

## A COOMPARATIVE OVERVIEW OF THERAVĀDA AND MAHĀYĀNA DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE

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**Key words:** Buddha, Theravāda school, Mahāyāna school, doctrine, Pataliputta, Mahāvihāra, dharma.

2,600 years ago the Buddha, the Awakened One, turned the wheel of Dharma in India. As the Dharma spread across India after the Buddha's parinirvāṇa, different interpretations of the Doctrine and practice of Vinaya rule led the emergence of the present day two main schools of Buddhism: Theravāda and Mahāyāna. The Vajrayāna<sup>1</sup> or the Diamond Vehicle emerged from the latter school.

In this paper, a comparative overview of Theravāda and Mahāyāna doctrine and practice will be presented in the context of their interpretations of the Buddha, Dharma and Sangha which are collectively called as the Triple Gem in the Buddhist tradition.

### Introduction: Theravāda and Mahāyāna schools

#### Theravāda school

Theravāda, "the Doctrine of Elders" which is the only extant school of early non-Mahayana schools is predominant form of Buddhism in South-East Asian countries. The term of Theravāda is established in Sri Lanka. The history of Theravāda Buddhism in Sri Lanka<sup>2</sup> starts around 250 BCE when King Aśoka sent Arahant Mahinda to Sri Lanka after the Third Council held at Pataliputta. Devānampiya Tissa, the king of Sri Lanka, (307-267 BC) built the Mahāvihāra monastery and consequently Buddha Dharma established in Sri Lanka. During the reign of King Vattagāmaṇi Abhaya (104-88 BC), Pāli Tipiṭaka which had been previously transmitted orally was written down for the first time on palm leaves. In the fifth century the great commentator Bhadantācariya Buddhaghosa arrived in Sri Lanka and composed his famous *Visuddhimagga*, compendium of Pāli Canon. In the eleventh century Theravāda Buddhism introduced to Burma and in the following centuries to Thailand, Laos and Cambodia.

#### Mahāyāna school

The term of Mahāyāna, the "Great Vehicle" implies that it is the great vehicle or conveyance which can deliver many beings from the shore of *samsāra*, the cyclic existence of death and rebirth, to the other shore of *nirvāṇa*. The term of "yāna" is first appeared in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra*. The Mahāyāna is compared with the bullock cart while the Śrāvakayāna and the Pratyekabuddhayāna are with the goat cart and the deer cart respectively.<sup>3</sup> *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* points out the seven greatnesses of the Mahāyāna as:

Greatness of basis and of the practice of both, of knowledge, of exertion of energy, and of skill in means.

Greatness of attainment and greatness of the acts of a Buddha: due to the greatness of these it is known as the great vehicle.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The Vajrayāna, according to Tibetan tradition, is the quickest path to attain Buddhahood in one's present lifetime while a bodhisattva goes through the three countless eons to attain the Buddhahood in the Sūtrayāna.

<sup>2</sup> According to *Mahāvamsa* sa before arrival of Arahant Mahinda, the Buddha visited the Ceylon three times and purified the island from the demons. It is recorded in *Mahāvamsa* as "In the ninth month after his enlightenment, at the full moon of December, the Conqueror came to Sri Lanka in order to purify it." *The Mahāvamsa*, ed. Wilhelm Geiger (London: Pali Text Society, 1908)

<sup>3</sup> *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka Sūtra: The Threefold Lotus Sutra* (Weatherhill/Kosei, 1975)

<sup>4</sup> *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*, Chapter 19.

