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Editorial

Richard Gombrich

Fully three years have passed since the OCBS published the first number of its *Journal*. In it, my editorial reported on what I found worrying features of the 16th congress of the International Association of Buddhist Studies, held a few months earlier at Dharma Drum Buddhist College near Taipei. I commented on what seemed to me striking and undesirable imbalances both in the subjects of the papers and in the national origins of those giving them.

Now this volume of our *Journal* follows upon the next (the 17th) congress of the IABS, this one held in Vienna, and only slightly smaller (reckoned in number of papers and of participants) than the previous one. Exactly the same features recurred. The number of participants from South and Southeast Asia was tiny, so that several of the world's major Buddhist communities were hardly represented at all. Again, there were very few papers on early Buddhism, very few on Theravāda or on Pali sources, little attention was paid to history, and none at all to the Buddha as a historical figure. As every time, there were plenary meetings at the opening of the congress and near its end, but the agenda was stereotyped, and no opportunity was given to mention, let alone discuss, these issues. There is no sign that the officers of the IABS think that they should concern themselves with such matters. A pity.

As I write this, preparations are being completed for a rather unusual Buddhist conference which will be held in Pune for 3 days, 22-24 November. It is being organized by Mr Pravin Bhalesain of the Indian Institute of Buddhist Studies (which is in Pune) and myself, on behalf of the OCBS. Dr Bhalchandra Mungekar, former Vice-Chancellor of the University of Bombay and longstanding member of the Rajya Sabha, will inaugurate it and preside. The title of the conference is "Buddhism Rejoins the Great Conversation in India". Attendance is free and open to all.

The title was invented for us by Mr Jeffrey Race, and publicised before details of the programme could be put in place. Then, as we went along, we realised that the topic, which implies a dialogue between Buddhists and Hindus, was too hot a potato for India's present political circumstances. So it must be confessed that this title does not give a clear picture of the programme. That picture can now be derived from the conference website, <http://ocbsindiaconference.org>, which spells out in some detail what the various sessions hope to achieve. In sum, we shall be considering social, cultural and educational challenges which the Ambedkarite community has to face today. We do not aspire to display great learning, let alone to make intellectual breakthroughs; but we shall try to raise morale, stimulate thinking, and even – if all goes well – to suggest practical measures.

There will be few academic lectures. However, on the second morning (23 November) four lecturers will look at Buddhist revival movements. Each lecture will consider a great Buddhist revival; the four are of very different ages but all alive today, and based in different parts of the world: Japan, Taiwan, northern America and northern India. They have one central feature in common: in all of them the laity have played the leading role. On the other hand, they present four totally different views of what Buddhism is chiefly about. As I have written, they have such diverse ideas and practices that the morning “should make us all aware of the **richness, variety and adaptability of the Buddhist tradition**. We may also find that we know less about Buddhism than we thought.”

In a speech which I shall probably make on the final day, I propose to strike a contrasting note, which I can call “Back to Buddhist Basics: Love and Compassion”. In this speech I intend to formulate a goal for the Ambedkarite community and to suggest a means to help attain it.

In advanced and complex societies, such as India, virtually every social group forms an association, or several associations, to further its interests. These interests are mainly conceived in social, political and economic terms. As we all know, it is normal in India for castes and communities to have such associations. Naturally the Ambedkarite Buddhists already have such organisations, and I am sure that most of them do valuable work. However, I am no less sure that what is in the forefront of their minds as their reason for existence is that the Ambedkarites have little power in comparison with their numbers, and as a community still suffer from centuries of deprivation and discrimination, so that they must work to remedy this situation.

To my mind, however, the Ambedkarites hold a trump card – but have not

yet learnt to make full use of it. The trump card is so obvious that it escapes their notice: they are Buddhists, and therefore are pledged to make their lives revolve around the twin values of Love and Compassion. If their associations make the practice of love and compassion their central goal, the very reason for their being, they will be unique, and uniquely wonderful. How so? Because generally the association of every community bears the name of that community, and works precisely for the people in that category, in a competition to outdo all other groups and categories. But what makes the Ambedkarites a community is that they are Buddhists, which commits them **to feel and practise love and compassion for all sentient beings.**

So Ambedkarites, both as individuals and as a community, have – I repeat – an absolutely unique character, and hold a trump card. For them, to work for the good of their community, and to work for what they believe in, is to work for all living beings. If they can really practise that ideal, the world will soon sit up and take notice!

While the phrase “all sentient beings” does mean precisely that, it still allows one to have priorities. And the priorities are not hard to work out: one can best alleviate suffering by helping those worse off than oneself, not those better off. So who are the worst off? Some people will first think of animals, and yes, they must be kept in mind and helped. But we all know – though we don’t like thinking about it – that in India there are huge numbers of people who are even worse off than most animals. I only have to mention the many millions of people whom the British labeled Criminal Castes, and who have been renamed Denotified Tribes (DNTs). I cannot here give a lecture about them. But we all know, unless we wish to turn a blind eye, that very many of these people are excluded from every kind of employment or occupation in which they could legally make a living, so that they are forced to steal if they wish to keep themselves and their families alive, and this in turn is used to justify treating them with horrendous brutality.

So, to be brief, the Ambedkarites have before their very eyes people whom society treats even worse than it has treated the Scheduled Castes; and if Buddhism means anything at all, it must mean attempting the huge task of remedying this vast injustice.

I am thus proposing a new goal; but I also wish to recommend new means. Far too little use has so far been made of the Internet, and of the wide accessibility of mobile phones which can take and transmit photographs. Many of the most flagrant injustices are inflicted upon these people by agents of the government,

first and foremost the police. Since the complainants are powerless, they rarely have the means to inform the public about their sufferings beyond their immediate locality. Unless a wider world is rapidly made aware of what is happening, those who complain of brutal treatment, torture, rape, or even murder take the terrible risk that the perpetrators will soon arrive to inflict vengeance on anyone who has dared to speak out. The internet can rapidly convey reports, photos and even videos which can at least initially appear anonymously, and reach powerful people and organisations both within India and even beyond. Even if the perpetrators discover in due course who is responsible for spreading the news, it will often be too late for them to do anything to stop it. Besides, the Internet is usually accessible to anyone who contacts the web site; it need not be subject to the editorial control of a politician, a newspaper editor, or anyone else who might wish to use their power to prevent such news from getting out. Thus, even if one organisation is hesitant to publish, the victim can always turn to another.

Of course, I am not suggesting that these wonderful new means of communication should be used only for publicising atrocities. They can and should be used equally for the public airing of any and every issue of oppression and discrimination. We should reflect that for all its defects India is still a democracy with free media of communication. What I am suggesting could not be carried out in China, where the Internet is censored and controlled. Let the Ambedkarite community, then, take full advantage, without delay, in the fact that they are pledged to follow the teachings of Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar by acting always in accord with the Buddhist values of love and compassion, and apply that to their position as citizens of India, a country where information is allowed to circulate and be used to improve the lives of all living beings.

The Mass Suicide of Monks in Discourse and *Vinaya* Literature*

Anālayo

With an Addendum by Richard Gombrich

In the first part of the present article I examine the canonical accounts of a narrative that accompanies the *pārājika* rule on killing. The narrative concerns a mass suicide by monks disgusted with their own bodies, which reportedly happened after the Buddha had praised seeing the body as bereft of beauty, *aśubha*. I argue that this episode needs to be understood in the light of the need of the early Buddhist tradition to demarcate its position in the ancient Indian context vis-à-vis ascetic practices and ideology.

The mass suicide by monks is found in discourse and *Vinaya* texts. This is significant for appreciating the respective roles of these two types of literature, a topic that I will explore in detail in the second part of this article, in dialogue with observations made in a recent monograph by Shayne Clarke on family matters in Indian Buddhist monasticism.

Introduction

The topics I will cover are as follows:

Part 1) THE MASS SUICIDE OF MONKS

- 1) Translation of the *Samyukta-āgama* Discourse
- 2) The *Vinaya* Versions
- 3) Early Buddhism and Ancient Indian Asceticism

*I am indebted to Adam Clarke, Martin Delhey, Sāmaṇerī Dhammānā, Richard Gombrich, Petra Kieffer-Pülz, and Tse-fu Kuan for commenting on a draft version of this article.

Part II) DISCOURSE AND VINAYA LITERATURE

- 4) *Vinaya* Material in Discourse Literature
- 5) Family Matters in Pāli Discourses
- 6) Reading *Vinaya* Literature

PART I) THE MASS SUICIDE OF MONKS

In what follows I begin with the discourse versions that report the mass suicide of monks, based on translating the *Samyukta-āgama* discourse, and follow by studying the narrative in six extant *Vinaya* versions.

1) Translation of the *Samyukta-āgama* Discourse¹

Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was staying in a Śāla tree grove alongside the river Valgumudā, by a village of the Vṛjīs.² At that time the Blessed One spoke to the monks on contemplating the absence of beauty; he praised contemplating the absence of beauty (*aśubha*), saying: “Monks, one who cultivates contemplating the absence of beauty, much cultivates it, attains great fruit and great benefit.”³

Having cultivated contemplating the absence of beauty, the monks then exceedingly loathed their bodies. Some killed themselves with a knife, some took poison, some hanged themselves with a rope or committed suicide by throwing themselves down from a crag, some got another monk to kill them.⁴

A certain monk, who had given rise to excessive loathing and aversion on being exposed to the absence of beauty, approached *Mrgadaṇḍi[ka], the son

¹The translated discourse is SĀ 809 at T II 207b₂₁ to 208a₈, parallel to SN 54.9 at SN V 320,7 to 322,13; for a reference to this discourse in the *Vyākhyāyukti* cf. Skilling 2000: 344. In order not to overburden the footnotes to this translation, in what follows I only note selected variations between the two discourse versions (except when discussing an issue of Chinese translation in note 5 below, where I also take up several of the *Vinaya* versions).

²SĀ 809 at T II 207b₂₁: 跋求摩河, for reconstructing the Sanskrit name I follow Akanuma 1930/1994: 725. The location in SN 54.9 at SN V 320,7 is the Hall with the Peaked Roof in the Great Wood by Vesāli.

³SN 54.9 does not report any direct speech and thus only has a counterpart to the preceding sentence, according to which the Buddha spoke in praise of cultivating *aśubha*.

⁴SN 54.9 at SN V 320,23 reports that on a single day ten, twenty or thirty monks committed suicide.

of a Brahmin.⁵ He said to *Mṛgadaṇḍi[ka], the son of a Brahmin: “Venerable, if you can kill me, my robes and bowl will belong to you.”⁶

Then *Mṛgadaṇḍi[ka], the son of a Brahmin, killed that monk. Carrying the knife he went to the bank of the river Valgumudā. [207c] When he was washing the knife, a Māra deity, who stood in mid-air, praised *Mṛgadaṇḍi[ka], the son of a Brahmin: “It is well, it is well, venerable one. You are attaining innumerable merits by being able to get recluses, sons of the Śākya, upholders of morality and endowed with virtue, who have not yet crossed over to cross over, who have not yet been liberated to be liberated, getting those who have not yet been stilled to attain stillness, getting those who have not yet [attained] Nirvāṇa to attain Nirvāṇa; and all their monastic possessions, robes, bowls, and various things, they all belong to you.”

Having heard this praise *Mṛgadaṇḍi[ka], the son of a Brahmin, then further increased his evil and wrong view, thinking: “I am truly creating great merit now by getting recluses, sons of the Śākya, upholders of morality and [endowed] with virtue, who have not yet crossed over to cross over, who have not yet been liberated to be liberated, getting those who have not yet been stilled to attain stillness, getting those who have not yet [attained] Nirvāṇa to attain Nirvāṇa; and their robes, bowls, and various things all belong to me.”

Hence he went around the living quarters, the areas for walking meditation, the individual huts, and the meditation huts, holding in his hand a sharp knife. On seeing monks he spoke in this way: “Which recluses, upholders of morality and endowed with virtue, who have not yet crossed over can I get to

⁵SĀ 809 at T II 207b₂₉ reads 鹿林, which I emend to 鹿杖. The first part of the name is unproblematic, as 鹿 renders “deer”, *mṛga/miga*. The second part 林 could refer to a “forest”, *dāva/dāya*, *vana* or *ṣaṇḍa/saṇḍa*, which could then reflect the name *Mṛgaṣaṇḍi[ka]. The Chinese counterpart to the *Samantapāsādikā*, T 1426 at T XXIV 744c₂₂, however, renders his name as 鹿杖 (note that Sp II 399,₁₅ gives his name as Migaladdhika, whereas Vin III 68,₂₁ speaks of Migalaṇḍika). The rendering 鹿杖 is also found in the Mahāsāṅghika, Mūlasarvāstivāda, and Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya* versions of the present event, T 1425 at T XXII 254b₁₁, T 1442 at T XXIII 659c₂₈, and T 1435 at T XXIII 7c₄. The use of 鹿杖 suggests, as noted by Bapat and Hirakawa 1970: 292 note 21, an original *Mṛgadaṇḍi[ka], which I use to reconstruct his name. As already suggested by Horiuchi 2006 (in an English summary of his paper given on page 120 of the journal; due to my ignorance of Japanese this is the only part of his research that I have been able to consult) the reading 鹿林 in SĀ 809 would originally have been 鹿杖. This could well be the result of a scribal error confounding 杖 and 林, two characters that easily can get mixed up with each other; in fact the reference to 鹿杖 in T 1442 at T XXIII 659c₂₈ has 林 as a variant for 杖.

