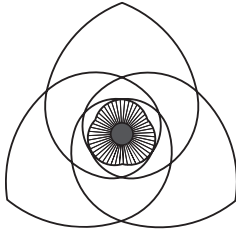


# A TREATISE ON MIND



VOLUME 4

## Maṇḍalas

Their Nature and Development

*Other Titles in the Series*

Volume 1: The 'Self' or 'Non-Self' in Buddhism

Volume 2: Considerations of Mind - A Buddhist Enquiry

Volume 3: The Buddha-Womb and the Way to Liberation

Volume 5: An Esoteric Exposition of the Bardo Thödol

Volume 6: Meditation and the Initiation Process

Volume 7: The Constitution of Shambhala

VOLUME FOUR



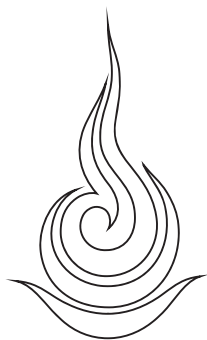
# Maṇḍalas

Their Nature and Development

BODO BALSYS

UNIVERSAL DHARMA  
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Ah!

Homage to the Lord of Shambhalla.  
Inconceivable, inconceivable, beyond thought  
Is the bejewelled crown of this most excelled Jina.  
He whose Eye has taught many Buddhas.  
And who will anoint the myriad,  
that in the future lives will come.  
As I bow to His Feet my Heart's afire.  
Oh, this bliss, this love for my Lord  
can barely be borne on my part.  
It takes flight as the might of the Dove.  
The flight of serene *nirvāṇic* embrace.  
The flight of Light so bright.  
The flight of Love so active tonight.  
The flight of enlightenment for all to come to  
their mind's Heart's attire.

Obeisance to the Gurus!  
To the Buddhas of the three times.  
To the Council of Bodhisattvas, *mahāsattvas*.  
To them I pledge allegiance.

Om Hūm! Hūm! Hūm!

## **Dedication**

Thanks to my students, past, present and future, and in particular to those that have helped in the production of this Treatise.

Om

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## Preface

This treatise investigates Buddhist ideas concerning what mind is and how it relates to a concept of a ‘self’. It is principally a study of the complex interrelationship between mind and phenomena, from the gross to the subtle—the physical, psychic, supersensory and supernal. This entails an explanation of how mind incorporates all phenomena in its *modus operandi*, and how eventually that mind is liberated from it, thereby becoming awakened. Thus the treatise explores the manner in which the corporeally orientated, concretised, intellectual mind eventually becomes transformed into the Clear Light of the abstracted Mind; a super-mind, a Buddha-Mind.

*A Treatise on Mind* is arranged in seven volumes, divided into three subsections. These are as follows:

### The I Concept

Volume 1. *The ‘Self’ or ‘Non-self’ in Buddhism.*

Volume 2. *Considerations of Mind—A Buddhist Enquiry.*

Volume 3. *The Buddha-Womb and the Way to Liberation.*

### Cellular Consciousness

Volume 4. *Maṇḍalas - Their Nature and Development.*

Volume 5. *An Esoteric Exposition of the Bardo Thödol.*

The Way to Shambhala

Volume 6. *Meditation and the Initiation Process.*

Volume 7. *The Constitution of Shambhala.*

*The I Concept* represents a necessary revision of a large work formerly published in one volume.<sup>1</sup> Together the three volumes investigate the question of what a ‘self’ is and is not. This involves an analysis of the nature of consciousness, and the consciousness-stream of a human unit developing as a continuum through time. It will illustrate exactly what directs such a stream and how its *karma* is arranged so that enlightenment is the eventual outcome.

The first volume analyses Prāsaṅgika lines of reasoning, such as the ‘Refutation of Partless Particles’, and ‘The Sevenfold Reasoning’ in order to derive a clear deduction as to whether a ‘self’ exists, and if so what its limitations are, and if not, then what the alternative may be. The analysis resolves the historically vexing question of how—if there is no ‘self’—can there be a continuity of mind that is coherently connected in an evolutionary manner through multiple rebirths.<sup>2</sup> In order to arrive at this explanation, many of the basic assumptions of Mahāyāna Buddhism, such as Dependent Origination and the Two Truths are critically analysed.

The second volume provides an in-depth analysis of what mind is, how it relates to the concept of the Void (*śūnyatā*) and the evolution of consciousness. The analysis utilises Yogācāra-Vijñānavādin philosophy in order to comprehend the major attributes of mind, the *saṃskāras* that condition it, and the laws by means of which it operates.

The enquiry into the nature of what an ‘I’ is requires comprehension of the properties of the dual nature of mind, which consists of an empirical and abstract, enlightened part. As a means of doing this, the *ālayavijñāna* (the store of consciousness-attributes) is explored, alongside the entire philosophy of the ‘eight consciousnesses’ of this School.

---

1 B. Balseys, *The I Concept, The Mahāhūdrā Concerning the Union of a Buddha and His Consort*, (Vajra Publications, Kathmandu, 2009).

2 My earlier work *Karma and the Rebirth of Consciousness* (Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 2006) lays the background for this basic question.

