The Sources of Buddhism

T. Newton Hill

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THE SOURCES OF BUDDHISM

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A THESIS FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTER OF ARTS

1. Vol. XIII., Vinaya Texts I, Patimokkha, Mahā Vagga I-IV.
   Translated from Pali by T.J. Rhys Davids and
   Hermann Oldenberg. 1881.

2. Vol. XVII., Vinaya Texts V, Culla Vagga V-VIII
   Translated from Pali by T.J. Rhys Davids and
   Hermann Oldenberg. 1881.

3. Vol. XX., Vinaya Texts III, Culla Vagga IV-XII
   Translated from Pali by T.J. Rhys Davids and
   Hermann Oldenberg. 1881.

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A. Sacred Books of the East.

Translated from the originals by various scholars, edited by F. Max Muller, - Oxford Press.

   Translated from Pali by T.W. Rhys Davids and Hermann Oldenberg. 1881.

   Translated from Pali by T.W. Rhys Davids and Hermann Oldenberg. 1881.

3. Vol. XX, Vinaya Texts III, Culla Vagga IV-XII.
   Translated from Pali by T.W. Rhys Davids and Hermann Oldenberg. 1885.

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   b. Sutta Nipata.
   Translated from Pali by V. Fausboel. 1881.

   Translated from Pali by T.W. Rhys Davids. 1881.

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B. Other Original Sources.

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THE PROBLEM

At first sight the problem of the sources of Buddhism seems to require merely a study of the life and teachings of Gotama or Sakyamuni, the "Buddha" or "enlightened one." The existence even of such a person has been questioned, however. Many scholars question his importance in the development of Buddhism, and even in the field of his life and career there is a great variety in the theories which have been seriously held by western scholars. It is the purpose of this thesis to study these problems and to arrive at the true solution of the sources of Buddhism.
CHAPTER ONE.

[Text continues here, but not visible in the image.]
Emile Senart has found in the story of Buddha another sun-myth, and considers Buddha to be merely a solar type. Senart is perhaps the most noted of any scholars who have held this view. The name, Maya (illusion), which is applied to Gotama's mother is perhaps a basis for his view, but a somewhat uncertain one, as the name has other interpretations. Dr. Hopkins, referring to this theory says, "Napoleon and Max Muller have each been treated as sun-myths and Senart's essay is as convincing as either jeu d'esprit." The evidence for a belief in a personal Buddha will be dealt with in another chapter, so further discussion of this theory will be needless here.

It is quite commonly accepted by western writers that, whatever the importance of the Buddha, Buddhism itself arose primarily as a moral revolt against Brahmanism, either as a direct revolt of the Kshatriyas (warriors), or as a revolt developing out of one of the great heresies of the time. It is difficult to find any evidence of a conflict between the Kshatriyas and the Brahmans (priests). W. Crooke, who says that "Buddhism and Jainism were organized by Kshatriyas outside of the holy land of the Brahmans in opposition to Brahmanical claims," admits that the Buddhists retained

3. Ibid. p. 299.
Brahmans as priests for the performance of domestic rites. The Ramayana and the Mahabharata, the great Indian epic poems have no suggestions of such a conflict, yet their heroes are the great kings and warriors of ancient India.

The society of the Valley of the Ganges, where Buddhism arose, in the sixth century B.C. was no doubt much like that of other races at similar stages. Such, at any rate, are the pictures which we have. The Brahmans like the priests of Judea possessed many special privileges. They, only, might teach in the schools, make sacrifices, and perform magic ceremonies of various sorts. A Kshatriya could not become a Brahman, people of different classes could not intermarry, and only sons of the twice born, that is of the three highest castes: Brahmans, Kshatriyas and Vaishyas, could enter schools; yet there is no substantial evidence that the caste system was yet strong. Rather, we are entirely unwarranted in supposing the system we now call the caste system to have existed in the sixth century B.C. in the Valley of the Ganges. On the contrary the keystone of the arch of the peculiarly Indian caste organization, — the absolute supremacy of the Brahmans,— had not yet been put in position, had not in fact been made ready. It was only in process of evolution.

There are more grounds for the suggestion that Buddhism,

and also Jainism, were two of many heresies which sprang up in Hinduism about the sixth century B.C. This period was indeed a remarkable one, not only in India, but also in Greece and Judea. It was the period of Pythagoras, Heraclitus and Parmenides in Greece - the dawn which ushered in the times of Socrates and Plato. In Judea the prophets had not yet ceased to be the heralds of better days. In India the great systems of philosophy were developing and many heresies are mentioned. "Keen discussions were going on but endless speculations had led to endless variance. One might even say there had been a general collapse of the philosophies. Dogmatism there was in abundance, but little more. Many had begun to ask 'Is truth attainable?' And a general feeling of despondence would seem to have prevailed among thinking people."¹ There seemed to be a deepening sense, in all the world, of "guilt requiring atonement, of pollution crying for purification, a feeling which had its roots in very early times but was now becoming universal."²

There were certainly many competing systems of philosophy in Hinduism during this period. Some of these systems still persist as orthodox Hindu philosophies. Others, it is claimed, developed as the Buddhist and Jain systems. These systems had much in common, - much more, indeed, than is commonly assumed. They denied the existence of Brahma as absolute, yet they did not deny the ordinary Hindu gods.³ But why should one

1. Mitchell, J. M., The Great Religions of India. p. 177
philosophy be accepted as orthodox while a similar one is rejected as heretical? Probably because of the non-brahmanical sources of the latter. No matter how orthodox, no matter how pure and high a system might be, when the principle of the absolute supremacy of the Brahmans was fully established, if the founder of the system were not a Brahman, the system was branded as a heresy. And this condemnation of Buddhism came centuries later, when Brahmanism was established; and singularly enough, the founders of both Buddhism and Jainism were said to be Kshatriyas, while other philosophies no less different from ancient Hinduism, but Brahmanical in origin, are today orthodox.

Even if this explanation be rejected, the most natural explanation is to be found in the idea of a dominant personality, whose influence continued to dominate his followers until their religion became one of the world religions.

Besides Buddhism and Jainism, the Sankhya philosophy must be considered in this connection. These three systems are very similar, and taken in the order of their traditional origin, Jainism, Sankhya and Buddhism, form a striking progressive series.¹ The Sankhya remained in Hinduism as an orthodox philosophy, while the others as already noted, became separate religions.

Jainism was probably founded by Vardhamana, or Mahavir, who lived late in the sixth century. Their own books claim

Rishabha, a mythical being who was supposed to have lived millions of years ago. Mahavir was said to be the last "Jina" in a long series of "Jinas", or "Conquerors", who had followed Rishabha. Some European scholars have accepted Parshva, the next preceding Jina, supposed to have lived two hundred and fifty years before Mahavir, as historical, but Mahavir is almost universally credited with its origin, and he is believed to have slightly antedated the Buddha.

Mahavir (Nalaputta in Buddhist books) was the son of a prince of Magadha, according to the generally accepted account. At the age of thirty he left home to become a wanderer. After twelve years he achieved the end of his quest. He immediately began to preach and gained many converts. He started a mendicant order and provided for nuns also. Gotama, too, is pictured as a prince of Northern India, who left home at about the age of thirty and having become enlightened, preached the doctrine to others, and established mendicant orders including one for nuns. He is also sometimes called the Jina. These similarities

1. Mitchell, Relig. of India, p. 205. 
are not very startling, however. These princes were not the only young men of northern India who left their homes to become wanderers, nor were they the only ones who thought they had discovered the final solution of the problem of salvation.

In the teachings further points of resemblances are pointed out. Jainism ignores the idea of a supreme god. It saw no escape from Karma, except by ending all. Three jewels, - Right Truth, Right Knowledge, and Right Living, are proposed.¹ They remind one of the eightfold path of Buddha, - Right Belief, Right Aims, etc. Another feature in common was the reverence for life, which among the Jains was stressed to an inordinate degree. The monastic orders were open to all classes, too, like the Buddhist.² The theory of the "Jinas" resembles the theory of the Buddha, great personalities reappearing from time to time through the ages; and Jacobi has suggested that the Jain theory was the earlier. This sort of a theory seems common to all Indian religions, and may have owed its origin to either of the great heresies, so called. The nirvana of the Jains is much like that of Buddha. It usually means utter extinction. All the books of the Jains, however,

¹ Moore, History of Religions, p. 280. ff.
² Ibid.
are later than the Pali Pitakas of Ceylon. These similarities are none of them fundamental and may all be explained by the fact that both religions grew up at about the same time, in answer to about the same needs, and under practically the same influence.

The Sankhya system stands logically between the Veda- da and Buddhism, and according to Farquhar, between Jainism and Buddhism. It is more skeptical than Jainism, yet does not go as far as does Buddhism. The Buddhists acknowledge that Kapila, the reputed founder of the Sankhya system, lived several generations earlier than Gotama. Professor R. Pischel, Garbe and Jacobi are convinced that Buddha as a philosopher was entirely dependent on the Sankhya system. Rhys Davids points out that there is no real evidence that Kapila was the real author of the Sankhya system, but that isolated thinkers long before had voiced views very similar to those which crystallized into the Sankhya philosophy, and that the oldest Sankhya books cannot be placed earlier than a thousand years after Gotama. Still he admits that the Sankhya teachers were probably right and that their teaching goes back before the rise of Buddhism.

The Sankhya system is more philosophical than Jainism, which was probably a "specialization and intensification of the old hermit discipline under the influence of an extraordinary reverence for life, and a dogmatic belief that not only men, animals and plants, but the smallest elements of earth, fire, water and wind are endowed with living souls."

1. Indeed I am tempted to say that the only religious elements of Sankhya teachings were not Sankhya. It teaches a dualism: a primary substance, Prakriti, the source of all phenomenal nature; and innumerable individual souls, on the other hand, existing as gods, demons, men, animals, and plants. There is no place for god as supreme. Changes of the universe are due to "disturbances or re-establishment of equilibrium among the components of the primary substance." 3 Life is pain and sorrow, and in the chain of rebirth will always be so. If existence is evil, then desire is at the bottom of all evil, as it is the cause of existence. Various methods of asceticism both meditative and self-mortificatory, were proposed. 4 Their monks like the Buddhist, practiced no worship. Schools were open to all classes, as were the monasteries. 5

2. Ibid. p. 237.
4. Ibid. p. 278.
5. Farquhar, Crown of Hind. p. 239.
Though ignoring Brahma, Sankhya philosophy like the Buddhist does not attack the common gods of the people. The isolation from phenomenal life, from desire and action, freedom from transmigration and Karma, from pain and suffering which is promised to the soul by Sankhya teachers, is practically identical with the Nirvana of the Buddhists. As implied already, this system does not ignore the common gods of the people.

