

THE  
ATTITUDES OF THE BUDDHA,

BY

O. FRANKFURTER, PH. D.



Table A.



Table B.



Table C.

## The Attitudes of the Buddha.

---

It is well known that the statues and images of the Buddha as we find them as objects of reverence in temples, palaces, and private houses wherever Buddhism is confessed, represent a phase of the real and legendary life of the founder as we find it recorded in the Sacred Books. It is considered an act of merit-making to recall in statues and pictures the features of the Buddha and they are looked upon "as images or likenesses of his person made for the purpose of keeping his followers mindful of him and consequently to gladden and delight their hearts at the thought of the Infinitely knowing one."

It follows therefrom that these statues are not considered as objects of worship in this sense that by addressing to them a prayer or wish it will be exauced or granted.

Only in a few instances have these statues inscriptions which record the date on which they were made and on what occasion, so that they have only in a limited sense an historical value. It remains of course for the individual to select for representation any phase in the life of the Buddha, but from the various statues existing it will be possible to reconstruct the life of the founder. Only to a limited extent is it possible to fix the place of the origin of these statues although generally speaking we may distinguish, by the form of their heads, statues coming from the North, the central and the Southern part of Siam. (See Tables A. B. C., drawn from statues preserved in the Museum of the Ministry for the Interior). How far we can derive from these statues ethnological data we cannot really discuss, as generally speaking the historically authenticated Buddha statues hitherto found in Siam do not go further back than 1,000 years. We may make certain deduction about the relative age of the statues by their dress as generally speaking those with Brahmanical headgear, etc., may be considered the older ones as Brahmanism prevailed in Siam before Buddhism. Thus also we may consider the statues of the Buddha the older ones in which traits of Brahmanical mythology occur such as Buddha protected by the Naga King. No deduction as to the age of the statues can, however, be made from the more or less orthodox peculiarities of the characteristics of the body as laid down in the

Buddha laksana since, for instance, King Phra Nangklao considered it a work of merit to shorten the fingers of the statue of the Sakyamuni preserved now in Wat Sudas(anadevārāma) in Bangkok.

In the following pages an attempt has been made to explain the meaning attached to the statues of the Buddha as they are found in Siam. It is in the main a translation of an essay of the Somteĵ Phra Paramanujit, the son of the King Phra Buddha Yot Fa, who died in 1854, and who rightly enjoyed a great literary reputation. It may at once be explained that besides the statues described in the following pages there are numerous others, as any act or legend recorded lends itself to a pictorial exhibition and the representations here given cannot thus even be described as the only orthodox ones; but it may be said of them that they are most frequently met with in Siam. Other statues occur in the attitude of the Buddha which are, however, only representations of one of his disciples or followers. Thus, to give a classical example, the so-called big-bellied Buddha is in reality the representation of Kaccayana, the founder of grammar. In Siam he is worshipped as assisting women in child-birth, but a confusion has taken place with the legend of Angulimāla, another disciple of the Buddha, formerly a robber. It may be also mentioned that to pay respect to the memory of a deceased priest his image is reproduced mostly in a sitting attitude of the Buddha.

The reproductions of the statues of the Buddha in the following pages are not intended as works of art; they give in bare outline the attitude of the Buddha and were drawn under the direction of Mr. Healey by the pupils of the school of arts. Most of the originals of the statues are kept in Wat Praĵeo and were made in the reign of King Mongkut, who destined them also to serve as a memorial to the legitimate Kings who reigned in Ayuddhya from 1350 up to 1767, and further from the reign of Khun Luang Tak in Bangkok up to the King Phra Nangklao.

It may finally be added that every Wat contains the statue of the Buddha which is considered the chief one. The Buddha in any position may be considered the chief image, but as a matter of fact those in sitting attitude appear to be the most numerous, and among them again the temptation of the Buddha by Mara and of the Buddha in self-concentration.

This legendary representation of the birth of the Buddha is taken from statuary preserved in Wat Arun, Bangkok.