Volume three focuses on the I-Consciousness and the subtle body, by first utilising a minor Tantra, *The Great Gates of Diamond Liberation*, to investigate the nature of the Heart centre and its functions, then the *chakras* below the diaphragm. This is necessary to lay the foundation for the topics that will be the subject of the later volumes of this treatise concerning the nature of meditation, the construction of *maṇḍalas*, and the yoga of the *Bardo Thödol*.

The focus then shifts to investigate where the idea of a self-sustaining I-concept or ‘Soul-form’ may be found in Buddhist philosophy, given the denial of substantial self-existence prioritised in the philosophy of Emptiness. Following this, the pertinent chapters of the *Ratnagotravibhāga Śāstra* are examined in detail so that a proper conclusion to the investigation can be obtained via the *buddhadharma*. This concerns an analysis of how the *ālayavijñāna* is organised, such that the rebirth process is possible for each human consciousness-stream, taking into account the karma that will eventually make each human unit a Buddha. In relation to this the ontological nature of the *tathāgatagarbha* (the Buddha-Womb) must be carefully analysed, as well as the organising principle of consciousness represented by the *chakras*. I thus establish that there is a form that appears upon the domain of the abstract Mind. I call this the Sambhogakāya Flower. The final two chapters of this volume principally define its characteristics.

The second subsection, *Cellular Consciousness* is divided into two parts. Volume four deals with the question of what exactly constitutes a ‘cell’ metaphysically. The cell is viewed as a unit of consciousness that interrelates with other cells to form *maṇḍalas* of expression. Each such cell can be considered a form of ‘self’ that has a limited, though valid, body of expression. It is born, sustains a form of activity, and consequently dies when it outlives its usefulness. This mode of analysis is extended to include the myriad forms manifest in the world of phenomena known as *saṃsāra* including the existence and functioning of *chakras*.

Volume five deals with the formative forces and evolutionary processes governing the prime cells (that is, *maṇḍalas* of expression), and the phenomenon that governs an entire world-sphere of evolutionary attainment. This is explored via an in-depth exposition of the *Bardo*

*Thödol* and its 42 Peaceful and 58 Wrathful Deities. The text also incorporates a detailed exposition concerning the transformation of *saṃskāras* (consciousness-attributes developed through all past forms of activity) into enlightenment. The entire path of liberation enacted by a *yogin* via the principles of meditation, forms of concentration, and related techniques (*tapas*, *dhāraṇīs*) is explained. In doing so, the soteriological purpose of the various wrathful and theriomorphic deities is revealed.

The third subsection, *The Way to Shambhala*, is also in two parts. They present an eclectic revelation of esoteric information integrating the main Eastern and Western religions. Volume six is a treatise on meditation and the Initiation process.<sup>3</sup> The meditation practice is directed towards the needs of individuals living within the context of our modern societies.

Volume six also includes a discussion of the path of Initiation as the means of gaining liberation from *saṃsāra*. The teaching in Volume five concerning the conversion of *saṃskāras* is supplementary to this path. The path of Initiation is the way to Shambhala. As many will choose to consciously undergo the precepts needed to undertake Initiation in the future, this invokes the necessity of providing much more revelatory information concerning this kingdom than has been provided hitherto.

How Shambhala is organised is the subject of volume seven, which details the constitution of the Hierarchy of enlightened being<sup>4</sup> (the Council of Bodhisattvas). It illustrates how the presiding Lords who govern planetary evolution manifest. This detailed philosophy rests on the foundation of the information provided in all of the previous volumes, and necessitates a proper comprehension of the nature of the five Dhyāni Buddhas. To do so the awakening of the meditation-Mind, which is the objective of *A Treatise on Mind*, is essential.

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3 The word Initiation is capitalised throughout the series of books to add emphasis to the fact that it is the process that makes one divine, liberated. It is the expression of divinity manifesting upon the planetary and cosmic landscape.

4 The word 'being' here is not pluralised because though this Hierarchy is constituted of a multiplicity of beings, together they represent one 'Being', one integral awakened Entity.

### How to engage with this text

In this investigation many new ways of viewing conventional Buddhist arguments and rhetoric shall be pursued to develop the pure logic of the reader's mind, and to awaken revelations from their abstract Mind. New insights into the far-reaching light of the *dharma* will be revealed, which will form a basis for the illustration of an esoteric view that supersedes the bounds of conventionally accepted views. Readers should therefore analyse all arguments for themselves to discern the validity of what is presented. Such enquiry allows one to ascertain for oneself, what is logical and truthful, thus overcoming the blind acceptance of a certain dogma or line of reasoning that is otherwise universally accepted as correct. Only that which is discovered within each inquiring mind should be accepted. The remainder should however not be automatically discarded, but rather kept aside for later analysis when more data is available—unless the logic is obviously flawed, in which case it should be abandoned. There is no claim to infallibility in the information and arguments presented in this treatise, however, they are designed to offer scope for further meditation and enquiry by the earnest reader. If errors are found through impeccable logic, then the dialectical process may proceed. We can then accept or reject the new thesis and move forward, such that the evolution of human thought progresses, until we all stand enlightened.

This treatise hopes to assist that dialectical evolution by analysing major aspects of the *buddhadharma* as it exists and is taught today, to try to examine where errors may lie, or where the present modes of interpretation fall short of the true intended meaning. The aim is also to elaborate aspects of the *dharma* that could only be hinted at or cursorily explained by the wise ones of the past, because the basis for proper elaboration had not then been established. This analysis of *buddhadharma* will try to rectify some of the past inadequacies in order to explore and extend the *dharma* into arenas rarely investigated.

