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POPULAR ELEMENTS
IN
SOME OF THE PĀLI SUTTAS

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ABBREVIATIONS

(Details of publications referred to here can be found in the Bibliography).

AMBRH	<u>N. Dutt, Aspects of Mahayana Buddhism and its Relation to Hinayana</u>
AN	<u>Anguttara Nikaya (Pali Text Society English or Pali Editions) - English, see GS, Pali, Vol.I-II, ed. R. Morris, Vol.III-V, ed. E. Hare</u>
BHS	<u>F. Edgerton, Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary</u>
BMD	<u>J. Dhirasekera, Buddhist Monastic Discipline</u>
BSO(A)S	<u>Bulletin of the School of Oriental (and African Studies (London))</u>
DB	<u>Dialogues of the Buddha, trans. T.W. and C. A.F. Rhys Davids (Pali Text Society English Edition)</u>
DICT PPN	<u>Malalasekera, Dictionary of Pali Proper Names</u>
DN	<u>Digha Nikaya (Pali Text Society English or Pali editions) - English, see DB, Pali, Vol. I-II, ed. T.W. Rhys Davids, J.E. Carpenter, Vol.III, ed. J.E. Carpenter</u>
EBTK	<u>K.N. Jayatilleke, Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge</u>
GS	<u>The Book of Gradual Sayings, trans., F.L. Woodward (Vol.I, II, V) and E.M. Hare (Vol. III, IV)</u>
IHQ	<u>Indian Historical Quarterly</u>
JAOS	<u>Journal of the American Oriental Society</u>

JASP	<u>Journal of the Asiatic Society of Pakistan</u>
JRAS	<u>Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain (and Ireland) (London)</u>
MLS	<u>Middle Length Sayings, trans., I.B. Horner (Pali Text Society English Edition)</u>
MN	<u>Majjhima Nikaya (Pali Text Society English or Pali Edition) - English, see MLS, Pali, Vol.I, ed. V. Trenckner, Vol.II-III, R. Chalmers</u>
PTS DICT	<u>Pali Text Society's Pali-English Dictionary by T.W. Rhys Davids and Wm. Stede</u>
SOB	<u>Pande, Studies in the Origins of Buddhism</u>
UCR	<u>University of Ceylon Review</u>
VT	<u>Vasumitra's Treatise, trans. J. Masuda</u>

INTRODUCTION

Anyone who has undertaken even preliminary studies in the history and contents of Pāli Sutta literature discovers that the suttas, while expressing and addressing themselves to a variety of concerns, have the answers to such concerns rooted in the Dhamma and authority of Śākyamuni Buddha. When it comes to the question of what is meant by particular statements of the Dhamma appearing in the suttas, the Theravāda tradition often has recourse to the Abhidhamma Piṭaka as their guide which, as G.C. Pande maintains, is a relatively late addition to the Pāli Canon and is best regarded as the "systematization and development of the doctrine of the sūtras [suttas] along sectarian lines."¹ Because the Abhidhamma's intention is to expound the contents of the suttas, and because it is canonical, many of the studies on Pāli Buddhism, both by those from within and outside of the Buddhist tradition, have relied heavily on the Abhidhamma as their guide to

¹See G.C. Pande, SOB, pp.1-2.

the contents of the suttas. Since the Abhidhamma methodology is basically philosophic and rationalistic, many of the studies of Pāli Sutta literature have been Abhidhamma-like in quality. Although such an Abhidhamma approach is justified, since the suttas themselves abound in formulae and lists which resemble or reflect the Abhidhamma methodology (the so-called Scholastic tendencies in Pāli literature), there are other elements in the suttas which are not as susceptible to the methodology of the Abhidhamma. For example, the suttas of the Pāli Tipitaka have much to say about the 'personality' of the Buddha both as a 'charismatic authority'² and as the source and founder of the Dhamma. In addition, Buddha is also the 'perfected' example of one who has achieved success in that Dhamma.

Because the Buddhist tradition is purported to have begun with the Buddha, there was and still is a tremendous curiosity and concern about the 'personality' and person of

²We are indebted to Mr. Gregory Schopen for having made available an article of his dealing with the place of the book in Pāli Buddhism. This article appeared in French in a volume mysteriously entitled, Nous, Gens de la Bible, pp.77-79. Mr. Schopen's article was extremely helpful in delineating the nature of the problem with which this study is somewhat concerned, and it is from his article that we have chosen to use the term "charismatic authority."

the Buddha, the results of which have, from the very beginning, injected an important 'ingredient' into the lives of many of the monks and in particular the laity's approach to what we call Buddhism. What this 'ingredient' accomplished in the individual psyches of men it is not possible to verbalize because it appeals to the so-called 'religious nature' or inclination in man, a question at some point outside of the scope of language. We can, however, say something about the outward manifestation of this 'ingredient;' it constituted a tremendous concern about and curiosity in the 'person' of the Buddha, his achievements, former lives, powers and life style, a concern which eventually moved toward the establishment of a Buddha cult. Whether such a concern was manifest in the lifetime of the Buddha is difficult to say, but one would assume that his appearance in the Pāli Suttas as a "charismatic authority" gives good ground for assuming that the 'nature' of Buddha was always a subject of some interest. In addition, the fact that entry into the order or becoming an upāsaka necessitated taking refuge in the Buddha, as well as the Dhamma, and Sangha, must be regarded as reflecting, from an early date, as much respect for the Buddha as for the Dhamma and Sangha.

While many individuals were involved in concentrating

on the 'personality' of the Buddha, there were others, particularly from within the monastic camp, who regarded concentration on the personality of the Buddha as a distracting force, a force which shifted the energy of the individual from the avowed target of Arhathood and Nibbāna, which is self-accomplished, to a less defined 'goal' rooted in the Buddha as a "charismatic authority."³ This latter 'goal,' while remaining that of ultimate Arhathood and Nibbāna, also favoured rebirth in the heavens as a gradual movement towards such a 'goal' and regarded the life style and previous lives of the Buddha as illustrating such an approach. The Pāli Suttas present us with both these approaches, speaking of Arhathood in this life as well as rebirth in the heavens (e.g. Anāgāmin).

Some scholars, and some Buddhists as well, have regarded concentration on the nature of the Buddha as a source of 'degenerate' forms of Buddhism; for example, Tantrism.⁴ To label Buddhological speculations as leading

³This is not to deny that the Buddha was also an 'authority' for those who concentrated on the Dhamma, but with the 'equating' of the Buddha with the Dhamma, or with the movement toward such an identification, the person of the Buddha became increasingly important in Buddhist praxis.

⁴See D.L. Snellgrove, The Hevajra Tantra, pp.5-6.

to 'degenerate' forms of Buddhism is to deny not only the wealth of such concerns in the Pāli Suttas, but in a very real sense to deny these concerns as genuine 'needs' on the part of the Buddhist community.

With the above in mind, our study hopes to balance that view of Pāli Buddhism which concentrates on the 'fact' that the Pāli Suttas contain some of the earliest Buddhist materials. This approach tends to regard the "popular elements" with which we are concerned as merely later accretions.⁵ This latter methodology, while contributing to our knowledge and understanding of early Buddhism, has the tendency, unless balanced by studies such as ours, to rob Theravāda Buddhism of its spiritual complexity. We too shall make use of the 'developmental' approach but we also hope to remain aware of the fact that the Pāli Suttas, as a

⁵In this regard it is interesting to note the remarks of Edward Conze, Thirty Years of Buddhist Studies, p.3, "The Pāli Canon, as we have it, is no older than that of other schools, say that of the Sarvastivadins. Its prestige among Europeans owed something to the fact that it fitted in with their mood, in being more rationalistic and moralistic than some other traditions, and much less given to religious devotion, mythology and magic. The Pāli Canon stresses the ethical side of Buddhism, to which Protestants would readily respond." Might we not ask whether the Protestants found what they were looking for? See also Conze, ibid, pp.11-12, where he admits to a personal inclination towards viewing

unit (a heterogenous unit), are the basis for the praxis of the Buddhists who use them, Buddhists who for the most part do not separate out the early materials from the later ones.

In our study we use the term "popular" to indicate those items, "elements" and events depicted in the suttas we will discuss which reflect, contribute to and maintain the "charismatic authority" of the Buddha. We must admit that the term "popular" is problematic because, in addition to its above ascribed use, the term "popular" also implies

Buddhism, "from [its] very beginning [as] a popular mass movement."

There are a great many questions connected with the early developments of Buddhism, many of the answers to which may surprise those who are used to viewing the suttas from the scholastic point of view. This subject is, however, beyond the scope of our study. Those wishing to get started in such a study might first consult the following:

C.A.F. Rhys Davids, "The Unknown Co-Founders of Buddhism," JRAS, 1927, pp.193-208; "The Unknown Co-Founders of Buddhism: A Sequel," JRAS, 1928, pp.271-286; "Curious Omissions in Pāli Canonical Lists," JRAS, 1935, pp.721-724; "An Important Historical Feature in the Anguttara Nikāya," Indian Culture, Vol.1, April 1935, pp.643-650.

Stanislav Schayer, "Precanonical Buddhism," Archiv Orientální (Prague), 1, 7, Fasc.1-2 (1935), p.124; "New Contributions to the Problem of Pre-Hīnayanistic Buddhism," Polish Bulletin of Oriental Studies (Warsaw) 1, 1937, pp.8-17.

A.K. Warder, "On the Relationship Between Early Buddhism and Other Contemporary Systems," BSO(A)S, 18 (1956), pp.43-63.

that Buddhological speculations were part of an attempt to popularize the Buddha (and Buddhism), to make him appeal to a larger audience. This meaning of "popular" and its applicability to our study is undeniably present. Once again we must remind the reader that we do not understand by "popular" something 'degenerate' for this would deny that Buddhological developments were 'felt needs.' Nor do we wish to ascribe to the view that Buddhological 'needs' were merely a 'sell-out' to Hinduism, for while Buddhism chose many of its models from other indigenous Indian religious traditions, sometimes to its detriment, it continued to uphold its tradition as a viable if not superior alternative to others.

One reason for the lack of interest in the Buddhological side of Pāli Buddhism rests with the fact that these materials often are of an 'extra-ordinary' kind and thus not easily explained without appealing to that rationalizing function of the mind with which we in this age are all too readily familiar. We have neither chosen to rationalize or philosophize these 'extra-ordinary' materials nor to describe them as imaginary or mere 'products' of meditation. It is not in the interest of our study to prove or disprove the many unusual occurrences and attributes connected with

the Buddha and his Dhamma. The fact that these occurrences appear in the canonical literature of the Buddhists and in an 'everyday setting' attests to their 'reality' in some 'minds,' and it is these 'minds' with which we are concerned. What we have done in our study is to discuss some of the more important elements, elements which we have termed "popular," which distinguish the Buddha from the rest of all beings including the "gods."

We have also shown that there is sufficient ground to maintain that Buddha even surpassed the status achieved by the Arhats, not merely on the basis of his having found the Way, but by virtue of his superior nature as Buddha, as "charismatic authority." We have also pointed out examples where the "charismatic authority" of the Buddha comes into tension with the more scholastic portions of the suttas which wish to treat Buddha's success as a success open to and achievable by all Arhats. In addition, we have pointed out where Buddha's 'personality' draws on the Dhamma in order to achieve its 'superior' status. There are, however, cases when we could do no more than mention the attributes or characteristics ascribed to the Buddha because we could find no information to 'untangle' them; these materials have been included in the hope that they will reflect something

of the 'spirit' of the tradition to which they belong. By keeping these materials off the shelf, we hope to maintain them as viable subjects for further study.

Regarding the sources for our study, and its scope, we have chosen to limit ourselves to the Dīgha and Majjhima Nikāyas of the Pāli Tipiṭaka of the Sthaviravada. These two Nikāyas are not only regarded by the Theravāda tradition as the most authoritative amongst the suttas of the Pāli Canon, but represent the most edited portions of the suttas, their style, length and literary richness contrasting sharply with the more repetitious and formulaic aspects of the remaining suttas. Thus the Dīgha and Majjhima Nikāyas provide a rich source of Pāli Buddhist Dhamma, and a view of the Buddha which exhibits many of the "elements" with which we are concerned. The reader should not assume that it is only in the Dīgha and Majjhima Nikāyas that we encounter "popular elements," for the remaining suttas of the Canon reveal an abundance of these and are a source for further studies.

By restricting ourselves to only two of the Nikāyas, we feel that we are able to present a 'type' of study which pays close attention to the context in which the "elements" that interest us appear. Because the suttas, and the Pāli Canon

in general, often exhibit a variety of answers to a single question, careful attention to the context in which the questions and answers arise is of utmost importance if we are to avoid some of the pitfalls which can plague a more general type of study. For example, in the enigmatic case of the iddhis, it is easy to see how some scholars accepted the first negative statement they could find as a basis for excluding the iddhis from Buddhism.⁶ However, a closer look at the context in which the iddhis appear, including negative statements, will, as we shall see, provide us with a more complex set of conclusions.

The study which follows is divided into four chapters, the subject matter of which, in brief, is as follows.

The first chapter, entitled "The Growing Buddhological Conception," deals with the less spectacular aspects of the Buddha, namely with the structure of the sutta (in which Buddha is almost always the main interlocutor) and the epithets and epithetic statements applied to him. The structure of the sutta reveals itself to be a contributing factor to the place and status held by the Buddha as an authority of the Dhamma, while the epithets and epithetic statements applied to and by the Buddha reveal the type

⁶See T.W. Rhys Davids, DB, Part I, pp.272-273.

and character of the attributes accredited to him. In addition, the study of epithets and epithetic statements provides an important methodological tool with which to judge the status of other members of the monastic community who may have similar types of epithets or epithetic statements applied to them.

Regarding the results of the first chapter, we are, for example, led to conclude that the Buddha was 'equated' with the Dhamma, and vice versa, as well as the fact that there seems to be sufficient ground to maintain that Buddha must have been thought of by some members of the community as surpassing the Arhat in the 'quality' of his enlightenment, at least before parinibbāna.

The second chapter, entitled "Further Aspects of the Buddhological Conception," deals with the nature of Buddha's birth as legend describes it in the suttas and with his bodily characteristics, the so-called "Thirty-Two Marks of a Great Man." Both these factors reveal themselves to be important indications of and contributing factors to the place and state in which the Buddha was held by those who thought him a "charismatic authority." In addition, the chapter contains a comparison between Buddha and the Cakkavattin, as well as investigating a number of important

themes such as, for example, the fact that the suttas present the brāhmaṇas as claiming the thirty-two marks as part of their tradition, the importance of light imagery, and the unusual place of Ānanda. The most obvious conclusion which emerges from the chapter is that Buddha as represented in the suttas we discuss was a unique individual not only because he was attributed with a remarkable birth but by the fact that physically he was distinguished from all other beings by the nature of his appearance.

The third chapter, entitled "Iddhi," investigates the position in which the iddhi was held and analyzes certain of the "iddhi examples" which were applied to the Buddha and the brethren. The conclusion which emerges from the chapter is that the treatment of iddhi by some scholars has failed to deal with the complexity of the situation. When examining the question of iddhi, one has to be prepared to distinguish between iddhi in the scholastic lists, that is as a mere product of meditation, and iddhi as illustrated in the daily events of the life of the Buddha and some brethren (e.g. Moggallāna). This latter instance of the iddhi especially reveals itself to be a contributing factor to the popularization of Buddhism and the reinforce-

ment of Buddha's "charismatic authority."

The final chapter, entitled "Buddha and 'the Gods,'" deals with the relationship of Buddha to the "gods." The status of these "gods" is shown to be below the status in which the suttas hold the Buddha, but there is some suggestion in the suttas that the "gods" were held in high regard even by the monks. There is good ground to assume that some amongst the monastic community may also have sought rebirth in the heavens, a custom which Buddha himself supposedly contributed to when, in a former birth as King Makhādeva, he founded the custom of rebirth in the Brahmā abodes.

The above is only an outline indicating what follows in the body of the study. The examples of "popular elements" which we have chosen, as mentioned earlier, are only some among many, but we feel that we have chosen some of the most important elements which contributed to and maintained the "charismatic authority" of the Buddha.

Regarding the structure of the study, the reader will discover that we have used a somewhat unconventional method regarding footnotes; the footnotes often are of some length and contain important points which might have been included in the main body of the study. We felt that to

do justice to the materials we are discussing, to provide some scope to the problems with which we are concerned, necessitated such an approach. The fact that this has made the study more difficult to read than a more conventional format is unfortunate, but the important factor is not 'ease of reading' but the quality of the study, and this, we feel, has been accomplished through the methods we have implemented.

I

THE GROWING BUDDHOLOGICAL CONCEPTION

One of the most significant contributions to the "popularization of Buddhism" is connected with the development of the Buddha 'personality.'¹ These contributions to the Buddha 'personality' suggest the development of a docetic conception of the Buddha² or at least point towards the formation of a Buddha cult. In this chapter we shall attempt to restrict ourselves to those materials in the Dīgha and Majjhima Nikāyas which might more easily be attributed to the Buddha as an 'historical personage.'³ However, it must

¹By 'personality' we do not intend any particular Buddhist doctrine, such as the Khandha theory, but its use in common parlance. Buddha himself says, MN.III,234-5, "one should not deviate from recognized parlance." Also, DN.I, 202, "For these Citta are merely names, expressions, turns of speech, designation in common use in the world. And of these a Tathāgata ... makes use indeed, but is not led astray by them." Thus the Buddha is also aware of the pitfalls of language, though he realizes that for teaching common parlance is necessary.

²It should be remembered that docetism is often referred to by the Pāli word lokuttara and that lokuttara has two meanings. First, in an ordinary sense, lokuttara refers to the "highest of the world, best, sublime ... often applied to Arahantship ... the ideal state, viz. Nibbāna." One would have little difficulty applying these meanings to the "Tathāgata" of the Pāli Suttas. A second meaning of

be maintained that an 'historical personal' view of the Buddha is merely a methodological tool whereby we can restrict ourselves to the less 'spectacular' attributes of the Buddha; the more spectacular aspects will be dealt with in subsequent chapters. The claim often made of the Sthaviravādins that they regard the Buddha merely as an 'historical personage' or even as an 'exceptional historical personage' is not very informative. In addition, one must remember that 'religious' literature is not the most likely place to find accurate historical information, for this literature is often, if not always, interested in trans-

lokuttara, "(in later canonical literature) beyond these worlds, supra-mundane, transcendental, spiritual. In this meaning it is applied to the group of nava lokuttarā dhammā (viz. the 4 stages of the path ... with the 4 phalas, and the addition of Nibbāna)." See PTS DICT, p.588. Thus the Mahasāṅghikas distinguished themselves from the Theravāda (Sthaviravāda) conception of a more historical Buddha, by maintaining all Buddhas are lokuttara, supermundane. See also M. Anesaki, "Docetism (Buddhist)", ERE 4, p.835; Jiryo Masuda, VT, p.18. See also fn.2, p.18 in his text.

It should, however, be pointed out that there exists, or existed, some confusion in the application of the term lokuttara at least in the minds of some scholars. See, for example, Kern, Manual of Indian Buddhism, p.64; Anesaki (see above), p.836, fn.2; E.J. Thomas, The Life of Buddha, p.215. Thomas, in discussing AN.II, 38, describes it as expressing the "supramundane." Yet, what he seems to be speaking about is lokuttara in the first sense. S. Dutt in The Buddha and the Five After Centuries, p.187, describes some passages in the Pāli Canon as pointing in the direction of a supramundane (lokuttara) concept.

historical 'states.' This is not the place to discuss such trans-historical approaches, other than to say that the Pāli Suttas exhibit those concerns among others.⁴

The Structure of the Sutta in the
Dīgha and Majjhima Nikāyas

The basic structure of the sutta may be seen as a contributory factor in "popularizing" the Buddha as well as indicating such a "popularizing" trend. Almost every sutta in the Dīgha and Majjhima (and those of the Nikāyas in general) is given by the Buddha, and in the few cases where it is given by a bhikkhu or bhikkhunī (Buddhist monk or nun)⁵

³We have chosen to use the name "Buddha" as the subject of many of our sentences. However, this "Buddha" is always the Buddha of the Pāli Suttas, in particular the Dīgha and Majjhima Nikāyas, unless otherwise indicated.

⁴For some discussion of Buddhist views on history, see B.G. Gokhale, "The Theravāda-Buddhist View of History," JAOS, V.85, 1965, pp.354-360. Also A.K. Warder, "The Pāli Canon and its Commentaries as an Historical Record," in Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon, ed. C.H. Philips, (1961), pp.44-56. See also fn.8 below in this chapter.

⁵Examples of suttas not given by the Buddha are MN.I, 95 given by Moggallāna; MN.I, 292 by Śāriputta. It is interesting to note that the latter sutta still opens with, "At one time the Lord was." See also MN.I, 299, given by the bhikkhunī Dhammānā; in this case not only does the sutta have a nidāna to the Lord, but the Buddha appears in it as a kind of overseer.

It should be noted that the Bhikkhu is not of Buddhist origin. See PTS DICT, 504, "an almsman, a mendicant, a

it is often given in Buddha's name, if not in his presence. In addition, the customary opening for the majority of suttas in the Dīgha and Majjhima Nikāyas is the phrase, "Evam me suttam," ("Thus have I heard") which thereby attempts to connect what follows in the suttas with the reported words of the Buddha (Buddha vacana). While this is obviously a legend-making device, one which probably was later taken for granted, it still appears in the Mahāyānic texts like the Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka, Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñā-pāramitā Sūtra, Vimalakīrti-Nirdeśa Sūtra, Lankāvatāra Sūtra and numerous others.⁶ It might be added that in the case

Buddhist monk or priest." For a discussion of the history of the term, see T.W. Rhys Davids, Dialogues of the Buddha, Part I, pp.214-215. For a possible example of a non-Buddhist being called a Bhikkhu in the Pāli Canon, see DN.II, 45.

⁶See H. Kern, trans., Saddharma Puṇḍarīka or Lotus of True Law, p.1; Edward Conze, trans., Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñā-pāramitā, p.1; Charles Luk, trans., The Vimalakīrti-Nirdeśa Sūtra, p.1; D.T. Suzuki, trans., The Lankāvatāra Sūtra, p.2. We can also find the same form in the Hevajra Tantra (D.L. Snellgrove, trans., The Hevajra Tantra, p.47) except that here any reference to the Buddha of the Pāli Canon is insignificant, "Thus have I heard - at one time the Lord dwelt in bliss with the Vajrayogini who is the Body, Speech, and Mind of all the Buddhas." For a particular examination of the sutta opening, see John Brough, "Thus have I heard ...," BSO(A)S, Vol.13, Part 2, 1950, pp.416-426.

of the Mahāyāna, not only do we find, "Evam me suttam" (in Sanskrit, "evam mayā śrutam"), but that the Mahāyāna attempted, through men like Asanga and Śāntideva, to prove that their literature originated with Śākyamuni.⁷ Thus, the basic structure shared by the Mahāyāna and Pāli Suttas is a contributing factor to the above mentioned equation (i.e. the Mahāyāna origin with Śākyamuni).

In addition to, "Evam me suttam," there usually follows a nidāna (cause, source, origin) describing the circumstances in which the sutta was given, this nidāna often appearing (whether factually or not is of no importance here) as a piece of viable history, and thereby adding credence to the sutta developments which follow.⁸ The following is a typical example from the Kassapa-Sīhanāda Sutta, DN.I, 161:

Thus have I heard. The Blessed One was once dwelling at Uguñña in the Kannakatthala deer park. Now Kassapa, a naked ascetic, came to where the Exalted One was, and exchanged with him the greetings and compliments of civility and courtesy, and stood respectfully aside. And, so standing, he said to the Exalted One

⁷See Dutt, AMBRH, pp.58-59.

⁸On the question of the historicity given in the suttas, see E.J. Thomas, History of Buddhist Thought, p.90, and his The Life of Buddha, pp.13-15. Also Pande, SOB, pp.44-47.

As well as the Nidāna, we often find a characteristic type of closing which generally acts to enhance the position in which the Buddha was held. Often these closing statements of praise to the Buddha, or the Dhamma, are made by the bhikkhus who, as the suttas report, were not only in frequent contact with the Buddha but were often held by him in high regard. Examples of such sutta closings are the following:

DN.I, 46 Brahma-jāla Sutta: "Thus spake the Blessed One, and glad at heart the brethren exalted his word. And on the delivery of his discourse the thousandfold world system shook."⁹

DN.I, 158 Mahali Sutta: "Thus spake the Blessed One; and Hare-lip the Licchavi, pleased at heart, exalted the word of the Blessed One."

MN.II, 266 Ānañjasappāya Sutta: "Thus spake the Lord: Delighted, the venerable Ānanda rejoiced in what the Lord had said."

Thus it is easy to see how the repeating, later reading, of the suttas would contribute to keeping alive the significant place held by the Buddha, especially after the parinibbāna.

⁹The closing line concerning the shaking of the thousand world system is probably of later origin, as is basically the sutta, though it is based on early material. See Pande, SOB, pp.81-82, 114. For an example of similar "shaking" in the Mahāyāna scriptures, see Kern, trans., Saddharma-Puṇḍarīka, p.6; Conze, trans., Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā, pp.114-115.

The Function and Significance of Buddha Epithets

Another significant contribution to the growth of a Buddhological conception is that of epithets and epithetic statements about the Buddha. Before discussing particular examples, we should try to ascertain the function of these epithets and epithetic statements. In a verse from the Anguttara (IV, 88) we have Buddha talking about his former lives, during one of which he was a cakkavattin ("Wheel turning king"):

... This earth I conquered and then justly ruled,
 Needing no rod or sword or violence,
 But ordering all impartially, I caused
 The clans to grow in fortune, riches, wealth,
 Theirs were all pleasures, mine the seven gems -
 The Buddhas taught in pity for the world -
 This is the cause of greatness and my names ...

While this reference is found in the Anguttara, it reveals the status which is given to "names" (nāma) throughout the Pāli Suttas, if not the Indian tradition in general.¹⁰

¹⁰There are a number of examples in the Pāli Suttas regarding the importance of the "name," e.g. MN.II, 120; 145. See also I.B. Horner, MLS, II, p.xxv.

For a discussion of the importance of "names" in the Indian tradition see J. Gonda, Notes on Names and the Name of God in Ancient India, p.25. In connection with the specific use of names in the form of a Mantra or dhāraṇī, see A. Bharati, The Tantric Tradition, pp.101-184. See also Edward Conze, Selected Sayings from the Perfection of Wisdom, pp.118-125.

Thus the epithet is a sign of success, generally a success which is recognized by many. It is not surprising to find that becoming an upāsaka involved mainly the taking of the tisaraṇa, that is taking faith in the ratana-ttaya ("three-jewels") of Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha (e.g. MN.I, 386).

Thus we have a very important example of the power invested in naming and names.¹¹ We may distinguish the "epithet" from the "epithetic statement" as follows. The epithet is generally a single word or group of words which succinctly endows the Buddha with certain qualities (e.g. teacher - Satthā, seer - muni, well-farer - sugata)¹² while the epithetic statement is generally of a more descriptive nature (possibly containing a number of epithets) and is quite often found in various variations of a single 'simple' form. Take, for

¹¹See N.Dutt, "Popular Buddhism," IHQ, Vol.XXI (Sept., 1945), pp.246-247; Nārada Thera, trans., The Dhammapada, verses 190-192, p.54. Also DN.III, 227; MN.I, 37; 356 for some variations in expressing faith in the Buddha, or the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha. Also of note is the fact that the Mahāyāna Prātimoksa rules make of "speaking ill of the Triratna" a Pārājikā (meriting expulsion) offence. In addition, see N. Dutt, AMBRH, pp.294-295.

