In the process of introducing a country, Hsiian-tsang has not explicitly stated whether it was visited by him or was only told of by others. He indicates these circumstances by using different expressions to describe the location of the country. In the former case he uses the expression “Rising-chih”, (meaning “proceed to”), while in the latter case he would simply use “chih” (meaning “one reaches”) such and such a country (vide. Pien-chi’s Postscript). But sometimes, the character “hsing” might have been left out by carelessness (e.g. in fasc. I, in describing his passage to Termal along the river Vakšu, and again from Termal to Bukhara via the kingdom of Hue, the character “hsing” was left out in both cases). On the other hand, sometimes a surplus “hsing” was inserted by mistake (e.g. the description of the kingdom of Malakuta in fasc. x). All these can be found out by collating it with the Biography of Hsiian-tsang. According to Ching-po’s Preface, out of the 138 countries recorded in this work, 28 were heard of the Hsiian-tsang. After making proper revision in accordance with the above mentioned expressions, it has been found now that these 28 countries should be: Ferghana, Memagh, Kaputana, Kusannik, Khakan, Bukhara, Fa-ti, Khorisniska, Gagayana, Kolom, Šuman, Kuvayana, Osh, Kotol, Kumdha, Baglan, Hromsinikan, Khulm, Talakan (the above are in fasc. I), Bolora (in fasc. iii), Nipala (in fasc. vii), Malakuta (in fasc. x), Simhala, Parsa (these two in fasc. xii), Alini, Raghu, Prtha Shighni (the above are in fasc. xii). The other 110 countries were visited by Hsiian-tsang in person.

At the beginning of the Ch’ion-lung period (1736) of the Ch’ing dynasty, this work was translated into the Tibetan language by Mgon-po-skabs (of which a manuscript copy is preserved in the library of the Otani University in Japan). During the last one hundred years it has been translated into French by Stanislas Julien, entitled Memoires sur les contrées occidentales Par Htiouen Tnsang, 2 tomes, (Paris, 1857), and into English by Samuel Beal, entitled Si-yu-ki, Buddhist Records of the Western World, 2 vol., (London, 1884), and another version by Thomas Watters: On Yuvan Chwang’s Travels in India, 2 Vol., (London, 1904-5). There is also a Japanese translation by Gennyo Ono. The study of this work was initiated by the comprehensive researches made by Thomas Watters included in his translation. Based on this translation the Japanese scholar Kendoku Hori made supplements and wrote An Explanation on the Si-yu-ki. After that Kiroku Adachi composed A Study of the Record of the Western Regions of the Great T’ang Dynasty in 2 vol., (Tokyo, 1942-3). Other works which are good for reference for the study of this work include: Vincent A. Smith’s The Itinerary of Yüan Chhwang, (London, 1905), Alex. Cunningham’s Ancient Geography of India, (London, 1871), L. Vivien de Saint-Martin’s Memoire analytique sur la carte de l’Asie centrale et de l’inde, (Paris, 1858), and Komayoshi Takakuwa’s A Study on the Various kingdoms of East and South India as contained in the Record of the Western Regions of the Great T’ang Dynasty, (Tokyo, 1926).

Yu Hsia.

TATHĀGATA (I). Tathāgata is the epithet that according to the discourses the Buddha regularly used to refer to himself thereby representing what in early Buddhism was considered to be the most fitting expression of the Buddha’s realization. This invests the term tathāgata with a considerable degree of importance and this term has remained of central importance throughout the history of Buddhism. In order to comprehensively treat the epithet tathāgata, it will be discussed in two separate articles. The present article will treat it from the perspective of the Pāli discourses, while another article will do so from the perspective of the Mahāyāna traditions.

From an etymological perspective, the word tathāgata can be derived from the adverb tatha, ‘thus’ (in the sense of ‘in this way’, ‘not otherwise’, anaññatha), and the past participle gata, ‘gone’. On this derivation, tathāgata can be translated as ‘thus gone’. This way of understanding the term tathāgata would then be similar to another epithet of the Buddha, sugata, ‘well gone’. Alternatively the second part of the compound could be the past participle āgata, ‘come’ or ‘arrived’, on which derivation the term tathāgata can be translated as ‘thus come’ (tathā+āgata).

