

Buddha-Nature (buddhadhātu) / Thus-Come-One Heart (tathāgatagarbha)
Sūtras and Śhāstras

All sūtras and śhāstras that include discussion of either of these synonymous terms are listed here; the essential excerpts on buddha-nature from the sūtras are compiled here by Kokyo Henkel in chronological order by the year in which they first appeared.

Sūtras first appearing in India:

- Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra (Great Complete Liberation) ~200 (ātman [self] = tathāgatagarbha)
Tathāgatagarbha Sūtra (Heart of the Thus Come One) ~300
Śhrīmālādevīsīṃhanādanirdeśa Sūtra (Lion's Roar of Queen Śhrīmālā) ~350 (ātman = tg)
Anūnatvāpūrṇatvanirdeśaparivarta Sūtra (Neither Increase nor Decrease) ~400
Mahābherī Sūtra (Great Dharma Drum) ~400 (ātman = tg)
Aṅgulimāliya Sūtra (Aṅgulimāla) ~400 (ātman = tg)
Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra (Appearance on Laṅka) ~450 (all these translated into Chinese by ~500)
Ghanavyūha Sūtra (Heavily Adorned [Realm]) ~700 (only sūtra w/no English translation)

Sūtras first appearing in China:

- Brahmajāla Sūtra (Divine Net) ~450 (maybe written by Kumārajīva [344-413])
Anuttarāśraya Sūtra (Supreme Basis) ~550 (reworking of Ratnagotravibhāga, maybe written by Paramārtha)
Śhūraṅgama Sūtra (Heroic March) ~700
Vajrasamādhi Sūtra (Adamantine Absorption) ~700 (first appeared in Korea)

Indian Śāstra:

Ratnagotravibhāga Mahāyānottaratantra Śāstra (Precious Lineage, Final Teaching of the Mahāyāna) ~500 (also translated into Chinese ~500)

Śāstras first appearing in China: (maybe written by Paramārtha [499-569])

Mahāyāna Śraddhotpādaśāstra (Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna) (ascribed to Aśhvaghoṣha) ~550

Buddhadhātu Śāstra (Buddha Nature) (ascribed to Vasubandhu) ~550

Earlier Indian Sūtras that served as basis for these

- Saddharma Puṇḍarīka Sūtra (Wondrous Dharma Lotus Flower), especially ch. 16: ~150
Avataṃsaka Sūtra (Flower Ornament), especially ch. 37: all beings have B-wisdom ~300
(both translated into Chinese ~400)
Saṃdhinirmochana Sūtra (Unlocking the Mysteries), especially ch. 6: all is mind: ~300
(translated into Chinese ~650)

Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāna Sūtra

a.k.a. Nirvana Sutra, translated from Chinese into English by Kosho Yamamoto, 1973

from Dharmakshema's Chinese translation, 430 CE (sutra compiled 200-300 CE)

Taisho Tripitaka Vol. 12, No. 374, edited by Dr. Tony Page, 2007, excerpts edited by Kokyo Henkel

Chapter 1: Introduction (*Buddha's light illuminates all places*) (page 1)

Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was staying at Kushinagara in the land of the Mallas, close to the river Ajitavati, where the twin sala trees stood. At that time, many great monks – eighty-billion hundred-thousand – were with the Blessed One. They surrounded him front and back. On the fifteenth day of the second month, as the Buddha was about to enter Nirvana, he, with his divine power, spoke in a great voice which filled the whole world and reached the highest of the heavens. It said to all beings in a way each could understand: "Today, the Thus-Come One [Tathagata], the Worthy One [Arhat], the Perfectly Awakened One, has compassion for, protects, and with an undivided mind, sees all beings as he does his (own child) Rahula. Therefore he is the refuge and sanctuary for the whole world. The Greatly Awakened Blessed One [Bhagavan] is about to enter Nirvana. All beings who have doubts may now ask questions." At that time, early in the morning, the World-Honored One emitted from his mouth rays of light of various hues, namely blue, yellow, red, white, clear, and multicolored. The rays of light shined throughout the 3,000 great-thousand-fold Buddha lands, and all ten directions were equally illuminated.

Chapter 2: On Chunda (*all compounded things are not-Self*) (Page 22)

Now, meditate upon all that is constructed, all that is compounded [samskrta]. Contemplate how all things/phenomena are not-Self [anatman] and are not-Eternal [anitya], and that nothing endures...

Chapter 3: On Grief (*four inverted views, true Self, parable of milk medicine*) (page 29, 32)

To think of discontent [duhkha] as Bliss [sukha] and to think of Bliss as discontent, is distorted Dharma; to think of the impermanent [anitya] as the Eternal [nitya] and to think of the Eternal as impermanent is distorted Dharma; to think of what is not-Self [anatman] as the Self [atman] and to think of the Self [atman] as not-Self [anatman] is distorted Dharma; to think of the impure [ashuba] as the Pure [shuba] and to think of the Pure as impure is distorted Dharma... Not-Self is bondage [samsara], the Self is the Tathagata; impermanence is the shravakas and pratyekabuddhas [small-vehicle practitioners], the Eternal is the Tathagata's Reality-Body [dharmakaya]; discontent is all heretics [tirthika], Bliss is Nirvana; the impure is all compounded things, the Pure is the true Dharma of the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas. This is called non-distortion/non-inversion. By not being inverted (in one's view), one will know both the letter and the meaning. If one desires to be freed from the four distorted/inverted views [viparita-drshti], one should know the Eternal, Blissful, the Self and the Pure in this manner...

Thus I say: "There is no self [atman], no person [pudgala], no living being [sattva], no life faculty [jiva], no personality, no observer, actor, or experiencer." O monks! Know that what the tirthikas teach (as Self) is like the case of a worm that eats tracks in wood, from which, by chance, there appears what looks like a letter. Because of this, the Tathagata teaches not-Self. This is to change beings and because he is aware of the occasion. Such not-Self is, as occasion arises, spoken of, and I also teach that there is Self. This is like the case of the learned doctor, who knows well the medicinal and non-medicinal qualities of milk (knows when to teach Self and not-Self). It is not like common people, who try to measure the size of their own Self. Common people and the ignorant (holding pre-Buddhist views of Self) may measure the size of their own Self and say, "It is the size of a thumb, like a mustard seed, or the size of a dust mote." When the Tathagata speaks of Self, in no case are things thus. That is why he says: "All things have no Self."

Even though he has said that all phenomena are empty of Self, it is not that they are truly empty of Self. What is this Self? Any phenomenon that is true [satya], real [tattva], eternal [nitya], sovereign/autonomous [aishvarya], and whose ground/basis has an unchanging nature [ashraya-aviparinama], is termed "Self" [atman]. This is as in the case of the great doctor who well understands the milk medicine. The same is the case with the Tathagata. For the sake of beings, he says "there is the Self in all things." O you four types of practitioners [monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen], learn/practice Dharma thus!

Chapter 5: On the Adamantine Body (*Reality-Body is eternal and indestructible*) (Page 43, 44)

The body of the Tathagata is one that is eternal, indestructible, adamantine [vajra], not sustained by various kinds of food. It is the Reality-Body [dharmakaya]...

The body of the Tathagata is one that is not a body and yet is a body. It is one not born and one that does not die... It is not consciousness [vijñāna] and is not mind [chitta] – and yet it does not depart from mind. It is a mind that is all-equal. It is not an "is", yet it is what "is". It does not go or come, and yet it goes and comes. It cannot be broken apart. It is indestructible... It is not a host/master and yet it is a host/master. It is not one that exists, nor does it not exist... It cannot be seen and yet can be well seen. It is no place and yet is a place. It is no abode and yet is an abode. It is not dark and not bright... It is not an aggregate [skandha], sphere [āyatana] or realm [dhātu], and yet it is the aggregates, spheres, and realms... It is not the four great elements, nor is it not the four great elements...

The Reality-Body of the Tathagata is perfect in all such innumerable, wonderful virtues. O (Layman) Kashyapa! Only the Tathagata knows all such aspects/modalities of being. All this is beyond what śhravakas and pratyekabuddhas can know. O Kashyapa! The body of the Tathagata is composed of all such virtues. It is not a body maintained or nourished by various foods. O Kashyapa! The virtue of the true body of the Tathagata is such. How could it suffer from illnesses, pain, and insecurity?

Chapter 8: On the Four Reliances (*nondual knowing is the Tathagata, the Reality-Body*) (Page 84, 85)

What are the four reliances [śharaṇa]? One should rely on the teaching [Dharma], not on the person; on the meaning, not the letter; on nondual knowing/awareness [jñāna], not on dualistic consciousness [vijñāna]; on sutras of definitive [nītārtha] meaning, not on sutras of provisional [neyārtha] meaning... We rely/depend on nondual knowing/awareness [jñāna] and not upon dualistic consciousness [vijñāna]. This knowing/awareness is the Tathagata. If any śhravaka does not well understand the virtues of the Tathagata, such a consciousness is not to be depended upon. If one knows that the Tathagata is the Reality-Body [dharmakaya], such true knowing can indeed be depended upon.

Chapter 9: On Wrong and Right (*virtuous conduct is necessary to see Buddha-Nature*) (Page 93)

All sentient beings have/are Buddha-Nature [buddha-dhātu]. Only by observing the precepts/virtue [śhīla] can one see it. When one sees Buddha-Nature, one attains unsurpassed Awakening [bodhi].

Chapter 12: On the Nature of the Tathagata (*All beings have BN but it's hidden*) (Page 101, 108, 136)

(The Layman) Kashyapa said to the Buddha: "O World-Honored One! Is there any Self in any of the 25 existences (realms of sentient beings) or not?" The Buddha said: "O good man! "Self" [ātman] is what "Heart of the Thus-Come-One" [tathagatagarbha] means. All sentient beings have/are Buddha-Nature [buddha-dhātu], and this is the Self. Such Self has, from the very beginning, been covered by innumerable defilements [kleśha], and that is why beings cannot see it. O good man! (Imagine that) there is a poor woman. She has true gold concealed in her house, but none of the people of her house, whether children or adults, know of it. But a stranger who knows about gold arrives and, through expedient means [upāya], says to the poor woman: "I would like to employ you; you can do some weeding for me." The woman answers: "I cannot do this now. If you let my son see where the gold is hidden, I will work for you." The man says: "I know where it is. I shall point it out to your son." The woman further says: "Nobody of my house, whether big or small, knows of this. How can you?" The man says: "I shall now make it clear." The woman says further: "I wish to see it. Please let me." The man digs out the gold that was hidden. The woman sees it, is gladdened, and begins to respect that person.

O good man! The case is the same with the Buddha-Nature which sentient beings have/are. Nobody can see it. This is like the gold which the poor woman possessed and yet could not see. O good man! I now let people see the Buddha-Nature that they have/are, which is covered/hidden by defilements. This is like the poor woman who cannot see the gold, even though she possesses it. The Tathagata now reveals to all beings the storehouse/treasury/womb [garbha] of Awakening, which is called Buddha-Nature. When all beings see this, they are gladdened and will take refuge in the Tathagata. The good expedient means is the Tathagata, and the poor woman is all the innumerable beings, and the casket of true gold is the Buddha-Nature.

O good man! Here is another parable: a woman has a child who, while still very young, is overcome by illness. Worried by this, the woman seeks out a good doctor. The good doctor comes and compounds medicine... This he gives to her for the child to take. Then he says to the woman: "When the child has taken the medicine, do not give any milk to the child for some time. When the medicine has worked its way out, you may then give milk." Then the woman applies a bitter substance to her nipple and says to the child: "Do not touch it. My nipple is poisonous." The child is hungry for the milk and wants to have it, but on hearing of the poison it turns away. After the medicine has done its work, the mother washes her nipple, calls in her child and gives it her nipple. Although hungry, the child, having heard about the poison, will not come to her. The mother then says: "I only put poison on my nipple so as to give you the medicine. As you have already taken the medicine, I have washed the poison off. Come! Take my nipple. It is not bitter anymore." On hearing this, the child slowly comes back and takes it. O good man!

This is the same with the Tathagata. In order to save beings, he gives them the teaching of not-Self [anatman]. Having thus practiced the Way, beings let go of the mind that clings to Self [ahamkara] and they attain Nirvana. All of this is to do away with people's wrong concepts, to show them the Way and cause them to stand above, to show them that they adhere to (worldly) Self [laukikatman], that what appears in the world is all false and not true, and to lead them to practice not-Self and purify themselves. This is like the woman's applying a bitter substance to her nipple out of love for her child. It is the same with the Tathagata. For practicing emptiness [shunyata], I say that all phenomena are not-Self. And just like the woman's cleaning her nipple and calling for her child to partake of her milk, it is the same with me, too: I now speak of the Tathagatagarbha. For this reason, monks, do not be afraid. Like the child who hears its mother and slowly comes back and takes the milk, the situation is the same with you monks. You should know well that the Tathagata hides nothing / is not hidden...

The nature of Self and not-Self are not two distinct things. This is what the hidden Tathagatagarbha refers to. This is what is praised by uncountable, innumerable, boundless numbers of Buddhas... For example, one sees geese flying far off in the sky and wonders if they really are geese or the sky. One looks carefully and sees them indistinctly. Bodhisattvas are also like this; they see but a small part of the nature of the Tathagata. How could shravakas and pratyekabuddhas see it well?...

It is the same with shravakas, pratyekabuddhas and Bodhisattvas – all can arrive at the same Buddha-Nature. Why? Because the defilements have been done away with. It is like removing the impurities from gold. Hence, all sentient beings have the same Buddha-Nature. One first hears of the hidden Tathagatagarbha, and later attains Buddhahood, in the course of time coming to know this fact...

(Mark Blum translation of Volume 1 ends here)

Chapter 21: On Pure Actions (*Buddha-Nature is Love; BN is nothing to gain*) (Page 212, 229)

Love/loving-kindness [maitri] is the Buddha-Nature of all sentient beings. This Buddha-Nature has long been covered over by defilements, which is why all beings are unable to see it. Buddha-Nature is love. Love is the Tathagata. O good man! Love is the great sky. The great sky is love. Love is the Tathagata. O good man! Love is space [akasha]. Space is love. Love is the Tathagata. O good man! Love is the Eternal [nitya]. The Eternal is Dharma. Dharma is the Sangha. The Sangha is love. Love is the Tathagata. O good man! Love is Bliss [sukha]. Bliss is Dharma. Dharma is the Sangha. The Sangha is love. Love is the Tathagata. O good man! Love is the Pure [shuba]. The Pure is Dharma. Dharma is the Sangha. The Sangha is love. Love is the Tathagata. O good man! Love is the Self. The Self is Dharma. Dharma is the Sangha. The Sangha is love. Love is the Tathagata. O good man! Love is immortality/deathless [amrita]. Immortality is love. Love is Buddha-Nature. Buddha-Nature is Dharma...

Not to possess is the Eternal, Bliss, Self, and the Pure. When a Bodhisattva-Mahasattva sees Buddha-Nature, he gains/realizes the Eternal, Bliss, the Self, and the Pure (jo-raku-ga-jo). Hence, we say that a Bodhisattva has nothing to gain. Having something to gain is the not-Eternal, not-Bliss, not-Self, and the not-Pure. Hence, we say that a Bodhisattva is a person who has nothing to gain. Also, O good man! That there is nothing to gain is the emptiness [shunyata] of ultimate truth [paramartha-satya]. When a Bodhisattva-Mahasattva meditates on the emptiness of ultimate truth, he sees nothing. Hence, we say that the Bodhisattva is a person who has nothing to gain.

