

VOLUME 2 (MAY 2012)

ISSN: 2047-1076

Journal of the
Oxford
Centre for
Buddhist
Studies



The Oxford Centre for
Buddhist Studies
<http://www.ocbs.org/>



A Recognised Independent
Centre of the University of Oxford

JOURNAL OF THE OXFORD CENTRE
FOR
BUDDHIST STUDIES

VOLUME 2



May 2012

Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies

Volume 2

May 2012

ISSN: 2047-1076

Published by the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies

www.ocbs.org

Wolfson College, Linton Road, Oxford, OX2 6UD, United Kingdom

Authors retain copyright of their articles.



Editorial Board

Prof. Richard Gombrich (General Editor): richard.gombrich@balliol.ox.ac.uk

Dr Tse-fu Kuan: jeformosa@yahoo.com

Dr Karma Phuntsho: kp287@cam.ac.uk

Dr Noa Ronkin: noa.ronkin@gmail.com

Dr Alex Wynne: alxwynne@hotmail.com

All submissions should be sent to: richard.gombrich@balliol.ox.ac.uk.

Production team

Operations and Development Manager: Steven Egan

Production Manager: Dr Tomoyuki Kono

Development Consultant: Dr Paola Tinti

Annual subscription rates

Students: £20

Individuals: £30

Institutions: £45

Universities: £55

Countries from the following list receive 50% discount on all the above prices:

Bangladesh, Burma, Laos, India, Nepal, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Cambodia, Vietnam, Indonesia, Pakistan, all African Countries

For more information on subscriptions, please go to www.ocbs.org/journal.

Contents

Contents	3
List of Contributors	5
Editorial. RICHARD GOMBRICH	7
Teaching the Abhidharma in the Heaven of the Thirty-three, The Buddha and his Mother. ANĀLAYO	9
Burning Yourself: Paṭicca Samuppāda as a Description of the Arising of a False Sense of Self Modeled on Vedic Rituals. LINDA BLANCHARD	36
A comparison of the Chinese and Pāli versions of the <i>Bala Saṃyukta</i> , a collection of early Buddhist discourses on “Powers” (<i>Bala</i>). CHOONG MUN-KEAT	84
Designations of Ancient Sri Lankan Buddhism in the Chinese Tripiṭaka. CHUAN CHENG	104
Scribal and Authorial Openings in Theravāda manuscripts: Evidence from the Nevill Collection KATE CROSBY	124
Tempering <i>Belles Infidèles</i> and Promoting <i>Jolies Laides</i> : Idle Thoughts on the Ideal Rendering of Buddhist Texts and Terminology. FLORIN DE-LEANU	146
A Geographical Perspective on Sectarian Affiliations of the <i>Ekottarika Āgama</i> in Chinese Translation (T 125). TSE-FU KUAN	179
Decoding Two “Miracles” of the Buddha. PAISARN LIKHITPREECHAKUL	209

Translating Translation: An Encounter with the Ninth-Century Tibetan Version of the *Kāraṇḍavyūha-sūtra*. PETER ALAN ROBERTS 223

Book Reviews

Afghanistan: Crossroads of the Ancient World by F. Hiebert and P. Cambon (eds.). Reviewed by Richard Fynes 241

Taiwan's Tzu Chi as Engaged Buddhism: Origins, Organization, Appeal and Social Impact. By Yu-Shuang Yao. Reviewed by Richard Gombrich 246

Tibet: a History by Sam van Schaik. Reviewed by Berthe Jansen 255

Locations of Buddhism: Colonialism and Modernity in Sri Lanka by Anne M. Blackburn. Reviewed by Suren Raghavan 259

The Ego Trick: What Does It Mean To Be You? by Julian Baggini. Reviewed by Rahula Thor 266

List of Contributors

Bhikkhu Anālayo specializes in early Buddhist studies. He teaches at the Center for Buddhist Studies, University of Hamburg, and at the Sri Lanka International Buddhist Academy, Kandy, and carries out research at Dharma Drum Buddhist College, Taiwan.

Linda Blanchard lives deep in the heart of the American Bible Belt and has collected a library of books about Buddhism and the Buddha's times that beats the heck out of her city library's collection of three books on the subject. She is currently working on an introductory book on Buddhism, as well as papers on the connections between views found in the Pali Canon and in the Upanishads. lin-daqpublic@nowheat.com

Choong Mun-keat studied Buddhism in Malaysia, Taiwan and Sri Lanka, before obtaining his BA (1990) in Buddhist Studies (Komazawa, Tokyo), MA in Studies in Religion (1994) and PhD (1999) in Buddhist Studies (Queensland). Currently he is a Lecturer in Studies in Religion at the University of New England, Australia. mchoong@une.edu.au

Chuan Cheng Pu Chengzhong teaches at the Buddhist College of Singapore, specialises in the cultural history of early Chinese Buddhism, and is interested in Buddhist literature and Buddhist ethics. He spent one and a half years studying Pali and Theravada Buddhism in Sri Lanka before completing an MA in Indian Religions and a PhD in Chinese Buddhism at S.O.A.S, during 2001 to 2005. chuancheng@bcs.edu.sg

Kate Crosby is Director of the Centre for Buddhist Studies and Seiyu Kiriya Reader in Buddhist Studies at SOAS. Recent research topics have included the *lik long* literature and poetic training of the Shan of Burma and northern Thailand, monastic disrobing practices throughout the Theravada world, and the literature and sponsorship of *boran yogāvacara* meditation, the so-called 'tantric Theravada' of Sri Lanka and mainland Southeast Asian Buddhism. She is co-editor of the Routledge journal *Contemporary Buddhism*. kc21@soas.ac.uk.

Florin Deleanu is Professor of Buddhist Studies at the International College for Postgraduate Buddhist Studies (Tokyo). His research focuses on meditation in Indian Buddhism. He is the author of *The Chapter on the Mundane Path (Laukikamārga) in the Śrāvakabhūmi: A Trilingual Edition (Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese), Annotated Translation, and Introductory Study* (2006) and is currently working

on a monograph dedicated to the history of spiritual cultivation in Yogācāra Buddhism. florindeleanu@yahoo.co.jp.

Richard Fynes D.Phil. (Oxon) is a Principal Lecturer in the Faculty of Art, Design and Humanities, De Montfort University, Leicester. He is interested in numismatics and has translated Jain epics poems for Oxford World's Classics and the Clay Sanskrit Library. rccfynes@dmu.ac.uk

Berthe Jansen is a PhD candidate in the research project 'Buddhism and Social Justice', at LIAS, Leiden University. She holds an MPhil degree in Tibetan and Himalayan Studies from Oxford University. Her dissertation is on pre-modern Tibetan monasticism and Tibetan monastic ideas about social justice, using *bca'yigs* (monastic guidelines) as primary sources. She also works as an interpreter and translator of (mainly) Buddhist Tibetan. b.k.jansen@hum.leidenuniv.nl

Tse-fu Kuan is an Assistant Professor in the College of General Studies at Yuan Ze University in Taiwan, and an editor of this Journal. He is interested in early Buddhism and the history of early Buddhist schools in India.

Paisarn Likhitpreechakul is a journalist and human rights activist based in Thailand. His main interest is in the relevance of the Buddha's teachings to modern society – in particular, the relationships between Buddhism, democracy and human rights. asiantrekker@yahoo.com

Suren Raghavan is a final year PhD researcher at University of Kent, UK and a Research Fellow at the OCBS. His research interests are in Theravada Buddhism and democratization. raghavansuren@gmail.com.

Peter Alan Roberts is a translator of Tibetan texts both contemporary and ancient, and is an interpreter for lamas of all Tibetan traditions. Also presently involved in translating sūtras for *84000: Translating the Words of the Buddha*. He lives in Hollywood and is unaffiliated with any institution. peteralanroberts@mac.com

Rahula Thor, BMedRad Sc (Medical Imaging), is an independent Buddhist scholar. He is a radiographer by profession. Apart from Buddhist studies, he has a keen interest in philosophy, psychology, history and comparative religion. He is currently writing an article, "Tracing Mahayana Concepts in the Pali Canon". He is a Malaysian, but currently lives in Singapore. rahula.thor@gmail.com

Editorial

Richard Gombrich

When about a year ago we at the OCBS decided to start this journal, we knew that there were already several learned journals in Buddhist studies, and many more which occasionally publish articles on Buddhism. Even so, we felt that there was a need for a publication which, without any drop in intellectual quality, would in some ways be a bit more like a magazine. By this we meant that it should be more accessible to non-specialists, and more varied, with a wide range of contributors, a wide range of subject matter (in terms of both topic and approach), and – we hoped – a correspondingly wider audience. It should also, ideally, carry some news of such things as exhibitions and conferences of relevance to Buddhist studies, and have room for discussion and even controversy.

A remarkable feature of this, our second volume, which I heartily welcome, is the variety of contributors – a fact which cannot but make for variety in the contributions. At the most superficial level, the authors of the fourteen articles and book reviews are drawn from eleven nations. What is far more important, however, is that more than half the pages are written by people who do not hold academic posts. If we are thus enlarging the range of people who make serious contributions to Buddhist studies, I believe that at least we are doing one thing right. In many countries, I know, academics work under such pressure from their employers, with so much teaching and (often pointless) administration, that it is hard for them to produce any research, let alone research which is both original and accessible to non-specialists; I intend to write about this in the near future. For the moment, however, let me celebrate the contributions made by those who for various reasons are *not* employed in academia.

I cannot specify all of them here, but I must draw attention to a couple. Linda Blanchard has never worked in education; as a Buddhist scholar she has no formal training and is virtually self-taught. Yet she has sent me an exciting new interpretation of the Buddha's teaching of dependent origination. She and I realise that so

ambitious a theory is bound to be controversial, and that only time will tell what the world will make of it; but I am confident that at the very least it deserves to be taken seriously. Taking it seriously also meant that I had to break my rule of imposing a limit on articles of ten thousand words, because I could not weaken her presentation of her case by curtailing the amount of evidence that she could present.

Peter Alan Roberts is a self-employed scholar, who earns whatever he does earn as a Tibetan translator and interpreter. He is incapable of blowing his own trumpet. Tucked away near the end of his article is an explanation of the origin of the name Avalokiteśvara. How much effort has been spent on this problem! Peter has found what seems to me must be the solution, but he is so modest that until I prodded him he was mentioning it only in passing, so that it could easily have gone unnoticed.

Analayo has a foot in both worlds, for he does teach part-time – though he is so prolific that no one would ever guess it. Writing here about the Buddha's descent to earth from a heaven after preaching the *abhidharma* to his mother, he has shown it to be “an instance of cross-fertilization between text and art, where an already existing tale is concretized in art and this in turn influences textual accounts.” This too is an exciting discovery. I wonder how many cases of reciprocal influence between text and artistic representation it is possible to find in the history of Buddhism.

I am also particularly pleased that this time we can offer our public five substantial book reviews, again on a wide range of topics. In the final paragraph of my own review I draw attention to something about which we hear too little: how “publishing” has for some unlucky authors become almost meaningless, regardless of the quality of their work. This damages our whole academic environment.

While one of the books reviewed is an exhibition catalogue, we have otherwise not yet succeeded in carrying news and discussion. Whether we can do so must depend on whether we can expand our audience and create a wider community of people interested in Buddhist studies at a serious intellectual level. I can only hope that more scholars, whether amateur or professional, will have the courage to submit their ideas to this journal, and that many more people will realize that they deserve to be read and discussed.

Teaching the Abhidharma in the Heaven of the Thirty-three, The Buddha and his Mother*

Anālayo

In what follows I investigate the tale of the Buddha's sojourn in the Heaven of the Thirty-three to teach his mother, based on a translation of a version of this episode in the *Samyukta-āgama* preserved in Chinese, with a view to discerning the gradual development and significance of this tale.

Introduction

With the present paper I continue exploring a theme broached in the last issue of the present journal, namely the Buddha's preaching activities in relation to early Buddhist inclusivism, which 'includes' denizens of the ancient Indian pantheon in the early Buddhist world, albeit with some significant changes.¹ While in the previous paper I studied the motif of Brahmā inviting the Buddha to start teaching, the episode taken up now is a rainy season retreat spent by the Buddha in the Heaven of the Thirty-three to teach his mother and the assembled *devas*.²

Śakra, the king in the Heaven of the Thirty-three, in a way exemplifies the tendency to inclusivism even more than Brahmā. The ancient Indian warrior god Indra, the slayer of Vṛtra,³ undergoes a rather radical transformation in early Buddhist texts and becomes a peaceful and devout Buddhist disciple under the

*I am indebted to Rod Bucknell, Giuliana Martini, Shi Kongmu, Ken Su, Giovanni Verardi and Monika Zin for comments on a draft of this paper.

¹ Anālayo 2011a.

² Another teaching given in the Heaven of the Thirty-three is reported in MN 134 at MN III 200,12, in which case the parallels MĀ 166 at T I 698c20 and T 77 at T I 886b12 speak of the Bamboo Grove at Rājagṛha instead.

³ A summary of this myth can be found in Macdonell 1897/2000: 58–60.

name of Śakra.⁴ In one episode located in the past, even when he has to engage in war, Śakra takes such care to avoid unnecessary harm to living beings that, on being defeated, he halts his retreat and turns round to face the enemy again so as to avoid harming the nests of birds that would be destroyed if he were to continue his flight.⁵ Needless to say, this heroic deed in the name of harmlessness is what then ensures his final victory.

The tale of the Buddha's visit to the Heaven of the Thirty-three, translated below from a *Samyukta-āgama* collection that has probably been transmitted within the Mūlasarvāstivāda tradition,⁶ shows Śakra and the whole celestial assembly as a pious gathering of respectful Buddhist disciples. Besides a few Sanskrit fragments,⁷ a full Sanskrit version of this tale occurs in the *Avadānaśataka*,⁸ a text stemming from the same Mūlasarvāstivāda tradition.⁹ The Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* also has recorded this episode.¹⁰

In the Theravāda tradition, a corresponding narration can be found in brief in the commentary on the *Suttanipāta* and in the *Jātaka* collection,¹¹ with a more detailed description provided in the *Dhammapada* commentary.¹²

A Chinese *Āgama* parallel to the *Samyukta-āgama* tale occurs as part of a longer discourse in the *Ekottarika-āgama*.¹³ The school affiliation of this dis-

⁴Cf. also Anālayo 2010b: 3 and 2011b: 157.

⁵SN 11.6 at SN I 224,24 and its parallels SĀ 1222 at T II 333c1 and SĀ² 49 at T II 390a8.

⁶On the school affiliation of the *Samyukta-āgama* cf., e.g., Lü 1963: 242, Waldschmidt 1980: 136, Mayeda 1985: 99, Enomoto 1986: 23, Schmithausen 1987: 306, Choong 2000: 6 note 18, Hiraoka 2000, Harrison 2002: 1, Oberlies 2003: 64, Bucknell 2006: 685 and Glass 2010.

⁷SHT V 1145, Sander 1985: 144, describes groups of *devas* proclaiming their status as stream-enterers; SHT V 1146 V1 to R1, Sander 1985: 145, has preserved the final part of the discourse with Mahāmaudgalyāyana announcing the Buddha's impending return; fragment Or 15009/49, Ye 2009: 125f, sets in towards the end of the episode preserved in SHT V 1145 and then has Mahāmaudgalyāyana's requesting the Buddha to return and the Buddha's reply; SHT III 835, Waldschmidt 1971: 56f, describes the Buddha's descent.

⁸The episode is part of tale 86, Speyer 1909/1990: 89,1 to 94,16.

⁹Hartmann 1985. The *Avadānaśataka* version is in fact fairly close to the tale in SĀ 506.

¹⁰T 1451 at T XXIV 346a14 to 347a18 and D 6 *da* 88a2 to 92a1 or Q 1035 *ne* 85a2 to 89a6.

¹¹Pj II 570,10 to 20 and Jā 483 at Jā IV 265,17 to 266,5; cf. also Vism 391,1 to 392,20.

¹²Dhp-a III 216,17 to 226,3.

¹³EĀ 38,5 at T II 705b23 (the Buddha goes to the Heaven of Thirty-three) to 707c4 (the Buddha has returned to Jambudvīpa); the section corresponding to SĀ 506 (which begins only at T II 706c18 with the four assemblies asking Mahāmaudgalyāyana to be their messenger) has been translated by Bareau 1997: 20–25.

course collection is a subject of continued discussion among scholars and thus at present best considered as undetermined.¹⁴

Another version occurs in the Chinese counterpart to the *Aṭṭhakavagga* of the *Suttanipāṭa*.¹⁵ Unlike its Pāli parallel, the Chinese counterpart to the *Aṭṭhakavagga* accompanies its stanzas throughout with prose narrations. A comparable case would be the Pāli *Udāna* collection, where the stanzas also come together with prose, whereas *Udāna* collections of other Buddhist schools consist only of verse material.¹⁶ Thus the Chinese counterpart to the *Aṭṭhakavagga* and the Pāli *Udāna* collection appear to testify to the same phenomenon, namely the inclusion into a canonical text of material that may originally have been of a more commentarial nature.¹⁷

Several other versions of the Buddha's sojourn in the Heaven of the Thirty-three have been preserved in the Chinese canon.¹⁸

Out of the various scenes depicted in this episode, his descent back to the human realm, accompanied by Brahmā and Śakra, has become one of the favourite motifs of Indian iconography,¹⁹ with early specimens extant already from the an-
iconic period.

¹⁴For a brief survey of aspects of the *Ekottarika-āgama* cf. Anālayo 2009b. At the SLABS conference held 2010 at SIBA in Sri Lanka, Tsefu Kuan presented several arguments in favour of the hypothesis that the *Ekottarika-āgama* was transmitted within the Mahāsāṃghika tradition. A position in favour of a Mahāsāṃghika affiliation has also been argued recently by Pāsādika 2010. For a survey of opinions on this topic by Japanese scholars cf. Mayeda 1985: 102f.

¹⁵The tale is part of the fourteenth discourse regarding the nun Utpalavarṇā, T 198 at T IV 184c25 to 185c9, translated in Bapat 1950: 36–42.

¹⁶For a study of this feature cf. Anālayo 2009a.

¹⁷On this phenomena cf. Anālayo 2010a.

¹⁸Cf., e.g., T 156 at T III 136b17 to 137b10, T 200 at T IV 247a1 to a8, and T 694 at T XVI 791b10 to 792c25 (for further references cf. note 72 below); for a detailed survey of relevant texts from the Tibetan canon cf. Skilling 2008.

¹⁹Foucher 1905: 537 comments that “le fait le plus important dans l’imagination populaire n’était ni son ascension, que l’on ne voit nulle part, ni même son séjour, qui manque de pittoresque, mais bien sa ‘descente’ sur la terre”.



The above Bhārhut relief, found on the so-called Ajātaśatru Pillar, depicts the Buddha's descent from the Heaven of the Thirty-three.²⁰ At the centre a triple flight of stairs reaches down from heaven, with footsteps of the Buddha depicted on the first and last step of the middle, wider flight of stairs. Above flying *devas* carry flowers, while the area to the side and below is packed with the expectant crowd that has gathered to welcome the Buddha's return. A tree with a seat stands beside the stairs, as if ready to receive the Buddha for the teaching to be given to the assembled crowd.²¹

²⁰Picture from Coomaraswamy 1956 plate XI figure 31 middle section; cf. also Cunningham 1879 plate XVII middle section. For a survey of early representations of the same scene cf., e.g., Fábri 1930: 289, Lamotte 1958/1988: 339, Schlingloff 2000: 478f and Skilling 2008: 42. Monika Zin informs me that among the recent Kanaganahalli discoveries (on which cf. Zin 2011) an aniconic depiction of the Buddha's descent has been found, which has so far not been published. The relief is about two meters in height and shows a single flight of stairs, the lowest of which carries the Buddha's footprints.

²¹Schlingloff 2000: 481 confirms that the stone seat under the fig tree is a pictorial reference to the Buddha's preaching after his return to earth, "auf die Predigt des Buddha nach seinem Herabstieg zur Erde wird durch einen Steinsitz unter einem Feigenbaum hingewiesen". The depiction of a fig tree would fit the reference to an Udumbara tree in SĀ 506 at T II 134c16; cf. also the translation below.

Below, I translate the *Samyukta-āgama* version, followed by a brief study of selected aspects of its presentation.

Translation

[Discourse to Śakra]²²

Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was spending the rains retreat in the Heaven of the Thirty-three on the Pāṇḍukambala Rock,²³ not far from the Pārijāta, the Kovidāra Tree, teaching the Dharma to his mother and the *devas* of the Thirty-three. At that time, the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana was spending the rains retreat at Śrāvastī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍada's Park.

Then [the members of] the four assemblies approached the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana, paid respects with their heads at his feet, withdrew to sit at one side and said to the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana: “Do you know where the Blessed One is spending the rains retreat?”²⁴

²²SĀ 506 at T II 134a7 to 134c23, for which Akanuma 1929/1990: 58 suggests the title 帝釋. The present discourse need not be a version of the *Devāvatāra-sūtra* mentioned in the ‘*Karmavibhaṅgopadeśa*’, Lévi 1932: 159,18, as the descent scene in SĀ 506 is rather brief, making it less probable that this particular episode would have provided the title of the discourse.

²³SĀ 506 at T II 134a7 actually reads: 驪色虛軟石. Judging from the corresponding passage in the *Avadānaśataka*, Speyer 1909/1990: 89,5: *pāṇḍukambalaśilāyaṃ pārijātasya kovidārasya nātīdūre* (cf. also the *Avadānakalpalatā* 14.1, Das 1888: 431,7), the reference in SĀ 506 would be to the *pāṇḍukambalaśilā*, the rock used as throne by Śakra; cf. also the *pāṇḍukambalaśilā* mentioned in Jā IV 265,19 and Dh-p-a III 217,3. Various descriptions of what is presumably the same place can be found in the parallels, cf., e.g., EĀ 38.5 at T II 705c1 (cf. also T II 706c12), T 198 at T IV 184c26, T 200 at T IV 247a1, and the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1451 at T XXIV 346a1, with its counterpart in D 6 *da* 88a2 or Q 1035 *ne* 85a3.

²⁴EĀ 38.5 at T II 705c29 precedes this with the members of the four assemblies inquiring from Ānanda, who does not know where the Buddha is residing and eventually directs them on to Aniruddha. Using his divine eye, Aniruddha is still unable to discern the Buddha's whereabouts, as the Buddha has transformed his body in such a way that he cannot be discovered. At the end of the three month period, the Buddha stops this transformation of his body. Thereon Aniruddha is able to see him. He then recommends that the one to be sent to the Heaven should be Mahāmaudgalyāyana. According to Pj II 570,11, however, the Buddha had been requested to return by Anuruddha, while Jā IV 265,21 reports that Mahāmoggallāna had come to tell the Buddha, as does Vism 391,20, preceded by indicating that Anuruddha had found out where the Buddha was. Dh-p-a III 218,9 begins with Mahāmoggallāna being asked about the Buddha's whereabouts. Even though Mahāmoggallāna knows, he nevertheless directs the members of the four assemblies to Anuruddha for finding out where the Buddha is; here, too, it is eventually Mahāmoggallāna who approaches the Buddha.

The venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana replied: “I heard that the Blessed One is spending the rains retreat in the Heaven of the Thirty-three, on the Pāṇḍukambala Rock, not far from the Pārijāta, the Kovidāra Tree, teaching the Dharma to his mother and the *devas* of the Thirty-three.” Then [the members of] the four assemblies, hearing what the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana had said, were delighted and joyful. They all rose from their seats, paid respects and left.

Then, when the three months of the rains retreat were over, [the members of] the four assemblies again approached the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana, paid respects with their heads at his feet and withdrew to sit to one side. Then the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana taught the Dharma to [the members of] the four assemblies in various ways, explaining, teaching, illuminating and delighting them. Having explained, taught, illuminated and delighted them, he remained silent.

Then [the members of] the four assemblies rose from their seats, paid respects with their heads and said to the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana: “Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana, please know that we have not seen the Blessed One for a long time. We [members of the four] assemblies eagerly long to see the Blessed One. Venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana, if it is not too troublesome, we would wish that you approach the Heaven of the Thirty-three on our behalf and inquire from the Blessed One on behalf of all of us: ‘Do you have little disease and little trouble, are you dwelling at ease and in peace?’ Further tell the Blessed One: ‘[The members of] the four assemblies of Jambudvīpa wish to see the Blessed One,²⁵ but they do not have the supernormal power to ascend to the Heaven of the Thirty-three to pay their respects to the Blessed One. The *devas* of the Thirty-three, [however], do themselves have the supernormal power to come down and be among human beings. We only wish for the Blessed One to come back to Jambudvīpa, out of compassion.”

Then the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana assented by remaining silent. [134b] Then [the members of] the four assemblies, knowing that the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana had assented by remaining silent, all rose from their seats, paid respects and left.

At that time the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana, knowing that [the members of] the four assemblies had left, entered concentration, an attainment of such a type that, just as a strong man bends or stretches his arm, so in an instant he disappeared from Śrāvastī and appeared in the Heaven of the Thirty-three, on the Pāṇḍukambala Rock, not far from the Pārijāta, the Kovidāra Tree. At that time

²⁵ On the significance of the term Jambudvīpa cf. Wujastyk 2004.

the Blessed One was teaching the Dharma to the assembly in the Heaven of the Thirty-three, surrounded by an innumerable retinue.

Then the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana, seeing the Blessed One from afar, was thrilled with joy, thinking: ‘Today the Blessed One is teaching the Dharma surrounded by the great heavenly assembly, which is no different from [him teaching] a gathering of the assemblies in Jambudvīpa.’

At that time the Blessed One, knowing the thought in the mind of the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana, said to the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana: “Mahāmaudgalyāyana, it is not on their own account [that they are gathered like this]. When I wish to teach the Dharma to the *devas*, they right away come together. When I wish them to leave, they right away leave. They come following my intention and go following my intention.”²⁶

At that time the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana paid respects with his head at the Buddha’s feet, withdrew to sit at one side and said to the Blessed One: “Various kinds of *devas* have come together in this great assembly. Are there in this great assembly of *devas* those who have earlier heard the Dharma taught by the Buddha, the Blessed One, and attained perfect confidence, who on the breaking up of the body, at death, have come to be reborn here?”

The Buddha said to the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana: “So it is, so it is. Among the various *devas* that have come together in this great assembly there are those who in their previous lives heard the Dharma and attained perfect confidence in the Buddha, the Dharma and the community, who have accomplished noble morality and, on the breaking up of the body, at death, have come to be reborn here.”²⁷

Then Śakra, the king of *devas*, on seeing that the Blessed One and the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana had finished speaking to each other in praise of the assembly of *devas*, said to the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana: “So it is, so it is, venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana. All of the various [*devas*] that have gathered in this assembly heard the right Dharma in their previous lives and attained perfect confidence in the Buddha, the Dharma and the community, accomplished noble morality and, on the breaking up of the body, at death, have come to be reborn here.”

²⁶ EĀ 38.5 at T II 705c27 attributes it to the Buddha’s concentrative power that they act like this.

²⁷ No such indication is given in EĀ 38.5, which instead at T II 705c9 reports that while in the Heaven of the Thirty-three the Buddha had delivered a gradual discourse culminating in the four truths, whereon the *devas* attained stream-entry. In other words, in this account they obviously had not already been stream-enterers in their former existence.

Then a certain monk,²⁸ on seeing that the Blessed One, the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana and Śakra, the king of *devas*, had finished approving of each other, said to the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana: “So it is, so it is, venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana. All of the various *devas* that have gathered here have heard the right Dharma in their previous lives and attained perfect confidence in the Buddha, the Dharma and the community, accomplished noble morality and, on the breaking up of the body, at death, have come to be reborn here.”

Then a *deva* rose from his seat,²⁹ [134c] arranged his garment so as to bare the right shoulder, and with hands held together [in respect] said to the Buddha: “Blessed One, I too accomplished perfect confidence in the Buddha and therefore came to be reborn here.” Another *deva* said: “I attained perfect confidence in the Dharma.” Some said they attained perfect confidence in the community and some said they accomplished noble morality, therefore coming to be reborn here. Like this, innumerable thousands of *devas* declared before the Buddha that they had attained the condition of stream-entry. They all then disappeared from before the Buddha and were no longer seen.

Then the venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana, soon after knowing that the heavenly assembly had left, rose from his seat, arranged his robes so as to bare the right shoulder, and said to the Buddha: “Blessed One, [the members of] the four assemblies of Jambudvīpa pay respects with their heads at the feet of the Blessed One and inquire from the Blessed One: ‘Do you have little disease and little trouble, are you dwelling at ease and in peace?’ [The members of] the four assemblies cherish the wish to see the Blessed One. They say to the Blessed One: ‘We humans do not have the supernormal power to ascend to the Heaven of the Thirty-three to pay our respects to the Blessed One. However, the *devas* have great might and power,

²⁸ It is unclear to me where this monk suddenly comes from; no comparable reference is found in the corresponding section in the chief parallel versions. A whole discourse dedicated to the Buddha’s mother, however, begins by indicating that the Buddha dwelled in the Heaven of the Thirty-three in the company of 1250 monks; cf. T 383 at T XII 1005a7: 與大比丘眾一千二百五十人俱 and the discussion in Durt 2007: 255 [56]. Similarly, another version of the present episode speaks of an innumerable great community of monks being together with the Buddha (and a similarly innumerable number of bodhisattvas) in the Heaven of the Thirty-three, T 694 at T XVI 790a16: 與無量大比丘眾.

²⁹ SĀ 506 at T II 134c1 at this point refers to 天子, corresponding to *devaputra*. Childers 1875/1993: 115 s.v. *devaputto* explains that “*devaputto* ... means simply a male deva”; cf. also Bodhi 2000: 384 note 141, who explains that “*devaputta* means literally ‘son of the devas’, but since devas are depicted as arising ... by way of spontaneous birth”, a literal translation would not be appropriate.

they are all able to come down to Jambudvīpa. We only wish for the Blessed One to come back to Jambudvīpa, out of compassion for [the members of] the four assemblies.”

The Buddha said to Mahāmaudgalyāyana: “You can return and tell the people of Jambudvīpa: ‘After seven days the Blessed One shall come back from the Heaven of the Thirty-three to the city of Sāṃkāśya in Jambudvīpa, outside the outer gate at the foot of the Udumbara tree.’”

The venerable Mahāmaudgalyāyana received the Blessed One’s instruction and entered concentration so that, just as a strong [man] bends or stretches his arm, in an instant he disappeared from the Heaven of the Thirty-three and arrived in Jambudvīpa. He said to [the members of] the four assemblies: “People, you should know that after seven days the Blessed One will come from the Heaven of the Thirty-three to the city of Sāṃkāśya in Jambudvīpa, outside of the outer gate at the foot of the Udumbara tree.”

As scheduled, on the seventh day the Blessed One came down from the Heaven of the Thirty-three to the city of Sāṃkāśya in Jambudvīpa, to the foot of the Udumbara tree. *Devas*, *nāgas*, *yakṣas*, up to Brahmā *devas*, all followed him down. At that time, this gathering was given a name. The name was ‘the place where the *devas* descended’.³⁰

Study

Comparing the various versions of the above tale, it is noteworthy that in the *Samyukta-āgama* discourse this episode occurs on its own, whereas in the other versions it comes embedded in a wider narrative. Moreover, the depiction of the Buddha’s descent is rather brief compared to the other versions. All we are told is that the Buddha came down as previously announced and that various celestial beings came down with him.³¹ In most of the other versions, the Buddha’s descent is depicted with considerable detail, often with precise indications about the manner in which he traversed the distance between heaven and earth, a description that then leads on to further narratives. Three stairs had been built for

³⁰The ending of the discourse is somewhat abrupt, without the standard conclusion that reports the monks’ delight in what the Buddha had taught them.

³¹The *Avadānaśataka*, Speyer 1909/1990: 94,15, and T 156 at T III 137b₄ are similar to SĀ 506, in as much as their report of the Buddha’s descent does not give any reference to a path or a flight of stairs he used to return to Jambudvīpa.

his descent by the *devas*,³² so that the Buddha could use the middle flight of stairs, being flanked by Brahmā and Śakra on each side.

Iconographic presentations of this episode regularly adopt the same pattern, portraying the Buddha's descent from the Heaven of the Thirty-three with the help of three flights of stairs, as for example in the Bhārhut relief presented above. Allinger (2010: 3) notes that “early Indian depictions – all those preserved are reliefs – almost always show three flights of steps ... in aniconic depictions the stairways are void of figures, while in iconic depictions they are occasionally replaced with a single flight.”

Now in the context of the above aniconic portrayal of the Buddha's descent, a flight of stairs is an obvious requirement for the whole image to work.³³ Without some visible evidence of a path or a flight of stairs it would be difficult to express the idea of a descent as long as the one who descends cannot be portrayed. Thus the depiction of stairs would have had a symbolic function.³⁴

³²The construction of three stairs is mentioned in T 198 at T IV 185c2: 便化作三階, in T 200 at T IV 247a5: 為佛造作三道寶梯, in T 694 at T XVI 792b18: 作三道寶階, in T 1451 at T XXIV 347a1: 作三道寶階 and D 6 da 91b2 or Q 1035 ne 88b5: *skas gsum sprul*, and in Dhṛp-a III 225,3: *tīni sopānāni māpesi*; cf. also Jā IV 266,1 and Vism 392,2. Stairs are also mentioned in a version of the Buddha's descent from the Heaven of the Thirty-three in fragment SHT III 835, Waldschmidt 1971: 56f, as well as in the *Book of Zambasta*, 23.142, Emmerick 1968: 360. EĀ 38.5 at T II 707a28 however, speaks of the construction of three paths, 作三道路, with a variant reading of similar meaning as 作三徑路. Bareau 1997: 22 note 18 takes this to reflect an earlier stage in the description of the Buddha's descent, suggesting that “on peut supposer que cette version a conservé ici un élément du récit primitif, l'escalier étant une précision destinée à rendre la construction en question plus prodigieuse et plus conforme à la solennité de l'événement comme à la souveraineté spirituelle du Bienheureux”. Yet, in view of the fact that T 200 and T 694 also employ the expression “path”, which then does refer to stairs, the reference in EĀ 38.5 could be a corruption of a similar reference and need not be testifying to an early stage in the evolution of the present motif. On a depiction of the descent scene in which the Buddha uses a tree ladder instead cf. Allinger 1999: 328.

³³Strong 2010: 976f suggests that “in an ‘aniconic’ context, a ladder may have simply been a convenient way of representing vertical movement, and once the tradition was established, it was kept even after the appearance of the Buddha image”. Ibid. adds that the function of the stairs could also have been to represent a “levelling of the field’ between humans and deities and the Buddha”. While I find the first of Strong's interpretations convincing, I doubt that a levelling of the field between men and *devas* would have caused the invention of the stair motif in the first place and I also doubt that the point would be to place the Buddha at the level of other humans. As far as I can see the main thrust of the whole story is rather elevating the Buddha to a level superior even to the highest *devas*. Thus the levelling of *devas* and men, it seems to me, is simply a by-product of the elevation of the Buddha.

³⁴On the symbolism of stairs in general cf., e.g., Guénon 1962: 244–247.

However, in the above Bhārhut relief the stairs already acquire a more literal nuance, given that the Buddha's footprints are explicitly depicted. No doubt the artist(s) intended to portray real stairs that the Buddha actually used to walk down. The pilgrims Fǎxiǎn (法顯) and Xuánzàng (玄奘) in fact describe the remains of the stairs that were believed to have been used by the Buddha on this occasion.³⁵

That the stairs were understood literally is also evident from textual accounts. Notably, several of these textual accounts struggle with the contrast between the ease with which the Buddha and subsequently Mahāmaudgalyāyana ascend to the Heaven of the Thirty-three, and the circumstance that the Buddha does not use the same method on descending.³⁶

The contrast between the Buddha's ability to move around freely in heavenly realms due to his supernatural powers and the construction of stairs for him to descend to Jambudvīpa becomes evident in the version of the present episode found in the Chinese counterpart to the *Aṭṭhakavagga*. The narration reports that, just before his descent, the Buddha tours the different heavens by employing the usual form of locomotion by mental power, illustrated with the standard simile of someone who bends or stretches an arm.³⁷ Yet, he does not use the same for the last part of his journey back to earth.

The *Ekottarika-āgama* explicitly tackles this issue, as it reports Śakra's instruction that stairs should be constructed so that the Buddha does not need to employ

³⁵ Fǎxiǎn (法顯) reports that the three stairs had mostly disappeared into the ground, T 2085 at T LI 859c19, but the last seven steps were still visible, around which a monastery was constructed. Xuánzàng (玄奘) then refers to the monastery which has the triple stairs in its precincts, T 2087 at T LI 893a24.

³⁶ Expressed in terms of the above Bhārhut relief, the mode of locomotion by way of stairs, indicated with the Buddha's footsteps, contrasts with the ease with which the *devas* fly around freely on both sides of the stairs. This contrast might explain the need to depict Brahmā and Śakra as also using stairs, whom several texts and iconographic presentations then show to be attending on the Buddha, equipped with an umbrella and a fly whisk respectively; their attendant status is reflected in the Bhārhut relief in the smallness of their rows of stairs, compared to the middle row used by the Buddha. The pictorial reference to Brahmā and Śakra clarifies that it is a matter of conscious choice that steps are being used. Strong 2010: 970 formulates the puzzling aspect of the textual accounts in this manner: "why does the Buddha ... need (or appear to need) a set of stairs to come down again to earth? Why does he not just fly or float down?" The assumption by Karetzky 1992: 179 that, using the staircase, "the Buddha both ascends to heaven to preach ... and descends to earth" does not appear to be supported by the textual and iconographic sources.

³⁷ T 198 at T IV 185b21: 如力士屈伸臂頃。

supernormal powers to arrive at Jambudvīpa.³⁸

The Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, which also reports some inter-celestial travels by the Buddha just before his descent, turns to this problem in an even more explicit manner. It reports Śakra asking the Buddha if he wishes to descend to Jambudvīpa by supernatural power or on foot.³⁹ The Buddha opts for going on foot, whereon Śakra gets three flights of stairs made. The Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* continues with the Buddha reflecting that some non-Buddhists might misinterpret this, thinking that due to arousing attachment while being in the Heaven of the Thirty-three the Buddha has lost his ability to use his supernatural powers. In order to forestall such ideas, the Buddha then decides to descend half the way to Jambudvīpa by supernatural power and the other half on foot.⁴⁰ Evidently tradition felt that the Buddha's descent from heaven by way of stairs required an explanation.

Now the idea of employing stairs would have occurred originally when representing the Buddha's descent in art, where at least in aniconic depiction such a motif arises naturally.⁴¹ However, the same is not the case for texts. In fact the above passages make it clear that in textual accounts the motif of the stairs was felt as something of a misfit, making it highly improbable that the idea of stairs could have come from a textual source. Instead, it would have originally arisen as a symbol in an aniconic context and was subsequently taken literally.

In other words, it seems to me that we have here an instance of cross-fertilization between text and art, where an already existing tale is concretized in art and this in turn influences textual accounts.

³⁸ EĀ 38.5 at T II 707a28: “see to it that the Tathāgata does not need supernatural powers to reach Jambudvīpa”, 觀如來不用神足至閻浮地; the assumption by Teiser 1988: 139 that the Buddha “has given up the ‘spiritual feet’ (*shen-tsu*) that allow him to fly” seems to be based on a misunderstanding of this passage. Bareau 1997: 22f translates the same as “car je considère que le Tathāgata ne (doit) pas utiliser ses bases de pouvoirs surnaturels (*ṛddhipāda*) pour arriver sur la terre du Jambudvīpa”, to which he adds in note 19 that “apparemment, les dieux veulent épargner au Buddha la peine de se servir de ses propres moyens surhumains. Ils veulent ainsi l’honorer et montrer qu’ils sont ses serviteurs, donc ses inférieurs”.

³⁹ T 1451 at T XXIV 346c28: 為作神通為以足步 and D 6 da 91b1 or Q 1035 ne 88b4: *ci rdzu 'phrul gyis 'bab bam 'on te zhabs kyis gshegs?*

⁴⁰ T 1451 at T XXIV 347a10: 我今宜可半以神通半為足步往瞻部洲 and D 6 da 91b6 or Q 1035 ne 89a2: *de nas bcom ldan 'das bar bar ni zhabs kyis bar bar ni rdzu 'phrul gyis so.*

⁴¹ Foucher 1949: 276f suggests that the artist(s) may have taken a hint from earthen ramps found in the area; cf. also Lamotte 1958/1988: 340.

If this should be correct, then those texts that have incorporated a description of stairs would be later than those which do not have any such reference. In the case of the two *Āgama* discourses that portray the Buddha's sojourn in the Heaven of the Thirty-three, the *Ekottarika-āgama* version does in fact show additional features of lateness, besides its description of the three paths by which the Buddha descended. It also reports that the sadness caused by the Buddha's absence led to the construction of Buddha statues, a story that would have come into being only once the iconic phase of Buddhist art had begun. Thus it seems safe to assume that the *Ekottarika-āgama* version reflects the influence of later elements,⁴² whereas the *Samyukta-āgama* discourse translated above appears to testify to an earlier stage in the narrative development of this episode.⁴³ Hence a study of the tale in the form preserved in the *Samyukta-āgama* might give us a glimpse of the main functions of the tale at an early stage in its development.

Now the central function of the tale appears to be similar in kind to the inclusivism evident in the *Ariyapariyesanā-sutta*, in that ancient Indian gods act in a way that is subservient to the Buddha and that endorses his teaching. The tendency to 'elevate' the Buddha is in fact quite evident in the present tale, where he 'ascends' to heaven. The request of the four assemblies for the Buddha to come back, complaining that humans do not have the ability of *devas* to travel between realms, further emphasizes the difference between the abilities of average humans and those of the *devas*. In view of such superiority of the *devas*, it is only natural that the four assemblies are delighted to know that the Buddha is spending the rainy season retreat in such a superior realm, that he has quite literally gone to heaven. Yet, on arrival in heaven Mahāmaudgalyāyana realizes that the Buddha teaches the *devas* in just the same way as he would teach in Jambudvīpa. That is, from the lofty perspective of the Buddha as a teacher, *devas* and men are similar. This elevates him all the more above them. In fact his role as a teacher of men and *devas* alike is one of the epithets in the standard descriptions of recollection of

⁴² Another case of art influencing a narrative description in the *Ekottarika-āgama* has been suggested by Zin 2006: 344, in that a reference in EĀ 42.3 at T II 749a24 to a large square stone, 大方石, the Buddha is on record for having miraculously removed "may well have been inspired by the reliefs" that depict this stone as square.

⁴³ This is significant in so far as the *Ekottarika-āgama* was translated fifty years earlier than the *Samyukta-āgama*. Clearly, the time of translation does not necessarily reflect the date of closure of a text; cf. in more detail Anālayo 2012.

the Buddha,⁴⁴ confirming that tradition considered this to be one of the Buddha's inspiring qualities.

The Buddha then tops this observation by indicating that the denizens of the Heaven of the Thirty-three come when he wants them to come and go when he wants them to go. This would also include Śakra, whom the discourse shows to have been present on this occasion. The ancient Indian warrior god has thus been subdued to such an extent that at a mere thought of the Buddha he obligingly comes and goes, almost like a string puppet.

Thus a central motif of the present narration appears to be the arousing of reverence for the Buddha's supremacy. A succinct pictorial presentation of this motif can be found in an aniconic presentation of the Buddha's descent, found in Mathurā, where the only person depicted worships the middle row of the three rows of stairs (the one by which the Buddha descends).⁴⁵

Following such clear indications of the Buddha's supremacy, the *Samyukta-āgama* discourse turns to providing a celestial endorsement for the Buddha's teaching. After Mahāmaudgalyāyana's inquiry we learn that the reason why these *devas* have been reborn in the Heaven of the Thirty-three is that they had earlier been disciples of the Buddha and had attained stream-entry. Lest there be any doubt about this, the same indication is repeated by Śakra and others, a repetition that in an oral setting would not have failed to impress the central message on the audience: Being a disciple of the Buddha can lead to rebirth in the Heaven of the Thirty-three (if not higher). This serves to replace whatever means contemporary Indian society may have considered effective for accomplishing the aim of rebirth in the Heaven of the Thirty-three.

Besides these aspects of inclusivism, however, there is still another intriguing feature in the above narration that deserves closer inspection. The *Samyukta-āgama* discourse begins by indicating that the Buddha was teaching the Dharma to his mother and to the *devas* in the Heaven of the Thirty-three. Thus in addition to the tendency to elevate the Buddha's status by presenting him as a teacher of *devas*, another important function of the above tale is related to the theme of filial piety. In fact the version of the present episode in the Chinese counterpart to the *Aṭṭhakavagga* explicitly indicates that the Buddha had gone to spend the rainy season retreat in the Heaven of the Thirty-three after recollecting the suf-

⁴⁴Cf., e.g., AN 3.70 at AN I 207,5 and two of its parallels, MĀ 202 at T I 771a28 and T 87 at T I 911b15.

⁴⁵Joshi: 2004 plate 28.

fering his mother had during her pregnancy, wherefore he wished to stay there to teach her.⁴⁶ The *Ekottarika-āgama* further dramatizes this element, as it begins by reporting that Śakra visits the Buddha and reminds him of the five actions that, according to tradition, all Buddhas need to accomplish, one of which is to deliver his parents. This clear hint is then followed by indicating that the Buddha's mother is now in the Heaven of the Thirty-three and wishes to hear the Dharma.⁴⁷

Epigraphic records indicate that the concept of filial piety was of considerable relevance for Indian Buddhists,⁴⁸ an indication that finds further support in several early discourses.⁴⁹ Hence to accord importance to this notion need not be seen as representing the influence of Chinese thought on the present discourse,⁵⁰ but could well have been an element already present in the Indic original on which the translation of the *Samyukta-āgama* was based. Nevertheless, a Chinese audience would certainly have been very receptive to this message,⁵¹ which would account for the popularity of this episode in Chinese sources.

The notion that the Buddha settled his debt of filial duty to his mother by ascending to heaven to teach her – it is not entirely clear to me why she could not have come down to Jambudvīpa to listen to any of his talks, as according to the texts is customary for others who dwell in heaven – is related to the well-known notion that she passed away soon after giving birth.⁵² The mother's early death appears to have been such a generally accepted detail of the Buddha's biography that the *Mahāpadāna-sutta* and its Sanskrit parallel consider it to be a rule that seven days after giving birth to a future Buddha the mother will pass away.⁵³ According to the *Mahāvastu* and the Pāli commentarial tradition, before taking birth Gau-

⁴⁶T 198 at T IV 185a7: 念母懷妊勤苦, 故留說經.

⁴⁷EĀ 38.5 at T II 703b20: 今如來母在三十三天, 欲得聞法.

⁴⁸Schopen 1984/1997.

⁴⁹Strong 1983 and Guang Xing 2005.

⁵⁰According to Faure 1998: 24, “the apparent lack of filial piety of the Buddha raised serious issues. In response to this criticism, Chinese Buddhists worked hard to assert a typically Buddhist form of filial piety: the Buddha even went to heaven, we are told, to preach the Dharma to his mother”.

⁵¹As Durt 1994: 53 comments, in an ancient Chinese setting one may well imagine “how compelling must have been the beautiful myth of the apparition of the Buddha to his mother”.

⁵²The reasons various traditions adduce for her early death are that a) it had to happen, b) the womb that had given birth to the bodhisattva needed to remain pure and c) she would have died of a broken heart had she been still alive at the time of his going forth; cf. Foucher 1949: 66f, Rahula 1978: 201f and Obeyesekere 1997: 475.

⁵³DN 14 at DN II 14,3 and the *Mahāvadāna-sūtra* fragment 360 folio 129 V3, Waldschmidt 1953: 21. Windisch 1908: 139 argues that the formation of this rule makes it probable that a kernel of

tama bodhisattva had in fact ascertained that his mother would survive his birth only seven days.⁵⁴

A problem with this notion, as pointed out by Bareau (1974: 249), is that elsewhere the discourses record that the bodhisattva's mother cried when he went forth.⁵⁵ If his mother had already passed away seven days after his birth, she would stand little chance of being present and weeping when her son had grown up and decided to leave the household life. According to the *Mahāvastu*, the bodhisattva's father even warned his son that if he were to go forth, his mother would die of grief.⁵⁶ Judging from these accounts, it seems as if the bodhisattva's mother was still alive at the time when her son went forth.⁵⁷

A closer examination of other passages in the *Mahāvastu* suggests an alternative explanation. The *Mahāvastu* describes how, on the night of his going forth, the bodhisattva tells his attendant Chandaka to return to Kapilavastu and convey his regards to his father, to Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī, and to his other kinsmen.⁵⁸ Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī was the Buddha's aunt and, according to the traditional account, had acted as his foster mother after his real mother had passed away.⁵⁹ In reply to the bodhisattva's request to give greetings to his father and

historical truth could be found in the report that the Buddha's mother passed away soon after giving birth.

⁵⁴Senart 1890: 3,18 and Ps IV 173,12.

⁵⁵DN 4 at DN I 115,17, DN 5 at DN I 131,29, MN 26 at MN I 163,29, MN 36 at MN I 240,26, MN 85 at MN II 93,19, MN 95 at MN II 166,30 and MN 100 at MN II 212,1 describe that the bodhisattva went forth even though his “mother and father were weeping with tearful faces”, *mātāpitunnaṃ assumukhānaṃ rudantānaṃ*. The same is recorded in DĀ 22 at T I 95b19 and DĀ 23 at T I 98a20 (parallels to DN 4 and DN 5): “the father and mother wept”, 父母 ... 涕泣, and in MĀ 204 at T I 776b3 (parallel to MN 26): “the father and mother cried”, 父母啼哭, a circumstance also reported in the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya, T 1428 at T XXII 779c15, and in the *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1890: 68,20 and 117,19.

⁵⁶Senart 1890: 140,8: “[your] mother and I will die”, *mātā ca haṃ ... maraṇaṃ nigacchet*.

⁵⁷Bareau 1974: 250 concludes that perhaps the bodhisattva's mother “a effectivement assisté au départ de son fils pour la vie ascétique et qu'elle est morte quelque temps plus tard, pendant que l'ascète Gautama recherchait la Voie de la Délivrance, avant qu'il ne revînt”.

⁵⁸Senart 1890: 165,1: *pituś ca śuddhodanasya saṃdiśati mahāprajāpātīye gautamiye sarvasya ca jñātivargasya*.

⁵⁹This is reported, for example, in the canonical versions of the account of the founding of the order of nuns; cf. the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya, T 1428 at T XXII 923a7, the Mahāsaṅghika Vinaya, Roth 1970: 14,9, the Mahīśāsaka Vinaya, T 1421 at T XXII 185c11, the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya, T 1451 at T XXIV 350c20, a Sarvāstivāda discourse (the episode is not given in full in the corresponding Vinaya, T 1435 at T XXIII 291a1), MĀ 116 at T I 605c13, and the Theravāda Vinaya, Vin II 254,38 (cf. also AN 8.51 at AN IV 276,17).

fostermother, Chandaka asks the bodhisattva if he does not feel any yearning for his “mother” and father.⁶⁰ The context makes it clear that Chandaka’s reference to the bodhisattva’s “mother” does not mean his actual mother, but his foster-mother. In fact, when conveying these greetings Chandaka does not speak of the bodhisattva’s mother, but instead of his aunt Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī.⁶¹ Thus in the *Mahāvastu* the expression “mother” refers to the bodhisattva’s fostermother.⁶²

Similarly, the reference to the bodhisattva’s mother in the discourses that report his going forth could be to his aunt and fostermother Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī, not his real mother. On this assumption, it would not have been the bodhisattva’s actual mother who cried when he went forth, but rather his fostermother.⁶³ The *Mahāvastu* in fact reports that, when the bodhisattva went forth, Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī cried so much that her eyes were affected.⁶⁴

However, Bareau (1974: 209) points out still another problem with the description of the early death of the Buddha’s mother in the Pāli discourses. The problem is that the Pāli discourses report that the bodhisattva’s mother was reborn in Tuṣita Heaven.⁶⁵ This does not fit too well with the different versions of the tale of the Buddha’s visit, including the Pāli commentarial tradition, which agree that she was rather staying in the Heaven of the Thirty-three.

According to early Buddhist cosmology, the *devas* of the Tuṣita realm are long-lived and even a short fraction of time spent in Tuṣita heaven equals long time periods on earth,⁶⁶ so that it would not be possible to assume that behind this

⁶⁰ Senart 1890: 165,3: *mātuḥ pituḥ na utkaṇṭhitam syā te*.

⁶¹ Senart 1890: 189,13: *pītarāṃ ... mātusvasāye pi sarvasya jñātivargasya*.

⁶² Similarly, in the *Gotamī-apadāna* 17.31, Ap II 532,1, Gotamī addresses the Buddha saying that she is his mother, *aham sugata te mātā*. According to Dash 2008: 154, it is a general pattern that “whenever the mother of the Buddha is mentioned, mostly it points to Mahāprajāpatī ... Mahāprajāpatī was revered and accepted as the mother of the Buddha more than Mahāmāyā by the text compilers, commentators and translators”.

⁶³ Oldenberg 1881/1961: 366 note 49 comes to the same conclusion.

⁶⁴ Senart 1897: 116,7; cf. also T 190 at T III 909c28. According to the ‘*Karmavibhaṅga*’, Lévi 1932: 59,10, however, it had been the bodhisattva’s father whose eyes were affected by sorrowing over the going forth of his son.

⁶⁵ MN 123 at MN III 122,2: *bodhisattamātā kālam karoti, tusitam kāyaṃ* (S^c: *tusitakāyaṃ*) *up-pajjati ti* (B^c, C^c and S^c: *upapajjati ti*); cf. also Ud. 5.2 at Ud 48,6.

⁶⁶ AN 3.70 at AN I 214,3 and its parallels MĀ 202 at T I 772c9, T 87 at T I 911c27 and SĀ 861 at T II 219b5 indicate that the lifespan of beings in the Tuṣita realm lasts for four thousand years, and a single day of these Tuṣita type of years corresponds to four hundred years on earth, a relationship described similarly in the *Āyuhparyanta-sūtra*, Matsumura 1989: 80,25 (Skt.) and 94,29 (Tib.), with the Chinese parallel in T 759 at T XVII 602c14. According to Ps V 7,8, seven years had passed since

inconsistency stands the idea that the bodhisattva's mother arose first in Tuṣita and then, still during the lifetime of the Buddha, passed away from there to arise in the inferior Heaven of the Thirty-three. Had she been living in Tuṣita at the time the Buddha decided to visit her, however, it would certainly have been more natural for him to be depicted as going directly to that realm, instead of approaching the Heaven of the Thirty-three.

The *Mahāpadāna-sutta* indicates that from the perspective of the Theravāda tradition it is a rule that the mother of a Buddha arises in Tuṣita after she dies, whereas according to its Sanskrit counterpart the mother of a Buddha will be reborn in the Heaven of the Thirty-three.⁶⁷ The *Lalitavistara* and several Chinese sources similarly indicate that the mother of Gautama Buddha was reborn in the Heaven of the Thirty-three.⁶⁸ Thus the problem with the Buddha's visit to his mother in the Heaven of the Thirty-three, although she had not been reborn in this realm, applies mainly to the Theravāda tradition.⁶⁹

The *Atthasālinī* confirms that it was indeed in the Heaven of the Thirty-three

his awakening when the Buddha went to the Heaven of the Thirty-three and taught the Abhidharma to his mother; Mochizuki 1940: 35 indicates that other sources agree that the Buddha spent his seventh rains retreat in the Heaven of the Thirty-three; cf. also Skilling 2008: 38. Thus, from the viewpoint of tradition, by the time of the Buddha's visit to the Heaven of the Thirty-three only a tiny fraction of a single day in Tuṣita had passed since Māyā had been reborn there.

⁶⁷DN 14 at DN II 14,4: *bodhisattamātā kālaṃ karoti, tusitaṃ kāyaṃ uppajjati* (B^c, C^c and S^c: *upapajjati*), *ayam ettha dhammatā*; whereas according to its counterpart in the *Mahāvadāna-sūtra* fragment 360 folio 129 V₃, Waldschmidt 1953: 21: *[m]āt[ā] ja[ne]tri kālagatā ... tridaśe (d)evanikāye u(papannā)*. Monier-Williams 1899/1999: 458 s.v. *tridaśa* explains that the term is used in relation to *devas* as a “round number for 3 x 11”.

⁶⁸That the Buddha's mother was reborn in the Heaven of the Thirty-three is reported in the *Lalitavistara*, Lefmann 1902: 98,4, T 156 at T III 136c26 (though interestingly with a variant reading referring to Tuṣita, 兜率), T 529 at T XIV 805a19, T 643 at T XV 677a28, T 1753 at T XXXVII 259c8, T 2037 at XLIX 898b25 and T 2041 at T L 90a20. Notably, a reference in EĀ 36.5 at T II 708b21 to the Buddha's return after having taught the *devas* and his mother reports that he arrived from Tuṣita, 從兜術天來下, with a variant reading that speaks of the Heaven of the Thirty-three, 從忉利天來下, which Deeg 2005: 269 note 1328 considers to be the preferable reading. That the Buddha returned from Tuṣita is also reported in the *Pratimālakṣaṇa*, Banerjea 1933: 9,1, a text in which the Buddha gives details as to how a statue of himself should be constructed.

⁶⁹Tuṣita would seem to be a more natural choice for allocating the rebirth of the Buddha's mother, however, since the Heaven of the Thirty-three often carries associations of sensual pleasure in early Buddhist thought. In view of the nuance of purity associated with the motif of her early death (cf. above note 52), it would seem preferable for her rebirth to be taking place in a realm that does not evoke associations of Śakra sporting with his celestial damsels, as, e.g., reported in SĀ 505 at T II 133c2; cf. also MN 37 at MN I 252,17 and Anālayo 2011b: 161 note 18.

that the Buddha visited his mother, which he did in order to teach her the Abhidharma.⁷⁰ According to the Ceylonese chronicle *Mahāvamsa*, Buddhaghosa wrote the *Atthasālinī* while he was still in India, before coming to Sri Lanka.⁷¹ This gives the impression that the *Atthasālinī*'s attempt to authenticate the Abhidharma by presenting it as a teaching delivered by the Buddha to his mother may have availed itself of an Indian tradition according to which the Buddha's mother had been reborn in the Heaven of the Thirty-three. Otherwise there would be little reason for the *Atthasālinī* to locate the Buddha's mother in a realm where according to the discourses of the Theravāda tradition she had not been reborn.

Now what according to a range of sources the Buddha taught his mother in the Heaven of the Thirty-three were the discourses, or the Dharma, but not the Abhidharma.⁷² In other words, the idea of employing the tale of the Buddha's visit to his mother as an authentication of the Abhidharma appears to be a peculiarity of the Theravāda tradition.⁷³ Nevertheless, this innovative idea plays on

⁷⁰ As 1,4: *vasanto tidasālaye*. Pe Maung Tin 1976: 1 note 2 explains that *tidasā*, "thirty", is a frequent substitution in verse for *tāvatiṃsa*; cf. also Haldar 1977: 24 and, for other instances, e.g., SN 1.11 at SN I 5, ult., SN 9.6 at SN I 200, 18, SN 9.18 at SN I 234, 21+24, Thī 121 and Thī 181.

⁷¹ *Mahāvamsa* 37.225; cf. also Rhys Davids 1900/1922: xxvii, Malalasekera 1928/1994: 98, Bechert 1955: 355, Law 1973: 407 and Norman 1978: 42. Pind 1992: 136f, however, argues against attributing this work to Buddhaghosa; for a critical review of arguments raised by Bapat 1942: xxxvff against identifying Buddhaghosa as the author of the *Atthasālinī* cf. Hayashi 1999.

⁷² A digital search of the CBETA edition (stopping at volume XXV in order to avoid unduly inflating this footnote) shows that the Buddha visited his mother to teach her the discourses, 說經, according to T 198 at T IV 184c26 and T 529 at T XIV 805a19. He taught her the Dharma and the discourses, 說法經, according to T 156 at T III 136c26, T 383 at T XII 1013b6, T 441 at T XIV 224c22. He taught her the Dharma, 說法, according to T 159 at T III 294a28, T 192 at T IV 39c24 (cf. also T 193 at T IV 86c23), T 197 at T IV 168c12, T 200 at T IV 247a2, T 203 at T IV 450a24, T 208 at T IV 534a16, T 294 at T X 857a10, T 374 at T XII 542a11, T 384 at T XII 1015b18, T 412 at T XIII 777c12, T 643 at T XV 647c3, T 694 at T XVI 791b10, T 806 at T XVII 751a21, T 816 at T XVII 799c21, T 1419 at T XXI 941b8, T 1451 at T XXIV 346a16, T 1507 at T XXV 37c28. None of these texts mentions the Abhidharma. The *Divyāvadāna*, Cowell 1886: 394,5 and 401,22, similarly reports that the Buddha descended from the Heaven of the Thirty-three after having taught his mother the Dharma, *dharmam deśayitvā*; cf. also the *Pratimālakṣaṇa*, Banerjee 1933: 9,2, the *Book of Zambasta* 23.18, Emmerick 1968: 346, and the *Buddhacarita* 20.56, Johnston 1936/1995: 56.

⁷³ Foucher 1949: 275 comments that "des théologiens ingénieux trouvèrent de leur côté l'occasion excellente de faire prêcher au Bouddha, pendant cette céleste retraite, le texte de l'*Abhidharma*, et d'authentifier ainsi, sans crainte de contradiction, la troisième des trois Corbeilles des Écritures sacrées". Davidson 1990/1992: 304 explains that "the Theravādas adapted an old story about the Tathāgata travelling to the Trayatrimśa heaven during a rains retreat to preach the dharma to his mother ... the Theravādas utilized this popular filial legend as a basis for identifying the first teach-

central themes inherent in the episode of the Buddha's sojourn in the Heaven of the Thirty-three, namely filial piety and celestial approval for the Buddha's teaching.

Proposing that the Abhidharma was originally taught in heaven thus results in a celestial seal of authentication, evidently needed for granting canonicity to what from a historical perspective clearly reflects late developments. At the same time, it also quite visibly enhances the Abhidharma as something superior to other canonical teachings. With this enhancement, the Buddha's settling of his filial duty also acquires a special dimension, since he repays his debt of gratitude to his mother not merely by giving her an ordinary discourse – for which, as mentioned above, she might just have come down to Jambudvīpa – but rather he delivers to her the supposedly superior doctrine of the Abhidharma.⁷⁴

In this way, Śakra and his heavenly assembly, among them the Buddha's mother, play an important role as an empowerment of the teaching of the Abhidharma, comparable to the role Brahmā plays in the *Ariyapariyesanā-sutta* to sanction the Buddha's teaching of the Dharma. These two instances point to the same tendency to inclusivism, whereby central figures in the ancient Indian pantheon make their contribution to the authentication and spread of what tradition considered to be the word of the Buddha.

ing of their *Abhidhamma-piṭaka*". Buswell 1996: 80 notes that "this filial legend was therefore a convenient foil for the Theravādins to use in accounting for the time and provenance of the preaching of their Abhidhamma". Skilling 2008: 51 comments that the "bold assertion that the Buddha taught the *Abhidhamma* to his mother ... in Trayastrimśa ... is unique to the Mahāvihāra. No other Buddhist school chose to locate the teaching of the *Abhidharma* in the Trayastrimśa abode ... there was no suggestion that the *Abhidharma* was taught anywhere but in Jambudvīpa". As Salomon 2011: 167 concludes, "this story would seem to be an *ex post facto* creation intended to allay concerns about the canonical status of the *abhidharma*".

⁷⁴Dhp-a III 222,⁶ indicates that the delivery of the Abhidharma teachings was especially meant for his mother, *atha satthā devaparisāya majjhe nisinno mātaraṃ ārabhha 'kusalā dhammā akusalā dhammā avyākataṃ dhammā 'ti abhidhammapiṭakaṃ paṭṭhapesi*, thereby establishing her in the attainment of stream-entry, Dhp-a III 223,¹⁷. According to Dhp-a III 216,¹⁵ this is a pattern followed by all Buddhas, i.e., going to heaven to teach their mother the Abhidharma.

Abbreviations

Ap	<i>Apadāna</i>
AN	<i>Aṅguttara-nikāya</i>
As	<i>Atthasālinī</i>
B ^e	Burmese edition
C ^e	Ceylonese edition
D	Derge edition
DĀ	<i>Dirgha-āgama</i> (T 1)
Dhp-a	<i>Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā</i>
DN	<i>Dīgha-nikāya</i>
EĀ	<i>Ekottarika-āgama</i> (T 125)
Jā	<i>Jātaka</i>
MĀ	<i>Madhyama-āgama</i> (T 26)
MN	<i>Majjhima-nikāya</i>
Pj	<i>Paramatthajotikā</i>
Ps	<i>Papañcasūdanī</i>
Q	Peking edition
S ^e	Siamese edition
SĀ	<i>Samyukta-āgama</i> (T 99)
SĀ ²	(other) <i>Samyukta-āgama</i> (T 100)
SHT	Sanskrihandschriften aus den Turfanfunden
SN	<i>Samyutta-nikāya</i>
T	Taishō edition (CBETA)
Thī	<i>Therīgāthā</i>
Ud	<i>Udāna</i>
Vin	<i>Vinayapīṭaka</i>
Vism	<i>Visuddhimagga</i>

References

- Akanuma, Chizen 1929/1990. *The Comparative Catalogue of Chinese Āgamas & Pāli Nikāyas*. Delhi: Sri Satguru.
- Allinger, E. 1999. “Observations on a Scene from the Life of the Buddha at Tabo Monastery”. In C.A. Scherrer-Schaub and E. Steinkellner (ed.), *Tabo Studies II, Manuscripts, Texts, Inscriptions, and the Arts*, 321–335. Roma: Istituto Italiano per l’Africa e l’Oriente.

- 2010. “The Descent of the Buddha from the Heaven of the Trayastriṃśa Gods, One of the Eight Great Events in the Life of the Buddha”. In E. Franco and M. Zin (ed.), *From Turfan to Ajanta: Festschrift for Dieter Schlingloff on the Occasion of his Eightieth Birthday*, 3–13. Lumbini International Research Institute.
- Anālayo 2009a. “The Development of the Pāli Udāna Collection”. *Bukkyō Kenkyū*, 37: 39–72.
- 2009b. “Zeng-yi A-han”. In W.G. Weeraratne (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*, 8 (3): 822–827. Sri Lanka: Department of Buddhist Affairs.
- 2010a. “The Influence of Commentarial Exegesis on the Transmission of Āgama Literature”. In K. Meisig (ed.), *Translating Buddhist Chinese, Problems and Prospects*, 1–20. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- 2010b. “Once again on Bakkula”. *Indian International Journal of Buddhist Studies*, 11: 1–28.
- 2011a. “Brahmā’s Invitation, The Ariyapariyesanā-sutta in the Light of its Madhyama-āgama Parallel”. *Journal of the Oxford Centre of Buddhist Studies*, 1: 12–38.
- 2011b. “Śakra and the Destruction of Craving – A Case Study in the Role of Śakra in Early Buddhism”. *Indian International Journal of Buddhist Studies*, 12: 157–176.
- 2012. “The Historical Value of the Pāli Discourses”. *Indo-Iranian Journal* (forthcoming).
- Banerjea, Jitendra Nath 1933. “Pratimālakṣaṇam”. *Journal of the Department of Letters, University of Calcutta*, 23: 1–84.
- Bapat, P.V. and Vadekar, R.D. 1942. *Aṭṭhasālinī, Commentary on Dhammasaṅgaṇī, The First Book of the Abhidhammapiṭaka of the Buddhist of the Theravāda School*. Poona: Bhandarkar Oriental Series No. 3.
- 1945 (part 1), 1950 (part 2). “The Arthapada-Sūtra Spoken by the Buddha”. *Visva-Bharati Annals*, 1: 135–227 and 3: 1–109.
- Bureau, André 1974. “La jeunesse du Buddha dans les Sūtrapiṭaka et les Vinayapiṭaka anciens”. *Bulletin de l’École Française d’Extrême Orient*, 61: 199–274.
- 1997. “Le prodige accompli par le Buddha à Saṃkaśya selon l’Ekottara-Āgama”. In S. Lienhard et al. (ed.), *Lex et Litterae, Essays on Ancient Indian Law and Literature in Honour of Professor Oscar Botto*, 17–30. Torino: Edizione dell’Orso.
- Bechert, Heinz 1955. “Zur Geschichte der buddhistischen Sekten in Indien und Ceylon”. *La Nouvelle Clio*, 7–9: 311–360.
- Bodhi, Bhikkhu 2000. *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha, A New Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya*. Boston: Wisdom Publication.

- Bucknell, Roderick S. 2006. “Samyukta-āgama”. In W.G. Weeraratne (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*, 7 (4): 684–687. Sri Lanka: Department of Buddhist Affairs.
- Buswell, R.E. Jr. et al. 1996. “The Development of Abhidharma Philosophy”. In K. Potter et al. (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies*, Vol. VII, *Abhidharma Buddhism to 150 AD*, 73–119, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Childers, Robert Caesar 1875/1993. *A Dictionary of the Pali Language*. Delhi: Asian Educational Services.
- Choong, Mun-keat 2000. *The Fundamental Teachings of Early Buddhism, A Comparative Study Based on the Sūtrāṅga Portion of the Pāli Saṃyutta-Nikāya and the Chinese Saṃyuktāgama*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.
- Coomaraswamy, Ananda K. 1956: *La sculpture de Bharhut*. Paris: Vanoest.
- Cowell, E.B., Neil, R.A. 1886. *The Divyāvadāna, A Collection of Early Buddhist Legends, Now First Edited from the Nepalese Sanskrit Mss. in Cambridge and Paris*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cunningham, Alexander 1879. *The Stūpa of Bharhut, A Buddhist Monument Ornamented with Numerous Sculptures Illustrative of Buddhist Legend and History in the Third Century B.C*. London: Allen and Co.
- Das, Sarat Chandra 1888. *Avadāna Kalpalata, A Collection of Legendary Stories About the Bodhisattvas by Kshemendra*. Calcutta: Bibliotheca Indica, vol. 1.
- Dash, Shobha Rani 2008. *Mahāpajāpatī, The First Bhikkhunī*. Seoul: Blue Lotus Books.
- Davidson, Ronald M. 1990/1992. “An Introduction to the Standards of Scriptural Authenticity in Indian Buddhism”. In R.E. Buswell (ed.), *Chinese Buddhist Apocrypha*, 291–325. Delhi: Sri Satguru.
- Deeg, Max 2005. *Das Gaoseng-Faxian-Zhuan als religionsgeschichtliche Quelle, Der älteste Bericht eines chinesischen buddhistischen Pilgermönchs über seine Reise nach Indien mit Übersetzung des Textes*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.
- Durt, Hubert 1994. *Problems of Chronology and Eschatology, Four Lectures on the Essay on Buddhism by Tominaga Nakamoto (1715-1746)*. Kyoto: Istituto Italiano di Cultura, Scuola di Studi sull’ Asia Orientale.
- 2007. “The Meeting of the Buddha with Māyā in the Trāyastriṃśa Heaven, Examination of the Mahāmāyā Sūtra and its quotations in the Shijiapu - Part I”. *Journal of the International College for Advanced Buddhist Studies*, 11: 266–245 [45–66].
- Emmerick, R.E. 1968. *The Book of Zambasta, A Khotanese Poem on Buddhism*. London: Oxford University Press.

- Enomoto, Fumio 1986. “On the Formation of the Original Texts of the Chinese Āgamas”. *Buddhist Studies Review*, 3 (1): 19–30.
- Fábri, C.L. 1930. “A Græco-Buddhist Sculpture Representing the Buddha’s Descent from the Heaven of the Thirty-three Gods”. *Acta Orientalia*, 8 (4): 287–293.
- Faure, Bernard 1998. *The Red Thread, Buddhist Approaches to Sexuality*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Foucher, Alfred 1905 (vol. 1). *L’art gréco-bouddhique du Gandhâra, Étude sur les origines de l’influence classique dans l’art bouddhique de l’Inde et de l’Extrême-Orient*. Paris: Ernest Leroux.
- 1949. *La vie du Bouddha, D’après les textes et les monuments de l’Inde*. Paris: Payot.
- Glass, Andrew 2010. “Guṇabhadra, Bāoyún, and the Saṃyuktāgama”. *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 31 (1–2): 185–203.
- Guang Xing 2005. “Filial Piety in Early Buddhism”. *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, 12: 81–106.
- Guénon, René 1962. *Symboles fondamentaux de la science sacrée*. Paris: Gallimard.
- Haldar, J.R. 1977. *Early Buddhist Mythology*. New Delhi: Manohar.
- Harrison, Paul 2002. “Another Addition to the An Shigao Corpus? Preliminary Notes on an Early Chinese Saṃyuktāgama Translation”. In Sakurabe Ronshu Committee (ed.), *Early Buddhism and Abhidharma Thought, In Honor of Doctor Hajime Sakurabe on His Seventy-seventh birthday*, 1–32. Kyoto: Heirakuji shoten.
- Hartmann, Jens-Uwe 1985. “Zur Frage der Schulzugehörigkeit des Avadānaśataka”. In H. Bechert (ed.), *Zur Schulzugehörigkeit von Werken der Hinayāna-Literatur, Erster Teil*, 1: 219–224. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Hayashi, Takatsugu 1999. “On the Authorship of the Aṭṭhasālīnī”. *Bukkyō Kenkyū*, 28: 31–71.
- Hiraoka, Satoshi 2000. “The Sectarian Affiliation of Two Chinese Saṃyuktāgamas”. *Indogaku Bukkyōgaku Kenkyū*, 49 (1): 506–500.
- Johnston, Edward Hamilton 1936/1995 (vol. 3). *Asvagoṣa’s Buddhacarita or Acts of the Buddha, Part III, Cantos XV to XXVIII Translated from the Tibetan and Chinese Versions*. Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal.
- Joshi, N.P. 2004. *Mathurā Sculptures, An Illustrated Handbook to Appreciate Sculptures in the Government Museum, Mathurā*. Delhi: Sundeep Prakashan.
- Karetzky, Patricia Eichenbaum 1992. *The Life of the Buddha, Ancient Scriptural and Pictorial Traditions*. Lanham: University Press of America.
- Lamotte, Étienne 1958/1988. *History of Indian Buddhism, From the Origins to the Śaka Era*. S. Webb-Boin (trsl.). Louvain-la-Neuve: Institut Orientaliste.

- Law, Bimala Churn 1973. “Buddhaghosa”. In G.P. Malalasekera (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*, 3 (3): 404–417. Sri Lanka: Department of Buddhist Affairs.
- Lefmann, S. 1902. *Lalita Vistara, Leben und Lehre des Çākya-Buddha, Textausgabe mit Varianten-, Metren- und Wörterverzeichnis*. Halle: Verlag der Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses.
- Lévi, Sylvain 1932. *Mahākarmavibhaṅga (La Grande Classification des Actes) et Karmavibhaṅgopadeśa (Discussion sur le Mahā Karmavibhaṅga)*. Paris: Ernest Leroux.
- Lü, Cheng. 1963: “Āgama”. In G.P. Malalasekera (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*, 1 (2): 241–244. Sri Lanka: Department of Buddhist Affairs.
- Macdonell, Arthur A. 1897/2000. *Vedic Mythology*. Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal.
- Malalasekera, G.P. 1928/1994. *The Pāli Literature of Ceylon*. Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society.
- Matsumura, Hisashi 1989. “Āyuparyāntasūtra, Das Sūtra von der Lebensdauer in den verschiedenen Welten, Text in Sanskrit und Tibetisch, Nach der Gilgit Handschrift herausgegeben”. In *Sanskrit-Texte aus dem buddhistischen Kanon: Neuentdeckungen und Neueditionen*, 1: 69–100. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Mayeda [=Maeda], Egaku 1985. “Japanese Studies on the Schools of the Chinese Āgamas”. In H. Bechert (ed.), *Zur Schulzugehörigkeit von Werken der Hinayāna-Literatur, Erster Teil*, 94–103. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Mochizuki, Shinko 1940. “The Places of Varṣavasāna during Forty-five Years of the Buddha’s Career after his Enlightenment”. In *Studies on Buddhism in Japan*, 2: 29–44. Tokyo: International Buddhist Society.
- Monier-Williams, M. 1899/1999. *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary, Etymologically and Philologically Arranged, With Special Reference to Cognate Indo-European Languages*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Norman, K.R. 1978. “The Role of Pāli in Early Sinhalese Buddhism”. In H. Bechert (ed.), *Buddhism in Ceylon and Studies on Religious Syncretism in Buddhist Countries*, 28–47. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Oberlies, Thomas 2003. “Ein bibliographischer Überblick über die kanonischen Texte der Śrāvakayāna-Schulen des Buddhismus (ausgenommen der des Mahāvihāra-Theravāda)”. *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens*, 47: 37–84.
- Obeyesekere, Gananath 1997. “Taking the Myth Seriously: The Buddha and the Enlightenment”. In J.U. Hartmann et al. (ed.), *Bauddhavidyāsudhākaraḥ: Studies in Honour of Heinz Bechert on the Occasion of his 65th birthday*, 473–482. Swisstal-Odendorf: Indica et Tibetica.
- Oldenberg, Hermann 1881/1961. *Buddha, Sein Leben, Seine Lehre, Seine Gemeinde*. München: Wilhelm Goldmann Verlag.

