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A STUDY OF THE TEACHING REGARDING THE PURE LAND OF AKSOBHYA
BUDDHA IN EARLY MAHAYANA

University of California, Los Angeles

PH.D. 1985

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UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA

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A Study of the Teaching
Regarding the Pure Land of Aksobhya Buddha
in early Mahayana

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy
in
East Asian Languages and Cultures

by


Tai-wo Kwan

1985

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With the approval of the Graduate Division,
this page has been compiled from three separate
signature pages for purposes of filing the dissertation.

University of California, Los Angeles

1985

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

A Study of the Teaching
Regarding the Pure Land of Aksobhya Buddha
in Early Mahayana

by

Tai-wo Kwan

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in

East Asian Languages and Cultures

University of California, Los Angeles, 1985

Professor William R. LaFleur, Chair

This is a historical study of the teaching regarding the pure land of Aksobhya buddha in early Mahayana. The materials used are primarily Chinese translations. This study is focused on the A ch'u fo kuo ching (T313), a translation attributed to the second century translator Lokaksema. In the introductory chapter the nature and scope of this study are briefly discussed. In Chapter Two the problems regarding the translator, the date of translation, and the date of the scripture are dealt with. In Chapter Three an attempt is made to trace this Mahayana

teaching back to pre-Mahayana Buddhist literature. The problem concerning how the career and resolutions of a bodhisattva is related to the actualization of a pure buddha land is discussed. Furthermore, the Buddhist notion of pure land is examined and interpreted in both philosophical and historical perspectives. Chapter Four is an exposition of the scripture regarding the pure land of Aksobhya. In this chapter, the connection between "theory" and "practice" of the Buddhists as well as the significance of pure land teaching in Mahayana are discussed. In Chapter Five, two other teachings of the Mahayana, namely, the prajnaparamita and the pure land of Amitabha, are compared and contrasted with the teaching regarding the pure land of Aksobhya. Chapter Six is a quantitative survey of early Mahayana sutras with Aksobhya Buddha and his buddha land as the focal point. In the concluding chapter, some Buddhists' opinions regarding the meaning and value of the pure land teachings are quoted from the sutras and sastras. These represent a glimpse of the whole array of subsequent justifications of, and philophizing on, the pure land teaching of the Mahayana, which are interesting topics for further investigations.

CHAPTER I: NATURE AND SCOPE OF THIS STUDY

Mahayana is a phenomenon within Buddhism. The teachings regarding the pure land are a phenomenon within Mahayana.^{1.1} And the teaching regarding the pure land of Akṣobhya Buddha, again, is a phenomenon within pure land teachings in general. This study is an investigation with special regard to the pure land of Akṣobhya Buddha in early Mahayana. The approach of this study will be a historical one.

Mahayana, as it is generally understood today, was a new movement of the Buddhist religion that began to take shape around the turn of the Christian era, came to its heyday in the third and fourth century and continued to flourish until the seventh century; before it slowly gave way to a form of esoteric Buddhism, the so called Vajrayana.

The notion of pure land, as will be shown in this study, was a common denominator of Mahayana; all varieties of Mahayana teachings shared the idea. On the other hand, pure land also constituted a special teaching, i.e., a teaching that prescribed and led to a peculiar form of practice. As the documents passed on to us show, the

teaching regarding the pure land arose as one of the earliest developments of Mahayana during the first and second century A. D.

The earliest teaching regarding the pure land comprises two varieties, namely, the pure land of Akṣobhya and the pure land of Amitābha. These two were similar in that they dealt with the same theme; however, as we will see, they were not tied to each other at their earliest stages of development.

For various reasons the cult of Amitābha dominated subsequent developments, becoming more popular and gaining more adherents both inside and outside its place of origin, India. ^{1.2} In East Asia, where the devotion of Amitabha shared with Ch'an (or Zen) the majority of clerical and lay followers, it is almost taken for granted that when people speak of the the pure land practice, they mean the pure land of Amitābha. Even recent scholarly works reflect this tendency: most of those devoted to the treatment of the pure land teaching treat only the pure land of Amitābha, as if the teaching regarding the pure land of Akṣobhya never existed. ^{1.3} It is a fact that the teaching regarding the pure land of Akṣobhya has long given way to that of Amitābha and hence, for missionary purposes, Akṣobhya has been neglected. But all evidence shows that the early Mahayanists treated the pure land of

Akṣobhya with the same degree of sympathy as they did that of Amitābha. ^{1.4} For the sake of historical investigation, the teaching regarding the pure land of Akṣobhya deserves proper attention. Thus, this study attempts the task of laying bare the pure land teaching of Akṣobhya which has been overlooked. In the process of exposing this teaching, we will try to account for the factors that led to the eclipse of Akṣobhya by Amitābha.

As the title indicates, this study concerns an early teaching of the Mahayana which originated and developed in India or somewhere inside its cultural sphere. But the materials on which this study is based are mainly Chinese translations of the Mahayana scriptures. The use of Chinese translations for the study of Indian Buddhism is necessary, not only as a useful expedient, but also as an indispensable source. ^{1.5}

On the whole, Chinese translations cover well over one thousand years of translation activities. From the second half of the second century A. D. on, an abundant number of scriptures was brought to China and translated into Chinese. Translation activities continued until the eleventh century ^{1.6} when Buddhism began to decline and no more literature was produced by Indian Buddhists. During this period of a millennium, translators produced well over 1,600 works of Indian or non-Chinese origins. ^{1.7}

This collection includes the earliest Buddhist scriptures -- the Āgamas, which are less well preserved but represent lineages other than the Nikāyas preserved in Pali. The collection also includes treatises by masters belonging to various Hinayana schools. Most amazing is its inclusion of vinaya texts of five different schools, precious materials for the study of the institutional history of early Buddhism. ^{1.8} For the study of Mahayana sutras, the Chinese translation provides not only a great number of texts, but also translations of earlier and later versions of the same text, thus enabling us to study the history of the texts as well as the development of the doctrines involved. For the study of the first few hundred years of Mahayana Buddhism, Chinese translations are obviously more desirable than the Tibetan ones, which provide, as a rule, only one, and usually the more developed, version of a scripture.

In addition to their quantity and antiquity, there is a feature of the Chinese translations which makes them indispensable for the study of the history of Mahayana Buddhism, especially that of the early period. The earliest extant Chinese translation of a Mahayana sutra can be traced back to 179 A. D. Besides, a majority of the translations came down to us with reliable information about translators and dates of translation. these provide

at least a clue to the general chronological sequence of the Mahayana scriptures. Even though the development of Mahayana Buddhism is still far from being clear and certain, the history of Mahayana Buddhism would have been shrouded in much deeper mystery had the Chinese Buddhists not provided us with chronological data about the translations.

Chinese translations are, after all, translations. One may ask the question: How faithfully do the Chinese translations reflect the meaning of the Indian scriptures? Since different translators in different periods of the history of translation achieved different levels in their efforts to render Indian words into the Chinese tongue, it would be unfair to conclude that Chinese translations are on the whole either reliable or not. But with regard to the earliest translations, with which this study inevitably deals, it may be said that although they may not necessarily be unreliable, they are generally prone to be more obscure and less readable than later ones.

The early Chinese translations or certain translators can become topics for separate studies. Such studies are important in that they not only deepen and broaden our present knowledge of the language of the early Chinese translations, but also serve to caution us against being misled by unskillful translation. But this task,

important as it is, cannot be undertaken by this present study.

Since our purpose is to gain information from the scriptures in translation, we can only bypass the problem concerning the reliability of the Chinese translations. However, future study on the language of the Chinese translations, whether resulting in approval, perhaps with some qualifications, or in condemnation of them, will not nullify the picture of early Mahayana we have drawn. First, we do not have to assume that the Indian language was the only proper language for representing a religious thought. Maybe the meaning of Buddhism was better presented and represented in Chinese. Second, even if we take into consideration the cultural difference built into the two languages, we do not have to exaggerate the incompatibility of the two languages and the inability of Chinese to render adequately the world views as well as the religious experience of the Hindu people. Even though the Chinese words may distort the meaning of some Indian notions, as long as the Chinese presentations of the Buddhist teachings are consistent, they have acquired an independent meaning in themselves.

Since this study is focused on the teaching regarding the pure land of Akṣobhya Buddha, the scripture in its earliest Chinese translation entitled A ch'u fo kuo ching

1.9 will become the focal point of our inquiry. Thus we will first discuss the problems surrounding the date and translator of this early Chinese work. The discussion of the date of the Chinese translation not only gives us information about the translation but also has bearing on when a certain scripture first existed in India. This is important, since the Buddhist scriptures do not provide chronological data and hence these data can be derived only indirectly. We will propose a conjecture on the date of appearance of the Indian counterpart of the A ch'u fo kuo ching after we obtain a conclusion on the date and translator of the Chinese translation. These constitute the subject matter of Chapter Two of this study.

Chapter Three deals with the background of the pure land teaching regarding Akṣobhya. Buddhist pure land teaching is founded on the doctrine of the bodhisattva's career which began to develop in pre-Mahayana literature. Therefore, we will first discuss the peculiar features of the doctrine that were carried on into the Mahayana. In our study, the case involves a certain bodhsattva called Aksobhya who made resolutions and then practised to become a buddha and actualized a pure land. We will undertake a general survey regarding the name of this bodhisattva and buddha as it appeared in the other earlier and contemporary texts. Generally speaking, the pure land can

be considered to be a Buddhist vision of the paradise laden with Buddhist ideals and goals. But since the vision of the pure land was also a cultural product, we can see that the specific imagery of the Buddhist pure land owed much to the traditional Hindu vision of the Uttarakuru and the various levels of the heavens, a vision which Buddhists shared.

Chapter Four is an exposition of the scripture containing the teaching about the pure land of Akṣobhya. Regardless of its changes, Buddhism has always been a religion concerned about salvation and the methods to attain that goal. The teaching regarding the pure land can be regarded as a new method developed in Mahayana to achieve salvation. We will also see that the flexibility of its basic tenets enabled Mahayana teachings to expand themselves to accommodate a wider spectrum of religious conviction and practice, favored by individuals who had different inclinations and capacities.

The teaching regarding the pure land of Akṣobhya was but one of the earliest teachings of the Mahayana. How did this teaching relate to its contemporaries? This question will be answered in part in Chapter Five in which we will compare the pure land teaching concerning Akṣobhya is compared and contrasted with the early teaching of the Prajnaparamita sutra. Whether the pure land teaching

regarding Amitābha postdated or was contemporaneous with that regarding Akṣobhya still remains a subject of scholarly dispute. However, when the problem of dates is left aside, the pure land teaching regarding Akṣobhya can be placed side by side with that regarding Amitābha merely for the sake of contrast and comparisons. In comparing the two teachings, the differences between the teachings in their nature, their characteristics, and the ideals of their practitioners become apparent. These differences throw light on the question about the final victory of Amitābha over Akṣobhya.

Chapter Six is a quantitative survey of the early Mahayana sutras. Taking Akṣobhya Buddha or his buddha land as the focal point, we will attempt to see how individual Mahayanists expressed their opinions and adapted them into the scriptures. About forty Mahayana sutras in Chinese translations will be included in this survey. They belong to the early stage of the development of Mahayana according to our criteria.

This study is concentrated on the earliest development of the Mahayana teaching regarding the pure land with special reference to that of Akṣobhya. As the pure land teachings subsequently made themselves known in Buddhist circles, they inevitably aroused amazement or doubt. Moreover, in East Asia where the cult of Amitābha

prevailed, countless commentaries devoted to the further explication of the teaching are found. Even in India, still in the rather early stage of development of the Mahayana, responses to such teachings are not lacking. These responses, obviously from Buddhist thinkers, appear in the sastras as well as the sutras. In the concluding chapter, some of these views are quoted. These quotations represent but a glimpse of the whole array of subsequent justifications of, and philosophizing on the pure land teaching of the Mahayana.

CHAPTER II. i. THE TRANSLATOR OF THE A CH'U FO KUO CHING

The text on which we focus our study is the A ch'u fo kuo ching (T313 阿閼佛國經), a Chinese translation of a Sanskrit text now no longer extant. According to the Tibetan translation the Sanskrit title of this sutra is generally known as Ārya-akṣobhya-tathāgatasya-vyūha-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra.^{2.1} This title does not correspond to the title of the second century Chinese translation stated above. Nor is it in keeping with the 8th century Chinese translation which has the title Pu tung ju lai hui (T310(6)不動如來會,) or with the variant titles given in the catalogues.^{2.2} Besides, the Chinese version of the Sikṣasamuccaya refers to this sutra as A ch'u ju lai pen yuan shou chueh ching.

The Sanskrit title, however, is not without variance. The Narthang edition of the Tibetan translation gives "Akṣobhyasya-tathāgatau-vyūha" instead of "Akṣobhya-tathagatasya-vyūha" commonly found in the other editions.^{2.4} And the Śikṣasamuccaya refers to this scripture as Akṣobhya-pranidhānānujñāna-sūtra.^{2.5} Therefore it is clear that the title Akṣobhya-tathāgatasya-vyūha was not given to the scripture in the beginning, nor was it known to the Chinese translator in the 2nd century A.D. But

since this title is shown in the majority of Tibetan translations and is confirmed by the phonetic transcription stated in a 13th century Chinese comparative catalogue of Buddhist scriptures, the Chih yuen fa pao han tung chung lu (至元法寶勘同總錄) 2.6 , it can be assumed that this is the title by which this scripture is commonly known in the 13th century. Therefore we use it to refer to the Sanskrit, or Indian form of the scripture.

For the sake of easy reference, the Akṣobhya-tathāgatasya-vyūha will hereafter be abbreviated as Aks.v., denoting the Indian scripture. When referring specifically to the Chinese form, we will use the Chinese title A ch'u fo kuo ching. Of course, it has to be borne in mind that the content of the Indian scripture can only be known, perhaps imperfectly, through its Chinese or Tibetan translations.

The date and authorship of the Aks.v., like all other Mahayana sutras, is still shrouded in mystery. However, modern scholars have been able to draw a historical picture based on the clues and evidence obtained from the Mahayana sutras. Still the picture is like a jigsaw puzzle with some missing parts. A discussion on the date and authorship of the Aks.v. will be left to the next section, in which the general questions regarding the dates of the earliest Mahayana sutras will also be discussed. Here we

will first concentrate on the identity of the translator and the date of the translation, because such historical data from the Chinese sources would usually provide a reliable clue to fixing the date of a given Mahayana sutra.

In the oldest extant catalogue of Chinese translation of the Tripitaka, the Ch'u san tsang chi chi (finished in A.D. 515), the A ch'u fo kuo ching was listed as one of the fourteen translations done by Chih Lou-chia-ch'an, whose translation activities lay between 178 and 189 A.D.

2.7 Chih Lou-chia-ch'an, a Chinese transcription of an Indian name believed to be Lokachema plus the designation of his national origin Chih (an abbreviation of Yueh Chih), is now generally being referred to by its Sanskrit equivalent Lokakṣema. 2.8

Lokakṣema was known in the history of Chinese Buddhism to be the earliest translator of Mahayana sutras that are still extant. And since he entered China during the second half of the second century A.D. 2.9, those sutras known to and translated by him must be either early Mahayana sutras, or early recensions of Mahayana sutras. If the Aks.v. was indeed translated by Lokakṣema we can be certain that it was among the earliest translations of Mahayana sutras. However, that the Aks.v. was a translation work of Lokakṣema is by no means beyond doubt.

Seng-yu (僧祐), the author of the Ch'u san tsang chi chi noted that the Aks.v., together with eight other sutras listed in his catalogue, appeared to have been translated by Lokaksema -- a judgement which Seng-yu borrowed from Tao-an (道安). 2.10

Tao-an (312-385 A.D.) was remembered as an eminent monk who was highly praised by his biographer as having made many contributions to the flourishing of Buddhism in China. 2.11 Among these was his compilation of a catalogue including the translation of Indian scriptures done before 374 A.D. Though his catalogue is no longer extant, Seng-yu used it in assembling his catalogue, which has come down to us as the first extant catalogue of Buddhist scriptures in Chinese translation. There Seng-yu reports that Tao-an, based on his familiarity with the styles of different early translators, conjectured the Aks.v. to have been translated by Lokakṣema.

Thus earliest extant catalogue holds the opinion that the Aks.v. was probably translated by Lokakṣema between the year 178-189 A.D. Interestingly enough, all the catalogues following that of Seng-yu unanimously maintained without doubt that the Aks.v. was actually translated by Lokakṣema. In addition to that, the date of the translation was pushed back three decades. The following table suffices to show the details: 2.12

<u>Catalogue</u>	<u>Finished in</u>	<u>Date of translation</u>	<u>Translator</u>
T2145	518 A.D	178-189 A.D.	probably Lokakṣema
T2146	594	147-149	Lokakṣema
T2034	597	147	Lokakṣema
T2147	602	--	Lokakṣema
T2148	664	147	Lokakṣema
T2149	664	147-189	Lokakṣema
T2150	664	--	Lokakṣema
T2151	after 649	147-186	Lokakṣema
T2153	695	--	Lokakṣema
T2154	730	147	Lokakṣema
T2034	597	147	Lokakṣema

From the above table we can see that beginning with the Fa ching lu (法經錄, T2146) and the Chiang fang lu (長房錄, T2034), both compiled at about the same time, the Aks.v. was recognized to have been translated by Lokakṣema. Besides, the date became earlier--147 or between 147 and 189. Is there any grounds for the later catalogues to justify their claims? Let us first discuss the date.

The two oldest extant sources, namely, Kao seng chuan and ch'u san tsang chi chi, maintain that Lokakṣema's major translation activities lay between 178 and 189.^{2.13} However, Seng-yu, the author of the C'hu san tsang chi chi, adds that Lokakṣema came to Lo-yang, the then capital

of the Han dynasty, during the later period of the reign of Emperor Huan (桓帝).^{2.14} This emperor of the Later Han dynasty reigned from 147 to 167. If Seng-yu is correct, then Lokakṣema had not even arrived at Lo-yang in 147, which is at the early period of Emperor Huan's reign. Fa-ching (法經) and Fei Chiang-fang (費長房) were the first authors after Seng-yu to adopt the date 147 for the time of translation of the Aks.v. How did they arrive at their conclusion? Fa-ching did not give his source. However, Fei Chiang-fang, after stating that Lokakṣema translated the Aks.v for the first time in the first year of Chien-ho (建和, 147 A.D.), went on to note that this information was found in the catalogue of Chu Shih-hsing.^{2.15} The biography of Chu Shih-hsing (朱士行) in the Kao seng chuan does not mention that he had actually compiled a catalogue.^{2.16} But if he had, then the information regarding the earliest translations given by him should be rather reliable since he lived almost a century earlier than Tao-an. We do not know the exact date of Chu Shih-hsing. But the Kao seng chuan has it that in 260 A.D. he departed for Khotan to seek the Sanskrit text of the Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā and later died there.^{2.17} If he had compiled a catalogue, then it must have been finished before 260. And 260 was a time just a century after the appearance of the translations of Lokakṣema. Apparently, Seng-yu did not

have a chance to see the catalogue of Chu Shih-hsing. Therefore he based his data primarily on the catalogue of Tao-an which was finished in 374. It is also quite clear that Tao-an (313-385) did not have a chance to see the catalogue of Chu Shih-hsing, if it ever existed. But did Fei Chiang-fang actually see this catalogue? The answer to this is negative. He only obtained the information from other anonymous catalogues. At the end of his work, the Li tai san pao chi, Fei Chiang-fang gives a list of twenty-four catalogues (including the ones of Chu Shih-hsing and of Tao-an) which are said to have existed but no longer available to him. 2.18

Obviously, the later catalogues, all of which maintain 147 as the date of translation of the Aks.v., adopted the information given by Fei Chiang-fang. But this dating is open to doubt. First, the biographer of Lokaksema, Hui-chiao (慧皎), was not certain if this foreign monk came to China in as early as 147. 2.19 Second, Fei Chiang-fang based his information only indirectly on the catalogue of Chu Shih-hsing, if indeed this catalogue ever existed and was reliable. Third, we can conjecture that even if Lokaksema arrived at China in as early as 147, he would have to spend some time in order to master the Chinese language. On the other hand, had he been sufficiently proficient in Chinese to translate a

sutra in 147, he would have produced more during the period of forty-two years (147-187) which he devoted to translating the Buddhist scriptures. Though the date of the translation of the Aks.v. remains uncertain, it seems very unlikely that it was as early as 147. If the Aks.v. was translated by Lokakṣema, the translation should have taken place during the second half of the second century A.D.

Now let us turn to the question regarding the translator of the A ch'u fo kuo ching. Was the A ch'u fo kuo ching as we see it now translated by Lokakṣema? This question can better be divided into two parts. First, did Lokakṣema ever translate the Aks.v.? Second, is the A ch'u fo kuo ching we now possess the translation of Lokakṣema?

As has been shown above, Seng-yu reported that the A ch'u fo kuo ching of two scrolls known to him was attributed to Lokakṣema by the erudite Tao-an,^{2.20} and only one version of the translation of the Aks.v. seemed to have been known to Seng-yu. However, a few decades later, Fei Chiang-fang began not only to fix the date of translation of the Aks.v. at 147 and maintain without the slightest trace of doubt that this was the work of Lokakṣema, but went on to specify that Lokakṣema's translation was the first one and that there was a second

translation done by Chih tao-ken (支道根 , date unknown) in the year of T'ai-k'ang (太康 , between 280 and 289). He also noted that this second translation, which had the same Chinese title, was very similar to the first one and that this information was obtained from the Catalogue of Miscellaneous Works of the Tsin Period by Chu Tao-chu (竺道祖 , 232-304) which he had at his disposal. ^{2.21} This catalogue of Chu Tao-chu is no longer extant but according to his biography, we know that he lived from 232 to 304 and that he actually compiled a catalogue and this catalogue was also available to his biographer when his biography was written (497-554). ^{2.22} If a Chih Tao-ken ever translated the Aks.v. between 280 and 289, then Tao-chu, who died in 304, should have a first hand knowledge of that event and his report should be reliable. However, it should be noted that this translator, Chih Tao-ken, was not given a biography in the authoritative Kao seng chuan and hence we know nothing about him. According to Fei Chiang-fang, this Chih Tao-ken produced only two translations, totalling two scrolls. ^{2.23} It is perhaps understandable that this minor translator was not given a place in the Biographies of Eminent Monks.

Based on the information given by Tao-chu two versions of translation of the Aks.v. existed side by side

and were available for comparison in the late third century. The following represents how Fei Chiang-fang, who relied on Tao-chu for his information about the translation of the Aks.v., perceived the A ch'u fo kuo ching in the late 6th century:

1) first translation by Lokakṣema in 147. (Based on information provided by Chu Shih-hsing);

2) second translation, very similar to the first one, by Chih Tao-ken between 280 and 289. (Based on information provided by Chu Tao-chu).

What is available now is only one version of A ch'u fo kuo ching ascribed to Lokakṣema. ^{2.24} Was he responsible for the translation of the version we now possess? Prof. Lancaster has pointed out that the translation of some technical terms in the A ch'u fo kuo ching is inconsistent with those in the Tao hsing pan jo ching (the earliest Chinese version of the Astahasrika-prajnaparamita), whose attribution to Lokakṣema raised little doubt. ^{2.25} Though he pointed out the inconsistencies, he was careful not to go so far as to suggest that the A ch'u fo kuo ching we now possess was not translated by Lokakṣema. If the present text is not the original version translated by Lokakṣema, it is most probably the work of that obscure Chih Tao-ken, who might

have only slightly revised the version first put forth by Lokakṣema. Hence, Chih Tao-ken may be held responsible for the inconsistencies found in the present version of the A ch'u fo kuo ching.

On the other hand, however, we can also assume that the present A ch'u fo kuo ching is the original version translated by Lokakṣema. The inconsistencies between the translation of terms would then be attributed to a change of preference during his long career as translator. Copist's change might also be responsible. In the millennium that elapsed from the time the A chu fo kuo ching was first finished until it was printed, scribes copied the work an unknown number of times. They might have thought that a substitution of prevalent terms for archaic ones would help bring the content of the scriptures up-to-date. This has been proved to have happened. Even in the A ch'u fo kuo ching, this kind of example exists. 2.26

While it is easy to substitute new vocabularies in old translations, it is not so easy to change the style of a given translator. One almost has to rewrite the whole text if one wishes to update old translation styles. Copists usually did not venture to do this. Therefore, a close study of the styles together with the vocabularies of different translators would throw light to our present

knowledge of early Chinese translations of Buddhist scriptures. But this is not a proposed task of this study.

Regarding the translator, the above discussion suffices neither to confirm nor to refute the opinion that Lokakṣema was the translator of the version of A ch'u fo kuo ching that we now possess. But since there is no strong evidence to suggest that Lokakṣema was not the translator, we are in a rather safe position to believe that he was, with the recognition that the translation of the technical terms in this sutra is sometimes consistent and sometimes inconsistent with that in the Tao hsing pan jo ching translated by him. The following are some examples:

<u>T313</u>		<u>T224</u>		<u>Equivalent Sanskrit</u>
無上正真道	752b	阿耨多羅 三耶三菩	437a	Anutara-samyak- saṃbodhi
薩云若	752b	薩云若	428a	Sarvajña
弟子緣一覺	752b	阿羅漢辟 支佛	426b	Śrāvaka- pratyekabuddha
僧那僧涅	754b	摩訶僧那 僧涅	427b	Mahāsaṃnāha- saṃnaddha

空	761b	空	457b	śūnyatā
智慧度無極	758b	般若波羅密	429a	Prajñāpāramitā
菩薩道	752a	菩薩道	429a	
如來	753b	恒薩阿竭	429a	Tathāgata
天中天	752a	天中天	469a	Bhagavat

Regarding the date, we have shown that Chinese Buddhists considered the A ch'u fo kuo ching to be one of the earliest translations of Mahayana sutras and that no one doubted its existence in translation in China in the second half of the second century A.D. If the Aks.v. was already existing in translation at that time, its original form must have existed in its place of origin -- India -- during or before the first half of the second century.

Five centuries after it was first translated, the Aks.v. was again translated into Chinese by Bodhiruci between the year 693 and 713, a time when this sutra had already been included in the Ratnakuta collection as the sixth division. ^{2.27} A comparison of this later version with the previous one surprises us by the few changes that have taken place during a long period of five centuries. Though the two versions show differences, the differences can be considered minimal compared to other Mahayana sutras that usually underwent drastic growth and change

during many centuries of development. The later translation also confirms our suspicion that the Sanskrit manuscript used by Lokakṣema was incomplete because it ends abruptly, while the newer one ends in the usual format of the sutras. The missing material amounts to about one thirtieth of the whole text.

Besides the two existing Chinese translations, there is also a Tibetan translation of the Aks.v. This translation is included as the sixth sutra in Dkon-Brtségs section of the Bkaḥ-Ḥgyur. This Tibetan translation is similar in content to the later Chinese translation.

CHAPTER II. ii. ABOUT THE DATE OF THE AKS.V.

No epigraphical materials so far discovered contain any reference to the Aks.v. Besides, like all other Mahayana stras, the Aks.v. is never mentioned in any Indian text of non-Buddhist tradition. Within the Buddhist tradition the Prajñāpāramitā-śāstra attributed to Nāgārjuna and known only in Chinese translation is the first work in which data regarding the Aks.v. appear. In this work of Nāgārjuna, many references are made to the "country", the "world", the "bodhisattvas", and the "career" of Aksobhya Buddha. ^{2.28} Although the title is not specifically mentioned, it is clear that the Prajñāpāramitā-śāstra is referring to an existing text of the Aks.v.

Its recognition in the Prajñājnāpāramitā-śāstra assures us that the Aks.v. existed during the time of Nāgārjuna or prior to the time that this sastra was composed. However, its inclusion in the Prajñāpāramitā-śāstra tells us only that the Aks.v. is one of the forty odd Mahayana sutras referred to or quoted by Nāgārjuna. ^{2.29} To narrow down the scope and try to arrive at a more specific conclusion regarding the date of the Aks.v. we have to move to another source of information, namely, the

date of the earliest Chinese translation of Mahayana sutras.

We have seen in the last section that the Aks.v. is listed in the Ch'u san tsang chi chi among thirteen other sutras attributed to the translator Lokakṣema. We have also concluded that Lokakṣema's translation activities should lie between the years 178 and 189. 2.30 And all the sutras translated by him, therefore, should not date later than the first half of the second century A.D. The 14 translations of Lokakṣema listed in the Chu san tsang chi chi are: 2.31

1. Pan jo tao hsing p'in ching 般若道行品經
2. Shou ling yen ching 首楞嚴經
3. Pan chou san mei ching 般舟三昧經
4. T'un chun t'o lo ching 佉真陀羅經
5. Fang teng pu ku p'in jo wei jih shuo pan jo ching
方等部古品曰遺日說般若經
6. Kuang ming san mei ching 光明三昧經
7. A che shih wang ching 阿闍世王經
8. Pao chi ching 寶積經
9. Wen ch'u ching 問署經
10. Hu pan ni huan ching 胡般泥洹經
11. Tou sa ching 兜沙經
12. A ch'u fo kuo ching 阿闍佛國經
13. Po pen ching 孛本經

14. Nei ch'ang pai p'in ching 內藏百品經

Of these fourteen sutras, numbers 2, 4, 5, 10, and 13 were unavailable at the time when Seng-yu composed the Ch'u san tsang chi chi.^{2.32} Of the rest, the Pan jo tao hsing ching attracts most of our attention, not only because it turned out to be a major scripture in the Mahayana, but also because it is closely affiliated with the Aks.v. in regard to doctrinal matters. We will deal with the differences and similarities of these two sutras in Chapter Five of this study. Let us now concentrate on the problem of the date of the Aks.v. and see if a definite solution to this problem is possible.

As indicated above, a Chinese translation of the Aks.v. appeared in the second half of the second century A.D. Thus it can be assumed that the Aks.v., in written form, already existed in its place of origin before that date, allowing time for the diffusion of a scripture to a remote place. Opinions vary from scholar to scholar as to how much time was needed for the spread of Buddhist scriptures. Thus guessing the date of a specific Mahayana sutra basing on the date of its Chinese translation is not an easy task. Three specific problems arise:

First, even though the date of a Chinese translation reflects a definite date by which a Sanskrit text must

have existed, still there is the question, how long did it take for a sutra to be transmitted to China? It could be within a year, if only the time of delivery is counted. It could be twenty years, if we assume that the monk who brought the text to China travelled slowly and, after settling down in China, took some years to study the Chinese language before he started the translation. It could be fifty years or even more, if we include the time a text needed to gain popularity in India, before someone resolved to bring it to China. Given the tardiness of communication and the danger and hardship along the road, plus the many variables we have not taken into account, the time needed for a text to be known in Chinese translation after it had been compiled in India is indeed difficult to estimate. Some scholars tend to give a shorter time while others tend to think that the time should have been longer. For example, Nakamura Hajime, while attributing the translation of the Larger Sukhāvātīvyūha to Lokakṣema, fixed the date of its Sanskrit text at around 140 A.D.^{2.33} This typifies an optimistic estimation. Since Lokakṣema should have already been in China during the later half of the second century, a text established in 140 A.D. must have spread so fast that it became available to Lokakṣema and consequently rendered into Chinese in just one or two decades.

Obviously, Nakamura's estimate includes only the time needed for the transmission of the text from India to China. He did not take into consideration or underestimated the time needed for an established text to make itself available to the monk bound for China. Taking in view a longer time needed for a text to spread, Akanumu Chizen estimated that the same Sukhāvativyūha appeared between the late first century B.C. to the middle of first century A.D. ^{2.34} -- a difference of over one century between the two estimations.

The above is just an ordinary example to show how different judgements can be, depending on over- or under-estimation of the time needed for the spread of the Buddhist scriptures. In the middle of the road, fifty to a hundred years is the time scholars tend to add on top of the translation date to get the date of the appearance of the Sanskrit text. Thus, as to the date of the Aks.v., Hiragawa Akira suggests the early part of the first century A.D. ^{2.35} Reconciling the extremes, a position in the middle of the road probably is more acceptable; fifty to a hundred years most likely represent the average time needed for the transmission of the texts at that time.

The average time, however, is obviously not the actual time for a particular text to find its way to China. This leads to a second problem. None of the

extant Chinese translations of Mahayana sutras can be dated earlier than 178. The first translations of influential Mahayana sutras like the Astasahasrikā-prajñāpāramitā, the Pratyutpannasamādhi, the Larger Sukhāvatīvyūha, and the Aks.v. are all attributed to Lokakṣema by the catalogues. ^{2.36} Even though one can prove that all these four sutras were translated by this translator and conclude that they are equally old as Chinese translations, one is still not sure if all those texts are as old as each other as Sanskrit texts. Certainly, individual texts took different lengths of time to spread. Some sutras may be older than others. But how can we judge which is older? Here, the dates of Chinese translation are no longer useful if all the texts in question were translated by the same translator. The criteria then may lie in the contents of the different sutras. By checking for the presence or absence of certain ideas, one can make his own judgements, although of course these judgements may be subjective. It is generally held that the Prajñāpāramitā is the oldest among the early Mahayana sutras, but Akanamu holds that the Aks.v. is even older than the Prajñāpāramitā, ^{2.37} while Shizutani adds the Sukhāvatīvyūha to the rank of the Aks.v., labelling them 'original Mahayana' (genshi daijō) and places the Prajñāpāramitā at a later time, namely, 'early Mahayana' (shoki daijō). ^{2.38} Such irreconcilable

views among researchers show that definite and indisputable conclusions regarding the chronology of the early Mahayana sutras are nearly impossible.

Third, underlying the problem of the date of the Mahayana sutras is a more subtle problem. Just what is meant by 'the original Sanskrit text'? Many controversies about the dates of Mahayana sutras actually revolve around the meaning of 'the original Sanskrit text'. Let us discuss this problem by taking as example 'the date of the Sanskrit text of the Tao hsing pan jo ching. If what we are asking about is the Sanskrit version that was used in the Chinese translation, this question is answerable in the sense that it calls forth a definite answer though we might not have enough data at our disposal to arrive at that answer. But if we ask about the original text from which even the earliest extant version owed its existence, this is not a question to which an easy answer can be given. Among the things we do not know about the Mahayana sutras is exactly how they came into existence. We are quite certain that a Mahayana sutra usually was not the result of the literary activities of an individual: Mahayana sutras do not have authors, properly speaking, but only compilers or editors. But how the compilers actually worked with their materials, how the materials came into existence, and for how long the materials had

been passed on before a de facto text was composed, we know almost nothing. Therefore, although we can postulate the existence of the 'primitive form' of the Mahayana sutras, what we have in hand are rather developed texts that are already composites. Certainly, by comparing identical features of the various recensions of the same text we can come close to the essential elements of the 'primitive text' that supposedly gave rise to later development. But we are still not in a position to assert that such a primitive text, as reconstructed, actually existed. The intricacy is, we must pinpoint a specific text before we can even try to date it. With our minimal knowledge of the earliest forms of the Mahayana sutras and how the teachings were actually composed into the scriptures, 'the primitive texts' is only an abstract notion.

