| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 東、西魏西元534—557年 | | |
| | 北齊西元550—577年 | 西元第六世紀 | 佛教傳入日本 |
| | 北周西元557—581年 | 西元574年 | 北周武帝第二次迫害佛教 |
| 西元第七至九世紀<br>中國佛教的黃金時代 | 隋朝西元581—618年 | 約西元600年 | 隋文帝卽位，中國佛教黃金時代的開始 |
| | 唐朝西元618—906年 | 西元629—644年 | 釋玄奘在印度 |
| | | 西元第七世紀中葉 | 釋義淨取道海路到印度 |
| | | 約西元600—900年 | 天臺、華嚴、淨土和禪四宗大盛 |
| | | 西元845年 | 唐武宗第三次迫害佛教 |
| | 五代西元 906—960年 | | |
| | 宋朝西元 960—1279年 | 西元第十世紀 | 宋太祖倡印大藏經 |
| 西元第十三世紀<br>喇嘛教在中國興起 | 元朝西元1279—1368年 | 西元第十三世紀 | 忽必略汗尊奉喇嘛教 |
| | 明朝西元1368—1644年 | 西元第十四世紀 | 宗喀巴（1357—1419年）創立喇嘛教的黃派 |
| | 清朝西元1614—1912年 | | |

內容，將足以應付今日時代的需要，對人類內心的眞正和平亦將有更多的貢獻。

## 中國佛教歷期大事記要表

| 大　綱 | 朝　代 | 重　要　紀　事 | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 西元前第五至六世紀<br>佛陀生平 | 周朝西元前1100—250年(戰國時代西元前403—221年) | 約西元前500年 | 悉達多喬達摩(釋迦牟尼佛)創立佛教於印度 |
| 西元前第三世紀<br>佛教在印度的傳佈 | 秦朝西元前221—206年 | 西元前第三世紀 | 佛教徒國王阿育王統治印度 |
| 西元第一世紀<br>佛教傳入中國 | 漢朝西元前206年—西元220年 | 西元65年 | 中國佛教徒社會的最早歷史記載 |
| 西元第四至六世紀<br>佛教在中國的傳佈 | 魏晉南北朝西元220—581年：<br>三國時代西元220—280年<br>西、東晉西元265—420年<br>北魏西元386—535年 | 西元第四世紀 | 佛教傳入韓國、新道家促進佛教、敦煌石窟寺廟啓建 |
| | | 西元399—414年 | 釋法顯在印度 |
| | | 西元401年 | 鳩摩羅什抵首都長安 |
| | | 西元446年 | 北魏太武帝第一次迫害佛教 |
| | | 西元460年 | 釋曇曜復興佛教，建雲岡石窟寺廟 |
| | | 西元494年 | 龍門石窟寺廟啓建 |
| | | 約西元500年 | 梁武帝　(502—549年)提倡佛教 |

同時，小乘佛教的目標——羅漢，從第十世紀以來變得很受歡迎，羅漢是個人已得解脫的自了漢，中國人所說的羅漢，從十六個增加到十八個，又增加到五百個，而且又賦予道家神仙的特性，如擁有降龍伏虎的奇異能力。

蒙古人崛起於第十三世紀，征服了整個中國，他們尊奉喇嘛教，喇嘛教盛行於忽必烈汗的宮廷。

喇嘛教由密教演變而來，修持的方法包括持咒、誦經和各種各樣的打坐，打坐法甚至包括一種男女交媾的瑜珈術，這種交媾實在是代表慈悲和智慧的聯合，而以父體和母體的結合爲象徵。但喇嘛教的最高教義是大手印，與禪宗的教義非常相近。

明朝恢復了漢人的統治，一位大喇嘛——宗喀巴在西藏創立新的教派，通稱爲黃教，因爲和尚穿的是鬱金色的服裝。黃教從西藏流傳到蒙古和內蒙古地方。

基於殊途同歸的格言，中國文化的融合力把儒釋道三家成功地合併在一起。

在融合的過程中，佛教緩和了儒家嚴肅的禮教，並防止了道家對自然的完全屈服。

佛教把中國人仁愛的觀念擴展到對所有衆生的慈悲。

佛教擴大了中國人的心靈領域：

——把生命解釋爲相互的因果關係；

——介紹新的宇宙觀，把宇宙看成無始無終的時空連續體。

——介紹萬法唯心造的觀念；

——把永恒、無限和圓覺智慧解釋爲空，空是一種不可言說，不可思議的境界。

佛教教義的總攝性消除了自己和他人、眞實和不眞實、存在和不存在等等之間的對立性。

因爲高山、沙漠和海洋再也不構成傳達思想的障碍，從中亞的和尚們在古代絲路的旅行，到中國佛教的成熟，這一整個過程，在世界佛教的發展上，也許只佔一個章節。世界佛教可藉所有其他的宗教而增富其

語言文字不是傳道的好媒介，而邏輯更是自相矛盾的。

總之，每個人都有佛性，只需喚醒它，就能體悟到在「眞空」裏，一切生命都統一於寂靜。

有智識的禪門信衆雖然過着簡單的生活，而一般佛教寺廟則用各種方式投帝王之所好，以舉行慶典和紀念法會、廣開素筵、演說故事以及多彩多姿的節目，來吸引大衆。此類活動對中國民間藝術和民間文學，產生了巨大的影響力。