- Pāsādika, Bhikkhu 2010. “Gleanings from the Chinese Ekottarāgama Regarding School Affiliation and Other Topics”. In K. Meisig (ed.), *Translating Buddhist Chinese, Problems and Prospects*, 87–96. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- Pe Maung Tin 1976. *The Expositor (Atthasālinī), Buddhaghosa’s Commentary on the Dhammasaṅgaṇī, The First Book of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka*. London: Pali Text Society.
- Pind, Ole Holten 1992. “Buddhaghosa – His Works and Scholarly Background”. *Bukkyō Kenkyū*, 21: 135–156.
- Rahula, Telwate 1978. *A Critical Study of the Mahāvastu*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Rhys Davids C.A.F. 1900/1922. *A Buddhist Manual of Psychological Ethics*. Hertford: Royal Asiatic Society.
- Roth, Gustav 1970. *Bhikṣuṇī-Vinaya, Including Bhikṣuṇī-Prakīrṇaka and a Summary of the Bhikṣu-Prakīrṇaka of the Ārya-Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin*. Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute.
- Salomon, Richard 2011. “An Unwieldy Canon: Observations on some Distinctive Features of Canon Formation in Buddhism”. In M. Deeg et al. (ed.), *Kanonisierung und Kanonbildung in der asiatischen Religionsgeschichte*, 161–207. Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- Sander, Lore and Waldschmidt, E. 1985. *Sanskrithandschriften aus den Turfanfunden, Teil 5*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner.
- Schlingloff, Dieter 2000. *Ajanta, Handbuch der Malereien/Handbook of the Paintings 1, Erzählende Wandmalereien/Narrative Wall-Paintings, Vol. I, Interpretation*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- Schmithausen, Lambert 1987. “Beiträge zur Schulzugehörigkeit und Textgeschichte kanonischer und postkanonischer buddhistischer Materialien”. In H. Bechert (ed.), *Zur Schulzugehörigkeit von Werken der Hinayāna-Literatur, Zweiter Teil*, 304–406. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Schopen, Gregory 1984/1997. “Filial Piety and the Monk in the Practice of Indian Buddhism, A Question of ‘Sinicization’ Viewed from the Other Side”. In G. Schopen (ed.), *Bones, Stones and Buddhist Monks, Collected Papers on the Archaeology, Epigraphy, and Texts of Monastic Buddhism in India*, 56–71. Honolulu: University of Hawai‘i Press.
- Senart, Émile 1890 (vol. 2), 1897 (vol. 3). *Le Mahāvastu, Texte sanscrit publié pour la première fois et accompagné d’introductions et d’un commentaire*. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale.
- Skilling, Peter 2008. “Dharma, Dhāraṇī, Abhidharma, Avadāna: What was taught in Trayastriṃśa?” *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology at Soka University*, 11: 37–60.

- Speyer, J.S. 1909/1970 (vol. 2). *Avadānaçataka, A Century of Edifying Tales Belonging to the Hinayāna*. Osnabrück: Biblio Verlag.
- Strong, John 1983. “Filial Piety and Buddhism: The Indian Antecedents to a ‘Chinese’ Problem”. In P. Slater and D. Wiebe (ed.), *Traditions in Contact and Change, Selected Proceedings of the XIVth Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions*, 171–186. Calgary: Canadian Corporation for Studies in Religion.
- 2010. “The Triple Ladder at Saṃkāśya, Traditions about the Buddha’s Descent from the Trāyastriṃśa Heaven”. In E. Franco and M. Zin (ed.), *From Turfan to Ajanta: Festschrift for Dieter Schlingloff on the Occasion of his Eightieth Birthday*, 967–978. Lumbini International Research Institute.
- Teiser, Stephen F. 1988: *The Ghost Festival in Medieval China*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Waldschmidt, Ernst 1953 (vol. 1). *Das Mahāvadānasūtra, Ein kanonischer Text über die sieben letzten Buddhas*. Berlin: Akademie Verlag.
- 1971. *Sanskrithandschriften aus den Turfanfunden, Teil 3*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner.
- 1980. “Central Asian Sūtra Fragments and their Relation to the Chinese Āgamas”. In H. Bechert (ed.), *The Language of the Earliest Buddhist Tradition*, 136–174. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Windisch, Ernst 1908. *Buddha’s Geburt und die Lehre von der Seelenwanderung*. Leipzig: B.G. Teubner.
- Wujastyk, Dominik 2004. “Jambudvīpa: Apples or Plumes?” In C. Burnett et al. (ed.), *Studies in the History of the Exact Sciences in Honour of David Pingree*, 287–301. Leiden: Brill.
- Ye Shaoyong 2009. “The Sanskrit Fragments Or. 15009/1–50 in the Hoernle Collection”. In S. Karashima and K. Wille (ed.), *Buddhist Manuscripts from Central Asia, The British Library Sanskrit Fragments*, 2: 105–127. Tokyo: International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology, Soka University.
- Zin, Monika 2006. “About Two Rocks in the Buddha’s Life Story”. *East and West*, 56 (4): 329–358.
- 2011. “Narrative Reliefs in Kanaganahalli, Their Importance for Buddhist Studies”. *Marg*, 63 (1): 12–21.

Burning Yourself: *Paṭicca Samuppāda* as a Description of the Arising of a False Sense of Self Modeled on Vedic Rituals

Linda Blanchard

lindaqpublic@nowheat.com

The teaching known as Dependent Arising is central to understanding what the Buddha taught. Current theories about its structure revolve around re-birth, or moment to moment experience in this life. This paper presents an entirely new theory for the structure underlying the lesson. This structure supports the deepest teachings on the causes of our suffering – that whatever we relate to self is suffering – and its cure – that when we recognize this truth, and understand that what gets built as a result is impermanent, it is then within our control to change the conditions. Recognizing the structure also improves understanding of the finer points made within the *suttas* about Dependent Arising.

Purpose of this Paper

This paper offers a fresh interpretation of “dependent arising” (*paṭicca samuppāda*) as a description of how and why we humans create many of our own problems (experienced as *dukkha*) through a false sense of “self” (*attā*). That description was originally modeled on a worldview popular during the Buddha’s lifetime, namely, the practice of rituals designed to create and perfect one’s “self” (*attā*) in a way that would give the best results both in this life and after death.

This new view of the teaching offers a description that would have been quite clear to the people of the day. By seeing how obvious the setting would have been to the contemporary audience, we can better understand why the steps have seemed so obscure to us: the context, so clear at the time that it needed no further

explanation, has been lost to us. Being both shorn of its context in real life, and devoid of detailed explanations of that context, has resulted in the loss of some of the finer points of the lesson.

In addition, the way the Buddha's culture used multileveled meanings has not been given enough weight, so that attempts to straighten the teaching into one linear description of events have run afoul of the multivariance of the message. I hope to show that explaining the context and structures brings what is being said into sharp focus, revealing an insight into human nature that is consistent with the rest of the Buddha's teaching, and is as valid and useful now as it was more than two millennia ago.

Supporting evidence for this theory will be provided primarily from *suttas* in the Pali canon, with some substantial help from certain modern texts that provide background information and current theories on the history of the culture in and around the Buddha's time. I will first present my overall theory, and then discuss the meaning of each of the classic twelve conditions and show, using evidence drawn from the *suttas*, how this new view makes sense of the data.

Conventions and Assumptions

No one knows with certainty whether most of the texts we find in the Sutta Piṭaka of the Pali canon were composed (or at least approved) by the Buddha himself, or were put together shortly after he died, or a long time after. Nor do we know whether they are somewhat modified from their original structures and wording, or greatly modified. In my reading of the *suttas*, I find, as many have before me, a consistent voice and personality. Whether that voice belonged to a real teacher or was created as part of a fictional story line has small impact: someone came up with this insight, and we might as well call him the Buddha. In the end it may make little difference when the teaching was put together or by whom, as long as the result is something we can understand and recognize as fitting well into the history of thought at that period. If the final structure turns out to have insights that are still useful to us in our time, all credit to the originator, whoever that may have been. For the sake of convenience, I will refer to the person who came up with both the insight and its structure as "the Buddha" and not concern myself about who or when, since that is not the point of this paper.

When attempting to understand a text, starting from the assumption that it is an indecipherable mashup of ideas, and maybe corrupt to boot, is logically unsound. It is best to begin by assuming the text is a coherent and well reasoned

whole, unless research proves otherwise. My starting assumption, then, is that dependent arising has a uniform structure and a consistent message.

This does not mean that every piece of the Pali canon will necessarily fit into this understanding of what is being said. I acknowledge that there are likely to be corruptions introduced by later voices. Nonetheless, it seems safe to assume that if a large proportion of *suttas* dealing with the *paṭicca samuppāda* fit this theory, it may be no less accurate, and perhaps more accurate, than some earlier interpretations.

For the most part I will try to confine the language used in this paper to ordinary English. I supply some Pali terms for reference, and the commonest among them I use in rotation with their English translations, just for the sake of variety; but there are a few terms that I will use in preference to their usual English counterparts because they make more sense when the reader is not left to draw on the established connotations of the terms commonly used in translation.

Foremost among these is *dukkha*, the full understanding of which should bring the awakening the Buddha hoped we could find through his words: the meaning of *dukkha* is precisely what the Buddha taught. In Pali *dukkha* has its opposite in *sukha*, often translated as “happiness”; so *dukkha* could be translated as “unhappiness”, but is usually (inadequately) translated as “suffering”. What it is, very roughly, is all that we experience through our own doing that takes us away from joy and especially from equanimity. Trying to give *dukkha* one English definition, or even many, confines it in unsuitable ways.

Another useful word is *dhamma*; its Sanskrit equivalent, *dharma*, has become widely used. The word was used to refer to various teachers’ systems of helping others to see “what is” or “the way things work”, and those are the primary senses of the word: as a truth, or a teaching about the truth, or a reality, that which “is”. By default, most of the Buddha’s uses of the word seem to indicate his own *dhamma*, the “truth of the way things are” that he describes.

Karma (*kamma* in Pali) has already entered into popular vocabulary, so to use its Sanskrit-derived popular form *karma* seems the simplest course.

The words *ātman* (*attā*) and *anatta* represent particular concepts. *Ātman* describes the Vedic understanding that there is an identifiable and lasting “self”; *anatta* is the Buddha’s denial that any such thing can be found, a denial that points to what we mistakenly identify as *ātman*. Because these two words refer to ideas that have no exact equivalent in English, and are critical to an understanding of dependent arising, I will use the Pali more often than their longer definitions in

English. Though in the *suttas* *anatta* is defined by what it is not – the Buddha seems at great pains to keep from giving it concreteness – in my own understanding, there is “something” there. What that “something” is, is “an ongoing process”.

In the same way that we identify “the process by which things burn” as “fire” and treat “fire” as if it were a thing, the Vedic people identified *attā* as a thing, while the Buddha indicated that it was not a thing, and pointed out that it was like fire. Most people seem to have assumed that the self was a fixed and identifiable entity within each sentient being.

One term seems to have been a challenge for all translators: *saṃkhārā*. In its place as the second step of the *paṭicca samuppāda* it is a key term. It has often been translated in recent times as “volitional formations” and one dictionary defines it as an “essential condition; a thing conditioned, mental coefficients”.¹ It may be all those things, but it is above all the key to unlocking the meaning of dependent arising. I will therefore leave its definitions until later, and will frequently use the Pali form rather than translations, just as I leave *dukkha* untranslated.

Its Place in the Buddha’s *Dhamma*

“Now this has been said by the Blessed One: ‘One who sees dependent origination sees the *dhamma*; one who sees the *dhamma* sees dependent origination.’”²

As evidenced by Sāriputta’s quote of the Buddha, the teaching known in Pali as *paṭicca samuppāda* (“dependent origination” in the above) is central to the Buddha’s *dhamma* (his teaching, his truth, his view of what is important). The two could even be said to be one and the same: dependent arising is the *dhamma*, the *dhamma* is dependent arising. The term as shown here, or in its other form as *paṭicca samuppanna*, is used in about three dozen *suttas*; its formulation in the classical twelve steps is repeated in several more *suttas*, and shorter varieties are also offered: nine links are the dominant form in the Dīgha Nikāya’s *suttas*, and much shorter variants occur throughout the Sutta Piṭaka. Many explanations have been suggested for these differences, including the possibility that they represent

¹ Pali-English Dictionary Version 1.0, created by a group of monks in Sri Lanka, an electronic, public-domain edition based primarily on A.P. Buddhadatta Mahathera’s Concise-Pali-English and English-Pali Dictionary, expanded with a series of corrections and additions.

² Sāriputta quoting the Buddha in MN 28.38 [PTS M i 191] as translated by Bhikkhus Bodhi and Ñāṇamoli in *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha* (1995).

corruptions (or that additional steps, bringing it up to twelve, are corruptions), or that they reflect the development of the Buddha's teaching methods as he practiced describing his insight to more people over the course of a lifetime. Any of these are possible, and I would add the possibility that he used the pieces he felt were most helpful in reaching his particular audience, so that on any given day he might only discuss the three or four steps he felt were critical to his message at that moment. He often introduced alternative directions that his chain of events could go in – for example, the one that leads to possessiveness and the taking up of sticks³ – but whatever the number of steps used and whatever terms he chose, the lesson always has the same underlying structure.

The most frequently cited description of the chain has twelve links, and it is this standardized list that makes the underlying structure of the teaching and its point clearest.

Classical Twelve Links and Their Usual Translations

1. *avijjā* – “ignorance”
2. *saṃkhārā* – “volitional formations”
3. *viññāṇa* – “consciousness”
4. *nāmarūpa* – “name-and-form”
5. *saḷāyatana* – “six senses”
6. *phassa* – “contact”
7. *vedanā* – “feeling”
8. *taṇhā* – “craving”
9. *upādāna* – “clinging”
10. *bhava* – “existence”
11. *jāti* – “birth”
12. *jarāmaraṇa* – “aging and death”

Interpretations of Dependent Arising

The *paṭicca samuppāda* has been interpreted in different ways over the course of history. The most popular interpretations have the twelve links describing the chain of events that keep us in *saṃsāra*, the wheel of a life filled with *dukkha*. There is the three-lives model championed by Buddhaghosa, with the early links representing a past life, in which actions create *karma* which has to be dealt with in

³DN 15 [PTS D ii 58]

the present life (in this model, the term *saṃkhārā* is effectively identical to *karma*); the middle portion describes behavior in the present life that is generating *karma*; and the final portion, beginning with birth (*jāti*), describes the next life that will deal with the consequences of this life's *karma*, which goes on to aging and death, only to continue the rounds.

In another view, the twelve steps are seen as describing one life, or at least all events as happening over the course of one life. In this understanding the steps are not perceived as completely linear, but birth is still literal birth, and death is of the body.

In both of the above interpretations, the final steps of dependent arising are conceived of as being about a literal birth and death, and its lessons are all about how we can break the cycle of *saṃsāra* to escape rebirth so that there will be no more aging and death.

Another popular view is that what is being described here is the moment by moment arising of our sense of self, so that dependent arising becomes a model of how consciousness is triggered by events, and we engage with them in a way that causes problems, and then we suffer for it. In this system, birth and death are interpreted as metaphors for the birth and death of a fleeting and reappearing sense of self.

This paper will suggest that all three systems are partially correct: dependent arising is about three lives and cycles of birth and death; it is describing one life in non-linear fashion; and it is showing us how fleeting moments give birth to an impermanent self that causes *dukkha*.

Problems With the above Interpretations

There are, however, problems with these interpretations.

The models that assume that what is being described is literal cycles of rebirth find no support in the *suttas*, where the twelve links in the chain never go around again from the last link to the first. “Aging and death” is never described as the forerunner of “ignorance”. Although dependent arising is often shown as part of Buddhist “Wheel of Life” imagery, the *paṭicca samuppāda* is not described as a wheel or a cycle in any text. If it describes cycles of rebirth, it is odd that it never gets portrayed as a cycle; instead it goes from link one to twelve and stops.⁴ It is

⁴However, there is the extended liberative formula (found in the Upanisa Sutta SN 12.23 [PTS S ii 30]), in which the last step is renamed *dukkha*, and that *dukkha* is shown as the inspiration to

also odd that if it is about the way *karma* from a past life brings about the present life, and the way our actions in this life create *karma* leading us into the next, the word for *karma* is not used in it, in its sense as intentional actions that carry future consequences.

The moment to moment interpretation of dependent arising finds some support in the *sutta* in which the Buddha describes the arising of consciousness with a metaphor of a monkey swinging from one branch of a tree to the next,⁵ but this model seems to me to have a problem in application: although my consciousness of what is happening in the moment does arise swiftly and can pass away just as fast, I do not perceive my sense of self vanishing and reappearing moment by moment. The idea of a fleeting self being born, suffering, and dying in rapid cycles belies our experience and the stubborn, persistent nature of the issues we deal with on a daily basis, as well as the fact that *dukkha* doesn't always come around that quickly in response to the sense of self that gives birth to it.

The concept of momentary consciousness is a good match for what modern science has recently been making clear to us, and it may be that the Buddha's description of how our minds work describes that process, yet – though the rapid arising and passing away of consciousness seems to be part of what is being pointed out in *paṭicca samuppāda* – thinking of it in terms of the “birth and death” of consciousness seems a bit of a stretch; that would seem to suggest that it is that very consciousness that experiences the suffering of aging and death.

For explanations of dependent arising to be satisfying, they need to describe what is readily visible to us when it is pointed out, since the Buddha suggests (in the quote above and elsewhere) that we can see it for ourselves, and his explanation is designed to help us see what goes wrong and why, to give us the power to fix the problem of *dukkha*. This is another problem with the models that see the *paṭicca samuppāda* as describing cycles of rebirth: past and future lives related by *karma* are not actually visible to us, yet we should be able to see for ourselves what these twelve steps are modeling. (This paper does not argue that the Buddha didn't teach rebirth, though it does argue that rebirth was not the lesson the Buddha was conveying by teaching dependent arising.)

practice the Buddha's methods and break the chain; the step following *dukkha* is *saddha* (faith) and then the following steps describe the course of practice.

⁵SN 12.61 [PTS S ii 95]

Professor Jurewicz’s Playing With Fire

Many attempts have been made to decipher the structure of the *paṭicca samuppāda*, with the hope of better clarifying what its point is, and many suggestions have been made in attempts to shed light on pieces or the whole. In a paper published in 2000, Joanna Jurewicz proposed that many of the terms used in dependent arising were referring to Vedic myths of creation. Her detailed analysis found correspondences between the Buddhist terms for the links and a variety of similar or related terms in the *Vedas*, the *Brāhmānas*, and the *Upaniṣads*. These works are thought to predate or be contemporaneous with the Buddha, so she reasoned that dependent arising may have been a refutation of many of the Vedic ideas discussed in the texts she worked on. The particular focus of her article was on the Vedic myth of creation, most famously associated with the deity Prajāpati (whose persona was later co-opted by Brahmā), whose role was that of First Man.

Professor Jurewicz’s paper takes a look at both the *paṭicca samuppāda* and the Vedic creation myth from the perspective of subject-object cognition, which (I would note) is central to much of Buddhism’s consideration of duality – the perceived separation between self and other. She sets out to show that the Buddha “formulated the *pratītyasamutpāda* as a polemic against Vedic thought” and argues that “Through the identification of the creative process with the process that leads only to suffering, he rejected the Brāhmaṇic way of thinking in a truly spectacular way.”⁶ I have come to agree with her that this is indeed what he did; but this is not all that he did, as we shall see.

Starting with dependent arising’s first step, “ignorance” (*avijjā*), she describes the beginning of the origin myth in which the ṚgVeda tells us that at first there was neither existence nor non-existence, and that it was not possible to know anything beyond that. The unknowableness of the pre-creative state is precisely the point, because what the Vedas are all about, by definition, is knowledge. What is defined here from the Vedic point of view is not simply ignorance of what is, but the total inability to know anything – for there isn’t anything to know. Jurewicz also points out that the term *avijjā* is not used for the matching part of the myth.

Next comes “the manifestation of the creative power of the Absolute” which, still in darkness, is unable to cognize anything. This state is not the same as the previous, unknowable “neither existence, nor non-existence”, because something – the creative power – exists now, but a power is apparently all that it is. Something

⁶ *Journal of the Pali Text Society*, Volume 26 (2000), p. 78.

exists, so knowledge is now possible, but it is still ignorant, being in darkness, and because there is nothing else there. Jurewicz describes a later rendition of the same basic story in which “the Creator (*ātman*) in the form of man (*puruṣavidha*) realizes his own singularity”. He is all that there is, and so the only potential subject for him to examine is his own self – he cannot be cognizant of anything else, for there is nothing else. In either version we can imagine that the First Man cannot have perceived himself to have form, because there was no space around him, and there were no active sense organs to be sensing anything; we are talking of pure awareness with nothing to be aware of except that it is aware, and that it is seeking something to be aware of.

Moving on to *saṃkhārā*, Jurewicz continues the creation story, describing the Creator as wishing for a second, so that he would have something to know. This second would be *ātman* as well, the Creator-*ātman*, but, effectively, divided. Jurewicz tells us that *saṃkhārā* derives from the root *saṃskṛ*, which in the relevant Vedic text is used to express the wish that will be fulfilled through building himself (*ātmānam*) “in the form of a fire altar, which is his body and the cosmos at the same time.” The term *saṃkhārā*, then, would seem to represent both the desire for existence and the act that begins the process of bringing *ātman* into existence (though *ātman* is not actually completed until a later step).

The fire altar comes into the story through Prajāpati’s “son” Agni, the fire deity/principle. Prajāpati’s wish to duplicate himself through the creation of the fire altar makes Agni a sort of equivalent of the Creator, and at the same time Agni is the Creator’s progeny, and the altar, and the world; all of these are equivalents of each other. Because Agni is fire, he is a hungry thing, which results in some drama. The main point to understand here is that just as Prajāpati was hungry to be able to know himself, though he had no means to do so, Agni/fire/the second self/*ātman* is also hungry. As Jurewicz points out,⁷ this is still the not-knowing – the “ignorance” (*avijjā*) – driving “the desire for *ātman*” (*saṃkhārā*).

In the instant of the creation of the second, there arises the subject-object split. The *ātman* remains hungry for knowledge, and what is doing the seeking is consciousness (*viññāṇa* in the Pali, *viññāna* in Sanskrit); this is hungry to know itself, but it is having trouble doing so because it has no eyes or ears, in fact no senses, through which to know itself.

⁷ibid, p 85. “It is worth noticing that in the very image of hunger the ideas of *avidyā* and of *saṃskārā* are present: hunger is both the lack of food and the desire to have it.” And hunger is driven by (is a form and result of) the desire for existence.

When Jurewicz brings us to *nāmarūpa* she notes that “the act of giving a name and form marks the final creation of the Creator’s *ātman*.” She relates *nāmarūpa* to naming ceremonies in which a father “confirmed his own identity” with his son and “by giving him a name he took him out of the unnamed, unshaped chaos and finally created him.” This is what Prajāpati does in the final act of creation, when he shatters himself (his *ātman*) into a myriad of pieces to create the world and all its inhabitants. In this way the Creator, the Absolute, also known as Prajāpati (and later known as Brahmā), is in every one of us as *ātman*. Through this explosive act of creation, the world of the senses is gained: finally Prajāpati has the tools through which he can come to know himself. The only problem is that he has tucked *ātman* into so many different names-and-forms, that it is no longer recognizable; from the Vedic point of view this is why none of us initially sees *ātman* in ourselves, and we have to work so hard to come to know the truth of things.

In the remainder of the article Jurewicz touches on many other possible links between the terms of the Buddha’s *paṭicca samuppāda* and Vedic cosmology, but the above is enough to have laid the groundwork for pushing her work a little farther. I will refer to the same article later, when I draw attention to the number of ways in which the element of fire is referred to.

The Prajāpati Myth as How We Come To Be The Way We Are

It seems clear from the foregoing that the elements of the Vedic creation myth are a close fit for the first five links in the chain of dependent arising. We start from neither existence nor non-existence (“ignorance”; *avijjā*); the desire for existence (“volitional formations”; *saṃkhārā*); hungry awareness (“consciousness”; *viññāṇa*); splitting up into pieces (“name-and-form”; *nāmarūpa*); which provides the medium/tools through which we come to know ourselves (“the six senses”; *saḷāyatana*). This alone should give us more insight into what the Buddha was describing with the *paṭicca samuppāda*.

Working with just the myth of All Creation arising from The First Man, we can guess that the Buddha was showing an audience familiar with the myth’s conventions that this also describes who we are, and how we come to be. This description is being addressed on several levels simultaneously.

Ignorance

We come into the world ignorant of what came before us because, on a purely physical and personal level, we arrive ignorant of whether there was existence before us or not. This is likely to be the direct parallel the Prajāpati myth was originally addressing: that we are born ignorant of what came before is true in everyone's experience. In the Buddha's system we are also ignorant of what brings into being that which we mistake for *attā*. This is the ignorance that is at the heart of all our problems: we have this initial condition as part of our nature and we are not even aware of it. "Ignorance" (*avijjā*), then, has three levels: one addresses our actual state of ignorance at birth; on a second level, the physical is paralleled by the Prajāpati myth's state of unknowableness; and on a third level the Buddha is saying that we are born unaware of how we operate or why; in particular, we are ignorant of what brings our sense of self into being, ignorant of how we come to behave as we do.

Desire For The Self's Existence

Samkhārā also operates on three levels.

At the most basic, physical level, *saṃkhārā* seems to be talking about sex. As Richard Gombrich has pointed out,⁸ the word *kāma* (desire) is used in some texts to describe the volitional impulse.

The original myth may well have been making a complex play on our need for procreation. It is well known that the ancient authors of the Vedas were making parallels to how any individual comes into being when they described the explosion of Prajāpati into the multitude of forms: this is a reference to procreative ejaculation. In the Vedic way of seeing things, the desire for sons is tied into the desire for personal existence, both through the modeling of the creation of Agni out of his father, Prajāpati (only through this act does their shared *ātman* become complete), and through the necessity, in the current life, of having a son who will provide for his aging father, and continue to offer oblations that support him after death. All this makes the lust that leads to pregnancy a requirement for the "desire for existence" in the long term, and that lust ultimately turns nothingness into something.

⁸"The Vedic 'Hymn of Creation' goes on to recount that somehow - inexplicably - a volitional impulse initiates the process of creation or evolution. This volitional impulse is there called *kāma*, the commonest word for 'desire.'" Richard Gombrich, *What The Buddha Thought*, (2009) p 134.

The term *saṃkhārā* also suggests a pun, since its components could literally mean “making together”, which is indeed how parents create a child.

The myth seems to be modeled on an understanding of how each of us comes to be: out of an unknowable state, through lust, born because of and into a continuum of the desire for existence. This gives us the first two levels of *saṃkhārā*. The third is the Buddha’s point that the desire we have for a certain kind of existence (a desire that continues due to our ignorance of the depths of our desire for existence) drives us to the process of creating a self.

Consciousness

Because we are born wanting to exist, and the only way to satisfy that desire is, first, to come to exist, and then, second, to come to know that we exist through knowledge, the particular knowledge we need is of ourselves. It is the “wanting” that brings *ātman* (in the myth) or the sense that we have a self (in the Buddha’s version) into existence. This is why *viññāṇa* is so hungry that it is always seeking, always craving something: it seeks to know itself; it needs the food of knowledge to survive. It started with desire for existence, so in order to be satisfied it must know itself, i.e., know that it exists.

Hungry consciousness is the source of the individuality of name-and-form because it divides the world up in order to know itself; and name-and-form feeds *viññāṇa*, consciousness, the food it seeks in order to continue existing/knowing that it exists.

To frame this in mundane terms, name-and-form does represent our tendency to split the world up into a dualistic view in which each of us is an individual (subject) and we see individual elements as outside us (objects); but more important than that is the way in which we tend to see some aspect of ourselves in everything we encounter: we sort things in terms of how they relate to us (are they useful; are they dangerous; are they like us in some way; are they too dissimilar). That tendency in our consciousness causes us to see the world not just in terms of subject-object dualities (“there is me, and there is what is outside of me”) but to sort the world into what is mine, and what is antithetical to me (“there is what is helpful and I need that, and there is what is harmful and I should avoid that”).

It is because we are seeking to know ourselves through everything we encounter that we see everything in terms of *nāmarūpa*; and it is because we are able to perceive, through *nāmarūpa*, that everything somehow relates to us, that *viññāṇa* continues. If we never saw anything in things around us that seemed

to confirm that our theory that “we have a self” is true, hungry consciousness would starve to death. But because we do perceive that everything relates to us, *nāmarūpa* feeds *viññāṇa*.

Consciousness tucks itself into everything that captures its awareness; it sorts everything out with reference to itself; it creates an entire world (worldview) that revolves around – or “is” – its own self. The Vedic view would see the world and self as one and the same because that’s just the way things are, but in the Buddha’s system, one could say, we create our own world because we define the world in terms of ourselves. The world we create and the self we create are both constructs and complement each other.

Let me again summarize the multileveled references being made: the consciousness described here has its physical parallel in gestation, whether we think of it as “consciousness descending from a past life”, as did those who believed in traditional rebirth in those days, or, in modern terms, of development of the abilities of the fetus. Its place in the origin myth is the spark of life resulting from a desire for existence that moves on to satisfy the original desire through knowledge. In the Buddha’s system it represents the way our minds seek evidence of who we are (of our existence) through our senses, of the way we sort everything out with reference to how it relates to us.

Identification

Nāmarūpa, seen through the structure of the Prajāpati myth, represents both the existence which was created in the first steps finally taking on individuality, and the individual identities (to which we give names and which we perceive through their forms) of all the things that the created one encounters. In the myth, the creator can’t identify anything until he splits himself up. *Nāmarūpa* is, therefore both the individual (*ātman*, or what we mistake for *ātman*), and every individual thing in the world, because in the myth they are both one and the same thing. This is why *nāmarūpa* represents both the “birth” of that *ātman* as an individual, and all of the individuals he encounters in the world, which he will interpret as being (i.e., having reference to) himself. In the Buddha’s lesson, *nāmarūpa* is addressing both the birth of our individuality, and the way we just naturally perceive everything “out there” to be part of us, to have reference to us.

Though we were, in a sense, born in the transition from the first step to the second, we are born again, into our sense of self, in *nāmarūpa*. This would be two births – which takes us back to Prof. Jurewicz’s supposition that *nāmarūpa* also

reflects a naming ceremony, in which the father gives the son his “final form”, thus creating his *ātman* in the way Prajāpati completed his *ātman* with Agni. This presumably draws on the “twice-born” concept of Vedism – once from the mother’s womb, and once again at an initiation rite. Real world: birth, then naming ceremony. Myth: existence, then splitting into name-and-form. Buddha: desire for that sense of self, followed by the way we identify the world as having to do with self, because it is out of that identification of our self with what we see around us that we create our sense of self, our second birth.

Direction of the Senses

In the Prajāpati myth, after “hungry desire for existence/knowledge” has split itself into individuals, it gains the senses, and uses those senses to seek to know itself. This is why the six senses and their objects (*saḥāyatana*) follow name-and-form (*nāmarūpa*): the six senses and their objects were created in one step; in the myth they are really one and the same thing, because Prajāpati’s senses are gained through all those objects. The Buddha is describing for us the way in which our desire for self has us directing our senses in search of ourselves in everything around us. Thus we define everything in terms of the way it relates to us. Physical: ability to use the senses after we are born, so that we can encounter the world. Myth: Prajāpati’s creations providing him with senses so he can know himself. Buddha: that we use our senses to meet hungry consciousness’s desire for knowledge of the self. We actually direct our senses to identify that which supports our sense of self.

Bonds and Equivalences

The Vedic world view was built on an assumption of bonds (*bandhu*) “relationships” softens what’s being said too much between things: between us here on earth and the cosmic powers beyond this world, and between things in this world, for example between father and son. Another way of putting this was that it was all about equivalences; as in the Prajāpati myth, father and son were one and the same: they were equivalents of each other.

The Prajāpati myth in its place in Vedic ritual depends on these equivalences: our human lives are seen as being what they are because that’s how things were set up when the First Man came into being, and the rituals modeled on those myths

are a reenactment of them, not simply confirming them, but strengthening and keeping the connections in place.

The early steps of dependent arising define the conditions we start from, describe human nature as seen through the Vedic creation myth, and also describe what the Buddha sees: that we come into this world ignorant of any other way of being, or even of how we are; that we crave that sense of self, and so we create it; that our minds seek to know ourselves; and that in doing so we create ourselves through the way we identify with everything we encounter, which we do via our senses.

Samkhārā As Rituals

But this is not all that the Buddha had to say. With Professor Jurewicz's brilliant insights,⁹ we are led to understand the origin myth, and to see how it helped the Buddha to describe how we come to be the way we are. She provides a clue to a deeper understanding of what *paṭicca samuppāda* describes when she ties the Buddha's term *saṃkhārā* to its Vedic roots, to Prajāpati's wish for a second, which would be acted upon through building his *ātman* as a fire altar. In the myth, *saṃkhāra* was a ritual that gave form to the wish for creation of the *ātman*, by creating an altar that was the equivalent of Prajāpati, of the world (for Prajāpati comprised the whole world at that point), and also of fire, Agni. The word *saṃkhāra*, in addition to perhaps being a pun on procreation (the "making together" of a child), here seems to reflect the perception that a real life event has the effect of "putting together" the *ātman*. That event is a social event, something people do together in communal rituals.

The *saṃkhāra* is a fire ritual; its tamer cousins are still enacted today in transformative *samskāra* rituals prescribed to mark moments of transition in the lives of high caste Hindus. Though not classed as a *samskāra* ritual, the biggest fire ritual of all, the Agnicayana, marked the completion of the transformation of *ātman*, the passage from this life grounded in the senses, to a world beyond. Both the *samskāra* rituals and the Agnicayana are rituals that have as a purpose the creation and/or perfection of the self to improve personal outcome after death.

In the life of a modern Hindu, the options seem to be either to be reborn (hopefully as a human, but that depends on one's *karma*), or, through the perfec-

⁹I am most indebted to her for giving me the grounding in the myth and language needed to see the underlying structure.

tion of one's knowledge of *ātman* to become one with (as Jurewicz puts it) “the Absolute”, also known as *brahman*.

Around the time when the Buddha lived, fire rituals were a central part of daily life. From the brahminical point of view, the highest class of people were the brahmins themselves. Some were officiating priests who performed rituals for others, and some were householders, but all would have a household fire and daily rituals. The warrior class and merchant classes also had household fires and small daily rituals, but the big, transformative rituals were conducted by specialist brahmin priests. In the brahminical texts as well as in the Buddhist *suttas*, these rituals are described as sacrifices. Sometimes animals were sacrificed, sometimes vegetable matter, or animal byproducts like clarified butter, but in the transformative rituals, like the Agnicayana, the thing sacrificed is considered to be the equivalent of the person who sponsors the ritual – *bandhu* again – and for this reason he is called the Sacrificer, because he sacrifices himself (his *ātman*) on that pyre, whether in the form of a goat during sacrifices in the normal course of his life, or with his own flesh and bones after death.

It is unlikely that anyone living in the Buddha's society would have been unaware of the spectacular and time-consuming Agnicayana ritual, or the funeral ritual that marked the transition from death to whatever “other world” the Sacrificer had been aiming at with rituals his whole life long, whether that be a world of ancestors, of particular gods, or union with *brahman*. The Vedic system was built on the assumption that the rites practiced throughout a lifetime, as well as keeping the gods, ancestors, and the universe nourished, enabled the Sacrificer to nourish his self, his *ātman*, in the same way – constantly building and perfecting himself and his world, in both the present world and the world he would inhabit after death. The concept was that during the ritual the Sacrificer died (he/his equivalent was what was being sacrificed), he made his way up to his world, and returned to earth a new man – literally (but, to our point of view, figuratively). Over the course of a lifetime of such rituals in which the *ātman* was perfected, he would “die” and “be reborn” many times.

The rituals that revolved around the perfection of the self seem to have been the model the Buddha used for dependent arising. This makes sense for many reasons.

First, the rituals will have been so well-known throughout society that, when using them as a model, there would have been no need to explain what was being referenced. It would make as little sense for the Buddha to stop and point out that

rituals were his model as it would make sense for a modern manual on scheduling to stop to explain the days of the week and hours in the day. That the model was so familiar explains why we find no explicit references to its being the structure underlying the lessons. That there are no explanations of what metaphor the Buddha was using explains a lot of our confusion in interpreting the terms.

Second, in case anyone missed the point that he was modeling the teaching on a ritual, he named his second step with a word that may have been in long use as meaning “ritual” (*saṃkhāra*).

Third, these rituals were like workshops in which one created and perfected the *ātman* over the course of time. The Buddha, as we know, denies that there is any *ātman* to be found. What he is telling us all throughout his lectures is that we create that which we mistake for the self. So he agrees with the Vedic view to the extent that we are creating something, but he denies that what we create is what we think it is, or that it lasts. That’s why he can use the model of the *saṃkhāra* rituals effectively to say, “Yes, it goes more or less the way you say it does, but with a few small differences...” What better way to both refute what is thought to be going on and to show that something else is happening, than to do it all in one structure?

Finally, the embedding of the Prajāpati Creation myth at the beginning also points to the chain of events being modeled, at least in part, on the Agnicayana ritual, because the Prajāpati myth was what was being modeled in the ritual itself. The fire altar that is built for the Sacrificer is constructed in the way Prajāpati built his – in the shape of a bird – and the altar is conceived as the equivalent of the Sacrificer, and of the world. Prajāpati is also known as the First Sacrificer, because he sacrificed himself by shattering himself into all of creation, into the individuality of name-and-form, as his act of creation. The Sacrificer, through this ritual, is re-enacting Prajāpati’s act of sacrifice, and creation of the world, and union with it, himself taking the role of Prajāpati.

Performance of the Ritual

If the links in the chain of dependent arising are modeled on the Agnicayana ritual and the *saṃkhāra* rituals of self-perfection, with the Prajāpati Creation myth built into the early steps, the next question is: what is the structure underlying what follows *saṃśāyātana*’s acquisition, i.e., the use of the senses?

What I suggest comes from our knowledge of what the portions from “contact” (*phassa*) through “clinging” (*upādāna*) describe. This is the portion of the

chain which seems to be best understood and is certainly most widely agreed on: it describes how, upon contact with the world, we react to it. It describes what we do day in, day out, over and over again: we engage with something, we experience it as good/bad/indifferent, we react to that experience, then we make assumptions about it in terms of how it relates to us. This is us doing what our senses direct us to do: naming-and-forming, identifying everything that happens to us in terms of how it relates to us, how it serves us, how it helps build up and stabilize our sense of self. It is all the things we do hundreds of times each day. It is our rituals.

I would suggest that the use of the word *vedanā* here, derived from a root shared with the name the Vedic people gave to their vast corpus of secret knowledge – the Vedas – is no coincidence. The Vedas represent the knowledge and ritual lore most precious to those orchestrating the sacrifices that create and perfect the *ātman*, while *vedanā* describes what we “know” about what we experience: how it feels. The Vedas lay out the performance of rituals in microscopic detail, and in this portion of dependent arising, we have our rituals laid out in just that way: tiny step by tiny step: “Here is how we do it: we start with our knowledge of an experience, and we build on that.” In addition, the altar that is at the center of the ritual fires is called the *vedi* – so this term might also be referring to that altar. Starting with the ritual tools of our senses, in the ritual arena of the sensual world, we perform these rituals over and over throughout our lives, building up *ātman* – or rather, what we mistake for *ātman*.

It is almost as if the Buddha were saying, “Yes, we build a self that is like fire through our rituals, but these are the details of the actual rituals that make it happen. This is the knowledge that is important, not what is in your Vedas.”

In her paper, Joanna Jurewicz notes that some of the terms in this section also relate to fire, for example *taṇhā*, which is *trṣṇā* in Sanskrit:

“The Buddha in his descriptions of *trṣṇā* very often refers to the image of fire. I think that the reason why he does so is not only because the metaphor of fire is particularly expressive, but also because something more lies behind it: here he is referring to the Vedic image of creation as performed by human subjects.”¹⁰

The reference to fire here would be two-fold: it is touching on the creation of *ātman*/second self/Agni, and also on fire being central to Vedic rituals (the Agnicayana in particular). Jurewicz notes that *trṣṇā* also makes particular reference

¹⁰p. 95

to fire's activity – to the insatiable nature of fire. This makes *taṇhā* not only fit the model of the Agnicayana, but the perfect word to describe what is happening in reality, the way our very natures burn for more of what we perceive as nourishing us, for the fuel of our experiences matching up what happens with how it relates to us.

Given that *upādāna* can mean fuel (as well as, according to Jurewicz, a cognitive activity comparable to burning fuel) we seem to have been given all the instructions needed to see the performance of the ritual: the tools of our senses, the arena of the world of the senses, the activities of contact, our Vedas via knowledge of how the experience feels, the fire that wants to burn, and the fuel for that fire, the fuel of our attachment to these very rituals.

Results of the Rituals

The links after *upādāna* are “existence” (*bhava*), “birth” (*jāti*), and “aging and death” (*jarāmaraṇa*). They can be interpreted in the rebirth models as literal descriptions of a being coming into existence from a past life, where *bhava* is seen as the arrival of something like “unresolved past *karma*” into the womb; some interpretations express this as consciousness descending into the womb. This is easy to understand, since the descriptions given in the suttas of birth and aging and death all sound fairly literal.

But given the number of layers of meaning in all that has gone before, and given that the Buddha is denying that what ritualists believe is happening is what is actually happening, it would be quite odd for this last part to mean exactly what was believed to be the result of an actual ritual: rebirth of some sort. All along, the Buddha has been denying the obvious interpretation, and showing that the truth is something else entirely.

To help us see this, here's a quick recap of the pattern of layering: the opening makes references to the Prajāpati myth, and rituals based on it, and points out how we arrive in the world (ignorant) and what drives us to do what we do. It simultaneously describes the creation of *ātman* and denies that what we conceive as *ātman* is exactly as normally described. Instead of a being born out of a craving for knowledge of the self, this is a notion born out of ignorance about the self; it is not *ātman* but that which we mistake for *ātman*. The middle portion has references to familiar rituals well known to society; it uses terms which evoke the texts (Vedas/*vedanā*), and the fire (*taṇhā/upādāna*), but all the while is describing an entirely different set of rituals; it does not say “Here's your ritual” overtly, but

obliquely. Why, then, would the final portion be the only part meant to be taken literally?

But if the last links are not actually about gestation, birth, aging, and death, what do they describe? The answer should lie in the direction of the whole: if dependent arising is, indeed, modeled on transformative fire rituals, ending with the funeral pyre, rites that (when they mark the end of an ideal life) work as transformative events in which the *ātman* reaches final perfection so that it can be born into its blissful next world, or rejoin the creative force, the Absolute, *brahman* and go to eternal bliss, then this final portion too must be modeled on that transformation. We've done the rituals, we've built the pyre, we've fed it fuel; will the *ātman* now be perfected, be transformed through *bhava* (which also means "becoming" – a translation more suited to transition), and then go to bliss? No, says the Buddha, in this step, what we perceive as the *ātman* that has been created and built up all along is perfected and born, but instead of going to bliss, it goes on to age and die, just as we are all born, age, and die; not to bliss, but to *dukkha*.

Reading The Suttas With This Interpretation

The language in the suttas – perhaps in part because of the layering of meaning that seems to have been a common practice in that culture¹¹ – can be interpreted in several ways. Historically, a case has been made that the Buddha frequently talked about literal rebirth as a fact of existence into which he had direct insight and which he even experienced for himself; there is a lot of evidence that can be offered to support that conclusion.

But if dependent arising was actually designed to refute current ideas about rituals, and the *ātman*, and the afterlife, and instead to point out what we can see for ourselves when we closely examine our own rituals (performed in ignorance), it seems unlikely that literal rebirth was the focal point of the teaching.

Questions concerning rebirth are not the only unresolved issues about dependent arising in the suttas. There have also been questions about how unusual sequences in various suttas fit with its classical order. Besides, there are related portions of the texts that remain downright inscrutable. If this interpretation is completely misguided, it should become obvious as we examine the suttas that we have a hard time making our theory fit the texts; the theory would make the

¹¹See Joanna Jurewicz' *Fire and Cognition in the Rgveda*, ISBN 978-83-7151-893-5 pub. Dom Wydawniczy ELIPSA

suttas make less sense if it is mistaken. If, on the other hand, our theory can be shown to be consistent with most suttas on the subject, and answer some of the unresolved questions, perhaps it will be approved. Only time – and many people willing to put in the effort to study and debate the issue – will really tell.

The classic definition of each of the twelve steps in the Sutta Piṭaka is in MN 9. Sāriputta there expounds each link in answer to the question “What is right view?”¹² The wording is repeated again in SN 12.2 (without crediting a speaker), and portions of it recur in various other suttas (for example birth, aging, and death are described, with more detail on sorrow, lamentation, despair and grief, in DN 22). Because it is the most detailed description of all twelve in one place, we can use it as an index to the whole set, and see how Sāriputta’s explanations fit the theory, adding other suttas as needed. He starts his discourse at the end of the chain of events, with aging and death: this is a logical starting place because it is what each of us does when looking for a cause: we spot an effect, and look back for the components that were required to bring it about.¹³

SUTTA SUPPORT

Death (*maraṇa*)

“And what is aging and death?... The aging of beings in the various orders of beings, their old age, brokenness of teeth, greyness of hair, wrinkling of skin, decline of life, weakness of faculties – this is called aging. The passing of beings out of the various orders of beings, their passing away, dissolution, disappearance, dying, completion of time, dissolution of the aggregates, laying down of the body – this is called death.”¹⁴

¹²Sāriputta starts the sutta with wholesomeness, nutriment, and the four noble truths, does all twelve links, and ends with the taints. The sutta can be found beginning at PTS M i 46. All translations of MN 9 cited here are by Bhikkhus Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi, from Wisdom Publication’s *Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha*, (1995), unless otherwise stated.

¹³Richard Gombrich points out that in the *Vinaya Piṭaka* it is the discovery of the *paṭicca samup-pāda* that is the Buddha’s awakening. Gombrich then shares an insight provided by his friend: “...Hwang Soon-Il has very plausibly suggested that this may be the origin of the common Pali expression *yoniso manasa-kāra*. The dictionary translates this with such terms as ‘proper attention’. But literally it means ‘making in the mind according to origin’, and that is just how the Buddha made his breakthrough.” p. 132 of *What the Buddha Thought*

¹⁴MN 9.22 [PTS M i 49]

A conversation the Buddha once had with Baka the Brahmā shows that the last link in the chain of dependent arising is not about literal aging and death, despite the way the above makes it look at first glance. Here is Baka speaking, followed by the Buddha's answer:¹⁵

“...Now, good sir, this is permanent, this is everlasting, this is eternal, this is total, this is not subject to pass away; for this is where one is neither born nor ages nor dies nor passes away nor reappears (*up-apajjati*) , and beyond this there is no other escape.”

When this was said, I told Baka the Brahmā: “The worthy Baka the Brahmā has lapsed into ignorance... in that he says of the impermanent that it is permanent, of the transient that it is everlasting, of the non-eternal that it is eternal, of the incomplete that it is total, of what is subject to pass away that it is not subject to pass away, of where one is born, ages, dies, passes away, and reappears, that here one is neither born nor ages nor dies nor passes away nor reappears; and when there is another escape beyond this, he says there is no other escape beyond this.”

I would first note that I can find no sense in the Pali of Brahmā or the Buddha talking about a place – there is no “where” there – so this piece could be describing the perception that abiding with Brahmā was a permanent, eternal state (not a place), endless, no next state: no more rebirths. With his contention that within this state one still ages and dies, the Buddha seems to be saying that what is usually perceived as “abiding in the Brahmā-state” is actually a state of existence still in this world where aging and death continue.

The passage can certainly be interpreted as the Buddha saying that the Vedic highest goal of “abiding with Brahmā” instead puts one in a “place” (Brahmā's world, taking on a life which goes on for a long while) where one ages and dies and is reborn again, but having (perhaps purposefully) made no mention of place, the Pali doesn't seem to be denying a place and a life spent in it. Instead it seems to be discussing a state, which is presumably a happy one, since followers of this system are working hard to get there and stay there eternally; we can call it “a state of eternal bliss”. Brahmā says it is without the usual pains of aging and death and being reborn again, probably because what Brahmā is describing is not literal life

¹⁵MN 49.3-.4 translation by Bhikkhus Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi [PTS M i 326]

with him in a world, but the state of eternal bliss “in union with brahman”. It is “total” and everlasting because it is the final rejoining with the Absolute that is being described here.

The reference to “reappearing” is usually seen as literal rebirth, but in the context of this new view that dependent arising is above all about *ātman* going through changes as a result of all our rituals, the reappearance referred to should be that which results from our frequent rituals. In those rituals the Sacrificer dies a **virtual** death each time, visits his other world, and returns to reappear (*upapaj-jati*) again. The last birth – following the final (actual) death – through the *bhava* of the death ritual, would not be thought of as *upapajjati* (which is why Baka says there will be no more of that). *Upapajjati* is what happens repeatedly in this life: we are born, grow up (age), join in the rituals, die, and reappear after the normal rituals; but not so after that last death marked by the rite of cremation.

Brahmā wants us to believe that at some point *ātman* gets to rest in eternal bliss, but the Buddha is saying *ātman* just returns to doing what we have always seen him doing, being modified by our rituals – not the Vedic rituals, but our rituals. It is not really *ātman* the Buddha is discussing here, it is whatever we mistake for *ātman*.

We keep changing as a result of our rituals (the ones that begin with *vedanā*) and when we get through the transition of *bhava* and come out the other side, as long as we are still creating that sense of *ātman*, it is still going to experience aging, sickness, and death, and go around again with the next change caused by our rituals. It is what passes for *ātman* that goes on the rounds, and it is that which the Buddha is identifying here as “impermanent, transient, non-eternal, incomplete, subject to pass away, born, aging, dying, passing away and reappearing.”

In MN 1¹⁶ the Buddha can be seen to address the way that the events described in dependent arising create something that “comes to be”, and that it is this which ages and dies:

...the Tathagata, too, accomplished and fully enlightened, directly knows earth as earth. Having directly known earth as earth, he does not conceive [himself] as earth, he does not conceive [himself] in earth, he does not conceive [himself apart] from earth, he does not conceive earth to be ‘mine’, he does not delight (*abhinandati*) in earth. Why is that? Because he has understood that delight is the root of

¹⁶MN 1.171 translated by Bhikkhus Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi [PTS M i 6].

suffering, and that with being (*bhava*) [as condition] there is birth, and that for whatever has come to be there is ageing and death.

A traditional interpretation might suggest that “whatever has come to be” describes “every single thing that has come into existence” in which case the above is simply a statement about impermanence. Yes, it is about impermanence; but given the context of the paragraph, it also has to do with conceptions of the self. It is not about the impermanence of any old “whatever” but is, instead, about the impermanence of that sense of self. If we look closely at the above we can see a mini-*paṭicca samuppāda* which goes from “delight” (a frequent synonym for *upādāna*), to *bhava* to birth to aging-and-death. This means that if dependent arising is using a ritual that was thought to create and perfect *ātman* to describe the birth of something we mistake for *ātman*, then it is that false *ātman* which is what arises, and aging and death await it. In the example above, it is that sense of the self as to do with earth which arises from delight in earth, but MN 1 shows that in any way¹⁷ we conceive that self, it is from that conception that the mistaken sense of self comes to be (is born), ages and dies.

This is why, when the Buddha was talking to Baka the Brahmā, he said that there was an escape beyond, and why he also repeatedly says that there is an unborn, unaging, undying, “beyond birth, aging, suffering, death”. It is the false sense of self that he is describing as being born, aging, suffering, dying; so naturally, when he tells us we can rid ourselves of it, we would then be beyond that birth, aging, suffering and dying: we would no longer experience the *dukkha* that arises from our sense that we have a lasting self. And, I contend, that is the only *dukkha* the Buddha is ever talking about.

Aging (*jarā*)

As for the aging portion of *jarāmaraṇa*, MN 26¹⁸ has this example of what is meant:

“And what may be said to be subject to aging? Wife and children are subject to aging . . . sheep, fowl and pigs, elephants . . . gold and

¹⁷I say that the sutta talks about “any way we conceive that self” by giving us what appears to be a comprehensive list of every way the self was conceived, in the Buddha’s time, and denying all of them.

¹⁸Translation by Bhikkhus Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi [PTS M i 162].

silver are subject to aging. These acquisitions (*upadhayo*) are subject to aging; and one who is tied to these things, infatuated with them . . . being himself subject to aging, seeks what is also subject to aging.”

Here it is clear the Buddha is not really talking about an individual’s own aging as the problem, and perhaps not even the aging of wives and children, sheep and fowl, our possessions, since “gold and silver” are described as aging, too, when, in the reality that concerns us, their aging is of no great importance, though they can of course be stolen from us. This means that in the piece above, “aging” is presented as a metaphor for impermanence, so we can interpret the section this way:

“One who is himself impermanent is tied to these impermanent things, infatuated with them. Being himself subject to impermanence, he seeks what is also subject to impermanence.”

The way it was phrased by the Buddha is far more poetic than my version, but either way it can be seen to say that we feel drawn to what is **similar** to us: we see our impermanent selves reflected in the impermanence of everything around us. This repeats the message of *nāmarūpa*, that we look for ourselves in things and find aspects of ourselves there, and we make those things part of ourselves. The use of the word “acquisitions” (*upadhayo*) seems likely to be wordplay relating the way we own things (*upadhi*) to the way we cling to them and make them part of ourselves (*upādānakkhandhā*).

When the Buddha talks about the problem with gold and silver’s aging, we can see that the real concern is not with an escape from aging, but with escaping from the *dukkha* that can result from aging. This makes aging a euphemism for all impermanent things. It is our infatuation with acquisitions (of things related to us in some way, of self) that are impermanent that is the problem, not the impermanence itself or even the things which are subject to impermanence. It is not aging that is the problem, it is the way we relate to things that age by making them part of our concept of self.

Both Aging And Death (*jarāmaraṇa*)

Sāriputta’s classic description of *jarāmaraṇa*, quoted above, gets offered as proof that the Buddha was speaking about literal rebirth because this seems to be a literal description of aging and death – which of course it is:

“And what is aging and death?... The aging of beings in the various orders of beings, their old age, brokenness of teeth, greyness of hair, wrinkling of skin, decline of life, weakness of faculties – this is called aging. The passing of beings out of the various orders of beings, their passing away, dissolution, disappearance, dying, completion of time, dissolution of the aggregates, laying down of the body – this is called death.”

The Buddha is again making a point with this last step: that when what we think of as *ātman* goes through a transformation (*bhava*), it just reappears in the same old world in which it suffers through aging, sickness, and death; so, yes, the text is describing this step literally because that is literally what that which we mistake for self experiences. But what it experiences is not simply aging and death, it is the *dukkha* that, through conceptions of self, comes to overlay them.

Because with this last step the Buddha is talking about the opposite of bliss, and because the end product of the whole process of dependent arising is *dukkha*, aging-and-death can best be interpreted as a metonym for (or the equivalent of) *dukkha*.

In the extended, liberative *paṭicca samuppāda* found in SN 12.23 (the *Upanisa Sutta*), the usual chain is extended into the path to liberation, and the liberative part of the path there starts with “faith” (*saddha*), which has *dukkha* as its condition; but *dukkha* has “birth” (*jāti*) as its condition, and the whole chain regresses from there back to “ignorance” (*avijjā*) in the normal way. Missing from this chain is “aging and death” and *dukkha* stands in its place, so *jarāmarāṇa* is being given there as the precise equivalent of *dukkha*. If we see *paṭicca samuppāda* as modeled on rituals, “aging and death” really is, coming at the end of dependent arising, is the Buddha’s way of saying that the results of all those repeated rituals is not bliss, but just “more of the same”:¹⁹ it is *dukkha*, the opposite of bliss.

That what is meant by *jarāmarāṇa* is precisely *dukkha* is also clear in the description of one of the questions the Buddha asked himself that led him to his insight:²⁰

¹⁹When I say that “more of the same” is *dukkha*, I am not saying that the Buddha says that “life is *dukkha*”, or even that the unenlightened life is *dukkha*. It is not all *dukkha*. The issue is just with the things we do with those rituals – when we are not doing “the usual stuff” life always has the potential to be wonderful. Our lives are a mix of doing things without quite understanding why we do them, things that are based on the desire for self the Buddha is describing, and doing things that aren’t in that category – selfless things, for example, or simple, joyful things.

²⁰SN 12.10(i) translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi [PTS S ii 10].

pubbeva me, bhikkhave, sambodhā anabhisambuddhassa bodhisattasseva sato etad ahoṣi – ‘kicchaṃ vatāyaṃ loko āpanno jāyati ca jīyati ca miyati ca cavati ca upapajjati ca. atha ca paṇimassa dukkhassa nissaraṇaṃ nappajānāti jarāmaraṇassā.

“Bhikkhus, before my enlightenment, while I was still a bodhisatta, not yet fully enlightened, it occurred to me: ‘Alas, this world²¹ has fallen into trouble, in that it is born, ages, and dies, it passes away and is reborn, yet it does not understand the escape from this suffering [headed by] aging-and-death...’

Although “headed by” has been inserted into the translation, the Pali actually presents the two terms *dukkha* and *jarāmaraṇa* as equivalents: “The many diverse kinds of suffering that are aging and death arise in the world...” or perhaps “The many diverse kinds of suffering that we call aging and death arise in the world...” It is possible that the phrase “aging and death” was a known metonym for all kinds of *dukkha*,²² but at any rate, we can see here again that “aging and death” is just another way of saying *dukkha*.

In SN 12.35²³ the Buddha is specifically asked who it is that ages and dies, and his answer is dependent arising. By giving that answer he specifically points to that which is “born” through that process as being what experiences aging and death:

“Venerable sir, what now is aging-and-death, and for whom is there aging-and-death?”

“Not a valid question,” the Blessed One said. “If one were to ask, ‘Which aging & death? And whose is this aging & death?’ and if one were to ask, ‘Is aging & death one thing, and is this the aging & death of someone/something else?’ both of them would have the same meaning, even though their words would differ... From birth as a requisite condition comes aging & death.”

²¹ Also note the (to us) odd use of “the world” as something that can suffer – this seems to be a reflection of the Prajāpati myth, where self-is-world and world-is-self and since they are equivalents they can be used interchangeably.

²² If “aging and death” was a known metonym for *dukkha*, this might help make sense of the question, in the quote from SN 12.35 below, which mentions the question “Which ‘aging and death?’”

²³ Translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi [PTS S ii 61].

The reason why the answer seems so obscure is that it cannot be made in terms of a person who is the result of a rebirth experiencing aging and death, because that is not what dependent arising is talking about. Through the lens of this interpretation, this is simply saying that “that which arises/is born” is that which experiences “aging and death” – which is just a metonym for *dukkha*.

Birth (*jāti*)

In MN 9, Sāriputta gives a detailed exposition on each of the links in the chain of events, and his description of “birth” (*jāti*) has long been held up as a very strong piece of evidence that the Buddha was making it clear that there was rebirth and we were bound to its cycles, because it seemed that this piece could not be interpreted any other way:

“And what is birth?... Whatever birth, taking birth, descent, coming-to-be, coming-forth, appearance of aggregates, & acquisition of [sense] spheres of the various beings in this or that group of beings, that is called birth.”²⁴

As translated, this is usually interpreted as literal birth (or, more accurately, as a rebirth). However, when viewed within the context of a dependent arising modeled on transformative rituals, it cannot be meant quite so literally. First of all, in the ritual setting, this “birth” would not generally be referring to a birth into an actual body at all, but into the world of one’s ancestors, or perhaps bliss with Brahmā. Within the lesson it is offering, though, it should be addressing the same point as the conversation with Baka the Brahmā: not eternal bliss, just more of the same *dukkha*. The Buddha is simply saying that the rituals we perform do not cause *ātman* to go to bliss in another world, they cause what we mistake for *ātman* to keep reappearing in this one.

It is interesting that the “appearance of the aggregates” is mentioned as part of birth, since there is every indication that the Buddha perceived the troubles that we have through the creation of our problematic sense of self to start up at about the same time as does sexual lust,²⁵ so those aggregates that fuel our mis-

²⁴Translation by Thanissaro Bhikkhu [http:// www.accesstosight.org/ tipitaka/ mn/ mn.009.than.html](http://www.accesstosight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.009.than.html)

²⁵For example in MN 38.28-29 [PTS M i 266] ,where he describes a boy’s life from conception to maturity, and the clinging is not introduced until after he’s gotten past the stage of playing tipcat and with toy ploughs; only when the strands of sensual pleasure kick in does the trouble begin.

taken sense that we have a self would not appear at birth, but long after. Those aggregates, however, would appear with each fresh rebirth of our false sense of self, so I would suggest that this is actually what is being described here: the birth and reappearance of that which is not self, here labeled as “a being”.

Another way of looking at this particular definition – and, in fact, all of Sāriputta’s descriptions in MN 9 – is to see that he is not really defining what is happening as part of the process, so much as talking about a specific requirement for this moment to happen.

A Note On Nutriment

In the Vedic cosmology there is a great deal of concern with food, with “nutriment”. This is such a strong influence in the culture that the gods are described as being fed by our little selves there in their world, and the sacrifice offered in rituals is seen as ascending in the smoke to sustain the gods or forefathers, and the sacrificer is understood to be banking nutriment to make his stay up there in bliss last long.²⁶ Not surprisingly, given that the society was heavily involved in settling new lands and developing the science of agriculture, another popular analogy was to the growing of food. If each of these steps is looked at in terms of nutriment – as the very most basic “ground” of things needed for this step to happen – Sāriputta’s descriptions not only make sense, they become a way of pointing out exactly what we need to look at to see the step occurring.

As we go through the remaining links in the chain of events, we can examine how this makes what’s going on easier to spot, but for the moment let us keep the focus on “birth”. It is clear that if there were no birth, ever, of any being anywhere, there could never arise any false-self or any *dukkha* resulting from the appearance of that mistaken sense of self. That makes “birth” the necessary “field” for that sense of self to grow in.²⁷ At the same time, we are also being asked to pay attention to how a particular sort of birth – the one that comes with the appearance of the aggregates – causes *dukkha*.

Literal birth is not the primary cause of *dukkha*. It is one of many component causes that are required for anything at all to happen, true, but it is just a field. Lots of good things come from the same field; there would be no life at all were it not for birth. But the acquisition of the aggregates is also pointed out as something

²⁶Which is probably why the terms for merit and its rewards have their roots in the ripening of crops.

²⁷It does not mean that what we need is to stop birth.

for us to look at – so that we can see what is born from those ways in which we conceive of a self.²⁸ It is true that if we stop literal birth, *dukkha* stops, but so does all the good stuff that comes from the same field, so what is being addressed here is, as usual, multileveled: without birth, no birth of the mistaken sense of self; the same is true without the appearance of the aggregates. The thing that is the proximate cause, the thing that goes to the heart of the trouble and gives us no goodness at all, that is the part that needs to be stopped, not the furthest cause, the one that also gives good stuff.

Becoming (*bhava*)

The word *bhava* has long been a problem for translators. It often gets translated as “existence” or “being”, which represents a steady state (except in phrases like “coming into existence”). Translating it as a state one is in and stays in may be causing confusion.

As part of a process like dependent arising, it is clearly a process itself, and since it marks the transition from one state (less pure *ātman*) to a different state (purer *ātman*), the other common translation of “becoming” suits it better. In its place before “birth” it can be seen as a sort of gestation, a moment or a period of change from one state to another.

The classic definition of “becoming” is found at MN 9.28.²⁹ When Sāriputta is asked “What is becoming?” his answer is:

tayome, āvuso, bhavā – kāmabhavo, rūpabhavo, arūpabhavo.

“There are these three kinds of being: sense-sphere being, fine-material being, and immaterial being.”

²⁸We can also look at Sāriputta’s analysis of aging and death in the same way: if there were no infirmity, no aging, no one ever died, there would be no food – no nutriment, no field – in which *dukkha* could grow. That there is such a thing as loss of abilities, and the things we are attached to do sicken and die and pass away – literally or metaphorically, as with silver and gold – that provides the field, the nutriment, a ground for us to grow *dukkha*. The literal is just the ground – we have to plant the seeds for something to grow.

²⁹[PTS M i 50]

Kāmabhava should not be too hard to understand. It is usually translated in terms of sensual pleasures, and though I tend to think it means more than that,³⁰ the usual translation should be sufficient in this quote. The other two terms, *rūpa* and *arūpa*, have been variously translated over the years but “form” (here “fine-material”) and “formless” (“immaterial”) are currently popular. How these words are interpreted by modern translators seems to vary, but the context is dependent arising’s discussion of how we create our sense of self, – and we are not simply talking about the self we have in this moment, but also about mistaken views of what an eternal, ongoing “self” (*ātman*) would consist of and would be after death. So the point here may concern one’s habitual attitude: whether one thinks little about where or whether one will be reborn and just lives for the moment through the senses (*kāma*); or one believes in being reborn into the world of the ancestors, where one takes “form” (*rūpa*) and hangs out munching on meritorious supplies; or one becomes one with *brahman* “with no form” (*arūpa*) at all. This interpretation remains speculative, and deserves a paper of its own, but the present paper will continue noting the ways it fits into the detailed descriptions of *paṭicca samuppāda*.

Sāriputta’s description again appears to point to a field, in this case the field in which *bhava* takes its nourishment: how we conceive of the self (i.e., the most popular ways in those days). If we were not busy perceiving our self as one of those sorts of being, we would not be creating the sense of self that gets born in the next step. In other words, without our conviction that we are in a world in which [pick your worldview] is the cosmic order and the consequent belief that we will become [pick the outcome of that worldview] after death, a sense of self that conforms to that view could not possibly be born in the next step.

If *bhava* is taken as “becoming” – that is, as a transition from an old sense of self to a newly upgraded version of a false self – the following translation stops being about ending rebirth/a final end to any existence at all:

“Friend, though I have clearly seen as it really is with correct wisdom,
Nibbana is the cessation of existence, I am not an arahant, one whose
taints are destroyed.”³¹

³⁰I suggest that it is all sense information that we cling to as relating to self, not just the “sensual pleasures”; it represents all the problematic things we do even when we don’t have a philosophy we cling to, because even non-conceptual impressions that we have a self begin with incoming sensual information.

³¹SN 12.68 translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi [PTS ii 118].

It would instead be about simply ending that sense of having a lasting self, so it becomes “Nibbana is the cessation of becoming” – where “becoming” represents a renewed sense of self, “becoming a fresh set of the aggregates” caused by clinging (*upādānakkhandhā*). Nibbana could not have been the cessation of plain old existence at any rate, or it would be annihilation, and would indeed have been instantaneous upon awakening; so it has to be the cessation of the existence of something we’ve been trying to get rid of, and that would be our conceptions of a lasting self.

The view that the three “becomings” are the possible conceptions of *ātman*’s place in the universe is also supported by MN 9’s³² explanation of the origin of *dukkha*:

And what is the origin of suffering? It is craving (*taṇhā*), which brings renewal of being (*ponobbhavikā*), is accompanied by delight and lust, and delights in this and that; it is craving for sensual pleasures (*kāmatāṇhā*), craving for being (*bhavataṇhā*), and craving for non-being (*vibhavataṇhā*). This is called the origin of suffering.

Here we have craving as three types, *kāma* again, and *bhava*, as well as *vibhava*. If my hypothesis is right, “regular old *bhava*-type *taṇhā*” could match the *rūpabhava* mentioned above, where it would be the culture’s majority understanding of *karma* and birth into an “other world” of form after death; and *vibhava* would correspond to *arūpabhava*, where *vibhava* would mean something “beyond becoming” or “beyond form” or “other than form” (i.e. “formless”).

Fuel (*upādāna*)

Upādāna’s succinct definition (as found in MN 9) has it as concerned with four things in particular: *kāmupādānaṃ*, *diṭṭhupādānaṃ*, *sīlabbatupādānaṃ*, and *attavādupādānaṃ*. As with *bhava*, above, the list starts with *kāma*, then seems to head off in a different direction, since there are four items listed here rather than three. The first new entry is *diṭṭhi*, which is views of/about things. *Diṭṭhi* is views which have an effect, as opposed to detached opinions. The next two items, *sīlabbatupādānaṃ* and *attavādupādānaṃ*, on examination, turn out to be views as well, the former being how people cling to their “rites and rituals” (which is what the whole of dependent arising is discussing!) and the latter views about the

³²MN 9.16 [PTS M i 48].

self (ditto!). In a sense, *ditṭhi* seems to be central to this link: – the views we have about what makes us what we are – and the other three are simply the commonest examples of the things that people held strong opinions about, the ones that get them the most *dukkha*: sensuality, ritualism, and views of the self.

When Dhammadinna answers a question about whether *upādāna* is equivalent to the *khandhā* in *upādānakkhandhā*, or is separate from it, the nun's answer is “neither”. She then explains what *upādāna* is:

“It is the desire and lust in regard to the five aggregates affected by clinging that is the clinging there.”³³

This means that *upādāna* is the desire and lust that form around the sense of self, the sense of what constitutes the self, including all the important issues that that brings up in Vedic society (i.e. where one goes after the breakup of the body). It is the desire and lust for whatever sense of self we have at the moment, whether it is about *kāma*, or *silabbata*, or *attavāda*, or some other *ditṭhi* (view). The aggregates are those points we cling to that are specifically generated by (affected by) *upādāna*, the fuel for our sense of self, the fuel of opinions.

Sāriputta's description again points out the field that causes or allows the clinging to grow: It is views, views about right behaviour and about rituals, views about our sensual needs, views about the self. Without these views, there would be no fuel for the ritual fires in which we create our sense of self, so they are what we need to understand and discard.

Thirst (*taṇhā*)

Craving (thirst) we have already mentioned, when covering *bhava*, as being about *kāma*, *bhava*, and *vibhava*. So it also relates to *saṃkhārā*, because *saṃkhārā* are, in the original sense, craving for existence, for coming into existence (which would be *bhava*) as well as for continuing to exist (*bhava* as ongoing process). Here the Buddha could be talking about the ways we conceive of ourselves: as simple, sensual creatures (the ones to whom things just happen, with no particular cause); or as creatures who pass through “becoming” into the world of form (*rūpa*); or through *vibhava*'s “beyond becoming” into the formless (*arūpa*).

In the world that created the model for dependent arising, the Sacrificer performed rituals to gain and perfect knowledge of the self that makes these preferred

³³MN 44.7 translated by Bhikkhus Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi [PTS M i 300].

outcomes happen; meanwhile, in the parallel lesson the Buddha is providing us with, we tend to confirm our preconceptions through our daily rituals, by relating them to our sense of self.

This is why in MN 9³⁴ craving also gets described in terms of craving for the objects of the senses.

“There are these six classes of craving: craving for forms, craving for sounds, craving for odours, craving for flavours, craving for tangibles, craving for mind-objects.”

It is through the senses that we build up the experiences we base our views (*upādāna*) on. The views then act as fuel for the fire of transition to our sense of self. When Sāriputta explains *taṇhā* in terms of the senses, he is not really explaining what *taṇhā* is or does, so much as pointing out the field in which it operates. When we are looking for that thirst for our sense of self in operation, we need to look specifically at the senses as they react to good feeling, bad feeling and neutral feeling; so Sāriputta is asking us to attend to that feeling of “I want more” or “I want to get away from it” that arises in response to sensory information.

Feeling (*vedanā*)

“And what is feeling, what is the origin of feeling, what is the cessation of feeling, what is the way leading to the cessation of feeling? There are these six classes of feeling: feeling born of eye-contact, feeling born of ear-contact... feeling born of mind-contact.”³⁵

Sāriputta’s explanation of feeling in MN 9 is a simple one: feeling derives from the senses. His formulation is modeled on the classic description of the noble truths: what it is, its origin, cessation, and the way to its cessation.³⁶ Describing

³⁴MN 9.38 [PTS M i 510]

³⁵MN 9.42 [PTS M i 51]

³⁶In fact, all the descriptions in MN 9 are framed in terms of that same formula for the Four Noble Truths. In this way we can see that in some sense every step of dependent arising is actually *dukkha*, and that is because its end-product is *dukkha*: what dependent arising describes is *dukkha* and its origin. Or it can be seen as describing the arising of a false sense of self and its origin (the two are the same). Or really, given the conversation with Baka the Brahṃā, it describes impermanence, for which we should be grateful: because of impermanence, dependent arising also describes the end of *dukkha* and the way to end it.

feeling as originating in the senses is entirely logical, though on the surface this tells us little about the part it plays in the process being described. Contact with a sense is the most fundamental nutriment for feeling to arise; it has to be there for us to see what is being pointed out. We need to pay attention to those senses when they make contact.

Dhammadinna, on the other hand,³⁷ talks of feeling in terms of pleasant, painful, and neither of those. What is most useful in her discussion is that she then describes what underlying tendencies relate to these three kinds of feeling: lust (*rāga*) underlies pleasant feeling, aversion (*paṭigha*) underlies the unpleasant, and ignorance (*avijjā*) underlies the things we feel as neither pleasant nor unpleasant; we seem to dismiss the things we have no particular feeling about as if they did not matter at all because, of course, “they have nothing to do with me”. So we can easily see that the type of feeling determines the reaction to it (which is a form of *taṇhā*).

Contact (*phassa*)

Contact’s origin, as described by Sāriputta in MN 9,³⁸ is also simply located in the senses, because he is still describing where we look, in this case for contact.

“There are six classes of contact: eye-contact, ear-... nose-... tongue-... body-... mind-contact.”

Once again, what he describes is the food that sustains the process, and where to look to see it for ourselves.

When Mahā Kaccāna explains some cryptic remarks the Buddha has made about the source of perceptions, he begins by describing what makes up contact:

“Dependent on the eye and forms, eye-consciousness arises. The meeting of the three is contact. With contact as condition, there is feeling. What one feels, that one perceives.”³⁹

Kaccāna’s explanation, like Sāriputta’s, is anchored in the senses, which is natural, since the senses themselves are the step just before this one. The senses and

³⁷In MN 44 [PTS M i 302]

³⁸MN 9.46 [PTS M i 52]

³⁹MN 18.16 translated by Bhikkhus Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi [PTS M i 111]

their objects – i.e., the activation of the senses – are required for contact, and the object of the senses is actually found in the step one further back, in *nāmarūpa*, where *rūpa* not only means “form”, but is the individuation of things in such a way that each thing relates to us, so that we find ourselves in it. We are not just talking about any contact, but contact of a specific type, contact that satisfies the particular desire for confirmation of the self.

Kaccāna’s statement goes back further still, for it relates to consciousness. Why would that be? Because it is hungry consciousness that is doing the seeking, that is directing the senses to look for nourishment, and it is that particular instance of consciousness that will cling to, or avoid, or ignore what it finds, depending on the feeling that arises from the contact. It is only when contact has encountered a suitable object that the sense’s awareness is fed, nourished, and arises – the tiny cycle of seeking for self and finding self has been completed.

We can see it this way: consciousness is not fulfilled – does not become complete – until it has something to be conscious of, and that “something” must be specifically what it is looking for; nothing else will satisfy it and make it complete. Driven by *saṃkhārā*, consciousness seeks the self. It is hungry but it is not real (not active, not sustained) until it has been fed. So when the eye meets a form, if that form confirms self, eye-consciousness now exists, because it has been nourished. That is what contact consists of: a moment when all the conditions of the drive to find the self have been met. Then feeling arises; feeling, which is knowledge of the experience (*vedanā*, our version of the ritual Vedas) comes to be, and then one can perceive both the self and the confirmation of the self in the world.

In Kaccāna’s statement, there is implied the whole cycle of dependent arising up to the moment when the sense of self is about to be conceived: the eye-consciousness, finding satisfaction in contact through the eye with forms, has been driven to do this by the desire for existence that is *saṃkhārā*, and that is operating only because of ignorance. It is seeking confirmation of the self in the world because of the perception of name-and-form – the expectation that aspects of self will be found in the world around us, so the senses are directed to look for confirmation, and when contact of the right sort is made, the feeling that results feeds our perception of self.

Direction of the Senses (*saḷāyatana*)

The word *saḷāyatana* breaks down into six (*saḷ*) *āyatana*, and is usually translated as “the six sense bases”. This is certainly what’s being addressed, as in Sāriputta’s⁴⁰ explanation of what it is:

“And what is the sixfold base...? There are these six bases: the eye-base, ear-... nose-... tongue-... body-... mind-base.”

But, as usual, what is missing here is any sense of how the “base” fits into the process, what it does, what its function is. When *āyatana* is simply translated as “base” or “sphere” or “world of” we understand that it represents a cause (base) and is part of a creation (sphere/world), but there is no clear sense of why it is there beyond providing fodder for contact.

Other definitions of *āyatana*, found in PED, may make more sense:

1. stretch, extent, reach... 2. exertion, doing, working, practice performance...

If the word is seen in an active sense, rather than as a passive recipient, it is a sense that is stretching out, extending, reaching, exerting itself. Then it becomes clearer that this refers to our senses driven to seek what *saṃkhārā* and consciousness are demanding we look for: ourselves and aspects of ourselves, through contact with the world.

The field for what is happening is the hungry senses, and that is therefore what we need to pay attention to. If we watch those senses we will notice how they are seeking something. They are the base from which the process of seeking for the self is able to act at this point in the chain.

Identification (*nāmarūpa*)

The most concise description of what “name-and-form” (*nāmarūpa*) is, as a link in dependent arising, comes again from Sāriputta⁴¹

“And what is mentality-materiality? ... Feeling, perception, volition, contact, and attention – these are called mentality. The four great

⁴⁰MN 9.50 [PTS M i 52].

⁴¹In MN 9.54 [PTS M i 53].

elements and the material form derived from the four great elements – these are called materiality. So this mentality and this materiality are what is called mentality-materiality.”

Again we have a description that appears to be straightforward and literal. If we take *nāma* (“name” or “mentality”) to mean “mental processing” and *rūpa* (“form” or “materiality”) to be just the physical, then what’s being described is the body-mind duality. Doesn’t it seem odd for the Buddha to say that this is what is real, what is happening? That there is this split – a mind and a body? This possible misinterpretation may come from the assumption that these descriptions say all that there is to say about each item and that they should be interpreted as absolutely literal descriptions of the link. However, that is apparently not all that is going on here. The pattern of his descriptions indicates that Sāriputta’s definitions may not be fully delineating what part each link in the chain plays in quite the way we would.

For name-and-form to do its identifying, there does have to be a mind that is doing the processing: feeling, perceiving, intending, making contact, and paying attention; and there does have to be a material body functioning for this step to occur. Just as in the next step, active senses are required, and in the next, those active senses have to make contact, and so on, right up to the way in which, for a sense of self to come into existence, there has to be a literal birth, and for *dukkha* to happen, there has to be food for it, too: aging, sorrow, despair, broken teeth, and death, because those are the things we make *dukkha* out of. Just so, the activities of *nāmarūpa* (feeling, perceiving, choosing, making contact, attending to the objects of our senses) require that we have name-and-form ourselves, and the things we encounter in the world have it too.

Sāriputta seems to be asking us to pay attention to these to see what is going on in this step: notice the mental processing we do: notice how we see something (perceive it) through its form (*rūpa*) and we define it verbally (name it, *nāma*).

Given the background of the term *nāmarūpa* in the Prajāpati myth, and given this step’s place in the ritual reenactment of that myth, it should go without saying that the defining we are doing in this step is finding ourselves in the myriad names and forms around us. This is why, in so many suttas, the Buddha points out that sometimes when we see something outside us, we say of it, “This is me, this is mine, this I am.”

This interpretation is consistent with what we find in the Dīgha Nikāya’s full treatment of *paṭicca samuppāda*, a text that has been a little bit muddy in inter-

pretation in the past. A look at it through the lens of this theory of dependent arising makes it a little bit clearer.

