

1000

Buddhas of Genius



The Book

Victoria Charles

1000 Buddhas of Genius

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Charles V.

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“All living beings are Buddhas and have wisdom and virtue within them.” (Buddha) Buddha ranks among the most depicted holy figures of the world - perhaps appearing more than Christ, a subject widely treated by Western artists. Venerated in all the nations of Asia, and even beyond, his image took form along the Silk Road, the birthplace of many schools of Buddhism. Indeed, the Buddhist religion recognises many Buddhas representing various traditions such as Buddhism of 'the Ancient Teaching' (Theravada), of 'the Great Vehicle' (Mahayana) and Tantric Buddhism (Vajrayana). A figure adored by all, Buddha has been depicted in every art form: sculpture, often of monumental size, like the now destroyed Buddhas of Bamyan, painting, and above all in countless cave murals, such as those of Ajanta in India or Dunhuang in China. Perfect for all those passionate about Asian art, from neophytes to Buddhists, this fascinating work invites the reader not only to discover or rediscover Buddha, his history, his codes, but also his innumerable faces through 1,000 representations selected from among the most beautiful works held in the world's greatest museums.

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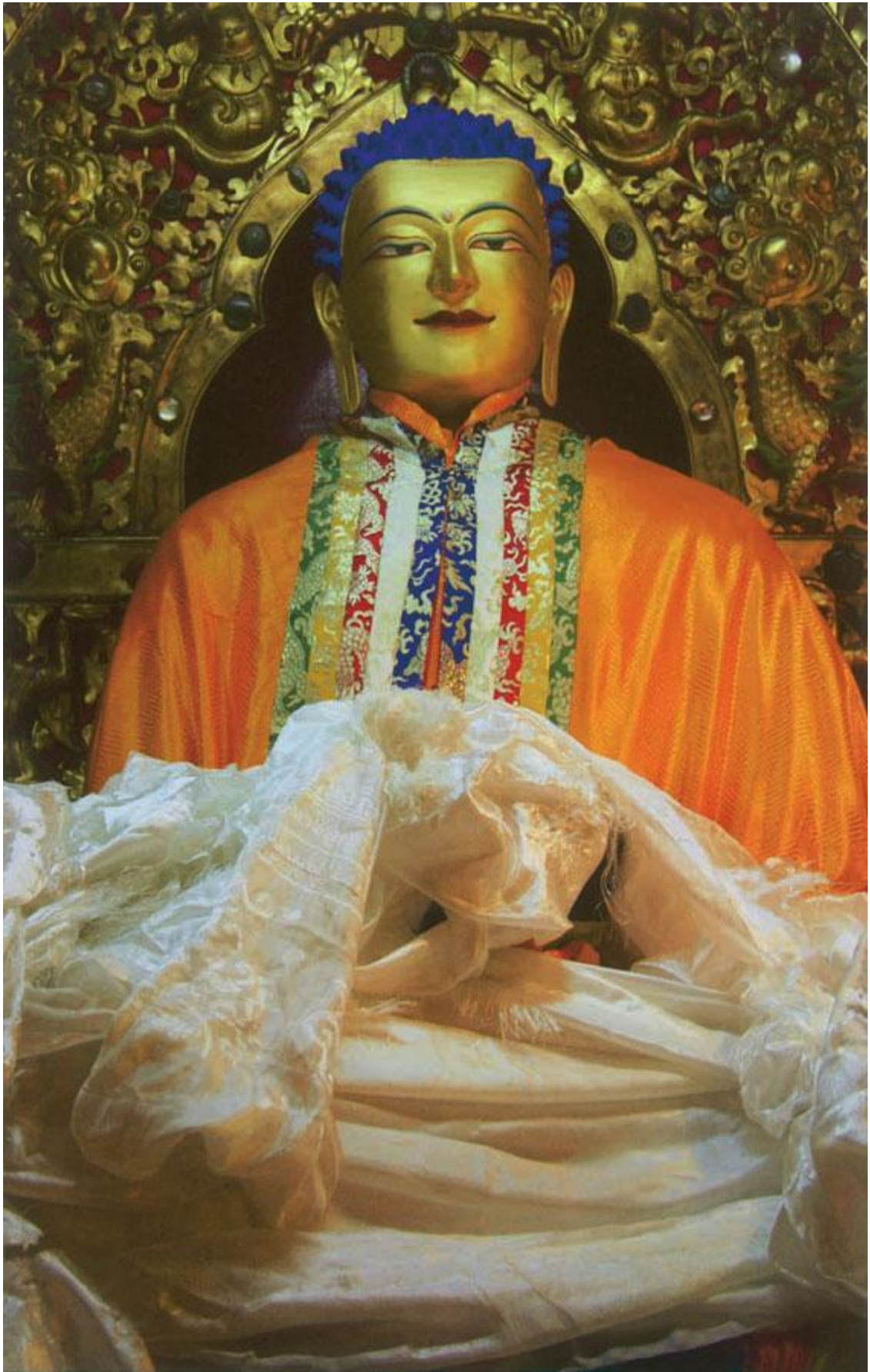
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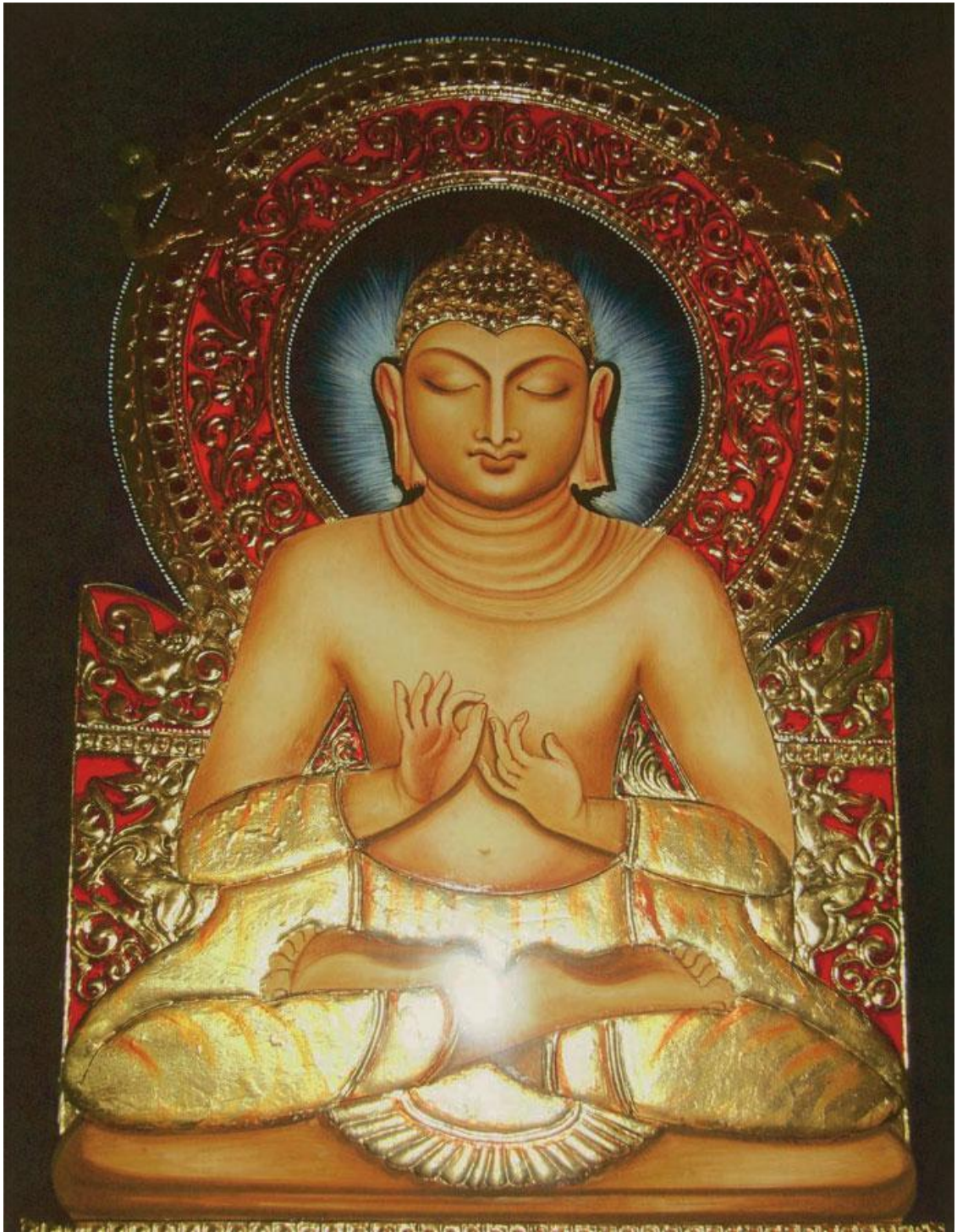
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Victoria Charles, Thomas William Rhys Davids 1000 Buddhas of Genius

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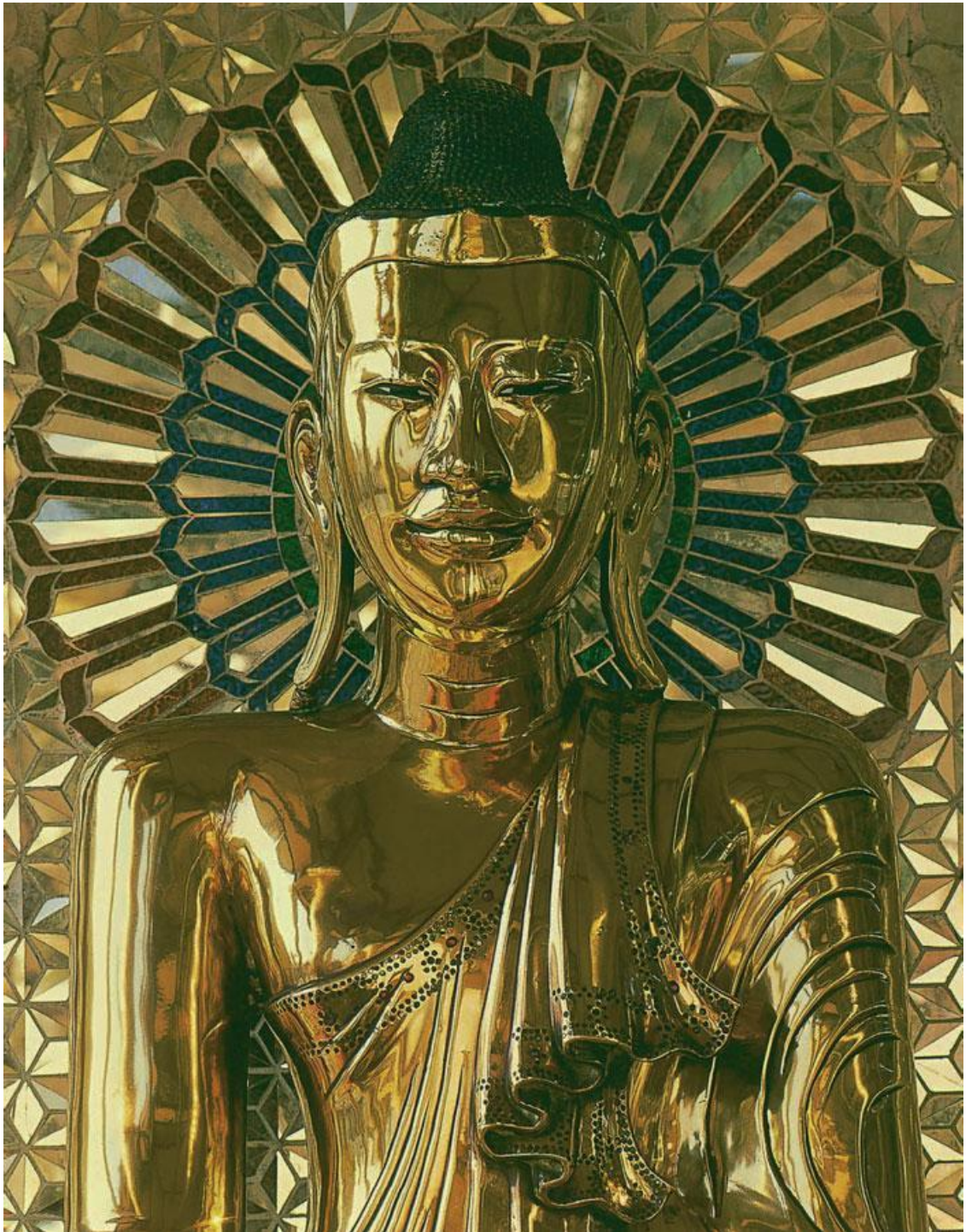


1. *Seated Buddha on Altar*, date unknown, location unknown, painted and gilt bronze.



2. *Seated Buddha*, date unknown, location unknown, paint and gold.

The Life of the Buddha



3. *Head of Buddha*, date unknown, Shwedagon Pagoda, Yangon, Burma, gold.

The Life of Gautama, Down to the Time of his Appearance as a Teacher:

Around 500 BCE, at a place called Kapilavastu on the banks of the river Rohini in what is now Nepal, there settled a tribe named the Sakyas. The river rose thirty or forty miles to the north of their settlement in the spurs of the mighty Himalayas, whose giant peaks loomed up in the

distance against the clear blue of the Indian sky. The Sakyas had penetrated further to the east than most of their fellow tribes, but beyond them in that direction was the powerful confederation of the Licchavis and the rising kingdom of Magadha, while behind them to the west lay those lands which the Brahmans held most sacred. Their nearest neighbours to be feared were the subjects of the king of Sravasti, the rival of the king of Magadha. It was this rivalry more than their own strength that secured for the Sakyas a precarious independence; but their own hand was strong enough to protect them against the incursions of roving bands from the hills, and to sustain them in their quarrels with neighbouring clans of the same standing as themselves. They lived from the produce of their cattle and their rice-fields; their supplies of water being drawn from the Rohini, on the other side of which lived the Koliyans, a kindred tribe.

The Sakyas sometimes quarrelled with the Koliyans for the possession of the water supply, but at this moment the two clans were at peace, and two daughters of the raja, or chief, of the Koliyans were the wives of Suddhodana, the raja of the Sakyas. The story tells us that both were childless, a misfortune great enough in other times and in other countries, but especially then and in that culture where it was firmly believed that the state of a man's existence after death depended upon ceremonies to be performed by his heir. The rejoicing, therefore, was great when, at the age of 45, the elder sister promised Suddhodana a son. In accordance with custom, she started off with the intention of being confined to her parents' house, but it was on the way under the shade of some lofty satin trees in a pleasant grove called Lumbini that her son, the future Buddha, was unexpectedly born. The mother and child were carried back to Suddhodana's house; there, seven days afterwards, the mother died. The boy, however, found a careful nurse in his mother's sister, his father's other wife.

Asita, the seer, visits the newborn prince (from the Pali Canon, the standard collection of scriptures for Theravada Buddhism):

[Date: -80 BE]

Asita the seer, in his mid-day meditation,
saw the devas of the Group of Thirty
– exultant, ecstatic –
dressed in pure white, honouring Indra,
holding up banners, cheering wildly,
and on seeing the devas so joyful and happy,
having paid his respects, he said:

“Why is the deva community
so wildly elated?
Why are they holding up banners
and waving them around?
Even after the war with the Asuras
– when victory was the devas',
the Asuras defeated –
even then there was no excitement like this.

Seeing what marvel
are the devas so joyful?

They shout,
they sing,
play music,
clap their hands,
dance.

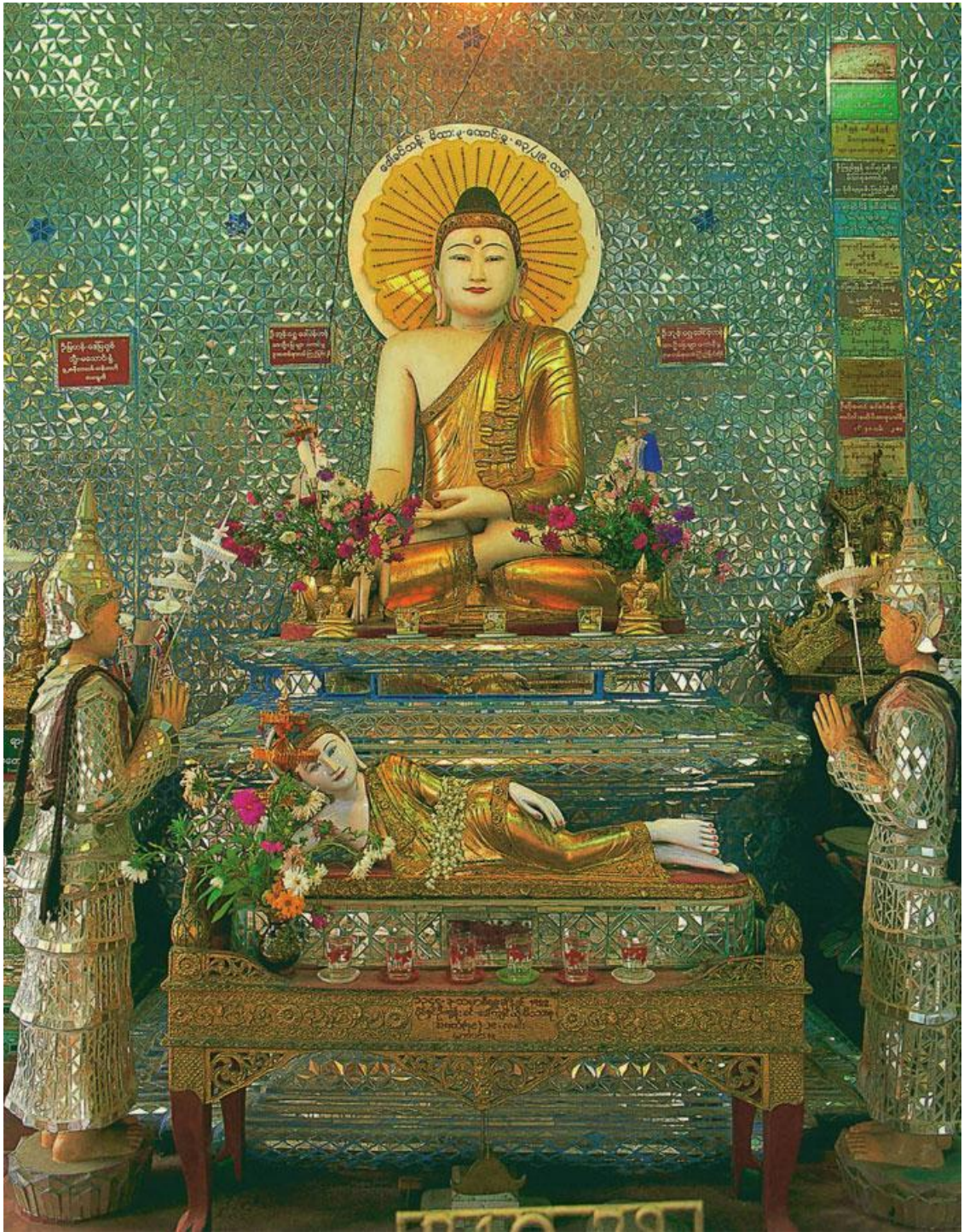
So I ask you, who live on Mount Meru's summit.

Please dispel my doubt quickly, dear sirs.”
“The Bodhisattva, the foremost jewel,
unequalled,
has been born for welfare and ease
in the human world,
in a town in the Sakyan countryside,
Lumbini.
That’s why we’re all so wildly elated.
He, the highest of all beings,
the ultimate person,
a bull among men, foremost of all people,
will set turning the Wheel [of Dharma]
in the grove named after the seers,
like a strong, roaring lion,
the conqueror of beasts.”
Hearing these words,
Asita quickly descended [from heaven]
and went to Suddhodana’s dwelling.
There, taking a seat, he said to the Sakyans:
“Where is the prince?
I, too, want to see him.”
The Sakyans then showed
to the seer named Asita
their son, the prince,
like gold aglow,
burnished by a most skilful smith
in the mouth of the furnace,
blazing with glory, flawless in colour.
On seeing the prince blazing like flame,
pure like the bull of the stars
going across the sky
– the burning sun,
released from the clouds of autumn –
he was exultant, filled with abundant rapture.
The devas held in the sky
a many-spoked sunshade
of a thousand circles.
Gold-handled whisks
waved up and down,
but those holding the whisks and the sunshade
couldn’t be seen.
The matted-haired seer
named Dark Splendor,
seeing the boy, like an ornament of gold
on the red woollen blanket,
a white sunshade held over his head,
received him, happy and pleased.
And on receiving the bull of the Sakyans,
longingly, the master of mantras and signs

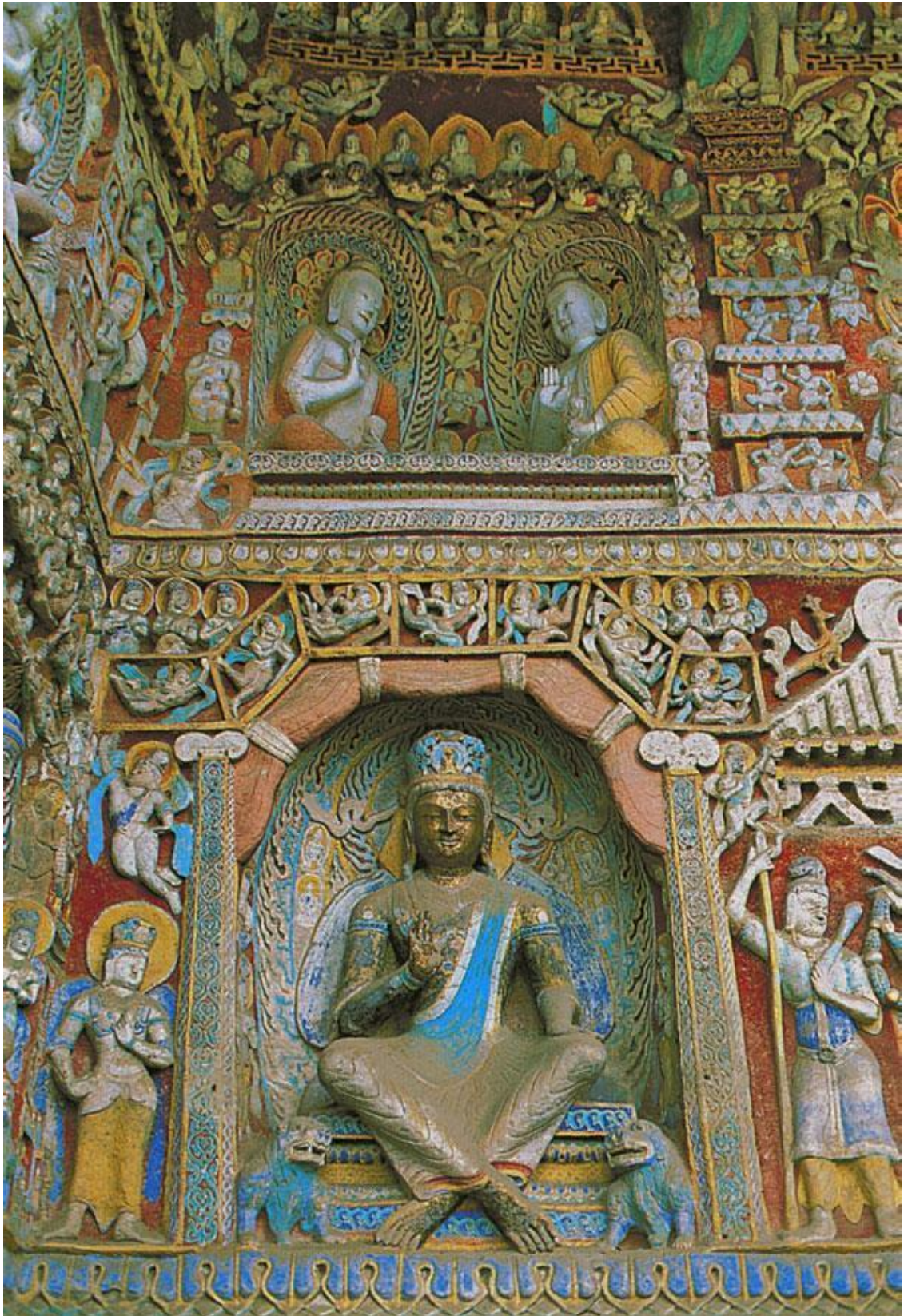
exclaimed with a confident mind:
“This one is unsurpassed,
the highest of the biped race.”
Then, foreseeing his own imminent departure,
he, dejected, shed tears.
On seeing him weeping,
the Sakyans asked:
“But surely there will be
no danger for the prince?”
On seeing the Sakyans’ concern
he replied, “I foresee for the prince
no harm.
Nor will there be any danger for him.
This one isn’t lowly: be assured.
This prince will touch
the ultimate self-awakening.
He, seeing the utmost purity,
will set rolling the Wheel of Dharma
through sympathy for the welfare of many.
His holy life will spread far and wide.
But as for me,
my life here has no long remainder;
my death will take place before then.
I won’t get to hear
the Dharma of this one with the peerless role.
That’s why I’m stricken,
afflicted, and pained.”
[Snp III.11]



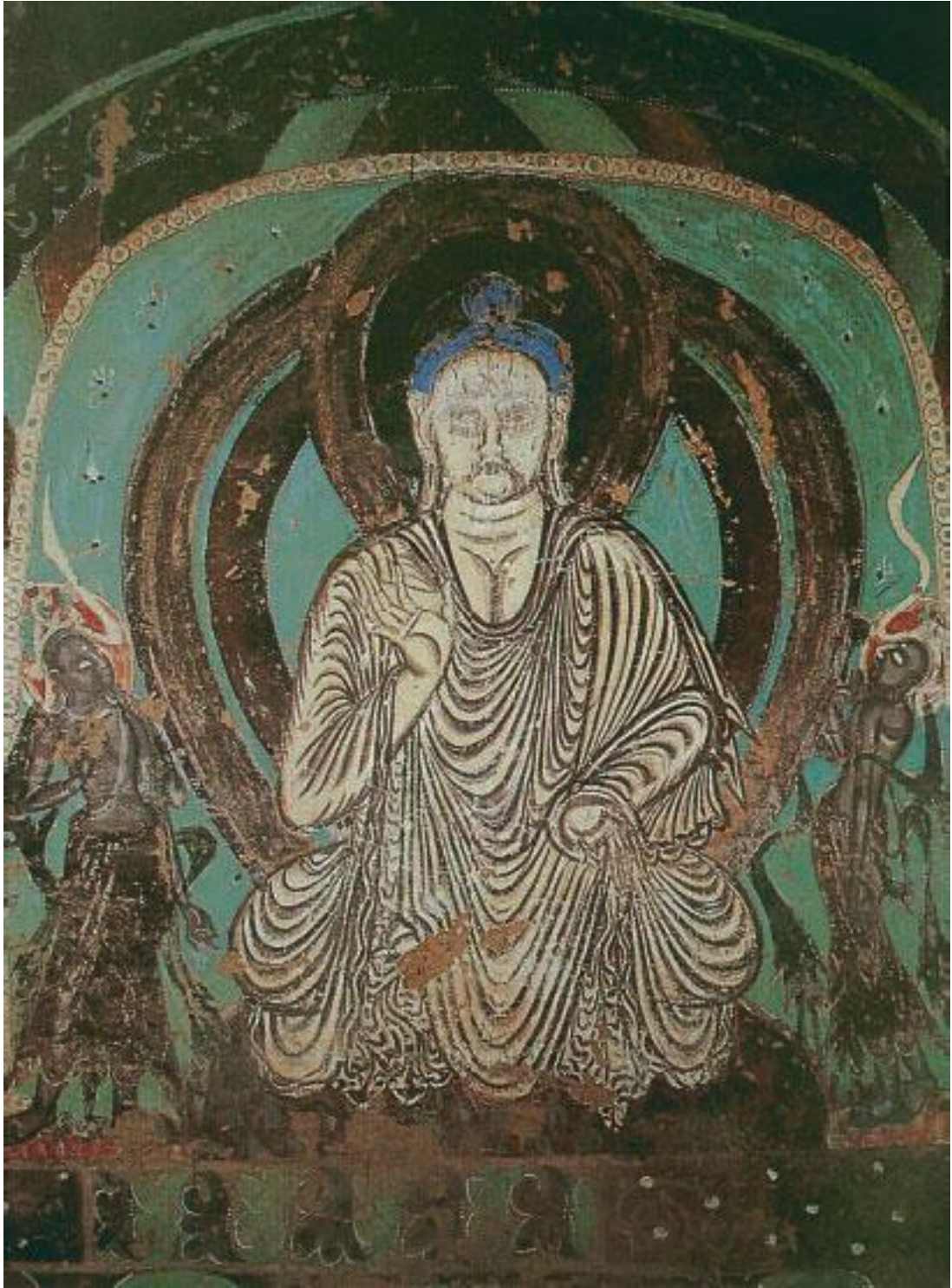
4. *Sakyamuni Buddha signaling fearlessness with right hand and the gift-giving sign with his left hand, date unknown, China.*



5. *Two Buddhas, one reclining and one seated*, date unknown, Shwedagon Pagoda, Yangon, Burma.



