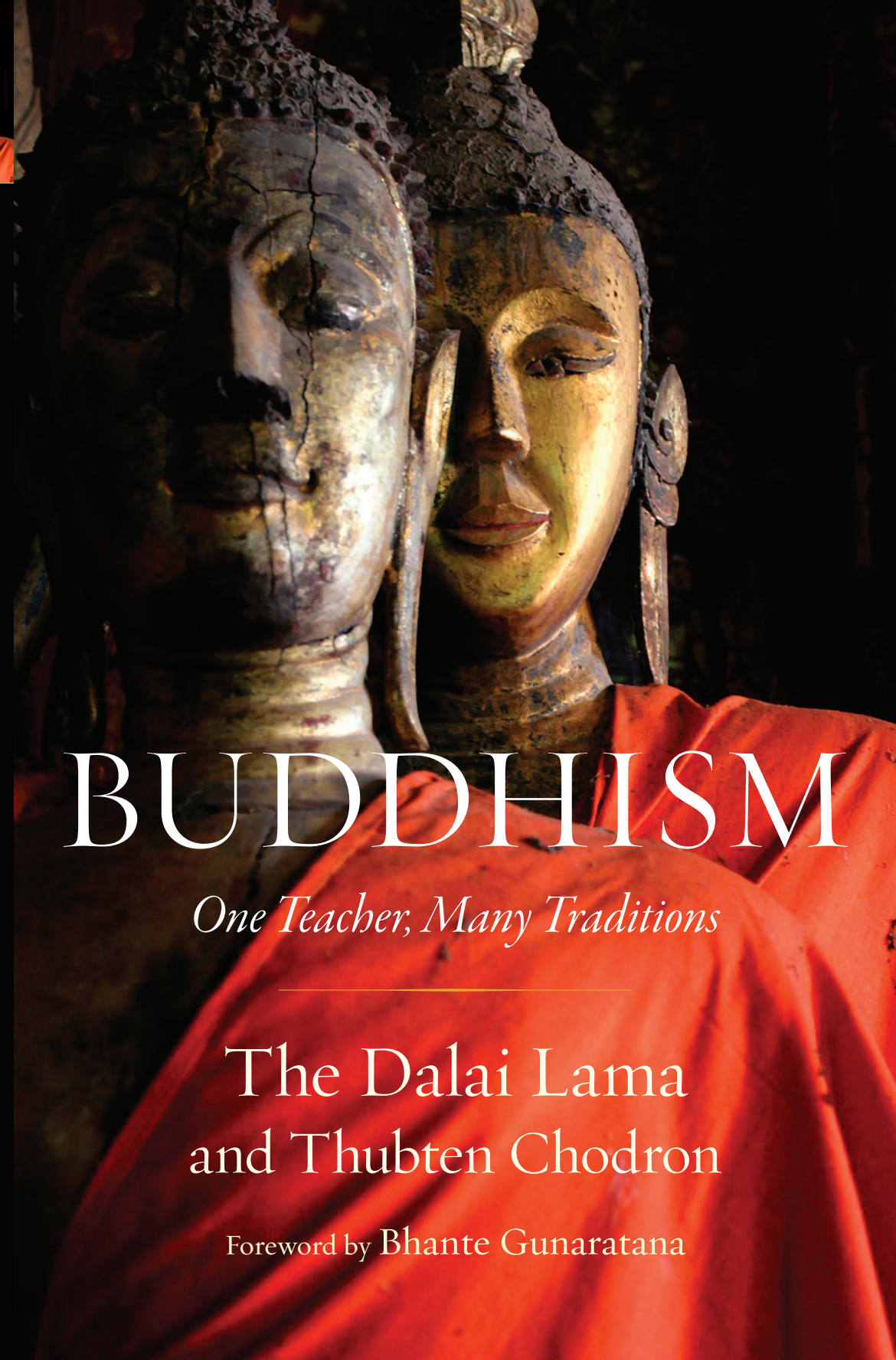

BUDDHISM

One Teacher, Many Traditions

The Dalai Lama
and Thubten Chodron

Foreword by Bhante Gunaratana

Selections from

BUDDHISM

One Teacher, Many Traditions

Bhikṣu Tenzin Gyatso,
THE FOURTEENTH DALAI LAMA
and
Bhikṣuṇī Thubten Chodron

Foreword by Bhante Gunaratana

Wisdom Publications • Boston

Contents

Foreword

The Dalai Lama and I both embarked on our life's work early. He was identified as the leader of Tibetan Buddhism as a toddler, not long before I at age twelve became a monk in the Theravāda Buddhism tradition in my native Sri Lanka. Causes and conditions thus came together for each of us to begin our journeys to preserve and share the wisdom of the Buddha at around the same time.

I first met His Holiness the Dalai Lama in India in 1956 at the Buddhist holy site of Sanchi. He was visiting on one of his first trips outside his homeland, three years before he was forced to flee Tibet. We did not meet again until the 1993 Parliament of World Religions in Chicago. Even though I do not meet him very often, I continue to feel an inner connection with him because of his wisdom and fairness in sharing his Dhamma knowledge. So it is with deep appreciation and admiration of His Holiness's wisdom that I happily offer a few words at the front of this book that His Holiness and Venerable Thubten Chodron have written about our shared Buddhist tradition.

People today are generally more broadminded than those who lived before. Though the world is not without conflict, a unifying trend is emerging as we become more economically and culturally interconnected. Given this current trend, Buddhist unity is overdue. Although we Theravāda Buddhists have long met with other Buddhists, once the panel or conference is over, we go our separate ways, and nothing much happens.

Well-meaning books on the various traditions show our common points but, perhaps in order to be polite, say little about the differences among us. We need not consider it impolite to point out where we differ. Not only are there doctrinal differences among the various types of Buddhists, cultural practices also differ from country to country. Even within a single country, Buddhist practices may vary from region to region or group to group. Being able to honestly survey the traditions is a healthy sign of our strength and

sincerity. There is nothing to hide in the Buddha's teaching. The present work is to be commended for its honest and systematic examination of the great overlap between the Pāli and Sanskrit Buddhist traditions while at the same time not shying away from discussing the many ways in which the teachings diverge.

