

THE EASTERN BUDDHIST

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THE TRIPLE BODY OF THE BUDDHA

I

IN the earlier forms of the Indian religion, the faith-element was not strongly affirmed and it was only when the Buddhists began to organise themselves that faith became prominently noticeable in the religious consciousness of the Indians. The Vedic religion was a cult of nature-worship and there was even a taint of utilitarianism in its followers. As to the conception of faith as a thing sufficient in itself, they had none of it. In the age of the Brahmanas, Indian minds grew torpid, ritualism was everything, and there was nothing in it that would betray great inner spiritual yearnings. The Upanishads were too intellectual for any religious feeling to develop. It was probably in a group of religious mendicants then known as "Paribbaja" that something like a spiritual groping for the light began really to stir. It was they that entertained something of faith in their leader. This feeling grew stronger when the Buddha became the central figure of his Brotherhood, for what kept his followers together in this organisation was their ardent faith in the personality and teaching of their leader.

There is no doubt that the rapid growth of Buddhism in India was chiefly due to the greatness of the Buddha's own personality which demanded faith and love in his disciples.

They were unconsciously drawn towards their leader and took in all his words with absolute faith, and through this faith they were led to discipline themselves in the moral precepts, meditation, and the cultivation of wisdom. So we read in the "Anguttara Nikāya" (III., p. 153):

"The Bhikkhus should first have faith and believe that the World-Honoured One is the Tathāgata, Arhat, the Fully-Enlightened One, the Perfect in Knowledge and Conduct, the Happy One, the Knower of the World, the Peerless, the Tamer of Mankind, the Master of Gods and Men, and the Buddha."

Again (Ang. I., p. 207): "Those who think of the Tathagata, are pleased with him, rejoice in him, and have their minds well cleansed of defilements, are those who abide in Brahma's fast-day (*brahmaposatha*), abide with him, are pleased with him."⁽¹⁾

According to Vangisa, one of the Buddha's disciples, "intoxicated in poem-making, he had wandered from town to town until he saw the perfect Buddha and believed in him."⁽²⁾

Another disciple, Pingiya, confessed: "O Brahman, even for a moment I am not separated from Gotama, who is one with great knowledge and great wisdom; he giveth benefits in this present life—and no time is lost, he quenchoth thirst of desire, preacheth the doctrine that will distance evils; nowhere I am away from the Peerless One; I look up to him with mind and eye, even at night I do not remain

(1) Tassa Tathāgataṃ anussarato cittaṃ pasīdati pāmojjaṃ uppajjati, ye cittaṃ upakkilesā te pahiyanti, ayam vuccati ariyasāvako brahmūposathaṃ upavasati Brahmaṇā saddhiṃ sanvasati Brahmaṇcassa ārabha cittaṃ pasīdati pāmojjaṃ uppajjati, ye cittaṃ upakkilesā te pahiyanti.

(2) Kāveyyamattā vicarimha pubbe gāṃā gāmaṃ purā purāṃ,
Athaddasāmi sambuddhaṃ sabbadhammānaparaguṃ.
So me dhammaṃ adesesi muni dukkassa pāragū;
Dhammaṃ sutvā pasīdemha, saddhā no udapajjatha.

idle but revere him, I embrace his doctrine with faith, contentment, mind, and memory."⁽¹⁾

In the *Vimāṅsaka Sutta* ("Majjhima Nikāya," No. 47, I. p. 320), mention is made of a "Faith securely founded and immovable by others,"⁽²⁾ while, in the *Thera-Gāthā*, Sirimitta sings of "him whose faith in the Tathāgata is firmly planted and unwavering,"⁽³⁾ and Merajina expresses complete satisfaction with the Buddha as follows :

"When I had heard the Master preach the Law,
No doubts my mind could thenceforth entertain
In him, all-knowing and invincible.
Nor in a mighty hero like to him,
Lord of the caravan, driver of men,
Peerless and grand, nor in the Path, the Rule,
Can ever want of faith disturb my soul."⁽⁴⁾

This faith in the Buddha was much stronger among his lay-disciples, and such people as Isidatta who was courtier to King Pasenadi, Queen Mallikā, and the King himself confessed a faith almost as absolute as can be seen only among the followers of the Pure Land sects. This attitude on the part of the Buddha's disciples naturally reflected itself in their conception of the personality of the Master, readily preparing the way for his deification by the later Buddhists. Not only was he thus made a superhuman figure, but an idea full of promising growth came to be conceived of by them, that is to say, they came to think that Buddhahood was not to be sought for in the person of the Buddha as a physical existence but in his relation to the Dharma or Law or Truth which was revealed by him.

(1) Accidentally neglecting at the time to note the page exactly where the passage is to be found, I fail to locate it again while this is going through the press.

(2) Ākāravati saddhā dassanamūlikā dāḥā asañhāriyā samagena vā brahmaṇena vā deveṇa vā mareṇa vā Brahmunā vā Kenasi vā lokasmīṇ.

(3) Yassa saddhā Tathāgata acaḷā supatiṭṭhita. *Thera-gāthā*, 507.

(4) The translation is by Mrs Rhys Davids.

II

By "Dharma," or "Dhamma" (in Pali), is meant first of all the doctrine of the Buddha. Thus we read in the "Anguttara Nikāya," (IV pp. 158, 351; V. p. 355, etc.) that "the Dhamma has its basis in the World-Honoured One, finds its leader in him, and makes him its abode."⁽¹⁾ And as the doctrine taught by the Buddha is the truth, universal and absolute, which was revealed in his inmost consciousness, the term naturally came to be identified with the Law; and then the Law and the Doctrine were conceived to have united themselves in the personality of the Buddha. The Buddha therefore was not a body which was only apparent to our physical eye, but a spirit or a moral person in whom the Dharma or Law was incarnated.⁽²⁾ For this reason, the "Dīgha Nikāya" (III. p. 84), says, "Dhammakāya, Brahmakāya, Dhammabhūta, Brahmabhūta—they all designate the Tathāgata."⁽³⁾

Also in the *Thera Gāthā* (Verses 490–491) we have:

"The self-same Path by which Vipassi went,
The Path of Sikhi and of Vessabhu,
Of Kukusandha, Konagamana,
And Kassapa, e'en by that very Road,
Lo! now to us there cometh Gotama.
And all these seven Buddhas,—they for whom
Craving was dead, and nought was grasped, and who
Stood planted on Abolishing of Ill—
They taught this Law, ay, even such as they,
Who were themselves the Body of the Law."⁽⁴⁾

(1) Bhagavaṃ-mūlakaṃ no bhante dhammā Bhagavaṃ-nettikā, Bhagavaṃ-patisaraṇa.