第九世紀時，寺廟的財勢造成教內的腐敗和教外的妬忌。佛教在表面上是興盛的，但在本質上則是衰敗的。由於七五五年以來的叛亂和苛政削弱了政府，使政府對寺廟免稅的優惠所造成的稅收損失極爲不滿。

終於爆發了八四五年的第三次大毀法，只有少數寺廟得以倖免。總共有四千六百座寺院、四萬間廟宇佛堂被毀；二十六萬個僧尼被迫還俗，十五萬人淪爲奴隸；幾億畝的寺廟土地被沒收充公，無數的金、銀、銅、鐵佛像被熔毀。雖然，次年唐武宗卽去世，新皇帝又開始復興佛教；但無疑地，這次鉅大的教難象徵着中國佛教黃金時代的結束。

唐亡於九〇六年。以後的半個世紀，是五代十國分崩離析的局面。沒落中的佛教，只能讓帝王統治者做白日夢，和安慰危難中的人們。殘酷的生命加深他們往生淨土的願望。觀音菩薩普遍的受到歡迎，人民紛紛向他求救。

對經典、符咒和佛像的大量需要，促成了七、八世紀之間木刻版印刷的發明。最早的現存版印經書是八六八年刋行的金剛經的摘錄，是一位捐贈人爲了記念他的雙親而出資廣爲流通的。

第十世紀，由十三萬塊木刻版印刷而成的中國大藏經，是印刷史上的大事。這是宋朝的開國皇帝——宋太祖下令刻印的，他與北方外族勢力相妥協而統一了中國。這一套是後來的版本，大小、形狀、內容都和宋藏是一樣的。

從外表看，佛教在宋代並無衰落的跡象，淨土宗變成日常生活的必要部份。繪畫和詩歌所流露出的寧靜和純樸，表現了不少禪的精神。代表此種趨勢的晚宋繪畫，對日本藝術留下相當深的影響。

，却能產生任何形狀。那個獅子的眼睛、耳朵和毛髮是金做的，就像整個獅子是金的一樣；因此，整個獅子就含藏在眼睛、耳朵甚或一根毛髮之中。這便是說明「所有現象界的東西都可以互相含容」的道理。

據說，法藏用鏡子來說明這個觀念。因爲，每一個鏡子裏的佛像，也在所有其他鏡子中反映出來，所以每一個個別現象，也包含所有其他現象。因此，華嚴宗說整個宇宙是互爲因果而同時產生的。一卽一切，一切卽一。它的教義是宣示萬法都是我們的「心」現出來的。

宗教哲學可能不像宗教幻想那樣立刻爲大衆所接受。阿彌陀佛所攝化的清淨極樂世界，其迷人景色對飽經憂患辛勞的人們是有不可抗拒的吸力的。阿彌陀佛，又稱無量光佛，他對信佛念佛者感應度化。因此，淨土宗在中國最爲普遍。淨土經典描述阿彌陀佛如何發願，只要虔誠相信他的，便可往生他的西方極樂世界。

阿彌陀佛的第一助手——觀音，本是丈夫身，後却演變成救苦救難的女菩薩，到處去拯救在困苦危難中的人們。大慈大悲的觀音菩薩，能變成許多化身以達成任務；有時候他被描寫成八個或十一個頭，或千手千眼，唯有這樣才能不遺漏任何一個衆生，見到和救度所有的衆生。

淨土宗的主要提倡者是道綽和他的弟子——善導。他們提倡一心不亂的念佛，以求往生西方極樂世界；也提倡念經、拜佛、觀想和唱讚。

另一方面，他們把地獄描繪成充滿恐怖、痛苦和暴力。從那時起，天堂和地獄的影像便深印在每個中國人的腦海中。

中國佛教最重要的發展是禪宗，禪是紀律極嚴的直覺觀照，一個人的佛性可以透過禪而顯現出來。

傳說第一位禪宗大師——菩提達摩，踏着一枝蘆葦渡過揚子江到北方，在少林寺面壁九年。這個故事說明了禪重視直指人心見性成佛，不立文字、不重偶像、寺廟或經典。漸悟和頓悟之爭，使禪宗分裂成兩個支派——北漸和南頓。六祖惠能和他的弟子們重視頓悟，其影響較强調漸修的北宗爲大。

禪師的教法各有不同，有些利用謎樣的話語、姿勢或動作，甚或棒打斥喝；有些利用公案問答的方式；有些默默地靜坐。但，禪師都認爲

在印度遊學十六年後，他回到了首都長安，歡迎他的人羣成山成海。在唐太宗支持下，他盡其餘生翻譯帶回來的許多經典。玄奘創立了唯識宗。唐太宗深爲他的譯經工作所感動，他把閱讀經書比作凝視長空和大海，仰之彌高，鑽之彌深。

皇帝們對佛教的保護，在唐太宗的媳婦——武則天的影響下達到最高峯，武則天是中國歷史上最有野心、最有權力的女皇帝。六七二年，她下令在龍門雕塑大毘盧遮那佛（大日如來）。她終於建立了一個新的朝代，她自稱爲未來佛。

