

Madhyama-āgama Studies

Anālayo

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Dharma Drum Buddhist College Series

In 1994, Master Sheng Yen (1931–2009), the founder of Dharma Drum Buddhist College, began publishing the Series of the Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies. The purposes of publishing this series were: to provide a venue for academic research in Buddhist Studies supported by scholarships from the Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies; to encourage top-quality Buddhist research; and to cultivate an interest in Buddhist research among the readership of the series. Moreover, by encouraging cooperation with international research institutions, he hoped to promote the domestic status of the academic study of Buddhism.

In keeping with Master Sheng Yen's vision, in order to promote different aspects of exchange in academic research, we at Dharma Drum Buddhist College have begun to publish three educational series:

Dharma Drum Buddhist College Research Series
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The Research Series (DDBC-RS) is primarily intended as a venue for academic research in the field of Buddhist Studies in general and of Chinese Buddhism in particular. The Translation Series (DDBC-TS) will present English renditions of Chinese canonical works as well as other important works, or else Chinese translations of academic publications on Buddhism that have appeared in European languages or Japanese, etc. The Special Series (DDBC-SS) will accommodate works which require special publication formats.

Among our future goals is the extensive development of Buddhist digital publishing and information to adapt to the interactive and hyper-connective environment of the Web 2.0 age. This will allow research outcomes to be quickly shared and evaluated through the participation of individual users, through such media as blogs, shared tagging, wikis, social networks and so on. Our hope is to work towards developing an open environment for academic studies (perhaps called Science 2.0) on Buddhist culture that will be more collaborative and efficient than traditional academic studies. In this way, Dharma Drum Buddhist College will continue to help foster the availability of digital resources for Buddhist Studies.

Huimin Bhikṣu, President
Dharma Drum Buddhist College
July 26, 2010

Foreword

Once the great indologist and eminent writer Govind Chandra Pande remarked that in a way Buddhism can be considered the most universal of all the historical forms of spiritual culture. In the long history of Buddhism its followers did not hesitate to adopt the linguistic and material modes of culture prevalent in the societies where it happened to spread. Thus Buddhist literature was readily created, for instance, in Central and East Asia and was considered fully authoritative. The historical Buddha himself did not favour the notion of any originally authentic language or of an absolutely sacrosanct canon of Holy Scripture. He wanted his disciples to accept his words only after duly testing and critically examining them.

On the strength of this rational message, says G.C. Pande, "even Buddhist mysticism depends on the scientific analysis of psychic and parapsychic phenomena and a system of moral and mental training depending on this analysis and testable by personal experience".

Borne out by G.C. Pande's observations it can certainly be maintained that also scholarly Buddhists by confession and likewise such members of Buddhist monastic orders can be expected – in a strictly scientific sense – to do solid research on the canonical and paracanonical texts of their various *dharma* traditions.

For over a decade now a good example of admirable scholarship on the part of *saṅgha* members is set by Bhikkhu Anālayo. In 2007 he successfully defended his D.Litt. dissertation at Philipp's University Marburg and published the same in 2011 (Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation, Taipei), entitled *A Comparative Study of the Majjhima-nikāya* in two vols. In this comprehensive textual study the author compares the Pāli discourses of the *Majjhima-nikāya* with their parallels preserved in Chinese, Sanskrit and Tibetan. As he has shown con-

vincingly, a meticulous comparative study together with judiciously handling the material dealt with does indeed go a long way towards clarifying many obscure places occurring in the canonical texts of Early Buddhism. When employing working hypotheses – indispensable, of course, in view of the numerous knotty textual and hermeneutical problems the buddhologist frequently is confronted with – Bhikkhu Anālayo always is circumspect and does not 'zoom' to conclusions. In the case of textual discrepancies between *nikāya* and *āgama* accounts, for instance, there is no need always to reconsider a given school affiliation; such discrepancies, as Bhikkhu Anālayo argues, are, more often than not, due to the "fluctuating nature of oral transmission".

As evidenced by quite a few articles that have appeared in various learned journals and by some monographs, alongside undertaking his D.Litt. dissertation and preparing it for publication Bhikkhu Anālayo has indefatigably been continuing his comparative studies, either focusing anew on topics already treated in his Habilitationsschrift or undertaking altogether new tasks of *nikāya-āgama* comparison by breaking fresh ground for the benefit of both the specialist and the cultured reader interested in early Buddhist canonical texts. I am very glad to see that nineteen out of his postdoctoral research papers have been singled out for a republication in one volume which will surely facilitate considerably accessibility to all those who are working or will be working in the respective area of Buddhist Studies and hopefully also to the general reader.

Bhikkhu Pāsādika
3rd May, 2012

Introduction

The *Madhyama-āgama* was, according to the information that has come down to us, translated into Chinese during the period 397–398 C.E. under the leadership of the Kashmirian monk Gautama Saṅghadeva.¹ According to what appears to be a general consensus among most scholars so far, the *Madhyama-āgama* collection would have been transmitted by reciters belonging to the Sarvāstivāda tradition.²

This *Madhyama-āgama* collection contains 222 discourses, assigned to 18 chapters, while the *Majjhima-nikāya* contains 152 discourses in 15 chapters. Regarding the chapter division in the two collections, 4 chapters in the *Madhyama-āgama* and the *Majjhima-nikāya* share the same headings and also have several dis-

¹ TI 809b26 reports that Saṅghadeva's translation was based on an original read out to him by the Kashmirian Saṅgharakṣa, the scribe was Dào cí (道慈), who was assisted by Lǐ bǎo (李寶) and Kānghuà (康化). Having studied this translation for several years, I am under the impression that, in spite of several translation errors, in general terms Gautama Saṅghadeva and his team have to a remarkable degree remained faithful to the original. Thus, for example, they do not seem to have introduced variations when rendering stereotyped expressions in the Indic original in order to accommodate the preferences of the Chinese reader, something quite common with other *Āgama* translators. Zürcher 1991: 288 describes this penchant of Chinese translators as follows: "there is a strong tendency to avoid the monotonous effect of ... verbatim repetition ... by introducing a certain amount of diversification and irregularity", as a result of which "in the same translated scripture we often find various alternative forms and longer or shorter versions of the same cliché". Regarding the *Madhyama-āgama*, Chung 2011: 16 note 19 comments that its discourses "seem to reflect an Indic original passed down in good condition".

² Cf. the discussion below page 516.

courses in common.³ Of the discourses in the *Majjhima-nikāya*, 95 have counterparts in the *Madhyama-āgama*, which, as a single *Majjhima-nikāya* discourse has two *Madhyama-āgama* parallels,⁴ count up to 96 discourses shared by the two collections.⁵ Most of the remaining *Madhyama-āgama* discourses have parallels in other Pāli *Nikāyas*, although a few discourses are unknown to the Pāli canon.⁶ The distribution of parallels over the two collections differs to such an extent that the allocation of discourses within each collection clearly is the outcome of a process specific to the respective reciter traditions.⁷

The impact of the prolonged period of oral transmission shows itself not only in differences in the distribution of discourses, but also in relation to the content of the discourses found in the *Madhyama-āgama* and the *Majjhima-nikāya*. Detecting errors that would have occurred at some point during the transmission of the discourses through a comparative study is thus a recurrent theme in the collected papers assembled in the present monograph. Here my emphasis is mainly on the rectification of errors in the much better known Pāli version of a discourse. Obviously, the same potential applies to an even greater degree to using Pāli discourses as a means to correct errors in their Chinese parallels, which were affected not only by problems in transmission, but also by translation errors. Readers of the Chinese *Āgamas*, however, appear to be well aware of this potential,⁸ whereas such potential seems to

³ Cf. below page 441f and Anālayo 2009k: 828.

⁴ MĀ 107 and MĀ 108 are both parallels to MN 17.

⁵ Cf. Anālayo 2011a: 9 note 69.

⁶ A survey of *Madhyama-āgama* discourse that do not have a Pāli parallel can be found in Minh Chau 1991: 348–355; for a study of indications given in two such discourses regarding *jhāna* practice cf. Anālayo 2012b.

⁷ Cf. table 2 in Anālayo 2007a: 36.

⁸ Cf., e.g., the extensive footnoting based on the Pāli parallels found in the 佛光

be less known among those who study the Pāli discourses. To draw attention to this potential is therefore a central aim of the papers collected here.

Contents

The studies in the following chapters are revised versions of articles published previously. Each study is based on partial or complete translations of the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse in question – one exception being the parallel to the *Cūḷavedalla-sutta*, where I instead translate the Tibetan parallel – followed by an examination of some aspects that I felt to be of further interest.⁹ In relation to the first discourse taken up for study, the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Ariyapariyesanā-sutta* (MN 26), I investigate the role of Brahmā in early Buddhism and in particular the episode according to which Brahmā Sahampati invites the Buddha to teach. The next discourse taken up is the Tibetan parallel to the *Cūḷavedalla-sutta* (MN 44), where my study explores the portrayal in the parallel versions of the *bhikkhunī* Dhammadinnā as an eloquent teacher. The *Vīmaṃsaka-sutta* (MN 47) and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, taken up next, demonstrate the importance given to investigation in early Buddhism, where the Buddha is on record for encouraging a thorough scrutiny of his own claim to being fully awakened by a prospective disciple.

The *Madhyama-āgama* parallels to the *Mahāsakuludāyi-sutta* (MN 77), the *Samaṇamañḍikā-sutta* (MN 78) and the *Vekhanassa-sutta* (MN 80) illustrate how a comparative study can rectify what appear to be errors of transmission on the side of the Pāli version; in the case of the *Samaṇamañḍikā-sutta* (MN 78) I also

Fóguāng edition (publ. 1983) of the *Āgamas*.

⁹ A discourse not included in the present selection is my translation of the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* (MN 10), which will be published in Anālayo 2013b.

survey the notion of a *samaṇa* in the early Buddhist discourses.

The *Ghaṭṭikāra-sutta* (MN 81) and its parallel pertain to the genre of canonical *jātakas*, reflecting the interest that tradition developed in past life accounts of the Buddha. The *Bāhitika-sutta* (MN 88) and its parallel exemplify the influence of the reciters on formulations employed in each of the two discourses, in this particular case apparently due to the discomfort caused by the discourse's portrayal of the Buddha's ethical integrity being scrutinized by a contemporary king.

The relationship between meditative tranquillity and insight is a central theme in my exploration of the *Āneñjasappāya-sutta* (MN 106) and its parallels. The *Chabbisodhana-sutta* (MN 112) provides yet another example for the potential of comparative studies, as even though the discourse's title refers to six types of purities, the actual discourse lists only five. The missing sixth purity can then be found in its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel. In the case of the *Bahudhātuka-sutta* (MN 115), my comparative study takes up the dictum that a woman cannot be a Buddha, etc., for closer examination.

The *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta* (MN 117), when compared to its parallels, affords us a glimpse of the beginnings of Abhidharma thought. With the *Cūlasuññata-sutta* (MN 121), taken up together with the first part of the *Mahāsuññata-sutta* (MN 122), I study a gradual meditative approach to the realization of emptiness. In the case of the *Bakkula-sutta* (MN 124), the arahant ideal is a central theme of my examination.

The *Dantabhūmi-sutta* (MN 125) and its parallel provide yet another example of how the presentation in a Pāli discourse can be improved by consulting its *Āgama* parallel. The *Mahākaccāna-bhaddekaratta-sutta* (MN 133) and its parallels then testify to the influence of notions held by the reciters on the present shape of the discourse.

The final two discourses taken up have parallels in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*. In the case of the *Gotamī-sutta* (AN 8.51), based on a comparative study I develop a new perspective on the canonical account of the foundation of the order of nuns. With the *Karajakāya-sutta* (AN 10.208), I examine the relationship between karma and liberation.

In an appendix to the present collection I critically examine the conclusions by Chung (2011) and Fukita regarding the question of the school affiliation of the *Madhyama-āgama*, a suggestion made concerning the appropriate way of translating the concluding phrase of *Āgama* discourses by Bingenheimer (2011), and some points raised by Minh Chau (1991) in his comparative study of the *Madhyama-āgama* and the *Majjhima-nikāya*.

Conventions

Since a considerable part of my target audience would be familiar with the Pāli canon only, in what follows I employ Pāli terminology, except for anglicised terms like "Dharma" or "Nirvāṇa", without thereby intending to take a position on the original language of the *Madhyama-āgama* discourses or on Pāli language being in principle preferable. I am of course aware of the fact that in academic circles Sanskrit is the preferred language, since it best represents the pan-Buddhist literary traditions. But I hope that my colleagues will bear with me for what I believe to be a decision that will greatly facilitate access to my studies by those who are only familiar with Pāli terms.¹⁰ For the same reason, I

¹⁰ Gómez 1995: 187 points out that there is a tendency for "scholars [to be] dedicated to a professional discourse of recondite jargon and *érudition pure*, with no sense of an audience outside the limited circle of the professional", followed by noting several "forgotten communities of readers that we often neglect". While the use of Sanskrit as such is certainly not a question of being dedicated to recondite jargon, it seems to me that having a sense for the prob-

have arranged my studies in the sequence in which the respective discourses are found in the Pāli canon. The original order of the *Madhyama-āgama* discourses translated and studied in the present monograph can be seen in table 1 below.

In the case of those *Madhyama-āgama* discourses that have their parallel in the *Majjhima-nikāya*, I adopt the paragraph numbering used in the English translation of these discourses by Bodhi and Ñāṇamoli (1995/2005) in order to facilitate comparison, even though in several cases this results in irregular numbering. In the notes to the translations, I focus on selected differences in relation to the Pāli parallel.¹¹ Abbreviations in the translation are usually found as such in the original.

In the translated text, I use square brackets [] to indicate supplementation and angle brackets < > to mark emendation. In order to facilitate cross-referencing, I have also used square brackets to provide the pagination of the original Chinese text on which the translation is based, and to indicate the pagination and footnote or endnote numbering of the original paper, whenever these differ from the present annotation.¹² When quoting various text editions,

able audience of my writings makes it advisable to avoid the unfamiliar Sanskrit in order to make my writings easily accessible to a readership that to a great part can be expected to have so far had exposure mainly to Pāli terminology.

¹¹ A comparative study of the *Majjhima-nikāya* discourses covered in the present monograph in the light of their parallels has recently appeared in Anālayo 2011a. Unavoidably there is some degree of overlap between that publication and the present collection of papers, especially as nearly all of the articles were published earlier. Nevertheless, since in Anālayo 2011a I do not provide translations and given that the present set of studies often focuses on specific issues in detail, I hope to be excused for occasional reduplication.

¹² My placing of square bracket is usually after a comma or full stop, and in case a new page starts with a table after the first section of the ensuing text, to avoid disturbing the textual flow or detracting from the table.

I have occasionally standardized or adjusted the punctuation.

Translation Terminology

When translating the discourses of the *Madhyama-āgama*, I have attempted to stay close to the terminology adopted by Bhikkhu Bodhi in his renderings of the Pāli equivalents, to facilitate comparison. In the case of 苦, equivalent to *dukkha*, however, I simply keep the Pāli term, which at times does stand for outright "pain", but on many an occasion refers to "unsatisfactoriness", where translations like "suffering" or "pain" fail to adequately convey the sense of the passage in question. The standard rendering of *bhagavant* in the *Madhyama-āgama* is 世尊, literally "World Honoured One", where I follow Bhikkhu Bodhi's translation of the corresponding Pāli term and adopt the rendering "Blessed One".

In the case of 念處, literally "mindfulness sphere", an expression that corresponds to *satipaṭṭhāna*, I opt for "establishing of mindfulness".¹³ For 慈, equivalent to *mettā*, I use the translation "benevolence"; with 漏, corresponding to *āsava*, I employ the rendering "influx";¹⁴ and for 覺, counterpart to *bodhi*, I use "awakening".¹⁵

¹³ On the inadequacy of the rendering "foundation of mindfulness" cf. Anālayo 2003c: 29f.

¹⁴ For a more detailed discussion of the significance of the term *āsava* cf. Anālayo 2011c.

¹⁵ On the significance of the term *bodhi* cf. Anālayo 2011a: xxiii and on the use of the philologically less apt rendering "enlightenment" as an aspect of Buddhist modernism Cohen 2010: 101.

Table 1: Translated *Madhyama-āgama* Discourses

MĀ no.:	Pāli no.:	Pāli title:
MĀ 15	AN 10.208	<i>Karajakāya-sutta</i>
MĀ 34	MN 124	<i>Bakkula-sutta</i>
MĀ 63	MN 81	<i>Ghaṭikāra-sutta</i>
MĀ 75	MN 106	<i>Āneñjasappāya-sutta</i>
MĀ 116	AN 8.51	<i>Gotamī-sutta</i>
MĀ 165	MN 133	<i>Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta</i>
MĀ 179	MN 78	<i>Samaṇamaṇḍikā-sutta</i>
MĀ 181	MN 115	<i>Bahudhātuka-sutta</i>
MĀ 186	MN 47	<i>Vīmaṃsaka-sutta</i>
MĀ 187	MN 112	<i>Chabbisodhana-sutta</i>
MĀ 189	MN 117	<i>Mahācattārīsaka-sutta</i>
MĀ 190	MN 121	<i>Cūlasuññata-sutta</i>
MĀ 198	MN 125	<i>Dantabhūmi-sutta</i>
MĀ 204	MN 26	<i>Ariyapariyesanā-sutta</i>
MĀ 207	MN 77	<i>Mahāsakuludāyi-sutta</i>
MĀ 209	MN 80	<i>Vekhanassa-sutta</i>
MĀ 214	MN 88	<i>Bāhitika-sutta</i>

Titles of Original Publications:

The *Āneñjasappāya-sutta* and its Parallels on Imperturbability and on the Contribution of Insight to the Development of Tranquillity; cf. below page 195.

The Arahant Ideal in Early Buddhism – The Case of Bakkula; cf. below page 365.

The *Bahudhātuka-sutta* and its Parallels on Women’s Inabilities; cf. below page 249.

The Bodhisattva and Kassapa Buddha – A Study Based on the *Madhyama-āgama* Parallel to the *Ghaṭikāra-sutta*; cf. below

- page 155.
- Brahmā's Invitation, The *Ariyapariyesanā-sutta* in the Light of its *Madhyama-āgama* Parallel; cf. below page 11.
- The Buddha's Truly Praiseworthy Qualities – According to the *Mahāsakuludāyi-sutta* and its Chinese Parallel; cf. below page 81.
- The Chinese *Madhyama-āgama* and the Pāli *Majjhima-nikāya* – In the Footsteps of Thich Minh Chau; cf. below page 515.
- The Chinese Version of the *Dantabhūmi Sutta*; cf. below page 395.
- Chos sbyin gyi mdo*, Bhikṣuṇī Dharmadinnā Proves Her Wisdom; cf. below page 39.
- A Gradual Entry into Emptiness, Depicted in the Early Buddhist Discourses; cf. below 325.
- Karma and Liberation – The *Karajakāya-sutta* (AN 10.208) in the Light of its Parallels; cf. below page 489.
- The *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta* in the Light of its Parallels – Tracing the Beginnings of Abhidharmic Thought; cf. below page 289.
- Mahāpajāpatī's Going Forth in the *Madhyama-āgama*; cf. below page 449.
- Qualities of a True Recluse (*Samaṇa*) – According to the *Samaṇamaṇḍikā-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* Parallel; cf. below page 105.
- The Scope of Free Inquiry – According to the *Vīmaṃsaka-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* Parallel; cf. below page 67.
- The Sixfold Purity of an Arahant, According to the *Chabbisodhana-sutta* and its Parallel; cf. below page 223.
- The *Vekhanassa-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* Parallel – A Case Study in the Transmission of the Pāli Discourses; cf. below page 139.
- The Verses on an Auspicious Night, Explained by *Mahākaccāna* – A Study and Translation of the Chinese Version; cf. below

page 421.

What the Buddha would not do, According to the *Bāhitika-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel; cf. below page 175.

Acknowledgement and Dedication

I am indebted to Bhikkhu Bodhi, Bhikkhu Brahmāli, Rod Bucknell, Jin-il Chung, Alice Collett, Jake Davis, Mitsuyo Demoto, Sean Fargo, Guo Gu, Peter Harvey, Christian Luczanits, William Magee, Jan Nattier, Giuliana Martini, Shi Kongmu, Ken Su, Bhikkhunī Tathālokā, Vincent Tournier and Monika Zin for comments and suggestions made in regard to one or more of the articles collected in this volume, and to the editors of the respective journals and books for their kind permission to reprint the material.

I would like to dedicate this book to the memory of the Vietnamese scholar monk Thich Minh Chau (1918–2012). His groundbreaking comparative study of the *Majjhima-nikāya* and the *Madhyama-āgama* was what originally inspired me to learn Chinese and engage in comparative studies of the *Āgamas* myself.

Ariyapariyesanā-sutta (MN 26)

Introduction

The theme of the present chapter is Brahmā's invitation to the Buddha to teach the Dharma, reported in the *Ariyapariyesanā-sutta*, an invitation that is absent from its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel.

By way of introduction, I survey the role of Brahmā in early Buddhism, followed by translating the relevant part of the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse, in order to then briefly evaluate this difference between the two discourses regarding the role played by Brahmā in relation to the Buddha's awakening.

The way the denizens of the ancient Indian pantheon appear in early Buddhist texts exemplifies a mode of thought that scholars have called "inclusivism".¹ The term inclusivism refers to a tendency to include, although in a subordinate position and at times with significant modifications, central elements of other religious traditions within the framework of one's own.

The role of the ancient Indian god Brahmā in early Buddhist texts is a good example of the way this strategy of inclusivism operates. Two main trends can be discerned: Several passages mock the claim that Brahmā is an all-knowing and eternal creator god, [13] while in other discourses a Brahmā by the name of Sahampati acts as a guardian of Buddhism.²

* Originally published 2011 under the title "Brahmā's Invitation, The Ariyapariyesanā-sutta in the Light of its Madhyama-āgama Parallel" in the *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies*, 1: 12–38.

¹ Cf. the articles collected in Oberhammer 1983 (esp. the paper by Hacker), as well as Mertens 2004, Kiblinger 2005 and Ruegg 2008: 97–99.

² Bailey 1983: 14 explains that "Brahmā is treated in two distinct ways; either he is bitterly attacked, or he is portrayed as a zealous devotee of the Buddha";

An instance of the tendency to satirize Brahmā, or more precisely to satirize Brahmās, as several manifestations of this god appear in Buddhist texts, can be found in the *Brahmajāla-sutta* and its parallels preserved in Chinese and Tibetan translation as well as in Sanskrit fragments.³ The discourse professes to explain, tongue-in-cheek, how the idea of a creator god came into being.⁴

Behind the explanation proffered in the *Brahmajāla-sutta* and its parallels stands the ancient Indian cosmological conception of the world system going through cycles of dissolution and evolution. Once a period of dissolution is over, the celestial Brahmā realm reappears and a particular living being, in accordance with its merits, is reborn into this realm. This living being at some point feels lonely and develops a wish for company. In the course of time, other living beings are also reborn in this Brahmā world, in accordance with their merits. The living being arisen first in the Brahmā world now reasons that its wish for company must have been what caused those other living beings to appear in the Brahmā world. This misconception then leads to the first living being's claim to be the creator of the others, a claim the other beings accept as fact and truth.

In this way, the *Brahmajāla-sutta* and its parallels parody a creation myth similar to what is found in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka*

cf. also Anālayo 2003b.

³ [2] In order to base my examination on what constitutes a common core among the early discourses transmitted by different schools, in what follows I take into account only instances found in more than one textual tradition. Thus passages preserved only in the Pāli canon are left aside.

⁴ [3] The relevant passage can be found in DĀ 21 at T I 90b21, T 21 at T I 266b15, Weller 1934: 22,29 (§60), and in discourse quotations in T 1548 at T XXVIII 657a19 and D 4094 *ju* 145a1 or Q 5595 *tu* 166b4; cf. also Gombrich 1996: 81 and Collins 2011: 32f; for a comparative study and a translation of DĀ 21 cf. Anālayo 2009e.

Upaniṣad.⁵ As this example shows, early Buddhism does not simply deny the existence of such a god. It rather purports to explain how the notion of a creator god arose, [14] namely as the outcome of a deluded Brahmā's belief that beings arose in his realm in compliance with this Brahmā's wish for company. With a good dose of humour, a psychologically intriguing point is made by presenting the notion of a creator god as an inventive response to loneliness.

Another discourse features a direct confrontation between a Brahmā and the Buddha, culminating in a contest. In this contest, each of the two tries to manifest their respective power in a celestial version of "hide and seek"; that is, each attempts to vanish from the other's sight. While Brahmā fails to go beyond the Buddha's range of vision, the Buddha completely disappears from the sight of Brahmā and the heavenly assembly.⁶

By depicting the Buddha's ability to trump Brahmā in regard to invisibility, the discourse not only asserts the superiority of the

⁵ [4] This has been pointed out by Gombrich 1990b: 13 and Norman 1991/1993: 272. The criticism of such indications made by Bronkhorst 2007: 207–218 relies on his assigning some of the early discourses to a relatively late period, based on a reference in MN 93 at MN II 149,4 to Yona, which to him (p. 209) "suggests that the passage which contains this reference was composed after – perhaps long after – the conquest of Alexander the Great". I am under the impression that this need not be the case. Already Bühler 1895/1963: 27 note 1 points out that, given that an Indian contingent formed part of the invasion of Greece by Xerxes (480 BC), once these Indians had returned home it would be only natural for Indian texts to reflect knowledge of the Ionians (i.e., the reference is not to Bactrian Greeks); cf. in more detail Anālayo 2009h, for a survey of similar indications by other scholars Anālayo 2011a: 552 note 116, and on the historical value of the Pāli discourses in general Anālayo 2012c.

⁶ [5] MN 49 at MN I 330,7 and MĀ 78 at T I 548c10; on this discourse cf. also Gombrich 2001, for a comparative study of the two versions cf. Anālayo 2011a: 294–299.

Buddha, but also appears to be punning on what may have been a common aspiration among brahmins, namely the wish to gain a personal vision of Brahmā.⁷

The superior power of the Buddha comes up again in relation to another Brahmā, who believes himself to be of such might that nobody else can reach his realm. His complacent belief is thoroughly shattered when the Buddha and several of his disciples manifest themselves seated in the air above this Brahmā.⁸ Needless to say, the position and height of seats in ancient Indian customs express the hierarchical positioning of those seated.⁹ Hence the scene where Brahmā unexpectedly finds the Buddha and some monks seated above him would not have failed to have its burlesque effect on the audience, while at the same time summing up the message of the discourse in a succinct image easily remembered in an oral society.

Another episode describes how the Great Brahmā is approached by a Buddhist monk who requests an answer to the ageless question about what transcends the world, [15] formulated in terms of where the four elements of earth, water, fire and wind cease without remainder.¹⁰ The monk had already proceeded

⁷ [6] This would be reflected in an episode in DN 19 at DN II 237,3, DĀ 3 at T I 32a28 and the *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1897: 209,13, which reports how a brahmin steward, because of his dexterous way of carrying out his duties, is believed to have personally seen Brahmā, which then inspires him to retire into seclusion and practise so as to indeed have such direct communion with Brahmā; cf. also Sanskrit fragment 530sV in Schlingloff 1961: 37. Another parallel, T 8 at T I 210c19, differs in not reporting the belief that he had already seen Brahmā.

⁸ [7] SN 6.5 at SN I 144,17 and its parallels SĀ 1196 at T II 324c22 and SĀ² 109 at T II 412c22. In SN 6.5 the Buddha and the monks even emanate fire.

⁹ [8] Nichols 2009: 54 comments, on the present instance, that in the Pāli version "the Buddha, significantly, appears directly above the Brahmā, giving a spatial demonstration of his superiority".

¹⁰ [9] DN 11 at DN I 221,3, Sanskrit fragment 388v7, Zhou 2008: 7, DĀ 24 at T I

through different celestial realms recognized in the ancient Indian cosmology, seeking a reply to his question. The inquiry remained unanswered, as the denizens of each heavenly realm directed him onwards to the next higher realm for a reply to his query.

When the monk finally reaches the presence of the Great Brahmā, the answer he receives is that the Great Brahmā is supreme in the whole world. The monk is not satisfied with this self-affirming declaration and insists on being instead given a proper reply to his question. When the Great Brahmā realizes that he is not able to get around this inquisitive monk by simply insisting on his own superiority, the Great Brahmā takes the monk aside and confides not knowing the answer to the monk's query. Yet, the Great Brahmā cannot admit this in public, as this would be upsetting to the other gods, who believe that Great Brahmā knows everything.

This amusing description of the Great Brahmā being forced to admit ignorance in private culminates with the Great Brahmā telling the monk that, to find an answer to his question, he should return to where he came from and ask the Buddha. In other words, with the help of an entertaining tale the audience is told that, in order to get a proper reply to their quest for going beyond the world, viz. Nirvāṇa, they should turn to the Buddha.

These four tales vividly illustrate the tendency in early Buddhist thought to mock the notion of Brahmā as an all-knowing creator god of supreme might.¹¹ In addition to this satirical strand,

102b18 (translated in Meisig 1995: 194) and D 4094 *ju* 64a2 or Q 5595 *tu* 71a4; cf. also SHT X 3805 and 3926, Wille 2008: 181f and 221f. Kiblinger 2005: 40 takes up the present instance as an example for Buddhist inclusivism.

¹¹ [10] According to McGovern 2011, such criticism raised against Brahmā as a creator god appears to have in turn had repercussions on this very notion in the brahmin tradition.

however, the early Buddhist texts also feature a Brahmā in the role of a protector of Buddhism. In the Pāli discourses, this Brahmā bears the name of Sahampati, although the parallel versions in the *Āgamas* often do not give his name.

Several discourses report how this Brahmā approves the Buddha's decision to honour nobody else,¹² instead according the place of honour to the Dharma that he has discovered. [16] In this way, Brahmā explicitly endorses the notion that the Buddha is supreme in the world, a message similar to that conveyed in the tales examined above. Instead of a deluded Brahmā whose defeat and discomfiture convey this message, here we encounter a properly domesticated Brahmā who knows his place ... in the Buddhist thought world, that is.

This Brahmā also voices his support of Buddhism in poetic form on another occasion by extolling the life of a seriously practising Buddhist monk.¹³ Another instance shows this Brahmā taking a close interest in the welfare of the Buddhist order by intervening so as to reconcile the Buddha with a group of unruly monks.¹⁴ At the time of the Buddha's passing away, this Brahmā is again present and pronounces a stanza suitable for the occasion.¹⁵

The support given to the Buddhist cause by this Brahmā be-

¹² [11] SN 6.2 at SN I 139,7 or AN 4.21 at AN II 20,14 and their parallels SĀ 1188 at T II 321c27, SĀ² 101 at T II 410a13 and D 4094 *nyu* 85a3 or Q 5595 *thu* 131a3; cf. also T 212 at T IV 718c1.

¹³ [12] SN 6.13 at SN I 154,16 and its parallels SĀ 1191 at T II 322c24 and SĀ² 104 at T II 411a11.

¹⁴ [13] MN 67 MN I 458,16 and one of its parallels, EĀ 45.2 at T II 771a12; a comparative study of this discourse and its parallels can be found in Anālayo 2011a: 367–370.

¹⁵ [14] DN 16 at D II 157,3 and a *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* fragment, Waldschmidt 1951: 398,22 (§44.6), T 6 at T I 188c12 and T 7 at T I 205b5; SN 6.15 at SN I 158,26 and its parallels SĀ 1197 at T II 325b20 and SĀ² 110 at T II 414a3.

comes particularly prominent in the autobiographical account of the Buddha's awakening, recorded in the *Ariyapariyesanā-sutta*.¹⁶ According to this discourse, having just gained awakening, the Buddha was hesitant to teach others what he had discovered. On becoming aware of the Buddha's disinclination to teach, Brahmā Sahampati appeared before the Buddha and requested him to teach, proclaiming that there would be those who will understand.¹⁷

The scene of Brahmā standing with his hands in the traditional gesture of respect to one side of the Buddha sitting in meditation became a favourite topic of ancient Indian art, exemplifying the central theme that underlies this episode: the superiority of the Buddha to Brahmā and thereby of the Buddha's teaching to brahmin beliefs.¹⁸ The motif is already current during the aniconic period, [17] when the presence of the Buddha appears to have been indicated only symbolically.¹⁹ A specimen from Gandhāra shows

¹⁶ [15] MN 26 at MN I 160ff; for a study of this discourse cf. Walters 1999.

¹⁷ [16] As pointed out by Bailey 1983: 175–186 (cf. also Jones 2009: 98f) and Zin 2003: 309, for Brahmā to intervene in this way is in keeping with his role in brahminical texts, where he encourages Vālmīki to compose the *Rāmāyana*, Bhatt 1960: 25,3 (1.2.22), Vyāsa to teach the *Mahābhārata* (according to one of several accounts of the origins of this work), Sukthankar 1933: 884,3 (Appendix 1.1), and Bharata to start the performance of theatre according to the *Nāṭyaśāstra*, Kedārnāth 1943: 3,9 (1.24).

¹⁸ [17] Schmithausen 2005a: 172 note 19 explains that by inviting the Buddha to teach, Brahmā is "implicitly urging his own worshippers, the Brahmans, to acknowledge the superiority of the Buddha and his teaching". Gombrich 2009: 183 comments that "the Buddhist claim to supersede brahmin teaching could not be more blatant"; cf. also Gombrich 1996: 21. Nichols 2009: 52 adds that "the motif of Brahmā pleading for the presence of the *dhamma* in the world shows the supposed creator's helplessness" to bring about the same without the Buddha.

¹⁹ [18] Cf. the arguments advanced by Dehejia 1991 and Linrothe 1993 in reply to Huntington 1985 and Huntington 1990.

only the empty seat of awakening under a tree, flanked on both sides by the gods Brahmā and Indra, who, with their hands in the traditional gesture of respect, seem to be inviting the Buddha to teach.²⁰ [18]

The tendency to depict the Buddha being worshipped by Brahmā as well as Indra is pervasive in sculptures,²¹ including reliquaries.²² In some cases it remains uncertain if a particular image is intended to portray the request to teach, or whether it may be just a scene of worship in general.²³

In another specimen from Gandhāra, however, the Buddha is clearly shown in a reflective pose, supporting his head with his right arm, which in turn is supported by his raised knee. Although this posture is frequently used for bodhisattva images,²⁴ the monastic dress in combination with the *uṣṇīṣa* make it clear that the central figure is the Buddha. The seat and the tree in the background suggest the seat of awakening and on each side of the Buddha, at a little distance, stand Brahmā and Indra, who share with the Buddha the feature of being haloed. Between Indra and the Buddha, a little to the back, we also find Vajrapāṇi.²⁵

²⁰ [19] Cf. plate 1 below page 610.

²¹ [20] Several representations in Gandhāran art are collected in Kurita 1988: 77–79 and 125–136; cf. also Foucher 1905: 421–427. A study of the role of Indra in Buddhist texts as another instance of inclusivism can be found in Anālayo 2011d.

²² [21] A well-known example is the Kaniṣka reliquary; cf., e.g., van Lohuizen-de Leeuw 1949: 98–101, the description in Dobbins 1971: 25 and the photograph in Huntington 2001: 134.

²³ [22] Rhi 1994: 220 note 60.

²⁴ [23] For a survey cf. Lee 1993.

²⁵ [24] Vajrapāṇi and Indra are distinct from each other in Gandhāran art; cf., e.g., Foucher 1905: 564, Senart 1906: 122, Vogel 1909: 525, Konow 1930, Coomaraswamy 1971: 31, Santoro 1979: 301; cf. also Lamotte 1966. In the

The proposed identification of this image as depicting "the pensive Buddha who is being requested to teach the Dharma" appears at first glance not entirely straightforward.²⁶ The Buddha is surrounded by five monks, while Brahmā and Indra – supposedly major figures in the present scene – stand at some distance from him. On the Buddha's right two monks are turned towards him with their hands held in the gesture of worship. On his left another three monks are standing, of whom the one closest to the Buddha may also be in the same respectful gesture, while the next one turns back towards his companion, as if he were hesitating or in doubt, needing to be urged on by the fifth in the group. [19]

The fact that the monks are five in number, together with the impression that not all of them are filled with the same degree of confidence, suggests that the scene may represent the Buddha's encounter with what were to become his first five monk disciples, an episode narrated in the latter part of the *Ariyapariyesanā-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel. The two versions agree that, although the five monks had decided not to show respect to the Buddha, as they thought he had given up his striving for liberation, when he actually approached they did receive him with respect.

Given that in Indian and Central Asian art successive events are at times represented in a single image,²⁷ the present piece could be combining the request to teach by Brahmā and Indra with a pictorial reference to the reception accorded to the Buddha

Pāli commentarial tradition, however, these two are identical; cf., e.g., Sv I 264,12.

²⁶ [25] Cf. plate 2 below page 611. The relief is now found in the Swat Museum, Saidu Sharif, Pakistan, and has been identified in Luczanits 2008: 226 catalogue number 165 as "der nachdenkliche Buddha wird gebeten, den Dharma zu lehren".

²⁷ [26] Cf., e.g., Schlingloff 1981.

by those who were the first to benefit from his acceptance of this request. [20]

Coming back to the textual sources, records of the present episode in the early discourses and in several biographies preserved in Chinese translation mention only an intervention by Brahmā alone, without referring to Indra.²⁸ The same is true of several *Vinaya* accounts.²⁹ According to the *Mahāvastu*, however, Brahmā came together with Indra.³⁰ The same is also stated in the *Jātaka Nidānakathā*.³¹ This gives the impression that for Brahmā to be accompanied by Indra could be a subsequent stage in the evolution of this motif, which in turn influenced representations in art.

In view of the widespread occurrence of this episode in art and literature, it comes as a surprise that the only known complete discourse parallel to the *Ariyapariyesanā-sutta*, found in the *Madhyama-āgama* collection, does not mention Brahmā at all. In what follows, I translate the first part of this *Madhyama-āgama* discourse.³²

²⁸ [27] MN 26 at MN I 168,18 (repeated in MN 85 at MN II 93,26 and SN 6.1 at SN I 137,12), a *Catuspariṣat-sūtra* fragment, Waldschmidt 1957: 112,14 (§8.9), and EĀ 19.1 at T II 593b3 (translated in Bareau 1988: 78); cf. also, e.g., T 185 at T III 480b2, T 189 at T III 643a3, T 190 at T III 806a13 and T 191 at T III 953a1.

²⁹ [28] Cf. the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 786c24; the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 103c23; the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, Gnoli 1977: 129,6 (cf. also T 1450 at T XXIV 126b22 and the Tibetan parallel, Waldschmidt 1957: 113,14 (§8.7)); and the Theravāda *Vinaya*, Vin I 5,21.

³⁰ [29] Senart 1897: 315,1. In the *Lalitavistara*, Brahmā is rather accompanied by his retinue, Lefmann 1902: 394,8 (cf. also T 186 at T III 528b4 and T 187 at T III 603b5).

³¹ [30] Jā I 81,10. Stanzas with which Indra (Sakka) and then Brahmā invite the Buddha to teach can be found in SN 11.17 at SN I 233,32, a discourse which, however, gives Jeta's Grove as the location.

³² The translated part of MĀ 204 begins at T I 775c7 and ends at 777b11. Trans-

Translation

Discourse at Ramma[ka]'s [Hermitage]³³ [21]

1. Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was dwelling at Sāvaththī, staying in the Eastern Park, the Mansion of Migāra's Mother.³⁴

3. At that time, in the afternoon, the Blessed One emerged from sitting in seclusion, came down from the top of the mansion and said to the venerable Ānanda: "I shall now go together with you to the river Aciravatī to bathe." The venerable Ānanda replied: "Yes, certainly."

The venerable Ānanda took hold of a door-opener and went to all the huts.³⁵ He told all the monks he saw: "Venerable ones, you could all gather at the house of the brahmin Ramma[ka]." On hearing this the monks gathered at the house of the brahmin Ramma[ka].

lations of this part of MĀ 204 can be found in Bareau 1963: 14f, 24f, 28, 72 and 145 and in Minh Chau 1991: 153–156 and 245–248. A comparative study of the present discourse that takes into account a wider range of parallel material can be found in Anālayo 2011a: 170–189.

³³ The Pāli editions differ on the title. While E^c and C^c have the title *Ariyapariyesanā-sutta*, the "Discourse on the Noble Search", B^c and S^c give the title as *Pāsarāsi-sutta*, the "Discourse on the Heap of Snares", referring to a simile that describes a deer caught in snares, found in the latter part of the discourse.

³⁴ ^[35] MN 26 at MN I 160,17 provides a more detailed introductory narration, corresponding to §2 and the first part of §3 in Ñāṇamoli 1995/2005: 253. According to its report, in the morning the Buddha had gone begging alms and some monks had approached Ānanda expressing their wish to receive a discourse from the Buddha, whereupon Ānanda told them to go to Rammaka's hermitage. Sanskrit fragment parallels to the present episode are SHT V 1332a, Sander 1985: 227, SHT VI 1493, Bechert 1989: 161f, and SHT X 3917, Wille 2008: 217.

³⁵ ^[36] The episode of Ānanda informing the other monks is not found in MN 26.

The Blessed One, followed by the venerable Ānanda, went to the Aciravatī river. He took off his robes, placed them on the bank and entered the water to bathe. Having bathed, he came out again, wiped his body [dry] and put on his robes.³⁶

At that time the venerable Ānanda was standing behind the Blessed One, holding a fan and fanning the Buddha. Then the venerable Ānanda, holding his hands together [in homage] towards the Buddha, said: "Blessed One, the house of the brahmin Ramma[ka] is very pleasant and orderly, it is highly delightful. May the Blessed One approach the house of the brahmin Ramma[ka], out of compassion." The Blessed One accepted [the suggestion of] the venerable Ānanda by remaining silent. [22]

4. Then the Blessed One, followed by the venerable Ānanda, went to the house of the brahmin Ramma[ka]. At that time, a group of many monks were seated together in the house of the brahmin Ramma[ka] discussing the Dharma. The Buddha stood outside the door, waiting for the monks to finish their discussion of the Dharma. The group of many monks, having completed their investigation and discussion of the Dharma, remained silent. On [coming] to know this, the Blessed One coughed and knocked on the door. Hearing him, the monks swiftly came and opened the door.

The Blessed One entered the house of the brahmin Ramma[ka] and sat on a seat that had been prepared in front of the group of monks. He asked them: "What have you just been discussing, monks? For what matter are you sitting together here?"³⁷ Then the monks replied: "Blessed One, we have just

³⁶ [37] According to MN 26 at MN I 161,9, he stood clothed in one robe drying his limbs.

³⁷ [38] In MN 26 at MN I 161,26 the second part of the Buddha's inquiry is about the nature of their discussion that had been interrupted, *vippakata*. This ap-

been discussing the Dharma, it is for a matter of Dharma that we have been sitting together here."³⁸

The Buddha commended them: "It is well, it is well, monks, sitting together you should engage in [either of] two things: the first is to discuss the Dharma, the second is to remain silent. [776a] Why? I shall also teach you the Dharma, listen carefully and pay proper attention!" The monks replied: "Yes, of course, we shall listen to receive the instruction."

5. The Buddha said: "There are two types of search, the first is called a noble search, the second is called an ignoble search. What is an ignoble search? Someone, being actually subject to disease, searches after what is subject to disease, being actually subject to old age ... subject to death ... subject to worry and sadness ... being actually subject to defilement, searches after what is subject to defilement."³⁹

8. "What is, being actually subject to disease, searching after what is subject to disease? What is subject to disease?"⁴⁰

pears to be an application of a stock phrase without consideration of the context, since the preceding section, in agreement with MĀ 204, indicates that their discussion had not been interrupted, as the Buddha had politely waited for it to finish before making his presence known.

³⁸ [³⁹] According to MN 26 at MN I 161,27, the monks had been speaking about the Blessed One. This would provide a smoother transition to the Buddha's subsequent delivery of an autobiographical account of his awakening, thereby continuing with a topic already broached by the monks.

³⁹ [⁴⁰] Here and below, the abbreviations are found in the original.

⁴⁰ [⁴¹] MN 26 at MN I 161,36 also mentions being subject to birth (= §6 in Ñāṇamoli 1995/2005: 254). Another difference is in the sequence, as MN 26 turns to being subject to disease (§8) only after mentioning the topic of being subject to old age (§7). Yet another difference is that MN 26 gives a full treatment of each case, while MĀ 204 abbreviates. The items mentioned to illustrate each case also differ slightly, thus MN 26 at MN I 162,4 mentions wife and son instead of brother and son, etc. The main themes are the same, how-

Sons and brothers are subject to disease, [23] elephants, horses, cattle, sheep, male and female slaves, wealth, treasures, rice and cereals are subject to disease and destruction. Living beings, stained and touched by greed and attachment, intoxicated with pride, take hold of and enter amidst these, without seeing the danger and without seeing an escape,⁴¹ grasping at them and engaging with them.

7. – 11. "What is being subject to old age ... subject to death ... subject to worry and sadness ... subject to defilement? Sons and brothers are subject to defilement, elephants, horses, cattle, sheep, male and female slaves, wealth, treasures, rice and cereals are subject to defilement and destruction.⁴² Living beings, stained and touched by greed and attachment, intoxicated with pride, take hold of and enter amidst these, without seeing the danger and without seeing an escape, grasping at them and engaging with them.

"That such a person, wanting and searching for the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from disease, should attain the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from disease – that is not possible. [That such a person, wanting and] searching for the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from old age ... free from death ... free from worry and sadness ... free from defilement, should attain the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from old age ... free from death ... free from worry and sadness ... free from defilement – that is not possible. This is

ever, except that MN 26 does not refer to rice and cereals at all.

⁴¹ [⁴²] MN 26 does not take up the topic of not seeing the danger and the escape, although such a reference can be found regularly in other contexts, e.g., MN 99 at MN II 203,16: *anādīnavadassāvī anissaraṇapañño*, differing from the formulation in MĀ 204 in as much as, in regard to the escape, the Pāli phrase speaks of lacking wisdom.

⁴² [⁴³] Adopting the variant 汚 instead of 法.

reckoned an ignoble search.

12. "What is a noble search? Someone reflects: 'I am actually subject to disease myself and I naively search for what is subject to disease, I am actually subject to old age... subject to death ... subject to worry and sadness ... subject to defilement myself and I naively search for what is subject to defilement. I would now rather search for the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from disease, search for the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from old age ... free from death ... free from worry and sadness ... free from defilement!' [24]

"That such a person, searching for the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from disease, should attain the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from disease – that is certainly possible. [That such a person], searching for the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from old age ... free from death ... free from worry and sadness ... free from defilement, should attain the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from old age ... free from death ... free from worry and sadness ... free from defilement – that is certainly possible.

13. "Formerly, when I had not yet awakened to supreme, right and complete awakening, I thought like this: 'I am actually subject to disease myself and I naively search for what is subject to disease, I am actually subject to old age ... subject to death ... subject to worry and sadness ... subject to defilement myself and I naively search for what is subject to defilement. What if I now rather search for the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from disease, search for the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from old age ... free from death ... free from worry and sadness [776b] ... free from defilement?'

14. "At that time I was a young lad, with clear [skin] and dark hair, in the prime of youth, twenty-nine years of age, roaming around well adorned and enjoying myself to the ut-

most. At that time I shaved off my hair and beard, while my father and mother were crying and my relatives were displeased.⁴³ I donned dyed robes and out of faith went forth to leave the household life and train in the path, maintaining purity of livelihood in body, maintaining purity of livelihood in speech and in mind.⁴⁴ [25]

15. "Having accomplished this aggregate of morality, aspiring and searching for the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from disease ... free from old age ... free from death ... free from worry and sadness ... the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from defilement, I approached Āḷāra Kālāma and asked him: 'Āḷāra, I wish to practise the holy life in your Dhar-

⁴³ [44] MĀ 204 at T I 776b3: 父母啼哭. MN 26 at MN I 163,29 agrees that the mother and the father were crying, although it mentions the mother first. The circumstance that MĀ 204 has the father first may, as suggested by Guang Xing 2005: 98 note 12, reflect Confucian influence; cf. also Anālayo 2011a: 173 note 153. Bareau 1974: 249 notes that it is curious for the mother to be described as being present when her son goes forth, as elsewhere she is reported to have passed away seven days after his birth; cf. MN 123 at MN III 122,2 or Ud 5.2 at Ud 48,6 and the discussion in Anālayo 2012e: 24f.

⁴⁴ [45] MĀ 204 at T I 776b5: 護身命清淨, 護口, 意命清淨. While MN 26 does not mention the bodhisattva's development of bodily, verbal and mental purity (or his accomplishing the aggregate of morality, which is mentioned later), a comparable reference, with a somewhat different wording, can be found in a Sanskrit discourse fragment paralleling the present episode, fragment 331r7, Liu 2010: 105, which reads *kāyena saṃvṛto viharāmi vācā āj[ī]va[m] ca pa[rīś]odha[ya]mi*. Judging from the Sanskrit reading, the reference to the mind, 意, could be a later addition to the passage in MĀ 204, in fact a purification of livelihood would only require restraint of bodily and verbal actions. Such a later addition could easily happen during the transmission of the text, as elsewhere the discourses often speak of the triad body, speech and mind, making it natural for the term mind to make its way into the present context. Von Hinüber 1996/1997: 31 explains that "pieces of texts known by heart may intrude into almost any context once there is a corresponding key word".

ma, will you permit it?' Āḷāra replied to me: 'Venerable one, I certainly permit it. You may practise as you wish to practise.'⁴⁵

"I asked again: 'Āḷāra, this Dharma of yours, did you know it yourself, understand it yourself, realize it yourself?' Āḷāra replied to me: 'Venerable one, completely transcending the sphere of [boundless] consciousness I have attained dwelling in the sphere of nothingness. Therefore I myself have known this Dharma of mine, understood it myself, realized it myself.'

"I thought again: 'Not only Āḷāra alone has such faith, I too have such faith,⁴⁶ not only Āḷāra alone has such energy, I too have such energy, not only Āḷāra alone has such wisdom, I too have such wisdom,⁴⁷ [whereby] Āḷāra has known this teaching himself, understood it himself, realized it himself.' Because I wished to realize this Dharma, I thereupon went to stay alone and in seclusion, in an empty, quiet and tranquil place, with a mind free from indolence I practised energetically.⁴⁸ Having stayed alone and in seclusion, in an empty, quiet and tranquil place, with a mind free from indolence practising energetically, not long afterwards I realized that Dharma.

⁴⁵ [46] MN 26 at MN I 164,2 indicates that the bodhisattva at first learned the theoretical aspects of Āḷāra's Dharma.

⁴⁶ [47] Dutt 1940: 639 explains that the reference to faith in the present context stands for "confidence in his abilities to develop the powers necessary to achieve his object".

⁴⁷ [48] MN 26 at MN I 164,16 lists all of the five faculties of faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom. The same is also the case for the corresponding section in the Sanskrit fragment 331v1–2, Liu 2010: 106. Since mindfulness and concentration are required to reach deeper levels of concentration, the Pāli and Sanskrit listings of mental qualities offer a more complete presentation.

⁴⁸ [49] MN 26 does not mention that the bodhisattva went to practise energetically in seclusion. Sanskrit fragment 331v3, Liu 2010: 106, agrees in this respect with MĀ 204.

"Having realized that Dharma, I again approached Āḷāra Kālāma and asked him: 'Āḷāra, is this the Dharma you have known yourself, understood yourself, realized yourself, namely, by completely transcending the sphere of boundless consciousness to attain dwelling in the sphere of nothingness?' Āḷāra Kālāma replied to me: [26] 'Venerable one, this is [indeed] the Dharma that I have known myself, understood myself, realized myself, namely, by completely transcending the sphere of [boundless] consciousness to attain dwelling in the sphere of nothingness.'⁴⁹

"Āḷāra Kālāma further said to me: 'Venerable one, just as I realized this Dharma, so too have you; just as you realized this Dharma, so too have I. Venerable one, come and share the leadership of this group.' Thus Āḷāra Kālāma, the teacher, placed me on an equal level, thereby giving me supreme respect, supreme support and [expressing] his supreme delight.

"I thought again: [776c] 'This Dharma does not lead to knowledge, does not lead to awakening, does not lead to Nirvāṇa.⁵⁰ I would rather leave this Dharma and continue searching for the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from disease ... free from old age ... free from death ... free from worry and sadness ... the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from defilement.'

16. "I promptly left this Dharma and continued searching for the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from disease ... free from old age ... free from death ... free from worry and sadness ... the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from

⁴⁹ [50] According to MN 26 at MN 164,32, at this point the bodhisattva explicitly indicates that he has attained the same. Sanskrit fragment 331v6, Liu 2010: 106, agrees in this respect with MN 26.

⁵⁰ MN 26 at MN 165,12 adds that this Dharma only leads to re-arising in the sphere of nothingness.

defilement. I approached Uddaka Rāmaputta and asked him: 'Uddaka, I wish to train in your Dharma, will you permit it?' Uddaka Rāmaputta replied to me: 'Venerable one, I certainly permit it. You may train as you wish to train.'

"I asked again: 'Uddaka, what Dharma did your father, Rāma,⁵¹ know himself, understand himself, realize himself?' Uddaka Rāmaputta replied to me: 'Venerable one, completely transcending the sphere of nothingness he attained dwelling in the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. Venerable one, what my father Rāma knew himself, understood himself, realized himself, is this Dharma.'

"I thought again: 'Not only Rāma alone had such faith, I too have such faith, not only Rāma alone had such energy, I too have such energy, not only Rāma alone had such wisdom, I too have such wisdom, [whereby] Rāma knew this Dharma himself, understood it himself, realized it himself. Why should I not get to know this Dharma myself, understand it myself, realize it myself?' Because I wished to realize this Dharma, I thereon went to stay alone and in seclusion, in an empty, quiet and tranquil place, with a mind free from indolence I practised energetically. Having stayed alone and in seclusion, in an empty, quiet and tranquil place, with a mind free from indolence practising energetically, not long afterwards I realized that Dharma. [27]

"Having realized that Dharma, I again approached Uddaka Rāmaputta and asked him: 'Uddaka, is this the Dharma your father Rāma knew himself, understood himself, realized himself, namely, by completely transcending the sphere of nothingness to attain dwelling in the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception?' Uddaka Rāmaputta replied to me: 'Ven-

⁵¹ Adopting the variant reading 父羅摩 instead of 羅摩子.

erable one, this is [indeed] the Dharma that my father Rāma knew himself, understood himself, realized himself, namely, by completely transcending the sphere of nothingness to attain dwelling in the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.'

"Uddaka Rāmaputta further said to me: 'Venerable one, just as my father Rāma realized this Dharma, so too have you; just as you realized this Dharma, so too did my father. Venerable one, come and share the leadership of this group.'⁵² Thus Uddaka Rāmaputta, the teacher, made me also a teacher, thereby giving me supreme respect, supreme support and [expressing] his supreme delight.

"I thought again: 'This Dharma does not lead to knowledge, [777a] does not lead to awakening, does not lead to Nirvāṇa. I would rather leave this teaching and continue searching for the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from disease ... free from old age ... free from death ... free from worry and sadness ... the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from defilement.'

17. "I promptly left this Dharma and continued to search for the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from disease ... free from old age ... free from death ... free from worry and sadness ... the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from

⁵² According to MN 26 at MN I 166,26, however, Uddaka offered the sole leadership of his group to the bodhisattva. Sanskrit fragment 332r8, Liu 2010: 107, agrees in this respect with MĀ 204. In view of the fact that the bodhisattva had attained what Uddaka had not attained himself, the reading in MN 26 fits the context better. Because of the repetitive nature of the account of the two teachers, it could easily have happened that the reading appropriate for the first instance was accidentally applied to the second instance, taking place at a time before the Sanskrit fragment version and MĀ 204 were transmitted separately.

defilement. I went to a brahmin village called Sena near Uruvelā, south of Elephant Peak Mountain. In that area I reached a delightful lush mountain forest by the river Nerañjarā, which was clean and full to its banks.

"On seeing it, I thought: 'This place that I have reached is a delightful lush mountain forest by the river Nerañjarā, which is clean and full to its banks. If a son of a good family wishes to train, he can train here. So I shall train, I would now rather train in this place.' I promptly took some grass and approached the tree of awakening. Having reached it, I spread out [the grass] as a sitting mat beneath [the tree] and sat down cross-legged with the determination not to break my sitting until the influxes had been eradicated. [28] I [indeed] did not break my sitting until the influxes had been eradicated.⁵³

18. "Searching for the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from disease, I attained the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from disease. Searching for the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from old age ... free from death ... free from worry and sadness ... free from defilement, I attained the supreme peace of Nirvāṇa, which is free from old age ... free from death ... free from worry and sadness ... free from defilement. Knowledge arose, vision arose and I was concentrated on the requisites of awakening.⁵⁴ I knew as it really is that birth has been extinguished, the holy life has been established, what had to be done has been done and there will be no experiencing of a further existence.⁵⁵

⁵³ MN 26 does not report the preparation of the seat or the determination not to get up until the influxes are destroyed.

⁵⁴ A reference to the *bodhipakkhiyā dhammā* is not found in MN 26.

⁵⁵ At this point, MN 26 at MN I 167,30 to 169,30 continues with the Buddha's reflection that his Dharma is difficult to understand, followed by reporting Brahmā's intervention. Thus two full pages of the E^c edition, corresponding to

22. "Having just awakened to the supreme, right and complete awakening, I thought: 'To whom should I first teach the Dharma?' I further thought: 'Should I now first teach the Dharma to Āḷāra Kālāma?' At that time there was a heavenly being up in the sky who told me: 'Great sage, may you know that Āḷāra Kālāma passed away seven days ago.' I also came to know for myself that Āḷāra Kālāma had passed away seven days ago. I thought again: 'It is a great loss for Āḷāra Kālāma that he did not get to hear this Dharma. If he had heard it, he would have quickly understood the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma.'

23. "Having just awakened to supreme, right and complete awakening, I thought: 'To whom should I first teach the Dharma?' I further thought: 'Should I now first teach the Dharma to Uddaka Rāmaputta?' At that time there was again a heavenly being up in the sky who told me: 'Great sage, may you know that Uddaka Rāmaputta passed away fourteen days ago.'⁵⁶ [777b] I also came to know for myself that Uddaka Rāmaputta had passed away fourteen days ago. I thought again: 'It is a great loss for Uddaka Rāmaputta that he did not get to hear this Dharma. If he had heard it, he would have quickly understood the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma.' [29]

24. "Having just awakened to supreme, right and complete awakening, I thought: 'To whom should I first teach the Dharma?' I further thought: 'The five monks of former times, who supported me in my efforts, have been of much benefit. When I practised asceticism, those five monks served me. Should I now first teach the Dharma to the five monks?' I further

§§19–21 in Ñāṇamoli 1995/2005: 260–262, are without any counterpart in MĀ 204.

⁵⁶ According to MN 26 at MN I 170,15, Uddaka had passed away just the night before.

thought: 'Where are the five monks of former times now?' With the purified divine eye that transcends [the vision] of human beings I saw that the five monks were in the Deer Park at the Dwelling-place of Seers near Benares.⁵⁷ After staying under the tree of awakening according [to my wishes], I gathered my robes, took my bowl and approached Benares, the city of Kāsi."⁵⁸

Study

Placing the above translated part of the Discourse at Ramma[ka]'s [Hermitage] and the corresponding part of the *Ariyapariyesanā-sutta* side by side reveals a number of small variations.⁵⁹ By far the most prominent difference, however, is the complete absence of Brahmā in the *Madhyama-āgama* version.

In the *Ariyapariyesanā-sutta*, the episode with Brahmā's intervention begins with the Buddha reflecting on the profundity of his realization, in particular the difficulty of understanding the principle of dependent arising and the nature of Nirvāṇa for those who are steeped in worldliness and defilements. Anticipating that others would not understand him, the Buddha considers that this would be troublesome and decides not to teach the Dharma.

Brahmā Sahampati becomes aware of this reflection in the Buddha's mind and realizes that the world will be lost, as the Buddha is disinclined to teach. Quickly appearing in front of the Buddha, with hands together in respect, Brahmā Sahampati requests the Buddha to teach, arguing that some will understand. Follow-

⁵⁷ MĀ 204 at T I 777b9: 仙人住, while MN 26 at MN I 170,30 speaks of the Isipatana; on the term cf. Caillat 1968 and Norman 1989: 375.

⁵⁸ MĀ 204 continues with the Buddha meeting Upaka on the way to Benares, etc.

⁵⁹ There are more substantial differences between the remaining parts of MN 26 and MĀ 204.

ing Brahmā's request, out of compassion the Buddha surveys the world with his divine eye and realizes that some beings are indeed capable of understanding, whereupon he decides to teach. Realizing that the mission has been successful, Brahmā Sahampati pays homage and disappears. [30]

In principle, the difference between the two parallel versions regarding the episode of Brahmā's intervention can be explained in two ways:

- 1) The episode has been lost in the *Madhyama-āgama* Discourse at Ramma[ka]'s [Hermitage], either through accidental loss or because those responsible for its transmission or translation have purposely omitted it.
- 2) The narration of Brahmā's entreaty is an element added later to the *Ariyapariyesanā-sutta*.

Regarding the first possibility, the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse translated above does not give the impression that a loss of text has occurred, as the narration runs smoothly without any uneven transition. Moreover, the remainder of the Chinese discourse makes as much sense as its Pāli parallel; that is, there appears to be no need for Brahmā to intervene in order for subsequent events to be coherent.

Proposing a conscious omission of this episode from the *Madhyama-āgama* version would require identifying some good reason for removing it. This can in fact be found. With subsequent developments in Buddhist traditions, the notion became prevalent that the Buddha had prepared himself during numerous past lives for his task as a teacher who would lead others to awakening. This notion makes it rather surprising that, once he has accomplished all that is required for carrying out this mission, he should need prompting by another in order to start teaching at

all.⁶⁰ Without this episode, the Buddha's autobiographical account is more easily reconciled with the traditional belief in his prolonged preparation for becoming a teacher. Thus there would have been a reason for removing this episode.

Regarding the second of the two above-mentioned possibilities, however, it seems equally possible that the Brahmā episode is a later addition.⁶¹ The general tendency during oral transmission is in fact more often to add and expand than consciously to remove passages. [31] Given that the *Madhyama-āgama* account reads smoothly without Brahmā's intervention, perhaps an early version of the Buddha's autobiographical account did not mention Brahmā at all.

The same pattern recurs in relation to the former Buddha Vi-passī: the *Mahāpadāna-sutta* and its *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel – the latter probably stemming from the Dharmaguptaka tradition⁶² –

⁶⁰ Blomfield 2011: 100 comments that "from the earliest times Buddhists have found this episode problematic. It seems unthinkable that the supreme embodiment of compassion would have considered keeping his wisdom to himself"; cf. also Bareau 1963: 141f, Webster 2005, Jones 2009 and Anālayo 2010c: 22–26.

⁶¹ Nakamura 2000: 212 comments that "the intervention of Brahmā ... cannot be found in the equivalent Chinese translation and is therefore a later interpolation". Nakamura supports his conclusion by arguing that the reference to dependent arising, found in MN 26 at MN I 167,35 just before Brahmā's intervention, differs from the referents used earlier in the discourse to the final goal as something that is tranquil and free from defilement. Yet, a reflection on the significance of what has just been realized need not perforce use precisely the same terms as a description of the earlier aspiration to what at that point had not yet been experienced. These two contexts are sufficiently different to allow for different but complementary perspectives on the implications of awakening.

⁶² On the school affiliation of the *Dīrgha-āgama* cf., e.g., Demiéville 1951: 252f, Brough 1962/2001: 50, Lü 1963: 242, Bareau 1966, Waldschmidt 1980: 136, Mayeda 1985: 97, Enomoto 1986: 25 and Oberlies 2003: 44.

report an intervention by Brahmā,⁶³ which is absent from a partial parallel preserved in Chinese and from a Sanskrit fragment version.⁶⁴ The partial Chinese version shows several substantial differences when compared with the Sanskrit fragments of the *Mahāvadāna-sūtra*, making it fairly certain that the two stem from different lines of transmission.⁶⁵ [32]

⁶³ DN 14 at DN II 36,21 and DĀ 1 at T I 8b22.

⁶⁴ T 3 at T I 156c14 and Waldschmidt 1956: 148 note 2.

⁶⁵ Just to mention a few major differences: On the prince's first outing from the palace, according to T 3 at T I 154b13 he encounters a sick person; in the Sanskrit fragment version, Waldschmidt 1956: 118,11, he instead first comes across someone afflicted by old age and only meets a sick person on the second outing. When his father comes to know what has happened, in T 3 at T I 154c5 he reflects that by staying at home the prince will become a wheel-turning king, but by going forth he will become a Buddha, whereas in the Sanskrit fragment version, Waldschmidt 1956: 120,25, the father worries whether the prediction that the prince will go forth will come true, without any reference to his becoming a wheel-turning king or a Buddha. On the fourth outing, having seen someone who has gone forth in T 3 at T I 155c3 the prince returns to the palace and there develops the aspiration to go forth, whereas in the Sanskrit fragment version, Waldschmidt 1956: 129,1, he approaches the renunciate, converses with him and then decides on the spot to go forth as well. The Sanskrit fragments, Waldschmidt 1956: 131,2, report that a reflection on the nature of the Dharma motivates the people to follow the prince's example and go forth, whereas in T 3 at T I 155c17 they are motivated by his having relinquished his high position. According to the Sanskrit fragment version, Waldschmidt 1956: 132,6, the bodhisattva Vipāśyin decides that he had better live alone and therefore dismisses the people who have followed him and gone forth, telling them to come back once he has reached awakening. Next he obtains grass and approaches the seat of awakening with the intention not to break his sitting until the destruction of the influxes has been achieved. None of these episodes is recorded in T 3. The bodhisattva Vipāśyin's investigation of dependent arising covers all twelve links in T 3 at T I 156a14, including volitional formations and ignorance, whereas in the Sanskrit fragment version, Waldschmidt 1956: 137,7, his investigation instead leads up to the

Once the absence of the Brahmā episode recurs in what appear to be separate lines of transmission of different discourses, it becomes probable that this episode is indeed a later addition. If such an addition took place, it must have happened at a time when the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Ariyapariyesanā-sutta* as well as the Sanskrit fragment version of the *Mahāvādāna-sūtra* and the partial Chinese parallel were already being transmitted independently from the ancestor of the Theravāda and Dharmaguptaka versions of these discourses. The powerful effect of this episode would then have been responsible for the widespread occurrence of Brahmā's intervention in texts like the *Mahāvastu* or the *Jātaka Nidānakathā*, etc., and in iconographic representations.

While the tendency for Brahmā to be 'included' in early Buddhist discourses appears to be so well attested that it can safely be assumed to be early, the most prominent example of Brahmā's role as a promoter of Buddhism – his requesting the Buddha to teach and thereby enabling the coming into existence of the whole Buddhist tradition – may be a later addition to the autobiographical account of the Buddha's awakening.

reciprocal conditioning of consciousness and name-and-form. In T 3 at T I 156b20 Vipaśyin's awakening is preceded by his contemplation of the arising and passing away of the five aggregates, whereas the Sanskrit fragment version, Waldschmidt 1956: 146,1, also mentions his contemplation of the arising and passing away of the links of dependent arising. Such substantial differences make it safe to assume that the two versions are derivative from separate transmission lineages.

Cūḷavedalla-sutta (MN 44)

Introduction

The present chapter provides an annotated translation of the Tibetan parallel to the *Cūḷavedalla-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*,¹ found as a discourse quotation in Śamathadeva's compendium of discourse quotations from the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, forming part of a work that stems from a Mūlasarvāstivāda tradition.² A third parallel occurs in the *Madhyama-āgama*.³

My translation is followed by a brief study of the significance

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¹ [5] MN 44 at MN I 299,1 to 305,5, translated in Ñāṇamoli 1995/2005: 396–403, which at MN I 305,5 give the title of the discourse as "Smaller Discourse of the Question-and-Answer Type", *Cūḷavedalla-sutta*.

² [8] On Śamathadeva's work cf. Mejer 1991: 63f and Skilling 2005: 699. My translation of the Tibetan version is based on the text found in volume 82 of the Sichuan collated edition of the Tanjur (henceforth referred to as Si), published by the China Tibetology Research Center in Beijing, ranging from pages 14,13 to 25,15. This corresponds to D 4094 *ju* 6b2 to 11a5 or Q 5595 *tu* 7a7 to 12b1, identified by Honjō 1984: 2 (§5); cf. also Pāsādika 1989: 20 (§1). Krey 2010a: 19 note 5 mentions the existence of a draft translation of the Tibetan version by Malcolm Smith that was available in 2006 on the internet, but was subsequently withdrawn again.

³ [6] MĀ 210 at T I 788a16 to 790b7, translated in Minh Chau 1991: 269–278, which at T II 788a14 gives the title of the discourse as "Discourse by the Nun [called] 'Delight in the Dharma'", 法樂比丘尼經. MĀ 210 thereby differs on the name of the speaker of the discourse, where 法樂 might correspond to Dharmanandā, or, as suggested by Minh Chau 1991: 24, to Dharmanandī. A discourse in the *Ekottarika-āgama*, EĀ 49.9 at T II 803c23, renders the name Dhammadinnā appropriately as 法施比丘尼.

of the discourse and of the way it presents the nun Dhammadinnā.

Translation

Discourse by Dhammadinnā⁴

1. The Blessed One was dwelling at Sāvattthī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park.⁵ At that time, the nun Dhammadinnā was residing in the nunnery Rājakārāma.⁶ At that time, the honourable Visākha approached the nun Dhammadinnā.⁷ Having

⁴ [11] Si 82: 14,14: *chos sbying gyi mdo*. Śamathadeva's *Upāyikāṭīkā* here provides a full version of the discourse from which the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* draws the quotation: *asabhāgo nirodha*; cf. Abhidh-k 1.6, Pradhan 1967: 4,7, translated in de La Vallée Poussin 1923/1971: 9 or Pruden 1988: 60. The *Abhidharmakośavyākhyā*, Wogihara 1932: 16,27, translated in de La Vallée Poussin 1930: 255, relates this quote to the householder Viśākha and the nun Dharmadinnā. In Śamathadeva's compendium, Si 82: 14,13, this quote then reads: 'gog pa ni 'dra ba ma yin no, whereas the Chinese translations of the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* render this quote as 滅無同類; cf. T 1558 at T XXIX 1c23 (Xuánzàng, 玄奘) and T 1559 at T XXIX 162b21 (Paramārtha). A counterpart to this statement is not found in the Pāli parallel (MN 44). In his comments on the present quote, de La Vallée Poussin 1923/1971: 9 note 2 refers the reader to an inquiry in MN 44 at MN I 304,19 after the counterpart to Nirvāṇa. This inquiry, however, occurs at the conclusion of the discussion and has counterparts in the Chinese and Tibetan versions. Thus, in spite of thematic similarity, this part of MN 44 does not correspond to the quote given in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*.

⁵ [12] MN 44 at MN I 299,1 gives the location as the Squirrel's Feeding Ground in the Bamboo Grove at Rājagaha.

⁶ [13] The other versions do not specify where she was staying at the time of the discourse. According to Jā II 15,1, the Rājakārāma had been built by King Pasenadi in the vicinity of Jeta's Grove, *jetavanasamīpe pasenadiraññā kārite*; cf. in more detail Malalasekera 1938/1998: 720 s.v. Rājakārāma.

⁷ [14] Si 82: 14,19 refers to him as *tshé dang ldan pa sa ga*, while the next sentence introduces him as a lay-follower, *dge bsnyen sa ga*, an expression used throughout the remainder of the discourse. The qualification *dge bsnyen*

paid respect with his head at the feet of the nun Dhammadinnā, he sat down to one side. Sitting to one side, the lay follower Visākha asked the nun [Si 15] Dhammadinnā: [9]

"Noble lady,⁸ if you would have the time to explain questions, [I would] inquire about a few subjects." "Honourable Visākha, I shall listen to know [your] questions."⁹

2. "Noble lady, identity (*sakkāya*) has been expounded, the arising of identity and the cessation of identity. What is identity, what is the arising of identity and what is the cessation of identity?"¹⁰

makes it clear that *tshē dang ldan pa*, corresponding to *āyasma* in Pāli, in the present context cannot have the meaning of marking someone off as a monastic. In fact, the use of the corresponding *āyasma* to address laity can also be found in several regulations in the Theravāda *Vinaya*, cf. Vin III 216,15, 218,35, 220,2 and 259,11, where the parallel versions preserved in Sanskrit similarly employ *āyuṣma*, cf. the Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya*, Tatia 1975: 14,11+19+27 and 18,3, the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, Banerjee 1977: 26,10, 27,2, 28,14 and 30,11, and the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, von Simson 2000: 186,14, 187,11, 191,7 and 198,4. In the case of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, the Tibetan version uses the corresponding *tshē dang ldan pa*; cf. Vidyabhusana 1915: 67,2+13, 69,17 and 73,3. In such contexts, the translation "venerable" would not fit and instead another term, like "honourable", appears to be appropriate. MN 44 at MN I 299,2 introduces its protagonist as *Visākho upāsako*, while MĀ 210 at T I 788a17 speaks of the female lay-follower Visākhā, 毘舍佉優婆夷. Thus, although the two parallel versions agree on announcing the lay status of the person visiting Dhammadinnā, they differ on the gender of her visitor, for a more detailed discussion of this difference cf. Anālayo 2007d: 32–34.

⁸ [15] Si 82: 15,1: *phags ma*, corresponding to *ayye* in MN 44 at MN I 299,7 and 賢聖 in MĀ 210 at T I 788a19.

⁹ [16] A similar exchange is also found in MĀ 210 at T I 788a19, but not in MN 44.

¹⁰ [17] In MN 44 Visākha also inquires after the way to the cessation of identity, MN I 299,27: *sakkāyanirodhagāminī paṭipadā*, which Dhammadinnā then explains to be the noble eightfold path. An inquiry regarding the arising and cessation of identity is absent from MĀ 210. However, a similar exchange may

"Honourable Visākha, the five aggregates [affected by] clinging are reckoned as identity in the higher teachings of the noble Dharma. What are the five? The bodily aggregate [affected by] clinging, the feeling ... perception ... volitional formations ... and the consciousness aggregate [affected by] clinging. The arising of identity ...¹¹ is [due to] delight and attachment in relation to future becoming, together with <craving> that relishes here and there.¹² The cessation of identity is accomplished through the removal of delight and attachment in relation to future becoming, [10] together with <craving> that relishes here and there; through their complete renunciation, exhaustion, fading away, cessation and pacification."

have been found earlier in MĀ 210, since its examination of identity view proceeds from inquiring after the non-existence of "identity view", MĀ 210 at T I 788b4: 云何無身見耶, to inquiring about the cessation of "identity", MĀ 210 at T I 788b12, 云何滅自身耶. This stands a little out of context and may be a remnant of an earlier examination of the arising and cessation of identity. A discussion of the topic of identity similar to MN 44 can be found in SN 22.105 at SN III 159,9, in which cases the parallel versions SĀ 71 at T II 18c2 and D 4094 *ju* 268b1 or Q 5595 *thu* 11b4 agree with SN 22.105 in taking up the arising, the cessation and the path to the cessation of identity.

¹¹ [18] Si 82: 15,10 at this point speaks of '*jig tshogs la lta ba*' ("identity view" instead of just mentioning "identity"). Since the inquiry was just about '*jig thogs*' and afterwards the discussion continues speaking just of '*jig thogs*', the present reference to the corresponding view is probably a transmission error, easily caused by the circumstance that later on the subject of identity view will be broached. Hence in my translation of the present passage I do not render *lta ba*, indicating the elision with "...".

¹² [19] Si 82: 15,10 reads *srid par dga' ba'i 'dod chags dang lhan cig pa'i srid pa ste*, where in my rendering I follow the emendation of the second occurrence of *srid pa* to *sred pa*, proposed by Vetter 2000: 122f. MN 44 at MN I 299,19 additionally notes that such craving is of three types: *kāmatanḥā*, *bhavatanḥā*, *vibhavatanḥā*; on this difference in general cf. also Choong 2000: 166 and Delhey 2009: 69 note 4.

7. "Noble lady, how does identity view arise?" "Honourable Visākha, an immature ordinary person, who is not learned, regards form as truly being the self, or form as possessing the self, or form as being in the self, or he regards the self as truly abiding in form. Likewise he regards feeling ... perception ... volitional formations ... consciousness as truly being the self, or consciousness as possessing the self, or consciousness as being in the self, or the self as abiding in consciousness. [Si 16] Thus identity view arises."

8. "Noble lady, how does identity view not arise?" "Honourable Visākha, a noble disciple, who is learned, does not regard form as truly the self, or form as possessing the self, or form as being in the self, or the self as abiding in form. He does not regard feeling ... perception ... volitional formations ... consciousness as truly the self, or the self as possessing consciousness, or consciousness as being in the self, or the self as abiding in consciousness. Therefore, identity view does not arise."

6. "Noble lady, the aggregates and the aggregates [affected by] clinging have been expounded. Noble lady, how is it, are the aggregates the same as the aggregates [affected by] clinging, or else are the aggregates different from the aggregates [affected by] clinging?"¹³

¹³ [20] MN 44 at MN I 299,32 tackles this topic earlier (before turning to identity view) and in a slightly different manner, as Visākha inquires whether clinging is the same as the five aggregates [affected by] clinging. In reply, Dhammādinā explains that clinging is neither the same as the five aggregates [affected by] clinging nor different from them, but simply stands for desire and lust in regard to them. On this distinction cf., e.g., Bodhi 1976, Boisvert 1995/1997: 20–30 and Anālayo 2008c: 405f. The present instance is not the only sequential variation between the three versions, which in order to avoid overcrowding the footnotes I do not note in each case, but only when this seems opportune.

"Honourable Visākha, the aggregates that are [affected by] clinging are the very aggregates, [yet] the aggregates are not [necessarily] aggregates [affected by] clinging. [11] How is it that the aggregates that are [affected by] clinging are the very aggregates, [yet] the aggregates are not [necessarily] aggregates [affected by] clinging? Honourable Visākha, form that is with influxes (*sāsrava*) and clinging, feeling ... perception ... volitional formations ... consciousness that is with influxes and clinging, these are aggregates as well as aggregates [affected by] clinging. Form that is without influxes and without clinging, feeling ... perception ... volitional formations ... consciousness that is without influxes and without clinging, these are aggregates, but they are not reckoned aggregates [affected by] clinging." [Si 17]

11. "Noble lady, regarding the [relationship between] the three aggregates – the aggregate of morality, the aggregate of concentration and the aggregate of wisdom – and the noble eightfold path; how is it, noble lady, is the noble eightfold path encompassed by the three aggregates, or else are the three aggregates encompassed by the noble eightfold path?"¹⁴

"Honourable Visākha, the noble eightfold path is encompassed by the three aggregates, the three aggregates are not encompassed by the noble eightfold path. How is it that the noble eightfold path is encompassed by the three aggregates, [yet] the three aggregates are not encompassed by the noble eightfold path? Honourable Visākha, in this regard right speech, right action and right livelihood have been assigned by

¹⁴ [21] MN 44 at MN I 300,31 and MĀ 210 at T I 788b25 follow a different sequence at this point, as the questioning proceeds by first of all requesting a definition of the noble eightfold path. This is then followed by inquiring about its conditioned nature and asking for a definition of the three aggregates, before coming to the question found at the present point in the Tibetan version.

the Blessed One to the aggregate of morality. Right mindfulness and right concentration have been assigned by the Blessed One to the aggregate of concentration. Right view, right intention and right effort have been assigned by the Blessed One to the aggregate of wisdom.¹⁵ Honourable Visākha, therefore it should be understood that the noble eightfold path is encompassed by the three aggregates, whereas the three aggregates are not encompassed by the noble eightfold path."

10. "Noble lady, is the path conditioned or unconditioned?" "Honourable Visākha, it is conditioned." [12] "Noble lady, is cessation of the same nature?"¹⁶ "Honourable Visākha, it is not of the same nature."

"Noble lady, how many factors does the first absorption possess?"¹⁷ "Honourable Visākha, it possesses five factors: [directed] comprehension, [sustained] discernment,¹⁸ delight, [Si 18] happiness and unification of the mind."

12. "Noble lady, regarding concentration, the cause of concentration, the power of concentration, and the development of concentration – noble lady, what is concentration, what is the cause of concentration, what is the power of concentration and what is the development of concentration?"

"Honourable Visākha, wholesome unification of the mind is concentration; the four establishments of mindfulness are the

¹⁵ [22] While MĀ 210 at T I 788c12 agrees in this respect, according to MN 44 at MN I 301,8 right effort belongs to the aggregate of concentration.

¹⁶ [23] Si 82: 17,19: 'gog pa 'dra ba yin nam; cf. above note 4.

¹⁷ [24] This inquiry occurs similarly in MĀ 210 at T I 788c19, but is absent from MN 44. A similar inquiry, however, is part of a question and answer exchange in MN 43 at MN I 294,28 between Mahākoṭṭhita and Sāriputta.

¹⁸ [25] Si 82: 17,21: *rtog pa* and *dp̄yod pa*, which in the present context function as counterparts to the absorption-factors *vitakka* and *vicāra* in MN 43 at MN I 295,1 and to 覺 and 觀 in MĀ 210 at T I 788c20.

cause of concentration; the four right efforts are the power of concentration; the undertaking of these very dharmas, their full undertaking, the abiding in them, practising and applying [oneself] to them is the development of concentration."¹⁹

13. "Noble lady, regarding formations, [what are reckoned to be] formations – noble lady, what are these formations?" "Honourable Visākha, there are bodily formations, verbal formations and mental formations – these are the three."

14. "Noble lady, what are bodily formations, what are verbal formations and what are mental formations?"²⁰ [13] "Honourable Visākha, exhalation and inhalation are reckoned as bodily formations; [directed] comprehension and [sustained] discernment are reckoned as verbal formations; perception and intention are reckoned as mental formations."²¹

15. "Noble lady, why are exhalation and inhalation reckoned as bodily formations, why are [directed] comprehension and [sustained] discernment reckoned as verbal formations, why are perception and intention reckoned as mental formations?"

"Honourable Visākha, exhalation and inhalation are bodily factors, they depend on the body, are related to the body, depending on the body they completely enter its [domain] – therefore exhalation and inhalation are reckoned as bodily for-

¹⁹ [26] MN 44 at MN I 301,13 differs in so far as it does not qualify unification of the mind as "wholesome". MĀ 210 at T I 788c24 agrees with the Tibetan in this respect, though it differs from the other versions in as much as it additionally indicates that the four ways to [psychic] power (*iddhipāda*) are the 'effect' of concentration, T II 788c26: 四如意足, 是謂定功也.

²⁰ [27] This topic is taken up similarly in MN 44 at MN I 301,17, while it is absent from MĀ 210.

²¹ [28] Si 82: 18,15: 'du shes dang sems pa. MN 44 at MN I 301,21 instead speaks of perception and feeling, *saññā ca vedanā ca*.

mations. On having examined and discerned with [directed] comprehension and [sustained] discernment one speaks [Si 19] – therefore [directed] comprehension and [sustained] discernment are reckoned as verbal formations. Perception and intention are factors arisen from the mind, go along with the mind, depend on the mind, are related to the mind, depending on the mind they completely enter its [domain] – therefore perception and intention are reckoned as mental formations."

"Noble lady, at the time when the body has been abandoned by these factors, when it is like a log, bereft of the mind, how many are the [other] factors that have been abandoned at that time?"²²

"Honourable Visākha, life [force], heat and consciousness, these are the three. At the time when life [force], heat and consciousness have been abandoned, the body is like a log, bereft of the mind."

"Noble lady, the occasion of passing away and dying and [the occasion] of entry into the meditative attainment of cessation – are these to be considered as distinct, are they different?"

"Honourable Visākha, the occasion of passing away and dying and [the occasion] of entry into the meditative attainment of cessation – these are considered as distinct, they have a number of differences. Honourable Visākha, on the occasion of passing away and dying, the bodily formations have ceased, the verbal formations [have ceased] and the mental formations have ceased.²³ [14] Honourable Visākha, the life [faculty] and

²² [29] This topic is also taken up in MĀ 210 at T I 789a1, while it is absent from MN 44. A similar discussion on the difference between a dead body and cessation, preceded by a reference to life force and heat, is part of a question and answer exchange between Mahākoṭṭhita and Sāriputta in MN 43 at MN I 296,11.

²³ [30] While MĀ 210 at T I 789a8 does not mention the three formations, these are part of the reply given to this question in MN 43 at MN I 296,13.

heat leave [the body], the faculties become otherwise, and consciousness departs from the body. On entering the meditative attainment of cessation, the bodily formations have ceased, the verbal formations [have ceased] and the mental formations have ceased. Yet, the life [faculty] and heat do not leave [the body], the faculties [do not]²⁴ become otherwise and consciousness does not depart from the body.²⁵ Honourable Viśākha, thus the occasion of passing away and dying and [the occasion] of entry into the meditative attainment of cessation are considered as distinct, they are different." [Si 20]

16. "Noble lady, how does the attainment of cessation take place?" "Honourable Viśākha, a monk who enters the attainment of cessation does not think 'I enter the attainment of cessation'.²⁶ His mind has previously been developed in such a way that, having been previously developed in that way, he

²⁴ [31] Si 82: 19,19: *dbang po gzhan du 'gyur ba*. Judging from the readings in the parallel versions, this would be a transmission error and should rather read: *dbang po gzhan du mi 'gyur ba*; cf. MN 43 at MN I 296,21: *indriyāni vippasannāni* in contrast to the earlier *indriyāni viparibhinnāni* (B° and S° read: *paribhinnāni*) and MĀ 210 at T I 789a10: 諸根不敗壞 in contrast to the earlier 諸根敗壞.

²⁵ [32] Si 82: 19,19: *nam par shes pa lus las 'da' bar mi 'gyur ro*. MN 43 and MĀ 210 differ, as they do not take a position on what happens with consciousness during cessation attainment; cf. also Schmithausen 1987: 339 and 1987/2007: 19f. On the difficulties of explaining the relationship between the attainment of cessation and the continuity or otherwise of the mind cf., e.g., Griffiths 1986/1991 and Pieris 2003.

²⁶ [33] Notably, even though in this passage Dhammadinnā appears to be speaking from experience, according to all versions she nevertheless employs the term 'monk', Si 82: 20,2: *dge slong*, MN 44 at MN I 301,32: *bhikkhuno*, MĀ 210 at T I 789a28: 比丘. This reflects a recurrent pattern in early Buddhist discourse to use the term 'monk' in a general manner, without thereby necessarily intending to restrict a particular statement to male monastic disciples only; cf. also Anālayo 2008a: 117f.

will fully dwell in [entering] it.

18. "Noble lady, how does the emergence from cessation take place?" "Honourable Visākha, a monk who emerges from the attainment of cessation does not think 'I emerge from the attainment of cessation'. Yet, his mind has previously been developed in such a way that, [15] having been previously developed in that way, he will fully dwell in [emerging from] it."²⁷

17. "Noble lady, when a monk enters the attainment of cessation, which factors will cease first: the bodily formations, the verbal formations or the mental formations?" "Honourable Visākha, when a monk enters the attainment of cessation, the verbal formations will cease first, then the bodily and mental formations."²⁸

19. "Noble lady, when a monk emerges from the attainment of cessation, which factors will arise first: the bodily formations, the verbal formations or the mental formations?" "Honourable Visākha, when a monk emerges from the attainment of cessation, the mental formations will arise first, then the bodily and verbal formations."²⁹

²⁷ [34] MN 44 at MN I 302,7 agrees that emergence from cessation occurs due to previous development, whereas according to MĀ 210 at T I 789b6 emergence is due to this body and the six sense-spheres conditioned by the life faculty, 因 此身及六處緣命根.

²⁸ [35] While MN 44 at MN I 302,4 agrees, MĀ 210 does not take up this topic. A similar discussion between Sāriputta and Mahākotṭhita in MĀ 211 at T II 792a9 differs in so far as it proposes that the bodily formations cease first, 先滅身行, 次滅口行, 後滅意行; for a more detailed discussion of this difference cf. Anālayo 2007a: 51f. A discourse quotation corresponding to the present section, found in the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, T 1545 at T XXVII 780c25, agrees with the Tibetan and Pāli versions on allocating this discussion to a discourse spoken by the nun Dharmadinnā, T 1545 at T XXVII 780c7.

²⁹ [36] Here, too, MN 44 at MN I 302,16 agrees, MĀ 210 does not take up this topic, and the similar discussion in MĀ 211 at T II 792a14 differs, as it pro-

21. "Noble lady, when a monk comes out of the attainment of cessation, to where does his mind incline, to where does it flow, whereto does it move?" "Honourable Visākha, when a monk comes out of the attainment of cessation, his mind inclines towards seclusion, flows towards seclusion, moves towards seclusion; [Si 21] it inclines towards liberation, flows towards liberation, moves towards liberation; it inclines towards Nirvāṇa, flows towards Nirvāṇa, moves towards Nirvāṇa."³⁰

20. "Noble lady, when a monk comes out of the attainment of cessation, what contacts does he contact?" [16] "Honourable Visākha, [he contacts] imperturbability, nothingness and signlessness."³¹

"Noble lady, to enter the attainment of cessation, how many factors does a monk develop?" "Honourable Visākha, this question should have been asked at first. I will nevertheless reply to it now. To enter the attainment of cessation, a monk develops two factors: tranquillity and insight."³²

22. "Noble lady, how many [types] of feeling are there?" "Honourable Visākha, there are three [types]: pleasant, unpleasant and neutral."

poses that mental formations are followed by verbal formations and bodily formations arise last, 先生意行, 次生口行, 後生身行.

³⁰ [37] MN 44 at MN I 302,26 and MĀ 210 at T I 789b11 only mention seclusion.

³¹ [38] MĀ 211 at T II 792a19 (parallel to MN 43) agrees, whereas according to MN 44 at MN I 302,22 the three contacts are empty, signless and desireless, *suññato phasso, animitto phasso* and *appaṇihito phasso*; on this difference cf. also Choong 1999: 62f. A discourse quotation corresponding to the present section in the *Karmasiddhiprakaraṇa* quotes as its source the Discourse to Mahākoṭṭhita, T 1609 at T XXXI 784b4: 摩訶俱瑟社羅契經, cf. also Anacker 1984/1998: 110, thereby agreeing with MĀ 211 that the present topic was part of a discussion between Sāriputta and Mahākoṭṭhita.

³² [39] This exchange is not found in MN 44 or MĀ 210.

23. "Noble lady, what is pleasant feeling, what is unpleasant feeling and what is neutral feeling?" "Honourable Visākha, bodily and mental pleasure or happiness that arises from contact experienced as pleasant is reckoned as pleasant feeling. Whatever bodily and mental displeasure or pain that arises from contact experienced as unpleasant is reckoned as unpleasant feeling. Whatever bodily and mental neutral or equanimous experience that arises from neutral contact is reckoned as neutral feeling.

25. "Noble lady, what increases with pleasant feelings, [Si 22] what increases with unpleasant feelings, what increases with neutral feelings?"³³ "Honourable Visākha, desire increases with pleasant feelings, aversion increases with unpleasant feelings and ignorance increases with neutral feelings."

26. "Noble lady, do all pleasant feelings increase desire, do all unpleasant feelings increase aversion and do all neutral feelings increase ignorance?" [17] "Honourable Visākha, not all pleasant feelings increase desire, not all unpleasant feelings increase aversion and not all neutral feelings increase ignorance. There are pleasant feelings that do not increase desire, but [instead] abandon it; there are unpleasant feelings that do not increase aversion, but [instead] abandon it; and there are neutral feelings that do not increase ignorance, but [instead] abandon it."

28. "Noble lady, what pleasant feelings do not increase desire, but [instead] abandon it?" "Honourable Visākha, here a noble disciple, being free from sensual desire and free from evil and unwholesome states, with [directed] comprehension

³³ [40] Si 82: 22,1: *rgyas par 'gyur*, while the parallel versions, MN 44 at MN I 303,7 and MĀ 210 at T I 789c7, instead speak of the respective "underlying tendency", *anusaya*/使.

and [sustained] discernment, and with happiness and rapture arisen from seclusion, dwells having fully attained the first absorption. With the stilling of [directed] comprehension and [sustained] discernment, with complete inner confidence and unification of the mind, [Si 23] free from [directed] comprehension and [sustained] discernment, with happiness and rapture arisen from concentration, he dwells having fully attained the second absorption. With the fading away of rapture, dwelling equanimous with mindfulness and comprehension, experiencing just happiness with the body, what the noble ones reckon an equanimous and mindful dwelling in happiness, he dwells having fully attained the third absorption. Such pleasant feelings do not increase desire, but [instead] abandon it."³⁴

"Noble lady, what unpleasant feelings do not increase aversion, but [instead] abandon it?" "Honourable Visākha, here a noble disciple generates an aspiration for supreme liberation: 'When shall I dwell fully realizing that sphere, which the noble ones dwell having fully realized?' The mental displeasure and painful feeling [due to] that aspiration, that pursuit and that longing do not increase aversion, but [instead] abandon it."

"Noble lady, what neutral feelings do not increase ignorance, but [instead] abandon it?" "Honourable Visākha, here a noble disciple, leaving behind happiness and leaving behind pain, with the earlier disappearance of mental pleasure and displeasure, with neither happiness nor pain and with completely pure equanimity and mindfulness, dwells having fully attained the fourth absorption. Such neutral feelings do not increase ignorance, but [instead] abandon it." [18]

24. "Noble lady, what is pleasant, [Si 24] what is unpleas-

³⁴ [41] MN 44 at MN I 303,30 and MĀ 210 at T I 789c11 mention only the first absorption, not the second or third absorption.

ant and what is the real danger in regard to pleasant feeling? What is pleasant, what is unpleasant and what is the real danger in regard to unpleasant feeling? What is pleasant, what is unpleasant and what is the real danger in regard to neutral feeling?³⁵

"Honourable Visākha, the arising of pleasant feeling and its abiding is pleasant, its transformation [into another feeling] is unpleasant.³⁶ Upon [manifesting] its impermanence, because of that, [there] is real danger in regard to it. The arising of unpleasant feeling and its abiding is unpleasant, its transformation [into another feeling] is pleasant. At the time when it [manifests its] impermanence, then the real danger in regard to it [manifests]. Being unaware of neutral feeling is unpleasant, the arising of awareness of it is pleasant. Whenever it [manifests its] impermanence, [then] the real danger in regard to it [manifests]."

³⁵ [42] MN 44 at MN I 303,1 only inquires after what is pleasant and unpleasant in relation to the three types of feeling. MĀ 210 at T I 789b25 reads: 云何樂, 云何苦, 云何無常, 云何災患 (followed by further inquiring about the underlying tendency, 云何使耶). Thus, in addition to investigating what is pleasant and unpleasant, MĀ 210 precedes its inquiry after the danger in regard to feelings with the question "what is its impermanence?" This appears to be a transmission error, in fact the reply given to this series of queries treats 云何無常 and 云何災患 as a single question, T II 789c1: 無常者即是災患, indicating that impermanence is the danger.

³⁶ [43] MN 44 at MN I 303,4 differs in so far as it only distinguishes between two phases, the persistence of a feeling and its change, whereas MĀ 210 at T I 789c1 agrees with the Tibetan version in also taking into account the arising of feeling. Another transmission error appears to occur in MĀ 210 at T I 789c4, which indicates that neutral feeling is unpleasant when not known and pleasant when not known, 不知苦, 不知樂, which should probably be emended to 不知苦, 知樂, in accordance with the reading in the parallel versions that being aware of neutral feeling can be reckoned as pleasant.

29. "Noble lady, what is the counterpart to pleasant feeling?" "Unpleasant feeling." "What is the counterpart to unpleasant feeling?" "Pleasant feeling." "What is the counterpart to pleasant and unpleasant feeling?"³⁷ "Neutral feeling." "What is the counterpart to neutral feeling?" "Ignorance." [19] "What is the counterpart to ignorance?" "Knowledge." "What is the counterpart to knowledge?"³⁸ "Nirvāṇa." "Noble lady, what is the counterpart to Nirvāṇa?"

"Honourable Visākha, you are going too far, you are really going too far, this is the end of it, it is not possible [to go further]. Following the Blessed One is for [the sake of] Nirvāṇa, the final goal of the pure holy life is Nirvāṇa, [Si 25] the eradication of *duḥkha*."

30. At that time the lay follower Visākha rejoiced in the exposition given by the nun Dhammadinnā. He paid respect to the nun Dhammadinnā by prostrating and left. Not long after the lay follower Visākha had left, the nun Dhammadinnā approached the Blessed One. Having approached him she paid respect with her head at the feet of the Blessed One and sat down to one side. Sitting to one side, the nun Dhammadinnā reported to the Blessed One the whole conversation she had been having with the lay follower Visākha.³⁹ The Blessed One said to the nun Dhammadinnā:

31. "Well done, Dhammadinnā, well done! If the lay fol-

³⁷ [44] This query is not found in MN 44.

³⁸ [45] MN 44 at MN I 304,16 at this point first indicates that liberation is the counterpart to knowledge, and then mentions that Nirvāṇa is the counterpart to liberation.

³⁹ [46] While MĀ 210 agrees with the Tibetan version, in MN 44 at MN I 304,26 it is Visākha who reports the conversation to the Buddha. Approaching the Buddha for confirmation in this way is a standard procedure in the discourses when expositions have been given by a disciple in the absence of the Buddha.

lower Visākha had asked me these matters in such words and with such expressions, I would have answered on these matters in just such words and expressions as you did, explaining it just like this."⁴⁰

The nun Dhammadinnā fully rejoiced and delighted in what the Buddha had said. [20]

Study

The above discourse presents a form of debate that takes place among Buddhist disciples.⁴¹ In such a debate, the aim of the discussion is less to gain victory and avoid defeat, as would be the case when a debate takes place with those who uphold a different system of thought or beliefs. Instead, the chief motivation for such 'debates' appears to be developing clarity of the teachings, be this for one's own sake, for the sake of the other, or for the sake of co-disciples who are present on the occasion.⁴² At times, such discussions give the impression of being just an amicable exchange be-

⁴⁰[47] In MN 44 at MN I 304,33 the Buddha lauds Dhammadinnā as wise and of great wisdom, *pañḍitā* and *mahāpaññā*. The Buddha's praise in the Tibetan version has already been translated by Skilling 2001: 148.

⁴¹[1] For a study of other instances of debate, based on a comparison of a Pāli discourse with its Chinese *Āgama* parallels; cf. Anālayo 2009b and Anālayo 2010e; on principles of debate in the Buddhist tradition cf. also Todeschini 2011.

⁴²[2] Such variety of purpose is reflected in a distinction between different types of questions made at As 55,17, which indicates that an inquiry need not be motivated by ignorance or by doubt. Instead, a question may also be posed for the sake of discussing what one has already understood, *diṭṭhasaṃsandanā pucchā*, to discover the opinion held by another, *anumatipucchā*, or to explain something to those who are present, *kathetukamyatā pucchā*. A comparable analysis of questions into different types can be found in the Jain *Ṭhāṇaṅga* 6.534, Jambūvijaya 1985: 217,5.

tween senior disciples, but at other times an underlying testing of the other's level of realization can be discerned.

The above 'debate' between the lay follower Visākha and the nun Dhammadinnā is not only outstanding for the great variety of themes it treats, but also for the fact that its chief protagonist is a nun. Nuns are considerably less prominent in early Buddhist texts than their male counterparts, be this as audience to discourses spoken by the Buddha or as speakers on their own. The reason for this is not far to seek. Several *Vinaya* rules prohibit the travelling together of monks and nuns in order to avoid suspicions that they might be having amorous relations.⁴³ Even the Buddha could apparently become the object of similar suspicions.⁴⁴ [6]

Such instances reflect ancient Indian concerns about relations between celibates and the other sex. These concerns make it only natural for the Buddha to refrain from setting out wandering in the company of nuns. Given his apparent itinerant lifestyle and the concern of the discourses to report what was spoken by or related to the Buddha, those who could accompany him on his travels – male monastics – feature with high frequency in the texts.

⁴³ [3] According to these rules, monks and nuns should not travel together or embark in the same boat, nor should monks teach nuns late in the evening; cf. Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 652b26, 652c29 and 650a12, Mahā-sāṃghika *Vinaya*, Tatia 1975: 21,15, 21,18 and 21,6, Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 48b18, 48c13 and 46b12, Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, Banerjee 1977: 34,15, 34,18 and 34,8, Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, von Simson 2000: 210,5, 210,9 and 210,1, and Theravāda *Vinaya*, Vin IV 62,28, 64,30 and 55,9. For a more detailed discussion cf. Anālayo 2008a: 115f.

⁴⁴ [4] Cf., e.g., the tale of how the Buddha was accused of having taken his pleasure with the female wanderer Sundarī, who was subsequently killed, reported in Ud 4.8 at Ud 43,22. A version of this tale is also found in T 198 at T IV 176c3, translated in Bapat 1945: 156ff; cf. also T 2085 at T LI 860c17 and T 2078 at T LI 899c20, for a Tocharian fragment cf. Sieg 1949: 28, for further parallels cf. Deeg 2005: 307f and Lamotte 1944/1981: 507 note 1.

Hence a discourse spoken by a nun deserves all the more attention, giving us a rare glimpse at female monastics in their role as teachers. Before taking a closer look at the discourse itself, I briefly summarize the background to the Pāli version of the discourse, as depicted in the Theravāda commentary.⁴⁵ [7] The *Paṇḍita-sūdanī* reports that the husband of Dhammadinnā, the merchant Visākha, had as a lay disciple of the Buddha progressed to the level of non-return. Having thereby left behind sensual desires for good, he was unable to continue his marital relationship as before. Hence he offered Dhammadinnā wealth and the freedom to do whatever she felt appropriate, upon which she decided to go forth instead. After having gone forth, she left the monastery in town for seclusion in order to be able to practice intensively and within a short time became an arahant, after which she returned to town. Hearing that she had come back to town so soon from seclusion, her former husband decided to visit her, in order to find out the reasons for her return.

According to the commentarial account, then, the questions posed by the non-returner Visākha to his former wife in the *Cūḷavedalla-sutta* have the purpose to test out Dhammadinnā's wisdom. That is, Visākha wants to discover if she has reached realization, or if she has just been unable to adapt to the living conditions in seclusion.

⁴⁵[9] Ps II 355,29. The same tale recurs with some variations in Mp I 360,17, translated by Bode 1893: 562–566 and summarized by Talim 1972: 117f, as part of a commentary on AN 1.14 at AN I 25,21, according to which Dhammadinnā was the foremost nun in regard to teaching the Dharma. Another occurrence is Thī-a 15,15, translated or summarized by Rhys Davids 1909/1989: 12, Murcott 1991: 62 and Pruitt 1998/1999: 26–30, which comments on her verse at Thī 12, and Dh-p-a IV 229,1, translated in Burlingame 1921: 226f. A poetical version of the past experiences of Dhammadinnā and her present encounter with Visākha can also be found in Ap 23.1–36 at Ap 567–569.

The Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* differs from this account, as it reports that Dhammadinnā never even got married to Visākha. Instead, with considerable struggle, she managed to get ordained on the eve of their scheduled wedding.⁴⁶

Whether the setting of the discourse is seen from the perspective of the Pāli commentary or from that of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, some degree of challenge and testing out of Dhammadinnā's understanding and depth of realization during the session of questions and answers with her former or would-be husband is evident in the discourse version of each tradition. [20]

In fact, a comparative survey shows that the three versions share a fair amount of topics, in spite of several differences,⁴⁷ where a recurrent pattern can be discerned that proceeds from relatively simple and innocuous questions to intricate and profound matters.⁴⁸

Thus, for example, a question on the nature of identity (*sak-kāya*) leads up to an inquiry about the precise relationship between clinging and the aggregates, a matter not easily explained unless the respondent has attained a good level of understanding. This is followed with the rather probing question regarding the relationship between the noble eightfold path and the three aggregates of morality, concentration and wisdom – which of these is the overarching category?⁴⁹ Another thorny question on the same

⁴⁶ [10] For a more detailed study and translated excerpts from the Tibetan Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* cf. Finnegan 2009: 157–160 and 202–207.

⁴⁷ A more detailed study of the difference between the three versions of the present discourse can be found in Anālayo 2011a: 276–286.

⁴⁸ This pattern has already been noticed by Foley 1894: 323–325 in a study of MN 44 she wrote before she married T.W. Rhys Davids.

⁴⁹ Mahāsi 1981/2006: 98 comments that "it is hard to answer that question ... however ... Dhammadinnā *therī* being an *Arahat* ... easily tackled the question". Regarding her subsequent exposition of the three formations, *ibid.* (p.

topic concerns the conditioned nature of the noble eightfold path. Behind this query stands the problem of how far the path to the unconditioned shares the nature of the goal to which it leads.

Once Dhammadinnā has settled each of these points, Visākha tests out her familiarity with mental tranquillity as well, succinctly inquiring into the mental qualities and practices that are required to deepen concentration. This much ascertained, he proceeds further by tackling the attainment of cessation, an experience that would require a high level of proficiency in insight and tranquillity. Here, too, Dhammadinnā is depicted as being able to prove her worth; in fact in the Tibetan version this exchange ends with a little quip at Visākha for having asked a question out of the proper order, presumably showing her self-confidence at this point of their discussion.

Visākha continues further, after having already ascertained Dhammadinnā's accomplishment in insight and tranquillity, by taking up the issue of feelings. This takes the course of their discussion from high meditative attainments back to the common world of experience. In line with the above-mentioned pattern, after the innocuous and easily answered query about the tree types of feelings the discussion quickly moves into deep waters, yielding the clarification that certain feelings are not necessarily related to defilements or underlying tendencies.

The final part of their discussion then proceeds through a series of terms that form counterparts to each other, until their exchange reaches the topic of Nirvāṇa. Visākha tries to push beyond this point, but Dhammadinnā makes it clear that he has gone too far. In this way, [21] the discourse presents her as remaining mas-

118) points out that her "ability to clarify those three kinds of *saṅkhāras* ... is immensely praiseworthy. Even nowadays, there will be only a few ... who may be able to tackle these difficult questions ... such being the case, the answer rendered by Dhammadinnā *therī* is, no doubt, extremely profound".

ter of the situation even when she is not able to give a reply to a question. Facing what in a normal debate setting would spell defeat, she self-confidently asserts that the debate has moved beyond issues that can be discussed. This assertion, presumably reflecting her own establishment in the realization of the final goal, can be seen to form a fitting conclusion to her exposition.

All versions report that the Buddha approves of Dhammadinnā's explanations, indicating that he would have given precisely the same replies himself. In other words, even approaching the Buddha himself Visākha would not have been able to get better replies. In the thought world of the early discourses, this is the highest praise a disciple can earn herself. The listing of eminent disciples in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* and the *Ekottarika-āgama* in fact reckon Dhammadinnā an outstanding teacher,⁵⁰ a qualification she apparently earned herself through the delivery of the present discourse.⁵¹

Her exposition seems to have been also held in high esteem among the ancient monks responsible for assembling the discourses into collections for the purpose of oral transmission. They decided to place the discourse spoken by Dhammadinnā next to a discussion on various aspects of the Dharma between Mahākoṭṭhita and Sāriputta.⁵² The Pāli versions of these two discourses

⁵⁰ AN 1.14 at AN I 25,21 qualifies her as foremost among those who are able to teach the Dharma, *dhammakathikā*, while EĀ 5.2 at T II 559a13 highlights her as foremost in the ability to "discriminate the meaning" and to "widely discourse on divisions and parts" [of the teaching], 分別義趣, 廣說分部. This listing is one of those Buddhist texts which, in the words of Falk 1989: 161, "unquestionably carries a strong positive image of the nun". For a survey of such positive images of nuns in the early text in general cf. Anālayo 2010f: 72–76, for a comparative study of the list of eminent nuns cf. Anālayo 2013a.

⁵¹ Cf. Mp I 363,13 and Ap 23.28 at Ap 569,11.

⁵² The two discourses are found side by side in the Theravāda and the Sarvāstivāda collections of middle length discourses: MN 43 has its parallel in MĀ

stand out in the Pāli canon for carrying the term *vedalla* in their titles,⁵³ which in the listing of textual *aṅgas* forms a distinct category, presumably referring to a question and answer exchange that involves subtle analysis.⁵⁴ The pair of °*vedalla-suttas* in the Pāli canon thus places Dhammadinnā on a par with Sāriputta, who according to the listing of eminent disciples in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* and the *Ekottarika-āgama* was foremost among the monks in regard to wisdom.⁵⁵ [22]

The insightful explanations offered in the present discourse appear to have functioned as a continuous source of inspiration in the history of Theravāda Buddhism, as can be seen from recurrent references to this exposition in the Pāli commentaries.⁵⁶

211, MN 44 has its parallel in MĀ 210. Otherwise these two collections disagree considerably in the order of their discourses.

⁵³ The slightly longer MN 43 has the title *Mahāvedalla-sutta*, whereas MN 44 carries the complementary title *Cūḷavedalla-sutta*. According to Horner 1953/1980: 194, length is one of the possible determinants for applying the qualification *mahā-* and *cūḷa-* respectively.

⁵⁴ According to Jayawickrama 1959: 14, the word *vedalla* "comes from an older *vaidārya* form, *vi* + √*dr* to tear apart, hence analyse or break down into fundamentals". Ibid. concludes that *vedalla* probably means "subtle analysis". Kalupahana 1965b: 618 similarly takes *vedalla* to refer in particular to "subtle analyses, unintelligible to the ordinary man". For the present instance, this nuance finds confirmation in Ap 23.27 at Ap 569,10, according to which the questions that Dhammadinnā replied to were deep and subtle, *gambhīre nipuṇe pañhe*.

⁵⁵ AN 1.14 at AN I 23,17 and EĀ 4.2 at T II 557b5. For a string of praises of Sāriputta's wisdom cf. also, e.g., SN 2.29 at SN I 64,3 and its parallel SĀ 1306 at T II 358c25.

⁵⁶ References in commentarial literature to the *Cūḷavedalla* (except for passages already mentioned above in note 45 and below in notes 63–65, and without taking into account references in the sub-commentaries), occur often in the context of definitions of the *vedalla* category or in listings of important texts, cf., e.g., Sp I 28,27, Sv I 24,14, Sv III 724,11, Ps I 278,5, Ps II 106,25, Spk II 4,16, Mp III 6,11, As 26,31 and Vibh-a 267,2, which thus can be found in the

Here it is perhaps also noteworthy that, according to the Pāli commentary, before going forth Dhammadinnā had asked her husband if the awakening he had reached could also be attained by women. In reply, her husband was quick to dismiss such doubts, making it clear that gender is irrelevant in such matters.⁵⁷ Thus, from the perspective of the tale presented in the commentarial tradition, the present discourse is a vindication of women's spiritual abilities being in principle not different from those of a man. The opinion that the commentary in this way attributes to the non-returner Visākha stands in explicit contrast to a presumably prevalent opinion in ancient India – reflected in the question asked by Dhammadinnā before her decision to go forth – according to which women cannot attain spiritual perfection.

The continuity of the tale not only shows her being able to equal her husband, but even surpassing his attainments. This constitutes a noteworthy turn of events, since in this way a woman

commentaries to each of the three *piṭakas*. References in commentarial literature to Dhammadinnā come up, e.g., in Mp I 405,5, Pj I 204,13, Thī-a 5,27, Thī-a 101,26, Thī-a 111,14, Thī-a 126,2, Thī-a 175,2, Thī-a 185,20 and Jā VI 481,16. On quotes from the present discourse in the *Visuddhimagga* cf. Krey 2010a: 35 note 82, for quotations in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, etc., cf. Pāsādika 1989: 20 §1, 28 §45, 33 §67 and 101 §§395f and Anālayo 2011a: 1044. A high regard for the teachings given by Dhammadinnā can also be seen in the circumstance that Mahāsi 1981/2006: 127, an eminent scholar-monk and meditation master of the Theravāda tradition in the 20th century, recommends the developing of inspiration by "bearing in mind the rare ability and gifted wisdom of Dhammadinnā in being able to elucidate with precision" the questions posed to her; cf. also above note 49.

⁵⁷ Ps II 357,15 reports her querying Visākha: "how is it, will this dharma be attained just by men or is a woman also able to attain it?", *kiṃ nu kho eso dhammo puriseh 'eva labhitabbo, mātugāmena pi sakkā laddun ti?* Visākha replies: "what are you saying, Dhammadinnā, ... whoever has the required qualities will obtain it", *kiṃ vadesi, dhammadinne ... yassa yassa upanissayo atthi, so so etaṃ paṭilabhati*.

becomes the teacher of her ex-husband. [23]

In the ancient Indian setting, a wife had to go to live in the house of her husband's family, where she was in a position subservient not only to her husband, but also to his parents.⁵⁸ Against this background, the present discourse throws into relief the degree to which, by dint of going forth as a nun and developing the path to liberation, a woman could completely reverse the situation in which she had been before.⁵⁹

In sum, the present discourse in its three extant versions shows Dhammadinnā self-confidently dealing with intricate aspects of the Dharma in a situation where her understanding is being challenged. It thus sets a clear antecedent, found within the textual corpus of the early Buddhist discourses, for the practice of debate among Buddhist disciples in later times.⁶⁰ Particularly noteworthy

⁵⁸ Horner 1930/1990: 1 explains that a man "regarded his wife simply as a child-bearer", as a consequence of which "her life was spent in complete subservience to her husband and his parents. She was allowed little authority at home and no part in public activities". Von Hinüber 1993: 102 draws attention to an instance that reflects the low position of a wife in the household of her husband, found in Vin IV 21,3, where a mother-in-law addresses her daughter-in-law with *je*, an address elsewhere used to address a female slave (or a courtesan; cf. Norman 1996: 58); cf. also Wagle 1966: 94, who in regard to the low position of a wife in the household of her husband comments that "it is not, therefore, surprising that the daughter-in-law is sometimes treated as a slave".

⁵⁹ The present instance is thus more remarkable than Gārgī's challenge to Yājñavalkya in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 3.6 and 3.8, on which cf., e.g., Findly 1985, or the dialogue between Yājñavalkya and his wife Maitreyī in the same work at 4.5, since Dhammadinnā gives a series of teachings to her ex-husband, of which at least the last appears to be beyond his ken.

⁶⁰ Debate among Buddhist disciples as a means of clarifying aspects of the Dharma has become a particularly prominent form of practice in the *dge lugs pa* tradition; cf., e.g., Sierksma 1964, Goldberg 1985, Tillemans 1989, Onoda 1992: 37–48, Perdue 1992, Newland 1996, Dreyfus 2003: 195–291 and Perdue 2008.

in this respect is the underlying pattern, observed above, of proceeding from relatively simple and innocuous questions to intricate and profound matters, thereby giving the impression that the discourse is indeed recording an actual debate.

Dhammadinnā's replies to the challenges she is shown to be facing make it clear that, from the viewpoint of early Buddhism, her gender had no bearing on her ability to reach realization and eloquently expound her understanding to others.⁶¹ Such testimony is independent of the historical value one may be willing to accord to the information that can be gathered from the early discourses. Though other canonical passages at times present women in general and nuns in particular in an unfavourable light,⁶² [24] there can be little doubt that the depiction of the nun Dhammadinnā in all versions of the present discourse conveys a remarkably positive image, whether it be reflecting a historical event or the imagination of the reciters of the text.

⁶¹ Mahāsi 1981/2006: 127 points out that "at the time when Dhammadinnā *therī* answered these ... difficult questions, she has not been long enough ... an ordained ... *bhikkhunī*", too short a time for her to become conversant with theoretical knowledge of the Dharma. Hence it clearly is "from her own insight knowledge personally acquired through practical exercise [that] she was able to answer clearly and precisely all the questions put forward by Visākha".

⁶² This topic has received attention by a broad range of scholars; cf., e.g., Falk 1974: 106f, Church 1975: 54f, Paul 1979/1985: 5–8, Willis 1985: 65, Lang 1986, Bancroft 1987: 81–93, Barnes 1987: 114, Falk 1989, Sumala 1991: 114–116, Rajapakse 1992: 70–75, Sponberg 1992, Gross 1993: 32–48, Wilson 1995, Harris 1999: 50f, Hüsken 2000: 59, Nagata 2002, Williams 2002, Ohnuma 2004: 303f, Hüsken 2006: 213 and Bentor 2008: 126. Without in any way intending to turn a blind eye to such passages, I believe that Collett 2009a: 112 is quite right when she emphasizes that more studies of female figures like Dhammadinnā are required in order to arrive at a more comprehensive and balanced understanding of the position of women as reflected in early Buddhist texts.