Here is its description of *nāmarūpa*:⁴²

“From name-&-form as a requisite condition comes contact. Thus it has been said. And this is the way to understand how, from name-&-form as a requisite condition comes contact. If the qualities, traits, themes, & indicators by which there is a description of name-group (mental activity) (*nāmakāye*) were all absent, would designation-contact (*adhivacana samphasso*) with regard to the form-group (the physical properties) (*rūpakāye*) be discerned?”

“No, lord.”

It seems we are talking about how we define things based on their form. Here’s my grammatically less accurate but I hope more intelligible translation of the same thing:

“If the qualities, attributes, signs, and indicators by which we categorize things were not recalled when we make contact with something, would assigning special terms based on physical grouping be possible?”

In other words, if we had no definitions by which we categorize things based on the forms they take, would we know what they were by their forms? We couldn’t.

Note that the word translated above as “designation” (*adhivacana*) carries a connotation of connections made between one sense of something and another. For example, in MN 5.9⁴³ it is used to express that when the term “blemish” is used, what is actually meant is “unskillful wishes”, and in MN 19.26⁴⁴ it gets repeated use in matching metaphors to their real meanings.

With that in mind, the sentence above can be interpreted to say that because we already have in mind that certain physical characteristics of things connect to a particular meaning, when we see those characteristics, we categorize them that way; in the absence of those preconceived notions, we would not connect to forms

⁴²Translated by Thanissaro Bhikkhu, [http:// www.accesstoinight.org/ tipitaka/ dn/ dn.15.o.than.html](http://www.accesstoinight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.15.o.than.html) [PTS D ii 62]

⁴³Translated by Bhikkhus Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi [PTS M i 27]

⁴⁴Translated by Bhikkhus Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi [PTS M i 118]

in that way. That this is the point being made becomes clearer when we look at the next portion's reversal of the above, reflecting the pattern the first sentence established:

“If the permutations, signs, themes, and indicators by which there is a description of form-group (*rūpakāye*) were all absent, would resistance-contact (*paṭighasamphasso*) with regard to the name-group (*nāmakāye*) be discerned?”

“No, lord.”

The above reverses what's being considered. Here the question seems to be: If we perceived a physical object as indistinguishable from every other object – if all the signs were missing – would we reject it? The unspoken part of this question – unspoken because knowledge of the mythology of the day is assumed – makes the sentence end: “...would we reject it as being too different from us?”

These considerations are part of the Prajāpati myth, which has two particular variations. In one of them the division of the Creator (so that he can seek himself) results in many diverse forms. This was the more popular version, in which the sense of self is lost in diversity. In the reverse variant of the tale, what is created is so uniform that there is no way to distinguish self from other. When seen through the lens of the Prajāpati myths, in the first question Ananda is being asked: if the first case were true, if there were a zillion individuals and no two apparently alike, but we didn't have categories into which to sort things, would we be able to feel kinship with them, would we mistake them for self? And the second question is: if we could not distinguish between one form and another, including between ourselves and everything around us, would we reject things as alien?

Recognizing the two questions as having the Prajāpati myth as their unspoken, underlying source, makes the point clear: It is because we have already decided that the world has meaning that we behave as we do: accepting kinship with what is like us – and deeming those things necessary – and rejecting what is too different from us – and avoiding it.

“If the permutations, signs, themes, and indicators by which there is a description of name-group and form-group were all absent, would designation-contact or resistance-contact be discerned?”

“No, lord.”

“Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for contact, i.e., name-and-form.”

Contact, in DN 15’s formulation of dependent arising, quoted above, follows from name-and-form, (the senses are skipped in this version) and it seems the outcome of that contact is being shaded into this definition: We come to know ourselves through contact, and we already have a tendency toward seeing ourselves as similar to or different from whatever we encounter. It is because we put things into categories, and because things have distinguishable forms, that we are able to do this. This means that *nāmarūpa*’s field is not simply that we must have a mind and body capable of making distinctions, but that there must be individuals with distinctly separate forms which we can use as the basis of our definitions. Both of these are the fields in which what we are doing in this step can flourish. We are being asked to notice the ways in which we relate to things through their names and forms.

Consciousness (*viññāṇa*)

“From consciousness as a requisite condition comes name-and-form.’ ... If consciousness were not to descend into the mother’s womb, would name-and-form take shape in the womb?”

“No, lord.”

“If, after descending into the womb, consciousness were to depart, would name-and-form be produced for this world?”

“No, lord.”

“If the consciousness of the young boy or girl were to be cut off, would name-and-form ripen, grow, and reach maturity?”⁴⁵

“No, lord.”

“Thus this is a cause, this is a reason, this is an origination, this is a requisite condition for name-and-form, i.e., consciousness.”⁴⁶

Here is another description that seems just too literal to interpret as meaning anything other than “the consciousness we are talking about is the one that arrives because of conception.” Yet if we look at it as speaking to the requirement

⁴⁵Note that a young boy or girl does not have fully mature name-and-form – this matches with *nāmarūpa* being a reference to the point in their lives when youths are given the rites of passage to enter society as fully responsible members, and is also a reminder that, in the Buddha’s system, the process being described doesn’t begin before a certain level of maturity. For brahmin males, this point came long before puberty.

⁴⁶DN 15 Translated by Thanissaro Bhikkhu, <http://www.accesstosight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.15.o.than.html> [PTS D ii 63]

for this step to happen – in the same way that Sāriputta’s descriptions of all that we’ve covered before stipulate what is necessary for each step to occur, rather than describe the process itself – it makes sense. The consciousness that arises due to our need to know that we exist, the consciousness that brings what we think is *ātman* into existence, does indeed require what we usually call consciousness, the mental-processing ability that was nurtured in a womb, had the chance to survive childhood, and matured (ripened) into the separate individuality designated by *nāmarūpa*. That general consciousness – our ability to think at all – is necessary for this step to happen. Meanwhile, there is ignorance-consciousness, *saṃkhārā*-consciousness, the self-seeking consciousness which is the thing we need to really take notice of.

The Prajāpati myth tells us that our desire for existence, our hungry consciousness, causes the birth of name-and-form; and the Buddha tells us the same: that we divide up the world with reference to ourselves, just as Prajāpati did in the myth. Both kinds of consciousness are needed and described, just as both kinds of birth are needed and described.

“‘From name-and-form as a requisite condition comes consciousness.’ ... If consciousness were not to gain a foothold in name-and-form, would a coming-into-play of the origination of birth, aging, death, and stress in the future be discerned?”

“No, lord.”

It is easy to read the above on the fundamental, physical level as saying that if we did not have consciousness, we could not become individuals recognizable by our names and forms, and so we would not be born, age, die, or ever suffer stress; that is both clear and true. But it is also saying that if, in our desire to know ourselves, we did not divide the world up with our definitions, in ways that sort it out with reference to ourselves, we would not feed the consciousness that gives birth to that which we mistake for *ātman*, nor would that which arises suffer from aging and death, because it would not, in the future, come to exist. Both are true, and the condition defined by the former meaning is also necessary for the condition defined by the latter meaning to arise: we must have general consciousness existing in our individual form for the specific consciousness to seek and find itself in the things we identify as having to do with self.

“This is the extent to which there is birth, aging, death, passing away, and re-arising. This is the extent to which there are means of desig-

nation, expression, and delineation. This is the extent to which the sphere of discernment extends, the extent to which the cycle revolves for the manifesting (discernibility) of this world – i.e., name-and-form together with consciousness.”

To the extent that we use our definitions to delineate the world, to that extent will what we mistake for *ātman* be born, age, die, pass away, and re-arise, and to that extent will the world as we know it, as we define it, continue, because name-and-form and consciousness feed each other.

In the final analysis, name-and-form is the field that feeds consciousness.

Samkhārā (saṃkhārā)

Sāriputta once again gives us directions what to pay attention to in order to see *saṃkhārā* and what they do:

“And what are formations? ...There are these three kinds of formations: the bodily formation, the verbal formation, the mental formation.”⁴⁷

This translation might be easier to understand if we see “formations” as “rituals”. Look at the rituals we perform with our bodies, with our words and with our minds. What are our habits, what unexamined tendencies do we have, what things do we do without thinking much about them? These things are the fodder for our sense of self, they are the field in which it all happens.

“And how, bhikkhus, should one know, how should one see, for the immediate destruction of the taints to occur? Here, bhikkhus, the uninstructed worldling,... regards form as self. That regarding, bhikkhus, is a formation (*saṃkhāro*). That formation – what is its source, what is its origin, from what is it born and produced? When the uninstructed worldling is contacted by a feeling born of ignorance-contact, craving (*taṇhā*) arises; thence that formation is born.”⁴⁸

⁴⁷ MN 9.62 [PTS M ii 54]

⁴⁸ SN 22.81 translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha* (2000), [PTS S iii 96]

The sort of contact that causes trouble for the worldling is that particular form of contact that has a particular sort of ignorance as its first cause. Ignorance-contact isn't about just any kind of contact; it has nothing to do with contact that doesn't make reference to our sense of self. It is the contact generated by the set of "givens" that is covered by the origin myth's portion at the beginning of *paṭicca samuppāda*.

This sutta is saying that *saṃkhārā* have as their source the kind of ignorance-contact that results in feelings that we relate to self. *Samkhārā*, as the things we do, represent our craving for existence being fed what it hungers for: contact with what the senses are directed to look for. And this results in actions (habits, rituals) that bring that sense of self into visible existence.

Three things meet to make contact: the senses, their objects, and sense-consciousness. The moment of contact brings hungry sense-consciousness to completion by feeding it what it needs, making sense-consciousness seem to arise out of sequence. In the same way, *saṃkhārā*'s circuit is completed only when an experience feeds it what it seeks.

The *saṃkhārā* in the above can be understood as the equivalent of "that which arises", of our mistaken sense of a lasting self, because it is "the desire for existence" given support by events. It is, one could say, that desire taking form as action. It then stands in for all that follows, which is why the rest of the quote above reads:

"Thus, bhikkhus, that formation (*saṃkhāro*) is impermanent, conditioned, dependently arisen; that craving is impermanent, conditioned, dependently arisen... that feeling, that contact, that ignorance... When one knows and sees thus the immediate destruction of the taints occurs."

This piece works through *paṭicca samuppāda* in reverse order: craving, back to feeling, to contact, and then leaping back to ignorance. Presumably the links between are "assumed" and not needed in order to make the point.. But the *saṃkhārā*, coming as they do after craving (so it's *saṃkhārā*, craving, feeling, contact, ignorance) are the sense of self forming; they take shape because they have been fed the experience they need to confirm the theory that self exists.

Ignorance (*avijjā*)

"And what is ignorance? Not knowing about suffering (*dukkha*), not knowing about the origin of suffering, not knowing about the cessa-

tion of suffering, not knowing about the way leading to the cessation of suffering – this is called ignorance. With the arising of the taints there is the arising of ignorance.”⁴⁹

Sāriputta’s definition of ignorance is easy enough to understand: the problem is that we are ignorant of what exactly *dukkha* is, and what causes it, and so of course we can’t know that it can end, or how end it. On the surface this seems to bear little relation to all that follows, but it is, again, the field, the fodder for the first source of our problems, and it can also be seen as telling us what will follow, because dependent arising is the cure for ignorance. It is the cure because it defines *dukkha*, it shows us its origin, enables us to see that *dukkha* can be ended, and shows us the way to end it.

In the portion of the sutta that immediately follows this, the final section, Sāriputta defines the taints, because he has (above) said that the taints are the cause of ignorance.

“There are these three taints: the taint of sensual desire (*kāmāsavo*), the taint of being (*bhavāsavo*), and the taint of ignorance (*avijjāsavo*).”⁵⁰

We encountered two out of three of these back at *taṇhā*’s craving, where it was *kāmatanḥā*, *bhavanḥā*, and *vibhavanḥā* that were being discussed. These lists always seem to start with *kāma*,⁵¹ perhaps because even when people hold no strong views about what makes us who we are, or who we will be after death, they still have strong views about things that come to us through our senses: we need this, and don’t want that, need even more of this, feel we need a monopoly in it, will go to war over ensuring we have enough of it, whatever it is. All this starts with the senses, as is made clear by the number of times our senses are referred to in the detailed “ritual” portion of dependent arising.

Bhava is about becoming whatever we conceive ourselves to be – in *taṇhā* it was about craving for becoming, which is another way of saying *saṃkhārā*, craving for existence. The forms that this craving for and clinging to existence takes may come in a variety of flavors (*bhava* or *vibhava*; *diṭṭhi* or *sīlabbata* or *attavāda*) but they all seem to revolve around that simple desire to be whatever it is we think we are or should be, and to look for confirmation in the world around us.

⁴⁹MN 9.66 [PTS M i 54]

⁵⁰MN 9.70 [PTS M i 55]

⁵¹At *upādāna* it was *kāmupādānaṃ*, *diṭṭhupādānaṃ*, *sīlabbatupādānaṃ*, and *attavādupādānaṃ*. In *bhava* it was *kāmaabhavo*, *rūpabhavo*, *arūpabhavo*.

If the taints that are the field in which ignorance grows are simply the ways we act, just naturally, in response to our senses (*kāmāsavo*), and our unquestioned desire to prove ourselves to be who we think we are (*bhavāsavo*), perhaps the third taint (*avijjāsavo*) is named ignorance because that's what the other two are, also: all three are how people behave when they don't know any better. Ignorance really needs no first cause: it is just the way we arrive in the world.

Conclusions

With the groundwork laid by Joanna Jurewicz in her 2000 article “Playing With Fire” it became clear that many of the terms in the *paṭicca samuppāda* made reference to Vedic mythology, and in particular to creation myths about Prajāpati.

Linking those terms to the structure of the great fire ritual, the Agnicayana, in which Prajāpati's creation myth is the metaphor for the creation, perfection, and transformation of the *ātman*, reveals ritual as the structure that is likely to have originally supported the teaching of dependent arising, a structure that was so obvious in its time that it went without overt mention – leaving later generations puzzled.

The confusion of interpretations offered in the past is easily understood through looking at the many layers of meaning incorporated into each link in the chain of events being described.

The overall structure first draws on the model of the conception of the first man from his desire for existence, and the completion of this process in the individuality of name-and-form; next come the details of a life of rituals – the things done over and over again throughout one life; and finally there is a fairly literal description of conception, birth, aging, and death. That structure is modeled on the way a life was viewed in those days: there was the birth out of the mother's womb (first birth), but that didn't really make one a man; there was an initiation ceremony which was seen as the more important “second birth” that gave the upper classes their name of “Twice Born”; and finally, at death, there was the last big ritual which completed the cycle, giving *ātman* the birth that really counted, into a life beyond death (third birth). This Vedic system had the Sacrificer born three times in one life cycle – so it is no wonder that later thinkers, having lost the original context, caught echoes of those three lives and felt that what was being described was the previous life, the present life, and the next life.

On the other hand, the actual model really described only one life – from conception to death and the transition to life beyond death – so those who felt that *paṭicca samuppāda* described one life were right too.

The third popular interpretation of dependent arising has been that it describes the moment by moment appearance and fading of the sense of self. With the very detailed description of how sense information comes to us, is experienced, reacted to, and built upon, which description is followed by birth, aging, and death, this is quite understandable. Because aging and death are equated in the suttas with *dukkha*, it made sense to see what was being described as a birth of that sense of self which results in its suffering, dying, and going around again. Suttas that talk about the rapid arising and passing away of consciousness would seem to support that view too. Unfortunately that view would appear to mean that each moment's arising of that sense of self results in a rapid response of *dukkha*, resulting in the death of that sense of self before the whole thing starts again; but in the suttas the fruits of our actions are not described as consistently arriving so fast, so there was clearly something wrong with that model.

What had been missing is the recollection of how, in the days in which the Buddha lived, individuals participated throughout their lives in rituals which were believed to modify their *ātman* – correct problems, bring into being as yet untapped resources, and so on. The process might be seen as similar to building, all throughout a life, a retirement home in some beautiful, distant setting. You go there and work on it a little more each time, perhaps taking out something that didn't work so well, adding some new feature, and when the time comes, it will be perfect and you'll spend the rest of your days there. The *ātman* was not destroyed with each ritual, but was transformed, and arose better than before.

The Buddha preached against such rituals, in part because of the waste of lives of the animals slaughtered in some, like the Agnicayana, and he, along with the Jains, who were also against the sacrifices, seem to have had an effect, because it was not long before the sorts of rituals that were the model, here described as underlying dependent arising, were largely eliminated from brahminical culture. It may well be that the Buddha's use of ritual in dependent arising also played a part, by ridiculing the basis for those rituals, in making them unpopular. What an irony, then, that the strength of his argument eventually made its framework so obscure that the teaching it carried became confused by the terms and the relationships between the pieces.

Seeing the complexity of the structures underlying the *paṭicca samuppāda* in

this new way not only makes sense, but also makes sense of the ways it was interpreted in the past.

Buddhists have long known that their original teacher denied the existence of the *ātman*, so it comes as no surprise that this interpretation shows him using the popular model of *ātman*'s creation through a life-long series of rituals as the model of how our life-long rituals (aka “habits”) lead us to create that which can be mistaken for *ātman*, that aggregate of senses of self. This alternative view of dependent arising's structure reveals a lesson that is entirely consistent with what is said throughout the suttas: that there is no eternal self that moves on after death, and that it is the way we react to sensory information that is the key to seeing what it is we are mistaking for that eternal self. This new interpretation of the teaching brings into sharp focus the way in which we invest a bit of ourselves in our definitions of everything we encounter; how we seek and find in the world around us confirmation of our sense of who we are. We do so because we believe that confirmation to be there, and therefore put ourselves into everything, just as Prajāpati did.

All citations for the Pali suttas are given first with reference to Wisdom Publications volumes, when available, followed by their location in the Pali Text Society editions, as follows:

PTS Pali Text Society

A letter designation for the volume:

- M Majjhima Nikāya
- D Dīgha Nikāya
- S Saṃyutta Nikāya
- A Aṅguttara Nikāya
- Sn Sutta Nipāta
- I Itivuttakka
- U Udāna

A roman numeral for the book within the volume

an Arabic numeral for the PTS page number in that book

A comparison of the Chinese and Pāli versions of the *Bala Saṃyukta*, a collection of early Buddhist discourses on “Powers” (*Bala*)*

Choong Mun-keat

mchoong@une.edu.au

This article first briefly examines the textual structure of the *Bala Saṃyukta* (力相應 *Li Xiangying*) of the Chinese *Saṃyuktāgama* (Taishō vol. 2, no. 99) in conjunction with its Pāli parallel. Then it compares the main teachings contained in the two versions. These two versions of a collection on the subject of ‘powers’ (*bala*) represent two different early Buddhist schools within the Sthavira branch. This comparative study of them focuses on the composition of the usual set of five powers, on various other sets of powers, and on disagreements in some teachings about powers presented in the two versions. It reveals similarities but also significant differences in both structure and doctrinal content, thus advancing the historical/critical study of early Buddhist doctrine in this area.

Introduction

The *Bala Saṃyukta* (力相應 *Li Xiangying*) of the Chinese *Saṃyuktāgama* (henceforth abbreviated SA; 雜阿含經 *Za Ahan Jing*, Taishō vol. 2, no. 99) corresponds to the *Bala Saṃyutta* of the Pāli *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (abbreviated SN). This *saṃyukta* (相應 *xiangying*) is a collection of discourses on the subject of powers (*bala*, 力 *li*), teachings relating to one aspect of the path of practice, well known as the thirty-seven *bodhipakṣyā dharmāḥ* (P. *bodhipakkhiyā dhammā*, 菩提分法

*I am indebted to Rod Bucknell for his constructive comments and corrections on a draft of this article, particularly in the area of textual structure. I am also grateful to the anonymous reviewers for their supports and remarks.

putifenfa).¹ In his previous study on this topic, Choong presented only the major shared content of these two versions (Choong 2000, pp. 222-223), which is limited to the usual or standard set of five powers (*pañca balāni*, 五力 *wuli*):

1. Faith-power (*saddhābala* 信力 *xinli*)
2. Effort-power (*viriyabala* 精進力 *jingjinli*)
3. Mindfulness-power (*satibala* 念力 *nianli*)
4. Concentration-power (*samādhibala* 定力 *dingli*)
5. Wisdom-power (*paññābala* 慧力 *huili*)

As Choong stated in that earlier study (p. 222), “The contents of *Bala Samyutta* of SN and *Li Xiangying* of SA are vastly different. Of the 110 ‘discourses’ in SN *Bala Samyutta* the first presents a list of the *five powers*, while the remainder are devoid of significant content. The forty-two discourses of *Li Xiangying* of SA contain various information about the *five powers*. Twenty of them have Pāli counterparts, but they are located in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* rather than in SN.” In the present article, therefore, I examine in greater detail these and other issues regarding the SA and Pāli versions of this *samyukta*.

I first briefly examine the textual structure of the two versions. Then I compare the main teachings contained in them, making use of new editions of SA: Yin Shun’s *Za Ahan Jing Lun Huibian* 雜阿含經論會編 [*Combined Edition of Sūtra and Śāstra of the Samyuktāgama*] (abbreviated CSA) and the Foguang *Tripiṭaka Ahan Piṭaka Za Ahan Jing* 佛光大藏經 阿含藏 雜阿含經 (abbreviated FSA).² This will reveal both similarities and significant differences in structure and doctrinal content, thus advancing the study of early Buddhist teachings in this area.

1. Textual structure

The Pāli *Bala Samyutta* (Connected with Powers) is the sixth of the twelve *samyuttas* comprised in the *Mahā Vagga* (Great Section) of SN. The corresponding Chinese SA version was translated from now lost Indic-language originals.³ In the

¹ Choong (2000), “Chapter 7. The Path”, pp. 206-207.

² These two new editions contain textual corrections, modern Chinese punctuation, comments, and up-to-date information on Pāli and other textual counterparts, including different Chinese versions of the text.

³ Cf. Chung (2008), pp. 163-168.

CSA edition the SA version bears the title 力相應 *Li Xiangying* supplied by the editor, Yin Shun.⁴ In earlier editions of SA, *xiangying* or *samyukta* titles are lacking, and the beginning and end of each *samyukta* have to be inferred from the *sūtra* contents. This Chinese *Bala Samyukta* is located in the *Dao-pin Song* 道品誦 (Path Section) of the reconstructed SA. It is the fifth of the *xiangyings/samyuktas* that are identifiable in this Path Section.⁵

The SN version, preserved in Pāli, belongs to the Vibhajyavāda/Tāmraśāṭṭiya tradition (often called Theravāda). The SA version, preserved in Chinese translation, belongs to the Sarvāstivāda tradition. Thus, these two texts represent two different early Buddhist schools within the Sthavira branch, two different versions of the same collection of discourses on the subject of powers.

The Pāli *Bala Samyutta* comprises 110 discourses (SN 50.1-110), and none of them has a counterpart in the Chinese *Bala Samyukta*. The Chinese version has forty-three discourses, which do have Pāli counterparts; but nearly all of these

⁴CSA i, p. 47 (in ‘Za Ahan Jing Bulei zhi Zhengbian 雜阿含經部類之整編 [Re-edition of the Grouped Structure of SA]’), and vol. ii, p. 303.

⁵Choong (2000), pp. 19, 245; (2010), pp. 57-60. The Path Section (= the *Mahā Vagga* of SN) pertains to the *sūtra-aṅga* portion of SA/SN. *Sūtra/Sutta* is one of the three *aṅgas* represented in the structure of SA/SN: *Sūtra* (Prose), *Geyā* (Verse mixed with Prose), and *Vyākaraṇa/Veyyākaraṇa* (Exposition). In its explanation of the twelve *aṅgas* (十二分教) the *Bahubhūmika* (本地分) of the *Yogācārabhūmi-śāstra* (瑜伽師地論) explains *sūtra-aṅga* (契經) (T30, no. 1579, 418b-c) thus:

1. discourses connected with the Aggregates (無量蘊相應語)
2. discourses connected with the Sense Spheres (處相應語)
3. discourses connected with Causal Condition (緣起相應語)
4. discourses connected with the Nutriments (食相應語)
5. discourses connected with the Truths (諦相應語)
6. discourses connected with *Dhātus* (界相應語)
7. discourses connected with the *Śrāvaka-yāna*, the *Pratyekabuddha-yāna*, and the *Tathāgata-yāna* (聲聞乘相應語, 獨覺乘相應語, 如來乘相應語) (i.e. the sections spoken by *Śrāvakas* and the *Tathāgata*)
8. discourses connected with the Stations of Mindfulness, Right Efforts, Bases of Supernormal Power, Faculties, Powers, Enlightenment Factors, Path Factors, etc. discourses connected with Impurity, Mindfulness of Breathing, Trainings, and Definite Purity/Faith (念住 正斷 神足 根力 覺支 道支等相應語, 不淨 息念 諸學 證淨等相應語).

A similar content of *sūtra-aṅga* is also found in *Prakaranārya-vāca-śāstra* (顯揚聖教論, T31, no. 1602, 508c): “聞十二分教者。謂聞契經 應頌 記別 ... 契經者。謂諸經中 ... 或說蘊所攝法。界所攝法。處所攝法。或說緣起所攝法。或說食所攝法。諦所攝法。或說聲聞獨覺如來所攝法。或說念住正斷神足根力覺支道支所攝法。或說不淨息念學證淨等所攝法。”

counterparts are located in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* (abbreviated AN) rather than in SN. The full set of Chinese-Pāli counterparts is shown in the following table. (The identification of the Chinese-Pāli counterparts shown is open to discussion.)

Chinese-Pāli correspondences of the *Bala Samyukta* (Li Xiangying)

<i>Bala Samyukta</i> (Chinese SA)	Pāli <i>Sutta Piṭaka</i>
661 (cf. SA-u 16)	AN 2.2.1
662	
663	
664	
665	
666	
667 (cf. SA-u 18)	AN 4.152–153
668	
669	AN 4.32
670	AN 4.153
671 (cf. SA 670)	AN 4.153
672 (cf. SA 670)	AN 4.153
673	AN 5.13
674	
675	AN 5.15
676	
677	AN 5.1 (first part)
678	AN 5.1 (latter part)
679	AN 5.2 (first part)
680 (cf. SA 678)	AN 5.2 (latter part)
681	AN 5.5
682	AN 5.5
683	AN 5.5
684 (cf. SA 75, 701; EA 46.4)	SN 22. <i>Khandha Samyutta</i> 58 = SA 75; AN 10. 21 = SA 701; MN 12.
685	AN 5.7
686	AN 6.64 (first part)
687	AN 6.64 (latter part)
688	AN 7.3-4
689	AN 7.3
690	AN 7.3
691	AN 7.4

Continued on next page

<i>Bala Samyukta</i> (Chinese SA)	<i>Pāli Sutta Piṭaka</i>
692 (cf. EA 38.1)	AN 8.27
693 (cf. EA 38.1)	AN 8.27
694	AN 8.28
695 (cf. SA 694)	AN 8.28
696 (cf. SA 694)	AN 8.28
697	
698	
699	
700	
701 (cf. SA 684; EA 46.4)	AN 10.21
702	
703	

As the table shows, the discourses that make up the *Bala Samyutta* of the Pāli SN have no counterparts in the *Bala Samyukta* of the Chinese SA. Of the 110 ‘discourses’ in the *Bala Samyutta* of SN, the first, SN 50.1, presents a list of the usual five powers; the rest are devoid of significant content; they merely add the stereotyped Gaṅgā repetition series. The list of the usual five powers does appear in the *Bala Samyukta* of SA, e.g., in SA 673 (= AN 5.13).⁶ But although the Pāli SN 50.1 presents the same list, it includes detailed information on how to develop and cultivate the five, none of which is shared with the Chinese SA 673.⁷ Thus, as regards content and presentation, SN 50.1 and SA 673 are not parallel discourses. The list of the usual five powers is present also in other discourses of the *Bala Samyukta* of SA, e.g., SA 675. Other discourses of this SA *samyukta* contain various categories and information about powers other than the usual five; but, as stated above, nearly all of their counterparts are located in AN rather than in SN. The composition of the five powers and other sets of powers will be discussed later in the article. First, however, one issue relating to textual structure needs to be addressed.

In most cases a *samyukta* of SA and its counterpart in SN have a high percentage of their discourses in common; however, not one discourse is common to the

⁶SA 673: “世尊告諸比丘。有五力。何等為五。信力・精進力・念力・定力・慧力。” (T 2, p. 185c; CSA ii, p. 310; FSA 2, p. 1064). AN 5.13: III, p. 10: *Pañc’ imāni bhikkhave balāni. Katamāni pañca? Saddhābalaṃ, viriyabalaṃ, satibalaṃ, samādhibalaṃ, paññābalaṃ.*

⁷SN 50.1: V, p. 249: *Pañc’ imāni bhikkhave balāni. Katamāni pañca. Saddhābalaṃ viriyabalaṃ satibalaṃ samādhibalaṃ paññābalaṃ. Imāni kho bhikkhave pañca balānīti. Seyyathāpi bhikkhave Gaṅgā nadi pācīnaninnā pācīnapoṇā pācīnapabbharā evam eva kho bhikkhave bhikkhu pañca balāni bhāvento pañca balāni bahulīkaronto nibbānaninno hoti nibbānapoṇo nibbānapabbhāro. ... nibbānapabbhāro ti.* (Cf. Woodward 1930, p. 223; Bodhi 2000, p. 1713)

Bala Samyukta of SA and the *Bala Samyutta* of SN. Thus, the situation with the *Bala Samyukta* of SA and its SN counterpart is highly unusual. For this situation, two possible explanations suggest themselves.

The first possibility is that the Pāli *Bala Samyutta* formerly had much the same content as the present Sarvāstivādin version, but almost all of that content was subsequently moved out of SN and into AN. This first possibility seems unlikely, however, because it is hard to suggest a plausible motive for virtually emptying the *Bala Samyutta* in this way.

The second possibility is that both the content and the arrangement of the two versions developed *after* the two schools – the Sarvāstivāda (SA) and Vibhajjavāda/Tāmraśāṭṭiya (SN) – had separated within the Sthavira tradition. In other words, only the list of the usual five powers that is now common to the two versions was present in the earlier *Bala Samyukta* that existed before the split between the two schools. This second possibility is suggested by a striking feature of the entries in the right-hand column of the table. The twenty-seven AN parallels are in increasing numerical order of the AN *nipātas* (i.e., the numbers before the dot in the AN references shown in the table). The sequence is: 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 10. This suggests that the content of the SA *Bala Samyukta* was imported from the Sarvāstivādin Numerical Collection (the lost Sarvāstivādin counterpart of AN) at some time after the split from the Vibhajjavādin tradition.⁸ That is, it may be that both traditions felt a need to fill up a nearly empty *Bala Samyukta/Bala Samyutta*. This would mean that the *Bala Samyukta* in both traditions was a largely artificial creation. It may have originally contained just one discourse (on the standard five *balas*) and then later been expanded, independently in the two traditions. The implication is that the Sarvāstivādins selected from their Numerical Collection discourses that dealt with various numbers of *balas* and then moved them into the *Bala Samyukta* of SA, while on the other hand the Vibhajjavādins filled out their SN *Bala Samyutta* by adding the stereotype Gaṅgā repetition series.

⁸For the movement of material from the lost Sarvāstivādin Numerical Collection into the SA *Bala Samyukta*, there are partial parallels elsewhere in SA. One may consider, for example, the following SA *samyuktas*: *Sekha* = *Xue* 學 (SA 816-832), *Assa* = *Ma* 馬 (SA 917-926), *Kammavipāka* = *Yebao* 業報 (SA 1039-1061) (cf. Choong 2000, pp. 19, 21-22, 227-228, 246-247). For these, the Pāli parallels of the component *suttas* are almost all in AN. No intact Sarvāstivādin Numerical Collection is extant. (The Sarvāstivādin SA and MA are preserved intact in Chinese translation, and large portions of the Sarvāstivādin DA survive in Sanskrit.)

2. The contents of the usual five powers in the two versions

SA 675 records the Buddha as saying this:

Regarding the faith-power, one should know that it is the four definite faiths/purities. Regarding the effort-power, one should know that it is the four right efforts. Regarding the mindfulness-power, one should know that it is the four stations of mindfulness. Regarding the concentration-power, one should know that it is the four *dhyānas*. Regarding the wisdom-power, one should know that it is the four noble truths.⁹

Its Pāli counterpart, AN 5.15, has similar explanations, except for the power of faith.¹⁰ The AN discourse equates the faith-power with the “four limbs of stream-entry” (*catūsu sotāpattiyaṅgesu*), whereas the SA discourse equates it with the “four definite faiths/purities” (四不壞淨 *si buhuaijing*; 不壞淨 “definite faiths/purities” = Skt. *avetya-prasāda*, P. *avecca-pasāda*). Although the terms used are different, the contents of the two sets equated with the faith-power are equivalent, according to the *Sotāpatti Samyutta* of SN and its counterpart *Buhuaijing Xiangying* (不壞淨相應) of SA.¹¹ The four are: 1. definite faith (*aveccappasāda*) in the Buddha (佛不壞淨), 2. definite faith in the Dharma (法不壞淨), 3. definite faith in the Saṅgha (僧不壞淨), 4. noble morality (*ariyakanta-sīla*, 聖戒). Thus, the use of different terms in explaining the faith-power is the only significant divergence between the two traditions in this teaching on the usual five powers.

These five powers are essentially identical with the five faculties (*pañca indriyāni*), as is explicitly stated in SN 48. *Indriya Samyutta* 43 (SN V, pp. 219-220). That is, the five powers are the five faculties; the five items are the same in the two sets, *balas* and *indriyas*. On the other hand, the Pāli discourse in question (SN 48.43) has no SA counterpart; also, its content is totally absent from the *Bala Samyukta* of SA.¹²

⁹“彼信力。當知是四不壞淨。精進力者。當知是四正斷。念力者。當知四念處。定力者。當知是四禪。慧力者。當知是四聖諦。” T 2, p. 185c; CSA ii, p. 311; FSA 2, p. 1065. Cf. also SA 666 (T 2, p. 184c; CSA ii, p. 306; FSA 2, p. 1058).

¹⁰AN III, pp. 11-12: ... *Catūsu sotāpattiyaṅgesu* ... *Catūsu sammappadhānesu* ... *Catūsu satipatthānesu* ... *Catūsu jhānesu* ... *Catūsu ariyasaccesu* Cf. AN 5.14: III, pp. 10-11.

¹¹Choong (2000), pp. 220, 228-229.

¹²For a discussion of this issue regarding *bala* and *indriya*, see also Gethin (1992), “9. The *balas*”, pp. 140-145.

Nevertheless, these usual five powers are content common to the two versions and are therefore likely to date from before the two corresponding schools split.

3. The other sets of powers

While the usual set of five powers, just discussed, is the only set shared by the *Bala Samyukta* of SA and its counterpart in SN, there are, as mentioned above, other sets of *bala* recorded in the *Bala Samyukta* of SA that do have Pāli counterparts, though these are located not in SN but in AN. They are the following:

- Two *balas* “powers”:
Calculation-power, Cultivation-power.¹³
- Three *balas*:
Faith-power, Effort-power, Wisdom-power.¹⁴
- Four *balas*:
(1) Faith-power, Effort-power, Mindfulness-power, Wisdom-power.¹⁵
(2) Faith-power, Mindfulness-power, Concentration-power, Wisdom-power.¹⁶
(3) Faith-power, Effort-power, Mindfulness-power, Concentration-power¹⁷
(4) Enlightenment/Wisdom-power, Effort-power, Innocence-power, Sympathy-power¹⁸
- Five *balas*:
(Training powers:) Faith-power, Effort-power, Shame-power, Guilt-power, Wisdom-power.¹⁹
- Six *balas*:
The six powers of a Tathāgata (SA 686–687 = AN 6.64: III, 417–420)
- Seven *balas*:

¹³數力, 修力 (in SA 661) = *paṭisaṅkhānabala*, *bhāvanābala* (in AN 2.2.1: I, 52).

¹⁴信力, 精進力, 慧力 (SA 664–666, no Pāli counterparts).

¹⁵信力, 精進力, 念力, 慧力 (SA 667).

¹⁶信力, 念力, 定力, 慧力 (also in SA 667).

¹⁷*saddhābala* (= 信力), *viriyabala* (= 精進力), *satibala* (= 念力), *samādhībala* (= 定力) (AN 4.152: II, 141) = (1) and (2), above.

¹⁸覺力, 精進力, 無罪力, 攝力 (SA 667, 670–672) = *paññābala*, *viriyabala*, *anavajjabala*, *saṅgāhabala* (AN 4.153: II, 142).

¹⁹(學力:) 信力, 精進力, 慚力, 愧力, 慧力 (SA 677–680) = (*sekhābalāni*;) *saddhābala*, *hiribala* (= 慚力), *ottappabala* (= 愧力), *viriyabala*, *paññābala* (AN 5.1–2: III, 1–2).

Faith-power, Effort-power, Shame-power, Guilt-power, Mindfulness-power, Concentration-power, Wisdom-power.²⁰

- Eight *balas*:

- (1) 自在王者力, 斷事大臣力, 結恨女人力, 啼泣嬰兒力, 毀咎愚人力, 審諦黠慧力, 忍辱出家力, 計數多聞力 (SA 692-693) = *Roṇṇabalā dāraka, kodhabalā mātugāmā, āvudhabalā corā, issariyabalā rājāno, ujjhattibalā bālā, nijjhattibalā paṇḍitā, paṭisaṅkhānabalā bahussutā, khantibalā samaṇabrāhmaṇā* (AN 8.27: IV, 223)
- (2) The “eight powers of an influx-extinguished *bhikṣu*” (SA 694 = AN 8.28: IV, 223-225)²¹

- Nine *balas*:

Faith-power, Effort-power, Shame-power, Guilt-power, Mindfulness-power, Concentration-power, Wisdom-power, Calculation-power, Cultivation-power.²²

- Ten *balas*:

- (1) The ten powers of a *Tathāgata* (SA 684, 701 = AN 10.21: V, 32-36; MN 12: I, 68-83; SA 685 = AN 5.7: III, 5-6; SA 702, 703)
- (2) 自在王者力, 斷事大臣力, 機關工巧力, 刀劍賊盜力, 怨恨女人力, 啼泣嬰兒力, 毀咎愚人力, 審諦黠慧力, 忍辱出家力, 計數多聞力 (SA 699-700, no Pāli counterparts)

²⁰ 信力, 精進力, 慚力, 愧力, 念力, 定力, 慧力 = *saddhābala, viriyabala, hiribala, ottappabala, satibala, samādhībala, paññābala* (SA 688-691 = AN 7. 3-4: IV, 3-4).

²¹ The “eight powers of an influx-extinguished *bhikṣu*” (漏盡比丘有八力, *aṭṭha khīṇāsavassa bhikkhuno balāni*) in the two versions have minor differences in content, as follows. SA 694 (T 2, p. 188b; CSA ii, p. 322; FSA 2, p. 1084): (1) Power of inclining towards seclusion (離), (2) Power of seeing the five sensualities as fire-pits (若見五欲, 猶見火坑), (3)-(8) Power of practising (修) the four stations of mindfulness (四念處), the four right efforts (四正斷), the four bases of supernormal power (四如意足), the five faculties-and-powers (五根 · 五力), the seven factors of enlightenment (七覺分), and the noble eightfold way (八聖道分). AN 8.27: IV, 223-225: (1) Power of fully seeing (*suditṭhā*) by right wisdom (*sammappaññāya*) all compounded things (*sabbe saṅkhārā*) as they really are (*yathābhūtam*) as impermanent (*aniccato*), (2) Power of seeing the sensualities (*kāma*) as fire-pits (*aṅgarakāsūpamā*), (3) Power of inclining towards seclusion (*viveka*), (4)-(8) Power of practicing (*bhāvitā*) the four stations of mindfulness (*cattāro satipaṭṭhānā*), the four bases of supernormal power (*cattāro iddhipādā*), the five faculties (*pañc’ indriyāni*), the seven factors of enlightenment (*satta bojjhaṅgā*), and the noble eightfold way (*ariyo aṭṭhaṅgiko maggo*) (Cf. Hare 1935, pp. 151-152).

²² 信力, 精進力, 慚力, 愧力, 念力, 定力, 慧力, 數力, 修力 (SA 697-698, no Pāli counterparts). Note: This set is a combination of the seven and the two *balas*.

(details discussed below, Section 4.(3))

Some sets of *bala* in the *Bala Samyukta* of SA have no Pāli parallels. The SA tradition therefore appears to have preserved or developed more sets of *bala* than the Pāli tradition.

4. Disagreements in some teachings on *balas*

In the following I discuss only the principal disagreements on some *bala*-related teachings presented in the *Bala Samyukta* of SA and its Pāli counterparts, under three headings: (1) Four powers, (2) Ten powers: the *Tathāgata* and the Wisdom-liberated one, and (3) Eight powers and ten powers.

(1) Four powers

(SA 667, 670-672 = AN 4.153; SA 667 = SA-u 18;
SA 668, no Pāli counterpart; SA 669 = AN 4.32)

The SA discourses numbered 667, 670-672 and their Pāli counterpart AN 4.153 list, among other sets, this set of four powers:

1. Enlightenment/ Wisdom-power (覺力 *jueli*, *paññābala*)²³
2. Effort-power (精進力 *jingjinli*, *viriyabala*)
3. Innocence-power (無罪力 *wuzuili*, *anavajjabala*)
4. Sympathy-power (攝力 *sheli*, *saṅgāhabala*)

SA 667 provides an explanation of this set, particularly the sympathy-power. This explanation is also found in another Chinese version, SA-u 18 (T2, no. 101: p. 497b), which is the counterpart of SA 667. The following discusses some issues raised by these explanations.

(a) SA 667 reports the Buddha as saying this:²⁴

There are four powers. ...

²³Note: “The power of faith” in Woodward (1933), p. 145 is mistranslated (or misprinted?) for the term *paññābalaṃ* (AN 4.153: II, p. 142).

²⁴“有四力。何等為覺力。於善・不善法如實知。有罪・無罪。習近・不習近。卑法・勝法。黑法・白法。有分別法・無分別法。緣起法・非緣起法如實知。是名覺力。何等為精進力。謂四正斷。如前廣說。何等為無罪力。謂無罪身・口・意。是名無罪力。何等為攝力。謂四攝事。惠施・愛語・行利・同利。” T 2, p. 184c; CSA ii, p. 307; FSA 2, p. 1059.

What is enlightenment-power? One knows, as they really are, good and bad *dharma*s; guilt and innocence; acceptable and unacceptable; inferior and superior *dharma*s; black and white *dharma*s; distinguishing and undistinguishing *dharma*s; conditioned arising *dharma*s and unconditioned arising *dharma*s (非緣起法 *feiyuan-qifa*). This is what is called enlightenment-power.

What is effort-power? This is the four right efforts, as explained above in detail.

What is innocence-power? This is to be guiltless in body, speech and mind. This is what is called innocence-power.

What is sympathy-power? This is the four bases of sympathy (“holding together”): charitable giving, kind speech, beneficial conduct, and treating equally.

Another Chinese version, SA-u 18 (the counterpart of SA 667), reports the Buddha as explaining the four powers thus:²⁵

There are four powers. What are the four powers? The first is mind-power (意力 *yili*); the second is effort-power (精進力 *jingjinli*); the third is non-violating power (不犯力 *bufanli*); the fourth is guarding power (守力 *shouli*).

What is mind-power? A monk knows good and bad conditions (善惡濁 *shan'ezhuo*) as they really are; he knows violating/offensive and non-violating; he knows approaching and non-approaching; he knows lesser and outstanding; he knows black and white; and he also knows arising conditions/states (從得濁 *congdezhuo*) as they really are. This is what is called mind-power.

²⁵“有四力。何等為四力。一者意力。二者精進力。三者不犯力。四者守力。意力為何等。若有比丘知善惡濁如至誠知。亦知犯亦知不犯。亦知可行亦知不可行。亦知非亦知增。亦知白亦知黑。亦知從得濁如諦知。是名為意力。精進力為何等。在有比丘在有濁所惡說。所犯說。所不可說。所黑說。不用進人說。如是輩為棄之。若所為濁好說。不犯說。可習說。可說。白說。所道說。如是輩濁。為行為貪欲。為行為精進。為受意。為制意。是名為精進力。不犯力為何等。在有比丘為不犯身受行止。為不犯口。為不犯心受行止。是名為不犯力。守力為何等。謂四輩。何等為四輩。一為攝。二為布施。三為相哀。四為相助善行。是名為守力。” T2, no. 101: p. 497b.

What is effort-power? Whatever states (濁 *zhuo*) are regarded (說 *shuo*) as evil, offensive, unacceptable, black, [and] not useful – these a monk discards (為棄之 *weiqizhi*); but whatever states are regarded as good, inoffensive, acceptable, welcome, white, [and] virtuous – for such states (如是輩濁 *rushibeizhuo*) he acts with zeal, acts with effort, exerts his mind, directs his mind. This is what is called effort-power.

What is non-violating power? A monk does not violate the moral discipline (受行止 *shouxingzhi*) with regard to body, speech, and mind. This is what is called non-violating power.

What is guarding power? This is the four bases. What are the four bases? The first is holding together, the second is charitable giving, the third is treating with kindness, and the fourth is helpful good conduct. That is what is called guarding power.

Thus, the expressions and contents of these two Chinese versions (SA 667 and SA-u 18) of the four powers are clearly not the same, although to some extent they are similar in meaning. Also, some Chinese terms, such as 善惡濁 *shan'ezhuo*, 從得濁 *congdezhuo*, used in the SA-u 18 version are not easily understood without comparing with SA 667.

(b) The items listed above for the four bases of sympathy/guarding are also listed in SA 669 = AN 4.32.²⁶ The corresponding Pāli terms in AN 4.32 are, *cattāri saṅgahavatthūni* (four bases of sympathy), *dāna* (charitable giving), *peyyavajja* (kind speech), *atthacariyā* (useful conduct), and *samānattatā* (treating equally). Thus, the notion of four bases of sympathy is shared by the two traditions.

(c) Regarding the four bases of sympathy, SA 668 reports the Buddha as saying:²⁷

What is the highest charitable giving? It is giving the Dharma. What is the highest kind speech? It is when a good man, who is happy to

²⁶T 2, p. 185a; CSA ii, p. 308; FSA 2, pp. 1060–1061. AN II, p. 32 (cf. Woodward 1933, p. 36).

²⁷“若最勝施者。謂法施。最勝愛語者。謂善男子樂聞。應時說法。行利最勝者。諸不信者能令入信。建立於信。立戒者以淨戒。慳者以施。惡智者以正智令入建立。同利最勝者。謂阿羅漢以阿羅漢。阿那含以阿那含。斯陀含以斯陀含。須陀洹以須陀洹。淨戒者以淨而授於彼。” T 2, p. 185a; CSA ii, p. 307; FSA 2, p. 1060.

learn, is given a Dharma talk at an appropriate time. What is the highest useful conduct? It is being able to help those who are unbelievers to have faith, to establish faith; being able to help those who would like to establish morality to have pure morality; being able to help those who are stingy to delight in charitable giving; being able to help those who have wrong knowledge to establish right knowledge. What is the highest equal treatment? It is treating those (而授於彼 *ershouyubi*) who are *Arhats* as *Arhats*, those who are *Anāgāmins* as *Anāgāmins*, those who are *Sakṛdāgāmins* as *Sakṛdāgāmins*, those who are *Srotāpannas* as *Srotāpannas*; and those who have established pure morality as pure.

This discourse does not, however, have a Pāli counterpart. Also, the explanation of the item, equal treatment (同利 *tongli*) seems unclear, both in meaning and in the practical sense. The antiquity of these pieces of doctrine is therefore in question.

Accordingly, the explanations of the four powers provided in SA 667 and SA-u 18 not only are different in phrasing, but also are not found in the Pāli version. Only the items on the four powers and on the four bases of sympathy are included in the Pāli version (AN 4.153, and AN 4.32). Also, the teachings in SA 668 on what is the highest in each of the four bases of sympathy are totally lacking in the Pāli version. Therefore, this set of four powers is likely to be a later doctrinal development, one that is particularly developed in the SA tradition.

(2) The *Tathāgata* and the Wisdom-liberated one: Ten powers

(SA 684 = SN 22.58 (= SA 75) + AN 10.21 (= SA 701))

In content and in structure SA 684 presents two parts.²⁸ The first part is about the distinction, the specific feature, the difference between the *Tathāgata*, who is fully enlightened, and a wisdom-liberated one. The second part is about the ten powers of a *Tathāgata*. The first part corresponds to one Pāli discourse, SN 22.58 (= SA 75);²⁹ the second part corresponds to another Pāli discourse, AN 10.21 (= SA 701).³⁰ Thus, the Chinese SA 684 amounts to a combination of these two Pāli

²⁸T 2, pp. 186b-187c; CSA ii, pp. 314-317; FSA 2, pp. 1071-1076.

²⁹SN III, pp. 65-66; cf. Woodward (1925), pp. 57-58; Bodhi (2000), pp. 900-901. T 2, p. 19b-c; CSA i, pp. 122-123; FSA 1, pp. 122-123.

³⁰AN V, pp. 32-36; Woodward (1936), pp. 23-26. T 2, p. 189a; CSA ii, p. 325; FSA 2, p. 1088.

texts, SN 22.58 and AN 10.21. Some issues, between the Chinese SA and Pāli versions in each of these two parts, need to be addressed here.

In the first part of SA 684 and also in SN 22.58 the Buddha explains what is the distinction, the specific feature, the difference between the *Tathāgata*, who is fully enlightened, and the wisdom-liberated one (*paññāvimutto*, 慧解脱 *hui-jietuo*). However, these two texts use different expressions when referring to the *Tathāgata* and the wisdom-liberated one, as follows:

SA 684 (also SA 75)	SN 22.58
如來·應·等正覺 <i>rulai ying dengzhengjue</i> (the <i>Tathāgata</i> , worthy one, fully enlightened)	<i>Tathāgato araham sammāsambuddho</i> (the <i>Tathāgata</i> , Arhant, fully enlightened)
阿羅漢慧解脱 <i>aluohan huijietuo</i> (an Arhant liberated by wisdom)	<i>paññāvimuttena bhikkhunā</i> (a <i>bhikṣu</i> liberated by wisdom)

The SA version indicates the difference between the *Tathāgata* and an Arhant liberated by wisdom, whereas the SN version distinguishes between the *Tathāgata* who is Arhant and a *bhikṣu* liberated by wisdom. In SA the Chinese term, 應 *ying* (“worthy one”) is translated according to the meaning from the Sanskrit term arhant, but the term 阿羅漢 *aluohan* is transcribed according to the sound from the same Sanskrit term arhant. The SA version applies the transcribed term 阿羅漢 *aluohan* to the person who is liberated by wisdom but not to the *Tathāgata*. The SN version applies the term Arhant (P. *Arahant*) to the *Tathāgata* but not to the person who is liberated by wisdom. Thus, in SA an Arhant is portrayed as being at a lower level than a *Tathāgata*, while in SN an Arhant is at the same level as a *Tathāgata* (cf. Choong 2000, p. 69).

A similar situation is found in the second part of SA 684 and in AN 10.21. Both record that the Buddha explains the ten powers³¹ of a *Tathāgata*. However,

³¹ MN 12 *Mahāsīhanāda Sutta* (I, pp. 68-83. Cf. Horner 1954, pp. 91-110; Ñāṇamoli and Bodhi 1995, pp. 164-178) provides an explanation, listing the ten powers (*dasa balāni*) of a *Tathāgata*, similar to SA 684 and AN 10.21, as follows:

- (1) knowing, as it really is, the possible as possible and the impossible as impossible
- (2) knowing, as it really is, the result of past, present and future actions
- (3) knowing, as it really is, the path leading to all destinations
- (4) knowing, as it really is, the world with its many different elements
- (5) knowing, as it really is, the different inclinations of beings
- (6) knowing, as it really is, the lower and higher faculties of beings

at the end the two versions use different expressions when referring to the result of attaining the ten powers of a *Tathāgata*, as follows:

SA 684 (also SA 701)	AN 10.21
Possessed of such powers, the <i>Tathāgata</i> , worth one, fully enlightened, attains the highest wisdom of the past Buddhas, is able to set rolling the Brahma-wheel, roars his lion's roar in the assemblies. ³²	These then, <i>bhikkhus</i> , are the <i>Tathāgata</i> 's powers of a <i>Tathāgata</i> , possessed of which the <i>Tathāgata</i> claims leadership, roars his lion's roar in the assemblies and sets rolling the Brahma-wheel. ³³
These ten powers are possessed only by a <i>Tathāgata</i> . This is what is called the various differences between the <i>Tathāgata</i> and a <i>Śrāvaka</i> . ³⁴	

The term *śrāvaka* (P. *sāvaka*), meaning “a hearer”, here refers to a disciple who could be a *bhikkhu* or an *Arhant* liberated by wisdom. The SA version of the notion of the ten powers of a *Tathāgata* distinguishes between the *Tathāgata* and a disciple of the Buddha, whereas the SN version does not clearly do this.

This feature of the SA version may, to some extent, reflect later Mahāyāna developments. In Mahāyāna Buddhist tradition the *Śrāvaka* and the *Arhant* are rated less highly than the follower of the Bodhisattva path, whose aim is to become a Buddha. The stage of Buddha in Mahāyāna Buddhism is achieved only by practitioners following the Bodhisattva path.

(3) Eight powers and ten powers

(SA 692-693 = AN 8.27; SA 699-700, no Pāli counterpart)

SA 692-693 and their Pāli counterpart AN 8.27 present a set of eight powers thus:

-
- (7) knowing, as it really is, the defilement, purity and arising with regard to the jhānas, liberations, concentrations and attainments
 - (8) knowing, as it really is, recollection of many former births
 - (9) knowing, as it really is, perceiving with the divine eye how beings pass away and reappear according to their actions
 - (10) knowing, as it really is, entering on and abiding in, through extinction of all influxes, the liberation of mind and liberation through wisdom

However, SA 686-687 (T 2, p. 187b-c; CSA ii, pp. 318-319; FSA 2, pp. 1077-1079) = AN 6.64: III, pp. 417-420, mention in common only the six powers. They are (1)-(3), (8)-(10) of the above ten powers.

SA 692-693: The power of kings is ruling, **the power of ministers is judging**, the power of women-folk is hatred/scolding, the power of children is crying, the power of fools is slander, the power of wise men is carefulness, the power of recluses is patience, the power of the learned is scrutiny.³⁵

AN 8.27: The power of children is crying, the power of women-folk is scolding, **the power of thieves is weapons/fighting**, the power of kings is ruling, the power of fools is contention, the power of wise men is cleverness/suavity, the power of the learned is analysis/scrutiny, the power of recluses and brahmins is patience.³⁶

Only one power in each version is not shared: SA has “the power of ministers is judging”, whereas AN has “the power of thieves is weapons”. The sequence in this set of eight powers is also different in the two versions.

A similar set, but with ten powers rather than eight, is found in SA 699-700, which have no Pāli counterpart:

The power of kings is ruling, the power of ministers is judging, **the power of skilled workers is tools**, **the power of thieves is weapons**, the power of women-folk is hatred/scolding, the power of children is crying, the power of fools is contention, the power of wise men is suavity, the power of recluses is patience, the power of the learned is scrutiny.³⁷

Compared with the list of eight powers in SA 692-693 (quoted above), this adds “the power of thieves is weapons”, which is also found in AN 8.2 (quoted above); and it adds one further power, “the power of skilled workers is tools”.

As regards its contents this set of ten powers seems largely irrelevant to the life of *bhikkhus*. It is therefore unclear why the Buddha should have taught it to them.

³⁵“自在王者力，斷事大臣力，結恨女人力，啼泣嬰兒力，毀咎愚人力，審諦黠慧力，忍辱出家力，計數多聞力。” T 2, p. 188b; CSA ii, pp. 321-322; FSA 2, pp. 1082-1083.

³⁶*Roṇṇabala dāraka, kodhabāla mātugāmā, āvudhabalā corā, issariyabalā rājāno, ujjhattibalā bālā, nijjhattibalā paṇḍitā, paṭisaṅkhānabalā bahussutā, khantibalā samaṇabrāhmaṇā.* AN IV, p. 223; cf. Hare (1935), p. 150.

³⁷“自在王者力，斷事大臣力，機關工巧力，刀劍賊盜力，怨恨女人力，啼泣嬰兒力，毀咎愚人力，審諦黠慧力，忍辱出家力，計數多聞力。” T 2, pp. 188c-189a; CSA ii, p. 324; FSA 2, pp. 1086-1088.

Also, there are more such discourses on powers in the SA tradition that have no Pāli parallels. Thus, although many of the discourses on powers are common to the two traditions, questions must be raised regarding the antiquity of the pieces of doctrine that are not shared.

Conclusion

The discourses that make up the *Bala Samyutta* of the Pāli SN have no counterparts in the *Bala Samyukta* of the Chinese SA. The discourses in the *Bala Samyukta* of the Chinese SA have Pāli counterparts located not in SN but rather in AN. No discourse is common to the *Bala Samyukta* of SA and the *Bala Samyutta* of SN. For this situation, two possible explanations are suggested. The first is that the two versions formerly matched up well, but the Pāli tradition subsequently removed most of the contents of this earlier *Bala Samyutta* into AN. The second possibility is that the textual structure and arrangement of SA and SN may have developed after the two traditions had separated; only the usual list of five powers, which is common to the two versions of the *Bala Samyukta* is original. The *Bala Samyukta* in both traditions was a largely artificial creation; because the standard five powers (*bala*) belonged to the well-known thirty-seven *bodhipakṣyā dharmāḥ*, each of the two traditions independently filled up the *Bala Samyukta*, which originally may have contained just one discourse on this standard set of five *balas*.

As to contents, this comparative study has focused on the usual set of five powers in the Chinese and Pāli versions, on a variety of other sets of powers, and on disagreements on some teachings about powers. The comparison has revealed the following main points:

1. The SA version of *Bala Samyukta* has more sets of powers than the Pāli.
2. The only difference between the Chinese SA and the Pāli *nikāyas* regarding the usual five powers is in the terminology used in explaining the faith-power (the first of the five). The relevant Pāli AN discourse associates the faith-power with the “four limbs of stream-entry” (*catūsu sotāpattiyaṅgesu*), while the SA discourse associates it with the “four definite faiths/purities” (四不壞淨 *si buhuaijing*). But despite this difference in terminology, the contents of the faith-power are the same in the two cases.
3. The five powers are identical with the five faculties (*pañca indriyāni*) as is explicitly indicated in SN 48. *Indriya Samyutta* 43. However, this discourse has no

SA counterpart; indeed, its content is entirely absent from the *Bala Samyukta* of SA.

4. The contents of one set of four powers – 1. Enlightenment, 覺力 *jueli*, 2. Effort-power 精進力 *jingjinli*, 3. Innocence-power 無罪力 *wuzuili*, 4. Sympathy-power 攝力 *sheli*, *saṅgāhabala* – are particularly developed in the SA tradition.

5. In the teaching on ten powers, the SA version indicates an *Arhant* is at a lower level than a *Tathāgata*, while the SN version indicates they are at the same level. The SA version also distinguishes between the *Tathāgata* and a disciple of the Buddha, whereas the SN version does not clearly state this.

6. As regards content, the set of eight or ten powers – the power of kings is ruling, etc. – appears largely unrelated to the life of *bhikṣus*. Also, there are more discourses devoted to this in SA than in AN. Thus, even though many of these pieces of doctrine are common to SA and AN, their antiquity is in question.

Overall, this study has revealed some substantial disagreements in the major teachings on *bala* “powers” between the Chinese and Pāli versions of the *Bala Samyukta*.

Abbreviations

- AN *Āṅguttara-nikāya*
 CSA Yin Shun's *Za Ahan Jing Lun Huibian* [*Combined Edition of Sūtra and Śāstra of the Saṃyuktāgama*] (3 vols, 1983)
 DA *Dīrghāgama* (T 2, no. 1)
 EA *Ekottarikāgama* (T 2, no. 125)
 FSA Foguang *Tripitaka Ahan Piṭaka Za Ahan Jing (Saṃyuktāgama)* (4 vols, 1983)
 MA *Madhyamāgama* (T 1, no. 26)
 MN *Majjhima-nikāya*
 PTS Pali Text Society
 SA *Saṃyuktāgama* (T 2, no. 99)
 SA-u Unattributed SA (T 2, no. 101) (The author and school of this collection are unidentified. An Shigao (fl. 148-170) is considered the translator by some. Harrison 2002, p. 2.)
 SN *Saṃyutta-nikāya*
 T Taishō Chinese *Tripitaka* (the standard edition for most scholarly purposes)

AN, MN and SN references are to PTS editions.

Bibliography

- BODHI, Bhikkhu (trans.), *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya* (Wisdom Publications, Boston, MA, 2000).
 CBETA Chinese Electronic Tripitaka Version 2007 (Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association, Taipei).
 CHOONG, Mun-keat, *The Fundamental Teachings of Early Buddhism: A comparative study based on the Sūtrāṅga portion of the Pāli Saṃyutta-Nikāya and the Chinese Saṃyuktāgama* (= *Beiträge zur Indologie* 32) (Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden 2000).
 CHOONG, Mun-keat, 'Problems and Prospects of the Chinese *Saṃyuktāgama*: Its structure and content', *Translating Buddhist Chinese: Problems and Prospects* (= *East Asia Intercultural Studies - Interkulturelle Ostasienstudien* 3; edited by Konrad Meisig) (Harrassowitz Verlag, Wiesbaden, 2010), pp. 53-64.

- CHUNG, Jin-il, *A Survey of the Sanskrit Fragments Corresponding to the Chinese Saṃyuktāgama* (Sankibō Busshorin, Tokyo, 2008).
- GETHIN, Rupert, *The Buddhist Path to Awakening* (1992; Oneworld Publication, Oxford, reprinted 2001).
- HARE, E. M. (trans.), *The Book of the Gradual Sayings, vol. IV* (PTS, London, 1935).
- HARRISON, Paul, 'Another Addition to the An Shigao Corpus? Preliminary Notes on an Early Chinese Saṃyuktāgama Translation', in *Early Buddhism and Abhidharma Thought: In Honor of Doctor Hajime Sakurabe on His Seventy-seventh Birthday* (Kyoto, 2002), pp. 1-32.
- HORNER, I. B. (trans.), *The Middle Length Sayings vol. I* (PTS, London, 1954).
- ÑĀṆAMOLI, Bhikkhu and Bodhi, Bhikkhu, *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A New Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya* (Buddhist Publication Society, Kandy, 1995).
- WOODWARD, F. L. (trans.), *The Book of the Kindred Sayings, vols. III, V* (PTS, London, 1925, 1930)
- WOODWARD, F. L. (trans.), *The Book of the Gradual Sayings, vols. II, V* (PTS, London, 1933, 1936)
- YIN SHUN (印順), 原始佛教聖典之集成 *Yuanshi Fojiao Shengdian zhi Jicheng* [The Formation of Early Buddhist Texts] (Zhengwen Chubanshe, Taipei, 1971).

Designations of Ancient Sri Lankan Buddhism in the Chinese Tripiṭaka¹

Chuan Cheng

chuancheng@bcs.edu.sg

According to the Chinese literary sources, both Buddhist and secular, a formal diplomatic relationship between China and Sri Lanka started as early as the first part of the fourth century CE. References to the Buddhist tradition existing on this island were made slightly earlier. This article examines all the Chinese references to it found in the Chinese Buddhist canon; they are mainly Chinese translations and transliterations of *tāmraparṇīya* and *sthavira*. It argues that the Buddhist tradition of ancient Sri Lanka is referred to in the Chinese Buddhist literature by terms such as *tāmraparṇīya* and in some cases as *sthavira* or **sthaviriya*. It also supports the view that it is *Tāmraparṇīya* (P. *Tambapaṇṇī[ya]*) rather than *Tāmraśāṭṭīya* that is used in Vasubandhu's and Bhavya's works in referring to the ancient Sri Lankan Buddhist tradition.

Ancient Sri Lanka, known to the Chinese as “Lion Country” 师子國, had its first official contact with the Chinese empire in the early 4th century CE,² yet

¹The format of the references to Chinese Buddhist texts is that which appears in the Dharma Drum College's electronic version of the Taisho edition of the Chinese Tripiṭaka. I would like to thank the two anonymous reviewers for their valuable comments and suggestions. My thanks also go to the editor, Professor Gombrich, for his kindness and encouragement. All errors remaining are nobody else's responsibility but mine.

²Chu sanzang jiji 出三藏記集, (compl. by Sengyou 僧祐 445-518), T54n2145.p092b. Cf. the Gaoseng zhuan 高僧傳, T50n2059.p0410b02-b04. An official history, the Songshu 宋書, mentions that the event took place in 430 and 435 under Emperor Wen's reign. See Songshu, Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 8 vols., 1974, pp. 79, 83, 2384. Strictly speaking, the character 师 should be written as 獅, but they are two homophonic characters found interchangeably in ancient Chinese texts. The country's name is even found in sūtras, see Zengyi ahan jing 增壹阿含經, T02n0125.p0629b05-06, Zhengfa nianchu jing 正法念處經, T17n0721.p0302c29-a03.



with regard to the Buddhist tradition existing in the island, few early Chinese sources specifically mention its name. This holds true for the sectarian affiliation of the two Chinese translations which are now generally believed to have been composed by the Sri Lankan Saṃgha.³ Similarly, there is hardly any information on the affiliated tradition of the more than a dozen members of the Saṃgha who either came from or had stayed in that island before they went to China during the fourth and sixth centuries.⁴ The earliest Chinese work containing information on Buddhism in that country is Faxian's (法顯 ca.337-ca. 442) travel records, the *Gaoseng Faxian zhun* 高僧法顯傳 or 'Biography of the Eminent Monk Faxian', in which he mentions Abhayagiri Vihāra and a monastery called *mohe piheluo* 摩訶毘何羅 (i.e. Mahāvihāra).⁵ Although he also states that he stayed in the country for two years and obtained a *Vinaya* text belonging to the school of Mishasai 彌沙塞 (i.e. Mahīśāsaka), he nowhere specifies the original relationship of these two monasteries with the traditional eighteen Schools.⁶ The fact that he obtained a copy of the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya* could mean many things, among which is the probability that the school of Mahīśāsaka existed there, and that one or both of the two monasteries were using this *Vinaya* text as their disciplinary code.

After Faxian, references to the Buddhist tradition of this country are found mainly in some post-sixth century Chinese translations of Indian Buddhist texts and in the writings of the Chinese. All the Chinese references can be divided into two clusters, each of which consists mainly of Chinese translations and transliterations of some Indic terms. This essay identifies designations of the Buddhist tradition of ancient Sri Lanka by examining these Chinese references. It first demonstrates that *tāmrāparṇīya* was one of the Indic terms used to designate the Sri Lankan Buddhist tradition in the works of some early medieval Indian Buddhist masters. The term *tāmrāparṇīya* (P. *tambapaṇṇī[ya]*), together with *tāmrāsāṭṭiya*, has been at the centre of some discussions as to which of these two originally referred to one or more Buddhist schools of ancient Sri Lanka. Of all the previous treatments on this topic, Lance Cousins' study is the most recent and detailed. He uses a variety of sources and confirms that *Tāmrāparṇīya* rather than *Tāmrāsāṭṭiya*

³The two works are the *Vimuttimagga* 解脱道論 (T.32,No.1608) and a shorter version of the *Samantapāsādikā* 善見律毘婆沙 (T. 24, No. 1462).

⁴Chu sanzang jiji, T54n2145.p104b-c; *Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳, T50n2059.p0345b.

⁵T51n2085.p0864c24-865b13. The phrase in the Taisho edition is 摩訶毘可羅. One anonymous reviewer of this article suggests that the graph 可 may have been a copyist's error for 何, which makes sense, as the Chinese term with 何 better fits the phonetics of mahāvihāra.

⁶Ibid, T51n2085.p0865c10.

was the relevant term.⁷ This study supports his conclusion by using evidence found in Chinese Buddhist sources.

The second part of this essay deals with the Chinese translations and transliterations of *sthavira* or a related Indic term, and identifies the link between this term and the ancient Sri Lankan Buddhist tradition in some Indian Buddhist texts.

1. *Tāmrāparṇīyas (tambapaṇṇī)*

The term *tāmrāparṇīya* (or an Indic term closely similar to it, such as *tāmravarṇīya*) appears in four forms in the Chinese texts, three resembling translations and one transliteration, and they all refer to the Buddhist tradition of ancient Sri Lanka. At this point we introduce the first three; the fourth will be treated in due course. The first one is the phrase *tongse dizi* 銅色弟子 or ‘disciples of copper colour’; it is found in Vimokṣaprajñārśi’s (毘目智仙 516 in China) translation of Vasubandhu’s (fl. 4th CE) *Karmasiddhi-prakaraṇa* or ‘Discussions on the Demonstration of Karma’. In the text, while talking about *ālaya-vijñāna* 阿梨耶識 or ‘clinging consciousness’, Vasubandhu states ‘again [others] name it as different *vi-jñāna* – just as [sometimes people] call “extinction” *samādhī* – for instance, those greatly virtuous disciples of [the School of] copper colour call it “consciousness of existence” 復說異識，如滅三昧。如彼大德銅色弟子，說有分識。⁸ The second Chinese term is the phrase *chi tongye bu* 赤銅鑠部 or ‘school of red copper plates’. This phrase must have been translated from the same Indic term that gave

⁷See his ‘Tambapaṇṇiya and Tāmraśāṭīya’ at <http://www.ocbs.org/images/fellows/lancearticle1.pdf>, accessed in November 2011. The author thanks one anonymous reviewer of this journal for informing me of Cousins’ work.

⁸*Ye chengjiu lun* 業成就論, T31n1608.0780a27-a28. Here *dade* is likely to be the *bhadanta* in the Tibetan translation (Skilling: 167). The term *tongse* also appears in the translation of the *Fomu da kongque mingwang jing* 佛母大孔雀明王經, where it is used to form the name of a country. The electronic version of the Taisho Chinese Tripiṭaka annotates it as *tāmrāparṇī* T19n0982.p0423a27, fn. 51. Also see another translation, the *Kongque wang zhou jing* 孔雀王呪經, T19n0984.p0450b06. In the translation of some other sutras, *tongse* is used to describe the colour of the Buddha’s tongue, being the 60th of the Buddha’s eighty minor marks. See the *Da sazhe Niganzi suoshuo jing* 大薩遮尼乾子所說經, T09n0272.p0344c12 and the *Da Baoji jing* 大寶積經, T11n0310.p0557b18, etc. Yet the *Mahāparinirvāna-sūtra* uses it to describe the thinness of the Buddha’s tongue (*Da banniepan jing* 大般涅槃經, T12n0374.p0438b12-b13, cf. T12n0375.p0680a03). Still another text uses it to describe the colour of the Buddha’s fingernails. See *Fo benxing jijing* 佛本行集經, T03n0190.p0696a06; cf. *Da sazhe Niganzi suoshuo jing*, T09n0272.p0343b14.

birth to the first one, because not only do these two phrases partly resemble each other, but, more importantly, it appears in Xuanzang's (玄奘 602-664) translation of the same Indian text: Xuanzang has *chi tongye bu* 赤銅鑠部 as the name of the school which accepts a 'consciousness of existence'.⁹ Judging from the fact that both translations were made from the same Indian text, it is reasonable to believe that 銅色弟子 and 銅鑠部 are just different translations of the same name of the school.

The third Chinese term appears in Xuanzang's translation of Bhavya's (c.500-570) *Mahāyāna Karatala-ratna Śāstra*; it is *tongye bu* 銅鑠部 or 'the school of copper-plates' in a passage which reads 'Again, masters of the School of Copper-plates maintains that the *rūpa* [existing] between [objects] is called "space" 銅鑠部師復作是說: 諸間隙色說名虛空'.¹⁰

The second and third translation terms look so similar, could they both be made from the same Indic term and refer to the same Buddhist tradition? There are several reasons to suggest a positive answer to this question. First of all, they both are Xuanzang's translations. And from the two contexts in which both phrases appear it is clear that they both are translations of the name of a Buddhist school. The difference of one graph between the two Chinese terms might indicate that they are made from the names of two different Buddhist schools, but two traditional Chinese annotations on the translations clearly show that is not the case. The first annotation is seen in a standard glossary of Chinese Buddhist translations compiled not long after Xuanzang's time, defining 銅鑠部 thus: 'It is the School of Elders [which] writes on red copper plates and still exists in the Lion country 上座部也。鑿赤銅鑠書字記文, 今猶在師子國也'.¹¹ The second annotation is a similar but more elaborate account of this school, offered by an unknown Chinese author's commentary on Bhavya's *Mahāyāna Karatala-ratna Śāstra*. It states:

'A hundred years after the Buddha's demise, King Aśoka was destroying Buddhism. His brother was a monk and obtained Arahathship. When [the King] was persecuting Buddhism he was a great elder. Worrying that Buddhism might be replaced by [other religions] and disappear, he had the Tripitaka engraved on copper plates and had them sent to the Lion country. Later on, King Aśoka had faith in

⁹ *Dacheng chengye lun* 大乘成業論, T31n1609-p0785a14.

¹⁰ *Dacheng zhangzhen lun* 大乘掌珍論, T30n1578-p0274b24.

¹¹ See the *Yiqie jing yinyi*, T54.2128, p.0646c16.

some monks and took back the Tipiṭaka on copper plates to circulate. This is why [it] is called the [school of copper plates]; it is the School of Elders. That school established the view that the form between objects is called “space”.

佛去世一百年後，阿輸伽王損壞佛法。時阿輸伽王弟出家，得羅漢果。當滅佛法時，身居上坐，恐佛法更立，無法可得，遂打銅鑠，錐諸三藏，送著師子國。後阿輸伽王得信部之僧，取銅鑠三藏以用流通，因以名焉，即是上座部。彼宗立間隲色，說名虛空。¹²

Although the account of the origin of the school sounds odd, it agrees with the first annotation in saying that it is named ‘School of Copper-plates’ because they used to write on ‘red copper plates’.¹³ Obviously to both authors there seemed to be no need to differentiate ‘red-copper’ from ‘copper’, just as shown in Xuanzang’s two translations. These two annotations also agree that the so-called School of ‘copper plates’ was the ancient Sri Lankan Buddhist tradition and that the tradition was known as Sthavira, a fact on which the second part of this essay will focus. As the first and second Chinese terms were held to refer to the same school, all the three terms are translations of one and the same school (or tradition) of Buddhism. From the last two Chinese authors, it is also clear that the school was understood by Xuanzang and other Chinese Buddhist authors to be a school of Sri Lankan Buddhism.

But is the understanding of the Chinese authors correct? The answer lies in finding the Indic counterpart for these three Chinese terms. Thus, identifying the original form of the Indic term is in order.

Two Indic terms have been suggested as the original of the three Chinese translation terms: *Tāmrāśāṭīyas* and *Tāmrāparṇīya*. As early as the 1960s, the

¹²Zhangzhen lun shu 掌珍論疏, X46n0788_p0718a03-a08. According to the Japanese Vinaya master Yasutōō’s 安達律師 (ac. 914) *Sanlun zong zhangshu*, in China there were six commentaries on the *Zhangzhen lu* by his time. See T55n2179_p1138a09-a14. The author would like to thank Dr. Wang Zhaoguo of International College for Postgraduate Buddhist Studies for Romanising the master’s name.

¹³Xuanzang reports that what was recited at the Buddhist council held in King Kaniṣka’s reign was also engraved on copper leaves. See his *Datang xiyu ji* 大唐西域記, T51n2087_p0887a05-a14, cf. the *Datang Da ci-en si sanzang fashi zhuan* 大唐大慈恩寺三藏法師傳 T50n2053_p0231b23-c04. There is a case of engraving government policy on copper leaves recorded in the *Mūlasarvāstivādin Vinaya*. See the *Genben shuo yiqieyou bu pinaiye* 根本說一切有部毘奈耶, T23n1442_p0646a08-a10. The *Yiqie jing yinyi* (T54n2128_p0367b03-b06), quoting from the *Xiyu ji* 西域記, also says that for lack of paper the Indians used copper leaves as one of many types of writing materials.

late Taiwanese scholar monk Yinshun (印順 1906-2005) had already provided the Sanskrit term *Tāmrāśāṭīyaḥ* as the Indic original of the ‘school of copper plates’ and ‘school of red-copper plates’, and his view is widely accepted in Chinese academia.¹⁴ Peter Skilling in his lengthy and informative article admits that Bhavya’s *Karatala-ratna* is only existent in Chinese translation, but follows the Sanskrit restoration of Louis de La Vallée Poussin and N. Aiyaswami Sastri in accepting the term 銅鑠部師 or ‘masters of the school of copper plates’ as ‘*Tāmrāśāṭīyas*’.¹⁵ He also notes that Lamotte had restored this term to Sanskrit as ‘*Tāmrāparṇīyanikāya*’.¹⁶ What is more, after surveying all the cases in which the uses of ‘*Tāmrāśāṭīyas*’ and ‘*Tāmrāparṇīya*’ seem uncertain, Skilling suggests the discrepancies were unlikely to be caused by the Tibetan translations, and concludes that ‘*Tāmrāśāṭīyas* must be accepted as the primary form of the great majority of available texts’, brushing aside the Chinese reading on the ground that Chinese translation ‘poses difficulties’.¹⁷ Skilling’s choice appears to be problematic; as also shown by Lance Cousins’ study, it is extremely likely that the problem lies with the Tibetan translations.¹⁸ In fact, Skilling’s article has a perfect example which shows that where *Tāmrāparṇīya* is used in the Sanskrit version of a text, *Tāmrāśāṭīya* is used in the Tibetan translation.¹⁹ Unless one can prove that the composition of the Sanskrit version postdates that of the Tibetan, one cannot give priority of acceptance to the Tibetan version.

A careful analysis of relevant Chinese evidence shows that for the Chinese term 銅鑠部師 Lamotte’s ‘*Tāmrāparṇīyanikāya*’ is the closest one. That is to say that the Chinese term 銅鑠部 (or all the three Chinese terms just investigated above) may have been translated from *Tāmrāparṇīya*. There are a couple of rea-

¹⁴ *Yuanshi fojiao shengdian jicheng* 原始佛教圣典集成, 3rd ed., Taiwan: Zhengwen Publishing House, 1971), pp. 9, 89. The latest study that maintains this view is Mun-Keat Choong’s *The Fundamental Teachings of Early Buddhism: a Comparative Study Based on the Sūtrāṅga Portion of the Pāli Saṃyutta-Nikāya and the Chinese Saṃyuktāgama* (Harrassowitz, 2000), pp. 3, 6. He repeated this assertion in ‘The Importance of Pali-Chinese Comparison in the Study of Pali Suttas’, papers presented at the conference *Exploring Theravāda Buddhist Studies: Intellectual Trends and the Future of the Field of a Study*, National University of Singapore, 2004, at http://www.ari.nus.edu.sg/docs/abstracts/abs_theravada.pdf, accessed in 2008.