(2) This idea is further developed in the *Suvarṇaprabhā Sūtra*, a later Mahāyāna production, where the author refers to the fusing of the suchness of the Dharma (法如如) with the wisdom of suchness (如如智).

(3) Tathāgataṃ hetaṃ Vaseṭṭha adhiyacāṇaṃ Dhammakāyo itī pi Brahmakāyo itī pi, Dhammabhūto itī pi, Brahmabhūto itī piti. See also M. III. p. 195, A. X 115.

(4) Translated by Mrs Rhys Davids.

It is to be noticed in these passages quoted above that the Buddha came to be known under such titles as "Dhammakāya," "Dhammabhūta⁽¹⁾," "Brahmakāya," and Brahmbhūta."

When the Bhikkhu Vakkali enamoured by the physical aspects of the Buddha expressed a burning desire to see him, the Buddha said to him: "Enough, O Vakkali, what is the use to you of seeing this foul body? He who sees the Dhamma sees me, and he who sees me sees the Dhamma because, O Vakkali, by seeing the Dhamma one sees me and by seeing me one sees the Dhamma."⁽²⁾ This famous saying later changed into "seeing the Dharmakāya of the Buddha with an eye of [transcendental] knowledge."⁽³⁾ Thus, the *Milindapañha* has: "Whosoever sees the Dhamma, he sees the Blessed One, for the Dhamma was preached by the Blessed One," and "In the body of the Dhamma the Blessed One can be pointed out, for the Dhamma was preached by him."⁽⁴⁾

According to the *Vajracchedhika Sūtra* (S. B. E., Vol. XLIX, p. 140):

"They who saw me by form,
And they who heard me by sound;
They engaged in false endeavours,
Will not see me.
A Buddha is to be seen from the Law;
For the Buddhas have the Law-Body;

(1) *Kāya* means "body," *Bhūta* "being."

(2) Alam Vakkali kim te iminā pūtikayena diṭṭhena. Yo kho Vakkali dhammaṃ passati so maṃ passati. Yo maṃ passati so dhammaṃ passati. Dhammaṃ hi Vakkali passanto maṃ passati maṃ passanto dhammaṃ passati. (Samyutta Nikāya, III. p. 120.)

(3) Paññacakkhunā Bhagavato Dhammakāyaṃ dis vā. (Sutta-Nipāta-Atthakatha, p. 41.)

(4) Yo dhammaṃ passati so bhagavantaṃ passati. dhammo hi mahārāja Bhagavatā desito. (Milindapañha, p. 71.)

Dhammakāyena pana kho mahārāja sakkā Bhagavā nidassetuṃ, dhammo hi Mahārāja Bhagavatā desito. (Milindapañha, p. 73.)

And the nature of the Law cannot be understood,
Nor can it be made to be understood."⁽¹⁾

In the *Mahāparinirvāna Sūtra* (大般涅槃經. 盈五, 二一右) "When sentient beings rejoicing in the Dharma discipline themselves according to the teaching, such will indeed be able to see the Dharmakāya (Law-Body) of the Tathāgata."⁽²⁾

The *Suvarṇaprabhā Sūtra* (金光明經. 分別三身品. 黃九, 七紙), to which reference was already made, concludes that this is truly the way to see the Buddha because one is thus enabled to see in truth the suchness of the Law.⁽³⁾ Nāgārjuna in this *Mādhyamika* (中論. 著一, 五十三) joins in this, saying: "Therefore, it is said in the Sūtra that he who sees the law of causation can also see the Buddha and the Fourfold Noble Truth."⁽⁴⁾

The legendary life of the Buddha echoes this idea in the following narrative: When the Blessed One was about to descend on earth from his heavenly abode in Tushita, the Bhikkhuni Uppalavannā (蓮華色比丘尼) was the first who came to meet him at Sankassa (僧佉舍) while Subhūti (須菩提), in retirement on the Mount of Holy Vulture (Gijjhakūta), was completely absorbed in the meditation of Śūnyatā (空), contemplating on the egolessness of all things. The Blessed One is recorded then to have declared that the one who first saw me was Subhūti and not Uppalavannā.⁽⁵⁾ This idea of seeing the Buddha through the Dharma marks the beginning

(1) ये नां रूपेण चाद्भ्याद्युर्ध्वं नां घोरेण चान्वगुः ।

विद्याप्रहाणप्रसृता न नां दृष्टवन्ति ते जनाः ॥

धर्मतो बुद्धो दृष्टव्यो धर्मकाया हि नायकाः ।

धर्मता च न विज्ञेया न सा शक्या विजानितुम् ॥

(2) 樂法衆生隨教修行. 如是等衆生乃能見如來法身.

(3) 是則名身真實見佛. 何以故. 如實得見法眞如故.

(4) 是故經中說. 若見因緣法. 即爲能見佛. 見苦集滅道.

(5) 增一阿含 ("Anguttara Āgama") 二十八. 晨二, 四十四紙; and 西域記 (Hsüan Tsang's Travels), 第四.

of the term Dharmakāya, or Law-Body.

Further, observe the following quotations from the “*Anguttara Āgama*” (增一阿含):

“The Body of the Tathāgata is the Body of the True Dharma, and what other Dharma should one seek?”⁽¹⁾

“After the passing of the Buddhas of old, their doctrine did not stay long on earth, After my passing, the Dharma will live long.”⁽²⁾

“The life of our Buddha Śākyamūni will be extremely long, for the reason of the Dharmakāya that will abide here though his physical body passes away.”⁽³⁾

“The life here of the Master Śākyamūni was very short. Though his physical body thus passed away, his Dharmakāya is here, let not the root of the Dharma be cut short. . . . The Dharmakāya of the Tathāgata is never destroyed but will stay long in the world and never be cut short.”⁽⁴⁾

All these quotations point to the same central conception of the Buddha as embodying himself in the Body of the Dharma.

The passage in the Chinese “*Anguttara Āgama*” (十五. 辰一, 六三左), saying, “The Body of the Tathāgata has the Dharma for its food” (如來身者以法身食), seems to have been the source of the following statements in the *Mahāyāna Sūtra, Mahāparinirvāna*, (Chap. II, 盈五, 一一右): “The Body of the Tathāgata is the Body of the Law and is not a body requiring food”⁽⁵⁾; “The Tathāgata is an Eternal Being, an Unchangeable Being, this Body of the Tathāgata is the Body

(1) 辰二·五三左。如來身者眞法之身。欲更求何法。

(2) 增一阿含四四, 辰三·三三左。

過去久遠諸佛滅後。教法不久住世。 . . . 我滅度後法當久存。

(3) 增一阿含四四, 辰三·三三左。

我釋迦文佛壽命極長。所以然者肉身雖取滅度法身存此。

(4) 增一阿含序品辰一, 三右。釋迦出世壽極短, 肉身雖逝法身在當令法本不斷絕。 如來法身不敗壞永存於世不斷絕。

(5) 如來身者即是法身非爲食身。

of transformation, and not a body supported by gross food," (Chapter III)⁽¹⁾; "The Body of the Tathāgata is a Body of Eternity, an adamantine body, and not a body of gross food, that is to say, it is the Body of the Law," (Chapter III)⁽²⁾.