The Pāli discourses indicate that the term tathāgata was in common use in ancient India. A similar term can in fact be found in the Jain scriptures, which refer to a liberated one as tāhāgaya. The expression tathāgata occurs also in the Rāmāyaṇa and the Mahābhārata.
The non-Buddhist usage of the term *tathāgata* can be seen in the Pāli discourses in a set of four ways of predicating the destiny of a *tathāgata* after death. This fourfold predication, or tetralemma, concerned with the destiny of a *tathāgata* after death, appears to have been a topic of considerable interest among ancient Indian recluse and wanderers. The problem it proposes is whether a *tathāgata* exists after death, or does not exist, or else neither exists nor does not exist. Since the Buddha consistently refused to take up any of these four positions, the formulation of the tetralemma on the *tathāgata* must stem from non-Buddhist circles.

The reason for the Buddha’s refusal of these four propositions has a close bearing on the Buddhist understanding of the term *tathāgata* and therefore deserves closer inspection. The precise implications of the Buddhist use of the term *tathāgata* were apparently not always clear to Buddhist monks themselves, since on the occasion Anurāda, when questioned by outside wanderers regarding the tetralemma on the *tathāgata* after death, proposed that there was another way of making a statement on this matter (S. III, I 115 = S. IV, 380).

The outside wanderers took him to be a fool, since the tetralemma exhausts the possible ways of predicating according to ancient Indian logic, so that a fifth proposition is simply impossible. Anurāda reported what had happened to the Buddha, who with a question and answer catechism led Anurāda to the realization that even here and now a *tathāgata* cannot be identified as any of the five aggregates, or as being in them, or as apart from them, though evidently he was not without form, feeling, perception, formation and consciousness. Since here and now a *tathāgata* cannot be found in truth and fact, the Buddha concluded, how could any predication about his future destiny be made? This reply by the Buddha clarifies why he did not take up any of the four positions proposed by the tetralemma. It also gives some indications on the implications of the term *tathāgata* from the Buddhist perspective.

As the Buddha explained on another occasion, only those who take any of the six senses to be mine or ‘I’ or ‘myself’ will take up any of these four propositions on the future destiny of a *tathāgata* (S. IV, 393). Since, however, a *tathāgata* cannot be fathomed by way of any of the five aggregates, it is simply impossible to make predications about him in line with the tetralemma (M.I, 487). The tetralemma on the *tathāgata* is merely an expression of personality view (*sakkīyadidhī*). Such personality view stands at the back of the tetralemma on the future existence of the *tathāgata* as it stands at the back of all other speculative views (S. IV, 287). Hence for one who has realized the falsity of personality view, any such views and proposals are simply meaningless.

According to the Pāli commentaries, occurrences of the term *tathāgata* in the context of the tetralemma should be understood to refer to satta, a ‘being’, or to an *arahanī*. The gloss *satta*, a ‘being’, has led some scholars to conclude that the tetralemma on the *tathāgata* may be concerned with living beings in general. Judging from the Pāli discourses, however, the tetralemma on the *tathāgata* is clearly concerned with one who has reached *emancipation*, not with living beings in general. This is the case both from the perspective of outside wanderers as well as from the Buddhist perspective. Hence the commentarial gloss may rather be intended to highlight that those who posed the tetralemma did so by mistaking a *tathāgata* to be a real and substantial type of being.

During their encounter with Anurāda, the outside wanderers used a string of synonyms when formulating the tetralemma, speaking of the *tathāgata* as the ‘highest person’ (*uttamapāramitā*), the ‘supreme person’ (*paramapāramitā*) and the one who has ‘achieved the supreme’ (*paramapattipattā*). These synonyms indicate that, from their perspective, the term *tathāgata* stood representative of one who had reached liberation and was not used as a reference for beings in general.