Even though the Mahayana sutras do not give specific data as to the time of their composition and authorship some Mahayana sutras provide noteworthy hints regarding these matters. First, as to the date of composition, the following passage is found in a version of the Aṣṭasahasrikā-prajñāpāramitā translated by Kumārajīva into Chinese:

After the extinction of the Tathāgata, Sariputra, this Prajñāpāramitā (sūtra) should spread

to the south. From the south it should spread to the west; from the west it should then spread to the north. Sariputra, when my Dharma is flourishing, there are no signs of extinction... Sariputra, in the last five hundred years, the Prajñāpāramitā (sūtra) should spread far and wide in the north. 2.39

Here, in the form of a prediction by the Buddha, the sutra reveals that after the first five hundred years of the nirvana of the Buddha, it would spread to and become popular in the north. "Five hundred years" is by no means an exact and literal figure because, first of all, it is a rounded figure, and in addition, that the true Dharma would endure in the world for five hundred years was an eschatological myth in the Buddhist tradition. 2.40 Besides these cautions, we should also be careful not to add this '500', even if we take it as a literal expression, to the date of the death of the Buddha held by modern historians. Instead, we must use the date of nirvana handed down in Buddhist tradition, especially that of the Northern Buddhists who generated the movement of the Mahayana. Although the tradition is not unanimous, generally accepted authority takes the mid-sixth century B.C. as the date of the nirvana of the Buddha. 2.41 We can then assume that the earliest Mahayana sutras made their first appearances shortly before the Christian era.

Second, as to the authors of the Mahayana sutras, the following two passages from two early Mahayana sutras can be noted:

Good men and good women, having obtained deep insight into the Perfection of Wisdom, delineated the profound teaching and made scriptures. 2.42

The sramanas and brahmanas..., whether they lived in monasteries, or dwelled in the mountains, under the trees or in the graveyards, all had accumulated insights from their previous births and were able to distinguish between the true and the false. Thus they composed texts of scriptures which rendered service to the world. 2.43

Later Mahayana sutras tended especially to mystify the origin of the Mahayana scriptures. These two Mahayana sutras, however, give us some hints with regard to actual history. They name no individuals, but instead pinpoint groups of people responsible for the production of Mahayana sutras. As the first passage points out, one of these groups was householders. The other groups, as second passage indicates, were the ascetics and the priests. Some of these ascetics and priests might even have been members of the Hinayana schools, but they were attracted by and contributed to the blooming Mahayana.

Moreover, regardless of their status as monks or householders, different people with different inclinations, different longings, different intellectual capacities must have variously contributed to the formation of Mahayana, as is testified by its diversified content.

Although the scripture quoted above referred to these people as producing Mahayana sutras, these writers must have felt very differently toward their works than those writers who think of themselves as creating original literary pieces. Instead of writing down what they thought and felt like the ordinary writer today, the writers of the Mahayana sutras must have firmly believed that they were only writing down what was already there. As they did not think they were responsible for what was said in the scriptures, the attachment of their names to the scriptures was unnecessary. In this sense, the compilers of the Mahayana sutras were not initiators; they were only transmitters. Yet in another sense, they were initiators: the new ideals and new teachings embodied in their compositions touched off a new religious movement. This double role played by the writers of the Mahayana sutras renders the problem of the date of the earliest forms of the sutras even more mysterious and controversial.

CHAPTER III. i. BODHISATTVA

In order to distinguish their teaching from that of the Hinayanists, the Mahayanists labelled their teaching 'the Great Vehicle'. In another context, Mahayanists called their 'Vehicle' the 'Bodhisattva Vehicle'. This was to distinguish themselves from the 'Vehicles' of the Disciples (śrāvaka) and the Self-enlighteners (pratyekabuddha).^{3.1} From this insistence on the part of the Mahayanists, we can see that the teaching regarding the bodhisattva must have played a very important role in the formation of Mahayana. The teaching of the 'Bodhisattva Vehicle' is a teaching about the superior deeds and resolutions of a bodhisattva in his effort to attain enlightenment for himself and make it available for all sentient beings.

To be sure, the term 'bodhisattva' was not first coined and used by Mahayanists. But there is a marked difference in its usage between Mahayanists and traditional Buddhists. This difference lies in that traditional Buddhists used 'the bodhisattva' to refer to the Buddha in his previous lives when he was approaching final enlightenment. To Mahayanists, a bodhisattva is a

name applicable to any one who has resolved to pursue, and is engaging in the pursuit of, buddhahood.

The Aks.v. contains a teaching regarding the career of the Bodhisattva Akṣobhya. Because of the unexcelled qualities of his career, perfect Buddhahood and a superior buddha land were accomplished. This will be discussed in the next chapter. In this chapter, we will delve into earlier developments in the Buddhist tradition which gave rise to Mahayana teachings about bodhisattvas.

The teaching regarding the career of the Bodhisattva was obviously not one that the Buddha gave to his disciples. It was after the death of the Buddha that the idea of the unparalleled greatness of the Buddha and his deeds in his past lives began to sprout in the imagination of the Buddhists. An enormous number of tales regarding the glorious and unparalleled deeds of the Bodhisattva flooded Buddhist circles. ^{3.2} These tales were subsequently compiled, and were variously called by Buddhists Jātaka, Avadāna, and Nidāna even though the subject matter of the three categories of collection is the same. ^{3.3} For the sake of convenience, these tales will hereafter be referred to as Jātaka/avadāna tales and the body of these tales will be called Jātaka/avadāna literature.

The following features of the Jātaka/avadāna tales have special bearing on the understanding of the text of the Aks.v.:

1) The length of time and the buddhas encountered

One of the characteristics of the Jataka/avadana literature is its commitment to describing the length of time the Bodhisattva took for his pursuit of enlightenment and the buddhas he encountered during that long period. The Fo pen hsing chih ching (佛本行集經, T190, which belongs to the Dharmagupta School ^{3.4}) and the Mahāvastu (which belongs to the Lokottaravādin School ^{3.5}) unanimously divide the whole career of the bodhisattva into four periods. They are:

- i) Career according to Nature (prakṛti-caryā)
- ii) Career according to resolution (pranidhāna-caryā)
- iii) Career conforming to resolution (anuloma-caryā)
- iv) Career of no turning back (anirvartana-caryā) ^{3.6}

The first period is a time in which the Bodhisattva was born as a virtuous and cultured human being. He might not have had a chance to encounter a Buddha and receive the Dharma. But according to his inborn nature, he was virtuous and respectful to elders and to the clergy. With such virtuous deeds he was accumulating the necessary merits for his future achievements in the Path.

The second period is a time when the Bodhisattva had resolved to seek after perfect enlightenment. The third period is a time when he, by conforming to his resolution, tenaciously practised the six paramitas. In the last period, his career culminated in his encountering the Buddha Dīpaṃkara and receiving the prediction of Buddhahood, which meant that he would never turn back in his spiritual journey. He was destined to become a buddha. 3.7

How long did it take for the Bodhisattva to go through all these periods before he became perfectly enlightened? According to the Fo pen hsing chih ching, the first three periods took him innumerable asaṅkhyakalpas. After he had received the prediction from Dīpaṃkara, he spent one more asaṅkhyakalpa in which he consecutively encountered fourteen buddhas. Then he obtained buddhahood in his last birth. 3.8

2) The stages of spiritual progress. Alternatively, the Jātaka/avadāna tales present the career of the Bodhisattva in a scheme of different stages. It seems that the scheme of ten stages is commonly held by all the schools since it is mentioned in most of the Jātaka/avadāna literature preserved in Chinese translations. 3.9 In the Sanskrit material, the Mahāvastu gives the following:

- i) durārohā (Difficult to enter)
- ii) baddhamānā (Fastening)
- iii) puṣpamaṇḍitā (Adorned with flowers)
- iv) rucirā (Beautiful)
- v) cittavistarā (Expansion of the heart)
- vi) rūparatī (Lovely)
- vii) durjayā (Difficult to conquer)
- viii) janmanideśa (Ascertainment of birth)
- ix) yaurarājya (Installation as crown prince)
- x) abhiṣeka (Coronation) 3.10

In this scheme of Ten Stages the spiritual progress of the Bodhisattva is described symbolically. It is interesting to note that from the eighth to the tenth stage, the spiritual advancement of the Bodhisattva is compared to the birth, the anointment, and the coronation of a cakravartin (a worldly emperor). Although this list of ten stages is not completely identical to those of the Mahayana, one can see that many similarities exist. Further, it should be noted that some early Mahayana sutras, such as the Aks.v., did not incorporate the stages of progress into their teaching.

3) The program of cultivation of the Bodhisattva. The Six Paramitas is another important feature of the tales. Over an extraordinarily long span of time, the Bodhisattva strenuously cultivated himself, culminating in the

attainment of enlightenment. What was the program of spiritual training that the Bodhisattva underwent? It was the practice of the Pāramitās that ferried the Bodhisattva to the other shore. Different lineages and schools prescribed different sets of pāramitās, numbering four, six, or ten. According to the Chinese version of the Mahāvibhāṣa, the Sarvāstivādins maintained that there are four pāramitās, or perfections:

During a duration of three asaṅkha-kalpas, the Bodhisattva cultivated the Four Pāramitās, namely, the pāramitā of giving, the pāramitā of discipline, the pāramitā of effort, and the pāramitā of prajñā, before he obtained perfect (enlightenment). 3.11

A more popular list of pāramitās contains six. The Fo pen hsiṅg chih ching, the Mahāvastu, the Shou hsiṅg pen chih ching, the Vinaya of the Mūlasarvāstivādin, as well as the Chinese Ekottarāgama all mention the Six Pāramitās.

3.12 These texts belong to different schools, so their agreement in a list of six shows that six was a majority view among the Buddhists even though the content of the six varies. The Mahayanists gave a consistent list of the Six Pāramitās: giving (dāna), discipline (śīla), forbearance (kṣānti), indefatigable effort (vīrya), meditation (dhyāna), and wisdom (prajñā). Some of the

early Mahayana sutras, notably the Prajñāpāramitā, especially emphasize the perfection of wisdom.

The driving force behind one's action is not the intellect, but the will. What prompted a bodhisattva to practise strenuously until the maturation of a period of innumeraable kalpas, was not his wisdom but his invincible determination and resolution to sustain in his difficult practice and obtain enlightenment. With regard to the resolutions of the Bodhisattva, the following characteristics of the Jātaka/avadāna tales can be noted.

The bodhisattva was not only strong in will power, but also went through a formal procedure of making vows. The Mahāvastu cites the vows he took:

"May my store of the root of merit be great enough for all living beings. Whatever evil deed has been done by me, may I alone reap its bitter fruit...

"So may I run my course through the world as He whose mind is rid of attachments does. May I set rolling the wheel of dharma that has not its equal, and is honoured and revered by devas and men." 3.13

The vows of the Bodhisattva include not only his resolution to become enlightened, but also his concern

about sentient beings. This concern can be seen even more clearly in another part of the same text:

"Having thus crossed, may I lead others across; emancipated, may I emancipate others; comforted, may I comfort others, as this exalted Dīpaṃkara now does." 3.14

Such concern for the living beings is important in the formation of the Mahayana teaching regarding the bodhisattvas. As the teaching developed toward what would be called Mahayana, the will to save sentient beings was unleashed from mere concern about their salvation and further embodied in a volition on the part of the bodhisattva to obtain an ideal world for the benefit of sentient beings.

Generally speaking, the resolutions of a Mahayana bodhisattva are of two kinds: the resolutions regarding his own career toward enlightenment, and the resolutions regarding a specific design of a buddha land to be realized as he becomes a buddha. The vows of Akṣobhya Bodhisattva can be grouped into these two categories and they will be dealt with in the next chapter. For now, let us take a brief look at a list of wishes regarding a better world as found in the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra, which is probably the earliest of all Mahayana sutras. In the

oldest Chinese translation of the text, the resolutions run as follows:

"May the destiny of animal in my land (kṣetra) be non-existent as I become buddha in the future...

"May robbers be also non-existent in my land as I become buddha in the future...

"May there be abundant water endowed with the eight qualities...

"May there be grains which are not costly...

"May there neither be bad years nor epidemics in my land as I become buddha." 3.15

These are but modest wishes. Naive as they are, these wishes in an early form of a Mahayana sutra 3.16 represent a modest attempt to design a preferred world to be realized as an essential part of one's buddhahood. Such a world is not already there, having been created by divine power, but a world to be actualized according to the specific resolutions of a bodhisattva. Unlike the bodhisattva in the Prajñāpāramitā Sūtra who is only aiming at a "better world", the bodhisattva in the Aks.v. is putting forth a design of a world that approaches perfection.

But why is a specific will regarding a pure land necessary before one obtains it? Is a pure buddha land an automatic consequence of one's buddhahood that is the culminating result of one's practices? These are questions that, in one way or the other, should have been raised by thinkers of the Mahayana. Actually, Nāgārjuna, in his Ta chih tu lun, proposed an answer to such a question. In the passage on the resolutions regarding buddha lands, he argues:

"The deeds and karma of the bodhisattvas are all pure. Therefore, pure retributions spontaneously follow. Why is it necessary to make resolutions?... [Because] when one cultivates for (future) blessings he may have no target if there are no (specific) resolutions... As the Buddha said: 'One will be born in prosperity and happiness if he longs for prosperity and happiness. One will be born in the heaven if he longs for the heaven.' These are obtained by the resolutions. The case with the bodhisattvas is similar. They have to cultivate in the resolutions of the pure worlds in order to obtain them... Therefore, superior retributions are received based on one's resolutions. Furthermore, since the adorned buddha worlds are no petty things, the merit of one's own practice is insufficient.

Therefore, the power of resolutions is necessary. This is analogous to the power of the ox. Even though adequate for pulling a cart, it cannot go to a destination without a driver. The case of the resolutions regarding the pure worlds is analogous to this. One's retribution is like the ox and one's will the driver. Question: if one does not make any (specific) resolutions, does one obtain no retribution of blessings? Answer: even though obtainable, it is not as desirable as having resolutions (because) resolutions can promote blessings. When one is always mindful of [the aim] of his practice, retribution of blessings increases.

3.17

In his attempt to reconcile the conflict between efforts of cultivation and resolutions Nāgārjuna maintained that both are necessary in order to bring about a pure buddha world. He also compared efforts of cultivation to the power of an ox and resolutions regarding pure buddha worlds to the directions of the driver. And he correctly pointed out that the realization of an adorned buddha world is no small endeavour which can be accomplished by one's own moral and meditational efforts. This leads us to a further question of considerable philosophical interest--a problem regarding

the triangular relation between the resolution, one's efforts of cultivation, and the pure world to be realized.

As one seeks enlightenment, one has to cultivate oneself according to the various programs of cultivation, such as the Eight Noble Paths or the Six Perfections. There is no doubt that one's effort of cultivation is sufficient for the realization of his buddhahood. But is this effort of cultivation also capable of bringing about a pure buddha world? Nāgārjuna has clearly said no and, according to him, this is precisely why we need resolutions. How, after all, resolution functions in bringing about a pure buddha world still remains a question. The following is a possible answer.

By one's moral and meditational efforts one can transform oneself. That is why one can realize enlightenment and obtain buddhahood. But when one wills an ideal world, what is the means of its realization? It cannot be the efforts with which one obtains enlightenment, because those suffice only to transform oneself but are not enough to transform the world. A similar problem has puzzled Buddhists. In the Fo pen hsing ching chi, we find the following discussion:

There were buddhas before Śākyamuni and they all obtained buddhahood and actualized their respective buddha

lands before the most recent Buddha, Śākyamuni, appeared in our world. In terms of buddhahood, all these buddhas were equally perfect. So it can be concluded that they must have all undergone the same strenuous and lengthy process of cultivation. But, suprisingly, they realized different kinds of world, some pure, and some impure. How could the same glorious practices and the same perfect buddhahood result in different buddha worlds, some of which are impure and awful like that of the Buddha Sakyamuni. This must have been due to the differences in their resolutions. Some of them must have deliberately willed an impure world as a part of their buddhahood. Why did they do that? The Buddhist scriptures have a persuasive and rather profound explanation but to discuss it would take us too far afield. What is obvious is that their resolutions only were responsible for the buddha worlds realized. Their practices and buddhahoods were as glorious and perfect as each other and had nothing to do with the kinds of buddha world they obtained. 3.18

But how can an ideal world be built by one's will? Certainly, man can work to rebuild a society. Within limits, man can also manipulate and rearrange things in nature. But this can only be done according to the laws of nature. We cannot fundamentally change the world. We are given a world in which our wills are incompatible with

the course of nature. Although sometimes our wishes come true, nature neither voluntarily complies with our wishes nor goes against them. In short, the course of nature is indifferent to the will of human beings. Even though one's effort can affect the change of nature to a certain degree, a large-scale change such as the actualization of a pure buddha world would require something like a work of creation by a source of power coming from the supernatural.

It seems that the incompatibility between the subjective will and the objective nature renders the Buddhist teaching of pure buddha lands less than credible. However, we do not have to proclaim that the Buddhist teaching regarding the pure lands is not philosophically justifiable and that our understanding of it has to be confined to faith only.

According to the Aks.v., the enlightening bodhisattva does not create a pure world by his supernatural power. The pure world just happens to exist as a response to the original resolutions of the bodhisattva.^{3.19} How is this possible? It is practically impossible, one may say, since the will of man and the course of nature are two different entities. They seldom, if at all, match with each other. However, while recognizing the incompatibility between the will of man and the course of

nature as a fact, we do not have to conclude that this is necessarily so. It is not absolutely impossible that compassionate and selfless resolutions would be matched by a corresponding change in nature. At least the Buddhists so believed.

While some of the conditions in the pure buddha world to which Buddhists aspired can be achieved by the application of modern technology, the Buddhists included them rather in a plan of pure land to be realized naturally. This was due to their lack of technical know-how on the one hand and their emphases on moral and meditational cultivation on the other. Modern man, able to manipulate and exploit nature and increase productivity to satisfy his needs, seems to be approaching one aspect of a pure land--a land of abundance. But although modern man possesses the technical means to render his living environment more satisfying, he does not find that the world he has thus manipulated is as desirable as it should be. Perhaps man, while exploiting nature according to his will, is not asking himself if his will is noble, selfless, and universal.

CHAPTER III. ii. BUDDHA

Akṣobhya is the name of the buddha who is the hero of the Aks.v. In this sutra, Akṣobhya is known as one of the numerous buddhas in the ten directions. And what is markedly Mahayanic is that he is a contemporaneous buddha. Of course, the Aks.v. is a full-fledged Mahayana sutra. So it is not surprising to find the name of a contemporaneous buddha dwelling in one of the innumerable worlds. But it is interesting to note that in the Mahāvastu the name Akṣobhya is also found. This prompts us to wonder if the Aks.v. has any relations with that pre-Mahayana avadāna text.

Akṣobhya is enumerated as one of the hundreds of the buddhas in the Mahāvastu.^{3.20} But in this text, 'Akṣobhya' is neither known as a present buddha nor tied to the eastern direction, to which that buddha is allocated by the Aks.v. and the later Prajñāpāramitā texts. Therefore, the pre-Mahayanic origin of the name of this buddha is still open to doubt, especially when we take into consideration that Akṣobhya as the name of a buddha is not found in any of the various Chinese versions of the Jātaka/avadāna literature.^{3.21} Even though the name of this buddha appears in a Sanskrit text attributed

to one of the pre-Mahayana schools it would be risky to regard everything contained in the Jātaka/avadāna texts as existing before the Mahayana arose.

In the earliest extant Chinese version of the Prajnaparamita (T224, Tao hsing pan jo ching), Akṣobhya is referred to as a contemporaneous buddha. ^{3.22} This matches with the way in which the Aks.v. deals with Akṣobhya. Even though the existence of innumerable buddhas in the ten directions is admitted in the Tao hsing pan jo ching, ^{3.23} only a few names of buddhas are actually mentioned. These names include:

- 1) Tan-wu-chi A-chu-chieh-lo-fo (Dharmodgata-aśugatra-aśukara) 曇無竭阿祝竭羅佛 471a
- 2) T'i-ho-chieh-lo-fo (Dīpaṅkara) 提和竭羅佛 431a, 458b
- 3) Chin-hua-fo (Suvarṇapuspa) 金華佛 458a
- 4) Chia-mo Chia-t'i-t'o P'o-lo-yeh (Kāma-khatidha-phālaya?) 迦摩迦提陀頗羅耶 477b
- 5) Ou-ch'en-na Ch'u-ni-mo 漚辰那拘尼摩 468b
- 6) Lo-lin-na Chang-na-fo (Ratnaketū) 羅鹿隣那 467c
杖那佛
- 7) Chien-t'o-lo-yeh (Gandhālaya) 捷陀羅耶 470c
- 8) A-ch'u-fo (Akṣobhya) 阿閼佛 458a; 467c; 469a; 470a

Of these eight, 1 and 2 are buddhas of the past. 3, 4, and 5 are future buddhas and 6, 7, and 8 are buddhas of the present. Of these three contemporaneous buddhas it is obvious that A-ch'u-fo, or Akṣobhya, is referred to most often. It is interesting to note that this text refers to A-ch'u-fo (Akṣobhya Buddha) or A-ch'u-fo-sa (Akṣobhya-buddha-kṣetra) as if they were so well known that it needed no further explanation. Although it appears that the writer of the Prajñāpāramitā sūtra knew about Akṣobhya from without, this external source was very unlikely the text of the Aks.v. for the following reason: In the Aks.v. the buddha land of Akṣobhya is given the name Abhirati, and this buddha land is allocated to the east. If the writer of the Tao hsing pan jo ching learned about Akṣobhya from the text of the Aks.v., he would have felt free to refer to his pure land by Abhirati instead of just 'the kṣetra of Akṣobhya Buddha' as we find in the sutra. Also it seems that the eastern direction had not been allocated to the buddha land of Akṣobhya at this stage, because no direction is attached to that buddha land in this earliest text of the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra (although the later versions of the text adopted this combination without hesitation). 3.24

The Aks.v. does not give any specific reason for the orientation of the buddha land of Akṣobhya. To be sure,

the buddha land of any buddha must be in a certain space and if the allocation of the direction was arbitrary then the east might be the best direction to begin with. Before assuming the allocation of direction to be an arbitrary choice, however, we can make some observations regarding the meaning of directions in the Buddhist tradition. In the Prajñāpāramitā-sūtra the east is the direction to which Sadāprarudita started off to seek the Perfection of Wisdom. ^{3.25} In view of the fact that the Aks.v. is related to the Prajñāpāramitā doctrinally, we can at least see that both scriptures shared the same preference for the same direction.

In a much later commentary on the teaching regarding the pure land, the Ching t'u an lo chi (淨土安樂集, T1958), we are told that the place where the sun rises is the place for things to originate while the place where the sun sets is the place for them to expire. ^{3.26} This contradistinction is made, of course, to show the difference in the implications of the teachings regarding the pure lands of Akṣobhya and of Amitābha. This may well be an insightful afterthought. But if we conclude that the writer of the Aks.v. deliberately chose the east against the west we might also have to assume that he must at least have had some knowledge of the teaching regarding the pure land of Amitābha. But as will be shown in a

later chapter, such an assumption is not supported by the content of the respective texts.

Lastly, as to the origin of the name 'Akṣobhya', we have noted above that the Mahāvastu is the only existing text attributed to a pre-Mahayanic school which has an occasional reference to that name. In the Chinese versions of the various Jātaka/avadāna literature and in the Sanskrit Lalitavistara, 'Akṣobhya' or 'A-chou-p'o' is found but it is used as the name of a fanciful measure. 3.27 In the Prajñāpāramitā texts Akṣobhya is mentioned in a few places. It is in the Aks.v. that the meaning of the name Akṣobhya is first given:

'O, World-honored One, now I give rise to an aspiration toward all-knowing, and to a resolution to practise the Perfections and attain perfect enlightenment. If until I attain perfect enlightenment, I should give way to anger towards all living beings, I am deceiving the Buddha, the World-honored One...' Because he is unshakable by anger, he is therefore named Unshakable (Akṣobhya). 3.28

Here, a peculiar feature of the Mahayana can be noted. As more and more names of the buddhas and of the bodhisattvas were used, the names of these heroic figures came from different sources. Some of these names may have

come from legendary or mythical figures borrowed from the Hindu or Persian traditions. Some may have been historical persons who were subsequently raised to the rank of the 'gods'. To this, the term 'Euhemerism' can be invoked. Other than these, the Buddhist devised a method of naming heroic bodhisattvas and buddhas according to their most prominent attributes. To Akṣobhya, a name was given commemorating his outstanding moral quality according to the Buddhist ideals.

CHAPTER III. iii. THE PURE LANDS

With regard to the term 'pure land' a Chinese commentator, Hui-yuan (慧遠 , 523-592) made this observation:

With regard to pure land, it is at times called in the sutras as Fo ch'a (佛刹 , buddha-kṣetra), or Fo chieh (佛界 , buddha realm), or Fo kuo (佛國), buddha country), or Fo t'u (佛土 , buddha land). It is also alternatively referred to as Ching ch'a 淨刹 pure kṣetra), Ching chieh (淨界 , pure realm), Ching kuo (淨國 , pure country), or Ching t'u 淨土 pure land). 3.29

Of these alternatives the one most commonly used by Chinese Buddhists was, needless to say, 'pure land'. Indeed, 'pure land' has become so popular that even we have been using it without any clarification. But why did this term particularly win the favor of users? And since so many alternatives are being used in the sutras, are the sutras in special favour of this term too? These are the questions to be answered in the following.

Having checked against the Sanskrit versions of the Larger Sukhāvativyūha and of the Saddharmapuṇḍarīka,

Fujita Kōtatsu pointed out that whenever the Chinese versions of those two sutras give 'pure land' as translation, their Sanskrit counterpart is 'kṣetra'. 3.30 Therefore, he suggested that the Chinese translator of those two sutras might have rendered those terms as an interpretation rather than translating them literally. But can we take this suggestion to imply that no translations of 'pure land' are faithful to their Sanskrit originals? This may be a hasty conclusion. Here let us examine the usage of the various terms designating the 'pure buddha world' in the various Chinese translations.

The title A ch'u fo kuo ching means "The Scripture of the Buddha Country of Akṣobhya". 'Buddha country', however, is used in the title only. In the text, 'buddha country' appears rather as 'fo ch'a', a complete transliteration of 'buddha-kṣetra'. 3.31 When the buddha land of Aksobhya is specifically referred to, the following are given:

A chu fo ch'a 阿閼佛刹

A chu ju lai ch'a 阿閼如來刹

A chu ju lai fo ch'a 3.32 阿閼如來佛刹

Besides these, the 'kṣetra' of Akṣobhya is sometimes referred to by its proper name A-p'i'lo-t'i (Abhirati) or A-pi-lo-t'i shih-chieh (阿比羅提世界). 3.33 This usage pattern is to a large extent paralleled by that of

the Tao hsing pan jo ching, except that Abhirati is not known in this text. ^{3.34} Since it was taken for granted that the buddha land of Akṣobhya is pure, the text of the Aks.v. seems to be unconcerned about attaching the label 'pure' to the name of that kṣetra. But when it comes to a situation in which a 'pure' buddha land has to distinguish itself from an impure one, a label is used. So we find an instance of 'pure buddha land' (清淨佛刹) in the A ch'u fo kuo ching. ^{3.35}

The Chinese version of the Vimalakīrtinirdeśa translated by Chih Ch'ien between 223 and 228 A.D. is probably the first Chinese Buddhist scripture to introduce the term ching ching fo t'u (清淨佛土) which was subsequently abbreviated as 'ching-t'u' and became so popular among Buddhists in China. In this early third century translation, not only is 'pure buddha land' mentioned, but its opposite, 'impure buddha land' is also given. ^{3.36} Besides the translation works of Chih Ch'ien, the term ching t'u and its variants can also be found in the works of the third-century translators like Dharmarakṣa, Mokṣala, and Nieh Tao-cheng. ^{3.37}

It is also interesting to note that Hsuan-tsang, a seventh century translator who has a reputation of translating literally, translated the shorter version of the Sukhāvativyūha as Ch'ing tsan ching t'u fo she shou

ching (稱讚淨土佛攝受經, T367). In this scripture, ching t'u, or the pure land, is used to refer to the buddha land of Amitabha. We do not know if his translation was made from a recension of Sanskrit text bearing the title other than 'Sukhāvativyūha'. But it is clear that 'pure buddha land' was introduced by the translators into China and was used by Chinese Buddhists justifiably, though sometimes as an abbreviated form.

It may be possible that the Sanskrit versions of the sutras used the term 'pure buddha land' less frequently than the Chinese translations did. But the unavailability of relevant Sanskrit materials makes this suggestion far from conclusive. It is hard to support the suspicion that the Chinese translator coined the term pure land. With regard to pure land, an Indian commentator, Nāgārjuna, says in the Ta chih tu lun:

Whenever a buddha land is adorned, it is called a pure buddha land such as is related in the Scripture of A mi t'o (The Sukhāvativyūha), etc. 3.38

Here, the meaning of 'a buddha land' and of 'pure' may need some footnoting. According to the Buddhist tradition, the notion of a buddha land includes not only the physical receptacle for the habitation of sentient

beings but also the time cycle which all existence must go through, as it is said in the Āgama:

The cyclical process of creation and destruction of such a Chilocosm, which is a habitat for sentient beings, is called one buddha kṣetra. 3.39

As to purity and impurity, little clarification is needed. The Buddhists had long recognized that the land on which we reside and on which the Buddha Śākyamuni was born leaves much to be desired. Such a land was labelled impure in the Buddhist tradition and this impurity was further analysed into five categories--the so called five impurities (pañca-kaṣāya). A pure buddha land is one which is free from those five kinds of impurities. 3.40

'Pure buddha land' is a general term. It can be used to refer to any buddha world other than ours, the only qualification being that such a buddha world must be pure. However, the history of Chinese Buddhism shows us that Chinese Buddhists came to use 'pure land' in a particular way. Instead of using ching t'u to refer to any pure buddha world, it is often used as a synonym for the buddha land of Amitābha. This should not be surprising since the teaching regarding the pure land of Amitābha became so popular that it was taken to be the prototype of pure land by Chinese Buddhists. 3.41

The Origin of Pure Land

In the following, three kinds of meaning of the notion of origin will be discussed. First, let us take up the psychological meaning of origin. If one regards the pure lands as unreal, only created by the imaginations and fantasies of Buddhists, one may just walk away and laugh at the foolishness of the people who created such fantasies and those who, inconceivably, are entertained by such fantasies. However, there are serious philosophers and theorists who, though concluding at the outset that these pure lands were created out of people's fantasy, still find it interesting to look into this matter. Because of their point of departure, they are not interested in any aspect of this human phenomenon other than looking into the psyche of man from which imaginations and fantasies spring. Paradises, heavens, or pure lands, which are characteristic of almost all religious traditions, these philosophers affirm, are in one way or the other nothing more than the projections of the aspirations of man. Man projects into the ideal world other than this or after this life the existence of things that he aspires or the non-existence of things that he fears.

As theorists have built the framework, researchers will happily set out to find applications and illustrations in their particular fields of investigation. Therefore, it is not surprising to find Buddhologists who try to explain the phenomenon of the teaching regarding the pure lands as something made up by the Buddhists to satisfy their aspirations. 3.42 A psychological explanation of any sort finds exponents and followers everywhere, in the past and in the present. Here we are not going to dismiss this theory and its application because it is not a wrong theory after all. But it has its limitation and this is what we would like to point out.

The attraction of a psychological explanation of religious phenomena lies in that it succeeds in pointing out the distinction between objects of our perception and that of our imagination. While the cause of our perception of the objective world lies in the material objects whose existence or non-existence does not depend on our wishes, our imagination, on the other hand, is free from the existence of the objects involved; our wishes can always create them. Under this psychological point of view, the pure lands of the Buddhists can be regarded as the creation of their imagination triggered by their aspirations and desires. The pure lands do not really

exist. In other words, they have no counterparts in the objective world we all perceive or are capable of perceiving.

The expounder of the pure land of Akṣobhya was fully aware of this accusation. In advocating the pure land Abhirati as really existing, he did not merely appeal to the words of the Buddha as the authority for the reality of Abhirati. In the Aks.v. the Buddha did not merely tell his audience about the existence of such a paradise of the other world; by his power he actually caused his audience to perceive, that is, to experience for themselves, the pure land Abhirati:

At that time Sariputra spoke to himself: "I wish to see Buddha Akṣobhya together with his land and his disciples." Recognizing the thought of Sariputra, the Tathagata, by his supernatural power, made Sariputra perceive everything (in the land of Akṣobhya) without leaving his seat. 3.43

Then, the Buddha made Sariputra recollect what he had seen in Abhirati, in which people were born equal, all enjoyed the prosperity equalling that found in the heavens. Still, although he presented Abhirati not only as a world related to us by the Buddha but as something actually seen by Sariputra, the expounder of that pure

land might still have difficulty in convincing unbelievers that the pure land of Aksobhya is something real. If one does not believe in the Buddha and Sariputra of the Mahayana scriptures, one can always suspect that the pure lands advocated there are products of the fantasy. Since one does not have a positive experience of them, one has all the reason to believe that the pure lands were just created by the exponents of those scriptures.