The Birth of the Buddha



Tradition has it that the Buddha after leaving the Court of his father remained for six years in solitude reflecting on sorrow and its causes. He is represented sitting with his hands crossed over his chest. ( 1 ).



1

ทรงทำทุกกรกิริยา

On the full-moon day of the Visākha month the Buddha received from the hands of Sujāta in the morning a dish of milk rice. He received it sitting and his hands opened. ( 2 )



2

ทรงรับเข้ามธปายาศของนางสุชาดา

After having partaken of the meal, he sets the dish floating on the Nerañjara River. He is represented sitting and setting the dish floating with both hands. ( 3 )



3

ทรงลอยภาคทองณะแม่น้ำเนรัญชรา

In the evening he receives 8 bundles of thatched grass from the hands of a Brahman (to prepare a couch). He receives it standing, stretching out his right hand. ( 4 )



4

ทรงรับทูลเกล้าฯ ถวาย  
พระราชมณเฑียรหมาย



He then formed the resolve that the couch should be made into a jewelled couch for him to lie down turning towards the east of the Mahabodhi. He then formed this resolution :—" Even if my flesh and blood should be dried up, and there should only be left one vein and one nerve, unless I receive supreme knowledge, I will not leave this couch." He then sat down turning his face to the East. In the evening Vasavatti Māra, the supreme king, and his horde tempted him. They were defeated and returned. He is represented sitting in contemplation his right leg over the left one and his right hand touching his knee, the position known as " the conquest of Māra." ( 5 )



5

ทรงผจญมารให้พ่ายแพ้ เรียกว่ามารวิชัย

In the first watch he acquired knowledge of previous existence ; and he knew by his divine eyes what would happen, in the middle watch ; and he knew in the last watch the chain of causation and at daybreak he acquired supreme knowledge and he said to himself " Buddha," *i.e.*, the enlightened one, who knows everything, the jewel through which joy will accrue to the world and all that is on it. He then remained under the shadow of the Bo tree for seven days, until this act became known in the abode of the gods, and doubt arose among them, and they enquired whether this was only one act of the Buddha. When the Buddha got cognisance thereof, he, having reached in the fourth stage of meditation supernatural knowledge, awoke from such meditation, and rose into the air ; and by this double miracle the gods were free from doubt. The Buddha then descended towards the North-east, a small distance from the jewelled seat. He contemplated on the conditions how he acquired supreme knowledge under the Bo tree and under the jewelled seat. He kept his eyes open constantly without wrinkling, bestowing his looks on the world. He is represented standing and folding his hands. ( 6 )



6

ทรงพิจารณาพระบารมีธรรม  
ที่ได้บรรลุพระ โภธิญาณทั้ง โภธิพฤษ

And to whatever place the Buddha expressed his wish to proceed, such wish was fulfilled. He is represented with his left foot lifted up and his hands resting on his lap. ( 7 )



7

ทรงนฤมิตทรงกรมแก้วเสด็จจกรม

The Buddha then enjoyed supreme happiness under the Banyan tree, when Māra approached him to extinguish annihilation. The Buddha replied that the time had not yet arrived as priests and nuns, the male and female followers, had not yet received instruction and good conduct had not yet spread. We the Tathāgata will only reach annihilation (Nirvāna ) when our followers know our doctrine and good conduct is spread, then we will enter into Nirvāna. He is represented sitting lifting his right hand warding off Māra. ( 8 )



8

มารเข้ามาทูลเสด็จให้ปรินิพพาน ทรงห้ามมาร



The Buddha enjoyed the happiness of emancipation under the Muccalindo tree. Then the King of serpents, Muccalinda, approached him and surrounded him seven times with his body and covered his head, so as to prevent mist, dew, wind and the sun reaching him. He is represented in the attitude of contemplation with the King of serpents encircling him. ( 9 )



He then enjoyed the happiness of emancipation under the Ket\* tree, and in the morning the God Indra offered him the fruit of the gall-nut tree. He is represented sitting receiving the fruit. ( 10 )

\* Rājāyatana.



