

The Mahayana Moment: The J-shape of Tipping Point Buddhism

By Thom Wolf, Ph.D.

| A summary of Chapter 6, “Mahayana Buddhism: Tipping Point Buddhism” 70-102,
in Bhalchandra L. Mungekar (ed.), *Buddhism and the 21st Century*.
New Delhi, Government of India & Nava Nalanda Mahavihara University, 2009 |

The Government of India commemorated the 2550th anniversary of the death of the Buddha (Mahāparinirvāna of Bhagawan Buddha) 4-6 February 2007 at Bodhgaya, India, the place of Gautama’s experience.

Dr. Bhalchandra Mungekar, former Vice Chancellor of Mumbai University, Convener of the Bodhgaya Conference, and Member of the Planning Commission, Government of India, is editor of the Mahāparinirvāna’s commemoration volume, *Buddhism and the 21st Century* (2009). In the portion of his preface pertaining to Mahayana Buddhism’s origins, Dr. Mungekar, Minister of Education, Planning Commission, Government of India and Chairman, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, Shimla, writes:

The Government of India commemorated the 2550th anniversary of the Mahāparinirvāna | Death of Lord Buddha with great solemnity throughout the country in 2007. For this a National Committee was constituted under the chairmanship of Dr. Manmohan Singh, Hon’ble Prime Minister of India. It was comprised of several important national leaders, including Union Ministers, Chief Ministers, Members of Parliament, eminent scholars, and Buddhist religious leaders. The last such national occasion for India was 1957; the next will be 2057.

In *Buddhism and the 21st Century*, the Mahāparinirvāna’s commemoration volume which I edited, the historical period of King Kaniska and the Fourth Buddhist Council (ca. 100 A.D. | C.E.) is discussed several times. Two of the discussions are by renown scholars of Buddhism, Gail Omvedt and B. R. Mani.

Gail Omvedt (Ph.D., University of California, Berkeley), senior fellow, Nehru Memorial Museum, New Delhi, points out that the Gandhara Fourth Buddhist Council and the beginning of Mahayana Buddhism transpired precisely during the time now known as the dividing line of BC and AD – or BCE and CE, a time of rich and wide multi-cultural exchange. Kanishka, the greatest Kushan ruler, was a patron of Buddhism and convener of the Fourth Buddhist Council (ca. 100 AD) – “the Council,” notes Omvedt, “that marked the beginning of Mahayana Buddhism”, and was guided by the monks Vasumitra and Asvaghosha.

When it comes to the archaeological profile of Buddhism in India, it is doubtful that anyone else can speak with the authority of B. R. Mani. All of us take note, then, when Dr. Mani, director, Archaeological Survey of India, argues that “Mahayana emerged after the First Buddhist Council itself and was codified during

the reign of Kanishka in the Fourth Council”, as per Tibetan belief. With that, Dr. Mani marks out the archaeological grounding of a most pivotal period of Buddhist and Indian history.

The third consideration of the dividing line period of history referenced by Omvedt and Mani is intriguingly discussed in this book by Thom Wolf (Ph.D., Andrews University), Chair of the International Buddhism: Expressions Around the World Session at the 2550th anniversary of the Mahaparinirvana. Professor of global studies, University Institute, New Delhi, Dr. Wolf calls his discussion some “thoughts on the way to Bodhgaya”.

First, he draws on the anthropological theory about revitalization movements first advanced by Anthony F. C. Wallace, professor of anthropology, University of Pennsylvania. Then, he asks if Mahayana Buddhism might be best conceptualized as a tipping-point phenomenon in the history of Buddhism. In so doing, Wolf assembles a significant group of historical events and individuals and a rather wide range of academic discussions on points or proposals that have been overlooked or left uncommented on up to now.

His conclusion is that Mahayana Buddhism is a tipping point phenomenon, a novel form of Buddhism with an outburst of features quite alien to Buddhism’s original concepts. Specifically, he argues that this Buddhist revitalization movement of Buddha-saviours was catalyzed by what came to be perceived as a disturbing threat, the introduction of the Jesus-the-only-Saviour conversion movement, by the apostle Thomas.

