


# Three Types of Lifeforms According to the Analyses of Buddhism Literatures

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## Abstract

An extraterrestrial or alien is a lifeform that is not originated from our earth. Until now, it was treated as a fiction character either because the public know them from tales, and/or because it is out of copes of contemporaneous common knowledge, and/or because of conspiracies. In Richard Dolan's book [1] "UFOs and Disclosure in the Trump Era", Dolan analyzes the prospects and context of UFO disclosure during Trump's presidency. He discusses the secrecy surrounding UFOs, the black budget breakaway civilization, and weaponization of secret technologies. Recently, Trump has expressed willingness to push the Pentagon for greater transparency and the release of additional footage related to UFO sightings. Despite of poli-tics, in many ancient literatures, there are records. For example, in the famous Japanese Moon Princess (Japanese: 竹取物語; Taketori Monogatari), it describes a lady from moon and the origin of the name of Mount Fuji. She had done something wrong on the moon, and had to serve her term on earth as if serving an open prison sentence. When she had completed her time on earth, her people came from the moon in a spaceship and took her back home [2]. In Buddhism literatures, there are more records about aliens. It is noteworthy that, among all kinds of forms, the human lifeform is the best, because human beings have the potential to achieve great meditation progresses and reach the almighty Buddhahood according to Buddhism literatures. The article will analyses some alien examples in these literatures.

**Keywords:** Mahayana Buddhism, Ganger River Sand, Shakyamuni Buddha, Amitabha, Bodhisattvas, Kalpa

## Introduction

An extraterrestrial or alien is a lifeform that is not originated from our earth. Until now, it was treated as a fiction character either because the public know them from tales, and/or because it is out of copes of contemporaneous common knowledge, and/or because of conspiracies. Nowadays, more and more people believe the conspiracy theory. Israeli Space Chief Haim Eshed claimed (2021) that aliens exist and that Trump was aware of their existence. In Richard Dolan's books, such as the "UFOs and Disclosure in the Trump Era" [1] (Richard Dolan Lecture Series), Dolan analyzes the prospects and context of UFO disclosure during Trump's presidency. He discusses the secrecy surrounding UFOs, the black budget breakaway civilization, and weaponization of secret technologies. In recent interviews, Trump has ex-pressed willingness to push the Pentagon for greater transparency and the release of additional foot-age related to UFO sightings.

Despite of politics, in many ancient literatures, there are records. For example the famous Japanese Moon Princess (Japanese:

竹取物語; Taketori Monogatari) is written in 9th century, and it records some events that happened before this book coming into being. It describes a lady from moon (Figure 1). She had done something wrong on the moon, and had to serve her term on earth as if serving an open prison sentence. When she had completed her time on earth, her people came from the moon in a spaceship and took her back home [2]. The same literature also records the name origin of the famous Fuji Mountain – after the lady was back to moon, the Japanese emperor did a memorial in a high mountain where is full (Fu) of soldiers (Ji). This is the name origin of the famous Mount Fuji in Japan. Fuji in Japanese means "in rich of soldiers". It seems very reasonable explanation of the name origin.

In Buddhism literatures, there are more records about aliens. According to Buddhism, among all kinds of life forms, the human lifeform is the best, because human beings have the potential to achieve great meditation progresses and reach the almighty Buddhahood according to Buddhism literatures. The article will ana-