七世紀中葉，阿拉伯人和西藏人阻斷中亞陸路，中國到印度的朝聖者必須取道海上。第一位由海路取經的高僧是義淨，他帶回新的經典，並著有「南海寄歸內法傳」，描述南洋羣島的佛教國家，包括他在該地翻譯很多經書的爪哇。

但是中國佛教的中心，是在它那突出而深邃的宗教思想。從印度佛教到中國佛教的轉變，開始於第六世紀中葉，而完成在第七、第八世紀。在本土各宗派中，有四個宗派構成中國佛教的精神和特質：天臺宗和華嚴宗注重教理，禪宗和淨土宗注重修行。

這四個宗派都屬於大乘，大乘主張普渡衆生才是佛陀的目標。

天臺宗的智顗大師集合各宗學說，而得出眞理有空、假、中三面的結論。萬事萬物都沒有實體，這是空；一般人由感官接觸現象界而享受到的人生是短暫的，所以是假。一切的存在是既空又假的，這就是中道的眞理。

因此，含藏互攝的宇宙可以從一粒沙或一根毛髮去窺測；智顗大師意義深長地說，「一念卽三千」，它也就是說：「每一個念頭都包含所有可能的世界」。

這種「一歸一切，一切歸一」的學理，造成了萬物不分鉅細皆有佛性的概念。因此，正如蓮華經所說的，芸芸衆生都可以進入佛道。蓮華經是以蓮花作純潔的象徵，說明佛性是出汚泥而不染的。

華嚴宗以華嚴經爲中心，創始人是法藏。他最有名的講道是利用宮殿中一隻金獅子作比喻，金子代表本體，獅子代表現象；本體沒有形狀

北魏武帝死後八年，復建工作進行得很快。繼任皇帝把自己認作佛陀化身，四六〇年任命曇曜爲首座和尚。

爲表示佛教將永久住世，他造了雲岡石窟寺廟。第一組石窟有五尊大佛像，代表過去的皇帝。第二組有佛陀、樂伎、施主和菩薩的雕像。菩薩是爲了救度衆生，而不願先成佛的。

第六位北魏皇帝爲了欣賞中國文化而遷都洛陽。新國都的佛寺建築增加得很快，一直到全城住宅區的三分之一均爲和尚所擁有爲止。

爲了與雲岡爭輝，又在附近的龍門建造石窟寺廟。

在皇族捐獻的一個石窟內，我們還可看到國王和皇后禮佛的莊嚴陣容。

此時，南方產生了佛教徒國王——梁武帝，他把頭髮剃掉以表示虔敬。他建了很多寺廟，不喝酒不吃葷，並禁用動物做藥和祭品。他召集會衆講經說法，聽衆多達五萬人，包括來自波斯、和闐和朝鮮的使者。

但，北方的周武帝看法却不一樣。他志在恢復古代中國的光輝，提倡儒學，攻擊佛教爲助長叛國份子和摧毀家庭倫理孝道。建築寺廟所浪費的財富以及不良份子混跡佛教界，更促成了五七四年的第二次大毀法。四年後，北周武帝去世，在他生前，幾萬座寺廟被皇家貴族所佔用；而且，可能有一百萬以上的僧尼被迫還俗。

暴風雨是短暫的。五八一年，隋文帝卽位，帶來了中國佛教的黃金時代。他自立爲王，稱自己爲佛陀的弟子，利用佛教來重新統一南北。

他聲名遠播，吸引了來自日本、朝鮮求經的使者。六〇〇年，中國開始成爲東亞之光。

六一八年，隋亡於唐，朝代的改變並不影響佛教的進展。唐太宗自稱是道教徒，並以儒家學說爲政府體制之所本，但他却依賴佛教爭取民心。唐朝的聲威遠播國外，許多朝聖者前往印度求取原本佛經。

他們之中最有名的是玄奘，他於六二九年出發，途經沙漠高山，終於克服了許多危險，來到印度河谷，沿恒河而下，參拜佛陀當時在其下成正等正覺的菩提樹。他的聲名隨他的旅行、研究而傳遍印度，得到國王們的褒獎。

非。這種說法似乎反映出基本的佛教「空」觀。

因此，有學問的和尚和學者之間，便開始同情性的討論；由於學者的影響，佛教便在貴族富豪之間爭取到信徒。

第四世紀的中國，戰亂頻仍，幾位高僧建立了中國佛教的哲學基礎。譬如釋道安把佛教思想的兩大主流——禪修與空觀揉合在一起。

道安的弟子——慧遠，把靈魂不滅比作火焰不熄地從一根木頭傳到另一根木頭，他在宮廷裏公開的辯稱沙們不拜王侯。

另一位高僧——道生，宣揚基本的大乘佛教教義，主張凡是有情衆生都有佛性，都可成佛。他最先相信「在經過長時間修行之後，可以頓悟成佛」。

佛教開始改變中國的文物，佛教傳入中國的重要據點是敦煌，南北陸路通道在此相會。

早在四世紀中葉，便有人在山裏雕塑洞穴寺廟，以供養遊化四方的和尚及本地信徒。

這種洞穴寺廟終於成爲此後千餘年的信仰中心，而且一直到今天，還是佛教藝術的寶庫。

四、五世紀之交，兩件大事發生了。西元三九九年，第一位到印度朝聖的中國和尚——釋法顯開始他的行程。四〇一年，來自庫車的高僧——鳩摩羅什到達首都長安，開始他的偉大計劃，把一些最重要的大乘經典翻譯成中文。