Still, while it is healthy to discuss our differences openly, focusing on them to the exclusion of our shared heritage is also misguided. Both the Pāli and Sanskrit traditions have made tremendous efforts to bring more peace to the world through the sincere preservation of the teachings of the Buddha. It is rare, in either tradition, to find any call for violence to promote one tradition over the other. Thus religious politics is completely foreign to the Buddha's teaching, but sadly some Buddhists fail to practice what their religion teaches. Enthusiasm for the "real" Dhamma is sometimes so strong that the very basic instruction of the Buddha on how to teach the Dhamma without creating conflict is overlooked.

On this point, the *Simile of the Snake* (MN 22) is quite relevant. In this sutta, wrongly grasping the Dhamma is compared to catching a poisonous snake by its tail. A snake will bite and cause death or sickness if held incorrectly, but if the snake is caught correctly, the venom can be extracted for medicine and the snake released without harm. Like this, we must grasp the meaning of Dhamma correctly and not cling to it. Mishandling or clinging to the Dhamma can poison the mind just as a venomous snake can poison the body, and poisoning the mind is much more dangerous.

If we properly grasp the meaning of Dhamma, we can experience what is called the *miracle of education*. Because ignorance is so strong and deep, the Buddha at first wondered whether he would be able to help people understand Dhamma in order to free them from suffering. However, he began to teach, and using his wisdom, he turned vicious persons into saints, wicked persons into holy ones, and murderers into peacemakers. This potential for transformation is the miraculous power of education.

In order to experience the miracle of education for ourselves, we must look within. The truth within us that we can experience all the time is called the Dhamma. It is this Dhamma that invites us saying, "If you want to be free from trouble, look at me. Take care of me." The Dhamma within us talks to us constantly, even if we are not listening. Buddhas need not come to this world for the Dhamma to exist. The buddhas realize it and comprehend it, and having realized it, they teach it and make it known; but

whether it is expounded or not, the Dhamma is there within us to be seen and heard, if we will only wipe the dust from our eyes and look at it.

We "come and see" the experience of peace the moment greed is abandoned. We "come and see" the experience of peace at the moment hatred is abandoned. We must build up this habit to "come and see" what is really happening within us without pointing our finger at others. We do not preserve and promote the Buddhist tradition for its sake alone. Rather, we preserve the teachings of the Buddha handed down from generation to generation because they relieve suffering and promote happiness.

When we investigate Buddhism's major traditions, as the present book does, we can see that they have contributed to the world a rich tapestry of cultural, social, and spiritual knowledge. That knowledge offers deep insights into psychology, philosophy, and mental health. The broad recognition of this has fed today's global awakening to the importance of meditation. We Buddhists freely invite anybody to enjoy the benefits that come from the practice of meditation.

Buddhism in all its forms draws the world's attention for its peaceful existence with other religions. Following this central message of the Buddha, every one of us should be a messenger of peace. This is our common bond. It is my wish that the present volume may help Buddhists everywhere release their clinging to views and engage in honest dialogue with mutual respect and that it may help all beings to experience the truth of the Dhamma that lies within. When our enthusiasm for the Dhamma is guided by love, compassion, joy, and equanimity, we honor the Buddha's central mission of peace.

Bhante Henepola Gunaratana
Founding Abbot, The Bhāvanā Society
High View, West Virginia

Prologue

Due to the great kindness of the Buddha, who taught the Dharma and established the Saṅgha, the teachings showing the path to liberation have been clearly set forth for sentient beings to follow. As the Buddha's doctrine spread throughout the Indian subcontinent and then into other countries, different Buddhist traditions emerged. In ancient times, and even into the modern era, transportation and communication among people from these various traditions were limited. While some may have heard about other traditions, there was no opportunity to check the accuracy of that information. Thus misconceptions arose and passed from one generation to the next.

Due to improvements in transportation and communication, in the twenty-first century, we followers of the Buddha have the opportunity to get to know each other directly. Thanks to new translations, we are now able to read the scriptures of each other's canons and the commentaries by our respective great masters. Since the translations available still represent only a fraction of the total scriptures, and the potential body of the sūtras and commentaries to read is quite extensive, we offer this humble volume as a bridge to begin learning about one another.

All of us Buddhists have the same Teacher, Lord Buddha. It would be for everyone's benefit if we had closer relationships with each other. I have had the great fortune to meet many leaders from the Christian, Muslim, Jewish, Hindu, Jain, and Sikh worlds, but I have had comparatively little opportunity to meet with the great teachers, meditators, and leaders of the different Buddhist traditions. Most Tibetan monastics and lay followers know little about other Buddhist traditions, and I believe the followers of other traditions know little about Buddhism as practiced in the Tibetan community. If our Teacher, the Buddha, came to our planet today, would he be happy with this? All of us, the Buddha's spiritual children, proclaim love for the same "parent," yet we have only minimal communication with our brothers and sisters.

In recent years this has fortunately begun to change. Many Buddhists

from Asia and the West have come to Dharamsala, India, the center of the Tibetan community in exile; some Tibetan monks and nuns have also visited their countries. Communication with our Theravāda brothers and sisters had been particularly minimal, but some cracks in the centuries-old divisions are beginning to appear there as well. For example, two Burmese monks studying at a university in India came to visit me. They were interested in learning about Tibetan Buddhism so they could broaden their knowledge of the Buddhist world while continuing to practice in their own tradition. I admire their motivation, and I would like to encourage Buddhists from all traditions to gain a deeper understanding of the vastness of the Buddha's doctrine. This can only help us to appreciate even more the Buddha's exceptional qualities as a Teacher who has the wisdom, compassion, and skillful means to lead us all to awakening.

A central purpose of this book is to help us learn more about each other. All Buddhists take refuge in the Three Jewels; our teachings are based in the four truths of the āryas (the malaise of *duḥkha*, its origin, cessation, and path), the three higher trainings (ethical conduct, concentration, and wisdom), and the four immeasurables (love, compassion, joy, and equanimity). All of us seek liberation from *saṃsāra*, the cycle of rebirth fueled by ignorance and polluted karma. Learning about our similarities and differences will help us be more united.

Another purpose of this book is to eliminate centuries-old misconceptions about each other. Some Theravāda practitioners believe Tibetan monastics do not follow the *vinaya*—the monastic ethical code—and that as practitioners of tantra, they have sex and drink alcohol. Meanwhile Tibetan practitioners think the Theravāda tradition lacks teachings on love and compassion and characterize those followers as selfish. Chinese Buddhists often think Tibetans perform magic, while Tibetans believe Chinese Buddhists mainly do blank-minded meditation. All of these misconceptions are based on a lack of knowledge. We offer this book as a step toward alleviating these misconceptions.