¹²For further information on the epithets of the Buddha, see references in Malalasekera, DICT.PPN, p.304; D.J. Thomas, The History of Buddhist Thought, p.151; S. Dutt, The Buddha and the Five After Centuries, pp.83-85. It should be noted that epithets and epithetic statements are part of the Indian heritage, not the exclusive property of Buddhists.

example, the following:

That Exalted One is an Arahāt, a fully enlightened one, abounding in wisdom and goodness, happy, with knowledge of the worlds, unsurpassed as a guide to mortals willing to be led, a teacher of gods and men, an Exalted One, a Buddha.¹³

And:

The Lord is perfected, wholly Self-awakened, endowed with (right) knowledge and conduct, well-farer, knower of the worlds, incomparable charioteer of men to be tamed, teacher of devas and men, the Awakened One, the Lord. He makes known this world with its recluses and brahmins, its devas and men, having realized them by his own super-knowledge. He teaches dhamma that is lovely in its beginning, lovely in the middle, lovely at the ending, with the spirit and the letter; he proclaims the Brahma-faring wholly fulfilled, quite purified. It were good to see perfected ones like this (DN.I,111).

While from the English translations the openings of both these passages seem different, the first passage can be found verbatim in its entirety in the opening of the second (see the Pāli)¹⁴ and then the second expands with, "... He

¹³DN.I, 7. Note, this is the Tevijja Sutta, which for some unknown reason is not numbered as is the case with the other Pāli Suttas in the English edition. The '7' refers to the paragraph in the English.

¹⁴This is surprising considering that the two passages were translated by the same individual, T.W. Rhys Davids. The fact that no 'fixed form' is adhered to in the English translations also makes it plain that a knowledge of Pāli is of absolute necessity in instances like the above; even if this knowledge is only elementary, it can help to avoid simple errors.

makes known this world" Both the passages are spoken by Brāhmaṇas, the former by the young Brāhmaṇa Vasettha, the latter by Brāhmaṇas of Campā. In terms of chronology (and common sense) it would seem that the latter example may be later than the first, although the evidence is somewhat uncertain.¹⁵

The first thing discovered by looking at the above two quotations is the opening, "That Exalted One is an Arahāt, a fully enlightened one ..." ("... Bhagavā araham sammā-sambuddha ...")¹⁶ so that we have the Buddha appealed to as both an Arahāt and a Buddha (i.e. sammā-sambuddha = "perfectly enlightened, a Universal Buddha" - see PTS DICT, p.696). This leads us to ask about the ascriptive powers

¹⁵See Pande, SOB, pp.114-115, 179. There, Pande describes the Tevijja Sutta (No.13 in the First Volume of the Dīgha) as early, while DN.I, 111 Sonadanta Sutta (Sutta No.IV in the First Volume of the Dīgha) is described as "uncertain, perhaps late." Investigating other similar passages in the suttas, such as MN.I, 285; MN.II, 401; MN.III, 140 leads to a general conclusion that it does seem likely that the 'expanded form' is used in later Pāli Suttas while the shorter is used in the earlier ones. However, it should be pointed out that the 'shorter' form is still used in the later Buddhist writings. See, for example, Edward Conze, trans., Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñā-pāramitā, p.141.

¹⁶The Pāli citations from the suttas of the Pāli Canon are from the PTS edition.

of these two terms. The Rhys Davids claim that instances like the above reveal that the two terms are still "in a state of fusion." This 'fusion' is not, however, of a synonymous variety; the difference between the terms is one of degree not of kind. The Rhys Davids further maintain that in suttas like the Mahāpadāna (DN.II, 1) we have a clear indication of the hardening 'differences' between the terms "Arahat" and "Buddha."¹⁷

In accordance with this view of the 'fusion' though 'difference' of the two concepts of Arahat and Buddha, one is able to find in the Pāli Suttas references to the fact that what seems to distinguish the Buddha from the brethren is that the Buddha found the Way (magga) while others follow it. The following example is given by Ānanda in the Gopakamogallāna Sutta, MN.III, 8:

There is not even one monk, brahman, who is possessed in every way and in every part of all those things of which the Lord was possessed, perfected one, fully Self Awakened One. For, brahman, this Lord was one to make arise a Way that had not arisen (before), to bring about a Way not brought about (before), to show a Way not shown (before); he was a knower of the Way, an understander of the Way, skilled in the Way. But the disciples are now Way-followers, following after him.

¹⁷T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids, trans., DB, Part III, pp.2-3.

Whether the above implies that those who achieve arhatship are 'equivalent' to the Buddha from the point of view of that goal is still a matter of some ambiguity.¹⁸ Interestingly enough the suttas, most of which have arhat-hood as their goal, provide us with virtually no examples of arhats with whom to compare the Buddha. In addition, those who are proclaimed arhats are usually so named at the close of the sutta, after which we hear virtually nothing more of them (e.g. DN.II, 153). In the instance of bhikkhus like Moggallāna and Śāriputta we are still left indecisive as to their status, for they are, as far as we know in the Dīgha and Majjhima Nikāyas, never called arhats.¹⁹ It is

¹⁸See Shwe Zan Aung and Mrs. Rhys Davids, trans., Points of Controversy (Kathā-Vatthu), pp.139-142. This section of the Kathā-Vatthu concerns itself with the "controverted point ... that the powers of the Buddha are common to disciples." The conclusion reached by the Theravādin is that a difference exists between the Tathāgata and the disciples, at least on some points. E.g., regarding Buddha's omniscience (sabbaññu), Buddha denies this claim at MN.I, 482. However, see E.J. Thomas, The Life of Buddha, pp.213-214; A.K. Warder, Indian Buddhism, pp.135-150; Malalasekera, DICT.PPN, p.1109; K.N. Jayatilleke, KBTK, pp.378-380.

¹⁹See the sections on Śāriputta and Moggallāna (Mahā Moggallāna) in Malalasekera, DICT.PPN, pp.541-547; 1108-1118; and Nyanaponika Thera, The Life of Śāriputta, Buddhist Publication Society, Ceylon, 1966.

If we hypothetically were to accept that Śāriputta

also worth noting that quite often it is the Buddha who maintains that arhatship has been obtained by a disciple,

and Moggallāna are arhats in the Dīgha and Majjhima Suttas in which they appear, we would come to the following conclusions.

The fact that as arhats (i.e. hypothetically) Moggallāna and Śāriputta were distinguished respectively by virtue of iddhi and abhidhamma (see MN.II, 248) would suggest that such distinctions would put them on a more 'mundane' level than that of the Buddha. For the Buddha is not the subject of such limitations ('distinctions'), hence Buddha's numerous epithets. This is not to say that there are not passages in the suttas under discussion where the disciples are highly praised by the Buddha, e.g. DN.II, 145-146; MN.III, 29, 80, 199. We do not, however, find passages to suggest that Śāriputta or Moggallāna is 'equal' to Buddha (see below). In addition, there are passages, for example MN.II, 196, 456, where Śāriputta receives a rebuke from the Buddha, as does Moggallāna (MN. II, 437 and fn.1 in I.B. Horner, trans., MLS.II, p.107).

Horner claims that Śāriputta attains arhatship at the close of the Dīghanakha Sutta (MN.I, 501) - see the index under "Śāriputta" in I.B. Horner, trans., MLS.II, p. 415. Malalasekera, DICTIONARY, p.1082, agrees with Horner. Nyanaponka Thera, The Life of Śāriputta, p.35, confirms Śāriputta's arhathood by referring to the Theragāthā (995, 996). Neither B.C. Law, A History of Pāli Literature, p.141, nor Pande, SOB, p.168, mentions Śāriputta's arhathood in this sutta. The sutta reads (MN.I, 501):

Now at that time the venerable Śāriputta was standing behind the Lord. Then it occurred to the venerable Śāriputta: 'The Lord speaks to us of getting rid of these things and those by means of superknowledge, the Well-farer speaks to us of casting out these things and those by means of superknowledge.' While the venerable Śāriputta was reflecting on this, his mind was freed from the cankers without clinging. [Itih idam āyasmato Śāriputtassa patisancikkhato anupādāya āsavehi ciham vimucci.]

"Freedom from the āsavas" is generally equated with

or who is asked to judge the 'truth' of the disciple's arhatship (e.g. MN.II, 252).

arhathood (e.g. DN.I, 155; MN.I, 249). However, it is worth noting that here we have none of the often found 'formulae' accompanying such arhathood (see PTS DICT, p.77). This cannot, however, provide sufficient evidence to reject Śāriputta's arhathood. Still, there are a number of further questions which are worth noting. Why, we may ask, does Śāriputta's arhathood take place at the closing of a sutta dealing with the Paribbājaka Dighanikha? Secondly, why is it treated so insignificantly, en passant, especially when Śāriputta is generally regarded as Buddha's chief disciple? Why do we not have Śāriputta called an arhat, if not in this sutta, then in any other in the Dīgha and Majjhima Nikāyas? Lastly, how are we to distinguish between those suttas in which Śāriputta is an arhat and those in which he is not?

In addition, it is curious that in the Anupadasutta (MN.III, 25) in which Śāriputta is praised by the Buddha (see MN.III, 29 but compare with DN.III, 84; MN.II, Selasutta = (Suttanipāta 109, PTS edition)) as the "Lord's own son," he still is not called an arhat. Also of interest is the fact that the claim of Śāriputta's arhathood here is provided by the commentarial literature; see I.B. Horner, trans., MLS, p.78, fn.1.

All the evidence would tend to suggest that there are numerous problems connected with arhats who have to vie with the Buddha for place in the Dīgha and Majjhima Nikāyas. Thus, at this point (i.e. as the suttas of the Dīgha and Majjhima present the case) Buddha still holds the dominant position, even though Śāriputta may be the heir of Buddha.

We may also be tempted to explain the difference between Buddha and the 'hypothetical arhats' in terms of kamma. That is, we may maintain that the 'differences' between the Buddha and the arhats rest with the fact that Buddha had exhausted most or all of his kamma in previous lives, hence his Exalted position, but the arhats still have

Regarding arhats, it is worth noting the following remark by T.W. Rhys Davids:

In the old texts, we are informed of a custom by which, when a bhikkhu thought he had attained [arhatship], he could 'announce his knowledge,' as the phrase ran. The 112th Dialogue in the Majjhima gives the six questions which should then be put to the new aspirant. If he answered these correctly, his claim should be admitted. By the time of the commentators this was obsolete. They speak of no arhats in their own day; and we hear of none mentioned, in any source, as having lived later than the 3rd century of our era. The associations with the word became so high that only the heroes of old were esteemed capable of having attained to it.²⁰

some kamma (more than the Buddha) to work out.

However, the position of kamma, like that of the arhat, receives little treatment, at least in the above context, in the suttas under discussion (see e.g. DN.III, 146; MN.II, 104; MN.III, 203).

²⁰T.W. Rhys Davids, "Arhat," ERE, Vol.1, p.775. For further information on the Arhat-Buddha distinction, see N. Dutt, AMBRH, pp.35, 198, 285. A reading of these sections in Dutt makes it clear that many of the problems connected with making Arhat-Buddha distinctions were also problems which contributed to the schisms which developed in the Buddhist community after Buddha's parinibbāna. We should also remember that much of the information connected with these problems is to be obtained in the commentarial and śāstric literature, and this imposes further difficulties.

See also A Critical Pāli Dictionary, Vol.1, p.148. For an interesting view of the problem in a more contemporary setting, see R.L. Slater, Paradox and Nirvana, pp.47-50. Walpola Rahula, History of Buddhism in Ceylon, pp.217-229, maintains (p.226) that, "There were arhants who were guilty of improprieties even at the time of the Buddha." It goes without saying that Buddha was never so accredited.

The above indication of the manner in which the arhat and arhathood was subsequently regarded would seem to have its origins in the suttas we are discussing. This is not to deny that the Pāli Suttas uphold arhathood as the 'goal,' nor that they speak of certain arhats, occasionally at some length, but that the method in which the arhats are treated as 'personalities' is minor in comparison with the extensive treatment given the Buddha. The Buddha is not the end product of a scholastic list of "six questions" but a dynamic 'personality' who provides the Buddhist tradition with its most complete example of what 'enlightenment' (bodhi) can accomplish in the individual man, an accomplishment and example not easily attained.

The arhat-Buddha distinction problem is one which is not clearly delineated in the suttas themselves and it is, therefore, not surprising to find that at the Second Council, one of the questions with which the Council concerned itself was whether or not an arhat could fall. Rather than pursue this discussion further, let us return to those passages which opened the discussion on arhats and examine, as those passages suggest, the significance of Buddha as teacher (satthā).

The choice of Buddha to act as teacher (satthā) is perhaps the most significant contribution a Buddha makes to

mankind, it is an act of compassion (karuṇā)²¹ which saves beings from rebirth and wrong-doing,²² thus opening "the

²¹Compassion (karuṇā) is an important ingredient in Pāli Buddhism. MN.III, 221, "A teacher teaches dhamma to disciples, compassionate, seeking their welfare, out of compassion, saing: 'This is for your welfare, this is for your happiness.'" MN.I, 118, "Whatever, monks, is to be done from compassion by a Teacher seeking the welfare of his disciples, that has been done by me out of compassion for you." See also DN.I, 4; MN.I, 46; MN.II, 239; MN.III, 117, 302. For examples of 'compassion' as a plea to Buddha to visit, or instruct, see MN.I, 237; MN.II, 113; MN.III, 153. An example of 'compassion' applied to Ānanda to talk with King Pasenadi is found in MN.II, 113; another of Śāriputta to visit Brāhmaṇa Dhānañjāni, in MN.II, 192.

It is also worth noting that 'compassion is one of the elements used to get rid of the Five Hinderances (pañca nīvaranāni) in particular of "ill will" (vyāpāda); e.g. DN.I, 71; DN.III, 49; MN.I, 275, 284, 347. Compassion is also one of the Four Unlimited (appamaññā); e.g. MN.I, 297, 335; MN.III, 146, as well as one of the Brahmavihāras, see DN.I, Tevijja Sutta.

For further information on Karuṇā, see S. Dutt, The Buddha and the Five After Centuries, pp.202-205; Biswanath Banerjee, "Place of Karuṇā (Compassion) in Buddhism," Proceedings of the Twenty-sixth International Congress of Orientalists, Jan.4-10, 1964, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, pp.336-342.

²²The text (DN.II, 39) actually reads, "... discerning the danger in rebirth in other worlds, and the danger in wrong doing." The statement is made in describing what Vipassi (Buddha) sees when he looks down over the world with his Buddha Eye (buddha-cakkhu); we have generalized the statement. The 'decision to teach' is archetypal in the life stories of the Buddhas. For an example with the Buddha (Śākyamuni) see MN.I, 168. In addition, the question of "rebirth in other worlds" will be touched on later in this study.

portals to Nirvana"²³ (DN.II, 39). We find in the suttas a great deal of 'tension' connected with the Buddha's decision to teach the Dhamma which is described as (MN.I, 168):

Deep, subtle, difficult to see, delicate,
Unseen 'twill be by passion's slaves
Cloaked in the murk of ignorance.

Yet the 'difficulty' of the Dhamma is balanced by Buddha's ability to teach it (DN.II, 232):

... a teacher of this kind, of this character, we find not, whether we survey the past or whether we survey the present - save only the Exalted One.²⁴

²³See T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids, DB, Part II, p.33, fn.1. There, the "portals to Nirvana" is given in the Pāli as "Amatassa dvārā; literally the doors of ambrosia." In the MN.I, 168 in which Buddha (Śākyamuni) makes the decision to teach, we have the following, "Opened for those who hear are the doors of the Deathless (amatassa dvārā)." Here also we have an allusion to ambrosia (amṛta).

In addition we are using the epithet 'Śākyamuni' to speak of Gotama of the Sakyan Clan; as far as we know this name does not appear in the suttas under discussion. See Malalasekera, DICT.PPN, p.969. However, since we have Buddha originating with the Sakyan Clan (DN.II, 165, MN.II, 99) and described as a muni (MN.II, 100; MN.III, 193) the use of Śākyamuni in this general application does not seem out of place.

²⁴It is interesting that we do not have any allusions here to the future. Since the statement is made by the devas of the Thirty-and-Three (devā Tāvātimsā) it is even more puzzling for perhaps they would know the future. A close look at the Mahāpadāna Sutta (see DN.II, 50-54) suggests that the "gods" could only remember the Buddhas of the past and the Buddha of the present. Buddha himself says (DN.II,

In addition, Buddha's teaching is not restricted to members of his own sect; there are numerous instances in which he teaches to, or talks about, Brāhmanas,²⁵ members of

53), "Thus, Brethren, through his clear discernment of the principle of the Truth, is the Tathāgata able to remember the Buddhas of old." Whether we can conclude that the 'silence' here regarding the future is merely a limitation of the "gods" or implies a future Buddha is difficult to say. Since we have reference to Metteyya, as a future Buddha, in the Cakkavatti Sihanāda Sutta (DN.III, 76), it is quite likely that the silence about the future pertains to a future Buddha. It is also worth noting that the Cakkavatti Sihanāda Sutta says Metteyya will appear when humans live 80,000 years (DN. III, 75). On the other hand, the Mahāpadāna Sutta (DN.II, 2-7) charts the lifespan during the time of Gotama (Buddha) at one hundred years. Therefore it would seem as though the Buddha of the Pāli Canon is the last member in the present cycle.

Regarding the place of Metteyya in the Theravāda, see Malalasekera, DICT.PPN, pp.660-662, and Edward Conze, Buddhism, p.116. Conze maintains that the Theravāda accepted a future Buddha but did not become very enthusiastic about the prospect.

²⁵See e.g. DN.I, 87, 111, 127, 224, Tevijja Sutta (No. 13 in DN.I); DN.III, 80; MN.I, 16, 175, 198, 285, 290; MN.II, 133-210 (the Brāhmanavagga); MN.III, 1, 7.

It should also be noted that the Buddha makes use of the term brāhmaṇa not only to indicate what is generally referred to as a member of the Brāhmaṇa caste but as a "man leading a pure, sinless and ascetic life, often even synonymous with Arhant." See PTS DICT, pp.494-495.

The Buddha in MN.I, 144, applies the term brāhmaṇa to himself, "Brahman, Monk, this is a synonym for the Tathāgata, perfected one, fully self-awakened one." See also MN.I, 108, 337. For further references in the Pāli Canon to the Buddhist use of the term Brāhmaṇa, see AN.IV, 144; Sutta Nipāta, 519; Dhammapada, 388; Milindapañha, 225. Note in addition, T.W.

other sects,²⁶ Kings,²⁷ and laity²⁸ (gahapati and upāsaka).

The results of his teachings are often depicted as being revolutionary experiences in the lives of those who heed them. Thus in the Lohicca Sutta (DN.I, 234) Buddha's teaching is maintained to have saved Brāhmaṇa Lohicca from rebirth in either purgatory or as an animal:

Just, Gotama, as if a man had caught hold of a man, falling over the precipitous edge of purgatory, by the hair of his head, and lifted him up safe back on the firm land - just so have I, on the point of falling into purgatory, been lifted back on to the land by the venerable Gotama. Most excellent, O Gotama, are the words of thy mouth, most excellent.

Rhys Davids, DB, Part I, pp.140-141. There the question of Buddha's methodology of 'remaking' the term brāhmaṇa is discussed. Also, C.A.F. and T.W. Rhys Davids, DB, Part III, p.4; C.A.F. Rhys Davids, "The Relations between Early Buddhism and Brahmanism," IHQ, Vol.10, 1934, pp.274-287; T.W. Rhys Davids, "Persecution of the Buddhists in India," JPTS, 1896, p.91; B.L. Barua, "The Doctrine of Caste in Early Buddhism," JASP, Vol.IV, 1959, pp.133-156; N. Dutt, "The Internal Forces in the Spread of Buddhism," All India Oriental Conference Proceedings and Transactions, 1922, pp.539-541.

²⁶See e.g. DN.I, 1, 47 (here the information is provided by King Ajātasattu), 161, 178; DN.II, 316; DN.III, 1, 36; MN.I, 171, 227, 237, 368, 371, 387, 481-524; MN.II, 1, 22, 29, 40; MN.III, 214. See also A.K. Warder, "On the Relationships Between Early Buddhism and other Contemporary Systems," BSO(A)S, 18, 1956, pp.43-63, and I.B. Horner, "Gotama and the other Sects," JAOS, Vol.66, 1964, pp.283-289.

²⁷See e.g. DN.I, 47; DN.II, 72; MN.II, 74, 91, 106, 118, 125.

²⁸For Gahapati see e.g. DN.I, 211; DN.II, 84; DN.III, 180; MN.I, 285, 290, 339-400 (Gahapativagga); MN.II, 54, 91, 106; MN.III, 291.

Buddha is also depicted as exhibiting considerable skill in teaching to a particular audience. Thus in the Brahma-jāla Sutta (DN.I, 2) we have the Buddha praised in these words, "How wonderful a thing it is, brethren, and how strange that the Blessed One, he who sees, the Arahāt, the Buddha Supreme, should so clearly have perceived how various are the inclinations of men," while in the well known and often quoted Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (DN.II, 109), Buddha's ability to suit the 'level of teaching'²⁹ to his

²⁹The phrase, 'level of teaching,' is used in a loose sense. Thus, for example, the Buddha would generally not lecture to the laity on the higher stages of the Path. However Buddha's decision not to do so was based solely on the fact that the laity, not having given up the household life and embarked upon the preliminaries, would not have much purpose for learning the higher stages. For example, we get graduated statements like the following in the Kūtadanta Sutta (DN.I, 148):

Then the Blessed One discoursed to Kūtadanta the Brahman in due order; that is to say, he spoke to him of generosity, of right conduct, of heaven, of the danger, the vanity, and the defilement of lusts, of the advantages of renunciation. And when the Blessed One became aware that Kūtanda the Brahman had become prepared, softened, unprejudiced, upraised, and believing in heart, then did he proclaim the doctrine the Buddhas alone have won; that is to say, the doctrine of sorrow, of its origin, of its cessation, and of the Path. And just as a clean cloth, with all stains in it washed away, will readily take the dye, just even so did Kūtanda the Brahman, even while seated there, obtain the pure and spotless Eye for the Truth, and he knew: 'Whatsoever has a beginning, in that is inherent also the necessity of dissolution.'

Since the Dhamma is, "deep, difficult to see,

audience as stated is follows:

Now I call to mind, Ānanda, how when I used to enter into an assembly of many hundred nobles, before I had settled myself

difficult to understand ... intelligible only to the wise," (MN.I,487) there is good reason to assume that Buddha taught what he knew was best for a particular individual at a particular time. In addition, the Buddha also makes the point that those who are under a different teacher (MN. I, 487) may also find it difficult to understand Buddha's Dhamma which requires 'full time.' However, whether Buddha actually restricted anyone from overhearing his discourses to the monks is unlikely. See however MN.III, 261, in which the householder Anāthapiṇḍika is dying and Śāriputta discourses to him on Dhamma usually given the monks, "Reasoned talk such as this, householder, does not (usually) [kho] occur for householders clad in white. It is for those that have gone forth, householder, that reasoned talk such as this (usually) occurs." For comments on this passage see I.B. Horner, trans., MLS, Vol.III, p.313, and fn.1.

It is noteworthy that Buddha does not rebuke Śāriputta for providing dhamma to Anāthapiṇḍika, while he does in MN.II, 196, when Śāriputta only shows Brāhmaṇa Dhānañjāni the way to the Brahma-world. Buddha himself taught such a Brahma-world goal in the Tevijja Sutta (No.13 in DN.I) so that there is good reason to assume that Buddha takes into account the disposition of those to whom he teaches, and that perhaps his peculiar ability to distinguish what is necessary is based on his 'superior knowledge' (his Buddhahood).

Also of note connected with Śāriputta's comments to Anāthapiṇḍika is that Anāthapiṇḍika asks Śāriputta to teach him dhamma in much the same way that Brahmā Sahampati appealed to the Buddha to teach (see MN.I, 168), for Anāthapiṇḍika says, "There are, reverend Śāriputta, young men of family with but little dust on their eyes who, not hearing dhamma, are declining, but they could be learners of dhamma." See also DN.I, 68; MN.II, 379; MN.III, 136. In MN.I, 490, householders clothed in white are referred to as disciples (sāvaka). See also DN.III, 125. Compare this with DN.II, 104, where Buddha tells Māra, "I shall not die, O Evil One, until the

there or talked to them or started a conversation with them, I used to become in colour like unto their colour, and in voice like unto their voice. Then with religious discourse I used to instruct and incite, and quicken them, and fill them with gladness. But they knew me not when I spoke, and would say: 'Who may this be who thus speaks? a man or a god?' Then having instructed, incited, quickened, and gladdened them with religious discourse, I would vanish away. But they knew me not even when I vanished away, and would say:- 'Who may this be who has thus vanished away? a man or a god?'³⁰

brethren and sisters of the Order, and until the lay disciples [sāvaka] of either sex shall have become true hearers ... carrying the doctrinal books in their memory, masters of the lesser corollaries that follow from the larger doctrine ... to spread the wonderworking truth abroad!" Thus the Dhamma seems to be open to anyone who is willing to listen, even though mere listening is insufficient to win the 'goal.'

³⁰This paragraph, though often quoted as an example of Buddha's upāya has rarely been fully dealt with. While no one would deny the upāya-like qualities found in the passage, there is also a suggestion of some powers more easily attributed to the 'supramundane' (lokuttara) characteristics of the treatment of Buddhas in the Mahāyāna. It would also seem that we have in this passage a suggestion of the development of the kāya conception of the Buddha. We have in the Pāli Canon quite a number of suggestions of such a kāya conception, when we have instances of the thirty-two lakkhana of the Mahā Purusa (e.g. DN.III, 142) and Buddha's 'equation' with the Dhamma (see discussion above in the body of this paper). Here, however, we have a picture of Buddha in a 'sambhokāya-like' manner, though not the sambhokāya of the Mahāyāna. For here Buddha is presented as something of an enigma to the nobles to whom he speaks. The nobles are unable to tell Buddha from a "god" and since nobles (khattiya) are not attributed in the Pāli Suttas with the ability to see "gods," the statement is quite forceful. However, the statement is made even more enigmatic when Buddha applies the same description to the other members of the Assembly (DN.II, 109) which include brāhmanas, householders and wanderers, the angel hosts of the Guardian Kings, members of the Great Thirty-Three, Māras and Brahmās. It is also interesting to note that the Buddha 'vanishes' (antarahita) from the site

There are numerous other incidents connected with the Buddha's ability to teach the Dhamma, but neither space nor our topic permits us to examine all of these. We can, however, say something about the relationship of Buddha to the Dhamma.

Buddha's concern is with living things, most particularly man,³¹ and what he gives to man is Dhamma. Thus in the Aranavibhanga Sutta (MN.III, 230) Buddha says, "one should simply teach dhamma," while in the well known parable of the arrow (MN.I, 429) and the parable of the raft (MN.I, 134) the function and purpose of the Dhamma is well delineated.³² Most important to this discussion

of the teaching. A closer look at the use of the word antarahita (see PTS DICT, p.48) in other passages in which it occurs, often shows it used in the sense of 'magical disappearance,' as for example when Bhikkhu Kevaddha 'vanishes' from the world of Brahmā and instantly appears before Buddha (DN.I, 222). Thus the above suggests that Buddha was much more than a teacher, he was also a mystery, and such mysteries are easily seen as contributing factors to a developing Buddhology.