There will always be obstinate and dogmatic ones that staunchly cling to established views. This produces a reactive malaise in current Buddhist ontological and metaphysical thought. However, amongst the many practitioners of the *dharma* there are also those who have

clarified their minds sufficiently to verify truth in whatever form it is presented, and will follow it at all costs to enlightenment. The Council of Bodhisattvas heartily seek such worthy ones. The signposts or guides upon the way to enlightenment have changed through the centuries, and contemporary practitioners of the *dharma* have yet to learn to clearly interpret the new directions. The guide books are now being written and many must come forth to understand and practice correctly.

If full comprehension of such guide books is achieved those *dharma* practitioners yearning to become Bodhisattvas would rapidly become spiritually enlightened. Here is a rhyme and reason *for* Buddhism. The actual present dearth of enlightened beings informs us that little that is read is properly understood. The esoteric view presented in this treatise hopes to rectify this problem, so as to create better thinkers along the Bodhisattva way.

The numbers of Buddhists are growing in the world, thus Buddhism needs a true restorative flowering to rival that of the renaissance of debate and innovative thinkers of the early post-Nāgārjunian era. In order to achieve this it must synthesise the present wealth of scientific knowledge, alongside the best of the Western world's philosophical output.

Currently the *buddhadharma* is presented as an external body of knowledge held by the Buddha, Rinpoches, monks and lay teachers. This encourages practitioners to hero worship these figures and to heed many unenlightened utterances from such teachers, based on a belief system that encourages people to *uncritically* listen to them and adopt their views. When enlightened teachers *do appear* and find consolidated reasons for firing spiritual bullets for the cause of the enlightenment of humanity, then all truth can and will be known. The present lack of inwardly perceived knowledge from the fount of the *dharmakāya* on the part of many teachers blocks the production of an arsenal of weapons for solving the problems of suffering in the world. Few see little beyond the scope of vision in what they have been indoctrinated to believe, allowing for only rudimentary truths to be understood. While for the great majority this suffices, it is woefully inadequate for those genuinely seeking Bodhisattvahood and enlightenment. The cost to humanity in not being given an enlightened answer as to the nature of

awakening, is profound.

We must go to the awakening of the Head lotus to find the most established reasoning powers. Without the 1,000 petals of the *sahasrāra padma* ablaze then there is little substance for proper understanding, little ability to hold the mind steady in the dynamic field of revelation that the *dharmakāya* represents. How can the unenlightened properly understand Buddhist scriptures, when there is little (revelation) coming from the Head centres of such beings? Much still needs to be taught concerning the way of awakening this lotus, and to help fill the lack is a major purpose of *A Treatise on Mind*.

Those who intend to reach enlightenment must go beyond the narrow sectarian allegiances promoted by many strands of contemporary Buddhism. Buddhism itself unfolded in a dialectical context with other heterodox Indian (and Chinese etc) traditions, and prospered on account of those engagements. When one sees the unfolding of enlightened wisdom in such a fashion, the particular information from specific schools of thought may be synthesised into a greater whole. Each school has various qualities and types of argument to resolve weaknesses in the opposing stream of thought. This highlights that there are particular aspects in each that may be right or wrong, or neither wholly right or wrong. Through this process we can find better answers, or if need be, create a new lineage or religion which is expressive of a synthesis of the various schools of thought.

The Buddha did not categorically reject the orthodox Indian religious-philosophical ideas of his time, nor did he simply accept them—he reformed them. He preserved the elements that he found to be true, and rejected those ‘wrong views’ which lead to moral and spiritual impairment. If the existing system needs reformation it becomes part of a Bodhisattva’s meditation. The way a reforming Buddha incarnates is dependent on how he must fit into such a system. Thus he is essentially an outsider incarnating into it to demonstrate the new type of ideas he chooses to elaborate. If there is a lot of dogmatic resistance to the presented doctrine of truth, then a new religion is founded. If there is some acceptance then we see reformation. There is always room for improvement, to march forward closer to enlightenment’s goal, be it for an individual or for a wisdom-religion as a whole. There is a need



for reform throughout the religious world today.

By way of a hermeneutical strategy fit for this task, we ought look no further than the Buddha himself. The Buddha proposed that all students of the *dharma* should make their investigations through the *Four Points of Refuge*. These are:

1. The doctrine is one's point of refuge, not a person.
2. The meaning is one's point of refuge, not the letter.
3. The sacred texts whose meaning is defined are one's point of refuge, to those whose meaning needs definition.
4. Direct awareness is one's point of refuge, not discursive awareness.<sup>5</sup>

These four points can be summarised or rephrased as: the doctrine (*dharma*), true or esoteric meaning, right definition, and direct awareness are one's point of refuge, not adherence to sectarian bias, semantics, the dialectics of non-fully enlightened commentaries, or to illogical assertions. What may be long held to be truthful, but is not, upon proper analytical dissection, needs rectifying. Also, in other cases, a doctrine or teaching may indeed be correct, but the current interpretation leaves much to be desired, and hence should be reinterpreted from the position of a more embracing or esoteric view.

