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Ronald S. Green
Coastal Carolina University, rgreen@coastal.edu

Chanju Mun
University of Hawaii at Manoa

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CHAPTER 1

Indian Foundations and Chinese Developments of the Buddha Dharma

1 Indian Foundation

a *Early Buddhist Traditions and Gyōnen's Representation of Them*

This chapter interprets the major Buddhist doctrinal themes of the schools that developed in India, limiting those themes to what Gyōnen seems to find most important to Japanese Buddhism. It also considers Gyōnen's method of treating these schools. Gyōnen mentions the major divide in Buddhist traditions in terms of the Mahāyāna and so-called Hīnayāna, which developed in India. He uses the word "Hīnayāna", meaning "lesser vehicle", which often carries the connotation of "heretical vehicle," and which has been used widely by proponents of Mahāyāna traditions. Although there is an inherent bias in the term, its use was so pervasive by the time Gyōnen employed it, that while it is an indicator of his Mahāyāna orientation, it can only be seen as mildly pejorative and not a real part of his larger purposeful orientation of information. After all, Gyōnen strongly supported the Vinaya tradition, which was itself a "Hīnayāna" school as he mentions in *The Transmission of the Buddha Dharma*. In order to address the category of Indian Buddhist development that he refers to as Hīnayāna, this chapter uses the expression as he did without further disclaimer.

In the 4th century CE, the Indian Buddhist philosopher Asaṅga described non-Mahāyāna Buddhism (Hīnayāna) as having established two categories of Buddhists based on their practices or vehicles. The first group was *śrāvaka* or "hearers", direct disciples of Śākyamuni Buddha or adherents to the principles of those direct disciples, which was early Buddhism. The second group was *pratyekabuddha* or "solitary realizers." While often relying on texts śrāvaka wrote, *pratyekabuddha* sought enlightenment without a master. Early Buddhist texts written in the Pāli language long before the time of Asaṅga mention the term *pratyekabuddha*. However, in those didactic Jataka tales of previous lives of the Buddha, *pratyekabuddha* appear as teachers living before Śākyamuni. The goal of both śrāvaka and *pratyekabuddha* was to realize enlightenment/awakening, or nirvāṇa, which is generally translated as "blowing out" of passions or extinction of persistent cravings. Some Buddhologists believe that the root of the term nirvāṇa is *nirvṛti* "to uncover." In this case, nirvāṇa is

closely linked with *vimokṣa*, "release" or "emancipation." Accordingly, and as we will see, the Mahāyāna conception of nirvāṇa does not mean death, but is associated with Buddha nature, our alleged inherent quality of enlightenment that we must work to reveal. Nirvāṇa is also a term used in contrast to *saṃsāra* or the cycles of rebirth. In accord with our thoughts and actions, the mind transmigrates among the six destinies (*gati*): the realms of hells, hungry ghosts (*preta*), animals, fighting spirits (*asura*), humans, and gods. Nirvāṇa, in contrast, refers to a mental realm in which one has transcended *saṃsāra*. However, sometime after the death of the Buddha, Hīnayāna monks conceived of two types of nirvāṇa: nirvāṇa that is "complete extinction" of passion (*anupadiśeṣa*-nirvāṇa), and nirvāṇa that is "incomplete extinction" (*sopadhiśeṣa*-nirvāṇa). Complete extinction is so named because it is believed that only in death does a person completely eliminate passions. Incomplete extinction refers to supreme worldly wisdom because one who possesses this kind of wisdom is still subject to the conditions of existence.

Hīnayāna developed an analytical and philosophical system known as the Abhidharma tradition. Abhidharma was once very popular and perhaps every school of Buddhism had an Abhidharma text that summarized its main sūtras and teachings. Today, Abhidharma has again become popular in Theravāda Buddhism. The term "Abhidharma" is a compound consisting of *abhi* that means "the one", "the best" or "directed to" and *dharma*, which in this sense refers to the "elements of existence," that is, phenomena.[1] The *Abhidharmakośa* (Treasury of Abhidharma) is widely considered to be the most representative text of the Abhidharma tradition. It identifies 75 elements of existence and states that these elements are real and permanent.[2] Abhidharma masters explain that these elements inundate human consciousness as momentary sense data. The goal is to eliminate unwholesome dharmas in order to escape the cycles of rebirth (*saṃsāra*).

This goal and methodology greatly contrasts with those of Mahāyāna Buddhists. Generally speaking, Mahāyāna schools do not hold the realization of

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1 The term "dharma" means "that which is established for firm," among other possible definitions (Sir Monier-Williams, *Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1951), p. 510). Here, however, "dharmas" with a small "d" in the plural will be used when referring to the elements of existence, and the singular "Dharma" with a capital "D" is used when referring to the Buddha's teaching.

2 Hirakawa Akira, Hirai Shun'ei et al., eds., *Index to the Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, 3 vols (Tōkyō: Daizō shuppan, 1973-1978). This is an indispensable reference for those engaged in serious textual studies of *Abhidharmakośa.* Louis de La Vallée Poussin and Étienne Lamotte, trans., *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu* (Bruxelles: Institut Belge des Hautes Études Chinoises, 1971).

nirvāṇa as their goal, complete or incomplete. Most Mahāyāna schools do not analyze the elements of existence, deconstructing all of the sights, sounds, tastes, and other sensations we experience as the Abhidharma does. Instead, their method is to engage in practices that benefit others, even at the expense of postponing one's own enlightenment or of abandoning the very notion of enlightenment itself. Such Mahāyāna practitioners are called bodhisattvas, "awakening beings" who are acting in compassionate ways that will eventually lead to the awakening of others and then themselves. A Mahāyāna bodhisattiva is awakening to her or his inherent Buddha nature, which is universally compassionate and simultaneously awakening others to Buddha nature.

In his relatively short treatment of Indian Buddhism in *The Transmission of the Buddha Dharma*, Gyōnen begins by mentioning the Buddha's enlightenment, the Abhidharma, and the creation of early Buddhist scriptures. It is important to notice that his focus on a few *sūtras among hundreds of others that are important to* Theravāda Buddhism, shows his emphasis on the Mahāyāna development and ultimately for him, the culmination of the Buddha's teachings in the traditional Japanese schools. Perhaps most telling in this regard is that Gyōnen makes the organizational structure of his narrative in his Indian section a period-specific or time-specific theory of the Buddha's teaching. He does so uncritically and as if this organization scheme is a historical reality rather than a *panjiao* doctrinal classification scheme created by merging elements of Chinese sectarian Buddhism in order to rank schools of Buddhism according to the alleged profundity of their doctrines.

As treated in more detail below, Gyōnen basically follows the doctrinal classification of the five periods of teachings devised by the famous Chinese Buddhist Zhiyi (538-597). Zhiyi's five divisions consist of (1) the first period of the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, (2) the second period of the Āgama scriptures, (3) the third period of the *Vaipulya* (Correct and Equal) scriptures, (4) the fourth period of the wisdom scriptures and (5) the fifth period of the *Lotus Sūtra* and the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*. This system exalts the scriptures taught during the fifth period as the final and complete teachings. Although Gyōnen is affiliated with the Kegon School, he does not strictly follow the Huayan (Kegon) doctrinal classification system of five teachings, (1) the Hīnayāna teaching, (2) the elementary Mahāyāna teaching, (3) the final Mahāyāna teaching, (4) the sudden Mahāyāna teaching, and (5) the perfect Mahāyāna teaching. Instead, as we will see in detail below, his system is true to his adherence to the concurrent study of more than one tradition, while still maintaining that there is something distinct about the thirteen schools of Chinese Buddhism and the traditional eight schools of Japanese Buddhism he examines.