The same holds for her depiction in the Pāli commentaries, which report that Dhammadinnā served as an inspiring model for other women who had chosen to follow her example by going forth in quest for awakening. The commentaries record that a woman who had gone forth under Dhammadinnā and learnt meditation from her became an arahant herself, after which this nun also became an outstanding teacher.⁶³ Another nun, who had been incapable of gaining concentration for twenty-five years, was according to the commentarial account able to develop her practice and eventually attained the six supernormal knowledges after hearing a teaching delivered by Dhammadinnā.⁶⁴

In addition to the detailed teaching preserved in the present discourse and its parallels, a succinct teaching attributed to Dhammadinnā can be found in a single stanza in the *Therīgāthā*, a collection of verses that often, similar to the present discourse, presents remarkably positive images of nuns. The stanza associated with Dhammadinnā in this collection can be seen to summarize key elements of what, according to tradition, had been her own development. This stanza emphasizes having a strong aspiration for liberation,⁶⁵ an element evident in Dhammadinnā's decision to go forth and in her withdrawing into seclusion in order to be able to practice. These two decisions go hand in hand with a renunciation of the attractions of sensuality in its grosser and finer forms, and in combination with such renunciation lead to progress that

⁶³ Thī-a 55,25. Krey 2010a: 20 note 12 points out that Dhammadinnā's role as a teacher is also documented in the Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya*; cf. Roth 1970: 52,10.

⁶⁴ Thī-a 74,27.

⁶⁵ Thī-a 19,6 glosses the expression *chandaajātā* found in Dhammadinnā's verse as *aggaphalattaṃ jātacchanda*, the arousing of desire for the highest fruit, spoken by her according to the commentarial explanation when she had already reached the lowest level of awakening and was striving to progress to full liberation.

takes place 'upstream', against the current of saṃsāric involvement. The stanza runs: [25]

"With desire for the final end aroused
 Let her mind be pervaded by it;
 With her heart no [longer] bound to sensuality
 She is reckoned one who moves upstream."⁶⁶

⁶⁶ Thī 12: *chandajātā avasāye manasā ca phuṭā siyā kāmesu appaṭibaddhacittā uddhaṃsotā ti vuccati*; B^o, C^e and S^e read: *avasāyī*, C^e: *phuṭhā*, S^e: *phuṭṭhā*. According to Blackstone 1998/2000: 28, the sentiment conveyed by this verse is exceptional in the *Therīgāthā*. A similar verse, though couched in masculine forms, can be found in Dhṃ 218: *chandajāto anakkhāte, manasā ca phuṭo siyā, kāmesu ca appaṭibaddhacitto, uddhaṃsoto ti vuccati* (S^e: *phuṭho, kāme and apaṭibaddha*^o). A counterpart in Uv 2.9, Bernhard 1965: 114, reads: *chandajāto hy avasrāvī, manasānāvīlo bhavet, kāmeṣu tv apratibaddhacitta, ūrdhvasroto nirucyate*. The Tibetan counterpart in Beckh 1911: 9 reads: *'dun pa skyes shing zag pa mi byed dang* (Zongtse 1990: 46: *par mi byed dam*), *sems la skyon med pa dang dran pa dang, 'dod pa mams la so sor ma chags gang, de ni 'pho ba'i gong du yin zhes* (Zongtse 1990: 46: *de ni gong du 'pho ba yin zhes gsungs*). For a Chinese parallel cf. T 212 at T IV 629b13: 欲生無漏行, 意願常充滿, 於欲心不縛, 上流一究竟。

Vīmaṃsaka-sutta (MN 47)

Introduction

The theme of the present chapter is the scope of free inquiry from the perspective of the *Vīmaṃsaka-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* and its counterpart in the *Madhyama-āgama*. In these two discourses, a prospective disciple is encouraged to investigate whether the Buddha's claim to being a fully awakened teacher is justified. Below I translate the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse, followed by a comparative study of the two versions and an evaluation of the significance of their presentation.

Examinations of Buddhist thought often refer to the *Kālāma-sutta* as the example par excellence for the advocacy of a principle of free inquiry, expressing a non-authoritarian and pragmatic attitude.¹ Yet, compared with the *Kālāma-sutta* the *Vīmaṃsaka-sutta* could lay an even greater claim to presenting a remarkable advocacy of free inquiry. The scope that this discourse allows for free inquiry stands in contrast to the well-known Indian conception of a teacher as being invested with an authority that should never be questioned. [8] According to the *Vīmaṃsaka-sutta* and its parallel, however, even the Buddha's claim to being a fully awakened teacher can be made the object of the most searching type of scrutiny.²

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¹ AN 3.65 at AN I 188,12 to 193,21, which has a parallel in MĀ 16 at T I 438b13 to 439c21. For a recent examination of this discourse cf. Evans 2007, with a reply in Pāsādika 2012.

² The claim of an arahant to having reached awakening should similarly be

Translation

Discourse on Investigating [for the Sake of] Understanding³

1. Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was dwelling in the Kuru country, in Kammāsadhamma, a town of the Kurus.⁴

2. At that time the Blessed One said to the monks:⁵ "If based on [the abilities] of one's own mind, one does not know the mind of another as it really is, then one cannot know if the Blessed One is rightly and fully awakened. [9] How [should one] investigate [for the sake of] understanding the Tathāgata?"

3. The monks said to the Blessed One: "The Blessed One is the source of the Dharma, the Blessed One is the master of the Dharma, the Dharma stems from the Blessed One. We only wish that he explains it, having heard it we will gain an extensive understanding of the meaning [of the earlier statement]." The Buddha said: "Monks, listen and pay careful attention, I shall give you a detailed explanation." The monks listened to receive the teaching.

checked, though the procedure adopted for this purpose in MN 112 at MN III 29,19 to 37,4 and its parallel MĀ 187 at T I 732a21 to 734a25 is less stringent; for a translation and study of this discourse cf. below p. 223.

³ The translated text is MĀ 186 at T I 731a29 to 732a8; for a comparative study cf. Anālayo 2011a: 291–293.

⁴ [7] MN 47 at MN I 317,20 instead locates the discourse in Jeta's Grove, Sāvathī; for studies of MN 47 cf. Premasiri 1991/2006 and Anālayo 2009f.

⁵ [8] MĀ 186 at T I 731b3: 世尊, the standard counterpart to *bhagavat* in the *Madhyama-āgama*. Nattier 2003b: 232 comments that "an etymological connection between this term and its Indian antecedent is not immediately evident ... at the present state of our knowledge it seems prudent simply to assume that 世尊 was coined as an interpretative rather than an etymological translation".

4. The Blessed One said: "If based on [the abilities of] one's own mind, one does not know the mind of another as it really is, one should investigate in two ways [for the sake of] understanding the Tathāgata. Firstly [in regard to] forms known by the eye, and secondly [in regard to] sounds heard by the ear. [One should investigate like this]:

"Could defiled states knowable through the eye or the ear be found in this venerable one?"⁶ Suppose at the time of investigating one comes to know that defiled states knowable through the eye or the ear are not found in this venerable one. If there are no [such defiled states], one should further investigate:

5. "Could mixed states knowable through the eye or the ear be found in this venerable one?" Suppose at the time of investigating one comes to know that mixed states knowable through the eye or the ear are not found in this venerable one. If there are no [such mixed states], one should further investigate:

6. "Could pure states knowable through the eye or the ear be found in this venerable one?" Suppose at the time of investigating one comes to know that pure states knowable through the eye or the ear are found in this venerable one. [10] If there are [such pure states], one should further investigate:

7. "Has this venerable one been practising this Dharma for a long time, or is he practising it [only] temporarily?"⁷ Suppose

⁶ [9] MĀ 186 is consistent in its use of the expression "that venerable one", 彼尊者, to refer to the Buddha throughout the course of the inquiry. The same expression is found later on in the Pāli version as well; cf., e.g., MN 47 at MN I 318,23: *ayam āyasmā*. In the present inquiry about the defiled and undefiled states, however, the Pāli version instead speaks of the Tathāgata, MN 47 at MN I 318,6: *saṃvijjanti vā te tathāgatassa no vā*; cf. the discussion below.

⁷ [10] MĀ 186 at T I 731b19: 為長夜行此法, 為暫行耶. MN 47 at MN I 318,23

at the time of investigating one comes to know that this venerable one has been practising this Dharma for a long time, he is not [just] practising it temporarily. If he constantly has been practicing [like that for a long time], one should investigate still further:

8. "Does this venerable one enter into meditation for the sake of fame or gain, or does he enter into meditation for the sake of neither fame nor gain?"⁸ Suppose at the time of investigating one comes to know that this venerable one does not enter into meditation motivated by something [that would result in] misfortune or badness [such as being desirous of fame and gain].

9. "If [the investigator then] speaks like this: 'That venerable one delights in the practice, he is not afraid. Being free from desire he does not engage in sensuality, having eradicated sensual desires'.⁹

10. "Then [someone] might ask [the investigator]: 'Venerable friend, what is the practice, what is the power, what is the knowledge, that enables the venerable one to see for himself rightly and make this declaration: 'That venerable one delights in this practice, he is not afraid. Being free from desire he does not engage in sensuality, having eradicated sensual desires?'

instead inquires if he has attained this wholesome Dharma a long time ago or only recently, *dīgharattaṃ samāpanno ayam āyasmā imaṃ kusalaṃ dhammaṃ udāhu ittarasamāpanno*, which Ps II 382,5 explains to mean "since a very long time ... or else ... yesterday", *cirakālato paṭṭhāya ... udāhu ... hiyyo*.

⁸ [11] Instead of referring to meditation practice, MN 47 at MN I 318,29 inquires if 'that venerable one' has acquired fame without succumbing to the dangers that result from becoming famous.

⁹ [12] In MN 47 at MN I 319,2 this declaration is preceded by an inquiry whether 'that venerable one' is free from fear and sensuality. This fits the earlier pattern of describing an investigation followed by a corresponding conclusion, whereas in MĀ 186 the conclusion comes somewhat unexpected.

[11]

"[The investigator then can] give this answer: 'Venerable friend, I do not know the mind of others, and I also do not have knowledge of other things [by way of psychic power].¹⁰ Yet, that venerable one, whether he is in seclusion, or among the [monastic] community, [731c] or in a [public] assembly; if [some] are progressing well; if [he] becomes the teacher for [those who] are progressing well; [or else] in relation to material things; [in any of these instances] one can see [the detached nature of] that venerable one.¹¹

"[Moreover, though] I did not come to know this myself [by psychic power], I heard it from that venerable one, asking him face to face, [whereon he said]: 'I delight in the practice, I am not afraid. Being free from desire I do not engage in sensuality, having already eradicated sensual desires'.

"Venerable friend, this is the practice, this is the power, this is the knowledge, due to which I rightly see for myself and make this declaration: 'That venerable one delights in the prac-

¹⁰[¹³] This declaration is not found in MN 47.

¹¹[¹⁴] MĀ 186 at T I 731c1: 若有善逝, 若為善逝所化為宗主, 因食可見彼賢者, 我不自知。My rendering of this cryptic passage is only tentative. The parallel passage in MN 47 at MN I 319,12 reads: "those who progress well, those who progress badly, and those who teach a group, some who are concerned with material things, and some who are not stained by material things – this venerable one does not despise [any of] them on that account", *ye ca tattha sugatā, ye ca tattha duggatā, ye ca tattha gaṇam anusāsanti, ye ca idh' ekacce āmisesu sandissanti, ye ca idh' ekacce āmisenā anupalittā, nāyaṃ āyaasmā taṃ tena avajānāti*. In MĀ 186, a reference to those who progress badly and to those who are not stained by material things is not found. Instead, MĀ 186 has a doubling of *sugatā*/善逝, followed by relating the being under the influence of material things to 'that venerable one', i.e., to the Buddha, and not to his disciples. Finally, the expression "I do not know myself", 我不自知, could be due to mistaking *ava-√jñā*, "to despise", for *a + √jñā*, "not to know".

tice, he is not afraid. Being free from desire he does not engage in sensuality, having eradicated sensual desires.'

11. "Herein, [the investigator] should further ask the Tathāgata [directly in regard to such] states, whether there are defiled states knowable through the eye or the ear, [or if the Tathāgata has reached] that attainment where those states cease entirely.¹² [The investigator should further ask] if there are mixed states knowable through the eye or the ear, [12] [or if the Tathāgata has reached] that attainment where those states cease entirely. [He should further ask] if there are pure states knowable through the eye or the ear, [or if the Tathāgata has reached] that attainment where those states cease entirely.

12. "The Tathāgata will tell him in reply if there are defiled things knowable through the eye or the ear, [or if he has reached] that state where those things cease entirely; if there are mixed states knowable through the eye or the ear, [or if he has reached] that state where those things cease entirely, [saying]:

13. "As to defiled things knowable through the eye or the ear, the Tathāgata has completely eliminated and uprooted them, so that they will not arise again.¹³ As to mixed states knowable through the eye or the ear the Tathāgata has completely eradicated and uprooted them, so that they will not

¹² [15] The point made by this passage could be understood in the light of the *Saṅgīti-sutta* and its Sanskrit parallel, which indicate that by having reached full awakening the Buddha was incapable of performing the type of deed that requires covering up so that others do not come to know of it; cf. DN 33 at DN III 217,8 and the Sanskrit fragment reconstructed in Stache-Rosen 1968: 79. A reference to the attainment where those states cease entirely is not found in MN 47.

¹³ [16] MN 47 does not explicitly refer to the uprooting of defiled states and their inability to arise again.

arise again. As to pure states, like this is my purity, like this are my objects, like this is my recluse-ship, like this I am accomplished in this true teaching and discipline'.¹⁴

14. "A disciple, who has [in this way gained some] confidence, approaches the Tathāgata to see him. He acts respectfully towards the Tathāgata and hears the Dharma from the Tathāgata. The Tathāgata teaches him the Dharma that [leads] high and even higher, that is sublime and even more sublime, skilfully discarding black and white.¹⁵

"As the Tathāgata teaches him the Dharma that [leads] high and even higher, that is sublime and even more sublime, skilfully discarding black and white, hearing it exactly like this [the disciple] comes to know thoroughly a certain teaching and in regard to all phenomena attains the supreme,¹⁶ [13] [thereby

¹⁴[17] MN 47 at MN I 319,31 adds that he does not identify with this purity, *no ca tena tammayo*.

¹⁵[18] MN 47 at MN I 319,34 instead speaks of the Dharma being "with dark and bright counterparts", *kaṅhasukkasappaṭibhāga*.

¹⁶[19] MĀ 186 at T I 731c20: 知斷一法, 於諸法得究竟, where I take the expression 知斷 to be rendering an equivalent to Pāli *parijānāti* or *pariññā*. Support for this could be gathered from the expression 知斷欲 in MĀ 99 at T I 584c13, which corresponds to *kāmānaṃ pariññaṃ*, "penetrative understanding of sensual pleasures", in its counterpart MN 13 at MN I 84,10. The commentary Ps II 54,21 explains *kāmānaṃ pariññaṃ* here to imply the "eradication of sensual pleasures", *kāmānaṃ pahānaṃ*. The translator's choice of 知斷 could have been based on a similar understanding of the implications of *pariññā*. The corresponding passage in MN 47 at MN I 319,37 reads: *so tasmim̐ dhamme abhiññāya idh' ekaccaṃ dhammaṃ dhammesu niṭṭhaṃ gacchati*; translated in Ñāṇamoli 1995/2005: 417 as: "through direct knowledge of a certain teaching here in that *Dhamma* I came to a conclusion about the teachings" (cf. also Chalmers 1926: 229: "so gradually therein had he, by insight into this or that state of consciousness, reached perfection in them all"; and Horner 1953/1967: 382: "so does he gradually by his superknowledge of point after point of *dhamma* come to fulfilment in *dhamma*").

arriving at] tranquil confidence in the Blessed One: 'The Blessed One is rightly and fully awakened!'¹⁷

15. "Again, [someone] might ask [the disciple]: 'Venerable friend, what is the practice, what is the power, what is the knowledge, due to which the venerable one came to know thoroughly a certain teaching and in regard to all phenomena attained the supreme, [thereby arriving at] tranquil confidence in the Blessed One: 'The Blessed One is rightly and fully awakened!''?"

"[The disciple then can] give this answer: 'Venerable friend, I do not know the mind of the Blessed One, and I also do not have knowledge of other things [by way of psychic power].¹⁸ [14] Yet, in relation to the Blessed One I have this tranquil confidence, [because] the Blessed One taught me the Dharma that [leads] high and even higher, that is sublime and even more sublime, skilfully discarding black and white.

¹⁷ [20] MN 47 at MN I 320,2 adds confidence in the Dharma and the community. Edwards 2008: 235 takes the reference to firm faith in the Dharma as standing in contrast to the idea that early Buddhism advocates freedom of thought. Yet, the point of the present passage is rather the inner certitude that comes with the attainment of stream-entry (cf. the commentarial gloss at Ps II 388,9: *ekaccam paṭivedhadhammaṃ abhiññāya tena abhiññātena paṭivedhadhammena desanādhamme niṭṭham gacchati*, with the subcommentary explaining *paṭivedhadhammaṃ abhiññāya* to intend *maggapaññāya jānitvā*), as a stream-enterer would know for certain that the one who taught him or her must also be awakened (and by implication that the teachings received must have the potential of leading to awakening). This certainly does not contradict the principle of freedom of thought evident in the remainder of the discourse's recommendation freely to query the teacher's claim to being awakened, but is only the final product arrived at through a process of free inquiry, which has resulted in confidence in the one whose teachings have led the stream-enterer to realization.

¹⁸ [21] As earlier (cf. above note 10), this declaration is not found in MN 47.

"Venerable friend, as and when the Blessed One taught me the Dharma, I heard it exactly like this, [knowing that] 'the Blessed One teaches me the Dharma that [leads] high and even higher, that is sublime and even more sublime, skilfully discarding black and white'.¹⁹ Having heard it exactly like this, I came to know thoroughly one state and in regard to all phenomena attained the supreme, [thereby arriving at] tranquil confidence in the Blessed One: [732a] 'That Blessed One is rightly and fully awakened!'

"Venerable friend, this is the practice, this is the power, this is the knowledge, due to which I came to know thoroughly a certain teaching and in regard to all phenomena attained the supreme, [thereby arriving at] tranquil confidence in the Blessed One: 'That Blessed One is rightly and fully awakened!'

16. "Once there is such practice, such power, deeply settled in the Tathāgata, once the basis of confidence is [firmly] established, then this is reckoned a [type of] faith that is rooted in vision, that is indestructible [because it is] united with knowledge and cannot be shaken by any recluse or brahmin, god, Māra or Brahmā, or anyone else in the world. In this way [one should] investigate [for the sake of] understanding the Tathāgata, in this way one will truly know the Tathāgata."

The Buddha spoke like this. The monks, having listened to what the Buddha said, were delighted and received it respectfully.

Study

The main thrust of the two versions is quite similar and differences found between them involve mostly details. One such detail

¹⁹ [22] That the teachings were heard like this is not mentioned in MN 47.

is that the *Madhyama-āgama* version employs the expression "this venerable one" right from the outset to refer to the Buddha, while in the *Majjhima-nikāya* version this usage sets in only at a later stage in the investigation. The usage of this expression as such is remarkable, since it purposely puts the Buddha on the same footing as any other monk. [15] The expression "this venerable one" thereby constitutes an eloquent expression of the fact that what is being investigated is precisely the question whether "this venerable one" qualifies for being reckoned a Tathāgata.

Since to refer to the Buddha with this term is rather unusual in the early discourses, thereby being the *lectio difficilior*, it seems probable that in this respect the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse has preserved an earlier reading. It could easily have happened that the unusual way of referring to the Buddha as *ayaṃ āyasmā* was replaced by the expression *tathāgata* during the course of oral transmission of the Pāli discourse, perhaps even quite unintentionally, whereas a change in the opposite direction would be improbable.

Another minor difference is that in the Pāli version the investigator examines whether the Buddha has "attained" this wholesome condition a long time ago or only recently. According to the Chinese version, the point of the investigation was whether he has been "practising" in this wholesome way for a long time or only temporarily. Thus the point at stake in the Chinese discourse does not appear to be how long ago the Buddha has attained awakening, but whether he is consistent in his conduct.²⁰

²⁰ [25] The use of 行 in MĀ 186 does not seem to be just a free translation of an equivalent to the *samāpanna* found in the corresponding Pāli passage, since other occurrences of the verb *samāpajjati* or the past participle *samāpanna* in the *Majjhima-nikāya* have their counterparts in 入 or 得 in their *Madhyama-āgama* parallels; cf. MN 43 at MN I 296,12: *samāpanno* and MĀ 210 at T I 789a11: 入; MN 50 at MN I 333,24: *samāpannaṃ* and MĀ 131 at T I 620c22:

In fact, the question whether the Buddha is indeed a fully awakened teacher or not would not necessarily be solved by finding out how long ago he has reached what he claims to be his awakening. The early Buddhist position on this topic can be gleaned from a discourse found in the *Samyutta-nikāya*, together with its Chinese and Sanskrit parallels. The different versions of this discourse report the Buddha explaining to King Pasenadi that the level of realization of even a young monk recently gone forth should not be underestimated.²¹ The rationale for this declaration is closely related to the present instance, [16] since the parallel versions of this discourse report that Pasenadi had just expressed doubts about the Buddha's claim to be fully awakened, due to the Buddha's young age at the time when their meeting took place. Thus to query whether the Buddha had only recently attained awakening would, from the perspective of this discourse, not appear to be a valid criterion for verifying his realization.

In its description of the Buddha's aloofness from fame and gain, the *Madhyama-āgama* version also indicates that he is not afraid.²² The implications of this statement in the Chinese version are not entirely clear. Here the Pāli parallel offers help, clarifying that the issue investigated is whether the Buddha is restrained out of fear.²³ Thus the point at stake appears to be that the Buddha ob-

入; MN 79 at MN II 37,26: *samāpajjati* and MĀ 208 at T I 786a16: 得; MN 106 at MN II 262,15: *samāpajjati* and MĀ 75 at T I 542b22: 得; MN 136 at MN III 207,14: *samāpanno* and MĀ 171 at T I 706b22: 入. This suggests that the original on which the translation of MĀ 186 was based had a different verb at this point of its exposition. Hirakawa 1997: 1043 lists a broad range of possible equivalents to 行, which does not, however, comprise *samāpad*.

²¹ [26] SN 3.1 at SN I 69,6, SĀ 1226 at T II 335a2, SĀ² 53 at T II 391c17, T 212 at T IV 680b19, D 296 *sha* 296a6 or Q 962 *lu* 324b7 and a corresponding section in the *Saṅghabhedavastu*, Gnoli 1977: 182,17.

²² [27] MĀ 186 at T I 731b27: 非恐怖.

²³ [28] MN 47 at MN I 319,2: *abhayūparato ayam āyasmā, nāyam āyasmā*

serves restraint as a natural expression of purity, not out of fear of being overpowered by some defilement or of incurring reproach.

The Pāli version continues by describing that "this venerable one" does not despise anyone, whether the disciples are progressing well or badly, whether they are attached to material things or not. The passage is already somewhat cryptic in the Pāli original, and the *Madhyama-āgama* translators evidently had difficulties with what they found in their Indic original, since the corresponding passage in the Chinese is rather obscure.

In this way, a comparison of the two versions helps to gather clarifying information in regard to some details that would remain somewhat unclear or puzzling if one were to rely on only one of them. Perhaps the most important result of such comparative studies, however, is that the variations found testify to the genuineness of the oral transmission of these different versions. [17] The type of differences found in the present case, for example, do not seem to be the result of conscious editing, nor do they appear to be due to the influence of opinions and dogmas held by the Buddhist school that transmitted the discourse in question. Instead, the variations found appear to be simply the kind of errors that are natural to material preserved over longer periods by oral means.

In the present case, the comparative study of the *Vīmaṃsaka-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel thus confirms the reliability of the central message given in the two discourses as an expression of early Buddhist thought on the theme of free inquiry. This central message is an invitation to use all available means possible to test someone's claim to being a fully awakened teacher.²⁴ In both versions, this investigation can be seen to pro-

bhayāparato.

²⁴ [30] Jayatilleke 1963/1980: 392, commenting on the *Vīmaṃsaka-sutta*, explains

ceed through four main stages:

1) Searching for impurities by empirical observation: Prospective disciples who have no telepathic powers and thus are not able to gauge the mind of another person directly should check the purity of a teacher who claims to be awakened in other ways. Such checking can be undertaken by observing the teacher's behaviour – watching how the teacher acts and listening to what the teacher says – in order to see if anything contradicts such a claim.

2) Scrutiny of the attitude of the teacher: Once a basic degree of purity of the teacher's way of behaviour has been ascertained in this way, the next step is to see how this person handles the role of being a teacher. Leaving aside the disagreement between the two versions over the first part of this inquiry (whether the point is if the teacher has attained realization a long time ago or if the teacher is consistent), in both versions the teacher's attitude towards fame and gain should be investigated. To express the point in modern language, the main point of inquiry is whether the teacher is attached to his (or her) role. [18]

3) Direct query of the teacher: Far from concluding the inquiry at this point, the investigator is encouraged to directly confront the teacher now, face to face asking if there is any impurity. This direct and rather challenging form of confrontation is perhaps the most remarkable aspect of this process of inquiry, in view of the ancient Indian context.

4) Personal verification: After having undertaken this comprehensive range of investigations of the teacher, the time has come to put the teachings to the test. The investigation has yielded an initial degree of confidence (*saddhā*), sufficient for being willing

that "doubt about the claims of the Tathāgata is not condemned, but in fact plays a central role in the process of inquiry which is considered to be essential prior to and for the generation of belief (or faith)".

to give it a try. Yet, true confidence in the teacher comes to its completion only when the teachings have led the disciple to personal verification of their efficacy.²⁵ At this point, a type of confidence has been reached that according to both versions is firmly rooted in personal experience and therefore unshakeable.

The thorough testing advocated in these four steps clearly shows that in early Buddhist thought – in the way this is reflected in the discourses preserved in the Pāli *Nikāyas* and the Chinese *Āgamas* – the scope of free inquiry is such that the teacher and founder of the tradition himself can become an object of a rather searching type of scrutiny and examination by a prospective disciple.

²⁵ [31] That with realization one in a way transcends reliance on faith is also the theme of Dhṛp 97, which describes the supreme person, *uttamaporiso*, as one who has gone beyond faith, *asaddho*, literally "faithless"; on this verse cf. also Norman 1979 and Hara 1992. The same proposal is also found in the parallel versions; cf. *aśraddho ... sa ve uttīmaporuṣo* in the Patna *Dharmapada* verse 333, Cone 1989: 191 or Roth 1980: 127; and *aśraddhaś ... sa vai tūttama-pūruṣaḥ* in Uv 29.23, Bernhard 1965: 377; with Chinese counterparts in 無信 ... 是名為勇士, T 212 at T IV 750c4 and T 213 at T IV 793b16, translated by Willemsen 1978: 132 (29.22) as "he who is faithless ... is called a valiant man"; and with a Tibetan counterpart in *dad pa med cing ... di ni skyes bu dam pa yin*, verse 29.23, Beckh 1911: 107 or Zongtse 1990: 310.

Mahāsakuludāyi-sutta (MN 77)

Introduction

The central theme of the discourse studied in the present chapter, the *Mahāsakuludāyi-sutta*, is the praiseworthiness of the Buddha. In agreement with its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, the *Mahāsakuludāyi-sutta* approaches this topic from two perspectives by first delineating those qualities that a contemporary *paribbājaka* like Sakuludāyī would consider praiseworthy, followed by contrasting these to those qualities of the Buddha that according to early Buddhist thought truly deserve praise. [138] In what follows, I translate the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse, followed by a study of some of the significant differences between the two versions.

Translation

Discourse to Sakuludāyī¹

* Originally published 2009 under the title "The Buddha's Truly Praiseworthy Qualities, According to the Mahāsakuludāyi-sutta and its Chinese Parallel" in the *Journal of the Pali Text Society*, 30: 137–160.

¹ [4] The translated text is MĀ 207 at T I 781b27 to 783c1, which at T I 781b27 gives the discourse's title as 箭毛經, literally "Discourse to Arrow Hair". According to note 18 in the Taishō edition, 箭毛 corresponds to Sakuludāyī; cf. also Minh Chau 1991: 378. In SĀ² 323 at T II 481c15, the expression 箭毛 corresponds as to the name Sūciloma (another version of the same discourse, SĀ 1324 at T II 363c1, uses the more precise rendering 針毛, "Needle Hair"). The name used by the Buddha to address Sakuludāyī in MĀ 207 is 優陀夷, equivalent to the name Udāyī, the form of address used by the Buddha in MN 77. The reasons for the translator's choice of 箭毛 remain unclear to me. A comparative study of MN 77 and MĀ 207 can be found in Anālayo 2011a: 416–424.

1. Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was dwelling at Rājagaha, staying in the Bamboo Grove, the Squirrels' Feeding Place, in the company of a great congregation of one-thousand-two-hundred-and-fifty monks who were observing the rains retreat.² [781c]

3. At that time, when the night was over, at dawn, the Blessed One put on his [outer] robe, took his bowl and entered Rājagaha to collect alms-food.³ Having collected alms [and partaken of them], he put away his [outer] robe and bowl, washed his hands and feet, put the sitting mat over his shoulder and went into the Peacocks' Grove,⁴ a park [frequented by] heterodox practitioners. [139]

4. At that time there was a heterodox practitioner in the Peacocks' Grove called Sakuludāyī, a renowned leader and teacher of a congregation, greatly famous and esteemed by the people, head of a great congregation of disciples, five hundred heterodox practitioners who honoured him.⁵

He was staying with a great congregation that was noisy, agitated and disorderly, giving free rein to a great clamour,

² [5] Instead of describing the company of monks that dwelt with the Buddha, MN 77 at MN II 1,4 (corresponding to §2 in Ñāṇamoli 1995/2005: 629) lists different well-known leaders of *paribbājakas* that were dwelling at the Peacock's Feeding Place, Sakuludāyī being one of them.

³ [6] In MN 77 at MN II 1,8 the Buddha reflects that it is too early to collect alms and thereon decides to approach the Peacock's Feeding Place to visit Sakuludāyī.

⁴ [7] MĀ 207 at T I 781c4: 孔雀林, whereas MN 77 at MN II 1,3 speaks of the *morānivāpa*, the "Peacock's Feeding Place". Ps III 235,12 explains that peacocks in this place were under protection and were provided with food, *tasmiṃ ihāne morānaṃ abhayaṃ ghosetvā bhojanaṃ paṭṭhapesuṃ*.

⁵ [8] MN 77 at MN II 1,12 does not provide a count of Sakuludāyī's company, nor does it report that he was esteemed by the people.

discussing various types of irrelevant talk,⁶ namely talk about kings, talk about thieves, talk about battles, talk about food, talk about robes and blankets, talk about married women, talk about girls, talk about adulterous women, talk about the world, talk about spacious districts, talk about the contents of the ocean, talk about country people – they were seated together talking these kinds of irrelevant talk.⁷

Seeing the Buddha coming from afar, the heterodox practitioner Sakuludāyī admonished the congregation: "Keep silent! The recluse Gotama is coming. [140] His congregation is silent, they always delight in silence and praise silence. If he sees that this congregation is silent, perhaps he will come to join us." Having silenced the congregation, the heterodox practitioner Sakuludāyī remained silent himself.

5. [When] the Blessed One had approached the heterodox practitioner Sakuludāyī, the heterodox practitioner Sakuludāyī promptly rose up from his seat, arranged his robes on one

⁶ [9] MĀ 207 at T I 781c8: 畜生之論, equivalent to *tiracchānakathā* in MN 77 at MN II 1,15. Norman 1993/1994: 91 suggests that " *tiracchāna-kathā* was at one time one example of ... gossip, 'talk about animals', on the same lines as 'talk about kings', etc., and it then became used in a generic sense, to stand for all such talk". Bodhi in Ñāṇamoli 1995/2005: 1282 note 748 comments that "*tiracchāna* means literally 'going horizontally', and though this term is used as a designation for animals ... in the present context it means talk that goes 'horizontally' or 'perpendicularly' to the path leading to heaven and liberation".

⁷ [10] The listings in the two versions differ. Both mention talk about: kings, thieves, battles, food, clothes, women, the world and the ocean. MĀ 207 covers the theme of 'women' in more detail by distinguishing between married women, girls and adulterous women. Besides these, MĀ 207 also mentions spacious districts and country people. MN 77 additionally lists great ministers, armies, fears, drink, beds, garlands, perfumes, relatives, vehicles, villages, towns, cities, countries, heroes, streets, wells, the dead, trifles and becoming this or that.

shoulder and, holding his hands together [in homage] towards the Buddha,⁸ said: "Welcome, recluse Gotama,⁹ it is a long time that the recluse Gotama has not come here. Please be seated on this seat."

The Blessed One sat on the seat prepared by the heterodox practitioner Sakuludāyī. Having exchanged greetings with the Blessed One, the heterodox practitioner Sakuludāyī sat down to one side. The Blessed One asked: "Udāyī, what have you been discussing, for what matter have you been seated together here?"

6. The heterodox practitioner Sakuludāyī replied: "Gotama, [let us] just leave that talk, that talk was not profound. [If] the recluse Gotama wishes to hear this talk, it would not be difficult to hear about it on a later occasion." The Blessed One asked like this three times: "Udāyī, what have you been discussing, for what matter have you been seated together here?"¹⁰ The heterodox practitioner Sakuludāyī replied three times: "Gotama, [let us] just leave that talk, that talk was not profound, [if] the recluse Gotama wishes to hear this talk, it would not be difficult to hear about it on a later occasion." [Then he said]: "But since the recluse Gotama has three times expressed his wish to hear it, [141] I shall now report it."¹¹

⁸ [11] MN 77 at MN II 2,13 only reports that Sakuludāyī invited the Buddha to a seat, without mentioning that he expressed his respect by getting up from his seat, arranging his robe on one side, and greeting the Buddha with folded hands.

⁹ [12] MĀ 207 at T I 781c17: 沙門瞿曇, whereas in MN 77 at MN II 2,11 Sakuludāyī employs the address *bhante*, "venerable sir", and refers to the Buddha as *bhagavā*, "Blessed One".

¹⁰ [13] In MN 77 at MN II 2,19 the Buddha does not inquire three times after the topic of the conversation that had been going on when he arrived.

¹¹ [14] In MN 77 at MN II 2,21 the talk about the *paribbājakas* who were staying at Rājagaha constitutes a change of topic from what the wanderers had been

"Gotama, we were seated together with many brahmins from the country of Kosala in a study hall of these Kosalans,¹² having the following discussion: 'It is of great profit for the people of Aṅga and Magadha, the people of Aṅga and Magadha are getting a great profit, [782a] in that a congregation that is such a great field of merit is spending the rains retreat in Rājagaha, namely [the congregation led by] Pūraṇa Kassapa. Why?

"Gotama, Pūraṇa Kassapa is a renowned leader and teacher of a congregation, greatly famous and esteemed by the people, head of a great congregation of disciples, with five hundred heterodox practitioners who honour him, and he is spending the rains retreat here in Rājagaha.¹³ (*In the same way for:*) [the congregation led by] Makkhali Gosāla ... Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta ... Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta ... Pakudha Kaccāyana ... Ajita Kesakambalī ...

"Gotama, Ajita Kesakambalī is a renowned leader and teacher of a congregation, greatly famous and esteemed by the people, head of a great congregation of disciples, with five hundred heterodox practitioners who honour him, and he is spending the rains retreat in this Rājagaha.'

"Continuing like this we also talked about the recluse Gotama, [saying]: 'This recluse Gotama is a renowned leader and teacher of a congregation, greatly famous and esteemed by the people, head of a great congregation of monks, with one-thousand-two-hundred-and-fifty men who honour him, [142] and he is spending the rains retreat in this Rājagaha.'

discussing when the Buddha arrived.

¹² [15] MN 77 does not indicate that the discussion happened with Kosalan brahmins, who in MĀ 207 appear to be visiting Magadha.

¹³ [16] MN 77 does not specify the number of disciples of Pūraṇa Kassapa, etc., or of the Buddha.

"Gotama, then we had the following thought: 'Now, out of these honourable recluses and brahmins, which one is respected by his disciples, honoured, worshipped and treated with respect, not being abused by his disciples with abuse in regard to the teaching, having no disciples who challenge their teacher [saying]: 'This is entirely impossible, it is not proper, it does not fit', and, saying so, they abandon him and go away?'

"Gotama, then we had the following thought: 'Pūraṇa Kassapa is not respected by his disciples, he is not honoured, worshipped and treated with respect by them, he is abused by his disciples with abuse in regard to the teaching, with many disciples who challenge their teacher [saying]: 'This is not possible, it is not proper, it does not fit', and, saying so, they abandon him and go away.'

"Gotama, on a former occasion Pūraṇa Kassapa, while being with a congregation of disciples, repeatedly raised his hand and called out: 'You should stop! People have not come to ask you about this matter, they have asked me about this matter. You are not able to settle this matter, I am able to settle this matter'. Yet the disciples continued to talk among themselves [even] more on that matter, without waiting for the teacher to complete his exposition on that matter.

"Gotama, then we had the following thought: 'In this way, Pūraṇa Kassapa is not respected by his disciples, he is not honoured, worshipped and treated with respect by them, he is abused by his disciples with abuse in regard to the teaching, with many disciples who challenge their teacher [saying]: 'This is not possible, it is not proper, it does not fit', and, saying so, they abandon him and go away.' (*In the same way for:*) Makkhali Gosāla ... Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta ... Nigaṇṭha Nāṭaputta [782b] ... Pakudha Kaccāyana ... Ajita Kesakambalī ...

"Gotama, we had the following thought: 'Ajita Kesakambalī is not respected by his disciples, he is not honoured, worshipped and treated with respect by them, he is abused by his disciples with abuse in regard to the teaching, with many disciples who challenge their teacher [saying] [143]: 'This is not possible, it is not proper, it does not fit', and, saying so, they abandon him and go away.'

"Gotama, on a former occasion Ajita Kesakambalī, while being with a congregation of disciples, repeatedly raised his hand and called out: 'You should stop! People have not come to ask you about this matter, they have asked me about this matter. You are not able to settle this matter, I am able to settle this matter'. Yet the disciples continued to talk among themselves [even] more on that matter, without waiting for the teacher to complete his exposition on that matter.

"Gotama, then we had the following thought: 'In this way, Ajita Kesakambalī is not respected by his disciples, he is not honoured, worshipped and treated with respect by them, he is abused by his disciples with abuse in regard to the teaching, with many disciples who challenge their teacher [saying]: 'This is not possible, it is not proper, it does not fit', and, saying so, they abandon him and go away.'

"Gotama, then we had the following thought: 'The recluse Gotama is respected by his disciples, he is honoured, worshipped and treated with respect by them, he is not abused by his disciples with abuse in regard to the teaching, having no disciples who challenge their teacher [saying]: 'This is not possible, it is not proper, it does not fit', and who, saying so, would abandon him and go away.'

"Gotama, on a former occasion the recluse Gotama was giving teachings surrounded by an immeasurable congregation

of hundreds of thousands.¹⁴ Among them there was one man who had nodded off and was making a noise by snoring.¹⁵ Another man then addressed this man, [144] saying: 'Don't make a noise by snoring while nodding off! Don't you want to hear the sublime teachings taught by the Blessed One, which are like the deathless?' That other man immediately became quiet and made no [more] noise.¹⁶

"Gotama, then we had the following thought: 'In this way the recluse Gotama is respected by his disciples, he is honoured, worshipped and treated with respect by them, he is not abused by his disciples with abuse in regard to the teaching, having no disciples who challenge their teacher [saying]: 'This is not possible, it is not proper, it does not fit', and who, saying

¹⁴ [17] MĀ 207 at T I 782b17: 無量百千眾, whereas MN 77 at MN II 4,34 just speaks of a company of several hundred, *anekasatāya parisāya*.

¹⁵ [18] MĀ 207 at T I 782b18: 鼻眠作聲, whereas in MN 77 at MN II 4,35 a disciple merely clears his throat, *ukkāsi*. According to a description of the conduct of ancient Indian *śramaṇas* attributed to Megasthenes, during the delivery of a discourse the hearers are not allowed to speak or to cough, and someone who does so is sent away for being a person who lacks self-restraint; cf. McCrindle 1877: 99 or else Majumdar 1960a: 273; on the reliability of the information attributed to Megasthenes cf. also the discussion between Majumdar 1958 and Sethna 1960, with a rejoinder in Majumdar 1960b. The description of a disciple who is admonished for clearing his throat recurs in MN 89 at MN II 122,10, in which case the parallel MĀ 213 at T I 797a18 again indicates that the disciple was actually snoring, while a parallel to the same discourse in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1451 at T XXIV 238a26, agrees with MN 89 that he merely cleared his throat.

¹⁶ [19] MN 77 at MN II 5,2 continues at this point by describing that, whenever the Buddha gave teachings, his disciples would be absolutely quiet and intent on what their teacher was saying, comparable to a crowd that watches a man pressing out honey at a crossroads. MN 77 also indicates that even disciples who disrobe continue speaking in praise of the Buddha, the Dharma and the monastic community, and maintain the five precepts as lay followers.

so, would abandon him and go away."

7. Having heard this, the Blessed One asked the heterodox practitioner Sakuludāyī: "Udāyī, how many qualities do you see in me, owing to which my disciples respect, honour, worship and treat me with respect, always following me without breaking away?"

8. The heterodox practitioner Sakuludāyī said: "Gotama, I see five qualities in Gotama owing to which his disciples respect, honour, worship and treat him with respect, always following him without breaking off. What are the five?"¹⁷

"The recluse Gotama is contented with coarse robes and praises contentment with coarse robes. That the recluse Gotama is contented with coarse robes and praises contentment with coarse robes, [782c] [145] this is the first quality I see in the recluse Gotama owing to which his disciples respect, honour, worship and treat him with respect, always following him without breaking away.

"Again, the recluse Gotama is contented with coarse food and praises contentment with coarse food. That the recluse Gotama is contented with coarse food and praises contentment with coarse food, this is the second quality I see in the recluse Gotama owing to which his disciples respect, honour, worship and treat him with respect, always following him without breaking away.

"Again, the recluse Gotama takes little food and praises taking little food. That the recluse Gotama takes little food and praises taking little food, this is the third quality I see in the recluse Gotama owing to which his disciples respect, honour, worship and treat him with respect, always following him without breaking away.

¹⁷ [20] The two versions list these five qualities in different sequences; cf. table 2.

"Again, the recluse Gotama is contented with coarse dwellings, beds and seats, and praises contentment with coarse dwellings, beds and seats. That the recluse Gotama is contented with coarse dwellings, beds and seats, and praises contentment with coarse dwellings, beds and seats, this is the fourth quality I see in the recluse Gotama owing to which his disciples respect, honour, worship and treat him with respect, always following him without breaking away.

"Again, the recluse Gotama dwells in seclusion and praises dwelling in seclusion. That the recluse Gotama dwells in seclusion and praises dwelling in seclusion, this is the fifth quality I see in the recluse Gotama owing to which his disciples respect, honour, worship and treat him with respect, always following him without breaking away.

"These are the five qualities I see in the recluse Gotama owing to which his disciples respect, honour, worship and treat him with respect, always following him without breaking away."

9. The Blessed One replied: "Udāyī, it is not on account of these five qualities in me that my disciples respect, honour, worship and treat me with respect, always following me without breaking away. [146]

"Udāyī, the robes worn by me have been suitably and perfectly cut with a knife,¹⁸ and [then] dyed with an unattractive colour.¹⁹ Thus [I wear] perfect robes [that are just] dyed with an unattractive colour. Udāyī, some disciples of mine might be

¹⁸ [21] Adopting the variant 刀 instead of 力.

¹⁹ [22] MN 77 at MN II 7,16 does not refer to the colour of the robes, only indicating that the Buddha would at times wear robes given by householders of finer texture than pumpkin down, *gahapatāni cīvarāni dhāremi dalhāni yatha lūkhāni alābulomasāni* (B^s and C^e: *gahapatiṭṭhāni*; B^c: *sattalūkhāni* and S^e: *suttalūkhāni*; C^e: *alāpulomasāni* and S^e: *alāvulomasāni*).

wearers of robes made of discarded rags for their whole life. Even [if], saying: 'Our Blessed One is contented with coarse robes and praises contentment with coarse robes',²⁰ my disciples were to praise me because of contentment with coarse robes, Udāyī, [merely] because of that they will not respect, honour, worship and treat me with respect, or follow me.

"Again, Udāyī, I [at times] eat cooked rice and grains, without husks and with a limitless variety of tastes. Udāyī, some disciples of mine might go begging alms food for their whole life, eating what has been left over.²¹ Even [if], saying: [783a] 'Our Blessed One is contented with coarse food and praises contentment with coarse food', my disciples were to praise me because of contentment with coarse food, Udāyī, [merely] because of that they will not respect, honour, worship and treat me with respect, or follow me. [147]

"Again, Udāyī, I [at times] take food equal to a single *bilva* fruit or equal to half a *bilva* fruit.²² Udāyī, some disciples of

²⁰ [23] Instead of the address "our Blessed One", 我世尊, used by the Buddha's disciples in MĀ 207 at T I 783a1, according to MN 77 at MN II 7,2 they refer to their own teacher as "recluse Gotama", *samaṇo gotamo*. Here the Pāli version appears to have suffered from some transmission error, as in the discourses the expression "recluse Gotama" is used by those who do not consider themselves as disciples of the Buddha; cf. also below page 105 note 3.

²¹ [24] MN 77 at MN II 7,30 additionally mentions that they go on uninterrupted alms round and that when being among the houses they will not consent to sitting down even on being invited, *sapadānacārino ... antaragharaṃ pavitṭhā samānā āsanena pi nimantīyamānā na sādiyanti*.

²² [25] MĀ 207 at T I 783a4: 我食如一鞞羅食, 或如半鞞羅. This seems to be a textual corruption, since in keeping with the general trend of the exposition one would expect some example of partaking of plenty of food to provide a contrast to the cupful of food taken by the disciples. MN 77 at MN II 7,1 provides such a contrast by describing that at times the Buddha would eat the full contents of his bowl, or even more, *iminā pattena samatittikam pi bhuñjāmi*,

mine might [at times] take food equal to a cupful or equal to half a cupful. Even [if], saying: 'Our Blessed One takes little food and praises taking little food', my disciples were to praise me because of taking little food, Udāyī, [merely] because of that they will not respect, honour, worship and treat me with respect, or follow me.

"Again, Udāyī, I [at times] might stay in tall buildings, or in pavilions.²³ Udāyī, some disciples of mine might for nine or ten months stay every night out in the open.²⁴ Even [if], saying: 'Our Blessed One is contented with coarse dwellings, beds and seats, and praises contentment with coarse dwellings, beds and seats', my disciples were to praise me because of contentment with coarse dwellings, beds and seats, Udāyī, [merely] because of that they will not respect, honour, worship and treat me with respect, or follow me.

"Again, Udāyī, I am constantly crowded in by monks, nuns, male lay followers and female lay followers. Some disciples of mine might join the community only once every fortnight, just for the sake of the Dharma and [to affirm their] purity [at the *pātimokkha* recital]. Even [if], [148] saying: 'Our Blessed One dwells in seclusion and praises dwelling in seclusion', my disciples were to praise me because of dwelling in seclusion,

bhīyyo pi bhuñjāmi.

²³ [26] MN 77 at MN II 8,16 describes that the Buddha would at times stay in gabled mansions that are completely plastered and sheltered from the wind by having bolted doors and shuttered windows, *kūṭāgāresu pi viharāmi ullitāvalittesu nivātesu phussitaggaḷesu pihitavātapānesu* (B^o and S^c: *phusitaggaḷesu*).

²⁴ [27] Adopting the variant 露 instead of 覆. In addition to the practice of dwelling in the open, *abbhokāsika*, MN 77 at MN II 8,14 also mentions living at the root of a tree, *rukkhamūlika*. These are two out of the standard set of ascetic practices, on which cf. also, e.g., Bapat 1937, Ganguly 1989, Nanayakkara 1989, Dantine 1991, Ray 1994: 293–323 and Boucher 2008: 190f note 8.

Udāyī, [merely] because of that they will not respect, honour, worship and treat me with respect, or follow me.

"Udāyī, it is not due to these five qualities in me that my disciples respect, honour, worship and treat me with respect, always following me without breaking off.

10. "Udāyī, there are five other qualities in me, owing to which my disciples respect, honour, worship and treat me with respect, always following me without breaking off. What are the five?²⁵

11. "Udāyī, there are disciples of mine who praise me for supreme virtue, saying: 'The Blessed One practices virtue and is of great virtue, he does what he says and he says what he does'.²⁶ Udāyī, in this way my disciples praise me for supreme virtue, and it is because of this that they respect, honour, worship and treat me with respect, always following me without breaking off.

13. "Again, Udāyī, there are disciples of mine who praise me for supreme wisdom, saying: 'The Blessed One dwells in wisdom and is of supremely great wisdom. If a disputant comes with counterarguments, [783b] [the Blessed One] will certainly be able to defeat him, that is to say, [the disputant] will be unable to give [satisfactory] explanations in regard to the right teaching and discipline, and will [even] be unable to

²⁵ [28] The two versions list these five qualities in different sequences; cf. table 3 below.

²⁶ [29] MĀ 207 at T I 783a25: 如所說所作亦然, 如所作所說亦然. MN 77 at MN II 9,16 instead mentions the Buddha's endowment with the supreme aggregate of virtue, *paramena sīlakkhandhena samannāgato*. A counterpart to the statement in MĀ 207 can be found in other Pāli discourses, e.g., DN 19 at DN II 224,3 (repeated at DN II 229,25): *yathāvādī kho pana so bhagavā tathākārī, yathākārī tathāvādī*; cf. also DN 29 at DN III 135,16 and AN 4.23 at AN II 24,7, which formulate the same principle with the Tathāgata as their subject.

[satisfactorily] explain his own proclamations.²⁷ [149] Udāyī, in this way my disciples praise me for supreme wisdom, and it is because of this that they respect, honour, worship and treat me with respect, always following me without breaking off.²⁸

12. "Again, Udāyī, there are disciples of mine who praise me for supreme knowledge and vision, saying: 'The Blessed One dwells knowing, not without knowing, he dwells seeing, not without seeing. The Dharma he teaches to his disciples is with causes, not without causes; it is with conditions, not without conditions; it is able to [offer] replies [to questions], not unable to [offer] replies [to questions]; it is with detachment, not without detachment.'²⁹ Udāyī, in this way my disciples praise me for supreme knowledge and vision, and it is because of this that they respect, honour, worship and treat me with respect, always following me without breaking off.

14. "Again, Udāyī, there are disciples of mine who feel repugnance towards the arrow of craving and who come and ask me about *dukkha*, its arising, its cessation and the path [to its cessation].³⁰ I promptly answer them about *dukkha*, its arising, its cessation and the path [to its cessation]. Udāyī, in this way my disciples come and ask me, and I satisfy their minds with

²⁷ [30] MN 77 at MN II 10,5 only takes up the abilities of the Buddha in a debate situation, not the inabilities of the opponent.

²⁸ [31] MN 77 at MN II 10,8 reports that at this point the Buddha asked Udāyī if he thought that the Buddha's disciples would nevertheless interrupt their teacher, which Udāyī denies, followed by the Buddha indicating that he did not expect to be instructed by his disciples, on the contrary, his disciples expect to be instructed by him.

²⁹ [32] MN 77 at MN II 9,25 notes that the Buddha teaches the Dharma through direct knowledge, *abhiññāya*, with a causal basis, *sanidāna*, and in a convincing manner, *sappāṭihāriya*.

³⁰ [33] MĀ 207 at T I 783b11: 苦是苦, 習是習, 滅是滅, 道是道, literally: "*dukkha* is *dukkha*, arising is arising, cessation is cessation, path is path".

my answers and arouse their delight, and it is because of this that they respect, honour, worship and treat me with respect, always following me without breaking off. [150]

34-36. "Again, Udāyī, I explain to my disciples how to attain realization of the higher knowledge of recollection of past lives, or how to attain realization of the higher knowledge of the destruction of the influxes.³¹

37. "Udāyī, in this way my disciples gain experience and deliverance in this right teaching and discipline and are able to reach the other shore, having becoming free from doubt and confusion, without vacillation in regard to this wholesome teaching, and it is because of this that they respect, honour, worship and treat me with respect, always following me without breaking off.

38. Udāyī, these are the other five qualities in me, owing to which my disciples respect, honour, worship and treat me with respect, always following me without breaking off."

Then the heterodox practitioner Sakuludāyī promptly rose up from his seat, arranged his robes on one shoulder and, holding his hands together [in homage] towards the Buddha, said: "Gotama, this is very exceptional, this is very special! You have well explained a profound matter and nourished my innermost being as if with ambrosia. Gotama, just as a great rain

³¹ [34] At this point a substantial differences manifests, as instead of the two higher knowledges mentioned in MĀ 207, MN 77 from MN II 11,3 to 22,15 lists a range of different aspects of the path to liberation, covering the four *satipaṭṭhānas*, the five *indriyas*, the five *balas*, the seven *bojjhaṅgas*, the noble eightfold path, the eight *vimokkhas*, the eight *abhibhāyatanas*, the ten *kaṣiṇas*, the four *jhānas*, insight into the nature of body and consciousness, production of a mind-made body, supernormal powers, the divine ear, telepathic knowledge of the mind of others, recollection of past lives, the divine eye and the destruction of the influxes.

nourishes the whole earth, above and below, in the same way the recluse Gotama has well explained a profound matter to us and nourished our innermost being as if with ambrosia. Blessed One, I have understood, Well-gone One, I have comprehended. Blessed One, from now on I take refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma and the community of monks. May the Blessed One accept me as a lay follower who has taken refuge for life from now on until life ends."³² [151]

The Buddha spoke like this. The heterodox practitioner Sakuludāyī, having listened to what the Buddha said, [783c] was delighted and received it respectfully.

Study

Given the fact that the praiseworthy qualities of the Buddha are the main theme of the *Mahāsakuludāyī-sutta* and its parallel, it would not be surprising if the tendency to elevate the Buddha's status should to some degree also have influenced the reciters responsible for transmitting the discourse. A comparison of the two versions in fact reveals several instances where this tendency is at work in one or the other out of the two versions.

Thus whereas the *Majjhima-nikāya* version does not count the number of disciples of the Buddha or the other teachers, the *Madhyama-āgama* account depicts the Buddha as surrounded by "one-thousand-two-hundred-and-fifty" disciples, while the other teachers only command a following of "five hundred" each.³³ Its presentation thus implicitly indicates that Sakuludāyī and the six well-known contemporary teachers were far less influential than

³² [35] MN 77 does not record that Sakuludāyī expressed his respect or that he took refuge.

³³ [36] MĀ 207 at T I 782a13 (the Buddha's disciples), T I 781c6 (Sakuludāyī's disciples) and T I 782a4+9 (the disciples of the other teachers).

the Buddha.³⁴ In the *Madhyama-āgama* account, the Buddha's influential status manifests not only in regard to his monk disciples, but also when it comes to an audience in general. Thus, according to this version, on a former occasion the Buddha was teaching an "immeasurable congregation of hundreds of thousands".³⁵ [152] The corresponding section in the *Majjhima-nikāya* discourse only speaks of an audience of "several hundreds".³⁶

Another facet of the same tendency in the *Madhyama-āgama* is its depiction of Sakuludāyī's behaviour when the Buddha arrives. Even though Sakuludāyī is introduced as a famous and well-known teacher, seated amidst his disciples, according to the *Madhyama-āgama* report he rises from his seat, arranges his robe over one shoulder and greets the Buddha with hands held together in reverential salutation,³⁷ a behaviour expressing the kind of respect a Buddhist lay disciple might show when the Buddha arrives. In the *Majjhima-nikāya* version, Sakuludāyī only welcomes the Buddha verbally and offers him a seat, a more realistic depiction of how a famous and well-known *paribbājaka* would have received the leader of another group.

The tendency to present Sakuludāyī as if he were a Buddhist lay disciple manifests again towards the end of the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse. Whereas the *Majjhima-nikāya* version merely reports Sakuludāyī's delight in the exposition he had just heard, according to the *Madhyama-āgama* version he takes refuge and

³⁴ [37] Manné 1990: 49 explains that in discourses that have a debate character and feature a meeting with an opponent "the description of the size of the following around each of the opponents ... serves to enhance, or otherwise, the importance of each adversary".

³⁵ [38] MĀ 207 at T I 782b17.

³⁶ [39] MN 77 at MN II 4,34.

³⁷ [40] MĀ 207 at T I 781c16.

asks to be accepted as a lay disciple.³⁸ This is rather surprising, since Sakuludāyī was a *paribbājaka*, so that one would expect him to request ordination, if he wanted to be a follower of the Buddha, instead of becoming a lay disciple.³⁹ Thus the depiction of Sakuludāyī's reaction at the conclusion of the discourse may be yet another instance of the tendency to enhance the status of the Buddha, manifesting in the present case by relying on a standard pericope for discourse conclusions applied to the present case without sufficient consideration of its appropriateness to the context. [153]

The tendency to enhance the status of the Buddha is not confined to the *Madhyama-āgama* version. Thus whereas in the *Madhyama-āgama* account Sakuludāyī addresses the Buddha with the expression "recluse Gotama",⁴⁰ in the *Majjhima-nikāya* version he uses the respectful address *bhante* and, instead of using the Buddha's name, refers to him as Blessed One.⁴¹ In this way, the *Majjhima-nikāya* version also presents him acting in a way suitable for a disciple of the Buddha, though it employs means that differ from those used in the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse.

Another facet of the same tendency occurs in relation to the Pāli version's portrayal of the disciples of other teachers, which serves as a contrast to the way the Buddha's followers behave. Although the two versions agree that the other teachers were not able to silence their disciples, according to the Pāli discourse these disciples would go so far as to tell visitors openly that their teacher

³⁸ [41] MĀ 207 at T I 783b28.

³⁹ [42] Cf. the comments below page 154 note 30.

⁴⁰ [43] Cf., e.g., MĀ 207 at T I 781c17.

⁴¹ [44] Cf., e.g., MN 77 at MN II 2,11: *bhante bhagavā*. In relation to another similar instance, Allon 1997: 121 comments that "the use of *bhante* 'venerable sir' is particularly unusual as a form of address used by an ascetic towards the Buddha, as is the ascetic referring to the Buddha as *Bhagavā*".

does not know how to reply, proclaiming that they should be asked instead of their teacher.⁴² Had these disciples indeed been so outrageously disrespectful towards their teacher in public, one would not expect these teachers to command the esteem among the populace that both versions attribute to them.

The Pāli version also provides a sharper contrast to the poor impression cut by the disciples of other teachers, as it portrays the disciples of the Buddha in a more favourable light than the Chinese discourse. When reporting a former occasion during which a particular disciple made some noise during the delivery of a discourse, the Pāli version merely records that he cleared his throat, whereas according to the Chinese report he had fallen asleep and was snoring, [154] a not too flattering description of what could happen when the Buddha was giving a discourse.⁴³

According to the Pāli account, whenever the Buddha gives a teaching, his disciples will be poised in silent expectancy, comparable to a crowd of people at a crossroads that observes a man who is pressing out honey. This description seems to some degree to conflict with other discourses, which indicate that the disciples of the Buddha were not invariably paying attention during a talk given by their teacher. An example would be the *Bhaddāli-sutta* and its Chinese parallel, according to which the Buddha had to rebuke one of his monk disciples for recurrently paying no attention when his teacher was delivering a discourse.⁴⁴

The Pāli version also stands alone in indicating that disciples who disrobe will nevertheless continue to speak in praise of the Buddha, the Dharma and the monastic community.⁴⁵ Other discourses give a less impressive account of former Buddhist monks,

⁴² [⁴⁵] MN 77 at MN II 3,17.

⁴³ [⁴⁶] MN 77 at MN II 4,35 and MĀ 207 at T I 782b18.

⁴⁴ [⁴⁷] MN 65 at MN I 445,32 and MĀ 194 at T I 749b3.

⁴⁵ [⁴⁸] MN 77 at MN II 5,14.

giving the impression that they did not always speak in praise of their former teacher and his teaching. For example, a discourse in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* reports the disparaging remarks made by the former Buddhist monk Sarabha, and according to the *Mahāśīhanāda-sutta* the former Buddhist monk Sunakkhatta's denigration of his earlier teacher caused the Buddha to deliver a rather long discourse in order to reveal his qualities and abilities.⁴⁶

In sum, it seems as if the theme of the praiseworthiness of the Buddha did exert some influence on the reciters of the discourse, causing an enhancing of the status of the Buddha that manifests in different ways in the Pāli and Chinese versions. [155]

The influence of oral transmission can also be seen in regard to the sequence in which listings are preserved. Variations in the sequence of listings are in fact one of the most prominent features noticeable in comparative studies, often involving differences that are of little doctrinal import. In the present case, such variations manifest in regard to both of the sets of five qualities of the Buddha: those described by Sakuludāyī and those described by the Buddha as what make him truly praiseworthy (see tables 2 and 3).⁴⁷

Table 2: Sakuludāyī on the Five Qualities of the Buddha

MN 77:

takes little food (1)
content with robes (2)
content with food (3)
content with dwelling place (4)
lives in seclusion (5)

MĀ 207:

content with robes (→ 2)
content with food (→ 3)
takes little food (→ 1)
content with dwelling place (→ 4)
lives in seclusion (→ 5)

⁴⁶ [49] AN 3.64 at AN I 185,8 and MN 12 at MN I 68,8.

⁴⁷ [50] The use of → in the tables points to the corresponding quality in the parallel.

Table 3: The Buddha's Listing of his Five Qualities

MN 77:	MĀ 207:
higher virtue (1)	supreme virtue (→ 1)
knowledge and vision (2)	supreme wisdom (→ 3)
higher wisdom (3)	supreme knowledge & vision (→ 2)
teaching of four noble truths (4)	teaching of four noble truths (→ 4)
teaching ways of development (5)	teaching higher knowledge (→ 5)

Another and considerably more significant difference occurs in regard to the last quality in the second of these two groups of five, the Buddha's quality as a teacher of meditative development. The *Madhyama-āgama* version lists merely recollection of past lives and the eradication of the influxes. Though this is rather brief, as one would have expected at least a reference to the divine eye to complete the standard set of three higher knowledges, the *Majjhima-nikāya* version in contrast is unexpectedly long, [156] as it presents a detailed exposition of various aspects of the path (see table 4).⁴⁸

Notably, the first part of this listing follows a numerical ascending order, while the items listed later instead come in the same sequence as found in the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta*.⁴⁹ This gives the impression that two originally independent listings may have been combined in the present instance.

In a passage repeated after each of these items, the Pāli version indicates that with every one of these practices many disciples of the Buddha have been able to attain accomplishment and perfection of direct knowledge.⁵⁰ According to the commentary, this de-

⁴⁸ [51] MN 77 from MN II 11,3 to 22,15.

⁴⁹ [52] DN 2 from DN I 73,23 to 84,12; this has been noted by Eimer 1976: 53.

⁵⁰ [53] MN 77 at (e.g.) MN II 11,8: *tatra ca pana me sāvaka bahū abhiññāvosā-napāramippattā viharanti*.

scription intends full liberation.⁵¹ [157] Such a potential is somewhat unexpected in regard to the development of such practices as the spheres of transcendence (*abhibhāyatana*), the ten *kaṣiṇas*, the production of a mind-made body, supernormal powers, or the divine ear, etc. This specification thus does to some extent read as if an earlier listing may have only had qualities the discourses generally reckon as capable of leading to perfection through direct knowledge.

Table 4: The Buddha's Fifth Quality

Teaching the development of:

- the four establishments of mindfulness,
- the five faculties,
- the five powers,
- the seven factors of awakening,
- the noble eightfold path,
- the eight liberations,
- the eight spheres of transcendence,
- the ten *kaṣiṇas*,
- the four *jhānas*,
- insight into the nature of body and consciousness,
- production of a mind-made body,
- supernormal powers,
- the divine ear,
- telepathic knowledge of the mind of others,
- recollection of past lives,
- the divine eye,
- the destruction of the influxes.

⁵¹ [54] Ps III 243,5.

In fact, the rather long exposition of all these practices is somewhat out of proportion in comparison with the space allotted to the other four truly praiseworthy qualities of the Buddha. Owing to this long treatment of the fifth quality, the *Mahāsakuludāyī-sutta* has become an unusually long discourse in the *Majjhima-nikāya* collection, one that, had this long treatment already been part of the discourse at the time of the collection of the *Nikāyas*, might have earned it a placing in the *Dīgha-nikāya* instead.

Though a comparative study of the two versions thus brings to light a number of differences that testify to the vicissitudes of oral transmission and its influence on the actual shape of the discourses in the canonical collections of different Buddhist schools, the main message given by both versions remains the same: What makes the Buddha truly worthy of praise, what causes his disciples to follow him and practice in accordance with his instructions, are not external aspects of behaviour that were held in high esteem in ancient India. Though frugality, a secluded life style and detachment in regard to the requisites of life are key aspects of the path of development in early Buddhism, they are not considered an end in themselves. What according to early Buddhist thought really makes the Buddha worthy of praise is his teaching of how to develop the mind, his disclosure of the path to liberation.

Samaṇamaṇḍikā-sutta (MN 78)

Introduction

With the present chapter, I explore the notion of a true recluse (*samaṇa*) in early Buddhist discourse. My study begins with a survey of selected occurrences of the term *samaṇa* in the Pāli discourses. Then I translate the *Madhyama-āgama* counterpart to the *Samaṇamaṇḍikā-sutta*,¹ a discourse that contrasts the early Buddhist conception of a true recluse to the implications of the same notion from the perspective of a contemporary wanderer, followed by a study of the two parallel versions.

In the Pāli discourses, the term *samaṇa* stands for religious practitioners of various affiliations. As such, the term is also used by the monastic disciples of the Buddha to designate themselves. According to the *Aggañña-sutta*, on being asked who they are, the Buddhist monks should proclaim themselves to be *samaṇas* who are followers of the Buddha.² Similarly, the term *samaṇa* can function as an epithet for the Tathāgata,³ who at times is referred

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¹ ^[2] B^o and S^o have the title *Samaṇamuṇḍika-sutta*.

² ^[3] DN 27 at DN III 84,16: *samaṇā sakyaputtiyā*; cf. also AN 8.19 at AN IV 202,13 (= AN 8.20 at AN IV 206,27, Ud 5.5 at Ud 55,25 and Vin II 239,20). Bodhi 1989: 4 notes that the Buddha's monk disciples were as "*samaṇas* distinguished from others with a similar demeanour and lifestyle as 'the recluses who follow the son of the Sakyan clan'". According to Chakrabarti 1973: 428, in inscriptions the term *kṣamaṇa-śramaṇa* appears to be used in a comparable manner to distinguish Digambara monks from other *samaṇas*.

³ ^[4] AN 8.85 at AN IV 340,1: *samaṇo ti ... tathāgatass' etaṃ adhivacanaṃ*. Jaini 1970/ 2001: 48 notes that "in the Jaina texts also, Mahāvīra ... is called a *śra-*

to as "the great *samaṇa*".⁴

As a group, the *samaṇas* are part of a standard listing in the early discourses that distinguishes assemblies into eight types. Four of these eight assemblies consist of human beings, which cover assemblies of *samaṇas*, brahmins, warriors, and householders.⁵ In what follows, [154] I briefly survey the way the discourses describe the relationship between *samaṇas* and these other three human assemblies, before turning to the normative usage of the term *samaṇa*.

Some degree of tension between the brahmins and the *samaṇas* is reflected in several passages that portray a disdainful and even hostile attitude of the former towards the latter. In the *Am-baṭṭha-sutta*, a young brahmin explains that his impolite behaviour towards the Buddha is the way he generally treats those "baldpated petty recluses, menials, the swarthy offspring from Brahmā's foot".⁶ His attitude was apparently based on his teacher's

maṇa". Wagle 1966: 56 points out, however, that when used as a mode of direct address the term *samaṇa* "denotes a certain indifference", unlike the more respectful address *bhadanta* (usually found in the vocative form *bhante*) or the honorific epithet *bhagavant*.

⁴ [5] The address *mahāsamaṇa* is used, e.g., by Uruvelakassapa at Vin I 24,21ff. Ray 1994: 65 sums up that "Gautama was himself a *śramaṇa* and was known as the Mahāśramaṇa (the great *śramaṇa*); his disciples were known as *śramaṇas*, and many of the features of early Buddhism reflect elements held in common by the various *śramaṇas* and *śramaṇa* groups".

⁵ [6] Cf., e.g., DN 16 at DN II 109,6, DN 33 at DN III 260,3, MN 12 at MN I 72,18 and AN 8.69 at AN IV 307,11 (with the four assemblies of gods comprising gods of the realm of the four heavenly great kings, gods of the Tavatīmsa realm, Māras and Brahmas); on the significance of the eight assemblies as a structural element underlying the *Sagātha-vagga* of the *Samyutta-nikāya* cf. Bucknell 2007.

⁶ [7] DN 3 at DN I 90,14: *ye ca kho te, bho gotama, muṇḍakā samaṇakā ibbhā kiṇhā bandhupādāpaccā, tehi pi me saddhiṃ evaṃ kathāsallāpo hoti, yathariva bhotā gotamena* (B^c, C^e and S^e: *kaṇhā*; S^e omits *te* and reads: *bandhupāda-*

opinion that these "baldpated petty recluses, menials, the swarthy offspring from Brahmā's foot" are not fit to converse with brahmins possessing the threefold knowledge (i.e. knowledge of the three Vedas).⁷ Other discourses similarly report that brahmins held those "baldpated petty recluses ... (etc.)" to be incapable of coming to know the Dharma,⁸ or to be ignorant regarding proper etiquette.⁹

The *Aggañña-sutta* records brahmins reviling those of their own class who go forth as Buddhist monks and thus relinquish their brahmin status and become *samaṇas*. This description provides further background to the notion of "menials" that are "swarthy" and the "offspring from Brahmā's foot" mentioned above: in contrast to *samaṇas*, brahmins lay claim to being the "highest" class, which is "fair" and "purified" in contrast to the darkness and lack of purity of other classes; in fact brahmins are "born from Brahmā's mouth", unlike members of other classes.¹⁰

Other passages depict brahmins expressing a hostile or even aggressive attitude towards *samaṇas*. Thus, a brahmin engaged in

paccā); on the term *muṇḍa* cf. Tedesco 1945.

⁷ [8] DN 3 at DN I 103,16: *ke ca muṇḍakā samaṇakā ibbhā kiṇhā bandhupadā-paccā, kā ca tevijjānaṃ brāhmaṇāṇaṃ sākacchā* (S^e: *keci*; B^e, C^e and S^e: *kaṇhā*; B^e and C^e: *bandhupādāpaccā*, S^e: *bandhupādapaccā*).

⁸ [9] MN 95 at MN II 177,8: *ke ca dhammassa aññātāro*.

⁹ [10] SN 7.22 at SN I 184,11: *ke ca sabhādhammaṃ jānissanti*. Spk I 267,1 explains that this remark was aimed at the Buddha, who had entered a public meeting from the front instead of entering from the side, as etiquette would have demanded.

¹⁰ [11] DN 27 at DN III 81,10: *brāhmaṇo va seṭṭho vaṇṇo, hīno añño vaṇṇo, brāhmaṇo va sukko vaṇṇo, kaṇho añño vaṇṇo, brāhmaṇā va sujjhanti no abrahmaṇā, brāhmaṇā va brahmuno puttā orasā mukhato jātā* (B^e, C^e and S^e: *hīnā aññe vaṇṇā* and *kaṇhā aññe vaṇṇā*; S^e omits *va* before *brahmuno*). As noted by Gombrich 1990b: 13 and Norman 1991/1993: 272, the notion of being born from Brahmā's mouth is found in the *Puruṣasūkta* of the *Ṛgveda* 10.90.12.

a fire sacrifice tells the Buddha in quite forceful terms to stay off, calling him an outcast.¹¹ Again, on seeing one of those "baldpated petty recluses" seated in meditation – in this case the Buddhist monk Mahākaccāna – young brahmins make noise close by and abuse him.¹² A rather stark example occurs in a passage in the *Udāna*, according to which brahmins fill up a well with chaff in order to prevent those "baldpated recluses" from drinking any water – an action directed at the Buddha and a company of monks who are journeying by.¹³ [155]

An entertaining perspective on brahmin denigration of *samaṇas* emerges from the *Māratajjanīya-sutta*. This discourse reports brahmins pouring abuse on the monk disciples of the former Buddha Kakusandha as "baldpated petty recluses, menials, the swarthy offspring from Brahmā's foot" and deriding their meditation practice.¹⁴ The same discourse reveals that the brahmins had acted in this way because they had been incited by Māra to do so. That is, from an early Buddhist perspective such abuse should be interpreted as an attempt by Māra to upset one's inner balance, a perspective that must have been of considerable assistance for developing an attitude of patience in such situations. According to the instructions given by the Buddha Kakusandha to his monks, such attacks by Māra are best faced by developing benevolence

¹¹ [12] Sn I 21,11 (in the prose section before stanza 116). Shiraishi 1996: 146 comments that "these words" clearly express "contempt of Śākyamuni Buddha".

¹² [13] SN 35.132 at SN IV 117,5. Besides the apparent tension between some brahmins and *samaṇas*, several discourses indicate that *samaṇas* could also be quite quarrelsome amongst themselves, which according to AN 2.4.6 at AN I 66,16 is due to attachment to their respective views.

¹³ [14] Ud 7.9 at Ud 78,10; on this tale cf. also Anālayo 2008b: 379f.

¹⁴ [15] MN 50 at M I 334,16; on this passage from a comparative perspective cf. Anālayo 2005: 12–13.

(*mettā*).

Another mode of contesting brahmin prejudice might underlie the sequence of listing the two main types of religious in ancient India as *samaṇas* and brahmins,¹⁵ where the circumstance that the brahmins are put in second position could be on purpose to counter their claim to superiority.¹⁶ Dutt (1962: 49) explains that

¹⁵ [¹⁶] The distinction between these two types of ancient Indian religious was apparently evident enough to be noticed by Megasthenes; cf. McCrindle 1877: 98. According to Patañjali's *Vvyākaraṇa-Mahābhāṣya*, Kielhorn 1880/1962: 476,9 (2.4.12.2), these two groups are opposed to each other, *yeṣāṃ ca virodha ityasyāvakāśaḥ: śramaṇabrāhmaṇam*. Foucher 1955: 260 highlights that these two sections of ancient Indian society were not only opposed to each other on ideological grounds, but were also in direct competition for the material support they required for their sustenance from the population (Gräfe 1974: 37 notes that the support to be given to brahmins is reflected in references to the *brāhmaṇabhojana* at Vin I 44,22 and 60,25). Olivelle 1974: 6 explains that "according to the *Viṣṇu-smṛti* a householder must turn back if he has seen ... a recluse, and a punishment of 100 *paṇas* is ordained 'for hospitably entertaining ... a religious ascetic at an oblation to the gods or to the manes' ... the sight itself of ... [a recluse] was considered by many as inauspicious. There was also a corresponding hostility towards the *brāhmaṇas* on the part of the recluses. In heterodox literature the *brāhmaṇas* are depicted as greedy social parasites living on the superstitious generosity of the common people". Nevertheless, as pointed out by Ruegg 2008: 5 note 3, "whether ... the *śramaṇas* and *brāhmaṇas* are in fact opposed depends of course on the circumstance in each case". Ruegg remarks that it also needs to be taken into account that quite a number of *bhikkhus* were of brahmin descent (cf. the survey in Sarao 1989: 93–139, Chakravarti 1996: 198–220 and Nakamura 2000: 360–362, and the figures given in Gokhale 1980: 74). According to Vin I 71,25, *jaṭilas* were allowed to join the order without having to observe the usual probationary period; cf. also Bronkhorst 1998b: 84. Bailey 2003: 112 explains that "the jostling for status between brahmins and Buddhists ... should not necessarily be taken as antagonism. But it is competition". On the not invariably hostile relationships between brahmins and early Buddhists cf. also Tsuchida 1991.

¹⁶ [¹⁷] Warder 1963/1991: 97, however, takes *samaṇa-brāhmaṇa* to be an exam-

while Buddhist and Jain texts use the expression "*Samaṇa-Brāhmaṇa*", in Asoka's edicts it appears as *Brāhmaṇa-samaṇa*, a plausible explanation of which is that ... those who themselves belong to the *Samaṇa* class ... wished to give it precedence [in their texts], while the *Brāhmaṇa* is put first in the edicts".

Yet, a closer inspection of the edicts shows a considerable degree of variation, where at times even within the same edict both sequences manifest.¹⁷ Though the sequence of the two terms

ple for *dvanda* compounds where "the important or leading object ... occupies the second position, which is normally the dominant position in Pali". Another example of the same type provided by him is the expression *Sāriputta-moggallāna*. Yet, Sn 557 designates Sāriputta as the one who keeps rolling the wheel of Dharma set in motion by the Buddha; and Ud 2.8 at Ud 17,29 and Th 1083 refer to him as the "general of the Dharma", *dharmasenāpati* (cf. also the *Divyāvadāna*, Cowell 1886: 394,22, which presents Śāriputra as the second teacher and the general of the Dharma who keeps the wheel of the Dharma in motion, *dvitīyaśāstā dharmasenādhipatir dharmacakrapravartanaḥ*; the last quality has a counterpart in Sn 557). Hence, if a hierarchical distinction between the two needs to be made, Sāriputta would take precedence over Mahāmoggallāna. From this it would follow that the position of honour in a *dvanda* – if there is to be a distinction between its two members – would be the first place. In the case of the compound *samaṇa-brāhmaṇa*, then, the first position accorded to the *samaṇas* would express precedence given to them over the brahmins. In fact, according to *vārttika* 3 on Pāṇini 2.2.34, Vasu 1891/1997: 273, the first member in *dvandva* compounds holds the place of honour, *abhyarhitam ca pūrvaṃ nipatati*.

¹⁷ [18] This can be seen in the survey below, which shows references to "brahmins and *samaṇas*" (B) or else to "*samaṇas* and brahmins" (S) in Aśoka's Rock Edicts 3, 4, 8, 9, 11 and 13, listed according to their locations Girnār, Kālsī, Śāhbāzgarhī, Mānsehrā, Dhaulī, Jaugāḍa and Supārā. As this survey shows, though the Girnār edicts invariably mention the brahmins in first place (B), other locations show a considerable degree of variation and often put the *samaṇas* first (S). Particularly revealing is the fourth Rock Edict at Kālsī, Śāhbāzgarhī and Mānsehrā, where within the same edict from the same location the sequence changes.

employed in the early Buddhist discourses may indeed be reflecting a reevaluation of the *samaṇa* vis-à-vis the brahmin,¹⁸ similar to the tendency in the same discourses to mention the warriors (*khat-*

	Gir.	Kāl.	Śāh.	Mān.	Dhau.	Jaug.	Sup.
3:	B	B	B	B	B	B	
4:	B	S	S	S	S		
4:	B	B	B	B	S		
8:	B	S	S	S	S	S	B
9:	B	S	S	S	S	S	
11:	B	S	S	S			
13:	B	B	B				

Cf. Rock Edict 3 in Woolner 1924/1993: 4,20 and 5,21; Rock Edict 4 in *ibid.* 6,4 and 7,4 and again 6,14 and 7,14; Rock Edict 8 in *ibid.* 16,1 and 17,1; Rock Edict 9 in *ibid.* 18,3 and 19,3; Rock Edict 11 in *ibid.* 20,22 and 21,22; and Rock Edict 13 in *ibid.* 26,7 and 27,7. An occurrence not included in the above survey is the Delhi-Toprā Edict 7 in *ibid.* 50,10 3rd col., where brahmins stand in the first place.

¹⁸ [19] Deo 1956: 45 notes that Jain texts also tend to "raise the position of the Samaṇa equal to that of the Brāhmaṇa, if not superior to him". A defiant attitude towards the brahmin claim to superiority can be seen in the Śvetāmbara tale of how the embryo of Mahāvīra was transferred by Śakra from the womb of the brahmin lady Devāṇandā to that of the warrior lady Triśalā, because according to *Jinacaritra* §17, Jacobi 1879/1966: 38,9: *na eyaṃ bhaviṣṣaṃ jaṇ ṇaṃ arahaṃtā ... aṃta-kulesu vā ... māhaṇa-kulesu vā ... āyāissaṃti*, "it shall not come to be that [future] *arhats* will take birth in a lowly womb ... or a Brahmanical womb". Deleu 1996: 163 notes that in *Viyāhapannatti* 9.33 Mahāvīra admits that Devāṇandā is his real mother, *devāṇandā māhaṇī mama ammā*; cf. Lalwani 1985: 71,29. Von Glasenapp 1925/1999: 324 explains that according to tradition Mahāvīra originally took birth in a brahmin womb "as a consequence of the Karma ... of his arrogance" in a former life. Jaini 1979/2001: 7 comments that this tale reflects an attitude "contrary to the ordinary caste hierarchy which places *brahmans* at the apex". Schubring 1962/2000: 32 sums up that "tradition gave great importance to Mahāvīra's Kshatriya and not Brahman descent"; cf. also Pande 1978: 53.

tiya/kṣatriya) before brahmins,¹⁹ in the case of Asoka's edicts the sequence of such listings may not always have been invested with a special importance.

Judging from the picture painted in the early discourses, interrelations between *samaṇas* and members of the warrior class were less problematic than between *samaṇas* and brahmins. Respect for recluses was apparently so deeply entrenched in ancient Indian society that even a king felt that he should not openly contradict the teachings of a *samaṇa* living in his realm.²⁰ It also seems to have been customary for kings to visit a *samaṇa* in order to receive religious instruction.²¹ [156]

Nevertheless, a king certainly has the power to banish a *samaṇa* from his realm.²² This ambivalence between respect and control could underlie the famous inquiry of King Ajātasattu in the

¹⁹ [20] Bucknell 2007: 21 note 59 notes that though in general listing of classes in the discourses begin with the warrior class, an exception can be found in MN 96 at MN II 177,22 (and in its parallel MĀ 150 at T I 661a7) where such a listing begins with the brahmins. This departure from the usual sequence reflects the particular circumstances of this passage, where the speaker is a brahmin, who naturally puts his own class in first position. According to Fick 1897: 55–56, the precedence given to the *khattiyas* in this way could be reflecting an actual hierarchy of power prevalent in north-eastern India of that time. In support of his suggestion he quotes DN 3 at DN I 91,11, where the brahmin Ambaṭṭha complains about the lack of respect with which the Sakyan *khattiyas* treated him on a former occasion; and DN 3 at DN I 103,21, according to which King Pasenadi did not allow the eminent brahmin Pokkharasādi a direct audience face to face, but would converse with him only through a curtain.

²⁰ [21] DN 2 at DN I 53,8: *kathaṃ hi nāma mādiso samaṇaṃ ... vijjite vasantaṃ apasādetabbaṃ maññeyya?* Thapar 1984/2001: 154 explains that "*śramaṇas* ... had large followings. Their popularity would lead those in power to treat them with respect".

²¹ [22] E.g., SN 44.1 at SN IV 374,11, where the teacher approached by the king of the country is the Buddhist nun Khemā.

²² [23] MN 90 at MN II 131,5.

Sāmaññaphala-sutta regarding the purpose and benefits of being a *samaṇa*.²³ Macqueen (1988: 206) comments: "Ajātaśatru was king and overseer of a region apparently much frequented by śramaṇas, and it may be that he was interested in having the status of this sizeable group of people clarified".²⁴

For the householder in general, to see a *samaṇa* can be considered a blessing,²⁵ as it affords an occasion for religious instruction. A male or female householder who approaches *samaṇas* and inquires about proper moral conduct will be endowed with wisdom even in the next life.²⁶ The function of *samaṇas* as teachers would have been a common notion, since a standard listing of sources for knowledge mentions respect for a particular *samaṇa*

²³ [24] DN 2 at DN I 51,19 reports the king's inquiry about a "fruit of recluse-ship visible here and now", *diṭṭhe va dhamme sandiṭṭhikaṃ sāmaññaphalaṃ*.

²⁴ [25] Macqueen 1988: 206, 207 and 209 further comments that "it may in fact be the case that, like others of his time, he [the king] was annoyed at their [the śramaṇas'] pretensions ... so he presents the Buddha with a dilemma. If, on the one hand, the śramaṇa's work brings him concrete, present and visible results, then his occupation is like those of ordinary folk and ... he would not in this case be exempt from the duties that kings felt free to impose upon people in secular occupations. If, on the other hand, the śramaṇa does not win such fruits ... one may question his right to receive the donations (concrete and visible) of the populace". Given that "criticism of the śramaṇa's parasitical mode of life is well attested in the literature of this period", "Ajātaśatru puts the śramaṇa on the same level as the ordinary man and asks him to stand up and give account of himself". Thapar 1976/1978: 86 explains that "the authoritarian trends in the states emerging in the mid-first millennium B.C. were not always sympathetic to wanderers. They were often seen as people escaping social responsibility or socio-political demands. Their survival as free thinkers was dependent on their being able to assert the right to an alternative life". Cf. also Warder 1956: 55, who notes that the śramaṇa lifestyle was "threatened by political changes in the Ganges region".

²⁵ [26] Sn 266: *samañānañ ca dassanaṃ ... etaṃ maṅgalaṃ uttamaṃ*.

²⁶ [27] MN 135 at MN III 206,1.

as a basis for holding a particular opinion or view.²⁷

While a *samaṇa* is expected to provide instruction and religious inspiration to laity, a householder should be respectful towards *samaṇas* and supply them with their daily needs.²⁸ The need to behave respectfully extends even to family members, as a *samaṇa* can expect worship from his mother, father or brother.²⁹

This nuance of respect leads me over to the more normative use of the term, where *samaṇa* as an honorific epithet stands representative for some degree of accomplishment. An important requirement for living up to the status of a *samaṇa* was, according to ancient Indian standards, harmlessness. A recluse should never retaliate when being abused,³⁰ and should quite literally 'put away

²⁷ [28] E.g., AN 3.65 at AN I 190,17: *samaṇo no garu*. According to Bhagat 1976: 328, "the Buddhist and Jaina literature assign an important part to the *śramaṇa* ... whose function was intellectual guidance and spiritual instruction". Dutt 1957: 30 explains that "the position of a *samaṇa* ... was equally that of a preceptor, preacher and religious leader".

²⁸ [29] E.g., SN 3.21 at SN I 96,12. Jain 1947: 192 indicates that *samaṇas* "were highly respected ... the common people paid them respects, called on them ... put them their queries, offered them food, provided them with shelter ... and other necessities of life". On lay support of *samaṇas*, especially in the case of Buddhist monks; cf., e.g., Spiro 1970/1982: 103–111, Strenski 1983: 471–476 and Freiberger 2000: 168–195.

²⁹ [30] SN 1.81 at SN I 45,6. Jain 1990: 346 notes that in Buddhist and Jain circles *samaṇas* "are accorded high honour both within their circles and without". Dutt 1924/1996: 55 explains that the *samaṇa* "is honoured as much as a Brāhmaṇa because his function is the same, namely, intellectual guidance and spiritual instruction". Karunaratna 2006: 660 adds that it was also "by the practice of austerities [that] the *samaṇas* came to be a highly respected category on a par with the mainstream brāhmaṇa religious".

³⁰ [31] AN 6.54 at AN III 371,10: *samaṇo akkosantaṃ na paccakkosati, rosantaṃ na paṭirosati, bhaṇantaṃ na paṭibhaṇati, evaṃ ... samaṇo samaṇadhamme ṭhito hoti* (C^e: *rosantaṃ and paṭiroseti*).

the rod' in regard to all living beings.³¹ A true *samaṇa* is intent on patience and gentleness,³² hence one who harms others is not a true *samaṇa*.³³

Other aspects of a true *samaṇa*'s mode of conduct can be deduced from a listing of the types of happiness associated with the lifestyle of a *samaṇa*, which are contentment with any requisite and delight in a life of celibacy.³⁴ Another element in the proper conduct of a *samaṇa* is truthfulness, hence one who utters falsehood cannot claim to be a *samaṇa*, even if he has a shaven head.³⁵ Those who are not true to the basic requirements of the *samaṇa* ideal are therefore a "corruption of a recluse", the "chaff of a recluse", not worthy of associating with true *samaṇas*.³⁶ [157]

³¹ [32] Dhṛp 142: *sabbesu bhūtesu nidhāya daṇḍaṃ ... so samaṇo*.

³² [33] AN 6.52 at AN III 363,24: *samaṇā ... khantisoraccādhippāyā*, adding as other qualities of *samaṇas* that they apply themselves to wisdom, are determined on [maintaining] moral conduct, adhere to 'nothing' and have Nirvāṇa as their goal.

³³ [34] Dhṛp 184: *na ... samaṇo hoti paraṃ viheṭṭhayanto*.

³⁴ [35] AN 5.128 at AN III 146,18. Another related aspect is taken up in AN 10.101 at AN V 210,8, according to which as a *samaṇa* one should repeatedly reflect on one's status as an outcast (on the *samaṇa* vis-à-vis the four classes cf. also DN 27 at DN III 95,22), on one's livelihood depending on others, and on the need to behave differently [compared to earlier, when still being a householder]. For a survey of qualities that are appropriate for a *samaṇa* cf. also Th 587–596.

³⁵ [36] Dhṛp 264: *na muṇḍakena samaṇo ... alikaṃ bhaṇaṃ ... samaṇo kiṃ bhavissati?*; cf. also Ud 3.6 at Ud 29,4: *yamhi na māyā ... so samaṇo* (B^o: *yamhī*). That shaving alone does not suffice for becoming a true *samaṇa* is similarly stated in the Jain *Uttarādhyayana-sūtra* 25.31, Charpentier 1922: 184.

³⁶ [37] AN 8.10 at AN IV 169,9: *samaṇadūsī* and *samaṇapalāpo*; on the idea of not being worthy to associate with true *samaṇas* cf. the event described in AN 8.20 at AN IV 206,4 (= Ud 5.5 at Ud 52,26 and Vin II 237,8). The notion of "corruption" recurs in a listing of four types of *samaṇas* at Sn 84, one of which is a corrupter of the path, *maggadūsī*. On the expression *asamaṇa*, "not a true

While these requirements of moral conduct would have been commonly accepted standards among *samaṇas* in ancient India, other qualities of a true *samaṇa* acquire a more distinctly Buddhist flavour. Thus according to the two *Assapura-suttas* in the *Majjhima-nikāya*, in addition to adherence to the basics of ethical conduct, other qualities more closely related to mental cultivation and the growth of wisdom are required for living up to being a true *samaṇa*.

The recommendations given in the first of these two discourses, the *Mahā-assapura-sutta*, proceed from purity of conduct – via restraint of the senses, moderation in regard to food, wakefulness, the development of mindfulness, and the attainment of deep stages of concentration – to the realization of the three higher knowledges (*tevijjā*).³⁷ The *Cūḷa-assapura-sutta* builds on the same theme by specifying that one who is under the influence of defilements is not a true *samaṇa*, in spite of having adopted external modes of conduct or forms of asceticism in vogue among ancient Indian *samaṇas*.³⁸ In sum, what makes one a true *samaṇa* from an early Buddhist perspective is, besides higher virtue, training in the higher mind and in higher wisdom.³⁹

The training in higher wisdom for becoming a true *samaṇa* could be undertaken by developing various aspects of wisdom,

recluse", cf. Horner 1938/1982: lii.

³⁷ [38] MN 39 at MN I 271,6 to 280,34. Chaudhary 1994: 127 explains that "in order to be a real *samaṇa*, one has to have inner qualities, one has to be pure in respect of all actions mental, vocal and physical".

³⁸ [39] MN 40 at MN I 281,1 to 284,30.

³⁹ [40] AN 3.81 at AN I 229,3: *adhivāṇasikkhāsamādānaṃ adhicittasikkhāsamādānaṃ adhipaññāsikkhāsamādānaṃ*. Wiltshire 1990: 295 relates the threefold training to the concept of harmlessness so central to the notion of a *samaṇa*, suggesting that "in its proper articulation, *avihiṃsā* entailed discipline of the triple faculties of 'body', 'mind' and 'speech'".

such as insight into:

- impermanence,⁴⁰
- honours and gains,⁴¹
- the world,⁴²
- feelings,⁴³
- the four elements,⁴⁴
- the five aggregates,⁴⁵
- the five faculties,⁴⁶
- the six senses and their objects,⁴⁷
- the links of dependent arising,⁴⁸
- the four noble truths.⁴⁹

From the perspective of developing insight into the four noble truths, then, only a teaching that contains the noble eightfold path can produce the four types of true *samañas*.⁵⁰ These four repre-

⁴⁰ [41] AN 6.102 at AN III 443,12.

⁴¹ [42] SN 17.25 at SN II 237,4, SN 17.26 at SN II 237,11 and SN 17.27 at SN II 237,21 (here and elsewhere, the relevant section is abbreviated in E^c).

⁴² [43] AN 3.102 at AN I 260,26.

⁴³ [44] SN 36.26 at SN IV 234,29, SN 36.27 at SN IV 235,7 and SN 36.28 at SN IV 235,13. Cf. also SN 48.34 at SN V 208,16 and SN 48.35 at SN V 209,3, where insight is directed to the five faculties of *sukha*, *dukkha*, *somanassa*, *domanassa* and *upe(k)kkhā*.

⁴⁴ [45] SN 14.37 at SN II 176,6, SN 14.38 at SN II 176,21 and SN 14.39 at SN II 177,10.

⁴⁵ [46] SN 22.50 at SN III 50,18, SN 23.5 at SN III 192,8 and SN 23.6 at SN III 192,25.

⁴⁶ [47] SN 48.6 at SN V 195,4 and SN 48.7 at SN V 195,25.

⁴⁷ [48] SN 48.29 at SN V 206,15 and SN 48.30 at SN V 207,1.

⁴⁸ [49] SN 12.13 at SN II 15,6, SN 12.29 at SN II 45,25 and SN 12.71 at SN II 129,13.

⁴⁹ [50] SN 56.22 at SN V 432,23 and It 4.4 at It 105,10.

⁵⁰ [51] DN 16 at DN II 151,10; a statement also made in MN 11 at MN I 63,26, on which cf. also Freiburger 2000: 89–92 and Anālayo 2009b.

sent the four stages of awakening,⁵¹ which are elsewhere also reckoned as the true fruits of recluse-ship.⁵² Whereas here the notion of a true *samaṇa* stands for all levels of awakening, in other passages the same term represents the highest stage of full awakening alone.⁵³ [158] In sum, once all unwholesome states have been pacified, *samita*, a monk becomes a true *samaṇa*,⁵⁴ who has gone beyond birth and death.⁵⁵

⁵¹ [52] AN 4.239 at AN II 238,11. Another set of four types of *samaṇa* is mentioned in DN 33 at DN III 233,11, distinguishing between those who are "unshakeable", *acala*, "blue lotus", *paduma*, "white lotus", *puṇḍarīka*, and "refined", *sukhumāla*. According to AN 4.88 at AN II 88,ult., these four correspond to the four levels of awakening and would thus be illustrating the same division as in AN 4.239. Other modes of understanding these four can be found in AN 4.87 at AN II 86,30 and AN 4.89 at AN II 89,27, where the first of the four stands for a disciple in higher training, *sekha*, while the other three represent different types of arahants; a distinction that appears to also be implicit in AN 4.90 at AN II 90,20, though here the second and third are not explicitly designated as arahants.

⁵² [53] SN 45.35 at SN V 25,7.

⁵³ [54] E.g., MN 40 at MN I 284,19, which makes a point of proclaiming that this status can be reached by members of any of the four classes. Another instance would be SN 45.36 at SN V 25,16, which indicates that the destruction of *rāga*, *dosa* and *moha* is the essence of being a *samaṇa*.

⁵⁴ [55] MN 39 at MN I 280,12: *samitāssa honti pāpaka akusalā dhammā saṅkilesikā ponobhavikā sadarā dukkhavipākā āyatim jātijarāmarañiyā, evaṃ kho, bhikkhave, bhikkhu samaṇo hoti* (B^e and S^e: *ponobbhavikā*, C^e and S^e: *jātijarāmarañiyā*); cf. also Dh 265 (quoted at the end of the present chapter); and AN 7.82 at AN IV 144,22 which after listing seven types of defilements – among them the root defilements of *rāga*, *dosa* and *moha* – indicates that pacifying them makes one a recluse, *samitattā samaṇo hoti*. According to Franke 1913: 305 and note 2, the term *samaṇa/śramaṇa* derives from √*śram*, "to endeavour", hence the relation to √*śam*, "to pacify" (alluded at in the present passages) is only a playful etymology of the type often employed in the early discourses.

⁵⁵ [56] Sn 520: *jātimaraṇaṃ upātivatto samaṇo tādi pavuccate tathattā*.

These passages indicate that, in spite of a general code of moral conduct shared among most ancient Indian *samaṇas*, the notion of what makes one a true recluse was invested in early Buddhism with a specific set of values.

This becomes particularly evident in some discourses that portray how contemporary practitioners, who are depicted as holding themselves to be accomplished *samaṇas* already, encounter the Buddha, go forth under him and eventually reach full liberation. According to these discourses, such converts thereon proclaim that they had earlier been deluding themselves, since only now have they really become true *samaṇas*.⁵⁶

The underlying contrast in these passages between the notion of a true *samaṇa* held among contemporary practitioners and its implications in early Buddhist circles forms the central theme of the *Samaṇamaṇḍikā-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*.

Translation

Discourse to the Carpenter Pañcakaṅga⁵⁷ [720b]

1. Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was dwelling at Sāvathī, staying in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park.

⁵⁶ [⁵⁷] E.g., MN 27 at MN I 177,20 or MN 89 at MN II 123,19; cf. also DN 8 at DN I 167,14, where the Buddhist notion of being a true *samaṇa* is contrasted to the qualities associated with this concept among contemporary ascetics.

⁵⁷ [⁶¹] The translated text is MĀ 179 at T I 720a28 to 721c19, which at T I 720a28 gives the discourse's title as 五支物主, literally "Master Five-limb", where 物主 would correspond to *thapati*, which according to the Pāli commentary, Ps III 114,5, qualifies Pañcakaṅga as a "foremost carpenter", *vaḍḍhakījeṭṭhaka*. A reference to the present discourse in the *Vyākhyāyukti* in Lee 2001: 14,12 gives the title as *yan lag lnga pa'i phya mkhan gyi mdo*, which Skilling 2000: 342 reconstructs as **Pañcāngasthapati-sūtra*. A comparative study of MN 78 and MĀ 179 can be found in Anālayo 2011a: 424–431.

2. At that time, the carpenter Pañcakaṅga had left Sāvattihī at dawn and was approaching the place where the Buddha was staying, with the intention to see and pay respects to the Blessed One. [Then] the carpenter Pañcakaṅga had the following thought: "For the time being [it would be better] to put off going to see the Buddha, [as] the Blessed One and the venerable monks would probably [still] be sitting in meditation. I might now rather visit Mallikā's Single-hall Park of heterodox practitioners.⁵⁸ [159] Thereon the carpenter Pañcakaṅga, to entertain and amuse [himself],⁵⁹ took the path to Tinduka plantation,⁶⁰ in order to visit Mallikā's Single-hall Park of heterodox practitioners.

3. At that time, in Mallikā's Single-hall Park of heterodox practitioners there was the heterodox practitioner Samaṇamuṇḍikāputta,⁶¹ a great leader, teacher of a congregation, esteemed by the people, a teacher who was presiding over a great community of five hundred heterodox practitioners.⁶²

⁵⁸ [62] MĀ 179 at T I 720b5: 一娑邏末利異學園, which would correspond to the *ekasālaka mallikāya ārāma* mentioned in MN 78 at MN II 23,8. A reference to this location in Sanskrit fragments of the *Prṣṭhapāla-sūtra*, folio 416r4 in Melzer 2006: 244, reads *yenaikasālamālikānyatīrthikaparivrājakānām ārāma*; cf. also the unnumbered Hoernle fragment (photograph 179), no. 132 in Hartmann 1991: 236 V2: [*li*]*kā any(a)[t](īr)[th](ikaparivrājakāḥ)* and V3: *ekasālam [ā](rāmam)*.

⁵⁹ [63] MĀ 179 at T I 720b6: 遊戲歡樂; MN 78 does not mention that he had the intention to entertain or amuse himself.

⁶⁰ [64] MĀ 179 at T I 720b6: 巾頭阿梨, which has its counterpart in the *tindukā-cīra* in MN 78 at MN II 23,7.

⁶¹ [65] MĀ 179 at T I 720b8: 沙門文苾子, literally "recluse *mun gji*'s son", (cf. the Early Middle Chinese pronunciation given in Pulleyblank 1991: 323 and 244 for 文 and 苾). This is closer to the name given in B^e and S^e as Samaṇamuṇḍikāputta, as against Samaṇamuṇḍikāputta in C^e and E^e.

⁶² [66] B^e and S^e agree with MĀ 179 on the count of disciples, whereas C^e counts

He was with a tumultuous company that was creating a great clamour, being very noisy and discussing various types of irrelevant talk,⁶³ namely talk about kings, talk about thieves, talk about battles and quarrels, talk about drinks and food, talk about robes and blankets, talk about married women, talk about girls, talk about adulterous women, talk about the world, talk about wrong practice, talk about the contents of the ocean, having gathered in this way to talk various types of irrelevant talk.⁶⁴

Seeing from afar the carpenter Pañcakaṅga coming, the heterodox practitioner Samaṇamaṇḍikāputta admonished his own congregation: "Keep silent! Be silent and do not speak another word! It is proper for you to collect and control yourselves. There is a disciple of the recluse Gotama coming, the carpenter Pañcakaṅga. Of those who are householder disciples of the recluse Gotama living in Sāvathī, none surpasses the carpenter Pañcakaṅga.⁶⁵ Why [should you be silent]? [Because] he delights in silence and praises silence. If he sees that this congregation is silent, perhaps he will come forward." At that time, after the heterodox practitioner Samaṇamaṇḍikāputta

seven hundred and E° (MN II 23,1) only three hundred disciples.

⁶³ [67] MĀ 179 at T I 720b11: 畜生之論, literally "animal talk", equivalent to *ti-racchānakathā* in MN 78 at MN II 23,14; cf. also above page 83 note 6.

⁶⁴ [68] The listings in the two versions differ, paralleling in several respects the differences noted above page 83 note 7. Both mention talk about: kings, thieves, battles, food, drink, clothes, women, the world and the ocean. Unlike MĀ 207, MĀ 179 at T I 720b13 also mentions "talk about wrong practice" or perhaps "talk about [those who] practice wrongly", 論邪道 (which may correspond to the expression *micchāpaṭipanna* found in other contexts in the Pāli discourses). For a study of the listings of such talks in DN 2 in comparison with the *Saṅghavedavastu* version cf. Ramers 1996: 238–253.

⁶⁵ [69] MN 78 at MN II 23,27 indicates only that Pañcakaṅga is one of the Buddha's disciples at Sāvathī, not that he is unsurpassed among them.

had stopped [the talking of] his congregation, he remained silent himself.

4. Then the carpenter Pañcakaṅga approached the heterodox practitioner Samaṇamuṇḍikāputta, exchanged greetings with him and stepped back to sit to one side. The heterodox practitioner Samaṇamuṇḍikāputta said:

5. "Carpenter, if [someone] is endowed with four qualities, I designate him as accomplished in wholesomeness, supreme in wholesomeness, an unsurpassable person who has attained the supreme essence and has the nature of a genuine recluse. What are the four? With the body he does not do evil deeds, with the mouth he does not speak evil words, he does not engage in wrong livelihood and does not think evil thoughts.⁶⁶ [160] Carpenter, if [someone] is endowed with these four qualities I designate him as accomplished in wholesomeness, supreme in wholesomeness, an unsurpassable person who has attained the supreme essence and has the nature of a genuine recluse."

6. On hearing the proposition made by the heterodox practitioner Samaṇamuṇḍikāputta, the carpenter Pañcakaṅga neither agreed nor disagreed. [Instead], he got up from his seat and left, [thinking]: "I shall personally approach the Buddha and inquire about the meaning of what has been said like this [by Samaṇamuṇḍikāputta]." [720c]

7. He approached the Buddha, bowed down with his head to pay respects and stepped back to sit to one side. Then he reported the entire conversation with the heterodox practitioner Samaṇamuṇḍikāputta to the Buddha. Having heard it, the Blessed One said:

⁶⁶ [70] A difference in the sequence of listing these four is that MN 78 at MN II 24,8 mentions thoughts before livelihood.

8. "Carpenter, if what the heterodox practitioner Samaṇamaṇḍikāputta proposes were indeed the case, then a small infant with tender limbs, lying on his back asleep,⁶⁷ would also be accomplished in wholesomeness, foremost in wholesomeness, an unsurpassable person who has attained the supreme essence and has the nature of a genuine recluse.

"Carpenter, a small infant has not yet a perception of the body, what to say of him engaging in evil bodily deeds, [when he] is only able to move the body [a little]? Carpenter, a small infant has not yet a perception of the mouth, what to say of him speaking evil words, [when he] is only able to cry? Carpenter, a small infant has not yet a perception of livelihood, what to say of him engaging in wrong livelihood, [when he] is only moaning?⁶⁸ Carpenter, a small infant has not yet a perception of thoughts, what to say of him engaging in evil thoughts, [when he] only thinks of the mother's milk?⁶⁹

"Carpenter, if it were as the heterodox practitioner Samaṇamaṇḍikāputta proposes, then a small infant would be accomplished in wholesomeness, foremost in wholesomeness, an unsurpassable person who has attained the supreme essence and has the nature of a genuine recluse.

9. "Carpenter, if someone is endowed with four qualities, I designate him as accomplished in wholesomeness, supreme in wholesomeness, but he is not yet an unsurpassable person, has not attained the supreme essence, does not have the nature of a genuine recluse.⁷⁰ [161]

⁶⁷ [71] MN 78 at MN II 24,23 does not specify that the child is asleep.

⁶⁸ [72] MN 78 at MN II 25,1 instead refers to the mother's milk, *māthañña*, as 'livelihood'.

⁶⁹ [73] MN 78 at MN II 24,33 instead mentions merely sulking, *vikujitamatta* (B^o: *vikūjita*^o, C^o: *vikujita*^o) as 'intention'.

⁷⁰ [74] According to MN 78 at MN II 25,7, someone endowed with these four quali-

"What are the four? With the body he does not do evil deeds, with the mouth he does not speak evil words, he does not engage in wrong livelihood and does not think evil thoughts.

"Carpenter, if someone is endowed with these four qualities, I designate him as accomplished in wholesomeness, supreme in wholesomeness, but he is not yet an unsurpassable person, has not attained the supreme essence, does not have the nature of a genuine recluse.⁷¹

"Carpenter, bodily deeds and verbal deeds I designate as conduct (*sīla*). Carpenter, thoughts I designate as belonging to the mind and being related to the mind's characteristics.⁷²

"Carpenter, I say one should know unwholesome conduct, one should know from where unwholesome conduct arises, one should know where unwholesome conduct is eradicated without remainder, where it is destroyed without remainder, and one should know: 'By what practice does a noble disciple eradicate unwholesome conduct?'

"Carpenter, I say one should know wholesome conduct, one should know from where wholesome conduct arises, one should know where wholesome conduct is eradicated without remainder, where it is destroyed without remainder, and one should know: 'By what practice does a noble disciple eradicate wholesome conduct?'

"Carpenter, I say one should know unwholesome thoughts, one should know from where unwholesome thoughts arise, one should know where unwholesome thoughts are eradicated

ties is not accomplished in wholesomeness and not supreme in wholesomeness, *na c'eva sampannakusalam na paramakusalam*.

⁷¹ [75] At this juncture, MN 78 at MN II 25,18 announces that one endowed with ten qualities is a true recluse, an announcement taken up again at the end of the discourse, MN 78 at MN II 28,34.

⁷² [76] This paragraph has no counterpart in MN 78.

without remainder, where they are destroyed without remainder, and one should know: 'By what practice does a noble disciple eradicate unwholesome thoughts?'

"Carpenter, I say one should know wholesome thoughts, one should know from where wholesome thoughts arise, one should know where wholesome thoughts are eradicated without remainder, [721a] where they are destroyed without remainder, and one should know: 'By what practice does a noble disciple eradicate wholesome thoughts?'

10. "Carpenter, what is unwholesome conduct? Unwholesome bodily conduct, unwholesome verbal [conduct], [unwholesome] mental conduct – this is reckoned to be unwholesome conduct.⁷³ [162]

"Carpenter, from where does this unwholesome conduct arise? I declare the place from which it arises: One should know that it arises from the mind. What kind of mind?⁷⁴ A mind with sensual desire, with ill will [or] with delusion – one should know that unwholesome conduct arises from this kind of mind.

"Carpenter where is unwholesome conduct eradicated without remainder, where is it destroyed without remainder? [When] a learned noble disciple abandons unwholesome bodily conduct and develops wholesome bodily conduct, abandons unwholesome verbal and mental conduct and develops

⁷³ [77] MN 78 at MN II 26,10 instead defines unwholesome conduct as covering unwholesome bodily action, unwholesome verbal action and evil forms of livelihood.

⁷⁴ [78] MN 78 at MN II 26,14 precedes its listing of a mind with sensual desire, etc., by indicating that the mind can be of many and various types and of different aspects, *cittam pi hi bahu anekavidham nānappakāraṃ* (B^e and C^e: *bahum*).

wholesome verbal and mental conduct,⁷⁵ this is where unwholesome conduct is eradicated without remainder, destroyed without remainder.

"Carpenter, by what practice does a noble disciple eradicate unwholesome conduct? When a learned noble disciple in regard to the body contemplates the internal body ... (*up to*) ... feelings ... states of mind ... in regard to dharmas contemplates dharmas – practising like this a noble disciple eradicates unwholesome conduct.⁷⁶

11. "Carpenter, what is wholesome conduct? Wholesome bodily conduct, wholesome verbal [conduct], [wholesome] mental conduct – this is reckoned to be wholesome conduct.⁷⁷

"Carpenter, from where does this wholesome conduct arise? I declare the place from which it arises: One should know that it arises from the mind. What kind of mind?⁷⁸ A mind free from sensual desire, free from ill will [and] free from delusion – one should know that wholesome conduct arises from this kind of mind.⁷⁹

"Carpenter, where is wholesome conduct eradicated with-

⁷⁵ [79] MN 78 at MN II 26,21 also mentions the need to abandon wrong livelihood.

⁷⁶ [80] MN 78 at MN II 26,24 instead mentions the four right efforts for eradicating unwholesome conduct; for a discussion of their relevance to the present discourse cf. Gethin 1992: 76–78.

⁷⁷ [81] MN 78 at MN II 27,3 instead defines wholesome conduct in terms of wholesome bodily action, wholesome verbal action and purified livelihood.

⁷⁸ [82] MN 78 at MN II 27,8 precedes its listing of a mind free from sensual desire etc. by indicating that the mind can be of many kinds, of various kinds and of different aspects.

⁷⁹ [83] Skilling 2000: 342 notes that a counterpart to this passage is preserved as a discourse quotation in the *Vyākhyāyukti*; cf. Lee 2001: 14,13: *dge ba'i tshul khrims 'di dag ni sems kyis kun nas bslang ba dag ste, sems de gang zhe na, dod chags dang bral ba dang zhe sdang dang bral ba dang, gti mug dang bral ba yin no.*

out remainder, destroyed without remainder? When a learned noble disciple practises virtue without being attached to this virtue,⁸⁰ this is where wholesome conduct is eradicated without remainder, destroyed without remainder.

"Carpenter, by what practice does a noble disciple eradicate wholesome conduct? When a learned noble disciple in regard to the body contemplates the internal body ... (*up to*) ... feelings ... states of mind ... in regard to dharmas contemplates dharmas – practising like this a noble disciple eradicates wholesome conduct.⁸¹ [163]

12. "Carpenter, what are unwholesome thoughts? Thoughts of sensuality, thoughts of ill will and thoughts of harming – these are reckoned to be unwholesome thoughts.

"Carpenter, from where do unwholesome thoughts arise? I declare the place from which they arise: One should know that they arise from perception. What kind of perception? I say, perceptions are of many kinds, of numberless kinds, with several kinds of volitional formations, such as perceptions of sensuality, perceptions of ill will and perceptions of harming.

"Carpenter, because of perceptions based on the element of sensual desire in living beings, unwholesome thoughts arise that are in conformity with the element of sensual desire. If there are [such] perceptions, then because of those perceptions unwholesome thoughts arise in conformity with the element of sensual desire. Carpenter, because of perceptions based on the elements of ill will and harming in living beings, unwhole-

⁸⁰ [84] MN 78 at MN II 27,12 adds that the noble disciple understands as it really is the liberation of the mind and liberation by wisdom where wholesome conduct ceases, *tañ ca cetovimuttiṃ paññāvimuttiṃ yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti, yath' assa te kusalasīlā aparisesā nirujjhanti.*

⁸¹ [85] MN 78 at MN II 27,15 instead mentions the four right efforts for eradicating wholesome conduct.

some thoughts arise that are in conformity with the elements of ill will and harming. If there are [such] perceptions, then because of those perceptions unwholesome thoughts arise in conformity with the elements of ill will and harming. This is [how] unwholesome thoughts arise from this kind of perception.⁸²

"Carpenter, where are unwholesome thoughts eradicated without remainder, [721b] where are they destroyed without remainder? When a learned noble disciple, secluded from sensual desires and secluded from evil and unwholesome qualities, with [directed] awareness and contemplation,⁸³ with joy and happiness born of seclusion, dwells having attained the first absorption. This is [how] unwholesome thoughts are eradicated without remainder, destroyed without remainder.

"Carpenter, by what practice does a noble disciple eradicate unwholesome thoughts? When a learned noble disciple in regard to the body contemplates the internal body ... (*up to*) ... feelings ... states of mind ... in regard to dharmas contemplates dharmas – practising like this a noble disciple eradicates unwholesome thoughts.⁸⁴

13. "Carpenter, what are wholesome thoughts? Thoughts free from sensuality, thoughts free from ill will and thoughts free from harming – these are reckoned to be wholesome thoughts. [164]

⁸² [86] This paragraph, relating unwholesome thoughts to the corresponding 'elements', is without a counterpart in MN 78.

⁸³ [87] MĀ 179 at T I 721b2: 有覺, 有觀, which in the present context are counterparts to *vitakka* and *vicāra* in the standard description of the first *jhāna* in Pāli discourses; cf., e.g., DN 1 at DN I 37,2 (MN 78 at MN II 28,1 abbreviates this part).

⁸⁴ [88] MN 78 at MN II 28,4 instead mentions the four right efforts for eradicating unwholesome thoughts.

"Carpenter, from where do wholesome thoughts arise? I declare the place from which they arise: One should know that they arise from perception. What kind of perception? I say, perceptions are of many kinds, of numberless kinds, with several kinds of volitional formations, such as perceptions free from sensuality, perceptions free from ill will and perceptions free from harming.

"Carpenter, because of perceptions based on the element of absence of sensual desire in living beings, wholesome thoughts arise that are in conformity with the element of absence of sensual desire. If there are [such] perceptions, because of those perceptions wholesome thoughts arise in conformity with the element of absence of sensual desires. Carpenter, because of perceptions based on the elements of non-ill will and non-harming in living beings, wholesome thoughts arise that are in conformity with the elements of non-ill will and non-harming. If there are [such] perceptions, then because of those perceptions wholesome thoughts arise in conformity with the elements of non-ill will and non-harming. This is [how] wholesome thoughts arise from this kind of perception.⁸⁵

"Carpenter, where are wholesome thoughts eradicated without remainder, where are they destroyed without remainder? When a learned noble disciple, with the cessation of pleasure and pain, and with the earlier cessation of joy and displeasure, with neither-pain-nor-pleasure, equanimity, mindfulness and purity, dwells having attained the fourth absorption.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ [89] This paragraph, relating wholesome thoughts to the corresponding 'elements', is without a counterpart in MN 78.

⁸⁶ [90] According to MN 78 at MN II 28,22, the cessation of wholesome thoughts takes place already with the second *jhāna*, a position probably taken with reference to the cessation of *vitakka* and *vicāra* that is characteristic of this level of absorption.

This is [how] wholesome thoughts are eradicated without remainder, destroyed without remainder.

"Carpenter, by what practice does a noble disciple eradicate wholesome thoughts? When a learned noble disciple in regard to the body contemplates the internal body ... (*up to*) ... feelings ... states of mind ... in regard to dharmas contemplates dharmas – practising like this a noble disciple eradicates wholesome thoughts.⁸⁷

"Carpenter, by wisely contemplating a learned noble disciple knows unwholesome conduct as it really is, knows as it really is from where unwholesome conduct arises, and by wisely contemplating knows as it really is how this unwholesome conduct is eradicated without remainder, destroyed without remainder. A noble disciple who practises like this comes to know the cessation of unwholesome conduct as it really is. [165]

"By wisely contemplating [a noble disciple] knows wholesome conduct as it really is, knows as it really is from where wholesome conduct arises, and by wisely contemplating knows as it really is how this wholesome conduct is eradicated without remainder, destroyed without remainder. A noble disciple who practises like this comes to know the cessation of wholesome conduct as it really is.

