

Śākyamuni and Vairocana^{*}

Introduction

Vairocana is a Buddha who plays a main role in such Mahāyāna (Great Vehicle) *sūtras* as the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* (*The Sūtra on the Region of Buddhas*¹), the *Mahāvairocanābhisaṃbodhi-vikurvītādhiṣṭhāna* (*The Supporting Power of the Miracle of Mahāvairocana's Enlightenment*) and the *Sarvathāgatatattvasaṃgraha* (*The Compendium of the Reality of All Tathāgatas*; regarded in the Sino-Japanese Buddhist tradition as the first section of the legendary *Vajrasekhara-sūtra* [*The Sūtra on the Adamantine Pinnacle*]). While the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* and the *Sarvathāgatatattvasaṃgraha* have both Vairocana and Śākyamuni (the historical Buddha Gotama) as leading characters, these two *sūtras* do not refer explicitly to the relationship between them. Therefore, Chinese and Japanese Buddhists have long argued over whether or not they are the same person. In this paper I will try to investigate their relationship through an examination of material from Indian Buddhism, and will also trace the development of the Chinese Buddhist understanding of that relationship.

As is well known, the entire body of the Sanskrit original of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* has been lost; but the text has come down to us in two Chinese versions, one of which was translated by Buddhabhadra in 418–420, and the other by Śikṣānanda in 695–699; as well as a Tibetan version translated by Jinamitra *et al.* at the end of the 9th century. Hereafter I will refer to these texts as the large *Buddhāvataṃsakas*.

Śākyamuni and Vairocana in the Large *Buddhāvataṃsakas*

At assemblies held in the *bodhimaṇḍa* (seat of enlightenment) and the *kūṭāgara* (multi-storied hall) in the large *Buddhāvataṃsakas*, a cosmos named *Kusumatāla-garbha-vyūhalaṃkāra-lokadhātu-samudra* (*Ocean of worlds, whose surface and inside*

* I would like to thank Dr. Michael Radich for suggesting improvements to the English of an earlier draft.

1 On the rationale for using this translation rather than the more common *Flower Ornament Sūtra* etc., see Ôtake 2007.

are decorated with an arrangement of flowers) is explained. The Sahā-lokadhātu (Sahā world), corresponding to our earth, is said to be just one of the incalculable worlds contained in this cosmos. In the same lines, the large *Buddhāvataṃsakas* say that this cosmos has been purified by Vairocana during his eons of bodhisattva practices. For example, the Tibetan version says:

O children of the Victor, this *Kusumatalagarbha-vyūhālaṃkāra-lokadhātu-samudra* (Ocean of worlds, whose surface and inside are decorated with an arrangement of flowers) was purified by the Blessed One, Tathāgata Vairocana in the past, at the times of [his] bodhisattva practices, for an ocean of eons as many as the atoms in an ocean of worlds; [that is to say, he] purified [it] with an ocean of vows in each of those eons, in the presence of as many Tathāgatas as there are atoms in an ocean of worlds.

*kye rgyal ba'i sras dag de la 'jig rten gyi kham rgya mtsho gzhi dang snying po me tog gi rgyan gyis brgyan pa 'di | bcom ldan das de bzhin gshegs pa rnam par snang mdzad sngon byang chub sems dpa' spyod pa'i tshe | bskal pa rgya mtsho 'jig rten gyi kham rgya mtsho'i rdul shin tu phra ba'i snyed kyis yongs su dag par byas ste | bskal pa re re zhing yang de bzhin gshegs pa 'jig rten gyi kham rgya mtsho'i rdul shin tu phra ba snyed kyi zhabs kyi drung du | smon lam rgya mtsho 'jig rten gyi kham rgya mtsho'i rdul shin tu phra ba snyed kyis yongs su dag par byas so ||*²

The expression “was purified” does not imply that this cosmos was constructed by Vairocana, but rather, that this cosmos was a place in which Vairocana practiced purification of worlds.³

Most interesting is that, when commenting on the construction of this cosmos, the text says further that Vairocana has the *Sahā-lokadhātu* as his Buddha-land. The Tibetan version says:

Above it (a world called *Ālokavarṇā* [Colour of light]), beyond as many worlds as there are atoms in a Buddha-land, there is a world called Sahā, surrounded by a circle of as many worlds as there are atoms in thirteen Buddha-lands, purified of defilements, its ground based on adamant, held up by a circle of winds of various colours, resting on a net of lotus flowers, shaped like a circle, adorned with a sky containing palaces for the gods. There that Blessed One Tathāgata Vairocana lives.

*de'i steng 'jig rten gyi kham sangs rgyas kyi zhing gi rdul shin tu phra ba snyed 'das pa na | 'jig rten gyi kham mi mjed ces bya ba 'jig rten gyi kham sangs rgyas kyi zhing bcu gsum gyi rdul shin tu phra ba snyed kyi 'khor gyis bskor ba | kun nas nyon mongs pa rnam par dag pa | rdo rje'i gzhi'i sa mtshams can | rlung gi dkyil 'khor kha dog sna tshogs can gyis shin tu bzang ba | pad mo'i dra ba la rab tu gnas pa | kun nas zlum pa'i dbyibs su gnas pa nam mkha' [corr.: mkha'i] lha'i khang pa can gyis brgyan pa 'di yod de | de na bcom ldan 'das de bzhin gshegs pa rnam par snang mdzad 'di bzhugs so ||*⁴

As is mentioned above, in Indian Buddhist mythology, the Sahā-lokadhātu corresponds to the earth. And, as is common knowledge, the Buddha living on this earth

2 P 761: Yi 109b¹⁻⁴.

3 Such a purification of worlds by bodhisattvas is defined in the *Mahāvāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* XVIII.48a and Vasubandhu's commentary on it as a practice of bodhisattvas in the eighth, ninth and tenth stages.

