

Three Turnings of the Wheel

Ji Hyang Padma, Ph.D.

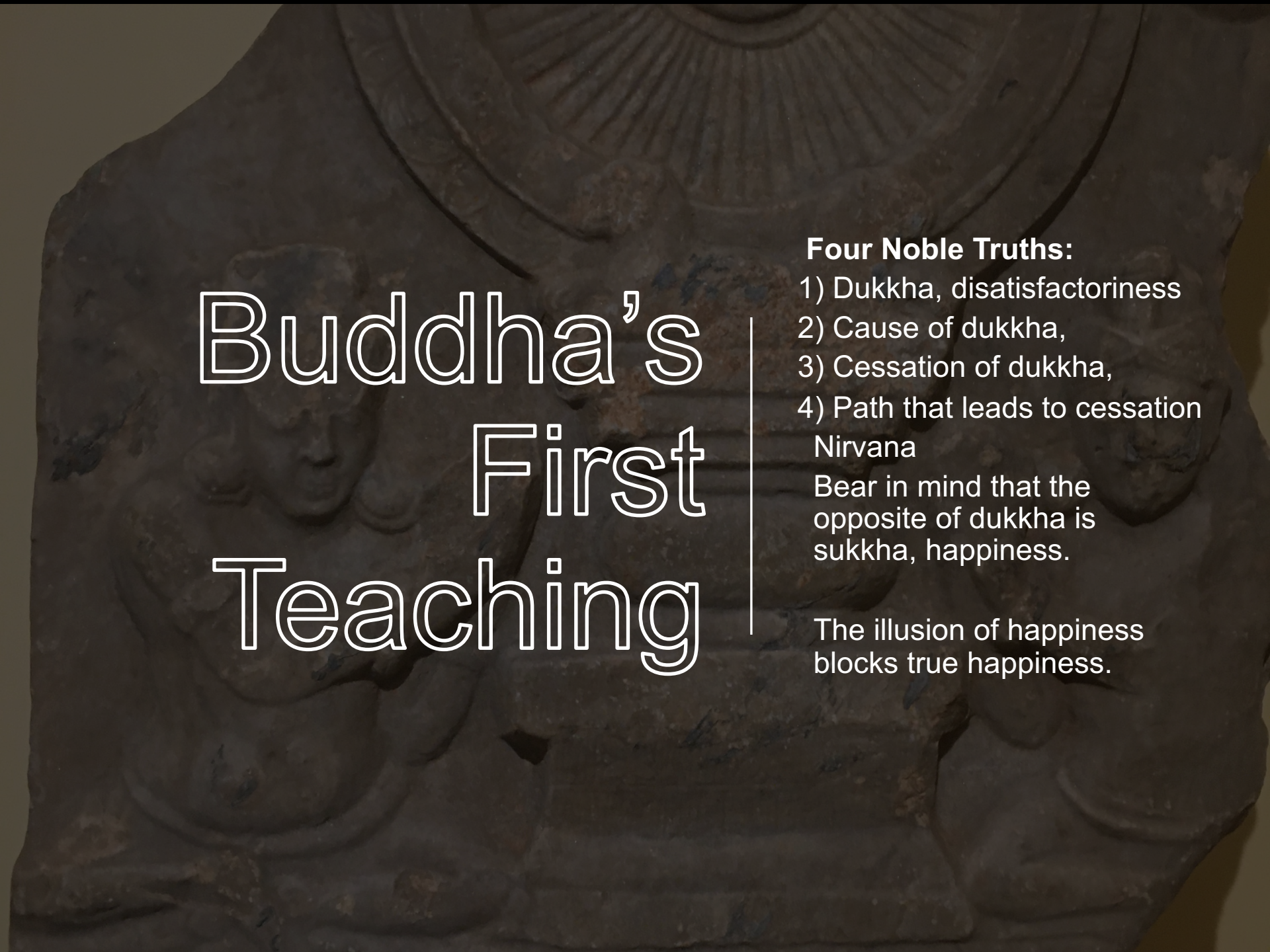


Wheel of Dharma

The First Turning: the Historical Buddha



- Previously referred to as “Buddha’s teaching”, “Buddha’s way”. Bhavana, in Buddhism “cultivating” or “producing”, “process of spiritual cultivation” is closest.
- BIRTH into warrior- caste Gautama family of Sakya clan in state of Kusala. Personal name not in earlier texts but in later ones as Siddharta, one who has achieved his goal. His father was the leader of the town of Kapilavastu.
- Said to have been born at full moon of Vaisakha (Vesak) (April- May), around sixth century BCE.
- From Kapilavastu he traveled south across the Ganges to Rajagatha, capital of Mogadha. He sought out sramana, strivers and stayed with them.