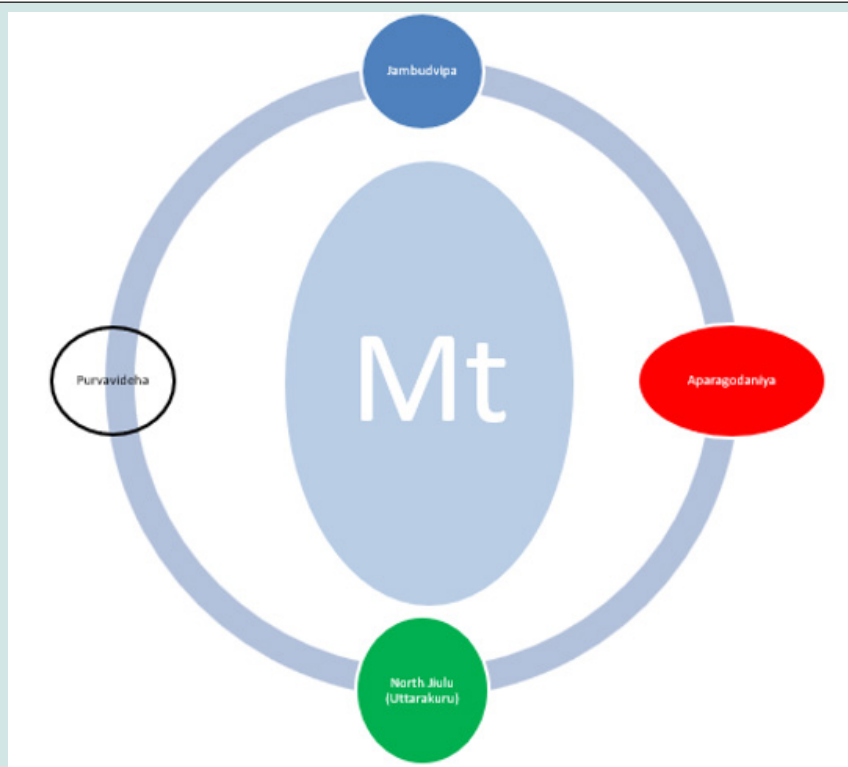
lyze some alien examples in these literatures. Due to the limitation of time and resource, this article will focus on three of them.

First of all, Buddhism has exceptional views on the world systems [3]. Pending on the texts in the Buddhism books, a world could refer to a very tiny one or a very large one, the latter of which is typically composed of billions of the tiny ones. Even the tiny one is still bigger than our earth. It refers to a world with the Mountain

Sumeru (also called Mount Meru, a giant invisible object like dark matter), Sun, moons, four major planets and eight minor planets as well as over 80,000 smaller objects called islands (Figure 2) [3-5]. Buddhism literatures mentioned many lifeforms out of our earth; it is critical to understand the world systems from the perspectives of Buddhism sutras in order to understand where they are coming from.



Figure 1: The famous Japanese Moon Princess (Japanese: 竹取物語, Taketori Monogatari) is written in 9th century, and it describes a lady from moon. She had done something wrong on the moon, and had to serve her term on earth. When she had completed her time on earth, her people came from the moon in a spaceship and took her back home [2]. This story was shot into movie recently. The left panel is from the movie poster. The right panel is from traditional Japanese literature printed before World War I.





**Figure 2:** Courtesy of Sun 2024 [3]. The world model for the “tiny one”. In Mahayana Buddhism, it is often called “4-underskies” (system). One “undersky” is referring to one major planet (like our earth) that surrounds the Mt. Meru. A) The central ellipse circle represents the Mount Sumeru (Meru). Surrounding it, there are four circles, representing four major earths (planets), each of which has their own names and different colors of skies and each of which has two minor planets nearby. B) Courtesy of Tibetan Buddhist Encyclopedia [6]. Tangka (Tibetan drawing) shows the eight smaller planets: there are two smaller planets around each above-mentioned planets; all of them are human habitats. In the center of Tangka, it is the Mt Meru; there are god realms above the Mt Meru. In order to draw the god realms, this drawing has blocked one of the planets; therefore, only eleven habitats were drawn. All of these twelve planets have their unique names; in addition to the 4 names shown in A, the names for the eight minors are called JuLapo, Lapo, Shedi, Shangyi, Tike, PiTike, Chamara and FaluoChamara. One of the smaller (minor) planets is called Chamara, where mainly live humanoid beings called Rakshasas [7].