"By wisely contemplating [a noble disciple] knows unwholesome thoughts as they really are, knows as it really is from where unwholesome thoughts arise, and by wisely contemplating knows as it really is how these unwholesome thoughts are eradicated without remainder, are destroyed without remainder. A noble disciple who practises like this comes

⁸⁷ [91] MN 78 at MN II 28,25 instead mentions the four right efforts for eradicating wholesome thoughts.

to know the cessation of unwholesome thoughts as it really is. [721c]

"By wisely contemplating [a noble disciple] knows wholesome thoughts as they really are, knows as it really is from where wholesome thoughts arise, and by wisely contemplating knows as it really is how these wholesome thoughts are eradicated without remainder, are destroyed without remainder. A noble disciple who practises like this comes to know the cessation of wholesome thoughts as it really is.

"Why? Based on right view arises right intention, based on right intention arises right speech, based on right speech arises right action, based on right action arises right livelihood, based on right livelihood arises right effort, based on right effort arises right mindfulness, based on right mindfulness arises right concentration.⁸⁸ With a mind concentrated like this, a noble disciple attains liberation from all desire, anger and delusion.

"Carpenter, a noble disciple with a mind that has been rightly liberated like this comes to know that all [forms of] births have been extinguished, the holy life has been established, what had to be done has been done, [for him] there will be no no experiencing of a further existence – he knows this as it really is.

"One who is reckoned to be training and to have acquired vision is endowed with eight factors, while an arahant who has destroyed the influxes is endowed with ten factors.

"Carpenter, what are the eight factors with which one who is training and who has acquired vision is endowed? To wit, the right view of one in training ... (*up to*) ... the right concen-

⁸⁸ [92] A similar sequential linking of the path factors can be found in MN 117 at MN III 76,1, where it covers all ten path factors.

tration of one in training – these are reckoned the eight factors with which one who is training and who has acquired vision is endowed.⁸⁹ [166]

14. "Carpenter, what are the ten factors with which an arahant who has destroyed the influxes is endowed? To wit, the right view of one beyond training ... (*up to*) ... the right knowledge of one beyond training – these are reckoned the ten factors with which an arahant who has destroyed the influxes is endowed.

"Carpenter, when someone possesses these ten factors, I reckon him as accomplished in wholesomeness, supreme in wholesomeness, an unsurpassable person who has attained the supreme essence and has the nature of a genuine recluse."

The Buddha spoke like this. The carpenter Pañcakaṅga and the monks, having listened to what the Buddha said, were delighted and received it respectfully.⁹⁰

Study

A comparison of the above translated *Madhyama-āgama* discourse with the *Samaṇamaṇḍika-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* brings to light several differences that point to the vicissitudes of oral transmission. In what follows, I will take up only selected differences for discussion, in particular those that have a direct bearing on the notion of a true *samaṇa*.

In the early discourses in general, the effects of oral transmission can be seen particularly well in regard to the sequence of listings which, unless a particular list is so much standardized that it

⁸⁹ [93] This whole section of MĀ 179, beginning with "Carpenter, a learned noble disciples by wise contemplation knows unwholesome conduct as it really is", up to the present juncture, is without a counterpart in MN 78.

⁹⁰ [94] MN 78 at MN II 29,13 does not mention the presence of monks listening to the Buddha's exposition.

has become thoroughly fixed, can easily change. An example is the presentation of the four qualities that according to the Buddha's critique do not suffice to make one a true recluse. The Pāli and Chinese versions differ in as much as they have the themes of thoughts and livelihood in the opposite sequence. Nevertheless, when illustrating these themes through the simile of the infant they present the respective manifestations of thoughts and livelihood in the same sequence, in that both mention the infant sulking or moaning as their third, and the mother's milk as the fourth, as can be seen in table 5 below.

Table 5: Sequences of Listing the 3rd and 4th Qualities

	MN 78	MĀ 179
3 rd	thoughts: sulking	livelihood: moaning
4 th	livelihood: mother's milk	thoughts: mother's milk

The net result of this is a somewhat different presentation, [167] as in the Pāli version the infant's thoughts express themselves by sulking, while in the Chinese parallel the infant's thoughts are concerned with the mother's milk. Conversely, in the Pāli version the child's livelihood is [to drink] the mother's milk, while in the Chinese parallel its livelihood is to moan [as a way of demanding nourishment]. Since both presentations make sense, it remains open to conjecture which of the two versions has preserved the original order of exposition.

A somewhat more important difference manifests in regard to the Buddha's assessment of the notion of a true recluse proposed by Samaṇamaṇḍikāputta. According to the *Majjhima-nikāya* version, the Buddha rejected the entire proposal. This is not the case in the *Madhyama-āgama* presentation, where he instead makes the finer distinction that someone endowed with purity of bodily

and verbal activities and pure livelihood is indeed "accomplished in wholesomeness", though such a one nevertheless fails to be a true recluse in the highest sense.⁹¹

In this way, the *Madhyama-āgama* version gives proper place to the importance of ethical conduct by avoiding unwholesome deeds, which is somewhat lost sight of with the *Majjhima-nikāya* version's sweeping dismissal. Elsewhere the Pāli discourses regularly emphasize the importance of ethical purity of conduct,⁹² passages that would support the *Madhyama-āgama* version's presentation that someone who has achieved such purity is indeed "accomplished in wholesomeness". Yet, more is required to become a 'true recluse' in the Buddhist sense, since ethical purity is only a means to an end – at least in early Buddhist thought – and this end, according to both versions of the present discourse, is reached when a *samaṇa* becomes fully liberated (thereby becoming the epitome of ethical perfection).

Another instance of sequential variation can be found in regard to the depiction of the qualities that do suffice to make one a true *samaṇa*: the ten path factors of an arahant. The Pāli version briefly mentions these ten at the outset of its exposition, right after the Buddha has rejected Samaṇamaṇḍikāputta's proposal with the help of the simile of the infant. The passage reads: [168]

"Carpenter, [on] possessing ten qualities I designate a person as endowed with wholesomeness and foremost in wholesomeness, as one who has reached the supreme and is an invincible recluse".⁹³

⁹¹ [96] See §9 of the translation and above note 70.

⁹² [97] Cf., e.g., AN 4.116 at AN II 119,30, a whole discourse dedicated to the importance of developing wholesome bodily, verbal and mental conduct, together with right view.

⁹³ [98] MN 78 at MN II 25,18: *dasahi kho, ahaṃ, thapati, dhammehi samannāgataṃ purisapuggalaṃ paññāpemi sampannakusalaṃ paramakusalaṃ uttama-*

The Pāli discourse does not continue with this theme at this point, but instead takes up the subject of unwholesome conduct. The transition to this topic is somewhat abrupt in the original, so much so that in his translation Bhikkhu Bodhi in *Ñāṇamoli* (1995/2005: 650) adds "[But first of all]" in order to provide a lead-over from the announcement of the ten qualities to the treatment of unwholesome conduct.

An exposition of these ten qualities occurs only at the end of the *Majjhima-nikāya* discourse, where the corresponding passage in the *Madhyama-āgama* version is found as well. In the *Majjhima-nikāya* version, this exposition begins with:

"Carpenter, [on] possessing what ten qualities do I designate a person as endowed with wholesomeness and foremost in wholesomeness, as one who has reached the supreme and is an invincible recluse?"⁹⁴

In other Pāli discourses, it is a standard procedure that a first announcement (such as "possessing ten qualities I designate a person as ...") is immediately followed by a question worded in the same terms (such as "possessing what ten qualities do I designate a person as ..."). This then leads over to a detailed exposition of the qualities mentioned in the first announcement.

In view of this standard pattern, the fact that in the present case most of the actual discourse intervenes between the first announcement of the ten qualities and the corresponding inquiry and exposition of these ten qualities gives the impression that a textual error may have occurred during transmission.

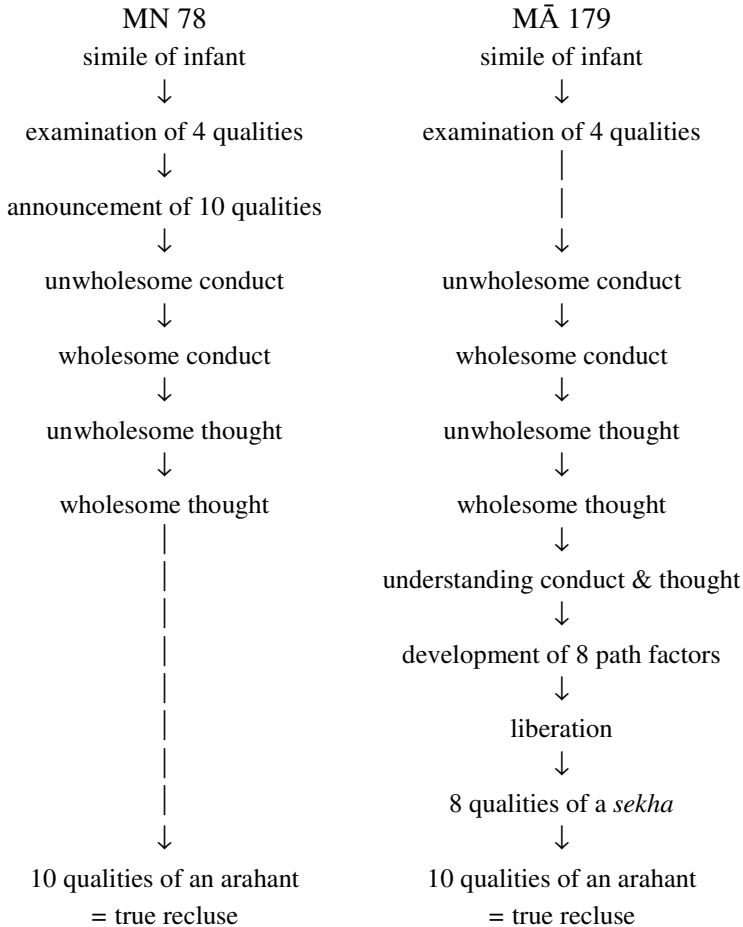
This impression is further strengthened by the fact that the inquiry and exposition of the ten qualities in the *Majjhima-nikāya*

pattipattaṃ samañaṃ ayojjhaṃ (B^c: *paññāpemi*).

⁹⁴ [99] MN 78 at MN II 28,34: *katamehi cāhaṃ, thapati, dasahi dhammehi samanāgataṃ purisapuggalaṃ paññāpemi sampannakusalaṃ paramakusalaṃ uttaraṃ pattipattaṃ samañaṃ ayojjhaṃ?* (B^c: *paññāpemi*; S^c does not have *cāhaṃ*).

version sets in somewhat abruptly, just as its earlier announcement of the ten qualities ends in a somewhat abrupt manner. The *Madhyama-āgama* discourse provides instead a gradual build-up to the theme of the ten qualities (see table 6). [169]

Table 6: Sequence of the Exposition



This gradual build-up begins by indicating that a noble disciple through wise contemplation acquires knowledge of conduct and thoughts in all their aspects as described in the body of the discourse. Such wise contemplation then leads to a development of the eight factors of the path of one in training. This in turn issues in full liberation, at which point a recapitulation of the eight path factors of a disciple in higher training (*sekha*) and of the ten path factors of an arahant fall naturally into place.

Such a gradual build-up is not found at all in the *Majjhima-nikāya* version. In view of the abrupt and somewhat disconnected way of the *Majjhima-nikāya* version's exposition of the ten qualities, it seems quite probable that the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse has preserved a presentation closer to the original exposition in this respect. [170] That is, an error during the oral transmission of the Pāli version may have caused a loss of the exposition on understanding conduct and thoughts, of the eight path factors leading to liberation and of the recapitulation of the eight qualities of a *sekha*. Possibly the same error may also be responsible for the disruption of the exposition on the ten qualities of a true recluse, with the introductory statement shifted to an earlier part of the discourse.

The gradual build-up in the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse provides a better conclusion to the main theme of the true recluse, by at first turning to an understanding of conduct and thoughts in their wholesome and unwholesome manifestations, followed by indicating that based on such an understanding a noble disciple practices the noble eightfold path and eventually reaches liberation.

In this way, the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Samañamañdikā-sutta* offers significant perspectives on the *Majjhima-nikāya* version's presentation, perspectives that accord well with the range of implications of the term *samaña* in other Pāli discourses.

In sum, then, becoming a true *samaṇa* from an early Buddhist perspective requires a basis in ethical purity and progress through the four stages of awakening until complete liberation is reached.

"One who pacifies evil [states]
altogether, be they small or great,
because of the pacification of evil [states]
is reckoned a [true] recluse."⁹⁵

⁹⁵ [100] Dhṛp 265: *yo ca sameti pāpāni, anuṃ thūlāni sabbaso, samitattā hi pāpānaṃ, samaṇo ti pravuccati*; with a partial counterpart in Gāndhārī *Dharmapada* 189, Brough 1962/2001: 149): *śamadhare va pa[va]ṇi, śramaṇo di pravucadi*; and full counterparts in the Patna *Dharmapada* 236, Cone 1989: 164 or Roth 1980: 118: *yo tu śameti pāpāni, aṇuttūlāni sabbaso, śamaṇā eva pāpānāṃ, śamaṇo ti pravuccati*; and in Uv 11.14c-f, Bernhard 1965: 190: *śamitaṃ yena pāpam syād, aṇusthūlaṃ hi sarvaśaḥ, śamitatvāt tu pāpānāṃ, śramaṇo hi nirucyate* (on this edition cf. the study by Schmithausen 1970), translated by Hahn 2007: 46. The corresponding stanza 11.15 in the Tibetan Uv, Beckh 1911: 39 or Zongtse 1990: 127, reads similarly: *gang dag sdig pa che phra dag, kun la brtag nas byed pa dang, sdig pa zhi ba de dag ni, dge sbyong nyid ces brjod par bya*, translated by Rockhill 1883/1975: 48, Sparham 1983/1986: 75 and Iyer 1986: 269. In the Chinese *Dharmapadas* and *Udānavargas* the second part of the stanza can be found; cf. T 210 at T IV 569a4: 調能止惡 ... 是為沙門, translated by Dhammajoti 1995: 208 (27.10a+d); T 211 at T IV 597b2: 調能止惡 ... 是謂沙門, translated by Willemsen 1999: 152, (27.8a+d); T 212 at T IV 681a19: 調能捨惡, 是謂沙門; T 213 at T IV 783a5: 所言沙門者 ... 穢垢盡消除, translated by Willemsen 1978: 47 (11.17a+c), though the stanza relates the eradication of defilements to being reckoned one who has "gone forth", 出家/ *pravrajya*, whereas the notion of a '*śramaṇa*' stands only for pacifying the mind.

Vekhanassa-sutta (MN 80)

Introduction

The present chapter takes up the *Vekhanassa-sutta* as a case study in the potential of comparative studies of Pāli discourses in the light of their Chinese parallels. The discussion between the Buddha and the wanderer Vekhanassa reported in the Pāli version has counterparts in the *Madhyama-āgama*, translated below, and in an individual Chinese translation. [90]

Translation

Discourse to *Vekhanassa¹

1. Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was dwelling at Sāvathī, staying in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park.

2. At that time the heterodox wanderer Vekhanassa, while roaming around,² came to where the Buddha was and, after ex-

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¹ [7] The translated text is MĀ 209 at T I 786b12 to 788a5. The name of the main protagonist given at T I 786b15 is 鞞摩那修, which according to Pulleyblank 1991: 39, 217, 221 and 346 would correspond to *pejñ' ma na' suw*, hence the original term must have been different from its Pāli counterpart *Vekhanassa*. The name of the protagonist of MN 80 brings to mind the Vaikhānasa hermits of the brahminical tradition; cf., e.g., Eggers 1929 for a translation and study of their *Dharmasūtra*. Besides MĀ 209, another parallel to MN 80 is T 90 at T I 913c7 to 914c23. A comparative study of MN 80 in the light of its two parallels can be found in Anālayo 2011a: 437–440.

² [8] Adopting the variant 徜徉 instead of 仿佯.

changing greetings, he said in an inquiring manner: "Gotama, this is the supreme appearance, the supreme appearance, Gotama, this is the supreme appearance."³ The Blessed One asked: "Kaccāna, what is this appearance?" [91]

The heterodox wanderer Vekhanassa replied: "Gotama, if [there is] an appearance where no other appearance is superior, more sublime, more excellent, Gotama, that appearance is the most excellent, that appearance is supreme!"

3. The Blessed One said: "Kaccāna, just as if someone were to say: 'What in the country is the most beautiful girl, I want her!' Then another man would pose such a question: 'Friend, do you know of the most beautiful girl in the country: this is her family name, this is her first name, this is her birth? [Do you know] whether she is long or short, stout or slim; whether she is of bright, or dark, or neither-bright-nor-dark [skin colour]? [Do you know] whether she is a warrior girl, or whether she is a brahmin, a merchant or a worker class girl? [Do you know] whether she lives in the eastern, the southern, the western or the northern direction?' That man would answer: 'I do not know!'

"Then the other man would ask again: 'Friend you do not know or see of the most beautiful girl in the country that this is her family name, this is her first name, this is her birth. [You do not know] if she is long or short, stout or slim; if she is of bright or dark or neither-bright-nor-dark [skin] colour. [You

³ [9] According to Hirakawa 1997: 1005, 色 also renders *varṇa*, so that the sense here seems to be the same as in the corresponding passage in MN 80 at MN II 40,7: *ayaṃ paramo vaṇṇo*. According to the commentary Ps III 273,16 on the same proposal made by Sakuludāyī in MN 79 at MN II 32,27, the proclamation of a "supreme appearance" intends the condition to be attained on rebirth in the *Subhakiṇhadevaloka*, the heavenly realm that corresponds to the attainment of the third *jhāna*.

do not know] if she is a warrior girl, if she is a brahmin, a merchant, or a worker class girl. [You do not know] if she lives in the eastern, the southern, the western, or the northern direction. Yet you make this statement: 'I want that girl'?"

"Similarly, Kaccāna, you make this statement: 'that sublime appearance is the most sublime appearance, [786c] that is the most excellent appearance, that is the supreme appearance'. But when I ask you about that appearance, you don't know it."

4. The heterodox wanderer Vekhanassa said: "Gotama, just like superbly refined utmost excellent gold, polished and treated so as to be pure by a goldsmith who is skilled in refining, placed on a white cotton mat under the sunshine, whose most sublime appearance would glow and shine with clear light, so too, Gotama, I say that sublime appearance is the most sublime appearance, that is the most excellent appearance, that is the supreme appearance."

5. The Blessed One said: "Kaccāna, I will now ask you, you may answer in accordance with your understanding. Kaccāna, what do you think, suppose the superbly refined utmost excellent gold, polished and treated so as to be pure by a goldsmith skilled in refining, placed on a white cotton mat under the sunshine, [92] whose most sublime appearance would glow and shine with clear light; compared to a glow-worm that would glow and shine with clear light in the middle of a dark night, of these [two] clear lights, which is the supreme one, which is the most excellent?"

The heterodox wanderer Vekhanassa replied: "Gotama, the clear light of the glow-worm is supreme and more excellent than the clear light of the superbly refined and select gold."

6. The Blessed One asked: "Kaccāna, what do you think, suppose a glow-worm would glow and shine with clear light in the middle of a dark night; compared to a burning oil lamp that

would glow and shine with clear light in the middle of a dark night, of these [two] clear lights, which is the supreme one, which is the most excellent?"

The heterodox wanderer Vekhanassa replied: "Gotama, the clear light of the burning oil lamp is supreme and more excellent than the clear light of the glow-worm."

7. The Blessed One asked: "Kaccāna, what do you think, suppose a burning oil lamp would glow and shine with clear light in the middle of a dark night; compared to a great burning wood fire that would glow and shine with clear light in the middle of a dark night, of these [two] clear lights, which is the supreme one, which is the most excellent?"

The heterodox wanderer Vekhanassa replied: "Gotama, the clear light of the great burning wood fire is supreme and more excellent than the clear light of the burning oil lamp."

8. The Blessed One asked: "Kaccāna, what do you think, suppose a great burning wood fire would glow and shine with clear light in the middle of a dark night; compared to the morning star that would glow and shine with clear light towards dawn in a cloudless [sky], of these [two] clear lights, which is the supreme one, which is the most excellent?"

The heterodox wanderer Vekhanassa replied: "Gotama, the clear light of the morning star is supreme and more excellent than the light of the great burning wood fire."

9. The Blessed One asked: "Kaccāna, what do you think, suppose the morning star that would glow and shine with clear light towards dawn in a cloudless [sky]; compared to the light of the resplendent moon,⁴ which in a cloudless [sky] at mid-

⁴ [10] MĀ 209 at T I 786c27: 月殿, literally "moon palace". A reference to a 'palace' is also found in the next exchange in relation to the sun, 日殿. The expression 月殿 recurs in MĀ 141 at T I 647c22, where it is the counterpart to *candimāpabhā* in SN 45.146 at SN V 44,18. My rendering as "resplendent" is

night would glow and shine with clear light, [93] of these [two] clear lights, which is the supreme one, which is the most excellent?"

The heterodox wanderer Vekhanassa replied: "Gotama, the clear light of the resplendent moon is supreme and more excellent than the light of the morning star." [787a]

10. The Blessed One asked: "Kaccāna, what do you think, suppose the light of the resplendent moon in a cloudless [sky] at midnight would glow and shine with clear light; compared to the light of the resplendent sun that during the time close to the midst of autumn would glow and shine with clear light in a pure sky free from clouds, of these [two] clear lights, which is the supreme one, which is the most excellent?"

The heterodox wanderer Vekhanassa replied: "Gotama, the clear light of the resplendent sun is supreme and more excellent than the light of the resplendent moon."

11. The Blessed One said: "Kaccāna, [beyond this] there are many gods. Now even though this sun and this moon are of such great power, such great might, such great merit, such great majesty, yet that clear light of the former [i.e., the sun and the moon] does not compare to the clear light of these gods. In former times I have been meeting and conversing with such gods, and what I said was agreeable to those gods, yet I do not make such a statement as: 'that sublime appearance is the most sublime appearance, that is the most excellent appearance, that is the supreme appearance!'

"But you, Kaccāna, in regard to what is [even] inferior and worse than the light of a glow-worm, you say: 'that sublime

based on the assumption that in the present context 殿 may also stand for *pa-bhā*, being perhaps misread as *sabhā*, which according to Hirakawa 1997: 694 is one of the terms rendered by 殿.

appearance is the most sublime appearance, that is the most excellent appearance, that is the supreme appearance!', and when asked about it you do not [even] know it!"

Then the heterodox wanderer Vekhanassa, after being directly criticized by the Blessed One, was upset and worried inside, with head down he kept silent, in loss of an argument and without words, as if he were searching for something.

12. Then, having criticized [him] the Blessed One, in order to cheer him up, [changed topic and] said: "Kaccāna, there are five strands of sensual pleasures that are gratifying and wished for, that lead to joy [of the type] that is related to sensuality, [namely] forms known by the eye, sounds known by the ear, [94] odours known by the nose, flavours known by the tongue, touches known by the body.

13. "Kaccāna, forms could be desirable or else they could be undesirable. Suppose for a person those forms are agreeable to the mind, commendable to the mind, [productive of] joy in the mind, fulfilling to the mind, satisfying to the mind's aspirations, then these are supreme and more excellent than other types of forms that are not desired, not wanted, not aspired to, not searched for. These are the most excellent and supreme types of form [for that person]. Kaccāna, it is the same for sounds, odours, flavours and tangibles. Kaccāna, tangibles could be desirable or else they could be undesirable. Suppose for a person those tangibles are agreeable to the mind, commendable to the mind, [productive of] joy in the mind, fulfilling to the mind, satisfying to the mind's aspirations, then these are supreme and more excellent than other types of tangibles that are not desired, not wanted, not aspired to, not searched for. These are the most excellent and supreme types of tangibles [for that person].

14. Then, holding his hands together [in homage] towards

the Buddha, the heterodox wanderer Vekhanassa said: "Gotama, it is very profound and very unique, how the recluse Gotama has explained to me in various ways sensual pleasures and the foremost sensual pleasure. Gotama, just as if with a grass fire one were to ignite a wood fire, or with a wood fire one were to ignite a grass fire, so too the recluse Gotama has explained to me in various ways sensual pleasures and the foremost sensual pleasure."⁵ [787b]

The Blessed One said: "Stop, stop, Kaccāna, because for a long time you have been of a different view, of a different belief, [affirming] a different type of joy, a different type of pleasure, a different type of thinking, you do not fully understand the meaning of what I say. Kaccāna, suppose a disciple of mine during the first and last watches of the night does not lie down to sleep, but with proper concentration and intention develops the requisites of the path, coming to know as it really is that 'birth has been extinguished, the holy life has been established, what had to be done has been done, there will be no experiencing of a further existence', such a one would fully understand what I say."

15. Then the heterodox wanderer Vekhanassa got angry towards the Buddha, dislike arose [in him] and disapproval, and with a wish to slander the Blessed One, [95] with a wish to slight the Blessed One, in order to slander the Blessed One, in order to slight the Blessed One, he said:

"Gotama, there are recluses or brahmins who do not [even] know the past world, who do not [even] know the future world, who do not [even] know countless births and deaths, yet they claim to have reached final knowledge, [assuming that they] know as it really is that 'birth has been extinguished, the holy

⁵ [11] The simile used here is not found in MN 80.

life has been established, what had to be done has been done, there will be no experiencing of a further existence'.

"Gotama, I think like this: 'How come these recluses and brahmins who do not [even] know the past world, who do not [even] know the future world, who do not [even] know countless births and deaths, claim to have reached final knowledge, [assuming that they] know as it really is that 'birth has been extinguished, the holy life has been established, what had to be done has been done, there will be no experiencing of a further existence'?"

16. Then the Blessed One reflected: "This heterodox wanderer Vekhanassa got angry towards me, dislike arose [in him] and disapproval, and with a wish to slander me, with a wish to slight me, in order to slander me, in order to slight me, he said:

"Gotama, there are recluses or brahmins who do not [even] know the past world, who do not [even] know the future world, who do not [even] know countless births and deaths, yet they claim to have reached final knowledge, [assuming that they] know as it really is that 'birth has been extinguished, the holy life has been established, what had to be done has been done, there will be no experiencing of a further existence'.

"Gotama, I think like this: 'Why is it that these recluses and brahmins who do not [even] know the past world, who do not [even] know the future world, who do not [even] know countless births and deaths, claim to have reached final knowledge, [assuming that they] know as it really is that 'birth has been extinguished, the holy life has been established, what had to be done has been done, there will be no experiencing of a further existence'?"

Knowing this the Blessed One spoke: "Kaccāna, if there are recluses or brahmins who do not [even] know the past world, who do not [even] know the future world, who do not [even]

know countless births and deaths, yet they claim to have reached final knowledge, [assuming that they] know as it really is that 'birth has been extinguished, the holy life has been established, what had to be done has been done, there will be no experiencing of a further existence', [96] for them it is fitting to make this statement: 'Let be the past world, let be the future world!'⁶

"Kaccāna, I [too] make such a statement: 'Let be the past world, let be the future world!' [787c] Even without recalling a single [past] life, if a disciple of mine comes who is not fraudulent and not deceitful, with a straight character, I will teach him. If he practices like that, in accordance with what I taught him, he will certainly come to know the right Dharma.

"Kaccāna, just like an infant boy, young and tender, lying on his bed, whose father and mother have bound his hands and feet.⁷ But when later on he has grown up and is endowed with all faculties, the father and mother free his hands and feet. He might only recall the time of being liberated,⁸ but does not recall the time of being in bondage.

"Just so, Kaccāna, I make such a statement: 'Let be the past world, let be the future world!' Even without recalling a single [past] life, if a disciple of mine comes who is not fraudulent and not deceitful, with a straight character, I will teach him. If he practices like that, in accordance with what I taught him, he will certainly come to know the right Dharma.

"Kaccāna, take for example an oil lamp that burns in dependence on oil and wick, if nobody supplies oil and the wick

⁶ [12] In MN 80, the Buddha instead agrees to Vekhanassa's criticism, see the discussion below.

⁷ [13] The point of binding the child like this would be to keep it from doing mischief when the parents are busy and unable to keep it under surveillance.

⁸ [14] Adopting a variant that only reads 解, without 縛.

is not adjusted, when the former oil is already extinguished and there are no further supplies, having nothing to grasp at, it will come quickly to cessation.⁹

"Just so, Kaccāna, I make such a statement: 'Let be the past world, let be the future world!' Even without recalling a single [past] life, if a disciple of mine comes who is not fraudulent and not deceitful, with a straight character, I will teach him. If he practices like that, in accordance with what I taught him, he will certainly come to know the right Dharma.

"Kaccāna, just as if one were to use ten or twenty or thirty or forty or fifty or sixty bundles of wood to make a fire that is bright and fully ablaze,¹⁰ [so that] then [one can] see the fire blazing. If afterwards nobody supplies more grass, wood, chaff or rags, when the former firewood is already extinguished and there are no further supplies, having nothing to grasp at it will come quickly to cessation.¹¹

"Just so, Kaccāna, I make such a statement: 'Let be the past world, let be the future world!' Even without recalling a single [past] life, if a disciple of mine comes who is not fraudulent and not deceitful, with a straight character, [97] I will teach him. If he practices like that, in accordance with what I taught him, he will certainly come to know the right Dharma."

17. While this teaching was given, the stainless and dustless eye of the Dharma in regard to all phenomena arose in the heterodox wanderer Vekhanassa.¹² Then the heterodox wanderer Vekhanassa saw the Dharma and attained the Dharma,

⁹ [15] This simile is not found in MN 80; a version of this imagery occurs in SN 12.53 at SN II 86,22.

¹⁰ [16] Adopting the variant 炯 instead of 洞.

¹¹ [17] While this simile is absent from MN 80, a counterpart can be found in SN 12.52 at SN II 85,17.

¹² [18] MN 80 does not report his stream-entry or his going forth.

realized the totally pure Dharma, [having] no more any [need] of other teachers, no longer relying on others, eradicating doubt and crossing over confusion, free from any hesitation, already established in the realization of the fruit, he attained intrepidity in the Dharma of the Blessed One.

Bowing down at the Buddha's feet he said: "Blessed One, I wish to obtain the going forth from the Buddha to train in the path, [may I receive] the full ordination and become a monk to practice the holy life." The Blessed One said: "Welcome,¹³ monk, practice the holy life!" [788a]

The heterodox wanderer obtained the going forth from the Buddha to train in the path, he forthwith received the full ordination and became a monk to practice the holy life. When the venerable Vekhanassa had gone forth to train in the path and had received the full ordination he, knowing the Dharma and seeing the Dharma (etc.), [eventually] attained arahantship.¹⁴

The Buddha spoke like this. The venerable Vekhanassa and the monks, having listened to what the Buddha said, were delighted and received it respectfully.

Study

In what follows, I take up only those differences between the two versions that help to clarify an aspect of the Pāli discourse, which is the case in relation to the treatment given to the theme of sensual pleasures in the later part of both versions.

According to the Pāli version, the Buddha spoke in this context of a highest sensual happiness that is supreme among sensual types of happiness, *kāmasukhā kāmaggasukhaṃ tatha aggam ak-*

¹³ [19] Adopting the variant 來 instead of 哉.

¹⁴ Adopting the variant 漢 instead of 訶.

khāyati.¹⁵ In the Pāli discourse this proclamation is somewhat cryptic, coming as it does at the end of a treatment of the five strands of sensual pleasure, and its implications are open to conjecture. The commentary then explains that *kāmaggasukha* refers to Nirvāṇa,¹⁶ to which the subcommentary adds that, since all phenomena of the three realms can be considered as a form of sensual pleasure (*kāma*), [98] thus of all such types of happiness Nirvāṇa is the highest.¹⁷

This commentarial explanation is problematic. A first problem is that *kāma* in its early Buddhist usage stands for only one of the three realms, not for all three. Rebirth in the other two realms, or even just experiences that correspond to them, that is, the absorptions or the immaterial attainments, are totally beyond *kāma*. This much can be seen from the standard introduction to the attainment of the first absorption in the Pāli *Nikāyas* and the Chinese *Āgamas*, which quite explicitly indicates the condition for its attainment to be seclusion from *kāma*, *vivicc' eva kāmehi* / 離雜欲.¹⁸ In fact, elsewhere the expression *kāmagga* refers to the highest level within the sensual realm, inhabited by the gods that delight in the creation of others,¹⁹ clearly inferior to the types of experiences of the

¹⁵ [20] MN 80 at MN II 43,4. Occurrences such as *bhavagga* in SN 22.76 at SN III 83,14 or *sīlagga*, etc., in AN 4.75 at AN II 79,2 indicate that a *tappurisa* compound with *-agga* as its second member stands for what is the "topmost" or the "highest" among what is referred to by the first member of the compound.

¹⁶ [21] Ps III 277,19: *kāmaggasukan ti nibbānaṃ adhippetamaṃ*.

¹⁷ [22] B^e-Ps-pt II 133: *sabbe hi tebhūmakadhammā kāmaṇīyaṭṭhena kāmā, te paṭicca uppajjanasukhato nibbānasukham eva aggabhūtaṃ sukham*. On the range of meaning of *kāma* in Sanskrit literature cf. Hara 2007: 82–87.

¹⁸ [23] The aloofness from *kāma* is especially highlighted in AN 9.33 at AN IV 411,5: *vivicc' eva kāmehi ... paṭhamaṃ jhānaṃ upasampajja viharatī, ettha kāmā nirujjhanti, te ca kāme nirodhetvā nirodhetvā viharanti*.

¹⁹ [24] Vv 139 at Vv 17,9.

other two realms.

Another problem is that Nirvāṇa is beyond the three realms, so that it would not be appropriate to consider the happiness of Nirvāṇa as supreme among the types of happiness of the three realms. As a discourse in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* clarifies, the happiness of Nirvāṇa is the very cessation of any feeling.²⁰ This would make it clear that the happiness of Nirvāṇa is of quite a different type than the forms of happiness that can be felt within the three realms.

The solution to the admittedly cryptic passage in the *Vekhanassa-sutta* can be found in the *Madhyama-āgama* version. In agreement with the individual Chinese translation, the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse indicates that the point made by the Buddha was that desirable sense-objects appear to provide the supreme form of happiness, when they are contrasted to undesirable sense-objects.²¹ Thus instead of referring to Nirvāṇa, the passage appears to be just an acknowledgement of the gratification that can be obtained through desirable sense-objects. This would then have been the first step in a treatment of sensual pleasures from the perspective of their gratification (*assāda*), their disadvantage (*ādīnava*) and the release from them (*nissaraṇa*), a treatment that was not concluded due to Vekhanassa's intervention.

Another clarifying perspective can be gained from the Chinese parallels in regard to Vekhanassa's reaction when being told that he had misunderstood the Buddha's exposition. The Pāli and Chinese versions agree that Vekhanassa reacted by criticizing those who claim to have reached final liberation without knowing the past and the future.²² [99] The two Chinese versions speak in the

²⁰ [25] AN 9.34 at AN IV 415,3: *etad eva khv' ettha sukhaṃ, yad' ettha n' atthi vedayitāṃ.*

²¹ [26] MĀ 209 at T I 787a21 and T 90 at T I 914a29.

²² [27] MN 80 at MN II 43,22: *ajānantā pubbantāṃ apassantā aparantaṃ*, MĀ 209 at T I 787b9: 不知世前際, 不知世後際, 不知無窮生死, and T 90 at T I

same context also of knowing "infinite births", thereby indicating that the reference to knowing the past refers to recollection of past lives. The same understanding is also reflected in the Pāli commentary.²³

According to the Pāli version, the Buddha acknowledged Ve-khanassa's criticism as being in accordance with what is proper.²⁴ This is rather surprising, since recollection of past lives is not an indispensable requirement for reaching full liberation. Of the three higher knowledges, the decisive one, from a Buddhist perspective, is the destruction of the influxes. Such destruction can be accomplished without having developed the other two higher knowledges, and thus without knowledge of the past.

Those who attain the final goal without developing the two higher knowledges would be those arahants who are described as being freed by wisdom only (*paññāvimutta*). A listing of different types of arahants in a discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya* indicates that out of a congregation of five hundred arahants sixty had reached the three higher knowledges, another sixty had the six knowledges (*abhiññā*), another sixty were freed both ways (*ubhatobhāgavimutta*), but the remaining three-hundred-and-twenty were released by wisdom (*paññāvimutta*).²⁵ The numbers given in the Chinese parallels differ, but they also clearly indicate that the majority of arahants were those released by wisdom.²⁶ Thus on

914b17: 不知過去世, 不知當來世, 無量生世間.

²³ [28] Ps III 278,5.

²⁴ [29] MN 80 at MN II 44,3: *tesaṃ so yeva sahadhammiko niggaḥo hoti*.

²⁵ [30] SN 8.7 at SN I 191,22.

²⁶ [31] MĀ 121 at T I 610b25, T 63 at T I 862a4 and SĀ 1212 at T II 330b24 count ninety arahants endowed with the three higher knowledges and ninety arahants freed both ways, while the remaining three-hundred-and-twenty are freed by wisdom. SĀ² 228 at T II 457c11 counts ninety arahants with the three higher knowledges and one-hundred-and-eighty arahants freed both ways, the re-

reading the Pāli version of the *Vekhanassa-sutta* one would be at a loss to understand why the Buddha should accept Vekhanassa's criticism.

In the Chinese versions, in fact, the Buddha does not agree to this criticism. According to them, the Buddha rather indicated that those who voice such criticism should be told to let be past and future.²⁷ The two Chinese versions continue with the Buddha turning to Vekhanassa and telling him also to let be past and future. This injunction is also found in the Pāli version, where its implications are, however, less evident, as it follows after the acknowledgement of the appropriateness of Vekhanassa's criticism.²⁸

The Pāli version then continues with a reference to the Buddha's ability to guide a sincere disciple to realization. The same is also found in the Chinese versions, which, however, also make the point that such a disciple could be led to realization even if he or she should be unable to remember a single birth. [100] Thus what in the Pāli version appears somewhat unrelated to what went on before, in the Chinese versions is a reinforcement of the point made earlier, namely that Vekhanassa's criticism was not justified, as it is possible to reach liberation without knowing the past.

By way of illustration of the Buddha's ability in leading a disciple to realization, the Pāli version comes out with a simile that describes an infant bound with a five-fold bond. After growing up, the child will be released from its bondage and will know the freedom from the bondage. The full import of this simile becomes clear in the Chinese versions, which highlight that the grown-up child's knowledge of being freed is independent of his or her abil-

mainder of the five hundred being freed by wisdom.

²⁷ [32] MĀ 209 at T I 787b28: 置世前際, 置世後際, and T 90 at T I 914b28: 置過去世, 置當來世.

²⁸ [33] MN 80 at MN II 44,3: *api ca, kaccāna, tiṭṭhatu pubbanto tiṭṭhatu aparanto.*

ity to recall the earlier bondage. That is, the point made with this simile is that to know one's former bondage during previous existences is not required in order to reach liberation in the present.

The Pāli discourse concludes with Vekhanassa taking refuge and asking to be accepted as a lay disciple.²⁹ This is also to some extent puzzling, since Vekhanassa was a wanderer, so that one would expect him to rather request ordination instead of becoming a lay disciple.³⁰ According to the Chinese versions, Vekhanassa indeed requested the going forth, in fact he attained stream-entry during the discourse and, after going forth, in due time became an arahant.³¹

In this way, the Chinese counterparts to the *Vekhanassa-sutta* help to clarify some points in the Pāli version that may have suffered from the vicissitudes of oral transmission. They reveal that the reference to the highest sensual pleasure need not concern Nirvāṇa, and that from an early Buddhist perspective a criticism of claims to awakening without knowing the past can be dismissed as inappropriate, since even without recollecting a single past life final liberation can be attained.

²⁹ [34] MN 80 at MN II 44,20: *upasakaṃ maṃ bhavaṃ gotamo dhāretu ajjatagge pāṇupetaṃ saraṇaṃ gataṃ.*

³⁰ [35] Freiburger 1997: 128, in a survey of the usage of the term *paribbājaka* in the Pāli discourses, comes to the conclusion that there is no evidence for the existence of any Buddhist *paribbājakas*; cf. also Karunaratne 2004: 318. Thus for someone who has already gone forth as a wanderer and who becomes a Buddhist, the most natural thing to do would be to ordain as a member of the Buddhist monastic order.

³¹ [36] MĀ 209 at T I 787c24 and T 90 at T I 914c15.

Ghaṭikāra-sutta (MN 81)

Introduction

The present chapter takes up a canonical *jātaka* that narrates the tale of two friends, a young brahmin and a potter, who live at the time of the previous Buddha Kassapa. Considerable parts of my original study of this tale have already appeared in a monograph on the genesis of the bodhisattva ideal,¹ hence in what follows I mainly present the translation of the relevant section of the *Madhyama-āgama* counterpart to the *Ghaṭikāra-sutta*, followed by a brief survey of the way the *jātaka* nature of this tale makes itself felt in the different versions of the present discourse.² [2]

Translation

Discourse at Vebhaliṅga³

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¹ Anālayo 2010c: 71–84.

² ^[3] Further parallel versions are the *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1882: 317–329; the *Saṅghabhedavastu*, Gnoli 1978a: 22–30, with its Tibetan counterpart at D 1 ga 4a to 10a or Q 1030 nge 3b to 9a; and the tenth tale in an *Avadāna* collection preserved in Chinese, 佛說興起行經, T 197 at T IV 172c to 174b. For a comparative study cf. Anālayo 2011a: 441–451.

³ ^[5] The partially translated text is MĀ 63 at T I 499a9 to 500c12 and again T I 503a3 to 19. MĀ 63 at T I 499a9 gives the title as 鞞婆陵耆, which according to Pulleyblank 1983: 39, 241, 195 and 245 would correspond to the Early Middle Chinese pronunciation *pejŋ' ba liŋ gi*, where the last syllable would be closer to the Vaibhidiṅgī given as the location in the *Saṅghabhedavastu*, Gnoli 1978a: 22,1; D 1 ga 4a1 or Q 1030 nge 3b3 reads *be'i bhi ŋing gi*. The *Mahāvastu* speaks of Mārakaraṇḍa, formerly called Veruḍiṅga, Senart 1882: 319,8. T 197 at T IV 172c9 has 多獸邑, with a phonetically similar variant

1. Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was dwelling in the country of Kosala. At that time, the Blessed One was travelling on a road together with a large company of monks.

2. On the way, he smiled with delight. The venerable Ānanda, on seeing the Blessed One smile, held his hands together [in homage] towards the Buddha and said: "Blessed One, what is the reason for this smile? Buddhas and Tathāgatas, free from attachment and fully awakened, do not smile arbitrarily and without reason. I would like to hear about the meaning [of this smile]." ⁴ [3]

3. Then the Blessed One said: "Ānanda, in this place the Tathāgata Kassapa, free from attachment and fully awakened, sat and taught [his] disciples the Dharma." ⁵

4. Then the venerable Ānanda quickly prepared a seat in that place and, holding his hands together [in homage] towards the Buddha, said: "Blessed One, may the Blessed One also sit in this place and teach his disciples the Dharma. In this way, this place will have been made use of by two Tathāgatas, free from attachment and fully awakened."

At that time, the Blessed One sat on the seat that the venerable Ānanda had prepared in that place. Having sat down, he said: "Ānanda, in this place there existed an assembly hall of the Tathāgata Kassapa, free from attachment and fully awakened. Seated in it, the Tathāgata Kassapa, free from attachment and fully awakened, taught his disciples the Dharma.

reading 多狩邑, which seems to reflect a different name.

⁴ [6] In MN 81 at MN II 45,3 and in the *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1882: 317,8, a smile by the Buddha similarly forms the occasion for the delivery of the tale. The *Saṅghabhedavastu* and T 197 do not report such a smile.

⁵ [7] The *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1882: 318,12, at this point brings in three former Buddhas.

5. "Ānanda, in former times in this place there was a town called Vebhaliṅga, greatly prosperous and opulent, with many inhabitants. Ānanda, in the town of Vebhaliṅga there was an eminent brahmin householder by the name of Non-anger,⁶ who was very wealthy and opulent, with immeasurable wealth and with livestock and property beyond calculation, [holding a royal] fief endowed with a variety of families, provisions and cities.⁷

"Ānanda, the eminent brahmin householder Non-anger had a son by the name of Uttara,⁸ a young brahmin (*māṇava*). He was of pure descent on both the father's and mother's sides for up to seven generations, [4] [499b] with uninterrupted continuity of births without blemish. He had learned much and kept it in mind, [being able] to recite it.⁹ He was a master of the four

⁶ [8] MĀ 63 at T I 499a26: 無恚. The *Saṅghebhedaṅkavastu*, Gnoli 1978a: 22,3, gives the name of the brahmin as Nyagrodha. Perhaps the rendering employed in MĀ 63 is due to a mistaking of *nyagrodha* for *nis + krodha*.

⁷ [9] MĀ 63 at T I 499a27: 封戶食邑種種具足, where the intended sense would be similar to a description, found in Pāli discourses, of an eminent brahmin as holding "a royal fief full of living beings, with grass, wood, water, and with grain"; cf., e.g., MN 95 at MN II 164,6.

⁸ [10] MN 81 at MN 46,4 gives the name of the young brahmin as Jotipāla. The *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1882: 319,11, similarly speaks of Jyotipāla, whereas the *Saṅghebhedaṅkavastu*, Gnoli 1978a: 23,1, agrees with MĀ 63 on the name Uttara, with its Tibetan counterpart *bla ma* in D 1 ga 4a6 or Q 1030 nge 3b8. The Chinese *Avadāna* tale, T 197 at T IV 172c13, reads: 火鬘, which according to Akanuma 1930/1994: 251 stands for Jotipāla. A past life of the bodhisattva as a brahmin youth by the name of Uttara who goes forth as a Buddhist monk is also recorded in Bv 12.11 at Bv 53,21 and Jā I 37,31, though with the difference that this past life took place at the time of the former Buddha Sumedha.

⁹ [11] In MN 81 at MN 46,1, neither the father nor the young brahmin's learning are mentioned, in fact the potter is introduced first, and then only his friend is brought in. The same is the case for the *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1882: 319,9. The *Saṅghebhedaṅkavastu*, Gnoli 1978a: 22,3, begins similarly to MĀ 63 by mention-

Vedas, being thoroughly proficient in their causes and conditions, with correct phonology and histories as fifth, [being also proficient in] philology and grammar.¹⁰

"Ānanda, the young brahmin Uttara had a close friend by the name of Nandipāla,¹¹ a potter, who always had thoughts of affection towards the young brahmin Uttara. [5] [They] untiringly delighted in seeing each other, without getting weary of it.

"Ānanda, the potter Nandipāla had taken refuge in the Bud-

ing first the father and describing the young brahmin's learning, before turning to the potter. Notably, the Tibetan version of the *Saṅghabhedavastu*, D 1 *ga* 4a2 or Q 1030 *nge* 3b4, begins instead with a detailed description of the potter and only after that turns to the brahmin youth, without mentioning his father. The Chinese *Avadāna* tale, T 197 at T IV 172c9, proceeds similarly to MĀ 63, as it first takes up the father and then the young brahmin, before mentioning the potter. In its description of the brahmin youth, T 197 at T IV 172c11 mentions that he had thirty of the thirty-two marks (of a great being), 有三十相. Lüders 1913: 883 notes a pictorial representation of the meeting between the Buddha Kassapa and the young brahmin, in which the latter is depicted as a monk endowed with *uṣṇīṣa* and *ūrṇā*, two prominent marks (*lakṣaṇa*) out of the set of thirty-two; for another representation of this meeting in Gāndhāran sculpture cf. Vogel 1954: 810.

¹⁰ [12] MĀ 63 at T I 499b1: 誦過四典經，深達因緣，正文，戲五，句，說。My translation assumes that 過 renders an equivalent to *pāragū*; 文 corresponds to *sākkhara*[*ppabheda*]; 戲五 translates an equivalent to [*iti*] *hāsapañcama* (Winternitz 1908: 260 notes that *Itihāsapurāṇa* is reckoned a fifth Veda in *Chāndogya Upaniṣad* 7.1.2); 句 corresponds to *padaka* and 說 to *veyyākaraṇa*. Notably, this description refers to four Vedas instead of the three Vedas mentioned in the standard description of a learned brahmin in Pāli discourses; cf., e.g., MN 91 at MN II 133,13.

¹¹ [13] MN 81 at MN 46,2 gives the name of the potter as Ghaṭṭikāra, as does the *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1882: 319,9. The *Saṅghabhedavastu*, Gnoli 1978a: 23,1, reads: *nandipāla ghaṭṭikāra*, with its Tibetan counterpart *rdza mkhan dga' skyong* in D 1 *ga* 4a2 or Q 1030 *nge* 3b4, a name also reflected in T 197 at T IV 172c13: 難提婆羅瓦師子。

dha, the Dharma and the community of monks, he was free from doubts in regard to these three [objects of] veneration and had no perplexity in regard to *dukkha*, its arising, its cessation and the path [leading to its cessation]. He had attained faith, was keeping the precepts, had heard much, was generous and was accomplished in wisdom.¹²

"[Ānanda, Nandipāla] abstained from killing and had abandoned killing, having discarded sword and club he had a sense of shame and fear of blame, with a mind [full of] benevolence and compassion for the welfare of all [beings], even insects. He had purified his mind with regard to killing living beings.¹³

"Ānanda, the potter Nandipāla abstained from taking what is not given and had abandoned taking what is not given, taking [only] what is given, delighting in taking what is given, always being fond of giving in generosity, rejoicing in [generosity] without stinginess, not expecting a reward. He had purified his mind with regard to taking what is not given.

"Ānanda, the potter Nandipāla abstained from sexual activity and had abandoned sexual activity, diligently cultivating the practice of celibacy, energetically [practising this] immaculate conduct with unsoiled purity, free from sensual desires, giving up sexual desires. He had purified his mind with regard to sexual activity.

¹² ^[14] MN 81 at MN II 46,5 does not describe the potter's accomplishment or his virtuous conduct at this point, a description it has instead at MN II 51,11 as part of the explanation given by the Buddha Kassapa to the king of Vārāṇasī. In the corresponding section in MĀ 63 at T I 501b11, the Buddha Kassapa repeats word for word the account of the potter's accomplishment and virtues given in the present section.

¹³ ^[15] For some comparative remarks on the standard description of virtuous conduct in *Madhyama-āgama* discourses in the light of parallel *Majjhima-nikāya* discourses cf. below page 236ff.

"Ānanda, the potter Nandipāla abstained from false speech and had abandoned false speech, he spoke the truth, delighting in truth, unshakeably established in speaking truth, being completely trustworthy, not deceiving [anyone in] the world. He had purified his mind with regard to false speech. [6]

"Ānanda, the potter Nandipāla abstained from divisive speech and had abandoned divisive speech, he engaged in speech that is not divisive, that does not harm others. He did not tell those what he had heard here, out of a wish to harm these; nor did he tell these what he had heard there, out of a wish to harm those. He had the wish to unite those who were divided, delighting in union. He did not create factions, did not delight in the [forming of] factions or praise the [forming of] factions. He had purified his mind with regard to divisive speech.

"Ānanda, the potter Nandipāla abstained from harsh speech and had abandoned harsh speech. Whatever speech there is that is rough and rude in tone, that sounds offensive and grates on the ear, that beings neither enjoy nor desire, that causes others suffering and vexation and that does not lead to calmness, he had abandoned such speech. Whatever speech there is that is clear, peaceful and gentle, that is pleasant to the ear and touching to the heart, that is enjoyable and desirable, that gives others happiness, words endowed with meaning, that do not make others afraid and that lead to calmness in others, such speech he spoke. He had purified his mind with regard to harsh speech.

"Ānanda, the potter Nandipāla abstained from frivolous speech and had abandoned frivolous speech. He spoke at the [proper] time, speaking what is true, what is Dharma, what is meaningful, what [leads to] appeasement, delighting in speaking what [leads to the] appeasement of [any] matter, and he

would teach well and admonish [others] well in accordance with the [proper] time and in a proper way. [499c] He had purified his mind with regard to frivolous speech.

"Ānanda, the potter Nandipāla abstained from earning profits and had abandoned earning profits, he had discarded weights and measures and did not accept goods [on commission], he did not bind people [with debts], he did not try to cheat with measures, nor did he deceive others for the sake of some small profit. He had purified his mind with regard to earning profits.

"Ānanda, the potter Nandipāla abstained from accepting widows or girls and had abandoned accepting widows or girls. He had purified his mind with regard to accepting widows or girls.

"Ānanda, the potter Nandipāla abstained from accepting male or female slaves and had abandoned accepting male or female slaves. He had purified his mind with regard to accepting male or female slaves.

"Ānanda, the potter Nandipāla abstained from accepting elephants, horses, cows or sheep and had abandoned accepting elephants, horses, cows or sheep. He had purified his mind with regard to accepting elephants, horses, cows or sheep.

"Ānanda, the potter Nandipāla abstained from accepting chickens or swine and had abandoned accepting chickens or swine. He had purified his mind with regard to accepting chickens or swine.

"Ānanda, the potter Nandipāla abstained from accepting farmlands or marketplaces and had abandoned accepting farmlands or marketplaces.¹⁴ He had purified his mind with regard

¹⁴ [17] MĀ 63 at T I 499c12: 店肆, which according to Hirakawa 1997: 427 can render *antarāpaṇa* or *āpaṇika*.

to accepting farmlands or marketplaces. [7]

"Ānanda, the potter Nandipāla abstained from accepting uncooked rice, wheat or legumes and had abandoned accepting uncooked rice, wheat or legumes. He had purified his mind with regard to accepting uncooked rice, wheat, or legumes.

"Ānanda, the potter Nandipāla abstained from alcoholic beverages and had abandoned alcoholic beverages. He had purified his mind with regard to drinking alcoholic beverages.

"Ānanda, the potter Nandipāla abstained from [reclining on] high and broad beds and had abandoned [reclining on] high and broad beds. He had purified his mind with regard to [reclining on] high and broad beds

"Ānanda, the potter Nandipāla abstained from [making use of] flower garlands, necklaces, perfumes and cosmetics and had abandoned [making use of] flower garlands, necklaces, perfumes and cosmetics. He had purified his mind with regard to [making use of] flower garlands, necklaces, perfumes and cosmetics

"Ānanda, the potter Nandipāla abstained from singing, dancing or acting, and from going to see or hear [singing, dancing or acting] and had abandoned singing, dancing or acting, and from going to see or hear [singing, dancing or acting]. He had purified his mind with regard to singing, dancing or acting, and from going to see or hear [singing, dancing or acting]

"Ānanda, the potter Nandipāla abstained from accepting gold, jewellery and the like and had abandoned accepting gold, jewellery and the like. He had purified his mind with regard to accepting gold, jewellery, and the like.

"Ānanda, the potter Nandipāla abstained from eating after noon and had abandoned eating after noon. He always took [only] a single meal [per day], not eating at night, training in

eating at the [proper] time. He had purified his mind with regard to eating after noon.

"Ānanda, the potter Nandipāla for his whole life abstained from taking a spade or a shovel in his hand, he did not dig the earth himself [for clay], nor tell another to do so. If water had washed out a bank so that it collapsed, or if a rat had broken up some earth, he would take that and use it to make pots. These he would put on one side and tell customers: [500a] 'If you have peas, legumes, rice, wheat, big or small hempseed, castor beans or mustard seed, pour them out [as payment] and take whichever [pot] you wish'.

"Ānanda, for his whole life the potter Nandipāla was looking after his father and mother. His father and mother were blind, they were entirely dependent on other people. This was the reason why he was looking after them.

"Ānanda, when the night was over, at dawn, the potter Nandipāla approached the Tathāgata Kassapa, free from attachment and fully awakened, and, having reached him, paid his respects and stepped back to sit to one side.

"The Tathāgata Kassapa, free from attachment and fully awakened, taught him the Dharma, exhorting, inspiring and thoroughly delighting him. Having taught him the Dharma with innumerable skilful means, having exhorted, inspired and thoroughly delighted him, [the Tathāgata Kassapa] remained silent.

"Ānanda, then, having been taught the Dharma, having been exhorted, inspired and thoroughly delighted by the Tathāgata Kassapa, free from attachment and fully awakened, the potter Nandipāla got up from his seat, paid his respects at the feet of the Tathāgata Kassapa, free from attachment and fully awakened, circumambulated him three times and left. [8]

"At that time, when the night was over, at dawn, the young

brahmin Uttara, who was riding a chariot [drawn by] white horses and in the company of five hundred young brahmins, had left the town of Vebhāṅga. He was approaching a forest spot with the intention of teaching his disciples, who had come from several different locations in order to recite brahmin hymns.¹⁵

"Then the young brahmin Uttara saw from afar that the potter Nandipāla was coming. Having seen him, he asked: 'Nandipāla, where are you coming from?'

"Nandipāla replied: 'I am coming from having paid respects to the Tathāgata Kassapa, free from attachment and fully awakened. Uttara, you could come with me to approach the Tathāgata Kassapa, free from attachment and fully awakened, to pay respects to him!'¹⁶

"Then the young brahmin Uttara replied: 'Nandipāla, I do not want to see [that] bald-headed recluse,¹⁷ [these] bald-

¹⁵ [18] MĀ 63 at T I 500a15: 令讀梵志書, literally "in order to read aloud brahmin books", where the counterpart in the *Saṅghabhedavastu*, Gnoli 1978a: 23,13 reads: *brāhmaṇakān mantrān vācayitukāmaḥ*, clarifying that oral recitation of hymns and mantras is meant. For other instances where a reference to 'books' should be similarly interpreted cf. Gombrich 1990a: 27.

¹⁶ [19] MN 81 does not report a visit paid by the potter to the Buddha Kassapa, nor does it describe how the young brahmin left town to teach his disciples. Instead, it sets in at MN II 46,5 right away with the potter asking his friend to come along to visit the Buddha Kassapa. The same is the case for the *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1882: 319,17, and the Chinese *Avadāna* tale, T 197 at T IV 172c22, whereas the *Saṅghebheda-vastu*, Gnoli 1978a: 23,2 and D 1 *ga* 4b4 or Q 1030 *nge* 4a5, reports that the potter was coming back from having paid a visit to the Buddha Kassapa.

¹⁷ [20] MĀ 63 at T I 500a21: 我不欲見禿頭沙門. The parallel versions report similar derogatory expressions used by the young brahmin at this point; cf. MN 81 at MN II 46,11; the *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1882: 320,3; the *Saṅghebheda-vastu*, Gnoli 1978a: 23,19 or D 1 *ga* 5a4 or Q 1030 *nge* 4b5; and the Chinese *Avadāna* tale, T 197 at T IV 172c23.

headed recluses will not be able to attain awakening, since awakening is to be attained [through what is] difficult.¹⁸ [9]

9. "Then the potter Nandipāla took hold of the topknot of the young brahmin Uttara, forcing him to descend from the chariot.¹⁹ Then the young brahmin Uttara had the thought: 'This potter Nandipāla never makes jokes and he is neither mad nor foolish; there must certainly be a reason why he now takes hold of my topknot.'²⁰ Having thought this, he said:

¹⁸ [21] MĀ 63 at T I 500a22: 道難得故, where judging from the counterpart in the *Saṅghabhedavastu*, Gnoli 1978a: 23,20: *bodhir hi paramaduṣkarā* and D I *ga* 5a4 or Q 1030 *nge* 4b5: *byang chub ni mchog tu dka' ba yin no*, the idea could be that awakening should be gained through asceticism. In MN 81 at MN II 46,12 the potter repeats his invitation two times, and once the young brahmin has refused these as well, they go to bathe. After bathing the potter again invites the young brahmin three times, and the latter refuses up to the third time. The *Mahāvastu* and the Chinese *Avadāna* tale proceed similarly, though they only report a single invitation after the two have taken a bath, Senart 1882: 320,19 and T 197 at T IV 172c27. The *Saṅghebhedavastu*, Gnoli 1978a: 23,23 and D I *ga* 5a7 or Q 1030 *nge* 4b8, only report the first instance with three invitations, without following this with the bathing interlude.

¹⁹ [22] MN 81 at MN II 47,12 depicts a gradual build-up of the potter's attempts to convince his friend, whom he at first takes hold off by the belt, only seizing the freshly washed hair of the young brahmin when the latter undoes his belt. The *Mahāvastu* proceeds similarly, with the difference that the first attempt does not involve the belt but rather the neck of the young brahmin, Senart 1882: 321,2. In the Chinese *Avadāna* tale, T 197 at T IV 173a1, the potter first takes hold of the clothes of his friend, then of the belt and then of the hair. The *Saṅghebhedavastu*, Gnoli 1978a: 23,32 and D I *ga* 5a7 or Q 1030 *nge* 4b8, proceeds similarly to MĀ 63, though without reporting that the potter's action forced his friend to descend from the chariot.

²⁰ [23] According to MN 81 at MN II 47,28, the young brahmin was surprised that the potter, though of inferior birth, should go so far as to seize a brahmin's freshly washed hair. The *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1882: 321,11, also reports the young brahmin reflecting on the lower birth of the potter, a point not made in the *Saṅghabhedavastu* or the Chinese *Avadāna* tale. On the implications of

'Nandipāla, I will follow you, I will follow you!' Nandipāla was delighted and added: 'To go [with me to visit the Tathāgata Kassapa] is very good.'

10. "Then the potter Nandipāla and Uttara the young brahmin together approached the Tathāgata Kassapa, free from attachment and fully awakened, and having reached him paid their respects and stepped back to sit to one side. The potter Nandipāla said to the Tathāgata Kassapa, [500b] free from attachment and fully awakened:

"Blessed One, this is my friend the young brahmin Uttara, who always looks on me with affection and untiringly delights in seeing me. [10] He has no faith and no respect in his mind for the Blessed One.²¹ May the Blessed One teach him the Dharma, arousing his delight so that he develops faith and respect in his mind.'

"Then the Tathāgata Kassapa, free from attachment and fully awakened, taught the Dharma to the potter Nandipāla and to the young brahmin Uttara, exhorting, inspiring and thoroughly delighting them. Having taught the Dharma with innumerable skilful means, having exhorted, inspired and thoroughly delighted them, he remained silent.

"Then, having been taught the Dharma from the Tathāgata Kassapa, free from attachment and fully awakened, having been exhorted, inspired and thoroughly delighted them, the potter Nandipāla and the young brahmin Uttara got up from their seats, paid their respects at the feet of the Tathāgata Kas-

taking hold of someone's hair in ancient India cf. Hara 1986.

²¹ [24] Whereas MN 81 and the *Mahāvastu* do not explicitly mention that the young brahmin had neither faith nor respect for the Buddha, the *Saṅghabhedavastu* and the Chinese *Avadāna* tale highlight that he had no faith in the Buddha, the Dharma and the Community; cf. Gnoli 1978a: 24,14 and D 1 *ga* 5b7 or Q 1030 *nge* 5a8, as well as T 197 at T IV 173a15.

sapa, free from attachment and fully awakened, circumambulated him three times and left.

11. "Then, when they had not yet gone far on their return [journey],²² the young brahmin Uttara asked: 'Nandipāla, having heard the sublime Dharma like this from the Tathāgata Kassapa, free from attachment and fully awakened, why are you intent on remaining at home, unable to leave it and train in the noble path?'

"Then the potter Nandipāla replied: 'Uttara, you know yourself that for my whole life I am looking after my father and mother, who are blind and entirely dependent on other people. It is because I am supporting and looking after my father and mother [that I cannot leave home].'

"Then the young brahmin Uttara asked Nandipāla: 'Can I obtain the going forth to train in the path under the Tathāgata Kassapa, free from attachment and fully awakened, [11] [500c] can I receive the full ordination, become a monk and practise the holy life?'

12. "Then the potter Nandipāla and the young brahmin Uttara promptly turned back from there and again approached the Tathāgata Kassapa, free from attachment and fully awakened. Having reached him, they paid their respects and stepped back to sit to one side.

"The potter Nandipāla said to the Tathāgata Kassapa, free from attachment and fully awakened: 'Blessed One, when we had not yet gone far on our return [journey], this young brahmin Uttara asked me: 'Nandipāla, having heard the sublime

²² [25] The *Saṅghabhedavastu* does not report that the two had left the presence of the Buddha Kassapa. In the *Mahāvastu*, however, they had left the presence of the Buddha, in fact after their discussion the young brahmin does not decide right away to become a monk, but only takes this decision a little later, after he has become dissatisfied with the household life, Senart 1882: 322,19.

Dharma like this from the Tathāgata Kassapa, free from attachment and fully awakened, why are you intent on remaining at home, unable to leave it and train in the noble path?'

"Blessed One, I replied: 'Uttara, you know yourself that for my whole life I have been looking after my father and mother, who are blind and entirely dependent on other people. It is because I am supporting and looking after my father and mother [that I cannot leave home]'

"Uttara asked me again: 'Can I obtain the going forth to train in the path under the Tathāgata Kassapa, free from attachment and fully awakened, can I receive the full ordination, become a monk and practise the holy life?'

"May the Blessed One let him go forth and train in the path by giving him the full ordination [so that he] becomes a monk and practises the holy life.'

"The Tathāgata Kassapa, free from attachment and fully awakened, accepted Nandipāla's [request] by remaining silent. Then Nandipāla the potter, knowing that the Tathāgata Kassapa, free from attachment and fully awakened, had accepted by remaining silent, got up from his seat, paid his respects with his head at the feet [of the Tathāgata Kassapa], circumambulated him three times and left.

"Then, soon after Nandipāla had left, the Tathāgata Kassapa, free from attachment and fully awakened, let Uttara go forth and train in the path by giving him the full ordination.

13. "[After] having [let him] go forth to train in the path and having given him the full ordination, [the Tathāgata Kassapa continued] to stay for a number of days at his discretion in the town of Vebhaliṅga. [Then] he took his robes and bowl and with a large company of monks went wandering with the intention of approaching Vārāṇasī, a town in the Kāsī country. Travelling in stages they reached Vārāṇasī, [12] a town in the

Kāsī country. In Vārāṇasī he dwelt in the Deer Park, the Place of Seers.

14.-22. ...²³

23. The Buddha said to Ānanda: "What do you think? Do you consider the young brahmin Uttara at that time as someone else? Do not think like that. You should know that I was him."²⁴

²³ [²⁶] The section of MĀ 63 not translated in the present chapter ranges from T I 500c12 to 503a3, covering approximately half of the entire discourse. Summarized in brief, MĀ 63 continues by describing how, on arrival at Vārāṇasī, the Buddha Kassapa is visited by the local king, to whom he delivers a teaching. At the end of the discourse, the king invites Kassapa and his monks for a meal the next day. The meal is prepared and served, followed by another teaching delivered by Kassapa, after which the king invites Kassapa to stay with him for the rains retreat period, promising abundant support. Kassapa does not accept the invitation. Asked by the saddened king if there is another supporter that equals him, Kassapa mentions the potter Nandipāla, explaining that the potter has full insight into the four noble truths and describing his virtuous conduct in the same way as done in the above translated section of MĀ 63. Kassapa then relates how on two former occasions he helped himself to food in the potter's house, having been invited to do so by the blind parents of Nandipāla, who was away; and how on another occasion Kassapa told his monks to remove the roofing from the potter's workshop to repair his own hut. In all these instances, Nandipāla reacted with joy and delight on finding out what had happened. Having heard this good report of Nandipāla, the king of Vārāṇasī decides to send him abundant food supplies, which the potter, however, politely declines to accept.

²⁴ [²⁷] The identification of the young brahmin as a former life of the Buddha is similarly made in MN 81 at MN II 54,18, in the *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1882: 335,5, and in the *Saṅghabhedavastu*, Gnoli 1978a: 30,14 and D I *ga* 10a4 or Q 1030 *nge* 9a7. The same is also implicit in the tale given in T 197. After providing this identification, MN 81 at MN II 54,20 concludes with Ānanda's delight in the Buddha's words, so that the remainder of MĀ 63 is without a counterpart in MN 81. The same is also the case for the other versions, which do not have a statement comparable to what comes next in MĀ 63.

"Ānanda, at that time I was benefiting myself and benefiting others, benefiting many people, [full of] compassion for the world, seeking the advantage and benefit of gods and men, seeking their peace and happiness. At that time in the Dharma that was taught [I] did not reach the ultimate, nor the ultimate purity, nor the ultimate holy life, nor the ultimate completion of the holy life.²⁵ At that time [I] was not able to abandon birth, [13] old age, disease and death, sorrow and grief, sadness and lamentation, [I] was not able to completely overcome *dukkha*.

"Ānanda, now I have appeared in the world [as] a Tathāgata, free from attachment, fully awakened, endowed with knowledge and conduct, well gone, knower of the worlds, an unsurpassable person, charioteer of the path of Dharma,²⁶ a teacher of gods and men, called a Buddha, an Assembly of Blessings.²⁷ Now I am benefiting myself and benefiting others,

²⁵ [28] The original actually reads as if the Dharma itself were not conducive to reaching liberation. Thus my supplementation of "[I]" is made in an attempt to make sense out of this passage, which forms a standard pericope in the *Madhyama-āgama* for past lives of the Buddha spent in a way that was not conducive to awakening. This pericope does not fit the present case, as the Dharma taught by a former Buddha would have been conducive to reaching liberation.

²⁶ [29] MĀ 63 at T I 503a12: 無上士, 道法御. Nattier 2003b: 227 explains that "having taken *anuttarapuruṣa* as a separate title ... translators were left to explain the epithet *damyasārathi* on its own. In ... Prakrit languages ... *damyā* would have been written *damma* ... Ignoring the unaspirated character of the initial *d-*, this word was apparently read as *dhamma*, and the resulting **dhammasārathi* interpreted as 'charioteer of the Dharma'; cf. also Min Chau 1991: 326.

²⁷ [30] MĀ 63 at T I 503a12: 眾祐. Counterparts to this listing of epithets in Pāli discourses have *bhagavant* at this juncture; cf., e.g., DN 2 at DN I 49,19. Nattier 2003b: 231 explains that, in its usage by early translators, "眾祐, 'mass of blessings', [is] a rendition which conveys quite well the etymology of the term, which consists of *bhaga* 'blessing, good fortune' plus the suffix *-vat* 'possessing'". In *Madhyama-āgama* discourses, the standard counterpart to

benefiting many people, [full of] compassion for the world, seeking the advantage and benefit of gods and men, seeking their peace and happiness. Now I teach a Dharma that reaches the ultimate, the ultimate purity, the ultimate holy life, the ultimate completion of the holy life. Now I have abandoned birth, old age, disease and death, sorrow and grief, sadness and lamentation, I have already completely overcome *dukkha*."

The Buddha spoke like this. The venerable Ānanda and the monks, having listened to what the Buddha said, were delighted and received it respectfully.

Study

In a monograph on the genesis of the bodhisattva ideal I already studied several aspects of the various versions of the present discourse that do not fit too well with the identification of the young brahmin as a former life of the Buddha,²⁸ making it quite possible that this identification is a later element, in line with what appears to be a general tendency of parables becoming *jātakas*.

In the *Ghaṭṭikāra-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel this

bhagavant is 世尊. A perusal of the *Madhyama-āgama* gives the distinct impression that Gautama Saṅghadeva aimed at consistency in his translation terminology, unlike other *Āgama* translators. Hence one would not expect him to use 眾祐 if the source text had the same term that he elsewhere rendered as 世尊. According to Hirakawa 1997: 1042, 眾祐 can render *bhagavat* or else *lokanātha*. In the four Pāli *Nikāyas*, the term *lokanātha* seems not to occur, being found only in the *Theragāthā* and *Therīgāthā*, Th 921, Thī 229 and Thī 307f. According to von Hinüber 1996/1997: 53, "both collections have been growing over a long period"; cf. also Norman 1983: 73f. Another occurrence can be found in the *Vatthugāthā* of the *Pārāyanavagga*, Sn 995, a section of the *Sutta-nipāta* that appears to be a later addition to this chapter; cf. Jayawickrama 1948: 243–249 and Norman 1983: 69. Thus *lokanātha* does not seem to be part of the earliest layer of Pāli canonical texts.

²⁸ Cf. above note 1.

young brahmin in fact plays a secondary role, as the main emphasis of the tale is on the potter and his relationship with the former Buddha Kassapa.²⁹ The central purpose of the *Ghaṭṭikāra-sutta* thus appears to be to depict the ideal layman, who fulfils his filial duty by supporting his blind parents and at the same time lives a life of such high ethical standard that it corresponds as closely as possible to the life of a monastic. Besides being endowed with the insight of a disciple in higher training, the potter undertakes his livelihood in a way that – by avoiding the harm caused to creatures through digging the ground and by abstaining from selling his products – conforms to the conduct usually only incumbent on and compatible with the life of a monastic. [25]

The assumption that the present tale only became a *jātaka* some time after its original delivery finds further support in the circumstance that a shift of emphasis from the potter to the young brahmin can be observed with the different versions, thereby expressing the increasing interest in the latter protagonist as a stage in the bodhisattva career of the Buddha.

Whereas in the Pāli discourse the actual tale begins with the potter, the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse instead turns first to the young brahmin, offering a rather detailed description that mentions his father and depicts the learning of the young brahmin. While the *Ghaṭṭikāra-sutta* only notes that the young brahmin is a friend of the potter, the *Madhyama-āgama* account introduces him as the son of an immensely wealthy brahmin, of pure descent, accomplished in all those qualities that make a brahmin worthy of respect (such as mastery of the Vedas, etc.) and the teacher of a sizeable group of students. [26]

²⁹ [57] Oldenberg 1912: 189: "auch ist die Erzählung vielmehr der Verherrlichung des Ghaṭṭikāra und seiner frommen Intimität mit dem Buddha jenes Weltalters gewidmet, als der Jotipālas".

This shift of emphasis also finds its expression in the title of the discourse. While the Pāli version is named after the potter, the *Madhyama-āgama* account takes the village where the potter and the young brahmin lived as its title, and in the *Mahāvastu* the tale is then named after the young brahmin.³⁰

The *Mahāvastu* in fact develops the theme of the young brahmin as a former life of the Buddha further, reporting how he formed the aspiration to become a Buddha himself.³¹ Through his telepathic powers the Buddha Kassapa became aware of this aspiration and predicted that the young brahmin was destined to become a Buddha in the future and to set rolling the wheel of the Dharma at the Deer Park at Vārāṇasī.

Pursuing the same theme in a different mode, the Chinese *Avadāna* tale reports how, on meeting the Buddha Kassapa, the young brahmin recognized that the Buddha Kassapa had thirty of the marks of a superior being, and thereon requested to be shown the other two.³² On ascertaining that the Buddha Kassapa had all thirty-two marks, the young brahmin was filled with faith, whereon the Buddha Kassapa delivered a description of the conduct of a bodhisattva. On hearing this description, the young brahmin confessed that he had not kept up this conduct.

With these episodes, the shift of emphasis from the tale of the potter to the young brahmin as a step in the bodhisattva career of the future Buddha Gotama becomes ever more evident.

The same tendency can even be found elsewhere in the Pāli canon, where the *Kathāvatthu* attributes a statement to the *Ghaṭṭi-*

³⁰ [67] Senart 1882: 335,8: *jyotipāla-sūtra*.

³¹ [68] Senart 1882: 330,1.

³² [69] T 197 at T IV 173a19, an account in several respects similar to standard descriptions in the Pāli discourses of how brahmins would ascertain the nature of the Buddha; cf., e.g., MN 91 at MN II 143,1 and its parallel MĀ 161 at T I 688b17.

kāra-sutta that is not found in the discourse itself. According to this statement, the Buddha told Ānanda that he lived the monk's life under the Buddha Kassapa for the sake of his future awakening.³³ [27] In spite of the young brahmin being identified as a former life of the Buddha, the discourse versions do not present his deeds and activities as something undertaken on purpose to promote his progress to Buddhahood.³⁴

In this way, the present discourse testifies to the influence of the evolving bodhisattva conception, whereby the didactic function of the potter as an exemplary lay disciple is increasingly overshadowed by emphasis given to his companion as a former life of the bodhisattva.

³³ [70] Kv 288,34: *kassape ahaṃ, ānanda, bhagavati brahmacariyaṃ acarim āyatim sambodhāya*. A remark similar to the quotation in Kv, although made by Mahāmaudgalyāyana, can be found in the *Saṅghabhedavastu* in Gnoli 1977: 20,17, according to which the *bodhisattva* lived the holy life under the former Buddha Kāśyapa with the aspiration to reach awakening in the future, *kāśyapo nāma ... buddho bhagavān, yasya antike bodhisattvo bhagavān āyatyāṃ bodhāya prañidhāya brahmacariyaṃ caritvā*.

³⁴ [71] In relation to other canonical *jātakas*, Gokuldas 1951: 10 notes that a "significant feature in the early Nikāyas ... lies in the recognition of these births as great kings or sages without ... the implication that these births formed some links in the chain of Bodhisatta evolution".

Bāhitika-sutta (MN 88)

Introduction

The present chapter studies the *Bāhitika-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, which record an inquiry into the ethical conduct of the Buddha, delineating what type of action the Buddha would undertake and what he would not do.

In the thought world of early Buddhism, the Buddha embodies the ideal of ethical perfection. A living example for his early disciples and an inspiring memory for later generations, descriptions of the Buddha's conduct exemplify the ethical standards aspired to and emulated by his followers. The *Bāhitika-sutta* takes up this theme in a rather direct manner, as its main topic is to scrutinize if the Buddha was indeed an embodiment of ethical perfection.

According to the information provided in the Pāli commentary, the *Bāhitika-sutta* takes its occasion from an inquiry by King Pasenadi into rather serious allegations against the Buddha's ethical purity, allegations related to an incident that involved the female wanderer Sundarī.¹ A discourse in the *Udāna* reports this incident in detail, indicating that in order to discredit the Buddha other wanderers had asked the female wanderer Sundarī to frequently visit Jeta's Grove. When her visits had become public knowledge, these wanderers killed Sundarī and buried her in Jeta's Grove.

Once her body was discovered, the wanderers went around town accusing the Buddhist monks of having taken their pleasure

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¹ Ps III 346,16: *sundarivatthusmiṃ uppannam*.

with Sundarī and then killed her.² [155] People believed this defaming report and started to revile the monks. The Buddha thereon instructed the monks to react to such abuse with a stanza on the bad destiny of those who make false allegations or deny a misdeed they have done. This served its purpose and convinced people of the innocence of the Buddhist monks.

An account of the same incident in the commentary to the *Dhammapada* differs in so far as here the attempt at defamation is more directly aimed at the Buddha.³ According to the *Dhammapada* commentary, on coming from Jeta's Grove Sundarī had told people that she had spent the night with the Buddha. Thus the rumour spread by the wanderers was that the Buddha's disciples murdered her in order to cover up the Buddha's misconduct. This account fits the *Bāhitika-sutta* better, as its inquiry is concerned with the moral integrity of the Buddha himself.⁴

Whether the defamation was directed against the Buddha or against his monk disciples, the Sundarī incident appears to have been a famous tale known among generations of Buddhists, in fact the Chinese pilgrim Fāxiān (法顯), who travelled India in the early fifth century, even refers to the place where she was believed to have been buried.⁵ [156]

² Ud 4.8 at Ud 43,22 to 45,31.

³ DhP-a III 474,3; cf. also Jā 285 at Jā II 415,12.

⁴ A version of this incident found in the Chinese counterpart to the *Aṭṭhakavagga* (serving as the introductory narration to its version of the *Duṭṭhaṭṭhaka-sutta*, Sn 780–787, whose Pāli commentary, Pj II 518,23, also narrates the Sundarī tale) agrees with the *Dhammapada* commentary that the purpose of the plot was to bring the Buddha into disrepute; cf. T 198 at T IV 176c3, translated in Bapat 1945: 156–158.

⁵ T 2085 at T LI 860c17; for further references cf. Deeg 2005: 307–308.

Translation

Discourse on the *Bāhitikā* Cloth⁶

1. Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was dwelling at Sāvattthī, staying in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park.

2. At that time, the venerable Ānanda was [also] staying in Sāvattthī and [had gone to] the Eastern Park, the Mansion of Migāra's mother, for some small matter.

At that time the venerable Ānanda, who had left Sāvattthī together with another monk and gone to the Eastern Park, the Mansion of Migāra's mother, after settling that matter was returning with that monk towards Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park.⁷

3. At that time Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, who was riding the elephant Ekaṇḍarika,⁸ had gone out of Sāvattthī to-

⁶ [9] The translated text is MĀ 214 at T I 797c7 to 799b25; for a comparative study cf. Anālayo 2011a: 505–510. MĀ 214 at T I 797c7 gives the title as 鞞訶提經. The corresponding title *Bāhitika-sutta* (S^e reads *Bāhitiya-sutta*) in MN 88 refers to the cloth that Pasenadi offers Ānanda at the end of the discourse, which according to the Pāli commentary, Ps III 347,13, was called *bāhitikā* because it came from a foreign country, *bāhitiraṭṭha*. Rhys Davids 1912/1993: 486 s.v. *bāhitikā* instead derives *bāhitikā* from *bāheti*, "to ward off," and suggests it to refer to a mantle or wrapper that "keeps out" the cold or the wind. Yet, in both discourses the *bāhitikā* is of considerable size, measuring sixteen spans by eight. A cloth of such a size would be too large to serve as a mantle or wrapper. The same size would, however, be suitable for making three robes, for which purpose according to both versions Pasenadi presented it to Ānanda. Thus the commentarial explanation seems preferable in the sense that *bāhitikā* stands for a "foreign cloth".

⁷ [10] In MN 88 at MN II 112,12 Ānanda appears to [be] alone, has just finished his meal and is on his way to the Eastern Park for his daily abiding [in meditation].

⁸ [11] MĀ 214 at T I 797c14: 一奔陀利, which according to the Taishō edition corresponds to Ekaṇḍarika. The same elephant recurs in two Chinese parallels to the *Piyajātika-sutta*, MĀ 216 at T I 801c19 and T 91 at T I 915c25. The

gether with the minister Sirivaḍḍha.⁹ The venerable Ānanda saw from afar that Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, was coming. He asked his monk companion: "Is that Pasenadi, the king of Kosala?" [The other monk] answered: "That is so." The venerable Ānanda then went down from the path to the foot of a tree. Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, saw from afar the venerable Ānanda among the trees. He asked: "Sirivaḍḍha, is that the recluse Ānanda?" Sirivaḍḍha replied: "That is so."

4-5. Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, told the minister Sirivaḍḍha: "Drive this elephant towards the recluse Ānanda!" Having received the king's instruction, Sirivaḍḍha drove the elephant towards the venerable Ānanda. [157]

6. Then Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, said: "Ānanda, where are you coming from and where do you wish to go?" The venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, I am coming from the Eastern Park, the Mansion of Migāra's mother, and I intend to go to Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park." Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, said: "Ānanda, out of compassion, if you have no urgent business in Jeta's Grove, we could go together to the river Aciravatī."

7. The venerable Ānanda accepted [the invitation] by Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, by remaining silent. Then Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, letting the venerable Ānanda [walk] in

Piyajātika-sutta itself, MN 87 at MN II 111, however, does not mention the elephant.

⁹ [12] MĀ 214 at T I 797c14: 尸利阿荼, which Akanuma 1930/1994: 622 identifies as a rendering of Sirivaḍḍha. In this case, too, the *Piyajātika-sutta* parallel MĀ 216 at T I 801c19 refers to him, whereas he is not mentioned in the *Piyajātika-sutta* itself. The other *Piyajātika-sutta* parallel, T 91 at T I 915c25, refers to this minister with the different rendering 賢首. In the four Pāli *Nikāyas*, the name Sirivaḍḍha recurs in SN 47.29 at SN V 176,14 as the name of a sick householder visited by Ānanda.

front, [798a] approached the bank of the river Aciravatī together [with the venerable Ānanda]. Having arrived he dismounted, took the elephant's rug, folded it in four, placed it on the ground and invited the venerable Ānanda: "Ānanda, you may sit on this seat." The venerable Ānanda replied: "Stop, stop, great king, just your intention suffices [to put me] at ease."

Three times Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, invited the venerable Ānanda: "Ānanda, you may sit on this seat." Three times the venerable Ānanda said: "Stop, stop, great king, just your intention suffices [to put me] at ease." [He added]: "I have my own sitting mat, I shall now sit on it." Thereupon the venerable Ānanda placed his sitting mat [on the ground] and sat down cross-legged.

8. After exchanging greetings with venerable Ānanda, Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, stepped back to sit to one side and said: "Ānanda, I would like to ask a question, will you listen to my question?" The venerable Ānanda said: "Great king, ask what you wish to ask. Having heard it, I will consider it."¹⁰

Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, would the Tathāgata undertake a type of bodily conduct [of such kind] that this bodily conduct would be detested by recluses and brahmins?" [158]

The venerable Ānanda answered: "Great king, the Tathāgata does not undertake a type of bodily conduct [of such kind] that this bodily conduct would be detested by recluses and brahmins who are intelligent and wise, as well as by others in the world [who are intelligent and wise]."

9. Having heard this, Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, approvingly said: "Well done, well done, Ānanda. [What] my [ques-

¹⁰ [14] Following the variant reading 聞 instead of 問.

tion] did not touch on, namely if they are intelligent and wise, as well as if others in the world [who are intelligent and wise would similarly detest it], Ānanda has touched on.¹¹ Ānanda, if there are unworthy ones who thoroughly criticize or praise, we do not see that as true. Ānanda, if there are worthy ones who thoroughly criticize or praise, we see that as true.¹²

"Ānanda, would the Tathāgata undertake such a type of bodily conduct that this bodily conduct would be detested by recluses and brahmins who are intelligent and wise, as well as by others in the world [who are intelligent and wise]?"

The venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, the Tathāgata does not at all undertake a bodily conduct of such a type that this bodily conduct would be detested by recluses and brah-

¹¹ [¹⁵] The king's appreciation appears to be due to the finer distinction introduced by Ānanda at this point, in that he speaks of censure by "intelligent and wise" recluses and brahmins, thereby making it clear that the point at stake is justified criticism, not the type of unjustified criticism that might be levied at the Buddha by recluses and brahmins who are not intelligent and wise. This finer distinction is also reflected in the Burmese and Ceylonese editions (B^e and C^e), where the king's inquiry similarly mentions only censure by "recluses and brahmins," whereas Ānanda replies by speaking of "wise recluses and brahmins," *samaṇehi brāhmaṇehi viññūhi*. In the PTS and Siamese editions (E^e and S^e), however, the king uses the qualification *viññūhi* already in his question, so that in these versions the reply given by Ānanda does not introduce anything new. This may be due to an error in transmission, since otherwise there would be no reason for the king to express his appreciation for Ānanda's ability to accomplish something with his answer that the king had not accomplished with his question, MN II 114,7: *yaṃ hi mayaṃ, bhante, nāsakkhimha pañhena paripūretuṃ taṃ, bhante, āyasmatā ānandena pañhasa veyyākaraṇena paripūritaṃ*.

¹² [¹⁶] My rendering of this somewhat cryptic passage is oriented on the corresponding passage in MN 88 at MN II 114,10, where King Pasenadi contrasts praise and blame spoken by fools without prior investigation to that of the wise, who will properly investigate a matter before forming an opinion.

mins who are intelligent and wise, as well as by others in the world [who are intelligent and wise]."

10-12. Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, what [kind of] bodily conduct is [that]?" The venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, unwholesome bodily conduct!"

Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, what is unwholesome bodily conduct?" [159] The venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, bodily conduct that constitutes an offence!"

Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, what is bodily conduct that constitutes an offence?" The venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, undertaking bodily conduct that is detested by the wise!" [798b]

Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, what do the wise detest?" The venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, that is, undertaking bodily conduct that harms oneself, harms others, harms both; that destroys wisdom and fosters evil; that does not [lead to] attaining Nirvāṇa, does not lead to knowledge, does not lead to awakening and does not lead to Nirvāṇa.

"Those [who undertake such conduct] do not know as it really is what things should be undertaken and do not know as it really is what things should not be undertaken. Not knowing as it really is what things should be undertaken and not knowing as it really is what things should not be undertaken, they do not know as it really is what things should be accepted and do not know as it really is what things should not be accepted. Not knowing as it really is what things should be accepted and not knowing as it really is what things should not be accepted, they do not know as it really is what things should be eliminated and do not know as it really is what things should not be eliminated. Not knowing as it really is what things should be eliminated and not knowing as it really is what things should not be eliminated, they do not know as it really is what things

should be accomplished and do not know as it really is what things should not be accomplished. [160]

"Not knowing as it really is what things should be accomplished and not knowing as it really is what things should not be accomplished, they do not undertake things that should be undertaken and undertake things that should not be undertaken. Not undertaking things that should be undertaken and undertaking things that should not be undertaken, they do not accept things that should be accepted and accept things that should not be accepted. Not accepting things that should be accepted and accepting things that should not be accepted, they do not eliminate things that should be eliminated and eliminate things that should not be eliminated. Not eliminating things that should be eliminated and eliminating things that should not be eliminated, they do not accomplish things that should be accomplished and accomplish things that should not be accomplished. Not accomplishing things that should be accomplished and accomplishing things that should not be accomplished, unwholesome states increase, wholesome states decrease. For this reason the Tathāgata does not undertake such things at all."

13. Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, for what reason does the Tathāgata not undertake such things at all?"

The venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, free from sensual desire, sensual desire being extinguished, free from hate, hate being extinguished, free from delusion, delusion being extinguished, the Tathāgata has eliminated all unwholesome states and accomplished all wholesome states. He is the edifying teacher, the sublime teacher, the skilful and well-disposed teacher, the leading charioteer, the well-disposed charioteer, [who uses] skilful words, sublime words, skilful and well-dis-

posed words.¹³ For this reason the Tathāgata does not undertake such things at all." [161]

Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, approvingly said: "Well done, well done, Ānanda, the Tathāgata does not at all undertake things that should not be undertaken. Why? Because he is a Tathāgata, free from attachment, rightly and fully awakened. Ānanda, you are that teacher's disciple practising the path with the wish to attain the unsurpassable peace of Nirvāṇa. Even you would not undertake such things, [798c] how then could the Tathāgata undertake such things?"¹⁴

14-16. Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, would the Tathāgata undertake a type of bodily conduct [of such kind] that this bodily conduct will not be detested by recluses and brahmins who are intelligent and wise, as well as by others in the world [who are intelligent and wise]?"

The venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, the Tathāgata certainly undertakes a bodily conduct of such type that this bodily conduct will not be detested by recluses and brahmins who are intelligent and wise, as well as by others in the world [who are intelligent and wise]."

Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, what [kind of] bodily conduct is [that]?" The venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, wholesome bodily conduct!"

Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, what is wholesome bodily conduct?" The venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, bodily conduct that constitutes no offence!"

Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, what is bodily conduct that constitutes no offence?" [162] The venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, undertaking bodily conduct that

¹³ [17] Such a listing of the Buddha's qualities is not found in MN 88.

¹⁴ [18] This line of reasoning of the king is not reported in MN 88.

is not detested by the wise!"

Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, what do the wise not detest?" The venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, undertaking bodily conduct that does not harm oneself, does not harm others, does not harm both; that [leads to] awakening wisdom and does not foster evil; that [leads to] attaining Nirvāṇa, leads to knowledge, leads to awakening and leads to Nirvāṇa.

"Those [who undertake such conduct] know as it really is what things should be undertaken and know as it really is what things should not be undertaken. Knowing as it really is what things should be undertaken and knowing as it really is what things should not be undertaken, they know as it really is what things should be accepted and know as it really is what things should not be accepted. Knowing as it really is what things should be accepted and knowing as it really is what things should not be accepted, they know as it really is what things should be eliminated and know as it really is what things should not be eliminated. Knowing as it really is what things should be eliminated and knowing as it really is what things should not be eliminated, they know as it really is what things should be accomplished and know as it really is what things should not be accomplished.

"Knowing as it really is what things should be accomplished and knowing as it really is what things should not be accomplished, they undertake things that should be undertaken and do not undertake things that should not be undertaken. Undertaking things that should be undertaken and not undertaking things that should not be undertaken, they accept things that should be accepted and do not accept things that should not be accepted. [163] Accepting things that should be accepted and not accepting things that should not be accepted,

they eliminate things that should be eliminated and do not eliminate things that should not be eliminated. Eliminating things that should be eliminated and not eliminating things that should not be eliminated, they accomplish things that should be accomplished and do not accomplish things that should not be accomplished. Accomplishing things that should be accomplished and not accomplishing things that should not be accomplished, [799a] unwholesome states decrease, wholesome states increase. For this reason the Tathāgata certainly undertakes such things."

17. Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, asked: "Ānanda, for what reason does the Tathāgata certainly undertake such things?"

The venerable Ānanda replied: "Great king, free from sensual desire, sensual desire being extinguished, free from hate, hate being extinguished, free from delusion, delusion being extinguished, the Tathāgata has accomplished all wholesome states and eliminated all unwholesome states. He is the edifying teacher, the sublime teacher, the skilful and well-disposed teacher, the leading charioteer, the well-disposed charioteer, [who uses] skilful words, sublime words, skilful and well-disposed words. For that reason the Tathāgata certainly undertakes such things."

Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, approvingly said: "Well done, well done, Ānanda, the Tathāgata certainly undertakes things that should be undertaken. Why? Because he is a Tathāgata, free from attachment, rightly and fully awakened. Ānanda, you are that teacher's disciple, practising the path with the wish to attain the unsurpassable peace of Nirvāṇa. [164] Even you will undertake such things, how then could the Tathāgata not undertake such things?"

18. "Ānanda has spoken well and now I am pleased, Ānanda has spoken aptly and I am extremely pleased. If Ānanda

[for his] teaching could accept the income of a village, I would give him the income of a village as a gift for his teaching. Ānanda, if [for his] teaching Ānanda could accept an elephant, a horse, an ox, a sheep, I would give him an elephant, a horse, an ox, a sheep as a gift for his teaching.¹⁵ Ānanda, if [for his] teaching Ānanda could accept a woman or a girl, I would give him a woman or a girl as a gift for his teaching. Ānanda, if [for his] teaching Ānanda could accept gold or jewellery, I would give him gold or jewellery as a gift [for his] teaching. [Yet], Ānanda, all such things Ānanda cannot accept.

"There is one cloth in my Kosala clan called *bāhitikā*, that is supreme. A king sent it [to me] contained within the shaft of a parasol as a token of trust.¹⁶ Ānanda, out of all cotton cloths in the Kosala clan, this *bāhitikā* is the supreme of all those cloths.¹⁷ Why? This *bāhitikā* cloth is sixteen span long and eight wide. This *bāhitikā* cloth I now give as a gift to Ānanda for his teaching. Ānanda can make a triple robe [out of it]. Accept it, so that the Kosala clan will for a long time increase in merit."

The venerable Ānanda said: "Stop, stop, great king, just your intention suffices [to put me] at ease. I myself have a triple robe, that has been accepted by me."

19. Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, said: "Ānanda, let me deliver a simile, on hearing a simile the wise will understand its

¹⁵ [¹⁹] In MN 88 at MN II 116,22 King Pasenadi speaks of offering Ānanda an elephant-treasure, *hatthiratana*, or a horse-treasure, *assaratana*, in addition to referring to the gift of a village.

¹⁶ [²⁰] The corresponding passage in MN 88 at MN II 116,29 indicates that King Ajātasattu had sent the cloth packed in the shaft of a parasol, *rañño māgadhena ajātasattunā vedehiputtana chattanāliyā pakkhipitvā pahitā*.

¹⁷ [²¹] A comparable statement that the *bāhitikā* is supreme is not found in MN 88.

meaning.¹⁸ Just as at the time of a great rain this river Aciravaṭī is full of water, overflowing both banks. Has Ānanda seen this?" [165] The venerable Ānanda replied: "I have seen it."¹⁹

Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, said: [799b] "In the same way, Ānanda, the three robes you have, you may give to [another] monk or nun, or to a male or female novice in training. Therefore, Ānanda, with this *bāhitikā* cloth make a triple robe, accept it, so that the Kosala clan will for a long time increase in merit."

20. The venerable Ānanda accepted [the invitation] by Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, by remaining silent. Then Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, knowing that the venerable Ānanda had accepted [by remaining] silent, gave the *bāhitikā* cloth to the venerable Ānanda as a gift for the teaching, got up from his seat, circumambulated [Ānanda] three times and left.²⁰

21. Not long after [the king] had left, the venerable Ānanda took the *bāhitikā* cloth and went to the Buddha, paid respects

¹⁸ [22] This introductory statement on the purpose of a simile being to lead the wise to an understanding, though not found in MN 88, is a recurrent pericope in the Pāli discourses, where it is mostly employed by monks to introduce a simile. In SN 41.1 at SN IV 282,30, however, the same introductory statement is also used by a householder who is about to deliver a simile to a group of monks. In this particular case, such a type of statement is absent from the parallel SĀ 572 at T II 152a14.

¹⁹ [23] The overflowing of the Aciravaṭī river appears to have been proverbial; cf., e.g., its occurrence in a simile in DN 13 at DN I 244,13 and its parallel DĀ 26 at T I 106a5. According to the *Dhammapada* commentary, Dh-p-a I 360,8, after a great rain a whole army that had camped on the banks of the Aciravaṭī was swept away by this river.

²⁰ [24] The threefold circumambulation is a recurrent pericope in *Madhyama-āgama* discourses. While not regularly employed in the Pāli discourses, a similar description can be found in DN 16 at DN II 163,27, where Mahākasapa performs three circumambulations of the Buddha's funeral pyre.

at the Buddha's feet, stepped back to stand to one side and said: "Blessed One, this *bāhitikā* cloth was given to me today by Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, as a gift for my teachings. May the Blessed One place his two feet on the *bāhitikā* cloth, so that the Kosala clan will for a long time increase in merit."²¹

Then the Blessed One placed his two feet on the *bāhitikā* cloth and said: "Ānanda, you may now tell me the whole conversation you had with Pasenadi, the king of Kosala."

Then the venerable Ānanda told the Buddha the entire conversation he had with Pasenadi, the king of Kosala. Holding his hands together [in homage] he said: "In speaking like this, did I not misrepresent the Blessed One? Did I speak truly in accordance with the Dharma, did I teach the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma, so that there is no censure in accordance with the Dharma?" [166]

21. The Blessed One answered: "Speaking like this you did not misrepresent me, you spoke truly in accordance with the Dharma, you taught the Dharma in accordance with the Dharma and there is no censure in accordance with the Dharma. Ānanda, if Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, had come to ask me about this matter in these phrases and words, I would have answered Pasenadi, the king of Kosala, about this matter in these phrases and words.²² Ānanda, you should keep in mind this matter, [just] as you spoke it. Why? This exposition [by you] is exactly [the way to explain] this matter."

The Buddha spoke like this. The venerable Ānanda and the

²¹ [25] In MN 88 at MN II 117,22 Ānanda offers the cloth to the Buddha, *bāhitikāṃ bhagavato pādāsi*.

²² [26] In the corresponding section in MN 88 at MN II 117,24, the question of a possible misrepresentation of the Buddha does not arise. Instead, the Buddha highlights the great gain of the king, as he had been able to meet and pay his respects to Ānanda.

other monks, having listened to what the Buddha said, were delighted and received it respectfully.

Study

The introductory narration in the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse differs in several respects from the Pāli version of the *Bāhitika-sutta*. In both versions King Pasenadi asks his minister if the monk they see in the distance is Ānanda. In the *Madhyama-āgama* account, Ānanda in a similar way inquires from his companion monk if the person they see riding an elephant is the king of the country, an inquiry not found in the *Majjhima-nikāya* discourse.

When evaluating this difference, it seems that whereas someone not well acquainted with the Buddhist monastic community might indeed be in doubt if the monk he sees at a distance is Ānanda, it is difficult to imagine that anyone could be uncertain of the identity of the king of the country. Even if Ānanda had never met King Pasenadi, the very fact that the person he sees is riding an elephant and would be wearing the emblems of a king (such as turban, chauri, royal umbrella, etc.) should make it self-evident that this is the king of the country.²³ [167] Hence the additional inquiry found in the *Madhyama-āgama* does not fit the situation well and could be an attempt to counterbalance the loss

²³ [27] According to the report given by Megasthenes, McCrindle 1877: 90, in ancient India "a private person is not allowed to keep ... an elephant. These animals are held to be the special property of the king." A relief on a pillar of the Bharhut Stūpa, reproduced in Cunningham 1879 plate 13 (described on p. 91), shows Pasenadi in a chariot attended by three servants, one of whom holds an umbrella over the king while the other holds a chauri (fly whisk). Though in this instance Pasenadi rides a chariot and not an elephant, this relief gives some idea of the pomp with which an ancient Indian king like Pasenadi would set out. Thus for someone who meets Pasenadi out on the road it should be relatively easy to realize that the person he sees is the king of the country.

of status incurred by Ānanda through not being immediately recognized by Pasenadi.

The two versions' description of events does in fact exhibit a recurring tendency to enhance Ānanda's status. Thus, according to the *Madhyama-āgama* account, King Pasenadi simply rides on his elephant close to Ānanda and in polite terms requests a meeting on the bank of the nearby river. In doing so, according to the *Madhyama-āgama* account he directly addresses Ānanda by his name, without using the respectful address *bhante* he employs in the *Majjhima-nikāya* version. According to the *Majjhima-nikāya* discourse, however, he first sends an envoy to convey the message to Ānanda that Pasenadi pays homage to him and asks him to wait a moment.²⁴ Then Pasenadi comes close on his elephant, dismounts and approaches Ānanda on foot, pays homage and politely asks for a meeting on the bank of the river nearby. Then Pasenadi remounts his elephant to approach the riverbank, where he gets down again from the elephant and again pays homage to Ānanda. This procedure seems rather complicated for the simple task of meeting a monk and may also be an attempt to enhance the status of Ānanda by showing the complicated etiquette employed by the king of the country. The way Pasenadi acts in the *Madhyama-āgama* account appears more realistic in comparison.

The two versions agree that on reaching the riverbank Pasenadi offers his elephant rug to Ānanda, which the latter declines to use. According to the *Madhyama-āgama* version, Pasenadi repeats this offer three times and Ānanda consequently refuses three times. While in the *Majjhima-nikāya* version King Pasenadi simply poses his question, [168] according to the *Madhyama-āgama* account he first asks permission to pose a question. Though the latter is a standard pericope in *Madhyama-āgama* discourses, the

²⁴ [28] MN 88 at MN II 112,20.

tendency to enhance the respectful behaviour shown by King Pasenadi towards Ānanda seems to have influenced the introductory narration in both versions, albeit in different ways.

This tendency may well be related to the nature of the inquiry King Pasenadi is about to make. According to an indication given in the *Saṅgīti-sutta* and its Sanskrit parallel, the Buddha's ethical purity was such that he had no need to hide any of his actions out of fear that others might come to know about them.²⁵ In view of this it is perhaps not surprising that the reciters were uncomfortable with the king of the country inquiring whether the Buddha had something to hide. This would explain why they are at pains to show that King Pasenadi did not exhibit any disrespect to Ānanda, even though his mission was to inquire into the moral integrity of Ānanda's teacher, the Buddha.

In both versions, King Pasenadi carries out his inquiry in a quite straightforward manner, as he keeps on putting into question all the indications given by Ānanda until they reach the basic definition of what makes a deed unwholesome. As illustrated in table 7 below, in the *Majjhima-nikāya* version this line of inquiry proceeds from qualifying conduct as unwholesome – via its nature of being blameworthy and afflictive – to the basic definition that such conduct causes affliction either to oneself, or to others, or to both, and thus leads to an increase in unwholesomeness and a decrease in what is wholesome. In the *Madhyama-āgama* version this inquiry proceeds from qualifying conduct as unwholesome – via it being an offence and detested by the wise – to the definition that it harms oneself, [169] or others, or both, and thus obstructs wisdom.

²⁵ [29] DN 33 at DN III 217,8 and the parallel Sanskrit fragments in Stache-Rosen 1968: 78f; cf. also the *Saṅgītiparyāya*, T 1536 at T XXVI 381c19, and the *Mahāvvyutpatti* §12, Sakaki 1926: 17.

Table 7: The Definition of Unwholesomeness

MN 88	MĀ 214
unwholesome	unwholesome
↓	↓
blameworthy	constitutes an offence
↓	↓
afflictive	detested by the wise
↓	↓
afflicts oneself and/or other	harms oneself and/or other

The agreement between the Pāli and Chinese versions on the basic aspects of the definition of the nature of unwholesomeness throws into relief a fundamental principle of early Buddhist ethics. This agreement is noteworthy since otherwise the two versions show considerable variations.

While the *Madhyama-āgama* version inquires only into bodily conduct, the *Majjhima-nikāya* parallel also undertakes a similar inquiry into verbal and mental conduct. The *Madhyama-āgama* discourse also differs from the *Majjhima-nikāya* account in that it has a more detailed coverage of the results of unwholesome deeds. Where the Pāli version briefly refers to an increase in unwholesomeness and a decrease in wholesomeness, the Chinese version brings up the topic of attaining Nirvāṇa and then continues with a long exposition on not knowing as it really is what things should be undertaken and what things should not be undertaken, etc.²⁶

²⁶ [30] This part of the exposition in MĀ 214 has some similarity to the four ways of undertaking things described in the *Mahādhammasamādāna-sutta*, MN 46 at MN I 310,10.

In spite of such differences, the basic principle underlying the definition of what constitutes an unwholesome deed is the same in the two versions and thus constitutes common ground between them, [170] in that an unwholesome deed involves affliction or harm to oneself, to others, or to both.

The theme of causing affliction to oneself or others comes up again in the detailed instructions given in the *Ambalaṭṭhikārāhulovāda-sutta* and its Chinese, Sanskrit and Tibetan parallels on proper conduct by way of body, speech or mind. The different versions agree that, just as if one were to look into a mirror, one should reflect before, during and after any activity on whether this activity leads to affliction for oneself or others.²⁷

A closely related type of reflection was, according to the *Dvedhāvitakka-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, undertaken by the Buddha previous to his awakening. The two discourses report that, during the time of his quest for liberation, he developed a clear distinction between those types of thoughts that lead to affliction for oneself or others and those that do not have such a result.²⁸ The former type are thoughts related to sensuality, ill will and harming, while thoughts of renunciation, non ill will and harmlessness are the type of thought that will not afflict oneself or others. As a discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya* and its *Samyukta-āgama* parallel point out, once lust, hatred and delusion are removed, one will no longer think in ways that lead to affliction for

²⁷ [31] MN 61 at MN I 415,25, with parallels in MĀ 14 at T I 436c9, in Sanskrit fragment SHT V 117, Sander 1985: 111–112, and in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya* preserved in Chinese and Tibetan, T 1442 at T XXIII 761a8 and D 3 *cha* 217a5 or Q 1032 *je* 201a6. The same presentation is also reflected in discourse quotations from this exposition found in the *Vyākhyāyukti-ṭīkā*, D 4069 *si* 200b3 or Q 5570 *i* 71a5, and in the *Śrāvaka bhūmi*, Shukla 1973: 55,16 or ŚSG 1998: 88,20 and T 1579 at T XXX 405b4.

²⁸ [33] MN 19 at MN I 115,2 and MĀ 102 at T I 589a19.

oneself or others.²⁹

This points to what appears to be the chief message of the *Bāhitika-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, namely the reason why the Buddha would not perform any unwholesome deed. [171] The two versions differ in the way they introduce this conclusion, as in the *Majjhima-nikāya* account King Pasenadi asks if the Buddha recommends the abandoning of all unwholesome states,³⁰ while in the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse he asks why the Buddha does not undertake unwholesome conduct. But the conclusion is the same in the two versions, in that the Buddha's ethical perfection is based on his successful eradication of all unwholesome mental states. In other words, early Buddhist ethics leads up to, culminates in, and is an expression of purity of the mind.³¹

²⁹ [34] SN 42.12 at SN IV 339,19 and SĀ 912 at T II 229b17.

³⁰ [35] MN 88 at MN II 116,13: *kiṃ pana, bhante ānanda, so bhagavā sabbesaṃ yeva kusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ upasampadaṃ vaṇṇeti?*

³¹ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2012d.

Āneñjasappāya-sutta (MN 106)

Introduction:

With the present chapter I study the meditative approaches to imperturbability depicted in the *Āneñjasappāya-sutta* (MN 106) and its Chinese and Tibetan parallels.¹ By way of introduction to the main theme broached in this discourse, I briefly survey discourses relevant to the early Buddhist notion of imperturbability. Next I translate the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Āneñjasappāya-sutta* part by part, after each of the main sections of the discourse examining variations between the *Madhyama-āgama* version, the *Āneñjasappāya-sutta* and a Tibetan version extant in Śamathadeva's compendium of discourse quotations in the *Abhidharmaśāstra*. By way of conclusion, I turn to the relationship between tranquillity and insight reflected in the parallel versions.

In the early discourses, "imperturbability" regularly represents the degree of mental stability obtained through the fourth absorption (*jhāna*).² With this level of deep concentration, all "perturba-

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¹ For the title of the discourse I follow B^c, C^c and S^e. E^e reads *Āṇaṇjasappāya-sutta*.

² Thus, e.g., DN 2 at DN I 76,15 describes the mental condition resulting from the fourth *jhāna* as "having reached imperturbability", *ānejjapatte* (B^c, C^c and S^e: *āneñjapatte*), a qualification similarly made in the parallel versions DĀ 20 at T I 85c7: 無動之地, T 22 at T I 275a13: 堅住不動, and in the *Saṅghabhedavastu*, Gnoli 1978a: 245,15: *āniñjyaprāptam*, with its Tibetan counterpart at D 1 *nga* 278b4 or Q 1030 *ce* 256a6: *mi g.yo bar gnas pa thob po*. The *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, Wogihara 1930: 90,16, sums up: *āniñjya-caturtha-*

tions" have been left behind, including those mental factors or qualities that are still present in the lower absorptions.³ Besides such mental "perturbations", [178] according to the discourses with the imperturbability of the fourth absorption even the process of breathing has apparently ceased.⁴

As part of an extended simile that illustrates the progress of a disciple with the example of taming a forest elephant, the *Danta-bhūmi-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel depict an elephant trained in imperturbability. Such a trained elephant is able to face unflinchingly a situation resembling an actual battle situation, such

dhyāna-vihāraḥ.

³ The *Laṭṭhikopama-sutta* and its parallel, MN 66 at MN I 454,28 and MĀ 192 at T I 743b2, reckon the applied and sustained mental application characteristic of the first *jhāna*, the rapture of the second *jhāna*, and the happiness present in the third *jhāna* as "perturbations". These are left behind once the imperturbability of the fourth *jhāna* has been reached.

⁴ According to SN 36.11 at SN IV 217,8, with the attainment of the fourth *jhāna* in- and out-breaths cease, *assāsapassāsā niruddhā honti*, an indication made similarly in its parallel SĀ 474 at T II 121b4: 出入息寂滅; cf. also AN 10.72 at AN V 135,3, which indicates that breathing constitutes a "thorn" for the attainment of the fourth absorption, *catutthassa jhānassa assāsapassāsā kaṇṭako* (with v.l. *kaṇṭakā*, in fact S^e reads *assāsapassāsā kaṇṭakā*, while B^e reads *assāsapassāso kaṇṭako*; C^e agrees with E^e), a statement made similarly in its parallel MĀ 84 at T I 561a9: 入第四禪者以入息出息為刺. Nevertheless, or perhaps precisely because of this, mindfulness of breathing appears to be particularly apt for developing imperturbability of body and mind; cf. SN 54.7 at SN V 316,12, which indicates that developing mindfulness of breathing leads to the absence of perturbations or motions of body or mind, *neva kāyassa iñjī-tattaṃ vā hoti ... na cittassa iñjī-tattaṃ vā hoti*. Whereas SN 54.7 makes this indication in relation to concentration on mindfulness of breathing as such, according to its parallel SĀ 806 at T II 207a5 such bodily and mental imperturbability, 身心不動, is the outcome of undertaking mindfulness of breathing in sixteen steps. On these sixteen steps cf. also Anālayo 2007b and Dhammajoti 2008.

as being surrounded by men who shout and brandish weapons.⁵ As the *Madhyama-āgama* version of this discourse indicates, this imagery exemplifies the level of imperturbability a disciple reaches through attaining the fourth absorption.⁶

According to recurrent descriptions given in the discourses, once such imperturbability has been reached, the mind can be turned to the development of various higher knowledges (*abhiññā*) or to the attainment of the immaterial spheres. The four immaterial spheres are in fact at times reckoned as forms of imperturbability.⁷ However, the usage in the discourses is not uniform in this respect, as at times only some of the immaterial attainments come under this label.

Thus the *Sunakkhatta-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* distinguishes between someone with a keen interest in:

- imperturbability,
- the sphere of nothingness,
- the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.

Here imperturbability must be different from the two higher immaterial attainments and appears to cover only the fourth *jhāna* and the two lower immaterial attainments.⁸ [179] In fact, the *Su-*

⁵ MN 125 at MN III 133,16 and MĀ 198 at T I 758a9, for a translation cf. below page 395.

⁶ MĀ 198 at T I 758b29.

⁷ AN 4.190 at AN II 184,29 indicates that with the attainment of the four immaterial spheres a monk qualifies for "having reached imperturbability", *ānejjappatto* (B^e, C^e and S^e: *āneñjappatto*); cf. also the *Dharmaskandha*, Dietz 1984 27,12: *ānimjyāḥ saṃskārā(h) katame, āha: catvāry ārūpyāṇy ānimjyam ity ucyate*, with its Chinese counterpart, T 1537 at T XXVI 506a23: "what are volitional formations [related to the] imperturbable? They are said to be the four immaterial concentrations", 云何不動行? 謂四無色定; or Vibh 135,21: *tattha katamo āneñjābhisaṅkhāro? kusalā cetanā arūpāvacarā – ayaṃ vucati āneñjābhisaṅkhāro*.

⁸ Bodhi in *Nāṇamoli* 1995/2005: 1313 note 1000 comments that "since the high-

nakkhatta-sutta explicitly indicates that one who has a keen interest in the sphere of nothingness has gone beyond the fetter of imperturbability.⁹

Yet, the *Pañcattaya-sutta*, found in the same *Majjhima-nikāya*, in agreement with its Tibetan parallel qualifies the sphere of nothingness as "imperturbable".¹⁰ Evidently, there is some fluctuation in the use of this qualification in the early discourses.¹¹

In whatever way imperturbability may have been reached through deeper levels of concentration, an arahant has gone beyond any volitional formations rooted in ignorance regarding such types of imperturbability.¹² Nevertheless, imperturbability is

est two immaterial attainments are dealt with separately, it seems that in this sutta only the fourth jhāna and the lower two immaterial attainments are intended as 'the imperturbable'".

⁹ MN 105 at MN II 255,5: *ākīñcaññāyatanādhimuttassa purisapuggalassa ye āṇaṇjasamyojane se bhinne* (B^e: *āneñjasamyojane*, C^e and S^e: *āneñjasaññojana*).

¹⁰ MN 102 at MN II 230,2: *ākīñcaññāyatanam ... āṇaṇjam* (B^e and C^e: *āneñjam*; S^e: *aneñjam*), with its counterpart in Skilling 1994b: 318,3: *ci yang med pa'i skye mched bsgrubs te gnas pa ... mi g.yo ba*.

¹¹ Cf. also AN 3.114 at AN I 267,1, which covers only the first three immaterial attainments (as part of a description of the difference between the rebirth of a worldlying and a noble disciple in the realms corresponding to these three). Nevertheless, the Burmese edition carries the title "Discourse on Imperturbability", *Āneñja-sutta*, and the Ceylonese and Siamese editions, which do not provide a title, refer to imperturbability in the corresponding section of their respective *uddānas*.

¹² SN 12.51 at SN II 82,15: *avijjāvīrāgā vijjuppādā ... na ānejjābhisaṅkhāram abhisaṅkharoti* (B^e and C^e: *ānejjābhisaṅkhāram*). The Sanskrit fragment parallel makes the same point, though phrased as a question; cf. S 474 folio 9 V2, Tripāṭhī 1962: 35: *avidyā viraktā bhavati vidyā utpannā ... apy=ānījyān=a[pi sa](m)[s](kā)rān=abhi(sam)[sku](ryād=av)[i](dyā)pratyayā? no bhadaṃta* (Tripāṭhī 1962: 135 emends to *vidyotpannā, abhisaṃskārān, avidyāpratyayān* and *bhadanta*). The parallel SĀ 292 at T II 83b14 instead speaks of leaving

also a quality of an arahant; in fact full liberation constitutes the highest form of imperturbability. A "perturbation" left behind with full liberation is any conceiving based on the notion of a substantial "I" at the core of experience.¹³ Fear is similarly no longer able to perturb a liberated mind.¹⁴

The imperturbability reached with full awakening manifests also in regard to sensory input by way of the sense-organs. An arahant's mind cannot be perturbed by any sense-experience, just as a column firmly planted in the ground or a mountain will not be shaken by wind from the four directions.¹⁵ [180] Nor will the

behind "volitional formations [related to] nothingness", 無所有行。

¹³ SN 35.207 at SN IV 202,29 and its parallel SĀ 1168 at T II 312a9 illustrate such conceiving with examples like: "I shall be", "I shall not be", "I shall be material", "I shall be immaterial", "I shall be percipient", "I shall be impercipient", etc.; cf. also Vibh 390,22. Sn 1041 notes that a liberated monk is free from perturbations, *nibbuto bhikkhu, tassa no santi iñjitā*; cf. also Sn 750: *yaṃ kiñci dukkhaṃ sambhoti, sabbhaṃ iñjitapaccayā, iñjitānaṃ nirodhena, n' atthi dukkhassa sambhavo*, according to which all *dukkha* has its origin in perturbations. Kv 615,1 (§22.3) clarifies that an arahant, however, does not necessarily pass away while being in the attainment of imperturbability (of the concentrative type).