¹⁵ Peter Skilling, ‘Theravādin Literature in Tibetan Translation’, *Journal of the Pali Text Society*, Vol. XIX, 1993, p. 160. cf. fn.2.

¹⁶ Ibid, p. 155, fn.4; p. 172.

¹⁷ Ibid, pp. 164-65.

¹⁸ Lance Cousins arrives at a similar conclusion by using other evidence. See his ‘*Tāmbapaṇṇīya* and *Tāmrāśāṭīya*’, p. 12.

¹⁹ Peter Skilling, ‘Theravādin Literature’, p. 160.

sons for this supposition. Firstly, a Chinese transliteration that is highly likely to have been based on something like *tāmraparṇīya* was identified by the Chinese with one of the Chinese terms above. The transliteration is *duomoluoba* 多摩羅跋 and appears in two passages of Prabhākaramitra's (波羅頗蜜多羅 564–633) translation of the Indian master Jñānaprabha's (智光 7th cent.) 般若燈論釋 or *Exegeses of the Prajñāpradīpa*.²⁰ In the first passage, the author says, 'Duomoluoba, the heretics, state that in the ultimate sense there is *tathāgata*. This is because [they] are attached to that which is expediently established 多摩羅跋外道說言, 第一義中有如來, 取施設故.'²¹ Again, a shorter passage expounding a verse on the nature of *nirvāṇa* reads:

'By nature *nirvāṇa* is not an entity that is produced by causes, but it can be expediently established, just like the horn of a hare. So claimed the followers of the *duomoluoba*, Sautrāntikas and other [schools].'

涅槃非是體, 無因能施設故, 譬如兔角。多摩羅跋及修多羅人等言。²²

In the latter case, after the quoted passage there is a pair of brackets in which this is included: '*Duomoluoba* is "red copper plate" in the Tang [dynasty] language 多摩羅跋者, 唐言赤銅鑠'. Thus by the Tang dynasty this transliteration and 赤銅鑠 were already thought to have been made from one and the same Indic term. In fact, an exact transliteration is also found in many Chinese translations of Mahāyāna scriptures that were made before the Tang dynasty.²³ Jizang's (吉藏 549–623) exposition of this transliteration is 葵香, 'fragrance of sunflower', although a Tang glossary offers 藿葉, 'fragrance of a certain pulse plant'.²⁴ The

²⁰ According to the Tang Biographies of Eminent Monks Jñānaprabha was a monk from central India and a disciple of Xuanzang's teacher, Śīlabadhra. In 626, he was invited at the suggestion of Xuanzang to the Chinese court and helped translate some Buddhist texts. See *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳, T. 50, No. 2060, p. 439c. A lexicographical text compiled later than the *Xu gaoseng zhuan* dates his arrival in China one year later. See *Fanyī míngyī jī*, T. 54, no. 2131, p. 71a.

²¹ *Banruo deng lun shi* 般若燈論釋, T30n1566_p0118b04-b05.

²² Ibid, T30n1566_p0128c11-c12. Due to ignorance of Theravādin thought, the present author has not been able to locate these two tenets in Theravādin literature.

²³ *Chengshi lun* 成實論, T32n1646_p0273c17; the *Da fangdeng daji jing* 大方等大集經, T13n0415_p0830a20, etc.; the *Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經 T09n0262_p0021c22, p0032b21, etc, and many other sūtras.

²⁴ *Fahua yishu* 法華義疏, T34n1721_p0567c23-c24, and the *Yiqie jing yinyi*, T54n2128_p0476a10.

Mahākaruṇa Sūtra explains that the fragrance is so called because it is found on the shore of a sea called *duomoluoba*.²⁵ Both meanings of this transliteration are included in the 12th century *Fanyi mingyi ji* 翻譯名義集 ('Collection of terms and their meanings found in the translations'); the author Purun (普潤 1086-1158) provides two explanations for *duomoluoba*, one of which goes 'or some say [it means] "red copper leaf" 或云赤銅鑠'.²⁶

Even if the Chinese identification of *duomoluoba* with 赤銅鑠 is not convincing, the phonetics of the transliteration does resemble the sound of the initial three syllables of *tāmrāparṇīya*. This phonetic resemblance does not exist between the Chinese transliteration and *tāmrāśāṭīya*. As for why the last two syllables of the Indic term are not reflected in the Chinese transliteration, the answer is that this is how Indic terms were translated and transliterated into Chinese.²⁷ In this case there is omission of the final syllable, which is common in Chinese Buddhist translations. For instance, the Chinese transliteration of 'Ānanda' is *anan*, *shelifu* is for 'Śāriputra', and *pini* for 'Vinaya'.

Secondly, a comparison of the Chinese translations, i.e. 銅鑠 and 赤銅鑠, and the dictionary meaning of *Tāmrāparṇīya* also supports the Chinese attribution. In the paragraphs above, 銅 and 赤銅 are translated respectively as 'copper' and 'red copper'. In ancient Chinese texts, this character also refers to 'bronze', and 'red bronze' would refer to 'copper' or 'foreign bronze' as translated in the *Fan fanyu* 翻梵語, 'Translating the Sanskrit', a proto-dictionary of Chinese and Sanskrit believed to have been compiled by the learned monk Baochang (465-535?).²⁸ Elsewhere in the Chinese Buddhist translations, 銅 was used by the translator of the

²⁵The *Beihua jing* 悲華經, T03n0157.p187b18-b19, etc.; the *Dacheng bei fentuoli jing* 大乘悲分陀利經, T03n0158.p0252b22-b23. References to Tambapaṇṇi as a place or even as a river are found in the Pāli literature too. See Cousins' 'Tambapaṇṇiya and Tāmrāśāṭīya', pp. 2-3.

²⁶T54n2131.p1104b07-09.

²⁷Indeed, various Buddhist translators applied a variety of ways to render Indic terminology into Chinese, which itself is an important separate topic of Buddhist Studies, so there might be some other explanations for this. It could be that the original was not Sanskrit at all, or due to the accent of the translator who recited the text, to name just two. But in the case in question, it must be a Sanskrit word, as the author was an Indian master who happened to be Xuanzang's study mate. Accent is not a likely explanation, as accent is hardly reflected in the number of syllables. For a study on ancient Chinese Buddhist lexicographers' remarks on the accent issue in translations, see Huang Renxuan 黃仁瑄, 'Tang Wudai fodian yinyi zhong de "Chu Xia" wenti' 唐五代佛典音义中的“楚夏”问题. *Nanyang shifan xueyuan xuebao (shehui kexue ban)* 南阳师范学院学报(社会科学版), 2010, 9:1, pp. 42-46.

²⁸For the dating of the *Fan fanyu*, see Chen Shiqiang 陳士強, *Da zangjing zongmu tiyao (wenshi zang)* 大藏經總目提要(文史藏), vol. 2, pp. 272-277.

Madhyamāgama to render an equivalent of the Pāli *kaṁsa* in the *Anaṅgaṇa sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*.²⁹

鑠 and 鑠 have been translated as ‘plate’. They are interchangeably used in the Chinese Buddhist canon.³⁰ The early Tang Buddhist glossary, the *Yiqian jing yinyi* 一切經音義 or ‘The sounds and meanings of [the terms] found in all the scriptures’, mentions that they both are pronounced the same as the simpler character 葉 or ‘leaf’.³¹ In fact, the literal meaning of 鑠 and 鑠 is ‘thin metal plate’. It is as thin as a ‘leaf’, hence both characters contain a 葉 or ‘leaf’, and they both are often substituted for by the latter.³² So the Chinese terms can be translated as either ‘copper plate’ or ‘copper leaf’. Skilling informs us that the literal meaning of *tāmraśāṭīya* is ‘copper-clothed’ and that *tāmra* is taken to mean ‘red’ in the old Tibetan-Sanskrit dictionary, the *Mahāvyutpatti*; thus ‘*Tāmraśāṭīyas* should be taken as “the followers of *Tāmraśāṭas*”’.³³ Clearly, the term *Tāmraśāṭa* cannot be translated as ‘copper plate’ or ‘red copper plate’.

Yet M. Monier-Williams’ *Sanskrit-English Dictionary* explains *tāmra* as ‘darkening’, which, if stretched a bit, is close to the definition ‘red’ given in the Tibetan dictionary as well as to the Chinese translation ‘copper colour’ 銅色.³⁴ The dictionary tells us that *tāmra* also means ‘copper’ when used in a compound. The example provided is ‘*Tāmra-dvīpa* found in the *Divyāvadāna* (xxxvi) as “copper-island”’.³⁵ A similar example can be seen in the *Fan fanyu*, in which the transliteration of *duomonaga* 多摩那竭 is interpreted as 洋銅城 or ‘foreign-bronze city’, which suggests that the Indic original term was *tāmranagara*.³⁶ Monier-Williams’ dictionary also gives ‘leafy’ as the literal meaning of *parṇya*.³⁷ Indeed, the definition of the term *Tāmraparṇīya* and *Tāmravarṇīya* made in this dictionary is

²⁹See *Zhong ahan jing* 中阿含經 To1n0026.p0566b10 and MN. 5: 25.

³⁰For evidence, see *Da baoji jing*, T11n0310.p0423c10-c11, *Zengyi ahan jing*, To2n0125.p0805c17, etc.

³¹T54n2128.p0857b01.

³²For its literal meaning see Wang Li 王力, et al. ed. *Wang Li gu hanyu zidian* 王力古汉语字典, Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2000, 2003 reprint, p. 1537. Peter Skilling’s translation suggested by Paul Harrison is ‘ore ring’, which is incorrect. See his ‘Theravādin Literature’, p. 160, fn.2.

³³Peter Skilling, ‘Theravādin Literature’, p. 166.

³⁴M. Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, reprint 1999), p. 438.

³⁵Ibid, p. 143. Cf. Peter Skilling ‘Theravādin Literature’, p. 161. Lance Cousins suggests that even this name may have been derived from ‘*Tāmraparṇī* or something similar’. See his ‘*Tambapaṇṇiya* and *Tāmraśāṭīya*’, p. 5.

³⁶T54n2130.p1039b18.

³⁷M. Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*, p. 606.

‘an inhabitant of Ceylon’; the combination of the literal meanings of *tāmra* and *parṇya* is almost a perfect match to the literal translation of 銅鑠 (‘copper leaf’). If we ask what may have been the Indic term for 赤銅鑠, the answer would depend on how we take the meaning of the character 銅: if it means ‘bronze’, ‘red-bronze’ or ‘foreign bronze’ would be ‘copper’. So 赤銅鑠 would be nothing other than *tāmrāparṇīya*. Besides, it has already been demonstrated that Xuanzang, who employed both 銅鑠 and 赤銅鑠 in different translations to translate one Indic term, and other Chinese authors equated these two Chinese phrases as the name of the same Sri Lankan Buddhist school. All this strongly shows that either *Tāmrāparṇīya* or *Tāmravarṇīya*, but not *Tāmraśāṭīya*, was the original Indic term behind the Chinese translations and transliterations.

Thirdly, a search for where the *Tāmrāparṇīyas* were may support the Chinese view. Information on the Pāli form of *Tāmrāparṇīyas*, i.e. *Tambapaṇṇi*, may be of some help for this point. Lance Cousins’s detailed study on *Tambapaṇṇīya* and *Tāmraśāṭīya* makes it sure that *Tambapaṇṇi* was located in Sri Lanka.³⁸ Again, according to a recent study, Sri Lanka was known as *Taprobane* by the ancient Greeks by the end of the 3rd century BCE.³⁹ *Taprobane*, like *Tambapaṇṇi*, could have also been derived from the original Sanskrit *Tāmrāparṇīya* or *Tāmravarṇīya*. This suggests that the *Tāmrāparṇīya* referred to by Vasubandhu and Bhavya was no other Buddhist tradition than the one prevailing in Sri Lanka at the time.

This suggestion can be further supported by circumstantial evidence. While discussing the varying readings of the term *su-arthaṃ su-vyañjanam* Skilling remarks that ‘the reading preferred by the Theravādins was known to Vasubandhu.’⁴⁰ And according to Chinese Buddhist translations Vasubandhu in three of his works refers to the same school (his other two works will be discussed in the next part of this essay). Skilling also notes: ‘Bhavya in chapter 4 of his *Tarkajvālā*, *Śrāvakatattvāvatāra*, cites four verses from a text of Ārya Sthavira Abhayagiriśāsins.’⁴¹ So when Bhavya attributes a view on ‘space’ to a school which was translated into Chinese as 銅鑠部 and identified by the Chinese tradition as a Buddhist tradition of ancient Sri Lanka, it is unlikely that he had no idea where the school was. If both Vasubandhu and Bhavya knew the location of the school, could it be that the Chinese translators of their works, one of whom was Xuanzang, got it wrong? This

³⁸ See his ‘*Tambapaṇṇīya* and *Tāmraśāṭīya*’, esp. pp. 6, 10.

³⁹ Duane W. Roller, *Eratosthenes’ Geography: fragments collected and translated, with commentary and additional materials* (Princeton University Press, 2010), pp. 178, 180.

⁴⁰ Peter Skilling, ‘Theravādin Literature’, p. 176.

⁴¹ Peter Skilling, ‘Theravādin Literature’, p. 142.

school, as seen above, was regarded as a Buddhist school of Sri Lanka by both Xuanzang himself and some other Chinese authors. At least Xuanzang seems to have known clearly where Sri Lanka was, because in his travel records, the *Datang Xiyu ji* 大唐西域記 or *Journey to the West*, he notes that the Sri Lankans were practising Mahāyāna Sthaviras, the origin of which can be traced to the Buddhism brought by Mahinda, and that there were Mahāvihārins and Abhayagiri-vihārins, and the former rejected Mahāyāna teachings.⁴²

Fourthly, the current understanding of the provenance of *Tāmraśāṭīyas* also favours the Chinese attribution. There are no major controversial views on the identity of *Tāmraśāṭīyas*. Nalinaksha Dutt suggested that *Tāmraśāṭīyas* were an offshoot of the Sarvāstivāda.⁴³ Narendra Nath Bhattacharyya seconds this view.⁴⁴ So do Ashok Kumar Anand, Bibhuti Baruah, and the well known Vietnamese master Thich Nhat Hanh.⁴⁵ Yinshun rightly pointed out long ago that the *Tāmraśāṭīyas*, whom he too mistakenly believed to be ancestors of the Theravādins, were descendants of the Vibhajyavādins.⁴⁶ Skilling remarks that *Tāmraśāṭīya* was a Buddhist school of India, and his justification is that *Tāmraśāṭīyas* and Theravādins of Sri Lanka originally branched off from the same Sthaviras so they share some tenets.⁴⁷ Again in his treatment of ‘affiliation of *Tāmraśāṭīyas*’ Skilling writes “‘Sthavira’ as used by Sumatīśīla, Asaṅga, and Hsüan-tsang may well refer to the broader Vinaya lineage of the *Tāmraśāṭīyas*: that is, they were not the Sthaviras but rather one of several schools of the Sthavira fold in India, along with at least the Mahīśāsakas and the Vibhajyavādins.”⁴⁸ All these seem to agree that *Tāmraśāṭīyas* may not have been located in ancient Sri Lanka, at least at the time when this term was referred to in the texts at question. But as the preceding paragraph shows,

⁴²Datang xiyu ji 大唐西域記, T51n2087-p0934a10-a24.

⁴³Buddhist Sects in India (New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1998, reprint of the 1978 second edition), p.49. This may explain the colour of their robes. According to the *Da biqu sanqian weiyi*, no school wore red robes, but the robe of the Sarvāstivādins was dark red; see *Da biqu sanqian weiyi* 大比丘三千威儀, (T24n1470-p0925c29-926a01) and the *Shelifu wen jing* 舍利弗問經 (T24n1465-p0900c14), of which the translator is unknown.

⁴⁴*Buddhism in the History of Indian Ideas* (New Delhi: Manohar Publishers, 1993), p. 218.

⁴⁵Ashok Kumar Anand, *Buddhism in India: from the Sixth Century B.C. to the Third Century A.D.*, (New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House, 1996), p. 113; Bibhuti Baruah, *Buddhist Sects and Sectarianism* (New Delhi: Sarup & Sons, 2000), pp. 18, 29, 44; Thich Nhat Hanh, *Master Tang Hô: First Zen Teacher in Vietnam and China* (Berkeley, California: Parallax Press, 2001), p.62.

⁴⁶Mun-Keat Choong, *The Fundamental Teachings of Early Buddhism: A Comparative Study Based on the Sūtrāṅga Portion of the Pāli Saṃyutta-Nikāya and the Chinese Saṃyuktāgama*, pp. 3, 6.

⁴⁷Peter Skilling, ‘Theravādin Literature’, pp. 172-173.

⁴⁸ibid, pp. 173-74.

the school referred to by both Vasubandhu and Bhavya was located in Sri Lanka. Moreover, the school's tenet of *bhavāṅga-vijñāna* mentioned by Vasubandhu is, to use Skilling's own words, '...equivalent to the *bhavaṅga-viññāna* well known in the literature of the Mahāvihāravāsins'.⁴⁹

So far it can be established that as far as the Chinese Tripitāka can tell, the original Indic term referred in Vasubandhu's and Bhavya's texts and translated or transliterated as 銅色弟子, 銅鑠部, 赤銅鑠部 and in some cases 多摩羅跋, is *Tāmrāparṇīya* or *Tāmravarṇīyas*, which represents nothing but the name of the ancient Sri Lankan Buddhist tradition.

2. *Sthavira* (**Sthaviriya*)⁵⁰

As mentioned above, two Chinese texts also identify 銅鑠部 (*Tāmrāparṇīyas*) with *shangzuo bu* 上座部. The term *shangzuo bu* means 'school of elders'. *Shangzuo*, as a noun, means 'upper seat', standing for the person qualified to sit on it, hence it means 'an elder' or 'elders'. *Bu* means 'school', roughly corresponding to *-vāda*. This term is the commonest, and semantically correct, Chinese translation of *Sthaviravāda* or simply *Sthavira*. This term, as is well known, designates one of the two earliest divisions of the Buddhist Saṃgha. But it is not the earliest Chinese term for the word *sthavira*, since according to the *Fan fanyu sitapiluo* 私他毘羅, along with *potanduo* 婆檀多, seems to have been introduced early on.⁵¹ In this work 婆檀多 is said to mean 'greatly virtuous' and 私他毘羅 'elder/s'.⁵² Due to the loss of Chinese Buddhist translations, it is impossible to know from where the author of the *Fan fanyu* received his information, but judging from the pronun-

⁴⁹ *ibid*, pp. 169. Cf. Lance Cousins, "Tambapaṇṇiya and Tāmraśāṭīya", pp. 12-13.

⁵⁰ By common philological convention, an asterisk before a word indicates that it is a hypothetical reconstruction. *Sthaviriya* seems not to be attested in Sanskrit.

⁵¹ The second complete transliteration of *sthavira* is found in the travel records of another Tang traveller monk and translator, Yijing (義淨 635-713). While defining the monastic rank and its corresponding epithet Yijing offers a complete phonetic translation of *sthavira*, *xitapiluo* 悉他薛羅, and annotates it with "the rank of dwelling", because ten years after taking higher ordination a monk is qualified to dwell alone. See his *Nanhai jigui neifa zhuan* 南海寄歸內法傳, T54n2125-p0220a21-a22. The character 薛 was mistaken by the copyist as well as the editors of the Taisho canon as *xue* 薛. In Wang Bangwei's annotated edition, 悉他薛羅 is restored to *sthavira*, but no mention of the character 薛 is made. See his *Nanhai jigui neifa zhuan jiaozhu* 南海寄歸內法傳校注, (Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1995), p.131.

⁵² *Fan fanyu*, T54n2130-p1024a15-a16, cf. T54n2130-p0983a11, p0998c13. In the *Da zhidu lun* 大智度論 (T25n1509-p0073b09), 婆檀多 is written as 婆檀陀 and an annotation is provided '[it means] "greatly virtuous" [venerable monk] in the Qin language 秦言大德'.

ciation of the two phrases there is no doubt that they are a phonetic translation of *bhadanta sthavira*.

Then the term *sthavira* was rendered phonetically as *tipilü* 體毘履, as found in the *Wenshu shili wen jing* 文殊師利問經 or ‘Sūtra of Mañjuśrī’s Enquiries’, a Mahāyāna sūtra translated by Saṃghapāla (僧伽婆羅 460 ~ 524), and as *tapiluo* 他鞞羅/他俾羅 in the *Shiba bu lun* 十八部論 or ‘Treatise on the Eighteen Schools’ attributed to be Paramārtha (真諦 499-569) and in the *Shelifu wen jing*.⁵³ The reason why these two transliterations are believed to be of *sthavira* is two-fold. First, they both are mentioned in the texts as one of the earliest two Buddhist schools; in fact the *Shiba bu lun* quotes some passages verbatim from the *Shelifu wen jing*. Second, immediately after the transliteration in both texts, there is a bracketed annotation saying, respectively, ‘In our language it means “elder”’ and ‘it means school of elders.’ Here, we too cannot be certain when the annotations were added, but a simple check of the phonetics of the Chinese transliterations against that of *sthavira* will show that they are correct.

Although Indic languages and Chinese are different in many respects, one of which is a problem of matching tones (i.e., long vowels are not easily displayed in Chinese phonology), we can still restore sounds reasonably well, especially consonants, even though the pronunciation of many words in ancient Chinese differs from the modern one.⁵⁴ From a comparison between the Chinese phonetic transliterations and the suggested *sthavira* it seems that the original’s initial ‘s’ was lost or omitted. That is to say, the Chinese term may have been made from an Indic

⁵³T.14, No. 468, p. 501b01-b28; T. 49, No. 2032, p.17b28-c22; T24n1465_p0900b27-28. Cf. the *Yibu zhi lun* 部執異論, T49n2033_p0022c06-c10. For annotations, see, T14n0468_p0501b02, T49n2032_p0018a14. It seems common to restore *sengqie poluo* 僧伽婆羅 as ‘Saṃghavarman’. The present author just cannot see how *-varman* matches the sound of the last Chinese character, although both *varman* and *pāla* mean ‘protector’.

⁵⁴On the study of ancient Chinese phonetics with the aid of Chinese Buddhist translations, some works deserve to be mentioned here. Yu Min 俞敏, ‘Houhan Sanguo fanhan duiyin pu’ 后汉三国梵汉对音谱, a journal article collected in his *Yu Min yuyanxue lunwen ji* 俞敏语言学论文集, Beijing: Shangwu yishu guan, 1999, pp. 1-62. W. South Coblin, ‘Remarks on Some Early Buddhist Transcriptional Data from Northwest China’, *Monumenta Serica*, Vol. 42, (1994), pp. 151-169. Shi Xiangdong 施向东, ‘Shiliu guo shidai yijing zhong de fanhan duiyin’ 十六国时代译经中的梵汉对音, a journal article collected in his *Yinshi xunyou: Shi Xiangdong zixuan ji* 音史寻幽——施向东自选集. 2008, pp. 75-85. Seishi Karashima, ‘Underlying Languages of Early Chinese Translations of Buddhist Scriptures’, in Christoph Anderl and Halvor Eifring eds., *Studies in Chinese Language and Culture - Festschrift in Honour of Christoph Harbsmeier on the Occasion of His 60th Birthday*. Oslo: Hermes Academic Publishing 2006, pp. 355-366.

original something like *thavira*.⁵⁵ There could have been a two-fold reason for this omission: either the foreign master who recited the original scripture omitted the ‘s’ sound while it was being translated into Chinese, or the original Indic word used to represent *sthavira* was a word without the ‘s’ sound in the texts undergoing translation, just as the Sanskrit word *skandha* becomes *khandha* in Pāli. After all Saṃghapāla was a foreign master who originally came from a country in which Pāli was the main Buddhist language. Needless to say there is still an issue of the accents of foreign translators who came from different parts of India—a phenomenon already noticed by Chinese Buddhist lexicographers.⁵⁶

With the omission of ‘s’, the remaining part of *sthavira* sounds more like *tapilu*, *tipilü*, and *tapiluo*. The Chinese phonetic system, ancient and modern, does not have a ‘v’ sound, so the letter ‘v’ in the word was transliterated as ‘b’ or ‘p’, which is also reflected in the transliterations of other Indic words such as *binaiye* 鼻奈耶 for the term *Vinaya*, *poshupandou* 婆藪槃豆 for Vasubandhu, *pilanpo* 毗藍婆 for *vairambhaka*, etc.⁵⁷ In many languages *b* and *p* are not easily distinguished; even today in the English pronunciation of some south and south-east Asians, ‘p’ is always sounded like ‘b’, or vice versa. Therefore *-thavi* sounded like *tapi* or *tabi* to the Chinese. The ancient pronunciation of the Chinese graph 履 may sound something close to *lu* instead of today’s *lǚ*; all *ü* sounds in contemporary Chinese phonetics were pronounced as *u* in the past. An evidence for this change of sound is the Vinaya master’s name Upāli, which was transliterated most often as *youboli* 優婆離. The first character of this phrase is now pronounced as *jāu*, which does not sound like the corresponding part of the original Indic term. In the past it must have been pronounced as *u*. Again, in ancient Chinese phonetics, there was no such sound as the Indian or English ‘r’, although in the sound presenting system of modern Chinese there is a roman letter ‘r’, but it is pronounced quite differently from the Indian or English ‘r’. So since the earliest translations, the letter ‘r’ was always pronounced as ‘l’; the evidence is too prolific in the Chinese translations to need further documentation.⁵⁸ This change, as K. R. Norman’s study shows, also

⁵⁵Both *sthavira* and *sthevira* can be found in Edgerton’s *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1970. 2009 reprint, p. 611.

⁵⁶For a study on this topic, see Huang Renxuan 黄仁瑄, Tang Wudai fodian yinyi zhong de “Chu Xia” wenti 唐五代佛典音义中的“楚夏”问题. *Nanyang shifan xueyuan xuebao (shehui kexue ban)* 南阳师范学院学报(社会科学版), 2010, 9:1, pp.42-46.

⁵⁷This phenomenon also appears in the case of some Sanskrit words and their Pāli derivatives. For instance, the Sanskrit word *nirvāṇa* becomes *nibbāna* in Pāli.

⁵⁸For instance, *Indranīla* as *yintuoluoniluo* 因陀羅尼羅, *punḍarīka* often as *fentuoli* 芬陀利, etc.

exists in the changes between Sanskrit and Pāli words.⁵⁹

Furthermore, also with the initial 's' omitted, *sthavira* (or **sthaviri[ya]*) was once transliterated as *tapili* 他毘梨 in Paramārtha's translation of Vasubandhu's *Xianshi lun* 顯識論 or 'Treaties of Illustrating Consciousness'. There the term again refers to a school holding the tenet of *bhavaṅga-viññāṇa*.⁶⁰ This immediately reminds us of the school of *Tāmrāparṇīyas* referred in Vasubandhu's other work discussed above. A closely similar but longer transliteration is found in Paramārtha's translation of Vasumitra's *Samayabhedopacakra*, the *Bu yizhi lun* 部異執論 or 'Treatise of Different Views of the Schools'.⁶¹ This transliteration is *tapiliyu* 他毘梨與 and can perhaps be tentatively restored as **thaviri[ya]*. It appears twice in the same paragraph that discusses the origin of the eighteen schools.⁶² The first appearance certainly refers to one of the two earliest schools, i.e., the Sthaviras, and the second is equated with Haimavata or 'School of Snowy Mountains'. This term in Paramārtha's translation of the same Indian text is rendered as *shangzuo dizi bu* 上座弟子部 or 'School of the Elders' Disciples', which is quite close to Xuanzang's rendering, i.e. 'Shangzuo bu 上座部', in his translation of the same text.⁶³

According to two Chinese glossaries of Sanskrit terms, *tipilü* 體毘履 and *tapili* 他毘梨, are believed to be titles of monastic ranks, and they mean, respectively, 'elders 老宿' and 'virtuous elders 宿德'.⁶⁴ One glossary also contains *xitina* 悉替那 as a transliteration of 'elders', of which the source does seem to be extant.⁶⁵

This is enough to show that the Chinese terms 私他毘羅悉他薛攞, 他鞞羅/他俾羅, and 體毘履 are all transliterations of Sthavira and that 他毘梨 and 他毘梨與 are transliterations of **Sthaviriya*. They all stand for the same as 上座

⁵⁹K. R. Norman has shown that the interchangeability between b and p, r and l, and t and d existed for a very long time in ancient India. See his *A Philological Approach to Buddhist Studies* (*Buddhist Forum V*, London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1997), p.67. In fact there is a handy example: *gili* in the *Isigili-sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya* (MN: 116) is also written as *giri* in *Abhayagiri*.

⁶⁰‘若是他毘梨部，名有分識。有者，三有，即三界也 T31n1618_p0881a03-04. Actually before this translation, Sengyou in his *Chu sanzang jiji* recorded that there was a translation by the title of 他毘梨，which he annotated as ‘virtuous elders’ (T55n2145_p0013b17).

⁶¹The Taisho edition has 部執異論; here the editorial wording of early Chinese editions is followed.

⁶²For the whole paragraph, see *Bu yizhi lun*, T49n2033_p0022b28-c11.

⁶³T49n2031_p0015a21,15b10-b11.

⁶⁴The *Fanyi mingyi ji*, T54n2131_p1074c12-c15. Cf. The *Fan fanyu*, T54n2130_p1024a15, T54n2130_p1041a15. Both terms are restored to Sanskrit as *sthavira* by the CBETA.

⁶⁵The *Fanyi mingyi ji* 翻譯名義集, T54n2131_p1074c15.

部 (Sthavira). Some cases of 上座部 have been identified with *Tāmrāparṇīya* in the preceding discussion. What must be discussed at this point is 他毘梨, as it also concerns our subject matter—the school of ancient Sri Lankan Buddhism. Thus we now turn to the question: ‘Why is 他毘梨 (**Sthaviri[ya]*) the same as 赤銅鑠部 (*Tāmrāparṇīya*)?’

The fact that 赤銅鑠部 and 他毘梨 are the same Buddhist school is plain in the translations that contain these two terms. As pointed out above, 赤銅鑠部 is referred in Vimokṣaprajñarṣi’s translation of Vasubandhu’s *Karmasiddhi-prakaraṇa* and 他毘梨 in Paramārtha’s translation of Vasubandhu’s *Xianshi lun*. They are both referred to by the same author as a Buddhist school holding the tenet of *bhavaṅga-viññāṇa*.

These two terms are also generally considered to be 上座部 (Sthaviravāda) and Vibhajyavādins in Paramārtha’s translation of Vasubandhu’s *Mahāyānasāṅgraha-bhāṣya*, which in fact is the earliest extant translation that renders Sthaviravāda in this way.⁶⁶ The term is mentioned in two places where *ādāna-ālaya* (阿陀那阿梨耶) or ‘clinging store consciousness’ is the topic of discussion. In both places Vasubandhu states that this consciousness is also called 有分識 (‘consciousness of existences’) by the School of Elders and the Vibhajyavādins.⁶⁷ In fact, that these two Buddhist traditions recognize a ‘consciousness of existences’ is also found in the *Vijñaptimātratā-siddhi* (*Cheng weishi lun* 成唯識論) translated by Xuanzang in 659.⁶⁸ In this translation, Xuanzang also uses 上座部 for the School of Elders.

有分識 ‘consciousness of existences’ is accepted by the *Tāmrāparṇīyas*, who refer to it as *bhavaṅga-viññāṇa*. So by the tenet of *bhavaṅga-viññāṇa* all 赤銅鑠部 (*Tāmrāparṇīya*), 他毘梨 (**Sthaviriya*), 上座部 (Sthavira) and Vibhajyavādins are linked together. Considering the fact that Vasubandhu in three of his works refers to a school as accepting such a tenet, it can well be imagined that these three schools are one and the same. Indeed, we may doubt that the Sthavira in one of Vasubandhu’s works means *Tāmrāparṇīya* and refers to a school which is an offshoot of the Sthaviras and still exists in the author’s time, as this would mean

⁶⁶Translated in 563 as *She dacheng shilun* 攝大乘釋論, T. 31, No. 1595. There seem to be two different copies of the translation. See *Zhongjing mulu* 眾經目錄, T55n2146_p0141c06-c07, T55n2147_p0159c09, T55n2148_p0193c11-c12.

⁶⁷T31n1595_p0160c05-160c10, T31n1598_p0386b16-b17. According to the *Shenmi jietuo jing* 深密解脫經 (*Samdhinirmocana-sūtra*), *ādāna-vijñāna* and *ālaya-vijñāna* are the same consciousness by different names. See T16n0675_p0669a22-a25, Cf. T16n0676_p0692b14-b17.

⁶⁸T31n1585_p0015a21-a22. Cf. Peter Skilling ‘Theravādin Literature’, p. 157.

that he linked the same tenet with different schools in his different works. That is unlikely. As mentioned above, both Bhavya and Xuanzang qualified Abhayagirivihārins as Sthavira, which suggests that a tradition of Sri Lankan Buddhism used to be known as Sthavira. Besides, the doubt would conflict with the attribution, demonstrated above, of the Chinese masters, among whom was the translator Xuanzang. The point here is that the Sthaviras and *Tāmrāparṇīyas* in Vasubandhu's works are the same school that existed in Sri Lanka, even though 'the Theravādins of Ceylon do not portray themselves as part of a "Greater Sthavira School" of Jambudvīpa, about which they are silent, but rather repositories of the pristine Sthavira lineage.'⁶⁹

Conclusion:

The above discussion reflects that it was *Tāmrāparṇīya*/*Tāmravarṇīya*, not *Tāmrāśāṭīya*, that is referred in the works of Vasubandhu and Bhavya, and that the term referred to a Buddhist tradition existing in ancient Sri Lanka. Even though it is a view common to all Buddhist traditions that Sthavira refers to one of the two earliest Buddhist divisions, the evidence relating to the doctrine of *bhavaṅga-viññāṇa* and the Chinese attributions, of which some were made not long after the Indian authors' time by translators such as Xuanzang, this term or *Sthāviri[ya] in Vasubandhu's *Xianshi lun* 顯識論 must also mean *Tāmrāparṇīyas*. And the Chinese authors, including Xuanzang, may have followed Vasubandhu and Bhavya and simply considered *Tāmrāparṇīyas* to be Sthaviras. This leads to the conclusion that according to the Chinese Buddhist sources, including translations of Indic Buddhist texts and the works of some Chinese Buddhists, the Buddhist tradition/s of ancient Sri Lanka is/are known by the designations *Tāmrāparṇīya*, *Sthāviri[ya] and Sthavira.

Be that as it may, apart from Bhavya and Xuanzang, who clearly label Abhayagirivihārins as Sthaviras, most of the Chinese references are not clear as to which particular sect of Sri Lankan Buddhism they are referring to, although by that time there already existed different sectarian Buddhist traditions on the island. This was due at least partly to the fact that the Indian authors were not specific regarding their origins. This gap might not be filled even if we could locate all the doctrinal points mentioned in this study in the Theravādin sources, as the sectarian divisions of today's Theravādins are not the same as those in the past. This

⁶⁹Peter Skilling, 'Theravādin Literature', p. 174.

indicates that although the information offered by the Chinese Tripitaka can be useful to the study of other Buddhist traditions, it has some limitations too.

Bibliography

- Amogha (不空 705—774), trns., *Fomu da kongque mingwang jing* 佛母大孔雀明王經, T. 19, No. 982.
- Anand, Ashok Kumar, *Buddhism in India: from the Sixth Century B.C. to the Third Century A.D.* New Delhi: Gyan Publishing House, 1996.
- Baochang (寶唱 465-?), *Fan fanyu* 翻梵語, T. 54, No. 2130.
- Baruah, Bibhuti, *Buddhist Sects and Sectarianism*, New Delhi: Sarup & Sons, 2000.
- Bhattacharyya, Narendra Nath, *Buddhism in the History of Indian Ideas*. New Delhi: Manohar Publishers, 1993.
- Bodhiruci (菩提留支 arrived in China 508), trns., *Da sazhe Niganzi suoshuo jing* 大薩遮尼乾子所說經, T. 9, No. 272.
- , *Shenmi jietuo jing* 深密解脫經, T. 16, No. 675.
- Bodhiruci (菩提流志 ?—727), et al. trns., *Da Baoji jing* 大寶積經, T. 11, No. 310.
- Buddhabhadra (佛馱跋陀羅 359-429), trns., *Da fangguang fo huayan jing* 大方廣佛華嚴經, T. 9, No. 278.
- Chen Shiqiang 陳士強, *Da zangjing zongmu tiyao (wenshi zang)* 大藏經總目提要 (文史藏), 2 volumes. Shanghai: Shanghai guji chubanshe, 2008.
- Coblin, W. South, 'Remarks on Some Early Buddhist Transcriptional Data from Northwest China', *Monumenta Serica*, Vol. 42, (1994), pp. 151-169.
- Daoxuan (道宣 596-667), compl., *Xu gaoseng zhuan* 續高僧傳, T. 50, No. 2060.
- Dharmakṣema (曇無讖 385-433), trns., *Da fangdeng daji jing* 大方等大集經, T. 13, No. 415.
- , *Beihua jing* 悲華經, T. 3, No. 157.
- Dharmananda 曇摩難提 (384-85 in China), trns., *Zengyi ahan jing* 增壹阿含經, T. 2, No. 125.
- Dutt, Nalinaksha, *Buddhist Sects in India*, New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1998.
- Edgerton, Franklin, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary*. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1970. 2009 reprint.
- Fajing (法經 fl. 594), et al., compl., *Zhongjing mulu* 眾經目錄, T. 55, No. 2146.
- Faxian (法顯 ca.337-ca. 442), *Gaoseng Faxian zhuan* 高僧法顯傳, T. 51, No. 2085.
- , *Da banniepan jing* 大般涅槃經, T. 12, No. 374.
- Gautama Prajñārucci (瞿曇般若流支 538 in China), trns., *Zhengfa nianchu jing* 正法念處經, T.17, No. 721.

- Huang Renxuan 黄仁琯, Tang Wudai fodian yinyi zhong de “Chu Xia” wenti 唐五代佛典音义中的“楚夏”问题. *Nanyang shifan xueyuan xuebao (shehui kexue ban)* 南阳师范学院学报(社会科学版), 2010, 9:1, pp.42-46.
- Huijiao (慧皎 497-554), *Gaoseng zhuan* 高僧傳, T. 50 No. 2059
- Huili (慧立) and Yanzong (彦惊), compl., *Datang Da ci-en si sanzang fashi zhuan* 大唐大慈恩寺三藏法師傳, T. 50, No. 2053
- Jizang (吉藏 549-623), *Fahua yishu* 法華義疏, T. 34, No.1721.
- Jñānagupta (闍那崛多 523-600), trnsl., *Fo benxing jijing* 佛本行集經, T. 3, No. 190.
- Karashima, Seishi, ‘Underlying Languages of Early Chinese Translations of Buddhist Scriptures’, in Christoph Anderl and Halvor Eifring eds., *Studies in Chinese Language and Culture - Festschrift in Honour of Christoph Harbsmeier on the Occasion of His 60th Birthday*. Oslo: Hermes Academic Publishing 2006, pp. 355-366.
- Kumārājīva (鳩摩羅什 344-413), trnsl., *Chengshi lun* 成實論, T. 32, No. 1646.
- , *Miaofa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經, T. 9, No. 262.
- , *Da zhidu lun* 大智度論, T. 25, No.1509.
- Monier-Williams, M., *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass , 1999.
- Mun-Keat Choong, *The Fundamental Teachings of Early Buddhism: a Comparative Study Based on the Sūtrāṅga Portion of the Pāli Saṃyutta-Nikāya and the Chinese Saṃyuktāgama*. Harrassowitz, 2000.
- , ‘The Importance of Pali-Chinese Comparison in the Study of Pali Suttas’, at [http:// www.ari.nus.edu.sg/ docs/ abstracts/ abs_theravada.pdf](http://www.ari.nus.edu.sg/docs/abstracts/abs_theravada.pdf), visited in June 2008.
- Norman, K.R, *A Philological Approach to Buddhist Studies (Buddhist Forum V)*. London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1997.
- Paramārtha (真諦 499-569), trnsl., *Yibu zhi lun* 部執異論, T. 49, No. 2033.
- , *Shiba bu lun* 十八部論, T. 49, No. 2032.
- , *She dacheng shilun* 攝大乘釋論, T. 31, No. 1595.
- Prabhākaramitra (波羅頗蜜多羅 564-633), trnsl., *Banruo deng lun shi* 般若燈論釋, T. 30, No. 1566.
- Purun (普潤 1086-1158), *Fanyi mingyi ji* 翻譯名義集, T. 54, no. 2131.
- Roller, Duane W., *Eratosthenes’ Geography: Fragments Collected and Translated, with Commentary and Additional Materials*. Princeton, N.J. : Princeton University Press, 2010.
- Samghabhadra (僧伽跋陀羅 488-89 in China), trnsl., *Samantapāsādikā* 善見律毘婆沙, T. 24, No. 1462.

- Samghapāla (僧伽婆羅 460~524), *Vimuttimaggā* 解脫道論, T. 32, No. 1608.
 —, trnsl., *Kongque wang zhou jing* 孔雀王呪經, T. 19, No. 984.
 —, trnsl., *Wenshu shili wen jing* 文殊師利問經, T. 14, No. 468.
 Sengyou (僧祐 445-518), compl., *Chu sanzang jiji* 出三藏記集, T. 55, No. 2145.
 Shen Yue (沈約 441-512), compl., *Songshu* 宋書. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 8 vols., 1974.
 Skilling, Peter, “Theravādin Literature in Tibetan Translation”, *Journal of the Pali Text Society*, XIX, 1993.
 Thich Nhat Hanh, *Master Tang Hô: First Zen Teacher in Vietnam and China*. Berkeley, California: Parallax Press, 2001.
 Trenckner, V. *Majjhima Nikāya*, 3 volumes. Pali Text Society, 1888-1899.
 Unknown, trnsl., *Da biqiu sanqian weiyi* 大比丘三千威儀, T. 24, No. 1470.
 Unknown, trnsl., *Dacheng bei fentuoli jing* 大乘悲分陀利經, T. 3, No. 158.
 Unknown author, *Zhangzhen lun shu* 掌珍論疏, X. 46, No. 788.
 Vimokṣaprajñarṣi's (毘目智仙 516 in China), trnsl., *Ye chengjiu lun* 業成就論, T. 31, No. 1608.
 Wang Bangwei, *Nanhai jigui neifa zhuan jiaozhu* 南海寄歸內法傳校注. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 1995.
 Wang Li 王力, et al. ed. *Wang Li gu hanyu zidian* 王力古漢語字典, Beijing: Zhonghua shuju, 2000, 2003 reprint.
 Xuanying (玄應 fl.649), et al. compl., *Yiqie jing yinyi* 一切經音義, T. 54, No. 2128.
 Xuanzang (玄奘 602-664), *Dacheng chengye lun* 大乘成業論, T. 31, No. 1609.
 —, *Datang xiyu ji* 大唐西域記, T. 51, No. 2087.
 Xu Yunhe, ‘Liang Yangdu Zhuangyan si shamen Shi Baochang shengping ji zhuzuo kaolue’ 梁揚都莊嚴寺沙門釋寶唱生平及著作考略. *Zongjiaoxue yanjiu* 宗教學研究, 3, 2009, pp. 95-98.
 Yasutōo's (安遠律師 ac. 914) *Sanlun zong zhangshu* 三論宗章疏, T. 55, No. 2179.
 Yijing (義淨 635-713), trnsl., *Genben shuo yiqieyou bu pinaiye* 根本說一切有部毘奈耶, T. 23, No. 1442.
 —, *Nanhai jigui neifa zhuan* 南海寄歸內法傳, T. 54, No. 2125.
 Yinshun, *Yuanshi fojiao shengdian jicheng* 原始佛教聖典集成, 3rd ed., Taiwan: Zhengwen Publishing House, 1981.
 Yu Min, *Yu Min yuyanxue lunji* 俞敏語言學論集, Beijing: Shangwu yinshuguan, 1999.

Scribal and Authorial Openings in Theravāda manuscripts: Evidence from the Nevill Collection

Kate Crosby

kc21@soas.ac.uk

Complete manuscripts of Theravāda Buddhist texts almost always open with an auspicious formula in homage to the Buddha. In manuscripts from Sri Lanka, the two most common opening formulae are the expressions of homage to the Buddha so widespread in other contexts. These are usually the opening formulae of the scribe or copyist, and separate from the authorial opening of the text contained in the manuscript. The latter often has its own auspicious or formulaic opening, which is more elaborate than the scribal opening. Although scribal formulae can usually be distinguished from the beginning of the text proper, i.e. the text as created by the author or redactor, the distinction between the two is not always recognised in printed editions of Pali texts and may be unclear or blurred in the manuscripts themselves. Below I examine the evidence of Sri Lankan manuscripts, especially those of the Nevill collection of the British Library, to see what they add to our current understanding of scribal and authorial openings.

Complete manuscripts of Theravāda Buddhist texts almost always open with an auspicious formula in homage to the Buddha. In manuscripts from Sri Lanka, the two most common opening formulae are the expressions of homage to the Buddha so widespread in other contexts, namely: *namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa* ‘Homage to the Blessed Lord, the worthy, fully Awakened one’, and *namo buddhāya* ‘homage to the Buddha.’ These are usually the opening formulae of the scribe or copyist, and separate from the authorial opening of the

text contained in the manuscript. The latter often has its own auspicious or formulaic opening, which is more elaborate than the scribal opening. Although scribal formulae can usually be distinguished from the beginning of the text proper, i.e. the text as created by the author or redactor, as I shall discuss below, the distinction between the two is not always recognised in printed editions of Pali texts and may be unclear or blurred in the manuscripts themselves. Evidence that the range of manuscript openings was wider than apparent from printed textual editions, and that the *namo tassa* and *namo buddhāya* openings mentioned above are not restricted to the manuscripts of canonical and commentarial texts – contrary to some statements in previous scholarship – has already been adduced by Oskar von Hinüber from Lānnā manuscripts.¹ Below I examine the evidence of Sri Lankan manuscripts, especially those of the Nevill collection of the British Library, to see what they add to our current understanding of scribal and authorial openings.

The Nevill Collection

The Nevill Collection, housed among the Asian and Africa (formerly the Oriental and India Office) collections of the British Library, is the largest collection of Sri Lankan manuscripts outside Sri Lanka. It contains 2227 manuscripts collected by Hugh Nevill, who worked for the Ceylon Civil Service between 1869 and 1895.² Throughout his career, Nevill had enthusiastically studied different aspects of Sri Lankan history, culture, languages and natural history. While his greatest enthusiasm was for the fauna of Sri Lanka, he also took an interest in and published on the history of Buddhism in the country. This interest led him to collect this large number of manuscripts.³ From his notes, it is clear that Nevill took the trouble to seek out and have copied rare texts and particularly early copies. When he left Ceylon in 1895 he took the manuscript collection with him to France, where he died in 1897. After his death the collection was purchased by the British Museum

¹ Von Hinüber 1996b. Building on von Hinüber's and Hundius' work (see bibliography) to discuss Lānnā manuscript culture more broadly, see Veidlinger 2006 Chapter Four. For a discussion of the physical form of Southeast Asian manuscripts, in particular Cambodian manuscripts, see Becchetti, who links the physical form with the purpose of the manuscript and the history of the tradition to which it belongs. She also includes some discussion of attitudes towards the sacred status of the manuscript on the basis of scribal colophons (Becchetti 1994). More recently, Berkwitz has summarised information on manuscripts from Sri Lanka and announced the new substantial Sri Lankan manuscript acquisition at Arizona State University Library (Berkwitz 2009).

² See K.D. Somadasa 1995 (Vol.7) for an outline of his life and work.

³ B.C. Bloomfield and G. Marrison, "Preface" to K.D. Somadasa (1987-1995) Vol.1: vii.

(Somadasa, 1995, vol.7: x). Lionel Barnett, Keeper of Oriental Printed Books and Manuscripts at the library from 1908 to 1936, produced a handlist in 1908. The full descriptive catalogue of the Nevill Collection in seven volumes by K.D. Somadasa was completed in 1995.⁴

Distinguishing between scribal and textual opening formulae

The opening auspicious formula selected by the scribe or copyist of a manuscript is usually quite separate from any auspicious opening included by the author of the text contained in that manuscript. I emphasise that I am differentiating here between the activity of a scribe and the activity of an author or redactor.⁵ The role of the former is to reproduce a previously established text, either by copying a previously existing manuscript or by putting to the written letter an orally transmitted text. As such he has a skilled role to play in the recording and preservation of the *dhamma*, but not a creative one.⁶ Changes in the text resulting from a scribe's activity are usually the result of scribal error, even if, after generations of copying, they do result in a substantially different text. The latter, i.e. the redactor or author, consciously creates the text in the form in which it is to be transmitted. The different roles may be obscured if a scribe of an established text makes conscious efforts to correct it, perhaps seeking to solve divergent readings or recensions, for example, and thus acts as a redactor creating what is effectively a new recension of the source text. There are other exceptions. The distinction between the role of redactor and copyist may be obscured in the production of practice manuals made by the practitioner for his/her own use, as will be seen below in the case of meditation manuals. The distinction is also obscured in a different way in traditions where the act of sponsoring a copy is important for the status of the sponsor, and the act or occasion of copying is therefore recorded in greater detail. While I have not seen this reflected in Sri Lankan manuscripts, we do see it in the copies of *lik long* ('great writings') in Shan Buddhism. There the copyist

⁴Somadasa 1987-1995. Somadasa has included many of Nevill's own observations where pertinent. Berkwitz lists other catalogues and collections of Sri Lankan manuscripts (2009: 40) to which we can add Bhikkhu Nyanatusita's "Reference Table of Pali Literature" based on Sri Lankan collections. http://resolver.sub.uni-goettingen.de/purl/?gr_elib-66

⁵On this distinction in relation to the colophons of Sri Lankan manuscripts, see Berkwitz 2009: 44.

⁶Scribes or copyists are usually male, but recent findings in relation to manuscript and textual performances of the Shan suggest that occasionally scribes may be female and suggests reasons why their activity is less visible, at least in the Shan context (Crosby and Khur-Yearn 2010)

performs an enhanced, almost authorial role for the initial part of the text. He (or occasionally she) often either replaces an existing scribal introduction or adds an additional one. The scribal introduction may be a substantial piece of writing in its own right. It records details about the occasion of the copying and in particular the details of the sponsors of the copy in creative, poetic ways.⁷ However, there is still a clear, separate beginning to the main text. Thus they conform to the authorial-copyist divide that applies in most cases in Sri Lankan manuscripts, as I shall now describe.

The Beginning of a Text

An authored text begins differently from a *buddhavacana* text, a text which is considered to be the ‘word of the Buddha’. A text which is explicitly, even if anonymously, authored usually begins with a homage to the Buddha, or to the triple gem, composed by the author or redactor of that text. This contrasts with the opening of a *buddhavacana* text. For example, as is well known, most texts of the *Sutta Piṭaka*, which are, or purport to be, *buddhavacana*, that is ‘the word of the Buddha’ or canonical, open directly with the phrase *evaṃ me sutam*, ‘Thus have I heard.’ This phrase is attributed to the Buddha’s attendant Ānanda and labels the text as an account of an episode or teaching in the Buddha’s life as witnessed by Ānanda and recalled by him at the first council after the Buddha’s final *nibbāna*. Manuscripts of *buddhavacana* texts open with the scribe’s homage, e.g. the *namo tassa* formula, then proceed straight into the standard *sutta* opening *evaṃ me sutam* or directly into the verses of a text such as the *Dhammapada*. Nevill manuscript Or.6599(34) is a collection of a number of texts showing this pattern.⁸ Thus the scribe’s opening formula precedes and is in addition to either the

⁷ Crosby and Khur-Yearn 2010.

⁸ I am not aware of *stotra* / *vandanā gāthā* in the Theravāda manuscript tradition praising the text itself, as are found as part of the manuscript tradition of Mahāyāna *sūtra*. There the *stotra* becomes part of the text copied by the scribe and would be expected in all manuscripts of a particular text, at least in a particular recension. See Skilton 1997: 75ff., where different forms of the *stotra* of the *Samādhirājasūtra* are found in different recensions and are a feature of that recension, rather than a product of manuscript scribes, yet are clearly not part of the *buddhavacana* text. The absence of such *vandanā gāthā* (using the Theravāda term) contrasts with the existence of such a genre in praise of other sacred items, such as particular sacred trees or pilgrimage sites, and reflects perhaps a difference in attitude to the sacred text in the Theravāda tradition, in contrast to the ‘cult of the text’ found in some Mahāyāna traditions (on which, see Schopen 1975). Closer examination of the introductions in *lik long* manuscripts (see above) may alter this picture to some extent.

author's homage or the *evaṃ me sutāṃ* formula or other *buddhavacana* signifier. If successive texts are copied into a single manuscript, the scribe repeats the opening formula before the beginning of each successive text. This is done whether the subsequent text is copied by the same or another scribe.

The devotional opening by the scribe tends to be simple compared with the more elaborate opening by an author, but it is there for some of the same reasons: because it is a traditional pattern of practice; because it is appropriate to pay homage before an undertaking; and because it ensures successful completion of the task. The author sometimes has the additional purpose of demonstrating skill in composition and, perhaps, of linking the content of his text with particularly relevant qualities of the triple gem. Thus in later Pali literature of 12th-13th-century Sri Lanka, at the height of the influence of Sanskrit *alaṃkāraśāstra* (poetics or aesthetics) on Pali literature, commentaries and manuals which allow for little display of erudition and *alaṃkāra* (poetic) techniques in the main body of the text often begin with highly sophisticated and complex introductory verses of homage to the triple gem, previous teachers in the lineage and the personal teachers or promoters of the author. They became the canvas on which the author could display his mastery of the language. In some cases, we also find that the student of an author has added some details to the beginning or end, providing similar information about the qualities of the author himself.⁹

The author-scribe distinction in relation to the *Peṭakopadesa*

In the context of his discussion of scribal practices, based mainly on the manuscript tradition of the Lānnā region of northern Thailand, von Hinüber notes one scribal opening which appears to contravene the customary simplicity noted above.¹⁰ The “unusual benediction” occurs at the opening of a copy of the *Peṭakopadesa* and reads: *namo sammāsambuddhānaṃ paramatthadassīnaṃ silādiḡuṇapāramippattānaṃ*, ‘Homage to all perfectly awakened Buddhas, who see the ultimate truth and have attained perfection in all the virtues beginning with moral conduct’.¹¹ In the context of scribal practice von Hinüber appears to regard this as

⁹For an example of these patterns see my discussion of the opening verses and related material for works by the 12th-century author and commentary writer Sāriputta (Crosby 2006).

¹⁰Von Hinüber 1996b: 44 note 16.

¹¹Von Hinüber 1996a: §167. Translation of the Pali mine. The list of virtues is the ten perfections, the first of which is moral conduct.

a scribe's manuscript opening.¹² The *Peṭakopadesa* is one of the earliest commentarial style texts within the Pali tradition. While it is sometimes classified as canonical, in that it is added to the *Khuddakanikāya* in Burma according to the *Piṭakat samuiṇ*,¹³ it is recognised by the tradition as an authored text rather than as *buddhavacana*. As such it lacks the *evaṃ me sutam* text opening which indicates a Buddha sermon recalled by Ānanda. It is attributed by the Theravāda tradition to the Buddha's disciple Mahākaccāyana. For example, a manuscript of the text held in the Nevill collection reads, *therassa mahā-kaccāyanassa jambu-vanavāsino Peṭakopadesa samattā* (sic).¹⁴ Since it is an explicitly authored text we should expect some kind of authorial homage separate from the scribe's homage. The Nevill manuscript of this text treats the benediction noticed by von Hinüber as the opening of the text of the *Peṭakopadesa* proper, i.e. of the authored text, not the manuscript. This can be seen from two features of the manuscript. The first is the presence of a separate scribal opening: the benediction in question is preceded by the title, which is in turn preceded by the scribal opening *namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa*. Thus the manuscript is supplied with the usual scribal auspicious formula before the title. The second feature is the layout of this particular manuscript. The scribe's *namo tassa*, etc. formula and the title are centred in the middle of the folio. Somadasa recognises this as the Burmese layout, suggesting that the text was copied from a Burmese archetype.¹⁵ Following the centred benediction and title the text is then presented in the usual way, i.e. across the entire folio continuously, including the benediction *namo sammāsambuddhānaṃ* etc. noted by von Hinüber. It seems, then, that the benediction is not the product of the scribe at all, but the traditional homage of the author. Thus it does not disrupt the patterns otherwise observed by von Hinüber for Lānnā scribal openings. I also know of no other elaborate opening which has been attributed to the scribe of a Pali manuscript, in marked contrast to the range of length and style found in the scribal colophons.¹⁶ While as a manuscript opening it would indeed have been rather elaborate, as an integral part of the text it

¹²This is apparent in 1996b but not in 1996a.

¹³Von Hinüber 1996a §156.

¹⁴British Library manuscript Or. 6601(38).

¹⁵Somadasa 1987, vol.1 293.

¹⁶The colophons range from non-existent, through a simple *subham-astu*, to lengthy and informative accounts of the circumstances of the copying of the text. The most elaborate and informative scribal colophons in the Theravāda tradition seem to be those of Lānnā manuscripts. See Hundius 1990, and von Hinüber 1993 and 1996b.

is a fairly modest authorial opening. Since the *Peṭakopadesa* is one of the earliest explicitly authored texts preserved by the Theravāda tradition, this opening is of interest as the earliest example of an authorial opening homage in Pali literature. It is a far cry from the elaborate *kāvya* (formal poetic) style of authorial openings of texts composed in the 12-13th centuries, or even from the more moderately developed style of the opening verses attributed to Buddhaghosa.¹⁷

The blurring of the scribe and author distinction in practice manuals

I have drawn a contrast between authorial and scribal openings, the former being a part of the text and the latter remaining outside the text, specific to the individual manuscript. I mentioned above that the distinction may be obscured in the case of manuals copied for personal use. One such manuscript in the Nevill collection that provides an example of this contains the text *Samatha-vipassanā-Vākkapprakaraṇa*, ‘*Litany for use before Tranquillity and Insight Meditation*’, which is a manual of liturgies to accompany *yogāvacara* (also known as *borān* or *dhammakāya*) meditations.¹⁸ The auspicious opening formula *namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa* is repeated at the start of each chapter. This is possibly on the model of the repeated homage at the start of each text within a manuscript, mentioned above. Alternatively it may be the result of simple repetition of the pattern set by the first chapter, since in this text the later chapters repeat the pattern set by the first chapter, changed only by the names of the relevant meditation exercise, *kammaṭṭhāna*, for which that section of the liturgy is intended. Another possible explanation is that this text, as a manual, may well have been copied by the person who intended it for his own use. In this case, the scribe is also the practitioner. There are several related liturgies accompanying manuals of meditation practice in the collection. By ‘liturgy’ here I mean the broader ritual context, which includes the offerings to be made to both Buddha and teacher. By ‘litany’ I mean the petitions to the Buddha for success in the meditation, which must be recited before each section of the meditation practice.

¹⁷On the latter see Crosby 2003: 74ff.

¹⁸For an edition and translation of this text, see Crosby 1999, Ch.6. On the related meditation manuals see *ibid.* Ch.1. For a discussion of the nature of the *borān*, *yogāvacara* or *dhammakāya* forms of meditation see Crosby 2000. For the confirmed introduction of this tradition to Sri Lanka as part of the 18th-century reform and for a description of a recently identified Sinhala version of the story of Cittakumārī and the five-branched tree symbolising the body, which occurs in meditation texts of this tradition and has been published from Khmer sources by Bizot (1976), see Crosby, Skilton and Gunasena 2012.

Both the meditation manuals and the litany vary according to the exact range of *kammaṭṭhāna* to be practised. It therefore seems that the exact reading of the litany was based on a pool of possible components compiled to form a liturgy to match the particular practices to be followed by the owner of the accompanying meditation manual.¹⁹ In this case the scribe is also the author, in that he is creating the liturgy afresh for his own use.²⁰ Moreover, the *namo tassa* formula is not only found as a scribal opening but also commonly found in Theravādin ritual liturgies, as is widely recognised. It is a recurring component of the more traditional *okāsa vandāmi bhante*, style liturgy for the *pabbajjā*, the lower ordination ceremony, recorded by Bizot.²¹ It is in fact this traditional *pabbajjā* on which the liturgy for the preliminary rituals (*pubbakicca*) of devotion to the teacher to be performed by the meditation practitioner is based.²² The role of scribe and author merge in the *Vākkapparakaraṇa* and so the opening manuscript formula seems also to form part of the *Vākkapparakaraṇa* text. This pattern is confirmed in other manuscripts copied (and redacted) for the scribe's own personal use, including the various meditation manuals from the *yogāvacara* tradition also found in the collection.

The variety among these meditation manuals suggests that, when they circulated in Sri Lanka following their introduction from Ayutthayā to Kandy in the mid-18th century, each person redacted the instructions for meditation as best suited them. The monks of Sri Lanka studied with monks from Ayutthayā, possibly through the Pali medium. The Siamese monks transmitted through them texts not mentioned among those listed as being brought over as written texts from Siam with this same mission. There is variation in the language used (varying degrees of Pali and Sinhala), in the extent to which there is any explanation of the instructions, whether or not diagrams are provided, and in the manner of

¹⁹See Collins 1993: 3-6, for a discussion of the creation of texts on the 'gene pool' model in the context of narrative Theravāda literature.

²⁰I do not mean to suggest that all the *yogāvacara* manuscripts were copied by meditation practitioners, only that personal use is more likely to be the motive for copying an esoteric meditation manual than it is for a better known, more popular text which is copied for ceremonial or ritual use, or for use during *baṇa*. During the revival of 18th-century Sri Lanka, manuscript copying per se was emphasised as a religious practice in its own right, rather than as an employment to gain money. Thus this traditional belief in the merits of manuscript copying and hence preserving the dharma received fresh emphasis.

²¹Bizot 1988: 26-32.

²²The *pubbakicca* liturgy for the *yogāvacara* meditation practices is provided in the *Amatākaraṇaṇanā*. It is an adaption of the "*okāsa vandāmi bhante*" *pabbajjā*.

abbreviating what are extensive instructions – the longest involves 3,800 verses containing different instructions.²³ The resulting variety creates quite a challenge for anyone seeking to create a critical edition of these texts and perhaps necessitates, rather, a diplomatic edition of a single version. Thus each of the Sri Lankan monks was creating his particular version of the text on the basis of the oral teaching received from a Siamese teacher. The copies we have of these texts may have been the personal manuals of practitioners, and thus the scribe and ‘author’ is the same.

Most Sri Lankan manuscripts of *yogāvacara* texts, if complete, begin with an auspicious formula, usually the formula *namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammā sambuddhassa*. Manuscript Or.6601(64), *Cattālīsa kammaṭṭhāna*, is an exception in that it begins with the formula *namo buddhāya*. Some versions then additionally follow the pattern of explicitly authored texts mentioned above. Thus while the manuscripts begin with one of the two scribal formulae given here, or occasionally with no formula, but then contain authorial homages. For example, the meditation manual the *Amatākaravaṇṇanā*, which contains the highest proportion of Pali of the different versions of these manuals, provides elaborate authorial verses of homage to the triple gem.²⁴ It begins with a *vandanā* of the triple gem in verse, a homage we find in more or less the same form in each of the several extant copies of the text. Similarly the texts end with the author’s aspiration, the same in each copy. The author’s aspirations relate to the content of the text and success in the practices described in the text, these being meditation manuals. The end of the text (indicated by (title X +) *niṭṭhitam/ā*, “X is complete”) is then usually followed by a colophon giving the scribe’s aspiration for the benefits of having copied the text. While colophons are not the subject of this article, I point out that here again, the author’s conclusion, *nigamana*, must be distinguished from the colophon provided by the scribe. The scribe’s aspiration does not necessarily relate to the content of the text. They vary in the *yogāvacara* meditation manuscripts we are discussing here from a simple *subham-astu*, “May there be good”, to aspirations to rebirth in the presence of the future Buddha Metteyya, to becoming a Buddha (by achieving the perfections and saving all beings from *saṃsāra*), or both.

²³On the type of abbreviation used see Crosby 2005: 171 or 2007; see the latter for more detailed discussion of the various manuscripts of the *yogāvacara* tradition represented in the Nevill collection.

²⁴See Crosby 1999, Ch.1. The version of the *Vākkapprakaraṇa* that is almost entirely in Pali also has an opening panegyric.

Auspicious in form as well as word?

It has been suggested that the opening scribal formulae of manuscripts are auspicious not only in meaning but also in form. The auspiciousness in meaning is clear from parallels with other manuscript practices in the Indian cultural region. It is auspicious to open the manuscript with the name of the deity presiding over the area to which the text contained in the manuscript relates. Hence the Buddha's name is itself auspicious. Further, in the wider context of Buddhist practice the Buddha is an appropriate object of homage before any Buddhist undertaking, whether the action undertaken is an explicitly religious one, such as manuscript copying, or not. The formal auspiciousness of the formulae *namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa* and *namo buddhāya* may derive from the number of syllables which make up each phrase. Thus the *namo tassa* formula consists of eighteen syllables, eighteen being one of the auspicious numbers of Buddhism, the *namo buddhāya* formula has five syllables, a number also replete with sacred symbolism. One tradition within Theravāda that particularly emphasises the symbolic use of language and the powerful significance of numbers, including syllable counts, is the *yogāvacara* tradition that we have already seen attested in the aforementioned manuscripts of the Nevill collection.²⁵ Thus the *namo buddhāya* formula, one of the two most common scribal openings mentioned above, is one of the most frequently found mantras both in the *yogāvacara* tradition and in esoteric Buddhism generally. The number of its syllables, five, is particularly symbolic in esoteric traditions.²⁶ Each of its five syllables is identified with items

²⁵ Also termed Mahānikāy or non-Mahāvihārin Buddhism by Bizot and other French scholars working on the tradition in mainland Southeast Asia.

²⁶ Bizot, starting from the context of the *yogāvacara* tradition, suggests that the belief in this significance is not confined to the esoteric tradition (1994: 36-8). He supports his suggestion that the number of syllables in sacred formulae intentionally adds up to one of the various auspicious numbers in Buddhism with observations regarding the translation of sacred formulae between two different sacred languages of Buddhism. The example on which he bases his theory is the *iti pi so* formula which praises the qualities of the Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha. This formula is important not only in the *yogāvacara* tradition but elsewhere, both in Theravāda and the wider Buddhist tradition. It contains one hundred and eight syllables in the Pali tradition. It also contains one hundred and eight syllables in the Sanskrit of the *Mahāvīryūtpatti*, even though the parallel words in the two languages would not add up to the same number were it not for some alteration in the Sanskrit/Pali. Thus an effort has been made to maintain the correct syllable count. This suggests that the syllable count is of significance, and offers circumstantial confirmation of my suggestion that the syllable count of the two most common opening formulae of Theravāda manuscripts might intentionally add up in both instances to a number auspicious in Buddhism.

in other significant sets of five. In the *yogāvacara* tradition, these tend to be important *Abhidhamma* categories, e.g. the five elements water, earth, fire, wind and space/atmosphere, or the five *khandha* “aggregates” *rūpa*, *vedanā*, *saññā*, *saṅkhāra* and *viññāna*; or other relevant groups of five, such as the qualities of mother, father, Buddha, Dhamma and Saṅgha, or the five Buddhas of this world-period (*kalpa*), Kakusandha, Konāgamana, Kassapa, Gotama and Metteyya.²⁷ In spite of the recognisable significance of syllable count in these contexts, however, it was not necessarily of significance to the scribes, as can be seen from the variety of other opening formulae and versions of the *namo tassa* formula which lack this auspicious syllable count. Other opening formulae among Lānnā manuscripts examined by von Hinüber include abbreviations of the *namo tassa* formula to *namo tass’ atthu* (‘Let there be homage to him’) or *nam’atthu* (‘Let there be homage’); additions to this formula, such as *namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa. jayatu sugatasāsanam* (‘May the dispensation of the Buddha be victorious’); a combination of both: *namo tass’ atthu. jayatu jinasāsanam*; or a different formula entirely: *svasti* (‘wellbeing’). *namo buddhāya. jayatu sugatasāsanam* and *namo buddhāya. pañca buddhā (sic) namām’aham* (‘I worship the five Buddhas’).²⁸

Re-examining the ‘rules’ of scribal openings

When making the examination of Lānnā manuscripts that I have drawn on here, von Hinüber observes, “While not too much attention was paid to the organisation of the text itself, the scribes were consistent in keeping certain rules concerning the beginning or end of the text. These rules underline the religious significance of the manuscripts.” He begins his preliminary study of the opening formula and colophons with the statement, “It is well known that a canonical Pali text or a commentary should start with the formula *namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa*. ... However, even in Theravāda the beginning of a sacred text is not as uniform as printed editions both oriental and western have it.”²⁹ Von Hinüber then notes some additions which precede or replace this formula

²⁷ See Crosby 2000 which summarises the evidence for this provided by Bizot in several publications on the Cambodian works of this tradition.

²⁸ Von Hinüber 1996b: 44–45. Von Hinüber notes as unusual the opening formula *namo buddhāya. pañca buddhā namām’ aham* on two manuscripts from northern Thailand, one a 16th century copy of the *Samantapāsādikā*, the other an 18th century copy of the *Thūpavaṃsa*.

²⁹ Von Hinüber 1996b: 43–44.

on a couple of *buddhavacana*/commentarial manuscripts and thus undermine this common knowledge.³⁰ Berkwitz observes, “The *namaskāra* that traditionally opens all Buddhist texts from Sri Lanka reads, ‘*namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa*’.”³¹ He also observes scribal insertions after this formula in manuscripts of the *Thūpavaṃsa* as well as auspicious marginalia.³² Thus both von Hinüber and Berkwitz observe some general rules while also noticing exceptions. I shall now examine what the Nevill manuscripts add to this picture.

If the implication on the part of modern editions that the *namo tassa* formula is the accepted opening only for canonical and commentarial texts were correct, it would present a further criterion beyond the *evaṃ me sutam* opening of the text itself for assessing the sacred status of the text contained in the manuscript. Such information could prove a useful tool in assessing the status of those texts regarded as *buddhavacana*, and included in the *Khuddakanikāya*, by some traditions and not by others, such as the *Peṭakopadesa* discussed above. It might further prove useful in assessing the ambiguous status of so-called apocryphal literature. An example of such an ambiguous case is presented by the manuscripts of the *Upāsakamanussavinayaavaṇṇanā*, a text preserved throughout Southeast Asia, recording the punishment in store for those who commit evil deeds. The punishments are given in terms of durations in particular hells, and the evil deed accorded most attention is disrespect. The text also briefly mentions the most certain way to a heavenly rebirth, namely having one’s son or daughter enter the *saṅgha*, suggesting that it predates the end of the nuns’ (*bhikkhuni*) ordination lineage.³³ The entire text is presented as a teaching given by the Buddha to Ānanda. It is thus presented as the word of the Buddha, i.e. *buddhavacana*. Unlike such discourses preserved in the main body of the canon, however, it does not begin with the *evaṃ me sutam* formula. Rather it begins with an invitation in verse to listen to the text:

*saṃsāre saṃsarantāṇaṃ manussānaṃ hitāvahaṃ
kāruṇṇeṇeva desesi manussavinayaṃ imaṃ
suṇantā sādhukāṇṇeṇeva suṇantu jīnadesitaṃ*

”He taught this Code of Conduct for Mankind solely from compassion

³⁰ *ibid.*: 43–44.

³¹ Berkwitz 2009: 49 note 18.

³² Berkwitz 2009: 44.

³³ See Crosby 2006 for a more detailed discussion of this text.

since it brings benefit to the people trapped in the cycle of *saṃsāra*.
Listening attentively, may people hear it as taught by the Conqueror!”

After the *evaṃ me suttaṃ* opening, a canonical *sutta* would then proceed to set the scene for the Buddha to teach the ensuing discourse. In doing so a canonical *sutta* follows a standard formula. The only variants possible in the standard scene-setting formula are the name of the city near which the Buddha is residing and the name of the location in which the Buddha gives his teaching. The most frequently named city is Sāvattthī (Sanskrit *Śrāvastī*) and the most frequently named location is Anāthapiṇḍaka’s *ārāma* in Jeta’s grove. Thus the typical scene-setting formula in the *Suttapiṭaka* reads as follows,

*Ekam samayaṃ bhagavā Sāvattthiyaṃ viharati Jetavane Anāthapiṇḍikassa ārāme.*³⁴

”At one time the Lord was living at Sāvattthī in Anāthapiṇḍaka’s park in Jeta’s grove.”

In the particular text quoted here, the discourse takes the form of a dialogue between the Buddha and Ānanda, which is again presented in formulaic terms:³⁵ in the *Dīghanikāya*.

Atha kho āyasmā Ānando yena Bhagavā ten’upasaṅkami, upasaṅkamitvā bhagavantam abhivādetvā ekam antaṃ nisīdi. ekam antaṃ nisinno kho āyasmā Ānando Bhagavantam etad avoca ‘kimatthiyāni bhante kusālāni silāni kimānisaṃsānī’ ti?

”At that time the venerable Ānanda approached the Lord (*bhagavā*). On approaching the Lord he addressed him, then sat down to one side. Once seated the venerable Ānanda said the following to the Lord: “Lord, what is the purpose of wholesome behaviour, of what benefit are virtuous actions?”

The last sentence, Ānanda’s question, is specific to this particular text and the discourse is the Buddha’s teaching on the subject in response to this and further questions by Ānanda.

³⁴Taken from *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, *Dasaka-nipāta* I PTS vol V: 1.

³⁵See Allon 1997, chapter 1 for an analysis of the variety of approach formulae using /upasaṅkamati

The *Upāsakamanussavinaya* also places the Buddha in that same location, namely in Jeta's grove near the city of Sāvattthī, and again presents the discourse as a teaching to Ānanda, but unlike the canonical text of the Buddha's teaching quoted above, it does not use the standardised formulae. Rather it reads as follows:

sāvattthinagaram upanissāya jetavane viharanto sammāsambuddho mahākāruṇṇe samāpattito vutthāya dibbacakkhunā veneyyabandhave oloketvā ānandaṃ āmantesi ehānanda mama santikā dhammaṃ sunāhīti vatvā dhammaṃ desento satthā idhānanda saṃsāre bahujaṇā saṃsaraṇtā pāpakammāni karonti.

"While dwelling in Jeta's grove close to the city of Sāvattthi, the perfectly awakened one (*sammāsambuddho*), who had attained perfection in great compassion, stood up and after observing with his divine eye kinsmen in need of training he summoned Ānanda. 'Come Ānanda, listen to a teaching of the *dharma* from me'. So saying the teacher proceeded to teach the *dharma*: "Now, Ānanda, many people while caught in the cycle of *saṃsāra* commit evil deeds..."

The *Upāsakamanussavinaya* purports to recount a story of the Buddha giving a sermon to Ānanda, but while presenting the same details of where and how the teaching came about as does the text from the canon, it uses none of the pericopes found in the canon. Moreover, the language is reminiscent of commentarial style.

The unstandardised nature of the opening of the *Upāsakamanussavinaya* could be used to argue that the text is late because it is not using the standardised formulae used by the early tradition to memorize the events of the Buddha's life. Alternatively it could be interpreted as reflecting an early tradition uncontaminated by the superimposition of standardisation.³⁶ Allon argues that the standardised formulae in the Pali canon are mnemonics and a feature of the oral nature of the Pali canon.³⁷ He rejects the idea of an imposed standardisation on existing canonical literature because, as his study of the Pali canon reveals, the standardisation is sophisticated, with subtle variations according to

³⁶Both Schopen and Allon discuss the interpretations of a number of previous scholars who have analysed the style of the canon with a view to assessing its orality (and hence earliness) or otherwise. Schopen 1997: 571-572; Allon 1997: 2-7.

³⁷Allon op.cit. 162. The view rejected is that held by Parry and, in particular, Lord.

the actors, narrator and action of a particular text. It is part of the creative process of developing a text for oral transmission, not blindly applied afterwards. This then leads to the conclusion that texts purporting to present the word of the Buddha that are not in this form are late and to some extent inauthentic or ‘apocryphal’. On the other hand, one could interpret texts that are unstandardised as the products of an old oral tradition and use the same data of standardised formulae in the canon to argue the opposite case, namely that the canon’s style is symptomatic of a high degree of editing and intervention in the text. There is, after all, no reason to assume that large-scale editing and standardisation need be an unsophisticated process. Applying the *evaṃ me sutaṃ* formula to a text was clearly understood as marking a text as *buddhavacana*. This is one of the changes made to existing texts in the process of transforming them into Mahāyāna *sūtras* and in the formation of the ‘apocryphal’ *suttas* of Theravāda.³⁸ The passage from the *Kṣudrakavastu* of the *Mūlasarvāstivādaśāstra* studied by Schopen provides guidance for the selection of appropriate standardized formulae into which to set stories of which such details are forgotten or unknown.³⁹ It shows some degree of the sophisticated variation pointed out by Allon. Given these opposite possible interpretations of the *evaṃ me sutaṃ* and other standardised formulae, the specific connotations behind the opening formulae used by scribes in the writing of manuscripts of such a text could gain greater significance. In this case, the scribal formula chosen by the copyist might then indicate to us whether a text such as the *Upāsakamanussavinayaṇṇanā* was regarded as authentic *buddhavacana* by the tradition that preserved it. The *Upāsakamanussavinayaṇṇanā* is in fact preserved in manuscripts with the opening formula *namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa*. Since it is not presented as a commentary, the formula could indicate that it was regarded as canonical.⁴⁰

We have now had two separate examples of texts which do not fit into the categories of canon or commentary, yet are preserved in manuscripts with the opening formula *namo tassa bhagavato sammāsambuddhassa*: the *yogāvacara* meditation and liturgy manuals on the one hand, and the apocryphal *sutta*, the

³⁸Hallisey proposes the phrase ‘allegedly non-canonical’ to “the alternative designations ‘apocryphal’ or ‘counterfeit’, since it is less likely to pre-judge the whole issue of the status of such texts.” (1993: 97, note 2).

³⁹Schopen 1997.

⁴⁰The term *vaṇṇanā* does not necessarily mean ‘commentary’ in text titles of Southeast Asia, although – as already observed – some of the language used is closer to that used by commentaries when glossing the main text.

Upāsakamanussavinayaṇṇanā, on the other. We have reason to be uncertain regarding the perceived status of both examples. Their preservation with scribal opening formulae also found in the manuscripts of canonical and commentarial texts adds to the doubt cast on the association of these formulae with these two genres of texts by von Hinüber in relation to northern Thai manuscripts.

