

The Tendai School founded by Saichō preached that the fundamental doctrine of Buddhism was to be found in the *Saddharmapuṇḍarika* Sutra. He emphasised that the Buddha nature is latent in every person and it was on this point that he attacked Hosso monks of Nārā. According to the Hosso monks only a limited few could become Buddha and most men were precluded from attaining Buddhahood. Saichō, on the contrary, emphasised that all men were potential bodhisattvas and the influence of the new sect exerted on the people was tremendous.

In the meantime, Kūkai, who mastered esoteric Buddhism in China, returned to Japan in 809 A.C. He was hailed as the most distinguished Buddhist personality in the capital. Saichō approached him as a disciple and received the *Kanjo* (esoteric Buddhism) from him to learn esoteric Buddhism. Their mutual relationship, however, was restrained in 816 A.C., when Kūkai refused to send back to him one of his favourite disciples. But the real problem Saicho faced was the defection of his novices to the Hossō sect in Nārā. According to the state-controlled system of ordination prevailed at that time, all novices, irrespective of their sectarian differences, had to go to Nārā to receive higher ordination. Most of these novices who went there did not return as they were enchanted by the fascinating surroundings in those temples. Annoyed by this situation, Saichō petitioned the court between 818-819 A.C., in three works collectively known as *Sange gakushō shiki* (Regulations for Student Monks of Mt. Hiei) seeking permission to conduct higher ordination according to Mahāyāna precepts, thus abandoning the traditional ordination system. He also requested to set up an independent ordination hall on Mt. Hiei, where newly ordained Tendai monks were to follow "for 12 years of uninterrupted study, after which the court would appoint them to official posts as teachers of Buddhism" (Kodensha, *Encyclopaedia of Japan*, Vol. 6, Japan, 1983, p. 365). In 807 A.C. when he of his own, conducted an ordination ceremony (*Ichijo-taikai*) according to Tendai rites, a wave of protests arose from Nārā monks. It was in defence of his stand that he composed, in 820 A.C., his most famous treatise, *Kenkairon*. One of his contentions was that his disciples, who were the adherents of the Mahāyāna precepts, should not submit themselves to Hinayāna rites of ordination prescribed by the Nārā monks. Ultimately the imperial court sanctioned institutional

autonomy to the Tendai sect in 822 A.C. seven days after his death.

As a mark of appreciation of the services rendered by him to religion, the *Denyō Hoshi* was bestowed on him shortly before his death. He was honoured again posthumously in 866 A.C. by the emperor Seiwa, when he conferred on him the title '*Denyō Daishi*', meaning the "Great Teacher who transmits the Teachings".

Saicho is reckoned as one of the two most important Buddhist leaders at the beginning of the Heian period (794-1185 A.C.), the other being Kūkai (s.v.).

C.S. Ranasinghe

SAKADĀGĀMI Is one who 'returns' (*āgāmi*) only 'once' (*sakid*) more to this world before reaching final liberation, due to having gained the second out of the four levels of awakening recognized in early Buddhism.

These four levels of awakening stand in a close relationship to the eradication of the fetters (*samyojana*) that bind one to continued existence in *samsāra*. The stream-enterer, who has gained the first level of awakening, has eradicated the three fetters of personality view (*sakkāyadiṭṭhi*), doubt (*vicikicchā*) and dogmatic clinging to rules and vows (*sīlabbata-parāṃsā*). These three fetters are to be eradicated by 'vision' (*Dhs. 183: dassanena pahātabba*), namely the first vision of *Nibbāna* gained with stream-entry. The next two fetters to be overcome are sensual lust (*kāmarāga*) and ill-will (*vyāpāda*), an eradication which takes place by way of 'development' (*Dhs. 183: bhāvanāya pahātabba*). In regard to this development, the *sakadāgāmi* or 'once-returner' has already made substantial progress, since he or she has considerably weakened both. Their complete eradication will however only be accomplished with the third level of awakening, the attainment of non-return.