⁶Such a tale is not found in SN 54.9, although it does occur in the Theravāda *Vinaya*, Vin III 68,₂₁.

cross over, who have not yet been liberated can I get to be liberated, who have not yet been stilled can I get to attain stillness, who have not yet [attained] Nirvāṇa can I get to attain Nirvāṇa?”

All the monks who loathed their bodies then came out of their monastic living quarters and said to *Mṛgadaṇḍi[ka], the son of a Brahmin: “I have not yet attained the crossing over, you should [make] me cross over, I have not yet attained liberation, you should liberate me, I have not yet attained stillness, you should get me to attain stillness, I have not yet attained Nirvāṇa, you should get me to attain Nirvāṇa.”

Then *Mṛgadaṇḍi[ka], the son of a Brahmin, killed the monks one after another with his sharp knife until he had killed sixty men.

At that time, on the fifteenth day, at the time for reciting the rules, the Blessed One sat in front of the community and said to the venerable Ānanda: “What is the reason, what is the cause that the monks have come to be few, have come to decrease, have come to disappear?”

Ānanda said to the Buddha: “The Blessed One spoke to the monks on contemplating the absence of beauty, he praised contemplating the absence of beauty. Having cultivated contemplating the absence of beauty, the monks exceedingly loathed their bodies ... *to be spoken in full up to* ... he killed sixty monks. Blessed One, this is the reason and the cause why the monks have come to be few, have come to decrease, have come to disappear.

“May the Blessed One give them another teaching so that, having heard it, the monks will diligently cultivate wisdom and delight in receiving the true Dharma, delight in abiding in the true Dharma.”

The Buddha said to Ānanda:⁷ “Therefore I will now teach you step by step [how] to abide in a subtle abiding that inclines to awakening and that quickly brings about the stilling of already arisen and not yet arisen evil and unwholesome states. It is just as a heavy rain from the sky can bring about the stilling of arisen and not yet arisen dust.⁸ In the same way, monks, cultivating this subtle abiding can bring about the stilling of all [already] arisen and not yet arisen evil and unwholesome states. [208a] Ānanda, what is the subtle abiding which, being much cultivated, inclines to awakening, and which can bring

⁷In SN 54.9 at SN V 321,¹⁰ the Buddha has Ānanda first convene all the monks that live in the area of Vesāli.

⁸The corresponding simile in SN 54.9 at SN V 321,²⁵ only mentions dust that has already arisen, not dust that has not yet arisen.

about the stilling of already arisen and not yet arisen evil and unwholesome states? It is this: abiding in mindfulness of breathing.”

Ānanda said to the Buddha: “How does one cultivate the abiding in mindfulness of breathing so that one inclines to awakening and can bring about the stilling of already arisen and not yet arisen evil and unwholesome states?”⁹

The Buddha said to Ānanda: “Suppose a monk dwells in dependence on a village ... *to be spoken in full as above up to* ... he trains to be mindful of breathing out [contemplating] cessation.”¹⁰

When the Buddha had spoken this discourse, hearing what the Buddha had said the venerable Ānanda was delighted and received it respectfully.¹¹

2) The *Vinaya* Versions

In addition to the *Samyukta-āgama* version and its *Samyutta-nikāya* parallel, representing a Mūlasarvāstivāda and a Theravāda line of textual transmission,¹² the same story occurs in six *Vinayas* as part of their exposition of the *pārājika* rule regarding killing a human being. These are the Dharmaguptaka, Mahāsāṅghika, Mahīśāsaka, Mūlasarvāstivāda, Sarvāstivāda, and Theravāda *Vinayas*.¹³

In agreement with the other *Vinayas*, the Theravāda *Vinaya* reports that the monks were killed by a certain person; his name in the Pāli version is Migalaṇḍika. The *Samyutta-nikāya* discourse, however, does not mention this episode. This has the unexpected result that there is a prominent discrepancy between two versions belonging to the same Theravāda canon.

⁹In SN 54.9 at SN V 322,³ this question is part of the Buddha’s own speech, instead of being posed by Ānanda.

¹⁰The reference is to a preceding discourse in the *Samyukta-āgama* collection, which gives the sixteen step scheme for mindfulness of breathing in full. In the *Samyukta-āgama* this scheme has cessation as its last step, whereas in the Pāli parallel the last step is letting go; cf. SN 54.1 at SN V 312,¹⁹ and for a translation and comparative study of the corresponding exposition in Mahāsāṅghika and Mūlasarvāstivāda canonical texts Anālayo 2007 and 2013b: 227–237.

¹¹Instead of the standard conclusion, reporting the delight of the audience, SN 54.9 at SN V 322,¹⁰ concludes with the Buddha repeating his introductory statement on the benefits of mindfulness of breathing practised in this way.

¹²On the school affiliation of the *Samyukta-āgama* cf., e.g., Lü 1963: 242, Waldschmidt 1980: 136, Mayeda 1985: 99, Enomoto 1986: 23, Schmithausen 1987: 306, Choong 2000: 6 note 18, Hiraoka 2000, Harrison 2002: 1, Oberlies 2003: 64, Bucknell 2006: 685, and Glass 2010.

¹³In what follows I take up only selected differences, as a full comparative study of all versions is beyond the scope of this article.

A variation in this aspect of the tale occurs also within the textual corpus of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, where the story can be found twice: once in the *Vinayavibhaṅga* for *bhikṣus* and again in the *Vinayavibhaṅga* for *bhikṣuṇīs*. The Chinese translation of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinayavibhaṅga* for *bhikṣus* has the *Mṛgadaṇḍi[ka] tale, whereas the *Vinayavibhaṅga* for *bhikṣuṇīs* does not mention *Mṛgadaṇḍi[ka] at all.¹⁴ The corresponding passages in the Tibetan translation of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, however, give this tale on both occasions, that is, in the *Vinayavibhaṅgas* for *bhikṣus* and for *bhikṣuṇīs*.¹⁵ This makes it clear that the short version in the Chinese translation of the *Vinayavibhaṅga* for *bhikṣuṇīs* must be an abbreviation, as the whole tale has already been given in the preceding *Vinayavibhaṅga* for *bhikṣus*.

Returning to the Theravāda canonical sources, the circumstance that the *Samyutta-nikāya* discourse occurs among collected sayings on mindfulness of breathing may have been responsible for a shortened narrative introduction to what in this context is the main theme: the sixteen steps of mindfulness of breathing. In a collection of discourses on this meditation practice, it is indeed relevant to show the function of mindfulness of breathing as a remedy for excessive disgust with the body, whereas the details of how the monks killed themselves are not relevant. In contrast, in the Theravāda *Vinaya* the issue at stake is killing and assisting suicide, hence it is natural to find more attention given to the activities of Migalaṇḍika.

The *Samyutta-nikāya* discourse itself indicates that the monks *satthahārakam pariyesanti*.¹⁶ Some translators understand this expression to imply that they were looking for someone to kill them.¹⁷ On this reading, the present passage would

¹⁴In contrast to the detailed description of *Mṛgadaṇḍi[ka]’s killings in the *Vinayavibhaṅga* for *bhikṣus*, T 1442 at T XXIII 659c₂₈, the actual story in the *Vinayavibhaṅga* for *bhikṣuṇīs* is very short. The part that comes after the Buddha’s recommendation of the practice of *aśubha*, and before his inquiry why the monks have become so few, reads as follows, T 1443 at T XXIII 923b₁₇ to b₂₀: “The monks then contemplated the absence of beauty. After having cultivated it, they gave rise to thorough disgust with their bodies [full] of pus and blood. Some took a knife to kill themselves, some took poison, some hung themselves with a rope, some threw themselves down from a high rock, some killed each other in turn. At that time the community of monks gradually decreased.” This account has no allusion to an intervention by *Mṛgadaṇḍi[ka].

¹⁵*Vinayavibhaṅga* for *bhikṣus* (parallel to T 1442): D 3 ca 133a₇ or Q 1032 che 119b₃, *Vinayavibhaṅga* for *bhikṣuṇīs* (parallel to T 1443): D 5 ta 52a₃ or Q 1034 the 50b₆.

¹⁶SN 54.9 at SN V 320,22.

¹⁷Rhys Davids and Stede 1921/1993: 674 translate the term *satthahāraka* as “an assassin” and Bodhi 2000: 1773 renders the whole phrase *satthahārakam pariyesanti* as “they sought for an as-

then reflect implicit knowledge of the Migalaṇḍika tale. Yet this understanding of the phrase seems doubtful, and others have taken the phrase to refer to looking not for a killer, but for a means to kill themselves (see the addendum below).¹⁸ In this case, the *Samyutta-nikāya* discourse would be without any reference to the Migalaṇḍika episode, similar to the case of the Chinese Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinayavibhaṅga* for *bhikṣuṇīs*.

In principle it is of course possible that the Theravāda *Vinaya* version is an expansion of the account in the *Samyutta-nikāya*.¹⁹ In this case the *Samyutta-nikāya* discourse would preserve an earlier version of the tale and the *Samyukta-āgama* discourse and the *Vinayas* later versions that have incorporated the tale of *Mrgadaṇḍi[ka]. However, to me this seems to be the less probable explanation, given that the *Samyutta-nikāya* discourse and the Theravāda *Vinaya* share a story of the Buddha going on retreat,²⁰ which is not attested in any of the other versions.²¹ The story of the Buddha's retreat clearly shows that the two Theravāda versions did not develop in isolation from each other. This makes it in turn more probable that the absence of details on the Migalaṇḍika episode in the *Samyutta-nikāya* discourse would be intentional, in the sense of reflecting the

sailant"; cf. also Thānissaro 2001/2013: 87, who argues that "the word *satthahāraka* clearly means 'assassin' in other parts of the Canon (see, for example, MN 145)." Yet the significance of the expression in MN 145 at MN III 269,¹² is not as self-evident as Thānissaro seems to think; cf. the addendum by Richard Gombrich to the present paper. One of the Chinese parallels to MN 145, T 108 at T II 503a6, appears to be based on a similar Indic expression, reading 求刀為食, where the use of 刀 makes it clear that the translator understood the phrase to refer to a tool for killing, not a killer (as part of my comparative study of MN 145 in Anālayo 2011a: 830 note 50 I had noted this expression in T 108, without in that context having had the time to proceed to a closer study of the significance of the corresponding Pāli phrase).

¹⁸Woodward 1930/1979: 284 translates the phrase *satthahārakam pariyesanti* as "sought for a weapon to slay themselves", and Hecker 1992/2003: 367 similarly as "sie suchten eine Waffe, um sich umzubringen." Delhey 2009: 90 note 70 draws attention to the gloss on *satthāharaka* at Vin III 73,²⁶ in support of taking the term to refer to a weapon instead of an assassin.

¹⁹This has been suggested by Delhey 2009: 91 note 70.

²⁰SN 54.9 at SN V 320,¹² and Vin III 68,⁶ report that the Buddha had gone on a retreat for two weeks, giving the explicit order that nobody was to approach him except for the person bringing him almsfood.

²¹The Mahiśāsaka *Vinaya* reports that the Buddha had just risen from his meditation when he discovered that the community of monks had diminished, T 1421 at T XXII 7b₂₁: 從三昧起. This does not seem to refer to a meditation retreat, but only to a rising from his daily meditation practice. If a comparable reference should have been found at an earlier point in the Theravāda version as well, it could easily have given rise to the idea of the Buddha going on a whole retreat.

teaching context of the discourse as part of a collection of instructions on mindfulness of breathing.