In the Chinese "Samyutta Āgama," XXIII, we have this: "The Body of the Tathāgata is the Body of the Law, whose essence is immaculate. The light of the Dharma abides forever in the world, dispelling this darkness of ignorance."⁽³⁾ This is almost literally repeated in the *Divyavādāna*, XXVII (pp. 396-397):

"The selfhood is the Dharma, the word, (?) which is excellent: the body is immaculate, made of the Dharma. . . . burning the light of the Dharma and dispelling the darkness of passions."⁽⁴⁾

This corresponds to the passage in the *Sutra of Asoka* (阿育王經, 藏十三六右): "The Body of the Law of the Buddha, the World-Honoured One, is immaculate and knows no peers. Lighting the lamp of the Buddha-Law, it dispels the darkness of all tormenting passions."⁽⁵⁾

To sum up, the Doctrine is what constitutes the Body of the Buddha, and he who sees the Doctrine and the Truth as revealed in it is he who sees the Buddha. Buddhahood consists in his spirituality and not in his physical being, however majestic it may be. To interview him, therefore, means to understand the Truth through the teaching of the Buddha. When this idea was further developed by the later Buddhists

(1) 盈五,一六左. 如來是常住法, 不變易法. 如來此身是變化身非雜食身.

(2) 盈五,一七左. 如來身者, 是常住身, 金剛身, 非雜食身, 即是法身.

(3) 辰三,三七右.

如來之體身, 法身性清淨. 法燈常存世, 滅此愚癡冥

(4) यद्ब्रह्मीरं वदतां वरस्य धर्मात्मनो धर्ममयं विशुद्धं धर्मप्रदीपो

ज्वलति प्रजासु क्लेश अन्यकारान्तकरो यदद्य

(5) 佛世尊法身 清淨無與等

其然佛法燈 除諸煩惱闇

as one of their metaphysical problems the Buddha-Body came to be identified with the Law or Truth or Tathatā (suchness).

III

Along with the development of Buddhology, there was another conception in the system of Buddhist philosophy which specially engaged the attention of the scholars. By this I mean the conception of Dharma, culminating in the theory of Ekayāna (or One Vehicle) and of the Dharmakāya. If all the Buddhas and Bhikkhus and in fact any Buddhist followers were enabled to attain illumination by means of the one vehicle (*ekayāna*) of the Dharma, it was quite natural for Buddhists to assume the transcendental existence of one Truth, which was designated by them as Dharmatā or Tathatā meaning the essence or suchness of things. This it was that would exist for ever regardless of the appearance or disappearance of the Tathāgata, and the Dharmakāya which had been understood as meaning one who experienced or was in possession of the Dharma or Truth, came to mean one in whom the Truth itself was embodied or one whose body was the Dharma itself. The idea of the Buddha as the Dharmakāya thus came to be entertained by his disciples as time went on after his entrance into Parinirvana.

Three thought-factors are thus seen to constitute the frame-work of the conception of Dharmakāya: 1. Faith in the Buddha; 2. The idea that he who seeks the Buddha in the flesh sees him not, but he sees him who seeks him in the Dharma; and 3. The idea that the transcendental and absolute existence of the Dharma suffers no changes whatever even when its revealer himself has passed away. These ideas did not assert themselves strongly enough to formulate the doctrine of Dharmakāya while the Buddha was still on earth; for he ever insisted on the moral and disciplinary perfection in the life of his Brotherhood and refused to discuss

all the problems of metaphysics that might lead the mind to an endless maze.

But as soon as the Buddha, the eye of the world, passed away at Kusināra, the excessive grief that seized upon his disciples gave birth to intense speculation regarding the after-death existence of the Tathāgata. Is his passing final? Does the Nirvāna mean an absolute extinction? Could not the Buddha prolong his earthly life at will? In the Pali *Book of Great Desease* (*Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*), which is one of the oldest scriptures of Buddhism, it is stated that the Buddha, if he so wished, could live another kalpa or the rest of his kalpa, while in the Chinese Āgamas (that is, in the *Sutra on Itineration*, 遊行經), we are told that the Buddha in his coffin showed his golden-coloured feet to Mahākassapa who came too late to be present at his death. (This legend is not recorded in the *Parinibbāna-sutta*.) These statements show how ready the Buddhists were to admit in the Master some supernatural qualities and something that was not to expire with the passing of one's physical existence.

As years rolled on, the disciples grew more and more convinced of the eternality and supernatural personality of the Buddha. While he was walking among them on earth, the love and reverence they felt for him was readily satisfied, but with his passing their emotional life would not be pacified with empty intellectualism. At first the latter must have strived to affirm itself against the claims of the emotion, as Buddhism is essentially a religion of the intellect and its followers endeavoured to live according to the Buddha's last instruction, "Take refuge in yourself making yourself the lamp; take refuge in the Dharma making it your lamp."⁽¹⁾ But inasmuch as they were all human, they could not but think of their Master so serene, so noble, so compassionate,

(1) Attadīpā attasaraṇā Dhammadīpā dhammasaraṇā. *Parinibbāna Sutta*, II. 26. (自歸依自燈明法歸依法燈明).

and so far above ordinary mortals in every way, as a being not quite of the same stuff as themselves. The logical consequence of this feeling was a conception of a supernatural and superhuman Buddha. Especially among the lay-disciples there was nothing to prevent them from worshipping him as the incarnation of a spiritual being, and every object that was connected with him as partaking something of his superhuman quality. Thus not only the Buddha himself but his relics, his words, his personal articles such as the bowl, robe, etc., and even the sights reminiscent of his life were objects of deep reverence and even of worship. The hope for a future Buddha's appearance on earth may also be regarded as a natural collorary to the supernaturalism of Buddhahood.

IV

There is no doubt that all the legendary stories of Buddha's life now in our possession belong to a much later age, but I am not yet qualified to pronounce judgment upon the respective antiquity of these stories, except the general remark that a story comparatively simple and rich in human elements must have been compiled the earliest. The poetic process of deification may be considered to have been a double one, one regarding the Buddha's former lives and the other regarding his life while he was among ourselves. The former has been transmitted to us in the *Jātaka Tales*, 547 in number, which are told in a mixed style, prose and verse, the latter being an earlier form of the Tales. In my view, the "Cariya-pitaka" (所行藏) is an older form of the *Jātakas*, and the *Jātaka-māla* (本生鬘經) is a later elaboration of the *Jātakas* themselves.

