

# Origin of Man

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## Preface

TSUNG MIH (SHU-MITSU, A.D. 774-841), the author of Yuen Jan Lun ('Origin of Man'), one of the greatest scholars that China ever produced, was born in a Confucianist family of the State of Kwo Cheu. Having been converted by Tao Yuen (Do-yen), a noted priest of the Zen Sect, he was known at the age of twenty-nine as a prominent member of that sect, and became the Eleventh Patriarch after Bodhidharma, the First Patriarch of the sect, who had come over to China from India about A.D. 520. Some years after he studied under Chino, Kwan (Cho-kwan) the philosophical doctrine of the Avatamsaka School, now known in Japan as the Kegon Sect, and distinguished himself as the Seventh Patriarch of that school. In A.D. 835 he was received in audience by the Emperor Wan Tsung, who questioned him in a general way about the Buddhist doctrines, and bestowed upon him the honourable title of Great Virtuous Teacher, together with abundant gifts. The author produced over ninety volumes of books, which include a commentary on Avatamsaka-sutra, one on Purnabuddha-sutra-prasannartha-sutra, and many others. Yuen Jan Lun is one of the shortest of his essays, but it contains all the essential doctrines, respecting the origin of life and of the universe, which are found in Taoism, Confucianism, Hinayanism, and Mahayanism. How important a position it holds among the Buddhist books can be well imagined from the fact that over twenty commentaries were written on it both by the Chinese and the Japanese Buddhist scholars. It is said that a short essay under the same title by a noted contemporary Confucianist scholar, Han Tui Chi (Kan-tai-shi, who flourished 803-823), suggested to him to write a book in order to make clear to the public the Buddhist view on the same subject. Thus he entitled the book 'Origin of Man,' in spite of his treating of the origin of life and of the universe. Throughout the whole book occur coupled sentences, consisting mostly of the same number of Chinese characters, and consequently while one sentence is too laconic, the other is overladen with superfluous words, put in to make the right number in the balanced group of characters. In addition to this, the text is full of too concise phrases, and often of ambiguous ones, as it is intended to state as briefly as possible all the important doctrines of the Buddhist as well as of the outside schools. On this account the author himself wrote a few notes on the passages that he thought it necessary to explain. The reader will find these notes beginning with 'A' put by the translator to distinguish them from his own.

K. N.

## Origin Of Man<sup>1</sup>

### Introduction

ALL animated beings that live (under the sun) have an origin, while each of inanimate things, countless in number, owes its existence to some source.<sup>2</sup> There can never be (any being nor) any thing that has (no origin, as there can be no) branch which has no root. How could man, the most spiritual of the Three Powers<sup>3</sup> exist without an origin?

(It is said)<sup>4</sup>, moreover, that that which knows others is intellect, and that that which knows itself is wisdom. Now if I, being born among men, know not whence I came (into this life), how could I know whither I am going in the after-life? How could I understand all human affairs, ancient and modern, in the world? So, for some scores of years I learned under many different tutors, and read extensively (not only) the Buddhist (but also) outside books. By that means I tried to trace my Self, and never stopped my research till I attained, as I had expected, to its origin.

Confucianists and Taoists of our age, nevertheless, merely know that our nearest origin is the father or the grandfather, as we are descended from them, and they from their fathers in succession. (They say) that the remotest (origin) is the undefinable (primordial) Gas<sup>5</sup> in the state of chaos; that it split itself into the two (different) principles of the Positive and the Negative; that the two brought forth the Three Powers of Heaven, Earth, and Man, which (in their turn) produced all other things; that man as well as other things originated in the Gas.

(Some)<sup>6</sup> Buddhists, (however), maintain simply that the nearest (origin) is Karma,<sup>7</sup> as we were born among men as the results of the Karma that we had produced in the past existences; and that the remotest (origin) is the Alaya-vijñana<sup>8</sup>, (because) our

1 The author treats the origin of life and of the universe, but the book was entitled as we have seen in the preface.

2 The same idea and expression are found in Tao Teh King (Do-toku-kyo), by Lao Tsz (Ro-shi, 604-522 B.C.).

3 The Three Powers are-(1) Heaven, that has the power of revolution; (2) Earth, that has the power of production; and (3) Man, that has the power of thought.

4 The sentence is a direct quotation of Tao Teh King.

5 Such a statement concerning the creation of the universe as the one here given is found in I King (Eeki-kyo). The primordial substance is not exactly 'gas,' but we may conceive it as being something like a nebula.

6Not all Buddhists, but some of them, are meant here-that is, Hinayanists and Dharma-laksanists.

7 According to Hinayanists, Karma (action) is that moral germ which survives death and continues in transmigration. It may be conceived as something like an energy, by the influence of which beings undergo metempsychosis.

8 According to the Dharma-laksana Sect, Alaya-vijñana (receptacle-knowledge) is the spiritual Substance which holds the 'seeds' or potentialities of all things.

Karma is brought forth by illusion, and (illusion by attachment), and so forth, in one word, the Alaya is the origin of life. Although all of (these scholars) claim that they have already grasped the ultimate truth, yet not in fact.

Confucius, Lao Tsz, and Shakya, however, were all the wisest of sages. Each of them gave his teachings in a way different from the other two, that they might meet the spiritual needs of his time and fit to the capacities of men. (So that) the Buddhist and the outside doctrines, each supplementing the other, have done good to the multitude. They were all (intended) to encourage thousands of virtuous acts by explaining the whole chain of causality. They were (also intended) to investigate thousands of things, and throw light on the beginning and on the end of their evolution. Although all these doctrines (might) answer the purpose of the sages, yet there must be some teachings that would be temporary<sup>9</sup>, while others would be eternal. The first two faiths are merely temporary, while Buddhism includes both the temporary and the eternal. We may act according to the precepts of these three faiths, which aim at the peace and welfare (of man), in so far as they encourage thousands of virtuous acts by giving warning against evil and recommending good. (But) Buddhism (alone) is altogether perfect and best of all, in investigating thousands of things and in tracing them back to their first cause, in order to acquire thorough understanding of the natures of things and to attain to the ultimate truth.

Each of our contemporary scholars, nevertheless, adheres to one school of the (above mentioned) teachings. And there are some (even) among the Buddhists who mistake the temporary for the eternal doctrine. In consequence they are never successful in tracing Heaven, Earth, Man, and other things back to their First Cause. But I am now (going to show how) to infer an Ultimate Cause for thousands of things, not only from the Buddhist, but from outsiders' teachings. First I shall treat of the superficial doctrines, and then of the profound, (in order to) free the followers of the temporary faiths from those (prejudices that prove to be) obstructions in their way to the truth, and enable them to attain to the Ultimate Reality. Afterwards I shall point out, according to the perfect doctrine, how things evolved themselves through one stage after another out of the First Cause (in order to) make the incomplete doctrines fuse into the complete one, and to enable the followers to explain the phenomenal universe.'

This essay is entitled 'Origin of Man,'<sup>10</sup> and it consists of the (following) four chapters: (1) Refutation of Delusive and Prejudiced (Doctrine); (2) Refutation of Incomplete and Superficial (Doctrine); (3) Direct Explanation of the Real Origin; (4) Reconciliation of the Temporary with the Eternal Doctrine.

9 The temporary doctrine means the teaching preached by Shakya Muni to meet the temporary needs of the hearers. The term is always used in contrast with the real or eternal doctrine.

10 'That is, Heaven, Earth, Man, and other things.'