Be that as it may, the report shared by the *Samyutta-nikāya* discourse and the Theravāda *Vinaya* that the Buddha had gone on a retreat is also significant in another way. The arising of this motif points to a need to reconcile the disastrous results of the monks attempting to engage in something the Buddha had recommended with the traditional belief that the Buddha was an outstanding and skilful teacher.²² The Pāli commentaries in fact build precisely on this retreat in their attempt to explain how such a grievous outcome could have happened.²³

The mass suicide of the monks becomes particularly problematic once the Buddha is held to have been omniscient.²⁴ While in the present case this is exceptionally evident, the same holds for most *Vinaya* narratives in general. These often feature the Buddha in the role of a law-giver who does not seem to foresee possible complications and therefore is repeatedly forced to adjust his rulings. Such a depiction is not easily reconciled with the belief that he was omniscient.²⁵

Probably the same belief in the Buddha's omniscience leads the Pāli commentaries to explain that, when the Buddha asked Ānanda what had happened, he did

²²As one of a standard set of epithets in the early discourses, the Buddha is reckoned to be the supreme trainer of persons to be tamed; cf., e.g., MN 27 at MN I 179,² and its parallel MĀ 146 at T I 656c₂₈ (on the apparent confusion underlying the Chinese rendering of this phrase cf. Nattier 2003: 227). Bodhi 2013: 9f describes the traditional belief to be that the Buddha is able “to understand the mental proclivities and capacities of any person who comes to him for guidance and to teach that person in the particular way that will prove most beneficial, taking full account of his or her character and personal circumstances. He is thus ‘the unsurpassed trainer of persons to be tamed’”, and his “teaching is always exactly suited to the capacities of those who seek his help, and when they follow his instructions, they receive favourable results.”

²³According to Spk III 266,³¹ and Sp II 397,¹¹, the Buddha knew that due to past deeds these monks had accumulated the karma of being killed. Not being able to prevent it, the Buddha decided to withdraw into solitary retreat. The commentaries also record an alternative explanation according to which the Buddha went into retreat foreseeing that some might try to blame him for not intervening in spite of his claim to be omniscient.

²⁴Mills 1992: 73 comments that the “Commentator grapples with the dilemma of proclaiming the Buddha omniscient on the one hand ... while showing him doing nothing to stop his monks committing suicide”; for a more detailed study of the notion that the Buddha was omniscient cf. Anālayo 2014b: 117–127.

²⁵Gombrich 2007: 206f points out that “the idea that the Buddha was omniscient is strikingly at odds with the picture of him presented in every Vinaya tradition”, which “show that the Buddha ... occasionally made a false start and found it necessary to reverse a decision. Since omniscience includes knowledge of the future, this is not omniscience.” That tradition had to grapple with this problem can be seen in the dilemma raised at Mil 272,¹⁸.

so knowingly.²⁶ That is, he inquired only for the sake of getting the conversation started. Explicit indications that the Buddha inquired knowingly, not out of ignorance, are also found in the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, the Chinese translation of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinayavibhaṅga* for *bhikṣuṅīs*, and the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*.²⁷

Coming back to the *Mṛgadaṇḍi[ka] tale, the Mahāsāṅghika *Vinaya* differs from the other versions in so far as it presents this episode right at the outset.²⁸ It begins by reporting that a monk who had been very sick asked his attendant to help him commit suicide. The attendant passed on this request to *Mṛgadaṇḍi[ka].²⁹ *Mṛgadaṇḍi[ka] killed the monk, but then felt remorse.³⁰ A Māra deity appeared and praised him for the killing, after which he went around offering to kill monks. It is at this point only that the Buddha gives a talk on the absence of beauty,³¹ which then motivates the monks to take up *Mṛgadaṇḍi[ka]’s offer to help them across by killing them.

According to the Mahāsāṅghika, the Mūlasarvāstivāda, and the Sarvāstivāda *Vinayas* he killed up to sixty monks.³² The number sixty occurs also in the Dharmaguptaka, Mahīśāsaka, and Theravāda *Vinayas*, but here this is the maximum

²⁶Spk III 268,₂₅ and Sp II 401,₂₅. Mills 1992: 73 notes that here “the Commentator arrives at another difficult point: explaining why the Buddha asked Ānanda where the monks had gone. If he was omniscient he knew already; if not, then he would be like ordinary people who need to ask ... such complications always follow from claims to omniscience.”

²⁷T 1428 at T XXII 576a₂₅: 知而故問, T 1443 at T XXIII 923b₂₀: 知而故問 (notably a remark without a counterpart in its Tibetan counterpart D 5 ta 53a₁ or Q 1034 the 51b₃, or in the account given in *Vinayavibhaṅga* for *bhikṣus*, T 1442 at T XXIII 660a₁₅ and its Tibetan counterpart D 3 ca 134a₅ or Q 1032 che 120a₈), and T 1435 at T XXIII 7c₁₅: 知故問. In Anālayo 2014a: 46f I have argued that the addition of such a phrase in the case of a *Dirgha-āgama* discourse is probably the outcome of commentarial influence, which may well hold also for the present case, in view of the similar indication being found in Spk III 268,₂₅ and Sp II 401,₂₅.

²⁸T 1425 at T XXII 254b₁₁.

²⁹T 1425 at T XXII 254a₂.

³⁰His remorse for the first act of killing is also reported in the Dharmaguptaka, Mahīśāsaka, and Theravāda *Vinayas*; cf. T 1428 at T XXII 575c₂₈, T 1421 at T XXII 7b₇, and Vin III 68,₂₈ (in these versions this occurs after the Buddha had commended contemplation of *aśubha*). According to Sp II 399,₂₆, he had approached the Vaggumudā river, whose waters were believed to be auspicious, in order to wash away not only the blood, but also the evil he had done.

³¹T 1425 at T XXII 254b₂₀.

³²T 1425 at T XXII 254b₂₅, T 1442 at T XXIII 660a₁₃ with its Tibetan counterpart in D 3 ca 134a₃ or Q 1032 che 120a₇, and T 1435 at T XXIII 7c₁₃. As part of Ānanda’s report to the Buddha, T 1425 at T XXII 254c₃ explicitly specifies that during a fortnight sixty men were killed, and T 1442 at T XXIII 660a₂₁ indicates that he killed a total of sixty monks.

number of those he killed in a single day.³³ This results in a much higher count of casualties. According to the *Samantapāsādikā*, commenting on the Theravāda *Vinaya*, he killed five hundred monks in total.³⁴

While the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya* does not give a total count of the killings, it shows the situation to have been rather dramatic. In a description without counterpart in the other versions it reports that the laity got so upset at the monastery being full of dead bodies like a cemetery that they decided to stop their support for the monks.³⁵

Together with the higher number of casualties, this attests to a tendency to dramatize the event, probably reflecting the development of the narrative in a *Vinaya* teaching context for the purpose of inculcating the need to avoid such suicidal behaviour. The more dramatic the tale, the better the lesson will be learned.

Alongside narrative elements related to the need to reconcile the story with the belief in the Buddha's omniscience and the apparent tendency towards dramatization, the main thread of the narrative is the same in the two discourse versions and the six *Vinaya* versions. The gist of the story thus would be as follows: The Buddha recommends the practice of contemplation of *aśubha*. In all versions he only gives such a general recommendation, without providing any detailed instructions. The monks then engage in this on their own and presumably in a way that lacks the balance that would have come with full instructions.³⁶ As a result of

³³T 1428 at T XXII 576a₁₂, T 1421 at T XXII 7b₂₀, and Vin III 69,₂₀ report that he killed from one up to sixty per day; for a partial translation of this part of T 1421 cf. Dhammajoti 2009: 257.

³⁴Sp II 401,₂₁.

³⁵T 1428 at T XXII 576a₁₄ to a₂₀: "Then in that monastic dwelling there was a disarray of corpses; it was a stinking and impure place, being in a condition like a cemetery. Then householders, paying their respects at one monastery after the other, reached this monastic dwelling. Having seen it, they were all shocked and jointly expressed their disapproval: 'In this monastic dwelling an alteration has taken place. The recluses, sons of the Śākya, are without kindness or compassion, killing each other. They claim of themselves: 'We cultivate the true Dharma.' What true Dharma is there in killing each other in this way? These monks even kill each other, let alone other people. From now on we will no longer worship, respect, and make offerings to the recluses, sons of the Śākya.'" For an alternative translation of this passage cf. Heng Tao (et al.) 1983: 67. On the conflict between the need of Buddhist monastics to ensure lay support by maintaining a proper public image and modes of monastic conduct related to the dead and cemeteries cf. Schopen 2006.

³⁶Spk III 265,₂₂ and Sp II 393,₂₂ relate the Buddha's recommendation on cultivating *aśubha* to contemplating the anatomical parts. In MN 10 at MN I 57,₂₀ and its parallel MĀ 98 at T I 583b₉ such contemplation of the anatomical parts of one's own body comes together with a simile that describes looking at a container filled with grains; cf. also the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, Bendall 1902/1970: 210,₈, and the *Arthaviniścaya-sūtra*, Samtani 1971: 24,₄. This simile seems to be intended to convey nuances of balance and detachment, instead of aversion; cf. in more detail Anālayo 2003: 149 and

this, they are so disgusted with their own bodies that they commit suicide, on their own or with assistance. As soon as he is informed of this, the Buddha intervenes and stops the monks from going so far as to kill themselves.

3) Early Buddhism and Ancient Indian Asceticism

Even when shorn of dramatic elements found only in some versions and after setting aside the belief in the Buddha's omniscience, the tale of the monks' mass suicide is still perplexing. Its depiction of the practice of *aśubha* going overboard to the extent that monks commit suicide needs to be considered within its cultural and religious context.

Among ancient Indian ascetic traditions in general, suicide was considered an appropriate means in certain circumstances;³⁷ particularly famous in this respect is a Jain practice often referred to as *sallekhanā*, where the accomplished saint fasts to death.³⁸ Keeping in mind this context helps to comprehend better the idea of helping monks who have not yet crossed to cross over by assisting them in suicide.

Not only does suicide appear to have been an accepted practice among some ancient Indian recluses; an attitude of disgust towards the body also seems to have been fairly commonplace in ascetic circles.³⁹ The thorough disgust the monks in the above tale came to feel towards their own bodies finds illustration in several *Vinaya* versions in a simile. This simile describes a youthful person fond of or-

2013b: 68. In fact in early Buddhist meditation theory contemplating the body as *aśubha* comes together with other practices that relate to the body in a different way, resulting in an anchoring in the body through postural awareness and in the experience of intense bodily bliss and happiness with the attainment of absorption; cf. in more detail Anālayo 2014d. The present case shows a similar counterbalancing, where an attitude of loathing the body finds its antidote by anchoring mindfulness in the body through awareness of the breath; on the practice of mindfulness of breathing cf. in more detail Anālayo 2003: 125–136 and 2013b: 227–240.

³⁷Cf., e.g., Kane 1941: 924–928 and 1953: 604–614, Thakur 1963, Filliozat 1967, Sircar 1971, Olivelle 1978, and Oberlies 2006.

³⁸Cf., e.g., Tatia 1968, Tukul 1976, Caillat 1977, Bilimoria 1992, Bronkhorst 1993/2000: 31–36, Settā 1990, Skoog 2003, and Laidlaw 2005; on suicide by Ājīvikas cf. Basham 1951: 63f, 84–90, and 127–131.

³⁹On the generally negative attitude towards the body in ancient Indian ascetic circles cf., e.g., Olivelle 2002.

nament who finds the carcass of a dead snake, a dead dog, or even of a human corpse hung around his or her neck.⁴⁰

Notably, this rather stark simile recurs in a discourse in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* and its parallels to describe the attitude of a fully awakened one towards his own body. The narrative context depicts the arhat Śāriputra defending himself against a wrong accusation by another monk. Śāriputra illustrates his mental attitude by comparing it to each of the four elements — earth, water, fire and wind — which do not react when any dirt or impurity is thrown on them. Other comparisons take up the docile nature of a dehorned ox or the humble attitude of an outcaste. Then Śāriputra uses the imagery of having the carcass of a dead corpse hung around one's neck to illustrate how he is “repelled, revolted, and disgusted with this foul body”, that is, his own body.⁴¹ Similar statements can be found in two *Āgama* parallels.⁴²

In the case of another reference to “this foul body”, however, the parallel versions do not have such a reference. Here a nun, who also appears to be an arhat,⁴³ replies to Māra who tries to tempt her with sensuality. According to the Pāli version, she proclaims herself “repelled and revolted by this foul body”.⁴⁴ Two

⁴⁰This is the case for the Dharmaguptaka, Mahīśāsaka, Sarvāstivāda, and Theravāda *Vinayas*: T 1428 at T XXII 575c₁₆, T 1421 at T XXII 7a₂₉, T 1435 at T XXIII 7b₂₅, and Vin III 68,₁₆ (the simile is not found in SN 54.9).