Hopefully this presentation finds welcoming minds that will carefully analyse it in line with their own understandings of the issues, and as a consequence build up a better understanding of the nature of what constitutes the path to enlightenment. Their way of walking as Bodhisattvas should be enriched as a consequence.

---

5 Griffith, P.J., *On Being Buddha, The Classical Doctrine of Buddhahood*, (Sri Satguru Publications, New Delhi, 1995), 52.

My eyes do weep as I stare into this troubled world,  
For I dare not place my Heart in my brother's keep.  
He would grapple that Heart with hands so rough  
So as to destroy the fabric of its delicate stuff.  
Oh to give, to give, my Heart does yearn,  
But humanity must its embrative,  
Humbling, pervasive scene yet to learn.  
To destroy and tear with avarice they know,  
But little care to sensitive rapture they show.  
How to give its blood is my constant fare,  
For that Love to bestow upon their Hearts I bemoan.  
But they hide their Hearts behind mental-emotional walls.  
No matter how one prods these walls won't fall,  
So much belittling emotional self-concern prop their bastions.  
Oh, how my eyes do weep as I stare.  
I stare at their fearsome malls and halls.  
That lock Love out from all their abodes  
And do keep them trapped in realms of woe.

Oṃ Maṇi Padme Hūṃ



# The Layers of Mind

## Introducing the concept of *maṇḍalas*

Consciousness must create an organised structure of the elements of the mind when one is thinking. This process creates the appearance of interrelated thoughts and images that are carefully delineated and linked by common structures, which can be termed a *maṇḍala*.<sup>1</sup> The structure and storage of the attributes of mind do not just exist in a specific place from where images are retrieved, such as in the brain or the Head centre. There are many levels of expression of mind, many nexus from one level to the next containing the *bījas*<sup>2</sup> of thought. These levels must be properly structured in organised patterns for easy retrieval. We also need to examine the way that *maṇḍalas* appear through the relationships that are instantly formed between thoughts as consciousness moves through time. This is the evolutionary process of moving from the point of origination of the seed thought to the circumference of expanded and inclusive resolution.

---

1 *Maṇḍala*: (Tib. dkyil 'khor), circle, wheel. A literary or esoteric corpus filled with religious symbolism that is drawn by one wishing to contemplate things divine, or to evoke potencies and forces associated with Nature and the subjective realms. A perfected, completed, state of being and perception encompassing all phenomena when presented symbolically in a specific form or blueprint of what is to be. Used as a visualising tool during Deity Yoga.

2 *Bīja*: seed (syllable), seminal point, the sound (*vac*) essence of a deity. The essential part of a mantra. The seed germ, the starting point for the display of power or creativity for a *maṇḍala*, or as a focus for meditation.

The colour, tone, note or sound, arrangement of lines, and overall structure are what determine the nature of the organisation of thought to be recalled. To these five must be added the grand design that correlates all seeming diversities into a unity, as well as the intensity of the thought or image. We thus have the seven Ray aspects conditioning *maṇḍalas* of structured thought, from the lowest, or seventh Ray quality in colour, to the highest, or first Ray quality in intensity.<sup>3</sup>

The demonstration of *colour* provides the major characteristics of the thought-form. All human mental-emotional forms of expression, such as anger, scientific opinion, and sensuality, manifest different hues of the electro-magnetic spectrum. The content of the thought-form can therefore be analysed by considering the particular hue it may possess.

*Tone* indicates how muddled, greyed (hence inchoate), or clear the nature of the thought may be. There may be different dull tones mixed with quite bright, clear patches of thought.

The *note* can be considered the inherent sound or resonance that immediately produces awareness of the thought's general meaning or purpose. Another thinker can thereby quickly deduce its basic content by attuning to this emanatory resonance. That attuned thinker can then agree or disagree merely by having experienced that note of the presenting thought.

The *line* determines how well the thought structure is delineated and modulated. It determines whether there is a clearly defined thought (possessing many lines of definition) or an inchoate brooding idea (possessing hazy or non-existent lines of definition).

The *structure* concerns the nature and complexity of the thought; how many layers or cells of thought (with their differing colours, tonalities, notes, etc.) may lie within the overriding thought.

*Grand design* differs in structure as it incorporates an overview of many different thought structures. It delineates the way that thoughts may be evolving and what they are evolving towards.

*Intensity* indicates the overall luminosity of the thought. This indicates the power and potency that it manifests in the realm of ideas, and in the world of activity. The penetrative power of the radiant

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3 These Seven Rays were introduced in volume 2 of this series, *Considerations of Mind* and will be further elaborated in this present volume.

luminous potency of abstract thought destroys all illusory fabrications of mind. It is developed through yogic prowess, and reveals inevitably the *dharmakāya*'s<sup>4</sup> revelatory vistas.

All *bījas* are grouped together in accordance with these seven major categories of each level of expression, and when multiplied together we have forty-nine such groups in all. To each of these can also be related a mantric seed syllable. Each category of thought then becomes a *bindu*<sup>5</sup> containing many *bījas* of images. Each *bīja* is thus a seed that can be categorised according to its major overriding characteristic or sub-characteristic within the general structure of the *bindu*.