6. North wall of the anterior room of Grotto 9 in Yungang, featuring Maitreya, Sakyamuni and Prabhutaratna, date unknown, Yungang, China.



7. *Seated Buddha*, date unknown, Mogao Cave 254, Dunhuang, China.

As with other men who become famous in their adult lives, many stories have been told about the miraculous birth and precocious wisdom and power of Gautama; these serve to demonstrate the spirit of the times in which they arose and grew. It is probable that the circumstances of his birth – his status as an only child, born out of due time, followed by the subsequent death of his mother – add to the instinctive feeling that his birth must have been different from that of ordinary men.

The name Siddhartha, said to have been given to him as a child, may have been a subsequent invention, for it means ‘he who has accomplished his aim.’ But parents of Siddhodana’s rank have never shown much aversion for grand names, and other Siddharthas are mentioned in various

histories of the time. However this may be, his family name was certainly Gautama, and as this was the name by which he was usually known after his death, we shall use it throughout this book.

Any other names given to the founder of Buddhism are not names at all, but rather titles. To the pious Buddhist it seems irreverent to speak of Gautama using his human name, thus the use of those numerous epithets which are used to refer to the Buddha, the Enlightened One. Such are Sakya-sinha, 'the lion of the tribe of Sakya;' Sakya-muni, 'the Sakya sage;' Sugata, 'the happy one;' Sattha, 'the teacher;' Jina, 'the conqueror;' Bhagava, 'the blessed one;' Loka-natha, 'the Lord of the world;' Sarvajna, 'the omniscient one;' Dharma-rajā, 'the king of righteousness,' and many others. These expressions had very real significance in moments of poetic fire, but their constant use among Buddhists tends not to bring into clearer vision but rather veil the personality of Gautama and maintain his aura of mystery.

Gautama himself was very early regarded as omniscient and absolutely sinless. His perfect wisdom is embodied in the title of Samma-sambuddha, 'the completely enlightened one,' found at the commencement of every Pali text. From his perfect wisdom, according to Buddhist belief, his sinlessness would follow as a matter of course. As a consequence of this assumption, the idea soon sprang up that he could not have been born as ordinary men are; that he had no earthly father, and in fact descended of his own accord into his mother's womb from his throne in heaven; and that he gave unmistakable signs immediately after his birth of his high character and of his future greatness. Earth and heaven at his birth united to pay him homage; the very trees bent of their own accord over his mother, and the angels and archangels were present with their help. His mother was the best and the purest of the daughters of men and his father was of royal lineage, a prince of wealth and power. It was a pious task for the storytellers to make Gautama's renunciation and his condescension to teach the dharma greater by the comparison between the splendour of the position he was to abandon and the poverty in which he afterwards lived.



8. *Ornate head of a Buddha*, date unknown, location unknown, wood.

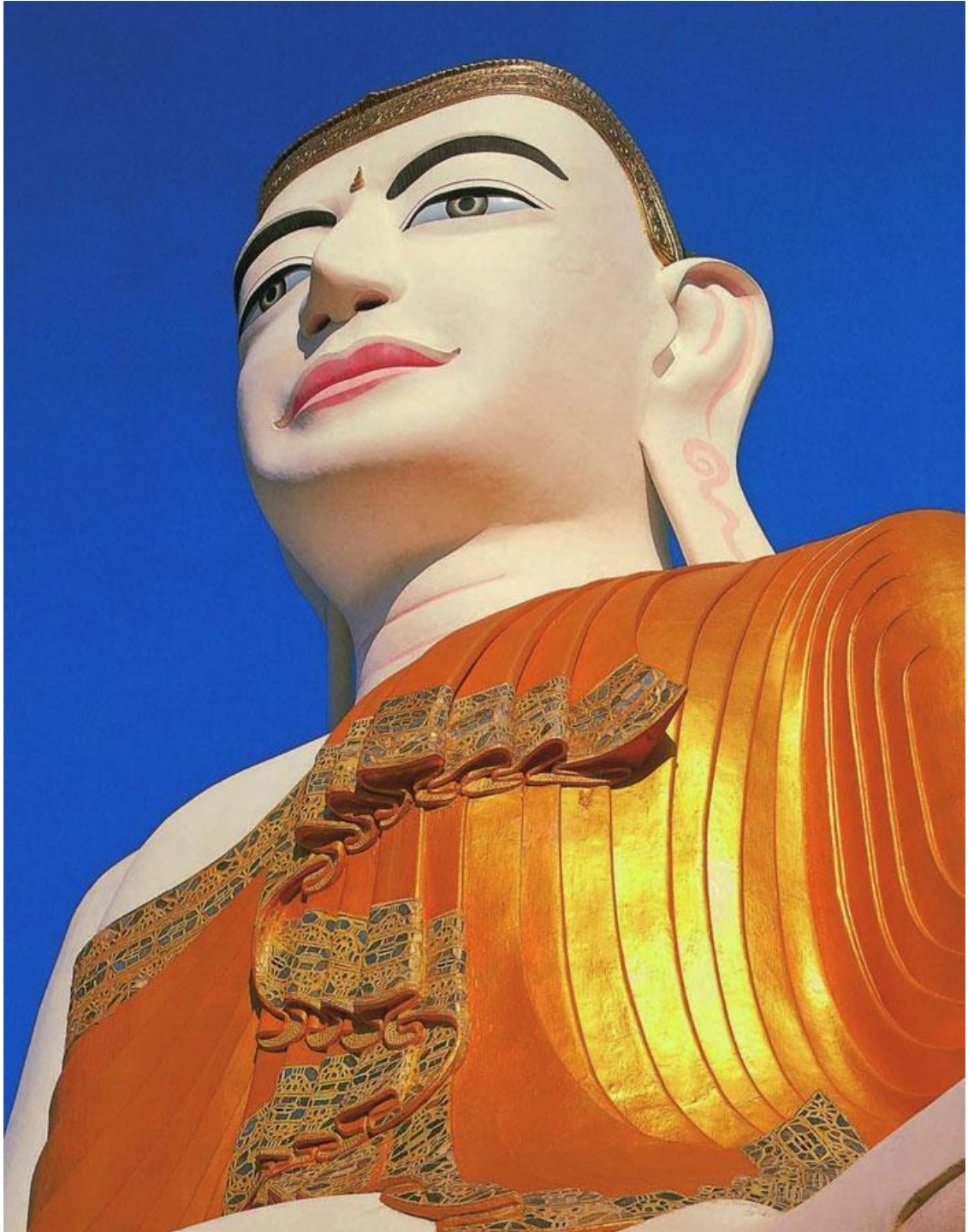


9. *Head of Gautama Buddha*, date unknown, India, stone, National Museum, New Delhi, India.

It is believed that Gautama was married very early to his cousin, the daughter of the raja of Koli. He did not, however, turn out to be a model prince. According to most of the southern accounts, Gautama's relatives went en masse to complain to the raja Suddhodana that his son, devoted to home pleasures, neglected those manly exercises necessary for one who might hereafter have to lead his kinsmen in case of war. Gautama, once informed of this, is said to have appointed a day to prove his skill against all challengers, and by surpassing even the cleverest bowmen and showing his mastery in 'the twelve arts,' he won back the good opinion of the complaining clansmen.

This is the solitary record of his youth. We hear nothing more of Gautama until, at the age of 29, he suddenly abandoned his home to devote himself entirely to the study of religion and philosophy. According to the story, a deity appeared to him in four visions, in the following forms: a man broken down by age, a sick man, a decaying corpse, and lastly, a dignified hermit. The visions appeared only to Gautama and his attendant Channa, who was each time inspired to interpret each vision for his master. We find in this ancient tradition an illustration of the feeling which pushed Gautama to abandon his family and his home. He was probably not the first and he was certainly not the last who, in the midst of prosperity and comfort, felt a yearning which nothing could satisfy and which robbed all earthly gains and hopes of their charm. This vague dissatisfaction deepens with every fresh proof of the apparent vanity of life, and gains power when, as is reported in the

case of Gautama, it arises more from sympathy with the sorrows of others than from any personal sorrow of one's own. At last, the details of daily life become insupportable; and the calm life of the hermit troubled with none of these things seems a haven of peace, where a life of self-denial and earnest meditation may lead to some solution of the strange enigmas of life.



10. *Torso and Head of Buddha*, date unknown, Sehhtatgyi, Pyay, Burma.



11. *Seated Buddha*, date unknown, China.



12. *Seated Buddha showing the vyakhyana mudra, symbolising perfect wisdom and the vow to teach others, date unknown, location unknown.*



13. *Seated Buddha*, date unknown, China, gilt bronze, height: 17.5 cm.

Such feelings must have become more and more present in Gautama's mind, when about ten years after his marriage, his wife bore their only child, a son named Rahula. The fear that this new tie might become too strong for him to break seems to have been the immediate cause of his flight. According to the oldest authorities of the Southern Buddhists, the birth of his son was announced to Gautama in a garden on the riverside, where he had gone after seeing the fourth vision (that of the hermit). Rather than rejoice at the birth of his son, Gautama is believed to have only said quietly, "This is a new and strong tie I shall have to break," and he returned home thoughtful and sad. But the villagers were delighted at the birth of the child, their raja's only grandson. Gautama's return became a celebration, and he entered Kapilavastu amidst a crowd of joyous clansmen. Among the sounds of triumph that greeted his ear, one especially is said to have attracted his attention. A young girl, his cousin, sang a stanza: "Happy the father, happy the mother, happy the wife of such a son and husband." In the word 'happy' lay a double meaning; it also meant 'freed,' delivered from the chains of sin and of transmigration, 'saved.' Grateful to one who at such a time reminded him of his highest thoughts, he took off his necklace of pearls and sent it to her, saying, "Let this be her fee as a teacher." She began to build castles in the air, thinking, "Young Siddhartha is falling in love with me, and has sent me a present," but he took no further notice of her, and passed on.

That night at midnight he sent his charioteer Channa for his horse, and while the servant was gone Gautama went to the threshold of his wife's chamber, and there by the light of the flickering lamp he watched her sleeping, surrounded by flowers, with one hand on the head of their child. He had wished for the last time to take his son in his arms before he left, but he now saw that he could not do so without waking the mother. As this might frustrate all of his intentions, the fear of waking Yasodhara at last prevailed; he reluctantly tore himself away, and, accompanied only by Channa, left his father's home, his wealth and power, and his young wife and only child behind him. He rode away into the night to become a penniless, despised student and a homeless wanderer. This is the circumstance which has given its name to the Sanskrit original of the Chinese work entitled the 'Mahabhinishkramana Sutra' or 'Sutra of the Great Renunciation.'

At age 29, the young prince goes forth into homelessness (Pali Canon):

[Date: -51 BE]

"Before my Awakening, when I was still an unawakened Bodhisattva, the thought occurred to me: 'The household life is crowded, a dusty road. Life gone forth is the open air. It isn't easy, living in a home, to lead the holy life that is totally perfect, totally pure, a polished shell. What if I, having shaved off my hair and beard and putting on the ochre robe, were to go forth from the home life into homelessness?'

"So at a later time, when I was still young, black-haired, endowed with the blessings of youth in the first stage of life, having shaved off my hair and beard – though my parents wished otherwise and were grieving with tears on their faces – I put on the ochre robe and went forth from the home life into homelessness."

[MN 36]

We next find another endeavour to relate, under the form of a vision that is supposed to have passed in Gautama's mind. Mara, the spirit of Evil, appeared in the sky, urged Gautama to stop his journey, and in exchange promised him a universal kingdom over the four great continents. When his words failed to have the desired effect, the tempter consoled himself with the hope that he would still overcome his enemy, thinking, "Sooner or later some hurtful or malicious or angry thought must arise in his mind; in that moment I shall be his master." Mara then followed him like a shadow, watchful of any failing. Gautama rode a long distance that night, not stopping until he

reached the bank of the river Anoma beyond the Koliyan territory. There he removed his ornaments and gave them and his horse to his charioteer to take them back to Kapilavastu. Channa asked to be allowed to stay with his master, offering to become an ascetic and continue to serve him, but Gautama would not hear of it, saying: "How will my father and my relations know what has become of me unless you go back and tell them?" Gautama then cut off his long hair, exchanged clothes with a poor passer-by, and sent home the dejected and sorrowing Channa, while he himself hurried on towards Rajagriha, to begin his new life as a homeless mendicant ascetic.



14. *Standing Buddha*, date unknown, China, gilt bronze, height: 26.6 cm.



15. *Standing Buddha*, date unknown, Ancient northwest Indian empire, stone.



16. *Standing Gautama Buddha*, date unknown, China, stone.



17. *Amitayus, “He of Infinite Life”, an aspect of Amitabha*, date unknown, Tibet, gilt bronze.



18. *Seated Buddha in the paryankasana posture, “sitting on a throne”, date unknown, Nanchan-si monastery, Mount Wutai, Shanxi province, China.*



19. *Seated Buddha with Prayer Wheel and Worshipers*, date unknown, location unknown, gilt bronze.



20. *Laughing Buddha, possibly Maitreya*, date unknown, Lingyin-si Temple, Hangzhou, Zhejiang province, China, rock.



21. *Vairocana Buddha on a lotus throne*, date unknown, Hangzhou, China.

Buddha speaks on Mara, the personification of evil (Pali Canon):

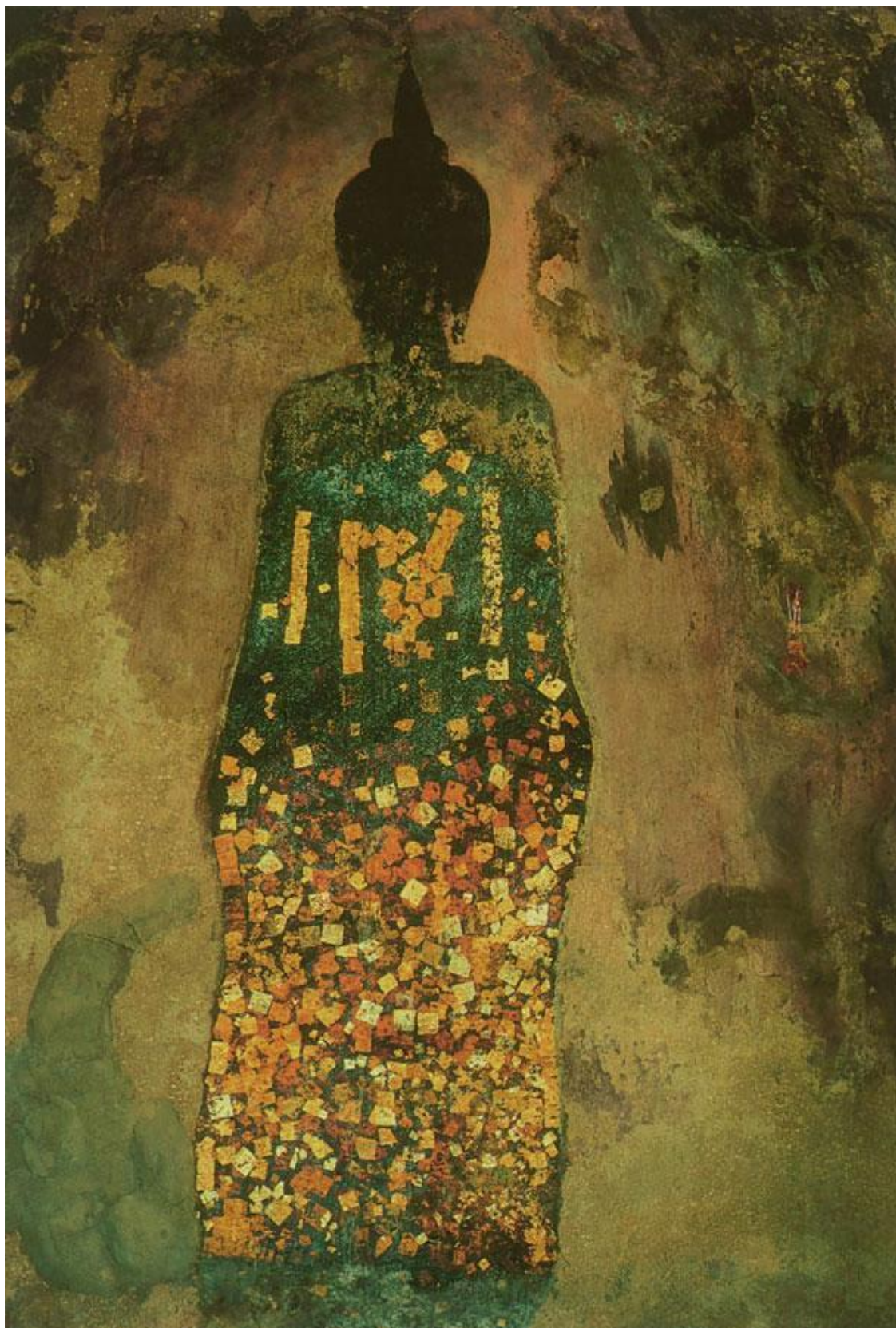
To me –
resolute in exertion

near the river Nerañjara,
making a great effort,
doing jhana
to attain security from bondage –
Namuci (Mara) came,
speaking words of compassion:
“You are ashen, thin.
Death is in
your presence.
Death
has 1,000 parts of you.
Only one part
is your life.
Live, good sir!
Life is better.
Alive,
you can do
acts of merit.
Your living the holy life,
performing the fire sacrifice,
will heap up much merit.
What use is exertion to you?
Hard to follow
– the path of exertion –
hard to do, hard
to sustain.”
Saying these verses,
Mara stood in the Awakened One’s presence.
And to that Mara, speaking thus,
the Blessed One said this:
“Kinsman of the heedless,
Evil One,
come here for whatever purpose:
I haven’t, for merit,
even the least bit of need.
Those who have need of merit:
those are the ones
Mara’s fit to address.
In me are conviction,
austerity,
persistence,
discernment.
Why, when I’m so resolute
do you petition me
to live?
This wind could burn up
even river currents.
Why, when I’m resolute
shouldn’t my blood dry away?

As my blood dries up
gall and phlegm dry up.
As muscles waste away,
the mind grows clearer;
mindfulness, discernment,
concentration stand
more firm.
Staying in this way,
attaining the ultimate feeling,
the mind has no interest
in sensual passions.
See:
a being's
purity!
Sensual passions are your first army.
Your second is called Discontent.
Your third is Hunger and Thirst.
Your fourth is called Craving.
Fifth is Sloth and Torpor.
Sixth is called Terror.
Your seventh is Uncertainty.
Hypocrisy and Stubbornness, your eighth.
Gains, Offerings, Fame, and Status
wrongly gained,
and whoever would praise self
and disparage others.
That, Namuci, is your army,
the Dark One's commando force.
A coward can't defeat it,
but one having defeated it
gains bliss.
Do I carry munja grass?
I spit on my life.
Death in battle would be better for me
than that I, defeated,
survive.
Sinking here, they don't appear,
some priests and contemplatives.
They don't know the path
by which those with good practises
go.
Seeing the bannered force
on all sides –
the troops, Mara
along with his mount –
I go into battle.
May they not budge me
from
my spot.

That army of yours,
that the world with its devas
can't overcome,
I will smash with discernment –
as an unfired pot with a stone.
Making my resolve mastered,
mindfulness well-established,
I will go about, from kingdom to kingdom,
training many disciples.
They – heedful, resolute
doing my bidding –
despite your wishes, will go
where, having gone,
there's no grief.”
... As [Mara] was overcome with sorrow,
his lute fell from under his arm.
Then he, the despondent spirit,
right there
disappeared.
[Snp III.2]

Rajagriha, the capital of Magadha, was the seat of Bimbisara, who was then one of the most powerful princes in the eastern valley of the Ganges. The city was situated in a pleasant valley, closely surrounded by five hills, in the most northerly offshoot of the Vindhya Mountains. In the caves on these hillsides, several hermits had found it convenient to settle. There they were free from the dangers of more disturbed districts and near enough to the town where they procured their simple supplies, while remaining surrounded by the solitude of nature. Gautama first attached himself to one of these Brahman teachers, named Alara; however, he became dissatisfied with Alara's system and turned to another teacher named Udraka, learning under them all that Hindu philosophy had then to teach about this world or the next.



22. *Buddha painting with gold leaf*, date unknown, Wat Chakrawat, Bangkok, Thailand, gold leaf.



23. *Seated Buddha*, date unknown, Sagaing, Burma.



24. *Buddha from the Eight Temples outside Gubei Pass in Chengde, Hebei province, date unknown, Chengde, China.*

Passers-by take notice of his serene radiance and mindfulness (Pali Canon):

On going forth,
he avoided evil deeds in body.
Abandoning verbal misconduct,

he purified his livelihood.
Then he, the Buddha, went to Rajagriha,
the mountain fortress of the Magadhans,
and wandered for alms,
endowed with all the foremost marks.
King Bimbisara, standing in his palace, saw him,
and on seeing him, consummate in marks,
said: "Look at this one, sirs.
How handsome, stately, pure!
How consummate his demeanour!
Mindful, his eyes downcast,
looking only a plow-length before him,
as one who's not from a lowly lineage:
Send the royal messengers at once
to see where this monk will go."
They – the messengers dispatched –
followed behind him.
"Where will this monk go?
Where will his dwelling place be?"
As he went from house to house –
well-restrained, his sense-doors guarded,
mindful, alert –
his bowl filled quickly.
Then he, the sage, completing his alms round,
left the city, headed for Mount Pandava.
"That's where his dwelling will be."
Seeing him go to his dwelling place,
three messengers sat down,
while one returned to tell the king.
"That monk, your majesty,
on the flank of Pandava,
sits like a tiger, a bull,
a lion in a mountain cleft."
[Snp III.1]



25. *Seated Buddha*,
date unknown, Burma, gilt wood.



26. *Buddha with flames arising from the head and shoulders*, date unknown, Bangkok, Thailand, gold.



27. *Torso and Head of Buddha*, date unknown, Ngarhtatgyi Pagoda, Yangon, Burma.



28. *Head of a Buddha statue*, date unknown, Swayambhunath Temple, Kathmandu, Nepal.

A king wonders, “Why have you gone forth?”:

Hearing the messenger’s words,
the noble warrior king
straight away went by royal coach,
out to Mount Pandava.
Going as far as the coach would go,
he got down, went up on foot,
and on arrival sat down.
Sitting there,
he exchanged courteous greetings,
then said:
“You are young, youthful,
in the first stage of youth,
endowed with the stature and colouring
of a noble-warrior.
You would look glorious
in the vanguard of an army,
arrayed with an elephant squadron.
I offer you wealth: enjoy it.
I ask your birth: inform me.”
“Straight ahead, your majesty,
by the foothills of the Himalayas,
is a country consummate

in energy and wealth,
inhabited by Kosalans:
Solar by clan,
Sakyans by birth.
From that lineage I have gone forth,
but not in search of sensual pleasures.
Seeing the danger in sensual pleasures
– and renunciation as rest –
I go to strive.
That's where my heart delights.”
[Snp III.1]



29. *Seated Buddha*, date unknown, location unknown, coloured pencil on paper.

He practises extreme austerities in the forest:

“I thought: ‘Suppose that I, clenching my teeth and pressing my tongue against the roof of my mouth, were to beat down, constrain, and crush my mind with my awareness.’ So, clenching my teeth and pressing my tongue against the roof of my mouth, I beat down, constrained, and crushed my mind with my awareness. Just as a strong man, seizing a weaker man by the head or the throat or the shoulders, would beat him down, constrain, and crush him, in the same way I beat down, constrained, and crushed my mind with my awareness. As I did so, sweat poured from my armpits. And although tireless persistence was aroused in me, and unmuddled mindfulness established, my body was aroused and uncalm because of the painful exertion. But the painful feeling that arose in this way did not invade my mind or remain.

“I thought: ‘Suppose I were to become absorbed in the trance of non-breathing.’ So I stopped the in-breaths and out-breaths in my nose and mouth. As I did so, there was a loud roaring of winds coming out my earholes, just like the loud roar of winds coming out of a smith’s bellows; extreme forces sliced through my head, just as if a strong man were slicing my head open with a sharp sword; extreme pains arose in my head, just as if a strong man were tightening a turban made of tough leather straps around my head; extreme forces carved up my stomach cavity, just as if a butcher or his apprentice were to carve up the stomach cavity of an ox. There was an extreme burning in my body, just as if two strong men, grabbing a weaker man by the arms, were to roast and broil him over a pit of hot embers. And although tireless persistence was aroused in me, and unmuddled mindfulness established, my body was aroused and uncalm because of the painful exertion. But the painful feeling that arose in this way did not invade my mind or remain.

“Devas, on seeing me, said, ‘Gautama the contemplative is dead.’ Other devas said, ‘He isn’t dead, he’s dying.’ Others said, ‘He’s neither dead nor dying, he’s an arahant, for this is the way arahants live.’

“I thought: ‘Suppose I were to practise going altogether without food.’ Then devas came to me and said, ‘Dear sir, please don’t practise going altogether without food. If you go altogether without food, we’ll infuse divine nourishment in through your pores, and you will survive on that.’ I thought, ‘If I were to claim to be completely fasting while these devas are infusing divine nourishment in through my pores, I would be lying.’ So I dismissed them, saying, ‘Enough.’