ālambana-mahatvaṃ ca pratipatter dvayos tathā/



"The greatness of basis refers to the extensive of the Mahāyāna dharma. The greatness of practice means that the teaching of the Mahāyāna is practiced for the benefit of both oneself and others. The greatness of knowledge refers to the knowledge of the absence of self in both persons and phenomena. The greatness of exertion of energy refers to the time required to attain buddhahood: three incalculable aeons. The greatness of skill means refers to the absence of defilements even without abandoning *samsāra*. The greatness of attainment means acquiring the qualities exclusive to buddhas. The greatness of the acts of a Buddha refers to a buddha's manifestation of complete awakening and *parinirvāṇa*." (Mario D'Amato 2000: 211). Starting from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century the Mahāyāna teaching had been extensively elaborated and promulgated by Ārya Nāgārjuna, Ārya Asaṅga and other great Mahāyānic scholars<sup>1</sup>. Accordingly the Mahāyāna school established as an independent Buddhist school in India. In the following centuries Mahāyāna Buddhism is introduced to China, Korea, Japan, Tibet, Mongolia and Vietnam.

### **The Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha in the light of Theravāda and Mahāyāna teaching**

#### **The Buddha**

##### *Theravāda Perspective of the Buddha*

According to Pāli Canon, the Gotama Buddha is the fourth fully-enlightened Buddha in this present fortunate aeon.<sup>2</sup> Before his enlightenment he was Bodhisatta in pursuit of ten perfections<sup>3</sup> and took his final birth in the world<sup>4</sup> and attained enlightenment. Thus, "that Blessed One is accomplished, fully enlightened, perfect in true knowledge and conduct, sublime, knower of worlds, incomparable leader of persons to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans, enlightened, blessed."<sup>5</sup> After his enlightenment, he taught the Dhamma for forty five years to his disciples and finally entered the *parinibbāna*. *Parinibbāna* is "the complete cessation of all conditioned states of mind and body, the cessation of all participation in this world." (John J. Makransky 1997: 11) After the attainment of *parinibbāna*, "*nibbāna* without the remaining", the existence of the Buddha is not answered by the Buddha. In *Cūḷamālunkya Sutta* of *Majjhima Nikāya* the Buddha said to bhikkhu Mālunkyaṇḍita "Therefore, Mālunkyaṇḍita, remember what I have left undeclared as undeclared, and remember what I have declared as declared. 'After death a Tathāgata exists'-I have left undeclared. 'After death a Tathāgata does not exist'-I have left undeclared. 'After death a Tathāgata both exists and does not exist'-I have left undeclared. 'After death a Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist'-I have left undeclared. Why have I left that undeclared? Because it is unbeneficial, ...it does not lead ..to enlightenment, to Nibbāna. That is why I have left it undeclared."<sup>6</sup>

The bhikkhuni Khema explains about the silence of the Buddha to King Pasenadi Kosala as "Even so, great king, any physical form (...feeling..perception..mental fabrication... consciousness by which one describing the Tathagata would describe him: That the Tathagata

jñānasya vīryārambhasya upāye kauśalasya ca/  
udāgama-mahatvam ca mahatvam buddha-karmaṇaḥ/  
etan-mahatva-yogād dhi mahāyānam nirucyate//

<sup>1</sup> In Tibetan tradition Ārya Nāgārjuna, Ārya Asaṅga, Aryadeva, Vasubandhu, Dignaga, Dharmakīrti, Guṇaprabha and Śākyaprabha are referred as "The Six Ornaments and Two Excellences of the Jambu dvīpa" (T. rgyan drug mchog gñis)

<sup>2</sup> "in this present fortunate aeon the Lords Buddhas Kakusandha, Koṇāgamana and Kassapa arose in the world. And, monks, in this present fortunate aeon I too have arisen in the world as a fully-enlightened Buddha." Mahapadāna Sutta: *The Long Discourses of the Buddha* (Boston, 1995). According to Theravāda school this present aeon is the aeon of five Buddhas.