Now in the twenty-first century East and West, South and North, are coming closer. We Buddhist brothers and sisters must also have closer contact and cultivate mutual understanding. This will benefit us as individuals, will help preserve and spread the Dharma, and will be an example of religious harmony for the world.

Bhikṣu Tenzin Gyatso, the Fourteenth Dalai Lama
June 13, 2014

Preface

A BOOK SHOWING the commonalities and unique points of various Buddhist traditions could have been approached from any number of perspectives. As Buddhists, we all bow to the Buddha, make offerings, and confess our ethical downfalls. We engage in meditation, chanting, study and recitation of sūtras, and listening to teachings. All of our communities have temples, monasteries, hermitages, and centers. Explaining the similarities and differences among these external activities would certainly aid our mutual understanding.

This book, however, focuses on the teachings—the shared tenets and the unique tenets of what we are calling the "Pāli tradition" and the "Sanskrit tradition." These are terms of convenience and should not be taken to imply that either tradition is homogenous. Both traditions trace their teachings and practices back to the Buddha himself. The Pāli tradition is descendant from the suttas and commentaries in Prakrit, in the old Sinhala language, and in Pāli. It relies on the Pāli canon and currently is found principally in Sri Lanka, Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, and parts of Vietnam and Bangladesh. The Sanskrit tradition descends from sūtras and commentaries in Prakrit, Sanskrit, and Central Asian languages and relies on the Chinese and Tibetan canons. It is currently practiced principally in Tibet, China, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, Mongolia, Nepal, the Himalayan region, Vietnam, and parts of Russia. Both traditions are found in Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, India, and in Western and African countries.

While stemming from the same Teacher, the Buddha, the Pāli tradition and the Sanskrit tradition each has its own distinctive features, unique contributions, and different points of emphasis. In addition, neither tradition is monolithic. The Buddhism of East Asia and Tibetan Buddhism, for example, are quite different in expression. But because they both stem from a similar body of Sanskrit texts and share many similar beliefs, they are included in the expression "the Sanskrit tradition."

Topics in this book are largely described from a prevalent viewpoint in

each tradition. This may differ from how a subtradition or an individual teacher approaches a topic. In some instances, we had to select one presentation among many to put in this book. For example, in the chapter on selflessness (not self), among all the views in the Sanskrit tradition, we explained the Prāsaṅgika Madhyamaka view as presented by Tsongkhapa. In other cases, we explained a topic—for example, bodhicitta—according to the Tibetan presentation and then gave distinctive features from the Chinese presentation.

There is a tremendous body of literature in both traditions, and deciding what to include in this book was not easy. His Holiness the Dalai Lama and I would have liked to include or elaborate upon many more points, but the book would have become too lengthy. We apologize for not being able to discuss the wide variety of views, interpretations, and practices within each tradition and request your patience if certain topics you consider important are absent or condensed. Quotes from scripture we wanted to include have been omitted due to space concerns, as have titles and epithets.

Many of this book's readers will undoubtedly be learned in their own Buddhist tradition. When reading descriptions, or even textual translations, from traditions different than one's own, the thought may arise, "This is incorrect." At this time please recall that other traditions may use different words to express the same meaning as in one's own tradition. Recall also the benefit arising from knowledge of the diversity of the Buddha's teachings.

This volume was conceived by His Holiness to promote greater mutual understanding among Buddhists worldwide. I feel deeply fortunate that he has trusted me to carry out this most beneficial endeavor. His Holiness contributed most of the teachings from the Sanskrit tradition. I wrote them up from public teachings he gave as well as from a series of private interviews I had with him over the years. These were translated by Geshe Lhakdor, Geshe Dorji Damdul, and Geshe Thupten Jinpa. Geshe Dorji Damdul and Geshe Dadul Namgyal checked this part of the manuscript. The writings of Chinese masters such as Zongmi, Yinshun, Hanshan Deqing, Shixian, Jizang, Taixu, and Ouyi Zhixu and interviews with Bhikṣu Houkuan, Bhikṣu Huifeng, Bhikṣu Dharmamitra, Bhikṣu Jian-hu, Dr. Lin Chen-kuo, and Dr. Wan Jing-chuang were some of the sources for Chinese Buddhism. Since I received bhikṣuṇī ordination in Taiwan, I have a heartfelt connection with that tradition. Reading the Pāli suttas, the writings of Buddhaghosa and Dhammapāla, and the teachings of contemporary authors such

as Ledi Sayadaw, Ñāṇamoli Thera, Nyanaponika Thera, Soma Thera, Bhikkhu Bodhi, and Bhikkhu Anālayo opened my eyes to the beauty of the Pāli tradition. I studied Bhikkhu Bodhi's series of 123 talks on the Majjhima Nikāya, and he very generously clarified many points for me in personal correspondence. He also checked the parts of this book describing the Pāli tradition. His Holiness also asked me to visit Thailand and study and practice at a monastery there, which I did for two weeks.

Pāli and Sanskrit are linguistically similar but not identical. Because some terms, such as *meditative stabilization*, are unwieldy in English, the Pāli and Sanskrit terms—here *jhāna* and *dhyāna*—have sometimes been used instead. In some chapters the Pāli and Sanskrit presentations of a topic are given in separate sections; in other chapters they are presented in parallel. Whenever Pāli perspectives are given, the spelling of terms will be in Pāli; Sanskrit perspectives will contain Sanskrit spellings. When two terms are in parentheses, the first is Pāli, the second Sanskrit. When only one term is present, either it is the same in both languages, or it corresponds with the tradition whose perspective is discussed in that passage. Pāli and Sanskrit terms are usually given in parentheses only for the first usage of a word. When Pāli and Sanskrit terms are left untranslated, only initial usages are italicized.

The English "four noble truths" has been replaced by a more accurate translation—"four truths of the āryas (*ariyas*)," which is often abbreviated to "four truths."

There are several English terms that followers of the Pāli tradition may find different than what they are used to. On the first occurrence of such terms, I tried to reference the more familiar English term. There will be translation choices for Sanskrit words that are unfamiliar to some readers as well. This is unavoidable, and I request your tolerance.

All errors, inconsistencies, and any points that may be inappropriate are due to my ignorance alone, and I request your patience with these. They do not in any way reflect on His Holiness.

Appreciation

I pay homage to the Buddha as the Teacher, he who gave us these precious Dharma teachings that make our lives meaningful and lead us to true freedom from duḥkha. I also pay homage to the lineages of realized Buddhist

masters in all traditions, due to whose kindness the Buddhadharma has flourished down into the present day.