It is obvious that the descriptions of the pure land are highly imaginative. The desirable conditions of the pure land are not things that we ordinarily find in the world of ours. But on the other hand, although we cannot find a pure land in our world, we cannot conclude that such a land cannot be found anywhere. That there are numerous worlds is beyond dispute for the Buddhists. As a matter of fact, even non-Buddhists cannot maintain that there is only one world because we are only capable of knowing one. The awful conditions of our natural and social existence are something given, something actual, but by no means the only possible conditions. An impure land with a limited supply of resources, with a harsh climate which forces men to struggle to survive, with animals that kill and live on the death of others, with human beings who have to dominate territories and have to fight to preserve them, is not a necessity. It merely

happens to exist, and we all experience it. On the contrary, a pure land with an abundant supply of resources, with landscape and climate completely matching the desires and wishes of living beings, with individuals whose self-interest does not come into conflict with that of others and hence wars and struggles do not exist, is absolutely possible. Such a world does not have to be an object of our mystical experience; it can be a proper object of our ordinary experience though probably none of us has ever experienced it.

The conditions found in the pure land conceived of by Buddhists are unquestionably possible given the conviction of the existence of innumerable worlds. The only question left is whether such a pure land has ever been actualized in some of those worlds; and if it has been actualized, what was the efficient means by which it was brought into existence. To answer this, we have to turn to a discussion of another meaning of 'origin'.

Unlike the psychological interpretation which tries to account for the "notion" of the pure land by looking into the psyche of people, the Mahayana sutras, taking for granted that the pure lands do exist, are concerned about accounting for the cause of the "existence" of the pure land. What brought about a certain pure land such as Abhirati? In the Aks.v. the answer to this question is:

. . . All these are the excellent qualities of the buddha land of Akṣobhya. How so? As was willed previously (by Buddha Akṣobhya), these excellent qualities are obtained naturally. 3.44

It has been pointed out before that, even though the resolutions were responsible for the creation of a buddha land, these resolutions cannot be taken as the efficient cause of his pure buddha land. His resolutions, rather, were the final cause which acted as a general plan or design for the pure land to be actualized but did not serve as a physical or material means toward the creation of it. Furthermore, his cultivations, such as the practice of the Perfections, also did not serve as the efficient cause of his pure land; they were rather the efficient cause of his buddhahood. The happening of Abhirati, as the text of the Aks.v. points out, followed the course of nature. Whatever means needed for the formation of the excellent conditions of his pure land were provided and executed by nature.

Nature, as we now understand it, is indifferent to our will. It follows its own course. But the world view of the Buddhists stipulates that a point of interaction should exist between man's noble and selfless resolutions and the course of nature. If the teaching regarding the

Buddhist practice is to be understood rationally, this point of interaction must be presupposed.

As we are approaching the third meaning of origin let us first consider this: The pure land itself is by no means an object of scientific investigation. The descriptions of the pure land can never be considered to have the same empirical ground as the descriptions of a certain continent on the planet earth as found in a geography textbook. This is precisely why a psychological explanation is totally indifferent to the pure lands or paradises themselves. What it is interested in, as we pointed out, is the structure of the psyche that perpetually yearns for a pure land.

A psychological explanation worked out by philosophers may involve speculations. But there is also room for sober-minded psychologists to carry out serious empirical studies. Since it is possible to experimentally distinguish between the qualities that are pleasant or unpleasant to the senses, psychologists can develop a list of qualities in which the human psyche rejoices. Such a paradise-ology as a branch of psychology would throw light on the universal elements of all paradises which sprang from individual cultures.

Detailed and scientific as this kind of paradise-ology may be, it still leaves something to be desired in the empirical study of pure land teaching. A psychological approach to the study of religious phenomena generally overlooks or under-estimates the role that individual cultures and histories played in the formation of religious teachings. It is curious to find, for example, that while Buddhists in India regarded wide-streching, level plains as an essential feature of a pure land, Taoists in China envisioned mountainous islands scattered in the ocean as the lands where immortals dwell. Why so drastic a difference? Examining only the universal, super-cultural psychological makeup of human being cannot give us the answer. The human psyche undoubtedly gives rise to notions of paradise. But to study specific teachings which vary from culture to culture, we have to look into the historical background responsible for the formation of such teachings. This is the third meaning of 'origin'.

As regards the historical origin of the pure land of Akṣobhya the legend of the Uttarakuru, or the Northern Country, among the Hindu people is the most significant as a precedent. The importance of the paradise of the northern country to understanding the formation of the pure land of Akṣobhya lies not only in the similarities

between the two, but also in the fact that the writer of the Aks.v. made reference to that paradise by name. In the Aks.v., we find this statement:

It is like the people of the Northern Country who have no kings; in the same manner, Sariputra, the buddha land of Akṣobhya-tathagata . . . has no kings.
3.45

That there is no ruler in the Uttarakuru is a statement found in the Aitareya brahmana:

Hence all people living in northern countries, such as the Uttarakurus, Uttaramadras, are inaugurated for living without a king. 3.46

What were the conditions of the Uttarakuru? Let us first examine the version narrated in the Mahābharata (vi.7.):

On the south of the Nila mountain and the northern side of Meru are the sacred Northern Kurus, which are the residence of the Siddhas. The trees there bear sweet fruits, and are always covered with fruits and flowers. All the flowers there are fragrant, and the fruits of excellent tastes. Some of the trees, again, yield fruit according to the will (of the plucker). There are, again some other

trees that are called milk-yielding. These always yield milk and six different kinds of food of the taste of amṛta itself. Those trees also yield clothes, and in their fruits are ornaments (for the use of man). The entire land abounds with fine golden sands. A portion of the region there, extremely delightful, is seen to be possessed of the radiance of the ruby, or of the lapis lazuli, or other jewels and gems. All the seasons there are agreeable, and nowhere does the land become miry. The tanks are charming, delicious, and full of crystal water. The men born there are dropped from the world of the celestial. All are of pure birth, and all are handsome in appearance. There twins (of opposite sexes) are born, and the women resemble Apsaras in beauty. They drink the milk, sweet as amṛta, of those milk-yielding trees. And the twins born there grow up equally. Both possessed of equal beauty, both endued with similar virtues, and both equally dressed, both grow up in love like couples of cakravakas. The people of that country are free from illness, and are always cheerful. Ten thousand and ten hundred years they live, and never abandon one another. A class of bird called bharunda, furnished with sharp beaks and possessed of great strength,

take them up when dead and throw them into mountain caves. 3.47

Now let us turn to a Buddhist version of the legend regarding the Northern Country. The Chinese translation gives several versions of this legend, each varying in degree of expansion and elaboration. The following is a paraphrase of the earliest Chinese version of the legend found in a scripture entitled Ta lou t'an ching (T23) translated by Fa-li (法立) and Fa-chu (法炬) between 290 and 307. 3.48

The Northern Country is 400,000 leagues in length and in breadth. There are numerous mountains. Along the banks of the smooth-flowing river there are various kinds of trees and flowers. At the two banks there are boats adorned with the four kinds of gem.

At the center of the Northern Country there is a bathing pond named Wu nan t'o. Its length and breadth are all 4,000 leagues. The water of the pond is cool, soft and pure and is surrounded by walls of seven layers. The bed of the pond is filled with golden sand, and its stairs are ornamented with the four kinds of gem. In the pond there grow lotuses of different color. When the stems of these lotuses are

broken, they exude juice like milk, which tastes like honey.

At the four quarters of the pond there are four smooth-flowing rivers. Along the banks of the rivers, which are made of gems, there grow various kinds of trees.

In the east of the bathing pond there is a garden called Hsien-hsiang. It is surrounded by seven layers of railing, seven layers of curtains, and seven rows of trees. These are all made of the four kinds of gem. In the garden there are trees that produce perfume, trees that produce jewelries, trees that produce clothes, trees that produces fruits, trees that produce tools and trees that produce musical instruments. The height of these trees vary from one to seven leagues.

In the south, the west, and the north there are also gardens which are similar to that in the east.

In the Northern Country there grows a kind of tree whose branches intertwine so as to provide shelter and people live underneath. There, man and woman do not live with each other (to form families). There are pure grains of rice produced naturally and need no cultivation. Those who want food can just

take this tasty rice to cook. A kind of pearl called Yen wei serves as fuel. When it is put under the pan, its radiance suffices to cook the rice. People from everywhere all come to eat the rice, which will never be exhausted.

There are neither robbers nor violent people. Nobody ever speaks of 'my wife'. Nor are there people who till the field.

When a man and a woman have sexual desire, they just have to stare at each other silently. While the woman follows, the man would lead her into the garden and enjoy sexual pleasure there for two days, three days, or up to seven days. After that, they depart each other as they wish and do not belong to each other.

Women are only pregnant for seven or eight days. When the baby, whether boy or girl, is born, it will be placed on the roads at the four boundaries. People coming from all quarters will let it suck their fingers, which give milk. After seven days, the infant will grow up and looks like a person at his twenties in the Jambudvīpa.

Rain clouds that gather at late night rain and pour water of eight qualities. The water humidifies the ground so that it will not become dusty.

The land surface of the Northern Country is covered with grass and trees nourished by flowing water. The leaves of the trees never shed and the trees always bear fruits. The grass is green, resembling the color of the peacock feather. When people trample on the grass, it collapses about four inches. And when one lifts his foot, the grass rebounds as it was before.

When the people in the Northern Country wish to play in the gardens, they get there by boats and arrive at the rims of the gardens. After they have played and bathed at the bank of the river they can obtain perfume from the perfume trees, clothes from the clothes trees, jewelries from the jewelry trees, tools from the tool trees, fruits from the fruit trees, and musical instruments from the instrument trees and then go into the garden. When the weather is warm, a breeze will sweep the ground of the garden. When I-lan wind comes, flowers of the trees fall on the ground to a depth reaching one's knee. By this time, all the people in the Northern Country come to play in Garden Hsian-hsiang for two, three,

or seven days. After that, each of them leaves freely as they wish, belonging to no one else and no one else belongs to him.

Throughout their entire life, the people of the Northern Country would have reddish dark hair. They are all eight foot tall and have the same complexion regardless of male or female. The people there all practise the Ten Virtues without being taught to do so. They live a life span of one thousand years without exception. After they die, they can get high births in the various heavens. When their life span in the heavens expires, they can be born in the wealthy and powerful families such as those of the brahman and of the worthies.

The excrement of the people of the Northern Country is covered up by the ground itself. Therefore, the ground is always clean.

When people die, they are dressed beautifully. There, people do not mourn for the death of others. The corpses are then carried to the boundary roads where a kind of bird called Wu-che would come to carry them out of the Northern Country.

There are similarities and differences between the Brahmanic and the Buddhist versions of the legend of the

Northern Country. In regard to the pleasantness of the natural environment, the abundance of food and supply, the non-existence of vice and misery, and the cheerfulness of its residents, the two versions generally agree with each other. But there is an outstanding difference, namely in the social structures each envisions. The Buddhist version presents a society where the institution of family does not exist. The opposite sexes mate freely. They do not have the idea of spouse. And hence their offspring are not brought up in family settings. The Brahmanic version, on the other hand, tends toward a monogamous family structure. We can see that the Buddhist version idealizes a separation of sexuality and family while the Brahmanic one praises the equality between couples (born twins, equal in everything). This might have been partially due to different social problems that Buddhists and Brahmans faced.

The Northern Country is an earthly paradise endowed with all the ideal conditions in which human beings live pleasantly because of the generosity of nature. Indeed, everything there is natural and almost nothing can be considered cultural. People there do not have to make tools in order to satisfy their needs more efficiently. Nor do they have to organize into social groups in order to protect their belongings; indeed they have no

"belongings". Moreover, they do not have to exert rigorous moral effort to be virtuous because they are naturally free from the tendency to commit evil deeds. In short, they do not force themselves to do some things or refrain from doing others; they just do whatever pleases them and everything comes out satisfactorily.

Such a paradise, desirable as it may seem, is not totally accepted by the expounder of the Aks.v. Although the pure land Abhirati resembles the Northern Country, especially with regard to the favorable conditions which endow people with freedom from want as well as from fear, Abhirati is a pure buddha land where people make conscious and rigorous effort to achieve what they consider most valuable. This peculiar feature of a Buddhist pure land will be discussed in the following chapter; here let us go on to examine another source of inspiration for Buddhist conceptions of a pure land.

Besides the Northern Country, which is an earthly paradise, the excellent conditions of the Thirty-three Heaven is also mentioned in the Aks.v. ^{3.49} The six levels of the heaven, within the domain of the Concupiscence World (Kāma-dhātu) where one's desires can be satisfied easily, should naturally have become the object of aspiration for the people in the mundane world. Located above the earth, the concupiscence heavens are

undoubtedly superior in many respects to the earthly paradise, the Northern Kuru. The Buddhist account of the six levels of the heaven of the concupiscence world is found in the same texts that contain descriptions of the Uttarakuru. ^{3.50} On the whole, the heavens are described in the same strain as the Northern Country though the former is much better than the latter in many respects, for example their brightness and the body height of the gods (80 leagues in the Yama heaven and up to 640 leagues in the Paranirmita-vaśa-vartin heaven). What is more fantastic is that, as the heaven gets higher, the desires of the resident gods can be satisfied even more easily. The people in the Jambu continent satisfy their sexual desires by contacts of the body, as is true for the people in the Northern Country. But we are told further that:

The asuras, just by keeping close to each other, accomplish their sexual intercourse through the mediation of the air. The Catur-mahārāja-kāyika gods are similar. The Yama gods accomplish their sexual intercourse only by staying in the partner's vicinity. The Tuṣita gods accomplish their sexual intercourse by holding hands; the Nirmāṇa-rataya gods by staring; the Paranirmita-vaśavartin gods by momentarily looking. ^{3.51}

Another version of the text claims more for the Paranirmita-vaśavartin gods: even as they give rise to a sexual desire, it is immediately satisfied. 3.52

Taken as a group, the heavens of the concupiscence world are different from the Northern Country. Most of the differences, however, are only a matter of degree; in regard to providing satisfying conditions, they are consistent. There is, however, one fundamental difference between the Northern Country and the heavens. Let us examine the following descriptions: 3.53

(In the Trayas-trimsa heaven) there is the city of Sakrendra called Sudarśana. Its length and width are all 2,400,000 leagues. It is beautifully surrounded by walls, seven layers of railings, seven layers of curtains and seven rows of trees, which are all ornamented with seven kinds of gem . . .

The walls are 2,400 leagues high and 1,200 leagues thick. The doors are 2,400 leagues high and 1,200 leagues wide. At an interval of 20,000 leagues is placed a door, each of which is guarded by 500 demons.

In the city of Sudarśana, there is a dragon palace, . . . made of seven kinds of gem.

In the city of Sudarśana, there is a consultation chamber for the King of Gods of the Trāyastriṃśa heaven, . . . made of seven kinds of gem.

(In the palace) there is a throne of Śakrendra . . . made of seven kinds of gem.

In the north of the palace there is an imperial garden . . . made of seven kinds of gem.

In the east of the palace there is an imperial garden . . . made of seven kinds of gem.

In the south . . . the west . . . (there are gardens of Śakrendra) . . ., all made of seven kinds of gem.

Outside the palace there are two boulevards leading to the harem of Śakrendra. There are also two boulevards leading to the garden . . ., to the bathing pond . . ., and to the palace of the dragon king.

Certainly, the luster of the gemstones and the beauty of the heavens make them much more luxurious than the Northern Country. But what strike the readers most is that, unlike the Northern Country which is an a naive and natural paradise, the scenes in the heavens parallel the

kingly luxuries of our mundane world (although far excelling them in degree). The people in the Northern Country have no social institutions, nor even anything man-made. The heaven of Indra, however, has not only walls, palaces, and boulevards in a city, but also dancing girls and concubines of the King of the gods. Together with his guards and subjects, these form a hierarchical society. Such a society, with all its man-made objects, interestingly reflects what we have in the mundane, civilized world.

Thus, the Northern Country idealizes a rural setting for our living environment, the descriptions of the heavens praises the urbanized or civilized way of life. These contradictory ideals were adopted by the two versions of the teaching regarding the pure land in early Mahayana. While the Aks.v. takes a rural setting as the ideal condition of pure land and praises individual and ascetic mode of practice, the Sukhāvativyūha, in which the pure land of Buddha Amitābha is described, favors a pure land in which the social and cultic mode of practice is especially appropriate. This interesting distinction will be exposed in more detail in the following chapters.

CHAPTER IV. i. AN OUTLINE OF THE SCRIPTURE

The early Chinese translation (2nd century translation) of the Aks.v. divides the text into five chapters:

- 1) Resolutions and Prediction of Buddhahood
- 2) The Excellent Qualities of the Buddha Land of Akṣobhya
- 3) The Accomplishments of the Disciples
- 4) The Accomplishments of the Bodhisattvas
- 5) The Parinirvāṇa (of Akṣobhya) 4.1

The 8th century Chinese translation done by Bodhiruci further splits chapter five of the text into two chapters. The chapter titles of this translation are as follow:

- 1) The Glory of Prediction
- 2) The Glory of the Merit of the Buddha Land
- 3) The Voice-Hearers
- 4) The Bodhisattvas
- 5) The Merit of Nirvana
- 6) The Causes and Conditions for Rebirth 4.2

Since the Tibetan translation does not divide the text into chapters, it is not clear whether the Chinese

chapter divisions are those found in the original. However, the chapter divisions in both Chinese translations are justified and satisfactory. The difference between the two Chinese translations lies only in that the 8th century translation further divide the 5th chapter of the 2nd century translation into two chapters. Since this further division does not represent a difference in the material covered but only a more preferable categorization of the material, the six chapters classification will be followed even though the text I use is the 2nd century Chinese translation.

The scripture begins with a description of the situation in which the Buddha was to give a sermon. In this sutra, the place was Mt. Gṛdhakūṭa. The size of the audience was 1,250 bhiksus, which was a relatively small audience compared to those mentioned in the other Mahayana sutras.

Sariputra came forward. After briefly stating that the imitation of the great vows and careers of the past bodhisattvas was a sure way to perfect enlightenment, he requested the Buddha to explicate, i) the resolutions, ii) the pure practice, and iii) the Girding on Armor of Indefatigable Effort (Sannāha-sannaddha) of those bodhisattvas.

As a reply to Sariputra's question, the Buddha related as follows:

In the east there was a world called Abhirati. The Buddha there was called Big Eye. He preached the Dharma, of which the Six Perfections were the foremost. There came forth a bhikṣu who said that he wished to make vows and practise as the past bodhisattvas. Buddha Big Eye told this bhikṣu that it was difficult to make vows and practise according to the teaching regarding the bodhisattvas because a bodhisattva should not give way to anger towards any living being.

In order to insure his truthfulness, the bhikṣu solemnly gave rise to a list of resolutions, of two kinds. First were the resolutions regarding his own practice. The most fundamental of these was his resolution not to become angry and for this reason he obtained the title Unshakable (Akṣobhya). Second were the resolutions regarding the pure land he willed to achieve.

After the various gods of the heaven had praised the extraordinary vows and unusual practice of Akṣobhya Bodhisattva, the Buddha confirmed that his vows were not paralleled by any in the Bhadra kalpa. Then the Buddha bestowed a prediction of Buddhahood upon Akṣobhya Bodhisattva. As the Buddha was bestowing the prediction

of Buddhahood, many miraculous and auspicious happenings appeared throughout the Chilocosm.

The Buddha also told Sariputra that Aksobhya Bodhisattva was so firm with his resolutions that he resolved thus: 'Even if the void may change, my vows should never alter.' Due to his indestructible vows, he had realized perfect enlightenment and presently resided in the world Abhirati.

The Buddha went on to relate the glorious bodhisattva career of Aksobhya, emphasizing especially his generosity in giving. As a bodhisattva, Aksobhya practised purified conduct (brahma-carya) and encountered buddhas in every birth of his and from them he received the Dharma. His practice consisted mainly of the Perfections, very seldom of the teachings of the Disciples.

The second chapter basically concerns the description of the pure buddha land accomplished by Aksobhya. Since a buddha land was created at the same time as his buddhahood was accomplished, the miraculous and auspicious happenings surrounding the achievement of buddhahood of Aksobhya were meticulously described. Then came the descriptions of the buddha land of Aksobhya. As the enumeration of the excellent conditions of the buddha land of Aksobhya proceed, the scripture never forgets to point out that all

these excellent conditions were a natural consequence of the past resolutions of Aksobhya.

Since the conditions of that pure land were so desirable, there should be many people who aspire to be reborn there. As a reminder, the Buddha in the scripture emphasized that it was not due to greed that one could be reborn there. It was owing to virtuous deeds and purified practice that one could be reborn in that buddha land.

Although the third and the fourth chapters deal with the Disciples and the bodhisattvas respectively, they should be considered a continuation of the description of the pure land. The ideal conditions of the pure land do not consist only of the physical environment, but also of the situations which made possible the certain and fast accomplishment of buddhahood. Therefore, chapter three of the scripture indulges in a detailed description of the superior conditions for practice and the perfect accomplishment of the practitioners of the teachings for the Disciples. Furthermore, in chapter four, the ideal conditions for the practitioners of the bodhisattva career are described. The readers would of course detect that the descriptions were always so laid out as to contrast with the undesirable conditions in this ordinary world.

The miraculous and auspicious happenings synchronous with the nirvana of Buddha Aksobhya is the subject of chapter five of the scripture. According to the tradition, a buddha would confer a prediction of buddhahood on a successor before he enters nirvana. In this scripture, a certain bodhisattva called Gandhahastin was the one who received the prediction. As he becomes buddha in the future, he will have the title Suvarna-padma (Golden Lotus). His buddha land as well as his disciples will equal those of Aksobhya.

After the nirvana of Buddha Aksobhya the true Dharma would prevail in his buddha land for a certain period, a period of hundred of thousands of kalpas. Then the true Dharma would be extinguished.

The last chapter of the scripture deals with the causes and conditions for rebirth in the buddha land of Aksobhya. These include, first of all, the imitation of the bodhisattva career of Aksobhya. Second, besides taking the practice of Aksobhya as a model, one should always will to be born in his buddha land. Among the various practices of Aksobhya, the Six Perfections are the most important. As one practises the Six Perfections and aspires for perfect enlightenment and being with Buddha Aksobhya, one could be reborn in his buddha land. Besides practice and will, there is a third condition with which

one can be reborn in the buddha land of Aksobhya. This is the hearing of the names of the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha. Moreover, the hearing of the name of the scripture, i.e., the Aks.v., would bring about an inconceivable result--the rebirth in the buddha land of Aksobhya.

CHAPTER IV. ii. AKSOBHYA AS BODHISATTVA

This bodhisattva of the Mahayana obtained his name in a dramatic way. Before he came forth to Buddha Big Eye, he was known just as 'a certain bodhisattva'. He obtained his name because of his fundamental resolution--not to give way to anger at any living being. Aksobhya, "the Unshakable", therefore, was the name he obtained. Throughout his bodhisattva career and his buddhahood he had this name. This is quite different from most Mahayana sutras in which a bodhisattva who received a prediction of buddhahood would receive a different name as he becomes a buddha.

The characteristic features that mark a bodhisattva of the Mahayana are his resolutions and his practice. Here we shall deal first with the resolutions of and then the career of Bodhisattva Aksobhya. As mentioned above, the fundamental vow of Aksobhya was his determination to be free from anger. He made a series of further vows, which can be classified into two groups. First is the group of vows regarding his practice, i.e., a specific program, a specific agenda, that he designed for himself to follow throughout his bodhisattva career. Second is the group of vows regarding the buddha land he willed to

obtain. These vows prescribe the special features that he wanted to be present in his buddha land as he became a buddha.

Unlike later sutras, the Aks.v. did not itemize the number of resolutions neatly so as to make them easier for the readers to count and memorize. By different standards, one can obtain different numbers of the resolutions. Here we do not attempt to assign numbers to resolutions but they are not presented without regular pattern in the text. ^{4.3} Lokaksema's translation gives the resolutions regarding practice in groups of five as follows:

With words of truth the bodhisattva solemnly declared that he should be considered to have deceived the Bhagavat if he should:

- 1) give rise to anger towards any living being;
- 2) will what is willed by the Sravakas and the Pratyekabuddhas;
- 3) have lustful desires;
- 4) be in the mental state of drowsiness, excitability and sluggishness;
- 5) be in the state of doubtfulness.

He should also be considered to have deceived the Bhagavat should he:

- 1) give rise to an intention of killing;
- 2) give rise to an intention of stealing;
- 3) think about impure practice;
- 4) give rise to a thought of lie;
- 5) give rise to a thought of remorse.

- 1) give rise to a thought of reviling;
- 2) give rise to a thought of coarse speech;
- 3) be in a state of foolishness;
- 4) give rise to a thought of sexual talk;
- 5) give rise to a thought of unorthodox view.

This bodhisattva declared further that he should be considered to have deceived the Bhagavat should he not:

- act according to his own words;
- have speech conducive to practice and sarvajna;
- become an ascetic in every birth of his;
- wear the garment made of cast-off rags and the three garments of monks after becoming an ascetic;

4.4

- preach the Dharma for others;
- become a Dharma-teacher;
- follow what are taught by noble practices;
- carry out those practices with profound wisdom;
- live on foods received as alms;
- meditate under the tree;

- have dignity in the manner of walking, sitting, and standing;
- refrain from committing the basic evils, or from indulging in vainful, deceptive, libelous, and slanderous speeches;
- refrain from making unnecessary movements such as raising hands during preaching;
- render respect to other bodhisattvas;
- refrain from making offering to heretic masters;
- refrain from sitting when receiving a sermon;
- refrain from discriminating the kinds of persons to receive his giving of property;
- refrain from discriminating the places to make his givings;
- refrain from discriminating the kinds of persons to receive his giving of Dharma;
- save those who are being beaten and imprisoned even at the cost of his own life.

It is interesting to note that though the bodhisattva made a long list of vows pertaining to his future career, he made only three pertaining to the design of his future buddha land. There are scholars who think that the vows regarding pure land number 18, 20, or 21 while those pertaining to practice count only 12.^{4.5} According to

our criteria, however, the vows pertaining to pure land per se number only three as follows:

1) Should the monks, nuns, laymen, and laywomen in his future buddha land be sinful or should there be slanders about sins he should be considered to have deceived the Bhagavat.

2) The priestly bodhisattvas should not have nocturnal emission since he himself resolved not to submit to nocturnal emission during his bodhisattva career.

3) The women in his future buddha land should not have foul discharge.

Although the vows of Bodhisattva Aksobhya amount to only a few, it does not follow that his pure land consists only of these features. The sutra gives a rather detailed description of his buddha land which is not covered by his stated resolutions. Since the sutra maintains that all those excellent conditions in his pure land were obtained according to the past resolutions of Aksobhya, we can assume that Aksobhya did not actually make these few vows. Perhaps from a literary point of view, one could argue that the sutra is avoiding repetitive narration. The pure land of Aksobhya will be treated in section four of this chapter. Here let us turn back to look at the bodhisattva career of Aksobhya as described in the Aks.v.

The sutra is brief in regard to the bodhisattva career of Aksobhya. We are told that as he was practising as a bodhisttva Aksobhya generously gave his head, eyes, and flesh. As a consequence, he never suffered from headache and other discomfort of the body throughout his whole career of bodhisattva. As a bodhisattva, he practised purified conduct (brahma-carya) in each of his births. He also encountered a buddha in every birth and from him he received the Dharma. His practice consisted solely of the Perfections; he never practiced according to the Path of the Disciples. In every birth, he caused others to progress in the path of buddhahood and to be able to memorize the content of sermon; when they were reborn in other buddha lands they would continuously rejoice in seeing the Bhagavat until they finally obtained perfect enlightenment. 4.6

The text interpolates here a passage relating the extraordinary, unworldly conditions in which Aksobhya, like all other bodhisattvas, descended from Tusita heaven and entered into the womb of his mother.

With regard to the bodhisattva career, the Aks.v. does not deviate from the Jātaka/avadāna tales; indeed it alludes liberally to the Jātaka/avadāna literature. That in his previous lives, the bodhisattva generously gave his head, eyes, and flesh to sentient beings is a recurrent

motif in the Jātaka/avadāna tales. ^{4.7} Also, the familiar legend of the descent of the bodhisattva from Tusita heaven into the womb of his mother can be seen in different recensions of the Jataka/avadana tales preserved especially in Sanskrit and Chinese sources. ^{4.8} One thing of special interest regarding the bodhisattva career of Aksobhya is the reference to the Six Perfections to the exclusion of the Ten Stages. Since the Prajñā-pāramitā sūtra also specially favors the Perfections it is beyond doubt that the Aks.v. is related doctrinally to it. Moreover, since these two early Mahayana sutras did not mention the Ten Stages, it is reasonable to surmise that the doctrine of the Ten Stages of the Mahayana had not yet fully formed.

The resolutions pertaining to the practice of Aksobhya are not innovative either. Besides his fundamental vow of being free from anger, the first five vows listed above represent his determination to be free from the so called Five Covers, a standard moral cultivation of traditional Buddhism. In addition to the Ten Evils, which constitute the next two groups of five, these are merely the cultivation prescribed for the training of every traditional Buddhist.

In terms of the program of cultivation, the bodhisattva in the Aks.v. did not willfully deviate from

that of traditional Buddhists. What is Mahayanic in this teaching for the bodhisattva practitioners is found in its emphasis in the creation of a pure land based on the resolutions of a bodhisattva. The purpose of creating a pure land is to benefit sentient beings. Traditional Buddhism set as highest goal for a practitioner the attainment of perfect enlightenment. The Mahayanists demanded that besides the attainment of Buddhahood, a bodhisattva, because of his concern for living beings, should also realize a pure buddha land as he becomes a buddha. The existence of such a pure buddha land would provide the sentient beings who are born there with a more nearly ideal environment for their progress toward their final goal. From this point of departure, the flower of the Mahayana teaching of the pure land bloomed.

CHAPTER IV. iii. AKSOBHYA AS BUDDHA

The pure land of Buddha Aksobhya is called Abhirati, or Delightful. What is the significance of this name? We know that Buddhist imagery of the pure buddha land often resembles the myths and legends of Hindu tradition. But is the name of this Buddhist pure land also a loan from the Brahmanic literature? This is a question still open to further investigation.

Just as the practice of bodhisattva Aksobhya resembles the program of cultivation prescribed for traditional Buddhists, so also, as a buddha depicted in a Mahayana sutra, Aksobhya underwent many important stages attributed to Buddha Sakyamuni. After resolving to cultivate for buddhahood, Aksobhya received the prediction of buddhahood from Buddha Big Eye. This was similar to Sakyamuni who received his prediction of buddhahood from Dipamkara. When Aksobhya was receiving the prediction of buddhahood, becoming enlightened, and entering nirvana, many miraculous happenings occurred, similar to the miracles surrounding Sakyamuni. As Aksobhya had to enter nirvana, he bestowed the prediction of buddhahood on a bodhisattva who was to become buddha after him; this is also a formula in Buddhist tradition. Most interesting of

all, the true Dharma in his buddha land, Abhirati, would prevail in that world for a limited period, just as with Sakyamuni. Although this period is comparatively much longer (hundred of thousands of kalpas), it is hard for one to understand why in a pure land like that of Aksobhya the Buddhist teaching should perish. All these features indicate that the writer of this Mahayana sutra was strongly attached to the memory of the tradition even though he was expounding a teaching of the Mahayana. As we shall see later, the Sukhāvatīvyūha, which contains another version of pure land teaching, is different from the Aks.v. in that it is more innovative and is less attached to the tradition.

Buddha Big Eye, the buddha who bestowed the prediction of buddhahood on Aksobhya, is not a popular figure in the Buddhist scriptures.^{4.9} It is not certain if the name of this buddha is related to Virupaksa, or Broad Eye, one of the four guardian gods of the heavens whose names are mentioned in the Vinayas. But the location of this guardian god, west according to different sources,^{4.10} does not match with that of the eastern direction of the buddha land of Aksobhya.

Miracles occurred when Aksobhya Bodhisattva was receiving the prediction of buddhahood, attaining enlightenment, and entering nirvana. As he was receiving

the prediction of buddhahood, the miraculous phenomena include:

- 1) brightness in the Chilocosm;
- 2) the trembling of the whole Chilocosm in six different ways;
- 3) all the plants in the Chilocosm inclined towards him and paid homage to him;
- 4) the eight categories of celestial beings all joined their palms and paid homage to him;
- 5) the pregnant women in the Chilocosm delivered peacefully; the blind saw and the deaf heard;
- 6) all humans and non-humans in the Chilocosm burnt incense;
- 7) the gods, asuras, and human beings all obtained peace of mind;
- 8) Vajra-yakṣa served as his guard;
- 9) the gods and humans scattered flowers and sprinkled perfume on him;
- 10) two billion human beings and three billions gods all resolved to cultivate perfect enlightenment and were predicted by Tathagata Big Eye;
- 11) the field was covered with many kinds of flowers;
- 12) many gods staying in the heaven covered the bodhisattva with celestial garments saying 'May

this bodhisattva soon accomplish perfect enlightenment';

- 13) the gods, humans and asuras rejoiced to the degree that exceeded the joy of having new-born infants;
- 14) knowing Aksobhya Bodhisattva was receiving the prediction of buddhahood, the people in their respective worlds joyously and gererously gave clothes and foods to the needy.
- 15) the gods of the Concupiscence World played music with celestial musical instruments as an offering. 4.11

The miracles synchronous with the enlightenment of Aksobhya are similar to the above:

- 1) brightness in the Chiliocosm;
- 2) the trembling of the worlds;
- 3) the people did not have the wish to eat or drink;
- 4) the people did not eat and drink in vain;
- 5) they did not engage in vainful speeches;
- 6) they did not become weary;
- 7) they felt peaceful and joyful;
- 8) they loved and respected each other;
- 9) the people and gods all abandoned their impure thoughts;

- 10) the people in his world joined their palms and paid homage to him;
 - 11) regardless of their capability, all the living beings were able to see the light of Aksobhya;
 - 12) the devil Papiyan was not able to disturb him on his road to enlightenment;
 - 13) the gods made offerings with music, scattered flowers and sprinkled perfume from the heaven.
- 4.12

As Aksobhya enters nirvana, the following will occur:

- 1) his phantom bodies will appear in every country of the Chiliocosm and preach there;
- 2) he will bestow the prediction of buddhahood on bodhisattva Gandhahastin, who will become the buddha entitled Suvarnapadma;
- 3) the world will tremble;
- 4) the plants will bow to pay homage to him;
- 5) the gods will make offerings to him by scattering flowers and perfume, which forms a canopy one yojana above;
- 6) the eight categories of celestial beings in the Chiliocosm will join their palms to pay homage to him;
- 7) the gods and men will see that he is entering nirvana and will become upset, undesirous of

entertainments, and will speak to each other, 'How swift does Aksobhya Buddha enter nirvana. The people will lose their refuge; the world will lose its eyes'. 4.13

Some of the miraculous happenings are repeated again and again in the prediction, the enlightenment, and the nirvana of Aksobhya. Not only they are repeated in the same sutra, but they are also paralleled in the various recensions of Jātaka/avadāna tales depicting the life and career of Śākyamuni Buddha. The most outstanding scenes paralleled in those tales are the light in the Chilocosm and the trembling of the earth. 4.14 As to the utterance of the people lamenting the nirvana of Aksobhya--'How swift does he go into nirvana. The people will lose their refuge; the world will lose its eyes'--one would immediately call up the scene of the nirvana of Sakyamuni Buddha depicted in the various literature dealing with this theme. 4.15 These all indicate that although the Aks.v. is a Mahayana sutra, it is so deeply rooted in the tradition that Aksobhya Buddha is made to resemble Śākyamuni Buddha in as many respects as possible. This peculiar feature is not found in most other Mahayana sutras, especially the later ones.