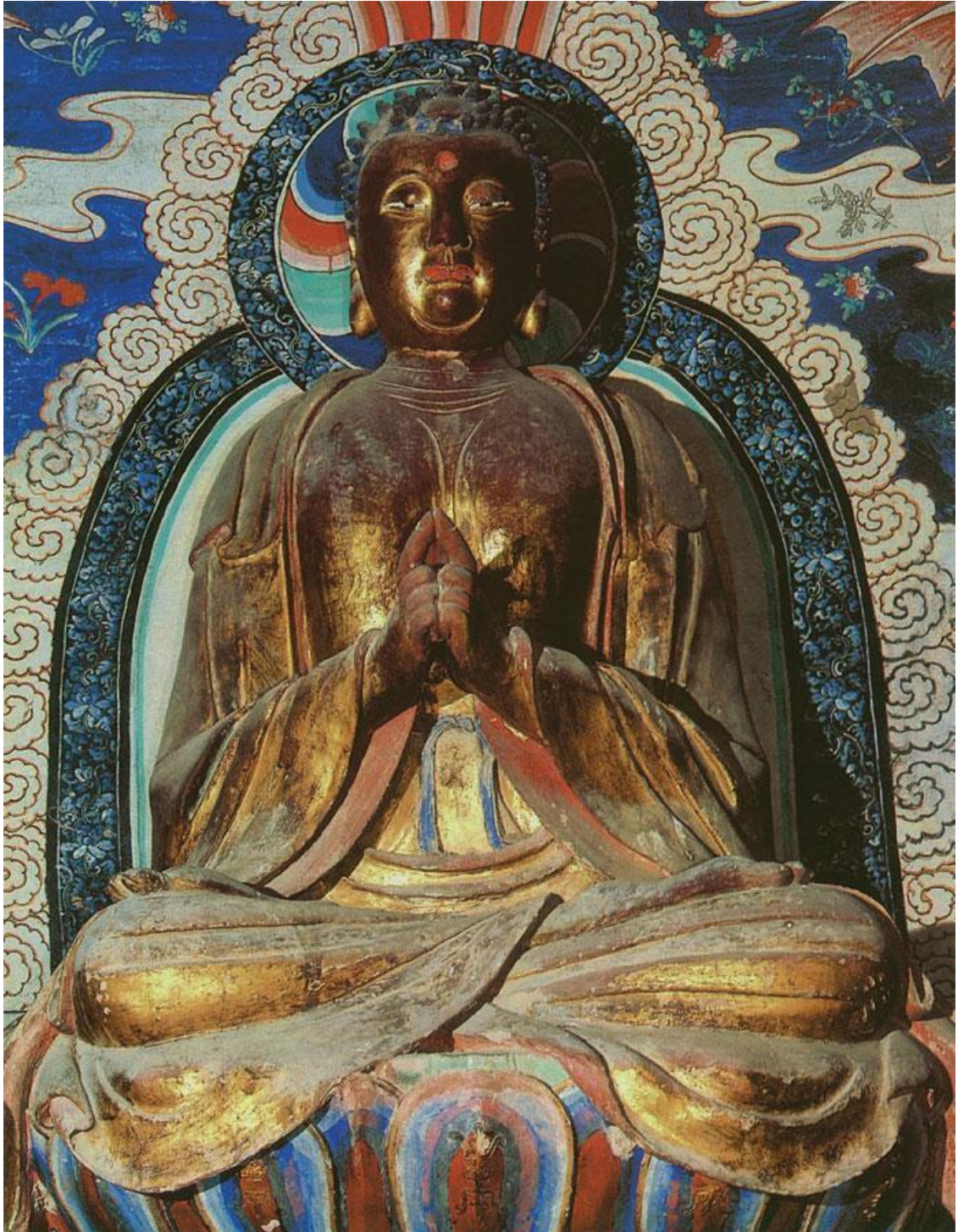
“I thought: ‘Suppose I were to take only a little food at a time, only a handful at a time of bean soup, lentil soup, vetch soup, or pea soup.’ So I took only a little food at a time, only a handful at a time of bean soup, lentil soup, vetch soup, or pea soup. My body became extremely emaciated. Simply from my eating so little, my limbs became like the jointed segments of vine stems or bamboo stems. My backside became like a camel’s hoof. My spine stood out like a string of beads. My ribs jutted out like the jutting rafters of an old, run-down barn. The gleam of my eyes appeared to be sunk deep in my eye sockets like the gleam of water deep in a well. My scalp shrivelled and withered like a green bitter melon, shrivelled and withered in the heat and the wind. The skin of my belly became so stuck to my spine that when I thought of touching my belly, I grabbed hold of my spine as well; and when I thought of touching my spine, I grabbed hold of the skin of my belly as well. If I urinated or defecated, I fell over on my face right there. Simply from my eating so little, if I tried to ease my body by rubbing my limbs with my hands, the hair – rotted at its roots – fell from my body as I rubbed, simply from eating so little.

People on seeing me would say, ‘Gautama the contemplative is black. Other people would say, ‘Gautama the contemplative isn’t black, he’s brown.’ Others would say, ‘Gautama the contemplative is neither black nor brown, he’s golden-skinned.’ So much had the clear, bright colour of my skin deteriorated, simply from eating so little.

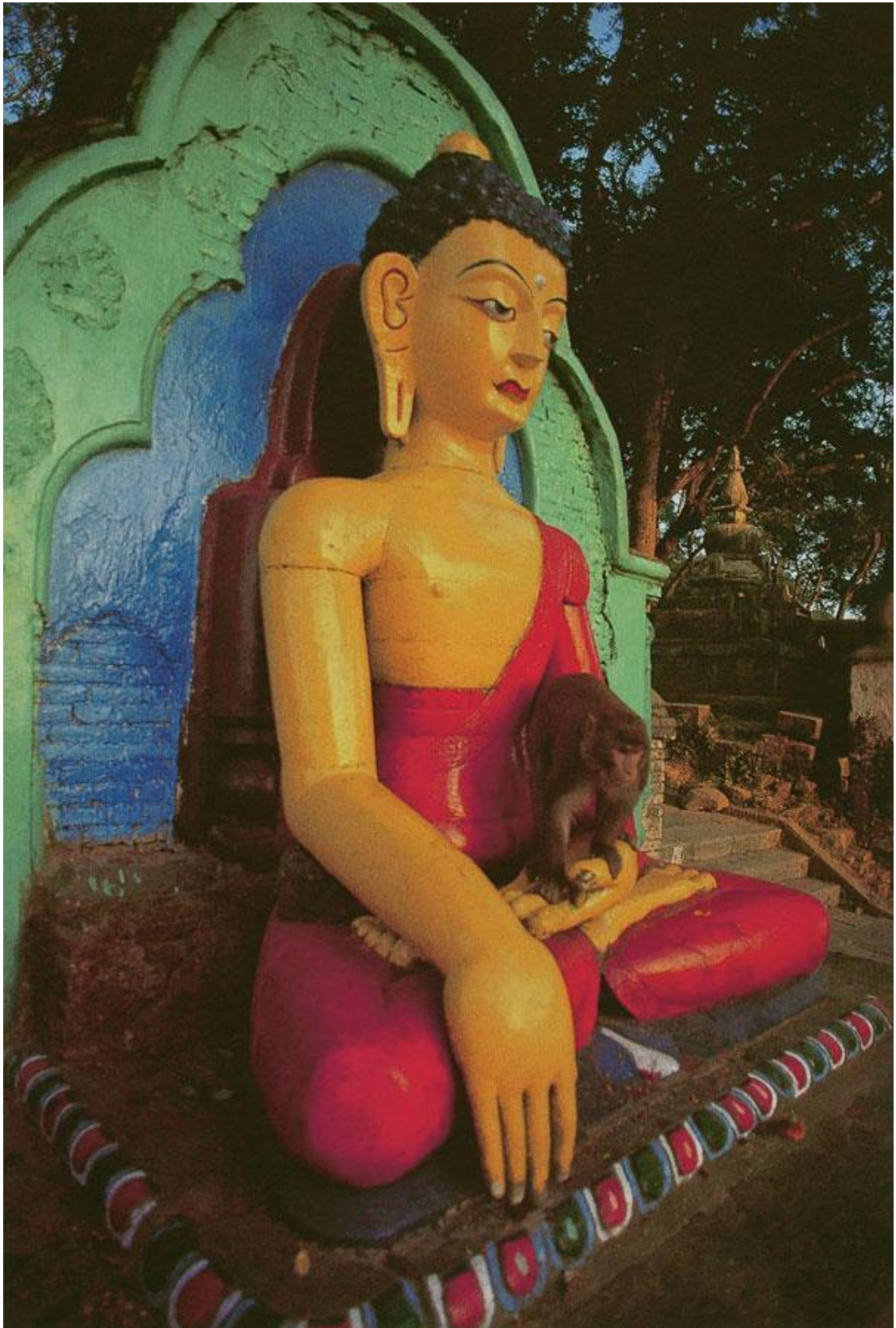
“I thought: ‘Whatever priests or contemplatives in the past have felt painful, racking, piercing feelings due to their striving, this is the utmost. None have been greater than this. Whatever priests

or contemplatives in the future will feel painful, racking, piercing feelings due to their striving, this is the utmost. None will be greater than this. Whatever priests or contemplatives in the present are feeling painful, racking, piercing feelings due to their striving, this is the utmost. None is greater than this. But with this racking practise of austerities I haven't attained any superior human state, any distinction in knowledge or vision worthy of the noble ones. Could there be another path to Awakening?"

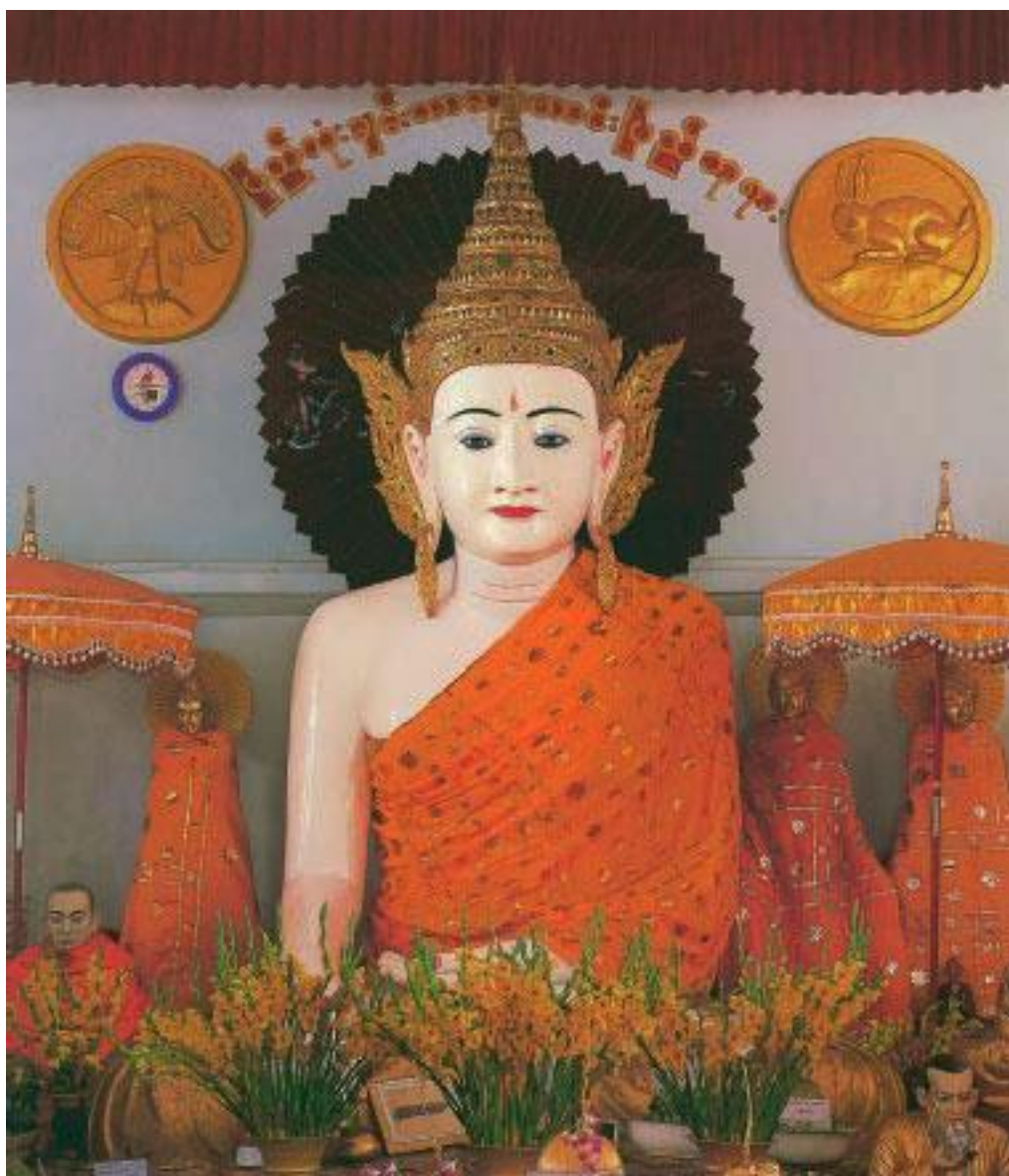
[MN 36]



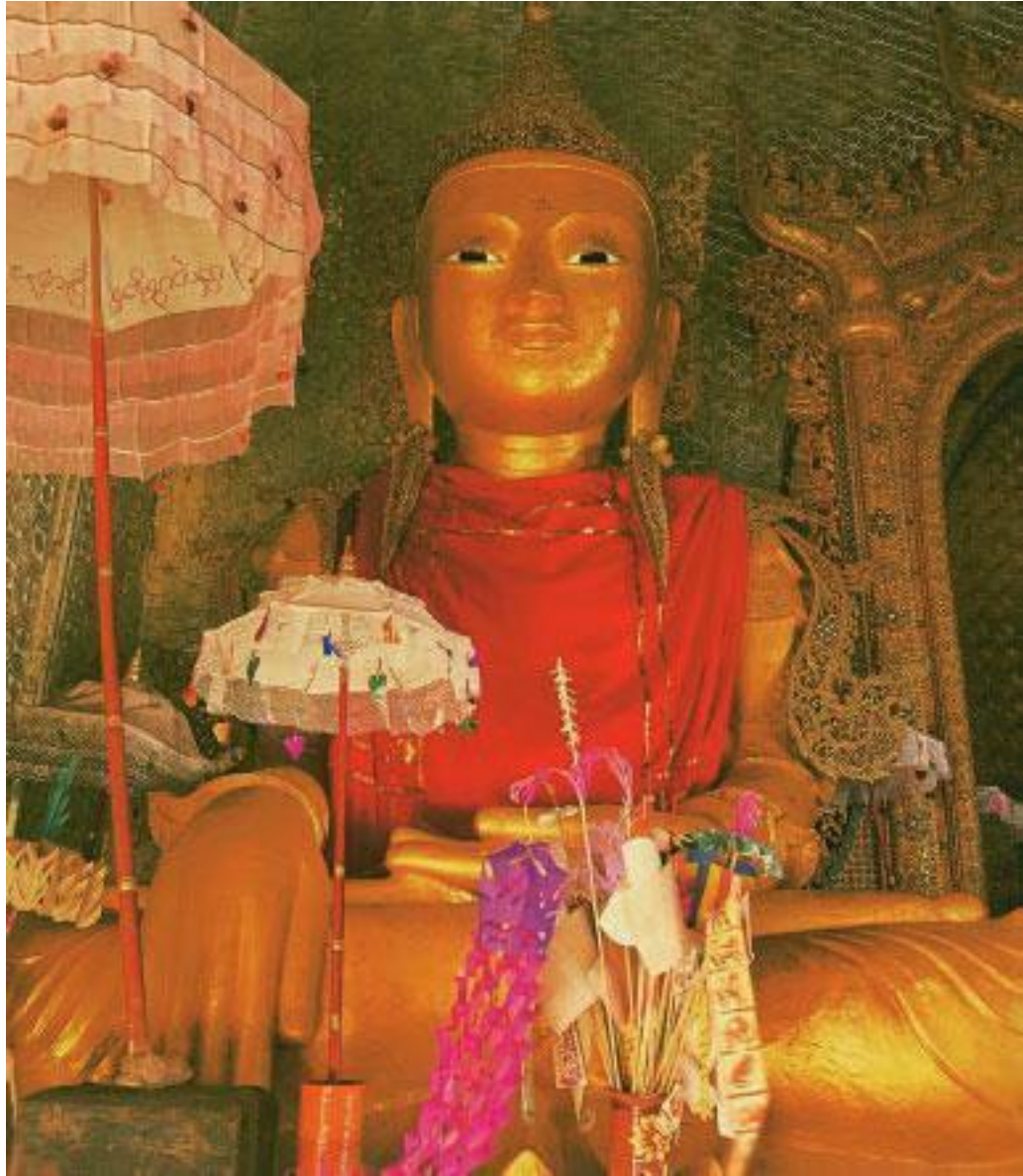
30. *Seated Buddha*, date unknown, location unknown.



31. *Buddha on Steps to Swayambunath Stupa*, date unknown, Kathmandu Valley, Nepal, painted stone.



32. *Seated Buddha*, date unknown, Shwedagon Pagoda, Yangon, Burma.



33. *Seated Buddha*, date unknown, Taungtoo Zedi, Inle Lake, Burma.

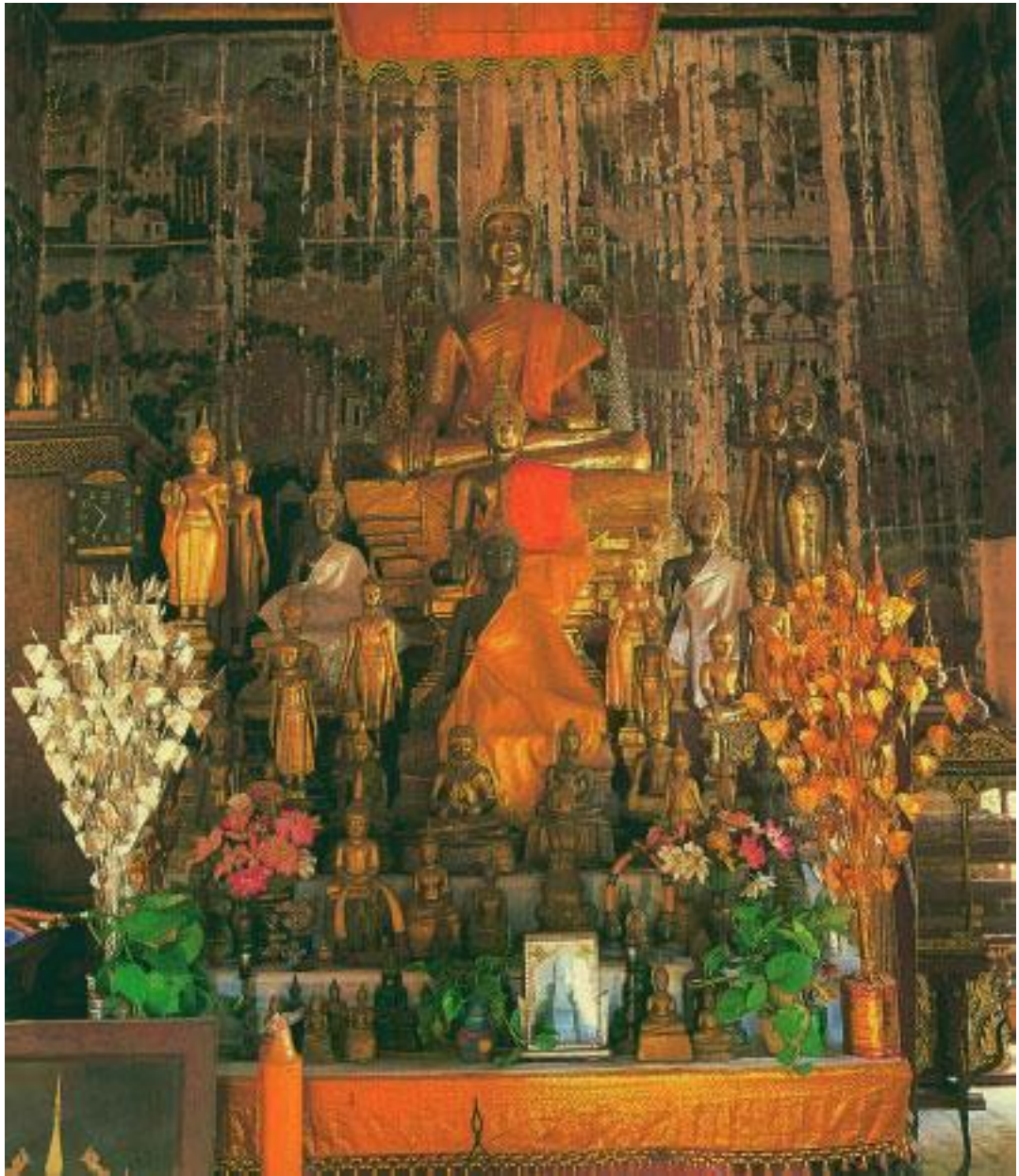
He confronts fear and terror head-on:

“I stayed in the sort of places that are awe-inspiring and make your hair stand on end, such as park-shrines, forest-shrines, and tree-shrines. And while I was staying there a wild animal would come, or a bird would make a twig fall, or wind would rustle the fallen leaves. The thought would occur to me: ‘Is this that fear and terror coming?’ Then the thought occurred to me: ‘Why do I just keep waiting for fear? What if I were to subdue fear and terror in whatever state they come?’ So when fear and terror came while I was walking back and forth, I would not stand or sit or lie down. I would keep walking back and forth until I had subdued that fear and terror. When fear and terror came while I was standing, I would not walk or sit or lie down. I would keep standing until I had subdued that fear and terror. When fear and terror came while I was sitting, I would not lie down or stand up or walk. I would keep sitting until I had subdued that fear and terror. When fear and terror came while I was lying down, I would not sit up or stand or walk. I would keep lying down until I had subdued that fear and terror.”

[MN 4]

It may be noticed that the question of the relations between Buddhism and the different systems of Hindu philosophy is as difficult as it is interesting. It is certain that, long before Gautama's time, the Brahmans had paid great attention to the deepest questions of ontology and ethics, and were divided into different schools from which Gautama drew many of his metaphysical tenets. The originality of his teachings arises more from the importance that he attached to moral training above ritual or penance, and to the systematised form in which he presented ideas derived from those of various previous thinkers. Like all other leaders of thought, Gautama was the creature of his time, and it must not be supposed that his philosophy was entirely of his own creation. One of the Chinese authorities gives long accounts of the discussions he held with Bhagava, Alara, and Udraka, which are interesting as being founded on ancient tradition. One of the most frequently inculcated tenets of the Brahmans was a belief in the efficacy of penance as a means of gaining superhuman power and insight; when Gautama, after studying the systems of Alara and Udraka, was still unsatisfied, he resolved to go apart and see what progress he himself could make by this prescribed method. He withdrew accordingly into the jungles of Uruvela, near the present temple of Bodhi Gaya. He stayed there for six years, attended by five faithful disciples, and gave himself up to the severest penance until he was wasted away to a shadow by fasting and self-mortification. Such powerful self-control has always excited the wonder and admiration of weaker men, and we need not be surprised that Gautama's fame is said to have spread "like the sound of a great bell hung in the canopy of the skies." If by these means he could have won that certitude and peace of mind for which he longed, the gain might have been worth the cost. But the more he thought, and the more he examined himself and denied himself, the more he felt himself a prey to a mental torture worse than any bodily suffering; this was the fear that all his efforts would be wasted, that he should die having gone wrong, and, after all his weary efforts, that he would only fail. At last one day, when walking slowly up and down, lost in thought, he suddenly staggered and fell to the ground. Some of the disciples thought he was actually dead; but he recovered and, despairing of further profit from such penance, began again to take regular food, and gave up his self-mortification. Then, when he was most in need of sympathy, when his wavering faith might have been strengthened by the tender trust and respect of faithful followers, his disciples forsook him and went away to Benares. To them it was an axiom that mental conquest lay through bodily suppression. In giving up his penance he had to give up their esteem; and in his sore distress they left him to bear the bitterness of failure alone.

There now ensued a second struggle in Gautama's mind, described in both the Pali and the Sanskrit accounts with a wealth of poetic imagery. Each event of this crisis is surrounded in the Buddhist accounts of their revered Teacher with the wildest legends, in which the very thoughts passing through the mind of Gautama appear in gorgeous descriptions as angels of darkness or of light. They represent him as sitting sublime, calm, and serene during violent attacks made upon him by a visible Tempter and his wicked angels, armed by all kinds of weapons, the greatness of the temptation shadowed forth by the horrors of the convulsion of the powers of Nature. "When the conflict began between the Saviour of the world and the Prince of Evil, a thousand appalling meteors fell; clouds and darkness prevailed. Even this earth, with the oceans and mountains it contains, though it is unconscious, quaked like a conscious being, like a fond bride when forcibly torn from her bridegroom, like the festoons of a vine shaking under the blasts of a whirlwind. The ocean rose under the vibration of this earthquake; rivers flowed back towards their sources; peaks of lofty mountains where countless trees had grown for ages rolled crumbling to the earth; a fierce storm howled all around; the roar of the concussion became terrific; the very sun enveloped itself in awful darkness, and a host of headless spirits filled the air."



34. *Seated Buddha surrounded by many Buddhas*, date unknown, Wat Si Phouthabath, Luang Prabang, Laos, various materials.



35. *Trio of seated Buddhas*, date unknown, Shwesigone Pagoda, Monywa, Burma.



36. *Head of reclining Buddha*, date unknown, Po Win Daung Caves, near Monywa, Burma.

He abandons his austerities (Pali Canon):

“I thought: ‘I recall once, when my father the Sakyan was working, and I was sitting in the cool shade of a rose-apple tree, then – quite withdrawn from sensuality, withdrawn from unskilful mental qualities – I entered and remained in the first jhana: rapture and pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought and evaluation. Could that be the path to Awakening?’ Then, following on that memory, came the realisation: ‘That is the path to Awakening.’ I thought: ‘So why am I afraid of that pleasure that has nothing to do with sensuality, nothing to do with unskilful mental qualities?’ I thought: ‘I am no longer afraid of that pleasure that has nothing to do with sensuality, nothing to do with unskilful mental qualities, but it is not easy to achieve that pleasure with a body so extremely emaciated. Suppose I were to take some solid food: some rice and porridge.’ So I took some solid food: some rice and porridge. Now five monks had been attending on me, thinking, ‘If Gautama, our contemplative, achieves some higher state, he will tell us.’ But when they saw me taking some solid food – some rice and porridge – they were disgusted and left me, thinking, ‘Gautama the contemplative is living luxuriously. He has abandoned his exertion and is backsliding into abundance.’