In addition to the people mentioned above, I also deeply appreciate the help of Samdhong Rinpoche, Geshe Sonam Rinchen, Dr. Alexander Berzin, Traci Thrasher, the staff at His Holiness' office, the community at Sravasti Abbey, and Tim McNeill and David Kittelstrom at Wisdom Publications. All knowledge is a dependent arising, and the kindness and wise consul of these and many other *kalyānamitras* has made the present work immeasurably better.

Unless otherwise noted, henceforth the pronoun "I" refers to His Holiness.

Bhikṣuṇī Thubten Chodron
Sravasti Abbey, June 13, 2014

Abbreviations

Translations used in this volume, unless noted otherwise, are as cited here. Some terminology has been modified for consistency with the present work.

AN Aṅguttara Nikāya. Translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi in *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2012).

BCA *Bodhicaryāvatāra* by Śāntideva. Translated by Stephen Batchelor in *A Guide to Bodhisattva's Way of Life* (Dharamsala, India: Library of Tibetan Works and Archive, 2007).

Bv *Buddhavaṃsa.* Translated by I. B. Horner in *The Minor Anthologies of the Pāli Canon* (Lancaster: Pali Text Society, 2007).

C Chinese

CMA *Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma*. Translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1993).

DN Dīgha Nikāya. Translated by Maurice Walshe in *The Long Discourses of the Buddha* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995).

J Japanese

LRCM *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path* (*Lam rim chen mo*) by Tsongkhapa, 3 vols. Translated by Joshua Cutler et al. (Ithaca: Snow Lion Publications, 2000–2004).

MMK *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* by Nāgārjuna

MN Majjhima Nikāya. Translated by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi in *The Middle-Length Discourses of the Buddha* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995).

RA *Ratnāvalī* by Nāgārjuna. Translated by John Dunne and Sara McClintock in *The Precious Garland: An Epistle to a King* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1997).

SN Saṃyutta Nikāya. Translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi in *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha* (Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2000).

TP *Treatise on the Pāramīs*, from the *Commentary to the Cariyāpiṭaka*. Translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi on www.accesstoinsight.org.

Ud *Udāna*

Vism *Visuddhimagga* of Buddhaghosa. Translated by Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli in *The Path of Purification* (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1991).

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1 | Origin and Spread of the Buddha's Doctrine

Not all people think alike. They have different needs, interests, and dispositions in almost every area of life, including religion. As a skillful teacher, the Buddha gave various teachings to correspond to the varieties of sentient beings. We're going to look at the development of the two major Buddhist traditions containing these teachings, the Pāli and Sanskrit traditions.[1] But first, we begin with the life story of Śākyamuni Buddha.

The Buddha's Life

In the view common to both traditions, Siddhārtha Gautama, a prince from the Śākya clan, was born and grew up near what is now the India-Nepal border in the fifth or sixth century B.C.E. As a child, he had a kind heart and excelled in the arts and studies of his time. He lived a sheltered life in the palace during his early years, but as a young man he ventured out beyond the palace walls. In the town, he saw a sick person, an old person, and a corpse, prompting him to reflect on the suffering nature of life. Seeing a wandering mendicant, he considered the possibility of liberation from saṃsāra. And so, at age twenty-nine, he left the palace, shed his royal attire, and adopted the lifestyle of a wandering mendicant.

He studied with the great teachers of his time, and he mastered their meditation techniques but discovered they did not lead to liberation. For six years he pursued severe ascetic practices in the forest, but realizing that torturing the body doesn't tame the mind, he adopted the middle way of keeping the body healthy for the sake of spiritual practice without indulging in unnecessary comforts.

Sitting under the bodhi tree in what is present-day Bodhgaya, India, he vowed not to arise until he had attained full awakening. On the full moon of the fourth lunar month, he finished the process of cleansing his mind of

all obscurations and developing all good qualities, and he became a fully awakened buddha (*sammāsambuddha*, *samyaksaṃbuddha*). Thirty-five years old at the time, he spent the next forty-five years teaching what he had discovered through his own experience to whoever came to hear.

The Buddha taught men and women from all social classes, races, and ages. Many of those chose to relinquish the householder's life and adopt the monastic life, and thus the saṅgha community was born. As his followers attained realizations and became skilled teachers, they shared with others what they had learned, spreading the teachings throughout ancient India. In subsequent centuries, the Buddhadharma spread south to Sri Lanka; west into present-day Afghanistan; northeast to China, Korea, and Japan; southeast to Southeast Asia and Indonesia; and north to Central Asia, Tibet, and Mongolia. In recent years, many Dharma centers have opened in Europe, the Americas, the former Soviet republics, Australia, and Africa.

I feel a deep connection to Gautama Buddha as well as profound gratitude for his teachings and for the example of his life. He had insights into the workings of the mind that were previously unknown. He taught that our outlook impacts our experience and that our experiences of suffering and happiness are not thrust upon us by others but are a product of the ignorance and afflictions in our minds. Liberation and full awakening are likewise states of mind, not the external environment.

Buddhist Canons and the Spread of the Dharma

Vehicle and *path* are synonymous. While they are sometimes used to refer to a progressive set of spiritual practices, technically speaking they refer to a wisdom consciousness conjoined with uncontrived renunciation.

The Buddha turned the Dharma wheel, setting forth practices of three vehicles: the Hearer Vehicle (Sāvakayāna, Śrāvakayāna), the Solitary Realizer Vehicle (Paccekabuddhayāna, Pratyekabuddhayāna), and the Bodhisattva Vehicle (Bodhisattayāna, Bodhisattvayāna). According to the Sanskrit tradition, the three vehicles are differentiated in terms of their motivation to attain a specific goal, their principal meditation object, and the amount of merit and time necessary to attain their goals. Teachings and practitioners of all three vehicles exist in both the Pāli and Sanskrit traditions. In general, those practicing the Hearer Vehicle principally follow the Pāli tradition, and those practicing the Bodhisattva Vehicle principally follow

the Sanskrit tradition. Nowadays in our world, hardly anyone follows the Solitary Realizer Vehicle.