10

เมื่อพระอินทรถวายผลส้มอ ทรวงรับผลส้มอ

At that time Tapussa and Bhalika, two merchant brothers, offered him some prepared rice. The Buddha reflected in what vessel to receive it and at that time a King offered him four almsbowls made of stone ; by the force of his wish he made them into one. He is represented sitting with his hands over the almsbowls. ( 11 )



11

ทรงรับบาตรเสถมัย ๔ บาตร

ทรงบันดาลอิทธิฤทธิ์สังขารเชื่อมประสานให้ติดเป็นบาตรเดียว

After having partaken of the meal, the merchants asked the Buddha for a lock from his hair. He is raising his hand to pull it out. ( 12 )

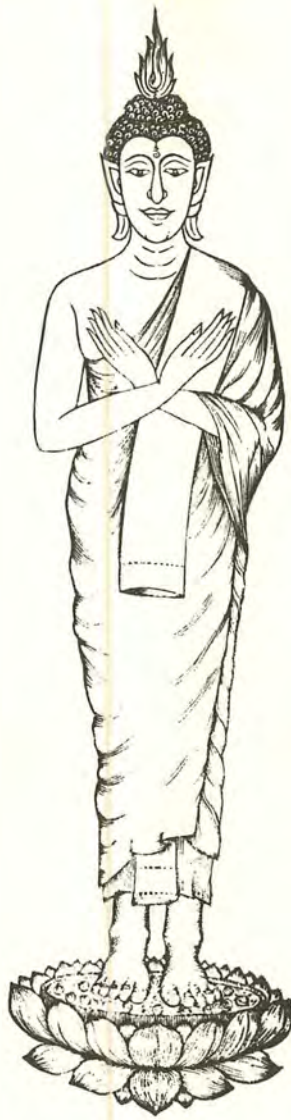


12

เมื่อพ่อค้าสองคนพี่น้องทูลขอพระเกษชาตุ  
ทรงนั่งยกพระหัตถ์เสียดพระเกษ



The Buddha then returns to the Banyan tree enjoying the happiness of emancipation fully comprehending the cause. He was doubtful whether it would be conducive to happiness if he would explain the conditions of things. At that time the Brahman Sahampati, being informed thereof, hastened to entreat the Buddha to explain the conditions of things. The Buddha is represented standing with his hands crossed over his chest ( 13 )



13

ทรงพระประชวรหนัก  
ทรงขับไล่อาพาธนั้นให้ระงับด้วยอิทธิบาทภาวนา

After having listened to the Brahman Sahampati the Buddha left the Banyan tree and proceeded to the abode of the five hermits explaining to them that he was the Enlightened One and that they should believe in his supreme knowledge. He explained to them the Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta so that Kondañña got knowledge of the purity of the Law, and received sanctification and he taught Vappa, Bhaddiya, Mahanana, Assaji, so that they might acquire the fruit of the purity in due time and he initiated them by the words: "Come here, ye priests." He is represented sitting raising his hand motioning them. (14)



14

ทรงกวักพระหัตถ์เรียกให้พระเบญจวรกิจย์  
อุปสมบทด้วยเอหิภิกขุ

The Buddha then stopped at the Bamboo grove in Rajagriha, when Upatissa and Kotila two friends approached him to be ordained as priests. The Enlightened One granted them permission and he taught them how to become Arahats with their followers, and appointed them to the foremost rank. He is represented sitting pointing one hand towards them. ( 15 )



15

ทรงตั้งเเต่ทศกัศถาน

From Rajagriha the Buddha proceeded to the Gotamaceti at Vesāli, where he remained during the cold season. During that time the dew fell and he felt the cold all night. He dressed in four robes to guard against the cold. He then gave instructions regarding the right dress to be worn in the cold season. He is represented sitting touching his dress with both hands. ( 16 )



16

ทรงห่มจีวรชั้นที่ ๒ พงทนนาวเมื่อฤดูหนาว



He then proceeded to Rajagriha. There Kaludāyī invited him to Kapilavatthu. The Buddha accepted the invitation and he proceeded there in a leisurely way. He is represented standing, his left hand hanging down and lifting his left leg. ( 17 )



