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Rationality and Early Buddhist Teachings

Karel Werner

Rational features in early Buddhist teachings has had great appeal to the European mind when Buddhism came to be studied by scholars. As a result its presentation to wider readership neglected or ignored its specifically religious elements, both on popular and higher spiritual level as irrational or anti-rational. It concerned particularly the doctrine of rebirth, belief in the existence of beings in invisible worlds and the notion of nirvāna/nibbāna, yet these tenets represent the very core of the Buddha's message. The article argues that rational approach to and even analysis of Buddhist teachings is important and even indispensable as illustrated by the conceptual analysis of the states of consciousness in the system of abhidhamma, but maintains that those elements of the teaching which cannot be verified in the western way for all to see should not be rejected as logical impossibility. Rather they should be viewed as supra-rational propositions, made by those who claim to have verified them for themselves by individual experience, and scrutinised as to their logical probability; this should proceed in the context of evaluating Buddhism as a practical philosophy of life and a global world view whose essential component is a spiritual discipline with an outlook of finding the final solution of the riddle of existence.

Karel Werner is a Research Professor, Department of the Study of Religions, School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, UK.

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Key words: Rebirth, World View, Verification,
Logical Probability, Spiritual Discipline.

Rationality is one feature of early Buddhist doctrine which is often rated highly by Western scholars, by many European followers of Buddhism and sympathetic readers of Buddhist scriptures and by books on Buddhism based on Pāli sources. Many of them have seen it as the most important quality or perhaps even the core of Buddhism as a religion or philosophy of life. This was the case particularly in the early years of the Western world's encounter with Buddhism - in the 19th century and in the early years of the 20th century, even up to the 1930's. Famous German academics, some of them accessible in English translations, like Hermann Oldenberg or Helmuth von Glasenapp, belonged to this category of scholars and so did some Buddhist monks of European origin such as Nyanatiloka, and lay followers writing on Buddhism like Paul Dahlke, a medical doctor who had a Buddhist *vihāra* built in Berlin - Frohnau in the 1920's.

As a result the public at large was presented with a doctrinal picture of Buddhism which was stripped of most of those specifically religious features which it shares with other religions around it. And so the result of an encounter of an educated European traveller, or a newly ordained Buddhist monk from Europe, with popular Buddhism in Buddhist countries was often one of disappointment if not shock, and frequently led to judgments in which the notion of 'superstition' played a part.

Some of those European intellectuals who were inclined to accept certain tenets from Buddhist thought on the grounds of their rational

The *Taehyedogyongchongyo* of Wŏnhyo: Translation of Chapters 4 & 5 with Annotated Notes

Yong-pyo Kim

The present study is an English translation of Wŏnhyo's Essentials of the Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra (The Taehyedogyongchongyo), Chapters 4 & 5 with Annotated notes. The Chapter 4 of TDC deals with the elucidation of the origin of the preaching on the Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra. There are six kinds of main causes and occasions: (a) To reveal the deeds of the bodhisattva widely. (b) To accept the solicitations of all devas. (c) To relieve doubts among all men. (d) To cure the sickness of all sentient beings. (e) To expound the truth of the first principle. (f) To bring the proponents of different theories within. The Chapter five deals with the problem of classification of the doctrine. Wŏnhyo insists that old theories of sudden enlightenment and that of gradual enlightenment and the three kinds of dharma-cakras (the four noble truths for Hīnayāna, Śūnyatā for Mahāyāna, and the righteous wisdom for ekayāna) are reasonable in a way. However, it is unreasonable for this Mahā-prajñā-pāramitā-sūtra to belong to the second dharma-cakra period

Yong-pyo Kim is a Professor of Buddhist Studies at Dongguk University, and President of the Korean Association of Religious Education.

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because it is contradictory to both the *sūtra* and the treatise. This *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*, like the *Avatamsaka-sūtra*, is the full teaching that is unsurpassed and indisputable wisdom acquired by the Buddha.

Key Words: Wŏnhyo, Prajñā Paramitā, Siddhanta, Śūnyatā,
Classification of the Doctrine,
Taehyedogyongchongyo, Paramārtha.