4 P 761: Yi 122a⁸–122b³.

can be none other than Śākyamuni. Is Vairocana identical to Śākyamuni? In fact, this identification is supported by the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, the last chapter of the large *Buddhāvataṃsakas*. In the “Māyā” chapter of the *Gaṇḍavyūha*, Queen Māyā, the mother of Śākyamuni, calls herself “mother of that Blessed One Vairocana” (*asya Bhagavato Vairocanasya mātā*).⁵

Here we can formulate a hypothesis: “Vairocana” is, like “Śākyamuni”, one of the epithets used for the historical Buddha Gotama. This hypothesis is confirmed by the fact that both “Śākyamuni” and “Vairocana” are included in the ten epithets of Gotama enumerated in the **Buddhalakṣaṇanirdeśa* (“Explication of Epithets of the Buddha”) chapter of the large *Buddhāvataṃsakas*. Let us compare translations of the chapter concerned:

<i>Fo shuo dousha jing</i> 佛說兜沙經 (T 280. Translated by Lokakṣema between 146 and 189)	<i>Rulai minghao pin</i> 如來名號品 (Chapter 3 of Buddhābhaddra’s version)	<i>Rulai minghao pin</i> 如來名號品 (Chapter 7 of Śikṣānanda’s version)	<i>Sangs rgyas kyi mtshan shin tu bstan pa</i> (Chapter 12 of the Tibetan version)
波迦私提	悉達	一切義成	<i>don thams cad grub pa</i>
勝達	(no equivalent)	(no equivalent)	(no equivalent)
世世慢陀	滿月	円満月	<i>zla ba’i dkyil ’khol</i>
夷阿那坭提	師子吼	師子吼	<i>seng ge’i nga ro can</i>
釈迦牟尼	釈迦牟尼	釈迦牟尼	<i>shā kya thub pa</i>
鼓師薩沈	神仙	第七仙	<i>drang srong dam pa’i mchog</i>
墮樓延	盧舍那	毘盧遮那	<i>rnam par snang mdzad</i>
俱譚滑提	瞿曇	瞿曇氏	<i>go’u ta ma’i rigs</i>
摩訶沙門	大沙門	大沙門	<i>dge spyod chen po</i>
最勝愁樓提	最勝	最勝	<i>rgyal ba dampā</i>
質多愁樓提	能度	導師	<i>mu stegs byed</i>

The Sanskrit reconstructions of the ten epithets are as follows:

Reconstruction	Meaning
(1) Sarvārthasiddhi	One who has achieved all his purposes
(2) Śaśimaṇḍala	Full moon
(3) Siṃhanādin	One who has a lion’s roar
(4) Ṛṣisattama (/ Ṛṣisaptama)	The best sage (/ Seventh sage)

5 GVS, 346, 24.

(5) Vairocana	The sun
(6) Śākyamuni	Hermit of the Śākya tribe
(7) Gotamagotra	One whose family name is Gotama
(8) Mahāśramaṇa	Great wandering monk
(9) Jinaśreṣṭhin	Excellent victor
(10) Tīrthaṃkara	Road maker

Among the ten epithets, Vairocana, “the sun”, is a derivative from the verb *vi√ruc* which means “to clarify”, “to illuminate”, “to shine”, “to radiate”, and so on. Therefore it can be rendered more accurately as “one who clarifies” etc.

Additionally, our hypothesis is also supported by the Indian Buddhist Sūryasiddhi (*circa* 7th and 8th centuries), who wrote a sub-commentary on Vasubandhu’s commentary on the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra* which is, as is well known, incorporated in the large *Buddhāvataṃsakas* as the “Ten Stages” chapter. When commenting on the line “owing to the original vow and supporting power of this Blessed One Vairocana” (*asyaiva Bhagavato Vairocanasya pūrvapraṇidhānādhiṣṭhānena*⁶) in the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra*, Sūryasiddhi says:

In the line “owing to the original vow and supporting power of this Blessed One Vairocana”, [the words “of this Blessed One Vairocana” mean] “of Śākyamuni who is called Vairocana”. Why is the epithet worded thus? Answer: (1) Since [he] clarifies various right laws (*saddharma*) to his disciples (*vineya*), [he is called] Vairocana. This is [the meaning of] Vairocana; just as [we say] *tapasvin* (“one who radiates heat” *i.e.* ascetic).⁷ (2) Or, since [he] variously illuminates and delights, [he is called] Vairocana. [This] means that [he] illuminates many kinds of qualities (*guṇa*) and he delights in skillfulness (*kauśalya*). This is [the meaning of] Vairocana. (3) Or, Vairocana is the Sun (*Āditya*, the god of the sun), because *Āditya* is more brilliant than the moon and stars. This Vairocana (Śākyamuni) belongs to him (*Āditya*), meaning that [Śākyamuni] was born into the family descendant from him (*Āditya*).

*bcom ldan 'das rnam par snang mdzad 'di nyid kyi sngon gyi smon lam dang byin gyis
brlabs kyi zhes bya ba ni | bcom ldan 'das shā kya thub pa rnam par snang mdzad ces bya
ba yi 'o || ci 'i phyir mtshan 'di skad ces bya zhe na | smras pa (1) gdul bar bya ba rnams la
dam pa 'i chos sna tshogs snang bar mdzad pas rnam par snang bar mdzad pa 'o || de nyid
rnam par snang mdzad de dka' thub can bzhin no || (2) rnam pa gcig tu na sna tshogs su
snang ba dang dgyes par byed pas rnam par snang ba 'o || yon tan rnam pa mang po snang
ba dang | mkhas pa rnams kyi mngon du dgyes par byed ces bya ba 'i tha tshig ste | de
nyid rnam par snang mdzad do || (3) rnam pa gcig tu na | rnam par snang mdzad ni nyi ma
ste | skar ma dang zla ba la sogs pa zil gyis nman khyad par du snang ba 'i phyir ro || rnam
par snang mdzad 'di ni de 'i yin te | de 'i rgyud las skyes zhes bya ba 'i tha tshig go ||*⁸

6 DBhS 4, 11.

7 This analogy implies that the term “Vairocana” is similar to the term *tapasvin* in that it means “one who radiates light/heat”.

8 P 5499: Ji 10a⁷–10b³.

Therefore we should conclude that Vairocana in the large *Buddhāvataṃsakas* is Śākyamuni himself; “Vairocana”, just like “Śākyamuni”, is not a name, but an epithet dedicated to the historical Buddha Gotama.

Nonetheless, the epithet Vairocana seems to have originally been dedicated not to Gotama as a Buddha, but to Gotama as a Bodhisattva, because the *Dengmu pusa suowen sanmei jing* 等目菩薩所問三昧經 (**Samantanetrāparipṛcchāsamādhi-sūtra*, *The Sūtra on Samantanetra's Questions on Meditation*), translated by Dharmarakṣa in 291, which was later incorporated into both Śikṣānanda's and the Tibetan versions of the large *Buddhāvataṃsaka* as the chapter entitled the **Daśasamādhi[ka]* (“Ten Meditations”), has the expression “Vairocana Bodhisattva” where Śikṣānanda's version has “Vairocana Tathāgata”, and the Tibetan version has “Blessed One Vairocana Tathāgata”.