## Chapter 1: Refutation Of Delusive & Prejudiced (Doctrine)<sup>11</sup>

According to Confucianism<sup>12</sup> and Taoism all sorts of beings, such as men and beasts, were born out of and brought up by the (so-called) Great Path of Emptiness.<sup>13</sup> That is to say, the Path by the operation of its own law gave rise naturally to the primordial Gas, and that Gas produced Heaven and Earth, which (in their turn) brought forth thousands of things. Accordingly the wise and the unwise, the high and the low, the rich and the poor, the happy and the miserable, are predestined to be so by the heavenly fiat, and are at the mercy of Time and Providence. Therefore they (must) come back after death to Heaven and Earth, from which (in turn) they return to the (Path) of Emptiness. The main purpose of these<sup>14</sup> (two) outside teachings is simply to establish morals with regard to bodily actions, but not to trace life to its First Cause. They tell of nothing beyond the phenomenal universe in their explanation of thousands of things. Though they point out the Great Path as the origin, yet they never explain in detail (what is) the direct, and (what) the indirect cause of the phenomenal universe, or how it was created, or how it will be destroyed, how life came forth, whither it will go, (what is) good, (what) evil. Therefore the followers of these doctrines adhere to them as the perfect teachings without knowing that they are merely temporary.

Now I (shall) raise, in brief, a few questions to point out their weaknesses. If everything in the universe, as they say, came out of the Great Path of Emptiness, that Great Path itself should be the cause of (not only) of wisdom, (but) of folly, (not only) of life, (but) of death. It ought to be the source of prosperity (as well as) of adversity, of fortune (as well as) of misfortune. If this origin exist (as it is supposed) to all eternity, it must be possible neither to remove follies, villainies, calamities, and wars, nor to promote wisdom, good, happiness, and welfare. Of what use (then) are the teachings of Lao Tsz and Chwang Tsz?<sup>15</sup> The Path, besides, should have reared the tiger and the wolf, given birth to Kieh<sup>16</sup> and Cheu<sup>17</sup>, caused the premature deaths

11 A. 'Those of Confucianists and Taoists.'

12 Confucianists are not of exactly the same opinion as Taoists respecting the creation. The Great Path here mentioned refers exclusively to Taoism.

13 The Great Path of Emptiness, Hū Wu Ta Tao, is the technical name for the Taoist conception of the Absolute. It is something existent in an undeveloped state before the creation of the phenomenal universe. According to Tao Teh King, it is 'self-existent, unchangeable, all-pervading, and the mother of all things. It is unnamable, but it is sometimes called the Path or the Great.' It is also called the Emptiness, as it is entirely devoid of relative activities.

14 Confucianism mainly treats of ethical problems, but Taoism is noted for its metaphysical speculation.

15 One of the greatest Taoist philosophers, and the author of the book entitled after his name. He flourished 339-327 B.C.

16 The last Emperor of the Hia dynasty, notorious for his vices. His reign was 1818-1767 B.C.

17 The last Emperor of the Yin dynasty, one of the worst despots. His reign was 1154-1122 B.C.

of Yen<sup>18</sup> and Jan<sup>19</sup>, and placed I<sup>20</sup> and Tsi<sup>21</sup> in their most lamentable condition. How could it be called a noble (path)?

Again, if, as they say, thousands of things could come naturally into existence without direct or indirect causes, they should come forth in all places where there are neither direct nor indirect causes. For instance, a stone would bring forth grass, while grass would give birth to man, and man would beget beasts, etc. In addition to this they would come out all at the same time, nothing being produced before or after the others. They would come into existence all at the same moment, nothing being produced sooner or later than the others. Peace and welfare might be secured without the help of the wise and the good. Humanity and righteousness might be acquired without instruction and study. One might even become an immortal genius<sup>22</sup> without taking the miraculous medicine. Why did Lao Tsz, Chwang Tsz, Cheu Kung<sup>23</sup> and Confucius do such a useless task as to found their doctrines and lay down the precepts for men?

Again, if all things, as they say, were made of the primordial Gas (which has no feeling nor will), how could an infant, just born of the Gas, who had never learned to think, or love, or hate, or to be naughty, or wilful (even begin to think or feel)? If, as they may answer, the infant as soon as it was born could quite naturally love or hate, etc., as it wished, it could (as well) gain the Five Virtues<sup>24</sup> and the Six Acquirements<sup>25</sup>, as it wished. Why does it wait for some direct or indirect causes (to gain its knowledge), and to acquire them through study and instruction?

Again, they might say life suddenly came into existence, it being formed of the Gas, and suddenly goes to naught (at death), the Gas being dispersed. What, then, are the spirits of the dead (which they believe in)? Besides, there are in history some instances of persons<sup>26</sup> who could see through previous existences, or of persons<sup>27</sup>

18 Yen Hwui (Gan-kai, 541-483 B.C.), a most beloved disciple of Confucius, known as a wise and virtuous scholar.

19 Jan Poh Niu (Zen-pak-giu, 521- . . . B.C.), a prominent disciple, of Confucius, distinguished for his virtues.

20 Poh I (Haku-i), the elder brother of Tsi, who distinguished himself by his faith and wisdom at the downfall of the Yin dynasty.

21 Shuh Tsi (Shiku Sei), the brother of I, with whom he shared the same fate.

22 Degenerated Taoists maintained that they could prepare a certain miraculous draught, by the taking of which one could become immortal.

23 Cheu Kung (Shu-ko), a most noted statesman and scholar, the younger brother of the Emperor Wu (1122-1116 B.C.), the founder of the Chen dynasty.

24 (1) Humanity, (2) Uprightness, (3) Propriety, (4) Wisdom, (5) Sincerity.

25 (1) Reading, (2) Arithmetic, (3) Etiquette, (4) Archery, (5) Horsemanship, (6) Music.

26 According to Tsin Shu, a man, Pao Tsing by name, told his parents, when he was five years, that he had been in the previous life a son to Li, an inhabitant of Kùh Yang, and that he had fallen into the well and died. Thereupon the parents called on Li, and found, to their astonishment, that the boy's statement was actually coincident with the fact.

27 Yan Hu, a native of Tsin Chen, recollected, at the age of five, that he had been a son to the next-door neighbour, and that he had left his ring under a mulberry-tree close by the fence of the house. Thereupon he went with his nurse and successfully restored it, to the astonishment of the whole family.

who recollected the events in their past lives. Therefore we know that the present is the continuation of the past life, and that it did not come into existence on a sudden by the formation of a Gas. Again, there are some historical facts<sup>28</sup> proving that the supernatural powers of spirits will not be lost. Thus we know that life is not to be suddenly reduced to naught after death by the dispersion of the Gas. Therefore (matters concerning) sacrifices, services, and supplications (to the spirits) are mentioned in the sacred books<sup>29</sup>. Even more than that! Are there not some instances<sup>30</sup>, ancient and modern, of persons who revived after death to tell the matters concerning the unseen world, or who appeared to move the hearts of their wives and children a while after death, or who<sup>31</sup> took vengeance (on the enemy), or who<sup>32</sup> returned favours (to their friends)?

The outside scholars might ask, by way of objection, if one live as a spirit after death, the spirits of the past would fill up streets and roads, and be seen by men; and why are there no eye-witnesses? I say in reply that (as) there are the Six Worlds<sup>33</sup> for the dead, they do not necessarily live in the world of spirits. (Even as spirits) they must die and be born again among men or other beings. How can the spirits of the past always live in a crowd? Moreover, if (as you say) man was born of (primordial) Gas which gave rise to Heaven and Earth, and which was unconscious from the very beginning, how could he be conscious all on a sudden after his birth? Why are trees and grass which were also formed of the same Gas unconscious? Again, if, (as you say), the rich and the poor, the high and the low, the wise and the unwise, the good and the bad, the happy and the unhappy, the lucky and the unlucky, are predestined alike by heavenly decree, why are so many destined by heaven to be poor and so few to be rich? Why so many to be low and so few to be high? In short, why are so many destined to be unlucky and so few to be lucky?