17

เมื่อพระกาลท่ายี่ทุลเขิญเสด็จเมืองกบิลพัสดุ์  
แล้วเสด็จพุทธดำเนินไป

When he arrived at Kapilavatthu his relations had made preparations for receiving him at the Nigrodhārama. His relations left him and none of them asked him to partake of food. In the morning he went out himself to collect food in the city. He is represented standing, holding his almsbowl in both hands. ( 18 )



18

เสด็จบิณฑบาตในเมืองกบิลพัสดุ์ครั้งแรก

Later on the heretics came and followed him with a view of performing a miracle before him. A gardener offered a ripe mango to the Buddha. The Buddha looked at Ananda, who understood his meaning and offered him a stone almsbowl; with this the Buddha received the fruit: he wanted to sit down and then Ananda spread out the Sanghati for him and pressed out the juice from the mango. After the Buddha had partaken of it, the gardener offered him some water which the Buddha receives in the almsbowl. He then told the gardener to plant the seed at the place, and he washed his hands over the place where the mango had been planted. He is represented in partaking of the mango water. ( 19 )



19

เมื่อดวงใจให้เพาะเมล็ดที่มะม่วง

And then receiving the water in the almsbowl. ( 20 )



20

ทรงรับน้ำมะม่วงถวายบาตร



After having restrained the heretics by this miracle the Buddha proceeded to the Tavatimsa heaven, where he propounded the Abhidhamma doctrine to his mother for three months. After the completion of the season (Pavarana) the Buddha left heaven. He is represented standing stretching out his arms opening the world. ( 21 )



21

เสด็จลงจากเทวโลก

When the Buddha took away the shroud of the slave girl Pun-  
na, he is represented standing, his right hand hanging down and in  
the left carrying a stick, pointing out analytical meditation arising  
from it. ( 22 )



22

ทรงชกผ้าบังสกลของนางบุณณทาศี

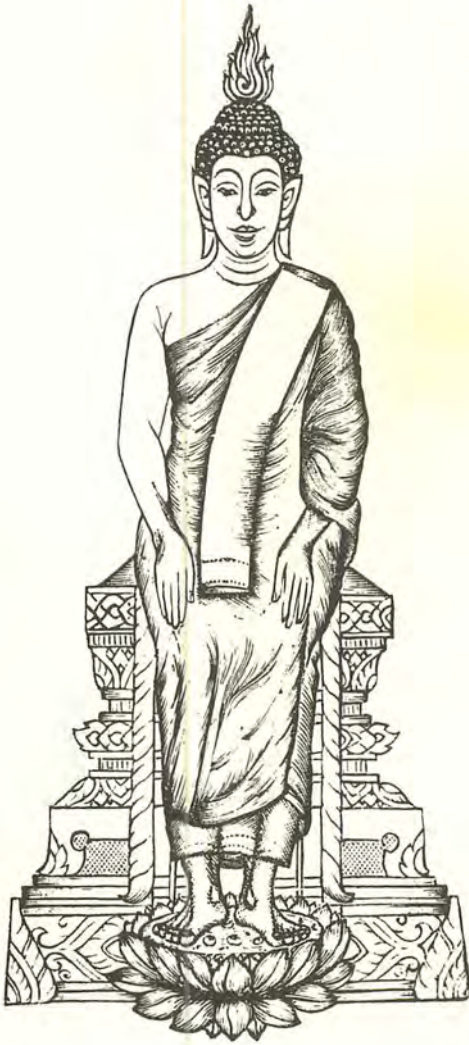
After having washed the shroud he had it cleaned and prepared for the robe of priests. He is represented sitting, his left hand holding a needle and the right hand a thread ready for stitching. ( 23 )



23

ทรงพระปรารภเริ่มจักรกรรม สนเข็มเย็บจักร

At that time three dangers arose in the City of Vesāli. The King of the Licchavi together with the people thought of quelling the danger. When they had agreed on the plan, Mahali invited the Buddha to Rajagriha. The King Bimbisara sent for his reception a covered boat, adorning it with flowers and preparing a seat on it. The Buddha is represented with his feet hanging down. ( 24 )