<i>Dengmu pusa suowen sanmei jing</i> (T 288: 10.575c)	<i>Shiding pin</i> 十定品 (Chapter 27 of Śikṣānanda's version) (T 279: 10.211b)	<i>Ting nge 'dzin bcu</i> (Chapter 33 of the Tibetan version) (P 761: Li 175b ⁷)
墮樓近菩薩	毘盧遮那如來	<i>bcom ldan 'das de bzhin gshegs pa rnam par snang mdzad</i>

The expression “Vairocana Bodhisattva” appears also in another chapter of the large *Buddhāvataṃsakas*: the **Anuvyañjanaraśminirdeśa* (“Explication of the Light from the [eighty] Minor Marks”) chapter of the large *Buddhāvataṃsakas*. Here, a miracle is mentioned that is performed by Śākyamuni in the Tuṣita heaven just before he enters the womb of his mother, Queen Māyā, and the text refers to Śākyamuni as “Vairocana Bodhisattva” throughout the chapter.

<i>Fo xiaoxiang guangming gongde pin</i> 佛小相光明功德品 (Chapter 30 of Buddhābhaddra's version)	<i>Rulai suihao guangming gongde pin</i> 如來隨好光明功德品 (Chapter 35 of Śikṣānanda's version)	<i>dpe byad bzang po'i 'od gzer bstan pa</i> (Chapter 41 of the Tibetan version)
盧舍那菩薩	毘盧遮那菩薩	<i>byang chub sems dpa' rnam par snang mdzad</i>

Here we should pay attention to the fact that the *Mahāvastu* (*Great Event*), a text belonging to the Mahāsaṃghika sect of Śrāvakayāna Buddhism, calls Śākyamuni *Vairocana Bodhisattvaḥ* (Vairocana Bodhisattva). When describing Kāla, a dragon-king (*nāgarāja*) welcoming Śākyamuni on his arrival at the Nairanjanā river to become a Buddha, the second *Avalokita-sūtra* of the *Mahāvastu* says as follows:

Joyful and delighted he adored the Bodhisattva, who was like the sun (*vairocana*) risen in the sky with all its rays, and addressed him thus:⁹

9 Jones 1949: 285. The Sanskrit *vairocana* in bracket is my addition.

*vairocanaṃ vā gaganasmiṃ sarvaraśmisamāgatam |
arcitvā muditatuşto bodhisattvaṃ samālope ||*¹⁰

In this context of the *Mahāvastu*, the term *vairocana* is not an epithet but a mere simile. However, it is likely that such a simile led to the formation of the Mahāyāna application of the epithet “Vairocana” to Gotama as a Bodhisattva.

To sum up, in the large *Buddhāvataṃsakas*,

- (1) “Vairocana” is, like “Śākyamuni”, not a name but an epithet applied to the historical Buddha Gotama;
- (2) The epithet “Vairocana” seems to have originally been applied not to Gotama as the Buddha, but to Gotama as a Bodhisattva;
- (3) The application of the epithet “Vairocana” to Gotama as a Bodhisattva seems to have a relationship with Śrāvakayāna Buddhism, because the *Mahāvastu* of the Mahāsaṃghika sect calls Gotama *Vairocana Bodhisattvaḥ*.

Śākyamuni and Vairocana in Indian Esoteric Buddhism

As is mentioned above, Vairocana appears also in the *Mahāvairocanābhisaṃbodhi-vikurvitādhiṣṭhāna* and the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha*, both of which are basic *sūtras* in Indian esoteric Buddhism and therefore were commented upon by some esoteric Buddhists. In what follows, I will introduce their interpretations of Vairocana by using two representative commentaries on the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha*: Śākyamitra’s (circa 8th century) *Kosalālaṃkāra* (*The Ornament of the Kosala Country*) and Ānandagarbha’s (circa 8th century) *Tattvālokakārī* (*Casting Light on Reality*).

In the introduction of the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha*, two Vairocanas are described: Vairocana and Mahāvairocana (Great Vairocana). While Vairocana is said to have dwelt in Akaniṣṭha,¹¹ the heaven of the king of the gods (*Akaniṣṭha-deva-rājasya bhavane vijahāra*), Mahāvairocana is said to have dwelt in the hearts of all Tathāgatas (*sarva-tathāgata-hṛdayeṣu vijahāra*). Although Chinese and Japanese esoteric Buddhists did not distinguish between them, both the Indian commentators say explicitly that the two Buddhas are different figures:

Śākyamitra

Since the difference between (1) Vairocana and (2) Mahāvairocana is not known, it should be mentioned. (1) Vairocana is a material body (*rūpa-kāya*). As a *niṣyanda* (result not different from its cause, *i.e.* a good result from good cause) whose characteristic is *āśraya-parivṛtti* (complete transformation of the basis, *i.e.* complete purification of body and mind), he became enlightened in Akaniṣṭha, a heaven of the gods, for the purpose of letting Bodhisattvas

10 MV 304, 9–10.

11 The “Sky-based” Heaven, *i.e.* the highest limit of the rūpadhātu (“world of material forms”).

who were born in the families of the gods take delight in enjoying his teaching (*dharma*). The one who, surrounded [by congregations of gods] in that very heaven (*tasmim eva bhavane*), manifests a perfectly-purified *niṣyanda* wisdom (*jñāna*) characterized by making objects manifest (*pratibhāsa-lakṣaṇam*), which owing to a succession of *samādhis* (meditation) follows on after the *vipāka* (result different from its cause) body, is referred to as Vairocana. Just as is said in a stanza: “Having abandoned the Śuddhāvāsa heaven,¹² [a Buddha] goes to the Akaniṣṭha heaven and shines. *Saṃbuddhas* (perfect Buddhas) become enlightened there (in the Akaniṣṭha heaven), but a *nirmita* (illusion [= illusory form of a Buddha]) becomes enlightened here (on the earth)”.¹³ (2) Mahāvairocana is the one whose essence is wisdom (*jñāna-svabhāva*). Being liberated from the hindrance of defilement (*kleśāvaraṇa*) and the hindrance of the object of knowledge (*jñeyāvaraṇa*), [the wisdom] works to manifest the aboriginal purity of all [sentient] beings.