Chapter 26: On the Action of a Baby (in Dongshan's "Jewel Mirror Samadhi") (Page 281)

Why do we speak of a "baby's action"? A baby cannot stand up, stay, come, go, or speak. This is the state of a baby. It is the same with the Tathagata. We say "unable to stand up" – the Tathagata does not raise up any aspect of anything. We say "unable to stay" – the Tathagata does not adhere to anything. We say "unable to come" – in the bodily action of the Tathagata, there is no moving. We say "unable to go" – the Tathagata has already entered Great Nirvana. We say "unable to speak" – he speaks, but does not speak... The Tathagata enacts expedient means and speaks, and through this, he helps people understand. Also, a baby speaks a big syllable. The same is the case with the Tathagata. He speaks a big word. This is "vaba". "Va" corresponds to "created", and "ba" to the "non-created". This is the baby. "Va" is "non-eternal", and "ba" is "eternal". Beings hear this and understand it as eternal. This is the action of the baby.

Chapter 29: On Bodhisattva Highly Virtuous King (Buddha-Nature is like space) (Page 318, 319)

If shravakas, pratyekabuddhas and Bodhisattvas do not see Buddha-Nature, we say "Nirvana". It is not "Great Nirvana [mahaparinirvana]". If they clearly see Buddha-Nature, this is Great Nirvana...

The Tathagata pervades all places, just like space. The nature of space cannot be seen; similarly, the Tathagata cannot really be seen, and yet he causes all to see him through his sovereignty. Such sovereignty is termed "Great Self" [mahatman]. That Great Self is termed "Great Nirvana". Moreover, Noble Son, a treasury, for example, contains many different kinds of rare things and is thus called a great/complete treasury. The extremely profound treasury of the Buddha-Tathagatas [tathagatagarbha] is like that: since it contains wondrous things, without any deficiency, it is termed "Great Nirvana". Moreover, Noble Son, a thing which is boundless/unlimited is called "Great". Since Nirvana is also boundless/unlimited, it is termed "Great".

Chapter 32: On Bodhisattva Highly Virtuous King (Self is not five aggregates or in them) (352,357)

A person might come to think that the Self is the body/form/matter [rupa], that the Self exists in the body; that there is a body in the Self, that the body belongs to the Self. Or he may view the Self as dualistic consciousness [vijñana], or think that the Self exists in consciousness, that consciousness exists in the Self, that consciousness belongs to the Self. Any such person who views things thus belongs to Mara [complete delusion]; any person who see things thus is not my disciple...

There is no place where Buddha-Nature abides. Only through the best expedient means [upaya] is it able to appear (like the sound of a lute/harp which cannot be found in any part of the lute).

Chapter 33: On Bodhisattva Lion's Roar (Buddhas & Bodhisattvas see BN differently) (366-7, 378)

To utter the lion's roar means to make it known that all sentient beings have/are Buddha-Nature and the Tathagata is Eternal and unchanging... (opening quote of Dogen's *Shobogenzo Bussho*)

Buddha-Nature is none other than the emptiness [shunyata] of ultimate truth [paramartha-satya]. The emptiness of ultimate truth is wisdom [prajna]. When we say emptiness, this does not refer to nothingness as emptiness, nor non-emptiness. Knowing/awareness [jnana] sees emptiness and not-emptiness, the Eternal and the not-Eternal, Suffering and Bliss, the Self and the not-Self. Emptiness refers to all birth and death [samsara]. Non-emptiness refers to Great Nirvana. And not-Self is nothing but birth and death. The Self refers to Great Nirvana [mahaparinirvana]. If one sees emptiness, but does not see non-emptiness, we do not speak of this as the Middle Way [madhyama-pratipada]. Or if one sees the not-Self of all things, but does not see the Self, we do not call this the Middle Way. The Middle Way is Buddha-Nature... The One Vehicle [ekayana] is Buddha-Nature. That is why I say that all beings have/are Buddha-Nature. All beings have One Vehicle... Buddha-Nature is, in truth, no Self. For the benefit of beings, I say "Self"...

O good man! You ask: "With what eye does a Bodhisattva of the ten stages [bhumi] see Buddha-Nature, but not quite clearly, and with what eye does the World-Honored One see Buddha-Nature clearly?" O good man! With the Eye of Wisdom [prajna] one sees it not quite clearly; with the Buddha-Eye, one sees it clearly. When one is still practicing for Awakening [bodhi], there is no clearness; with nothing to practice, one sees all clearly. When one has nothing more to practice, one sees clearly. When one abides in the ten stages of a Bodhisattva, one does not see quite clearly.

Chapter 34: On Bodhisattva Lion's Roar (*Buddha-Nature is potential*) (Page 387, 388, 390, 396)

The Buddha-Nature of sentient beings has two causes. One is the true cause and the other the condition. The true cause is all sentient beings; the condition is the six perfections [paramitas]...

The Buddha-Nature of all beings is unbreakable, indestructible, cannot be depicted, cannot be grasped, cannot be tied or bound up. It is like space, which is also in all sentient beings. All sentient beings have/are it. As there is nothing that hinders it, one does not see this emptiness. If beings did not have this emptiness, there could not be any going, coming, walking, standing, sitting or reclining; and there could be no being born and growing up...

The Buddha-Nature of beings is what all Buddhas see; it is not what shravakas and pratyekabuddhas can know. All beings do not see Buddha-Nature. That is why they are all bound up by defilements [klesha] and wander through birth and death [samsara]. When one sees Buddha-Nature, no bonds of defilement can bind one. Liberation is realized and one attains Great Nirvana...

How do we speak about the future "is" (being)? For example, a person goes to a potter and asks: "Do you have a pot?" The answer comes back: "We have a pot." And yet, actually there is no pot. As the potter has the mud, he says that he has the pot. Know that the person is not telling a lie. There is butter in milk. It is the same with the Buddha-Nature of sentient beings. If one wishes to see Buddha-Nature, one must contemplate time, form and color. For this reason, I say that all sentient beings have/are Buddha-Nature...

All beings definitely will attain unsurpassed Awakening [bodhi]. Because of this, I say in this sutra that all beings, down to those who have committed the five deadly sins, those who have performed the four grave offences [parajika], and the completely depraved [icchantika] all have Buddha-Nature...

Chapter 36: On Bodhisattva Lion's Roar (*there is only one Buddha-Nature*) (page 417)

One finds the Buddha-Nature of sentient beings in the different bodies of the beings of the five realms (god, human, animal, hungry ghost, hell) but the Buddha-Nature is always one, and there is no change.

Chapter 37: On Bodhisattva Lion's Roar (*Tathagata's Body and Self are unconditioned*) (page 428)

Form is based on causal relations (is conditioned/dependent). What is based on causal relations is not-Self. What is not-Self is discontent [duhkha] and empty [shunya]. The body of the Tathagata is not based on causal relations (is unconditioned/independent). Because there are no causal relations, we say that is the Self. The Self is the Eternal, Bliss, the Self, and the Pure.

Chapter 39: On Bodhisattva Lion's Roar (*BN has no location; BN is love & compassion*) (457-459)

You may say that Buddha-Nature lives in sentient beings. O good man! You should know that what is Eternal has no place to dwell. If there is a dwelling place, this tells us that what is there is impermanent...

Each of the blind men speaks about the elephant (after touching one of its parts/aggregates) and what he says does not accord with the truth. Yet it is not that he does not speak about the elephant. It is the same with the person who speaks about Buddha-Nature. It is not any one thing, and yet it is not other than them. O good man! That is why I say that Buddha-Nature is not form, and yet it is not separate from form. It is not the Self, nor is it other than the Self. O good man! Many heretics say that there is a Self. But in truth, there is no Self. The Self of beings is the five aggregates [skandha]. Other than the aggregates, there is no Self. O good man! For example, the stem, leaves, and calyx combine and we get the bloom of a lotus. Other than this, there cannot be any flower. It is the same with the Self of beings...

The Eternal Tathagata is the Self. The Reality-Body [dharmakaya] of the Tathagata is boundlessness, unobstructedness, birthlessness, deathlessness... This is the Self. Sentient beings, in truth, do not have such a Self and what the Self possesses. Only because of the fact that a person completely attains absolute emptiness of ultimate truth do we say "Buddha-Nature". O good man! Great love and great compassion are Buddha-Nature... All beings surely will attain great love and great compassion. So, we say that all beings possess great love and great compassion. Great love and great compassion are Buddha-Nature. Buddha-Nature is the Tathagata. Great sympathetic joy and great equanimity are Buddha-Nature... Buddha-Nature is great trust/faith [shraddha]... Buddha-Nature is the twelve links of dependent arising [pratitya-samutpada]. Why? Because of causal relations, the Tathagata is eternal. All beings definitely have the twelve links of dependent arising. That is why we say "All beings have Buddha-Nature"...

It is difficult to conceive of Buddha-Nature... All beings have Buddha-Nature, but not all can know it...

Buddha-Nature is not form, and yet is not other than/separate from form. It is not feelings, not perceptions, not formations, and not consciousness. Nor is it separate from consciousness.

Chapter 40: On Bodhisattva Kashyapa (*Buddha-Nature not inside nor outside, like space*) (Page 473)

The Buddha-Nature of sentient beings is not inside nor outside; it is like space, which is neither inside nor outside. If there were in and out in space, we could not say that space is one and eternal; nor could we say that it exists everywhere. Although space exists neither inside nor outside, all beings have/are it.

Chapter 41: On Bodhisattva Kashyapa (*BN is not in time, does not exist nor not exist*) (493-7, 502)

The Tathagata's ten powers, four fearlessnesses, great love and great compassion... the 32 marks of perfection, the 80 minor marks of excellence, all the samadhis, such as the Heroic March [Shurangama] Samadhi... are the Buddha-Nature of this Buddha. In this Buddha-Nature, there are seven aspects, namely: 1) the Eternal, 2) the Self, 3) Bliss, 4) the Pure, 5) the True, 6) the Real, and 7) the Good...

The Buddha-Nature of the Tathagata is not of the past, present or future. The Buddha-Nature of the body acquired to represent a particular person has present and future...

O good man! All the bondages of ignorance [avidya] and defilement [klesha] are Buddha-Nature. Why? Because they (as qualities of sentient beings) are the cause of Buddha-Nature...

The Buddha-Nature of the stream-enterer and once-returner who have abandoned defilements to some extent is like milk; the Buddha-Nature of the non-returner is like curds; that of the arhat is like butter; that of pratyekabuddhas up to the Bodhisattvas of the ten stages is like clarified butter; and the Buddha-Nature of the Buddha is like the pure essence of melted butter [sarpirmanda]...

Beings do not understand the Middle Way. At times they understand it, and at other times they do not. O good man! In order that beings can know it, I say that Buddha-Nature is neither within nor without... Buddha-Nature is neither "is" (existent/being) nor "not-is" (non-existent/non-being); it is "is" and "not-is". Why do we say "is"? All is "is". Beings do not get cut off and do not die. This is like the flame of a lamp, until one attains unsurpassed Awakening. So, we say "is". "Why do we say that it is "not-is"? All beings are, for the present, not the Eternal, Bliss, the Self, and the Pure, and do not possess the Buddha-Dharma. Hence, "not-is". As "is" and "not-is" become one, we say Middle Way. That is why the Buddha says that the Buddha-Nature of beings is neither "is" nor "not-is"...

If one says that all beings definitely have Buddha-Nature, this is grasping; if one says that they do not have it, this is what is false. The wise say: "The Buddha-Nature of beings is neither "is" nor "not-is" "...

On hearing this, some think: "This Nirvana Sutra is one that belongs to heretics, not a Buddhist sutra."

Chapter 42: On Bodhisattva Kashyapa (*non-sentient things do not have Buddha-Nature*) (517,519)

If someone says that all sentient beings definitely have or definitely do not have Buddha-Nature, such a person slanders the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha...

"Non-Buddha-Nature" refers to walls, pebbles, stones, and non-sentient things...

Chapter 45: On Kaundinya (*each person does not have their own individual Self*) (page 555)

Shrenika said: "I do not say that all beings have one Self. I say that each person has his own Self." The Buddha said: "O good man! If you say that each person has his own Self, this means that there are many Selves. This is not so. Why not? It was said before that Self pervades everywhere. If the (personal) Self is everywhere, the karmic roots of all beings would be the same (people would not receive karmic effects)."

Equivalent terms in Parinirvana Sutra: Buddha-Nature/Awakened Element [buddha-dhatu] = Heart/Womb/Treasury of the Thus-Come-One [tathagata-garbha] = Thus-Come-One-Nature [tathagata-dhatu] = Thus-Come-One [tathagata] = Buddha = Dharma = Sangha = Reality Body [dharmakaya] = Self [atman] = Eternal [nitya] = Bliss [sukha] = Purity [shubha] = Love/Kindness [maitri] = Compassion [karuna] = Sympathetic Joy [mudita] = Equanimity [upeksha] = Space [akasha] = Great Unbinding [mahaparinirvana] = Liberation [vimoksha] = Immortality [amrita] = One Vehicle [ekayana] = Ultimate Truth [paramartha-satya] = Emptiness [shunyata] = Dependent-Arising [pratitya-samutpada] = Middle Way [madhyama-pratipada] = Trust [shraddha] = Nondual Awareness/Knowing [jnana]

Tathāgata-garbha Sūtra

The Heart of the Thus-Come-One Scripture (excerpts)

大方廣如來藏經

Translated during the East-Jin Dynasty by Tripitaka Master Buddhahadra ~400 (sutra appeared ~300)

Taisho Tripitaka Volume 16, Number 667

Translated into English by William H. Grosnick

Thus I heard one time: The Bhagavan was staying on Grdhvakuta near Rajagrha in the lecture hall of a many-tiered pavilion built of fragrant sandalwood. He had attained buddhahood ten years previously and was accompanied by an assembly of a hundred thousand great bhikshus and a throng of bodhisattvas and great beings sixty times the number of sands in the Ganga...

At that time the Bhagavan spoke to Vajramati and the other bodhisattvas, saying, "Kulaputras, there is a Vaipulya Sutra named 'Tathagata-garbha'. It was because I wanted to expound it to you that I showed you these signs. You should all listen attentively and ponder it well." All said, "Excellent. We very much wish to hear it."...

The Buddha said, "Kulaputras, there is a comparison that can be drawn between the countless flowers conjured up by the Buddha that suddenly withered and the innumerable conjured buddha images with their many adornments, seated in the lotus position within the flowers, who cast forth light so exceedingly rare that there was no one in the assembly who did not show reverence. In a similar fashion, kulaputras, when I regard all beings with my buddha chakshur (eye), I see that hidden within the kleshas (barbs) of raga (greed), lobha (confusion), dvesha (hatred) and moha (obscuration) there is seated augustly and unmovingly the tathagata jnana, the tathagata vision and the tathagata kaya. Kulaputras, all beings, though they find themselves with all sorts of kleshas, have a tathagata-garbha that is eternally unsullied, and that is replete with virtues no different from my own. Moreover, kulaputras, it is just like a person with supernatural vision who can see the bodies of tathagatas seated in the lotus position inside the flowers, even though the petals are not yet unfurled; whereas after the wilted petals have been removed, those tathagatas are manifested for all to see. In similar fashion, the Buddha can really see the beings (sattva) tathagata-garbha. And because he wants to disclose the tathagata-garbha to them, he expounds the sutras and the Dharma, in order to destroy kleshas and reveal the buddha-dhatu (buddha-element, buddha-nature). kulaputras, such is the dharma of all Buddhas. Whether or not buddhas appear in the world, the tathagata-garbha of all beings are eternal and unchanging. It is just that they are covered by kleshas of sentient beings. When the Tathagata appears in the world, he expounds the Dharma far and wide to remove their ignorance and tribulation and to purify their universal wisdom. Kulaputras, if there is a bodhisattva who has faith in this teaching and who practices it with ekagra-chitta (single-pointed mind), he will attain vimukti and correct universal enlightenment and for the sake of the world he will perform Buddha deeds far and wide."...