24

เมื่อลงเรือขนานเสด็จไปประทับไทยณะเมืองเวสาลี



When the Buddha was alone in the jungle an elephant with the name of Pālileyyaka came to attend him. The Buddha is represented sitting, his feet hanging down and his hands stretched out to receive the elephant. ( 25 )



25

เสด็จอยู่ป่าติโลยกั

The Brahman Vakkali was always intent on seeing the Buddha and he went therefore to the abode of the Buddha, and was admitted as a priest. He always fixed his eyes on the Buddha but the Buddha forbade him to do so. The Buddha is represented sitting, signalling with his hands. ( 26 )



26

ไบกพระหัตถ์ถวัลย์ประณามพระวักกั

Once upon a time in the district of Kosala no rain was falling throughout the Kingdom and the people asked the Buddha to intervene for them, and the Buddha showing mercy remained near the Lotus pond at Jetavana. He bears a bathing cloth with which he covers the upper and lower parts of the body. He proceeded to the steps of the pond, when clouds covered the sky everywhere and the rain fell copiously. He is represented lifting his right hand washing his body. ( 27 )



๒๗

เมื่อชาวเมืองโกศลมาทูลขอฝน  
ทรงยื่นยกพระหัตถ์ดูบพระกายสร้างน้ำฝน

When the Buddha received an invitation of the merchant Culapunna, the younger brother of the priest Mahāpunna, he ordered Ananda to select 499 priests to follow him. Ananda obeyed the behest of the Buddha. In the morning when the Buddha was sitting in meditation, the throne of Indra became hot and Indra ordered Visukamma to prepare 500 seats at the gate of Jetavana and the Buddha sat down on one of the seats and the 499 priests sat on the others and the remaining seat was reserved for Saccabanda. When the Buddha reached the mountain Saccapabbata he stopped his throne in mid air, urging Saccabanda to give up the heretic doctrine and to become a priest with the words: "Come priest"; whereupon he followed the Buddha. The Buddha partook of the meal in the house of Culapunna the merchant and then returned. The King of the Nāga then begged the Buddha to leave a footprint on the bank of Namada river. When he arrived at the mountain of the Saccabanda the Buddha said:— "Formerly you were a great teacher who assembled around you many followers teaching the wrong doctrine, now you stay and assemble your people and teach them so that they may give up the heretic doctrine and enter the golden path of Nirvana." Saccabanda then asked for a mark which might be worshipped. The Buddha then left his footprint on a stone and it appeared as if the footprint was made on wet earth. The Buddha is represented leaving an impression of his foot.\* ( 28 )

---

\* This is perhaps the original of the Sacred Footprint.



28

ทรงยืนเหยียบแสดงรอยพระบาท  
ไว้ ณ หลังหินเขาสะจัก ณ ที่



When the Buddha stayed in Jetavana in the City of Savatthi, no rain fell and the rice withered all over the country. The water in the tanks, ponds and rivers was dried up and even the lotus pond from which the Buddha partook of water. Fishes suffered great distress, because the crows preyed upon them whilst the rest hid themselves in the mud. At that time the Buddha went with his almsbowl collecting food and when he saw this he felt pity. After having partaken of food the Buddha called Ananda asking him to bring him a bath cloth. Ananda said that the water was dried up since several days but the Buddha called for the bath cloth again, and when Ananda gave it to him, the Buddha covered his body with a part of it whilst he put the other part over his shoulder. He stood up near the pond, and is represented calling for rain with his right hand, and opening the left hand to catch the water and then the rain was falling.\* ( 29 )

---

\* This is the statue carried in procession at the Sowing Festival.