Von Hinüber's discussion rests mainly on the c. 140 northern Thai Pali manuscripts in the monastic library of Wat Lai Hin near Lampang.⁴¹ Further to test the patterns of association between scribal opening and the content of a manuscript in relation to Sri Lankan manuscripts, I shall summarise the evidence of other Nevill manuscripts. While the 2227 manuscripts of the Nevill collection represent a much bigger database than the Wat Lai Hin library, it has a much shorter time span. The oldest dated Wat Lai Hin manuscript dates from 1471, and others range from the 15th to the 18th centuries. In contrast, the Nevill manuscripts date primarily from the 18th and 19th centuries, with a significant number from the seventeenth. Only a handful are dated prior to the 17th-century, mostly on palaeographical grounds, and few of those are undamaged at the beginning. Further, the colophons of the Sinhalese manuscripts are on the whole far less informative than the northern Thai manuscripts about provenance, date, motivation and ownership.

Not all of the Nevill collection manuscripts are explicitly Buddhist. Other subjects represented include history, geography, ethnography, grammar, medicine, astrology, music, poetry, texts to deities such as Pattini, eulogies of individuals, both Sri Lankan and European, etc. Focusing on texts explicitly related to Buddhism in some way, we find that the *namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammā sambuddhassa* formula is by far the most common opening, followed in popularity by the opening *namo buddhāya*.

Copies of the following types of text are found with the opening homage *namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa*:

- Pali canonical texts including 'apocryphal' *sutta*;
- *atthakathā*, *ṭīkā*;
- *abhidhamma-mātikā*;
- *paritta*;
- the vast majority of the very numerous word-for-word glosses, translations and explanations in Sinhala of *sutta*, sacred formulae, *pāṭimokkha* etc.;

⁴¹ Von Hinüber 1996b: 35.

- Sinhalese commentaries, retellings and summaries of *sutta*, of episodes from commentaries, of *jātaka* tales;
- anthologies, e.g. *Suttasaṅgaha*, *Upāsakajanālaṃkāra*;
- *Sahassavatthuppakaraṇaṃ*;
- *Buddhavandanā*;
- *ānisaṃsa* (text on the merits of particular types of religious activities);
- Sinhalese texts listing the details of previous Buddhas, the lives of the Bodhi-satta;
- Sinhalese biographies of the Buddha;
- Sinhalese Paritta commentaries, collections of ritual formulae, e.g. precepts or magical formulae to be used for protection/ healing;
- meditation manuals including *yogāvacara* meditation manuals;
- Sinhalese translations of *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha*, Sinhalese translations of Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga*, Sinhalese translations of the *Jinacarita*;
- medieval *vinaya* handbooks in Pali or Sinhala, including the *Khuddasikkhā*, *Mūlasikkhā*, *Uposathavidhi*, *kammavācā*; glossaries of *vinaya* terms;
- *Saddharmālaṅkāraya*; *pūjākathā*, chapters from the *Pūjāvalī*;
- sacred cosmology;
- descriptions of first Buddha image, of first council, Sinhalese description of first council;
- chronicles incl. the *Thūpavaṃsa*;
- *Abhidhamma* manuals/anthologies including the *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha*;
- *Dasabodhisattupattikathā*;
- texts for lay conduct, e.g. *Gihivinaya*, *Upāsakamanussavinaya*; hell texts;
- Pali poems on Buddhist subjects, e.g. by the 18th-century Saṅgharāja Saraṇaṃkara
- *Saddhamma-saṅgaha* ('history of sacred literature')

The length and range of this list of types of texts preceded by the *namo tassa* formula demonstrates overwhelmingly that this formula is by no means restricted to canonical and commentarial texts in the late medieval manuscript tradition of Sri Lankan Theravāda. A great variety of treatises and poetry in both Pali and Sinhala are also found preceded by the *namo tassa* formula. It is clear that the *namo tassa* formula is not exclusive to manuscripts of canonical and commentarial texts. The next step is to see whether manuscripts of such texts exclusively begin with the *namo tassa* formula, or also with other formulae.

The second most common opening auspicious formula is the *namo buddhāya*. The frequency of this formula in the Nevill collection is in contrast to the scarcity of it in the Vat Lai Hin collection noticed by von Hinüber, where it occurs in only two manuscripts, a Vinaya text from the 18th century and a Jātaka from c. 1500 C.E., although it also occurs there as a component of other opening formulae in several manuscripts.⁴²

In the Nevill collection the following types of texts are found in manuscripts which begin with the *namo buddhāya* formula:

- *sutta*, including apocryphal *sutta*;
- commentaries;
- Sinhalese commentaries on non-canonical texts;
- Sinhalese word for word glosses, translation and retellings of *suttas*, *jātakas*, *vandanā* and sacred formulae;
- *ānisaṃsa*;
- *vinaya* commentaries, manuals and summaries incl. *Mūlasikkhā*, *kāmāvācā*;
- *katikāvata*; meditation manuals including one *yogāvacara* manual;
- Sinhalese religious works on topics such as the *pāramī*;
- Pali poems;
- human and veterinary medical texts employing *mantra/yantra/paritta*/power of Buddha's qualities;
- 'tantric'/ritual texts re *mantra*, *yantra*, compilations of *mantra*;
- Sanskrit *stotra*;⁴³
- treatises on how to make *kaṭhina* robes and thanksgiving for gifts of robes;
- treatises on causes of earthquakes;
- *śilpa-śāstra*;
- aspiration verses.

From this list it can be seen that the *namo buddhāya* formula is found on manuscripts of canonical works and commentaries. This means that the *namo tassa* formula was not universally regarded as the only appropriate opening for a manuscript of a canonical or commentarial text. The number of canonical and commentarial manuscripts opening with *namo buddhāya* is however far fewer than those using the *namo tassa* formula, with c.90% preceded by the *namo tassa*

⁴² Von Hinüber 1996b: 45.

⁴³ The *namo buddhāya* formula is the same in Sanskrit and Pali, unlike the *namo tassa* formula.

formula. Sinhalese commentaries and retellings likewise usually begin with the *namo tassa* formula, even though a few have *namo buddhāya*.⁴⁴

Manuscripts containing scientific, medical and ritual texts more commonly open with *namo buddhāya*, although they also often have no opening formula at all, perhaps because – as with the meditation manuals – they are copied by the practitioner himself for personal use. The distinction between a *paritta* text and a text of *paritta* for medical purposes is not always clear. Manuscripts of medical texts also often open with homage to the Buddha in the form *namas sarvajñāya*⁴⁵, “Homage to the omniscient one,” or *namaḥ śrīghanāya*, an epithet of the Buddha more familiar in Mahāyāna contexts. Medical texts which seek to harness the powers of both the Buddha or the three jewels and the Sinhalese pantheon pay homage to both the Buddha and the appropriate deity, with the Buddha placed first.

Conclusions

We have seen that in the majority of cases scribal openings to manuscripts are to be distinguished from textual openings, be these canonical or authorial. Making this distinction allows us to identify the authorial opening of the *Peṭakopadesa* as the earliest in Pali literature, and a modest precursor of later authorial practice. We have also seen that there may be no absolute distinction in the case of manuscripts that functioned as practice manuals for the person who copied them, as is the case with the *yogāvacara* meditation manuals preserved in the Nevill collection. We explored the relatively large number of manuscripts in the Nevill collection to assess the possibility that the scribal openings had a further significance in reflecting the religious status of the text they introduced, as had been suggested in previous scholarship.

This exploration added to the information provided by von Hinüber and Berkwitz, which hinted that earlier assumptions had been too universalised. While there appear to be general tendencies in the Sri Lankan manuscripts of the Nevill collection for some types of text to be preceded by one formula in preference to the other, the usage of the opening formulae is not exclusive or even strongly

⁴⁴I had initially intended to develop a statistical analysis of the manuscript openings in the Nevill collection, but given the lack of variety and the non-specificity of the openings I do not anticipate such a study bearing useful results.

⁴⁵Cf. von Hinüber “A probably unique opening formula is: nama’ sarbbajñāya. purrb-bācāryyebhyo ..., Adhikamāsavinicichāy, CS 940: A.D. 1578” (ibid. 44 note 14)

normative. The same text may be found in multiple copies introduced by the *namo tassa* formula on some and the *namo buddhāya* on others, as is the case, for example, with two copies of the *Vammikasūtrasannaya* and two copies of the identical *bodhivandanā*. The scribes do not therefore seem to have been so “consistent in keeping certain rules concerning the beginning ... of a text” after all. The types of text listed are all in some way representative of Buddhist religion and thus both formulae do to some extent “underline the religious significance of the manuscripts”⁴⁶ (we would not expect to find either formula on a completely un-Buddhist text), but they do not define their contents as closely as we might hope. The one formula that appears to be fairly specific to content is the formula *namo sarvajñāya*, “homage to the omniscient one.” However, it is not specific to one particular religion, but rather used as an epithet of the relevant deity/Buddha worshipped by the author/owner. One medical text, owned by a Christian apothecary, for example, further describes the *sarvajña* referred to in the homage as having blue eyes, perhaps a reference to Christ’s Dutch or Victorian British manifestation. Thus the *sarvajña/sabbañña* formula is mostly found on what we might call scientific texts, such as *śāstra* or medical texts, where invoking the quality of omniscience in the object of homage seems particularly appropriate.

The two most common formulae for the opening of Buddhist manuscripts in late medieval Sinhalese manuscripts, *namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammā sambuddhassa* and *namo buddhāya*, are not used exclusively for particular genres of Buddhist texts. Nor does there seem to be a change in the usage over the period under consideration (17th-19th centuries). It is unclear whether one or the other of the two formulae was popular with different monastic or other traditions, or a matter of scribal preference, since insufficient data of this kind are provided in the colophons of the Nevill manuscripts. Even if it we had more data, such detail would be hard to ascertain, given the frequency of the *namo tassa* and *namo buddhāya* formula. The *namo tassa* opening of the European and Burmese editions of canonical and commentarial works does not, then, reflect the variety of practice in Sri Lankan manuscripts.

References

- Allon, M. (1997). *Style and Function: A Study of the dominant stylistic features of the prose portions of Pāli canonical sutta texts and their mnemonic function*. *Studia*

⁴⁶ *ibid.* 1996b: 43.

- Philologica Buddhica Monograph Series XII*, the International Institute for Buddhist Studies, Tokyo.
- Becchetti, C. (1994), “Une ancienne tradition de manuscrits au Cambodge”, in Bizot (ed.) *Recherches nouvelles sur le Cambodge*, École française d’Extrême-Orient, Paris: 47-62.
- Berkwitz, Stephen C. ‘Materiality and Merit in Sri Lankan Buddhist manuscripts’ in Stephen C. Berkwitz, Juliane Schober and Claudia Brown (eds.) *Buddhist Manuscript Cultures: Knowledge, ritual and art*. London and New York: Routledge: 35-49.
- Bizot, François, 1976. *Le figuier à cinq branches, Recherches sur le bouddhisme khmer I*, PEFEO, vol.CVII, Paris.
- , 1988. *Les traditions de la pabbajjā en Asie du Sud-Est, Recherches sur le bouddhisme khmer IV*, Göttingen.
- Blackburn, Anne M 2001, *Buddhist Learning and Textual Practice in Eighteenth Century Lankan Monastic Culture*. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press.
- Crosby, Henrietta Kate 1999, ‘Studies in the Medieval Pāli Literature of Sri Lanka with special reference to the esoteric *Yogāvacara* Tradition.’ D. Phil. dissertation, University of Oxford.
- Crosby, Kate, 2000, ‘Tantric Theravāda: A bibliographic essay on the writings of François Bizot and other literature on the *Yogāvacara* Tradition,’ *Contemporary Buddhism*, November. Issue 2: 141-198.
- , ‘The Origin of the Language Name Pāli in Medieval Theravāda Literature,’ *Journal of Buddhist Studies*, Centre for Buddhist Studies, Sri Lanka, vol.2, Dec 2003: 70-116.
- , 2005. ‘Differences between the *Vimuttimagga-uddāna* and the *Amatākara-vaṇṇanā*,’ *Journal of Buddhist Studies*, Sri Lanka, vol.3, Jan 2005: 139-151.
- , 2006. ‘Sāriputta’s Three Works on the *Samantapāsādikā*,’ *The Journal of the Pali Text Society*, vol.XXVIII (2006): 49-59.
- , 2006. ‘A Theravāda Code of Conduct for Good Buddhists: the *Upāsakamanus-savinaya*,’ *Journal of the American Oriental Society*, 126.2: 177-187.
- , 2007. *Saṅkhepasārasaṅgaha*: Abbreviation in Pāli’, in O. von Hinüber, Rupert Gethin and Mark Allon (eds.) *Journal of the Pali Text Society*. vol. XXIX. *Festschrift in honour of the 80th birthday of K.R. Norman in 2005 and the 125th anniversary in 2006 of the founding of the Pali Text Society*. 2007: 169-174.
- Crosby, Kate with Jotika Khur-Yearn, ‘Poetic *Dhamma* and the *zare*: traditional styles of teaching Theravāda amongst the Shan of northern Thailand’, in *Contemporary Buddhism*: issue 1, 2010: 1-26.

- Crosby, Kate with Andrew Skilton and Amal Gunasena, “The Sutta on Understanding Death in the Transmission of *borān* Meditation from Siam to the Kandyan Court”, *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, forthcoming 2012, 28pp.
- Hallisey, Charles (1993), “*Nibbānasutta*: an allegedly non-canonical *sutta* on *Nibbāna* as a Great City”, *Journal of the Pali Text Society* vol. XVIII: 97-130.
- von Hinüber, Oskar, 1993. “Pāli und Lānnā (Nord-Thai) in Kolophonen alter Palmblatt Handschriften aus Nord-Thailand”, *Indogermanica et Italica. Festschrift für Helmut Rix*. Innsbruck: 223-236.
- , 1996a. *A Handbook of Pali Literature*, Walter de Gruyter, Berlin, New York.
- , 1996b. “Chips from Buddhist Workshops: Scribes and Manuscripts from Northern Thailand”, *Journal of the Pali Text Society* vol. XXII: 35-57.
- Hundius, Harald, 1990. “The Colophons of Thirty Pāli Manuscripts from Northern Thailand”, *Journal of the Pali Text Society* XIV, 1-173.
- Lagirarde, François, 1994. “Textes bouddhiques du pay khmer et du Lanna: un exemple de parenté”, F.Bizot (ed.) *Recherches Nouvelles sur le Cambodge*, EFEO, Paris: 63-77.
- Bhikkhu Nyanatusita’s “Reference Table of Pali Literature” based on Sri Lankan collections. http://resolver.sub.uni-goettingen.de/purl/?gr_elib-66 Last accessed 31st January 2012.
- Schopen, Gregory, 1975. “The phrase *sa pr̥thivīpradeśaś caityabhūto bhavet* in the *Vajracchedikā*: notes on the cult of the book in Mahāyāna”, *Indo-Iranian Journal* 17: 147-181.
- , 1997. “If You Can’t Remember, How to Make It Up: Some Monastic Rules for Redacting Canonical Texts”, in P.Kieffer-Pülz and J.-U. Hartmann (eds.), *Bauddhavidyāsudhākaraḥ: Studies in Honour of Heinz Bechert on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*, Indica et Tibetica Band 30, Swisttal-Odendorf: 571-582.
- Skilton, Andrew, 1997. “The *Samādhirājasūtra*: a study incorporating a critical edition and translation of Chapter 17”, D.Phil. dissertation, University of Oxford.
- Somadasa, K.D. 1987-1995. *Catalogue of the Hugh Nevill Collection of Sinhalese Manuscripts in the British Library*, 7 vols., British Library, London, Pali Text Society, Henley on Thames.
- Veidlinger, Daniel M. 2006. *Spreading the Dhamma. Writing, Orality and Textual Transmission in Buddhist Northern Thailand*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press.

Tempering *Belles Infidèles* and Promoting *Jolies Laides*: Idle Thoughts on the Ideal Rendering of Buddhist Texts and Terminology¹

Florin Deleanu

florindeleanu@yahoo.co.jp

The paper argues for the suitability, or at least acceptability, of a translation style which I call *jolie laide*, i.e. a rendering which is not necessarily exquisite in its aesthetic quality but is as faithful as possible to the original and perfectly intelligible in the target language. This is not a mechanical process, and in order to meet these standards, the translator should allow for flexibility and make full use of the critical apparatus. I do not rule out, however, other rendering strategies, and the last part of my contribution illustrates the possibility of having *jolies laides* side by side with free translations. The article also contains an appendix on Dao'an's 'five [points of permissible] deviation from the original and three [points which should remain] unchanged' and Xuanzang's 'five types [of Indic words which should] not be translated'.

Strutting and Fretting Our Hour Between the Rock of Graceful Freedom and the Hard Place of Lacklustre Literalness

To add or not add? – that is the question awaiting any translator! Is it nobler to suffer the slings and arrows of hard-core philologists mercilessly unleashed against

¹ It is my pleasure and duty to express my sincerest gratitude to the following persons who have kindly helped and supported me in various ways: Prof. em. Dr Richard Gombrich, Prof. Dr Stefano Zacchetti, Miss Amanda Anderson (commissioning editor, Macmillan Education), and Mr Michael Fessler (haiku poet). An earlier version of this paper was read at the Symposium on Yogācāra Terminology held at Mangalam Research Center for Buddhist Languages, Berkeley (California), in November 2012. My warmest thanks also go to the Symposium participants for their kind feedback.

graceful free renderings? Or should one take arms against a tedious sea of lacklustre literal translation? In one form or another, the question has been around for quite a while. The awareness of the need to make a responsible choice is already discernable in Cicero's and Horace's exhortations to avoid word-for-word renditions.² A continent apart and centuries later, one recognises similar concerns in Daoan's 道安 (312-385) counsel to the translators of Buddhist scriptures into Chinese to depart from the Indic originals in some regards but stay close to them in others.³ According to George Steiner (1998, 251), the essence of the argument has been repeated again and again over the centuries 'with identical theses, familiar moves and refutations in debate'.⁴ The lines below can hardly aspire to bring something original, let alone solve the perennial dispute of literal vs free rendering (if it is solvable at all!). Apart from a few idle thoughts on the theoretical framework of translation, they will mainly attempt to connect these basic questions and some derived problems to the task of rendering traditional Buddhist sources and terminology into modern languages.⁵

While extreme forms of literal or free renderings of Buddhist texts may not be so frequent, there is an entire spectrum of degrees between these two poles. And there seems to be no consensus as towards which pole and in what degree one's translation should be geared. The problem is further compounded by the lack of objective criteria for defining and assessing the degrees of literalness. What may be a perfectly understandable rendering for some (usually the translator himself/herself!) could make quite a few puzzled eyebrows rise.

Even with all these provisos, some renderings do, however, strike us as unnecessarily literal. Alex Wayman's study, partial edition, and translation of the *Śrāvakaḥmūmi* (1961) or *The Foundation of the Disciples* [*Path of Spiritual Cul-*

²Cicero's famous *verbum pro verbo* occurs in the *Libellus de optimo genere oratorum* (Hedicke ed. 1889, 6). In the *Ars Poetica* (verses 133-134), Horace similarly advises: 'as a faithful translator, you will take care not to translate word for word' (*nec verbum verbo curabis reddere, fidus interpres*; see Coleman ed. and tr. 1783).

³These are the 'five [points of permissible] deviation from the original and three [points which should remain] unchanged' 五失本三不易 (see Appendix I). Equally relevant for the discussion are Xuanzang's 玄奘 'five types [of Indic words which should] not be translated' 五種不翻 (see Appendix II).

⁴Steiner is actually commenting here on Ronald Knox's *On English Translation* (1957, p. 5).

⁵Many of the examples selected here are taken from Yogācāra sources, one of the two major Mahāyāna schools of thought in India, but the vast majority of my comments apply, I believe, to any genre of Buddhist literature as well as basically to all classical and traditional texts across the entire spectrum of human culture.

tivation],⁶ an otherwise noteworthy pioneering contribution, provides some relevant examples. In spite of its merits, Wayman's style sometimes displays what Edgerton (1962, 308) describes as 'wooden literalness'. The epithet is specifically used to qualify Wayman's rendering of the Sanskrit phrase *bhojanemātrajñātā* as 'knowing the amount in food'. In plain English, this amounts to saying 'moderation in eating' or, as suggested by Edgerton (ibid.), 'moderation in food'.

At the opposite pole, we find adaptations like Dwight Goddard's *Self-*

⁶ Another possible rendering of the title is *The Disciples' Level*. The primary sense of °bhūmi in the titles of the *Śrāvakabhūmi* and the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, especially in the early phases of their textual history, appears to have been that of 'foundation' or 'source' rather than 'stage'. The latter is, to be sure, one of the meanings of the word, and this semantic sphere becomes more prominent in works such as the *Daśabhūmikasūtra* or *Scripture on the Ten Stages [of the Bodhisattva's Path]*. We must note, however, that as also argued by Itō (1968; 1970), even in the *Daśabhūmikasūtra*, one of the basic senses of *bhūmi* appears to have been that of *ākara* 'a rich source of anything, place of origin' (Itō 1968, 134).

The meaning of 'foundation' in the title of the *Yogācārabhūmi* is also attested in later commentarial works like the **Yogācārabhūmivivākhyā* or *Exposition upon the Foundation [or: Stages] of Spiritual Practice* (T 30.884c25-26) (see Deleanu 2006, 48, n. 3). Similarly, in his *Sūtrālamkāravṛttibhāṣya* or *Gloss upon the Ornament of [Mahāyāna] Scriptures*, the Yogācāra exegete Sthiramati (ca 510-570) glosses the term *pañcavidhā yogabhūmiḥ* (ad MSĀ 65.16ff.), usually construed as 'five types of stages of spiritual practice', as follows: 'The[se] five types of factors are called "foundations of spiritual practice" (*yogabhūmi*) due to [their] being the basis (**āśraya*) and the ground (**nidāna*; or: **adhiṣṭhāna*) of the cultivation (**bhāvanā*) of spiritual practice (*yoga*)' (*chos rnam pa lnga rnal 'byor bsgom pa'i rten dang gzhiṣṭ gyur pas na rnal 'byor gyi sa zhes bya'o* || D Mi 189a4-5). The polysemy of the word *bhūmi* is undeniable, and it is not excluded that even in the same context, more than one denotation or connotation may have been present. It seems to me, however, more natural to construe the original meaning of the titles of the *Śrāvakabhūmi* and the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* as 'The Foundation of the Disciples['] Path of Spiritual Cultivation]' and 'The Foundation of the Bodhisattvas['] Path of Spiritual Cultivation]' respectively.

However, it is quite possible that °bhūmi in the sense 'stage', i.e. a semantic line which may have originally been a secondary, even dormant, semantic line in the title of the two texts, may have gradually gained prominence over the meaning of 'foundation' once the *Śrāvakabhūmi* and the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* became part of the *Yogācārabhūmi* and the latter continued its expansion into a mega-encyclopaedia of spiritual and doctrinal lore. But even in the *Yogācārabhūmi*, the term °bhūmi does not have a straightforward, unequivocal meaning of 'step' on a ladder of spiritual progression. There is no implication, for instance, that a yogi must first practice according to the Śrāvakayāna, then follow the Pratyekabuddha's path, and then engage in the bodhisattvic course of salvific activity and spiritual cultivation. If there is a sense of *bhūmi* as 'level' in the context of the titles of the textual units making up the *Yogācārabhūmi*, then it must be one of hierarchical evaluation of religious ideals from the perspective of the Great Vehicle: Śrāvakayāna, the lowest Vehicle, is placed first; this is followed by the path of the Solitary Buddhas; and finally the Mahāyāna course of praxis is set forth in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*.

Realization of Noble Wisdom (1932)⁷ which drastically abridges, edits, thematically re-arranges, and renames the chapters of D.T. Suzuki's (generally faithful, if at times controversial) English translation (1932) of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* or *Scripture upon [the Buddha's] Entry into the Island*.⁸ This not only blasts the original flow of ideas and themes into a new structure which bears little resemblance to the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* itself but sometimes also tampers with the very message of the text.

Let us take, for instance, the Chapter on the [Undesired] Consequences of [Postulating] the Permanence or Impermanence of the Tathāgata (*Tathāgatanityānitya-prasaṅgaparivarta*).⁹ The gist of this very brief chapter is that the Tathāgata is neither permanent nor impermanent (*na [...] tathāgato nityo nānityāḥ*)¹⁰ and the true understanding of the meaning of this statement can only come 'from the destruction of the conceptual knowledge' (*vikalpabuddhikṣayān*).¹¹

⁷Dwight Goddard (1861-1939) played a major role in the introduction and popularisation of Buddhism, especially Zen, in the United States. Though not a Buddhist scholar in the strict sense of the word, his publications, especially *A Buddhist Bible* (1932), were instrumental in familiarising the American public with the basic teachings of Buddhism. My remarks below, not always exactly flattering, are not meant to slight Goddard's otherwise impressive achievements.

⁸My usage of 'adaptation' here follows Bastin 2009, 3, and refers to an act of altering and rewriting the text mainly in order to make it accessible to larger or different sections of the public. Scholars like Eco 2001, 67-77, 106-117; Eco [2003] 2004, 123-126, 127-132; etc. (on the basis of Roman Jakobson 'Linguistic aspects of translation', 1959) prefer to label this genre 'rewording' or 'intralinguistic translation'. (For Eco's assessment of 'rewording', see below.) Eco employs 'adaptation' (also called 'transmutation') for a reformulation of the original which implies a change of the semiotic system, such as the adaptation of a film to a novel (see Eco 2001, 119; Eco [2003] 2004, 158-165). Last but not least, for a classification of the types of interpretation and change from one semiotic system to another, translation being a particular case of this more general phenomenon, see Eco's outstanding classification (2001, 99ff.).

⁹LĀv 217-219, corresponding to Suzuki's translation 1932, 187-189.

Tathāgata, literally and often rendered as 'Thus-gone', is an epithet of an Awakened One, and is another, actually a favourite, appellation for the (or a) Buddha. I find the literal translation rather opaque for those not familiar with Buddhism and prefer to stick to the Indic form which, by the way, is now registered in most of the large English dictionaries. The downside of this choice is that it, too, is admittedly unintelligible to the wider public. If a more intelligible equivalent is to be provided, I would rather opt for something along the lines of C.A.F. Rhys Davids' 'he who has won through to the truth' (see Rhys Davids and Stede [1921-1925] 1986, s.v. *tathāgata*) or I.B. Horner's 'Truthfinder' (e.g. Horner tr. [1951] 1993, 13 rendering Vin I 12-13; etc.).

¹⁰LĀv 217.4-5.

¹¹LĀv 219.1. Suzuki (1932, 189) renders Skt. *vikalpabuddhi* as 'knowledge that is based on discrimination', an equally possible translation.

By restructuring the argumentation line of the chapter and conflating it with passages from other chapters, Goddard (1932, 109-110) not only departs from the original arrangement of ideas, but ends up giving the unsuspecting reader a rather different, if not wrong, description of the basic purport. For a page or so, Goddard sticks to the basic structure of the original, presenting the arguments leading to the conclusion that as far as linguistic formulations are possible, the Tathāgata can only be declared to be neither permanent nor impermanent. The American author ends the third paragraph of his account more or less faithfully stating the message of the sutra itself: ‘when discrimination is done away with, Noble Wisdom [...] will be established’ (ibid. 110). Goddard, however, does not stop here and returns to the statement made by the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* that the Tathāgata can also be said to be permanent, a statement which is basically directed at those who become too much attached to the equally wrong view that It is impermanent. The stress in Goddard’s account is now on ‘the eternal-unthinkable of the Tathāgatas [which] is the “suchness” of Noble Wisdom’ (ibid.). The addition of this paragraph, which concludes with declaring this exalted state to be ‘truly eternal’ (ibid.), is not only superfluous but also erroneous in its stress on the permanency of the Tathāgata rather than on the need to transcend any duality, including permanence and impermanence, as well as conceptual cognition – the basic message of the chapter in its original as well as in Suzuki’s translation.¹²

¹²To make things worse, Goddard further spoils the consistency of this chapter, which is exceptionally unitary in the otherwise jumbled collection of doctrinal snippets representing the bulk of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*. He continues his section (ibid. 111) with an account of the destruction of the ‘twofold egolessness’, which leads to the attainment of the ‘self-nature of the Tathagatas’, and of the ‘four kinds of sameness relating to Buddha-nature’, a topic taken from a totally different part of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra*, i.e. LĀv Chapter III, pp. 141-142 (corresponding to Suzuki tr. 1932, 122-123).

Furthermore, while Suzuki correctly renders these four kinds of sameness (*samatā*) as ‘sameness of letters’ (*akṣarasamatā*), ‘sameness of words’ (*vāksamatā*), ‘sameness of teachings’ (*dharmasamatā*), and ‘sameness of the body’ (*kāyasamatā*) (Lāv 141.10-11 = Suzuki tr. 1932, 123), Goddard takes the liberty to alter the last two items into ‘sameness of meaning’ and ‘sameness of essence’ respectively. This is an unnecessary change which actually blurs the meaning of the original. The *dharmasamatā* is clearly explained by the text itself as referring to being conversant with the thirty-seven factors conducive to Awakening (*saptatṛiṃśatāṃ bodhipakṣyāṇāṃ*; LĀv 142.10-11), a spiritual and doctrinal category which hardly accounts for the rendering of ‘meaning’ (for this category, see the excellent monograph by Gethin [1992] 2003). Likewise, the translation of *kāyasamatā* as ‘sameness of essence’ is (at least half) problematic. The *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* spells it out as referring to the *Dharmakāya*, which admittedly could be rendered – *inter alia* – as ‘essence’. But this covers only half of the semantic sphere of the compound, which is defined in the same passage of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* as also covering the thirty-two signs (*lakṣaṇa*) and eighty minor traits

Goddard's work is thus not so much a faithful summary of the *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra* as an attempt to rewrite Suzukui's translation, an attempt which sometimes is even misleading in its description and restructuring of ideas and sections. Admittedly, the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* is a jungle of doctrines and themes, and introducing some order does help the reader in gaining a better view of the purport of the text. In this sense, Goddard's 'epitomised version', to use the subtitle of his work, may have some merits. However, if one wishes to get a bird's eyeview of the *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* which does not take dangerous shortcuts, turns and rolls, then relying upon a traditional commentary like Kokan Shiren's 虎關師鍊 (1278-1346) *Butsu go shin ron* 佛語心論 (*Treatise on the Essence of the Buddha's Words*) or one of its modern versions such as Jikidō Takasaki's (1980, 19-54) excellent synoptic presentation is a far wiser choice.

Theoretically, one can only with agree with Eco ([2003] 2004, 127-132) that 'rewording is not translation'.¹³ If anything, Goddard's work is an adaptation comparable to such genres as the *Tales from Shakespeare* by Charles and Marry Lamb (1807) or the *belles infidèles*, a popular style of translation thriving in France during the 17th-18th centuries. The latter were works, mainly by classical authors, adapted to suit the tastes and moral standards of the age, with translators often taking such liberties as heavily doctoring the style, censoring, and even correcting the originals (see Salama-Carr 2009, 406-408).

Goddard's 'epitomised version' is, however, an extreme example, and most modern translators are found somewhere in between the poles of *belles infidèles* and what one may label *laides fidèles*. Following different strategies and philosophies, everyone trying his or her hand at rendering a foreign source, especially a classical one, is most probably striving to become what Horace named *fidus interpres* or 'faithful translator'. The ideal of fidelity, however, is not something easy to define, let alone achieve. The 'in-between' the two extremes is not a simple straight line easily quantifiable or divisible into clear discrete units. It rather seems to be a hugely complex space with multiple dimensions related to subjectively and historically determined values. Translation does imply an intricate play between invariants, i.e. elements remaining unaltered in the source language as well as the target language, and shifts, i.e. necessary changes to make the rendering intelli-

(*anuvyañjana*) characteristic of the physical body (*rūpa*[...] *kāya*^o) (LĀv 142.7) of the Tathāgatas – a meaning which is not exactly evoked by 'essence'.

¹³See also Bastin 2009, 3: 'Adaptation [...] is not generally accepted as a translation but is nevertheless recognized as representing a source text'.

gible.¹⁴ The core of the problem is to identify what precisely are invariants and shifts as well as how the latter are to be implemented.¹⁵

In the present state of consent over the importance of faithfully communicating the purport of the original, on the one hand, and disagreement as to how exactly this is to be achieved, on the other, it seems wiser to keep an open and flexible attitude in one's own approach and embrace, or at least admit of, the possibility of plurality. We have seen and most likely will continue to see a wide range of translation approaches in all areas of Buddhist studies. Although one is entitled, I believe, to criticise (what he/she may regard as) excesses, it is more constructive to accept the principle of plurality and whenever necessary (in lexicographical contributions, for instance) to duly reflect the variety of translations and styles.

Based upon an admittedly impressionistic assessment, I would, however, say that the balance in such areas as Yogācāra and Abhidharma research tends to tip in favour of near-literal renderings of different degrees and hues – something which is not exactly describable as *laides fidèles* but rather, to once again use a French phrase, as *jolies laides* or 'plain-looking ladies nonetheless exuding charm'. Here I shall use the latter collocation to refer to such translations which are not exactly exquisite in style but succeed in conveying the purport of the original (arguably better than the *belles infidèles*) and in being intelligible (perhaps occasionally with some difficulty...) – features which make them attractive enough for a devoted reader.

As intimated above, I do not deny the rights of free translations and wish to emphasise the importance of maintaining this tradition, too. The only point I would dare to make here is that hard-core proponents of this approach should, nonetheless, try to temper their *belles infidèles*. Too much *beauté* might spoil the very meaning and *raison d'être* of the entire enterprise of translation. On the other hand, advocates of the rival strategy of literal or near-literal translations should make serious efforts in creating acceptable *jolies laides* and promoting them to the general public.

¹⁴For these concepts, see Bakker, Koster, and van Leuven-Zwart 2009.

¹⁵Ideally, one could conceive of a translation that is both extremely faithful to the original and exquisitely outstanding in style. The modern Chinese thinker and pioneer translator of Western culture, Yan Fu 嚴復 (1852-1921) expressed a similar ideal in his triple principle aiming at faithfulness 信, intelligibility 達, and elegance 雅 (see Lackner 2001, 365-366). Fascinating as it may be, this remains, however, a remote ideal probably attainable only in a few exceptional cases.

Since my own very modest attempts at translation tilt in the direction of the latter approach, I shall concentrate here more on the problems raised by the *jolies laides*, as well as some possible compromises (a word which sounds better than solutions – the latter being hardly possible in a strong sense).¹⁶

Before tackling these issues, it is, however, important to state the basic premises of what I regard as a *jolie laide* translation.

(1) Faithfulness to the original.¹⁷ Staying as close as possible to the original both lexically and grammatically presupposes perfect understanding of the source in linguistic, doctrinal, and cultural terms and conveying its message with as little interference on the part of the translator as possible. Needless to say, the process cannot and should not be mechanical. Understanding implies interpretation, and conveying it in an intelligible form requires making changes in the target language which cannot be controlled simply by the translator's choice.

(2) Intelligibility in the target language. This is a criterion at least as important as fidelity. Actually, whenever a choice has to be made between faithfulness and intelligibility, I believe the latter should be given priority. The bottom line of any translation is to convey the basic message of a text. If structural, even lexical, fidelity cannot be achieved in the target language, awkwardly close faithfulness to the original can and should be sacrificed on the altar of intelligibility. After all, no translator, let alone reader, would like to be told something similar to what the classicist Robert Yelverton Tyrell (1844-1916) remarked about the English render-

¹⁶No matter how close we may endeavour to stay to the original, there is no doubt that a subjective, interpretative element will remain. In this sense, one is reminded of Gadamer's conclusions on the subject: 'Translation cannot be a reproduction of an original, it can only be an interpretation reflecting both empathy and distance' (Hermans 2009, 132, referring to Gadamer's *Truth and Method*, 1960). See also Eco's excellent discussion of translation and interpretation (Eco 2001, 65-132; Eco [2003] 2004, 123-145; etc.)

¹⁷The word 'faithfulness' may seem outdated but I see no cogent reason for avoiding it both in theoretical discussions and practical attempts to achieve a good translation. And I do not seem to be the only one who sticks to this term. The eminent theoretician and skilled translator (as well as marvellous writer) Umberto Eco ([2003] 2004, 4-5) cherishes a similar ideal: 'It seems that to respect what the authors said means to remain faithful to the original text. I understand how outdated such an expression can sound [...]. But the concept of faithfulness depends on the belief that translation is a form of interpretation and that (even while considering the cultural habits of their presumed readers) translators must aim at rendering, not necessarily the intention of the author (who may have been dead for millennia), but the *intention of the text* – the intention of the text being the outcome of an interpretative effort on the part of the reader, the critic or the translator.' Cf. also *ibid.* 190-192.

ing of the *Agamemnon* made by Robert Browning in 1887: ‘The original Greek is of great use in elucidating Browning’s translation of the *Agamemnon*.’¹⁸

(3) Use of a critical apparatus even in translations designed to reach the general public. Many unnecessary headaches on how much fidelity is to be sacrificed for intelligibility, or the other way round, can be avoided by not shying away from the use of a full critical apparatus and the philological conventions currently accepted in the scholarly community but frequently shunned by both publishers and readers. The downside of this premise is that although translators may rejoice in the sharp decrease of their purchase of aspirin, publishing houses and the general public may be less willing to face their share of headaches. More details on this and the other premises will be discussed in the pages below.

Terminology As It Is (*yathābhūtam!*)

Ideally, we should be able to find perfect, or at least satisfactory, equivalents for each term in the vast technical vocabulary employed in Buddhist sources.¹⁹ The quest is far from new. The same Sisyphean task has been faced by all traditional civilisations in which Buddhism left an impact deep enough to lead to the production of literary sources. Most notably, the Chinese and Tibetans have struggled for centuries to find optimal solutions. And in spite of all the failures and extravagant attempts, the process has had profound and enriching effects not only for the Buddhist communities but also for the languages and cultures of these countries.²⁰

¹⁸Cited from Ratcliffe ed. 2006, 460. Browning’s translation, which is easily available on the Net (<http://www.archive.org>), is indeed fraught with hundreds of examples of awkward turns of phrase which require checking the original or another more intelligible translation.

¹⁹Needless to say, the issue of equivalence is not limited to Buddhist sources. It is a general problem applying to all cultures and ages. For theoretical discussions, see Koller 1989; Gutt 1991, 10-17; Eco 2001, 9-21; Eco [2003] 2004 9-31; etc.

²⁰For a very good discussion of the historical background and various types of Buddhist terminology in Chinese translations, see Deeg 2010. For Tibetan Buddhism, see the outstanding contributions of Scherrer-Schaub 1999; Seyfort Ruegg 1992; etc. Quite a few contributions dedicated to various aspects of rendering Tibetan texts and terminology as well as studies dealing with problems linked to Buddhist translations in general are found in Doboorn Tulku ed. 1995. On the other hand, scholars like Griffiths (1981, 17) deplore the effects Buddhist translations had on the languages of Tibet and China (as well as of India, since Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit is declared ‘barbaric’). This view (as well as a few other points made by Griffiths in this article) is, I believe, at best controversial and unless backed up by serious linguistic and stylistic evidence, only applies to one side of a very multifaceted process of textual production.

A one-to-one equivalence pleasing every single reader, let alone scholar in the field, remains, however, a distant dream at best. In tune with the philosophy we are studying, it would actually seem more appropriate to describe it as mere illusion (*māyāmātra!*). Let us look at some reasons underlying this predicament.

(1) Needless to say, technical terms, as any other words in natural languages, are both context-determined and history-dependent. Perfect symmetry between the source language and the target language, presupposing one-to-one equivalence in all contexts and texts, is hard to achieve, to say the least. More often than not, both languages confront us with lexical material which is polysemic, and this plurality of meanings has quite different histories.

Let us take a key Buddhist term like the Sanskrit *dhyāna* (Pali, *jhāna*). Already in the early Pali Canon, *jhāna* appears to have a wide semantic sphere and usage. In a narrow technical sense, it refers to the four levels of ‘meditative absorption’ leading to heightened states of emotional balance.²¹ There are, however, textual witnesses pointing in the direction of a different and most probably wider understanding. For instance, the verses uttered by the Buddha during the night of his Awakening declare that victory over Māra, the Evil One, i.e. the symbol of death,²² occurs to him who is ‘ardent[ly] meditating’ (*ātāpino jhāyato*).²³ This must be either a general meaning or a reference to meditation on the chain of dependent arising (*paṭiccasamuppāda*), upon which the Buddha had concentrated his attention (*manasā ’kāsi*) at least in the account given by the *Vinayapīṭaka* or *Book of Monastic Discipline*.²⁴ The cognate verb similarly appears to be used with a broad meaning in the *Dhammapada* or *Verses of the Teaching* which exhorts ‘meditate, mendicant, and do not be careless’.²⁵

This polysemy is inherited and further amplified in Mahāyāna Buddhism, Yogācāra included. The *Abhidharmasamuccaya* or *Compendium of Philosophy*, for instance, often construes *dhyāna* as ‘(the four levels of) meditative absorption’.²⁶ However, the same text also tells us that while in *dhyāna*, the Buddhas

²¹The description of the four *jhānas* is a frequent pericope in the Canon (see DN I 73-75; DN II 313; MN I 21-22, etc.). Later scholastic texts like the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī* (§§ 167-175) divide the meditative progression into five stages of absorption by splitting the first *jhāna* into two levels.

²²For the multifaceted meanings and symbols of Māra in Buddhism, see Windisch 1895, Ling [1962] 1997; etc.

²³Vin I 2.

²⁴Vin I 1. Cf. also Ud 1-3; etc..

²⁵Dh 371a: *jhāya bhikkhu mā ca pāmado*.

²⁶E.g. AbhSamBh 78.23-79-2; 79.15-80-3; etc.

and bodhisattvas attain all sorts of contemplations [or: meditative concentrations] (*samādhi*), which are not even known, let alone accessible, to disciples (*śrāvaka*) and solitary Buddhas (*pratyekabuddha*).²⁷ For the Buddhas and bodhisattvas, *dhyāna* is thus no longer a mere experience of meditative absorption but rather the locus or foundation upon which contemplative states peculiar to Mahāyāna are generated and practised.

The latter usage becomes even more obvious in the definitions given to the *dhyānapāramitā* or ‘perfection of meditation’, which is construed in a most comprehensive sense. In the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* or *Foundation of the Bodhisattvas* [‘*Path of Spiritual Cultivation*’],²⁸ for example, *dhyāna* is categorised as meditation for blissful dwelling in the present life (*drṣṭadharmasukhavihārāya dhyānam*), meditation for triggering the qualities [necessary for] the bodhisattva’s contemplation [or: concentration] (*bodhisattvasamādhiguṇanirhārāya dhyānam*), and meditation for [accomplishing] acts for the benefit of [all] sentient beings (*sat-tvārthakriyāyai dhyānam*).²⁹

The *Laṅkāvatārasūtra* goes one step further and classifies *dhyāna* into four types:

1. Simpletons’ meditation (*bālopacārikam dhyānam*), i.e. the typical tranquility (*śamatha*) meditation practised by disciples and solitary Buddhas, which culminates in the attainment of cessation (*nirodha[samāpatti]*), i.e. the last of the traditional nine stages of absorption.
2. Meditation investigating the [cognitive] object [or: sense] (*arthapravicayam dhyānam*), which focuses on the characteristics of the essencelessness of phenomena (*dharmānairātmya*) and the stages (*bhūmi*) of the Bodhisattva path.
3. Meditation [taking] Suchness [i.e. Supreme Reality] as its object (*tathātā-lambanam dhyānam*).
4. Tathāgata’s meditation (*tāthāgataṃ dhyānam*) accessible only to the Awakened Ones and consisting in various unfathomable (*acintya*) altruistic acts undertaken for the sake of sentient beings.³⁰

Obviously, the sense of meditative absorption is discernable only in the first category, the rest consisting in cogitation, contemplative states, or salvific activity. The latter can hardly be connected to the old technical meaning of *dhyāna* as

²⁷ AbhSamBh 81.7-12.

²⁸ The title can also be construed as The Bodhisattvas’ Level; see note 5 above.

²⁹ BoBh-W 207.9-208.9; BoBh-D 143.9-144.4.

³⁰ LĀv 97-98.

‘absorption’. It seems more likely that they are a development from the general sense of the word, development which, however, went far beyond the semantic limits that the early Buddhist communities could have imagined.

To complicate matters, scholastic analysis adds a further meaning to *dhyāna*, that of birth and existence in heavenly spheres obtained in accordance with mastery of different levels of meditative absorption. The *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* or *Commentary on the Thesaurus of Philosophy*, for instance, tells us that ‘briefly stated, [one can speak of] two sorts of *dhyāna* due to the distinction [made between] *dhyāna* as birth and [*dhyāna*] as meditative attainment’.³¹ The same usage can be ascertained in Yogācāra sources such as the *Śrāvakabhūmi*³² and the *Abhidharmasamuccaya*.³³

Last but not least, a further ramification in the semantic history of the word is brought by Tantric Buddhism. We find, for example, in Āryadeva’s *Caryāmelāpaka-pradīpa* or *Lamp on the Integration of Practice* a technique called ‘the twofold meditation’ (*dvividhaṁdhyānam*). This refers to two steps of yogic praxis implying the dissolution (*anubhedā*) and grasping of a globe (*piṇḍagrāha*) (of light?), which makes it possible for the contemplative to dissolve into the Brilliance, i.e. the Ultimate Reality.³⁴ The methods are not described in detail in Āryadeva’s opus, but in all likelihood they represent advanced forms of Tantric meditation consisting in visualisations and control of subtle energies. Although the general rendering of ‘meditation’ may be used in this context, too, the term can be more precisely rendered as ‘meditative visualisation’ or even ‘meditative technique [of dissolution into the Brilliance]’.

(2) We should add here the obvious fact that polysemy is not confined to the source language. One of the most frequent and certainly justified renderings of *dhyāna* is ‘meditation’, but the English word itself is far from being monolithic.³⁵

³¹ AKBh 432.4-5: *samāsato dvividhāni dhyānāny upapattisamāpattidhyānabhedāt* (sentence which comments on verse 1a in Chapter VIII: *dvividhā dhyānāni* “of two sorts is *dhyāna*”).

³² ŚrBh 438.12. See also Deleanu 2006, 318 (critical edition), 446 (English translation), 476, n. 28 (containing further details).

³³ AbhSamBh 81.1-6.

³⁴ CMPr 442-443.

³⁵ Let us cite here one of its uses in the Christian tradition. Richard of St Victor divides the ladder of the contemplative life into three steps: (1) cogitation, i.e. unsystematic pondering; (2) meditation, i.e. systematic application of mind requiring effort; and (3) contemplation, i.e. effortless abiding in the bliss of the Truth (see Kirchberger tr. 1957, 136-138). The issue and stages of the contemplative life is also discussed in detail in St Thomas Aquinas’ *Summa Theologica* (2.2.Q.180; for English translation, see Fathers of the English Dominican Province tr. 1911, Question 180). Cf.

Depending on the translator, different shades of meaning could be present, and ideally (i.e., whenever the publisher does not impose space limitations!), basic definitions of one's usage of key terms in the target language, too, should be provided.

(3) The semantic complexity of most technical terms in both the source and the target languages requires flexibility and openness: flexibility in finding the proper rendering(s) fit for each specific usage (even if this means a departure from one-to-one equivalence) and openness to the presupposition that one's choices may not be the only possible ones, let alone the best. This does not invalidate the need for effort on the part of the translator to look carefully into each context and find what he/she believes to be the best rendering. Yet the sheer complexity of each language, exponentially augmented in the process of translation, makes 'perfection' and 'definitive solutions' difficult, if attainable at all.

To return to the example of *dhyāna/jhāna*: together with many Buddhist scholars, I believe that rendering the term as '(meditative) absorption' in its strict technical sense and 'meditation' in a more general usage is basically correct. On the other hand, I do not think that T.W. Rhys Davids' translation of *jhāna* as 'rapture' ([1899] 1977, 84, etc.), Woodward's 'trance' ([1934] 1979, 272, etc.) or 'musing' ([1936] 1972, 106, etc.) are necessarily wrong.³⁶

Furthermore, when we come to far more difficult and controversial terms such as *adhimukti* ('conviction', etc.),³⁷ *vijñapti* ('representation', etc.), *prājñā* ('wisdom', etc.) and so on, or even the ubiquitous 'five aggregates' (*pañcaskandhāḥ*),³⁸ we must be open to plurality. What the scholarly community and public at large

also the title of Descartes' famous *Meditationes de Prima Philosophia* or *Meditations on First Philosophy*. For an excellent overview of the semantic range of the term 'meditation' in the Western as well as Indian (mostly Brahmanic) tradition, see Bader 1990, 25-44.

³⁶There are also traditional glosses which construe *dhyāna* as *upanidhyāna* or 'reflection' in spite of its basically non-reflexive nature. See ŚrBh 450.14-16; Deleanu 2006, vol. 2, 331, 454, and note 171 (containing further details).

³⁷I discuss the term and the previous research on it in detail in Deleanu 2006, vol. 2, pp. 470-473 (note 15).

³⁸The recent attempt of the scholars attending the Symposium on Yogācāra Terminology (held at Mangalam Research Center for Buddhist Languages, Berkeley, November 2012) to discuss and come to a common set of translations for the five aggregates proved extremely fruitful but could not lead to complete agreement. While a certain degree of common understanding, or at least awareness, may have been achieved, none of the participants could secure unconditional support for all his/her choices, each being reasonable enough in its own way, from all the members of the otherwise small group of a dozen or so specialists present at the Symposium. This shows how remote the ideal of singular, universally acceptable translations is. If anything, such academic debates and

badly need are extensive and reliable lexicographical tools collecting all (or at least the major) translations attempted by scholars over the centuries.³⁹ We find some of them in works like Edgerton's classical *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary* ([1953] 1985) or Dayal's old but still valuable study on the Bodhisattva doctrine ([1932] 1978). Fortunately, more recent projects such as the *Digital Dictionary of Buddhism* (<http://buddhism-dict.net/ddb/>), whose initiator and main editor is Prof. Dr A. Charles Muller (University of Tokyo), or the *Buddhist Translators' Workbench* (<http://www.mangalamresearch.org/>) undertaken by the Mangalam Research Center for Buddhist Languages (Berkeley, California) under the direction of Mr Jack Petranker, are making impressive progress and will one day come to answer this need in a thorough and highly professional manner.

The Yoga of Terminology Propping

Another way to help flexibility as well as ensure more palatability to Buddhist studies is to combine the use of (at least some of the) well-established renderings with the readiness to paraphrase them. For instance, the key Yogācāra term usually rendered as 'three natures' (*trayaḥsvabhāvaḥ*; *trisvabhāva*) or 'threefold nature' (*trividhaḥsvabhāvaḥ*; *svabhāvastrividhaḥ*)⁴⁰ has the double benefit of being faithful to the meaning of *svabhāva* in Sanskrit and having a long, well-established use easily recognisable by almost any student of Buddhism.⁴¹ On the other hand, it cannot be denied that 'nature' (not to mention 'self-nature'!) in the particular sense meant in Yogācāra philosophy may be a rather puzzling use for quite a few members of the general public. If the results of Buddhist scholarship are to reach wider audiences, as I believe they should, then using only 'three natures' may be

discussions, though quite useful in themselves, can only lead to a higher level of well-organised and well-informed disagreement.

³⁹The criteria for deciding what makes a 'major' translation are arguably and controversially impressionistic. In the absence of objective standards for deciding them, the more renderings are collected the better, even if equivalents considered inappropriate by the editor(s) end up side by side with excellent translations. Ideally, detailed lexicographical sources should also contain the assessment and comments of their author(s)/editor(s) no matter how controversial the latter may themselves turn out to be.

⁴⁰In Yogācāra, these are also known as the 'three characteristics' (*trīṇi lakṣaṇāni*) or 'triad of characteristics' (*lakṣaṇatraya*).

⁴¹The translation appears to be fairly old in Buddhist studies. A very brief and most likely insufficient check led me to ascertain that the rendering is at least as early as Yamakami [1912] 1976, 106, 196, 204.

insufficient. In this case, I suppose adding a paraphrase like ‘three modes of consciousness functioning’, whether in square brackets or notes, would open more minds and hearts to what Yogācāra has to say. Similarly, while Frauwallner’s *Elemente der Gegebenheiten*, rendered into English by LodröSangpo as ‘elements of the factors’, is a faithful literal translation of Skt. *dharmadhātu*, it becomes fully intelligible to the non-initiated if paraphrased as ‘the ultimate state of being’, as actually done by Frauwallner himself.⁴²

Paraphrasing may, however, become insufficient when one is faced with much more complex terms and phrases or feels the need to further elucidate the ‘hidden’ (*saṃdhi!*) meanings of words and wording. In such cases, making full use of the critical apparatus to bring forth the entire semantic field, with its historical and cultural ramifications, becomes imperative. Many Buddhist scholars, especially the clearly distinguishable sub-species of ‘hard-core’ philologists, do, of course, make extensive use of it. We do not have to tell them to augment their annotations – they anyway do so by their very nature (*svabhāvenaiva!*), so to speak. If further efforts are required, then these should be towards increasing the public awareness of the necessity of or at least acceptability of the critical apparatus.⁴³ I see no reason why publishers and the general readership should *a priori* reject annotations, bracketing, parallel translations, etc. They are admittedly more difficult to follow than, say, comics or gossip columns, but those who set their mind on reading Buddhism will probably be willing to spend some more time and energy on the intricacies of reading annotations and also accepting some exotic notations. Whether or not every single reader makes full use of it, the critical apparatus should, I believe, be an integral part not only of academic publications but also of books geared to general audiences.

Without the help of annotations (a German invention, as they often say!), I cannot see how we could come as close as possible to restoring the original colours of the blurred fresco of ideas and details lying beneath the surface level of a text. The full import, for instance, of a diatribe voiced by the authors of the *Śrāvaka-bhūmi* against ‘one’s own body, material, coarse, made of the four elements, growing upon boiled rice [or] coarse gruel, always requiring ointment, bathing, and massage, [yet] bound to breaking, splitting, scattering, and destruction’ can only

⁴² See Frauwallner 1969, 148, etc. = Frauwallner 2010, 160, etc.

⁴³ See also the apt remarks made by Gómez (1996, XIII-XIV) on the subject.

be grasped by providing annotations.⁴⁴ These will reveal most, or at least the basic, ideas, socio-cultural background, and paronomastic use of the imagery which is opaque to most modern readers but would have been quite obvious to an educated audience in ancient India.⁴⁵ It does require some effort on the part of the reader, not to mention of the translator, to cover this intricate web of information, but correct understanding in depth does come at a price.⁴⁶ Serious reading arguably is not only a delight but also to a certain extent a form of ascetic practice (*tapas!*).

One question arises here. If we are to rely on heavily ‘armed’ critical apparatuses, how close should we stay to the original? In other words, can we produce *laides fidèles* propped up by page after page of annotations? Controversial as it may be, my choice would be to give intelligibility and a minimum degree of good style in the target language priority over unnecessarily obedient fidelity. Rather than ‘ugly (hyper-)faithful renderings,’ I believe the translator’s efforts should concentrate on producing *jolies laides*—not exactly beautiful pieces of writing but faithful enough and, one hopes, reasonably attractive.

A similar conclusion comes out of Wendy Doniger O’Flaherty’s (1971; 1987) experience (experiments?) in and reflections on rendering Sanskrit literature. In an early article published in 1971, the American Indologist advocates a new approach which presupposes ‘a very literal, word-for-word translation, retaining the long, multiple compounds, and bracketing pairs of words to represent the puns and *doubles entendres* with which Sanskrit abounds’ (Doniger O’Flaherty 1987, 123). This resulted, as the author herself admits, in a ‘highly unorthodox form of English *verse*’ (ibid. 124), which in turn, ‘called upon the reader to do a great deal of work indeed’ (ibid. 123). Later on, Doniger O’Flaherty came to criticise her earlier over-literal, rather unintelligible style, admitting that she failed to realise ‘that anyone who was interested in fighting through that sort of translation would be likely to go ahead and *learn* the original language’ (ibid. 124).

⁴⁴ Skt. *kāyasyādhyātmikasya rūpiṇa audārikasya caturmahābhūtikasyaudanakulmāṣopacitasya nityotsadanānapanaparimardanabhedanacchedanavikiraṇavidhvaṃsanadharmaṇa* (Deleanu 2006, vol. 1, p. 322).

⁴⁵ Paronomasia (*śleṣa*) is a major figure of speech in Indian literature, including Buddhist sources, and is also discussed at length in traditional Indian poetics (*alaṃkāraśāstra*) (see Gerow 1971, 38-42, 288-306; etc.).

⁴⁶ Speaking of efforts on the part of the author, it took me seven notes and three and a half pages to provide explanations to the phrase cited above (see Deleanu 2006, vol. 2, p. 449; notes 79-85 [pp. 497-501]). Whether this is too much or too little annotation admittedly represents a controversial issue.

The conclusion provides further argument for avoiding literal translations as well as extravagant notation systems. What distinguishes a *jolie laide* rendering from a *laidefidèle* is the degree of intelligibility of the translation itself. Although an in-depth understanding of a *jolie laide* will most probably need the backing of annotations and bracketing, the basic comprehension of its main ideas should be possible just by reading the translation itself with no or little help from footnotes.

Prudent Loving-Kindness For (Almost...) Any Translation Style

I must reiterate that my arguing in favour of *jolies laides* does not mean that this should be the only style to be followed by all translations. Generally speaking, it is wiser to accept a functionalist approach implying that ‘the linguistic form of the target text is determined by the purpose it is meant to fulfil’ (Schäfner 2009, 115). Free renderings are not bad in themselves, especially as long as the translator clearly states his/her method and goals.⁴⁷ If we temper the excesses of the *belles infidèles*, i.e. if we do not let them run into the domain of sheer adaptations, they can remain an equally viable way of transmitting Buddhist lore and culture to the readers of our age.

And if publishers and audiences are bodhisattvic enough, putting *jolies laides* and *belles infidèles* side by side in the same volume may be an appealing, even preferable, alternative. The translator may hope that his/her entire volume will be perused, but depending on their interests and needs, the readers may choose to focus on either of the renderings. And needless to say, readers should consult annotations only to the extent they find necessary to disambiguate the message and background of the text. (Confidentially, I must add that even scholars may skip some notes, but don’t ask how many and how often....)

Though far from being gifted with poetical talent (or any talent, for that matter), I take the liberty of taxing the reader’s patience with a clumsy attempt to see how a *jolie laide* translation can co-exist side by side with a free rendering which I hope can be qualified as remotely *belle infidèle*.⁴⁸ For this purpose, I have chosen

⁴⁷In this and many other senses, Gómez 1996 is a very good example of a more or less free translation, as clearly acknowledged by the author (see especially pp. X-XIV), and perfectly fulfils its purposes.

⁴⁸On the very thorny issues raised by translating poetry, see Eco’s pertinent remarks ([2003] 2004, 137-156; cf. Eco 2001, 40-45, on translating rhythm; etc.).

Stanza 30 of Vasubandhu's (ca 350-430)⁴⁹ *Triṃśikāvijñaptimātratāsiddhi* or *Thirty [Stanzas on] the Proof [that Everything is] Representation-Only*.⁵⁰ The verses conclude the celebrated philosophical treatise with a statement on the ultimate goal of Buddhist practice, i.e. the locus and experience of Awakening attained after a long, arduous path of spiritual cultivation.

So let me start with a *jolie laide* translation of the stanza (*jolie* enough for most readers, I dare hope...)

That alone is the uncontaminated Realm, inconceivable, wholesome,
lasting,⁵¹
Blissful; this is the Liberation Body, it is called the Truth (*dharma*) of
the Great Sage.⁵²

⁴⁹The dates of Vasubandhu, the great Indian philosopher and patriarch of Yogācāra Buddhism, remain a controversial issue. The dates given above are based on a series of conjectures which I share with a few more scholars (see Deleanu 2006, vol. 1, pp. 186-194). It must be added, however, that placing Vasubandhu between 400 and 480 has for more supporters in the academic community.

⁵⁰Sanskrit original (Trim 14; TrimBh-B 138.8-9):

*Sa evānāsravo dhātur acintyaḥ kuśalo dhruvaḥ /
Sukho vimuktikāyo 'sau dharmākhyo 'yaṁ mahāmuneḥ //* [Kārikā 30]

Tibetan Translation (TrimBh-B 139.12-15):

*de nyid zag pa med dang dbyings /
bsam gyis mi khyab dge dang brtan //
de ni bde ba rnam grol sku /
thub pa chen po'i chos zhes bya //*

(NB: I have followed Buescher's text but converted its transliteration into the Wylie system.)

Chinese translation (T 31.61b):

此即無漏界 不思議善常
安樂解脫身 大牟尼名法

⁵¹The Sanskrit word *dhruva*, which also means 'stable', is glossed by Sthiramati in his *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣya* or *Commentary upon the Thirty [Stanzas on] Representation[-Only]* as follows: '[the word] stable [is used] because [the uncontaminated Realm] is permanent through its inexhaustibility' (*dhruvo nityatvād akṣayatayā*; TrimBh-B 142.7). Cf. Xuanzang's Chinese rendering cited in note 49 above: 常 'permanent'.

⁵²Sthiramati (TrimBh-B 142.10) explains *dharma* here as *dharmakāya* or 'Dharma-Body', i.e. the Ultimate Truth itself. The **Vijñaptimātratāsiddhiśāstra* 成唯識論 or *Treatise on the Proof [that Everything Is] Representation-Only*, a commentarial opus surviving only in Chinese translation, similarly explains the term as the 'Dharma-Body of the Great Sage' 大牟尼名法身 (T 31 51a19).

As for my vain lumbering into the poetical world, the *belle infidèle* translation reads:⁵³

Long lasting is *that* Realm, beyond what mind can fathom or attain,
And wholesome in its nature, full of bliss, and well above all stain.
Indeed the Freedom Body 'tis, cut loose from woe and more rebirth,
Which oft they name the Truth and Norm of the Great Sage of Ut-
most Worth.

The doubtless clumsy attempt to attain a more pleasing effect through rhythm and rhyme has resulted, however, in quite a few deviations from the original. First, Sanskrit verse basically relies only (or at least mainly) upon rhythm, i.e. patterns of regular succession of long and short syllables. Most of classical Indian poetry, including the stanza above, does not exploit the aesthetic dimension of rhyme.⁵⁴ However, rendering into a modern Western language in rhythmical prose without rhyme would, I surmise, reduce the literary value of a *belle infidèle*, especially if the latter is also intended to evoke an aura of ages bygone.

The second, more obvious deviation in my translation is the addition of words which do not appear in the original such as 'cut loose from woe and more rebirth', etc.⁵⁵ These, however, are more or less harmless changes against which I believe Vasubandhu would not have protested too much (though he might have told me 'to mind-only' the task of rendering faithfully!). The basic Buddhist understanding of the word 'Liberation' (*vimukti*) does entail becoming free from the cycle of

⁵³I must express here my warmest thanks to my friends Miss Amanda Anderson and Mr Mike Fessler, who kindly assure me that this *belle infidèle* translation sounds more pleasing to (at least two pairs of) native English ears on both sides of the Atlantic.

⁵⁴Figures of expression like paronomasia, alliteration, etc. are often employed in Indian literature, and some varieties such as *yamaka* may approximate the effects of rhyme. Gerow (1971, 23) defines the term as follows: '*Yamaka* ('cadence'), the most maligned of all the figures [of speech], is basically the Indian correspondent to our rhyme: the repetition of a sequence of syllables at predetermined positions in a metrical pattern, but not restricted to the end of lines as in most Western poetry'. A few subtypes of *yamaka* such as *pādāntayamaka*, for instance, imply the use of the same word at the end of each verse (*pāda*) in a stanza – though this would hardly qualify as rhyme, let alone good, in Western poetry! (see *ibid.* 231). The device is not, however, central to Sanskrit poetry, and even considered to be a low figure of speech (for a detailed discussion and varieties, see *ibid.* 223-238). The pleasing aesthetic effect that verse has on Indian ears is, first and foremost, derived from rhythm.

⁵⁵On the possibility of inventing verses for approximating the prosodic dimension of the original, see Eco [2003] 2004, 146-147.

rebirths and suffering. Of course, there are differences, sometimes vast, amongst the various strains of Buddhist thought as to what exactly this Liberation means and how It is brought about. Yet to the best of my knowledge, there is complete agreement that Its attainment signifies the end of ‘woe and more rebirth’, at least as these are experienced by deluded beings.

Such harmless changes appear, therefore, to be both acceptable and actually unavoidable if a *belle* (not too) *infidèle* is to be produced. What ought to be avoided at all costs is omission of terms and phrases in the original other than semantically unimportant grammatical elements. The real challenge, especially for verse, remains to come up with close enough renderings which are at the same time written in a style capable of inducing aesthetic feelings akin to the original.

I do not wish to test any longer the reader’s efforts to cultivate the perfection of patience (*kṣāntipāramitā*!), and I shall now rest my quill, which can hardly boast of any originality. The idle thoughts set down above actually draw on long practice in trying to stay as close as possible to the Buddhist sources and conveying this in an intelligible and reasonably good style. If anything, my attempt here has been to put in a wider theoretical context some of the aspects and problems entailed by this practice. To some, if not many, of the readers of this humble essay (in case there are any at all....), these will be matters of course, probably not worth spelling out in any detail. It thus only remains for me to express my apologies for trying to take coals to Newcastle or, as we say in Japanese, attempting to give a Dharma-talk to Śākyaṃuni himself.⁵⁶

Appendix I

Dao’an 道安 (312-385) is one of the central figures in early Chinese Buddhism whose efforts to understand the true message of the new religion left a deep impact on the course it would take in the next centuries.⁵⁷ His ‘five [points of permissible] deviation from the original and three [points which should remain] unchanged’ 五失本三不易 reflect a genuine concern to make translation both faithful to the Indic original and intelligible to Chinese audiences and readers.⁵⁸

⁵⁶The original Japanese wording of the saying is: 釋迦に説法 *Shaka ni seppō* (literally, ‘Sermon to Śākya[muni Buddha]’).

⁵⁷For details on Dao’an life and activity, see Zürcher 1972, vol. 1, pp. 184-204; Kamata 1982, 355-393; etc.

⁵⁸Another way of construing the last part of the phrase, i.e. 三不易, is ‘three difficulties’. The two possible interpretations derive from the Chinese character 易 (*yì* in Modern Mandarin) which

The passage expounding Dao'an's views on this matter is found in his 'Preface to the *Compendium of the Mahāprajñāpāramitāsūtra*' 摩訶鉢羅若波羅蜜經抄序 (T 55.52b-c) recorded in the *Chu sanzangjiji* 出三藏記集 or *Collection of Notes Concerning the Translation of the Tripiṭaka [into Chinese]*, a major historical source compiled by the scholarmonk Sengyou 僧祐 (445-518). Dao'an's theory of translation expressed in this short passage has been the subject of many modern studies and translated into quite a few languages. Here I shall list only some of the most important contributions which have come to my attention: Satō 1952; Ui 1956, 130-137; Ōchō 1958, 247ff.; Robinson [1967] 1978, 77-79; Zürcher 1972, 203; Hurvitz and Link, 1974, 425-432; Held 1980; Kamata 1982, 387-388; Wang 1984; Aramaki and Kominami tr. 1993, 70-74; Lackner 2001; Cheung ed. 2006, 79-83.⁵⁹

Since the reader can find very good translations into English (especially Hurvitz and Link, 1974, 426-428 [complete rendering of the Preface]; Robinson [1967] 1978, 77 [partial translation of the key passage]; Lackner 2001, 362-363 [partial rendering of 'the five losses']; etc.), I shall limit myself here to a brief presentation of the gist of Dao'an views.⁶⁰

has two different meanings (as well as pronunciations in Classical Chinese): (1) 'easy' (whose reconstructed pronunciation in Early Middle Chinese is /jiāh/ or /jih/ [see Pulleyblank 1991, s.v.]); and (2) '(to) change' (/jiak/ [ibid.]). The passage itself does not help much for disambiguation. The three points adduced by Dao'an here are intimately connected to the essence of the scriptural truth, and they can be construed as either textual elements which are 'not [to be] changed' 不易 (/pʰt̚ jiak/) or which are 'not easy' 不易 (/pʰt̚ jiāh/) to render into Chinese. The problem has been recognised and discussed in modern scholarship, but no agreement appears to have been reached so far. While scholars like Ui 1956, 134; Ōchō 1958, 250-251; Robinson [1967] 1978, 77-79; Hurvitz and Link, 1974, 427-428; Wang 1984, 206; etc. favour the rendering 'three difficulties', others such as Zürcher 1972, 203; Kamata 1982, 388; Aramaki and Kominami tr. 1993, 72-73; etc. prefer to construe the phrase as points which should not be changed in the Chinese translation. It is not easy (不易 indeed!) and probably not even possible to give a final verdict, but if one presupposes that Dao'an had the factor of stylistic symmetry in mind – a rhetorical aspect which the Chinese greatly admire and use –, then '[points which should] not [be] change[d]' 不易 contrasted to '[permissible] deviations from [literally, losses of] the original' 失本 make more sense. Anyway, the passage bears both readings, and to all intents and purposes, I adopt the latter in my discussion here.

⁵⁹I am sincerely grateful to Prof. Dr Stefano Zacchetti, who has most kindly helped me to add more bibliographical information to this list and provided me with Pdf files of some of the contributions.

⁶⁰Whether these views represent a general theory of translation, a practical guide for translators, or observations linked mainly to the *Compendium of the Mahāprajñāpāramitāsūtra* (whose Preface Dao'an actually is writing) has been a debated topic. For a very good discussion and sound conclusions, see Lackner 2001, 261-262.

The five [points of permissible] deviation from the original 五失本:

(1) Departing from the word order in the original and following the natural rules of the Chinese syntax in translation is a liberty which one has to take when rendering from the totally different language(s) of the Western regions 胡語.⁶¹

(2) ‘The scriptures of the Western regions esteem [plain] substance, [whereas] the Chinese are fond of [elegant] style’ 胡經尚質，秦人好文。 It is, therefore, permissible to depart from the Indic original and adapt the style of the translation to the tastes of Chinese audiences and readers.⁶²

⁶¹ I render 胡語 *hu yu* as ‘languages of the Western regions’, which from Dao’an’s and his contemporaries’ perspective encompassed Central Asia and India. The Chinese Master must have known that (most of the) Buddhist scriptures were composed in the language(s) of India, but he uses the character 胡 *hu*, which does not refer specifically to India. Originally, it denoted the ‘barbarian’ tribes living north or west of the ancient Chinese heartland. Even later the word would retain its pejorative, racist connotations typical of the Sinocentrist feelings entertained by many orthodox Chinese intellectuals. Whether Dao’an as well as the vast majority of Chinese Buddhists shared these feelings or not remains, however, controversial. Scholars like Yang (1998) argue that 胡 *hu* did retain a ‘strong racist sense’ even in Buddhist sources, and it came to be replaced with 梵 *fan*, which specifically denotes Sanskrit (and/or Indic languages in languages in general) without any disparaging nuance (for more on this character, see note 72 below) only around the beginning of the Sui and Tang periods (6th to 7th century), when Buddhism came to be fully accepted in the Chinese society and culture. Yang’s views have been criticised by Boucher (2000), who argues that though not always consistent, the dichotomy 胡 *hu* – 梵 *fan* refers to texts written in *kharoṣṭhī* script vs those in *brāhmī* script. Furthermore, the preference for the latter character in later Chinese sources reflects the fact that by the 5th century, *kharoṣṭhī* (=胡 *hu*) became obsolete and replaced with *brāhmī* (=梵 *fan*) in Northern India and Central Asia (Boucher 2000, especially pp. 17-19). More importantly, Boucher remarks that ‘*hu*, when referring to scripts, languages, texts, is not used in any overtly derogatory manner – neither by the critics of Buddhism nor by Buddhist exegetes themselves’ (ibid. 23). This applies, I believe, to the use of this character in Dao’an’s Preface too. His sincere belief, so often openly expressed, that the ultimate truth came from the lips of an Awakened Man and His Disciples who had lived in a Western land makes it quite unlikely that 胡 *hu* evoked any pejorative, racist tones for Dao’an and his audiences.

⁶² The character 質 *zhi* also implies the nuance of crude, unpolished nature, being opposed to 文 *wen*, which is the adorned, the refined, that which is acquired as a result of training, and basically associated with urban civilisation. Confucius 孔子 (551-479 B.C.E.) contrasts the two in a famous saying: ‘[When] there is a preponderance of [the unrefined qualities of] natural disposition 質 over [civilised] refinement 文, then [the result] is [boorish] rusticity. [When] there is a preponderance of [civilised] refinement over [the unrefined qualities of] natural disposition, then [the result] is [behaving like a pedantic] clerk. [Only] after [the unrefined qualities of] natural disposition and [civilised] refinement [become] equally blended, [will the result be achieving the status of] a true gentleman’ 質勝文，則野。文勝質，則史。文質彬彬，然後君子。 (*Analec*s 論語, Ch. VI 雍也, § 16; the Chinese original based on Cheng 1990, vol. 2, p. 400 [although it must be said that there are no var. lec. and the saying is the same in any edition; the English translation is mine but I

(3) The Indic originals are too detailed, especially when it comes to exclamations, 嘆詠 which are often repeated 反覆. In order to conform to Chinese

have also consulted the renderings of Legge, [1893] 1991, 190; Lau 1992, 51; Yoshikawa 1978, vol. 1, 187-188; as well as the very useful Chinese traditional commentaries collected in Cheng 1990, vol. 2, p. 400-401).

Another hint as to what Dao'an may have meant by the stylistic preferences of the Chinese as well as to what 質 *zhi* meant to Chinese intellectuals (as well as connoisseurs of the subtleties of the language) is suggested by Ui (1956, 133). This is an episode concerning the famous Kuchean Buddhist Master and translator Kumārajīva (344-409) 鳩摩羅什, who is also said to have attained a very high proficiency in the language of the Middle Kingdom, and his prominent Chinese disciple Senrui 僧叡, recorded in the Biographies of Eminent Monks 高僧傳, an early ecclesiastical history written by the scholar monk Huijiao 慧皎 in 519. It goes like this:

[Seng]rui participated in the correction of the scriptures translated by [Kumāra]jī[va]. In the earlier rendering of the Lotus Sutra of the True Teaching, Chapter on the Prediction [of Future Buddhahood], done by Dharmarakṣa, it is said: 'Deities see human beings, [and] human beings see deities'. Having arrived with [his own] translation of the [Lotus] Sutra at this place, [Kumāra]jī[va] said: 'This word[ing of Dharmarakṣa's version] is identical with the meaning of [the original text of] the Western Regions, but as far as the style is concerned, it is exceedingly crude.' [Seng]rui said: 'Then why not [something like] "Deities and human beings come into mutual contact, and [thus] are able to catch sight of each other"?'. [Kumāra]jī[va] gladly said: 'Verily so!'

什所翻經，叡並參正。昔竺法護出『正法華經』，「受決品」云：「天見人，人見天。」什譯經至此，乃言：「此語與西域義同，但在言過質。」叡曰：「將非《人天交接，兩得相見》？」什喜曰：「實然！」 (T 50.364b2-6; the punctuation is mine)

The episode may have happened in fact, but the account contains a rather puzzling detail. True, Kumārajīva did translate the *Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra* under the title of *Miao fa lianhua jing* 妙法蓮華經 or *Lotus Sutra of the Wondrous Teaching*. Equally true, Dharmarakṣa 竺法護 (233-ca310) had rendered the text into Chinese as the *Zheng fa hua jing* 正法華經 or *Scripture of the [Lotus] Flower of the Right Teaching* some two centuries earlier. But the sentence cited above, i.e. 天見人，人見天, does not occur in the extant version of Dharmarakṣa's translation. Kumārajīva's rendering does contain the sentence 人天交接，兩得相見 (T 9.27c25), as apparently suggested by Sengrui. And one can trace it back to the Sanskrit original, where it reads: *devā api manuṣyān draṣyanti, manuṣyā api devān draṣyanti* (SadPuṇ 202.3-4) 'deities will see human beings, and human beings will also see deities'. The problem is that the same sentence is rendered in the extant version of Dharmarakṣa's translation of the *Lotus Sutra* as: 天上視世間，世間得見天上，天人世人往來交接。 (T 9. 95c28-29) – not exactly the crude sentence Kumārajīva is said to have seen. Furthermore, the Chapter on the Prediction [of Future Buddhahood] is given above as 受決品, which again does not correspond to our extant version, which reads: 授五百弟子決品 (T 9.94b26). The only explanation I can think of is that Kumārajīva had access to a different (earlier, unedited?) redaction of Dharmarakṣa's translation which has not survived to later ages (though Huijiao must have known it as he does not seem to mind the discrepancy).

stylistic preferences, it is allowed to delete these superfluous rhetorical elements.

(4) The scriptures of the Western regions often contain prolix explanatory additions (or what we would call today exegetical interpolations) which should be distinguished from the scriptural text proper and can therefore be excised.

(5) The Indic style finds it acceptable to complete the exposition of one topic and then after embarking upon a new subject to reiterate a few phrases or sentences concerning the topic just explained above. Such repetitions can, of course, be omitted.

The three [points which should remain] unchanged 三不易:

(1) The Holy One 聖, i.e. the Buddha, preached the scriptures in conformity with his times. Customs 俗 do change over the years, but one should not ‘expunge the elegant ancient [wording conveying the message of the Holy One] only to fit [the tastes of] the present age’ 刪雅古以適今時.

(2) ‘Ignorance and wisdom are Heaven[-made] distinctions’ 愚智天隔, and one should accept that ordinary people cannot understand all subtleties contained in the scriptures. The translator should not sacrifice these subtle nuances and make alterations only to agree to the customs of later ages 末俗.

(3) The Buddha’s foremost disciples Ānanda and Mahākāśyapa as well as the Five Hundred Arhats, traditionally believed to have compiled the Canon after the Buddha’s demise, were extremely cautious 兢兢 in their transmission of the scriptures. How can deluded people living one thousand years after the Buddha and his direct disciples be so complacent 平平 as to believe that they can ‘fathom and judge [the original meaning] with their modern ideas’ 近意量裁?⁶³ Obviously, the basic wording of the scriptures should not be changed.⁶⁴

⁶³Together with Hurvitz and Link 1974, 448, n. 129, I prefer the reading 裁, attested by the Song, Yuan and Ming Canons (see T vol. 55, p. 52, n. 21), instead of 截, adopted by the Taishō edition on the basis of the Korean Tripitaka.