Wolf explains that revitalization movements are “deliberate, organized, conscious attempts by some or all of the members of a society to construct for themselves a more satisfying culture.” Key to any such revitalization movement is a “mazeway resynthesis” process. That process is generated by a highly creative person, the “mazeway resynthesizer” or “prophet”; and Wolf reminds us that those revitalization prophets are rare, brooding, and borrowing persons.

Revitalization movement prophets are those striking individuals who create some new, innovative, and hybrid mazeway reconceptualization – a sweeping and unheard of reinterpretation that widely impacts subsequent history. Such persons, “in spiritual turmoil, cognitive dissonance, and often even physical illness, resolve such conflicts by modifying their mazeways to accommodate new, formerly troubling, elements in their lives.” That reformulation process Wolf applies to the historical Mahayana movement, and the mazeway resynthesizer role he assigns to the inimitable monk of Buddhist history, Asvaghosha.

Not all will agree with Dr. Wolf’s anthropological revitalization thesis. But he introduces a fresh integration on the obscure origins of 1st century AD Mahayana Buddhism. He also gives us intriguing suggestions for further research and provides us with an engaging beginning point. You will not quickly forget Thom Wolf’s thoughts ‘on the way to Bodhgaya’: might the 1st and 2nd century A.D./C.E. historical moment of Mahayana Buddhism be best understood as Tipping Point Buddhism?

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Mahayana Buddhism: The J-shape of Tipping Point Buddhism

Thom Wolf, Ph.D.

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Bodhgaya. Government of India, Ministry of Culture

[A summation of Chapter 6, Thom Wolf, "The Mahayana Moment: Tipping Point Buddhism" 70-102. In Bhalchandra L. Mungekar (editor), *Buddhism in the 21st Century*. New Delhi: Ministry of Culture, Government of India and Nava Nalanda Mahavihara University 2009.]

Some say Mahayana is only a continuation and a maturation of the Buddha's teaching rather than a serious alteration, a mutation. But most would agree with A. K. Warder, professor of Sanskrit, University of Toronto, that while the Mahayana movement, "claims to have been founded by the Buddha himself...the consensus of the evidence...is that it originated...in the 1st century CE."¹

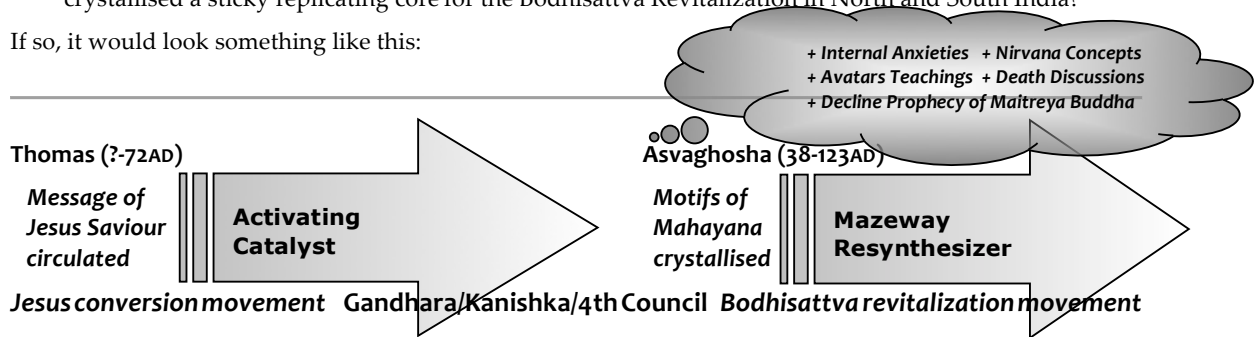
I have come to think that the Mahayana-mutation innovation was from the Asvaghosha-and-the-Kanishka-Fourth-Council, which created the historical critical-mass threshold. The *catalyst* was the Thomas-tour in Gandhara. The *Bodhisattva Revitalization* was the resultant-movement of the Northern transmission into Central Asia and China. The three *converging lines of data* were the internal spiritual ecology of the *sangha*, the external social environment of Gandhara, and the personal resynthesizing experience of Asvaghosha.