I. Part One: Structure and Meaning

The present study is an English translation of Wŏnhyo's Essentials of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*, Chapters 4 & 5 with Annotated notes.¹

The Chapter 4 of TDC deals with the elucidation of the origin of the preaching on the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*. There are six kinds of main causes and occasions: (a) To reveal the deeds of the bodhisattva widely. (b) To accept the solicitations of all devas. (c) To relieve doubts among all men. (d) To cure the sickness of all sentient beings. (e) To expound the truth of the first principle. (f) To bring the proponents of different theories within.

The Chapter five deals with the problem of classification of the doctrine. Wŏnhyo insists that old theories of sudden enlightenment and that of gradual enlightenment and the three kinds of *dharmacakras* (the four noble truths for Hinayāna, *Śūnyatā* for Mahāyāna, and the righteous wisdom for *ekayāna*) are reasonable in a way. However, it is unreasonable for this *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra* to belong to the second

1 TDC is contained in HPC Vol.1. 'HPC' refers to the *Han'gukpulgyochunseo* 韓國佛教全書. Complete Works Korean Buddhism (Seoul: Dongguk University Press. 1984) & T.33, No.1697. For introduction and English translation of the Chapters 1-2 of the TDC, see, Yong-pyo Kim, "Wŏnhyo's Essentials of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*: Translation of Chapters 1-2 with Annotated Notes" *International Journal of Buddhist Thought & Culture* (IJBTC) Vol.6 (2006), pp. 53-75; and translation of TDC chapter 3, see, "Wŏnhyo's Interpretation of the *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-sūtra*," IJBTC Vol.2 (2003), pp. 101-106.

Faith and the Resolution of the Four Doubts in Wonhyo's *Doctrinal Essentials of the Sūtra of Immeasurable Life* (*Muryangsu-gyeong-jong-yo*)

Charles Muller

Among the numerous distinctive aspects of the work of the noted Korean scholar-monk Wonhyo is the broad range of traditions and texts that he accorded treatment - along with the unusual level of fairness and seriousness he brought to such works - an indication of his lack of sectarian bias. Another distinctive aspect of his work as an exegete is the extent to which his "religious" attitude - his concern for the nurturance of the faith in the minds of his readers inevitably rises to the forefront of his works. Thus, what he has to say about the idea of "faith" 信 in the context of a Pure Land work is a matter of considerable interest.

On the other hand, given the way that the Pure Land tradition is currently perceived by its modern adherents, one might be given to assume

Charles Muller is a Professor of Toyo Gakuen University, Japan.

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that the notion of “faith in other-power” constitutes the backbone of the arguments made in seminal Pure Land scriptures such as the *Sūtra of Immeasurable Life* (Larger *Sukhāvātī-vyūha*; K. *Muryangsu-gyeong*, C. *Wu-liang-shou-jing*). This paper shows, based on Wonhyo’s analysis, how in fact the main form of faith expounded by the *sūtra* is something much more like that seen articulated in mainstream *Yogācāra* and *Tathāgatagarbha* texts. The paper also shows how Wonhyo uses *Yogācāra*-based hermeneutics to unravel the conundrum of the four kinds of cognition dropped, without explanation in the final lines of the *sūtra*.

Key Words: Faith, Pure Land, Wonhyo, Yogacara, Tathagatagarbha.

I. Introduction: the *Sūtra of Immeasurable Life* as *Yogācāra* Text

Wonhyo (617-686) is known in East Asia for a number of especially insightful and influential commentarial works, with the best-known being his commentaries on the *Awakening of Mahāyāna Faith* and the *Nirvāṇa Sūtra*. Another area in which Wonhyo made a major contribution was that of Pure Land, where he wrote definitive commentaries on both the larger and smaller *Sukhāvātī-vyūha* (or *Amitābha Sūtra* and *Sūtra of Immeasurable Life*). Spurred by a question put to me on the role of “faith in other-power” in Wonhyo, I ventured into a study of the larger *sūtra* along with Wonhyo’s commentary on it (*Muryangsu gyeong jong-yo*; “Doctrinal Essentials of the *Sūtra of Immeasurable Life*”) based on the fact the this *sūtra* is one of the most originary and seminal “other-power” Buddhist texts. It is a *locus classicus* for the famous eighteenth and nineteenth vows of Amitābha, in which he promises Pure Land rebirth to those who chant his name.