“So when I had taken solid food and regained strength, then – quite withdrawn from sensuality, withdrawn from unskilful mental qualities, I entered and remained in the first jhana: rapture and pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought and evaluation. But the pleasant feeling that arose in this way did not invade my mind or remain. With the stilling of directed thought and evaluation, I entered and remained in the second jhana: rapture and pleasure born of composure, unification of awareness free from directed thought and evaluation – internal assurance. But the pleasant feeling that arose in this way did not invade my mind or remain. With the fading of rapture I remained in equanimity, mindful and alert, and physically sensitive of pleasure. I entered and remained in the third jhana, of which the Noble Ones declare, ‘Equanimous and

mindful, he has a pleasurable abiding.’ But the pleasant feeling that arose in this way did not invade my mind or remain. With the abandoning of pleasure and pain – as with the earlier disappearance of elation and distress – I entered and remained in the fourth jhana: purity of equanimity and mindfulness, neither pleasure nor pain. But the pleasant feeling that arose in this way did not invade my mind or remain.”

[MN 36]



37. *Torso and Head of Buddha*, date unknown, Wat Si Muang, Vientiane, Laos, gilt bronze.

Disenchanted and dissatisfied, Gautama had given up all that most men value in order to seek peace in secluded study and self-denial. Failing to attain this object while learning the wisdom of others and living the simple life of a student, he devoted himself to that intense meditation and penance which all philosophers at that time said would raise men above the gods. Still unsatisfied, longing always for a certainty that seemed ever just beyond his grasp, he had added vigil to vigil and penance to penance. When, to the wondering view of others, he had become more than a saint, his indomitable resolution and faith suddenly and completely broke down. Then, when sympathy would have been most welcome, Gautama found his friends falling away and his disciples leaving him. Soon after, he wandered out towards the banks of the Nairanjara, received his morning meal from the hands of Sujata, the daughter of a neighboring villager, and sat himself down to eat it under the shade of a large tree to be known from that time as the sacred Bodhi tree, or tree of wisdom. There he remained through the long hours of that day, debating with himself what next to do. The philosophy he had trusted in seemed to be doubtful; the penance he had practised so long had brought no certainty, no peace; and all his old temptations came back upon him with renewed force. For years he had looked at all earthly good as vanity, worthless and transitory. He had thought that it contained within itself the seeds of evil, and must inevitably bring forth its bitter fruit. But

now to his wavering faith the sweet delights of home and love, the charms of wealth and power, began to show themselves in a different light, and to glow again with attractive colours. They were within his reach; he knew he would be welcomed back, and yet he was plagued by doubt: Would returning home bring him satisfaction? Would all his labours be lost? Was there no solid ground to stand on? He agonised in his doubt from the early morning until sunset. But as the day ended the religious side of his nature had won the victory; his doubts had cleared away. He had become Buddha, that is, enlightened; he had grasped, as it seemed to him, the solution of the great mystery of sorrow, and had learned at once its causes and its cure. He seemed to have gained the haven of peace that allowed him to rest at last on a certitude that could never be shaken.

But his victory had not been won without a loss. The works of penance and self-mortification he had so long and so resolutely carried out had been tried in the fire and found wanting; from that day he not only claimed no merit on account of them, but took every opportunity of declaring that such penances were not advantageous, which was a renunciation greater, probably, to one in his position, than that which the Buddhists call the 'Great Renunciation.'



38. *Flower Buddha*, date unknown, Tibet, copper with gold, height: 19 cm.



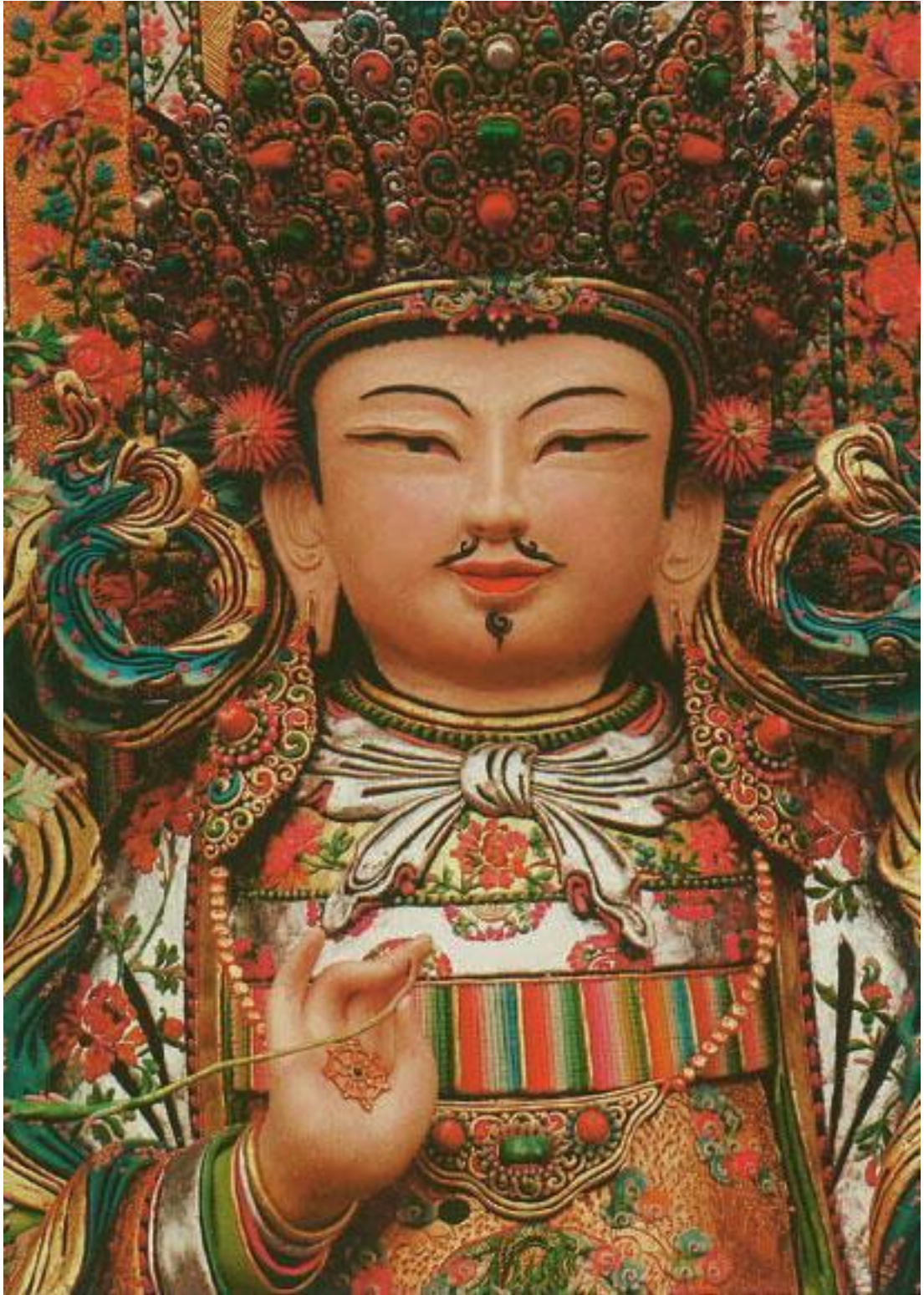
39. *Seated Buddha*, date unknown, location unknown.



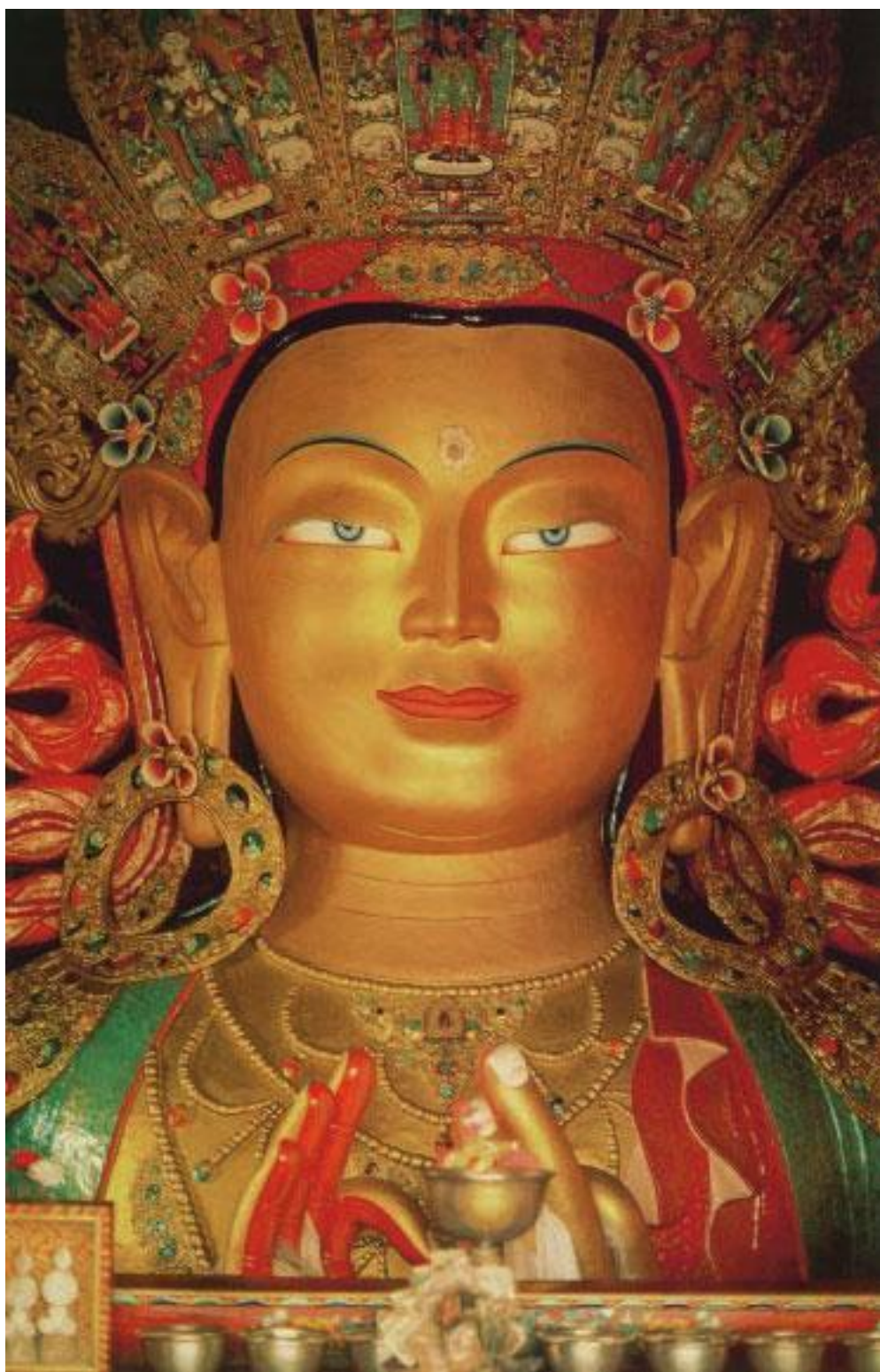
40. *Shakyamuni in the bhumisparsha mudra calling the Earth to Witness*, date unknown, location unknown.



41. *Seated Buddha*, date unknown, Sri Lanka, gilt bronze.



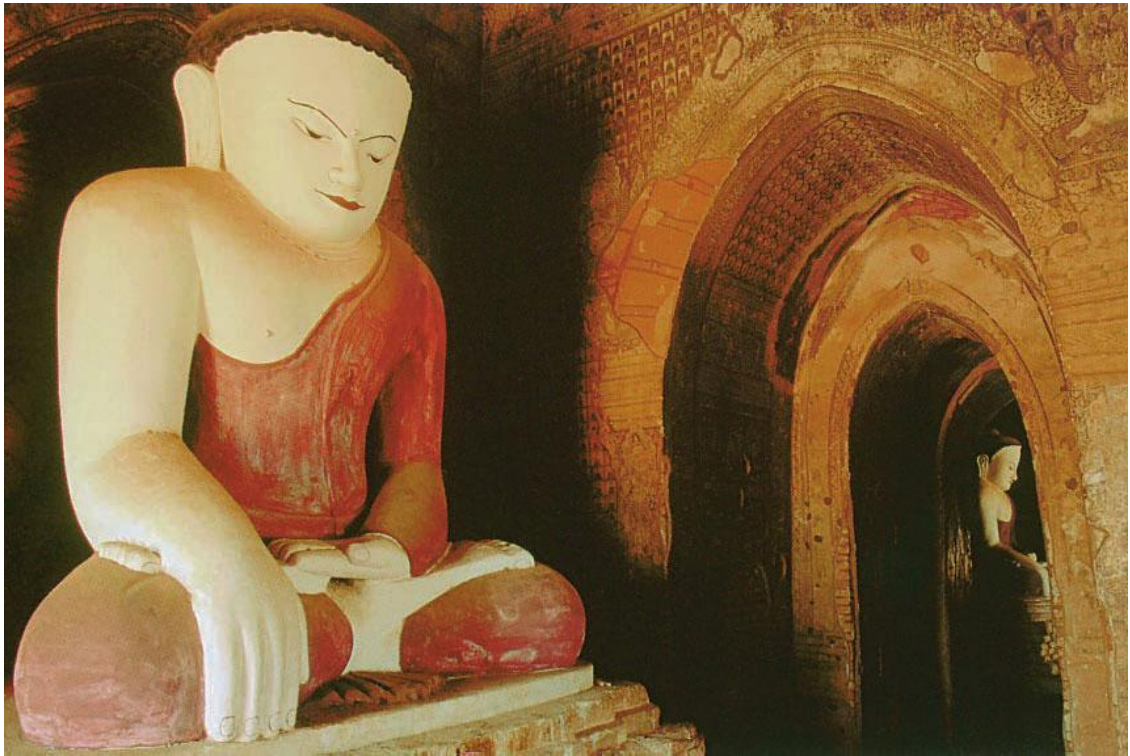
42. *A richly robed and bejewelled Buddha*, date unknown, Xining, Qinghai province, China, moulded from yak butter by Tibetan monks at Ta'er-si monastery.



43. *Buddha Statue*, date unknown, monastery Kloster Tikse Gompa, near Leh, Ladakh, India.



44. *Seated Buddha in the lotus position*, date unknown, Bodh Gaya, Bihar state, India.



45. *Seated Gautama Buddha displaying the earth-touching mudra*, date unknown, Paya Thonzu Temple, Bagan, Burma.

Supreme Awakening (Pali Canon):

Through the round of many births I roamed
without reward,
without rest,
seeking the house-builder.
Painful is birth
again and again.
House-builder, you're seen!
You will not build a house again.
All your rafters broken,
the ridge pole destroyed,
gone to the Unformed, the mind
has come to the end of craving.
[Dhp 153–4]

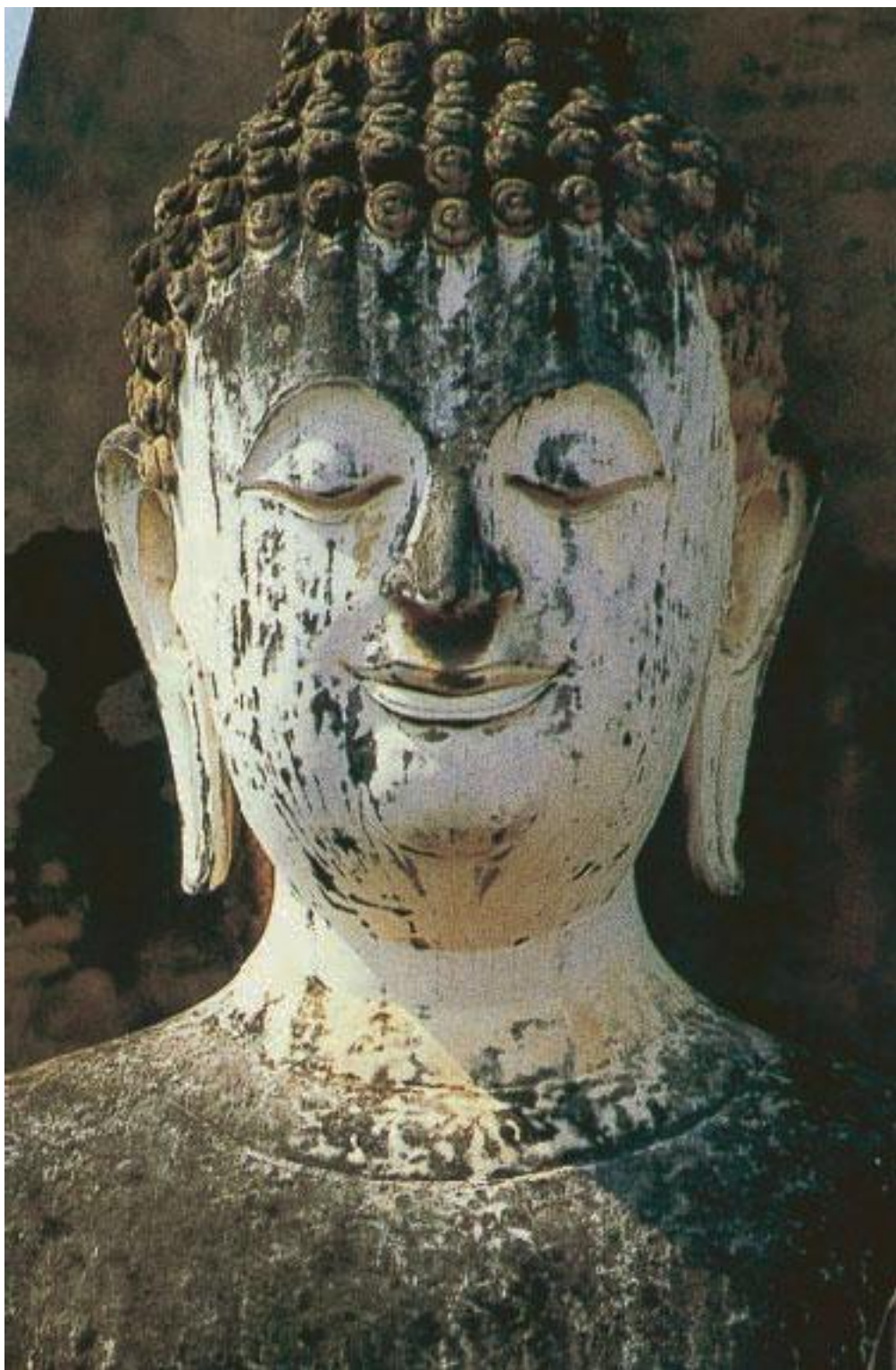
Gautama had now arrived at his conclusions regarding the nature of man and the world around him; he had realised the psychological and moral system to which he adhered during his long career. The old system of sacrifice and penance seemed meaningless compared to the apparent simplicity and power of the new one; because of this, Gautama felt more and more intensely the immensity of the distance which separated him from the beliefs of those about him. That feeling of utter loneliness which is often experienced by the leaders of men – especially in moments of high exaltation and insight – broke upon him with such force that it seemed to him impossible to go to his fellow countrymen with a doctrine that to them would seem almost incomprehensible. These men were subject to the same temptations as those whose power he had just experienced, though they lacked the earnestness and insight which he felt himself to possess. How could such men grasp the truth, at once fundamental and deceptively simple, of his system of salvation by

self-control and love, without any of the rites, ceremonies, charms, priestly powers, or gods that they had come to trust?

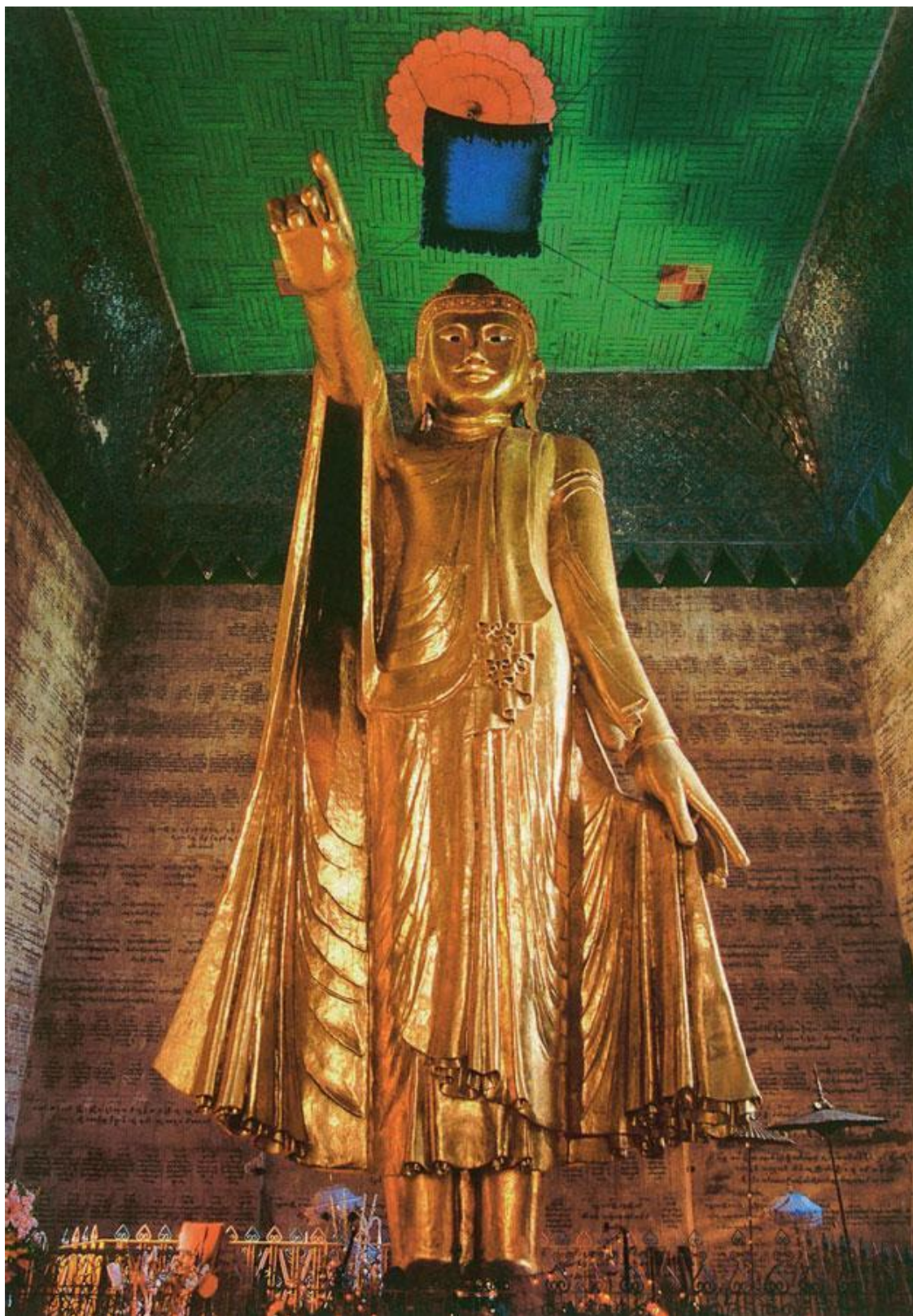
That such a thought occurred to him is very natural, given the circumstances, and this is reflected in the biographies of his life. The reason which they assign as the motive for his final determination is worthy of notice: it is said to have been love and pity for humanity. The thought of mankind, as it seemed to him, utterly doomed and lost, made Gautama resolve, at whatever hazard, to proclaim his doctrine to the world. The pious Buddhist is constantly grateful that Buddha, when he might have been freed from all life's suffering, was motivated by his love of mankind to live in a world defined by the sorrows of finite existence.



46. *Anuradhapura*, date unknown, Ruvanvelisaya Dagoba, Sri Lanka.



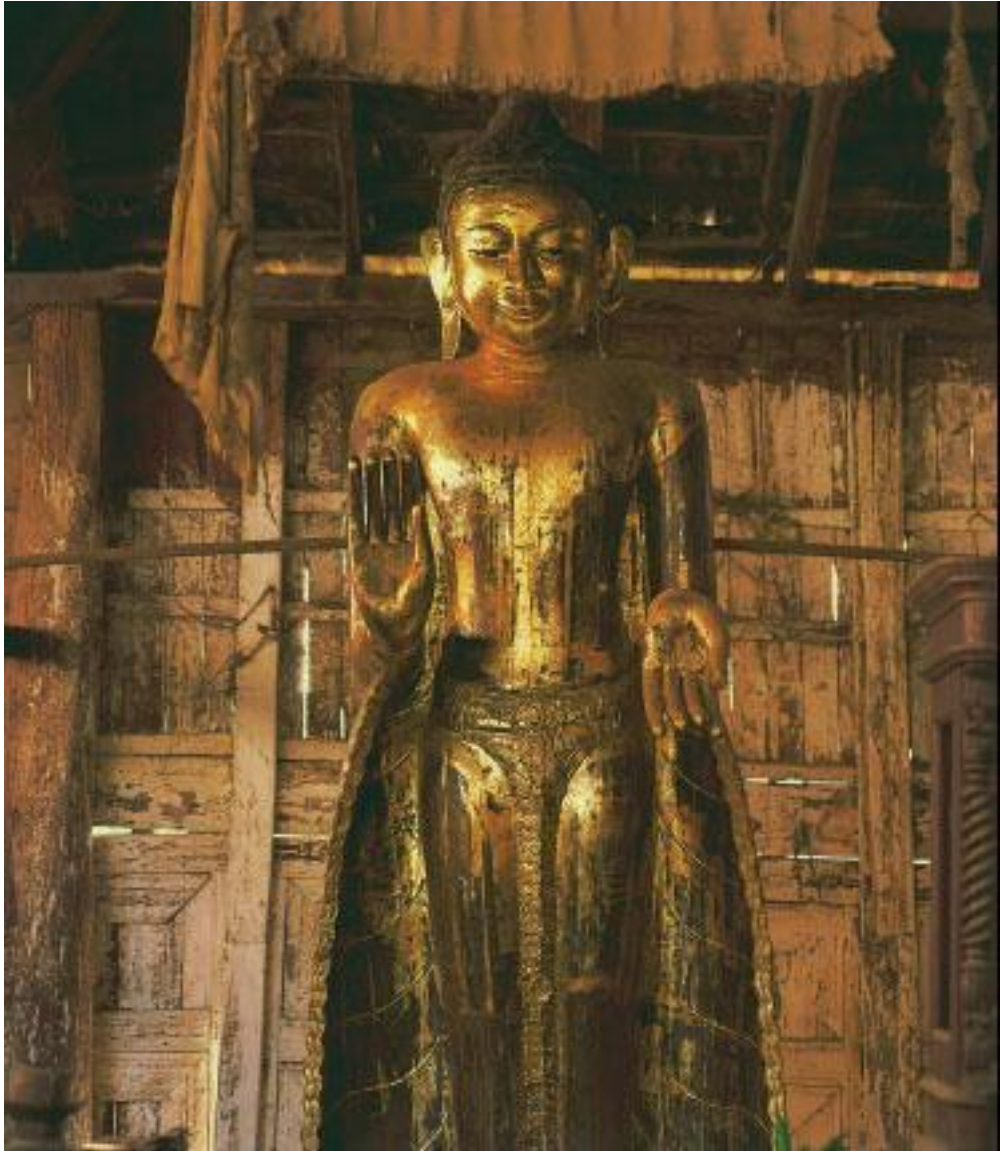
47. *Head of Large Buddha*, date unknown, Sukhothai, Thailand.