Their teaching has much in common with Buddhism; desire is fundamental in Buddhism, as is meditation. The other similarities have already been noted. Buddhism goes a step further and ignores the soul completely. And this one change would be enough, because of its effect on the entire system, and the adjustment thus made necessary, to justify the author's prominence in any study of the development of Buddhism. Nor on the whole are the resemblances strong enough, or fundamental enough to justify us in a belief that Buddhism owed its rise to some development of this philosophy.

It cannot be denied, however, that in the development of Buddhism, these philosophies, as well as others of the times, must have contributed to the philosophical background of Buddhism, as well as to the general unrest of the time, and when a leader appeared with a confident message and a compelling message, the people of that day must have turned from their conflicting philosophies to his promise of bliss with great relief.
CHAPTER TWO.
Various answers have been given to the question, "who was the Buddha"? Perhaps the most interesting theory is the one proposed recently by Dr. D. B. Spooner in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.1 He contends that the Mauryan dynasty, to which Asoka, the great Buddhist emperor, belonged, was Persian; that Gotama himself was a Zoroastrian; and that Buddhism was "an adaptation of the Magian faith to Indian conditions, a Hinduizing of the Parsi cult."2 It had already been pointed out by various writers that there were points of similarity between Buddhism and Zoroastrianism, but Dr. Spooner has been the first scholar to attempt to trace Buddhism to Zoroastrianism as the original source.

Dr. Spooner's attention was directed to the problem by his recent excavation at Kumrahār, near Patna, where Colonel Waddell had already located the site of Asoka's capital, Pataliputra. Dr. Spooner found traces of a vast pillared hall, unparalleled, he says, in ancient India, but which corresponds closely to the throne room, or "Hall of a Hundred Columns," of Darius Hystaspes3 at Persepolis. In the throne room at Persepolis there were ten rows of ten columns each. At Kumrahār, eight rows of ten columns

3. Darius Hystaspes reigned from 521 - 485 B.C.
each, and Dr. Spooner thinks that there may have been two rows more originally. The columns were ten cubits apart, and it is interesting to note that at Persepolis the cubits were Persian, while at Kumrahar they were Indian cubits.

The intercolumniation at Kumrahar was five diameters, which is said to be distinctly Persian. The only column recovered by the party bore a stone mason's mark, closely resembling a similar mark at Persepolis. In addition to these similarities in the hall he also noted mounds of such form and orientation as to correspond closely to the grouping of other buildings around the throne room at Persepolis, and furthermore the ruins are on a terrace, which is also true of the Persepolitan ruins.

Fa Hien and Hiuen Thang, the Chinese travellers\(^1\) in their descriptions of the remains of Asoka's palaces speak of walls of stone. These buildings at Kumrahar must have been built of wood, the pillars being the only stone work. Otherwise there would have been trace of the stone in the ruins. Hiuen Thang refers to a terrace with ruins on it, which was a little distance from the Asoka buildings, which were themselves partly in ruins. The buildings at Kumrahar which must have belonged, then, to the Mauryan period, must have been built before Asoka's time, therefore probably by Chandragupta.

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\(^1\) J.R.A.S. 1915. p. 73 ff.
Various scholars have recognized Persian influence in early Indian architecture. Mr. Kennedy recognized Persepolis as the channel for most Assyrian forms in India, and adds, "most of the details were borrowed from Persia". 1 Grunwedel says the important monuments of ancient India show Persian influence. 2 The son of Darius Hystaspes counted India as part of his kingdom. The edicts of Asoka are thought to echo those of Darius. 3 Dr. Marshall says that Asoka's columns and capitals were wrought by Greco-Persian masons. 4

"At a court", Dr. Spooner concludes, where the Indian monarch washed his royal hair according to the Persian calendar, and built his royal highway from his palace in imitation of Darius, his palaces themselves may very well have been as imitative as the royal road. We, therefore, need no longer hesitate to give our archeological evidences at Kumrarah their full face value. Far from being opposed to our existing knowledge, they merely supplement and complete it, uniting previous scraps of information into a consistent and harmonious whole, and showing us upon the threshold of the historical period a dynasty of

1. J.P.A.S. Apr.1898, p.283, quoted by Dr. Spooner.
2. Grunwedel and Burgess, Buddhist Art in India. p.17 quoted by Dr. Spooner.
almost purely Persian type."\(^1\) In addition to the archeological evidence, literary evidence is produced also. In the Mahabharata the architecture, in all the "more important building operations is attributed to the demon, Asura, or Danava Maya, who by his magic power builds such huge buildings as are described, immense moated palaces with arches, and a roof supported by a thousand columns."\(^2\) It is known that Persian buildings were sometimes ascribed to Ahura Mazda. For instance the epigraph on the great "Porch of Xerxes" reads, in part, as follows: - "Xerxes, the great King saith: 'by the grace of Ormazd (another name for Ahura Mazda) I have made this portal." When Persian masons first introduced the use of building stone into India, they being Zoroastrian, may have ascribed their works to Ahura Mazda. The name would of course remain a foreign name, and its pronunciation would follow no known rule. Asura is thought by some scholars to be a cognate of Ahura - meaning demons in India, just as "Devas", "the shining ones" of India, came to mean demons in Persia. If this were true the Indians would naturally think the stone masons were ascribing the buildings to their own Asuras or demons. Asura Maya is said to be associated with sorcery, astronomy and the art of war.\(^3\)

Dr. Spooner finds a line in the epic which he calls a "direct asseveration of the identity of Asura Maya and

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2. Hopkins Great Epic, p.381, quoted by Dr. Spooner.
Ahura Mazda. But the directness does not seem to be noticeable to any one else. He also argues that the description of the palaces of Chandragupta by Megasthenes and an account in the Mahabharata of the palaces built by Maya are very similar. But this similarity might well be found in any two accounts of ancient oriental palaces.

There are several references in the Epic to a type of Sabha or throne room in which the actual pillars, as "structural necessities were lost to the consciousness of the beholder by reason of his absorption in the symbolism of a different and more conspicuous feature. This feature was the literal presence of innumerable large sculptured representations of divine and semi-divine beings, so sculptured and disposed as to impress the beholder as actually supporting on their upstretched arms, the various floors of the Sabha. A similar structure is, Dr. Spooner says, depicted on the face of the tomb of Darius Hystaspe and in miniature on the entrance to his Sabha. This structure is the Talar, an open many-sided platform serving as a

1. M. Bh. II 1.
3. Hist. of India, Baroda Ed. Vol. II. p. 111
4. M.Bh. II, 1-14 to 17.
5. M.Bh., II, 1-24; II, 3-31; II, 10-3; II, 11-14 ff. quoted and translated by Dr. Spooner.
MAP SHOWING THE HOLY LAND OF THE BUDDHISTS
AND THE PROPOSED LOCATION OF MERV.
support to the throne in which the various floors are apparently upheld by sculptured hosts, representing, in this case, the nations subject to the "King of Kings.” Would not such a structure be far more in keeping, it is argued, with either the remains at Kumrahār or Persepolis than would an immense flat building with no adequate provisions for lighting and without architectural beauty?

The name Maurya, it is further urged, is Persian in origin, not Indian. In the Avesta occurs the name, Moṣrva, which is connected with the Margu of Achaemenian inscriptions. These names are explained¹ as the name of the people of Merv. Merv appears also as Meru and Maur. Mt. Meru is especially prominent in Hindu mythology. This Merv is commonly accepted as the modern Transcaucasian city of that name.² – an oasis on the edge of a desert. The identification is based on its name "Merv" and the name of its river which is Murghat. The same evidence should be accepted for any other site of course, and the Persepolitan platform stands on the plain of Merv or Mervdasht. And the river flowing through this plain is known higher up as Murghat. This platform is built against a sacred mountain. Would not this be much more appropriate for the Mt. Meru of Hindu tradition? The numbers thirty–

1. Bartholomae Altiranisches Wörterbuch, 1904, p.1147, quoted by Dr. Spooner.
2. See map.
three and eighty four, associated with Mt. Meru, are Zoroas-
trian numbers.

The punch marked coinage, the oldest coinage of India, 
Dr. Spooner says1, is Persian. The weights agree with the 
Achaemenian system, and the symbols are largely Iranian. 
He discovers a fairly constant group of symbols on these 
coins. One symbol is the usual solar symbol, which could 
be Zoroastrian. The second symbol is a complex solar or 
astrological symbol which he does not attempt to recognize, 
except the taurine which is one element on it. The taurine 
represents, he says, the ancient emblem of the Persians in 
the form of a bull's head. The third symbol is the branch 
which he interprets as the sacred Branch of Hm of the Zoro-
astrians. Fourth, appears the figure of a humped bull with 
taurine, probably the Bull of Mithra. The last symbol he 
menciones is the Caitya, probably representing a hill, hence 
possibly Mt. Meru? He mentions a similar modern Jain sym-
bol of a certain tirthankara which they call Mt. Meru. 

An obscure passage in Patanjali translated by Weber2 
says that the Mauryas manufactured images for trade, but 
that they were not idols. They were not objects of direct 
adoration, nor were they used by any "Pujari" as a means of 
livelihood. Such would have been the attitude of Zoroastri-
an stone workers. So Dr. Spooner equates the Mauryas of

2. Indische Studien, pp. 148-9, quoted by Dr. Spooner.
this passage to "Mervian-Iranian-Zoroastrian" instead of Sculptor, as Weber thought it might be. The figures made for sale by the Mauryas were horses and chariots, also Persian.

And why do Hindu historians assign the Mauryas to such utter oblivion? Chandragupta was certainly not a Buddhist, and it is unlikely that any hatred of Aśoka because of his religion would be visited upon his grandfather also. It is strange that Chandragupta, the first great historical emperor, should be condemned so completely. The Sungas who succeeded the Mauryas boasted that they had rid the earth of its low-born oppressors. Chandragupta first appears with Alexander as the latter enters India from Persia. Later it was by means of an army largely Persian that Chandragupta established his kingdom. He formed a matrimonial alliance with Seleukos who ruled Persia at that time. The last of the Nandas, too, shared this same hatred. They were said to have exterminated the Kshatriyas. Would this be expected of any Hindu kings? Nava Nandas may mean "new Nandas, as well as "nine Nandas". - and the former would fit in more easily chronologically. These Nandas, too, were immensely wealthy. May they not have entered India as great merchant princes, acquiring power until they became rulers? Racial hatred would then account for this silence in Hindu books.