rnam par snang mdzad dang rnam par snang mdzad chen po la tha dad du bya ba ci zhi g yod pa mi shes pas de brjod par bya ste | rnam par snang mdzad ni gzugs kyi sku ste | rgyu mthun pa gnas yongs su gyur pa'i mtshan nyid can du 'og min lha'i rgyal po'i gnas na de lha'i rigs kyi nang du skyes pa'i byang chub sems dpa' rnam la chos kyi longs spyod kyi dga' ba nyams su myong bar bya ba'i phyir mngon par byang chub ting nge 'dzin gyi rim gyis (corr.: gyi) rnam par smin pa'i sku rjes nas rgyu mthun pa'i ye shes yongs su dag pa so sor snang ba'i mtshan nyid can gnas de nyid na yongs su bskor bar ston pa gang yin pa de la ni rnam par snang mdzad ces bya ba'i sgrar bshad de | ji skad du | gtsang ma gnas ni rnam spangs shing | 'og min gnas ni nyams dag 'bar | yang dag sangs rgyas der sangs rgyas | sprul pa dag ni 'dir sangs rgyas zhes tshigs su bcad pa gsungs pa'i phyir ro || rnam par snang mdzad chen po ni ye shes kyi rang bzhin can te | nyon mongs pa dang shes bya'i sgrub pa las shin tu rnam par grol ba dang dngos po thams cad kyi rang bzhin so sor snang ba yang dag par ston par spyod pa'o ||¹⁴

Ānandagarbha

(1) The one who became enlightened in the Akaniṣṭha heaven and is the self-nature (*i.e.* central figure) of [the array of] the bodies of five Tathāgatas (*i.e.* Vairocana, Akṣobhya, Ratnasambhava, Lokeśvara and Amoghasiddhi, as mentioned in the *sūtra* in question; see below) is Vairocana. (2) The *dharma-dhātu* (basis of qualities [of sages] *i.e.* emptiness)¹⁵ whose characteristic is the absence of beginning and end, and which is the cause of his (Vairocana's) production of the array of Vairocana, Vajrasattva, and others, each being a mind (*citta*) and mental associates (*caitta*) without duality [of subject and object], is Mahāvairocana.

'og min gyi gnas su mngon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas pa de bzhin gshegs pa lnga'i sku'i ngo bo nyid ni rnam par snang mdzad yin la de nyid kiyis gnyis su med pa'i sems dang sems

- 12 The “Purified Abode” Heaven, where *anāgāmins* (the third class of Śrāvaka sages) live.
- 13 The first fourth of this stanza corresponds to the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* *Sagāthaka* 772b: *Śuddhāvāsād vinissrtāḥ*. The second fourth corresponds to *Sagāthaka* 107d: *Akaniṣṭhe virājate*. The latter half corresponds to *Sagāthaka* 39cd: *tatra budhyanti saṃbuddhā nirmitas tv iha budhyate*. Śākyamitra's arrangement “Having abandoned the Śuddhāvāsa heaven, [a Buddha] goes to the Akaniṣṭha heaven and shines” makes no sense, because “Śuddhāvāsa” heaven is a collective noun referring to five heavens (Avṛha, Atapa, Sudṛṣa, Sudarśana, and Akaniṣṭha), and contains the Akaniṣṭha heaven itself.
- 14 P 3326: Wī 9a⁴⁻⁸.
- 15 For the definition of the word *dharma-dhātu*, see the *Madhyāntavibhāga* I.14–15.

*las byung ba nram par snang mdzad dang rdo rje sems pa la sogs pa'i tshul bskyed pa'i
rgyur gyur pa chos kyi dbyings thog ma dang tha ma med pa'i mtshan nyid can ni nram
par snang mdzad chen po yin no* ||¹⁶

While Śākyamitra regards Mahāvairocana as wisdom (*jñāna*), Ānandagarbha considers Mahāvairocana to be the *dharma-dhātu*. The *dharma-dhātu* is identical with the body of *Dharma* (*dharma-kāya*; see further below). Śākyamitra paraphrases “wisdom” by “body of wisdom” (*jñāna-kāya*) and says: “because both the body of wisdom (*jñāna-kāya*) and the body of *Dharma* (*dharma-kāya*) are pervasive in everything... (*ye shes dang chos kyi sku gnyis ni thams cad du khyab pa yin pa'i phyir*)¹⁷”. Therefore we should conclude that the wisdom mentioned by Śākyamitra is the one which, like the *dharma-dhātu* (i.e. emptiness), exists originally in all sentient beings, but that it is not identical with the *dharma-dhātu*. Thus the two commentators differ from each other in expounding Mahāvairocana.

However, as regards Vairocana, they both comment equally that Vairocana not only dwelt in the Akaniṣṭha heaven, but also became enlightened there. Their comments are based, in fact, on the passages that follow the introduction of the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha* itself. In the relevant passages, the *sūtra* first introduces Sarvārthasiddhi, a Bodhisattva who practices all forms of asceticism for the purpose of attaining enlightenment. As we have seen above, “Sarvārthasiddhi” is, in the large *Buddhāvataṃsakas*, one of the ten epithets dedicated to the historical Buddha, Śākyamuni. Then the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha* describes the sight of all Tathāgatas coming near to Sarvārthasiddhi and letting him know “the reality of all Tathāgatas” (*sarva-tathāgata-tattva*, as in the title of the *sūtra*), due to the fact that all asceticism is useless for becoming a Buddha.

Having known the reality of all Tathāgatas, Sarvārthasiddhi becomes enlightened, becomes a Tathāgata named Vajradhātu, and is accompanied by four Buddhas: Akṣobhya, Ratnasambhava, Lokeśvara, and Amoghasiddhi. The *sūtra* then calls him “the Blessed One Śākyamuni Tathāgata” (*Bhagavān Śākyamunis Tathāgataḥ*). This proves that in the *Sarvatathāgatatattvasaṃgraha*, as in the large *Buddhāvataṃsakas*, Sarvārthasiddhi is identical to Śākyamuni.