The origin of the *Jātakas* is in the Buddha's narrations of his own past lives and of those of his disciples. They were meant to illustrate the doctrine of karma. But the conviction which ever grew stronger among the followers of the

Buddha concerning the supernaturalness of his personality, gradually worked out the rich treasury of the Jātakas as we have them now. In them it is told that the Buddha went through many a rebirth in order to perfect his personality by the practise of the ten Pāramitās or perfect virtues: charity (*dāna*), morals (*śīla*), renunciation (*nikkhama*), wisdom (*ñāna*), energy (*vīrya*), patience (*khanti*), sincerity (*sacca*), resolution (*adhiṭṭhāna*), compassion (*metta*), and disinterestedness (*upekha*). Thus before he came on earth for the final appearance, he is said to have been in Tushita heaven. *Pāramitā* means perfection or consummation, that is, to realise all that is contained in a virtue to its fullest extent. For instance, in practising the virtue of charity the Jātakas make the Buddha sacrifice not only his possessions, but parts of his body and even his very life for the sake of his fellow-beings.

The thought underlying the Jātaka Tales developed on the one hand into the conception of Bodhisattvaship, and on the other instigated the growth of mythical elements in the life of Buddha, such as his decision while in Tushita heaven to come down on earth or his entrance into the womb of Queen Māyā in the form of a white elephant.

The supernaturalisation of the life of a religious leader is a common phenomenon and Buddhism was no exception. The thirty-two special features, however, of perfect manhood, which are generally ascribed to Buddha are borrowed from phrenology taught by the Lokāyata and other non-Buddhist schools and not at all original to Buddhism. Later, a Sambhogakāya Buddha (受用身) came to be in possession of those marks as well as the eighty minor ones.

One way of mythically transcribing the earthly life of Śākyamuni was to treat it dramatically, and another way was to regard poetic dictions as literary facts. An instance of the first process is the description of the Buddha's four visions of old age, sickness, death, and religious serenity. This was

evidently a dramatic setting of the fact that the Buddha abandoned his pride in a youthful life, health, and well-being as recorded in a Pali sutta called *Ariyapariyesana* (which corresponds to the Chinese 柔輓經, 辰六. 39). As to examples of poetic license given to the life of Buddha, there are plenty : The spiritual struggles he had to go through before his attainment of the Bodhi (perfect wisdom) are depicted in the visit of Māra who tries to tempt him away from the path of righteousness ; his opening the eye of knowledge which would dispel the darkness of ignorance prevailing in the world is thus beautifully figured in the *Divyāvadana* (XXVII, p. 365) :

निम्ना चोन्नमते नतावनन्ते बुद्धानुभावान्मही ।
 म्याणुः शर्करकण्टकव्यपगता निर्दोषतां याति च ॥
 अन्धा मूकजडेन्द्रियाश्च पुरुषा व्यक्तेन्द्रियास्तात्क्षणम् ।
 संवाद्यन्मनियद्विज्ञाश्च नगरे नन्दन्ति त्र्यम्बकानाः ॥

The beautiful colour of the Buddha's skin is compared to gold or violet-gold mined at Jambunādi ; his carriage so majestic and awe-inspiring is likened to the king of the elephants, as is seen from the *Divyāvadana*, XXVII, p. 364 :

कनकाचलसंनिभाग्रदेहो द्विरेन्द्र प्रतिमः सलीलगानी ।
 परिपूर्णशशाङ्कसौम्यवक्रो भगवान्भिक्षुगणैर्वृतो जगाम ॥

With the supernaturalisation of the Buddha, it was natural that miracles so strongly forbidden by him were to creep more

Compare the following extract from the Chinese translation of the *Life of King Asoka* in the "Samyutta Āgama," No. 23 (阿育王傳. 辰三. 三一左) :

地下即成平	高地反爲下	由佛威神故
荆棘諸瓦礫	皆悉不復見	犍盲及瘖瘂
即得見聞語	城郭諸樂器	不擊妙音出

The Chinese *Sutra of King Asoka* (藏十. 二九右) has :

佛身如金山	行步如象王	面貌甚端嚴
猶若於滿月	與比丘圍繞	俱行入於城

and more into his own life, displacing the human elements in which it must have been abundant.

V

While this mythical transformation was going on on the one hand, the Elders were on the other hand quite persistent in preserving the humanness of Buddhahood. True, they, like others, conceded to him the thirty-two special and eighty minor marks of a great man, the ten powers (*bala*), eighteen unique qualities (*āvenika-dharma*), and four convictions (*vaiśāradya*); but they held to the following views.

1. That the Buddha's last existence on earth was a product of karma, and it was subject to natural laws.

2. That the Buddha did not preach all doctrines with one voice, even in him there was a not-all-sufficient doctrine.

3. That the Buddha was not omniscient every moment of his life, his wisdom was awakened through meditation and reflection.

4. That as far as emancipation itself is concerned no qualitative distinction is to be made between that of the Buddha and that of his disciples (belonging to the two Yānas), the only difference between the two lying in the Realisation or the Way.

Against these human views of Buddhahood, the Mahāsāṅghikas contended that (1) the Buddha-body was not subject to natural laws, (2) the Buddha-body was not bound by space, (3) the Buddha preaches all doctrines with one voice, (4) whatever doctrine he teaches is all-sufficient, (5) the life of the Buddha is eternal, (6) his power is infinite, (7) he does not dream, (8) he is omniscient at any moment. The Buddha was thus completely deified.

In Vasumitra's *Treatise on the Wheel of Buddhism as Interpreted by Various Schools* (異部宗輪論, 藏四, 七十六左), we read under the "Mahāsāṅghikas and Other Schools":

“Buddhas, World-Honoured Ones, they are not of the world; all the Tathāgatas have nothing to do with things earthly. Every word of the Tathāgatas makes the wheel of the Law revolve; the Buddha teaches all doctrines with one voice, and there is nothing in the World-Honoured One’s teaching that ought not to be so. The corporeal body of the Tathāgata really knows no limits, nor has his power any limits, nor is his life ever limited. The Buddha makes converts of all sentient beings, and in them is awakened a faith pure and unwearied. He does not dream while asleep. In answering a question, the Tathāgata never deliberates. As the Buddha always abides in meditation, he never preaches with words, yet sentient beings imagining him preach with words are delighted exceedingly. The Buddha comprehends all things in one single thought; by the *prajñā* (perfect intelligence) which is in conformity with one single thought, he comprehends all things; the consummate knowledge, uncreated knowledge in possession by the Buddha, the World-Honoured One, is ever operative even to his Parinirvana.