⁴¹AN 9.11 at AN IV 377,₂: *ahaṃ, bhante, iminā pūtikāyena aṭṭiyāmi* (B^c: *aṭṭiyāmi*) *harāyāmi jigucchāmi*. When considered within its context, the statement seems a bit out of place. The earlier similes, found also in the parallel versions, illustrate a balanced and non-reactive attitude, where the elements do not react with aversion towards anything impure. The present simile instead conveys a reaction, and a rather strong one at that. The simile thereby does not fulfil the purpose of illustrating a non-reactive attitude. This leaves open the possibility that during oral transmission the earlier references to the elements bearing up with impure things might have attracted the present simile, since it is also concerned with the topic of impurity. This remains speculation, however, since similar statements are found in two parallels; cf. the note below.

⁴²MĀ 24 at T I 453c₁₃: “I frequently contemplate the foul and impure parts of this body with a mental attitude of being embarrassed and ashamed and filled with utter disgust”, 常觀此身臭處不淨，心懷羞慙，極惡穢之； and EĀ 37.6 at T II 713b₁: “I am disgusted with this body”, 厭患此身。

⁴³The description in SN 5.4 at SN I 131,₁₂ indicates that she had gone beyond sensual desire and desire related to the form and formless realms, which would imply that she had become an arhat. The parallels are more explicit in this respect. SĀ 1204 at T II 328a₁₁ indicates that she had eradicated the influxes (*āsava*), and SĀ² 220 at T II 455b₂₁ reports that she had cut off all craving; for a translation of SĀ 1204 cf. Anālayo 2014c: 128f.

⁴⁴SN 5.3 at SN I 131,₁₁: *iminā pūtikāyena ... aṭṭiyāmi* (B^c and C^c: *aṭṭiyāmi*) *harāyāmi*. Another comparable reference by *bhikkhunī* Khemā can be found in Thī 140.

parallel versions of her reply to Māra do not have a corresponding expression.⁴⁵ In these discourses she expresses her lack of interest in sensual pleasure without bringing up a loathing for her own body and without qualifying her body as foul.⁴⁶ The variation found in this instance seems to reflect some degree of ambivalence in the early Buddhist texts vis-à-vis the ancient Indian ascetic attitude of being disgusted with the body, something that is also evident from other passages.

The need to avoid the excesses of asceticism already forms a theme of what according to tradition was the first discourse given by the Buddha after his awakening, which sets aside asceticism as one of the two extremes to be avoided.⁴⁷ The Buddha's claim to have reached awakening after giving up asceticism met with a rather hesitant reaction by his first five disciples. This exemplifies the difficulties of getting the Buddhist path to awakening acknowledged in a setting dominated by ascetic values.

The *Mahāsakuludāyī-sutta* and its parallel report that, on being praised for his ascetic qualities, the Buddha clarified that some of his disciples were considerably more ascetic than himself.⁴⁸ His lack of conforming to ascetic values as a Buddha is to some extent made up for by his pre-awakening practices, where he is on record as having himself tried out breath control and fasting.⁴⁹ Other ascetic practices and a life of total seclusion from human contact, described in the *Mahāsīhanāda-sutta*, apparently reflect previous life experiences as an ascetic.⁵⁰

⁴⁵ SĀ 1204 at T II 328a₆ and SĀ² 220 at T II 455b₁₇.

⁴⁶ Another occurrence of the "foul body" in SN 22.87 at SN III 120,₂₇, here used by the Buddha to refer to his own body, also does not recur in the parallels. In this case, however, the parallels do not have a counterpart to the entire statement that in SN 22.87 leads up to the expression: in SĀ 1265 at T II 346c, the Buddha's instruction follows a different trajectory and EĀ 26.10 at T II 642c₂₀ does not report any instruction at all; cf. in more detail Anālayo 2011d.

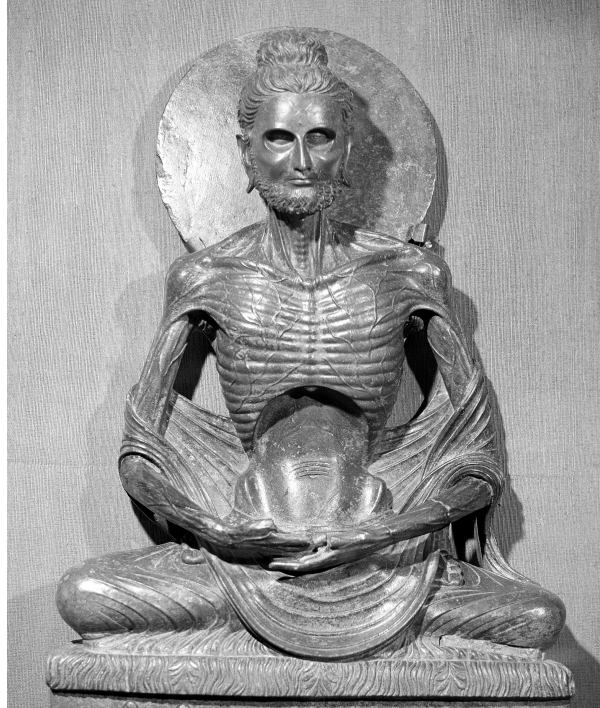
⁴⁷ For a study of the Chinese versions of this discourse cf. Anālayo 2012b and 2013a.

⁴⁸ MN 77 at MN II 6,₃₁ and MĀ 207 at T I 782c₂₁.

⁴⁹ MN 36 at MN I 243,₄ and a Sanskrit fragment parallel in Liu 2010: 171; on the significance of fasting in ancient Indian ascetic traditions cf. Olivelle 1991: 23–35

⁵⁰ MN 12 at MN I 77,₂₈ and its parallel T 757 at T XVII 597a₁₃. The allocation of these ascetic practices to a past life emerges from Jā 94 at Jā I 390,₁₆, noted by Hecker 1972: 54. MN 12 at MN I 77,₂₃ introduces these practices simply as something from the past, without this necessarily being the past of the same lifetime of the Buddha, and MN 12 at MN I 81,₃₆ then turns to other experiences the Buddha had in former lives. As already pointed out by Dutoit 1905: 50 and Freiburger 2006: 238, several of the austerities listed in MN 12 would in fact not fit into the account of events before the Buddha's awakening: his dwelling in solitude was such that he went into hiding as soon as any human approached from afar, which does not square with the traditional account that he was in the company of the five who later became his first disciples. His undertaking of ritual bathing

The Buddha's personal acquaintance with asceticism is also reflected in iconography, vividly depicting his emaciated body after prolonged fasting.



*Figure 1: Fasting Siddhārtha
Lahore Museum, courtesy of John and Susan Huntington,
The Huntington Archive at The Ohio State University.⁵¹*

three times a day does not match the description of dust and dirt accumulating on his body over the years to the extent of falling off in pieces. The depiction of his practice of nakedness stands in contrast to his wearing different ascetic garments. Such a variety of ascetic practices could only be fitted into a whole life of asceticism, as reported in the *Jātaka* account, not into the few years of austerities practised by the Buddha-to-be before his awakening. Although Bronkhorst 1993/2000: 22 comments that “it is hard to see in what other context this part could originally have existed”, taking into account Jā 94 suggests that it could have originated as an account of ascetic practices done by the Buddha in a previous lifetime, thereby documenting that his rejection of such practices was based on having himself tried out and found them not conducive to liberation.

⁵¹Cf. also Bapat 1923: 142 and Rhi 2006/2008: 127–131, as well as the discussion in Behrendt 2010.

The need to accord a proper place to ascetic values within the Buddhist tradition has also found its expression in the form of the *dhutaṅgas*. These comprise such activities as wearing rags as robes, subsisting only on almsfood, dwelling at the root of a tree, staying in a cemetery or just living out in the open, not reclining (even at night), accepting any type of accommodation, and taking one's meal in a single session per day.⁵²

The tension in early Buddhism between the need to accommodate ancient Indian asceticism and not going too far in that direction is well exemplified in the two figures of Mahākāśyapa and Devadatta. Mahākāśyapa features as an outstanding disciple renowned for his asceticism.⁵³ Devadatta is on record for having caused the first schism in the early Buddhist tradition through his request that some ascetic practices be made binding on all monks.⁵⁴

It is against this background of ancient Indian ascetic values that the significance of the *Vinaya* tale of the mass murder of monks and its relation to the *pārājika* rule on killing can be better appreciated. The tale is best understood in the light of the need of the early Buddhist tradition to demarcate its position in the ancient Indian context vis-à-vis ascetic practices and ideology.

Now the *pārājika* rule itself concerns intentionally depriving a human being of life and assisting others in committing suicide, or inciting them to kill themselves. Together with the actual rule, the accompanying narrative in the *Vinaya* has an important function for inculcating Buddhist monastic values. This is particularly so for a *pārājika* rule, an infringement of which involves loss of one's status of being fully ordained.⁵⁵ Therefore *pārājika* rules and the stories that come with them

⁵²For a reference to such practices, notably here presented as potential bases for arousing conceit, cf. MN 113 at MN III 40,23 and its parallels MĀ 85 at T I 561c6 and T 48 at T I 838b14; on variations in the later standardized listings of ascetic practices cf., e.g., Bapat 1937, Dantinne 1991: 24–30, Ganguly 1989: 21–23, Nanayakkara 1989: 584, Ray 1994: 293–323, and Wilson 2004: 33

⁵³The listings of outstanding disciples in AN 1.14 at AN I 23,18 and EĀ 4.2 at T II 557b8 reckon him foremost in the observance of the ascetic practices; cf. also the *Divyāvadāna*, Cowell and Neil 1886: 395,23, and the *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1882: 64,14.

⁵⁴For detailed comparative studies of the Devadatta episode cf. Mukherjee 1966 and Bateau 1991.

⁵⁵The present *pārājika* rule applies to any fully ordained monk, independent of his particular living situation, *pace* Kovan 2013: 794, who holds that “*pārājika* rules (initiated in and) structured around a communal body are attenuated in solitude.” Kovan 2013: 794 note 27 bases this suggestion on contrasting individual suicides like those of Channa and Vakkali (on these two cases cf. in more detail Delhey 2006 and 2009 as well as Anālayo 2010b and 2011d) to the mass suicide of monks. In the case of the mass suicide, according to him “in that communal monastic context the Buddha's condemnation of suicide is unequivocal and suggests nothing of the ‘particularism’ of the responses

can safely be expected to receive special attention in the training of a monastic.⁵⁶

In view of this it seems to me that the main issue at stake is to demarcate the early Buddhist monastic identity in contrast to ancient Indian asceticism. The story is on purpose so dramatic, in order to make sure that newly ordained monks who are being taught the narrative context of the *pārājika* rule regarding killing clearly understand what goes too far. The vivid details of the drama throw into relief the importance of a balanced attitude that leads beyond sensuality without resulting in self-destructive tendencies.

The need to avoid killing living beings in general was commonly accepted in ancient Indian ascetic and recluse circles as part of the overarching value of non-violence, *ahiṃsā*. It would therefore have been less in need of illustration through the main narrative that comes with the corresponding rule. It seems to me therefore natural that the story related to this rule takes up in particular the issue of assisting suicide, to throw into relief the early Buddhist attitude in this respect. In sum, the final versions of the tale of the mass suicide of monks are in my view best understood as being strongly influenced by narrative requirements resulting from a *Vinaya* teaching context.

In another study I took up the narrative that comes with the *pārājika* rule against sexual intercourse, concerning the monk Sudinna. I concluded that this narration sets early Buddhist monasticism in contrast to the Brahminical notion of a man's duty to procreate and warns against excessive intimacy with one's own family.⁵⁷ In the present case of the *pārājika* rule against killing a human being, the narrative depicts excesses in ascetic values, resulting in a loathing of one's own body to the extent of wishing to commit suicide.⁵⁸

In a way, these two tales can be seen to negotiate the need of the early Buddhist monastic community to carve out a clear-cut identity in distinction to contempo-

he appears to bring to the solitary monks in the other cases." Now the *pārājika* rule common to the different *Vinayas* concerns killing someone else as well as inciting someone else to commit suicide or even actively assisting in it. "The solitary monks in the other cases" only killed themselves. Thus their cases do not reflect a restricted scope for this *pārājika* rule, an idea which as far as I can see is without a basis in *Vinaya* literature. Instead, they simply do not belong to the category of *pārājika* offences; cf. also below note 123.

⁵⁶This is reflected, e.g., in Vin I 96,²², which reports that the four *pārājikas* should be taught right after full ordination has been received, in order to make sure that the newly ordained monk knows what must be avoided and thus preserves his status as a fully ordained *bhikkhu*.

⁵⁷Anālayo 2012a: 421f.