In the course of studying Wonhyo’s exegesis alongside the source *sūtra*, a number of interesting points become apparent. The first thing that came to my notice was the fact that the exegesis actually has very

The Buddhist Faith of the Nobility in the Eastern Jin Dynasty

Ven. Gye-hwan
(Ae-soon Chang)

At the beginning, the Buddhism did not spread to China in the same way as it did in India. It was met with criticism and opposition in China at first. It was the Chinese who made an effort to assimilate Buddhism into Chinese society. To be specific, the effort was mainly made by Confucian aristocrats who patronized the religion.

In that regard, understanding the Buddhist faith revolving around aristocrats plays a significant role in figuring out the nature of Buddhism in the Eastern Jin (東晉) Dynasty (317-420).

The culture in the Eastern Jin was dominated by the upper classes who devoted their lives to academics and literature and was based on their social and economic foundation. Therefore, Buddhist monks had to approach the nobility in many aspects, assimilate them and encourage them to follow Buddhism's moral precepts.

Ven. Gye-hwan (Ae-soon Chang) is a Professor of Buddhist Studies at Dongguk University, Korea.

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Buddhism finally established its critical position as a religion in Chinese society with the help of the nobility's perception, trust and financial support. Buddhism, once a culture of the nobility, laid the foundation for spiritual culture in the Eastern Jin Dynasty, together with the Taoist schools of Laotzu and Chuangtzu.

Likewise, as for Xichao (郗超), both Buddhism and Confucianism can be understood based on the common practical moral principles of daily life. This trend is more protrusive in Northern Buddhism than in Southern Buddhism, which seems to have something to do with his realistic perception about Buddhism and his military service in Jing-zhou (荊州).

Therefore, the way to get away from retribution is to set a goal and practice step by step, which is to reach nirvana. And any practice to control the mind and will should serve as a means to enlightenment, not as an end itself. Xichao's practical and realistic approach in the Feng-fa-yao (奉法要) can be indicated by his emphasis on the Five Precepts and the Ten Good Deeds and human beings' retribution for their sin.

And yet, the nature of the book is more outstanding in his comments on bliss, citing that one should not only have the good mind but make the effect of it appear without others' noticing. The practical aspect of Buddhism shown in his book, Feng-fa-yao, did not appear in Jian-kang (建康) and Hui-ji (會稽) where he spent his youth and learned Buddhism. Rather, the realistic feature can be traced to his experience in the army.

As a conclusion, the Feng-fa-yao illustrates such a phenomenon based on his experience in Jing-zhou and his knowledge of Buddhism, which shows a new trend in the development process of Buddhism in the Eastern Jin era.

Key Words: Aristocratic Buddhism, Xichao, Feng-fa-yao,
Five Precepts, Ten Good Precepts.

I. Preface

Buddhism in China was a significant transversal of original Indian

The Historical Origins and Development of Gandhara Art

Iqtidar Karamat Cheema

The region of Gandhara was the part of Achaemenian Empire in the time of Cyrus the great in 6th century B.C. It remained under the Persian domination for more than two centuries until Alexander the Great conquered it in 326 B.C. By 317 B.C. the last of the Greek forces of Alexander had departed from the country and in just 20 years the Greek rule disintegrated ceding the region to Mauryan dynasty. Founder of the dynasty was Chandragupta Maurya and his grandson Asoka who made Buddhism the state religion of his dominion and sent missionaries to neighboring states to spread the faith. After Asoka's death the dynasty underwent a rapid decline and from about 184 B.C. Gandhara returned to Greek rule, then Sakas or Scythians. For about a century and a half the Sakas were able to maintain themselves in Gandhara and were supplanted by another similar group known as Kushans. The Succeeding Kushan rulers consolidated and enlarged their territory turning it into an empire. Like Asoka, Kanishka too adopted Buddhist faith and with the true zeal of a convert fortified the religion in the region with the establishment of Stupas and monasteries.