Question: Why did Mahayana arrive/appear/activate *when* it did (1st century AD), *where* it did (Gandhara region), and *with whom* it did (Asvaghosha and the Fourth Council)?

Answer: *Tensions within the monastery (dissensions, dissipation, discussions) and traumas of the generation (the 500 years decline prophecy and the dynamic Jesus Saviour movement) reformulated into a sticky solution for the stressed sangha community at a significant moment of time, causing a viral revitalization movement within Buddhism.*

- Is Mahayana Buddhism Tipping Point Buddhism? That is, was it caused by the resynthesizing articulation of Asvaghosha out of his listening-to-and-learning-about the compassionate Saviour – the crucified and risen Jesus of the St Thomas intentional conversion movement – as well as monastic re-conceptualizations concerning *nirvana* and *avatars*?
- Could the *Buddhacarita* and the *Awakening* be Asvaghosha's mazeway reformulation that crystallised a sticky replicating core for the Bodhisattva Revitalization in North and South India?

If so, it would look something like this:



Was 1st century CE Mahayana, then, born in Gandhara Hospital and delivered by Kanishka's Council, derived from the resynthesizing mind of Asvaghosha, who precipitated a new version of Buddhism? Is the *Buddhacarita* Buddha actually a Jesus-contoured Buddha, a J-shaped Buddha? Did the *Awakening* begin to transform the rationalist human Sakyamuni monk – intensely concerned about the extinction of his own cravings – into a redeemer Saviour Buddha, infinitely compassionate about the salvation of others?

In other words, might Thomas' witness-about and wonders-by-the-name-of the resurrected Jesus have had any constructing influence on Asvaghosha's reformulation as he meditated on the Buddha's relics? Thus the question: *Could Mahayana Buddhism be Tipping Point Buddhism – a saviour-mutant for the masses?*

¹ A. Warder, *Indian Buddhism*. 3rd edition. New Delhi: Motilal Barnarsidass 2004, 352-452.
2017, 2012, 2007 University Institute educational edition

I must confess that the unexpected happened on my way to Bodhgaya. I had never expected what I now cannot escape: The incredible thought that *perhaps those strange familiarities of the Buddha-of-Asvaghosha might actually have some connection with the Jesus-of-St Thomas*. Could it be that in the global conversation of the 21st century, any conversation about the Buddha will also become a conversation about Jesus? I had never ever thought of that possibility before. Now, in coming to Bodhgaya, I cannot escape that possibility.

And so I ask: Is there perhaps, in Asvaghosha's *bodhisattva* Buddha, any smudged fingerprint, distant shadow or lingering fragrance of that other one, the one whom some call the only Saviour? These are my questions about Mahayana Buddhism: Tipping Point Buddhism – my thoughts on the way to Bodhgaya.