The *sūtra* further goes on to refer to him as “the Blessed One Tathāgata Vairocana, who became enlightened not long before” (*Bhagavān Vairocanas Tathāgata acirābhisambuddhaḥ*). Both of the commentators, Śākyamitra and Ānandagarbha, explain that Sarvārthasiddhi is a past form of that Vairocana who is said in the introduction of this *sūtra* to have dwelt in the Akaniṣṭha heaven. This reveals that in the *Sarvatathāgatatattva-saṃgraha*, as in the large *Buddhāvataṃsakas*, Vairocana is Śākyamuni himself. When commenting on the passage “[all Tathāgatas] came near him (Sarvārthasiddhi)” (*tenopajagmuḥ*), the commentators say as follows:

16 P 3333: Zi 36a⁵⁻⁷.

17 P 3326: Wi 19b⁶⁻⁷.

Śākyamitra

The line “[all Tathāgatas] came near him (Sarvārthasiddhi)” means “[all Tathāgatas] began to stay near [him]”. the Blessed One Sarvārthasiddhi, having taken his birth in the Śākya tribe, and having made a [docetic] show of feeling joy as a boy, demonstrating the arts, staying in the harem, departing [from the palace] and the great renunciation, also made a [docetic] show of [engaging in] asceticism, with his body and life span both similar to those sentient beings who had already become adequate [to attain enlightenment] in their past lives and were born among humankind, in order to allow [them] to achieve their purpose (*i.e.* enlightenment), and in order to break the conceit of those who had become attached to a heretical view and arrogantly thought that man could be liberated by asceticism. Having left his human body behind at the place of asceticism by means of his supporting power (*adhiṣṭhāna*), [Sarvārthasiddhi] went to the heaven of the king of gods (*i.e.* Akaniṣṭha) through his supernatural power (*rddhi*). [All Tathāgatas] drew near to him, *i.e.*, went close to him who, by using his body made of mind (*manomayakāya*), after having entered into the *śūnyatā-samādhi* (emptiness meditation) and the like, arrived at the Akaniṣṭha heaven for the purpose of attaining the utmost, right, and perfect enlightenment (*anuttarā samyak-sambodhiḥ*).¹⁸

*der bzhugs pa ni gnas par mdzad pa ste | bcom ldan 'das don thams cad grub pa shā kya'i rigs su skye ba yongs su bzhes nas | gzhon nu rol pa dang | bzo bstan pa dang | btsun mo'i 'khor gyi nang na bzhugs pa dang | mngon par byung ba dang | rab tu byung ba yang bstan nas | sems can sngon yongs su smin par byas pa mir skye pa rnam dang | sku tshe yang dag par 'brel pa la sogs pas don mdzad pa'i phyir dang | mu stegs kyi lta ba la mngon par zhen cing dka' bar spyod pas grol bar 'gyur ro zhes mngon par lrom pa rnam la mngon pa'i nga rgyal gzhom pa'i phyir dka' bar spyod pa mdzad par yang bstan te | dka' bar spyod pa'i sa nyid la byin gyis brlabs kyi mi'i lus bzhag nas rdzu 'phrul gyis lha'i rgyal po'i gnas su gshegs te | yid kyi rang bzhin gyi lus kyi bla na med pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i byang chub tu mngon par rdzogs par 'tshang rgya ba'i phyir stong pa nyid kyi ting nge 'dzin lta bu la snyoms par zhugs nas 'og min gyi gnas na bzhugs pa gang na pa der gshegs te | der bzhud ces bya ba'i don to ||*¹⁹

Ānandagarbha

The meaning of this [passage] is as follows: [All Tathāgatas] went near, *i.e.*, went close to him, being the Blessed One Sarvārthasiddhi who, having perfected the accumulation (*saṃbhāra*) of both wisdom (*jñāna*) and virtue (*puṇya*) through taking various past births during three *asaṃkhyeya* (incalculable) eons, produced *dhyānas* [in the *rūpadhātu*] and *samāpattis* in the *ārūpyadhātu*, having produced the highest fourth *dhyāna*; having, through the power of *samādhi*, formed an existence equipped with a body made of mind (*manomayakāya*) as his final [existence]; and having gained the consecration (*abhiṣeka*) with crown and robes from all Tathāgatas, gave up *ānāpāna* (a special breathing training/practice) by thinking, “I should attain enlightenment in order to help and benefit all sentient beings,” and then sat in the

- 18 This passage has been introduced to the Western world through Obermiller's English translation of Bu-ston's *History of Buddhism*:

Śākyamitra and others, who hold the doctrine of the *Guhyasamāja*, say that the Teacher, when He was practising asceticism, left His worldly frame on the banks of the Nairanjanā river, and, in His spiritual form, rose up to the Akaniṣṭha heavens, where He became a Buddha in the form of the Body of Bliss. Thereupon the spirit again descended in to the Body wearied by penance, and after that, the other acts, the arrival to Bodhi-maṇḍa etc. were performed. (Obermiller 1931: 137, 11–18)

- 19 P 3326: Wi 20a⁷–20b⁴.

seat of enlightenment (*bodhimaṇḍa*) in the Akaniṣṭha heaven. [This is the reason the text] speaks thus.

*de'i don 'di yin te gang gis bskal pa grangs med pa gsum du skye ba sna tshogs bzhes te |
bsod nams dang ye shes kyi tshogs yongs su rdzogs par mdzad nas | bsam gtan dang gzugs
med pa'i snyoms par 'jug pa bskyed de | bsam gtan bzhi pa'i chen po 'i yang chen po bskyed
nas ting nge 'dzin gyi stobs kyi yid kyi rang bzhin gyi lus can gyi srid pa tha ma par mdzad
nas | de bzhin gshegs pa thams cad las cod pan dang | dar dpyangs kyi dbang bskur ba thob
nas sems can thams cad la phan pa dang bde ba'i phyir 'tshang rgya bar bya'o zhes dgongs
nas dbugs rngub pa dang | dbugs dbyung ba bkag (dka') ste bcom ldan 'das don thams cad
grub pa 'og min gyi gnas na byang chub kyi snying po na bzhugs pa gang na ba der gshegs
shing bzhud nas 'di skad ces gsungs pa yin no ||²⁰*

Although the *sūtra* calls Sarvārthasiddhi “the Blessed One Śākyamuni Tathāgata” (*Bhagavāṃ Śākyamunis Tathāgataḥ*) and Śākyamitra comments clearly that Sarvārthasiddhi was born in the Śākya tribe, *i.e.* Sarvārthasiddhi is Śākyamuni, Ānandagarbha does not explicitly say so. When commenting on the relevant words of the *sūtra*, Ānandagarbha says rather that Sarvārthasiddhi *will be* born in the Śākya tribe and *will be* called Śākyamuni, *i.e.* that Sarvārthasiddhi is a former life of Śākyamuni:

Expressing the idea that [Sarvārthasiddhi] will be so called in the future after taking his birth in the Śākya tribe, [the line] says “Śākyamuni”.