After Kanishka, Gandhara was annexed by Persian rulers. Buddhism

Iqtidar Karamat Cheema is a Deputy Registrar at University of Punjab, Pakistan.

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continued to flourish and develop at greater or lesser pace till about 460 A.D. when the whole North Western India was over run by white Huns who carried out the total destruction and devastation where ever they went. Buddhism had developed such firm roots in Gandhara that in spite of a number of invasions and a succession of foreign rules in the thousand years or so, majority of Gandhara population remained Buddhist.

The artistic manifestation of the faith further strengthened the bond unifying the people of Gandhara. The subject matter of Gandhara art was the depiction of various Buddhist concepts. Political, socio-economic and cultural structure of Gandhara has been studied in its Buddhist Art. However, Buddhist art of Gandhara has been clouded in mystery. Even today, after over a century and a half of research, many of its problems are still unsolved. Questions remain such as the date of its zenith and duration of its survival; the historical ambience from which it arose; the sources of its many cosmopolitan influences; the inspiration of the "classical" Buddha image; the circumstance; of its downfall and the destruction of its monuments. All these issues are part of discussion of the present research study.

Key Words: Gandhara Art, Buddhist Art, Kushan Empire,
Taxila, Buddha Image.

Pakistan is an ancient land and cradle of many civilizations. Its history goes back to several millennia as is evidenced by Stone Age discoveries (Khan: 11-12). Its cultural heritage is preserved in the form of a large number of sites/monuments of pre-historic, proto-historic, historic and early Muslim period. They provide source material for the study of history, ancient customs, beliefs and cultures of this region. Leaving aside the prehistoric civilization flourished on fertile land of Pakistan, it produced the remarkable Buddhist art, which mingled eastern and western concepts in early historic period. It developed and unfolded a gleeful craftsman ship from the genius of its own fertile soil.

The Dragon in the Buddhist Korean Temples

Hye-young Tcho

The dragon is a case of a remarkable integration of Buddhism in different cultures. In the Indian Buddhism, we find nāgas instead of dragons. The nāga is considered as the symbol of the renewal of life and fecundity. And Śākyamuni reached enlightenment at Bodhgaya, Nāga King became the first creature to receive the Buddha's teaching. When Buddhism reached China, the nāga were replaced with the dragons. All these gave to the dragon the status of a superior authority in the Chinese culture. Afterwards, the Buddhist dragon followed his own way in Asian countries. Such is the case in Korea where the belief in the dragon flourished in the spiritual, artistic and literary fields. After the adoption of Buddhism, the dragon became the most important divinity of Korea and the object of popular belief all along its history. The Korean temples do show the important role the dragon plays in the Korean Buddhist faith. We can find that kind of believe in Korean temples. First feature is as guardian of the temple. Second feature is the dragon as the protector of the Buddha and the Dharma. The Buddhist dragon attained great

Hye-young Tcho is teaching at Institut national des langues et civilisations orientales in Paris.

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success, and this proves that the Korean people has a profound sensitivity and great faith into this deity.

Key Words: Dragon, Dragon King, Nāga,
Korean Temple, Buddhist Culture.

Introduction

Since its origin, the Dragon has never ceased to fascinate people, in the East as in the West, and “to look intensely” is precisely what *drakôn*¹ means in Greek. In the West, the Dragon is considered as the incarnation of evil defeated by the Archangel Michael, whereas in the East he is the most splendid, the most beneficent, the best protector of all beings.

In fact, according to the Chinese tradition, the Dragon dates back to the beginnings of the civilization of China. A Horse-Dragon sprang out of the Yellow River with a pattern on his back, from which originated the eight trigrams of the *Yi-jing*, *the Book of Changes*. Fuxi himself, who - according to the legend - received the Book, was looking like a Dragon.² Thanks to this legendary animal, Yu the Great established the Chinese civilization by way of the “Nine Articles of his Great Rule,” which can be found in the *Shu-jing*, *the Classic of Documents*. Thus the Dragon is the symbol of the imperial power and, according to his influence over raining and human destiny, it is also

1 “That is the meaning of its Greek name *drakôn*, present participle of the verb *derkomai*, ‘I stare fixedly’ constructed from the Indo-European root *derk*, ‘to shine’” (Li: 5).

