

THREE DIVINE BODIES: TRI-KAYA

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The universal essence manifests itself in three aspects or modes as symbolized by the three Divine Bodies (Sanskrit-Trikaya). The first aspect, the Dharmakaya or the Essential (or True) Body is the primordial, unmodified, formless, eternally self existing and essentially of Bodhi or divine beingness.

The second aspect is the Sambhogakaya or the Reflected Body wherein dwell the Buddhas of meditation (Skt. Dhyana-Buddhas) and other enlightened beings of super human form

The third aspect is the Nirmanakaya or the Body of Incarnation or the human form in which state Buddha was born on earth.

In the chinese interpretation of the Tri-kaya, the Dharmakaya is the immutable Buddha essence and noumenal source of the cosmic whole. The Sambhogakaya is the phenomenal appearances and the first reflex of the Dharmakaya on the heavenly planes. In the Nirmanakaya, the Buddha essence is associated with activity on the Earth plane and it incarnates among men as suggested by the Gnostic poem in the Gospel of St.John which refers to the coming of the word and the mind through human body. See herein book II, p. 217).

In its totality, the universal essence is the one mind, manifested through the myriads of minds in all the states of Sangsaric existence. It is called 'the essence of the Buddha', 'the great symbol', 'the sole seed' 'the potentiality of truth', and 'the all-foundation' as the text states that it is the source of all the bliss of Nirvana and all the sorrow of Sangsara. Mind in its micro cosmic aspect is variously described by the unenlightened. Some calling it the ego or soul.

Complete realization of the essential and undifferentiated oneness of Sangsara and Nirvana, according to Mahayana, is the ultimate duality which leads to deliverance. As taught by the enlightened one, this is the aim and objective of Dharma as in all systems

of yoga and in all schools of Buddhism and Hinduism.

We would begin with the things generally known and accepted, and would end with the most important item of our investigation. Hence our dissertation would conclude with the sentence.

Therefore, the Trikaya is the All-Enlightened Mind itself. In this respect, the oriental mentality is not so different from the medieval. As late as the eighteenth century our books on history or natural science began, with the God's decision to create a world. The idea of a universal mind is a common knowledge in the East, since it aptly expresses the introverted eastern temperment into a psychological language. The above statements could be paraphrased thus: The unconscious is the root of all experience of oneness (Dharmakaya), the matrix of all archetypes of structural patterns (Sambhogakaya), and the condition sine qua non of the phenomenal world (Nirmanakaya).

(1) For further interpretation of the Chinese view of the Trikaya, the student is referred to the Rev. K.L.Reichelt's Truth and Tradition in Chinese Buddhism (Shanghai, 1035).

(2) See Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines.

(3) The Introduction is supplementary to the more technical exposition of Nirvana presented in the General Introduction to Tibetan Yoga and Secret Doctrines.

(4) The Central Philosophy of Buddhism (London, 1955)-by Prof. T.R.V. Murti.