According to Gyōnen's chronological *panjiao* system, the Buddha taught different messages at different times "based on capacities of sentient beings." Gyōnen says that in the second week after his enlightenment the Buddha first taught the message in the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, the major scripture of his own Kegon tradition of Tōdaiji Temple. He next taught the Hīnayāna teachings of the Four Noble Truths and the Eightfold Path. Gyōnen says, "He taught Four Noble Truths for (the first) twelve years and the *Wisdom Sūtra* for (the second) thirty years. He explained the *Lotus Sūtra* for eight years, forty years after his enlightenment." Finally, Gyōnen says, the Buddha taught the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra* at the time of his *parinirvāṇa*.

After introducing these specific sūtra traditions in this way, Gyōnen turns to the vinaya in which he also participates. In close proximity to this discussion, he says as in passing and without explanation that "Aśvaghoṣa Bodhisattva wrote the *Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna*."[3] This text has long been suspected of being Chinese apocrypha, even before Gyōnen's time. If Gyōnen did not know this or rejected it, we still have to wonder several things about his mention of this text specifically among hundreds of Indian Buddhist scriptures. First, since there is no evidence that the *Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna* was influential in India, does Gyōnen base his assumptions here and throughout only on East Asian sources? At the least it is evident that his portrayal of the Indian development is based on what is important to East Asia where the *Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna* was extremely influential while not so in India. We might further speculate that his mention of this text could be related to some of its content that helped make it popular in East Asia, its interpretation of *tathatā* (suchness) as a dynamic force related to Buddha nature, its message that Buddhists should have faith in that force, and the related bodhisattva practices that substantiate its power. In the same vein, Gyōnen ends the section by very briefly glossing thirteen Indian traditions that were propagated in various forms to China. These include esoteric Buddhism and the new schools, Pure Land and Chan (Zen).

Although Gyōnen does not describe in detail the Indian development of Yogācāra and Madhyamaka philosophical stances, these traditions are extremely important for the development of subsequent East Asian schools of Buddhism. This is particularly true concerning the application of their teachings to the seemingly contradictory doctrines of *ālaya-vijñāna* and *tathāgathagarbha*

3 Yoshito S. Hakeda, trans., *The Awakening of Faith: Attributed to Aśvaghosha* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1967); and Whalen Lai, "*The Awakening of Faith in Mah*āyā*na* (*Tasheng ch'i-hsin lun*): A Study of the Unfolding of Sinitic Mahāyāna Motifs" (PhD diss., Harvard University, 1975).

with which East Asian Buddhists struggled and to which the *Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna* provides a solution that Gyōnen accepts. This acceptance is important for portraying the ecumenism of the picture he draws. But it ignores critical differences in major Mahāyāna traditions. Yogācāra and Madhyamaka are then treated in more detail below as well as the solution Gyōnen accepts.

b *Yogācāra and Madhyamaka*

Mahāyāna developed two major philosophical schools in India, Yogācāra and Madhyamaka. Like Abhidharma, Yogācāra advocates analysis of the elements of existence for soteriological reasons. Additionally, however, it requires adherents to engage in bodhisattva social activism. Also unlike Abhidharma, Yogācāra includes the idea that people are endowed with ālaya-vijñāna or storehouse consciousness, which functions to maintain continuity among all the various sensations in a person's life and as a storehouse of karmic seeds. Although it is not in Yogācāra writings, according to the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*, the ālaya-vijñāna is the same as *tathāgathagarbha*, the womb of Buddhahood, an idea which is further developed in Chinese Buddhism and equated with Buddha nature.

The other major Mahāyāna philosophical school is Madhyamaka, literally the "middle path." It is the school of thought systematized by Nāgārjuna (*c.* 150-*c*. 250), who either derived much of his thought from the *Prajñāpāramaitā Sūtra* (Sūtra on the Perfection of Wisdom) or, as some claim, wrote that scripture.[4] The sūtra discusses emptiness (śūnyatā) and dependent origination (*pratītyasāmutpāda*). Emptiness means that the elements of existence are absent of an independent essence (*svabhāva*). That is to say, there is nothing that is completely independent of other things and that exists by itself. Likewise, according to this idea, all phenomena are impermanent, subject to change, and in constant flux. Dependent origination means that all things, each of which is empty of an independent essence, interact and produce phenomena. Emptiness implies dependent origination and vice versa. Madhyamaka warns however that to cling to either emptiness or dependent origination as the ultimate nature of reality without the other is an error. Thus, Nāgārjuna in the opening invocation in his famous *Fundamental Verses on the Middle Way* (*Mūlamadhyama-kārikā*)[5] writes:

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4 Edward Conze, trans., *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines and Its Verse Summary* (Bolinas: Four Seasons Foundation, 1973); and Edward Conze, trans., *The Large Sutra on Perfect Wisdom: With the Divisions of the Abhisamayālaṅkāra* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1975).

5 Kenneth K. Inada, trans., *Nāgārjuna: A Translation of his Mūlamadhyamakakārikā with an Introductory Essay* (Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1970); David J. Kalupahana, *Nāgārjuna: The Phi-*

> I pay homage to the Buddha, the supreme teacher, who has taught dependent origination [through the eight negations]: there is neither production nor destruction, neither permanence nor impermanence, neither unity nor diversity, and neither coming nor going, in order to extinguish verbal fabrication.[6]

As Nāgārjuna states, the purpose of the eight negations is to extinguish verbal fabrication, that is, the narrative we add to sensations and through which we posit a notion of an independent self that experiences. It is this narrative that causes suffering. The negations aim to destroy the belief in an absolute and unchanging entity of any sort, and to bring about the awareness that phenomena are empty of an essence. *Prajñā*, so important to Madhyamaka, is insightful wisdom associated with realization of the inseparability of emptiness and dependent origination. Madhyamaka, however, is not just a philosophical exercise. It is an active process for extinguishing verbal fabrication in order to overcome the problems of *saṃsāra*. The *Awakening of Faith in the Mah*āyā*na* uses the term "śūnyatize", expressing the process of realizing emptiness as an active verbal form of śūnyatā. In the process one eliminates dichotomous notions of *saṃsāra* and nirvāṇa, there is no nirvāṇa without *saṃsāra* and vice versa. One also eliminates dichotomous notions of sentient beings and the Buddha, that is, there is no Buddha without sentient beings and vice versa. The process enables sentient beings to realize that they are all interrelated and interdependent and that there is no awareness of "I" without the awareness of "you." A Mahāyāna bodhisattva is one who has developed this kind of insight that all things are interrelated and interdependent, which forms the doctrinal basis of compassion. The bodhisattva implements this wisdom in the realm of *saṃsāric* reality.

From the Mahāyāna perspective then, a bodhisattva is one who puts into practice what the historical Buddha realized. For this reason, Vimalakīrti, the lay protagonist of the *Vimalak*ī*rtinirde*ś*a-s*ūtra, which deals with non-duality, ridicules non-Mahāyāna monks who do not attempt to implement what they have realized in their intensive meditation practices.[7] As this example shows,

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losophy of the Middle Way (Albany, New York: State University of New York Press, 1986); and Jay L. Garfield, trans., *The Fundamental Wisdom of the Middle Way: Nāgārjuna's Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995).