48. *Shweyattaw Buddha*, date unknown, Mandalay, Burma.



49. *Medicine Buddha*, date unknown, location unknown.



50. *Standing Buddha*, date unknown, Hkinkyiza Kyaung Monastery, Sale, Burma.

The Buddha investigates the laws of cause-and-effect (Pali Canon):

I have heard that on one occasion, when the Blessed One was newly Awakened – staying at Uruvela by the banks of the Nerañjara River in the shade of the Bodhi tree, the tree of Awakening – he sat in the shade of the Bodhi tree for seven days in one session, sensitive to the bliss of release. At the end of seven days, after emerging from that concentration, in the third watch of the night, he gave close attention to dependent co-arising in forward and reverse order, thus:

When this is, that is.

From the arising of this comes the arising of that.

When this isn't, that isn't.

From the cessation of this comes the cessation of that.

Now from the remainderless fading and cessation of that very ignorance comes the cessation of fabrications. From the cessation of fabrications comes the cessation of consciousness.

From the cessation of consciousness comes the cessation of name-and-form.

From the cessation of name-and-form comes the cessation of the six sense media.

From the cessation of the six sense media comes the cessation of contact.

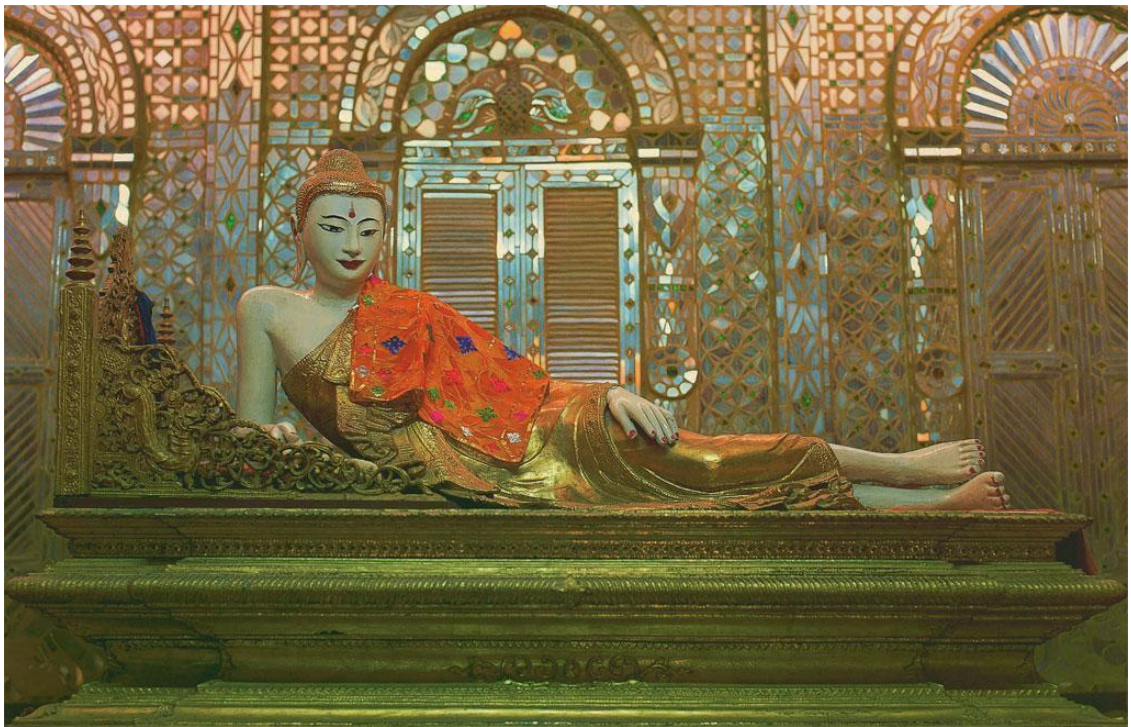
From the cessation of contact comes the cessation of feeling.
From the cessation of feeling comes the cessation of craving.
From the cessation of craving comes the cessation of clinging/sustenance.
From the cessation of clinging/sustenance comes the cessation of becoming.
From the cessation of becoming comes the cessation of birth.
From the cessation of birth, then old age and death, sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, and despair all cease.

Such is the cessation of this entire mass of stress and suffering.

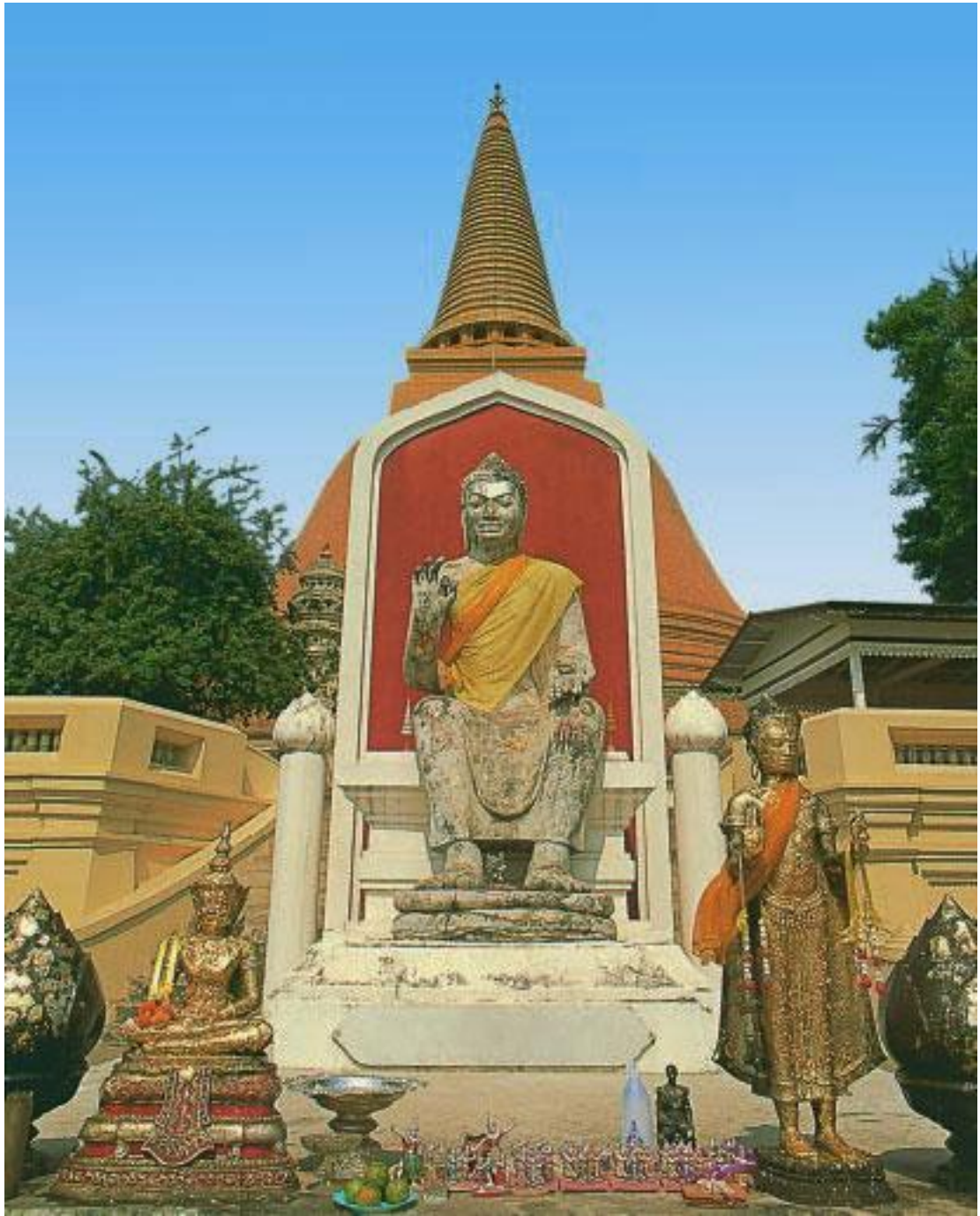
Then, on realising the significance of that, the Blessed One on that occasion exclaimed:

As phenomena grow clear
to the brahmin – ardent, absorbed –
he stands, routing the troops of Mara,
like the sun that illumines
the sky.

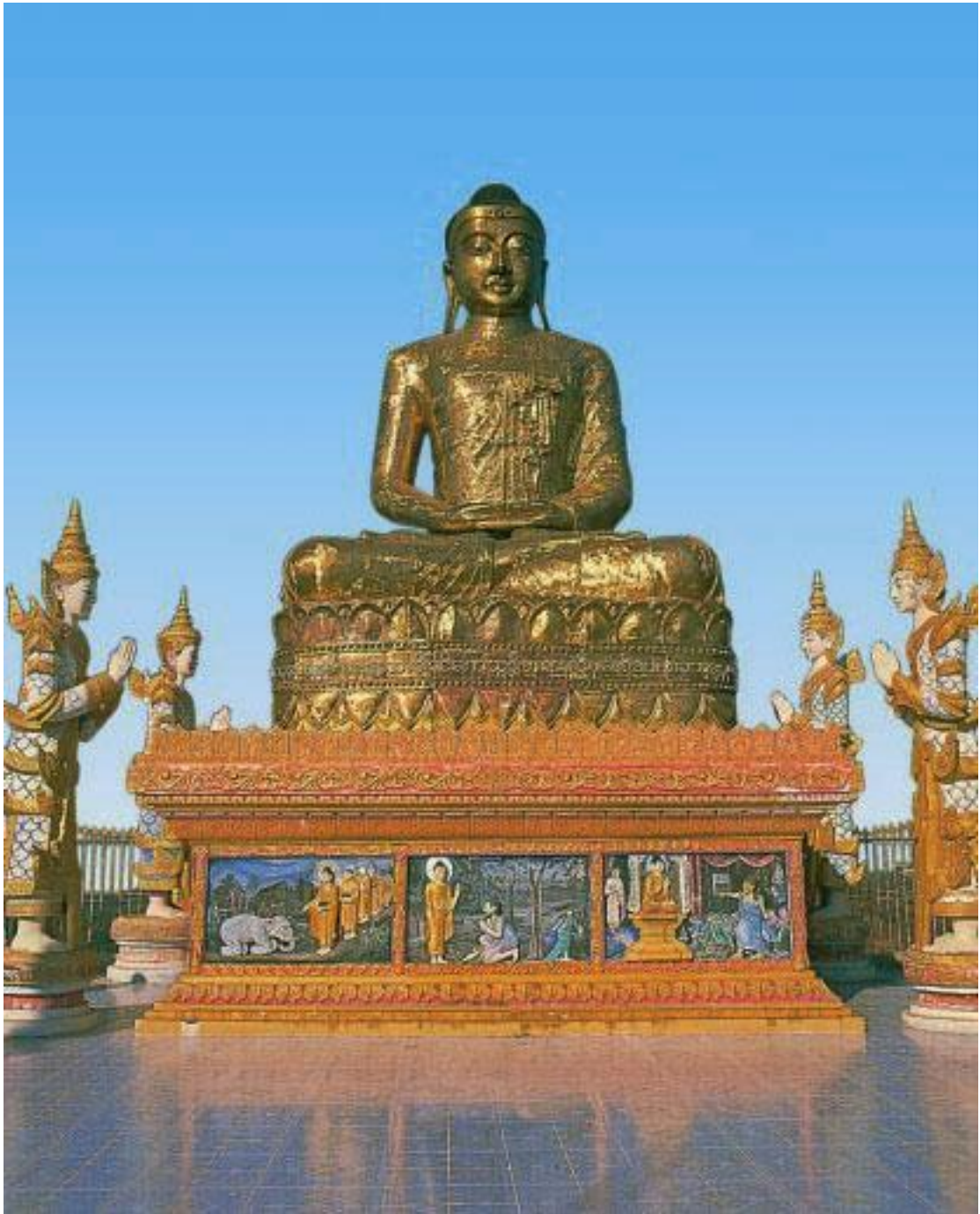
[Ud I.3]



51. *Reclining Buddha*, date unknown, Shwekyimyint Pagoda, Mandalay, Burma.



52. *Seated Buddha*, date unknown, Nakhon Pathom Chedi, Thailand.



53. *Seated Buddha*, date unknown, Sagaing, Burma.



54. *Buddha statues at Taihu Lake, Wuxi, date unknown, China, clay.*



55. *Seated Buddhas rest on plinths at the base of a stupa, date unknown, Wat Chai Watthanaram, Bangkok, Thailand, stone.*



56. *Seated Buddha*, date unknown, Shwesayan Pagoda, Thaton, Burma.

The Buddha wonders, “Whom should I revere as my teacher?”:

On one occasion, when the Blessed One was newly Self-awakened, he was staying at Uruvela on the bank of the Nerañjara River, at the foot of the Goatherd’s Banyan Tree. Then, while he was alone and in seclusion, this line of thinking arose in his awareness: “One suffers if dwelling without reverence or deference. Now on what priest or contemplative can I dwell in dependence, honouring and respecting him?”

Then the thought occurred to him: “It would be for the sake of perfecting an unperfected aggregate of virtue that I would dwell in dependence on another priest or contemplative, honouring and respecting him. However, in this world with its devas, Mara, and Brahma, in this generation with its priests and contemplatives, its royalty and common-folk, I do not see another priest or contemplative more consummate in virtue than I, on whom I could dwell in dependence, honouring and respecting him.

“It would be for the sake of perfecting an unperfected aggregate of concentration...

“It would be for the sake of perfecting an unperfected aggregate of discernment...

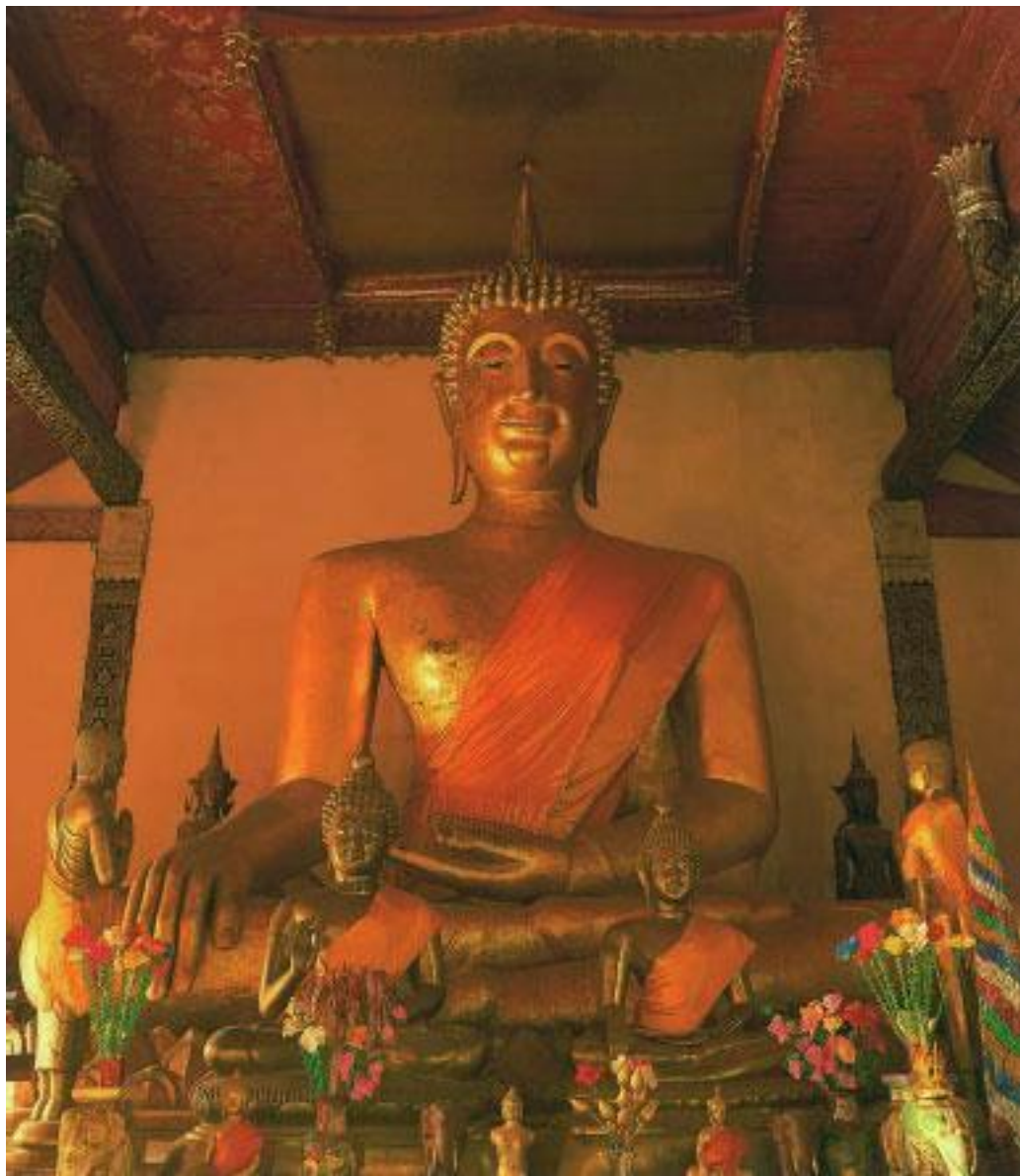
“It would be for the sake of perfecting an unperfected aggregate of release...

“It would be for the sake of perfecting an unperfected aggregate of knowledge and vision of release that I would dwell in dependence on another priest or contemplative, honouring and respecting him. However, in this world with its devas, Mara, and Brahma, in this generation with its priests and contemplatives, its royalty and common-folk, I do not see another priest or contemplative more consummate in knowledge and vision of release than I, on whom I could dwell in dependence, honouring and respecting him.

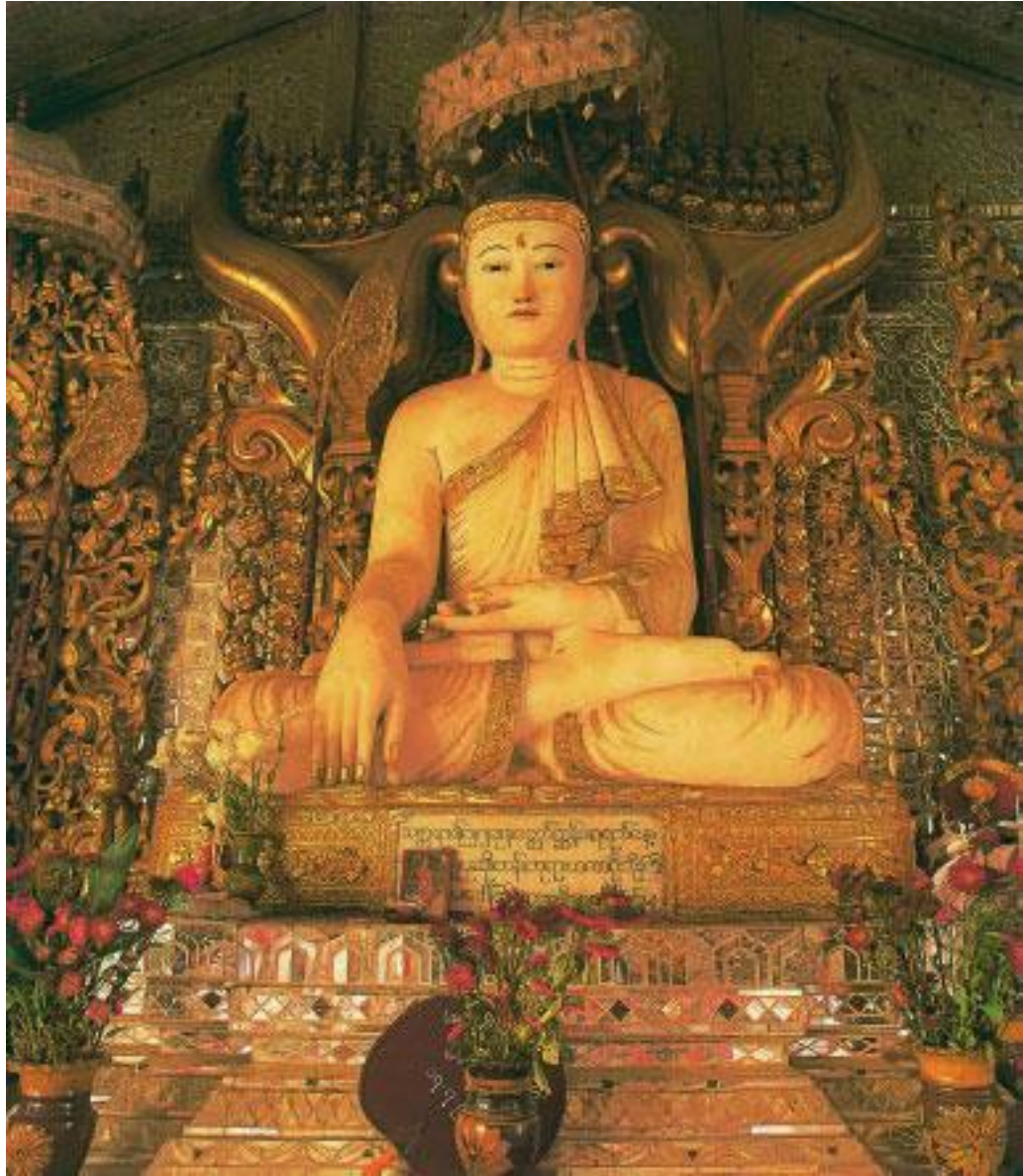
“What if I were to dwell in dependence on this very Dharma to which I have fully awakened, honouring and respecting it?”

Then, having known with his own awareness the line of thinking in the Blessed One's awareness – just as a strong man might extend his flexed arm or flex his extended arm – Brahma Sahampati disappeared from the Brahma-world and reappeared in front of the Blessed One. Arranging his upper robe over one shoulder, he saluted the Blessed One with his hands before his heart and said to him: “So it is, Blessed One! So it is, One-Well-Gone! Those who were arahants, Rightly Self-awakened Ones in the past – they, too, dwelled in dependence on the very Dharma itself, honouring and respecting it. Those who will be arahants, Rightly Self-awakened Ones in the future – they, too, will dwell in dependence on the very Dharma itself, honouring and respecting it. And let the Blessed One, who is at present the arahant, the Rightly Self-awakened One, dwell in dependence on the very Dharma itself, honouring and respecting it.”

[SN VI.2]



57. *Seated Buddha*, date unknown, Wat Manorum, Luang Prabang, Laos.



58. *Seated Buddha*, date unknown, Shwedagon Pagoda, Yangon, Burma.

He wonders, “Should I teach this Dharma to others?”:

I have heard that on one occasion, when the Blessed One was newly Self-awakened, he was staying at Uruvela on the bank of the Nerañjara River, at the foot of the Goatherd’s Banyan Tree. Then, while he was alone and in seclusion, this line of thinking arose in his awareness: “This Dharma that I have attained is deep, hard to see, hard to realise, peaceful, refined, beyond the scope of conjecture, subtle, to be experienced by the wise. But this generation delights in attachment, is excited by attachment, enjoys attachment. For a generation delighting in attachment, excited by attachment, enjoying attachment, this/that conditionality and dependent co-arising are hard to see. This state, too, is hard to see: the resolution of all fabrications, the relinquishment of all acquisitions, the ending of craving; dispassion; cessation; Unbinding. And if I were to teach the Dharma and if others would not understand me that would be tiresome for me, troublesome for me.”

Just then these verses, unspoken in the past, unheard before, occurred to the Blessed One:

Enough now with teaching

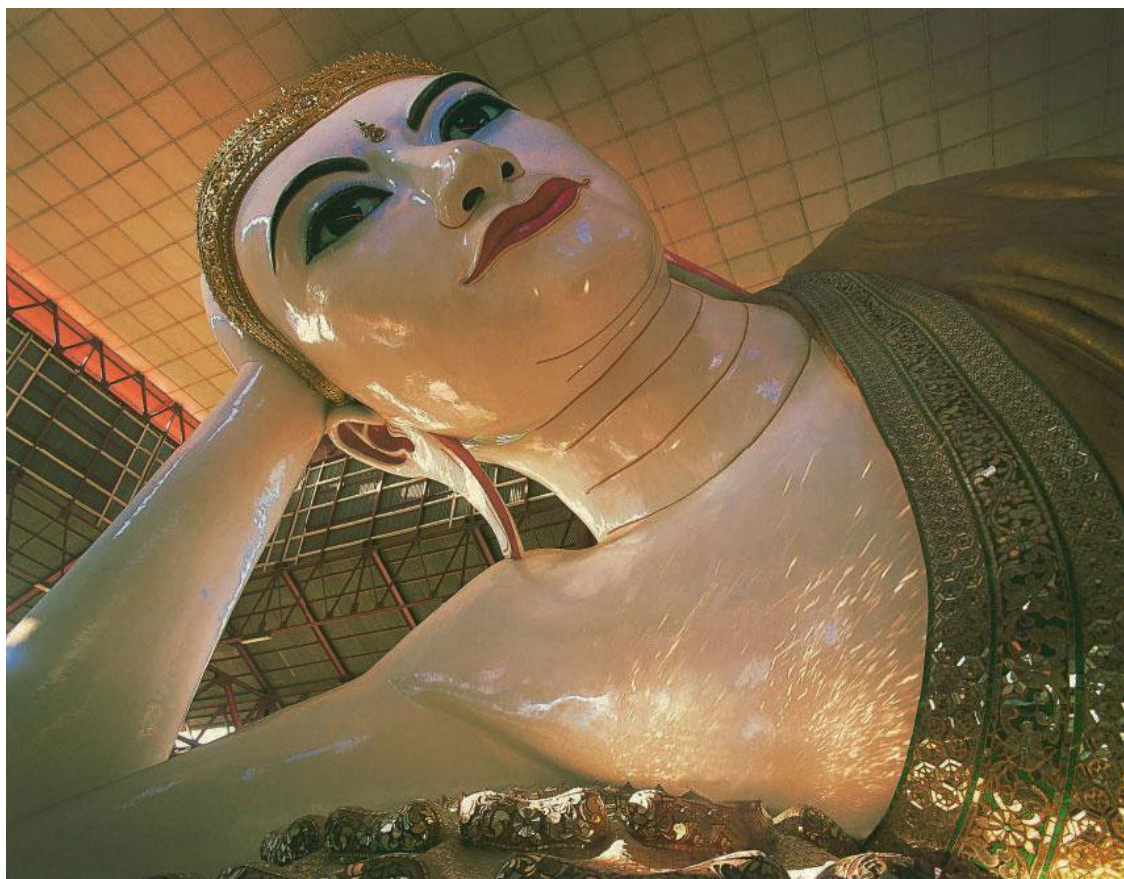
what

only with difficulty

I reached.
This Dharma is not easily realised
by those overcome
with aversion and passion.
What is abstruse, subtle,
deep,
hard to see,
going against the flow –
those delighting in passion,
cloaked in the mass of darkness,
won't see.



59. *A Himalayan shrine containing an image of a seated Buddha draped with colourful fabric, date unknown, Kunzang La pass, Spiti, Himachal Pradesh state, India, gilt bronze.*



60. *Reclining Buddha*, date unknown, Chaukhtatgyi Pagoda, Yangon, Burma, painted plaster.