"Or kulaputras, it is like pure honey in a cave or a tree, surrounded and protected by a countless swarm of bees. It may happen that a person comes along who knows some clever techniques. He first gets rid of the bees and takes the honey, and then does as he will with it, eating it or giving it away far and wide. Similarly, kulaputras, all beings have the Tathagata-garbha. It is like pure honey in a cave or tree, but it is covered by kleshas, which, like a swarm of bees, keep one from getting to it. With my Buddha eye I see it clearly, and with appropriate virtuous expedients I expound the Dharma, in order to destroy kleshas and reveal the Buddha vision. And everywhere I perform Buddha deeds for the benefit of the world."...

"Or, kulaputras, it is like a kernel of wheat that has not yet had its husk removed. Someone who is impoverished might foolishly disdain it, and consider it to be something that should be discarded. But when it is cleaned, the kernel can always be used. In like fashion, good sons, when I observe beings with my Buddha chakshur, I see that the husk of kleshas covers their limitless tathagata vision. So with appropriate upayas I expound the Dharma, to enable them to remove those kleshas, purify their jnana paramita (tenth bodhisattva stage) and to attain in all worlds the anuttara-samyak-sambodhi."...

"Or, kulaputras, it is like the genuine gold that has fallen into a pit of waste and been submerged and not seen for years. The pure gold does not decay, yet no one knows that it is there. But suppose there came along someone with supernatural vision, who told people, 'Within the impure waste there is a genuine gold trinket. You should get it out and do with it as you please.' Similarly, kulaputras, the impure waste is your innumerable klesha. The genuine gold trinket is your tathagata-garbha. For this reason, the Tathagata widely expounds the Dharma to enable all beings to destroy their kleshas, attain correct perfect enlightenment and perform Buddha deeds."...

"Or, kulaputras, it is like a store of treasure hidden beneath an impoverished household. The treasure cannot speak and say that it is there, since it isn't conscious of itself and doesn't have a voice. So no one can discover this treasure store. It is just the same with beings. But there is nothing that the power of the Tathagata's vision is afraid of. The treasure store of the great dharma is within beings' bodies. It does not hear and it is not aware of the addictions and delusions of the five desires. The samsara chakra turns and beings are subjected to countless dukkhas. Therefore Buddhas appear in the world and reveal to them the tathagata-dharma-garbha in their bodies. And they believe in it and accept it and purify their universal wisdom. Everywhere on behalf of beings he reveals the tathagata-garbha. He employs an eloquence which knows no obstacle on behalf of the Buddha's faithful. In this way, kulaputras, with my Buddha eye I see that all beings possess the tathagata-garbha. And so on behalf of bodhisattvas I expound this Dharma."...

"Or, kulaputras, it is like the pit inside amra fruit which does not decay. When you plant it in the ground, it grows into the largest and most regal of trees. In the same manner, kulaputras, when I look at beings with my Buddha vision, I see that the tathagata-garbha is surrounded by a husk of ignorance, just as the seeds of a fruit are only found at its core. kulaputra, that tathagata-garbha is cold and unripe. It is the profound nirvananirvrta that is brought about by maha-jnana (great wisdom). It is called the samyak sambuddha (perfect Buddha), the Tathagata, the Arhat and so on. kulaputras, after the Tathagata has observed beings, he reveals this message in order to purify the bodhisattva mahasattva jnana."...

"Or, kulaputras, it is like a man with a statue of pure gold, who was to travel through the narrow roads of another country and feared that he might be victimized and robbed. So he wrapped the statue in worn-out rags so that no one would know that he had it. On the way the man suddenly died, and the golden statue was discarded in an open field. Travelers trampled it and it became totally filthy. But a person with supernatural vision saw that within the worn-out rags there was a pure gold statue, so he unwrapped it and all paid homage to it. Similarly, kulaputras, I see the different beings with their many kleshas, transmigrating through the long night of endless samsara and I perceive that within their bodies is the wondrous tathagata-garbha. They are august and pure and no different from myself. For this reason the Buddha expounds the Dharma for beings, that they might sever those kleshas and purify their tathagata jnana. I turn the Dharmachakra again and again in order to convert all worlds."...

"Or, kulaputras, it is like a woman who is impoverished, vile, ugly and hated by others, who bears an Arya son in her womb. He will become a Chakra-vartin King, a ruler of all the four directions. But she does not know his future history and constantly thinks of him as a base-born, impoverished child. In like fashion, kulaputras, the Tathagata sees that all beings are carried around by the samsara chakra, receiving suffering and poison, but their bodies possess the tathagata-garbha. Just like that woman, they do not realize this. This is why the Tathagata everywhere expounds the Dharma, saying, 'kulaputras, do not consider yourselves inferior or base. You all personally possess the buddha-dhatu.' If you exert yourselves and destroy your past evils, then you will receive the title of bodhisattva or Bhagavan and convert and save countless beings."...

"Or, kulaputras, it is like a master foundryman casting a statue of pure gold. After casting is complete, it is inverted and placed on the ground. Although the outside is scorched and blackened, the inside is unchanged. When it is opened and the statue taken out, the golden color is radiant and dazzling. Similarly, kulaputras, when the Tathagata observes all beings, he sees that the Buddha-garbha is inside their bodies replete with all its many virtues. After seeing this, he reveals far and wide that all beings will obtain relief. He removes kleshas with his Vajra-jnana and reveals the Buddha-kaya like a person uncovering a golden statue."...

Śhrīmālādevī Siṃhanāda Nirdeśha Sūtra

The Lion's Roar of Queen Shrimala Discourse (excerpts)

Translation from collection of Chinese and Tibetan versions, Taisho Vol. 12, Number 353 (sutra ~350)

Translated by Alex and Hideko Wayman

Thus have I heard. Once the Buddha was residing in Jeta Garden of Anathapindika's Park in Shravasti...

5. One Vehicle

Lord, 'Great Vehicle' (mahayana) is an expression for Buddha Vehicle. In that way, the three vehicles are counted as one vehicle (ekayana). By realizing the 'one vehicle' one attains the incomparable rightly completed enlightenment. Lord, 'incomparable rightly completed enlightenment' is an expression for the Nirvana-realm. 'Nirvana-realm' is an expression for the Dharmakaya of the Tathagata. The ultimate realization of the Dharmakaya is the One Vehicle. Lord, the Tathagata is not one thing, and the Dharmakaya something else, but the Tathagata is himself the Dharmakaya. The ultimate realization of the Dharmakaya is the ultimate of the One Vehicle.

8-9. The Dharmakaya and the Meaning of Voidness

"Lord, the cessation of suffering is not the destruction of Dharma. Why so? Because the Dharmakaya of the Tathagata is named 'cessation of suffering,' and it is beginningless, uncreate, unborn, undying, free from death; permanent, steadfast, calm, eternal; intrinsically pure, free from all the defilement-store; and accompanied by Buddha natures more numerous than the sands of the Ganges, which are nondiscrete, knowing as liberated, and inconceivable. This Dharmakaya of the Tathagata when not free from the store of defilement is referred to as the Tathagatagarbha.

"Lord, the knowledge of the Tathagatagarbha is the voidness knowledge (shunyata-jnana) of the Tathagatas. The Tathagatagarbha is something not seen before or understood before by any Disciple or Self-Enlightened one. It has been seen directly and understood by the Lord. The voidness knowledge of the Tathagatagarbha is of two kinds. These two are as follows:

"Lord, the Tathagatagarbha is void of all the defilement-stores, which are discrete and knowing as not liberated.

"Lord, the Tathagatagarbha is not void of the Buddha dharmas which are nondiscrete, inconceivable, more numerous than the sands of the Ganges, and knowing as liberated.

(Diana Paul translation from Chinese: "O Lord, there are two kinds of wisdom of emptiness with reference to the tathāgatagarbha. The tathāgatagarbha that is empty is separate from, free from, and different from the stores of all defilements. And the tathāgatagarbha that is not empty is not separate from, not free from, and not different from the inconceivable Buddha-Dharmas more numerous than the sands of the Ganges River.")

"Lord, these two kinds of voidness knowledge of the Tathagatagarbha arouse trusting faith in the Lord, even by the great Disciples. Lord, the voidness knowledge of all the Disciples and Self-Enlightened ones involves the four wayward objects. That being so, none of the Disciples or Self-Enlightened ones have ever seen before or understood before the cessation of all suffering. The Lord has experienced it directly and understood it. Also he has overcome all the defilement-store and cultivated the path leading to the cessation of suffering.

11-12. The One Refuge and Wayward Stage

Lord, the sentient beings go astray regarding the five grasping personality aggregates; they have the idea that the impermanent is permanent, suffering is pleasure, nonself is self, the impure is pure.

"Lord, the domain of omniscient knowledge which is the Dharmakaya of the Tathagata has never been seen before, even by the pure knowledge of the Disciples and the Self-Enlightened. When sentient beings have faith in the Tathagata and those sentient beings conceive [him] with permanence, pleasure, self, and purity, they do not go astray. Those sentient beings have the right view. Why so? Because the Dharmakaya of the Tathagata has the perfection of permanence (nitya-paramita), the perfection of pleasure (sukha-paramita), the perfection of self (atma-paramita), the perfection of purity (shuba-paramita). Whatever sentient beings see the Dharmakaya of the Tathagata that way, see correctly.

Whoever see correctly are called the sons of the Lord born from his heart, born from his mouth, born from the Dharma, who behave as manifestation of Dharma and as heirs of Dharma.

13. Intrinsic Purity of the Mind

"Lord, samsara is based on the Tathagatagarbha. It was with reference to the Tathagatagarbha that the Lord pointed out and explained, '[It is] without limit in the past.' Since there is the Tathagatagarbha, there is reason for speaking of 'cyclical flow' (samsara). Lord, as to 'cyclical flow,' no sooner do the sense organs for perception pass away than it [the Tathagatagarbha] takes hold of sense organs for perception, and that is 'cyclical flow.' Lord, the two natures, 'passing away' and 'rebirth' are conventional terminology for the Tathagatagarbha. Lord, 'perished' and 'born' are conventional terminology for the world (loka). 'Perished' is the loss of the senses. 'Born' is the renewal of the senses. But, Lord, the Tathagatagarbha is not born, does not die, does not pass away to become reborn. The Tathagatagarbha excludes the realm with the characteristic of the constructed (samskṛta). The Tathagatagarbha is permanent, steadfast, eternal. Therefore the Tathagatagarbha is the support, the holder, the base of constructed [Buddha natures] that are nondiscrete, not dissociated, and knowing as liberated from the stores [of defilement]; and furthermore is the support, the holder, the base of external constructed natures that are discrete, dissociated, and knowing as not liberated.

"Lord, if there were no Tathagatagarbha, there would be neither aversion towards suffering nor longing, eagerness, and aspiration towards Nirvana. What is the reason? Whatever be these six perceptions, and whatever be this [other] perception, these seven natures are unfixed, momentary, and lack experience of suffering; hence these natures are unfit for aversion towards suffering or for longing, eagerness, and aspiration towards Nirvana. Lord, the Tathagatagarbha has ultimate existence without beginning or end, has an unborn and undying nature, and experiences suffering; hence it is worthy of the Tathagatagarbha to have aversion towards suffering as well as longing, eagerness, and aspiration towards Nirvana.

"Lord, the Tathagatagarbha is neither self nor sentient being, nor soul, nor personality. The Tathagatagarbha is not the domain of beings who fall into the belief in a real personality, who adhere to wayward views, whose thoughts are distracted by voidness. Lord, this Tathagatagarbha is the embryo of the Illustrious Dharmadhatu, the embryo of the Dharmakaya, the embryo of supramundane dharma, the embryo of the intrinsically pure dharma.

"Lord, this intrinsic purity of the Tathagatagarbha stained by adventitious secondary defilements is the domain of the Tathagata, who is the inconceivable master. Why so? The virtuous consciousness, being momentary, is not defiled by defilements; and also the unvirtuous consciousness, being momentary, is not defiled by defilements. Lord, since neither do defilements touch that consciousness nor does that consciousness touch defilements, in that case, how does consciousness, having a noncontacting nature, get defiled? Lord, there is both the defilement and the defiled consciousness. Therefore, the meaning of the defilement on the intrinsically pure consciousness is difficult to understand. The Lord alone has the Eye, the Knowledge for it. The Lord is the root of all Doctrines. The Lord is the omnipotent being. The Lord is the resort."

The Lord, having heard Queen Shrimala explain matters difficult to understand, sympathetically rejoiced and said, "Queen, exactly so! It is difficult to the meaning of the intrinsically pure consciousness in a condition of defilement. Queen, these two Doctrines are difficult to understand: the consciousness intrinsically pure is difficult to understand; and the defilement of consciousness is difficult to understand. Queen, you as well as the Bodhisattvas possessed of the great Doctrine are able to hear these two Doctrines. Queen, the rest, the Disciples, accept the two Doctrines only through faith in the Tathagata.

15. The Lion's Roar of Queen Shrimala

When Queen Shrimala had appealed with those words, her retinue joined her in bowing to the feet of the Lord. The Lord then said to Queen Shrimala, "Excellent, most excellent, timely and opportune is your explanation of the means for properly guarding oneself in the profound Doctrine and your explanation of overcoming the enemies of the Illustrious Doctrine! Queen, the worship of a hundred thousand Buddhas is less a marvel than your explanation of the meaning."

Anūnatva-Apūratva-Nirdeśa Sūtra

Buddha Pronounces the Neither Increase nor Decrease Sūtra (excerpts)

佛說不增不減經

Translated in the Northern Wei Dynasty by Tripiṭaka Master Bodhiruci ~500 (sutra appeared ~400)

Taisho Tripiṭaka, Volume 16, Number 668, Translated into English by Rulu

Thus I have heard: At one time the Buddha was staying on Gṛdhrakūṭa Mountain, near the capital city, together with a multitude of 1,250 great bhikṣhus and innumerable, countless Bodhisattva-Mahāsattvas...

"Śhāriputra, foolish ordinary beings do not see in accord with reality the one dharma realm. Because they do not see in accord with reality the one dharma realm, they invoke the wrong view in their minds, saying that the realm of sentient beings increases or that the realm of sentient beings decreases...

"Śhāriputra, foolish ordinary beings, because they do not have the wisdom developed from hearing the Dharma, adhere to the view of cessation or extinction with respect to the Tathāgata's nirvāṇa. Because of their perception of cessation or extinction, they claim that the realm of sentient beings does decrease. This is an enormously wrong view and an extremely grave, sinister karma...

"Śhāriputra, these two views are the afflictions arising from the roots of ignorance! Such are the view that nirvāṇa is created and the view that it suddenly comes about without causes or conditions!

"Śhāriputra, these two views are the extremely evil dharma of enormous fundamental troubles. Śhāriputra, from these two views arise all the [wrong] views. These two views and all the [wrong] views, never separated from one another, are like a net. All the [wrong] views include various kinds of views whether internal or external, whether gross, subtle, or in-between, whether of increase or decrease. Śhāriputra, these two views, however, depend on the one realm, share the one realm, and are included in the one realm. Foolish ordinary beings, because they do not know and see in accord with reality the one realm, invoke the extremely evil view in their minds, saying that the realm of sentient beings increases or that the realm of sentient beings decreases."

At that time Śhāriputra the Wise asked the Buddha, "World-Honored One, what is meant by one realm? All foolish ordinary beings, because they do not know and do not see in accord with reality the one realm, invoke the extremely evil, enormous wrong view in their minds, saying that the realm of sentient beings increases or that the realm of sentient beings decreases."