In all his effort to model Aksobhya after the stereotyped buddha, the author of the Aks.v. consciously

or unconsciously committed an inconsistency. As described above, Aksobhya underwent almost all the extraordinary passages in the same way as Sakyamuni. He made resolutions to become a buddha; he received the prediction of buddhahood from a certain buddha before him; he practised the bodhisattva career; he attained enlightenment; he entered nirvana. It is this last feature, the entering of nirvana, which is not quite in keeping with the Mahayana vision of buddhahood. Only Śākyamuni Buddha, remembered by traditional Buddhists, lived a life span of eighty years and entered nirvana. The buddhas of the Mahayana, so perfect in their buddhahood and enjoying infinite unexcelled retribution, live forever and do not enter nirvana. More importantly, as the teaching requires, Aksobhya has to be a contemporaneous buddha so that he and his buddha land can become an object of aspiration for the miserable people of this world. If he has already entered nirvana, those who are reborn in his world can no longer see him face to face and receive his instructions. Would it be the same as staying in this world in which the buddha has already left us?

This underlying dilemma makes the understanding of this scripture difficult. On the one hand, since the traditional image of the buddha is one who goes through

resolution, prediction, cultivation, enlightenment, and nirvana, Aksobhya is depicted as having undergone these stages. But on the other hand, as a buddha of a pure land, he has to be present to receive and console the sentient beings who are reborn there. Therefore, we find two contradictory passages existing side by side in the scripture. First, we are told that Aksobhya Buddha was presently residing in Abhirati and was actually seen by Sariputra. ^{4.16} But in another context, we are given a depiction of a scene of the nirvana of Aksobhya. ^{4.17} The only way to resolve this apparent contradiction is to treat the descriptions regarding the nirvana of Aksobhya as a prediction of a future event. This might well have been the intention of the writer but the Chinese translation does not show this clearly.

To conclude, we can say that the author of the Aks.v. treated Aksobhya Buddha as a contemporaneous buddha though his familiarity and attachment to the tradition led him to indulge in a depiction of a buddha resembling Śākyamuni to a degree that invites confusions.

Besides his attachment to tradition, we can detect a strong sense of fate firmly rooted in the mind of the author of this scripture. This is found in the author's conception and conviction that the Dharma of Aksobhya Buddha would eventually perish. The extinction of the

Dharma of Aksobhya certainly cannot be due to the corruption and decadence of the Sangha or to suppression by unbelieving kings, because in the buddha land of Aksobhya these do not exist. Despite all the favorable conditions, a sense of fate drives the author to conceive of the eventual extinction of the Dharma in Abhirati. This sense of fate is perhaps derived from the feeling of impermanence deeply rooted in every Buddhist--things that come into existence must eventually pass away.

CHAPTER IV. iv. ABHIRATI -- THE BUDDHA LAND OF AKSOBHYA

Due to the previous resolutions of Aksobhya a pure buddha land was created. This pure buddha land was called Abhirati. The excellent conditions of this pure buddha land can be divided into several categories. First, there is the natural environment:

1. The three bad destinies, namely, the hells, the hungry ghosts, and the animals, are non-existent. All human beings are virtuous.
2. The land surface is level, with no hills and valleys. Neither gravel or barren mountain exist. The ground is as soft as cotton. It depresses as one steps on it and rebounds as one's foot is lifted. The climate is neither too hot nor too cold, and refreshing breeze comes if one wants it. As the wind blows, the trees generate wonderful music which surpasses any worldly music.
3. The trees always bear flowers and fruits. The people pluck their clothing from the trees, and women pluck pluck their jewelries and ornaments from them also.
4. As the people desire foods and everything they wish for, they immediately appears before them. The

foods as well as the clothing of the people are of excellent quality, surpassing those of the gods in the heaven.

5. The people live in viharas decorated with curtains festooned with seven kinds of gem. The seats and beds of the people are made of seven kinds of gem covered with soft cotton. They exist spontaneously due to the blessings and virtue of the people.
6. The bathing pools are filled with water of eight tastes. The existence or non-existence of these pools follow the wishes of the people.
7. In the buddha land of Aksobhya the light of the sun and the moon disappear, but there is not darkness. The light of the true enlightenment of Aksobhya pervades the Chiliocosm and makes it always bright. On the footprints of Aksobhya lotus flowers spontaneously grow.

The above are superb conditions of the natural environment for the people. Furthermore, human nature is of excellent quality:

1. In the buddha land of Aksobhya illnesses caused by wind, cold, and air do not exist.
2. The people do not have bad complexion or ugly body forms.

3. The people are mild in their lust, anger, and foolishness. The people do not indulge in the pursuit of sexual pleasure but just enjoy it naturally.
4. The virtues of the women equal those of the goddesses and far surpass those of the women of the Cakravartin. Women there do not have the shortcomings of the women of this world, who slander others, envy the Dharma, and indulge in evil doings. Physically, the women do not suffer no fatigue or pain during pregnancy and delivery, but pass through these experiences peacefully and are not defiled by dirt and foul discharge.

Besides these natural conditions, the following excellent things are found in a social setting in the buddha land of Aksobhya:

1. There are no prisons to confine the people.
2. There are no heresies.
3. Like the Northern Country, there are no ruling kings.
4. There are neither agricultural nor commercial activities.

It can easily be seen that the natural environment of the buddha land of Aksobhya shares many common features

with that of the Northern Country. The most outstanding similarity is the production of what is needed for life: food and clothing as well as jewelry all grow on trees. The Buddhists added to the pure land a special feature borrowed from the notion of heaven, namely, the presence of foods according to one's wishes. Another similarity is the existence of the bathing pool. In the Mahabharata version as well as the earliest Buddhist version of the legend of the Uttarakurus there is no reference to the condition of the land as level. But in later versions of the Buddhist account of the Northern Country we find that the land is described as flat and level besides being soft and covered with grass. ^{4.18} This is a peculiar feature of all the Buddhist pure lands.

There are differences. In Abhirati the three bad destinies are absent, a feature not mentioned in the legend regarding the Northern Country. This is a very important element in order for a buddha world to be considered pure. Another difference can be found in the residences of the people. Plainly speaking, the people in the northern paradise live under trees though the scene is much beautified in the legend. The people in the Buddhist pure land, on the other hand, live in houses ornamented with curtains and gemstones.

Generally speaking, the northern paradise was conceived as a garden from which people obtain all their pleasure. Culture and social structure are so minimal as to be practically non-existent. People neither cultivate virtues nor commit evils; they live according to nature. They are happy because nature is generous to them. The scenario of a Buddhist pure land is considerably different though in its requirement of a generous nature it is on the same ground as the northern paradise. But the Buddhists, with their profound insight into human nature, demanded not only physical conditions but also an improved human structure. In addition to a better physical body, with features such as freedom from illness and ugliness, the Buddhists also demand that human beings be endowed with higher moral attributes.

It is interesting to note that the expounder of this sutra was deeply concerned about women: women in the buddha land of Aksobhya are free from the physical pains associated with childbearing as well as from the psychological habits of being envious, gossiping, and indulging in petty evils. One may interpret this as the expounder's sharing in the traditional Buddhist contempt of woman. But if physical ailments and pains as well as enviousness and gossiping were indeed common attributes of womanhood, as least as observed by the expounder of

this sutra, his concern to transform those negative qualities of womanhood into positive ones in a pure buddha land should be appreciated. Indeed, women have been given a place in this buddha land of Aksobhya. In the other version of early pure land teaching, women are eliminated from the pure land: in the Sukhāvatīvyūha, women are transformed into men as they are reborn in the pure land of Amitabha. 4.19

As to social structure, both the northern paradise and the pure land of Aksobhya share the ideal of a society without a sovereign. There is neither segregation between the rulers and the ruled, nor confinement of one individual by another. Besides the non-existence of political powers, there are also no economic activities. The legend regarding the northern paradise does not specify the non-existence of commerce. But this is implied in its emphasis on the abundance of supplies for the basic needs of life. The lack of economic activities such as agriculture and trading is especially emphasized in the Aks.v. The Buddhists' distaste for these activities is perhaps difficult to understand in our culture, where production and productivity are highly valued.

These excellent conditions are but general features that one can find in a paradise. As the Buddhists have a

clearly delineated life purpose, their existence in a pure land must stretch far beyond merely enjoying the generosity of nature and the harmony of human society. Indeed, the Aks.v. devotes more space to describing the conditions in the buddha land of Aksobhya favorable to the practice of the practitioners than to the more general descriptions of that land. In the Aks.v. the practice of the disciples and that of the bodhisattvas are treated equally. In this regard, this Mahayana sutra is different from most of the other Mahayana sutras in that, while advocating a Mahayana teaching, it does not deride the traditional practice of the Buddhists. The following are the favorable conditions for the spiritual progress of the practitioners following the Path of the Disciples:

1. The practitioners there are numerous.
2. Their accomplishments are far more superior than the practitioners elsewhere.
3. They have a buddha to preach for them.
4. Their foods and clothing are obtained without being sought. Therefore, they are self-contained, none being attached to means of livelihood.
5. The disciples are not proud.

6. The buddha does not have to discipline disciples because there are neither violent nor evil-doing people.
7. Since there is no such thing as monastic rules, the disciples do not shave their hair and join the congregation. As a consequence, they assemble freely and do not have complaints and conflicts with each other. Indeed, the disciples rejoice in solitary practice and do not like communal lives.
8. The disciples are neither over-diligent nor lazy.
9. In receiving sermons, the disciples can concentrate. Whether they stand or sit, they do not become weary.
10. When these disciples enter nirvana, they manifest various auspicious and miraculous signs.

The bodhisattva practitioners are endowed with other excellent conditions with respect to their practice:

1. The bodhisattva practitioners are numerous.
2. All the priestly bodhisattvas are capable of memorizing what they have heard. The sermons given by Buddha Aksobhya outnumber and are far more profound than those given by the Buddha.
3. The bodhisattvas can be reborn in various buddha lands as they wish. After receiving the Dharma from

the various buddhas, they can return to the buddha land of Aksobhya.

4. The householder bodhisattvas live in high-rise mansions. Those who have left the household life do not live in residential buildings. These two groups of bodhisattvas can memorize and recite the sermons they have heard even though they are not present at the sermons. When they are reborn in other buddha lands they can recollect the teachings they received previously.

5. The blessings gained by practising the Perfections in the buddha land of Aksobhya far surpass those gained in this world.

6. The practitioners there are not obstructed or disturbed by Papiyan. Therefore, they can practise peacefully and do not have to fear falling back.

7. The bodhisattvas born there are of the same kind (same race and caste). They equal each other with respect to their spiritual progress. They all approach the same goal and there are no heretical teachings.

A noteworthy characteristics of the practice of both the Disciples and the bodhisattva is that they are fond of practising alone. If one is familiar with the stories of conflicts, disputes, and corruption in the community of

monks described in the Vinaya texts, one should not be surprised to find that the most desirable environment has no monastic rules, no compulsory and inflexible disciplines to enforce or argue about, and no interference from authority. Seen from a historical perspective, it can be detected that this teaching of the pure land of Aksobhya favors an individual, ascetic mode of religious practice different from the cultic and urbanized one advocated in the other early Mahayana version of the pure land. We will take up this theme again in the following chapter.

The descriptions of the excellent conditions of the buddha land of Aksobhya repeatedly emphasize the superiority of being contemporaneous with an existing buddha. Here is a very good occasion to apply a psychological interpretation, for example: the Buddhists felt abandoned as the buddha in this world--Sakyamuni--had already entered nirvana and the future Buddha had not yet come. They desperately needed buddhas of other worlds, whom they imagined they could encounter and communicate with. This is why and how the Buddhist teaching regarding the pure lands came into existence.

It is not only possible, but often productive, to examine the significance of an 'ideal' world in a psychological approach. It is obvious that the excellent

conditions of the 'delightful' world are specifically contrasted with undesirable conditions found in this world. The pure land is not just another world but is a world more desirable than this one. Since the desirable conditions cannot be found in this world, they are projected to be existing in another. This is the reason why such a specific set of conditions, and not otherwise, is found in that pure buddha land. Such a psychological theory, if it is not abused, has its merit in that it reminds us of the ideal character of the teachings of the paradises or the pure lands. Only by recognizing the ideal character of these teachings can we treat them fairly.

Nevertheless, a psychological theory usually oversimplifies historical and cultural complexities. Besides, although we cannot 'see' the pure lands, they may after all exist somewhere, somehow. Assuming the existence of the pure lands is presumptuous, one may say, but the refusal to entertain the idea in a mental exercise would deprive us of the ability to appreciate the Buddhist conviction that one's noble and sincere resolutions can result in the re-creation of a world. Making resolutions is an important aspect of practice in Mahayana. The whole array of Buddhist practice cannot be properly understood

and fully appreciated if we dismiss the premises and rationales of the Buddhist at the outset.

IV. v. The Conditions for Rebirth

The pure buddha land of Aksobhya is more preferable than the world we have. It should naturally become an object of aspiration for most people. Two means of accomplishing this objective are provided in the Aks.v. First, one can be reborn there. Second, one can obtain such a pure land by himself. We will take up the first theme first.

To be sure, the belief in transmigration was not peculiar to Buddhists. It was a common doctrine presupposed by all Hindus and was something that no one attempted to prove. As we can see in the Aks.v., the expounder of this Buddhist scripture was more concerned about 'proving' the reality of the pure land of Aksobhya 4.20 than to convince the readers (presumably all Hindus or people sharing the Hindu world view) that there was some such thing as transmigration. One would be reborn, after his death, as a higher or lower state of being, if not the same state as his previous birth. That there are rebirths was beyond question. What was important were the methods to control the process of these events to conform to one's desires. A peculiar Buddhist element is at work in this connection. What are the things that one can do

to insure rebirth in the buddha land of Aksobhya? Not sacrifice, not nothing, but the following:

1. Imitate the bodhisattva career of Aksobhya and will to be born in his buddha land.
2. Practise the Six Perfections and will to attain perfect enlightenment and encounter Aksobhya.
3. Will to see the glorious light of Aksobhya and determine to illuminate one's own buddha land with light.
4. Will to see the innumerable disciples in the buddha land of Aksobhya and determine to have the same innumerable disciples in one's own buddha land .
5. Will to see and imitate the practices of the bodhisattvas in the buddha land of Aksobhya and take those as models.
6. Always bear in mind the names of the Buddhas, of the Tathagatas, of the Dharmas, and of the Samgha.
7. Visualize and be mindful of a) the buddhas in the east, b) the unparalleled Dharmas they preach, and c) the assembly of disciples present in the sermon; and resolve the same to happen as one attains perfect enlightenment.

8. Cause the other bodhisattvas to rejoice in such an excellent buddha land of Aksobhya.
9. Single-mindedly resolve to be reborn in the buddha land of Aksobhya. 4.21

These practices can be analysed into three different kinds. First is the imitation of the bodhisattva career of Aksobhya. As explained in the previous section the program of practice consists of moral cultivations mostly resembling those prescribed for traditional Buddhist training. 4.22 Even though the practice of the Six Perfections is emphasized, they are not particularly Mahayanic. What is peculiar as a Mahayana teaching is its emphasis on the resolution to be reborn in the pure land of Aksobhya. We have seen earlier how Nagarjuna argued the importance of making resolutions. A specific resolution is a target on which all the merit of one's cultivation is to converge. 4.23 Without the resolution aiming at the rebirth in Abhirati the mere practice of the Six Perfections may not bring the result one desires.

The second kind of practice is that the resolution itself can bring forth one's desired result. On a certain level, the practice of the Six Perfections and other moral cultivations are practice per se. But as Mahayana developed, the emphasis on practice gradually shifted to the volitional and emotional side of the person. This

teaching regarding the pure land of Aksobhya is a good illustration of the shift. Fixing one's will on a certain objective is a practice even more important than the moral and meditational cultivation highly valued in traditional Buddhism.

The third kind of practice is in the memorization and visualization of sacred objects. Traditionally, mindfulness of the Three Jewels, the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Samgha, was a common mode of practice. But at no time was the practice of the Threefold Mindfulness conceived to be a means of obtaining inconceivable results. As the Mahayana developed, the magical power of the sacred objects was more and more emphasized. Even in this early teaching regarding the pure land of Aksobhya, which advocates the importance of one's own effort as a means of cultivation, the predominance of the devotional elements of religious practice is making itself known.

With his bodhisattva career, Aksobhya accomplished his buddhahood and the creation of a pure buddha land. Now the scripture asks those who wish to be reborn in his buddha land to imitate his past career. In imitating the bodhisattva career of Aksobhya can one obtain a buddha land for himself instead of being reborn in his buddha land? This is theoretically possible, and the text actually suggests that this is an alternative for a

bodhisattva though this theme is not elaborated further.

4.24 Indeed, instead of aspiring to be reborn in the pure land of a contemporaneous buddha, a bodhisattva can will to obtain a pure land as a condition of his buddhahood just as the bodhisattva Aksobhya did in the past. A bodhisattva's will to purify his own buddha land for the benefit of living beings is a more heroic act than merely aspiring to be reborn in the pure land of others. A teaching inviting a bodhisattva to obtain a pure land for himself is evidently a direction that the teaching about pure lands can go. Nevertheless the emphasis on being reborn in pure lands finally eclipsed the other alternative. Even a text which lays so much emphasis on self effort like the Aks.v. is leaving some room for the reliance on the power of the others; it is no wonder that the subsequent development of pure land teaching was pronounced in its devotionalism.

CHAPTER IV. vi. THE MEANS FOR THE PROPAGATION OF THE
TEACHING

After dealing with the conditions for the rebirth in the buddha land of Aksobhya it seems that the text should end. However, the text of the Aks.v. goes on to deal with the glorification of the scripture. The Buddha in the scripture exhorts the receivers of this teaching to memorize, chant, expound to others, copy, and if unable to do these, just worship and make offerings to the text of this scripture. The Buddha also praises the magical power of this scripture and asks to have it spread far and wide. This peculiar feature in a Mahayana sutra is not unique to the Aks.v. In most Mahayana sutras, like the early versions of the Prajnaparamita sutra, such material appear under the chapter title 'Anuparindana'. Although this additional material has little to do with the teaching of the scripture itself, it sometimes is useful in providing clues to some aspects of early Mahayana history. To examine what historical information this particular early Mahayana sutra provides, first let us look at the following summary:

The Buddha told Sariputra that in the buddha world of Aksobhya all the good men and good women come to the

buddha and receive this scripture from him. After hearing, these good men and good women memorize and recite the scripture... The practitioners of the Bodhisattva Path as well as those of the Disciples all received, recited, and expounded on, this scripture...

The good men and good women who recite this scripture after hearing, and further resolve to obtain rebirth in the buddha land of Aksobhya, will be taken care of by Aksobhya. Therefore, they are no longer subjected to the disturbances of Papiyan or to the fear of falling back with regard to their spiritual progress. These good men and good women shall obtain what they wish as well as perfect enlightenment. They will not be hurt in any occasion; not by fire, nor by wild beast, poisonous water or insect. They are also free from harm by humans or non-humans. They will always be guarded by Aksobhya until they die and thereafter they will be reborn in his buddha land.

Although Aksobhya dwells afar, he is capable of knowing the mind of the bodhisattvas in this world. Those bodhisattvas who voice their wish to be born in his buddha land are heard by Aksobhya, who knows their names and castes. Those who receive and recite this scripture of Aksobhya are known and protected by him.

If there are bodhisattvas who receive and recite this scripture, they can be certain that they will not fall back as regards their spiritual progress even though they do not wish to be reborn in the buddha land of Aksobhya.

Those bodhisattvas who, after receiving and reciting, expound this scripture to others so as to enable them to accumulate good roots are indeed accumulating innumerable good roots for themselves. They are close to perfect enlightenment and will obtain great wisdom, and extinguish their evil retributions and exterminate the cycle of birth and death.

Those who seek the Path of the Disciples should also receive, recite and expound this scripture to numerous others. by doing so, they can realize Arhatship... 4.25

A few things can be noticed from the above exhortations of the Buddha. First, he refers to the physical existence of the text of this scripture. Since the recitation and preaching of the text were a natural means for the advocate of the scripture, the merits of memorizing and reciting the scripture are repeatedly emphasized. However, in order to draw a group of followers large enough to spread this Mahayana teaching, which was probably trying to gain a firm ground in the field of traditional Buddhism, it courted the assistance

of traditional Buddhists. That is why this sutra emphasizes that the seekers of the Path of the Disciples are also invited to advocate this scripture for benefit to their own goal -- Arhatship. The mutual hostility between traditional Buddhists and Mahayanists is indicated in many Mahayana sutras. But this text presents a rather harmonious scene. From the friendly atmosphere here, we can even assume that some traditional Buddhists were sympathetic to and assisted in the advocate of Mahayana.

As is widely known, one of the characteristics of Mahayana is that it unleashed the practice of the religion from the grip of the educated elites of the Samgha and made it available to the general populace. However, a teaching about the unexcelled resolutions and the difficult career of the bodhisattva Aksobhya cannot be considered a more popular version of the teaching handed down by the Buddha. Moreover, the teaching was transmitted in written form, well organized but sophisticated and therefore inaccessible to many. In order to draw the following of the general populace, the Mahayanists had to make a compromise. This compromise, generally known among Buddhists as expedient means, appears in the following passage:

A bodhisattva should make the householders who cultivate the Path know of this scripture because

they are not capable of understanding this scripture adequately... If the bodhisattva-mahasattvas who practise this scripture live in a far away country, [this bodhisattva] should go to them and confer this scripture and further recite and expound for them. Even though some good men and good women cannot read and recite, he should tell them to worship and make offering to this scripture. If there are no scriptures, have them copied (regardless of all difficulties). 4.26

Thus we see that in the Aks.v. the content of the teaching, the understanding of which requires one to be literate as well as well-versed in the dogmas, is giving way to the worship of the physically existing scripture. The emphasis on the importance of reciting, expounding, copying, and even worshipping the scripture as a means for its popularization is also a distinctive feature of the early Prajñāpāramitā sūtra. We will take this up again in the following chapter in which the relations between the Prajñāpāramitā sūtra and the Aks.v. are discussed. Here let us see how the notion of expedient means is being pushed a step forward in order to popularize this Mahayana teaching, gradually depriving itself of the ascetic, individual, and intellectual elements, and approaching the cultic, social, and devotional mode of religious practice.

As has been pointed out in Chapter Two, some material is missing from the text of the second century Chinese translation. The missing part of the scripture as found in the 8th century Chinese translation contains the following passage:

Sariputra told the Buddha saying, "Indeed, World-honored One, extensive merit can be accomplished by this teaching." The Buddha told Sariputra, "It is so; it is so. It is as you have said. Sariputra, if a country is devastated by flood, hail, untimely thunder, and other fearful disasters, the good men and good women there should be mindful of Unshakable Tathagata and pronounce his name. By doing so, all Disasters can be extinguished. This is because that Tathagata previously saved hundred thousands of dragons and relieved the various sufferings of the beings. This is also due to the truthfulness of his previous merciful resolutions which were transferred to good roots and matured in perfection. Therefore by pronouncing his name all troubles of living beings would disappear. 4.27

It is not certain if this passage already existed in the second century Chinese translation, which should better reflect the earliest state of the scripture. But

chances are good that this passage was a part of the early text of the Aks.v. Since the magical power of the text of the scripture has already been praised repeatedly, it is not a big leap to hold that the pronouncement of the name of the saving buddha can bring about inconceivable results.

CHAPTER V. i. THE AKS.V. AND THE PRAJÑĀPĀRAMITĀ SŪTRA

It is generally agreed that the Aks.v. is closely related to the Prajñāpāramitā sūtra especially with regard to doctrinal matters. ^{5.1} But it does not follow that these two early Mahayana sutras resemble each other in every respect. As its title indicates, the Prajñāpāramitā sūtra is a scripture devoted to the explication of the 'Perfection of Wisdom', one of the six Perfections which constitute the core of the career of a bodhisattva. The Aks.v., on the other hand, is a scripture devoted to depicting and glorifying the career undertaken and the pure land obtained by Bodhisattva Aksobhya. Regardless of the apparent thematic difference, however, the two scriptures share many common elements. The following is an attempt to show the similarities between the two.

Because the Prajñāpāramitā sūtra underwent extensive development and growth ever since its inception, 'Prajñāpāramitā sūtra' nowadays means a class of sutras rather than a single literary composition. Our comparison will concentrate on the oldest extant version of the Prajñāpāramitā which was translated by Lokakṣema in A.D. 179 into Chinese. ^{5.2} for the sake of brevity, our future reference to this earliest Chinese version of the

Prajñāpāramitā sutra will be represented by a code -- T224 (which stands for the number assigned to this scripture in the Taisho edition of the Chinese canon).

The first thing one may notice regarding the Aks.v. and T224 is that neither mentions the other as an existing text. Thus, we have no direct evidence as to whether the text of the Aks.v. preceded that of T224 or vice versa. Nor do the date of the Chinese translation of these two texts provide any decisive clue regarding their chronological sequence. According to the earliest extant catalogue of Chinese translations of Buddhist scriptures, the Ch'u san tsang chi chi, T224 was translated in A.D. 179.^{5.3} Although the translator as well as the date of translation of the Aks.v. are less certain than those of T224, it has been shown in Chapter Two of this study that the Aks.v. should have been known in China as a translation before the third century A.D.^{5.4} In the same chapter it has also been shown that the views of the scholars regarding the dates of the Aks.v. and the earliest Prajñāpāramitā sutra are diverse and no agreement has been obtained. Since the chronological precedence between T224 and Aks.v. has not been established with certainty, we will not attempt to apply the category of influence to the comparison of the two texts. What we

will try to show are the similarities or differences between the two.

We have indicated that although the Mahāvastu contains a list of several contemporaneous buddhas, Aksobhya is not included in the list. The only one instance in which Aksobhya is named in this Jātaka/avadāna text is among a long list of past buddhas.^{5.5} This occasional appearance of the name of Aksobhya in a presumably pre-Mahayana text does not suffice to provide convincing evidence to trace the pre-Mahayanic origin of Aksobhya especially when we take into consideration that Aksobhya as a name never shows up in the Chinese translations of the wide range of Jātaka/avadāna literature.

Therefore, it can safely be assumed that Aksobhya did not appear until the Mahayana sutras began to see the world. Aksobhya or his buddha land are mentioned in T224 and in numerous other Mahayana sutras some of which, under a certain criterion, can be considered as early. The manner in which the other Mahayana sutras deal with Aksobhya will be discussed in another chapter. Here we will concentrate on T224.

T224 refers to Aksobhya Buddha or to his buddha land in several contexts.^{5.6} It is interesting to note that

although the Aks.v. as an existing text is never mentioned in T224, 'the bodhisattva career of Aksobhya' appears as an already well-known term in T224. ^{5.7} And the reference to 'the bodhisattva career of Aksobhya' is found again and again in the other and later versions of the Prajñāpāramitā literature. ^{5.8} It is clear that although the Aks.v. might not have been available as a text, the theme of the bodhisattva career of the contemporaneous buddha Aksobhya must have become prevalent during the compilation of the early Prajñāpāramitā.

Aksobhya is treated differently in T224 and in the Aks.v. The differences are as follow:

1) On the whole T224 only mentions Aksobhya in passing, treating him as if he is already a well-known figure. The Aks.v. devotes the text of the scripture to a detailed exposition of the teaching regarding the resolutions, the career, the enlightenment, the nirvana, and the excellent conditions of the buddha land of Aksobhya.

2) In T224 the buddha land of Aksobhya is always being referred to as A ch'u fo ch'a (阿閼佛刹 *Akṣobhya-buddha kṣetra). ^{5.9} In the Aks.v. the buddha land is also known as 'Abhirati' though 'A chu fo ch'a' is used more often. ^{5.10}

3) The location of the buddha land of Aksobhya in the east is unknown in T224 while the Aks.v. explicitly declares that this buddha land is in the east. The Aks.v. seems to be the oldest known Mahayana sutra to combine Aksobhya, Abhirati, and the east. Although this triad eventually found its way into the later texts of the Prajñāpāramitā sūtra 5.11 the earliest, T224, was obviously ignorant of it.

Besides the above differences, the texts of T224 and the Aks.v. show some consistency as well as some inconsistency regarding persons and events:

1) Both texts mention a bodhisattva named Gandhahastin as a prominent figure in the buddha land of Aksobhya. In T224, Gandhahastin is described as the most highly achieved bodhisattva in the buddha land of Aksobhya. 5.12 In the Aks.v. he is also the one who received the prediction of buddhahood from Aksobhya. According to the prediction, he would become buddha in the future and have the title Suvarṇapadma, or Golden Lotus. 5.13

2) However, T224 does not mention that Gandhahastin would become the next buddha following Aksobhya. Instead, it is related in T224 that a certain woman called Ganga-devi, who was a member of the audience at the sermon of

the Buddha, received prediction of buddhahood. According to the prediction, Ganga-devi, because of her determination and courage, would be reborn as a man in the buddha land of Aksobhya. After going through many rebirths in numerous buddha lands and therein encountering numerous buddhas she would become a buddha and have the title Survaṇapuṣpa, or Golden Flower. 5.14

Although very similiar, 'Suvarṇapuṣpa' as known in T224 is not identical to 'Suvarṇapadma' in the Aks.v. In addition, T224 does not specify that Ganga-devi would become buddha in the buddha land of Aksobhya though her next birth will take place there. In view of the fact that both Suvarṇapuṣpa in T224 and Suvarṇapadma in the Aks.v. are mentioned in close context with the buddha land of Aksobhya it can reasonably be assumed that there must have been something common in the tradition which gave rise to Suvarṇapuṣpa and Suvarṇapadma in T224 and in the Aks.v. respectively.

3) In T224 it is related that a certain bodhisattva would hear of the teaching of the Perfection of Wisdom in the buddha land of Aksobhya. 5.15 In the Aks.v. it is also mentioned that being well versed in the Perfection of Wisdom is an essential attribute of the bodhisattvas in the buddha land of Aksobhya. 5.16

4) In T224 there is a passage which runs like this:

As the Buddha was expounding on the Perfection of Wisdom, his four groups of disciples, the gods, the asuras, and the other celestial beings within his buddha world, depending on the power of Buddha (Śākyamuni), were all able to see Buddha Aksobhya and the innumerable bhiksus who were all Arhats. The bodhisattvas were also innumerable. After they had all seen these, these were no longer seen. Then the Buddha told Ananda, "It is like the people of that country can no longer be seen. The invisibility of Aksobhya Buddha, his bodhisattvas and Arhats, as well as the teachings of the scripture are similar. The teachings cannot see the teachings. The teachings cannot memorize the teachings. Why so? The teachings of the scriptures are neither memorable, nor visible, nor addable." The Buddha further told Ananda, "The teachings of the scriptures are empty, ungraspable, unmemorable. It is like an apparitional man worked out by a magician. The teachings of the scriptures are similar. They are neither memorable nor touchable. Why so? Because they have no forms. If a bodhisattva can practise this he is practising the Perfection of Wisdom. 5.17

In the Aks.v. there is a a passage describing Sariputra's seeing of the buddha land of Aksobhya:

At that time Sariputra thought: "Now I wish to see that buddha world as well as Unshakable Tathagata and the assembly of the Voice-hearers." The World-honored One, knowing what was in the mind of Sariputra, with supernatural power, caused him to see everything without having him leave his seat. "Do you see it now?" "I have seen it," replied Sariputra. 5.18

Then Sariputra went on to describe the excellent conditions of the budhha land of Aksobhya that he had seen. What is of special interest is that, after the lengthy description of the buddha land by Sariputra, Ananda and Subhuti, two figures who appear nowhere else in the text, suddenly emerge and engage in the following conversation:

Then Ananda gave rise to this thought: " Now I should examine the power of eloquence of the Reverend Subhuti." Having given rise to such thought he said to Subhuti, "We should observe Unshakable Tathagata, his Voice-hearers and his buddha land." Subhuti told Ananda, "If you wish to see that tathagata, you should watch above."

Having watched the above, Ananda told Subhuti, "I have already watched above. It is all emptiness and quietude." Subhuti said, "Unshakable Tathagata, his Voice-hearers and his buddha land are like what you have seen above." 5.19

The strangeness with this passage is that Ananda and Subhuti come into the scene too suddenly. Throughout the Aks.v. Sariputra is the person carrying on dialogue with the Buddha. The passage depicting the conversation between Ananda and Subhuti not only disturbs the smooth flow of the text but it also engages in a discussion of the teaching not quite in keeping with the rest of the scripture. Although the Aks.v. is similar to the Prajñā-pāramitā sūtra in that it emphasizes the Perfection of Wisdom as an essential practice of the bodhisattva, it does not resemble the Prajñāpāramitā in its repeated effort to explicate the paradoxical nature of the Perfection of Wisdom. The Aks.v. deals with its theme descriptively. Therefore, the passage depicting the conversation between Ananda and Subhuti appears to be an interpolation. It might have been added to the otherwise well-organized text of the Aks.v. by someone who knew the Prajñāpāramitā text well and thought that a qualification should be added to the nature of the buddha land of Aksobhya, which is also one of the dharmas. However,

since we do not have the testimony of an older text of the Aks.v., this judgement should remain tentative.

5) In the Aks.v. it is taken for granted that there are women in the buddha land of Aksobhya and the women there can get rid of the undesirable qualities associated with womanhood. But in T224, Gaṅga-devī would be transformed from female to male as she is reborn in the buddha land of Aksobhya. 5.20 That Gaṅga-devī would be reborn as male obviously comes from the assumption that there are no females in the buddha land of Aksobhya. In this respect, T224 is inconsistent with the Aks.v. Interesting enough, the absence of the female sex is a prominent feature in the Sukhāvati, the buddha land of Amitābha, which T224 seems to have no knowledge of.