For the Buddhist use of the term *tathāgata* a relevant instance is a discourse in which the monk Yamaka declared that a monk who has destroyed the influxes (*khīnasava*) will be annihilated at death (S. III, 111). Sāriputta took him to task for this proclamation, and with the help of a question and answer catechism led Yamaka to the same conclusion arrived at by the Buddha and Anurāda, namely that a *tathāgata* here and now cannot be found in truth and fact. In this discourse, the expression *tathāgata* occurs interchangeably with the expression *khīnasavo bhikkhu*, a ‘monk [with] influxes destroyed’. This
The usage of the term *tathāgata* thereby parallels its usage by the outside wanderers in the *Anūraṅga Sutta* and shows that the term *tathāgata* stood for a liberated person, both from the perspective of Buddhist monks and from the perspective of outside wanderers.

The use of *tathāgata* as representative of *arahants* in general recurs in several other Pāli discourses, where the term refers to an *arahani* whose mind is totally free, and who is forever beyond the five hindrances (S.V, 327). A whole discourse in the *Sutta Nipāta* describes why a *tathāgata* is worthy of offerings, a description which similarly seems to use the term in a way including *arahants* in general (Sn. 467-477).

Other instances of the term *tathāgata* in the Pāli discourses refer more specifically to the Buddha, highlighting qualities that *arahants* have in common with him. These instances indicate that a *tathāgata* is endowed with purity of body, speech and mind, so that there is no need for him to hide anything of his activities (D. III, 217). Elsewhere the discourses highlight that *tathāgatas* never speak what is untrue (M. II, 108).

A *tathāgata* has eradicated all conceit (M. I, 486), does not fall prey to conceivings in relation to phenomena (M. I, 5) and is beyond conceptual proliferation (Dhp. 254: nippapanca). Rebirth is extinct for a *tathāgata*, and gods and men will not be able to see him after death (D.1, 46). The mind of a *tathāgata* inclines towards thoughts of peace and seclusion (It. 31). When others praise or disparage him, a *tathāgata* remains unaffected (M. I, 140). In short, a *tathāgata* is one who is endowed with all wholesome things and has overcome all unwholesomeness (M. II, 115). A *tathāgata* is like a lotus arisen above water, since though living in the world, he is not sullied by it. (S. III, 140).

Other qualities of a *tathāgata* are more uniquely the domain of the Buddha, who is the one who discovers and teaches the path. Such path finding *tathāgatas* arise rarely in the world (D. II, 149). Their arising is for the benefit of gods and men (A.I, 22). When they arise, the gods experience growth, while the demons suffer diminution (D. II, 271).

The role of a *tathāgata* in the spiritual realm is similar to a wheel-turning king (*cakka-vattati rīja*), who is the worldly counterpart to a *tathāgata*. Both are *supreme* in their respective sphere. Their passing away leads to similar sorrow among men (A.I, 77) and their funeral should be undertaken in similar manners (D. I, 141).

A characteristic of a wheel-turning king is that he possesses seven treasures: a wheel, an elephant, a horse, a jewel, a woman, a steward and a counselor, each endowed with magical qualities. The counterparts to these seven treasures are the seven factors of awakening (*bojjhāgāra*), whose manifestation similarly forms a characteristic of a *tathāgata* (S.V, 99). The arising of a *tathāgata* not only leads to the manifestation of the seven factors of awakening (S.V, 77), but also to the manifestation of the teaching on the noble eightfold path (S.V, 14) and the five faculties (S.V, 235), and thereby to the realization of the four levels of awakening (A.I, 22).

Even though a *tathāgata*’s arising is required for the teachings to manifest, the truth he teaches exists independently of the arising of a *tathāgata* (A.I, 286). To teach this truth, a *tathāgata* arises. The need for this truth to be taught is in fact the very reason why a *tathāgata* arises, since it is due to the existence of birth, old age and death that *tathāgatas* arise and teach the path leading to their transcendence (A.V, 144). Such teaching activity of *tathāgata* is wonderful and amazing, since he is able to lead beings in a direction that runs contrary to their attachment, conceit and ignorance (A.II, 131).

A *tathāgata* is able to successfully teach what goes against the habitual tendencies of beings due to his skill in teaching, as he not only knows what is beneficial and true, but also is well aware of measure and proper time, and has a clear understanding of the different types of assemblies (and therewith of the proper way to speak to them)11. A *tathāgata* leads beings with the *Dhamma* as his tool (S. 1, 127), and his words are always true and beneficial, since he is full of compassion for living beings (M. I, 395). Yet a *tathāgata* does not create any dependency on his role as a teacher, and whether he teaches disciples or no, a *tathāgata* always remains ‘such’ (M. II, 331).