Chanakya, the Brahman minister of state who rendered
such signal service to Chandragupta may have been a Magian Brahman, it is argued. The Atharvan Purohita, (or priest), is honored at court, and the Atharva Veda is preeminently the Veda of magic,—hence magian. Dr. Spooner thinks that the Magians must have entered India in early times; and Magadha was certainly later a magian center. There magians were said to have come from Saka Dwiya, the home of the Sakas, a country abounding in saka or sal trees. From this term Saka, through the Pali Sakiya and the mixed dialect form Shakiya, the term Sakya is derived linguistically. 1 This term means the "people of a country abounding in saka trees," and this people is located by Dr. Fleet and other scholars at Kapilavastra, where Buddha was born. The term Saka, according to Herodotus means Scythian, but this term has always been applied loosely, and Persian invaders from the direction of Scythia would probably have been called Saka people, and the Persians were at this time the ruling people of the Scythian country.

There is the well-known Sakya legend also: The oldest wife of Ambatthā dies and his new queen upon the birth of a son prevails upon the king to banish the four sons of his former wife. These princes, accompanied by their sisters and a little retinue start off. They come to the sage, Kapila on the shore of a lake surrounded by saka trees

Here they settled, and as there were no suitable wives, the princes married their sisters. Their father, when he heard of it exclaimed "clever indeed are the princes, right clever to be sure" (Sakya vata bhowaja kumana, paramasakya bho kumana ti). Sakya is the word for clever. Their descendants are of course the Sakyas, the clan of Buddha. Zarathushtra emphasized the next of kin marriage\(^1\) and the great Vishtaspa's sister, Hutos, was queen, "according to Magian practice," if we accept the Pahlavi narrative\(^2\). All this, Dr. Spooner says, "shows unmistakably that the ancestors of the Buddhas, the Sakyas of Kapilavastu, are not to be differentiated from the other Saka Dwipana, and that they were of Zoroastrian origin."\(^3\)

The author of the Dabistan - i - Mazahib says, "the ancient Persians claim Gaya as a temple of their foundation, where Gywa (Kaiwan), or the planet Saturn was worshipped.\(^4\) This Gaya was also the center of Gotama's work, and both Brahmanas and Buddhists today claim the temple. This would be explained if Gotama was himself a Zoroastrian. Naturally he would go to Gaya if it were a place already sacred to his ancestors. It would afterwards be sacred to his followers and would continue to be sacred to the Magian Brahmanas.

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2. Ibid. p. 70.
In the legends of the two religions there are many similarities which may add to the evidence. In the Avesta we are told that "the divine sacerdotal and kingly glory is handed onward from ruler to ruler, and from saint to saint, ever with a view to its illuminating ultimately the soul of the inspired one."¹ The Buddhists believe in a succession of Buddhas dating far back into antiquity, culminating in Gotama.

"In the Avestan Gathas and in Pahlavi literature, the soul of the mythical primeval bull, three thousand years before the revelation of the religion, beholds a vision in heaven of the fravasi or ideal image of the prophet, Zarathushtra, Zaratush, that is to be."² In Buddhist sculpture scenes are found depicting the fravasi of Gotama in the Tushita Heaven prior to descending into Maya's womb.³ And the story is found in the Buddha Karita.⁴ Hvovi, Zarathushtra's third wife, had no earthly children, "but she is the noble consort from whom ultimately are descended the future millenial prophets."⁵ This is analogous to the idea of Bodhisattvas of Mahayana Buddhism: The heaven in which Zarathushtra's spirit dwelt before birth was called

¹ Jackson, Zoroaster, p. 24
² Jackson, Zoroaster, p. 23
³ J.B.A.S., July 1915, p. 446.
⁵ Jackson, Zoroaster, p. 21
Amitabha or "eternal light," which resembles the "Boundless light," one of the Buddhist heavens. And the name of another Buddhist heaven, the Heaven of the Thirty Three Gods, is Zoroastrian, - at least this number occurs much more frequently in the Zoroastrian books than in the Rig Veda.

The Glory descends and enters the Virgin body of Zarathushtras' mother. According to Buddhist tradition the Buddha entered his mother's womb in the form of a white elephant - a distinctly Indian coloring. This glory is combined with the guardian Spirit, brought to earth in the stem of a Hom plant borne at the height of a man by two archangels. The material essence or Substantial Nature completes the holy triad. It is "miraculously combined with the elements of milk, through the agency of water and the plants, or through the archangels, Khurdat and Murdat. The milk is mixed with Hom and is drunk by the future prophets' parents."

Dr. Spooner sees these scenes depicted in the bas-reliefs of the birth of Buddha at Bath. There are figures of Brahma and Indra in which he sees the two archangels. The Hom plant is replaced by a sal branch, grasped at the "height of a man." The heavenly figures accompanying Brahma and

1. Jackson, Zoroaster, p. 34
3. Jackson, Zoroaster, p. 24
Indra as they pour forth the water of heaven over the new-born Buddha in the sculptures of Bath, are of course, the other archangels, Khurdat and Mardat. In the fact that these scenes are seen in combination there may be an indication of the triune character of the Avestan story.

In the Avesta all nature rejoices at the prophet's birth. In the Tripitaka the same is true of the Buddha. Attempts are made on the lives of each according to the traditions. An ox attempts to kill Zarathushtra while an elephant attempts to slay the Buddha. The latter is an Indian coloring.

When Zarathushtra was seven years old he was tried, so the tradition runs, by "shreckliche Ärsheinungen" from which all fled except the future prophet. The Buddha also in his youth, according to widespread tradition, saw frightful apparitions of sickness, old age and death in loathsome forms.

The Zoroastrian account of the great renunciation, though similar, is thought by Dr. Spooner to be an echo of the Buddhist story. But he is sure that the Persian form of the enlightenment story is the earlier and original story.

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1. Jackson, Zoroaster, p. 27
and Zoroaster enters upon the true pathway of the faith. It is in this year that the archangel of Good Thought, Vohu Manah, appears unto Zarathushtra in a vision and leads his soul in holy trance into the presence of God, Ahura Mazda. \(^2\) Buddha's enlightenment came at the age of thirty-five, \(^3\) and he, also, is said to have ascended into heaven to visit his mother's soul soon afterwards. In both stories there is an account of a two-fold temptation of power and lust at this time.

Another remarkable similarity is the prohibition of graven images by Zoroastrians and Buddhists alike, - again the early history of each religion is connected with a great king whose patronage did much to establish the religion.

"The iconographical evidence," Dr. Spooner declares, "establishes conclusively that the details of all the Buddha story, particularly in the cycle of the nativity, were brought into India before the Buddha's birth, and were then attached to his person with local adaptations, on his appearance in the role of the enlightened one, though subsequently to his death, of course." \(^3\) This theory explains Asoka's edicts, his missionary zeal, (copied from Vishtaapa), and Asoka's change of faith. Gautama

1. Jackson, Zoroaster, p. 36.
2. See below p. 50.
was of the same race and cult. Buddhism was only an adaptation of the Parsi cult to Indian conditions. Caste, they disregarded, of course. The Brahmanas were reverenced, it is true, but they were probably Magian Brahmanas. "Buddhism, in other words, stands for the spiritual acclimatization of a section of the Domiciled Iranians, - It was the Sikhism of ancient India, a spiritual compromise between the rulers and the ruled."

Dr. Spooner's proposition that Persian influence in early India is fully established is probably not to be questioned. Mr. V. A. Smith\(^2\) is convinced that the Kumrahar building was copied from a Persepolitan original, but he does not accept the proposition that the Mauryan dynasty was one "of almost purely Persian type," as Dr. Spooner contends.

The equation of Asura Maya with Ahura Mazda is in part justifiable. Dr. F. W. Thomas says the "proposal to regard Maya, for which an early pronunciation, Maza, is perfectly tenable, as an adapted borrowing of Mazda can not be contested in principle, since such borrowings are not governed by ascertained phonological laws; on the other hand they require proof, which must naturally be circumstantial."\(^3\) Dr. Spooner has failed, however, to furnish this proof, nor has Dr. Thomas been able to furnish the

\(^3\) J.P.A.S., Apr., 1916, p. 362.
definite proof, and unless we accept the theory that Asura and Ahura are cognates, and that Asura had already come to mean "demons", (and scholars are still divided over this question)¹, there is this great difficulty to be removed.

Why would Indians ascribe buildings to the Demon, Asura Maya, if the idea came from Persian stone masons who ascribed their work to the great God, Ahura Mazda? And it is not established that the Persians did so ascribe their buildings generally.

The hypothesis of a wonderful architectural structure at Persepolis with "sculptural representations of divine and semi-divine beings" is at best but a hypothesis and cannot be accepted as evidence, except simply as a possible explanation, no more probable than many others.

Mr. A. Berriedale Keith questions Dr. Spooner's translations of several passages from the Mahabharata, as well as his conclusions.²

The derivation of Maurya from Mourva is also dismissed by Mr. Keith as not to be taken seriously.³ Dr. Thomas admits that Merv may well be foreign in origin but he thinks it must be traced through Sumeru.⁴ Dr. Spooner's derivation is worthy of more notice than given

² J.R.A.S., Jan. 1916, p. 139
³ J.R.A.S., Jan. 1916, p. 140
to it by Mr. Keith but it cannot be accepted as fully pro-
ven.

The punch marked coins, according to Mr. V. A. Smith, who speaks authoritatively on this point, may be interpreted as Dr. Spooner does. But Mr. Smith thinks it equally likely that they were Jainist. He knows of no modern Jain symbol connected with Mt. Meru. Mr. Smith also suggests Tibetan influence.

The passage from Patanjali is obscure and the figures referred to may be as truly Indian as Persian. Indian literature contains numerous references to horses and chariots.

"The aitareya Brahmana attests to the establishment of the Purohita with his magic spells in royal favor before the time of Chandragupta. The early importance of magic in India generally is hardly to be accounted for by Persian influence. Furthermore, the evidence for the early arrival of magic in India is based on the Puranas, which cannot be accepted as evidence for any period prior to the third century, A.D. Besides there seems to be some doubt whether the Magians were really Zoroastrian.