6 T.30.1564.1b14-17. John Keenan translates *prapañca* as "verbal fabrication" in *The Realm of Awakening: Chapter Ten of Asaṅga's Mahāyānasaṃgraha* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989), 9.

7 Étienne Lamotte, trans., *The Teaching of Vimalak*ī*rti* (*Vimalak*ī*rtinirde*ś*a*) (rendered from the French by Sara Boin) (London: Pali Text Society, 1976); Burton Watson, trans., *The Vimalakirti*

the middle path doctrine does not perceive enlightenment gained through meditation as an end in itself. Meditation is a means to gain the wisdom that is necessary to understand emptiness. This means cannot be undermined because the perfect understanding of emptiness requires the complete destruction of the self-notion that makes the "self" the measuring rod of the world. Likewise, this destruction requires meditation or yoga practice, an introspective technique used to realize the nature of self, to transform consciousness, and to engage in soteriological social activism. These are the basic practices of the Yogācāra School.

Yogācāra was systematized by the brothers Asaṅga and Vasubandhu in the fifth century. But the term yoga can be traced to and is derived from early Indian meditative techniques described in ancient texts such as the *Upaniṣad*s and the *Bhagavatgitā*. Within the context of these two texts, yoga refers to the practice of concentration in order to realize union with the cosmos or Brahman, the unchanging ultimate monistic reality as interpreted by the non-dual Advaita Vedanta school of Hinduism that emphasizes the meditative aspects of these texts in this way. The English word "yoke," to join, is a cognate of yoga, which has been interpreted as meditation and other practices aimed at realizing union. But Yogācāra is a school of Buddhism. It does not believe in an unchanging reality. Instead, it is based on the theory that all thoughts emerge from the "core" consciousness. Hence, Yogācāra asserts that our perception of the world is a mental construction. That is, the mind perceives, interprets, and evaluates the world. Yogācāra aims at transforming consciousness through critical evaluation, meditation, and bodhisattva activities. These are the yoga practices of Yogācāra. Meditation is required for concentration, so that practitioners will not be swayed by external distraction. It also aims at the realization of that the mind-body distinction is yet another false dichotomy leading to the ordinary experience of a fragmented life.

This school, therefore, examines the manner in which reality is perceived, interpreted, and evaluated. In doing so, Yogācāra analyzes and categorizes consciousness as having eight components which are referred to as the *vijñāna*s, discriminating consciousnesses. The eight consciousnesses or *vijñāna*s are the: (l) eye, (2) ear, (3) nose, (4) taste, (5) touch, (6) *mano* (mental consciousness including thoughts and ideas), (7) *manas* (mental consciousness including disturbing emotions and attachment to the concept of self), and (8) ālaya-vijñāna. The first five of these are the agents of the senses, the sixth forms conceptions from sensations, and the seventh evaluates those conceptions.

Sutra (New York: Columbia University Press, 1997); and John R. McRae, trans., *The Vimalakīrti Sutra* (Berkeley: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 2004).

The eighth consciousness is the repository of karmic seeds. "Karma" means action, impulse, conduct, or behavior, while "seed" refers to a potential. To illustrate the functional relations between the four categories of consciousness (senses, mental ideation, evaluation, and storehouse), the following example is presented. One sees a person, interprets that person as a man, and evaluates him as evil. This evaluation prompts one to kill that man. But this act does not end there. Instead it deposits a "killing potential" or karmic seed in the eighth consciousness. This killing potential "perfumes" or affects the other aspects of consciousness, particularly the seventh consciousness. The term "perfume" is derived from the Sanskrit word "*vasana*." It means that which influences other things, just as the smell of perfume permeates that with which it comes into contact. Thus, to evaluate the world properly, Yogācāra advocates meditation, as does the Madhyamaka School. Still, the purpose of Yogācāra is to transform unwholesome potential into wholesome potential through analysis, meditation, and bodhisattva practice. The Yogācāra meditative process is described below in reverse order from that just given.

First, the mind into which the eighth consciousness has been transformed through practice is referred to as ā*darśa-j*ñā*na*, literally "mirror-mind." The mirror-mind perceives phenomenal reality just as it is, without distortion. This initial transformation is the conversion of unwholesome potentials. Second, *samat*ā*-j*ñā*na* is the wisdom of equality. But equality does not mean that all sentient beings are born as equals. It refers, rather, to functional equality. For example, the *raison-d'etre* of a professor is the student, and vice versa. Likewise, *samat*ā*-j*ñā*na* refers to wisdom that perceives unity in diversity. Third, *pratyavekṣana-j*ñā*na* is the wisdom that recognizes the different problems of sentient beings, despite their functional equality. It is the wisdom that resolves those problems. Thus, *pratyavekṣana-j*ñā*na*, in contrast to *samat*ā*-j*ñā*na*, refers to wisdom that perceives diversity in unity. Diversity requires discrimination, discrimination of one thing from another. Though Yogācāra conceives of discrimination as unwholesome, as a process that should be eliminated, what actually needs to be discarded is biased discrimination, replacing it with "unbiased discrimination." For example, Yogācāra asserts the need of unbiased discrimination in order to distinguish impermanence from permanence, non-self from self, and truth from falsity. Fourth, *kṛtya-anuṣṭh*ā*na-j*ñā*na* is the wisdom of implementation.

Yogācāra advocates the ālaya-vijñāna causation theory, that is, all thoughts emerge from the ālaya-vijñāna. Thus Yogācāra maintains that what we ordinarily perceive as the objective world is a mental construction. That is, the mind perceives, interprets, and evaluates the world. The rationale underlying the notion of *citta-m*ā*tra* is the "three patterns of thought" (*tri-svabh*ā*va*). The three

patterns are discriminating phenomena, perceiving them as other-dependent, and negating their reality. In the first pattern of thought, one has fragmentary impressions of the world and perceives those fragments as real and absolute (*parikalpita-svabhāva*). In the second pattern of thought, one perceives phenomena as products of dependent origination (*paratantra-svabhāva*), that is, interconnected and changing. In the third pattern, one negates phenomenal reality in that it is empty of an essence (*parinișpanna-svabhāva*). The nature of ālaya-vijñāna is dependent origination, neither absolute nor empty, because *manas-vijñāna* and ālaya-vijñāna co-dependently arise. But ālaya-vijñāna is a metaphor, a means for understanding "core" consciousness in terms of dependent origination. To this extent, Madhyamaka and Yogācāra do not contradict one another. A difference is that Madhyamaka generally takes an ontological (emptiness/dependent origination) approach while Yogācāra generally takes an epistemological approach. But Yogācāra is not exclusively an epistemological school as some have suggested. It also advocates bodhisattva action as a necessary part of the awakening process.

