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For Mahayana Buddhism, awakening consists in understanding the true nature of reality. While non-Mahayana doctrine emphasizes the absence of the self in persons, Mahayana thought extends this idea to all things. The radical extension of the common Buddhist doctrine of "dependent arising" (pratityasamutpada), the idea that nothing has an essence and that the existence of each thing is dependent on the existence of other things, is referred to as emptiness (shunyata). They realize that since no individual has a "self," there can be no real difference between themselves and others, and therefore their own liberation is not distinct from the liberation of all beings.

2. Buddhists prefer to speak of 'rebirth' rather than 'reincarnation' since the latter implies the existence of an unchanging soul, which is something Buddhism denies.

3. On fundamentalism in religious traditions see Marty and Appleby (1993).

4. King (1964:vf)

5. Answers to the first four questions were proposed in The Nature of. The Suramgamasamddhisutra is an early Mahayana Buddhist scripture. Within a narrative framework provided by a dialogue between the Buddha and the bodhisattva Drdhamati, it airs central issues of Mahayana Buddhism by means of philosophical discussion, edifying anecdote, marvellous feat, and drama. At its core is a description of the seeming conversion of Mara, the embodiment of all malign tendencies that obstruct advancement, and the prediction that he too will become a Buddha. Acting like Mahāyāna doctrine was the meaning of Buddhism from the beginning may reflect a sectarian commitment, but it is ahistorical and, for people who are supposed to be scholars of Buddhism, dishonest or incompetent. However, the idea that the world is essentially unpleasant, in all its details, and gives us a nagging feeling that something is not quite right, is a good Buddhist clue that something is wrong more deeply. Again, in the Mahāyāna, we get the notion that desire can be transformed rather than abolished, which strictly speaking leaves us as part of the cycle of Dependent Origination; and. No Self Nature means that there are no essences, just as Momentariness means that there are no substances. Mahayana Buddhism also spread to other South and Southeast Asian countries, such as Afghanistan, Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, the Maldives, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Burma, Iran and other Central Asian countries before being replaced by Theravada Buddhism or other religions.[6]. Large Mahāyāna scholastic centers such as Nalanda thrived during the latter period of Buddhism in India, between the seventh and twelfth centuries.[1] Major traditions of Mahāyāna Buddhism today include Chan Buddhism, Korean Seon, Japanese Zen, Pure Land Buddhism, Nichiren Buddhism and Vietnamese Buddhism.