法顯歷盡了千辛萬苦，朝拜恒河沿岸的聖蹟，到佛教的策源地研究佛學。之後，他又到錫蘭停留一個短時期。四一四年，經過二百天海上航行，他又回到了老家。

當時，北方已爲突厥族所統一，其君王自稱爲佛。

北魏開國皇帝鼓勵建造佛像佛寺，邀請一位和尚當顧問。

不幸，一位道士和一位儒家大臣向北魏武帝進了讒言，誣告佛教是虛僞的外國宗教。於是，中國佛教史上，第一次毀法便發生在四四六年。北魏武帝頒佈了一項嚴厲的命令，燬掉所有佛塔、繪畫和佛經，並殺戮全部出家人。

佛法曾被大家比作超渡苦海以達涅槃彼岸的竹筏。佛教有兩個主要派別：一個是强調個人解脫的小乘，一個是强調普渡衆生的大乘。

在西元前第三世紀，隨着印度阿育王勢力的擴張，佛教從恒河河谷向四面八方流傳。在西北方，佛教傳入犍陀羅（就是今旁遮普西北部及東阿富汗）和喀什米爾。西元一世紀，又經中亞細亞國際公路傳抵中國。

那時候的中國，正是武力鼎盛的漢朝，它和古羅馬正好分佔東西兩個世界。漢朝的勢力籠罩着東亞，從韓國到支那土耳其斯坦（卽今新疆省），從戈壁沙漠到越南，都受到它的影響。

中國的文化以儒家爲中心：是主張由秉承天命的仁君聖主來治國，他以百姓的意志爲意志，本着仁心而行仁政，治國如治家，社會秩序井然。

中國的宇宙觀是道家的：道支配着所有生命，道顯現在陰陽這兩種形成萬物的正負力量上。道家是一種與世無爭的哲學，他們認爲要求長生，必須返璞歸眞。

來自國外的佛教，終於傳到這一個自足自給、自滿自得的世界。

白馬寺是第一座中國佛教廟宇，傳說是因爲漢明帝夢見佛陀化身的金神而建立的。中國佛教最早的歷史記載，發生在西元六十五年。第二世紀中葉以前，佛陀與道教諸神便一齊供奉在皇宮裏。

但，佛教在中國得勢，一直要等到漢朝滅亡以後。

北方在突厥和西藏民族的入侵下，連年戰亂，人民顚沛流離，飽嘗痛苦，佛教提供給當時人民身心兩方面的庇護所，正是發展的大好時機。百姓一出家便可免除兵役、勞役和賦稅。那些來自國外的統治者，不受儒家和道家傳統的束縛，便尊奉非中國信仰的佛教，以確保他們的勝利和興盛。他們聽從和尙的告誡，和尙們以慈悲來禁止他們的濫殺，因此這些和尙便爲久遭蹂躪的中國人所歡迎。

南方是中國朝廷所發現的避難所，動亂和挫敗却助長了形而上學的興起。

新道家認爲淸靜無爲是美德，並以「無」爲萬事萬物的起源。聖賢必須把自己和「無」合爲一體，所謂「無」便是要忘却自他、生死和是

# 佛教在中國

□ 世界宗教研究院稿 □

政　大　□ 鄭振煌譯 □

佛教起源於二千五百多年前，喜馬拉雅山南麓山脚下的一個小王國。喜馬拉雅山是地球上最高的山，也是印度和中國兩個主要文明古國的分界嶺。

佛教深深地改變了這兩個古國，也改變了其他的遠東國家。

若以面積、人口和時間來說，受佛教影響最深的顯然是中國。佛教在中國經歷了光輝燦爛的發展。

大約是在基督降生前五百年左右，一位印度王子——喬達摩釋迦牟尼，深受人生的生、老、病、死種種束縛所苦。他拋棄了帝王的榮華富貴，以求斷絕世間的一切慾望，從事嚴格的修行，一直到他成了佛——也就是所謂的「覺者」。

佛陀把生命看做無數個人在無窮的輪廻中流轉的長流——每一個生命都是前生的果，每一種命運都是從前善業和惡業所留下來的果。在輪廻圈子裏，痛苦是不可避免的。解脫就是衝破輪廻圈子，證入涅槃的境界——所謂涅槃乃是一種絕對超越的不可思議的境界。一個人要如何才能達到這種境界呢？