<sup>3</sup> Ten perfections are 1. Perfection of Giving 2. Morality 3. Renunciation 4. Wisdom 5. Energy 6. Patience 7. Truthfulness 8. Resolution 9. Loving-kindness and 10. Equanimity

<sup>4</sup> "I am the highest in the world; I am the best in the world; I am the foremost in the world. This is my last birth; now there is no renewal of being for me." Acchāriya-abbhūta Sutta: *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha* (Boston, 2001)

<sup>5</sup> Mahāsihanāda Sutta: *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha* (Boston, 2001)

<sup>6</sup> ibid. p 536



has abandoned, its root destroyed, made like a palmyra stump, deprived of the conditions of development, not destined for future arising. Freed from the classification of form, great king, death' doesn't apply. 'The Tathagata doesn't exist after death doesn't apply. 'The Tathagata both exists and doesn't exist after death' doesn't apply. 'The Tathagata neither exists nor doesn't exist after death' doesn't apply."<sup>1</sup>

In *Madhupiṇḍika Sutta* of *Majjhima Nikāya* Mahā Kaccāna says that "He is vision, he is knowledge, he is the Dhamma, ...the giver of Deathless, the lord of the Dhamma."<sup>2</sup>

*Mahāyāna Perspective of the Buddha*

In Mahāyāna, the Śākyamuni Buddha is omniscient, endowed with perfect provisions of merit and wisdom (*puṇya-jcāna-saṃbhāra*) and four bodies.<sup>3</sup> The historical Buddha, according to the Mahāyāna, is none other than his supreme emanation body (*S. paramanairmāṇikāya T. mchog gi sprul sku*). Through the supreme emanation body the Buddha showed the beings how to attain enlightenment in display of the twelve acts<sup>4</sup>. The Buddha's entrance into *mahāparinirvāṇa* is the teaching of the impermanency. His supreme emanation body will display the twelve acts in other world systems until all sentient beings are released from the *samsāra*.

The four bodies of Buddha are attained after completion of the tenth stage Bodhisattva. The four bodies are as: (1). *Svābhāvikakāya*, the essential body (*T. ngo bo cid sku*). The void nature of the Buddha's omniscient mind. (2). *Jcānadharmakāya*, the dharma body of wisdom (*T. ye shes chos sku*). The omniscient mind of the Buddha. (3). *Sāmbhogikakāya*, the body of enjoyment (*T. long ngo bo cid sku*) or the body endowed with the qualities of the five certainties (*T. nges pa lnga ldan*)<sup>5</sup>. (4). *Nirmāṇakāya*, the Emanation Body (*T. sprul sku*). The body which is not endowed with the qualities of the five certainties. There are three types of emanation body as 1. supreme emanation body (*T. mchog gi sprul sku*), 2. artisan emanation body (*T. bzo bo sprul sku*) and 3. miscellaneous emanation body (*T. skye ba sprul sku*).

The essential body and the Dharma body are called as the self-benefit bodies (*S. svārthakāya T. rang don sku*) of the Buddha. The bodies are attained by the result of the provision of wisdom (*jcāna-saṃbhāra*). The body of enjoyment and the Emanation body are the bodies for the benefit of others (*S. parārthakāya T. gzhan don sku*). These two bodies are attained by the provision of merit (*puṇya -saṃbhāra*). The activities of the Buddha are spontaneity, effortless, endlessness and omnipresence. The four bodies and the activities are identical for all buddhas.

**Dharma: The Foundation, the Path and the Result (*gzhi lam 'bras gsum*)**

**The Foundation, the Path and the Result in Theravāda**

**The Foundation: Three characteristics (*ti-lakkhaṇa*)**

The path in Theravāda starts with the understanding of three characteristics (*ti-lakkhaṇa*) of the conditioned world and wish to attain Arahant hood, the end of *samsāra*. The three

<sup>1</sup> Khema Sutta: With Khema" (SN 44.1), translated from the Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu. Access to Insight, <http://www.accesstosight.org/tipitaka/sn/sn44/sn44.001.than.html>.

<sup>2</sup> Mahāsihanāda Sutta: *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha* (Boston, 2001) p 203

<sup>3</sup> Ārya Vimuktisena (early sixth century) held "three bodies theory" while Ācārya Haribhadra advocated "the four bodies theory."