⁶⁴The Chinese original of the key passage reads: 譯胡為秦 有五失本也。一者、胡語盡倒而使從秦，一失本也。二者、胡經尚質，秦人好文。傳可衆心 非文不合，斯二失本也。三者、胡經委悉 至於嘆詠，丁寧反覆，或三或四，不嫌其煩，而今裁斥，三失本也。四者、胡有義記 正似亂辭，尋說向語 文無以異，或千五百 刈而不存，四失本也。五者、事已全成，將更傍及，反騰前辭，已乃後說而悉除，此五失本也。然般若經三達之心 覆面所演。聖必因時時，俗有易。而刪雅古 以適今時，一不易也。愚智天隔 聖人叵階。乃欲以千歲之上微言，傳使合百王之下末俗，二不易也。阿難出經去佛未久，尊大迦葉 令五百六通 迭察迭書。今離千年 而以近意量裁。彼阿羅漢乃

*

In a nutshell, what Dao'an is trying to say is that while translators are allowed to (or rather should) make some grammatical and stylistic changes, mainly excising repetitious and superfluous passages, it would be unwise to presume that they could tamper with the substance and basic wording of the scriptures, no matter how abstruse these may appear to them.

Appendix II

Xuanzang's 玄奘(602-664) translations represents the pinnacle of the centuries-long travails to render the Buddhist Dharma into the language of the Middle Kingdom. The Master's obsession with getting to the very root of scriptural accuracy and faithfully conveying it to his country fellowmen led not only to a long, arduous journey of studies and pilgrimage to India but also to an amazingly prolific activity in translating thousands of manuscript leaves into Chinese.⁶⁵ Linguistically, this passion for the original message resulted in some of (if not) *the* most faithful (as well as intelligible) translations in the history of Buddhism on Chinese soil. Xuanzang has not left much by way of a theory of translation, but the 'five types [of Indic words which should] not be translated' 五種不翻, allegedly advocated by him, offer a glimpse into some of his ideas concerning the proper rendering of Buddhist terminology. We find a sketchy description of these principles in the *Fanyimingyiji* 翻譯名義集 or *Collection of Translations of Names and*

兢兢若此，此生死人而平平若此。豈將不知法者勇乎？斯三不易也。(T 55.52b23-52c9; my punctuation).

⁶⁵According to Kamata 1999, 251 (on the basis of the *Kaiyuan lu* 開元錄 or *Catalogue of the Kaiyuan Era*; see also Kamata 1999, 306-307), Xuanzang and his team translated 76 Indian texts amounting to 1347 scrolls 卷 of Chinese text. This surpasses the 1222 scrolls representing the total number produced by the five most celebrated translators (excluding Xuanzang) active on Chinese soil, i.e., Dharmarakṣa 竺法護 (233-ca.310), Kumārajīva (344-409) 鳩摩羅什, Paramārtha (499-569) 真諦, Yijing (635-713) 義淨, and Amoghavajra 不空 (705-774). According to one calculation, this means that in the eighteen years after his return from India, Xuanzang translated at the stunning pace of about one scroll every five days (Kamata 1999, 251, on the base of a study by Matsumoto Bunzaburō published in 1925).

Meanings,⁶⁶ a Sanskrit-Chinese dictionary compiled by the scholarmonk Fayun 法雲 in 1143.⁶⁷

The ‘five types [of Indic words which should] not be translated’ refer to those categories of lexemes for which the translator should provide phonetic transcriptions, i.e. use Chinese characters for the phonetic value only, rather than offer semantically meaningful equivalents. A case in point is *prajñā*, for which Xuanzang prefers the phonetic transcription 般若 (*/pa-ŋia’/* in Early Middle Chinese pronunciation [see Pulleyblank 1991, s.vv.]; *bōrě* in modern Mandarin Pinyin transliteration), both characters being used here for their phonetic value, i.e. pronunciation, while their meaning is completely ignored. The semantically transparent equivalent 智慧, a binome in which both characters mean ‘wisdom’ (thus conveying the basic sense of the Sanskrit word), is discarded as an inferior rendering. Xuanzang’s reasons for this as well as other judgements will become apparent from Fayun’s account of the ‘five types [of Indic words which should] not be translated’:

Master [Xuan]zang of the Tang [Dynasty] elucidated the five types [of Indic words which should] not be translated. (1) [Words which] are esoteric [should] not be translated;⁶⁸ [magical formulae like] *dhāraṇī*s 陀羅尼 are such [examples].⁶⁹ (2) [Words which] are pregnant with

⁶⁶This work should not be confused with the Sino-Japanese title by which the *Mahāvvyutpatti* is known, i.e. 翻譯名義集 (*Hon’yaky myō gi shū*, in Japanese pronunciation). The famous *Mahāvvyutpatti* (Tib. *Bye brag tu rtogs par byed pa chen*) is a Sanskrit-Tibetan lexicographical work (compiled by the beginning of the 9th century; see Seyfort Ruegg 1992, 389; etc.) which lists words and phrases recommended as standard renderings for the translation of Buddhist scriptures into Tibetan. In the course of time, Chinese and Mongolian equivalents were also added to the basic list, but (as far as I know) there seem to be no clear records as to their author and date of incorporation. Sakaki (1916, V-VI) conjectures that the Chinese equivalents may have been added much later, probably over a long period between the Yuan (1279-1367) and Qing (1662-1911) dynasties.

⁶⁷The same principles, described in very similar words, are also found in Zhou Dunyi’s 周敦義 Preface to this dictionary, i.e. *Fanyi ming yi xu* 翻譯名義序 (T 54.1055a13-18).

⁶⁸Here and below a more literal translation of the Chinese syntax would be ‘because [they] are esoteric, [they] are not translated’, and so on.

⁶⁹Another possible way of construing the sentence 陀羅尼是 (literally meaning ‘*dhāraṇī* is this’) would be to take the word *dhāraṇī* itself as the example given for this category. The Chinese equivalent for *dhāraṇī* used here is indeed a phonetic transcription, which makes such an interpretation not completely impossible. However, I think that the meaning of the statement is more general. The thousands of particular *dhāraṇī*s covered by this category are esoteric by definition, and each should therefore be transcribed with Chinese characters rather than trying (whenever possible!) to render them into meaningful phrases or sentences.

many meanings [should] not be translated, like *bhagavat* 薄伽梵 [which] encompasses six meanings.⁷⁰ (3) [Words which denote objects] inexistent [in China] [should] not be translated, like the *Jambu-tree* 閻浮樹.⁷¹ (4) [Words for which it is preferable to] follow the old [tradition] [should] not be translated, like *anu[ttarasamyaksam]bodhi* 阿耨菩提,⁷² [which] can actually be rendered [into Chinese] but have been in usage with their Indic pronunciation [transcribed by means of Chinese characters]⁷³ since the time of Mātāṅga.⁷⁴ (5) [Words which] generate [more] good [in phonetic transcription should] not be translated, like [*prajñā* transcribed as /pa-ṣia/, i.e.] 般若 [which sounds more] dignified [when compared to] ‘wisdom’ 智慧 [i.e. the translation proper which sounds] shallow; [the former] makes people [feel more] respect [for the term], and therefore should not be translated.⁷⁵

The citations from or references to Sanskrit and Pali sources show the page number after the abbreviated title and, whenever relevant, volume number. Often I also give the line number, which follows a dot placed after the page number. For

⁷⁰The six meanings of the Sanskrit word *bhagavat* are detailed in the entry dedicated to this term in the same *Fanyī míng yī* (T 54.1057b-c). Actually, the very account of Xuanzang’s five principles is part of this entry.

⁷¹This is the rose-apple tree (*Syzygium jambos*) which does not grow in the Chinese climate.

⁷²This is the ‘unsurpassed perfect Awakening’, which is also translated into Chinese by fully meaningful equivalents such as 無上正等覺 *wushang zhengdeng jue*, etc.

⁷³The Chinese character 梵 *fan* basically represents a phonetic transcription of *Brahman*, *Brahmā*, *brāhmaṇa*, *brāhmī* (script or text written in it; see note 60 above), etc. It is also often used to refer to the language used by the Brahmins, which in orthodox terms should, of course, be Vedic and Classical Sanskrit. However, in Chinese sources the character seems to be used less strictly and most probably covered any Indic language, whether Classical Sanskrit, Hybrid Sanskrit, or forms of Prakrit, in which the Buddhist scriptures were written.

⁷⁴This is one of the missionaries said to have brought the Scripture in Forty-two Sections 四十二章經 to Luoyang 洛陽, the capital of the Chinese Empire at that time. Traditional accounts place the translation of this text into Chinese in 67 C.E. The story of the missionaries and, more conspicuously, of the text is most probably a legend. The earliest reliable sources concerning organised activities of translation and systematic propagation of Buddhism in Luoyang date from the middle of the 2nd century (see Zürcher 1972, vol. 1, pp. 28-30; etc.).

⁷⁵The Chinese original reads: 唐奘法師明五種不翻。一、祕密故，不翻，陀羅尼是。二、多含故，不翻，如薄伽梵含六義故。三、此無故，不翻，如閻浮樹。四、順古故，不翻。如阿耨菩提，實可翻之，但摩騰已來存梵音故。五、生善故，不翻，如般若尊重，智慧輕淺，令人生敬，是故不翻。(T 54.1057c7-12; my punctuation).

Tibetan sources, I have used the *sDe dge Canon* (abbreviated as ‘D’). The syllable following ‘D’ shows the traditional Tibetan numeration symbol and is followed by the folio number, ‘a’ = recto or ‘b’ = verso, and line number. For Chinese sources, I have relied upon the *Taishō Canon* (abbreviated as ‘T’). The number following the siglum ‘T’ indicates the volume in this Canon, followed by a dot and then by page, segment (‘a’, ‘b’, ‘c’), and column number.

AbhSamBh	<i>Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya</i> (Tatia ed.)
AKBh	<i>Abhidharmakośabhāṣya</i> (Pradhan ed.)
BoBh	<i>Bodhisattvabhūmi</i>
BoBh-D	Dutt ed.
BoBh-W	Wogihara ed.
Ch.	Chinese
CMPr	<i>Caryāmelāpakapradīpa</i> (Wedemeyer ed.)
D	<i>sDedgē Canon</i> (Takasaki et al. ed.)
LĀv	<i>Laṅkāvatārasūtra</i> (Nanjio ed.)
MSĀ	<i>Mahāyāna-Sūtrālaṅkāra</i> (Lévied.).
SadPuṇ	<i>Saddharmapuṇḍarikasūtra</i> (Kern and Nanjio ed.)
Skt.	Sanskrit
ŚrBh	<i>Śrāvakabhūmi</i> (Shukla ed.)
T	<i>Taishō Canon</i> (Takakusu and Watanabe ed.)
Tib.	Tibetan
Trim	<i>Triṃśikāvijñaptimātratāsiddhi</i> (Lévi ed.)
TrimBh	<i>Triṃśikāvijñaptimātratābhāṣya</i>
TrimBh-L	Lévi ed.
TrimBh-B	Buescher ed.

Bibliography⁷⁶

- Aramaki Noritoshi 荒牧典俊 and Kominami Ichirō 小南一郎 tr. 1993. *Daijō butten, Chūgoku, Nihon-hen* 大乘仏典中国・日本編 Vol. III: *Shutsu sanzō ki shū, Hō on ju rin* 出三蔵記集、法苑珠林. Tokyo: Chuōkōron-sha.
- Bader, Jonathan. *Meditation in Śāṅkara's Vedānta*, New Delhi: Aditya Prakashan, 1990.

⁷⁶Where reprints have been consulted, the original date of publication is inserted in square brackets.

- Baker, Mona and Gabriela Saldanha eds. 2009. *Routledge Encyclopedia of Translation Studies*. 2nd ed. London and New York: Routledge.
- Bakker, Matthijs, Cees Koster, and Litty van Leuven-Zwart. 2009. 'Shifts'. In Baker and Saldanha eds.: 269-274.
- Bastin, Georges L. 2009. 'Adaptation'. In Baker and Saldanha eds.: 3-6.
- Boucher, Daniel. 2000. 'On *Hu* and *Fan* Again: the Transmission of "Barbarian" Manuscripts in China'. *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 23 (1): 7-28.
- Browning, Robert (transcribed by). 1877. *The Agamemnon of Æschylus*. 1st edition. London: Smith, Elder, & Co.
- Buescher, Hartmut. 2007. *Sthiramati's Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣya: Critical Editions of the Sanskrit Text and its Tibetan Translation*. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften.
- Cheng Shude 程樹德. 1990. *Lun yu ji shi* 論語集釋. Edited by Cheng Junying 程俊英 and Jiang Jianyuan 蔣見元. 4 vols. Beijing: Zhonghua shuju.
- Cheung, Martha, ed. 2006. *An Anthology of Chinese Discourse on Translation*. Volume 1: *From Earliest Times to the Buddhist Project*, Manchester, UK, and Kinderhook, USA: St. Jerome Publishing.
- Coleman, George ed. and tr. 1783. *The Art Of Poetry An Epistle To The Pisos: Q. Horatii Flacci Epistola Ad Pisonem, De Arte Poetica*; available on line at Project Gutenberg, <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/9175>.
- Dayal, Har. [1932] 1978. *The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhist Sanskrit Literature*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Deeg, Max. 2008 (2010). Creating religious terminology: A Comparative approach to early Buddhist translations'. *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 31 (1-2): 83-118.
- Deleanu, Florin. 2006. *The Chapter on the Mundane Path (Laukikamārga) in the Śrāvaka-bhūmi: A Trilingual Edition (Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese), Annotated Translation, and Introductory Study*. 2 vols. Tokyo: The International Institute of Buddhist Studies.
- Doboom Tulku ed. 1995. *Buddhist Translations: Problems and Perspectives*. New Delhi: Manohar.
- Doniger O'Flaherty, Wendy. 1971. 'A New Approach to Sanskrit Translation, Applied to Kālidāsa's Kumārasambhava Canto VIII'. *MAHFIL: A Quarterly of South Asian Literature* 7 (3-4): 129-142.
- . 1987. 'On Translating Sanskrit Myths'. In W. Radice and B. Reynolds eds. *The Translator's Art: Essays in Honour of Betty Radice*. Harmondsworth: Penguin, 121-128.

- Dutt, Nalinaksha ed. 1978. *Bodhisattvabhūmi*. Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute.
- Eco, Umberto. 2001. *Experiences in Translation*. Translated by Alastair McEwen. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- . [2003] 2004. *Mouse or Rat: Translation as Negotiation*. London: Phoenix.
- Edgerton, Franklin [1953] 1985. *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*. Volume I: Grammar; Volume II: Dictionary. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas Publishers.
- . 1962. Review of *Analysis of the Śrāvakabhūmi*, by Alex Wayman. *Language* 38 (3): 307-310.
- Fathers of the English Dominican Province tr. 1911. *The Summa Theologica of St. Thomas Aquinas*. Part II-II (*Secunda Secundae*). New York: Benziger Brothers; also available online at Project Gutenberg, <http://www.gutenberg.org/ebooks/18755>.
- Frauwallner, Erich. 1969. *Die Philosophie des Buddhismus*. 3rd revised ed. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag.
- . 2010. *The Philosophy of Buddhism*. Translated by Gelong Lodrö Sangpo, with the assistance of Jigme Sheldrön, under the supervision of Professor Ernst Steinkellner. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.
- Gerow, Edwin. 1971. *A Glossary of Indian Figures of Speech*. The Hague and Paris: Mouton.
- Gethin, R.M.L.[1992] 2003. *The Buddhist Path to Awakening*. Oxford: Oneworld.
- Goddard, Dwight. 1932. *Self-Realization of Noble Wisdom: A Version Based on Dr. Suzuki's translation of the Laṅkāvatārasūtra* (Thetford); reprinted as D.T. Suzuki tr., Dwight Goddard, compiled and edited. 2005. *The Lankavatara Sutra: An Epitomized Version*. Varanasi: Pilgrims Publishing.
- Gómez, Luis O. 1996. *Land of Bliss: The Paradise of the Buddha of Measureless Light*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press and Kyoto: Higashi Honganji Shinshū Ōtani-ha.
- Griffiths, Paul J. 1981. 'Buddhist Hybrid English: Some Notes on Philology and Hermeneutics for Buddhologists.' *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 4 (2): 17-32.
- Gutt, Ernst-August. 1991. *Translation and Relevance: Cognition and Context*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.
- Hedicke, Edmundus ed. 1889. *M. Tullii Ciceronis libellus de optimo genere oratorum*. J.D. Rauert: Soraviae Lustorum.

- Held, Axel. 1980. 'Enthalt Tao-an's Vorwort in CSTCC 8.1 wirklich "Leitsatzefur die "Übersetzer"?'. *Nachrichtender Gesellschaft fur Natur- und Völkerkunde Ostasiens* 1980: 111–119.
- Hermans, Theo. 2009. 'Hermeneutics'. In Baker and Saldanha eds.: 130–133.
- Horner, I.B. tr. [1951] 1993. *The Book of Discipline*. Volume IV (*Mahāvagga*). Oxford: Pali Text Society.
- Hurvitz, Leon N. and Arthur E. Link. 1974. 'Three Prajñāpāramitā prefaces of Tao-an'. In *Mélanges de Sinologie offerts à Monsieur Paul Demiéville*. Paris: Bibliothèque de l'Institut des Hautes Études Chinoises, Volume XX: 403–470.
- Itō Zuiei 伊藤瑞叡. 1968. 'Jujikyōniokerubhūmi no gogi' 十地經における の語義. *Indogaku bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 印度學佛教學研究 17 (1): 134–135.
- . 1970. 'Jujikyōniokerubhūmi no gainen' 十地經における bhūmi の概念. *Indogaku bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 印度學佛教學研究 18 (2): 442–448.
- Kamata Shigeo 鎌田茂雄. 1982. *Chūgokubukkyō-shi* 中国仏教史. Vol. I. Tokyo: Tōkyō daigaku shuppan-kai.
- . 1999. *Chūgokubukkyō-shi* 中国仏教史. Vol. VI. Tokyo: Tōkyō daigaku shuppan-kai.
- Kern, H. and Nanjio, Bunyiu ed. [1908–1912] 1970. *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka*. Osnabrück: Biblio Verlag.
- Kirchberger, Clare tr. 1957. *Richard of St. Victor, Writings on Contemplation*. London: Faber and Faber.
- Koller, Werner. 1989. 'Equivalence in Translation Theory'. In A Chestermann ed. *Readings in Translation Theory*. Helsinki: Oy Finn Lectura AB.
- Lackner, Michael. 2001. 'Circumnavigating the Unfamiliar: Dao'an (314–385) and Yan Fu (1852–1921) on Western Grammar'. 2001. In Michael Lackner, Iwo Amelung, and Joachim Kurtz eds. *New Terms for New Ideas. Western Knowledge and Lexical Change in Late Imperial China*. Leiden: Brill, 357–370.
- Lau, D.C. tr. 1992. *Confucius, The Analects (Lunyu)*. 2nd edition. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press.
- James, Legge. [1893] 1991. *The Chinese Classics*. Vols. I & II: *Confucian Analects, The Great Learning, The Doctrine of the Mean, The Work of Mencius*. 2nd revised edition. Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc.
- Lévi, Sylvain ed. 1907. *Asaṅga Mahāyāna-Sūtrālaṃkāra: Exposé de la doctrine du Grand Véhicule selon le système Yogācāra*. Tome I: Texte. Paris: Libraire Honoré Champion.
- . ed. 1925. *Vijñaptimātrātāsiddhi*. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale.
- Ling, Trevor. [1962] 1997. *Buddhism & the Mythology of Evil: A Study in Theravāda Buddhism*. Oxford: Oneworld.

- Nanjio, Bunyiu ed. [1923] 1956. *The Laṅkāvatāra Sūtra*. Kyoto: Otani University Press.
- Ōchō Enichi 横超慧日. 1958. *Chūgoku bukkyō no kenkyū* 中国仏教の研究. Kyoto: Hōzō-kan.
- Pradhan, P. ed. 1975. *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya of Vasubandhu*. Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute.
- Pulleyblank, Edwin G. 1991. *Lexicon of reconstructed Pronunciation in Early Middle Chinese, Late Middle Chinese, and Early Mandarin*. Vancouver: UBC Press.
- Rhys Davids, T.W. tr. [1899] 1977. *Dialogues of the Buddha*. Part I. London: Pali Text Society.
- Rhys Davids, T.W. and William Stede. [1921-1925] 1986. *The Pali Text Society's Pali-English Dictionary*. London: Pali Text Society.
- Ratcliffe, Susan ed. 2006. *Oxford Dictionary of Phrase, Saying, and Quotation*. 3rd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Robinson, Richard H. [1967] 1978. *Early Mādhyamika in India and China*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Sakaki Ryōsaburō 榊亮三郎. 1916. *Mahāvvyuttpati* 翻譯名義大集. Kyoto: Shingon-shū Kyōto Daigaku.
- Salama-Carr, Myriam. 2009. 'French Tradition'. In Baker and Saldanha eds.: 404-410.
- Satō Ichirō 佐藤一郎. 1952. 'Chūgokujin no hon'yaku-ron: Shaku Dōan no go shit-subon san fu eki-ronwochūshin to shite' 中國人の翻譯論 — 釋道安の五失本三不易論を中心として. *Nihon chūgoku gakuho* 日本中國學報 4.
- Schäfner, Christina. 2009. 'Functionalist Approaches'. In Baker and Saldanha eds.: 115-121.
- Scherrer-Schaub, Cristina. 1999. 'Translation, Transmission, Tradition: Suggestions from Ninth-Century Tibet'. *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 27: 67-77.
- Shukla, Karunesha ed. 1973. *Śrāvakabhūmi of Ācārya Asaṅga*. Patna: K.P. Jayaswal.
- Seyfort Ruegg, D. 1992. 'Some Reflections on Translating Buddhist Philosophical Texts from Sanskrit and Tibetan'. *Asiatische Studien/Études Asiatiques* XLIV (1): 367-391.
- Steiner, George. 1998. *After Babel: Aspects of Language & Translation*. 3rd ed. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Suzuki, Daisetz Teitaro. [1932] 1956. *The Lankavatara Sutra: A Mahayana Text Translated for the first time from the original Sanskrit*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul Ltd.
- Takasaki Jikidō 高崎直道. 1980. *Ryōga kyō* 楞伽經 (*Butten kōza* 佛典講座, Vol. 17) Tokyo: Daizō shuppan kabushiki kaisha.

- Takasaki, Jikidō 高崎直道, Zuihō Yamaguchi 山口瑞鳳, and Noriaki Hakamaya 袴谷憲昭 eds. 1980. *sDe dge Tibetan Tripiṭaka bsTanhygur* — preserved at the Faculty of Letters University of Tokyo デルゲ版チベット大蔵経論疎部. *Sems tsam* 唯識部. Tokyo: Sekai seiten kankō kyōkai.
- Tatia, Namthal ed. 1976. *Abhidharmasamuccaya-bhāṣyam*. Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute. Ui Hakuju 宇井伯壽. 1956. *Shaku Dōan kenkyū* 釋道安研究. Tokyo: Iwanami shoten.
- Wang Wenyan 王文顏. 1984. *Fodian hanyi zhi yanjiu* 佛典漢譯之研究. Taipei: Tianhua chubanshe.
- Wayman, Alex. 1961. *Analysis of the Śrāvakabhūmi Manuscript*. Berkley: University of California Press.
- Wedemeyer, Christian K. ed. and tr. *Āryadeva's Lamp that Integrates the Practices (Caryāmelāpakapradīpa): The Gradual Path of Vajrayāna Buddhism According to the Esoteric Community Noble Tradition*. New York: The American Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2007.
- Windisch, Ernst. 1895. *Māra und Buddha*. Leipzig: Abhandlungder Philologisch-historischen Klasseder Königlichen Sächsischen Gesellschaftder Wissenschaften XV, 4.
- Wogihara Unrai ed. [1936] 1971. *Bodhisattvabhūmi*. Tokyo: Sankibo Buddhist Book Store.
- Woodward, F.L. tr. [1930] 1977. *The Book of the Kindred Sayings*. Part V. London: Pali Text Society.
- Yamakami Sōgen. [1912] 1976. *Systems of Buddhistic Thought*. San Francisco: Chinese Materials Center, Inc.
- Yang Jidong. 1998. 'Replacing *hu* with *fan*: A Change in the Chinese Perspective of Buddhism during the Medieval Period'. *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 21 (1): 157-170.
- Yoshikawa Kōjirō 吉川幸次郎. 1978. *Ron go* 論語. 3 vols. Tokyo: Asahi shinbunsha.
- Zürcher, E. 1972. *The Buddhist Conquest of China: The Spread and Adaptation of Buddhism in Early Medieval China*. 2 vols. Leiden: E.J. Brill.

A Geographical Perspective on Sectarian Affiliations of the *Ekottarika Āgama* in Chinese Translation (T 125)

Tse-fu Kuan

The *Ekottarika Āgama* (*Zengyi ahanjing*, T 125) extant in Chinese translation is a collection of texts which are organized by numbers mentioned in the texts. It corresponds roughly to the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* in the Theravāda tradition still flourishing today. The sectarian affiliation of the *Ekottarika Āgama* is controversial. This research is an attempt to explore this issue in a more comprehensive way. A comparison between the texts in this collection and their parallels reveals its geographical preference for Magadha. This finding, along with some textual indications, suggests that the *Ekottarika Āgama* could be affiliated to the Mahāsāṃghikas or Mūlasarvāstivādins.

Introduction

The four *Āgamas* translated into Chinese from their Indic originals in the fourth and fifth centuries AD correspond to the four main *Nikāyas* in Pali and also represent the earliest stratum of the Buddhist Canon. Widespread agreement has been reached in attributing the *Madhyama Āgama* (hereafter abbreviated as 'MĀ'; T 26 *Zhong ahanjing*) to the Sarvāstivāda school.¹ The *Samyukta Āgama* (hereafter 'SĀ', T 99 *Za ahanjing*) is also widely ascribed to the Sarvāstivāda² or perhaps more precisely the Mūlasarvāstivāda tradition.³ *Bieyi Za ahanjing* (T 100),

¹ Lü 1963: 242; Kumoi 1963: 248; Mayeda 1964: 643–644; Ui 1965: 136; Enomoto 1984a: 1071; Thich Minh Chau 1991: 18–27; Oberlies 2003: 48.

² Kumoi 1963: 248; Ui 1965: 136; Yinshun 1994: 97; Hiraoka 2000: 501.

³ Lü 1963: 242; Enomoto 1984a: 1071; Enomoto 1984b: 99; Mizuno 1996: 373–375; Hiraoka 2003; Oberlies 2003: 64.

‘Other Translation of the *Samyukta Āgama*’ (hereafter ‘SĀ2’), was transmitted by the Mūlasarvāstivāda according to recent research.⁴ The *Dirgha Āgama* (hereafter ‘DĀ’, T 1 *Chang ahanjing*) is attributed to the Dharmaguptaka by many scholars.⁵

In contrast, the sectarian affiliation of the *Ekottarika Āgama* (hereafter ‘EĀ’, T 125 *Zengyi ahanjing*) is controversial. It is ascribed to the Mahāsāṃghikas by Bareau (1955a: 55 and 57), Ui (1965: 137–138), Akanuma (1981: 37–39), Bronkhorst (1985: 312–314), Pāsādika (2010: 88–90), etc., but to the Dharmaguptakas by Matsumoto (1914: 349) and Warder (2000: 6). The arguments for assigning it to the Dharmaguptaka do not seem strong. One argument is that, in the words of Warder (2000: 6), EĀ states that there are 250 *prātimokṣa* rules, a figure which among the *Vinayas* now available agrees only with that of the Dharmaguptaka (T 1428, *Four-Part Vinaya* 四分律). This argument ignores two facts: (1) the *Mahīśāsaka Vinaya* available today also has 250 rules;⁶ (2) the number of *prātimokṣa* rules underwent a period of fluidity as attested by the different texts of the same sects.⁷ The other argument is that the *stūpa* (pagoda) features prominently in both the EĀ (*stūpa* transcribed as *toupo* 偷婆) and the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya* (*stūpa* translated as 塔). The word *stūpa* (塔) occurs 261 times in the 60 fascicles (*juan* 卷) of the *Dharmaguptaka Vinaya*, which contains 448 pages in the Taishō edition (T XXII 567–1014).⁸ Here the frequency of the word *stūpa* is 4.35 occurrences per fascicle or 0.58 per page. In the 40 fascicles of the *Mahāsāṃghika Vinaya* (T 1425 摩訶僧祇律), which contains 322 pages in the Taishō edition (T XXII 227–548), *stūpa* (塔) occurs 226 times.⁹ Thus the frequency of the word *stūpa* is 5.56 occurrences per fascicle or 0.70 per page. Consequently, the *stūpa* features even more prominently in the Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya* than in the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, and hence the Mahāsāṃghika school would be a better candidate for the affiliation of EĀ than the Dharmaguptaka.

As mentioned above, many scholars are in favour of attributing EĀ to the Mahāsāṃghikas. Their arguments, however, are not conclusive and are only based on fragmentary evidence. As Anālayo (2009: 822) points out, Bareau (1955a:

⁴Enomoto 1984a: 1073; Enomoto 1984b: 102; Bingenheimer 2011: 42–44. Cf. also Bucknell (2011).

⁵Lü, 1963: 242; Kumoi, 1963: 248; Ui, 1965: 135; Waldschmidt, 1980: 136; Salomon 1999: 173–174.

⁶Cf. Nattier & Prebish (1977: 268).

⁷Cf. Anālayo (2009: 823).

⁸By searching CBETA.

⁹By searching CBETA.

55 and 57) refers to the introductory section (i.e. Prefatory Chapter 序品) of EĀ in support of assigning it to the Mahāsāṃghika tradition, but he does not offer further specifications. Therefore, Anālayo (2009: 822–823) has conducted “a short survey of instances from this introductory section that seem relevant to the question of school affiliation”, and sums up:

Hence the reference to three past Buddhas instead of one, the injunction to freely supply a location to a discourse when this has been forgotten, the manifestation of an earthquake and heavenly flowers at the conclusion of the first council, and Ānanda’s initial hesitation to take on the role of reciting the discourses at the first council are elements in the introduction to the *Ekottarika Āgama* that would support associating it with the Mahāsāṃghika tradition.

On the other hand, Anālayo (2009: 823) goes on to comment: “... conclusions on the school affiliation of the introduction may not necessarily hold true for the whole *Āgama* collection.”

In his two articles, Hiraoka (2007, 2008) sees some passages of the EĀ as showing an affinity with certain schools, particularly the (Mūla-)Sarvāstivāda. As I suggested in a conference paper presented in 2010,¹⁰ only one of the instances given in his two articles provides apparently substantial evidence, and it indicates a close connection between the EĀ and the Mūlasarvāstivāda. Both the EĀ (T II 726c–727b) and the *Bhaiṣajyavastu* of the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* 根本說一切有部毘奈耶藥事 (T 1448 XXIV 22c–23b) have an account about the Buddha being saluted by King Ajātasattu and gods, who offered 2500 parasols in total. Both texts say that the Buddha on that occasion related a story about his former birth as King Mahāsudassana. Both texts share a fairly similar storyline. As far as I am aware, there is only one other parallel tale, which is in the *Dhammapada* Commentary (III 445–448), but this Pali version is considerably different in many details from the story in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* and EĀ. Therefore, the presence of this story in the two texts suggests the possibility that this EĀ passage is of Mūlasarvāstivāda provenance.

It may be reasonable to recognize a certain passage or even a *sūtra* in EĀ as closely related to a certain school. In a forthcoming article (Kuan 2012 or 2013), I

¹⁰“Enquiry into the Sectarian Affiliation of the *Ekottarika Āgama* in Chinese Translation”, The Fourth International Conference of Sri Lanka Association of Buddhist Studies, Kandy, Sri Lanka, December 2010.

provide three arguments for EĀ 32.5 being affiliated to the Mahāsāṃghikas. Such studies, however, can provide only fragmentary pieces of evidence at the most. Even if pieced together, they still cannot prove that the entire EĀ collection was transmitted by a certain school. My present essay is an attempt to make a more comprehensive exploration of this issue, using a method very different from the others.

Method

The narrative framework of a text (*sūtra/sutta* or others) could have been arbitrarily set up in the compilation of the Buddhist Canon, as Gombrich (1990: 22) points out: “In its account of how the Canon came to be compiled, at the First Council, the introduction to the *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*¹¹ frankly says that words of the narrative portions were inserted on that occasion, and thus clearly distinguishes between the words attributed to the Buddha and their settings.” Therefore the setting of a text may not tell us the exact place at which a discourse was delivered or an event happened. From the religious point of view, the setting is irrelevant to religious practice; what really matters is the doctrine on liberation. It is therefore likely that the Buddhist tradition paid more attention to preserving the doctrine than to the settings. After the schisms, the various sects did not mind modifying some doctrines in their texts, let alone making up settings for their texts.

Schopen’s (1997) research may cast some light on this issue. He cited the following passage from the *Kṣudrakavastu* of the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* (translated from Tibetan by Schopen 1997: 575):

The Blessed One said: “Upāli, those who forget the name of the place, etc., must declare it was one or another of the six great cities, or somewhere where the Tathāgata stayed many times. If he forgets the name of the king, he must declare it was Prasenajit; if the name of the householder, that it was Anāthapiṇḍada; of the lay-sister, that it was Mṛgāramātā.”

Schopen (1997: 575–576) says that the two categories, “places where the Buddha stayed many times” and “the six great cities”, are almost coterminous. He (p. 576) points out that the range of options among the six cities is severely restricted

¹¹Commentary on DN.

by the additional provisions. If the name of a king or householder or female lay follower is lost, it must be replaced with the names Prasenajit, Anāthapiṇḍada or Mṛgāramatā, while all these three were from Śrāvastī (Pali Sāvattī). Therefore the rules set in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* quoted above clearly favour Sāvattī. Schopen (1997: 579) concludes: “The shape of all our collections would, moreover, seem to suggest that redactional rules very similar to those in the *Kṣudraka-vastu* operated in all traditions or monastic groups, even if the Mūlasarvāstivādin version is the only one so far discovered.” I would like to add that apart from the Mūlasarvāstivādin version, there are at least three other versions available to us.

1. The *Ten Recitations Vinaya* 十誦律 (T 1435) of the Sarvāstivāda records a similar conversation between the Buddha and Upālī and also lists six great cities,¹² but one of the six differs from the Mūlasarvāstivādin version and the order of the six cities is also different.¹³
2. The *Mahāsāṃghika Vinaya* 摩訶僧祇律 (T 1425) lists eight great cities instead of six as the place names that should be supplied in case they are forgotten (T XXII 497a).¹⁴
3. The Prefatory Chapter of EĀ states: “If the place where a *sūtra* was delivered is lost, one should say that it was [delivered] in Sāvattī.”¹⁵

Thich Minh Chau (1991: 55) points out that more texts in the Chinese *Madhyama Āgama* than in the Pali *Majjhima Nikāya* have their settings in Kammāsadhamma, and he suggests that this is because the Sarvāstivādins preferred places related to their stronghold or their own native places. In other words, the compilers’ regional sense may have affected their selection of settings for the *sūtras*. Accordingly, we may be able to identify or speculate about the sectarian affiliation of EĀ by finding out if the compilers of this collection had an inclination for a certain region when making up the settings. This geographical inclination can be detected

¹²T XXIII 288b–c: 長老優波離問佛：「世尊，我等不知佛在何處說修多羅、毘尼、阿毘曇。我等不知云何。」佛言：「在六大城：瞻波國、舍衛國、毘舍離國、王舍城、波羅[木*奈]、迦維羅衛城。何以故？我多在彼住，種種變化皆在是處。」

¹³The Sarvāstivāda version lists Campā, Sāvattī, Vesālī, Rājagaha, Bārāṇasī and Kapilavattu (see the quotation in the previous footnote), while the Mūlasarvāstivāda version has Sāvattī, Sāketa, Vesālī, Bārāṇasī, Rājagaha and Campā (see Schopen 1997: 576).

¹⁴T XXII 497a: 如是一切聽一切制皆在八大城：一舍衛、二沙祇、三瞻婆、四波羅奈、五拘睺彌、六毘舍離、七王舍城、八迦毘羅衛。是九部經若忘說處者，是八大城趣舉一，即名是處世尊所印，是名聽法。

¹⁵T II 550b: 正使不得說經處，當稱原本在舍衛。

by comparing *sūtras* of EĀ with their parallels in other collections of Buddhist texts extant in various languages. The parallels are collected from the following two sources:

1. Chizen Akanuma, *The Comparative Catalogue of Chinese Āgamas & Pāli Nikāyas*, 1929.
2. Venerable Anālayo, Rod Bucknell and Bhante Sujato, *Online Sutta Correspondence Project* (<http://www.suttacentral.net/>), 2011.

I have to concede that due to my inability to read Tibetan, the Tibetan parallels are not included in this study. This being said, there are so few Tibetan parallels that their exclusion would have very little, if any, effect on the result of my research.

Each EĀ *sūtra* and its parallel/parallels are put in the same row in the tables below for comparison. EĀ comprises 472 *sūtras* and the Prefatory Chapter 序品, which contains no *sūtra*. Of these 472 *sūtras*, 21 *sūtras* give no locations¹⁶ and 80 are set in locations other than Sāvatti City (*Shewei Guo* 舍衛國¹⁷).¹⁸ Apart from these 101 *sūtras*, 371 out of the 472 *sūtras* in EĀ are set in Sāvatti. The extraordinarily frequent occurrence of Sāvatti as the setting apparently results from the application of the above-mentioned rule stated in the Prefatory Chapter. Although this setting is virtually meaningless in most cases, if a *sūtra* set in Sāvatti has a parallel text that is set in another place, this may afford a clue for speculating about the geographical inclination of the school to which that parallel text belongs. Therefore, such cases will be included in the tabular comparison below. Place names in this paper are given mainly in their Pali forms for the practical reason that most Indic names within the scope of this study are found in Pali sources rather than in Sanskrit. The following four cases are omitted from the tables below because they are invalid for our comparative study:

¹⁶ 4. 2–10, 5.1–5, 6.1–4, 7.1–3.

¹⁷ *Guo* 國 can mean ‘country/nation’, ‘capital’ or ‘city’ (see HDC s.v. 國). In many cases, including this one, it refers to the capital and is translated as ‘city’ in my paper.

¹⁸ 11.9, 11.10, 12.6, 12.8, 13.4, 13.6, 13.7, 17.10, 17.11, 18.4, 18.5, 18.8, 19.1, 19.2, 19.9, 19.11, 20.2, 23.2, 23.3, 23.6, 23.7, 24.3, 24.5, 24.8, 25.6, 28.1, 28.3, 28.4, 30.1, 30.2, 31.2, 31.4, 31.8, 32.6, 32.7, 32.10, 33.10, 34.2, 35.7, 35.9, 37.2, 37.3, 37.10, 38.3, 38.7, 38.9, 38.11, 39.10, 40.2, 40.5, 40.7, 40.10, 41.1, 41.2, 41.4, 42.3, 43.3, 43.4, 43.6, 43.7, 44.6, 44.7, 44.9, 44.11, 45.1, 45.2, 45.4, 45.7, 46.8, 47.9, 48.5, 48.6, 49.4, 49.6, 49.8, 49.9, 50.4, 50.10, 52.1, 52.6.

1. An EĀ *sūtra* is set in Sāvatti while its parallel/parallels give no setting.
2. An EĀ *sūtra* is set in Sāvatti and has no parallels.
3. An EĀ *sūtra* and all its parallel/parallels are set in the same place.
4. An EĀ *sūtra* gives no setting.

The 13 sets of texts listed in Table 1 appear to suit our purpose, but a scrutiny reveals that this is not the case. A few sets of texts are too different from each other to be regarded as parallels. In two cases, different place names are given as the settings in the parallel texts, but by inference they actually refer to the same place. In other cases, although the parallels give different place names, these places were located in the same country. Such cases are excluded from this study, which is primarily concerned with the countries or states that were chosen as the settings of the texts. There are still other cases that are excluded. The reason for each case is given in the following table.

Table 1

EĀ <i>sūtras</i> (referred to by chapter number and <i>sūtra</i> number)	Parallels in Pali and Sanskrit	Parallels in Chinese translation
18.3 T II 587c Sāvatti 舍衛國	MN 3 (I 12) Sāvatti This was the capital of Kosala.	MĀ 88 (T I 569c) Kosala country 拘娑羅國
24.5 T II 618a27 Magadha 摩竭國 (lit. <i>Mojie</i> Country. Hereafter Magadha.)	MN 26 (MN I 160) Although the Buddha is said to live in Sāvatti at the beginning of the <i>sutta</i> , the parallel account is set in Magadha (MN I 168ff.)	
37.3 T II 710c Vajji 拔耆國	MN 32 (I 212) Gosiṅgasālavanadāya This is in Vajji according to MN 31 (see EĀ 24.8 above) Skt frgm: SHT V 1346 No location	MĀ 184 (T I 726c) Vajji 跋耆國 (* <i>Vajjisū</i>) T 154.16 生經·佛說比丘各言志經 (T III 80c) Vajji 越祇
38.10 T II 724b On one occasion the Buddha was in Sāvatti (T II 724b: 一時佛在舍衛國), but later the king was told: “The Sakya clan has a village called Deer Hall, where the Tathāgata is staying.” (T II 724c: 釋種有村名曰鹿堂, 如來在彼遊化)	MN 89 (II 118) Sakya AN 10.30 (V 65) Sāvatti	MA 213 (T I 795b17) among the Sakyans 釋中 T 1451.8 <i>Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya Kṣudrakavastu</i> 根本說一切有部毘奈耶·雜事 (T XXIV 237a6–239b18) Sakya clan 釋種
38.11 T II 725b Rājagaha 羅閱城	Dhp-a III 436–449 Veḷuvana This was in Rājagaha according to DPPN II 936.	

EĀ <i>sūtras</i> (referred to by chapter number and <i>sūtra</i> number)	Parallels in Pali and Sanskrit	Parallels in Chinese translation
41.5 T II 746a Sāvatti 舍衛國	SN 16.5 (II 202) Rājagaha This text is too different from EĀ 41.5 to be counted as its parallel.	EA 12.6 (T II 570a) Rājagaha 羅閱城 SĀ 1141 (T II 301c) Sāvatti 舍衛國 SĀ2 116 (T II 416b) Sāvatti 舍衛國 All the three texts are too different to be counted as parallels to EĀ 41.5.
44.6 T II 766a Ukkatthā 優迦羅	MN 1 (I 1) Ukkatthā This was in Kosala; see DN I 87.	MĀ 106 (T I 596b) Sāvatti 舍衛國 This was capital of Kosala
45.2 T II 770c Sakya 釋翅	MN 67 (I 456) at Cātumā (a Sākya village according to DPPN I 860) in a myrobalan grove (<i>āmalakivana</i>)	T 137 (T II 860a) A-mo-le herb grove (<i>āmalakivana</i>) of the Sakya clan 釋氏舍夷阿摩勒藥樹園
45.4 T II 772a village of Poluo 婆羅村, which is most likely to be a misprint of 娑羅村, village of Suoluo (Sālā)	SN 4.18 (I 113) Magadha, at the brahmin village of Pañcasālā (<i>Bhagavā Magadhesu viharati Pañcasālāyam brāhmaṇagāme</i>) Dhp-a III 257-8 Pañcasālā	SĀ 1095 (T II 288a) the brahmin village of Suoluo (Sālā) 娑羅婆羅門聚落, equivalent to <i>Pañcasālāyam brāhmaṇagāme</i> , but Pañca is omitted.
49.10 T II 806a Sāvatti 舍衛國	AN 11.16 V 342 No location Skt frgm SHT I 620R Śrāvastī (Sāvatti)	T 138 (T II 861a-b) comprises two <i>sūtras</i> ; both begin with 聞如是：一時，婆伽婆在。Only the second <i>sūtra</i> , set in Sāvatti 舍衛城, is parallel to EĀ 49.10, while the first <i>sūtra</i> is set in Rājagaha 羅閱城
50.6 T II 811a Sāvatti 舍衛國	MN 12.9-15 (I 68) Vesāli Too different to be reckoned a parallel.	
51.2 T II 814b Sāvatti 舍衛國	SN 15.13 (II 187) Rājagaha The text is much longer and more elaborate, so it should not be reckoned a parallel to EĀ 51.2.	SĀ 937 (T II 240b) Vesāli 毘舍離 SĀ2 330 (T II 485c) Vesāli 毘舍離 Both texts are too much longer and elaborate to be reckoned parallels to EĀ 51.2.
52.9 T II 829b Sāvatti 舍衛國	Ja 77 (I 334) Jetavana This place is in Sāvatti as found throughout the Canon.	T 146 (T II 870c) Sāvatti 舍衛 T 147 (T II 872a) Sāvatti 舍衛國 T 148 (T II 873a) Sāvatti 舍衛國

Below are the cases valid for this study:

Table 2

EĀ sūtras	Parallels in Pali, Sanskrit and Gāndhārī	Parallels in Chinese translation
11.9 T II 567a Rājagaha 羅閱城 (Luoyue City, partial transcription of Rājagaha)		
11.10 T II 567b Rājagaha 羅閱城		
12.1 T II 568a Sāvatti 舍衛國 (more precisely Sāvatti Capital/ City, see note 17)	DN 22 (II 290) and MN 10 (I 55) are both set in Kammāsaddhamma in the Kuru country.	MĀ 98 T I 582b Kammāsaddhamma 劒磨瑟曇 in the Kuru country 拘樓瘦 (*Kurūsu)
12.6 T II 570a Rājagaha 羅閱城	SN 16.5 (II 202) Rājagaha	SĀ 1141 (T II 301c) Sāvatti 舍衛國 SĀ2 116 (T II 416b) 舊園林毘舍佉講堂. This place is in Sāvatti according to SĀ2 113 (T II 415a: 舍衛舊園林中毘舍佉講堂) EA 41.5 is too different to be counted as a parallel.
12.7 T II 570b Sāvatti 舍衛國	SN 17.36 (II 242) Rājagaha	SĀ 1064 (T II 276b) Rājagaha 王舍城 (King-house City, a literal translation of Rājagaha/ Rājagrha) SĀ2 3 (T II 374b) Rājagaha 王舍城
12.8 T II 570c Rājagaha 羅閱城		
13.4 T II 573a 拔祇國 Vajji	SN 22.1 (III 1) Bhaggā (Bhaggesu viharati. dwelling among the Bhaggas.) DPPN II 345: “Bhaggā — The name of a tribe and a country ... The Bhagga country lay between Vesāli and Sāvatti.”	SĀ 107 (T II 33a) Bhaggā (婆祇國) 婆祇 is transcribed from a name equivalent to Bhaggā according to Akanuma (1931: 90)
13.5 T II 573c Sāvatti 舍衛國	MN 7 (I 36) Sāvatti	MĀ 93 (T I 575a) 鬱鞞羅, transcribed from Uruvelā according to Akanuma (1931: 717). Uruvelā is in the Magadha country according to MN 26(I 166) T 51 梵志計水淨經 (T I 843c) Uruvelā 鬱鞞羅
13.7 T II 575a Rājagaha 羅閱城		

EĀ <i>sūtras</i>	Parallels in Pali, Sanskrit and Gāndhāri	Parallels in Chinese translation
17.10 T II 585c Sakya 釋翅		
17.11 T II 586c Rājagaha 羅閱城	AN 4.70 (II 74) No location Cv 7.3.4 (Vin II 190) Rājagaha	EĀ2 14 (T II 878a6–22) Sāvattthi 舍衛國
18.4 T II 589a Rājagaha 羅閱城		
18.8 T II 592c Sakya 釋翅瘦 (* <i>Sakkesu</i>)		
19.3 T II 593c Sāvattthi 舍衛國	MN 37 (I 251) Sāvattthi	SĀ 505 (T II 133b) Rājagaha 王舍城
19.9 T II 595b 婆那國, transcribed from Varaṇa , a country lying to the west of Sāvattthi, according to Akanuma (1931: 737)	AN 2.4.7 (I 67) Madhurā	SĀ 547 (T II 141b) 婆羅那, transcribed from Varaṇa according to Akanuma (1931: 352)
19.11 T II 596a The Buddha travelled in the territory of Magadha , and gradually approached Vesāli city. (佛遊摩竭國界, 漸來至毘舍離城)	DN 16.2.14–19 (II 95–98) Vesāli It was the capital of the Licchavis, who formed a part of the Vajjian confederacy (See DPPN II 940 s.v. Vesāli and 779 s.v. Licchavi). Mv VI.30 (Vin I 231–233) The Buddha was in Koṭigāma and then went to Vesāli at the invitation of Ambapālī. According to SN 56.21 V 431, Koṭigāma was a village of the Vajjians.	
20.2 T II 597a Rājagaha 羅閱城		
21.1 T II 601c27 Sāvattthi 舍衛國	AN 4.34 (II 34) No location It 90 (p. 87) No location	SĀ 902–904 (T II 225c) All 3 <i>sūtras</i> are set in Rājagaha 王舍城.
21.5 T II 603b Sāvattthi 舍衛國	AN 10.89 (V 170) No location SN 6.1.10 (I 149) Sāvattthi Snp III 10 (p. 123) Sāvattthi	SĀ 1278 (T II 351b) Rājagaha 王舍城 SĀ2 276 (T II 470a) Rājagaha 王舍城
23.2 T II 611c02 Rājagaha 羅閱城		
23.3 T II 612a The Buddha was in Campā City (占波國). Campā was in the country of Aṅga according to DN II 235.	AN 6.55 (III 374) in Sītavana, Rājagaha Mv V.1.12–19 (Vin I 181–183) Sītavana Waldschmidt 1968b. No location	MĀ 123 (T I 611c) Sāvattthi 舍衛國 SĀ 254 (T II 62) Rājagaha 王舍城 T 1421.21 <i>Five-Part Vinaya of the Mahīśāsaka school</i> 彌沙塞部五分律 (T XXII 145a13–146b7) Rājagaha 王舍城 T 1428.39 <i>Four-Part Vinaya</i> 四分律 of the Dharmaguptakas (T XXII 843b12–845a28) Rājagaha 王舍城

EĀ sūtras	Parallels in Pali, Sanskrit and Gāndhārī	Parallels in Chinese translation
23.5 T II 613b Sāvatthi 舍衛國	AN 3.79 (I 225) No location Waldschmidt 1968a. Śrāvastī (Sāvatthi)	SĀ 1073 (T II 278c) Sāvatthi 舍衛國 SĀ2 12 (T II 376c) Rājagaha 王舍城 T 116 (T II 507b) Sāvatthi 舍衛國 T 117 (T II 508a) Sāvatthi 舍衛國
23.6 T II 613c Rājagaha 羅閱城		
24.2 T II 615b Sāvatthi 舍衛國 Although the Buddha is said to be in Sāvatthi at the beginning of the sūtra, how the Buddha interacts with the demon is actually set in Vajji country. (T II 615b: 佛在舍衛國 ... 拔祇國界有鬼 ...)	SN 10.12 (I 213) = Snp I 10 (p. 31) “The Blessed One was dwelling at Āḷavī in the haunt of the demon (<i>yakkha</i>).” DPPN I 295: “Āḷavī – A town thirty yojanas from Sāvatthi and probably twelve from Benares. (SnA I 220) It lay between Sāvatthi and Rājagaha. (inferred from Vin II 170–5) ... The king of Āḷavī was known as Āḷavaka.” Accordingly, Āḷavī was a kingdom between Kosala and Magadha.	SĀ 1326 (T II 364b) Magadha 摩竭提 SĀ2 325 (T II 482c) Magadha 摩竭提
24.3 T II 617a14 Sakya 釋翅		
24.8 T II 626b The Buddha was in Kosambī City (拘深城), where the monks were in constant dispute and did evil (T II 626b: 佛在拘深城 ... 拘深比丘恒好鬪訟, 犯諸惡行). He tried to settle the dispute by giving a discourse, including a story about King Long-life (長壽王, Dighiti in Mv X.2.2-4.5). Being unable to persuade them, the Buddha left for the country of Vajji (跋耆國). There three clansmen, namely Anuruddha, Nandiya and Kimbila, were living in concord and practising the Dharma diligently. (T II 629a: 世尊便捨而去, 詣跋耆國。爾時, 跋耆國中有三族姓子: 阿那律、難提、金毘羅。)	MN 31 (I 205) The Buddha was in Nādikā. Anuruddha, Nandiya and Kimbila were living in concord at Gosīngasālavanadāya and practised the Dharma diligently. Then the spirit (<i>yakkha</i>) Dīgha Parajana and other gods praised: “It is a gain for the people of Vajji. ...” The Buddha replied without mentioning the passage on Magadha that occurs in the EĀ version. (MN I 210f.) MN 48 (I 320) The Buddha was living in Kosambī (in the country of Vamsā, see below in the right column), where the monks took to quarrelling. He summoned the monks and delivered a discourse, with which they were satisfied.	MĀ 72 (T I 532c) The Buddha dwelt in Kosambī (拘舍彌), where the monks were often quarrelling (T I 532c: 佛遊拘舍彌 ... 拘舍彌諸比丘數共鬪諍。). The Buddha tried to settle the dispute by giving a discourse, including a story about King Long-life (長壽王). Being unable to persuade them, the Buddha left Kosambī and went to Pācīnavamsadāya (般那蔓闍寺林), where lived three clansmen: Anuruddha, Nandiya and Kimbila. (T I 536a: 般那蔓闍寺林有三族姓子共在中住, 尊者阿那律陀、尊者難提、尊者金毘羅。.) The ensuing account is similar to that in MN 128 without mention of the praise for the three clansmen by Dīgha Parajana or others.

<p>The great general Long-life (長壽大將, equivalent to Dīgha Parajana in MN 31) approached the Buddha and said: “It is a great gain for the big country of Vajjī that here dwell these three clansmen: Anuruddha, Nandiya and Kimbila.” The Buddha replied: “... Let alone the big country of Vajjī, it is a great gain for the big country of Magadha that it has these three clansmen. If the people and the like in the big country of Magadha recollect the three clansmen, then they will enjoy peace for a long time.”</p> <p>(T II 629c12: 長壽大將至世尊所...白世尊曰:「跋耆大國快得大利,有此三族姓子而自遊化:阿那律、難提、金毘羅。」世尊告曰:「...且捨跋耆大國,摩竭大國快得善利,乃有此三族姓子。若當摩竭大國人民之類憶此三族姓子,便長夜獲安隱。」)</p>	<p>MN 128 (III 152) The opening of this <i>sutta</i> is the same as that of MN 48, about the dispute among the monks in Kosambī. Having tried to settle the dispute in vain, the Buddha went to Pācīnavāṃsadāya (in the Ceti country according to AN IV 228f.) and visited the above three clansmen, with whom he talked mainly on meditation. There is no mention of the praise for the three clansmen by Dīgha Parajana or others.</p> <p>Ja 371 (III 211) <i>Jetavana</i> Ja 428 (III 486) <i>Kosambī</i> Neither of the <i>Jātakas</i> mentions the praise for the three clansmen.</p> <p>Mv X. 2.2-4.5 (Vin I 341–352) does not mention the location of the dispute or the praise for the three clansmen.</p>	<p>T 1428 <i>Four-Part Vinaya</i> 四分律 of the Dharmaguptakas (T XXII 879b–882c): The Buddha was living in <i>Kosambī</i> (拘睢彌), where the monks were deep in dispute. The Buddha tried to settle the dispute by giving a discourse, including a story about King Long-life (長生王). Being unable to persuade the monks in Kosambī, the Buddha returned to Sāvattī. This account makes no mention of the three clansmen or the praise for them.</p> <p>#Kosambī was the capital of Vāṃsa. See DPPN II 798.</p>
<p>25.6 T II 632a Rājagaha 羅閱城</p>	<p>MN 5 (I 24) Sāvattī</p>	<p>MĀ 87 (T I 566a) 婆奇瘦 T 49 (T I 839a) 婆祇 Both 婆奇瘦 and 婆祇 are transcribed from a name equivalent to <i>Bhaggā</i> according to Akanuma (1931: 90)</p>
<p>26.10 T II 642b Sāvattī 舍衛國</p>	<p>SN 22.87 (III 119) Rājagaha</p>	<p>SĀ 1265 (T II 346b) Rājagaha 王舍城</p>
<p>27.1 T II 643a Sāvattī 舍衛國</p>	<p>MN 141 (III 248) Bārāṇasī (capital of Kāśi; see DPPN II 274)</p>	<p>MĀ 31 (T I 467a) Sāvattī 舍衛國 T 32 佛說四諦經 (T I 814b) Sāvattī 舍衛國</p>
<p>27.2 T II 643c Sāvattī 舍衛國</p>	<p>MN 11 (I 63) Sāvattī</p>	<p>MĀ 103 (T I 590b) Kuru 拘樓瘦 (*<i>Kurūsu</i>)</p>
<p>28.1 T II 646c Rājagaha 羅閱城</p>	<p>Dhp-a I 366–374 Sāvattī</p>	
<p>28.4 T II 650c Rājagaha 羅閱城</p>	<p><i>Theragāthā</i> Commentary on verses 181 and 182 (I 305ff.) Sāvattī</p>	
<p>28.5 T II 652b Sāvattī 舍衛國</p>	<p>AN 4.180 (II 167) Bhoganagara DN16.4.7-11 (II 123) Bhoganagara DPPN II 393: Bhogagāmanagara — A village in the Vajjī country.</p>	<p>DA 2 (T I 17b) Bhoga City (負彌城) = Bhoganagara 負彌 is transcribed from Bhoga according to Akanuma (1931: 97)</p>

EĀ sūtras	Parallels in Pali, Sanskrit and Gandhāri	Parallels in Chinese translation
30.1 T II 659a Magadha 摩竭國		
30.2 T II 659b Rājagaha 羅閱城		
31.2 T II 665b Kosambi 拘深		
31.4 T II 668b Rājagaha 羅閱城		T 131 婆羅門避死經 (T II 854b) Sāvatthi 舍衛城
31.6 T II 669c Sāvatthi 舍衛國 Only this version has the following passage: The near shore is the territory of Ajātasattu; the further shore is the territory of King Bimbisāra. (T II 670a: 此岸者阿闍世國界也，彼岸者毘沙王國界也。) Both were kings of Magadha. Ajātasattu overthrew his father, Bimbisāra, and succeeded to the throne. See Vin II 191. (阿闍世 is a usual transcription of Ajātasattu. 毘沙 is transcribed from Bimbisāra according to Hirakawa 1997: 697 and Akanuma 1931: 99).	SN 35.197 (IV 172) No location (According to Feer 1894: 172, note 9, the setting as Sāvatthi is given in only one Burmese manuscript.) Skt frgm: Enomoto 1985: 83–84 No location	SĀ 1172 (T II 313b) Kosambī 拘睺彌國
31.11 T II 673b Sāvatthi 舍衛國	SN 16.6 (II 203) Rājagaha	SĀ 1138 (T II 300b) Sāvatthi 舍衛國 SĀ2 113 (T II 415a) Sāvatthi 舍衛國
32.5 T II 676b Sāvatthi 舍衛國	SN 8.7 (I 190) Sāvatthi Hoernle 1916: 38–39 No location Enomoto 1985: 88 = SHT V 1193 No location SHT VI 1598 No location	SĀ 1212 (T II 330a) Rājagaha 王舍城 SĀ2 228 (T II 457a) Rājagaha 王舍城 MĀ 121 (T I 610a) Rājagaha 王舍城 T 61 佛說受新歲經 (T I 858a) = EĀ 32.5 T 63 佛說解夏經 (T I 861b) Rājagaha 王舍城 T 62 佛說新歲經 (T I 859a) Sāvatthi 舍衛國 This text is very different from the others and is a Mahāyānist variant.
32.6 T II 669c Rājagaha 羅閱城		
33.10 T II 689a04 Magadha 摩竭國	AN 7.68 (IV 128) Kosala	MĀ 5 (T I 425a15) Kosala 拘薩羅

EĀ sūtras	Parallels in Pali, Sanskrit and Gāndhārī	Parallels in Chinese translation
34.2 T II 690a13 Bārāṇasī 波羅[木*奈]	Dhp-a I 337–361. [Sāvatthi] This reference should not be counted because it is much longer than EĀ 34.2, and has a prologue different from the EĀ version.	T 197 佛說興起行經·佛說頭痛宿緣經第三 (T IV 166c) [Anotatta Lake 阿耨達泉] T 198 佛說義足經·維樓勒王經第十六 (T IV 188a) [Sāvatthi 舍衛國] T 211 法句譬喻經 (T IV 583a) [No location] These three texts should not be counted because they each correspond to only a small part of EĀ 34.2 without any account similar to the prologue of EĀ 34.2.
35.7 T II 699c Rājagaha 羅閱城	SN 7.2.3 (I 174–175) Sāvatthi (in Kosala) Dhp-a III 232–233, which is an abridged version of SN 7.2.3.	SĀ 1181 (T II 319b) Kosala 拘薩羅 SĀ2 95 (T II 407b) Kosala 拘薩羅
35.9 T II 701a Rājagaha 羅閱城	SN 8.4 (I 188) Sāvatthi	SĀ 1214 (T II 331a) Sāvatthi 舍衛國 SĀ2 230 (T II 458a) Sāvatthi 舍衛國
37.2 T II 708c Anotatta Lake 阿耨達泉		T 310 大寶積經·密迹金剛力士會 (T XI 56c) This should not be counted because it is in a Mahāyāna text and resembles only part of the second half of EĀ 37.2.
37.7 T II 713c Sāvatthi 舍衛國		SĀ 335 (T II 92c) Kuru 拘留搜 (*Kurūsu)
38.3 T II 717c Magadha 摩竭國	AN 4.36 (II 37) <i>antarā ca Ukkatṭham antarā ca Setabyarī</i> (both in Kosala, for Ukkatṭhā see DN I 87, for Setabya see DN II 316) Gāndhārī version: Allon 2001: 124 - <i>hofo</i> (incomplete)	SĀ 101 (T II 28a) Kosala 拘薩羅 SĀ2 267 (T II 467a) Kosala Country 憍薩羅國
38.6 T II 719b Sāvatthi 舍衛國	MN 86 (II 97) Sāvatthi Skt frgm: Enomoto 1994: 22–23 No location Hartmann 1998: 358–361 Restore to (<i>Magadheṣu</i> or <i>Māgadakeṣu janapa</i>) <i>deṣu</i> according to T 100, i.e. SĀ2 16 (see Hartmann 1998: 358)	SĀ 1077 (T II 280c) Aṅguttarāpa 央瞿多羅國 SĀ2 16 (T II 378b) Magadha 摩竭陀國 T 118 佛說鷲掘摩 (T II 508b) Sāvatthi 舍衛國

KUAN – SECTARIAN AFFILIATIONS OF THE EKOTTARIKA ĀGAMA

	SHT I 160c No location SHT VI 1561 No location	T 119 佛說鳶嶠髻經 (T II 510b) Sāvatthi 舍衛城 T 200.99 賢愚經·無惱指鬘品 (T IV 423b) Sāvatthi 舍衛國 T 212.17 出曜經·雜品 (T IV 703a) Sāvatthi 舍衛國
38.8 T II 723c Sāvatthi 舍衛國	SN 35.206 (IV 198) No location	SĀ 1171 (T II 313a) Kosambi 拘 睺彌
38.9 T II 724a Bārāṇasī 波羅[木*奈]		
39.6 T II 731a Sāvatthi 舍衛國	SN 46.16 (V 81) Rājagaha	
39.9 T II 733b Sāvatthi 舍衛國	MN 23 (I 142) Sāvatthi	SĀ 1079 (T II 282a) Rājagaha 王 舍城 SĀ2 18 (T II 379c) Rājagaha 王舍城 T 95 (T I 918b) No location
40.1 T II 735b Sāvatthi 舍衛國	DN 27 (III 80) Sāvatthi AN 7.62 (IV 100) Vesāli Skt frgm: SHT V 1583 No location Waldschmidt 1970 No location	MĀ 8 (T I 428c) Vesāli 鞞舍離 MĀ 154 (T I 673b) Sāvatthi 舍衛國 DĀ 5 (T I 36b) Sāvatthi 舍衛國 T 10 (T I 216b) Sāvatthi 舍衛國 T 30 (T I 811c) Vesāli 毘舍梨
40.5 T II 739b Vesāli 毘舍離		
40.6 T II 740a Sāvatthi 舍衛國	MN 2 (I 6) Sāvatthi AN 6.58 (III 387) No location	MĀ 10 (T I 431c) Kuru 拘樓瘦 (*Kurūsu) T 31 (T I 813a) Kuru Country 拘留國
40.7 T II 741b Ayojjhā 阿踰闍 It is uncertain in which country Ayojjhā was located (see DPPN I 165).		MĀ 7 T I 427c Kosambi 拘舍彌
40.8 T II 741c Sāvatthi 舍衛國	AN 6.19 (III 303) Nādika (in the Vajji country according to DPPN I 976) AN 8.73 (IV 316) Nātika/ Nātika/ Nādika	

EĀ sūtras	Parallels in Pali, Sanskrit and Gandhāri	Parallels in Chinese translation
41.2 T II 744c Deer Park City 鹿野城 (probably Migadāya, near Bārāṇasī, which was the capital of Kāśī)		
42.5 T II 753c Sāvattthi 舍衛國	AN 8.70 (IV 308) DN 16.3.1–20 (II 102–109) Sanskrit: Divy 200–206 All these 3 parallels are set in Cāpāla shrine in Vesālī. Akanuma (1929: 387) lists SN 51.10 and <i>Udāna</i> 6.1 (set in Cāpāla shrine) as parallels, but they make no mention of the eight causes for a great earthquake, the purport of EĀ 42.5, so they should not be counted.	DĀ 2 (T I 15c– 16a) Cāpāla shrine 遮婆羅塔 It is in Vesālī according to the Pali and Divy versions. MĀ 36 (T I 477b) 金剛國, Diamond Country, could be Vajirā (see DPPN II 810)
42.6 T II 754a Anuruddha dwelled at the place where four Buddhas lived. The Blessed One was in Sāvattthi. 阿那律遊在四佛所居處。世尊在舍衛城。	AN 8.30 (IV 228) The Blessed One dwelled among the Bhaggas (Bhaggā country). Anuruddha dwelled among the Ceti (Ceti country). (<i>Bhagavā Bhaggesu viharati. Anuruddho Cetisu viharati.</i>) Ceti is among the 16 great countries (<i>mahājanapada</i>) in AN I 212–213.	MĀ 74 (T I 540c18) The Buddha dwelled in Bhaggā (* <i>Bhaggesu</i>). Anuruddha was in Ceti (* <i>Cetisu</i>). 佛遊婆奇瘦。阿那律陀在枝提瘦 T 46 (T I 835c) The Buddha was on Mount Shizhi/Shimu (?) ... Anuruddha was in that <i>Jhāna Open Water</i> (?) 佛在誓[枝]牧山 ... 阿那律，在彼禪空澤中。
43.3 T II 758c territory of Magadha 摩竭國界	SN 35.200 (IV 179) Ayojjhā The setting is “The Buddha was dwelling at Kosambi / Ayojjhā on the bank of the river Ganges”. The town’s name has different readings: <i>Kosambiyam</i> and <i>Ayojjhāyam</i> . DPPN I 165 states: “Kosambi was on the bank of the river Jumnā rather than the Ganges.” The map of Zürcher (1962: 2–3) also locates Kosambi by the river Yamuna, which is synonymous with Jumnā (see Lamotte 1988: MAP 1). According to another <i>sutta</i> (SN III 140), Ayojjhā was on the bank of the river Ganges.	SĀ 1174 (T II 314c) Ayojjhā 阿毘闍, which is transcribed from a name equivalent to Ayojjhā according to Akanuma (1931: 68).

	Consequently the correct reading in our text must be <i>Ayōjjhāyam</i> . It is, however, uncertain in which country Ayōjjhā was located (see DPPN I 165).	
43.6 T II 761b Magadha 摩竭國	MN 34 (I 225) Vajji Skt frgm: SHT VI 1381 (unknown school affiliation) Rājagrha (Rājagaha)	SĀ 1248 (T II 342a) Rājagaha 王舍城
44.7 T II 766b Rājagaha 羅閱城	Dhp-a I 319 Sāvatti	
44.9 T II 767c Rājagaha 羅閱城		
44.10 T II 768c Sāvatti 舍衛國	SN 45.2 (V 2) Sakya	
44.11 T II 769a Rājagaha 羅閱城	AN 9.24 (IV 401) No location	
45.1 T II 769b Rājagaha 羅閱城 Found in the prologue (T II 769b12–c21).	Ja 196 (II 127) Jetavana The beginning is somewhat different from the prologue of EĀ 45.1 Sanskrit texts: Mhvu III 67–90. Divy 523.9–528.13 Neither has a counterpart to the prologue of EĀ 45.1	MĀ 136 (T I 642a) Sāvatti 舍衛國 It has no counterpart to the prologue of EĀ 45.1. T 1442 <i>Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya</i> 根本說一切有部毘奈耶 (T XXIII 887a–891c) A preceding passage (886a19–887a3) may be reckoned a counterpart to the prologue of EĀ 45.1, but it gives no location .
45.5 T II 772c Sāvatti 舍衛國	SN 11.22 (I 237) Sāvatti	SĀ 1107 (T II 291a) Vesāli 鞞舍離 SĀ2 36 (T II 385a) Sāvatti 舍衛國
45.6 T II 773b Sāvatti 舍衛國	MN 151 (III 293) Rājagaha	SĀ 236 (T II 57b) Sāvatti 舍衛國
45.7 T II 773c Rājagaha 羅閱城	Dhp-a I 434–447 Jetavana	
46.2 T II 775c Sāvatti 舍衛國	AN 10.20 (V 29) in Kuru country, in a town called Kammāsadhamma	
46.8 T II 778b Rājagaha 羅閱城	AN 10.27 (V 48) Sāvatti	
47.9 T II 784a Rājagaha 羅閱城		

EĀ sūtras	Parallels in Pali, Sanskrit and Gandhāri	Parallels in Chinese translation
48.2 T II 786a Sāvatti 舍衛國	AN 8.20 (IV 204) Sāvatti According to Akanuma (1929: 152), the second half of EĀ 48.2 is equivalent to Dhp-a III 236, which in my view is too different to be counted as a parallel.	MĀ 37 (T I 478b) Campā 瞻波 T 33 恒水經 (T I 817a) the river Ganges 恒水 T 34 法海經 (T I 818a) Campā 瞻波 T 35 海八德經 (T I 819a) 無勝國, unidentified place T 1421.28 <i>Five-Part Vinaya of the Mahiśāsaka school</i> 彌沙塞部五分律 (T XXII 180c25-181b4) Campā Country 瞻婆國 T 1435.33 <i>Ten Recitations Vinaya</i> 十誦律 of the Sarvāstivāda (T XXIII 239b7-240a27) Campā Country 瞻婆國
48.5 T II 791c Rājagaha 羅閱城		
49.3 T II 795b Sāvatti 舍衛國	SN 14.15 (II 155) Rājagaha	SĀ 447 (T II 115a) Rājagaha 王舍城
49.4 T II 796a 拘留沙法行城 Kammasadhamma, Kuru 拘留沙 (*Kurūsu) is transcribed from Kuru according to Akanuma (1931: 330). 法行城 (Dharma Action City) is translated from Kammasadhamma according to Akanuma (1931: 270).		
49.6 T II 798a Rājagaha 羅閱城	MN 92 (II 146) =Snp III 7 (p. 102) at Āpaṇa in the country of Aṅguttarāpa Sanskrit text: Dutt 1984: 262–266 (in the <i>Bhaiṣajyavastu</i> of <i>Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinayavastu</i>) Location is referred to as Udumā on p. 255. Here Dutt (note 3) suggests that it is equivalent to Ātumā in Mv VI. 37 (Vin I 249f.), according to which this town lay between Kusināra and Sāvatti. Therefore it was probably located in or near Kosala Country .	T 1428.42 <i>Four-Part Vinaya</i> 四分律 of the Dharmaguptakas (T XXII 873a25–c12) Aṅguttarāpa Country 阿牟多羅國, Āpaṇa City 阿摩那城

EĀ <i>sūtras</i>	Parallels in Pali, Sanskrit and Gāndhārī	Parallels in Chinese translation
49.9 T II 802b Sakya 釋翅	Akanuma (1929: 153) refers to Cv 7.3-4 & Dhp-a I 133, but both accounts are too different to be reckoned parallels to EĀ 49.9.	
50.4 T II 806c Magadha Country, Mithilā City 摩竭國蜜提羅城	MN 83 (II 74) Mithilā (in Videha Country according to DN II 235) Ja 9 (I 137) and Ja 541 (VI 95) are both set at Mithilā in the country of Videha (<i>Videharatthe Mithilāyaṃ</i>)	MĀ 67 (T I 511c) Videha Country... Mithilā 鞞陀提國 ... 彌薩羅 T 152.87 六度集經·摩調王經 (T III 48b) 無夷國, which refers to Mithilā according to Akanuma (1931: 426). T 211.38 法句譬喻經·道利品 (T IV 606b) [No location] Too different to be reckoned a parallel.
50.10 T II 813c Rājagaha 羅閱城		

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 2 lists all EĀ *sūtras* that are valid for our comparative study: a total of 82 EĀ *sūtras* either have no parallels or have parallels that are set at locations different from those in EĀ *sūtras*. Of these 82 *sūtras*, 31 are set in Sāvattthi. This frequency is not surprising because, as mentioned above, it is an “authorized” practice to assume Sāvattthi as the setting for those *sūtras* whose settings were unavailable. What should really surprise us is the remarkable frequency of place names related to the kingdom of Magadha. 28 *sūtras* are set in Rājagaha, the capital of Magadha. 7 *sūtras* are set in Magadha. Although EĀ 24.8 and EĀ 31.6 begin by stating locations irrelevant to Magadha, they both contain passages referring to Magadha, but such passages are not found in their parallel texts. In sum, 37 *sūtras* out of the 82 *sūtras* in question (45%) refer to Magadha or its capital. This is a statistically significant indication that the school which transmitted EĀ (T 125) had a strong preference for Magadha.

In striking contrast, of the 72 Pali parallels,¹⁹ only 9 (12.5%) are set in Rājagaha; no others are set in this city or other places in Magadha. Among the 19 Sarvāstivāda parallels (18 MĀ *sūtras* and one parallel in the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*), only 2 (10.5%) are set in Magadha: one in Rājagaha and the other in Uruvelā.

¹⁹SN 10.12 and Snp I 10 are regarded as one and the same parallel to EĀ 24.2. MN 92 and Snp III 7 are regarded as one and the same parallel to EĀ 49.6.

In Table 2 there are 26 occurrences of SĀ *sūtras*, of which 11 (42%) are set in Magadha or its capital, Rājagaha. Similarly, 7 out of the 13 SĀ2 *sūtras* (54%) in this table are set in Magadha or Rājagaha. Both SĀ and SĀ2 are ascribed to the Mūlasarvāstivāda. If we also take into account the three EĀ parallels found in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*: the parallel to EĀ 38.10 set in Sakya, the parallel to EĀ 45.1 without location (hence invalid) and the parallel to EĀ 49.6 set in Udumā (near or in Kosala), then we have 41 (26 + 13 + 2) “valid” Mūlasarvāstivāda parallels in total. Thus 18 (11 + 7 + 0) out of the 41 Mūlasarvāstivāda parallels (44%) are set in Magadha or its capital. Therefore this school seems to have preferred to choose Magadha as the setting for their texts. Is it then possible that EĀ, also in favour of Magadha, belongs to the Mūlasarvāstivādins?

Let us examine the historical and geographical backgrounds of Buddhist sects in relation to Magadha. The Theravāda,²⁰ Sarvāstivāda²¹ and Mahāsāṃghika²² traditions all agree that the original schism occurred between the Sthaviras and the Mahāsāṃghikas, and that this schism occurred about one hundred years after the Buddha’s death. More precisely speaking, the schism began during the reign of Aśoka, around 270–230 BC.²³ After a survey of the Pali, Sanskrit, Chinese and Tibetan sources and referring to Przyluski (1926: 308–309), Dutt (1978: 10) concludes that after the first schism the Easterners, who had their seat at Vaiśālī (Vesālī), were the Mahāsāṃghikas and their offshoots; when the political as well as Buddhist centre shifted from Rājagṛha to Pāṭaliputra, the Mahāsāṃghikas also made Pāṭaliputra (Pāṭaliputta) their chief centre.²⁴ It should be noted that these two towns both belonged to “Greater Magadha”.²⁵ Pāṭaliputta, formerly a village called Pāṭaligāma, was already in the country of Magadha at the Buddha’s time (DPPN II 178). Vesālī was originally in the country of Vajjī, which was conquered by Ajātasattu, King of Magadha, soon after the Buddha’s death (DPPN II

²⁰Dīp V 16ff. (p. 35f.).

²¹*Bu Zhiyi Lun* 部執異論 (T 2033 XLIX 20a).

²²*Shelifu wen jing* 舍利弗問經 (**Sāriputraparipṛcchā*, T 1465 XXIV 900b–c).

²³For details, see Kuan (2008: 2).

²⁴Dutt makes this comment but does not provide a textual reference to support it. As to this issue, Cv XII (Vin V 294–307) in conjunction with Dīp V 16–39 (pp. 35–37) may connect the Mahāsāṃghikas to Vesālī. This school is connected to Pāṭaliputta in the **Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣā* (阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論 T 1545 XXVII 511a–512a). In a personal communication from Mr L.S. Cousins, he advises that one should be very cautious about interpreting any specific references to the Mahāsāṃghikas either in Pāṭaliputta or at Rājagaha or other pilgrimage sites.

²⁵I am borrowing this term from the title of Johannes Bronkhorst’s book, *Greater Magadha: Studies in the Culture of Early India*, Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2007.

814). In other words, Vesāli was already part of Magadha when the initial schism brought the Mahāsāṃghikas into being. Bareau (1955b: ix, 108) refers to the *Sanlun xuanyi* 三論玄義 (T 1852, pp. 8b–9c)²⁶ by Jizang 吉藏 (549–623 AD), sub-commentary on the commentary by Paramārtha 真諦 (499–569 AD) on the treatise by Vasumitra (T 2033, *Bu Zhiyi Lun* 部執異論), and says:

Paramārtha has passed on to us some data that this tradition²⁷ has overlooked, such as the exile of the Mahāsāṃghikas to the north of Rājagṛha, data that seem to me credible enough to make me think that he has based them on other sources that are also worthy of attention.²⁸

Rājagṛha (Rājagaha) was the capital of Magadha at the Buddha's time.²⁹ Accordingly, the Mahāsāṃghikas had their stronghold in Magadha at a very early time.