Despite some inconsistencies, both the Aks.v. and T224 can be considered as sharing a common ground regarding Aksobhya Buddha and his buddha land. Besides persons and events, the texts incorporate similar doctrinal concepts, such as the following:

<u>T313</u>		<u>T224</u>		<u>Equivalent Sanskrit</u>
無上正真道	752b	阿耨多羅三 耶三菩	437a	anutara-samyak- sambodhi

薩云若	752b	薩云若	428a	sarvajña
弟子緣一 覺	752b	阿羅漢 辟支佛	426b	śrāvaka-pratyeka- buddha
僧那僧涅	754b	摩訶僧那 僧涅	427b	mahasāmnāha- sāmnaddha
空	761b	空	457b	śūnyatā
智慧度無極	758b	般若波羅密	429a	prajñāpāramitā
菩薩道	752a	菩薩道	429a	

Before we move to another topic, it must be pointed out that the Aks.v. does not use the term 'Mahayana' while T224 does. ^{5.21} However, the Aks.v. distinguishes between the path of the bodhisattva and that of the Disciples. ^{5.22} This suffices to identify the Aks.v. as a Mahayana sutra.

About the pure land

The notion of pure buddha land is not unknown in T224. However, it lacks a detailed description of a pure land. What it has is a naive vision of a pure land embodied in the resolutions of a bodhisattva. The resolutions are as follows:

- 1) no animals (especially beasts of prey)
- 2) no robbers

- 3) abundant water of good quality
- 4) enough grains
- 5) no plagues 5.23

According to T224, these were the essential features to be found in the buddha land of Ganga-devi when she became buddha. What this picture of pure land is all about is a livable environment where one can enjoy freedom from want and from fear. The Aks.v. depicts a pure land in which the environment is not only livable, but is thoroughly pleasing. Moreover, the structure of nature in the buddha land of Aksobhya provides much more favorable conditions for the spiritual progress of the practitioners. Still, these differences are only a matter of degree of elaboration and sophistication. Despite the naiveté of T224 and the sophistication of the Aks.v. in regard to their visions of the pure land, there are many similarities lying beneath the surface--namely, in the ideals held by the expounders and followers of the teachings the scriptures contain.

The expounders and practitioners

The ideal buddha land sought by the bodhisattva in T224 is a place where wild beasts and robbers do not exist. From this clue, we can conjecture that the

expounders of T224 were those who dwelt in the wilderness and practised in solitary manner. The Buddhist term for this was aranyaka, those who lived in the aranya. 'Aranya' literally means forest but also implies far-removed places with no sound of discord, uninhibited and still. In short, 'aranya' can be considered to be the Buddhist definition of hermitage. 5.24

Practice in the aranya represented the Buddhist practitioners' awareness of the importance for their spiritual progress of staying away from the hustle and bustle of human affairs and of city life. Although this ideal resembled to a great extent the characteristics of the career of the founder of the religion, Sakyamuni Buddha, it was by no means the only way of life of Buddhist monks. In the vinaya texts, we find that there was a category of monks who departed from the ideal of the uninterrupted life of the recluse and chose to live close to the settlements of worldly people. 5.25 There were certainly advantages in doing so. Possibly they could obtain offerings from the lay patrons more easily; but even more important, city-dwelling monks could make their teaching and consolation more readily available to the householders. Ever since the Buddha founded the religion, his followers had been leaning to one or the other end of the spectrum, from forest to city, to establish an ideal

mode of practice. As it happened, the opposition between forest-dwelling and city-dwelling monks helped propel the development of the Buddhist religion.

There is another clue which leads to the conclusion that the teaching contained in T224 was developed out of the group of aranya practitioners. Subhuti is depicted in this scripture as the preacher entrusted by the Buddha to expound the prajnaparamita. Since Subhuti is a well-known figure in the Āgamas and is remembered as an adept in aranya practice, it is natural that he should become the hero of a scripture whose teaching was derived from the meditations of the aranya practitioners. 5.26

The buddha land of Aksobhya depicted in the Aks.v. provides a condition much more pleasing than the minimal means of subsistence required by the aranyaka. However, the characteristics of the disciples in the buddha land of Aksobhya reveal that they are indeed aranya practitioners. According to the Aks.v., the practitioners of the Path of the Disciples in the buddha land of Aksobhya are those who

- 1) do not reside in vihāras;
- 2) do not observe the disciplines;
- 3) are not covetous of foods, clothes and the fulfillment of other desires;
- 4) do not delight in community living. 5.27

This is just a portrait of an aranya practitioner.

Besides this, the vows of the bodhisattva Aksobhya also reveals the mode of livelihood characteristic of aranya practitioners. In his vows, Aksobhya Bodhisattva resolved to retire to the aranya, to meditate under trees, to meditate in the open field, and to live in the graveyard. 5.28 One would wonder why in the pleasant environment of the buddha land of Aksobhya the practitioners there still inclined to lead the lives of ascetics. Was it because the expounders of the Aks.v. were so completely disappointed at the corruptions of the city dwelling monks and so averse to urban life that they idealized a kind of solitary, undisturbed practice in the pure land of Aksobhya?

The characteristics of the teachings

In regard to the characteristics of the teachings, both T224 and the Aks.v. show similarities though in some respects they differ from each other.

All Mahayana teachings agreed that the Six Perfections are essential part of the program of cultivation for the bodhisattvas. But the Prajñāpāramitā sūtra, as its title indicates, is a scripture devoted

especially to the explication of the Perfection of Wisdom. In the version translated by Kumārajīva, we find the following lines:

(In this scripture) the Bhagavat expounded neither on the Perfection of Giving, nor on the Perfection of Discipline, nor on the Perfection of Forebearance, nor on the Perfection of Effort, nor on the Perfection of Meditation. Why did he merely expound on the Perfection of Wisdom? It is because Wisdom has a comprehending and guiding function. 5.29

The Aks.v. does not show a particular emphasis on the Perfection of Wisdom. It treats the Six Perfections equally, as being equally significant in regard to the attainment of perfect enlightenment as well as to rebirth in the buddha land of Aksobhya. 5.30

No doubt the teaching of the Perfection of Wisdom is one of the Mahayana teachings. But it is also a teaching which has two aspects. While it is a teaching about the world, it is also a teaching about the teachings of Buddhism. On the one hand, the teaching of the Perfection of Wisdom is a meditation, a reflection, and a critique of the objects of our experience--revealing their emptiness--and on the other hand, it is also a teaching which sets out to meditate and to reflect on the nature of the

doctrinal concepts of Buddhism such as samsara and nirvana, as well as the practices leading to them. Although it was Nāgārjuna who persuasively worked out the full consequences of the teaching of the Perfection of Wisdom, the early Prajñāpāramitā literature, in a suggestive and meditative mode of discourse, had already pointed out:

[There is] nothing to receive, nothing to follow; who obtains the Dharma? Nothing to hold nor to gather. And there is no thought about nirvana. Therefore, a bodhisattva does not even accept (the teaching) of prajñāpāramitā....

In prajñāpāramitā, dharmas are neither obtainable nor locatable. Therefore, this is prajñāpāramitā. 5.31

In this sense, T224 speaks of the prajnaparamita as having a comprehending and guiding function for the other five paramitas. The five perfections are practices leading to perfect enlightenment. But these practices, such as giving, should only be executed as if nothing is being given and no merits are being accumulated therefrom, or else they do not culminate in perfect enlightenment.

Risking the danger of oversimplification, our purpose of the above exposition of the teaching of the Perfection

of Wisdom is to point out its difference from the teaching about a pure land as contained in the Aks.v. In contrast to that of the Prajñāpāramitā, the teaching regarding the pure land of Aksobhya is a teaching of the first order. That is to say, unlike the teaching of the prajñāpāramitā which is concerned to reflect on existing teachings, the teaching of the pure land of Aksobhya adds to the bulk of existing Buddhist teachings a new one. In addition to the Jambudvīpa the Aks.v. teaches that there is an Abhirati. In addition to the rebirth in the Uttarakuru, or in the various levels of the heaven, the Aks.v. teaches that one can also seek rebirth in Abhirati. In addition to cultivation in the buddha land of Śākyamuni where one would have to face tremendous hardships and disturbances during one's spiritual journey the Aks.v. teaches that the cultivation in the buddha land of Aksobhya is pleasant and the result guaranteed. Certainly more could be said, but the above should suffice to make clear the essential difference between T224 and the Aks.v.

Although there is a difference in character between the teachings of the two scriptures, it does not follow that there are no similarities in their other features. To be sure, Buddhist scriptures were seldom composed solely for the exposition of one theme. In the course of their formation, many heterogeneous elements might have

been combined in any one scripture. Therefore, the Prajñāpāramitā sūtras were not solely devoted to the explication of the Perfection of Wisdom nor was the Aks.v. only concerned with the depiction of the pure land of Aksobhya. One should not be surprised to find that even though the Aks.v. focuses on a teaching of the first order, it also has a self-critical tendency. While concentrating on expounding what the buddha land of Aksobhya is, it also tries to point out what it is not. In the course of narration, the Aks.v. more than once leaves the descriptive mode of discourse and reflectively qualifies what it has said about the buddha land of Aksobhya and the cultivation of the bodhisattvas. When the Aks.v. is talking about the numerous buddha lands, it adds a qualifying remark that those buddha lands are empty, and that the one of Aksobhya is no exception. 5.32 When it speaks of the superiority of a certain group of bodhisattvas, the Aks.v. also points out that they are equal to others because all dharmas are equal. 5.33

On the practical aspect of the teachings, both scripture emphasize the importance of wisdom and self-effort. Both praise austerity and deride sensuality. 5.34 Due to their emphasis on understanding and rigorous effort as necessary means of cultivation, it seems that these two scriptures should have been favored by learned and devoted

monks, at least by those who could read and write. In order for the teachings to spread beyond the priestly circle, both scriptures adopted the same expedient means, namely, the worship of the text of the scripture besides hearing, reciting, and copying it. 5.35 As a result, a scripture like T224, which essentially contains words of wisdom, or a scripture the Aks.v, which emphasizes the importance of rigorous meditational and moral efforts, is also a scripture which appeals to the general populace as something which can exert unimaginable magical power when the physically existing text is worshipped and glorified. 5.36

CHAPTER V. ii. THE AKS.V. AND THE SUKHĀVATĪVYŪHA

Sukhāvātī, the pure land of Buddha Amita, or Amitāyus, or Amitābha, 5.37 is a pure land often mentioned in the Mahayana sutras, early as well as late. 5.38 Although it has been suggested by some scholars that the teaching regarding the Buddha Amita was as old as, or even older than that regarding the prajñāpāramitā, 5.39 neither his name nor the name of his buddha land is ever mentioned in T224, which has several references to Aksobhya and his buddha land. Moreover, the Aks.v. does not mention Amita or Sukhavati either. On the other hand, the earliest text regarding the pure land of Amita also does not mention Aksobhya. Since the scriptures regarding the pure lands of Aksobhya and of Amita both were devoted to advocating pure land teachings, their mutual ignorance poses a question for historians of Mahayana. One answer to this question is that the teaching of Amita's pure land became prevalent after that of Aksobhya had already lost its popularity. 5.40 Such an explanation is not very satisfactory due to the fact that a subsequent teaching might still have made use of a preceding one unless they were separated not only by time, but also by space. Therefore, a more plausible explanation for the phenomenon

of mutual ignorance between the two scriptures is that the expounders of these two scriptures were in different locations. 5.41

Although spatial separation alone suffices to explain the phenomenon of mutual ignorance, temporal separation may reinforce the plausibility of the explanation. Therefore, We would hypothesize that the two scriptures originated in different locations and that they appeared one after the other. However, the second hypothesis is not supported by the dates of Chinese translation of the two pure land scriptures since they were translated at approximately the same time, i.e., second to third century. 5.42

The various questions concerning the origin and development of the pure land teaching of Amita Buddha call for a separate treatment and cannot be dealt with here. Our purpose here is simply to compare the earliest form of the teachings regarding the pure land of Aksobhya and that of Amita. Although they show no apparent mutual influence, these two teachings allow considerable comparison and contrast because they deal with the same theme. Comparison will make their respective characteristics more comprehensible and their identities more clearly defined. As a by-product of the comparative

endeavor we also hope to answer the question of the popularity of Amita Buddha in subsequent times.

Unlike the text of the Aks.v. which remained relatively unchanged for centuries, ^{5.43} the text containing the teaching of Amita underwent considerable growth and development. We can see this, for example, in the number of resolutions made by Amita according to the various texts. The second to third century Chinese translations (T361, T362) give 24. The two later Chinese translations (T310(5), T363) give 48 while the Tibetan translation gives 49 and the Sanskrit versions give 46 or 47. (But a Chinese translation done in 1001 curiously give 36.) ^{5.44}

Although it has been shown to be always the case, one can still doubt if the development of texts regarding doctrinal matters must necessarily follow the process of growth--namely from simple to complex. Certainly, one cannot determine the relative antiquity of the texts solely by assuming the simpler to be the older and maintain that the texts containing 24 resolutions must be older than those containing 48. However, the texts that give 24 resolutions also happen to be the texts translated earliest into Chinese. What puzzles us is the fact that the 11th century Chinese translation gives 36 resolutions.

As the text developed, so did the teaching contained therein. Since our purpose is to compare the Aks.v. with the earliest known forms of the pure land teaching of Amita, the text we will use is the early Chinese translation entitled A mi to san yeh san fo sa lou fo t'an kuo tu jen tao ching (阿彌陀三耶三佛薩權佛檀過度人道經 T362), said to have been translated by Lokaksema or by Chih Ch'ien in the late second or early third century. 5.45 For the sake of brevity, this version of Chinese translation will be referred to as T362, a convention already adopted in the previous chapters.

The following comparisons will be carried out under three categories. They are I) the resolutions, II) the pure lands, and III) the methods for rebirth in the pure lands.

I) The Resolutions

The striking difference between the pure land of Aksobhya and that of Amita is immediately apparent when we examine their fundamental resolution. While Aksobhya's resolution and practices concentrated on the conquest of his own anger, a feature primary to the training of all Buddhist practitioners, the resolutions of Amita focused

on the accomplishment of a buddha land superior to all other buddha lands:

I resolve to seek buddhahood and cultivate in the career of the bodhisattva so that when I become buddha I will be the most superior among the innumerable buddhas of all directions; ... when I become buddha my instructions as well as my name shall be heard of in innumerable buddha lands in all directions... Those who come to be born in my buddha land shall all become bodhisattvas. (In addition,) the number of arhats shall surpass that found in the other buddha lands. 5.46

Basically, the pure land of Aksobhya is one that is meant to excel this land in which Sakyamuni Budha once dwelt. But the pure land of Amita is one that deliberately aims at excelling all other pure lands. From among twenty-one billion buddha lands, the bodhisattva Dharmakara chose the best elements and condensed them into twenty-four resolutions which were to be brought into reality in his future buddha land. As he became buddha, "his name was Amita, the most superior, with valorous wisdom, having unexcelled light." 5.47 From this basic distinction between the pure land of Aksobhya and that of Amita we can maintain, despite the fact that there is still no conclusive evidence as to the chronological

precedence of one or the other of these two pure lands, that the pure land of Aksobhya is at least logically prior to that of Amita. The existence of Sukhavati presupposed the existence of "twenty-one billion" other buddha lands since it is modelled after the best of them all.

The resolutions regarding the pure land in the Aks.v. are simple. They count only three. Even though in Abhirati there are many features which, according to the text, are the result of the previous resolutions of Aksobhya, they were not deliberately fitted into the list of resolutions of Aksobhya. The resolutions of Amita, on the other hand, were neatly tailored and meticulously arranged even in the earliest version of the text such as T362. Unlike Aksobhya's resolutions which purport more to his own cultivation than to his future buddha land, all of the resolutions of Amita have to do with the design of his buddha land or with his buddhahood in the pure land. Therefore his resolutions can be classified into two groups: first, resolutions purporting to the superiority of his buddhahood, and second, resolutions purporting to the superior natural structure of Sukhavati and the unexcelled practices made possible by it.

The following list is arranged under these two groups. The number at the beginning of each resolution represents the numbering of the resolutions of T362. Next

to this, a number or numbers in the bracket represent the numbering of the resolutions given in the Oxford Sanskrit text. 5.48

i. Resolutions regarding Buddhahood

4 [17, 18]

His name shall be heard of in innumerable buddha lands in all directions, thus enabling living beings to rejoice in hearing his name and be caused to be reborn in his buddha land.

17 [7, 8, 5]

After he has become buddha his powers of seeing, of hearing, and of flying shall surpass those of other buddhas by ten times.

18 [--]

After he has become buddha his wisdom in expounding the scripture and practising the Path shall surpass the other buddhas by ten times.

19 [15]

After he has become buddha, the living beings in all buddha lands shall be reborn as human beings and become pratyekabuddhas and arhats. As they try to measure the extent of his life, even by numbering millions of millions of kalpas, no one can know the limit of his life span.

20 [12]

After he has become buddha, the number of bodhisattvas and arhats shall be so numerous in his buddha land that no one can actually know it.

21 [13]

After he has become buddha his light shall surpass that of other buddhas by a million times. Those who see his light shall be caused to be reborn in his buddha land.

ii. Resolutions regarding the Superiority of the Buddha Land and of the Cultivation there

1 [1]

In his buddha land there shall neither be hells, nor animals, nor hungry ghosts, nor species that fly or crawl.

1 [34]

Women who are reborn in his buddha land shall become men. All who are born there are metamorphically born (aupapāduka) in the lotus pond

3 [--]

His buddha land, wide and broad, shall be made of seven kinds of gem. Supplies for livelihood shall be obtained naturally like the dwelling place of the king of the Sixth Heaven.

5 [19]

Living beings everywhere shall repent their previous evil deeds, cultivate virtues and aspire to be reborn in his buddha land upon hearing his name.

6 [--]

The householders who wish to get rebirth in his buddha land shall be reborn as bodhisattvas in his buddha land if they piously carry out the duties of lay patrons.

7 [18]

Those who one-mindedly wish to be born in his buddha land shall, upon their deaths, be received by him, accompanied by a multitude of bodhisattvas and arhats, and be born in his buddha land.

8 [2]

The bodhisattvas in his buddha land shall not be reborn in the three destinies if they wish to go to be reborn in other buddha lands.

9 [4,3]

The bodhisattvas and arhats in his buddha land shall have proper and nice bodies. They shall be of the same golden color and be of the same kind (caste?), like the gods of the Sixth Heaven.

10 [9]

The bodhisattvas and arhats in his buddha land shall know the thoughts and wishes of others.

11 [--]

The bodhisattvas and arhats in his buddha land shall not submit to sexual desires. They shall neither give way to anger nor be foolish.

12 [--]

The bodhisattvas and arhats in his buddha land shall love, respect, and not be envious of each other.

13 [21,22]

The bodhisattvas in his buddha land who wish to make offerings to buddhas of all directions shall be able to fly to them. The things they wish to offer shall be present as soon as they think of them.

14 [--]

The bodhisattvas in his buddha land shall have foods and rice present in their bowls as they give rise to the thought of eating.

15 [3]

The bodhisattvas in his buddha land shall all have golden complexion. They shall be similar to the buddha in regard to thirty-two bodily forms and the the eighty auspicious marks.

16 [23]

The bodhisattvas and arhats in his buddha land shall have loud voice. They shall be similar to the buddha in regard to expounding the scriptures and practising the Path.

21 [14]

The bodhisattvas and arhats in his buddha land shall have a life span of innumerable kalpas.

22 [6]

The bodhisattvas and arhats in his buddha land shall be able to recollect the deeds of their former births. They shall have a thorough knowledge of all events of all directions, past, present, and future.

23 [--]

The bodhisattvas and arhats shall have a halo around their heads.

Just by comparing these twenty-four resolutions of Amita with those of Aksobhya, we can see that their differences are obvious. But before we go on to analyse the differences, it is worthwhile to point out, first of all, the few similarities. According to the Aks.v. and T362, in the buddha lands both of Aksobhya and of Amita:

1. There are no differences as to the color and bodily form of the people. (#9 in T362; T313.755c)
2. Needs of livelihood are obtained naturally . (#14 in T362; T313.755c)
3. There are no bad destinies (animals, the hells, and the hungry ghosts). (#1 in T362; T313.755c)
4. The people do not have lust anger, and foolishness. (#11 in T362; T313.755c)

The first two are features found also in the Uttarakuru and the various levels of the heavens. 5.49 They can be taken to be the basic conditions of all paradises. The third and the fourth are perhaps peculiar to Buddhist teachings. Since getting rebirth in the three bad destinies is deemed by the Buddhists as a serious drawback or fall as regards the spiritual progress of living beings, the pure lands of the perfect buddhas should not have those three bad destinies, imperatively. This is also true for lust, anger, and foolishness. There are of course many more mental states which are not conducive to, and may even hinder, one's path to enlightenment, but according to Buddhists, nothing else so adversely affects one's state of mind as lust, anger, and foolishness. This is why Buddhists term them "the Three Poisons".

These common features are basic either to the orientation of a paradise or to a Buddhist pure land. The existence of these commonalities in both scriptures of the pure land should not be taken as evidence that one borrowed from the other. For the differences between the buddha land of Amita and that of Aksobhya are manifold and are striking.

It goes without saying that the pure land of Amita is more splendid and luxurious than that of Aksobhya. But

the reason that the pure land of Amita surpasses the other pure lands lies in the deliberate intention of Amita to accomplish a pure land not only better than the impure one we have, but also that excelling all other pure lands. We can detect the unusual ambition of Amita in the following:

In his buddha land, the bodily form of the bodhisattvas and of the arhats is similar to that of the buddha (res. 15). The ways they practise and preach are also similar to those of the buddha (res. 16).

When Amita becomes buddha, his powers surpass those of the other buddhas (res. 17). His wisdom in preaching the scriptures as well as in practice also surpass those of the other buddhas (res. 18). His life span is unlimited (res. 19) and his light is also unlimited (res. 24). Because of his unusual buddhahood, his disciples also excel those of the other lands in that they are innumerable (res. 20) and live a life span of innumerable kalpas (res. 21). They have unusual powers in knowing the past, the present, and the future (res. 22). Last but not least, they have halos around their heads (res. 23).

The most outstanding characteristic of the resolutions of Amita lies in that his buddha land is to be the best among all the buddha lands. The twenty-four resolutions are but some items illustrating this

fundamental aspiration. The resolutions of Amita were certainly the greatest of all since his basic resolution was to excel all other buddhas. In T362, it is emphatically pointed out that his light outreaches that of all buddhas, even outreaching those whose light stretch two million buddha lands. ^{5.50} Why? Because of the greatness of his resolution. Not only does his light reach far and wide, his fame is also to be known far and wide so that none of those in innumerable buddha lands of all directions fail to hear of his name ^{5.51} and rejoice in gaining rebirth in his buddha land. Truthful indeed is his resolution: the name of Amita turned out to be the most widely known and most frequently pronounced among all names of buddhas, at least in East Asia.

II. Abhirati and Sukhāvatī

On the whole, the Aks.v. can be considered to be more thoroughly steeped in the tradition while the Sukhāvatīvyūha is more innovative. Throughout the Aks.v., the epoch-making events surrounding Aksobhya such as his enlightenment and his nirvana were purposely made to parallel those surrounding Sakyamuni Buddha. Amita, conversely, is an unusual buddha in the sense that he does not resemble the other buddhas in many respects. Unlike

Sakyamuni who entered nirvana, he does not enter nirvana because of his infinite life span. ^{5.52} The innotiveness of T362 also appears in its depiction of a land in which living beings are born metamorphically (which is necessary since the female sex does not exist). It also departs from the traditional geographical knowledge in that it admits of no Sumeru or oceans surrounding it. ^{5.53}

As to the descriptions of the excellent conditions of pure lands and of the superior states of the spiritual cultivation among the practitioners, both the Aks.v. and T362 are in the same strain. But as we have pointed out earlier in Chapter Three, ^{5.54} Abhirati leans towards the Northern Country while Sukhavati resembles more closely the heavens of the concupiscence world. As in the northern country, there are women in Abhirati. In regard to the enjoyments, the lack of ruling powers, and the non-existence of a closely-knit society and the struggles derived therefrom, Abhirati agrees with the northern country. The Buddhist element beyond those is that the practitioners do not have to observe the precepts. Because of the absence of the sangha, the conflicts and corruption within are absent either. The pure land depicted in the Aks.v., one may say, still largely resembles an earthly paradise. In Abhirati, the people do not have to worry about the lack of means of livelihood

since they are provided naturally and are unlimited in supply. This enables the practitioners to afford an undisturbed and hence more fruitful advancement. In Sukhavati, the people also do not have to care about the needs of livelihood. But the scripture goes further to point out that in Sukhavati pleasure is unlimited and indescribable. ^{5.55} This would appeal to an audience whose desire for heavenly enjoyments is greater than their aspiration towards perfect enlightenment.

Basically, a pure land as envisioned by Buddhists is one in which there is a harmonious union between nature and culture. Therefore, the scriptures depicting the pure lands do not hesitate to include man-made objects in the pure lands. Unlike the Uttarakuru which is so natural as to have the people live under trees, ^{5.56} the people in Abhirati live in houses. ^{5.57} In Sukhavati, there are not only buildings used for living and for preaching, but these buildings are superior to those of the king of the Sixth Heaven. ^{5.58} Besides this, the gems and the music all excel those found up there. ^{5.59}

The vision of the pure land in the earliest form of the Prajñāpāramitā sūtra is a living environment where there are no natural calamities (plague, drought, beasts) and no social vice (robbers). ^{5.60} The pure land depicted in the Aks.v. is more elaborate and more delightful. ^{5.61}

But basically, it is a pure land conceived in contrast to the Uttarakuru, which is itself compared to the saha world, or the world of ours. Therefore, in both the uttarakuru and Abhirati, there should be neither economic activities (agriculture and commerce) ^{5.62} nor political structure (kings). ^{5.63} These are all in contrast to what the saha world has. But Sukhavati is radically different. The extraordinary means of generating living beings, the extremely luxurious living environment, and everything that pleases the senses are all unusual in that they excel those found in the Sixth Heaven. Now it becomes clear that the conception of Sukhavati is to contrast with the Sixth Heaven. According to the initial intention of Amita, the pure land of his is to excel all other buddha lands. However, the frequent and deliberate effort of the scripture (T362) to compare and contrast the conditions of Sukhavati with those of the Sixth Heaven, ^{5.64} shows that the inspiration of this pure land does not come from Abhirati or other buddha lands, but from the Sixth Heaven of the concupiscence world. This does not mean that the author or authors of the Sukhāvṛtīvyūha necessarily took the sources about the Sixth Heaven as their model. But they clearly believed the best of all buddha lands should excel the Sixth Heaven, at least in regard to its sensual features.

The differences in the ideal living environments depicted for the Uttarakuru, Abhirati, and Sukhāvati also interestingly reflect a shift from life in the country to urban life. The Uttarakuru is a paradise so natural that artificial objects and organized institution can scarcely be found. While resembling the Uttarakuru in many respects, Abhirati is a pure land in which one can find the shadow of urban life. Sukhāvati is a large step forward in embracing the ideal of urban life. It has departed from the kind of paradise characteristic of the Uttarakuru. Instead, it glorifies an elevated form of city life, cultured and perfect. That Amita eventually won out over Aksobhya was perhaps not accidental. It simply testifies to the fact that both the general direction of the development of human society and the development of Buddhism as a religion all followed the trend toward urbanization. 5.65

As religious teachings, the Aks.v. and the Sukhāvativyūha can be considered as representing two different trends of pure land teaching. The former presents a teaching about a pure land which has something to say about the undesirable conditions of this world and thus provides a pure land of the other world, so that practitioners who are weary or fearful of the obstructions and hardships confronting them can seek to be reborn

there. A pure land like this serves as a station for the long spiritual journey of the Buddhist practitioners. The latter, on the other hand, is about a pure land which is conceived to be surpassing all existing buddha lands (hence all existing teachings regarding pure lands). Since such a pure land is perfect in every respect, those born there do not have to take it as a station for passers-by, but as a perpetual resting place. As the development of the history of Buddhism in East Asia shows, the rebirth in the pure land of Amita gradually came to be taken as an end in itself, replacing the goal which is supposed to be sought after by all Mahayana Buddhist -- anuttarasamyaksambodhi.

The Expounders and Followers of the Scripture

As the teaching of the buddha land of Aksobhya itself gives some clues regarding the characteristics of its expounders and followers, ^{5.66} the teaching of the buddha land of Amita also provides some hints as to the characteristics of its expounders. Unlike the Aks.v. which repeatedly praises the aranya practitioners, T362 never mentions aranya or praises the practice characteristic of the aranyakas. Instead, it speaks of the residences of the bodhisattvas and arhats. ^{5.67} This is very different from the Aks.v. which talks about the priestly bodhisattvas who do not live in residential

buildings. 5.68 From this, we can imagine that the expounders of the pure land of Amita were those with whom aranya practice was either unfamiliar or unsympathetic.

Owing to the fact that leaving the household is highly praised and considered to be superior to the life of laity, the expounders of this teaching regarding the buddha land of Amita (362) should have been members of the priestly circle. 5.69 However, the followers, or the intended audience of this scripture were obviously householders. This can be seen in the mode of persuasion of the scripture and in the methods specially designed for the householders to obtain rebirth in Sukhavati. These aspects of the scripture will be dealt with in the following exposition. But at this point, it can be pointed out that, as the expounders of the scripture were not aranyakas, but clerics who lived close to or in the settlements of people, they should naturally be those who took more care of the laymen and expounded teachings which addressed the particular needs of the householders.

III. Practice Suitable for Rebirth in the Pure Land of Amita

As the Prajñāpāramitā sūtra and many other Mahayana sutras have emphatically pointed out, the goal for a

Mahayana practitioner is perfect enlightenment. 5.70 The pure land scriptures, like those of Aksobhya and of Amita, however, represent a slight deviation from the professed goal of Mahayana sutras in general. They set the goal for the practitioners as seeking rebirth in the pure lands. But in the final analysis, the goal of seeking rebirth in the pure land is not contradictory to that of perfect enlightenment. The former can be considered to be a station along the journey, where a practitioner can find a place which provides security and assurance for one's final destination to perfect enlightenment. If perfect enlightenment is a goal too remote and too difficult to attain, rebirth in the pure lands is one much more easily accessible.

But how to obtain rebirth in the pure lands? In this regard, the teaching of Aksobhya and the early form of the teaching of Amita differed markedly. The former prescribed a kind of practice emphasizing one's own effort and virtuous deeds (according to Buddhist standards) while the latter offered a mode of practice presupposing one's willingness to rely on the assistance of another. In other words, the former can be said to be an ascetic and individualistic approach, the latter a cultic and social one.

A list of types of conduct leading to rebirth in Abhirati has been given in chapter four of this paper.

5.71 The main point of the whole array of conduct is a kind of practice that requires one's strong courage and rigorous moral efforts. A mere wish or desire to be reborn in a pleasing and satisfying place like Abhirati is strongly discouraged. 5.72 More importantly, there is no one but themselves who can ferry the practitioners to Abhirati. The teaching of Amita differs markedly in these respects. First, it is pointed out in T362 that one would be reborn in Sukhavati if one sincerely wills to be born there. 5.73 Second, it is also said that even if one is not worthy of the rebirth, the compassionate Amita Buddha, by his power, would still ferry him. 5.74 It does not mean that those who aspire after rebirth in Sukhavati do not have to do anything. After all, to worship and submit oneself to Amita Buddha constitute practice. But such a program of practice is very different from that required for rebirth in the buddha land of Aksobhya.

According to T362, there are three ranks of people who follow different routes leading to rebirths in the buddha land of Amita:

The highest rank of people should abandon their homes, leave their wives and extinguish their sexual desires. They should practise as śramaṇas and assume

the Path of Non-ado. 5.75 They should also practise the career of the bodhisattvas and cultivate themselves according to the Satprajñāparamitā sūtra. As śramaṇas, they should not be deficient in observing the (teachings in the) scriptures and the disciplines. They should be merciful, progress diligently, and should not give way to anger. They should not copulate with women. They should purify themselves and be covetous for nothing. With sincerity, they should will to be reborn in the buddha land of Amita. If they can keep this will in mind continuously, these people can spontaneously see Amita Buddha, the bodhisattvas and the arhats in their dreams. As these people are dying, Amita uddha, together with his bodhisattvas and arhats, would fly to receive them to be reborn in the buddha land of his.

People of the middle rank, who also will to be reborn in the buddha land of Amita, although being unable to leave the household life, to abandon wives, to extinguish sexual desires and to practise as sramanas, should observe the (teachings in the) scriptures and the disciplines without failure. In addition, they should practice giving, always believe in the words of the scriptures of the Buddha, and

have the most sincere faith in them. 5.76 They should feed the sramanas, build Buddhist temples and stupas, scatter flowers, burn incense, light lamps and hang various banners. All these they should do without hesitation. Continuously for one day and night, they should not give way to anger and should purify themselves, be merciful, progress diligently, extinguish sexual desires and (concentrate on the) will to be reborn in the buddha land of Amita. If they can do this they can also see Amita Buddha in their dreams. As these people are dying, Amita Buddha would let them see him and his country.

People of the third rank, who also will to be reborn in the buddha land of Amita, although having nothing to do with the practice of giving, nor being able to burn incense, nor to scatter flowers, nor to light lamps, nor to hang various banners, nor to build Buddhist temples and stupas, nor to feed the sramanas, they should extinguish sexual desires and be covetous for nothing. As they obtain the scripture they should immediately be merciful and progress diligently. They should not give way to anger and purify themselves. As these things are practised, they should one-mindedly will to be reborn in the buddha land of Amita. If for ten days and

nights they can do these without intermission, they would be reborn in the buddha land of Amita upon death. 5.77

As we can see in the above descriptions, it is clearly specified in T362 that the highest rank of people who would be reborn in the buddha land of Amita is those who leave the household life. The lower ranks of people are those lay followers who can either piously carry out the duties of lay patrons (second rank) or those who are faithful even though they are unable to support the temple financially (third rank). The manner in which these householders seek to be reborn in the buddha land of Amita is characteristic of the kind of practice peculiar to the lay followers. Therefore, besides supporting the temple materially, "the most important thing for those who cannot diligently practise concentration and observe the disciplines is to be virtuous (and observe the ten precepts, namely, 1) not to kill, 2) not to steal, 3) not to commit adultery, 4) not to deceive, 5) not to take intoxicating liquor, 6) not to be slanderous, 7) no coarse speech, 8) not to lie, 9) not to be envious, and 10) not to be greedy with foods. Besides, one should neither be mean, nor be angry, nor be foolish, nor be suspicious, but should be obedient to parents, be sincere and faithful, believe in the words of the Buddhist scriptures, and

deeply believe that virtuous deeds will result in blessings in the next birth." 5.78 Traditionally, the way the lay followers of Buddhism received the Dharma was to take refuge in the Three Jewels and to observe the five or eight precepts. 5.79 And the teaching contained in the scripture regarding the pure land of Amita is just a Mahayana version of such practice of devotion taught to the general lay followers. That this teaching is Mahayanic lies not quite in the form of practice, but in the goal these householders can seek -- the rebirth in the pure land of a contemporary buddha.

