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Chapter 1 : The Life, or Legend, of Gaudama, the Buddha of the Burmese

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Most people accept that the Buddha lived, taught, and founded a monastic order during the Mahajanapada era during the reign of Bimbisara c. Most historians in the early 20th century dated his lifetime as c. It was either a small republic, or an oligarchy, and his father was an elected chieftain, or oligarch. There is also philological evidence to suggest that the two masters, Alara Kalama and Uddaka Ramaputta, were indeed historical figures and they most probably taught Buddha two different forms of meditative techniques. No written records about Gautama were found from his lifetime or from the one or two centuries thereafter. Another one of his edicts Minor Rock Edict No. Sanskrit, palm-leaf manuscript. The character of the Buddha in these traditional biographies is often that of a fully transcendent Skt. Andrew Skilton writes that the Buddha was never historically regarded by Buddhist traditions as being merely human: It is important to stress that, despite modern Theravada teachings to the contrary often a sop to skeptical Western pupils, he was never seen as being merely human. Buddhist texts reflect this tendency, providing a clearer picture of what Gautama may have taught than of the dates of the events in his life. Gautama was the family name. Legend has it that, on the night Siddhartha was conceived, Queen Maya dreamt that a white elephant with six white tusks entered her right side, [97] [98] and ten months later [99] Siddhartha was born. However, her son is said to have been born on the way, at Lumbini, in a garden beneath a sal tree. Siddhattha, meaning "he who achieves his aim". During the birth celebrations, the hermit seer Asita journeyed from his mountain abode and announced that the child would either become a great king chakravartin or a great sadhu. Suddhodana held a naming ceremony on the fifth day, and invited eight Brahmin scholars to read the future. All gave a dual prediction that the baby would either become a great king or a great holy man. Early texts suggest that Gautama was not familiar with the dominant religious teachings of his time until he left on his religious quest, which is said to have been motivated by existential concern for the human condition. Birth of the Buddha. The infant Buddha taking the Seven Steps. Greco-Buddhist art of Gandhara. According to the traditional account, [which?] Siddhartha is said to have spent 29 years as a prince in Kapilavastu. Borobudur, 8th century At the age of 29, Siddhartha left his palace to meet his subjects. When his charioteer Channa explained to him that all people grew old, the prince went on further trips beyond the palace. On these he encountered a diseased man, a decaying corpse, and an ascetic. These depressed him, and he initially strove to overcome ageing, sickness, and death by living the life of an ascetic. Gautama initially went to Rajagaha and began his ascetic life by begging for alms in the street. Siddhartha rejected the offer but promised to visit his kingdom of Magadha first, upon attaining enlightenment. He left Rajagaha and practised under two hermit teachers of yogic meditation. However, Gautama felt unsatisfied by the practice, and moved on to become a student of yoga with Uddaka Ramaputta Skr. But, once more, he was not satisfied, and again moved on.

Chapter 2 : Gautama Buddha - Wikipedia

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