If the Mauryans were Zoroastrian, why is Megasthenes

3. Ibid. p. 140.
so silent? He would certainly have noticed it, and it is not enough to merely suppose that it was too well known to be mentioned. Dr. Spooner has shown that this theory is a possible explanation, but he has not proven that the Mauryans were really Zoroastrian themselves. And I do not agree with him that Chandragupta was Persian in his life. On the contrary with Dr. Thomas — "as to Chandragupta Maurya, I can conceive nothing more naturally Indian than his personal and family names and his whole story."  

The Sakya legend is capable of interpretations to fit any theory of the Buddha's origin. Several generations are necessary, if the legend is accepted as having any basis, and any Zoroastrian elements would tend to disappear from a small group surrounded by alien people, and the derivation of the name really favors the Scythian theory, even more than the Zoroastrian theory.

Gaya was an ancient Hindu shrine revered for its sacred fig tree and quite naturally after the triumph of Brahmanism over Buddhism, became again prominent as a shrine.  

It was the Buddha's center of activity probably because it was the community nearest to the Bo-tree where the Buddha became enlightened.

2. See below, p. 32ff.
The similarities between Buddhism belong for the most part to the legendary accounts, and such accounts would be quite likely to follow the same general trend even in various countries. In fact many of these stories can be duplicated in Hinduism. The story of Krishna's incarnation\(^1\) reminds one of the stories of both Buddha and Zarathushtra's birth. It is difficult to see the likeness which Dr. Spooner sees between the sculptures and the story of Zarathushtra's birth. All nature rejoices when any great hero of the orient is born. And the ox is only one of the many animals by means of which the demons attempt to end the future prophet's life.\(^2\)

The appearance of frightful apparitions to a boy of seven,\(^3\) and to a man of twenty-nine,\(^4\) do not seem so similar, and the story of the three sights of sickness, old age and death is not found in the oldest Buddhist source.\(^5\) Dr. Spooner says that Buddha's enlightenment came at the age of thirty-two, but he spent six years, after he left home at twenty-nine, before his enlightenment while Zarathushtra spent twelve years in wandering and was younger by five years when he received his revelation. The tempta-

1. From Sagar
2. Jackson, Zoroaster, p. 29.
4. See below, p. 47ff.
5. cf. below, p. 48.
tion account belongs also to the later legendary accounts as does the story of his visit to his mother.

In fact, though there are many similarities in the later legends, there is very little in the earliest account of the Buddha which reminds us of Zarathushtra. The broad outline is the same: A youth living in luxury, leaves his home to seek for something he knows not what. After wandering, in one case for twelve, in the other for six years, one receives a revelation, the other becomes enlightened. And they both begin to preach their doctrines. This story could be told of other teachers of the east no doubt, and means little as evidence of a relation between two religions except a similar historical background, somewhat similar conditions of life, and perhaps, an exchange of ideas. If we admit there were many elements borrowed from Zoroastrianism, their absence from the canon adopted finally during Asoka's time ¹ probably would make it certain that they are of later adoption, which would not materially affect the question of the primary sources. Later Persian influence in India is undoubted, but unless more evidence is produced we must say that the Buddha was not Persian and that Persian influences were probably not strong in India until long after the Buddha's death.

¹. See below. p.
An older and better known theory argues that the Buddha was of Scythian origin. He belonged to the clan of the Sakya, and the etymological connection of Sakyā and Saka has already been mentioned. It is a little more likely that the Sakyas were Scythians, than that they were Persians who were called Scythians because they came from Saka Dwipa, or Scythia. It is chronologically possible that the Sakyas were Scythian as we know that Scythians invaded western Asia as early as 635 B.C. It is, course, entirely possible that one branch of the Scythians had come into North India at some earlier date, settling in a district which they called the "Royal City," (Kambul - Kambalik, the city of the Khan.) This might easily change into Kapila or Kimbul (the Singhalese form.)

The Scythians paid peculiar reverence to the tombs of their deceased kings. Sakya Muni or the Buddha left instruction that he was to be buried according to the old system of the wheel-kings. The ideal meaning of the word chakravartin (wheel king), is a "monarch who rules all within the chakra of rocks supposed to cover the world," or a universal monarch. The Scythian kings claimed such proud titles. Their tombs were surrounded by circular ranges of rocks apparently to signify their universal sovereignty. The early Buddhist tope (where his ashes

1. Beal - Catena, p. 127
2. Ibid. p. 127
were buried or which were raised in honor of the Buddha were mounds of earth surrounded by circular rings of either wood or stone.¹

The evidence is very slight and so far as I know there is no evidence in Buddhism itself of Scythian origin. It is possible, of course, that the Sakyas were originally Scythians, but if so they must have become fully acclimated long before the sixth century, B.C. There is nothing in the story of the life of the Buddha or his family to indicate any such foreign influence, and even if we do accept a Scythian origin, unless some Scythian influence may be traced in the essential doctrines of Buddhism we cannot accept seriously any proposal to find the ultimate source of Buddhism in the land of the Saka trees.

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¹ Beal - Catena, p. 187
CHAPTER THREE

It has been shown that none of the theories which have been advanced sufficiently account for the origin of Buddhism. It is necessary to show that there is a theory which will account for all that we know about early Buddhism, and which is internally contradictory to any other known facts. Prehistoric Buddhism can be accounted for as the result of the life and teachings of Gotama Buddha, a historical person who lived and taught in Northern India and who was Indian in birth and environment. This does not mean that all the developments of Buddhism in Tibet, or of the goddess cult in China and Japan, or any other modern distortions of Buddhism can be traced back to this one personality. No more than would one attempt to trace all the distortions and developments of Christianity back to Christ in the same way. Neither can this view ignore certain elements adopted from earlier religions of India. On the contrary the presence of such elements is exactly what one would expect. This is true of all the religions established by founders, yet we in all ages attach any less value to the personality of the founder because he incorporated certain doctrines into his own system. Nor would the theory deny the possibility of external influence in the later development of Buddhism in Northern India, and as it spread throughout the Orient. But
Having shown that none of the other theories which have been advanced satisfactorily account for the origin of Buddhism, it is now my purpose to show that there is a theory which will account for all that we do know about early Buddhism, and which is in no wise contradictory to any other known facts. Primitive Buddhism can be accounted for as the result of the life and teachings of Gotama Buddha, a historical person who lived and taught in Northern India and who was Indian in birth and environment. This does not mean that all the developments of Lamaism in Tibet, or of the goddess cult in China and Japan, or any other modern distortions of Buddhism can be traced back to this one personality. No more than would one attempt to trace all the distortions and developments of Christianity back to Christ as the source. Neither would this view ignore certain elements adopted from earlier religions of India. On the contrary the presence of such elements is exactly what one would expect. This is true of all the religions established by founders, yet we do not ascribe any less value to the personality of the founder because he incorporated certain doctrines into his own system. Nor would this theory deny the probability of external influence in the later development of Buddhism in Northern India, and as it spread throughout the Orient. But
it states that Primitive Buddhism, as it developed originally, and as it began to spread out, was evolved out of the mind of, or organized by the genius of a great thinker, in answer to the need of his age. And we may further, in spite of the distortions, trace his influence in Buddhism as it has undergone strange developments in response to new conditions of environment.

This theory is certainly a priori tenable. Are not the other great missionary religions of the world all ascribed to personal founders? Hinduism alone of the great religions is purely ethnic, ascribable to the slow growth of ages on ages, though with great variety of divergent schools within it. But Hinduism is not strictly a world religion. One must be born a Hindu, and except, perhaps, for the theosophical bodies of recent years, Hinduism does not threaten to spread out of India. Christianity, Mohammedanism, Confucianism and Zoroastrianism, all have their historical founder. The existence of Christ, Mohammed, Confucius or Zarathushtra, like that of Buddha has been questioned, but few scholars of any repute would today seriously question the existence of any one of these persons. And truly the unanimity of the tradition of a founder is a stubborn fact to argue away. The almost universal acceptance of this view, of course, simply reflects the Buddhist tradition, but when almost all the leading
Western scholars accept the historicity of the Buddha, one can certainly claim that he was more than a sun-myth.

This theory does not deny all the claims of the adherents of other theories. Indeed it explains many of such claims. Are traces of Sankhya philosophy or of Jainism to be found? No doubt the Buddha knew of such teachings and would naturally accept parts of them, if they appealed to him, and as we have already indicated, he had much in common with them. Are there traces of Zoroastrianism? India and Persia have always been near each other. Hinduism, too, has some elements in common with Zoroastrianism. It is altogether possible that some Persian influence is traceable. Indian faiths have always been ready to take up foreign cults. Suppose Buddhism was in part a democratic revolt against privilege and authority, would not a leader be necessary? And what more natural than that he should be a Kshatriya?

The tradition of the Buddha is universal throughout Buddhist literature in all countries and it is traceable back in an unbroken line to the very time of the beginnings of Buddhism. These traditions, coming down to us from so many sources are yet so consistent when relieved of their palpably legendary accretions that they challenge our faith. "The legend of Gotama follows the great common track of Oriental inspiration. - - Its resemblance to
New Testament mythology --- is yet sufficient to show decisively that the elements available for the mythopoetic faculty in different religions are substantially the same.\textsuperscript{1}

And these legends, as will be noted later\textsuperscript{2} are almost absent from the earliest books which are near the times of which they tell. The tradition of a series of Buddhas reaching far back into the unknown past, ascribes to Gotama the historical origin of Buddhism. The naturalness and fidelity to things Indian will be noted in the picture of his life as drawn from the earliest sources.

Again in the rapid spread of Buddhism we may trace the influence of a great leader. No abstract movement has ever shaken a community unless it became incarnate in some personality. Nor is the patronage of Asoka explanation enough for the rapid growth. It is hardly conceivable that the great emperor would have been easily converted by a movement which had had no leader to give it impetus and devotion. And when we find as we approach more nearly to his own time that the literature portrays a leader of winsome personality, wholly Indian in thought and life, with less and less of the miraculous and more of the human in his personality, the evidence becomes more conclusive.