In the Aks.v., the practice relevant to rebirth in Abhirati includes the conduct characteristic of an aranya practitioner. 5.80 Although aranya practice need not be confined to those who have left the household life, it is obvious that only those who have abandoned their homes and wives can carry out such practise adequately and effectively. Therefore, in the later version of the Aks.v., the following remark is added to the text:

(In the buddha land of Aksobhya) those who have left the household life are numerous while those who remain in their homes are scanty. 5.81

In T362, the people of the highest rank are undoubtedly those who have left the household life. But, as can be

seen in the above descriptions, the mode of practice adopted by these people is still different from that of the aranyakas, or the ascetics described in the Aks.v. Obviously, the former reflects the lifestyle of monks who lived in the temples situated near or in the cities. In other words, these monk can better be regarded as clergymen rather than mendicant monks.

Although T362 ranks these temple monks as the highest among those who are to be reborn in the pure land of Amita -- a testimony to the fact that the expounders of this teaching were monks -- the intended audience of the scripture was obviously people of the second or third rank, i.e., the believing householders. The teaching regarding Amita's pure land is one which makes every effort to appeal to the householders. The following represents only a small part of the persuasive effort of the scripture to dramatize the dreadful situation of this world faced by householders. After meticulously describing the superior conditions in the buddha land of Amita, the scripture (T362) challenges its readers:

By being reborn in the buddha land of Amita, (one can) cut off the five bad destinies. There, one can rise to the highest achievement of the career of the bodhisattva. It is easy to be born there. The buddha land is pleasing and naturally conforms to

one's wishes. Why don't you abandon the affairs of the world and practise morality? Thence you can have an extremely long life, the span of which is without limit.

For what reasons are you attached to worldly affairs and tormented by worry of impermanence? Worldly people are shallow and vulgar. They engage in strife with each other for things that are not urgent. In this world full of violent evils and extreme sufferings, they all toil in order to earn their livings. Regardless of high or low, rich or poor, old or young, men or women, people all worry about money and wealth. Whether they have it or not, their griefs are just the same. Anxiously they seek; discreetly they calculate. Thus driven along by the mind they do not have a moment of peacefulness.

When you possess farmland you are anxious about farmland. When you possess houses you are anxious about houses. When you possess cattle you are anxious about cattle. When you possess horses you are anxious about horses. When you possess the six kind of domestic animals you are anxious about domestic animals. When you possess servants you are anxious about servants. When you possess clothing, wealth, gold, silver or precious things you are anxious about all of them. Repeatedly you cling your

mind to them with anxiety, grief and fear, always wondering if there will be accidents, flood, fire, robbers, foes, or creditors, who will get hold of them, or which will burn and submerge them. Agitated by the poison of anxiety, your bondage will never be released. As resentment accumulates within, sickness strikes and anxiety will not abandon you. You may be stubborn enough not to let go of any (of your possessions). As you die you may still be lying on your death-evoking treasure. But when you leave it to die will it follow you? Regardless of superior or inferior, rich or poor, people are all subjected to these anxieties and fears. Alas, people toil and suffer like this! They are united with illnesses and forever abide with pains.

If you are born to a small family you will always be embittered by poverty and wants. Although you possess no farmland, you are anxious about obtaining farmland. Although you possess no houses, you are anxious about obtaining houses. Although you possess no cattle, you are anxious about obtaining cattle. Although you possess no domestic animals, you are anxious about obtaining domestic animals. Although you possess no servants, you are anxious about obtaining servants. Although you possess no clothing, wealth, fixtures, and foods and drinks, you

are anxious about obtaining them. As you get hold of one item, you will find you are thinking of getting all. While you can possess a little bit, it is already time that your life expires.

Life is as bitter as this. And even in it, you always seek and demand. Your calculations are in vain. You cannot always obtain what you want. Thus you labor both your mind and your body. You are anxious whether you stand or sit. Alas, with grief always accompanying, people toil like this. With burning heart ever with them, they submit to envy and hatred. They are also united with illness and forever abide with pains.

There may be some who are ever indifferent to this (dreadful situation). Until they die, they will not do virtuous deeds and practise the Path. As their lives expire, they should certainly go afar alone and be subjected to a (bad) destiny. They are not capable of knowing (the difference between) the good and the bad destinies...

In this world of love and desires, one comes and goes, is born and dies, alone. One should ultimately arrive at either suffering or blessings. But one has to take it himself; nobody else can substitute for him...

(In this saḥā world) people who do not understand the Path are many while those who have obtained it are few. Life is short and cannot be relied upon. Regardless of noble or common, rich or poor, men or women, old or young, people all rush to toil and moil. For their entire lives, they are subjected to envy and hatred. In the atmosphere filled with evil, none of them are not sad. However, they still do things in vain. Their evils offend heaven and earth. They do not act according to humanity and morality. Let them do what they want. You will see that they will suddenly be deprived of their natural life span and be thrown into the bad destinies. Life after lives, they will continuously lament. This will not end for millions of millions of years. Such pain is beyond description and (people like these) are indeed pitiable. 5.82

Despite the heavy dramatization, the message of the scripture is simple: the situation of this world is so dreadful, why not seek rebirth in the other world -- the pure land of Buddha Amita. For the householders who are trapped and are being tormented in this world, the method of getting deliverance is simple. Without permanently leaving the household life, without having to undergo the program of strenuous cultivation undertaken by the

aranyaka ascetics, and without having to endure the unbearably long lapse of time during which a bodhisattva strives for enlightenment, one can obtain rebirth in Sukhāvātī -- just by carrying out the duties of a lay patron, by temporarily staying away from the desires and concerns of householders, by keeping Amita Buddha in mind, or in the case of failure to do all these, by relying on Amita's mercy and power. 5.83

Now it should become clear why the teaching regarding the pure land of Amita prevailed and eventually eclipsed that of Aksobhya. The former was a teaching that appealed to the householders while the latter was one which only the self-relying and courageous mendicant monks could adequately follow. It is probably because of the fact that the number of householders had always exceeded that of the monks that a teaching appealing to the former should have overcome one that was appreciated by the mendicant monks. In his vows, Amita resolved for a pure land best among all other buddha lands so that his name was to be heard by people in buddha lands of all directions. 5.84 Certainly it was because his unexcelled buddha land that people came to hear of his fame. But it was also because he offered a means to salvation so appealing to the general populace that he became so popular and eventually won out over Aksobhya.

Before ending this chapter, it should be pointed out that the teaching of pronouncing the name of Amita buddha -- a method which later development of the teaching considered to be sufficient for one's rebirth in Sukhavati -- is not found in the early texts of the scripture such as T362 or T361. The two early texts talk about "keeping the will of rebirth in the buddha land of Amita in mind." 5.85 This obviously means sustaining the wish in one's mind, not pronouncing the name of Amita, even silently. The pronunciation of the name of Amita Buddha as central to all practices was a later development. In the later texts, fixing one's thought on Amita Buddha, or memorizing (anusmrti) by pronouncing, silently or articulately, his name has become the essential practice. 5.86 Of course, this reflects a tendency further to simplify the practice. However, such a practice clearly was not advocated by the early texts of the scripture. On the other hand, it is interesting to note that the pronunciation of the name of the Buddha had already been absorbed into the early text of the Aks.v. In the A ch'u fo kuo ching, we find the following passage:

(The bodhisattvas) always bear in mind the names of the buddhas, of the tathagatas, of sarvajna, of the Dharma, and of the samgha. If there are good men

and good women who hear of the names, they can be reborn in the buddha land of Aksobhya. 5.87

In this context, it is the repeated pronunciation of the names, and not merely the mindfulness of a certain wish, idea, or vision that yields the result. As to the memory of names, they must be pronounced, whether silently or aloud. From this, we can see that the pronunciation of names (of the buddhas, of the Dharma, etc.) had already been recognized in the Aks.v. as capable of yielding inconceivable results, although it was the later development of the teaching regarding Amita that fully utilized this method and limited the pronunciation to the name of Amita.

CHAPTER VI. AKSOBHYA IN THE EARLY MAHAYANA SUTRAS

This chapter is an attempt to show how Aksobhya Buddha and his pure land are known and regarded in the early Mahayana sutras as well as to reveal how the Mahayanists exchanged ideas. As the teaching concerning Aksobhya Buddha and the pure land Abhirati spread, it inevitably stirred up some response in Buddhist circles. Since Buddhists were individuals, they must have had their own opinions on such a teaching. They did not express their opinions through the production of treatises or reviews that bore their names. Instead, in the process of producing more Mahayana sutras, Mahayanists left the scriptures to speak for them. As we can see today, the opinions were those of individual Mahayanists, but the spokesman was the Buddha.

In the introduction of this paper, we asserted that the notion of the pure land was a common denominator of all Mahayana and was not necessarily a tenet peculiar to a certain school or sect. ^{6.1} We did not, however, immediately support that assertion with further documentation. In this chapter we will try to make this clear: although the notion of innumerable contemporaneous buddhas and buddha lands may not be expressly stated in

all the Mahayana sutras, it is nonetheless implicitly implied or presupposed. One cannot find a Buddhist scripture that claims to be Mahayanic and yet disputes the tenet of contemporaneous buddhas and buddha lands. Certainly, not all buddha lands are pure, as the Buddhists have recognized.^{6.2} But pure buddha lands especially attracted the attention of Buddhists and it was only the pure buddha lands that the followers of Buddhism wished to be reborn.

Aksobhya and Abhirati were only the very first names of a buddha and of a pure buddha land known in the Mahayana circle. As Mahayana developed, more and more names of buddhas and of pure lands were disseminated. As a result there were Mahayana sutras devoted exclusively to enumerate these names of buddhas and of pure lands.^{6.3} New names were being made and old and well-known names were being reiterated. Therefore, it is not surprising to find that subsequent Mahayana sutras refer to the names of Aksobhya and Abhirati. Some mention them in passing; some refer to them with commentary; still others contrast and compare them with other well-known pure lands such as that of Amita Buddha.

In the Mahayana sutras, it is commonplace for the achieved bodhisattvas to travel to and fro among various buddha lands. The recurring motif together with the

constant reiteration of Aksobhya make possible the assessment of how this buddha was treated in the early Mahayana sutras without examining the teachings peculiar to the individual scriptures. In dealing with the materials, I followed the the Index to the Taisho Tripitaka to locate the occurrences of the name of Aksobhya or of Abhirati in their Chinese transliteration or translations. This procedure singled out about 100 sutras. I did not include those sutras classified in the Taisho canon as tantric texts because I think Aksobhya Buddha in tantric texts requires a separate study. The dates of translation of these hundred sutras range from the second to the eleventh century. 6.4

Since the Aks.v. and the early Prajñāpāramitā sūtra have been treated in the previous chapter, they will be left out in this chapter. Here we will focus our attention on a group of about 43 sutras (including re-translations) which, according to our criteria, are regarded as early Mahayana sutras.

The obvious criterion of early Mahayana sutras is of course their dates of composition. But since these dates were as a rule not recorded the only reliable clue to them is the dates of Chinese translation. The sequence of the Chinese translations, however, does not necessarily reflect the sequence in which the Mahayana sutras were

produced, for an early scripture may have been translated at a late date. Fortunately, the works of Nagarjuna partially help to solve this problem. In his Ta chih tu lun (Prajñāpāramitā śāstra) and Shih chu p'i p'io sa lun (Daśa bhūmika vibhāṣa?) Nāgārjuna mentioned the titles or quoted the texts of about forty scriptures. ^{6.5} By comparing the titles or the quotations of the texts with the scriptures known in the existing Chinese canon, we can have at least a partial picture of Mahayana sutras existing before Nāgārjuna. This picture is inevitably incomplete because the Mahayana sutras mentioned or quoted by Nagarjuna were not the totality of those Mahayana sutras known to him or existing before his lifetime.

Based on those Mahayana sutras known to Nāgārjuna, we can make a list of early Mahayana sutras by including all those translated early into Chinese, assuming that the dates of the Chinese translations reasonably well reflect the sequence of the production of Mahayana sutras. Even then, a question arises. At what time should we date Mahayana's "later" period? The time division between an early and a late period can be entirely arbitrary and very flexible. The Chinese translations of the second century A. D. are certainly "early" as long as there were many "late" sutras to follow them. Unless a set of earlier sutras can be distinguished as essentially different from

a later set in regard to their contents, the distinction between early and late Mahayana sutras would depend entirely on the whim of the one who set the time line.

The Sandhinirmocana sūtra puts forth a criterion that might enable us to distinguish early and late sutras based on the different characteristics of the teachings:

During the first period, in the Deer Park, [the Buddha], with concealed intention, turned the Dharma wheel by [preaching] the Four Noble Truths for those whos aspired after the Vehicle of the Sravakas...

During the second period, [the Buddha] turned the Dharma wheel by [preaching] the emptiness, the neither origination nor extinction, the in-self non-arisal, and the nirvana of self-nature of all dharmas only for those who aspired after the Great Vehicle.

Now in the third period, [the buddha] turns the Dharma wheel by explicitly [preaching] the emptiness, the neither origination nor extinction, the in-itself non-arisal, the nirvana of self-nature, and the nature of no-self-ness for those who aspire after all vehicles. 6.6

Here, let us not be troubled by any attempt to elucidate the meaning of the abstruse expressions above, but simply point out, somewhat dogmatically, that the

first stage refers to the teaching of the Hinayana; the second, to the sunyata teaching of Mahayana; and the third to the vijnaptimatratā teaching of later Mahayana. This scheme of periodization offered by Mahayanists themselves suffices to make clear the distinction between the early and later Mahayana sutras according to the essential characteristics of the teachings peculiar to each period. Although such a scheme has a systematic ring, it also reflects the actual doctrinal development of Buddhism and has constituted one of the standard views as to the classification of teachings in traditional Buddhist scholarship.

However, the criterion adopted by the Sandhinirmocana sūtra does not serve our purpose. The notion of numerous contemporaneous buddhas and buddha lands was an aspect of Mahayana teaching which pervaded the whole period of Mahayana and did not change according to changes in the philosophical tenets. Therefore, for our purpose, we can only adopt an arbitrary criterion for early Mahayana sutras. We do this by setting the time line up to the sixth century A. D. for the Chinese translations. The sixth century was a time when all the early Mahayana sutras, unless they never were translated, should have been translated into Chinese. With some forty sutras chosen under this criterion, there should be enough

samples to come up with a general picture showing the status of Aksobhya in early Mahayana.

The buddha lands of Aksobhya and of Amita were the first well-known pure lands of Mahayana. It is natural for subsequent Mahayana sutras to mention them. Before we talk about the Mahayana sutras which include both the pure lands of Aksobhya and of Amita, it is better first to treat those that mention only the former. The sutras that mention Aksobhya and/or his pure land, Abhirati, are listed below in their chronological order of translation from the early third to the fifth century A. D. ^{6.7}

- T328 (Ak3) Hsu lai ching 須賴經
[var. tran. T329 (Ak23) Hsu lai ching 須賴經]
- T474 (Ak4) Wei mo chieh ching 維摩詰經
- T310(3) (Ak9) Mi chi chin kang li shih hui 密迹金剛力士會
- T565 (Ak16) Shun ch'uan fang pien ching 順權方便經
[T566 (Ak35) Lo ying lo chunag yen fan pien p'in
ching 樂瓔珞莊嚴方便品經]
- T657 (Ak32) Hua shou ching 華手經
- T484 (Ak33) Pu ssu i kuang p'u sa so shuo ching
不思議光菩薩所說經
- T642 (Ak34) Shou leng yen san mei ching 首楞嚴三昧經
- T277 (Ak46) Kuan p'u hsien p'u sa hsing fa ching 觀普
賢菩薩行法經
- T825 (Ak48) Shen shen ta hui hsiang ching 甚深大迴向經

Almost invariably these sutras mention Aksobhya and his pure land in a context of numerous buddhas and buddha lands (T277, T328[329], T484, T474, T565, T825). In T277, Aksobhya and his pure land are objects to be seen in a samadhi. In T328[329], T484, T825, T310(3), T657, T277, Abhirati is the pure land in which the figures related in the scriptures are to be reborn. More interesting, in T310(3), T565[566], T474, and T642, Abhirati was a place in which achieved bodhisattvas passed away and then came to be reborn in this saha world. The pure land of Aksobhya is taken to be one of the many buddha lands where a bodhisattva visits and gains spiritual insight during his difficult and lengthy career.

Among this group of sutras, T328 and T474 stand out in praising Aksobhya and his pure land highly. T474, the Chinese version of the celebrated Vimalakirtinirdeśa, devotes a chapter to the buddha land of Aksobhya. ^{6.8}

The sutras that recognize both Aksobhya and Amita are more numerous. Some refer to both names in the same context while others introduce their names in different contexts. They are listed chronologically according to the dates of their Chinese translations beginning from the early third to the late sixth century A. D. ^{6.9}

T532 (Ak5) Ssu ho mei ching 私呵味經

- T632 (Ak6) Hui yin san mei ching 慧印三昧經
- T170 (Ak8) Te kuang t'ai tzu ching 德光太子經
 [T310(18) (Ak65) Hu kuo p'u sa hui 護國菩薩會]
- T598 (Ak10) Hai lung wang ching 海龍王經
- T585 (Ak11) Ch'ih hsin fan t'ien so wen ching 持心梵
 天所問經
- T263 (Ak12) Cheng fa hua ching 正法華經
 [T262 (Ak28) Miao fa lien hua ching 妙法蓮華經]
- T318 (Ak13) Wen shu shih li fo t'u yen ching ching 文
 殊師利佛土嚴淨經
- T425 (Ak14) Hsien chieh ching 賢劫經
- T342 (Ak15) Ju huan san mei ching 如幻三昧經
- T811 (Ak17) Chueh ting tsung ch'ih ching 決定總持經
 [T831 (Ak55) Pang fo ching 諷佛經]
- T433 (Ak18) Pao wang ching 寶網經
- T384 (Ak20) P'u sa ch'u t'ai ching 菩薩處胎經
- T656 (Ak21) P'u sa ying lo ching 菩薩瓔珞經
- T366 (Ak25) A mi t'o ching 阿彌陀經
- T475 (Ak30) Wei mo chieh so shuo ching 維摩詰所說經
- T374 (Ak38) Ta pan nieh p'an ching 大般涅槃經
 [T376 (Ak36) Ta pan ni yuan ching 大般泥洹經]
- T157 (Ak39) Pei hua ching 悲華經
 [T158 (Ak24) Ta ch'eng pei fen t'o li ching 大乘悲
 分陀利經]
- T663 (Ak37) Chin kuang ming ching 金光明經
- T397(9) (Ak40) Ta fang teng ta chi ching pu t'ung feng

大方等大集經寶幢分

T267 (Ak41) Pu t'ui chuan fa lun ching 不退轉法輪經

T643 (Ak43) Kuan fo san mei hai ching 觀佛三昧海經

T278 (Ak42) Ta fan kuang fo hua yen ching 大方廣佛
華嚴經

T268 (Ak44) Kuang po yen ching pu t'ui chuan lun ching
廣博嚴淨不退轉法輪經

T414 (Ak50) P'u sa nien fo san mei ching 菩薩念佛三昧經

T633 (Ak49) Ju lai chih yin ching 如來智印經

[T634 (Ak95) Ta cheng chih yin ching 大乘智印經]

T434 (Ak51) Ch'eng yang chu fo kung te ching 稱揚諸
佛功德經

T423 (Ak56) Seng ch'ieh cha ching 僧伽吒經

T639 (Ak57) Yueh teng san mei ching 月燈三昧經

T649 (Ak63) Kuan ch'a chu fa hsing ching 觀容諸法行經

Among these sutras, many treat Aksobhya and Amita equally, referring to them as two buddhas presiding over two buddha lands among innumerable buddha lands of the ten directions. These sutras include:

T263[262], T278, T384[376], T397(9), T414, T425, T433,
T532, T585, T598, T639, T643, T656, T663, T423

However, some sutras have a high opinion of Aksobhya. They express their opinions in different ways, the most explicit of which is to say that Askobhya is the best

among the buddhas or to emphasize that Aksobhya is praised by buddhas of all directions. ^{6.10} Another way for a sutra to express opinion is to compare the pure land of Aksobhya with the one it is describing. In T318, which deals with the pure land of Manjusri, the buddha land of Aksobhya is singled out as a model of pure lands and is compared to the one of Manjusri. ^{6.11} The future buddha land of Manjusri is also compared to that of Amita and the conclusion of the sutra is that the former is superior to the latter. ^{6.12}

It is interesting to note that T384, while praising the buddha land of Aksobhya, delivers an extremely harsh criticism of the teaching regarding Sukhavati. It does not condemn the pure land of Amita directly, perhaps because the perfection of Sukhavati is beyond doubt. But the sutra points out that those who aspire after rebirths in Sukhavati would inevitably be deceived by a land of pleasure and laziness also situated in the west, in the vicinity of Sukhavati. Perplexed by and attached to such a pseudo pure land, almost all of those who wish to be reborn in Sukhavati ended up being reborn in such a land of pleasure and laziness. ^{6.13}

Some other sutras incorporate Aksobhya and Amita in Jataka/avadana tales, revealing their previous incarnations, such as spiritual teacher and student, king

and minister. In this way they differentiate the status of Aksobhya, of Amita, and even of Sakyamuni.

In the Jataka tales of traditional Buddhists, a tale narrating a past event is usually one that illustrates the glorious career of the bodhisattva in the past. The Jataka/avadana tales of the Mahayana generally resemble such illustrative function but the heroes in the tales are no longer the Buddha Sakyamuni in his past births but numerous other buddhas and bodhisattvas in previous incarnations. The following is to introduce those that have to do with the previous incarnations of Aksobhya and Amita.

Let us begin with T170, Te kuang t'ai tzu ching, translated by Dharmeksema in the early fifth century. 6.14 The whole sutra is a tale deliberately structured to resemble the myth concerning the causes that led prince Siddhartha to leave the household life and then became the Buddha. Of course the heroes of the tale have been replaced by others.

One unique element of this Mahayana tale, with no parallel in the traditional versions of the myth concerning Sakyamuni, is that this tale begins with the assertion that in the remotest past a certain buddha called Chi-i (吉義) was born into the world. 6.15

This feature of a Mahayana Jataka tale -- being contemporaneous with a buddha while one is practising the bodhisattva career -- is almost without exception shared by all the sutras we will deal with.

As Buddha Sakyamuni is depicted as the son of King Suddhodana, here in this tale there is also a king whose name was An-cheng-wu (頓真無). The first son of this king was called Te-kuang (德光). Like Śākyamuni, this prince Te-kuang was highly born, privileged, and doomed to lead a happy life. But the gods came to the prince and told him about the impermanence of things, the swiftness of human lives and the inescapability of one's karmas. Upon hearing this message, the prince could no longer enjoy the pleasure derived from the luxurious garden and the beautiful dancing girls especially made available to him by the king. When asked by the king why he was indifferent to these things aspired after by all people of the world, the prince told his father that he was determined not to go after impermanent things of the world, not to be enslaved by the thirst of power, love, and desire; he had instead resolved to seek enlightenment in the quiet places of the mountain and the forest.

With firm determination the prince always rejoiced in hearing the gods praising the unparalleled merit of the Buddha, the Dharma and the Sangha. He was always

disgusted by the impermanence, unpleasantness and impurities of the world. Then came the moment when the prince resolved to leave the bondage of home and the future throne and headed for the east to the place of Chi-i Tathagata. Fearing that his family would try to stop him if he went out through the door, the prince spoke to the direction of Chi-i Tathagata: "If the Tathagata is omniscient, he should take care of me." Immediately, the Tathagata stretched his right arm to send forth great brightness which shone upon the prince. In the light, there emerged a lotus flower which carried the prince to the Tathagata.

When that unusual night had passed, the king learned from the weeping dancing girls that the prince was missing. Tormented by dread, the king searched around the city wall one thousand times before the guardian god of the city told him that the prince was now in the place of Chi-i Tathagata.

When the king came to the place of Chi-i Tathagata he was also converted by the Tathagata. Then the prince requested the Tathagata to go into the city with his sangha. Chi-i Tathagata granted the prince his request, thus enabling the prince to make offering to him and his sangha. Besides making offerings by providing foods, the prince also decorated the houses of the sangha and

furnished them with beddings of various colors. With other measures the prince made his best effort to support the livelihood of the Buddha and the sangha. After the nirvana of the Tathagata, the prince built innumerable stupas and continued to make offerings to the relics of the Buddha. After 300 million kotis of years of making offerings, the prince left the household life, practised strenuously and lived on food of alms. Following his lead, the king, the ministers, the queen and all the citizens all left their homes and cultivated themselves in the Path.

True Dharma was sustained in the world for 64 thousand kotis of years, because of the patronage of the prince Te-kuang who had become a bhiksu. In the same manner, this bhiksu continued to make offerings to ninety-four kotis of buddhas.

As the preacher of the scripture, Buddha Śākyamuni, finally reveals, king An-cheng-wu of the past was the present Buddha Amitayus; the prince Te kuang was the Buddha himself, while the guardian god of the city was Buddha Aksobhya.

Basically this tale is a Mahayana reiteration of a certain part of the myth concerning the buddha Sakyamuni - - the periods of his household life and of the causes that

prompted him to leave the household life. But this Mahayana tale has an added element. The prince became a pious patron of the Dharma and the sangha. If Jataka tales do have a certain pedagogical function among others, this Mahayana avadana tale obviously is trying to instill in the audience a conviction that the true Dharma can be sustained much longer if more pious supports are obtained from the lay patrons. As the expounders of this scripture, like that of many other, has realized, the patrons who can most effectively influence the flourishing or decline of the Dharma are the imperial patrons -- the powerful ones.

Amita's incarnation as the king and Aksobhya's incarnation as the guardian god of the city in this tale are not essential to the pedagogical element of this sutra. They can be replaced by others without doing any harm to the content of the tale. That this sutra makes use of both was probably because of their popularity. Their relationship, whether coordinate or subordinate, is not at all clear. In other avadana tales, however, such relationships are more readily recognizable.

In T811[T831] an avadana tale is related which illustrates the sin of libelling the Mahayana sutras. In this sutra, it was a time when Buddha Kuang-shih-yin was in the world. There was a teacher of the Dharma called

Pien-chi (辯 積) who preached this Chueh ting tsung ch'ih ching (T811). A king called Yueh-shih (月 施) piously supported and made all sorts of offering to this Dharma teacher. Therefore, the king enjoyed blessed retributions. On the other hand, the ten sons of a wealthy family, because they libelled this Dharma teacher and violated the Dharma and disciplines, fell to the bad destinies and suffered for an extended period of time. In this tale, the king is said to be the present Amita while his teacher is Aksobhya. 6.16

Similarly, T663 and its later version T665 (Sanskrit: Suvarṇaprabhāṣa-uttama-rāja) presents a tale which relates the relation between a king and a Dharma teacher who preached the scripture Suvarṇaprabhāṣa. In this sutra the Dharma teacher, Ratnasikhi, is said to be the incarnation of Aksobhya while the king, Susāmbhava, is the Buddha Śākyamuni himself. 6.17 Therefore, Aksobhya is regarded here in this sutra as the teacher of Śākyamuni. A common tendency of the Mahayana sutras is not only to introduce numerous contemporaneous buddhas, but to praise them highly, sometimes even more highly than Sakyamuni, the founder of the Buddhist religion.

As we will see, other sutras regard Aksobhya and Amita equally. But there are also sutras that make the latter higher than the former. In the Kuan ch'a chu fa

hsing ching (觀察諸法行經 , T649) there are two avadana tales that involve both Aksobhya and Amita. The structures of both tales are similar: their events happened when a certain buddha was in the world; and they involve imperial patrons (a prince in tale I and a king in tale II), and preachers (shuo fa che 說法者) who preached about the samadhi of the sutra. Of course the names of the characters in the two tales are different. More distinctive, however, are the incarnations. In tale I the prince was Buddha Amitayus; the preacher was Buddha Broad Eye who, according to the text, was the prediction-bestower of Aksobhya.^{6.18} Therefore, in this tale, both Amita and Aksobhya are considered to be the students of the same Buddha Broad Eye. In tale II, the king was Aksobhya; the preacher Amitayus. Here, Amita is regarded as the teacher of Aksobhya. It is not uncommon to find heterogeneous or even inconsistent elements in the same sutra because of the peculiar manner in which Buddhist scriptures were formulated. So it is not surprising to see that the implications of tale II contradict that of tale I.

Furthermore, tale II in T649 is similar not only in structure but also in the names of its personages to another sutra, namely, T425. According to its date of translation (A. D. 291), and the fact that it is known in

the Ta chih tu lun, this T425 should have served as the prototype of tale II described above (translated in 595). T425, known as Bhadra-kalpika sutra or Bhadrakalpāvadāna in Sanskrit, relates the tale as usual as coming from the mouth of the Buddha who illustrates the foremost importance of the offering of Dharma. The tale runs like this:

In the remote past, there was a buddha called Chin-lung-chueh-kuang (金龍決光). His buddha land was called Immeasurable Purity. There was a monk called Wu-hsien-liang Pao-yin (無限量寶音) who, because of his unwillingness to comply with the degraded monks of the time, was expelled by the majority of monks and was forced to live in the mountain. But this monk was not fearful. He still diligently preached the samadhi expounded by this scripture (T425). At that time, there was a cakravartin king called Shih-chung-wu-yu Yueh-yin (使眾無憂悅音) who went to the monk and listened to his sermon on this samadhi. The king was delighted and begged the monk to continue his preaching career. The king also sent his thousand sons to protect the monk so that he could preach on this samadhi for half a kalpa. This monk was the incarnate Amita while the king was Aksobhya. The thousand sons of the king were the thousand buddhas in the bhadrakalpa. 6.19

This earlier version of the tale was taken over by T649 which also lengthened it and added more details. The characters remained the same even though their names were translated differently in the two sutras. The following table shows the similarities of the names of the characters in the tales of the two sutra (T425 and T649) which are otherwise unrelated:

	<u>T425</u>		<u>T649</u>
Buddha	金龍決光	10b12	廣淨厚金普無疑 光威王 737b20
Preacher	無限量寶音	10b13	無邊功德寶振聲 淨行聚 738b28
Incarnation	阿彌陀	10c4	無量壽如來 738c10
Royal patron	使眾無憂 悅音	10b20	多人無憂普欲 喜音 737c23
Incarnations	阿閼佛	10c5	不動如來 738c13
Dharma			
preached	賢劫三昧	10b16,10b29	決定觀淨諸 法行三摩地 737c2

While we are considering adoption of materials, it is interesting to note that one within this group adopts from other scriptures in a most unusual manner: T157[158], which is known as Karunapundarikasūtra in Sanskrit. This sutra adopts from T313, the Aks.v. that constitute the

core of this study. The unusual feature lies in the thorough adoption of the content of the text of the Aks.v. with only a slight variation in presentation. In the case of T157, it is a certain Pao-tsang Tathagata who bestowed prediction of buddhahood on a prince who became Aksobhya Bodhisattva. ^{6.20} This is different from the Aks.v. which has Tathagata Big-Eye bestow prediction on a certain bhiksu. But other than this difference, the resolutions of Aksobhya as well as the features of the pure land are similar in both scriptures. (It is clear that it was T157 that adopted from the Aks.v. and not vice versa. Besides the dates of translation (the Aks.v., 2nd century; T157, early 5th century) as testimony, it is also evident that since it relates various sorts of pure lands and discusses them, T157 must have been a sutra which appeared after many names of buddhas and of pure lands had widely been disseminated.) The sharing of common materials was one of the reasons for the proliferation of Mahayana sutras. Allusion to the tradition was commonplace. But to produce a sutra on the basis of other existing sutras was a rather unusual practice, even for the Mahayanists.

In ways other than avadana tales, there are sutras which hold that Amita or the Sukhavati is better. In T366, the abbreviated version of the Sukhāvātīvyūha, Aksobhya is brought into the text to serve, together with

numerous other buddhas, as advocate of the scripture Sukhāvatiīvyūha. We have pointed out in the last chapter that Aksobhya is unknown to the earliest versions of the Sukhavatīvyūha (T361,362).^{6.21} But in this obviously later version (T366, translated by Kumārajīva in A. D. 402), we can see that the expounder of the teaching of Amita's pure land has made an effort to incorporate Aksobhya to his scripture.

In T632 [633,634] the buddha land of Amita is described as the final destiny of one's long cycles of rebirth. One gets birth in Abhirati only for purpose of transition. But Sukhāvatiī was clearly considered by many to be the final destiny.

On the other hand, although the early Vimalakirtinirdeśa (T474) does not know the name Amita, this buddha has already been incorporated into a later version of the sutra (T475, translated in 406).^{6.22} This is paralleled by the effort of the shorter version of the Sukhāvatiīvyūha to adopt Aksobhya.

Finally, it should be pointed out that the notion of the four regional buddhas is found in the early Chinese version of the Suvarṇaprabhāsa sūtra (T663, translated by Dharmakṣema between 412 and 421). In this sutra, the arrangement is as follows:

East -- Akṣobhya
South -- Ratnaketu
West -- Amitāyus
North -- Dundubhiṣvara 6.23

It seems that this sutra has set the model for the subsequent arrangement of the regional buddhas. Although subsequent texts may give different names and in the tantric texts a fifth buddha is added to occupy the center, the above scheme was generally followed and Akṣobhya is almost always included. 6.24

CHAPTER VII. CONCLUSIONS

A distinction has to be made between a general notion of pure land and a teaching regarding the pure land. As has been pointed out early in this study, pure land as a general notion is a property of all Mahayana and is found in or presupposed by every Mahayana sutra, while a teaching regarding the pure land of a certain buddha constitutes a specific teaching. The specific teaching appears not only in the depiction of a particular pure land but also in the weaving into the teaching of a specific mode of religious practice. Early Mahayana gave two versions of specific teachings regarding the pure lands: 1) the teaching regarding the pure land of Aksobhya and 2) the teaching regarding the pure land of Amita. These two teachings constituted the subject matters of the Akṣobhyavyūha and of the Sukhāvatīvyūha respectively.