¹⁴ SN 4.11 reports an unsuccessful attempt by Māra to scare the Buddha, who calmly replies that a fully awakened Buddha would not be perturbed even if Māra were to shake the whole mountain, SN I 109,23: *n'eva sammāvimuttānaṃ buddhānaṃ atthi iñjitan*. The parallel SĀ 1088 at T II 285b10 indicates that Māra would not be able to perturb even a single hair of a fully awakened Buddha, 於佛等解脫, 不能動一毛 (another parallel, SĀ² 27 at T II 382a17, does not speak of "perturbing", but only of "making his hair stand on end"; cf. the translation in Bingenheimer 2011: 133).

¹⁵ The image of the mountain occurs in AN 6.55 at AN III 378,7 = Vin I 184,27; the metaphor of the column is found in AN 9.26 at AN IV 404,21. The parallel to AN 9.26, SĀ 499 at T II 131b16, employs both similes to illustrate the freedom of an arahant's mind from lust, anger and delusion. Among the parallels to AN 6.55, the image of the mountain unshaken by winds as an illustration of mental imperturbability in regard to sense experience occurs in MĀ 123 at T I

experience of pleasure or pain be able to perturb a truly awakened one.¹⁶

The above brief survey brings to light two main aspects of imperturbability in the discourses: tranquillity and insight.¹⁷ These two implications of the term are not always neatly set apart, as at times imperturbability occurs in a way that involves both. This is the case in the *Āneñjasappāya-sutta*, whose depiction of various approaches to imperturbability reveals an intriguing perspective on the relationship between tranquillity and insight.

The *Āneñjasappāya-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* has a parallel in the *Madhyama-āgama* and another parallel in a nearly complete discourse quotation extant in the Tibetan translation of Śamathadeva's compendium of discourse quotations in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*.¹⁸

The three versions of this discourse cover three "approaches to imperturbability" (1), three "approaches to nothingness" (2), and three approaches that lead either to the attainment of "neither-

612c20, SĀ 254 at T II 63a22 (cf. also 63b6), T 1428 at T XXII 844c25 (cf. also 845a8), Gnoli 1978a: 146,6, fragment 142 SB 35, Hoernle 1916: 169f, and fragment 412 folio 21 V6, Waldschmidt 1968: 781.

¹⁶ Ud 3.3 at Ud 27,18, a verse that also employs the image of a firm mountain unshaken by winds. The verse is preceded by a prose narration according to which the Buddha and a company of monks dwelled in imperturbable concentration while sitting in meditation, explained in Ud-a 185,15 to stand for concentration on the highest fruition (i.e. full liberation); cf. also the *Mahāvvyutpatti* no. 554, Sakaki 1926: 43, which in a listing of types of concentrations mentions *aniñjyo nāma samādhiḥ*. The counterpart to Ud. 3.3 in T 212 at T IV 767c11 employs the imagery of a mountain to illustrate aloofness from *dukkha*.

¹⁷ For a listing of various types of imperturbability cf. also Paṭiś II 206,14.

¹⁸ [19] D 4094 *ju* 227b7 to 230b2 or Q 5595 *tu* 260a4 to 263a6; the quotation sets in with the second way to imperturbability. For a comparative study of MN 106 cf. Anālayo 2011a: 613–617.

perception-nor-non-perception" or to "liberation" (3). My examination takes up these three topics in turn, each time providing a translation of the relevant section from the *Madhyama-āgama* version, followed by a discussion of the significance of the respective passages.

Translation (1)

Discourse on the Path to Pure Imperturbability¹⁹

1. Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was dwelling among the Kurus, staying in the Kuru town of Kammāsadhamma.

2. At that time, the Buddha said to the monks: "Sensual pleasures are impermanent, unreal, false, of a false nature, being indeed illusory, deceptive and foolish. Sensual pleasures now or in future, [181] material forms now or in future²⁰ – all these are the domain of Māra, they are indeed Māra's bait, since because of them innumerable evil and unwholesome qualities arise in the mind, [such as] covetousness and anger that leads to quarrelling, which for one reckoned a noble disciple under training create an obstruction.

3. "Hence a learned noble disciple contemplates like this: 'The Blessed One has proclaimed that sensual pleasures are impermanent, unreal, false, of a false nature, being indeed illusory, deceptive and foolish. Sensual pleasures now or in future, material forms now or in future – all these are the domain of Māra, they are indeed Māra's bait,²¹ since because of them

¹⁹ [20] The section of MĀ 75 translated here ranges from T I 542b3 to 542c10.

²⁰ [21] MN 106 at MN II 262,1 differs in so far as, besides examining the true nature of present or future sensual pleasures, *kāma*, it mentions present or future "sensual perceptions", *kāmasaññā*, instead of present or future material forms.

²¹ [22] MN 106 at MN II 262,2 additionally mentions that they are also Māra's

innumerable evil and unwholesome qualities arise in the mind, [such as] covetousness and anger that leads to quarrelling, which for one reckoned a noble disciple under training create an obstruction'.

"He [further] reflects like this: 'I could dwell attaining a vast state of mind, completely overcoming the world [by] taking hold of that state of mind. If I dwell attaining a vast state of mind, completely overcoming the world [by] taking hold of that state of mind, then in this way innumerable evil and unwholesome qualities will not arise in the mind, nor covetousness or anger that leads to quarrelling, which for one reckoned a noble disciple under training create an obstruction'.²²

"By employing this practice and this training, developing [the mind] like this in a broad and extensive manner, he easily attains purity of the mind in regard to that sphere. Having attained purity of the mind in regard to that sphere, a monk²³ will attain entry into imperturbability herein, or else employ wisdom for the sake of liberation. At a later time, when the body breaks up at death, because of that former mental disposition he will certainly reach the imperturbable.²⁴ This is reck-

"realm", *visaya*, and Māra's "pasture", *gocara*.

²² [23] MN 106 at MN II 262,13 moreover indicates that by abandoning unwholesome mental states the mind will be "free from narrowness", *aparitta*, "boundless", *appamāṇa*, and "well developed", *subhāvita*.

²³ [24] MĀ 75 at T I 542b22 here changes from the earlier "noble disciple", 聖弟子 (still mentioned two lines earlier at T I 542b20), to a "monk", 比丘. In MN 106 at MN II 262,14 the one who attains imperturbability at this point appears to still be the noble disciple (since no subject is explicitly referred to, the earlier mentioned *ariyasāvaka* would still be the subject of the sentence), as is the case for the Tibetan version (in its description of the second approach to imperturbability), D 4094 *ju* 228a2 or Q 5595 *tu* 260a7, which at this junction refers to the noble disciple, *'phags pa nyan thos*.

²⁴ [25] MN 106 at MN II 262,17 speaks in this context of the "evolving conscious-

oned the first explanation of the path to pure imperturbability.

4. "Again, a learned noble disciple contemplates like this: 'If there are material forms – these are all [made up] of the four elements and what is derived from the four elements.'²⁵ The four elements are of an impermanent nature, are *dukkha* and [subject] to cessation'.²⁶ [182]

"Practising and training like this, developing [the mind] like this in a broad and extensive manner, he easily attains purity of the mind in regard to that sphere. Having attained purity of the mind in regard to that sphere, a monk will attain entry into imperturbability herein, or else employ wisdom for the sake of liberation. At a later time, [542c] when the body breaks up at death, because of that former mental disposition

ness" that reaches imperturbability, *saṃvattanikaviññāna*, which Ps IV 61,20 identifies as the karmically resultant consciousness, *vipākaviññāna*; on the *saṃvattanikaviññāna* cf. also Collins 1982: 215. D 4094 *ju* 228a2 or Q 5595 *tu* 260a7 (in relation to the second path to imperturbability) similarly speaks of the "accomplishing consciousness", *bsgrubs pas rnam par shes pa*, that reaches imperturbability; cf. also the *Dharmaskandha*, Dietz 1984: 29,28, which in a discussion of how the formation of imperturbability leads to rebirth employs the expression *saṃvartanīya*, though not explicitly related to consciousness.

²⁵ [26] MN 106 at MN II 262,20 at this point again brings in present or future "sensual pleasures", *kāma*, and present or future "sensual perceptions", *kāmasaññā*. MN II 262 note 9 refers to a Sinhalese manuscript that omits this section, which would thus be similar to MĀ 75. The Tibetan version agrees in this respect with MĀ 75.

²⁶ [27] MN 106 at MN II 262,23 merely points out that form is made up of the four elements and its derivatives. Similar to MĀ 75, the Tibetan version provides an insight perspective on the four elements, differing in so far as it qualifies them as impermanent, conditioned and dependently arisen, D 4094 *ju* 227b7 or Q 5595 *tu* 260a5: 'byung ba chen po bzhi gang yin pa de yang mi rtag pa 'dus byas pa bsams pas bsgrubs pa rten cing 'brel par 'byung ba yin no.

he will certainly reach the imperturbable. This is reckoned the second explanation of the path to pure imperturbability.

5. "Again, a learned noble disciple contemplates like this: 'Sensual pleasures now or in future, material forms now or in future, sensual perceptions now or in future, perceptions of forms now or in future – all these perceptions are of an impermanent nature, are *dukkha* and [subject] to cessation'.²⁷

"At that time he will certainly attain the perception of imperturbability.²⁸ Practising and training like this, developing [the mind] like this in a broad and extensive manner, he easily attains purity of the mind in regard to that sphere. Having attained purity of the mind in regard to that sphere, a monk will attain entry into imperturbability herein, or else employ wisdom for the sake of liberation. At a later time, when the body breaks up at death, because of that former mental disposition he will certainly reach the imperturbable. This is reckoned the third explanation of the path to pure imperturbability."

Study (1)

Looking back on these approaches to imperturbability, the object(s) of each of these three differ to some extent in the Pāli, Chinese and Tibetan versions, as can be seen in table 8 below.

²⁷ [28] MN 106 at MN II 263,7 similarly highlights the impermanent nature of perception, followed by indicating that "what is impermanent is not worth delighting in, not worth approving of, not worth attaching to", *yad aniccaṃ taṃ nālaṃ abhinandituṃ, nālaṃ abhivadituṃ, nālaṃ ajjhosituṃ*. The Tibetan version again employs the qualifications "impermanent", "conditioned" and "dependently arisen".

²⁸ [29] MĀ 75 at T I 542c6: 得不動想, an indication not made in the parallel versions. This reference to attaining the "perception of imperturbability" in MĀ 75 fits the context, as all versions in their next step refer to leaving behind the "perception of imperturbability"; cf. MN 106 at MN II 263,17, MĀ 75 at T I 542c12 and D 4094 *ju* 228b1 or Q 5595 *tu* 260b7.

Table 8: Three Approaches to Imperturbability

	MN 106	MĀ 75	Śamathadeva
1 st	sensual pleasures, sensual perceptions	sensual pleasures, material forms	(not extant)
2 nd	sensual pleasures, sensual perceptions, material forms	material forms	material forms
3 rd	sensual pleasures, sensual perceptions, material forms, perceptions of forms	sensual pleasures, material forms, sensual perceptions, perceptions of forms	sensual pleasures, material forms, sensual perceptions, perceptions of forms

In regard to the first approach, the Pāli and Chinese versions agree on mentioning sensual pleasures, with the Pāli version also bringing in sensual perceptions, while the Chinese version instead refers to material forms (the corresponding section is unfortunately not covered in the quote preserved in Tibetan). In the second case, the Chinese and Tibetan versions mention just material forms, while the Pāli version also lists sensual pleasures and sensual perceptions. In the third case, the three versions agree in their listing, except for the sequence of their presentations.

Evidently some alteration during transmission must have occurred, in order for these variations to have come into being. However, it seems difficult to come to an unequivocal decision on which version, if any, represents the original reading. Perhaps the simplest approach would thus be to leave aside the items not found in all versions. [183] Thus, the three versions can be seen to agree on the following basic pattern:

- sensual pleasures,
- material forms,
- the above two and the corresponding perceptions.

In regard to each of these three approaches, the *Āneñjasappāya-sutta* and its parallels present insightful reflections that enable reaching imperturbability. In the case of these insightful reflections, the parallel versions also show some variations, as can be seen from table 9.

Table 9: Three Modes of Approaching Imperturbability

	MN 106	MĀ 75	Śamathadeva
1 st	defile & obstruct	defile & obstruct	(not extant)
2 nd	consist of 4 elements	consist of 4 elements; impermanent & <i>dukkha</i>	consist of 4 elements; impermanent & conditioned
3 rd	impermanent & <i>dukkha</i>	impermanent & <i>dukkha</i>	impermanent & conditioned

In regard to the first approach, the extant versions agree that the insight to be developed is the tendency of sensual pleasures to defile the mind, creating an obstruction for progress towards liberation; an obstruction exemplified by identifying sensual pleasures as the bait and domain of Māra.

In the case of the second approach, while the Pāli discourse only mentions that material form consists of the four elements, the parallel versions further indicate that the four elements are impermanent and *dukkha* (Chinese version) or that they are impermanent and conditioned (Tibetan version).

In support of the Pāli version's presentation, it could be noted that, according to the *Mahāgopālaka-sutta* and a range of paral-

lels, knowledge of material form involves precisely the realization that form is made up of the four elements and their derivatives.²⁹ [184] This much of insight apparently suffices, as according to the *Mahāgopālaka-sutta* and its parallels someone who is endowed with the insight that form consists of the four elements is ready for progress towards liberation.

In this way, the *Mahāgopālaka-sutta* and its parallels, as well as the *Āneñjasappāya-sutta*, point to the same basic insight into the four elements as qualities common to all material phenomena. That is, however beautiful or ugly any particular material form may appear, mental imperturbability can be achieved by reflecting that this form is just a combination of the four elements and thus not essentially different from any other occurrence of matter in the world.

Regarding the third approach, the three versions are in agreement on impermanence forming the central insight that should be developed. The *Madhyama-āgama* version's brief reference to the unsatisfactory nature of perceptions receives a more detailed exposition in the *Majjhima-nikāya* version, which explains that due to being impermanent perceptions are "not worth delighting in, approving of, or attaching to".³⁰ In spite of differing formulations, the two versions thus agree that the main thrust of insight requires a progression from impermanence to detachment. The Tibetan version also turns to the conditioned and dependently arisen nature of perceptions, thereby highlighting another important facet of their impermanent nature.

²⁹ [³⁰] MN 33 at MN I 222,37, AN 11.18 at AN V 351,8, SĀ 1249 at T II 342c25 (this is the negative case of not knowing form, as the positive case is not given in full), translated in Anālayo 2010b: 4, EĀ 49.1 at T II 794c10 and T 123 at T II 546c24; cf. also the **Mahāprajñāpāramitā-(upadeśa)-śāstra*, 大智度論, T 1509 at T XXV 74a11, translated in Lamotte 1944/1981: 149.

³⁰ [³¹] See above note 27.

Summing up the key aspects of these three approaches, what leads to imperturbability are the insights that:

- sensual pleasures are defiling and obstructing,
- material forms are made up of the four elements,
- the above [two] and perceptions are impermanent.

These three types of insight are in themselves not surprising, as they well concord with what other discourses have to say on these themes. What is noteworthy, however, is that the *Āneñjasappāya-sutta* and its parallels agree in depicting how such insights can lead to attaining imperturbability, with the development of wisdom introduced as an alternative option to simply attaining imperturbability.³¹ The fact that all versions speak of the possibility of achieving a corresponding rebirth makes it unmistakably clear that the imperturbability spoken of in the present context must be the concentrative type of imperturbability, that is, at least the fourth absorption.

It would be making too much of the present passage if one were to assume that insight alone leads to such deep concentration,³² in fact the reference given in regard to the first approach to

³¹ [³²] MN 106 at MN II 262,26 employs *vā* and MĀ 75 at T I 542b29 或, both conveying the sense of an alternative option. The Tibetan version, D 4094 *ju* 228a2 or Q 5595 *tu* 260a7, employs *cing*, which could convey a sense of an alternative, though in its general usage *cing* rather stands for "and" (references are in all three cases to the second approach to imperturbability, as the first approach is not included in the quote preserved in Tibetan).

³² [³³] The commentary, Ps IV 59,16, bases the development of insight into sensual pleasures (that then leads to imperturbability) on the third absorption. Yet, insight into sensual pleasure is already a condition for reaching the first absorption, whose standard description stipulates the need of being (at least temporarily) free from sensuality; cf., e.g., DN 1 at DN I 37,1: *vivicc'eva kāmehi*, with its parallels DĀ 21 at T I 93b20: 去欲 and Weller 1934: 58,3: *'dod pa dag las dben*. Similar formulations from other Chinese *Āgamas* can be found, e.g., in MĀ 2 at T I 422b11: 離欲, SĀ 347 at T II 97a6: 離欲, SĀ² 198 at T II

imperturbability to "attaining a vast state of mind" that is then developed "in a broad and extensive manner" may well be an implicit reference to the development of tranquillity. Nevertheless, it is remarkable that the *Āneñjasappāya-sutta* and its parallels do clearly depict insight making a rather substantial contribution to the development of deep stages of concentration. [185] The same theme continues with the next section of the discourse, which presents approaches to the attainment of nothingness.

Translation (2)³³

6. "Again, a learned noble disciple contemplates like this: 'Sensual perceptions now or in future, perceptions of forms now or in future,³⁴ and the perception of imperturbability – all these perceptions are of an impermanent nature, are *dukkha* and [subject] to cessation'.³⁵

"At that time he will attain the perception of the sphere of nothingness.³⁶ Practising and training like this, developing [the mind] like this in a broad and extensive manner, he easily attains purity of the mind in regard to that sphere. Having at-

447a11: 離欲, EĀ 28.6 at T II 653b19: 無欲; for a Sanskrit version of this specification cf., e.g., Gnoli 1978a: 242,22: *viviktaṃ kāmair*.

³³ [34] The section translated here ranges from T I 542c10 to 543a1.

³⁴ [35] MN 106 at MN II 263,16 and D 4094 *ju* 228a7 or Q 5595 *tu* 260b6 at this juncture also mention sensual pleasure and forms (in addition to the corresponding perceptions).

³⁵ [36] MN 106 at MN II 263,17 instead enjoins the reflection that the cessation of all these perceptions is peaceful and sublime, namely the sphere of nothingness, *yatth' etā aparisesā nirujjhanti, etaṃ santaṃ etaṃ pañītaṃ yadidaṃ ākiñcaññāyatanaṃ*. The Tibetan version continues with the reflection it had earlier, i.e., viewing these perceptions as impermanent, conditioned and dependently arisen; cf. D 4094 *ju* 228b1 or Q 5595 *tu* 260b8.

³⁶ [37] MĀ 75 at T I 542c13: 得無所有處想, an indication not made in the parallel versions; cf. also above note 28.

tained purity of the mind in regard to that sphere, a monk will attain entry into ⟨nothingness⟩ herein,³⁷ or else employ wisdom for the sake of liberation. At a later time, when the body breaks up at death, because of that former mental disposition he will certainly reach the ⟨sphere of nothingness⟩.³⁸ This is reckoned the first explanation of the path to the sphere of pure nothingness.

7. "Again, a learned noble disciple contemplates like this: 'This world is empty, empty of a self, empty of what belongs to a self, empty of what is permanent, empty of what is everlasting, empty of existing continuously and empty of being unchanging'.³⁹ [186]

³⁷ [38] MĀ 75 at T I 542c15 actually reads "attain entry into imperturbability", 得人不動, an evident error which I emend to 得人無所有處, the reading required by the context and found in the description of the next two contemplations; an emendation also supported by the parallel versions, MN 106 at MN II 263,20: *ākiñcaññāyatanaṃ samāpajjati* and D 4094 *ju* 228b2 or Q 5595 *tu* 260b8: *ci yang med pa la mos par 'gyur zhing*.

³⁸ [39] Similar to the error mentioned above in note 37, MĀ 75 at T I 542c17 reads 必至不動, which I emend to 必至無所有處; cf. also MN 106 at MN II 263,23: *ākiñcaññāyatanūpagaṃ* and D 4094 *ju* 228b2 or Q 5595 *tu* 261a1: *ci yang med pa la snyoms par 'jug cing*.

³⁹ [40] MN 106 at MN II 263,26 reads: "this is empty of a self and of what belongs to a self", *suññam idaṃ attena vā attaniyena vā* (following B^e, C^e, S^e and Horner 1959: 48 note 6 on reading *suññam idaṃ* instead of E^e *saññam idaṃ*; cf. also Minh Chau 1991: 329). Similar to MĀ 75, D 4094 *ju* 228b6 or Q 5595 *tu* 261a6 also speaks of being empty of permanence (with the difference that here this forms the 3rd approach to nothingness), reading: "the world is empty ... of permanence, of stability, of changelessness, of an immutable nature, devoid of a self and of what belongs to a self", *'jig rten ni stong pa'o ... rtag pa dang, brian pa dang, g.yung drung dang, mi 'gyur ba'i chos can gyis stong zhing bdag dang bdag gi dang bral ba'o*. Baba 2004: 11 explains that such a type of treatment makes use of "expressions of emptiness that are more recent than those in the first four Pāli Nikāyas", as similar descriptions can be

"Practising and training like this, developing [the mind] like this in a broad and extensive manner, he easily attains purity of the mind in regard to that sphere. Having attained purity of the mind in regard to that sphere, a monk will attain entry into the sphere of nothingness herein, or else employ wisdom for the sake of liberation. At a later time, when the body breaks up at death, because of that former mental disposition he will certainly reach the sphere of nothingness. This is reckoned the second explanation of the path to the sphere of pure nothingness.

8. "Again, a learned noble disciple contemplates like this: 'I am not another's possession and I do not have possessions myself'.⁴⁰

found only in historically later works such as the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*; cf. *Paṭis* I 109,10: *suññaṃ attena vā attaniyena vā niccena vā dhuvena vā sassa-tena vā avipariñāmadhammena vā*.

⁴⁰ [41] MĀ 75 at T I 542c25: 我非為他而有所為，亦非自為而有所為；my translation of this cryptic passage is conjectural, alternatively the same passage could also be rendered as: "I do not act for another, nor do I act for myself", though this would seem less meaningful in the present context. MN 106 at MN II 263,34 reads: "I am not anything belonging to anyone anywhere, nor is there anything belonging to me in anyone anywhere", *nāhaṃ kvacani kassaci kiñcanatasmim* (S^e: *kvacini na*, C^e: *kassaci*), *na ca mama kvacani kismiñci kiñcanaṃ n' atthi* (S^e: *kvacini*, C^e: *kismici kiñcanatatthi*). A similar reflection recurs in AN 3.70 at AN I 206,18, where the parallel passage in MĀ 202 at T I 770b13 reads: "I am without parents, I have no parents, I am without wife and children, I have no wife and children, I am without male or female slaves, I have no ownership over male or female slaves", 我無父母，非父母有，我無妻子，非妻子有，我無奴婢，非奴婢主 (adopting a variant reading 主 instead of 生). The counterpart to the present passage in MĀ 75 in D 4094 *ju* 228b4 or Q 5595 *tu* 261a3 reads: "there is no I in any way at all, there is no mine in any way at all", *bdag 'ga' zhiḡ tu 'ga' yang cung zad med do, bdag gi 'ga'* (Q: without 'ga') *zhiḡ tu 'ga' yang cung zad med do* (which in the Tibetan version constitutes the 2nd approach to nothingness). A comparable mode of reflection can be found in the Jain *Āyāraṅga* 1.7.6.1 (or alternatively 1.8.6.1), which

"Practising and training like this, developing [the mind] like this in a broad and extensive manner, he easily attains purity of the mind in regard to that sphere. Having attained purity of the mind in regard to that sphere, a monk will attain entry into the sphere of nothingness herein, or else employ wisdom for the sake of liberation. At a later time, when the body breaks up at death, because of that former mental disposition he will certainly reach the sphere of nothingness. This is reckoned the third explanation of the path to the sphere of pure nothingness".

Study (2)

The variations between these three approaches to nothingness are summarized in table 10 below.

Table 10: Three Modes of Approaching Nothingness

	MN 106	MĀ 75	Śamathadeva
1 st	cessation of perceptions	perceptions are impermanent & <i>dukkha</i>	perceptions are impermanent & conditioned
2 nd	empty of self	empty of self & of permanence	no I at all
3 rd	I am not anything, etc.	no possession	empty of self & of permanence

In the first case, the Chinese and Tibetan accounts continue with the same insight already employed earlier to reach imperturbability. This leads to a higher stage because the scope of its applica-

runs: "I am alone, nobody belongs to me and I do not belong to anyone", Schubring 1910/1966: 37,7: *ego aham aṃsi, na me atthi koi na yāham avi kassai*; cf. also Caillat 1977: 58 note 59 and Jacobi 1882: 36,22, reading *no me* instead of *na me*.

tion has been broadened, covering also the perception of imperturbability. The Pāli version instead presents the reflection that the cessation of these perceptions is peaceful and sublime. [187]

Regarding the second approach to nothingness (which in the Tibetan version forms the third), there is general agreement on its main theme being emptiness. A difference between the three presentations is that the Chinese and Tibetan versions note that perceptions are also empty of permanence, thereby directing insight to the quality of impermanence as well.

In the case of the third approach to nothingness (the second in the Tibetan version), the phrasing in the three versions differs, perhaps in part due to translation difficulties (at least in the case of the *Madhyama-āgama* passage). The Pāli version's reflection that "I am not anything belonging to anyone anywhere, nor is there anything belonging to me in anyone anywhere" recurs elsewhere in the Pāli *Nikāyas* as a mode of contemplation employed by Jains or by brahmins.⁴¹

Of these three modes for approaching nothingness, the second is particularly noteworthy, as it takes up a form of contemplation that is distinctly Buddhist: insight into the absence of a self. This brings out with increased clarity a point noted already above in relation to the approaches to imperturbability, namely the contribution insight can make to the development of deep stages of concentration (in the present case to the attainment of the sphere of nothingness).

Another passage that relates emptiness to imperturbability can be found in the *Mahāsuññata-sutta* and its parallels, which describe a mode of practice where attention given to emptiness

⁴¹ [42] AN 3.70 at AN I 206,18 and AN 4.185 at AN II 177,11; cf. also the parallel versions to AN 4.185: SĀ 972 at T II 251b12, SĀ² 206 at T II 450c24 and Sanskrit fragment fol. 173b4, Pischel 1904: 818; cf. also Lévi 1904: 304.

leads to imperturbability.⁴² Yet another relevant discourse is the *Cūḷasuññāta-sutta*, which in agreement with its parallels depicts a gradual meditation on emptiness that proceeds through the immaterial attainments.⁴³

That contemplation of emptiness can lead to imperturbability (*Mahāsuññāta-sutta*) or to attaining the sphere of nothingness (*Āneñjasappāya-sutta*) not only highlights the contribution that insight can make to the development of tranquillity; it also shows that contemplation of emptiness can at times fall short of being truly liberating. [188]

In fact, the *Cūḷasuññāta-sutta* and its Tibetan parallel make a point of clearly distinguishing between various emptiness experiences and the destruction of the influxes, explicitly qualifying only the last as an "unsurpassable" form of emptiness.⁴⁴ In contrast, other emptiness experiences are still surpassable, in as much as they are not completely liberating. That is, an experience of emptiness need not be a liberating experience, as it could just be an – from the subjective viewpoint certainly profound – experience of mental tranquillity.

The topic of insight contemplation resulting in deep concentration or leading to liberation underlies the remaining section of the *Āneñjasappāya-sutta*, which turns to the attainment of neither-

⁴² [43] MN 122 at MN III 112,25, MĀ 191 at T I 739a8 (translated below page 354) and Skilling 1994b: 220,5.

⁴³ [44] Differing in so far as MN 121 at MN III 107,10 covers also the fourth immaterial attainment among the stages that precede the attainment of signlessness. The parallel versions only mention the first three immaterial attainments before turning to signlessness; cf. MĀ 190 at T I 737c2 (translated below page 331, cf. also Choong 1999: 71 and Schmithausen 1981: 235) and the Tibetan parallel in Skilling 1994b; 172,3 (on which cf. also Skilling 1997: 355).

⁴⁴ [45] MN 121 at MN III 109,1: *paramānuttarā suññatāvakkanti* and Skilling 1994b: 178,2: *stong pa nyid la 'jug pa bla na med pa*.

perception-nor-non-perception and to the gaining of liberation.

Translation (3)⁴⁵

9. "Again, a learned noble disciple contemplates like this: 'Sensual pleasures now or in future, material forms now or in future, sensual perceptions now or in future, perceptions of forms now or in future, the perception of imperturbability and the perception of the sphere of nothingness – all these perceptions are of an impermanent nature, are *dukkha* and [subject] to cessation'.⁴⁶

"At that time he will attain [the perception of the sphere of neither-perception-nor]-non-perception.⁴⁷ Practising and training like this, developing [the mind] like this in a broad and extensive manner, he easily attains purity of the mind in regard to that sphere. Having attained purity of the mind in regard to

⁴⁵ [⁴⁶] The section translated here ranges from T I 543a1 to 543b28.

⁴⁶ [⁴⁷] As in the case of the first approach to nothingness (cf. above note 35), MN 106 at MN II 264,10 instead notes that the cessation of perceptions is peaceful and sublime, whereas D 4094 *ju* 229a4 or Q 5595 *tu* 261b4 points out that these perceptions as impermanent, conditioned and dependently arisen.

⁴⁷ [⁴⁸] MĀ 75 at T I 543a8 just reads "no perception", 無想. Though *Madhyama-āgama* discourses usually employ 非有想非無想 to render "neither-perception-nor-non-perception", another exception to this pattern can be found in MĀ 120 at T I 609c15, which reads 有想無想, a reading found also at a later point in the present discourse, MĀ 75 at T I 543a24. Moreover, in MĀ 164 at T I 695b17 無想 features as an abbreviated reference to 非有想非無想, mentioned just before in the same line. This suggests that the present instance of 無想 stands for "neither-perception-nor-non-perception" (to which in accordance with the earlier exposition on nothingness I have added the "perception of the sphere"), in line with the reading found in the two parallels, MN 106 at MN II 264,14: *nevasaññānāsaññāyatanaṃ* and D 4094 *ju* 229a4 or Q 5595 *tu* 261b5: 'du shes med 'du shes med min skye mched; and in line with a reference to the present passage in the *Yogācārabhūmi*, T 1579 at T XXX 858a22, which also speaks of "neither-perception-nor-non-perception", 非想非非想.

that sphere, a monk will attain entry into [neither-perception-nor]-non-perception herein, or else employ wisdom for the sake of liberation. At a later time, when the body breaks up at death, because of that former mental disposition he will certainly reach the sphere of [neither-perception-nor]-non-perception. This is reckoned the explanation of the path to pure [neither-perception-nor]-non-perception."

10. At that time the venerable Ānanda was holding a fan and fanning the Buddha. Then the venerable Ānanda held his hands together [in homage] towards the Buddha and said: [189] "Blessed One, suppose a monk practises like this: 'There is no I, nor anything belonging to me, I will not be, what belongs to me will not be. What has earlier [come to] exist, will be extinguished',⁴⁸ and he attains equanimity [by practising like this]. Blessed One, a monk who practises like this, will he completely attain final Nirvāṇa?"

The Blessed One answered: "Ānanda, this matter is uncertain. There are some who attain it, there are some who do not attain it." The venerable Ānanda said: "Blessed One, practising in what way will a monk not attain final Nirvāṇa?"

The Blessed One said: "Ānanda, suppose a monk practises like this: '[There is] no I, nor anything belonging to me, I will not be, what belongs to me will not be. What has earlier [come to] exist, will be extinguished', and he attains equanimity [by practising like this]. Ānanda, if the monk delights in that equanimity, becomes attached to that equanimity, becomes established in that equanimity, Ānanda, then practising like that the monk will certainly not attain final Nirvāṇa."

The venerable Ānanda said: "Blessed One, if a monk has

⁴⁸ [49] On this type of contemplation cf. also de La Vallée Poussin 1931, Bodhi 2000: 1060 to 1063 note 75 and Anālayo 2009d.

such clinging, he will not attain final Nirvāṇa?" The Blessed One said: "Ānanda, if a monk has such clinging, he will certainly not attain final Nirvāṇa!"

11. The venerable Ānanda said: "Blessed One, what is that monk clinging to?" The Blessed One said: "Ānanda, in his practice there is a remainder [of clinging], namely to the sphere of [neither]-perception-[nor]-non-perception, which is supreme among what exists – that monk is clinging to it."

The venerable Ānanda said: "Blessed One, so that monk is practising with a remainder of clinging?" The Blessed One said: "Ānanda, in this way the monk is indeed practising with a remainder of clinging!"

The venerable Ānanda said: "Blessed One, practising in what way will a monk certainly attain final Nirvāṇa?"

12. The Blessed One said: "Ānanda, suppose a monk practises like this: 'There is no I, nor anything belonging to me, I will not be, what belongs to me will not be. [543b] What has earlier [come to] exist, will be extinguished', and he attains equanimity [by practising like this]. Ānanda, if the monk does not delight in that equanimity, does not become attached to that equanimity, does not become established in that equanimity, Ānanda, practising like this the monk will certainly attain final Nirvāṇa."

The venerable Ānanda said: "Blessed One, if a monk clings to nothing, will he certainly attain final Nirvāṇa?" The Blessed One said: "Ānanda, if a monk clings to nothing, he will certainly attain final Nirvāṇa!"

13. Then the venerable Ānanda held his hands together [in homage] towards the Buddha and said: "The Blessed One has explained the path to pure imperturbability, he has explained the path to the sphere of pure nothingness, he has explained the path to pure [neither-perception-nor]-non-perception, he

has explained Nirvāṇa without remainder.⁴⁹ [190] Blessed One, what is noble liberation?"

The Blessed One replied: "Ānanda, a learned noble disciple contemplates like this: 'Sensual pleasures now or in future, material forms now or in future, sensual perceptions now or in future, perceptions of forms now or in future, the perception of imperturbability, the perception of the sphere of nothingness and the perception of [neither-perception-nor]-non-perception – all these perceptions are of an impermanent nature, are *dukkha* and [subject] to cessation – this is reckoned as one's individual existence.⁵⁰ If there is one's individual existence, there is birth, there is old age, there is disease and there is death'.⁵¹ Ānanda, if there is this dharma: entire extinction, remainderless cessation, no further existence – then there will be no birth, nor old age, disease or death.

"A noble [disciple] contemplates like this: 'What is [this dharma] certainly has the nature of liberation. What is Nirvāṇa

⁴⁹ [50] MN 106 at MN II 265,21 speaks at this point also of "crossing the flood in dependence on one thing after another", *nissāya nissāya ... oghassa nittharaṇā* (the expression *nissāya nissāya* recurs in DN 16 at DN II 130,14, where it describes a row of chariots that follow each other "one after another").

⁵⁰ [51] MĀ 75 at T I 543b13: 自己有, counterpart to *sakkāya* in MN 106 at MN II 265,30 and to 'jig *tshogs* in D 4094 *ju* 230a5 or Q 5595 *tu* 263a1. Unlike MĀ 75, the Pāli and Tibetan versions do not refer to impermanence, etc., at this juncture.

⁵¹ [52] MN 106 at MN II 265,30 simply indicates that "this is the deathless, nameless liberation of the mind through not clinging", *etaṃ amataṃ yadidaṃ anupā-dā cittassa vimokho* (B^e, C^e and S^e read *vimokkho*), without referring to birth, old age, disease and death, and without remarking on what has the nature of liberation. Birth, old age, disease and death are mentioned in D 4094 *ju* 230a5 or Q 5595 *tu* 263a1. Commenting on this part of MN 106, Kalupahana 1965a: 547 sums up that "true deliverance is only the deliverance of the mind without grasping".

without remainder, that is called the deathless'. With such contemplation and such view he will certainly attain liberation of the mind from the influx of sensuality, from the influx of existence, and liberation of the mind from the influx of ignorance. Being liberated, he knows that he is liberated: 'Birth has been extinguished, the holy life has been established, what had to be done has been done, there will be no experiencing of a further existence', knowing this as it really is.

14. "Ānanda, now I have explained to you the path to pure imperturbability,⁵² I have explained the path to the sphere of pure nothingness, I have explained the path to pure [neither-perception-nor]-non-perception, I have explained Nirvāṇa without remainder and I have explained noble liberation.

15. "What a teacher does for [his] disciples out of great compassion, with kind thoughts of empathy,⁵³ seeking their benefit and welfare, seeking their peace and happiness, that I have now done. You should further act yourselves. Go to a secluded place, to the foot of a tree in a forest, to an empty quiet place to sit in meditation and reflection. Do not be negligent, be diligent and increase your effort, [so that you] do not later have regrets – this is my teaching, this is my instruction!"

The Buddha spoke like this. The venerable Ānanda and the monks, having listened to what the Buddha said, were delighted and received it respectfully.

Study (3)

In the case of the first of these three modes of development, the three versions vary in ways similar to the variations found in

⁵² [53] MĀ 75 at T I 542b20: 淨; the qualification "pure" is not made in the parallel versions.

⁵³ [54] MĀ 75 at T I 543b22: 慈哀 and 愍傷. Hirakawa 1997: 49 lists *kāruṇika* for the former and (p. 491) *anukampā* for the latter.

regard to the first approach towards nothingness, see table 11.

Table 11: The Three Last Modes of Development

	MN 106	MĀ 75	Śamathadeva
1 st	cessation of perceptions	perceptions are impermanent & <i>dukkha</i>	perceptions are impermanent & conditioned
2 nd	attachment?	attachment?	attachment?
3 rd	just individual existence	just individual existence	just individual existence

The second mode of development is similar in kind to the second approach to nothingness, in that here again an insight contemplation – this time phrased in terms of what "will not be" – has the potential of leading to a concentration attainment, [191] here the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception. The crucial question is whether the practitioner is able to avoid attachment to the equanimity of this experience, as such attachment prevents progress towards final liberation. The third mode then presents noble liberation as being reached by realizing that all experiences discussed so far are simply occurrences of individual existence (*sakkāya*). Hence letting go of such individual existence, in the sense of not identifying with these experiences, will lead to the supreme.

The exposition in the *Āneñjasappāya-sutta* and its parallels can be seen to touch on various nuances of imperturbability. The explicit usage of the term appears to correspond to its implications in the *Sunakkhatta-sutta*, where it stands for the fourth absorption and the two lower immaterial attainments. In addition to this explicit usage, the *Āneñjasappāya-sutta* and its parallels also cover the two higher immaterial attainments – nothingness and

neither-perception-nor-non-perception – concentrative experiences that are elsewhere in the discourses also reckoned as manifestations of imperturbability. The topic of the last section of the discourse is then the supreme type of imperturbability: the attainment of liberation. The different nuances of imperturbability covered in this way, ranging from tranquillity to insight, exemplify the implicit message of the discourse on their close interrelationship.

When evaluating this presentation, it needs to be kept in mind that in the thought world of the early discourses tranquillity and insight are regularly presented as interrelated with and dependent upon each other. This can be seen in the *Yuganaddha-sutta*, for example, which depicts four modes of approaching liberation. One of these four modes in the *Yuganaddha-sutta* does not explicitly refer to tranquillity or insight, hence it can be left aside for the purpose of the present discussion.⁵⁴ The other three are:

- tranquillity followed by insight,
- insight followed by tranquillity,
- tranquillity and insight conjoined.⁵⁵ [192]

⁵⁴ [⁵⁵] The description of this mode in AN 4.170 at AN II 157,20 speaks of overcoming restlessness in regard to the Dharma, *dharm' uddhacca*; for a discussion of which cf. Anālayo 2009i. According to the parallel version SĀ 560 at T II 147a5, however, even the approach that involves overcoming restlessness eventually results in tranquillity and insight.

⁵⁵ [⁵⁶] AN 4.170 at AN II 157,4 reports that a monk or a nun may either "develop insight preceded by tranquillity ... [or] develop tranquillity preceded by insight ... [or] develop tranquillity and insight conjoined", *samathapubbaṅgamam vipassanam bhāveti ... vipassanāpubbaṅgamam samatham bhāveti ... samathavipassanam yuganaddham bhāveti*. The parallel SĀ 560 at T II 146c24 indicates that a monk or a nun may either, while "sitting in meditation thus settle the mind, well settle the mind, definitely settle the mind and train the mind in tranquillity and insight ... [or, while] sitting properly, give attention to investigation-of-phenomena and through [such] contemplation settle the mind,

This presentation indicates that not only may tranquillity lead to insight, but insight can also lead to tranquillity. This suggestion is well in line with the exposition in the *Āneñjasappāya-sutta*.

The specific contribution made in the *Āneñjasappāya-sutta* and its parallels is to highlight in what way insight can make its contribution to the development of tranquillity. Such insight is not merely awareness of the factors of the mind that need to be overcome in order to reach a deeper level of concentration, but much rather employs themes that stand at the very heart of early Buddhist meditative wisdom, such as contemplation of emptiness in terms of the absence of a self. In this way, the *Āneñjasappāya-sutta* and its parallels throw a spotlight on a significant aspect of the relationship between tranquillity and insight, thereby putting them into proper perspective as two qualities that in mutual collaboration will lead to liberation.

"There is no absorption for one bereft of wisdom
[just as] there is no wisdom for one who does not meditate,
one who has [both] absorption and wisdom,
such a one is close to Nirvāṇa indeed."⁵⁶

well settle it, definitely settle it and train it in tranquillity and insight ... [or] practice both tranquillity and insight in conjunction", 坐作如是住心, 善住心, 局住心, 調伏心止觀 ... 正坐思惟, 於法選擇, 思量住心, 善住, 局住, 調伏止觀 ... 止觀和合俱行.

⁵⁶ ^[57] Dhṛ 372: *n' atthi jhānaṃ apaññāssa, paññā n' atthi ajhāyato, yamhi jhānañ ca paññā ca, sa ve nibbānasantike* (C^c: *nibbānasantike*); with similarly worded Indic language counterparts in Gāndhārī *Dharmapada* stanza 58, Brough 1962/2001: 127, Patna *Dharmapada* stanza 62, Cone 1989: 119 or Roth 1980: 103, and Uv 32.25, Bernhard 1965: 439.

Chabbisodhana-sutta (MN 112)

Introduction:

In the present chapter I study the description in the *Chabbisodhana-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel of different facets of the mental purity reached by one who has attained full liberation. The two discourses present these different facets with the help of a series of investigations – taught by the Buddha to his disciples – for checking anyone's claim to having reached the final goal.¹

According to this series of investigations, someone claiming to have become an arahant should be cross-questioned on various aspects of his or her alleged purity. In the *Chabbisodhana-sutta*, these cover:

- detachment in regard to four ways of expression (*vohāra*),
- detachment regarding the five aggregates [affected by] clinging,
- detachment from the six elements (earth, water, fire, wind, space and consciousness),
- detachment in regard to the six senses,
- freedom from any sense of 'I' through successful development of the gradual path.

What makes the *Chabbisodhana-sutta* worthy of attention is that it presents five types of purity, four of which draw out various aspects of the detachment and equanimity of an arahant, while the fifth combines another feature of such detachment with a de-

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¹ MN 112 at MN III 29,19 to 37,4.

scription of how this level of purity has been reached. The count of five purities is noteworthy in so far as it does not match the title of the discourses: *chabbisodhana*, "six-fold purity".

The Pāli commentary attempts to arrive at six types of purity by dividing the last item listed into two.² On this suggestion, freedom from any sense of 'I' or 'mine' in regard to this body with its consciousness and in regard to any external sign should be applied to oneself and to others. [243]

Although in this way a count of six could indeed be established, the same procedure could be applied to some of the other purities listed in the *Chabbisodhana-sutta*. One could, for example, distinguish between detachment in regard to one's own material elements and those of others. That is, a consistent application of this procedure would exceed the required count of six types of purity.

The commentary records also another opinion, attributed to the "elders that live on the other side of the sea".³ According to the explanation of these elders, a count of six purities can be reached by adding the detached attitude of an arahant in regard to the four nutriments. That this is indeed the way to arrive at six types of purities finds its confirmation in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Chabbisodhana-sutta*, which besides the five purities mentioned in the Pāli version does describe the detached attitude of an arahant towards the four nutriments of edible food, contact, intention and consciousness.⁴

² Ps IV 94,21.

³ Ps IV 94,23: *parasamuddavāsī therā*; this expression, as already noted by Mori 1991: 746f, would refer to elders from India.

⁴ MĀ 187 at T I 732b18. I briefly drew attention to this finding in Anālayo 2005: 104. The four nutriments occur also in the description of the detachment of an arahant in the *Saundaranandakāvya* 18.18, Johnston 1928: 136,5, together with the elements (18.14), the aggregates (18.15), and the senses (18.16).

Translation

Discourse on a Declaration of [Final] Knowledge⁵

1. Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was dwelling at Sāvathī, staying in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park.⁶ [244]

2. At that time the Blessed One told the monks: "Suppose a monk approaches you and declares to have attained [final] knowledge, [saying]: 'I know as it really is that birth has been extinguished, the holy life has been established, what had to be done has been done, there will be no experiencing of a further existence.'⁷

5. "Hearing this you should approve of it as good and correct,⁷ rejoice in it, and receive it respectfully. Having approved of it as good and correct, having rejoiced in it and received it respectfully, you should ask that monk further like this:

"Venerable friend, the Blessed One has taught five aggregates [affected by] clinging, the aggregates [affected by] clinging of bodily form, feeling, perception, volitional formations and consciousness.⁸ Venerable friend, knowing what and see-

⁵ The translated text is MĀ 187 at T I 732a21 to 734a25; for a comparative study of MĀ 187 cf. Anālayo 2011a: 635–639.

⁶ [8] MN 112 at MN III 29,21 at this point has a pericope found frequently in the *Majjhima-nikāya*, according to which the Buddha first addresses the monks: "bhikkhus", and they reply: "venerable sir", and only after this exchange the Buddha begins to deliver the discourse proper; on this pericope cf. also Anālayo 2011a: 21f.

⁷ [9] The advice given in MN 112 at MN III 29,26 is different, as here the monks are recommended to neither approve nor disapprove of the claim that has been made, *n' eva abhinanditabbaṃ nappaṭikkositabbaṃ*. That is, whereas according to MĀ 187 a claim to full awakening should be given an initial approval that is then followed by an investigation, in MN 112 approval will only be given once the investigation has been carried to its successful conclusion.

⁸ [10] While MĀ 187 at T I 732a27 just speaks of the teachings by the "Blessed

ing what in regard to these five aggregates [affected by] clinging have you attained the knowledge that there is no clinging to anything and that [through] the destruction of the influxes the mind has been liberated?"

6. "A monk, whose influxes are destroyed and who has attained the knowledge of having established the holy life, [732b] would properly answer like this: 'Venerable friends, the bodily form aggregate [affected by] clinging is without <strength>,⁹ empty and void, it is undesirable, it has no permanent existence, it cannot be relied on and is of a nature to change.

"Knowing like this, [whatever] I had of desire, defilement, attachment, bondage and underlying tendency to bondage and attachment in regard to the bodily form aggregate [affected by] clinging¹⁰ – that has been extinguished, has faded away, ceased, been tranquilized and calmed; and I attained the knowledge that there is no clinging to anything and that [through] the destruction of the influxes the mind has been liberated. [245]

"Like this [the aggregate affected by clinging of] feeling ... perception ... volitional formations ... the aggregate [affected by] clinging of consciousness is without strength, empty and void, it is undesirable, it has no permanent existence, it cannot be relied on and is of a nature to change.

"Knowing like this, whatever I had of desire, defilement, attachment, bondage and underlying tendency to bondage and

One", 世尊, MN 112 at MN III 29,29 refers to the teachings by the "Blessed One who knows and sees, the arahant, the Fully Awakened One", *bhagavatā jānatā passatā arahatā sammāsambuddhena*.

⁹ [11] MĀ 187 at T I 732b2: 非果, literally "without fruit", which, based on the parallel passage in MN 112 at MN III 30,31: *rūpaṃ kho ahaṃ, āvuso, abalaṃ ... viditvā*, I presume to be a mistaking of an equivalent of *abala* for *aphala*.

¹⁰ [12] MN 112 at MN III 31,1 also mentions (here and elsewhere) the overcoming of mental standpoints and adherences, *adhiṭṭhāna* and *abhinivesa*.

attachment in regard to the aggregate [affected by] clinging of consciousness – that has been extinguished, has faded away, ceased, been tranquillized and calmed; and I attained the knowledge that there is no clinging to anything and that [through] the destruction of the influxes the mind has been liberated.

"Venerable friends, knowing like this and seeing like this in regard to these five aggregates [affected by] clinging, I attained the knowledge that there is no clinging to anything and that [through] the destruction of the influxes the mind has been liberated.' A monk, whose influxes are destroyed and who has attained the knowledge of having established the holy life, would properly answer like this.

"Hearing this you should approve of it as good and correct, rejoice in it and receive it respectfully. Having approved of it as good and correct, having rejoiced in it and received it respectfully, you should further ask that monk like this:

"Venerable friend, the Blessed One has taught four nutriments, due to which living beings obtain existence and continue growing.¹¹ What are the four? Edible food, coarse and fine, is reckoned the first, contact is reckoned the second, volition is reckoned the third and consciousness is reckoned the fourth. Venerable friend, knowing what and seeing what in regard to these four nutriments have you attained the knowledge that there is no clinging to anything and that [through] the destruction of the influxes the mind has been liberated?' [246]

"A monk, whose influxes are destroyed and who has at-

¹¹ [13] Descriptions of the four nutriments in Pāli discourses, e.g., MN 9 at MN I 48,4, also refer to the support provided by these four nutriments for those who are about to come into existence or else who seek to come into existence, *sambhavesīnam vā anuggahāya* (on *-esin* cf. Bodhi in Ñāṇamoli 1995/2005: 1186 note 120).

tained the knowledge of having established the holy life, would properly answer like this: 'Venerable friends, being neither mentally elated nor depressed in regard to edible food – not depending on it, not bound by it, not defiled by it and not attached to it – I attained release, I attained emancipation, I attained total liberation, freeing the mind from the perversions (*vipallāsa*), knowing as it really is that birth has been extinguished, the holy life has been established, what had to be done has been done, there will be no experiencing of a further existence.

"Like this being neither mentally elated nor depressed in regard to the nutriment of contact ... volition ... consciousness – not depending on it, not bound by it, not defiled by it and not attached to it – I attained release, I attained emancipation, I attained total liberation, freeing the mind from the perversions, knowing as it really is that birth has been extinguished, the holy life has been established, what had to be done has been done, there will be no experiencing of a further existence.

"Venerable friends, knowing like this and seeing like this in regard to these four nutriments I attained the knowledge that there is no clinging to anything and that [through] the destruction of the influxes the mind has been liberated.' A monk, whose influxes are destroyed and who has attained the knowledge of having established the holy life, would properly answer like this. [247]

3. "Hearing this you should approve of it as good and correct, rejoice in it and receive it respectfully. Having approved of it as good and correct, having rejoiced in it and received it respectfully, you should further ask that monk like this:

"Venerable friend, the Blessed One has taught four [ways

of] expression.¹² What are the four? Declaring to have seen [what has been] seen is reckoned the first, declaring to have heard [what has been] heard is reckoned the second, declaring to have experienced [what has been] experienced is reckoned the third, [732c] declaring to have come to know [what has been] known is reckoned the fourth.¹³ Venerable friend, knowing what and seeing what in regard to these four [ways of] expression have you attained the knowledge that there is no clinging to anything and that [through] the destruction of the influxes the mind has been liberated?'

¹² [15] MĀ 187 at T I 732b28: 四說. Bapat 1975: 28 notes that this rendering correctly conveys *vohāra* in the sense of Skt. *vyāhāra*, just as in MĀ 203 at T I 773a15 (counterpart to *vohāra* in MN 54 at MN I 360,4) the translation 俗事 correctly conveys *vohāra* in the sense of Skt. *vyavahāra*, showing that the translator was clearly aware of the different meanings of the term.

¹³ [16] Notably, MĀ 187 at T I 732b30 has 識識說 at the point in its listing where its parallel MN 112 at MN III 29,30 has *muta mutavādītā*, and then 知知說 where MN 112 reads *viññāte viññātavādītā*. In their general usage in the *Madhyama-āgama*, 識 stands for "consciousness" or "being conscious", whereas 知 represents "knowing". The *Madhyama-āgama* seems to be consistent in its rendering of the four *vohāras*; cf. MĀ 106 at T I 596b18: 見, 聞, 識, 知, parallel to *diṭṭha, suta, muta* and *viññāta* in MN 1 at MN I 3,15 (in which case another parallel, EĀ 44.6 at T II 766b3, reads 見, 聞, 念, 知, and a third parallel, T 56 at T I 851b3, reads 見, 聞, 知, 識); or MĀ 200 at T I 764c22: 見, 聞, 識, 知, parallel to *diṭṭha, suta, muta* and *viññāta* in MN 22 at MN I 135,34. According to Vin IV 2,25, *muta* refers to what is experienced by the sense organs nose, tongue and body, whereas *viññāta* refers to what is experienced by the mind, an explanation given similarly in the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 634b6. Vetter 2000: 101 note 7, however, suggests that "*muta* rather points to 'experienced by the ['sense organ'] mind', whereas *viññāta* probably has ... the meaning 'experienced by other external senses'". Nakamura 1983: 312 notes that the same set is also found in the Jain tradition as *diṭṭhaṃ suyaṃ mayaṃ vinnāyaṃ*. The same group of four also occurs in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 3.7.23, Radhakrishnan 1953/1992: 229: *adr̥ṣṭo draṣṭā aśrutah śrotā, amata mantā, avijñāto vijñātā*.

4. "A monk, whose influxes are destroyed and who has attained the knowledge of having established the holy life, would properly answer like this: 'Venerable friends, being neither mentally elated nor depressed in regard to declaring to have seen [what has been] seen¹⁴ – not depending on it, not bound by it, not defiled by it and not attached to it – I attained release, I attained emancipation, I attained total liberation, freeing the mind from the perversions, knowing as it really is that birth has been extinguished, the holy life has been established, what had to be done has been done, there will be no experiencing of a further existence.

"Like this being neither mentally elated nor depressed in regard to declaring to have heard [what has been] heard ... to have experienced [what has been] experienced ... to have come to know [what has been] known – not depending on it, [248] not bound by it, not defiled by it and not attached to it – I attained release, I attained emancipation, I attained total liberation, freeing the mind from the perversions, knowing as it really is that birth has been extinguished, the holy life has been established, what had to be done has been done, there will be no experiencing of a further existence.

"Venerable friends, knowing like this and seeing like this in regard to these four [ways of] expression I attained the knowledge that there is no clinging to anything and that [through] the destruction of the influxes the mind has been liberated.' A monk, whose influxes are destroyed and who has attained the knowledge of having established the holy life, would properly answer like this.

¹⁴ [17] MN 112 at MN III 30,8 instead switches from the earlier mentioned *diṭṭhe diṭṭhavādīnā*, etc., to just *diṭṭhe*, etc., so that in its exposition, even though the inquiry was after the four ways of expression, the monk's answer is about his attitude towards what is seen, heard, sensed and cognised.

9. "Hearing this you should approve of it as good and correct, rejoice in it and receive it respectfully. Having approved of it as good and correct, having rejoiced in it and received it respectfully, you should further ask that monk like this:

"Venerable friend, the Blessed One has taught six internal sense-spheres: The eye sense-sphere, the ear ... nose ... tongue ... body ... and the mind sense-sphere. Venerable friend, knowing what and seeing what in regard to these six internal sense-spheres have you attained the knowledge that there is no clinging to anything and that [through] the destruction of the influxes the mind has been liberated?"

10. "A monk, whose influxes are destroyed and who has attained the knowledge of having established the holy life, would properly answer like this: [249] 'Venerable friends, in regard to the eye, as well as eye-consciousness and objects to be experienced by eye-consciousness,¹⁵ I have complete knowledge.

¹⁵ [18] MN 112 at MN III 32,16 also brings in the objects of the respective senses, reading (in the case of the first sense) *cakkhusmiṃ ... rūpe, cakkhuvīññāne, cakkhuvīññānaviññātabbesu dhammesu*. Here the presentation in MĀ 187 seems more economical, since once "things to be cognised" by one of the senses are taken into account, to mention the corresponding object would be redundant. Ps IV 93,22 attempts to explain this redundancy by suggesting that "form" refers to what is actually cognised, while the expression "things to be cognised by eye-consciousness" refers to what could have been cognised but has disappeared (or will disappear) without being cognised. This explanation is not fully convincing, since it would be irrelevant to describe the reaction of an arahant to what he or she does not experience at all. The commentary offers also another explanation, according to which the expression "things to be cognised by eye-consciousness" refers to the aggregates of feeling, perception and volitional formations that are present together with eye-consciousness during the act of cognition, while "form" stands for the object. This also does not seem to solve the problem, since the aggregates of feeling, perception and volitional formations are not cognisable by eye-consciousness or any of the other sense-consciousness, so that apart from "form" there would be little

Having come to know these two aspects [of experience], venerable friends, delight [in regard to] the eye, as well as eye-consciousness and objects to be experienced by eye-consciousness, has been extinguished. [Through] that extinction, dispassion, cessation, tranquillization and calming I attained the knowledge that there is no clinging to anything and that [through] the destruction of the influxes the mind has been liberated.

"Like this in regard to the ear ... the nose ... the tongue ... the body ... the mind, as well as mind-consciousness and objects to be experienced by mind-consciousness, I have complete knowledge. Having come to know these two aspects [of experience], venerable friends, delight [in regard to] the mind, as well as mind-consciousness and objects to be experienced by mind-consciousness, has been extinguished. [Through] that extinction, dispassion, cessation, tranquillization and calming I attained the knowledge that there is no clinging to anything and that [through] the destruction of the influxes the mind has been liberated.

"Venerable friends, knowing like this and seeing like this in regard to these six internal sense-spheres I attained the knowledge that there is no clinging to anything and that [through] the destruction of the influxes the mind has been liberated.' A monk, whose influxes are destroyed and who has attained the knowledge of having established the holy life, would properly answer like this. [250]

7. "Hearing this you should approve of it as good and correct, rejoice in it and receive it respectfully. Having approved of it as good and correct, having rejoiced in it and received it

scope for finding anything that could be fitted into the category "things to be cognised by eye-consciousness".

respectfully, you should further ask that monk like this:

"Venerable friend, the Blessed One has taught six elements: the earth element, the water element, the fire element, the wind element, the space element and the consciousness element.

"Venerable friend, knowing what and seeing what in regard to these six elements have you attained the knowledge that there is no clinging to anything and that [through] the destruction of the influxes the mind has been liberated?' [733a]

8. "A monk, whose influxes are destroyed and who has attained the knowledge of having established the holy life, would properly answer like this: 'Venerable friends, I do not see the earth element as mine, nor myself as pertaining to the earth element, nor the earth element as a self,¹⁶ that is to say, [in regard to] the these three [modes of] clinging that in dependence on the earth element [can] come into existence,¹⁷ [through] the extinction, fading away, cessation, tranquilliza-

¹⁶ [19] MN 112 at MN III 31,23 presents this purity only in a two-fold manner: neither taking the element as self, nor [conceiving a sense of] self based on the element, (e.g., in the case of earth): *paṭhavīdhātuṃ ... anattato upagacchīṃ, na ca paṭhavīdhātunissitaṃ attānaṃ* (B^e and C^e read *na attato upagacchīṃ*).

¹⁷ [20] A variant reading speaks instead of two types of clinging, 二受. The reference to three types of clinging is specific to the present instance, evidently intending what has been described in the previous sentence. Thus the occurrence of 三受 in MĀ 187 at T I 733a4 does not imply a departure from the standard set of four types of clinging, listed, e.g., in MĀ 29 at T I 463a7 in close agreement with its Pāli counterpart MN 9 at MN I 51,1, 謂有四受, 欲受, 戒受, 見受, 我受, a listing found also in MĀ 103 at T I 591b9 (parallel to MN 11 at MN I 67,5). The only difference between such listings in the two collections is that instead of the Pāli versions' "clinging to a doctrine of self", *attavādupādāna*, *Madhyama-āgama* listings simply speak of "clinging to [a sense of] self"; for a discussion of this difference cf. Anālayo 2008c.

tion and calming of any underlying tendency to attachment,¹⁸ I attained the knowledge that there is no clinging to anything and that [through] the destruction of the influxes the mind has been liberated.

"Venerable friends, I do not see the water ... the fire ... the wind ... the space ... the consciousness element as mine, nor myself as pertaining to the consciousness element, nor the consciousness element as the self, that is to say, [in regard to] these three [modes of] clinging that in dependence on the consciousness element [can] come into existence, [through] the extinction, [251] fading away, cessation, tranquillization and calming of any underlying tendency to attachment, I attained the knowledge that there is no clinging to anything and that [through] the destruction of the influxes the mind has been liberated.

"Venerable friends, knowing like this and seeing like this in regard to these six elements I attained the knowledge that there is no clinging to anything and that [through] the destruction of the influxes the mind has been liberated.' A monk, whose influxes are destroyed and who has attained the knowledge of having established the holy life, would properly answer like this.

11. "Hearing this you should approve of it as good and correct, rejoice in it and receive it respectfully. Having approved of it as good and correct, having rejoiced in it and received it respectfully, you should further ask that monk like this:

"Venerable friend, knowing what and seeing what in regard to this internal body with consciousness and [in regard to] all external signs has any [notion of an] 'I', I-making and underlying tendency to conceit been abandoned, is known to have

¹⁸ [21] Following the variant reading 諸 instead of 識.

been uprooted and cut off at its root, unable to come to growth again?"

12. "A monk, whose influxes are destroyed and who has attained the knowledge of having established the holy life, would properly answer like this: 'Venerable friends, formerly at the time when I had not yet gone forth to train in the path, I felt weary of birth, old age, disease and death; of sorrow, lamentation and distress; of worry, mourning, dejection and grief – wishing to abandon this great mass of *dukkha*. [252]

"Venerable friends, having felt weary of this misery I had this reflection: 'Life in the house is confined, a place full of dust; going forth to train in the path is [like] emerging into a great open space. Now for me at home, being chained by [such] chains, it is not possible for the [whole] life to manifest completely the pure practice of the holy life. I would rather forsake my wealth, little or much, forsake my relatives, few or many, shave off beard and hair, put on monastic robes and out of confidence leave the home life, become homeless to train in the path.

"Venerable friends, at a later time I forsook my wealth, little or much, forsook my relatives, few or many, shaved off beard and hair, put on monastic robes and out of confidence left the home life, became homeless to train in the path.

13. "Venerable friends, having gone forth to train in the path, having forsaken the [outward] signs of being a family [man] and received the essentials of monkhood, I practised the precepts, guarding the code of rules; I adopted proper conduct and manners, always fearing the slightest fault, upholding the essentials of the training.

"Venerable friends, I abstained from killing and had abandoned killing, having discarded sword and club, I had a sense of shame and fear of blame, with a mind [full of] benevolence

and compassion for the welfare of all [beings], even insects.¹⁹ I purified my mind with regard to killing living beings. [733b]

"[Venerable friends], I abstained from taking what is not given and had abandoned taking what is not given, taking [only] after it had been given, delighting in taking what is given, always being fond of giving in generosity, rejoicing in [generosity] without stinginess, [253] not expecting a reward. I purified my mind with regard to taking what is not given.

"Venerable friends, I abstained from sexual activity and had abandoned sexual activity, diligently cultivating the practice of celibacy, energetically [practising this] immaculate conduct with unsoiled purity, free from sensual desires, giving up sexual desires. I purified my mind with regard to sexual activity.

"Venerable friends, I abstained from false speech and had abandoned false speech, I spoke the truth, delighting in truth, unshakeably established in speaking truth, being completely trustworthy, not deceiving [anyone in] the world. I purified my mind with regard to false speech.

"Venerable friends, I abstained from divisive speech and had abandoned divisive speech, I engaged in speech that is not divisive, that does not harm others. I did not tell those what I had heard here, out of a wish to harm these; nor did I tell these what I had heard there, out of a wish to harm those. I had the wish to unite those who were divided, delighting in union. I did not create factions, did not delight in or praise the [forming of] factions. I purified my mind with regard to divisive speech.

"Venerable friends, I abstained from harsh speech and had

¹⁹ [22] MN 112 does not explicitly mention insects, nor does it mention purification of the mind in respect to each restraint, except for the case of taking what is not given; cf. MN 112 at MN III 33,23: *sucibhūtena attanā vihāsim*.

abandoned harsh speech. Whatever speech there is that is rough and rude in tone, offensive sounds that grate on the ear, that people neither enjoy nor desire, [speech] that causes others suffering and vexation and that does not lead to calmness, such speech I had abandoned.²⁰ Whatever speech there is that is clear, peaceful and gentle, that is pleasant to the ear and [easily] enters the mind, that is enjoyable and desirable, that gives others happiness, words endowed with meaning, that do not make others afraid and that lead to calmness in others,²¹ [254] such speech I spoke. I purified my mind with regard to harsh speech.

"Venerable friends, I abstained from frivolous speech and had abandoned frivolous speech. I spoke at the [proper] time, speaking what is true, what is Dharma, what is meaningful, what [leads to] appeasement, delighting in appeasing litigations, I would teach well and admonish [others] well in accordance with the [proper] time and in a proper way.²² I purified my mind with regard to frivolous speech.

"Venerable friends, I abstained from earning profits and had abandoned earning profits. I had discarded weights and measures and did not accept goods [on commission], I did not bind people [with debts], I did not try to cheat with measures, nor did I deceive others for the sake of some small profit.²³ I

²⁰ [23] MN 112 takes up the case of harsh speech in brief, only giving a detailed description in relation to its opposite of gentle speech.

²¹ [24] MĀ 187 at T I 733b14: 令他得定, an aspect not mentioned in MN 112. That gentle speech is conducive to concentration is also indicated, e.g., in MN 41 at MN I 286,37, which considers harsh speech to be *asamādhisaṃvattanika*; cf. also SHT III 808 R5, Waldschmidt 1971: 15, which in the context of a gradual path treatment qualifies harsh speech as *asamā[dh]i[sa]ṃ[va]r[dhan]ī*.

²² [25] MN 112 does not refer to litigations or to teaching and admonishing.

²³ [26] The present case combines into one what MN 112 at MN III 34,19 presents

purified my mind with regard to earning profits.

"Venerable friends, I abstained from accepting widows or girls and had abandoned accepting widows or girls. I purified my mind with regard to accepting widows or girls.

"Venerable friends, I abstained from accepting male or female slaves and had abandoned accepting male or female slaves. I purified my mind with regard to accepting male or female slaves.

"Venerable friends, I abstained from accepting elephants, horses, cows or sheep and had abandoned accepting elephants, horses, cows or sheep. I purified my mind with regard to accepting elephants, horses, cows or sheep.²⁴

"Venerable friends, I abstained from accepting chickens or swine and had abandoned accepting chickens or swine. I purified my mind with regard to accepting chickens or swine. [255]

"Venerable friends, I abstained from accepting farmlands or marketplaces and had abandoned accepting farmlands or marketplaces.²⁵ [733c] I purified my mind with regard to accepting farmlands or marketplaces.

"Venerable friends, I abstained from accepting uncooked rice, wheat or legumes and had abandoned accepting uncooked rice, wheat or legumes.²⁶ I purified my mind with regard to ac-

as two distinct aspects: buying and selling, *kayavikkaya*; and using false weights, etc., *tulākūṭakaṃsakūṭamānakūṭa*, which, moreover, occur towards the end of the Pāli version's listing. For a survey of the sequence of listings in the two versions see table 12.

²⁴ [27] The present case combines into one what MN 112 at MN III 34,15 presents as two distinct aspects: accepting goats or sheep; and accepting elephants, cows, horses or mares (MĀ 187 does not mention mares or goats).

²⁵ [28] MN 112 at MN III 34,17 speaks instead of accepting "ground", *vatthu*.

²⁶ [29] MN 112 at MN III 34,12 also mentions accepting raw meat, *āmakamaṃsa*. Minh Chau 1991: 31 takes this difference to have deeper significance, in the sense that from the perspective of the Pāli tradition cooked meat is allowed,

cepting uncooked rice, wheat or legumes.

"Venerable friends, I abstained from alcoholic beverages and had abandoned alcoholic beverages.²⁷ I purified my mind with regard to drinking alcoholic beverages.

"Venerable friends, I abstained from [reclining on] high

whereas the dropping of any reference to meat in the corresponding section in *Madhyama-āgama* discourses implies that all kinds of meat are prohibited, thereby representing – according to Minh Chau – the Sarvāstivāda championing of vegetarianism. Yet, if all kinds of meat were considered as being prohibited, one would expect MĀ 187 to simply state that, i.e., to drop the reference to "raw" and keep the remainder of the regulation, instead of dropping the whole rule. Moreover, Prasad 1985: 136 points out that the reference to accepting raw meat lacks a counterpart also in the other *Āgamas* and therefore is not specific to the Sarvāstivāda tradition; cf. also below page 528ff.

²⁷ [30] Notably this is the only item in the listing in MĀ 187 that does not have a counterpart in MN 112, though the Pāli discourses refer to the need of abstaining from alcohol in the context of the five precepts; cf., e.g., DN 5 at DN I 146,20 (with its monastic counterpart in *pācittiya* 51 at Vin IV 110,13). Whereas a description of ethical restraint as part of the gradual path in the *Saṅghabhedavastu*, Gnoli 1978a: 233, also does not refer to the consumption of alcohol, the same is taken into account in a gradual path account in DĀ 20 at T I 83c27. Nattier 2003a: 109 note 11 points out that variations in regard to reference to abstaining from alcohol occur even within a single work, such as the *Mahāvastu*, where in one instance a listing of the ten courses of action, *karmapatha*, includes the prohibition against alcohol (at the cost of omitting a reference to harsh speech), whereas in another instance the ten courses are listed without a reference to alcohol; cf. Senart 1882: 107,13 and Senart 1890: 99,5. The importance of such abstention is highlighted in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Pradhan 1967: 218,18, according to which lack of restraint in this respect endangers keeping the other precepts as well. The long term consequences of alcohol consumption are, according to AN 8.40 at AN IV 248,9, either rebirth in hell, or as an animal, or as a ghost, or as a mentally deranged human. Reat 1996: 49 comments that "though it is clear that the Buddha did not approve of alcohol and drugs, abstinence from intoxicants ... in the Pāli *sūtras* ... is ... not nearly as prominent [an] ... ethical issue as it came to be in later Buddhism".

and broad beds and had abandoned [reclining on] high and broad beds. I purified my mind with regard to [reclining on] high and broad beds.

"Venerable friends, I abstained from [using] flower garlands, necklaces, perfumes and cosmetics and had abandoned [using] flower garlands, necklaces, perfumes and cosmetics. I purified my mind with regard to flower garlands, necklaces, perfumes and cosmetics.

"Venerable friends, I abstained from singing, dancing or acting, and from going to see or hear [singing, dancing or acting]; I had abandoned singing, dancing or acting, and [abandoned] going to see or hear [singing, dancing or acting]. I purified my mind with regard to singing, dancing or acting, and [with regard to] going to see or hear [singing, dancing or acting].

"Venerable friends, I abstained from accepting gold, jewellery and the like and had abandoned accepting gold, jewellery and the like. I purified my mind with regard to accepting gold, jewellery and the like. [256]

"Venerable friends, I abstained from eating after noon and had abandoned eating after noon. I took [only] a single meal [per day], not eating at night, training in eating at the [proper] time. I purified my mind with regard to eating after noon.

14. "Venerable friends, having accomplished this noble aggregate of virtue I further engaged in contentment, taking robes [just] to cover the body and taking food [just] to sustain the physical body. Wherever I went, I took robes and bowl with me, without concerns or longings, just as a wild goose flies through the air with [only] its two wings, I was like that.

15. "Venerable friends, having accomplished this noble

aggregate of virtue and this supreme contentment,²⁸ I further guarded the senses, always mindful of stopping thoughts of desire, with clear understanding successfully guarding the mind through mindfulness and attaining perfection [therein], constantly willing to arouse the mind.²⁹ Thus, on seeing a form with the eye, I did not grasp its sign nor did I savour the form.³⁰ That is to say, I guarded the eye faculty for the sake of restraint,³¹ so that no covetousness, sadness and worry, evil and unwholesome phenomena would arise in the mind, for that reason I guarded the eye faculty.

"Like this, on [hearing a sound] with the ear ... [smelling an odour] with the nose ... [tasting a flavour] with the tongue ... [experiencing a touch] with the body ... coming to know a phenomenon with the mind, I did not grasp its sign nor did I savour the phenomenon. That is to say, I guarded the mind fac-

²⁸ [31] MN 112 at MN III 34,30 adds that at this point a form of happiness that is due to blamelessness is experienced within, *ajjhataṃ anavajjasukhaṃ paṭi-saṃvedesiṃ*.

²⁹ [32] MN 112 does not describe the role of mindfulness and energy in this way. Yit 2004: 185 notes that a similar specification can be found in AN 5.114 at AN III 138,20, however, which associates sense-restraint with "protective mindfulness", *ārakkhasatino*, and speaks of being "endowed with a mind protected by mindfulness", *satārakkhena cetasā samannāgata*; as is the case for the *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1897: 52,4: *ārakṣāsmṛti ... araktena cetasā samanvāgataḥ*, and the *Saṅghabhedavastu*, Gnoli 1978a: 240,20, which speaks of *guptasmṛtimānasaḥ*; cf. also the *Śrāvakahūmi*, Shukla 1973: 64,6, 65,9 and 66,4 or ŚSG 1998: 100,8+18 and 101,2 as well as T 1579 at T XXX 406b24 and T XXX 406c3+10, which gives a detailed exposition on the implications of *ārakṣitasmṛti* / 防守正念, *nipakasmṛti* / 委正念, and *smṛtyārakṣitamānasa* / 念防護意 under the heading of *indriyaśaṃvara*.

³⁰ [33] MN 112 at MN III 34,31 speaks of not grasping the sign or the details, *na nimittaggāhī* and *nānubyañjanaggāhī*.

³¹ [34] MĀ 187 at T I 733c19: 譚忿靜故, where I follow the indication in Hirakawa 1997: 471 that 忿靜 can render *viruddha*.

ulty for the sake of restraint, so that no covetousness, sadness and worry, evil and unwholesome phenomena would arise in the mind, for that reason I guarded the mind faculty. [257]

16. "Venerable friends, having accomplished this noble aggregate of virtue, this supreme contentment, and this noble guarding of the senses,³² I had right comprehension when going out and coming in,³³ contemplating and distinguishing well when bending, stretching, lowering and lifting up [a limb]; with orderly manners and appearance,³⁴ I properly carried the outer robe, the other robes and the bowl;³⁵ when walking, standing, sitting and reclining, when sleeping or awake, when talking or keeping silent, I always had right comprehension.

17. "Venerable friends, having accomplished this noble aggregate of virtue, this supreme knowledge of contentment, this noble guarding of the senses, and having obtained right

³² [35] MN 112 at MN III 35,10 adds that at this point the monk experienced an unimpaired type of happiness within, *ajjhataṃ abyāsekasukhaṃ paṭisaṃvedesiṃ*.

³³ [36] MN 112 additionally mentions clear comprehension when looking in any direction. The same aspect of clear comprehension is also mentioned in DĀ 2 at T I 14a3 and in the *Śrāvakahūmi*, Shukla 1973: 11,12 or ŚSG 1998: 20,4 and T 1579 at T XXX 397b17.

³⁴ [37] MĀ 187 at T I 733c26: 庠序; cf. the explanation given in T 2128 at T LIV 615b23. This aspect of clear comprehension is not mentioned in MN 112.

³⁵ [38] At this point MN 112 additionally mentions clear comprehension when eating and when defecating or urinating. A description of clear comprehension in DĀ 2 at T I 14a3 also mentions eating and drinking, as does the *Śrāvakahūmi*, Shukla 1973: 11,13 or ŚSG 1998: 20,5 and T 1579 at T XXX 397b19. A reference to clear comprehension in a *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* fragment, S 360 folio 167 V6, Waldschmidt 1950: 15, however, appears to be similar to the listing found in MĀ 187, as it continues straightaway after *sāṃghāṭīcivarapātra-dhāraṇe* with *gate sṭhite niṣaṃṇe sāyite*, whereas in MN 112 at MN III 35,14 *asite pīte khāyite sāyite* and *uccārapassāvakamme* are found between *saṅghāṭipattacīvaradhāraṇe* and *gate ṭhite nisinne sutte*.

comprehension when going out or coming in, I stayed alone in a secluded solitary place, either going to an empty peaceful place at the foot of a tree, [734a] or to a mountain cave, or to a heap of straw in an open place, or to a forest, or to a cemetery.

"Venerable friends, having stayed in a solitary place, or having gone to an empty peaceful place at the foot of a tree, I spread the sitting mat and sat down cross-legged with straight body and straight mental aspiration, and with mindfulness that was not scattered.³⁶

I abandoned and removed covetousness, with a mind free from agitation,³⁷ not giving rise to covetousness with the wish 'may I get it' when seeing the wealth of others and their endowment with livelihood. I purified my mind with regard to covetousness.

"Like this I abandoned ill will ... sloth-and-torpor ... restlessness-and-worry ... doubt, overcoming hesitation, free from vacillation in regard to wholesome things. I purified my mind with regard to doubt. [258]

18. "Venerable friends, when I had abandoned these five hindrances, which are blemishes of the mind that weaken wisdom, secluded from sensual desires and secluded from evil and unwholesome things ... (*up to*) ... I dwelled having attained the fourth absorption.

19. "Venerable friends, when I had obtained concentration like this, with a mind that is purified and without blemish or affliction, that had become soft and supple, well steadied and attained to imperturbability, I roused the mind to progress towards knowledge and realization of the destruction of the in-

³⁶ [39] MĀ 187 at TI 734a4: 念不向; MN 112 at MN III 35,24 speaks of *parimukha sati*.

³⁷ [40] MĀ 187 at T I 734a4: 心無有諍, where in my translation I follow the indication given in Hirakawa 1997: 1085 that 諍 can also render *kṣobha*.

fluxes.

"Venerable friends, I knew: 'this is *dukkha*' as it really is, I knew: 'this is the arising of *dukkha*' ... I knew: 'this is the cessation of *dukkha*' ... I knew: 'this is the path leading to the cessation of *dukkha*' as it really is. I knew: 'these are the influxes' ... I knew: 'this is the arising of the influxes' ... I knew: 'this is the cessation of the influxes' ... I knew: 'this is the path leading to the cessation of the influxes' as it really is.

20. "When I knew and saw that like this, the mind was liberated from the influx of sensual desire, from the influx of existence and the mind was liberated from the influx of ignorance. Being liberated I knew to be liberated, knowing as it really is: 'Birth has been extinguished, the holy life has been established, what had to be done has been done, there will be no experiencing of a further existence'.

"Knowing like this and seeing like this in regard to this internal body with consciousness and [in regard to] all external signs any [notion of an] 'I', I-making and underlying tendency to conceit has been abandoned, is known to have been uprooted and cut off at its root, unable to come to growth again.' [259] A monk, whose influxes are destroyed and who has attained the knowledge of having established the holy life, would properly answer like this.

21. "Hearing this you should approve of it as good and correct, rejoice in it and receive it respectfully. Having approved of it as good and correct, having rejoiced in it and received it respectfully, you should further tell that monk like this:

"Venerable friend, at your first declaration we already felt approval and rejoiced in it. Yet, we wanted to further listen to the venerable one [as he proceeds] from high to higher and seek out his wisdom and eloquence in replying, for this reason

we kept on asking the venerable question after question'."³⁸

The Buddha spoke like this. The monks, having listened to what the Buddha said, were delighted and received it respectfully.

Study

Apart from the lack of any reference to the arahant's purity in regard to the four nutriments in the *Chabbisodhana-sutta*, the two versions are quite similar in their expositions, which do not seem to involve substantially different perspectives on the theme of the mental purity of an arahant.

The degree to which oral transmission can affect a discourse can be seen by comparing the listing of ethical observances and the listing of purities in the two versions. As shown in table 12 and table 13, in both cases the sequence of listing varies considerably, even though the actual items listed show much overlap.³⁹ [260]

In regard to the listing of ethical restraints (table 12), [262] it would be difficult to decide whether items found only in one version are due to an addition in this version or to a loss in the parallel version. Besides, none of these differences appears to be significant enough to involve a substantially different attitude to ethical restraint.

³⁸ [41] Such a statement is not found in MN 112 at MN III 37,1, where the monks only at this point fully approve of his claim by stating that they consider it a great gain to have a companion like him.

³⁹ [42] When comparing the listing in MĀ 187 with MN 112, in table 12 and 13 I use → to indicate correspondence with MN 112 and ≠ if no counterpart is found. Thus, e.g., → 1 means that this corresponds to the first quality in MN 112.

Table 12: Listing of Ethical Restraints

MN 112:	MĀ 187:
killing (1)	killing (→ 1)
theft (2)	theft (→ 2)
sexual activity (3)	sexual activity (→ 3)
false speech (4)	false speech (→ 4)
divisive speech (5)	divisive speech (→ 5)
harsh speech (6)	harsh speech (→ 6)
frivolous speech (7)	frivolous speech (→ 7)
injuring seeds and plants (≠)	trading and cheating (→ 23 & 24)
eating after noon (9)	accepting women (→ 16)
dancing and singing (10)	accepting slaves (→ 17)
garlands and beautification (11)	accepting elephants, etc., (→ 18 & 20)
using high beds (12)	accepting chicken or pigs (→ 19)
accepting gold, etc. (13)	accepting land (→ 21)
accepting grain (14)	accepting grain (→ 14)
accepting raw meat (≠)	taking alcohol (≠)
accepting women (16)	high beds (→ 12)
accepting slaves (17)	garlands and beautification (→ 11)
accepting goats or sheep (18)	dancing and singing (→ 10)
accepting chicken or pigs (19)	accepting gold etc. (→ 13)
accepting elephants, etc. (20)	eating after noon (→ 9)
accepting land (21)	
going on errands (≠)	
trading (23)	
cheating (24)	
accepting bribes, etc. (≠)	
murder and robbery (≠)	

In regard to the listing of purities (table 13), however, it seems

quite probable that the Pāli version lost one item from the listing. This suggests itself from the title of the Pāli version, which only makes sense if at an earlier time an additional type of purity, such as provided through the treatment of the four nutriments, was part of the *Chabbisodhana-sutta*. The "elders that live on the other side of the sea", mentioned in the Pāli commentary, were apparently still familiar with such an earlier version that included the four nutriments, a treatment probably lost at some point during or after the transmission of the Pāli discourse from India to Sri Lanka.

Table 13: Listing of Purities

MN 112:	MĀ 187:
four ways of expression (1)	five aggregates (→ 2)
five aggregates (2)	four nutriments (≠)
six elements (3)	four ways of expression (→ 1)
six senses (4)	six senses (→ 4)
sense of 'I' (5)	six elements (→ 3)
	sense of 'I' (→ 5)

From the perspective of oral transmission, this apparent loss of a whole section of the Pāli discourse, together with the commentarial gloss on this loss, are noteworthy. Although the present case reveals that even a considerable part of a discourse can be lost, it also shows the degree to which the reciting monks were committed to preserving a discourse as they had received it. It would have been easy for the reciters to supply the missing section about the four nutriments on the strength of the discourse's title and the commentarial explanation by simply inserting a treatment of the four nutriments from another discourse; or else they could have changed the title to "five-fold purity" in order to make it fit with

the discourse's content. This did not happen and the Pāli discourse was instead handed down in its present truncated state. That no such change was introduced, testifies to the fidelity of the reciters and their earnest efforts, albeit not always successful, to pass on a discourse the way they had received it.

Even with this substantial loss, the basic message of the *Chab-bisodhana-sutta* and its parallel remains the same. Once a claimant to full awakening could prove his or her total detachment in regard to the four ways of expression, [263] the five aggregates [affected by] clinging, the six elements, and the six senses, and furthermore through successful completion of the gradual path has gone completely beyond any sense of 'I' or 'mine', it would naturally follow that this level of accomplishment also implies total detachment in regard to the four nutriments. Thus, even though the Pāli version appears to have suffered a substantial textual loss, the descriptions of mental purity given in the two versions otherwise agree closely.

The present case thus clearly shows the impact of orality on early Buddhist discourse material and illustrates the potential of comparative studies between discourses from the Pāli *Nikāyas* and their parallels in the Chinese *Āgamas* in bringing out details of the teaching with additional clarity, while at the same time confirming essentials. This confirmation is, perhaps, the most important result of such comparative studies, in that it takes our understanding of early Buddhism beyond the confines of a single tradition and places it on a broader basis.

Bahudhātuka-sutta (MN 115)

Introduction

The present chapter takes up the *Bahudhātuka-sutta*, which presents an analytical exposition of various doctrinal themes as well as a listing of impossibilities, according to which a woman is incapable of being a Buddha. Notably, this impossibility is not found at all in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Bahudhātuka-sutta*.¹ By way of providing a background to this significant difference, in what follows I briefly survey the position taken in other early discourses regarding the spiritual abilities of women, followed by a detailed study of the *Bahudhātuka-sutta* in the light of its parallels.

Other early Buddhist discourses indicate that the ability to attain any of the four stages of awakening is independent of gender. An explicit endorsement of women's abilities to reach awakening can be found in a discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya* and its counterparts in two *Samyukta-āgama* collections translated into Chinese, which allegorically refer to a set of wholesome qualities as a vehicle for approaching liberation. The three versions agree that by means of this vehicle the goal of liberation can be reached independent of whether the one who mounts the vehicle is a woman or a man.²

* Originally published 2009 under the title "The Bahudhātuka-sutta and its Parallels on Women's Inabilities", in the *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, 16: 137–190.

¹ [10] This has already been noted by Nagata 2002: 282f.

² [1] SN 1.46 at SN I 33,11: "woman or man, by means of this vehicle [come] close to Nirvāṇa", *itthiyā purisassa vā, sa ve etena yānena, nibbānasseva santike* (C^e reads *nibbānasseva*); SĀ 587 at T II 156a22: "a sublime vehicle like this, mounted by a man or a woman, will emerge out of the thicket of birth

Such a clear assertion of gender equality in the spiritual realm is remarkable in view of what appears to have been a prevalent attitude towards women and their religious potential in ancient India.³ In another discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya* and its parallels in the two *Samyukta-āgamas* already mentioned, Māra appears as an advocate of ancient Indian machismo in this respect.⁴

The three versions describe how Māra accosts a meditating nun and tries to unsettle her by suggesting that a woman's innate

and death, leading to the attainment of the peaceful state", 如是之妙乘, 男女之所乘, 出生死叢林, 逮得安樂處; SĀ² 171 at T II 437a24: "men as well as women, are able to mount this vehicle, will certainly discard name-and-form, become dispassionate and eradicate birth and death", 男子若女人, 能乘是乘者, 必捨棄名色, 離欲斷生死.

³ [2] Jaini 1991: 1 notes that the Digambara Jains "vehemently have insisted that one cannot attain mokṣa, emancipation of a soul from the cycles of birth and death (*saṃsāra*), as a female". Though the formation of the Digambara sect postdates the period of early Buddhism, this position is nevertheless noteworthy in the light of the indication given in the *Jinacaritra* that nuns consistently outnumbered monks throughout Jain history (*Jinacaritra* 134f, 161f, 176f and 214f counts 14.000 monks against 36.000 nuns under Mahāvīra; 16.000 monks against 38.000 nuns under Parśva; 18.000 monks against 40.000 nuns under Ariṣṭanemi; and 84.000 monks against 300.000 nuns under Rṣabha; cf. Jacobi 1879/1966: 66,5, 69,18, 71,22 and 75,18). Independent of the historical value of such figures, they do point to the eminent position nuns were believed to have held in the Jain monastic order since the most ancient times. That a whole series of the Jain tradition should eventually come to affirm that women are incapable of reaching liberation shows, as pointed out by Jaini 1991: 23, that "the prejudice against the female sex must have been deep-rooted in the popular mind". For a study of Digambara nuns cf. Shāntā 1985/1997: 630–683.

⁴ [3] Rajapakse 1995: 13 note 14 comments that "it is interesting to note that the doubts in question are raised by Māra, the mythic-symbolic focus of evil in Buddhism, who thus assumes the role of a 'male chauvinist' in this setting. Māra generally functions ... as an opponent of goodness and spirituality"; cf. also Anālayo 2012a.

lack of wisdom renders her incapable of reaching realization.⁵ The nun is quick to give a fitting reply to this insinuation. After clarifying that gender is simply irrelevant, once the mind is concentrated, she tells Māra that with such talk he should better go to those who are still caught up in identifications with being a woman or being a man.⁶

⁵ [4] SN 5.2 at SN I 129,14: "what is to be attained by seers ... that a woman with her two finger wisdom cannot attain", *yan taṃ isīhi pattaḃbaṃ ... na taṃ dvaṅgulapaññāya, sakkā pappotum itthiyā* (following the new E^c edition by Somaratne 1998: 283,11). SĀ 1199 at T II 326b1: "the state wherein seers dwell, this state is very difficult to attain, one with [just] a two finger's wisdom is unable to attain that state", 仙人所住處, 是處甚難得, 非彼二指智, 能得到彼處; for a translation of SĀ 1199 cf. Anālayo 2012a. SĀ² 215 at T II 454a5: "what is attained by seers, that state is difficult to reach, with your despicable and defiled wisdom you will not attain a state like that", 仙聖之所得, 斯處難階及, 非汝鄙穢智, 獲得如是處. The reference to a woman's "two finger wisdom" in SN 5.2 and SĀ 1199 may have been a popular saying, as it recurs in a different context in the *Mahāvastu* in Senart 1897: 391,19 and 392,13; cf. also Gokhale 1976: 104, Kloppenborg 1995: 154, Bodhi 2000: 425 note 336, Abeynayake 2003: 3 and Collett 2009b: 99 note 7.

⁶ [5] SN 5.2 at SN I 129,23: "what does womanhood matter, [once] the mind is well concentrated? ... one to whom it would occur that 'I am a woman' or '[I am] a man' ... [only] to such a one it is fit for Māra to speak [like this]"; *itthibhāvo kiṃ kayirā, cittaṃhi susamāhite ... yassa nūna siyā evaṃ, itthāhaṃ puriso ti vā ... taṃ māro vattum arahati* (S^c reads *itthibhāvo* and *itthīhaṃ*). SĀ 1199 at T II 326b6: "[once] the mind has entered a [concentrative] attainment, what has a female appearance to do with that? If knowledge has arisen, the unsurpassable state will be reached. [But] if in regard to the perception of being a 'man' or a 'woman', the mind has not reached complete separation, then such a one will speak like Māra. You should go and speak to such a one"; 心入於正受, 女形復何為, 智或若生已, 逮得無上法, 若於男女想, 心不得俱離, 彼即隨魔說, 汝應往語彼. SĀ² 215 at T II 454a9: "the characteristics of a woman have nothing to do with it, only the mind develops concentrative absorption and contemplates with vision the supreme Dharma. One who has the perception of a 'man' or a 'woman', may say to a woman that she can achieve

In direct contrast to the prejudice voiced by Māra, according to a range of *Vinayas* the Buddha clearly affirmed women's ability to reach any of the four stages of awakening.⁷ Corroboration for this assertion can be found, for example, in a verse in the *Therīgāthā*, which records a group of thirty nuns declaring their successful attainment of final liberation.⁸

The *Mahāvaccagotta-sutta* and its parallels give even higher numbers, reporting that over five hundred nun disciples of the

nothing in the Dharma. [But] if one has no perception of a 'man' or a 'woman', how could such distinctions arise?", 女相無所作, 唯意修禪定, 觀見於上法, 若有男女相, 可說於女人, 於法無所能, 若無男女相, 云何生分別 (where my rendering assumes the last two instances of 相 to be an error for 想, a frequent error in the *Āgamas*; cf. Anālayo 2011a: 274 note 54). The protagonist of the present verses appears to have been a remarkable nun with outstanding abilities, as according to the *Avadānaśataka*, Speyer 1909/1970: 22,4 (cf. also the *Karmaśataka*, Skilling 2001: 146), she had committed the entire code of rules to memory after a single hearing. Horner 1930/1990: 165 comments "that a woman could be represented as making such an utterance is a proof that the old life of Hinduism in which women were regarded merely as child-bearers and as commodities was, if not suffering a decline, at least not passing entirely unquestioned".

⁷ [6] This is reported in the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 923a24; in what according to some scholars could be the Haimavata *Vinayamātrka* (cf. below note 6 page 450), T 1463 at T XXIV 803b10; in the Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya*, Roth 1970: 13,5; in the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 185c17; and in the Theravāda *Vinaya*, Vin II 254,33 (cf. also AN 8.51 at AN IV 276,10). According to a parallel to this account in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1451 at T XXIV 350b15, it was the Buddha's foster mother who made this point, where the circumstance that the Buddha did not reject her assertion of women's abilities gives the impression that here, too, such abilities are at least implicitly affirmed. The same holds true for a Sarvāstivāda parallel, MĀ 116 at T I 605a13.

⁸ [7] Thī 120: "in the last watch of the night they destroyed the mass of ignorance", *rattiyā pacchime yāme tamokkhandhaṃ padālayuṃ* (B^c: *tamokkhandhaṃ*), followed by indicating at Thī 121 that this was accomplished by a group of thirty elder nuns.

Buddha had reached full awakening.⁹ [138] In sum there can be little doubt that early Buddhism did consider women to be fully capable of attaining the highest level of liberation.

When it comes to the issue of being a Buddha, however, tradition takes the position that only a male is capable of fulfilling such a role. In the early discourses, the *locus classicus* for this position is the *Bahudhātuka-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*, according to which a woman is incapable of occupying various positions, one of them being that of a Buddha.¹⁰

The *Bahudhātuka-sutta* has several parallels: a discourse in the

⁹ [8] MN 73 at MN I 490,24: "Vaccha, not merely one hundred, not two hundred, not three hundred, not four hundred, not five hundred, but far more nuns who are my disciples dwell by having realized here and now through their own direct knowledge the influx-free deliverance of the mind and deliverance by wisdom, being established in it through the destruction of the influxes", *na kho, vaccha, ekaṃ yeva satāṃ na dve satāni na tīṇi satāni na cattāri satāni na pañca satāni, atha kho bhiiyo va yā bhikkhuniyo mama sāvika āsavānaṃ khayā anāsavaṃ cetovimuttim paññāvimuttim diṭṭheva dhamme sayam abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharanti*. SĀ 964 at T II 246c14: "not only one, two, three nuns, (up to) five hundred, there are many [more] nuns in this Dharma and discipline who have destroyed all influxes (up to) and will not experience a further existence"; 不但一, 二, 三比丘尼, 乃至五百, 有眾多比丘尼, 於此法律, 盡諸有漏, 乃至不受後有; and SĀ² 198 at T II 446b13: "in the Dharma I teach, there are not [only] one, two, three, (up to) five hundred, but many [more] nuns than that who have attained this state", 我教法中, 比丘尼等得斯法者, 非一, 二, 三, 乃至五百, 其數眾多, where "this state" refers to the earlier mentioned "attaining deliverance of the mind and deliverance by wisdom", 心得解脫, 慧得解脫; cf. also T 1482 at T XXIV 963b17.

¹⁰ [9] MN 115 at MN III 65,24: "it is impossible, it cannot come to be that a woman should be an arahant who is a Sammāsambuddha", *aṭṭhānam etaṃ anavakāso yaṃ itthi araham assa sammāsambuddho* (B^o, C^o and S^o: *itthī*). The same position is also taken in AN 1.15 at AN I 28,9, a discourse of which no parallel appears to be known. Such absence of a parallel does not necessarily imply lateness, as lack of a counterpart could also be due to the dynamics of transmission; cf. below page 530ff.

Madhyama-āgama, a discourse translated individually into Chinese,¹¹ a discourse preserved in Tibetan translation,¹² a full version in Śamathadeva's compendium of discourse quotations in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, preserved in Tibetan,¹³ and a full version as a discourse quotation in the *Dharmaskandha* of the Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, preserved in Chinese.¹⁴

In what follows, I translate the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Bahudhātuka-sutta*, followed by a comparative study of the various versions of this discourse in order to assess the main thrust of the discourse as a whole and tendencies at work in other parts of the discourse. Then I will turn to the absence of a reference to women's inabilities in the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse. [139]

¹¹ [12] T 776 at T XVII 712b14 to 714a1, entitled "Discourse Spoken by the Buddha on the Fourfold Dharma Instruction", 佛說四品法門經, a title reconstructed by Nanjio 1883/1989: 219 as *Buddhabhāṣita-caturvarga-dharma-paryāya-sūtra*.

¹² [13] D 297 *sha* 297a2 to 301b2 or Q 963 *lu* 325b3 to 330b1, entitled *kham mang po pa'i mdo*, which thus similar to MN 115 and MĀ 181 takes the "many elements" as its title, though in its reference to the Indic original it has these two words in the reverse sequence, D 297 *sha* 297a2 or Q 963 *lu* 325b3: *rgya gar skad du dhā tu ba hu ta ka sū tra*. Skilling 1994a: 772 notes several editions whose title corresponds to the sequence of the Pāli title and suggests that "*dhātubahutaka* must be a reconstruction". For my work on this discourse I am greatly indebted to Peter Skilling, who kindly allowed me to consult his unpublished translation and edition of the Tibetan discourse. It is a rare gift to be associating with an eminent scholar of such broadminded generosity, especially when it comes to sharing his own unpublished work.

¹³ [15] D 4094 *ju* 28b2 to 33b4 or Q 5595 *tu* 31b1 to 36b6, which gives the title as *kham mang po pa'i mdo*, "the Discourse on Many Elements".

¹⁴ [14] This discourse quotation comes at the outset of chapter 20 on "many elements" in T 1537 at T XXVI 501b25 to 502c18.

Translation

Discourse on Many Elements¹⁵

1. Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was dwelling at Sāvattthī, staying in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park. At that time the venerable Ānanda, who was seated alone in a tranquil place meditating and reflecting, had this thought in his mind: "All fears arise from foolishness, not from wisdom. All misfortunes, disasters and worries arise from foolishness, not from wisdom."

Then, in the late afternoon, the venerable Ānanda got up from sitting in meditation, went towards the Buddha, paid respect with his head at the Buddha's feet, stepped back to stand to one side and said: "Blessed One, [while] I was alone in a tranquil place meditating and reflecting today, I had this thought in my mind: "All fears arise from foolishness, not from wisdom. All misfortunes, disasters and worries arise from foolishness, not from wisdom."¹⁶

2. The Blessed One said: "So it is, Ānanda, so it is, Ānanda. All fears arise from foolishness, not from wisdom. All misfortunes, disasters and worries arise from foolishness, not from wisdom. Just as from a heap of reeds and grass a fire might start, which burns down a house or a roofed hall, Ānanda, in the same way all fears arise from foolishness, not from wisdom. All misfortunes, disasters and worries arise from foolishness, not from wisdom.

"Ānanda, if there were fears in past times, they all arose

¹⁵ [10] The translated text is MĀ 181 at T I 723a8 to 724c3; for a comparative study of MĀ 181 cf. Anālayo 2011a: 645–654.

¹⁶ [17] MN 115 at MN III 61,9 begins directly with the Buddha broaching this subject, without reporting that a corresponding thought had occurred to Ānanda. The other parallel versions agree with MĀ 181.

from foolishness, not from wisdom. All misfortunes, disasters and worries arose from foolishness, not from wisdom. Ānanda, if there will be fears in future times, they will all arise from foolishness, not from wisdom. All misfortunes, disasters and worries will arise from foolishness, [140] not from wisdom. [723b] Ānanda, if there are fears in present times, they all arise from foolishness, not from wisdom. All misfortunes, disasters and worries arise from foolishness, not from wisdom.¹⁷

"Hence, Ānanda, due to foolishness there is fear, [due to] wisdom there is no fear; [due to] foolishness there are misfortunes, disasters and worries, [due to] wisdom there are no misfortunes, disasters or worries. Ānanda, whatever fears, misfortunes, disasters and worries there are, they all start off from foolishness,¹⁸ not from wisdom."¹⁹

3. Then venerable Ānanda, who was [moved] to tears,²⁰ held his hands together [in homage] towards the Buddha and said: "Blessed One, how is a monk foolish and not wise?"²¹

The Blessed One replied: "Ānanda, if a monk does not know the elements, does not know the sense-spheres, does not know causes and conditions, and does not know what is possi-

¹⁷ [18] MN 115 does not take up the fears of the past and the future. The other parallels agree with MĀ 181.

¹⁸ [19] MĀ 181 at T I 723b6: 可得, for which Hirakawa 1997: 235 gives as possible equivalents *prā-vrabh* and *sam-ā-vrabh*.

¹⁹ [20] At this point in MN 115 at MN III 61,25 the Buddha encourages his disciples to train themselves with the thought "we shall become wise ones and inquirers", *paññitā bhavissāma vīmaṃsakā* (S° only reads *paññitā bhavissāma*, without *vīmaṃsakā*), an injunction that underlines the practical import of the subsequent exposition.

²⁰ [21] Such a reaction by Ānanda is not mentioned in the other versions.

²¹ [22] In MN 115 at MN III 62,2 Ānanda asks directly about how a monk can be reckoned a wise one, without broaching the complementary topic of being reckoned a foolish one. The other parallel versions agree with MĀ 181.

ble and what is impossible. Ānanda, a monk like this is foolish and not wise."²²

The venerable Ānanda said: "Blessed One, a monk like this is [indeed] foolish and not wise. Blessed One, how is a monk wise and not foolish?"

The Blessed One replied: "Ānanda, if a monk knows the elements, knows the sense-spheres, knows causes and conditions, and knows what is possible and what is impossible. Ānanda, a monk like this is wise and not foolish."

4. The venerable Ānanda said: "Blessed One, a monk like this is [indeed] wise and not foolish. Blessed One, how does a monk know the elements?" [141]

The Blessed One replied:²³ "Ānanda, suppose a monk sees eighteen elements and knows them as they really are, [namely]: the eye element, the form element and the eye-consciousness element; the ear element, the sound element and the ear-consciousness element; the nose element, the odour element and the nose-consciousness element; the tongue element, the taste element and the tongue-consciousness element; the body element, the tactile element and the body-consciousness element; the mind element, the mind-object element and the mind-consciousness element; Ānanda, he sees these eighteen elements and knows them as they really are."²⁴

²² [²³] The discourse quotation in Śamathadeva's compendium and the *Dharmaskandha* add to this fourfold listing the aggregates as a fifth item, which D 4094 *ju* 29b1 or Q 5595 *tu* 32b1 lists as its first, whereas in T 1537 at T XXVI 501c11 they occur in the third place; cf. table 14. The *Dharmaskandha* also gives an exposition of this topic by listing the five aggregates, T 1537 at T XXVI 502a13, an exposition without counterpart in the discourse quotation in Śamathadeva's compendium.

²³ [²⁴] Several of the elements listed here are not found in MN 115; cf. table 15.

²⁴ [²⁵] At this point in MN 115, and after each of the sets of elements listed subse-

5-7. "Again, Ānanda, [a monk] sees six elements and knows them as they really are, [namely]: the earth element, the water element, the fire element, the wind element, the space element and the consciousness element. [142] Ānanda, he sees these six elements and knows them as they really are.

"Again, Ānanda, [a monk] sees six elements and knows them as they really are, [namely]: the element of sensual desire, the element of ill will, the element of harming, the element of dispassion, the element of absence of ill will and the element of absence of harming. Ānanda, he sees these six elements and knows them as they really are.

"Again, Ānanda, [a monk] sees six elements and knows them as they really are, [namely]: the element of pleasure, the element of pain, the element of [mental] joy, the element of [mental] sadness, the element of equanimity and the element of ignorance. Ānanda, he sees these six elements and knows them as they really are. [143]

"Again, Ānanda, [a monk] sees four elements and knows them as they really are, [namely]: the element of feeling, the element of perception, the element of volitional formations and the element of consciousness.²⁵ Ānanda, he sees these four elements and knows them as they really are.

8. "Again, Ānanda, [a monk] sees three elements and knows them as they really are, [namely]: the sense-sphere element, the [fine-]material element and the immaterial element. Ānan-

quently, Ānanda asks the Buddha if there could be another way how a monk can be reckoned as skilled in the elements, e.g., MN III 62,19: *siyā pana, bhante, añño pi pariyāyo yathā dhātukusalo bhikkhū ti alaṃ vacanāya*. Thus in MN 115 the different sets of elements are alternative options, whereas MĀ 181 gives the impression as if all sets of elements need to be known.

²⁵ [26] This set of four elements is not found in MN 115, though it occurs in the other versions.

da, he sees these three elements and knows them as they really are. [723c]

"Again, Ānanda, [a monk] sees three elements and knows them as they really are, [namely]: the material element, the immaterial element and the element of cessation. Ānanda, he sees these three elements and knows them as they really are.²⁶ [144]

"Again, Ānanda, [a monk] sees three elements and knows them as they really are, [namely]: the element of the past, the element of the future and the element of the present. Ānanda, he sees these three elements and knows them as they really are.

"Again, Ānanda, [a monk] sees three elements and knows them as they really are, [namely]: the superior element, the inferior element and the middling element. Ānanda, he sees these three elements and knows them as they really are.²⁷

"Again, Ānanda, [a monk] sees three elements and knows them as they really are, [namely]: the wholesome element, the unwholesome element and the undetermined element. Ānanda, he sees these three elements and knows them as they really are.

"Again, Ānanda, [a monk] sees three elements and knows them as they really are, [namely]: [145] the element of the trainee (*sekha*), the element of the one beyond training and the element of the one who is not a trainee and not beyond training. Ānanda, he sees these three elements and knows them as they really are.

9. "Again, Ānanda, [a monk] sees two elements and knows them as they really are, [namely]: the element with influxes and the element without influxes. Ānanda, he sees these two ele-

²⁶ [27] The present triad of elements (material / immaterial / cessation) and the next triad (past / future / present) are absent from MN 115 and T 776.

²⁷ [28] The present triad of elements (superior / inferior / middle) and the next two triads (wholesome / unwholesome / undetermined and trainee / beyond training / neither) are absent from MN 115, but occur in the other versions.

ments and knows them as they really are.²⁸

"Again, Ānanda, [a monk] sees two elements and knows them as they really are, [namely]: the conditioned element and the unconditioned element. Ānanda, he sees these two elements and knows them as they really are.

"Ānanda, [a monk] sees these sixty-two elements and knows them as they really are. Ānanda, like this a monk knows the elements."²⁹

10. The venerable Ānanda said: "Blessed One, like this a monk [indeed] knows the elements. Blessed One, how does a monk know the sense-spheres?" [146]

The Blessed One replied: "Ānanda, suppose a monk sees the twelve sense-spheres and knows them as they really are, [namely]: the eye sense-sphere and the form sense-sphere; the ear sense-sphere and the sound sense-sphere; the nose sense-sphere and the odour sense-sphere; the tongue sense-sphere and the taste sense-sphere; the body sense-sphere and the tactile sense-sphere; and the mind sense-sphere and the mind-object sense-sphere. Ānanda, he sees these twelve sense-spheres and knows them as they really are. Ānanda, like this a monk

²⁸ [29] The present pair of elements (with influxes / without influxes) is absent from MN 115, but occurs in the other versions.

²⁹ [30] A final count of all elements is not found in any of the parallels, so that MĀ 181 is the only version that specifies the overall number of elements. A count of sixty-two elements is associated with the present discourse in other sources, however, e.g., in the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, T 1545 at T XXVII 367c4: 多界經中說界差別有六十二 (cf. also Buddhavarman's *Vibhāṣā* translation, T 1546 at T XXVIII 279b24); or in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Abh-k 1.28, Pradhan 1967: 18,7: *bahudhātuke 'pi dvāṣaṣṭirdhātavo deśitāḥ* (with its Chinese counterparts in T 1558 at T XXIX 6c2: 多界經說界差別有六十二, and in T 1559 at T XXIX 166c23: 於多界經中, 佛說有六十二界); cf. also T 1552 at T XXVIII 874a6: 六十二界, 如多界經說及餘契經, and T 1828 at T XLII 657b17: 六十二界, 如多界經.

knows the sense-spheres."

11. The venerable Ānanda said: "Blessed One, like this a monk [indeed] knows the sense-spheres. How does a monk know causes and conditions?"

The Blessed One replied: "Ānanda, suppose a monk sees causes and conditions as well as what has arisen through causes and conditions and knows it as its really is, [namely]: "Dependent on this, that exists; [if] this does not exist, that does not exist; [if] this arises, that arises; [if] this ceases, that ceases. That is to say, conditioned by ignorance are formations ... (*up to*) ... conditioned by birth are old age and death. If ignorance ceases formation ceases ... (*up to*) ... [if] birth ceases old age and death ceases. Ānanda, like this a monk knows causes and conditions."

12-18. The venerable Ānanda said: "Blessed One, like this a monk [indeed] knows causes and conditions. How does a monk know what is possible and what is impossible?" [147]

The Blessed One replied: "Ānanda, suppose a monk sees what is possible as possible and knows it as its really is; and he sees what is impossible as impossible and knows it as it really is.³⁰

"Ānanda, it is not possible that there could be two wheel-turning kings ruling in the world. [However], it is certainly possible that there could be one wheel-turning king ruling in the world.

"Ānanda, [724a] it is not possible that there could be two Tathāgatas in the world. [However], it is certainly possible that there could be one Tathāgata in the world.

"Ānanda, it is not possible for a person [endowed] with a

³⁰ [31] The listings of impossibilities show considerable variations in the different versions; cf. table 16.

vision of the truth intentionally to kill his father or mother, kill an arahant, cause a schism in the community or, out of an evil mental disposition towards the Buddha, cause the Tathāgata's blood to flow. [However], it is certainly possible for an ordinary worldling intentionally to kill his father or mother, kill an arahant, cause a schism in the community or, out of an evil mental disposition towards the Buddha, cause the Tathāgata's blood to flow.³¹

"Ānanda, it is not possible for a person [endowed] with a vision of the truth intentionally to violate the moral precepts, reject the moral precepts and stop [practising] the path. [However], it is certainly possible for an ordinary worldling intentionally to violate the moral precepts, reject the moral precepts and stop [practising] the path.³²

"It is [also] not possible for a person [endowed] with a vision of the truth to reject and abandon his own [dispensation] and search for someone to be honoured among outsiders, search for a field of merit [among outsiders]. [However], it is certainly possible for an ordinary worldling to reject and abandon his own [dispensation] and search for someone to be honoured among outsiders, search for a field of merit [among outsiders]. [148]

³¹ [32] The contrast here is between the 見諦人 and the 凡夫人, counterparts to the *ditṭhisampanna puggala* and the *puthujjana* mentioned in the corresponding section in MN 115 at MN III 64,29. The former of these two is at least a stream-enterer, so that the impossibilities listed here contrast a member of the community of noble ones to a worldling.

³² [33] The present and the subsequent impossibilities, up to the impossibility that a person endowed with view could be reborn into an eighth existence, have as their counterpart in MN 115 at MN III 65,11 a single impossibility, according to which a person endowed with view will not designate another teacher [as his teacher], *aññam sattāram uddiseyya*; cf. table 17.

"Ānanda, it is not possible for a person [endowed] with a vision of the truth to follow other recluses and brahmins and declare: 'Honourable ones, you see what can be seen and know what can be known'. [However], it is certainly possible for an ordinary worldling to follow other recluses and brahmins and declare: 'Honourable ones, you see what can be seen and know what can be known'.

"Ānanda, it is not possible for a person [endowed] with a vision of the truth to have faith in divination and inquire about auspicious and inauspicious [omens]. [However], it is certainly possible for an ordinary worldling to have faith in divination and inquire about auspicious and inauspicious [omens].

"Ānanda, it is not possible for a person [endowed] with a vision of the truth to inquire about what is related to auspicious and inauspicious signs from other recluses or brahmin diviners in order to see if there is some suffering or trouble [to be expected in the future], seeing it as being the truth. [However], it is certainly possible for an ordinary worldling to inquire about what is related to auspicious and inauspicious signs from other recluses or brahmin diviners in order to see if there is some suffering or trouble [to be expected in the future], seeing it as being the truth.

"Ānanda, it is not possible for a person [endowed] with a vision of the truth, when extreme pains arise, tremendous pains that are not [at all] agreeable, not [at all] pleasurable, not [at all] longed for, unthinkable, that lead up to the ending of life, to reject and abandon his own [dispensation] and to follow outsiders and search [for help] from some recluse or brahmin who bears in mind a spell of one line, a spell of two lines, three lines, four lines, many lines, [even] a spell of a hundred thousand lines, [with the thought]: 'this will cause me to be freed from *dukkha*', searching in this way for *dukkha*, the aris-

ing of *dukkha*, the path [leading to the cessation of] *dukkha*, and the cessation of *dukkha*.³³ [149] [However], it is certainly possible for an ordinary worldling to reject and abandon his own [dispensation] and to follow outsiders and search [for help] from some recluse or brahmin who bears in mind a spell of one line, a spell of two lines, three lines, four lines, many lines, [even] a spell of a hundred-thousand lines, [with the thought]: 'this will cause me to be freed from *dukkha*', searching in this way for *dukkha*, the arising of *dukkha*, the path [leading to the cessation of] *dukkha*, and the cessation of *dukkha*.

"Ānanda, it is not possible for a person [endowed] with a vision of the truth to experience an eighth existence. [However], it is certainly possible for an ordinary worldling to experience an eighth existence.

"Ānanda, it is not possible that, on account of evil conduct by body, speech and mind one should, [724b] when the body breaks up at death, proceed towards a good destination and be born in a heavenly world. [However], it is certainly possible that, on account of evil conduct by body, speech and mind one should, when the body breaks up at death, proceed towards a bad destination and be born in a hellish world.

"Ānanda, it is not possible that, on account of pure conduct by body, speech and mind one should, when the body breaks up at death, proceed towards a bad destination and be born in a hellish world. [However], it is certainly possible that on account of pure conduct by body, speech and mind one should, when the body breaks up at death, proceed towards a good destination and be born in a heavenly world.

³³ Notably the sequence of enumeration here departs from the standard presentation of the four truths; cf. also Anālayo 2011c.

"Ānanda, it is not possible that evil conduct by body, speech and mind should have as its result the experience of pleasure. [However], it is certainly possible that evil conduct by body, speech and mind should have as its result the experience of pain. [150]

"Ānanda, it is not possible that pure conduct by body, speech and mind should have as its result the experience of pain. [However], it is certainly possible that pure conduct by body, speech and mind should have as its result the experience of pleasure.

"Ānanda, it is not possible to settle the mind fully in the four[-fold] establishing of mindfulness if the five hindrances that defile the mind and weaken wisdom are not overcome. [However], it is certainly possible to settle the mind fully in the four[-fold] establishing of mindfulness if the five hindrances that defile the mind and weaken wisdom are overcome.³⁴

"Ānanda, it is not possible to aim at developing the seven factors of awakening if the five hindrances that defile the mind and weaken wisdom are not overcome and if the mind is not fully settled in the four[-fold] establishing of mindfulness. [However], it is certainly possible to develop the seven factors of awakening if the five hindrances that defile the mind and weaken wisdom are overcome and if the mind is fully settled in the four[-fold] establishing of mindfulness.

"Ānanda, it is not possible to aim at attaining supreme, right and complete awakening if the five hindrances that defile the mind and weaken wisdom are not overcome, if the mind is not fully settled in the four[-fold] establishing of mindfulness

³⁴ The present and the following impossibilities are without a counterpart in MN 115, though they have counterparts in the other versions.

and if the seven factors of awakening are not developed. [However], it is certainly possible to attain supreme, right and complete awakening if the five hindrances that defile the mind and weaken wisdom are overcome, if the mind is fully settled in the four[-fold] establishing of mindfulness and if the seven factors of awakening are developed.

"Ānanda, it is not possible to eradicate and make an end of *dukkha* if the five hindrances that defile the mind and weaken wisdom are not overcome, if the mind is not fully settled in the four[-fold] establishing of mindfulness, [151] if the seven factors of awakening are not developed and if supreme, right and complete awakening is not attained. [However], it is certainly possible to eradicate and make an end of *dukkha* if the five hindrances that defile the mind and weaken wisdom are overcome, if the mind is fully settled in the four[-fold] establishing of mindfulness, if the seven factors of awakening are developed and if supreme, right and complete awakening is attained. Ānanda, like this a monk knows what is possible and what is impossible."

19. The venerable Ānanda said: "Blessed One, like this a monk [indeed] knows what is possible and what is impossible." Then the venerable Ānanda held his hands together [in homage] towards the Buddha and said: "Blessed One, what is the name of this discourse, how should we respectfully bear it in mind?"