The three Buddha-body theory, important to Gyōnen's Kegon school and other East Asian traditions, is derived from the "three patterns of thought," an epistemological theory. The three Buddha-bodies are (1) *dharmakāya*, the truth body or the universe, (2) *saṃbhogakāya*, literally the rewarded body, a body realized through meditation and bodhisattva practice, and (3) *nirmāṇakāya*, the truth body transformed into a historical figure. *Saṃbhogakāya* bridges *dharmakāya* and *nirmāṇakāya* as meditation bridges the historical being and the universe. The three Buddha-body theory did not exist prior to the development of Yogācāra. For example, Nāgārjuna conceived of only two Buddha-bodies, *dharmakāya* and *nirmāṇakāya*. Yogācāra's three patterns of thought provided the basis of both the ālaya-vijñāna and *saṃbhogakāya*. It is also essential for understanding *tathāgatagarbha* thought. According to the three Buddha-body theory, the historical Buddha is a *nirmāṇakāya* Buddha, a physical being who lived and taught. Mahāvairocana Buddha referred to in the *Mahāvairocana Sūtra* and Vairocana Buddha in the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* of the Kegon School and enshrined in Tōdaiji Temple are examples of *dharmak*āya Buddhas, that is, not historical figures but representations of the Buddha's Dharma, the truth, and the universe itself. Amitābha Buddha of Pure Land Buddhism is a *saṃbhogakāya* Buddha, not a historical Buddha or a representation of the Dharma but a representation of the Buddha's practice, in this case, his compassion. By representing the Buddha's compassion including bodhisattva activities and the Buddha's meditation practices, *saṃbhogakāya* is the practical means for a historical being to actualize the Dharma. Therefore it is the bridge between *dharmakāya* and *nirmāṇakāya*.

While it is popularly believed that Indian Mahāyāna produced only two major philosophical schools, Madhyamaka and Yogācāra, Takasaki Jikidō claims that Tathāgatagarbhavāda is a third important Indian Mahāyāna school of thought. He traces the term "Tathāgatagarbhavāda" to the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*.[8] Tathāgatagarbhavāda is a devotional school that does not rely on critical analysis of doctrinal propositions to verify its truth-claim. Rather, it presupposes that all sentient beings possess *tathāgatagarbha* or Buddha nature, and that bodhisattva practice is the way to verify that truth. *Tathāgatagarbha* literally means the "womb of the Tathāgata," while "*vāda*," as previously said, means "school." Tathāgatagarbhavāda, therefore, means the school which presupposes that all sentient beings are endowed with a "Tathāgata potential." Although the *Tathāgatagarbha Sūtra*, probably composed in the early third century and extant in Chinese and Tibetan translations, is the first text that deals with *tathāgatagarbha* thought, it is in the *Ratnagotravibhāga*, composed sometime between the late fourth and early fifth centuries in which that thought is first presented in a systematic way.[9] Tathāgatagarbhavāda failed to gain widespread popularity in India. Nonetheless, it became broadly popular outside of India and has been considered the basis of all East Asian schools of Buddhism.[10] Speculations about the reasons for the eventual decline of Tathāgatagarbhavāda in India have been variously offered. One possibility is that the failure is related to the development of a system of logic (Nyāya) among non-Buddhist schools of Indian philosophy. Indian Buddhists responded to the challenges of these schools and developed their own logic, culminating in the works of Dignāga (late fifth century). Another reason given is that Tathāgatagarbhavāda eventually merged with Yogācāra thought as illustrated, for example, in the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*.[11]

8 See Takasaki Jikidō, *Nyorai-shisō no keisei* (Formation of *Tathāgatagarbha* Theory) (Tōkyō: Shunjūsha, 1974), 11.

9 Jikidō Takasaki, *A Study on the Ratnagotravibhaga* (*Uttaratantra*)*, Being a Treatise on the Tathāgatagarbha Theory of Mahāyāna Buddhism* (Rome: Istituto italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1966); David Seyfort Ruegg, *La théorie du tathāgatagarbha et du gotra:* études sur la sotériologie et la gnoséologie du bouddhisme (Paris: École Française d›Extrême-Orient, 1969); and H.S. Prasad, E.H. Johnston and Eugéne Obermiller, *The Uttaratantra of Maitreya* (Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications, 1991), which contains introduction, E.H. Johnston's Sanskrit Text, and E. Obermiller's English Translation.

10 Jamie Hubbard and Paul L Swanson, eds., *Pruning the Bodhi Tree*: *The Storm over Critical Buddhism* (*Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997*).

11 Daisetz T. Suzuki, *Studies in the Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* (London: Routlege & Kegan Paul, 1930); and Daisetz T. Suzuki, trans., *The Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra: A Mahāyāna Text* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1999).

The *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* was translated into Chinese on four occasions. Three of these translations are extant: Guṇabhadra's translation in four fascicles (in 443), Bodhiruci's translation in ten fascicles (in 513), and Śikṣānanda's translation in seven fascicles (between 700 and 704). Bodhiruci's ten-fascicle version and Śikṣānanda's seven-fascicle version are the most commonly read in East Asia. The prefaces in these two versions relate a reconciliation story between ālaya-vijñāna and *tathāgatagarbha* thought by making reference to personalities found in the *Rāmāyana* of Hinduism. In that epic, Rāvaṇa is described as a violent ruler who has become nearly immortal through ascetic practice. But in the preface to the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* he is described as a benevolent king who invites Rama, the hero figure in the epic, to Laṅka. In the Brahmanic tradition, both the Buddha and Rama are conceived of as incarnations of Viṣṇu. Indeed, in *Aśvaghoṣa*'s influential *Life of the Buddha* (*Buddhacarita*), the Buddha is described as related to Rama in the ruling family of the Solar Dynasty. The author of the preface to these translated versions of the *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* most likely used these literary personalities, Rama and Buddha, joining hands in peace as a visionary model to reconcile the doctrinal difference between ālaya-vijñāna and *tathāgatagarbha* thoughts. The *Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra* claims that the unwholesomeness of the ālaya-vijñāna can be transformed into a wholesome entity, at which point it is called *tathāgatagarbha*.

But there are basic doctrinal differences between these two schools, Yogācāra and Tathāgatagarbhavāda, which this theory ignores. Yogācāra requires mental transformation of unwholesome aspects of the ālaya-vijñāna to the wholesome mirror-mind (ādarśa-jñāna). In contrast, Tathāgatagarbhavāda presupposes that sentient beings are endowed with a wholesome quality (*tathāgatagarbha*). *Tathāgatagarbha* is, therefore, identified as *dharmadhātu*, the "realm of the Dharma."[12] But Tathāgatagarbhavāda more often uses the term *dharmakāya*, the personification of *dharmadhātu*. This means that though *tathāgatagarbha* is an objectified *dharmadhātu*, it is nevertheless offered by *dharmakāya* to sentient beings. *Tathāgatagarbha*, a metaphor to be sure, represents the revelatory nature of the Dharma. It is in this context that an objectified *dharmadhātu* is personified and that Tathāgatagarbhavāda is identified as a devotional system of thought. But *tathāgatagarbha*, as said, is a metaphor. It is skillful means designed to impress upon its followers that sentient beings are inherently "good."

12 Kang Nam Oh, "A Study of Chinese Hua-yen Buddhism with Special Reference to the *Dharmadhātu* (*fa-chieh*) Doctrine" (PhD diss., McMaster University, 1976); and Kang Nam Oh, "*Dharmadhātu*: An Introduction to Hua-yen Buddhism," *The Eastern Buddhist* 12.2 (1979): 72-91.

2 Chinese Developments

a *The Introduction and Initial Changes*

Gyōnen writes the following in the first fascicle of *The Transmission of the Buddha Dharma*.