*ma 'ongs pa'i dus na shā kya'i rigs su skye ba yongs su gzung nas 'di ltar bya'o || zhes
thugs dam bcas pas na shā kya thub pa la zhes smos so ||²¹*

To sum up, in Indian esoteric Buddhism, just as in the large *Buddhāvataṃsakas* and Sūryasiddhi's commentary on the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra*, Vairocana is regarded as Śākyamuni himself.

Additionally, an interesting idea provided by both Śākyamitra and Ānandagarbha is, as we saw above, that Sarvārthasiddhi went to the Akaniṣṭha heaven using his body made of mind (*manomayakāya*), and then attained a new material body while leaving his original material body behind on the earth. According to both commentators, Śākyamuni had two different material bodies simultaneously: one is earthly, the other is heavenly. In other words, although Śākyamuni died in his original body on earth when he was eighty years old, he goes on living with another body in heaven, as the super-Buddha Vairocana.

Śākyamuni and Vairocana in the Doctrine of Three Bodies in Indian Buddhism

As is well known, the Yogācāra school of Mahāyāna Buddhism classifies the Buddha's bodies into the following three groups:²²

20 P 3333: Zi 44a³⁻⁷.

21 P 3333: Zi 51b⁴.

22 See, for example, the *Mahāyānasamgraha* X.1.

(1) *svabhāva-kāya* (/ *svābhāvikah kāyaḥ*) or “the body of self-nature”. The body of self-nature is the self-nature of the other two bodies, and is also called *dharma-kāya* or “the body of *Dharma*”. This body is identical with emptiness.

(2) *sambhoga-kāya* (/ *sāmbhogikah kāyaḥ*) or “the body of enjoyment”. The body of enjoyment is a material body that a Buddha enjoys for himself; he also allows bodhisattvas in the ten stages to enjoy the same body on the occasions when he preaches.

(3) *nirmāṇa-kāya* (/ *nairmāṇikah kāyaḥ*) or “the body of transformation”. The body of transformation is also called *nirmita* or “[something] transformed”, because this body is created by the supernatural power of the body of enjoyment, and transformed into various forms for the purpose of teaching sentient beings who have not yet entered the ten stages.

The Yogācāra school regards Śākyamuni as a body of transformation.²³ Although I have not yet succeeded in finding any Yogācāra text that expounds Vairocana in terms of the doctrine of three bodies, I have located a text of the Mādhyamika school of Mahāyāna Buddhism that refers to Vairocana in the context of this doctrine. In Chapter 4 of his *Tarkajvālā* (*The Flame of Reason*),²⁴ entitled “Entering into Reality according to the Śrāvakas” (*Nyan thos kyi de kho na la 'jug pa*), Bhavya (circa 6th century) supposes that Śrāvakayānist have twelve reasons for asserting that the Mahāyāna is not the Buddha’s true teaching, and argues against them one by one. The seventh of the twelve reasons is as follows:

For the reason that since [in the Mahāyāna] Śākyamuni is said to be a *nirmita*, all his teachings are false.

shā kya thub pa sprul pa yin par smra bas bstan pa thams cad kyang log pa yin pa'i phyir |²⁵

Bhavya argues against this point as follows:

Although Śākyamuni is a mere *nirmita*, [he] is true, because [he] is produced by the body of enjoyment that has Akaniṣṭha for its [Buddha]-realm, and that [body in turn] depends on the body of *Dharma*.

shā kya thub pa yang sprul pa kho na yin par rigs te | 'og min gyi spyod yul can chos kyi sku la brten pa'i longs spyod rdzogs pa'i sku las rab tu byung ba yin pa'i phyir ro ||²⁶

This defence means that since *nirmitas* are created by the body of enjoyment on the basis of the body of *Dharma*, both being true bodies of the Buddha, all teachings

23 See the following texts: Asaṅga’s verse commentary on the *Vajracchedikā prajñāpāramitā* verse 74 (Tucci 1956: 90); Vasubandhu’s commentary on the *Vajracchedikā prajñāpāramitā*, T 1511, 25: 784b; T 1513, 25: 876c; Vasubandhu’s commentary on the *Saddharma puṇḍarīka-sūtra*, T 1519, 26: 9b; T 1520, 26: 18c; Vasubandhu’s *Vyākhyāyukti*, VY 240–249.

24 For this chapter, see Skilling 1997.

25 D 3856: Dza 156a⁵⁻⁶; P 5256: Dza 169b³.

26 D 3856: Dza 181a⁶⁻⁷; P 5256: Dza 197a⁵⁻⁶.

of *nirmitas* are from true Buddhas and therefore true. Bhavya goes on to refer to and quote several passages from scriptures of the Śrāvakayāna that prove the fact that Buddhas produced *nirmitas* for the purpose of guiding sentient beings, and then says the following:

In just this manner, when a *nirmita* being Śākyamuni acts, [the *nirmita*] is not like a false illusion; while [*nirmita* Buddhas] are made to appear by the supporting power (*adhiṣṭhāna*) of the Tathāgata Vairocana who resides in the Śuddhāvāsa heaven, these *nirmita* Buddhas are not different Buddhas, because their basis (*i.e.* Vairocana) is one. Just like [various] lights produced by the sun, or just like many men who perform a task at the behest of their lord, since the *nirmitas* are many but their task is one, it is admitted that Tathāgata is not many. Therefore there is no discrepancy in saying [as in the *Bahudhātuka-sūtra* (*The Sūtra on Multiple Elements*) of the *Madhyamāgama* (*Middle-length Sayings*)]: “There is no state and no condition in which many Buddhas appear in one world [simultaneously]”,²⁷ for [this] is said with regard to one world-system consisting of a billion worlds (*trisāhasra-mahāśaḥasra-lokadhātu*) [where one body of enjoyment reigns], but not with regard to all world-systems [each reigned over by each of many bodies of enjoyment simultaneously].