THERAVADA-CHRISTIANITY-MAHAYANA: A COMPARISON CHART

THERAVADA BUDDHISM 486 BC/BCE: Buddha's death	ST THOMAS CHRISTIANITY "o"AD/CE: Jesus' birth to 72 AD/CE	MAHAYANA BUDDHISM 100 AD/CE: Asvaghosha @ 4th Council
Humanity deluded: <i>individual alone in Wheel of existence</i>	Humanity disobedient: <i>individual and involved with others</i>	Humanity an illusion: <i>individual and involved with others</i>
Emancipation: of self from rebirths <i>achieved by self efforts of merit works</i>	Salvation: by Jesus the Saviour <i>received by grace thru faith not achieved by merit works</i>	Salvation: by and of Bodhisattvas <i>achieved by extra merit works given others by grace thru faith</i>
Key virtue: <i>prajna/wisdom enlighten self</i>	Key virtue: <i>agape/love love God and love neighbour</i>	Key virtue: <i>karuna/compassion enlighten self and assist others</i>
Religion: ceremonies of escape from the world – full-time in monastery primarily for monks not laity	Spiritual life: relationship lived out in world, but not of world – for all peoples and persons 'monks' not a category	Religion ceremonies: enlightenment for self and world – relevant beyond monks for monks and related laity
Ideal: the <i>arhat</i> world-renouncer – attained emancipation/nirvana for self	Ideal: Jesus the man crucified, risen, coming again – only Saviour of world	Ideal: the <i>bodhisattva</i> – enlightenment-achiever for self, merit-disperser for others
Buddha: <i>a saint only</i>	Jesus: <i>the only Saviour</i>	Buddha: <i>one of many saviours</i>
Eschews metaphysics: <i>a self-discipline: meditative, monastic, following 8fold Path</i>	Experiences metaphysics: <i>a new life: in Christ, following his example in faith love and hope</i>	Elaborates metaphysics: <i>a religion: metaphysical, monastic, mythic devotional piety</i>
Eschews rituals: <i>restricted to monastic rules, self disciplines and Buddha's dharma</i>	Emphasizes relationships: <i>with God and with others in faithfulness, mercy, and justice</i>	Elaborates rituals: <i>rich in images, formulas, buddhas and shamanistic tantras</i>
Practices center on meditation: <i>gods-less practices without divine assistance – self chanting mantras with rosaries</i>	Practice of constant-in-prayer: <i>personal communion with God for self and intercession for others – no mantras, no rosaries</i>	Practices and petitionary prayers: <i>Bodhisattvas-full practices with divine assistants – text recitals, mantras, and rosaries for merit and merit transfer</i>
Conservative: <i>from death of Buddha, 5th century BC – an early 'little vehicle' for monks, preserving Theravada, 'the teachings of the elders'</i>	Radical: <i>from resurrection of Jesus, 1st century – a transformation movement for all nations, obeying God in faith, love, and hope</i>	Liberal: <i>after movement of Jesus, 2nd century CE – a later 'large vehicle' for the masses, innovating parinirvana, sambodhi, and vasudeva buddhas</i>

Source: Thom Wolf, *Theravada-Christianity-Mahayana: A Comparison Chart*. New Delhi: University Institute 2007.

Adapted from Thanh, *Seeker's Glossary of Buddhism* Sutra Translation Committee 1998, 432-439, 765-768; Smith, *The World's Religions* HarperOne 2009, 126. Supplemented by Ahmad-Shah, "Asvaghosha and the Origins of Mahayana" *Oikos Worldviews Bulletin* 2005; Ward, "Buddhaghosha and Asvaghosha: Buddhist Analogues to God" *Images of Eternity One World* 1998; *Religion & Community* Oxford Univ Press 2000; Feibleman, *Understanding Oriental Philosophy* Horizon 1976; Partridge, *Introduction to World Religions* Fortress 2005. For St Paul/St Thomas Christianity: Balchin, *What Christians Believe* Lion 1996; McGrath, *Introduction to Christian Faith* Routledge 2000. Also, Keown, *Buddhism* Oxford Univ Press 2000; Keown, *Dictionary of Buddhism* Oxford Univ Press 2003; Powers, *Concise Encyclopedia of Buddhism* OneWorld 2006; Prebish, *The A to Z of Buddhism* Vision 2007.

The Theravada-Christianity-Mahayana Comparison Chart lays out the striking differences which make Southeast Asia's Theravada/Hinayana (Thera/Elders/Little *Monk-vehicle* Buddhism) and Central/East Asia's Mahayana (Maha/Large *Masses-vehicle* Buddhism). Those Hinayana-Mahayana

differences some Buddhist scholars call almost different religions. Those J-shaped (Jesus-shaped) differences in Mahayana Buddhism are resolved when the historical phenomenon of St. Thomas in North and South India is acknowledged. By clarifying the historical sequence of the Theravada-Buddha, the Thomas-Jesus, and the Mahayana-Buddha, the chart helps explain the J-shape of Mahayana's Buddha.

I build on the Theravada-Mahayana contrast list of University of California, Berkeley's Huston Smith (*The World's Religions* 2009). Buddhist definitions are Minh Thanh's (*Seeker's Glossary of Buddhism*, Sutra Translation Committee 1998). The three-columns display integrates historical reference to earliest Christianity.