2 “Lauded by the upholders of the *Yi-jing*, Fuxi was pushed to the forefront of the founders of the civilization; he invented the system of the tied knots and divination by using yarrow stocks, which were both among the first methods of government. His birth was considered as miraculous; some say his mother was conceived by way of a floating stick; others say (it is the standard version) that he was born in a swamp, well known to be haunted by dragons. He looked like a Dragon ... Therefore, according to the most popular tradition, it is to him, and not to Yu, the founder of the tripod, that a Dragon offered the Hot’ou ... ” (Granet: 154).

Buddhist No-Self and Mindful Consumerism

Ryan Long

Fundamental Buddhist concepts, such as interrelatedness, karma, and desire, readily tie into an ecologically sustainable perspective. These, and other Buddhist views and ideas, if integrated into daily life choices, have great potential for rectifying and enhancing human interactions with ecosystems and the universe as a whole. This paper is written in an attempt to investigate and encourage the role of Buddhists as mindful consumers through a two-fold synthesis. It incorporates the consideration of both Buddhist philosophy and ecological sustainability issues through academic literature review while illustrating the potential for active integration among the two areas of thought through the use of creative metaphor expansion and short fictional stories, in addition to more conventional academic style. It has been the attempt of the author to apply such a format for discussion without undermining the academic integrity of the paper and it is the hope of the author that such an approach will expedite a more thorough understanding of the topic.

Key Words: Sustainable, Buddhism, Ecology,

Ryan Long is a 2006-2007 Fulbright Researcher in Anthropology in The Republic of Korea.

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Consumer, Interrelation.

I. Introduction

Beginning roughly one million years ago, members of the genus *Homo* began what we may call a “subsistence pattern remodeling,” moving them into the niche of a large predator in their ecosystems. The hunter-gatherer society was born and remained for at least another 999,900 years. Since that remodeling toward the evolution of our species occurred, humans have effectually replaced all other large predators in the ecosystems we inhabit, and, in modern times, also in those we do not inhabit. Along the way natural ecological shifts, and natural climate shifts often extreme enough to result in ice ages, killed off many of these predators as well as a great deal of humans and many other living things. These shifts tested our ability to apply our brains to innovative tool making and use as well as migration skills, but we remained hunter-gatherers, tied directly into our habitats until our next great subsistence pattern remodeling began at about the end of the Pleistocene epoch. Most significantly since the advent of agriculture about 10,000 years ago, and most completely after the industrial revolution, human beings have been continually, not only dominating, but destroying and destabilizing their ecosystems in order to support the exponential growth of their populations.

The global problems that current generations of humans are confronted with in relation to the stability of ecosystems and the sustainability of environments have been, fortunately, so well documented and publicized that most require little to no attention here except in relation to underlying causes and solutions. Readers who feel they are lacking in knowledge of these problems might try typing the word “environment” into an internet search engine, asking their local

Why Korea? Why Buddhism?

Marian Werner

In this essentially personal article the author, an Englishwoman, describes how her interest in Korea started and developed, and what drew her from her Christian roots towards Buddhism. A student of English literature, she found in poems such as those by John Keats a poignant expression of the unsatisfactoriness of life which is the basis of the first Noble Truth expounded by Gautama Buddha. She and her husband became acquainted with the richness of Korean culture through an exhibition in London, and subsequently through reading various books, but it was not until 1999 that they paid their first visit to South Korea. What they found so entranced them that they have been back six more times. Their main interest has been in seeing as many Buddhist temples and hermitages as possible, and so far they have visited about 170. No two temples are alike, and all are treasure-houses.

In exploring all the halls open to visitors, the author was intrigued to see the shrines to Sansin and the ubiquitous tiger, and has since made a point of paying her respects to the mountain spirits who, she believes, occupy an important role in Korean tradition and seem even to have the power to change the weather. The beauty of Korean sculpture, architecture and painting, together with the exquisite natural surroundings in which most Korean

Marian Werner is a researcher of Asian Religious Culture, UK.