“All Bodhisattvas, when entering into the maternal womb, do not go through the stages of *kalalam*, *av’budam*, *posi*, *ghanah*, [and *praśāklā*] in order to form their own body. They assume the form of a white elephant as they enter into the maternal womb. When they are born, they come out of the right side of the mother’s body. No Bodhisattvas will ever entertain the thought of greed, anger, and harm. In order to benefit sentient beings, the Bodhisattvas desire to be born in the worlds of evil beings, and as they desire they walk freely among them”⁽¹⁾

(1) 諸佛世尊皆是出世。一切如來無有漏法諸如來語皆轉法輪。佛以一音說一切法。世尊所說無不如義。如來色身實無邊際。如來威力亦無邊際。諸佛壽量亦無邊際。佛化有情令清淨無厭足心。一剎那心了一切法。一剎那心相應般若知一切法。諸佛世尊盡智無生智恒隨轉。佛無睡夢。如來答問不待思惟。一切菩薩入母胎中皆不執癩刺藍額部壘閉尸鍵南為自體。一切菩薩入母胎時作白象形。一切菩薩出母胎時皆從右脇。一切菩薩不起欲想志想害想菩薩身欲饒益有情。願生惡趣隨意能往。

Some commentators of Vasumitra take these qualifications of the Buddha as belonging to a Body of Enjoyment (*Sambhogakāya*), but in the earlier days of the Mahāsāṅghikas the theory of Sambhogakāya had not yet been formulated. What they so far achieved was the transcendental interpretation of the Buddha-body as a preliminary to the later development of the Trikāya doctrine. Through this we can see how early after the Nirvana, that is, in the second century of the Christian era, the conception of the Buddha-body went through certain stages of metamorphosis. We read in the "Anguttara Āgama" (XXI) where the Buddha is still conceived in a transitory form between the corporeal Buddha and the Dharmakāya :

"The Tathāgata-Body is pure, free from defilements, and is the recipient of all heavenly breath : could such be regarded as human-made? The Tathāgata-body is called the Great Body, it is not a created body, no heavenly beings can surpass him. The Tathāgata-body is above valuation and measurement. His voice is altogether beyond qualifications"⁽¹⁾. . . . Here we can trace some of the Mahāsāṅghika views of the Buddha-body incorporated in the scripture itself.

VI

The Questions of King Milinda which was compiled in the first century before Christ, reflects the Elders' view of the time concerning the Buddha-body, and naturally there is no further development here than the Mahāsāṅghika Buddhology as already referred to. The statement however that the tribulations of the Buddha were merely accidental and not due to his previous karma, seems to be a modification of the Sthāvira theory of karma, whereas the assertion that the

(1) 增一阿含. 二十一. (俱二. 二, 三)

如來身者清淨無穢. 受諸天氣. 爲是人所造耶. 如來身者爲是大身. 如來身不可造作. 非諸天所及. 如來身者不可摸則. 不可言長短. 音聲亦不可法.

Buddha's all-knowledge was the outcome of his reflection is thoroughly orthodox. Aśvaghosha who seems to have flourished in the first century after Christ did not add much to the stock of knowledge concerning the Buddha-body as is evidenced in his *Mahālanikāya Śāstra* (大莊嚴論) and *Buddhacarita* (佛所行讚). No reference will be made here to *The Awakening of Faith* (起信論) whose authorship is generally ascribed to Aśvaghosha.

It was about this time that along with the production of the Purāna literature by the followers of Hinduism the Mahāyanists got busy compiling their own sacred books. The idea of plurality of Buddhas was then widely circulated. The *Prajñā-Sūtras* (般若經) told of the existence of a Pure Land or a Buddha-land of purity outside this mundane world. The *Pundarikā* (法華經) insisted on a double nature of Buddhahood, distinguished the earthly Śākyamuni as a manifestation from his original, the eternally transcendent one, while the *Avatamsaka* (華嚴經) conceived a Daśadbhūtakāya (十界身) Buddha who reveals himself throughout the ten worlds. The culmination of these metaphysical speculations concerning the nature of the Buddha was reached when Nāgārjuna in the second century after Christ propounded the dualistic conception of the Law-body and the natural body in the Buddha. This view is expressed in several places scattered throughout his memorable work called 智度論, a commentary on the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra*, which is a veritable encyclopedia of Buddhist knowledge and philosophy of those days. The passages bearing on the subject are extracted below.

“The Buddha has two bodies: one is his body of Dharma-nature and the other is the natural body born of his parents. The Body of Dharma-nature fills the ten quarters of space, is measureless and limitless; its form is serene, its features are majestic; it is infinitely radiant, and it is endowed with infinite speeches. The audience, also with the body of Dharma-

nature and invisible to mortal eyes, fills the universe. Manifesting himself at all times, in all forms, in all names, and at all places, and by all means, he delivers sentient beings; thus always delivering every being, the Buddha knows no time of rest for himself. It is in this way that the Buddha in his Body of Dharma-nature delivers all sentient beings in all the worlds in the ten quarters, while that which suffers the result of evil karma is the mortal body of the Buddha. The mortal Buddha preaches according to grades as all human things are graded. Because of this double form of Buddhahood, he suffers misery yet is free from faults.”⁽¹⁾

“Kosala is the country where the Buddha was born, and as he knows how to show his gratitude, he frequently stayed at Śrāvastī. As he perfected his Body of Dharma he also frequently stayed at Rājagriha. As the Body of the Dharma excels his created body he stayed more frequently at Rājagriha than at Śrāvastī.”⁽²⁾

“There are two bodies in the Buddha, one is the body of miraculous transformation and the other is the body born of his parents. As the latter is subject to human conditions it is not comparable to the heavenly one.”⁽³⁾

“It is asked: ‘All the Buddhas in the ten quarters and all dharmas of the past, present, and future are forms of no-form; why do we then speak of the thirty-two characteristic marks of the Buddha? When there is not a form of reality,

(1) 智度論九 (往一·五八)

佛有二種身。一者法性身。二者父母生身。是法性身滿十方虛空。無量無邊。色像端正。相好莊嚴。無量光明。無量音聲。聽法衆亦滿虛空。此衆亦是法性身。非生死人所得見也。常出種々身。種々名號。種々生處。種々方便。度衆生。常度一切。無須臾息時。如是法性身佛。能度十方世界衆生。受諸罪報者。是生身佛。生身佛次第說法如人法。以有二種佛故。受諸罪無咎。

(2) 智度論三 (往一·二三)

憍薩羅國佛生身地。知恩故多住舍婆提。 成就法身故多住王舍城. 法身於生身勝故。二城中多住王舍城。

(3) 智度論十 (往一·六六)