If it be the will of Heaven to bless so limited a number of persons at all, and to curse so many, why is Heaven so partial? Even more than that! Are there not many who hold a high position without any meritorious conduct, while some are placed in a low one in spite of their keeping to (the rules of) conduct? Are there not many who are rich without any virtues, while some are poor in spite of their virtues? Are there not the unjust who are fortunate, while the just are unfortunate? Are there not the humane, who die young, while the inhuman enjoy long lives? In short, the righteous (are doomed) to perish, while the unrighteous prosper! Thus (we must infer) that all this depends on the heavenly will, which causes the unrighteous to prosper and the righteous to perish. How can there be reward for the good (as it is taught in your

28 All the ancient sages of China believed in spirits, and propitiated them by sacrifices.

29 The sacred books of Confucianism, Shu King and Li Ki.

30 Pang Shang, the Prince of Tsi, is said to have appeared after his death.

31 Poh Yiu, of Ching, is said to have become an epidemic spirit to take vengeance on his enemies.

32 According to Tso Chwen (Sa-den), when Wei Wu, a General of Tsin, fought with Tu Hwui, the dead father of his concubine appeared, and prevented the march of the enemy in order to return favours done to him.

33 1) The heaven, or the world for Devas; (2) the earth, or the world for men; (3) the world for Asuras; (4) the world for Petras; (5) the world for beasts; (6) hell.

sacred books)<sup>34</sup>, that Heaven blesses the good and shows grace to the humble? How can there be punishment for the bad (as it is taught in your holy books)<sup>35</sup>, that Heaven curses the evil and inflicts punishment on the proud?

Again, if even all such evils as wars, treacheries, and rebellions depend on the heavenly will, those Sages would be in the wrong who, in the statement of their teaching, censure or chastise men, but not Heaven or the heavenly will. Therefore, even if Shi<sup>36</sup> is full of reproofs against maladministration, while Shu<sup>37</sup> of eulogies for the reigns of the wisest monarchs-even if Propriety<sup>38</sup> is recommended as a most effectual means of creating peace between the governors and the governed, while Music<sup>39</sup> (is recommended as a means of) ameliorating the customs and manners of the people--still, they can hardly be said to realize the Will on High or to conform to the wishes of the Creator. Hence you must acknowledge that those who devote themselves to the study of these doctrines are not able to trace man to his origin.

## Chapter 2 Refutation Of Incomplete & Superficial (Doctrine)<sup>40</sup>

THERE are in the Buddhist doctrines, to state briefly, the five grades (of development), beginning with the most superficial, and ending with the most profound teachings. (They are as follows:) (1) The Doctrine for Men and Devas; (2) the Doctrine of the Hinayanists; (3) the Mahayana Doctrine of Dharma-laksana; (4) the Mahayana Doctrine of the Nihilists<sup>41</sup>; (5) the Ekaydna Doctrine that teaches the Ultimate Reality.<sup>42</sup>

1. The Doctrine for Men and Devas. -- The Buddha, to meet temporarily the spiritual needs of the uninitiated, preached a doctrine concerning good or bad Karma as the cause, and its retribution as the effect, in the three existences (of the past, the present, and the future). That is, one who commits the tenfold sin<sup>43</sup> must be reborn after death in hell, when these sins are of the highest grade<sup>44</sup>; among Pretas<sup>45</sup>, when of the middle grade; and among animals, when of the lowest grade. Therefore the Buddha for a temporary purpose made these (uninitiated) observe the Five Precepts

34 Shu King and I King.

35 *Ibid.*

36 Shu King, a famous book of odes.

37 Shu King, the records of the administrations of the wisest monarchs of old.

38 Li Ki, the book on proprieties and etiquette.

39 It is said in Hiao King that music is the best means to improve customs and manners.

40 'The imperfect doctrines taught by the Buddha.'

41 'These first four doctrines are treated of in this chapter.'

42 'This is mentioned in the third chapter.'

43 (1) Taking life, (2) theft, (3) adultery, (4) lying, (5) exaggeration, (6) abuse, (7) ambiguous talk, (8) coveting, (9) malice, (10) unbelief.

44 There are three grades in each of the tenfold sin. For instance, the taking of the life of a Buddha, or of a sage, or of a parent, etc., is of the highest grade; while to kill fellow-men is of the middle; and to kill beasts and birds, etc., is of the lowest. Again, to kill any being with pleasure is of the highest grade; while to repent after killing is of the middle; and killing by mistake is of the lowest.

45 Hungry spirits.

similar to the Five Virtues<sup>46</sup> of the outside doctrine, in order to enable them to escape the three (worst) States<sup>47</sup> of Existence, and to be reborn among men. (He also taught that) those who cultivate<sup>48</sup> the tenfold virtue<sup>49</sup> of the highest grade, and who give alms, and keep the precepts, and so forth, are to be born in the Six Celestial Realms of Kama<sup>50</sup> while those who practise the Four<sup>51</sup> Dhyanas, the Eight Samadhis<sup>52</sup>, are to be reborn in the heavenly worlds of Rupa<sup>53</sup> and Arupa. For this reason this doctrine is called the doctrine for men and Devas. According to this doctrine Karma is the origin of life<sup>54</sup>.

Now let me raise some questions by way of objection. Granting that one has to be born in the Five States of Existences<sup>55</sup> by virtue of Karma produced (in previous

46 The five cardinal virtues of Confucianism are quite similar to the five precepts of Buddhism, as we see by this comparison:

VIRTUES: 1. Humanity, 2. Uprightness, 3. Propriety, 4. Wisdom, 5. Sincerity.

PRECEPTS: 1. Not to take life, 2. Not to steal, 3. Not to be adulterous, 4. Not to get drunk, 5. Not to lie.

47 (1) Hell, (2) Pretas, (3) Beasts.

48 A. 'The Buddhist precepts are different from the Confucian teachings in the form of expression, but they agree in their warning against the evil and in encouraging the good. The moral conduct of the Buddhist can be secured by the cultivation of the five virtues of humanity, uprightnes, etc., as though people in this country hold up their hands joined in the respectable salutation, while the same object is attained by those of The Fan, who stand with their bands hanging down. Not to kill is humanity. Not to steal is uprightnes. Not to be adulterous is propriety. Not to lie is sincerity. Not to drink spirits nor eat meat is to increase wisdom, keeping mind pure.'

49 (1) Not to take life, (2) not to steal, (3) not to be adulterous, (4) not to lie, (5) not to exaggerate, (6) not to abuse, (7) not to talk ambiguously, (8) not to covet, (9) not to be malicious, (10) not to unbelieve.

50 Kama-loka, the world of desire, is the first of the Three Worlds. It consists of the earth and the six heavenly worlds, all the inhabitants of which are subject to sensual desires.

51 The Buddhists taught the four Dhyanas, or the four different degrees of abstract contemplation, by which the mind could free itself from all subjective and objective trammels, until it reached a state of absolute absence of unconcentrated thought. The practiser of the four Dhyanas would be born in the four re.-ions of the Rupa-lokas in accordance with his spiritual state.

52 Namely, the above-mentioned four degrees of contemplation, and other four deeper ecstatic meditations. The practiser of the latter would be born in the four spiritual regions of Arupa-loka in accordance with his state of abstraction.

53 Rupa-loka, the world of form, is the second of the 'three Worlds. It consists of eighteen heavens, which were divided into four regions. The first Dhyana region comprised the first three of the eighteen heavens, the second Dhyana region the next three, the third Dhyana region the following three, and the fourth Dhyana region the remaining nine.