61. *Head of Reclining Buddha*, date unknown, location unknown.

As the Blessed One reflected thus, his mind inclined to dwelling at ease, not to teaching the Dharma.

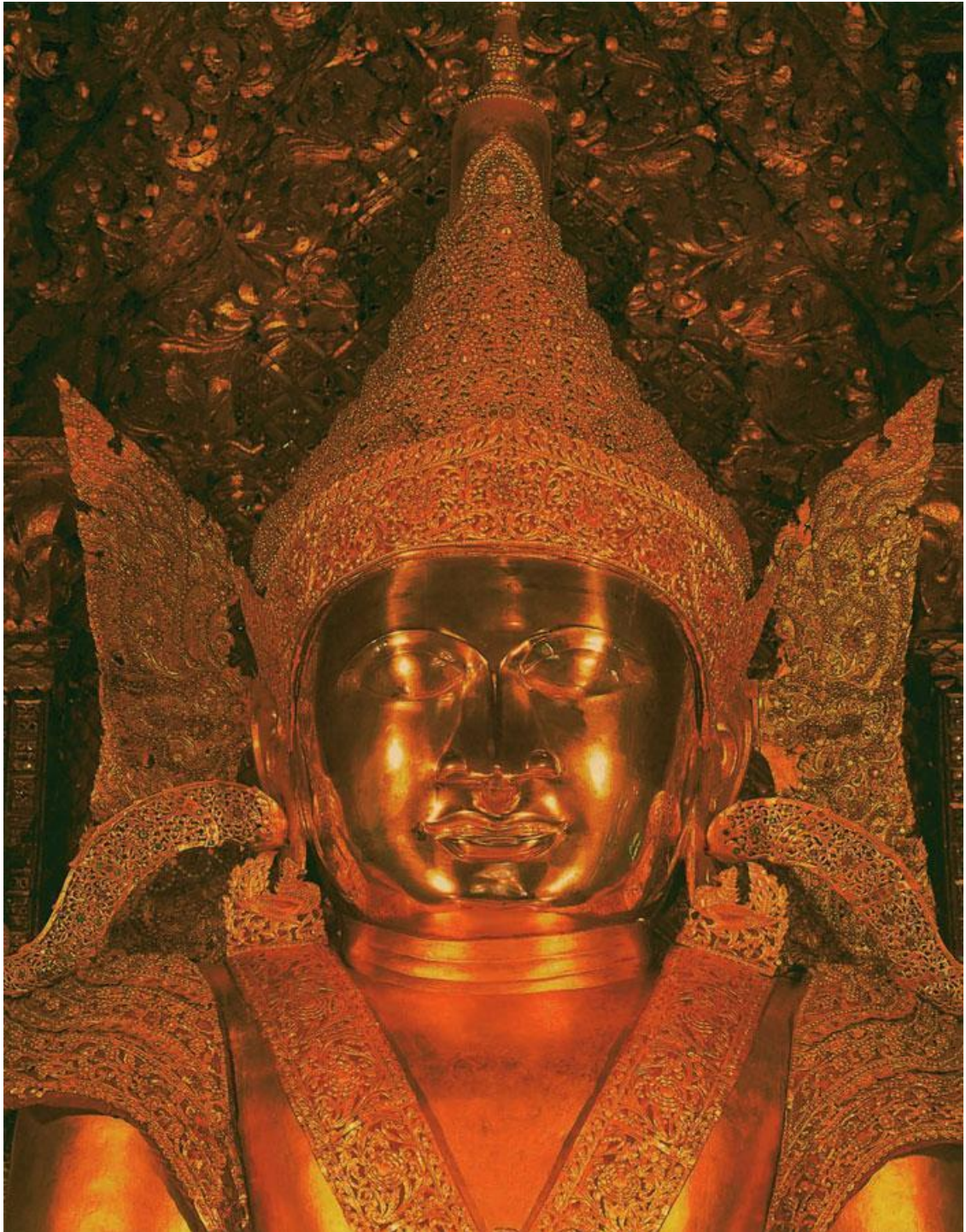
Then Brahma Sahampati, having known with his own awareness the line of thinking in the Blessed One's awareness, thought: "The world is lost! The world is destroyed! The mind of the Tathagata, the arahant, the Rightly Self-awakened One inclines to dwelling at ease, not to teaching the Dharma!" Then, just as a strong man might extend his flexed arm or flex his extended arm, Brahma Sahampati disappeared from the Brahma-world and reappeared in front the Blessed One. Arranging his upper robe over one shoulder, he knelt down with his right knee on the ground, saluted the Blessed One with his hands before his heart, and said to him: "Lord, let the Blessed One teach the Dharma! Let the One-Well-Gone teach the Dharma! There are beings with little dust in their eyes who are falling away because they do not hear the Dharma. There will be those who will understand the Dharma."

Then the Blessed One, having understood Brahma's invitation, out of compassion for beings, surveyed the world with the eye of an Awakened One. As he did so, he saw beings with little dust in their eyes and those with much, those with keen faculties and those with dull, those with good attributes and those with bad, those easy to teach and those hard, some of them seeing disgrace and danger in the other world. Just as in a pond of blue or red or white lotuses, some lotuses – born and growing in the water – might flourish while immersed in the water, without rising up from the water; some might stand at an even level with the water; while some might rise up from the water and stand without being smeared by the water – so too, surveying the world with the eye of an Awakened One, the Blessed One saw beings with little dust in their eyes and those with much,

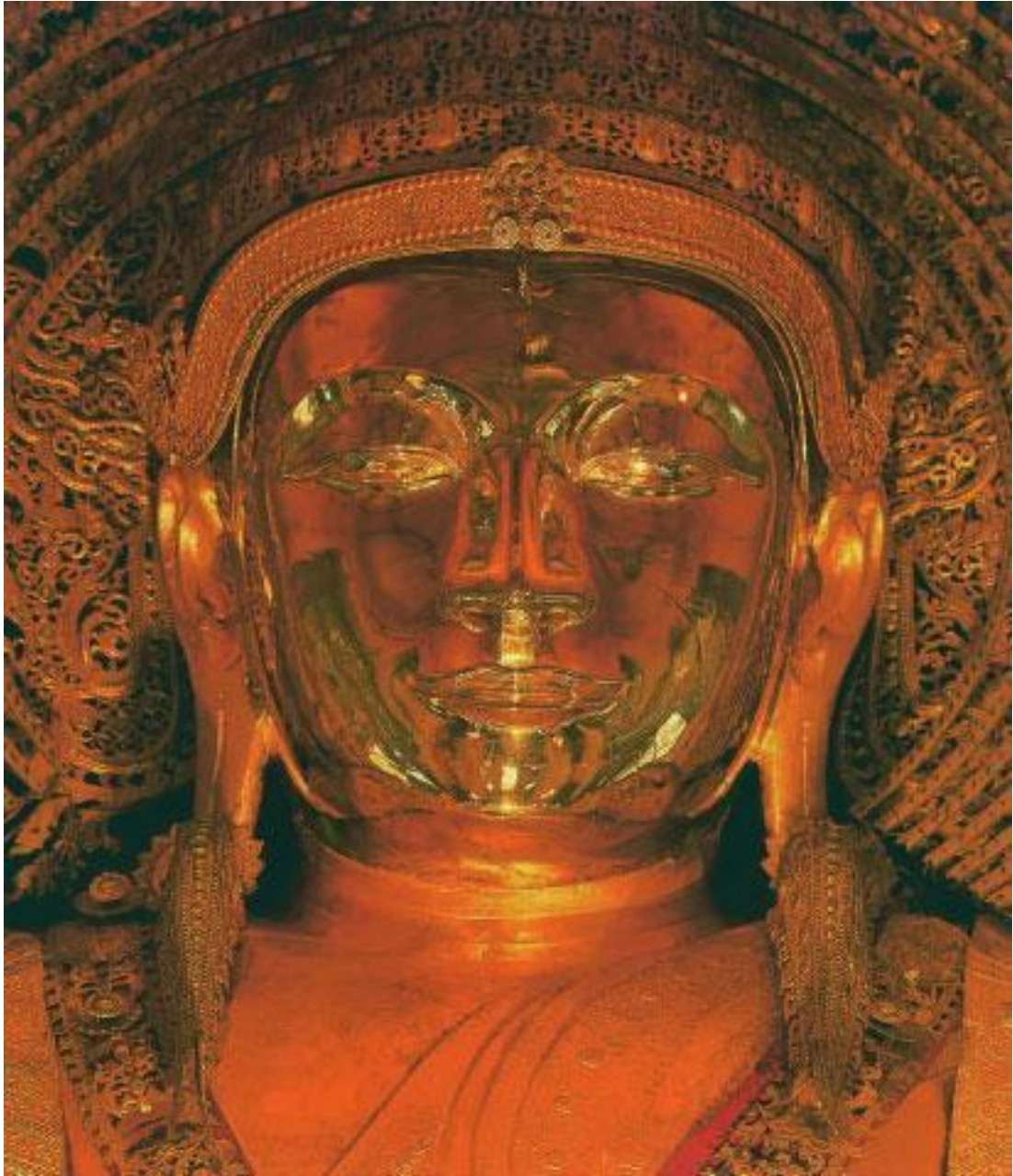
those with keen faculties and those with dull, those with good attributes and those with bad, those easy to teach and those hard, some of them seeing disgrace and danger in the other world.

Then Brahma Sahampati, thinking, “The Blessed One has given his consent to teach of Dharma,” bowed down to the Blessed One and, circling him on the right, disappeared right there.

[SN VI.1]



62. *Head of Maha Muni Buddha*, date unknown, Mawlamyine, Burma, gilt bronze.



63. *Head of Buddha statue*, date unknown, Eindawya Pagoda, Mandalay, Burma, gilt bronze.

To those who look upon Gautama in a less mystic light, as a man of mixed motives and desires, it will seem reasonable that other considerations of a less lofty kind must have tended, half-unconsciously perhaps, in the same direction. Silence would be taken as a confession of failure; and, even apart from what had happened, there is always sweetness in declaring the unknown or being the bearer of good news. It is at least certain that Gautama, like Muhammad, had an intense belief in himself, a confidence that must have been peculiarly strong in that moment of clearness when he had seemed at last to stand face to face with the deep realities or rather unrealities of life; and his sense of isolation yielded before his consciousness of power and his prophetic zeal.

At first, it is said, he intended to address himself to his old teachers, Alara and Udraka. Finding that they were dead, he walked straight to Benares, where his former disciples were then living. On the way he met with an acquaintance named Upaka, and from him received his first rebuff. The account of the conversation is only preserved to us in one of the lesser known biographies, but is so striking that it is deserving of notice. The Brahman, surprised at Gautama's

expression and carriage, asked him: “Whence comes it that thy form is so perfect, thy countenance so lovely, thy appearance so peaceful? What system of religion is it that imparts to thee such joy and such peace?” To this question Gautama replied, in verse, that he had overcome all worldly influences and ignorance, error, and passionate craving.

Then the Brahman asked where he was going, and on hearing he was going to Benares, asked him for what purpose; to this the ‘World-honoured’ replied in the following verses: “I now desire to turn the wheel of the excellent Law. For this purpose I am going to that city of Benares to give Light to those enshrouded in darkness, And to open the gate of Immortality to men.”

After further questioning, he then informed Upaka that having completely conquered all evil passion, and forever gotten rid of the remnants of personal being, he desired by the light of his religious system to dispense light to all, as a lamp enlightens all in the house.

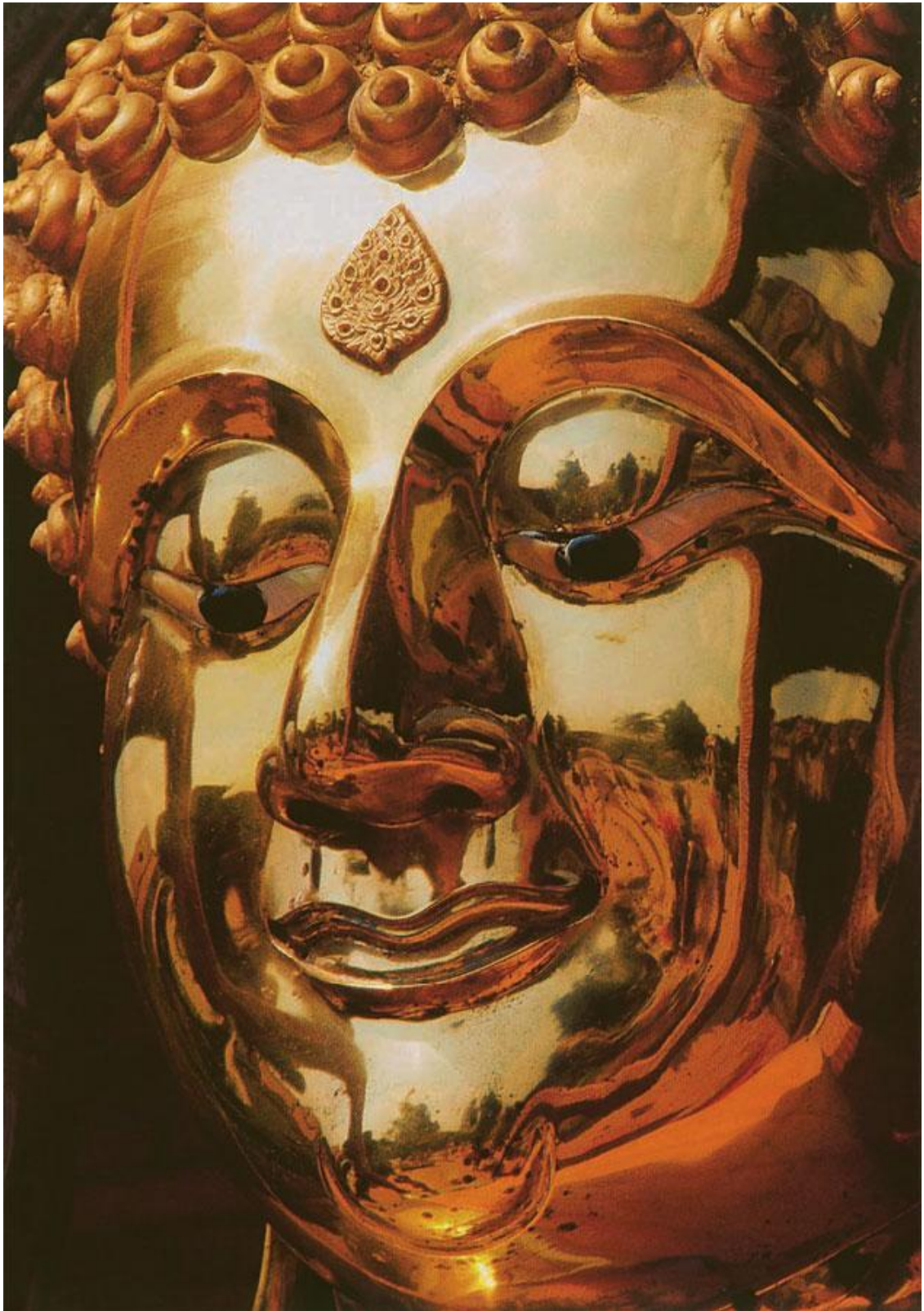
On this the Brahman, unable apparently to further tolerate such pretensions, said curtly, “Venerable Gautama, your way lies yonder,” and turned away himself in the opposite direction.

We have this episode in its Pali form, in the Vinaya Pitaka (“Pitaka” is the term used for a Buddhist canon of scriptures). The expression ‘turning the wheel of the excellent Law’ means, roughly, ‘to found a kingdom of righteousness,’ and the expression ‘to open the gate of Immortality to men,’ being quite unbuddhistic, has probably arisen from a mistranslation of the word ‘amata,’ meaning ambrosia or nectar. This is a name applied to Nirvana, as being the heavenly drink of the wise.

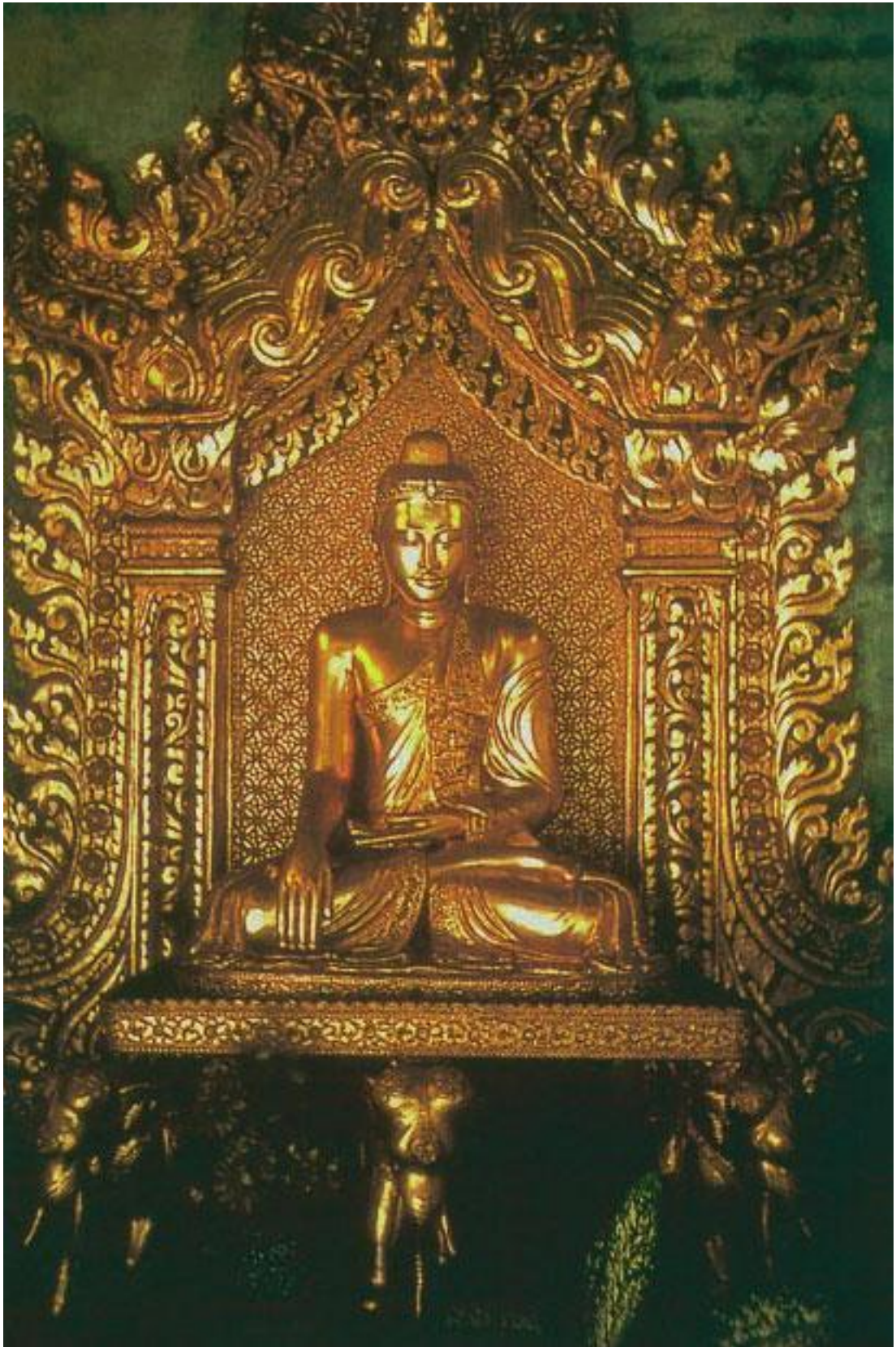
Nothing daunted, the new prophet went on to Benares; in the cool of the evening, he entered the deer park about three miles north of the city, where his five former disciples were then living. They, seeing him coming, resolved not to recognize him as a master because he had broken his vows; they chose to address him simply by his name. On the other hand, as he was of high caste descent, they offered him a mat to sit on. They respected him still, but a strong sense of duty prevented them from receiving him as an authoritative teacher because he had fallen from orthodoxy. Gautama remarked the change of manner in the others, and told that they were still on the path of suffering, whereas he had found the way of salvation which had so long remained hidden. Having become a Buddha, he could show them how to escape from the evils of life. They objected to his claim from a Hindu ascetic point of view; how can his mind have won the victory when he had yielded to his body? Gautama replied by explaining the fundamental truths of his system, an exposition preserved in the Dhammacakkappavattana Sutra, the Sutra of the Foundation of the Kingdom of Righteousness.

The oldest form of this Sutra is in Pali, and the later accounts are poetical versions of the ancient tradition. The devas – supernatural beings – thronged to hear the discourse until all the heavens were empty; the sound of their approach was like the noise of a storm, until at the blast of a heavenly trumpet they became as still as a waveless sea. All nature was moved; the everlasting hills, on which the world is built, leapt for joy, and bowed themselves before the Teacher, while the powers of the air disposed all things as was fitting; gentle breezes sighed, and delicious flowers filled the air with their scent.

According to the scripture, “The evening was like a lovely maiden; the stars were the pearls upon her neck, the dark clouds her braided hair, the deepening space her flowing robe. As a crown she had the heavens where the angels dwell; these three worlds were as her body; her eyes were the white lotus flowers which open to the rising moon; and her voice was, as it were, the humming of the bees. To worship the Buddha, and hear the first preaching of the word, this lovely maiden came.” When Gautama spoke, though he spoke in Pali, each one of the assembled hosts thought himself addressed in his own language, as did the different kinds of animals, great and small. There are very few lengthened accounts of what was actually said, and they differ almost entirely in the miraculous and poetical details; but they agree on the whole as to the course of Gautama’s argument.



64. *Head of a Buddha*, date unknown, Wat Yai Chai Mongkhon, Ayutthaya, Thailand, gilt bronze.



65. *Seated statue of Gautama Buddha as the ninth incarnation of the Hindu creator god, Vishnu, date unknown, Mandalay, Burma, gold.*

The Buddha's first sermon, to the group of five ascetics (Pali Canon):

On one occasion the Blessed One was staying at Varanasi in the Game Refuge at Isipatana. There he addressed the group of five monks:

“There are these two extremes that are not to be indulged in by one who has gone forth. Which two? That which is devoted to sensual pleasure with reference to sensual objects: base, vulgar, common, ignoble, unprofitable; and that which is devoted to self-affliction: painful, ignoble, unprofitable. Avoiding both of these extremes, the middle way realised by the Tathagata – producing vision, producing knowledge – leads to calm, to direct knowledge, to self-awakening, to Unbinding.

[The Noble Eightfold Path]

“And what is the middle way realised by the Tathagata that – producing vision, producing knowledge – leads to calm, to direct knowledge, to self-awakening, to Unbinding? Precisely this Noble Eightfold Path: right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration. This is the middle way realised by the Tathagata that – producing vision, producing knowledge – leads to calm, to direct knowledge, to self-awakening, to Unbinding.

[The Four Noble Truths]

“Now this, monks, is the noble truth of stress: Birth is stressful, aging is stressful, death is stressful; sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, and despair are stressful; association with the unbeloved is stressful, separation from the loved is stressful, not getting what is wanted is stressful. In short, the five aggregates of clinging/sustenance are stressful.

“And this, monks, is the noble truth of the origination of stress: the craving that makes for further becoming – accompanied by passion and delight, relishing now here and now there – i.e., craving for sensual pleasure, craving for becoming, craving for non-becoming.

“And this, monks, is the noble truth of the cessation of stress: the remainderless fading and cessation, renunciation, relinquishment, release, and letting go of that very craving.

“And this, monks, is the noble truth of the way of practise leading to the cessation of stress: precisely this Noble Eightfold Path – right view, right resolve, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration.

[One's duties with regard to the Four Noble Truths]

“Vision arose, insight arose, discernment arose, knowledge arose, illumination arose within me with regard to things never heard before: ‘This is the noble truth of stress’...

‘This noble truth of stress is to be comprehended’... ‘This noble truth of stress has been comprehended.’

“Vision arose, insight arose, discernment arose, knowledge arose, illumination arose within me with regard to things never heard before: ‘This is the noble truth of the origination of stress’... ‘This noble truth of the origination of stress is to be abandoned’... ‘This noble truth of the origination of stress has been abandoned.’

“Vision arose, insight arose, discernment arose, knowledge arose, illumination arose within me with regard to things never heard before: ‘This is the noble truth of the cessation of stress’... ‘This noble truth of the cessation of stress is to be directly experienced’... ‘This noble truth of the cessation of stress has been directly experienced.’

“Vision arose, insight arose, discernment arose, knowledge arose, illumination arose within me with regard to things never heard before: ‘This is the noble truth of the way of practise leading to the cessation of stress’... ‘This noble truth of the way of practise leading to the cessation of stress is to be developed’... ‘This noble truth of the way of practise leading to the cessation of stress has been developed.’



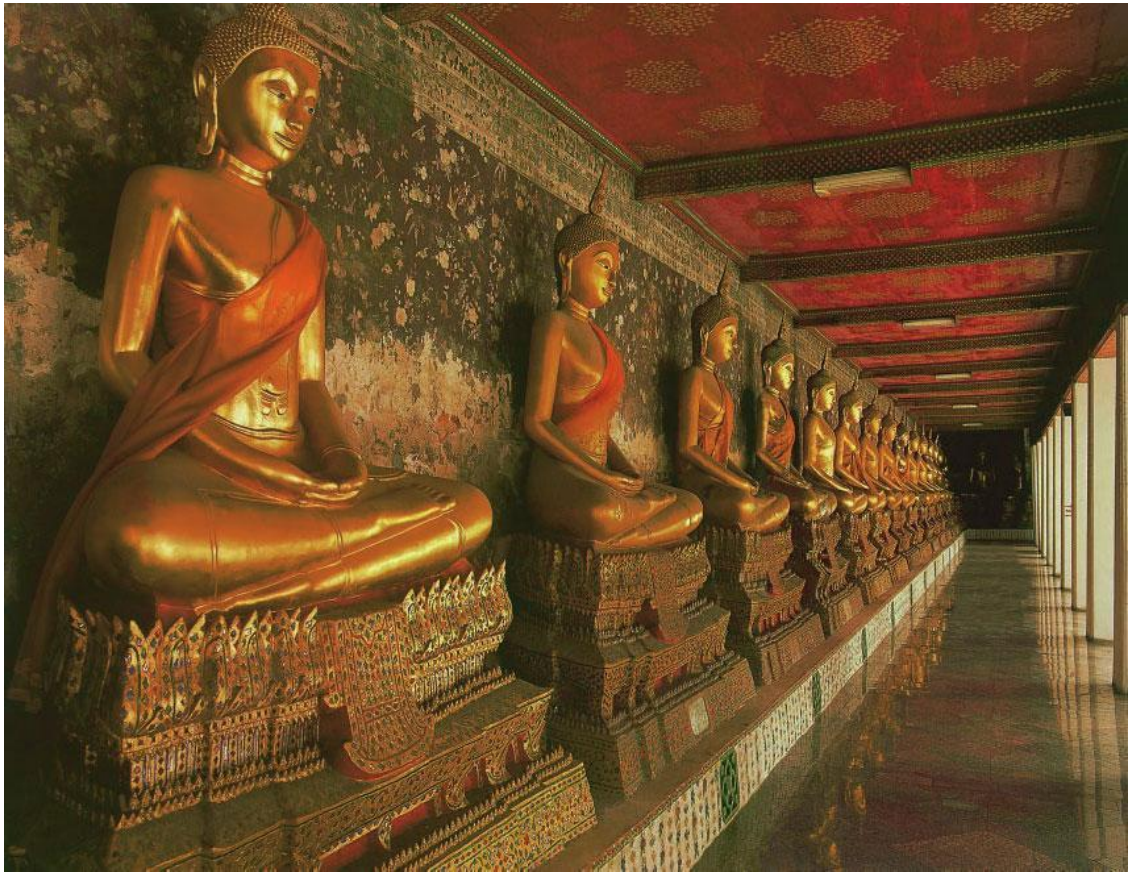
66. *Seated Buddha*, date unknown, Kyaikbawlaw Pagoda, Kyaikto, Burma, gilt bronze.