佛身二種。一神通變化身。二父母生身。父母生身受人法故。不如天。

why this reference to the thirty-two marks?'. 'Because of his created body we speak of the thirty-two characteristic marks of the Buddha; but because of his Body of the Dharma, we speak of forms of no-form.'"⁽¹⁾

"The Buddha with a created body sat on a grass-seat under the tree, while the Buddha with the body born of the Dharma-nature makes a seat of the heavenly robe."⁽²⁾

"The Buddha has two bodies: One is the body born of the Dharma-nature, and the other is the body manifested in accordance with the qualities of sentient beings."⁽³⁾

"There are two Buddhas, one in his true body and the other in his transformation body. When beings see the Buddha in his true body, every wish of theirs is fulfilled. The true body of the Buddha fills the universe and his radiance illumines throughout the ten quarters. His voice when preaching resounds all through the worlds in the ten quarters, which are as numerous as the sands of the Ganga."⁽⁴⁾

"Buddha has two bodies, one is the Dharmakāya and the other is the Rūpakāya (material body). The Dharmakāya is the true Buddha, and the Buddha has a material body because of the earthly truth. When causes and conditions are considered from the point of view of the Body of the Dharma, the nature of all things is truly revealed."⁽⁵⁾

(1) 智度論二十九 (往二·四八)。

問曰。十方諸佛及三世諸法。皆無相相。今何以故說三十二相。一相尚不實。何況三十二。 爲生身故說三十二相。爲法身故說無相。

(2) 智度論三四 (往二·七七)。

生身佛把艸樹下坐。法性生身佛以天衣爲座。

(3) 智度論三四 (往二·七九)。

有二種佛。一者法性生身佛。二隨衆生要劣現化佛。

(4) 智度論三〇 (往二·五一)。

佛身有二種。一者真身。二者化身。衆生見佛真身。無願不滿。佛真身者遍於虛空。光明遍燭十方說法音聲亦遍十方無量恆河沙等世界。

(5) 智度論五九 (往五·九八)。

佛有二種身。一者法身。二者色身。法身是真佛。色身爲世諦故有佛。法身相上。種々因緣。說諸法實相。

In *Hymns of the Universe* (*dharmadhātu* 法界讚), generally ascribed to Nāgārjuna, allusion is made to the doctrine of the Trikāya (triple body of the Buddha), but I am sceptical about the authorship of this śāstra. *Sanskrit Hymns on the Triple Body* (三身梵讚) is also regarded by the Tibetans as Nāgārjuna's, but the fact alone that the verse is written in āryagīta seems to point another way. Seeing how many references Nāgārjuna makes in his Commentary on the *Prajñāpāramitā* to the double, instead of the triple, body of the Buddha, it is highly problematical that he would take up another theory in comparatively insignificant works and sing the praise of the triplicity of Buddhahood. I should rather consider him an advocate of the Duākāya theory.

Here however rises a certain difficulty concerning Nāgārjuna's attitude towards the Amitābha Buddha and his Pure Land as taught in the *Larger Amitāyus* and other Sūtras, with which undoubtedly he must have been acquainted. How did he regard this Buddha? As the physical Buddha, or as one of the Dharmakāya? In his conception of the Dharmakāya there is yet no differentiation between Dharmakāya itself and Sambhogakāya as in the dogma of the Trikāya which evidently developed later than Nāgārjuna, and consequently his Amitābha must have been of the Dharmakāya. But as we know there is room enough for his Dharmakāya to harbour two distinct notions, the Dharmakāya as the ground of the physical Buddha born of his parents, (in this case the Dharmakāya being identical with Suchness, *tathatā*), and secondly the Tathāgata residing in the Land of Purity, who is an actual existence with distinctive characteristics. Nāgārjuna's commentary on the "Buddha's Land of Purity" (淨佛土品) in the *Prajñāpāramitā-Sūtra* lacks clearness and penetration. Inasmuch as we admit the existence of many Buddhas along with the conception of the Tathāgata as the Body of the Dharma-nature or as the formless Dharmakāya, and inasmuch

as we admit also the authority of the Mahāyanā scriptures, the inadequacy of the Duākāya theory grows all the more apparent. The theory had to develop further yet. As to Nāgārjuna's idea of the Tathāgata as expounded in the *Madhyamika*, which is directed against the common-sense view of it, this need not engage our attention here.

The further elaboration of Buddhology after Nāgārjuna appears in the *Maḥāparinirvāna-Sūtra* (大般涅槃經) and the *Sandhinirmocana-Sūtra* (解深密經), and this idea was later systematised by Asanga and adopted in the *Suvarṇaprabhasa-Sūtra* (金光明經), *Meditation on the Ground of Mind* (心地觀經), and other Sūtras.

The *Parinirvāna-Sūtra* deriving its Buddha-conception from that of the Mahāsāṅghika school emphasises the Nāgārjunan view that the Buddha has two bodies, one impermanent and the other permanent, or the one the Body of the Dharma and the other the body born of the parents, and that the human Buddha which is a manifestation seemed, as far as our mortal eye was concerned, to have entered into Nirvana and in truth did not enter into it. We read in the Sūtra: "This body of mine is not, ultimately speaking, the product of carnal union This body of mine is no more than the Dharmakāya, which in accordance with worldly conditions manifests itself on earth, enters into the maternal womb, etc., etc. The Body of the Tathāgata is no other than the Dharmakāya itself, and is not composed of flesh, blood, muscles, veins, bones, and marrows. But because of its conforming to the human conditions on earth, it revealed itself first as a babe, etc. By performing the human functions the Buddha merely conceded to the conditions of the world."⁽¹⁾

(1) 大般涅槃經四 (盈五·二二).

我此身畢竟不從婬欲和合而得生 我今此身即法身。隨順世間。示現入胎 如來身者即是法身。非是肉血筋脉骨髓之所成立。隨順世間衆生法故。示爲嬰兒 大小便利出入息等。隨順世間如是示。

In the seventh volume of the *Parinirvāna-Sūtra*, the author vindicates himself against the charge that the mythical conception of the Buddha is a heresy. He makes the Buddha himself prophesise this by saying that the Buddha told Mahākāśyapa of such a charge likely to be made against true Buddhists seven hundred years after his death. The charge is met by declaring that all the human conditions under which the Buddha was revealed to his disciples and worshippers were merely the earthly modes of his transcendental Tathāgata-ship.