Arupa-loka, the world of formlessness, is the third of the Three Worlds. It consists of four heavens.

The first is called 'the heaven of unlimited space,' the second 'the heaven of unlimited knowledge,' the third 'the heaven of absolute non-existence,' the fourth 'the heaven of neither consciousness' nor unconsciousness.,

A. 'None of heavens, or of hells, or of the worlds of spirits, is mentioned in the title of this book, because these worlds are entirely different from ours, and absolutely beyond the sight and hearing.

Ordinary people know not even the phenomena actually occurring before them; how could they understand the unseen? So I entitled it simply, "The Origin of Man " in agreement with the worldly teachings. Now that I treat, however, of the Buddhist doctrine, it is reasonable to enumerate these worlds in full.'

54 A. 'But there are three sorts of Karmas: (1) The bad, (2) the good, (3) the immovable. There are the three periods for retribution: (1) In this life, (2) in the next life, (3) in some remote future life.'

55 The states of--(1) heavenly beings, (2) men, (3) beings in hell, (4) hungry spirits, (5) beasts.



lives), is it not doubtful who is the author of Karma, and who the recipient of its consequences? If it might be said that the eyes, ears, hands, and feet produce Karma, then the eyes, ears, hands, and feet of a newly-dead person are still as they were. So why do they not see and hear and thus produce Karma?

If it be said that it is the mind that produces Karma (I ask), what is the mind? If you mean the heart, the heart is a material thing, and is located within the body. How can it, by coming quickly into the eyes and ears, distinguish the pleasing from the disgusting in external objects? If there be no distinction between the pleasing and the disgusting, why does it accept the one or reject the other?

Besides, the heart is as much material and impenetrable as the eyes, ears, hands, and feet. How, then, can the heart within freely pass to the organs of sense without? How can this one put the others in motion, or communicate with them, in order to cooperate in producing Karma?

If it be said that only such passions as joy, anger, love, and hatred act through the body and the mouth and enable them to produce Karma, (I should say) those passions--joy, anger, and the rest--are too transitory, and come and go in a moment. They have no Substance (behind their appearances). What, then, is the chief agent that produces Karma?

It might be said that we should not seek after (the author of Karma) by taking mind and body separately (as we have just done), because body and mind, as a whole, conjointly produce Karma. Who, then, after the destruction of body by death, would receive the retribution (in the form) of pain or of pleasure?

If it be assumed that another body is to come into existence after death, then the body and mind of the present life, committing sins or cultivating virtues, would cause another body and mind in the future which would suffer from the pains or enjoy the pleasures. Accordingly, those who cultivate virtues would be extremely unlucky, while those who commit sins very lucky. How can the divine law of causality be so unreasonable? Therefore we (must) acknowledge that those who merely follow this doctrine are far from a thorough understanding of the origin of life, though they believe in the theory of Karma.

2. The Doctrine of the Hinayanists.--This doctrine tells us that (both) the body, that is formed of matter, and the mind, that thinks and reflects, continually exist from eternity to eternity, being destroyed and recreated by means of direct or indirect causes, just as the water of a river glides continually, or the flame of a lamp keeps burning constantly. Mind and body unite themselves temporarily, and seem to be one and changeless. The common people, ignorant of all this, are attached to (the two combined) as being

Atman<sup>56</sup>.

For the sake of this Atman, which they hold to be the most precious thing (in the world), they are subject to the Three Poisons Of lust<sup>57</sup>, anger<sup>58</sup> and folly<sup>59</sup>, which (in their turn) give impulse to the will and bring forth Karma of all kinds through speech and action. Karma being thus produced, no one can evade its effects. Consequently all must be born<sup>60</sup> in the Five States of Existence either to suffer pain or to enjoy pleasure; some are born in the higher places, while others in the lower of the Three Worlds.<sup>61</sup>

When born (in the future lives) they are attached again to the body (and mind) as Atman, and become subject to lust and the other two passions. Karma is again produced by them, and they have to receive its inevitable results. (Thus) body undergoes birth, old age, disease, death, and is reborn after death; while the world passes through the stages of formation, existence, destruction, and emptiness, and is re-formed again after emptiness. Kalpa after Kalpa<sup>62</sup> (passes by), life after life

56 Atman means ego, or self, on which individuality is based.

57 A. 'The passion that covets fame and gain to keep oneself in prosperity.'

58 A. 'The passion against disagreeable things, for fear of their inflicting injuries on oneself.'

59 A. 'Wrong thoughts and inferences.'

60 A. Different sorts of beings are born by virtue of the individualizing Karma.'

61 A. 'Worlds are produced by virtue of the Karma common to all beings that live in them.'

62 Kalpa, a mundane cycle, is not reckoned by months and years. It is a period during which a physical universe is formed to the moment when another is put into its place.

A. "The following verses describe how the world was first created in the period of emptiness: A strong wind began to blow through empty space. Its length and breadth were infinite. It was 16 lakhs thick, and so strong that it could not be cut even with a diamond. Its name was the world-supporting-wind. The golden clouds of Abhasvara heaven (the sixth of eighteen heavens of the Rupa-loka) covered all the skies of the Three Thousand Worlds. Down came the heavy rain, each drop being as large as the axle of a waggon. The water stood on the wind that checked its running down. It was 11 lakhs deep. The first layer was made of adamant (by the congealing water). Gradually the cloud poured down the rain and filled it. First the Brahma-raja worlds, next the Yama-heaven (the third of six heavens of the Kama loka), were made. The pure water rose up, driven by the wind, and Sumeru. (the central mountain, or axis of the universe) and the seven concentric circles of mountains, and so on, were formed. Out of dirty sediments the mountains, the four continents, the hells, oceans, and outer ring of mountains, were made. This is called the formation of the universe. The time of one Increase and one Decrease (human life is increased from 10 to 84,000 years, increasing by one year at every one hundred years; then it is decreased from 84,000 to 10 years, decreasing by one year at every one hundred years) elapsed. In short, those beings in the second region of Rupa-loka, whose good Karma had spent its force, came down on the earth. At first there were the 'earth bread' and the wild vine for them. Afterwards they could not completely digest rice, and began to excrete and to urinate. Thus men were differentiated from women. They divided the cultivated land among them. Chiefs were elected; assistants and subjects were sought out; hence different classes of people. A period of nineteen Increases and Decreases elapsed. Added to the above-mentioned period, it amounted to twenty Increases and Decreases. This is called the Kalpa of the formation of the universe.

"Now let us discuss this point. The Kalpa of Emptiness is what the Taoist calls the Path of Emptiness. The Path or the Reality, however, is not empty, but bright, transcendental, spiritual, and omnipresent. Lao Tsz, led by his mistaken idea, called the Kalpa of Emptiness the Path; otherwise he did so for the

(comes on), and the circle of continuous rebirths knows no beginning nor end, and resembles the pulley for drawing water from the well.<sup>63</sup>

All this is due to Ignorance which does not understand that no bodily existence, by its very nature, can be Atman. The reason why it is not Atman is this, that its formation is, after all, due to the union of matter and mind. Now (let us) examine and analyze (mind and body). Matter consists of the four elements of earth, water, fire, and wind, while mind consists of the four aggregates of perception<sup>64</sup>, consciousness<sup>65</sup>, conception<sup>66</sup>, and knowledge<sup>67</sup>.