Śhāriputra continued, "Very good! World-Honored One, this meaning is too profound for me to understand. I pray only that the Tathāgata will explain to me, to make me understand."

At that time the World-Honored One told Śhāriputra the Wise, "This profound meaning is in the realm of the Tathāgata's wisdom. It is also in the action field of the Tathāgata's mind. Śhāriputra, all voice-hearers and Pratyekabuddhas are unable to know, to see, or to observe with their wisdom such profound meaning. Much less can all the foolish ordinary beings speculate [about it]. Only the wisdom of Buddha-Tathāgatas is able to observe, to know, and to see this meaning. Śhāriputra, all voice-hearers and Pratyekabuddhas, with all their wisdom, can only believe this meaning out of respect, but they are unable to know, to see, or to observe it in accord with reality. Śhāriputra, this profound meaning is in effect the highest truth, and the highest truth is in effect the realm of sentient beings. The realm of sentient beings is in effect the Tathāgata store (tathāgatagarbha), and the Tathāgata store is in effect the dharma body (dharmakāya). Śhāriputra, the meaning of the dharma body, in the Buddha Dharma, explained by me is not apart, not removed, not severed, and not different from the inconceivable virtue and wisdom of the Tathāgata, which are more abundant than the sands of the Ganges.

"Śhāriputra, taking the ordinary lamp as an analogy, its brightness and its flame are not apart or removed from each other. As another analogy, the luster and the form of a precious jewel are not apart or removed from each other. The meaning of the dharma body explained by the Tathāgata is the same way. In the Buddha Dharma, it is not apart, not removed, not severed, and not different from the inconceivable virtue and wisdom of the Tathāgata, more abundant than the sands of the Ganges.

"Śhāriputra, the dharma body is a dharma of no birth and no death, neither of the past nor of the future, because it is away from the two extremes. Śhāriputra, it is not of the past because it is apart from birth,

and it is not of the future because it is apart from death. Śhāriputra, the dharma body of the Tathāgata is permanent because it is the unchanging dharma and the endless dharma. Śhāriputra, the dharma body of the Tathāgata is eternal because it is the everlasting refuge and because it is in equality unto the endless future. Śhāriputra, the dharma body of the Tathāgata is cool because it is the dharma of nonduality and the dharma of no differentiation. Śhāriputra, the dharma body of the Tathāgata never changes because it is the dharma of no cessation and the dharma of no formation.

"Śhāriputra, it is this dharma body that, fettered by boundless afflictions more numerous than the sands of the Ganges, has been following along with the world since time without a beginning. When it is drifting to and fro in the ocean waves of life and death, it is called sentient beings. Śhāriputra, it is also this dharma body that, tired of the suffering of life and death in the world, abandoning all the desires and quests, cultivating the six pāramitās, and collecting the 84,000 Dharma Doors to train in the bodhi Way, is called Bodhisattvas.

"Furthermore, Śhāriputra, it is also this dharma body that, having transcended all the sufferings in the world and having left the bondage of afflictions and all the defilements of afflictions, acquires purity and quietness, to abide in the pure dharma on the other shore, arriving on the ground which all sentient beings wish for. When it has attained the unexcelled, ultimate insight into the realm of objects, away from all hindrances and obstructions, and has acquired the power of command in the midst of all dharmas, it is called the Tathāgata, Samyak-Sambuddha. Therefore, Śhāriputra, not apart from the realm of sentient beings is the dharma body, and not apart from the dharma body is the realm of sentient beings. The realm of sentient beings is in effect the dharma body, and the dharma body is in effect the realm of sentient beings. Śhāriputra, these two dharmas have the same meaning under different names.

"Furthermore, Śhāriputra, as I said above, there are three kinds of dharmas in the realm of sentient beings. They all are true suchness, without any distinction or difference. What are these three dharmas? The first is the substance of the Tathāgata store, the primal state, responsive to the pure dharmas. The second is the substance of the Tathāgata store, the primal state, unresponsive to the bondage of afflictions and the impure dharmas. The third is the Tathāgata store, including all dharmas, which is in equality and is eternal unto the endless future.

"Śhāriputra, you should know the substance of the Tathāgata store, the primal state, which is responsive to the pure dharmas. This dharma is accord with reality, not false, and it is not apart and not removed from the inconceivable wisdom and purity in the dharma realm of true suchness. As the primal state has no beginning, there has always been this substance of dharmas, responsive to purity. Śhāriputra, pertaining to this pure dharma realm of true suchness, I pronounce to sentient beings this inconceivable dharma, called the mind of pure self-nature.

"Śhāriputra, you should know the substance of the Tathāgata store, the primal state, which is unresponsive to the bondage of afflictions and the impure dharmas. The primal state has never been responsive to the bondage of afflictions and the impure dharmas, which, however, can be annihilated only by the bodhi wisdom of the Tathāgata. Śhāriputra, pertaining to this inconceivable dharma realm unresponsive to but fettered by afflictions, I pronounce to sentient beings the inconceivable dharma of the mind of pure self-nature, which is covered by afflictions that are like visiting dust.

"Śhāriputra, you should know the Tathāgata store, including all dharmas, which is in equality and is eternal unto the endless future. It is the root of all dharmas, complete and replete with all dharmas, and it is not apart and not removed from the true reality of all worldly dharmas. It holds all dharmas and encompasses all dharmas. Śhāriputra, pertaining to this refuge of the inconceivable pure dharma realm, which has neither birth nor death, always cool, never changing, I pronounce that it be called sentient beings. Why? Sentient beings are in effect the refuge which has neither birth nor death, permanent, eternal, cool, and unchanging. It is a different name of the inconceivable pure dharma realm. According to this meaning, I say that dharma is called sentient beings. Śhāriputra, these three dharmas all are true suchness, not distinct, not different. In this neither varying nor changing dharma of true suchness, one ultimately does not elicit the two extremely evil, unwholesome wrong views. Why? Because one sees in accord with reality. As for the view of increase and the view of decrease, Śhāriputra, Buddha-Tathāgatas ultimately stay far away from these two wrong views. Both are denounced by Buddha-Tathāgatas."

Mahābherī Sūtra

Great Dharma Drum Sūtra (excerpts)

大法鼓經

Translated in the Liu Song Dynasty by Tripiṭaka Master Guṇabhadra ~450 (sutra appeared ~400)

Taisho Tripiṭaka volume 9, number 270

Translated into English by Rulu

Fascicle 1 (of 2)

At one time the Buddha was dwelling in the Anāthapiṇḍika Garden of Jetavana Park in the city kingdom of Śhrāvastī, together with 500 great bhikṣus, as well as 100,000 Bodhisattva-Mahāsattvas...

The Buddha told Ānanda, “This sūtra is the secret Dharma store of Tathāgatas (tathāgatagarbha). It is profound and wondrous, hard to understand and hard to believe. Therefore, Ānanda, you should not say that all who attend will benefit.”...

Thus, inadequate sentient beings, voice-hearers, Pratyekabuddhas, and novice Bodhisattvas each had this thought: “I am incapable of hearing and accepting this Dharma, which says that the Tathāgata has entered parinirvāṇa and then that He is eternally abiding, never extinct.”

Having heard in the midst of the multitude what they had never heard before, they left their seats and departed. Why? They had cultivated in the long night the view of void with respect to parinirvāṇa. Upon hearing of this pure sūtra, which is free from obscurity, they left their seats and departed. Among the voice-hearers, Pratyekabuddhas, and novice Bodhisattvas, who came from the ten directions, on the scale of a million koṭi parts, only one part remained.

The Bodhisattva-Mahāsattvas who stayed on believed in the eternal abiding and changelessness of the dharma body. They then could settle in, accept, and uphold all the sūtras about the Tathāgata store (tathāgatagarbha). They could also explain to and comfort the world, enabling others to understand all the veiled statements [in these sūtras]. They could well discern sūtras of definitive meaning versus sūtras of non-definitive meaning. They all could subdue sentient beings that violated the prohibitions, and they all could respect and serve the pure virtuous ones. With great pure faith in the Mahāyāna, they would not consider the Two Vehicles as extraordinary. They would pronounce only mahāvaipulya sūtras, not other sūtras. They would pronounce only that the Tathāgata is eternally abiding and that there is the Tathāgata store, without abandoning emptiness—not only the emptiness of the self-view but also the emptiness of the self-essence of all saṃskṛta dharmas...

Fascicle 2 (of 2)

Kāśhyapa said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, Mahāyāna sūtras mostly state the meaning of emptiness.”

The Buddha told Kāśhyapa, “All sūtras about emptiness have unrevealed aspects. Only this sūtra is the unsurpassed pronouncement, without any unrevealed aspect. For example, Kāśhyapa, King Prasenajit always sponsors a great assembly of almsgiving in the eleventh month of the year. He first feeds the hungry ghosts, the forlorn ones, and the poor mendicants. He next gives to śramaṇas and Brahmins fine food in various flavors as they wish. In the same way Buddha-Bhagavāns expound various kinds of Dharmas in the sūtras according to the desires and preferences of sentient beings.

“There are sentient beings that breach their precepts, are negligent and indolent in training and learning, and reject the wondrous texts concerning the eternal abiding of the Tathāgata store. They prefer to study and learn various sūtras that teach emptiness, whether following the words and phrases, or adding or altering some words and phrases. Why? They say these words: ‘The sūtras of the Buddha all declare no-self.’ Nevertheless, they do not know the true meaning of emptiness and no-self. Those without wisdom pursue extinction.

“Indeed, emptiness and no-self are the Buddha’s words. Why? Immeasurable defilements in the store of afflictions have always been empty, in nirvāṇa. Indeed, nirvāṇa is the all-encompassing word. It is the word for the great parinirvāṇa attained by Buddhas, eternally in peace and bliss.”

Kāśhyapa asked the Buddha, “How does one discard [the view of] cessation or perpetuity?”

The Buddha told Kāśhyapa, “Sentient beings each transmigrate through the cycle of life and death without a commanding self. Therefore, I explain to them the meaning of no-self. However, the great parinirvāṇa attained by Buddhas is eternal peace and bliss. This meaning shatters the view of cessation or perpetuity.”

Kāśhyapa said to the Buddha, “Please turn to no-self, having talked about self for a while.”

The Buddha told Kāśhyapa, “I explain the meaning of no-self to destroy the worldly view of self. If I did not say so, how could I induce people to accept the Dharma of the great teacher? When the Buddha pronounces no-self, sentient beings become curious. To hear what they have never heard before, they come to the Buddha. Then I enable them to enter the Buddha Dharma through hundreds of thousands of causes and conditions. Once they have entered the Buddha Dharma with growing faith, they diligently train and energetically progress in their learning of the Dharma of Emptiness. Then I pronounce to them the eternal peace and bliss, and the liberation that still manifests form. There are worldly doctrines asserting that existence is liberation. To destroy them, I pronounce that liberation leads to nonexistence. If I did not say so, how could I induce people to accept the Dharma of the great teacher? Through hundreds of thousands of causes and conditions, I explain to them liberation, nirvāṇa, and no-self. Then I see sentient beings mistake liberation for ultimate extinction. Those without wisdom pursue extinction. Then I pronounce, through hundreds of thousands of causes and conditions, that there still is form after achieving liberation.”

Kāśhyapa said to the Buddha, “World-Honored One, achieving liberation and command means that sentient beings must be eternal. By analogy, upon seeing smoke, one deduces that there must be fire. If there is a [true] self in one, then there can be liberation. Saying that there is a [true] self means that there is form after achieving liberation. This is not the worldly self-view, nor is it the statement of cessation or perpetuity.”

Kāśhyapa asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, why does the Tathāgata, who never enters [extinction through] parinirvāṇa, manifest entering parinirvāṇa? Why does He who is never born manifest birth?”

The Buddha told Kāśhyapa, “It is for destroying the idea of perpetuity in sentient beings’ calculating minds. The Tathāgata never enters [extinction through] parinirvāṇa but manifests entering parinirvāṇa. He is never born but manifests birth. Why? Sentient beings would say, ‘Even a Buddha has an ending in life and is not in command, not to mention any of us, who has a self and belongings of self.’ As an analogy, a king is seized by a neighboring nation. In cangue and shackles, he thinks this thought: ‘Am I now still the king, the lord? I now am neither the king nor the lord.’ Why does he have such tribulations? It is caused by dissipation. Every sentient being that transmigrates through the cycle of life and death has no commanding self. The lack of command is the meaning of no-self that I have explained.

“As another analogy, a person is pursued by bandits who will harm him with knives. He thinks this thought: ‘I now have no strength. How can I avoid death?’ With such concerns about the suffering of birth, aging, illness, and death, sentient beings wish to become the god-king Śhakra or a Brahma-king. To destroy this kind of mentality, the Tathāgata manifests death. The Tathāgata is the god of gods. If His parinirvāṇa meant extinction, then the world should also go extinct. If it is not extinction, then it means eternal peace and bliss. To be in eternal peace and bliss, there must be a [true] self, as smoke implies fire. If there is no self and one claims to have a self, the world should be filled with selves. [The true] self does not invalidate no-self. If there were no [true] self, a [nominal] self could not be established.”...

Kāśhyapa asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, if there is a [true] self in one, why is it covered up by one’s afflictions, like dirt?”

The Buddha told Kāśhyapa, “Very good! Very good! You should ask the Tathāgata this question. As an analogy, a goldsmith perceives the purity of gold. He thinks about why such pure gold is mixed with dirt and seeks the origin of the dirt. Will he find its origin?”

Kāśhyapa replied, “No, World-Honored One.”

The Buddha told Kāśhyapa, “If he spends his entire lifetime thinking about the initial cause of the dirt since time without a beginning, will he find the original state? He will acquire neither gold nor the origin

of dirt. However, if he diligently uses skillful means to remove the dirt mixed with the gold, he will acquire the gold.”

The Buddha told Kāśhyapa, “Thus [true] self is covered up by one’s afflictions, like dirt. If a person who wants to see his [true] self thinks this thought, ‘I should search for this self and the origin of afflictions,’ will that person find the origin?”

Kāśhyapa replied to the Buddha, “No, World-Honored One.”

The Buddha told Kāśhyapa, “If one diligently uses skillful means to remove one’s afflictions, which are like dirt, one will realize one’s [true] self. If one, having heard this sūtra, with profound faith and delight, uses skillful means, neither leisurely nor rushed, to do good karmas with one’s body, voice, and mind, through these causes and conditions, one will realize one’s [true] self.”

Kāśhyapa asked the Buddha, “If there is true self, why it is not seen?”

The Buddha told Kāśhyapa, “I will now give you an analogy. For example, a beginning student is learning the five letters [five sets of five consonants], which are used to compose stanzas of verses. If one wants to know the meanings [of the verses] before learning [the letters], can one know them? One should first learn [the letters], and then one will know [the meanings]. Having learned [the letters], one needs to be taught by the teacher, who uses examples to indicate the meanings of verses composed of words. If one can listen to and accept the teacher, one will acquire understanding of the meanings of the verses, and then believe and appreciate them. The [true] self is now covered up by the store of afflictions. If someone says, ‘Good man, the Tathāgata store is such and such,’ then the hearer immediately wants to see it. Is he able to see it?”

Kāśhyapa replied, “No, World-Honored One.”