⁵⁸Kuan 2008: 54 succinctly summarizes the lesson conveyed by the tale, in that the monks "did not realize that such practices are intended to remove desire for the body, not the body itself."

rary Brahmins and to ascetically inclined recluses. The two narrations throw into relief these two extremes to be avoided, sensuality and excessive concern with family on the one hand and asceticism leading to self-destruction on the other hand. They thereby reiterate the contrast between the two extremes to be avoided that stands at the outset of what according to tradition was the first discourse spoken by the Buddha. With these two *Vinaya* narratives, the two extremes come alive through showcasing monastics going off the middle path.

Unlike the depiction of Sudinna's breach of celibacy, the story about the mass suicide of monks is also found in two discourses, alongside the six *Vinaya* versions. This difference is of considerable importance for the second part of my study, since it provides significant indications for assessing the potential of reading *Vinaya* literature compared to reading the discourses.

PART II) DISCOURSE AND VINAYA LITERATURE

4) *Vinaya* Material in Discourse Literature

A perusal of the early discourses soon makes it clear that these regularly contain *Vinaya*-related material. This holds not only for the *Samyutta-nikāya*, which has the story of the mass suicide of monks, but also for each of the other three *Nikāyas*.⁵⁹ The *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* in the *Dīgha-nikāya* is a prominent example, apparently being the result of a wholesale importation of what originally was a *Vinaya* narrative.⁶⁰ The same discourse in fact records the promulgation of a new type of rule against an obstinate monk and the application of this rule is then reported in the Theravāda *Vinaya*.⁶¹ The promulgation of this rule is also found in the discourse parallels to the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*.⁶²

The *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* does not stand alone in this respect. A similar pattern can be observed in the *Alagaddūpama-sutta* in the *Majjhima-nikāya*, whose depiction of another obstinate monk finds its complement in the Ther-

⁵⁹Cf., e.g., Gethin 2014: 64. My presentation in what follows takes the Pāli discourses as its starting point since this is the only complete set of four *Nikāyas/Āgamas* at our disposal.

⁶⁰Cf., e.g., Frauwallner 1956: 46 and Hirakawa 1993/1998: 264.

⁶¹DN 16 at DN II 154,17 and Vin II 290,9.

⁶²Waldschmidt 1951: 284,17 and 285,24 (§29.15), DĀ 2 at T I 26a₁₉, T 5 at T I 168c₁₃, T 6 at T I 184b₁₂, T 7 at T I 204c₄, and EĀ 42.3 at T II 751c₇.

avāda *Vinaya*'s report of how he should be dealt with.⁶³ His obstinate behaviour is also taken up in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Alagaddūpama-sutta*,⁶⁴ as well as in the Dharmaguptaka, Mahāsāṅghika, Mahīśāsaka, Mūlasarvāstivāda, and Sarvāstivāda *Vinayas*.⁶⁵ In this way the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* and the *Alagaddūpama-sutta*, together with their parallels, point to a close interrelation between discourse and *Vinaya* literature as a feature common to various schools.

The *Alagaddūpama-sutta* is not the sole instance of *Vinaya* material in the *Majjhima-nikāya*. The *Sāmagāma-sutta* offers detailed explanations on how to implement seven ways of settling litigation (*adhikaraṇa-samatha*) in the monastic community; tradition reckons these seven to be part of the *pātimokkha*.⁶⁶ The seven ways of settling litigation recur in the parallels to the *Sāmagāma-sutta* as well as in the *prātimokṣas* of other schools.⁶⁷

The *Bhaddāli-sutta* and the *Kīṭāgiri-sutta* in the same *Majjhima-nikāya* feature monks who openly refuse to follow a rule set by the Buddha.⁶⁸ In both cases, similar indications can be found in their respective discourse parallels,⁶⁹ and the story of Bhaddāli's refusal recurs also in the Mahāsāṅghika *Vinaya*.⁷⁰

The seven ways of settling litigation are also listed in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*,⁷¹ which moreover contains a series of discourses elaborating on the reasons for the promulgation of *pātimokkha* rules in general.⁷² In addition, this collection has a

⁶³MN 22 at MN I 130,2, with the whole event being reported again at Vin II 25,11 and Vin IV 133,33 as the background narration for legal actions to be taken. In his detailed study of the Theravāda *pātimokkha*, von Hinüber 1999: 70 considers the present case as one of several instances where material originated as part of a discourse and then came to be integrated in the *Vinaya*, noting that there is also evidence for a movement of texts in the opposite direction; cf. also his comments below in note 73.

⁶⁴MĀ 200 at T I 763b3.

⁶⁵The Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 682a9, the Mahāsāṅghika *Vinaya*, T 1425 at T XXII 367a3, the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 56c12, the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1442 at T XXIII 840b21 (cf. also Yamagiwa 2001: 86,7 and 87,8 (§6.1)), and the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1435 at T XXIII 106a3.

⁶⁶MN 104 at MN II 247,6 and Norman and Pruitt 2001: 108,5; cf. also Vin IV 207,1.

⁶⁷MĀ 196 at T I 754a21 and T 85 at T I 905c4; for a comparative survey of the seven *adhikaraṇa-samatha* in the different *prātimokṣas* cf. Pachow 1955: 211–213.

⁶⁸MN 65 at MN I 437,24 and MN 70 at MN I 474,1.

⁶⁹Parallels to MN 65: MĀ 194 at T I 746b27 and EĀ 49.7 at T II 800c2. Parallel to MN 70: MĀ 195 at T I 749c27.

⁷⁰T 1425 at T XXII 359b13.

⁷¹AN 7.80 at AN IV 144,1, which is preceded by a series of discourses (7.71–78) on commendable qualities of an expert in the *Vinaya*.

⁷²AN 2.17 at AN I 98,9 to 100,7.

whole section with question and answers on various legal technicalities ranging from the ten reasons for the promulgation of rules to the topic of schism. This section closely corresponds to a section in the Theravāda *Vinaya*.⁷³ The exposition on the ten reasons for the promulgation of rules has a counterpart in a discourse in the *Ekottarika-āgama*, as well as in the different *Vinayas*.⁷⁴

Most of this material reflects problematic issues that concern the monastic community, yet it is nevertheless found among the Pāli discourses. Clearly the mass suicide of monks is not unique in this respect and there seems to have been no definite and fixed dividing line between *Vinaya* material and the discourses.

Turning to the Pāli *Vinaya* itself, according to the *aniyata* regulation a trustworthy female lay follower can charge a monk with a breach of a rule and such evidence requires the *saṅgha* to take action.⁷⁵ The *prātimokṣas* of other schools agree in this respect.⁷⁶ This confirms that, in regard to knowledge about breaches of rules and related *Vinaya* matters, the Buddhist monastic legislators did not operate from the perspective of a clear-cut divide between laity and monastics, nor were their concerns solely dominated by the wish to maintain a good reputation among the laity.

In the case of the mass suicide of monks, the fact that we only have two discourse versions may well be due to the vicissitudes of transmission, as a result of which we do not have access to complete discourse collections of those schools of which we have at least a *Vinaya*. In the case of another *Vinaya* narrative found in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, concerning the foundation of the *bhikṣuṇī* order,⁷⁷ we in fact have not only two discourse parallels preserved in Chinese translation,⁷⁸ but also a reference to yet another such discourse version in the *Mahāsāṅghika*

⁷³ AN 10.31–43 at AN V 70,3 to 79,3. As already noted by Norman 1983a: 28, this corresponds to Vin V 180,1 to 206,25. In relation to the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* in general, von Hinüber 1996/1997: 40 comments that this collection “contains sometimes rather old *Vinaya* passages ... sometimes old material may be preserved from which the *Vinayapiṭaka* has been built. In other cases the source of an AN paragraph may have been the *Vinaya*.”

⁷⁴ EĀ 46.1 at T II 775c7; the ten reasons for the promulgation of rules can be found in the *Dharmaguptaka Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 570c3, the *Mahāsāṅghika Vinaya*, T 1425 at T XXII 228c24, the *Mahīśāsaka Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 3b29, the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*, T 1442 at T XXIII 629b21, the *Sarvāstivāda Vinaya*, T 1435 at T XXIII 1c16, and the *Theravāda Vinaya*, Vin III 21,17.

⁷⁵ Vin III 187,1.

⁷⁶ For a comparative survey of the *aniyata* rules in the different *prātimokṣas* cf. Pachow 1955: 95–97.

⁷⁷ AN 8.51 at AN IV 274,1.

⁷⁸ MĀ 116 at T I 605a8 and T 60 at T I 856a4; cf. in more detail Anālayo 2011c.

Vinaya.⁷⁹ The reference clearly shows that a record of this event was found among the Mahāsāṃghika discourse collections. This further confirms the overall impression that the textual collections were not based on keeping *Vinaya* related material apart from discourses meant for public consumption. Instead, these two types of literature are closely interrelated and the tale of the mass suicide of monks is an example of a recurrent tendency.

5) Family Matters in Pāli Discourses

In order to corroborate my conclusion that information on monastic issues can be found not only in *Vinaya* texts, but also in the discourses, in what follows I turn to another topic that comes to the fore in the Sudinna episode that forms the background to the *pārājika* against sexual intercourse, namely its warning against excessive intimacy with one's own family. Unlike the case of the mass suicide of monks, Sudinna's breach of celibacy to ensure the continuity of his family line is not recorded among the early discourses, but only in different *Vinayas*.

The topic of how Indian Buddhist monastics relate to their families has recently been explored in detail by Clarke (2014: 162), who identifies “privileging of *sūtra*—and in particular Pāli *sutta*—over *vinaya* literature”, in combination with some preconceptions, as a major factor contributing to the construction of a scholarly misconception regarding the nature of Indian Buddhist monasticism.⁸⁰ Clarke (2014: 153 and 163) therefore advocates that, whereas in his view so far “we have placed all of our eggs in one basket, the *Suttapiṭaka* of the Pāli canon”, instead “we need to go off the sign-posted and well-trodden highways of Buddhist *sūtra* literature and continue to explore the still largely uncharted terrain of ‘in-house’ monastic codes such as the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya*”.

The scholarly misconception he targets is best summarized with an excerpt from the dust jacket of his study:

⁷⁹T 1425 at T XXII 471a₂₆ indicates that the full narration should be supplemented from the discourse version; for another reference to the same discourse cf. T XXII 514b₄.

⁸⁰Clarke 2014: 17 notes that the misunderstanding he has targeted “cannot be attributed, solely, to the privileging of one type of canonical text over another (i.e., *sūtra* over *vinaya*) ... rather, I suggest that it stems from selective reading within the corpus of privileged traditions and genres, a selectivity guided by preconceived notions about what Buddhist monasticisms should look like and perhaps also by how they have been put into practice by schools of Buddhism in the modern world.”

“Scholarly and popular consensus has painted a picture of Indian Buddhist monasticism in which monks and nuns severed all ties with their families when they left home for the religious life ... This romanticized image is based largely on the ascetic rhetoric of texts such as the *Rhinoceros Horn Sutra*. Through a study of Indian Buddhist law codes (*vinaya*), Shayne Clarke dehorn the rhinoceros.”

In the context of the present paper it is of course not possible to do full justice to Clarke’s monograph, which would require a proper review.⁸¹ Hence in what follows I only take up what is relevant for my discussion of *Vinaya* narrative. In relation to the story of the mass suicide of monks, of particular interest to me is the relationship between discourse and *Vinaya* material, given that this story is found in both genres.

One issue here would be to see how far scholarly misconceptions regarding Indian Buddhist monasticism are indeed related to privileging Pāli discourse material. The best way to go about this would be to see what the Pāli discourses in the four main *Nikāyas* have to say on family matters.⁸² Of course, given that discourses have a considerably lower percentage of narrative material when compared to *Vinaya*, it is impossible to find a similar wealth of tales and stories in both types of literature, especially as detailed background narratives are often found only in the commentaries. Nevertheless, a quick perusal of the Pāli discourses, by no means meant to be exhaustive, does bring to light a few relevant indications.

The *Mahāpadāna-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* acknowledges the importance of family relations in its description of past Buddhas. In addition to reporting the names of the mother and father of each Buddha,⁸³ it also depicts the recently awakened Vipassī deciding to teach first of all his half-brother, the prince Khaṇḍa, who then became one of his two chief disciples.⁸⁴

The importance of family relations in a past life of the present Buddha comes to the fore in the *Mahāgovinda-sutta*, according to which he went forth together with all of his forty wives.⁸⁵ The discourse concludes with an evaluation of the

⁸¹I would like to be clear that what follows is not meant to stand in place of a review (for which cf., e.g., Ohnuma 2014) and my discussion is not solely concerned with Clarke’s monograph.

⁸²In order to explore what the Pāli discourses can offer in this respect, here and below I on purpose do not take up the parallels.

⁸³DN 14 at DN II 6,31.

⁸⁴DN 14 at DN II 40,8.