> The propagation of Buddhism in China preserved the model of Indian Buddhism. Its transmission from the west needed to consider the nurturing of sentient beings in China. The Buddha's teachings were transmitted to and generally accepted by Chinese people in a way that would make Buddhism reside there for a long time. Because all countries are not the same, Buddhism had to be propagated to all different areas regardless of the dangerous borders connecting inland countries or the oceans separating them.... Therefore, it is difficult to know and to explain the meaning of the transmission of the Buddha Dharma.

In this passage, Gyōnen hints at differences in Indian and Chinese Buddhism. Below is a consideration of this transmission with reference to some of Gyōnen's positioning.

Chinese Buddhist tradition has generally claimed that Buddhism was introduced to China when Kāśyapamātaṅga and Dharmarakṣa came to Loyang from Central Asia in 67 CE. But recent historical studies indicate that Buddhism was introduced to China decades before that time. Yicun, who was a monk from Yuezhi, a territory near the Caspian Sea occupied by an Indo-Scythian tribe of Central Asia, arrived in the Chinese capital city of Chang'an in 2 BCE. Furthermore, it is believed that Chu Wangying, a brother of Emperor Ming (r. 57-75 CE), was converted to Buddhism in 65 CE. For our purposes, more important than the exact date of Buddhism's introduction to China, however, are the historical circumstances surrounding its introduction. In first-century India, the Kuṣāṇa Dynasty (late first century to mid-third century) was a time of the rule of a powerful kingdom in northern India. At this time, the development of the Silk Road enabled Sino-Indian communications. The name Silk Road does not, however, refer to a single road that directly connected India and China. Rather, it was a network of roads that Central Asian nomads constructed and roamed for many centuries prior to the first century. These roads were incorporated as part of the route employed to transport silk from China to India, and ultimately to the Roman Empire. It also provided the path for transmissions of Buddhist traditions to China.

In the early part of the first century CE, during the Han Dynasty (206 BCE-220 CE), China had already developed sophisticated literary and philosophical

traditions as well as effective Confucian-based social and bureaucratic systems. Nevertheless, greed and nepotism contributed to corruption within the Han bureaucracy and led to widespread peasant revolts. This internal chaos provided the Central Asian tribes with opportunities to invade north China and destroy the Han Chinese rule. Such internal turmoil led some Chinese intellectuals to criticize Confucianism, the political rationale of the Han Dynasty. This laid the foundation for the eventual acceptance of Buddhism with alien ideas and practices. The Chinese domestication of Buddhism faced a number of problems.

Although the translation of Buddhist Sanskrit texts into Chinese began as early as the second century CE, linguistic and cultural differences made it difficult to render accurate translations. Sanskrit and Chinese belong to different language families, and cultural difference made it difficult to find accurate equivalents. Concepts that were unfamiliar to the Chinese, such as the Indian notion of emptiness, were particularly troublesome. To translate these unfamiliar foreign terms, Chinese translators of this period employed a method known as "matching concepts" (*geyi*), that is, borrowing Daoist terms to represent Buddhist ideas. For example, emptiness was translated as "*benwu*," "primordial nothingness." Other terms that had no native equivalents such as "nirvāṇa" and "Buddha" were transliterated. Eventually, however, a number of Chinese monks such as Daoan (312-385) attempted to move away from matching concepts. In 384, the Chinese army invaded Kucha and, following Daoan's advice, captured the learned monk Kumārajīva (344-413). Because of sudden political change, however, Kumārajīva spent the next seventeen years in captivity, during which time he studied and mastered the Chinese language. Finally, in 401, Emperor Yaoxing (r. 366-416) invited Kumārajīva to Chang'an where he translated many Sanskrit texts into Chinese without matching concepts. We notice in Gyōnen's portrayal of the transmission of the Buddha Dharma from India to China and eventually to Japan, there is no discussion of the important fact that translation issues contributed to fundamental differences in the schools as they appear over time and across borders. Gyōnen would have readers believe that the Buddhist ideas and schools that became popular in India were simply spread to China and Japan where they persisted in the same form regardless of language.[13] For example, he positions Indian Yogācāra to be the same as Chinese Faxiang and Japanese Hossō, which simply is not the case.[14] Presenting an image of an unchanging transmission is a kind

13 Today linguist argue that language orders our perception of the world.

14 Dan Lusthaus, *Buddhist Phenomenology: A Philosophical Investigation of Yogācāra Buddhism and the Ch'eng Wei-shih Lun* (London: Routledge, 2003).

of fundamentalism based on the Confucian ideal of family lineage, which has been long-used in East Asia to legitimize ones position, whether in government, business, or Buddhism.

Chinese rulers traditionally funded groups of translators to render Sanskrit texts into their language in order to build merit and expand their political influence. A typical group might consist of those reciting and translating Sanskrit terms, and those evaluating, recording, proofreading, and editing the translations. Despite such measures, problems remained in the final translations. As a result, an "old" and a "new" translation tradition developed. Kumārajīva represented the old translation style while the famous pilgrim-monk Xuanzang (600-664) epitomized the new translation. Kumārajīva's translations were in a polished literary style that increased their popularity. But his style had numerous errors. For example, he did not distinguish between the terms "stūpa" (mounds where Śākyamuni's ashes were allegedly buried) and "*caitya*" (a site for worship). But because of the attractiveness of his writing style, his translations became popular. In contrast, Xuanzang's translations were literal and thus more accurate. However, it seems that he edited the Sanskrit originals where the meaning was unclear so as to render it into accurate and acceptable Chinese. These two men, while representing different styles of translation, are considered to have been the greatest Sanskrit-to-Chinese translators.

Although the matching-concepts tradition was abandoned after Kumārajīva, Daoism continued to influence the development of Buddhism in China. In the late Han period, a number of Chinese intellectuals criticized the Han bureaucracy and left the capital for the provinces. They were attracted to philosophical Daoism, which rejected the social philosophy of Confucianism, promoted meditative practices to attain release from mundane reality, and encouraged its practitioners to become one with nature. Subsequently, in the late Six Dynasties period (220 or 222 CE-589 CE), these groups engaged in the tradition of *qingtan* or "pure conversation," witty philosophical debate that criticized the establishment. They became interested in the Buddhist concept of wisdom and Buddhist meditation practices. In the fourth and fifth centuries, such hybrid groups called Buddho-Daoists, along with those who matched Buddhist and Daoist concepts, helped to popularize Buddhism. This popularization enriched Buddhist monasteries, enabled monks to exercise social influence, and subsequently led to persecution. Four major Buddhist persecutions took place in China. The first happened during the reign of Emperor Taiwu (r. 433-452) of the Northern Wei Dynasty, the second under Emperor Wu (r. 560-578) of the Northern Zhou Dynasty, the third under Emperor Wuzong (r. 840-846) in the Tang Dynasty, and the fourth under Emperor Shizong (r. 954-959) in the Later Zhou Dynasty. In our discussion of the development of Chinese Buddhism

from the Indian transmission, the first two persecutions in north China, which took place in the late Six Dynasties period, are relevant in particular.