In the *Sandhinirmocana* the Dharmakāya of the Tathāgata is conceived to be that which is obtained by a Bodhisattva when all the Virtues of Perfection are practised at every stage of discipline to their fullest extent so that all the conditions of deliverance are fulfilled and perfect enlightenment is finally attained. This Dharmakāya manifests itself in a body of transformation going through all the phases of human existence, such as conception, birth, renunciation, ascetic practises, and enlightenment, and it is this human body of transformation that is seen and heard and served by sentient beings, while the Dharmakāya is that which supports the body of transformation. The Buddha conceived by Nāgārjuna as issued from the human parents, is according to the *Sandhinirmocana* a body of transformation reflecting the light of the Dharmakāya.

VII

That the theory of the Triple Body came to be formulated in Buddhism as we have it now was due to the genius of Asanga (無著) who following Nāgārjuna went still deeper into the ideas of the *Parinirvāna* and the *Sandhinirmocana*. In his *Mahāyāna-samparigraha-sāstra* (攝大乘論), we read:

“How do we know the greatness of Buddhahood?⁽¹⁾ We know it on account of the triple body of Buddhahood, 1. Body

(1) This may not be quite an appropriate term for 果智, which literally means the Buddha's wisdom obtained as the fruit of his long discipline.

of Self-nature, 2. Body of Enjoyment, and 3. Body of Transformation. By the Body of Self-nature is meant the Dharmakāya of all the Tathāgatas, for it is the basis of all things and makes it possible for them to change from one state to another. By the Body of Enjoyment is meant the assemblage of all the Buddhas in the Land of Purity, which is manifested through the virtue of the Dharmakāya, it is the body that will enjoy all the spiritual pleasures of the Mahāyāna. By the Body of Transformation is meant the one who, depending upon the Dharmakāya, showed itself in Tushita heaven and then disappeared therefrom; who was born on earth and became capable of passions; left his home going over the wall, and under the heretics practised all forms of asceticism; and who attaining to the great perfect wisdom (*mahābodhi*) revolved the great wheel of the Law, and passed into great Nirvana."⁽¹⁾

The Body of Self-nature (*svabhāvakāya*) corresponding to the Dharmakāya, and the Body of Enjoyment (*sambhogakāya*) corresponding to the Vipākakāya (Recompense Body) and together with the Body of Transformation (*nirmānakāya*), have finally come to establish the dogma of the Triple Body of the Tathāgata. The basis and reason of the Triple Body is the Dharmakāya, through which the other two Bodies are capable of maintaining their existence, and consequently the three separate bodies are in fact the three aspects of one essence in which we conceive Tathāgatahood. The object of worship or faith has thus now been transferred from the historical and natural Buddha to the Vipākakāya Buddha or Recompense Body of Tathāgatahood. This doctrine of the Triple Body has

(1) 攝大乘論下(來九, 四十三)。

彼果智殊勝云何可見, 謂由三種佛身。應知彼果智殊勝, 一由自性身, 二由受用身, 三由變化身。此中自性身者, 謂諸如來法身。一切法自在禪所依止故, 受用身者, 謂依法身, 種々衆會所顯清淨佛土, 大乘法樂爲所受。變化身者, 亦依法身, 從觀世多天宮, 現, 沒, 受生, 受欲, 踰戒, 出家, 往外道所修諸苦行, 證大菩提, 轉大法輪, 入大涅槃故。

since then been adopted in such Sutras as the *Suvarnaprabha*, the *Meditation on the Ground of Mind*, etc., and in the following Śāstras: Vasubandhu's *Saddharma-pundarikasutra-upadesa* (世親著, 妙法蓮華經優波提舍), Dharmapala's *Vijñānamātra-siddhi-śāstra* (護法著, 成唯識論), Bandhuprabha's *Discourse on the Stages of Buddhahood* (*Buddhabhūmika*, 親光著, 佛地經論), *Hymns of Dharmadhātu* (讚法界頌), *Hymns of the Trikāya* (三身梵讚), and so on.

The *Suvarnaprabha* treats of the Trikāya theory in one of its chapters entitled "Distinction of the Three Bodies," (三身分別品), but as this chapter does not appear in the Sanskrit original recently discovered and also in the earliest Chinese translation by Dharmaraksha (曇無讖, 412-421), we may reasonably conclude that the dogma of the Triple Body developed later than the compilation of the earlier *Suvarnaprabha*. Whatever this was, the dogma as incorporated in the later version of the Sutra has evidently followed Asanga.

"There are three bodies in the Tathāgata. What are they? 1. The Body of Transformation, 2. The Body of Response, and 3. The Body of the Law. How does the Bodhisattva understand the Body of Transformation? While the Tathāgata is still at the stage of discipline, he practises all kinds of disciplinary rules for the sake of sentient beings; and thus disciplining himself he finally attains perfection in it. Because of the power thus gained through his discipline, he attains great freedom, he thoroughly understands all sentient beings each according to his disposition, conduct, and position. When the Tathāgata manifests himself in various forms, he does not wait for the time, nor does he miss the time; he is always in accordance with the place, time, and conduct of all beings, and discourses for them accordingly. This is his Body of Transformation.

"How does the Bodhisattva understand the Body of Response? In order to make all the Bodhisattvas obtain a

thorough passageway, a Tathāgata preaches the truth by which they come to understand the oneness of Samsāra (birth-and-death) and Nirvana. This Body which is characterised with the thirty-two major and the eighty minor marks of a superior man and invested with a halo around the head and back, is manifested by the Tathāgata, because sentient beings are to be freed from the fears and joys that arise from their materialistic conception of the Tathāgata, because a basis is to be established for the doctrine of the Buddha, which knows no limits, and because the strength of the original vow which is in all truth in accordance with the Reality of Suchness and with the Wisdom of Suchness [is such as to make the Tathāgata assume this Body of Response]. This is known as the Body of Response.

“How does the Bodhisattva understand the Dharmakāya? When in order to get rid of all the hindrances arising from the passions, etc., and to be in possession of all possible forms of goodness, the Reality of Suchness and the Wisdom of Suchness alone are conceived, we have the Body of the Dharma.

“The first two Bodies have a nominal existence, but the third truly and really exists and is the foundation for the first two. When Nirvana with residue (*upadhiśeṣha*) is spoken of the Buddha, it is because of the first two Bodies, while Nirvana without residue (*anupadhiśeṣha*) is spoken of only because of the Dharmakāya. In one sense the Three Bodies are said to be eternal and in another sense they are said not to be eternal. When the Body of Transformation is conceived to be always revolving the Wheel of the Law, manifesting itself everywhere in response to conditions, and never ceasing to work out means of salvation, the Body is said to be eternal; but as it is not fundamental, it does not reveal all the great functions that it is in full possession of, and then it is called not eternal. When the Body

of Response is conceived to be in continual existence from beginningless time, and to be constantly at work as long as there are beings in existence whom all the Buddhas embrace in their unique virtues. the Body is said to be eternal; but as it is not fundamental it does not reveal all the functions that it is in full possession of, and then it is called not eternal. As to the Dharmakāya, it is not a mode of action, there is no trace of becoming in it, and as it is the ground of all things, it is like unto space, and it is said eternal."⁽¹⁾

The doctrine advanced in the *Meditation on the Ground of Mind* (心地觀經), which was translated into Chinese by an Indian monk called Prajñā and others in 785-810, A. D., closely follows Asanga even using his term, Vipākakāya or the Body of Recompense, which shows that this Sutra was produced later than Asanga. We read: "In the one sole Buddha-treasure there are three Bodies, 1. Body of Self-nature, 2. Body of Enjoyment, and 3. Body of Transformation. There are two aspects in the Body of Enjoyment, that of self-enjoyment and that of other-enjoyment."⁽²⁾

(1) 金光明經 (黃九), 分別三身品 (五紙以下).