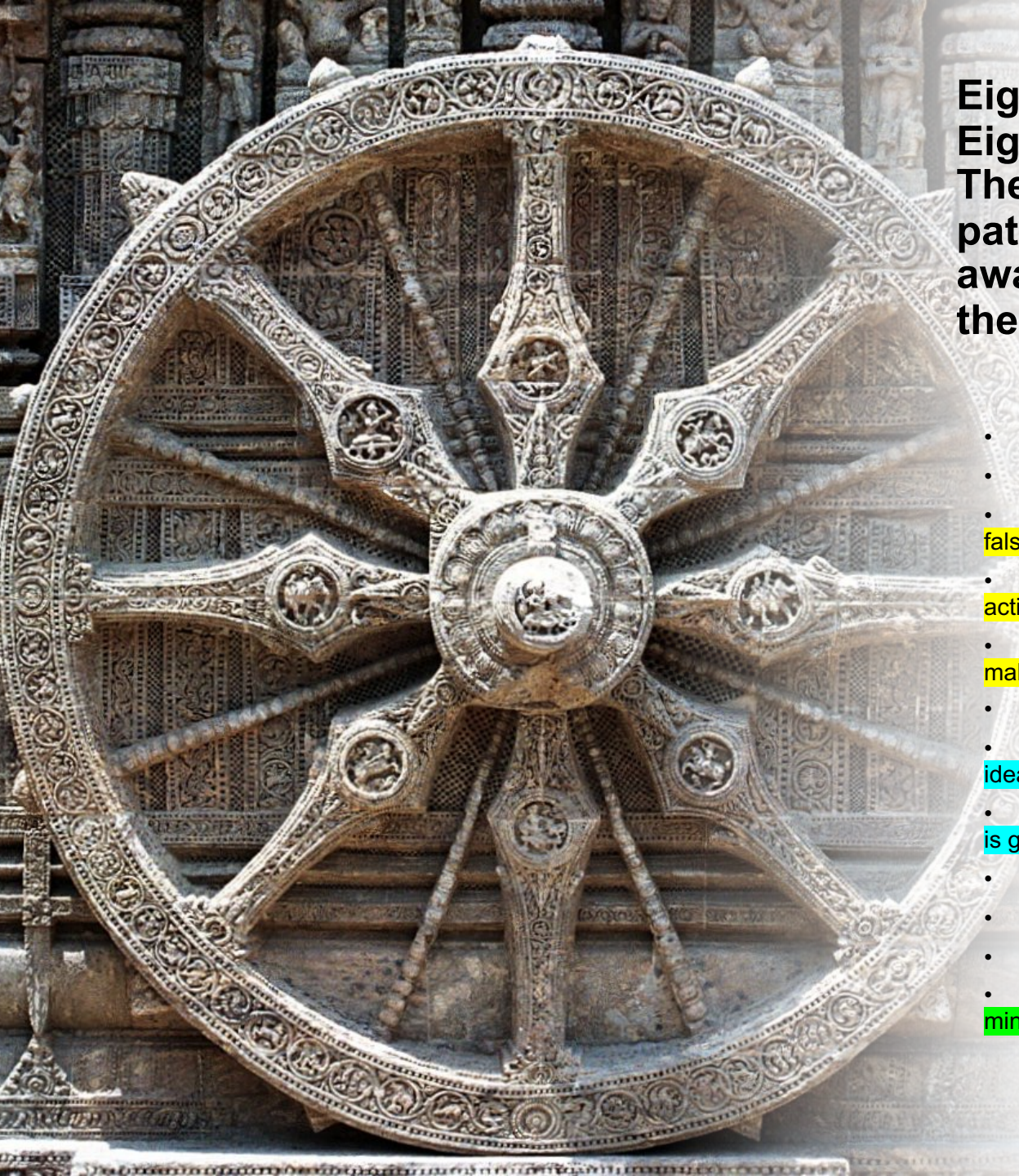
Buddha's First Teaching

Four Noble Truths:

- 1) Dukkha, dissatisfaction
- 2) Cause of dukkha,
- 3) Cessation of dukkha,
- 4) Path that leads to cessation
Nirvana

Bear in mind that the opposite of dukkha is sukka, happiness.

The illusion of happiness blocks true happiness.



Eightfold Path

Eight domains to attend to—
These are aspects of the path— from here to awakening-- not ends in themselves.

- Buddhaghosa's divisions of the path
- **SILA: ethics/precepts**
- Right Speech (refraining from falsehood, harsh words, idle gossip)
- Right Action: Careful compassionate action.
- Right Livelihood: Not selling arms or making intoxicants
- **SAMADHI**
- Right Effort: Doing the work to translate ideas into clear life
- Right Mindfulness: Being aware of what is going on in our own bodymind
- Right Concentration: training the mind
- **PRAJNA/PANNA**
- Right (skillful) Understanding- clarity
- Right Thought (wholesome states of mind)

Taking Refuge



Trapusa and Bhallika were first. Next was Yasa His father became the first lay disciple. His mother and wife, first women sangha. 54 of Yasa's friends joined and awakened. The disciples of a Skeptic, Sariputra and Maudgalyana joined and brought 250 others. Sariputra was known for teaching, renowned for understanding of emptiness. Maudgalyana, for psychic abilities.