Unknown by most, but well-known by Buddhist scholars, the Buddha himself predicted that his own dharma/teaching would decline 500 years after his death. That saying was recorded by the Sangha and pervasively discussed within Buddhist monasteries leading up to the historical period of St. Thomas' time in India. The monk manuscripts documentation of the Buddha's "decline prophecy" is charted here:

Decline of the Dharma: A Chart of Buddhist Traditions

Monk or Manuscript	Buddha's Prophecy of the Decline	Decline of the Dharma	Asvaghosha named	Years After Buddha's nirvana	Asvaghosha Refutes tirthakas	Asvaghosha Writes Dharma
1. Li tai san pao chi		X	X	300	X	X
2. Hui-yuen Kuma-rajiva (400AD)			X	370		
3. Life of Vasubandhu			X	500		X
4. Castra II Preface			X	500		X
5. Sang-ying, Castra Preface		X	X	500		
6. Fu tsou t'ung chi	X	X	X	600		
7. Fa-tsang, Castra Commentator	X	X	X	600		
8. Chih-k'ai	X	X	X	600	X	X
9. Popular Accounts Chinese & Japanese	X	X	X	600	X	X
10. Fo tsu li tai tung tsai	X	X	X	600	X	X
11. Maham aya sutra	X	X	Pao-tien Asvaghosha Nagarjuna	500 600 700	X	X
12. "Nagarjuna", Castra commentato (Mantra sect Shingonshyu?)	X	X	Six Asvaghoshas	@ different times	X	X

Source: Thom Wolf, *Decline of the Dharma: A Chart of Buddhist Traditions*. New Delhi: University Institute 2007.

Based on Teitaro Suzuki, *Asvaghosha's Discourse on the Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana*. Chicago: Open Court 1900, 2-13. Accessible at <http://www.sacred-texts.com/bud/taf/tafoo.htm>. Supplemented by S. Beal, *The Fo-Sho-Hing-Tsan-King. Sacred Books of the East Volume 19*. 1883. Accessible at <http://www.sacred-texts.com/bud/sbe19/index.htm>; and Timothy Richard, *The Awakening of the Faith*. Shanghai: CLS 1907 [1960]. Accessible at <http://www.sacred-texts.com/bud/aof/aofoo.htm>

Daizets Teitaro Suzuki (1870-1966), intent on bringing Zen Buddhism and Eastern philosophy to the West, was long associated with Columbia University. Professor Suzuki gives four bracing judgements about Asvaghosha that are most helpful, "so far as we can judge from all our available historical records":²

(1) That today Asvaghosha's name is almost entirely unknown—and if he is known, it is usually only that he wrote the first-ever *Life of the Buddha* (*Buddha-carita*) 500 years after the



D. T. SUZUKI 1950

² D. Suzuki, *Asvaghosha's Discourse on the Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana*. Chicago: Open Court 1900, x-xiv.
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Buddha lived. “But there is no doubt that he was the first champion, promulgator, and expounder of this [Mahayana] doctrine...and one of the deepest thinkers of the Buddhist patriarchs.”

(2) That Asvaghosha’s *significance* is *almost entirely overlooked*—and yet “almost all the mahayanistic thoughts...are traceable” to his *Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana*, “so we can take it as the representative text of this school.”

(3) That Asvaghosha’s *influence* is *almost entirely unnoticed*—“the accounts of his life and of the significance of his philosophy are so few that the important influence exercised by him upon the development of the Mahayana Buddhism has been left almost entirely unnoticed.”