The realisation of once-return requires the development of tranquillity (*samatha*) and insight (*vipassanā*), based on a firm foundation of moral conduct (*M. I, 33*). To proceed from stream-entry to once-return and from there to the higher stages of awakening calls for contemplating the five aggregates

as impermanent, unsatisfactory and devoid of a self (S. III, 168). One who takes any formation to be permanent or satisfactory, or else any phenomena to be a self, or else does not look on *Nibbāna* as happiness, will be incapable of gaining once-return or any of the other levels of awakening (A. III, 442).

The development of insight for the gain of once-return is necessarily based on having association with superior persons, hearing the *Dhamma*, developing wise attention and practising in accordance with the *Dhamma* (S. V, 410). Attaining once-return also requires being free from stinginess in regard to one's lodging, family, gains and reputation, together with having a sense of gratitude (A. III, 273). The most important requirement for the gain of once-return, however, is the arising of a *Tathāgata*, since due to his teaching the path to once-return and to the other stages of awakening is revealed to humanity (A. I, 23)

Though a once-returner has made substantial progress when compared to a stream-enterer or a worldling, yet he or she has not yet fully penetrated the teaching (D. II, 252), a feat only accomplished by those who have gained the highest level of awakening: the *arahants*. An *arahant* has also fully developed the five faculties (*indriya*), while a once-returner has done so only to a lesser degree (S. V, 202).

While an *arahant* and a non-returner are endowed with swift wisdom (*javanapaññā*), a once-returner and a stream-enterer still need to develop this quality (S. V, 376). This does however not mean that the wisdom of a once-returner and a stream-enterer are of the same level. According to the *Paṭisambhidā-magga*, the wisdom of a once-returner is in effect far beyond the wisdom of a stream-enterer (*Ps.* II, 194). The difference between these two levels of awakening may also be reflected in the fact that the number of once-returners found among the monk disciples of the Buddha was far less than the number of stream-enterers (S. V, 406).

The once-returner needs to develop not only wisdom in order to progress further, but also concentration. This becomes evident in the *Cūladukkhakkhanda Sutta* (M. I, 91), where the Buddha instructed the *Sakyan Mahānāma* to develop a type of pleasure that is aloof from sensuality in order to go beyond the attraction of sensual pleasures.

According to the commentarial explanation (MA. II, 61), *Mahānāma* was a once-returner and the expression 'pleasure aloof from sensuality' refers to the pleasure of *jhāna* attainment. On the commentarial explanation this passage then indicates that for the once-returner's progress to the higher stages of awakening, deeper levels of concentration need to be developed. The same is confirmed by other discourses, which highlight that while the non-returner has completed the training in morality and concentration, the once-returner has only completed the training in morality, but not yet in concentration (A. I, 232 and A. IV, 380).

That a once-returner need not yet have developed concentration to absorption level can also be deduced by examining the once-returner's level of rebirth. A once-returner is so called because he or she will be reborn once again in 'this world' (i.e. the *rūpaloka* comprising the human world and lower celestial spheres). Someone who has developed concentration up to the ability to attain *jhāna* is however not going to return to 'this world' in the next life (A. II, 126), but will be reborn in a higher heavenly sphere beyond the sensuous field (i.e. the *rūpaloka* or the *arūpaloka*). This certainly does not imply that all once-returners are bereft of deeper levels of concentration. But if all once-returners were at the same time also *jhāna* attainers, the very concept of a 'once-returner' would be superfluous, since not a single once-returner would ever return 'to this world'. Hence the very expression 'once-return' shows that the development of concentration up to the level of *jhāna* attainment cannot be a necessary requirement for gaining this level of awakening.

Though not all once-returners are at the same time also *jhāna* attainers, some once-returners may however have developed substantial levels of deep concentration and even have gained the immaterial attainments. Such once-returners would then fall into the class of being a 'body-witness' (*kāyasakkhī*). If however the faculty of faith should be predominant, the resulting once-returner will be 'freed by faith' (*saddhāvimutta*), and if wisdom is foremost, then such a type of once-returner will belong to those who have 'attained to view' (*ditthippatta*) (A. I, 120).