True, there is little mention of Gotama outside of purely Buddhist literature and accounts based on the for-

\textsuperscript{1} Samuel Johnson, Oriental Religions, India. p. 689
\textsuperscript{2} Of. Below, p. 47ff.
The orthodox Hindu account is simply that he was
the ninth Avatar of Vishnu, sent to lead men into error
and destruction. This is, of course, unhistorical, simply
a clever method of vitiating the power of Buddhism in Hindu
circles. The scarcity of mention is not a fatal argument, however. The Indian people have never been interested in
history, and before the time of Darius the son of Hystaspes
in about 486 B.C., we have almost no mention of India in
European sources. Megasthenes, the Greek ambassador to
Chandragupta's court in the fourth century B.C., writes of
Indian life and refers to monks at the court who may have
been Buddhist. The term used does not necessarily mean
Buddhist monks, however. Though Buddhism spread rapidly
from the outset, it did not apparently come into open con­
flict with Brahmanism until long after Asoka's time.
Sages were accepted as a matter of course. And is not our
knowledge of Christ limited quite largely to Christian
sources? Yet few scholars would today attempt to deny
his existence as a historic person. Few scholars, indeed,
have ever questioned the Buddha's existence. His life is
truly as well established by historical evidence, both lit­
erary and archeological, as is that of any person of antiqu­

1. Mitchell, Great Religions of India. p. 199
2. V.A. Smith, Early History of India., p. 12.
3. Copleston, Buddhism, p. 11.
ity. Furthermore, how can we account for the origin of the legend of Gotama, if we are to call it such? The name Buddha, of course, is accounted for as the adjective "enlightened." But this tradition did not demand a historical Gotama as a savior to tell them of the true doctrines. The development of a legendary divinity could be so accounted for, but not the Buddha, glowing with humanity as we find him in the early records.

Before the life of Gotama is taken up more particularly, it will be well to discuss the sources and accuracy of our information about the Buddha. There are four great collections of Buddhist literature: the Pali texts of Ceylon, the Sanskrit books of Nepal, the Tibetan and the Chinese libraries. Of these, the Pali texts are undoubtedly the oldest and, therefore, would most faithfully reflect the life and thought of early Buddhist circles, and they ought to most nearly contain the teachings of Gotama. In the oldest collection of the Pali books, the Three Pitakas, there is no biography of the Buddha. There are biographical fragments here and there out of which can be gathered a fairly complete account of his life, especially of the beginning and end of his ministry. These Three Pitakas constitute the sacred Canon of Ceylon. They are

1. Mrs. Rhys Davids Buddhism, p. 13
2. Copleston, Buddhism, p. 16.
the Vinaya, the Sutta and the Abhidhamma Pitakas, containing respectively the rules of the order, sermons and short sayings of the Buddha, and philosophical dissertations.

The earliest biography, an introduction to one of the commentaries, probably dates in its present form from the time of Buddhaghosha in the fourth century, A.D., and only tells the early life of Gotama. The Lalita Vistara, a gorgeous Sanskrit poem of Nepal on which are based the common European notions of Buddhism, though earlier than Buddhaghosha, is later in composition than the biography just referred to. The earliest Chinese biography is a history of the Buddha by Wang Puh, who lived about 650 A.D. This is based on early records brought from India, probably the ones which gave rise to the Lalita Vistara. The Tibetan literature is not yet accessible in large quantities, but will probably add little to our knowledge of Primitive Buddhism. It will be unnecessary in the main to refer to any sources other than the early Pali texts, except to remark that the story of the life, and the essential doctrines of the teachings of Buddha as found in all other sources agrees remarkably with the Pali account.

The first book of the Maha Vagga, the principal sec-

1. Copleston, Buddhism. p. 17
2. Beal, Catena, p. 10
tion of the Vinaya Pitaka, contains a detailed account of Gotama's enlightenment and the beginning of his career. The Mahaparinibbana Sutta or "Great Sutta of the Decease" contains the account of the last days of the great teacher. Parts of this account are also found in the fifth book of the Maha Vagga. Throughout the Vinaya, and here and there in the Sutta Pitaka there are allusions to various incidents of his life.

The canon, it is claimed by the Buddhists, was edited immediately after Gotama's death, but there is internal evidence that this is not true. It is generally believed, however, to have been fixed by the time of Asoka - say in 247 B.C. Some parts are undoubtedly earlier, especially most of the Vinaya. The canon was not reduced to writing until about 80 B.C. This does not affect the date of its composition, however. In India memory and oral tradition have always been considered the safest method of preserving sacred doctrines. It was only when wars threatened the destruction of large numbers of believers in Ceylon that the Pitakas were written. The Dipavanisa, a Ceylonese chronicle of about 400 A.D., says:

1. Nibbana is the Pali form of Nirvana.
3. Mrs. Rhys Davids, Buddhism. p. 19
4. Ibid, p. 19
"The text of the Three Pitakas, and the commentary too, thereon,
the wise Bhikkhus of former time had handed down by
word of mouth;
The then Bhikkhus, perceiving how all being do decay,
Meeting together, wrote them in books that the Dhamma
might last long."

The translators of the Vinaya go on to say: "Though
we must therefore believe that the Vinaya before it was
reduced to writing was handed down for about three hundred
years solely by memory, — we do not think it is at all
necessary, or even possible to impugn the substantial ac­
curacy of the texts handed down in a manner that seems to
moderns, so unsafe. The text as it lies before us, stands
so well against proofs, whether we compare its different
parts with one another, or with the little that is yet
known of its northern counterparts, that we are justified
in regarding these Pali books as in fact the authentic
mirror of the old Magadha text, as fixed in the central
schools of the most ancient Buddhist Church."¹ The Pali
seems to have been the vernacular of Kosala where Buddhism
first took firm root.² When Buddhism was carried to Cey­
lon during Asoka's reign about 250 B.C., the canon was re­
cited in the Pali and when it was written down no one
thought of translating it into Singhalese.

². Mrs. Phye Davids, Buddhism. p. 11.
Perhaps the most remarkable proof of the early date for the Pali texts is the fact that, although first written down in Ceylon, there are in the text no references or illustrations which can be traced to any region except Northern India. If the canon had not been regarded so completely fixed, there would have crept in a few Ceylonese adaptations. Such has been the history of such literature everywhere, - so much so that we attempt to tell where a book was written with no other evidence than the details which we can trace to climatic or racial or geographical sources. If, then, these were so early regarded as sacred, need we fear that they reflect fairly the thought of the earliest Buddhist community, and, therefore, of Buddha himself?

The life of Gotama may be divided, for convenience into periods. In fact his life seems to go through three distinct phases. His early life, up to the Great Renunciation, as it is called in Europe, forms the first period. The second period closes with his enlightenment under the Bo-tree or Bodhi-tree as it is often called. The remainder of his life goes along on a fairly even tenor for nearly fifty years closing with his death. During this period he developed his doctrines, established his orders and taught widely.
Gotama Buddha was born about 560 B.C. in the country of Lumbini, in the town of the Sakyas, near Kapilavastu, the home of his father Suddhadana. A pillar near Kapilavastu, erected by Asoka in the third century B.C. is inscribed: "Here the exalted one was born." His father is called a raja, but never Maharaja, so it is not likely that his father was a king, as later legends declare. The clan was a noble one from all accounts. The name Suddhadana, pure rice, suggests that the clan probably owned extensive rice lands. Gotama was of purest Kshatriya descent on both sides.

1. Gotama or Gautama was his family name. Siddhartha or Siddhattha (desire accomplished) may have been his given name but it is seldom used. Some of the other names applied to him are:
   - Sakya-munyi, - Sage of the Sakyas.
   - Sakya-sinha, - Lion of the Sakyas.
   - Bhagavan, - Blessed Lord.
   - Jina, - Conqueror.
   - Mahavira, - Great Hero.
   - Chakravarti, - Universal Monarch
   - Tathagata, - Who comes and goes as his predecessors. The Buddhists seem to consider Gotama too familiar. (See Maha Vagga I - 6.)

2. As to the date of Gotama's birth and death there has been considerable difference of opinion, but apparently the scholars are now, in the main, agreed that he was born about 560 B.C. and that he lived for nearly eighty years. For a further discussion see F. Max Miller's introduction to the Dhammapada, S.B.E., Vol.X., and Rhys Davids' "Coins and Measures of Ceylon."

4. See map.
5. M.V. 1-54-1
7. Rhys Davids, Early Buddhism. p. 27.
Gotama's mother died soon after his birth and he was cared for by his aunt. Of his youth we have no details in the earliest accounts, and the details afterwards related are too fanciful to be received as genuine. There is a pretty ballad, the "Nalaka Sutta" which is interesting. The sage Asita, while in the Tisita heaven, is told by rejoicing deities that the "Bodhisatta, the excellent pearl, the incomparable, is born for the good and for a blessing in the world of men, in the town of the Sakyas, in the country of Lumbini". Asita goes to the palace, sees the child in a glory provided by the gods, who were themselves invisible, and prophesies, "This Prince will reach the summit of perfect enlightenment, he will turn the wheel of the Dhamma." This, of course, is the basis for the distorted and grotesque stories which are to be found in all the later collections, and this story is natural, thoroughly Indian. The astrologers' visit and the predictions of greatness, are all Indian and are found in other Indian literature.

The young prince grew up surrounded by wealth and luxury and was said to have a palace for each of the three

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4. cf. Ramayana, - Premasagar.
seasons. He was married at the age of nineteen. The name of his wife is not given in the canonical account and she is only mentioned once. One son, Rahula, was born. Nothing else is told of this early life. He left it apparently under the influence of thoughts concerning the sadness and inevitableness of old age and death. Rhys Davids quotes two passages referring to this period: "An ordinary unscholarled man, though himself subject to old age, not escaped beyond its power, when he beholds another man old, is hurt, ashamed, disgusted, overlooking the while his own condition. Thinking that that would be unsuitable to me the infatuation of a youth in his youth departed utterly from me." The same words are used of health and life.

The other text is: "Before the days of my enlightenment, when I was still only a Bodhisat, though myself subject to rebirth, old age, disease and death, to sorrow and to evil, I sought after things subject also to them. Then methought: why should I not thus? Let me when subject to these things, seeing the danger therein, seek rather after that which is not subject thereto, even the supreme bliss and security of Nirvana."