<sup>4</sup> The twelve acts (*T. mdzad pa cu gnyis*) are 1. descent from Tushita heaven 2. entering the womb of his mother 3. taking birth 4. displaying his skill in the worldly arts 5. life in the palace 6. renunciation 7. practicing arduous discipline 8. meditating under the bodhi tree 9. defeating of Māra 10. attaining full enlightenment 11. turning the wheel of doctrine and 12. passing into the nirvāṇa.

<sup>5</sup> The five certainties are 1. certainty of place (the pure realm called Akanīṣha), (2) certainty of form (endowed with 32 major and 80 minor marks of great being), 3. certainty of teaching (only the Mahāyāna teaching), 4. certainty of entourage (only bodhisattvas in the bhumis) and 5. certainty of time (until all sentient beings is enlightened).



characteristics are *anicca* (the all conditioned things are impermanent), *dukkha* (suffering) and *anattā* (no-self). In *Samyutta Nikāya* says "Body, brethren, is impermanent. What is impermanent, that is suffering. What is suffering, that is not the self. What is not the self, that is not mine, that I am not, that is not the self of me. This is the way one should regard things as they really are, by right insight. So, likewise with regard to feeling, perception, the activities and consciousness."<sup>1</sup>

### *The Path: the Noble Eightfold Path (ariya-aṭṭhangika-magga)*

Motivated by the wish of release from the bondage of *samsāra* which is conditioned by greed (*lobha*), hatred (*dosa*), and delusion (*moha*) and kammic force, a person starts to step on the Noble Eightfold Path (*ariya-aṭṭhangika-magga*) which leads to the cessation of suffering (*dukkha-nirodha*). The Noble Eightfold Path consists of (1). right view (*sammā-diṭṭi*), (2). right thought (*sammā-sankappa*), (3). right speech (*sammā-vacā*), (4). right action (*sammā-kammanta*), (5). right livelihood (*sammā-ājīva*), (6). right effort (*sammā-vāyāma*), (7). right mindfulness (*sammā-sati*) and (8). right concentration (*sammā-samādhi*). These eight steps to the Arahantship are divided into three disciplines as (1). morality (*sīla*), (2). concentration (*samādhi*) and (3). wisdom (*paccā*).

The Arahantship is attained by the elimination of ten fetters in the four stages. At the first stage, one enters the stream and becomes a stream-winner (*sotāpanna*) and eradicates the three lower fetters i.e., (1). personality-belief (*sakkāya-diṭṭi*) (2). doubt (*vicikicchā*) and (3). attachment to rites and rituals (*sīlabbata-parāmāsa*). At the second stage, one becomes a once-returner (*sakadāgāmi*) and the fourth lower fetter, sensual desire (*kāma-rāga*) and fifth lower fetter, ill-will (*vyāpāda*) are weakened. At the third stage, the fourth and fifth fetters are completely eliminated and one becomes a non-returner (*anāgāmi*). Finally, at the fourth stage, one becomes an arahant by eradicating the five higher fetters i.e., (1). craving for existence in the Form World (*rūpa-rāga*), (2). craving for existence in the Formless World (*arūpa-rāga*), (3). conceit (*māna*), (4). restlessness (*uddhacca*) and ignorance (*avijjā*). Finally one attains the status of "Birth is finished, the holy life has been led, done is what had to be done, there is nothing further here."<sup>2</sup> This is the highest attainment in Theravāda.

### *The Result: Nibbāna*

Upon attainment of Arahantship one realizes *Nibbāna*, "the destruction of lust, the destruction of hatred, the destruction of illusion"<sup>3</sup> and "unborn, unageing, unailing, deathless, sorrowless, undefiled supreme security from bondage"<sup>4</sup>. In Theravāda tradition, two types of *nibbāna* are emphasized i.e., 1. *nibbāna* with remaining (P. *sa-upādi-sesa-nibbāna*) and 2. *nibbāna* without remaining (P. *an-upādi-sesa-nibbāna*). The first *nibbāna* is experienced in the life time of an arahant and the latter is attained after his physical death.