佛陀的答案，簡單的說只有三個字，那就是：戒、定、慧。

# MAJOR EVENTS OF BUDDHISM IN CHINA

| OUTLINE | DYNASTIES | MAJOR EVENTS |
|---|---|---|
| 6th–5th century B.C. Life of Buddha | Chou ca. 1100–256 B.C. (Warring States 403–221 B.C.) | ca. 500 B.C. Siddhartha Gautama (Sakyamuni) founds Buddhism in India |
| 3rd century B.C. Spread of Buddhism in India | Ch'in 221–206 B.C. | 3rd c. B.C. Buddhist King Asoka rules in India |
| 1st century A.D. Introduction of Buddhism into China | Han 206 B.C.–220 A.D. | 65 A.D. Earliest historical mention of a Chinese Buddhist community |
| 4th–6th century A.D. Spread of Buddhism in China | The Period of **Wei Chin, Southern and Northern Dynasties** 220–581 A.D. | 4th c. A.D. Buddhism spreads to Korea<br>Neo-Taoists aid Buddhism<br>Beginning of cave temples in Tun-huang |
| | **Three Kingdoms** 220–280 A.D. | 399–414 A.D. Monk Fa-hsien in India |
| | **West and East Chin** 265–420 A.D. | 401 A.D. Monk Kumarajiva arrives in capital Ch'ang-an |
| | **Northern Wei** 386–535 A.D. | 446 A.D. First persecution of Buddhism by Northern Wei Emperor Wu |
| | | 460 A.D. Monk T'an-yao restores Buddhism, creates cave temples of Yün-kang |
| | | 494 A.D. Cave temples of Lung-mên started |
| | **East and West Wei** 534–557 A.D. | ca. 500 A.D. Emperor Wu (reign 502–549) of Liang promotes Buddhism |
| | **Northern Ch'i** 550–577 A.D. | 6th c. A.D. Buddhism spreads to Japan |
| | **Northern Chou** 557–581 A.D. | 574 A.D. Second persecution of Buddhism by Northern Chou Emperor Wu |
| | **Sui** 581–618 A.D. | ca. 600 A.D. Beginning of Golden Age of Buddhism under Sui Emperor Wên |
| 7th–8th century A.D. Golden Age of Chinese Buddhism | **T'ang** 618–906 A.D. | 629–644 A.D. Monk Hsuan-tsang in India |
| | | Mid. 7th c. A.D. Monk I-ching's sea voyage to India |
| | | ca. 600–900 A.D. T'ien-t'ai, Hua-yen, Pure Land and Ch'an (Zen) Schools of flourish |
| | | 845 A.D. Third persecution of Buddhism by T'ang Emperor Wu-tsung |
| | **The Five Dynasties** 906–960 A.D. | 10th c. A.D. Printing of Tripitaka under the founder of Sung |
| | **Sung** 960–1279 A.D. | 13th c. A.D. Kubilai Khan embraces Lamaism |
| 13th century A.D. Rise of Lamaism in China | **Yüan** (Mongol) 1279–1368 A.D. | 14th c. A.D. Tsong-kha-pa (1357–1419) founds the Yellow Sect of Lamaism |
| | **Ming** 1368–1644 A.D. | |
| | **Ch'ing** (Manchu) 1644–1912 A.D. | |

the same goal, the Chinese tendency to synthesize and harmonize has succeeded in merging Buddhism with Confucianism and Taoism.

In the process, Buddhism has relaxed the rigidity of Confucian ethics and checked the abandonment of the Taoist surrender to Nature.

It has extended the Chinese compassion for humanity to all living things.

It has expanded the Chinese mind: -

- by interpreting creation as reciprocal causes and effects;

- by introducing the view of the universe as a time-space continum without beginning or end;

- by presenting all phenomena as a projection of the mind;

- and by identifying eternity, infinity and perfect wisdom with emptiness, a state beyond words and imagination.

The all-inclusiveness of its doctrine eliminates the duality of self and others, real and unreal, being and non-being.

As mountains, deserts and oceans cease to act as barriers in the transmission of ideas, the whole span of human drama from the travels of Central Asian monks on ancient silk routes to the maturity of Chinese Buddhism has become, perhaps, merely a chapter in the development of World Buddhism, which, enriched by all other faiths, will meet the challenge of present day needs and contribute to true peace in the mind of Man.

showed more than a trace of Ch'an. Later Sung paintings of this tendency left a deep imprint on Japanese art.

Meanwhile, the Hinayana ideal of **arhats**, or passionless ones who have attained personal liberation, became popular from the Tenth Century on. Called **Lohan** in Chinese, they proliferated from sixteen to eighteen to five hundred and acquired attributes of Taoist immortals such as the magic power to subdue dragons and tigers.

When the Mongols rose in the Thirteenth Century to conquer all of China, they embraced Tibetan Lamaism, which took over the court of Kublai Khan.

Lamaism is derived from **Tantric** Buddhism. Its practice consists of prayers, recitations, special techniques in various forms of meditation, including even a yoga practice of sexual union which is none other than the union of compassion and wisdom, as symbolized by the yab-yum, or father-mother image. However, the highest teaching of Lamaism is bound in a doctrine called, **"Mahamudra"**, the Great Symbol, which is very similar to the principle of Ch'an Buddhism.

With the return to Chinese rule in the Ming Dynasty, an eminent lama, Tsong-kha-pa, established a new school in Tibet, commonly known as the Yellow Sect, so called because of the saffron attire of its monks. From Tibet, the sect finally spread to the Ordos and Manchuria.

Based upon the adage that different paths lead to

bronze and iron images melted. Although the next year the emperor died and revival began with the new ruler, this persecution nevertheless marked the end of the Golden Period of Chinese Buddhism.

T'ang ended in 906. In the next half-century, five dynasties and ten kingdoms once more engaged in chaotic struggles. Declining Buddhism served only to store up the dreams of the temporary rulers and to give solace to insecure people. The brutality of life sharpened their yearning for rebirth in the Pure Land. The popularity of Kuan-yin amounted to a universal "begging for mercy".