一切如來有三種身。云何爲三。一者化身。二者應身。三者法身。云何菩薩了知化身。善男子。如來昔在修行地中。爲一切衆生修種々法。如是修習。至修行滿。修行力故得大自在。自在力故隨衆生意行界悉嘗了別。不待時不過時處相應。時相應。行相應。說法相應。現種々身。是名化身。

云何菩薩了知應身。謂諸如來爲諸菩薩通達故。說於真諦。爲會解了生死涅槃是一味故。爲除身見衆生怖畏歡喜故。爲無邊佛法而作本故。如實相應如々如々智本願力故。是身得現具三十二相八十種好頂背圓光是名應身。

云何菩薩學說了知法身。爲除諸煩惱等障。爲具諸善法故。唯有如々如々智。是名法身。

前二種是假名有。此第三身是真實有。爲前二身而作根本。善男子。依此二身一切諸佛說有餘涅槃。依此法身說無餘涅槃。以有義故而說於常。以有義故說無常。

化身者恒轉法輪。處々隨緣。方便相續。不斷絕故。是故說常。非是本故。具足大用不顯現故。說爲無常。應身者。從無始來。相續不斷。一切諸佛不共之法。能攝持故。衆生無盡。用亦無盡。是故說常。非是本故。以具足用不顯現故。說爲無常。法身者非是行法。無有異相。是根本故。猶如虛空。是故說常。

(2) (字二·五三).

唯一佛寶具三種身。一自性身二受用身三變化身。其受用身有二種相。一自受用二他受用。

In the *Lankāvatāra* (楞伽經) it is stated that "all things that are seen among sentient beings and Bodhisattvas in all the countries in the ten quarters including the Body of Recompense, the Body of Transformation, and all other manifestations, issue from the Blessed Land of the Infinite Life. All the preachings to be found in the 'diffusive class' of sutras such as the esoteric doctrines, doctrines taught by sons of the Buddhas, and those of other teachers, are the preachings delivered by the Buddha-body of Transformation and not by the real Body of Recompense."⁽¹⁾

As this portion of the *Lankāvatāra* is a much later addition to the main earlier text, the statement quoted here naturally presents the original theory of the Triple Body in a modified form by regarding primitive Buddhism as the preaching of a Transformation Body.

Vasubandhu's *Saddharma-pundarika-sutra-upadesa* also reflects Asanga's theory of the Trikāya as we can see in the following extract: "This is the doctrine without equal because it demonstrates the perfect wisdom (*bodhi*) of the Buddha in his triple aspect: 1. It demonstrates the perfect wisdom of the Response Body and the Transformation Body of the Buddha, which is demonstrated everywhere in accordance with the understanding [of the disciples], as we read in the Sutra about the Tathāgata's escape from the palace of the Śākya and his attainment of the unparalleled perfect enlightenment while sitting at the holy place not far from the city of Gaya; 2. It demonstrates the perfect wisdom of the Buddha's Recompense Body which is realised by him when he gains permanent Nirvana after fulfilling all the disciplinary exercises belonging to the ten stages of Bodhisattvaship, as we read in the Sutra, 'O son of a good family, since I attained

(1) (黃六. 一一四).

十方諸刹土. 衆生菩薩中所有法. 報佛化身及變化. 皆從無量壽極樂界中出. 應知密意說. 所有佛子說. 及諸導師說. 悉是化身說. 非是實報佛.

to Buddhahood it is already innumerable hundred thousand myriads of nayutas of kalpas'; 3. It demonstrates the perfect wisdom of the Buddha's Dharmakāya, that is to say, the essential purity of the Tathāgata-garbha (如來藏), its abiding in Nirvana, its eternality, its refreshing coolness, its immutability, etc.; for it is said in the Sutra that the Tathāgata truly perceives and understands the character and grades of the triple world and not as is done by beings in it."⁽¹⁾

Asanga's theory of the Triple Body thus grows more pronouncedly enunciated in the Sutra literature as well as in the Śāstras.

Bandhuprabha, in his treatise on the *Sutra on the Stages of Buddhahood* (佛地經論, 卷一及二), explains the text in the light of the Trikāya doctrine, while Vasubandhu also follows Asanga in his work *Discourse on the Ten Stages* (十地論) where he refers to the Law Body, Recompense Body, and in the Sutra with the title of *Mahāyānabhīsamaya* (大乘同性經), mention is made of the True Body, the Body of Recompense, and the Body of Response.

In the foregoing I hope I have made it in a general way clear as to how the dogma of the Triple Body first started from the worshipful attitude of the earlier Buddhists towards their Master, which resulted in the conception of the Law Body (Dharmakāya), and how this latter conception, once finding an articulate expression both in the Sutras and the śāstras, steadily grew up so as to make Nāgārjuna formulate his theory of the Two Bodies (*dvikāya*) of the Tathāgata, and finally how this Nāgārjuna doctrine developed into Asanga's

(1) (往六·六四丁左)

示現三種佛菩提故。一者示現應化佛菩提。隨所應見而為示現。如經皆謂。如來出釋氏宮。去伽耶城不遠。往於道場。得成阿耨多羅三藐三菩提故。二者示現報佛菩提。十地行滿足。得常涅槃置故。如經。善男子。我實成佛已來。無量無邊。百千萬億那由他劫故。三者示現法佛菩提。謂如來藏性淨。涅槃常恆。清涼。不變。等義。如經。如來如實知見三界之相次第。乃至不如三界見於三界故。

Trinity where the third Body, the Vipākakāya or the Body of Recompense, came to find its legitimate place. The Trinity, thus complete as dogma, has now put the Vipākakāya Buddha in the place of the natural Buddha as the Buddhist object of faith, making its content ever deeper and ever more enhancing. This reconstruction of the theory of the Buddha-body marks one of the dividing lines between the Mahāyāna and the Hinayāna.

CHIZEN AKANUMA