As noted above, Buddhism was initially introduced to China by Central Asians. Ironically, however, after they occupied and settled in north China, Central Asians abandoned Buddhism, adopted Confucianism as a way to legitimate their political system, and persecuted Buddhists. At the same time, the Chinese intellectuals, who left the capital and settled in the south, abandoned Confucianism, adopted Buddhism and contributed to its popularization. Over time, the Chinese were able to drive back the Central Asians and establish the Sui Dynasty, unifying divided states in 581. During this dynastic period, the government promoted Buddhism. But because of the persecutions of the previous period, the Sui Buddhists felt the need both to domesticate Buddhism and to prove that Buddhism in China was equal, if not superior, to that of India, a goal we might compare to Gyōnen's in Japan. Three features distinguished the native schools that developed during the Sui and early Tang periods (hereafter called the Sui-Tang period): (1) a shift from Indian/Central Asian founders to native Chinese founders and the establishment of a patriarchal system consisting of Chinese monks; (2) the development of *panjiao* doctrinal classification systems; and (3) the development of a positive world-view.

b *The Chinese Patriarchal System*

The shift from Indian and Central Asian to Chinese founders in the two periods is shown in the chart below:

As this chart indicates, the founders and systematizers of the schools of the Six Dynasties period were either Central Asians or Indians, while those of the schools developed during the Sui-Tang period were Chinese. The native patriarchs gained credibility during the Sui-Tang period as a way of proving the uniqueness and superiority of the Chinese schools. Gyōnen's depiction of the Chinese patriarchs, when mentioned at all, ignores the changes they instituted and presents their teachings as a transmission or translation of Indian texts. To the contrary, the shift from foreign to native patriarchs represents not only an ethnic change, but a doctrinal shift as well. Jizang's new Sanlun is an example of this. Jizang's thought is not simply the projection of Indian Madhyamaka, rather it represents the Chinese domestication of the *prajñā* doctrine, which forms the basis of Madhyamaka.[15] In turn, it had considerable influence on Chan Buddhism, Chinese Zen. In contrast, Gyōnen writes "Jizang transmitted

15 See Hirai Shun'ei, *Chūgoku hannya shisōshi no kenkyū* (Studies on the History of Chinese *Prajñā* Thought) (Tōkyō: Shunjūsha, 1976), 172-5.

TABLE 1.1 ■ author:: if possible supply table caption

Six dynasties period Schools: Founders/Systematizers	Sui-Tang period Schools: Founders/Systematizers
Niepan: Dharmarakṣa (321-308)	Tiantai: Huiwen (6th century)
Sanlun: Kumārajīva (350-409)	New Sanlun: Jizang (549-623)
Huayan: Buddhabhadra (359-429)	Huayan: Dushun (557-640)
Weishi: Vasubandhu (5th century) (Yogācāra)	Faxiang: Kuiji (632-682)
	Zen: Bodhidharma
	Pure Land: Tanluan (476-542)

their steps (i.e., the previous master's teachings) and understood them as completely as ice melts down."

Chan, alleged to have been founded by the Indian monk Bodhidharma, appears to be an exception to this shift from foreign to native patriarchs. Bodhidharma is said to have arrived in China in about 520 and to have taught Chan meditation. Despite claims of his historicity, Bodhidharma is probably a legendary figure who appears in the *Luoyang qielan-ji* (Stories of Monasteries in Loyang) composed in the mid-sixth century,[16] and in the "Biography of Bodhidharma" recounted in the *Song Gaoseng zhuan* (Biographies of Eminent Monks Composed in the Song Dynasty) compiled in 988. Although both are extremely interesting texts, they are not reliable historical documents. Furthermore, the Chinese invention of a Chan School has primarily relied on the creation of a long list of Chinese patriarchs in direct line with Bodhidharma. The most famous, if also most tenuous, among these is Huineng (638-713), the alleged sixth patriarch according to the southern school of Chan.[17] In addition to designating Chinese founders, most schools that developed in the Six Dynasties period and in the Sui-Tang periods established their own *panjiao* systems.

Gyōnen's mention of the Sui-Tang founding patriarchs is a kind of transmission of the Chinese lineage system to Japan in itself, although he does not admit to the respective changes to Buddhism each represents. Presenting this

16 Yi-t'ung Wang, trans., *A Record of Buddhist Monasteries in Lo-yang* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984).

17 For a critique of the Chan lineage system and description of its fabrication, see John R. McRae, *Seeing Through Zen* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004).

system as historical documentation is essential to his method of representing schools of Japanese Buddhism as legitimately in the same lineages, coming from India through China and ending in a similar patriarchy in Japan. As further evidenced below, Gyōnen's method also involves the championing of a hybrid *panjiao* system of doctrinal classification, and a transmission lineage system that ignores the multiplicities of history, including the political expediency behind government promotion of certain schools and the decisive Korean impact on Japanese Buddhism. While Daoist ideology mixed with Buddhism in China to form traditions of Buddhism distinct from India, the patriarch system shows one aspect of the Confucian influence on Chinese Buddhism as well. The ideological Confucian hierarchy of the patriarch systems in operation in terms of actual or mythological individuals is a reflection of *panjiao* systems in terms of doctrine. Furthermore, Chinese Buddhists represented Confucian hierarchy in physical space as well. The traditional Chinese Buddhist temple complex, in contrast to what was found in India, came to be set up on *fengshui* principles, mirroring the layout of the imperial palace and the surrounding capital. Like the Confucian oriented palace, the Chinese Buddhist master's quarters is located in the north of the temple grounds, facing south like the emperor.

c *The Panjiao System*

Scholars believe that *panjiao* systems were urgently needed for organizing the massive number of Buddhist texts being translated into Chinese. Therefore, *panjiao* systems begin to be created with the translations by Kumārajīva and end, generally speaking, with that of Fazang since no significant new translations came after his time.[18] In his study of Chinese *panjiao* systems, Chanju Mun categorizes them into two groups: ecumenical systems and sectarian systems. He introduces several ecumenical *panjiao* systems, including those devised by Kumārajīva, Sengrui (352-436), Bodhiruci (d. 527), Huiyuan (523-592), Jizang (549-623) and Wonhyo (617-686). Because Gyōnen appears to be ecumenical in his research on various Buddhist traditions, it might be expected that he would also adopt an ecumenical *panjiao* system. Surprisingly, he does not even mention ecumenical *panjiao* systems in *The Transmission of the Buddha Dharma*.

For the most part Gyōnen implements the system of "five periods of teachings" known to be the most important and famous system of Tiantai Buddhism,

18 For a thorough treatment of Chinese *panjiao* systems, see Chanju Mun, *The History of Doctrinal Classification in Chinese Buddhism* by Chanju Mun (Lanham, Maryland: University Press of America, 2005).

using that to create his own version of the five periods of teachings.[19] The five-period system classifies Buddhists texts by when their messages were allegedly taught according to the idea that the Buddha's teaching changed over five periods of his life. As Gyōnen recognizes, though there are various theories regarding these five periods of teachings and which sūtras belong to which period, all are generally derived from explanations originally propounded by Huiguan (d. 453) and Liu Qiu (436-495) of the Nirvāṇa School active during the Southern Dynasties.[20]

Chegwan (*fl.* the 10th century) well summarizes the Tiantai version of the five periods of teachings in his *Cheontae sagyo-ui* (Introduction to Tiantai Buddhism's Four Teachings) as follows.[21]

(1) The first period is the *Huayan Sūtra* (*Avataṃsaka Sūtra*) period. After the Buddha's enlightenment, he expounded the *Huayan Sūtra* for 21 days for the bodhisattvas. This was a teaching for those of very sharp faculties and, according to this teaching, such bodhisattvas may directly awaken the reality principle. According to the classification of the Buddha's instructive modes, this is the sudden teaching and according to the system of four kinds of the content of the Buddha's teaching, this is the differentiated teaching and the perfect teaching. When the Buddha delivered these first teachings on supreme enlightenment immediately after achieving nirvāṇa himself, because the teachings were too abstruse for people not near enlightenment, no one could understand them. Even though the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* is extensive and perfect in content, it does not give the audience concrete means to manifest the teaching. Metaphorically, the first period teaching is said to have the flavor of raw milk.

