poetic sentiment. His description of the journey to Kapilavatthu from Rāĩagaha (vv. 347-352) is beautiful and unique for which our poet should occupy a place in the foremost rank of poets. His description of the beauty and charms of Māyā (vv. 77-78) and Yasodharā (vv. 172 and 395) is delicate and graceful . His description of the overall change in the world immediately after the birth of Siddhattha (vv. 98-116), and his description of Siddhattha's conflict with Māra under the Bodhi-tree (vv. 243-265)—all are striking, and exemplify the poet's real poetic intellect.

But what is remarkable about the style of the Jinacarita is that in most cases it is concise and light while at the same time elegant and brilliant. The verses no doubt are constructed artificially but we seldom find any difficult or irregular constructions[17]. Besides, the verses are embellished with choicest words and striking figures of speech. How excellent and appropriate appears that simile in which Sumedha is compared to a royal elephant as an elephant flees from a forest blazing with fire, Sumedha also departed from his house (blazing with passions, envy, delusion and the like—v. 21); or in which the newborn child Siddhattha is compared to a golden goose—Siddhattha came forth from the womb of his mother like a golden goose descending from a lotus (v. 88); or in which consorting of deer (or animals) with lions is compared to that of parents with children (v. 100); or in which Yasodharā is compared to a moon which is aspired to by all bee-like eyes (v. 172); or in which the Buddha's journey is compared to that of the moon—like a pure full moon surrounded by starts, the Buddha went here and there being accompanied by his brilliant disciples (vv. 326, 356-357).

In conclusion, we quote Charles Duroiselle's comment: 'The charm of the Jinacarita lies in its lighter style; in the author's choice of graceful and sometimes forcible images; in the art of his descriptions, the richness and, in some passages, the delicacy of his expressions; qualities which go to make its reading of heavy didactic poetry'.[18] But for its some lengthy and bombastic compounded words and some prosy expressions, the Jinacarita could have occupied a place in the formost rank of the Indian *kāvyas*.

17. Very few contracted forms like *pāpetva* (v. 326) has been used for the sake of metre.
18. Jinacarita (ed. and translated by Charles Duroiselle), Introduction, p. ii,

THE LOTUS AS A SYMBOL IN THE PALI TRADITION

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From Hindus mythology, one learns that from the golden lotus on Visṇu's forehead appeared the goddess Srī. In another episode, while reclining on the serpent Ananta a lotus stalk arose from Visṇu's navel which gave birth to the god Brahma. In sculpture Visṇu is often depicted holding a lotus-flower in one of his four hands. In post-Vedic literature Surya, the sun god, is represented as standing on a red lotus flower. Besides its importance in Hindu religion, the lotus-flower plays a prominent role in Mahāyāna Buddhist literature and art; it is especially associated with the Bodhisattva.[1] The purpose of this paper is to examine the symbol of the lotus in the earlier Pali Buddhist tradition. It will be demonstrated that much of the later symbolic significance of the lotus in Mahāyāna Buddhism is prefigured in the Pali tradition.

The lotus is not just any lovely product of nature; it possesses a mysterious power. If used in conjunction with medicines, the lotus can cure illness.[2] It is reported that it helped cure the fever of Sāriputta, an important early disciple of the Buddha.[3] Thus from an early period in the Buddhist tradition the lotus had a magical quality.

The lotus is a plant which grows upward from the bottom of a lake or pond and slowly ascends to the surface. Thus the lotus is born in the water, it comes to full maturity in the water, eventually rises to the surface and stands unspotted by the water. As such, it serves as a symbol of the Tathāgata (the one thus come), who is born and matures in the world, passes beyond the world, and eventually emerges untainted by the world.[4] In this sense, the lotus is not only a symbol of the Tathāgata but also of upward action, spiritual growth and attainment, and detachment from the world.

The spiritual development of human beings is represented by the lotus. There are beings with a little or much dust in their eyes. Others possess acute or dull faculties. In other words, some individuals are more benighted than others. Just as some lotus-flowers thrive while immersed in water, others reach the surface of the water, and some rise undefiled out of the water.[5]

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1. See Heinrich Zimmer, *The Art of Indian Asia Its Mythology and Transformations* 2 Vols., ed. Joseph Campbell (New York: Random House Inc., 1960), I: 181ff; see also William E. Ward, "The Lotus Symbol: Its Meaning in Buddhist Art and Philosophy", *Journal of Asthetics and Art Criticism*, Vol. II (1952-53), pp. 135-146.
2. *The Book of the Discipline* (Vinaya Piṭaka) Vol. IV (Mahāvagag) trans. I. B. Horner (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1962), 278.
3. Ibid., 214.
4. *The Book of the Kindred Sayings* (Saṁyutta Nikāya) Vol. III, trans. F. L. Woodward (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1954), 3, 139.
5. *The Middle Length Sayings* (Majjhima Nikāya) 3 Vols. trans. I. B. Horner (London: Luzac & Company Ltd., 1967), I. 169; *Dialogues of the Buddha* (Digha Nikāya) 3 Vols., T. W. and C. A. F. Rhys Davids (London Luzac & Company Ltd., 1966-1971), II. 38-39.