## Rakshasas



**Figure 3:** Courtesy of Tibetan Buddhist Encyclopedia [9]. Rakshasas is a form of human-like beings in Buddhism literatures. A Rakshasa is also said to be a mythological humanoid being or unrighteous spirit in Hinduism.

Rakshasas is a form of human-like beings in Buddhism literatures (Figure 3). It is also deemed as a race according to other religions including Hindu-ism, Jainism and Folk Islam. The Rakshasas is ruling the Chamara [7]. A female rakshasa is called a Rakshasi. They

are also called Rakshasas are also called man-eaters (Kavyads). According to a Tibetan legendary story, it is said when the Rakshasas was prepared to invade the human habitat, Jambudvipa (our earth), the Guru Rinpoche Padmasambhava (“Born from a Lotus”)

observed that, so he had to leave Tibet in order to preach in Rakshasas' kingdom. Then, the Rakshasas' king was killed by the Guru Rinpoche Padmasambhava who processed the Rakshasas King's body and commands Rakshasas to do good things. There could be more habitats for Rakshasas other than the Chamara. According to the tantra of Cakrasaṃvara, also known as Korlo Demchog Gyud in Tibetan, when the Buddha was teaching the Cakrasaṃvara tantra, there are Rakshasi who are from the center of the earth (beneath the earth); Buddha turned them into human, the best life forms for dharma practices. The Holy Bible also mentioned there was a queen who came from beneath the earth and met with King Solomon [8]. It is unclear whether they are same beings.

### Eight Kinds of God-Dragon-like Beings

The Eight Kinds of God-Dragon-like Beings (Aṣṭasenā), also translated as Demi-Gods and Semi-Devils, is a well-known concept in Asian cultures. Many novels are based on this concept. Some novels are fictions about the Gods and Devils; and some of them are fictions about human characters, where the main characters have psychological traits resemble these being — for example, the Eight Books of the Heavenly Dragon (Figure 4) written by Jin Yong (the pen name of Louis Cha Leung-Yung, the Hong Kong's most famous author) has been sold 100 millions of copies, made to numerous movies and TV series, and reached billions of audiences. The Eight Kinds are Deva (God), Asura (God-noid), Dragon, Garuḍa, Yakṣa, Gandharva, Kinnara and Mahoraga. Among them, the most powerful beings are Deva and Asura.

**Deva** is translated as gods. The concept of Deva varies across

these traditions, but they share common characteristics. They have a higher dimension than modern people: modern human cannot see them, but they can show their body to human if they want. In Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism, a Deva (Sanskrit: ) refers to a divine being, often translated as “god” or “celestial being.” Buddhism believes Devas are inhabit the higher realms of existence where they dwell in bliss and happiness. One of these gods is Brahma (Sanskrit: , Figure 5) who is referred to as “the Creator”, whose share similar characters as the God described in Bible. Brahma claims everything, the starts and the worlds are made by him; Buddha questioned Brahma: “are the sufferings of people also made by you?” It is documented in Buddhism Great Cannons [10]. Another god in Buddhism literature is the Sakras, who is a powerful god living in the top region of Mount Meru (Trayastrīṃsa [11]) and is called Jade Emperor in some cultures. The Mount Meru and Trāyastrīṃsa have been discussed in previous publications [3-5]. In Trayastrīṃsa, there are 33 cities. The center one, surrounded by the other 32 cities, is the capital city, where Sakra lives. Inhabitants (Devs) of Trāyastrīṃsa are each half a krośa tall (about 1500 feet) and live for 1000 “heaven years”, of which each day is equivalent to 100 years. According to the Buddha-taught Loutan Sutra, 36,000 years on earth equal to 1 “heaven year” of Trāyastrīṃsa. A general inhabitant there can live for over 36 million years [11]. It is noteworthy that there are many different groups of Devs. There are significant differences between Brahma and Sakras: Brahma is more powerful and lives in a higher realm; Sakras and other Trayastrimsa inhatitants be-longs to the earth-depended gods, who need an earth-like planet to live, while Brahma does not need that.