<- Mahakasyapa, known for attainment in meditation. Zen lineage. Supposed to have organized the memorization of Buddha's teaching and the precepts. Convened first Buddhist council after Buddha died.

Buddha went back to family. His son Rahula and half-brother, Nanda, converted. Upali, who had the greatest memory of the precepts, joined. Buddha's cousin, Ananda, joined- known for his memory and closeness to the Buddha.

Women were admitted after Maha Prajnapati and others walked across India barefoot and Ananda made a special request of the Buddha.

First Turning Origin: Oral Tradition

Thus have I heard ...

- Sutras have lists, repetition, other mnemonic devices
- Points are made through vivid metaphor:
 - Fire/extinction
 - Dream
 - Mirage
 - Plantain tree
 - Magician's illusion
 - Seeds, rain, cultivation
 - Refuge as doctor and medicine

-Each is illustrating another aspect of the nature of reality



Three Seals of Existence



- Impermanence: everything changes
- Dukkha: dissatisfaction of seeking permanent happiness in impermanent things
- Non-Self. No independently existing thing. Empirical selfhood better understood as a verb—always changing

Five Aggregates:

Form (rupa, body) Physical body and the physical form of the world... A recent study showed that Israeli judges granted parole in sixty-five percent of cases heard immediately after they had eaten and in nearly zero cases heard just before a break period or at the end of the day.

Feelings/ Sensations: Pleasant, unpleasant, neutral.