⁸⁵DN 19 at DN II 249,24; on the family dimension of Gautama Buddha’s going forth cf. also Strong 1997.

practice undertaken by the bodhisattva at that time. This conclusion does not in any way express criticism of the act of going forth together with all of his wives.⁸⁶

In his present life the Buddha then is on record as approaching his son Rāhula for a visit.⁸⁷ On other occasions he goes to beg together with his son or goes to meditate together with him.⁸⁸ According to the *Aggañña-sutta*, Buddhist monks in general should consider themselves as sons of the Buddha, born from the Buddha's mouth.⁸⁹ The imagery of the disciples being the sons of the Buddha recurs again in the *Lakkhaṇa-sutta*.⁹⁰

The *Ratṭhapāla-sutta* shows the monk Ratṭhapāla intending to visit his family. The Buddha, realizing that it will be impossible for Ratṭhapāla to be lured back into lay life, gives his explicit permission.⁹¹ In conjunction with the other passages surveyed so far, this episode clarifies that there is no problem as such in associating with members of one's family, as long as this does not compromise essential aspects of one's monastic role, such as celibacy.

Other passages provide similar indications, if they are read taking into account the background information provided in the commentaries.⁹² One example is the *Cūlavedalla-sutta*'s record of a long discussion between the nun Dhammadinnā and the layman Visākha, who according to the commentary was her former husband.⁹³ When the discussion is reported to the Buddha, he lauds Dhammadinnā for her wisdom, without the least censure of her having such a long exchange with her ex-husband.⁹⁴

The converse can be seen in the *Nandakovāda-sutta*, which reports that the monk Nandaka was unwilling to take his turn teaching the nuns, who according

⁸⁶DN 19 at DN II 251,12; the only criticism raised is that due to engaging solely in the practice of the *brahmavihāras* and not practising the noble eightfold path, his going forth did not lead to full awakening.

⁸⁷MN 61 at MN I 414,3.

⁸⁸MN 62 at MN I 421,1 and MN 147 at MN III 278,1.

⁸⁹DN 27 at DN III 84,21.

⁹⁰DN 30 at DN III 162,5; for monks and nuns referring to themselves or being referred to as sons and daughters of the Buddha cf., e.g., Th 174, Th 348, Th 1237, Th 1279, Thī 46, Thī 63, and Thī 336 (not taking into account Th 295, as here such a reference is attributed to the Buddha's actual son Rāhula).

⁹¹MN 82 at MN II 61,16.

⁹²Discourse commentary need not invariably reflect a textual stratum later than *Vinaya*, which contains material of originally commentarial nature that can be considerably later than the rules themselves; for a survey of the historical layers in the Pāli *Vinaya* cf. von Hinüber 1996/1997: 20.

⁹³Ps II 355,29.

⁹⁴MN 44 at MN I 304,33.

to the commentary had been his wives in former times.⁹⁵ When informed about this, the Buddha calls Nandaka to his presence and orders him to teach the nuns, whereupon Nandaka goes to the nunnery to fulfil his duty.⁹⁶ The circumstance that in the Pāli account he approaches the nunnery shows that, from the viewpoint of tradition, this incident should be placed at an early stage in the teaching career of the Buddha, before a rule was promulgated that monks should not approach nunneries to give teachings.⁹⁷ In other words, this particular episode should be read as reflecting an early stage in the development of Buddhist monasticism.

This much already suffices to paint a picture of the early Buddhist monastic attitude towards family relations that offers no support to the assumption that going forth meant a total severance of all possible interaction with the members of one's family.⁹⁸ Such a conclusion is in fact not altogether new. Collins in his introduction to Wijayaratne (1990: xvif) points out that the assumption that a solitary lifestyle was characteristic for an early stage of Indian Buddhist monasticism has been shown by Wijayaratne's research on the Pāli *Vinaya* (originally published in 1983 in French) as being merely a myth.

As already noted by several scholars, the very organisation of early Buddhist monasticism was modelled on a republican form of government based on the clan chiefdom, *gaṇa*, such as the Vṛjīs;⁹⁹ and the "importance of kinship ties in the extension of support to Buddhism" in its early phase has been discussed by Chakravarti (1987/1996: 143–145). According to Wilson (1996: 29), "evidence from every category of Indian Buddhist literature may be found to support the view that the *sangha* is held together by a variety of pseudofamilial ties. Kinship structures are reduplicated within the *sangha* in a variety of ways."

Again, as already noted by Frauwallner (1956: 71), most *Vinayas* preserve an explicit stipulation according to which a new monk who joins the Buddhist monastic community should look on his preceptor as a "father", who in turn looks on him as a "son".¹⁰⁰ In this way several scholars have highlighted various as-

⁹⁵ Ps V 93,8; for a more detailed discussion cf. Anālayo 2010a: 373.

⁹⁶ MN 146 at MN III 271,4.

⁹⁷ Vin IV 56,13.

⁹⁸ With this I do not intend to underrate the importance given to dwelling in seclusion; cf. in more detail Anālayo 2009 and 2011b.

⁹⁹ Cf., e.g., Bhagvat 1939: 126f, Barua 1968: 43ff, Thapar 1984: 70ff, and Hazra 1988: 62ff; just to mention a few.

¹⁰⁰ Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 799c₄, Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 110c₂₆, Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1435 at T XXIII 148b₂₃, and Theravāda *Vinaya*, Vin I 45,26. To these a stipulation to the same effect in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *bhikṣukarmavākya* can be added; cf. Banerjee

pects of the family dimensions of Indian Buddhist monasticism. The continuing importance of family matters for Buddhist monastics in modern times has been documented in anthropological studies, be these on monastics in Sri Lanka or in the north of India in Zangskar.¹⁰¹

The passages on family matters in the Pāli discourses surveyed so far come alongside recurrent references to departing from the home for homelessness and leaving behind one's relatives.¹⁰² The home that one should leave behind receives a more detailed explanation in a discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya*, according to which this implies leaving behind desire, lust, and craving.¹⁰³ Once again consulting a Pāli discourse can help to make it clear that the notion of leaving behind one's home and family was not invariably meant to be taken in the strictly literal sense that one is in principle never allowed to approach the place where one formerly lived. In line with this indication, those who go forth leave behind family and relatives without this implying that they could never ever relate to them as monastics.

Perhaps a simile may be useful at this point for the sake of illustration. Let us assume someone has left her job. Having left her job does not mean she can never again enter her former workplace. She might enter it again, but she would do so as a client or customer. Having left her job also does not mean she will never again have any contact with her former colleagues. She may well have such contacts, even with her former boss. But she will not relate to her ex-boss as an employee,

1977: 72,¹⁶ a passage that has already been highlighted by Cohen 2000: 15. In the words of Cole 2004: 281, the “very effort to leave domesticity was itself domesticized and remade into a Buddhist family”; cf. also Cole 2006: 301, who points out that “the monastic space was regularly organized as something like a patriarchal family that employed the language of fathers and sons to structure discipline, identity, and authority in a way that rendered monastic identity not all that different from those templates constructed within the sphere of the lay family.”

¹⁰¹ Cf., e.g., Samuels 2010 and Gutschow 2006.

¹⁰² The standard description of going forth as part of the gradual path account in the Pāli discourses, cf., e.g., DN 2 at DN I 63,⁹, indicates that leaving behind a large or small group of relatives one cuts off hair and beard, dons the yellow robes, and goes forth from the household into homelessness.

¹⁰³ SN 22.3 at SN III 10,⁸ (which uses the term *oka* instead of *agāra*); for a discussion of different nuances of the notion of leaving behind the home cf. Collins 1982: 167–176. Olivelle 1993: 67 explains in relation to the concern with homelessness in ancient Indian recluse circles that “the value system of the vedic world is inverted: wilderness over village, celibacy over marriage, economic inactivity over economic productivity, ritual inactivity over ritual performance, instability over stable residence, inner virtue and experience over outward observance”; cf. also Ashraf 2013.

nor expect to receive a salary. In fact she might dare tell her former boss things she would not have dared to say earlier, when she was still an employee.

I suggest that going forth from the household life as depicted in early Buddhist texts is similar. Those who have left their family homes may still return to visit, but they do so as monastics. They may still meet their family members, who may even go forth together with them, but after having gone forth they relate to each other from the viewpoint of being themselves monastics.

This suggestion finds support in the examples that Clarke has examined in his study. Particularly striking are *Vinaya* narratives reporting that pregnant women go forth and then, once they have delivered, do not dare to stay in the same room or even touch their own baby boy.¹⁰⁴ This runs so much counter to the normative reaction of a mother as to make it clear that, even right after having given birth, they are shown to see themselves as monastics first of all. The stories portray them approaching the situation of having a child from within the prescribed code of conduct of a nun vis-à-vis a male.

What about the solitary lifestyle depicted in the *Khaggavisāṇa-sutta*?¹⁰⁵ According to the two commentaries on the *Sutta-nipāta*, the *Khaggavisāṇa-sutta* is a collection of sayings by Pratyekabuddhas.¹⁰⁶ The canonical *Apadāna* and its commentary take the same position.¹⁰⁷ A similar understanding can be seen in the *Mahāvastu*, which introduces its version of several stanzas paralleling the *Khaggavisāṇa-sutta* by indicating that the stanzas were spoken by different Pratyekabuddhas.¹⁰⁸ Such an understanding recurs in relation to another parallel stanza found in the *Divyāvadāna*.¹⁰⁹

Given this agreement between texts from the Lokottaravāda-Mahāsāṅghika, the Mūlasarvāstivāda, and the Theravāda traditions, it seems fair to assume that the attribution of these stanzas to Pratyekabuddhas is comparatively early.¹¹⁰

¹⁰⁴Several such cases are discussed in Clarke 2014: 121–146.

¹⁰⁵The *Khaggavisāṇa-sutta* is found at Sn 35 to 75.

¹⁰⁶Nidd II 83,21 and Pj II 52,11; references already noted by Clarke 2014: 7 and 175 note 42.

¹⁰⁷Ap 7,17 and its commentary Ap-a 129,14.

¹⁰⁸Senart 1882: 357,12, where the stanzas are spoken right before the Pratyekabuddhas enter final Nirvāṇa.

¹⁰⁹Cowell and Neil 1886: 294,13; the stanza, counterpart to Sn 36, is here spoken by a Pratyekabuddha after having reached awakening.

¹¹⁰Norman 1983b: 106 note 70 comments that the parallel in the *Mahāvastu* “proves that the attribution predates the schism between the Theravadins and the Mahasāṅghikas.” Salomon 2000: 8f points out that “various Buddhist traditions surrounding the Rhinoceros Sūtra are unanimous, where they say anything about the matter at all, in describing its verses as the inspired utterances

From the viewpoint of tradition, then, the *Khaggavisāṇa-sutta* was apparently never meant to represent the norm for an ideal Buddhist monasticism. Instead, its purpose was to depict what happens precisely when there is no Buddhist monasticism.¹¹¹ The few who reach awakening on their own during such a period become Pratyekabuddhas and, in contrast to a Buddha, do not start a monastic community of disciples.¹¹² So the solitary lifestyle eulogized in the *Khaggavisāṇa-sutta*, just as the *Mahāsihanāda-sutta*'s depiction of the bodhisattva dwelling in total seclusion from human contact,¹¹³ does not seem to be meant to depict normative behaviour to be emulated by Buddhist monastics.

There has been considerable discussion about whether the term *khaggavisāṇa* in the title of the discourse and in the recurrent phrase *eko care khaggavisāṇakappo*

(*gāthā* or *udāna*) of the pratyeka-buddhas.” “Some doubt exists on the part of modern scholars as to whether this association is historically original to the text or, rather, is a later interpretive imposition”. However, “it is clear that the association of the Rhinoceros Sūtra with the pratyeka-buddhas had become widespread, indeed apparently unanimous, at a relatively early period, as confirmed by its attestation in both the Pali and the Sanskrit tradition.”