The desire for multiple copies of sutras, spells and images must have spurred the invention of block printing some time during the Seventh to Eighth Century. The oldest extant printed book, dated 868, was of excerpts from the Diamond Sutra, distributed freely by the donor as a memorial to his parents.

A landmark in the history of printing was the Tenth Century edition of the Chinese **Tripitaka**, or compelete Buddhist canon, printed from 130,000 engraved blocks. It was ordered by the founder of the Sung Dynasty, who reunified China in an uneasy peace with northern non-Chinese powers. This set is a later edition that retains the same scope and form.

Outwardly, Buddhism during the Sung dynasty continued to grace the Chinese landscape, with the Pure Land School very much a part of daily life. The tranquility and simplicity in painting and poetry

Ch'an masters differ in teaching: some use enigmatic utterings, gestures or acts ranging to the extreme of scolding and beating; some use the case method of question-and-answer; some practice meditation in silence; but all consider words a poor medium and logic self-defeating.

After all, everyone has within himself the Buddha-nature: one only has to awaken it - to attain a sudden flash of insight for the unity of all existence in a great tranquility, the True Emptiness.

While intellectual followers of Ch'an lived in simplicity, the popular Buddhist church catered to imperial favor and attracted the multitude by staging celebrations and memorial services, and by offering vegetable feasts, story-telling lectures and colourful festivals. Such activities exerted a tremendous influence on Chinese folk art and literature.

By the Ninth Century, the wealth and power of the church had nurtured corruption within and incurred hatred and jealousy without. The government, weakened by rebellions and misrule since 755, looked hungrily at the revenue resulting from the tax-exempt status of the church.

This brought about the third great persecution of 845, which spared only a few temples. In all, 4,600 monasteries, 400,000 temples and shrines were demolished; 260,000 monks and nuns were defrocked and 150,000 slaves taken over; hundreds of millions of temple land were confiscated and an untold number of gold, silver,

a thousand eyes and arms, the better to see all and to help all.

The main proponents of this school were Tao-cho and his disciple Shan-tao. They promoted the practice of **nien-fo** or uttering the name of Amitabha with an undivided mind to assure rebirth in the Western Paradise, as well as the practice of chanting sutras, worshipping images, meditating on and singing praises to the Buddha.

On the other hand, they painted a picture of Hell with horrors of torture and violence. These images of Heaven and Hell have been imprinted on every Chinese mind ever since.

The most important Chinese development in Buddhism is the Ch'an or Zen School. Ch'an is intuitive meditation with strict discipline, through which one's Buddha nature can be revealed.

Legend has it that **Bodhidharma**, the first patriarch of Ch'an, crossed the Yangtze River on a reed branch to the north, where he sat in front of a wall for nine years. The story illustrates the emphasis of Ch'an on inner enlightenment without words, images, temples or sutras.

The argument among believers over gradual enlightenment versus sudden enlightenment split Ch'an into two subschools, the Northern and the Southern. The Sixth Patriarch, Hui-nêng, and his disciples championed the idea that intuitive wisdom and enlightenment came suddenly. This Southern School eventually prevailed over the Northern.

as is the whole lion, so the whole lion is in the eye, the ear or even a strand of hair. This is the doctrine of inter-penetration and mutual identification of all phenomena.

It was recorded that Fa-tsang used mirrors to illustrate this concept. As the Buddha figure in each mirror is reflected in every other mirror, so each individual phnomenon embraces every other phenomenon. Thus the Hua-yen School proclaimed that the entire universe arises simultaneously through reciprocal causation. The One is the Many, the Many is the One. It spread the belief that all things are manifestations of the same supreme Mind.

Religious philosophy is probably never as readily acceptable by the masses as religious imagination. The enchanting picture of Pure and Happy Land presided over by **Amitabha**, the Buddha of Infinite Light, who responds to anyone meditating or calling upon his name in good faith, is irresistible to people who toil and worry. Thus the Pure Land School became the most popular in China. The Pure Land Sutra describes how Amitabha vowed that anyone with absolute faith in him shall be reborn in his Western Paradise.

His chief minister, Kuan-yin, who in later centuries evolved into the female Goddess of Mercy, looks in all directions to save people from suffering and danger. As the bodhisattva of infinite compassion, he can assume various forms to carry out his mission; he is sometimes depicted with eight or eleven heads or with

Schools for practice.

All four belong to Mahayana, or the Greater Vehicle, which believes that universal liberation for all sentient beings is the aim of the Buddha.

The T'ien-t'ai master, Chih-i, synthesized all forms of Buddhism, arriving at the conclusion of a three-fold truth: emptiness, phenomena, and the middle way. All things have no reality and are, therefore, empty; they enjoy temporary existence as phenomena reached by the senses; every existence is empty and temporary at the ame time, with the truth of the middle way.

Therefore, the whole cosmos, with its realms interwoven and interpenetrated, may be present in a grain of sand or the point of a hair: cryptically, "one thought is three thousand worlds", which might be interpreted as "in every instance of thought, all possible worlds are involved."

This One-in-All and All-in-One doctrine leads to the idea that Buddha-nature is to be found in everything from the biggest to the tiniest; therefore, all beings can be converted to enter the path of the Buddha, as proclaimed in the Lotus Sutra. Lotus, the symbol of purity, rises from the mud but is unsullied.