Perceptions: Screening sensations through filter of the self-image

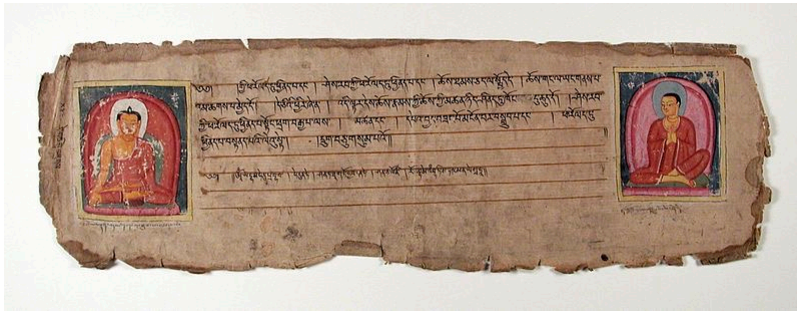
Mental Formations/ Concepts: Storyline emerges.

Consciousness: Director's cut of the movie, with running commentary

We now feel *separate, independent, and unitary*.

We can use this model to attend to our self-insight, while remembering that the map is not the territory.

Dependent Arising

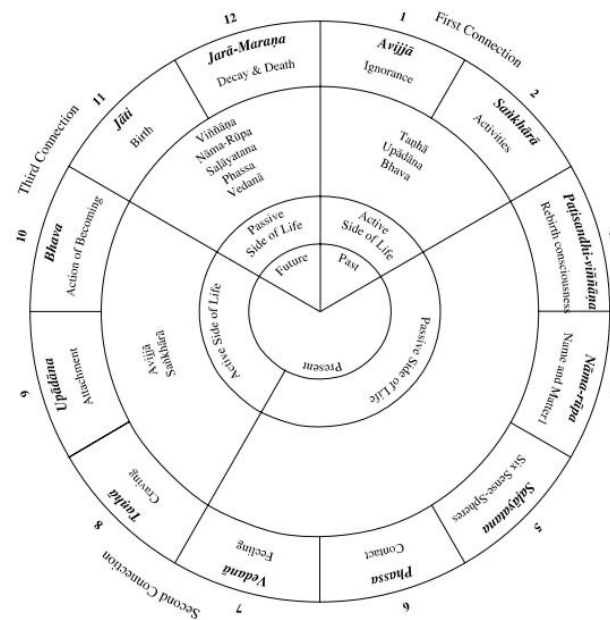


Title Pages from a Kanjur
(Buddhist Canon) LACMA.
Western Tibet, 12th- 17th
Century.

- Each element of existence is conditioned by other elements.
- Perception itself arises through a convergence of factors; it depends upon that which is perceived.
- Consciousness and name-and-form rest upon each other like two sheaves of reeds leaning on each other (Macy, 1978, p.147)).
- *Paticca samupadda* is also referred to as mutual causality, interdependent origination, and mutual arising.

Twelve Links of Causation

- Ignorance. Being blind to what is moving us on a moment to moment level.
 - Taking the self concept as a real thing.
- Formations: Impulses, actions, thoughts.
- Consciousness. Qualities of the mind.
- Nama Rupa, name and form. Form/body creates an experience,
 - mind makes up a story to go along.
- Six sense doors.
- Feeling. “All the Dharmas gather together in feeling.”
- Craving/ grasping.
- Clinging. (Dualistic mode)
- Becoming. Object relations. Complexes.
- Birth. The emergence of an identity. “I am now this.”
- Aging and Death. Whatever it is, it has already changed.



Three root causes/ root evils: greed, hate, ignorance (unclear or in denial)
 Non-greed is generosity, altruism.
 Non-hate is patience, compassion, kindness.
 Non-ignorance is clarity of mind, insight into reality.



Four Noble Truths and Social Justice

As interpreted by BK Ambekdar

- Four Noble Truths:
 - Existence of Dukkha.
 - --Dukkha can include institutionalized social oppression. There are children or whole communities who are marginalized and oppressed by social, political, and economic forces that are essentially beyond their control, unless they somehow collectively organize a resistance to oppression.
 - Causes of Dukkha
 - A Way to Freedom from Dukkha
 - **Eightfold Path**
 - **Dhamma as right relationships between people in all spheres of life**
 - **The goal of the eightfold path is to remove injustice and inhumanity that man does to man**



Important First- Turning Suttas to Read:

- Middle Way Sutta
- Fire Sutta
- Nibbana Sutta

Considered to be buddhavacana.