**Figure 4:** The Eight Kinds of God-Dragon-like Beings (Aṣṭasenā), also translated as Demi-Gods and Semi-Devils, is a well-known concept in Asian cultures. It refers to eight Divine-like life forms mentioned in Buddhism. Many novels are based on this concept. Some of them are fictions about human characters, where the main characters have psychological traits resemble these being — for example, the Eight Books of the Heavenly Dragon written by a Hong Kong's most famous author has been sold 100 millions of copies.



**Figure 5:** Statue of Brahma. It is from Chennakesava temple, built in 1100s AD.

**Asura** is also called Godnoid, because they have same life span, body density and similar-level of power as the gods in Trāyastriṃśa, where Sakras lives. Asurais is a god-like being with powerful fighting capability. They live in cities near the bot-tom side of Sumera (Mt. Meru). They communicate each other by hearts (mind thinking). They have a higher dimension than modern people: modern human can-not see them, but they can show their body to human if they want. It was translated as Demigod by Buddhism or Hinduism scholars; but they are not demigod because demigod is a word from Greek meaning the part-human and part-divine offspring. Asura is often fighting with Sakras. They can communicate each other by heart: when one Asura is thinking and the other Asura can get his ideas. When male Asura goes to battle fields, his families can watch the battles simultaneously from a lake. One of Asura kings is called Pimozhiduoluo. When Asura's troop fights again Sakra's troop, this king can make his body as big as half of Mt. Meru to scare Sakra's troop. Sakra can manifest as many bodies as the number of Asura solders. So each Asura solders feels that the Sakra will come and beat up himself. They are also scared. In most battles, Asura loses the war and run away, while throw away all their tools (weapons) and carriages in the battle fields. There is another Asura King

called Good-Illusory-Tech Asura King, who can use some illusion techniques to make these carriages and tools invisible; thus Asura can come back and take them later. Rahu is another Asura King, who can make the moon and the sun half or fully in-visible during eclipse. It is noteworthy that Siddhartha Gautama Buddha's son has the name of Rahula, because there is an eclipse when he was born. It was thought the eclipse is caused by Rahu Asura. Asura (Figure 6) is a kind of very powerful lifeform, able to mate with the Dev people (gods) in Trayastrimsa. From the point view of the Dev people in Trayastrimsa, they thought the Asura lady is beautiful while Asura male is ugly (actually might not). Thus, Devs in Trayastrimsa used to take Asura lady from their realm into Trayastrimsa. This is one of main reasons for the war between Asura and gods. In Theravada Buddhism, Asura was treated as a different being from gods, while in many other Buddhism branches, they were thought as gods. Even in Theravada scripture, it mentioned a story: once upon a time, Asura was living in Trayastrimsa, the same place as Sakras. In a previous life of Siddhartha Gautama Buddha, the "Buddha" was born as Sakras in Trayastrimsa and had a drink with Asura who was also living in Trayastrimsa at that periods.