There is here no mention of the signs—the leper, the

1. Copleston, Buddhism, p. 19
2. Encyc. Britt. 11th Ed., p. 738
3. Vinaya Texts, S.B.E., Vol XII, note P. 308
4. Rhys Davids, Early Buddhism, p. 30, Quoted from Anguttara, 1. 148.
corpse, the old man, though the development of the legends is easy to trace. The story of the sudden flight at night leaving wife and child asleep is not present. Nor do we find the story of his disgust at the attitude of the sleeping woman. True this story is found in the Maha Vagga, but Yasa, one of the early disciples, sees the women and is thus led to seek the Buddha. The story as found in the canon simply states that he left home at the age of twenty-nine to become a wanderer, probably under the influence of some such thoughts about the hopelessness of life as described above. Such conduct was quite natural. Many another Indian youth had felt impelled to become a wanderer, as many a youth has done since.

Of this period we have little information. He studied for awhile under two teachers whose names we know but whose doctrines we do not know. These two men are the ones to whom Gotama first wished to preach after his enlightenment. These teachers are said to have asked Gotama to be a fellow teacher, but he refused. They were supposed to have taught a sort of mystic ecstasy.

He was afterwards associated with five mendicants. He inflicted various severe penances upon himself, and almost exhausted, he resolved that self mortification was not

1. Copleston, Buddhism, p. 19
3. M.V., I - 6-5.
the proper way to passionlessness and liberation. Then the five mendicants forsook him, and went away, on the ground that he had given up the struggle and gone back to a life of abundance. In the Maha Vagga we are told that when Gotama came to them after his enlightenment that they did not want to salute him even, so keenly did they feel his desertion.3

There is no account given of his subsequent life until the night, six years after he left home, when he sat under the Bodhi-tree at Uruvela near Gaya on the bank of the river, Nerangara. While practising meditation there came into his soul an exaltation which he describes as insight: "When this knowledge, this insight, had arisen within me, my heart was set free from the intoxication of lusts, set free from the intoxication of ignorance. In me thus emancipated there arose the certainty of that emancipation, and I came to know 'Rebirth is at an end. The higher life has been fulfilled. What had to be done has been accomplished. After this present life there will be no beyond.' This last insight did I attain to in the last watch of the night. Ignorance was beaten down, insight arose, darkness was destroyed, the light came, inasmuch as I was there, strenuous, aglow, master of myself."3 In the Sutta Nipata there is a ballad representing a conflict be-

2. M.V., I - 6
between Gotama and Mara, the evil one, during the meditation. Probably it refers to a state of depression which made the exaltation all the more of a victory. He was now fully enlightened - the "Buddha."  

The account of the next few days is all taken from the first sections of the first book of the Maha Vagga. 3 Buddha remained at Uruvela for twenty-eight days enjoying the bliss of emancipation. During this period he revolved in his mind the chain of causation, told a haughty Brahman the true attributes of a Brahman, was protected from rain and storm by a hooded snake and converted two merchants, Tapussa and Bhallika who "took refuge in the Blessed One and in the Dhamma". 3 Buddha hesitates to preach his doctrine because he thinks the doctrines will be difficult for the ordinary mind to grasp. They would not care anything about it. At this stage, Brahma, lord of all the gods, came to him and begged him to teach the new doctrine. Thus reassured, Buddha immediately began to teach.  

How natural and fitting a scene! It represents of course his discouragement when he faced the immense task,  

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1. This has come to be the recognized name for Gotama in Western literature. I shall henceforth use this form without the adjective.  

2. S.B.E. XIII.  

3. The formula later came to be "I take refuge in the Buddha, I take refuge in the Dhamma, (law), I take refuge in the Sangha (community)." See Copleston, Buddhism. p. 186
and his taking up new courage for his task.

He went first to the five mendicants with whom he had been associated. As he was on his way to Benares, near which were the mendicants, he met Upaka, one of the naked ascetics, to whom he declares "I am the holy one in the world, I am the highest teacher, I alone am the absolute Sambuddha, I have overcome all states of sinfulness, therefore, Upaka, am I the Sina." Upaka replied, "It may be so; but walked away. The five mendicants, in spite of their intention to treat him coldly, greeted him kindly. He told them he was the holy, absolute Sambuddha. He denied their accusation of disloyalty. He told them that he was following a middle path, which leads to insight, wisdom, Nirvana and Sambodhi. This path is between the extreme of indulgence and the extreme of austerity. It is also called the eightfold path. In this sermon he utters the "Four noble truths". These will be referred to again. After this sermon was finished, the narrative concludes and then there were six arahate in the world.

The account from this point becomes somewhat vague, and is probably not to be regarded as strictly chronological.

The Rules of the Community follow, and they are usually int-

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3. Another name for one who has attained absolute holiness.
roduced by a statement about the circumstances which gave
rise to the rule. Occasionally a valuable reference is
found. The incident of Yasa’s conversion follows, with a
story of his friends who came to see what had caused his
change, and then “there were sixty arabs in the world.”

Buddha soon sent out these disciples “for the gain of
the many, for the welfare of the many, out of compassion for
the world, for the good, for the gain and for the welfare
of gods and men.” The conversion of the Jatilae, or
fire worshippers, may indicate Zoroastrian influence or the
success of his early preaching. Buddha’s meeting with
Bimbisara, King of Magadha is no doubt historical. The
King granted Buddha, a bamboo grove and is said to have ac-
cepted the doctrine. The conversion of the two great dis-
ciples, Zariputta and Mogallana, no doubt was an early
event as well as Buddha’s visit to his home where he saw
his father, wife and son. The last was admitted to his
order but it is evident that he was but a youth. As the
order was already established it must have been some years
after his enlightenment.

For about forty-five years he continued his work in

1. See p. 5
2. M.V. I - 10.
4. M.V. I
7. M.V. I - 54.
Northern India, remaining quiet in the rainy season, wandering about the remainder of the year. During these years he had ample time to work out his system, and to fully instruct his disciples. And in view of the early closing of the canon, I see no reason to doubt that we have his teaching, and often his very words preserved for us. Two disciples more ought to be mentioned, - the faithful Ananda who did not attain Arhatship until after Buddha's death, and Devadatta who was a schismatic and intriguer, perhaps a Jain. He said Buddha should be more rigid in the discipline.

Buddha died at Kusinara, probably in Nepal. He ate either some pork or mushrooms\(^1\) to which his death is ascribed. His body was burned according to his own directions and his ashes distributed, it is said, among neighboring clans, the King of Magadha, and a Brahman.\(^2\) He left a strong community with a set of rules and doctrines fully worked out, with an enthusiastic devotion to his cause which was to spread the religion all over the Orient.

Rhys Davids\(^3\) describes Buddha's daily life, "He rose quite early - - if he were to stay at the place where he had slept he would remain alone till it was time to go on his round for alms to the neighboring village." If he were

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2. Ibid, p. 45.
moving from one place to another, a walk of from eight to ten miles would occupy the time. He was often invited for the morning meal, the principal meal of the day, to some particular house. If not, he took his bowl and went from house to house, collecting enough for the meal which was always over before sun-turn. When he was an invited guest he would after the meal 'give thanks,' as the phrase ran, in the form of a talk on some one or other of the more elementary points of religion. When he carried his meal back to his lodging place this thanksgiving would take the form of an exhortation or dialogue with the disciples on one of the deeper matters of the faith. The heat of the day was given up to repose or meditation. As the afternoon drew in, either the journey to the next stage was resumed, or if the stay in the same place was to be prolonged, an informal reception was held under the trees. The folk from the neighboring villages would come in bringing presents of flowers, and one of the visitors, either a layman or a recluse from some other order, would ask questions or start a discussion, the rest listening as they sat round on the grass under the trees. By sundown the assembly was dismissed. Then Gotama, should he feel so inclined, was wont to take his bath, after which he would talk with the disciples, perhaps far into the night."

The account of his life leaves the impression of a very real and striking personality. The devotion of Ananda¹

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¹ Mahaparanibbana Sutta. S.B.E. Vol XI.
especially in the last hours of Buddha's life and during the early days thereafter, is a picture requiring a splendid object for that devotion. The power of his personality is attested to in the account of the five mendicants who in spite of themselves were courteous to him and became his disciples, and Roja, the Mallian who was so suffused with the feeling of Buddha's love that he followed Buddha as a calf would follow the cow. Bimbisara gave Buddha quite royal attention, granting him a large park. His magnanimity is shown in the account of the Jatilas and of Siha, the Likkhavi general. He advised the leader of the Jatilas to consult his followers before he became Buddhist and he advises Siha to consider well. Siha's answer shows beyond a doubt that Buddha was somewhat unique in this respect.

This account of Buddha, so reasonable, and so purely Indian, even in detail, so free from the mass of agenda which mar the later accounts, is the basis for all the Buddhist stories of his life, whether Sanskrit, Tibetan, or Chinese. In all the variant stories covered with the accretions of the centuries, yet intact beneath the legendary, may be found in outline the simple story as sketched above. This not only means a remarkable fidelity to the original source in Northern India, and an added proof of its genuineness, but it goes far to prove the reality and dominant personality of the

2. M.V. VI - 31-10.
Buddha in the origin of Buddhism, and it means that his personality must have been a strong factor in the religion as it spread out into Ceylon, Burma, Nepal, Tibet, China and even into Japan. Thus were subject to the law of cause and effect.

Before attempting to draw any final conclusions it will be profitable to note briefly the teaching of Buddhism. Does this teaching contain the essential doctrines of the Buddha? Or did the essential doctrines of Buddhism develop at some later time? What are the essentials of Buddhism, as taught by Buddha, both by precept and by example? Here we find even surer footing than in the discussion of his life. He had formulated part of his teaching before he began his active ministry, and during the forty-five years he spent in active teaching in Northern India he must have thoroughly worked out his system. His disciples were no doubt familiar with metaphysical distinctions, and would be especially careful to keep the philosophical doctrines intact. They were familiar with his method of stating his teachings in Suttas which were easy to remember. So it is not unreasonable to claim that the doctrinal sayings of the canon are really the words of Buddha. They are certainly what his early disciples believed that he said, and represent very nearly his actual thoughts.

Buddha is commonly said to have been atheistic. In a certain sense this was true. He proposed a plan of salva-

tion by which a person could reach the coveted goal in this life entirely by means of his own efforts. Though thus ignoring the gods Buddha never denies their existence. He taught that deities were subject to the law of cause and effect. Everything changes, the worlds where the devas dwell, places of torment, earth, heaven and hells all tend to mend or be destroyed. The "gods are more highly organized and more fortunate beings than men, but like these they also stand within the "Samsara", and if they do not acquire the saving knowledge and thus withdraw from mundane existence must also change their bodies as soon as the power of their formerly won merit is exhausted. They, too, have not escaped the power of death, and they, therefore, stand lower than the man who has attained the highest goal." In the story of his enlightenment, Brahma, the Lord of the Gods, is pictured as pleading with Buddha to spread the new teaching. This story must have come from Buddha's own lips too. It is a common element of all Indian faiths to believe that a man may, through merit or charm become more powerful than the gods. Buddha never claims divinity for himself. He did on one occasion, however, reprove the mendicants at Sānāre for calling him by name. This reverence very naturally grew into worship shortly after the death of the Buddha.