(4) That Asvaghosha’s *role* in early Mahayana is *almost entirely unacknowledged* today—and yet Asvaghosha “was one of the most eminent leaders among earlier Buddhists”—“in some way or other” connected with Kanishka’s Council, and unquestionably prominent in the extremely meagre, confusing and legend-filled Sanskrit sources, but well known nevertheless throughout the Buddhist traditions of Central and East Asia.³

Suzuki’s observations are important because most Western buddhologists leave specifics rather inexplicably unexplored in discussing the roots of the Mahayana tradition. For example, one representative account by John Snelling says, “The Mahayana represents a great creative flowering of various potentials latent in the Buddha’s basic teachings...Edward Conze...stresses the importance of non-Indian influences from the Mediterranean and Iranian worlds on its development...Non-Buddhist Indian influences must also have played a part.”⁴ And Paul Williams says that “in Central Asia, Buddhism was in contact with various other cults” in the North India Gandhara area that includes Kashmir during the early centuries CE.⁵

But in spite of numerous such nods to “non-Indian” and “non-Buddhist” “influences,” these leads tend to not be followed up. So then, like Suzuki and Carus, what is strange to me is that the roles of Asvaghosha in emergent Mahayana are repeatedly, almost universally, passed over.

By way of illustration, one common oversight: Asvaghosha authoring the foundational Mahayana documents of the first ever *Buddha-carita* and the foundational *Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana*. Another, his leadership in Kanishka’s Gandhara Fourth Buddhist Council. A third, Asvaghosha as the foundational articulator of threshold Mahayana. In these roles and others, too many seem to (as Suzuki makes clear) simply overlook Asvaghosha, landing instead on designations of Nagarjuna as Mahayana’s founder, or on vague comments about others even less known.

Oxford educated E. Ahmad-Shah, professor of philosophy, Lucknow University, corrected my Asvaghosha blindspot.⁶ He begins by locating Asvaghosha’s completion of the *Buddhacarita* (*The Life of the Buddha*) in Sri Lanka (86-91AD) as a landmark in the annals of Buddhism. It is well known that Asvaghosha travelled extensively throughout South India. It seems less known that traditions place the apostle Thomas in precisely the same regions as Asvaghosha: The Gandhara region in North India and the east coast in South India; and even a tradition that Asvaghosha met the apostle Thomas. Traditions of Syrian Christians say Thomas had come to India by the sea lanes, was in the court of Parthian king Gondoporus in North India from 47-52 AD, and traveled to South India in 52 AD, working there until 72 A.D. when he was speared to death.⁷

It will be recalled that Gondoporus, a descendent of Malinda, ruled in Taxila of the Gandhara region (20-48 AD). The records say miraculous healings in the name of Jesus of both Gondoporus’ brother Gad and his wife, the Queen, brought about the conversion of all three.⁸ Thus, as Jawaharlal Nehru reminded us some time ago, “There were Christians in India before there were Christians in Portugal.”⁹

³ D. Suzuki, *Asvaghosha’s Discourse on the Awakening of Faith in the Mahayana*. Chicago: Open Court 1900, x-xiv.

⁴ J. Snelling, *The Buddhist Handbook: A Complete Guide to Buddhist Schools, Teaching, Practice, and History*. New York: Barnes & Noble 1998, 83.

⁵ P. Williams, *Mahayana Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations*. London: Routledge 1989, 229.

⁶ For quotations and E. Ahmad-Shah’s argument, see *Buddhism and Christian Faith*. Lucknow: Lucknow Publishing House [1973] 1997, 19, 50-74, 77-81, 87-94, and 97-105 and “Asvaghosha and the Origins of Mahayana” *Oikos Worldviews Bulletin* Number 5 Issue Fall 2005: 7-18.

⁷ See S. Moffett, *A History of Christianity in Asia*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis 1998, 3-90; Gillman and Klimkeit 1999, 20-202; Bentley 1993, 53-64; and Fernando and Gispert-Sauch 2004, 55-71.

⁸ On the conversion of Gondoporus, see Gillman and Klimkeit 1999, 159-166; and V. Smith and P. Spear, *The Oxford History of India*. Oxford: Oxford University Press 1981, 249f.

⁹ J. Nehru, *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru: 1May-31July 1957*. Delhi: Jawaharlal Nehru Memorial Fund 2006, 556.

Ahmad-Shah draws pointed attention to this crosscurrents area of King Gondophorus in Northwest India and specifically to this generation of trade, ideas, and multidirectional conversions among competing spiritualities. Gondophorus' grandfather, Malinda, had converted to the Buddha. Now, Malinda's grandson, Gondophorus, became a follower of Jesus.