The Buddhist notion of pure land has to be distinguished from the general notion of paradise. While the imagery of ideal living conditions can be considered innate in all human aspirations, the Buddhist vision of pure lands was heavily tinted with indigeneous ideals of Hindu culture in general and with Buddhist goals and ideals in particular.

Although a psychological interpretation throws light on a certain aspect of the phenomenon of pure land teaching (for example: the heavens in early Buddhism were replaced by the pure lands in Mahayana, so that instead of aspiring to be reborn in the joyful heavens one could seek to be reborn in the pure land of a contemporaneous buddha, 7.1) this interpretation cannot help us to understand how such a teaching was structured and how it fit with specifically Buddhist ideals and convictions. Making up a pure land to substitute for the heavens might or might not have been the underlying motive of the Mahayanists who developed the teaching of pure lands, but this is not how the teaching was presented.

The teaching regarding pure lands is founded on the notions of the lengthy careers of the bodhisattvas and their great vows to actualize pure lands. The case we have brought forward is the career and resolutions of the bodhisattva Aksobhya as presented in the Aks.v. We have seen how the doctrines regarding the careers and vows of the bodhisattva were developed from the Jātaka/avadāna literature which preceeded the Mahayana sutras. As to the philosophical question concerning how the resolutions of the bodhisattva could result in the creation of a pure land, we have emphasized that this is the place where Buddhist convictions are profoundly at work. One may not

agree with the Buddhists but their premises and rationales should receive due respect and appreciation and not be simply dismissed.

The practice regarding the pure land is not necessarily limited to seeking rebirth in the pure land of a buddha but. As is clearly stated in the Aks.v., one can also practice the career of the bodhisattva, make resolutions and accomplish a pure land for himself. But this trend of the teaching lost its ground in the subsequent development of pure land teaching. Almost all practices regarding pure land bear the goal of seeking rebirth in the pure land of a contemporaneous buddha. The reason for this is clear. To purify a buddha land in order to give benefit to the sentient beings is the heroic career of a bodhisattva. To rely oneself on a certain buddha and seek his help by being in his pure land is what most sentient beings can do. Since the devotional form of pure land practice finally eclipsed the individualistic and ascetic one, this may be an indication that Mahayana Buddhism was becoming more and more the property of the common people.

A comparison of the Aks.v. with the early version of the Sukhāvativyūha showed that the former advocates an ascetic, individualistic mode of practice while the latter favors a social, cultic, and devotional one. These two

modes of practice correspond to the jñāna marga and bhakti marga conventionally used to distinguish between types of practices in orthodox Hindu tradition. 7.2 And this distinction between wisdom (jñāna) and devotion (bhakti) is repeatedly reflected in Buddhist terminology. 7.3 Interestingly, each of the two versions of pure land teaching in early Mahayana seems to illustrate one end of this polarity.

Even though it has been demonstrated that a pure land teaching is not necessarily one whose characteristic is devotional, the common sense opinion that a pure land teaching prescribes a devotional mode of practice is not without reason. The pure land teaching regarding Amita became dominant and has long been taken to be the archetype of pure land teaching. Its counterpart, the pure land teaching regarding Aksobhya, has been forgotten or at least no longer is able to draw attention from practitioners. It is fortunate that the scripture on this pure land teaching is preserved in translations. This enables us to study the details of such pure land teaching in early Mahayana.

This study has concentrated only on the earliest development of Mahayana teachings regarding pure lands with special reference to that of Aksobhya. As the teachings were disseminated, they would inevitably have

triggered Buddhist response, whether emotional or intellectual. In East Asia, where pure land teaching exerted tremendous influence, there is also a tremendous amount of literature devoted to the propagation, explication, justification, and disputation, as well as philosophy of pure land teaching. These can certainly constitute many separate studies and cannot be dealt with here. What we would like to show in this concluding chapter are some of the opinions of Buddhist thinkers of India regarding the origins and meanings of pure land teachings. Of course, the following can represent only a glimpse of the vast ocean of the Buddhist religious literature.

First let us see the two opinions represented in two Mahayana sutras:

Bodhisattva-mahasattva P'u-kuang further said to the Buddha: "World-honored One, are there differences between the pure and wonderful buddha lands of the ten directions?" The Buddha told P'u-kuang, "There are no differences." Then P'u-kuang asked the Buddha, "World-honored One, why is it that in the scriptures the buddha land of Amita is praised as having trees, dragon palace, and chambers all made of the seven kinds of gem, and those who wish to be reborn there could arrive according to their wishes."

The Buddha told Bodhisattva-mahasattva P'u-kuang, "You have misunderstood me. Because the people of this saha world are all greedy and defiled. Those who are upright are few and those practising heresies are many . They do not trust in the true Teaching and concentrate on it. They are all confused and do not have a goal. In order to make these sentient beings concentrate I praise that buddha land so that those who wish to be reborn there can have their wishes fulfilled and hence results obtained." T1331.529c

To purify oneself and observe the disciplines for one day and night is superior to doing virtuous deeds in the buddha land of Amita for one hundred years. Why so? Because in his buddha land all the people are virtuous. Things are obtained naturally without seeking. There is no evil. To do virtuous deeds for ten days and nights in this world is superior than doing virtuous deeds in the other buddha lands for one thousand years. Why so? The people in the other buddha worlds all practise virtues. Few of them do evils. Things are obtained naturally without seeking. In this world, evil-doers are numerous while virtue-doers are few. If one does

not seek and work, one cannot obtain what he wants.

T362.315c

One is amazed to find that the second passage is from the early Chinese version of the Sukhāvativyūha. Even though the scripture praises all the advantages of gaining rebirth in the buddha land of Amita, it turns back to remind one of the priveleges we all enjoy by dwelling in this saha world. While dissatisfied with the conditions of our mode of existence, the expounder of the scripture still was able to see some light, some meaning for our existence on the planet earth.

The following are from sastras whose authors are known to us. The opinions expressed are more clearly attributable to individual Buddhist thinkers.

With regard to the practice of the Mahayana the Buddha said thus: "To resolve to seek the Path of the buddha is even more difficult than to lift the Chiliocosm." Now you speak of the difficulties and length of time in obtaining the stage of no falling back. Should there be an easy Path by which one can arrive swiftly at the stage of no falling back? [I would say that] these are only the words of cowards and inferiors, not of the great men of strong will.

But if you wish to hear this expedient means, I would expound it for you:

There are innumerable teachings in the religion of the Buddha. It is like the difficult and easy paths in the world; on the land route one has to toil along the road; but on the water-way one rejoices riding on the boat. The paths of the bodhisattvas are similar. There may be some who progress diligently and there may be some who, by means of the expediency of devotion, arrive at the stage of no falling back easily and swiftly. T1521.41a (Shih chu p'i p'o sha lun attributed to Nagarjuna)

Suppose there is a man who learns this teaching for the first time and wishes to seek the right faith, but lacks courage and strength. Because he lives in this world of suffering he fears that he will not always be able to meet the buddhas and make offerings to them personally, and that, since faith is difficult to perfect, he is thinking of retreating. Then he should know that the Tathagatas have an excellent expedient means to protect his faith: that is, by having the mind set on a buddha, one can be reborn in the buddha land of the other worlds according to his wishes. There, he will always see the buddha and be free from the bad

destinies for ever. As it is said in the sutra: "If a man concentrates on thinking of Amita buddha in Sukhavati in the west and wishes to be born in that world, directing all the good roots he has cultivated [toward that goal], then he will be born there." Because he will always see the buddha, he will never fall back. T1666.583 (Awakening of Faith in Mahayana attributed to Asvaghosa)

Furthermore, all the teachings of the buddha should be understood according to the four kinds of meaning and reliance [explained below]. First, normal meaning. For example, there is some such saying [in the scriptures]: "At that time my name was Vipasya. I became buddha long ago." Second, separate time meaning. For example, there is some such saying [in the scriptures]: "If there is a person who recites the name of buddha To-pao, then he would definitely not fall back as regards supreme enlightenment." Furthermore, there is some such saying [in the scriptures]: "By resolution alone, one can obtain rebirth in the buddha land Sukhavati." Third, separate intention meaning. For example, there is some such saying [in the scriptures]: "If one can make offerings to these buddhas as innumerable as the sands of the Ganges, one can

obtain understanding in the teachings of Mahayana." Fourth, the meaning according to the desires of sentient beings. For example, the Tathagata previously praised [the merit] of giving and afterwards blamed it. This is also true of the other practices such as discipline, etc. These are the so-called four meanings. T1593.121b (Mahāyānasamgraha attributed to Asanga)

Buddhist thinkers evaluated pure land teachings as a practice easy to pursue, or as an expedient means excellent for protecting one's tenacity, or as a teaching that should be understood as deviating from the normal mode of discourse of the Buddha. Although all these interpretations have a systematic ring, they unanimously address one underlying question: Why did the teaching of Buddhism develop into so many varieties? Their suggestions provide an insight for us to explain why the Buddhist religion expanded to incorporate seemingly inconsistent elements into its fundamental tenets.

Modern Buddhologists have tried to explain the phenomenon of Mahayana by pointing to the Hindu influence on Buddhism. ^{7.4} While one cannot refute that the shadows of the Uttarakuru and of the heavens as well as the devotional mode of practice are apparent in Buddhist pure land teachings (hence their conclusion that these

elements were a result of Buddhist adaptation of the Hindu tradition), one can also see that, in the course of its development, Buddhism was actively developing new elements which it did not hitherto possess. The Buddhists' own concept of expedient means has it that teachings of various depth, various contents, and various implications were provided to meet the various needs and capacities of sentient beings. From a developmental point of view, we can interpret the emergence of and changes in Buddhism as voluntary expansion of the religion to include teachings that respond to people very diverse in their needs and capacities.

NOTES

Chapter One

- 1.1 In short, Buddhist pure land can be regarded as a Buddhist version of paradise. While the basic features of a paradise are preserved, Buddhists incorporated into their vision of the pure land ideals and goals peculiar to them. For the definition and the usage of the term as well as the relation between the Buddhist pure land and the traditional Hindu paradise see Chapter III,iii. For the relation between the teaching and practice, see Chapter IV.
- 1.2 One may note that the number of Indian Buddhist scriptures mentioning the name of Amitabha (or its variant forms) exceed that of Aksobhya. (Compare the table in Fujita:Genshi Jōdo, pp. 141-161 with the one included as Appendix A of this study.) In China, the popularity of Amitabha can be seen in the formation of the pure land cult. In Japan, a recent statistics showed that whereas half of the population is Buddhists, 50% (about 20 Million) of them are adherents of one or the other lineage of the Pure Land School. (See Ishida Mitsuyuki, Jōdokyō kyōrishi, Kyoto, 1962. p.3.)
- 1.3 For example, Fujita Kotatsu:Genshi jōdo shisō no kenkyū, 1973; Ishida Mitsuyuki:Jōdōkyō kyōri shi, 1962. In Fujita's work only scanty reference to the pure land of Aksobhya is found even though the title of the book indicates that it is a study of "early notion of pure land".

- 1.4 See Chapter VI of this study for a summary of the opinions of the early Mahayana sutras regarding Akṣobhya and Amitābha.
- 1.5 For a demonstration of the importance of Chinese translations, see Lancaster:The Oldest Mahayana sutra.
- 1.6 Generally speaking, Chinese translation of Indian scripture came to a standstill in the twelve century although a few minor translations were done after that date.
- 1.7 The Taisho canon includes 1692 items of translation of sutras, vinayas, and sastras. Besides, the editor included under the headings Historical, Miscellaneous, and Non-Buddhist Works twenty odd works of of non-Chinese origin. (T2026-2033, T2042-2049, T2058, T2090, T2137, T2138, T2141)
- 1.8 These are the vinaya texts of the Mahīśāsaka (T1421), the Mahāsaṃghika (T1425), the Dharmaguptaka (T1428), the Sarvāstivāda (T1435), and the Mūlasarvāstivāda (T1442).
- 1.9 T313 阿閼佛國經 See Chapter II.i for details.

Chapter two

- 2.1 The title given in the Narthang edition varies. See the Tohoku Catalogue #50, the Otani Catalogue p. 235, and the Korean (Lancaster) Catalogue #22(6).
- 2.2 T2145.6b 阿閼佛刹諸菩薩學成經, 或云阿閼佛經
T2146.115c 佛刹菩薩學成經

T2034.52c 阿閼佛刹諸菩薩學成記經

2.3 T1636.78b

2.4 See the Otani Catalogue, p.235.

2.5 T1636.78c note #7.

2.6 Taisho Supplement, vol. 2, p.184b.

2.7 T2145.6b

2.8 Lancaster:An Analysis, p12.

2.9 T2059.324b; T2145.95c; T2149.224a gives 147 A. D.

2.10 T2145.6b;95c

2.11 Tao-an's bibliography can be found in T2059.351c-354a.

2.12 T2145.6b, T2146.115c, T2034,52c-53a, T2147.151b, T2148.189b, T2149.220c;223c;224a, T2150.342b, T2151.348c, T2153.392b, T2154.468c, T2157.775c

2.13 T2059.324b, T2145.95c

2.14 T2145.95c

2.15 T2034.52c

2.16 T2059.346b

2.17 *ibid.*

2.18 T2034.127b-c

2.19 T2059.324b Here, in the biography of Lokaksema, Hui-chiao states that Lokaksema was in Loyang during the reign of Emperor Ling (168-189 A. D.). But in the

biography of K'ang Seng-hui (T2095.325a), Hui-chiao also states that Lokaksema translated numerous sutras during the times of Emperor Huan (147-168) and Emperor Ling (168-189).

2.20 T2145.6b Hui-chiao also adopted this view. See T2059.324b.

2.21 T2034.69a-b

2.22 T2059.363a His name appears here as 釋道祖 instead of 竺道祖 .

2.23 T2034.69b The text gives "經七卷成帝世沙門支道根出". Here "成帝世" should read "武帝世" because 成帝 's reign began in 326, a time after the death of 竺道祖 . Also 太康年 (280-290) is a reign period of 武帝 , not 成帝 .

2.24 T313

2.25 Lancaster:An Analysis, pp.14-15.

2.26 In T313 "Bhagavat" was translated as 天中天 while the later standard translation turned out to be 世尊 . But in one instance the text of T313 gives 諸佛世尊 (752b13) instead of 諸佛天中天 . This is obviously a later substitution.

2.27 T310(6) This version of Chinese translation has been translated into English: "The Dharma-Door of Praising Tathagata Aksobhya's Merits" in C C. Chang, ed., A Treasury of Mahayana Sutras. Pennsylvania University Press, 1983.

2.28 T1509.615b "阿閼佛初發心時.行清淨行.不休不息

乃至成阿耨多羅... ", 615c "阿闍佛作菩薩時
620a "阿闍佛會 "

2.29 For a discussion on the sutras quoted or mentioned in the Ta chih tu lun see Yin-shun: Ch'u ch'i ta ch'eng, pp.24-32.

2.30 See Chapter II.i of this study.

2.31 T2145.6b

2.32 See Seng-yu's own notation in T2145.6

2.33 Nakamura:Jōdo sambukyō, p.206.

2.34 See Hirakawa:Shoki daijō, p.106.

2.35 Hirakawa:Shoki daijō, p.105.

2.36 The first three sutras were all listed in the Ch'u san tsang chi chi. The Suhkāvātīvyūha (T362, T361) was attributed to Lokakṣema by later catalogues.

2.37 Akanamu Chizen:Bukkyō kyōten seiritsu shiron, p.264. Reported in Hirakawa:Shoki daijō, pp.99-107. I did not have a chance to see Akanamu's work.

2.38 Shizutani:Shoki daijō, pp.42-46.

2.39 T227.555a-b The reference to five hundred years is not found in T224, T221, T223, or in the Sanskrit text. But a standardized expression pertaining to five hundred years appear in the Sanskrit texts of the Saddharmapundarika and of the Vajracchedika. See Hirakawa:Shoki daijō, p.68.

2.40 T1421.186a, T1428.923c

2.41 According to the northern tradition, the date of the coronation of Asoka was 117 years after the nirvana of the Buddha. According to the southern tradition, the lapse of time was 218 years. For details, see Yin Shun:Fo chiao shih ti, pp.182-190.

2.42 T224.446c

2.43 T493.757c

Chapter Three

3.1 T1579.548c, T1604.653b-c

3.2 According to the Fu fa tsang yin yuan chuan there once were " 七萬七千本生諸經 ".
T2058.304c

3.3 Although definitions for the terms jataka, avadana, and nidana can be found in Buddhist texts (e.g., T374.451c-452a) it has to be noted that the meaning of the terms are very obscure. Usually, the same tale is variously referred to as jataka, or avadana, or nidana in different canonical texts. For a discussion of this problem, see Yabuki:Amidabutsu, p. 128.

3.4 The sectarian belonging of this text is indicated by itself: " 此經... 曇無德師名為佛本行 ".
(T190.932a)

3.5 The sectarian belonging is indicated in the text. See Mahavastu i, p.2. Jones' translation (pp. 2-3) reads: "Here begins the Mahavastu, which is based on the redaction of the Vinaya pitaka made by the noble

Mahāsaṅghikas, the Lokottaravādins of the Middle Country."

- 3.6 T190.656c Mahāvastu i, p.46 (Jones I, p.39). For a description of the sectarian belongings of these two works, see Hikata: Honshō kyō, pp.93-102.
- 3.7 The last three periods correspond to the stages depicted in Kumarajiva's translation of the Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā See Yin-shun: Ch'u ch'i, p.134.
- 3.8 T190.657a-672a
- 3.9 T184.463a, T185.473b, T189.623a
- 3.10 Mahāvastu i, p.76. Quotation from Jones' translation, I, p.60.
- 3.11 T1545.892a
- 3.12 T190.656c, Mhu. iii, p. 26, T184.463a, T1448.75c, T125.550a
- 3.13 Mhu. i, pp.47-48 (Jones I, p.40).
- 3.14 Mhu. i, p. 239 (Jones I, p. 194. A similar pattern of vows is found also in the early Prajnaparamita literature. For example, T224.465c, T227.575a, T225.501a.
- 3.15 T224.457c-458a
- 3.16 These five vows was expanded into twenty eight in the later Prajñāpāramitā (T221.92b-93a)
- 3.17 T1509.108a-c
- 3.18 See T190.656b-c.

- 3.19 T313.758c8:
- 3.20 Mhu. i, p.139 (Jones I, p. 110)
- 3.21 "Akṣobhya" is used to mean a number in T190.709c and T187.563a. In The Hongen section of the Taisho canon there are a few sutras which use "Aksobhya" as the name of a buddha. (e.g., T157, T158, and T170) But these texts are obviously those of the Mahayanists.
- 3.22 T224.469a;467c;458a;470a
- 3.23 T224.458a
- 3.24 T223.349c, T220(1).698a, T220(2).26c;278c, T220(3).645a;445b, T220(4).833c, T220(5).906c
- 3.25 T224.470c ff.
- 3.26 T1958.18a
- 3.27 Edgerton:Dictionary, p. 147. T187.563a, T190.709c;710a
- 3.28 T310(6).102b, T313.752a
- 3.29 Ta ch'eng i chang 大乘義章 T1851.839a
- 3.30 See Fujita:Genshi jōdo, pp. 507-511 for details.
- 3.31 T313.751c;775b
- 3.32 See Appendix A (Ak. 2) for page numbers.
- 3.33 T313.751c20;751c23
- 3.34 See appendix A (Ak. 1) for more details.
- 3.35 T313.762b19: 如阿闍佛昔行菩薩道時所取清淨佛刹

In T310(6).107c6 the passage reads: 此亦不動如來
清淨佛剎功德莊嚴

- 3.36 T474.534c:
- 3.37 T310(33).562c, T318, T221.136a
- 3.38 T1509.708c
- 3.39 T1(18).114c
- 3.40 For a contrast between the pure buddha land and the five defilements (panca-kasaya) of this world see T642.637a, T157.174c, T1509.529b.
- 3.41 For examples, see the writings of Se Ling-yun (T2103.199b) and the citations in the Kao seng chuan (T2059.343c;356c).
- 3.42 Nakamura:Sambukyō, II, p. 204; Ajia bukkōyshi, p. 125.
- 3.43 T313.759c, T310(6).112b The emphasis on direct experience is also found in T362.316b-c, T227.578b.
- 3.44 T313.758c
- 3.45 T313.756a, T310(6).105c
- 3.46 M. Haug, tr., the Aitareya Brahmana, Bombay, 1863, vol. II, p.518. quoted from Hastings:Enclopaedia, vol. 2, p. 699.
- 3.47 Quoted from "Blest, abode of the (Hindu)", Hastings:Encyclopaedia, vol.2, p.699.
- 3.48 T23.279 ff. The other versions of this legend can be found in:

1) Shih chi ching 世記經 T1(30), translated by Buddhayasas in 413. (The Pali Digha nikaya does not contain a counterpart of this sutra.)

2) Ch'i shih ching 起世經 T24, translated by Jñānagupta between 585 and 560.

3) Ch'i shih yin pen ching 起世因本經 T25, translated by Dharmagupta between 605 and 617.

3.49 T313.755c

3.50 T23.294a ff.

3.51 T1(30).133c

3.52 T23.297b

3.53 T23.294a ff.

Chapter Four

4.1 T313.751b;755a;756c;758a,760b

4.2 T310(6).101c;104c;106a;107a;109a;109c

4.3 T313 breaks down the content of the vows by numbers while T310(6) does not. But generally the vows in these two texts correspond to each other.

4.4 T310(6) adds many more items between this resolution and the following one, such as begging, one meal per day, reside in the hermitage or the graveyard, etc. Cf. T313.752b7-15 and T310(6).102b28-102c7.

- 4.5 See Yin Shun:Ch'u ch'i ta ch'eng, p. 814 for the views of the Japanese scholars regarding classification of the resolutions.
- 4.6 T313.754b-c
- 4.7 For example, see T152.1b ff.
- 4.8 For example, see T187
- 4.9 The reference in the Chinese canon is found in T657.162b. Other references in the various Fo ming ching 佛名經 are T443.330b;341a;345c, T440.177a, T448.397a;391b.
- 4.10 T9.214c, T165.396c, T191.973a
- 4.11 T313.753b-754a
- 4.12 T313.755a
- 4.13 T313.760b ff.
- 4.14 For example, T190.795c;796a, T189.642b
- 4.15 For example, T1(2).27b:
- 4.16 T313.659c
- 4.17 T313.760b
- 4.18 T1(30).117c22, T24.314a28, T25.369b
- 4.19 T362.301a28
- 4.20 See pp. 62 ff. of this study.
- 4.21 Summarized from T313.761b24-762b9.

- 4.22 These are the avoidance of the so called Five Covers and the Ten Evil Things refered to in traditional Buddhism. See Nakamura:Bukkyō go daijiten, pp. 356c and 591c.
- 4.23 See p. 45 of this study.
Cf. T310(6).110b24-26.
- 4.24 T313.762b17-19:
Cf. T310(6).110b24-26
- 4.25 T313.762c ff.
- 4.26 T313.764a1-10
- 4.27 T310(6).112a17-24

Chapter Five

- 5.1 See Ajia bukkyōshi, p.26.
- 5.2 See Lancaster:An Analysis, p.13 for other opinions regarding the date of translation.
- 5.3 T2145.6b
- 5.4 See Chapter II.i of this study.
- 5.5 See p. 51 of this study.
- 5.6 T224.458a;467c;469a;470a
- 5.7 T224.467c
- 5.8 For example, T227.576c, T225.502a, T223.361b,
T220(5).916c
- 5.9 T224.458a;470a

- 5.10 T310(6) gives more " 妙喜世界 " than does T313.
- 5.11 T220(4).833c, T220(3).645a
- 5.12 T224.470a Here, the transliteration 捷陀訶盡 is given. T227.578b gives 香象 .
- 5.13 T313.760b-c The Sanskrit term is reconstructed from the transliteration " 羞洹那波頭摩 " given in T313. T310(6).109a gives the translation " 金蓮 " (Golden Lotus).
- 5.14 T224.458a
- 5.15 T224.467c
- 5.16 T313.758b
- 5.17 T224.469a18-28
- 5.18 T313.759c
- 5.19 T313.760b
- 5.20 T224.458a
- 5.21 T224.427c The transliteration " 摩訶衍 " is given.
- 5.22 T313.762c The contrast " 菩薩道 " and " 弟子道 " is made.
- 5.23 T224.457c-458b
- 5.24 See T1428.573c11 ff. In T1451.383c16 ff. "aranya" is translated as " 空閑處 " .

- 5.25 For details and illustrations see Yin Chun:Ch'u ch'i ta ch'eng, pp. 200-212.
- 5.26 T26.703c
- 5.27 T313.757c
- 5.28 T313.752b gives "sitting under trees" only while T310(6).102c gives all the items listed here. However, in another context, T313 also mentions the practice in 空閑處, a translation of 'araṇya' (759a12).
- 5.29 T227.544a-545c
- 5.30 T313 generally treats the six paramitas equally (e.g. 751c;761c) although in one instance "prajñāpāramitā" is mentioned alone.
- 5.31 T224.426b14-22
- 5.32 T313.762b2-3
- 5.33 T313.760b18
- 5.34 For example, T313.756a:
T224.470c10 ff.:
- 5.35 T313.763c-764a, T224.478a-b
- 5.36 T224.431c, T310(6).112a
- 5.37 The name of this buddha assumes many forms in the scriptures. The oldest Chinese translation gives "A mi t'o fo" 阿彌陀佛 (T418.905b8). This transliteration was followed by numerous subsequent translators and prompted modern researchers to reconstruct its Sanskrit form as Amita or Amida (See Fujita:Genshi jōdo, pp. 287-295). The forms more

often found in the Sanskrit and Tibetan texts are Amitābha and Amitāyus. But it is interesting to note that the name of this buddha was first translated in China as 無量壽 (See table in Fujita:Genshi jōdo, pp. 141-161), which points to Amitayus, while the occurrence of 無量光 (Amitabha) is relatively rare. Amita is used in this study for the sake of convenience.

5.38 See Chapter VI of this study.

5.39 See Hiragawa:Shoki daijō, p. 105 and Shizutani:Shoki daijō, pp. 42-46, 60-66.

5.40 See Nakamura:Sambukyō I, p. 365.

5.41 The later versions of the Sukhāvativyūha have already adopted elements from the Aks.v. and the Prajñāpāramitā sūtra. For details see Yin-shun:Ch'u ch'i ta ch'eng, p.818.

5.42 According to Seng-yu, a certain A mi t'o ching consisting of two scrolls was translated by Chi-ch'ien between 223 and 253 A. D (T2145.6c). However, later catalogues stirred many controversies regarding the translator and the date of translation of this sutra.

5.43 T313 and T310(6) See Appendix C for a concordance of the two texts.

5.44 For discussions regarding the number of resolutions in the several recensions of the text see Fujita:Genshi jōdō, pp. 381-382 and Nakamura:Sambukyō I, p. 354.

5.45 From the translation style as well as the choice of words it is clear that T361 and T362 were not two translations done independently of each other. T362 is

used in this study because I feel that this version should have appeared before, and was used in the translation of, T361.

5.46 T362.300c-301a

5.47 T362.301a

5.48 Neither the numbering nor the contents of the resolutions in the Chinese and Sanskrit versions correspond to each other. One resolution in this Chinese version may represent two or three in the later Chinese or Sanskrit versions. For a comparison of the resolutions in the different recensions see Fujita:Genshi jōdō, pp.382-384.

5.49 See Chapter III.iii of this study.

5.50 T362.302c:

5.51 T362.300c

5.52 T362.308c

5.53 T362.303b

5.54 See p.82 of this study.

5.55 T362.305b: "其樂無極", T362.306c: "快樂不可言".

5.56 See p.73 of this study.

5.57 See Chapter IV.iv of this study.

5.58 T362.308b

5.59 T362.303b;305b

5.60 T224.457c-458a

- 5.61 Compare T362.303b-308b with T313.755a-756c
- 5.62 See Chapter III.iii and IV.iii of this study.
- 5.63 Ibid.
- 5.64 T362.305b17 ff.
- 5.65 I owe this to Prof. Kees Bolle.
- 5.66 See p.142 ff. of this study.
- 5.67 T362.304a: 諸菩薩阿羅漢所居宅舍
 305a: 諸菩薩阿羅漢講堂精舍所居處宅舍中
 310b: 佛國界邊自然七寶城中
- 5.68 T313.758b27 ff.
- 5.69 T362.309c-310c
- 5.70 Anuttarasamyaksambodhi T224.437a
- 5.71 See pp.120-121 of this study.
- 5.72 T313.756a
- 5.73 T362.310a
- 5.74 T362.310b
- 5.75 The Chinese translation here gives 無為 which is a Taoist terminology. The Sanskrit word from which this is translated is not clear.
- 5.76 T362.310a18
- 5.77 T362.309c-310c
- 5.78 T362.311a

- 5.79 See Yin Shun:Ch'u ch'i ta ch'eng, chapter four.
- 5.80 See pp.144 ff. of this study.
- 5.81 T310(6).107b
- 5.82 T362.311c1 ff.
- 5.83 T362.310b-c;311b
- 5.84 See p.155 of this study.
- 5.85 T362.310a: 至誠願欲往生阿彌陀佛國
Cf. T361.291c: "至精願欲生無量清淨佛國
- 5.86 For example, T366.347b: 執持名號
- 5.87 T313.761c-762a

Chapter Six

- 6.1 See p. 1 of this study.
- 6.2 That the Buddha Śākyamuni appeared in a world full of impurities is a common theme of the Mahayana sutras. See note #3.40.
- 6.3 These include the 佛名經 in the Chinese canon and the sutras like the Karuṇapundarika.
- 6.4 See Appendix A for details.
- 6.5 See Yin Shun:Ch'u ch'i, pp.21-31
- 6.6 T676.697a23 ff.
- 6.7 See Appendix A for more data regarding these sutras.

- 6.8 T474.534b-535b
- 6.9 The Fo ming ching's are not included.
- 6.10 T267.251a16:
T434.88a3:
- 6.11 T318.892b28:
- 6.12 T318.899c
- 6.13 T384.1028a
- 6.14 Variant translation T310(18)
- 6.15 T170.418a. T310(18).415a gives
- 6.16 T811.772a ff. Another version of the tale is found
in T831.876c ff.
- 6.17 T663.348a ff., T665.444a ff.
- 6.18 Tale I:T649.734a-b, Tale II:T649.737b-738c.
- 6.19 T425.10b-c
- 6.20 T157.194b
- 6.21 See p.151 of this study.
- 6.22 T475.548b The table in Fujita:Genshi jodo,p.141
indicates that 無量 is mentioned in this sutra
But according to the context, that term should not be
taken as the name of Amita.
- 6.23 T663.335b
- 6.24 See Nakamura:Bukkyōgo jiten, p374d

Chapter Seven

- 7.1 An illustration may be found in the development of the Buddhist scriptures. An early Chinese translation of the Madhyāgama has it that those who practise virtue are destined to be reborn in the heavens while those evil-doers will be born in the hells. A later recension of the text changed the rebirth in the heaven to the rebirth in the pure lands. Compare T26(170).705a ff. and T81.
- 7.2 See Hastings:Encyclopaedia, Vol. 2, p.800.
- 7.3 For example, the Five Roots: effort, memory, concentration, insight, and devotion.
- 7.4 See Ishiue:Butten, pp. 487 ff. for a summary of the views of scholars.

APPENDIX A

A List of Mahayana sutras in the Chinese Canon (Taisho edition) where 'Aksobhya' or 'Abhirati' appear

1. The sutras are listed chronologically according to their date of Chinese translation. Each sutra is assigned a number (beginning with Ak. 1.) and is listed in the first vertical column of the table.
2. The title column lists the Chinese titles. If there are variant translations for a sutra, their Ak# would be included in a bracket
3. The translator column lists the translators of the sutra. The information given in the Korean (Lancaster) Catalogue is used.
4. The K# column lists the numbers of the sutras in the Korean (Lancaster) Catalogue. This column also indicates whether a Sanskrit or a Tibetan text exists. For information regarding Tibetan translations the Korean Catalogue can be consulted. Wherever available a C# is also listed for reference to the Conze catalogue.
5. The T# column lists the number of the sutra in the Taisho canon.
6. The Buddha and Buddha Land column lists all the names of buddha and/or of buddha lands as appear in the scriptures.
7. The Page and Line column shows the page and line numbers of the Taisho canon.
8. The Others column shows other information: 'Ami.'=the name of Amitābha or Amitāyus appears in the same text; 'Sukh.'=the name of Sukhavati appears in the same text.

Ak*	Title	Translator	Date of Translation	K*
1	道行般若經 (Ak7, 22, 31, 72, 87)	Lokaksema	179	K6 Ti/Sk C239
2	阿閼佛國經 (AK79)	Lokaksema	147 - 136	K27 Ti
3	須賴經 (AK23)	Pai Yen	220 - 265	K - Ti
4	維摩詰經 (AK50, 70)	Chih Chien	223 - 228	K120 Ti/Sk frag.