The Hua-yen School concentrated on the Garland Sutra. Its founder was Fa-tsang. His most famous sermon used as an analogy, a golden lion in the palace: gold is the symbol of principle, and the lion is the symbol of phenomenon. The principle has no form, but may assume any form. The eyes, ears and hairs are all gold

Ch'ang-an. With Emperor T'ai-tsung's support, he devoted the rest of his life to translating the voluminous texts he brought back. Hsüan-tsang founded the School which explains all phenomena in terms of one ultimate reality: Mind. The emperor was so impressed by his work that he compared looking at the scriptures to gazing at the sky or sea, immeasurable in height and unfathomable in depth.

The height of imperial patronage was reached under the influence of Emperor T'ai-tsung's daughter-in-law, who became the most ambitious and powerful Empress in Chinese history. In 672, she ordered the carving of the Great Vairocana Buddha, or the Brilliant One, at Lung-men. When she finally founded a new dynasty, she claimed herself the Future Buddha.

In mid-Seventh Centnry, the Arabs and the Tibetans interrupted the Central Asian land route; Chinese pilgrims had to travel by sea to reach India. The first important monk to do this was I-ching, whose voyages resulted in bringing back new scriptures and a report of the Buddhist kingdoms in the Southern Archipelago, including Java, where he did a great deal of translation.

But the heart of Chinese Buddhism is its distinctive and profound religious thinking. The transformation from Indian to Chinese Buddhism began in mid-Sixth Century and was completed in the Seventh and Eighth Centuries. Among native schools, four form the spirit and substance of Chinese Buddhism: The T'ien-t'ai and Hua-yen Schools for doctrine; the Ch'an and Pure Land

were appropriated by the imperial family and aristocrats, and probably more than a million monks and nuns were defrocked.

The storm was brief. The founding by Emperor Wen of the new Sui dynasty in 581 ushered in the golden era of Chinese Bnddhism. Calling himself Emperor, Disciple of The Buddha, he used this religion as a binding influence in the reunification of north and south.

His fame attracted envoys from Japan and Korea to seek Buddhist teachings. The year 600 marked the beginning of China's role as the Light East Asia.

The dynastic change from Sui to T'ang in 618 did not affect the progress of Buddhism. The second T'ang emperor T'ai-tsung, professed to be a Taoist and based his governmental structure on Confucian principles, but he relied on Buddhism for gaining popular support aud for the spiritual welfare of the empire. T'ang's influence extended far beyond its boundaries, and many pilgrims reached India to seek original scriptures.

Among them, the most famous was Hsüan-tsang, who began his journey in 629. Surviving many perils in deserts and mountains, he finally reached the Indus Valley, sailed down the Ganges and saw the bodhi tree under which Buddha attained enlightenment. His fame spread throughout India as he travelled and studied; he was honored by the king.

After a pilgrimage of 16 years, he received a tumultuous welcome upon returning to the capital,

other sentient beings.

Admiration for Chinese culture motivated the sixth Northern Wei emperor to move his capital to Lo-yang. Temple construction in the new capital mushroomed until one-third of the dwelling area in the city was occupied by monks.

To rival the glory of Yün-kang, cave temples were created at nearby Lung-men.

In a cave sponsored by the imperial family, we can still see the magnificence of the processions of emperors and empresses paying respect to the Buddha.

Meanwhile the south produced its Buddhist monarch, Emperor Wu of the Liang Dynasty, whose hair was shaved to symbolize devotion. He constructed numerous temples, gave up wine and meat and prohibited the use of living things in medicine and sacrifice. He convened assemblies to elucidate sutras, with audiences as great as 50,000, including envoys from Persia, Khotan and Korea.

Back in the north, another Emperor Wu, but of the Northern Chou Dynasty, had a different vision. Aiming to restore the glory of ancient China, he favored Confucianism and charged Buddhism with fostering disloyalty toward the country and breaking down filial piety at home. The waste of wealth in temple construction and the harboring of undesirable elements in the monastic community were added reasons for the second great persecution of 574. Before Emperor Wu died, four years later, tens of thonsands of temples

begin his monumental project of rendering into Chinese some of the most important Mahayana scriptures.

The Chinese traveller survived untold hardships to reach sacred sites along the Ganges and study holy teachings at the source. Later he sailed to Ceylon for a short stay. Then, after 200 days at sea, he returned home in 414.

By that time, the north had been unified by a Turkic tribe, whose emperors identified themselves with Buddhas.

The founder of this Northern Wei Dynasty encouraged the erection of images and temples and invited a monk to be imperial advisor.

However, a Chinese Taoist and a Confucian minister convinced the third Northern Wei emperor that Buddhism was a fictitious foreign religion. Thus the first of three Great Persecutions of Buddhism in Chinese history began in 446. A drastic edict was issued to destroy all stupas, paintings, and sutras and to execute all monks.

Restoration came swiftly after the ruier died eight years later. The succeeding emperor considered himself the reincarnation of Buddha and appointed T'an-yao the chief of monks in 460.