A *tathāgata* is a being whose manifestation is difficult to find in this world (A.I, 22). Nevertheless, it is certainly worthwhile any effort to visit him, since to go to see a *tathāgata* or his disciples is the supreme type of ‘sight-seeing’ (A. III, 326).
TATHĀGATA (1)  280  TATHĀGATA (1)

Tathāgatas do not need to avail themselves of magic (S. IV, 342). Their teaching and practice (dhammavinaya) are open and accessible, like the sun and the moon, not a secret affair (A. I, 283). For the same reason, a tathāgata does not keep a teacher’s secrets (D. II, 100).

A tathāgata teaches a path he practises himself, so that the jhūnas and the three higher knowledges (tevijjas) can be reckoned as ‘footprints’ of a tathāgata (M. I, 181). While his teaching often displays a refined sense of humour, a tathāgata nevertheless does not smile without a reason (M. II, 45).

Conversations with a tathāgata appear to follow a certain law, so that when asked for a third time, a tathāgata will give an answer or grant a reasonable request (D. II, 117). The reverse side of this lawful pattern is that one who does not answer a reasonable question put by a tathāgata for a third time, runs the risk of his head being split into pieces (D. I, 95). A similar risk awaits anyone who were to demand being worshipped by a tathāgata (A. IV, 173).

A tathāgata is in fact a mighty being, and even for the king of the gods it is not an easy matter to approach him (D. II, 265). Due to his might, a great light pervades the whole earth on the four occasions when a tathāgata descends into his mother’s womb, when he is born, when he awakens and when he sets in motion the wheel of Dhamma (A. II, 130). Anyone attempts to harm a tathāgata will incur grave retribution for such an act (M. I, 332), and it is impossible to kill a tathāgata (Vin. II, 194). His physical power even extends to such mundane matters as digestion, since there are certain types of food that can only be digested by a tathāgata, not by anyone else (D. II, 127). Due to having developed the four roads to power (iddhipāda), a tathāgata is able to live for a whole aeon (D. II, 103). Of all beings, a tathāgata is infall supreme (S.V, 41) and there is no one who could equal him (A. I, 22). Thus tathāgatas are indeed wonderful and amazing beings (S. V, 283).

The protective power of a tathāgata is such that on one occasion the sun god and the moon god, by going for refuge to the tathāgata, were able to frighten Rāhu away, who had just captured them (S.I, 50). Recollecting the tathāgata not only frightens away demons, but also ensures mental peace, since during such recollection lust, anger and delusion cannot obsess the mind (A. III, 285).

An important characteristic of a tathāgata is his possession of ten powers (bala). These ‘ten powers of a tathāgata’ are:

1. knowledge of what is possible and what is impossible
2. knowledge of karma and its result
3. knowledge of the ways to all (rebirth) destinations
4. knowledge of the various elements that make up the world
5. knowledge of the different inclinations of living beings
6. knowledge of the faculties of beings
7. knowledge of the attainment of concentration and realization in all its aspects
8. knowledge of his past lives
9. knowledge of the arising and passing away of beings in accordance with their deeds
10. destruction of the influxes.

In addition to these ten powers, a tathāgata is also in possession of four intrepidity (vesārajjas). These four intrepidity (vesārajjas) are:

1. he is fully awakened
2. he has successfully eradicated all influxes
3. he knows what are obstructions to the development of the path
4. he is able to lead to freedom from dukkha.

Endowed with these ten powers and four intrepidity, a tathāgata can well claim the role of a leader and roar his lion’s roar in assemblies (ibid). The tathāgata’s qualities highlighted by the four intrepidity recur in an alternative presentation, which speaks of the threefold blamelessness (anupavajja) of a tathāgata: his Dhamma is well proclaimed, he has clearly shown the path to Nibbāna and hundreds of his followers have carried this path to its successful culmination (A. IV, 83).