Ak#	T#	Buddha and Buddha Land	Page & Line	Others
1	T224	阿閼佛刹 阿閼佛 阿閼佛所 阿閼佛 阿閼佛刹	458a19* 467c8 467c23 469a20* 470a13	
2	T313	阿比羅提...[東方] 阿閼菩薩 阿閼如來 阿閼佛刹 阿閼佛 阿閼如來佛刹 阿閼如來刹 阿閼世尊	751c20* 752b4* 753b12 755a1* 755b13* 756c27* 757a24* 762b6	
3	T328	[東]可樂國 阿閼 阿閼佛	56b20 56b20 56b24	
4	T474	阿閼佛 阿閼佛阿維羅提世界 阿閼如來	529a6 534c20* 535a2*	

Ak#	Title	Translator	Date of Translation	K#
				C311
5	私呵昧經	Chih Chien	223 -253	K358 (--)
6	慧印三昧經 (AK49, 95)	Chih Chien	223 - 253	K172 Ti
7	大明度經 (AK1, 22, 31, 72, 87)	Chih Chien	223 -253	K9 Ti/Sk C239
8	德光太子經	Dharma-aksa	270	K479 (--)
9	密迹金剛力士會 (AK91)	Dharma-aksa	280	K22(3) Ti
10	海龍王經	"	285	K377

Ak#	T#	Buddha and Buddha Land	Page & Line	Others
		阿閼如來	535a2	
5	T532	妙藥(樂?)王國土 無怒佛	813b1 813b1	Ami.
6	T632	阿閼佛	465a12	Ami.
7	T225	無怒佛刹 無怒佛所 無怒佛 無怒佛國	497a27* 502b5 503a4* 503b12	
8	T170	無怒覺如來	418b1	
9	T310 (3)	阿閼佛土 妙樂世 阿閼佛土 妙樂世界	68a16 68a17 77b17 77b18	
10	T598	妙樂世界 無怒如來佛土	145b25	Ami.

Ak#	Title	Translator	Date of Translation	K#
				Ti
11	持心梵天所問經 (AK26, 54)	Dharma- raksa	286	K142 Ti
12	正法華經 (AK28, 66)	Dharma- raksa	286	K117 Ti/Sk
13	文殊師利佛土嚴淨經 (AK77, 83)	Dharma- raksa	290	K31 Ti
14	賢劫經	Dharma- raksa	291 or 300	K387 Ti/Sk
15	如幻三昧經 (AK35)	Dharma- raksa	265 - 313	K44 Ti
16	順權方便經	Dharma- raksa	265 - 313	K204

Ak#	T#	Buddha and Buddha Land	Page & Line	Others
		無怒佛國妙樂世界 無怒如來	153a16 153a17	
11	T585	妙樂世界	2c10	Ami.
12	T263	[東方] 甚樂世界 無怒如來	92c24 92a25	Ami.
13	T318	阿閼如來妙樂世界 阿閼如來	892b28 893b29	Ami.
14	T425	無怒覺 阿閼佛 阿閼如來	9c5 10c5 64c6	Ami. Ami.
15	T342	無動菩薩	134a28	Ami.
16	T565	阿閼佛所妙樂世界	930a24	

Ak#	Title	Translator	Date of Translation	K#
17	決定總持經 (AK55)	Dharma- raksa	265 - 313	K238 Ti
18	寶網經	Dharma- raksa	266 - 313	K354 Ti
19	放光般若波羅密經 (AK27, 72)	Moksala	291	K2 Ti/Sk C189
20	菩薩處胎經	Chu Fo- Nien	365 - 384	K406 (--)
21	菩薩瓔珞經	Chu Fo- Nien	376	K385 (--)
22	摩訶般若鈔經 (Ak1, 7, 31, 72, 87)	Chu Fo- Nien and Dharma- priya	382	K5 Ti/Sk

Ak#	T#	Buddha and Buddha Land	Page & Line	Others
17	T811	阿閼如來	772b2	Ami.
18	T433	阿閼如來	86c23	Ami.
19	T221	阿閼佛國 妙樂佛國 妙樂佛國 妙樂佛所 妙樂佛土 阿閼如來	10b7 93c27 103c5* 103c28 103c28 105c4	
20	T384	阿閼佛境界 無怒佛所 阿閼佛國	1028a6 1052c23* 1054b26	Ami.
21	T656	無怒佛 無怒佛土	67c8 107c12	Ami.
22	T226	阿閼佛國	531a28	

Ak#	Title	Translator	Date of Translation	K#
23	須賴經 (AK3)	Chih Shih	373	K362 Ti
24	大乘悲分陀利經 (AK39)	unknown	350 - 431	K125 Ti/Sk C445
25	阿彌陀經 (AK71)	Kumara- jiva	402	K192 Ti/Sk
26	思益梵天所問經 (AK11, 54)	Kumara- jiva	402	K143 Ti
27	摩訶般若波羅密經	Kumara- jiva	404	K3

Ak#	T#	Buddha and Buddha Land	Page & Line	Others
23	T329	[東方] 妙樂世界	63a7 63a8	
24	T158	無惱 阿閼 [東方] 樂喜世界 阿閼如來 阿閼菩薩 阿閼如來 阿閼佛土 無惱如來 阿閼菩薩 阿閼佛 [東方] 樂喜刹 阿閼如來 樂喜刹	257c9 258c11 258c13 258c15 258c22 259a7 259a25 260a8 272a5 285b8 287a16	Ami.
25	T366	阿閼鞞佛	347b19	Ami.
26	T586	喜樂國	35a1	Ami.
27	T223	阿閼佛國	229b22	

Ak#	Title	Translator	Date of Translation	K#
				Ti/Sk
	(AK19, 29, 72)			
28	妙法蓮華經	Kumarajiva	406 or 405	K116
	(AK12, 66)			Ti/Sk
29	大智度論	Kumarajiva	402 - 406	K549
	(AK27)			(--)

Ak#	T#	Buddha and Buddha Land	Page & Line	Others
		阿閼佛 阿鞞羅提國土 阿閼佛	349c6 361b9	
28	T262	阿閼佛 [東方] 歡喜國	25b26 25b27	Ami.
29	T1509	阿閼佛 阿閼佛國 阿閼佛世界 阿閼佛 阿閼佛 阿鞞羅提國土 阿閼佛國 阿閼佛世界 阿閼佛 阿閼佛 阿閼佛世界 阿閼佛 " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " " "	115c14 353b24 354a14* 529c29 591b7 591c23* 613c18 613c29 614a15 615a26* 615b10 615c2* 617c8* 619c27 620a3 712a4	Ami.

Ak#	Title	Translator	Date of Translation	K#
30	維摩詰所說經 (AK4, 70)	Kumarajiva	406	K119 Ti/Sk frag. C331
31	小品般若波羅密經 (AK1, 7, 22, 72, 87)	Kumarajiva	408	K7 Ti/Sk C239
32	華手經	Kumarajiva	406	K396 Ti
33	不思議光菩薩所說經	Kumarajiva	402 - 412	K381 Ti

Ak#	T#	Buddha and Buddha Land	Page & Line	Others
		見阿閼佛品	754b27	
		阿閼佛	754c2	
30	T475	阿閼佛	548b14	Ami.
		妙喜國	555b6	
		無動佛	555b6	
		" " "	555c17	
		妙喜世界	555b14	
		" " " "	555c5	
		無動如來	555b15	
		妙喜佛土	555c13	
31	T227	阿閼佛土	568b16	
		阿閼佛	576c22	
		" " "	578b17*	
		阿閼如來	578b21	
		見阿閼佛品	578b13	
32	T657	阿閼佛土妙喜世界	196a24	
		阿閼佛土	204c14	
33	T484	阿閼佛土	672a22	

Ak#	Title	Translator	Date of Translation	K#
34	首楞嚴三昧經	Kumarajiva	402 - 412	K378 Ti/Sk
35	樂璣珞莊嚴方便 品經 (AK 16)	Dharma- yasar	415	K205 Ti
36	大般泥洹經 (AK38, 47)	Fa Hsien	417 - 418 or 410 - 411	K106 Ti
37	金光明經 (AK61, 80)	Dharma- ksema	414 - 421	K1465 Ti/Sk C329
38	大般涅槃經 (AK36, 47)	Dharma- ksema	412 - 421	K105 Ti
39	悲華經 (AK24)	Dharma- ksema	412 - 421	K126 Ti/Sk C445

Ak#	T#	Buddha and Buddha Land	Page & Line	Others
34	T642	阿閼佛 妙喜世界	636c27	
35	T566	阿閼佛土	938c20	
36	T376	阿閼佛國	867a5*	Ami.
37	T663	阿閼佛 [東方]阿閼如來 東方阿閼	349a13 345c5 335b12	Ami.
38	T374	阿閼佛國	384a9*	Ami.
39	T157	阿閼 " " [東方]妙樂世界 阿閼如來 阿閼菩薩 " " " "	194b11* 195c3 195c7 195c9 195c10* 196a9	Ami.

Ak#	Title	Translator	Date of Translation	K#
40	大方等大集經寶 (AK69) 幢分	Dharma- ksema	414 -- 426	K56 Ti
41	不退轉法輪經 (AK44)	unknown	412 -- 439	K137 Ti
42	大方廣佛華嚴經 (AK75, 85)	Buddha- bhadra	418 - 422 or 398 - ?	K79 Ti/Sk C481 C486
43	觀佛三昧海經	Buddha- bhadra	420 - 423	K401 (--)

Ak#	T#	Buddha and Buddha Land	Page & Line	Others
		阿閼如來	196a19	
		妙樂(世界)	196a21	
		阿閼菩薩	213c21	
		[東方]妙樂世界	229c19	
		阿閼如來	229c19	
		東方妙樂世界	231c15	
		阿閼如來	231c16	
40	T397	東方 妙樂世界	143c20	Ami.
		阿閼	143c20	
		阿閼佛	148a24	
41	T267	阿閼佛	251a16	Ami.
42	T278	妙樂世界	694c27	Ami.
		阿閼如來	694c27	
		阿閼佛	786b13	Ami.
		妙樂嚴淨(刹)	786b14	
43	T643	妙喜(國)	689a8	Sukh.
		阿閼	689a8	Ami.

Ak#	Title	Translator	Date of Translation	K#
44	廣博嚴淨不退轉輪 經 (AK41)	Chih Yen	427	K136 Ti
45	菩薩善戒經	Gunavarman	431	K524 Ti/Sk C493
46	觀普賢菩薩行法經	Dharma- mitra	424 - 442	K380 (--)
47	大般涅槃經 (AK36, 38)	Hui Yen, etc.		K1403 Ti
48	甚深大迴向經	unknown	420 - 479	K507 (--)
49	如來智印經 (AK6, 95)	unknown	420 - 479	K173 Ti
50	菩薩念佛三昧經 (AK68)	Gunasala	462	K60 (--)
51	稱揚諸佛功德經	Kimkarya	472	K371 Ti

Ak#	T#	Buddha and Buddha Land	Page & Line	Others
44	T268	喜樂(世界) 阿閼佛	282a12 282a13	Ami.
45	T1582	無動(佛)	961a23	
46	T277	東方阿閼佛 妙喜國	390c24	
47	T375	阿閼佛國	623c29	Ami.
48	T825	阿閼佛國 阿閼佛所 妙樂國土	868a22* 868a25	-
49	T633	阿閼佛	472a12	Sukh.
50	T414	東方不動國土 不動界 阿閼兩足尊	800a18 811c14 811c14	Sukh.
51	T434	東方 妙樂(世界) " " " " " "	87c8 88b8	

Ak#	Title	Translator	Date of Translation	K#
52	佛名經	Bodhiruci	520 - 524	K390 (--)
53	金剛仙論	Bodhiruci	508 - 535	-- (--)
54	勝思惟梵天所問經 Ak11, 26	Bodhiruci	518 or 536	K144 Ti

Ak#	T#	Buddha and Buddha Land	Page & Line	Others
52	T440	阿閼如來 " " " " 阿閼佛 妙樂世界 阿閼如來 阿閼佛 " " " 東方可樂世界 不動(佛) 可樂世界 阿閼佛國土 不動(佛)	37c8* 88a4 116a20 121b13 121b13 143c29 140c20 160a21 160a21 163a12 163a12 140c25, 129b9 131c21, 132b24, 134a4 , 141a5 140a23, 144c17, 157b1 , 162c25 167a20, 177b21, 179c7, , 116a11	Ami. Ami.
53	T1512	東方阿閼 " " " "	870c17 367b14	Ami.
54	T587	安樂國	64b13	Ami.

Ak#	Title	Translator	Date of Translation	K#
55	謗佛經 (AK17)	Bodhiruci	508 - 535	K239 Ti
56	僧伽吒經	Upasunya	538	K398 Ti
57	月燈三昧經	Warendra- yayas	557	K181 Ti/Sk
58	百佛名經	Warendra- yayas	582	K365 (--)
59	十方千五佛名經	unknown	572	K--
60	現在賢劫千佛名 經	unknown	502 - 557	K392 (--)

Ak#	T#	Buddha and Buddha Land	Page & Line	Others
55	T831	阿閼如來	877c5	Ami.
56	T423	不動如來 世界	962b3	Ami.
57	T639	阿閼佛 [東方]阿閼佛 世界	563a27 566c8 601c28	Ami. Sukh.
58	T444	阿閼佛	354c16	Ami.
59	T442	阿閼佛 " " "	314c3 316a20	Ami.
60	T447	不動佛 " " " " " " 無動佛 " " "	379b25 383a1 385c13 382a25 387a29	Ami.

Ak#	Title	Translator	Date of Translation	K#
61	未來星宿劫千佛 名經	unknown	502 - 557	K393 (--)
62	五千五百佛名神 呪除障滅罪經	Jnana- gupta	594	K394 Ti
63	觀察諸法行經	Jnana- gupta	595	K405 (--)
64	大乘三聚懺悔經	Jnana- gupta	585 - 600	K541 Ti
65	護國菩薩會 (AK86)	Jnana- gupta	585 - 604	K2218 Ti/Sk C33
66	添品妙法蓮華經 (AK12, 28)	Jnana- gupta and Dharma- gupta	601 - 602	K118 Ti/Sk C324
67	合部金光明經 (AK37, 80)	Pao Kuei	597	K128 Ti/Sk

Ak#	T#	Buddha and Buddha Land	Page & Line	Others
61	T448	無動如來	388b24	Ami.
62	T443	阿閼初發心共如來 不動如來	342a8 345b29	Ami.
63	T649	不動如來 " " " "	734b17 738c13	Ami. Ami.
64	T1493	阿閼如來	1094b20	Ami.
65	T310	阿閼佛	471b17	Ami.
66	T264	阿閼(佛) 歡喜國	160a22	Ami.
67	T664	東方阿閼(佛) 阿閼佛	359c22 371a10	Ami. Ami.

Ak#	Title	Translator	Date of Translation	K#
68	大方等大集經菩薩 (AK50) 念佛三昧分	Dharma- gupta	607 - 614	K65 (--)
69	寶星陀羅尼經 (AK40)	Prabha- mitra	629 - 630 or 627	K78 Ti
70	說無垢稱經 (AK4, 30)	Hsuan- tsang	650	K121 Ti/Sk frag. C331

Ak#	T#	Buddha and Buddha Land	Page & Line	Others
		東方阿閼如來 阿閼佛	388c17 392a24	Ami.
68	T415	東方不動世界 阿閼應供兩足尊	838b24 851c28	Sukh. Ami.
69	T402	阿閼如來 東方可樂世界 阿閼(佛) 阿閼如來	571a23 562c18 562c18* 382c4	Ami.
70	T476	不動如來 " " " " 妙喜(世界) 無動如來 " " " " 妙喜世界 無動佛 妙喜國土 妙喜世界 無動如來 妙喜界	574b9 585a14 584c17 584c18 585a3* 585a6* 585a26 585b2 585b6* 585b9 585b13	Ami.

Ak#	Title	Translator	Date of Translation	K#
71	稱讚淨土佛攝 (AK25) 受經	Hsuan- tsang	650	E193 Ti/Sk 0433
72	大般若波羅密多經 (AK1, 7, 19, 22, 31, 37, 90)	Hsuan- tsang	660 - 663 or 659 - 663	E1 Ti/Sk

Ak#	T#	Buddha and Buddha Land	Page & Line	Others
71	367	不動如來	350a22	Ami.
72	T220	東方 不動佛國 Vol.5 東方 不動如來 甚可愛樂佛世界 Vol.6 不動如來 不動佛 不動佛所 " " " " 東方 不動佛國 Vol.7 " " " " " " " " " " " " 不動佛 世界 東方不動如來 甚可愛樂佛國土 不動佛世界 不動佛所 " " " " 東方不動如來 甚可愛樂佛世界	50b3 698a2 783c4* 783c14 777a12 777c15 26c19 445b23 906c13 906c14 278c24 278c27 308b28 853a15 645a8	

Ak#	Title	Translator	Date of Translation	K#
73	離垢慧菩薩所問 禮佛法經	Nadi	663	K491 (--)
74	大方廣佛華嚴經不 思議佛境界分(AK76)	Deva- prajna	689 - 691	K38 (--)

Ak#	T#	Buddha and Buddha Land	Page & Line	Others
		不動佛世界	645a11	
		東方 不動如來 可愛世界	833c6	
		不動佛世界	833c7	
		不動如來	313c9*	
		" " " "	677a2	
		" " " "	857a11	
		不動如來國土	857a24	
		不動如來	859c5	
		" " " "	853c18	
		不動佛	853b17	
		不動如來	919a8*	
		不動佛所	916b16	
		不動佛	916c1	
		不動佛所	920b12	
		妙喜界	955b16	
		不動佛所	955b16	
73	T487	東方阿閼如來	699a15	Ami.
74	T300	阿閼鞞如來	907c18	Ami.
		妙喜世界	908b20	Sukh.

Ak#	Title	Translator	Date of Translation	K#
75	大方廣佛華嚴經 (AK42, 35)	Siksananda	695 - 699	K80 Ti C481, C486
76	大方廣如來不思議 境界經 (AK74)	Siksahanda	700	K87 (--)
77	文殊師利授記會 (AK13, 35)	Siksahanda	700	K2215 Ti
78	無邊莊嚴會	Bodhiruci	706 - 713	K22(2) Ti
79	不動如來會 (AK2)	Bodhiruci	706 - 713	K22(6) Ti

Ak#	T#	Buddha and Buddha Land	Page & Line	Others
75	T279	妙喜世界 不動如來 阿閼如來	339c24 339c24 443a6	Sukh. Ami.
76	T301	阿閼佛 妙喜世界	911a5 911c23	Ami. Sukh.
77	T310 (15)	不動如來妙喜世界 不動如來	338b21 341b17	Ami.
78	T310 (2)	阿閼	40c22	Ami.
79	T310 (6)	妙喜國 不動菩薩 不動如來 不動如來佛刹 不動如來清淨佛刹 妙喜刹 妙喜世界 不動佛國 不動佛所	102b15 102b18 103b12 105c8 107b9 108b2 104b3 109c3 108a16	

Ak#	Title	Translator	Date of Translation	K#
80	金光明最勝王經 (AK37, 67)	I Ching	703	K127 Ti/Sk C329
81	金剛頂瑜伽中發 阿耨多羅三藐三菩提心論	Amogha- vajra	746 - 774	K1369 (--)
82	大乘密嚴經	Amogha- vajra	720 - 774	K1344 Ti
83	大聖文殊師利菩薩佛 刹功德 (AK13, 77) 莊嚴經	Amogha- vajra	720 - 774	K1341 Ti
84	仁王護國般若波 羅密多經	Amogha- vajra	765	K1340 (--)
85	大方廣佛華嚴經 (AK42, 75)	Prajna	798	K1262 Ti/Sk C436

Ak#	T#	Buddha and Buddha Land	Page & Line	Others
		不動佛刹 不動刹	112b22 111a2	
80	T665	東方阿閼尊 東方不動 阿閼佛 東方不動佛 " " " " " " " " " "	404a12 404c16 416a29 423c7 439b26 444c14	Ami. Ami. Ami. Ami. Ami.
81	T1665	東方阿閼佛 " " " " "	573c24 574a4	Ami. Ami.
32	T632	極樂妙喜刹	754b10	Ami.
83	T319	不動如來妙喜世界 不動如來	904a16 907c11	Ami.
84	T246	不動菩薩	837c17	
85	T293	妙喜世界 不動如來 阿閼如來	687c6 687c6 842b18	Sukh. Ami.. Ami.

Ak#	Title	Translator	Date of Translation	K#
86	護國尊者所問大乘經 (AK65)	Danapala	994	K1206 Ti/Sk C513
87	佛母出生三法藏 波羅密多經 (AK1, 7, 22, 31, 72)	Danapala	1003 - 4	K1423 Ti/Sk
88	觀想佛母般若波 羅密多菩薩經	Tien-hsi-tsai	980 - 983	K1139 (--)
89	未曾有正法經	Fa Tien	1000	K1403 Ti
90	最上根本大樂金剛 不空三昧大教王經 AK72(10)	Fa Hsien	999	K1256 Ti/Sk C278
91	如來不思議秘密 大乘經	Dharma-raksa	1018 - 53	K1486

Ak#	T#	Buddha and Buddha Land	Page & Line	Others
86	T321	阿閼如來	14b9	Ami.
87	T228	妙喜世界阿閼佛刹 阿閼佛刹 阿閼如來 " " " " " " " " 阿閼佛國	648b27 662c24 663a10* 665b26 665c8* 665c5	
88	T259	阿閼世尊	854b12	Ami.
89	T628	無動(菩薩) " " " "	446b22* 446c2	
90	T244	不動如來	823b20	Ami.
91	T312	極樂世界	735a18	

Ak#	Title	Translator	Date of Translation	K#
	(AK9)			Ti
92	大乘集菩薩學論	Dharma-raksa and Jih Cheng	1058 - 72	K1488 Ti/Sk C414
93	聖佛母般若波羅密多九頌精義論	Dharma-raksa	1018 - 58	K1478 Ti C247
94	大乘隨轉宣說諸法經	Shao Te	990 - 1127	K-- Ti
95	大乘智印經 (AK6, 49)	Chih Chi chiang	1053	K-- Ti

Ak*	T*	Buddha and Buddha Land	Page & Line	Others
		阿閼如來佛刹 阿閼如來 極樂世界 阿閼佛刹	735a18 735a19 747b19 747b20	
92	T1636	阿閼如來本願授決經 阿閼如來	78b24 78b25*	Ani.
93	T1516	阿閼佛	900a12	
94	T652	阿閼如來	776b17	
95	T634	阿閼佛	433b19	Ani.

Appendix B

A list of names of Aksobhya and his buddha land
in the Mahayana Sutras in the Taisho Canon

I. Name of Buddha

II. Name of Buddha Land

III. Name of Buddha + Name of Buddha Land

IV. Others

I.

[阿 闍] A ch'u

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
157	39	328	3
158	24	1512	53
310(2)	78		

[阿 闍 佛] A ch'u fo

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
223	27	440	52
224	1	442	59
227	31	444	58
262	28	474	4
264	66	475	30
267	41	632	6
268	44	633	49
277	46	634	95
278	42	639	57
301	76	663	37
310(18)	65	664	67
313	2	665	80
328	3	1509	29
402	69	1512	53
397	40	1516	93
643	43	1665	81
425	14		

[阿 闍 如 來] A ch'u ju lai

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
157	39	425	14

158	24	433	18
221	19	434	51
227	31	440	52
228	87	474	4
278	42	487	73
279	75	652	94
293	85	663	37
312	91	664	67
313	2	811	17
318	13	831	55
321	86	1493	64
402	69	1636	92
443	62		

[阿闍菩薩] A ch'u p'u sa

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
157	39	313	2
158	24		

[阿闍世尊] A ch'u shih chuan

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
157	39	313	2
259	88		

[阿闍尊] A ch'u chuan

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
665	80

[阿闍兩足尊] A ch'u liang tsu chuan

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
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414 50

[阿閼應供兩足尊] A ch'u ying kung liang
tsu chuan

T# Ak#
415 68

[阿閼鞞佛] A ch'u p'i fo

T# Ak#
366 25

[阿閼鞞如來] A ch'u p'i ju lai

T# Ak#
300 74

[不動佛] Pu tung fo

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
220	72	447	60
440	52	665	80

[不動如來] Pu tung ju lai

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
220	72	319	83
244	90	367	71
279	75	443	62
293	85	476	70
310(6)	79	649	63
310(15)	77		

[不動菩薩] Pu tung p'u sa

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
246	84	310(6)	79

[無動佛] Wu tung fo

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
447	60	476	70
475	30	1582	45

[無動如來] Wu tung ju lai

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
448	61	476	70
475	30		

[無動菩薩] Wu tung p'u sa

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
342	15	628	89

[無怒佛] Wu nu fo

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
225	7	656	21
532	5		

[無怒如來] Wu nu ju lai

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
263	12	598	10
329	23		

[無怒覺如來] Wu nu ch'eh ju lai

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
170	8

[無惱菩薩] Wu nao p'u sa

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
158	24

II

[阿閼佛刹] A ch'u fo ch'a

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
224	1	312	91
228	87	313	2

[阿閼如來刹] A ch'u ju lai ch'a

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
313	2

[阿閼如來佛刹] A ch'u ju lai fo ch'a

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
312	91	313	2

[阿閼佛國] A ch'u fo kuo

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
221	19	375	47

223	27	376	36
226	22	384	20
228	87	825	48
374	38	1509	29

[阿閼佛國土] A ch'u fo kuo t'u

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
440	52

[阿閼佛土] A ch'u fo t'u

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
158	24	484	33
227	31	566	35
310(3)	9	657	32

[阿閼佛世界] A ch'u fo shih chieh

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
639	57	1509	29

[阿閼佛境界] A ch'u fo ching chieh

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
384	20

[阿閼佛所] A ch'u fo shuo

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
224	1

[不動佛刹] Pu tung fo ch'a

T# Ak#
310(6) 79

[不動刹] Pu tung ch'a

T# Ak#
310(6) 79

[不動如來清淨佛刹] Pu tung ju lai
ch'ing ching fo ch'a

T# Ak#
310(6) 79

[不動如來佛刹] Pu tung ju lai fo ch'a

T# Ak#
310(6) 79

[不動佛國] Pu tung fo kuo

T# Ak# T# Ak#
220 72 310(6) 79

[不動如來國土] Pu tung ju lai kuo t'u

T# Ak#
220 72

[不動國土] Pu tung kuo t'u

T# Ak#
414 50

[不動佛世界] Pu tung fo shih chieh

T# Ak#
220 72

[不動如來世界] Pu tung ju lai shih chieh

T# Ak#
423 56

[不動世界] Pu tung shih chieh

T# Ak#
415 68

[不動界] Pu tung chieh

T# Ak#
414 50

[不動佛所] Pu tung fo shuo

T# Ak# T# Ak#
220 72 310(6) 79

[無怒佛刹] Wu nu fo ch'a

T# Ak#
225 7

[無怒佛國] Wu nu fo kuo

T# Ak#
225 7

[無怒佛土] Wu nu fo t'u

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
656	21

[無怒佛所] Wu nu fo shuo

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
225	7	384	20

[阿比羅提世界] A pi lo t'i shih chieh

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
313	2

[妙喜刹] Miao hsi ch'a

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
310(6)	79	682	82

[妙喜國] Miao hsi kuo

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
277	46	475	30
310(6)	79	643	43

[妙喜國土] Miao hsi kuo t'u

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
476	70

[妙喜佛土] Miao hsi fo t'u

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
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475 30

[妙喜世界] Miao hsi shih chieh

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
279	75	310(6)	79
293	85	475	30
300	74	476	70
301	76		

[妙喜界] Miao hsi chieh

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
220	72	476	70

[妙樂佛國] Miao le fo kuo

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
221	19

[妙樂佛土] Miao le fo t'u

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
221	19

[妙樂世] Miao le shih

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
310(3)	9

[妙樂世界] Miao le shih chieh

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
157	39	434	51

278	42	440	52
310(3)	9	474	4
329	23	585	11
397	40		

[妙樂佛所] Miao le fo shuo

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
221	19

[妙藥(樂?)王國土] Miao le huang kuo t'u

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
532	5

[妙樂嚴淨刹] Miao le yen ching ch'a

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
278	42

[可樂國] Ko le kuo

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
328	3

[可樂世界] Ko le shih chieh

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
440	52

[喜樂國] Hsi le kuo

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
586	26

[喜樂世界] Hsi le shih chieh

T# Ak#
268 44

[樂喜世界] Le hsi shih chieh

T# Ak#
158 24

[樂喜刹] Le hsi ch'a

T# Ak#
158 24

[歡喜國] Huan hsi kuo

T# Ak# T# Ak#
262 28 264 66

[甚樂世界] Shen le shih chieh

T# Ak#
262 12

[安樂國] An le kuo

T# Ak#
587 54

[極樂世界] Chi le shih chieh

T# Ak#

III

[阿閼佛阿鞞羅提國土] A ch'u fo a
p'i lo t'i kuo t'u

T# Ak#
223 27

[阿閼佛阿毘羅提國土] A ch'u fo a
p'i lo t'i kuo t'u

T# Ak#
1509 29

[阿閼佛阿維羅提世界] A ch'u fo a
wei lo t'i shih chieh

T# Ak#
474 4

[阿閼佛所妙樂國土] A ch'u fo shuo
miao le kuo t'u

T# Ak#
825 48

[阿閼佛妙喜世界] A ch'u fo miao hsi
shih chieh

T# Ak#
642 34

[阿閼佛土妙喜世界] A ch'u fo t'u
miao hsi shih chieh

T# Ak#
657 32

[阿閼佛所妙樂世界] A ch'u fo shuo
miao le shih chieh

T# Ak#
565 16

[阿閼如來妙樂世界] A ch'u ju lai
miao le shih chieh

T# Ak#
318 13

[不動如來妙喜世界] Pu tung ju lai
miao hsi shih chieh

T# Ak# T# Ak#
319 83 310(15) 77

[東方不動如來可愛世界] Tung fang pu
tung ju lai ko ai shih chieh

T# Ak#
220 72

[東方不動如來...甚可愛樂佛世界] Tung
fang pu tung ju lai shen ko ai le fo shih chieh

T# Ak#
220 72

[東方不動如來甚可愛樂佛國土] Tung fang
pu tung ju lai shen ko ai le fo kuo t'u

T# Ak#
220 72

[妙喜界不動佛所] Miao hsi chieh pu
tung fo shuo

T# Ak#
220 72

[妙樂世界阿閼佛刹] Miao le shih
chieh a ch'u fo ch'a

T# Ak#
228 87

[妙樂世界無怒如來佛土] Miao
le shih chieh wu nu ju lai fo t'u

T# Ak#
598 10

[無怒佛國妙樂世界] Wu nu fo kuo
miao le shih chieh

T# Ak#
598 10

IV

[見阿闍佛品] Chien a ch'u fo p'in

<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>	<u>T#</u>	<u>Ak#</u>
227	31	1509	29

[阿闍如來本願授決經] A ch'u ju
lai pen yñan shou chñeh ching

Appendix C

A Concordance of T313 with T310(6)

This concordance is a detailed comparison of the two Chinese translations of the Akṣobhyavyūha (T313 and T310(6)). The two Chinese texts are broken up into small passages for comparison so that missing materials in either of the two texts can be shown in the following table. The passage numbers were assigned so as to correspond to the passage numbers I used in the English translation of T313, which is not included in this volume.

	T313	T310(6)
1.	751b27	101c29
2.	751c3	102a5
3.	7	11
4.	14	16
5.	20	20
5a.	22	--
6.	28	23
7.	752a2	26
8.	5	27
9.	29	102b12
10.	752b4	15
11.	7	18
12.	752c17	102c26
13.	19	28
14.	21	103a2
15.	24	4
16.	753a16	19
17.	21	23
18.	26	27
19.	753b3	103b5
20.	10	10
21.	15	14
22.	23	18
23.	753b28	103b21

	T313	T310(6)
24.	753c7	103b25
24a.	--	29
25.	12	103c3
26.	16	5
27.	18	7
28.	21	9
29.	25	13
30.	29	14
31.	754a5	17
32.	8	19
33.	14	22
34.	19	25
35.	24	104a1
36.	754b4	4
37.	7	7
38.	13	13
38a.	--	20
39.	17	23
40.	19	25
41.	21	29
42.	25	104b4
43.	754c1	9
44.	19	24
45.	23	27
46.	754c28	104c2

	T313	T310(6)
47.	755a4	104c8
48.	10	15
49.	16	21
50.	18	23
51.	24	28
52.	755b3	105a9
53.	6	14
54.	16	20
55.	21	22
56.	26	28
56a.	755c4	--
57.	7	105b5
58.	13	9
59.	21	18
60.	28	23
61.	756a3	27
62.	6	105c1
63.	8	2
64.	12	4
65.	18	7
66.	22	13
67.	27	15
68.	756b3	18
69.	15	24
70.	17	26

	T313	T310(6)
71.	756c18	105c27
72.	21	29
73.	24	106a3
74.	756c7	11
75.	9	13
76.	24	28
77.	757a2	106b6
78.	4	8
79.	9	13
80.	15	17
81.	27	28
82.	28	106c1
83.	757b1	2
84.	6	8
85.	10	12
86.	14	15
87.	16	17
87a.	19	--
88.	759c18	18
89.	25	22
90.	758a9	107a2
91.	23	14
92.	25	16
93.	29	18
94.	758b9	107a27

	T313	T310(6)
95.	758b13	107b1
96.	23	11
97.	27	16
98.	758c2	18
99.	4	20
100.	7	23
101.	10	24
102.	16	28
103.	24	107c7
104.	759a16	25
105.	26	108a4
106.	759b2	10
107.	6	15
108.	759c6	108b9
109.	24	21
110.	760a7	108c1
111.	14	6
112.	18	10
113.	24	15
114.	760b1	18
115.	9	24
116.	12	28
117.	15	109a2
118.	20	7
119.	23	10

	T313	T310(6)
120.	760b28	109a15
121.	760c5	18
122.	9	22
123.	13	25
124.	22	109b3
125.	761a1	9
126.	2	11
127.	12	21
128.	21	28
129.	24	109c2
129a.	26	--
130.	761b4	4
131.	13	12
132.	16	15
133.	24	24
134.	26	25
135.	29	28
136.	761c14	110a4
137.	17	7
138.	21	12
139.	762a6	21
139a.	762b1	--
140.	4	110b11
140a	--	16
141.	9	18

	T313	T310(6)
142.	762b19	110b26
143.	762c5	110c13
144.	13	21
145.	21	28
146.	24	111a4
147.	763a1	6
148.	10	13
149.	14	16
149a.	--	19
150.	17	22
151.	20	26
152.	22	28
153.	26	111b3
154.	763b3	8
155.	6	11
156.	11	14
157.	17	19
158.	21	22
159.	24	24
160.	25	27
161.	763c3	111c3
162.	5	5
163.	12	10
164.	16	14
165.	20	18

	T313	T310(6)
166.	763c24	111c22
167.	26	24
168.	764a3 - 10	29
169.		112a5
170.		7
171.		11
172.		14
173.		15
174.		17
175.		24
176.		112b4
177.		7
178.		10
179.		19
180.		23
181.		25
182.		27
183.		112c1 -- 11

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