The Buddha's teaching spread widely in India in the centuries after the Buddha lived and was brought to Sri Lanka from India by King Aśoka's son and daughter in the third century B.C.E. The early suttas were transmitted orally by the *bhāṇakas*—monastics whose job it was to memorize the suttas—and according to Sri Lankan sources, they were written down about the first century B.C.E. to form what is now the Pāli canon. Over the centuries, beginning in India and later augmented by Sinhala monks in the old Sinhala language, a body of commentaries to the scriptures built up. In the fifth century the great translator and commentator Buddhaghosa compiled the ancient commentaries and translated them into Pāli. He also wrote his famous masterwork the *Visuddhimagga* and numerous commentaries. Another South Indian monk, Dhammapāla, lived a century later and also wrote many commentaries in Pāli. Pāli is now the scriptural language uniting all Theravāda Buddhists.

Beginning in the first century B.C.E., the Sanskrit tradition came into view and gradually spread in India. Philosophical systems in India—Vaibhāṣika, Sautrāntika, Yogācāra (a.k.a. Cittamātra or Vijñānavāda), and Madhyamaka—evolved as scholars developed divergent views on points not explained explicitly in the sūtras. Although many tenets of the Pāli tradition are shared with one or another of these four tenet systems, it cannot be equated with any of them.

Several monastic universities arose—Nālandā, Odantapuri, and Vikramaśīla—and there Buddhists from various traditions and philosophical schools studied and practiced together. Philosophical debate was a widespread ancient Indian custom; the losers were expected to convert to the winners' schools. Buddhists sages developed logical arguments and reasonings to prove the validity of Buddhist doctrine and to deflect the philosophical attacks of non-Buddhists. The renowned Buddhist debaters were also great practitioners. Of course not all Buddhist practitioners were interested in this approach. Many preferred to study the sūtras or to practice meditation in hermitages.

Nowadays, three canons exist: the Pāli, Chinese, and Tibetan; a Sanskrit canon was not compiled in India. Each canon is divided into three "baskets" (*piṭaka*)—or categories of teachings—which are correlated with the three higher trainings. The Vinaya basket deals chiefly with monastic

discipline, the Sūtra basket emphasizes meditative concentration, and the Abhidharma basket is mainly concerned with wisdom.

The Chinese canon was first published in 983, and several other renditions were published later. The standard edition used now is the Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō, published in Tokyo in 1934. It consists of four parts: sūtras, vinaya, śāstras (treatises), and miscellaneous texts originally written in Chinese. The Chinese canon is very inclusive, sharing many texts with both the Pāli and Tibetan canons. In particular, the Āgamas in the Chinese canon correspond with the first four Nikāyas in the Pāli canon.

The Tibetan canon was redacted and codified by Buton Rinpoche in the fourteenth century. The first rendition of the Tibetan canon was published in 1411 in Beijing. Later editions were published in Tibet in Nartang in 1731–42 and later in Dergé and Choné. The Tibetan canon is composed of the Kangyur—the Buddha's word in 108 volumes—and the Tengyur—the great Indian commentaries in 225 volumes. Most of these volumes were translated into Tibetan directly from Indian languages, chiefly Sanskrit, although a few were translated from Chinese and Central Asian languages.

Pāli Tradition

Buddhism spread to Sri Lanka, China, and Southeast Asia many centuries before coming to Tibet. As our elder brothers and sisters, I pay respect to you.

Modern-day Theravāda was derived from the Sthaviravāda, one of the eighteen schools in ancient India. The name Theravāda does not seem to have indicated a school in India prior to Buddhism having gone to Sri Lanka. The Sinhala historical chronicle *Dīpavaṃsa* used the name Theravāda in the fourth century to describe the Buddhists on the island. There were three Theravāda subgroups, each with a monastery bearing its name: Abhayagiri (Dharmaruci), Mahāvihāra, and Jetavana. Abhayagiri Theravādins had close connections with India and brought in many Sanskrit elements. The Jetavanins did this as well, but to a lesser extent, while the Mahāvihārins maintained the orthodox Theravāda teachings. In the twelfth century the king abolished the Abhayagiri and Jetavana traditions and amalgamated those monks with the Mahāvihāra, which has since remained prominent.

Buddhism suffered greatly after the Sri Lankan capital fell to the Coḷa forces in 1017. The bhikkhu and bhikkhunī orders were destroyed, although the bhikkhu order was restored when the Sri Lankan king invited monks

Darima Daribazaron

DHAMEKH STUPA, SITE OF THE BUDDHA'S FIRST TEACHING, SARNATH, INDIA

from Burma to come and give the ordination. The Buddhadhamma thrived once again in Sri Lanka, and Sri Lanka came to be seen as the center of the Theravāda world. When the state of Theravāda teachings or its ordination lineages in one country were adversely affected, leaders would request monks from another Theravāda country to come and give ordination. This has continued up to the present day.

In late eighteenth-century Thailand, King Rāma I began to remove elements of Brahmanism and tantric practice, although traces live on today with many Thai Buddhist temples hosting a statue of four-faced Brahmā in their courtyard. King Rāma IV (r. 1851–68), a monk for nearly thirty years before ascending the throne, witnessed the relaxed state of monastic discipline and Buddhist education and instituted a wide range of saṅgha reforms. Importing an ordination lineage from Burma, he began the Dhammayuttikā Nikāya, unified the other sects into the Mahā Nikāya, instructed both sects to keep the monastic precepts more strictly, and placed both under a single ecclesiastical authority. Revamping monastic education, he wrote a series of textbooks expressing a more rational approach to Dhamma and eliminated elements of non-Buddhist folk culture attached to Thai

Buddhism. As Thailand became more centralized, the government assumed the authority to appoint preceptors to give ordination. The Saṅgha Act of 1902 brought all monastics under royal control by centralizing administrative authority for the entire saṅgha in the Supreme Saṅgha Council (*Mahathera Samakhom*) headed by the *saṅgharāja*. King Rāma V's half-brother, Prince Wachirayan, wrote new textbooks that were the basis for national saṅgha exams. These exams improved the monks' knowledge as well as distinguished the monks who would advance in ecclesiastical rank.

Colonialism hurt Buddhism in Sri Lanka, but the interest of a few Westerners in Buddhism, especially theosophists Helena Blavatsky and Henry Olcott, spurred lay Buddhists such as Anagārika Dhammapāla to present Buddhism in more rational terms and to connect with Buddhists internationally. Buddhism provided a rallying point for Sri Lankans in dealing with colonialism and establishing an independent nation.