The Buddha told Kāśhyapa, “For example, the student who does not know the meanings of the verses should follow the teacher on faith. Kāśhyapa, know that the Tathāgata is the speaker of truthful words. He truthfully describes the existence of sentient beings. You will know later, like that student who has learned [from his teacher]. I now explain to you the realm of sentient beings by four veiled analogies. These four are the eye blinded by a disease, the moon covered by heavy clouds, the water in a well to be dug, and the flame of a lamp inside a container. Know that these four analogies involve the causes and conditions for realizing one’s Buddha store. All sentient beings have Buddha nature with immeasurable excellent appearance, majesty, and radiance. Because of Buddha nature, all sentient beings can attain parinirvāṇa. For example, the disease of the eye can be cured. Before one has encountered a good physician, one’s eye is sightless. Once a good physician appears, one will quickly perceive sights. Indeed, the immeasurable store of afflictions covers and obstructs one’s Tathāgata nature. Unless one encounters Buddhas, [holy] voice-hearers, or Pratyekabuddha, one mistakes no-self for self, and non-self for belongings of self. After encountering Buddhas, [holy] voice-hearers, or Pratyekabuddhas, one then knows about one’s true self. As if cured of a disease, one’s eye opens and sees clearly. The eye disease refers to one’s afflictions, and the eye refers to one’s Tathāgata nature. When the moon is covered by clouds, it is not bright and clear. Likewise, when one’s Tathāgata nature is covered up by afflictions, it is not bright and clear. If one discards the cloud of afflictions, one’s Tathāgata nature will be bright and clear, like the full moon. When one digs a well, dry dirt indicates that water is still far away. When one gets wet dirt, one knows that water is near. If one gets the water, then it is the ultimate [end]. If one encounters Buddhas, [holy] voice-hearers, or Pratyekabuddhas, and learns to perform good actions and to dig out the affliction dirt, one will realize one’s Tathāgata nature, which is like the water. This nature is also like the flame of a lamp inside a container. It is useless to sentient beings when its brilliance is hidden. If the container is removed, then the light of the lamp will shine everywhere. Likewise, the affliction container hides one’s Tathāgata store, which is useless to sentient beings when its appearance and majesty are not bright and clear. If one discards the store of afflictions, eradicating them all forever, then one’s Tathāgata nature will fully manifest its excellent appearance and radiance for Buddha work. It is like shattering the container so that sentient beings can enjoy the lamplight. Thus these four analogies illustrate the causes and conditions. As one’s [true] self encompasses the realm of sentient beings, the same is true for all sentient beings. The realm of sentient beings is boundless, radiant, and pure.”

Kāśhyapa asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, if all sentient beings have the Tathāgata store in

one nature and on the One Vehicle, why does the Tathāgata say there are the Three Vehicles—the Voice-Hearer Vehicle, the Pratyekabuddha Vehicle, and the Buddha Vehicle?”

The Buddha told Kāśhyapa, “I should now use an analogy. An elder of great wealth has an only son who, under the care of his wet nurse, was lost in the midst of a crowd. As the elder is near his time, he has this thought: ‘It has been a long time since I lost my only son. I do not have other sons, nor parents or relatives. Once I die, all my assets will go to the king.’ As he is feeling concerned, the lost son, begging on his way, arrives at his original home. He does not recognize his father’s house. Why? The son has been lost since childhood. His father recognizes him but does not tell him so. Why? He is afraid that his son might run away. He gives him some things and says to him, ‘I have no offspring, and you can be my son. Do not go elsewhere.’ The son answers, ‘I cannot bear staying here. Why? My staying here would be as painful as if in shackles.’ The elder asks, ‘What would you like to do?’ The son answers, ‘I would rather remove filth, tend livestock, or work in the fields.’ The elder thinks, ‘This child has little fortune, but I should be patient. I will go along with his wish for now.’ Then he tells him to remove feces. A long time has passed, and the son has seen the elder gratify the five desires. Delight rising in his heart, he thinks this thought: ‘I hope this great elder will, out of pity, accept me as his son and give me riches and treasures.’ With this idea in mind, he no longer works diligently. The elder, having seen the change, has this thought, ‘Before long, he will definitely be my son.’ Then the elder finds him and asks, ‘Do you now have different ideas which cause you not to work hard?’ The son replies, ‘My heart wishes to be your son.’ The elder says, ‘Very good! I am your father, and you are my son. I am really your father though you did not know it. I now give you all that is in my treasure store.’ He then makes an announcement in the midst of a huge multitude: ‘This is my long-lost son. Unwittingly, he happened to return home. I asked him to be my son, and he refused. Today he willingly asks to be my son.’...

Likewise, Kāśhyapa, to those who do not appreciate the One Vehicle, I pronounce the Three Vehicles. Why? This is the Tathāgata’s skillful approach. All voice-hearers are my sons, just like the feces remover who has come to know his identity only today.”...

“Moreover, Kāśhyapa, suppose there is a man who, crossing an expanse of wilderness, hears the call of a flock of birds. Dreading that the bird call means there are bandits, he takes another path. He enters an empty marshland and arrives at where tigers and wolves lurk. He is eaten by a tiger. Kāśhyapa, likewise, when bhikṣus, bhikṣuṇīs, upāsakas, and upāsikās in future times hear the talk of self as well as the talk of no-self, they fear the talk of self. They then enter the vast void, the view of cessation, to study and learn no-self. They do not appreciate the profound sūtras that teach the Tathāgata store and the eternal abiding of Buddhas. Furthermore, Kāśhyapa, you ask me what I have said to Ānanda: ‘With existence, there are pain and pleasure. Without existence, there is neither pain nor pleasure.’ Harken now! Kāśhyapa, the Tathāgata is neither existence nor a sentient being, nor does He perish.”

Kāśhyapa asked the Buddha, “Why not, World-Honored One?”

The Buddha told Kāśhyapa, “As an analogy, under the snow mountain, there is a precious jewel radiating pure light. A person who is skilled in identifying precious jewels can recognize one on sight and seize it. It is like the process of refining gold. When the impurities and rubbish are eliminated, pure gold is revealed, which has never been tainted by the filth initially with it. Why? It is like the lamp carried by a person walking. Wherever he goes, darkness is dispelled by the bright light of the lamp. As refined pure gold is never tainted by filth, neither is the precious jewel. When moonlight and starlight shine on it, it rains down pure water. When sunlight shines on it, it blazes fire. Indeed, Kāśhyapa, the Tathāgata, also called Arhat, Samyak-Saṃbuddha, who appears in the world, has forever left birth, aging, illness, and death, and has eradicated all afflictions and habits. He always radiates great light, like a luminous jewel, and He is never tainted, like a pure lotus flower never touched by dirt or water. Furthermore, Kāśhyapa, the Tathāgata responsively appears in the world, manifesting an ordinary body with such and such an appearance at such and such a time. He is never tainted by the filth in the birthplace of ordinary beings, nor does He experience the pain or pleasure of the world. The pleasures in the five desires of gods and humans as requital for one’s merit are in effect pains. Only liberation is the ultimate eternal bliss.”

Āṅgulimālika Sūtra

央掘魔羅經

Translated in the Liu Song Dynasty by Tripiṭaka Master Guṇabhadra ~450 (sutra appeared ~400)

Taisho Tripiṭaka, volume 2, number 120

Translated into English by Rulu

Fascicle 2

Then the Brahma-King Śhikhin, the ruler of this Sahā World, emitted vast radiance to illuminate the city of Śhrāvastī. Single-mindedly he joined his palms and bowed down at the Buddha’s feet. After making offerings to the Tathāgata and Āṅgulimāla, he spoke in verse: “I now bow down to the physician of the Three Realms of Existence, whose great spiritual power is inconceivable. I now bow down to the sovereign king, whose establishings are extraordinary. He has established Āṅgulimāla in the Dharma. Because there is no analogy for His utmost excellent works, He is called the beyond-analogy honored one.”...

Āṅgulimāla said to Pūrṇa-Maitrāyaṇīputra, “Alas, Pūrṇa-Maitrāyaṇīputra practices the way of a mosquito and does not know how to expound the Dharma. Alas, an ignorant mosquito does not know that the Tathāgata’s teaching that dharmas have no self is a veiled teaching. It is like a moth throwing itself into the flame of the lamp of ignorance. Actually, what Buddha-Tathāgatas never find means that all past Buddha-Bhagavāns looked into all sentient beings by skillful means and did not find the absence of their Tathāgata store [tathagatagarbha]; that all present Buddha-Bhagavāns look into all sentient beings by skillful means and do not find the absence of their true self; that all future Buddhas will look into all sentient beings by skillful means and will not find the absence of their true nature; that all past, present, and future Pratyekabuddhas and holy voice-hearers looked, do look, and will look into all sentient beings by skillful means and did not, do not, and will not find the absence of their Tathāgata store. This is the true meaning of the Buddha’s stanza.

“Moreover, what Buddha-Tathāgatas never find means that all past Buddha-Tathāgatas delved, do delve, and will delve into all dharmas by skillful means, and did not, do not, and will not find a self imagined by the world to have various features, such as its size being that of a thumb, a grain of rice, a sesame seed, a wheat berry, or a mustard seed; its color being blue, yellow, red, or white; its shape being square, round, long, or short. Some say that one’s self is in one’s heart, or above or below one’s navel; some say that it is in one’s head, eyes, or body parts; some say that it permeates one’s body, like sweat; some say that it is constantly in peace and joy, and at rest. Such countless diverse, deluded thoughts are the worldly way to identify one’s self. All Buddhas, Pratyekabuddhas, and holy voice-hearers never find such a self, and the truly enlightened one explains this to sentient beings. This is the true meaning of the Tathāgata’s stanza, not what you just explained according to your deluded thinking.

“Moreover, what Buddha-Tathāgatas never find means that all past Buddha-Bhagavāns sought by skillful means and did not find the action of the Tathāgata store, because the Tathāgata in every sentient being by nature has no action, but has immeasurable purity and majesty and countless good characteristics; that all present Buddha-Bhagavāns seek by skillful means and do not find the action of one’s Tathāgata store, because the Tathāgata in every sentient being by nature has no action, but has immeasurable purity and majesty and countless good characteristics; that all future Buddha-Bhagavāns will seek by skillful means and will not find the action of one’s Tathāgata store, because the Tathāgata in every sentient being by nature has no action, but has immeasurable purity and majesty and countless good characteristics.

“All past, present, and future Pratyekabuddhas and holy voice-hearers did not, do not, and will not see with their eyes the Tathāgata store in their bodies. There is a reason. For example, because Rāhula respects the precepts, when he observes pure water, he does not understand that he sees an insect [in the water]. He wonders whether it is an insect, not an insect, or a dust particle. After intently observing for a long time, he gradually comes to see the tiny insect as it is. It is the same with a Bodhisattva on the tenth ground. When he observes his true nature in his body, he entertains countless different views of this

nature. Because it is hard to enter one's Tathāgata store, it is hard to comfort a Dharma expounder. In the blazingly evil world, not sparing his body or life, he expounds the Tathāgata store to sentient beings. Therefore, I say that Bodhisattva-Mahāsattvas, who are heroes among men, are [virtually] Tathāgatas.

“Aniruddha possesses the foremost god eye, and truly and clearly sees bird tracks in the sky, which cannot be seen by those who possess only the physical eye. However, they believe that Aniruddha sees bird tracks [in the sky]. Likewise Pratyekabuddhas, voice-hearers, and ordinary beings with the physical eye believe that they have the Tathāgata store because it is stated in the Buddha's sūtras. How can they see their Buddha nature [Buddha-dhātu or Buddha-gotra] as Buddhas do? Even Pratyekabuddhas and holy voice-hearers come to believe in it because of their trust in a source. How can ordinary beings, like the born blind, know [their Tathāgata store] on their own without learning about it from others?

“I heard from a past Buddha that in the initial kalpa of this world, the earth contained four flavors. Those who tasted these four flavors then still eat dirt now, because they do not abandon their longtime practice. It is the same with those who trained under past Tathāgatas to observe their Tathāgata store. Because of their longtime training, they now still believe in it with delight and train through the long night to requite the Tathāgatas' kindness. When they hear about one's Tathāgata store from a future Dharma expounder, they will also believe in it with delight. Those who believe [in one's Tathāgata store] with delight are the Tathāgata's sons and will requite His kindness...

“In this way a Dharma expounder should give teachings and praise the truth of a Tathāgata's eternity. If he does not do so, he abandons [the truth of] one's Tathāgata store. This person should not sit on a lion throne. Like a chaṇḍāla [outcaste], he should not ride a great king's elephant.

“All Buddhas seek the birth of one's Tathāgata store by skillful means and never find it, because no birth is Buddha nature, which exists in every sentient being, has countless excellent characteristics, and is pure and majestic. All Buddhas seek the untruth of one's true nature by skillful means and never find it, because truth is one's Buddha nature, which exists in every sentient being, has countless excellent characteristics, and is pure and majestic. All Buddhas seek the impermanence of one's true nature by skillful means and never find it, because permanence is one's Buddha nature, which exists in every sentient being, has countless excellent characteristics, and is pure and majestic. All Buddhas seek the instability of one's Tathāgata store by skillful means and never find it, because stability is one's Buddha nature, which exists in every sentient being, has countless excellent characteristics, and is pure and majestic. All Buddhas seek the change in one's Tathāgata store by skillful means and never find it, because no change is one's Buddha nature, which exists in every sentient being, has countless excellent characteristics, and is pure and majestic. All Buddhas seek the inquietude of one's Tathāgata store by skillful means and never find it, because quietude is one's Buddha nature, which exists in every sentient being, has countless excellent characteristics, and is pure and majestic. All Buddhas seek the destruction of one's Tathāgata store by skillful means and never find it, because no destruction is one's Buddha nature, which exists in every sentient being, has countless excellent characteristics, and is pure and majestic. All Buddhas seek the damage to one's Tathāgata store by skillful means and never find it, because no damage is one's Buddha nature, which exists in every sentient being, has countless excellent characteristics, and is pure and majestic. All Buddhas seek the illness of one's Tathāgata store by skillful means and never find it, because no illness is one's Buddha nature, which exists in every sentient being, has countless excellent characteristics, and is pure and majestic. All Buddhas seek the aging and death of one's Tathāgata store by skillful means and never find them, because no aging and no death are one's Buddha nature, which exists in every sentient being, has countless excellent characteristics, and is pure and majestic. All Buddhas seek the impurity of one's Tathāgata store by skillful means and never find it, because purity is one's Buddha nature, which exists in every sentient being, has countless excellent characteristics, and is pure and majestic.

“As oil does not mix with water, likewise one's Buddha nature never mixes with one's afflictions, though one's countless afflictions shroud one's Tathāgata nature. Hence one's Buddha nature abides in one's afflictions, like a lamp contained in a bottle. When the bottle is broken, the lamp is revealed. The bottle means one's afflictions, and the lamp means one's Tathāgata store. An expounder of one's Tathāgata store, whether a Tathāgata, a Bodhisattva, or a voice-hearer, with or without afflictions,

expounds it according to his ability. Pūrṇa-Maitrāyaṇīputra, I say that such an expounder is a truly enlightened one, who can shatter the hearer's bottle of a koṭi afflictions, enabling him to see his true nature, like seeing an āmra [mango] in his palm. As an analogy, when the sun or moon is covered by dense clouds, its light is obscured. When the clouds are removed, its radiance illuminates. It is the same with one's Tathāgata store. When it is shrouded by one's afflictions, it is unseen; when one's afflictions are removed, its radiance illuminates everywhere. One's Buddha nature is radiant and pure, like the sun or moon. Alas, Pūrṇa-Maitrāyaṇīputra practices the way of a mosquito and does not know how to expound the Dharma. He should quietly scurry away."

Fascicle 4

Then Mañjuśrī said to Aṅgulimāla, "What is meant by the Tathāgata store? If all sentient beings possess the Tathāgata store, they all will become Buddhas even if they have track records of evil karmas, such as killing, stealing, sexual misconduct, lying, and drinking alcohol. Why? Because all sentient beings have Buddha nature [buddha-dhātu or buddha-goṭra] and will someday achieve deliverance. Because one has [and cannot lose] Buddha nature, should one commit the rebellious sins or become an icchantika? If one had a self [ātman], its self-realm [ātman-dhātu] could deliver all in existence. However, one has neither a self nor its realm. Buddhas teach that all dharmas have no self."