We thus start from simple premises, *bījas*, ideas, to the more complex and ordered paradigms of thought, such as found in the Kālachakra Tantra *maṇḍala*. Indeed, most teachings designed by enlightened beings, as found in *kārikās*, *sāstras*, *ślokas*, and especially Tantras, are arranged in the form of *maṇḍalas*, which may be seen when the overall design is considered. Such a *maṇḍala* of thought was explained in volume 3, chapter 7 of this series regarding a rendition of part of the *Uttaratantra* of Maitreya-Asaṅga, wherein the nine-petalled whorled structure of the Sambhogakāya Flower<sup>6</sup> was revealed.

One of the major purposes of the esotericism presented in this series of works is to assist Buddhists to examine their texts far more carefully than has previously been done. Generally little more than the obvious aspects or levels of meaning of texts have been determined. Consequently the wealth of information found in the far subtler layers

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4 *Dharmakāya*: the body or vehicle of the *dharma*. It is the body of Bliss. *Dharma* is the fount of the Law and *kāya* is its vehicle. The primordial, eternally self-existing essentiality of *bodhi* (enlightenment). The highest of the three-fold bodies (*trikāya*) of a Buddha, or of any Initiate of the fifth degree or greater. (The other two being the *sambhogakāya* and *nirmanakāya*.)

5 *Bindu*: (Tib. thig-le) seminal point or 'drop' of energy. A *bindu* differs from a *bīja* in that a *bīja* is a unique indivisible seed germ, whilst a *bindu* may be a collection of many of these. From each drop can come an entire *maṇḍala* of visual or creative expression. The *dharmakāya* for instance can be taken as a *bindu* or 'seminal point' for *saṃsāra*.

6 Sambhogakāya Flower. In the *Uttaratantra* the Sanskrit term used for this concept is *tathāgatagarbha* (the Buddha-germ, or 'womb'). It is an alternate name for the reincarnating principle, in the form of a *chakra* (a flower) existing upon the domain of the abstract Mind.

of interpretation has only been skimmed, ignored, or not comprehended at all. Even seemingly simple early Theravāda works such as the *Dhammapada* could be better interpreted, as the illustration below will show.

## Mind as origin

The first verse of the *Dhammapada* states:

All things are preceded by mind, led by mind, created by mind.<sup>7</sup>

This phrase is generally interpreted in terms of only one type of mind: that possessed by the ordinary thinker. The correct esoteric interpretation however is based on there being three concentric circles of mind being referred to. The central circle being that which is ‘preceded by mind’, the next concentric circle being that which is ‘led by mind’, and the third, outer, concentric circle is that which is ‘created by mind’. Each level or layer of mind is bound by the limit of attainment of its overall thought structure, which in reality would produce a sphere of thought. A circle is a two-dimensional representation of a sphere of containment, thus the three zones of interrelation are symbolised diagrammatically by concentric circles.

From this concept a cosmological schema can be derived relating to the creative process (of a Logos) and of the way the entire evolutionary process proceeds and evolves from a Mind.<sup>8</sup> Here we would need to

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<sup>7</sup> *Manopubbaṅgamā dhamma manoseṭṭhā manomayā. Dhammapada—Khuddaka-Nikaya, Sutta Pitaka*, Pāli canon. Different translators have made various renditions of these words. For instance, the version given in *The Sacred Books of the East Series*, Vol. 10., ed. F. M. Müller, (Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi, 2004), 3: ‘All that we are is the result of what we have thought: it is founded on our thoughts, it is made up of our thoughts.’ The version given by Dr. P. L. Vaidya, *Dhammapada*, (The Oriental Book Agency, 1934), 1: ‘The qualities (of the things) come into existence after the mind, (lit. the qualities have got mind as their precursor), are dependent upon mind, and are made up (formed) of mind.’

<sup>8</sup> In this book, mind (*manas*) will be capitalised when it refers to that attribute of mind that is beyond the concrete or empirical formulations of a normal mind (which will retain the lower case). Hence the enlightened Mind, abstract Mind, a Logoi or Buddha’s Mind will all be capitalised. Note also that the meaning of the term Logos refers to a ‘Thus gone’ Buddha from a previous evolutionary epoch. For the sake of

be free to extrapolate or extend the consideration to the formation of an entire planetary manifestation. The conditioning factors being the degree of subtlety and pervasiveness of the mind in question. (However the general Buddhist presumption is to relate it all to a person's mind.)

The statement that 'All things (*dhamma*) are preceded by mind' or being 'the result of what we have thought' thus presents a major philosophical assertion: that before there was anything (i.e., the objective phenomena of *saṃsāra*<sup>9</sup>) there was (only) mind. We are left to speculate how that mind came into existence in the first place, the organisational methods and structure of that mind, or whether or not it is incorporated as part of the thought process of an even greater entity that incorporates the bounds of all *manasic* substance.<sup>10</sup> What if our reference was also to the Mind of a 'thus gone one', a Tathāgata? However, when we enquire how 'all things' can come from such a Mind if they are preceded by it, we must utilise logic to realise how this can come to be. For things to proceed from any mind, that mind must be structured, organised and directed by a conscious manipulator of *manasic* substance. This necessitates a meditating or thinking entity.

There are five main candidates for such an entity:

1. An ordinary person, undertaking normal acts of volition to create or change things in *saṃsāra* based upon his/her ideas.