The Blessed One said: "Ānanda, you should memorize this [discourse] as the Many Elements, [724c] the Dharma Element, the Element of the Deathless, the Many Drums, the Dharma Drum, the Drum of the Deathless, the Mirror of the Dharma, the Four Chapters. For this reason, call this discourse

by the name 'Many Elements'.³⁵

The Buddha spoke like this. The venerable Ānanda and the monks, having listened to what the Buddha said, were delighted and received it respectfully.

Study

In what follows, I survey the more significant variations between the different versions of the present discourse in order to provide a background to my subsequent discussion of the inabilities of women.

One such variation occurs in regard to the basic four-fold presentation of what is required in order to be reckoned wise. [152] The discourse quotations in the *Dharmaskandha* and in Śamathadeva's compendium differ from the other versions in as much as they mention the aggregates as a fifth topic (see table 14).

While Śamathadeva's compendium has the aggregates as the first item in its listing, followed by the four topics mentioned in

³⁵ Four of these titles, the "Many Elements", the "Drum of the Deathless", the "Mirror of the Dharma", and the "Four Chapters" occur also in nearly all of the other versions; cf. MN 115 at MN III 67,29: *bahudhātuko ... catuparivaṭṭo ... dhammādāso ... amatadundubhi*; T 776 at T XVII 713c27: 四品法門 ... 法鏡 ... 甘露鼓 ... 多界; D 297 *sha* 301a7 or Q 963 *lu* 330a8: *le'u bzhi pa ... chos kyi me long ... bdud rtsi'i rnga bo che* (thereby qualifying the drum of the deathless as "great") ... *kham mang po*; T 1537 at T XXVI 502c17: 四轉 ... 大法鏡 (qualifying the mirror of the Dharma as "great") ... 甘露鼓 ... 多界; D 4094 *ju* 33b3 or Q 5595 *tu* 36b5: *le'u bzhi pa ... chos kyi me long ... bdud rtsi lnga* (speaking of a "five[-fold] deathless" instead of the "drum of the deathless") ... *kham mang po*. MN 115 at MN III 67,30 also mentions the "Unsurpassable Victory in Battle", *anuttaro saṅgānavijayo*, a title not found in the other versions. The same title recurs in a listing of five alternative titles for the *Brahmajāla-sutta*, DN 1 at DN I 46,25, where it is also absent from the Chinese and Tibetan counterparts; cf. DĀ 21 at T I 94a12, T 21 at T I 270c20 and Weller 1934: 64,33.

all versions,³⁶ the *Dharmaskandha* instead lists the aggregates as its respective third.³⁷ The discourse quotation in Śamathadeva's compendium does not give an exposition to this topic, but only mentions it in its initial listing. The *Dharmaskandha*, however, does provide such an exposition.³⁸

Table 14: Main Topics of the Exposition

Discourse versions	Śamathadeva	<i>Dharmaskandha</i>
1) elements	1) aggregates	1) elements
2) sense-spheres	2) elements	2) sense-spheres
3) dependent arising	3) sense-spheres	3) aggregates
4) impossibilities	4) dependent arising	4) dependent arising
	5) impossibilities	5) impossibilities

These variations, [153] together with the absence of any reference to the aggregates in the discourse versions, make it quite probable that this topic is a later addition. This impression is further confirmed by the circumstance that all versions speak of "four chapters" or "four turnings" as one of the possible titles of the discourse.³⁹ Thus it seems safe to conclude that the original

³⁶ D 4094 *ju* 29b1 or Q 5595 *tu* 32b1: *phung po*.

³⁷ T 1537 at T XXVI 501c11: 蘊.

³⁸ T 1537 at T XXVI 502a13: "A wise one who knows and sees the five aggregates as they really are is skilled in the aggregates. That is to say, he knows and sees the aggregate of form, the aggregate of feeling, the aggregate of perception, the aggregate of volitional formations and the aggregate of consciousness as they really are. This is reckoned a wise one who is skilled in the aggregates", 智者於五蘊如實知見, 是蘊善巧, 謂如實知見色蘊, 受蘊, 想蘊, 行蘊, 識蘊, 是名智者於蘊善巧.

³⁹ MN 115 at MN III 67,29: *catuparivaṭṭa*; T 776 at T XVII 713c27: 四品法門; D 297 *sha* 301a7 or Q 963 *lu* 330a8: *le'u bzhi pa*; T 1537 at T XXVI 502c17:

exposition involved only four topics – the elements, the sense-spheres, dependent arising and the impossibilities – and did not include a reference to the aggregates or even an exposition of them as a fifth topic.

Substantial variations can also be found in relation to the exposition of the first of these four topics, the elements (see table 15).

The briefest treatment of this topic occurs in the Pāli discourse, which lists forty-one elements. These forty-one elements form the common core of the exposition in all versions. The individual translation additionally covers a set of four elements, three sets of three elements and one set of two elements, so that its listing presents fifty-six elements. These fifty-six elements recur in the other Chinese and Tibetan versions, which have another two additional sets of three elements, so that the listing in these count sixty-two elements, see below table 15, where I detail only the additional sets in full, to facilitate comparison. [154]

Table 15: Listing of Elements

41 elements in the Pāli discourse, MN 115:

18 elements: the senses, their objects and the corresponding types of consciousness

6 elements: earth, water, fire, wind, space and consciousness

6 elements: pleasure, pain, joy, sadness, equanimity and ignorance

6 elements: sensual desire, renunciation, ill will, absence of ill will, cruelty and absence of cruelty

3 elements: sensual sphere, [fine-]material sphere and immaterial sphere

2 elements: conditioned and unconditioned

56 elements in the individual translation, T 776:

18 elements

6 elements

6 elements

6 elements

4 elements: feeling, perception, volitional formations and consciousness

3 elements

3 elements: inferior, middle and superior

3 elements: wholesome, unwholesome and undetermined

3 elements: trainee, beyond training and neither

2 elements: with influxes and without influxes

2 elements

62 elements in the other versions:

18 elements

6 elements

6 elements

6 elements

4 elements

3 elements

3 elements: material, immaterial and cessation

3 elements: past, future and present

3 elements

3 elements

3 elements

2 elements

2 elements

In principle, [155] such differences could have been caused by a loss of text or by an addition. A loss of text due to intentional omission seems improbable, as the elements not listed in the Pāli

version are found in other Pāli discourses.⁴⁰ Hence there would have been no real reason for those who transmitted the *Bahudhātuka-sutta* to eliminate these elements deliberately from the exposition. The Pāli discourse also does not show any sign of accidental loss. In fact, this seems less probable since this would require two instances or stages of accident loss, [156] causing a loss of six elements in the case of the individual translation and a loss of twenty-one elements during the transmission of the Pāli discourse.

This makes it more probable that the exposition on elements has gone through a gradual expansion instead, with the individual translation testifying to an intermediate stage between the exposition on forty-one elements, found in all versions, and the list of sixty-two elements. Such a gradual expansion would be a fairly natural occurrence during oral transmission, where a listing of elements could easily attract other textual items related to the same topic.

The assumption of a textual expansion would also be in line with the above discussed case of five against four chief topics, where the aggregates can safely be considered an instance of later

⁴⁰ The four elements occur in an analysis of deeper levels of concentration into its constituent elements under the heading of the four mental aggregates given in MN 64 at MN I 436,21+29. The additional element triplets recur in DN 33 at DN III 215,20+22, DN III 216,16, DN III 217,24 and DN III 218,1, which has the triplet material, immaterial and cessation as its entry 3:14; what is inferior, middle and superior as its entry 3.15; past, future and present as its entry 3.24; wholesome, unwholesome and indeterminate formations as its entry 3.35; and the trainee, the one beyond training and the one who is neither as its entry 3.36. The distinction between what is with influxes and what is without the influxes is applied in DN 28 at DN III 112,7 to supernormal powers; in MN 117 at MN III 72,6 to the factors of the noble eightfold path; in AN 2.7 at AN I 81,1 to happiness; and in AN 10.133 at AN V 275,20 to the ten courses of action.

addition and thus testify that a tendency towards expansion is at work elsewhere in the present text.

The presentation of the next two topics – the sense-spheres and dependent arising – is similar in the parallel versions. When it comes to the last topic of impossibilities, however, considerable variations manifest again (see table 16).

The parallel versions concur that the simultaneous manifestation of two wheel-turning kings or two Tathāgatas is impossible.⁴¹ They similarly agree that wholesome conduct cannot have bad results or lead to rebirth in hell, just as it is impossible that unwholesome conduct could have pleasant results or lead to rebirth in heaven.

The parallel versions also affirm unanimously that a stream-enterer is incapable of committing any of the five heinous crimes, which are to kill one's mother, to kill one's father, to kill an arahant, to create a schism and to hurt a Buddha intentionally so as to cause his blood to flow.⁴²

A minor difference in the mode of presentation is that the Pāli version lists these five heinous crimes as five impossibilities, whereas the other versions present them together as a single impossibility. [157]

⁴¹ The discourse quotations in the *Dharmaskandha* and in Śamathadeva's compendium agree with MĀ 181 in mentioning the two wheel-turning kings first, T 1537 at T XXVI 502b12 and D 4094 *ju* 32a1 or Q 5595 *tu* 35a2. The other versions mention them in second place, MN 115 at MN III 65,20, T 776 at T XVII 713b18 and D 297 *sha* 300a7 or Q 963 *lu* 329a5.

⁴² While in the listing in MN 115 at MN III 65,3, shedding the blood of a Tathāgata precedes schism, the other versions agree with MĀ 181 at T I 724a3 in adopting the opposite sequence; cf. T 776 at T XVII 713b27, D 297 *sha* 300b3 or Q 963 *lu* 329a8, T 1537 at T XXVI 502b21 and D 4094 *ju* 32a6 or Q 5595 *tu* 35a8. On this type of variation cf. also Silk 2007b: 254f.

Table 16: Themes in the Exposition on Impossibilities

Mentioned in all versions:

- simultaneous arising of two wheel-turning kings or Tathāgatas
- bad conduct leads to good results/rebirth
- good conduct leads to bad results/rebirth
- a stream-enterer commits five heinous crimes

Mentioned in all versions, but treated differently:

- further inabilities of a stream-enterer
(see also table 17)

Mentioned only in some versions:

- awakening reached without overcoming the hindrances, etc.
(not in MN 115)
- inabilities of women
(not in MĀ 181, see also table 18)

Another point made in all versions is that stream-enterers will not have faith in outsiders or take an outsider as their teacher. The versions differ, however, as they treat this theme in different ways and also mention various other inabilities of a stream-enterer, which they present alternatively as a single impossibility, as three, as four or as seven impossibilities (see table 17).

These more detailed presentations cover various aspects of a stream-enterer's firm confidence in his teacher, indicating that a stream-enterer is unable to give up the precepts and unable to consider outsiders to be a worthy field of merit or to be awakened. Nor would a stream-enterer believe in auspicious signs. Most versions indicate that a stream-enterer will not be reborn into an eighth existence.

Some versions moreover mention a stream-enterer's inability

to kill a living being intentionally. [158] The Pāli version stands alone in also indicating that a stream-enterer will not consider any formation as permanent, satisfying or a self.

Table 17: Further Inabilities of a Stream-enterer

1 impossibility covering 2 aspects (individual translation):

- after violating monastic precepts slanders own teacher and takes outsider as teacher, seeks liberation from outside teacher

1 impossibility covering 6 aspects (Śamathadeva's compendium):

- intentionally kills living beings, gives up precepts, considers outsiders worthy, thinks outsiders are awakened, has faith in auspicious signs, experiences eighth existence

1 impossibility covering 7 aspects (Tibetan discourse):

- intentionally kills living beings, gives up precepts, considers outsiders worthy, takes outsiders as teacher, has faith in auspicious signs, thinks outsiders know truth, experiences eighth existence

3 impossibilities covering 6 aspects (*Dharmaskandha*):

- intentionally kills living beings
- gives up precepts
- seeks teacher or field of merit among outsiders, considers outsiders worthy, practices divination through auspicious signs, experiences eighth existence

4 impossibilities covering 4 aspects (MN 115):

- regards formations as permanent
- regards formations as satisfying

- regards formations as self
- follows another teacher⁴³

7 impossibilities covering 7 aspects (MĀ 181):

- gives up precepts
- considers outsiders as perfected and a field of merit
- thinks outsiders know truth
- has faith in auspicious signs
- inquires about auspicious signs from outsiders
- searches way out of *dukkha* from outsiders
- experiences eighth existence

These variations, [159] found between the different versions in regard to types of impossibilities and in regard to the mode of presenting these, make it quite probable that a gradual expansion has taken place. Although an accidental loss of text cannot be totally excluded, such an assumption seems highly improbable, since a whole series of accidents would be required in order to arrive at the degree of diversity found between the parallel versions. Moreover, none of the items missing in some versions seems to be of such an unusual nature that one would expect an intentional omission to be responsible for its disappearance from some other versions.

The same pattern becomes even more evident with other impossibilities that are mentioned only in some versions, which cover the requirements for reaching awakening and the inabilities of women (see above table 16). [160] In the case of the first of these two themes – the requirements for reaching awakening – the

⁴³ The first three constitute the first to third impossibilities in MN 115 at MN III 64,16, while the impossibility of following another teacher comes as the ninth impossibility at MN III 65,10.

Pāli discourse is the only version that does not broach this theme.

According to the other versions, the hindrances need to be overcome, mindfulness needs to be established and the awakening factors need to be developed. Each of these builds on the preceding and their conjoint undertaking is required for reaching awakening (and thereby making an end of *dukkha*).

There would have been little reason for the reciters of the Pāli version to omit such a presentation. Given that the Pāli discourse shows no signs of accidental loss, it seems the most natural explanation in this case would be that this stipulation regarding the requirements for reaching awakening is a case of addition in the other versions.

In the case of the second theme – the inabilities of women – the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse is the only version that does not mention these. The other versions present this theme with some variations.

In regard to the differences and variations observed so far in the treatment of impossibilities, it is noteworthy that according to the **Mahāprajñāpāramitā-(upadeśa)-śāstra* (大智度論) the listing of impossibilities originally delivered by the Buddha in the present discourse was subsequently expanded.⁴⁴ As an example for this tendency, the **Mahāprajñāpāramitā-(upadeśa)-śāstra* mentions the impossibility that a noble one – i.e., one who is at least a stream-enterer – could take an outsider as his or her teacher.⁴⁵

⁴⁴ T 1509 at T XXV 237a28 explains that the "possibilities and impossibilities like these [mentioned before] were declared by the Buddha himself in the Discourse on Many Elements. Based on what the Buddha had said, the treatise masters further expanded by declaring [more] possibilities and impossibilities", 如是等, 是處不是處, 多性經中佛口自說, 諸論議師輩, 依是佛語, 更廣說是處不是處; cf. also Lamotte 1944/1970: 1525.

⁴⁵ T 1509 at T XXV 237b1 refers to the impossibility "that noble ones seek out a heterodox teacher", 若諸賢聖求外道師.

Given that this impossibility is found in all versions of the *Bahudhātuka-sutta*, the observation made in the **Mahāprajñā-pāramitā-(upadeśa-)śāstra* appears to reflect a tendency at work already during the early stages in the formation of the different versions of the present discourse.⁴⁶

Keeping in mind this tendency towards expansion, explicitly noted in the **Mahāprajñāpāramitā-(upadeśa-)śāstra* and found at work repeatedly throughout the different versions of the *Bahudhātuka-sutta* studied so far, provides the required background for examining the theme of women's inabilities. [161]

While the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Bahudhātuka-sutta* does not take up the theme of what is impossible for women at all, the other versions of this discourse present the various inabilities of women as a single impossibility, as two or as five impossibilities (see table 18).

In regard to content, a difference is that according to some versions a woman cannot be one of the four heavenly kings, while others instead indicate that she cannot be Māra.

Another difference that is of considerable significance for the main topic of my present investigation is that, except for the Pāli version, the other versions agree in indicating that a woman cannot be a Paccekabuddha.

⁴⁶ Lamotte 1944/1970: 1525 note 1 suggests that this would be intending the authors of the Abhidharma in particular, "le *Traité* a sans doute en vue les auteurs d'Abhidharma qui on considérablement augmenté la liste des possibilités et impossibilités dressée par le Buddha". This is certainly the case, but the same tendency towards expanding the theme of impossibilities seems to make itself felt already in the *Bahudhātuka-sutta* and its discourse parallels, perhaps corresponding to a tendency of early stages of Abhidharma thought manifesting itself in the discourses, on which cf. in more detail below page 289ff.

Table 18: Impossibilities for Women

1 impossibility covering 6 aspects (individual translation):

- wheel-turning king, heavenly king, Sakka, Brahmā, Paccekabuddha and Buddha

1 impossibility covering 6 aspects (Tibetan discourse):

- wheel-turning king, Sakka, Brahmā, Māra, Paccekabuddha and Buddha

1 impossibility covering 6 aspects (*Dharmaskandha*):

- wheel-turning king, Sakka, Māra, Brahmā, Paccekabuddha and Buddha

2 impossibilities covering 6 aspects (Śamathadeva):

- wheel-turning king
- heavenly king, Sakka, Brahmā, Paccekabuddha and Buddha

5 impossibilities (MN 115):

- Buddha
- wheel-turning king
- Sakka
- Māra
- Brahmā

When evaluating the implications of these impossibilities, [162] it needs to be kept in mind that in a patriarchal society like ancient India the idea of a female wheel-turning king would have been out of the question. It would have been similarly out of the question for ancient Indians to conceive that a female Sakka, a female heavenly king or a female Brahmā could be reigning in their

respective heavenly worlds.⁴⁷ The same reasoning would also apply to Māra, who according to the Pāli commentarial tradition occupied a position similar to a king or a prince in the highest heaven of the sense-sphere realm.⁴⁸

The point behind the above mentioned impossibilities is that a woman cannot fulfil these functions in the present. Though she could become any of these in a future birth, as long as she is a female she cannot perform the function of any of these rulers since to assume these leadership positions would, from the perspective of ancient Indian patriarchal society, require being a male.⁴⁹

This would also explain why Buddhist tradition holds that someone who is about to become a Buddha will not take birth as a woman. To do so, at least in a patriarchal society like ancient India, would make it more difficult to execute the role of being a Buddha successfully, as people would have less respect for a fe-

⁴⁷ Ps IV 123,11 explains that in the present context the reference is to Mahābrahmā, i.e., a Brahmā who reigns in the Brahmā world; in fact the individual translation, T 776 at T XVII 713b22, speaks explicitly of the Heavenly King Mahābrahmā in this context, 大梵天王, and the *Dharmaskandha*, T 1537 at T XXVI 502b17, speaks of King Brahmā, 梵王. The Pāli commentary explains that the suggestion in MN 115 at MN III 66,8 that a man can become a Brahmā should not be taken literally, as Brahmās are genderless, but should be understood only in the sense that the outer appearance of a Brahmā resembles a man more than a woman.

⁴⁸ According to Ps I 34,2, Māra lives in the *paranimmittavasavattidevaloka* governing his own following like a rebel prince in the border region of a kingdom, *attano parisāya issariyaṃ pavattento rajjapaccante dāmarikarājaputto viya vasati*; a similar indication is also made in the *Yogācārabhūmi*, Bhattacharya 1957: 75,7.

⁴⁹ Barnes 1987: 114 comments on the impossibilities for women that "this theory excluded women from leadership". As Sharma 1978: 74 points out, at least in the case of Māra this would not have been an issue, as given the negative role Māra plays in Buddhist texts, "the denial of Marahood can hardly be an embarrassment".

male teacher. [163]

A parallel reasoning seems to underlie the circumstance that Buddhas are born in families from the warrior or brahmin class (*varṇa*).⁵⁰ This specification appears to be based on the same logic, since for a Buddha to be born in a low class would make it unnecessarily difficult to be sufficiently respected as a teacher.⁵¹ Thus these specifications on the gender or the social class of a Buddha are an adaptation to ancient Indian society. They do not imply that gender or social class have a bearing on spiritual ability.⁵²

Here it also needs to be taken into account that the presenta-

⁵⁰ This can be seen in the listing of former Buddhas given in DN 14 at DN II 2,28, DĀ 1 at T I 2a16, T 2 at T I 150b1, T 4 at T I 159b21, EĀ 48.4 at T II 790b14 and a Sanskrit fragment counterpart, S 360 folio 115 verso, Fukita 2003: 4. The *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1890: 1,3, points out that "bodhisattvas are born in two types of families, warrior families or brahmin families", *dvīhi kulēhi bodhisattvā jāyanti, kṣatriyakule vā brāhmaṇakule vā*. Rahula 1978: 186 sums up: "if the Buddha is to hail from a backward family, nobody would care for what he preaches and hence an Enlightened One is always to be born in the highest caste of the day". Wawrytko 1994: 286 comments that "prevailing social conditions prompted the Buddha to choose a high caste for his incarnation ... presumably the same practical considerations would have militated against an incarnation in the female gender within ancient Indian society".

⁵¹ According to the *Sanghabhedavastu*, Gnoli 1977: 36,13, the future Buddha chose to be reborn in a warrior family since the warriors were more respected than brahmins, and his decision on where to be born was taken in order to avoid an objectionable type of birth, *mā me syur atonidānaṃ pare vakkāraḥ 'bodhisattvena garhaṇīyāyāṃ jātau pratisandhir grhīta' iti*. A related position can be found in the Jain tradition, as according to the *Jinacaritra* (17), Jacobi 1879/1966: 38,9, future arahants or wheel-turning kings will avoid arising in a low womb or even in a brahmin womb.

⁵² The present inability does also not imply, as assumed by An 2002: 11, that women are considered incapable of reaching liberation and be arahants, it only concerns the question of being a Buddha.

tion in the *Bahudhātuka-sutta* and its parallels still stems from a period in the development of Buddhist thought when the idea of aspiring to Buddhahood had not yet become a general option. As pointed out by Kajiyama (1982: 64), "the dictum that a woman cannot become a Buddha ... did not have a target to which it could have been directed", since at that time "no one, neither man nor woman, aspired to Buddhahood."⁵³

In sum, then, the inability of a woman to assume the position of a ruler on earth, a ruler in various heavenly realms or a ruler in the field of Dharma seem to reflect leadership conceptions in ancient India.

From this perspective, one might even venture to query how far the inabilities of women stipulated in the *Bahudhātuka-sutta* would still be applicable in a society where female leadership is a common feature. Just as in a society that does not have a class hierarchy with brahmins and warriors at its apex a Buddha would not need to stem from these classes (*varṇa*), so a Buddha's gender

⁵³ Romberg 2002: 164 notes that once "the aim was no longer to become an Arhat, but to become Buddha ... this shift made, in fact, the situation for women worse, because a doctrinal foundation was laid for the necessity of changing the sex before being able to become enlightened". In fact the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* explains that a woman will not realize the awakening of a Buddha because already an advanced bodhisattva has left behind womanhood for good and will not be reborn again as a female, Wogihara 1930: 94,3: *na ca strī anuttarāṃ samyaksambodhim abhisambudhyate. tat kasya hetoḥ? tathā hi bodhisattvaḥ prathamasyaiva kalpāsamkhyeyasyātyayāt strībhāvaṃ vijahāti bodhimaṇḍaniśadanam upādāya na punar jātu strī bhavati*; cf. also Paul 1979/1985: 212 note 7. Harrison 1987: 78 concludes that "women ... are generally represented in such an unfavourable light as to vitiate any notion of the Mahāyāna as a movement for sexual equality. Compared with the situation in the Pāli Canon, in which women are at least as capable as men of attaining the highest goal, arhatship, the position of women in Mahāyāna has hardly changed for the better".

might not need to be male in a society where gender equality is a generally accepted fact.⁵⁴

⁵⁴ A problem with this suggestion would be one of the thirty-two marks with which according to tradition the Buddha was endowed, namely the concealed nature of his genitals; cf. e.g., MN 91 at MN II 136,17: *kosohitavathaguyho*, referred to in its parallels MĀ 161 at T I 686b16 and T 76 at T I 883c26 as 陰馬藏; on which cf. in more detail Anālayo 2011b: 46. Hae-ju 1999: 131 comments that the idea of women's inability to become a Buddha "may have stemmed from the idea of the Buddha's unique sexual mark. Even though his sexual organ is concealed, the mark is characterized as male"; cf. also Kajiyama 1982: 65 and Cheng 2007: 72. The standard description of the significance of these thirty-two marks, e.g., MN 91 at MN II 134,16 and its parallels MĀ 161 at T I 685a23 and T 76 at T I 883c2, states that one who has these will definitely become either a wheel-turning king or a Buddha. In several discourses, brahmins investigate the Buddha's possession of the thirty-two marks and, once they find out that he possesses all of them and have been told by him that he claims to be a Buddha, they come to the conclusion that his claim must be true. Thus possession of the thirty-two marks serves to certify a claim to Buddhahood in the eyes of contemporary brahmins. However, the standard descriptions of the significance of these marks neither explicitly state nor necessarily imply that to become a wheel-turning king or a Buddha one must invariably be endowed with these marks (though this may well be the way later tradition interprets these passages). It only states the future prospect of one who has them. Thus, what this dictum implies for one who does not have all thirty-two marks would be that such a person's claim to be a Buddha would fail to arouse confidence in brahmins who believe in the significance of these marks. In the discourses, the situation of someone claiming to be a Buddha without possessing all thirty-two marks does not arise, as whenever the possession of these marks is under scrutiny, the object of such investigations is invariably Gotama Buddha. Nevertheless, a significant indication can be found in the *Mahāpadāna-sutta*, which makes a point of not including the possession of the thirty-two marks among what is the rule, *dhammatā*, for all Buddhas. Whereas the *Mahāpadāna-sutta* consistently introduces various qualities of the infant bodhisattva Vipassī as *dhammatā esā*, and thus specifies their possession as something that is invariably the case for any Buddha-to-be, when the discourse turns to his thirty-two marks, DN 14 at DN II 16,1, the

Be that as it may, in contrast to these inabilities related to leadership positions, to speak of the impossibility of a female Paccekabuddha would imply equating womanhood with lesser spiritual abilities. A Paccekabuddha does not act as a teacher, so that there would be no need to take into account the preferences of ancient Indian patriarchal society. [164] The question of being a Paccekabuddha is thus solely a question of spiritual ability, as a Paccekabuddha has to accomplish the difficult task of reaching awakening without the guidance of a teacher.

Hence to consider it impossible for a female to be a Paccekabuddha amounts to proposing that a woman by dint of her gender is incapable of the degree of spiritual ability required for realizing awakening without the guidance of a teacher. That this would indeed be the implication of this particular impossibility becomes evident in the individual translation, which contrasts this inability of a woman to the case of a man, who by dint of merit and wisdom can become a Paccekabuddha.⁵⁵ In short, a woman would

phrase *dhammatā esā* is no longer used. The same is the case for its *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel, where the recurrent reference to an "unchanging principle for all Buddhas", 諸佛常法, is no longer used when the description turns to the thirty-two marks, DĀ 1 at T I 4c20. Not all parallel versions agree in this respect, as judging from fragment 143.2 in Fukita 2003: 71 the Sanskrit parallel did use the expression *dharmatā* at the outset of its description of bodhisattva Vipaśyī's possession of the thirty-two marks; while another parallel, T 2 at T I 152b13, does not use such a specification even in its description of his other qualities. In sum, at least from the perspective of the *Mahāpadāna-sutta* and its *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel, the possibility that someone could be a Buddha without being in the possession of all of the thirty-two marks does not seem to be categorically ruled out.

⁵⁵ T 776 at T XVII 713b23 indicates that what is impossible for women is instead possible in the case of "a son of a good family who is endowed with the marks of a great man and adorned with merit and wisdom", 善男子, 具大人相, 福慧莊嚴.

lack the merit and wisdom required for this feat.

The **Mahāprajñāpāramitā-(upadeśa-)śāstra* goes even further. In a passage presented as a discourse quotation from the Discourse on Many Elements, this work proclaims that a woman can reach liberation only with the help of a man.⁵⁶ That is, from the perspective of this passage even for becoming an arahant a woman will need help by a male. At this point, the degradation of the spiritual abilities of women has become fully manifest.

In view of this evident tendency to devalue the abilities of women, it is quite significant that the *Madhyama-āgama* version does not mention any of the inabilities of women. An accidental loss of such a passage seems less probable in view of the recurrent tendency towards gradual expansion that appears to be at work in regard to other topics in all versions. A deliberate deletion of such a treatment is similarly improbable, since the five inabilities of a woman are listed in another *Madhyama-āgama* discourse.⁵⁷

This discourse is one of several canonical records of the Buddha permitting women to go forth as nuns, following a request by Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī and an intervention in her favour by Ānanda. The five inabilities of women are also mentioned in a version of the same event in the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*,⁵⁸ [165] whereas they

⁵⁶ T 1509 at T XXV 237a19: "if a woman attains the liberation of Nirvāṇa, it is in dependence on a male that she attains it; it does not happen that she attains awakening on her own", 若女人得解脫涅槃,亦因男子得,無有自然得道; cf. also Lamotte 1944/1970: 1524.

⁵⁷ Cf. below page 467.

⁵⁸ T 1421 at T XXII 186a12: "a woman has five obstructions, she cannot be Sakka, the ruler of gods, or the Heavenly King Māra, or the Heavenly King Brahmā, or a noble wheel-turning king or a king of the Dharma in the three realms", 女人有五礙,不得作天帝釋,魔天王,梵天王,轉輪聖王,三界法王. The five impossibilities are also mentioned in EĀ 43.2 at T II 757c24, where they serve to explain why a woman cannot be given a prediction of future Buddhahood.

are absent from accounts of this event in the *Vinayas* of the Dharmaguptaka, 'Haimavata' (?), Mahāsāṃghika, Mūlasarvāstivāda and Theravāda traditions.⁵⁹

As the passage on the inabilities of women occurs at different junctions in the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya* and in the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse, it seems probable that this topic is not an original part of the account of the foundation of the order of nuns;⁶⁰ similar to the above discussed case where two out of six versions of the Discourse on Many Elements have a reference to the aggregates that occurs at different junctions in these two versions (see table 14), where other indications confirm that this reference is a later addition.

Returning to the *Bahudhātuka-sutta* and its parallels, when considered against the background of the purpose of the whole discourse, the theme of what a woman cannot achieve appears to be quite irrelevant. The different versions agree that the Buddha

This passage thus shows a stage of development comparable to the extract from the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* quote above in note 53. A counterpart to the tale in EĀ 43.2 can be found in an apocryphal Pāli *jātaka* edited in Jaini 1989/2001; cf. also Gombrich 1980: 70 on a version of this tale in a Sinhala prose work composed in the 15th century. The occurrence of this tale in the *Ekottarika-āgama* is one of several passages indicating the integration of comparatively late elements into this discourse collection; cf. Anālayo 2009j and 2013c.

⁵⁹ Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 922c to 923c, the 'Haimavata' (?) *Vinayamāṭṛka*, T 1463 at T XXIV 803a to 803c, the Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya*, Roth 1970: 4–21, the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1451 at T XXIV 350b to 351c, and the Theravāda *Vinaya*, Vin II 253 to 256 (= AN 8.51 at AN IV 274 to 279); cf. also the survey in Heirman 2001: 282.

⁶⁰ In the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 186a12, the inabilities of women stand at the beginning of several passages that describe the negative repercussions of allowing women to go forth. In MĀ 116 at T I 607b10 (and in its close parallel T 61 at T I 858a1), women's inabilities come at the end of a comparable series of passages on the detrimental consequences of permitting women to ordain.

gave his disciple Ānanda an exposition on essential aspects of the Dharma that are required for the development of wisdom. That the development of wisdom requires insight into the elements, the sense-spheres and dependent arising is quite straightforward. The same could also be said for insight into the karmic consequences of wholesome and unwholesome deeds or for knowledge about certain qualities of a stream-enterer. Such items would still be in line with the general canonical conception of wisdom, which stands for a type of insight and understanding that leads to liberation,⁶¹ not for a mere accumulation of various and perhaps irrelevant facts.

In contrast, to know if a wheel-turning king, a heavenly king, a Sakka, a Māra, a Brahmā, a Paccekabuddha or a Buddha can be female would be of little relevance to Ānanda, who was living at a time when the ruling positions in the various heavens were held to have been already occupied by males, and when the one male who according to tradition could have become a wheel-turning king had already become a Buddha instead. [166] Given that as a stream-enterer Ānanda would not have had any reason to aspire to become any of these,⁶² it would be difficult to conceive of any practical relevance that knowledge of gender restrictions for occupying these positions could have had for Ānanda.⁶³

⁶¹ MN 43 at MN I 293,36 indicates that the purpose of wisdom is to develop "direct knowledge", "penetrative knowledge" and "abandoning", *paññā ... abhiññatthā pariññatthā pahānatthā*; its parallel MĀ 211 at T I 790c22 similarly explains that wisdom has the purpose of leading to "disenchantment", to "dispassion" and to a "vision in accordance with reality", 智慧者有厭義, 無欲義, 見如真義.

⁶² SN 22.83 at SN III 106,3 and its parallel SĀ 261 at T II 66b3 record how Ānanda became a stream-enterer, which Vin II 183,21 indicates to have happened soon after his ordination.

⁶³ Pérez-remón 1980: 357 note 48 comments, regarding the impossibilities of two Buddhas or two wheel-turning kings arising simultaneously and the impos-

In sum, since an accidental loss or an intentional omission of an exposition on the inabilities of women in the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse seems improbable, the most straightforward conclusion would be that the theme of women's inability is a later addition to the exposition on impossibilities in the different versions of the Discourse on Many Elements. Thus in this respect the *Madhyama-āgama* version quite probably testifies to an early stage, when the theme of what women cannot achieve had not yet become part of the discourse.

As part of the general tendency to expand on various impossibilities, however, this theme must have soon enough made its way into various versions of the discourse.⁶⁴ Whereas the inability of a woman to be a Buddha can still be seen as an expression of leadership conceptions held in ancient Indian patriarchal society, once her inability to be a Pāccekabuddha becomes part of the listing of impossibilities, the implications are clearly a diminishing of the spiritual abilities of women. This tendency can safely be assumed to stand in contrast to the teachings of early Bud-

sibilities of women: "these impossibilities and their corresponding possibilities are introduced in between the other impossibilities and possibilities regarding moral matters, interrupting the enumeration of things morally possible or impossible, a fact that might indicate their later interpolation". Singh 2010:149 comments that "later texts have added to the perceived limitations of being a woman, such as being unable to rule [as a cakkavartin, etc.] ... these can be seen as consequences of cultural influence on Buddhism, and [of] not adhering to known teachings of the Buddha".

⁶⁴ Kajiyama 1982: 58 concludes that, regarding the listing of inabilities of women, "it is most likely that the dictum did not exist when the Buddhist Order maintained one and the same tradition, but that it was created after the Order was divided into many schools and was inserted into sūtras of various schools". However, the suggestion by Kajiyama 1982: 70 that "the dictum that a woman is incapable of becoming a Buddha arose probably in the first century B.C." may be putting things at too late a time.

dhism, where – as far as the texts allow us to judge – gender was not considered to have an impact on spiritual abilities.

Mahācattārīsaka-sutta (MN 117)

Introduction

With the present chapter I turn to the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta*, a discourse of particular significance, as it describes a supramundane version of the path-factors.¹ This description is absent from a *Madhyama-āgama* parallel and from a parallel found in Śamathadeva's compendium of discourse quotations from the *Abhidharma-kośabhāṣya*.² [60]

Unlike its parallels, the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta* distinguishes three instances of the path-factors right view, right intention, right speech, right action and right livelihood: wrong path-factor, mundane right path-factor and supramundane right path-factor.³ The

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¹ MN 117 at MN III 71,8 to 78,18.

² ^[6] D 4094 *nyu* 43b7 to 47b4 or Q 5595 *thu* 83a7 to 87b2; whose title is given in an *uddāna* at D 4094 *ju* 235b4 or Q 5595 *tu* 269a5 as the Discourse on "The Great Forty", *chen po bzhi bcu*; cf. also Skilling 1997: 341f. In addition to this Tibetan parallel, parts of a version of the present discourse have been preserved in Sanskrit fragments; cf. SHT V 1125 in Sander 1985: 120 and SHT VIII 1919A in Bechert 2000: 100. SHT V 1125 R1–2 has part of the summing up of the exposition into two sets of twenty found in MN 117 at MN III 77,21, while R3 has preserved part of the shift from the eightfold noble path of the disciple in training to the tenfold noble path of the arahant found in MN 117 at MN III 76,7 (cf. also SHT VIII 1919A), although the exposition in the Sanskrit version seems to have been formulated in a manner that differs and also appears to have stood at a different point in the Sanskrit version, namely right after the summing up of the exposition into two sets of twenty.

³ ^[8] I already drew attention to several of the points made in the present section in Anālayo 2005: 98–100.

perceived importance of this description of supramundane path-factors can be seen in a discussion on the nature of the supramundane noble path, presented in the commentary on the *Vibhaṅga*, according to which a monk should ask another monk if he is a "reciter of the 'great forty'".⁴ This question reflects the significance that was attached to the present discourse, whose recall the commentaries considered an indispensable requirement for being able to engage in a discussion on the supramundane noble path.⁵

Closer scrutiny of the discourse itself shows that some of the Pāli terms used in the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta's* definition of supramundane right intention, such as "fixing" (*appanā*) of the mind and "mental inclination" (*cetaso abhiniropanā*), are not found in other discourses and belong to the type of language used only in the Abhidharma and historically later Pāli texts.⁶

In fact, the terms employed to define the supramundane path-

⁴ [9] Vibh-a 320,26: *tvam tāva mahācattārīsakabhāṅako hosi na hosī ti pucchitabbo*.

⁵ [10] While Adikaram 1946/1994: 31 and Goonesekera 1968: 689 simply list the *mahācattārīsakabhāṅaka* in their treatments of the *bhāṅaka* tradition, without attempting an explanation, Mori 1990: 125 takes the expression *mahācattārīsakabhāṅaka* to be an example of "Bhāṅakas who further specialized in some particular suttas". Alternatively, perhaps the expression *mahācattārīsakabhāṅaka* is used in the present context simply in order to inquire if the other monk remembers the exposition given in this particular discourse, equivalent to asking him: *mahācattārīsakam dhāresi?* Be that as it may, the use of the term *mahācattārīsakabhāṅaka* definitely highlights the importance of MN 117, which due to its unique exposition would have been and still is an important reference point for discussions on the supramundane path.

⁶ [11] MN 117 at MN III 73,15 lists *takko vitakko saṅkappo appanā vyappanā cetaso abhiniropanā* to define *sammāsaṅkappo ariyo anāsavo lokuttaro maggaṅgo*. The terms *appanā*, *vyappanā* and *cetaso abhiniropanā* do not seem to recur at all in other discourses. The whole listing recurs verbatim in Dhs 10,17 and in Vibh 86,8: *takko vitakko saṅkappo appanā vyappanā cetaso abhiniropanā*.

factors of right intention, right speech, right action and right livelihood are precisely the same as those used in the *Vibhaṅga* of the Pāli *Abhidhammapiṭaka*. Notably, the *Vibhaṅga* uses these terms in its exposition of the path-factors according to the specific method of the Abhidharma, different from the terms the same work uses when it analyses these path-factors according to the method of the discourses.⁷ That is, from the viewpoint of the *Vibhaṅga* this type of terminology is distinctly Abhidharmic, differing from the mode of exposition found in the discourses.

Moreover, the treatment of the path-factors from a supramundane viewpoint in the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta* qualifies the mundane wholesome path-factors as "with influx" and as "ripening in attachment".⁸ Yet, the definitions given in the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta* for the path-factors of mundane right intention, [61] right speech, right action and right livelihood recur in other discourses as part of the standard definition of the noble eightfold path that leads to the eradication of *dukkha*.⁹ Thus, what according to other discourses leads to the eradication of *dukkha*, in the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta* is presented as something that ripens in attachment and is associated with the influxes.

The different attitude towards the mundane path-factors can also be seen in the circumstance that the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta* explicitly considers each of the supramundane path-factors as a "factor of the path" (*maggāṅga*), a qualification it does not use in

⁷ [12] This is the exposition of the fourth noble truth from the viewpoint of the Abhidharma, *abhidhammabhājanīya*, at Vibh 106,3, preceded by treating the same subject from the viewpoint of the discourses in the *suttantabhājanīya*. The same Abhidharmic treatment recurs also at Dhs 63,21.

⁸ [13] E.g., for the path-factor of right intention in MN 117 at MN III 73,6: *sāsa-vo ... upadhivepakko*.

⁹ [14] MN 117 at MN III 73,9, MN III 74,3+30 and MN III 75,20, paralleling the definitions of these path-factors, e.g., in MN 141 at MN III 251,16+19+23+26.

relation to their mundane counterparts. Yet, the mundane path-factors would certainly also merit being reckoned as "factors of the path". The restricted use of this qualification for the supramundane path-factors becomes understandable once it is recognized that this passage employs distinct Abhidharmic terminology. That is, the use of the qualification "factor of the path" (*maggaṅga*) is based on the idea of the "path" as understood in the Abhidharma and the commentaries, where, instead of referring to a prolonged period of practice, "path" stands only for the moment when the four stages of awakening are attained.¹⁰

Thus, the reference to a "factor of the path" in this part of the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta* has in view only the mind-moment during which the supramundane path is experienced. From this viewpoint, the mundane path-factors are indeed not fit to be reckoned "factors of the path".

Similarly, the qualification "without influxes" refers, in accordance with the use of the same term in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇī*, only to the four paths and fruits.¹¹ That is, the exposition of the supramundane path-factors in the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta* does not seem to refer to the path-factors of an arahant, which is what the term "without influxes" usually refers to in the discourses, but rather describes the path-factors present at the moment of attaining any of the four levels of awakening.

The same focus on the mind-moment of awakening can be seen in the circumstance that, instead of expounding supramundane right view and right intention in terms of their content, the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta* presents them in terms of the state of mind of one who experiences any of the stages of awakening.¹² In the

¹⁰ Cf. also Gethin 1992: 131f.

¹¹ [15] Dhs 196,4: *ariyāpaññā maggā ca maggaphalāni ca ... ime dhammā anāsavaṃ*.

¹² [16] Bodhi in Ñāṇamoli 1995/2005: 1328 note 1103 comments that "the defī-

case of the three path-factors of right speech, right action and right livelihood, the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta* refers simply to the mental act of restraint. [62] In this context, the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta* uses a string of terms that also does not recur in this way in other discourses, while the same string of terms is found in the same context in Abhidharma works of the Pāli canon.¹³ Clearly, this presentation is pervaded by a distinct Abhidharmic flavour.

At this point, the question could be posed to what extent the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta*'s overall exposition requires a presentation of the supramundane path-factors. According to the preamble found similarly in the parallel versions of the discourse, the main intent of the present exposition is to show the supportive function of the other seven path-factors for right concentration. That is, the point at stake does not seem to be an exposition of the path-factors individually, but rather their interrelation as a basis for developing right concentration, and in particular the function of right view, right effort and right mindfulness as means of correction and support for the other path-factors.¹⁴ This intent of the exposition would not require a supramundane description of the path-factors.

This becomes all the more evident with the parallel versions, where such a supramundane description is not found. Nevertheless, the main topic of the discourse – the development of right concentration based on the other path factors and in particular on the cooperation of right view, right effort and right mindfulness – is presented with similar, if not increased clarity in these versions,

tion is formulated by way of the cognitive function rather than the objective content of right view".

¹³ [17] MN 117 at MN III 74,9+35 and MN III 75,25: *ārati virati paṭivirati vera-maṇī*, a string of terms that recurs in the definition of these path-factors from the viewpoint of the Abhidharma, the *abhidhammabhājanīya*, given in Vibh 106,31+36 and Vibh 107,4; cf. also Dhs 63,35 and Dhs 64,2+7.

¹⁴ [18] Meisig 1987: 233.

as can be seen from the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse translated below.

Subsequent to the translation, I survey some of the differences between the parallel versions of this discourse and then translate two *Samyukta-āgama* discourses which, despite not being parallels properly speaking to the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta*, do have similar supramundane versions of the path-factors.

Translation (1)

Discourse on the Noble Path¹⁵

1. Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was dwelling among the Kurus, in the Kuru town of Kammāsadhamma.¹⁶ [735c] At that time the Blessed One told the monks: "There is one path for beings to gain purification, for being separated from worry, sadness and tears, for eradicating dejection, pain, remorse and anxiety, for easily attaining the [right] method,¹⁷

¹⁵ [20] The translated text is MĀ 189 at T I 735b27 to 736c25; a comparative study can be found in Anālayo 2011a: 657–664. A translation of MĀ 189 into German can be found in Meisig 1987. Though in a few instances my rendering of the Chinese original differs, there can be no doubt about my indebtedness to the work done by Meisig on MĀ 189. The title of MĀ 189 reflects the theme of the noble path, broached at the outset of the different versions of the discourse in terms of the eighth path-factor of concentration developed in dependence on the other seven path-factors. The Pāli and Tibetan versions instead take their title from a later section of the discourse, which adds up the ten right path-factors, the ten types of wholesome states that arise from them, the ten wrong path-factors and the ten types of unwholesome states that arise from them, arriving at a total count presented under the heading of being a teaching on "the great forty", *mahācattārīsaka*, 四十大, *chen po bzhi bcu*.

¹⁶ [21] MN 117 at MN III 71,8 instead has Jeta's Grove at Sāvathī as its location.

¹⁷ [22] MĀ 189 at T I 735c2: 如法. As already noted by Meisig 1987: 235 note 6, 如法 corresponds to the "method", *nāya*, mentioned in MN 10 at MN I 56,2;

namely noble right concentration, with its arousing, its supports, and also with its equipment in having seven factors.¹⁸
[63]

2. "In regard to this noble right concentration, [I will] explain its arousing, its supports and also its equipment.

3. "What are the seven [factors]? [They are] right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort and right mindfulness. If based on arousing these seven factors, on being supported [by them] and equipped [with them], the mind progresses well and attains one-pointedness – then this is reckoned noble right concentration with its arousing, with its supports and with its equipment. Why?

34. "Right view gives rise to right intention, right intention gives rise to right speech, right speech gives rise to right action, right action gives rise to right livelihood, right livelihood gives rise to right effort, right effort gives rise to right mindfulness, and right mindfulness gives rise to right concentration.¹⁹

cf. also Hirakawa 1997: 348, who lists *nyāya* as one of the possible meanings rendered by 如法.

¹⁸ [23] This introductory qualification of noble concentration as the one path (一道) for the purification of beings is not found in MN 117, although it has a counterpart in D 4094 *nyu* 44a2 or Q 5595 *thu* 83b1, which speaks of a "single vehicle", *theg pa ni gcig*; on references to the 'single vehicle' in *Samyukta-āgama* discourses cf. the discussion in Nattier 2007. In general, the Pāli discourses seem to reserve the qualification *ekāyano* – on which cf., e.g., Gethin 1992: 59–66, Kuan 2001: 164, Anālayo 2003c: 27–29 and Nattier 2007 – for the practice of *satipaṭṭhāna*; cf., e.g., MN 10 at MN I 55,31. As pointed out by Nattier 2007: 194, the present occurrence in MĀ 189 shows how "in contrast to the Pāli ... the *Madhyamāgama* did not limit the use of the *ekāyana* refrain to contexts dealing with the four *smṛtyupasthānas*".

¹⁹ [24] This sequential build-up of the path-factors is found in the Pāli and Tibetan versions only after the detailed exposition of the path-factors, MN 117 at MN

"The noble disciple who has in this way rightly concentrated the mind will swiftly eradicate sensual desire, ill will and delusion. The noble disciple who has in this way rightly liberated the mind, swiftly comes to know that birth has been extinguished, the holy life has been established, what had to be done has been done, there will be no experiencing of a further existence, knowing this as it really is."²⁰

4. "Herein, right view is foremost ahead. If one sees that wrong view is wrong view – this is reckoned right view. If one sees that right view is right view – this is also reckoned right view.

5. "What is wrong view? This view, namely: 'There is no [efficacy] in giving, there is no [efficacy] in offerings [during a sacrifice], there is no [efficacy] in reciting hymns [during a sacrifice],²¹ there are no wholesome and evil deeds, there is no result of wholesome and evil deeds, there is neither this world nor another world, there is no [obligation towards one's] father or mother,²² in the world there are no worthy men who have reached a wholesome attainment,²³ who are well gone and

III 76,1 and D 4094 *nyu* 46b2 or Q 5595 *thu* 86a6.

²⁰ [25] This paragraph has no counterpart in MN 117, though a similar presentation occurs in D 4094 *nyu* 46b3 or Q 5595 *thu* 86a7.

²¹ [26] MĀ 189 at T I 735c15: 呪説, which together with the preceding 齋 appear to correspond to the reference to what is "offered" and "sacrificed", *yittha* and *huta*, in MN 117 at MN III 71,27. While the two Pāli terms are similar in meaning, the rendering in MĀ 189 seems to reflect two aspects of a sacrifice: the performance of offerings and the recitation of hymns.

²² [27] The Pāli and Tibetan versions at this point also mention the denial of the existence of spontaneously arisen beings, MN 117 at MN III 71,30: *n' atthi sattā opapātikā* and D 4094 *nyu* 44a6 or Q 5595 *thu* 83b7: *sems can brdzus* (D: *rdzus*) *te byung ba rnam med do*. On such spontaneously arisen beings cf. also Windisch 1908: 184–194 and Manné 1995: 78–80.

²³ For a discussion of my rendering "worthy men" cf. below note 30 page 498.

have progressed well, who by their own knowledge and experience abide in having themselves realized this world and the other world' – this is reckoned wrong view.

7. "What is right view?"²⁴ This view, namely: 'there is [efficacy] in giving, there is [efficacy] in offerings, there is [efficacy] in reciting hymns, there are wholesome and evil deeds, there is a result of wholesome and evil deeds, [64] there are this world and another world, there is [obligation towards one's] father or mother, in the world there are worthy men who have reached a wholesome attainment, who are well gone and have progressed well, who by their own knowledge and experience abide in having themselves realized this world and the other world' – this is reckoned right view.

9. "To see that wrong view is wrong view – this is reckoned right view; and to see that right view is right view – this is also reckoned right view. Having understood like this, one then seeks to train [oneself], wishing to abandon wrong view and to accomplish right view – this is reckoned right effort. With mindfulness a monk abandons wrong view and accomplishes right view – this is reckoned right mindfulness. These three factors go along with right view, from view to effort."²⁵

²⁴ [28] At this point, MN 117 at MN III 72,4 introduces a distinction between two types of right view (§6 in Ñāṇamoli 1995/2005: 934): that which is affected by influxes and that which is not affected by them; followed by expounding these two in detail (§§7–8 in Ñāṇamoli 1995/2005: 935); cf. the discussion below. MN 117 adopts the same twofold distinction in its exposition of right intention, right speech, right action and right livelihood, a difference to which I already drew attention in *Anālayo* 2005: 98–100.

²⁵ [29] *MĀ* 189 at T I 735c26: 此三支隨正見, 從見方便. The implication appears to be that the three factors (view, mindfulness and effort) are required for a development that sets in with view (i.e., recognizing a wrong path-factor) and culminates in effort (i.e., abandoning the wrong path-factor). MN 117 at MN III 72,26 instead speaks of the three factors revolving and circling around right

For this reason, right view is foremost ahead.

10. "If one sees that wrong intention is wrong intention – this is reckoned right <view>.²⁶ If one sees that right intention is right intention – this is also reckoned right <view>.

11. "What is wrong intention? Thoughts of sensuality, thoughts of ill will and thoughts of harming – this is reckoned wrong intention [736a].

13. "What is right intention? Thoughts of dispassion, thoughts of non-ill will and thoughts of non-harming – this is reckoned right intention.

15. "To see that wrong intention is wrong intention – this is reckoned right <view>; and to see that right intention is right intention – this is also reckoned right <view>. Having understood like this, one then seeks to train [oneself], wishing to abandon wrong intention and to accomplish right intention – this is reckoned right effort.²⁷ With mindfulness a monk aban-

view, *tayo dhammā sammādiṭṭhiṃ anuparidhāvanti anuparivattanti*, while D 4094 *nyu* 44b5 or Q 5595 *thu* 84a7 indicates that the three path-factors follow after view, *lam gyi yan lag gsum po 'di dag ni lta ba nyid kyi rjes su 'jug pa ste*.

²⁶ [30] MĀ 189 at T I 735c28 actually reckons recognizing wrong intention for what it is as an instance of "right intention", 若見邪志是邪志者, 是謂正志. The parallel versions, however, present such recognition as an instance of right view, *sammādiṭṭhi / dag pa'i lta ba*; cf. MN 117 at MN III 73,1 and D 4094 *nyu* 44b6 or Q 5595 *thu* 84b1 (though Q 5595 *thu* 84a8 has a mistake of a similar type, as it reckons right view to be when on rightly sees "wrong intention as wrong view", *log pa'i rtog pa la log pa'i lta ba'o* (D correctly reads: *rtog pa'o*); cf. also note 27 below). That recognition of wrong intention is an instance of right 'view' also suggests itself from the context, hence I take this presentation in MĀ 189 to be a transmission error and emend to 是謂正見; cf. also Meisig 1987: 238 note 27. The same pattern recurs in MĀ 189 also in relation to the introductory statement on right speech, right action and right livelihood.

²⁷ [31] The transmission error found in the Q edition of the Tibetan version, men-

dons wrong intention and accomplishes right intention – this is reckoned right mindfulness. These three factors go along with right intention, from view [to] effort. For this reason, right view is foremost ahead.

16. "If one sees that wrong speech is wrong speech – this is reckoned right ⟨view⟩.²⁸ If one sees that right speech is right speech – this is also reckoned right ⟨view⟩. [65]

17. "What is wrong speech? False speech, divisive speech, harsh speech and frivolous speech – this is reckoned wrong speech.

19. "What is right speech? Abstention from false speech, from divisive speech, from harsh speech and from frivolous speech – this is reckoned right speech.

21. "To see that wrong speech is wrong speech – this is reckoned right ⟨view⟩; and to see that right speech is right speech – this is also reckoned right ⟨view⟩. Having understood like this, one then seeks to train [oneself], wishing to abandon wrong speech and to accomplish right speech – this is reck-

tioned above in note 26, recurs at this juncture and is here also found in the D edition: in the context of describing the role of effort and mindfulness for abandoning wrong intention and arousing right intention both editions speak of 'view', when 'intention' would instead be required, thereby confusing *log par rtog pa* and *yang dag pa'i rtog pa* with *log par lta ba* and *yang dag pa'i lta ba*; cf. D 4094 *nyu* 45a2 or Q 5595 *thu* 84b4. As in the case noted above, this error differs from the one found in MĀ 189, as it replaces the path-factor with view, whereas MĀ 189 replaces view with the path-factor. Nevertheless, the similarity in type of this error shows how easily such confusion can arise in a repetitive exposition during the prolonged period of transmission of the texts.

²⁸ [32] MĀ 189 at T I 736a7 actually reads: 若見邪語是邪語者，是謂正語，"if one sees that wrong speech is wrong speech – this is reckoned right speech"; cf. above note 26.

oned right effort.²⁹ With mindfulness a monk abandons wrong speech and accomplishes right speech – this is reckoned right mindfulness. These three factors go along with right speech, from view [to] effort. For this reason, right view is foremost ahead.

22. "If one sees that wrong action is wrong action – this is reckoned right <view>.³⁰ If one sees that right action is right action – this is also reckoned right <view>.

23. "What is wrong action? Killing living beings, taking what is not given and sexual misconduct – this is reckoned wrong action.

25. "What is right action? Abstention from killing, from taking what is not given and from sexual misconduct – this is reckoned right action.

²⁹ [33] The Tibetan version continues with the transmission error noted above in note 27, as its exposition of the role of effort and mindfulness for abandoning wrong speech speaks instead of wrong 'view', whereas when it comes to the arousing of right speech it correctly speaks of right 'speech', D 4094 *nyu* 45a7 or Q 5595 *thu* 85a2, reading *de de ltar shes nas log pa'i lta ba spang ba'i phyir 'bad par byed cing, yang dag pa'i ngag nye bar bsgrub pa'i phyir yang dag pa'i rtsol ba byed de*. Thus here the transmission error disappears in the midst of the sentence in both editions, and the correct readings are found for the remaining path-factors (though an intrusion of *lta ba* out of context can again be found in a later section of the discourse, in an exposition of how each right path-factor abandons its wrong counterpart, D 4094 *nyu* 47a4 or Q 5595 *thu* 87a1, where right knowledge, instead of leading to the relinquishment of wrong knowledge, leads to the relinquishment of wrong 'view', *yang dag pa'i shes pas log pa'i lta ba spong bar 'gyur te*, and to the relinquishment of the unwholesome qualities that arise in dependence on wrong 'view'). It is noteworthy that, once the above noted error had happened, the evident inconsistency found in midsentence was not subsequently rectified.

³⁰ [34] MĀ 189 at T I 736a15 actually reads: 若見邪業是邪業者, 是謂正業, "if one sees that wrong action is wrong action – this is reckoned right action"; cf. above note 26.

27. "To see that wrong action is wrong action – this is reckoned right <view>; and to see that right action is right action – this is also reckoned right <view>. Having understood like this, one then seeks to train [oneself], wishing to abandon wrong action and to accomplish right action – this is reckoned right effort. With mindfulness a monk abandons wrong action and accomplishes right action – this is reckoned right mindfulness. These three factors go along with right action, from view [to] effort. For this reason, right view is foremost ahead.

28. "If one sees that wrong livelihood is wrong livelihood – this is reckoned right <view>.³¹ If one sees that right livelihood is right livelihood – this is also reckoned right <view>. [66]

29. "What is wrong livelihood? If there is seeking [requisites] with a dissatisfied mind, having recourse to various inappropriate types of spells,³² making a living by wrong forms

³¹ [35] MĀ 189 at T I 736a24 actually reads: 若見邪命是邪命者, 是謂正命, "if one sees that wrong livelihood is wrong livelihood – this is reckoned right livelihood"; cf. above note 26.

³² [36] MĀ 189 at T I 736a26: 種畜生之呪. As already pointed out by Meisig 1987: 241 note 48, 畜生 corresponds to *tiracchāna* in the expression *tiracchānavijjā*, used, e.g., in Vin II 139,31 or in Vin IV 305,7 for wrong types of livelihood (on *tiracchāna* cf. also above note 6 page 83). A reference to 呪 recurs in a definition of wrong livelihood in MĀ 31 at T I 469b11, which refers to "various types of tricks, skills and spells", 種種伎, 術, 呪. A parallel to MĀ 31, T 32 at T I 816b21, speaks in the same context of 畜生業, literally "animal deeds", an expression where 畜生 also conveys the sense "inappropriate". The same 畜生業 recurs also in T 21 at T I 265a10, an individual translation that parallels the *Brahmajāla-sutta* (DN 1), to introduce various types of wrong livelihood. Under the heading 畜生業, T 21 at T I 265a21 then gives examples for wrong livelihood related to 呪, such as, e.g., spells that help overcoming an adversary, etc. These occurrences suggest 種畜生之呪 to stand for "various inappropriate spells", though in the context of the earlier definitions of wrong and right view the same character rather appears to stand for "hymns"; cf. also above note 21.

of livelihood; if one does not seek robes and blankets in accordance with the Dharma, but by means of what is against the Dharma, does not seek beverages and food, beds and couches, medicine [or] any [other] requisites of life in accordance with the Dharma, but by means of what is against the Dharma – this is reckoned wrong livelihood.

31. "What is right livelihood? If there is no seeking [requisites] with a dissatisfied mind, not having recourse to various inappropriate types of spells, [736b] not making a living by wrong forms of livelihood; if one seeks robes and blankets with what is in accordance with the Dharma, by means of the Dharma, seeks beverages and food, beds and couches, medicine [or] any [other] requisites of life with what is in accordance with the Dharma, by means of the Dharma – this is reckoned right livelihood.³³

33. "To see that wrong livelihood is wrong livelihood – this is reckoned right ⟨view⟩; and to see that right livelihood is right livelihood – this is also reckoned right ⟨view⟩. Having understood like this, one then seeks to train [oneself], wishing to abandon wrong livelihood and to accomplish right livelihood – this is reckoned right effort. With mindfulness a monk abandons wrong livelihood and accomplishes right livelihood – this is reckoned right mindfulness. These three factors go along with right livelihood, from view [to] effort. For this reason, right view is foremost ahead.

"What is right effort? A monk cultivates desire for the aban-

³³ [37] MN 117 at MN III 75,12 instead contrasts making one's livelihood in a wrong way by "scheming, cajoling, hinting, reproaching, seeking [to get] gain [in exchange for another] gain", *kuhanā lapanā nemittikatā nippesikatā lābheṇa lābhaṃ nijigimsanātā*, to overcoming wrong types of livelihood and undertaking one's livelihood rightly (for a definition of the wrong ways of livelihood mentioned here cf. Vibh 352,21).

doning of already arisen unwholesome states, he seeks means, is energetic and diligent in arousing the mind towards cessation. He cultivates desire for the non-arising of not yet arisen unwholesome states, he seeks means, is energetic and diligent in arousing the mind towards cessation. He cultivates desire for the arising of not yet arisen wholesome states, he seeks means, is energetic and diligent in arousing the mind towards cessation. He cultivates desire for the stabilizing of already arisen wholesome states without loss or regress, for their increase and expansion, for their development and full implementation, he seeks means, is energetic and diligent in arousing the mind towards cessation. This is reckoned right effort.³⁴ [67]

"What is right mindfulness? A monk contemplates the internal body as a body ... (*up to*) ... feelings ... states of mind ... he contemplates dharmas as dharmas. This is reckoned right mindfulness.

"What is right concentration? A monk, secluded from sensual desire and secluded from evil and unwholesome states ... (*up to*) ... dwells having attained the fourth absorption. This is reckoned right concentration.

"What is right liberation? A monk [attains] liberation of the mind from sensuality ... from ill will ... and from delusion. This is reckoned right liberation.

³⁴ [38] The present and subsequent passages, concerned with expounding the path-factors from right effort up to right knowledge, are without a counterpart in MN 117. The Tibetan version does continue by examining right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration, D 4094 *nyu* 46a6 or Q 5595 *thu* 86a2, without, however, taking up right liberation or right knowledge. Its presentation of the former three also differs, as instead of bringing in the four right efforts, the four establishing of mindfulness and the four absorptions, in each case it rather lists various terms that are near synonyms to effort, mindfulness and concentration respectively; cf. also the discussion below.

"What is reckoned right knowledge? A monk knows that his mind has been liberated from sensuality ... from ill will ... from delusion. This is reckoned right knowledge.

"The one in training (*sekha*) is endowed with eight factors, the arahant, who has destroyed the influxes, is endowed with ten factors.

34.³⁵ "What are the eight factors with which the one in training is endowed? The right view of one in training ... (*up to*) ... the right concentration of one in training. These are the eight factors with which the one in training is endowed.

"What are the ten factors with which the arahant, who has destroyed the influxes, is endowed? The right view of one beyond training ... (*up to*) ... the right knowledge of one beyond training. These are reckoned the ten factors with which the arahant, who has destroyed the influxes, is endowed.

35. "Why? One who has right view abandons wrong view, [whereby] the innumerable evil and unwholesome states that arise because of wrong view are also abandoned and the innumerable wholesome states that arise because of right view are developed and brought to perfection ... (*up to*) ... one who has right knowledge abandons wrong knowledge, [whereby] the innumerable evil and unwholesome states that arise because of wrong knowledge are also abandoned, and the innumerable

³⁵ [39] The distinction between the path of the disciple in higher training and the arahant is also found in MN 117 at MN III 76,7, where it forms the conclusion to the exposition of the sequential build-up of the path-factors and is not followed by a listing of the respective eight or ten path-factors. The distinction between the paths of the disciple in higher training and of the arahant occurs a little later in D 4094 *nyu* 46b4 or Q 5595 *thu* 86b1, where the sequential build-up of the path-factors is first followed by indicating that in this way the noble disciple is able to eradicate the three root defilements and attain liberation; cf. above note 19.

wholesome states that arise because of right knowledge are developed and brought to perfection.³⁶ [68] [736c]

36. "[Together] these are twenty wholesome types and twenty unwholesome types. Hence this is reckoned the teaching on the great forty types,³⁷ which sets rolling the wheel of Brahma and which cannot be stopped or contradicted by any recluse or brahmin, god, Māra or Brahma, or by anyone else in the world.

37. "If there is a recluse or brahmin [trying to stop or contradict] the teaching on the great forty types proclaimed by me, which sets rolling the wheel of Brahma and which cannot be stopped or contradicted by any recluse or brahmin, god, Māra or Brahma, or by anyone else in the world, then this [recluse or brahmin] will incur ten types of rebuke in accordance with the Dharma. What are the ten?

"If he censures right view and commends wrong view, then he is supporting and commending those recluses and brahmins who have wrong view. If there is a recluse or brahmin [trying to stop or contradict] the teaching on the great forty types proclaimed by me, which sets rolling the wheel of Brahma and which cannot be stopped or contradicted by any recluse or brahmin, god, Māra or Brahma, or by anyone else in the world, then

³⁶ [40] The listing of the ten path-factors of an arahant in MN 117 at MN III 76,7 differs in so far as here right knowledge is the ninth factor, whereas right liberation takes the tenth and last position. D 4094 *nyu* 47a1 or Q 5595 *thu* 86b6 agrees with MĀ 189 on having as its last item the right knowledge of one who is beyond training, *mi slob pa'i yang dag pa'i shes pa*. On the positioning of right knowledge in the Pāli discourses cf. Bucknell 1986: 6f.

³⁷ [41] MĀ 189 at T I 736c2 actually reads 四十大法品. In the next instance of this expression at T I 736c4, however, a variant reading changes the sequence of the last two characters to 品法. Since this fits the context better, I adopt this reading for all instances of this expression.

this is the first type of rebuke he will incur in accordance with the Dharma.

"If he censures ... (*up to*) ... right knowledge and commends wrong knowledge, then he is supporting and commending those recluses and brahmins who have wrong knowledge. If there is a recluse or brahmin [trying to stop or contradict] the teaching on the great forty types proclaimed by me, which sets rolling the wheel of Brahma and which cannot be stopped or contradicted by any recluse or brahmin, god, Māra or Brahma, or by anyone else in the world, then this is the tenth type of rebuke he will incur in accordance with the Dharma.

"If there is a recluse or brahmin [trying to stop or contradict] the teaching on the great forty types proclaimed by me, which sets rolling the wheel of Brahma and which cannot be stopped or contradicted by any recluse or brahmin, god, Māra or Brahma, or by anyone else in the world, then these are the ten types of rebuke in accordance with the Dharma [that he will incur].

38. "If there are still other recluses and brahmins, who adopt [the practice] of squatting and proclaim [the practice] of squatting, who are nihilists and proclaim nihilism,³⁸ [69] who deny causality, deny action and deny karma, who think that

³⁸ [42] MN 117 at MN III 78,13 refers to these nihilists as *okkalā vassa-bhaññā* (C° and S° read *ukkalā*, B° notes the variant reading *vaya-bhaññā*). The commentary, Ps IV 136,4, explains that Vassa and Bhañña are the proper names of two individuals who were inhabitants of the country of Okkala. The *ukkalā-vassa-bhaññā* as proponents of a doctrine of non-action recur in SN 22.62 at SN III 73,3 and in AN 4.30 at AN II 31,21; cf. also Kv 141,28. Bareau 1981: 3 comments that MĀ 189 does not make an "allusion to the Ukkalas", but Meisig 1987: 245 note 93 and 99 explains that the reference to "squatting" (Skt. *utkuṭaka*) and to what is "cut off and destroyed" (Skt. *vyaya-bhinna*) could be due to the translator not recognizing these as proper names and instead rendering them as activities.

whatever is done and designated as good or evil will be cut off and destroyed then and there, even they are afraid of and are worried about censuring the teaching on the great forty types proclaimed by me, which sets rolling the wheel of Brahma and which cannot be stopped or contradicted by any recluse or brahmin, god, Māra or Brahma, or by anyone else in the world."

The Buddha spoke like this. The monks, having listened to what the Buddha said, were delighted and received it respectfully.

Study (1)

On surveying the variations found between the three versions of the present discourse, it is remarkable that on several occasions the discourse quotation in Śamathadeva's compendium preserved in Tibetan agrees with the Pāli version when the latter differs from the Chinese. In this way the Mūlasarvāstivāda version preserved in Tibetan shows a number of affinities with the Theravāda version in cases where what with high probability represents a Chinese rendering from the Sarvāstivāda tradition differs.

For example, the Pāli and Tibetan versions agree regarding the title "The Great Forty", against the title of the Chinese discourse as the "The Noble Path". They also agree in positioning the sequential build-up of the path-factors after these factors have received a detailed exposition, whereas the Chinese version translated above adopts the opposite sequence. The Pāli and Tibetan versions again concord that the existence of spontaneously arisen beings is an aspect of right or wrong view, whereas this is absent from the corresponding Chinese description.

This goes to show that, whatever may be the final word on the relationship between the Mūlasarvāstivāda and the Sarvāstivāda traditions, the Tibetan and Chinese versions of the present dis-

course do stem from two to some degree independent lines of transmission. For them to nevertheless agree in not having any exposition of the supramundane path-factors provides strong evidence against the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta*.

As already mentioned at the outset of the present chapter, the treatment of the supramundane path-factors does not seem to be necessary from the viewpoint of the central topic of the discourse, [70] the same treatment shows distinct Abhidharmic characteristics and vocabulary, and it is absent from both parallels. This makes it highly probable that the description of the supramundane path-factors is a later addition to the Pāli discourse.

Such a conclusion does not entail a dismissal of the reliability of the Pāli version as a whole, as in other respects the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta* appears to be closer to what probably was the original exposition than its Chinese and Tibetan counterparts. This can be seen in the part of the Chinese parallel translated above that sets in after the definition of right and wrong livelihood (after paragraph 33 in the translation above). Up to this point, in all versions right concentration has been defined as one-pointedness of the mind endowed with the other seven path-factors, while right effort and right mindfulness have been explained to be the effort and the mindfulness required for establishing the right manifestations of the other path-factors. Hence it would be redundant to expound these path-factors once more. Yet, this is precisely what happens in the Chinese and Tibetan versions.

In the Chinese discourse, this takes place by way of the standard definitions of right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration, which describe the four right efforts, the four establishments of mindfulness and the four absorptions. The Chinese account then continues by also defining right liberation and right knowledge.

The last two are not taken up in the Tibetan account at all,

which also differs in the way it defines right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration. Instead of the standard definitions found in the Chinese discourse, the Tibetan version describes these three path factors with the help of a series of near synonyms.³⁹ The passage in question reads:

"What is right effort? Endeavouring with aspiration, not procrastinating, surpassing exertion, abandoning, endeavouring, non discouragement, not becoming easily satisfied – this is reckoned right effort.

"What is right mindfulness? Whatever mindfulness, recollection, various instances of mindfulness, non-forgetful mindfulness, absence of forgetfulness, non-delusion, being endowed with non-deluded qualities, sustained noting (*abhilapanatā*) of the mind⁴⁰ – this is reckoned right mindfulness. [71]

"What is right concentration? Whatever calm dwelling of the mind, complete still abiding, manifest still abiding, essential still abiding, non-distraction, right collectedness, tranquility and concentration, one-pointedness of the mind – this is reckoned right concentration."

This rather substantial difference makes it highly probable that in this case additions have taken place in the Chinese and Tibetan versions. In fact, whereas in regard to the earlier path-factors all versions invariably conclude each case by highlighting the cooperative activity of right view, right effort and right mindfulness,

³⁹ [47] D 4094 *nyu* 46a5 or Q 5595 *thu* 86a2.

⁴⁰ [48] D 4094 *nyu* 46a7 or Q 5595 *thu* 86a4: *sems kyi mngon par brjod pa*; where *mngon par brjod pa* would correspond to *abhilapanatā*; cf. Edgerton 1953/1998: 56 s.v. *abhilapanatā* and entry no. 2795 in the *Mahāvīyūtpatti*, Sakaki 1926: 201. On the significance of *abhilapanatā* cf. also the discussion in Cox 1992/1993: 79–82 and Gethin 1992: 39f.

such an indication is absent from their exposition of the remaining three path-factors. The Chinese and Tibetan versions also do not provide a contrast to wrong manifestations of these path-factors. This makes it safe to assume that the additional treatment of these path-factors was added during the process of oral transmission.⁴¹

In sum, it seems that the treatment of the path in the present discourse has been expanded in different ways in each of the three versions during the prolonged period of transmission, as follows:

- Addition of the standard expositions of the path-factors right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration, right liberation and right knowledge in the case of the Chinese version.
- Addition of expositions of the path-factors right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration by listing synonyms in the case of the Tibetan version.
- Division of the right path-factors into two types and addition of a supramundane path-factor to the descriptions of right view, right intention, right speech, right action and right livelihood in the case of the Pāli version.

While the Chinese version's apparent addition of expositions of path-factors like right effort, right mindfulness or right concentration can be seen to draw on standard descriptions of the path-factors found elsewhere in the discourses, with the Tibetan ver-

⁴¹ [49] Cf. also Meisig 1987: 230. In fact, whereas the earlier part of MĀ 189 at T I 735c3 is concerned with a definition of "noble right concentration", 聖正定, just as its counterpart MN 117 at MN III 71,16: *ariyo sammāsamādhī*, the present section in MĀ 189 at T I 736b16 speaks merely of "right concentration", 正定, a change of terminology that supports the impression that this part of the discourse may be a later expansion or addition. The Tibetan version, however, speaks from the outset only of "right concentration", without further qualifying it as "noble"; cf. D 4094 *nyu* 44a2 or Q 5595 *thu* 83b1: *yang dag pa'i ting nge 'dzin*.

sion's exposition of the same path-factors already a slightly more Abhidharmic nuance comes to the fore, [72] as each of these path-factors is glossed with the help of a long series of near synonyms. Although listings of near synonyms is a feature of oral transmission widely attested to in the early discourses,⁴² when taken to such lengths it becomes more characteristic of Abhidharma literature.⁴³ The Tibetan treatment is at the same time an instance of the above-mentioned tendency to describe path-factors not in terms of what they perform, but in terms of what is performing them, that is, the state of mind of one who develops them.⁴⁴

With the Pāli version, then, this tendency towards Abhidharma influence manifests by integrating an exposition whose philosophical and philological aspects clearly reflect Abhidharmic thought.

Notably, the Theravāda tradition does not stand alone in having such a distinction between mundane and supramundane path-factors in its discourse collections. A somewhat similar exposition can be found twice in the *Samyukta-āgama*, a collection probably representing the Mūlasarvāstivāda tradition.⁴⁵ In what follows, I

⁴² [50] Cf., e.g., von Simson 1965: 32f, 41–55, von Hinüber 1994 and Allon 1997: 191–272.

⁴³ [51] Cf. also Meisig 1987: 227.

⁴⁴ [52] Another example of the same pattern can be found in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Saccavibhaṅga-sutta*, where the Pāli version has the standard description of the path-factors in terms of what they perform, MN 141 at MN III 251,12, whereas MĀ 31 at T I 469a15 describes which set of mental qualities fulfils the function of a particular path-factor at the time of attending to *dukkha*, to its arising, to its cessation and to the path; a mode of presentation found similarly in another parallel preserved as an individual translation, T 32 at T I 816a17 (a parallel in the *Ekottarika-āgama* just lists the path-factors without explaining them; cf. EĀ 27.1 at T II 643b23, translated in Anālayo 2006: 148).

⁴⁵ [53] Cf., e.g., Lü 1963: 242, Waldschmidt 1980: 136, Mayeda 1985: 99, Enomoto 1986: 23, Schmithausen 1987: 306, Choong 2000: 6 note 18, Hiraoka

first translate the two discourses from the *Samyukta-āgama*, followed by briefly examining their significance in relation to the present topic.

Translation (2)

[Discourse on Right and Wrong]⁴⁶

Thus have I heard:⁴⁷ At one time the Buddha was dwelling at Sāvattḥī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park. At that time the Blessed One told the monks ... (*as said above, with these differences*):⁴⁸

"What is right view? Right view is of two types: There is right view that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, that turns towards [rebirth in] a good destination; and there is right view that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that rightly eradicates *dukkha* and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*.

"What is right view that is [mundane], with influxes, with grasping, [that turns] towards [rebirth in] a good destination? If one has the view that there is [efficacy] in giving, there is

2000, Harrison 2002: 1, Oberlies 2003: 64, Bucknell 2006: 685 and Glass 2010.

⁴⁶ Adopting the title suggested in Akanuma 1929/1990: 75.

⁴⁷ [⁵⁴] The translated text is SĀ 785 at T II 203a19 to 204a15; a small section of a parallel to SĀ 785 has been preserved in Uighur, cf. fragment G a6–7 in Kudara 1983: 302.

⁴⁸ [⁵⁵] This remark refers to the preceding discourse, SĀ 784 at T II 203a1, according to which the Buddha delivered a teaching to the monks that begins by highlighting the basic contrast between what is "wrong" (邪) and what is "right" (正), followed by a detailed exposition of what is right by way of describing the eight factors of the noble eightfold path. This description corresponds to what the present discourse presents under the heading of being "worldly" and "with influxes", etc.

[efficacy] in what is spoken ... (*up to*)⁴⁹ ... the knowledge that there are arahants in this world who will not experience a further existence [73] – this is called right view in this world that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, [that turns] towards [rebirth in] a good destination.

"What is right view that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that rightly eradicates *dukkha* and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*? This is reckoned to be [when] a noble disciple gives attention to *dukkha* as *dukkha*, gives attention to its arising ... to its cessation ... and to the path as path, [with a mind that] in the absence of influxes gives attention that is conjoined to the Dharma [by way of] investigation, discrimination, inquiry, realization, wisdom, awakening and contemplative examination – [203b] this is called right view that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that rightly eradicates *dukkha* and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*.

"What is right intention? Right intention is of two types: There is right intention that is mundane, with influxes, with

⁴⁹ [56] The full description of right view, to be supplemented from SĀ 784 at T II 203a5, would be: "there is [efficacy] in giving, there is [efficacy] in what is spoken, there is [efficacy] in offerings, there is wholesome conduct, there is evil conduct, there is result of wholesome and evil conduct, there is this world, there is another world, there is [an obligation towards one's] father and mother, there are [spontaneously] arisen beings, there are arahants who have well attained and have progressed well, who by their own knowledge fully dwell having realized this world and the other world, knowing by themselves that 'for me birth has been extinguished, the holy life has been established, what had to be done has been done, there will be no experiencing of a further existence'". My rendering of the slightly ambivalent expression 有眾生 at T II 203a7, literally "there are living beings being born", as "there are [spontaneously] arisen beings", is inspired by the Tibetan parallel, D 4094 *ju* 206a5 or Q 5595 *tu* 235a7, which reads: *sems can rdzus te byung ba yod do*.

grasping, [that turns] towards [rebirth in] a good destination; and there is right intention that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that rightly eradicates *dukkha* and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*.

"What is right intention that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, [that turns] towards [rebirth in] a good destination? This is reckoned to be right intention [by way of] thoughts of renunciation, thoughts of non-ill will, thoughts of non-harming – this is called right intention that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, [that turns] towards [rebirth in] a good destination.

"What is right intention that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that rightly eradicates *dukkha* and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*? This is reckoned to be [when] a noble disciple gives attention to *dukkha* as *dukkha*, gives attention to its arising ... to its cessation ... and to the path as path, [with a mind that] in the absence of influxes gives attention that is conjoined to mental states [by way of] discrimination, self-determination, understanding, repeated inclination and resolution – this is called right intention that is noble, [74] supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that rightly eradicates *dukkha* and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*.

"What is right speech? Right speech is of two types: There is right speech that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, [that turns] towards [rebirth in] a good destination; and there is right speech that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that rightly eradicates *dukkha* and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*.

What is right speech that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, [that turns] towards [rebirth in] a good destination? This is reckoned to be right speech [by way of] abstaining

from false speech, from divisive speech, from harsh speech and from frivolous speech – this is called right speech that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, [that turns] towards [rebirth in] a good destination.

"What is right speech that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that rightly eradicates *dukkha* and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*? This is reckoned to be [when] a noble disciple gives attention to *dukkha* as *dukkha*, gives attention to its arising ... to its cessation ... and to the path as path, [having] gotten rid of desire [related to] wrong livelihood,⁵⁰ [with a mind that] in the absence of influxes abstains from the four evil verbal activities and from any other evil verbal activities, removes them and detaches from them, he strongly guards himself against them and keeps himself back so as to not transgress, does not go beyond the proper time and beware of not overstepping bounds – this is called right speech that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that rightly eradicates *dukkha* and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*.

"What is right action? Right action is of two types: There is right action that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, [that turns] towards [rebirth in] a good destination; and there is right action that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that rightly eradicates *dukkha* and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*.

"What is right action that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, that turns towards [rebirth in] a good destination? This is reckoned to be abstention from killing, [75] from stealing and from sexual misconduct – this is called right action that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, that turns to-

⁵⁰ [57] Here and below I adopt the variant 貪 instead of 念.

wards [rebirth in] a good destination.

"What is right action that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that rightly eradicates *dukkha* and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*? This is reckoned to be [when] a noble disciple gives attention to *dukkha* as *dukkha*, gives attention to its arising ... to its cessation ... and to the path as path, [having] gotten rid of desire [related to] wrong livelihood, with a mind that in the absence of influxes does not delight in or attach to the three evil bodily activities or to any other of the number of evil bodily activities, [203c] he strongly guards himself against them and keeps himself back so as to not transgress, does not go beyond the proper time and be-wares of not overstepping bounds – this is called right action that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that rightly eradicates *dukkha* and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*.

"What is right livelihood? Right livelihood is of two types: There is right livelihood that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, that turns towards [rebirth in] a good destination; and there is right livelihood that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that rightly eradicates *dukkha* and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*.

What is right livelihood that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, that turns towards [rebirth in] a good destination? This is reckoned to be seeking in accordance with the Dharma for robes and food, for bedding and for medication in conformity with one's disease, not [seeking for these] against the Dharma – this is called right livelihood that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, that turns towards [rebirth in] a good destination.

"What is right livelihood that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that rightly eradicates *duk-*

kha and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*? This is reckoned to be [when] a noble disciple gives attention to *dukkha* as *dukkha*, gives attention to its arising ... to its cessation ... and to the path as path, [with a mind that] in the absence of influxes does not delight in or attach to any wrong livelihood, he strongly guards himself against it and keeps himself back so as to not transgress, [76] does not go beyond the proper time and beware of not overstepping bounds – this is called right livelihood that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that rightly eradicates *dukkha* and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*.

"What is right effort? Right effort is of two types: There is right effort that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, that turns towards [rebirth in] a good destination; and there is right effort that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that rightly eradicates *dukkha* and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*.

"What is right effort that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, that turns towards [rebirth in] a good destination? This is reckoned to be energetic desire, putting forth surpassing exertion, being firmly established in it, being able to arouse it, with mental states that take hold of energy constantly, without remission – this is called right effort that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, that turns towards [rebirth in] a good destination.

"What is right effort that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that [rightly] eradicates *dukkha* and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*? This is reckoned to be [when] a noble disciple gives attention to *dukkha* as *dukkha*, gives attention to its arising ... to its cessation ... and to the path as path, [with a mind that] in the absence of influxes has recollective mindfulness conjoined to mental states [by

way of] energetic desire and effort, putting forth surpassing diligence, being established in it firmly, able to arouse energy, with mental states that take hold of [energy] constantly, without remission – this is called right effort that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that [rightly] eradicates *dukkha* and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*.

"What is right mindfulness? Right mindfulness is of two types: There is right mindfulness that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, that turns towards [rebirth in] a good destination; and there is right mindfulness that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that rightly eradicates *dukkha* and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*. [77]

"What is right mindfulness that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, that turns towards [rebirth in] a good destination? This is mindfulness that is in conformity with being mindful, with repeated mindfulness, with recollective mindfulness that is without forgetfulness,⁵¹ that is not vain – this is called right mindfulness that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, that turns towards [rebirth in] a good destination. [204a]

"What is right mindfulness that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, [that rightly eradicates *dukkha*] and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*? This is reckoned to be [when] a noble disciple gives attention to *dukkha* as *dukkha*, gives attention to its arising ... to its cessation ... and to the path as path, [with a mind that] in the absence of influxes gives attention that is conjoined to that [type of] mindfulness that is in conformity with being mindful, with

⁵¹ [58] Adopting the variant 忘 instead of 妄.

repeated mindfulness, with recollective mindfulness that is without forgetfulness, that is not vain – this is called right mindfulness that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, [that rightly eradicates *dukkha*] and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*.

"What is right concentration? Right concentration is of two types: There is right concentration that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, that turns towards [rebirth in] a good destination; and there is right concentration that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that rightly eradicates *dukkha* and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*.

"What is right concentration that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, that turns towards [rebirth in] a good destination? This is [when] the mind is settled without disturbance, imperturbable, having taken hold of quietude and tranquillity, being concentrated and with a unified mind – this is called right concentration that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, that turns towards [rebirth in] a good destination.

"What is right concentration that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that rightly eradicates *dukkha* and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*? This is reckoned to be [when] a noble disciple gives attention to *dukkha* as *dukkha*, gives attention to its arising ... to its cessation ... and to the path as path, [with a mind that] in the absence of influxes gives attention that is conjoined to mental states that are settled without disturbance, [78] without loss, having taken hold of tranquillity, being concentrated and with a unified mind – this is called right concentration that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that rightly eradicates *dukkha* and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*."

When the Buddha had spoken this discourse, the monks,

having listened to what the Buddha said, were delighted and received it respectfully.

[Discourse to Jānussoṇi]⁵²

Thus have I heard.⁵³ At one time, the Buddha was dwelling at Sāvathī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park. At that time, the brahmin Jānussoṇi approached the Buddha. Having paid respect with his head at the Buddha's feet, exchanged friendly greetings with the Blessed One and stepped back to sit to one side, he asked the Buddha: "Gotama, regarding the so-called right view, what is such right view?"

The Buddha told the brahmin: "Right view is of two types: There is right view that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, that turns towards [rebirth in] a good destination; and there is right view that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that rightly eradicates *dukkha* and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*.

"What is right view that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, [that turns] towards [rebirth in] a good destination? If one has the view that there is [efficacy] in giving, there is [efficacy] in what is spoken, there is [efficacy] in offerings ... (*up to*)⁵⁴ ... [there are arahants who] know by themselves that there will be no experiencing of further existence – brahmin, this is called right view that is mundane, with influxes, with grasping, [that turns] towards [rebirth in] a good destination.

"Brahmin, what is right view that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that rightly eradicates *duk-*

⁵² Adopting the title suggested in Akanuma 1929/1990: 75.

⁵³ [59] The translated discourse is SĀ 789 at T II 204c14 to 205a2.

⁵⁴ [60] Here, too, the full description of right view should be supplemented from SĀ 784 at T II 203a5; cf. above note 49.

kha and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*? This is reckoned to be [when] a noble disciple gives attention to *dukkha* as *dukkha*, gives attention to its arising ... to its cessation ... and to the path as path, [79] [with a mind that] in the absence of influxes gives attention that is conjoined to the Dharma [by way of] investigation, discrimination, inquiry, realization, skilful and intelligent wisdom and contemplative examination – this is called right view that is noble, supramundane, without influxes, without grasping, that rightly eradicates *dukkha* and turns towards the transcendence of *dukkha*."

When the Buddha had spoken this discourse, the brahmin Jānussoṇi, having listened to what the Buddha said, was delighted. Being delighted he got up from his seat and left. [205a]

(As for right view, so too for right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness and right concentration – for each a discourse should be spoken as above).⁵⁵

Study (2)

The presentation in the *Samyukta-āgama* discourses translated above distinguishes the eight path-factors into worldly and supramundane manifestations. The description of the first five supramundane path-factors in the *Samyukta-āgama* is similar to the corresponding sections in the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta*. Unlike the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta*, the *Samyukta-āgama* discourses only take up right path-factors in their worldly and supramundane manifestations, without covering wrong manifestations of the path-factors. The *Samyukta-āgama* discourses also do not take up the role

⁵⁵ [61] Indications of this type, as in the present instance in SĀ 789 at T II 205a1, are a recurrent feature of the *Samyukta-āgama*.

of right view, right effort and right mindfulness in relation to each path-factor. These differences are of such magnitude as to make it safe to conclude that these *Samyukta-āgama* discourses are not parallels to the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta*.

The Buddha's interlocutor in the second of the two above translated *Samyukta-āgama* discourses, the brahmin Jānuṣsoṇi, also features as the audience to a discourse on the twenty-two faculties (*indriya*) preserved in Śamathadeva's compendium of discourse quotations in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*.⁵⁶ No version of this discourse is known from the canonical collections, though quotations from it occur in later works. Regarding the contents of its presentation, in the Pāli canon a listing of twenty-two faculties is not found in the discourses, but only in the *Abhidharma*.⁵⁷

In his detailed study of this discourse, [80] Skilling (2012: 429) observes that this "text might be a product of the interaction of *Sūtra* and *Abhidharma* – the tendencies of the latter set in the format of the former ... Can we envisage a stage when the *Abhidharma* as a self-conscious enterprise had not yet arisen or gained canonical status? At this stage – the beginnings of *Abhidharmic* systematization – the natural format for reformulated material was that of the *sūtra*, and the natural place was the *Sūtrapīṭaka* – where else to place it?"

⁵⁶ [62] D 4094 *ju* 50b8 or Q 5595 *tu* 47a2.

⁵⁷ [63] Thus, e.g., Vibh 122,1 begins its *abhidhammabhājanīya* on the faculties by listing the twenty-two, followed by explaining them one by one. Notably, this topic does not have a corresponding *suttantabhājanīya*, perhaps reflecting the fact that, whereas the assembling of these diverse faculties under a single heading would be the result of *Abhidharmic* systematization, the faculties that make up this list are already found in separate discourses; cf. also Vibh-a 125,21. That is, with the whole set being covered in the *abhidhammabhājanīya*, there would have been no material for compiling a *suttantabhājanīya*. For further occurrences of the whole set in other works cf. Skilling 2012.

In a similar vein, Thomas (1933/2004: 160) comments that "in the sense of a method ... Abhidhamma is no doubt much older than the existing works of that name", as several discourses "seem to imply that the method was already in existence when those suttas were revised".

According to Hirakawa (1993/1998: 127), "even before the contents of the *Sūtra-piṭaka* had been finalized, the Buddha's disciples were analyzing his teachings with methods similar to those employed later in [the] *abhidharma*. These early analyses were often incorporated into [the] *sūtras*. After the *Sūtra-piṭaka* had been established and its contents determined, *abhidharma* investigations were considered to be a separate branch of literature ... [and] were later compiled into a collection called the *Abhidharma-piṭaka*."

Similar considerations would apply to the present instance, in that the explanations given to Jānussoni on right view, etc., from a two-fold viewpoint seem to testify to this very tendency of Abhidharmic thought, expressed in the format of a set of short discourses, which then recur as an integrated discourse given to the monks in the same *Samyukta-āgama*.

It is noteworthy that these *Samyukta-āgama* discourses with high probability stem from the Mūlasarvāstivāda tradition, like the Tibetan parallel to the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta*, which was translated several centuries after the *Samyukta-āgama* was rendered into Chinese.⁵⁸ This further strengthens the testimony of the

⁵⁸ [64] While the translation of the *Samyukta-āgama* began in 435, translation activities into Tibetan only began some four centuries later. In the case of Śamathadeva's work, in the absence of any precise information Skilling 2005: 699 suggests the eleventh century to be a possible date for the translation, the work itself having been compiled "at any time between the 5th century and the as yet unknown date of its Tibetan translation"; cf. also Mejer 1991: 64, who explains that "it seems probable that the Indian translator, Jayaśrī," of Śa-

Tibetan parallel to the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta*, in that a conscious removal of a supramundane exposition of the path-factors from the Tibetan version can safely be excluded, given that a similar mode of presentation is found in these two *Samyukta-āgama* discourses. In fact, a version of one of these *Samyukta-āgama* discourses is also found in Śamathadeva's compendium of discourse quotations in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, [81] and this version has the exposition of supramundane factors.⁵⁹

The occurrence of an exposition of the supramundane path-factors in the *Samyukta-āgama* shows that the beginning stages of Abhidharmic thought left their traces in the discourse collections of the Theravāda tradition as well as of the Mūlasarvāstivāda tradition. These instances thus offer us an intriguing glimpse at the beginnings of Abhidharmic thought, prior to the formation of canonical Abhidharma texts in their own right.

The concern in the *Samyukta-āgama* discourses and in the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta* with expounding the path-factors from a supramundane viewpoint shows how early Abhidharmic analysis has a root in meditation practice and experience, since the rationale behind these presentations would be to throw additional light on what constitutes the essence of the Buddha's teaching: the culmination of the path in the experience of awakening.

mathadeva's work "is the same as the Kashmirian logician Jayaśrī who lived in the second half of the eleventh century".

⁵⁹ [65] D 4094 *ju* 205b6 to 209a7 or Q 5595 *tu* 234b8 to 238b8, counterpart to SĀ 785, with the distinction and subsequent exposition of the two types of right view beginning at D 4094 *ju* 206a2 or Q 5595 *tu* 235a4.

Cūlasuññata-sutta (MN 121)

Introduction

In the present chapter I explore meditation on emptiness based on material from the early Buddhist discourses. My examination begins with the Chinese *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Cūlasuññata-sutta*, a text of central importance for meditation on emptiness. Following a translation of this *Madhyama-āgama* discourse, I survey differences between the parallel versions that are of particular relevance to my topic, based on which I then explore the practical implications of the instructions given in the discourse.

Next I turn to the *Mahāsuññata-sutta* and its parallels. Based on a translation of the first part of the *Madhyama-āgama* version of this discourse, I place meditation on emptiness within a wider practical context.

The theme of the *Cūlasuññata-sutta* in the *Majjhima-nikāya* is the depiction of a gradual meditative approach to the realization of emptiness.¹ This discourse has two parallels: a discourse in the *Madhyama-āgama*, [26] translated below, and a discourse extant in Tibetan translation, which forms part of a set of discourses known under the title of being *Mahāsūtras* and stemming from a Mūlasarvāstivāda line of transmission.

* Originally published 2012 under the title "A Gradual Entry into Emptiness, Depicted in the Early Buddhist Discourses" in *Thai International Journal of Buddhist Studies*, 3: 25–56.

¹ On the early Buddhist notion of emptiness cf. also, e.g., Lamotte 1970/1976: 1995–2043, Karunaratne 1988: 44–53, Choong 1999, Anālayo 2007c, Pāsādika 2007b, Skilling 2007 and Yinshun in Huifeng 2009.

Translation (1)

Shorter Discourse on Emptiness²

1. Thus have I heard. At one time, the Buddha was dwelling at Sāvattthī, staying in the Eastern Park, in the Mansion of Migāra's Mother. [737a]

2. At that time, in the afternoon, the venerable Ānanda got up from sitting in meditation and approached the Buddha. Having paid homage at the Buddha's feet, he stepped back to stand to one side and said:

3. "At one time the Blessed One was dwelling among the Sakyans, in a town of the Sakyans named Nagaraka. At that time, I heard the Blessed One speak like this: 'Ānanda, I often dwell in emptiness.' Did I understand well, receive well and remember well that saying by the Blessed One?" Then the Blessed One replied: "Ānanda, you truly understood well, received well and remembered well that saying by me. Why? From then until now, I often dwell in emptiness.

4. "Ānanda, just as this Mansion of Migāra's Mother is empty of elephants, of horses, of cattle, of sheep, of wealth, of grain, and of male and female slaves;³ yet there is this non-emptiness: [the

² [5] The translated text corresponds to MĀ 190 at T I 736c27 to 738a1, paralleling MN 121 at MN I 104,1 to 109,17 and D 290 or Q 956, edited in Skilling 1994b: 146–186. A comparison of MĀ 190 with MN 121, based on translated extracts from both, can be found in Choong 1999: 66–76. A study of all three versions, including the Tibetan version, can be found in Schmithausen 1981: 232–239, Skilling 1997: 335–363 (cf. also Skilling 2007: 233–235) and Anālayo 2011a: 683–688.

³ [6] MN 121 at MN III 104,15 indicates that the Mansion of Migāra's Mother is empty of elephants, cattle, horses, mares, empty of gold and silver, and empty of congregations of men and women; for a survey of the considerably longer listing in the Tibetan version cf. Skilling 1997: 348f and 363 (table 32).

presence] of just the community of monks.⁴ [27] Thus, Ānanda, whatever is not present, I therefore see as empty;⁵ and whatever else is present, I see as truly present. Ānanda, this is called truly dwelling in emptiness,⁶ without distortion.⁷

"Ānanda, if a monk wishes to dwell much in emptiness, that monk should not give attention to the perception of village and not give attention to the perception of people, but should frequently give attention to the unitary perception of forest.⁸

"In this way he knows that this is empty of the perception of village, empty of the perception of people. Yet there is this non-emptiness: just the unitary perception of forest.⁹ [He knows]: 'Whatever weariness because of the perception of village there might be – that is not present for me. Whatever weariness because of the perception of people there might be – that is also not present for me. There is only the weariness because of the unitary perception of forest.' Whatever is not present, he therefore sees as

⁴ [7] MN 121 at MN III 104,17 qualifies this as a unitary experience in dependence on the community of monks; for a discussion of the Tibetan equivalent cf. Skilling 1997: 349.

⁵ [8] In MN 121 at MN III 104,18 the subject of the sentence is a monk. The Tibetan version does not explicitly identify the subject.

⁶ [9] MN 121 at MN III 105,2 additionally qualifies this entry into emptiness as "pure", *parisuddha*.

⁷ [10] MN 121 at MN III 104,19 proceeds differently, as it follows the description of what is absent in the Mansion of Migāra's Mother by directly turning to the perception of forest. The Tibetan version agrees with MĀ 190.

⁸ [11] MĀ 190 at T I 737a13: 無事想, literally "perception of no thing". The same expression 無事 functions elsewhere in the *Madhyama-āgama* as a counterpart to *arañña*; cf., e.g., MĀ 26 at T I 454c27 and its parallel MN 69 at MN I 469,3. MN 121 at MN III 104,20 adds that the monk's mind enters into the perception of forest and becomes steady.

⁹ [12] MN 121 at MN III 104,22 has first the reflection on the disturbances and then the reflection on what the present perception is empty of. The Tibetan version agrees with MĀ 190.

empty; whatever else is present, he sees as truly present. Ānanda, this is called truly dwelling in emptiness, without distortion.

5. "Again, Ānanda, if a monk wishes to dwell much in emptiness, that monk should not give attention to the perception of people and not give attention to the perception of forest, but should frequently give attention to the unitary perception of earth. If that monk sees this earth as having hills and hollows, with clusters of snakes, with clumps of thorn-bushes, with sand and rocks, steep mountains and deep rivers, he should not attend to it so. If [instead] he sees this earth as level and flat like the palm of a hand, [28] then his manner of looking at it is beneficial and should be frequently attended to.¹⁰

"Ānanda, it is just as a cow hide which, when stretched and fastened with a hundred pegs, being fully stretched, has no wrinkles and no creases.¹¹ [Similarly], if he sees this earth as having hills and hollows, with clusters of snakes, with clumps of thorn-bushes, with sand and rocks, steep mountains and deep rivers, he should not attend to it so. If [instead] he sees this earth as level and flat like the palm of his hand, then his manner of looking at it is beneficial and should be frequently attended to.

"In this way he knows that this is empty of the perception of people and empty of the perception of forest. Yet there is this non-emptiness: just the unitary perception of earth. [He knows]: "Whatever weariness because of the perception of people there might be [737b] – that is not present for me; whatever weariness

¹⁰ [13] The present illustration of the manner in which the earth should be attended to, found also in the Tibetan version, Skilling 1994b: 156,9, is not provided in MN 121.

¹¹ [14] Elsewhere this simile illustrates a particular torture administered to evil-doers in hell, where the tongue is stretched out and fixed by a hundred pegs; cf., e.g., MĀ 199 at T I 760b28, EĀ 50.5 at T II 810c27 and Jā 541 at Jā VI 112,31.

because of the perception of forest there might be – that is also not present for me. There is only the weariness because of the unitary perception of earth.' Whatever is not present, he therefore sees as empty; whatever else is present, he sees as truly present. Ānanda, this is called truly dwelling in emptiness, without distortion.

6. "Again, Ānanda, if a monk wishes to dwell much in emptiness, that monk should not give attention to the perception of forest and not give attention to the perception of earth, but should frequently give attention to the unitary perception of the sphere of infinite space.

"In this way he knows that this is empty of the perception of forest and empty of the perception of earth. Yet there is this non-emptiness: just the unitary perception of the sphere of infinite space. [He knows]: 'Whatever weariness because of the perception of forest there might be – that is not present for me; whatever weariness because of the perception of earth there might be – that is also not present for me. There is only the weariness because of the unitary perception of the sphere of infinite space.' Whatever is not present, he therefore sees as empty; whatever else is present, he sees as truly present. Ānanda, this is called truly dwelling in emptiness, without distortion. [29]

7. "Again, Ānanda, if a monk wishes to dwell much in emptiness, that monk should not give attention to the perception of earth and not give attention to the perception of the sphere of infinite space, but should frequently give attention to the unitary perception of the sphere of infinite consciousness.

"In this way he knows that this is empty of the perception of earth and empty of the perception of the sphere of infinite space. Yet there is this non-emptiness: just the unitary perception of the sphere of infinite consciousness. [He knows]: 'Whatever weariness because of the perception of earth there might be – that is not

present for me; whatever weariness because of the perception of the sphere of infinite space there might be – that is also not present for me. There is only the weariness because of the unitary perception of the sphere of infinite consciousness.' Whatever is not present, he therefore sees as empty; whatever else is present, he sees as truly present. Ānanda, this is called truly dwelling in emptiness, without distortion.

8. "Again, Ānanda, if a monk wishes to dwell much in emptiness, that monk should not give attention to the perception of the sphere of infinite space and not give attention to the perception of the sphere of infinite consciousness, but should frequently give attention to the unitary perception of the sphere of nothingness.

"In this way he knows that this is empty of the perception of the sphere of infinite space and empty of the perception of the sphere of infinite consciousness. Yet there is this non-emptiness: just the unitary perception of the sphere of nothingness. [He knows]: 'Whatever weariness because of the perception of the sphere of infinite space there may be – that is not present for me; whatever weariness because of the perception of the sphere of infinite consciousness there may be – that is also not present for me. There is only the weariness because of the unitary perception of the sphere of nothingness.' Whatever is not present, he therefore sees as empty; whatever else is present, he sees as truly present. Ānanda, this is called truly dwelling in emptiness, without distortion.¹² [737c]

10. "Again, Ānanda, if a monk wishes to dwell much in emptiness, that monk should not give attention to the perception of the sphere of infinite consciousness and not give attention to the per-

¹² [15] MN 121 at MN III 107,8 continues at this point with the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, corresponding to §9 in Ñānamoli 1995/2005: 968. This step is not found in MĀ 190 or in the Tibetan version.

ception of the sphere of nothingness, [30] but should frequently give attention to the unitary ⟨signless⟩ concentration of the mind.¹³

"In this way he knows that this is empty of the perception of the sphere of infinite consciousness and empty of the perception of the sphere of nothingness. Yet there is this non-emptiness: just the unitary ⟨signless⟩ concentration of the mind. [He knows]: 'Whatever weariness because of the perception of the sphere of infinite consciousness there might be – that is not present for me; whatever weariness because of the perception of the sphere of nothingness there might be – that is also not present for me. There is only the weariness because of the unitary ⟨signless⟩ concentration of the mind.' Whatever is not present, he therefore sees as empty; whatever else is present, he sees as truly present. Ānanda, this is called truly dwelling in emptiness, without distortion.¹⁴

11. "He thinks: 'My [experience] of the ⟨signless⟩ concentration of the mind is rooted – it is rooted in volitional formations, it is rooted in intentions. What is rooted in formations, rooted in intentions, I do not delight in that, I do not seek that, I should not dwell in that.'¹⁵ Knowing thus, seeing thus, his mind is liberated

¹³ [16] MĀ190 at T I 737c3 actually speaks of "unconscious concentration of the mind", 無想定. My translation is based on the assumption that the present reading results from a confusion in the original of 想 with 相, two characters often mixed up with each other in Chinese translations; cf. Anālayo 2011a: 274 note 54. My suggested emendation to 無相心定 corresponds to the "signless concentration of the mind", *animitta cetosamādhī*, found in MN 121 at MN III 107,28, which has its Tibetan counterpart in the "signless element", *mtshan ma med pa'i dbyings*, Skilling 1994b: 172,5; cf. also Choong 1999: 71 and Anālayo 2011a: 686 note 15.

¹⁴ [17] MN 121 at MN III 108,10 continues at this point by repeating once more the description of attending to the signless concentration of the mind.

¹⁵ [18] The insight reflection at this point in MN 121 at MN III 108,15 directs attention instead to the fact that the signless concentration of the mind is conditioned and therefore impermanent. The Tibetan version is similar to MĀ 190.

from the influx of sensual desire ... from the influx of existence, and his mind is liberated from the influx of ignorance. Being liberated, he knows he is liberated. He knows as it really is that birth has been extinguished, the holy life has been established, what had to be done has been done, there will be no experiencing of a further existence.

"In this way he knows that this is empty of the influx of sensual desire, empty of the influx of existence and empty of the influx of ignorance. Yet there is this non-emptiness: just this body of mine with its six sense-spheres and the life faculty.

12. "[He knows]: 'Whatever weariness because of the influx of sensual desire there might be – that is not present for me; whatever weariness because of the influx of existence ... because of the influx of ignorance there might be – that is also not present for me. [31] There is only the weariness because of this body of mine with its six sense-spheres and the life faculty.' Whatever is not present, he therefore sees as empty; whatever else is present, he sees as truly present. Ānanda, this is called truly dwelling in emptiness, without distortion,¹⁶ namely the eradication of the influxes, the influx-free and unconditioned liberation of the mind.

13. "Ānanda, whatever Tathāgatas,¹⁷ free from attachment and

¹⁶ [19] MN 121 at MN III 109,1 qualifies this entry into emptiness as supreme and as unsurpassed, *paramānuttarā*. The Tibetan version in Skilling 1994b: 178,2 agrees that at this point the entry into emptiness has become unsurpassed, *stong pa nyid la 'jug pa bla na med pa yin no*.

¹⁷ [20] MN 121 at MN III 109,2 instead speaks of recluses and brahmins; the Tibetan version agrees with MĀ 190. Since the discourse as a whole is a detailed exposition of the Buddha's statement that he often dwelled in emptiness, it would be natural for the conclusion to refer to the dwelling in emptiness of a Tathāgata. Ps IV 154,16 understands the expression "recluses and brahmins" in MN 121 to intend only Buddhas and their disciples in the present context. In fact, according to MN 11 at MN I 66,3 and its parallels MĀ 103 at T I 591a20 and EĀ 27.2 at T II 644a16 heterodox recluses and brahmins did not

completely awakened, there have been in the past, they all truly dwelled in this emptiness, without distortion, namely in the eradication of the influxes, the influx-free and unconditioned liberation of the mind.¹⁸

"Ānanda, whatever Tathāgatas, free from attachment and completely awakened, there will be in the future, they will all truly dwell in this emptiness, without distortion, namely in the eradication of the influxes, the influx-free and unconditioned liberation of the mind.

"Ānanda, I, who am the Tathāgata now, free from attachment and completely awakened, I also truly dwell in this emptiness, without distortion, namely in the eradication of the influxes, the influx-free and unconditioned liberation of the mind.

"Ānanda, you should train yourself like this: 'I shall also truly dwell in this emptiness, without distortion, namely in the eradication of the influxes, the influx-free and unconditioned liberation of the mind.' Ānanda, you should train yourself like this."

The Buddha spoke like this. [738a] The venerable Ānanda and the monks, having listened to what the Buddha said, were delighted and received it respectfully. [32]

Study (1)

The meditation on emptiness presented in the above discourse shows several variations when compared to the Pāli account. Placing the three extant versions of this discourse side by side, the following sequence of themes emerges:

really understand the problem posed by clinging to a doctrine of self, so that one would not expect MN 121 to propose that heterodox recluses and brahmins were able to dwell in supreme emptiness.

¹⁸ [21] MN 121 does not refer to the eradication of the influxes and the liberation of the mind; the Tibetan version agrees with MĀ 190.

Table 19: The Gradual Approach to Emptiness

Chinese & Tibetan:	Pāli:
1) community of monks	forest (→ 2)
2) forest	earth (→ 3)
3) earth	infinite space (→ 4)
4) infinite space	infinite consciousness (→ 5)
5) infinite consciousness	nothingness (→ 6)
6) nothingness	neither-perception-nor-non-perception
7) signlessness	signlessness (→ 7)
8) destruction of influxes	signlessness (→ 7) destruction of influxes (→ 8)

One noteworthy difference is that the perception of the community of monks forms a distinct stage of practice in the *Madhyama-āgama* and Tibetan version, whereas the *Cūlasuññata-sutta* begins by mentioning that the Mansion of Migāra's Mother is empty of animals, with only the community of monks being present, but then directly turns to the perception of forest. The progression in the Chinese and Tibetan version conforms better to the basic pattern observed throughout all versions. In contrast, in the Pāli version it is not immediately evident in what way the presence of the community of monks leads to the perception of forest.¹⁹

¹⁹ [22] MN 121 at MN III 104,18 begins its description of attending to the perception of forest by indicating that the practising monk disregards the perceptions of village and of people. While the perception of village would presumably correspond to the earlier mentioned elephants, cattle, horses, mares, gold, silver, and congregations of men and women that are absent from the Mansion of Migāra's Mother, the perception of people would only be overcome once the perception of the community of monks has been left behind. This supports the impression that a loss of text might have occurred here, suggesting the

Another difference is that the *Cūlasuññata-sutta* takes up neither-perception-nor-non-perception, a step not mentioned in the parallel versions. The *Cūlasuññata-sutta* thereby explicitly treats neither-perception-nor-non-perception as a perception on a par with the other perceptions mentioned previously.²⁰ [33]

Considering this issue in a wider context, several other discourses do employ the term "perception" in relation to the fourth immaterial sphere.²¹ However, this might be just a manner of speaking, since the actual experience of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, as its name indicates, is a type of experience outside the range of what can still be properly considered a "perception". This becomes evident from a number of discourses which, in order to describe the whole range of possible experiences, distinguish between beings with perceptual experiences, those that do not have perceptual experiences (i.e., which are unconscious), and beings with the experience of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.²² By employing a separate category for neither-percep-

possibility that the original would have covered giving attention to the perception of the community of monks as a distinct step in the gradual entry into emptiness, followed by turning to the perception of forest as a subsequent step.

²⁰ [23] MN 121 at MN III 108,2: "he understands: 'this perceptual experience is empty of perceptions of the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception'", *suññaṃ idaṃ saññāgataṃ nevasaññānāsaññāyatanaśaṅkhā ti pajānāti*.

²¹ [24] The expression *nevasaññānāsaññāyatanaśaṅkhā* can be found, e.g., in MN 106 at MN II 265,30, AN 9.33 at AN IV 414,8, AN 9.42 at AN IV 451,18, AN 10.6 at AN V 7,17, AN 11.7 at AN V 318,19, AN 11.10 at AN V 326,2 and AN 11.19 at AN V 353,25. The corresponding expression 非有想非無想處想 or 非想非非想入處想 can be found in MĀ 168 at T I 701b7 and in SĀ 926 at T II 236a29 (parallel to AN 11.10).

²² [25] SN 45.139 at SN V 42,1, AN 4.34 at AN II 34,14, AN 5.32 at AN III 35,24 and AN 10.15 at AN V 21,13. Such a distinction is also found in a Chinese parallel to SN 45.139, SĀ 902 at T II 225c23, and in a Tibetan parallel to AN 4.34, D 4094 *ju* 97a2 or Q 5595 *tu* 110b7, although another Chinese parallel to

tion-nor-non-perception, these discourses indicate that this type of experience is neither a perceptual experience, nor a form of unconsciousness. That the fourth immaterial attainment does not fully qualify as a type of perception also becomes evident from other passages, according to which the third immaterial attainment already constitutes the pinnacle of perception.²³

A set of discourses in the *Samyutta-nikāya* describes Mahā-moggallāna's gradual progression through the four immaterial attainments, a progress that culminates in his practice of the signless concentration of the mind.²⁴ [34] Thus this set of discourses depicts a meditative development that moves through the same stages as the *Cūḷasuññata-sutta*. The difference is, however, that Mahā-moggallāna's meditative progression is part of his development of concentrative mastery. In contrast, in the *Cūḷasuññata-sutta* the point at issue is not the attainment of an immaterial sphere as such, but the use of the corresponding perception for the

AN 4.34, EĀ 21.1 at T II 602a7, does not mention beings with the experience of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.

²³ [26] MN 102 at MN II 230,2 and AN 10.29 at AN V 63,21; cf. also the discussion in Skilling 1997: 356. The Tibetan parallel to MN 102 in Skilling 1994b: 318,5 makes the same stipulation. This much is also the case for a Tibetan parallel to AN 10.29, D 4094 *ju* 272a3 or Q 5595 *thu* 15b3, whereas a Chinese parallel, MĀ 215 at T I 799c22, only describes the disenchantment of the noble disciple with all types of perception, without explicitly indicating that the third immaterial attainment is the highest among them (although the same is implicit in its presentation). Another reference to the third immaterial attainment as the highest among perceptions can be found among Sanskrit fragments of the *Prṣṭhapāla-sūtra*, Melzer 2006: 262 (§36.44).

²⁴ [27] SN 40.9 at SN IV 269,4. While the preceding steps of his practice of the immaterial attainments in SN 40.5–8 do not seem to have a Chinese counterpart, Mahā-moggallāna's attainment of signlessness is also recorded in the parallel SĀ 502 at T II 132b18, and his gradual progression through the lower absorptions is described in SĀ 501 at T II 132a18.

purpose of insight into emptiness.

When it comes to the development of insight, one in fact often finds that only the first three immaterial attainments are mentioned. This is the case, for example, in a passage in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* related to deeper stages of insight, which surveys types of perceptions during which sensory experience is absent.²⁵ Since sensory experience is certainly also absent during the attainment of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, the only reason why the fourth immaterial attainment is not included in this context would be because the nature of this experience no longer fits the context, presumably because it is no longer truly a type of perception.

Again, insight contemplations described in the *Aṭṭhakanāgara-sutta* and the *Mahāmālunkya-sutta* do not mention the fourth immaterial attainment in a series of meditative experiences that include the other three immaterial attainments,²⁶ presumably be-

²⁵ [28] AN 9.37 at AN IV 427,12 presents the three immaterial attainments as examples of an experience where, although the sense-doors are present, their objects and the corresponding spheres are not experienced. This discourse follows the three immaterial attainments with another type of meditation, described as not being inclined towards nor away, and as having realisation as its fruit. Harvey 1986: 27 suggests that this meditation could also be a form of *animitta samādhi*. His suggestion finds confirmation in the partial parallel SĀ 557 at T II 146a16, which indeed speaks of this concentration as a "signless concentration of the mind", 無相心三昧 (SĀ 557 corresponds only to the part of AN 9.37 that reports a discussion between Ānanda and a nun, it does not have the earlier treatment of experience in which sense objects are absent). Thus AN 9.37 seems to have a sequence of meditative experiences closely similar to the Chinese and Tibetan parallels to MN 121.

²⁶ [29] MN 52 at MN I 352,33 and MN 64 at MN I 437,6. The parallels to MN 52, MĀ 217 at T I 802b27 and T 92 at T I 916c8, differ in as much as they do include the fourth immaterial attainment in their treatment. Maithrimurthi 1999: 97 note 136 comments that in this case the reference to the fourth immaterial attainment was probably added mechanically, i.e., by way of conforming to the complete set of four immaterial attainments. The parallel to MN 64, MĀ

cause the nature of neither-perception-nor-non-perception is not apt for the development of insight described in these discourses.²⁷ [35] The same may well apply to the *Cūḷasuññata-sutta*, which is also concerned with the development of insight based on deeper concentration experiences.

In fact, the similarity of sequence between several steps of the present gradual entry into emptiness and the standard exposition of the immaterial attainments found elsewhere could easily have been responsible for an intrusion, perhaps quite unintentional, of the fourth immaterial attainment into the *Cūḷasuññata-sutta* during the transmission of the discourse.²⁸ In contrast, it seems much less probable that a reference to the fourth immaterial attainment would have been accidentally lost in the Chinese and Tibetan versions, and it would be even more difficult to conceive of a reason for its intentional omission. In sum, it seems probable that neither-perception-nor-non-perception should not be included as a step in the gradual approach to emptiness.