Ananda K. Coomaraswamy's classic discussion gives Mahayana's new interpretation of the Three Refuges, his *Buddha and the Gospel of Buddhism*.¹⁰ Coomaraswamy says that in Hinayana the Three Refuges for the Wheel-weary are the *Buddha*, the *Dharma*, and the *Sangha*: To gain these one must become one of the elite few, a renouncer of this world of suffering and craving-fires, and enter the path of the monastery. But in Mahayana the Three Refuges shift to the *Buddhas*, the *Bodhisattvas*, and the *Dharmakaya*: To gain these there is the offer "to all beings in all worlds, salvation by faith and love as well as by knowledge."

Ahmad-Shah's argument is that during that providential generation of Gondophorus-Thomas-Kanishka-Asvaghosha, Asvaghosha was troubled-and-torn by three anxieties: the tensions within the Sangha, the Buddha's prophecy of the future decline of his teachings, and the possibilities of the appearance of a *Maitreya*, a future Buddha, who would be Light for the world.¹¹ And his conclusion is that Asvaghosha's hybrid mazeway reconceptualization of Theravada Buddhism's B-shaped Buddha into a J-shaped Buddha is the "key to the origin of Mahayana Buddhism."

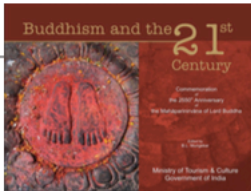
I have come to find this line of thinking persuasive. ■


The Mahayana Moment: Tipping Point Buddhism

"Thorn Wolf's *The Mahayana Moment: Tipping Point Buddhism*, on the origin of Mahayana Buddhism as a revitalization movement at the end of the first century AD, makes very good use of the revitalization movements model.

I think Wolf has made a compelling case. Although not previously aware of the possible influence of St. Thomas, it reminds me of the Christian influences on the code of Handsome Lake among the Seneca."


Anthony F.C. Wallace, Ph.D.
Founder of "Revitalization Movements" theory, winner of the Bancroft Prize for American history, long-time professor of anthropology
University Professor of Anthropology Emeritus
University of Pennsylvania






"Not all will agree with Dr. Wolf's anthropological revitalization thesis. But he introduces a fresh integration on the obscure origins of 1st century AD Mahayana Buddhism, intriguing suggestions for further research and an engaging beginning point. You will not quickly forget Thorn Wolf's thoughts "on the way to Bodhgaya": might the 1st and 2^d century A.D. | C.E. historical moment of Mahayana Buddhism be best understood as 'Tipping Point Buddhism'?"

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¹⁰ Coomaraswamy's *Buddha and the Gospel of Buddhism* has proven to be a classic. What he does in three points, most others do in four to six; and yet, with Hattori and Coomaraswamy, most writers also stress the historically new front-and-center role of the *bodhisattva* saviours. For example, Damien Keown sketches five new things: *bodhisattvas*, the great emphasis on compassion and insight, a new body of literature, emptiness, and the Buddha seen as a supernatural being worthy of loving devotion. See Conze 1993; Smith 2004; K. Chen, "Buddhism" 124-136 in K. Crim (editor), *The Perennial Dictionary of World Religions*. San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco 1990, and *Buddhism in China: A Historical Survey*. Princeton: Princeton University Press 1964, 3-20; J. Snelling, *The Buddhist Handbook: A Complete Guide to Buddhist Schools, Teachings, Practice, and History*. New York: Barnes & Noble 1998, 83-91; J. Maguire, *Essential Buddhism: A Complete Guide to Beliefs and Practices*. New York: Pocket Books 2001, 33-46; and Keown, 2003, 167-68.

¹¹ On Sakyamuni's prophecy in *Diamond Sutra* 6, T. Richards, *The New Testament of Higher Buddhism*. Edinburgh: T & T Clark 1910, 131. For the centrality of the Kashmir-Gandhara region, the Buddhist texts involved, and the historical context, see N. Singh, *Buddhism in Kashmir*. Srinagar: Gulshan 2011.