1. Rhys Davids, Early Buddhism. p. 98.
2. F. Garbe, Philosophy of Ancient India., p. 13.
Buddha denied the existence of the soul. Man, he taught, consists of five skandhas or aggregates: Rupa, or material attribute, of which there are twenty-seven; Vedana, feeling or sensation, of which there are three or five; Sanna, perception or recognition, divided into six classes; Sankhara, the fifty-two factors of consciousness; and Vinnana, the eighty-nine elements of cognition. None of these can be called a soul. These skandhas are themselves changing continually. There is no abiding principle within man. In his list of heresies he gives quite a number of heresies regarding the soul, including the belief that the soul was one of the skandhas, and the belief in conscious or unconscious existence after death. The doctrine of the soul and the heresy of individuality are two very prominent heresies recognized by Buddha. Buddha retained the doctrine of transmigration as providing a moral cause for suffering but his denial of the soul's existence left a gap between one life and another which must be bridged. This bridge is one of the strongest proofs that the doctrines of Buddhism were formulated by the master mind of its founder. It is also one of the most stable of all Buddhist doctrines, accepted most universally in all systems developed from the Pitakas. It has the most practical bearing too, on the lives of its

believers. Like the doctrine of transmigration it is not a new doctrine but Buddha made it new by giving it a new content, - a fuller meaning. And this new meaning gave to it life and power for his system. It could hardly have been merely accidental. It is the doctrine of Karma as defined by Rhys Davids: "This is the doctrine that as soon as a sentient being dies a new being is produced in a more or less sinful and material state of existence, according to the Karma, the desert or merit, of the being who had died." The new being is caused by upadana or grasping or by thirst. Sensations originate from contact with the outside world, a yearning or thirst springs from these and the grasping from the thirst. This grasping state of mind causes a new set of skandhas - "The Karma of the previous set of skandhas, or sentient being, then determines the locality, nature and future of the new set of skandhas, of the new sentient being."2

In his first sermon at Benares Buddha gives utterance to some of the most prominent and distinctive of his teachings. As this sermon is brief, and is so universally accepted as the first statement of his doctrines, I shall quote parts of it quite fully. It is found in the Maha Vagga3 immediately after the account of his enlightenment.

2. Ibid.
3. M.V. I - C. Dhamma Nakkhayav attana Sutta.
"There are two extremes, Bhikkhu, which he who has given up the world ought to avoid. What are these two extremes? A life given to pleasures, devoted to pleasures and lusts: this is degrading, sensual, vulgar, ignoble, and profitless; and a life given to mortification: this is painful, ignoble and profitless. By avoiding these two extremes, Bhikkhu, the Tathagata has gained the knowledge of the Middle Path which leads to insight, which leads to wisdom, which conduces to calm, to knowledge, to the Sambodhi, to Nirvana."

"Which, O Bhikkhu, is this Middle Path, the knowledge of which the Tathagata has gained, which leads to insight, etc? It is the holy eightfold Path, namely, Right Belief, Right Aspiration, Right Conduct, Right Means of Livelihood, Right Endeavor, Right Memory, Right Meditation."

"This, O Bhikkhu, is the Noble Truth of Suffering: Birth is suffering; decay is suffering; illness is suffering; death is suffering; presence of objects we hate is suffering; separation from objects we desire is suffering; not to obtain what we desire is suffering; briefly the fivefold clinging to existence is suffering."

"This, O Bhikkhu, is the Noble Truth of the Cause of 

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1. Five skandhas, see above p. 58.
Suffering: Thirst, that leads to rebirth, accompanied by pleasure and lust finding its delight here and there. (This thirst is threefold, namely: thirst for pleasure, thirst for existence, thirst for prosperity.)

"This, O Bhikkhus, is the Noble Truth of the cessation of Suffering: that (it ceases with) the complete cessation of this thirst, - a cessation which consists in the absence of every passion, with the abandoning of this thirst, with the doing away with it, with the deliverance from it, with the destruction of desire."

"This, O Bhikkhus, is the noble Truth of the Path which leads to the cessation of suffering: That eightfold Path, that is to say, Right Belief, Right Aspirations, Right Speech, Right Conduct, Right Means of Livelihood, Right Endeavor, Right Memory, Right Meditation."

Rhys Davids is correct in saying of this first sermon, "There is no doubt, I think, that we have here not only the actual basis of the Buddha's teachings, but also the very words in which he was pleased to state it...... the essential words of the discourse, however shortened, are not likely to have been much altered." Buddha seems to have designed this statement of his doctrines for the great mass of his followers, leaving the deeper instruction for

1. May be annihilation.
2. Rhys Davids, Buddhism, American Lectures. p. 131.
the wiser ones. Copleston thinks Buddha would have called the Four Noble Truths and the Chain of Causation the fundamental elements of his teachings.

The Chain of Causation, or the Twelve Causes, explains in some detail the relation of pain to desire, and in addition carries the analysis back to "ignorance, the first root of all evil." Professor Oldenberg attempts to find a connected meaning in this chain and gives up in despair. But it seems to me that Rhys Davids is more nearly correct in saying "The whole picture of this wheel or chain of causation seems to me to be an attempt at expressing what happens in every human life." There is an interdependence of these links, but not always of the same kind, and it is not necessary to believe that each link is intended to follow the preceding one in time.

Here is the Chain of Causation as recited by Buddha under the Bo-tree at Uruvela: "From ignorance spring the samkharae, (conformations), from the samkharae springs consciousness, from consciousness spring name and form, from name and form spring the six provinces (five senses and mind), from the six provinces springs contact, from contact springs

1. Hopkins, Rel. of Ind. p. 320
2. Copleston, Primitive Buddhism, p. 70.
3. Copleston, Primitive Buddhism, p. 77.
4. Rhys Davids, Buddhism, Am. Lects., p. 160
6. According to Rhys Davids, (Buddhism, Am. Lects, p. 156)
7. "Conformations" mean those immaterial qualities and capabilities which go to make up an individual."
sensation, from sensation springs thirst (of desire), from thirst springs attachment, from attachment springs existence, from existence springs birth, from birth springs old age and death, grief, lamentation, suffering, dejection and despair. Such is the origination of this whole mass of suffering again by the destruction of ignorance, which consists in the complete absence of lust, the sankharas are destroyed, etc. — Such is the cessation of this whole mass of suffering."

The Four Truths are spoken of as the principal doctrine of the Buddha, and in another book of the Maha Vagga, Buddha says, "It is through not understanding and grasping four Noble Truths, O Bhikkhus, that we have had to run so long, to wander so long in this weary path of transmigration, both you and I," and he goes on to name the Four Noble Truths. The Majjhima Nikaya and the Sanyutta Nikaya are almost wholly devoted to the statement and restatement of the Truths or twelve Causes, or the endless turning over of the formulae. These Four Noble Truths, or more particularly perhaps, the idea of impermanence underlying them, can be said to be the basis for all of Buddha's teaching about conduct. This idea of impermanence of all things, the dissolution sooner or later of the elements of all things, has been sufficiently dealt with; I think, in the consideration of the soul. It

1. K.V. I - 7-8.
2. K.V. VI. 29
cannot be shown, of course, that the Noble Truths are applied directly to any particular problem, and the Chain of Causation, whatever it meant to Gotama Buddha is certainly difficult of comprehension to the western mind. Yet this underlying thought can be traced throughout Buddha's system as the shaping principle.

The eightfold Path is nowhere expounded as a system of teaching, though it is often named. Certain phases of it are discussed in other connections. The second, Right Desire, is overlooked by numerous writers who state that Buddha advocated the suppression of all desire. And in one of the Dialogues, Buddha speaks of several Right Desires, — "the desire for emancipation from sensuality, aspiration towards the attainment of love for others, the wish not to injure any living thing, the desire for the eradication of wrong, and for the promotion of right dispositions in one's own heart."

In this eightfold Path there are four stages.1 The entering on the Path, or conversion, which follows companionship with converted people, hearing of the law, enlightened reflection or practice of virtue, When an unconverted man perceives the Four Noble Truths he is converted. In this first stage he becomes freed from the delusion of

self, (3) doubt of the Buddha or his doctrines, and (3) belief in the efficacy of rites and ceremonies.

The second stage is that of those who will return to this world after death. Lust, hatred and delusion are here reduced to a minimum.

The third stage is that of those who will not have to return to this world. (4) Sensuality and (5) malevolence are destroyed during this stage.

The Path of the Arahata is the fourth and final stage. This is the stage of men set free by insight. Here he is freed from (6) desire for rebirth on earth, (7) desire for rebirth in heaven, (8) pride, (9) self-righteousness, and (10) ignorance.

These ten desires, delusions and faults from which he is freed are the "Ten Bonds", or the "Ten Fetters." "Eating Five Hindrances to the Path are given: Sensuality, ill-will, torpor of mind or body, worry and wavering. "When these five Hindrances have been put away within him, he looks upon himself as freed from debt, rid of disease, out of jail, a free man, and secure, and gladness springs up within him, on his realizing that, and joy arises in him thus gladened and so rejoicing, all his frame becomes at ease, and being thus at ease, he is pervaded with a sense of peace and in that peace his heart is stayed."