In addition to describing all these various qualities of a tathāgata, the Pāli discourses offer also several synonymous terms for the tathāgata. Thus the tathāgata can be spoken of as ‘Dhamma-body’ or as ‘Brahmī-body’, in the sense that he has ‘become the
Dhamma’ and ‘become Brahmin.’ Not only has he become Dhamma and Brahmin (in the sense of becoming ‘holy’), he also has ‘become the eye’ and ‘become knowledge’, since he is the giver of the deathless and the ‘lord of the Dhamma’\(^1\). The tathāgata is the ‘king of the Dhamma’ (A. I, 110: dhammadāyā), and thus comparable to a ‘lion’ indeed (A. III, 122). A tathāgata in his teaching role is like a ‘physician’ (M. II, 260 bhīsakka), he is the ‘knower of the path’ (S. III, 108: maggakāsala) and ‘one with vision who stands on the shore’ (It. 115), being a true ‘brahmin’ and ‘sage’ (A. IV, 340).

Besides offering these synonyms, the Pāli discourses also give a set of five reasons why a tathāgata deserves to be so called. These five reasons, found in the Loka Sutta (A. II, 23 and It. 121), explain that the Buddha deserves to be called a tathāgata because:

1. he has fully comprehended the world, its arising and cessation, and is free from it
2. he has penetrative insight into whatever is seen, heard, experienced, cognized etc.
3. he speaks only what is true from the time of his awakening to his final Nibbāna
4. he acts in accordance with what he says and speaks in accordance with his action
5. he is supreme in the world.

The Pāli commentaries have built on these explanations of the term tathāgata, found in the Loka Sutta. In the Sumanāgalavīlasīni (DA. I, 59), Buddhaghosa offers altogether eight perspectives on the term tathāgata. The final four of his explanations correspond to the final four explanations given in the Loka Sutta, recurring moreover also in the Pāsādika Sutta (D.III, 135):

1. Tathā āgato, ‘thus come’, in the sense that the tathāgata has come the same way as previous Buddhas, by fulfilling the perfections (pārami) and developing the qualities leading to awakening (bodhipakkhiyā dhammā).

2. Tathāgato, ‘thus gone’, in the sense that the tathāgata went like previous Buddhas (by taking seven steps right after his birth and proclaiming to be chief in the world). Based on the same derivation the commentary also interprets tathāgato as ‘gone truly’ (tattavā gamanān), in the sense that his going was not false (avītāthā), since he overcame the hindrances, developed the four jhānas, practised the insight contemplations and reached liberation.

3. Tathālakkhaṇaṃ āgato, ‘arrived at the real characteristics of phenomena’, representing his penetrative knowledge of the true nature of phenomena, such as the elements, the aggregates, the qualities leading to awakening (bodhipakkhiyā dhammā), the links of dependent arising (paṭīṭhe ca samuppāda) etc.

4. Tathādhamme yathāvato abhisambuddho, ‘fully awakened in accordance with the truth’, a reference to the four noble truths, which the Buddha himself (at S. V, 430) qualified to be true (tathā) not false (avīthā) and not otherwise (anaṅāthā).

5. Tathādassitthāya, ‘sees the truth’, he knows and sees all aspects of experience in accordance with reality, (corresponding to the second quality in the Loka Sutta, A. II, 23).


In addition to incorporating the explanations provided in the Loka Sutta, Buddhaghosa’s presentation highlights that the path and conduct of a tathāgata take place in full accordance with the path and conduct of previous tathāgatas. Buddhaghosa’s explanations of the term tathāgatas in particular bring out the nuance of truth (tathā). In fact Buddhaghosa continues after these eight explanations by taking up the same nuance again and explaining that the tathāgata’s ‘arrival at truth’ tathāyā gato, stands for his fourfold penetrative insight into the world by way of full understanding (ivānapaṭāraṇī, abandoning its arising (pāñānapaṭāraṇī), realizing (sacchikirīya), its
cessation and developing the path. This additional gloss thereby takes up the first quality mentioned in the Loka Sutta (A. II. 23) and rounds off Buddhaghosa’s presentation of the term.