³¹Regarding the status of human birth in Buddhism, see MN.III, 169, 178-179, 186.

³²Thus, the parable of the arrow is used to account for the silence of the Buddha regarding the Avyākata (the Undeclared, the Inexpressible) which number ten and are stated as follows (DN.I, 187-188):

- 1) Is the world eternal?
- 2) Is the world not eternal?

of the relationship of the Buddha to the Dhamma, and vice

- 3) Is the world finite?
- 4) Is the world infinite?
- 5) Is the soul [attan] the same as the body?
- 6) Is the soul one thing, and the body another?
- 7) Does one who has gained the truth live again after death?
- 8) Does he not live again after death?
- 9) Does he both live again, and not live again, after death?
- 10) Does he neither live again, nor not live again, after death?

Buddha's refusal to answer the avyākata is stated as (MN.I, 431), "It is because it is not connected with the goal, is not fundamental to the Brahma-faring, and does not conduce to turning away from, not to dispassion, stopping, calming, superknowledge, awakening nor to Nibbāna. Therefore it has not been explained by me."

See also Buddha's reply in DN.I, 188; MN.II, 485, and the Avyākta Samyutta in SN.IV, 373. See T.W. Rhys Davids, trans., DB, Part I, pp.186-190; K.N. Jayatilleke, EBTk, pp.471-476; Nathmal Tatāa, "The Avyākrtas or Indeterminables," The Nava Nalanda Mahavihāra Research Publication, Vol.II, pp.142-159. Tatāa's treatment is basically that given by the Mahāyāna. Also of note is R. Slater, Paradox and Nirvāna, pp.74-75, who makes the significant point, and we quote him (everything in parentheses () refers to his footnotes):

It is this gulf in experience which partly explains his [Buddha's] silence on questions which have since been classed by his followers as the Great Indeterminates, questions which the Buddha left open, answering neither Yea nor Nay (D.I, 17ff; D.I, 187 etc). Various reasons have been given for this silence.

It has been suggested that the Buddha himself did not know the answers or that he had reached no clear conclusion (Keith, Buddhist Philosophy, Chap.II, p.45) or that he was not interested in philosophy, indeed, distrusted philosophy, and these questions were speculative. For this last explanation, there is some support in the Pāli scriptures ... There is still stronger support for the suggestions

versa, is the fact that the Buddha is, in many ways, to be

that his silence was dictated by pastoral motives, "This question is not calculated to profit," the Buddha tells Potthapāda, "it is not concerned with the Dhamma" (D.I., 188). Rhys Davids suggests that the speculations were eschewed because they were based on insufficient evidence (Dialogues of the Buddha, Part I, p.188). But insufficient evidence for whom? For the Buddha himself, it might be said from the standpoint of the critical historian. We are considering the question, however, from the standpoint of his followers, from the standpoint of the Buddhist faith. From such a point of view there can be no question of insufficient evidence; the Buddha knew all that was to be known; he was the Enlightened One. But the Buddha himself might well consider that there was insufficient evidence for the disputants and for his followers who had not yet attained the Nibbāna vision. That, in fact, is the attitude indicated.

Slater's position is one which we find quite tenable; it points to the fact of Buddhahood as something unique, something which is in some way beyond our understanding. This is not to imply that there are not passages in the suttas which negate this view, as for example when Buddha states (DN.II, 100), "I have preached the truth without making any distinction between exoteric and esoteric doctrine ... the Tathāgata has no such thing as the closed fist of a teacher, who keeps things back." However, the implication is also found in the suttas that Buddha 'transcends' the experience of the common man, and of those who have not attained at least arhathood, (e.g. DN.I, 46, 165; MN.III, 8). The whole movement of the Buddhist tradition would seem to rest almost entirely on the fact that the Buddha of the Pāli Canon is to some degree an enigma.

In a similar manner the parable of the raft (MN.I, 134) makes it clear that the Dhamma is only a means (upāya) to get to the other shore, as is the parable itself (MN.I, 135), "Even so, monks, is the Parable of the Raft dhamma taught by me for crossing over, not for retaining." When the Pāli Suttas declare (MN.I, 37) that Dhamma is "a come and see thing (ehi-passika)," we must be prepared to accept that as fact. The roads of scholarship are not always the roads of faith and, as Slater says above, "We are considering

'equated' with the Dhamma for, as Buddha, he 'embodies'³³

the question, however, from the standpoint of his followers, from the standpoint of the Buddhist faith." In addition, we are not concerned with a merely historical Buddha but the Buddha of the Pāli Suttas. Thus, like the parable of the arrow, the parable of the raft lends credence to the Buddha as 'different from' those with whom he comes in contact; the question remains, how different?

³³One of the most important contributions to Buddhology rests with the view of Buddha as 'embodying' the Dhamma, a seemingly necessary requirement for its being taught to those most likely to use it - mankind (see DN.I, 230). Thus the attitude taken to periods when the Dhamma is being taught by the Buddha to the brethren is highly reverential. We read in the Mahā Sakuludāyī Sutta (MN.II, 4), "At the time when the recluse Gotama was teaching dhamma to an innumerable assembly, there was the sound neither of expectoration nor of coughing among his disciples. Any group of people who were waiting were ready for him, thinking: 'We will hear that dhamma that the Lord will teach us.' It is as though a man at a crossing on a high road might press out a little pure honey, and any group of people who were waiting might be ready for him."

Apart from this idealized picture of the Buddha as a teacher (satthā) we also find this sutta discussing a number of things for which the disciples (sāvaka), "revere ... and honour [Buddha] and, revering and respecting, live in dependence" (MN.II, 9). All those things for which the sāvakas "revere and honour" Buddha rest with the fact that Buddha 'embodies' the dhamma:

The recluse Gotama is of moral habit, he is possessed of the most excellent body of moral habit ...

When the recluse Gotama says: I Know, I see - it is because he does know, does see. The recluse Gotama teaches dhamma from superknowledge [abhiññā] not without superknowledge ...

It is not I, Udāyin, that expect instruction from disciples; on the contrary, it is the disciples that expect instruction from me.

Dhamma, and is the 'best' example of one who has achieved success in and founded that Dhamma. In addition, the

Rather than pursue further the subject of Buddha as a teacher of the Dhamma, it would prove useful to examine him as more particularly 'embodying' it. The nature of such 'embodiment' might be gleaned from an analysis of the parable of the raft (MN.I, 134) wherein Dhamma is only a means (upāya), and from the following passage spoken by Buddha at the close of the Brahma-jāla Sutta (DN.I, 46), "The outward form, brethren, of him who has won the truth [tathāgata] stands before you, but that which binds it to rebirth is cut in twain. So long as his body shall last, so long do gods and men behold him. On the dissolution of the body, beyond the end of his life, neither gods nor men shall see him." Compare this with MN.I, 140 and Buddhaghosa's comments given in I.B. Horner, *MLS*, Vol.I, p. 179, fn.3.

Even if we assume that the "outward form" of Buddha is only residual kamma, we must also acknowledge that what, "binds it to rebirth [present and future kamma] is cut in twain." Thus we have a picture of Buddha as immanent, yet transcendent. The fact that Buddha on "the dissolution of the body" will be seen neither by "gods" nor men does not tell us anything other than that or, at most, that Buddha will not 'suffer' a future birth.

In addition we may draw a connection between Dhamma as a device (upāya) and Buddha's visible body as being the most excellent of bodies in the Buddhist view of existence (e.g. the thirty-two characteristics of a great person). Buddha's body is most perfect because he 'embodies' the Dhamma, for as has already been pointed out, this is a requirement to teach it. Buddha's abandoning of his body (outward form) can be equated with the abandoning of Dhamma when the 'other shore' is reached (see I.B. Horner, "The Concept of Freedom in the Pāli Canon," Présence du bouddhisme, Vol.XVI, pp.342-343).

A paradox (or problem) persists, however, for the Buddha, in spite of having a body, in spite of any kamma (e.g. he does become ill, and can supposedly have his blood drawn - MN.III, 65) has crossed to that other shore. How else

'value' of a teacher is directly connected with his having or not having achieved that which he teaches and if he has not, he should not teach (see Lohicca Sutta, DN.I, 230).

The Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta Sutta (MN.III, 195) says, "The Lord knows what should be known, sees what should be seen, he has become vision, become knowledge, become dhamma, he is the propounder, the expounder, the bringer of the goal, the giver of the Deathless [Nibbāna], dhamma-lord, Tathāgata."

The conception of Buddha as 'embodying' Dhamma is also found in expressions of faith (saddhā)³⁴ made to the

could Buddha know of Nibbāna? He may refuse to answer the Avyākta of whether a Tathāgata lives after 'death' or he may, as in the above passage, say that after his 'death' neither gods nor men will see him, but Buddha does teach the Way to Nibbāna (MN.III, 6), "Even so, brahman, Nibbāna does exist, the way leading to Nibbāna exists and I exist as adviser ... some of my disciples, on being exhorted and instructed by me attain the unchanging goal - Nibbāna."

There are still problems connected with the suttas' 'view' of the Buddha but our analysis does reveal something of the enigma surrounding the Buddha, as well as some of the 'strands' for developing the Buddha 'personality.'

³⁴The place of saddhā (usually translated as "faith" - see PTS DICT, p.675) in Pāli Buddhism is one meriting a separate study. Though such a study will not be taken up here, it should be pointed out that saddhā, like its English 'equivalent' "faith" is susceptible to a wide range of interpretations. For some references to saddhā in the Dīgha and Majjhima Nikāyas, see DN.I, 63; DN.III, 227; MN.I, 123, 320, 356, 480-481; MN.II, 170-171; MN.III, 6.

For further information, see B. Barua, "Faith in

Buddha. Thus in the Aggañña Sutta (DN.III, 84) we read:

He, Vāsetṭha, whose faith [saddhā] in the Tathāgata³⁵ is settled, rooted, established and firm, a faith not to be dragged down by recluse or brahmin by deva or māra or Brahmā or anyone in the world, well may he say: I am a veritable son of the Exalted One, born from his mouth, born of the Norm [Dhamma], cradled by the Norm, heir of the Norm. And why? Because, Vāsetṭha, these are names [adhivacana] tantamount to Tathāgata; belonging to [Dhammakāyo] the Norm, and again, belonging to the highest [Brahma-kāyo] and again, one with the Norm [Dhamma-bhūto], and again, one with the Highest [Brahma-bhūto].

Buddhism," Buddhistic Studies, ed. B.C. Law, 1931, pp.329-349; E. Conze, Buddhist Thought in India, pp.47-50; K.N. Jayatilleke, EBTk, pp.383-389 (see further references in the index, pp.513-514); N. Dutt, "Place of Faith in Buddhism," IHQ, Vol.XVI, 1940, pp.639-646; Mrs. Gyomroi-Ludowyk, "The Valuation of Saddhā in the Early Buddhist Texts," UCR, Vol. 5, pp.32-49; Louis de la Vallée Poussin, "Faith and Reason in Buddhism," Transactions of the Third International Congress for the History of Religions, Vol.II, 1908, pp.32-43.

³⁵Malalasekera, DICT.PPN, p.989, has the following entry for Tathāgata, "An epithet of the Buddha, used by the Buddha referring to himself [see however DN.II, 129]. The Commentators [see his fn.1 and PTS DICT, p.296] give eight (sometimes expanded to sixteen) explanations of the word, which shows that there was probably no fixed tradition on the point. The explanations indicate that the name can be used for any arhant, and not necessarily only for a Buddha. The term was evidently pre-Buddhistic, though it has not yet been found in any pre-Buddhist work."

Malalasekera's entry is not very helpful and it should be noted that, as far as we are aware, no instance of the term Tathāgata being applied to arhats appears in the Dīgha and Majjhima, nor the Nikāyas in general. Scholarship still has to investigate the significance of Buddhist śāstras and commentaries in light of the Nikāyas themselves. Work done by S. Schayer and others make it quite clear that commentators often attempt to 'rationalize' materials which cannot possibly fit into their systems. This problem is

The reference to Buddha as Dhammakāya is striking, especially when the term Dhammakāya does not appear elsewhere in the Pāli Nikāyas (see PTS DICT, p.338). As we have already indicated, there is ample reason to identify Buddha with the Dhamma.³⁶ The above passage speaks of

beyond the scope of our study, but should be kept in mind whenever the commentaries or śāstras are alluded to.

"Tathāgata" is generally translated as "thus gone" or "thus come" (see F. Edgerton, BHS DICT, p.248). The PTS DICT, p.296, translates it as "he who has won though to the truth." Thus, as M. Anesaki maintains (Anesaki, "Tathāgata," ERE, Vol.12, p.202), "whatever it may have meant originally, or from whatever source it may have been derived, Tathāgata is an epithet of Buddha used to express his very personality." Anesaki also points out that whenever the question of Buddha's existence after his bodily death comes up, the Buddha is addressed by the epithet Tathāgata and thus the epithet represents the personal aspect of the dhamma. Anesaki also concludes (p.204), "Buddha's personality is inseparable from the metaphysical entity of dhamma and vice versa. The idea of the Tathāgata has, in this way, become the pivot around which both philosophical speculations and religious faith have been moved and developed. For further comments on Tathāgata see I.B. Horner, The Book of the Discipline (Vinaya-Pitaka), Vol.I, (Suttavibhanga), p.lvi.

For an interesting discussion of the Mahāpadāna Sutta and Tathāgata, see L.A. Waddell, "The So-Called 'Mahapadana' Suttanta and the Date of the Pāli Canon," JRAS, pp.661-680. Waddell maintains (p.677) that the term Tathāgata is intimately linked with the scheme of previous Buddhas, implying that Buddha has 'come' or 'gone' the way of all Buddhas. Also worth noting is Waddell's conclusion (see "Maha-Padhana Sutta," JRAS, 1914, p.1033) that the sutta title should read Mahā Padhāna (not Mahā-Apadāna as in the PTS edition) and that the epithet Padhāna refers to Buddha

Buddha as Dhamma when it uses the term Dhamma-būta, "having become the Dhamma" (PTS DICT, p.339). One important point connected with epithets like Brahma-kāya³⁷ and Brahma-bhūta³⁸ rests with the fact that the word "Brahma," when combined with another term, often exhibits a certain ambiguity, thus

as "The Foremost Being" and "which was a pre-Buddhist Sankhya epithet for the supreme Brahmanical god." This conclusion is not as far fetched as it may seem.

³⁶It is worth noting Buddhaghosa's comments to Dhammakāya in the sutta under discussion (T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids, DB, Part III, p.81, fn.2), "why is the Tathāgato said to have a norm [Dhamma]-body? Because having devised the Three-Piṭaka-Buddha-word by his mind he conducts it forth by his speech. Therefore his body from having normness (dhammatā) is considered as the Norm, and is so called."

³⁷Buddhaghosa's comments on brahma-kāya are (above source), "And just because of this Norm-body-ness, he has an excellent body, for Norm is called brahma in the sense of best, supreme, excellent."

³⁸Found elsewhere in the suttas (e.g. DN.III, 84; MN.I, 111; MN.II, 349; MN.III, 195, 224). The term brahma-bhūta is usually translated as 'becoming Brahma' ("divine being, most excellent being" - PTS DICT, p.493). Dhirasekera says, regarding the term Brahmabhūta (BMD, pp.63-64), "In all instances, the term brahmabhūta as an epithet of the Buddha is closely associated with the term dhammabhūta. In the Aggañña Sutta these two terms are declared to be epithets of the Buddha and are associated with two other terms derived from the same concepts of dhamma and brahma. The Buddha is also described as dhammakāyo and brahmakāyo. He is the symbol of the Dhamma (dhammakāyo) and he is identified with it. Hence he is also dhammabhūta ... the term brahmabhūta is used to stress the Buddha's perfection and pre-eminence."

the PTS DICT, p.493 notes, "The combined form of all specified bases (I, II, III) is brahma^o, and with regard to meaning it is often not to be decided to which of the three categories the compound in question belongs." The specified bases referred to as I, II, III are: I - brahman, II - Brahmā, III - brahma (see PTS DICT, pp.492-493). The problems connected with 'interpreting' the compound forms of the word "brahma" are important, for it quite likely refers to an important Buddhist characteristic of methodology by which an attempt is made to transfer or transmute the meanings of terms like "brahma," "brahman" or "brahmā" into a particularly Buddhist context. Part of the value of such a technique is that it not only transfers or transmutes the original use of the term but may also retain in the minds of some who hear it the characteristics of its original usage. Most often, at least in the Dīgha and Majjhima Nikāyas, these terms are taken from the brāhmaṇa tradition.³⁹

³⁹See fn.25 of this Chapter. It is also of note that Buddha refers to his Way (magga) as Brahma-faring (brahmacariya) implying, according to the PTS DICT, p.494, "the moral life, holy life, religious life, as the way to end suffering." In the Mahāsīhanāda Sutta (MN.I, 77) we have Buddha using the term brahmacariya to describe the Buddha's former asceticism. Buddhaghosa (Dīgha Nikāya Atthakathā (i.e. Sumanigulavilāsini) I, 177) lists the following application of the term Brahmacariya (translation from Jothiya Dhirasekera, BMD, pp.58-59): "(1) dāna - charity (2) veyyāvacca - rendering a service (3) pañcasikkhapadasīla - observance of the five precepts (4)

For example, also found in the suttas is the term brahmapatta (e.g. MN.I, 386) which J. Dhirasekera (BMD, p. 61) maintains was, as far as the Buddha was concerned, to imply "the attainment of the goal, the perfection of the religious life which [Buddha] propounded." The term "brahma" says Dhirasekera (BMD, p.64), "connotes only the idea of noble, worthy and supreme."

The PTS DICT, p.493, has the following entry for brahmapatta: "arrived at the highest state, above the devas, a state like the Brahmā gods." In addition, Dhirasekera

appamañña - practice of the Brahmaviharas (5) methunavirati - celibacy (6) sadārasatosa - chastity (7) virīya - striving (8) uposathanga - observance of the day of the fast (9) ariyamagga - the noble path (10) sāsana - the complete Buddhist way of life."

Some of the above applications of the term brahmacariya are not peculiar to Buddhism and the general tenor of the list seems to be virtuous living. Thus we have another example of that aspect of Buddhist methodology discussed above. For further discussion on the term brahmacariya see Jothiya Dhirasekera, BMD, pp.80-83, 85-87, and the references cited there, e.g. DN.I, 62; MN.I, 23, 38, 40, 67, 148, 172, 179, 197, 267, 304, 344, 431; MN.II, 39, 55, 67. A general statement on the use of the term brahmacariya in Buddhism would be, "that life which leads one to Nibbāna." This term, therefore, cannot be applied to the life of the householder (see Ratthapatasutta, MN.II, 54).

(BMD, p.66) maintains that the concept of Brahmā as a personal being was recognized by the Buddhist texts. With the above in mind, it is easy to see how the term brahmapatta, even when used by a Buddhist with a Buddhist context intended, may also have been understood in a brāhmaṇa-like manner of implying 'union' with Brahmā or the attainment of the Brahmā-world. Thus the adoption by the Buddhists of traditional terms, that is, terms with already established connotations, was perhaps as dangerous as it appears wise.⁴⁰ We should remember too that many of the brethren were originally Brāhmaṇas and that some confusion may have arisen in their minds when they heard terms which they had formerly understood as one thing, now being used in another context. The fact that converts to Buddhism may have been informed of the changes in the ascription of these terms does not necessarily imply that some of their former connotations would ipso facto disappear. The adoption by the Buddhists of other Brāhmaṇa frameworks and structures (at least as the Buddhist suttas present the case) can be seen in a number of other instances. In the Aggañña Sutta (DN.III, 81) we find the following

⁴⁰For further comments see R.C. Mitra, The Decline of Buddhism in India, pp. 150-151.

statement of comparison between Brahmanas and Samanas:

The Brahmins, lord, say thus:

Only a Brahmin is of clear complexion; other complexions are swarthy. Only brahmins are of pure breed; not they that are not of the brahmins. Only brahmins are genuine children of Brahmā, created by Brahmā, heirs of Brahmā.

As for you, you have renounced the best rank, and have gone over to that low class - to shaven recluses, to the vulgar rich, to them of swarthy skins, to the footborn descendents. Such a course is not good [our italics].⁴¹

Yet in the Anupada Sutta (MN.III, 29) we find Buddha himself making the following claim to the monks, "Monks, if anyone speaking rightly should say of a man: 'He is the Lord's own son, born of his mouth, born of dhamma, formed by dhamma, an heir to dhamma, not an heir to material things' - speaking rightly he could say of Śāriputta: 'He is the Lord's own son, born of his mouth, born of dhamma, formed by dhamma, an heir to dhamma, not an heir to material things.'"

⁴¹In contrast to the intention of the passage, it is interesting to note that the Buddha's complexion is often a subject of praise (e.g. DN.II, 133), "How wonderful a thing it is Lord, and how marvellous, that the colour of the skin of the Exalted One should be so clear, to exceeding bright." And (MN.I, 170), "Your reverence, your faculties are quite pure, your complexion is very bright, very clear."

In addition, regarding the subject of "class" (yanna - see PTS DICT, p.596, No.5), it is to the khattiya that the Buddha belonged (see e.g. DN.II, 3-7) and which is spoken of as the best (DN.I, 99), "The Kshatriya is the best of those among this folk who put their trust in lineage [Gotta-parti-sārīna]. But he who is perfect in wisdom and righteousness, he is the best among gods and men." For further remarks on khattiya supremacy, see T.W. Rhys Davids, DB, pp.215-216.

What Buddha obviously does is to replace the word "brahmā" with the word "dhamma" which on the surface appears as a highly rational and realistic procedure. However, we must remember that Buddha is in many ways 'equated' with Dhamma; even here we find the phrase, "born of his mouth" (i.e. the Buddha's) which, while it obviously alludes to Buddha's ability to utter Dhamma, may also be taken as alluding to the Buddha's power to 'metaphorically' or 'symbolically' do the same as Brahmā, that is to 'create' Buddhists as Brahmā creates Brāhmaṇas.⁴² We must be careful not to attribute to Buddha, as he is presented in the Dīgha and Majjhima Nikāyas, a position by which we free him from his Indian context. The whole development of Buddhism belies such a treatment. In addition, we must remember that not all those individuals who 'supported' the Buddha and the communities which he represented were upāsakas (lay disciples); often enough they were merely the common gahapati (householder). While it may seem simplistic, it should be stated that those who found themselves involved with the Buddha and the Buddhist communities could not help but conceive of the Buddha and the Buddhist community in a

⁴²Just how this statement of Buddha might have been interpreted by those who heard it is yet another question.

manner which reflected their personal milieu. Nor should we exempt the bhikkhu from such divergent views for, not only does the history of the Buddhist tradition bear this out, but the fact that the bhikkhus were often of brāhmanic extraction, if not from other segments of Indian society, suggests a great 'pool' of Indian tradition in the Buddhist camp.

The function of epithets not only helped to alter the view taken of Buddha, but also indicated the direction of the development of his 'personality.' A thorough study of Buddha epithets and epithetic statements still remains as a study uncompleted. We cannot, however, at this time expand our treatment further though we will take the opportunity to mention more of these epithets in subsequent chapters. We will, however, conclude this chapter with a list of some epithets and epithetic statements not yet mentioned:⁴³

DN.I, 71	"crossed over doubt"	<u>tinṇavicikiccha</u>
DN.I, 189	"the Happy One" (well-farer)	<u>sugata</u>

⁴³If the reader examines the sources from which these epithets and epithetic statements are taken, he will discover them to originate predominantly in the verse sections of the suttas. The questions surrounding the status of these verses and their chronology is still a matter for clarification. Regarding recent work in this area, see A.K. Warder, Pali Metre.

DN.II, 16	(said of Vipassi Buddha) "An arhant, a Buddha supreme, rolling back the veil from the world" -see also DN.III, 146.	<u>"...bhagavā araham sammā sambuddho loke udapadi"</u>
DN.II, 39	"Hero" "Conqueror"	<u>vīra</u> <u>vijita</u>
DN.II, 123	"The <u>master with eye divine</u> , the quencher of griefs, is at peace."	<u>"Dukkha's'anta-karo satthā cakkhuma parinibbuto'ti"</u>
DN.III, 197	"Kin o' th' sun" "humanity's aristocrat" "highest among men"	<u>ādicca bandhu</u> <u>purisājāṇṇa</u> <u>purisuttama</u>
MN.I, 168	"Seer"	<u>samanta-cakhu =</u> "all-seeing" (see PTS DICT, p.683)
MN.I, 171	"Omniscient" "For me there is no teacher/One like me does not exist In the world with its devas/No one equals me" "For I am perfected in the world, A teacher supreme am I, I alone am all awakened, Become cool am I, <u>Nibbana attained"</u> "victor"	<u>sabba-vidū =</u> "all-wise" (see PTS DICT, p.681) <u>"Na me ācariyo atthi sadiso me na vijjati, sadevakas mīm lokas- mīm na-tthi me patipuggalo"</u> <u>"Ahami hi arahā loke, aham satthā anuttaro, eko'nhī sammāsam- buddho, sitibhuto' smi Nibbuto"</u> <u>jina</u>
MN.I, 386	"all within" "the stainless" "world renounced" "excellent charioteer"	<u>vessantara</u> <u>vimala</u> <u>vantalokāmisa</u> <u>sārathivara</u>

MN.I, 386	"the matchless"	<u>Anuttharassa</u> = "nothing higher" (PTS DICT, p.26)
	"the shining"	<u>ruciradhamma</u>
	"of no incertitude"	<u>Nikkankha</u>
	"deep"	<u>gambhīra</u>
	"Bringer of security"	<u>khemamkara</u>
	"on dhamma standing"	<u>dhammatṭha</u>
	"supreme one"	<u>nāga</u>
	"without impediments"	<u>nippapañca</u>
	"seer"	<u>isi</u>
	"Brahma-attained"	<u>brahmapatta</u>
	"Breaker of the Citadel, sakka"	<u>purindada sakka</u> ⁴⁴
	"incomparable person"	<u>appaṭipuggala</u>
	"unequaled"	<u>asama</u>
	"the confident"	<u>visārada</u>
	"the accomplished"	<u>nipuṇa</u>
	"worthy of offerings"	<u>āhuneyya</u> ⁴⁵
	the yakkha	<u>yakkha</u>
	"the best of persons"	<u>uttamapuggala</u>
	"beyond measure"	<u>atula</u> = "incomparable, not to be measured, beyond compare or description" (PTS DICT, p. 305, under <u>tula</u>)
MN.II, 100	"great sage"	<u>maha + isi</u> (<u>mahesi</u>)
MN.II, (Sn.109)	"... you are king of kings, the lord of men; rule, O Gotama"	"... <u>rājābhirājā</u> <u>manujindo rajjam</u> <u>karehi Gotama</u> "
	"Awake"	<u>Buddha</u>
(Sn.110)	"physician without peer"	" <u>sallakatto anuttaro</u> ;" N.B. <u>sallakatta</u> = "one who works on the (poisoned) arrow" (PTS DICT, p.699)

⁴⁴See comments in I.B. Horner, MLS, II, p.52, fn.5.

⁴⁵PTS DICT, p.117, says of Āhuneyya, "sacrificial, worthy of offerings or of sacrifice, venerable, adorable, worshipful."