### *The Foundation, the Path and the Result in Mahāyāna*

#### *The Foundation: Bodhi mind (bodhicitta)*

The spiritual path to the attainment of fully enlightened Buddhahood is started with the generation of *bodhicitta*. *Bodhicitta* is the entrance door to Mahāyāna. Je Tsongkhapa said "The only door to the Great Vehicle is the generation of Bodhicitta"<sup>5</sup>. A person who is generated

<sup>1</sup> *The essential teaching of Buddhism* (London/Sydney, 1989)

<sup>2</sup> *Sāmaññaphala Sutta: The Long Discourses of the Buddha* (Boston, 1995)

<sup>3</sup> *The essential teaching of Buddhism* (London/Sydney, 1989)

<sup>4</sup> *Ariyapariyesana Sutta: The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha* (Boston, 2001)

<sup>5</sup> *byan chub lam rim chung ngu*, fasc. 66 "theg chen gyi 'jug sgo sems skyed kho na"



*bodhicitta* "shall be born in the family of the Buddha [and becomes] a son of the Buddha."<sup>1</sup> The definition of *bodhicitta* is given in *Abhisamayālan'kāra* as:

The generation of the [bodhi] mind is the aspiration to attain fully completed enlightenment for the benefit of others.<sup>2</sup>

*Bodhicitta* is generated in two ways by contemplating on "six causes and one effect" (T. *rgyu* 'bras man ngag bdun) method and "exchanging self and others" (T. *gdag gzhan mcam brje*) method. In the "six causes and one effect" meditation, a practitioner contemplates on six causes: (1). to see all sentient beings as one's own mother, (2). to recollect their kindness, (3). to show gratitude, (4). to develop kindness and (5). compassion, and (6). aspiration to help beings and finally generates the *bodhicitta*, "one effect". In "exchanging self and others" method, a meditator contemplates on equanimity between self and others in respect to both want happiness and avoid suffering. Further, a practitioner contemplates that all suffering comes from self-cherishing thought and all happiness comes from the desire of happiness for others thinking that the Buddha attained the enlightenment because of his compassion for sentient beings while we are still in *samsāra* due to our self-centered thought.

*Bodhicitta* is divided into two categories: 1. the mind of aspiration (*praṇidhi-citta*) and 2. the mind of entrance (*prasthāna-citta*). The difference between the two *bodhicittas* is explained by in *Bodhicaryāvatāra* as

As is understood by the distinction  
Between aspiring to go and actually going,  
So the wise understand in turn  
The distinction between the two.<sup>3</sup>

Another explanation is given in *Bhāvanākrama* One as:

The aspiration mind is the goal-directed volition, thinking first of all, "May I become a Buddha for the benefit of all the world." The entrance mind is the subsequent taking of the vow and the applications to the collections [of merit and knowledge].<sup>4</sup>

*The Path: the Five paths (pacca-mārga)*

After generation of the mind of entrance or the bodhi-mind of application (*prasthāna-citta*), a bodhisattva engages in the practices of the six perfections<sup>5</sup> (*ṣaḍ-pāramita*) and progress through the five paths (*pacca-mārga*).

The generation of the mind of entrance (*prasthāna-citta*) and the entrance to the first path of accumulation (*sambhāramārga*) is simultaneous. The Four Noble Truths is contemplated in the path accumulation. In the second path of preparation (*prayoga-mārga*), a practitioner attains the state of non-falling into the three lower realms. The path of accumulation and preparation are the path of ordinary bodhisattva. In the third path of insight (*darśanamārga*), a bodhisattva realizes the emptiness directly, thus, he/she becomes the noble bodhisattva (*arya bodhisattva*) and attains the first bodhisattva *bhūmi*, joyous stage (*pramuditā-bhūmi*). The other nine *bhūmis*<sup>6</sup> are attained in the path of cultivation (*bhāvanāmārga*). In the eight stage, a bodhisattva starts to

<sup>1</sup> Bodhicaryāvatāra III. *Ethics of Tibet* (Delhi, 1992) p 28 adya buddhkule jāto buddhaputro'smi sāmpratam.