As a symbol of permanence of Buddhism, he created the cave temples of Yün-kang. In the first group of caves appeared five gigantic Buddha figures representing the past emperors. The next group housed numerous images of Buddha, musicians and donors, and **bodhisattvas,** who refrain from entering nirvana in order to save

phical foundation of Chinese Buddhism was laid by a few eminent monks such as Tao-an, who merged two main currents of Buddhist thought - the practice of meditation and the doctrine of emptiness……

His disciple, Hui-yüan, likened the indestructibility of the spirit to the endless transmission of fire from wood to wood and argued at court that monks be exempt from bowing to the emperor.

Another eminent monk, Tao-shêng, propagated the fundamental Mahayana tenet that all sentient beings possess the Buddha-nature and are capable of becoming Buddha. He pioneered in the belief of sudden and complete enlightenment after a long process of religious training.

And Buddhism began to change the Chinese landscape. The strategic point for transmitting Buddhism into China was Tun-huang, where the northern and southern overland routes met.

As early as the middle of the Fourth Century, cave temples were carved out of the hills to serve travelling monks and native believers.

Eventually this became a center of devotion for the next thousand years, and a depository of Buddhist art to this day.

Through Tun-huang, two great events occurred at the turn of the century. In 399, Fa-hsien, the first Chinese monk to complete his pilgrimage to India, started his journey. In 401, from Kucha the high monk, Kumarajiva, travelled to the capital, Ch'ang-an, to

Chinese Buddhist community occurred in 65 A.D. By the middle of the Second Century, Buddha was worshipped in the palace along with Taoist deities.

But not until the period after the collapse of the Han Empire did Buddhism gain momentum in China.

In the north, under the invading Turkic and Tibetan tribes, incessant warfare, chaos and misery provided a climate ripe for a religion affording physical and spiritual refuge to the masses. By entering monkhood, common people escaped military and labor services as well as taxation. Non-Chinese rulers, unshackled by Confucian and Taoist traditions, embraced this non-Chinese faith to ensure their victory and prosperity. They listened to advice from monks, who exercised a restraining influence over wanton killing through the preaching of compassion, thus endearing themselves to the downtrodden Chinese.

In the South, where the Chinese court found haven, uncertainty aud frustration favored the growth of metaphysical speculation.

Neo-Taoists considered inactivity as virtue and non-being as the origin for all things. The sage must identify himself with non-being, which is oblivious of self and others, life and death, right and wrong. This seemed to mirror the basic Buddhist ideal of emptiness.

Thus a sympathetic dialogue developed between the learned monks and the literati, whose influence enabled Buddhism to gain converts among royalty and the rich.

In the chaos of Fourth Century China, the philoso-

called **Mahayana**, the Greater Vehicle.

During the Third Century B.C., with the expanding power of the Indian king, **Asoka,** Buddhism burst out of the Ganges Valley and spread in all directions. In the northwest, it took root in **Gandhara** and **Kashmir.** From there, by the beginning of the Christian era, it was moving through Central Asian international highways to China.

The Chinese dynasty then was Han, a power in the East that matched Rome in the west. Han influence dominated East Asia, from Korea to Chinese Turkestan, from the Gobi Desert to Vietnam.

The national creed was Confucianism: a benevolent ruler under the mandate of Heaven, whose will coincides with that of the people; an orderly society with a rigid family structure; a moral code based on humanity and the practice of perfect Virtue for its own sake.

The cosmic view was Taoism: **Tao** or the Way of Nature governs all life, manifesting itself in **Yin** and **Yang**, the negative and positive forces that shape all things - a philosophy of passivity with avoidance of worldly strife, and of a return to purity for the attainment of eternal life.

Into this self-contained and smug world, came trickles of a foreign idea.

The White Horse Temple, reputedly the first Chinese Buddhist monastery, was founded on the legend that Buddha appeared as a "golden deity" in the dream of Emperor Ming. The earliest historical mention of a

Its greatest influence in terms of area, population and duration has been in China, where it went through a splendid transformation.

**MAIN TITLE - BUDDHISM IN CHINA**

It was about five hundred years before Christ. A young Indian prince, Gautama Sakyamuni, was deeply disturbed by the bondage of human experience - birth, age, illness and death. Despite the glory and pleasures of royalty, he answered an inner call to sever worldly attachments and undergo extreme trials - until he became Buddha, the Enlightened One.

Buddha saw life as a stream of countless individuals going through endless rebirth - every life the result of former lives, and every fate the effect of former good or evil deeds. Within the cycle of rebirth, suffering is inevitable. To attain liberation is to break away from this cycle and enter into **nirvana**, an inscrutable state of absolute transcendence.

How can one reach this state?

Buddha's answer, in its simplest form, was: moral conduct, deep contemplation and intuitive wisdom.

Buddha's teaching has been compared to rafts crossing the sea of suffering to reach the shores of Nirvana. There are two main schools in Buddhism: the one stressing personal liberation is called Theravada, or more popularly referred to as **Hinayana**, the Lesser Vehicle, and the one stressing universal liberation is

# Bilingual Buddhist Digest

## 中・英・文・摘

## BUDDHISM IN CHINA

*Narration Script*

By

The Institute for Advanced Studies
of World Religions

*Translated into Chinese*

By

Cheng Chen-huang

The idea began 2500 years ago in a tiny kingdom at the southern foot of the Himalayas, the loftiest mountains on earth and the dividing line of two major civilizations: India and China.

It has profoundly changed both, as well as every other country in the Far East. The idea is Buddhism.