de bzhin du shā kya thub pa'i sprul pa yang 'jug pa yin la | yang dag pa ji lta ba bzhin ma yin pa'i sgyu ma dang 'dra ba yang ma yin zhing | gnas gtsang ma na gnas pa'i de bzhin gshegs pa rnam par snang mdzad kyi (D: kyis P) byin gyi rlabs (D: brlabs P) kyis bstan pa yang (D: P ad. ma) yin la | sprul pa'i sangs rgyas de rnams tha dad pa'i sangs rgyas kyang ma yin te | rten gcig pa'i phyir nyi ma'i dkyil 'khor las rab tu bkpe ba'i 'od zer lta bu'am | mi'i bdag po la brten pa'i bya ba byed pa'i skyes bu mang po bzhin du sprul pa rnams mang po nyid yin na yang mdzad pa gcig pa'i phyir de bzhin gshegs pa ni mang po nyid ma yin par 'dod de | des na 'jig rten gyi kham gsig tu sangs rgyas mang po 'byung ba ni gnas med cing skabs med do zhes bya ba dang yang mi 'gal te | stong gsum gyi stong chen po'i 'jig rten gyi kham kyi dbang du byas nas bstan pa yin gyi | 'jig rten gyi kham thams cad du ni ma yin pas so ||²⁸

Here Bhavya states that *nirmitas* are produced by Vairocana who resides in the Śuddhāvāsa heaven, a collective noun including five heavens: Avṛṇa, Atapa, Sudṛṣa, Sudarśana, and Akaniṣṭha. Judging from Bhavya's statement above that the body of enjoyment has Akaniṣṭha for its [Buddha-]realm, we should conclude that Bhavya did not identify Vairocana with Śākyamuni, but regarded Śākyamuni and Vairocana as the body of transformation and the body of enjoyment respectively.

To sum up, unlike the large *Buddhāvataṃsaka*, Sūryasiddhi and Indian esoteric Buddhists, Bhavya is of the opinion that Vairocana is not Śākyamuni himself.

Śākyamuni and Vairocana in Chinese Buddhism

The large *Buddhāvataṃsaka* was first translated into Chinese by Buddhahadra in 418–420, under the Eastern Jin 晉, a dynasty in southern China, and soon gained

27 阿難。若世中有二如來者終無是處。 T 26, 1: 723c–724a, *asthānam anavakāśo yad apūrvāca-ramau dvau tathāgatāv arhantau samyaksambuddhau loka utpadjeyātām*. (AKBb 184, 19–20)

28 D 3856: Dza 181b⁶–182a²; P 5256: Dza 197b⁶–198a³.

broad currency during the period of the Southern and Northern Dynasties. According to Jizang's 吉藏 (549–623) *Huayan youyi* 華嚴遊意 (*The Mind that Disports Itself in the Avataṃsaka*), a treatise on the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*, people in the Southern Dynasties regarded Śākyamuni and Vairocana, as they appear in this *sūtra*, as the same person, while people in the Northern Dynasties considered them to be different figures. As we have seen above, the understanding of the Southerners is more appropriate than the understanding of the Northerners, in the context of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* itself.

The understanding of the Northerners was probably first expressed in the *Fanwangjing* 梵網經 (*Brahma-Net Sūtra*), an apocryphal *sūtra* compiled, according to Funayama Tōru,²⁹ in the latter half of the 5th century, under the Wei 魏, a northern Chinese dynasty. This *sūtra*, in which Vairocana preaches precepts at Śākyamuni's request, clearly shows the idea that Śākyamuni is a body of transformation created by Vairocana:

Then the Buddha Vairocana was greatly delighted, and manifested a *śamādhi* (meditation) named “the originally-enlightened constantly-dwelling *Dharma* body whose nature is a light pervading like the ether”, and disclosed to those present: “O sons of the Buddha, listen carefully, think carefully, and then practice. I practiced the “stages of [the development of] mind” for a hundred *asaṃkhyeya* (incalculable) eons and, for this reason, succeeded in eliminating [the qualities of] the ordinary being, achieved correct enlightenment, and then came to be called Vairocana. I dwell in the ocean of worlds contained in a lotus flower (*i.e.* the Kusumatalagarbha-vyūhālaṃkāra-lokadhātu-samudra of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*). The flower is vast and endowed with a thousand leaves. Each leaf consists of one world-system, and they form a thousand world-systems in all. I created a thousand Śākyamunis in each of the thousand world-systems. Then each world-system has a billion Mt Sumerus, a billion suns and moons, a billion sets of four continents, a billion Jambūdvīpas, and a billion Bodhisattvas. One Śākyamuni sits under [each of] a billion *bodhi*-trees [by creating a billion bodies] and preaches the Bodhisattva's stages of [the development of] mind about which you ask. Just like him, each of the other nine hundred and ninety-nine Śākyamunis creates [a billion Śākyamunis, thus there are] a trillion Śākyamunis [in all]. The thousand Buddhas on the [lotus] flower are my bodies of transformation. The trillion Śākyamunis are bodies of transformation created by the thousand Śākyamunis. I myself am the very root and called “the Buddha Vairocana”.

爾時盧舍那佛即大歡喜現虛空光體性本原成佛常住法身三昧示諸大眾。是諸佛子。諦聽。善思修行。我已百阿僧祇劫修行心地以之爲因初捨凡夫成等正覺、號爲盧舍那。住蓮花臺藏世界海。其臺周遍有千葉。一葉一世界爲千世界。我化爲千釋迦攬千世界。後就一葉世界復有百億須彌山百億日月百億四天下百億南閼浮提百億菩薩。釋迦坐百億菩提樹下各說汝所問菩提薩埵心地。其餘九百九十九釋迦各現千百億釋迦亦復如是。千花上佛是吾化身。千百億釋迦是千釋迦化身。吾已爲本原名爲盧舍那佛。³⁰

The *Fanwangjing*'s understanding of the relationship between Śākyamuni and Vairocana is thus, as we saw above, somewhat similar to Bhavya's understanding of the same relationship. Although the *Fanwangjing* is an apocryphal *sūtra* created in

29 Funayama 1996.

30 T 1484, 24: 997c.

China and predates Bhavya, it may have happened that the creator(s) had been influenced by this kind of Indian understanding through communication with Indian monks.

The Wei dynasty started to accept the doctrine of the three bodies from the beginning of the 6th century, through the texts of the Yogācāra school translated into Chinese by two Indian monks, Ratnamati and Bodhiruci. The Chinese translation of Vasubandhu's commentary on the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra*, made by Bodhiruci, led to the formation of the Dilun 地論 school, which was centered on the study of this text and was active in the North. A Dunhuang manuscript belonging to the Dilun school, Stein 613V, has a "Three Bodies of the Buddha" chapter (*Fo san shen zhang* 佛三身章) which runs as follows:

We state that Vairocana has the characteristic of enjoyment; Śākyamuni is characterized by response.