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academic deference one could avoid such terms but then this would emasculate one's ability to describe truth relegated to the higher echelons of Being (the *dharmakāya*). Despite the use of certain superlatives, Buddhist terminology doesn't provide the ammunition to adequately describe this domain. The objective of this series of books is hopefully to better elucidate the ramifications of the *dharmakāya* to an audience unaccustomed to think at such a level. To do so one cannot be hamstrung by the limitations of approved terminology and related concepts that stifle explanation beyond a certain point.

9 *Saṃsāra*: cyclic existence, life-death cycle, the empirical realm. The ocean of causality, the perpetual turning of the wheel of births and deaths. Anything associated with the material worlds, to that which is ephemeral and ever-changing, and hence phenomenal, having no true substantiality of its own. It refers thus to the realms of illusion (corporeality) into which the personality incarnates and begins to identify with by means of the concrete mind.

10 *Manas* can refer to the substance of the mind. More accurately however it refers to the mind as an organ of thought, where the willing and thinking process is also incorporated. The Sanskrit term *citta* specifically refers to mental substance.



2. A person absorbed in *dhyāna*<sup>11</sup> but now focussed upon re-entering *saṃsāra*, thereby undertaking the necessary *manasic* volitions that will inevitably lead to incarnation into objective form, a reawakening thereto.
3. The Sambhogakāya Flower existing upon the abstracted realms of Mind in the process of retrieving *bījas* for the purpose of projecting a new personal-I.
4. A liberated awakened one, who manifests *siddhis* (psychic powers) for the purpose of phenomenal appearance.
5. A Tathāgata<sup>12</sup> in the process of manifesting a world sphere for the purpose of the enlightenment and liberation of all the incorporated (sentient) beings. The Mind in question here represents an aspect of *dharmakāya* manifesting a Thought-sequence that incorporates a primeval stage of Thought, right through to an inevitable conclusion of Buddhahood for all units of consciousness that are embedded within that Thought-sequence.

In each case the process of the appearance of ‘things’ from the prior existence of a *manasic* impulse is similar, starting from a very limited effectiveness and scope in the ordinary person, to the far-reaching vista of an Ādi Buddha,<sup>13</sup> who is responsible for the appearance of what we understand as Nature. Generally speaking, that which is ‘preceded by mind’ refers to the originating thought of a primal Thinker, which starts the wheels of the law (of *karma*), and of Dependent Origination into motion. Without such an originating seed-thought nothing could

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11 *Dhyāna*: concentration, one-pointed abiding in an unwavering state of mind. A state of absorbed contemplation, deepest meditation and abstraction into the causal realms of the Sambhogakāya Flower or higher, according to the abilities of the meditator.

12 Tathāgata: such Buddhas (Logoi) project a body of manifestation that is a planetary, solar, or any other cosmological body. They are darkness eaters, digesting primal (dark) substance in their ‘stomachs’ (*maṇipūra chakra*), converting it thereby into consciousness states. Thus the entire panoply associated with human evolution to Buddhahood comes into being.

13 Ādi Buddha: the primordial enlightened one, the essence of the *buddhadharma*, of which all other Jinas (Buddhas of meditation) are attributes.

come to be. This sets the pattern or paradigm of what occurred in the past, the *karma* and *saṃskāras*<sup>14</sup> that are retrieved by consciousness to condition the now.

In the retrieval process we are investigating the patterning of a *maṇḍala* that proceeds from within without. The *bījas* to be awakened are stored in the innermost sphere or circle of this *maṇḍala* of space-time, from which they make their way to the surface of whatever is to help condition the fleeting phenomenal world of events that we actually come to experience in consciousness.

The concept of space-time links the evolution of space from a *bīja*-seed with that of time. It is a concept utilised by modern physicists in their Big Bang theory, and works esoterically with respect to the evolution of any consciousness-stream. Consciousness expands from a central point as it evolves over time, developing *saṃskāras* of increasing complexity and intensity of mind. This movement happens in spiral form. The difference between the esoteric philosophy and modern science, however, is that there is a universal pre-existing space, from which and in which evolves each space-time continuum of mind. Each space-time continuum therefore is a unit of *karma*-formation. It can also be considered a unit of *manasic* expansion, therefore of a human unit, world-sphere, solar system, or galaxy, within the context of myriads of similar mind-spheres (space-time continuums) evolving together within the primal matrix that is universal space.

Universal time (time being that which happens as a consequence of the formation of a *bīja* unit) is consequently particularised in terms of finite time, evolving time wherein consciousness manifests its expression for any 'universe' to appear. Inevitably, as *karma* comes to be resolved as a consequence of gaining enlightenment and liberation ensues, so all merges into the Clear Light of Mind. This Mind resting in its natural

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14 *Saṃskāra* (compounding of ideas): from the Sanskrit roots, *saṃ* and *kri*, meaning the action (*kri*) that will improve, refine or make an impression in consciousness. *Saṃskāras* are thus the impressions from actions done in former incarnations and which are carried through to this one and thus become the basis for one's present *karma*. It also refers to the effects of one's present actions that will bear fruit in later lives. *Saṃskāras* are thus those actions that tend to bind one to the wheel of rebirth; to repetitious pain or pleasing dispositions, mental constructs, the inception of imagery, and all emotions. They can also be the tendencies to enlightenment.

unadulterated state, which is equated with ‘universal space’ above, and from one perspective can be viewed in terms of the concept of the Void (*śūnyatā*), is more specifically the zone that is the *saṃsāra-śūnyatā* nexus.<sup>15</sup>

The above summarises the major theme of this book, which will be elaborated from various perspectives, wherein we effectively have the eventual resolution of the *karma* producing world-forming tendencies of a personal-I. (This is also further explored in my book *An Esoteric Exposition of the Bardo Thödol*). This necessitates the destruction of ‘ego’, and the abstraction into that which represents the body of the *dharma* (*dharmakāya*). The entire purpose therefore is to move beyond mind and its activities to penetrate the boundary of what space veils.