If all (these elements) be taken as Atman, there must be eight Atmans (for each person). More than that! There are many different things, even in the element of earth. Now, there are three hundred and sixty bones, each one distinct from the other. No one is the same as any other, either of the skin, hair, muscles, the liver, the heart, the spleen, and the kidneys. Furthermore, there are a great many mental qualities each different from the others. Sight is different from hearing. Joy is not the

temporary purpose of renouncing worldly desires. The wind in the empty space is what the Taoist calls the undefinable Gas in the state of Chaos. Therefore Lao Tsz said, 'The Path brings forth one.' The golden clouds, the first of all physical objects, is (what the Confucianist calls) the First Principle. The rain-water standing (on the wind) is the production of the Negative Principle. The Positive, united with the Negative, brought forth the phenomenal universe. The Brahma-raja-loka, the Sumeru, and others, are what they call the Heaven. The dirty waters and sediment are the Earth. So Lao Tsz said, 'One produces two.' Those in the second region of the Rupra-loka, whose good Karma had spent its force, came down upon the earth and became human beings. Therefore Lao Tsz said, 'The two produce three.' Thus the Three Powers were completed. The earth-bread and different classes of people, and so on, are the so-called 'production of thousands of things by the Three.' This was the time when people lived in eaves or wandered in the wilderness, and knew not the use of fire. As it belongs to the remote past of the prehistoric age, previous to the reigns of the first three Emperors, the traditions handed down to us are neither clear nor certain. Many errors crept into them one generation after another, and consequently no one of the statements given in the various works of scholars agrees with another. Besides, when the Buddhist books explain the formation of the Three Thousand Worlds, they do not confine themselves merely within the limits of this country. Hence their records are entirely different from those of the outsiders (which are confined to China).

"'Existence' means the Kalpa of Existence that lasts twenty Increases and Decreases. 'Destruction' means the Kalpa of Destruction that lasts also twenty Increases and Decreases. During the first nineteen Increases and Decreases living beings are destroyed; while in the last worlds are demolished through the three periods of distress (1) the period of water, (2) the period of fire, (3) the period of wind. 'Emptiness' means the Kalpa of Emptiness, during which no beings nor worlds exist. This Kalpa also lasts twenty Increases and Decreases."

63 A. 'Taoists merely know that there was one Kalpa of Emptiness before the formation of this present universe, and point out the Emptiness, the Chaos, the primordial Gas, and the rest, naming them as the first or the beginningless. But they do not know that the universe had already gone through myriads of cycles of Kalpas of formation, existence, destruction, and emptiness. Thus even the most superficial of the Hinayana doctrines far excels the most profound of the outside doctrines.'

64 A. 'It receives both the agreeable and the disagreeable impressions from without.' It is Yedana, the second of the five Skandhas, or aggregates.

65 A. 'It perceives the forms of external objects.' It is Samjña, name, the third of the five aggregates.

66 A. 'It acts, one idea changing after another.' It is Samskara, the fourth of the five aggregates.

67 A. 'It recognizes.' It is Vijñana, the last of the five aggregates.

same as anger. If we enumerate them, in short, one after another, there are eighty thousand passions.<sup>68</sup>

As things are thus so innumerable, none can tell which of these (without mistake) is to be taken as the Atman. In case all be taken as the Atman, there must be hundreds and thousands of Atmans, among which there would be as many conflicts and disturbances as there are masters living in the one (house of) body. As there exists no body nor mind separated from these things, one can never find the Atman, even if he seeks for it over and over again.

Hereupon anyone understands that this life (of ours) is no more than the temporary union of numerous elements (mental and physical). Originally there is no Atman to distinguish one being from another. For whose sake, then, should he be lustful or angry? For whose sake should he take life<sup>69</sup>, or commit theft, or give alms, or keep precepts? (Thus thinking) at length he sets his mind free from the virtues and vices subjected to the passions<sup>70</sup> of the Three Worlds, and abides in the discriminative insight into (the nature of) the Anatman<sup>71</sup> only.

By means of that discriminative insight he makes himself pure from lust, and the other (two passions) puts an end to various sorts of Karma, and realizes the Bhutatathata<sup>72</sup> of Anatman. In brief, he attains to the State of Arhat<sup>73</sup>, has his body reduced to ashes, his intelligence annihilated, and entirely gets rid of sufferings.

According to the doctrine of this school the two aggregates, material and spiritual, together with lust, anger, and folly, are the origin of ourselves and of the world in

68 Eighty thousand simply means a great many.

69 A. 'He understands the truth of misery.' The truth of Duhkha, or misery, is the first of the four Noble Satyas, or Truths, that ought to be realized by the Hinayanists. According to the Hinayana doctrine, misery is a necessary concomitant of sentient life.'

70 A. 'He destroys Samudaya.' The truth of Samudaya, or accumulation, the second of the four Satyas, means that misery is accumulated or produced by passions. This truth should be realized by the removal of passions.

71 A. 'This is the truth of Marga.' The truth of Marga, or Path, is the fourth of the four Satyas. There are the eight right Paths that lead to the extinction of passions; (1) Right view (to discern truth), (2) right thought (or purity of will and thought), (3) right speech (free from nonsense and errors), (4) right action, (5) right diligence, (6) right meditation, (7) right memory, (8) right livelihood.

72 A. 'This is the truth of Nirodha.' Nirodha, or destruction, the third of the four Satyas, means the extinction of passions. Bhutatathati of Anatman means the truth of the non existence of Atma or soul, and is the aim and end of the Hinayanist philosophy.

73 Arhat, the Killer of thieves (i.e., passions), means one who conquered his passions. It means, secondly, one who is exempted from birth, or one who is free from transmigration. Thirdly, it means one deserving worship, So the Arhat is the highest sage who has attained to Nirvana by the destruction of all passions.

which we live. There exists nothing else, either in the past or in the future, that can be regarded as the origin.

Now let us say (a few words) by way of refutation. That which (always) stands as the origin of life, birth after birth, generation after generation, should exist by itself without cessation. Yet the Five Vijñanas<sup>74</sup> cease to perform their functions when they lack proper conditions, (while) the Mano-vijñana<sup>75</sup> is lost at times (in unconsciousness). There are none of those four (material) elements in the heavenly worlds of Arupa. How, then, is life sustained there and kept up in continuous birth after birth? Therefore we know that those who devote themselves to the study of this doctrine also cannot trace life to its origin.

3. The Mahayana Doctrine of Dharmalaksana.<sup>76</sup>--This doctrine tells us that from time immemorial all sentient beings naturally have eight different Vijñanas<sup>77</sup> and the eighth, Alaya-vijñana<sup>78</sup>, is the origin of them. (That is), the Alaya suddenly brings forth the 'seeds'<sup>79</sup> of living beings and of the world in which they live, and through transformation gives rise to the seven Vijñanas. Each of them causes external objects on which it acts to take form and appear. In reality there is nothing externally existent. How, then, does Alaya give rise to them through transformation? Because, as this doctrine tells us, we habitually form the erroneous idea that Atman and external objects exist in reality, and it acts upon Alaya and leaves its impressions<sup>80</sup> there. Consequently, when Vijñanas are awakened, these impressions (or the seed-ideas) transform and present themselves (before the mind's eye) Atman and external objects.

74 A. 'The conditions are the Indriyas and the Visayas, etc.' Indriyas are organs of sense, and Visayas are objects on which the sense acts. Five Vijñanas are--(1) The sense of sight, (2) the sense of hearing, (3) the sense of smell, (4) the sense of taste, (5) the sense of touch.

75 Mano-vijñana is the mind itself, and the last of the six Vijñanas of the Hinayana doctrine. A. '(For instance), in a state of trance, in deep slumber, in Nirodha-samapatti (where no thought exists), in Asamjñi-samapatti (in which no consciousness exists), and in Avrhaloka (the thirteenth of Brahmaloкас).