At times, the lotus beneath the water is symbolic of a bhikkhu in the third state of trance. Just as the lotus flourishes beneath the water and is saturated by cool water, a monk in the third trance state is saturated with joy.[6] The bhikkhu in this state is serene and self-possessed.

In the Sangīti Sutta of the Digha Nikāya,[7] four types of recluses are enumerated: the unshaken recluse; the blue lotus recluse; the white lotus recluse; and the exquisite recluse. I want to concentrate on the significance of the blue and white lotus recluses.

The blue lotus recluse is equivalent to a once-returner (*sakadāgāmin*):

> Herein a monk, by utterly wearing out three fetters and by weakening lust, anger and delusion, is a once-returner. Coming back just once more to this world he makes an end of Ill.[8]

The blue lotus recluse is assured of no bad rebirths and enlightenment within one more lifetime. He is free of the three fetters (*saṃyojana*): delusions of self; doubts about the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha; trust in the efficacy of rituals and good works.[9] If one places the colour blue within the Indian cultural context, one discovers that since indigo-blue is so durable, blue is the colour of faithfulness.[10] Furthermore, the blue lotus recluse contemplates the rise and fall of the five-grasping groups (*upādānakkhandhā*), but he does not experience the eight deliverances (*vimokhas*).[11]

The white lotus recluse is equal to the degree of sanctification represented by a non-returner (*anāgāmin*):

> Herein a monk, by utterly wearing out the five fetters which cause rebirth here, is apparitionally born, destined there to pass utterly away, of a nature not to return from that world.[12]

The non-returner destroys the initial three fetters plus sensuality and ill-will.[13] The white lotus recluse is assured of enlightenment during his current lifetime. He will be reborn in another world and never return to the present cycle of suffering.[14] Like the blus lotus recluse, he contemplates the rise and fall of the five-grasping groups, but he goes beyond the level of spiritual attainment of the blue lotus recluse by personally experiencing the eight deliverances.[15]

In many world religions, white is the colour of purity. The lotus is rooted and grows in the slimy mud at the bottom of a pond. As it

6. *Middle Length Sayings*, 1. 277; 2. 16; 3. 93.
7. *Dialogues of the Buddha*, III. 233.
8. *The Book of the Gradual Sayings* (Anguttara Nikāya) Vol. 2, trans. F. L. Woodward (London Luzac & Company Ltd., 1962), 2.88.
9. *Dialogues of the Buddha*, I. 156.
10. Friedrich Heiler, *Erscheinurgsformen und Wesen der Religion* (Stuttgart: W. Kohlhammer Verlag, 1961), p. 125.
11. *The Book of the Gradual Sayings*, 2. 90.
12. Ibid., 2.88; 2.89.
13. *Dialogues of the Buddha*, I. 156.
14. Ibid., III. 132.
15. *The Book of the Gradual Sayings*, 2.90; 2.89.

moves upward and blossoms forth, the white lotus is untainted by the mud of the earth. Likewise, the successful monk emerges clean and purified of the world's uncleanliness.

The lotus is a symbol of spiritual progress and enlightenment. It grows in the maternal, primeval, procreative waters. The waters represent the pre-formal potentiality for spiritual enlightenment. It is the unformed from which a new form, new being or new life can emerge. Within the water, the lotus represents its generative organ; it is the energy and force inherent in the waters.[16] The waters—the symbol of life-gives new life; the lotus is nourished by the waters, but it eventually rises above the waters and symbolically transcends them. Not a drop of water can cling to the leaves of the lotus which becomes totally detached like the enlightened saint. The gradual rising of the lotus is an act of creation; the emerging of a new being.

The significance of the lotus as a pre-eminent symbol in Mahāyāna Buddhism is prefigured in the Pali tradition. In other words, the seeds of its later importance are rooted in the Pali tradition and in early Hinduism. For example, a symbol of the ātman is the lotus of the heart.[17] For one who knows the truth, evil action does not adhere to him, just as water does not cling to the leaf of a lotus-flower.[18] And from its association with the Hindu goddesses, the lotus connotes the supramundane character of the enlightened ones of the Mahāyāna tradition.[19] The unfolding of the lotus is symbolic of the dawn of enlightenment and the victory over ignorance. It represents the wisdom of Nibbāna, the aspiring monk, and the various levels of human existence.

16. Heinrich Zimmer, *Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization*, ed. Joseph Campbell (New York: Pantheon Books, 1963), p. 90.
17. *Maitri Upaniṣad*, 6.2; *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 8.1.1.
18. *Chāndogya Upaniṣad*, 4.14.3.
19. Zimmer, *The Art of Indian Asia*, p. 175.