<sup>2</sup> *Abhisamayālan'kāra*. I verses 19 Isems bskyed pa ni gzhan don pyir/ yang dag rdzogs pa'i byang chub 'dod/

<sup>3</sup> Bodhicaryāvatāra I. verses 15-16: A Guide to the Bodhisattva's Way of Life (Dharmasala, 1979)

<sup>4</sup> *Bhāvanākrama* One: *Ethics of Tibet* (Delhi, 1992)

<sup>5</sup> The six perfections are 1. Giving (*dāna-pāramita*), 2. Morality (*śīla-pāramita*), 3. Patience (*kṣānti-pāramita*) 4. Effort (*vīrya-pāramita*), 5. Meditation (*dhyāna-pāramita*) and 6. Wisdom (*prajñā-pāramita*).

<sup>6</sup> (2) Stainless or pure (*vimalā-bhūmi*), (3) Luminous (*prabhākarī-bhūmi*), (4) Radiant (*arcīsmatī-bhūmi*), (5) Difficult to Conquer (*sudurjayā-bhūmi*), (6) Approaching (*abhimukhī-bhūmi*), (7) Gone Far (*dūran'gamā-bhūmi*), (8) Immoveable (*acalā-bhūmi*), (9) Good Intelligence (*sādhumatī-bhūmi*) and (10) Cloud of Dharma (*dharmameghā-bhūmi*)



eliminate cognitive obstruction (*jceyāvaraṇa*), the obstruction to omniscience. After completing the tenth *bhūmi*, a bodhisattva enters the fifth path of no-more learning (*aśaikṣmārga*) and attains the fully enlightened Buddhahood, endowed with four bodies of Buddha, ten powers (*daśabala*)<sup>1</sup>, four fearlessnesses (*catvāravaiśāradya*)<sup>2</sup>, four kinds of specific understanding (*catvārapratīsamvit*)<sup>3</sup> and eighteen qualities exclusive to buddhas (*aṣṭādaśāveṇika-buddha-dharma*).<sup>4</sup>

*The Result: Non-abiding nirvana (Apratiṣṭhita-nirvāṇa)*

*Vijcāptimātratāsiddhi* specifies the four types of *nirvāṇas*: *anādikālika-prakṛti-śuddha-nirvāṇa* (naturally pure *nirvāṇa* from beginningless time), *sopadhiśeṣa-nirvāṇa* (*nirvāṇa* with residual conditioning), *nirupadhiśeṣa-nirvāṇa* (*nirvāṇa* without residual conditioning), and *apṛatiṣṭhita-nirvāṇa* (non-abiding *nirvāṇa*).

Buddhas neither abide in *samsāra* nor in quiescent *nirvāṇa* of śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha. *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* says:

By wisdom [of non-duality. Buddha] does not abide in *samsāra* by compassion [he] does not stay in the quiescence. [*nirvāṇa* of śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha]<sup>5</sup>

*Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra-bhāṣya* states:

There is not any distinction between *samsāra* and *nirvāṇa* in the ultimate sense because of their identity in absence of self.<sup>6</sup>

In accordance with the Mahāyāna, the liberation of the śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas is only from the afflictive obstruction (*kleśāvaraṇa*), the obstruction to attain the release from *samsāra* while the liberation of buddha is from the both obstructions, the afflictive obstruction (*kleśāvaraṇa*) and the cognitive obstruction (*jceyāvaraṇa*), the obstruction to omniscience.