76 This school studies in the main the nature of things (Dharma), and was so named. The doctrine is based on Avatamsaka-sutra and Samdhi-nirmocana-sutra, and was systematized by Asamga and Vasu-bandhu. The latter's book, Vidyamatra- siddhi- çastra-karika, is held to be the best authoritative work of the school.

77 (1) The sense of sight; (2) the sense of hearing; (3) the sense of smell; (4) the sense of taste; (5) the sense of touch; (6) Mano-vijñana (lit., mind-knowledge), or the perceptive faculty; (7) Klista-mano-vijñana (lit., soiled-mind-knowledge), or an introspective faculty; (8) Alaya-vijñana (lit., receptacle-knowledge), or ultimate-mind-substance.

78 The first seven Vijñanas depend on the Alaya, which is said to hold all the 'seeds' of physical and mental objects.

79 This school is an extreme form of Idealism, and maintains that nothing separated from the Alaya can exist externally. The mind-substance, from the first, holds the seed ideas of everything, and they seem to the non-enlightened mind to be the external universe, but are no other than the transformation of the seed-ideas. The five senses, and the Mano-vijñana acting on them, take them for external objects really existent, while the seventh Vijñana mistakes the eighth for Atman.

80 The non-enlightened mind, habitually thinking that Atman and external objects exist, leaves the impression of the seed-ideas on its own Alaya.

Then the sixth and the seventh' Vijñana veiled with Avidya<sup>81</sup>, dwelling on them, mistake them for real Atman and the real external objects. This (error) may be compared with one diseased<sup>82</sup> in the eye, who imagines that he sees various things (floating in the air) on account of his illness; or with a dreamer<sup>83</sup> whose fanciful thoughts assume various forms of external objects, and present themselves before him. While in the dream he fancies that there exist external objects in reality, but on awakening he finds that they are nothing other than the transformation of his dreaming thoughts.

So are our lives. They are no other than the transformation of the Vijñanas; but in consequence of illusion, we take them for the Atman and external objects existing in reality. From these erroneous ideas arise delusive thoughts that lead to the production of Karma; hence the round-of rebirth to time without end.<sup>84</sup> When we understand these reasons, we can realize the fact that our lives are nothing but transformations of the Vijñanas, and that the (eighth) Vijñana is the origin.<sup>85</sup>

4. Mahayana Doctrine of the Nihilists. -- This doctrine disproves (both) the Mahayana and the Hinayana doctrines above mentioned that adhere to Dharma-laksana, and suggestively discloses the truth of Transcendental Reality which is to be treated later.<sup>86</sup> Let me state, first of all, what it would say in the refutation of Dharma-laksana.

If the external objects which are transformed are unreal, how can the Vijñana, the transformer, be real? If you say the latter is really existent, but not the former,<sup>87</sup> then (you assume that) the dreaming mind (which is compared with Alaya-vijñana) is entirely different from the objects seen in the dream (which are compared with

81 Avidya, or ignorance, which mistakes the illusory phenomena for realities.

82 A. 'A person with a serious disease sees the vision of strange colours, men, and things in his trance.'

83 A. 'That a dreamer fancies he sees things is well known to everybody.'

84 A. 'As it was detailed above.'

85 A. 'An imperfect doctrine, which is refuted later.'

86 A. "The nihilistic doctrine is stated not only in the various Prajñā-sutras (the books having Prajñā-paramita in their titles), but also in almost all Mahayana sutras. The above-mentioned three doctrines were preached (by the Buddha) in the three successive periods. But this doctrine was not preached at any particular period; it was intended to destroy at any time the attachment to the phenomenal objects. Therefore Nagarjuna tells us that there are two sorts of Prajñās, the Common and the Special. The Çravakas (lit., hearers) and the Pratyekabuddhas (lit., singly enlightened ones), or the Hinayanists, could hear and believe in, with the Bodhisattvas or the Mahayanists, the Common Prajñā, as it was intended to destroy their attachment to the external objects. Bodhisattvas alone could understand the Special Prajñā, as it secretly revealed the Buddha nature, or the Absolute. Each of the two great Indian teachers, Çilabhadra and Jñānaprabha, divided the whole teachings of the Buddha into three periods. (According to Çilabhadra, A.D. 625, teacher of Hiuen Tsang, the Buddha first preached the doctrine of 'existence' to the effect that every living being is unreal, but things are real. All the Hinayana sutras belong to this period. Next the Buddha preached the doctrine of the middle path, in Samdhi-nirmocana-sutra and others, to the effect that all the phenomenal universe is unreal, but that the mental substance is real. According to Jñānaprabha, the Buddha first preached the doctrine of existence, next that of the existence of mental substance, and lastly that of unreality.) One says the doctrine of unreality was preached before that of Dharma-laksana, while the others say it was preached after. Here I adopt the latter's opinion."

87 A. 'In the following sentences I refute it, making use of the simile of the dream.'

external objects). If they are entirely different, you ought not to identify the dream with the things dreamed, nor to identify the things dreamed with the dream itself. In other words, they ought to have separate existences. (And) when you awake your dream may disappear, but the things dreamed would remain.

Again, if (you say) that the things dreamed are not identical with the dream, then they would be really existent things. If the dream is not the same as the things dreamed, in what other form does it appear to you? Therefore you must acknowledge that there is every reason to believe that both the dreaming mind and the things dreamed are equally unreal, and that nothing exists in reality, though it seems to you as if there were a seer, and a seen, in a dream. Thus those Vijñanas also would be unreal, because all of them are not self-existent realities, their existence being temporary, and dependent upon various conditions.

"There is nothing," (the author of) *Madhyamika-ṣāstra*<sup>88</sup> says, "that ever came into existence without direct and indirect causes. Therefore there is anything that is not unreal in the world." He says again: "Things produced through direct and indirect causes I declare to be the very things which are unreal." (The author of) *Craddhotdada-ṣāstra*<sup>89</sup> says: "All things in the universe present themselves in different forms only on account of false ideas. If separated from the (false) ideas and thoughts, no forms of those external objects exist." "All the physical forms (ascribed to Buddha)," says (the author of) a sutra,<sup>90</sup> "are false and unreal. The beings that transcend all forms are called Buddhas."<sup>91</sup> Consequently you must acknowledge that mind as well as external objects are unreal. This is the eternal truth of the Mahayana doctrine. We are driven to the conclusion that unreality is the origin of life, if we trace it back according to this doctrine.

Now let us say (a few words) to refute this doctrine also. If mind as well as external objects be unreal, who is it that knows they are so? Again, if there be nothing real in the universe, what is it that causes unreal objects to appear? We stand witness to the fact there is no one of the unreal things on earth that is not made to appear by something real. If there be no water of unchanging fluidity,<sup>92</sup> how can there be the unreal and temporary forms of waves? If there be no unchanging mirror, bright and clean, how can there be various images, unreal and temporary, reflected in it? It is true in sooth that the dreaming mind as well as the things dreamed, as said above, are equally unreal, but does not that unreal dream necessarily presuppose the existence of some (real) sleepers?

88 The principal textbook of the Madhyamika School, by Nagarjuna and Nilanetra, translated into Chinese (A.D. 409) by Kumarajiva.

89 A well-known Mahayana book ascribed to Aṣvaghosa, translated into Chinese by Paramartha. There exists an English translation by D. Suzuki.

90 *Vajracchedha-prajñā-paramita-sutra*, of which there exist three Chinese translations.