The Buddha told Mañjuśrī, "All sentient beings possess the Tathāgata store. However, like a lamp in a bottle, it is shrouded by countless afflictions. For example, Kāśhyapa Tathāgata bestowed a prophecy upon a young [spiritual] trainee. He prophesied, 'After seven years, you will become a Wheel-Turning King and use the true Dharma to rule and transform the world, while after seven days, I will enter parinirvāṇa.' After hearing His prophecy, the young trainee exuberantly rejoiced and thought, 'The one with all wisdom-knowledge prophesied that I will become a Wheel-Turning King. I have no doubt [that it will come true].' He told his mother, 'Get me various kinds of fine food, such as fish, meat, milk, cheese, sesame, and beans, to build up my strength.' Then he ate all these things in a mixture and died an untimely death. Mañjuśrī, did that Buddha lie? Did He not have all wisdom-knowledge? Did that young trainee not have the roots of goodness to deserve the good requital of becoming a Wheel-Turning King?"

Mañjuśrī answered, "World-Honored One, his past evil karmas must have caused his death."

The Buddha told Mañjuśrī, "Do not say so. His untimely death was not a requital for his past evil karmas. Mañjuśrī, how could that Buddha not know the requital for his past evil karmas and bestow upon him a prophecy [by mistake]? He had no past evil karmas, but lost his life because of his own doing. Mañjuśrī, a man or woman might think, 'My body possesses the Tathāgata store. Because I will achieve deliverance, I now might as well do evil.' If someone does evil, will he achieve deliverance because of his Buddha nature? In that story, the young trainee had the nature of a king, but failed to use it. Why? Because he abandoned self-restraint. Likewise sentient beings fail to reveal their Buddha nature because they abandon self-restraint. Do sentient beings not have Buddha nature? They truly do have it. Was that Buddha's prophecy of the young trainee's becoming a Wheel-Turning King a lie? Sentient beings tell lies and abandon self-restraint. Although they hear the Dharma, they abandon self-restraint. It is their own fault that they do not become Buddhas."...

"What is the path? There are two paths, the voice-hearer path and the Bodhisattva path. The voice-hearer path is the Eightfold Right Path. The Bodhisattva path is [the understanding] that all sentient beings possess the Tathāgata-store self and should, step by step, eradicate their afflictions and reveal their Buddha nature, which is motionless, delightful, and lovable. Those who do not eradicate [their afflictions] transmigrate forever through [their cycles of] birth and death."...

One's mind initiates [everything],
And one's excellent mind produces dharmas.
If one's mind has pure belief
While speaking or doing things,
Joy follows one,
Like the shadow of a form.

“This stanza [originally from the Dhammapada] explains to voice-hearers that the Tathāgata store means one’s inherent pure mind. As one’s Tathāgata store transcends all dharmas, all dharmas are one’s Tathāgata store. If one does things with pure belief and intention, it is because one has ended all one’s afflictions and seen one’s self-realm. As one has pure belief in one’s Tathāgata store whenever one speaks or does things, likewise after one attains Buddhahood, one will speak or do things to deliver all in the world. As one sees the shadow of a form, likewise one sees one’s Tathāgata store. That is why I say, ‘Like the shadow of a form.’”

One’s mind initiates [everything],
And one’s excellent mind produces intentions.
If one’s mind does evil
Through speaking or doing things,
Pains follow one,
Like wheels [of a cart] that follow a track.

“This stanza explains what is meant by afflictions. ‘One’s mind does evil’ means that one’s mind, shrouded by countless afflictions, initiates evildoing. So it is called evil. If one does not know that one’s inherent pure mind is the Tathāgata store, one succumbs to countless afflictions. Because one is restless and confused, whether one speaks or does things, pains endlessly follow. ‘Like wheels that follow a track’ means that evils accumulate as one transmigrates through [one’s cycle of] birth and death, and that evils drive sentient beings to take the three evil life-paths, like wheels that follow a track. That is why I say that whoever is tardy in acquiring merit delights in evil dharmas.

“Moreover, Mañjuśhrī, because one knows that milk contains butter, one churns milk to get butter; because water contains no butter, one does not churn it. Likewise, Mañjuśhrī, because one knows that one possesses the Tathāgata store, one diligently observes the pure precepts and practices the Brahma way of life. Moreover, because one knows that a mountain contains gold, one excavates the mountain to get gold; because a tree contains no gold, one does not excavate it. Likewise, Mañjuśhrī, because one knows that one possesses the Tathāgata store, one diligently observes the pure precepts and practices the Brahma way of life, and declares, ‘I will definitely attain Buddha bodhi.’ Moreover, Mañjuśhrī, if one had no Tathāgata store, practicing the Brahma way of life would be futile, like churning water for a kalpa but never getting butter.”

Mañjuśhrī asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, what is meant by the Brahma way of life? Why has the Tathāgata discarded the pleasures of the five desires?”

Aṅgulimāla said to Mañjuśhrī, “Innumerable gods know that [desire] will cause them to fall, so they stay away from thoughts of desire.”

The Buddha told Aṅgulimāla, “Do not say so. All sentient beings possess the Tathāgata store. Therefore, all men are brothers, and all women are sisters.”...

Mañjuśhrī asked the Buddha, “World-Honored One, is it because [all sentient beings possess] the Tathāgata store that Buddhas do not eat flesh?”

The Buddha said, “Indeed. Without a beginning, all sentient beings transmigrate through [their cycles of] birth and death. They have been parents, brothers, or sisters, just like an actor’s various roles. One’s flesh and others’ flesh are one flesh. Therefore, Buddhas do not eat flesh. Moreover, Mañjuśhrī, one’s realm and the realms of all sentient beings are one realm, and all flesh is one flesh. Therefore, Buddhas do not eat flesh.”

Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra

Appearance on Lanka Sutra, translated by Red Pine (excerpts)

from the Chinese translation by Gunabhadra (around the year 450), Taisho Tripitaka vol. 16, number 670

Chapter 2: Mahamati's Questions, on 3 modes of reality (imagined, dependent, perfected) (XXIII p99)

“Moreover, Mahamati, bodhisattvas should be well acquainted with the three modes of reality (tri-svabhava). And what are the three modes of reality? Imagined reality (parikalpita-svabhava), dependent reality (paratantra-svabhava), and perfected reality (parinishpanna-svabhava).

“Mahamati, imagined reality arises from appearances (nimitta). And how does imagined reality arise from appearances? Mahamati, as the objects and forms of dependent reality appear, attachment results in two kinds of imagined reality. These are what the tathagatas, the arhats, the fully enlightened ones describe as ‘attachment to appearance (nimitta)’ and ‘attachment to name (nama).’ Attachment to appearance involves attachment to external and internal entities, while attachment to name involves attachment to the individual and shared characteristics of these external and internal entities. These are the two kinds of imagined reality. What serves as the ground (ashraya) and objective support (alambana) from which they arise is dependent reality (a.k.a. alaya-vijnana).

“And what is perfected reality? This is the mode that is free from name or appearance or from projection (samkalpa). It is attained by buddha knowledge (arya-jnana) and is the realm where the personal realization of buddha knowledge takes place. This is the perfected reality and the heart of the tathagata-garbha.”

The Buddha then repeated the meaning of this in verse:

“Name and appearance and projection: these characterize two modes of reality (imagined and dependent). Correct knowledge (samyag-jnana) and suchness (tathata): these characterize the perfected mode.”

“Mahamati, this is what is known as the teaching of how to view what characterizes the five dharmas and the modes of reality. This is the realm where the personal realization of buddha knowledge takes place and which you and other bodhisattvas should cultivate.”

(section LV, page 159)

The Buddha then repeated the meaning of this in verse:

1. “When the mind is tied to external realms, knowledge is subject to speculation; where freedom from projection prevails, impartial wisdom rises.
2. What exists in imagined reality in dependent reality doesn't; imagined reality is what is grasped, dependent reality is not imagined.
3. Where a myriad distinctions arise, like illusions they aren't real; where characteristics multiply, because they're projections, they aren't perfect.
4. Characteristics are mistakes, rising from a mind in bondage; projections of what isn't known, based on dependent reality.
5. What exists in imagined reality is simply dependent reality, projections of all kinds, based on dependent reality.
6. There's conventional truth and ultimate truth, and a third that denies causation; projections refer to conventional truth, their cessation is the realm of sages.
7. Like someone who contemplates, who perceives a multitude in one, where no multitude exists: this is what projections resemble.
8. Like someone with cataracts who imagines different forms, which neither are nor aren't cataracts, dependent reality is thus mistaken.
9. Like gold that has been refined, free from dross and impurities, the sky without a cloud: imagined reality purified.
10. Imagined reality doesn't exist, dependent reality does; assertions & denials by projections are undone.
11. If imagined reality doesn't exist, and dependent reality does, if one doesn't and the other does, from what doesn't comes what does.
12. Thus is dependent reality based upon projection, from which name and appearance follow, giving rise to more projections.

13. Though they remain unperfected, once you get past all projections, knowledge is thus purified: this is ultimate truth.
14. Projections are twelve in number (words, the object of words, characteristics, value, self-existence, causes, views, reasoning, arising, non-arising, continuity, bondage and emancipation), dependent reality is sixfold, the knowledge known to oneself includes not one distinction.
15. The truth includes five dharmas, reality has three modes, practitioners who distinguish these don't separate from suchness (tathata).
16. Dependent reality and appearances, imagined reality and names; from the characteristics of projection, dependent reality arises.
17. In the radiant light of wisdom, dependent and imagined reality vanish, nor does perfected reality exist, so how is anything distinguished?
18. Because their natures are distinguished, the two realities are established; where a myriad projections appear lies the realm of pure buddha knowledge.
19. Imagined reality is like a painting, projecting dependent reality; something other than projection, this is the view of other schools.
20. What is projected by projection, they see coming from causes; beyond the duality of projection, this is where perfection occurs."

Chapter 4: excerpts on 5 dharmas (appearance, name, projection, suchness, correct knowledge)

(section LXXXIII, page 245)

"Mahamati, as for appearance (nimitta), what appears to visual consciousness, we name 'form.' What appears to auditory, olfactory, gustatory, tactile, or conceptual consciousness, we name 'sound,' 'smell,' 'taste,' 'feeling,' or 'thought.' These are the names for appearances.

"Mahamati, projection (samkalpa) fabricates names (nama) and points to appearances as being 'like this and not something else.' What we name an elephant or a horse, a charioteer or a foot soldier, a man or a woman, this is what is meant by projection.

"Mahamati, according to correct knowledge (samyag-jnana), names and appearances are indistinguishable – like passerby. When the different forms of consciousness do not arise, and they are neither annihilated nor eternal, and one does not end up in the realms of shravakas, pratyeka-buddhas, or other paths, this is what is meant by correct knowledge.

"Moreover, Mahamati, as a result of correct knowledge, bodhisattvas neither assert names nor appearances, nor do they not assert names or appearances. They avoid dualistic views of assertion or denial because they know that names and appearances do not arise. This is what is meant by suchness...

The Buddha told Mahamati, "The three modes of reality as well as the eight forms of consciousness and the two kinds of no-self (persons and things) are all included in the five dharmas. Mahamati, name and appearance are the imagined mode of reality. Mahamati, because the mind and what belongs to the mind are dependent on projection for their existence and arise together with name, just as do the sun and its rays, and because they are supported by the differentiation of their various appearances, they constitute the dependent mode. And, Mahamati, because correct knowledge and suchness are indestructible, they make up the perfected mode."

(section LXXXIV, page 247)

"Moreover, Mahamati, the five dharmas include appearance, name, projection, suchness, and correct knowledge. Mahamati, appearance is what is perceived as having physical shape and features. This is what is meant by appearance. If a certain appearance is referred to as a pot and not something else, this is what is meant by name. Designating names and pointing to appearances, as in the case of a pot, involve the mind and what belongs to the mind. This is what is meant by projection. But names and appearances are essentially ungraspable and ultimately unknowable. What is not affected by anything and what transcends mistaken projections, this is what is meant by suchness. What is real, true, certain, ultimate, self-existent, and ungraspable, these are the characteristics of suchness. The characteristics I and all buddhas accordingly attain and truly explain and designate and indicate to others so that they are able to reach a true understanding of what is neither annihilated nor eternal and so that they do not give rise to

projections but reach the realm of the personal realization of buddha knowledge beyond the reach of shravakas, pratyeka-buddhas and followers of other paths, this is what is meant by correct knowledge.

Chapter 2: Mahamati's Questions, excerpts on tathagata-garbha (section XXVIII, page 109)

Mahamati Bodhisattva then asked the Buddha, "In the sutras, the Bhagavan says that the tathagata-garbha is intrinsically pure, endowed with thirty-two attributes and present in the bodies of all beings, and that, like a priceless jewel wrapped in soiled clothing, the ever-present, unchanging tathagata-garbha is likewise wrapped in the soiled clothing of the skandhas, dhatus, and ayatanas and stained with the stain of the erroneous projections (parikalpa) of greed, anger, and delusion, and that is what all buddhas teach. How is it that what the Bhagavan says about the tathagata-garbha is the same as what followers of other paths say about a self (atman)? Bhagavan, followers of other paths also speak of an immortal creator without attributes, omnipresent and indestructible. And they say this, Bhagavan, is the self."

The Buddha replied, "Mahamati, the tathagata-garbha of which I speak is not the same as the self mentioned by followers of other paths. Mahamati, when I speak about the tathagata-garbha, sometimes I call it 'emptiness' (shunyata), 'formlessness' (animitta), or 'intentionlessness' (apranihita), or 'realm of reality' (bhutakoti), 'dharma nature' (dharmata), or 'dharma body' (dharmakaya), or 'nirvana,' 'what is devoid of self-existence' (nisvavabhavata), or 'what neither arises nor ceases,' or 'original quiescence,' or 'intrinsic nirvana,' or similar expressions.

"It is to put an end to the fear foolish beings have about the expression 'no self' (nairatmya) that the tathagatas, the arhats, the fully enlightened ones proclaim the teaching of the tathagata-garbha as a projectionless (nirvikalpa) realm devoid of fabrications. Mahamati, bodhisattvas of the present and the future should not become attached to any view of a self.

"Take for example a potter who applies such things as manual labor, water, a stick, a wheel, and a string to a lump of clay to make different kinds of vessels. The Tathagata is also like this, applying wisdom and a variety of skillful means to what has no self and is free from projection. Sometimes I speak about the tathagata-garbha and sometimes no self. Thus, the tathagata-garbha of which I speak is not the same as the self spoken of by followers of other paths. This is what is meant by the teaching of the tathagata-garbha. The tathagata-garbha is taught to attract those members of other paths who are attached to a self so that they will give up their projection of an unreal self and will enter the threefold gate of liberation (emptiness, formlessness, intentionlessness) and aspire to attain unexcelled, complete enlightenment forthwith. This is why the tathagatas, the arhats, the fully enlightened ones speak in this manner about the tathagata-garbha. To speak otherwise would be to agree with the followers of other paths. Therefore, Mahamati, in order to avoid the views of followers of other paths, you should rely on the selfless tathagata-garbha (tathagata-nairatmya-garbha).

Chapter 3: More Questions, on tathagata-garbha & repository consciousness (sect. LXXXII, p. 240)

Mahamati once more asked the Buddha, "Bhagavan, would you please explain again the arising and cessation of the skandhas, dhatus, and ayatanas? If they contain no self, who arises, and who ceases? Foolish people rely on arising and cessation and fail to experience an end of suffering and fail to know nirvana."