(2) The second period is the Deer Park period. After delivering the message in the *Huayan Sūtra*, because ordinary people of undeveloped faculties were not able to understand it, the Buddha discarded it and decided instead to guide people through skillful means. Thus, he delivered the Hīnayāna teaching at Deer Park in Sarnath near Benares. This is a period lasting twelve years and the sūtras that derived from this period are the Āgama. Therefore, it is also called the Āgama period. In this period, the Buddha teaches the Four Noble Truths, the Twelve Linked Chain of Causation, and the Six Perfections. The second period teaching has the flavor of whey.

(3) The third period is the *Vaipulya* period, which is said to have spanned eight years. For the people who had grasped the Hīnayāna teaching, the Buddha

19 D.101.97b5-98b15.

20 D.101.104a14.

21 Mun, 128-9.

now teaches the messages recorded in certain Mahāyāna scriptures including the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-sūtra*, the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*, the *Śūraṅgamasamādhi-sūtra*, the *Viśeṣacintabrahmaparipṛcchā-sūtra*, the *Suvarṇaprabhāsa-sūtra* and the *Śrīmālādevī-sūtra*. In this period, the Buddha reveals that the Hīnayāna teachings were provisional and given as skillful means in order to raise peoples' consciousness to a level where they were able to understand the higher teachings of Mahāyāna. The third period teaching has the flavor of a still-developing dairy product.

(4) The fourth period is the Wisdom period. From the end of the *Vaipulya* period, it lasts for twenty-two years. During that time, the Buddha expounds the Wisdom (*Prajñāpāramitā*) sūtras in order to awaken people to the principle of emptiness. The representative scripture of this period is the huge *Greater Wisdom Sūtra* in 600 fascicles. In this period, the Buddha no longer delivers the teachings found in the three canons of the Hīnayāna but directly gives the perfect teaching of the Mahāyāna, accompanying the common teaching and the differentiated teaching of the Mahāyāna. The fourth teaching has the flavor of a mature dairy product.

(5) The fifth period is the *Lotus* and *Nirvāṇa* period during which time the Buddha taught the *Lotus Sūtra* for eight years and the *Nirvāṇa* Sūtra for one day just before his death. At this time, the Buddha says that the final goal of the Hīnayāna and the Mahāyāna is the same. Thus it is also called the teaching of one vehicle in which the presence of Buddha nature in every being is strongly affirmed. The fifth period teaching has the best taste, called the flavor of *maṇḍa* cream. According to the *Lotus Sūtra*, by giving the sudden teaching and the gradual teaching in the previous four periods, the Buddha leads the audience to the (true) teaching, which is neither the sudden teaching nor the gradual teaching; by giving the provisional truth, he manifests the absolute truth; by getting rid of the provisional truth, he establishes the absolute truth; and by subsuming three vehicles, it goes back to one vehicle.

Although Chanju Mun has found that three major sectarian *panjiao* systems were prominent in China,[22] Gyōnen mentions only two of these, the Tiantai *panjiao* system of the five periods of teachings and eight doctrines, and the Huayan *panjiao* system of the five teachings and ten tenets.[23] In *The Transmission of the Buddha Dharma*, Gyōnen excludes the sectarian Faxiang *panjiao* system that classifies the Dharma into three periods of teachings and eight

22 See Chanju Mun's book on Chinese Buddhist *panjiao* systems.

23 Gyōnen mentions the Tiantai *panjiao* systems of eight doctrines and the five periods of teachings in D.101.107a2-3 and for Huayan *panjiao* systems of five teachings and ten tenets in D.101.107a13-15.

tenets. Kuiji (632-682), actual founder of Chinese Faxiang School, defines the first period of teachings as the time which the Buddha delivered the messages contained in the four Āgamas, the second period of teachings as the time of Madhyamaka doctrines, and the third period of teachings as those of Yogācāra. Kuiji's classification of the eight tenets is as follows. (1) The tenet which says both subject and object are existent is that of the Vāsīputrīya sect, etc. (2) The tenet which says objects are existent and subjects are not existent is that of the Sarvāstivāda sect, etc. (3) The tenet which says neither existences in the past nor in the future are existent is that of Mahāsaṃghika sect, etc. (4) The tenet which holds that only existences are existent in the present is that of the Prajñāptivāda sect, etc. (5) The tenet which says worldly existences are not existent and transcendental existences are existent is that of the Lokottaravāda sect, etc. (6) The tenet which says only the names of all existences are existent is that of the Ekavyāvahārika sect, etc. 7) The tenet which says the ultimate meaning is emptiness is that found in the wisdom scriptures, the *Madhyamaka Śāstra* by Nāgārjuna, and the Śata Śāstra (by his disciple Āryadeva). (8) The tenet that is loyal to principle (*li*) is found in the *Lotus Sūtra* and in the teaching of the Middle Path delivered by Asaṅga (d.u.) and other Yogācāra masters.

In addition to the Tiantai *panjiao* system of the five periods of teachings explained above, the *panjiao* system of eight doctrines consist of "two kinds of four teachings." The first set of four teachings is based on the Buddha's instructive mode and the second set of four teachings is based on the content of his message. The four teachings included in the first set are the sudden teaching of the *Huayan S*ūtra, the gradual teaching of the Ā*gama*, the intermediate teaching of the *Vaipulya S*ūtras, and the esoteric teaching of the *Lotus* Sūtra and *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*. The four teachings included in the second set are the teaching of three canons (Ā*gama*), the teaching common in the Hīnayāna and the Mahāyāna (*Vaipulya S*ūtras), the differentiated teaching of the Mahāyāna (*Prajñāpāramaitā S*ūtras) and the perfect teaching (*Lotus* Sūtra and *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*). A simplified version of the five periods and eight doctrines is illustrated in Table 1.2.

The Huayan *panjiao* system, developed by Fazang (643-712), founder of Chinese Huayan school, is called the "five doctrines and ten schools." The five doctrines are the Hīnayāna teaching, the elementary Mahāyāna teaching, the final Mahāyāna teaching, the sudden Mahāyāna teaching, and the perfect Mahāyāna teaching. Fazang accepts Kuiji's *panjiao* system of eight tenets and modifies it into his own *panjiao* system of ten tenets by classifying Kuiji's Faxiang (Yogācāra) Buddhism as inferior to his own Huayan Buddhism. So, Fazang copies tenets (1)-(7) of Kuiji's eight tenets as tenets (1)-(7) of his own system. After these seven tenets, he adds (8) the *tathāgatabarbha* teaching, (9) the teaching

TABLE 1.2 *Five periods and eight doctrines*

Five periods	Four teachings (1)	Four teachings (2)
Huayan	Sudden	
Āgama	Gradual	The Teaching of Three Canons
Vaipulya	Intermediate	The Teaching Common in the Hīnayāna and the Mahāyāna
Prajñā		The Differentiated Teaching of the Mahāyāna
Lotus-Nirvāṇa	Esoteric	The Perfect Teaching

of the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-sūtra*, and (10) the teaching of the *Huayan Sūtra*. As shown in Table 1.3, the five teachings are closely related with the ten tenets in the Huayan *panjiao* system.