Colonialism did not harm Buddhism in Burma as much, and it actually stimulated the king to request monks to teach vipassanā meditation in the court. This resulted in laypeople from all social classes learning to meditate. The monks Ledi Sayadaw (1846–1923) and Mingon Sayadaw (1868–1955) set up lay meditation centers, and Mahasi Sayadaw (1904–82) passed his teachings to lay teachers. This meditation style is now popular in Burma.

The means to select a saṅgharāja differs. In Thailand, they are generally appointed by the king. In other countries monastic seniority or a semidemocratic process are used. The authority of saṅgharājas varies: some are figureheads; others such as the late Mahā Ghosananda of Cambodia have great influence by virtue of their practice, beneficial works, and advancement of social change. Thailand's saṅgharāja, a position existing since the eighteenth century, is part of a national hierarchy handling issues of importance to the saṅgha. He has legal authority over monastics, works with the secular government, and is assisted by the Supreme Saṅgha Council. In Cambodia the saṅgharāja position disappeared during the Khmer period, but in 1981 the government reestablished it.

In many cases, national governments instituted changes that had the side effect of lessening the saṅgha's traditional roles as teachers and doctors and supplanting them with secular systems of modern education and medicine. As a result, Theravāda monastics, as well as their brethren in countries following the Sanskrit tradition, have had to rethink their role in society in the face of modernization.

Buddhism in China

Buddhism entered China in the first century C.E., first via the Silk Road from Central Asian lands where Buddhism flourished and later by sea from India and Sri Lanka. By the second century, a Chinese Buddhist monastery existed, and translation of Buddhist texts into Chinese was under way. Early translations employed inconsistent terminology, leading to some misunderstanding of Buddhist thought, but by the fifth century, translation terms became more settled. The early fifth century also marked the translation of more vinaya texts. For many centuries, emperors sponsored translation teams, so a wealth of Buddhist sūtras, treatises, and commentaries from India and Central Asia were translated into Chinese.

Chinese Buddhism contains a diversity of schools. Some views and practices are common to all schools, while others are unique to individual schools. Some schools are differentiated based on their philosophical tenets, others on their manner of practice, others by their principal texts. Historically, ten major schools developed in China.

1. *Chan* (J. *Zen*) was brought to China by the Indian meditation master Bodhidharma in the early sixth century. He was the twenty-eighth Indian patriarch and the first Chinese patriarch of this school. Currently, two sub-branches of Chan exist, Linji (J. *Rinzai*) and Caodong (J. *Sōtō*). Linji primarily uses *hua-tous* (koans)—puzzling statements that challenge practitioners to go beyond the limits of the conceptual mind—and speaks of sudden awakening. Caodong focuses more on "just sitting" and takes a more gradual approach.

   Early Chan masters relied on the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* and on Prajñāpāramitā sūtras such as the *Vajracchedikā Sūtra*, and some later adopted *tathāgatagarbha*, or "buddha essence," ideas. The *Śūraṅgama Sūtra* is popular in Chinese Chan. Nowadays most Korean Chan practitioners and some Chinese ones learn Madhyamaka—Middle Way philosophy. Dōgen Zenji and Myōan Eisai were instrumental in bringing Zen to Japan in the thirteenth century.
2. The *Pure Land* (C. *Jingtu*, J. *Jōdo*) school is based on the three Pure Land sūtras—the smaller and larger *Sukhāvatīvyūha* sūtras and the *Amitāyurdhyāna Sūtra*. It emphasizes chanting the name of Amitābha Buddha and making fervent prayers to be reborn in his

pure land, which provides all circumstances necessary to practice the Dharma and attain full awakening. The pure land can also be viewed as the pure nature of our own minds. Chinese masters such as Zhiyi, Hanshan Deqing, and Ouyi Zhixu wrote commentaries on the Pure Land practice, discussing how to attain serenity and realize the nature of reality while meditating on Amitābha. After the ninth century, Pure Land practice was integrated into many other Chinese schools, and today many Chinese monasteries practice both Chan and Pure Land. Hōnen took the Pure Land teachings to Japan in the late twelfth century.

3. *Tiantai* (J. *Tendai*) was founded by Huisi (515–76). His disciple Zhiyi (538–97) established a gradual progression of practice from the easier to the most profound, with the ultimate teachings found in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra*, the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra*, and Nāgārjuna's *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-upadeśa*. This school balances study and practice.
4. *Huayan* (J. *Kegon*) is based on the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, translated into Chinese around 420. Dushun (557–640) and Zongmi (781–841) were great Huayan masters. Huayan emphasizes the interdependence of all people and phenomena and the interpenetration of their worlds. The individual affects the world, and the world affects the individual. Huayan philosophy also emphasizes the bodhisattvas' activities in the world to benefit all beings.
5. The *Sanlun* (J. *Sanron*) or Madhyamaka school was founded by the great Indian translator Kumārajīva (334–413) and principally relies on the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* and *Dvādaśanikāya Śāstra* by Nāgārjuna and the *Śataka Śāstra* of Āryadeva. Sometimes Nāgārjuna's *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-upadeśa* is added as the fourth principal Sanlun text. Sanlun relies on the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras and follows the *Akṣayamatinirdeśa Sūtra* in asserting that these sūtras reveal the definitive meaning of the Buddha's teachings.
6. *Yogācāra* (C. *Faxiang*, J. *Hossō*) is based on the *Saṃdhinirmocana Sūtra* and on the *Yogācāryabhūmi Śāstra*, *Vijñaptimātrasiddhi Śāstra*, and other treatises by Maitreya, Asaṅga, and Vasubandhu. Xuanzang (602–64) translated these important texts and established this school after his return from India.

7. *Vajrayāna* (C. *Zhenyan*, J. *Shingon*) is based on the *Mahāvairocana Sūtra*, *Vajraśekhara Sūtra*, *Adhyardhaśatikā Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra*, and *Susiddhikara Sūtra*, which explain yoga tantra practices. Never widespread in China, this school was brought to Japan by Kukai (774–835) and is still extant there.
8. The *Vinaya* (C. *Lu*, J. *Ritshū*) school was founded by Daoxuan (596–667) and principally relies on the Dharmaguptaka vinaya, translated into Chinese in 412. Four other vinayas were also translated into Chinese.
9. The *Satyasiddhi* (C. *Chengshi*, J. *Jōjitsu*) school is based on the *Satyasiddhi Śāstra*, an Abhidharma-style text that discusses emptiness among other topics. Some say it emphasizes the Śrāvaka Vehicle, others say it bridges the Śrāvaka Vehicle and Bodhisattva Vehicle. This school is not extant now.
10. *The Abhidharma* (C. *Kośa*, J. *Kusha*) school was based on the *Abhidharmakośa* by Vasubandhu and was introduced into China by Xuanzang. While this school was popular in the "golden age of Buddhism" during the Tang dynasty (618–907), it is small now.