The process of the evolution of *karma*-formations, in terms of a progressing space-time continuum is presented in figure 1, ‘The moving screen of the past’ showing the process of bringing *saṃskāras* that were developed in past lives (or incarnation of a world-sphere, star system or galaxy) to the event horizon of consciousness.

An event horizon is that particular experiential zone, or imaginative sphere that any consciousness is engaged upon at any moment in time. We can see therefore that the process is illusional, because it is changing all of the time, with the new images appearing and disappearing as the space-time continuum that is the event horizon evolves over time. (Represented by the serpentine arrow moving forwards, outwards from the page and upwards towards greater heights in consciousness.) The past (*saṃskāras*) are continually being retrieved from ‘memory’ to experience the present moment, yet one is always moving towards a future resolution of attributes of mind. Mind after all is the only thing that can comprehend the passage of time, and therefore of evolving space—the space that is the growing mental expansion of the consciousness-stream involved.

The triangle above the event horizon represents the progression of consciousness towards the future, and the triangle below it represents the place of storage and retrieval of *saṃskāras*. It therefore represents the past, or zone of comparative ignorance with respect to what the

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15 The *saṃsāra-śūnyatā* nexus is explored in greater depth in chapter 3.

future portends. The further one travels to the past the deeper the zone of ignorance, and therefore of comparative darkness, memory fades into the hoary mists of time.

The phrase from the *Dhammapada* that speaks of things being ‘led by mind’ refers to the actual images that are retrieved in the present moment (that is the eternal Now) within the realm of consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*<sup>16</sup>). This concerns the nature of the thought structure (*idea maṇḍala*) within which consciousness is presently imbued or working with. It is also inclusive of any number of interlinked thoughts that can seed the present one with ideas or images.

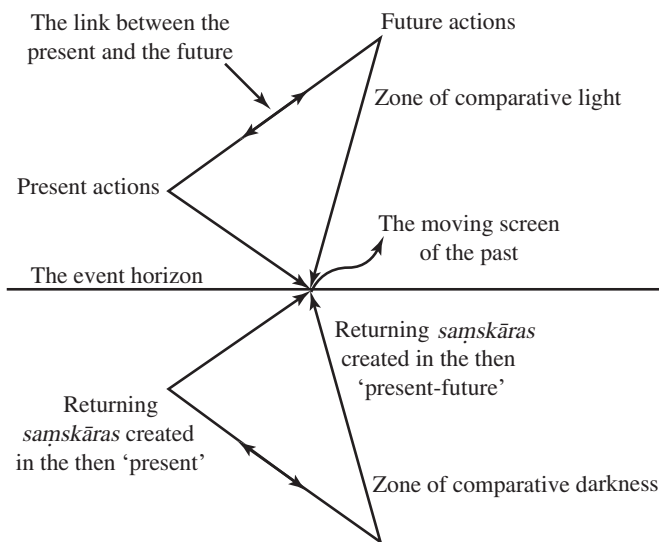


Figure 1. The moving screen of the past

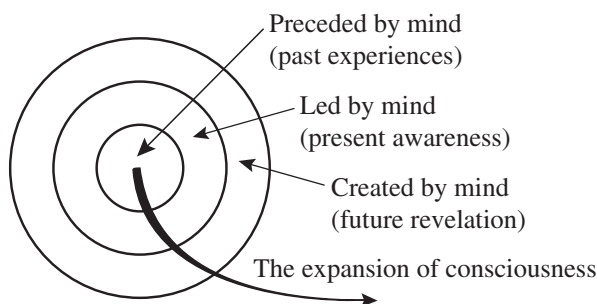
That which is ‘created by mind’ refers to the impact of the recalled

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16 *Ālayavijñāna*: the universal storehouse of consciousness, the mind as basis-of-all in the Yogācāra philosophy. Here *ālaya* is a store of mental images gained from the faculty of distinguishing or discerning (*vijñāna*). The *ālaya* can be conceived to be ever-present in one respect and also as being subject to evolutionary progression. The ability of the *ālaya* to evolve produces the many attributes of *manas*. The *ālaya* that remains in and by itself can also be considered an aspect of the abstract Mind. The *ālayavijñāna* is further explained later in this chapter.

*saṃskāras* with the external environment in such a way that they are modified or altered in some way, and therefore form new *bījas* of images to be stored within the *maṇḍalic* structure of consciousness. This incorporates any consequent actions of a mental, psychic, emotional-mental, emotional, or physical nature. Such actions produce experiences that are assimilated by consciousness and which change consciousness in some way, hence the future unfolds.