[The twelve-spoked Wheel of Dharma]

“And, monks, as long as this knowledge and vision of mine – with its three rounds and twelve permutations concerning these four noble truths as they actually are present – was not pure, I did not claim to have directly awakened to the right self-awakening unexcelled in the cosmos with its deities, Maras, and Brahmas, with its contemplatives and priests, its royalty and commonfolk. But as soon as this knowledge and vision of mine – with its three rounds and twelve permutations concerning these four noble truths as they actually are present – was truly pure, then I did claim to have directly awakened to the right self-awakening unexcelled in the cosmos with its deities, Maras and Brahmas, with its contemplatives and priests, its royalty and commonfolk. Knowledge and vision arose in me: ‘Unprovoked is my release. This is the last birth. There is now no further becoming.’”

[The Noble Sangha is born]

That is what the Blessed One said. Gratified, the group of five monks delighted at his words. And while this explanation was being given, there arose to the Venerable Kaundinya the dustless, stainless Dharma eye: Whatever is subject to origination is all subject to cessation.



67. *Seated Buddha in hall of Buddhas*, date unknown, Wat Suthat, Bangkok, Thailand, gilt bronze.

[The Wheel of the Dharma begins to turn]

And when the Blessed One had set the Wheel of Dharma in motion, the earth deities cried out: “At Varanasi, in the Game Refuge at Isipatana, the Blessed One has set in motion the unexcelled Wheel of Dharma that cannot be stopped by priest or contemplative, deity, Mara or God or anyone in the cosmos.” On hearing the earth deities’ cry, the deities of the Four Kings’ Heaven took up the cry...the deities of the Thirty-three...the Yama deities...the Tushita deities...the Nimmanarati deities...the Paranimmita-vasavatti deities...the deities of Brahma’s retinue took up the cry: “At Varanasi, in the Game Refuge at Isipatana, the Blessed One has set in motion the unexcelled Wheel of Dharma that cannot be stopped by priest or contemplative, deity, Mara, or God or anyone at all in the cosmos.”

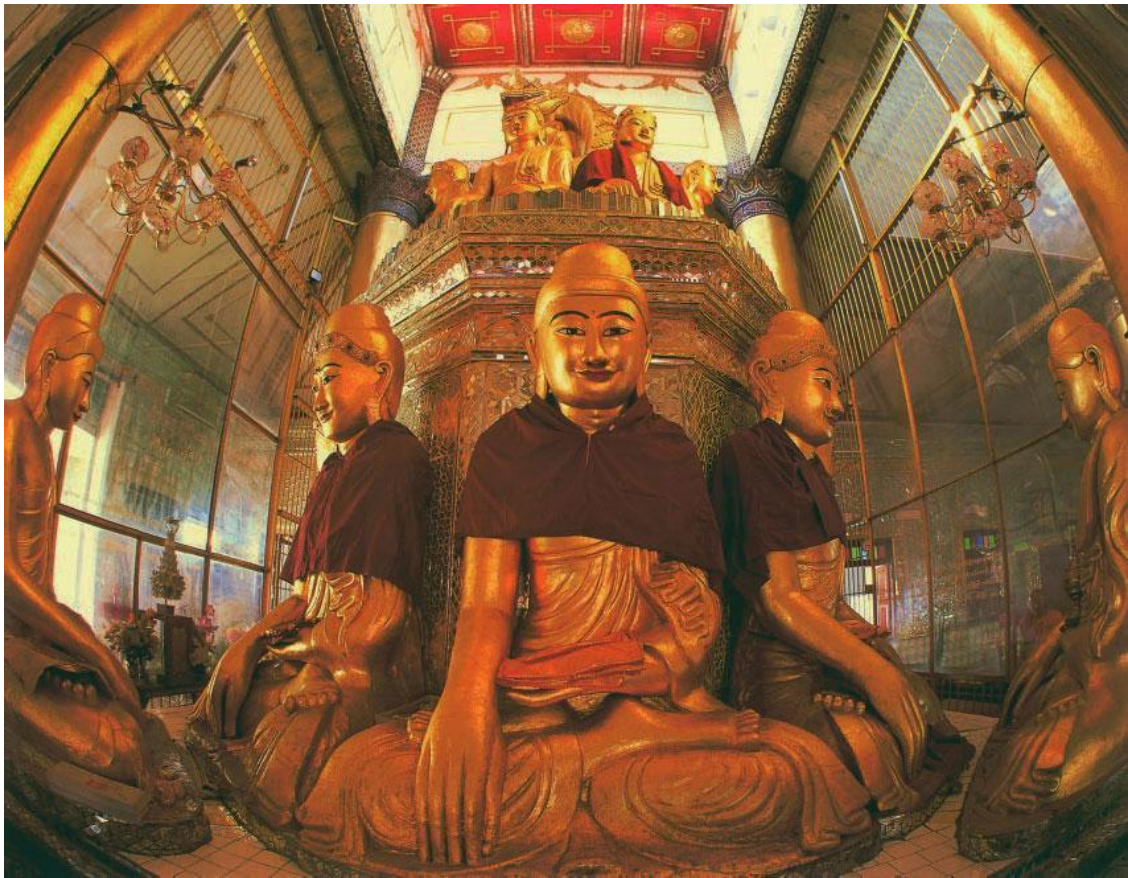
So in that moment, that instant, the cry shot right up to the Brahma worlds. And this ten-thousand fold cosmos shivered and quivered and quaked, while a great, measureless radiance appeared in the cosmos, surpassing the effulgence of the deities.

Then the Blessed One exclaimed: “So you really know, Kaundinya? So you really know?” And that is how Venerable Kaundinya acquired the name Ajnata-Kaundinya – Kaundinya who knows.

[SN LVI.11]

The Buddha declared that he had arrived at these convictions, not by study of the Vedas (the Hindu texts) or from the teachings of others, but by the light of reason and intuition alone. Initially, these teachings were difficult for his old disciples to accept. However, after spending long hours discussing them with him, asking their questions and hearing his answers, these men became the first to acknowledge Gautama in his new role. It was the aged Kaundinya, ready for his release from

life, who first openly gave in his adhesion; but the others also, after many talks with the Buddha, sometimes separately, sometimes together, soon accepted in its entirety his plan of salvation.



68. *Trio of seated Buddhas*, date unknown, Kyaikhami, Yayleh Pagoda, Kyaikhami, Burma.

Life of Gautama from the Commencement of his Public Ministry until his Death
What sets the Buddha apart (Pali Canon):

As he was sitting there, [Moggallana the Guardsman] said to Venerable Ananda: “Master Ananda, is there any one monk endowed in each and every way with the qualities with which Master Gautama – worthy and rightly self-awakened – was endowed?”

“No, brahmin, there isn’t any one monk endowed in each and every way with the qualities with which the Blessed One – worthy and rightly self-awakened – was endowed. For the Blessed One was the arouser of the unarisen path, the begetter of the unbegotten path, the expounder of the unexpounded path, the knower of the path, the expert with regard to the path, adept at the path. And now his disciples follow the path and become endowed with it after him.”

[MN 108]

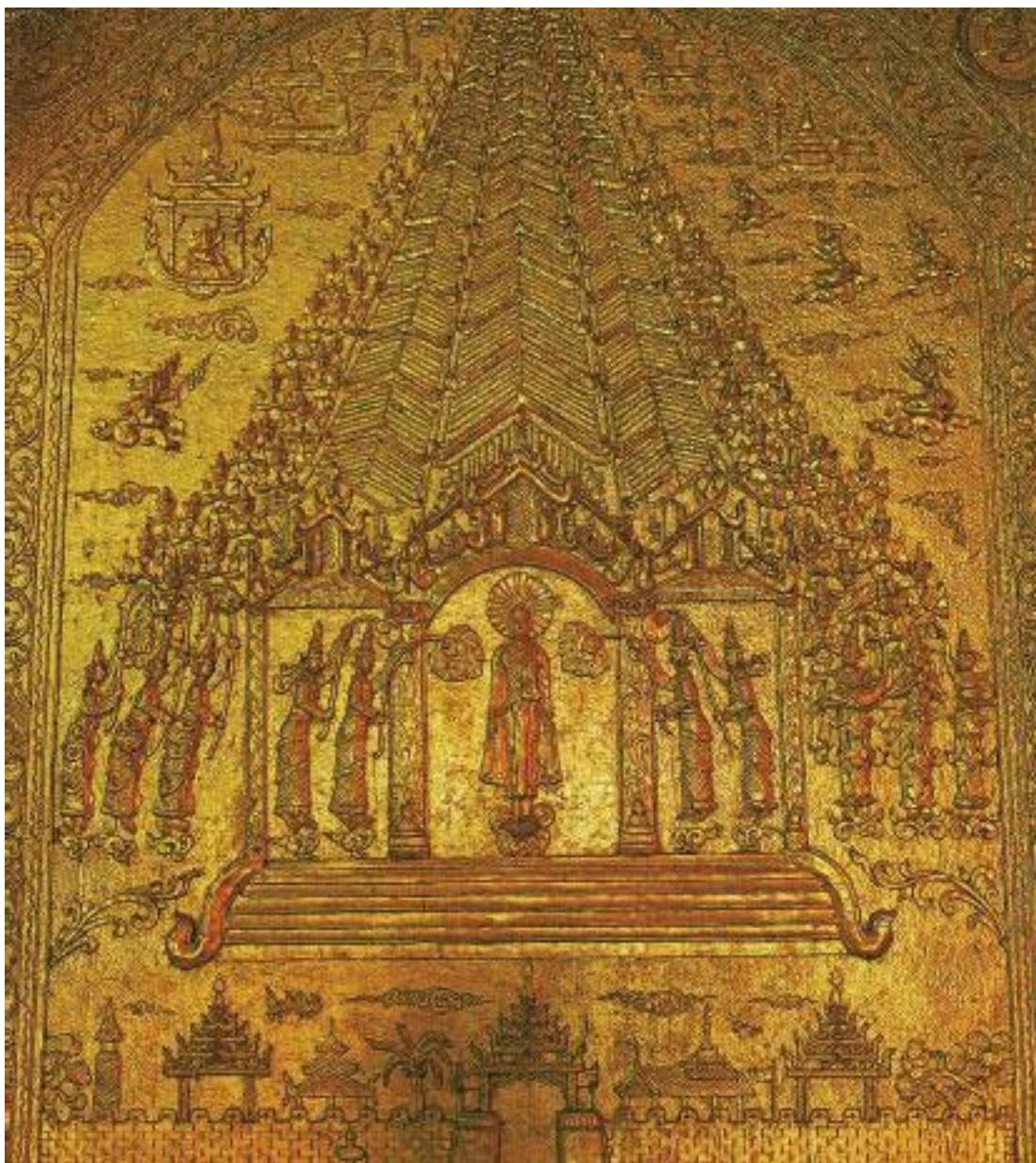
Gautama now remained for some time in the Migadaya wood, teaching his new doctrines; he taught these quietly, and only to those who came to him, which is evidence of the gulf that divided him from the professional teachers of the time. His was no mere scholastic system, involved like those of the Brahmins in a mysterious obscurity; it was not offered solely to the consideration of only a few selected adepts. Not only was he a great thinker, he also possessed a prophetic ardour and missionary zeal which prompted him to popularise his doctrine and to preach to all without exception – men and women, high and low, ignorant and learned alike. Thus all of his first disciples were laymen, and two of the very first were women. The first convert was a rich young man named

Yasa, who joined the small company of personal followers; the next were Yasa's father, mother, and wife, who chose to remain lay disciples.

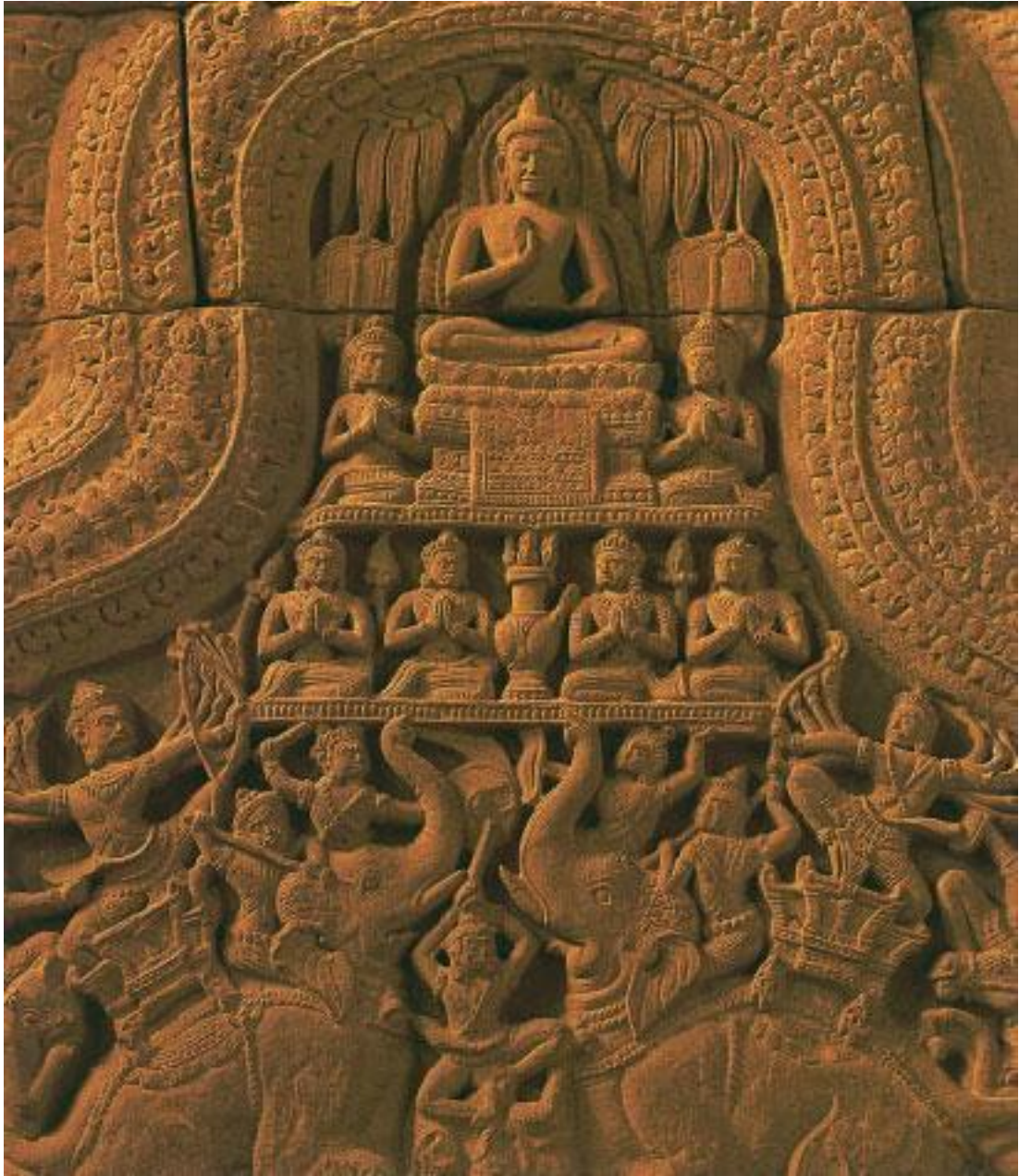
It was not until some time later that Gautama established an order of female mendicants; he held the life of a mendicant to be necessary to expedite progress towards deliverance from that 'thirst' which was the cause of all evil. This is not to suggest that the life of a mendicant was the only way; he highly honoured the believing householder. A lay disciple, though not yet able or willing to cast off the ties of home or business, might yet 'enter the paths' and, by a life of rectitude and kindness, ensure for himself in a future existence more favourable conditions for his growth in goodness. There is no magic in any outward act; everyone's salvation consists of and depends entirely on a modification and growth in his own inner nature, to be brought about by his own self-control and diligence, and thus the earnest layman will advance further in 'the paths' than the mendicant who is wanting in self-control and energy. Gautama's whole teaching resolved itself into a system of intellectual and moral self-culture, from those choosing to lead the mendicant's life to those who practised the teachings within their homes.



69. *Standing Buddha*, date unknown, Sule Pagoda, Yangon, Burma, gold.



70. *Standing Buddha with attendants*, date unknown, Kyaikbawlaw Pagoda, Kyaikto, Burma, gold.



71. *The Attack of Mara*, date unknown, Tep Pranam, Siem Reap, Cambodia, stone.

Five months after the crisis under the Bodhi tree and three months after Gautama's arrival at the Migadaya wood, he called together all his disciples, who at that time numbered sixty persons, and sent them in different directions to preach and teach, leaving Yasa only to remain at Benares near his parents.

The Burmese account states that on this occasion Buddha gave the following speech: "Beloved Rahans ('monks'), I am free from the five great passions which, like an immense net, encompass men and [gods]; you too, owing to the instructions you have received from me, enjoy the same glorious privilege. There is now incumbent on us a great duty, that of labouring effectually on behalf of men and [gods], and procuring to them the invaluable blessing of the deliverance. To the end of securing more effectually the success of such an undertaking, let us part with each other and proceed in various and opposite directions, so that no two of us should follow up the same way. Go ye now, and preach the most excellent Law, expounding every point thereof, and unfolding it with care and attention in all its bearings and particulars. Explain the beginning, the middle, and the

end of the law to all men without exception: let everything respecting it be made publicly known and brought to broad daylight. Show, now, the way leading to the practise of pure and meritorious works. You will meet, doubtless, with a great number of mortals not as yet hopelessly given up to their passions, and who will avail themselves of your preaching for reconquering their hitherto forfeited liberty, and freeing themselves from the thrall of passions. For my part, I will direct my course to the village of Sena, situated in the vicinity of the solitude of Uruwela.”

Throughout his career, Gautama was in the habit of travelling about during most of the fine part of the year, teaching and preaching to the people; but during the four rainy months, from June to October, he remained in one place devoting himself more particularly to the instruction of his declared followers.



72. *Phra Bot (Buddhist temple banner) showing Sakyamuni Buddha with his two chief disciples, the monks Sariputra and Maudgalyayana, date unknown, location unknown, painting on cloth, 98 × 270 cm.*

From the Pali Canon:

His teachings, always practical, include lessons in basic good manners:

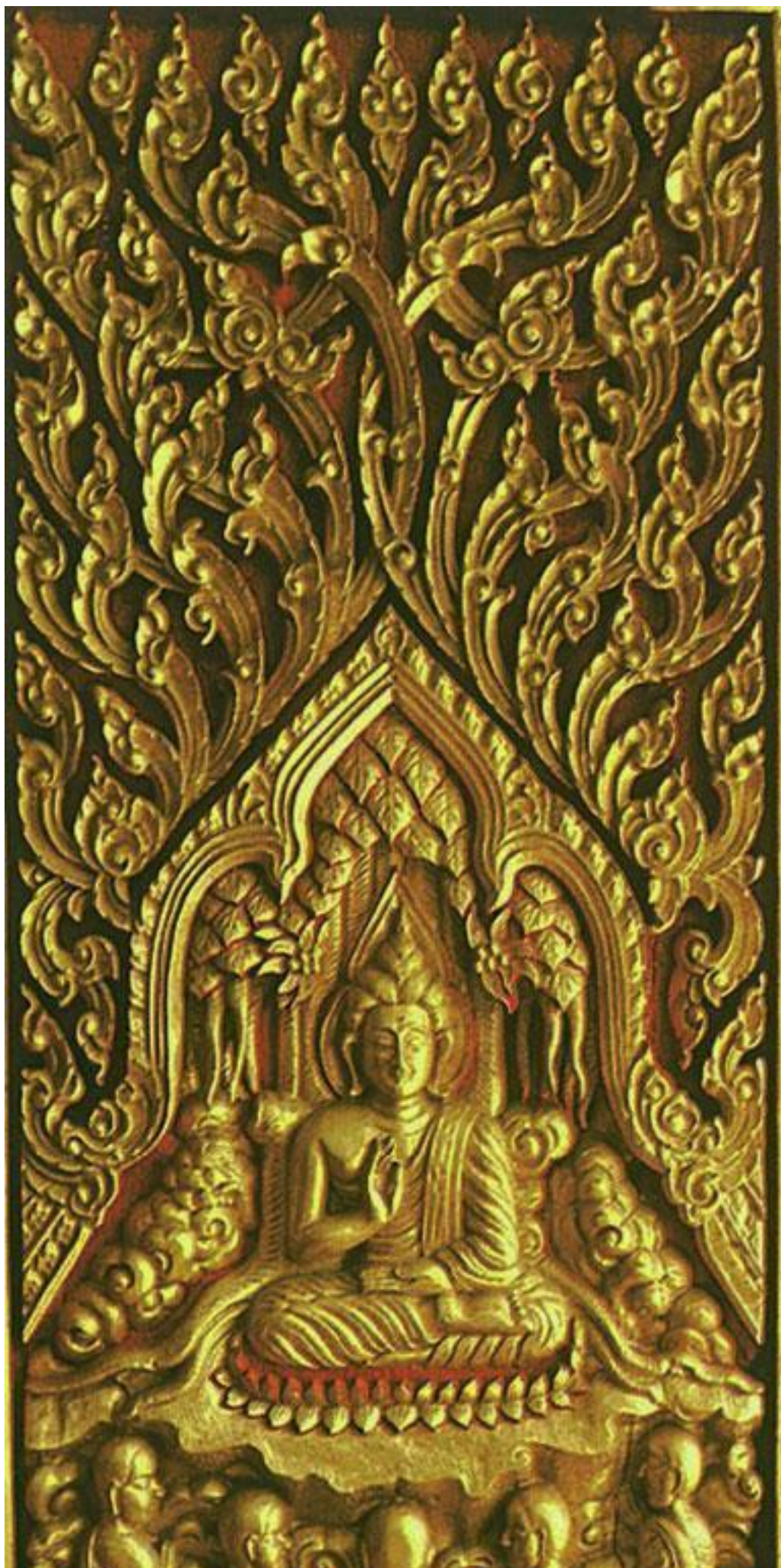
“And how is a monk one with a sense of social gatherings? There is the case where a monk knows his social gathering: ‘This is a social gathering of noble warriors; this, a social gathering of priests; this, a social gathering of householders; this, a social gathering of contemplatives; here one should approach them in this way, stand in this way, act in this way, sit in this way, speak in this way, stay silent in this way.’ If he didn’t know his social gathering, he wouldn’t be said to be one with a sense of social gatherings. So it’s because he does know his social gathering that he is said to be one with a sense of social gatherings. This is one with a sense of Dharma, a sense of meaning, a sense of himself, a sense of moderation, a sense of time, and a sense of social gatherings.”

[AN VII.64]

...lessons in how to treat one’s parents:

Support for one’s parents,
assistance to one’s wife and children,
consistency in one’s work:
This is the highest protection.

[Sn II.4]



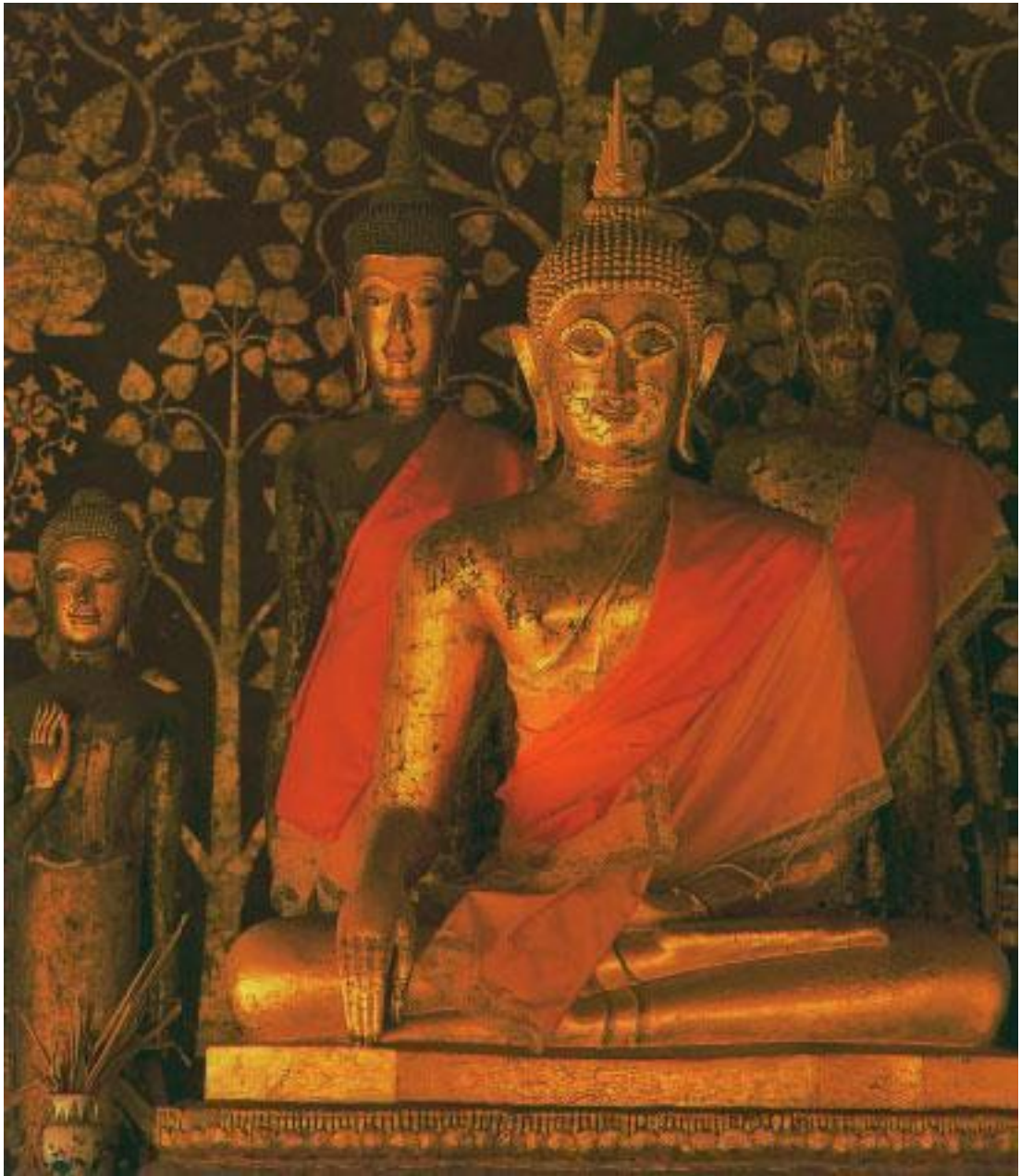
73. *The Buddha Preaching His First Sermon*, date unknown, Wat Palelai Temple, Singapore, carved, painted and gilded teakwood, 2.48 × 1.17 m.