The Buddha said, "Excellent. Listen carefully, and I will tell you."

Mahamati replied, "May we be so instructed."

The Buddha said, "The tathagata-garbha is the cause of whatever is good or bad and is responsible for every form of existence everywhere. It is like an actor who changes appearances in different settings but who lacks a self or what belongs to a self. Because this is not understood, followers of other paths unwittingly imagine an agent responsible for the effects that arise from the threefold combination (of sensory power, domain, and consciousness).

"When it is impregnated by the habit-energy (vasana) of beginningless fabrications (prapancha), it is known as the repository consciousness (alaya-vijnana) and gives birth to fundamental ignorance along with seven kinds of consciousness. It is like the ocean whose waves rise without cease. But it transcends the misconception of impermanence or the conceit of a self and is essentially pure and clear.

"The seven kinds of thoughts of the remaining forms of consciousness – the will (manas), conceptual consciousness (mano-vijnana), and the others – rise and cease as the result of mistakenly projecting

(abhutaparikalpa) and grasping external appearances. Because people are attached to the names and appearances (nama-nimitta) of all kinds of shapes, they are unaware that such forms and characteristics are the perceptions of their own minds (sva-chitta-drshya) and that bliss or suffering do not lead to liberation (moksha). As they become enveloped by names and appearances, their desires arise and create more desires, each becoming the cause or condition of the next. Only if their senses stopped functioning, and the remaining projections of their minds no longer arose, and they did not distinguish bliss or suffering, would they enter the Samadhi of Cessation of Sensation and Perception (nirodha-samapatti) in the fourth dhyana heaven. However, in their cultivation of the truths of liberation (four noble truths), they give rise to the concept of liberation and fail to transcend or transform (paravrtti) what is called the repository consciousness of the tathagata-garbha. And the seven kinds of consciousness never stop flowing. And how so? Because the different kinds of consciousness arise as a result of causes and conditions. This is not the understanding of shravaka or pratyeka-buddha practitioners, as they do not realize there is no self that arises from grasping the individual or shared characteristics of the skandhas, dhatus, or ayatanas (they have seen through the self of persons but not the self of dharmas).

For those who see the tathagata-garbha, the five dharmas, the modes of existence (svabhava), and the two kinds of no-self cease to exist. And once they progress through the sequence of stages (bhumi) and are not swayed by the views of other paths, they are said to dwell in the unshakable stage of bodhisattvas (achala-bhumi, the eighth stage), where they enjoy the bliss of the ten samadhis. Supported by the buddhas during such samadhis, they reflect on the inconceivable Dharma. But because of their vows, they do not grasp the bliss of samadhi or ultimate reality (bhuta-koti). And by means of the personal realization of buddha knowledge (sva-pratyatma-arya-jnana), which is not among the practices of shravakas, pratyeka-buddhas, or followers of other paths, they complete the ten-stage path of the lineage of sages, and they acquire bodies of knowledge and projection that transcend samadhi.

“Therefore, Mahamati, bodhisattvas who seek the highest goal should purify what are called the tathagata-garbha and the repository consciousness. Mahamati, if there were nothing called the repository consciousness, the tathagata-garbha [, then the external world of things] would neither arise nor cease. But sages and fools alike experience arising and cessation, Mahamati. Therefore, practitioners who cultivate the personal realization of buddha knowledge dwell in the bliss of whatever is present and do not abandon their practice.

“Mahamati, although this repository consciousness of the tathagata-garbha (tathagata-garbha-alaya-vijnana) seen by the minds of shravakas and pratyeka-buddhas is essentially pure, because it is obscured by the dust of sensation (klesha), it appears impure – but not to tathagatas. To tathagatas, Mahamati, the realm that appears before them is like an amala fruit in the palm of their hand.

“Mahamati, I have used my spiritual power to support Queen Shrimala and other bodhisattvas of deep wisdom to explain the meaning of what are called the repository consciousness and the tathagata-garbha, which appear together with the seven other kinds of consciousness, so that those shravakas still attached to them might see that persons and dharmas are without a self. Thus supported by the power of the Buddha, Queen Shrimala explained the realm of understanding of tathagatas and not the realm of understanding of shravakas, pratyeka-buddhas, or other paths. The repository consciousness of the tathagata-garbha is something only buddhas and those wisest of bodhisattvas who rely on meaning understand. Therefore you and the other bodhisattvas should diligently reflect on the repository consciousness of the tathagata-garbha. Don’t simply think hearing about this is enough.”

The Buddha then repeated the meaning of this in verse:

1. “Deep is the tathagata-garbha with seven kinds of consciousness; the two kinds of grasping that arise are avoided by the wise.
2. The mind is like a reflected image, the result of habit-energy without beginning; for those who see what is real, whatever is seen isn’t seen.
3. Like fools who see me point to the moon, look at my finger and not at the moon, those who cling to names don’t see this truth of mine.
4. The mind (chitta/alaya) is the hero in a play, the will (manas) is the hero’s confidant, the five forms of consciousness are the cast, projections are the audience [or stage].”

Brahmajāla Sūtra

Translated by Kumārajīva [344-413], Taisho 24:1484. Translated into English by Charles Muller

Vairochana Buddha said: “Thousand buddhas, listen well! You previously asked: ‘what is the meaning of ‘ground?’ ’ My disciples, when bodhisattvas enter into the ground of the essence of the wisdom of equality, they teach the true Dharma. All practices reach fruition in the flower illumination that completely fills the four heavens; it is the teaching that relies on the vehicle; it is the teaching that relies on the nondelimited principle. The ten supernatural powers, the ten epithets, the eighteen distinctive characteristics, abiding in the Buddha’s pure land, innumerable great vows, the fearless rhetorical skill, all the sciences, all practices—I attain and enter all of these, being born in the family of the Buddha, sitting on the ground of the Buddha-nature. In the end not experiencing any obstacles, nor the causes and effects of ordinary people, I am filled with great bliss. From one Buddha-land I enter innumerable Buddha-lands; from one kalpa I enter innumerable kalpas; the inexplicable teachings become explicable. In reflection I see all dharmas, and in resisting and complying I see all dharmas; while always entering the two truths, I remain in the ultimate truth...

“In the Dharma of the peak samādhi there is the tolerance of superior bliss, permanent extinction without remainder. Thereupon entering into all buddha-lands, they cultivate themselves in the category of innumerable merits, each practice luminously shining. Entering into the application of skillful means, they enlighten all sentient beings, enabling them to gain a vision of the constancy, bliss, self, and purity of the Buddha-nature. These people who are born in and abide in this land carry out the Dharma teachings of conversion, which become gradually more profound...

“My disciples, when bodhisattvas reach to the Ground of Flower Ornamentation of the Essence, they use the deportment of the buddhas, and the Tathāgata’s royal concentration—where they have complete control over samādhi, entering and leaving regardless of time. In the trichiliocosms of the ten directions, ten billion suns and moons, ten billion continents beneath the four heavens, in one instant they attain enlightenment, turn the wheel of the Dharma [and pass through the other eight major junctures of the Buddha’s career] up to entering into nirvāna... They are to make the transition from all views to enter into the Buddha view, and from the Buddha view enter into all views. From the Buddha-nature they enter into the natures of sentient beings, and from the natures of sentient beings enter into the Buddha-nature. This ground is lustrously illuminated, with wisdom after wisdom shining; brightly burning, brightly burning, they are without fear and without limitation. The stage includes the ten powers, eighteen distinctive abilities, liberation, nirvāna, the purity of the unconditioned single path. And for all sentient beings they appear as father, mother, elder and younger brothers, and expound the Dharma for them, exhausting all kalpas to attain realization of the path. They furthermore materialize in all lands, and cause all sentient beings to see each other like fathers and mothers, and cause all Māras and non-Buddhists to see each other like fathers and mothers. Abiding in this ground, they start off from the state of birth and death, arriving to the adamant state. In the space of a single thought, they manifest this kind of activity, and are able to transition themselves to enter innumerable realms of sentient beings. This brief recapitulation of this kind of immeasurable activity is like a drop in the ocean...

“At this time the Buddha observed the nets of the King of the Brahma Heaven, and was motivated to say: ‘Innumerable worlds are just like the eyes in this net. Each and every world is different from the other, and the differences are innumerable. It is the same with the Buddha’s teachings’...

The radiant adamant precepts are the source of all buddhas, the origin of all bodhisattvas, the seed of Buddha-nature. All sentient beings without exception have Buddha-nature. All [those who have] mentation, consciousness, form, and mind—who have these feelings and these minds, are all encompassed by these Buddha-nature precepts. It is precisely because of these ever-present causes [in the form of the precepts], that there is without fail always an abiding Dharma body. In this way, these ten *prātimokṣas* appear in the world, and these Dharma rules are received and upheld with reverence by all sentient beings of the three times. I will now once again recite the Chapter of the Ten Inexhaustible Precepts Treasury for this great assembly. These are the precepts for all sentient beings, whose original self-nature is pure...

Anuttarāśraya-Sūtra

Supreme Support-Basis Scripture

佛說無上依經

Translated by Paramārtha ~550, Taisho 16, number 669. Translated into English by Fitri Junoes

Chapter 2: Tathāgatadhātu (...the Bhagavan was staying at Karaṇḍa Veṇuvana at Rājagṛha...)

The Buddha said to Ānanda, “After Buddha’s, Bhagavan’s *parinirvāṇa*, [if one] would build a shrine, erect a *stūpa*, make a [Buddha] statue for worship, the meritorious reward is incalculable, [and] cannot be known in terms of the quantity of dust particles. Why is this so?”

“Ānanda, the Tathāgata is wonderful, inconceivable. Why is this? As the *dhātu*, as the *gotra*, it is inconceivable. As the *bodhi*, as realization, it is inconceivable. As virtues, as qualities, it is inconceivable. As benefit, as the function, it is inconceivable. Ānanda, what is the *tathāgatadhātu*? How is the Tathāgata as *dhātu* inconceivable? Ānanda, all sentient beings have an excellent nature of aggregates, entrances, and *dhātus* that manifests within and without [and] proceed from beginningless time. [This excellent nature is] acquired by the nature of things [*dharmatā*] and is ultimately bright [and] excellent. Herein, if [the *dhātu* is] not dependently originated through thought, mind and consciousness, then [it] cannot be dependently originated by way of conceptualization process based on logical thinking; it cannot be dependently originated through improper mental application. If it is separate from improper mental application, this *dharma* does not generate ignorance. If it does not generate ignorance, this *dharma* does not pertain to the twelve existence factors of conditioned co-arising. If it does not pertain to the twelve existence factors of conditioned co-arising, this *dharma* is devoid of characteristics. If [the *dhātu* is] without characteristics, then it is not something that is produced. [It is] non-arising, non-ceasing, non-decreasing and inexhaustible. It is permanent. It is ever-lasting. It is tranquil. It is abiding. The intrinsic nature is pure without any contamination, separated, taintless. [It is] liberated from the sheath of defilements, positively conjoined with and not separated from Tathāgata-*dharma*s, which are greater than the number of sands of the Ganges. It [also] does not relinquish knowledge. [Thus, this *dhātu* is] inconceivable.

“Ānanda, just like the priceless *chintāmaṇi* — beautiful, polished, decorated, attractive and radiant — its nature is completely pure without any contamination, [even when] left in filth for one-hundred thousand *kalpas*. After such a long time, if there is someone who picks it up and obtains it, washes and cleans it, guards and protects it, without letting it fall [again], this priceless *chintāmaṇi*, having been cleansed and kept, regains its purity and does not relinquish its nature as a gem. In the same way Ānanda, all Tathāgatas who formerly were at the causal stage know that *sattvadhātu* is intrinsically pure [but] polluted by adventitious defilements. The Buddhas, the Tathāgatas contemplate thus: the adventitious defilements cannot penetrate into the pure *dhātu* of sentient beings. These defilements are the exterior cover, constructed by false thoughts. We can teach the profound *dharma* to remove the hindrance of defilements to all sentient beings. We should not generate inferior thoughts. On account of a mind of greatness we give rise to a thought of respect towards sentient beings, generate respect towards the teacher, generate *prajñā*, generate *jñāna* and give rise to great compassion. Based upon [these] five *dharma*s, *bodhisattvas* attain the state of non-retrogress.

“These *bodhisattva*-s further reflect: these defilement-taints are powerless and incapable, and are not conjoined with the fundamental basis. There is no real basis, no basis of abode. This supremely pure basis is therefore without a basis. False thoughts, topsy-turviness, or conditioning arise [with it as the absolute base]. It is just like the case that earth, water and wind are able to abide with the support of their bases. This very basis of theirs is without a support. Likewise, defilements have no real support. If one truly knows and contemplates through proper mental application, these defilements do not generate opposition [to absolute reality, which is absolutely pure]. I now should reflect in such a way as not to allow defilements to pollute. If I have defilements and yet they do not pollute, this is excellent. If we are attached to the defilements, how can we preach the *dharma* to sentient beings and liberate them from the bondage of defilements? Therefore, we now should abandon defilements and teach the true *dharma* to liberate sentient beings from bondage. If there are defilements that cause the continuation of the cycle of

birth and death and yet are conjoined with virtuous roots, then we should embrace these defilements for the sake of the maturation of sentient beings, the maturation of the *Buddhadharmas*. In this way, Ānanda, the Tathāgatas in the causal stage, on the basis of true knowledge of reality and on the basis of the proper amount of cultivation, reach the *tathāgatadhātu*. Without stain, without attachment, [they] can enter the cycle of birth and death, revolve in birth and death — which is not bondage of defilements — and realize the great skillful-means. They abide in the non-abiding serene *nirvāṇa* and rapidly attain supreme perfect enlightenment.

“Ānanda, this *tathāgatadhātu* is immeasurable, boundless [but] covered by a sheath of defilements, follows the flow of birth and death, drifts in the six realms and revolves in the cycle [since] beginningless time. This I call the *sattvadhātu*. Ānanda, this *sattvadhātu* gives rise to disgust towards the suffering of birth and death and relinquishes the six sensual desires. On the basis of the eighty-four thousand *dharma* perspectives, which are subsumed under the ten perfections, he cultivates the path of *bodhi*. This I call a *bodhisattva*. Ānanda, this *dhātu* of sentient beings has already been freed from the sheath of defilements, transcended all sufferings, washed off of taints and been absolutely tranquilized, purified and cleansed. It is that which all sentient beings aspire to see, the wonderful superior state, the state of omniscience, free from all hindrances. When [the *bodhisattva*] enters and abide therein, he has attained the incomparable capability, the power of great sovereignty of a *dharma* king. This I call the *Tathāgato'rhan samyak-sambuddha*. Ānanda, this *tathāgatadhātu* in the three states everywhere is totally unhindered, intrinsically tranquil. It is like an empty space that cannot be covered, cannot be filled-up and cannot be congested with all kinds of forms, such as earthenware, silverware and goldware. The *tathāgatadhātu*, like empty space, is also like this; it is totally unhindered in the three states and everywhere.

“Ānanda, when all Tathāgatas at the causal stage, on the basis of true knowledge of reality and on the basis of the proper amount of cultivation, [they] contemplate the five virtues of the *tathāgatadhātu*: inexpressible, without duality, surpasses identity and difference, surpasses the domain of logical thinking, and being of the same taste everywhere. Having seen these, the *bodhisattva-s* eliminate the signs of sentient beings, eliminate the signs of differentiations of *dharma-s* and eliminate the signs of the great fetters. On the basis of unhindered knowledge, observe the *tathāgatadhātu* among the serial continuities of sentient beings and give rise to the thought of wonder: ‘Oh, sentient beings!’ The Tathāgata is inside the body of sentient beings; one cannot see the Tathāgata by logical reasoning. Therefore, I say that the complete noble path liberates one from the hindrances of the beginningless bondage to signs, so that sentient beings, due to the power of the noble path, can break the bondage to signs, and they themselves can realize properly the Tathāgata in its reality and equality. Why is it so? All sentient beings are bound by attachment to signs, thus do not cognize the Tathāgata, do not attain Tathāgata and do not see the Tathāgata.