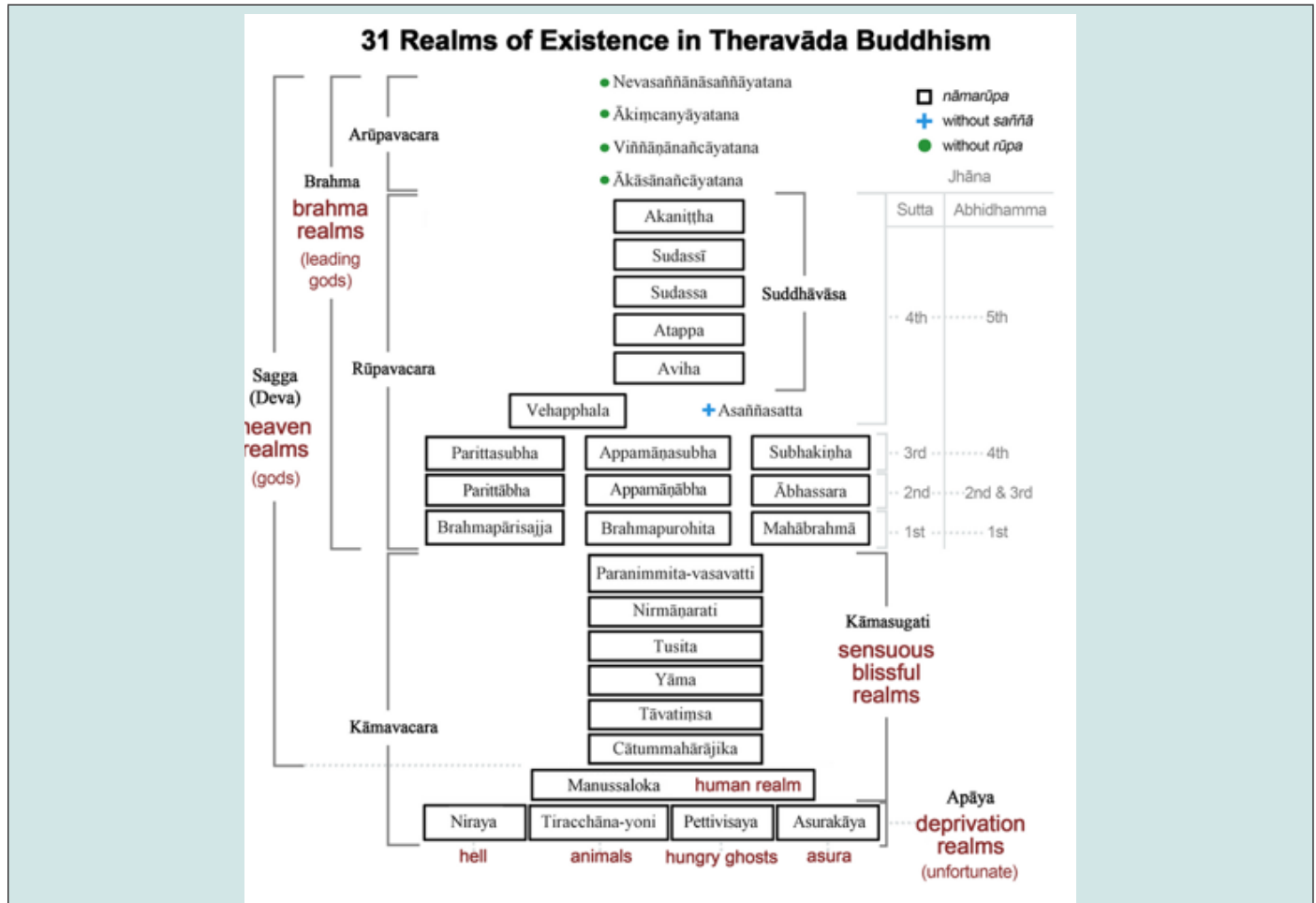


**Figure 6:** Asurais, a god-like being with powerful fighting capability. They live in cities near the bottom side of Sumera (Mt. Meru). They communicate each other by hearts (mind thinking). They have a higher dimension than modern people: modern human cannot see them, but they can manifest their body to human if they want.

**Discussion**

There are a number of lifeforms that are documented in Buddhism literatures. However, tremendous amounts of work are

required in order to translate them into modern language from ancient scriptures. Thus, we only mentioned a few. Figure7 is a map according to Theravada Buddhism; there are more in other Buddhism branches.



**Figure 7:** The 31 realms according to Theravada Buddhism. Each realms have different lifeforms. Nonetheless, there could be more according to other branches.

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