Mother and father,
compassionate to their family,
are called
Brahma,
first teachers,
those worthy of gifts
from their children.
So the wise should pay them
homage,
honour
with food and drink
clothing and bedding
anointing and bathing
and washing their feet.
Performing these services to their parents, the wise
are praised right here
and after death
rejoice in heaven.
[Iti 106]

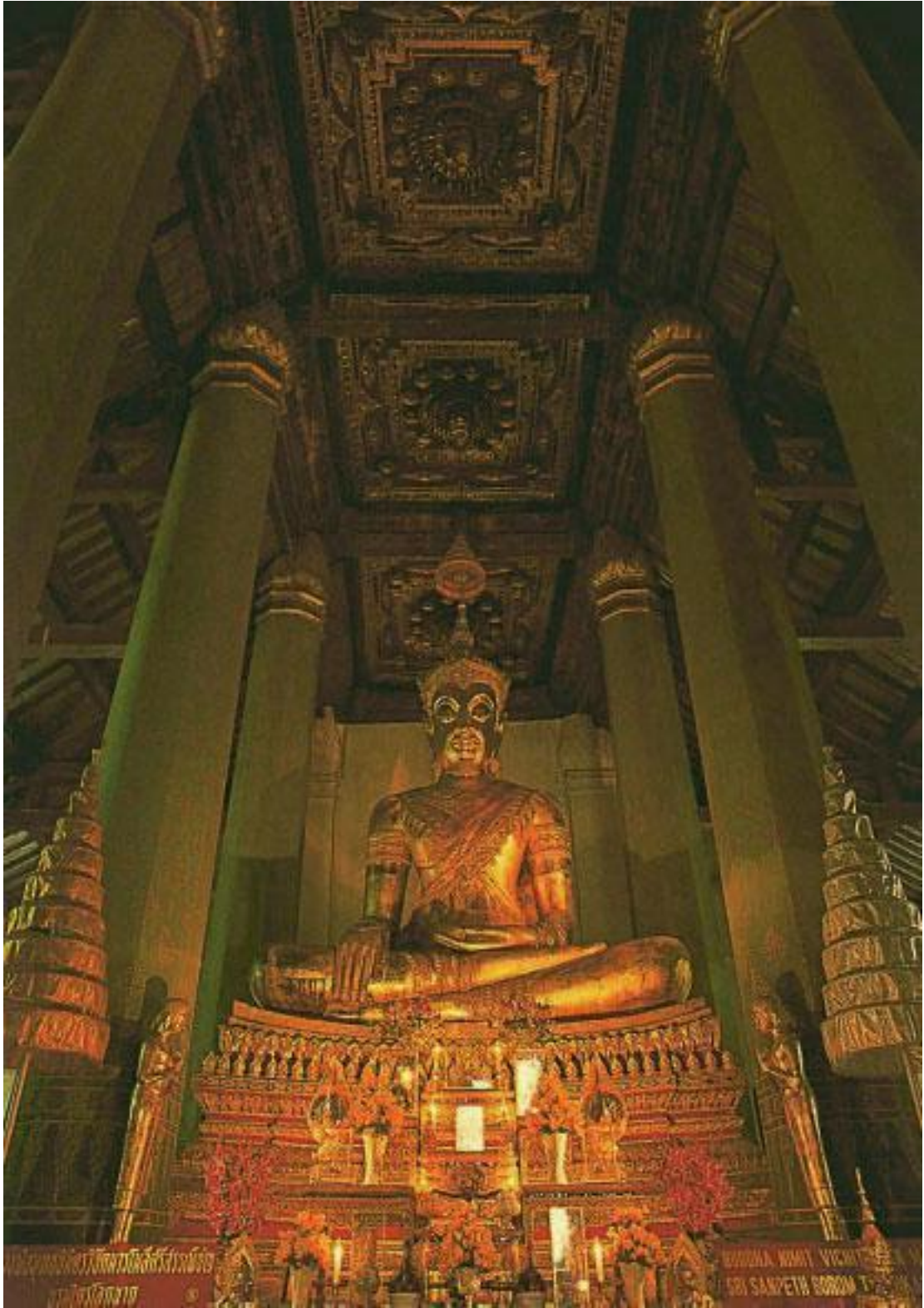
...lessons on the value of generosity:

“And what is the treasure of generosity? There is the case of a disciple of the noble ones, his awareness cleansed of the stain of stinginess, living at home, freely generous, openhanded, delighting in being magnanimous, responsive to requests, delighting in the distribution of alms. This is called the treasure of generosity.”

[AN VII.6]



74. *Seated Buddha*, date unknown, Wihan Nam Tam, Wat Phrathat Lampang Luang, Lampang Luang, Thailand, gilt bronze.



75. *Seated Buddha*, date unknown, Wat Na Praman, Ayutthaya, Thailand.

...on the value of virtue:

“And what is the treasure of virtue? There is the case where a disciple of the noble ones abstains from taking life, abstains from stealing, abstains from illicit sexual conduct, abstains from lying, abstains from taking intoxicants that cause heedlessness. This, monks, is called the treasure of virtue.”

[AN VII.6]

...on the fruits of virtuous conduct:

With mind rightly directed,
speaking right speech,
doing right deeds with the body:
a person here
of much learning,
a doer of merit
here in this life so short,
at the break-up of the body,
discerning,
reappears in heaven.

[Iti 71]

...on the drawbacks of all sensual pleasures – even heavenly ones:

“There is the case where a person, being subject himself to aging, realising the drawbacks of what is subject to aging, seeks the unaging, unsurpassed rest from the yoke: Unbinding. Being subject himself to illness, realising the drawbacks of what is subject to illness, he seeks the unailing, unsurpassed rest from the yoke: Unbinding. Being subject himself to death, realising the drawbacks of what is subject to death, he seeks the undying, unsurpassed rest from the yoke: Unbinding. Being subject himself to defilement, realising the drawbacks of what is subject to defilement, he seeks the undefiled, unsurpassed rest from the yoke: Unbinding.”

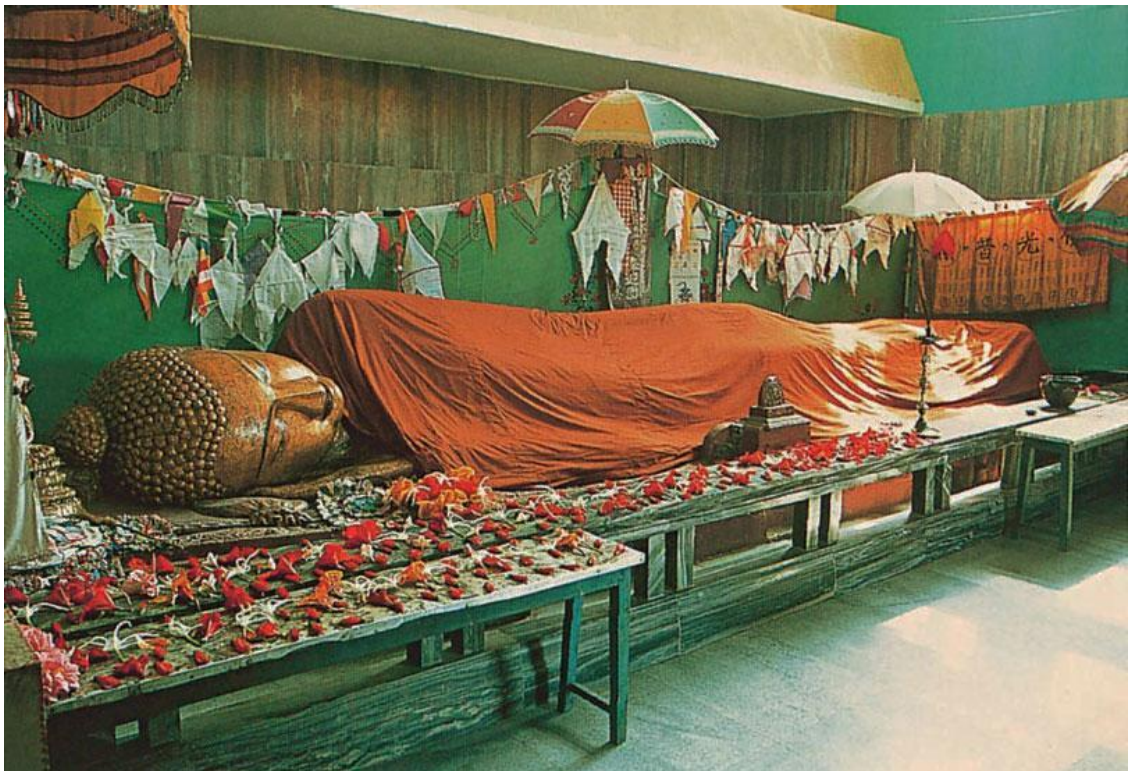
[AN IV.252]



76. *Sanar Muni Buddha*, date unknown, Kalamyo Pagoda, Mrauk U, Burma, gilt bronze.



77. *Gautama Buddha seated in meditation on a lotus throne with a fiery mandorla, one of the emblems of his spiritual power, surround him, date unknown, Temple of Yongsu, Suwon, South Korea.*



78. *Prayer flags and a traditional colourful umbrella, the Buddhist symbol of protection, raised over a figure of Gautama Buddha reclining at the moment of parinirvana, date unknown, Kusinagara, deathplace of the Buddha, Northern India.*



79. *Semi-reclining Buddha in front of a stupa*, date unknown, Burma.

...on the value of renunciation:

“Having seen the drawback of sensual pleasures, I pursued that theme; having understood the reward of renunciation, I familiarised myself with it. My heart leaped up at renunciation, grew confident, steadfast, and firm, seeing it as peace. Then, quite withdrawn from sensuality, withdrawn from unskillful qualities, I entered and remained in the first jhana: rapture and pleasure born from withdrawal, accompanied by directed thought and evaluation.”

[AN IX.41]

... and on the four Noble Truths:

“Bhikkhus, it is through not realising, through not penetrating the Four Noble Truths that this long course of birth and death has been passed through and undergone by me as well as by you. What are these four? They are the noble truth of Dukkha; the noble truth of the origin of Dukkha; the noble truth of the cessation of Dukkha; and the noble truth of the way to the cessation of Dukkha. But now, bhikkhus, that these have been realised and penetrated, cut off is the craving for existence, destroyed is that which leads to renewed becoming, and there is no fresh becoming.”

[DN 16]



80. *Seated Buddha*, date unknown, Shwesigone Pagoda, Monywa, Burma.

In short, the Buddha teaches how to realise true and lasting happiness, Nirvana:

“There is that sphere where there is neither earth, nor water, nor fire, nor wind; neither sphere of the infinitude of space, nor sphere of the infinitude of consciousness, nor sphere of nothingness, nor sphere of neither perception nor non-perception; neither this world, nor the next world, nor sun, nor moon. And there, I say, there is neither coming, nor going, nor stasis; neither passing away nor arising: without stance, without foundation, without support. This, just this, is the end of stress.”

[Ud VIII.1]

“Both formerly and now, it is only stress that I describe, and the cessation of stress.”

[SN XXII.86]

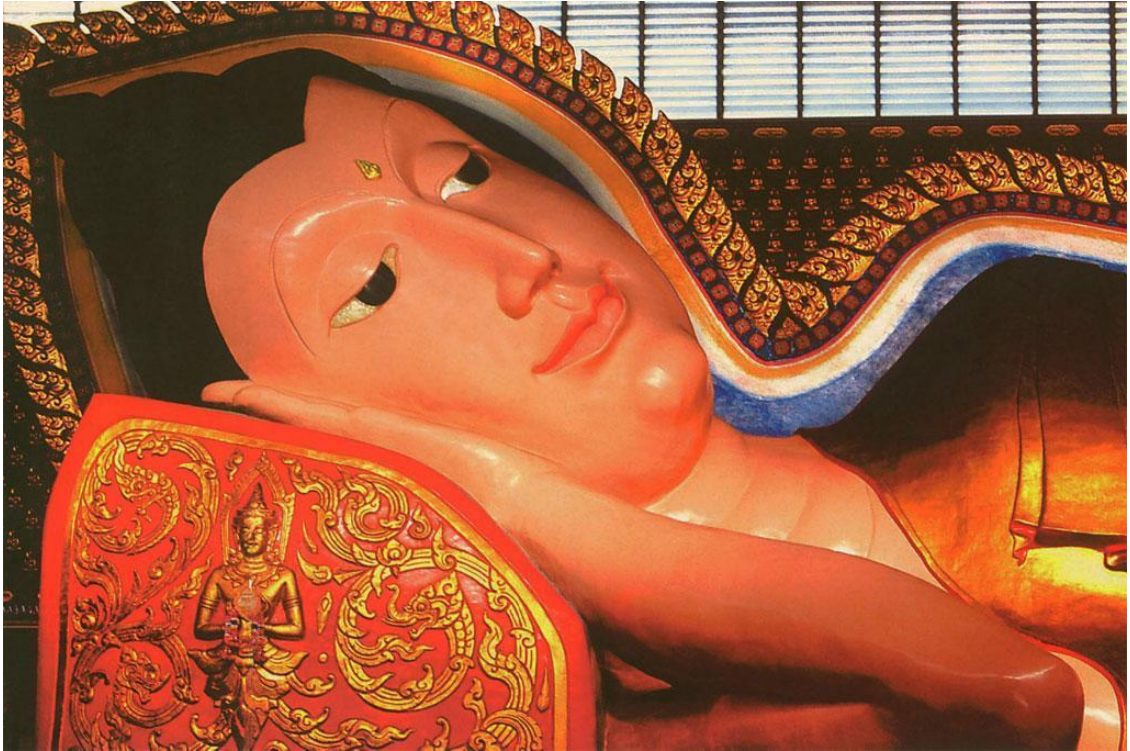
The importance afterwards attached to the accession of Gautama’s next convert is shown by the number of miraculous events which are said to have preceded it. Of these, the only possible historical basis is that in the solitudes of Uruwela there were three brothers named Kasyapa, fire worshippers and hermit philosophers, whose high reputation as teachers had attracted a considerable number of scholars. After Gautama had remained some time with them, the elder brother adopted his system, and at once took a principal place in the small body of believers. His brothers and their scholars followed his example; the first set discourse preached by Gautama to his new disciples is preserved in the Pitakas under the title *Adittapariyaya Sutra* (Sermon on the Lessons to be drawn from Burning).

This Sutra affords an excellent example of the method so often adopted by Gautama of creating his new doctrines by putting a new meaning into the religious ceremonies of the time, or into the common occurrences of life. The new disciples, who had been worshippers of Agni, the

sacred fire, were seated with Gautama on the Elephant Rock near Gaya, with the beautiful valley of Rajagriha stretched out before them, when a fire broke out in the jungle on the opposite hill. Taking the fire as his text, the Teacher declared that as long as men remained in ignorance they were consumed by a fire of the excitement produced within them by external things. These things acted upon them through the five senses and the heart (which Gautama regarded as a sixth organ of sense). The eye, for instance, perceives objects: from this perception arises an inward sensation, producing pleasure or pain. Sensations produce this misery and joy, because they supply fuel to the inward fires of lust, anger, and ignorance, and the anxieties of birth, decay, and death. The same was declared to be the case with the sensations produced by each of the other senses. Those who follow the Buddha's scheme of inward self-control, the four stages of the Path whose gate is purity and whose goal is love, have become wise. For them, sensations no longer give fuel to the inward fire, since the fires of lust, anger, and ignorance have ceased to burn. These true disciples are thus free from that craving thirst which is the origin of evil, and the wisdom they have acquired will lead them on to perfection; they are delivered from the miseries which would result from another birth. Moreover, in this birth they no longer need the guidance of such laws as those of caste and ceremonies and sacrifice, for they have already reached far beyond them.



81. *Seated Buddhas*, date unknown, Po Win Daung Caves, near Monywa, Burma.



82. *Gautama Buddha lying on his right side in the final repose of death*, date unknown, Chayamangkalaram Temple, Malaysia.

From Gaya, Gautama and his new disciples walked on towards Rajagriha. The city was still ruled by Bimbisara, the most powerful chieftain in the eastern valley of the Ganges, whose kingdom of Magadha extended about 160 kilometres south from the river Ganges, and 160 kilometres east from the river Sona. Both Gautama and Kasyapa were well known in the town, and when the raja came out to welcome the teachers, the crowd was uncertain which was the master and which the disciple. Gautama therefore asked Kasyapa why he had given up sacrificing to Agni. The latter saw the motive of the question, and replied that while some took pleasure in sights and sounds and taste and sensual love, and others in sacrifice, he had perceived that all these alike were worthless, and had given up sacrifices of any kind. Nirvana was a state of peace unattainable by men under the guidance of sense and passion, a rest destructive of transmigration, birth, decay, and death: a happy state to be reached by inward growth alone. Gautama is then said to have told the people a story about Kasyapa's virtue in a former birth; seeing how impressed they were, he went on to explain to them the Four Noble Truths. At the end of this sermon the raja professed himself to be an adherent of the new system. The next day all the people in the place, excited by the conversion of Kasyapa and Bimbisara, crowded to the Yashtivana grove where Gautama had rested to see him and hear what new thing he had to say. When Gautama went to the raja's house to receive his daily meal, he was surrounded by an enthusiastic multitude. The raja received him with great respect and, saying that Yashtivana was too far off, assigned to him as a residence a bamboo grove (veluvami) close by, which became celebrated as the place where Gautama spent many rainy seasons, and delivered many of his most complete discourses.

There he stayed for two months, and during that time two ascetics named Sariputra and Moggallana joined the Sangha or Society, as the small company of Buddhist mendicants was called. The high position that Gautama soon assigned these new disciples created some ill-feeling among the older members of the Sangha. To disperse the tension, Gautama called together his followers and addressed them at some length on the means requisite for Buddhist salvation, which he summed up in the celebrated verse:

To cease from all wrong-doing,
To get virtue,
To cleanse one's own heart,
This is the religion of the Buddhas.



83. *Seated Gautama Buddha before a wall containing dozens of niches sheltering small Buddha images*, date unknown, Pagoda of One Thousand Buddhas at the monastery of Wat Si Saket, Vientiane, Laos.

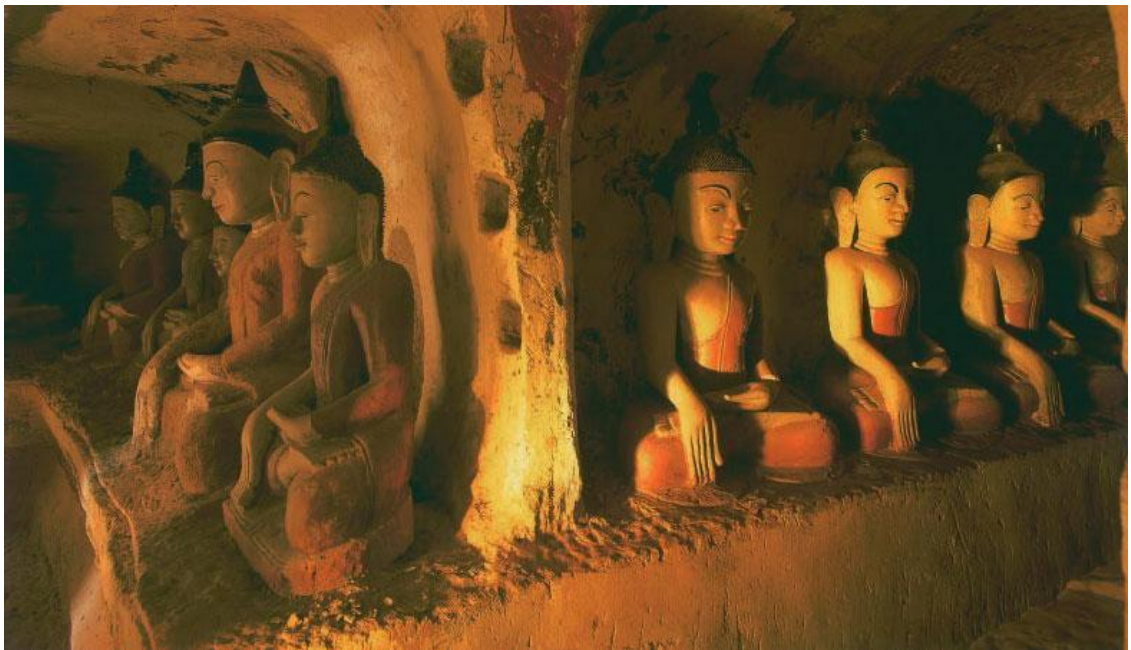
His reputation spreads (Pali Canon):

“A monk called Gautama, it seems, a son of the Sakyans who went forth from a Sakyan clan, has been wandering in the Kosalan country with a large Sangha of bhikkhus and has come to Sala. Now a good report of Master Gautama has been spread to this effect: ‘That Blessed One is such since he is arahant and Fully Enlightened, perfect in true knowledge and conduct, sublime, knower of worlds, incomparable teacher of men to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans, enlightened, blessed. He describes this world with its gods, its Maras, and its (Brahma) Divinities, this generation with its monks and brahmins, with its kings and its people, which he has himself realised through direct knowledge. He teaches a Dharma that is good in the beginning, good in the middle and good in the end with (the right) meaning and phrasing, he affirms a holy life that is utterly perfect and pure.’ Now it is good to see such arahants.”

[MN 41]

At the same time he laid down the first rules for the guidance of the society, the simple code called the ‘Patimokkha,’ that is ‘the Disburdenment,’ a word afterwards applied to a book containing a summary of the more complex system of laws, as elaborated at the time of Gautama’s death. This meeting of mendicants at which the Society was first incorporated is known as the ‘Savakasannipata,’ or assembly of the disciples.

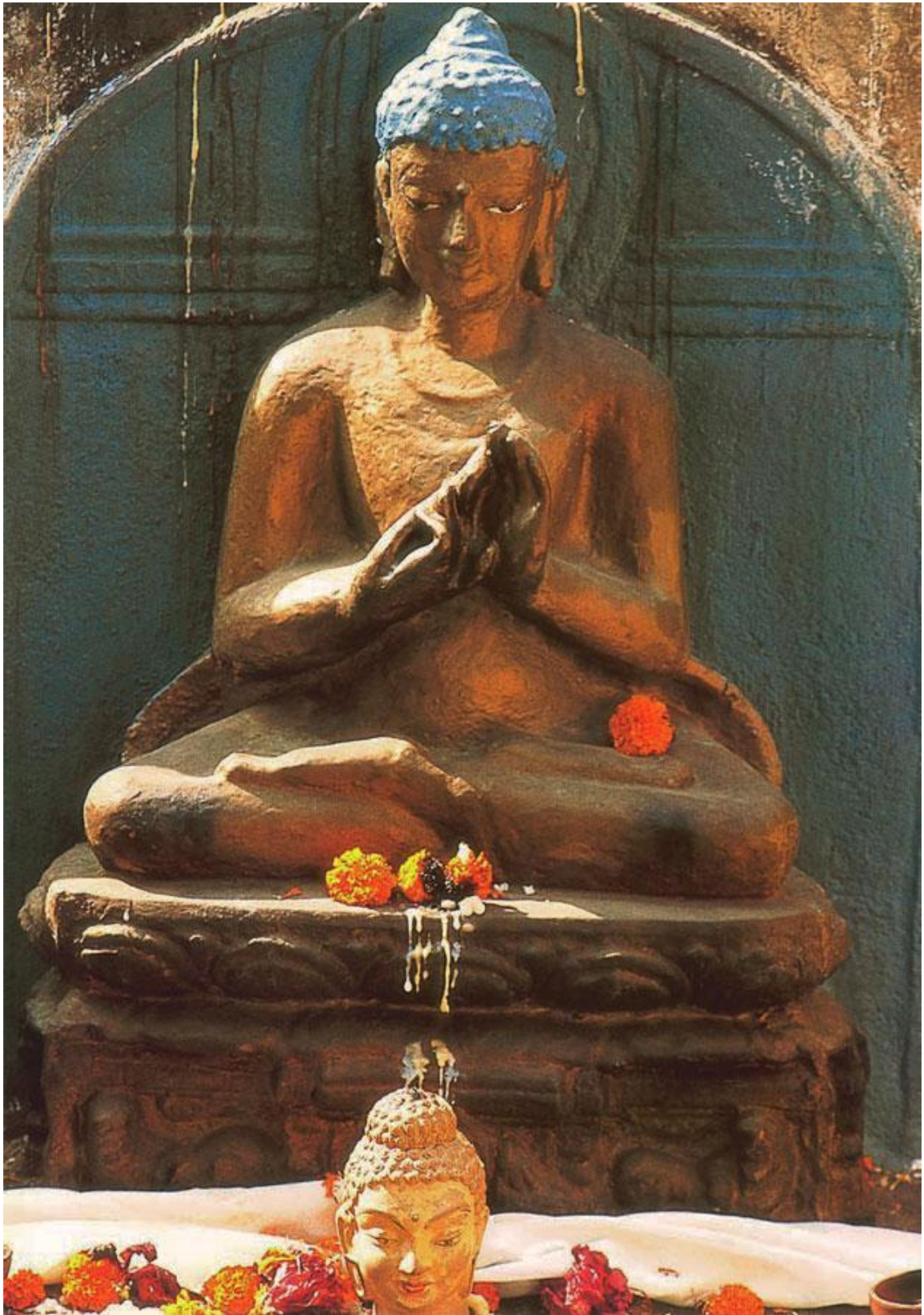
The enthusiasm of the people seems to have cooled down more rapidly than it arose, for we hear of no other conversions besides those of Sariputra and Moggallana and their pupils. Moreover, the members of the society began even to complain to Gautama that when they went out to beg their daily food they were received with abuse and ridicule, on the grounds that the new teaching would deprive households of their support and depopulate and ruin the country. This they did not know how to answer, which is not surprising, for the charge was unfortunately true. The Brahmins, indeed, held celibacy in high honour, but only in youth and old age; and the ascetics, far from seeking imitators, added such penance to their celibacy expecting that it would be unattainable by ordinary men. The Buddhists painted in glowing colours the contrast between the miseries of life in the world and the sweet calm of life in the Order, and wanted every one for his own sake to share at once in their salvation. Gautama's answer, perhaps the best possible, does not dispute the charge but simply reasserts that what the people called ruin he called good. He advised his followers to say that he, the Buddha, was only trying to spread righteousness as former Buddhas had done; that he used no weapons except persuasion; those whom he won over, he did so only by means of the truth, which he proclaimed for the benefit of all.



84. *Caverns of Seated Buddhas*, date unknown, Po Win Daung Caves, near Monywa, Burma.



85. *Seated Buddhas*, date unknown, Shwedagon Pagoda, Yangon, Burma, gilt bronze.



86. *Seated image of Gautama Buddha with floral offerings*, date unknown, Bodh Gaya, site of the Buddha's enlightenment, Bihar State, India, Gandharan style, stone.

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