A third difference is the double mention of the signless concentration of the mind in the *Cūḷasuññata-sutta*. This is unexpected, as it no longer conforms to the pattern of overcoming a particular weariness or disturbance with each of the successive

205 at T I 780a17, agrees with the Pāli version on taking the exposition only up to the third immaterial attainment. The same pattern would also apply to the corresponding realms of rebirth, since AN 3.114 at AN I 267,1 to 268,19 describes how a noble disciple, on being reborn in one or the other immaterial realm, will attain final Nirvāṇa there, a presentation that also does not include the realm of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.

²⁷ [30] Cf., e.g., AN 9.36 at AN IV 426,9, according to which penetration to [liberating] insight, *āññāpaṭivedha*, is possible as long as perception is still present, with a parallel in a discourse quotation in the *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, Pradhan 1950: 69,15, already noted by Schmithausen 1981: 224 and Ruegg 1989: 200.

²⁸ [31] Von Hinüber 1996/1997: 31 explains that "pieces of texts known by heart may intrude into almost any context once there is a corresponding key word".

steps, a pattern observed elsewhere throughout all versions.²⁹ This gives the impression that an error may have occurred in the Pāli version. This hypothesis receives support from the fact that already in relation to the first instance of signlessness the *Cūḷasuññata-sutta* mentions the body and the six senses together with the life faculty.³⁰ Here the Chinese and Tibetan versions offer a more straightforward perspective, since it makes better sense to speak of the six sense-spheres as that which is still left after the destruction of the influxes has been attained. Once the influxes are destroyed, sensory experience is indeed what is still left. [36] The same qualification does not fit signless concentration of the mind so well, which by its very absence of signs would be aloof from sensory experience.

Thus in regard to the three differences discussed above, the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse and its Tibetan parallel appear to have preserved a preferable sequence of steps for the gradual entry into emptiness. Following the indications given in the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse and its Tibetan parallel, the gradual meditation on emptiness would proceed as follows:

- 1) empty of animals and wealth & not empty of community of monks
- 2) empty of people (including monks) & not empty of forest
- 3) empty of forest & not empty of earth
- 4) empty of earth & not empty of infinite space

²⁹ [32] Schmithausen 1981: 237 comments that "this appears strange in a text which up to this point had strictly followed a pattern of ... progressive spiritual stages. In such a framework, the two final sections give the impression of being either two juxtaposed alternative versions or a juxtaposition of an original and a revised version of the final portion".

³⁰ [33] MN 121 at MN III 108,4. Tanto 2004, however, argues in favour of the present formulation in MN 121.

- 5) empty of infinite space & not empty of infinite consciousness
- 6) empty of infinite consciousness & not empty of nothingness
- 7) empty of nothingness & not empty of signlessness
- 8) empty of influxes & not empty of body with six senses and life faculty

1) The first of these steps begins with directing attention to the place at which, according to all versions, Ānanda and the Buddha were staying. That is, when asked about dwelling in emptiness, the Buddha is shown to turn to the immediately present and ordinary situation, taking this as a stepping-stone for a gradual entry into emptiness. With this step, a unifying feature found in the Mansion of Migāra's Mother is given attention, namely the presence of the other monks. The monks would all have shaven heads and wear similar robes. This would facilitate viewing them as a unitary object, not as distinct individuals. This unified vision would then stand in contrast to the variegated perceptions one would have when being in a village and seeing various animals, etc.

2) With the second step, the unitary perception of the monks is replaced by a similarly unitary perception that is based on something more stable than the monks, some of whom might have been moving around, namely the forest representing the landscape surrounding the Mansion of Migāra's Mother.³¹ [37] The perception of forest is also more encompassing, since the entirety of this landscape can be included under the heading of the perception of forest, whereas the earlier perception of monks took up a more limited object out of the present situation. On a symbolic level,

³¹ [34] Hayashima 1962 notes that the early Buddhist conception of emptiness was closely related to the solitary and remote lifestyle of the Buddha and his disciples, something particularly evident in the present instance.

the perception of the forest also brings in the theme of seclusion, a necessary foundation for the deeper levels of mental tranquillity and insight that the subsequent steps in the gradual entry into emptiness require. Overall, a shift to a more comprehensive and stable perception appears to be the key aspect at this stage.

3) The third step then proceeds from forest to earth. As the three versions of the discourse indicate, the point in this progression is to disregard any variation – such as different aspects of the vegetation or irregularities in the earth's surface – and instead develop a perception of earth from a unitary viewpoint, just as if the earth had been made completely straight like a stretched hide or like looking at the flat palm of one's hand. The point, here, is to proceed to a perception of earth as such, representative of the notion of solidity, which constitutes the chief implication of earth as one of the four elements in Buddhist thought.³²

Thus at this juncture the mode of viewing begins to employ abstraction. The employment of an abstract concept that to some extent goes beyond what is perceived by the eye – in the present case the notion of solidity – appears to be the distinct contribution of this particular step.

4) Next the notion of solidity is replaced by infinite space. This part of the gradual entry into emptiness thus enters known terrain in early Buddhist meditation practice, as a similar progression is the basis for the attainment of the immaterial spheres. Such attainment would take place after successful mastery of the fourth absorption. The meditation object previously used for absorption attainment, which due to the unification of the mind during absorption attainment had become an all-embracing experience,

³² [35] Cf., e.g., MN 28 at MN I 185,16 and its parallel MĀ 30 at T I 464c7, which agree on summing up the characteristic of the internal earth element (manifesting in various aspects of the body) as what is "solid", *kakkhala* 堅.

then needs to be replaced by the notion of infinite space. In other words, the all-pervasiveness of the former object remains, but the object itself is allowed to disappear.

The same basic pattern applies to the gradual entry into emptiness, where the unitary perception of earth qua solidity is replaced by attending to the space that had been taken up by this perception of earth, [38] which by further development then results in the perception of infinite space. In this way, the experience of matter is left behind and the meditative experience would be pervaded by a sense of there being no obstruction or limits anywhere.

5) The next step follows the same dynamic that underlies a progression through the immaterial attainments, which now requires turning attention to the mind itself. By earlier becoming absorbed in the notion of infinite space, consciousness has become itself one with the experience of infinity. Letting go of the notion of space and turning attention to the mind then enables the development of the perception of infinite consciousness.

With this step of practice, the meditator becomes aware of consciousness as the very foundation of subjective experience. Needless to say, early Buddhism does not consider consciousness or the mind to be the source of the external world. But as far as subjective experience is concerned, consciousness is its very foundation and no experience is possible without consciousness. Hence with this step, space is left behind and infinite consciousness becomes the pervasive theme of the meditative experience.

6) With the sixth step the comparison with the immaterial attainments continues to hold, in that the experience of infinite consciousness is now attended to as something insubstantial in every respect, resulting in the notion that there is nothing. In this way, the perception of nothingness is developed. Judging from the overall dynamics of the present discourse, out of three possible approaches to attaining the perception of nothingness, delineated

in the *Aññjasappāya-sutta* and its parallels, the one best suited to the present context would be the reflection that "this is empty of a self and what pertains to a self".³³

Undertaken in this way, attending to nothingness revolves around the realization that there is nothing at all that could qualify as a self, nothing to be identified with and nothing to be considered as one's personal possession. A sense of disowning or dispossessing would pervade this stage of the gradual entry into emptiness where, by successfully establishing the perception of nothingness, any notion of an 'I' or 'my', however subtle it may be, is left behind.

7) The seventh step departs from the pattern set by the immaterial attainments. Instead of continuing abstraction to a point where the nature of perception itself is sublimated, the practice proceeds beyond the notion of nothingness by directing the mind to signlessness. [39] Simply stated, attending to the signless means that those features and aspects of an object by which one recognizes things – the signs – are disregarded. While signlessness is one of the aspects of Nirvāṇa and thus can refer to the experience of awakening, it can also stand for various other levels of meditative experience in which the recognizing tendency of the mind has been transcended.³⁴

The present stage thus completes the previous progression

³³ [36] MN 106 at MN II 263,26, MĀ 75 at T I 542c18 and D 4094 *ju* 228b6 or Q 5595 *tu* 261a6; for a comparative study, together with a translation of MĀ 75, cf. above page 195.

³⁴ [37] For a detailed study of *animitta* cf. Harvey 1986, on the *nimitta* in general cf. Anālayo 2003a. An additional perspective on signlessness could also be found in SĀ 80 at T II 20b4, according to which it is impossible to develop signlessness without at first developing concentration on emptiness, whereas "having attained emptiness, it is possible to develop signlessness", 得空已, 能起無相.

through ever more refined perceptions by turning to the very nature of perception itself and letting go of any notion or concept in the mind whatsoever, even letting go of the concept of nothingness.

8) With the eighth step the gradual emptying of perception becomes the basis for the final touch of liberating insight. The parallel versions express this insight in slightly different terms. They agree in highlighting that the present experience of signlessness is of a conditioned nature. While the Pāli discourse additionally draws attention to its impermanence, the Chinese and Tibetan versions mention the need to avoid delighting in the present meditative experience. In spite of such difference, the basic implications appear to be the same and could perhaps best be covered under the term *virāga*, which at the same time stands for "dispassion" (= absence of delight) as well as for "fading away" (= impermanence).³⁵ From a practical perspective, impermanence and the absence of delight could thus be considered two sides of the same coin.

At this point, by giving up even the most subtle holding on to any experience of emptiness, the true realization of supreme emptiness becomes possible (the epithet "supreme" being explicitly employed at this final stage in the Pāli and Tibetan versions). For supreme emptiness, the preceding gradual emptying of perception formed the preparation. Throughout this gradual progress, a crucial theme taken up at the present juncture – conditionality – was kept present in terms of the types of weariness overcome or still present "because of" one's meditative experience. This recurrent directing of the meditator's awareness to conditionality reflects the close relationship between realization of emptiness and dependent arising. [40]

³⁵ [38] On the significance of *virāga* cf. Anālayo 2009g.

With the present final step, the conditioned nature of all stages in the gradual entry into emptiness is left behind through realization of the unconditioned. What remains, after this supreme accomplishment in emptiness, is simply the continuity of life, exemplified by the body and the senses together with the life faculty.

In sum, with these different stages of transcendence, a gradual refinement of experience appears to take place. Beginning with perceptions of the actual situation in which the discourse was situated, the progression leaves behind matter (4) and then even its opposite of space (5). Next comes a going beyond any sense of identification with the experiencing mind (6), followed by leaving behind even the signs required for the formation of concepts (7). Eventually this leads up to a letting go of all emptiness experiences thus far. However sublime these may be, they are to be viewed as merely a conditioned product of the mind in order to arrive at the supreme emptiness of liberating the mind from defilements (8). In other words, while the previous steps require a progressive letting go within the realm of perceptual experience, the last requires letting go of experience itself.

Regarding the practical implementation of this gradual entry into emptiness, the parallel versions make several points worthy of mention. One of these is that the recurrent reference to a unitary perception makes it clear that the various perceptions are to be cultivated from a firm basis of concentration, so as to result in what is characteristic of absorption experience: unification of the mind.³⁶

When this has been successfully achieved, the task is to recognize clearly the nature of what has been attained in terms of "this

³⁶ [39] MN 43 at MN I 294,31 and the parallels to MN 44, MĀ 210 at T I 788c20 and D 4094 *ju* 8a2 or Q 5595 *tu* 8b8 (translated above page 45), agree on reckoning *cittekaggatā*, །འཇུག་པའི་སྐབས་ཀྱི་འཇུག་པ་, as characteristic of already the first absorption.

is empty of" what has just been transcended, as well as a clear recognition of what the present experience is not empty of. That is, by directing awareness to nothingness, for example, experience has become empty of the perceptions of infinite space and infinite consciousness, but the perception of nothingness remains. This is what the present experience is not empty of. It is precisely this non-emptiness that needs to be left behind in order to proceed further. In other words, a clear recognition of this non-emptiness is what enables progress in the gradual meditation on emptiness. This mode of contemplation marks the decisive difference between the gradual entry into emptiness and a mere attainment of the immaterial spheres of infinite space, infinite consciousness, etc., as such. [41]

The clear recognition of what the present experience is empty of and what it is not empty of is in all versions explicitly phrased in terms of a "weariness" or even "disturbance" overcome or still being present.³⁷ This expression may well have been chosen on purpose to drive home the truth of *dukkha*. The gradual entry into emptiness involves a progression through ever more refined perceptions based on attaining deeper levels of concentration, whose respective attainment requires a clear awareness of what needs to be let go of – referred to as weariness or disturbance – for further progress. By qualifying what is to be left behind and what is to be attained similarly as types of "weariness", the instructions appear to be aimed at ensuring that each stage in the gradual entry into emptiness is seen as merely a stepping stone, a type of weariness somewhat more refined than those previously experienced, nevertheless it is still something to become weary of and something that still pertains to the realm of what is conditioned.

³⁷ [40] On the corresponding Pāli and Tibetan expressions cf. the discussion in Skilling 1997: 352–355.

Once the different stages of this gradual progress through ever subtler types of weariness have led up to the destruction of the influxes, according to the Pāli and Tibetan versions a type of emptiness has been reached that alone deserves to be reckoned supreme. In other words, the gradual approach to emptiness quite explicitly recognizes that there can be a variety of emptiness experiences. Yet, emptiness in its true sense is only attained when the mind has become void of defilements.

Another noteworthy aspect of the above procedure for developing a genuine and undistorted approach to emptiness is that the whole progression revolves around a qualification. Emptiness is not presented as a kind of entity. Instead, it constitutes a method of meditation. Even when the *Cūlasuññata-sutta* employs the noun "emptiness" in regard to the final step in the series, the issue at stake is still a qualification of experience as "empty of", in this case as empty of the influxes. Qualifying something as "empty of" simply means that it is "devoid of" something else. This concurs with a consistent emphasis in the early discourses on the quality of being empty, instead of an abstract state of emptiness.

This significant aspect of the conception of emptiness in early Buddhist thought requires a little further exploration. Thus, for example, the discourses often refer to an "empty place", which being empty of people and other potential disturbances and distractions finds inclusion among a standard listing of locations conducive to meditative seclusion, together with the root of a tree or a forest.³⁸ [42] The same ordinary sense of being empty of people finds employment in a simile that describes a man who, while attempting to escape a group of enemies set on killing him,

³⁸ [41] E.g., SN 55.1 at SN V 311,8: *suññāgāragato*, with its counterpart in SĀ 803 at T II 206a23: 空露地, where the meditative practice undertaken at such an empty place is mindfulness of breathing.

comes to an empty village. Deeper connotations come to the fore in the explanation given for this simile, according to which the empty village stands for the empty nature of the six senses.³⁹ Just as the poor man will find nothing in the empty village that could help him in his predicament, so the six senses turn out to be just empty and unsubstantial. The way in which the six senses can be qualified as empty can be deduced from another discourse, which explains the implications of the dictum that the entire world is empty. The world is empty in the sense that the eye is empty of a self or anything that could belong to a self,⁴⁰ as is the case for the ear, the nose, the tongue, the body and the mind.

The same sense of being "empty of" applies in relation to selfhood, when all aspects of personal experience are considered to be "empty of" a self and of what belongs to a self. To assert emptiness in terms of the absence of a permanent self, however, does not imply a denial of the conditioned and impermanent continuity of the five aggregates. These exist as changing processes and to know that which is still there in terms of "it is present" is accord-

³⁹ [42] SN 35.197 at SN IV 174,32 and its parallels SĀ 1172 at T II 313c15 and EĀ 31.6 at T II 670a8; cf. also Hoernle fragment Or. 15009/252v8, Nagashima 2009: 261.

⁴⁰ [43] SN 35.85 at SN IV 54,7 proclaims that the eye is "empty of a self and empty of what belongs to a self", *suññaṃ attena vā attaniyena vā*. The formulation in the parallel SĀ 232 at T II 56b24 (translated in Choong 2004: 73) differs in as much as it indicates that "the eye is empty, it is empty of being permanent, of being perpetual and of having an unchanging nature, and it is empty of anything belonging to a self", 眼空, 常恒不變易法空, 我所空, presenting a more evolved stage of such descriptions; cf. also above note 39 page 210 as well as Lamotte 1973/1993: 18 and Choong 2000: 93. Another instance of a more developed presentation has been noted by de Jong 2000: 177 (quoting Mori), where in Chinese *Āgama* texts a reference to emptiness appears to have been added to passages that in the Pāli discourses speak just of impermanence, unsatisfactoriness and not-self.

ing to the *Cūḷasuññata-sutta* and its parallels a necessary aspect of a genuine and undistorted approach to emptiness.

While emptiness is central in the progress to full awakening depicted in the *Cūḷasuññata-sutta* and its parallels, the same versions also clarify that insight into emptiness alone does not suffice. The important transition from signlessness to the destruction of the influxes requires recognizing the conditioned nature of such experience and its impermanence (according to the Pāli version) or else its inherent unsatisfactoriness (according to the Chinese and Tibetan versions). [43] That is, the other two characteristics need also be brought in to complete the maturation of insight. This much can also be deduced from the Greater Discourse on Emptiness, which, in a way, contextualizes the meditative experience of emptiness.

Similar to the *Cūḷasuññata-sutta*, the *Mahāsuññata-sutta* has parallels in the *Madhyama-āgama* and in a discourse preserved in Tibetan translation. The three versions begin with the Buddha referring to his own dwelling in emptiness, followed by describing how a monk may come to abide in emptiness as well. This pattern of proceeding from the Buddha's own experience of emptiness to the way a monk can achieve the same is reminiscent of the *Cūḷasuññata-sutta* and thus points to an intimate relationship between the two discourses. In what follows, I translate the first part of the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Mahāsuññata-sutta*, followed by a brief evaluation.

Translation (2)

Greater Discourse on Emptiness⁴¹

⁴¹ [44] The translated excerpt from MĀ 191 ranges from T I 738a5 to 739b21, paralleling §§1–17 in the translation of MN 122 by Ñāṇamoli 1995/2005: 971–975. The parts corresponding to the translated extract can be found in MN 122 at MN I 109,19 to 115,9 and D 291 or Q 957, edited in Skilling

1. Thus have I heard. At one time, the Buddha was dwelling among the Sakyans at Kapilavatthu, staying in the Nigrodha Park.

2. At that time, when the night was over, at dawn, the Blessed One put on his [outer] robe, took his bowl and entered Kapilavatthu to collect alms-food. Having completed his meal, in the afternoon he went to the dwelling of Kāḷakhemaka the Sakyan. At that time, in the dwelling of Kāḷakhemaka the Sakyan numerous beds and seats had been set out, [indicating that] many monks were staying there. Then, the Blessed One came out of the dwelling of Kāḷakhemaka the Sakyan and went to the dwelling of Ghāṭā the Sakyan.

At that time, the venerable Ānanda and many monks had congregated in the dwelling of Ghāṭā the Sakyan to make robes. The venerable Ānanda saw from afar that the Buddha was coming. Having seen this, [44] he came out to receive the Buddha, took the Buddha's [outer] robe and bowl, and returned to prepare a bed and seat and to draw water for washing the feet.

When the Buddha had washed his feet and had sat down on the seat prepared by the venerable Ānanda in the dwelling of Ghāṭā the Sakyan, he said: "Ānanda, in the dwelling of Kāḷakhemaka the Sakyan numerous beds and seats have been set out, [it seems that] many monks are staying there."

The venerable Ānanda said: "Yes, indeed, Blessed One, in the dwelling of Kāḷakhemaka the Sakyan numerous beds and seats have been set out, many monks are staying there. Why is that? [Because] we are now making robes."

3. Then, the Blessed One told Ānanda: "A monk should not

1994b: 188–241. A comparative study of MĀ 191 and MN 122 can be found in Choong 1999: 79–84, for studies that also cover the Tibetan discourse cf. Skilling 1997: 365–400 (cf. also Skilling 2007: 235–237) and Anālayo 2011a: 688–701.

desire vociferous talk, delight in vociferous talk, associate with vociferous talk, desire company, delight in company, associate with company, not desiring to be separated from company, not delighting in dwelling alone in remote places.

"If a monk desires vociferous talk, delights in vociferous talk, associates with vociferous talk, desires company, delights in company, associates with company, not desiring to be separated from company, not delighting in dwelling alone in remote places, then it is impossible for him to attain, easily and without difficulty, that which is called happiness: noble happiness, the happiness of dispassion, the happiness of separation, the happiness of stillness, the happiness [that leads to] full awakening, the non-worldly happiness, the happiness [that leads beyond] birth and death.

"Ānanda, if a monk does not desire vociferous talk, does not delight in vociferous talk, does not associate with vociferous talk, does not desire company, does not delight in company, does not associate with company, desiring to be separated from company, constantly delighting in dwelling alone in remote places, then it is certainly possible for him to attain, easily and without difficulty, that which is called happiness: noble happiness, the happiness of dispassion, the happiness of separation, the happiness of stillness, the happiness [that leads to] full awakening, the non-worldly happiness, the happiness [that leads beyond] birth and death. [738b]

4. "Ānanda, a monk should not desire vociferous talk, delight in vociferous talk, associate with vociferous talk, desire company, delight in company, associate with company, not desiring to be separated from company, not delighting in dwelling alone in remote places. If a monk desires vociferous talk, delights in vociferous talk, associates with vociferous talk, desires company, delights in company, associates with company, not desiring to be separated from company, not delighting in dwelling alone in remote places, [45] then it is impossible for him to attain either the

temporary liberation of the mind that is delightful or the permanent liberation of the mind that is unshakeable.

"Ānanda, if a monk does not desire vociferous talk, does not delight in vociferous talk, does not associate with vociferous talk, does not desire company, does not delight in company, does not associate with company, desiring to be separated from company, constantly delighting in dwelling alone in remote places, then it is certainly possible for him to attain either the temporary liberation of the mind that is delightful or the permanent liberation of the mind that is unshakeable.

5. "Why is that? I do not see a single form that I might desire or delight in,⁴² [since] with the decay and change of that form there would at some time arise sorrow, lamentation, sadness, pain and vexation.

6. "For this reason, I fully and completely awoke to this other abiding, namely dwelling in emptiness externally by transcending all perception of form.⁴³ Ānanda, when I dwell in this abiding, there arises joy. I experience this joy throughout the whole body with right mindfulness and right comprehension. There arises rapture ... there arises tranquillity ... there arises happiness ... there arises concentration. Thus I experience this concentration throughout the whole body with right mindfulness and right comprehension.⁴⁴

⁴² [⁴⁵] In MN 122 at MN III 111,2 the statement on delighting in form is made in general, not in relation to the Buddha himself. The Tibetan version agrees with MĀ 191.

⁴³ [⁴⁶] According to MN 122 at MN III 111,7, the Buddha's dwelling in emptiness was rather "internally" and by "not giving attention to any sign". The Tibetan version agrees with MĀ 191. Here the presentation in MN 122 seems preferable; cf. in more detail Anālayo 2011a: 690–692.

⁴⁴ [⁴⁷] MN 122 does not describe the arising of joy, etc. The Tibetan version agrees with MĀ 191.

"Ānanda, there may be monks, nuns, male lay followers, or female lay followers who together come to see me. Then, behaving in such a way toward them, being in such a mental state, secluded and delighting in dispassion, I teach them the Dharma, to encourage and help them.

7. "Ānanda, if a monk wishes to dwell much in emptiness, then that monk should keep the mind internally established in tranquillity so that it becomes unified and concentrated. Having kept the mind internally established in tranquillity so that it becomes unified and concentrated, he should attend to emptiness internally. Ānanda, if a monk speaks like this:⁴⁵ [46] 'Without keeping the mind internally established in tranquillity so that it becomes unified and concentrated, I attend to emptiness internally', you should know that that monk will [just] greatly trouble himself. Ānanda, how does a monk keep the mind internally established in tranquillity so that it becomes unified and concentrated?

8. "A monk completely drenches and pervades this body with rapture and pleasure born of seclusion [experienced in the first absorption], so that no part [of his body] is not pervaded by the rapture and pleasure born of seclusion.⁴⁶ Ānanda, it is just as a person taking a bath, who has placed bath powder in a vessel, sprinkles it with water and kneads it into a ball, so that every bit of it, inside and out, is completely drenched and pervaded with the water, with none seeping out. In the same way, Ānanda, a monk completely drenches and pervades this body with rapture and pleasure born of seclusion, so that there is no part [of his body] that is not pervaded by rapture and pleasure born of seclusion. [738c] Ānanda, in this way a monk should keep the mind

⁴⁵ [48] Such a statement and its consequences are not taken up in MN 122. The Tibetan version agrees with MĀ 191.

⁴⁶ [49] MN 122 at MN III 111,21 instead lists the four absorptions, without, however, describing their effect on the body.

internally established in tranquillity so that it becomes unified and concentrated.

9. "Keeping the mind internally established in tranquillity so that it becomes unified and concentrated, he should attend to emptiness internally. Having attended to emptiness internally, his mind is perturbed, does not advance and progress, does not attain spotlessness, is not established and is not released in regard to emptiness internally.

"Ānanda, if a monk, while he is contemplating, comes to know that on attending to emptiness internally his mind is perturbed, does not advance and progress, does not attain spotlessness, is not established and is not released in regard to emptiness internally, then that monk should attend to emptiness externally. Having attended to emptiness externally, his mind is perturbed, does not advance and progress, does not attain spotlessness, is not established and is not released in regard to emptiness externally.

"Ānanda, if a monk, while he is contemplating, comes to know that on attending to emptiness externally his mind is perturbed, does not advance and progress, does not attain spotlessness, is not established and is not released in regard to emptiness externally, then that monk should attend to emptiness internally and externally. Having attended to emptiness internally and externally, his mind is perturbed, does not advance and progress, [47] does not attain spotlessness, is not established and is not released in regard to emptiness internally and externally.

"Ānanda, if a monk, while he is contemplating, comes to know that on attending to emptiness internally and externally his mind is perturbed, does not advance and progress, does not attain spotlessness, is not established and is not released in regard to emptiness internally and externally, then that monk should attend to imperturbability. Having attended to imperturbability, his mind is perturbed, does not advance and progress, does not attain spot-

lessness, is not established and is not released in regard to imperturbability.

10. "Ānanda, if a monk, while he is contemplating, comes to know that on attending to imperturbability his mind is perturbed, does not advance and progress, does not attain spotlessness, is not established and is not released through imperturbability, then that monk should repeatedly direct his mind to this or that concentration,⁴⁷ repeatedly practice it, repeatedly soften [the mind] so that it becomes joyful and tender, absorbed in the pleasure of seclusion.

"Repeatedly directing his mind to this or that concentration, repeatedly practicing it, repeatedly softening [the mind], so that it becomes joyful and tender, absorbed in the pleasure of seclusion, he should accomplish dwelling in emptiness internally. Having accomplished dwelling in emptiness internally, the mind becomes imperturbable, advances and progresses, attains spotlessness, is established and is released in regard to emptiness internally. Ānanda, if a monk, while he is contemplating, comes to know that he has accomplished dwelling in emptiness internally, that the mind has become imperturbable, advances and progresses, attains spotlessness, is established and is released in regard to emptiness internally – then this is reckoned his right comprehension.

"Ānanda, the monk should then accomplish dwelling in emptiness externally. Having accomplished dwelling in emptiness externally, the mind becomes imperturbable, advances and progresses, attains spotlessness, is established and is released in regard to emptiness externally. [739a] Ānanda, if a monk, while he is contemplating, comes to know that he has accomplished dwell-

⁴⁷ [50] My translation is based on emending the reading 彼彼心 in MĀ 191 at MN I 738c20 in conformity with a repetition of the present phrase two lines below, which just reads 彼心. Regarding the subsequent reference to this and that concentration, 彼彼定, MN 122 at MN III 112,15 instead recommends focusing on the previously [developed] sign of concentration, the *samādhinimitta*.

ing in emptiness externally, that the mind has become imperturbable, advances and progresses, attains spotlessness, [48] is established and is released in regard to emptiness externally – then this is reckoned his right comprehension.

"Ānanda, the monk should then accomplish dwelling in emptiness internally and externally. Having accomplished dwelling in emptiness internally and externally, the mind becomes imperturbable, advances and progresses, attains spotlessness, is established and is released in regard to emptiness internally and externally. Ānanda, if a monk, while he is contemplating, comes to know that he has accomplished dwelling in emptiness internally and externally, that the mind has become imperturbable, advances and progresses, attains spotlessness, is established and is released in regard to emptiness internally and externally – then this is reckoned his right comprehension.

"Ānanda, he should then accomplish dwelling in imperturbability. Having accomplished dwelling in imperturbability, the mind becomes imperturbable, advances and progresses, attains spotlessness, is established and is released in regard to imperturbability. Ānanda, if while contemplating a monk comes to know that he has accomplished dwelling in imperturbability, that the mind has become imperturbable, advances and progresses, attains spotlessness, is established and is released in regard to imperturbability – then this is reckoned his right comprehension.

11. "Ānanda, if a monk who is dwelling in this abiding of the mind wishes to practice walking meditation, then that monk goes out of his meditation hut and practices walking meditation in the open, in the shade of the hut, with his faculties settled within, the mind not directed outwards or backwards, perceiving [only] what is in front. Having practiced walking meditation like this, his mind does not give rise to covetousness, sadness, or any [other] evil or unwholesome state – this is reckoned his right comprehension.

"Ānanda, if a monk who is dwelling in this abiding of the mind wishes to sit in concentration, then that monk leaves the walking meditation, goes to the end of the walking meditation path, spreads his sitting mat, and sits down cross-legged. Having sat in concentration like this, his mind does not give rise to covetousness, sadness, or any [other] evil or unwholesome state – this is reckoned his right comprehension.⁴⁸ [49]

13. "Ānanda, if a monk who is dwelling in this abiding of the mind wishes to think thoughts, then as regards the three evil and unwholesome thoughts – thoughts of sensual desire, thoughts of ill will and thoughts of harming – these three evil and unwholesome thoughts that monk should not think. [Instead], as regards the three wholesome thoughts – thoughts of dispassion, thoughts of non-ill will and thoughts of non-harming – these three wholesome thoughts he should think. Having thought like this, his mind does not give rise to covetousness, sadness, or any [other] evil or unwholesome state – this is reckoned his right comprehension.⁴⁹

12. "Ānanda, if a monk who is dwelling in this abiding of the mind wishes to speak, then as regards talking ignoble talk related to what is not beneficial – such as talk about kings, talk about thieves, talk about battles and quarrels, talk about drinks and food, talk about robes and blankets, talk about married women, talk

⁴⁸ [51] Instead of giving detailed instructions on the undertaking of walking and sitting meditation, MN 122 at MN III 112,31 mentions all four postures, but without detailed explanations; the Tibetan version agrees in this respect with MĀ 191. A description of walking meditation similar to the present instance in MĀ 191 can be found in AN 7.58 at AN IV 87,2, where it functions as a method to overcome drowsiness.

⁴⁹ [52] MN 122 at MN III 113,12 adopts a different sequence, as it first turns to talking (§12) and then to thinking (§13); the Tibetan version agrees with MĀ 191. As the general pattern in this part of the discourse moves from formal meditation to less formal activities, the progression in the Chinese and Tibetan versions from thoughts to conversation fits this pattern better.

about girls, talk about adulterous women, talk about the world, talk about wrong practices, talk about the contents of the ocean – the monk does not talk such types of irrelevant talk.⁵⁰

"[Instead], as regards talking noble talk that is related to what is beneficial, that makes the mind malleable, [739b] free of darkness and the hindrances – such as talking talk about giving, talk about morality, talk about concentration, talk about wisdom, talk about liberation, talk about knowledge and vision of liberation, talk about self-effacement, talk about not socializing, talk about fewness of wishes, talk about contentment, talk about dispassion, talk about abandoning, talk about cessation, talk about sitting in meditation, talk about dependent arising, such talk [proper] for recluses – [the monk talks such talk]. Having talked like this, his mind does not give rise to covetousness, sadness, or any [other] evil or unwholesome state – this is reckoned his right comprehension.

14. "Again, Ānanda, there are five strands of sensual pleasure that are pleasurable, that the mind thinks about, that are connected with craving and sensual desire: forms known by the eye, sounds known by the ear, odours known by the nose, flavours known by the tongue and tangibles known by the body. [50]

15. "If a monk's mind turns to contemplation and, in regard to these five strands of sensual pleasures, he comes under the influence of these strands of sensual pleasures, then his mind will dwell among them. Why? Sooner or later, in regard to these five strands of sensual pleasures, [if] one comes under the influence of these strands of sensual pleasures, the mind dwells among them.

"Ānanda, if a monk, while he is contemplating, comes to know that in regard to these five strands of sensual pleasures he has

⁵⁰ [53] On the different listings of irrelevant types of talk in *Majjhima-nikāya* and *Madhyama-āgama* discourses cf. above note 7 page 83.

come under the influence of these strands of sensual pleasures, that his mind is dwelling among them, then that monk should contemplate the impermanence of these various strands of sensual pleasures, contemplate their decay, contemplate their fading away, contemplate their abandoning, contemplate their cessation, contemplate abandoning them, giving them up and separating from them.⁵¹ Then, whatever he has of desire and defilement regarding these five strands of sensual pleasures will soon cease. Ānanda, if while contemplating like this a monk knows that whatever he had of desire and defilement in regard to these five strands of sensual pleasures has been abandoned – this is reckoned his right comprehension.

16. "Again, Ānanda, there are the five aggregates [affected by] clinging. The form aggregate [affected by] clinging ... feeling ... perception ... volitional formations ... and the consciousness aggregate [affected by] clinging. The monk should contemplate their rise and fall thus: 'This is material form, this is the arising of material form, this is the cessation of material form, this is feeling ... perception ... volitional formations ... this is consciousness, this is the arising of consciousness, this is the cessation of consciousness.'

17. "Then whatever conceit of an 'I' he has in regard to these five aggregates [affected by] clinging, that will soon cease. Ānanda, if the monk, while he is contemplating like this, comes to know that whatever conceit of an 'I' he had in regard to these five aggregates [affected by] clinging has ceased – this is reckoned his right comprehension.

18. "Ānanda, these states are entirely desirable, entirely delightful, entirely [worth] thinking about.⁵² They are without in-

⁵¹ [54] The presentation in MN 122 at MN III 114,25 differs and does not provide instructions on what should be done to overcome the attraction of the five cords of sensual desire. The Tibetan version agrees with MĀ 191.

⁵² [55] My translation of 法 as a plural form takes a lead from the wording in MN

fluxes, without clinging, beyond the reach of Māra, beyond the reach of the Evil One, beyond the reach of all evil and unwholesome states that defile and are the root of future becoming, that result in vexation and *dukkha*, and that are the cause of birth, old age, disease and death. This is reckoned accomplishment in diligence.⁵³ [51] Why? All Tathāgatas, who are without attachment and fully awakened, attained awakening through diligence. Through the faculty of diligence, innumerable wholesome states arise that are in accordance with the requisites of awakening. Ānanda, for this reason you should train like this: 'I will also be accomplished in diligence' – you should train like this."⁵⁴

Study (2)

Unlike the *Cūḷasuññata-sutta*, the *Mahāsuññata-sutta* and its parallels do not depict a gradual approach to emptiness, but rather indicate that a monk who has been unable to stabilize his meditative experience of emptiness needs to strengthen his concentration. This provides an important indication relevant to the practice depicted in the *Cūḷasuññata-sutta* as well, in that for the mind to progress through the unitary perceptions in the gradual entry into emptiness, a basis in mental tranquillity is an essential requirement.

Another significant indication given in the *Mahāsuññata-sutta* and its parallels is that they explicitly clarify that emptiness comprises what is internal as well as what is external. This well reflects the attitude taken in this respect in early Buddhist thought, where notions of emptiness and insubstantiality are considered as

122 at MN III 115,8: *ime ... dhammā*.

⁵³ [56] This remark and the following exposition on diligence are without a counterpart in MN 122.

⁵⁴ [57] Similar to MN 122, MĀ 191 continues at this juncture by taking up the case of the proper behaviour of a faithful disciple, etc.

applicable without restriction to the entire gamut of existence, be this oneself, others, or any other aspect of the external world.⁵⁵

The *Mahāsuññata-sutta* and its parallels also indicate how emptiness can be related to everyday activities, once comprehensive dwelling in emptiness has been achieved in all respects – internally, externally and internally-and-externally. The three versions agree that this takes place by staying aloof from desire and aversion, an aloofness that is combined with clear comprehension of what is taking place. The same indication is also made in the *Piṇḍapātapārisuddhi-sutta* and its Chinese parallel, which describe how a monk who wishes to dwell in emptiness – a theme that relates this discourse to the *Cūlasuññata-sutta* and *Mahāsuññata-sutta* – should examine if, while going to beg for alms, anything has caused the arising of desire in his mind.⁵⁶ [52] If desire has arisen, the monk should make a firm effort to overcome it.

Another passage relevant to the theme of dwelling in emptiness during everyday activities can be found in a succinct instruction, according to which in the seen there should be just the seen, in the heard there should be just the heard, in what is experienced there should be just the experienced and in what is cognized there should be just the cognized. One who dwells like this will not be established in what is seen, heard, etc., be neither here, nor there, nor in between – thereby transcending *dukkha*.⁵⁷

⁵⁵ [58] Cf., e.g., Sn 937, according to which the entire world is without any essence.

⁵⁶ [59] MN 151 at MN III 294,11 and SĀ 236 at T II 57b15; on this passage cf. also Baums 2009: 353.

⁵⁷ [60] SN 35.95 at SN IV 73,4 and its parallel SĀ 312 at T II 90a12 and D 4094 *ju* 241b3 or Q 5595 *tu* 276a2. The potential of this succinct instruction is reflected in a case reported in Ud 1.10 at Ud 8,8, where the non-Buddhist ascetic Bāhiya receives the same instruction during his first meeting with the Buddha and thereon attains full awakening on the spot; cf. also Anālayo 2003c: 229–

According to a detailed elaboration of this instruction, the task to remain with just what is seen, etc., requires not giving attention to the "sign" of attraction,⁵⁸ a term that provides a connection to the theme of 'sign'-lessness mentioned as the last step in the gradual entry into emptiness depicted in the *Cūḷasuññata-sutta*. Thus, maintaining emptiness during everyday activities requires remaining balanced with any sensory input by not giving in to those features and aspects of perceived objects – their signs – that may cause desire or aversion.

The *Mahāsuññata-sutta* and its parallels also turn to the five strands of sensual pleasure. Before that, however, they indicate what type of thought and talk is compatible with dwelling in emptiness. Properly dwelling in emptiness thus requires refraining from unwholesome thoughts, avoiding worldly conversations and staying aloof from sensual attraction. Engaging in sensuality is therefore clearly not compatible with what early Buddhist thought reckons to be true dwelling in emptiness. In other words, from an early Buddhist viewpoint, a genuine realization of emptiness has an inseparable relationship to ethical conduct.

With this much accomplished, the *Mahāsuññata-sutta* and its parallels bring up the topic of conceit, whose removal requires contemplating the impermanent nature of the five aggregates. They thereby relate emptiness to the topic of impermanence, as was the case in the *Cūḷasuññata-sutta*. Contemplation of the impermanent nature of the five aggregates thus can be considered to form the *Mahāsuññata-sutta*'s counterpart to the *Cūḷasuññata-sutta*'s development of insight in relation to signlessness, [53] both of which are meant for the same purpose: the attainment of su-

232 and Ñāṇananda 2005: 318f and 323–342.

⁵⁸ [61] SN 35.95 at SN IV 73,18 speaks of the *nimitta*, which has its counterpart in 梘 and *rgyu mtshan* in SĀ 312 at T II 90a21 and D 4094 *ju* 241b6 or Q 5595 *tu* 276a6.

preme emptiness through the destruction of the influxes.

"Contemplate the world as empty,
Mogharāja, always mindful.
Root out the underlying view of self,
Like this, you will transcend death.
[When] contemplating the world like this,
The King of Death does not catch sight of you."⁵⁹

⁵⁹ [62] Sn 1119: *suññato lokaṃ avekkhassu, mogharāja sadā sato, attānudiṭṭhiṃ ūhacca, evaṃ maccutaro siyā, evaṃ lokaṃ avekkhantaṃ, maccurājā na pas-satī ti.*

Bakkula-sutta (MN 124)

Introduction

The present chapter studies Buddhist notions of the praiseworthy qualities of a fully awakened one. These notions appear to have to some degree gone through a process of development that led to a shift of emphasis already manifesting in the early discourses.¹ [2]

The beginnings of such a shift of emphasis can best be traced by examining the depiction of the arahant monk Bakkula, whose qualities and conduct are the topic of the *Bakkula-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel. Following a translation of the *Madhyama-āgama* version of this discourse and a comparative study, I continue studying the early Buddhist arahant ideal based on another discourse related to Bakkula, found in the *Ekottarika-āgama*, and based on a few selected passages related to the arahant monk Mahākassapa.

Translation

Discourse by Bakkula²

* Originally published 2007 under the title "The Arahant Ideal in Early Buddhism – The Case of Bakkula" in the *Indian International Journal of Buddhist Studies*, 8: 1–21. The present chapter also incorporates extracts from another article published 2010 under the title "Once again on Bakkula" in the same journal, 11: 1–28.

¹ [5] Another aspect in the development of the arahant ideal is examined by Bond 1984: 228, who points out that "the *arahant* concept seems to have developed from an ideal readily attainable in this life ... into an ideal considered remote and impossible to achieve in one or even many lifetimes".

² The translated text is MĀ 34 at T I 475a11 to 475c14; for a comparative study cf. Anālayo 2011a: 711–716.

1. Thus have I heard. At one time, when the Buddha had recently passed away, [3] the venerable Bakkula was dwelling at Rājagaha, staying in the Bamboo Grove at the Squirrel's Feeding Place.

2. At that time there was a heterodox wanderer, a close friend of the venerable Bakkula from the time before [Bakkula] had gone forth. While roaming around in the afternoon, he came to where the venerable Bakkula was staying, exchanged greetings and stepped back to sit to one side.

3-8. The heterodox wanderer said: "Venerable friend Bakkula, I would like to ask a question, will you listen to it?" The venerable Bakkula answered: "Heterodox wanderer, having heard what you are asking about, I will consider it."

The heterodox wanderer said: "Venerable friend Bakkula, how long have you been practising the path in this right teaching and discipline?" The venerable Bakkula answered: "Heterodox wanderer, I have been practising the path in this right teaching and discipline for eighty years."

The heterodox wanderer said: "Venerable friend Bakkula, during the eighty years that you have been practising the path in this right teaching and discipline, how many times do you recall having engaged in sexual intercourse?" The venerable Bakkula said to the heterodox wanderer: "You should not ask such a question. Instead [you should] ask in another way: 'Venerable friend Bakkula, during the eighty years that you have been practising the path in this right teaching and discipline, how many times do you recall having aroused a sensual perception?' Heterodox wanderer, you should ask this question."

Then, the heterodox wanderer spoke like this: "Venerable friend Bakkula, I now ask again, during the eighty years that you have been practising the path in this right teaching and discipline, how many times do you recall having aroused a

sensual perception?"

Then, in relation to this question by the heterodox wanderer, the venerable Bakkula addressed the monks: [475b] "Venerable friends, I have been practising the path in this right teaching and discipline for eighty years, but you all should not think that on that account I would arouse conceit." – That the venerable Bakkula made such a declaration, this we reckon a marvellous quality of the venerable Bakkula.

Again, the venerable Bakkula declared: "Venerable friends, during the eighty years that I have been practising the path in this right teaching and discipline, I never had a sensual perception." – That the venerable Bakkula made such a declaration, this we reckon a marvellous quality of the venerable Bakkula. [4]

9–15. Again, the venerable Bakkula declared: "Venerable friends, I have been wearing rag robes for eighty years, but you all should not think that on that account I would arouse conceit." – That the venerable Bakkula made such a declaration, this we reckon a marvellous quality of the venerable Bakkula.

Again, the venerable Bakkula declared: "Venerable friends, during the eighty years that I have been wearing rag robes, I do not recall having ever accepted a robe given by householders, having ever cut up [robe material] and made a robe [by myself], having ever employed another monk to get a robe made [for me], having ever used a needle to sew a robe, or having ever taken a needle to sew a bag, not even a single stitch." – That the venerable Bakkula made such a declaration, this we reckon a marvellous quality of the venerable Bakkula.

16–19. Again, the venerable Bakkula declared: "Venerable friends, I have been begging alms for eighty years, but you all should not think that on that account I would arouse conceit."

– That the venerable Bakkula made such a declaration, this we reckon a marvellous quality of the venerable Bakkula.

Again, the venerable Bakkula declared: "Venerable friends, during the eighty years that I have been begging alms, I do not recall having ever accepted an invitation by householders, having ever skipped [a house when] begging for alms, or having ever begged alms from a great household so as to obtain pure, subtle, supremely excellent and rich food to bite, put into the mouth and digest.

20–25. I never looked at a woman's face, nor do I recall having ever entered a nunnery. I do not recall having ever exchanged greetings with a nun, not even speaking [to a nun when meeting her] on the road." – That the venerable Bakkula made such a declaration, this we reckon a marvellous quality of the venerable Bakkula.

26–29. Again, the venerable Bakkula declared: "Venerable friends, during the eighty years that I have been practising the path in this right teaching and discipline, I do not recall having ever kept a novice as attendant, nor do I recall having ever taught the Dharma to lay people, even to the extent of speaking four phrases." – That the venerable Bakkula made such a declaration, this we reckon a marvellous quality of the venerable Bakkula. [5]

30–37. Again, the venerable Bakkula declared: "Venerable friends, during the eighty years that I have been practising the path in this right teaching and discipline, [475c] I have never been sick, not even to the extent of having a headache for a short moment. I do not recall having ever taken medicine, not even a single piece of gallnut." – That the venerable Bakkula made such a declaration, this we reckon a marvellous quality of the venerable Bakkula.

Again, the venerable Bakkula declared: "Venerable friends,

when sitting down cross legged, during these eighty years I never leaned against a wall or a tree."³ – That the venerable Bakkula made such a declaration, this we reckon a marvellous quality of the venerable Bakkula.

38. Again, the venerable Bakkula declared: "Venerable friends, within three days and nights [after my ordination] I attained the threefold realization." – That the venerable Bakkula made such a declaration, this we reckon a marvellous quality of the venerable Bakkula.

40–41. Again, the venerable Bakkula declared: "Venerable friends, seated cross-legged I will attain final Nirvāṇa." The venerable Bakkula then attained final Nirvāṇa while seated cross-legged. – That the venerable Bakkula attained final Nirvāṇa while seated cross-legged, this we reckon a marvellous quality of the venerable Bakkula.

The venerable Bakkula made declarations like this. At that time the heterodox wanderer and the monks, having listened to these declarations, were delighted and received them respectfully.

Study

Although the main thrust of the *Bakkula-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, translated above, is similar, in relation to details a number of differences can be found. One difference involves the narrative framework of the discourse. The *Majjhima-nikāya* version gives the name of Bakkula's visitor as Acela Kassapa and reports that Bakkula's declarations had such an impact on Acela Kassapa that he decided to go forth and eventually became an arahant.⁴ The *Madhyama-āgama* discourse, [6] in con-

³ [9] Adopting the variant 倚 instead of 猗.

⁴ [10] MN 124 at MN III 127,13.

trast, neither gives the visitor's name nor reports that he went forth and became an arahant.

The Pāli version's identification of Bakkula's visitor is to some extent problematic, as other Pāli discourses also report that Acela Kassapa went forth and eventually became an arahant, though according to them this happened after hearing quite a different discourse by another speaker.

The *Kassapasīhanāda-sutta* records that an exposition on asceticism by the Buddha inspired Acela Kassapa to go forth and become an arahant.⁵ A discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya* reports that Acela Kassapa ordained and became an arahant after finding out that his former friend, the householder Citta, had as a householder progressed further than Acela Kassapa had been able to do as a wanderer.⁶ Another discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya* records an exposition by the Buddha to Acela Kassapa on whether pleasure and pain are caused by oneself, others, both, or neither, an exposition that so inspired Acela Kassapa that he went forth and eventually became an arahant.⁷

Unless the same name Acela Kassapa refers to four different persons, the above Pāli passages contradict one another. The Chinese parallels to the above-mentioned discourses do not associate these different events with the same person. The *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel to the *Kassapasīhanāda-sutta* introduces its protagonist just as a Kassapa,⁸ while the *Samyukta-āgama* version of the meeting of the householder Citta with his former friend refers to the latter just as a naked ascetic (*acela*) and heterodox wanderer, without giving his name.⁹ Only the Chinese and Sanskrit fragment par-

⁵ [11] DN 8 at DN I 177,1.

⁶ [12] SN 41.9 at SN IV 302,10; cf. also von Hinüber 1997: 68.

⁷ [13] SN 12.17 at SN II 22,6.

⁸ [14] DĀ 25 at T I 104c12: 迦葉.

⁹ [15] SĀ 573 at T II 152a24: 阿耆毘外道.

allels to the discourse on the causation of pleasure and pain introduce the wanderer who heard this exposition as Acela Kassapa,¹⁰ though according to them he became only a stream-enterer during the discourse and was afterwards killed by a cow. Since the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Bakkula-sutta* does not identify Bakkula's visitor (nor reports that he became an arahant), [7] the presentations in these different *Āgama* discourses do not conflict with one another.

In addition to differing in the extent to which they identify Bakkula's visitor and describe his reaction, the Pāli and Chinese versions of the *Bakkula-sutta* also differ in regard to the qualities they ascribe to Bakkula.

The two versions report in similar terms how Bakkula reacts to his visitor's inquiry about sexual intercourse by reformulating the question. Once his former friend asks the more appropriate question about having sensual perceptions, according to the *Madhyama-āgama* version Bakkula first clarifies that he has no conceit about having been ordained for eighty years, and then points out that during this whole time he has never experienced a perception related to sensual desire.¹¹

In the *Majjhima-nikāya* version, Bakkula does not make any statement about conceit, but then takes up the issue of his perceptions and thoughts during the eighty years of his monkhood in additional detail by pointing out that he also never had a perception of ill will or harming, and also no thought related to sensuality, ill will or harming.¹²

¹⁰ [16] SĀ 302 at T II 86b3, T 499 at T XIV 768c20 and fragment S 474 folio 14 R2, Tripāthī 1962: 47; cf. also SHT V 1133 aA3, Sander 1985: 128.

¹¹ [17] MĀ 34 at T I 475b4.

¹² [18] MN 124 at MN III 125,21. The reference to such thoughts seems to some degree redundant, given that he has already clarified that he has never even had any such perception, which the discourses reckon as the source of thoughts;

With subsequent topics, the *Madhyama-āgama* version continues coming back to Bakkula's freedom from conceit, forestalling the possibility that his proclamation of several of his qualities that are no longer directly related to his former friend's inquiry about sexual intercourse could be misunderstood as an expression of pride.

The next two topics discussed in both versions relate to the requisites of a monk. In the *Madhyama-āgama* version Bakkula clarifies that he has no conceit in regard to his ascetic observance of wearing rag robes for eighty years. As a strict wearer of rag robes, according to both versions Bakkula never accepted a new robe given by householders. While according to the *Madhyama-āgama* account he never had a robe made by another and never sewed a bag, [8] according to the *Majjhima-nikāya* version he never sewed a *kaṭhina* robe,¹³ and he never made robes for others.¹⁴ The same discourse also reports that he never dyed a robe.

In regard to food, Bakkula is on record for having adopted another of the ascetic observances, which is to depend only on begging alms for one's sustenance and not to accept invitations. The *Madhyama-āgama* version again notes that Bakkula does not feel any conceit on account of his conduct, and then reports that Bakkula had undertaken the practice of continuous begging for food and never went to superior households in order to get exquisite food. The *Majjhima-nikāya* version instead highlights that he never desired to be invited, and never sat or ate inside a house. [9]

cf., e.g., MN 78 at MN II 27,28 and its parallel MĀ 179 at T I 721a22 (translated above page 125).

¹³ [19] The *kaṭhina* robe is to be offered to a selected monk at the *kaṭhina* ceremony held after the conclusion of a rainy season retreat.

¹⁴ [20] The E^c edition at MN III 126,29 and C^c read *sabrahmacārī cīvarakamme byāpāritā*, while B^c reads *sabrahmacārīnaṃ cīvarakamme vicāritā* and S^c *sabrahmacārīnaṃ cīvarakammaṃ vicāritā*.

The next theme is Bakkula's conduct towards women. The two versions agree that Bakkula did not look at women and never entered a nunnery. While the *Madhyama-āgama* version states that he would not even greet nuns, the *Majjhima-nikāya* version reports that he never taught any woman, not even a nun, a female probationer or a female novice.¹⁵

Bakkula also did not act as a teacher in regard to male monastics. According to the *Madhyama-āgama* account he never had a novice as his attendant, while according to the *Majjhima-nikāya* version he never gave the going forth or higher ordination and never gave dependence.¹⁶ The *Madhyama-āgama* version also notes that Bakkula never taught the Dharma to the laity.

Another aspect of Bakkula's conduct relates to his health and bodily care. Both versions state that he never got sick,¹⁷ and therefore never used medicine or carried it around.¹⁸ [10] He also never allowed himself the comfort of leaning against a support. The Pāli version additionally records that he never bathed in a bathroom,

¹⁵ [21] A female probationer, *sikkhamānā*, is preparing herself during a two years period for taking the higher ordination as a *bhikkhunī*.

¹⁶ [22] Dependence, *nissaya*, involves a tutelage relationship between a *bhikkhu* of at least ten years standing and a junior *bhikkhu*.

¹⁷ [23] Bakkula's freedom from disease is also recorded in the *Karmavibhaṅga*, Lévi 1932: 76,11, in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1448 at T XXIV 82c25, and in T 199 at T IV 194c5. AN 1.14 at AN I 25,6 reckons Bakkula as foremost in health; cf. also the *Aśokāvadāna*, Cowell 1886: 396,5, SĀ 604 at T II 168a22 and T 2043 at T L 138c5. Other references to his health can be found in T 1544 at T XXVI 1018b11, T 1545 at T XXVII 121c5, T 2058 at T L 308a22, T 2122 at T LIII 615b27 and T 2123 at T LIV 44c13. The list of eminent disciples in EĀ 4.5 at T II 557c16 introduces him as foremost in longevity.

¹⁸ [24] The E^e edition at MN III 127,2, C^e and S^e read *besajjaṃ pariharitā*, while B^e reads *besajjaṃ upaharitā*.

never used bathing powder and never had a massage.¹⁹ The Pāli discourse also notes that Bakkula never lay down and never spent a rainy season retreat in a village.

The final topic covered in both versions is Bakkula's declaration that he became an arahant soon after his ordination. While in the *Madhyama-āgama* account Bakkula proclaims that he attained the three higher knowledges within three days,²⁰ in the *Majjhima-nikāya* discourse he declares that he became an arahant within a week. The two versions conclude by reporting that Bakkula passed away seated, after having announced his impending *parinirvāṇa* to his fellow monks. [11]

Looking back on the two versions of the present discourse, it is particularly noteworthy that each of them follows its descriptions with repeated acclamations by the reciters of the discourse, praising the wonderful and marvellous character of the qualities of the arahant Bakkula. This form of presentation is rather unusual for discourses found in the *Āgamas* or *Nikāyas*. Usually the remarks by the reciters specify locations and identify speakers, or provide transitions from one event to another and background narrations, but do not make explicit proclamations of approval. These repeated acclamations reveal that, from the perspective of the reciters, Bakkula's mode of conduct was considered highly praiseworthy, that for them he was a model arahant.

Another noteworthy point is that this depiction of Bakkula as a

¹⁹ [25] The E° edition at MN III 126,29 reads *sabrahmacārīgattaparikamme byā-pajjitā*, while B° reads *sabrahmacārī gattaparikamme vicāritā*, C° *sabrahmacārī gattaparikamme vyāpāritā* and S° *sabrahmacārīgattaparikammaṃ sādītā*.

²⁰ [26] MĀ 34 at T I 475c7. His attainment of the three higher knowledges recurs in the Chinese, Sanskrit and Tibetan versions of the verses attributed to him; cf. T 199 at T IV 194c1, Bechert 1961: 145,10, Dutt 1984: 193,12 and Hofinger 1954: 81,11. Such a reference is absent from a Pāli version of his verses at Th 225–227.

model arahant does not belong to the earliest stages of the history of the Buddhist order. The two versions agree that by the time of meeting his former friend, Bakkula had been ordained for eighty years. Hence, even if he had taken ordination soon after the Buddha started to teach, the meeting described in the present discourse would nevertheless have to be placed several decades after the Buddha's passing away, at least thirty-five years later than the forty-five year period of the Buddha's teaching activities. Thus the remark at the beginning of the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse, according to which the meeting between Bakkula and his friend took place "when the Buddha had recently passed away", could be simply a case of applying a standard pericope.²¹

From the circumstance that Bakkula had been a monk for eighty years by the time of the events described in both versions of the *Bakkula-sutta*, it would also follow that the present discourse could not have been part of the recital of discourses that according to the traditional account took place at the so-called first council (or better "communal recitation"), *saṅgīti*, held soon after the Buddha's demise.²² In fact, the commentary to the *Bakkula-sutta* explains that this discourse was included in the canonical collections only at the second council or communal recitation.²³ [12]

²¹ [27] MĀ 34 at T I 475a13: 佛般涅槃後不久。

²² [28] This communal recitation is described in the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 968b15, in the Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya*, T 1425 at XXII 491c2, in the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 191a19, in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1451 at T XXIV 407a3, in the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1435 at T XXIII 449a20, and in the Theravāda *Vinaya*, Vin II 287,12; for a comparative study of these and other accounts of this event cf. Przyluski 1926; for a translation of the relevant passages cf. Anuruddha 2008; on the significance of the term *saṅgīti* cf. Tilakaratne 2000 and Skilling 2009: 55–60.

²³ [29] Ps IV 197,2: *idaṃ pana suttaṃ dutiyasaṅgahe saṅghātan ti.*

In sum, then, the occurrence of the relatively unusual feature of repeated acclamation shows that, from the perspective of the reciters, the conduct and qualities of Bakkula represented an important ideal. At the same time, the lateness of the two versions indicates that this ideal stems from a time when the Buddha had already attained final Nirvāṇa several decades ago.

Revisiting the conduct and qualities of Bakkula from this perspective, it is noteworthy that according to both versions he never sewed robes with a needle. Even if he wore only rag robes, these would have needed to be mended from time to time. According to the Pāli version, he also never dyed his robe, a task that would similarly be difficult to avoid in the hot and humid climate of India, where the natural dye used for robes requires periodical renewal. From this it would follow that someone else must have undertaken this work on his behalf.

The Pāli commentary explains that Bakkula's relatives would get rag robes made and dyed for him, leaving them out for him when he went to bathe. Bakkula then dressed in those new robes and gave his old robes to other monks, so that a need to mend his robes never arose.²⁴ This would explain how he managed to wear robes without doing any mending or dying himself, although the commentarial account is to some extent difficult to reconcile with the explicit statement in the *Bakkula-sutta* that he never accepted a robe from a householder.²⁵ Even though, according to the commentarial explanation, these were rag robes, they had nevertheless been prepared by householders and the fact that he put them on after bathing would mean that he accepted them. Be that as it may, in order to avail himself of dyed and stitched rag robes he evidently had to rely on the help of others, yet, according to both

²⁴ [30] Ps IV 193,23.

²⁵ [31] MN 124 at MN III 126,1: *nābhijānāmi gahapatiṅvaram sādītā*.

versions of the present discourse, he does not seem to have reciprocated in this respect. [13]

Such lack of reciprocation was apparently not confined to robes. Although Bakkula himself must have received ordination and presumably also training as a novice, he did not train novices according to the *Madhyama-āgama* account, nor did he give the going forth, ordination or dependence according to the *Majjhima-nikāya* version. Judging from the *Madhyama-āgama* version, he never even gave any teachings to the laity.

Now, if this were just an isolated instance of a monk who is rather withdrawn and introverted, then this would perhaps not be worth further comment. Bakkula's behaviour could simply be seen as representing a peculiar instance out of a range of arahants of quite differing character portrayed in the discourse, some more introverted and others more outgoing.²⁶ What makes the case of Bakkula noteworthy, however, is the circumstance that the reciters consider his conduct as praiseworthy to the extent of acclaiming each aspect of his behaviour as wonderful and marvellous. Independent of whether the picture of Bakkula given in the two discourses is taken to be a historical record or just a product of the imagination of the reciters, the fact remains that they praise qualities that, had he not been considered an arahant, could even be mistaken for selfishness. In fact the *Madhyama-āgama* version's repeated reference to Bakkula having no conceit gives the impression that a critical attitude towards his claims was considered to be not only a remote possibility.

Another aspect of his conduct that the reciters consider worth extolling is his refraining from any interaction with nuns. This too

²⁶ [37] An example, noted by Engelmajer 2003: 41–43, would be Sāriputta as someone frequently shown to be teaching and assisting others, in contrast to a group of monks described in MN 31 (and its parallels), who live a rather secluded and thus more self-contained life.

is puzzling, since once Bakkula had become an arahant soon after his ordination, whether within three days (according to the *Madhyama-āgama* account) or within a week (according to the *Majjhima-nikāya* version), one might wonder why teaching nuns or greeting them should be considered as something better to be avoided. According to the Pāli commentary and a commentary on the *Ekottarika-āgama* preserved in Chinese, Bakkula had been eighty years old at the time of his going forth.²⁷ This makes it even more difficult to understand why it is praiseworthy when a monk who is an arahant and well over eighty shuns any contact with nuns. [14]

According to the *Nandakovāda-sutta* and its parallel, the Buddha expected his monk disciples to take their turn at teaching nuns.²⁸ The Theravāda *Vinaya* even considers it an offence if a monk does not teach the nuns when it is his turn.²⁹ The same *Vinaya* also reports that the Buddha sent Ānanda to give teachings to the harem of King Pasenadi.³⁰ If even young Ānanda, who is reported to have become an arahant only after the Buddha had passed away, is shown to be teaching the charming wives of the king,³¹ there seems little reason to consider it praiseworthy when an apparently considerably older monk who is an arahant would not even speak to nuns.

A description in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* of seven qualities that prevent a monk from decline makes a point of combining each of these qualities with the need to encourage the development of the

²⁷ [33] Ps IV 192,23 and T 1507 at T XXV 45c22; on T 1507 cf. Mori 1970.

²⁸ [34] MN 146 at MN III 270,18 and its parallel SĀ 276 at T II 73c25, translated in Anālayo 2010a.

²⁹ [35] Vin II 264,35.

³⁰ [36] Vin IV 158,30.

³¹ [37] The attractiveness of the wives in King Pasenadi's harem is described in SN 55.6 at SN V 351,8.

same qualities in others.³² In fact, according to the *Mahāgopālaka-sutta* and its parallels to teach others is an integral aspect of being a praiseworthy monk.³³ These discourses present as a serious defect what the two versions of the *Bakkula-sutta* consider wonderful and marvellous.

A discourse in the *Āṅuttara-nikāya* compares those who are concerned only with their own welfare to those who are concerned with their own welfare and the welfare of others, making it clear that the latter are more praiseworthy.³⁴ The importance of concern for others can also be seen in the depiction of other arahant monks. The *Rathavinīta-sutta* and its parallels, for example, highlight that Puṇṇa Mantāniputta was praiseworthy not only because he possessed various good qualities himself, [15] but also because he taught others how to develop the same qualities.³⁵ Even a monk like Revata who, unlike Bakkula, in the early discourses exemplifies a secluded and solitary life style,³⁶ would still make a point of proclaiming that he feels himself a friend and comrade to all, being

³² [38] AN 7.34 at AN IV 30,12.

³³ [39] MN 33 at MN I 221,18, AN 11.8 at AN V 349,11, SĀ 1249 at T II 343a5 (translated in Anālayo 2010b), EĀ 49.1 at T II 794b8 and T 123 at T II 546b15. According to Katz 1982/1989: 196, "it is natural for an arahant to teach". Witanachchi 2005: 582 adds that "an ideal Buddhist monk would not be contented only with ... [his] own welfare. He is also expected to impart the knowledge of the Dhamma ... to others".

³⁴ [40] AN 7.64 at AN IV 116,22; a comparative study of this discourse and its parallels can be found in Schmithausen 2004.

³⁵ [41] MN 24 at MN I 145,19 and its parallels MĀ 9 at T I 430a10 and EĀ 39.10 at T II 734a9; on the importance given to benefiting others among the early disciples cf. also Aronson 1980/1986: 11–23.

³⁶ [42] AN 1.14 at AN I 24,10 reckons Revata as foremost among those who live in forests; cf. also MN 32 at MN I 213,15 and its parallels MĀ 184 at T I 727b3, EĀ 37.3 at T II 710c24 and T 154 at T III 81a27, which record his praises in favour of living in seclusion.

compassionate towards all beings.³⁷

Admittedly, not everyone is capable of teaching others, but at least some cooperation in monastic affairs would be possible for anyone. To assist other monks in their tasks is according to other discourses a praiseworthy quality and will lead to communal harmony and concord.³⁸ An example of such praiseworthy conduct would be the case of Dabba Mallaputta. According to an account found in the Theravāda *Vinaya*, when Dabba had become an arahant at a young age, he reflected in what way he could render service to the monastic community. Eventually he decided to act as a distributor of lodgings and meals for his monk companions, a decision that met with the Buddha's explicit approval.³⁹

Another *Vinaya* passage records that on one occasion the Buddha chanced upon a sick monk who had not been properly cared for. With Ānanda's help, the Buddha himself washed the monk and afterwards admonished the other monks, explaining that it was their duty to look after a sick fellow.⁴⁰ For the Buddha to set an example in this way makes it unmistakably clear that a lack

³⁷ [43] Th 648: *sabbamitto sabbasakho sabbabhūtānukampako*. Johansson 1969: 122 explains that "as the arahants are completely without egotism ... they are friendly towards everybody".

³⁸ [44] DN 33 at DN III 267,20 and AN 10.50 at AN V 90,17.

³⁹ [45] Vin III 158,11; cf. also the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 587a28, the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 15a4 and the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1442 at T XXIII 695b27; for references to the services he rendered to the community cf. also the Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya*, T 1425 at T XXII 280a19 and the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1435 at T XXIII 22a9.

⁴⁰ [46] Vin I 302,3; for parallels cf., e.g., the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 861b23, the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya* T 1424 at T XXII 223b18, the Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya*, T 1425 at T XXII 455a28, and the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1435 at T XXIII 205a26; cf. also EĀ 44.7 at T II 766b22. Regarding this episode, de Silva 1993: 29 comments that "the Buddha ... set a noble example by himself administering to the helplessly sick".

of concern for other monks was considered inappropriate in early Buddhism, instead of which an attitude of mutual assistance and benevolence was encouraged. [16]

In the light of the above passages, it seems that the image of the arahant Bakkula praised in the two versions of the present discourse differs considerably from the ideal conduct of an arahant, or even of a monk in general, depicted in other discourses. Whereas the ideal arahant monk in other discourses is one who helps others and is willing to teach and guide, the arahant eulogized in the Pāli and Chinese versions of the present discourse is concerned only with himself. Apart from his claim to having reached final liberation within a very short time after ordination, neither the Pāli nor the Chinese version devotes any space to Bakkula's meditative development or to his insight and wisdom. The emphasis in both versions is instead on a display of externally flawless and ascetic conduct.

As the *Bakkula-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel are evidently later discourses, they might testify to a stage in the development of the conception of an arahant where the earlier more altruistic ideal was gradually being replaced by a growing emphasis on austere external conduct,⁴¹ a shift of perspective during which the arahant's detachment becomes increasingly understood as a form of indifference.⁴² [6]

⁴¹ [47+48] Horner 1936/1979: 191 comments that "it seems that the seeds of altruism, planted with foresight by Gotama at the beginning of his ministry ... smothered during the passage of time". Katz 1979: 56 explains that in the early discourses "the detachment of the arahant ... is not a bland neutrality or indifference ... Buddhist detachment means the non-reference of feeling to self, not merely the cultivation of a hedonic or emotively banal neutrality".

⁴² In what follows, my study is based on extracts from the article "Once again on Bakkula", published 2010 in the *Indian International Journal of Buddhist Studies*, 11: 1–28.

The arahant Bakkula occurs also in a discourse found in the *Ekottarika-āgama*,⁴³ where his unwillingness to teach others even motivates Sakka to visit Bakkula in order to find out why this monk, though being an arahant and endowed with deep insight into the true nature of reality, is nevertheless unwilling to share his insight with others.⁴⁴ On being asked by Sakka why he does

⁴³ EĀ 23.2 at T II 611c2 to 612a16, translated in Legittimo 2009; cf. also T 2122 at T LIII 470a1. For additional reference to tales related to Bakkula cf. Lamotte 1944/1970: 1386f note 1.

⁴⁴ The assumption by Legittimo 2009: 96 that Sakka even takes refuge in Bakkula appears to be based on a misunderstanding of EĀ 23.2 at T II 612a1: 釋提桓因遙向世尊叉手，便說此偈，歸命十力尊， which Legittimo 2009: 98 translates as: "Śakra devānam Indra from a distance joined his hands [pointing] towards the honourable [Bakkula] and said in verses: '[I] take refuge in the honourable [Bakkula] [who possesses] the ten powers'. The term 世尊, a standard epithet of the Buddha in *Āgama* discourses, makes it clear that the first part of the passage in question depicts Sakka holding his hands in reverence towards the direction where the Buddha was dwelling. Such acting with respect towards the direction in which the Buddha stays is a common occurrence in the thought world of the early discourses; cf., e.g., MN 89 at MN II 124,1 (with parallels in MĀ 213 at T I 797b2 and in T 1451 at T XXIV 238b4 and D 6 *tha* 85b4 or Q 1035 *de* 82a8), which reports that the two courtiers of King Pasenadi went to sleep with their heads pointing in the direction they had heard the Buddha was dwelling, even though this resulted in pointing their feet at the king, a highly disrespectful action according to ancient Indian customs. Besides, in early Buddhist thought the one in whom one takes refuge is invariably the Buddha, not his disciples. This can be seen in several discourses in the same *Ekottarika-āgama*, where disciples tell those wishing to take refuge in them to take refuge in the Buddha instead; cf. EĀ 19.9 at T II 595c18, EĀ 32.7 at T II 680b6, translated in Pāsādika 2006: 402, and EĀ 36.5 at T II 704b2. The same applies also to the present instance, since the one in whom Sakka takes refuge is qualified as endowed with the ten powers, 十力, obviously a reference to the ten powers of a Tathāgata. Similarly worded taking of refuge in the Buddha can be found elsewhere in the *Ekottarika-āgama*; cf. EĀ 23.2 at T II 612a3 and EĀ 30.3 at T II 664a16. Another discourse in the

not engage in teaching the Dharma, Bakkula explains that there are enough others, such as the Buddha or chief disciples like Sāriputta or Ānanda, who are able to do so. In reply, Sakka notes that there are many beings of various types, thereby indicating that there would still be scope for Bakkula to also deliver teachings. Faced by Sakka's insistence, [7] Bakkula agrees that there are many different types of beings and then explains that his main motivation for remaining silent is that people are so attached.⁴⁵ Extrapolating from the way he is depicted in this *Ekottarika-āgama* discourse, it seems that Bakkula simply can't be bothered teaching the Dharma to people who – precisely because they lack a proper understanding of the Dharma – are still under the influence of attachment.⁴⁶

Given that Bakkula's main motivation for not teaching appears to be that he cannot be bothered, the *Ekottarika-āgama* discourse concords with the picture drawn of Bakkula in the *Bakkula-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, where he is praised as a saint who never taught or assisted others.⁴⁷ [8]

same collection even proclaims that the ten powers are outside of the domain of disciples; cf. EĀ 51.3 at T II 816c8. For a comparison of the ten powers with the abilities of an arahant cf. de Silva 1987: 40-42; on who can attain the ten powers cf. also Dessein 2009.

⁴⁵ EĀ 23.2 at T II 611c24.

⁴⁶ [22] His disinclination to teach is thus different from the recently awakened Buddha's hesitation to teach, which according to MN 26 at MN I 167,34 was due to his reflection that people would not be able to comprehend what he had discovered; cf. also above page 33. From Bakkula's perspective, people's ability to comprehend would no longer have been in question, in fact his own attainment of awakening would have been a living proof of the fact that people were able to understand what the Buddha had discovered.

⁴⁷ [23] A similar perspective emerges also in T 1507 at T XXV 46a20, as part of its gloss on a reference to Bakkula in the listing of eminent disciples, EĀ 4.5 at T II 557c16. According to T 1507, Ānanda questions Bakkula why he does

In fact the *Ekottarika-āgama* discourse in a way completes the picture, since the other two discourses do not explicitly indicate why Bakkula did not teach.⁴⁸

Had Bakkula been exemplifying a type of monk who remains a hermit for his whole life, such conduct could be understandable, since he would have lacked opportunities to teach. But this does not seem to be the case, as the *Bakkula-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel depict him as living amidst a monastic community. In both discourses he readily addresses other monks during his discussion with his visitor and also announces his impending passing away to other monks. Thus, at the moment of receiving a chance visit by a non-Buddhist wanderer, Bakkula is shown to be in the company of others monks, and at the time of his death, he is apparently also living together with other monks. [9] That is, at least on the occasions described in

not teach even though he possesses the four analytical knowledges. Bakkula confirms that he possesses these four indeed, but enjoys being by himself and does not like to be in the hustle and bustle of the world, therefore he does not teach the Dharma.

⁴⁸ [24] Legittimo 2009: 99, however, argues for the present discourse being a "deliberate effort to rehabilitate Bakkula", achieved by having Sakka come "down to earth to test him, to see whether it is true that he does not teach others". Yet, in the discourse itself the motivation of Sakka's visit is not to find out if it is true that Bakkula does not teach, but rather to find out if he does not teach because he is unable to do so; cf. the reflection at EĀ 23.2 at T II 611c9, translated by Legittimo 2009: 97 as "I am not sure whether this honourable one is able to teach the dharma to others or whether he is not able to. I shall now test him". Given that Bakkula's reply satisfies Sakka's curiosity, as it confirms that this monk is able to teach the Dharma, it becomes all the more plain that the arahant Bakkula shows no interest in assisting others and thereby in some way reciprocating the guidance and assistance he must have received when going forth and learning the Dharma himself. Had he been unable to teach, his not engaging in teaching activities would have been more easily understandable.

these discourses, Bakkula is depicted as someone who lives as a member of a monastic community. He would thus have had ample opportunity to engage in those teaching activities which he proclaims to have never performed. [12]⁴⁹

The list of outstanding disciples in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* presents Bakkula as foremost in health, while the corresponding listing in the *Ekottarika-āgama* reckons him as foremost in longevity.⁵⁰ Though these are qualities that probably nobody would want to miss, it is not immediately evident why their possession is reckoned to be significant in the case of an arahant. Compared with other qualities mentioned in the listings of outstanding disciples, such as wisdom, meditative expertise, learnedness, or adherence to strict modes of conduct, etc., to be healthy and have a long lifespan does not stand in a direct relation to the circumstance that their bearer is an arahant or even a Buddhist monk. They could as well be in the possession of someone who is not even a follower of the Buddha.

That health and longevity of an arahant may not necessarily arouse inspiration in others is conveyed in the *Aśokāvadāna* of the *Divyāvadāna*. The work describes how King Asoka is taken for a tour of sacred spots, visiting the *stūpas* of different eminent disciples in turn. On being told of their respective qualities, the king makes a donation of a hundred-thousand pieces of gold to the *stūpas* of Sāriputta, Mahāmoggallāna and Mahākassapa respectively, and an even more substantial donation to the *stūpa* of Ānanda.

When he is informed that Bakkula was outstanding for his health and for never having taught even a two-line stanza to others,

⁴⁹ The part found in the original paper between pages 9 and 12 has been abbreviated.

⁵⁰ Cf. above note 17.

[13] he donates just a small coin. To his surprised entourage the king explains his lack of inspiration to be because this monk, unlike others, did not benefit beings.⁵¹

What is significant about this tale – where the humour inherent in the depiction could be intentional⁵² – is not only the lack of enthusiasm that Bakkula arouses in the distinguished visitor to his *stūpa*. The very fact that Bakkula is mentioned at all is also remarkable. Whereas the other four monks are famous chief disciples of the Buddha, in the early discourses Bakkula is clearly a peripheral character and there would have been a fair number of other well-known arahant disciples that could have been mentioned in his stead. By being accorded a *stūpa*, the *Aśokāvadāna* concurs with the other discourses discussed above in presenting Bakkula as worthy of worship.

What to make of his praiseworthiness, given that his outstanding qualities appear somewhat uninspiring, as exemplified in King Asoka's reaction? Since the interest in Bakkula evinced in the various texts surveyed so far would probably not be related to his longevity or health, even though the listings of eminent disciples emphasize these qualities, perhaps the coming into vogue of a more austere and to some degree self-centred arahant ideal may explain why Bakkula is reckoned as particularly praiseworthy.

To better appreciate the significance of Bakkula as representative of a particular type of arahant, in what follows I briefly ex-

⁵¹ [40] Cowell 1886: 396,5, where Upagupta informs the king about Vatkula (Bakkula) in the following terms: *alpābādhānām agro nirdiṣṭo bhagavatā, api ca na tena kasyacid dvīpadikā gāthā śrāvitā*, whereupon the king decides: *diyātām atra kākaṇiḥ*, and then explains that he is not inspired because this monk: *na kṛtaṃ hi tena yathā kṛtaṃ sattvahiṭaṃ tad anyaiḥ*. As noted by Rotman 2009: 162, the king's lack of inspiration was because Bakkula "didn't teach".

⁵² [41] For examinations of humour in Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* literature cf. Clarke 2009, Schopen 2007 and Schopen 2009.

amine another figure in the early Buddhist texts: the arahant Mahākassapa. [14] In the early discourses, this rather famous disciple stands representative for austere conduct, exemplified in his recurrent association with the observance of the ascetic practices.⁵³

A discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya* and its parallels report that Mahākassapa's devotion to some of these observances was so firm that he was not willing to give up their practice even when recommended to do so by the Buddha.⁵⁴ This episode throws into relief Mahākassapa as an advocate of the values of ancient Indian asceticism within early Buddhism,⁵⁵ where often tendencies towards a less austere spirit made their appearance.

Unlike Bakkula, however, Mahākassapa is shown to be engaging in teaching activities, in fact according to a discourse in the *Kassapa-samyutta* and its parallels he was exemplary for a pure

⁵³ [42] The listings of outstanding disciples in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* and the *Ekottarika-āgama* agree on taking the observance of the ascetic practices as the hall-mark of Mahākassapa, AN 1.14 at AN I 23,18 and EĀ 4.2 at T II 557b8. His eminency in this respect is also recorded in the *Divyāvadāna*, Cowell 1886: 395,23, and in the *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1882: 64,14. On Mahākassapa in general cf., e.g., Przyluski 1914: 522–528, Przyluski 1923: 167–173 and 327–340, Malalasekera 1938/1998: 476–483, Lamotte 1944/1981: 191f note 1 and 287 note 1, Lamotte 1944/1970: 1399 note 1, Waldschmidt 1948: 285–313, Tsukamoto 1963, Bareau 1971: 215–265, Ray 1994: 105–118, Ñāṇaponika 1997: 109–136, Deeg 1999: 154–168, Karaluvinna 2002, Silk 2003, Wilson 2003, Deeg 2004, Klimburg-Salter 2005: 541–547 and Lagirarde 2006.

⁵⁴ [43] SN 16.5 at SN II 202,11, SĀ 1141 at T II 301c10, SĀ² 116 at T II 416b11, EĀ 12.6 at T II 570b3 and EĀ 41.5 at T II 746a22. Tilakaratne 2005: 236 comments that "the behaviour of Mahā Kassapa in this context is not typical of a disciple of the Buddha. Usually ... the disciple would abide by the request of the Master".

⁵⁵ [44] Przyluski 1926: 296 explains that: "Mahākāśyapa ... c'est un homme des temps nouveaux ... il incarne les influences brahmaniques qui ont si fortement contribué à modifier le Bouddhisme primitif".

way of teaching that is undertaken out of compassion.⁵⁶ [15]

Regarding his teaching activities, several discourses in the *Kassapa-samyutta* give the impression that the way he executed this task did not always meet with appreciation. Three Pāli discourses and their Chinese parallels report that the Buddha invited him to deliver instructions to other monks, which he declined, pointing out their lack of readiness to receive his teachings.⁵⁷ Notably, according to the last of these three instances, respect for ascetic practices had gone into decline among other monks.

Two more instances involve nuns. One of these begins with Ānanda convincing Mahākassapa to accompany him to a nunnery to give teachings. One of the nuns afterwards expresses her displeasure at having received teachings from Mahākassapa instead of being able to listen to Ānanda, whom she considers superior. Mahākassapa, who had come to know of the comment made by the nun, rebukes Ānanda and gets him to admit that the Buddha publicly certified Mahākassapa to be in the possession of a whole range of attainments.⁵⁸

On another occasion some young monks, who apparently had been under the guidance of Ānanda, disrobe. Mahākassapa censures Ānanda and calls him a youngster (or else compares him to

⁵⁶ [45] SN 16.3 at SN II 200,3, SĀ 1136 at T II 300a15, SĀ² 111 at T II 414c10 and T 121 at T II 545a6.

⁵⁷ [46] SN 16.6 at SN II 204,3, SĀ 1138 at T II 300b16, SĀ² 113 at T II 415a12 and T 212 at T IV 643a27. SN 16.7 at SN II 206,3, SĀ 1139 at T II 300c29 and SĀ² 114 at T II 415b29. SN 16.8 at SN II 208,20, SĀ 1140 at T II 301a26 and SĀ² 115 at T II 415c24.

⁵⁸ [47] According to SN 16.10 at SN II 216,11, before listing his attainments Mahākassapa also threatens to have this episode investigated by the community, a remark not found in the parallel versions SĀ 1143 at T II 302b24 and SĀ² 118 at T II 417b19. As noted by Karaluvinna 2002: 439, SN 16.10–11 give the impression that Mahākassapa "was not popular among the nuns".

a small child).⁵⁹ This arouses criticism by a nun, who insinuates that Mahākassapa was formerly a follower of a heterodox tradition.⁶⁰ When Mahākassapa comes to know of this criticism, in front of Ānanda he relates in detail his close relationship with the Buddha and again proclaims his various attainments, [16] concluding that to overlook his qualities is like attempting to hide an elephant under a palm leaf.⁶¹

When surveying these passages in his study of the personality of arahants, Johansson (1969: 130) comes to the conclusion that, since "from an absolute point of view these incidents must be seen as shortcomings", after all "the idea that arahantship was a super-human degree of perfection is incorrect". This may be going a little too far. A passage in the Theravāda *Vinaya* points to a special type of relationship between these two monks,⁶² which would make it natural for Mahākassapa to admonish Ānanda after the Buddha had passed away, perhaps on the assumption that the favouritism shown by the nuns could best be redressed by Ānanda himself. This would also set the context for Mahākassapa's listing of his attainments, which highlight that whereas the nuns preferred

⁵⁹ [48] SN 16.11 at SN II 218,22 and a version of this event in the *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1897: 48,19, agree on reading *kumārako*; SĀ 1144 at T II 303a6 reads 童子 and SĀ² 119 at T II 418a6: 猶如小兒.

⁶⁰ [49] SN 16.11 at SN II 219,12, Senart 1897: 49,12, SĀ 1144 at T II 303a14 and SĀ² 119 at T II 418a16.

⁶¹ [50] SN 16.11 at SN II 222,9, Senart 1897: 55,4, SĀ 1144 at T II 303c9 and SĀ² 119 at T II 418c21.

⁶² [51] According to Vin I 92,37, on being asked to assist Mahākassapa in an ordination, Ānanda says that he does not dare to pronounce Mahākassapa's name (which he would need to do during the motion) because: *garu me thero*, where *garu* according to Horner 1951/1982: 119 note 3 is "probably equivalent to *guru*, spiritual teacher. Cf. *garunissaya* at *Vin.* ii. 303"; on the inappropriateness of pronouncing the name of a superior person, evident in this passage, cf. von Hinüber 1991: 124.

Ānanda to Mahākassapa, the Buddha considered Mahākassapa superior to Ānanda, as far as spiritual development was concerned.

Nevertheless, the somewhat rough tone he adopts according to these passages, considered together with the references to monks not ready for his teachings, does convey the impression that Mahākassapa represents a particular current within the early Buddhist Saṅgha that faced criticism from other monks and nuns. Thus von Hinüber (2008: 26), after surveying these episodes and the account of the so-called first council, where Mahākassapa again in quite strong terms rebukes Ānanda,⁶³ [17] concludes that "Ānanda as the favourite of the Buddha ... and Mahākassapa as the most venerable monk immediately after the *nirvāṇa* and heir to the Buddha, may be considered as the heads of two conflicting currents within the *saṅgha* of monks", representative of "a deeply rooted dissent, perhaps as bad as the earlier conflict with Devadatta".

⁶³ [52] The canonical accounts report that Ānanda had to face a whole set of reproaches from Mahākassapa (for a comparative survey cf. Tsukamoto 1963: 820), one of them being that Ānanda acted as the spokesman for the founding of the order of nuns, cf. the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 967b27, the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 191b14, the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1451 at T XXIV 404c23, the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1435 at T XXIII 449c8, and the Theravāda *Vinaya*, Vin II 289,25. In the Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya*, T 1425 at T XXII 492a22, however, the criticism is voiced by Upāli. Frauwallner 1956: 161 comments that "Ānanda... is much lowered in status and is deeply humbled by Mahākāśyapa ... [which stands] in contrast with the rest of the early tradition. In the tradition of the Sūtrapiṭaka Mahākāśyapa is a prominent disciple, but does not specially stand out and is not often mentioned, with the exception of the *Kāśyapasaṃyukta* of the *Samyuktāgama*. On the contrary Ānanda is the closest attendant of the Buddha ... the account of the council ... [shows] a deep reaching modification and revaluation of the tradition concerning the position of Ānanda and Mahākāśyapa"; cf. also Przyluski 1926: 376f, Bareau 1971: 140 and Migot 1952: 539f.

In his study of the opposition between these two disciples, Tilakaratne (2005) sees this tension between Mahākassapa and Ānanda as setting trends that have been of major significance in the development of the Theravāda tradition, where especially the austere example provided by Mahākassapa appears to have been rather influential.⁶⁴

Yet, in the above surveyed instances Mahākassapa does take an active interest in community matters and also acts as a teacher. In fact, he even goes to a nunnery to teach the nuns, even though he does so only at the instigation of Ānanda. That is, in contrast to Bakkula, Mahākassapa would not have been able to proclaim that he never entered a nunnery, that he never greeted a nun or that he never taught a nun.

The *Mahāgosīṅga-sutta* indicates that Mahākassapa not only undertook several ascetic practices himself, but also encouraged others to do the same.⁶⁵ [18] Thus, in spite of all austerity and sternness, Mahākassapa does represent an arahant who shows concern for others. This, however, is not the case with Bakkula, whose not assisting others in any way is so prominent.

A withdrawal from involvement with others would perhaps only be natural in view of the lack of appreciation and receptivity among other monastics, depicted in the above surveyed discourses from the *Kassapa-saṃyutta*. This pattern can be seen in its incipient stage with Mahākassapa, exemplified in his repeatedly declin-

⁶⁴ [53] In fact, even just comparing the similar expositions given to certain topics in the *Vimuttimaggā* and the *Visuddhimaggā*, a tendency to shift from mental qualities to externals of conduct clearly makes itself felt; cf. in more detail Anālayo 2009c: 6–12.

⁶⁵ [55] MN 32 at MN I 214,2 and its parallels MĀ 184 at T I 727c2, EĀ 37.3 at T II 711a7 and T 154 at T III 81b16, which, in spite of varying in their listings of his qualities, agree on the basic pattern that he not only possessed these qualities himself, but also encouraged others to develop the same.

ing the Buddha's invitation to teach the monks and in the problems that arise from his being persuaded to teach the nuns.

In a way, the description given of Bakkula could be seen as representative of the outcome of this pattern: the austere arahant no longer teaches. Once he no longer acts as a teacher, to command respect and be considered worthy of support this type of arahant needs to display an externally flawless and ascetic conduct. This is precisely what is depicted in the *Bakkula-sutta* and its parallel.

Given that the depiction of Bakkula must stem from a period at some distance after the Buddha's decease, it seems reasonable to assume that the praises bestowed on him in the *Bakkula-sutta* and its parallel testify to a development in the conception of an arahant subsequent to the arahant ideal reflected in other early discourses.⁶⁶ In fact, as the above comparison with Mahākassapa

⁶⁶ [57] Another instance relevant to the present discussion would be the *Saṅgāmaji-sutta* in the *Udāna*, where a monk (who according to Ud-a 71,²⁴ was an arahant), on being asked by his wife to support her and their little child, Ud 1.8 at Ud 5,20, reacts by simply ignoring her. The Buddha thereupon praises him for his detached attitude and freedom from bondage. Notably, the prose that accompanies the corresponding verse in the Chinese *Udāna* collection, T 212 at T IV 771a2, does not mention this tale at all. Several scholars have pointed out that prose narrations in the *Udāna* tend to be later than the verses on which they comment; cf. Seidenstücker 1913: 87, Seidenstücker 1920: xvi, Winternitz 1920/1968: 67, Woodward 1935: v, Pande 1957: 72, Lamotte 1968: 465, Nakamura 1980/1999: 43, Norman 1983: 61, Abeynayake 1984: 66, Ireland 1990: 7, von Hinüber 1996/1997: 46 and Anālayo 2009a. Several other *Udāna* collections do not have any prose at all, but consist entirely of verse. Hence this particular tale could belong to a similar textual stratum as tales found in the commentaries on the *Jātaka* and the *Dhammapada*, even though, unlike these, in the case of the *Udāna* such tales have become 'canonical' and in the present instance counterparts to this tale can be found in SĀ 1072 at T II 278b11 and SĀ² 11 at T II 376b21. The *Saṅgāmaji-sutta* could thus be another

shows, [19] in other early discourses austerity and ascetic conduct do not require refraining from teaching activities. In the case of Mahākassapa, probably the example par excellence for asceticism among the early disciples, teaching activities and a vivid concern for the welfare of the Saṅgha (evinced in the role he takes after the Buddha's demise) show that – from an early Buddhist view-point – austerity can co-exist with concern for others.

In sum, it seems that the arahant ideal evident in the depiction of Bakkula reflects tendencies whose incipient stage can already be discerned in some discourses related to Mahākassapa, probably standing representative of an attitude held among a faction of the early Buddhist community. The way Bakkula is presented in the *Ekottarika-āgama* does not seem to differ substantially from the *Bakkula-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, in that these discourses agree – albeit in different ways – in extolling an arahant who simply can't be bothered with others. [20] Had Bakkula's fellow monks adopted a type of conduct similar to what these discourses consider as highly praiseworthy, the Buddhist monastic order would not have stood much chance of survival.

instance reflecting a development of the arahant ideal in line with the example provided by Bakkula.

Dantabhūmi-sutta (MN 125)

Introduction

The present chapter studies the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Dantabhūmi-sutta* as yet another instance illustrating the potential of comparative studies of the early discourses. The translation is followed by a discussion of some of the more significant differences to be found between the two versions, which are of particular relevance for the role of *satipaṭṭhāna* in relation to *jhāna* attainment. [6]

Translation

Discourse on the Stages of Taming¹

1. Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was dwelling at Rājagaha, staying in the Bamboo Grove at the Squirrels' Feeding Place.

2. At that time the novice Aciravata was also living at Rājagaha, in a forest, staying in a meditation hut. At that time the prince Jīvasena, roaming about during the afternoon, came to where the novice Aciravata was staying, exchanged greetings with him, stepped back to sit to one side and said:² "Venerable

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¹ The translated discourse is MĀ 198 at T I 757a3 to T I 759a10; for a comparative study cf. Anālayo 2011: 717–722.

² [6] MĀ 198 at T I 757a7 gives the name of the prince as 耆婆先, where I have followed the indication by Akanuma 1930/1994: 243 that this suggests a name like Jīvasena. MN 125 at MN III 128,9 instead speaks of the prince Jayasena.

Aciravata, I would like to ask a question, will you listen to my question?"³

The novice Aciravata replied: "Good prince, ask what you wish to ask, having heard it I will consider it." The prince asked: "Aciravata, is it true that a monk in this Dharma and discipline who is not negligent and practises diligently reaches unification of the mind?" The novice answered: "Good prince, it is true that a monk in this Dharma and discipline who is not negligent and practises diligently reaches unification of the mind."

3. The prince asked further: "Venerable Aciravata, would you completely tell me, according to what you have heard, what you have recited, how a monk in this Dharma and discipline who is not negligent and practises diligently reaches unification of the mind?"

The novice answered: "Good prince, I am not able to tell you properly and in detail, according to the Dharma I have heard and have recited, how a monk in this Dharma and discipline who is not negligent and practises diligently reaches unification of the mind. Good prince, if I tell the good prince according to the Dharma I have heard and have recited, how a monk in this Dharma and discipline who is not negligent and practises diligently reaches unification of the mind, [7] perhaps the good prince will not understand. That would be wearisome for me."

4. The prince said to the novice: "Venerable Aciravata, you are not going to be defeated by others, with what reason in mind

³ [7] This is a standard pericope in *Madhyama-āgama* discourses, where often a discussion begins with the visitor (to the Buddha or to a monk) making a polite request to be allowed to put a question. Such a polite request occurs comparatively rarely in the Pāli discourses, though an instance of it can be found in MN 109 at MN III 15,23, in which case, however, it is absent from the parallel SĀ 58 at T II 14b17.

do you withdraw yourself?⁴ Venerable Aciravata, you can tell me, according to the Dharma you have heard, you have recited, how a monk in this Dharma and discipline who is not negligent and practises diligently reaches unification of the mind. If I understand, it is good, if I do not understand, I will not ask another question about anything."

5. Then the novice Aciravata told the prince Jīvasena, according to the Dharma he had heard, he had recited, how a monk in this Dharma and discipline who is not negligent and practises diligently reaches unification of the mind. [757b]

Then the prince Jīvasena said: "Venerable Aciravata, that a monk in this Dharma and discipline who is not negligent and practises diligently reaches unification of the mind, that is not possible", and having made this declaration of impossibility he right away got up from his seat and left without bidding farewell.

6. Not long after the prince Jīvasena had left, the novice Aciravata went to the Buddha, paid homage with his head, stepped back to sit to one side and told the Buddha all the conversation [that had taken place] with the prince Jīvasena. When the Buddha had heard it, he said to the novice:

7. "Aciravata, wait.⁵ How could prince Jīvasena attain [understanding]? Engaging in sensual pleasures, attached to sensual pleasures, consumed by craving for sensual pleasures, subject to the fever of sensual pleasures, that the prince should know or see the stage [to be attained] by abandoning sensual pleasures, abandoning the craving for sensual pleasures, abandoning the fever of sensual pleasures, this stage [to be attained] by dispassionate knowledge, dispassionate vision, dispassion-

⁴ [10] Such a remark is not reported in MN 125.

⁵ [11] MĀ 198 at T I 757b8: 止, literally: "stop".

ate realization, that is not possible. Why? Aciravata, [because] prince Jīvasena continuously engages in sensual pleasures.

8. "Aciravata, it is just like four tameable [beings], a tameable elephant, a tameable horse, a tameable ox and a tameable man.⁶ Of them two tameable [beings] resist taming, and two tameable [beings] accept taming. Aciravata, what do you think? That the two tameable [beings] that resist taming, that are untamed and have not [reached] the stage of taming, being untamed should experience the state of taming, is that not impossible? But that the two tameable [beings] that accept taming, that are well tamed, have been tamed and have ... [reached] the stage of taming,⁷ [8] being tamed should experience the state of taming, that is certainly possible.

"Thus, Aciravata, let it be. How could prince Jīvasena attain [understanding]? Engaging in sensual pleasures, attached to sensual pleasures, consumed by craving for sensual pleasures, subject to the fever of sensual pleasures, that the prince should know or see the stage [to be attained] by abandoning sensual pleasures, abandoning the craving for sensual pleasures, abandoning the fever of sensual pleasures, this stage [to be attained] by dispassionate knowledge, dispassionate vision, dispassionate realization, that is not possible. Why? Aciravata, [because] prince Jīvasena continuously engages in sensual

⁶ [12] MN 125 at MN III 130,2 instead contrasts two tamed elephants, two tamed horses and two tamed oxen with two untamed elephants, two untamed horses and two untamed oxen. An additional reference to "men", 人, recurs in MĀ 212 at T I 794a29 in the context of a listing of elephants, horses and oxen, in which case the counterpart in MN 90 at MN II 129,4 also does not bring in "men".

⁷ [13] MĀ 198 at T I 757b18 at this point actually reads "have not [reached] the stage of taming", 未調地, just as in the earlier case of the two untamed beings, which the context suggests to be a textual error.

pleasures.

9. "Aciravata, it is just like a great rocky mountain not far from a village, complete and without crevices, solid and not hollow, firm and immovable, that is altogether a single [mass].⁸ Suppose two men have the wish to take a proper look. One of them quickly climbs the mountain, the second man remains at the bottom of the mountain. The man on top of the rocky mountain sees that on the [other] side of the rocky mountain there is beautiful level ground, with scenic gardens, woodland groves, clear springs, flower ponds and long flowing rivers. Having seen this, the man on top of the mountain says to the man at the bottom of the mountain: 'Do you see that on the [other] side of the mountain there is beautiful level ground, [757c] with scenic gardens, woodland groves, clear springs, flower ponds and long flowing rivers?'⁹ The man standing at the bottom of the mountain replies: 'As I see this mountain, that on its [other] side there should be beautiful level ground, with scenic gardens, woodland groves, clear springs, flower ponds and long flowing rivers, that is not possible!'

"Then the man on top of the rocky mountain quickly comes down, takes hold of the man at the bottom of the mountain and quickly takes him up. When they have reached the top of the

⁸ [14] MN 125 at MN III 130,24 simply speaks of a great mountain, without further describing it.

⁹ [15] In MN 125 at MN III 130,29 it is the man standing below who inquires from the man on top of the mountain what he is able to see. This fits the simile better, since for the man on top of the mountain it should be self evident that the man below is not able to see the sights, so that there would be little need for him to ask the man at the bottom of the mountain if he could see the scenery. This would also better illustrate the encounter between the prince and the novice, since the prince, similar to the man at the bottom of the mountain, had inquired about something that he could not see himself.

rocky mountain he asks him: 'Do you see that on the [other] side of the mountain there is beautiful level ground, with scenic gardens, woodland groves, clear springs, flower ponds and long flowing rivers?' The other man replies: 'Only now I see it'. Then [the first man] again asks the other man: 'At first you said that to see this is not possible, but now you say you see it. What is the reason for this?' The other man replies: 'At first I was obstructed by the mountain, therefore I could not see'.¹⁰

10. "Thus, Aciravata, let it be. How could prince Jīvasena attain [understanding]? Engaging in sensual pleasures, attached to sensual pleasures, consumed by craving for sensual pleasures, subject to the fever of sensual pleasures, that the prince should know or see the stage [to be attained] by abandoning sensual pleasures, abandoning the craving for sensual pleasures, abandoning the fever of sensual pleasures, this stage [to be attained] by dispassionate knowledge, dispassionate vision, dispassionate realization, that is not possible."¹¹ [9]

12. "Aciravata, in former times a head-anointed warrior king had an elephant hunter. The king said to him: 'You, elephant hunter, catch a forest elephant for me and bring him. When you have got him, tell me!' Then, having received the king's instructions, the elephant hunter quickly mounted the royal elephant and went into the forest woods. In the forest woods the elephant hunter saw a large forest elephant, and having seen him he caught and bound him, attaching him to

¹⁰ [16] In MN 125 at MN III 131,19 the Buddha concludes the simile by explaining that the mass of ignorance obstructing the prince is even greater than such a mountain.

¹¹ [17] In MN 125 at MN III 131,29 the Buddha tells Aciravata that if he had delivered these two similes, the prince would have acquired confidence in him, to which Aciravata replies that these similes did not occur to him as he had not heard them earlier.

the royal elephant's neck. Then the royal elephant brought the forest elephant out into the open.

"The elephant hunter returned to the head-anointed warrior king and said: 'Great king, the forest elephant has been obtained, he is bound and in the open. The great king may do as he pleases. On hearing this the head-anointed warrior king said: 'Good elephant tamer, you may now quickly tame that forest elephant, make him submit so that he [becomes] a well tamed elephant, and when he is well tamed, come back and tell me'.¹²

"Having received the king's instructions, the good elephant tamer took hold of a large post, put it on his right shoulder, went to where the forest elephant was, planted the post in the ground and bound the forest elephant to it by the neck, [in order to] control [the elephant's] intentions of delighting in the forest, to discard his thoughts of desire for the forest, to stop his forest weariness, so that he [will come to] delight in the village and city, and develop a liking for men. The good elephant tamer then began by giving him fodder and drink.

"Aciravata, when that forest elephant for the first time accepted fodder and drink from the elephant tamer, the good elephant tamer thought: 'Now this forest elephant will certainly live. Why? [Because] this forest elephant has for the first time accepted fodder and drink'.

"When that forest elephant for the first time accepted fodder and drink from the elephant tamer, the good elephant tamer used soft and agreeable words to tell him:¹³ [758a] 'Lie down,

¹² [18] In relation to taming and also in relation to catching the elephant, according to MN 125 at MN III 132,2+15 the king gives more detailed instructions to the elephant trainer on how he should undertake these tasks.

¹³ [19] In MN 125 at MN III 133,3 the elephant tamer gives the first food only after the elephant has started to give ear to the friendly words addressed to him

get up! Go, come back! Take up, put down! Bend, stretch! When that forest elephant, on being addressed by the elephant tamer with soft and agreeable words, lay down and got up, went and came back, took up and put down, bent and stretched, then like this the forest elephant followed the instructions of the elephant tamer.

"Aciravata, when that forest elephant had obeyed the instructions of the elephant tamer, the good elephant tamer bound his two front feet, his back feet, his two hind parts, his two sides, his tail, his forehead, his ears, his tusks and also his trunk.¹⁴ A man holding a goad was made to mount on his neck, and many people were made to stand in front of him holding swords, [10] shields, spears, lances, halberds, hatchets and axes. Holding a sharp halberd in his hand and standing in front of the forest elephant, the good elephant tamer said: 'I will now train you in imperturbability, you must not move!'¹⁵

"When at the time of being trained in imperturbability by the elephant tamer, that forest elephant did not lift his front feet, did not move his back feet, his two hind parts, his two sides, his tail, his forehead, his ears, his tusks or his trunk, not moving any of these, then like this the forest elephant followed the elephant tamer's [instructions] by remaining imperturbable.

"Aciravata, when that forest elephant followed the elephant

by the elephant tamer.

¹⁴ [20] According to MN 125 at MN III 133,17, the elephant tamer bound a great plank to the elephant's body.

¹⁵ [21] MĀ 198 at T I 758a9: 不移動. MĀ 191 at T I 738c16 uses the same 不移動 where its counterpart MN 122 at MN III 112,9 speaks of *āṇaṅja* (B^c, C^c and S^c read *āneṅja*), corresponding to *mi g.yo ba* in its Tibetan counterpart in Skilling 1994b: 214,6. Another occurrence of *āṇaṅja* in MN 106 at MN II 262,15 (B^c, C^c and S^c again read *āneṅja*) has as its counterpart just 不動 in MĀ 75 at T I 542b24.

tamer's [instructions] by remaining imperturbable, at that time he put up with swords, shields, spears, lances, halberds, hatchets and axes, and the sound of loud shouting. At that time he was able to endure any yelling, blowing of conches, beating of drums and striking of bells – being able to endure all of that. When that forest elephant could endure it, at that time he was tamed, well tamed, had reached the higher taming, had reached the supreme taming, [was endowed with] superior swiftness, unsurpassable swiftness, was fit for being ridden by the king, to receive fodder from the king's granary and to be acclaimed a royal elephant.

13. "It is like this, Aciravata, at a time when a Tathāgata arises in the world, free from attachment,¹⁶ fully awakened, accomplished in knowledge and conduct, well gone, knower of the worlds, the unsurpassable person, charioteer of the Dharma,¹⁷ teacher of gods and men, called a Buddha, an Assembly of Blessings.¹⁸ [11] He has known and realized for himself this world [with its] gods and Māras, [with its] Brahmās, [with its] recluses and brahmins, from men to gods, and dwells having

¹⁶ [22] MĀ 198 at T I 758a19: 無所著 a standard rendition in the *Madhyama-āgama* of "arahant" as an epithet of the Buddha. Nattier, 2003b: 218, suggests that the rendering 無所著 could be inspired by an exegetical tradition similar to the gloss on this epithet offered in *Vism* 198,12, which explains that the Buddha "is aloof from all defilements ... because of being aloof he is an arahant", *ārakā hi so sabbakilesehi ... ārakattā arahaṃ* (cf. also AN 7.80 at AN IV 145,2: *ārakattā arahā hoti*). Discourses in the *Dīrgha-āgama* and the *Samyukta-āgamas* translate this second epithet of the Buddha more appropriately as "worthy of offerings", 應供; cf., e.g., DĀ 10 at T I 83c4, SĀ 395 at T II 106c7 and SĀ² 156 at T II 432c10.

¹⁷ [23] MĀ 198 at T I 758a20: 無上士, 道法御, counterpart to the "unsurpassable leader of persons to be tamed" in MN 125 at MN III 134,2 (supplemented from MN I 179,2); cf. above note 26 page 170.

¹⁸ [24] MĀ 198 at T I 758a20: 眾祐; cf. above note 27 page 170f.

himself accomplished realization. He teaches a Dharma that is sublime in the beginning, sublime in the middle and sublime in the end, that has [proper] meaning and expression, and he reveals a holy life that is completely pure.

"A householder's son hears that Dharma taught by him. On hearing it, the householder's son gains confidence in the Dharma taught by the Tathāgata.¹⁹ Having gained confidence, he shaves of his beard and hair, puts on monastic robes and out of confidence leaves home, becomes homeless to train in the path.

"Aciravata, at that time the noble disciple comes out into the open, just like the king's forest elephant [was brought out into the open]. Just as the forest elephant has lust, desire, delight and attachment, namely for staying in the forest,²⁰ so, Aciravata, gods and men have desire, lust, delight and attachment, namely for the five strands of sensual pleasure of forms, sounds, odours, tastes and tangibles.

15. "The Tathāgata at first tames that monk: 'You should maintain purity of livelihood in body, [758b] maintain purity of livelihood in speech and in mind!' [12]

16. "When the noble disciple maintains purity of livelihood in body, maintains purity of livelihood in speech and in mind, the Tathāgata further tames the monk:²¹

¹⁹ [25] The standard Pāli accounts of the gradual path at this point report the reflection of the householder that the household life is crowded and dusty, whereas to go forth is out in the open. Though this type of reflection is not found in MĀ 198, a similar type of reflection occurs in other *Madhyama-āgama* discourses; cf., e.g., MĀ 80 at T I 552b12, MĀ 146 at T I 657a5 and MĀ 187 at T I 733a18, of which the last two are counterparts to Pāli versions of this reflection in MN 27 at MN I 179,12 and in MN 112 at MN III 33,8.

²⁰ [26] Though MN 125 at this point does not bring in the forest elephant, in its earlier description of the catching of the elephant at MN III 132,10 it also mentions that the forest elephant is attached to the forest.

²¹ [28] Before taking up the practice of *satipaṭṭhāna*, MN 125 has the standard ac-

22. "You should contemplate the body as body internally ... (*up to*) ... contemplate feelings, mental states and dharmas as dharmas!"²² When the noble disciple contemplates the body as body internally ... (*up to*) ... contemplates feelings, mental states and dharmas as dharmas,²³ then these four establishing of mindfulness are what is called a settling in the noble disciple's mind, binding that mind, to control intentions of delighting in the household, to discard thoughts of desire for the household, to stop the household weariness, so that he delights in the right Dharma and in developing noble conduct.

23. "Aciravata, just as the elephant tamer, having received the king's instructions, took hold of a large post, put it on his right shoulder, went to where the forest elephant was, planted the post in the ground and bound the forest elephant to it by the neck, [in order to] control [the elephant's] intentions of delighting in the forest, to discard his thoughts of desire for the forest, to stop his forest weariness, so that he [will come to] delight in the village and city, and develop a liking for men. Like this, Aciravata, these four establishing of mindfulness

count of the gradual path, which covers sense restraint, contentment with food, wakefulness, the practice of mindfulness together with clear comprehension and the removal of the five hindrances.

²² [29] MĀ 198 at T I 758b3: 汝當觀內身如身, 乃至觀覺, 心, 法如法. The injunction to contemplate "internally", *ajjhataṃ*, is part of the instruction for contemplating body, feelings, mental states and dharmas in MN 10 at MN I 56,27.

²³ [30] According to MN 125 at MN III 136,4, such practice is undertaken *ātāpī sampajāno satimā, vineyya loke abhijjhādomanassam*. A counterpart to this type of stipulation is not only absent from MĀ 198, but also from MĀ 98, the parallel to the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta*, MN 10. A Sanskrit fragment with instructions on the development of mindfulness, however, has preserved this injunction; cf. SHT I 614 V1–3, Waldschmidt 1965: 272: *ātāpi smṛtimāṃ samprajāna viniyābhidyā l[o]k[e daur]manasyam*.

are called settlings in the noble disciple's mind, binding that mind, to control intentions of delighting in the household, to discard thoughts of desire for the household, to stop the household weariness, so that he delights in the right Dharma and in developing noble conduct.²⁴

24. "When the noble disciple contemplates the body as body internally ... (*up to*) ... contemplates feelings, mental states and dharmas as dharmas, then the Tathāgata further tames the monk: 'You should contemplate the body as body internally, do not think a thought related to sensual pleasures ... (*up to*) ... contemplate feelings, mental states and dharmas as dharmas, do not think a thought related to what is not right-ful!'²⁵ [13] When the noble disciple contemplates the body as body internally and does not think a thought related to sensual pleasures ... (*up to*) ... contemplates feelings, mental states and dharmas as dharmas and does not think a thought related to what is not rightful, then like this the noble disciple follows the instructions of the Tathāgata.

²⁴ [31] MN 125 at MN III 136,18 instead concludes that the four *satipaṭṭhānas* lead to obtaining the [proper] method and to realizing Nirvāṇa.

²⁵ [32] MĀ 198 at T I 758b15: 莫念欲相應念, 乃至觀覺, 心, 法如法, 莫念非法相應念. The E^e edition of MN 125 at MN III 136,21 and S^e instead instruct not to think a thought "related to the body", *mā ca kāyūpasamhitaṃ vitakkaṃ vitakkesi*, and continue in the same way in regard to the remaining three *satipaṭṭhānas* by enjoining to avoid thoughts related to the objects of mindfulness practice, *mā ca vedanūpasamhitaṃ vitakkaṃ ... mā ca cittūpasamhitaṃ vitakkaṃ ... mā ca dhammūpasamhitaṃ vitakkaṃ vitakkesi* (with the instructions for feelings and mind abbreviated in S^e). B^e and C^e instruct in all four cases: "do not think a though related to sensuality", *mā ca kāmūpasamhitaṃ vitakkaṃ vitakkesi*. In the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*, Dutt 1934/2000: 204,2, a description of body contemplation also stipulates not thinking thoughts related to the body, *na ca kāyasahagatān vitarkān vitarkayati*, similar to the instructions given in E^e and S^e.

"Aciravata, just as the forest elephant who, on being addressed by the elephant tamer with soft and agreeable words, lay down and got up, went and came back, took up and put down, bent and stretched, like this the forest elephant followed the instructions of the elephant tamer.²⁶ Like this, Aciravata, when the noble disciple contemplates the body as body internally and does not think a thought related to sensual pleasures ... (*up to*) ... contemplates feelings, mental states and dharmas as dharmas and does not think a thought related to what is not rightful, then like this the noble disciple follows the instructions of the Tathāgata.

25. "When the noble disciple follows the instructions of the Tathāgata, the Tathāgata further tames the monk: 'you should dwell secluded from sensual desires, secluded from evil and unwholesome states ... (*up to*) ... attain and dwell having accomplished the fourth absorption!²⁷ When the noble disciple dwells secluded from sensual desires, secluded from evil and unwholesome states ... (*up to*) ... attains and dwells having accomplished the fourth absorption, [14] then like this the no-

²⁶ [33] MN 125 does not provide this relation to the simile of taming the elephant. Another difference is that the activities of bending and stretching are not mentioned in the Pāli version's earlier description of this stage of training the elephant. By including these activities, MĀ 198 at T I 758b20 provides a closer relationship between the instructions to the elephant and the instructions for contemplating bodily activities given in MN 10 at MN I 57,5 and MĀ 98 at T I 582b25, which in addition to the activities of going forward and backward, *abhikkante paṭikkante* / 出入, of carrying (a bowl etc.) *dhāraṇe* / 著, and of sitting and lying down, *nisinne sutte* / 坐臥, also mention the activities of bending and stretching, *samiñjite pasārite* / 屈伸.

²⁷ [34] Though on reading the English translation this might not be immediately evident, the formulation in MĀ 198 at T I 758b25 leaves no doubt that, in spite of the abbreviation found at this point, the first absorption is explicitly taken into account.

ble disciple has followed the Tathāgata and has become established in imperturbability.

"Aciravata, just as at the time of being instructed by the elephant tamer in imperturbability, [758c] the forest elephant did not lift the front feet, did not move the back feet, his two hind parts, his two sides, his tail, his forehead, his ears, his tusks and also his trunk, then like this the forest elephant followed the elephant tamer's instructions on imperturbability.²⁸ Like this, Aciravata, when the noble disciple dwells secluded from sensual desires, secluded from evil and unwholesome states ... (*up to*) ... attains and dwells having accomplished the fourth absorption, then like this the noble disciple has followed the Tathāgata and become established in imperturbability.²⁹

30. "When by following the Tathāgata the noble disciple has been established in imperturbability, then at that time he is able to bear affliction by hunger and thirst, cold and heat, mosquitoes and gadflies, flies and fleas, wind and sun, and bad words, he can also endure being beaten with sticks.³⁰ Any disease of the body that causes the utmost pain [and even] cuts off desire for life, all these discomforts he can bear.

"Aciravata, just as when the forest elephant followed the elephant tamer and remained imperturbable, at that time he put up with swords, shields, spears, lances, halberds, hatchets and axes, and the sound of loud shouting. He was able to endure any yelling, blowing of conches, beating of drums and striking of bells – being able to endure all of that.³¹ Like this, Acira-

²⁸ [35] MN 125 does not provide this relation to the simile of taming the elephant.

²⁹ [36] MN 125 at MN III 136,30 continues with the attainment of the three higher knowledges, not mentioned in MĀ 198.

³⁰ [37] MĀ 198 at T I 758c8: 捶杖. The corresponding description in MN 125 at MN III 136,33 does not envisage that the disciple could be beaten with sticks.

³¹ [38] MN 125 does not provide this relation to the simile of the taming of the

vata, when by following the Tathāgata the noble disciple has been established in imperturbability, then at that time he is able to bear affliction by hunger and thirst, cold and heat, mosquitoes and gadflies, flies and fleas, wind and sun, and bad words, he can also endure being beaten with sticks. Any disease of the body that causes the utmost pain [and even] cuts off desire for life, all these discomforts he can bear.

"Aciravata, when the noble disciple follows [the instructions of] the Tathāgata and is able to bear up [with all of this], at that time he is tamed, well tamed, has reached the higher taming, the supreme taming, has reached the higher peace, the supreme peace, has discarded all crookedness, fear, stupidity and deceitfulness, he has become pure, has settled the dust, is free from dirt, free from filth, fit to be praised, fit to be invited, fit to be revered, fit to be respected, truly fit for offerings, an excellent field of merit for all gods and men.³²

"Aciravata, just as when that forest elephant could endure all, at that time he was tamed, well tamed, had reached the higher taming, had reached the supreme taming, [was endowed with] superior swiftness, unsurpassable swiftness, was fit for being ridden by the king, to receive fodder from the king's granary and to be acclaimed a royal elephant. [15] Like this, Aciravata, when the noble disciple follows [the instructions of] the Tathāgata and is able to bear up [with all of this], at that time he is tamed, well tamed, has reached the higher taming, the supreme taming, has reached the higher peace, the supreme peace, has discarded all crookedness, fear, stupidity and deceitfulness, he has become pure, has settled the dust, is free

elephant.

³² [39] MN 125 at MN III 137,3 instead relates the worthiness of the disciple to his having rid himself of all lust, hatred and delusion, and being purged of flaws.

from dirt, free from filth, fit to be praised, fit to be invited, fit to be revered, fit to be respected, truly fit for offerings, an excellent field of merit for all gods and men.

31. "Aciravata, a young forest elephant who dies untamed is reckoned to have 'died untamed', [759a] a middle-aged ... an old elephant who dies untamed is reckoned to have 'died untamed'. Aciravata, a young noble disciple who dies untamed is reckoned to have 'died untamed', a middle-aged ... an old noble disciple who dies untamed is reckoned to have 'died untamed'.³³

32. "Aciravata, a young forest elephant who dies well tamed is reckoned to have 'died well tamed', a middle-aged ... an old elephant who dies well tamed is reckoned to have 'died well tamed'. Aciravata, a young noble disciple who dies well tamed is reckoned to have 'died well tamed', a middle-aged ... an old noble disciple who dies well tamed is reckoned to have 'died well tamed'.