91 A. 'Similar passages are found in every book of the Mahayana Tripitaka.'

92 The Absolute is compared with the ocean, and the phenomenal universe with the waves.

Now, if both mind and external objects, as declared above, be nothing at all, no-one can tell what it is that causes these unreal appearances. Therefore this doctrine, we know, simply serves to refute the erroneous theory held by those who are passionately attached to Dharma-laksana, but never clearly discloses spiritual Reality. So that Mahabheri- harakaparivarta-sutra<sup>93</sup> says as follows: "All the sutras that teach the unreality of things belong to an imperfect doctrine (of the Buddha). Mahaprajña-paramita-sutra<sup>94</sup> says: "The doctrine of unreality is the first entrance-gate to Mahayanism."

When the above-mentioned four doctrines are compared with one another in the order of succession, each is more profound than the preceding. They are called the superficial, provided that the follower, learning them a short while, knows them by himself to be imperfect; (but) if he adheres to them as perfect, these same (doctrines) are called incomplete. They are (thus) said to be superficial and incomplete with regard to the follower.

### **Chapter 3: The Direct Explanation Of The Real Origin<sup>95</sup>**

5. The Ekayana Doctrine that Teaches the Ultimate Reality.--This doctrine teaches us that all sentient beings have the Real Spirit<sup>96</sup> of Original Enlightenment (within themselves). From time immemorial it is unchanging and pure. It is eternally bright, and clear, and conscious. It is also named the Buddha-nature, or Tathagata-garbha.<sup>97</sup> As it is, however, veiled by illusion from time without beginning, (sentient beings) are not conscious of its existence, and think that the nature within themselves are degenerated. Consequently they are given to bodily pleasures, and producing Karma, suffer from birth and death. The great Enlightened One, having compassion on them, taught that everything in the universe is unreal. He pointed out that the Real Spirit of Mysterious Enlightenment (within them) is pure and exactly the same as that of Buddha. Therefore he says in Avatamsaka-sutra<sup>98</sup>: "There are no sentient beings, the children of Buddha, who are not endowed with wisdom of Tathagata<sup>99</sup>; but they cannot attain to Enlightenment simply because of illusion and attachment.

93 The book was translated into Chinese by Gunabhadra, A.D. 420-479.

94 This is not the direct quotation from the sutra translated by Hiuen Tsang. The words are found in Mahaprajña-paramita-sutra, the commentary on the sutra by Nagarjuna.

95 A. 'The perfect doctrine, in which eternal truth is taught by the Buddha.'

96 The ultimate reality is conceived by the Mahayanist as an entity self-existent, omnipresent, spiritual, impersonal, free from all illusions. it may be regarded as something like the universal and enlightened soul.

97 Tathagata's womb, Tathagata being another name for Buddha.

98 The book was translated into Chinese by Buddhahadra, A.D. 418-420.

99 The highest epithet of the Buddha, meaning one who comes into the world like the coming of his predecessors.



When they are free from illusion, the Universal Intelligence,<sup>100</sup> the Natural Intelligence<sup>101</sup> the Unimpeded Intelligence,<sup>102</sup> will be disclosed (in their minds)."

Then he tells a parable of a single grain of minute dust<sup>103</sup> containing large volumes of Sutra, equal in dimension of the Great Chilocosmos.<sup>104</sup> The grain is compared with a sentient being, and the Sutra with the wisdom of Buddha. Again he says later<sup>105</sup>:

"Once Tathagata, having observed every sort of sentient beings all over the universe, said as follows: 'Wonderful, how wonderful! That these various sentient beings, endowed with the wisdom of Tathagata, are not conscious of it because of their errors and illusions! I shall teach them the sacred truth and make them free from illusion for ever. I shall (thus) enable them to find by themselves the Great Wisdom of Tathagatha within them and make them equal to Buddha.'

Let me say (a few words) about this doctrine by way of criticism. So many Kalpas we spent never meeting with this true doctrine, and knew not how to trace our life back to its origin. Having been attached to nothing but the unreal outward forms, we willingly acknowledged ourselves to be a common herd of lowly beings. Some regarded themselves as beasts, (while) others as men.

But now, tracing life to its origin according to the highest doctrine, we have fully understood that we ourselves were originally Buddhas. Therefore we should act in conformity to Buddha's (action), and keep our mind in harmony with his. Let us betake ourselves once more to the source of Enlightened Spirit, restoring ourselves

100 The all-knowing wisdom that is acquired by Enlightenment.

101 The inborn wisdom of the Original Enlightenment.

102 The wisdom that is acquired by the union of Enlightenment with the Original Enlightenment.

103 One of the famous parables in the sutra.

104 According to the Buddhist literature, one universe comprises one sun, one moon, one central mountain or Sumeru, four continents, etc. One thousand of these universes form the Small Thousand Worlds; one thousand of the Small Thousand Worlds form the Middle Thousand Worlds; and the Great Thousand Worlds, or Great Chilocosmos, comprises one thousand of the Middle Thousand Worlds.

105 This is not an exact quotation of the sutra.

to the original Buddhahood. Let us cut off the bond of attachment, and remove the illusion that common people are habitually given to.

Illusion being destroyed,<sup>106</sup> the will to destroy it is also removed, and at last there remains nothing to be done (except complete peace and joy). This naturally results in Enlightenment, whose practical uses are as innumerable as the grains of sand in the Ganges. This state is called Buddhahood. We should know that the illusory as well as the Enlightened are originally of one and the same Real Spirit. How great, how excellent, is the doctrine that traces man to such an origin!<sup>107</sup>

### **Chapter 5: Reconciliation Of The Temporary With The Real Doctrine<sup>108</sup>**

Even if Reality is the origin of life, there must be in all probability some causes for its coming into existence, as it cannot suddenly assume the form of body by accident. In the preceding chapters I have refuted the first four doctrines, merely because they are imperfect, and in this chapter I shall reconcile the temporary with the eternal doctrine. In short, I shall show that even Confucianism is in the right.<sup>109</sup> That is to say, from the beginning there exists Reality (within all beings), which is one and spiritual. It can never be created nor destroyed. It does not increase nor decrease itself. It is subject to neither change nor decay. Sentient beings, slumbering in (the night of) illusion from time immemorial, are not conscious of its existence. As it is hidden and veiled, it is named Tathagata-garbha.<sup>110</sup> On this Tathagata-garbha the mental phenomena that are subject to growth and decay depend.

<sup>106</sup>The passage occurs in Tao Teh King.

<sup>107A.</sup> 'Although all of the above-mentioned five doctrines were preached by the Buddha Himself, yet there are some that belong to the Sudden, while others to the Gradual, Teachings. If there were persons of the middle or the lowest grade of understanding, He first taught the most superficial doctrine, then the less superficial, and "Gradually" led them up to the profound. At the outset of His career as a teacher He preached the first doctrine to enable them to give up evil and abide by good; next He preached the second and the third doctrine that they might remove the Pollution and attain to the Purity; and, lastly, He preached the fourth and the fifth doctrine to destroy their attachment to unreal forms, and to show the Ultimate Reality. (Thus) He reduced (all) the temporary doctrines into the eternal one, and taught them how to practise the Law according to the eternal and attain to Buddhahood.

'If there is a person of the highest grade of understanding, he may first of all learn the most profound, next the less profound, and, lastly, the most superficial doctrine-that is, he may at the outset come "Suddenly" to the understanding of the One Reality of True Spirit, as it is taught in the fifth doctrine. When the Spiritual Reality is disclosed before his mind's eye, he may naturally see that it originally transcends all appearances which are unreal, and that unrealities appear on account of illusion, their existence depending on Reality. Then he must give up evil, practise good, put away unrealities by the wisdom of Enlightenment, and reduce them to Reality. When unrealities are all gone, and Reality alone remains complete, he is called the Dharma-kaya-Buddha.'

<sup>108 A.</sup> 'The doctrines refuted above are reconciled with the real doctrine in this chapter. They are all in the right in their pointing to the true origin.'