Moreover, the prevalence of the Mahāsāṃghikas in Magadha lasted for several centuries. While interpreting the epigraphic finds in light of the literary sources, Lamotte (1988: 527) remarks: “Even while maintaining most of their strength in Magadha until the time of I ching³⁰ (end of the seventh century), the Mahāsāṃghikas, during their long history, had already migrated to Mathurā...” In the 5th century AD Faxian 法顯 stated in his autobiography that he was searching for a *Vinaya* text but the *Vinaya* was handed down orally in northern India and he could only find a written text in “Central India” at Pāṭaliputra, namely

²⁶It is stated thus: “At that time (116 years after the Buddha's death) due to Mahādeva the Mahāsāṃghikas migrated and lived in the country of *Āṅguttarāpa, which lies to the north of Rājagṛha.” (T XLV 8c: 于時大眾部因摩訶提婆移度住央崛多羅國，此國在王舍城北。)

²⁷This refers back to the Kashmiri Sarvāstivādins.

²⁸I am grateful to Dr Roderick Bucknell for translating this passage into English for me.

²⁹One of the referees says:

“It is known that the Mahāsāṃghikas were strong in Vaiśālī and Pāṭaliputra, however nothing really connects them to in Rājagṛha where presumably more than one group was active. To make that connection the author might mention that a group called the Rājagirikas was active in Andhra. They are considered to be a Mahāsāṃghikas offshoot. They are mentioned in several texts and the name appears on inscriptions (consulting the index in Lamotte *History of Indian Buddhism* will give a first range of sources).”

This comment seems to suggest that the Rājagirikas had some connection to Rājagṛha (perhaps originating in that city), but I have consulted several sources without being able to find such a connection.

³⁰義淨 is now usually transcribed as Yijing.

the Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya*.³¹ Roth (1970: III) observes: “We see that the history of the Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya* and of its manuscript is closely connected with ancient Pāṭaliputra which gave a home to the ‘Great Assembly.’” He (1970: X) further maintains:

Fa-hsien’s discovery of the Mā-Vin at Pāṭaliputra was certainly not an incident of mere chance. The existence of this *Vinaya* here indicates at least that the Mahāsāṃghika had one of their centers in Pāṭaliputra.

In view of the foregoing, we may tentatively conclude that the Mahāsāṃghikas were flourishing in Magadha since the first schism in the 3rd century BC until at least the 5th century AD, when Faxian acquired this school’s *Vinaya* in Pāṭaliputra. This period coincided with the transmission of EĀ (T 125) in India before it was first translated into Chinese in 385 AD by Zhu Fonian (竺佛念) and later on revised and enlarged by the same translator.³² Furthermore, the Mahāsāṃghikas’ thriving in Magadha during those centuries may explain why the redactors of EĀ exhibited a remarkable preference for Magadha when selecting place names as the settings of *sūtras*. Consequently, there is a high possibility that EĀ is affiliated to the Mahāsāṃghikas.

Let us move on to the other possibility. Willemen *et al* (1998: 85) point out that the name “Mūlasarvāstivādins” is missing in all lists anterior to the 7th century AD, and it is Yijing 義淨 who first mentions them in the last quarter of the 7th century.³³ As indicated by Willemen *et al* (1998: 85), according to Yijing, the Mūlasarvāstivādins were the most numerous Buddhist sect in Magadha.³⁴ This

³¹See T 2085 *Faxian zhuan* 法顯傳 at T LI 864b: 從彼波羅[木*奈]國東行還到巴連弗邑。法顯本求戒律，而北天竺諸國，皆師師口傳，無本可寫。是以遠涉乃至中天竺，於此摩訶衍僧伽藍得一部律，是摩訶僧祇眾律。

³²For a reconstruction of the history of its translation, see Lin (2009). The EĀ is wrongly attributed to Gautama Saṃghadeva (瞿曇僧伽提婆) in the later catalogues and Taishō edition. Cf. Legittimo (2008: 255–256) and Nattier (2010: 233, note 8).

³³See also Frauwallner (1956: 25) and Enomoto (2000: 242).

³⁴See T 2125 LIV 205b: 摩揭陀則四部通習，有部最盛。In his *Nanhai jigui neifazhuan* 南海寄歸內法傳 (T 2125), Yijing depicts the geographical distribution of the four major Buddhist schools prevailing in India at that time. These four schools are the Mahāsāṃghika, the Sthavira, the Mūlasarvāstivāda, and the Saṃmatīya (T LIV 205). In this work he sometimes refers to the Mūlasarvāstivāda as *Youbu* 有部, which was usually used by others as an abbreviation for the Sarvāstivāda (說一切有部). This has led Enomoto (2000: 243) to think that Yijing identifies the Mūlasarvāstivāda as the Sarvāstivāda. It should be noted, however, that Yijing unequivocally says: “The *Ten Recitations Vinaya* too (like the Dharmaguptaka, Mahīśāsaka and Kāśyapiya) is not of the

was the situation in Magadha over 200 years after EĀ, SĀ and SĀ2³⁵ had been translated, and hence does not suffice to explain why the redactors of these *Āgamas* preferred to choose places in Magadha as the settings of *sūtras*. There arises a question: When did the Mūlasarvāstivādins begin to prosper in Magadha? It would not be far-fetched to estimate that it took at least several generations or even centuries for them to expand and become the predominant sect in Magadha. Therefore, the Mūlasarvāstivādins could have already taken root in Magadha before the last quarter of the 4th century or the first half of the 5th century, when the EĀ, SĀ and SĀ2 were introduced into China and translated. If so, then it is possible that EĀ, just like SĀ and SĀ2, belongs to the Mūlasarvāstivādins, who preferred to choose places in Magadha as the settings of *sūtras* because they settled in this region. This appears consistent with the fact that EĀ has an account that is only found in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* as mentioned above. It is also very likely that the Mūlasarvāstivādins as latecomers were under the long-standing influence of the Mahāsāṃghikas in Magadha, and thus could have borrowed some materials from the Mahāsāṃghika tradition and incorporated them into their own texts. This may explain why EĀ contains several passages that have led scholars to ascribe EĀ to the Mahāsāṃghikas if EĀ is in fact affiliated to the Mūlasarvāstivādins.

Conclusion

A comparison of EĀ *sūtras* with their parallels shows that the redactors of this collection had a statistically significant preference for Magadha when selecting place names as the settings of *sūtras*. According to historical sources, the Mahāsāṃghikas prevailed in Magadha from the times when this sect came into being as a result of the original schism until at least the 5th century AD, when Faxian acquired this school's *Vinaya* in Magadha. EĀ (T 125) was introduced into China and translated into Chinese near the end of the 4th century AD, so this *Āgama* is likely to have been transmitted in Magadha by the Mahāsāṃghikas during the centuries

Mūlasarvāstivāda.” (T LIV 206c: 十誦律亦不是根本有部) This remark makes a clear distinction between the Mūlasarvāstivāda and the Sarvāstivāda, whose *Vinaya* is translated into Chinese as the *Ten Recitations Vinaya* (T LV 20a: 薩婆多部十誦律). In the 7th century the “orthodox” Sarvāstivāda suffered a fatal decline and the Mūlasarvāstivāda was flourishing (cf. Willemen *et al*, 1998: xiii) when Yijing visited India, so it is the Mūla-sarvāstivāda, rather than the Sarvāstivāda, that was included in the list of the four major schools in his *Nanhai jigui neifazhuan*.

³⁵SĀ was translated in the period 435–443 AD according to Bucknell (2011: 37). SĀ2 was translated between 385 and 431 AD according to Bingenheimer (2011: 6).

when they were thriving there. This possibility is reinforced by the fact that several passages and even one *sūtra* in EĀ are attributed to the Mahāsāṃghikas by some scholars.

There is however another possibility. The statistics indicates that the Mūlasarvāstivādin SĀ and SĀ2 also have a strong inclination to choose Magadha as the setting for their texts. Thus EĀ might also belong to the Mūlasarvāstivāda as SĀ and SĀ2 do. This seems consistent with the fact that EĀ has an account that is only found in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* but not anywhere else in Buddhist literature available to us. Therefore, it is also possible that EĀ is affiliated to the Mūlasarvāstivādins.

From the viewpoint of geographical distribution along with some textual indications, the Mahāsāṃghika and Mūlasarvāstivāda appear to be the two best candidates for the sectarian affiliation of EĀ. Admittedly, the result of this research is far from conclusive, but it echoes a valuable opinion expressed by Salomon (2008: 14):

We do not know with any confidence that the distribution of recensions of Buddhist texts in early times strictly followed sectarian, as opposed to, for example, geographical patterns. ... The assumption that one school had one and only one version of a given text, and conversely that no two schools shared the same or very similar versions of it, is a dubious one. Although such situations do seem to have developed in later times, after formal closed canons were developed by (at least some of) the schools, there is no good reason to read this situation back into earlier periods, in which this process seems not yet to have taken place or at least not to have been fully elaborated.

Acknowledgements

I would like to express my gratitude to Dr Roderick S. Bucknell, Mr L.S. Cousins and Dr Marcus Bingenheimer for providing valuable suggestions. Particularly, Dr Roderick S. Bucknell acquired a French book that I needed and translated some relevant passages for me. My thanks are also due to the following: Mr Yun-kai Chang 張雲凱, who served as my research assistant from October 2009 to July 2010, helped with a preliminary tabular comparison in this study. Mr Shi-Ren Lan 藍世任 helped me obtain several sources referred to in this article. I would

like to thank the referees for their valuable suggestions and the National Science Council of Taiwan for their financial support (NSC 98-2410-H-155-060-).

Abbreviations

References to Pali texts are to the Pali Text Society editions, unless otherwise noted.

AN	<i>Aṅguttara Nikāya</i>
CBETA	CBETA Chinese Electronic Tripiṭaka Collection Version April 2010, Taipei: Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association.
Cv	<i>Cullavagga</i>
DĀ	<i>Dirgha Āgama</i> (<i>Chang ahanjing</i> 長阿含經)
Dhp-a	<i>Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā</i>
Dīp	<i>The Dīpavaṃsa: An Ancient Buddhist Historical Record</i> , ed. and tr. by Hermann Oldenberg, London: Williams and Norgate, 1879.
Divy	<i>Divyāvadāna</i> , ed. E.B. Cowell and R.A. Neil, Cambridge: The University Press, 1886.
DN	<i>Dīgha Nikāya</i>
DPPN	<i>Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names</i> , ed. G. P. Malalasekera, London: John Murray, 1937.
EĀ	<i>Ekottarika Āgama</i> (<i>Zengyi ahanjing</i> 增壹阿含經)
EĀ2	<i>Foshuo qichu sanguan jing</i> 佛說七處三觀經, identified as a different and incomplete version of the <i>Ekottarika Āgama</i>
HDC	<i>Hanyu Da Cidian</i> 漢語大詞典 (A Great Dictionary of the Chinese Language), ed. Zhufeng Luo 羅竹風, Hong Kong: 三聯書店, 1988–1994.
It	<i>Itivuttaka</i>
Ja	<i>Jātaka</i>
MĀ	<i>Madhyama Āgama</i> (<i>Zhong ahanjing</i> 中阿含經)
Mhvu	<i>Mahāvastu-Avadāna</i> , 3 vols., ed. Émile Senart, Paris, 1882–1897.
MN	<i>Majjhima Nikāya</i>
Mv	<i>Mahāvagga</i>
SĀ	<i>Samyukta Āgama</i> (<i>Za ahanjing</i> 雜阿含經)
SĀ2	<i>Other Translation of the Samyukta Āgama</i> (<i>Bieyi Za ahanjing</i> 別譯雜阿含經)
SHT	<i>Sanskrithandschriften aus den Turfanfunden</i> (<i>Verzeichnis orientalischer Handschriften in Deutschland</i>), ed. W. Clawiter, L. Holzmann, L. Sander, E. Waldschmidt, H. Bechert and K. Wille, Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner. 1965 (vol I), 1968 (vol II), 1971 (vol III), 1980 (vol IV), 1985 (vol V), 1989 (vol VI).
Skt frgm	Sanskrit fragments
SN	<i>Samyutta Nikāya</i>

- SnA *Sutta-nipāta* Commentary
 Snp *Sutta-nipāta*
 T *Taishō Shinshu Daizōkyō* 大正新脩大藏經 (Cited from CBETA)
 Vin *The Vinaya Piṭakam*, 5 volumes, ed. Hermann Oldenberg, Edinburgh: Williams & Norgate, 1879–1883.

References

English titles in parentheses are my translations.

- Akanuma, Chizen 赤沼智善 1929. *The Comparative Catalogue of Chinese Āgamas & Pāli Nikāyas* 漢巴四部四阿含互照錄, reprinted 1986, Taipei: 華宇出版社.
- 1931. *A Dictionary of Buddhist Proper Names* 印度佛教固有名詞辭典, first Indian edition 1994, Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications.
- 1981. *Bukkyō kyōten shiron* 佛教經典史論 (*On the History of Buddhist Texts*), Kyoto: 法藏館.
- Anālayo 2009. “Zeng-yi A-han”, *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*, ed. W.G. Weeraratne, Sri Lanka: Department of Buddhist Affairs, vol. 8 no. 3, pp. 822–827.
- Allon, Mark 2001. *Three Gāndhārī Ekottarikāgama-Type Sūtras: British Library Kharoṣṭhī Fragments 12 and 14*, Seattle and London: University of Washington Press.
- Bureau, André 1955a. *Les sectes bouddhiques du petit véhicule*, Paris: École Française d’Extrême-Orient.
- 1955b. *Les premiers conciles bouddhiques*, Paris: Presses Universitaires de France.
- Bingenheimer, Marcus 2011. *Studies in Āgama Literature—With Special Reference to the Shorter Chinese Saṃyuktāgama*, Taipei: Shin Wen Feng Print Co.
- Bronkhorst, Johannes 1985. “Dharma and Abhidharma”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 48, 305–320.
- Bucknell, Roderick S. 2011. “The Historical Relationship between the Two Chinese Saṃyuktāgama Translations”, *Chung-Hwa Buddhist Journal* 24, 35–70.
- Dutt, Nalinaksha 1978. *Buddhist Sects in India*, 2nd edition, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- (ed.) 1984. *Gilgit manuscripts, Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinayavastu*, Vol. 3 Part 1 (*Bibliotheca Indo-Buddhica*, No.16), Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications.
- Enomoto, Fumio 榎本文雄 1984a. “Setsu issai u bu kei Āgama no tenkai: *Chū agon to Zō agon o megutte*” 説一切有部系アーガマの展開——『中阿含』と『雜阿含』をめぐって—— (The Development of the Āgamas of the Sarvāstivāda

- Lineage: Concerning the *Madhyama Āgama* and the *Samyukta Āgama*), 印度學佛教學研究 *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 32/2, 1073–1070.
- 1984b. “Agon kyōten no seiritsu” 阿含經典の成立 (*Formation of the Āgama Texts*), 東洋學術研究 *Journal of the Oriental Studies* 23/1, 93–108.
- 1985. “Zō agon kyō kankei no bonbun shahon danpen: Turfan shutsudo bonbun shahon mokuroku dai 5 kan o megutte” 『雜阿含經』關係の梵文写本断片——『Turfan出土梵文写本目錄』第5卷をめぐる—— (Sanskrit Manuscript Fragments relating to the *Samyukta Āgama*: Concerning *Sanskrihandschriften aus den Turfanfunden Teil 5*), 佛教研究 *Bukkyō Kenkyū* 15, 81–93.
- 1994. *A Comprehensive Study of the Chinese Samyuktāgama: Indic Texts corresponding to the Chinese Samyuktāgama as Found in the Sarvāstivāda-Mūlasarvāstivāda Literature, Part 1: *Samgītanipāta*, Kyoto: Kacho Junior College.
- 2000. “Mūlasarvāstivādin’ and ‘Sarvāstivādin’”, *Vividharatnakaraṇḍaka: Festgabe für Adelheid Mette*, ed. Christine Chojnacki, Jens-Uwe Hartmann and Volker M. Tschannerl, Swisstal-Odendorf, 239–250.
- Feer, M. Leon 1894. (ed.) *The Samyutta-nikāya*, Part IV, reprinted 1973, London: Pali Text Society.
- Frauwallner, E. 1956. *The Earliest Vinaya and the Beginnings of Buddhist Literature*, Roma: Is. M. E. O.
- Gombrich, R. F. 1990. “How the Mahāyāna Began”, *The Buddhist Forum Vol. I, Seminar Papers 1987–1988*, ed. T. Skorupski, London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 21–30.
- Hartmann, Jens-Uwe 1998. “Sanskrit Fragments from the Āgamas (I): The Aṅgulimālāsūtra”, *Indologica Taurinensia* 23/24, 351–362.
- Hirakawa, Akira 平川彰 1997. *Buddhist Chinese-Sanskrit Dictionary* 佛教漢梵大辭典, Tokyo: The Reiyukai.
- Hiraoka, Satoshi 平岡聡 2000. “The Sectarian Affiliation of Two Chinese Samyuktāgamas”, 印度學佛教學研究 *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 49/1, 506–500.
- 2003. “Zō agon kyō to setsu issai u bu no ritsuzō”, 印度學佛教學研究 *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 51/2, 818–813.
- 2007. “『増一阿含經』の成立解明に向けて(1) The Sectarian Affiliation of the Zengyi ahan-jing (1)”, 印度學佛教學研究 *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 56/1, 305–298.
- 2008. “『増一阿含經』の成立解明に向けて(2) The Sectarian Affiliation of the Zengyi ahan-jing (2)”, 印度學佛教學研究 *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies* 57/1, 319–312.

- Hoernle, A. F. Rudolf 1916. *Manuscript Remains of Buddhist Literature Found in Eastern Turkestan: Facsimiles with Transcripts, Translations and Notes*, Vol. I, Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Horner, I.B. (tr.) 1951. *The Book of the Discipline* vol. IV (*Mahāvagga*), reprinted 2000, Oxford: Pali Text Society.
- Kuan, Tse-fu 2008. *Mindfulness in Early Buddhism: New Approaches through Psychology and Textual Analysis of Pali, Chinese and Sanskrit Sources*, London and New York: Routledge.
- (forthcoming, 2012 or 2013) “The Pavāraṇā Sutta and ‘liberation in both ways’ as against ‘liberation by wisdom’”, *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*.
- Kumoi, Shōzen 1963. “Āgama (2)”, *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism* Vol. I, Fasc. 2, ed. G.P. Malalasekera, Government of Ceylon, 244–248.
- Lamotte, Étienne 1988. *History of Indian Buddhism: From the Origins to the Śāka Era*, translated from the French by Sara Webb-Boin, Louvain: Peeters Press.
- Legittimo, Elsa 2008. “Reopening the Maitreya-files: Two almost identical early Maitreya *sūtra* translations in the Chinese Canon: Wrong attributions and text-historical entanglements”, *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 31/1–2 (2010), 251–293.
- Lin, Jia'an 林家安 2009. *Xiancun hanyi Zengyi ahanjing zhi yizhe kao* 現存漢譯《增一阿含經》之譯者考 (*An Investigation into the Translator of the Extant Chinese translation of the Ekottarika Āgama*), unpublished MA thesis, Chungli, Taiwan: Yuan Kuang Buddhist Institute, <http://old.ykbi.edu.tw/htm/thesis/94-19/94-19-03.pdf>
- Lü, Cheng 1963. “Āgama (1)”, *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism* Vol. I, Fasc. 2, ed. G.P. Malalasekera, Government of Ceylon, 241–244.
- Matsumoto, Bunzaburō 松本文三郎 1914. *Butten no kenkyū* 佛典の研究 (*A Study of Buddhist Texts*), Tokyo: 丙午出版社.
- Mayeda, Egaku 前田惠學 1964. *A History of the Formation of Original Buddhist Texts* 原始佛教聖典の成立史研究, Tokyo: Sankibo-Busshorin Publishing Co., Ltd.
- Mizuno, Kōgen 水野弘元 1996. *Bukkyō bunken kenkyū* 仏教文献研究 (*A Study of Buddhist Literature*), Tokyo: 春秋社.
- Nattier, Janice J. and Prebish, Charles S. 1977. “Mahāsāṃghika Origins: The Beginnings of Buddhist Sectarianism”, *History of Religions* 16/3, 237–272.
- Nattier, Jan 2010. “Re-Evaluating Zhu Fonian’s *Shizhu duanjie jing* (T309): Translation or Forgery?” *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology at Soka University for the Academic Year 2009* [ARIRIAB], Vol. 13, 231–258.

- Oberlies, Thomas 2003. “Ein bibliographischer Überblick über die kanonischen Texte der Śrāvakayāna-Schulen des Buddhismus”, *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens* 47, 37–84.
- Pāsādika, Bhikkhu 2010. “Gleanings from the Chinese *Ekottarāgama* Regarding School Affiliation and Other Topics”, *Translating Buddhist Chinese: Problems and Prospects*, ed. Konrad Meisig, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 87–96.
- Przyluski, Jean 1926. *Le concile de Rājagṛha; introduction à l'histoire des canons et des sectes bouddhiques*, Paris: P. Geuthner.
- Roth, Gustav (ed.) 1970. *Bhikṣuṇī-Vinaya: Including Bhikṣuṇī-Prakīrṇaka and a Summary of the Bhikṣu-Prakīrṇaka of the Ārya-Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādin*, Patna: K. P. Jayaswal Research Institute.
- Salomon, Richard 1999. *Ancient Buddhist Scrolls from Gandhāra: The British Library Kharoṣṭhī Fragments*, Seattle: University of Washington Press.
- 2008. *Two Gāndhārī Manuscripts of the Songs of Lake Anavatapta (Anavatapta-gāthā)*, Seattle and London: University of Washington Press.
- Schopen, Gregory 1997. “If You Can’t Remember, How to Make It Up: Some Monastic Rules for Redacting Canonical Texts”, *Bauddhavidyāsudhākaraḥ: Studies in Honour of Heinz Bechert on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday*, ed. Petra Kieffer-Pülz and Jens-Uwe Hartmann, Swisttal-Odendorf, 571–582.
- Thich Minh Chau, Bhikṣu 1991. *The Chinese Madhyama Āgama and the Pāli Majjhima Nikāya*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Ui, Hakuju 宇井伯壽 1965. *Indo tetsugaku kenkyū*, Vol. II 印度哲學研究 第二 (A Study of Indian Philosophy Vol. II), Tokyo: 岩波書店.
- Waldschmidt, Ernst 1968a. “Drei Fragmente buddhistischer Sūtras aus den Turfanhandschriften”, *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, Philologisch-Historische Klasse* 1968.1, 20–26. Reprinted 1989 in Bechert, Heinz & Kieffer-Pülz, Petra (eds.), *Ernst Waldschmidt, Ausgewählte kleine Schriften*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 249–255.
- 1968b. ‘Ein Beitrag zur Überlieferung vom Sthavira Śroṇa Koṭivimśa’, in *Mélanges d’indianisme. À la mémoire de Louis Renou* (= Publications de l’Institut de Civilisation Indienne, Fasc. 28). Paris: E. de Boccard, 773–787. Reprinted 1989 in Bechert, Heinz & Kieffer-Pülz, Petra (eds.), *Ernst Waldschmidt, Ausgewählte kleine Schriften*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 217–231.
- 1970. ‘Fragment of a Buddhist Sanskrit text on cosmogony’, in Tilakasiri, J. (ed.), *Añjali. Papers on Indology and Buddhism. O. H. Vijesekera felicitation volume*: 40–45, Peradeniya. Reprinted 1989 in Bechert, Heinz & Kieffer-Pülz, Petra (eds.), *Ernst Waldschmidt, Ausgewählte kleine Schriften*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 290–295.

- 1980. “Central Asian Sūtra Fragments and Their Relation to the Chinese Āgas”, *The Language of the Earliest Buddhist Tradition*, ed. Heinz Bechert, Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 136–174.
- Warder, A.K. 2000. *Indian Buddhism*, 3rd revised edition, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass. (First edition 1970)
- Willemen, Charles and Dessein, Bart and Cox, Collett (1998) *Sarvāstivāda Buddhist Scholasticism*, Leiden: Brill.
- Yinshun 印順 1994. *Yuanshi fojiao shengdian zhi jicheng* 原始佛教聖典之集成 (*Compilation of the Original Buddhist Scriptures*), 3rd revised edition, Taipei: 正聞出版社 (First published 1971).
- Zürcher, E. 1962. *Buddhism: Its Origin and Spread in Words, Maps and Pictures*, London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Decoding Two “Miracles” of the Buddha

Paisarn Likhitpreechakul

asiantrekker@yahoo.com

Although the Buddha forbade his disciples from performing supernatural acts, the Tipitaka shows the teacher himself performing miracles in several places. Some Buddhists may take these literally, while others ignore or dismiss them as fanciful hagiography. This article proposes to “decode” two such miracles – namely, the twin miracle and the miracle to convert Aṅgulimāla – as refutation of rival karma theories, and to examine their relevance to the modern world.

The Twin Miracle¹

In Lap-Lae district at the edge of Uttaradit town in Thailand, there is an important group of three temples. While the most prominent one, Wat Phrataen Sila-at (Temple of the Buddha’s Rock Seat), houses a rock seat the Buddha is said once to have sat on, Wat Phra Yuen (Temple of the Standing Buddha) keeps a stone base imprinted with what are believed to be his footprints and Wat Phra Non (Temple of the Reclining Buddha) is home to a rock bed that the Buddha supposedly reclined on.

The author had visited these temples many times since childhood without realizing their significance as a group, until one day he looked at the newly repainted murals inside Wat Phra Yuen.

Among the many wall paintings depicting scenes from the Buddha’s life, one panel shows multiple Buddhas in three postures - sitting, standing and reclin-

¹ A revised version of the author’s articles published in *The Nation* newspaper (Thailand) on July 25-26, 2010.

ing. The scene is an important episode long considered paradoxical. The story, according to the *Dhammapada* Commentary, goes like this.²

A non-believer put a precious bowl on top of a pole made of a series of bamboos, and challenged anyone who claimed to be enlightened – if such a person existed – to fly through the air to retrieve it. The bowl was coveted by all the teachers of the six rival schools. One – Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta – was singled out as trying the hardest – although unsuccessfully – for the “bowl of contention” by pretending to be on the verge of trying, only to be stopped by his disciples, as previously rehearsed. In the end, a senior Buddhist monk performed a flying miracle and took it in order to show Buddhism’s superiority. When he found out, the Buddha admonished the monk and laid down a rule forbidding the performance of supernatural acts.

The heretics were delighted to hear the news and started blowing horns about their own superior powers. So the Buddha raised the bar with a promise to perform a miracle himself under a mango tree in the city of Sāvathī. The heretics then went ahead and uprooted all the mango trees in that city. When the time came, however, the Buddha miraculously made a giant mango tree spring up from the seed of a mango he had just eaten.

At this point, Sakka the chief of gods, ordered the deity Wind-cloud to uproot the heretics’ pavilion and blow dust and rain at them, and the Sun deity to scorch them. The heretics were said to flee completely demoralized. One rival teacher, Pūraṇa Kassapa, was said to commit suicide.

The Buddha then performed what is known as the “twin miracle”, involving the creation of a double. As one Buddha stood, sat or lay down, the other would take a different posture, both taking turns asking each other questions concerning the Dhamma. It was said that as a result, thousands gained stream entry. This episode is considered the turning point when Buddhism won a decisive victory over rival religions.

Some Buddhists may take such a miracle literally, while others ignore or dismiss it as fanciful hagiography. Whether one believes it or not, there remains the fact that the Buddha seemingly broke his own rule, and this needs explanation. According to tradition, the Buddha answered this charge of inconsistency by insisting that the owner of a mango garden can consume all his mangoes while prohibiting others from doing so. This traditional way of answering one paradox

²*Dhammapada* Commentary, Book XIV, Story 2

with another is hardly satisfactory, especially in light of the Buddha’s condemnation of miracles elsewhere in the *Tipiṭaka*.³

Even when we consider the thousands who benefited from the event, the miracle still appears un-Buddhist, because for the Buddha a charitable end can never justify an undesirable means, as the Dhamma is known to be “lovely in the beginning, lovely in the middle and lovely in the end”.

It could be argued that the purpose of the miracle was to ready the minds of his audience for the Dhamma being taught. Ironically, the content of the Buddha’s teaching on that occasion was not recorded by tradition. Some may even counter that the miracle is more distracting than conducive to absorbing a sermon.

Since the text has nothing further to say about the miracle and leaves us with a paradox, the author would like to take this as a departure point and propose a context-based interpretation to augment the traditional text-based reading.

It helps to recall that when the Buddha condemned miracles, he made an exception for one: the supernatural ability in the art of teaching (*anusāsanī-pāṭihāriya*).⁴ During the twin miracle, the Buddha reportedly “looked into the hearts of the great multitude... and preached dharma and performed a miracle in accordance with the temper and disposition of every such person”.⁵

Many in the audience must have been followers of the rival schools, especially the Nigaṇṭhas or followers of early Jainism, eager to humiliate the Buddha after their teacher had been defeated by the Buddha’s disciple . (Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta himself was not reported to be present, however.)

The Nigaṇṭhas have their own theory of karma and liberation. For them, karma encompasses all physical, verbal and mental acts regardless of intention. In order to attain deliverance from the cycle of rebirths and suffering, they practised non-performance of new karma and annihilation of past karma by asceticism including fasting and various kinds of self-torture.

Sanskrit scholar Johannes Bronkhorst writes: “Probably the earliest surviving detailed description of the road leading to liberation in the Jaina texts occurs in the so-called *Ācārāṅga Sūtra*... The ascetic who decides that he is ready for it takes up a position – *lying, sitting, or standing*⁶ – abstains from all food, and faces death with complete indifference. He starves to death in a state of total restraining with

³ Particularly in the Kevaṭṭa Sutta (DN I 211-223).

⁴ See, for example, the Kevaṭṭa Sutta (DN I 214).

⁵ Burlingame, Eugene Watson, *Buddhist Legends Part 3*, Harvard Oriental Series Vol 30, p. 47.

⁶ Author’s italics.

regard to all activity and movement... We read repeatedly in the *Ācārāṅga* that suffering is the result of activity. ‘He knows that all this suffering is born from activity’; ‘No action is found in him who has abandoned activity, the condition for rebirth originates on account of activity.’⁷ We read in another Jain text, the *Uttarādhyayana*, that as part of his internal austerities, ‘if a monk remains motionless when lying down, sitting, or standing upright, this is called abandoning of the body.’⁸

In *Cūḷadukkhakkhandha Sutta*, the Buddha similarly described the practice of a group of Nigaṇṭhas, ‘Now, Mahānāma, on one occasion I was living at Rājagaha on the mountain Vulture Peak. On that occasion a number of Nigaṇṭhas living on the Black Rock on the slopes of Isigili were practising continuous standing, rejecting sitting, and were experiencing painful, racking, piercing feelings due to exertion.’⁹ Before enlightenment, the Buddha experimented with similar ascetic practices (*dukkarakārikā*) in seated position.¹⁰

But once enlightened, he re-defined karma as the motivations behind actions, pointing out in *Nibbedhika Sutta*, ‘It is volition, monk, that I declare to be karma. Having willed, one performs an action by body, speech or mind.’¹¹ The contrast between Buddhism and Nigaṇṭha belief is further elaborated in *Upāli Sutta*.¹² Therefore, rather than the Nigaṇṭha’s ascetic practices of physical and mental immobility, the Buddhist way out of suffering involves the eradication of moral defilements (*kilesa*) – the root cause of karma, rebirths and suffering.

The twin miracle may seem innocuously content-free to a Buddhist, but its connotation would not have been lost to the Nigaṇṭhas. Not only was the Buddha challenging their non-action approach to karma every time he changed postures between standing, sitting and lying – the three positions in the *Ācārāṅga Sūtra*, as may be recalled; he even seemed to be happily doubling it when he created a doppelgänger! From the Buddhist perspective, however, the Buddha had superseded all karma at enlightenment under the Bodhi tree.

⁷ Bronkhorst, Johannes, *Karma: Dimensions of Asian Spirituality*, 2011, University of Hawai‘i Press, p 10.

⁸ Uttarādhyayana XXX www.sacred-texts.com/jai/sbe45/sbe4532.htm

⁹ MN No 14

¹⁰ For example, *Mahāsaccaka Sutta* (MN No 36) and *Bodhirājakumāra Sutta* (Mn No 85).

¹¹ AN III 415. (*cetanāhaṃ, bhikkhave, kammaṃ vadāmi. cetayitvā kammaṃ karoti – kāyena vācāya manasā.*)

¹² MN I 371-387 (No. 56)

So if we are to take it literally, the miracle can be understood as a visualized koan which the Buddha used to jolt the predominantly Nigaṇṭha audience into questioning their view of karma and opening the way for an alternative theory. (It would not be surprising if the Buddha on that occasion gave a sermon along the line of *Cūḷadukkhakhandha Sutta* mentioned above or the *Sīvaka Sutta* and *Tittha Sutta* cited below.) The miracle, therefore, would fall under the rubric of educational tool, which is praised rather than condemned by the Buddha.

However, a better reading is to regard the episode as a teaching device directed at Buddhists. Seen in this light, it is a brilliant refutation of the Nigaṇṭhas’ rival karma doctrine, so that latter-day Buddhists will not fall for the doctrine of karmic determinism.

To confirm this interpretation of the miracle, one remembers that the heretics tried to destroy all the mango trees before the Buddha’s arrival. In Buddhist literature, trees and fruits are frequently used as metaphors for karma and its result. The Buddha’s miraculous mango tree, therefore, was an in-your-face reminder to the heretics of this failure to uproot karma despite their strenuous efforts. As a result, they were “blown away” by the miracle (symbolized by their wind-ravaged pavilion). In particular, Pūraṇa Kassapa, must have been so humiliated that he committed suicide, because he taught the doctrine of non-action (*akiriya*), which denied altogether that good or bad actions had any result for the doer.¹³

This reading also explains why the Buddha rejected one fantastic miracle after another when his disciples proposed to perform them on his behalf – rather than forbidding them all in one go with the established rule. None of them would have the effect of the instruction he intended to give. This also explains the conventional belief that only a Buddha can perform a twin miracle: only the Buddha himself can play the role of decisively vanquishing heretical beliefs.

Miracle to convert Aṅgulimāla¹⁴

In light of the twin miracle interpretation above, it seems likely that at least some other miracles of the Buddha can be similarly interpreted as teaching devices, bypassing the question whether they were actual occurrences or later invented on.

¹³The Buddha was also misunderstood by Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta as teaching this doctrine in the *Sīha Sutta* (AN iv 180).

¹⁴A revised version of the author’s article published in *The Nation* newspaper (Thailand) on Feb 17-18, 2011.

A case in point is the famous miracle in the *Āṅgulimāla Sutta* in which the eponymous brigand exhausted all his speed and strength while trying to catch up with the serenely-paced Buddha.¹⁵ Āṅgulimāla shouted for the Buddha to stop, only to be perplexed and converted at the Buddha’s pronouncement, “I’ve already stopped, Āṅgulimāla. You stop too.” Tradition explains that the Buddha was referring to cessation of violence against other beings, and the *Sutta* is considered as the supreme demonstration of the compassionate Buddha’s redemptive power and the universal human potential for spiritual progress.

Buddhist scholar Piya Tan adds depth to this miraculous scene by describing Āṅgulimāla’s chase after the Buddha as a Sisyphean run in which what went nowhere was not only Āṅgulimāla’s feet but also his spiritual development.¹⁶ This recalls a verse in the *Sutta Nipāta* describing the Buddha, “Whatever sectarians there are, whether Ājīvikas or Jains, not one of them surpasses you in wisdom, just as a man standing still does not pass one going quickly.”¹⁷

The shortcoming of the traditional explanation is that it doesn’t sufficiently deal with the intention behind Āṅgulimāla’s gruesome acts.¹⁸ Like in the twin miracle above, an even bigger problem is that it doesn’t explain the fact that the Buddha here performed a miracle despite his own prohibition of them elsewhere.

Again, the key to interpreting this miracle is to remember that the Buddha is known for his skillful means, tailoring his teachings to suit the audience’s predispositions. Āṅgulimāla was said to be among the brightest students at Taxila, the “Oxford of ancient India”. That he was not an average robber but a philosopher-brigand seems to be confirmed by his utterance at finally discovering the Buddha’s teachings, “Of all the Dhammas known to men, I have come to the very best.”¹⁹ To such a man, therefore, a simple message on the unwholesomeness of murder is too painfully obvious to be worth spelling out - much less accompanied by a miracle. So what was the Buddha’s actual message to him?

By meticulously studying the variant Pali readings of the *Sutta*, Richard Gombrich convincingly concluded in his article *Who Was Āṅgulimāla?* that Āṅgulimāla

¹⁵MN II, 97-105 (No 86). The story is also told in the *Thera-gāthā* 866-891.

¹⁶Tan, Piya, 2003, “Discourse on Āṅgulimāla”. Available online: <http://dharmafarer.org/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2009/12/5.11-Āṅgulimāla-S-m86-piya.pdf>

¹⁷*Sutta Nipāta*, II.14, verse 381, *The Rhinoceros Horn*, trans. K R Norman, Pali Text Society, 1985.

¹⁸These explanations were not found in the Āṅgulimāla Sutta or the Thera-gāthā, but described in the commentaries to them – *Papañca-sūdanī* and *Paramattha-dīpanī*, respectively

¹⁹*Āṅgulimāla Sutta* (MN ii 105)

was in fact an early worshipper of Śiva, the god of destruction.²⁰ The author believes that the following interpretation of the Buddha’s miracle corroborates Professor Gombrich’s discovery.

Through Professor Johannes Bronkhorst’s works on Brahmanical philosophies, the author came to glimpse Aṅgulimāla’s mind, which the Buddha must have read. According to Professor Bronkhorst, at the foundation of Brahmanical philosophies, including Śaivism, is the belief that no karma is incurred if one does not attach oneself to the actions or their results. He explains, “A right attitude secures that material nature acts without involvement of the self. Non-involvement is central. It is fundamental that one dissociate oneself from one’s actions, or rather from their fruits. Actions which are not inspired by the desire to obtain happiness or to avoid suffering do not produce karmic effects. They are as good as complete inactivity.”²¹ In other words, not committing oneself to an act is as good as not committing it. For example, the *Bhagavadgītā* reads, “Holding pleasure and pain alike, gain and loss, victory and defeat, then gird thyself for battle; thus thou shalt not get evil.”²² Professor Bronkhorst adds, “Obtaining this mental attitude can be facilitated in various ways.” In the *Bhagavadgītā*, it was recommended to regard one’s act as an offering to Krishna.

According to Professor Gombrich’s insight above, it is likely that Aṅgulimāla similarly made his killings acts of sacrifice to Śiva, hoping to attain liberation from the cycle of rebirth and associated sufferings. Explaining how Aṅgulimāla came to wear a garland of fingers, he wrote, “Tantra rests on the idea... that a worshipper can somehow identify with his god in a literal sense... This idea underlies most of the sophisticated theology, both tantric and devotional, of Indian theism.”²³

This would explain why, according to the commentaries, the hitherto intelligent Aṅgulimāla, son of a Brahmin chaplain, came to blindly follow his teacher’s instruction to kill a thousand victims. If his education was the doctrine of detaching himself from his actions, a gruesome mission with a high death toll would be a perfect proof of his success.

Had Aṅgulimāla only been emotionally insensitive to blood, then the Buddha’s statement that he hadn’t ceased violence would have sounded blatantly obvious – like a butcher being told that his hands are bloody. But if, rather, Aṅgulimāla

²⁰ Gombrich, Richard, 1996, ‘Who was Angulimala?’, *How Buddhism Began*, pp 135-164

²¹ Bronkhorst, Johannes, “Ājīvika doctrine reconsidered”, *Essays in Jaina Philosophy and Religion*, Delhi, Motilal Banarsidass, 2003.

²² *Bhagavadgītā* 2.38

²³ *Ibid*, p 155

had been ideologically desensitized to violence, then the Buddha’s argument would truly have caught him by surprise – like a high priest being told that his lifelong worship actually leads to hell. It would jolt Aṅgulimāla into an awakening – like a “moon coming out from behind a cloud”.

So when the Buddha said that Aṅgulimāla had not stopped accumulating karma, it was not just Aṅgulimāla’s violence that was rebuked but, more importantly, its underpinning philosophy of moral suspension. By saying, “I’ve already stopped, Aṅgulimāla. You stop too,” the Buddha was making the point that Aṅgulimāla did not stop accumulating new karma despite his non-attachment philosophy, while the Buddha had already done so. The Buddha’s presentation of the converted Aṅgulimāla to the king, therefore, declares not only a triumph of compassion over violence but also a philosophical victory. This also explains why the Buddha seemed to be purposely seeking out Aṅgulimāla in the first place.

Other things that previously looked out of place now make better sense. The Buddha gave Aṅgulimāla two statements to proclaim.²⁴ Why did he bother to give Aṅgulimāla the first version, “I have not intentionally committed violence against any being”, which both knew full well to be false? The key word here is “intentionally” (*sañcicca*). This first statement can be considered an opportunity for Aṅgulimāla openly to disavow his former belief.

Aṅgulimāla the Śiva worshipper would have no problem in uttering it because he would claim to have had no intention against his victims. However, the converted Aṅgulimāla would not be able to say it. Moreover, the second version the Buddha gave allowed Aṅgulimāla to confirm his transformation, declaring that he had not intentionally committed any violence after being (re)born into the Buddhist order.

This reading also explains the *Sutta*’s rather unusual ending. Most stories about the Buddha’s disciples end when nibbāna is reached. However, the *Aṅgulimāla Sutta* goes on to tell how Aṅgulimāla suffered a painful fate after enlightenment.²⁵ Upon seeing his injury, the Buddha uttered, “Bear it, Brahmin! Bear it, Brahmin! You are experiencing here and now the result of deeds because of which you might have been tortured in hell for many years, for many hundreds of years, for many thousands of years.”²⁶ This was likely intended – not unlike the

²⁴ *Aṅgulimāla Sutta*, MN II 103.

²⁵ *Aṅgulimāla Sutta*, MN II 104.

²⁶ *Aṅgulimāla Sutta*, MN II 104. *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha*, p. 715.

mango tree in the twin miracle – to reaffirm that Āṅgulimāla’s murderous acts indeed bore fruit, despite what he had previously believed.

Modern Resonances

The interpretations of both miracles may sound esoteric and irrelevant to the modern world, but in fact beliefs similar to those of the Nigaṇṭhas and Āṅgulimāla are still at work in today’s societies.

Blaming It All on the Past

Lacking knowledge of competing karma theories in the Buddha’s time, many Buddhists fail to grasp how the Buddha revolutionized the concept of karma, turning it from an all-oppressive cosmic force to an agency to command one’s own life and make spiritual progress in this life. Oblivious to the Buddha’s emphasis on the here and now, they regress to the pre-Buddhist belief that everything in life is determined by the past. This kind of karmic navel-gazing – identical to the Nigaṇṭhas’ *pubbekatavāda* – allows all of today’s predicaments to be conveniently blamed on deeds committed in previous lives. Therefore, instead of making efforts to improve one’s conditions according to the Buddha’s forward-looking doctrine, they are preoccupied with staring retrospectively into the karmic crystal and conducting charlatan rituals to “untangle karma”.

Karmic determinism has done great damage not only to individual efforts but also to society as a whole, when karma is used to rationalize inequality and justify prejudices. According to this view, the disabled, the poor and women are said to deserve their present woes because they made too little merit or, worse, committed sins in their past lives. This list of second-class humans has in modern times extended to include homosexuals, transgenders, people with HIV, sex workers, victims of crimes, the frail and even tsunami victims.

In the *Sīvaka Sutta*, the Buddha clearly rejected this heretical view that “whatever a person experiences, be it pleasure, pain or neither-pain-nor-pleasure, all is caused by previous karma.” Instead, he gave examples of physical, biological and social factors as additional causes for present phenomena and concluded that holders of that deterministic view “go beyond what they know by themselves and what is accepted as true by the world.”²⁷

²⁷ SN IV 230. *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha*, p. 1279.

In the *Tittha Sutta*, the Buddha reasoned that this kind of determinism would also mean that people do good and bad deeds as a result of past karma. Such fatalism would mean that nobody is responsible for their acts, and there would be no desire or effort to do what should be done and avoid what should not be.²⁸ Such a view obviously does not constitute a religion – let alone the Buddha’s.

In a society revelling in karmic fatalism and cosmic retribution, rigid norms and communal sanctions are enforced to preserve the social – and cosmic – order. It is thought righteous to maintain prejudice and discrimination against marginalized minorities, while empowering measures provided for them are seen as undue approval and encouragement for those with allegedly undeserving moral characters.

Taken by believers into their own hands and institutionalized by society, karmic determinism, in effect, is turned into a self-fulfilling prophecy. Indeed, much of the ordeal suffered by the vulnerable is ensured by structural violence in the forms of public censure and social sanctions.

According to Buddhism, however, differences among people should be a cause for kindness and compassion. In fact, in the *Vāseṭṭha Sutta* the Buddha was the first religious teacher to proclaim the commonality of all humankind in an age when caste, sexism and racism prevailed.²⁹

Therefore, the Buddha’s karma theory should be used to improve societies for the benefit of all – not for blaming the victims. To use a science metaphor, the Buddha was not only the Newton who transformed the understanding of karmic gravity, but also the Wright brothers who led the way in navigating and even defying it.

Duty to Kill

Gītā verses such as “Holding pleasure and pain alike, gain and loss, victory and defeat, then gird thyself for battle; thus thou shalt not get evil,” would be interpreted by most modern Hindu thinkers as addressing a spiritual battle inside oneself. However, fundamentalists see them literally as validation for actual wars, considering it righteous to kill in the name of dharma – much like Arjuna, who was advised by Krishna to follow his warrior duty by going to war with his own cousins. Unfortunately, this kind of thinking is not limited to India. Of all places, this

²⁸ AN III, VII.61.

²⁹ MN No. 98.

Āṅgulimāla-like belief manages to creep up in modern Buddhist societies in the guise of Buddhism.

“You did not have any intention; therefore you did not commit any sin.” This would be in accordance with the Buddha’s teachings if said about a doctor who lost a patient’s life despite her best professional effort. However, it is chilling when used as “a license to kill” by Nuon Chea, Khmer Rouge’s “Brother Number 2”, to convince his subordinates of their innocence after their reign of terror had caused millions of deaths.³⁰ According to him, no bad karma is incurred if one merely follows orders without “taking it personally”. This is clearly a modern variant of Āṅgulimāla’s religion. The difference is Nuon Chea and his lieutenants were not worshipping Śiva but practised the faith of radical totalitarianism.

Zen Buddhism underpinned Japan’s Code of Bushidō – “the way of the warrior” – and instilled samurais with bravery in the face of death, as well as the determination to carry out their bloody tasks. Brian Victoria, author of *Zen at War*, summarized: “There is a Zen belief that you can transcend good and evil. And once you’ve done this, you act in a spontaneous and intuitive manner. Once you believe that discriminating thought is no longer important – in fact, that not only is it not important, but that it has to be discarded – then all ethical concerns disappear.”³¹

Zen-inspired Bushidō is, therefore, actually closer to Āṅgulimāla’s religion than the Buddhism of which it claims to be a branch, as nothing can be further removed from the Buddha’s teachings than war and violence. Even before World War II, Japanese religious leaders cited Buddhism to support the country’s militaristic expansion. Soyen Shaku, teacher of D.T. Suzuki, defended the Russo-Japanese war by calling it a just war against evils that “must be unflinchingly prosecuted”.³²

³⁰“Enemies of the People”, *The Economist*, Jul 29, 2010. <http://www.economist.com/node/16703377>.

³¹Stephens, Christopher. “Zen’s Holy War: Christopher Stephens speaks with priest and historian Brian Victoria,” *Kansai Time Out*, April 2003. Also quoted in Metraux, Daniel A., *A Critical Analysis of Brian Victoria’s Perspectives on Modern Japanese Buddhist History*. Available online: www.globalbuddhism.org/5/metraux04.htm.

³²Shaku, Soyen, “At the Battle of Nan-Shan Hill”, *Zen for Americans*, 1906. Available online: www.sacred-texts.com/bud/zfa/zfa23.htm

Also cited in Loy, David, “Is Zen Buddhism?”, *The Eastern Buddhist*, Vol. 28, No. 2 (Autumn 1995), pp. 273-286. Available online: www.thezensite.com/ZenEssays/CriticalZen/Is.Zen.Buddhism.html.

Most recently, in 2010 many Thais were calling for the government to crack down on the tens of thousands of “red-shirt” protesters who were camping for weeks in the heart of Bangkok. To justify the foreseeable bloodshed, one violence-monger published a *Gītā*-alluding poem dedicated to the then prime minister entitled, “Go to war, Abhisit!”

Although the *Āṅgulināla Sutta* obviously censures violence, it is more importantly a rebuttal of moral suspension, of which murder is but one possible manifestation. J. Robert Oppenheimer, the scientific director of the Manhattan Project, is believed to have read verses from the *Gītā* to calm his mind and justify his central role in building the world’s first nuclear bombs.³³ After the first explosion, he quoted the *Gītā*, “Now I am become Death, the destroyer of worlds.”³⁴ His case is an example of how one man’s moral suspension can affect the lives and deaths of millions, even though he was “just doing his job”.

Buddhism, on the other hand, would allow no such moral vacuum, emphasizing mindfulness over actions at all time. For the Buddha, we can never detach ourselves from or deny responsibility for our deeds because we are the sum of all volitions reflected in them. Committing actions in the name of a god, belief, ideology, cause, regime or institution doesn’t lessen our moral responsibility.

The *Āṅgulināla Sutta*, therefore, is a story not only about the Buddha’s compassion but also his wisdom, countering moral suspension with mindfulness and moral responsibility. To read it merely as a tale of an evil man’s spiritual U-turn deprives Buddhists of the moral foundation that Buddhism has to offer.

Conclusion

In retrospect, it is no surprise that the Buddhist Canon would contain some visualized – as opposed to purely verbalized – versions of the Buddha’s challenge to rival religions. His debates with the Nigaṇṭhas are well represented in the *Tipiṭaka*. This interpretation of the twin miracle, if correct, provides graphic visuals to buttress his arguments.

In regards to Brahministic beliefs, the Buddha was shown to be criticizing its social construct – namely, the caste system – in many places. But little seems to

³³ Hijiya, James A., “The Gita of J. Robert Oppenheimer”, *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society* Vol. 144, No. 2, June 2000. Available online www.amphilsoc.org/sites/default/files/Hijiya.pdf.

³⁴ A video clip of Oppenheimer citing the *Gītā* after the first explosion can be viewed at www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZuRvBoLu4to.

be said about its soteriology, particularly its karma theory. This interpretation of the *Āṅgulinimāla Sutta*, if correct, will go in some way to change that.³⁵



Figure 1: *Āṅgulinimāla*

³⁵ While in these two miracles the Buddha may have shown what his karma theory is not, another less well known “miracle” demonstrates what it is. Interested readers may want to read “The Legend of the Earth Goddess and the Buddha” by the present author in the *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies* (JOCBS), Vol 1.



Figure 2: *Twin Miracle*

Translating Translation: An Encounter with the Ninth-Century Tibetan Version of the *Kāraṇḍavyūha-sūtra*

Peter Alan Roberts

The *Kāraṇḍavyūha-sūtra* is the source for Avalokiteśvara's mantra: *Oṃ maṇi-padme hūṃ*, the most popular mantra in Tibet. This article examines why the sutra itself is little known, the history of its translation, the challenges that faces the translators, and evidence of corruption in the Sanskrit manuscript that was the basis for their translation. Finally there are thoughts on the meaning of Avalokiteśvara's name, the sutra's title, and the mantra itself.

The “84,000 project” plans to place online, over the next twenty-five years, English translations of the entire Kangyur (*bka' gyur*), the corpus of Tibetan translations of works attributed to the Buddha. In an estimated twenty-five years' time, work will start on translations of the Tengyur (*bstan gyur*), the Tibetan translations of Buddhist commentaries and practice texts, some miscellaneous works (such as Kālidāsa's *The Cloud Messenger*), and a few early Tibetan texts, one of which will be mentioned below.

I had a personal interest in translating the *Kāraṇḍavyūha-sūtra*, as it is the source of the mantra *Oṃ maṇipadme hūṃ*, the mantra of bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara (Tib. *spyan ras gzigs*). At the age of sixteen, before my encounter with any Buddhist, I had copied out the Tibetan letters of the mantra, its phonetics and purported meaning from the only book on Tibet available in my corner of Wales at the time: *The Third Eye*, written by an Englishman who claimed to have been a Tibetan named Lobsang Rampa who swapped bodies with an Englishman (and conveniently brainwashed himself to forget Tibetan). He went on to write a series of books, including one telepathically dictated to him by his cat.



After such unpromising beginnings and various vicissitudes, I came to live at the Kagyu Samye Ling Centre in Scotland, where in 1978 I spent fifteen hours a day repeating *Om maṇipadme hūṃ* with the late Khenpo Lhamchok (*mkhan po lha mchog*) from East Tibet, who had turned his back on scholasticism and higher Tantric studies to dedicate himself exclusively to the practice of this mantra and turning his huge *Om maṇipadme hūṃ*-filled prayer wheel. We were in the midst of accumulating a hundred million repetitions of the mantra, which with large groups of laypeople in Tibet and India could be accomplished in a month, but took years in Scotland, even with numbers phoned in from all around Europe.

Khenpo Lhamchok taught that one repetition of the mantra prevented rebirth as an animal, two prevented rebirth as a *preta*, and three prevented rebirth in the hells. He even said (through his female interpreter) that even children and women could gain enlightenment by repeating it. If a prayer wheel containing the mantra is placed on the crown of a dying person's head he/she will certainly be reborn in Sukhāvati. Turn such a prayer wheel three times before setting off on a journey and your goals will be accomplished. I helped make a large wooden sign with the mantra on it set next to a pond so that it would reflect on the water, as the mere reflection would cause the fish in the pond to be reborn in Sukhāvati.

The Tibetan tradition teaches that the six syllables of the mantra include all six Buddha families and six wisdoms, cure all six *kleśas* (defilements), and prevent rebirth in the six realms that comprise the phenomenal world.

The most common representation of Avalokiteśvara in Tibet is white, sitting cross-legged and with four arms, two hands together in *añjali mudrā* (palms together), and holding a wish-fulfilling jewel. The other hands hold up a crystal *mālā* (rosary) and a white lotus. A particularly widespread practice of the four-armed Avalokiteśvara is a very brief *sādhana* (practice) by Tangthong Gyalpo (d. 1485), also famous for constructing iron suspension bridges and for being the founding father of Tibetan opera. In this meditation, Avalokiteśvara is visualised above the practitioner's head. The written mantra is arranged as a circle in Avalokiteśvara's heart. As it turns, it radiates light rays that purify all words and all beings, each one becoming an Avalokiteśvara. In conclusion, Avalokiteśvara dissolves into the practitioner and they become inseparable.

A Sūtra in the Shadows

Om maṇipadme hūṃ (pronounced 'Om mani pemé hung' in most parts of Tibet) is ubiquitous in Tibetan religious culture, filling prayer wheels, both hand-held

and gigantic, carved on walls and mountainsides. Tibet is said to be the special field of activity of Avalokiteśvara; such leading lamas as the Dalai Lamas and the Karmapas are regarded as his emanations. It is even said that Tibetan babies speak the mantra spontaneously. The *Kāraṇḍavyūha-sūtra* establishes the pre-eminence of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara even above all Buddhas. We would therefore expect the *sūtra* to be popular in Tibet. However, even the learned lamas I know are unfamiliar with the *sūtra*; some have not even heard of it. One general reason for this is the Tibetan emphasis on native commentarial literature rather than on the Kangyur itself; the latter is normally only read ritually in annual ceremonies. A further reason for the obscurity of the *sūtra* is that the Tibetan Avalokiteśvara meditation practices and explanations of *Oṃ maṇipadme hūṃ* are not to be found in the *sūtra*.

The primary source for Tibetan Avalokiteśvara practices and teachings is not this *sūtra*, but the eleventh-century *Maṇi Kabum* (*maṇi bka' 'bum*), “A Hundred-Thousand Teachings on the Maṇi Mantra,” a compilation of texts “discovered” by three tertöns (*gter ston*) or “treasure revealers” between the eleventh and thirteenth centuries. It was claimed to have been composed and concealed by Tibet’s first Buddhist king, the seventh-century Songtsen Gampo (*strong btsan sgampo*), who reigned from 617 to 650, and whom the text portrays as an incarnation of Avalokiteśvara (Tib. *spyān ras gzigs*). It quotes from the *Kāraṇḍavyūha*, but clearly from the ninth-century translation. The *Kāraṇḍavyūha* is primarily known through the quotations chosen by this text, which extol the merit that comes from reciting the mantra. For example, a Buddha states that although he could count the number of raindrops that fall in a year, he cannot calculate the merit that comes from saying the mantra just once. It is assumed that this is Śākyamuni speaking, but most of these quotations are Śākyamuni repeating what he has heard from five of the past six Buddhas. There is no literary evidence, even in the Dunhuang cave libraries, for the popularity of *Oṃ maṇipadme hūṃ* or for the elevated importance of Avalokiteśvara before the eleventh century, when Avalokiteśvara practices were promulgated in a new wave of teachings from India. The Avalokiteśvara texts preserved in the Dunhuang caves use other mantras or *dhāraṇīs*. There is no copy of the *Kāraṇḍavyūha-sūtra* in the collection, even though it had been translated by that time, which indicates its lack of importance, at least in that area. There are, however, two ritual texts that do appear to show the influence of the *Kāraṇḍavyūha*’s six-syllable mantra: one has *Oṃ vajrayakṣamaṇipadme hūṃ* and the other has *Oṃ maṇipadme hūṃ mitra svāhā*.

The *Maṇi Kabum* created a specifically Tibetan version of the Avalokiteśvara myth, but here my focus is on the Tibetan translation of the *sūtra* in the early ninth century. It is a comparatively late translation within that translation project; this too indicates its relative lack of importance at that time, as well as the difficulties involved in translating it.

There are some added difficulties for a Tibetan reader of the *Kāraṇḍavyūha-sūtra*. For example, the author assumed the reader's familiarity with the *Mahābhārata*'s Pāṇḍavas, Kauravas and Khasas, and the story of Viṣṇu's dwarf incarnation as Vāmana, which includes Bali the king of the *asuras*, and his councilor Śukra (who is also the deity of the planet Mercury). The *sūtra* retells this Indian lore in an original manner, but its significance and clarity would be diminished for those unfamiliar with these narratives.

It Came from Inner Space

There is a Tibetan legend that the *sūtra* was one of four inside a precious casket (*kāraṇḍa* can mean casket in Sanskrit; see below) that descended from the sky onto the roof of the palace of the fifth-century ruler of the Yarlung area, King Lhathothori Nyentsen (*lha tho tho ri gnyan btsan*). This first appears in the *Pillar Testament*, where the King's name is given as Lhathothore Nyenshel (*lha tho tho re gnyan shel*). This text was said to have been discovered by Atiśa inside a pillar in 1049, but it exists in various versions dating from the eleventh and twelfth centuries. *The Pillar Testament* states that after the casket's descent from the sky it was revered and treasured, without the contents being understood. When Lhathothori's descendant, Songtsen Gampo, became the ruler of Tibet in the seventh century and became a convert to Buddhism, Thönmi Sambhota (Thon mi sam bhota) invented the Tibetan alphabet and translated the texts contained in the casket, including the *Kāraṇḍavyūha*. However, there is no historical evidence for the existence of Thönmi Sambhota, let alone of this translation.

A more mundane account by the thirteenth-century Nel-pa paṇḍita describes the texts being given to Lhathothori Nyentsen by a paṇḍita from India, who then continues on his way to China. This and other accounts state that one of the treasured writings was the six-syllable mantra, written in gold, but do not list the *Kāraṇḍavyūha-sūtra* as being present. The Tibetan word for Lhathothori's casket is *za ma thog*, so any *sūtra* it contained could be described as a *za ma thog gi mdo*, which could be one reason why the *Kāraṇḍavyūha Sūtra* became associated with that legend. The presence of the mantra alone would still suggest that the *sūtra*

dates to before the fifth century, but that assumes the historical reliability of these accounts written six hundred years later.

Lokesh Chandra, in his introduction to his edition of the *sūtra*, records a tradition that Upagupta taught the text to King Aśoka in the second century BCE, though this is analogous to saying Shakespeare read *Oliver Twist*. He also states that it was translated by Dharmarakṣa of Dunhuang into Chinese in 270 CE, and again by Guṇabhadra between 435 and 443 CE. However, as Studholme points out, those were translations of the *Ratnakaraṇḍavyūhasūtra*, a very different text. The only known translation into Chinese is that by T'ien Hsi-tsai in 983, which is also late in terms of the importance of Avalokiteśvara in Chinese Buddhism, and is indicative of the *sūtra*'s marginal importance even for that tradition.

The manuscript fragments discovered in the Gilgit *stūpa* are not later than the seventh century, and are less Sanskritized than the surviving Sanskrit versions of the *sūtra*, the earliest of which dates to the beginning of the second millennium. Adhelheid Mette, who has published these fragments, suggests that it was composed in the fourth or fifth centuries. The Tibetan version tends to correspond with the earliest of the Cambridge manuscripts rather than the readily accessible Vaidya edition of the twentieth century.

The *sūtra* evolved eventually into a longer form in verse, entitled *Guṇakāraṇḍavyūha*, one of the last Buddhist *sūtras* to be written in Sanskrit. The early Gilgit version has an even longer title: *Avalokiteśvara-guṇa-kāraṇḍavyūha*. Tuladhar Douglas has established that the *Guṇakāraṇḍavyūha* was written in fifteenth-century Nepal. It incorporates passages from texts such as the *Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra*, and is “bookended” by yet another layer of narrative added to what was already a complex story-within-story structure.

The *Kāraṇḍavyūha-sūtra* was evidently composed at a time when and in an area of India where the *purāṇas* of Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism were well established, for the *sūtra* both reacted against and absorbed those traditions.

As to geographical reference points that the reader is assumed to be familiar with: Varāṇasi plays an important role and its sewer is mentioned on two occasions, so that it must have made a vivid impression on the author. Magadha would have been known well known from accounts of the Buddha's life. Candradvīpa, is not mentioned in any other sutra, though it appears later in tantras. This is a location in the Ganges delta or south Bengal. Finally, Siṃhala, which is Śrīlaṅka, is clearly a distant land portrayed as an island inhabited by *rākṣasīs* (demonesses who could take on the form of beautiful ladies but then eat their lovers). Siṃhala

is often portrayed as the land of the *rākṃhals* in Buddhist literature, such as the *Lain Buddhist lit*, and also in general Indian literature, such as the *Rāmāyaṇa*, though the males of this species are all curiously absent in the *Kārae all cursūtra*.

What Avalokiteśvara Did Next; A summary of the sūtra's contents.

Śākyamuni describes to Bodhisattva Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhin that Avalokiteśvara has just visited the Avīci hell, freeing the beings there, followed by a visit to the “city of the *pretas*”. *Pretas* (the departed) are a category of ghosts who are forever tormented by hunger and thirst.)

He then describes Buddha Vipāśyin describing how Śiva, Viṣṇu, Agni, Sarasvatī, the deities of the sun, moon and so on, were all manifested from different parts of Avalokiteśvara's body; this mirrors the Brahmanical account of the creation of the universe from Brahmā. Avalokiteśvara then warns the newly created Śiva how beings in the future will think that he is the creator instead, and he even recites one of the Śaivite verses about Śiva's *liṅga* (phallus) that he prophesies will gain currency. It is an almost exact reproduction of a verse in the *Skandapurāṇa*, which Studholme describes as a major influence on the *sūtra*.

Śākyamuni then describes Buddha Śikhin describing Avalokiteśvara's qualities to bodhisattva Ratnapāṇi, and Avalokiteśvara comes from Sukhāvātī to see Śikhin with an offering of lotuses from Amitābha.

Śākyamuni then describes Buddha Viśvabhū, in a previous Jetavana Monastery, describing to bodhisattva Gaganagaṇja how Avalokiteśvara visited the land of gold inhabited by upside-down beings, the land of silver inhabited by four-legged beings, and the iron land of the *asuras*, where Bali describes to Avalokiteśvara, in yet another narrative within a narrative, how Viṣṇu's deception resulted in his banishment to the underworld. Viśvabhū then describes Avalokiteśvara visiting the land of darkness inhabited by *yakṃbis* and *rākandās*; then manifesting as a Brahmin in the highest paradise, the Śuddhāvāsa realm, where he fills a poor deity's empty palace with wealth; then going to Siṃhala as a handsome man who marries all the *rākṣasīs* and converts them from cannibalism; then becoming a bee that buzzes homage to the three jewels over a sewer in Varanasi, thus liberating all the insects within it; and then going to Magadha, where he invisibly causes a rain of food and drink to fall on people in the wilderness who have been resorting to eating each others' flesh for the previous twenty years.

Then Avalokiteśvara arrives at Viśvabhū's Jetavana Monastery and bodhisattva Gaganagaṇja meets him. As each Buddha's name is only given when they are first

introduced into the narrative and they are thereafter referred to only as Bhagavan, as is Śākyamuni too, it is easy to lose track of which Buddha is relating the narrative we are reading.

Śākyamuni then recounts his previous life as a merchant and being rescued from the cannibalistic *rākṣasīs* of Siṃhala (had they relapsed?) by Avalokiteśvara in the form of a flying horse.

Śākyamuni then starts to describe to Bodhisattva Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhin the landscape and inhabitants in each of Avalokiteśvara's pores. However, there will prove to be only ten of them. But the description abruptly stops and is later recommenced, interrupted by the insertion of a narrative that concerns the climax of the *sūtra*: obtaining the *Oṃ maṇipadme hūṃ mahāvidyā*. While *vidyā* is basically a Sanskrit word for "knowledge", and in later tantras meant a consort, in this context it is virtually a synonym of mantra and means "spell" and "incantation", so *mahāvidyā* is "great incantation".

Śākyamuni says that he visited trillions of Buddhas in search of the six-syllable mantra, or as the *sūtra* refers to it, the *mahāvidyā*. Eventually he met Buddha Padmottama, who had also searched through trillions of Buddha realms until he came to Amitābha, who instructed Avalokiteśvara to give the *mahāvidyā* to Padmottama. Avalokiteśvara in doing so creates a *maṇḍala* from precious powders. These diagrams that represent the palaces of a deity and its environs became a well-known feature of Buddhist tantra. They represent the palace seen from above, without its roof, and the doors and walls laid out flat. In this *sūtra*, the *maṇḍala* is simple compared to those of the tantras. The four maharajas that guard the four directions stand guard in the doorways. Inside, Amitābha is in the center of the palace with a bodhisattva Maṇidhara on his right, and a four-armed goddess named Śaḍakṣarī Mahāvidyā (*yi ge drug pa'i rig sngags chen mo*; "the six syllable great *vidyā*") on his left. The only other figure is a vidyādhara making offerings beneath the goddess. The vidyādharas were beings with magical powers and spells. Therefore the names of all three deities in addition to Amitābha relate to the *mahāvidyā*. However, we see here the personification of the *mahāvidyā* as a four-armed goddess. because not only is *mahāvidyā* a feminine noun, but the *sūtra* also frequently refers to it as "the Queen of *mahāvidyās*" (*mahāvidyārājñī*; *rig sngags chen mo'i rgyal mo*). She is described as white, with four arms, her extra arms holding a lotus and a rosary of jewels. This is evidently the origin of the later four-armed version of Avalokiteśvara.

Śākyamuni then tells Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhin that presently the only person

who possesses the *mahāvidyā* is an incontinent *dharmabhāṇcon* (*dharmabhāṇaka*) in Varāṇasi. A *dharmabhāṇaka* had an important role in the purely oral transmission of Buddhism in its first centuries. They preserved lengthy teachings in their memory and recited them. In this case he has the *mahāvidyā* secretly memorized. He has lost his vows, but still wears his robes, soiled with feces and urine, and he has a wife and children, but nevertheless Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhin should regard him as being equal to all the Buddhas. Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhin goes to Varāṇasi, obtains it, and returns to the Buddha Śākyamuni. Śākyamuni abruptly continues with the description of Avalokiteśvara's pores, concluding with an ocean that comes from his big toe, reminiscent of the *Viṣṇu Purāṇa*'s description of the origin of the Ganges.

Avalokiteśvara then arrives from Sukhāvati with an offering of lotuses to Śākyamuni from Amitābha. Śiva and his consort Umādevī arrive to receive from the Buddha prophecies of their Buddhahood. However, the Buddha sends them to Avalokiteśvara to receive them, another demonstration of Avalokiteśvara's superiority to all Buddhas.

Śākyamuni describes witnessing a *samādhi* competition between Avalokiteśvara and Bodhisattva Samantabhadra during the time of Buddha Krakucchanda (which Avalokiteśvara of course wins), even though earlier Śākyamuni had described Avalokiteśvara as imperceivable and stated that Samantabhadra had spent twelve years in search of one of Avalokiteśvara's pores and failed to see them.

Avalokiteśvara then departs in what reads like a natural conclusion to the *sūtra*, but it is followed by what is evidently another addition. Śākyamuni prophecies to Ānanda that there will be monks in the future with bad conduct and that they should be expelled. However, the description is peculiarly similar to that of the *dharmabhāimil* who was the only human to possess the *oṃ maṇipadme hūṃ mahāvidyā!* The Buddha also describes with apparent relish all the sufferings in hells that will come to those who appropriate or use monastic property; this reads like a list of complaints about the activities of lay people when this part of the *sūtra* was composed.

An impossible task fulfilled

The Tibetan translator of the *Kāraṇḍavyūha* was Yeshe Dé (*Ye-shes sDe*), the principal Tibetan in the translation program of the late eighth and early ninth centuries, which was begun by King Trisong Detsen (*Khri srong lde btsan*, reigned 742-798).

Yeshe De's name is on no less than 347 texts in the Kangyur and the Tengyur (*bstan 'gyur*), three of which are his own original works in Tibetan.

He worked on this *sūtra* with two Indian paṇḍitas. One of these was Jinamitra, who is listed as the translator of 234 texts. He had come to Tibet in the reign of Trisong Detsen.

The other Indian was Dānaśīla, also known as Mālava, who came to Tibet much later, in the reign of Ralpachen (*ral pa can*, r. 815-838). Dānaśīla has his name on 167 texts. He is also listed as the author of seven of these, five of which he translated himself, one of which curiously is a text of divination based on the croaks of crows. Of the remaining two texts he authored, Jinamitra translated one, while Rinchen Zangpo (*rin chen bzang po*, 958–1055), the prolific translator of a later generation, translated the other. Dānaśīla was from Kashmir. The earliest manuscripts of the *sūtra* were discovered in a *stūpa* in Gilgit, which is Kashmir's immediate neighbor to the north. Studholme believes that this fact, together with the strong Śaivite influence on the *sūtra*, suggests that it originated in Kashmir. Although there is no concrete evidence for this, its translation only after the arrival of Dānaśīla in Tibet at least does not contradict that hypothesis.

Jinamitra and Dānaśīla, together with a few other Indian scholars, compiled the great Tibetan-Sanskrit concordance entitled *Mahāvvyutpatti*, which was the fruit of decades of work on translation.

The *Kāraṇḍavyūha Sūtra* is listed in the catalogue of the collection in the Tang-tong Denkar Palace (*pho brang thang stong ldan dkar*), which was compiled in 824, and therefore we can date the translation to some time between 815, the beginning of Ralpachen's reign, and 824.

The translation work took place in a building dedicated to the translation project, which was situated within the circular compound of Samye (*bsam yas*) Monastery, Tibet's first monastery. Yeshe Dé appears to have died during Ralpachen's reign and his remains are said to be interred within a *stūpa* on the hill neighbouring the monastery.

The translators had to resort to the transcription of Sanskrit in the lists of flora and fauna that appear in the text, there being no obvious Tibetan equivalents, although even *tarakṣa* was simply transcribed, in spite of there being wolves in Tibet. Apart from the challenging vocabulary there were difficulties that arose from the *sūtra* itself and from errors in the manuscript that the Tibetan translation was made from.

The *sūtra*'s narratives are not always clear, and seem compressed from their original sources. Some of the first person narratives within the *Kāraṇḍavyūha-sūtra* retain egregious signs of their original third person form. For example, in the Buddha's account of his previous life as a merchant on the island of the *rākṣasīs*, as he sets out from his house one night the account is suddenly in the third person, and after his walking all around an iron building (*samantena parikramati*), and climbing a tree, it reverts back to first person (*anuvicaran tvarita āgacchāmi*). These grammatical anomalies tend to be cleaned up in the Tibetan translation, though not in Bali's long story of his unfortunate encounter with Viṣṇu, which is mostly in the third person.

I shall give here a few interesting instances of when the translators were at the mercy of a corrupt text.

In one of Avalokiteśvara's pores there are mountains, each made of a precious substance, and the Tibetan lists diamond, silver, gold, crystal, red lotuses and sapphire. The mountain of red lotuses is obviously anomalous, if charming. The Sanskrit in all present editions has *padmarāga*, ruby, which is usually simply transliterated into Tibetan. It seems that here and in three other places in the text, *padmarāga* was incorrectly copied, or misread, as *padmarakta*, though it would have been a highly suspect strange word.

A more serious corruption is where *adrṣṭa-maṇḍala* (an unseen *maṇḍala*) lost a syllable to become *aṣṭa-maṇḍala* (eight *maṇḍalas*), and this was compounded by the omission of the negative, so that *adrṣṭamaṇḍalasya na dātavyāṃ* seems to have become *aṣṭamaṇḍalasya dātavyāṃ*. In the Sanskrit, Avalokiteśvara is stating that there must be a visible *maṇḍala*, for otherwise the recipient will not see and learn the portrayed *mudras*, or hand gestures, of the deities. The Tibetan instead has Avalokiteśvara announcing that he is going to make eight *maṇḍalas* to transmit the *mahāvidyā*, even though he then describes just the one.

More confusing yet is where *ayaṃ* ("this (masculine)") was corrupted to *ahaṃ* ("I") in the middle of the Buddha's description of how Avalokiteśvara is unperceivable, with *ayaṃ māyāvī asādhyah sūkṣma evaṃ anudṛśyate* becoming *ahaṃ māyāvī asādhyah sūkṣma evaṃ anudṛśyate*, so that briefly the Buddha is describing himself!

The most interesting mistranslation is perfectly understandable, and has been the topic of papers by Régamey and Lienhard. It is in the context of the story of the flying horse that rescues merchants from Siṃhala. the land of the *rākṣasīs*, where shipwrecked merchants had unsuspectingly set up home with them, not

suspecting that they would eventually be their wives' meals. Naomi Appleton has studied various retellings of this story, which first appears in the *Jātakas*, where the Buddha is the flying horse and the 250 merchants who realize the deception and leave on his back eventually become 250 pupils of the Buddha (another 250 merchants who remained with their wives were eaten up). The *Kāraṇḍavyūha-sūtra*'s particular version is in accord with its promotion of the supremacy of Avalokiteśvara above all Buddhas. Here the previous life of the Buddha is not as the rescuing horse but as the head merchant who is in need of rescue, having been duped by his *rākṣasī* wife, and Avalokiteśvara has appeared as the flying horse that saves him. In this case, however, all the other merchants make the mistake of looking back as their wives call out to them, so that they fall off the horse and are immediately devoured.

The interesting part, in terms of the difficulties of translation, is in the description of how the head merchant discovers that his wife and the other women are *rākrifīs*. In Tibetan it is his own wife who informs on herself and the other women while she is asleep. The merchant is astonished to see her laughing in her sleep, as he has never seen such a thing before, and asks her why she's laughing. She then tells him that all the women are *rākṣasīs* and are going to eat the merchants, and if he does not believe her to take a road south (though the Tibetan always translates *dakṣiṇa* in the *sūtra* literally, as "on the right") to see where a previous group of merchants are locked up and being eaten. He does so (this being the point in the narrative where he climbs the tree in the third person and sees the unfortunate prisoners over the wall), and when he returns to his house, she asks him if he now believes her. When he says he does, she tells him where to find the flying horse and how to escape on it. He then climbs into bed and his wife suspiciously asks why he is cold. He says he went outside to defecate and urinate, and for the rest of the stay until his escape he has to keep his plan secret from her.

There is something a little odd about this story, and it hinges on one word: *ratikara*. An *apsaras* (celestial nymph) listed amongst the audience for the Buddha's teaching at the beginning of the *sūtra*, is named *Ratikarā*, obviously a feminine noun, which could be rendered as "giver of (erotic) pleasure." In the merchant's story, however, it is a masculine noun, and this form appears not to occur anywhere in Sanskrit literature other than in this *sūtra*. The Sanskrit does not mention any sleeping going on while the laughing occurs, but the Tibetan addition of sleeping was presumably the only way to make sense of the passage where the paramour of the "giver of pleasure" is betraying herself.

In the *Guṇakāraṇḍavyūha*, which is the later, extended Nepalese version, *raticara* has been replaced by *dvīpa*. Now it makes sense, unusual though that sense may be. The merchant's astonishment is at seeing a lamp laugh, and it is the talking lamp that exposes the true nature of his wife and tells him how to escape. This makes narrative sense, in terms of the merchant's astonishment and particularly as the *rake cus* are all talked about in the third person. The *Kāraṇḍavyūha-sūtra* gives no explanation for the sudden appearance of this strange lamp, which is characteristic of its crude narrative style, but the *Guṇakāraṇḍavyūha* identifies the lamp as also being an emanation of Avalokiteśvara. It could, however, be argued that this clearer version is also a way of rationalizing the *sūtra*'s confusing narrative.

The mysterious name

The *sūtra* describes Avalokiteśvara as having qualities that no Buddha, let alone any other bodhisattva, possesses. His "name", his *mahāvidyā*, is a secret sought by Buddhas in many realms and eons without success. Yet paradoxically Avalokiteśvara still has the status of being Amitābha's emissary to the Buddha, bringing with him the gift of a lotus flower, as is standard for the role of a bodhisattva in earlier *sūtras*. Perhaps the earliest example of bodhisattvas as emissaries from the Buddhas in other realms is found in the *Lalitavistara*, though this predates the appearance of the *Sukhāvatīvyūha-sūtra*, so that Avalokiteśvara as a messenger from Amitāyus (the commoner early name for Amitābha) is strikingly absent.

Avalokiteśvara first appears prominently as one of two bodhisattva attendants to Amitāyus in the *Sukhāvatīvyūha-sūtra*. Avalokiteśvara was translated into Tibetan as *spyān ras gzigs*, "seeing eyes". The Chinese *Kuan-yin* is derived from a variant in Sanskrit: *Avalokitasvara*, where *svara* means "sound", which was therefore glossed as "one who perceives the sounds [of the prayers of the faithful]," amongst other interpretations. In the Chinese tradition Avalokiteśvara eventually became worshipped in female form, because of the identification of Princess Miao-chan as his emanation.