The Buddha spoke like this. The novice Aciravata and the monks, having listened to what the Buddha said, were delighted and received it respectfully.

Study

Looking back on the *Madhyama-āgama* version, it is noteworthy that while its depiction of the stages of taming an elephant is similar to the *Dantabhūmi-sutta*, its account of the taming of a monk differs considerably from the Pāli version. While the Chinese discourse proceeds from a basis in moral conduct directly to the practice of the *satipaṭṭhānas*, the Pāli discourse follows moral conduct with sense restraint, contentment, wakefulness, the prac-

³³ [40] MN 125 at MN III 137,12 instead speaks of young, middle aged and old disciples who "have not destroyed the influxes". As the Pāli version earlier took up the three higher knowledges, the imagery in both versions accords with their respective expositions of the training of the disciple.

tice of mindfulness together with clear comprehension, and the removal of the five hindrances, after which only it turns to the practice of the *satipaṭṭhānas*. The Pāli version's presentation in this way corresponds to the standard descriptions of the gradual path in other discourses. Due to giving such a full account of the gradual path, the *Dantabhūmi-sutta* takes up *satipaṭṭhāna* only subsequent to the removal of the five hindrances, at a stage of the gradual path where normally the development of the absorption has its place.

This positioning of *satipaṭṭhāna* is unexpected, since according to the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel awareness of the presence of the five hindrances is an integral part of *satipaṭṭhāna* practice.³⁴ A discourse in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* even recommends the practice of *satipaṭṭhāna* in order to overcome the five hindrances.³⁵ [16] Thus one would not expect *satipaṭṭhāna* practice to be appropriately placed only after a removal of the five hindrances.

According to the *Dantabhūmi-sutta* and its parallel, the function of *satipaṭṭhāna* at this point is to overcome thoughts related to the household life.³⁶ From the perspective of the Pāli discourse, this specification is puzzling, since if the practice of *satipaṭṭhāna* were to take place after the five hindrances have already been removed, there would be little need for it to perform the function of overcoming thoughts related to the household life.³⁷

³⁴ [42] MN 10 at MN I 60,11 and MĀ 98 at T I 584a24.

³⁵ [43] AN 9.64 at AN IV 458,4.

³⁶ [44] MN 125 at MN III 136,16 and MĀ 198 at T I 758b6.

³⁷ [45] Ps IV 199,12 explains that the expression "habits [related to] the household life" refers to habits based on the [enjoyment of] the five strands of sensual pleasure, *gehasitasīlānaṃ ti pañcakāmaguṇanissitasīlānaṃ*. Concern with enjoyment of the five strands of sensual pleasure would have been left behind once the five hindrances have been successfully overcome.

When faced with such variations, it is often not easy to come to an unequivocal decision about which of the two versions could be preserving a more authentic record of the discourse. Oral transmission involves the possibility of accidental loss but also the possibility that a text may have been expanded because a key term caused the reciter(s) to supplement a standard pericope or formula.³⁸

Exploring this second possibility, an expansion of the original account could have taken place along the lines of a full treatment of the gradual path of training. That is, the long account of the disciple's sense restraint, contentment, wakefulness, practice of mindfulness together with clear comprehension and removal of the five hindrances, found in the Pāli version, could be such an expansion. It may not be too far-fetched to assume that during oral transmission a reference to the arising of a Tathāgata could have caused the reciter(s) to continue with a full account of the gradual path, as such a full account would normally be required when a reference to the arising of a Tathāgata comes up during the recitation of a discourse.

If this section in the Pāli version should have been expanded during oral transmission, the treatment of *satipaṭṭhāna*, which usually is not explicitly mentioned in accounts of the gradual path, would thereby have been displaced to a later section of the discourse. Such a displacement would explain why *satipaṭṭhāna* stands in a place where usually one finds the absorptions, a placing that does not fit the purpose that *satipaṭṭhāna* should perform at this junction according to the *Dantabhūmi-sutta* and its parallel, namely overcoming thoughts related to the household life.

Another noteworthy difference is that the *Madhyama-āgama*

³⁸ Cf. the observation by von Hinüber 1996/1997: 31, quoted above note 44 page 26.

version concludes its description of the disciple's training with the fourth absorption, whereas the Pāli version also takes the three higher knowledges into account. By not mentioning the destruction of the influxes, the *Madhyama-āgama* presentation strikes at first sight an unfamiliar note, since the destruction of the influxes usually constitutes the culmination of an account of the training of a disciple. [17]

Once the possibility is granted that the part preceding *satipaṭ-thāna* could, in the Pāli version, have been accidentally expanded along the lines of the standard gradual path account, then the same procedure also offers a possible explanation for the appearance of the three higher knowledges at the end of the Pāli version. Alternatively, the Chinese version could have lost the treatment of the three higher knowledges.

In evaluating this particular difference, it needs to be born in mind that the topic of the two parallel versions is how a disciple can, by dint of diligent practice, reach unification of the mind. From this perspective, an account of the disciple's training until the attainment of the fourth absorption would be sufficient, as with the fourth *jhāna* complete unification of the mind has indeed been accomplished.

The presentation in the *Madhyama-āgama* version could also call for support two discourses in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, which compare qualities of a trained elephant to qualities of a disciple. These two discourses describe how a disciple overcomes unwholesome thoughts and develops the ability to patiently bear the vicissitudes of climate, etc., which they compare to an elephant's ability to patiently bear a battle situation.³⁹ The same two discourses continue by comparing a disciple who swiftly approaches liberation to an elephant's ability to approach swiftly any place his

³⁹ [46] AN 4.114 at AN II 117,31 and AN 5.140 at AN III 163,29.

trainer wants him to go to. Since the *Dantabhūmi-sutta* and its parallel do not describe how the elephant swiftly approaches any place his trainer wants him to go to, but stop with the elephant's ability to bear a battle situation patiently, their corresponding account of the disciple's training would also find its proper conclusion with the attainment of the absorptions, without taking up the attainment of final liberation.

However, even though the three higher knowledges are not required from the perspective of the topic of the discourse and do not seem to be taken into account as a separate stage in the simile of the taming of the elephant, their appearance does not create any internal inconsistency in the discourse. Hence in this case it is not entirely straightforward to decide which of the two versions has preserved the better account.

Another significant difference is that, from *satipaṭṭhāna* practice without thoughts, the *Dantabhūmi-sutta* continues with the attainment of the second absorption, whereas its *Madhyama-āgama* counterpart also takes the first absorption into account. This difference could in principle be the result of an addition on the side of the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse or of a loss of material on the side of the Pāli version.

Due to the nature of oral transmission, it could easily have happened that a reference to the first absorption was supplemented in accordance with standard descriptions of the four absorptions found elsewhere. Similarly, from the perspective of oral transmission the occurrence of the word *vitakka* in the passage on *satipaṭṭhāna* without thought could easily have led to a lapse on the part of the reciter(s) of the discourse, who continued straight away with the calming of *vitakka* mentioned at the outset of the second absorption formula, thereby unintentionally dropping the

first absorption in between.⁴⁰ To decide between these two possibilities requires a closer look at the nature of the first absorption.

A discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya* and its *Samyukta-āgama* parallel reckon the second absorption to be a noble type of "silence".⁴¹ Discourses from the same two collections also indicate that with the first absorption speech has ceased.⁴² This makes it clear that the reference to "silence" is not meant in a literal sense. The point behind the idea of noble silence would rather be related to the function of the two absorption factors *vitakka* and *vicāra* as verbal formations,⁴³ in that these mental factors are required for being able to speak. The same two mental factors can also be employed in a way that does not involve breaking into speech, merely standing for a directing of the mind towards a theme or object and sustaining it there.⁴⁴

⁴⁰ [49] A complementary case occurs in MN 19 at MN I 117,6 and its parallel MĀ 102 at T I 589c10, where the Chinese version omits the first absorption and proceeds directly from overcoming wholesome thoughts to the second absorption, whereas the Pāli version does take the first absorption into account.

⁴¹ SN 21.1 at SN II 273,14: *dutiyaṃ jhānaṃ upasampajja viharati, ayaṃ vuccati ariyo tuṅhībhāvo ti*, SĀ 501 at T II 132a19: 第二禪具足住, 是名聖默然。

⁴² SN 36.11 at SN IV 217,5: *paṭhamaṃ jhānaṃ* (B^e and C^e: *paṭhamaṃ jhānaṃ*, S^e: *paṭhamajjhānaṃ*) *samāpannassa vācā niruddhā hoti*, SĀ 474 at T II 121b2: 初禪正受時, 言語寂滅。

⁴³ SN 41.6 at SN IV 293,15: *vitakkavicārā vacīsāṅkhāro* and SĀ 568 at T II 150a24: 有覺, 有觀, 名為口行。Another occurrence of this definition in MN 44 at MN I 301,21 has a similarly worded Tibetan counterpart in D 4094 *mngon pa, ju 8a5* or Q 5595 *tu 9a5: rtog pa dang dpyod pa ni ngag gi 'du byed ces bya'o*.

⁴⁴ In a discussion of the nature of *vitakka*, Cousins 1992: 139 speaks of "the activity of bringing different objects into firm focus before the mind's eye – be these objects thoughts or mental pictures". Shankman 2008: 40 explains that, though in the context of the first absorption *vitakka* and *vicāra* must be representing some degree of mental activity, they "should never be understood as thinking or musing in the ordinary sense".

That in the context of absorption attainment *vitakka* does not refer to conceptual thought would also have been the understanding of the translator(s) of the *Madhyama-āgama*, as they instead speak of "awareness", a rendering found also in other *Āgama* discourses.⁴⁵ By using this particular Chinese character for this absorption factor, different from the character they employ elsewhere to render "thought",⁴⁶ the translators seem to express their understanding of its practical implications. This would fit with an interpretation of the absorption factor *vitakka* as conveying the idea of an application of the mind, in the sense of a directing of awareness that can take place in rather subtle ways.

According to the autobiographical account of the Buddha's own progress towards absorption, he had to struggle through various mental obstructions before being able to attain the first absorption.⁴⁷ The same discourse reports the advice given by the Buddha to Anuruddha, who experienced similar difficulties, while

⁴⁵ Descriptions of the first absorption in each of the four main Chinese *Āgamas* have as their counterpart to *savitakka* the expression 有覺; cf. DĀ 9 at T I 50c19 (parallel to DN 33 at DN III 222,5); MĀ 2 at T I 422b12 (parallel to AN 7.65 at AN IV 118,21); SĀ 483 at T II 123b1 (parallel to SN 36.29 at SN IV 236,3); and EĀ 31.1 at T II 666b13 (parallel to MN 4 at MN I 21,35). Hirakawa 1997: 1062 lists $\surd budh$, $\surd jñā$ and $\surd vid$ for 覺, which Soothill 1937/2000: 480 translates as "to awake, apprehend, perceive, realize" and also as to be "aware". The term 觀 as an equivalent to *vicāra* usually renders terms related to $\surd paś$ in the *Madhyama-āgama*, such as, e.g., *vipaśyanā* or *anupaśyanā*, "insight" or "contemplation".

⁴⁶ Thus, e.g., MĀ 102 at T I 589c9 uses 覺 in the context of absorption, but in the same line of the text employs 念 to refer to "thoughts", both occurrences paralleling the use of the same word *vitakka* in its parallel MN 19 at MN I 116,35 and 117,7. The use of these different renderings does convey the impression that the translator(s) were aware of the difference between these two types of *vitakka* and endeavoured to render them in such a way that they would not be confused with each other.

⁴⁷ MN 128 at MN III 157,29 and MĀ 72 at T I 536c19.

another Pāli discourse describes that the Buddha had to assist Mahāmogallāna in attaining the first absorption.⁴⁸ This is significant in view of the fact that according to the canonical listings of eminent disciples Anuruddha and Mahāmogallāna excelled all other disciples with their concentrative attainments.⁴⁹ For them to nevertheless be described as needing the Buddha's personal intervention to attain the first absorption makes it clear that this level of concentration was considered to require a considerable amount of meditation practice and expertise even in the case of gifted practitioners. This in turn implies that the first absorption already constitutes a deep level of concentration, a state of mental unification that is beyond mere conceptual thinking and reflection.⁵⁰

The presentation in the *Dantabhūmi-sutta*, however, seems to imply that the practice of *satipaṭṭhāna* can become an equivalent to the attainment of the first absorption. Though *satipaṭṭhāna* meditation functions as an important foundation for the development of the absorptions,⁵¹ *satipaṭṭhāna* in itself does not constitute a form of absorption. A central characteristic of *satipaṭṭhāna*

⁴⁸ SN 40.1 at SN IV 263,18.

⁴⁹ According to AN 1.14 at AN I 23,18+20 and EĀ 4.2 at T II 557b6+9, Mahāmogallāna was outstanding for his mastery of supernormal powers and Anuruddha for his divine eye.

⁵⁰ In fact, AN 10.72 at AN V 135,1 indicates that "sound is a thorn for the first absorption", *paṭhamassa jhānassa saddo kaṇṭako*, a statement made similarly in its parallel MĀ 84 at T I 561a7: "for one who has attained the first absorption sound becomes a thorn", 入初禪者以聲為刺. Since both versions continue by describing factors that need to be overcome for attaining the higher absorptions as their respective "thorns", it follows that from the perspective of both discourses during attainment of the first absorption hearing no longer takes place in the way it ordinarily does.

⁵¹ [47] The foundational role of *satipaṭṭhāna* for deeper levels of concentration can be seen in DN 18 at DN II 216,12, SN 52.6 at SN V 299,19 or SN 52.11–24 at SN V 303,3 to 306,2.

meditation is to be aware of the changing nature of phenomena, whereas absorption attainment requires concentration on a single and stable object. Already with the first absorption mental unification has been reached,⁵² a condition of the mind that does not seem to be compatible with awareness of changing phenomena. Therefore it appears improbable that practice of *satipaṭṭhāna* enables one to attain the second absorption directly, [18] without any need to develop the first absorption.

In sum, on evaluating the two possible ways of explaining the difference between the *Dantabhūmi-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel regarding the first absorption, it seems probable that a loss of text has occurred in the Pāli version, whereas the Chinese discourse appears to preserve the more original presentation that includes a reference to the first absorption.

Another case of loss on the side of the *Dantabhūmi-sutta* seems to have occurred regarding the relationship between the various stages of taming the forest elephant and the training of the disciple. The *Madhyama-āgama* version compares thought-free *satipaṭṭhāna* to the stage of taming during which the elephant is taught to obey orders, while the disciple's level of mental imperiturbability reached after attaining the four absorptions finds its illustration in the stage of imperturbability reached in the training of the elephant.

Though the *Dantabhūmi-sutta* portrays the same stages of taming the elephant, it does not relate these stages of the elephant's taming to the stages of training the disciple. Since the "stages of taming" are the central topic of both discourses, the stages of the elephant's taming may well have been intended to illustrate several successive stages of training a disciple, as they

⁵² MN 43 at MN I 294,31, MĀ 210 at T I 788c20 and D 4094 *ju* 8a1 or Q 5595 *tu* 8b8 list unification of the mind as one of the factors of the first absorption.

still do in the Chinese discourse.

Thus the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Dantabhūmi-sutta* offers significant perspectives on its Pāli counterpart, enabling the detection of what appear to be the type of error that is bound to affect material that has gone through a long period of oral transmission.

Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta (MN 133)

Introduction

In the present chapter I translate the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta*, followed by surveying differences between the two versions that exemplify the impact of oral transmission over a prolonged period undertaken by reciters who had not necessarily undergone training in memorizing skills from their early youth onwards.¹

Translation

Discourse on a *Deva* at the Hot Spring Grove²

* Originally published 2008 under the title "The Verses on an Auspicious Night, Explained by Mahākaccāna – A Study and Translation of the Chinese Version" in the *Canadian Journal of Buddhist Studies*, 4: 5–27 (due to a printing error, notes 42 to 67 only appeared in the next issue of the same journal, 5: 138f). For the present chapter I have rearranged the paper, placing a study part, found originally at the outset, after the translation.

¹ Von Hinüber 1989: 67f points out that while brahmins were trained from their childhood onwards in memorizing, training as a reciter in the early Buddhist tradition would only begin after ordination, which usually took place at a later age; cf. also Frauwallner 1956: 172f and Gombrich 1990b: 6f.

² [26] The translated text is MĀ 165 at T I 696b26 to 698c1; for a comparative study cf. Anālayo 2011a: 760–763. MĀ 165 at T I 696b26 gives the title as 溫泉林天, thus differing from the Pāli version's title *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta*. A partial Chinese parallel is T 1362 at T XXI 881c3 to 882c1, which has the title "discourse spoken by the Buddha on [the topic of] a good night", 佛說善夜經. A partial Tibetan parallel occurs three times in the Derge edition (D 313, D 617 and D 974), and twice in the Peking edition (Q 979 and Q 599). The occurrence of three versions of this translation in the Derge edition and two versions in the Peking edition appears to be due to some uncertainty about

1. Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was dwelling in Rājagaha, staying in the Bamboo Grove, the Squirrels' Feeding Place.³ The venerable Samiddhi was at that time also dwelling in Rājagaha, staying at the Hot Spring Grove. [696c]

When the night was over, at dawn, the venerable Samiddhi left his dwelling and approached the hot springs, took off his robes and, [having left] them on the bank, entered the hot springs to take a bath. Having taken a bath he came out, wiped his body [dry] and put on his robes.⁴

At that time there was a *deva* of excellent bodily shape, with a majestic appearance. When the night was over, at dawn, [this *deva*] approached the venerable Samiddhi, bowed down with its head to pay respects and stepped back to stand to one side.⁵ The brilliance of the excellent splendour of that *deva*'s appearance illuminated the hot springs and their banks. [After] having and

the category to which this text should be assigned, with the result that it was finally placed into two or even into three categories, namely *sūtra*, *tantra*, and *dhāraṇī*; cf. also Skilling 1997: 81–83. The Tibetan versions are entitled '*phags pa mtshan mo bzang po zhes bya ba'i mdo*, corresponding to *Bhadrakarātrī-nāma-ārya-sūtra* (the prefix '*phags pa* qualifies the discourse itself; cf. Skilling 1997: 585f). The Chinese and Tibetan versions parallel only the first part of MN 133 and MĀ 165, as they do not have Mahākaccāna's commentary on the stanzas. The introductory narration of the meeting between Samiddhi and a *deva* recurs as the prologue to another discourse of different content, SN 1.20 at SN I 8,16; cf. also *Jātaka* tale no. 167 at Jā II 56,24. This meeting led to a different discussion, as the visiting *deva* tried to tempt Samiddhi with sensual pleasures. The parallels to SN 1.20, SĀ 1078 at T II 281c4 and SĀ² 17 at T II 379a24, do not give the name of their monk protagonist.

³ [27] According to MN 133 at MN III 192,2, at that time the Buddha was staying in the *tapodārāma*.

⁴ [28] In MN 133 at MN III 192,5 Samiddhi just stands and lets his limbs dry by themselves.

⁵ [29] MN 133 does not report that the *deva* paid respect by bowing down.

stepped back to stand to one side, the *deva* said to the venerable Samiddhi: [11]

2. "Monk, do you remember the stanzas⁶ on an auspicious night?"⁷ The venerable Samiddhi replied to the *deva*: "I do not remember the stanzas on an auspicious night." He [then] asked the *deva*: "Do you remember the stanzas on an auspicious night?" The *deva* replied: "I also do not remember the stanzas on an auspicious night." The venerable Samiddhi asked the *deva* again: "Who remembers the stanzas on an auspicious night?"⁸

The *deva* answered: "The Blessed One is dwelling here in Rājagaha, staying in the Bamboo Grove, the Squirrels' Feeding Place. He remembers the stanzas on an auspicious night. Monk, you could approach the Blessed One and from him directly [learn how] to remember and recite the stanzas on an auspicious night. Why? [Because] the stanzas on an auspicious night pertain to the teachings, they pertain to what is beneficial, being the root of the holy life, they [lead to] progress in knowledge, progress in reali-

⁶ [30] In MN 133 at MN III 192,11 the *deva* instead inquires after "the summary and the analysis" of these stanzas, *uddesañ ca vibhaṅgañ ca*, and after Samiddhi has explained that he does not know them, the *deva* asks after the stanzas themselves.

⁷ [31] MĀ 165 at T I 696c7: 跋地羅帝. Sanskrit fragment versions of this expression can be found in SHT III 816 V3, Waldschmidt 1971: 32, which reads: *bhadragarātrīya* (cf. also R2), and in fragment 3 b3, Minayeff 1983: 243, which reads *bhadrakarātrīyaḥ*. The Tibetan versions (D 313 *sa* 161b2, D 617 *ba* 56a7, D 974 *waṃ* 90a3, Q 599 *ya* 96b3 and Q 979*shu* 171a7) speak of an "auspicious night", *mtshan mo bzang po*, corresponding to *bhadrakarātrī*. MN 133 at MN III 192,11 reads *bhaddekaratta*. Bodhi in Ñāṇamoli 1995/2005: 1342 note 1210 explains that "*ratta* and *ratti* could be taken to represent respectively either Skt *rātra* and *rātri* (= night) or Skt *rakta* and *rakti* (= attachment)". The Sanskrit and Tibetan versions support the first alternative.

⁸ [32] MN 133 does not report such inquiry or that the *deva* directs Samiddhi to the Buddha.

zation, and progress towards Nirvāṇa.⁹ [As] a son of a good family who, out of faith, has left the household life to become homeless and practise the path, you should [learn how] to remember and recite the stanzas on an auspicious night." After speaking like this, the *deva* paid respects with its head at the feet of the venerable Samiddhi and, having circumambulated him three times, vanished from that place.¹⁰

3. Not long after the *deva* had disappeared, the venerable Samiddhi approached the Buddha, bowed down with his head to pay respects, stepped back to sit to one side and said: "Blessed One, today, when the night was over, at dawn, I left my dwelling and approached the hot springs, took off my robes and, [having left] them on the bank, entered the hot springs to take a bath. Having taken a bath I came out, wiped my body [dry] and put on the robes.

At that time there was a *deva* of excellent bodily shape, with a majestic appearance. When the night was over, at dawn, [this *deva*] approached me, bowed down with its head to pay respects and, having stepped back, stood to one side. The brilliance of the excellent splendour of that *deva*'s appearance illuminated the hot springs and their banks. [After] having stepped back to stand to one side, that *deva* said to me:

'Monk, do you remember the stanzas on an auspicious night?' I replied to that *deva*: 'I do not remember the stanzas on an auspicious night!' [Then] I asked the *deva*: 'Do you remember the stanzas on an auspicious night?' That *deva* replied: 'I also do not remember the stanzas on an auspicious night!' I again asked that *deva*: [697a] 'Who remembers the stanzas on an auspicious night?'

⁹ [33] In MN 133 at MN III 192,25 the *deva* only indicates that these stanzas are beneficial and fundamental for the holy life. The next sentence in MĀ 165 (on the son of a good family) is without a counterpart in MN 133.

¹⁰ [34] In MN 133 at MN III 192,27 the *deva* simply vanishes, without paying respect or performing circumambulations.

That *deva* answered: 'The Blessed One is dwelling here in Rājagaha, staying in the Bamboo Grove, the Squirrels' Feeding Place. He remembers the stanzas on an auspicious night. Monk, you could personally approach the Blessed One and from him directly [learn how] to remember and recite the stanzas on an auspicious night. Why? [Because] the stanzas on an auspicious night pertain to what is beneficial, they pertain to the teachings, being the root of the holy life, they [lead to] progress in knowledge, progress in realization, and progress towards Nirvāṇa. [As] a son of a good family who, out of faith, has left the household life to become homeless and practise the path you should [learn how] to remember and recite the stanzas on the auspicious night!' After speaking like this, that *deva* paid respects with its head at my feet and, having circumambulated me three times, vanished from that place."

The Blessed One asked: "Samiddhi, do you know that *deva's* name and where it comes from?"¹¹ The venerable Samiddhi replied: "Blessed One, I do not know that *deva's* name and I also do not know where it comes from." The Blessed One said: "Samiddhi, that *deva* is a general of the troops in the heaven of the Thirty-three, called Main Hall."¹²

Then the venerable Samiddhi said: "Blessed One, now is the right time, Well-gone One, now is the right time for the Blessed One to teach the stanzas on an auspicious night to the monks."¹³ Having heard them from the Blessed One, the monks will remem-

¹¹ [36] This inquiry and the revelation of the *deva's* name is not found in MN 133.

¹² [37] At this point, MĀ 165 at T I 697a11 switches from the earlier 天, corresponding to *deva*, to 天子, corresponding to *devaputta*. Childers 1875/1993: 115 s.v. *devaputto* explains that "*devaputto* ... means simply a male *deva*", so that this change of terminology may be of no further significance.

¹³ [38] In MN 133 at MN III 193,6 Samiddhi instead requests the Buddha to teach the summary and the analysis on an auspicious night.

ber them well." [12]

4. The Blessed One said: "Samiddhi, listen well and pay proper attention to what I shall teach to you." The venerable Samiddhi said: "Yes, indeed." Then, all the monks [being ready] to listen and receive the instructions, the Buddha proclaimed [these stanzas]:¹⁴

5. "Be careful not to think about the past,
and do not long for the future.

Matters of the past have already ceased,
the future has not yet come.¹⁵

As for phenomena in the present moment,
one should contemplate
with mindfulness [their] lack of stability.

The wise awaken in this way.¹⁶

If one undertakes [such] practice of noble ones,
who [would] be worried about death?

I shall disengage from [all] that [which is related to death],
[so that this] great *dukkha* and misery comes to an end.¹⁷

Practise diligently like this,
day and night without negligence!

Therefore, the stanzas on an auspicious night

¹⁴ [39] MN 133 does not explicitly refer to other monks at this point, though their presence is evident from the continuity of the discourse.

¹⁵ [40] A parallel to this stanza can also be found in the *Yogācārabhūmi*, T 1579 at T XXX 387c28; cf. also Enomoto 1989b: 35 and Wayman 1989: 209; further parallels are listed in Skilling 1997: 82.

¹⁶ [41] The second part of this stanza in MN 133 at MN III 193,15 instead reads: "immovable and unshakeable, having known it let him [continue to] cultivate [in this way]", *asaṃhīraṃ asaṃkappaṃ, taṃ vidvā-m-anubrūhaye* (S^e: *asaṃhīraṃ*, C^e and S^e: *asaṃkappaṃ*, S^e: *viddhā*).

¹⁷ [42] MN 133 at MN III 193,16 instructs that "right now diligence should be done, who knows if death will come tomorrow, there is no bargaining with Death and its great armies", *ajj' eva kiccaṃ ātappaṃ, ko jaññā maraṇaṃ suve, na hi no saṅgaraṃ tena, mahāsenena maccunā* (C^e: *kiccaṃ*, S^e: *saṅgaran*).

should regularly be taught."¹⁸

6. Having spoken like this, the Buddha got up from his seat and entered his dwelling to sit in meditation.

7. The monks thereon had the following reflection: "Venerable friends, please know that the Blessed One has given this brief instruction and, without explaining its details, has gotten up from his seat and entered his dwelling to sit in meditation, [namely]:

'Be careful not to think about the past,
and do not long for the future. [697b]

Matters of the past have already ceased,
the future has not yet come.

As for phenomena in the present moment,
one should contemplate
with mindfulness [their] lack of stability.

The wise awaken in this way.

If one undertakes [such] practice of noble ones,
who [would] be worried about death?

I shall disengage from [all] that [which is related to death],
[so that this] great *dukkha* and misery comes to an end.

Practise diligently like this,
day and night without negligence!

Therefore, the stanzas on an auspicious night
should regularly be taught."

They further had the following reflection: "Venerable friends, who would be able to explain in detail the meaning of what the Blessed One has just said in brief?" They further had the following reflection: "The venerable Mahākaccāna is always praised by the Blessed One and by his wise companions in the holy life. The

¹⁸ [43] The second part of this stanza in MN 133 at MN III 193,19 instead indicates that "to him, indeed, the night is auspicious, so the peaceful sage has explained", *taṃ ve bhaddekaratto ti, santo ācikkhate munī ti*.

venerable Mahākaccāna would be able to explain in detail the meaning of what the Blessed One has just said in brief. Venerable friends, let us together approach the venerable Mahākaccāna and request him to explain its meaning. If the venerable Mahākaccāna explains it, we shall remember it well."¹⁹ [13]

8. Thereupon the monks approached the venerable Mahākaccāna, exchanged greetings, stepped back to sit to one side, and said: "Venerable Mahākaccāna, please know that the Blessed One has given this brief instruction and, without explaining its details, has gotten up from his seat and entered his dwelling to sit in meditation, [namely]:

'Be careful not to think about the past,
and do not long for the future.
Matters of the past have already ceased,
the future has not yet come.
As for phenomena in the present moment,
one should contemplate
with mindfulness [their] lack of stability.
The wise awaken in this way.
If one undertakes [such] practice of noble ones,
who [would] be worried about death?
I shall disengage from [all] that [which is related to death],
[so that this] great *dukkha* and misery comes to an end.
Practise diligently like this,
day and night without negligence!
Therefore, the stanzas on an auspicious night
should regularly be taught.'

We had the following reflection: 'Venerable friends, who would be able to explain in detail the meaning of what the Blessed

¹⁹ [45] In MN 133 the monks do not explicitly indicate their intention to remember Mahākaccāna's explanation.

One has just said in brief?' We further had the following reflection: 'The venerable Mahākaccāna is always praised by the Blessed One and by his wise companions in the holy life. The venerable Mahākaccāna would be able to explain in detail the meaning of what the Blessed One has just said in brief.' We only wish that the venerable Mahākaccāna would give an extensive explanation, out of compassion."²⁰

9. The venerable Mahākaccāna said: [697c] "Venerable friends, let me deliver a simile. On hearing a simile the wise will understand its meaning. Venerable friends, just as if there were a man who wants to search for heartwood. In order to search for heartwood, he enters the forest, holding an axe.²¹ He sees a great tree possessed of roots, branches, joints, twigs, leaves, flowers and heartwood. That man does not take hold of the roots, branches, joints and heartwood, but only takes hold of the twigs and leaves."²²

"Venerable friends, what you said is just like that. [Although] the Blessed One is present, you leave and come to ask me about this meaning. Why? Venerable friends, please know that the Blessed One is the eye, is knowledge, is meaning, is the Dharma, is the master of the Dharma, is the general of the Dharma, he teaches the true meaning, the revelation of all meanings is because of the Blessed One."²³ Venerable friends, you should have

²⁰ [47] In MN 133 at MN III 194,29 the request by the monks does not refer to compassion.

²¹ [48] MN 133 does not mention the axe.

²² [49] MĀ 165 at T I 697c4 employs the character 觸 to describe the action of this man. The usual meaning of 觸 is "to touch", although Hirakawa 1997: 1069 indicates that the same character can also render *upahanyamāna* and *parāṃṛṣṭa*, which would better fit the present context. MN 133 at MN III 195,1 speaks of thinking that heartwood should be sought among branches and leaves.

²³ [50] MN 133 at MN III 195,5 reads: "the Blessed one knows [what is to be] known, the Blessed One sees [what is to be] seen, he has become vision, he

approached the Blessed One to ask about this meaning: 'Blessed One, how is this? What is its meaning?' As the Blessed One would have explained it, venerable friends, you could have remembered it well."

10. Then the monks said: "Yes, indeed, venerable Mahākaccāna, the Blessed One is the eye, is knowledge, is meaning, is the Dharma, is the master of the Dharma, is the general of the Dharma, he teaches the true meaning, the revelation of all meanings is because of the Blessed One. We should have approached the Blessed One to ask about this meaning: 'Blessed One, how is this? What is its meaning?' As the Blessed One would have explained it, we could have remembered it well. Yet, the venerable Mahākaccāna is always praised by the Blessed One and by his wise companions in the holy life. The venerable Mahākaccāna will be able to explain in detail the meaning of what the Blessed One has just said in brief. We only wish that the venerable Mahākaccāna would give an extensive explanation, out of compassion."²⁴

11. The venerable Mahākaccāna said to the monks: "Venerable friends, listen together to what I say. [14]

12-13.²⁵ "Venerable friends, how does a monk think about the past? Venerable friends, with the really existing eye a monk came

has become knowledge, he has become the Dharma, he has become Brahmā, he is the speaker, expounder and elucidator of meaning, the giver of the deathless, the lord of the Dharma, the Tathāgata", *bhagavā jānaṃ jānāti passam passati cakkhuhūto nāṇabhūto dhammabhūto brahmabhūto vattā pavattā at-thassa nimmetā amatassa dātā dhammassāmī tathāgato.*

²⁴ [51] Instead of appealing to his compassion, in MN 133 at MN III 195,19 the monks express their hope that giving an explanation will not inconvenience him.

²⁵ [52] In MN 133 at MN III 195,27, corresponding to §12 in Ñāṇamoli 1995/2005: 1046f, Mahākaccāna repeats the stanzas spoken by the Buddha. In MĀ 165 this repetition comes only at the end of Mahākaccāna's explanation at T I 698b8, where the same is again found in MN 133 at MN III 198,9.

to know agreeable forms,²⁶ which the mind remembers, forms that are yearned for, that are connected with desire, that the mind delights in, that [become] a basis for holding on [to forms], a basis that is from the past. His consciousness has desires and is defiled with attachment in regard to the past. Because of consciousness having desires and being defiled with attachment, he delights in those [forms]. Because of delighting in them, he [keeps on] thinking about the past.²⁷

"It is the same for the ear ... the nose ... the tongue ... the body ... With the really existing mind a monk came to know agreeable mind-objects, which the mind remembers, mind-objects that are yearned for, that are connected with desire, that the mind delights in, that [become] a basis for holding on [to mind-objects], a basis that is from the past. His consciousness has desires and is defiled with attachment in regard to the past. Because of consciousness having desires and being defiled with attachment, he delights in those [mind-objects]. Because of delighting in them, he [keeps on] thinking about the past. Venerable friends, in this way a monk [keeps on] thinking about the past.

14. "Venerable friends, how does a monk not think about the past? Venerable friends, with the really existing eye a monk came to know agreeable forms, which the mind remembers, forms that

²⁶ [53] MĀ 165 at T I 697c20: 實有眼. In relation to future and present, MĀ 165 does not qualify the sense organs as "really" existing.

²⁷ [54] MN 133 at MN III 195,32 reads: "such was my eye in the past, such were forms', [thinking like this] consciousness is bound by desire and lust. Due to consciousness being bound by desire and lust, he delights in that [past visual experience]. Delighting in that, he follows after the past", *iti me cakkhuṃ aho-si atitam addhānaṃ iti rūpā ti tattha chandarāgapaṭibaddhaṃ hoti viññāṇaṃ, chandarāgapaṭibaddhattā viññāṇassa tad abhinandati, tad abhinandanto atī-taṃ anvāgaceti* (B^e and S^c: cakkhu; B^c: chandarāgapaṭibaddhaṃ and chandarāgapaṭibaddhattā).

are yearned for, that are connected with desire, that the mind delights in, that [become] a basis for holding on [to forms], [698a] a basis that is from the past. His consciousness has no desires and [is not] defiled with attachment for the past. Because of consciousness not having desires or being defiled with attachment, he does not delight in those [forms]. Because of not delighting in them, he does not [keep on] thinking about the past.

"It is the same for the ear ... the nose ... the tongue ... the body ... With the really existing mind a monk came to know agreeable mind-objects, which the mind remembers, mind-objects that are yearned for, that are connected with desire, that the mind delights in, that [become] a basis for holding on [to mind-objects], a basis that is from the past. His consciousness has no desires and [is not] defiled with attachment for the past. Because of consciousness not having desires or being defiled with attachment, he does not delight in those [mind-objects]. Because of not delighting in them, he does not [keep on] thinking about the past. Venerable friends, in this way a monk does not think about the past.

15. "Venerable friends, how does a monk long for the future? Venerable friends, if there are eye, forms and eye-consciousness of the future, and a monk wishes to obtain what has not yet been obtained, [or] his mind longs for [more of] what has already been obtained, because of having longing in his mind he delights in those [forms]. Because of delighting in them, he longs for the future.²⁸

²⁸ [57] MN 133 at MN III 196,25 reads: "may my eye be such in the future, may forms be such', [thinking like this] the mind is inclined towards getting what has not been gotten. Because of the mind being inclined, he delights in that [future visual experience]. Delighting in that, he hopes for the future", *iti me cakkhuṃ siyā anāgataṃ addhānaṃ iti rūpā ti appaṭiladdhassa paṭilābhāya cittaṃ paṇidahati, cetaso paṇidhānapaccayā tad abhinandati, tad abhinandanto anāgataṃ paṭikaṅkhati* (B^e and S^e: *cakkhu*).

"It is the same for the ear ... the nose ... the tongue ... the body ... If there is the mind, mind-objects and mind-consciousness of the future, and he wishes to obtain what has not yet been obtained, [or] his mind longs for [more of] what has already been obtained, because of having longing in his mind he delights in those [mind-objects]. Because of delighting in them, he longs for the future. Venerable friends, in this way a monk longs for the future.

16. "Venerable friends, how does a monk not long for the future? Venerable friends, if there are eye, forms and eye-consciousness of the future, and a monk does not wish to obtain what has not yet been obtained, and his mind does not long for [more of] what has already been obtained, because of having no longing in his mind he does not delight in those [forms]. Because of not delighting in them, he does not long for the future.

"It is the same for the ear ... the nose ... the tongue ... the body ... If there is the mind, mind-objects and mind-consciousness of the future, and he does not wish to obtain what has not yet been obtained, and his mind does not long for [more of] what has already been obtained, because of having no longing in his mind he does not delight in those [mind-objects]. Because of not delighting in them, he does not long for the future. Venerable friends, in this way a monk does not long for the future.

17. "Venerable friends, how does a monk cling to phenomena in the present moment? Venerable friends, if there are eye, forms and eye-consciousness of the present, and a monk's consciousness has desires and is defiled with attachment for what is present, because consciousness has desires and is defiled with attachment, he delights in those [forms]. Because of delighting in them, he clings to phenomena in the present moment.²⁹

²⁹ [60] MN 133 at MN III 197,15 reads: "the eye and forms, friends, are both presently arisen. [If] consciousness is bound by desire and lust in regard to what is

"It is the same for the ear ... the nose ... the tongue ... the body ... If there is the mind, mind-objects and mind-consciousness of the present, and a monk's consciousness has desires and is defiled with attachment for what is present, because consciousness has desires and is defiled with attachment, he delights in those [mind-objects]. Because of delighting in them, he clings to phenomena in the present moment. Venerable friends, in this way a monk clings to phenomena in the present moment.

18. "Venerable friends, how does a monk not cling to phenomena in the present moment? Venerable friends, if there are eye, forms and eye-consciousness of the present, and a monk's consciousness has no desires and [is not] defiled with attachment for what is present, because of the consciousness not having desires or being defiled with attachment, [698b] he does not delight in those [forms]. Because of not delighting in them, he does not cling to phenomena in the present moment.

"It is the same for the ear ... the nose ... the tongue ... the body ... If there is the mind, mind-objects and mind-consciousness of the present, and a monk's consciousness has no desires and [is not] defiled with attachment for what is present, because of the consciousness not having desires or being defiled with attachment, he does not delight in those [mind-objects]. Because of not delighting in them, he does not cling to phenomena in the present moment. Venerable friends, in this way a monk does not cling to phenomena in the present moment.

presently arisen, due to consciousness being bound by desire and lust, he delights in that [present visual experience]. Delighting in that, he is overwhelmed by presently arisen phenomena", *yañ c' āvuso cakkhuṃ ye ca rūpā ubhayam etaṃ paccuppannaṃ, tasmim̐ yeva paccuppanne chandarāgappaṭibaddhaṃ hoti viññāṇaṃ, chandarāgappaṭibaddhattā viññāṇassa tad abhinandati, tad abhinandanto paccuppannesu dhammesu saṃhīrati* (B^o and S^o: *cakkhu*, B^o and C^o: *ce* instead of *yeva*, B^o: *chandarāgappaṭi*^o, S^o: *saṃhīrati*).

19. "Venerable friends, regarding this brief instruction given by the Blessed One who, without explaining its details, got up from his seat and entered his dwelling to sit in meditation, [namely]:

'Be careful not to think about the past,
and do not long for the future.
Matters of the past have already ceased,
the future has not yet come.
As for phenomena in the present moment,
one should contemplate
with mindfulness [their] lack of stability.
The wise awaken in this way.
If one undertakes [such] practice of noble ones,
who [would] be worried about death?
I shall disengage from [all] that [which is related to death],
[so that this] great *dukkha* and misery comes to an end.
Practise diligently like this,
day and night without negligence!
Therefore, the stanzas on an auspicious night
should regularly be taught.'

"This brief instruction given by the Blessed One without explaining its details, I would explain in detail in this way, employing these phrases and words. Venerable friends, you can approach the Buddha and set out [my explanation] in full [to him].³⁰ [15] As the Blessed One explains its meaning, venerable friends, you can together remember it."

20. Then, having heard the venerable Mahākaccāna's explanation, the monks remembered well [how] to recite it, got up from their seats, circumambulated the venerable Mahākaccāna three

³⁰ [64] MN 133 does not report that Mahākaccāna explicitly told the monks to repeat his explanation in front of the Buddha, though the same is implicit in his invitation at MN III 198,14 that they should ask the Buddha about the meaning of the stanza.

times, and left.³¹ Approaching the Buddha they bowed down with their heads to pay respects, stepped back to sit to one side and said: "Blessed One, the brief instruction just given by the Blessed One without drawing out the meaning in detail, after which [the Blessed One] got up from his seat and entered his dwelling to sit in meditation, the venerable Mahākaccāna has explained in detail employing these phrases and words."

21. Having heard it, the Blessed One expressed his praise: "Well done, well done. My disciple is endowed with the eye, with knowledge, with Dharma, with meaning.³² Why? [Because] in regard to this instruction given by the teacher to the disciples in short, without explaining its details, that disciple has explained it in detail employing these phrases and words. You should remember it like this, as the monk Mahākaccāna has explained it. Why?³³ With the help of this explanation you will properly contemplate its meaning like this."

The Buddha spoke like this. The monks, having listened to what the Buddha said, delighted in it and received it respectfully.

Study

Out of the variations found between the *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* counterpart, two instances deserve a closer examination. One of these two instances occurs in Mahākaccāna's explanation of the set of stanzas spoken by the Buddha in the *Madhyama-āgama* version. According to

³¹ [65] MN 133 does not record that the monks remembered Mahākaccāna's exposition well, nor does it report that they circumambulated him. Circumambulations are more frequently mentioned in the *Madhyama-āgama* than in Pāli discourses; cf. Anālayo 2011a: 21.

³² [66] The Buddha's praise of Mahākaccāna in MN 133 at MN III 199,11 highlights that he is wise and has great wisdom.

³³ [67] This question and the following sentence are not found in MN 133.

the *Madhyama-āgama* account, when describing the need to avoid attachment to past experiences, [7] Mahākaccāna qualifies the sense organs as "really" existing.³⁴ This qualification, which has no counterpart in the *Majjhima-nikāya* version, could be reflecting the school affiliation of the *Madhyama-āgama*. In fact the **Mahāvibhāṣā* uses precisely the same expression in its treatment of the Sarvāstivāda tenet that the past and the future really exist.³⁵ Thus in the present instance it seems as if a belief held by the Sarvāstivādins caused a change in the formulation of a canonical passage.

What is particularly noteworthy about the present case is that the qualification of the sense organs as "really" existing is not used in regard to present and future times. Hence, though the use of this qualification appears to express the influence of Sarvāstivāda thought, this influence seems to have been of a somewhat accidental type, since it is not applied consistently. If the application of this qualification were the outcome of conscious editing, one would expect the same qualification to have been similarly applied to sense organs in future and present times.³⁶

This is significant, since it indicates that even in the case of an apparent influence of the school affiliation on the text, such influence need not be the outcome of deliberate change. In the present

³⁴ [7] MĀ 165 at T I 697c20: 實有, while in the case of future and present experience MĀ 165 at T I 698a15+21 only employs 有, without 實.

³⁵ [8] T 1545 at T XXVII 393a24: 實有過去未來; cf. also the discussion in the *Vijñānakāya*, T 1539 at T XXVI 534c18, with a résumé in Bareaux 1955a: 137, and the survey in Cox 1995: 136–137, with further references in her notes. The Theravādin critique of this position can be found in Kv 116,27.

³⁶ [9] This treatment of just the past as really existing would not only differ from the position taken in the Sarvāstivāda school(s), but also from that taken in the Kāśyapīya tradition, which apparently affirmed a partial existence of the past (in as much as the past is still to bear fruit) and a partial existence of the future (in as much as some future events are already now determined); cf. Bareaux 1955b: 202 and the discussion in Kv 151,8.

case, it seems as if part of a Sarvāstivāda analysis of sense experience, which would have made some statement to the effect that the sense organs "really" exist, became part of the discourse during the process of transmission. Because of the accidental nature of this intrusion of exegetical material into the discourse, apparently only the treatment of the past was affected, and the exposition of present and future experiences remained in a more original form.³⁷

An example of later influence appears to also occur in the *Majjhima-nikāya* version, this being the second of the two instances mentioned above. This instance occurs in relation to the question asked by the *deva* visiting Samiddhi. According to the Pāli account, the *deva* first asks Samiddhi if he knows "the summary and the analysis" on an auspicious night. When Samiddhi admits that he does not know them, the *deva* asks if he knows the "stanzas" on an auspicious night, which Samiddhi also does not know.³⁸ The corresponding passage in the *Madhyama-āgama* version reports only a single query, which concerns the stanzas.³⁹

The presentation in the Pāli discourse is to some extent puzzling, since the "stanzas" would correspond to the "summary".

³⁷ For a study of cases where commentarial exegesis appears to have become part of a discourse at some point during transmission cf. Anālayo 2010d.

³⁸ ^[10] MN 133 at MN III 192,10: "do you remember the summary and the analysis on an auspicious night?", *dhāresi ... bhaddekarattassa uddesañ ca vibhaṅgañ cā ti?*; followed at MN III 192,16 by: "do you remember the stanzas on an auspicious night?", *dhāresi ... bhaddekarattiyo gāthā ti?*

³⁹ ^[11] MĀ 165 at T I 696c7. The same is also the case for the other Chinese translation and the Tibetan version, although these speak of the "discourse" on an auspicious night, instead of the "stanzas"; cf. T 1362 at T XXI 881c10: "have you heard the discourse on the auspicious night?", 聞善夜經不?, and D 313 *shu* 171b1: "monk, do you know the discourse on an auspicious night?", *dge slong khyod kyis mtshan mo bzang po'i mdo sde shes sam?* (found similarly in D 617 *ba* 56b2, D 974 *wam* 90a5, Q 599 *ya* 96b5 and Q 979 *shu* 171b1). I already noted this inconsistency in MN 133 in Anālayo 2005: 101.

This can be seen in the subsequent part of the *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta* where, after the Buddha has spoken the stanzas without further explaining their meaning, [8] the monks wonder who would be able to explain the meaning of this "summary".⁴⁰ This clearly identifies the stanzas as the summary. In fact, apart from the stanzas it would be difficult to find anything else that could be reckoned as a summary.

Not only the reference to a "summary", but also the mentioning of an "analysis" does not fit subsequent events too well. This comes to light in the section that describes the exchange between Samiddhi and the Buddha. After reporting what had taken place earlier, Samiddhi formulates his request for a teaching by repeating the question the *deva* had asked him, that is, by inquiring about a "summary" and its "analysis".⁴¹ Although the Buddha agrees to this, after having taught the stanzas he retires to his dwelling without delivering any analysis or explanation of the stanzas. This is rather puzzling, since once the Buddha has agreed to Samiddhi's request, one might wonder why he should suddenly change his mind and withdraw without delivering the analysis he has just indicated that he is willing to give.

In the *Madhyama-āgama* version, the *deva* and Samiddhi had only been discussing the stanzas, so that when Samiddhi comes to see the Buddha he only asks to be taught the stanzas. In view of this, in the *Madhyama-āgama* account it is quite natural for the

⁴⁰ [12] MN 133 at MN III 193,24: "Friends, the Blessed One, having given this brief summary to us ... who would explain the meaning of this brief summary given by the Blessed One?", *idaṃ kho no, āvuso, bhagavā saṃkhittena uddesaṃ uddisitvā ... ko nu kho imassa bhagavatā saṃkhittena uddesassa uddiṭṭhassa ... atthaṃ vibhajjeyyā ti?*(C^e and S^e: *saṃkhittena*)

⁴¹ [13] MN 133 at MN III 193,5: "it would be good, venerable sir, if the Blessed One were to teach me the summary and the analysis on an auspicious night", *sā-dhu me, bhante, bhagavā bhaddekaratassa uddesaṃ ca vibhaṅgaṃ ca desetū ti.*

Buddha to teach only the stanzas. Thus it seems as if the inquiry after a "summary" and an "analysis" in the *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta* does not fit its context too well, and the flow of events in the *Madhyama-āgama* version is more natural.

The same pattern recurs in the case of the *Uddesavibhaṅga-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel.⁴² In the Pāli version of this discourse, the Buddha himself announces a teaching that involves a summary and an analysis, but then withdraws to his dwelling after giving only the summary.⁴³ In the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, the Buddha does not make any such announcement, so that here his departure after teaching only a summary does not create any inconsistency.⁴⁴ Another relevant case is the *Lomasakaṅgiyabhaddekaratta-sutta*, which also reports how a *deva* asks a monk about the summary and analysis of an auspicious night, followed by asking him about the verses.⁴⁵ As here, too, the verses correspond to the summary, this double inquiry creates the same redundancy as in the *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta*. In this case, again, the *Madhyama-āgama* counterpart and another Chinese parallel only have a single inquiry.⁴⁶ On con-

⁴² The present discussion already appeared in Anālayo 2011a: 788–790.

⁴³ [15] MN 138 at MN III 223,5: "I will teach you a summary and an analysis, monks, listen and attend well, I am about to speak", *uddesavibhaṅgaṃ vo, bhikkhave, desissāmi, taṃ suṅātha sādhukaṃ manasikarotha bhāsisāmi ti*. Bodhi in Ñānamoli 1995/2005: 1349 note 1249 comments that "it is strange that the Buddha, having announced that he will teach a summary and an exposition, should recite only the summary and leave without giving the exposition".

⁴⁴ [16] In MĀ 164 at T I 694b16 the Buddha instead announces that he will give a teaching that is good in the beginning, middle and end, etc.

⁴⁵ [17] MN 134 at MN III 199,27: "do you remember the summary and the analysis on an auspicious night?", *dhāresi ... bhaddekarattassa uddesaṅ ca vibhaṅgaṅ cā ti?*, followed at MN III 200,5 by: "do you remember the verses on an auspicious night?", *dhāresi ... bhaddekarattiyo gāthā ti?*

⁴⁶ [18] Both versions inquire after the verses together with their meaning, MĀ 166

sidering these three instances, one might wonder what could have caused these recurrent references to a summary and its analysis, [9] which do not fit the remainder of these discourses.

Explicit references to a summary and an analysis occur also in the introductory section to another two discourses in this particular chapter of the *Majjhima-nikāya*.⁴⁷ Other discourses in this chapter announce a summary, which they then follow with an analysis, while still other discourses adopt the pattern of a summary and its analysis without explicit announcement.⁴⁸ Thus the basic pattern, where a "summary" statement is followed by a more detailed explanation, an "analysis", appears to be a uniting theme of this particular chapter in the *Majjhima-nikāya*, the "chapter on analysis", *Vibhaṅgavagga*.⁴⁹

This characteristic pattern would have given a strong sense of cohesion and connectedness to this group of discourses during oral transmission. In fact nine counterparts to the discourses found in the *Vibhaṅga-vagga* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* are located in the corresponding chapter on analysis in the *Madhyama-āgama*.⁵⁰

at T I 698c14: 偈及其義 and T 77 at T I 886b7: 偈及解義.

⁴⁷ [19] MN 131 at MN III 187,17 and MN 132 at MN III 190,1, where, however, the reference to a summary and an analysis does not create any redundancy or inconsistency.

⁴⁸ [20] MN 137 at MN III 216,8, MN 139 at MN III 230,20 and MN 140 at MN III 239,15 explicitly identify their introductory statement as a summary, which they then follow by a more detailed analysis. MN 135 at MN III 203,10, MN 136 at MN III 209,2 and MN 141 at MN III 248,4 proceed from a succinct statement to its analysis, without, however, announcing this explicitly.

⁴⁹ [21] The only exception to this appears to be MN 142, which does not follow this pattern. Rhys Davids 1902: 475 is of the opinion that MN 142 "seems to belong, in its subject-matter, to the Vinaya" and was "probably interpolated" in the *Majjhima-nikāya*.

⁵⁰ [22] This is the 13th chapter in the *Madhyama-āgama*, the 根本分別品, which contains the counterparts to MN 132, MN 133, MN 134, MN 135, MN 136,

This is a remarkable correspondence, as the two collections have only four chapters at all in common. Of these four chapters, two chapters have each four discourses in common and one chapter has only two discourses in common with its counterpart.⁵¹ Thus for the *Majjhima-nikāya* "chapter on analysis" and the *Madhyama-āgama* "chapter on analysis" to share nine discourses is remarkable, suggesting that the pattern where a summary is followed by an analysis did indeed form a strong bond that kept this group of discourses together in the two reciter traditions.

This suggests that the reciters would have been well aware of the pattern responsible for the formation of this chapter. Since the references to a summary and an analysis are absent from the respective *Madhyama-āgama* parallels, and in several cases do not fit their context, resulting in redundancies and inconsistencies, the most plausible explanation would be that they came to be part of the Pāli discourses during oral transmission. That is, during the oral transmission of the discourses now collected in the *Majjhima-nikāya* a remark, which originally may have been just a mnemonic aid to help the reciters be aware of the characteristic shared by this group of discourses, might have become part of the discourses themselves.

In the case of the *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta*, this reference to a summary and an analysis creates both a redundancy

MN 137, MN 138, MN 139 and MN 140, though in a different sequence.

⁵¹ [23] The 4th *Majjhima-nikāya* chapter on pairs (*Mahāyamaka-vagga*) has a counterpart in the 15th *Madhyama-āgama* chapter on pairs (雙品), which contains parallels to MN 31, MN 32, MN 39 and MN 40. The 9th *Majjhima-nikāya* chapter on kings (*Rāja-vagga*) has a counterpart in the 6th *Madhyama-āgama* chapter related to kings (王相應品), which contains parallels to MN 81 and MN 83. The 10th *Majjhima-nikāya* chapter on brahmins (*Brāhmaṇa-vagga*) has a counterpart in the 12th *Madhyama-āgama* chapter on brahmins (梵志品), which contains parallels to MN 91, MN 93, MN 96 and MN 99.

(mentioning a "summary" and again the "verses") and an inconsistency (the Buddha withdraws without teaching the analysis he had agreed to deliver). Thus the case of the *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta* could be another example of how a notion held by the reciters influenced the wording of a discourse during the course of oral transmission. [10]

The two cases discussed above – the redundant query after a summary and an exposition in the Pāli version and the qualification of past sense organs as truly existing in the Chinese version – thus seem to testify to the same phenomenon, namely to the influence exercised by views and ideas held by the reciters on the way they transmitted the discourse. In both cases, these influences result in creating inconsistencies within the discourses themselves, either by having the Buddha not give an analysis he had earlier agreed to give, or by qualifying only the sense organs of the past as truly existing, without applying the same to present and future sense organs. In both cases, if these influences had been the outcome of conscious editing, one would expect the editors to have executed their task with more care and consistency, either by avoiding having the Buddha announce an analysis he then does not give, or by applying the qualification "really" consistently. Thus both cases are probably best understood as results of a more accidental type of change, as would be only natural for material transmitted by oral means.⁵²

Besides these differences, [15] however, the central theme of the two versions of the present discourse is closely similar. This theme finds its succinct expression in the set of stanzas on how to properly spend an "auspicious night". The allusion to an auspicious

⁵² [24] Nattier 2003b: 52 explains that "to assume a 'creative individual author' as the driving force behind interpolations in Buddhist scripture is to import a model that is foreign to most of the literary processes that have shaped the production of Indian religious texts".

cious night could well be a popular phrase taken over and infused with a deeper meaning,⁵³ something the discourses often depict the Buddha as doing.⁵⁴

Though the basic idea of an auspicious night might stem from ancient Indian conceptions of particular nights that are considered spiritually auspicious, the last stanza in both versions makes it clear that the recommendations given are not meant for a single night only, as such practice should be undertaken "day and night".⁵⁵ In fact, references to a night in ancient Indian usage need not exclude the daytime, as "night" can function as an umbrella term for both day and night.⁵⁶ Thus the central message of the *Mahākaccāna-bhaddekaratta-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel would be that by letting go of past memories, by being free from yearning for the future, [16] and by dwelling without attachment in the pre-

⁵³ [68] Cf. Ñāṇamoli 1995/2005: 1343 note 1210. Ñāṇaponika 1977: 346 note 966 relates the expression *bhaddekaratta* to the brahmin custom of spending a religious observance night by fasting, staying awake and meditating.

⁵⁴ [69] Rhys Davids 1921: 132 illustrates this mode of teaching with the image of "pouring new wine into the old bottles". Hershock 2005: 4 speaks of "openly accommodating ... existing political, social and religious authorities" and then focussing "on how they might be skilfully *redirected*", expressive of a "general strategy of accepting, but then pointedly revising the meaning" of contemporary conceptions.

⁵⁵ [70] MN 133 at MN III 193,18: *ahorattaṃ* and MĀ 165 at T I 697a24: 晝夜. Ñāṇananda 1973/1984: 3 comments that "the *Bhaddekaratta-suttas* do not appear to envisage withdrawal from thoughts of the past, future and present for so little as one night. On the contrary, the verses ... say that the person ... abides ardently and unweariedly day and night, that is, surely for some consecutive time lasting longer than 'one night'".

⁵⁶ [71] According to Thanissaro 2002: 346, the reference to a night in the expression *bhaddekaratta* "should be interpreted in light of the custom – common in cultures that follow the lunar calendar – of calling a 24-hour period of day-and-night a 'night'"; cf. also Winternitz 1908: 361 note 1, who explains that Indians reckon time in "nights", instead of "days".

sent moment, any time becomes a truly "auspicious" time.

As Mahākaccāna clarifies in the two versions of the present discourse, the problem faced when trying to put this instruction into practice is that the mind may succumb to longing and desires in relation to any of the senses and in regard to any of the three time periods. In regard to the past, this may take place by reviving memories of what happened in former times. These could be beautiful things one has seen, pleasant music or words heard, fragrant odours one has smelled, delicious flavours one has tasted, delightful physical touches, or even pleasant mental experiences that took place without being directly stimulated by some sensory input. Reviving such memories one "follows after" the past.⁵⁷ Yet, what is past is gone and has ceased completely, thus spending the present moment immersed in memories of the past is to waste the potential of the here and now.⁵⁸

The same applies to any future experience, where the tendency of the untrained mind is to spend time in daydreaming and fantasizing about experiences yet to come. Underlying such daydreams is a longing for pleasant experiences by way of any of the six senses, a wish to have things the way one would like them to be. Yet, such wishful thinking is unrealistic and again simply a waste of time since it neglects taking advantage of whatever the present moment has to offer.

As any attempt at formal meditation practice will easily show, to avoid revival of past memories and fantasies about the future is

⁵⁷ [72] Regarding the instruction in MN 133 at MN III 193,11 that one "should not follow after the past", the commentary Ps V 6,16 explains that *anvāgāmeti* intends "to go after" (by way of craving and views).

⁵⁸ [73] Ñāṇananda 1973/1984: 27 clarifies, however, that "it is not so much the mere recollection of the past that is the bondage ... it is the tendency to retrace, revive, relive and relish the past that has to be eliminated", that is, the problem is not memory as such, but attachment and delight in regard to what is remembered.

not an easy task and requires sustained effort at repeatedly returning to the only moment where one can really live: the present moment. Though to remain in the present moment is already a demanding task, the *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel indicate that to spend a truly "auspicious night" requires more than that: the present moment's experience should be productive of insight. According to the Chinese version, one should contemplate the lack of stability of what takes place in the present, thereby becoming aware of the impermanent nature of all experience. The Pāli version speaks of remaining unshakeably established in contemplating arisen phenomena with insight.⁵⁹ The commentary explains that this intends contemplation of impermanence, together with the other insight contemplations that build on awareness of impermanence.⁶⁰

Thus awareness of impermanence seems to be a key aspect of the stanzas on an auspicious night, in that one who maintains clear understanding of the changing nature of phenomena will remain established in the present moment free from attachment and thereby avoid either dwelling on the past or longing for the future. [17]

The same theme recurs in other discourses related to this particular set of stanzas. In the *Majjhima-nikāya*, the *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta* is one out of four discourses that take the stanzas on an auspicious night as their common theme. The first of these discourses is the *Bhaddekaratta-sutta*,⁶¹ which follows

⁵⁹ [74] MN 133 at MN III 193,13.

⁶⁰ [75] Ps V 1,13: *aniccānupassanādīhi sattahi anupassanāhi ... vipassati*.

⁶¹ [76] MN 131 at MN III 187,13 to 189,23. This discourse appears to have no Chinese counterpart. However, Sanskrit fragment SHT III 816, Waldschmidt 1971: 32, could be a partial parallel to MN 131, as SHT III 816 V1–2 records that the Buddha was at Jeta's Grove and addressed the monks on his own when delivering the stanzas, a description that is similar to the introductory narration in MN 131 at MN III 187,13.

the stanzas with an explanation given by the Buddha. According to this explanation, delight in memories of past experiences related to the five aggregates [affected by] clinging is to dwell on the past; wishing for some particular future manifestation of the five aggregates [affected by] clinging is to yearn for the future; and mistaking any of the five aggregates [affected by] clinging as a self means that the present moment is not being properly contemplated. In the *Ānandakaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta*,⁶² Ānanda delivers precisely the same explanation on the stanzas. In the *Lomasakaṅgiyabhaddekaratta-sutta* a monk approaches the Buddha for an explanation of the stanzas,⁶³ with the Buddha in reply giving the same explanation as in the *Bhaddekaratta-sutta*. That is, the *Bhaddekaratta-sutta*, the *Ānandakaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta* and the *Lomasakaṅgiyabhaddekaratta-sutta* provide the same explanation of the stanzas on an auspicious night, based on the five aggregates [affected by] clinging.

Thus to spend a truly auspicious night could be undertaken by directing awareness to the arising and passing away of the five aggregates, [18] thereby remaining with detachment in the present moment, without dwelling on fond memories from the past or engaging in fantasies about the future.

Whereas the Buddha and Ānanda relate the stanzas on an auspicious night to the five aggregates, Mahākaccāna offers an explanation that is based on the six senses. The Buddha's endorsement of Mahākaccāna's exposition clarifies that this different presentation is but a complementary perspective on the same topic. That is, to view experience from the perspective of the five aggregates or to view it from the perspective of the six senses are

⁶² [77] MN 132 at MN III 189,25 to 191,29, which has a parallel in MĀ 167 at T I 699c27 to 700b22.

⁶³ [78] MN 134 at MN III 199,19 to 202,9, which has two parallels in MĀ 166 at T I 698c3 to 699c25 and T I 886a25 to 887a26.

complementary approaches to the development of insight. Both are analyses of subjective existence, the one focussing on the constituents of subjective personality (aggregates), while the other takes up the different facets of subjective experience (senses). In both cases, the main point remains the same, in that by leaving behind past and future, and by remaining with awareness of impermanence in the present moment, the path to liberation unfolds.

This basic requirement, aptly described in the stanzas on an auspicious night and treated from complementary perspectives by the Buddha and Mahākaccāna, finds a succinct expression in a stanza in the *Dhammapada*, a stanza that has been preserved similarly in a range of parallel versions:

"Let go of the past, let go of the future,
Let go of the present, transcending existence."⁶⁴

⁶⁴ [83] Dhṛp 348: *muñca pure muñca pacchato, majjhe muñca bhavassa pāragu*; with parallels in Gāndhārī *Dharmapada* stanza 161, Brough 2001: 144: *muju pura muju pachadu, majadu muju bhavasa parako*, Patna *Dharmapada* stanza 150, Cone 1989: 142: *muñca pure muñca pacchato, majjhe muñca bhavassa pāragū*; Uv stanza 29.57, Bernhard 1965: 391: *muñca purato muñca paścato, madhye muñca bhavasya pāragah*, with its Tibetan counterpart in stanza 29.60, Beckh 1911: 112 or Zongtse 1990: 326: "let go of past and future, let go of [what is] in between, transcend existence", *sngon bral phyi ma dang bral zhing, dbus bral srid pa'i pha rol phyin*. Chinese versions of this stanza can be found in T 210 at T IV 569b12: "avoid [what is] before and be free of [what is] behind, let go of the middle, cross over [all] that", 釋前解後, 脫中 degree 彼 (following the indication in Hirakawa 1997: 1177 that 釋 can also render *pari + √hr̥*), T 212 at T IV 752c23: "let go of [what is] before, let go of [what is] behind, let go of [what is] between, transcend existence", 捨前捨後, 捨間越有, and T 213 at T IV 794a13: "let go of [what is] before and let go of [what is] behind, let go of [what is] between, transcend existence", 捨前及捨後, 捨間越於有.

Gotamī-sutta (AN 8.51)

Introduction

The present chapter studies the account of the founding of the order of nuns. [269] Besides a Pāli discourse found among the Eights of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*,¹ a discourse in the *Madhyama-āgama* records this event, with a closely similar account preserved in an individual translation.²

In addition to these three discourse versions,³ [270] a range of

* Originally published 2011 under the title "Mahāpajāpati's Going Forth in the Madhyama-āgama" in the *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, 18: 268–317.

¹ [5] AN 8.51 at AN IV 274,1 to 279,13, a translation of which can be found in Hare 1955: 181–185. B^e and C^e give the title of the discourse as *Gotamī-sutta*, the "Discourse on Gotamī".

² [8] T 60 at T I 856a6 to 858a6, entitled 佛說瞿曇彌記果經, which I tentatively translate as "discourse spoken by the Buddha [in reply to] Gotamī's declaration regarding the fruits [of recluse-ship]". The title's indication that this is a discourse "spoken by the Buddha", 佛說, is a regular feature of titles of works in the Chinese canon, where in most cases it probably does not render an expression present in the original, but serves as a formula of authentication of the translated text. Regarding the reference in the title to 記果, "declaration of fruit", the character 記, a standard rendering of *vyākaraṇa*, does not recur in the discourse. The character 果 makes its appearance again in the context of Gotamī's reference to women's ability to attain the four "fruits" of recluse-ship, hence I assume that the title would have such fruits in mind. Hirakawa 1982: 47 note 2 refers to T 60 just as "*Gautamī-vyākaraṇa-sūtra*". The progression of the narrative in T 60 is in most aspects so similar to that of MĀ 116 that it seems safe to conclude that this version stems from a closely related line of transmission. According to a suggestion by Mizuno researched in Hung 2009, T 60 appears to be part of a group of discourses translated from the same *Madhyama-āgama*.

³ [4] A brief account of the foundation of the order of nuns, with Gotamī herself beginning the narrative, can also be found in T 156 at T III 153c7 to 154a6. A

Vinaya texts have preserved records of the way the order of nuns was held to have come into being.⁴ These are found in the *Vinaya* in Four Parts of the Dharmaguptaka tradition, preserved in Chinese translation;⁵ a *Vinayamātrka* preserved in Chinese translation, which some scholars suggest represents the Haimavata tradition, although this identification is a matter of controversy;⁶ [271]

more detailed version of the founding of the nuns' order, in this case as part of a biography of the Buddha, is provided in T 196 at T IV 158a22 to 159b17. The assumption by Laut 1991, that an account of the foundation of the order of nuns can be found in the *Maitrisimit*, an assumption followed by Pinault 1991 for a Tocharian counterpart (cf. also Schmidt 1996: 276), appears to be based on a misunderstanding; cf. Hüsken 2000: 46 note 9 and Anālayo 2008a: 106–108.

⁴ ^[9] In addition to the *Vinaya* versions listed below, a listing of the eight special rules is also provided in the *Sammitīya Vinaya* preserved in Chinese translation, T 1461 at T XXIV 670c5 to c16. Moreover, a full version of the foundation account can be found in T 1478 at T XXIV 945b25 to 947a8. Heirman 2001: 284 note 48 quotes Hirakawa to the effect that T 1478 might be a Chinese compilation, and notes that T 1478 shows the influence of Mahāyāna thought. A survey of the main narrative elements in T 1478, covering also relevant sections that come after the account proper, can be found in Heirman 2001: 284–288.

⁵ ^[10] The relevant section is found in T 1428 at T XXII 922c7 to 923c12.

⁶ ^[11] The relevant section is found in T 1463 at T XXIV 803a22 to 803b24. A Haimavata affiliation has been proposed for T 1463 by Hofinger 1946: 13, Bareau 1955b: 112 and Lamotte 1958: 148, being preceded in this respect by Przyluski 1926: 316, who pointed out that T 1463 at T XXIV 819a29 gives the "snowy mountain", 雪山, as the location for the compilation of the canon of the teachings by the five hundred monks (at the so-called first council), 此是雪山中五百比丘所集法藏, a passage translated by de Jong 1962/1979: 289 note 6 as: "c'est ainsi que, dans les montagnes neigeuses, les Corbeilles de la Loi ont été rassemblées par le cinq cents moines". As noted by Bareau 1955b: 112 note 1, "cette phrase ... passe pour attester l'origine haimavata de l'ouvrage". The character pair 雪山 can render *haimavata*; cf. Hirakawa 1997: 1241. Heirman 2001: 277 note 13 points out a reference to a "ten recitation

the *Vinaya* of the Mahāsāṃghika tradition, preserved in Sanskrit;⁷ the *Vinaya* in Five Parts of the Mahīśāsaka tradition, preserved in Chinese translation;⁸ the *Vinaya* of the Mūlasarvāstivāda tradition, where the episode is extant in Chinese and Tibetan translation, with considerable parts also preserved in Sanskrit fragments;⁹ [272] and the *Vinaya* of the Theravāda tradition, whose

sections *Vinayamāṭṛka*" in T 2063 at T L 947b29: 十誦毘尼每經 (with a variant reading 母 instead of 每). The character pair 十誦 in this context would be indicating that this *Vinayamāṭṛka* belongs to the Sarvāstivāda tradition; cf. Tsai 1994: 103, the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya* being the 十誦律. It remains unclear, however, if the present reference intends the same text as the 毘尼母經 found at T 1463; on whose title cf. also Clarke 2004: 87. Schmithausen 1991: 38 note 218 quotes Hirakawa to the effect that the affiliation of T 1463 to the Haimavata or to the Dharmaguptaka tradition, proposed by some scholars, is not sufficiently established (my ignorance of Japanese prevents me from consulting Hirakawa's presentation myself).

⁷ [12] The relevant section can be found in Roth 1970: 4–21, with a French translation provided in Nolot 1991: 2–12 and a free English rendering in Strong 1995: 52–56. The Chinese translation of this *Vinaya* abbreviates, T 1425 at T XXII 471a25, indicating that in this tradition a discourse version of this event was in existence. T 1425 at T XXII 514b4 then gives the title of this discourse as 大愛道出家線經, reconstructed by Brough 1973: 675 as "*Mahāprajāpatī-pravrajyā-sūtra* (?)".

⁸ [13] The relevant section is found in T 1421 at T XXII 185b19 to 186a28; translated in Sujāto 2011: 17–21.

⁹ [14] The Chinese version is T 1451 at T XXIV 350b10 to 351c2, with its Tibetan counterpart in D 6 *da* 100a4 to 104b5 or Q 1035 *ne* 97a7 to 101b8. The Sanskrit fragments have been edited by Ridding 1919 and again by Schmidt 1993, with a translation by Wilson found in Paul 1979/1985: 83–87; cf. also Krey 2010b: 60–63. On the school affiliation of these fragments cf. Roth 1970: 5 note 3b, Yuyama 1979: 6, Schmidt 1994, Chung 1998: 420, Oberlies 2003: 62 and Finnegan 2009: 310 note 591. An extract on the eight weighty principles from a discourse version of the present episode, transmitted within the Mūlasarvāstivāda tradition, can also be found in Śamathadeva's compendium of discourse quotations in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, D 4094 *ju* 212b6 to

account corresponds closely to the discourse version found in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*.¹⁰

Translation

Discourse on Gotamī¹¹

Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was dwelling among the Sakyans, staying at Kapilavatthu in the Nigrodha Park, observing the rainy season retreat together with a great company of monks.¹² [273]

At that time Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī approached the Buddha, paid homage with her head at the Buddha's feet, stepped back to stand to one side and said: "Blessed One, can women attain the fourth fruit of recluse-ship?"¹³ For that reason, [can] women in this right teaching and discipline leave the household out of faith, becoming homeless to train in the path?"

The Blessed One replied: "Wait, wait, Gotamī, do not have this thought, that in this right teaching and discipline women leave the household out of faith, becoming homeless to train in the path. Gotamī, you shave off your hair like this, put on monastic robes and for your whole life practice the pure holy life."¹⁴ Then, being restrained by the Buddha, Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī

214a3 or Q 5595 *tu* 242b6 to 244a4.

¹⁰ [15] Vin II 253,1 to 256,32, a translation of which can be found in Horner 1940/1982: 352–356. A survey of the main narrative pieces in the different versions listed above can be found in Heirman 2001: 278–284.

¹¹ [17] The translated text is MĀ 116 at T I 605a8 to 607b16. The Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1435 at T XXIII 291a1, abbreviates and does not give a full account.

¹² [18] AN 8.51 does not mention that the Buddha was observing the rains retreat.

¹³ [19] In AN 8.51 Gotamī does not bring up the topic of women's ability to attain the four levels of awakening.

¹⁴ [20] No suggestion of this kind is found in AN 8.51.

paid homage with her head at the Buddha's feet, circumambulated him thrice and left.¹⁵

At that time, the monks were mending the Buddha's robes, [thinking]: 'Soon the Blessed One, having completed the rainy season retreat among the Sakyans, the three months being over, his robes mended and complete, taking his robes and bowl will journey among the people.'

Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī heard that the monks were mending the Buddha's robes, [thinking]: 'Soon the Blessed One, having completed the rainy season retreat among the Sakyans, the three months being over, his robes mended and complete, taking his robes and bowl, will journey among the people.' [274] Having heard it, Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī approached the Buddha, paid homage with her head at the Buddha's feet, stepped back to stand to one side and said: "Blessed One, can women attain the fourth fruit of recluse-ship? For that reason, [can] women in this right teaching and discipline leave the household out of faith, becoming homeless to train in the path?"

The Blessed One again replied: "Wait, wait, Gotamī, do not have this thought, that in this right teaching and discipline women leave the household out of faith, becoming homeless to train in the path [605b]. Gotamī, you shave off your hair like this, put on monastic robes and for your whole life practice the pure holy life." Then, having been restrained again by the Buddha, Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī paid homage with her head at the Buddha's feet, circumambulated him thrice and left.

At that time the Blessed One, having completed the rainy

¹⁵ [21] In AN 8.51 at AN IV 274,10 Gotamī immediately repeats her request twice, then realizes that the Buddha will not permit it and leaves sorrowful and in tears (without any reference to circumambulations, a recurrent difference between Pāli discourses and their Chinese *Āgama* parallels; cf. also Anālayo 2011a: 21).

season retreat among the Sakyans, the three months being over, his robes mended and complete, taking robes and bowl, went journeying among the people. Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī heard that the Blessed One, having completed the rainy season retreat among the Sakyans, the three months being over, his robes mended and complete, taking robes and bowl, had gone journeying among the people.¹⁶ Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī, together with some elderly Sakyan women, followed behind the Buddha, who in stages approached [the village of] Nādika, where he stayed at the Brick Hall in Nādika.¹⁷ [275]

Then Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī approached the Buddha again, paid homage with her head at the Buddha's feet, stepped back to stand to one side and said: "Blessed One, can women attain the fourth fruit of recluse-ship? For that reason, [can] women in this right teaching and discipline leave the household out of faith, becoming homeless to train in the path?"

A third time the Blessed One replied: "Wait, wait, Gotamī, do not have this thought, that in this right teaching and discipline women leave the household out of faith, becoming homeless to train in the path. Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī, you shave off your hair like this, put on monastic robes and for your whole life practice the pure holy life." Then, having been restrained a third time by the Blessed One, Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī paid homage with her head at the Buddha's feet, circumambulated him thrice and left. Then Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī stood outside the entrance, her bare feet soiled and her body covered with

¹⁶ [22] AN 8.51 does not refer to mending the robes or to taking them along.

¹⁷ [23] AN 8.51 at AN IV 274,29 instead gives as the location the Gabled Hall in the Great Wood at Vesālī. Malalasekera 1937/1995: 976 explains that Nādika (alternatively spelled Nātika or Nātika) was "a locality in the Vajji country on the highway between Koṭṭigāma and Vesālī". AN 8.51 also indicates that on this occasion Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī had shaved off her hair and put on robes.

dust, tired and weeping with grief.¹⁸

The venerable Ānanda saw Mahāpajāpati Gotamī standing outside the entrance, her bare feet soiled and her body covered with dust, tired and weeping with grief. Having seen her, he asked: "Gotamī, for what reason are you standing outside the entrance, your bare feet soiled and your body covered with dust, tired and weeping with grief?"

Mahāpajāpati Gotamī replied: "Venerable Ānanda, in this right teaching and discipline women do not obtain the leaving of the household out of faith, becoming homeless to train in the path." The venerable Ānanda said: "Gotamī, you just wait here, I will approach the Buddha and speak to him about this matter." [276] Mahāpajāpati Gotamī said: "So be it, venerable Ānanda."

Then the venerable Ānanda approached the Buddha, paid homage with his head at the Buddha's feet and, holding his hands together [in homage] toward the Buddha, said: "Blessed One, can women attain the fourth fruit of recluse-ship? For that reason, [can] women in this right teaching and discipline leave the household out of faith, becoming homeless to train in the path?"¹⁹ [605c]

¹⁸ [24] Gotamī's standing outside weeping is in AN 8.51 at AN IV 275,2 not preceded by another request for women to go forth. In fact, in this version she has already made three requests during her (single) meeting with the Buddha at Kapilavatthu.

¹⁹ [25] In AN 8.51 at AN IV 275,19 Ānanda describes Gotamī's standing at the entrance and then requests permission for women to go forth, without at this point bringing up any other argument in support of this request. He repeats his request twice, and on being rebuffed each time by the Buddha, at AN IV 276,3 reflects: "suppose I were to request the Blessed One's [permission] for women to go forth from home to homelessness in the teaching and discipline made known by the Tathāgata in another way", *yaṃ nūnāhaṃ aññena pi pariyyeyena bhagavantam yāceyyam mātuḡāmassa tathāgatappavedite dhammavinaye*

The Blessed One replied: "Wait, wait, Ānanda, do not have this thought, that in this right teaching and discipline women leave the household out of faith, becoming homeless to train in the path.

"Ānanda, if in this right teaching and discipline women obtain the leaving of the household out of faith, becoming homeless to train in the path, then this holy life will consequently not last long. Ānanda, just like a household with many women and few men, will this household develop and flourish?" The venerable Ānanda replied: "No, Blessed One."

[The Buddha said]: "In the same way, Ānanda, if in this right teaching and discipline women obtain the leaving of the household out of faith, becoming homeless to train in the path, then this holy life will not last long."²⁰ [277]

"Ānanda, just as a field of rice or a field of wheat in which weeds grow, that field will certainly come to ruin."²¹ In the same

agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajjan ti (B^c: *yaṃ*). After this reflection, Ānanda inquires if women who go forth in the Buddha's dispensation can attain the four levels of awakening.

²⁰ [26] The simile of the household with many women and a reference to the holy life not lasting long occurs in AN 8.51 at AN IV 278,23 only at a later point, after Gotamī has accepted the eight special rules and Ānanda has conveyed this to the Buddha. In AN 8.51 at AN IV 278,21 the Buddha not only indicates that the holy life will not last long, but also proclaims that the right Dharma will remain for only five hundred years, instead of one thousand. A similar proclamation occurs at a later juncture in MĀ 116.

²¹ [27] AN 8.51 at AN IV 279,1 speaks of mildew affecting a field of ripe rice, followed by also bringing up the example of a disease known as 'red rust' affecting a field of ripe sugarcane. Both similes come in AN 8.51 at the end of the discourse, after the Buddha has agreed to permit women to go forth. T 60 at T I 856c4, which up to this point agrees closely with MĀ 116, differs in that in its version of the present simile the problem is not caused by weeds, but by hail.

way, Ānanda, if in this right teaching and discipline women obtain the leaving of the household out of faith, becoming homeless to train in the path, then this holy life will not last long."

The venerable Ānanda said again: "Blessed One, Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī has been of much benefit for the Blessed One. Why? After the Blessed One's mother passed away, Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī raised the Blessed One."²²

The Blessed One replied: "Indeed, Ānanda, indeed, Ānanda, Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī has been of much benefit for me, namely in raising me after my mother passed away. Ānanda, I have also been of much benefit for Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī. Why?

"Ānanda, because of me, Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī has taken refuge in the Buddha, taken refuge in the Dharma and taken refuge in the community of monks;²³ she is free from doubt in regard to the three jewels and in regard to *dukkha*, [278] its arising, its cessation and the path [to its cessation]; she is accomplished in faith, maintains the moral precepts, broadly develops her learning, is accomplished in generosity and has attained wisdom; she abstains from killing, abandoning killing, abstains from taking what is not given, abandoning taking what is not given, abstains from sexual misconduct, abandoning sex-

²² [28] The argument of the Buddha's indebtedness to Gotamī occurs earlier in AN 8.51 at AN IV 276,16, after Ānanda gets the Buddha to admit that women can attain the four levels of awakening. The Buddha responds to this argument by right away stipulating the eight special rules, without pointing out in what way he had benefitted Gotamī.

²³ [29] In early Buddhist texts a reference to the community of monks is the standard phrasing for the taking of refuge. Recollection of the Saṅgha, however, rather takes the four types of noble disciples as its object, who could be monastic or lay, male or female.

ual misconduct, abstains from false speech, abandoning false speech, and abstains from alcoholic beverages, abandoning alcoholic beverages.

"Ānanda, if because of a person one takes refuge in the Buddha, takes refuge in the Dharma and takes refuge in the community of monks, becoming free from doubt in regard to the three jewels and in regard to *dukkha*, its arising, its cessation and the path [to its cessation]; one becomes accomplished in faith, maintaining the moral precepts, broadly developing learning, being accomplished in generosity and attaining wisdom; one abstains from killing, abandoning killing, abstains from taking what is not given, abandoning taking what is not given, abstains from sexual misconduct, abandoning sexual misconduct, abstains from false speech, abandoning false speech, and abstains from alcoholic beverages, abandoning alcoholic beverages; then, Ānanda, it is impossible to repay the kindness of such a person even if for the whole life one were in turn to support him with robes and blankets, beverages and food, beds, medicines and all [other] requisites.

"Ānanda, I shall now set forth for women eight weighty principles to be honoured, which women should not transgress, which women are to uphold for their whole life [606a]. Ānanda, just as a fisherman or his apprentice makes a dike in deep water to conserve the water so that it does not flow out,²⁴ Ānanda, in the same way I shall now declare for women eight weighty principles to be honoured, [279] which women should not transgress, which women are to uphold for their whole life. What are the eight?²⁵

²⁴ [30] The simile of the dike has a counterpart at the end of AN 8.51 at AN IV 279,9.

²⁵ [31] The eight special rules for the nuns appear in AN 8.51 at AN IV 276,21 in the following sequence: 1) even if ordained for hundred years a nun still has to

"Ānanda, a nun should seek higher ordination from the monks.²⁶ Ānanda, I set forth for women this first weighty principle to be honoured, which women should not transgress, which women are to uphold for their whole life.

"Ānanda, a nun should every half-month approach the monks to receive instruction.²⁷ Ānanda, I set forth for women this second weighty principle to be honoured, which women should not transgress, which women are to uphold for their whole life.

"Ānanda, in a dwelling-place where no monks are staying, a nun cannot spend the rainy season retreat. Ānanda, I set forth for women this third weighty principle to be honoured, which women should not transgress, which women are to uphold for their whole life.

"Ānanda, a nun who has completed the rainy season retreat should ask in both assemblies regarding three matters: seeking [invitation (*pavāraṇā*)] in regard to what has been seen, heard or suspected. Ānanda, I set forth for women this fourth weighty principle to be honoured, which women should not transgress, [280] which women are to uphold for their whole life.

"Ānanda, if a monk does not permit questions by a nun, the nun cannot ask the monk about the discourses, the *Vinaya* or

pay respects to a recently ordained monk; 2) a nun should not spend the rains retreat where there are no monks; 3) every fortnight a nun should come for exhortation; 4) a nun should observe *pavāraṇā* in both communities; 5) for a serious offence a nun should observe *mānatta* in both communities; 6) the higher ordination of a nun requires both communities; 7) a nun should not revile a monk; 8) a nun is not allowed to criticize a monk.

²⁶ [32] AN 8.51 at AN IV 277,9 adds that a candidate for higher ordination needs to have trained as a probationer (*sikkhamānā*) for two years in six principles.

²⁷ [33] AN 8.51 at AN IV 276,30 adds that the nuns should also inquire about the date of the observance day (*uposatha*).

the Abhidharma. If he permits questions, the nun can ask about the discourses, the *Vinaya* or the Abhidharma.²⁸ Ānanda, I set forth for women this fifth weighty principle to be honoured, which women should not transgress, which women are to uphold for their whole life.

"Ānanda, a nun cannot expose a monk's offence; a monk can expose a nun's offence.²⁹ Ānanda, I set forth for women this sixth weighty principle to be honoured, which women should not transgress, which women are to uphold for their whole life.

"Ānanda, a nun who has committed an offence requiring suspension (*saṅghādisesa*) has to undergo penance (*mānatta*) in both assemblies for fifteen days. Ānanda, I set forth for women this seventh weighty principle to be honoured, which women should not transgress, which women are to uphold for their whole life.

"Ānanda, although a nun has been fully ordained for up to a hundred years, she should still show utmost humility toward a newly ordained monk by paying homage with her head [at his feet], being respectful and reverential, speaking to him with hands held together [in homage]. Ānanda, I set forth for women this eighth weighty principle to be honoured [606b], which women should not transgress, which women are to uphold for their whole life. [281]

"Ānanda, I set forth for women these eight weighty principles to be honoured, which women should not transgress, which women are to uphold for their whole life. Ānanda, if Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī upholds these eight weighty principles

²⁸ [34] AN 8.51 at AN IV 277,12 instead indicates that nuns should not revile or abuse monks.

²⁹ [35] AN 8.51 at AN IV 277,15 does not specify that the point at issue is an offence. T 60 at T I 857a11 speaks of "what has been seen, heard or known".

to be honoured, this is her going forth in this right teaching and discipline to train in the path, her receiving of the higher ordination and becoming a nun."

Then, having heard what the Buddha said, having received it well and remembered it well, the venerable Ānanda paid homage with his head at the Buddha's feet, circumambulated him thrice and left. He approached Mahāpajāpati Gotamī and said to her: "Gotamī, women do obtain the leaving of the household out of faith in this right teaching and discipline, becoming homeless to train in the path. Mahāpajāpati Gotamī, the Blessed One has set forth for women eight weighty principles to be honoured, which women should not transgress, which women are to uphold for their whole life. What are the eight?"

"Gotamī, a nun should seek higher ordination from the monks. Gotamī, this is the first weighty principle to be honoured which the Blessed One has set forth for women, which women should not transgress, which women are to uphold for their whole life.

"Gotamī, a nun should every half-month approach the monks to receive instruction. Gotamī, this is the second weighty principle to be honoured which the Blessed One has set forth for women, which women should not transgress, which women are to uphold for their whole life.

"Gotamī, in a dwelling-place where no monks are present, a nun cannot spend the rainy season retreat. Gotamī, this is the third weighty principle to be honoured which the Blessed One has set forth for women, which women should not transgress, which women are to uphold for their whole life. [282]

"Gotamī, a nun who has completed the rainy season retreat should ask in both assemblies regarding three matters: seeking [invitation] in regard to what has been seen, heard or suspected.

Gotamī, this is the fourth weighty principle to be honoured which the Blessed One has set forth for women, which women should not transgress, which women are to uphold for their whole life.

"Gotamī, if a monk does not permit questions by a nun, the nun cannot ask the monk about the discourses, the *Vinaya* or the Abhidharma. If he permits questions, the nun can ask about the discourses, the *Vinaya* or the Abhidharma. Gotamī, this is the fifth weighty principle to be honoured which the Blessed One has set forth for women, which women should not transgress, which women are to uphold for their whole life.

"Gotamī, a nun cannot expose a monk's offence; a monk can expose a nun's offence. Gotamī, this is the sixth weighty principle to be honoured which the Blessed One has set forth for women, which women should not transgress [606c], which women are to uphold for their whole life.

"Gotamī, a nun who has committed an offence requiring suspension has to undergo penance in both assemblies for fifteen days. Gotamī, this is the seventh weighty principle to be honoured which the Blessed One has set forth for women, which women should not transgress, which women are to uphold for their whole life.

"Gotamī, although a nun has been fully ordained for up to a hundred years, she should still show utmost humility toward a newly ordained monk by paying homage with her head [at his feet], being respectful and reverential, and speaking to him with hands held together [in homage]. Gotamī, this is the eighth weighty principle to be honoured which the Blessed One has set forth for women, which women should not transgress, which women are to uphold for their whole life. [283]

"Gotamī, the Blessed One has set forth these eight weighty principles to be honoured, which women should not trans-

gress, which women are to uphold for their whole life. Gotamī, the Blessed One has said this: 'If Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī upholds these eight weighty principles to be honoured, this is her going forth in this right teaching and discipline to train in the path, her receiving of the higher ordination and becoming a nun.'

Then Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī said: "Venerable Ānanda, let me deliver a simile. On hearing a simile the wise will understand its meaning. Venerable Ānanda, just as if a warrior girl, or a brahmin [girl], or a householder [girl], or a worker [class] girl,³⁰ handsome and beautiful, bathes so as to be totally clean, applies perfume to her body, puts on bright clean clothes and adorns herself with various ornaments.

"Suppose there is, furthermore, someone who thinks of that girl, who seeks her benefit and well-being, who seeks her happiness and ease.³¹ He takes a head-wreath made of lotuses,³² or a head-wreath of champak flowers, or a head-wreath of great-flowered jasmine (*sumanā*), or a head-wreath of Arabian jasmine (*vassikā*) or a head-wreath of roses, and gives it to that girl.³³ That girl will with great joy accept it with both hands and place it on her head.

"In the same way, venerable Ānanda, these eight weighty principles to be honoured, which the Blessed One has set forth for women, I receive on my head and uphold for my whole life." [284] At that time Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī went forth in this right teaching and discipline to train in the path, she re-

³⁰ [36] AN 8.51 at AN IV 278,5 mentions a young man or woman and does not refer to the possibility that they could be from any of the four classes.

³¹ [37] AN 8.51 gives no information about the giver of the garland.

³² [38] Adopting the variant 鬘 instead of 鬘.

³³ [39] T 60 at T I 857b14 only mentions four types of head-wreaths; AN 8.51 at AN IV 278,6 has just three types.

ceived the higher ordination and became a nun.³⁴

Then, at a [later] time, Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī was followed and surrounded by a great company of accomplished nuns, who were all elder and senior nuns, who were known to the king and who had been living the holy life for a long time.³⁵ Together with them she approached the venerable Ānanda, paid homage with her head at his feet, stepped back to stand to one side and said:

"Venerable Ānanda, may you know that these are all elder and senior nuns who are known to the king and have been living the holy life for a long time. [In regard to] those young monks who have just started to train, who have recently gone forth and not long come to this right teaching and discipline, [607a] let these monks pay homage with their heads at the feet of those nuns in accordance with seniority, being respectful and reverential, greeting them with hands held together [in homage]."

Then, the venerable Ānanda said: "Gotamī, you just wait here, I will approach the Buddha and speak to him about this matter." Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī said: "So be it, venerable Ānanda." Then the venerable Ānanda approached the Buddha, paid homage with his head at the Buddha's feet, stepped back to stand to one side and holding his hands together [in homage] toward the Buddha, he said: [285]

"Blessed One, today Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī, together with a company of accomplished nuns, all elder and senior nuns who are known to the king and who have been living the holy life for a long time, approached me, paid homage with her head at

³⁴ [40] A similar remark is in T 60 at T I 857b17 spoken by Ānanda, instead of being an indication made by the narrators of the discourse.

³⁵ [41] This episode is not recorded in AN 8.51, although a comparable account can be found in Vin II 257,26.

my feet, stepped back to stand to one side and holding her hands together [in homage], said to me: 'Venerable Ānanda, these are all elder and senior nuns who are known to the king and have been living the holy life for a long time. [In regard to] those young monks who have just started to train, who have recently gone forth and not long come to this right teaching and discipline, let these monks pay homage with their heads at the feet of those nuns in accordance with seniority, being respectful and reverential, greeting them with hands held together [in homage]."

The Blessed One replied: "Wait, wait, Ānanda, guard your words, be careful and do not speak like this. Ānanda, if you knew what I know, [you would realize that] it is not proper to say a single word, let alone speaking like this.

"Ānanda, if in this right teaching and discipline women had not obtained the leaving of the household out of faith, becoming homeless to train in the path, brahmins and householders would have spread their clothes on the ground and said: 'Diligent recluses, please walk on this! Diligent recluses, practice what is difficult to practice, so that we may for a long time get benefit and welfare, peace and happiness.'³⁶

"Ānanda, if in this right teaching and discipline women had not obtained the leaving of the household out of faith, becoming homeless to train in the path, brahmins and householders would have spread their hair on the ground and said:³⁷ [286]

³⁶ [42] These and the following descriptions, as well as the reference to the five inabilities of women, are not found in AN 8.51 (or in the *Vinaya* version). Stepping on an article spread on the ground for good luck appears to have been a custom in ancient India, as Vin II 129,15 records an allowance for monks to step on cloth when asked to do so by laity for the sake of good fortune.

³⁷ [43] Adopting the variant 地 instead of 旃.

'Diligent recluses, please walk on this! Diligent recluses, practice what is difficult to practice, so that we may for a long time get benefit and welfare, peace and happiness.'

"Ānanda, if in this right teaching and discipline women had not obtained the leaving of the household out of faith, becoming homeless to train in the path, then brahmins and householders, on seeing recluses, would have respectfully taken various types of beverages and food in their hands, stood at the roadside waiting and said: 'Venerable sirs, accept this, eat this, you may take it and go, to use as you wish, so that we may for a long time get benefit and welfare, peace and happiness.'

"Ānanda, if in this right teaching and discipline women had not obtained the leaving of the household out of faith, becoming homeless to train in the path, [607b] then faithful brahmins [and householders], on seeing diligent recluses, would respectfully have taken them by the arm to lead them inside [their houses], holding various types of valuable offerings and saying to those diligent recluses: 'Venerable sirs, accept this, you may take it and go, to use as you wish, so that we may for a long time get benefit and welfare, peace and happiness.'

"Ānanda, if in this right teaching and discipline women had not obtained the leaving of the household out of faith, becoming homeless to train in the path, then even this sun and moon, who are of such great power, of such great might, of such great fortune, of such great majesty, would not have matched the majesty and virtue of diligent recluses, what to say of those lifeless and skinny heterodox practitioners?

"Ānanda, if in this right teaching and discipline women had not obtained the leaving of the household out of faith, becoming homeless to train in the path, [287] then this right teaching would have remained for a thousand years. Now it has been decreased by five hundred years and will remain for [only]

five hundred years.

"Ānanda, you should know that a woman cannot assume five roles. It is impossible that a woman could be a Tathāgata, free from attachment, rightly awakened; or a wheel-turning king; or the heavenly ruler Sakka; or King Māra; or the great god Brahmā. You should know that a male can assume these five roles. It is certainly possible that a male could be a Tathāgata, free from attachment, rightly awakened; or a wheel-turning king; or the heavenly ruler Sakka; or King Māra; or the great god Brahmā."

The Buddha spoke like this. The venerable Ānanda and the monks, having listened to what the Buddha said, delighted in it and received it respectfully.

Study

The above translated *Madhyama-āgama* discourse offers several significant clues that help in reassessing the way the foundation of the Buddhist order of nuns has been recorded in early Buddhist canonical texts.

One of these indications is that the Buddha's refusal of Mahāpajāpati Gotamī's request is accompanied by an alternative suggestion: "Gotamī, you shave off your hair like this, put on monastic robes and for your whole life practice the pure holy life."³⁸ [288]

Similar suggestions made by the Buddha are recorded in the discourse version individually translated into Chinese, in the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya* and in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*.³⁹ The version of this statement in the individual translation is closely simi-

³⁸ [44] MĀ 116 at T I 605a17: 瞿曇彌，如是汝剃除頭髮，著袈裟衣，盡其形壽淨修梵行。I already drew attention to this feature in Anālayo 2010f: 94–96.

³⁹ [45] For comparable passages cf. T 196 at T IV 158a27 and T 1478 at T XXIV 945c1.

lar to the *Madhyama-āgama* version, reading: "Gotamī, you can always shave your hair, put on monastic robes and until the end [of your life] practice the pure holy life."⁴⁰

According to the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, the Buddha explained that such a form of practice had already been undertaken under former Buddhas, when "women who had taken refuge in a Buddha, staying at home they shaved their heads, wore monastic robes and energetically practicing with effort they obtained the fruits of the path. With future Buddhas it will also be like this. I now permit you to undertake this practice."⁴¹

The relevant Sanskrit fragment of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* reads: "in this way, Gautamī, with head shaven and putting on a monastic robe (*saṃghāṭī*), for your whole life practice the holy life that is totally complete, pure and perfect, which will for a long time be for your welfare, benefit and happiness."⁴² [289]

⁴⁰ [46] T 60 at T I 856a14: 汝瞿曇彌, 常可剃頭, 被袈裟, 至竟行清淨梵行.

⁴¹ [47] T 1421 at T XXII 185b27: 諸女人輩自依於佛, 在家剃頭, 著袈裟衣, 勤行精進, 得獲道果, 未來諸佛亦復如是, 我今聽汝以此為法.

⁴² [48] Schmidt 1993: 242,5: *evam eva tvam gautami muṅḍā saṃghāṭīprāvṛtā yāvajjīvaṃ kevalaṃ paripūrṇaṃ paṇḍitaṃ paryavadātaṃ bra[h](maca)ryaṇ cara, tat tava bhaviṣyati dīrgharātram arthāya hitāya s[u]khāye ti*. The translation by Wilson in Paul 1979/1985: 83 reads: "just you alone, O Gotamī, with shaven head, with robes of a nun, for as long as you may live, will be fulfilled, purified and cleansed. This chaste and holy life will be for your benefaction and welfare over a long period". This seems not to do full justice to the original, which does not appear to intend restricting this injunction to her "alone"; cf. also Krey 2010b: 61 note 73. In the present context, *kevalaṃ* is not an adverb, but an adjective in the accusative that introduces the qualifications of the *brahmacarya* as *paripūrṇa*, *paṇḍita* and *paryavadāta*, the whole set being a standard phrase found recurrently in early Buddhist texts; cf., e.g., von Simson 1965: 54,18 and Bechert 2003: 123. The same sense would apply to the counterpart passage in the Chinese version, T 1451 at T XXIV 350b16, which instructs that she should "cultivate in this holy life single and complete purity, without blemish", 修諸梵行純一圓滿清淨無染,

Since Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī had asked for permission to become a homeless one, it seems that according to these versions what the Buddha does not permit is her becoming a homeless wanderer. Instead he suggests that, having shaved her hair and put on robes, she can live a celibate spiritual life in the more protected environment at home.

The versions that do not record the above suggestion nevertheless report that Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī and a group of like-minded women shaved their heads and put on robes.⁴³ This would be quite a natural action to take if the Buddha had given them permission to do so.

Having shaved off their hair and wearing robes they then follow the Buddha, presumably motivated by the wish to benefit from his presence and to show that they were willing to brave the living conditions of wandering around in ancient India. [290] Apparently laity would at times follow the Buddha for quite some distance on his journeys,⁴⁴ so that for Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī and her group to trail the Buddha would not have been unusual and would have fallen short of leaving the household life behind for good. Such an action would not have been something the Buddha had explicitly forbidden.

and to the Tibetan version, which enjoins: "cultivate the holy life with single and complete perfection, complete immaculacy and complete purity", D 6 da 100b2 or Q 1035 ne 97b4: 'ba' zhig pa la yongs su rdzogs pa yongs su dag pa yongs su byang bar tshangs par spyad pa spyod cig.

⁴³ [49] This is the case for the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 922c18, the 'Haimavata' (?) *Vinayamātrka*, T 1463 at T XXIV 803a29, the Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya*, Roth 1970: 6,14, and the Theravāda version, AN 8.51 at AN IV 274,30 or Vin II 253,22.

⁴⁴ [50] Vin I 220,21 depicts the Buddha being followed by a whole group of lay people wishing to make offerings in turn, a group apparently so large that it took a long time before each could get its turn; another such reference can be found in Vin I 238,33.

However, for them to shave their heads and wear robes on their own initiative, without having received some sort of suggestion in this respect by the Buddha, would be an improbable course of action to take. Had the Buddha flatly refused Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī's request without suggesting any alternative, as he does in some versions, her decision to shave off the hair and don robes on her own account would become an act of open defiance.⁴⁵ This seems unlikely in view of the authority the Buddha was invested with according to early Buddhist texts and in view of the fact that these women must have considered themselves his disciples.

In fact, most versions give quite explicit indications that Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī should be reckoned a stream-enterer at the present juncture of events.⁴⁶ In the standard descriptions in the early discourses, [291] a stream-enterer is qualified as one who has unshakeable faith in the Buddha and maintains firm moral conduct, with some passages indicating that even in case of committing very minor breaches of conduct a stream-enterer will immediately

⁴⁵ [51] Blackstone 1999: 302, based on studying only the Theravāda version, comes to the conclusion that "in defying the Buddha, Mahāprajāpatī ... poses a direct challenge to the Buddha's authority".

⁴⁶ [52] The description of the benefits she had gained thanks to the Buddha in T 60 at T I 856c10 is closely similar to that in MĀ 116, which clearly implies her attainment of stream-entry. The Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 923a21, reports that she had attained the right path, which can be taken to refer to the same. The 'Haimavata' (?) *Vinayamāṭṛka* does not take up the topic of how the Buddha benefitted her at all. The Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya*, Roth 1970: 15,13, refers to her insight into the four noble truths (cf. also T 196 at T IV 158c11 and T 1478 at T XXIV 946b15), another characteristic of stream-entry. The Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 185c13, is ambivalent, only mentioning her acquisition of faith in the three jewels. The Chinese version of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1451 at T XXIV 350c23, explicitly speaks of her stream-entry. (The whole section on how the Buddha benefitted her is not found in the Sanskrit or Tibetan versions.)

confess.⁴⁷ This conveys a sense of eagerness to follow the Buddha's commands that makes it highly unlikely for a stream-enterer to be depicted as deliberately challenging the Buddha and publicly acting contrary to the instructions he or she has received directly from the Buddha.

Moreover, the narrative in the extant versions records no criticism or reproach of Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī and her companions having shaved heads and wearing monastic robes. None of the canonical versions reports any remark by the Buddha about this action, even though in some versions Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī approaches him directly with her hair shaved off and dressed in monastic robes.⁴⁸ Had this been an act of open defiance, or even just a personal whim, this would naturally have led to at least a passing comment on her behaviour, if not to open censure.

Even when Ānanda asks Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī what is making her cry, in several versions he does not refer at all to her shaven head or wearing monastic robes, but merely notices that she is sad and exhausted from travelling.⁴⁹ Had this not been preceded by some kind of allowance by the Buddha, [292] her sudden appear-

⁴⁷ [53] Sn 232 and its counterpart in the *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1882: 292,7.

⁴⁸ [54] This is the case for the Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya*, Roth 1970: 6,22, and for the Chinese version of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1451 at T XXIV 350b22 (the relevant section is not extant in the Sanskrit fragment), with its Tibetan counterpart in D 6 *da* 101a2 or Q 1035 *ne* 98a4.

⁴⁹ [55] When approaching Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī to inquire about what afflicts her, in the Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya*, Roth 1970: 8,2, Ānanda just asks what makes her cry; in the Theravāda version, AN 8.51 at AN IV 275,8 or Vin II 254,4, he also comments on her bodily condition after travelling; cf. also T 1478 at T XXIV 946a13. The corresponding section in the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 185c7, does not report Ānanda's query in full, only indicating that he "inquired after the reason" for her behaviour. As this is preceded by reporting that she was standing at the entrance and weeping, this case also seems to conform to the same pattern.

ance with her hair shaved off and donning robes would have merited a comment.⁵⁰

In sum, closer consideration suggests that for the Buddha to tell Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī that she can live a semi-monastic life at home quite possibly constitutes an early piece of the narrative that was lost in some versions. This is rather significant, since it changes the picture of the Buddha's refusal considerably. Once he proposes such an alternative, the issue at stake is not stopping women from becoming nuns in principle.⁵¹ Instead, his refusal would be just an expression of concern that, at a time when the Buddhist order was still in its beginnings, lack of proper dwelling places and the other living conditions of a homeless life might be too much for the Sakyan ladies.⁵² [293]

⁵⁰ [56] In the Dharmagupta *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 922c21, and in the 'Haimavata' (?) *Vinayamāṭṛka*, T 1463 at T XXIV 803b2, Ānanda's inquiry contains a reference to the fact that they have shaven heads and wear robes, although the way this is formulated does not appear to imply a reproach, but is just part of the description by Ānanda, on a par with their being sad and worn out by travelling.

⁵¹ [57] A refusal in principle would stand in contrast to the report that he planned to have an order of nuns from the outset; cf. DN 16 at DN II 105,8, Sanskrit fragment 361 folio 165 R2–3, Waldschmidt 1950: 53), DĀ 2 at T I 15c4, T 6 at T I 180b27, T 7 at T I 191b28, T 1451 at T XXIV 387c27, with the Tibetan parallel in Waldschmidt 1951: 209,23; cf. also the *Divyāvadāna*, Cowell 1886: 202,10. For a more detailed discussion cf. Anālayo 2010f: 65–67 and 91f.

⁵² [58] Kabil Singh 1984: 24 suggests that "the Buddha was reluctant to accept women into the Order primarily because he was aware that it was not simply a question of the admission of women, but that there were many other problems involved thereafter. The immediate objection was possibly Mahāpajāpatī herself. Since she ... had never been acquainted with the experience of hardship, it was almost unimaginable to see the queen going from house to house begging for meals"; cf. also Wijayaratna 1991: 25. Evans 2001: 115 queries if "the purely physical privations and hazards of the wanderer's life" were considered acceptable living conditions for women like the Sakyan ladies.

Once Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī and her companions show that they are willing to brave these difficult conditions, it would also be understandable why the Buddha relents and permits their entry into the order. In this perspective, then, the extended depiction of how Ānanda convinced him to let women go forth may be a later development. In fact, it seems as if at the time when the order of nuns appears to have come into being, Ānanda was not yet a monk.⁵³

Besides, the way the Buddha is depicted elsewhere in the early texts does not give the impression that he was easily influenced, once he had taken a decision.⁵⁴ The parallel versions in fact differ in regard to what persuaded the Buddha to accept women in his order, in spite of his supposed misgivings, giving the impression that the need to account for the Buddha being persuaded has been dealt with in different ways.

Here the *Madhyama-āgama* version furnishes another significant hint, since in its account the argument regarding the spiritual ability of women to attain up to the fourth stage of awakening is made by Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī right at the outset, when she requests the going forth for the first time. Nevertheless, the Buddha refuses. The same early placing of this argument recurs in the individually translated version and in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* account.⁵⁵ That is, in contrast to the impression conveyed by some

⁵³ [59] For a more detailed discussion cf. Anālayo 2010f: 86–90.

⁵⁴ [60] Horner 1930/1990: 107 comments that for the Buddha "it would have been in complete discordance with his character to have let people's wishes and desires, however lofty, supplant or overcome what he knew to be right. Nor was he likely to take any step which might strike at the integrity of the Order". Freedman 1977: 124 adds that "it seems somewhat ridiculous to claim that Ānanda was able to convince the Buddha against his own better judgement to allow women to 'go forth'". Blackstone 1995: 50 notes that "this story presents the only occurrence of the Buddha changing his mind after he has refused a request three times".

⁵⁵ [61] T 60 at T I 856a11 and the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* version, Schmidt 1993:

other versions, [294] to judge from these accounts women's spiritual potential was not what changed the Buddha's mind.

Now, according to a range of sources the Buddha's initial decision to teach the Dharma at all was based on surveying the potential of human beings to reach awakening.⁵⁶ Thus, he would have been well aware that women do have such potential, without needing a reminder.

In the *Madhyama-āgama* version, what precedes the Buddha's relenting is a reference by Ānanda to the services of Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī as the Buddha's foster mother.⁵⁷ A similar exchange between Ānanda and the Buddha is reported in the *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga-sutta* and its parallels, where Ānanda's intervention has the purpose of convincing the Buddha that he should accept a robe that Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī wishes to offer to him.⁵⁸ The parallel

242,1, with the Chinese counterpart in T 1451 at T XXIV 350b15 and the Tibetan version in D 6 *da* 100a7 or Q 1035 *ne* 97b2; cf. also T 196 at T IV 158a25 and T 1478 at T XXIV 945b27.

⁵⁶ [62] This is reported in MN 26 at MN I 169,6, T 189 at T III 643a20, T 190 at T III 806c12, T 191 at T III 953a15, *Catuspariṣat-sūtra* fragment M 480 R1–3, Waldschmidt 1952: 43f, the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 787a20, the *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1897: 318,1, the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 104a4, and the *Saṅghabhedavastu* of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, Gnoli 1977: 130,1, with its Chinese counterpart in T 1450 at T XXIV 126c18 and its Tibetan counterpart in Waldschmidt 1957: 117,11.

⁵⁷ [63] A similar reminder can be found in T 60 at T I 856c7, the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 923a6, the Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya*, Roth 1970: 14,8, the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 185c11, the Chinese translation of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1451 at T XXIV 350c20 (such a reminder is not reported in the corresponding section in the Sanskrit fragment or in the Tibetan version), and in the Theravāda version, AN 8.51 at AN IV 276,15 and Vin II 254,37; cf. also T 196 at T IV 158c5 and T 1478 at T XXIV 946b7.

⁵⁸ [64] MN 142 at MN III 253,18, MĀ 180 at T I 722a6, D 4094 *ju* 254a7 or Q 5595 *tu* 289b8. The same is the case for Bajaur Kharoṣṭhī fragment 1 line 7 (I am indebted to Ingo Strauch for putting a transliteration of the so far unpub-

versions agree that, in the case of the relatively insignificant issue of accepting the offering of a robe, Ānanda's intervention was not successful. [295]

This makes it difficult to conceive of the same argument being more successful as part of an attempt to convince the Buddha to permit women to go forth, if he had indeed been unwilling to have an order of nuns. This is all the more the case if he knew that this permission was going to shorten the duration of his dispensation.⁵⁹ Besides, in most versions of this exchange the Buddha clarifies that he has already settled his debt of gratitude by establishing Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī in taking refuge and the precepts, as well as in becoming a stream-enterer.⁶⁰

A perhaps more natural explanation would be that the exchange between Ānanda and the Buddha regarding the service provided by Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī originally arose in a context similar to what is described in the *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga-sutta* and its parallels. This exchange would then subsequently have been incorporated into the account of the founding of the order of nuns in order to provide a rationale for the Buddha's relenting.⁶¹

The Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya* offers still another perspective, as in its presentation the Buddha gives in, thinking: "let not the mind of Ānanda, the son of Gautamī, be adversely affected, let not the

lished fragment at my disposal), Sanskrit fragment SHT III 979, Waldschmidt 1971: 241f, Tocharian fragment YQ 1.26 1/1 verso 6, Ji 1998: 172, and Uighur fragment folio 7b11, Geng 1988: 196; cf. also Tekin 1980: 70. On the Buddha's indebtedness to Gotamī cf. also Ohnuma 2006.

⁵⁹ [65] Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2010f: 78–82.

⁶⁰ [66] MN 142 at MN III 253,21 differs from its parallels in so far as, according to its account, these points were made by Ānanda.

⁶¹ [67] The Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya* could be testifying to an intermediate stage in this process, as it has the offering of robes as part of its account of the founding of the order of nuns; cf. T 1421 at T XXII 185b20.

teachings he has heard become confused, even though my right Dharma remains for [only] five hundred years."⁶² The suggestion that the Buddha wanted to avoid Ānanda getting confused and forgetting the teachings seems as unsuccessful as the other versions in providing a cogent reason for the Buddha to permit something he supposedly does not want to happen and which he knows will have dire consequences for his dispensation. [296]

Another noteworthy aspect of the *Madhyama-āgama* version is that it takes up the consequences of admitting women to the order twice: The first occasion is when Ānanda makes his initial request for women to go forth. The Buddha replies that the holy life will not last as long if women go forth, comparable to a household with many women and few men, which will not develop properly. The second instance occurs toward the end, as part of a depiction of several negative repercussions of allowing women to join the order, because of which the Buddha's right teaching will remain for only five hundred years, instead of the thousand years it could have remained.

The formulation used in these two instances shows a minor but significant difference. The first instance reads: "Ānanda, if in this right teaching and discipline women obtain the leaving of the household out of faith, becoming homeless to train in the path, then this holy life will consequently not last long."⁶³

In this passage, the point at stake is the duration of the "holy life", the *brahmacariya*, a term that also stands for celibacy. A

⁶² [68] Roth 1970: 16,14: *mā haivānandasya gautamīputrasya bhavatu cittasyān-yathātvam mā pi se śrutā dharmā sammoṣaṅ gaccha(n)tu, kāmaṃ pañcāpi me varṣaśatāni saddharmo sthāsyati*. Yet another perspective is presented in T 156 at T III 153c28, where the Buddha relents once Ānanda has argued that Buddhas of the past had four assemblies.

⁶³ [69] MĀ 116 at T I 605c3: 阿難, 若使女人得於此正法律中至信, 捨家, 無家, 學道者, 令此梵行便不得久住。

reference to the holy life can also be found in the corresponding passage in some of the parallel versions.⁶⁴ [297]

The second instance in the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse then reads: "Ānanda, if in this right teaching and discipline women had not obtained the leaving of the household out of faith, becoming homeless to train in the path, then this right teaching would have remained for a thousand years."⁶⁵ Similar references to the "right teaching", the "Buddha's teaching", the "teaching and discipline" or the "well-taught teaching and discipline" occur in several of the other parallel versions.⁶⁶

Now, considering the first instance of this passage in the *Madh-*

⁶⁴ [70] T 60 at T I 856b28 also takes up this theme in two separate statements, where the first speaks of the duration of the holy life, 梵行, while the second indicates that the "inheritance of the teaching", 遺法, will remain for only five hundred years; cf. T I 857c29. The Theravāda version, AN 8.51 at AN IV 278,18 or Vin II 256,15, speaks first of the "holy life", *brahmacariya*, and then of the "right teaching", *saddhamma*, both occurring together as part of a single sentence; cf. also T 196 at T IV 158c2, which speaks of the "Buddha's pure holy life", 佛清淨梵行, and T 1478 at T XXIV 946a28, where a reference to the holy life occurs together with the Buddha's teaching.

⁶⁵ [71] MĀ 116 at T I 607b8: 阿難, 若女人不得於此正法律中至信, 捨家, 無家, 學道者, 正法當住千年.

⁶⁶ [72] In the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 923a1, it is the "Buddha's teaching", 佛法, that will not last long. The 'Haimavata' (?) *Vinayamāṭṛka*, T 1463 at T XXIV 803b9, instead speaks of the duration of the "right teaching", 正法, as is the case also for the Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya*, Roth 1970: 16,14, which refers to the *saddharma*. According to the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 186a14, the decrease in duration will affect the "Buddha's right teaching", 佛之正法. The Sanskrit version of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, Schmidt 1993: 244,4, speaks of the "teaching and discipline", *dharmavinaya*, with its Chinese counterpart, T 1451 at T XXIV 350c12, referring to the "Buddha's teaching", 佛法, and the "right teaching", 正法, and its Tibetan counterpart to the "well-taught teaching and discipline", D 6 *da* 102a1 or Q 1035 *ne* 99a3: *legs par bshad pa'i chos* (Q: *kyi*) 'dul ba.

yama-āgama on its own, independent of the second instance, the reference to the holy life could be applying to the nuns in particular. On this interpretation, the point made would be that, if women become homeless wanderers, their living of the holy life in celibacy will not last long. [298]

The reasons for such an indication are not difficult to find, as the situation in ancient India for women who were not protected by a husband appears to have been rather insecure and rape of nuns seems to have been far from uncommon.⁶⁷ In the Jain tradition, which otherwise exhibits a keen concern to avoid any type of violence, specific instructions were apparently given in case nuns were staying in a dwelling without lockable doors. In such a situation, a stout nun should stand on guard close to the entrance at night with a stick in hand, ready to drive away intruders.⁶⁸ Thus women who had gone forth appear to have been in need of some form of protection against the danger of sexual abuse.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ [73] The Theravāda *Vinaya* reports several cases of the raping of nuns; cf., e.g., Vin I 89,10, Vin III 35,7, Vin IV 63,8, Vin IV 65,9, Vin IV 228,13 and Vin IV 229,25; cf. in more detail Perera 1993: 107f.