First- Turning Shastra Literature:

- Questions of King Melinda, Nagasena
- Buddhaghosa. Visuddhimagga, The Path of Purification

*“The inner tangle and the outer tangle—
This generation is entangled in a tangle.
And so I ask of Gotama this question:
Who succeeds in disentangling this
tangle?” (S.i.13)*

*First- Turning Ethics emphasize virtue of
restraint. Begin by simply not producing
suffering.*

--Parable of coins.

Child-villager-moneychanger

Second Turning of the Wheel (Mahayana)

- 500 years after the birth of the Buddha.
- Builds upon the First Turning by describing emptiness of all objects (Madyamaka, middle way between eternalism and nihilism).
- Ethic of care as well as ethic of restraint.
- More recognition of path for laypeople

Important Second-Turning Sutras

- ❖ Heart Sutra
- ❖ Vimalakirti Sutra
- ❖ Diamond Sutra
- ❖ Lotus Sutra



Third Turning of the Wheel (Yogacara)

“Mind Only”- the mind constitutes your reality, the mind is the problem, and therefore it is the solution.

- Builds upon the 1st and 2nd Turning by describing emptiness of the subject

Metaphors: cloud, illusion, fire-wheel.

Important Third-Turning Sutras

- ❖ Lankavatara Sutra
- ❖ Samdhinirmokaya Sutra



Asangha and Vasubandhu: Siblings in Dharma

**--Vasubandhu is part of the Zen lineage,
Asangha is more favored in the Tibetan lineage**

- One of the philosophical achievements of Mind Only was to resolve the contradiction between the concepts of selflessness and samsara. If there is no self, what cycles through samsara?
- The Yogacara answered this by developing the idea of alaya consciousness, which was ultimately the basis for projecting a self and the foundation of samsara. The capacities or seeds for everything to arise is in the alaya consciousness. When causes and conditions come together, they become a mode of appearance as something actual. Their effect or imprints are then stored in the alaya (all-ground).
- The philosophies of no-self and Mind Only both examine what exists and what does not exist in the ultimate nature. Mind Only also explains that there are not external things – or even the mind. “In terms of the ultimate truth, the mind is also no more than an illusory nature.



Vasubandhu story

- Vasubandhu has got caught up in ascetic practices, and as a result of his overstriving cannot find peace.
- Jayata uses Vasubandhu's disciple community as the means to deliver the message. Vasubandhu's students are indignant, they are certain that their teacher is on the right path. However, as a result of Jayata's critique, Vasubandhu is able to adjust his course. As the Buddha had discovered in his lifetime, this practice is about the Middle Way. If the strings are too tight, the instrument will not play. And if the strings are too loose, that is also an issue.
- Consider for yourself, today: are your strings too tight, or too loose? Where in your practice does an adjustment need to be made--



Asangha story

- Asangha practices to see Maitreya Buddha, without success.
- Comes across the man polishing a pole with a cloth
- Comes across the man shaping a stone with a feather
- Comes across a starving dog, with maggots
- The townspeople: why are you carrying that old dog?
- Can we persevere—
- Even though buddhas and great bodhisattvas can appear anywhere, even in the Bardo (the dreamlike state between lifetimes) or our dreams, if we're too caught in our own fixations and obscurations, we can't see them. And even if we do see something, we can't see these beings as they really are. When we see with the eyes of compassion, we see more truly.



Thirty Verses on Mind- Alone by Vasubandhu

- Self and other occur in the transformation of consciousness
- Transformation= ripening of karma (Alaya), consciousness of a self (Manas) and imagery of sense objects (18 realms)
- Manas is associated with kleshas.
- Sense consciousnesses arise on root consciousnesses like waves arise on water
- Consciousness is all the seeds transforming in various ways
- Conceptualizations are empty
- Even though buddhas and great bodhisattvas can appear anywhere, even in the Bardo (the dreamlike state between lifetimes) or our dreams, if we're too caught in our own fixations and obscurations, we can't see them. And even if we do see something, we can't see these beings as they really are. When we see with the eyes of compassion, we see more truly.