<sup>109 A.</sup> 'The first section states the fifth doctrine that reveals the Reality, and the statements in the following sections are the same as the other doctrines, as shown in the notes.'

<sup>110 A.</sup> 'The following statement is similar to the fourth doctrine explained above in the refutation of the phenomenal existence subject to growth and decay.' Compare Çraddhotpada-çāstra.

Real Spirit, as is stated (in the Aṣṣvaghosa's Ḍastra), that transcends creation and destruction, is united with illusion, which is subject to creation and destruction; and the one is not absolutely the same as nor different from the other. This union (with illusion) has the two sides of enlightenment and non-enlightenment,' and is called Alaya-vijñana. Because of non-enlightenment,<sup>111</sup> it first arouses itself, and forms some ideas. This activity of the Vijñana is named 'the state of Karma.<sup>112</sup> Furthermore, since one does not understand that these ideas are unreal from the beginning, they transform themselves into the subject (within) and the object (without), into the seer and the seen. One is at a loss how to understand that these external objects are no more than the creation of his own delusive mind, and believes them to be really existent. This is called the erroneous belief in the existence of external objects.<sup>113</sup> In consequence of these erroneous beliefs, he distinguishes Self and non-self, and at last forms the erroneous belief of Atman. Since he is attached to the form of the Self, he yearns after various objects agreeable to the sense for the sake of the good of his Self. He is offended, (however), with various disagreeable objects, and is afraid of the injuries and troubles which they bring on him. (Thus) his foolish passions<sup>114</sup> are strengthened step by step.

Thus (on one hand) the souls of those who committed the crimes of killing, stealing, and so on, are born, by the influence of the bad Karma, in hell, or among Pretas, or among beasts, or elsewhere. On the other hand, the souls of those who, being afraid of such sufferings, or being good-natured, gave alms, kept precepts, and so on, undergo Antarabhava<sup>115</sup> by the influence of the good Karma, enter into the womb of their mothers.<sup>116</sup>

There they are endowed with the (so-called) Gas, or material (for body).<sup>117</sup> The Gas first consists of four elements<sup>118</sup> and it gradually forms various sense-organs. The mind first consists of the four aggregates,<sup>119</sup> and it gradually forms various Vijñanas. After the whole course of ten months they are born and called men. These are our present bodies and minds. Therefore we must know that body and mind has each its own origin, and that the two, being united, form one human being. They are born among Devas and Asuras, and so on in a manner almost similar to this.

111 A. 'The following statement is similar to the doctrine of Dharma-laksana.'

112 Here Karma simply means an active state; it should be distinguished from Karma, produced by actions.

113 A. 'The following statement is similar to the second doctrine, or Hinayanism.'

114 A. 'The following statement is similar to the first doctrine for men and Devas.'

115 The spiritual existence between this and another life.

116 A. 'The following statement is similar to Confucianism and Taoism.'

117 A. 'This harmonizes with the outside opinion that Gas is the origin.'

118 (1) Earth, (2) water, (3) fire, (4) air,

119 (1) Perception, (2) consciousness, (3) conception, (4) knowledge.

Though we are born among men by virtue of 'the generalizing Karma,'<sup>120</sup> yet, by the influence of 'the particularizing Karma,'<sup>121</sup> some are placed in a high rank, while others in a low; some are poor, while others rich; some enjoy a long life, while others die in youth; some are sickly, while others healthy; some are rising, while others are falling; some suffer from pains, while others enjoy pleasures. For instance, reverence or indolence in the previous existence, working as the cause, brings forth high birth or low in the present as the effect. So also benevolence in the past results in long life in the present; the taking of life, a short life; the giving of alms, richness miserliness, Poverty. There are So many particular cases of retribution that cannot be mentioned in detail. Hence there are some who happen to be unfortunate, doing no evil, while others fortunate, doing no good in the present life. So also some enjoy a long life, in spite of their inhuman conduct; while others die young, in spite of their taking no life, and so forth. As all this is predestined by 'the particularizing Karma' produced in the past, it would seem to occur naturally, quite independent of one's actions in the present life. Outside scholars ignorant of the previous existences, relying simply on their observations, believe it to be nothing more than natural.<sup>122</sup>

Besides, there are some who cultivated virtues in the earlier, and committed crimes in the later, stages of their past existences; while others were vicious in youth, and virtuous in old age. In consequence, some are happy in youth, being rich and noble, but unhappy in old age, being poor and low in the present life; while others lead poor and miserable lives when young, but grow rich and noble when old, and so on. Hence outside scholars come to believe that one's prosperity or adversity merely depends on a heavenly decree.<sup>123</sup>

The body with which man is endowed, when traced step by step to its origin, proves to be nothing but one primordial Gas in its undeveloped state. And the mind with which man thinks, when traced step by step to its source, proves to be nothing but the One Real Spirit. To tell the truth, there exists nothing outside of Spirit, and even the Primordial Gas is also a mode of it, for it is one of the external objects projected by the above-stated Vijñanas, and is one of the mental images of Alaya, out of whose idea, when it is in the state of Karma, come both the subject and the object. As the subject developed itself, the feebler ideas grow stronger step by step, and form erroneous beliefs that end in the production of Karma.<sup>124</sup> Similarly, the object increases in size, the finer objects grow gradually grosser, and gives rise to unreal things that end in the formation<sup>125</sup> of Heaven and Earth. When Karma is ripe enough,

120 The Karma that determines different classes of beings, such as men, beasts, Pretas, etc,

121 The Karma that determines the particular state of an individual in the world.

122 A. 'This harmonizes with the outside opinion that everything occurs naturally.'

123 A. 'This harmonizes with the outside opinion that everything depends on providence.'

124 A. 'As above stated.'

125 A. "In the beginning, according to the outside school, there was 'the great changeableness,' which underwent fivefold evolutions, and brought out the Five Principles. Out of that Principle, which they call the Great Path of Nature, came the two subordinate principles of the Positive and the Negative. They seem to explain the Ultimate Reality, but the Path, in fact, no more than the 'perceiving division' of the Alaya. The so-called primordial Gas seems to be the first idea in the awakening Alaya, but it is a

one is endowed by father and mother with sperm and ovum, which, united with his consciousness under the influence of Karma, completes a human form.

According to this view (of Dharmalaksana), things brought forth through the transformations of Alaya and the other Vijñanas are divided into two parts; one part (remaining), united with Alaya and the other Vijñanas, becomes man, while the other, becoming separated from them, becomes Heaven, Earth, mountains, rivers, countries, and towns. (Thus) man is the outcome of the union of the two; this is the reason why he alone of the Three Powers is spiritual. This was taught by the Buddha<sup>126</sup> himself when he stated that there existed two different kinds of the four elements--the internal and the external.

Alas! O ye half-educated scholars who adhere to imperfect doctrines, each of which conflicts with another! Ye that seek after truth, if ye would attain to Buddhahood, clearly understand which is the subtler and which is the grosser (form of illusive ideas), which is the originator and which is the originated. (Then) give ye up the originated and return ye to the originator, and to reflect on the Spirit, the Source (of all). When the grosser is exterminated and the subtler removed, the wonderful wisdom of spirit is disclosed, and nothing is beyond its understanding. This is called the Dharma-sambhoga-kaya. It can of itself transform itself and appear among men in numberless ways. This is called the Nirmana-kaya of Buddha.<sup>127</sup>

mere external object."

126 Ratnakuta-sutra (?), translated into Chinese by Jñanagupta.

127 Every Buddha has three bodies: (1) Dharma-kaya, or spiritual body; (2) Sambhoga-kaya, or the body of compensation; (3) Nirmana-kaya, or the body capable of transformation.