“Ānanda, when the Tathāgata was formerly at the causal stage, he contemplated on the *tathāgatadhātu*, penetrating it and clearly discerning it. He directly realized all *dharma-s* as totally being equal and properly turned the unsurpassed excellent wheel of *dharma*, directly maturing the assembly of noble disciples who are immeasurable and limitless and surrounded the Tathāgata with respect. The Tathāgata abides in cool *nirvāṇa* without residue, working for the benefit of sentient beings without forsaking them until the end of the world. Ānanda, because this *tathāgatadhātu* is intrinsically pure, because in the domain of sentient beings it does not vary with regard to characteristics, and does not differ, it is conjoined with [the qualities of] absolutely following along, equal, radiant, smooth, most wonderful, tender, and wholesome. Ānanda, it is like the water element that is intrinsically clear and moist; it is able to cohere, able to moisten and able to nurture all herbs and trees. In the same way, Ānanda, all Buddha-s in their causal stage, with the *tathāgatadhātu* as the support-basis, cultivate the roots of goodness and benefit sentient beings. Therefore, for the sake of these activities, they enter the three realms and manifest birth, old age, sickness and death. These *bodhisattvas*’ birth, old age and so forth, therefore, do not truly exist. Why is it so? They have truly seen the *tathāgatadhātu*.

“Ānanda, it is like an elderly wealthy man who has an only son, handsome and intelligent. He takes care, loves and looks after his son with a continuous affection, without neglect even for a moment. This boy is young and craves for the pleasure of dances and plays, so he does not realize when his feet step into

a smelly, big, deep pit of dirt, full of dung and rotten corpses. The mother of the child and the other relatives see the child falls into the pit and scream in fear and howl in pain, frustration and anger. These relatives, even though they cry in grief, have no physical strength, are cowardly, incapable of going into this deep pit to rescue the child from suffering. At this time, the elderly man quickly returns. He cares about his child, and without being disgusted by the foul smell, he enters into the pit, grabs and pulls out the child. In the same way, Ānanda, I make this analogy in order to illustrate the true meaning. The said pit of dung and rotten corpses are analogies for the three realms. The only child is an analogy for ordinary sentient beings. The mother and other family relatives are analogies of the *śhrāvakas* and the *pratyekabuddha*-s. These people of the two *yānas* see sentient beings being drifted in the stream of existence, and drowned in birth and death. They are unable to pull them out with their strength, even though they pity and worry about them and are in pain. The rich elderly [man] is a *bodhisattva* with a pure, untainted, unpolluted mind. Having directly realized the *dharma* that has never been acquainted with before, he comes to enter the bad smelly place of birth and death and manifests in a body that is subject to birth in order to rescue sentient beings.

“Ānanda, [you] should know such is *bodhisattvas*’ great compassion, wonderful and inexpressible: [they have] transcended the three realms and [are] liberated from all bondages but again enter the three realms and experience births in the three existences. Sustained by skillful-means and perfection of wisdom, even though there are defilements, they are not tainted. They teach the true *dharma*-s in order to extinguish the sufferings of sentient beings. Ānanda, you ought to know that the *tathāgatadhātu* is of great spiritual might, being without change and resplendent. Ānanda, this *sattvadhātu* is the nature of all sages. It is without cultivation, without non-cultivation, without practice, without non-practice, without mind and without mental *dharma*, without *karma* and without karmic fruit, without suffering and without joy. [One who contemplates thus is said to] have entered this domain: this nature is one of equality; this nature is one of non-variation; this nature is one of separateness; this nature is one of complying; this nature is one of vastness; this nature is one of unselfishness; this nature is one of without-high-and-lowness; this nature is one of trueness; this nature is one of inexhaustibleness; this nature is one of permanence; this nature is one of clearness.

“Ānanda, how is this *dhātu* the nature of the sages? All noble *dharmas* are accomplished with this as the condition. All sages are manifested on the basis of this *dhātu* as the cause. Therefore, I call this the *dhātu* of the sages. Ānanda, the unique reals of all Tathāgatas that exceed the amount of Ganges’ sand are issued from, and are manifested by the Tathāgata-nature that I currently speak about. This [nature] is called the *tathāgatadhātu*. All sages who believe in [this] true teaching and deeply esteem it come to accomplish their bodies of *shīla*, *samādhi*, and *prajñā*. Hence this *dharma* is called the *dharmakāya*.

“For those *dharmas* that cohere and are not separated, that do not relinquish wisdom and that are disconnected, this is the support-base, the support and the foundation. For those *dharmas* that are cohesive and separated, that relinquish knowledge, [that are] connected, this is also the support-base, the support and the foundation. Therefore, I say that the matrix [*garbha*] of all *dharmas*, being non-changing, is called suchness. [The matrix of all *dharmas* is] without topsy-turviness, so it is called the reality-limit. [The matrix of all *dharmas*] transcends all signs, it is called quiescence. [The matrix of all *dharmas* is] the domain of the activities, the noble one’s wisdom of non-discrimination, so it is called the ultimate truth. Ānanda, you ought to know that this *tathāgatadhātu* is neither existent nor non-existent, neither defiled nor pure. It is intrinsically taintless, conjoined with purity. Ānanda, how is it that the Tathāgata as *dhātu* is inconceivable? Ānanda, this *tathāgatadhātu* at the state where taint exists, the pure and impure *dharmas* exist simultaneously, this situation, is inconceivable. It is not the domain of knowledge of those who are liberated through [insight into] the profound doctrine and become *arhat*-s and *pratyekabuddhas*.

“Ānanda, there are two *dharmas* that are incomprehensible. First, that the *dharmadhātu* is intrinsically pure; this is incomprehensible. Second, the hindrance of defilement-taint [on the basis of this *dhātu*] is incomprehensible. Only the non-retrogress *bodhisattva*-s are conjoined with the great doctrine, able to listen, able to accept and able to practice these. Because all those *bodhisattvas*, the *śrāvakas* and the *pratyekabuddhas* have faith in the words of the Buddha, therefore, they gain knowledge of these *dharmas*. Ānanda, the Tathāgata with regard to the nature of this *dhātu* is inconceivable.”

Śhūraṅgama Sūtra

Great Buddha Crown Heroic March Sutra (*Da Fo Ding Shou Leng Yan Jing* (excerpts))

首楞嚴經

Translated during the Tang Dynasty by Shramana Paramiti from central India (in 705)

Taisho Volume 19, Number 945

Translated into English by the Buddhist Text Translation Society

Chapter 2

"Ananda, you have not yet understood that all the defiling objects that appear, all the illusory, ephemeral phenomena, spring up in the very spot where they also come to an end. Their phenomena aspects are illusory and false, but their nature is in truth the bright substance of wonderful enlightenment. Thus it is throughout, up to the five skandhas and the six entrances, to the twelve places and the eighteen realms; the union and mixture of various causes and conditions account for their illusory and false existence, and the separation and dispersion of the causes and conditions result in their illusory and false extinction. Who would have thought that production and extinction, coming and going are fundamentally the eternal wonderful light of the Tathagata, the unmoving, all-pervading perfection, the wonderful nature of True Suchness! If within the true and eternal nature one seeks coming and going, confusion and enlightenment, or birth and death, one will never find them.

"Ananda, Why do I say that the five skandhas are basically the wonderful nature of true suchness, the Treasury of the Tathagata (tathagatagarbha)? Ananda, suppose a person with clear vision were to gaze at clear bright space. His gaze would perceive only clear emptiness devoid of anything else. Then if that person for no particular reason fixed his gaze, the staring would cause fatigue. Thus in empty space he would see illusory flowers and other illusory and disordered unreal appearances. You should be aware that the form skandha is like that. Ananda, those illusory flowers did not originate from space nor did they come from the eyes. In fact, Ananda, if they came from space, coming from there they should also return to and enter space. But if objects were to enter and leave it, space would not be empty. And if space was not empty, then there would be no room for it to contain the flowers that might appear and disappear, just as Ananda's body cannot contain another Ananda. If the flowers came from the eyes, coming from them, they should also return to the eyes. If the image of flowers originated in the eyes, then they themselves should have vision. If they had vision, when they went out to space, they should be able to turn around and see the person's eyes. If they didn't have vision, then in going out, they would obscure space and in returning they would obscure the eyes. But when the person saw the flowers, his eyes should not have been obscured. But on the contrary, isn't it when we see clear space that our vision is said to be clear? From this you should understand that the form skandha is empty and false. Fundamentally its nature cannot be attributed to either causes and conditions or spontaneity.

Chapter 3

"Ananda, your nature is so submerged that you have not realized that your seeing, hearing, awareness, and knowing are basically the Treasury of the Tathagata (tathagatagarbha). Contemplate seeing, hearing, awareness, and knowing to see whether they are subject to coming into being and ceasing to be; whether they are identical or different; whether they are not subject to coming into being and ceasing to be; and whether they are neither identical nor different.

"You still do not realize that in the Treasury of the Tathagata the nature of seeing is enlightened brightness, the essence of enlightenment is bright seeing. That fundamental purity pervades the Dharma Realm. Beings' minds absorb it according to their capacity to know. Just as the eyes capacity to see pervades the Dharma Realm, so, too, do the capacities to hear, smell, taste, make contact, and know. All those capacities are glorious, magnificent qualities. Since they pervade the Dharma Realm and fill all emptiness in the ten directions, how could they be found in any fixed location? Whatever manifests does so in compliance with karma. Ignorant of that fact, people of the world are so deluded as to assign its

origin to causes and conditions or to spontaneity. These mistakes, which arise from the discriminations and reasoning processes of the conscious mind, are nothing but the play of empty and meaningless words.

"Ananda, the nature of consciousness has no source, but is a false manifestation based on the six organs and their corresponding objects. Now, take a look at the entire sagely assembly gathered here. The observations made by your eyes are similar to reflections in a mirror, both being devoid of distinction-making. However, your consciousness will systematically identify what is seen: that is Manjushri, that is Purna, there is Maudgalyayana, there is Subhuti, and that one is Shariputra. Does the consciousness which is aware and knows come from seeing, from forms, from emptiness, or does it arise suddenly without a cause?"

Chapter 4

"Bhagavan, if all the mundane sense organs, sense objects, skandhas, places, and realms are the Treasury of the Tathagata (tathagatagarbha), why, in that fundamental purity, do the mountains, rivers, great earth and all other conditioned phenomena suddenly arise, cyclically change and flow, end, and then begin again? (*Book of Serenity case 100 is based on this section*)

"Based on wonderful understanding that neither ceases to be nor comes into being, I unite with the Treasury of the Tathagata. Thus the Treasury of the Tathagata is the unique and wonderful enlightened brightness which completely illumines the Dharma Realm. That is why, within it, the one is limitless; the limitless is one. In the small appears the great; in the great appears the small. Unmoving in the Bodhimanda, yet pervading the ten directions, my body contains the ten directions and endless emptiness. On the tip of a single hair appear the lands of the Jeweled Kings. Sitting in a mote of dust, I turn the great Dharma wheel, put an end to defiling dust, and unite with enlightenment, so that true suchness, the wonderful enlightened bright nature, comes into being.

"The Treasury of the Tathagata is the fundamental, wonderful, perfect mind. It is not the mind, nor emptiness, nor earth, nor water, nor wind, nor fire; it is not the eyes, nor the ears, the nose, the tongue, the body, or the mind. It is not form, nor sounds, smells, tastes, objects of touch, or dharmas. It is not the realm of eye-consciousness, nor any other, up to and including the realm of mind-consciousness. It is not understanding, nor ignorance, nor the ending of understanding or ignorance, nor any other, up to and including old age and death and the ending of old age and death. It is not suffering, nor accumulation, nor extinction, nor the Way. It is neither knowing nor attaining. It is not Dana, nor Shila, nor Virya, nor Kshanti, nor Dhyana, nor Prajna, nor Paramita, nor any other: It is not the Tathagata, nor the Arhats, nor Samyaksambodhi, nor Parinirvana, nor Eternity, nor Bliss, nor True Self, nor Purity.

"Therefore, it is neither mundane nor transcendental, since the Treasury of the Tathagata is the wonder of the mind's primal understanding. It is the mind; it is emptiness, it is earth; it is water; it is wind; it is fire; it is the eyes; it is the ears; the nose, the tongue, the body, and the mind. It is form; it is sounds; smells, tastes, objects of touch, and dharmas. It is the realm of eye-consciousness, and so forth, up to and including the realm of mind-consciousness. It is understanding and ignorance and the ending of understanding and ignorance, and so forth up to and including old age and death and the ending of old age and death. It is suffering; it is accumulation; it is extinction; and it is the Way. It is knowing and attaining. It is Dana; it is Shila; it is Virya; it is Kshanti; it is Dhyana; it is Prajna; and it is Paramita, and so forth, up to and including the Tathagata, the Arhats, Samyaksambodhi, Parinirvana, Eternity, Bliss, True Self, and Purity.

"It is both mundane and transcendental, since the Treasury of the Tathagata is the wonderful understanding of the primal mind. It is apart from identity and negation. It is identity and negation.

"How can beings in the three realms of mundane existence and the Hearers and Those Enlightened to Conditions at the level of transcendental existence make suppositions about the unsurpassed Bodhi of the Tathagata with the minds that they know of, or enter the knowledge and vision of the Buddha through the medium of worldly language? Consider lutes, flutes, and guitars. Although those can make wonderful sounds, but if there are no skilled fingers to play them, their music will never come forth. You and all beings are the same way. The precious, enlightened true mind is perfect in everyone. I apply pressure and the Ocean Impression emits light; you move your mind, and the wearisome defilements spring up. That

happens all because you do not diligently seek the unsurpassed enlightened Way, but are fond of the lesser vehicle and are satisfied with little attainment."

Purna said, "My mind and the Tathagata's true wonderful pure mind are no different in their perfect precious enlightenment and complete understanding. But I have long been plagued with beginningless false thoughts and have long endured the cycle of rebirth. As of yet my attainment in the sagely vehicle is not ultimate. Bhagavan has completely ended all falseness and attained wonderful eternal truth. I venture to ask the Thus Come One why all beings exist in falseness and conceal their own wonderful understanding, so that they keep drowning in this deluge?"

The Buddha said to Purna, "Although you have cast off doubts, you still have not ended residual delusions. I will now question you about a mundane event. Did you hear about Yajnadatta from Shravasti who on impulse one morning held a mirror to his face and fell in love with the head in the mirror? He gazed at the eyes and eyebrows but got angry because he could not see his own face. He decided he must be a mountain or river sprite, lost control, and ran madly about. What do you think? Why did this person set out on a mad cause for no reason?"

Purna said, "That person was insane. There's no other reason."

The Buddha said, "What reason can you give for saying that the wonderful enlightened bright perfection, the fundamentally perfect bright wonder is false? If there is a reason, then how do you define false? All of your own false thinking becomes in turn the cause for more. From confusion you accumulate confusion through eon after eon; although the Buddha is aware of it, he cannot counteract it. From such confused causes, the cause of confusion perpetuates itself. When one realizes that confusion has no cause, the falseness becomes baseless. Since it never arose, why would you hope for its end? One who obtains Bodhi is like a person who awakens to tell of the events in a dream; since his mind will remain awake and clear, why would he want to hold onto the things in a dream?"