## Sangha

*Sangha in Theravāda tradition: Pātimokkha*

Sangha, the order of Buddhist monks and nuns is formed when five ascetics, Ajnata Kauṇḍinya, Aśvajit, Bhadrīka, Dasabala Kasyapa and Mahanama Kulika were accepted as the Buddha's disciple after his first sermon on the four noble truths in the Deer Park. In the early days of Sangha, the ordination was simple as simply by taking refuge in the Triple Gem. As more people from all walks of life joined Sangha, the need of rule and regulation of ordination arose. "The Buddha prescribed two levels of ordination, the *pabbajja* or novice (*samanera*) ordination, and the *upasampada* or higher (*bhikkhu*) ordination." (Lester 1973: 49). The novice

<sup>1</sup> Ten powers are: 1. knowledge of sources and non-sources, 2. of actions and their fruitions, 3. of divisions of the eighteen constituents, 4. of varieties of inclinations, 5. of superior and non-superior faculties, 6. of the paths leading to all forms of cyclic existence and solitary peace, 7. of the concentrations, liberations, meditative stabilizations, meditative absorptions and knowledge of others' afflictions and others' non-contamination, 8. of remembering former lives, 9. of death, transmigration, and birth and 10. of contaminations and their extinction

<sup>2</sup> Four fearlessness are: 1. fearlessness with respect to asserting that I am completely and perfectly enlightened, 2. fearlessness with respect to asserting that the contaminations have been extinguished, 3. fearlessness with respect to teaching that the obstructions are to be ceased and 4. fearlessness with respect to teaching the paths of deliverance

<sup>3</sup> Four kinds of specific understanding are 1. understanding of doctrine (*dharma*), 2. of meaning (*artha*), 3. of grammar and lexical intension (*nirukti*) and 4. of eloquence (*prātibhāṇa*)

<sup>4</sup> Eighteen qualities exclusive to buddhas are: 1. possessing of unmistaken bodily qualities, 2. not possessing uncontrolled speech, 3. possessing undeclining memory, 4. constant abidance in meditative equipoise, 5. not having the various discriminations of one-pointedly apprehending cyclic existence as to be forsaken and nirvana as to be attained, 6. possessing indiscriminate equanimity, 7. possessing undeclining aspiration, 8. possessing undeclining effort, 9. possessing undeclining mindfulness as a means for taming sentient beings, 10. possessing undeclining meditative stabilization, 11. possessing undeclining wisdom, 12. possessing undeclining liberation, 13. virtuous activity of body, 14. virtuous activity of speech, 15. virtuous activity of mind, 16. unobstructed wisdom concerning the past, 17. unobstructed wisdom concerning the future and 18. unobstructed wisdom concerning the present

<sup>5</sup> *Abhisamayālaṅkāra* I, verses 11 a-b. /shes pas srid la mi gnas shing/ sñing rjes zhi la mi gnas dang/

<sup>6</sup> *Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra-bhāṣya*  
na cāsti saṃsāra-nirvāṇayoh. kimcin nā nākaṇaṃ paramārtha-vṛttiyā nairātmyasya samatayā/



keeps ten precepts while bhikkhu observes two hundred twenty seven precepts. These precepts are listed in the *Vinaya Piṭaka* as four *pārājika*<sup>1</sup> rules, thirteen *sam'ghādisesa*, two *aniyata*, thirty *niissaggiya pācittiya*, ninety two *suddha pācittiya*, four *pāṭidesanīya*, seventy five *sekhiya* and seven *adhikaraṇasamatha*. There are three hundred eleven rules for bhikkhunī.

*Sangha in Mahāyāna: Prātimokṣa, Bodhisattva and Tantric vow*

Sangha members in Mahāyāna keep *prātimokṣa* rules and Bodhisattva vow. In Tibetan tradition, monks observe the three vows (T. *sdom pa gsum*) including the tantric vow. The bodhisattva vow which includes eighteen root vows<sup>2</sup> and forty-six subsidiary vows guards *bodhicitta* against from its degeneration. When a practitioner is introduced to receive an initiation to any four tantra<sup>3</sup>, he/she is required to receive the tantric vow which consists of fourteen root vows.