說盧舍那以爲報相釋迦以爲應相。

This statement is the same as Bhavya's understanding, as long as we presume that "body of response" (Ch. *ying shen* 應身) is a translation of "body of transformation". Jizang's treatise on the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* also refers to this statement as the understanding of Northern masters:

Second, Northern masters understand: there are three kinds of Buddha: [Buddha as the body of] *Dharma*, [Buddha as the body of] enjoyment, and [Buddha as the body of] transformation. The *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* was preached by the Buddha as [the body of] enjoyment. The *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, the *Prajñāpāramitā*, and so on were preached by the Buddha as [the body of] transformation. The Buddha as [the body of] *Dharma* never preaches. They (northern masters) interpret: Vairocana is the Buddha as [the body of] enjoyment; Śākyamuni is the Buddha as [the body of] transformation; Vairocana is, for Śākyamuni, the [body of] enjoyment; Śākyamuni is, for Vairocana, the Buddha as [the body of] transformation. The *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* was preached by the Buddha Vairocana.

次北方論師解。彼有三佛。一法。二報。三化。華嚴是報佛說。涅槃般若等是化佛說。法佛則不說。彼判。舍那是報佛。釋迦是化佛。舍那爲釋迦之報。釋迦爲舍那之化。華嚴經是舍那佛說。³¹

Though influenced by the Dilun school, the Tiantai 天台 school shows a somewhat strange understanding. This school distinguishes between the two Chinese transcriptions corresponding to the Sanskrit "Vairocana", that is, Piluzhena 毘盧遮那, which appears in the *Guan puxian pusa xingfajing* 觀普賢菩薩行法經, and Lushena 盧舍那, which appears in Buddhahadra's translation of the *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra*. The *Fahua wenju* 法華文句 (*Punctuating Commentary on the Saddharmapūṇḍarīka*), a record of the Tiantai master Zhiyi's 智顗 (538–597) lectures on the *Saddharmapūṇḍarīka-sūtra*, runs as follows:

The Tathāgata as the body of *Dharma* is named Piluzhena, which is rendered into Chinese as "ubiquitous". The Tathāgata as the body of enjoyment is named Lushena, which is

31 T 1731, 35: 1c.

rendered into Chinese as “perfect purity”. The Tathāgata as the body of transformation is named Śākyamuni, which is rendered into Chinese as “passing over from the conflagration [of lives]”.

法身如來名毘盧遮那。此翻遍一切處。³²
報身如來名盧舍那。此翻淨滿。應身如來名釋迦文。此翻度沃焦。^{33 34}

Thus, the understanding that Śākyamuni and Vairocana are different figures originated in the Wei dynasty in Northern China, and came to enjoy popularity during the Sui 隋 and Tang 唐 dynasties, both of which unified Northern and Southern China. Japanese Buddhism, which is deeply indebted to Sui and Tang Buddhism, has also been influenced by this understanding.

Conclusion

My suggestions in this paper are as follows:

- (1) For the large *Buddhāvataṃsakas* and Sūryasiddhi’s commentary, both “Vairocana” and “Śākyamuni” are epithets applied to the historical Buddha Gotama, *i.e.* Vairocana is Śākyamuni himself;
- (2) The epithet “Vairocana” seems to have originally been applied not to Gotama as the Buddha, but to Gotama as a Bodhisattva;
- (3) The application of the epithet “Vairocana” to Gotama as a Bodhisattva seems to have a relationship with Śrāvakayāna Buddhism, because the *Mahāvastu* of the Mahāsaṃghika sect calls Gotama *Vairocana Bodhisattva*;
- (4) In Indian esoteric Buddhism, similarly, Vairocana is regarded as Śākyamuni himself;
- (5) In his doctrine of three bodies, Bhavya considers that Vairocana, the body of enjoyment, created Śākyamuni, the body of transformation;
- (6) The *Fanwangjing*, an apocryphal *sūtra* created in China, and the doctrine of three bodies in Chinese Buddhism, show the same understanding as Bhavya.

It has been said by some contemporary scholars that Vairocana in the large *Buddhāvataṃsakas* is the body of *Dharma*. For example, Watanabe Shōkō states:

The *Buddhāvataṃsaka-sūtra* makes it clear that the most fundamental essence of Śākyamuni Buddha is the Buddha as the body of *Dharma*. This Buddha as the body of *Dharma* is named Piluzhena Buddha (pronounced in the Indian manner, “Vairocana”). This Piluzhena Buddha appears in multiple worlds in the shapes of multiple Buddhas, such as Śākyamuni and others.

『華嚴經』はシャーキヤムニ仏陀の本体が法身仏であることを明らかにする。その法身仏はビルシャナ仏陀（インド流に発音すればヴァイローチャナ）と名づけ

32 Cf. 觀普賢菩薩行法經, T 277, 9: 392c.

33 Cf. 阿毘曇八鍵度論, T 1543, 26: 916a.

34 T 1718, 34: 128a.

られる。このビルシャナ仏陀がシャーキャムニその他の多くの仏陀となって多くの世界に姿を現わすのである。³⁵

I do not deny the fact that the large *Buddhāvataṃsakas* say in some places that the body of *Dharma* creates multiple Buddha-bodies. However, the large *Buddhāvataṃsakas* never say that this body of *Dharma* is named Vairocana. Vairocana in the large *Buddhāvataṃsakas* is, as we saw above, none other than Śākyamuni himself.

Abbreviations

- AKBh *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*. Edited by P. Pradhan. Patna: K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1975.
 D Derge.
 DBhS *Daśabhūmīśvaro nāma mahāyānasūtram*. Edited by Ryūkō Kondō. Tokyo: Daijyō Bukkyō Kenyō-Kai, 1936.
 GVS *Gaṇḍavyūhasūtra*. Edited by P. L. Vaidya. Darbhanga: Mithila Institute of Post-Graduate Studies and Research in Sanskrit Learning, 1960.
 MV *Le Mahāvastu Tome III*. Edited by Émile Senart. Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1882.
 P Peking.
 T Taishō.
 VY *The Tibetan Text of the Vyākhyāyukti of Vasubandhu*. Edited by Lee Jong Cheol. Tokyo: Sanikibō, 2001.

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