MN.II (Sn.110) "As speaks the Visioned
One, physician, great
hero, so roars the
forest lion"

"yathā bhāsati
cakkhumā salla-
katto mahāviro,
siho va nadati
vane"

MN.III, 153 "dhamma master"

dhammassāmi

II

FURTHER ASPECTS OF THE BUDDHOLOGICAL CONCEPTION

In this chapter, we examine the characteristics of Buddha's 'birth' and the qualities that are ascribed to one 'born' in such a manner. This treatment of Buddha's (a Buddha's) 'birth' indicates the direction in which the Buddhological conception developed and reveals as part of this development the conception of the Buddha, if not as lokuttara ("supramundane"), then as 'superhuman,' a type of being surpassing even the devas and brahmās.¹ In

¹There is no difficulty in labelling the Buddha 'superhuman' but the question of whether he can be described as lokuttara is still a problem - see the discussion on p.15, fn.2 of this paper.

Further to the discussion presented at that time, we should like to add the following points of information. André Bareau, in his translation of Vasumitra's Treatise, entitled, "Trois traités sur les sectes bouddhiques attribués à Vasumitra, Bhavya et Vinitadeva" (première partie), Journal Asiatique, Vol.CCXLII, 1954, p.238, says the following regarding the Mahāsaṅghika, Ekavyavahārika, Lokottaravāda and Kaukkutike schools' position on the question of the status of Buddhas:

1^oTous les Buddha Bhagavant sont supramondains (lokottara). (Deux interprétations possibles, qui furent soutenues toutes deux: 1. les Buddha sont hors du monde souillé et supérieurs à lui par leur valeur; 2. les Buddha résident en dehors et au-dessus du monde).

addition, we examine Buddha's relationship to the Cakkavattin,

In English this reads (our translation): "All the Buddhas, Exalted Ones, are supramundane (lokuttara). (Two possible interpretations, both of which are supported: 1. The Buddhas are outside of the foul world and superior to it by their value; 2. the Buddhas reside outside and above the world).

Before commenting on the above, it would prove useful to examine the term "lokuttara" which literally means "superior, higher," than the loka ("world"). See PTS DICT under "uttara" (p.131) and "loka" (pp.586-588). However, the English term "world" cannot be blindly equated with the Pāli term "loka" unless we extend the usual designation of "world" to include the immaterial as well as the material aspects of 'world.' Since "loka" also refers to the various deva abodes, lokuttara refers to that which is 'outside' those lokas (i.e. 'outside' the kāma, rūpa and arūpa-lokas).

Another significant point is that most of the entries for the occurrence of the term "lokuttara" at least as listed in the PTS DICT (see p.588 under "lokiya") are references to the commentarial or śāstric literature, with very few references in the Pāli Suttas themselves. For example, at MN.II, 181, we find "lokuttara dhamma" which the PTS DICT equates with Nibbāna. Buddha says at MN.II, 181, "Now I, brahman, lay down that a man's wealth is dhamma, ariyan, supermundane [Ariyan kho aham brahmana lokuttaram dhammam purissasa sandhanam pannapemi]."

Thus it is Nibbāna which most clearly exemplifies 'that' which is "outside of the world" (see Bareau's statement above).

When Buddha declares in DN.I, 46, "The outward form, brethren, of him who has won the truth [tathāgata] stands before you, but that which binds it to rebirth is cut in twain," he (Buddha) is in some sense declaring himself to be "outside of the foul world and superior to it by [his] value." (See Bareau's point #1). However, when the Dīgha passage (i.e. DN.I, 46) concludes with, "So long as his body [i.e. Buddha's] shall last, so long do gods and men behold him. On the dissolution of the body, beyond the end of his life neither gods nor men shall see him," then we must assume that Buddha is still in some sense, as here implied, "rooted" to the world.

the other alternative open to one possessing the Thirty-Two Marks of a Great Man.

The chapter makes it clear that Dhamma apart from the Buddha, apart from its perfected example, was insufficient material on which to found a 'religion.' Some appeal to certain of the 'emotional' qualities in man was also required and these 'needs' were felt by both the bhikkhus, who 'produced' this conception of Buddha for their Canon, as well as by those outside of the Order. The fact that

However, the position of the Buddha in relation to both the 'worlds' (lokas) and Nibbāna is, in this passage, somewhat ambiguous. Buddha does declare himself to have attained Nibbāna, e.g. MN.I, 167, 171: "For I am perfected in the world, /A teacher supreme am I, /I alone am all-awakened /Become cool am I, Nibbāna attained." Yet, the question of Nibbāna 'with or without remainder' leads to further difficulties, e.g. MN.I, 148. See also Chapter I, p.38 ff of this study; B.C. Law, "Aspects of Nirvāna," Indian Culture, Vol.II, No.2, Oct. 1935, pp.327-348; and Mrs. C.A.F. Rhys Davids, "A Historical Aspect of Nirvāna," Indian Culture, Vol.II, No.3, Jan. 1936, pp.537-547.

Thus we must conclude that the Buddhas in the suttas under discussion are not clearly lokuttara in the Mahāsamghika sense given above of "outside and above the world." While we have no trouble in making the lokuttara claim for the Buddha metaphorically, the real solution is to be found in the later development of the tri-kāya conception. The Mahāsamghikas could never have accepted the Theravāda claim that the Buddha completely 'disappeared' at the parinibbāna. The passage quoted above from DN.I, 46, suggests that there may have been some in the Theravāda camp who also could not decide the answer to the question, though the passage at the same time preserves some historical framework for the Buddha. Since the suttas themselves are composite in nature, we find

these Buddhological developments likely appeared after the 'death' of the Buddha did not stop the tradition from connecting them with an early origin by, for example, establishing a scheme of previous Buddhas and appealing to the Brāhmaṇa tradition as a recognized source of knowledge for the Mahāpurisa lakkhani.

The Buddha's 'Birth'²

The 'birth' of a Buddha (bodhisatta)³ is described

a divergence of views on the status of the Buddha, though moving toward the tri-kāya view. Some of these threads have already been elaborated in our first chapter. See also O. Stein, "Notes on the Trikaya Doctrine," Jha Commemorative Volume, Poona Oriental Series, No.39, 1937, pp.389-398, especially pp.396-397.

²We use the term 'birth' merely for convenience. In no way can we claim the appearance of the Buddha in the world as 'birth' in the familiar sense of the word, even though the framework bears a similarity to 'birth' as we know it, in that he has a mother and spends time in her womb.

³The term "bodhisatta" is the correct term to use in any instance in which we are speaking of the Buddha prior to his enlightenment (bodhi). The PTS DICT, p.491, reads, "Bodhi-satta (1) a 'bodhi-being,' i.e. a being destined to attain fullest enlightenment or Buddhahood. A Bodhisatta passes through many existences and many stages of progress before the last birth in which he fulfils his great destiny."

See also T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids, DB, Part II, p.3. Dhirasekera, BMD, p.53, fn.3, has the following entry, "The term Bodhisatta ... refer[s] only to Buddha Gotama during the thirty-five years of his early life, prior to his enlightenment. This covers both the princely life of twenty

in the Mahāpadāna Sutta (DN.II, 1) in which we learn of the existence of six previous Buddhas before the coming of Gotama.⁴ In the Acchariyabbhutadhamma Sutta (MN.III, 119), we have specific reference to Gotama's 'birth' as described by Ānanda who declares, "Face to face with the Lord, reverend

years under the name of Siddhatta and the six years of mendicancy during which he came to be called Samano Gotamo. Referring to this earlier period prior to his enlightenment, the Buddha calls himself the Bodhisatta, Pubbe va me bhikkhave sambodhā anabhisambuddhassa bodhisattassa sato [MN.I, 240; SN.II, 10]."

⁴See DN.II, 5. There, the previous six Buddhas are listed as Vīpassī, Sikhī, Vessabhū, Kakusandha, Konāgamana and Kassapa. See also Malalasekera, DICT PPN, p.295, for references to the multiplication of former Buddhas in the Pāli Sources. L.A. Waddell, "The So-called 'Mahapadana' Suttanta and the date of the Pāli Canon," JRAS, 1914, pp.675-680. There (pp.676-677) Waddell maintains:

The theory that former human Buddhas preceded Gotama, although generally accepted as an integral part of Buddha's Buddhism, seems to me to have been invented after the Buddha's death. For it is not essential to that system, but is indeed opposed to the principle that Sākya Muni achieved Buddhahood solely on his own initiative, and that his Arhatship was measurably beyond and practically different in degree from that attainable by his followers [my italics here], so as to leave no room for the possibility that two Buddhas could co-exist as contemporaries. Moreover the number of these Buddhas continued steadily to expand in later periods. But strongest of all evidence is the fact that all these former Buddhas as described in the text are mere reduplications of the historical Buddha in every single respect, except in the trivial points of names for themselves, parents, etc. This theory, therefore, in my opinion, manifestly belongs to the later period when the monks were systematizing everything and extending the basis of Buddhism on cosmic lines, so as to make the advent of a Buddha a part of the great fixed laws of Nature. This

sir, have I heard this, face to face have I learnt."⁵

Perhaps the most remarkable characteristic of the description of the 'birth' of a Buddha, that is from the point of view of those who would think of a Buddha as merely an historical figure, are the 'supernatural' embellishments which surround the event, thus heralding it as a unique occurrence. With this in mind, Sakka declares in the

is the constant refrain by which descriptive paragraphs are introduced in this Pāli text, "It is the rule [that] (dhammatā esā). Thus a series of imaginary Buddhas were extended back along the fabulous past ages of the world, according to Brahmanic notions of cosmic ages or Kalpas."

⁵It is of note that the two accounts of the 'birth' of a Buddha are the same, except for the fact that the Mahāpadāna Sutta uses Vipassī Buddha as its example while the Acchariyabbhutadhamma Sutta uses Gotama Buddha. In addition, the two Suttas have a different refrain at the close of each of the sections (see main body of paper above). Thus the Mahāpadāna, as we have already mentioned (see fn.4 above) has the refrain, "That, in such a case, is the rule" (Ayam ettha dhammatā) while the Acchariyabbhutadhamma, "I regard this too as a wonder, a marvellous quality of the Lord's" (idam p'aham, bhante, Bhagavato acchariyam abhutadhammam dharemi).

Both the suttas are late; see Pande SOB, pp.94-96; 140. Pande says (p.140) of the Majjhima account, "The Sutta obviously belongs to a period when the Buddha was a full fledged god, or rather, more, and his birth a miraculous descent of the divine." It is quite likely that the Majjhima account is earlier than the Dīgha one because it does not make mention of the previous six buddhas. Thus the refrain in the Mahāpadāna, "Ayam ettha dhammatā," is a way of accounting for the universal pattern of a Buddha's 'birth'. Of course, there is also the possibility that both the Dīgha and Majjhima accounts appeal to some form of a legend no longer available.

Mahā Govinda Sutta (DN.II, 225), "Nowhere, gentlemen, and at no time is it possible that, in one and the same world system, two Arhant Buddhas supreme should arise together, neither before nor after the other." Śāriputta reiterates Sakka's position in the Sampasādanīya Sutta (DN.III, 114), "In the presence of the Exalted One have I heard him say and from him have received, that whereas in times gone by and in future times there have been, and will be other supreme Buddhas equal to himself in the matter of Enlightenment [sambodhi], yet that in one and the same world system [loka-dhatu], there should arise two Arhants Buddhas Supreme, the one neither before nor after the other: - that is impossible and unprecedented. That cannot be."

The embellishments of the 'birth' of a Buddha are highly significant in reflecting the status and nature of the Buddha in his relationship to other beings (human and non-human) in the Buddhist 'spiritual' milieu. The Buddha's 'birth' is made to appear as a benefit to both devas and men alike, the former being particularly involved in the event. The events of the Buddha's birth (a Buddha's 'birth') are presented in the Dīgha and Majjhima accounts alluded to above as follows:

A) The Buddha's Last Birth

The bodhisatta remains in the "Tusita group" (Tusita kāya), the "Heaven of Delight" until it is time for his final birth (DN.II, 12). The Majjhima account (MN.III, 119) adds, that the Bodhisatta remains in the "Tusita group ... for as long as his life-span [yāvatāyuga] lasted," and that both there and in the bodhisatta's 'descent' into his mother's womb, he was "mindful and clearly conscious [sato sampajāno]." ⁶

⁶Tusita (Tusita kāya) refers to the fourth deva loka (of which there are six) of the kāma dhātu. See e.g. DN.I, 215; DN.III, 259. Louis de la Vallée Poussin, in an article based primarily on the Sanskrit Abhidharma Kośa of Vasubandhu, "Cosmogony and Cosmology(Buddhist)" ERE, Vol.4, p.134, has the following entry, "The abode of the tusitas, 'satisfied' or 'blissful;' the residence of a future Buddha before his last existence; king, samtusita [e.g. see DN.III, 219]; length of life, 4000 years; height 1 krośa."

The figure 4000 refers to the fact that to those found in this abode one day is equivalent to four hundred human years and that there are 4000 such days for those in the tusita kāya. See Alica Matsunaga, Buddhist Philosophy of Assimilation, p.52. The reference to height as 1 krośa refers to the physical height of those in the tusita group, thus the devas are usually of a greater stature than men. See, regarding the krośa, William McGovern, A Manual of Buddhist Philosophy, pp.42-43. For further information see McGovern, pp.66, 77; Louis de la Vallée Poussin, trans., L'Abhidharmakosa de Vasubandhu, troisième chapitre, pp.1, 164, 166. For specific references to the Pāli Tipiṭaka, see Malalasekera, DICT PPN, pp.1033-1034.

It should be noted that the development or elaboration of these cosmological notions are most likely a later development in Buddhism for we are given in a number of places in the Pāli Suttas, e.g. the Brahma-Jāla Sutta (DN.I, 1) definite statements against such speculation. See also Louis de la Vallée Poussin, "Cosmogony and Cosmology (Buddhist)" ERE,

B) Entering his mother's womb

When the bodhisatta enters his mother's womb, we are given the following account (Both the Dīgha (DN.II, 12) and Majjhima (MN.III, 120) concur in the Pāli):

When ... the Bodhisatta, having descended from the Tusita group, entered his mother's womb, then an illimitable glorious radiance [appamāno ulāro obhāso], surpassing even the deva-majesty of devas, appeared in the world with its devas, its Māras, its Brahmas, among the generations with recluses and brahmins, devas and men. And even in those spaces between the worlds [lokantarikā], gloomy [aghā], baseless [asamvutā] regions of blackness plunged in blackness, where the moon and the sun, powerful and majestic though they are, cannot make their light [ābhāya nānubhonti] prevail - even there there appeared the illimitable glorious radiance, surpassing even the deva-majesty of devas. And those beings who had arisen there recognized one another by means of this radiance, and they thought: "Indeed there are other beings who are arising here." And this ten-thousand-world-system quaked, trembled and shook, and there the illimitable glorious radiance surpassing even the deva-majesty of devas (MN.III, 120).

The most distinctive feature of this passage is the constant allusion to light (obhāsa), an image which here, as elsewhere in the Nikāyas, affirms the importance of events connected with the Buddha or accompanies various achievements (siddhi) in the Buddha's magga. An analysis of the function

Vol.4, pp.129-130; and "Agnosticism (Buddhist)," ERE, Vol.1, p.221.

Also of note is the phrase in the Majjhima account, "for as long as his life span [yāvatāyuga] lasted," implying that those in the deva lokas were subject to kamma. The Dīgha account says the same when it declares, "until it is time for his final birth."

played by "light" is a study unto itself, so that we must restrict ourselves here to only those aspects which directly concern us.⁷

The passage cited above also alludes to the fact that Buddha's "illimitable glorious radiance" surpasses the "deva-majesty of devas." Since the devas are often described in the suttas in terms of light (e.g. DN.II, 209, 225; MN.III, 147, 192) - the term deva literally means "to shine" (see PTS DICT, p.329) - the fact that Buddha surpasses the devas and brahmās in "radiance" reveals his status over them, at least in this instance. In the Mahāgovinda Sutta (DN.II, 221) we learn that "those gods ... who had been recently reborn in the hosts of the Thirty-Three because they had lived the higher life under the Exalted One, they outshine [atirocati] the other gods in appearance and in glory." Whether those who were reborn in the deva-lokas were

⁷For an overall picture of the importance of "light" as a 'religious' symbol, see J. Gonda, The Vision of the Vedic Poets, pp.266-275; Mircea Eliade, The Two and The One, pp.19-78, and "Spirit, Light and Seed," History of Religions, Vol.II, No.1, August 1971, pp.1-30. In connection with the Pali term "obhāsa" see I.B. Horner, MLS, III, xxi-xxiii, p.202, fn.1. Horner makes the point (p.202, fn.1), "Obhāsa is a difficult word for a translator and its meaning or meanings, for these seem to vary from context to context, need further investigation." The PTS DICT, p.169 has for obhāsa, "(from obhāsati) shine, splendor, light, lustre, effulgence; appearance. In clairvoyant language also "aura."

formerly bhikkhus or merely upāsakas is not stated. In the 'idealized' framework of the Pāli Suttas, Nibbāna is the 'real' aim for a bhikkhu or bhikkunī.

In the Aggañña Sutta (DN.III, 85) we have an elaborate description by the Buddha of the genesis of mankind. The most significant point is that the "descent" from the "World of Radiance" (DN.III, 85) is the taking on of solidity (DN.III, 85-86), "Then those beings began to feast on the savoury earth, breaking off lumps of it with their hands. And from the doing thereof the self-luminance [syam-pabhā] of these beings faded away, the moon and the sun became manifest" (see also DN.III, 28).

Since Buddhist cosmology sees the sun as a stage in conjunction with the decline/descent of those from the "World of Radiance," the attribution of Buddha with a "light" greater than the sun's ("And even in those spaces between the worlds ... where the moon and sun ... cannot make their light prevail - even there appeared the illimitable glorious radiance,") describes the advent of Buddha as a descent without loss of "light."

We also find throughout the Pāli Suttas numerous epithetic statements (often metaphorical) which describe Buddha as a bringer of 'light' to the 'world,' "It is wonder-

ful, good Gotama; good Gotama, it is wonderful. It is as if good Gotama, one might set upright what had been upset, or might disclose what was covered, or might point out the way to one who had gone astray, or might bring an oil lamp [tela-pajjota] into darkness so that those with vision might see material shapes - even so is dhamma made clear in many a figure by the good Gotama" (DN.I, 110, 125, 176; DN.II, 41; MN.I, 184, 290).⁸

In conclusion, we should also reiterate that a connection exists between the Buddha's complexion and "light" (see p.50 of this study). In addition, one of the Thirty-Two marks of the Buddha is the gold-colour of his skin (see DN.III, 143 - "suvanna-vanno").⁹

⁸In addition, there are statements on "light" connected with success in the Buddhist Dhamma. Thus in the Mahā-padāna Sutta (DN.II, 33, 35) we find the following said of Vipassi, the Bodhisat, just before he becomes a Buddha:

"Coming to be, coming to be!" - at that thought, brethren there arose to Vipassi the Bodhisat a vision into things not called before to mind, and knowledge arose, a reason arose, wisdom arose, light [Alōka] arose ...

"Ceasing to be, ceasing to be!" - at that thought, brethren, there arose to Vipassi, the Bodhisat a vision into things not called before to mind and knowledge arose, wisdom arose, light [alōka] arose.

In the Dvedhāvitakkasutta (MN.I, 117) Buddha says (see also MN.I, 249):

This, monks, was the third knowledge attained by me in the

We are still left with the problem of how to differentiate between the various Pāli terms which we, following the English language translations of the suttas (and the PTS DICTIONARY) have translated as "light". This understanding must be left in abeyance because it is beyond the scope of our study and the treatment to which we have put the examples in which these terms occur.

last watch of the night; ignorance was dispelled, knowledge arose, darkness was dispelled, light [āloka] arose, even as I abided diligent, ardent, self-resolute.

The connection between "light" and "vision" is, as suggested by these passages, highly significant, for it is "light" which makes possible "vision." Thus Buddha's "light" allows those beings who have arisen in "those spaces between the worlds, gloomy, baseless regions of blackness" (DN.II, 12; MN.III, 120), to see each other. On another level, "vision" and "light" combine to bring 'sight' ('insight') into things not 'seen' before. The subject of 'vision' like 'light' is highly complex and a study unto itself. See e.g. J. Gonda, The Vision of the Vedic Poets, pp.302-317; Mrs. C.A.F. Rhys Davids, "Seeing things as they really are," Buddhism, Vol.1, No.3, March 1904, pp.377-392.

⁹For further remarks see André Bareau, "The Superhuman Personality of Buddha and its symbolism in the Mahāparinirvāna-sūtra of the Dharmaguptaka," Myths and Symbols, Studies in Honour of Mircea Eliade, pp.12-13. Note Bareau's comments on p.19, "The Mahāparinirvānasūtra of the Dharmagupta thus reveals a rather extensive conception of Buddha which all the first disciples could have formed of him. Let us state immediately that it does not differ essentially from those which one could draw from the study of the five other versions of the same work."

Returning to the Dīgha and Majjhima accounts of Buddha's 'birth,' we will now examine:

C) The Devas' Protection of the Bodhisatta

"When ... the Bodhisatta is entering his mother's womb, four devas [devaputta] approach so as to guard the four quarters, saying: 'Do not let a human being or a non-human being [amanussa] - whatever annoy the Bodhisatta or the Bodhisatta's mother'" (MN.III,120 = DN.II, 12).¹⁰

The fact that the Buddha, as the Bodhisatta entering his mother's womb, has the protection of the devas is significant in establishing his importance among them, as well

¹⁰The PTS DICT, p.73, has the following entry for amanussa: "[a + manussa] a being which is not human, a fairy, demon, ghost, spirit, yakkha." For a more comprehensive listing of its occurrence see A Critical Pāli Dictionary, p.392.

The significant point about the amanussa is that he/she/it may be good or evil. Thus in the passage above, the devaputta guard the bodhisatta from being harmed. We find a similar 'evil' use of amanussa in the Sonadanda Sutta (DN.I, 116), "Truly, sirs, in whatsoever village or town the Samana Gotama stays, there the non-humans [amanussa] do the humans no harm."

Regarding "evil spirits" see Patilal N. Mehta, Pre-Buddhist India, pp.323-325. Mehta's sources are based mainly on the Jātakas but much of the information therein applies equally to the period we are discussing.

as among humans. In addition, the fact that Buddha later becomes a means of protecting oneself from 'evil forces' (e.g. see fn.10) shows his 'power' over such evil forces, a power which benefits all those within the Buddha's 'proximity,' or - by implication - those following his Way.

D) The Buddha's Mother

The mother of the Bodhisatta also receives special attention in the suttas by virtue of the fact of her association with the Bodhisatta:

When ... the Bodhisatta is entering his mother's womb, the Bodhisatta's mother is virtuous through her own nature, restrained from onslaught on creatures, restrained from taking what has not been given, restrained from wrong enjoyment of pleasures of the sense, restrained from lying speech, restrained from occasions of slothfulness resulting from (drinking) strong intoxicants (MN.III, 120 = DN.II, 12).¹¹

When ... the Bodhisatta is entering his mother's womb, no desire connected with the strands of sensual pleasures arises in the Bodhisatta's mother towards men, and the Bodhisatta's mother is not to be transgressed against by any man of infatuated thoughts (MN.III, 121 = DN.II, 13).

When ... the Bodhisatta is entering his mother's womb, no ailment whatever arises in the Bodhisatta's mother, the Bodhisatta's mother is at ease, her body not tired; and within her womb the Bodhisatta's mother sees the Bodhisatta,

¹¹The mother is described in following certain sīlas (the so-called pañca-sīla), all of which are upheld as the proper code of morality for upāsakas and upāsikās. See DN II, 174; DN.III, 62. Also B.G. Gokhale, Buddhism and Asoka, p.30; N.Dutt, "Place of Laity in Early Buddhism," IHQ, 1945, p.176. For reference to the pañca-sīla in the Pāli Nikāyas,

complete in all his limbs, his sense-organs perfect [abhinindriya] (MN.III, 121 = DN.II, 13).¹²

... the Bodhisatta's mother dies seven days after the Bodhisatta is born and arises in the Tusita group Tusita Kāya .

While ... other women carry the child in their womb for nine or ten months before they give birth, the Bodhisatta's mother does not give birth to the Bodhisatta in this way. The Bodhisatta's mother carries the Bodhisatta in her womb for exactly ten months before she gives birth.

While ... other women give birth sitting or lying down, the Bodhisatta's mother does not give birth to the Bodhisatta in this way: the Bodhisatta's mother gives birth to the Bodhisatta while she is standing (MN.III, 122 = DN.II, 14).¹³

E) The Birth

When ... the Bodhisatta is issuing from his mother's womb, devas receive him first, men afterwards.

When ... the Bodhisatta is issuing from his mother's womb, the Bodhisatta does not at once touch the earth; the four devas having received him, place him in front of his mother, saying: "Rejoice, lady, mighty is the son that is born to you" (MN.III, 122 = DN.II, 14).¹⁴

see PTS DICT, pp.712-713. E.J. Thomas, History of Buddhist Thought, p.44, makes the point, "The formulation of the moral training in the Dīgha is no doubt a scholastic production."

¹²See T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids, DB, Part II, p.10, fn.1.

¹³All the events in section "D" above depict the uniqueness of a Buddha's 'birth' and of the Buddha himself. The 'birth story' attempts to retain some semblance of commonly held 'reality' by actually using elements of the birth process. The fact that the Bodhisatta's mother dies seven days after the birth is perhaps a reward for her unique function, for she is reborn in the Tusita Kāya.

¹⁴The fact that it is the devas who receive the Buddha

When ... the Bodhisatta is issuing from his mother's womb, he issues quite stainless, undefiled by watery matter, undefiled by mucus, undefiled by blood, undefiled by any impurity, pure and unstained (MN.III, 122-123, DN. II, 14).

When ... the Bodhisatta is issuing from his mother's womb, two streams of water appear from the sky, the one cool, the other warm, wherewith they perform a water libation for the Bodhisatta and his mother (MN.III, 123 = DN.II, 15).¹⁵

first, once again enhances the position of the Buddha, implying he is deva-like, if not more exalted than the devas. The latter position is often maintained in the suttas; see the events connected with the following: DN.I, 222; DN.III, 135; MN.I, 85 and MN.I, 330.

¹⁵Supernatural events such as those alluded to in the verses above are found interspersed throughout the Pāli Suttas, and indicate the concern of the universe in the events of Buddha's life. Thus, for example, at the close of the Brahmajāla Sutta (DN.I, 46) we find the following:

Thus spake the Blessed One, and glad at heart the brethren exalted his words. And on the delivery of this discourse the thousandfold world system shook.

The Mahāparinibbāna Sutta is also replete with these supernatural happenings. When Buddha rejects (DN.II, 106), "the rest of his natural term of life [ayu-samkhāram ossaji] ... there arose a mighty earthquake, awful and terrible, and the thunders of heaven burst forth." When the time comes for Buddha's 'death' we have the following description (DN.II, 137-138):

Now at that time the twin Sāla trees were all one mass of bloom with flowers out of season; and all over the body of the Tathāgata these dropped and sprinkled and scattered themselves, out of reverence for the successor of the Buddhas of old. And heavenly Mandārava flowers, too, and heavenly sandalwood powder came falling from the sky ... And heavenly music was sounded in the sky ... And heavenly songs came wafted from the skies.

At the time of the Buddha's 'death' (DN.II, 156), there is a "mighty earthquake, terrible and awe-inspiring:

The moment ... the Bodhisatta has come to birth, standing on even feet and facing north, he takes seven strides, and while a white sunshade is being held over him he scans all the quarters and utters as with the voice of a bull: "I am chief in the world, I am best in the world, I am eldest in the world. This is the last birth, there is not now again becoming" (MN.III, 123 = DN.II, 15).¹⁶

and the thunders of heaven burst forth." When the Mallas of Kusinārā try to lift the body of the Buddha they are unable to do so because the "spirits" (devas) want the body removed in a certain manner and the Mallas must give in to them (DN.II, 160). The fact that the Mallas are forced to give in to the devas is significant in revealing the power which the devas had over the ordinary man.