### CONCLUSION

As Buddhism spread in the vast geographical area covering from the southern to the northern part of Asia, the Buddhist teaching had been diversified. The different interpretation of doctrine and vinaya practice led to the emergence of the present day Buddhist schools, Theravāda and Mahāyāna. Two traditions hold different perspective in the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. Nevertheless, both tradition accepts the major essential characteristics of Dharma teachings of taking refuge in the Triple Gem<sup>4</sup>, the four distinctive seals<sup>5</sup>, the development of loving kindness and wisdom and the realization of *nirvāṇa* which is the ultimate goal of Buddhist spiritual path.

### Хураангуй

2600 жилийн өмнө Бурхан Буддха Энэтхэг орноо номын хүрдийг эргүүлснээс хойш Бурханы сургааль ном өргөн уудам нутаг дэвсгэрт дүгэн дэлгэрч улмаар цаг хугацаа улиран, нийгэм соёл ахуй өөрчлөгдөн хувирахын сацуу Бурхан Буддхагийн айлдсан сургааль номыг дагагчид тухайн сургааль ном, хуврагийн баримтлах ёс цаазыг өвөр өврийн байдлаар тайлан ухаарч баримтлах болсон бөгөөд эдүгээ эртний Энэтхэгт үүссэн Бурханы шашны хуврагийн 18 аймгаас уламжлагдан ирсэн Тхеравада мөн Их Хөлгөний шашин нь Бурханы шашны зонхилох хоёр урсгал болон хөгжиж байна. Энэхүү хоёр урсгал нь Бурханы шашны гол сургааль болох бодийн хутаг, түүнд хүрэх зам мөрийг хийгээд хуврагийн аймгийн баримтлах сахил санваарын талаар хэрхэн тайлбарлан үздэг болохыг энэхүү судалгааны өгүүллэгт харьцуулан үзүүлэхийг зорив.

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<sup>1</sup> The first *pārājika* rule is laid down after Bhikkhu Sudinna committed the offence of having sexual intercourse with his ex-wife.

<sup>2</sup> The eighteen root vows are 1. praising ourselves and belittling others, 2. not sharing Dharma teachings or wealth, 3. not listening to others' apologies or striking others, 4. discarding the Mahāyāna teachings and propounding made-up ones, 5. taking offerings intended for the Triple Gem, 6. forsaking the holy Dharma, 7. disrobing monastics or committing such acts as stealing their robes, 8. committing any of the five heinous crimes, 9. holding a distorted, antagonistic outlook, 10. destroying places such as towns, 11. teaching voidness to those whose minds are untrained, 12. turning others away from full enlightenment, 13. turning others away from their *prātimokṣa* vows, 14. belittling the śrāvaka vehicle, 15. proclaiming a false realization of voidness, 16. accepting what has been stolen from the Triple Gem, 17. establishing unfair policies and 18. giving up bodhicitta.

<sup>3</sup> Four tantras are 1. action tantra (*kriya*), 2. performance tantra (*cārya*), 3. yoga tantra and 4. highest tantra (*anūttarayoga*)

<sup>4</sup> Je Tsongkhapa specified in his *Lam rim chen mo* (The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment) that "going for refuge [in the Triple Gem is], the excellent door for entering the teaching [of the Buddha]" (T. bstan pa la 'jug bu'i sgo dam pa skyabs 'gro) *The Great Treatise on the Stages of the Path to Enlightenment*. Vol one.

<sup>5</sup> The Buddhist doctrine is differentiated from non-Buddhist doctrine by these four distinctive seals: (1). all products are impermanent (T. 'du byas thams cad mi rtag pa) (2). all contaminated things are miserable (T. zag bcas thams cad sdug bsn'al ba) (3). all phenomena are empty and selfless (T. chos thams cad stong zhin' bdag med pa) (4). nirvāṇa is peace (T. mya n'an las 'das pa zhi ba).



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