Four intoxications arise to prevent enlightenment, — mental infatuations arising from sensual pleasures, from the pride of life, from ignorance and from speculation. On the question of speculation, Buddha said, "the entanglement of such speculation is accompanied by sorrow, wrangling, resentment, the fever of excitement. It conduces neither to detachment of heart, nor to freedom from lusts, nor to tranquility, nor to peace, nor to wisdom, nor to insight of the higher stages of the Path, nor to Nirvana."¹

"To have realized the Truth, and traversed the Path; to have broken the Bonds or delusions; put an end to the intoxications; got rid of the hindrances; mastered the craving for metaphysical speculation was to have attained the ideal, the Fruit, as it is called of Arhatship."²

Dr. Copleston³ speaking of the ideal Buddha says: "gazing out like the sage of Lucretius, from the serene heights of wisdom, over the varied world of life, but radiating forth, unlike that sage, rays of kind feeling and love in every direction; calm amid storms because withdrawn into a trance of dreamless unconsciousness; undisturbed because allowing no external object to gain any hold on sense or emotion, or even on thought; owing nothing and wanting nothing; resolute, fearless, firm as a pillar; in utter isolation from

¹. Ryda Davide, Early Buddhism, p. 70, quoted from Dialogues of Buddha. (trans.)
². Ryda Davide, Early Buddhism, p. 73.
all other beings, except by feeling kindly to them all, — 
such is the ideal conqueror of Buddhism. The last point
of vantage by which existence can retain hold on him is
gone, he cannot continue to exist." must also be

What is Nirvana, the goal of the eightfold Path?
The majority of western scholars have taken it to mean
annihilation. Farquhar says no one knows what Buddha
meant by the term,' and in a sense this may be true, yet
it is so important in the Buddhist system that it ought
not to be dismissed so abruptly. Bournouf believes that
"Nirvana, the summum bonum of Buddhism is the absolute
nothing." Hopkins claims three distinct meanings for
the term, — external blissful repose, extinction and ab-
solute annihilation, and the extinction of lust, anger
and ignorance. 3 Max Muller says it may only mean the
extinction of many things, such as selfishness, desire and
sins. 4 Rhys Davids defines it as the "extinction of that
sinful, grasping condition of mind and heart, which would
otherwise, according to the great mystery of Karma, be the
cause of renewed individual existence." That extinction
is to be brought about by, and runs parallel with, the
growth of the opposite condition of mind and heart; and it

2. Quoted by Max Muller, Science of Religion, p. 140.
3. Hopkins, Religion of India, p. 381.
is complete when that opposite condition is reached. Nirvana is therefore the same thing as a sinless, calm state of mind . . . perfect peace, goodness and wisdom." 1

Nirvana, while an end in itself, must also be regarded as a means of escape from the whirlpool of rebirth. In Buddha's last discourse he said, "It is through not understanding and grasping the Four Noble Truths, O Bhikkhus, that we have had to run so long, to wander so long, in this weary path of transmigration." Salvation was the escape from the wheel of life, not merely from sin or hell. It was to be achieved by one's self alone. In the discourse just referred to he said: "Be a refuge to yourselves. Hold fast to the truth as a lamp." 2 His last recorded words were, "Work out your own salvation with diligence." 3

The result of Nirvana, however, must be complete extinction, because desire and error having been driven out nothing would be left to bring about a new set of skandhas of a new individual. One will finally reach Parinirvana, or complete and final extinction. But it was Nirvana, a perfect life, here and now, a state of bliss to be achieved in this life which was praised by Buddha, and the early Buddhists.

1. Rhys Davids, Manual of Buddhism, p. 111. ff. At the end of the chapter, p. 130, ff. he quotes all the passages in Pitakas which contain the word Nirvana.
3. Ibid. II – 33.
4. Ibid. VI – 10.
When asked about the state of the Tathagata after death, Buddha refused to answer. Sometimes he countered with the question, "Where does the fire go?" In answer to a series of questions about the origin of the world, the body life, etc., he said: "Everyone of these is a mere view, is holding a view, belongs to the jungle of mere opinion . . . . . ; it involves pain, vexation, despair and distress; it does not tend to dissatisfaction, or putting away desire, or the destruction or the quieting of it, or to knowledge, or to absolute Buddha - insight, or to Nirvana." Yet heavens and hells are mentioned in the earliest sources, perhaps because of the popular superstitions. Then Buddha taught that many people did not attain full Arahatship in this life, yet did not return to this life. They, of course, might continue their progress in some heaven. There is no authentic record of any definite teaching of Buddha's concerning the future life. He is concerned with this life. The ideal life is to attain Nirvana and to enjoy its bliss now.

During the forty-five years in which Buddha taught in Northern India, his monastic order must have assumed rather definite form. The rules are embedded in the Vinaya, the earliest of the Pitakas. These rules are codified in the Pāṭimokkha, which is found in the beginning of the Vinaya.

Pitaka, though it is really later. It seems to be an attempt to arrange the rules in simpler form. In the Vinaya they are scattered through the text, with introductory remarks as to the occasion of the rule. Apparently the rules were formulated by Buddha as the problems arose, though the Pattiya manual may be the earlier form. It is early anyway, and is fairly constant in all compilations of the canon. If it is the earlier form, the other arrangement was an artificial attempt to give a reason for the promulgation of each rule.

The rules are really prohibitions. These prohibitions in the manual are arranged in groups according to their importance. The first group are the four irremedial faults: sexual intercourse, lying, stealing, and the taking of life. These are recited in the formula of warning addressed to monks at their first admission. Various groups of lesser prohibitions follow, but it will be unnecessary to list them here. The Positive rules are given as the four "Resources". They are, the minimum of dwelling, food, dress, and conliments. Disciplinary rules were made governing the admission of monks into the order, etc. Indulgences were prohibited, yet the monk could use his time very much as he liked. It was a system of liberty as contrasted

1. Maha Vagga, V, -28
with the Brahmanical system of endless details.

The community of nuns is represented as an afterthought of Buddha’s, and a reluctant one at that. He considered it a death blow to the pure religion. "Under whatever doctrine or discipline women are allowed to go out from the household life into the homeless state, that religion will not last long." Eight rules were given for their guidance, principally requiring them to reverence the Bhikkhus. The sisterhood seems to have been weak then and since.

There is one book, the "Therigatha," in the Pitaka collection which contains songs of the "Female Elders". They were commonly called "Bhikkhunis."

Buddha’s teaching was for all beings in the three worlds: deities, men, demons, and brutes. But he did not attempt to apply all of his rules to all beings. He recognized the impossibility of getting all people to join his order, and apparently did not wholly disapprove of the lives of those who did not join the order. While admitting women, and therefore implying that they may attain Nirvana, yet he prefers that they attend to the household. He commended the Brahmans of old because they married for love. The laity could not attain to Nirvana directly. They could get nearer to it, and could hope to attain in

1. Culla Wagga, X - I. S.P.F. XX.
2. Ibid. X - 1 - 6.
some future life, perhaps in an existence in one of the heavens. He seems to have intended the Four Noble Truths for the mass of the people. The precepts for the laity seem to parallel the Truths, rather than to supplement them. On the whole his moral teaching was of a high order, probably the highest ever produced in India.

Because of the widespread notion that Buddhism was a democratic revolt against caste, it will be necessary to examine his teachings in regard to caste. Dr. Copleston's chapter on caste is an important contribution to this subject. He calls our attention to Buddha's references to the misery of low caste, the advantage of high caste and pride of his own high birth. According to tradition all of the Buddhas were Brahmans or Kshatriyas. And most of his followers were of the twice born castes. He ignored the caste system in his own order, and inevitably his teaching would undermine the caste system wherever it was accepted. He says, "Not by birth is one a Brahman, by work one is a Brahman." It is unlikely, as has already been suggested, that the castes were rigid in any sense during Buddha's life. So we may say that Buddha, while not attacking the caste system, did set in motion forces

3. Angut, IV, 8 - 5.
5. Sumj. III - 3,6. All quoted by Copleston.
which ultimately were squarely opposed to the Hindu caste system.

Such in outline, are the essential teachings of Primitive Buddhism. Many elements, of course, have been ignored or only briefly mentioned as this is not intended as an exhaustive study of the doctrines of Buddhism. But the distinctively Buddhist doctrines are those given above. And they show a unity of thought which is remarkable, and which must be ascribed to the moulding influence of a master mind. The different doctrines show a similarity of thought, too, which is a further indication of a common source. Buddha did not originate all of the doctrines which were distinctive in early Buddhism. Many of them can be traced to ancient Hinduism. Writing of this, Mr. Rhys Davids \(^1\) says, "The Buddhist doctrine that salvation from suffering, from mere quantitative existence indefinitely prolonged, depended on choice of a right ideal; that goodness was a function of intelligence; that sacrifice of the heart was better than the sacrifice of bullocks; that the ideal of man was to be sought, not in birth or wealth, or rank, but in wisdom and goodness; that the habitual practice of the rapture of deep reverie was a useful means of ethical training, or acquiring that intellectual insight on which self-culture depends; a great part of the theory of

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Karma; the fundamental doctrine of impermanence of all phenomena, the spirit of unquestioning toleration in all matters of religion and speculation, are all pre-Buddhistic— even the doctrine that salvation can be obtained in this life—Buddha merely added that it could only be enjoyed in this life, that there was no salvation at all beyond the grave."

Again he says:  "Gotama the Buddha was careful in all of his discussions to build on foundations already laid. He— took up and emphasized the best teaching of the past; on certain points only were his doctrines new. The most important and far reaching of these points was his ignoring the then universally accepted theory of a soul; that is a vague and subtle, but real and material entity supposed to reside during life within the body, and to fly out at death, usually through a hole at the top of the head, to continue existence as a separate and conscious individual, elsewhere."

Although many of the doctrines may be traced to earlier sources, yet Buddha gave to them a new content. He revitalized and reshaped them. Sir Monier Williams recognizes this when he says, "Brahmanism has taken from Buddhism—great intensity of belief in the doctrine of trans-

It is this revitalizing of doctrine after doctrine of ancient Hinduism which offers the true explanation of the early success of Buddhism. And this revitalizing must have been the work of a great religious thinker and leader.

In the words of Richard Garbe, "For since the doctrines of all these orders, or of their founders, were essentially alike, and since it will scarcely be attributed to accident that the teaching of Buddha alone developed into a world religion — the only explanation of this is found in the assumption that Buddha's manner of teaching is responsible for the result, and that we have to seek in it the germ of the later expansion of Buddhism."

And it is in his order, which is acknowledged to have been one of the greatest factors in the early success of the religion, that his influence would naturally be most powerful, at least in the beginnings. No other theory will explain the remarkable early success, or the historical strength of this faith based so fully on an older faith, yet so different. Primitive Buddhism then was no tremendous religion complex, developed out of countless sources in the slow process of time, with endless variation of thought in its different elements. It is rather a fairly consistent and unified

1. Monier Williams, Buddhism, p. 80.
2. F. Garbe, Philosophy of Ancient India, p. 81.
system developed by Gotama Buddha in response to the need of his times. It is faulty, yet nevertheless powerful, and has perhaps been adhered to by more people than has any other religious belief.