When the time comes to light the funeral pyre, it cannot be lit until Kassapa appears and then it catches fire by itself (DN.II, 163-164). Finally, when the Buddha's body was burnt and only the bones remained, "there burst forth streams of water from the storehouse of the waters [beneath the earth], and extinguished the funeral pyre of the Exalted One" (DN.II, 164; see also DN.II, 171-172).

¹⁶For an interesting account of this passage see Mircea Eliade, Myths, Dreams and Mysteries, pp.110-115. Eliade says of the Buddha's birth (p.111): "What the myth of his nativity expresses with perfect precision, is that as soon as the Buddha is born he transcends the cosmos and abolishes space and time (he becomes the "highest" and the "oldest" in the world)." Eliade regards the seven steps (p.112) as "Buddha's passing through the seven heavens to attain the 'highest point'." When Buddha attains the summit of the cosmos, he (p.114) "becomes contemporary with the commencement of the world."

See also T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids, DB, Part II, p.12, fn.2.

Further, see A. Foucher, The Life of the Buddha, pp.35-36. Foucher's comments on the seven steps are based on the account in the Lalitavistara.

Both the Dīgha and Majjhima (DN.II, 15 = MN.III, 123-124) accounts then repeat the four passages with which we open section (E) above.

The Thirty-Two Marks of a Great Man
(Mahāpurisalakkhānāni)

There are a number of instances in the suttas of the Dīgha and Majjhima Nikāyas where we have reference to the Mahāpurisalakkhānāni¹⁷ and the only two possible careers

¹⁷The Mahāpurisalakkhānāni are as follows (DN.II, 17-19):

- (1) ... feet with level tread.
- (2) ... on the soles of the ... feet wheels appear with a thousand spokes, with tyre and hub. in every way complete.
- (3) ... projecting heels,³
- (4) He is long in fingers and long in the toes,⁴
- (5) Soft and tender in hands and feet,
- (6) With hands and feet like a net.⁵
- (7) His angles are like rounded shells;⁶
- (8) His legs are like an antelope's.⁷
- (9) Standing and without bending he can touch and rub his knees with either hand.
- (10) His male organs are concealed in a sheath.
- (11) His complexion is like bronze, the colour of gold.
- (12) His skin is so delicately smooth that no dust cleaves to his body.⁸
- (13) The down on it grows in single hairs, one to each pore.
- (14) The small hairs on his body turn upward, every hair of it, blue-black in colour like eye-paint, in little curling rings to the right.
- (15) ... a frame divinely straight.¹
- (16) He has the seven convex surfaces.²
- (17) The front half of his body is like a lion's.³
- (18) There is no furrow between his shoulders.⁴
- (19) His proportions have the symmetry of the banyan tree⁵:-

open to a person possessing these "marks." Thus we read in the Mahāpadāna Sutta (DN.II, 16) the following statement by the brāhmaṇa soothsayer (nemitta-brāhmaṇa) regarding the birth

The length of his body is equal to the compass of his arms, and the compass of his arms is equal to his height.

- (20) His bust is well rounded.⁶
- (21) His taste is supremely acute.⁷
- (22) His jaw is as a lion's⁸
- (23) He has forty teeth.⁹
- (24) Regular teeth.
- (25) Continuous,
- (26) The eye-teeth are very lustrous
- (27) His tongue is very long (see DN.I, 131)
- (28) He has a divine voice like the karavīka-birds.¹
- (29) His eyes are intensely blue,²
- (30) He has the eyelashes of a cow.³
- (31) Between the eyebrows appears a hairy mole, white and soft like cotton down.
- (32) His head is like a royal turban.⁴

For references to the footnotes, taken mostly from the Dīgha commentary, see T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids, DB, Part II, pp.14-16. See also the account in the Brahmāyusutta (MN.II, 135+) and the fn. references in I.B. Horner, MLS, II, pp.320-322, as well as E.J. Thomas, The Life of Buddha, pp. 220-223.

It is worth commenting on the entry to footnote 9 associated with No.(23) above (see p.15 in DB, II), "... The Great Man at a more adult stage has eight more than the normal thirty-two. How the learned brahmins saw these signs in the babe is not explained." The question is a strange one to ask in the light of the legendary account of the marks in general. One possible way to answer it would be to refer to an earlier remark in the sutta (DN.II, 13) that the Bodhisatta was 'born' "complete in the endowment of all his limbs and organs." Certainly if the Bodhisatta can declare on his 'birth' (DN.I, 15), "Chief am I in the world, Eldest am I in the world," we have no difficulty in assuming him to have all forty teeth. There is also the possibility that

of Vipassī:

Rejoice, lord, for one of the Mighty Ones is born thy son!¹⁸
 Fortune is thine, my lord, good fortune is thine that in thy
 family such a son has come to birth! For this babe, my lord,

the account of the Mahāpurisalakkhānāni was originally not applied to the Buddha as a 'child' but to him as the adult and only later was it applied to him as in the story of his birth in the Mahāpadāna Sutta. However, the nature of the marks as a predictionary device would tend to work against the above view, because nowhere are we told that they are only present in the adult but rather must be there from the very beginning. For some of the difficulties connected with the thirty-two marks, see I.B. Horner, MLS, II, pp.320, fn.4, 321, fn.2. Also, Alex Wayman, "Contributions Regarding the Thirty-Two Characteristics of the Great Person," Sino-Indian Studies Liebhenthal Festschrift, Vol.V, Parts 3 and 4, May 1957, pp. 243-260. It is interesting to note the following remark in a footnote of Wayman's paper (p.258, fn.57):

This relation between the lakṣanas and Dharma may help clarify the fact, pointed out by Paul Demieville, Le concile de Lahasa, (Paris, 1952), I, 116, fn., that among authors who knew of only two bodies of the Buddha (i.e. rūpa-kāya and dharmakāya), the Dharmakaya is sometimes attributed to lakṣana and anvyañjana. But the full-fledged Mahāyāna, which assigned the characteristics to the Sambhagakāya, also specialized the meanings of dharma.

We have seen in the previous chapter of this paper that there is good reason to assume the 'trend' if not case of a two body system in regard to the Buddha; this also might give credence to the case suggested above that only those individuals with some 'religious' training would be able to detect the lakṣhānāni which is somehow connected with the dharmakāya. Thus, for example, in the Mahāpadāna Sutta account, even though king Bandhuman sees the child before sending for the brahmin soothsayers, it is they who declare that the child is 'marked.' This is not to imply that the king may not have seen the 'marks' and only then asked for the brahmin soothsayers, especially since such soothsaying was very much a part, and still is, of the Indian tradition. Rather, the textual treatment seems to suggest that such non-knowledge, or non-ability, to detect the lakṣhānāni may have been the result of lack of

is endowed with the thirty-two marks of the Great Man [Mahāpurisalakkhānāni]; and to one so endowed two careers lie open, and none other. If he lives the life of the House, he becomes Lord of the Wheel [cakka-vatti], a righteous [dhammiko] Lord of the Right [dhamma-rajā], a ruler of the four quarters, conqueror guardian of the people's good, owner of the Seven Treasures [satta ratana]. His do these seven treasures become, to wit, the Wheel treasure, the Elephant treasure, the Horse treasure, the Gem treasure, the Woman

proper training. In this regard, it is also worth noting that Bandhuman rājā is never able to accept one pole of the brāhmaṇa's 'prediction' (i.e. the Buddha pole) but attempts to keep the 'child' at 'home;' hoping he will become the cakkavartin (DN. II, 23) and thus continue in the Khattya tradition of his father, "We must not have Vipassi declining to rule. We must not have him going forth from the House into the Homeless state. We must not let what the brahmin soothsayers spoke of come true."

Finally, it should be added that a case is often presented that (see Wayman article above, p.246) as Senant says, "the Buddhist Mahāpurusa, a Buddha or a cakravartin, is essentially the Purusa Nārāyana of mythology and mysticism." Regarding this comment, which is beyond the scope of this paper, see D.C. Sircar, Studies in the Religious Life of Ancient and Medieval India, 1971, p.37.

¹⁸The opening of this quotation runs in Pāli as follows, "Attamano deva hohi, makesakkho te deva putto uppanno." What is particularly worthy of notice is that the king is referred to by the epithet, "deva." The PTS DICT, p.329, has the following brief entry, "3. king, usually in voc. [vocative] deva, king!"

A list of occurrences then follows; however the list, like many in the PTS DICT, is scanty (e.g. the present example not being listed), so that the only other reference in the suttas is to Anguttara II, 57. F.D. Woodward, GS, Vol. II, p.67, fn.1, states about this Anguttara passage, "These terms [deva, devi] are of course honorific terms, and are titles given to a king and queen."

A look at the entry under "deva" in the PTS DICT, pp.329-330, reveals that the general significance of the term

treasure, the Steward treasure, the Eldest Son treasure making seven.¹⁹ More than a thousand son will be his, heroes, vigorous of frame, crackers of the hosts of the enemy. He, when he has conquered this earth to its ocean bounds, is established not by the scourge, not by the sword, but by righteousness [dhammena]. But if such a boy go forth from the life of the House into the Homeless state, he becomes an Arhant, a Buddha Supreme, rolling back the veil from the world [loke vivattacchaddo].

"deva" is "divine" and, though it sometimes applies to "subordinate deities," is generally a "title attributed to any superhuman being or beings regarded to be in certain respects above the human level ... Always implying also a kinship and continuity of life with humanity and other beings; all devas have been man and may again become men." We will have more to say about devas in the next chapter; what we imply here is that the king is often regarded in Buddhism as a 'special' type of individual. For an interesting problem connected with King Asoka and devas see J. Filliozat, "Devas of Asoka," Studies in Asokan Inscriptions, pp.35-55. On p.34 of his study, Filliozat draws our attention to a passage in the Mahāgovinda Sutta (DN.II, 250), "And whether he arrived at village or town or city, there he became as a king to kings, as Brahmā to brahmins, as a deity to commons =householders, gahapati, [see DN.II, 248 where the Rhys Davids use the English word householders]."

Filliozat adds to the quotation from the Mahāgovinda Sutta, "or as the Mahavastu says in the corresponding passage (III, 223), King of the Kingdom, a god among the masters of house, Brahmā for the Brahmins. This is of course a figure of speech but it proves that the ideas of gods sojourning among men was strongly established in the imagination."

What Filliozat could also have added was that Buddha was this Mahāgovinda in a former life (DN.II, 251).

¹⁹For elaborations on the sutta-ratana see the Mahāsudassana Sutta (DN.II, 169) and the Bālapandita Sutta (MN.III, 172); see also Ambattha Sutta (DN.I, 88); Brahmāya Sutta (MN.II, 134).

The elaborate accounts in the Mahāsudassana (DN.II, 177)

Interestingly it is a brāhmaṇa soothsayer (nemitta-brāhmaṇa) who is responsible for making the 'prediction' on the future of the child Vīpassī (DN.I, 16). However, Buddha

and in the Bālapandita Suttas (MN.III, 172) in addition to the Seven Treasures also mention the "four efficacies" (catu-iddhi). The four iddhis are summarized in the PTS DICT, p.120 (under "Iddhi") as follows: "1. Pre-Buddhistic; the Iddhi of a layman. The four Iddhis of a king are personal beauty, long life, good health and popularity."

The Rhys Davids, DB, Part II, p.208, fn.2, maintain, "The Four Iddhis. Here again, as elsewhere, it will be noticed that there is nothing supernatural about these four Iddhis. See the passage quoted above, Vol.I, p.272 foll. [in DB, Part I]. They are merely attributes accompanying or forming part of the majesty (iddhi) of the king of kings." See also I.B. Horner, MLS, Vol.III, p.217, fn.3.

Returning to the satta-ratna, it is worth noting some of the magical qualities connected with some of the Treasures, e.g.:

(MN.III, 174): ... the Treasure of the Horse appears to the Wheel rolling king; it is all white, with a head (as black as) a crow's, a dark man, going through the sky by psychic potency [iddhimā], a king of horses named Valāha ... the Treasure of the Jewel appears to the wheel rolling king. It is an emerald jewel, of purest water, well cut into eight facets. And the light of that Treasure of the Jewel, monks, is shed all round a yojama [see PTS DICT, p.559]. Once upon a time, monks, the wheel-rolling king, in order to test that very Treasure of the Jewel, arrayed the fourfold army, raised aloft the jewel on the top of a standard and went out into the dense darkness of the night. And, monks, the villagers all around set about their daily work by its effulgence, thinking it to be day.

(MN.III, 175): ... Treasure of the Householder appears to the wheel rolling king. As a result of kamma, he has deva-like vision by which he sees treasure whether it has an owner or not 'It is just here, homemaker, that I have need of gold coins and gold.' Then, monks, that Treasure of the Homeholder, touching the water with both his hands, drew up a jar full of gold coins and gold.

in the Brahmajāla Sutta (DN.I, 8) says, "Whereas some recluses and Brahmans, while living on food provided by the faithful are tricksters, droners out (of holy words for pay), diviners [nemittaka], and exorcists, ever hungering to add gain to gain - Gotama the recluse holds aloof from such deception and patter."²⁰

The suttas of the Dīgha and Majjhima maintain that the thirty-two marks of the Great Man (Mahāpurisalakkhānāni) are part of the Brāhmaṇa tradition. In the Ambattha Sutta (DN.I, 88) we read in the 'stereotyped' description of a Brāhmaṇa:

Now at that time a young Brāhman, an Ambattha, was a pupil under Pokkharasādi the Brāhman. And he was a repeater (of the sacred words) knowing the mystic verses by heart, one who had mastered the Three Vedas, with the indices, the ritual, the phonology, and the exegeses (as a fourth), and the legends as a fifth, learned in the idioms and the grammar, versed in Lokāyata sophistry, and in the theory of the signs on the body of a great man [*italics are ours*].

T.W. Rhys Davids comments on the above, DB, Part I, p.110, fn.2, "The knowledge of these thirty-two marks of a Great Being (Mahā-purisha) is one of the details in the often-recurring paragraph giving the points of Brahman wisdom ... No such list has been found, so far as I know, in those portions of the pre-Buddhistic priestly literature that have

²⁰For further references see DN.I, 9 and T.W. Rhys Davids, DB, Part I, pp.16, fn.5; 17, fn.2.

survived ... Who will write us a monograph (historical of course) on the Mahāpurusha, theory as held in early times among the Aryans in India?"

As far as we are aware, no such historical monograph has yet been written, which would lead one to conclude that there are numerous difficulties involved. Most work done on the Mahāpurusalakkhānāni refrain from dealing with the marks themselves, or merely mention them in passing.²¹

The fact that the suttas maintain the thirty-two marks of the great man to be part of the Brāhmaṇa tradition (āgata) makes the marks a criterion for others to judge the Buddha's claim to enlightenment. It is of note that in the Selasutta (MN.II, Sutta 92 = Sn.108) we find Sela the

²¹See, for example, Alex Wayman, "Contributions regarding the Thirty-Two Characteristics of the Great Person," Sino-Indian Studies Liebenthal Festschrift, ed. B. Kshittis Roy, Vol.V, Parts 3 and 4, May 1957, pp.242-260. Also André Bareau, "The Superhuman Personality of Buddha and its Symbolism in the Mahapannirvanasutra of the Dhammagupta," Myths and Symbols, Studies in Honour of Mircea Eliade, p.13; E.J. Thomas, Life of Buddha, pp.200-201; A. Foucher, The Life of Buddha, pp.39-46. Foucher's account there is based mainly on the Lalitavistara.

For other references to the claim by Brāhmaṇas that the Thirty-two marks of a great man are part of their tradition [āgata] see DN.I, 88, 114, 120; MN.II, 134, Sutta #92 = Sn.107 .

brahmin saying, "The Lord is endowed with the thirty-two marks of a Great Man in full, not partially, but yet I do not know whether he is an Awakened One or not. All the same, I have heard it said by aged brahmans full of years, teachers of teachers: 'When their own praises are being spoken, those that are perfected ones, fully Self-awakened Ones reveal the self [attānam pātukaronti]!" Sela then praises (by acknowledging) the thirty-two marks of the Buddha, but does not receive the 'revelment of the self,' because such a 'self' is shunned in the Buddha's teaching (see I.B. Horner, *MLS*, II, p.335, fn.4). Buddha convinces Sela to have faith in him (SN.109) and eventually wins Sela over.

The attitude adopted to the Buddha in the example of Sela seems to be a typical attitude of the young Brahman (see also DN. I, 105-108, the case of Ambattha; MN.II, 136-146, the case of Brahmāyu - NB. 144) who requires a little more than the seeing of the thirty-two marks themselves. What this 'tension' implies is difficult to say. Perhaps the 'tension' reveals the difficulties which the redactors of these suttas faced in dealing with the less historical and more spectacular aspects of the Buddha, and thus required the Buddha (as depicted in the suttas) to discourse to these

brāhmaṇas on some subject or other. The 'tension' may also suggest a loss of origins, for the older brāhmaṇas like Pokkharasādi have no trouble in accepting the thirty-two marks as a 'sign' of the status of Buddha (compare DN.II, 89 with DN.II, 107) and thus such episodes in which a young Brāhmaṇa has doubts is perhaps meant to reflect the degeneration of the Brāhmaṇa tradition, or the religious tradition in general, or at least to imply that hereditary brāhmaṇa-hood is not in itself a sufficient criterion for the 'true' brāhmaṇa (see e.g. DN.I, 111; MN.II, Sutta #98 = SN.122, verse 650).

As has been pointed out, Buddha is presented in the Brahmajāla Sutta as being against such practices as those associated with diviners (nemittakā) so that the reluctance of young Brāhmaṇas to accept the Buddha merely on the basis of the thirty-two marks may be an attempt to deal with a situation in which diviners are, as in the Brahmajāla Sutta, looked down upon.

Since we do not have instances in the Dīgha and Majjhima Nikāyas of individuals other than Brāhmaṇas 'seeing' the marks, we must assume that seeing them required some type of 'training' in order to see them. Thus the common man could not 'see' them. Also, there is the case of the

Buddha's tongue and his penis in a sheath which requires the Buddha's intervention in order that they should be 'seen' and this intervention is often, particularly in the case of the latter, a 'psychic phenomenon' (see e.g. MN.II, 135- "Then the Lord contrived such a contrivance of psychic power [iddhābhisamkāram] that the brahman youth Uttara saw that which the Lord had cloth-hid was sheath-cased." We are tempted to think of the aforementioned event as not really 'psychic' but as an attempt to deal with a situation which would otherwise be difficult to handle, for people are generally reluctant to reveal their private parts in public. Indeed this is a possibility since almost all of the remaining marks can be seen externally, by merely observing the Buddha. However, 'psychic' events are part of the very nature of meditational success, and we must assume that their significance here runs deeper than can be answered with a mere rationalization. In this regard it is of note that it is always the Buddha who 'senses' or 'reads the mind' of those wishing to confirm the two marks of the tongue and the penis in a sheath. Perhaps the difficulty in 'seeing' these two marks, in themselves extraordinary, is used as a ploy by the Buddha to win young Brahmanas over to his side.

As has already been stated, there is little to be made of the particular 'marks' (lakkhanas) themselves until further research is attempted in this area; in particular the appearance of the lakkhanas in pre-Buddhistic materials calls for examination. What the thirty-two marks do accomplish is to mark the Buddha off from the rest of mankind by virtue of his 'perfect' outward appearance. Buddha is yet much more than a 'perfect man,' as he is a Buddha. What is more, we can gain some appreciation of the Buddha's status by comparing him with his 'alter ego,' the cakkavattin,²² the "Wheel rolling King" (see I.B. Horner, *MLS*, Vol.II, p.217) or "Lord of the Wheel" (see T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids, *DB*, Part II, p.13).

²²The subject of the cakkavattin is capable of a study unto itself, so that we will concern ourselves here only with those aspects which are important to our study. To quote Wijesekera, "The Cakkavatti and his Rig Vedic Prototype," All India Oriental Conference Proceedings and Transactions, 1955, p.238:

Several attempts have been made by western scholars to explain the origin of this important concept. But no agreement is found either as to the nature of the cakkavatti's character or with regard to the symbolism of the cakka which is the most characteristic of his seven precious possessions or satta-ratana. In fact, scholars have shown marked diversity of opinion even as to the exact meaning of the term 'cakka-vatti' (Skr. cakra-vartin).

We may mention, in passing, that Wijesekera (p.241) makes the point that "one cannot fail to note the striking similarity of the ... achievements of Indra to the career

The most significant thing about Buddha's relation

of the cakkravartin as found mainly in the Buddhist works." Wijesekera is led to conclude (p.242) and it is worth quoting him in the entirety:

... we may come to the conclusion that in the character of Vedic Indra we have a distinct antecedent of at least one aspect of the Cakkavatti's personality viz his aggressive and conquering nature as an imperial monarch. It is true that the Rgvedic Indra is a blustering, pugnacious adventurer with morals of a specious character, and, the Cakkavatti of the Buddhists is a mild and highly religious person who is described as a righteous and moral ruler (dhammiko dhammaraja). But, as Mrs. Rhys Davids has pertinently observed, the Cakkavatti himself reflects a career of military aggression however righteous the end of his conquests be. It may be mentioned here that Indra himself appears in Buddhism as sakko devanamindo, divested of all his crude and primitive traits, transformed into a gentle and amiable devotee of the Buddha. Moreover, the importance of the wheel in the Cakkavatti's career is sufficiently exemplified in the cakra which Indra wields against his foes in the Rgveda, and whatever be the basic significance of it, the marked similarity to the cakka-ratana cannot be ignored. But it must be mentioned that a full explanation of the symbolism of the cakka will be multiple and complex. It is necessary to emphasize that even in the parallelisms suggested in this paper, it has not been possible to refer to several other aspects of Indra's cakra - such as its use as a whirling weapon or discus - which need to be gone into fully before a final judgment is passed.

Regarding Indra in early Buddhism, see Charles Godage, "The Place of Indra in Early Buddhism," UCR, Vol.3, 1945, pp.41-72.

The important distinction between the Buddha and the Cakkavattin is that the former "holds sway over the entire spiritual world," while the latter "is the ideal supreme ruler of the secular world." See Walpola Rahula, History of Buddhism in Ceylon, p.66. Also see H. Jacobi, "Chakravartin," ERE, Vol.3, column two, p.336, "With the Buddhists and the Jainas the Cakkravatin represents the higher temporal

to the cakkavattin is that Buddha, in choosing the homeless state (only two choices being open to him) is, from the

power, just as the Buddha or Jina represents the highest spiritual power." Indeed the suttas themselves seem to bear out the distinction; note for example the following remark in the Bālapandita Sutta (MN.III, 177):

Even so, monks, that happiness and joy that the wheel-rolling king experiences from the seven Treasures and the four efficacies, compared with deva-like happiness does not count, it does not amount to an infinitesimal fraction (of it), it cannot even be compared (with it).

Thus the Buddha seems to maintain that even rebirth in the heaven world (sagga loka - see MN.III, 178) is superior to that happiness derived from being a cakkavattin. Obviously, Buddha's interest goes beyond the kamma-bound-world.

It is worth noting the remarks of U.N. Ghoshol (though based on the work of Przyluski), Studies in Indian History and Culture, 2nd revised edition, 1965, p.35, regarding the development of the cakkavattin concept in later Buddhist literature:

The rise of the popular concept of Chakravarti had a profound repercussion upon the legend of the Buddha. Sākyamuni must now appear to be equal or even superior to the legendary kings. The aim of this legend was to show that Sākyamuni in his anterior birth was a mighty Chakravartin king, and that the humble village of Kuśa, where he died was formerly a capital-city more magnificent than the residence of the greatest monarchs.

E.J. Thomas, The Life of Buddha, p.222, maintains that these suttas which speak of the cakkavattin are amongst the latest portions of the Canon. However, regarding the "theory of a Great Man," Thomas (p.219) maintains that it is "undoubtedly originally non-Buddhist;" but he fails to give us his evidence.

For an instance of the cakkavattin in Indian

Buddhist point of view choosing the highest path. In addition, the Buddha often receives the type of treatment usually received by both kings and cakkavattins. The most obvious examples are connected with the Buddha's parinibbāna.

Thus in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (DN.II, 142) we read:

The men, Ānanda, worthy of a cairn [thūpa], are four in number. Which are the four?

'A Tathāgata an Able Awakened One, is worthy of a cairn. One awakened for himself alone is worthy of a cairn [i.e. a Pacceka-Buddha]. A king of kings [rājā cakkavattin] is worthy of a cairn.

In addition, at DN.II, 146, Ānanda entreats the Buddha not to "die" in the insignificant town of Kusinārā, but

Buddha answers:

Say not so, Ānanda ... Long ago, Ānanda there was a king, by name Mahā-Sudassana, a king of kings cakkavattin, a righteous man who ruled in righteousness [dhamma], Lord of the four quarters of the earth, conqueror and protector of his people, possessor of the seven royal treasures. This Kusinārā, Ānanda was the royal city of King Mahā-Sudassana ... [see also the Mahā Sudassana Sutta (DN.II, 169)].

Also in the Mahāparinibbāna (DN.II, 161) when the question arises as to what to do with the remains of Buddha, Ānanda says, "As men treat the remains of a king of kings so ... should they treat the remains of a Tathāgata." It is worth noting that it is Ānanda who makes the statement²³ and

sculpture (dated 200 B.C.) see T.N. Ramachandran, "The Identification of a Buddhist Sculpture from Jaggayyapeta," All-India Oriental Conference Proceedings and Transactions, 1933. pp.763-772.

²³In this case it is Buddha who has earlier given

then goes on to tell the Mallas of Kusinārā how the body should

Ānanda the appropriate information (see DN.II, 141-142). However, Ānanda's function in the suttas is particularly interesting for he embodies a more 'popular' aspect of the doctrine than do those other bhikkhus who are more easily viewed as partaking in the 'restricted' and controlled path that leads to Arhatship.

If one examines the place of Ānanda in the Mahā-parinibbāna Sutta, one finds that the questions he asks (or has put in his mouth) are more appropriate to the laity than to the bhikkhu (at least as the bhikkhu is generally depicted in the suttas); thus, for example, it is with Ānanda that the question of the Buddha's prolongation of life arises (DN.II, 103). It is to Ānanda that Buddha talks about the pleasantness of the various Cetiyas (e.g. DN.II, 117). In addition, it is with Ānanda that Buddha works a magical feat of clearing the turbid waters (DN.II, 129), to which Ānanda replies, "How wonderful, how marvellous is the great might and power of the Tathāgata!" (It is unusual for anyone other than the Buddha to use the word Tathāgata; see T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids, DB, Part II, p.140, fn.1). Buddha also shares with Ānanda the information about when the "colour of the skin of a Tathāgata becomes clear and exceeding bright" (i.e. DN.II, 134). It is to Ānanda that Buddha reveals the cause of his telling Upavāna to "stand aside," that is, "In great numbers, Ānanda, are the gods of the ten world-systems assembled together to behold the Tathāgata. For twelve leagues, Ānanda, around the Sala Grove of the Mallas, the Upavattana of Kusinārā there is no spot in size even as the pricking of the point of the tip of a hair which is not pervaded by powerful spirits." Also of significance is the fact that it is to Ānanda that Buddha reveals (DN.II, 140), "four places ... which the believing clansman should visit with feelings of reverence." These include (1) where the Buddha was born (2) where he attained enlightenment (3) where "the kingdom of righteousness [was] set on foot by the Tathāgata" and (4) where the Buddha attained the parinibbāna.