TABLE 1.3 *The five doctrines of Fazang's* Panjiao *system*

Five Doctrines	Texts or schools of thought
1. Hīnayāna	Āgama
2. The elementary Mahāyāna teaching	Sanlun (Madhyamaka) and Faxiang (Yogācāra)
3. The final Mahāyāna teaching	Tathāgatagarbha
4. The sudden Mahāyāna teaching	Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-sūtra
5. The perfect Mahāyāna teaching	Huayan Sūtra

In this scheme, the Hīnayāna teachings are the Buddha's early messages that are preserved in the Buddhist *Āgamas*. The so-called elementary Mahāyāna teachings are those of the Faxiang and Sanlun schools. The final Mahāyāna teaching is *tathāgatagarbha* thought as described in the *Laṅkāvatāra-s*ūtra and the *Awakening of Faith in the Mahāyāna*. The sudden Mahāyāna teaching is the doctrine of non-duality as described in the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-sūtra*. The perfect Mahāyāna teaching refers to the *dharmadhātu* causation theory as described in the *Huayan Sūtra*. That causation theory holds that cosmic harmony springs from the interpenetration and interdependence of all phenomena. This theory is an extension of Madhyamaka's dependent origination theory. However, Huayan's theory of dependent origination encompasses the entire

cosmos, describes all phenomena within it in terms of dependent origination, and affirms the reality of those phenomena and the material universe.

Although the Chinese *panjiao* systems are clearly contrived in their descriptions of the historical sequence of the development of Buddhist thought, there is an important issue that deserves attention. While the doctrinal classification systems of Tiantai and Huayan differ in a number of ways, both use the terms "sudden" and "gradual," and regard the former to be superior to the latter. The use of these two terms for describing Buddhist doctrine and practice originated in China, not India.

Because Gyōnen is an historian, although he basically follows Zhiyi's doctrinal classification of five periods of teachings, he lists the compilation dates of the various scriptures more clearly than do either Zhiyi or Fazang and thereby creates his own hybrid system. Table 1.4 shows the chronological order Gyōnen ascribes to the sūtras he names. He does so near the beginning of fascicle one, the Indian Buddhism section of *The Transmission of the Buddha Dharma*, thereby setting up the assumptions that continue in fascicle two and three, specifically the superiority of the Mahāyāna and a ranking within those teachings. Gyōnen provides dates of each sūtra in terms of how many years after enlightenment the Buddha gave the respective teachings recorded therein. Whereas Gyōnen jumps around in the order he mentions these texts, so that we can compare his doctrinal classification system with those of his Chinese predecessors, Table 1.4 organizes them according to his chronological attributions in *The Transmission of the Buddha Dharma*.

Although for the most part Gyōnen follows the Tiantai doctrinal classification of five periods of teachings to explain the order in which the Buddha taught the Dharma, he does not strongly evaluate the *Lotus Sūtra* over other scriptures as do Tiantai sectarians. Whereas Zhiyi chronologically groups Buddhist scriptures in his five categories, Gyōnen does not group them chronologically as a doctrinal classifier but specifies the date of each scripture as an historian. He says that the Buddha taught the Yogācāra teaching in the *Sandhīnirmocana-sūtra* in the 38th year after his enlightenment, considering that the Buddha taught the scripture in the later part of the wisdom teaching period which lasts from the 12th year to the 42nd year. He says the Buddha expounded the Pure Land teaching found in the *Amitāyurdhyāna-sūtra* in the 42nd year simultaneously with the *Lotus Sūtra*. Gyōnen makes several contradictory statements within close proximity of one another in his doctrinal classification system. For example, he says that the Buddha taught the *Greater Wisdom Sūtra* in the 5th year and in another sentence that the Buddha delivered the message of the same sūtra in the 29th year. He also states that the Buddha expounded the teachings in the *Lotus Sūtra* for five years or for eight

TABLE 1.4 *Gyōnen's* Panjiao *system*

Time after enlightenment the Buddha delivered the message according to Gyōnen	**Name of text**
2nd week	*Avataṃsaka-sūtra*
6th week, taught for 12 years	Hīnayāna teachings including the Four Noble Truths and dependent origination
4th year	taught Buddhism to dragons and ghosts at Mt. Gayāśirṣa
5th year	*Greater Wisdom Sūtra* (*Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*)
7th year	*Pratyutpanna-samādhi-sūtra*
10th year	*Tathāgatagarbha Sūtra*
12th year, taught for 30 years	*Wisdom Sūtra*
16th year	*Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-sūtra*
16th year	*Mahāvaipulya-mahāsannipāta-sūtra*
28th year	*Yingluo jing*
29th year	*Greater Wisdom Sūtra*, the *Diamond Sūtra*, the *Tianwangwen banruo jing* (*The Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra* of the King of the Surpassing Heaven), and the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra*
38th year	*Sandhīnirmocana-sūtra*
40th year, taught for 5 or 8 years	*Lotus Sūtra*
42nd year	*Amitāyurdhyāna-sūtra*, *Lotus Sūtra* in three meetings at two locations
49th year	*Nirvāṇa Sūtra*

years from the 40th year after enlightenment and in another sentence says the Buddha began to teach the same sūtra from the 42nd year after enlightenment. Although he argues in one sentence that the Buddha taught the *Wisdom* scriptures for 30 years beginning in the 12th year after his enlightenment, he says in another sentence that the Buddha expounded a *Wisdom* scripture in the 5th year after his enlightenment.

According to the Tiantai doctrinal classification of five periods of teachings, the Buddha taught the first period teaching for 21 weeks, the second

period teaching for 12 years, the third period teaching for 8 years, the fourth period teaching for 22 years and the fifth period teaching for 8 years, making his teaching career 50 years in total. Gyōnen says that the Buddha delivered his messages in (1) the *Avataṃsaka S*ūtra during the second week after his enlightenment, (2) the Hīnayāna teachings represented by the teaching of the Four Noble Truths and dependent origination for 12 years after the sixth week, (3) the *Wisdom* teaching for 30 years from the 12th year after enlightenment, (4) the *Lotus* teaching for 5 or 8 years from the 40th year, and (5) the *Nirvāṇa* teaching just before his death in the 49th year after his enlightenment. Tiantai doctrinal classifiers consider the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa-sūtra* and the *Mahāvaipulya-mahāsannipāta-sūtra* to be "*Vaipulya*" ("Correct and Equal" teachings shared by Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna alike) given by the Buddha during the third period. Since Gyōnen also classifies these together as having been taught during the 16th year after enlightenment, he might also have considered them to have been taught during the third period along with the *Wisdom Sūtra* which, he says, the Buddha taught in the 12th year after enlightenment. If so, because Gyōnen includes the third *Vaipulya* period of Tiantai Buddhism's doctrinal classification in his own third *Wisdom* teaching period and divides in his doctrinal classification Tiantai doctrinal classification's fifth period teaching into two period teachings, i.e., the *Lotus* teaching and the *Nirvāṇa* teaching, he appears to have made his own version of the five periods of teachings. So, it appears that he based his sectarian *panjiao* system on the ranking systems of Zhiyi, Fazang, and/or others and to have not established an ecumenical *panjiao* system based on unbiased research he adopts.