But even for a bodhisattva this is a curious name: *avalokita* is a past passive participle, meaning "seen"; but in that case what could "Lord of the Seen" mean? It has been glossed as "one who is looking upon all beings with compassion", but another approach is to consider what it would have meant to Buddhists in the beginning of the first millennium, particularly within the Mahāsaṅghika tradition, which was particularly fertile ground for the appearance of what became

known as Mahāyāna sūtras. Two of the principal Mahāsaṅghika sūtras, within its Lokottaravādin tradition, were the *Avalokita Sūtras*. They are contained within the Mahāvastu and were not translated into Tibetan. They are sometimes referred to as proto-Mahāyāna sūtras. In the *Avalokita Sūtras*, *avalokita* does not refer to a being, but means that which has been seen by those who have crossed over *saṃsāra*, and is therefore a synonym for enlightenment. Therefore for a Lokottaravādin, whatever the actual etymological origin of the name may be, it would inescapably have had the resonance of meaning “Lord of Enlightenment”.

The rise of a bodhisattva to a paradoxical supremacy over the Buddhas resulted from the need for a divine figure who could be prayed to and who would respond by interceding in the difficulties of one’s life. The Buddha of early Buddhism has entered the quietude of nirvana, leaving us to do for ourselves the salvific work that he has explained. Brahmanical deities could not fulfill the role of a saviour, one who could bring liberation through his blessing, and the only kind of Buddhist figure who could be promoted to such a role was the bodhisattva.

But why did Avalokiteśvara rise to such prominence above all other bodhisattvas? Following the *Sukhāvatīvyūha-sūtra*, where Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta appear as the two bodhisattvas on either side of Amitāyus, sūtras, such as the *prajñāpāramitā sūtras* have Avalokiteśvara and Mahāsthāmaprāpta amongst the Buddha’s audience as a pair. They are both given individual prominence in the additional chapters of the *Lotus Sūtra*, but in the *Kāraṇḍavyūha* Mahāsthāmaprāpta is alone in the audience, presumably listening along with the others to a description of the supremacy of Avalokiteśvara’s qualities and awaiting the rare opportunity to see him. In the Tibetan tradition Mahāsthāmaprāpta even became conflated with and eclipsed by Vajrapāṇi.

One crucial reason for Avalokiteśvara’s initial rise in prominence could simply be his unusual name: in the Buddhist response to and assimilation of Śiva, this bodhisattva’s name mirrored Śiva’s common epithet of Īśvara (Lord). Lokeśvara (Lord of the World) became another name commonly used for Avalokiteśvara. Moreover, Studholme has pointed out that the six-syllable mantra of Avalokiteśvara was a response to Śiva’s five-syllable mantra in the *Skanda Purāṇa*. The reaction to the cult of Śiva by appropriating his qualities into a bodhisattva is evident in Avalokiteśvara’s displacement of Śiva’s role as a creator in the sūtra, and is explicit in such texts as the *sādhana* of “Avalokiteśvara with a blue throat”, the blue throat being a characteristic of Śiva; he acquired it when he drank the powerful poison that formed at the creation of the world.

Towards the end of the first millennium, there was an even more explicit Buddhist mirroring of Śiva with the appearance of Cakrasaṃvara, the deity who took possession of Śiva's body, retinue and sacred sites.

The mysterious title

A *karaṇḍa* (without the long *a*) is usually a basket made of reeds, river reeds being the most suitable material for making baskets. A *karaṇḍa* is frequently shown in the background of portraits of Indian *siddhas* as a basket containing their collections of scriptures. *Siddhas* are also portrayed as making a hand gesture representing the basket: a *karaṇḍa-mudrā*. There is even a layperson's hairstyle named *karaṇḍa-makuṭa*: the hair is arranged on top of the head in the shape of a tall rounded basket. Another word for basket is *piṭaka*, the most common metaphor for the Buddha's teachings: they are described as "the three baskets" or *tripiṭaka*, which contain the *vinaya*, the *sūtras* and the *abhidharma* or its predecessor the *mātrkā*.

However, *kaṇḍa* is also used for something more solid than reeds. In the *Kāraṇḍavyūha-sūtra* the word *karaṇḍa* is only used for the container in which beings in hell are crammed together and boiled like beans, which bursts open and frees the beings when Avalokiteśvara arrives there. The Tibetan translates both *karaṇḍa* and *kāraṇḍa* as *za ma tog*, which in present times is generally used for a solid box for carrying food in, and we have seen that King Lhathothori was described as receiving the divine gift of texts in a *rin chen za ma tog*, which would therefore be a precious box or casket.

In the title of the *sūtra*, however, *Kāraṇḍa* has a long *a*, and that word is most commonly used for a duck that lives amongst river reeds, though the *sūtra*'s title is unlikely to mean "A Display of Ducks". In terms of Sanskrit grammar, it appears to be a *vṛddhi* form that would indicate origin. The reeds themselves are never called *karaṇḍa*. Perhaps, if the long *a* has any grammatical significance, it means that this display of Avalokiteśvara's qualities has come from the casket that contains this description.

The word *vyūha* in the title follows the example of such *sūtras* as *Sukhāvatī-vyūha* and *Gandavyūha*. *Vyūha* can mean array, display, presentation and description, and is used in the *sūtra* itself to mean a chapter. Studholme points out that in the Vaishnavite tradition it is used to mean Viṣṇu's emanations. The later Nepalese version's longer title *Avalokiteśvara-guṇa-kāraṇḍa-vyūha* is more meaningful and could be translated as *The display from the basket of the quali-*

ties of Avalokiteśvara, or *The display of the baskets (or caskets) of the qualities of Avalokiteśvara*, as when Tuladhar-Douglas takes *kāraṇḍa* to be a plural and mean “reliquaries”.

The mysterious mantra

The climax of the *sūtra* is the revelation of the Queen of *mahāvidyās*: *Om maṇi-padme hūṃ*. The narrative of the *sūtra* is clumsy, for the Buddha states that no one anywhere, not even any Buddha, knows it, but abruptly this description changes to the merits of those rare people who do know it.

As described above, Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhin obtains the *mahāvidyā* from the only person in the world who possesses it. (Though one assumes from the preceding narrative that Śākyamuni has it, he does not act as if he does.) This individual, a lapsed monk with a family, who was nevertheless respected for his esoteric knowledge, was presumably a type of person who existed at the time of the *sūtra*’s composition. A similar description occurs at the end of the *sūtra*, as a prophecy, condemning such lapsed monks with families living in temples.

The mantra itself has been subject to various interpretations and Lopez has given a delightful history of them.

The earliest interpretations in the west, as in the venerable Lobsang Rampa’s strange book, was that *maṇi* and *padme* did not form a compound and *padme* was the masculine locative, with the result that it meant “Jewel in the Lotus”. But as has been pointed out by Martin and others, masculine nouns have female vocative endings in mantras. Maṇipadma is here, as frequently described in the *sūtra*, Avalokiteśvara’s name: “Jewel-Lotus.”

Verhagen has even supplied us with a translation of one of the few indigenous Tibetan texts in the *bstan-gyur*, a grammar text entitled *sgra’i rnam par dbye ba bstan pa*, “A teaching on the cases”, which uses this very mantra as an example for the vocative ending in *-e*. Nevertheless, this still puzzles commentators. How can a male noun end up with a feminine ending? One obvious answer to this conundrum is that this is hybrid Sanskrit, in other words a Sanskritized middle-Indic. In Māgadhi Prakrit the masculine nominative and vocative singular ending was *-e*. There are still a few traces of this *-e* ending found in Pali, which otherwise has the northwestern Middle-Indic ending *-o*. However this argument is countered by the *-e* ending being rare in Buddhist hybrid Sanskrit texts. However Signe Cohen has pointed out the unreliability of the printed editions of these texts, for their editors frequently “corrected” the *-e* ending to *-o*, and that the *-e* ending, which

has been considered as confined to the north-east, was also widespread in the north-west. She also points out that when we look at Tocharian loan-words from Sanskrit, indicating what kind of Buddhist Sanskrit the inhabitants of Turkestan were familiar with, “masculine personal names and other masculine *-a* stems signifying a person invariably end in *-e* in Tocharian B: *upadhyāye*, *brāhmaṇe*, and *bodhisatve* for *upadhyāya*, *brāhmaṇa*, and *bodhisatva*.”

My translation, with its various demerits, of this unusual, obscure, but significant *sūtra*, will appear on the 84000 website, so that anyone interested can read for themselves the unexpected source of *oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ*. Whether that will inspire people to recite it more or less often remains to be seen.

References

- Appleton, Naomi. “The story of the horse king and the merchant Siṃhala in Buddhist texts.” *Buddhist Studies Review, Journal of the UK Association of Buddhist Studies*, vol 23, no. 2, 2006. pp. 187-201.
- Bka' chems ka khol ma. [The Pillar Testament]*. Gansu, China: Kan su'i mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1989.
- Buddha Speaks Mahāyāna Sublime Treasure King Sūtra. Also known as: Avalokiteśvara-guṇa-kāraṇḍavyūha Sūtra; Kāraṇḍa-vyūha Sūtra.* (Trans. from Chinese) Silfong Chen. Website: *Buddhist Scriptures in Multiple Languages*.
- Cohen, Signe, “On the Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit/Middle Indic Ending “*-e*” as a ‘Magadhisim.’” *Acta Orientalia*. vol. 63, 2002. pp. 67-70.
- Dānaśīla. “Kākacaritra, bya rog gi skad brtag par bya ba.” *Bstan 'gyur (dpe bsdur ma)*. Beijing: krung go'i bod rig pa'i dpe skrun khang, vol. 114, 1994-2008. pp. 1501-1506.
- Gerner, Manfred. *Chaksampa Thangtong Gyalpo – Architect, Philosopher and Iron Chain Bridge Builder*. Thimphu: Center for Bhutan Studies, 2007.
- Imaeda, Yoshiro. “Note préliminaire sur la formule *oṃ maṇi padme hūṃ* dans les manuscrits tibétains de Touen-houang” Michel Soymié (ed.), *Contributions aux études sur Touen-Houang*. Geneva/Paris: Librairie Droz. 1979, pp. 71-76.
- Kapstein, Matthew. “Remarks on the Mani bka 'bum and the Cult of Avalokitesvara in Tibet.” Goodman & Davidson (eds.), *Tibetan Buddhism, Reason and Revelation*. 1992, pp. 79-93.
- . *The Tibetan Assimilation of Buddhism: Conversion, Contestation, and Memory*, Oxford University Press, 2002.

- Kāraṇḍa-Vyūha-Sūtra: or the Supernal Virtues of Avalokiteśvara; Sanskrit Text of the Metrical Version, Edited for the First time from Original manuscripts*, Lokesh Chandra (ed.), New Delhi: Aditya Prakashan, 1999.
- “*Kāraṇḍavyūha-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra. Za ma tog bkod pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo*” in *Bka' gyur*. Derge 116, vol. Mdo Ja. pp. 200a-247b.
- “*Kāraṇḍavyūha Sūtra*.” *Mahāyāna-Sūtra-Saṃgraha*, Edited by P. L. Vaidya, Darbhanga: Mathila Institute, 1961. pp. 258-308.
- Lienhard, Siegfried. “Avalokiteshvara in the wick of the nightlamp.” *Kleine Schriften*, ed. Siegfried Lienhard and Oskar von Hinüber, Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz GmbH & Co. KG, 2007. pp. 93 395) – 104 406.
- Lopez Jr., Donald S. *Prisoners of Shangrila: Tibetan Buddhism and the West*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.
- Ma ni bka' 'bum : a collection of rediscovered teachings focusing upon the tutelary deity Avalokitesvara (Mahakarunika)*. Delhi: Trayang and Jamyang Samten, 1975.
- Martin, Dan. “On the origin and significance of the prayer wheel according to two nineteenth century sources.” *Journal of the Tibet Society*, vol. 7, 1987. pp.13-29.
- Mette, Adelheid, *Die Gilgit-Fragmente des Kārandavyūha*. Swisttal, Germany: Indica et Tibetica Verlag, 2005.
- Nilakaṇṭhāryāvalokiteśvarasādhana: 'Phags pa spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug mgrin pa sngon po can gyi sgrub thabs. Bstan-'gyur*, Derge 3431, vol. Rgyud Mu. 90a4–90b5.
- Rhaldi, Sherab. “Ye-Shes sDe: Tibetan Scholar and Saint.” *Bulletin of Tibetology* vol. 38, 2002, pp.20-36.
- Régamey, C. “Le pseudo-hapax ratikara et la lampe qui rit dans le ‘sūtra des ogresses’ bouddhique.” *Asiatische Studien/Etudes Asiatiques* XVIII-XIX, 1965. pp. 175ff.
- Roerich, G.N. [1949] 1976. *The Blue Annals*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- van Schaik, Sam. 2006. “The Tibetan Avalokitesvara Cult in the Tenth Century: Evidence from the Dunhuang Manuscripts.” *Tibetan Buddhist Literature and Praxis (Proceedings of the Tenth Seminar of the IATS, 2003, Volume 4)*, ed. Ronald M. Davidson and Christian Wedemeyer. Leiden: EJ Brill, 2006. pp. 55–72.
- Schopen, Gregory, *Figments and Fragments of Mahāyāna Buddhism in India: More Collected Papers*. University of Hawai'i Press, 2005.
- “*Sgra'i rnam par dbye ba bstan pa*” in *Bstan 'gyur*. Peking 5838, Ngo, pp. 54a-64a.
- Stearns, Cyrus. *King of the Empty Plain: The Tibetan Iron-Bridge Builder Tangtong Gyalpo*. Ithaca NY: Snow Lion Publications, 2007.
- Studholme, Alexander. *Origins of Om Mani Padme Hum: A study of the Karandavyūha*. State University of New York, 2002.

- Thang stong rgyal po. “‘Gro don mkha’ khyab ma” *Bka’ brgyud zhal ‘don phyog bsgrigs*. Zhang kang: zhang kang then mā dpe skrun khang, 2001. pp. 155-156.
- Tuladhar-Douglas, Will. *Remaking Buddhism for Medieval Nepal: The fifteenth-century reformation of Newar Buddhism*. London and New York: Routledge, 2006.
- Uebach, Helga, Nel-pa Paṇḍita’s Chronik Me-tog Phreñ-wa: Handschrift der Library of Tibetan Works and Archives, Tibetischer Text in Faksimile, Transkription und Übersetzung. Munich: Kommission für Zentralasiatische Studien, Bayerische Akademie der Wissenschaften, 1987.
- Verhagen, P.C. “The Mantra ‘Om maṇi-padme hūṃ’ in an Early Tibetan Grammatical Treatise,” *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, Vol. 13, Number 2, 1990. pp. 133-138.
- Yü, Chün-fang. *Kuan-yin; the Chinese Transformation of Avalokiteśvara*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2000.

Book Reviews

***Afghanistan: Crossroads of the Ancient World.* Hiebert, F. and P. Cambon, eds. (London: The British Museum Press, 2011).**

“Afghanistan: Crossroads of the Ancient World” was the title of the British Museum exhibition of objects from the National Museum of Afghanistan, Kabul, which was formally opened by President Karzai of Afghanistan on 1 March 2011. The book here reviewed is the catalogue of that exhibition. The objects described and illustrated in the catalogue are beautiful and enigmatic, and the story of their continued preservation in the most difficult of circumstances is fascinating, saddening and ultimately heartening.

Prior to its arrival in London, the exhibition had toured Europe and northern America, having been shown in Paris, Turin, Amsterdam, Washington, San Francisco, Houston, New York, Ottawa and Bonn. A touring exhibition of such priceless, and in some cases extremely fragile, artefacts, could only be the result of active collaboration between politicians, archaeologists, curators and scholars from many countries, and this international collaboration is reflected in the catalogue, which contains essays by scholars based in Afghanistan, France, the United States and Russia, although none by British scholars. After three brief essays that provide contextual information about the National Museum of Afghanistan, the attempts to preserve from destruction the cultural heritage of Afghanistan, and the history and cultures of ancient Afghanistan, the structure of the catalogue follows the structure of the exhibition, which was divided into four sections, each showing objects from one of four key archaeological sites in Afghanistan: Tepe Fullol, Ai Khanum, Begram and Tillya Tepe. Each section is introduced by one or two essays, following which every object that was displayed in that particular section of the exhibition is illustrated and briefly described, a total of 227 objects. Most of these objects were feared to have been stolen, lost or destroyed during

the years of war and unrest between the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979 and the establishment of the present government of Afghanistan in 2002. During this period, the National Museum of Afghanistan was subject to almost continual looting, its buildings hit by rockets on several occasions, and many of the artefacts that still remained in it destroyed by the Taliban in 2001. In 1996 the Afghan Ministry of Information and Culture decided to pack for safekeeping the objects that remained in the museum at that time. Those pieces that were placed in the museum's storerooms were destroyed by the Taliban but other pieces that had been transferred to the Hotel Kabul were preserved. Previously in 1988 objects found at Tillya Tepe had been placed for safekeeping in the vaults of the Central Bank of Afghanistan. In 2003 the Afghan government reported that the cases containing the objects were still in the vaults with their seals unbroken. The work of making an inventory of and conserving the surviving objects began in 2004 under the aegis of the National Geographic Society. Over 23,000 objects, 20,587 of them from Tillya Tepe, have now been placed on the inventory. What was on display in the exhibition and described in the catalogue is only a fraction of the surviving treasure of Afghanistan.

By far the oldest artefacts described in the catalogue are a group of three fragmentary gold vessels from a hoard of gold of silver vessels that were cut in pieces by the farmers who discovered them in 1966 at Tepe Fullol, situated in northern Afghanistan to the south of the Oxus. Apparently the three vessels are what remain of a larger collection of vessels from the hoard once in the collection of the National Museum of Afghanistan. Dated to 2200 to 1900 BC, the vessels bear geometrical motifs and depictions of boars, bulls, trees and mountains. Few in number, the objects seem to belong to a bronze-age culture that extended over an area that is now northern Afghanistan, eastern Iran, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Pakistan. They appear to have been made locally but are influenced by a response to wide-ranging cultural contacts. They thus adumbrate the more extensive examples of cultural eclecticism described in the remainder of the catalogue.

Bactria, the area of Afghanistan to the north of the Hindu Kush with its centre around the Oxus river was famed in classical antiquity for its thousand cities, and the following section of the catalogue is devoted to artefacts from one of them, founded by one of the successors of Alexander the Great in circa 300 BC and flourishing as a Hellenistic city complete with theatre and gymnasium until it was overwhelmed by nomadic invaders in circa 145 BC. The site of the city was discovered in 1961 and excavations took place from 1965 until they were interrupted by

the Soviet invasion. The city is situated on a tributary of the Oxus, not far from the present border with Tajikistan. Now known as Ai Khanum, meaning Lady of the Moon, from the name of a neighbouring village, the original Greek name of the city is lost to us. The objects from the site show how in Bactria Hellenistic artistic traditions were mixed and amalgamated with local and other Asian traditions, but the strength of Greek culture at the city can be demonstrated by a fragmentary stele on which one Clearchos, who has been identified by some scholars with a disciple of Aristotle who bore that name, caused to be engraved as a gift to the city a copy of the Delphic precepts, the originals of which were situated at the shrine of Apollo at Delphi and which prescribed the code of ethical conduct for a Greek gentleman. The Greek demi-god Heracles is represented by a bronze statuette probably of local manufacture that shows him naked, bearing a large club in one hand and crowning himself with his other. The catalogue discusses the popularity of the worship of Heracles in the Hellenised East and in central Asia, but does not mention his importance for Buddhist iconography, a theme that I shall briefly mention below. A beautiful and striking example of hybrid Greek and Oriental art is a gilded silver plate once fastened to a wooden disc that shows the goddess Cybele riding in a chariot drawn by two lions. She is accompanied by Nike, the goddess of Victory, and is attended by two priests. Although found in a temple area of the city, it may have been deposited there by nomadic looters. Worthy of note are a selection of small round compartmentalised bowls with lids made from schist, a grey stone found in the mountains of Afghanistan. Although they were primarily used for storing cosmetics and jewellery, the catalogue suggests that such bowls were the prototype for the Buddhist reliquaries produced at a later date in Gandhara.

The third section of the exhibition focused on an astonishing array of objects found in 1937 and 1939 in two sealed rooms at an archaeological site at Begram, situated to the south of the Hindu Kush mountains and in ancient times as now a site of strategic importance. The objects were varied in type and diverse in origin: glassware and objects in plaster, porphyry and alabaster from Roman Egypt and the Mediterranean world, fragments of lacquer from China, and from India carved ivory and bone. They appear to have been deposited in the mid-first century AD. Some of the objects discovered were decidedly odd, such the drinking horn in the shape of a goat's head holding the remains of an ostrich egg and the model aquarium in which bronze fish would float when it was filled with water, neither, however, on display in the exhibition and perhaps lost. The varied ob-

jects seem to share a common novelty which taken with the fact that objects of similar materials appear to have been stored together suggests that they were a merchant's stock and that the rooms they were found in was some kind of emporium, rather than a royal treasure house. A series of ivory plaques, which clearly originated in India, bears carvings of narrative scenes that may be taken from the Jatakas. Among the bronzes are statuettes of the Roman-Egyptian gods Serapis-Heracles and Harpocrates. The most breathtaking objects from Begram are the glass beakers painted with Bacchic scenes of figures harvesting grapes, the glass trellis-worked vases and goblets, and the glass flasks in the shape of fishes. The survival of such fragile objects is almost miraculous. Taken together, the objects from Begram show that the cultural networks which enabled the Mauryan emperor Asoka to send out his ministers of *dhamma* in the third century BC were still in place in the first century AD.

The final section of the catalogue is introduced by the Russian archaeologist Viktor Ivanovich Sarianidi, whose discovery and excavation in 1978 of six graves cut into a mound called Tillya Tepe, situated in northern Afghanistan to the south of the Oxus river. Tillya Tepe means Hill of Gold in the local Uzbek language, and is rightly named, since the splendid treasure that was buried with the bodies, over 20,000 pieces mainly in gold and semi-precious stones, caused a sensation when published in the world's press shortly after its discovery. The decades of war that followed the discovery prevented the excavation of a seventh grave, its contents presumably looted. The bodies in the excavated graves were of one man and five women, members perhaps of the same family, the cause of their death unknown. They were nomads and the dated of their burial appears to have been some time in the second quarter of the first-century AD. They were wealthy people with sophisticated tastes. The artistic quality of their grave goods, that seem mainly to be of manufactured locally, is breathtaking. The collapsible crown buried with one of the females that was cut from sheets of gold which when assembled form trees with birds is exquisite as are the pair of gold pendants set with precious stones portraying the 'dragon master', a man in nomadic dress grasping a dragon in each hand. External contacts are shown by coins from Parthia and the Roman Empire. The most intriguing coin or perhaps medallion is so far unique and of great importance for the study of Buddhist iconography, which I would like to discuss in rather more detail, given the nature of the journal in which this review is being published.

Found in the grave of the man, it is a gold piece 1.6cm in diameter, bearing

on one side a lion walking left with a *nandipada* to its front and on the other a semi-naked male figure holding or turning an eight-spoked wheel. On each side of the piece is a Kharosthi legend. The cataloguer gives the following transliteration and translation of the legend on the side of the piece bearing the lion: *sih[o] vigatabhay[o]* 'the lion has driven away fear'. The legend on the side of the piece bearing the figure and wheel and the figure is given the following transliteration and translation by the cataloguer: *dharmacakrapravarta[ko]* 'he who brings the wheel of law into motion'. These transliterations and translations should be regarded as tentative. The cataloguer states that this figure could be the oldest representation of the Buddha, and this has been the opinion of other scholars such as Brown (2006), who sees in the figure of the 'naked man' a lost prototype for later Gandharan representations of the walking Buddha pushing the Wheel of Law. However, Joe Cribb and other scholars have observed that the figure is not naked but is wearing a lion-skin, its tail hanging between the figure's legs. Consequently, the figure can be none other than Heracles, whose iconography is used to represent Vajrapāṇi in Gandharan art. If the figure can be interpreted as holding and supporting the wheel rather than turning it, it is possible that the imagery represents Vajrapāṇi in his role of upholder and protector of the *dhamma*. However the origins, function of the piece and the interpretation of its imagery remain enigmatic.

The essays in the catalogue were previously published in French, as part of the catalogue that accompanied the exhibition in the earlier stages of its tour. There is some repetition and also some contradictory material in the various essays, the latter serving to underline the continued debate about the origins, chronology, and function of many of the objects on display. Considerations of time, convenience and expense perhaps prevented the addition of material by any of the British scholars involved with the staging of the exhibition of the British Museum. As is often the case with exhibition catalogues, this catalogue provides excellent photographs of the individual items that were on display but does not provide a record of the layout of the exhibition or show how the objects were exhibited in relation to each other. Both these deficiencies are to some extent mitigated by the British Museum website, where the interested reader can find further information about the exhibition and some scholarly articles by its curator, St John Simpson.

The subtitle of the exhibition and its catalogue is not hyperbole: Afghanistan was a major cultural crossroads of the ancient world, and from the perspective of the student of Buddhism, the catalogue is invaluable in that enhances the under-

standing of the material cultures of the societies in which Buddhism developed during the period of its expansion into central Asia and eastern Iran.

Bibliography

Brown, R.L., 2006. 'The walking Tilya Tepe Buddha: a lost prototype', *Bulletin of the Asia Institute*, 14.

Richard Fynes
De Montfort University, Leicester
rccfynes@dmu.ac.uk

***Taiwan's Tzu Chi as Engaged Buddhism: Origins, Organization, Appeal and Social Impact.* By Yu-Shuang Yao. Foreword by Peter Clarke. Leiden: Global Oriental/Brill. 2012. xviii, 243 pp., 9 illustrations, 23 tables.**

It is many years since I have enjoyed an academic book so much as this one, or benefited so much from reading it. I had the good fortune to be invited by Global Oriental to read a manuscript submitted to them for publication. Since I do not know Chinese, and have no specialist knowledge of Chinese religion, I was disinclined to accept; but I was moved to do so by being told that the author, who lived in Taiwan, had spent nearly ten years looking for a publisher for this, her first book in English. For once, my virtue has been rewarded.

Though the book is closely based on a Ph.D. thesis for the University of London, where it was examined by Professor David Martin and Mrs W.M. Morgan, it is far from being a mere academic exercise. I have no hesitation in describing it as a brilliant achievement.

The book describes and analyses a Buddhist sect or movement which was founded in a remote part of Taiwan in 1966 by a young lady originally called Jin Yun (b.1937). Since her (irregular) ordination in 1963 as a nun, she has been known as Master Cheng Yen. She is still in sole control of the movement. When Dr. Yao began her fieldwork in 1995, the movement had about 3.5 million members, including over 20,000 full time volunteers, and was still dominated by women. Though it had some male members earlier, a formal male section was created only in 1990. By the time her thesis was examined, in 2001, membership

had almost doubled, and about half of the members were men. It has continued to expand, and recently has been permitted to set up a branch in mainland China. Membership is scrupulously documented. Except among student members, the dropout rate appears to be negligible.

It is of course a pity that the book failed to find a publisher for so long, so that the data, and particularly the figures, are not up to date. However, the book is not mere journalistic reportage, but an extremely thoughtful and illuminating analysis, so that it does not lose value over time.

The book is written from a macro-sociological perspective. It stands firmly in the Anglo-American tradition of the sociology of religion, which owes most to Max Weber. More specifically, it studies a new religious movement (NRM) in the spirit and with the methods and techniques of the late Bryan Wilson and his many pupils. Dr Yao was not among them, but acknowledges a particular debt to the monograph on Soka Gakkai in Britain by Wilson and Karel Dobbelaere.¹ She frequently cites and uses the theories and views of sociologists of this school. In particular, a whole chapter near the end of the book is titled "Does Tzu Chi meet the Expectations of Current Sociological Theory?" and looks at whether it meets the ten criteria proposed by Rodney Stark for the success of an NRM.² (Her answer to the question is; "Broadly, yes.") While her analysis is extraordinarily well done, this chapter will mainly interest specialists and may be skipped by the general reader. The rest of the book, on the other hand, is utterly accessible, not least because it is so well organised and clearly written, without a word of waffle or unnecessary jargon. This last virtue is so rare in academic sociology that it must surely be singled out for celebration.

The clarity of expression and organization is already conspicuous in the two introductory chapters. These are *not* to be skipped. The first gives a *tour d'horizon* of Taiwan's religious landscape, gradually narrowing the focus to NRMs. Even someone as completely ignorant of Taiwan as I was is thus taught enough about the context to feel comfortable with the details to come. The next chapter, on the author's methods, could in my view be presented to students as a model. The clarity here serves not merely an aesthetic, or even just an intellectual, purpose, but reflects the author's honesty and total lack of pretentiousness. The section on

¹Wilson, Bryan and Dobbelaere, K., *A Time to Chant, the Soka Gakkai Buddhists in Britain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994).

²Stark, R., 'Why Religious Movements Succeed or Fail: A Revised General Model', *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, Vol. 11, No. 2, 1996, pp. 133-46.

the strengths and weaknesses of the methods employed is particularly admirable. I never thought that I would actually enjoy reading a chapter devoted to matters of method.

Chapters 3 to 8 present the results of the research. Chapter 3 recounts the founder's early life and what led to her founding a movement. She left home in 1960 soon after her father died, and despite her mother's entreaties led an independent and ascetic religious life, at first with an older nun and then by herself. She slowly acquired a few devotees, and even more slowly began to study Buddhist texts.

"In the mid-1960s, three Catholic nuns came to visit Cheng Yen with the intention to try to convert her ... [T]hey told Cheng Yen that most Buddhist disciples only seek to prepare for life after death and do not perform actual deeds that deal with the problems of society. They claimed ... that there were not Buddhists who built schools and hospitals the way that Christians did" (p.66). This made Cheng Yen think, and she studied the compassionate activities of the Bodhisattva Guan Yin. In those days there was no system of state provision or other charitable help for those in medical need. Hospitals regularly required a large deposit before admitting a patient for treatment, and in remote parts, such as down the east coast, where Cheng Yen lived, medical facilities were sadly inadequate. She began by asking her devotees, mostly housewives, to help her raise money to pay for medical deposits for the poor. Initially they did this by knitting baby shoes. They also gave voluntary labour to help the poor and the sick. By 1978, though the movement was still only local, they had raised and spent over a million New Taiwan Dollars (nearly £25,000) and helped over 500 people.

At this point, Cheng Yen announced a project to build a large new hospital. "[T]here was no large hospital in Hualien, only several small ones which were run by Christian missions. A new hospital would, therefore, not only supply income for Tzu Chi but also prevent the loss of potential converts to Christianity, as patients in the Christian hospitals often became Christians themselves. In addition, it was seen as a more efficient way to help the needy by providing medical treatment directly instead of paying for somebody else to supply it. Because Master Cheng Yen regarded sickness as the primary cause of misery and poverty, constructing a hospital seemed to fit perfectly with her philosophy" (pp.72-3). By a lucky chance, at that time "a new railway line which went round the whole island was completed, enabling Cheng Yen to travel frequently to preach in Taipei, and the Movement took root in the capital. ... [M]ost of its members and donations

have since been recruited there”(p.73). The movement caught the attention of prominent citizens, including some influential politicians, and of the media. It has never looked back.

Thus “the motivation for Cheng Yen to become a Buddhist nun came from social reasons rather than religious calling.” She founded her movement, “The Buddhist Compassion Merit Society” as a Buddhist medical charity, virtually a mirror image of the Christian medical charities found almost all over the world; nor has this side of it ever diminished. Some members who were asked why they found Tzu Chi appealing referred to this directly: “I was very glad to hear Tzu Chi was aware of the needs of our society and that one of our Buddhist nuns could do the same things as Christians” (p.182).

In the ‘80s, the movement expanded its aims and ambitions. The Taipei branch became the centre of its “cultural” mission, mainly propagated through print, including free monthly magazines, and over radio and TV. The mission was also extended to educating the rich about the problems in society that they should attend to. This then led to relief work abroad, including (controversially) in mainland China. In 1989 a Nursing College was completed, to be followed by a Medical College, and these have been developed into a whole university. “[S]he has employed three vice-executives to oversee the missions of education, medicine and culture, and reserves only the mission of charity for herself” (p.76).

Over this entire period Tzu Chi has developed its organization. Membership imposes continual duties, above all in raising funds and recruiting more members. Many means have been devised to enhance the spirit of community among members. Moreover, while the Master’s leadership and charisma have never been in question, in some respects her status has approached the superhuman. None of these features are peculiar to religious movements, and the Master constantly stresses the importance of material self-sufficiency (see her speech to new initiates, p.177). So is Tzu Chi in fact a religious movement?

Chapter 4, “Altruism and morality become a way of life”, soon dispels any such doubt. As usual in Buddhism, “morality” here refers to ethical self-control. The chapter introduces the movement’s remarkable ideology. All of it has come, piecemeal, from Cheng Yen, and much of the chapter is culled from her two books, *The Silent Thoughts I* and *II*, which have both been bestsellers in Taiwan.

The movement is indeed unmistakably Buddhist. Its two central Buddhist features are the devotion given to Guan Yin, the embodiment of compassion, and the prominence given to the classical Buddhist teaching of karma. Both of

these features make Tzu Chi's Buddhism predominantly an ethical teaching, one which stresses the practical and is concerned with improving the here and now. Members must "enter the gate of compassion before they can enter the gate of Buddhism". This is obviously consonant with the movement's roots as a medical charity.

Traditional Mahayana recognises a set of six moral qualities which every future Buddha, and thus every devout Buddhist, must strive to bring to perfection; and besides compassion Cheng Yen also lays particular emphasis on three of them: self-restraint through following moral rules; determination; and wisdom/understanding. The whole ethos has a puritanical flavour, and despite some great differences in detail, due to the utterly different historical circumstances, it recalls the flavour of the ethical code for laymen laid down by the Buddha. After all, this is essentially a lay movement, and, as in early Buddhism, each signed up member assumes the responsibility to conform to a specific code of behaviour. For instance, Cheng Yen recommends praying twice a day, but the only true function of prayer is self-scrutiny. Similarly, Tzu Chi and early Buddhism alike reject most of the religious rituals of the society around them. For example, Tzu Chi celebrates the local *secular* festivals, but not the traditional festivals of Chinese Buddhism.

At first blush, it looks as if Cheng Yen's teaching of karma follows the Buddhist mainstream. Nevertheless, some of her views would hardly have met with the Buddha's assent, and probably owe much to the widespread Chinese idea of fate. For example, "a husband's extramarital affair is considered to be the result of the wife's bad karma", and she advises a female disciple, "Don't call it an affair. You should view it as an opportunity..." (p.80). She means, an opportunity to learn how to cope with suffering. The contrast with Buddhist tradition is greater than that with the Buddha himself: even wisdom can be better cultivated by interaction with people than by scriptural study and meditation. Cheng Yen stresses action, not mere intentions, and (as Dr Yao remarks) in this respect follows the *Vinaya* more closely than Buddhist ethics in general.

Indeed, some of her views on death and the afterlife are so unorthodox that karma seems to be deprived of its metaphysical underpinnings and become an ethical teaching pure and simple. Her views on death deserve to be quoted at length.

Tzu Chi has developed a distinctive ritual for the deceased called *zhunian* (assistance chanting). It consists of a group of people reciting the name of a Buddha, A-mi-tuo-fo (the Chinese version of Amitabha

Buddha). When a direct kinsman of a member dies, other members will gather at the home of the deceased immediately to perform *zhunian*...

It is said the function of *zhunian* is to help the dying soul to find the way to heaven. According to Cheng Yen, when death occurs the soul will have to leave the body and go to either hell or heaven in preparation for the next birth. The time between death and rebirth is ... between a few hours and forty-nine days, depending on the karma of the deceased: the better the karma, the sooner will the person be reborn. Cheng Yen says it is a period of transition for the deceased as well as for the surviving kin: the soul may be very confused after departing from the body and may not find the way to heaven, and the living kin may be highly emotional over the loss of the beloved one. The feelings of the living kin, however, can hinder the soul's ability to detach itself from the body and may cause the soul to miss the opportunity for rebirth.

Cheng Yen claims the purpose of *zhunian* is twofold: it directs the soul on its way to heaven, and it creates a peaceful and calm atmosphere for the survivors... *Zhunian* begins as soon as death is announced and is continued for at least eight hours. This is the length of the time which the soul usually takes to depart from its physical body. Cheng Yen advises that *zhunian* is to be performed for seven days but not longer than forty-nine days, the maximum time span before rebirth. Meanwhile the family of the deceased is advised to follow a [Buddhist] vegetarian diet. Cheng Yen said that bad karma would be generated by the killing of an animal and what the mourners had eaten during this period would count against the deceased, and thus reduce the chances for a fortunate rebirth.

Since the function of *zhunian* is merely to guide the departed soul but does not transfer any merit to it, this shows a transient concept of one's relations to one's dead ancestor... Cheng Yen does not mention how to assist the souls which have missed the moment of rebirth or are held in hell. The true function of *zhunian* is best understood as improving life in this world ...

Most importantly, *zhunian* helps people to overcome the traditional negative attitude towards death. Death is traditionally seen as

a kind of pollution and will bring bad luck and illness to the world of the living, so that traditionally only close kin are involved with funerals. For an outsider, it is considered to be extremely unlucky to encounter a funeral. Tzu Chi's practice of death rituals offers the members a more reasonable solution to fit in with their urban modern lives. Not only the relatives of the dead but also Tzu Chi members participate in Tzu Chi funerals, and they are aware that this creates a new form of interpersonal relationship in the cities....

Cheng Yen sees death from the point of view of reincarnation (rebirth). Since the soul will re-enter the circle of reincarnation, the relationship between the deceased and his/her living kin will soon be terminated. It is consequently impossible to maintain any bond between the deceased and his/her surviving relatives, and they no longer share a common collective karma after the forty-nine day period. Against the traditional belief, in Cheng Yen's view dead ancestors will not have any influence on the living descendants beyond this period...

Cremation and preservation of the ashes in a Buddhist funeral parlour are encouraged by Cheng Yen. Tzu Chi regards death as a rather cheerful event, an equivalent to a new beginning of the next life. The funeral is like a farewell party for the dead, so not only relatives but also people from the Movement are invited...(pp.94-6)

Dr Yao then provides a fascinating account of a Tzu Chi funeral. But perhaps the most striking details come last:

Although Tzu Chi provides free funeral services, relatives of the deceased usually donate afterwards to the Movement's funeral fund. Funeral services therefore become an important source of income for Tzu Chi... Cheng Yen asserts that the merit from the donation to the funeral fund cannot be credited to the deceased but accrues to the living donor; and that the only way for the dead to generate merit for him/herself is to donate their body for the public good, e.g. for medical research. The donated bodies usually go to the Movement's hospital.

In Tzu Chi's teachings there is no mention of transferring merit to a dead ancestor or past relatives. The relationship with dead ances-

tors has been de-emphasized by Cheng Yen, not only in her notion of death but also by her view on performing ancestral rites. For example, in her reply to a devotee's question about performing memorial rites for a dead ancestor, the Master says, 'You should sincerely do something for the dead. Then both the doer and the dead will be blessed, and the doer will obtain a reward for the meritorious deed, while the deceased will contribute to the world by motivating you to become a Buddhist.' It may thus be seen that the emphasis is on the work of the living and not on the deceased ancestors (pp.97-8).

To deny that Tzu Chi is a religion would be perverse; but it hardly qualifies as a soteriology.

The next four chapters, comprising most of the second half of the book, are built on the data Dr Yao collected by means of thirty in-depth interviews and 769 questionnaires. Of the latter she handed out 1,214, and the return rate was 66

Chapter 5 discusses the social composition of the membership, chapter 6 the recruiting strategy, chapter 7 the organizational structure and the process of socialisation into the Movement, and chapter 8 analyses the Movement's appeal. There are a lot of tables in chapters 5 and 6, but the text is rarely dry. The material in chapter 7 on affective bonding, indoctrination and initiation strikes me as ethnography at its best.

The general picture of the Membership that emerges is of upward mobility into the middle and even the upper middle class. A very high proportion of members have moved into the city from the countryside. If we leave aside the category of College Student Members, the average age, educational level and (especially) economic standing of members are somewhat higher than those of the general population, so that the Movement's socio-economic profile is much what one would expect when one thinks of Weber's early Protestant bourgeoisie in Europe or, for that matter, the Buddha's following in ancient India.

The author makes it clear that she is particularly interested in why people join and then stay in the movement, and is not content to leave Weber's "elective affinity" to provide all the answers. Chapter 8, packed with quotations from interviews, allows the members to speak for themselves. While motives are diverse, a clear picture emerges. Joining Tzu Chi gives a sense of meaning and purpose to life: members find fulfilment through the self-respect that comes from a life of service to the community. That the demands made on members in terms of both time and money are so heavy only enhances this effect, for it serves to bond members

into a new community in which new affective ties can replace those left behind in the countryside or a lower social class, and makes the appeal self-reinforcing.

A constantly recurring theme is the role played by the Master and the way that her disciples see her and relate to her. It is hard not to admire the balance she manages to strike between authority and humanity, between hard-headed practicality and the re-iteration of ideals. It seems that increasing numbers of members express the hope to be reborn with her in life after life.

The interesting “Afterword” gives an idea of recent trends, particularly the drift towards deification of the Master. (Does that await her after death?) It also considers in what sense Tzu Chi can be classed as secular. Finally the “Afterword” picks up a theme adverted to in Chapter 1 and ascribes Tzu Chi’s success partly to its being the only Buddhist movement to use Hokkien rather than Mandarin Chinese, thus marking itself out as intended for Taiwanese, not Mainlanders. This prompts the thought that successful social movements are often characterised by an ability to meet almost contradictory needs. Tzu Chi has a universalist ideology and has even begun to operate overseas, and yet at the same time is ostentatiously parochial as a movement by and for a little regarded cultural minority in a corner of greater China.

Long though it is, this review has only been able to give a sample of the riches this book contains. It is sad to have to conclude by reporting that while its preparation was in its final stages, Global Orient was taken over by Brill, and then at the last minute Brill decided that it should only be produced by Print on Demand, so that few people are likely even to hear of it, let alone see a copy. That this nowadays can pass for “publishing” makes one despair for the traditional values of academic life.

Richard Gombrich

Emeritus Boden Professor of Sanskrit, University of Oxford

Acting Academic Director, OCBS

richard.gombrich@balliol.ox.ac.uk

***Tibet: a History.* By Sam van Schaik (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2011), xxiii + 324 pp. ISBN 978 0 300 15404 7.**

The work under review is not a social, political, cultural, or religious history of Tibet. It is, as the title suggests, a general history. Writing such a history is an ambitious endeavour. The author, Sam van Schaik, is well known for his work on early Tibetan history and his excellent blog www.earlytibet.com. With this book, the author is apparently ambitious to counter misconceptions about Tibetan history and culture and to supersede earlier propagandist works that claim to give a complete picture of Tibet's past. At the same time, van Schaik does not claim this work to be complete or impartial, but considers it to be a narrative, and "any narrative is limited to the point of view of particular people and events" (p. xvii). With this admitted limitation in mind, the author explores the narratives of figures in Tibetan history who have played a major role in the creation of Tibet, Tibetan culture and identity, or who at least left their mark on later lore, be it as historiographers or story-tellers.

Let me consider the intended audience of this general history of Tibet, presented as a narrative. The title will surely appeal to those who desire a quick fix of Tibetan history. That this book is unburdened by copious endnotes, Tibetan language terms, or references to Tibetan primary sources is attractive for the neophyte in Tibetan studies. This approach suits those who want to learn about the background to the Sino-Tibetan conundrum and the current status of the Tibetan people, without being impregnated with propaganda from either side of the political spectrum. The style of the book is accessible, which also makes it an enjoyable read for "armchair historians", or just those who wish to educate themselves about Tibet in general. Another audience perhaps intended by the author is university students. Those who teach Tibetan studies acknowledge the dearth of suitable literature that they can assign. Works that are not overtly biased, outdated or too specialised are few. Many university course syllabi on Tibetan history contain (chapters from) Snellgrove and Richardson's *A Cultural History of Tibet* (1968), Stein's *Tibetan Civilization* (1972 [1962]) or the more recent *The Tibetans* (2006) by Kapstein. All of these expertly deal with issues of Tibetan culture and religion, but lack a comprehensive and comprehensible account of the history of Tibet as a nation. The question is whether van Schaik's narrative history is able to fill the gap.

The book by no means follows traditional Tibetan accounts of history, although it often makes use of them in order to assess the later influence they had on Tibetan culture and national identity formation. Following tradition, however, Tibet's history here starts in the seventh century and ends with "the present" (I fear that this may age the work before its time). In the first chapter the perspective of Songtsen Gampo (no Tibetan spelling is provided and he is called "Songtsen" for short) takes centre stage. The reader is introduced to Songtsen's thoughts and feelings, which provide a sense of the heritage that the Tibetan Imperial royal house was purported to have had. Throughout the book, van Schaik continues to provide "insight" into the ruminations of Tibetan historical figures. This, some may say, makes history come alive, and in all likelihood this is why the author opted to write a narrative history.

Van Schaik is very familiar with the most up to date research on the history of Tibet, and as he is able to read Tibetan well, he has not been limited to secondary sources. One can safely say that all conditions for writing this history were in place. Nevertheless, I think that his choice of narrative history was unfortunate. The book interweaves three different threads: historical "facts", traditional historiographical accounts, and the aforementioned thoughts and aspirations of historical figures. What the book critically fails to do is to make the reader able to distinguish between these three. This may be partly due to the scarcity of source references, a limitation perhaps imposed by the publisher. Admittedly, requiring the reader to consider the available sources would – presumably – break up the narrative.

Another reason why the narrative structure is of limited value is because it fails to enter into a conversation with its reader: it presents the audience with a polished "closed" version of Tibetan history. The reader is not prompted to question the sources or their interpretations; he is not inspired to further educate himself on a particular topic. Crucially, the book mostly ignores what is not (yet) known, what the sources are silent about, and what questions remain largely unanswered. I believe that giving a sense of the open-endedness of history is a major inspiration for inquisitive people to become involved in research, or perhaps merely to engage in thought. If, as Piet Geyl says, history is "a discussion without end", why not let readers participate in that discussion?

For these reasons *Tibet: a History* is not to be recommended as a textbook for university students without considerable framing: a lecturer of Tibetan history wants students not just to know about Tibet's history but also to think about

it. This reservation comes in spite of the work's up to date and mostly sound (although often unverifiable) research. Nonetheless, this book is likely to offer interesting and previously unknown nuggets of information to scholars of Tibetan history and culture. However, to verify and further pursue the information provided is made very difficult by the lack of references.

As is to be expected, there are also a few minor omissions and inconsistencies. Here are some examples: There are a couple of works missing from the bibliography: *The Enquiry of Vimalaprabha* (p. 18) is referenced in a footnote as 'Q.835: 271' but is absent in the bibliography. The same goes for a nameless work by Ramble published in 2007 (p. 272, n. 7), and for the *Encyclopaedia of Islam* referred to on the same page (n. 18). For those interested in the primary sources that van Schaik uses, it is frustrating to find that references to (mainly Dunhuang) texts are listed in inaccessible formats, for example: IOL Tib J 1746 (p. 273, n. 20). This – unless one already knows about the source – does not provide any concrete information on how to get to it, mainly because any complete bibliographic reference is missing. For the senior scholar of old Tibetan texts these references may suffice; for the eager newcomer this may be thoroughly disheartening. On the rare occasions that Tibetan texts or words are mentioned (predominantly in the notes) there are further minor inconsistencies: sometimes Wylie is used to transliterate (e.g. shel phreng lu gu rgyud: p. 274, n. 22; chos rtsigs: p. 275, n. 28) and at other times the words are merely transcribed (e.g. labrang; podrang: p. 277, n. 3). Some points that are presented as incontrovertible befuddle me, although this may be because I do not have access to the sources that van Schaik had. For example, the second part of the name of the “inventor” of the Tibetan script, Thonmi Sambhota (tib. thon mi/ thu mi sambhoṭa) is explained as a nickname given to him in India, meaning “the Good Tibetan” (p. 12). The latter part of the name, “bhoṭa”, is likely to refer to his “nationality”, but there are no conclusive linguistic arguments for the whole name to mean “the Good Tibetan”, although I find it plausible that later Tibetan historiographers gave it that gloss. Elsewhere van Schaik juxtaposes the early lifestyle of agriculturalists bound to the land with that of nomads who “moved about freely” (p. 13). According to my knowledge, there is no evidence that either confirms or refutes the supposition that nomads had no restrictions on their movement, but it is more than plausible that even as early as the 7th century, Tibetan nomadic groups had a certain extent of territoriality and were bound to using specific pastures at specific times of the year (as they did in later times).

Above, I applauded van Schaik's efforts to connect the past with the present, but sometimes the links he makes are not entirely convincing: he mentions for example that the battle flags on long straight poles carried by 7th century Tibetan soldiers, described in "some accounts", were "ancestors of the peaceful prayer flags that adorn Buddhist sites in Tibet today" (p. 17). Furthermore, even though the book keeps issues pertaining to doctrinal Buddhism at bay, some references to it must have been seen as unavoidable. In the context of the introduction of Buddhism into Tibet, van Schaik notes that karma literally means "actions" and that the doctrine of karma was a "radical contradiction of the Tibetan belief" that the way to avoid suffering and to achieve happiness was to placate the gods and spirits (p. 32). He is right in asserting that doctrinal Buddhism did not integrate instantaneously and effortlessly with existing Tibetan beliefs, but I doubt whether the notion of karma was ever perceived or presented as a contradiction, let alone a radical one.

These criticisms do not, however, detract from the fact that this book is a major contribution, not because it presents Tibetan history in a radically new light but because it fills a gap in the market. Prior to the publication of this book, no "complete" history of Tibet was readable, accessible and without a political or ideological axe to grind. As mentioned above, the work gives an unbiased overview that strikes a balance between religio-cultural and political history. The book repeatedly links events in the past with current Tibetan cultural practices and political quandaries, by which the author expertly shows the relevance of history to current-day issues. Van Schaik furthermore has succeeded in debunking the bunk that is Tibetan history in the general consciousness. He convincingly shows, for example, that the Tibetans have been a warlike people; that Buddhist Tibetans have not eschewed resorting to violence and would even fight each other; and that Tibet was neither a hell on earth nor a Shangri-la prior to the Chinese takeover. Even though van Schaik has not succeeded in writing the new academic standard work I had hoped for, this extremely erudite book comes fully recommended to readers who want to understand the background of a nation and a people, without being burdened by academic minutiae or too many open ends. Because this book helps a general audience develop a balanced view of Tibet and its history, I can only hope that *Tibet: a History* will soon be published as a cheap paperback, available at all major bookstores, supermarkets, and airports.

Berthe Jansen

b.k.jansen@hum.leidenuniv.nl

***Locations of Buddhism: Colonialism and Modernity in Sri Lanka.* By Anne M. Blackburn (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 2010). xxii + 237 pp. ISBN: 978-0-226-05507-7.**

Professor Anne Blackburn is a scholar with specialist expertise on the Theravādin Saṅgha of Sri Lanka. While some of her previous work, such as *Approaching Dhamma* (Pariyatti 2003) and *Religions, Reasons and Gods: Essays in Cross-cultural Philosophy of Religion* (Cambridge 2006), has dealt with Buddhism/religion from a universal point of view, with her new work she has returned to her original passion, the life and work of Sinhala *bhikkhus*. This was the focus of her PhD Thesis and her early book *Buddhist learning and Textual Practice in Eighteenth-Century Lankan Monastic Culture* (Princeton 2001).

Negotiating with religious leaders in order to understand peace and war in a given society has become the focus of many academic disciplines. The post 9/11 political discourse has generated a new vigour and a new approach which tries to understand, unlock and perhaps collaborate with these traditional powers in order to usher democratic stability into many otherwise fragile states.

After a protracted ethnic war of 30 years, Sri Lanka is looking for ways to create democratic recovery. Internal and international power brokers will benefit from understanding the transformed role of *bhikkhus* in defining and reshaping the politics of the contemporary Sinhala majority – as they have done throughout history.

The Venerable Hikkaḍuvē Sri Sumaṅgala (1827-1911) was an important contributor to the process of intellectualizing and domesticating Sinhala Buddhism during the colonial era. In this semi-biographical work Blackburn analyses the socio-political context in which the monk became an influential player in defining the role of the *bhikkhus* and preserving Buddhism under a colonial rule that actively supported Christian missionary work. Hikkaḍuvē produced commentaries in Sinhala, the majority vernacular language, on ancient texts such as the *Tripitakaya*. I call this “domesticating the dhamma” with reference to its use, and Sinhalizing Buddhism in its political relevance. The author declares: “... [T]he aims of this book are not solely biographical. Rather, this study aims to address some of the pressing problems in the study of religion under colonialism, and the study of the impact of colonialism on the thoughts and social worlds of colonized South Asians” (p. XI). I find this book valuable because it elucidates not just the

colonial impact on religion, but also reveals how religion and its traditional power agents reacted and re-cast their roles under aggressive colonial rule.

Members of the Saṅgha reacted to colonial rule in at least three ways.. Some led resistance; some withdrew or became passive collaborators; and some engaged creatively and intellectually with both the indigenous society and the colonial masters. Hikkaḍuvē took the last path and thus gave a new direction to modern Buddhism in Lanka.

The structure of the book is novel. Rather than raise a fundamental question at the beginning and take the readers through an analysis to reach an answer, Blackburn does the opposite. She gives detailed and little known information about non-religious, largely academic, activities of Hikkaḍuvē. She thus unearths the socio-political dynamics that were governing the power relations between the prominent *bhikkhus* and their colonial rulers on the one hand, and between the Saṅgha and the emerging merchant class of Southern Sinhalas on the other. This locates the life and work of Hikkaḍuvē in a changing society with its political anxieties. The conventional way of writing about a historical individual. is to investigate their life to determine their personality and the psychological trends which make the subject noteworthy. However, in this book Blackburn is investigating the structure of a life as a basis for understanding a whole society, or a part of it. Locating Buddhism thus becomes a kind of “religious geography”. This is a methodological novelty.

In her first chapter, Blackburn describes a key historical transition that was set in motion by the Sangha of the southern provinces of Lanka when they challenged the Kandy high caste (Goyigama) monks. The Kandy fraternity, even after their reform as the Siyam Nikāya under Venerable Vāliṇṇa Saraṇamkara, continued their hegemony over the southern Sangha (Malalgoda 1976: 82,128 and 139). Hikkaḍuvē was the first Southern monk to be appointed to the post of Saṅgha Nāyaka (chief monk) at the historic mountain temple of Sṛī Pāda. This was a direct challenge to Kandyan control. The appointment, validated by the English rulers, was a symbol of political transition; it marked the beginning of the end of the Kandyan kingdom and its religio-political authority.

Unlike Malalgoda, who in his unmatched research of this period was the first to investigate these changes, Blackburn is not interested in the fractional divisions amongst the Sangha based on region and caste, a subterranean dynamic that fuels identity politics. Her focus is on human relations and the careful social negotiation by a southern monk whose primary role was intellectualizing Buddhism so

that it would survive colonial oppression. She bases her analysis on “life history”, avoiding the much travelled “colonial history” path. She questions the validity and popular use of the concepts of “modernity” and “colonialism” and attempts to redefine them.

The second chapter deals with Hikkaḍuvē’s popularity as a scholar, and his move to the suburb of Colombo where he worked to establish the Vidyodaya Pirivena. In many ways, the Vidyodaya project was a reaction to the missionary led education that had replaced the once influential Pirivenas. Blackburn traces how Hikkaḍuvē, instead of following the traditional Saṅgha inclination to confront the colonial rule, found gaps within the colonial administration in which he could cultivate support and recognition. He did this while keeping the colonial administration out of the daily running of the institute: diplomatic in manner, he was in effect subversive. Hikkaḍuvē displayed what Blackburn terms “locative pluralism”. “Rather than assuming a single dominant affiliation or “identity” as the hermeneutical key to social action, it is more revealing to assume that the person we study exemplifies locative pluralism, acting simultaneously in relation to plural and shifting collectives of belonging to which they feel a sense of responsibility and emotional investment” (p 210). While challenging the missionaries, colonial masters and local collaborators, Hikkaḍuvē restored the importance of the Saṅgha in defining and teaching Buddhism. However, Blackburn shows a tendency to treat Hikkaḍuvē as apolitical, a controversial position to say the least.

Hikkaḍuvē was in many ways a strong defender of the faith and of the tradition that governs it. In 1831, Venerable Bentara Atthadassī, (1790-1862) a pupil of the rebellious reformist southern monk Karatoṭa Dhammārāma (1737-1827), proposed three key ideas to reform and revive the role of the Saṅgha. While his proposals were aimed at the entire Saṅgha, they posed a direct challenge to the Kandian Siyam Nikāya. In his first point, Bentara challenged the practice of inviting a selected group of monks for the Sāṅghika dāna (meal provided to the Monastic Community). He claimed that this was against the *Dakkhinā Vibhanga Sutta*. He argued that inviting monks by name to a Dāna makes the event *pudgalika* (personal) rather than *Sāṅghika* (communal). This promoted a sharp debate and wide division in the Saṅgha as well as among the learned laity, as Dāna in Theravāda Buddhism is an important rite, central to lay accumulation of merit.. Bentara’s other two proposals for reform dealt with timing: when exactly to observe the *Pōya* days (full moon, new moon and the two mid-points between) on which fully ordained monks recite their code of conduct and the

vassāna (three months of rains retreat). Bentara argued that neither the Siyam monks nor the leading monks of the Amarapura Nikāya held these important rituals according to the correct calendar. His campaign gained notice, and in 1837 he was invited to present his case and debate with Valagedara Dhammadassī, a learned Siyam monk. Bentara's challenges appeared as important and based on sound historical evidence. Yet the Siyam Nikāya and those who were loyal to Kandyan authority opposed Bentara's reformist proposals. The debate continued for years. It took key turns in 1850, 1854 and 1855. At all these notable points, it was young Hikkaḍuvē who, despite his southern roots, acted on behalf of the Kandyan monks to argue against Bentara and block the proposed reforms. These debates eventually led to division and the forming of a new Nikāya, the *Srī Kalyāṇi Sāmagrīdharma Saṅgha Sabhā*. According to the Vinaya (the monastic code), contributing to the splitting of the Saṅgha is a *garukāpatti* – an offense of the utmost seriousness.. We do not know the motives of Hikkaḍuvē, but his willingness to uphold the tradition even when it seemed to contradict the Vinaya is fully demonstrated.¹ In Blackburn's narrative this side of Hikkaḍuvē gets buried in the details of his academic work. She seems to justify the dichotomy as "locative pluralism".

Chapters three, four and five of the book largely deal with important stages in Hikkaḍuvē's reforms. Superficially these reforms appear "modern" in the wider context of South and Southeast Asian Buddhist societies; however, they mainly served to concretize the central role of the Saṅgha in determining the socio-politics of the Sinhala as a people and Lanka as a state. His diplomatic handling of the highly sensitive issue of caste within the Saṅgha was typical.. Blackburn traces the struggles Hikkaḍuvē faced in balancing his intellectual understanding with the traditional practice: "We see Hikkaḍuvē inhabited an entangled world of discourse and social practices." Beside the caste issue, Hikkaḍuvē launched into the controversial topic of the Vinaya, especially in relation to monastic dress.

Attempting to "reform" the Sāsana so that it could withstand the pressures of the "modern" world, Hikkaḍuvē became the symbol of tradition in the Sinhala Saṅgha. His keen interest in institutionalizing the practice of Shishyanu-Shishya (teacher-pupil) lineages illustrates this. Among the many influenced by his reforms was Don David Hewavitharane, later known as Anagārika Dharmapāla, the leading Sinhala Buddhist nationalist campaigner, who promoted the ethnore-

¹ For detailed discussion of this and many other points concerning division in the Sinhala Saṅgha see chapters four and five of Malalgoda's *Buddhism in Sinhalese Society 1750-1900* (1976).

ligious concept of “Sinhala-Bauddhaya” (a Sinhala who essentially is a Buddhist). Chapter five details these changing political dynamics and how Hikkaḍuvē became a constant negotiator between tradition and modernity.

However, most details of chapters four and five concern issues that have already earned much attention from historians such as K. M De Silva (1986) and from sociologist Kitsiri Malalgoda.

What is missing in Blackburn’s narrative is a much-needed analysis of the political impact of Hikkaḍuvē’s projects, because it is their political implications that dictated the Sangha-State relationship. Blackburn chooses to avoid discussing the dichotomy Hikkaḍuvē constantly displayed. In public, he was a scholar monk whom the colonists treated with respect. However, in private, he often held entrenched traditional views that supported radical agitation against the colonists. Hikkaḍuvē managed to hide those views, and even willingly accepted colonial gifts and positions (Seneviratne 1999: 133).

It is in the sixth and last chapter, after a brief survey of the influential literature on modern Buddhism in Lanka, that Blackburn presents her concluding arguments and most sustained theoretical analysis. She argues against our established understanding of the colonial era of Lanka and the rest of South Asia. Blackburn maintains that individuals like Hikkaḍuvē symbolize a transition from the traditional role of *bhikkhus* to a modernist path: a path that encouraged a new level of intellectualizing the religion by internationalizing the local as well as localizing the international (or transnational) ideas of Buddhism. She writes: “This study of Hikkaḍuvē thus reminds us to remain alert to domains of Buddhist intellectual expression and to arguments for the rectification of problems understood in some sense as social and collective, that occurred in periods or conditions we may call ‘modern’ or ‘colonial modern’ but not in a historicist or developmentalist vein” (pp. 212).

Building on her 2009a work, she questions the current analyses of Sinhala Buddhism as it evolved during the late 19th and early 20th century. She maintains that sorting modern Buddhism into categories such as “Protestant Buddhism”, “Buddhist Revivalism” and “Buddhist Modernism” is of limited use in deconstructing traditional monastic power in Sinhala Buddhism. Blackburn contests the use of terms such as “traditional” versus “modern” in identifying a trend in history. She argues that often these are empty, unless they are used in the discursive form of understanding “oneself” and “other”.

This position moves the rest of the project in a different direction. “Tradition”, as the term is used in political science, is not mere absence of technology, democracy or forms of economic distribution. It refers to a dynamic that brings the past into the present – a particular constructed past as defined by certain texts and individuals. Hikkaḍuvē was a continuum of that “past” who felt challenged by the “modern” times introduced by English colonialists. Yet he was a clever manipulator of his modern “present” to promote his agenda. That his agenda was to renew the past is a point that Blackburn seems to have avoided analyzing.

She is right in arguing for the unchanged influence of monastic authority. Yet the thematic categorizations and analyses of Buddhism in Lanka with which she takes issue have been created to show how during different periods the Saṅgha and the laity engaged with each other as well with the political authority in different ways. Blackburn’s claim that “Protestant Buddhism” did not produce any continuum is debatable. Protestant Buddhism is a term introduced by anthropologist Gananath Obeyesekere (1970;1975) and later adopted by Richard Gombrich (1988) to characterize a type of social transformation that Buddhism as a faith underwent, and the dynamic of such “Protestantism” continues in Lanka until today. In fact, this version of Buddhism is more powerful in contemporary Lankan society than the monastic tradition. Indeed, a new generation of young southern monks who were exposed to Protestant Buddhism became key leaders of Saṅgha involvements in the 1971 and 1988 anti-state revolts led by the *Janatā Vimukti Peramuna*. Thus Protestant Buddhism was not a short-lived phenomenon, as Blackburn argues, but a dynamic socio-political response of Buddhism to its challenges. Stanley Tambiah (1986), a known anthropologist, asked whether “protestant Buddhism” became the reason for which *Buddhism* was *Betrayed*? It was indeed, for its resistance to the state and the “non-Buddhist” forces deepened and took a “jihadist” turn in the discourse of war against the separatist Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. The major weakness of Blackburn’s argument lies not only in her limited appreciation of the “protestant” dynamics of Buddhism and the politics they generated in Lanka, but also in her preference for probing intellectual, social and institutional lives and practices of the Saṅgha as a superior way of understanding or “locating” Buddhism in Lanka.

Research on “life history” is an area with immense importance for understanding the survival, political influence and defining ideology of Buddhism in Lanka. Recent social discourses and their influence as mobilized by Venerable Gangodawila Soma (Berkwitz 2004) and Venerable Walpola Rahula (Raghavan

2011) confirm this fact. Our understanding of individual Sangha members promises to provide insight into the socio-political dynamic that motivates them and brings them into public life. However, analysis of certain individual lives alone will not be enough to make us understand the historic role and relation of *bhikkhus* to Sinhala society. Buddhism in Lanka is not only a religion, but also the hegemonic framework that defines “self” and “other”, as well as the socio-politics arising from those definitions.

Despite this limitation, and a rather dull cover design, Blackburn’s book is a scholarly intervention and an enjoyable read. It promises to be a landmark text for any student of Buddhism and of Sinhala Buddhism in particular. Her work should challenge the modern native scholars of Sinhala Buddhism to find new methodological and conceptual frameworks to understand Buddhism and its inseparable relationship to Sinhala and their politics.

References

- Berkwitz, Stephen C., “Resisting the Global in Buddhist Nationalism: Venerable Soma’s Discourse of Decline and Reform”, *Journal of Asian Studies* 67, 2008: pp. 73-106.
- Blackburn, Anne M., “‘Buddhist Revival’ and the ‘Work of Culture’ in 19th-century Lanka” in *The Anthropologist and the Native: Essays for Gananath Obeyesekere*, Seneviratne, H. L. (ed.), Anthem Press, London and New York, 2009a.
- De Silva, K. M., *History of Sri Lanka*, Penguin, New Delhi, 1989.
- Gombrich, R. and Obeyesekere, G., *Buddhism Transformed: Religious Change in Sri Lanka*, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, 1988.
- Malalgoda, Kitsiri, *Buddhism in Sinhalese Society 1750-1900*, University of California Press, Berkeley, 1976.
- Obeyesekere, Gananath, “Religious Symbolism and Political Change in Ceylon”, *Modern Ceylon Studies*, Vol. 1, No. 1, 1970, pp. 43-63
- , “Sinhalese-Buddhist Identity in Ceylon”, in de Vos, G. & L. Romanucci-Ross (eds.), *Ethnic Identity: Cultural Continuities and Change*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1975, pp. 231-258.
- Raghavan, Suren, “Venerable Walpola Rahula and the politicization of the Sinhala Sangha”, *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies*, 2011, Volume 1, pp. 114-133.

Seneviratne, H. L., *The Work of Kings: The New Buddhism in Sri Lanka*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1999.

Tambiah, Stanley J., *Buddhism Betrayed?*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1992

Suren Raghavan

University of Kent

raghavansuren@gmail.com

The Ego Trick: What Does It Mean To Be You?. By Julian Baggini (London: Granta Publications, 2011). 304 pp., ISBN 978-1847081926 (paperback).

This book, based on the author's PhD thesis, "Psychological Reductionism about Persons – A Critical Development", is about the perplexing subject of the self. He rejects the "pearl" view which presupposes that the self is an essence, an unchanging core, and favours the "bundle theory", which goes back to the Buddha – that the self is a collection of sensations, thoughts and perception. The strong sense of unity and singleness of the self which arises from this messy, fragmented sequence of experiences and memories in a brain which has no control centre is the result of the Ego Trick.

The first part (Chapter 1-6) of the book supports four main claims. First, there is nothing and no part of you which contains your essence. Second, you have no immortal soul. Third the sense of self must in some way be a construction. Fourth, this unity of sense of self is in some ways fragile, and in others robust.

In Chapter 7, Baggini makes three main claims: (i) the unity of the self is psychological, (ii) we are no more than, but more than just matter [*sic*] and (iii) identity is not what matters.

The unity of the self is psychological

For my part, when I enter most intimately into what I call *myself*,
I always stumble on some particular perception or other, of heat or cold,
light or shade, love or hatred, pain or pleasure, colour or sound, etc.
I never catch *myself*, distinct from such perception.
David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*,
Book 1, Part 4, Section 6

Baggini describes the “self” as a collection or bundle of emotions, thoughts and perceptions. You, the person, are not separate from these thoughts. The self is not a substance or thing; it’s a function of what this collection does. In this sense, the “I” seems to be a verb dressed as a noun.

The unity of experience – what we call the “self” or “I” – is the result of the Ego Trick, the remarkable way in which the collection of mental events, made possible by the brain, constructs a singular self without a singular *thing* underlying it. While it seems as if there is an unchanging core, there is actually none. According to Baggini, while we do not understand how this trick works, the point is that it does.

This fits well with the Buddhist concept of five aggregates: body, feeling, perception, mental construction and consciousness; and each of these, according to the Buddha, is not-self, *anatta* (SN 22.59).

We are no more than, but more than just matter [sic]

They [*dualists*] started from the correct idea that thoughts, feelings and sensations were not physical things. The category mistake was to conclude that they must therefore be a different *kind of thing*, a non-physical thing. But there is another, more plausible alternative: they are not *things* at all. Rather thinking and feeling are what brains and bodies *do*. Mind should not be thought of a substance, but as a kind of activity. (p.63)

Baggini mentioned that there are three seemingly obvious truths. The first is that thoughts, feelings, emotions and so on are real. The second truth is that whatever thoughts and feelings are, they are not straightforwardly physical. The third is that the universe has within it only the physical things described by physics equations. According to Baggini, the only way to make sense of these three facts

is that mental events *emerge* from physical ones, without being strictly identical with them.

While Baggini describes consciousness as an emergent property, he notes that he is not trying to explain consciousness; to do so would require an explanation of *how* it emerges, the mechanism of its emergence. He emphasizes that even if we don't know *how* it does so, consciousness does indeed emerge from complex physical events in the brain. We have feelings and thoughts because of the brain that works, not because there is something else. The evidence is that if you alter the brain, you alter the consciousness.

In a similar tone, the Buddha described “all” as the eye and forms, the ear and sounds, the nose and odours, the tongue and tastes, the body and tactile objects, the mind and mental phenomena (SN 36.23).

Identity is not what matters

To illustrate this, Baggini uses the Ship of Theseus Paradox. Consider a wooden ship which has had all the parts replaced over time. Is it still the same ship? Hobbes added another puzzle: if all the old parts are reassembled, does it have a stronger claim to being the original ship?

Baggini remarked that we need only to think of early childhood and dementia to realise that we are not strictly identical with our past selves.

This concept is remarkably similar to a passage in the *Milindapañha*. King Menander asked Nāgasena whether he who is reborn remains the same or becomes another. “Neither the same nor another,” was the answer he received. Nāgasena gave the examples of a baby, the lighting of a lamp and the derivatives of milk (curds, butter and ghee) to illustrate his answer.

Critical review

Suzanne Segal's depersonalizing experience (p.26)

To answer Baggini, what she was feeling, as described, is not *anatta*. The experience of *anatta* is *not* a case of the self that one used to have ceasing to exist (SN 44.10).

Descriptions like “vastness”, “infinite”, “no one and everyone, nothing but everything”, do indeed sound like the Hindu idea of *brahman*, as Baggini has correctly identified. In fact, Segal (1998, p.53) herself mentioned that her experience

could be the state of Cosmic Consciousness described by Maharishi Mahesh Yogi. This concept is also strikingly similar to, perhaps the same as, the Buddhist concept of formless absorptions or *jhānas* – described as “infinite space”, “infinite consciousness”, etc.

We read that Segal had a massive brain tumour. Her “spiritual” experience seems very likely to be a result of her cerebral pathology. While we will never know the true cause of her experience, according to Baggini, the most likely explanation is neurological. We also learn that Segal eventually recovered memories of abuse during her childhood. (Segal, 1998, pp.174-175)

Simeon and Abugel (2006, pp.142-146) suggest that she was probably having a depersonalization disorder. Waugaman (2010, p.1506) suggests in his review of Simeon and Abugel (2006) that Segal’s experience could possibly be a dissociative disorder, rather than simply depersonalization.

Baggini’s self

For Baggini, the sense of self is really there, but it is not a single, solid thing. The simplest analogy is with a cloud. For him, the solidity of self is an illusion; the self itself is not.

Although the Buddha did not deny the person or the individual (SN 22.22), he did not call the process, what Baggini calls the Ego Trick, the *self*. For the Buddha, all phenomena are not-self (*Dhammapada* 279).

The Buddha considered the following as inherently misleading:

I have a self.....I have no self.....It is precisely by means of self that I perceive self.....It is precisely by means of self that I perceive not-self..... It is precisely by means of not-self that I perceive self.....This very self of mine – the knower that is sensitive here & there to the ripening of good & bad actions — is the self of mine that is constant, everlasting, eternal, not subject to change, and will stay just as it is for eternity. (MN 2, translated from Pali by Thanissaro Bhikkhu)

Self-identification is described by the Buddha as the five aggregates affected by clinging (MN 44). When one is stuck, tightly stuck, in desire, lust, delight and craving for the five aggregates, therefore one is called a being (SN 23.2). But if one doesn’t have an underlying tendency towards the five aggregates, then one is

not measured in accordance with it; if one is not measured in accordance with it, then one is not reckoned in terms of it (SN 22.96).

Split-brain thought experiment (p.65)

In the split-brain thought experiment, Baggini asks us to imagine that the two hemispheres of his brain are surgically divided and placed into two bodies whose brains have been destroyed. The right is called Rightian, and the other Leftian. Both awake and claim to be Baggini, remember as much about Baggini's past as each other and have identical personalities. Baggini asks which, if any, is Baggini?

Baggini says that both can't be Baggini. He reasons that if both are himself, then both must be the same person, but clearly they aren't. Both will now be having different experiences and acquire different memories.

I disagree with Baggini's conclusion. Here it is interesting to note that some spiritual adepts in the tradition of Tibetan Buddhism are able to manifest multiple *tulkus* (incarnations) simultaneously. There are also *tulkus* who incarnate before the previous incarnation has died (Thondup, 1998, p.19). So, both, Rightian and Leftian could be Baggini. In the case of these *tulkus*, a mental process is utilized, and in the case of this thought experiment, a physical process, splitting the brain, is utilized.

Baggini on Reincarnation (pp.187-188)

Baggini writes that the case against reincarnation is already solid; hence no such evidence is needed. One would naturally expect him to elaborate further, but disappointingly he doesn't. He also mentions that there is simply no good reason to believe it. However, this does not presume its non-occurrence. For example, there is no good reason for the universe to exist, but it does exist.

Baggini has interviewed Akong Tulku Rinpoche and Ringu Tulku Rinpoche. We read that both do not remember things from their past lives. This may not be surprising, considering that we can't even remember our early childhood. This condition of childhood amnesia is probably due to how the brain develops from infancy to adulthood. Children who remember past lives also tend to lose these memories as they grow older. It would then be strange if people were normally to remember past lives.

Baggini writes, “If someone had really remembered a detail from past life which could be verified and they could not have otherwise known, that would be an astonishing recovery.....” (pp.185-186). Here I would like to refer Baggini to the work of Ian Stevenson, whose extensive research on reincarnation was based on children who claimed to remember previous lives. Also, to Jim Tucker, who took over Stevenson’s work on his retirement.

Now if the mind is an activity, and, as the old dictum goes, “every action has an equal and opposite reaction”, then *karma* or action is what makes the world go round. Rebirth takes place because of *karma*. And the universe exists because of *karma*. This would not be surprising if we consider matter and mind to be interdependent. This could be the cause for spontaneous creation described in *The Grand Design* (Hawking & Mlodinow, 2010, p.180).

Transformative powers (pp .223-224)

While Baggini agrees that the bundle view in some ways radically changes how we view life and self, he feels that it leaves more as it is than it changes. He writes about the attachment to his partner and the terrible distress if one were to die before the other. He also mentions Susan Blackmore, a psychologist and Zen practitioner, saying she will be devastated if her husband dies. However, he himself provides two responses by quoting Paul Broks, a clinical neuropsychologist and Derek Parfit, a philosopher. He writes that Broks says “that despite his intellectual convictions, he lives as a ‘soul theorist’ or ‘ego theorist’ who persists with the belief in a fixed core of self”.

We have this deep intuition that there is a core, an essence there, and it’s hard to shake off, probably impossible to shake off, I suspect. But neuroscience shows that there is no centre in the brain where things do all come together. Paul Broks (p.28)

I wouldn’t expect acceptance of “the true view” to have great transformative powers, chiefly because the true view is so hard to accept. Derek Parfit (p.234)

Intellectual understanding and mere acceptance of *anatta* is not enough. The great transformative powers lie in the experience, realization and insight into *anatta*, usually through meditative practice.

The death of a loved one need not necessarily be a negative experience. Sometimes love means letting go. Death could be an inspiring and uplifting experience. I am particularly reminded of one of Ajahn Brahm's talks in which he recounted the death of his father with the simile of a concert:

As I walked out of the crematorium in Mortlake, West London, after his funeral service, I clearly remember that it was drizzling and very cold. Yet I never felt sad at all. I felt inspired, uplifted and deeply moved. "Dad, that was a wonderful performance. That was a tremendous concert that you played in front of your son. I will never forget those fugues and cadenzas and the deep feeling that you gave to your symphony. You were a maestro of life. How lucky I was to have been at your concert." I was inspired, not sad. I felt deep gratitude, not grief. I felt I had witnessed one of the great lives of my era.

I strongly recommend *The Ego Trick*. It has certainly clarified and deepens my understanding of the Buddhist concept of not-self.

Bibliography

- Baggini, J. (1996). *Psychological Reductionism About Persons - A Critical Development*, PhD Thesis, University College London.
- Baggini, J. (2011). *The Ego Trick – What Does it Mean to be You?* Granta Publications, London.
- Bodhi, Bhikkhu. (2003). *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Samyutta Nikaya*, 2nd edition, Wisdom Publications, Massachusetts.
- Davids, T.W.R. (trans.) (1890). *The Questions of King Milinda*, Clarendon Press, Oxford.
- Hawking, S. & Mlodinow, L. (2010). *The Grand Design*, Bantam Press, London.
- Nanamoli, B. & Bodhi, B. (1995) *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha: A Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya*, Wisdom Publications, Massachusetts.
- Segal, S. (1998). *Collision with the Infinite: A Life Beyond the Personal Self*, Blue Dove Press, California.
- Simeon, D. & Abugel, A. (2006). *Feeling Unreal: Depersonalization Disorder and the Loss of the Self*, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Thanissaro, B. (trans.) (2012). *The Dhammapada: A Translation*, Access to Insight. Retrieved from <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/kn/dhp/dhp.intro.than.html>

—— (trans.) (2010). *Sabbasava Sutta: All the Fermentations* (MN 2), Access to Insight. Retrieved from <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/mn/mn.002.than.html>

Thondup, T. (2011). *Incarnation: The History and Mysticism of the Tulku Tradition of Tibet*, Shambhala Publications, Massachusetts.

Waugaman, R.M. (2010). Review of *Feeling Unreal: Depersonalization Disorder and the Loss of Self* by Daphne Simeon and Jeffrey Abugiel (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006) in *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, 57(6): 1504-1508.

Rahula Thor
Independent Buddhist Scholar
rahula.thor@gmail.com