While one may claim the central significance of Ānanda is based solely on the fact that he was the Buddha's attendant at the time of the parinibbāna, this in itself cannot account for his function in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta. If one attempts

be wrapped, etc. In addition, Ānanda maintains that just as a thūpa is erected for the remains of a king of kings so should one be erected for the remains of the Buddha (DN.II, 142), "At the four crossroads a cairn [thūpa] should be

to find a common denominator in the discussions between Buddha and Ānanda, one finds that it rests in an 'emotional' framework. All the questions, or facts revealed by the Buddha to Ānanda are concerned with those individuals who are still caught up in the 'world' of samsara. Of course, one may also see the situation as a methodology on the part of the redactors of the suttas to embody 'popular' aspirations by providing some basis for a Buddha cult; indeed this is quite likely. The suttas in instances like those above attempt to wield a two edged sword by satisfying both lay and monkish aspirations. In addition, Buddha does tell Ānanda (DN.II, 141), "Hinder not yourselves, Ānanda, by honouring the remains of the Tathāgata. Be zealous, I beseech you, Ānanda in your own behalf! Devote yourselves to your own good! Be earnest, be zealous, be intent on your own good! There are wise men, Ānanda, among the nobles, among the brahmins, among the heads of houses, who are firm believers in the Tathāgata; and they will do due honour to the remains of the Tathāgata."

However the above goes unheeded by Ānanda who immediately asks, "But what should be done, Lord, with the remains of the Tathāgata?" And even more surprising Buddha proceeds to answer the question in detail. N.Dutt, "Popular Buddhism," IHQ, 1945, pp.250-251, maintains that the above statement by the Buddha to Ānanda to devote himself to his own salvation is suddenly put in because, "The interpolator, who put in the directions for worshipping ceṭiyas and stupas and held out the hope that by such worship one would be reborn in the heavens, realized the inconsistency with the principles of the religion and immediately corrected himself by adding the remark that the advanced monks were not to occupy themselves with such worship."

One must agree that the passage in question seems out of place especially when the conversation is carried on as if the Buddha's warning had never been uttered. The composite

erected to the Tathāgata. And whosoever shall there place garlands or perfumes or paint, or make salutation there, or become in its presence calm in heart - that shall long be to them for a profit and a joy."

Also the Buddha and the cakkavattin both indicate acceptance through silence (see e.g. DN.II, 180), both are of Khattiya origins (DN.II, 172, DN.III, 64) and both have the epithet "righteous" (dhamma) applied to them. Thus in our quotation above from the Mahāpadāna Sutta (DN.II, 16) we learn that the cakkavattin conquers the earth by "righteousness" (dhamma) or as the Mahāsudassana Sutta (DN.II, 169) states, "Long ago, Ānanda, there was a king, by name Mahā-Sudassana, a king of kings, a righteous man, who ruled in righteousness."

In addition, in the same sutta (Mahā Sudassana, DN. II, 181), a jātaka-like²⁴ account is given, in which Vissakamma builds for the king a palace called 'Righteousness' ("Dhammam") as well as (DN.II, 184) a "Lotus-lake" also called Righteousness.

Buddha is called "dhamma lord" (e.g. MN.I, 111; MN. III, 195), "whose words are righteousness itself" (DN.I, 95,

nature of the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta is well attested to, see e.g. T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids' remarks in DB, Part II, pp. 71-77; also G.C. Pande, SOB, pp.98-106. Pande (p.98) titles his section on DN.16, "A Veritable Mosaic." For further

NB context), "King under Dhamma" (MN.III, 262), "Dhamma-master" (MN.III, 153), "a Tathāgata founds the sublime kingdom of righteousness [anattaram dhamma cakkam] (DN.II, 108 - NB the English translation is not very close to the Pāli), and finally has even "become Dhamma" (MN.III, 195).²⁵

The significance of dhamma for both the Buddha and the cakkavattin cannot be overemphasized for both are dependent upon dhamma. Thus in the Cakkavatti-Sīhanāda Sutta (DN.III, 61), King Strongtyre instructs his eldest son in the "Ariyan duty of a sovran [sic] of the world [ariyam cakkavatti-vattanti]." The basic ingredient is "leaning on the Norm [Dhamma] ... honouring, respecting and revering it, doing homage to it, hallowing it, being thyself a Norm-banner, a Norm-signal, having the Norm as thy master." The use of dhamma is thus as significant for the Cakkavattin as for the Buddha, though the nature of the Dhamma

details on Ānanda see Malalasekera, DICT PPN, pp.249-270.

²⁴See T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids, DB, Part II, pp. 192-198. There the authors state (p.192), "The same legend recurs at the Mahā-Sudassana Jātaka, No.95, in Mr. Fausboll's edition ... the latter differs in several important particulars from our Suttanta."

²⁵Regarding "righteousness" (dhamma; dhamma cakka) see U.N. Ghoshal, "Principle of the Kings Righteousness (In the Pāli Canon and the Jātaka commentary)" Gautama Buddha, 25th Centenary Vol., 1956, pp.196-204; and S. Tachibana, The Ethics of Buddhism, pp.191-195.

in each case is not strictly the same; the Dhamma of the Buddha assumes and transcends the dhamma of the Cakkavattin as ruler.²⁶

Both Buddha and the Cakkavattin are also described as teachers, thus in the Mahāsudassana Sutta (DN.II, 173; see also DN.III, 62) we read, "Then ... all the rival kings in the region of the East came to the Great King of Glory and said:- 'Come, O mighty King! Welcome, O Mighty King! All is thine, O Mighty King! Do thou, O Mighty King, be a Teacher [anusada]!"²⁷

However, the status of the Cakkavattin is not equivalent to that of a Buddha, a situation which in light of the very nature of the texts is not surprising. The suttas reveal the difference when in the account of King Strongtyre (told by the Buddha) the king learns that he is soon to die and then says (DN.II, 60), "I have had my fill of human pleasures; 'tis time to seek after divine joys. Come, dear boy [the king's eldest son], take thou charge over this earth bounded by the ocean. But I, shaving hair

²⁶The term "dhamma" has always been a problem for scholarship in the field of Indian studies, see e.g. PTS DICT, pp.335-339. See also B.G. Gokhale, "Dhamma as a Political Concept in Early Buddhism," Journal of Indian History, Vol.46, April 1968, pp.249-261.

²⁷The term used for "teacher" is anusas, implying

and beard, and donning yellow robes will go forth from home into the homeless state,"

Buddha himself says in the Bālapandita Sutta (MN. III, 177), "That happiness and joy that the wheel-rolling king experiences from the seven Treasures and the four efficacies, compared with deva-like happiness does not count, it does not amount to an infinitesimal fraction (of it) it cannot even be compared (with it)."

Thus though many of the Buddha's characteristics may have originated in the legendary accounts of the kings, it is in Buddha's 'nature' to surpass them, and the Cakkavattin, which perhaps best symbolizes these legendary kings to a Buddhist's consciousness.

In addition, the suttas of the Dīgha and Majjhima in their presentation of kings, other than the Cakkavattin, often depict the king as seeking out the advice of the Buddha, praising him, etc. With this in mind we read the following account (MN.II, 120):

Then King Pasenadi having entered the dwelling-place, having inclined his head to the Lord's feet, kissed the Lord's feet

advising, instructing. See PTS DICT., p.44. Note the term usually used to describe Buddha as "teacher" is sattha. Both terms however have the same root, sās.

on all sides with his mouth and stroked them on all sides with his hands, and he made known his (own) name: "I, reverend sir, am King Pasenadi of Kosala; I, reverend sir, am King Pasenadi of Kosala ... I, reverend sir, see monks here faring a perfectly fulfilled, perfectly purified Brahma-faring all their lives long until their last breath. And outside this, reverend sir, I behold no other Brahma-faring so perfectly fulfilled and perfectly purified."²⁸

Another notable example is that of King Avantiputta of Mādhurā (MN.II, 84) who, after a discussion with Kaccāna the Great on caste, asks Kaccāna for refuge, "I am going to the reverend Kaccāna for refuge and to dhamma and to the order of monks. May the revered Kaccāna accept me as a lay-disciple [upāsakam] going for refuge from today forth for as long as life lasts." Kaccāna replies (MN.II, 90):

But do not you, sire, go for refuge to me. You must go for refuge only to that Lord to whom I have gone for refuge. "But where, good Kaccāna is this Lord staying now, perfected one, fully Self-awakened One?" Sire, this Lord, perfected one, fully Self-Awakened One, has now attained final nibbāna [parinibhuto]." ... But good Kaccāna, since the Lord has attained final Nibbāna, we are going for refuge to that Lord who has attained final nibbāna and to dhamma and to the Order of monks. May the revered Kaccāna accept me as a lay disciple.²⁹

²⁸Regarding Kosala see the useful article by B.C. Law. "Buddha's Activities in Kasi-Kasala." Journal of Indian History. Vol.34, 1950. pp.139-171. For other references in the suttas of the Dīgha and Majjhima to Buddha's relationship with kings, see e.g. DN.I, 47. 85; MN.II, 92 - case of Prince Bodhi. Also of note is the claim by Buddha that he was King Makhādeva in a former life (MN.II, 82). However, as King Makhādeva (Buddha) taught only the reaching of the Brahmā-world. See also B.C. Law, Buddhistic Studies, "Some Ancient Indian Kings." pp.185-219. For kings in a mainly Indian context,

Thus we see that the fact that Buddha had attained the parinibbāna. had 'died,' did not imply that he was no longer functioning in the Buddhist community. The Madhurā Sutta makes the point that refuge must be asked of the Buddha, though Kaccāna will decide whether or not to accept the king. In this way, Buddha remains very much a part of the Buddhist Way, even if he is not physically there.

see A.L. Basham, "Ancient Indian Kingship," Indica, Vol.I, No.2, Sept. 1964, pp.119-127.

²⁹Of note, though deleted from the quotation given above, is the fact that Kaccāna is described in a stereotyped form usually applied to the Buddha, "Excellent, good Kaccāna, excellent, good Kaccāna. It is as if one might set upright what had been upset, or might disclose what was covered, or show the way to one who had gone astray."

The same incident occurs at MN.II, 162. including the case of a brahman Ghotamukha trying to take refuge under Udena instead of Buddha.

It is difficult to show what to make of the fact that a stereotyped form usually applied to the Buddha is here in two cases applied to a bhikkhu. Both suttas are classified as "late" by Pande, SOB, pp.136-171, and this is well in keeping with the fact that Buddha is therein described as having attained parinibbāna. We can only suppose that the stereotyped form in question is applied to the Bhikkhus Udena and Kaccāna in the same way as to the Buddha to show the universal nature of the conversion experience regardless of who it is who achieves the conversion. However, the fact that both these suttas make reference to the fact that refuge must be made to the Buddha, even if he has attained parinibbāna, would tend to render the above conclusion as only probable, though perhaps the self-consciousness of the sutta in terms of maintaining the Buddha as refuge may provide the justification for using the stereotyped form in the case of Udena and Kaccāna. The main difficulty is the obvious fact that most of the suttas in the Dīgha and Majjhima concern themselves with the Buddha, the 'living' Buddha.

III

IDDHI

In this chapter we examine one of the 'powers' connected with the Buddha, and some of the other brethren, which is found in what is commonly referred to as the "cha abhiññās" ("six superknowledges"), in particular the iddhi.¹ These 'powers' are, in the order in which they appear in the list of six,² (1) iddhi, (2) dibba sotadhātu ("heavenly ear").

¹The only place in the Dīgha and Majjhima Nikāyas where the six 'powers' occur under the name cha abhiññās is in the Dasuttara Sutta (DN.III, 281). See also PTS DICT. p.64 and T.W. Rhys Davids. DB, Part I, pp.59, 62. In addition, while the six 'powers' do occur as a list of six in a number of places in the texts we are considering (e.g. DN.I. 77 100. 124; DN.III, 281; MN.II, 18; MN.III, 98), at no time are they called there abhiññās. Thus our use of the term is merely one of convenience and is based on the fact of the Dasuttara Sutta account.

²The abhiññās also occur as a list made up of the first five components of the list of six. See e.g. T.W. Rhys Davids, DB, Part I, pp.59, 62. Rhys Davids' justification seems to rest with the fact that the last abhiññā is most distinctly Buddhist, whereas the others may be the common property of many Indian religious traditions. See also N. Dutt, Early Monastic Buddhism, p.81, where the Rsi Asita is credited with the five abhiññās; Rev. N.R. M. Ehara, Soma Thera, Kheminda Thera, The Path of Freedom (Vimuttimagga), p.209 and P.V. Bapat, Vimuttimagga and Visuddhimagga, A Comparative Study, pp.65, 86.

(3) paracittañāna ("others' thought-reading"), (4) pubbeni-vāsañāna ("knowledge of previous births"), (5) dibba cakkhu ("heavenly eyes") and (6) āsavanam khayañāna ("knowledge of the extinction of one's own impurities").³

The 'stereotyped' and formulaic account of the list of the abhiññās is usually regarded as the result of success in the four jhānas thus indicating that the 'powers' are in some way connected to a meditational technique.⁴ In addition,

³See N. Dutt. Early Monastic Buddhism, p.78, fn.1. The Dasuttara Sutta (DN.III, 281) lists the cha abhiññās as follows:

- (1) enjoys the wonderous gift [iddhi] in its various modes:- being one, he becomes many ... he becomes ... invisible; he goes without obstruction through a wall ... solid ground ... on water ... in the sky ... he reaches with the body up to the heaven of Brahmā;
- (2) by deva-hearing [dibbaya sota-dhātuyā], purified, surpassing that of men, he hears sounds both heavenly and human, far and near;
- (3) by his mind he understands the minds of other beings, other persons; he discerns the passionate mind as passionate ... the freed mind as freed, the unfree mind as unfree;
- (4) he recalls to mind the various temporary states as he lived in days gone by, namely, one birth, or more ... in all their details and their modes;
- (5) with the deva sight [dibbena cakkhunā], purified, surpassing that of men, he discerns the pageant of beings faring according to their deeds;
- (6) he lives in the attainment. the personal knowledge and realization, through the extinction of the intoxicants, of sane and immune freedom of heart and mind.

⁴See e.g. Pe Maung Tin, trans., The Path of Purity (Visuddhimagga), pp.432-471. It is also interesting to note

the structure of the list seems to indicate a hierarchy leading from the iddhis to the extinction of the āsavas, usually equated with arhatship (see PTS DICT, p.115 and DN. II, 84), but the path indicated by the list is only one among many found in the suttas so that not every bhikkhu becomes proficient in the iddhis, at least as far as the suttas we are studying present the case.

The Iddhi

The word "iddhi" does not lend itself to easy translation. As the PTS DICT, p.120, states, "There is no single word in English for iddhi, as the idea is unknown in Europe. The main sense seems to be 'potency'." Some of the English 'equivalents' used in place of iddhi, where iddhi occurs in compound, are "mystic wonder" (iddhi-pātihāriya - DN.I, 212), "wonderous gift" (iddhi-vidhā - DN.I, 77), "magic power," "supernatural power," and "miraculous power."⁵

in the iddhi description of the first abhiññā the phrase, "he travels cross legged in the sky," which may indicate a yogic posture. From the typical description of the abhiññās following after the four jhānas and ñāna dassana it is obvious that the iddhis and other abhiññās are regarded as being cultivated through a 'meditational' technique. There is nothing unusual about this, as it was a common attitude of the Indian tradition to regard the acquiring of such 'powers' as the result of the cultivation of certain techniques, be they meditations, tapas or other austerities.

The editors of the PTS DICT, p.120, list three definitions;⁶

Regarding the jhānas, see e.g. PTS DICT, p.286; N. Dutt, "Buddhist Meditation," IHQ. Dec.1935, Vol.XI, No.4, pp.736-740; and K.N. Jayatilleke, EBTK, pp.438 ff (see also his index).

⁵The English 'equivalent' "magic power" is used by Poussin. "Magic (Buddhist)," ERE, Vol.8, p.255. See also E.J. Thomas. The Life of Buddha, p.292 under iddhi. Alica Matsunaga, The Buddhist Philosophy of Assimilation, p.64, uses the English equivalent, "supernatural powers," as does N. Dutt, AMBRH, p.342. N.Dutt, Early Monastic Buddhism, p.78, fn.1, uses "miraculous powers."

⁶These three definitions are categorized under the following headings: 1) "Pre-Buddhistic" 2) "Psychic powers" 3) "The Buddhist theory of Iddhi." Since we will have more to say about numbers 2 and 3, we will only comment here on the first entry ("Pre-Buddhistic"), which runs as follows:

1) Pre-Buddhistic; the Iddhi of a layman. The four Iddhis of a king are personal beauty, long life, good health, and popularity (D.II, 177; M.III, 176; cp.J.III.454 for a later set). The Iddhi of a rich young noble is 1. The use of a beautiful garden, 2. of soft and pleasant clothing, 3. of different houses for different seasons, 4. of good food, A.1.145. At M.I.152 the Iddhi of a hunter is the craft and skill with which he captures game; but at p.155 other game have an Iddhi of their own by which they outwit the hunter. The Iddhi, the power of a confederation of clans, is referred to at D.II.72. It is by the Iddhi they possess that birds are able to fly (Dhp.175).

There does not seem to be any reason for us to comment in any detail about the above use of the term "iddhi." The term as used above merely seems to imply that which is part of the 'nature' of the individual. While we may contend that the iddhi, as used above, is something which is developed (for example the hunter improves in hunting with his experience in hunting) the suggestion is also there that it is part of the 'nature' or perhaps 'kamma-content' of the individual to do what he does. This is not to imply that the question of 'will' does not have its place. For example the reference to the

we are particularly concerned with the following:

2. Psychic powers, including most of those claimed for modern mediums (see under Abhiññā). Ten such are given in a stock paragraph i.e. the first abhiññā .

The "stock paragraph" is as follows (DN.I, 77):

He enjoys the Wonderous Gift [iddhi-vidhāya] in its various modes - being one he becomes many or having become many becomes one again; he becomes visible or invisible; he goes, feeling no obstruction, to the further side of a wall or rampart or hill, as if through air; he penetrates up and down through solid ground, as if through water; he walks on water without breaking through, as if on solid ground; he travels cross-legged in the sky, like the birds on wing; even the Moon and the Sun, so potent so mighty though they be, does he touch and feel with his hand; he reaches in the body even up to the heaven of Brahmā.

One of the difficulties which immediately arises in a discussion of the iddhi is, how are we to regard the appearance of the term outside of its occurrence in the stereotyped paragraph above? Does the above 'stock paragraph' represent the earliest form in which the term iddhi appears in a Buddhist context or are the individual examples of iddhi scattered throughout the suttas earlier than the seemingly scholastic

"power of a confederation of clans" (DN.II, 72) states that if the Vajjians continue the tradition of meeting together, honouring their elders, supporting the cetiyas, etc., the Magadhans will be unable to defeat the Vajjians (see also DN.II, 77). In this regard it is interesting to note P.R. Barua's comment, "Brahmin Doctrine of Sacrifice." JASB, Vol. 1, 1956, p.97. "A guiding principle of Buddhism is not to introduce anything new which is not consistent with the times and not to upset anything which has long been established as a custom. According to this principle, Buddhism has accepted without averse criticism but with some modifications the social and religious rules based upon existing belief." See also T.W. Rhys Davids, DB, Part 1, pp.272-273.

paragraph above?⁷

These questions are difficult to answer because the iddhis were not the exclusive property of the Buddhists but were, as we have already indicated (see e.g. fn.6 of this chapter) pre-Buddhistic, so that to try to answer the questions, we would have to examine their pre-Buddhistic use, and this lies beyond the scope and intention of this chapter of our study. A possibility would be that both views of the iddhi are found together. That is, the iddhis were spoken of as both the 'product' of a technique such as meditation or yoga (as a dogmatic assertion of success in such techniques), as well as in the 'loose' sense of 'so and so being able to perform this or that.' This latter 'loose' description of the iddhi was, once it appeared, an important ingredient in capturing the attention of the laity. We must however be careful not to assume that only the laity was affected by

⁷In this regard it is also worth noting that the last three of the cha abhiññās occur in a separate Buddhist 'formula' called the tevijja. See e.g. DN.III, 220, 275; MN.I, 22, 182, 248, 278, 367. The term tevijja is also used to describe the knowledge had by the brāhmaṇas, that is the three vedas. Regarding tevijja in the brāhmaṇa sense, see DN.I, 238. The tevijja (in the Buddhist context), like the full list of the abhiññās, often follows on the four jhānas. Are we to conclude that the tevijja represents the earlier form of the list and the six abhiññās the later?

the 'loose sense' of the iddhi, for it was quite likely important to certain members of the religious 'organizations' (e.g. the bhikkhus) as well. In order to better understand the position of the iddhi in the suttas, we now turn to the suttas themselves.

The status of the iddhi is the subject of the Kevaddha Sutta (DN.I, 211); there, Kevaddha, a "young householder

[gahapati-putta]"⁸ says to the Buddha:

It were well if the Exalted One were to give command to some brother to perform, by power surpassing that of ordinary men, a mystic wonder [iddhi-pātihāriyam]. Thus would this Nālandā of ours become even so much the more devoted to the Exalted One.

Buddha replies (DN.I, 211) that he is not accustomed to making such requests of the brethren yet goes on to reassure Kevaddha that such 'powers' as the iddhi-pātihāriya are part of his teaching (DN.I, 212):

... there are three sorts of wonders, Kevaddha, which I, having myself understood and realized them, have made known to others. And what are the three? The mystic wonder [iddhi-pātihāriyam], the wonder of manifestation [adesanā-pātihāriyam], and the wonder of education [anusāsani-pātihāriyam].

Buddha then elaborates each of the three "wonders;" the iddhi-pātihāriya is none other than the "stock paragraph"

⁸The householder (gahapati) is also called odāta-vasanāna (in DN.I, 211) meaning "dressed in white (of householders or laymen as opposed to the yellow dress of the bhikkhus)."
See PTS DICT, p.167.

of the first abhiññā.⁹ Buddha then points out to Kevaddha one of the drawbacks to such claims to iddhis, and that is connected with the possibility that an unbeliever may say, regarding these powers of iddhi (DN.I. 213), "Well, sir! there is a certain charm called the Gandhāra Charm.¹⁰ It is by the efficacy thereof that he performs all this." Then Buddha, having got Kevaddha to acknowledge this possible rebuttal, states the 'often quoted' lines, "It is because I perceive danger in the practice of mystic wonders [iddhi-pātihāriye], that I loathe [jigucchāmi] and abhor [attiyāmi] and am ashamed [harāyāmi] thereof."¹¹

⁹Here we have reference to iddhi vidhāya (the usual designation of the first abhiññā) as an iddhi pātihāriya.

¹⁰T.W. Rhys Davids, DB, Part I. p.278, fn.1 states, "The Gandhāra Charm is mentioned at Jātaka IV, 498, 499, as a well known charm for the single purpose only of making oneself invisible." This leads us to question how the suttas can maintain that the Gandhāra charm can accomplish all the iddhis. Rhys Davids states (p.278, fn.3), "It is most probable that the Jātaka is right in both cases [i.e. the Gandhāra Charm and the Jewel Charm (see DN.I, 214)] as to the meaning of these charm-names, and that the objector is intentionally represented like Kanha in the Ambattha Suttanta [DN.I. 88], to be 'drawing the long bow'." One imagines from T.W. Rhys Davids' somewhat cryptic statement that what is being suggested here is that the objector, like Ambattha, is merely trying to provoke a response from the Buddha and that it is not a case of comparing the iddhis to the "Charms."

¹¹The ādesanā-pātihāriya, the "wonder of manifestation," by which other people's thoughts are read, is treated similarly to the "mystic wonder," except that the "Charm" used is the "Jewel Charm" (DN.I, 214).

To understand the place of the iddhi in the Kevaddha Sutta, if not in the suttas in general, we must analyze carefully what has just transpired between Kevaddha and Buddha.

The first point to be made is that Kevaddha is a gahapati (householder) and that he, like the other members of the community at Nālandā, supported the Buddhists as they would have supported any mendicant.¹² The desire of

¹²As E. Lamotte states, Histoire du bouddhisme indien, pp.72-73. "Les religieux bouddhistes comme leurs confrères des sectes hétérodoxes ne pouvaient subsister sans l'aide de la population indienne. Le moine est par définition un mendicant (bhiksu): il ne peut rien posséder, et l'exercice d'un métier lucratif lui est interdit. Il doit vivre de la charité des laïcs et celle-ci, dans l'Inde, ne lui fut jamais refusée. Pour l'Indien en effet le śramana-brāhmaṇa, le pravrajita, quelles que soient ses croyances et ses pratiques, est un excellent 'champ de mérites' (punya-ksetra), faisant fructifier au centuple l'aumône qu'on y sème. En revanche, le moine répondait aux générosités dont on le comblait en accordant bénévolement l'instruction religieuse: le 'don de la Loi' (dharmadāna) compensait le 'don matériel' (āmisadāna)."

In translation (ours) this reads, "The Buddhist monks like their counterparts (brothers, colleagues) in heterodox sects, could not subsist without the willing help of the Indian population. A monk is by definition a mendicant (bhiksu): he may possess nothing, and he is forbidden to engage in a lucrative profession or trade. He must live off the charity of the laity and this [charity], in India, is never denied him. For the Indian in fact the śramana-brāhmaṇa, the pravrajita, no matter what his beliefs and his practices, is an excellent 'field of merit' (punya-ksetra), making bear fruit one-hundredfold the alms one sows in it [i.e. the 'field of merit']. In exchange, the monk responds to the generosity heaped on him by compassionately providing

Kevaddha, and others, to see some display of iddhi is not unusual as the lay community most likely regarded the religieux as cultivating and being distinguished from the non-religieux by virtue of such 'powers.' The fact that Kevaddha suggests that a display of iddhi would increase the devotion of the people of Nālandā to the Buddha perhaps suggests that a certain amount of competition existed in obtaining lay support, which as time went on became more 'organized' around lay devotees of specific religious affiliations. and/or that some of the people of Nālandā would be willing to become upāsakas.

The second point is connected with the form of Kevaddha's request, for he asks that a brethren (bhikkhu) perform the iddhi with, of course, the Buddha's approval.

religious instruction; the 'gift of the Law' (dharmadāna) compensates the 'material gift' (āmisadāna).

See also H. Oldenberg, Buddha: His Life, His Doctrines, His Order, p.382.

Regarding merit (puñña), 'merit-type' statements, and gifts (dāna), see DN.I. 51, 60; DN.II. 141, 142, 266, 355; MN.I, 287, 403, 446; MN.III. 254.

At DN.II, 94, we find (see also DN.III, 227), "... believing this church [sāvaka samgho] to be worthy of honour of hospitality, of gifts, and reverence; to be the supreme sowing ground of merit for the world [anutaram puññakkhetam lokassāti]."

In addition, as mentioned above, a request such as that of Kevaddha, if granted, would enhance the position in which the Buddha was held. The sutta directs the question of the displaying of iddhis to the bhikkhus, or perhaps Kevaddha is attempting to provoke Buddha to making such a display by asking it of the brethren. We would tend to favour the former view, for at no time are we given the impression that what is at stake here is the ability to actually perform the iddhis but rather whether the iddhis should be used as a means of gaining the community's approval.

