Who is Shakyamuni Buddha?

Shakyamuni is the historical founder of Buddhism who lived approximately 3,000 years ago. Chinese and Japanese tradition set the date of his birth on April 8, 1029 B.C. E. and his death on February 15, 949 B.C. E. He was born in what is present day Nepal as a prince, the son of King Shuddhodana of the Shakya tribe. According to Buddhist tradition, at the age of nineteen he renounced his princely life, and started his journey as a religious ascetic seeking the truth. At the age of 30, having realized that the severe austerities of ascetic life in India did not lead to an awakening to the ultimate truth, he sat under a pipal tree (also known as the "Bodhi Tree") and meditated. He attained enlightenment and embarked on a lifelong career of traveling through India, preaching to many disciples and believers to lead them to the same enlightenment.

During the last eight years of his life he expounded the teachings of the "Lotus-Nirvana Period," in which he taught the principles of the Lotus Sutra, his highest teaching, and instructions for its transmission. Shakyamuni's teachings in the Lotus Sutra ultimately reveal in the depths of the passages that his status was provisional, and that the True Buddha of *kuon-ganjo* would appear in the Latter Day of the Law to reveal the Buddhism of the true cause that would lead all humanity to enlightenment.