¹¹¹Based on what appears to be an implicit reference to the Buddha in Sn 54, Bronkhorst 1993/2000: 125 argues that “the *Khaggavisāṇa Sutta* must therefore have been composed after, or at the earliest during the preaching of the Buddha. How then could it be thought of as being composed by Pratyekabuddhas?” Sn 54 appears to refer to MN 122 at MN III 110,²⁸ where the Buddha warns Ānanda against excessive socializing. Needless to say, the point of the original passage was not that Ānanda should live an entirely solitary life, which would have left the Buddha without his attendant. Sn 54 might therefore be the result of combining this reference with the refrain *eko care khaggavisāṇakappo*. Such a presumably later addition does not render impossible the assumption that the bulk of the discourse depicts a mode of thought believed to have been pre-Buddhist. The *Apadāna*, Ap 7,¹ in fact explicitly introduces the Buddha as the source of information about the sayings by Pratyekabuddhas reflected in the *Khaggavisāṇa-sutta*. This would be in line with a general attitude in tradition, reflected, e.g., in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, Wogihara 1971: 397,¹¹ and the *Cullaniddesa*, Nidd II 80,¹ according to which the Buddha was able to teach events that took place long ago, based on his own direct knowledge of the past. A to some extent comparable case can be seen in the *Mahāpadāna-sutta* and its parallels, where the present Buddha gives information about past Buddhas as well as about himself; cf. DN 14 at DN II 2,¹⁵ Fukita 2003: 34,⁹ DĀ 1 at T I 1C¹⁹, T 2 at T I 150a¹⁷, T 3 at T I 154b⁹, T 4 at T I 159b¹¹, and EĀ 48.4 at T II 790a²⁷. Here, too, the time when the story is told being the lifetime of the present Buddha, about whom detailed information is given, does not render it impossible for events to be reported by the same speaker that were believed to have taken place in the far distant past.

¹¹²In the words of Ashraf 2013: 29, the motif of the Pratyekabuddha “describes the practice of a *monachos*, solitary monk, in contrast to the cenobite, who finds his relevance in a community of practitioners.” For a critical reply to the suggestion by Norman 1983b that the term Pratyekabuddha refers to one who awakens because of an external stimulation, *pratyaya*, instead of standing for one who lives a solitary life without disciples, *pratyeka*, cf. Anālayo 2010c: 11ff.

¹¹³Cf. above note 50.

illustrates a solitary lifestyle with the example of a rhinoceros or rather of its horn. As far as I can see, the evidence points to the comparison being with the animal itself.¹¹⁴ Whatever may be the final word on the significance of the term *khaḍgaviṣāṇa/khaggavisāṇa*, however, the foregoing discussion would have made it clear that there is no need to try to dehorn the rhinoceros, since neither the horn nor the whole animal poses a problem.

For correcting the mistaken notion that a solitary lifestyle of the type depicted in the *Khaggavisāṇa-sutta* was normative for Indian Buddhist monasticism, the

¹¹⁴Taking the imagery to be about the horn would have the support of the commentaries; cf. Nidd II 129,¹³, Pj II 65,¹⁰, and also Ap-a 133,³². Hare 1945/1947: 11 note 2 comments that the idea of the single horn of the Indian rhinoceros would convey its “being contrasted no doubt with the two horns of other animals”. This imagery comes alive in the description of the Indian rhinoceros by Megasthenes in McCrindle 1877: 59, according to which “a horn sprouts out from between its eyebrows, and this is not straight, but curved into the most natural wreaths.” Contrary to the commentarial explanation, however, according to Edgerton 1953/1998: 202 s.v. *khaḍga-viṣāṇa*, the term “means *rhinoceros*, = Skt. *khaḍgin*, originally *having a sword(-like) horn*. The comparison is to the animal, not to its horn.” Yet, Norman 1996/2001: 38 points out that in the Jain *Kalpa-sūtra* the comparison is to the horn of a rhinoceros. In reply, Salomon 2000: 11 comments that “when we look further afield, in the Buddhist Sanskrit tradition, the answer seems to be exactly the opposite”, that is, there is considerable support for the image being concerned with the rhinoceros itself. In addition to this, as noted already by Jayawickrama 1949/1977: 22, “in other places in the Pāli Canon the idea of wandering alone is compared with the movements of animals of solitary habits rather than with parts of their anatomy”, for which he provides several examples. To this Salomon 2000: 12 adds that a stanza in the Gāndhārī parallel to the *Khaggavisāṇa-sutta* speaks instead of a solitary elephant, where “the reference can only be to the solitary habits of the bull elephant.” Regarding animal habits, Saddhatissa 1985: 8 note 1 refers to the “gregarious nature of the Indian species, called *Rhinoceros unicornis*”, in support of the interpretation that opts for the horn. But, as pointed out by Jamison 1998: 253, based on quoting authorities on zoology, the rhinoceros is indeed a solitary animal; thus “the root *car* ‘wander’ is particularly appropriate to the seasonal behavior of the rhinoceros, who seems almost to conduct himself like a roaming mendicant.” Schmithausen 1999: 233 note 13 points out that in the *Khaggavisāṇa-sutta* the image serves to illustrate the activity of *carati*, which would support an interpretation of it as referring to a rhinoceros; cf. also Wright 2001: 4, who notes that “the verb *care* shows that the idea of solitary perambulation is paramount.” That the image is indeed about a solitary habit finds further support in the observation by Caillat 2003: 38 that, judging from Jain texts, it seems preferable “to retain the full meaning of the substantive *kappa*, *kalpa*, ‘usage, practice’ ... thus, for *khaḍga-viṣāṇa-kalpa*, ‘following the habits of the rhinoceros’ (in contrast to the commentarial understanding, which takes *kappa* to stand for *sadisa*, “like”). Although the situation may have seemed ambivalent by the time of Jones 1949/1973: 250 note 1 and even Kloppenborg 1974: 60, who takes both interpretations as being valid, to my mind by now the contributions that have been made by various scholars render the situation fairly conclusive, in that the original idea would have been to illustrate a solitary lifestyle with the habits of a rhinoceros, the idea of the single horn gaining prominence as a secondary development.

potential of reading the Pāli discourses could be put to the test again. A standard phrase found repeatedly at the outset of a Pāli discourse shows the Buddha in the company of 500 monks.¹¹⁵ While the number is of course stereotypical, there can be little doubt that it portrays a substantial group of monks living and travelling together with the Buddha. A discourse in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* even goes so far as to report that the Buddha stopped one of his monks from going off into seclusion, recommending he should better stay with the community of monks.¹¹⁶ This much already suffices to show, again, that recourse to the Pāli discourses themselves can help to rectify the notion that monastics are invariably expected to live a solitary life.

6) Reading *Vinaya* Material

The relevance of reading Pāli discourse literature alongside *Vinaya* material for exploring topics like family matters can be seen with another discourse in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*. The discourse reports that a mother and her son had both gone forth and were spending the rainy season retreat together, visiting each other often. Eventually they engaged in sexual intercourse with each other.¹¹⁷ This story not only shows that it was in principle possible for mother and son to go forth together, but also for them to meet regularly and this evidently in rather private circumstances. A problem arises only once this leads to sex, aggravated in the present instance by being incest.

The incest story in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* clearly shows that discourse literature can contain material that is rather compromising. The same holds for the mass suicide of monks, where a narrative with a considerable potential to be damaging to the reputation of the Buddha as a teacher is not confined to the *Vinayas*.¹¹⁸ Here the discourse material is as revealing as the *Vinaya* texts, both reporting that a recommendation given by the Buddha on a meditation topic led to

¹¹⁵For a discussion of variations in the standard number of monks accompanying the Buddha cf. Anālayo 2011a: 417–419.

¹¹⁶AN 10.99 at AN V 209,15.

¹¹⁷AN 5.55 at AN III 67,24; cf. also the discussion in Silk 2009: 126–128.

¹¹⁸Even for it to be recorded in the *Vinaya* is remarkable. Mills 1992: 74 comments that “it is strange that a story like this, which does no credit to the Buddha, but quite the opposite, was permitted to remain in the *Vinaya* ... if the story is partly true, it would hardly reflect well on the Buddha, while if the whole story is true he appears in a worse light still.”

a mass suicide among his disciples.¹¹⁹ A case of incest among Buddhist monastics is similarly problematic. Both tales should be found only in “in-house” literature, if a clear dividing line between material for public display and in-house documentation had indeed been a concern informing the formation of the Buddhist textual collections. This is clearly not the case.

The evidently complementary nature of discourse and *Vinaya* material makes it in my view indispensable that a proper appreciation of individual tales (like the mass suicide of monks) or Indian Buddhist monasticism in general is based on reading *Vinaya* stories in conjunction with what early discourse material has to offer. In contrast, relying only on *Vinaya* texts would be like trying to reconstruct the history of a particular country or time period solely based on criminal records. It does not need much imagination to envision a rather distorted picture emerging from using solely such material.

Vinaya tales have their origin in something that went wrong. They need to be contextualized. Using only *Vinaya* texts to reconstruct the history of Indian monasticism would be even worse than relying only on criminal records, since such records can be expected to be based on actual events. In contrast, *Vinaya* narratives feature misbehaving monastics side by side with celestial beings, demons, and animals able to speak. Such narratives tell us a lot about the views and beliefs held by those responsible for their coming into being, but circumspection is required when they are used as a basis for reconstructing the actual situation on the ground.

Vinaya passages referring to nuns running brothels, for example, need not invariably be reflecting actual conditions. In view of the general Indian perception

¹¹⁹The tale of the mass suicide is also of interest in relation to the proposition in Clarke 2014: 17 that “whereas *sūtras* go into lengthy discourses on the value of meditation, for instance, Schopen has shown that Buddhist monastic law codes warn against rigorous engagement in contemplative exercises” (reference is to Schopen 2004: 26). In the present case the dangers of improper meditation practice are indeed highlighted, but this occurs together with drawing attention to the advantages of proper practice of mindfulness of breathing. Here the dangers and advantages of meditation practice are taken up both in discourse and *Vinaya* literature. In the case of the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*, just to give one other example, Hu-von Hinüber 2014: 89 notes that instructions on examining the anatomical parts of the body occur as part of “a long passage about different matters concerning the meditation” on *aśubha*, in what she considers an attempt “to impart all of the basic knowledge [of] what a monk needs to practice his daily life in the Saṃgha.” Here the purpose is clearly to encourage meditation—precisely the meditation that the tale of the mass suicide of monks shows to be problematic—not to warn against it.

of renunciant women as being on a par with prostitutes,¹²⁰ it is in principle possible that the idea of nuns running brothels could have arisen in an environment antagonistic to Buddhist monastics.¹²¹ Once having become a popular perception, this could then have motivated the drawing up of rules to safeguard reputation, even without it needing to have actually happened.¹²²

This is of course not to say that it is in principle impossible for something like this to have taken place, but only to point out that the implications of the existence of such a rule require evaluation. A decisive criterion when evaluating such stories is to my mind a principle espoused by Clarke (2014: 166), according to which all of the extant *Vinayas* need to be consulted. In his own words: “any *vinaya* cannot be accepted as representative of Indian Buddhist monasticisms without first fully examining the other five monastic law codes; we must marshal all available evidence in rereading Indian Buddhist monasticisms.”¹²³ Given that references to nuns running brothels do not seem to appear in all *Vinayas*,¹²⁴ the possibility that these references have come into being as the product of imagination has to be seriously taken into consideration. Had this been a real problem during the

¹²⁰Olivelle 2004: 499 notes that in the *Manusmṛti* “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 *Manusmṛti*, quoted in Jyväsjärvi 2007: 80, defines females who have become homeless as “women without protectors ... [who], being lustful women, are disguised in the dress (of ascetics).”

¹²¹The suggestion in Clarke 2014: 35 that the occurrence of certain narrative motifs in Sanskrit drama and other Indian literature antagonistic to Buddhism can serve to corroborate that descriptions of misbehaviour in *Vinaya* narratives are based on historical facts is therefore to my mind not conclusive.

¹²²Horner 1938/1982: xxi notes that *Vinaya* narratives at times give the impression “that these are the outcome, not of events, so much as of lengthy and anxious deliberations. The recensionists had a responsible task. They were legislating for the future.” Therefore quite possibly “at the time of the final recension, each rule was minutely scrutinised and analysed, and all the deviations from it, of which the recensionists had heard or which they could imagine, were formulated and added.”

¹²³As a side note, it seems to me that doing full justice to this important principle would stand in contrast to the suggestion by Clarke 2009 that breach of a *pārājika* rule may only result in loss of communion with a particular local community, given that this suggestion is based on a story found only in a single *Vinaya*. In general terms, as indicated by Kieffer-Pülz 2014: 62, by now “general statements on the basis of only one *Vinaya* should belong to the past.” Moreover, as I already argued in Anālayo 2012a: 418f note 42, even the assumption that this single story has implications on the nature of *pārājika* rules is rather doubtful; cf. also above note 55 and below note 125.

¹²⁴Judging from the survey in Clarke 2014: 228 note 63, the brothel motif is only found in some *Vinayas*.

early stages of Indian Buddhist monasticism, we would expect all of the *Vinayas* to try to tackle it.