The third point to be made is that Buddha actually states that he can perform such iddhis, and has taught them as well, but he refuses to display them or have them displayed because they are not unique to his Way. Thus Buddha draws on the Gandhāra Charm as a means of suggesting that the iddhis are achievable through other methods than those used by Buddhists. It would seem that Buddha's statement about "perceiving the danger in the practice of mystic wonders" is a way of maintaining that they are not central to his Way, nor do they distinguish his Path from the paths of others.

At DN.III. 66. "... keep up such alms for holy men [samanesu brāhmanesu] as shall be of value in the realms above, heavenly gifts, the result whereof shall be happiness here and rebirth in the heavenly worlds."

The strongly worded statement that Buddha "loathes and abhors and is ashamed" of the practice of iddhis is somehow out of place in light of the fact that Buddha has just provided Kevaddha with a list of iddhis in which he (the Buddha), and others he has taught, are proficient. Further, Buddha closes the section of the sutta dealing with the pātihāriya as follows (DN.I, 215), "So these, Kevaddha, are the three wonders I have understood and realized myself, and made known to others." This closing would seem out of place in light of the Buddha's criticisms of the first two pātihāriya and the suggestion, by implication, that the "wonder of education" is the best. Since the "wonder of education," anusāsana pātihāriya, leads to arhatship, it should obviously be labelled here as the best. Another significant point is that the "wonder of education" is nothing more than the path revealed in the Sāmañña Phala Sutta (DN.I. 47), except that here the first five abhiññās have been deleted.¹³

Pande. SOB, p.91, implies that the Kevaddha Sutta's attempt is to extend the connotation of the term "pātihāriya,"

¹³See T.W. Rhys Davids' DB. Part 1. pp.57-62. We do not agree with his conclusion, p.62, that the Buddhist Order rejected the first three abhiññās, for how does he account for the various illustrations of Buddha's and Moggallāna's power of iddhi? Or at MN.II, 18. where Buddha says, "a course has been pointed out by me for disciples, practicing which disciples of mine experience the various forms of psychic

a typical Buddhist method as we have indicated in chapter 1 of this paper. What is really intended is difficult to say. Apart from the suggestions we have already made regarding the possibility that Buddha did not want his Way to be distinguished by virtue of the iddhis, because they were common property of other religieux as well, there is also the possibility that such an attitude is continued by certain post-Buddha Buddhists. If the so-called 'scholastics' had intended to relieve themselves of the burden of the performance of iddhis, what better way than to put such a claim in Buddha's mouth, while at the same time maintaining that the iddhis were capable of being performed? Do we have here that same type of conflict we have seen elsewhere in which the Buddha as legend, or legend as Buddha, has to struggle with the more scholastic attitude taken on the part of certain Buddhists, and possibly evidenced here in this sutta? We do not intend to imply that the historical Buddha was not himself averse to the practice of iddhis, but rather to draw attention to a fact of Buddhological development.

We find another attempt to debase the iddhis in the Sampasādaniya Sutta (DN.III, 112) where the first abhiññā "stock paragraph" is applied to some samanas and brāhmaṇas

power; having become one [etc.]." See also Angutara Nikāya, I, 170.

and labelled as "ignoble" ("no ariyā ti") while another type of iddhi is labelled as "noble" ("ariyā ti"). Once again, however, Buddha is totally familiar with both the modes of "supernormal power" (iddhi-vidhā). The iddhi description of the first abhiññā is labelled "supernormal power which is concomitant with the mental intoxicants and with worldly aims." whereas the "noble" iddhi is connected with the bhikkhu's ability to "remain unconscious of disgust amid what is disgusting; or [113] conscious of disgust amid what is not disgusting; [etc.]." Here again we see that the sutta is extending the use of the term "iddhi" and telling us at the same time that the bhikkhu should concentrate on the "noble" power. It is difficult to draw any definite conclusions regarding the above, though it is worth noting that the sutta closes with the following statement by the bhikkhu Udāyin (DN.III, 115):

Wonderful, lord, marvellous, lord is it to behold how self-contained, serene, and resigned is the Tathāgata, when he who is so mighty and powerful will not proclaim himself! If any Wanderers of independent doctrines were to discern in themselves even one of such matters, they would flourish around a banner because of it. Wonderful, marvellous is it to behold how self-contained, serene and resigned is the Tathāgata, when he who is so mighty and powerful will not proclaim his own virtues!

Thus the sutta's aim is to present the Buddha as above worldly desire, worldly desire being equated with, among other

things. the practice of iddhi as instanced in the "stock paragraph" of the first abhiññā. It should also be noted that the main interlocutor of the sutta is Śāriputta who was not distinguished. as was Moggallāna, by such powers of iddhi. In addition, in the Mahā Sakuludāyisutta (MN.II, 18), it is to Udāyin that the Buddha says, "a course has been pointed out by me for disciples, practicing which disciples of mine experience the various forms of psychic power; having become one they become many"

Whatever conclusion is reached regarding the status of the iddhi, it obviously annoyed some members of the Buddhist community to have the iddhi viewed as 'magical powers' to be demonstrated, if not acquired. Yet, at some stage in the development of the doctrine these powers of iddhi made their appearance, perhaps as a way of exalting the personality of the Buddha, because other groups were making similar claims for their heroes or because the competition to gain lay support was on the increase with 'religious' groups actually crediting certain members of the society as their laity (e.g. upāsakas).¹⁴ Since nibbāna was

¹⁴ See e.g. N. Dutt, "Place of Laity in Early Buddhism." IHQ, Sept. 1945, Vol. XXI, pp.164-183; B.G. Gokhale. Buddhism and Asoka. pp.25-57; Etienne Lamotte, Histoire du bouddhisme indien. pp.71-92.

not the ideal to which most householders aspired, rebirth in the heavens being their aim, there is some cause to believe that the iddhis may have been a concession to the laity. However, this presents a rather fragmented picture of the Indian community, for it is just as certain that some bhikkhus themselves felt the nibbāna ideal as something abstract, unemotional and beyond their reach, and the bhakti development in Buddhism suggests these bhikkhus as an important source for maintaining the iddhis.

The Sampasādaniya Sutta (DN.III, 102) includes among its list of righteous doctrines ("kusakesu dhammesu") the "Four Roads to Saintship" ("cattāro iddhipādā"). While the sutta does no more than state this, it is interesting to examine the usual significance of the iddhipādā. The most interesting example is found in the Jana-Vasabha Sutta (DN. II, 213) in which Brahmā Sanamkumāra reveals the "Four Ways to Iddhi" to the devas of the Thirty-Three, as the Buddha revealed them:

In the first place a brother practices that which is compounded of concentration and effort with desire. In the second place a brother practices that which is compounded of concentration and effort with energy. In the third place a brother practices that way which is compounded of concentration and effort with a [dominant] idea. In the fourth place a brother practices that way which is compounded of concentration and effort with investigation [the italics belong to the translators].

Brahmā also points out:

Now those recluses or brahmins who, in past times, have enjoyed iddhi in one or more of its forms, they have all done so through the practice and improvement in just these Four Ways. And those recluses or brahmins who, in future times, will enjoy iddhi more or more of its forms, they will all do so through practice and improvement in just these Four Ways.

Brahmā also goes on to state (DN.II. 214), "I too ... through practice and improvement in just these Four Ways to Iddhi have acquired such power and potency therein." There is sufficient ground based on what Brahmā says to maintain that the 'type' of iddhi being spoken of here is closer to the "ignoble" iddhis of the Sampasādaniya Sutta than to the "noble" iddhis. That is, the iddhipādā are here taken to mean that which is productive of those iddhis which are similar to the first abhiññā list which, we might add, are frequently attributed to the brāhmaṇas and samanas. A cursory look at Brahmā's 'powers' in the Dīgha and Majjhima would bear this conclusion out, as well as the fact that the Jana-Vasabha Sutta speaks of samanas and brāhmaṇas as having attained their iddhis through the iddhipādā. It is these same iddhipādā which, at DN.III, 77. are claimed responsible for prolonging a bhikkhu's life and which appear in the Mahā-parinibbāna Sutta (DN.II, 120) in the list of truths which

the Buddha has proclaimed.¹⁵

One possible reason for the inclusion or acceptance of the iddhis in the Buddhist dhamma is perhaps illustrated by the following remark in the Pāsādika Sutta (DN.III. 124):

... if the system [brahmacariyam] be not successful, prosperous, widespread and popular in its full extent [bāhu-jaññam = belonging to the mass of people, masses - see PTS DICT, p.486], well proclaimed among men, or if the system be all this but have not attained the foremost place in public fame and support:- by any one such circumstance the system is rendered imperfect.

Buddha makes a similar remark in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (DN.II, 106) where he tells Māra that he will not die "until this pure religion of mine shall have become successful, prosperous, wide-spread, and popular in all its full extent;" (see also DN.II, 219).

¹⁵Dutt. Early Monastic Buddhism. pp.247-248 says of the iddhipādā:

The third group of practices [i.e. in the DN.II. 120 list] is called Iddhipādā (=Sanskrit Rddhipāda) or attainment of super-normal powers through meditation, for which are required strong desire (chanda) energy (virīya), mental application (citta) and examination and discrimination (mīmamsā). The adept should observe that each of these four practices of his is not feeble or clogged by idleness and arrogance. While undergoing those exertions, the adept rises above all distinctions of time and place or day and night and remains also mindful of the contents of his body.

These practices are supposed to confer many miraculous powers, of which there is a long list in the Nikāyas. e.g. he can rise and walk in air as if on land, he can dive into the earth as if in water, he can pass through a wall or any material obstruction, and so forth.

One thing does seem clear from this study of the iddhi, and that is that the iddhi was not to be regarded as an end in itself. In the 'ideal framework' which leads to arhatship the iddhi is an insignificant by-product which some may cultivate and others bypass.¹⁶ The important thing is that the Buddha did not bypass such claims to iddhi and thus he stands with the other brāhmaṇas and samanas who supposedly possessed such powers as a sign of success in their 'religious' endeavours. We shall now turn to some examples of iddhi, as they appear outside of the stereotyped and formulaic statement in the "stock paragraph" of the first abhiññā.

The Iddhis-Examples

One of the most numerous uses of the iddhis is connected with the ability of Buddhist and non-Buddhist religieux to visit the devas and Brahmās in the Kāma and Rūpa Dhātus. For example, in the Cūlatanḥāsankhaya Sutta (MN.I, 252) Moggallāna decides to go to the Tāvātimsa heaven

¹⁶The point should be made that the suttas exhibit a number of paths by which to reach arhatship; the one containing the iddhis is not the most frequent.

(Sanskrit trāyastriṃśa), the second heaven of the deva-lokas, the heaven of the Thirty-Three Devas,¹⁷ to see Sakka the king of the Thirty-Three to ask him whether he understood what the Buddha had told him. The sutta accomplishes the transition with the help of the following simile:

Then the venerable Moggallāna the Great, as a strong man might stretch out his bent arm or might bend back his outstretched arm, vanishing from the palace of Migāra's mother in the Eastern Monastery, appeared among the devas of the thirty-three.¹⁸

It is interesting to find that the very same simile which is used to describe Moggallāna's "vanishing" and appearance in the heaven of the thirty-three, is also used to describe Brahmā Sahampati's "vanishing" from the Brahmā-world in the Rūpadhātu, and his appearance on earth (MN.I,

¹⁷For further information see W. McGovern, A Manual of Buddhist Philosophy, pp.60-69; Louis de la Vallée Poussin, "Cosmogony and Cosmology (Buddhist)," ERE, Vol.8, p.134 ff.

¹⁸See also MN.I, 253, where Mahā Moggallāna shakes the Vejayanta Palace, "Then it occurred to the venerable Moggallāna the Great: 'This yakkha lives much too indolently. Suppose that I were to agitate this yakkha?' Then the venerable Moggallāna the Great worked such a working of psychic power [iddhābhisankhāram] that with his big toe he made Vejayanta Palace tremble, shake and quake. Then the minds of Sakka, the lord of devas, and of the great rajah Vessavana and the devas of the thirty-three were full of wonder and marvel, and they said: 'Indeed, the great psychic power, the great majesty of the recluse is wonderful, it is indeed marvellous, inasmuch as with his big toe he makes this deva-like abode tremble, shake and quake.'"

458):

Then Brahmā Sahampati, knowing by mind the reasoning in the Lord's mind, as a strong man might stretch forth his bent arm or might bend back his outstretched arm, even so, vanishing from the Brahmā-world he appeared before the lord.

The simile, while obviously implying the ease with which Moggallāna and Brahmā Sahampati accomplish the feat in moving from one 'plane' to another is also a way of linking Brahmā's and Moggallāna's 'potency' regarding this iddhi. In addition, the fact that some of the abhiññās actually are labelled as deva^o (e.g. deva-hearing, deva-sight) is once again a way of linking the power of the devas with those humans proficient in these powers as well as perhaps a means of impressing those to whom both devas and such powers were important. As I.B. Horner states (The Early Buddhist Theory of Man Perfected, p.83), "The display of these [iddhis] would easily impress the many-folk (puthujjana) who are always more ready to compute worth by unusual physical prowess than by outstanding mental achievement." We would also add that there is excellent grounds to believe that this type of "impressing" was equally so to many of the Buddhist monks who also found "mental achievements" not sufficiently satisfying.

In the Mahāpadāna Sutta (DN.II, 48) we read, "Then brethren, those bhikkhus, some by their magic power

[iddhānubhāvena], some by the magic power of the gods [devānam iddhānubhāvena], on that very day came to Bandhumati to recite the Patimokkha." Here again we see that those who had mastered the iddhi(s) concerned were able to move great distances in a short period of time. The fact that the devas assisted those who had not the power of iddhi to arrive at Bandhumati on time reveals that the devas are regarded as not only interested in the events in Jambudīpa but in the Buddhist community as well.

In the Angulimāla Sutta (MN.II, 99) we have the case of the robber Angulimāla who wishes to kill the Buddha, thinking him to be an unaccompanied recluse:

Then the robber Angulimāla, having grasped his sword and his shield having armed himself with bow and quiver, followed close after the Lord. Then the Lord performed such a wonder of psychic power [iddhābhisamkhāram] that the robber Angulimāla although walking with all his strength, was not able to catch up with the Lord who was walking at an ordinary pace.

Another important use of iddhi is connected with the Buddha's Mahāpurisalakkhānāni, in particular the fact that his penis was hidden in a sheath¹⁹ and that in order to reveal this fact to anyone the Buddha appeals to his power of iddhi (DN.I, 106):

¹⁹This particular lakkhana of the Buddha most likely implies that the Buddha was free of earthly desires. Thus the Sampasādaniya Sutta (DN.III, 113) states, "The Exalted One neither follows the habitual practices of those things

And the Blessed One knew that he [Ambattha] was in doubt, and so he arranged matters by his Wonderful gift [iddhā-bhisamkhāram] that Ambattha the Brahman saw how that part of the Blessed One that ought to be hidden by clothes was enclosed in a sheath. And the Blessed One so bent round his tongue that he touched and stroked both his ears, touched and stroked both his nostrils, and the whole circumference of his forehead he covered with his tongue.²⁰

The Mahāparinibbāna Sutta contains a number of examples of Buddha's power of iddhi, for example (DN.II, 88), "At that time the river Ganges was brimful and overflowing: and wishing to cross to the opposite bank some began to seek for boats, some for rafts of wood, whilst some made rafts of basket-work. Then the Exalted One as instantaneously as a strong man would stretch forth his arm, or draw it back again when he had stretched it forth, vanished from this side of the river, and stood on the further bank with the company of brethren." Whilst the above reference to Buddha crossing the river does not contain any mention of iddhi, the 'type' of event and the

which attract through worldly desires, especially sensuality - a low and pagan way, unworthy, unprofitable, belonging to the worldly majority; nor does he follow the habitual practices of self-mortification."

²⁰It would seem as though the possession of such a tongue by the Buddha was a way of expressing the fact that the Buddha always spoke the truth (MN.II, 108), "Tathāgatas do not speak against the truth." See also Edward Conze, The Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom, Part 1, 1961, p.3, fn.8.

use of the simile gives us good ground to assume that it was a power of iddhi which allowed the Buddha to accomplish the feat.

Perhaps the most controversial of the powers of iddhi is connected with the so-called question of the "Buddha's prolongation of life." Strictly speaking, this 'prolongation' is connected with the "four paths to iddhi," but as has been suggested in the section on iddhi (see p. 114, fn.15 above) these four paths lead to the iddhis of the first abhiññā.²¹ Further complicating the case is the fact that prolongation of life is not listed as one of the iddhis in the first abhiññā. In spite of these well taken criticisms, it would prove useful to examine the question of Buddha's prolongation of life, if only in brief. At DN.II, 103, we read:

Ānanda, whosoever has developed, practiced, dwelt on, expanded and ascended to the very heights of the four paths to Iddhi [cattaro iddhipādā], and so mastered them as to be able to use them as a vehicle, and as a basis he, should he desire it, could remain in the same birth for an aeon [kappa] or for that portion of the aeon which has yet to run [kappāvasesam]. Now the Tathāgata has thoroughly practiced and developed them [in all respects as just described] and he could, therefore live on yet for an aeon, or for that portion of the aeon which has yet to run.

²¹ Further to the remarks indicated in the earlier section of this paper it is interesting to note that the Vimuttimaggā credits the "supernormal power of transformation" to the "four bases of supernormal power." See Rev.N.R.M. Bhara, Soma Thera, Kheminda Thera. trans., The Path of Freedom (Vimuttimaggā), p.217.

Almost the entire debate hinges on the translation of the Pāli kappāvasesam, which the PTS DICT, p.187, translates as, "for the rest of the kappa," and which Edgerton translates, BHS DICT, p.173, "more than a kalpa." Padmanabh Jaini, who has made a careful study of the subject, feels that Edgerton's translation is most likely the correct one.²²

Since we are unable to state definitively which translation of kappāvasesam is applicable in the sutta under discussion, it might prove useful to examine the subject from other points of view. First, Buddha directs the question of his prolongation of life to Ānanda but the sutta presents Ānanda as under the 'spell' of Māra (DN.II, 104, "So far was his heart possessed by the Evil One,") and so Ānanda cannot make such a request to the Buddha. There are a number of interesting questions which arise from the above presentation of Ānanda. Why did the Buddha make the request to Ānanda? Was it merely because Ānanda was his attendant? Why did not Buddha, who is everywhere else in the suttas incapable of being 'fooled,' not know that Māra had put a spell on Ānanda? In the Māratajjaniya Sutta (MN.I, 332) Māra enters the stomach of Moggallāna but much to Māra's surprise Moggallāna 'sees' him and tells him to get out, thereafter delivering a

²²Padmanabh S. Jaini. "Buddha's Prolongation of Life," BSO(A)S. No.21, 1958 pp.546-552.

rebuke to him. However, we are asked to believe that Buddha was unable to 'sense' that Ānanda was under the 'spell' of Māra, not even when Māra appears before the Buddha almost as soon as Ānanda leaves and asks Buddha to accomplish the parinibbāna at that moment (DN.II. 104). In addition, the Udumbarikā Sīhanāda Sutta (DN.III. 57) actually presents us with an example of Buddha being able to tell that others are affected by Māra. "Then the Exalted One thought: Every one of these foolish men is pervaded by the Evil One, so that to not even one of them will the thought occur." Also, in the Brahmanimaritānīka Sutta (MN.I. 327) we have Buddha saying:

I Evil One, know you: do not think that I do not know you. Māra you are the Evil One. And whoever, Evil One, is a Brahmā, and whatever are Brahmā companies, and whatever are Brahmā-conclaves, all are in your grasp, all are in your power. It occurs to you thus, Evil One: Let this one too be in my grasp, let this one too be in my power. But I, Evil One, am not in your grasp, I am not in your power [*italics are ours*].

The Cullavagga account of the first council contains a section dealing with Ānanda's not having responded to the Buddha's "hint" that he could live on for a "full lifespan," (Cullavagga, 288):

You, reverend Ānanda ... (although) a broad hint was being given, a palpable sign was being made, did not ask the Lord, saying: "Let the Lord remain for a (full) lifespan, let the well-farer remain for a (full) lifespan for the welfare of the many folk ... Confess that offence of wrong-doing. "But I honoured sirs, because my mind was obsessed with Māra, did not ask the Lord...".

Jaini's comment on this is well taken, "Surely if kappa meant only an āyukappa [duration of a man's life], and if the power of the Buddha was only limited to avert any premature death, there was no point in censuring Ānanda for his absent mindedness."²³

²³Ibid, p.549.

Further to our remarks regarding Ānanda throughout this study, it is noteworthy to read the following statement of Jean Przyluski, Le concile de Rajagrha, p.297:

...Il serait, en tout cas, incompréhensible qu'Ānanda, honoré si longtemps de la confiance du Maître et qui devait un jour succéder à Kāśyapa dans la dignité de Patriarche, n'eût pu parvenir, du vivant de Śākyamuni, à cette condition d'Arhat que des personnalités moins éminentes surent acquérir instantanément. La vérité qu'Ānanda personnifiait l'idéal du Bouddhisme primitif; tandis que Kāśyapa est le chef d'une Église déjà réformée. Ānanda pouvait être un saint dans une assemblée du Mahāsamgha, mais sa popularité chez les bhiksuni et les laïcs lui nuisait auprès des zéloteurs de l'idéal monastique. Pour incarner ce nouvel idéal, il fallait des saints nouveaux.

In translation (ours) this reads:

...It would in any case be incomprehensible that Ānanda, honoured for so long by the confidence of the Master, and who would one day succeed Kāśyapa in the dignity of Patriarch, would not arrive, during the lifetime of Śākyamuni, to that condition of Arhatship which less eminent persons knew how to acquire instantly. The truth is that Ānanda personified the ideal of primitive Buddhism; while Kāśyapa is the head of an already reformed Church. Ānanda could be a saint in a Mahāsamgha assembly but his popularity with the bhiksuni and the laity was injurious to him in terms of the zealots of the monastic ideal. To embody this new ideal, new saints were needed.

Przyluski's criticism is, in our opinion, extremely

The Katthāvatthu account (XI. 5) hinges on the question, if Buddha could live for a Mahākappa or longer, then how would this fit in with the law of kamma (see Anguttara II, 172)?

There is no point in our trying to solve the problem here, for the problem as we have presented it, and as it presents itself, attests to the fact that it was one of great controversy in the period concerned. The sutta account in the Mahāparinibbāna is ambiguous. the Cullavagga account seems ridiculous if all that is at stake is whether the Buddha could have lived another twenty years. In addition, the question of kamma as it applies to a Buddha is not very well worked

well taken and would tend to suggest that Ānanda was used as a scapegoat by those members of the Sangha who could not come to terms with the growing buddhological conception. If the 'religion' of Ānanda was indeed the "primitive" form of Buddhism, then scholarship has much more work to do in attempting to reach this early period from the sources which are available to us, as well as to point out in greater detail than before that the Buddhism which they have so far spoken of is predominantly the Buddhism of the monastic order.

If Przymuski is correct, then the so-called 'degenerate' developments which take place in Buddhism are really more in keeping with the 'original' spirit of Buddhism than was the purely monastic form which required of the Buddha that he be regarded as a human being, however exalted, so that they (the members of the Order) could hopefully acquire 'something' of the same status.

out in the suttas. Rather, we must conclude that the Mahā-parinibbāna exhibits some of the problems which arose when the redactors of the suttas had to deal with Gotama as both a man and a Buddha. The Mahāsamghikas, on the other hand, had no problem deciding that the life of a Buddha was limitless (see Masuda, VT, p.20, No.8).

Returning to other examples of iddhis, we find in the Udumbarikā Sihanāda Sutta (DN.III, 57) the following description applied to the Buddha. "Then the Exalted One having uttered his Lion's roar in the park Queen Udumbarikā had assigned to the Wanderers, rose up and went through the air, and alighted on the vulture's peak."

It is also noteworthy that Buddha is referred to by the epithet muni (e.g. MN.II, 144) and that the muni in a Rg.Veda (Hymn cxxvi, Book x) is described as follows:

- 2 The Munis, girdled with the wind, wear garments soiled of yellow hue,
They, following the wind's swift course go where the Gods have gone before.
- 3 Transported with our Munihood we have pressed on into the winds:
You therefore, mortal men, behold our natural bodies and no more
- 4 The Muni, made associate in the holy work of every God
Looking upon all varied forms flies through the region of the air.²⁴

²⁴Ralph R.H. Griffith, trans., The Hymns of the Rgveda, Vol.II, p.582. See also p.32, fn.23 of this paper.

Another significant example of Buddha's power of iddhi is found in the Brahmanimantanika Sutta (MN.I, 329) where Buddha not only declares that he is greater in super-knowledge (abhiññā) than Brahmā but actually proves it (MN. I. 330) by the following incident:

'Now, Brahmā, you vanish from me if you are able.'
 Then, monks, Baka the Brahmā saying, 'I will vanish from the recluse Gotama,' was nevertheless unable to vanish from me. When this had been said, I, monks spoke thus to Baka the Brahmā: Now I am vanishing from you, Brahmā.
 'Come, good sir, you vanish from me if you are able.' Then I, monks, having resolved a psychic resolve like this: 'May Brahmā and Brahmā's company and Brahmā's conclave hear the sound of me without seeing me,' disappeared and spoke

There are other examples of the power of iddhi which we could draw on; however our aim is to show that these powers of iddhi are found in the suttas of the Dīgha and Majjhima Nikāyas in situations which present themselves as historic incidents in the daily life of Buddhism.

One of the difficulties which some scholars have exhibited in interpreting such items as the iddhis is that they cannot refrain from making 'truth evaluations' of the claims. Thus we read in the PTS DICT, p.120 (under "iddhi"): There is no valid evidence that any one of the ten iddhis in the above list actually took place. A few instances are given, but all are in the texts more than a century later than the recorded wonder.

Such an approach to Buddhist materials, that is a

certain 'self-consciousness' about some of the contents of the suttas we are studying, may lead to a certain methodological outlook which often seeks to 'rationalize' the 'magical' contents of the suttas.

We have drawn attention to the above problem because it is pertinent to the passages under discussion. For, while the iddhis are regarded as the product of a training, usually a meditational one, the suttas present examples of the exercise of iddhis, like those above, in a spontaneous and 'non-meditational' format. The situations which they depict are significant to those who hear or read the suttas. Our interest is not in the verification or non-verification of such 'events' (e.g. iddhis) but with the appeal and repercussions which the 'events' had on Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike in spreading that form of 'religion' found in the suttas under discussion.

As we have already indicated, the powers of iddhi were not the exclusive property of the Buddhists but were the common property of the Indian 'religious' traditions. From the point of view of the suttas of the Digha and Majjhima, however, there comes the strong suggestion, in spite of some negative attitude toward the iddhis, that the Buddhists surpassed brahmanas, samanas and other religieux in these powers.²⁵

Obviously, if Buddha is able to 'defeat' Brahmā in the power of iddhi (MN.I. 330) and it is to this Brahmā that the brāhmaṇas seek 'union' (e.g. Tevijja Sutta, DN.I, Sutta No. XIII), then Buddha is a greater master of iddhi²⁶ than the brāhmaṇas and, by implication, so too were certain of the Buddhist community, e.g. Moggallāna.²⁷

²⁵It is interesting to note that at DN.I, 37, Buddha presents certain brāhmaṇas as able to attain the four jhānas but incapable of going beyond them to the iddhis and other abhiññās. See DN.I, 13; MN.I, 377; MN.II, 155; MN.III, 210.