Some of the ten schools still exist as separate schools. The tenets and practices of those that do not have been incorporated into existing schools. Although the Vinaya school does not exist as a separate entity now, the practice of vinaya has been integrated into the remaining schools, and the saṅgha is flourishing in Taiwan, Korea, and Vietnam. While no longer distinct schools, the Abhidharma, Yogācāra, and Madhyamaka philosophies are studied and meditated upon in the indigenous Chinese schools as well as in Korea, Japan, and Vietnam.

Changes in society in the early twentieth century spurred Buddhist reform and renewal in China. The fall of the Qing dynasty in 1917 stopped imperial patronage and support of the saṅgha, and the government, military, and educational institutions wanted to confiscate monasteries' property for secular use. Buddhists wondered what role Buddhadharma could play in their encounter with modernity, science, and foreign cultures.

This social change provoked a variety of reactions. Taixu (1890–1947), perhaps the most well-known Chinese monk of that time, renewed the study of Madhyamaka and Yogācāra and began new educational institutes

for the saṅgha using modern educational methods. He also incorporated the best from secular knowledge and urged Buddhists to be more socially engaged. Traveling in Europe and Asia, he contacted Buddhists of other traditions and established branches of the World Buddhist Studies Institute. He encouraged Chinese to go to Tibet, Japan, and Sri Lanka to study, and he established seminaries in China that taught Tibetan, Japanese, and Pāli scriptures. Taixu also formulated "Humanistic Buddhism," in which practitioners strive to purify the world by enacting bodhisattvas' deeds right now as well as to purify their minds through meditation.

Several young Chinese monks studied Buddhism in Tibet in the 1920s and 30s. Fazun (1902–80), a disciple of Taixu, was a monk at Drepung Monastery, where he studied and later translated into Chinese several great Indian treatises and some of Tsongkhapa's works. The monk Nenghai (1886–1967) studied at Drepung Monastery and, upon returning to China, established several monasteries following Tsongkhapa's teachings. Bisong (a.k.a. Xing Suzhi 1916–) also studied at Drepung Monastery and in 1945 became the first Chinese *geshe lharampa*.

The scholar Lucheng made a list of works in the Tibetan and Chinese canons to translate into the other's language in order to expand Buddhist material available to Chinese and Tibetan practitioners and scholars. In the first half of the twentieth century, Chinese lay followers had increased interest in Tibetan Buddhism, especially in tantra, and invited several Tibetan teachers to teach in China. They and their Chinese disciples translated mostly tantric materials.

Taixu's disciple Yinshun (1906–2005) was an erudite scholar who studied the sūtras and commentaries of the Pāli, Chinese, and Tibetan canons. A prolific writer, he was especially attracted to Tsongkhapa's explanations. Due to Yinshun's emphasis on Madhyamaka and the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras, many Chinese Buddhists have renewed interest in this view. He developed the schema of the major philosophical systems in Chinese Buddhism today: (1) False and unreal mind only (C. *Weishi*) is the Yogācāra view. (2) Truly permanent mind only (C. *Zenru*) is the tathāgatagarbha doctrine, which is popular in China and has strong impact on practice traditions. (3) Empty nature, mere name (C. *Buruo*) is the Madhyamaka view based on the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras. Yinshun also encouraged Humanistic Buddhism.

Buddhism in Tibet

Tibetan Buddhism is rooted in Indian monastic universities such as Nālandā. Beginning in the early centuries of the Common Era and lasting until the early thirteenth century, Nālandā and other monastic universities consisted of many erudite scholars and practitioners emphasizing different sūtras and espousing a variety of Buddhist philosophical tenets.

Buddhism first came to Tibet in the seventh century through two wives of the Tibetan monarch Songtsen Gampo (605 or 617–49), one a Nepali princess the other a Chinese princess, who brought Buddhist statues to Tibet. Buddhist texts in Sanskrit and Chinese soon followed. From the late eighth century onward, Tibetans preferred the texts coming directly from India, and these formed the bulk of Buddhist literature translated into Tibetan.

Buddhism flourished in Tibet during the reign of King Trisong Detsen (r. 756–ca. 800), who invited the monk, Madhaymaka philosopher, and logician Śāntarakṣita from Nālandā and the Indian tantric yogi Padmasambhava to come to Tibet. Śāntarakṣita ordained Tibetan monks, establishing the saṅgha in Tibet, while Padmasambhava gave tantric initiations and teachings.

Śāntarakṣita also encouraged the Tibetan king to have Buddhist texts translated into Tibetan. In the early ninth century, many translations were done, and a commission of Tibetan and Indian scholars standardized many technical terms and compiled a Sanskrit-Tibetan glossary. However, Buddhism was persecuted during the reign of King Langdarma (838–42), and monastic institutions were closed. Since Dharma texts were no longer available, people's practice became fragmented, and they no longer knew how to practice all the various teachings as a unified whole.

At this crucial juncture Atiśa (982–1054), a scholar-practitioner from the Nālandā tradition, was invited to Tibet. He taught extensively, and to rectify misconceptions, he wrote the *Bodhipathapradīpa*, explaining that both sutra and tantra teachings could be practiced by an individual in a systematic, noncontradictory manner. As a result, people came to understand that the monastic discipline of the Vinaya, the bodhisattva ideal of the Sūtrayana, and the transformative practices of the Vajrayāna could be practiced in a mutually complementary way. Monasteries were again built, and the Dharma flourished in Tibet.

The Buddhism in Tibet prior to Atiśa became known as the Nyingma or "old translation" school. The new lineages of teachings entering Tibet beginning in the eleventh century became the "new translation" (*sarma*) schools, and these slowly crystallized to form the Kadam, Kagyu, and Sakya traditions. The Kadam lineage eventually became known as the Gelug tradition. All four Tibetan Buddhist traditions that exist today—Nyingma, Kagyu, Sakya, and Gelug—emphasize the Bodhisattva Vehicle, follow both the sūtras and tantras, and have the Madhyamaka philosophical view. Following the example of Śāntarakṣita, many Tibetan monastics engage in rigorous study and debate in addition to meditation.