Yogacara (Mind Alone) pt.2

- **The Emptiness (Sunyata) Doctrine.** In a Yogacara context, emptiness is the realization of the non-existence of observer and observed. The concept recognizes that all composite things are devoid of a self-nature or independent substance (svabhava). They are nothing more than appearances in the mind.
- **The No-Birth View of Existence (Anatpāda).** If human beings, like dogs and cats, are just projections of Mind or only mind, it makes no sense to talk about their birth and death as if they were physical beings. As expressed in the sutra, “O Mahamati, it is taught by the Tathagatas of the past, future, and present that all things are unborn. Why? All things are unborn because they are the manifestations of our own mind and have no reality of their own.” While birth and death are well-known features of the relative, discriminative world, they do not exist in the absolute world, a realm beyond the senses that is supreme wisdom (āryajnāna).
- **The Nature of a Tathagata.** Since the nature of the Buddha as the Tathagata is stressed throughout the Lanka, practitioners should have some understanding of what is emphasized by this title for the Buddha. Rather than using words like I, me, or myself, the Buddha often refers to himself as the Tathagata (“One who has the nature of thusness in his comings and goings”). While the Tathagata has attained enlightenment (Bodhi) and awakened to the nature of reality, he importantly also has the will and compassion to liberate all beings by leading them to the direct experience of reality. This attitude separates the Tathagata from arhats and other practitioners who focus on liberation for themselves. He does this in part by taking different forms so as to be able to teach a wide variety of beings most effectively, as mentioned above.

Pith Teachings of the Lanka

- **Whatever we see or think or feel is our own mind.**
- **And, self realization is necessary.**
- Rather than focusing on impurity as the cause of suffering, this focuses on the illusory self as the cause of suffering. How did we get attached to a self, and how to get unstuck?
- “Who sees that the habit-energy of projections of the beginningless past is the cause of the three realms, and who understands that the tathagata stage is free from projections or anything that arises, attains the personal realization of the Buddha and effortless mastery over their own mind.”
- **“such is the nature of things, the realm of nothing but mind....there is no seer or anything seen/no speaker or anything spoken...those who view such things as real/they don’t see the Buddha/nor do those who imagine nothing/only those who transform their existence. P.29 42-44**

Yogacara's Three Modes

- 1) Imagined reality= nature of experience, prepanca (conceptualizations)**
 - **false judgement that causes us to seek pleasure in impermanent things.**

- 2) Dependent reality= in which we begin to apprehend the interdependent nature of all things.**
 - Due to dependent arising, everything has the appearance of separation and so this is both pure and impure.

- 3) Perfected reality= paratara. Ultimate truth.**
 - Pure nature: seeing that everything is created by Mind alone.

The Eight Consciousnesses

The Lanka describes as well the **eight layers of consciousness** that consist of **six sense consciousnesses**

1) sight 2) hearing, 3) smell 4) taste, 5) touch, and 6) conceptual consciousness)

and two subconscious consciousnesses (**7th = basis of inner reflection**).

The eighth or repository consciousness (alaya consciousness) a great ocean generating from itself both the mind, the sensory impressions and the outer world.

This acts like a receptacle into which the latent karmic energy of past and present habitual tendencies or ingrained dispositions (bijas) are deposited into, stored, and at times reactivated. Though, this can also be the route to deep insight, archetypal levels of awareness, awakening.

Six senses and their objects arise from consciousness like waves from water.

“There is no spoon”.

- The mind has self awareness as it watches different senses, so it concludes that it exists as a separate thing. But self and world are created by Mind. 8th Consciousness. Storehouse consciousness. Self and world are both dependently arisen from storehouse consciousness.
- **Seeds of consciousness in storehouse are affected by dispositions- positive or negative thoughts/words/deeds. Transform these seeds through the six perfections.**