²⁶For other examples of Buddha's power of iddhi, see DN.III, 6. etc., where Buddha's power to predict what will happen to those who are following the wrong path is called a "mystic wonder" (iddhi-pātihāriya). At DN.III, 19, Buddha performs an iddhi so that Pātika is unable to rise from his seat, while at DN.III, 27, we get the following:

Thereupon, Bhaggava, I taught, and incited, and aroused, and gladdened that company with religious discourse. And when I had done so and had set them at liberty from the great bondage, had drawn forth eighty-four thousand creatures from the great abyss, I entered on jhāna by the method of flame, rose into the air the height of seven palm trees, projected a flame the height of another seven palm trees, so that it blazed and glowed; and then I reappeared in the Great Wood, at the Gabled Hall.

In the Pātika Sutta (DN.III, 3) Buddha is criticized by Sunakkhatta of the Licchavis for, among other things, not working "mystic wonders [iddhipātihāriyam] surpassing the power of ordinary men." Buddha maintains that the 'mystic wonders' are not essential to his teaching but surprisingly goes on to relate a whole series of such wonders.

²⁷For further examples of Mahā Moggallāna's power of iddhi, see Malalasekera, DICT PPN, pp.543-544; P.E. Maung Tin, trans., The Path of Purity (Visuddhimagga), Cha.XII, pp.432-471.

Some Conclusions

We suggest that there is good ground to maintain that the iddhis and other related 'powers' were somehow assigned to Buddhism at an early date. We say early for a number of reasons, the first being that Buddhism at its inception was not the scholastic product, the refinement which we find in the formulae and lists in many of our suttas. In addition, since Buddhism depended for its linguistic development on the language which was generally part of the Indian tradition of the religieux, Buddhism could not help but carry, even in its use of the language, something of its 'original' connotation. Thus, for example, I.B. Horner (Early Buddhist Theory of Man Perfected, p.83) maintains that, "at some early date, the notion of arahan was connected with that of supernormal powers." It seems likely that Buddhism began by trying to eliminate some of these "supernormal powers" as is indicated by the ambiguous negative statements we have discussed at the beginning of this chapter. However, the effort of weeding out these powers was never entirely successful, hence the numerous examples of isolated instances of iddhi and the manifestation of other powers performed by Buddha and Moggallāna which became or remained canonical (more likely the former).

Once these trends became the property of the Buddhist tradition, then the doors were thrown open to further elaboration of these themes.

However, our suttas do retain something of the rejection of these powers, but these are unfortunately unsuccessful attempts because the Buddha is never attributed as being without the iddhis. Thus, if the founder had these powers, why should not the other bhikkhus who supposedly gained success in the dhamma? If the claim be made that arhatship is perfection and this does not betake itself of the 'ignoble' iddhi, then we must ask, why did Buddha who was even 'more' perfected?

IV

BUDDHA AND "THE GODS"

In this final chapter, we examine some of the relationships between Buddha, Buddhism and the "gods."¹ Our aim is not to present a study of particular "gods"²

¹By the word "gods" we refer to those beings which are usually subsumed under the Pāli "deva." The PTS DICT, pp.329-331, entry under "deva" is extremely comprehensive; part of that definition reads:

Deva ... As title attributed to any superhuman being or beings regarded to be in certain respects above the human level. Thus primarily (see 1^a) used of the first of the next-world devas, Sakka, then also of subordinate deities, demons and spirits (devaññatarā some kind of deity; snake-demons: nagas, tree-gods: rukka-devata etc) ...

Note 1^a in the reference above refers to such gods as Māra, Brahmā, Yakkha, Gandhabba. We draw a distinction between deva (kāmadhatu) and Brahmā (rūpadhatu) on the fact that the Buddhist cosmological system distinguishes between deva and brahma lokkas.

See W. McGovern, Manual of Buddhist Philosophy, pp. 63-69. For a list of devas in the suttas we are studying, see e.g. DN.I. 215; DN.II, 208, 250, 259; MN.II, 193. See also T.W. and C.A.F. Rhys Davids, DB. Part II, pp.295-298.

²Regarding individual studies of the "gods" see e.g., Joseph Masson, La religion populaire dans le canon bouddhique Pāli, 1942; Charles Godage, "The Place of Indra in Early Buddhism," UCR, Vol.3, 1945, pp.41-72; P.R. Barua, "The Conception of Yama in Early Buddhism," JASP, 9, 1964, pp.1-14; B.C. Law, "The Buddhist Conception of Māra," Proceedings and Transactions of the 3rd Oriental Conference, Madras, 1924, pp.483-493; Alex Wayman, "Studies in Yama and Māra," Iranian Journal, 3, No.1 & 2, 1959, pp.44-73, 112-131.

but to indicate the place and function which, in particular the devas and brahmas, had in contributing to and illustrating the "charismatic authority" of the Buddha.

The Question of the Status of the Gods

The position most frequently taken by scholars and exhibited in the suttas regarding the status of the "gods" in Buddhism is that, although they are attributed with great powers and happiness, surpassing not only that of men (MN.I, 505) but of the cakkavattin (MN.III, 177), the "gods" are inferior to the Buddha and, by implication, to all those who successfully follow in the Buddha's Way. Because the devas and brahmās are still subject to kamma they are thus liable to future rebirths in inferior states (e.g. MN.I, 73; MN.II, 132). With the above in mind, Buddha in the Pātika Sutta (DN.III, 28) rejects the traditional account of the Brāhmaṇas that Brahmā is the ultimate beginning of all things by revealing Brahmā's status to be achieved through kamma. Buddha's rejection of the brāhmaṇa claim is based on Buddha's superior knowledge, "The Ultimate beginnings of things [aggaññan]. I know ... and I know not only that, but more than that." Buddha then, in response to a counter question asking him how the world was evolved (since Buddha

rejected the Brāhmaṇas' claim that it began with Mahā Brahmā) provides an answer which begins with, first the dissolution and then the evolution of the 'world' showing that, not only are there higher abodes than that occupied by Brahmā (MN.I, 329) but that Brahmā achieves his status through the law of kamma (DN.III, 29):

Now there comes also a time, friends, when, sooner or later, this world-system begins to re-evolve. When this happens, the abode of the Brahmās appears, but it is empty. And some being or other, either because his span of years has passed, or because his merit is exhausted, deceases from the world of Radiance [abhassara-devaloka] and comes to life in the abode of the Brahmās.³

A similar description is then applied to the companions of Brahmā who appear in the Brahmā abode because of their kamma, as do the other "gods" that populate the Brāhmaṇa, and by implication ^{the} Buddhist pantheon. Because the "gods" are subject to kamma, the implication in the suttas seems to be that they must be reborn as men in order to undertake the Buddhist path,⁴ for the life of a "god" is pleasure-bound and not conducive to undertaking the life of a bhikkhu (see MN. III, 230).

³See also DN.I, 17.

⁴Thus in the Devadūta Sutta (MN.III, 186) Yama says, "Those that do evil deeds in the world are subject to a variety of punishments ... O that I might acquire human status and that a Tathāgata might arise in the world, a

Buddha's superiority over the "gods" is revealed through a number of methods, for example we have drawn attention to his superior powers of iddhi in the previous chapter (see e.g. MN.I, 330). In addition (MN.I, 329) Buddha is able to "know and see" (jānāmi passāmi) the "class called Lustrous Ones ... the class called Vehapphala," which Brahmā cannot. This leads Buddha to declare, "Thus I, Brahmā, am not merely on an exact equality with you as regards super-knowledge; how could I be lower, since I am indeed greater than you?" In the Kevaddha Sutta (DN.I, 222) Brahmā is embarrassed because he is unable to answer a bhikkhu's question regarding the four elements, a question which the bhikkhu has also put to all the devas from the Four Great Kings (Cātummahārājika) on up and finally to Brahmā. The latter is forced to admit, as did all the other devas, that he does not know the answer and that the bhikkhu should return and ask the question and accept the answer of Buddha. In addition to these more obvious incidents in which Buddha's superiority over the "gods" is revealed is the frequently found statement describing Buddha as "a teacher for gods and

perfected one, a fully awakened one, and that I might wait on that Lord, and that that Lord might teach me dhamma, and that I might understand that Lord's dhamma." See also P.R. Barua, "Gods and the Brahma-viharas," JASP, Vol.XII, No.1, April 1967, p.181, fn.1.

men;"⁵ that Buddha "by himself, thoroughly knows and sees, as it were, face to face this universe - including the world above of the gods, the Brahmās, and the Māras."⁶ Or, as the Vimamsaka Sutta (MN.I, 320) states:

Monks, in anyone in whom faith in the Teacher is established, rooted, supported by these methods, by these sentences, by these words, that faith is called reasoned, based on vision, strong: it is indestructible by a recluse or brāhman or deva or Māra or Brahmā or by anyone in the world.⁷

Thus Buddha declares (MN.I, 171), "In this world with its devas no one equals me," while in the Pāsādika Sutta (DN.III, 135) he states, "As to the world, O Cunda, with its Māras and its Brahmās, of all its folk, divine or human, recluse or brāhmans, the Tathāgata hath surpassed them."

Some Problems

The above view of the status of the "gods" in Buddhism is the typical approach taken by most scholars writing on the subject.⁸ This is not to imply that the suttas do not present such a view; however there are a number of problems to accepting the above view as the only one.

⁵See e.g. DN.I, 7, 68, 87, 111; also MN.I, 140, 211.

⁶See e.g. DN.I, 111, 150, 224; MN.I, 401.

⁷See also DN.III, 84.

⁸See G.B.G. Gokhale, Buddhism and Asoka, pp.25-46; P.R. Barua, "Buddha and the Gods," JASP, Vol.XIV, No.2, August 1969.

In the Jana Vasabha Sutta (DN.II, 208) we find Vessavana, one of the Four Great Kings, saying, "And those gods, lord, who had been recently reborn in the hosts of the Thirty-Three because they had lived the higher life [brahmacariyam] under the Exalted One, they outshone the other gods in appearance and in glory." The PTS DICT, p.494, says of brahmacariya, "esp. in Buddh. sense the moral life, holy life, religious life, as way to end suffering." In the passage quoted above, then, we have as we have mentioned earlier in this study, a possible example of the Buddhist brethren choosing rebirth in the heavens. J. Dhirasekera's remarks on this passage (BMD, p.6) are more definite:

We are well aware of the fact that the spiritual earnestness of early Buddhist monasticism soon receded into the background. In its place, the slower process of perfection through samsaric evolution, subject to birth in good and evil states (sugati and duggati) came to the fore and gained prominence. This tended, to a certain degree, even to secularize the monastic ideal. The reward for the religious life of the monk differed from that of the laymen only in the matter of degree. They both shared a life of bliss in heaven, the monk excelling the layman with regard to his complexion, glory and lifespan.

In the Samkhāruppatti Sutta (MN.III, 100 ff) we have Buddha discoursing to the bhikkhus about the deva hierarchy and rebirth in those worlds after death and though Buddha closes the sutta with a statement on nibbāna, we are at no time told that the other 'worlds' are not to be sought after

by the monks:

It occurs to him: 'O that at the breaking up of the body after dying I might arise in companionship with the Devas that have reached the plane of neither-perception-nor-no-perception.' He fixes his mind on this, he resolves his mind on this, he develops his mind for this. These aspirations and abidings of his, developed thus, made much of this, conduce to uprising there. This, monks, is the way this the course that conduces to uprising there.

In the Cetokhila Sutta (MN.I, 102) however, Buddha chastises certain bhikkhus for desiring rebirth in the deva lokas or as devas. Thus the suttas exhibit a certain diversity of views on the subject and we should not extrapolate from the fact of the majority of negative statements regarding rebirth in other 'worlds' that the problem was clearly black and white in practice.

Regarding the function of the "gods," it is important that we remember that it is a Brahmā who 'convinces' a Buddha to teach the Dhamma (DN.II, 37), to hold the Patimokkha (DN. II, 46) and who exhorts the Buddha to take back an order of noisy monks (MN.I, 458). In addition, some of the 'powers' which Buddha (and others proficient in these 'powers') had are termed deva⁰; e.g. deva-cakkhu - deva sight, deva sotadhātu - deva hearing. There is also some question as to how Buddha actually receives some of his privileged information. In the Mahāpadāna Sutta (DN.II, 8) the brethren ask whether the "gods" have revealed to Buddha the

lives of former Buddhas or whether Buddha has derived these by himself. Buddha answers that both views are true (DN.II, 52, 53). In this way, a number of points of contact are established between Buddha, Buddhism and the "gods." First, the conclusion which most scholars have concentrated on, that is that Buddha's contact with the "gods" reflects his superiority over them and results in a deification of the Buddha somewhat at the expense of the "gods." However, one might also conclude that the "gods" constituted a threat to Buddhism and that Buddhism sought to alleviate the threat by having the "gods" sanctioning Buddhism, appealing to Buddha to teach the dhamma, as well as having them actually participate in spreading the dhamma. It is significant that the devas and brahmās are reputed to be unable to follow the Buddha's Path, even though they advocate it. In this way, their function as "gods", as aids to man, are maintained so that these "gods" are still capable of exerting some influence on the course of events. For example, in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta (DN.II, 160), the "spirits" (devata) are powerful enough to win their own way when it comes to the question of the route for the Buddha's funeral parade.

Buddha and Other Indigenous Indian Beliefs

Buddha is, at times, shown to ascribe to certain indigenous Indian beliefs as, for example, when he states (DN.II, 87), "... wherever ground is ... occupied by powerful fairies [devatāya], they bend the hearts of most powerful kings and ministers to build dwelling places there, (and fairies of middling and inferior power bend in a similar way the hearts of middling and inferior kings and ministers)".⁹ In the Cūlapunnama Sutta (MN.III, 24) given by Buddha to the bhikkhus, he describes the "good man" as follows:

And how, monks, does a good man have the views of good men? As to this, monks, a good man is of these views: 'there is (result of) gift, there is (result of) offering, there is (result of) sacrifice; there is fruit and ripening of deeds well done or ill done; there is this world, there is a world beyond; there is (benefit from serving) mother, there is (benefit from serving) father; there are spontaneously arising beings; there are in the world recluses and brahmins who are faring rightly, proceeding rightly and who proclaim this world and the world beyond having realized them by their own super knowledge. It is thus, monks, that a good man has the views of good men ... in the breaking up of a body after dying arises in some bourn of good men. And what, monks, is a bourn of good men? It is deva greatness or human greatness.

Keeping the above in mind, Lamotte's comments are of interest:

Adherence to the Buddhist faith never obliges the follower to reject his ancestral beliefs and to repudiate the religious practices in force in his community. By one of the compromises of which India furnishes many examples, each man is authorized to venerate in addition to the triple jewel, the gods of his district, of his caste or of his choice and to

⁹This seems to contradict the 'spirit' of the Brahmājāla Sutta. See DN.I, 1ff.

render them an appropriate worship ... The advent of Buddhism did not carry with it the "twilight of the gods." Neither did Śākyamuni ever fight the gods of hindu paganism. It [Buddhism] recognized that "revered and honoured by man, the gods revere and honour him in return" (Vinaya I, p.229; Dīgha II, p.88; Udāna, p.89). It (Buddhism) refuses to condemn en bloc the practices of paganism; blood sacrifices involving the murder of living beings are to be disapproved of; peaceful offering exempt of cruelty are to be recommended. Certain practices reflecting pure superstition, ritual baths, etc., are practically without value. What is important is to put each thing in its place: superior to the cult of the gods are the alms accorded the pious monks; superior to the alms giving is the taking of refuge in the Triple Jewel; the supreme achievement of sacrifice is entry into the order.¹⁰

We see in this remark of Lamotte's something of the conflict within Buddhism itself; on one side acceptance of ancestral beliefs, etc., on the other the hierarchy of worth which Buddhism placed on ancestral beliefs in comparison to its particular doctrines. The suttas we are studying reflect more often than not an ideal scholastic framework written from the point of view of those who would uphold the higher (monastic) 'stages' of the Buddha Path and in this way we, in studying these documents for the more 'practical aspects' of the dhamma, are working at a disadvantage. The suttas do, however, provide us with clues as to what the practice was, and this practice often necessitated the suspension of the 'ideal,' at least for the moment. The 'deification' of the Buddha, his appearing as a viable and superior 'alternative' to the "gods," is one of the ways of

¹⁰Our translation; see the French in E. Lamotte, Histoire du bouddhisme indien, p.74.

re-introducing the "gods" (if they were ever really absent).

Further Points of Clarification

Most scholars attribute the advent of the "gods" into Buddhism as a result of the inclusion of the laity. Thus B.G. Gokhale, Buddhism and Asoka, p.35, talking about Buddhism before the advent of the laity as not appreciably concerned with the gods, states:

But these circumstances refer to a stage when the system of the Buddha was principally in the form of a monastic movement. Then came the inclusion of the laity in the fold due to the stress of historical circumstances. The ideal, which was placed before this section of influential devotees was not Nirvāna, as in the case of the monks, but godhood. Having arrived at this position it was imperative on the part of the Buddha and his disciples to take the next logical step and present a consistent idea of the 'state of blessedness' which the laity were to enjoy, after death, as a reward for their virtuous actions.

Regarding the inclusion of the laity, we admit that they must have exerted a tremendous influence on the Buddhist community to satisfy their personal desires,¹¹ yet we contend that similar desires were also manifest in many of the brethren themselves whose origins were with the laity. We also grant that the Buddhists did present the "gods" as exhibiting a

¹¹Regarding the attitude taken to the laity (i.e. gahapati, upāsaka) see e.g. DN.II, 104, 113, 141 ff, 147; DN.III, 37, 180; MN.I, 29, 32, 37, 179, 467, 491,; MN.II, 5. See also N. Dutt, "Place of the Laity in Early Buddhism," IHQ, XXI, No.3, September 1945, pp.245-270.

"moral nature" as opposed to their functioning in the Vedas where they were objects of worship, masters of the known and unknown. However, another important impetus to the development of the Buddhist pantheon as well as to the Buddha 'personality' is the contact which Buddhism had with other 'religious' communities, one of the most notable in the suttas we are discussing being the Brāhmaṇas and it is this group which we use as our example.

The Buddha reacted against the Brāhmaṇa claim that they were the superior 'caste' on the basis of birth (i.e. heredity). Thus in the Vāsettha Sutta, Buddha declares in verse (MN.II, Sutta 98 = Sn.122):

By birth! None is by birth a brahman; none
by birth no brahmana; by deed is one
A brahmana, by deeds no brahmana!¹²

Yet in the Aggañña Sutta (DN.III, 97, see also DN.I, 99) we find Brahmā Sanam-Kumara ("Eternal Youth") saying:

The Khattya is the best among this folk
Who put their trust in lineage
But one in wisdom and in virtue clothed,
Is best of all 'mong spirits and men.

The fact that a Brahmā makes the statement is poignant in light of the fact that it is with Brahmā that the Brāhmaṇas

¹²For other passages pertaining to Brāhmaṇas see e.g. DN.I, 8, 24, 97, 104, 111, 119, 124, 174, 192, 227; DN.III, 81, 191; MN.I, 265, 281, 284, 343, 401, 401; MN.II, 123, 135, 169, 177; MN.III, 77, 167, 210, 291, 297.

sought union. Buddha contends that brāhmaṇas extending as far back as the rishis of the Veda had not attained union with Brahma, that the brāhmaṇas are like a "string of blind men" but that Buddha knows the way to union with Brahmā through the brahmaviharas,¹³ (see Tevijja Sutta, DN.I, Sutta No.13):

38. For Brahmā, I know ... and the world of Brahmā, and the path which leadeth unto it. Yea, I know it well as one who has been from within it.

In fact, in the Makhādeva Sutta (MN.II, 82) Buddha maintains that he in a former birth was King Makhādeva and that he had founded the "lovely custom" that others after him maintained, that is rebirth in the Brahmā-world. Buddha also points out that nibbāna is superior to rebirth in the Brahmā-world but the purpose of the sutta is to connect Buddha with knowledge of the brahmaviharas as a means to rebirth in the Brahmā abodes. We should also point out that Buddhism itself accepts the Brahmā abodes as an important part of its soteriology, as the anāgāmin ("non-returner") works out his

¹³The brahmaviharas show connection with brāhmaṇa practices as they occur in the Yoga Sūtras (I,33). The account given in the Makhādeva Sutta, quoted above, would also tend to suggest that the brahmaviharas were non-Buddhist in some sense. See E.J. Thomas, The History of Buddhist Thought, p.50; I.B. Horner, MLS, II, pp.xxx-xxxix, T.W. Rhys Davids, DB, Part 1, p.299, maintains that the brahmaviharas are "almost certainly exclusively Buddhist." The brahmaviharas

salvation in the Brahmā lokas without having to return to earth.¹⁴ However, the Brahmā abodes which constitute the 'place' of the anāgāmin are higher than the abode of Mahā Brahmā.¹⁵

The question arises as to why it was necessary to include aspects of the Brāhmana tradition into the Buddhist Dhamma, that is apart from the fact that Buddhism to some extent 'grew up' in contact with other religious traditions. The answer would seem to rest with the fact that as Buddhism grew as a movement it was forced to interact with the religieux in other ways than before, probably most noticeably over the question of gaining lay support for its growing numbers. In addition, most of the chief disciples, including

are as follows (DN.I, Sutta No.13, Tevijja Sutta, paragraph 78):

Verily this, Vāsettha, is the way to a state of union with Brahmā 'And he lets his mind pervade one quarter of the world with thoughts of pity ... sympathy ... equanimity, and so the second, and so the third, and so the fourth. And thus the whole wide world, above, below, around, and everywhere, does he continue to pervade with heart of pity ... sympathy ... equanimity, far reaching, grown great, and beyond measure.

See also DN.II. 186, 250; for further information see N. Dutt, Early Monastic Buddhism, p.174ff; I.B. Horner, The Early Buddhist Theory of Man Perfected, p.149ff; P.R. Barua, "Gods and the Brahma-Viharas," JASP, Vol.XII, No.1, April 1967, pp.177-208.

¹⁴See e.g. DN.I, 156, 229; DN.II, 252; DN.III, 107, 132, 237, 277; MN.I, 37, 62, 141, 350, 468, 490, 515; MN.II,

Śāriputta and Moggallāna were originally of Brāhmaṇa extraction,¹⁶ and this may also have been true of many others in the ranks of the Sangha, so that there were internal as well as external pressures. With the above in mind, it is Śāriputta (MN.II, 194) who shows brāhmaṇa Dhānañjāni the way to companionship with Brahmā through the brahmaviharas. This led Buddha to ask Śāriputta why he did not take the brāhmaṇa further. Śāriputta replies (MN.II, 196), "It occurred to me, Lord: 'These brahmans are very intent on the Brahmā-world. Suppose I were to show the brahman Dhānañjāni the way to companionship with Brahmā'." Buddha does not press the case further but informs Śāriputta that the brāhmaṇa has achieved companionship with Brahmā.

Some Summary Remarks

While the earliest attitude taken by Buddhism to the "gods" is still a subject of some mystery, no one doubts that

52, 146; MN.III, 247, 254. See also A Critical Pāli Dict., p.162; PTS DICT, p.31; Sangharakshita, The Three Jewels, pp. 154-155.

¹⁵Ibid, pp.154-155; Wm. McGovern, Manual of Buddhist Philosophy, p.67.

¹⁶See C.A.F. Rhys Davids, "The Relations Between Early Buddhism and Brahmanism," IHQ, Vol.10, 1934, p.280, fn.2.

the "gods" became in subsequent developments an important component of Buddhism, to the extent that Buddhism developed its own pantheon. The impetus for the introduction and/or development of the "gods" in Buddhism was probably, as we have mentioned, the result of a number of factors, most important of which was the growing Buddhist Sangha (and its changing values), its interaction with lay communities and other religieux and the 'death' of the Buddha.

We have also seen that the impetus for the development of a Buddhist pantheon and the 'deification' of the Buddha was, to some extent, an internally motivated event in the Sangha where the "gods" and rebirth in the heavens had some appeal amongst the brethren themselves. The only way in which Buddhism could survive (in its growing numbers) in the environment in which it found itself, was to 'deify' the Buddha or have him drown in insignificance as a mere man.

CONCLUSION

In this study we have shown some of the factors which indicated, contributed to, and maintained the Buddha as a "charismatic authority" in the tradition he is purported (in the suttas we have studied) to have founded. The suttas of the Dīgha and Majjhima Nikāyas present the Buddha as something more than a mere founder of the Dhamma, as a unique "god-like" figure standing 'outside' of his discovery while at the same time being identified with it. Thus Buddha is distinguished from others by his birth and appearance and, unlike other bhikkhus who are occasionally shown to excel in certain abilities or 'powers,' Buddha has no such limitations, being master of all these and perhaps even his own 'death.'

We have used the expression "popular elements" to indicate those items, events, etc., which provide the materials for the development of, or reflect the Buddha as, a "charismatic authority." These "elements" ranged from Buddha's miraculous 'birth' to his superiority over the "gods." We have drawn attention to the fact that the

"charismatic authority" of the Buddha often had recourse to (or developed along with) the scholastic portions of the suttas, where, for example, the Buddha is 'equated' with the Dhamma. In addition, we have also shown that there are instances when the Buddha's 'personality' departs from the scholasticism of the numerous formulae of the suttas as, for example, when Buddha is presented as displaying certain powers of iddhi, which the suttas in certain instances do not sanction or are 'forced' to present somewhat ambiguously.

We have also indicated those places, when they could be discerned, that perhaps provided the internal impetus for Buddhological developments; for example, in the treatment of the "gods" where the evidence suggests that even among certain of the brethren the 'desire' for companionship with the "gods" or rebirth in the heavens may have provided some of the motivation for the development of a Buddhist pantheon. In addition, the ascription of certain epithets and epithetic statement to the Buddha indicates not only the 'conception' had of him, but the awareness of the Buddhist tradition to the tradition of other religieux, that a certain 'religious model' existed, and that it was to this model that Buddhism had to appeal, not only to present itself as a 'religious'

group in the eyes of those outside its camp but in the eyes of its own community as well.

The reasons for the development of the Buddha's personality are complex and beyond the scope of our study, yet it is not the case of choosing one set of reasons over the other. No one denies that the laity exerted a great deal of force but we must also see that the 'death' of the Buddha and the growing Buddhist community did much to alter the so-called 'pre-canonical' form of Buddhism. Thus, even though Ānanda was implored by the Buddha (in the Mahāparinibbāna Sutta) to carry on with his own salvation, Ānanda is overwrought at the Buddha's 'death' and the Buddha cannot help but provide alternatives for Ānanda as well as the Buddhist lay-followers by inculcating pilgrimages to thupas which venerate certain moments in the life of a Buddha.

The value of our study is that it attempts to emphasize certain "elements" in the Pāli Suttas of the Dīgha and Majjhima Nikāyas which are often passed over on the way to the more formulaic and scholastic portions of the Pāli Suttas. Our study pays its dues to the fact that the Buddhist tradition which used the suttas we have discussed did so by viewing them as a composite and it is from that composite that their praxis derived, and continues to do so.

The 'transplanting' of Buddhist studies into the University has presented those of us who would wish to understand something of the 'experience' of Pāli Buddhism with a serious methodological problem. We feel that the 'type' of study we have undertaken is a beginning to the understanding of certain 'emotional' undercurrents in the Pāli Suttas which relate particularly to the Buddha as a "charismatic authority." These undercurrents are not to be construed as opponents of scholasticism, for the suttas, like man, are multifaceted in their interests. What is clear is that later developments in what may be generally termed Buddhism continued, developed and deleted trends which we see in the Pāli Suttas we have discussed. In this way the suttas of the Dīgha and Majjhima are not only sources for our understanding of the 'popularization' of Buddha, but of Buddhism as well.

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