⁶⁸ [74 (1)] Deo 1956: 475f. Deo 1956: 489 notes that in Jain texts "numerous instances are recorded of nuns who were harassed by young people, bad elements, householders and kings ... licentious persons ... followed them up to their residence and harassed them while they were on the alms tour. Cases of kidnapping occurred on a large scale".

⁶⁹ [74 (2)] Regarding how nuns were apparently seen in early medieval mainstream brahminical society, Olivelle 2004: 499 notes that in the *Manusmṛiti* "there are women of certain groups ... who are stereotyped as being sexually promiscuous", one of them being "female wandering ascetics". Similarly, a commentary on the *Manusmṛiti*, quoted in Jyväsjärvi 2007: 80, defines females who have become homeless (*pravrajitā*) as "women without protectors ... [who], being lustful women, are disguised in the dress (of ascetics)". Jyväsjärvi 2011: 82 note 97 then notes that "shaving a woman's head was sometimes a penalty for adulterous behaviour (Nār[ada-smṛiti] 12.91)", which would have further strengthened such associations in the case of shaven-headed Buddhist nuns.

The assumption that the original point at stake could have been the precarious situation of homeless nuns would also fit the simile of a household that has many women and few men, given at this juncture in the *Madhyama-āgama* version, a simile found in nearly all parallel versions.⁷⁰ [299] The image conveyed by this

Another significant observation by Jyväsjärvi 2011: 224 is that a tale in the *Bṛhatkalpabhāṣya* reflects the notion that "in lay society men are not considered culpable if they pursue a woman who they think has made herself available, regardless of her actual intent". Jamison 2006: 209 sums up that "the evidence assembled from *Manu*, from the *Arthaśāstra*, and from the *Kāma Sūtra* demonstrates that the female religious, heterodox or not, is viewed either as sexually available or as a cunning agent encouraging illicit sexual behaviour in others". Jamison 2006: 206 then suggests that "part of the impetus for the intensely misogynist sentiments in *Manu* comes from the challenge posed by this new female type, the independent *and* religious unorthodox woman" as found in the Jain and Buddhist orders of nuns. Jyväsjärvi 2011: 35 concludes that "representations of renunciant women as morally dubious across a range of genres [of texts] are so consistent that we can safely assume they point to shared assumptions regarding 'independent' women in Indian male discourse". It seems quite possible that comparable notions regarding women who had gone forth had already come into existence earlier, once the Jain order of nuns, which appears to have preceded the Buddhist order of nuns, had come into being. On the position of women in general, Bhattacharji 1987: 54 comments that "woman has been a chattel in India ever since the later Vedic times". A relatively early passage can be found in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad* 6.4.7, which recommends that, in case a woman after her menstrual period is not willing to have sex and trying to bribe her (with presents) has also been unsuccessful, she should be beaten with a stick or one's fists and be overpowered. Once such attitudes are condoned in a text like the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*, in the case of a woman who goes forth and thus is perceived by others to be without the protection of her rightful owner or protector – her father, husband or son – it seems quite probable that she would run the risk of being considered by some males as an easily available commodity.

⁷⁰ [75] T 60 at T I 856b29, the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 923a1, the 'Haimavata' (?) *Vinayamātrka*, T 1463 at T XXIV 803b7, the Mahīśāsaka

simile would aptly illustrate the difficulties of adequately protecting women who have become homeless celibate wanderers from interference and abuse.

The same could then also apply to an image found in most versions, which depicts a field of corn or sugar cane affected by some disease or some weather calamity.⁷¹ The original point of such simile(s) may have been to illustrate the traumatic effect of rape and similar abuse on Buddhist nuns, obstructing the natural ripening of the seeds of their spiritual potential.

On the assumption that the present passage could have originally implied that women joining the order will be in a precarious situation and their practicing of the holy life might not last long, the reference to a shortening of the lifespan of the Buddha's teaching from a thousand years to five hundred would be a subsequent development.

In the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse, it is in fact puzzling that the Buddha should have kept quiet about the threat posed to the thousand years' duration of his right teaching when Ānanda could still have been prevented from continuing his request on behalf of Gotamī. Instead, he only refers to this threat after the fait accompli. The progression of the narrative in the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse thus gives the impression that these two instances could be an earlier and a later version of the same pronouncement, the earlier one speaking of the holy life, the later one taking up the thousand years' duration of the Buddha's right teaching. [300]

Vinaya, T 1421 at T XXII 186a15, the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, Schmidt 1993: 244,1, T 1451 at T XXIV 350c12 and D 6 *da* 102a2 or Q 1035 *ne* 99a4, and the Theravāda version, AN 8.51 at AN IV 278,23 or Vin II 256,16; cf. also T 196 at T IV 158b28 and T 1478 at T XXIV 946a26. The simile is not found in the Mahāsāṃghika *Vinaya*, where the texts at this point is not complete, as the manuscript has apparently lost one simile; cf. Roth 1970: 10 note 11.

⁷¹ [76] Such a simile is not found in T 1421 and T 1463.

Regarding the second instance, to predict that the Buddha's teaching will suffer a decline simply because women have gone forth is indeed a rather curious suggestion. Besides the implausibility of the Buddha being convinced to do something that will be detrimental to the duration of his own teaching, another problem is that a range of discourses speak of the presence of the nuns as something positive that ensures the duration of the Buddha's teaching, which would be deficient unless he had nun disciples.⁷² Such references stand in direct contrast to the notion that women's going forth could adversely affect the duration of the Buddha's dispensation, further supporting the impression that this could be one of the later additions to the account of the coming into being of the order of nuns.

In the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse, the reference to a shortening of the duration of the Buddha's right teaching is part of a series of negative implications of women's going forth, together with a reference to the five impossibilities for women, a notion which in a previous chapter I suggested probably represents a later development.⁷³ [301]

⁷² [77] Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2010f: 67–72.

⁷³ [78] Cf. above page 287. Needless to say, in an oral tradition for a textual piece to appear somewhere it need not be taken away from another place, a situation that differs in this respect from the type of change that comes about through a misplacing of a folio in a manuscript. Had the five impossibilities been original to the *Bahudhātuka-sutta* exposition, their addition to the present exposition would not have required any change affecting their original placing. Instead of being an original part of the early teachings, the most probable scenario appears to be that the notion of these five impossibilities arose later, but early enough still to find a placing during oral transmission in different discourses. One such placing is the listing of impossibilities in the Theravāda version of the *Bahudhātuka-sutta*, in which case the Sarvāstivāda version does not have such a reference. In the Sarvāstivāda tradition the same piece has instead found a place among various negative assessments of women in the pre-

Now, it is significant that in the case of the *Madhyama-āgama* version this outburst of negativity toward women comes right after Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī has asked for nuns to be respected according to seniority. This stands in a curious contrast to her previous happy acceptance of the eight special rules, one of which stipulates that even the most senior nun has to pay respects to a newly ordained monk.

There are several apparent inconsistencies with these eight special rules,⁷⁴ one of the problems being that some of these rules presuppose the existence of an order of nuns. Another problem is the apparent existence of nuns ordained with the simple formula "come nun".⁷⁵ This gives the impression that, at least for some time after Gotamī's going forth, the presence of both communities may not have been required for the ordination of a nun, contrary to what is stipulated in one of the special rules. In sum, it seems impossible for these eight special rules to have been promulgated at the time when the order of nuns was about to be founded. In fact, their promulgation conflicts with a basic principle observed consistently elsewhere in the *Vinaya*, where a regulation is set forth only when a case requiring it has happened, not in advance.

Thus the curiosity mentioned above, where Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī happily accepts a certain mode of conduct as part of the eight special rules and then later goes to the Buddha to get this

sent discourse, in which case the Theravāda version does not mention the five impossibilities.

⁷⁴ [79] For surveys of these eight rules cf., e.g., Waldschmidt 1926: 118–121, Horner 1930/1990: 118–161, Hirakawa 1982: 49–95 (in the notes to these pages), Kusumā 1987/2010: 29–32, Nolot 1991: 397–405, Heirman 1997: 34–43, Hüsken 1997: 346–360, Heirman 1998, Chung 1999, Hüsken 2000: 46–58, Nagata 2002: 283f, Chung 2006: 13, Cheng 2007: 83–100, Salgado 2008, Sujāto 2009: 51–81, Anālayo 2010f: 82–86 and Hüsken 2010.

⁷⁵ [80] Cf., e.g., Thī 109; for further references cf. Anālayo 2010f: 84f.

changed, need not be taken to be a depiction of female weakness.⁷⁶ Instead, it appears to be simply a sign of internal inconsistency in the account, [302] supporting the impression that the eight special rules are a later addition.

Regarding Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī's request, according to the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse she refers to several senior nuns of long standing when making this appeal. That is, by the time of her plea for nuns to be respected according to seniority, some time has passed since the order of nuns was founded. Given that nuns in other contemporaneous Indian traditions were apparently not respected by their male counterparts in accordance with seniority,⁷⁷ the same would probably have happened in the Buddhist tradition, once nuns had been in existence for some years and thus had acquired some degree of seniority.

It would be natural for senior nuns, who had met with such disrespect several times, to approach the Buddha in order to get clarification about this matter. According to the Theravāda *Vinaya*, the Buddha explicitly noted that by refusing such a request he was just following already existing customs.⁷⁸ This incident could then have been part of a process of textual growth that eventually resulted in the set of eight special rules, which assemble various regulations responding to different situations that for the most part could only have arisen when the order of nuns was already in existence. [303]

The circumstance that in the *Madhyama-āgama* version an

⁷⁶ [81] Sujāto 2009: 59 suggests that in this way Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī "exhibits yet another womanly weakness, changing her mind and getting Ānanda to ask a special privilege from the Buddha: that they forget this rule, and allow paying respect according to seniority".

⁷⁷ [82] A quote from the *Upadeśamālā*, translated in Jaini 1991: 168, indicates that this was the case for the Jain tradition.

⁷⁸ [83] Vin II 258,2.

outburst of negativity toward women comes right after Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī has asked for nuns to be respected according to seniority could be of further significance. Reading between the lines, it seems that the negativity toward the nuns comes to the surface when they are no longer as deferential and submissive as some monks would have liked. This part of the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse thus hints at what would have fomented negativity toward nuns, an attitude evident in all versions of the account of how the order of nuns began.

Such negativity would have become acute once the Buddha was no longer alive. After the Buddha had passed away, the struggle for survival among other competing religious groups in ancient India must have become rather acute for the Buddhist monastic community, who needed to ensure at any cost that the laity remained well disposed toward them and provided the required support and offerings.⁷⁹

Lacking the central authority of the Buddha, a sizeable section of the order of monks could have become increasingly nervous about the independent behaviour of the nuns and their close relationship with the laity, facilitated by the circumstance that nuns for reasons of security were not able to live in secluded spots in the way this was possible for monks and would thus naturally have tended to be in closer contact with lay followers. [304]

Other scholars have already noted indications that nuns were becoming increasingly independent,⁸⁰ something that might well have been perceived as a challenge by some monks, all the more if nuns were more easily able to influence lay opinion. Such a situation might well have motivated some monks to attempt to

⁷⁹ [84] Nagata 2002: 285 comments that "when Śākyamuni, the leader of the community, died, the question was: 'Could a Buddhist community that included nuns continue to enjoy the respect of the laity?'"

⁸⁰ [85] Cf., e.g., Hüsken 1997: 476 and Schopen 1996/2004.

steer away from a development that they saw as endangering the smooth continuity of the Buddhist tradition in the way they conceived it.

The apparently felt need to put the nuns in their place becomes particularly evident with the eight special rules, mentioned in all versions.⁸¹ Notably, the Pāli discourse version of the foundation account occurs among the Eights of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*. This gives the impression that, from the viewpoint of the reciters, these eight rules are the key aspect of the whole narrative. These eight special rules are apparently of such importance that, besides being recorded in the *Vinaya*, they are also placed into a discourse collection, thereby being destined for a wider audience, including the laity at large. In other words, this discourse appears to be meant to inform the laity: we are keeping the nuns under control.⁸²

Once monks perceived nuns as problematic, it would have been natural for these monks to read that meaning into the similes that depict the adversities suffered by a field of corn or sugar cane, or the image of a household with many women and few men. [305] That is, instead of illustrating a danger for nuns, from the viewpoint of monks apprehensive of nuns these images would of course have portrayed the danger posed by nuns.⁸³ Such a change of per-

⁸¹ [86] Wilson 1996: 145 sums up that "women were admitted to the *saṅgha* under one decisive condition: that they submit to male authority. That is the gist of the eight special rules".

⁸² [87] Barnes 2002: 44 comments that "the story of the founding of the bhikṣuṇī saṅgha publicly proclaims that the formal structure of the saṅgha reflects that of the society around it: Buddhism would be no threat to the values that governed lay society". Young 1994: 81 notes that the "story of the first ordination of the nuns ... is *descriptive* of existing conditions [at the time of reaching its final form], the subordination of the nuns to the monks, rather than a *prescription* by the Buddha that this is the way it should be".

⁸³ [88] Dash 2008: 102 suggests that a reason for the Buddha's initial refusal to let women go forth could have been that "there was every possibility of teasing

spective would then inevitably have influenced the way these similes were preserved in the canonical records. This could also easily have lead to giving a more explicit expression to their apprehensions about the need to ensure the continuity of the Buddhist tradition, culminating in the notion that the teachings would last only five hundred years – a number of recurrent use in the early texts and with obvious symbolic significance⁸⁴ – whereas without those 'problematic' nuns it would last twice as long.

The *Madhyama-āgama* discourse in fact expresses quite vividly apprehensions regarding the existence of Buddhist nuns and their competition in regard to support and respect received from the lay community. Had an order of nuns not come into existence, householders would have invited the monks to step on their clothes and even on their hair.⁸⁵ Householders would also have

and insulting [of] monastic women" taking place, noting that "harassment [directed] to a monastic woman is, directly or indirectly, an offence to the saṅgha itself". This suggests the possibility of a gradual transition between the two alternative perspectives on the significance of these similes, in that the vulnerability of nuns would have automatically had an effect on the overall image of the community. In other words, such a problem for nuns would inevitably have become a problem for the whole community. This in turn would have naturally led to an increasing emphasis – among the male reciters of the texts – on an endangering of the whole community.

⁸⁴ [89] On the symbolism of the number five hundred cf. Anālayo 2011a: 417f.

⁸⁵ [90] In the *Madhyama-āgama* collection, a similar depiction of lay people putting their hair on the ground for monks to step on recurs in MĀ 131 at T I 621c1, as well as in its parallels T 66 at T I 865c3, T 67 at T I 867c15, and Waldschmidt 1976: 143, except for the Pāli parallel MN 50, which does not mention any spreading of hair on the ground. The context is an account of events at the time of a past Buddha. The respectful behaviour of the laity is then instigated by Māra in order to get the monks under his control. Notably, the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 186a24, indicates that Ānanda's intervention in favour of women's going forth was because he had been influenced by Māra. Similar to the case mentioned above in note 61, in this case,

stood waiting by the roadside with food and drinks ready, [306] inviting the monks to take anything from their homes. Even competition with other religious groups in ancient India would have been no issue at all.

The *Madhyama-āgama* version then rounds off its testimony to the disapproving attitudes toward nuns among those who were responsible for the final shape of this discourse with a reference to the five impossibilities for women, found also in the individually translated discourse and in the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*.⁸⁶ This listing does not stand in any meaningful relation to the remainder of the account and thus seems to have found its placing here simply because it fits the general trend of negative sentiments about women in general or nuns in particular. This is perhaps not surprising, since an account of the founding of the order of nuns would be the most natural place for voicing such feelings.

Now, reconstruction of historical events based on purely textual accounts is certainly hazardous. Nevertheless, based on what can be culled from the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse in comparison with the other versions, it seems possible to arrive at a coherent narrative of the foundation of the order of nuns. [307] A sketch of such a version would be more or less like this:

Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī requests permission for women to go forth, which the Buddha refuses because conditions are not yet suitable for such a move, as her living the holy life in celibacy might not last long if she were to become a homeless wanderer. Therefore, he tells her that she should better live a celibate life in the more protected environment at home, having cut off her hair

too, the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya* could be showing an intermediate stage in a process of incorporation of this piece from its original context as a tale related to a past Buddha into the narrative of the foundation of the order of nuns.

⁸⁶ [91] T 60 at T I 858a1 and T 1421 at T XXII 186a12; cf. also T 196 at T IV 159b10 and T 1478 at T XXIV 949b15.

and put on robes.

Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī and a group of women follow this suggestion and shave off their hair and put on robes. After the Buddha has left, they decide to follow him, thereby proving their willingness to brave the conditions of a homeless life. On witnessing their keenness and ability to face the difficulties of a homeless life, or else on being informed of it, the Buddha gives them permission to join the order. This might be the nucleus out of which the various accounts of the foundation of the order of nuns developed.

Karajakāya-sutta (AN 10.208)

Introduction

In the present chapter I study the *Karajakāya-sutta* in the light of its parallels, based on a translation of its *Madhyama-āgama* counterpart. The *Karajakāya-sutta*,¹ found among the Tens of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, begins by highlighting the point that the results of intentionally performed deeds will inevitably have to be experienced.² Similar proposals on the definite relationship between karma and its fruit can be found elsewhere in the Pāli canon.³ [2]

Such statements need to be contextualized with other passages which clarify that this relationship does not operate in a rigidly

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¹ Title adopted from B^c and C^c.

² AN 10.208 at AN V 299,11: "I do not say, monks, that without being experienced there is a coming to an end of intentional deeds that have been undertaken and accumulated", *nāhaṃ, bhikkhave, sañcetanikānaṃ kammānaṃ katānaṃ upacitānaṃ appaṭisaṃveditvā vyantibhāvaṃ vadāmi* (B^c reads *appaṭisaṃveditvā* and *byantibhāvaṃ*, C^c *vyantibhāvaṃ*).

³ Statements with similar implications can be found, e.g., in Dh 127, Ud 5.4 at Ud 51,16 and Sn 666; for further references cf. Dayal 1932/1970: 190, McDermott 1980: 176 and Krishan 1997: 66–69. The statement in AN 10.208 is quoted in Kv 466,11 (12.2) in the context of a discussion of karma and its fruit; cf. also McDermott 1975: 427. Van Zeyst 1965: 654 notes that the opening proposal in AN 10.208 does not leave much room for the later notion of *ahosi kamma*, listed at Paṭi II 78,1 and explained in Vism 601,6 to stand for karma that does not have a result, e.g., karma that was bound to ripen in the present life but did not get an opportunity to do so.

predetermined manner.⁴ This is reflected in a simile about a piece of salt, found in a discourse in the *Āṅuttara-nikāya* and in its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel. According to this simile, just as a piece of salt will have a different effect on the drinkability of water if it is thrown into a small cup of water or into a large river, so too the effect of a particular deed depends on the overall moral development of the performer of this deed.⁵ According to the *Mahākammavibhaṅga-sutta* and its parallels, this is the case to such an extent that even someone who commits a particularly bad deed may nevertheless be reborn in heaven if actions undertaken during his or her life have otherwise been of a wholesome nature.⁶ Conversely, one who has performed a remarkably wholesome deed may be reborn in hell due to having otherwise committed predominantly bad deeds.

A complementary perspective is provided in a discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya* and its parallels in the two Chinese *Samyukta-āgama* translations. These discourses point out that, in addition to the fruition of former deeds, a range of other factors could be having their conditioning impact on the nature of present moment's experience, such as bodily disorders, change of climate, or external violence.⁷ That is, in early Buddhism the inevitability of

⁴ That the early Buddhist karmic theory is not predeterministic has been pointed out repeatedly; cf., e.g., Jayatilleke 1968, Gómez 1975: 82, Ñāṇaponika 1975: 91, Story 1975: 74, Fujita 1982: 151, Siderits 1987: 153, Jayawardhana 1988: 408, de Silva 1991: 273, Siridhamma 1998: 62–67, Halbfass 2000: 102, Harvey 2000/2005: 23, Hershock 2005: 6–7, Nelson 2005: 4, Harvey 2007: 59 and Pāsādika 2007a: 319.

⁵ AN 3.99 at AN I 250,1 and MĀ 11 at T I 433a21.

⁶ MN 136 at MN III 214,20, MĀ 171 at T I 708b16 and D 4094 *ju* 267a7 or Q 5595 *thu* 10b2; cf. also the **Mahāprajñāpāramitā-(upadeśa-)śāstra*, T 1509 at T XXV 238b17, translated in Lamotte 1944/1970: 1535.

⁷ SN 36.21 at SN IV 230,13, SĀ 977 at T II 252c21 and SĀ² 211 at T II 452b14. Keown 1996: 340 sums up: "the Buddhist theory of karma does not rule out

karmic retribution is seen to operate within a network of various causes and conditions and therefore does not exercise its influence in a mono-causal manner.

What makes the *Karajakāya-sutta* worthy of further attention is that it continues with another statement, which runs: "Yet, monks, I do not say that there is a making an end of *dukkha* without having experienced [the fruits of] intentional deeds that have been undertaken and accumulated."⁸ [3]

This statement is surprising, since elsewhere the discourses associate such a position with Jain thought. Thus the *Devadaha-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel report that contemporary Jains undertook ascetic practices in the belief that the karmic fruition of formerly undertaken bad deeds needs to be expiated. According to their reasoning, if in addition no new deeds are undertaken, all *dukkha* can be eradicated and liberation will be won.⁹

the possibility of accidents and adventitious misfortune".

⁸ AN 10.208 at AN V 299,14: *na tvevāhaṃ, bhikkhave, sañcetanikānaṃ kammānaṃ katānaṃ upacitānaṃ appaṭisaṃviditvā dukkhass' antakiriyaṃ vadāmi* (B^o: *appaṭisaṃveditvā*).

⁹ MN 101 at MN II 214,8: "by eradicating former deeds through asceticism and by not doing new deeds there will be no flowing on in future, from no flowing on in future [comes] the destruction of deeds, from the destruction of deeds [comes] the destruction of *dukkha*, from the destruction of *dukkha* ... all *dukkha* will be exhausted", *purāṇānaṃ kammānaṃ tapasā vyantibhāvā, navānaṃ kammānaṃ akaraṇā āyatīṃ anavassavo, āyatīṃ anavassavā kammakkhayo, kammakkhayā dukkhakkhayo, dukkhakkhayā ... sabbam dukkham nijjiṇṇam bhavissati*. MĀ 19 at T I 442c3: "if those former deeds are eradicated through ascetic practice and no new ones are created, then all deeds [will be] eradicated, [if] all deeds have been eradicated, then the eradication of *dukkha* is attained, [if] the eradication of *dukkha* is attained, then the end of *dukkha* is attained", 若其故業因苦行滅, 不造新者, 則諸業盡, 諸業盡已, 則得苦盡, 得苦盡已, 則得苦邊. This seems to be a fairly accurate record of Jain thought (for a discussion of some other Pāli discourses that report Jain theories about karma cf. Jain 1966).

The *Devadaha-sutta* and its parallel continue by presenting a criticism of the assumptions underlying such a belief, with the Buddha interrogating the Jains if they had any knowledge of their former bad deeds or were aware of the resultant karma being diminished. Since the Jains have to deny both, the Buddha concludes that their belief is ill founded and their ascetic practices fruitless. Another discourse sets a clear contrast to the Jain approach by proclaiming that the goal of living the celibate life (*brahmacariya*) in the early Buddhist monastic tradition is not to alter or eradicate karmic retribution, but to develop insight into the four noble truths.¹⁰

The distinctive nature of the early Buddhist conception regarding the relation between karma and liberation can be seen from the tale of the former brigand Aṅgulimāla. According to this tale, even a serial murderer can reach full awakening within the same lifetime, too short a time span to allow for the karmic retribution of recurrent killing to be fully exhausted.¹¹ Though intentionally performed murder is inevitably followed by karmic retribution, [4] once full awakening has been attained, this karmic retribution can come to fruition only during the remainder of that single lifetime.¹²

¹⁰ AN 9.13 at AN IV 382,3.

¹¹ That he had not yet exhausted the karmic retribution of his killings is reflected in MN 86 at MN II 104,14, EĀ 38.6 at T II 721a29 and T 119 at T II 511c27, which reckon his experience of being attacked and beaten up when going to beg alms, an event that took place after he had become an arahant, to be in retribution for his former bad deeds.

¹² This principle is succinctly summed up in Th 81: "whatever evil done by me previously in other births, it is to be experienced here and now, as there exists no other occasion [for it to ripen]", *yaṃ mayā pakataṃ pāpaṃ, pubbe aññāsu jātisu, idh' eva taṃ vedaniyaṃ, vatthu aññaṃ na vijjati*. Th-a I 186,15 explains that the speaker was an arahant. Applying this perspective to the stanza found in MN 86 at MN II 104,23 (= Th 872) and Dhṃ 173 then suggests that their refer-

In sum, the above quoted statement from the *Karajakāya-sutta* does not fit well with what can be gathered about the conception of karma and its relationship to liberation elsewhere in the early Buddhist discourses.¹³ Instead, this statement appears to correspond to the Jain position on this issue. In Jain thought, karma is perceived as a material substance that, as a result of a person's activity, adheres to the self and will fall away again once its effect has been experienced.¹⁴ To transcend this process requires the expiation of karmic retribution through asceticism. Thus the *Dasaveyāliya-sutta* (*Daśavaikālika-sūtra*), one of the four *Mūlasūtras* of the Jain canon, proclaims that liberation will be attained only when one's former bad deeds have been experienced, emphatically asserting that it is impossible to reach liberation without karmic retribution being either experienced or else expiated through asceticism.¹⁵ This statement corresponds closely to the proposal

ence to closing off evil deeds by what is wholesome may refer to the same principle, in that through having attained awakening the scope for the ripening of karmic retribution is confined to the present lifetime. As explained by Main 2005: 2, "arahats, by means of their attainment, have cut off the causes for re-birth and will only experience the results of past action until their death. In this short span of time, much of their store of *kamma* will not have the opportunity to come to fruition". Within that last lifetime, however, karma will still bear its fruit, in fact even the Buddha is reckoned as having been subject to the experience of karmic retribution; cf., e.g., Walters 1990, Cutler 1997, Hara 1997: 250–253 and Guang Xing 2002.

¹³ The idea that Nirvāṇa can be attained through good karma, advanced in Khp 7,19+27 (8.9+13) or in Mil 341,23, is a later development; cf. McDermott 1973, McDermott 1977: 466, McDermott 1984/2003: 118–122 and Schmithausen 1986: 207.

¹⁴ Cf., e.g., von Glasenapp 1915: 19–20, Tatia 1951: 220–260, Mehta 1957: 13–30, Schubring 1962: 172–185, Kalghatgi 1965, Jaini 1979/2001: 111–127, Dundas 1992/2002: 97–102, Johnson 1995, Bronkhorst 2000: 119, Halbfass 2000: 75–85 and Jain 2005: 248–259.

¹⁵ Lalwani 1973: 212,1 (appendix 1 part 1 stanza 18): *pāpānāṃ ca khalu bhoḥ*

made at the beginning of the *Karajakāya-sutta* that, to make an end of *dukkha*, karmic retribution has to be experienced. [5]

The *Karajakāya-sutta* has parallels in a discourse in the *Madhyama-āgama*, translated below, and in Śamathadeva's compendium of discourse quotations in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, extant in Tibetan.¹⁶ Both of these parallel versions begin their exposition by affirming the inevitability of karmic retribution, but differ from the *Karajakāya-sutta* in that they do not make a statement about the need of experiencing karmic retribution in order to be able to make an end of *dukkha*.¹⁷

Translation

Discourse on Intention¹⁸

Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was dwelling at Sāvattihī, staying in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park.¹⁹ At that time, the Blessed One told the monks:

"If [someone] performs deeds intentionally, I say that he will inevitably have to experience their fruits, either experiencing them in this life or experiencing them in a later life.²⁰ If [someone] per-

kṛtānāṃ karmanāṃ pūrvam duścīrṇānāṃ duṣpratīkrāntānāṃ vedayitvā mokṣaḥ – nāstyavedayitvā tapasā vā śoṣayitvā.

¹⁶ [18] D 4094 *ju* 236b2 to 238b5 or Q 5595 *tu* 270a3 to 272b5; translated in Martini 2012.

¹⁷ [19] MĀ 15 at T I 437b27 and D 4094 *ju* 236b3 or Q 5595 *tu* 270a5, which instead point out that unintentionally performed deeds do not entail karmic retribution.

¹⁸ The translated text is MĀ 15 at T I 437b24 to 438b11.

¹⁹ [21] AN 10.208 at AN V 299,11 does not give any information on the Buddha's whereabouts, but opens directly with the statement on the inevitability of karmic retribution.

²⁰ [22] AN 10.208 at AN V 299,13 and D 4094 *ju* 236b2 or Q 5595 *tu* 270a5 speak of three time periods for experiencing karmic retribution; on which cf. von

forms deeds unintentionally, I say that he will not necessarily have to experience their fruits.

"Herein, three are the [types] of intentionally performed bodily deeds that are unwholesome, that result in the experience of *dukkha* and that have *dukkha* as their fruit; four are the [types] of verbal deeds and three are the [types] of mental deeds that are unwholesome, [6] [437c] that result in the experience of *dukkha* and that have *dukkha* as their fruit.²¹

"What are the three [types] of intentionally performed bodily deeds that are unwholesome, that result in the experience of *dukkha* and that have *dukkha* as their fruit? Killing living beings is reckoned the first. [Someone is] supremely evil and blood-thirsty,²² having the wish to injure and being without compassion for living beings, including insects.²³

"Taking what is not given is reckoned the second. Out of attachment he takes the possessions of others with the intention of stealing.

"Sexual misconduct is reckoned the third. He has intercourse with a woman that is protected by her father, or protected by her

Hinüber 1971 and Anālayo 2011a: 779f note 118.

²¹ [23] AN 10.208 has neither a summary statement nor a detailed exposition of the ten unwholesome actions.

²² [24] MĀ 15 at T I 437c3: 飲血, literally "drinking blood", which perhaps renders an expression similar to the Pāli *lohitapāṇī*, "bloody-handed", mistaking the second member of this compound to be related to *pāna* or *pāṇiya*, "drink".

²³ [25] MĀ 15 at T I 437c3: 蛄蟲 (according to Hirakawa 1997: 1037f, 蛄 renders *kunta* and 蟲 can render *kṛmi* or *kīta*, hence my rendering as "insects"). Since a detailed treatment of the ten unwholesome actions is not given in AN 10.208, a comparison can only be made with the description of killing in AN 10.206 at AN V 292,15, which, however, just refers to beings in general, *sabbapāṇabhūtesu*, without any further specification; on this type of difference cf. also Anālayo 2011a: 190. The corresponding section in D 4094 *ju* 236b5 or Q 5595 *tu* 270a8 mentions the killing of ants, *grog sbu*.

mother, or protected by both parents, or protected by her sister, or protected by her brother, or protected by the parents-in-law, or protected by relatives, or protected by the clan; or a woman protected by threat of corporal punishment,²⁴ even one who has been garlanded in token of betrothal.²⁵

"These are reckoned the three types of intentionally performed bodily deeds that are unwholesome, that result in the experience of *dukkha*, and that have *dukkha* as their fruit.

"What are the four [types] of intentionally performed verbal deeds that are unwholesome, that result in the experience of *dukkha* and that have *dukkha* as their fruit? Speaking falsehood is reckoned the first. On being questioned in an assembly, or among family members, or in the king's palace thus: 'say what you know', he claims to know what he does not know, [7] or claims not to know what he knows; claims to have seen what he has not seen, or claims not to have seen what he saw; he knowingly speaks falsehood either for his own sake or for the sake of others, or for the sake of wealth.

"Divisive speech is reckoned the second. Wishing to divide others, he tells those what he has heard from these, out of a wish

²⁴ [26] MĀ 15 at T I 437c7: 有鞭罰恐怖, literally "having whip-punishment fear", which I assume to be rendering an original similar to AN 10.206 at AN V 292,20: *saparidaṇḍā*, literally "with a stick around", an idiomatic expression indicating that a woman is protected by threat of corporal punishment (cf. Vin III 139,35); with a counterpart in D 4094 *ju* 236b7 or Q 5595 *tu* 270b3: *chad pa dang bcas pa*. For a survey of different types of women who are reckoned to be under protection cf. also Collins 2011: 51.

²⁵ [27] MĀ 15 at T I 437c8: 及有名假質至華鬘, literally: "even [one who] is conceptually designated [as] engaged, having obtained a flower garland", which I take to be similar in meaning to AN 10.206 at AN V 292,20: *antamaso mālā-guṇaparikkhittā* (B^c: *mālāguḷaparikkhittā*, C^c: *mālāguḷaparikkhittā*); on this expression cf. also Silk 2007a: 7. D 4094 *ju* 236b7 or Q 5595 *tu* 270b3 qualifies such a girl as *yongs su bzung ba la phreng ba 'phangs te*.

to harm these, [or else] tells these what he has heard from those, out of a wish to harm those. Wishing to divide those who are united and further to divide those who are already divided, he forms factions, delights in [the forming of] factions and praises [the forming of] factions.

"Harsh speech is reckoned the third. He employs a type of speech that is rough and rude in tone, which sounds offensive and grates on the ear, that beings neither enjoy nor desire, which causes others suffering and vexation, and which does not lead to calmness, speaking such type of speech.

"Frivolous talk is reckoned the fourth. He speaks at the wrong time, speaks what is not true, what is not meaningful, what is contrary to the Dharma, what does not [lead] to appeasement, and also commends issues that do not [lead] to appeasement. Disregarding the [proper] timing, he does not teach or admonish properly.

"These are reckoned the four types of intentionally performed verbal deeds that are unwholesome, that result in the experience of *dukkha*, and that have *dukkha* as their fruit.

"What are the three [types] of intentionally performed mental deeds that are unwholesome, that result in the experience of *dukkha* and that have *dukkha* as their fruit? Covetousness is reckoned the first. On seeing another endowed with wealth and all the necessities of life, he constantly has the wish and desire: 'May I get it!'

"Irritation and ill will are reckoned the second. With a mind [full of] dislike and irritation,²⁶ he has the thought: 'May those beings be killed, be bound, be arrested, be removed,²⁷ and be ban-

²⁶ [28] MĀ 15 at T I 437c25: 嫉恚. Hirakawa 1997: 367 indicates that 嫉, besides its main meaning of "jealousy", can also render *pratighāta*, which would fit the present context better.

²⁷ [29] MĀ 15 at T I 437c26: 應收, 應免. Hirakawa 1997: 569 and 156 gives *grahaṇa* as a Sanskrit equivalent for 收, and *pari-śhr* for 免, hence my rendering

ished', having the wish that others experience infinite *dukkha*.

"Wrong view is reckoned the third. He has a view that is distorted, a view like this, declaring thus: 'There is no [efficacy in] giving, there is no [efficacy in] offerings [during a sacrifice], there is no [efficacy in] reciting hymns [during a sacrifice],²⁸ there are no wholesome and evil deeds, [8] there is no result of wholesome and evil deeds, there is neither this world nor another world, there is no [obligation towards one's] father and mother,²⁹ in the world there are no worthy men who have reached a wholesome attainment,³⁰ [438a] who are well gone and have progressed well, who by their own knowledge and experience abide in having themselves realized this world and the other world'.

"These are reckoned the three types of intentionally performed mental deeds that are unwholesome, that result in the experience of *dukkha* and that have *dukkha* as their fruit.

"The learned noble disciple leaves behind unwholesome bod-

as "arrested" and "removed".

²⁸ [30] MĀ 15 at T I 437c28: 呪説, which together with the preceding 齋 appear to correspond to the reference to what is "offered" and "sacrificed", *yiṭṭha* and *huta*, in AN 10.206 at AN V 293,30. While the two Pāli terms are similar in meaning, the rendering in MĀ 15 seems to reflect two aspects of a sacrifice: the performance of offerings and the recitation of hymns.

²⁹ [31] The description of wrong view in AN 10.206 at AN V 293,32 adds a denial of the existence of spontaneously arisen beings, *n' atthi sattā opapātikā*; cf. also above note 22 page 296. Spontaneously arisen beings are also mentioned in D 4094 *ju* 237b6 or Q 5595 *tu* 271b4: *sems can rdzus te byung ba mams med do*; on this difference in general cf. also Anālayo 2011a: 659f.

³⁰ [32] MĀ 15 at T I 438a1: 真人, which judging from its usage elsewhere in the *Madhyama-āgama* (cf., e.g., MĀ 85 at T I 561a20) would render a term equivalent to the Pāli *sappurisa*, though in its general usage 真人 can also render "arahant". AN 10.206 at AN V 294,1 instead speaks of "recluses and brahmins", *samaṇa-brāhmaṇā*, and D 4094 *ju* 237b7 or Q 5595 *tu* 271b5 of arahants, *dgra bcom pa*.

ily deeds and develops wholesome bodily deeds, leaves behind unwholesome verbal and mental deeds and develops wholesome verbal and mental deeds. That learned noble disciple, being endowed with diligence and virtue in this way, having accomplished purity of bodily deeds and purity of verbal and mental deeds, being free from ill will and contention, discarding sloth-and-torpor, being without restlessness³¹ or conceit, removing doubt and overcoming arrogance, with right mindfulness and right comprehension, being without bewilderment, dwells having pervaded one direction with a mind endowed with benevolence, and in the same way the second, third and fourth directions, [all] of the four directions, above and below, completely and everywhere. Being without mental shackles, resentment, ill will, or contention, with a mind endowed with benevolence that is supremely vast and great, boundless and well developed, he dwells having pervaded the entire world.

Then he reflects like this: 'Formerly my mind was narrow and not well developed; now my mind has become boundless and well developed.'

"When the mind of the learned noble disciple has in this way become boundless and well developed, if because of [associating with] bad friends he formerly dwelt in negligence and performed unwholesome deeds, [9] those [deeds] cannot lead him along, cannot defile him and will not come back to meet him.

"Suppose there is a small boy or girl,³² who since birth is able to dwell in the liberation of the mind through benevolence. Later on, would [he or she] still perform unwholesome deeds by body,

³¹ [33] Adopting the variant 掉 instead of 調.

³² [34] AN 10.208 at AN V 300,2 refers only to a boy, *kumāro*. Since all versions later on mention a man and a woman, the presentation in MĀ 15 fits the context better. D 4094 *ju* 238a6 or Q 5595 *tu* 272a5 also mentions both a boy and a girl, *khye'u dang bu mo*.

speech or mind?" The monks answered: "Certainly not, Blessed One."

"Why? Not performing evil deeds themselves, how could evil deeds arise? Therefore, a man or woman, at home [or] gone forth, should constantly make an effort to develop liberation of the mind through benevolence. If that man or woman, at home [or] gone forth, develops liberation of the mind through benevolence, [since] when going towards the other world [he or she] will not take this body along, [he or she] will proceed [just] in accordance with [the developed quality of their] mind.

"Monks, you should reflect like this: 'Formerly I was negligent and performed unwholesome deeds. Let the fruits of these be experienced entirely now, not in a later world'.³³ If liberation of the

³³ [35] This reflection of the monks is not found in AN 10.208, although a similar reflection occurs in D 4094 *ju* 238b1 or Q 5595 *tu* 272b1. Limitations of space do not allow a full discussion of this significant difference, which seems to be another case of textual loss on the side of AN 10.208. Briefly stated, in MĀ 15 and the Tibetan version the present passage marks a shift from the theme of the rebirth prospects of a man or woman in general to practice undertaken by monks, where the reflection that the fruits of evilness shall be experienced entirely now represents an aspiration to develop insight in such a way that non-return or full awakening is realized within the same lifetime. According to the commentarial explanation at Mp V 77,17, the earlier passage on the man or woman developing the *brahmavihāras* implies that any 'limiting deeds' related to rebirth in the sensual realm have no scope to influence the next rebirth. That the issue at stake is the next rebirth finds support in other passages that take up the effect of the *brahmavihāras* on 'limiting deeds'. In DN 13 at DN I 251,7 such a reference (which is not found in the description of the *brahmavihāra* practice in the parallel version DĀ 26 at T I 106c17) occurs in the context of a teaching on how to reach union with Brahmā, as is the case in MN 99 at MN II 207,25 (where such a statement is not found in the description of the *brahmavihāra* practice in the parallel MĀ 152 at T I 669c10). The same type of statement in SN 42.8 at SN IV 322,13 and its parallels SĀ 916 at T II 232b5 and SĀ² 131 at T II 425b29 is addressed to a Jain householder who had pro-

mind through benevolence has become boundless and well developed like this, [10] certainly non-returning will be attained, or else that which is even higher.

"It is the same with dwelling having pervaded the entire world with a mind endowed with compassion, sympathetic joy or equanimity, without mental shackles, resentment, ill will, or contention, [with a mind that is] supremely vast and great, boundless and well developed.

Then he reflects like this: 'Formerly my mind was narrow and not well developed; now my mind has become boundless and well developed.

"When the mind of the learned noble disciple has in this way become boundless and well developed, if because of [associating with] bad friends he formerly dwelt in negligence and performed unwholesome deeds, those [deeds] cannot lead him along, cannot defile him and will not come back to meet him. [438b]

"Suppose there is a small boy or girl, who since birth is able to

posed that unwholesome deeds inevitably lead to rebirth in hell. That is, all these passages are related to the nature of the next rebirth. This makes it highly probable that the effect of *brahmavihāra* practice on limiting deeds, described in AN 10.208 and its parallels, also refers to the next rebirth. Thus the present passage need not be understood as entailing a complete elimination of karma, pace Maithrimurthi 1999: 76 (cf. also Enomoto 1989a: 46–48 and Wiltshire 1990: 268), but would only intend the effect of karmic retribution on the next rebirth. The subsequent passage on the monks' aspiration, found only in MĀ 15 and the Tibetan version, would then imply that the development of the *brahmavihāras* has the potential of leading to non-returning or full liberation if – following the suggestion in Mp V 78,7 (cf. also the similar progression of ideas in the *Yogācārabhūmi*, T 1579 at T XXX 808b24) – such *brahmavihāra* practice is undertaken by those who have already reached the insight of a stream-enterer or once-returner, something to which AN 10.208 at AN V 300,14 seems to be implicitly referring by qualifying the monk who reaches non-return as endowed with wisdom.

dwell in the liberation of the mind through equanimity. Later on, would [he or she] still perform unwholesome deeds by body, speech or mind?" The monks answered: "Certainly not, Blessed One."

"Why? Not performing evil deeds themselves, how could evil deeds arise? Therefore a man or woman, at home [or] gone forth, should constantly make an effort to develop liberation of the mind through equanimity. If that man or woman, at home [or] gone forth, develops liberation of the mind through equanimity, [since] when going towards the other world [he or she] will not take this body along, [he or she] will proceed [just] in accordance with [the developed quality of their] mind.

"Monks, you should reflect like this: 'Formerly I was negligent and performed unwholesome deeds. Let the fruits of these be experienced entirely now, not in a later world.' If liberation of the mind through equanimity has become boundless and well developed like this, certainly non-returning will be attained, [11] or else that which is even higher."

The Buddha spoke like this. The monks, having listened to what the Buddha said, were delighted and received it respectfully.

Study

As the above translated *Madhyama-āgama* discourse shows, the *Karajakāya-sutta*'s proclamation that it is impossible to make an end of *dukkha* without experiencing karmic retribution – absent from the two parallel versions – comes at a point in the text where there is anyway a substantial difference between the Pāli discourse on the one side and the Chinese and Tibetan versions on the other side. The Pāli discourse at this point continues by referring to a noble disciple who practises the *brahmavihāras*. This passage gives an impression of abruptness, as it begins with: "that noble disciple, monks, in this way free from covetousness, ill will

and delusion".³⁴ Yet, the preceding part has not introduced any noble disciple, nor has it described in what way such a noble disciple has become free from covetousness, etc. Thus the way this sentence is formulated gives the impression that a loss of text has taken place, creating a lacuna that can be filled with the help of the parallel versions.

In the Chinese and Tibetan counterparts, the initial statement on karmic retribution is illustrated through a detailed exposition of the ten unwholesome actions, ranging from killing to wrong view. Then these two versions turn to the noble disciple, who abstains from these ten unwholesome actions and develops the *brahmavihāras*. It is at this point that the above-mentioned passage in the *Karajakāya-sutta* seems to fit in, with its reference to "that noble disciple" who is "in this way free from covetousness, ill will and delusion" – the last three of the unwholesome actions – and thus able to engage in the practice of the *brahmavihāras*.

The impression that the *Karajakāya-sutta* has lost an exposition of the ten unwholesome actions is further supported by its placement in the Tens of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*. In its present form, the Pāli discourse does not have any aspect related to the number ten. This suggests that at an earlier time, when discourses were allocated to different sections in the four *Nikāyas*, the *Karajakāya-sutta* may still have had an exposition on the ten types of unwholesome actions.

Now, precisely at the point where the *Karajakāya-sutta* affirms that to make an end of *dukkha* requires experiencing karmic retribution, a rather substantial loss of text appears to have taken place. [12] This, together with the absence of such a statement in the

³⁴ [36] AN 10.208 at AN V 299,16: *sa kho so, bhikkhave, ariyasāvako, evaṃ vigatābhijjho vigatavyāpādo asammūḷho*. Woodward 1936/1955: 193 note 1 comments that "all this ... is introduced without apparent reason thus suddenly".

parallel versions, makes it quite probable that this statement is also the outcome of some error during transmission.³⁵

Although the situation so far seems still relatively straightforward, the picture gets somewhat complicated by the fact that a detailed exposition of the ten unwholesome actions, such as what would have been found in an earlier version of the *Karajakāya-sutta*, occurs in the two discourses that precede the *Karajakāya-sutta* in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, the first and the second *Saṅcetanika-sutta*.³⁶ The opening section of these two discourses also agrees with the *Karajakāya-sutta*, that is, the statement that making an end of *dukkha* requires experiencing the fruition of former deeds occurs not only in the *Karajakāya-sutta*, but also in these two discourses.

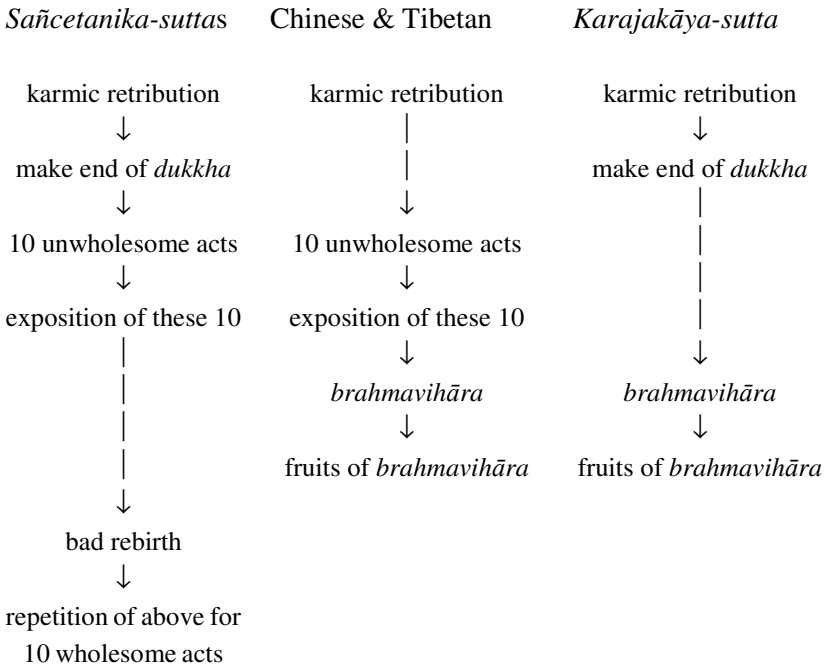
The parallelism between these discourses can best be illustrated with a survey of their main themes, given in table 20. After the introductory statement on karmic retribution and the need to experience it in order to make an end of *dukkha*, the two *Saṅcetanika-suttas* (AN 10.206 and AN 10.207) give a detailed exposition of the ten unwholesome actions, similar to the Chinese and Tibetan discourses. Subsequently, the two *Saṅcetanika-suttas* turn to the bad rebirth that is to be expected from undertaking the ten unwholesome actions, a prospect that the first *Saṅcetanika-sutta* (AN 10.206) illustrates with the simile of a die which, when thrown up in the air, will fall down and stay where it has fallen. The re-

³⁵ [37] My conclusions differ from those of Vetter 1988: 90, who seems to take the statement on the need to experience karmic retribution for being able to make an end of *dukkha* as original and then interprets the reference to the *brahmavihāras* in AN 10.208 as "an attempt to react to this idea", where "cultivating the four immeasurables is recommended as a means to overcome the power of former deeds".

³⁶ [38] AN 10.206 at AN V 292,1 and AN 10.207 at AN V 297,14, title adopted from B^e and C^e.

mainder of the two *Sañcetanika-suttas* then repeats the same pattern for the opposite case of undertaking the ten wholesome deeds, which results in a good rebirth. [13]

Table 20: Main Themes in the Exposition



The parallelism between the *Sañcetanika-suttas* and the *Karajakāya-sutta* in regard to their beginning parts, and between the *Sañcetanika-suttas* and the Chinese and Tibetan discourses in regard to the detailed treatment of the ten unwholesome actions, makes it probable that all these discourses were interrelated during oral transmission, in fact the Chinese and Tibetan versions are

parallels to all three Pāli discourses.³⁷ Thus the way the *Karajakāya-sutta* and the *Saṅcetanika-suttas* have been preserved in the Pāli canon could be the result of a garbling of what originally was a single discourse. [14]

The phrasing of the statement shared by these three consecutive discourses might then be due to a relatively common type of transmission error, where either a negation is lost or else an originally positively worded phrase is negated.³⁸ That is, the sentence

³⁷ [39] Akanuma 1929/1990: 341 also lists SĀ 1047, SĀ 1048 and EĀ 48.1 as parallels to AN 10.206 and AN 10.207. Yet, SĀ 1047 at T II 274a6 takes up unwholesome deeds, mental states and views, 惡業, 惡心, 惡見, making it a closer parallel to AN 3.116 at AN I 270,9, which examines *silavipatti*, *cittavipatti* and *diṭṭhivipatti*, and illustrates their bad consequence with the simile of the die found also in SĀ 1047 at T II 274a21, as well as in AN 10.206 at AN V 294,15. The other two parallels mentioned by Akanuma, SĀ 1048 at T II 274a26 and EĀ 48.1 at T II 785c25, offer an examination of the karmic retribution for the ten unwholesome actions that has more in common with MN 135 at MN III 203,16 than with AN 10.206, even though MN 135 does not base its exposition on the ten unwholesome actions. Thus MĀ 15 and the discourse quotation in Śamathadeva's compendium seem to be the two chief parallels to AN 10.206, AN 10.207 and AN 10.208.

³⁸ [40] Lack of space does not allow an exhaustive survey of this phenomenon, instead of which three examples drawn from the *Majjhima-nikāya* will have to suffice: 1) In a description of what appears to be an arrival at the final goal, MN 29 at MN I 196,29 reads *samayavimokkha*, where from the context one would rather expect *asamayavimokkha*, a reading found in fact in a repetition of the same passage at MN I 197,27, and throughout in B° and C°, as well as in the commentary Ps II 232,3, whereas S° reads *samayavimokkha*. 2) The advice of a doctor in regard to a wound in MN 105 at MN II 257,4 reads *alañca te antarāyāya*, whereas B° and C° read *analañca te antarāyāya*, and S° *alañca te anantarāyāya* (the editions also disagree as to whether this wound still contains poison and whether the doctor is aware of that). In this case E° finds support in a parallel version in SHT IV 500 folio 3 V4, Sander 1980: 220, which reads *ala[m]te-t(r)-ānta[r](ā)yāya*. 3) As a heading for an exposition of how clinging to a sense of self leads to agitation, MN 138 at MN III 227,26 speaks

in question might earlier have read *paṭisaṃviditvā* instead of *ap-
paṭisaṃviditvā*, in which case the statement would have been: "Yet,
monks, I do not say that there is a making of an end of *dukkha*
through having experienced [the fruits of] intentional deeds that
have been undertaken and accumulated."

Though this obviously remains hypothetical, as I am not aware
of any variant that would support the suggested emendation, nev-
ertheless, such a statement would better accord with early Bud-
dhist teachings than the reading *appaṭisaṃviditvā*. By setting a
contrast to the position adopted by the Jains, the suggested emen-
dation *paṭisaṃviditvā* would highlight the point that, even though
karma will definitely bear its fruit, nevertheless liberation is not to
be won through expiating karmic fruition. The assumption that
the text may have read *paṭisaṃviditvā* would also better suit the
introductory phrase "yet" or "however", *tveva* (*tu + eva*), which
would then introduce a real contrast to the preceding statement on
the inevitability of karmic retribution.³⁹ [15] The suggested emen-

of *anupādā paritassanā*, a reading found not only in other Pāli editions but
also in its Chinese parallel MĀ 164 at T I 695c19: 不受而恐怖, even though
this is a clear misfit and the context would require "agitation due to clinging".
In fact the reading *upādā paritassanā* is found in a similar treatment in SN
22.7 at SN III 16,3; cf. also Bodhi in Ñāṇamoli 1995/2005: 1350 note 1253. In
sum, the above examples suggest transmission errors that involve: 1) loss of a
negation in the PTS edition, 2) addition of a negation in the Asian editions, 3)
addition of a negation in the Pāli editions and in the *Madhyama-āgama* paral-
lel. These examples thus appear to testify to a tendency for negations to be-
come lost or else be added during textual transmission.

³⁹ [41] The only recurrence of the pattern *na tvevāhaṃ ... dukkhassa antakiriyaṃ
vadāmi* that I have been able to locate is SN 22.99 at SN III 149,27, where the
point is also a refutation of a tenet held by contemporary recluses, preceded by
a statement of a general principle (here on the nature of *saṃsāra*). This instance
has a positively worded condition: *sandhāvataṃ saṃsarataṃ*, being in that re-
spect similar to my suggested emendation. If the parallelism with SN 22.99

dation *paṭisaṃviditvā* would also fit the subsequent exposition in the *Karajakāya-sutta*, which culminates with the attainment of non-return or full awakening, clearly showing that, from the perspective of the remainder of the discourse, to make an end of *dukkha* does not require exhausting karmic retribution.

In sum, assuming the occurrence of a relatively common transmission error would fit better with the remainder of the *Karajakāya-sutta* and would place the teachings given in this discourse fully within the range of early Buddhist doctrine. In fact, although the Buddhist and Jain traditions obviously influenced each other in various ways, one would not expect the canonical texts of one tradition to uphold a position of the other tradition with which they elsewhere explicitly disagree, especially when it comes to such vital matters as the relationship between karma and liberation.

Yet another example where a Pāli discourse appears to have assembled Jain thought can be found in the first discourse of the third chapter of the *Udāna*. The *udāna* itself – the 'inspired utterance' that forms the key aspect of each discourse in this textual collection – begins by describing the aloofness "of a monk who leaves behind all karma, shaking off the dust of what formerly had been done".⁴⁰ According to the prose narration that precedes this stanza, the Buddha spoke this inspired utterance on seeing a monk seated in meditation who, "with mindfulness and clear comprehension was enduring without complaint painful, fierce, sharp and severe feelings that were the result of former deeds".⁴¹ [16]

should be a valid indication, then in the passage under discussion one would expect a positively worded condition, i.e., *paṭisaṃviditvā*, instead of *appaṭisaṃviditvā*.

⁴⁰ [42] Ud 3.1 at Ud 21,11: *sabbakammajahassa bhikkhuno, dhunamānassa purekatham rajam* (S^e reads *bhūnamānassa purekkhatam*).

⁴¹ [43] Ud 3.1 at Ud 21,4: *purāṇakammavipākajam dukkham tippam kharam kaṭu-*

What is striking about this stanza is the idea of "leaving behind all karma", *sabbakammajaha*, by "shaking off", *dhunati*, the dust of former deeds. The expression *sabbakammajaha* does not seem to recur in other Pāli discourses,⁴² though the term *sabbakammakhaya*, "the destruction of all deeds", occurs as a term representing awakening.⁴³ The verb *dhunati* in the four Pāli *Nikāyas* and in verses found in the *Sutta-nipāta* and the *Thera-* and *Therīgāthā* tends to have a figurative sense as a "shaking off" or "casting off" of evil states.

Examples are descriptions where the disciples of the Buddha "cast off evilness",⁴⁴ or else a monk "casts off evil things", comparable to a tree shaking off its leaves in the wind.⁴⁵ Similar in implication is the allegorical injunction to "shake off Māra's army", just as an elephant would knock over a hut made of reeds.⁴⁶ A stanza specifies that the monks "cast off the three roots of evilness",⁴⁷ and in another stanza someone requests to have his "doubt cast off", in the sense of having the doubt dispelled by an expla-

kaṃ vedanaṃ adhvāsento sato sampajāno avihaññamāno (B^e and C^e read *tibbaṃ*, S^e does not have *kharaṃ*). According to Ud-a 165,2, this monk was already an arahant, so that from the perspective of the commentators the monk's endurance of pain due to former deeds was not something that brought him closer to liberation.

⁴² [44] A related expression would be *sabbakammavihāyinaṃ* or *sabbakammavihāyinaṃ* found in B^e, C^e and S^e of AN 4.28, though E^e at AN II 29,1 reads *sammā kammaviyākatam* instead.

⁴³ [45] Cf., e.g., SN 5.8 at SN I 134,4, AN 4.23 at AN II 24,19 and It 4.13 at It 123,3.

⁴⁴ [46] DN 30 at DN III 179,8: *dhunanti pāpaṃ* (S^e reads *panudi-pāpassa*).

⁴⁵ [47] Th 2 and Th 1006: *dhunāti pāpake dhamme*.

⁴⁶ [48] SN 6.14 at SN I 156,35 and 157,20: *dhunātha maccuno senaṃ*, found again at Th 256; cf. also the similar expression *dhunāma maccuno senaṃ* at Th 1147 and 1149 (S^e reads *dhunāmu*).

⁴⁷ [49] Thī 276: *tīṇi pāpassa mūlāni dhunanti*.

nation.⁴⁸ In sum, in these contexts *dhunati* conveys a figurative sense of casting or shaking off detrimental mental qualities.

Thus the relationship established in the above quoted *Udāna* stanza between *dhunati* and the dust of former deeds as an illustration of leaving behind all karma appears to be unique in early Buddhist texts. Gombrich (1994: 1078ff) comments that the above stanza "sounds ... unequivocally Jain", giving the impression that it "was of non-Buddhist origin". In fact in Jain scriptures, as noted by Enomoto (1989a: 45), "the elimination of *karman* is expressed as 'shaking off (*dhū-*)', and the word *raja* (*rajas*, *raya*) ... implies *karman*".

Examples of such usage can be found in the *Dasaveyāliya-sutta*, which presents shaking off the dust of karma as the way to liberation,⁴⁹ explaining that the evilness from the past is to be shaken off through austerity.⁵⁰ In such passages, the idea of "shaking off" has a literal sense, [17] as the point at stake is to free the soul from the material particles of karma that have been accumulated. Hence the above-quoted *Udāna* passage would be another case where a Pāli passage attributes Jain thought to the Buddha.⁵¹

Turning to the parallel versions, instead of *sabbakammajahas-sa* the Chinese and Tibetan counterparts speak of "leaving behind

⁴⁸ [50] Sn 682: *dhunātha me samsayaṃ*.

⁴⁹ [51] Lalwani 1973: 53,27 and 54,8 (chapter 4 part 12 verses 20–21): *dhunāti karmarajaḥ*.

⁵⁰ [52] Lalwani 1973: 198,9 and 203,8 (chapter 9 part 4 stanza 8 (here counted as 4) and chapter 10 stanza 7): *tapasā dhunoti purāṇapāpakaṃ*; for further examples cf. Yamazaki 2003: 498–499.

⁵¹ [53] Enomoto 1989a: 45 points out that a similar image can be found in the *Kauṣṭhiki Upaniṣad* 1.4; cf. Radhakrishnan 1953: 757,4: *tat-sukṛta-duṣkṛte dhunute vā ... sa eṣa viśukṛto viduṣkṛto brahma-vidvān brahmaivābhipraiti*, translated *ibid.*: "there he shakes off his good deeds and his evil deeds ... thus one, freed from good and freed from evil, the knower of *Brahman*, goes on to *Brahman*".

all sensuality", indicating that they were based on a reading that had *kāma* instead of karma.⁵² This gives the whole stanza a different thrust. Once the point is leaving behind sensuality, the reference to dust would also fall into place, as other discourses associate the image of dust with sensuality and the life of a householder.⁵³ Though the qualification of such dust as something "formerly done" remains puzzling, a reference to sensuality would also concord with the figurative usage of *dhunati* in other discourses, since to shake off the dust of *kāma* would be a mode of shaking off detrimental mental qualities.⁵⁴

Regarding the explanation given in the prose section of this *Udāna* discourse, the corresponding prose section in the Chinese parallel has no reference to experiencing pain that results from former deeds; in fact it does not even mention a monk seated in meditation.⁵⁵ In general, prose sections in the *Udāna* tend to be

⁵² [54] T 212 at T IV 765a6: 比丘盡諸愛, 捨愛去貢高, T 213 at T IV 796b20: 苾芻諸愛盡, 捨愛去貢高, Beckh 1911: 131 (32.3): *dge slong 'dod pa kun spangs shing, mdun gnas pa yi rdul bsal ba*, Zongtse 1990: 378 (32.3): *dge slong 'dod pa kun spangs shing, mdun na gnas pa'i rdul bsal ba*. Enomoto1989a: 44 note 2 comments: "the Tibetan and Chinese versions reflect the reading like **sarvakāmajahasya*". In the case of the Sanskrit version, the beginning of the stanza has not been preserved, reading only ... *hasya bhikkhuno, dhunvānasya puraskṛtaṃ rajāḥ*, Bernhard 1965: 432 (32.3).

⁵³ [55] Dust as representing the household life is part of the standard pericope for going forth, which qualifies living at home as a path of dust, *rajapatha*/塵勞之處; cf., e.g., MN 27 at MN I 179,12 and its parallel MĀ 146 at T I 657a5. In Sn 974 the image of dust represents passion, *rāga*, in regard to the objects of the five senses. Notably Ud-a 166,34, in its gloss on *purekatam rajam* in Ud 21,11, speaks of *rāgaraja*, the "dust of passion".

⁵⁴ [56] Enomoto1989a: 44 note 2, however, seems to take the reading *kamma/karma* to be the original one, as he comments that "*karman* is replaced by *kāma*". In fact, the qualification *purekata* would suit *karma* better than *kāma* (ibid. note 3).

⁵⁵ [57] T 212 at T IV 765a8.

later than the verses,⁵⁶ [18] making it possible that the description of a monk seated in meditation and enduring pain came into being at a time when the stanza already read *sabbakammajaha*. In sum, just as in the case of the *Karajakāya-sutta*, in the present instance, too, the attribution of Jain thought to the Buddha could be due to an error in textual transmission.⁵⁷

Another case of affinity with Jain thought can be found in a discourse in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, which presents the training in morality, concentration and wisdom as three modes of "annihilation", *nijjarā*, as a result of which one does not perform new deeds and gets rid of former deeds by experiencing them.⁵⁸ Enomoto (1989a: 52) comments that "the word *nijjarā* (*nirjarā*) is a technical term of Jain practice and indicates the annihilation of *karman*". In this case, however, the use of Jain terminology seems to be intentional. The discourse begins with a Jain follower presenting his beliefs in a somewhat challenging manner, hence the use of Jain expressions in the reply serves a purpose, since in this way a teaching could be given in terms understandable and acceptable to the visitor.⁵⁹

⁵⁶ [58] Cf. above note 66 page 392.

⁵⁷ [59] This would support the suggestion by Bronkhorst 1998a: 12 that the presence of such passages "in the Buddhist canon can be most easily explained on the assumption that they are not part of earliest Buddhism" (emphasis removed); for a reply to Bronkhorst 1998a cf. Enomoto 2002/2003: 243f.

⁵⁸ [60] AN 3.74 at AN I 221,23: *so navañ ca kammaṃ na karoti purāṇaṃ ca kammaṃ phussa phussa vyantīkaroti* (B°, C° and S° read *vyantīkaroti/byantīkaroti*), with a counterpart in SĀ 563 at T II 147c27: 業更不造, 宿業漸已斷.

⁵⁹ [61] The expressions used in AN 3.74 recur in AN 4.195 at AN II 197,32, with a counterpart in MĀ 12 at T I 434b23; cf. also Bronkhorst 1993/2000: 29 note 8. In this case, too, the context is an encounter with a Jain, which would explain the choice of terminology. According to Ruegg 1989: 143, cases like AN 3.74 and AN 4.195 are "evidently to be explained by the fact that ... [the] auditor was a Nirgrantha and that the teaching was thus intended as an intro-

Yet another instance relevant to the present context could be the recommendation to constrain the mind forcefully, given in the *Vitakkasanthāna-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel as the last of five methods for dealing with unwholesome thoughts.⁶⁰ At first sight, this recommendation seems to contrast with other discourses that include the same practice among exercises that had not been able to lead the bodhisattva to awakening.⁶¹ [19] Bronkhorst (1993/2000: xll) takes this instruction to be a case where "Jaina practices had come to be accepted by at least some Buddhists".⁶²

Closer inspection of the *Vitakkasanthāna-sutta* and its parallel reveals, however, that this exercise is not presented as something that on its own results in awakening,⁶³ but rather as a last resort in case all other attempts to deal with unwholesome thoughts have failed. Even though forcefully restraining the mind is not a method that will result in awakening, it does serve to stop unwholesome thoughts and thereby prevent their spilling over into unwholesome actions.⁶⁴ Thus the instructions given in the *Vitakkasanthāna-sutta* do not conflict with other Pāli passages that consider forceful restraint of the mind to be on its own incapable of leading to awakening.

ductory salvific device"; cf. also Gombrich 1994: 1095.

⁶⁰ [62] MN 20 at MN I 121,1 and MĀ 101 at T I 588c17.

⁶¹ [63] E.g., MN 36 at MN I 242,26; cf. also the more briefly formulated counterparts in the *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1890: 124,3, and the *Saṅghabhedavastu*, Gnoli 1977: 100,3.

⁶² [64] Cf. also King 1980/1992: 10 and Bronkhorst 1999: 86.

⁶³ [65] This can be seen more clearly in MĀ 101, which does not have a counterpart to the reference in MN 20 at MN I 122,4 to cutting off craving, etc.; for a discussion cf. Anālayo 2005: 8–9.

⁶⁴ [66] Gombrich 1994: 1080 comments that it is not "at all strange that a technique which, used by itself ... turned out not to lead to Enlightenment, could be recommended ... for overcoming a particular difficulty".

In sum, besides the case of the *Karajakāya-* and *Sañcetanika-suttas*, the above discussed *Udāna* discourse seems to be another case where a Pāli discourse takes up a position that fits Jain thought better than the teachings of early Buddhism. In both cases, the formulation found in the Pāli version is not supported by the parallel versions, so that both cases may well be the outcome of errors that occurred at some point during their transmission. These two cases thus reveal the potential of comparative studies based on parallel versions transmitted by different schools for properly assessing the doctrinal legacy of the early Buddhist discourses.

Appendix

Introduction

In the present appendix, I examine the question of the school affiliation of the *Madhyama-āgama*, based on a recent contribution to this topic by Chung (2011) and Fukita, followed by turning to the discussion in Bingenheimer (2011) of the expression 奉行. Then I take up some of the conclusions drawn by Thich Minh Chau in his comparative study of the *Majjhima-nikāya* and the *Madhyama-āgama*. Thus the points taken up for examination are:

- The hypothesis that the *Madhyama-āgama* stems from a Sarvāstivāda line of transmission.
- The significance of the expression 奉行 found at the conclusion of *Madhyama-āgama* discourses.
- The question of the degree to which the roles of Mahākassapa and Sāriputta in the discourses collections of the Sarvāstivāda and Theravāda traditions reflect the influence of the respective schools.
- The hypothesis that descriptions of the Buddha taking a rest in front of the monks were deliberately omitted by the Theravādins.
- The significance of the absence of Chinese *Āgama* parallels to Pāli discourses, in particular the relation of the lack of a Chinese version of the *Jīvaka-sutta* to vegetarianism.
- The unusual conclusion of the *Mūlapariyāya-sutta*, which reports that the monks did not delight in the discourse, and the probable reasons why this conclusion is not found in the *Madhyama-āgama* version.
- The supposition that the Buddha's instruction to his son Rāhula in the *Madhyama-āgama* expresses decisively different per-

spectives on the significance of morality held by the Sarvāstivāda and the Theravāda traditions.

- The question of how far the usage of the terms *thera* in the Pāli *Nikāyas* and Chinese *Āgamas* should be understood as expressing sectarian concerns. [3]

The School Affiliation of the *Madhyama-āgama*

The general consensus among scholars so far considers the *Madhyama-āgama* to have been transmitted by reciters of the Sarvāstivāda tradition.¹ In a recent publication, Chung and Fukita provide several arguments that support this school identification, demonstrating also that the alternative of attributing the collection to the Dharmaguptaka tradition is rather unconvincing.²

Their conclusion, Chung (2011: 33), is nevertheless that "while we respect the prevailing opinions on this issue, we have considerable difficulty in supporting the view that the Zhong-ahanjing [*Madhyama-āgama*] derives from the Sarvāstivāda school, at least insofar as we define the term 'school' as a community of Buddhist monks who share a common canonical tradition".

The evidence they have surveyed suggests the existence of at least two distinct *Āgama* traditions within the Sarvāstivāda and/or Mūlasarvāstivāda traditions.³ It seems indeed quite possible that

* My discussion of suggestions made by Minh Chau was originally published 2008 under the title "The Chinese *Madhyama-āgama* and the Pāli *Majjhima-nikāya* – In the Footsteps of Thich Minh Chau" in the *Indian International Journal of Buddhist Studies*, 9: 1–21.

¹ Cf., e.g., Lü 1963: 242, Waldschmidt 1980: 136, Enomoto 1984, Mayeda 1985: 98, Enomoto 1986: 21, Minh Chau 1991: 27 and Oberlies 2003: 48.

² Chung 2011: 29–32.

³ Chung 2011: 27f notes that it seems as if "the Zhong-ahanjing [*Madhyama-āgama*] and the Shisong-lü [*Sarvāstivāda Vinaya*] derive from a common tradition. Apart from the fact that there are certain incongruities with regard to some Vinaya rules, and that questions concerning the language of the underly-

there were not only different *Vinayas* within the Sarvāstivāda and/or Mūlasarvāstivāda traditions,⁴ but also distinct *Āgama* transmission lineages, although certainly exhibiting less pronounced differences between each other than what can be found between the respective *Vinayas*.⁵

ing Indic original of the Zhong-ahanjing remain to be solved, it is possible that these two texts stem from two closely related branches of a Buddhist school. Assuming that the Zhong-ahanjing stems from a Sarvāstivāda branch, it would be logical to suppose that there were at least two *Āgama* traditions or *bhāṇaka* (reciter) lineages of the Madhyamāgama within the Sarvāstivāda school. These either differed from each other from the start or shared a common origin but went through different developmental processes ... the transmission of the *Āgama* texts within these respective traditions in different locations might have resulted in sub-traditions with regional variants in diction, or with variants conditioned by the times ... if that is indeed the case, then it would mean that within the Sarvāstivāda school there existed not only two or more *Vinaya* traditions, but also more than a single *Āgama* tradition".

⁴ On the relationship between Sarvāstivāda and Mūlasarvāstivāda cf. Enomoto 2000, Skilling 2002 and Wynne 2008.

⁵ This would explain the observation by Chung 2011: 17 that "there are divergences between the sūtras in the Za-ahan-jing [*Samyukta-āgama*] and their counterparts in the Zhong-ajanjing [*Madhyama-āgama*], but these are not to a degree substantial enough to warrant an assumption that the Zhong-ahanjing derives from a Buddhist school which had no direct relation to the school from which the Za-ahanjing originates". The same holds for other observations mentioned by Chung 2011: 23 and 26, such as structural differences between the Chinese *Madhyama-āgama* and the *Madhyama-āgama* reflected in Śamathadeva's compendium of discourse quotations in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* as well as the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, or variations in listings of the 32 marks of a great man in MĀ 59 as against such listings in Sanskrit fragments of the *Mahāvadāna-sūtra* and the *Sanḥabhedavastu* of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*; cf. also the table in Chung 2011: 185ff. All this fits the assumption that the *Madhyama-āgama* stems from a Sarvāstivāda reciter lineage, whereas the *Samyukta-āgama* preserved in Chinese, Śamathadeva's compendium and obviously the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* stem from the Mūlasarvāstivāda tradition(s).

In view of the fluctuating nature of oral transmission that for centuries has had a determining influence on the early discourse collections, it would only be natural if followers of various branches of a particular school, quite probably separated from each other geographically, do not preserve the texts in precisely the same manner, with the same errors and variations, etc.

The research by Chung and Fukita also shows that, in spite of a considerable degree of general correspondence,⁶ occasionally passages in the *Madhyama-āgama* do not exactly match their counterparts in the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*.⁷ This is perhaps not sur-

⁶ Cf., e.g., Chung 2011: 18, who regarding MĀ 37 at T I 478b13 to 479c10 and its counterpart in the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1435 at T XXIII 239b7 to 240a19, concludes that "these two versions are so similar as to suggest derivation from a common source". Again, comparing SĀ 592 at T II 157b18 to 158b23 and two equivalents in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, Gnoli 1977: 166,16 to 171,1 and Gnoli 1978b: 14,13 to 18,13, with the second third of MĀ 28 at T I 459c9 to 460c1 and its counterpart in the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1435 at T XXIII 243c20 to 244b23, Chung 2011: 19 comments that "these last two texts [i.e., MĀ 28 and the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*] are more closely related to each other than to the first three texts [i.e., SĀ 592 and the two passages in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*]" Cf. also above page 307.

⁷ Regarding a reference to a discourse in the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1435 at T XXIII 301a27, which de Jong 1988: 12 had identified as referring to MĀ 26, Chung 2011: 19 comments that "the cited passage cannot be located therein [i.e. in MĀ 26]". Now the instructions attributed to the Buddha in T 1435 at T XXIII 301a17 begin with a description of the proper conduct of a forest monk that clearly stands in relation to what the preceding tale had described, where a forest monk is unable to give proper replies to those visiting the place where he is staying. This is not a quote from MĀ 26, where the setting is different, as here a forest monk comes to visit other monks. These instructions are then followed by some additional indications at T XXIII 301a23, according to which a forest monk should also be knowledgeable in the discourses, the *Vinaya* and the Abhidharma, as well as in the absorptions and the stages of awakening. Following these indications the reference to the discourse comes in the form: "as described in detail in the *Goniṣāda-sūtra*", T 1435 at T XXIII 301a27: 如

prising, since given the nature of oral transmission it cannot be expected that the discourses and the *Vinaya* of any particular school match each other without the least variation.

An illustrative example in this respect can be found in the count of precepts for monks given in several discourses in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* as "over 150 rules".⁸ This reference does not correspond too well to the number of rules for monks according to the Theravāda *Vinaya* tradition, which amount to 227 rules.⁹ Such a difference would obviously not be sufficient ground for concluding that the Theravāda affiliation of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*

瞿尼沙修多羅中廣說. Similar qualities are stipulated in MĀ 26 at T I 455c13, which describes that a forest monk should be knowledgeable in *Vinaya* and Abhidharma, in the immaterial attainments and in the destruction of the influxes. Thus, while the terminology employed does not correspond exactly (no explicit mention of the 'discourses', reference to absorptions as against immaterial attainments and to stages of awakening instead of destruction of influxes), the thematic similarity makes it clear that this need not be considered a mismatch. The point at stake does not appear to be an exact quotation from the discourse, but rather to indicate that the topics broached have received a more detailed treatment in MĀ 26. Thus this *Vinaya* passage could well have come into being in a reciter tradition whose *Madhyama-āgama* collection contained a discourse corresponding to MĀ 26. In addition to this case, another discourse quotation in T 1435 at T XXIII 410c4 refers to the 跋陀婆羅經. Chung 2011: 19 comments that this reference "is similar in name to Sūtra 194 of the Zhong-ahanjing, the Batuoheli-jing 跋陀和利經. In content, however, this sūtra can hardly be the source of the citation in the Shisong-lü". Thus perhaps this reference is not to MĀ 194, but to another discourse found elsewhere.

⁸ AN 3.83 at AN I 230,17: *sādhikaṃ ... diyaddhasikkhāpadasataṃ*, an expression found again in AN 3.85 at A I 231,18, AN 3.86 at A I 232,33 and AN 3.87 at A I 234,11; cf. also, e.g., Dutt 1924/1996: 75f, Law 1933: 21, Bhagvat 1939: 64, Pachow 1955: 8f, Misra 1972: 33 and Dhirasekera 1982/2007: 145.

⁹ The Theravāda *pātimokkha* comprises 4 *pārājika*, 13 *saṅghādisesa*, 2 *aniyata*, 30 *nissaggiya pācittiya*, 92 *pācittiya*, 4 *pāṭidesanīya*, 75 *sekhiya* and 7 *adhikaraṇasamatha*, resulting in a total count of 227.

is doubtful. A more natural conclusion, following a suggestion given in the Pāli commentary, would be that at the time of the coming into being of these discourses not all of the rules recorded in the *Vinaya* had been promulgated.¹⁰

The above variation regarding the overall count of rules is not the only such instance found when comparing the Theravāda *Vinaya* to the Pāli discourses. Another example occurs in an examination of seven ways of settling litigations (*adhikaraṇa samatha*) in the *Sāmagāma-sutta*, which takes these up in a sequence that differs from the way they are listed in the Pāli *Vinaya*.¹¹

Such divergences affect not only the count or sequence of rules and regulations. Even the Buddha's reflections right after having reached awakening – presumably a topic of considerable significance for his disciples – are reported differently in the Theravāda *Vinaya* and in the *Udāna*.¹²

Yet another example can be found in relation to the *Ratṭhapāla-sutta*. The Theravāda *Vinaya* reports an exchange in verse between Ratṭhapāla and his father that clearly belongs to an epi-

¹⁰ Mp II 346,30: *tasmim samaye paññattasikkhāpadān' eva sandhāy' etaṃ vuttaṃ.*

¹¹ MN 104 at MN II 247,19 has decision by majority (*yebhuyyasikā*) as the second item in its exposition, whereas Vin IV 207,5 has decision by majority in fifth position. This difference seems to be an inconsistency within the discourse itself, as MN 104 at MN II 247,8 gives a listing that corresponds to the sequence in Vin IV 207,5; cf. also Anālayo 2011a: 607 note 112 and for a survey of such inconsistencies in the case of the *Madhyama-āgama* Chung 2011: 33 note 113.

¹² Ud 1.1–3 at Ud 1,6 report that the recently awakened Buddha contemplated dependent arising during the first watch of the night, dependent cessation during the second watch of the night, and both during the last watch of the night. According to Vin I 1,5 he contemplated both during each of the three watches. Judging from the stanzas that accompany the prose in Ud and Vin, especially the reference to *khaya* in the second stanza, the Ud account is the more original; cf. also Anālayo 2008b: 379.

sode reported in the *Raṭṭhapāla-sutta*, when Raṭṭhapāla visits his home town after going forth and does not receive any alms at his family's house.¹³ The Pāli discourse has none of these stanzas.

These few instances may already suffice to show that some degree of variation is natural in the case of the type of oral material that we are dealing with. Here it also needs to be kept in mind that the Pāli discourses are not a product of the Theravādins, just as the *Madhyama-āgama* is not a product of the Sarvāstivādins. Instead, these are collections of discourses transmitted orally for long periods by successive generations of Indian reciters, of which only the last generations could be considered members of a particular school.

In sum, it is only natural that some minor divergences between the texts transmitted within a particular school occur. The nature of the transmission of the early texts therefore makes it unavoidable that school affiliations cannot be settled beyond any doubt. This in turn implies that, in a discussion of the question of school affiliation, an examination of textual variations needs to be combined with an evaluation of the impact of doctrinal views on the transmitted material.¹⁴ Yet, Chung and Fukita do not seem to have taken doctrinal influences into consideration at all.

While the survey by Chung and Fukita does offer a welcome reminder that the Sarvāstivāda affiliation of the *Madhyama-āgama* is just a hypothesis, as far as I can see it remains clearly the most probable and convincing hypothesis.

The Conclusion of *Madhyama-āgama* Discourses

A character couplet found regularly at the conclusion of dis-

¹³ Vin III 148,30. Raṭṭhapāla's visit to his former home is reported in MN 82 at MN II 61,26; cf. also Anālayo 2011a: 457f.

¹⁴ For an example cf. above p. 437f.

courses in the *Madhyama-āgama* and other *Āgamas* is 奉行, where it occurs together with a reference to the listeners delighting in what has been said.¹⁵ The corresponding concluding formula in Pāli discourses only speaks of the listeners delighting (*abhinandati*, at times together with *anumodati*, which conveys the same meaning). This raises the question if there is an Indic counterpart to 奉行.

In a recent study of 奉行, Bingenheimer (2011: 53) suggest the expression renders an Indic original \sqrt{dhr} .¹⁶ Bingenheimer (2011: 56) then concludes that "the intention of the Indian original was to

¹⁵ MĀ 145 at T I 654b27 confirms that the object of such delighting and 奉行 is what has just been said, 我等一切歡喜奉行彼比丘所說. MĀ 131 at T I 622c12 indicates that 奉行 and delighting should be considered as separate activities, as in the context of a five character stanza they are divided by "and": 歡喜而奉行.

¹⁶ Bingenheimer 2011: 53 bases his suggestion on a passage in the *Āyuhparyanta-sūtra*, Matsumura 1989: 82,27 (§36): *śrutvā bhikṣavo dhārayiṣyanti*, on which he comments that "for this passage, which is not the closing formula, we have a parallel in both the ZA [*Samyukta-āgama*] and the BZA ... in the ZA *dhārayiṣyanti* is rendered *fengxing*". While the expression 奉行 does not occur in the Chinese parallel to the above passage from the *Āyuhparyanta-sūtra*, T 759 at T XVII 603a26, which reads: 我等樂聞, 受持憶念, it occurs at the end of the text, T 759 at T XVII 604a21, which unfortunately has no counterpart in the Sanskrit fragment. Counterparts to the above type of expression in the *Samyukta-āgama* (= ZA) show some variations (such as 當受持奉行 and (當)如說奉行), but in those instances where I have been able to identify a Sanskrit or Pāli parallel, the expression corresponding to *śrutvā bhikṣavo dhārayiṣyanti* or *sutvā bhikkhū dhāressantī ti* is 諸比丘聞已, 當受奉行; cf. SĀ 75 at T II 19c2 and SN 22.58 at SN III 66,9, SĀ 282 at T II 78b8 and MN 152 at MN III 299,2, SĀ 291 at T II 82b8 and SN 12.66 at SN II 107,22, SĀ 294 at T II 84a6 and SN 12.19 at SN II 24,16, SĀ 684 at T II 186c5 and a Sanskrit fragment parallel, together with the Pāli counterpart, in Chung 2009: 9, SĀ 813 at T II 208c20 and SN 54.10 at SN V 323,3, SĀ 1136 at T II 299c16 and 300a6 and SN 16.3 at SN II 198,16 and 199,7. In these cases, *dhāressantī* is already rendered by 當受, thus 奉行 appears to be without a counterpart.

express the semantics of 'retain/remember/uphold' rather than 'practice/fulfill/act upon'".

Since in the discourses translated above I rather rendered 奉行 as "receive respectfully", in what follows I briefly explain my choice. Given that the implications of this character couplet may well differ with various translators, I will focus on its usage in the *Madhyama-āgama*. Now in the only case where I have been able to locate an Indic counterpart to 奉行 in the *Madhyama-āgama*, the parallel reads *samādāya vartati / vattati*, conveying the sense of "undertaking and practising".¹⁷ Looking at 奉行 from the viewpoint of the meaning suggested by the context, the sense of undertaking something or practising seems indeed relevant for a few other occurrences in the *Madhyama-āgama*, where the question at stake is putting into practice a meditative instruction received earlier.¹⁸

However, the sense of undertaking or practising does not fit

¹⁷ This occurs in the context of describing the Vajjians well undertaking and practising the Dharma set forth by their ancestors, MĀ 142 at T I 648c17: 舊跋耆法善奉行, which has as its parallel DN 16 at DN II 74,13: *vajjidhamme samādāya vattantī ti* and Sanskrit fragment M 372 V5, Waldschmidt 1950: 66: [vṛ]jīdharmam samā[da](ya vartante); cf. also the Tibetan parallel in Waldschmidt 1951: 111. The same principle is then applied to the monks who should undertake and practice the precepts set forth to them by the Buddha, MĀ 142 at T I 649b18: 戒善奉行, DN 16 at DN II 77,5: *sikkhāpadesu samādāya vattissanti*, and fragment S 380 (= no. 254) V1, Waldschmidt 1950: 84: *(si)k-ṣāṃ samādāy(a vartīṣyante)*.

¹⁸ MĀ 8 at T I 429b15, MĀ 130 at T I 619c4 and MĀ 160 at T I 684a14: 奉行法者. On this expression, Bingenheimer 2011: 55 comments that "the passage, which appears six times in T.26, is always followed by 修四梵室 where 'practice' is clearly expressed by *xiu*, 修, and the meaning 'remember' for *fengxing* therefore seems preferable". It seems to me that this is not invariably the case, cf., e.g., MĀ 8 at T I 429b15: 諸弟子等有不具足奉行法者, 彼命終已, 或生四王天, 或生三十三天, where the passage in question is not followed by another term that stands for "practice", so that the meaning of 奉行 in such contexts does indeed seem to be "to practice".

contexts in the same collection where 奉行 occurs together with delighting, as is the case for the standard ending of a discourse. An example would be the recurrent use of 奉行 as part of a discussion where, on receiving a reply to a query, the questioner reacts by delighting and 奉行.¹⁹ There is little scope for the questioner to put things into practice while being in the midst of a discussion.

At first sight one might think that perhaps here the sense of remembering falls into place, since in an oral setting this is precisely what is required from the questioner, namely that he keeps in mind what he has just heard. A closer inspection, however, shows that this does not always work. A case in point is the parallel to the *Chabbisodhana-sutta* (MN 112) translated above.

The discourse indicates that, when a monk claims to be an arahant, the other monks should first of all approve of it, rejoice in it and undertake 奉行, followed by then investigating this claim.²⁰ In the case of the first instance of 奉行 in relation to the bare fact that the monk in question claims to be an arahant, there would seem to be little need to make any special effort to remember this. The point of the description thus seems to be that the other monks should first of all react in an appreciative and respectful manner, before undertaking a closer investigation. The same sense of appreciation and respectful reception would also fit the standard conclusion of a discourse.

In its use in the *Madhyama-āgama*, then, when 奉行 occurs together with delighting I adopt as a provisional rendering "receive respectfully",²¹ which as far as I can see seems to work for most

¹⁹ Besides MĀ 187 quoted in the note below, cf., e.g., MĀ 29 at T I 461c11, MĀ 134 at T I 635a22, MĀ 172 at T I 709a28, MĀ 201 at T I 788a25 and MĀ 211 at T I 790b22.

²⁰ MĀ 187 at T I 732a25: 汝等聞之, 當善然可, 歡喜奉行; cf. above page 225.

²¹ According to Hirakawa 1997: 338, 奉行 can render *pratipatti*, for which Monier-Williams 1899/1999: 667 gives as a possible meaning "respectful reception".

occurrences of 奉行. Depending on context, such respectful reception can be understood to imply at least to some degree also remembering what one has heard and/or putting it into practice as the natural consequence of a respectful reception of an instruction. I realize that this is not ideal, but for the time being hopefully this will work until further research has clarified the meaning of 奉行.

The Role of Mahākassapa and Sāriputta

In his groundbreaking comparative study, Minh Chau (1991) examines various aspects of the *Madhyama-āgama* that, in his view, make it probable that this collection was transmitted by the Sarvāstivāda tradition. As mentioned above, I think his identification is probably correct. However, not all of the arguments that he proposes serve the purpose of establishing this conclusion.

Having highlighted Mahākassapa's status as "the first and foremost ācariya of the Sarvāstivāda sect, while Sāriputta is considered to be the first ācariya of the Theravāda sect", Minh Chau (1991: 21) notes that the *Anupada-sutta*, which praises Sāriputta as the disciple who is born from the Blessed One's mouth and who keeps rolling the wheel of Dharma, does not have a Chinese parallel. He then concludes that "as the Buddha ... extolled elder Sāriputta so highly, the Sarvāstivādins might drop this sutta from their Canon or it might be interpolated by the Theravādins in their Canon".

Yet, another *Madhyama-āgama* discourse also states that Sāriputta kept rolling the wheel of Dharma.²² Even the long praise of Sāriputta's wisdom, found at the beginning of the *Anupada-sutta*, recurs in similar words in several *Madhyama-āgama* discourses.²³

²² [3] MĀ 121 at T I 610b9: 舍梨子, 我所轉法輪, 汝復能轉.

²³ [4] MN 111 at MN III 25,5; cf. MĀ 27 at T I 458b15, MĀ 28 at T I 461b10, MĀ 31 at T I 467b10 and MĀ 121 at T I 610b5.

Thus the *Madhyama-āgama* does not seem to be consistent in underrating Sāriputta's status.

Moreover, a discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya* reckons Mahākassapa as having been born from the Blessed One's mouth, employing exactly the same terms used to describe Sāriputta in the *Anupada-sutta*.²⁴ [4] Thus this Pāli discourse shows quite a positive attitude towards Mahākassapa. Conversely, other Pāli discourses even present a critical perspective in regard to Sāriputta. One example is the *Cātumā-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*, which records the Buddha explicitly voicing criticism of Sāriputta.²⁵

A particularly telling case is the *Dhānañjāni-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel. Both discourses report that Sāriputta had given a teaching to the dying brahmin Dhānañjāni due to which the latter was reborn in a Brahmā world. The two versions differ, however, in their evaluation of Sāriputta's teaching. According to the *Madhyama-āgama* version, the Buddha praised Sāriputta's wisdom and explained to the assembled monks that Sāriputta had successfully taught Dhānañjāni the path to the Brahmā world, adding that if he had continued to teach the brahmin further, Dhānañjāni would have understood the Dharma.²⁶

The *Majjhima-nikāya* version, however, gives a rather different evaluation. It points out that Sāriputta had left after establishing Dhānañjāni in the "inferior Brahmā world", even though "there still was more to be done by him".²⁷ This criticism is voiced three

²⁴ [5] SN 16.11 at SN II 221,22: *bhagavato putto oraso mukhato jāto dhammajo dhammanimmito dhammadāyādo*, which corresponds word for word to the praises of Sāriputta in MN 111 at MN III 29,11.

²⁵ [6] MN 67 at MN I 459,19; a criticism also reported in its parallel EĀ 45.2 at T II 771b6.

²⁶ [7] MĀ 27 at T I 458b17: 舍梨子比丘成就實慧, 此舍梨子比丘教化梵志陀然, 為說梵天法來, 若復上化者, 速知法如法。

²⁷ [8] MN 97 at MN II 195,20: *sati uttarikaraṇīye, hīne brahmaloke patiṭṭhāpetvā*

times in the Pāli discourse. At first the reciters themselves express this criticism as part of their narration of what happened.²⁸ Then the Buddha conveys the same disapproval to the assembled monks when he sees Sāriputta approaching them. Once Sāriputta has arrived, the Buddha directly asks him why he had left after establishing Dhānañjāni only in the inferior Brahmā world, even though there was still more for him to do. Thus the present example, taken on its own, would give the impression that the Theravāda tradition had a less positive attitude towards Sāriputta than the Sarvāstivāda reciters. [5]

The above variations reveal the lack of uniformity in the way the discourse collections of the Sarvāstivāda and Theravāda schools present Sāriputta and Mahākassapa. Thus the role assumed by these two disciples in various discourses need not be an expression of the influence of the school that transmitted the respective discourse. That is, the esteem in which Mahākassapa and Sāriputta were respectively held by the Sarvāstivāda and Theravāda schools may not have had such far-reaching consequences as to lead to the wholesale omission of discourses.

The Buddha's Deportment in the *Dhammadāyāda-sutta*

Thich Minh Chau points out that in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Dhammadāyāda-sutta* the Buddha takes a rest by lying down in front of the monks, whereas the same is not recorded in the *Majjhima-nikāya* version.²⁹ He also notes that a similar description is found in another *Madhyama-āgama* discourse, which does not have a Pāli counterpart. From this he in-

(C^c: *uttariṃ karaṇīye*), a description repeated at MN II 195,25 and MN II 196,1.

²⁸ [9] For the reciters to include this criticism in their narrative description is noteworthy, since in general the narrative voice in the discourses tends just to relate circumstances without explicitly evaluating them.

²⁹ [10] MĀ 88 at T I 570b22 and MN 3 at MN I 13,34.

fers that "that the Pāli compilers were not happy over these attitudes of the Buddha and dropped" the corresponding passage in the former case and the whole discourse in the latter case (Minh Chau 1991: 30). In contrast, for the Sarvāstivādins "the dignified way which the Buddha adopted in lying down in front of the monks had nothing questionable" which "justified the Sarvāstivādins in preserving these details".

The *Dhammadāyāda-sutta* has another parallel in the *Ekottari-ka-āgama*, which also does not describe the Buddha lying down. Instead, it agrees with the *Majjhima-nikāya* version that the Buddha just retired to his dwelling.³⁰ Moreover, several Pāli discourses do describe the Buddha lying down to take a rest in front of the monks.³¹ This makes it improbable that the absence of such a description in the *Dhammadāyāda-sutta* and the lack of a Pāli parallel to the other *Madhyama-āgama* discourse could be an expression of a wish of the compilers of the Pāli canon to erase such descriptions. [6]

Vegetarianism and the *Jīvaka-sutta*

The hypothesis that certain discourses were dropped under the pressure of sectarian influence comes up again in relation to the *Jīvaka-sutta*. Minh Chau (1991: 31f) reasons that "the dropping from all the Chinese Āgamas of the Pāli sutta *N^o 55, Jīvaka-sutta*, in which the Buddha was reported to allow the monks to take three kinds of meat, confirms the Sarvāstivāda's attitude against meat-eating". "This difference in attitude towards meat-eating in

³⁰ [11] EĀ 18.3 at T II 588a25.

³¹ [12] DN 33 at DN III 209,18, MN 53 at MN I 354,25, SN 35.202 at SN IV 184,8 and AN 10.67 at AN V 123,1. Minh Chau 1991: 30 seems to have been aware of such instances, as he notes that "the Theravādins referred to these details very rarely", thus he did not base his argument on assuming a total absence of such descriptions in Pāli discourses.

the two versions serves to explain why now-a-days meat-eating is allowed for the monks of countries following the Theravāda tradition, while the monks of such countries as China, Korea, Vietnam observe vegetarianism faithfully".

Yet, to take the absence of a parallel to the *Jīvaka-sutta* to be an expression of Sarvāstivāda vegetarianism would not fit too well with the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, which mentions the three instances when meat should not be consumed in the same way as the *Jīvaka-sutta*; both indicate that, apart from the stipulated conditions, meat-eating is allowable.³² Had vegetarianism in the Sarvāstivāda tradition been strong enough to lead to a suppression of the *Jīvaka-sutta*, one would expect it to have exerted its influence also on the *Vinaya*.

In fact, the early texts of the different Buddhist schools seem to be in general agreement that meat-eating is allowable. The only recorded instance of vegetarianism being advocated appears to come from the schismatic Devadatta.³³ According to Ruegg (1980: 236f), it seems probable that "vegetarianism became established in Buddhism ... in close connection with ... the *tathāgata-garbha* doctrine", which would make it unlikely that the idea of vegetarianism could have exerted a determining influence on the compilation of the *Āgama* collections. [7]

³² [13] T 1435 at T XXIII 190b9 and T XXIII 264c27, corresponding to the description in MN 55 at MN I 369,4. Moreover, T 1435 at T XXIII 91b21 includes meat and fish in a listing of allowable food, and T 1435 at T XXIII 190b14 agrees with Vin I 238,8 on reckoning meat consumption apart from the prohibited three instances as pure, 三種淨, *tikoṭiparisuddha*; the same is the case for the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*; cf. T 1458 at T XXIV 570a15 (also in Dutt 1984: 236,17); cf. also Waldschmidt 1939/1967: 104f, Prasad 1979, Schmithausen 2005b: 188f and Heirman 2006: 60.

³³ [14] For a survey of the points raised by Devadatta according to the different *Vinayas* cf., e.g., Bureau 1991: 108 and Mukherjee 1966: 76f.

Independent of the exact time at which vegetarianism became a tenet of general importance in the history of Buddhism, the absence of a parallel to the *Jīvaka-sutta* in the Chinese *Āgamas* would not be related to such issues, as among Sanskrit fragments of the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda *Dīrgha-āgama* a counterpart to the *Jīvaka-sutta* has been found.³⁴ These fragments have preserved the passage on the conditions for the consumption of meat that Thich Minh Chau assumes to be the reason for the absence of a version of this discourse in the Sarvāstivāda tradition.³⁵

Thus the absence of a parallel to the *Jīvaka-sutta* among the discourses found in the Chinese *Āgamas* does not seem to be related to ideological issues, but rather appears to be an outcome of the circumstance that the four *Āgamas* belong to different schools. The *Madhyama-āgama* collection preserved in Chinese does not have a parallel to the *Jīvaka-sutta* because the Sarvāstivādins would have had a version of this discourse in their *Dīrgha-āgama* collection, a collection not preserved in Chinese. The *Dīrgha-āgama* preserved in Chinese translation is generally held to belong to the Dharmaguptaka tradition.³⁶ This collection does not include a version of the *Jīvaka-sutta*, possibly because this discourse was found in another *Āgama* of the Dharmaguptaka tradition, perhaps in its *Madhyama-āgama*, similar to the placing given to this discourse in the Theravāda tradition.

The *Jīvaka-sutta* is not the only such instance of Pāli discourses that are without a counterpart in the Chinese *Āgamas*. [8] Even in the same chapter of the *Majjhima-nikāya*, the *Gahapati-vagga*,

³⁴ [15] Cf. the survey in Hartmann 2004: 127 and the *uddāna* in Hartmann 2002: 138; cf. also fragment SHT VI 1525 V1 to R2, which according to the identification in Bechert 2004: 439 belongs to a version of the *Jīvaka-sutta*.

³⁵ [16] DĀ (Skt) fragment 433v (I am indebted to Jens-Uwe Hartmann for kindly providing me with a preliminary draft transliteration of this fragment).

³⁶ [17] Cf. above note 62 page 35.

several more such cases can be found.

One such case is the *Apaṇṇaka-sutta*, parts of which have similarly been preserved in Sanskrit fragments.³⁷ Another example is the *Kukkuravatika-sutta*, which has no known parallel either in the Chinese *Āgamas* or in Sanskrit fragments. Nevertheless, an exposition that seems to stem from a version of this discourse can be found in Śamathadeva's compendium of discourse quotations in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, extant in Tibetan.³⁸

Moreover, the *Saṅgītiparyāya*'s comment on the four types of action treated in the *Kukkuravatika-sutta* explicitly refers to the protagonist of this discourse, Puṇṇa, who was observing the ascetic practice of behaving like a cow.³⁹ There can be little doubt that this passage has a version of the *Kukkuravatika-sutta* in mind.

A last example, still from the same *Gahapati-vagga* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*, is the *Abhayarājakumāra-sutta*, which has no known parallel either in the Chinese *Āgamas* or in Śamathadeva's compendium. Nevertheless, parts of this discourse have been preserved in a discourse quotation in the **Mahāprajñāpāramitā-(upadeśa-)-śāstra*.⁴⁰

Thus the *Gahapati-vagga* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* has a number of discourses that are without counterpart in the Chinese *Āga-*

³⁷ [18] For a survey of the fragment parallels to MN 60 cf. Anālayo 2011a: 339 note 147. The same is the case for the *Kandaraka-sutta*, MN 51, though here it is uncertain if the relevant Sanskrit fragments are parallels to MN 51 or to one of the other Pāli discourses that expound the same theme; cf. the survey of fragment parallels in Anālayo 2011a: 309 note 2.

³⁸ [19] D 4094 *ju* 268b2 or Q 5595 *tu* 235a3, translated in Skilling 1979.

³⁹ [20] T 1536 at T XXVI 396a8 notes that the Buddha gave this exposition of the four types of action to 圓滿, the observer of the cow conduct, 牛戒, corresponding to Puṇṇo, the *govatiko*, mentioned in MN 57 at MN I 387,9.

⁴⁰ [21] T 1509 at T XXV 321b15 to b25. On an as yet unpublished Sanskrit fragment parallel cf. Hartmann 1992: 28.

mas, yet Sanskrit fragments or discourse quotations preserved in Chinese or Tibetan sources document the existence of parallel versions. [9] This goes to show that the absence of a discourse from the *Āgamas* may simply be due to differences in the distribution of discourses among the four discourse collections transmitted by various Buddhist schools. Since the four *Āgamas* translated into Chinese do not stem from a single school, such variations in distribution have affected the range of discourses preserved in Chinese translation.

The Conclusion of the *Mūlapariyāya-sutta*

In relation to the unusual concluding section of the *Mūlapariyāya-sutta*, according to which the monks did not delight in the Buddha's exposition, Minh Chau (1991: 204) notes that the discourses identified by Akanuma (1929/1990: 163) as the parallel versions – a discourse in the *Madhyama-āgama* and an individual translation – instead employ the standard conclusion to a discourse, namely, that the monks were delighted with the Buddha's exposition.⁴¹ Thich Minh Chau then reasons that the negation *na* "might have been used to earmark its [the discourse's] expunging from the Pāli Tipiṭaka, but the later Pāli compilers forgot to do so". Yet, that the monks did not delight in the discourse is also recorded in an *Ekottarika-āgama* parallel to the *Mūlapariyāya-sutta*.⁴²

This rather unusual ending was also known to the Pāli commentators, who provide an explanation for it. They report that the Buddha had preached this discourse to humble the pride of a group of five hundred monks.⁴³ The monks did not delight in the dis-

⁴¹ [22] MĀ 106 at T I 596c14: 彼諸比丘聞佛所說, 歡喜奉行 and T 56 at T I 851b21: 彼諸比丘聞世尊所說, 歡喜而樂.

⁴² [23] EĀ 44.6 at T II 766b15: "at that time, the monks did not accept that teaching [given to them by the Buddha]", 是時諸比丘不受其教.

⁴³ [24] Ps I 56,8; cf. also Jā 245 at Jā II 259,14. The commentary continues by

course, the commentary explains, because they were unable to understand what the Buddha had taught them. On this explanation, their unusual reaction could indeed have been part of the discourse right from its outset.⁴⁴ [10]

The Pāli editions of the *Mūlapariyāya-sutta* do in fact vary, as according to the PTS edition the monks did delight in the exposition given by the Buddha on this occasion.⁴⁵ This difference between texts within the Theravāda tradition suggests an explanation that might also apply to the parallels to the *Mūlapariyāya-sutta* found in the *Madhyama-āgama* and in an individual translation, in that the natural levelling tendency of oral transmission or else the influence of editors or translators led to a 'correction' of the concluding section in accordance with the standard phrase employed at the end of all other discourses: the monks delighted in what the Buddha said.

In other words, the lack of delight of the monks as the more unusual reading, *lectio difficilior*, is in this case likely to be the more original version and there seems to be no need to assume that it expresses a wish to erase the discourse from the *Majjhima-nikāya* collection.

indicating that on a later occasion the same group of monks received a short discourse by the Buddha, at the conclusion of which all of them became arahants; cf. AN 3.123 at AN I 276,23. EĀ 44.6 at T II 766b18 continues with an additional instruction to the monks on practising meditation in seclusion, as a result of which the monks do delight in what the Buddha has told them.

⁴⁴ [25] According to an alternative interpretation suggested by Bodhi 1980/1992: 20, Thanissaro 2002: 156 and Ñāṇananda 2005: 286, the monks might also have been unable to delight in this penetrative discourse because they did not understand its thorough undermining of various concepts to which they were still attached.

⁴⁵ [26] While the E^c edition at MN I 6,24 reports that the monks delighted, according to B^c, C^c and S^c they did not delight in the exposition given by the Buddha.

The Instruction to Rāhula

In relation to the *Ambalaṭṭhikārāhulovāda-sutta*, Minh Chau (1991: 34) notes that the instructions given by the Buddha to his son Rāhula in the Chinese version differ from its Pāli counterpart. The *Madhyama-āgama* instructions refer to a bodily action that is "pure" but at the same time is unwholesome and results in *dukkha*, while a bodily action that is "not pure" is wholesome and does not result in *dukkha*.⁴⁶ The corresponding *Majjhima-nikāya* passage does not envisage that a bodily action could be simultaneously pure and unwholesome, but simply describes an unwholesome bodily deed as one that results in affliction.⁴⁷

In an attempt to make sense of the *Madhyama-āgama* passage, Thich Minh Chau interprets the expression "pure" (淨) to mean "permissible" and comments that "by the term permissible, the Chinese means that it is approved by the Scriptures or it does not infringe the monastic rules".⁴⁸ [11] He then concludes that "in the Sarvāstivāda definition there is wide scope for a liberal attitude towards the interpretation of the monastic regulations. We might find ... in this difference an explanation of the rigid orthodoxy of the Theravāda monks who up to now-a-days would frown on any attempt to relax or to interpret differently the established rules, while the Sarvāstivāda and its offshoot schools adopted a more or less liberal attitude toward the observance of monastic rules".

A problem with applying this interpretation, however, is that, according to the instruction for a past bodily action in the *Madhya-*

⁴⁶ [27] MĀ 14 at T I 436c11: 彼身業淨 ... 不善與苦果受於苦報, and 436c14: 彼身業不淨 ... 善與樂果受於樂報.

⁴⁷ [28] MN 61 at MN I 415,29: *akusalaṃ idaṃ kāyakammaṃ dukkhudrayaṃ dukkhavipākaṃ*.

⁴⁸ In fact Hirakawa 1997: 727 lists *kalpika* and *kalpa* as possible equivalents for 淨; cf. also Bapat 1970: 223, who notes that the expression *akappiya* in Sp II 289,24 has as its counterpart 不淨 in T 1462 at T XXIV 727c23.

ma-āgama discourse, a "permissible" (淨) bodily deed should be confessed, while a "not permissible" (不淨) bodily deed leads to the arising of joy.⁴⁹ This makes little sense, since for a "permissible" bodily deed there would be no need for confession. In fact, the idea to give precedence to other's welfare over the requirements of moral conduct belongs to a later phase of Buddhist thought and does not seem to be reflected in the early discourses.

In addition to the *Madhyama-āgama* and *Majjhima-nikāya* versions, the instructions to Rāhula can be found in several other texts: in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinayavibhaṅga*, preserved in Chinese and Tibetan,⁵⁰ in a discourse quotation in the *Vyākhyāyukti-īkā*, preserved in Tibetan,⁵¹ and in a paraphrase in the *Śrāvaka-bhūmi*.⁵² All of these parallels agree with the *Majjhima-nikāya* discourse that the instructions are to refrain from a bodily deed that is harmful and unwholesome, without envisaging that such a deed could be reckoned as pure.

Thus the most straightforward explanation of this part of the *Madhyama-āgama* version would be to assume the occurrence of a translation error. Such an error could have happened due to misinterpreting a *sandhi* in the Indic original, [12] assuming that a particular word has, or else does not have, the negative prefix *a-*.

This type of error does, in fact, occur in another *Madhyama-āgama* discourse, which describes the behaviour of a monk who is investigated for some misdeed. According to the *Madhyama-*

⁴⁹ [29] MĀ 14 at T I 436c27.

⁵⁰ [30] T 1442 at T XXIII 761a11: 是不善事, 是苦惡業, 能於未來感苦異熟 and D 3 *cha* 217a5 or Q 1032 *je* 201a6: *bdag dang gzhan la gnod par 'gyur ba mi dge ba* (D: *ba'i*) *sdug bsngal 'byung ba mam par smin pa sdug bsngal ba yin*.

⁵¹ [31] D 4069 *si* 200b3 or Q 5570 *i* 71a5: *gnod pa dang ldan pa mi dge ba sdug bsngal 'byung ba dang*.

⁵² [32] T 1579 at T XXX 405b5: 自損及以損他是不善, Shukla 1973: 55,16: *vyābhādhikaṃ ... ātmano vā parasya vā akuśalaṃ*.

āgama description, this monk might either display anger and say that he wants to act in accordance with the wishes of the community that investigates him, or else he might not display anger and say that he does not want to act in accordance with the wishes of the community.⁵³ According to the *Majjhima-nikāya* parallel, however, the monk who displays anger is also unwilling to act in accordance with the wishes of the community, while the one who does not display anger wants to act in accordance with the wishes of the community.⁵⁴

This is clearly the more logical presentation and in this case, too, the mistaking of a *sandhi* by the translator(s) of the *Madhyama-āgama* appears to be the most probable reason for the wording in the Chinese discourse.⁵⁵ Thus, rather than reflecting decisively different perspectives on the significance of morality held by the Sarvāstivāda and the Theravāda traditions, the present *Madhyama-āgama* passage may simply be the result of a translation error.

The Term *Thera* [15]

Minh Chau (1991: 33) quotes Anesaki (1901: 897) to the effect that the term *thera* "in the Chinese Āgamas ... occurs, as far as I know, only thrice – the title Āyushman being used otherwise. Can we conclude that the Chinese version is derived from traditions dating from an age in the history of Buddhism when the

⁵³ [33] MĀ 194 at T I 748b28 and c18: 瞋恚憎嫉, 發怒廣惡 ... 作如是說, 我今當作令眾歡喜而可意, and 不瞋恚憎嫉, 發怒廣惡 ... 不如是說, 我今當作令眾歡喜而可意.

⁵⁴ [34] MN 65 at MN I 442,31 and 443,10.

⁵⁵ [35] Karashima 1992: 263 notes the occurrence of this type of error in Dharmarakṣa's translation of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra*; Bapat 1970: lix points out occurrences of this type of error in the Chinese counterpart to the *Saman-tapāsādikā*, T 1462. This shows that such mistakes were not uncommon.

authority of Theras was not yet solidified, or it descended from a school antagonistic to the authority of the orthodox Theras?" This suggestion by Anesaki seems to be incorrect, as a counterpart to *thera* can be found in numerous *Āgama* discourses, which use the expression 長老, literally "elder", often additionally qualified as 上尊, "senior".⁵⁶ Thus there seems to be no reason to assume that references to *thera* express sectarian concerns.

Conclusion

In sum, it seems to me reasonable to assume that the *Madhyama-āgama* was transmitted by Sarvāstivāda reciters; and for the conclusion to *Madhyama-āgama* discourses I provisionally adopt the translation "receive respectfully".

The above surveyed differences between the *Madhyama-āgama* and the *Majjhima-nikāya* in regard to the depiction of chief disciples or the Buddha's deportment do not appear to reflect sectarian influences. Sectarian concerns need also not be responsible for the absence of a parallel to the *Jīvaka-sutta* in the *Madhyama-āgama*, for the way the reaction of the listening monks is reported in the *Mūlapariyāya-sutta*, or for how the *Madhyama-āgama* records the instructions given by the Buddha to his son Rāhula.

When evaluating the above surveyed suggestions by Thich Minh Chau, I think it needs to be kept in mind that, at the time when he was undertaking his research, the study of the nature and dynamics of oral tradition was still in its beginnings. Nowadays, awareness of the impact of orality on the actual shape of the discourses found in the Pāli *Nikāyas* and the Chinese *Āgamas* is con-

⁵⁶ [43] Occurrences in the *Madhyama-āgama* alone are: MĀ 22 at T I 450a21, MĀ 26 at T I 455c7, MĀ 33 at T I 471c29, MĀ 38 at T I 481a9, MĀ 39 at T I 481b16, MĀ 82 at T I 557c25, MĀ 83 at T I 559b27 (in the discourse's title), MĀ 84 at T I 560b25, MĀ 88 at T I 569c26, MĀ 116 at T I 606c25, MĀ 142 at T I 649b20, and MĀ 196 at T I 754b16; cf. in more detail Deeg 2012: 130ff.

stantly growing and it is becoming increasingly evident that a good number of variations are best understood in the light of the dynamics and vicissitudes of oral transmission.⁵⁷

Thus when Minh Chau (1991: 75) contrasts an "unmistakenly common source of the Chinese and the Pāli versions" to "differences in the details ... due either to the compilers' choice or to the characteristics of the schools they represented", [16] it becomes clear that for him variations are necessarily the outcome of conscious manipulation by editors and compilers, influenced by the ideas and dogmas of the particular Buddhist school to which they belong. Therefore the oral nature of the material with which he was working was naturally not at the forefront of his attention.

Moreover, the digitalisation of the canonical texts facilitates checking particular passages or expressions to a considerable degree. With the computer technology nowadays at our disposal, it is a matter of seconds to test certain hypotheses that in earlier days could only be evaluated by extensive and time-consuming research.

Thus my criticism above mainly reflects the shift of perspective that has resulted from the progress of Buddhist studies and the advances of computer technology made during the more than five decades that have gone by since Thich Minh Chau originally did his research (completed in 1961). This does not affect the value of his work as a lasting inspiration for those of us who are engaged in comparative studies between discourses from the Pāli *Nikāyas* and the Chinese *Āgamas*, with their considerable potential to reveal the common core and the traces of change that affected the legacy of early Buddhist literature.

⁵⁷ On these dynamics cf. Anālayo 2011a: 14–22 and 855–891.

Abbreviations

Abhidh-k	<i>Abhidharmakośabhāṣya</i>
AN	<i>Aṅguttara-nikāya</i>
Ap	<i>Apadāna</i>
As	<i>Atthasālinī</i>
B ^e	Burmese edition
Bv	<i>Buddhavaṃsa</i>
C ^e	Ceylonese edition
D	Derge edition
DĀ	<i>Dīrgha-āgama</i> (T 1)
Dhp	<i>Dhammapada</i>
Dhp-a	<i>Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā</i>
Dhs	<i>Dhammasaṅgaṇī</i>
DN	<i>Dīgha-nikāya</i>
E ^e	PTS edition
EĀ	<i>Ekottarika-āgama</i> (T 125)
It	<i>Itivuttaka</i>
Jā	<i>Jātaka</i>
Khv	<i>Khuddakapāṭha</i>
Kv	<i>Kathāvatthu</i>
MĀ	<i>Madhyama-āgama</i> (T 26)
Mil	<i>Milindapañha</i>
MN	<i>Majjhima-nikāya</i>
Mp	<i>Manorathapūraṇī</i>
Paṭis	<i>Paṭisambhidāmagga</i>
Pj	<i>Paramatthajotikā</i>
Ps	<i>Papañcasūdanī</i>
Ps-pt	<i>Papañcasūdanī-purāṇaṭṭikā</i>
Q	Peking edition
S ^e	Siamese edition
SĀ	<i>Saṃyukta-āgama</i> (T 99)
SĀ ²	(other) <i>Saṃyukta-āgama</i> (T 100)

SHT	Sanskriithandschriften aus den Turfanfunden
Si	Sichuan Tanjur edition
SN	<i>Samyutta-nikāya</i>
Sn	<i>Sutta-nipāta</i>
Sp	<i>Samantapāsādikā</i>
Spk	<i>Sāratthappakāsinī</i>
ŚSG	Śrāvabhūmi Study Group
Sv	<i>Sumaṅgalavilāsinī</i>
T	Taishō edition (CBETA)
Th	<i>Theragāthā</i>
Th-a	<i>Theragāthā-aṭṭhakathā</i>
Thī	<i>Therīgāthā</i>
Thī-a	<i>Therīgāthā-aṭṭhakathā</i>
Ud	<i>Udāna</i>
Ud-a	<i>Paramatthadīpanī</i>
Uv	<i>Udānavarga</i>
Vibh	<i>Vibhaṅga</i>
Vibh-a	<i>Sammohavinodanī</i>
Vism	<i>Visuddhimagga</i>
Vin	<i>Vinaya</i>
Vv	<i>Vimānavatthu</i>

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Plate 1
The Entreaty to Teach the Dharma
Gandhara
courtesy Trustees of the British Museum



Plate 2
The Pensive Buddha is Being Requested to Teach
Gandhara
courtesy Christian Luczanits