Not only can once-returners be distinguished according to their predominance in relation to concentration, faith or wisdom, but according to the

commentarial tradition they also fall into five classes related to their progress in different spheres of rebirth (MA. I, 163). Two such types of once-returners are those who have attained once-return in the human world and gain the final goal after either being reborn in the human world or else after being reborn in a heavenly world. A complementary set of two types of once-returners are those who have attained once-return while living in a heavenly world and gain the final goal after either being reborn in the human world or else after being reborn in a heavenly world. The fifth case, according to this commentarial explanation, are those who have attained once-return in the human world, followed by a rebirth in a heavenly realm, followed in turn by another rebirth in the human world during which they too gain final liberation.

The circumstance that there are different types of once-returners who may have emphasized different qualities during their progress on the path to this particular level of awakening caused some confusion in the mind of the lay disciple *Migasālā*. Her father *Purāṇa* had lived a celibate life, while her uncle *Isidatta* had not done so, yet the Buddha declared both to have passed away as once-returners (A. III, 347 and A. V, 138). That both had been able to gain the same level of awakening, the Buddha explained, was because *Isidatta's* stronger wisdom had made up for his comparatively less developed moral conduct.

This passage also shows that the gain of once-return was not the sole domain of monks. The same finds corroboration in other discourses, which report over ninety lay followers from the locality of *Nāika* to have gained once-return (D. II, 93) and an unspecified number of lay followers from the district of *Magadha* to have done the same (D. II, 218).

Gender also has no say in these matters, the Buddha declared to *Ananda*, since women are most certainly capable of gaining once-return, just as they are able to gain any of the other stages of awakening (A. IV, 276). This ability finds its confirmation when the residence of the women of king *Udena* burnt down and a substantial number of women together with queen *Sāmāvatī* were killed. Asked by the monks about their fate, the Buddha proclaimed that several among them had attained once-return, others stream-entry and some even non-return (*Ud.* 79).

The gain of once-return is one of the supreme fruits of living the celibate life (S. V, 26) and it is for the sake of such sublime attainments that the holy life is to be lived under the Buddha (D. I, 156). A monk who gains once-return is a blue lotus recluse (A. II, 89) and will reach the other shore just like a strong young oxen crosses the *Gaṅges* river (M. I, 226). Among mankind immersed in water, the once returner is one who comes up and crosses over (A. IV, 12). See also ANĀGĀMIN, ARAHANT, ARIYAPUGGALA, SOTA PATTI.

Anālayo

SAKKA.

Preamble: Sakka is the chief or the king of gods according to Buddhist Mythology. Pali literature always refer to him as "Sakka" the chief/king of gods (*Sakko Devānaṃ Indo*). A comparative study of the Vedic Indra and the Buddhist Sakka shows that the concept did not originate within Buddhism, but was borrowed from the pre-Buddhist society. All scholars agree that it was Indra the most popular god of the Vedic Aryans that Buddhists have adopted as "Sakka" the chief/king of gods.

Indra as depicted in Vedic Literature:

An examination of Vedic mythology shows that the gods of the Vedic Aryans were none other than personified powers of nature such as fire (*agni*), sun (*sūrya*), wind (*marut*), dawn (*uśhas*), rain (*parjanya*) etc. The gods they conceived were human in appearance or anthropomorphic on the physical side. The Vedic Aryans composed hymns to invoke the nature gods and the collection of hymns was known as the *Rigveda*, the oldest literary collection of Indo Aryan languages and it contains altogether 1,028 hymns addressed to 33 gods, they conceived out of various aspects of nature.

Out of all the gods of the Vedic Aryans, it was Indra¹ primarily the god of thunderstorms who was the most popular and their national god. It is seen that Indra alone is invoked in one fourth of the hymns contained in the *Rigveda* far more than addressed to any other single god. Further more, Indra is more anthropomorphic on the physical side and more invested with mythological imagery than any other

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