Some misnomers from the past—the terms "Lamaism," "living buddha," and "god king"—unfortunately persist. Westerners who came in contact with Tibetan Buddhism in the nineteenth century called it Lamaism, a term originally coined by the Chinese, perhaps because they saw so many monks in Tibet and mistakenly believed all of them were lamas (teachers). Or perhaps they saw the respect disciples had for their teachers and erroneously thought they worshiped their teachers. In either case, Tibetan Buddhism should not be called Lamaism.

Lamas and tulkus (identified incarnations of spiritual masters) are respected in Tibetan society. However, in some cases these titles are simply social status, and calling certain people tulku, rinpoche, or lama has led to corruption. It saddens me that people put so much value on titles. Buddhism is not about social status. It is much more important to check a person's qualifications and qualities before taking that person as one's spiritual mentor. Teachers must practice diligently and be worthy of respect, whether or not they have titles.

Some people mistakenly believed that since tulkus are recognized as incarnations of previous great Buddhist masters, they must be buddhas and thus called them "living buddha" (C. *huofo*). However, not all tulkus are bodhisattvas, let alone buddhas.

"Godking" may have originated with the Western press and was attributed to the position of the Dalai Lama. Since Tibetans see the Dalai Lama as the embodiment of Avalokiteśvara, the bodhisattva of compassion, these journalists assumed he was a "god," and since he was the political leader of Tibet, he was considered a king. However, since I currently hold the position of Dalai Lama, I repeatedly remind people that I am a simple Buddhist monk, nothing more. The Dalai Lama is not a god, and since the Central Tibetan

Administration located in Dharamsala, India, is now headed by a prime minister, he is not a king.

Some people mistakenly think the position of the Dalai Lama is like a Buddhist pope. The four principal Tibetan Buddhist traditions and their many sub-branches operate more or less independently. The abbots, rinpoches, and other respected teachers meet together from time to time to discuss issues of mutual interest under the auspices of Central Tibetan Administration's Department of Religion and Culture. The Dalai Lama does not control their decisions. Similarly the Dalai Lama is not the head of any of the four traditions. The Gelug is headed by the Ganden Tripa, a rotating position, and the other traditions have their own methods of selecting leaders.

Our Commonalities and Diversity

Sometimes people mistakenly believe that Tibetan Buddhism, especially Vajrayāna, is separate from the rest of Buddhism. When I visited Thailand many years ago, some people initially thought that Tibetans had a different religion. However, when we sat together and discussed the vinaya, sūtras, abhidharma, and such topics as the thirty-seven aids to awakening, the four concentrations, four immaterial absorptions, four truths of the āryas, and noble eightfold path, we saw that Theravāda and Tibetan Buddhism have many common practices and teachings.

With Chinese, Korean, and many Vietnamese Buddhists, Tibetans share the monastic tradition, bodhisattva ethical restraints, Sanskrit scriptures, and the practices of Amitābha, Avalokiteśvara, Mañjuśrī, Samantabhadra, and Medicine Buddha. When Tibetan and Japanese Buddhists meet, we discuss the bodhisattva ethical restraints and sūtras such as the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra.* With the Japanese Shingon sect we share the tantric practices of the Vajradhātu maṇḍala and Vairocanābhisaṃbodhi.

While there are differences in the texts that comprise each canon, there is considerable overlap of the material discussed in them. In subsequent chapters we will explore some of these in greater depth, but here are a few examples.

The Buddha spoke at length about the disadvantages of anger and the antidotes to it in the Pāli suttas (e.g., SN 11:4–5). The teachings for overcoming anger in Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra* echo these. One sutta

Anandajoti Bhikkhu

Reclining Buddha, Thailand

(SN 4:13) recounts the story of the Buddha experiencing severe pain due to his foot having been cut by a stone splinter. Nevertheless, he was not distressed, and when prodded by Māra, he responded, "I lie down full of compassion for all beings." This is the compassion generated when doing the taking-and-giving meditation (Tib. *tonglen*) taught in the Sanskrit tradition, where a practitioner imagines taking the sufferings of others upon himself and giving others his own happiness.

Furthermore, the altruistic intention of bodhicitta so prominent in the Sanskrit tradition is an extension of the four *brahmavihāras* (four immeasurables) taught in the Pāli canon. The Pāli and Sanskrit traditions share many of the same perfections (*pāramī*, *pāramitā*). The qualities of a buddha, such as the ten powers, four fearlessnesses, and eighteen unshared qualities of an awakened one are described in scriptures from both traditions. Both traditions speak of impermanence, the unsatisfactory nature, selflessness, and emptiness. The Sanskrit tradition sees itself as containing the teachings of the Pāli tradition and elaborating on certain key points—for example, by explaining true cessation according to the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras and the true path according to the Tathāgatagarbha sūtras and some of the tantras.

The terms Thai Buddhism, Sri Lankan Buddhism, Chinese Buddhism, Tibetan Buddhism, Korean Buddhism, and so on are social conventions. In each case, Buddhism in a country is not monolithic and contains many Buddhist practice traditions and tenet systems. Within these, there are sub-

groups consisting of monasteries or teachers with various affiliations. Some subtraditions emphasize study, others meditation. Some stress practicing serenity (*samatha*, *śamatha*), others insight (*vipassanā*, *vipaśyanā*), and others both together.

While one country may have many traditions in it, one tradition may also be practiced in many countries. Theravāda is practiced Sri Lanka, Thailand, Burma, Laos, Cambodia, and is also found in Vietnam. Within Theravāda countries, some follow early Buddhism—the suttas themselves—without relying on the commentaries very much, while others follow the explanations in the commentarial tradition. Even the robes in one country or in one tradition may vary.

Similarly, Chan is practiced in China, Taiwan, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam. While Chan practitioners in all these countries rely on the same sūtras, the teachings and meditation style vary among them.

In Western countries, Buddhism from many different traditions and countries are present. Some groups consist primarily of Asian immigrants, and their temples are both religious and community centers where people can speak their native language, eat familiar food, and teach their children the culture of their homeland. Other groups in the West are composed mostly of Western converts. A few are mixed.

As followers of the Buddha, let's keep these variations in mind and not think that everything we hear or learn about another tradition applies to everyone in that tradition. Similarly not everything we hear about how Buddhism is practiced in a particular country applies to all traditions or temples in that country.

Indeed we are a huge and diverse Buddhist family following the same wise and compassionate Teacher, Śākyamuni Buddha. I believe our diversity is one of our strengths. It has allowed Buddhism to spread throughout the world and to benefit billions of people on this planet.

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