29

พระคันธาระราชกุมาร

Whilst the Buddha was stopping during the Lent season at the Veluvāna he got seriously ill, but he was able to overcome the illness through his patience and through the powers he had acquired. After he had recovered from his illness he explained the law of old age to Ananda, saying: "Now we the Tathagata are 80 years of age, our body is like a cart which must be repaired with bamboo." He is represented sitting, his two hands placed on his lap. ( 30 )



30

ทรงแสดงชาดกรรมแก่พระอานนท์  
ว่าพระกายของพระองค์เหมือนเรือนแก้ว

The Buddha spoke to Ananda : “Whoever has attained the four constitutes of magic power, he will be borne firmly established and will be like a vehicle which always moves in the right path, and if such a man desired to live for over a whole kalpa or more he may do so. We the Tathagata by our magical power may live a kalpa or more.” When the Buddha uttered this distinctly, Ananda understood the meaning, but was not mindful enough to address the Buddha to lengthen the life. At that time the Māra came reminding the Buddha about the words he had addressed to him saying : “Now the community and the precepts of the Buddha are flourishing, according to the words of the Buddha, would he extinguish passions and enter into Nirvāna ?” Then the Buddha :—“Within a short time, in three months time, we will enter into Nirvāna,” and after having thus spoken to Māra he discussed on age and the Sankhāra. He is represented sitting, lifting his right hand reflecting about his age. ( 31 )



31

ปลงพระชนมายุสังขาร

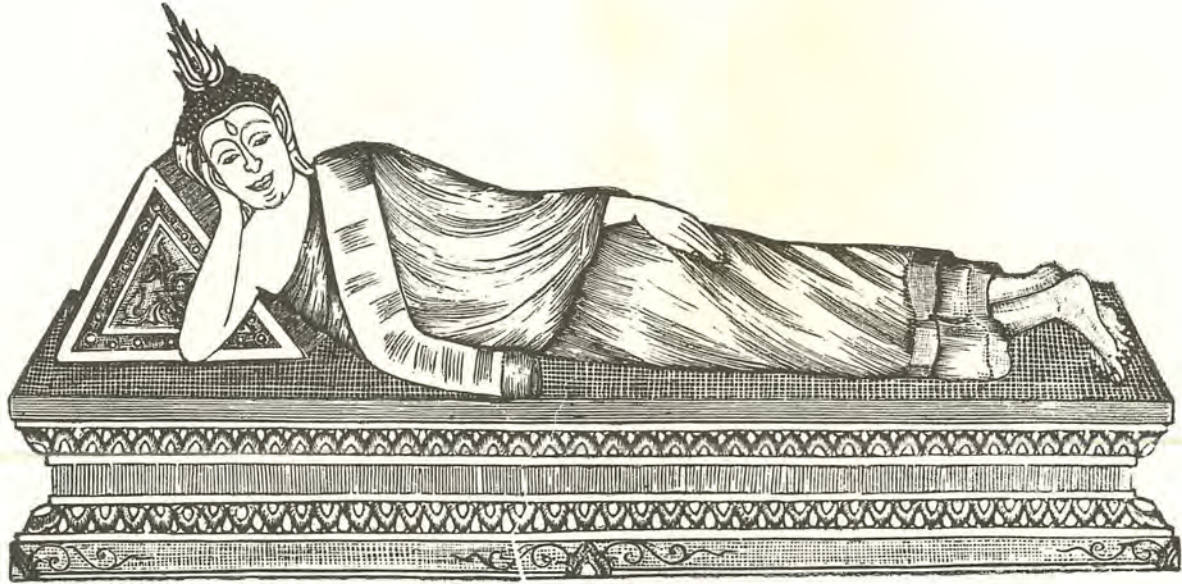
And the Buddha then stopped at the mango grove when he received food in the shape of soft pork from the hands of Chunda. After partaking of the food he became ill, his bowels were out of order so that he was sick unto death. He would not have partaken of this meal and would have partaken of fresh pork, but it was ordained that this was to be a conspicuous example of alms collecting in the time of Buddha. ( 32 ).



32

ตาเมืองเวสาลี  
ว่าเป็นความเห็นภายหลังเรียกว่านาคาวโลก





The Death of the Buddha

นิพพานไสยาสน์