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Buddhist temples are located, is part of the reason for the author's enthusiasm, but more especially there is the way of life demonstrated by the monks and nuns who are resident in the temples. She wonders if eventually her karma will bring her in that direction.

Key Words: June War, Korean Culture, Personal Search,
Buddhist Temples, Sansin.

From time to time on my visits to South Korea, now numbering seven, Koreans have asked me the above questions. Naturally they are curious. Korea is a long way from my country, England, and my white hair tells them that the journey to and fro may be arduous. Some Korean Christians who meet me are amazed that a westerner should be interested in Buddhism (and I for my part feel initial surprise when a Korean tells me they are Christian), and Korean Buddhists often want to know how widespread Buddhism is in England.

First, then, I will briefly explain, why Korea? I was born in London in 1935. At the age of fourteen I started to keep a large diary, and the entry for Tuesday, 27 June, 1950, includes: "Nasty situation in Korea - Russians - listened to news. Russian planes shot down." That was the first time, perhaps, that I looked at an atlas to see exactly where Korea was. The June War also made me aware of the dangerous ambitions of the Soviet Union. Six years later, when I was at Bristol University, I walked with other undergraduates to lay flowers on the war memorial in memory of the students killed by the communists in the Hungarian Uprising. After graduating in French, English and History, I worked for nearly six years in Montreal, where the secretary at the next desk to mine told me that her brother had been killed in the Korean War. I was very moved, on visiting Seoraksan for the first time, to read the poem on one of the war memorials, " ... may grass

Western Buddhism: Past, Present and Future

Timothy. V. Atkinson

Although Buddhism spread throughout Asia it remained virtually unknown in the West until modern times. The early missions sent by the emperor Ashoka to the West did not bear fruit. Religious intolerance, cultural chauvinism and racism are among the reasons why people of European extraction remained contemptuous of things Asian and unwilling to explore Asian religious traditions. Major changes in attitudes have occurred only in the past fifty years or so. Knowledge of Buddhism has come through three main channels: Western scholars; the work of philosophers, writers and artists; and the arrival of Asian immigrants who have brought various forms of Buddhism with them to Europe, North America and Australia. The first graduate program in Buddhist Studies in the West was not offered until 1965, but many programs have followed since then. In recent years, Buddhologists have been called upon to help Western governments with foreign policy decisions and to train diplomats going to Asia, a role reminiscent of past imperialist practices. Buddhists believe that Buddhism itself can die out for eons only to be reborn in the distant future when the time and social conditions are right. Perhaps that is the case today. Communist suppression, Christian condemnation, and Capitalist materialism have taken their toll on

Timothy. V. Atkinson is a Professor at Seoul University of Foreign Studies, Korea.

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institutionalized Buddhism in Asia. Is the West now the stage for a revitalization and integration of the Buddhist faith worldwide?

Key Words: Cultural Relativism, Religious Tolerance,
Enlightenment, Meditation, Buddhist Ecology.

I. Buddhism's Bumpy Path into Western Consciousness

Although Buddhism spread throughout Asia it remained virtually unknown in the West until modern times. The early missions sent by the emperor Ashoka to the West did not bear fruit. Religious intolerance, cultural chauvinism and racism are among the reasons why people of European extraction remained contemptuous of things Asian and unwilling to explore Asian religious traditions. Major changes in attitudes have occurred only in the past fifty years or so. Knowledge of Buddhism has come through three main channels: Western scholars; the work of philosophers, writers and artists; and the arrival of Asian immigrants who have brought various forms of Buddhism with them to Europe, North America and Australia.

II. The First Interaction

Some two millennia ago, a Western influence helped to shape an important Buddhist legacy. The Buddha's face or body was not part of the iconography during the first five centuries after Sakyamuni's extinction. Such representation was deemed inappropriate because the Buddha's existence was separate from that of sentient beings. In fact, the historical Buddha had explicitly declared that he was not to be identified with his body. Thus the early symbols of worship such as the *stupas*, the "diamond" throne, the *bodhi* tree and the eight-spoked Dharma wheel were relics that emphasized the complete transcendence