In the quotation from the *Dhammapada* the world is considered to be that which is defined by consciousness and exists within consciousness, which is a view endorsed by the Yogācāra school. The problem of the nature and appearance of objective reality has however not been answered. The inner universe of the mind, and the outer universe of ‘the world’ that has been created by the mind however are causally linked. The nature of the expansion of consciousness as we move from the past to the future appearance of things is shown in figure 2 below.



**Figure 2. The process of the expansion of consciousness**

Here we also see the process of the expansion of consciousness as the experiences of the things created by mind become assimilated. This assimilation then becomes the store for that which precedes a future expansion. Essentially, each expansion helps create the completed integration of the overall *maṇḍala* of the mind structure. As the *saṃskāras* generated become more refined and encompassing, so then the structure itself grows along a limb of truthful reason to find and then integrate with the trunk of the grand design of which it has always been a component part. Inevitably the structure becomes energetically

more intense because of increasing refinement of substance, causing it to grow upwards and outwards so as to encompass the vastness of the sky of *bodhi*.<sup>17</sup>

Now let us redraw the diagram in terms of the ‘mind’ that is created by mind. (This relates to the three aspects of time in relation to the evolutionary expansion of mind.)

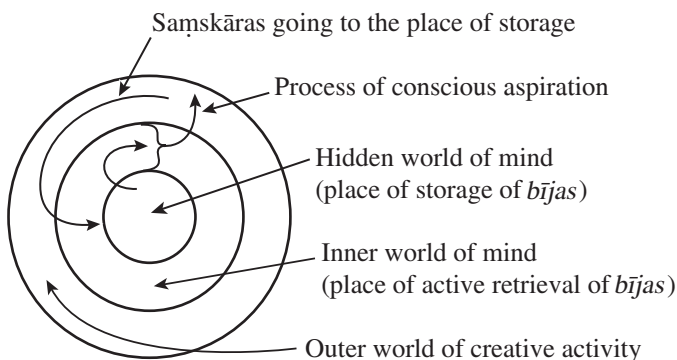


Figure 3. The cycles of expansion of mind

After new mental *saṃskāras* have formed and fulfilled their activity as a ‘process of conscious aspiration’, they become veiled in the place of storage. The mind therefore expands as the ‘hidden world of mind’ becomes increasingly filled with *bījas* of intensified potential. Whenever *bījas* are recalled they pass through the above process, and so the cycle of expansion progresses. If new images are processed through sensory contact with outer phenomena, and lessons are learned of what not to do, so then the cycles spiral upon ever higher arcs of endeavour. The substance of the *bījas* comes to be composed of an increasingly refined nature. This ‘hidden world’ can be considered to be five layered, relating to the store of *bījas* conditioned by the five Elements. This

17 *Bodhi*: enlightenment, full awakening, attainment of perfected knowledge, transcendental insight, the result of the union of compassion (*karuṇa*) and wisdom (*prāñā*). The expression of compassionate revelation. Literally compassionate understanding, divine Intelligence, ‘Be-ness’. That which is obtained from the ‘Bo’ tree, under which the Buddha sat when he gained his full enlightenment.

can be expanded to include the view of the 3 x 5 characteristics of the Sambhogakāya Flower, which is the true place of storage of the rarefied *bījas* of any consciousness-stream.

Figure 3 depicts the foundational basis to the information presented in figure 4: ‘The relationship of *śūnyatā* to *saṃsāra*’. Figure 4 presents additional information relating to *śūnyatā* and of Nāgārjuna’s four gates that were explained in volume 1, chapter 9 of this series: ‘not self, not others, not caused and not both’ that allow consciousness to interrelate with *śūnyatā*<sup>18</sup> via the *śūnyatā-saṃsāra* nexus. This is veiled in figure 3 by the central sphere denoted as the ‘hidden world of mind’. This ‘hidden world’ is that of the I-consciousness. (That attribute of consciousness that outlasts the death of any incarnate personality.)

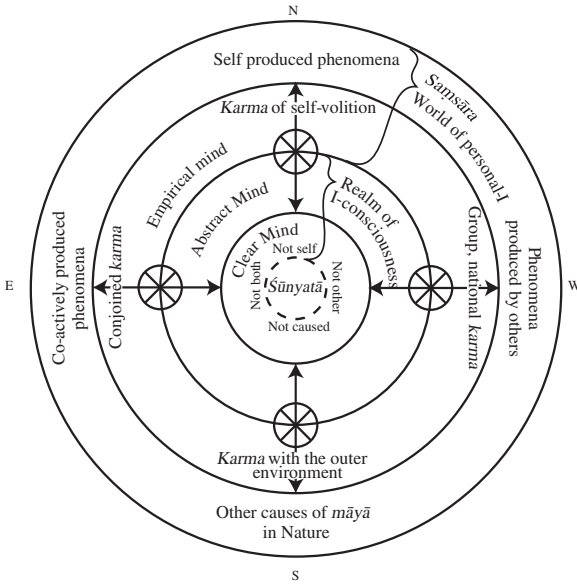


Figure 4. The relationship of *śūnyatā* to *saṃsāra*

18 *Śūnyatā*: emptiness, voidness, devoid of characteristics, suchness. That which relates to the absence of mind. In Candrakīrti’s *Madhyamakāvatara* there are said to be sixteen types of emptiness, which are really negations based on the categories of phenomena.