To these explanations offered by Buddhaghosa, the commentator Dhammapāla adds another set of eight explanations (Uda. 133):

1. Tathāya āgato, ‘arrived [in accordance with] a true [vow],’ having made the vow to become a Buddha under Dipaṅkaara Buddha and renewed this vow under each of the subsequent Buddhas during the aeons of his development of the Pāramīs as a bodhisattva.
3. Tathāmi āgato, ‘arrived at the truth’ of the four noble paths on his own.
4. Tathā gato, ‘gone in such a way’, namely by taking birth, realizing awakening, declaring the Dhamma and Vinaya, and attaining the Nibbāna element without residue.
5. Tathāvādha, ‘such like’, like former Buddhas in regard to virtue, concentration, wisdom, liberation etc.
6. Tathā pavattuto, ‘proceeding thus’ unimpeded, due to being endowed with supernormal power and knowledge.
7. Tathehi āgato, ‘not gone’ to future rebirths through ‘true’ knowledge.
8. Tathā gatabhāvena, ‘through the state of gone thus’, highlighting the function of the Dhamma as the central means for tathāgatas and their disciples, related to the use of tathāgata as an adjective qualifying the dhammā at Sn. 237, a quite unique way of employing the term tathāgata.

Though the commentators give considerable room to the idea of ‘truth’, the idea of ‘thus gone’ or ‘thus come’ in the term tathāgata continues to be the most prominent meaning of this epithet in later Buddhist traditions. The Chinese translators opted for the rendering ‘thus come’, ru2 lai3 in order to translate tathāgata, while the Tibetan rendering of the same term as de bzhin gshigs pa combines the two meanings ‘thus come’ and ‘thus gone’.

In this way the epithet tathāgata, used by the Buddha to refer to himself from the beginning of his teaching career (M. I. 171) until his final parinibbāna (D. II. 135), eludes our attempts to assign to it a single and unambiguous meaning. This elusiveness of the term, however, possibly makes it an even more fitting epithet for the tathāgata, the fully liberated one, whose sublime nature defies worldly understanding. See also BUDDHA.

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Analayo.

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1 Norman p. 154. comments that if... we assume that - gata is used in the same way as in sugata and duggata, then we can see that it [i.e tathāgata] means “(one who is) in that sort of (very good) way”.

2 Chalmers p. 113 suggests still another derivation, explaining: tathāgata, in my opinion, is derived from the adjective tathā and āgata, and means “one who has come at the real truth”
TATHĀGATA (2) The Mahāyāna Concept. From the Pali and Buddhist Sanskrit sources it can be gleaned that the Mahāyāna concept of tathāgata on the one hand is inspired by notions of ancient Buddhism and, on the other, it represents a significant departure from what the designation tathāgata was originally taken to mean. Although various shades of proto-Mahāyāna teachings had already spread in the early Śrāvakayāna schools and the Mahāsāṅghikas cannot be considered as exclusively having ushered in the Great Vehicle, it was, nevertheless, the Lokottaravādins, forming a subschool of the Mahāsāṅghikas, who promulgated a Buddhology which can be regarded as linking the Śrāvakayāna concept of tathāgata with that of Mahāyāna proper. In the following, (a) a Buddhological Śrāvakayāna precondition for subsequent Buddhologies will be named, (b) the Lokottaravādin Buddhology and (c) the salient features of the fully-fledged Mahāyāna concept of tathāgata will be given.

(a) At 4.11, p.38f., the Buddha denies his becoming either a divine, human or any other being. His interlocutor is told to regard him as the Buddha who has overcome the world and is unaffected by it. See the close parallel at 5.111, p. 140...Tathāgato loke sangvedha lokam abhibhraya viharati anupalito lokenāt, cited at Ku 18.1, as an example of what an ‘unorthodox school wrongly interpreted’ and on account of which a kind of Buddhist docetism saw the light of day.

(b) From such canonical passages as cited by the Kathāvatthu it was concluded that the Buddha, born in the world, but not tainted by it, must be “supramundane” or “transcendent” (lokottara). Recently the Lokottaravānavāsūra has been made accessible (Harrison 1982), ascribed by Candrakīrī to the Pūrvaśāsīlas, like the Lokottaravādins forming a subschool of the