Regarding Indian Buddhist monasticism in general, based on his study of family matters in *Vinaya* literature Clarke (2014: 155) comes to the conclusion that “mainstream Buddhism itself is starting to look surprisingly and increasingly like what we see in later Mahāyāna Buddhism in Nepal, for instance.” In my view this is not an accurate reflection of the material he has studied, as it does not reflect the difference between monastics who relate to their former partners as monastics and priests who actually live a family life. Moreover, it fails to distinguish between what the texts present as exceptional in contrast to common behaviour.¹²⁵

The cases Clarke has surveyed in his study all fall under the first category of monastics relating to their former partners as monastics. When those who go forth need not obtain a legal divorce, in keeping with ancient Indian customs, then this does not imply that their marriage will not be considered on a practical level as having come to an end. Once former husband and wife relate to each other as monastics and are no longer permitted to have sex with each other, this does amount to a substantial difference from the married priests of Newar Buddhism in Nepal.¹²⁶ In sum, Clarke’s conclusion is an example of a tendency where, in the

¹²⁵In relation to the discussion by Clarke 2014: 47–56 of the tales of Dharmadinnā and Sudinna as evidence for monastics living with their families, Ohnuma 2014: 2 queries, in relation to Sudinna, “shouldn’t his behavior be seen as a precedent-setting example of everything that a monastic should *not* do, and thereby as a highly unusual case?” Thus “making *some* distinction—no matter how speculative—between those familial practices that were truly ordinary and those that were highly unusual” seems to be required. Besides, “Clarke also fails to consider the *negative* evidence: If the practice of monastics living at home were anything other than highly unusual, wouldn’t the *vinayas* contain legal procedures for how to deal with such monastics and legislate their proper roles within the monastic community? And if such rules are lacking, shouldn’t we conclude that the cases of Sudinna and Dharmadinnā were, in fact, fairly unusual and lacked the taken-for-granted quality of occasional visits home?” Regarding the story of Dharmadinnā found in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*’s account of ordination by messenger, it seems to me that Clarke’s presentation is beset by the same methodological problem as his reasoning regarding the nature of *pārājika* rules (cf. above note 123), where he also bases far-reaching conclusions on a story found only in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*. In the present case the accounts of ordination by messenger in the parallel versions, listed in Clarke 2014: 190 note 37, have completely different narratives. Yet, as formulated by Clarke 2014: 18 himself, when studying *Vinaya* narrative we should “ensure that what we see is not just an isolated viewpoint of a single tradition, but is broadly representative of the canonical jurists’ handling ... in all extant *vinayas*.”

¹²⁶Gellner 1989: 6 explains that “the role of part-time Buddhist monk within the institutional framework of Newar Buddhism is restricted to [the sacerdotal caste of the] Śākya and Vajrācāryas. The role of the permanent, and permanently celibate, monk or nun is open neither to them nor

words of Ohnuma (2014: 3), he “occasionally overstates his case.”

This to my mind corroborates that excessive emphasis on misdeeds reported in *Vinaya* texts can lead to painting a distorted picture. The same holds for the mass suicide of monks. The story does make it unmistakably clear that the early generations of reciters did not yet conceive of the Buddha as an infallible and omniscient teacher. At the same time, however, the tale needs to be considered alongside records of the Buddha’s successful teaching activities found elsewhere, that is, it needs to be contextualized in order to avoid arriving at a distorted picture of the Buddha’s role as a teacher. Only such contextualization within the whole extant textual corpus, in combination with taking into account the ancient Indian setting, enables a proper appreciation of this and other *Vinaya* tales.

Conclusion

Understanding the tale of the mass suicide of monks requires taking into account the ascetic environment within which early Buddhism evolved. The tale itself depicts a recommendation given by the Buddha being put to use without proper instructions. The resultant mass suicide reflects the influence of a prevalent negative attitude towards the body and the tolerance of suicide in ancient Indian ascetic circles. In a *Vinaya* teaching context, this tale would have evolved in line with its function to demarcate Buddhist monastic identity in contrast to contemporary ascetic values by showing how things can go wrong.

The occurrence of the mass suicide tale among the discourses shows that problematic narratives were not allocated to *Vinaya* texts only, making it improbable that these offer us the only window available for in-house information on what took place on the ground. Instead, *Vinaya* narratives need to be read with a clear recognition of their teaching purposes and of the fact that they are naturally con-

to any other Newar ... the traditional institutions of Newar Buddhism provide for no such role”; cf. also Gellner 1992: 59: “Vajrācāryas and Śākyas are, then, householder Buddhist monks.” Allen 1973: 11 even speaks of “the radical anti-celibacy of the form of Buddhism” found in Nepal. As explained by von Rospatt (forthcoming), “though assuming monkhood only ritually for a few days, they maintain their monastic identity even after disrobing. Thus Newar Buddhism is not a ‘Buddhism without monks,’ as some observers have held, but a Buddhism with monks who have turned householders without giving up their identity as monastics”; cf. also Lienhard 1999 and von Rospatt 2005. I fail to see how mainstream Indian Buddhist monasticism could be considered as resembling such descriptions. With this I do not in any way intend to encourage an evaluation of Newar Buddhism as a degeneration, but only to clarify that it does differ substantially from what available sources allow us to know about mainstream Indian Buddhist monasticism.

cerned with what went wrong, instead of giving us a complete picture of Indian Buddhist monasticism as a whole. They reflect views and opinions held by those responsible for the final shape of the passages in question, which result from a range of influences, historical events being only one of them.

Addendum

By Richard Gombrich

In the *Puṇṇovāda sutta*, MN *sutta* 145, the Buddha and the monk Puṇṇa are discussing the latter's intention to become a missionary in a remote region called Sunāparantaka, where they consider that that people may well react to him with active hostility. They consider a series of possible reactions in ascending order of violence, culminating in the possibility that they will kill him. What, asks the Buddha, does Puṇṇa think of that?

He replies that sometimes people feel such self-disgust that they *sattha-hāraḥkaṃ pariyesanti*: “they look for a *sattha-hāraḥkaṃ*.” He goes on: *Taṃ me idaṃ apariyitthaṃ*¹²⁷ *yeva sattha-hāraḥkaṃ laddhaṃ*. This means: “So I have acquired this *satthahāraḥkaṃ* without even looking for it.” The grammar of this sentence is crucial to how we can translate *sattha-hāraḥkaṃ*. It has to be the grammatical subject of the sentence, and the neuter pronoun *idaṃ* agrees with it. So it is neuter, in fact neuter singular, and cannot refer to a person. It must mean “thing which takes away life”.

The *pada-vañṇanā* (word commentary) at Vin III 73, glossing the word, has given 8 examples of such things, including poison and a rope. The word occurs in several places, as Anālayo reports, and it would be tedious to list all the wrong translations of it which have been published. They seem to have been influenced by the fact that there is a word *sattha* (< Sanskrit *śastra*) meaning a cutting weapon, e.g. a knife or dagger. This however is not that word, but a homonym of it. Though it is not in the *PED*, *sattha* can mean, if we interpret it as the p.p.p. of Sanskrit $\sqrt{\text{śvas}}$, “[the breath of] life”, a synonym of *pāṇa*. *Hāraḥka* means “taking away”.

¹²⁷There is a variant reading *apariyitthaṃ*; this makes no difference at all.

This is not the place to take my own analysis of the story much further, but I shall indicate the direction of my thoughts. I have always admired the dictum of Dr Samuel Johnson, who said, “Sir, I get the Latin from the meaning, not the meaning from the Latin.” In the present case, this means that I start from the observation that the whole story which introduces the third *pārājika* offense with the story of the mass suicide of monks is totally absurd and must owe its form to some misunderstanding – a misunderstanding which I think we can dimly discern.

Why is it absurd? I can easily suggest four reasons.

We know that Roman warriors sometimes committed suicide by getting someone to hold a sword onto which they threw themselves; Japanese warriors (*samurai*) had almost the same custom; but is there any other trace of this custom, or any similar form of assisted suicide, in India?

If that is not enough, does this story not conflict with other major features of what we know of early Buddhism? How come that so spectacular an event is never mentioned outside this immediate context, either in the Buddhist texts or in the polemics of non-Buddhist religious literature? It is as if even the Buddhists themselves did not believe this story.

And well might they not so believe! Buddhists knew that if one killed oneself, one would not escape from corporeal existence but be reborn in another body – but probably in worse circumstances, because one had died by self-inflicted violence.

Finally, as Anālayo points out in his article, the story reflects amazingly badly on the Buddha: not only does it impugn his omniscience, but something far worse: it shows him guilty of the most shocking misjudgment, failing to foresee the effect of his own preaching. Anālayo mentions this, most pointedly in note 118 and the related text in this article, but goes no further than calling it “remarkable”. Yet is any comparable episode to this recorded elsewhere?

None of this is in disagreement with Anālayo’s analysis of the function that this story was intended to have. It survives in several versions, and this alone shows that it did serve a purpose in training monastics and setting a limit to permissible asceticism. My intention is merely to dig deeper and suggest how so grotesque and unrealistic a fable came about.

Abbreviations

AN	<i>Aṅguttara-nikāya</i>
Ap	<i>Apadāna</i>
Ap-a	<i>Apadāna-aṭṭhakathā</i>
B ^e	Burmese edition
C ^e	Ceylonese edition
D	Derge edition
DĀ	<i>Dīrgha-āgama</i>
DN	<i>Dīgha-nikāya</i>
EĀ	<i>Ekottarika-āgama</i> (T 125)
Jā	<i>Jātaka</i>
MĀ	<i>Madhyama-āgama</i> (T 26)
Mil	<i>Milindapañha</i>
MN	<i>Majjhima-nikāya</i>
Nidd II	<i>Cullaniddesa</i>
Pj II	<i>Paramatthajotikā</i>
Ps	<i>Papañcasūdanī</i>
Q	Peking edition
SĀ	<i>Samyukta-āgama</i> (T 99)
SĀ ²	<i>Samyukta-āgama</i> (T 100)
SN	<i>Samyutta-nikāya</i>
Sn	<i>Sutta-nipāta</i>
Sp	<i>Samantapāsādikā</i>
Spk	<i>Sāratthappakāsinī</i>
T	Taishō edition
Th	<i>Theragāthā</i>
Thī	<i>Therīgāthā</i>
Vin	<i>Vinayaṭṭhaka</i>

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Overcoming “Sentimental Compassion”: How Buddhists Cope with Compassion Fatigue.*

Fung Kei Cheng

Compassion fatigue demolishes productivity and the mental health of helping professionals. And yet, very little research has investigated it from the Buddhist perspective. The following mixed-method research explores how Buddhists overcome and prevent compassion fatigue during their caring services. With reference to the *Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra* (維摩詰所說經), this project has examined the experiences of 35 interviewees. It then proposes the bodhisattva spirit as a potential solution, for it involves interaction between *bodhicitta* (enlightened mind 菩提心), *prajñā* (wisdom 般若) and *upāya* (skilful means 方便). The enlightened mind is the basis for the latter two qualities. Wisdom enables helping practitioners to free themselves from “sentimental compassion” and reduce stress when serving clients. Having applied skilful means to caregiving, practitioners flexibly cater to the individual needs of the service recipients. Through this process, practitioners both help others and take care of their own emotional

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Keywords: bodhisattva, self-benefiting altruism, sentimental compassion, untainted compassion, *Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra*

reactions towards clients’ distress, resulting in tackling compassion fatigue, enhancing personal growth and achieving self-benefiting altruism.

Buddhist Philosophy on Compassion Fatigue

A cluster of terminology, including burnout, compassion fatigue, vicarious trauma, and secondary traumatic stress, refers to negative impacts on physical, mental, and spiritual health, and the work performance of caregivers,¹ volunteers² and human service professionals,³ including counsellors,⁴ social workers⁵ and teachers,⁶ especially among young novices.⁷ This patois is made up of frequently interchangeable terms,⁸ although the causes behind the symptoms are different⁹ and their focus varies regarding the intensity of empathic engagement.¹⁰ Burnout is usually produced by heavy workloads, bureaucratic demands, and the disintegration of professional identity.¹¹ Meanwhile, vicarious trauma inclines towards cognition changes related to the professionals themselves, others around them and the world,¹² and secondary traumatic stress¹³ indicates behavioural symptoms¹⁴ and psychological dysfunction.¹⁵ Compassion fatigue results in compassion discomfort and stress,¹⁶ and the erosion of hopes and empathy,¹⁷ mainly referring to affective and emotional responses.¹⁸ This fatigue is induced when

¹ Milstein, Gerstenberger, and Barton (2002)

² Rank, Zaparanick, and Gentry (2009); Lynch and Lobo (2012)

³ Bozgeyikli (2012); Sprang, Craig, and Clark (2011); Jacobson (2012)

⁴ Injeyan et al. (2011); Baird and Jenkins (2003); Arvay (2001); Jenkins and Baird (2002); Bride, Hatcher, and Humble (2009); Fahy (2007)

⁵ Newell and MacNeil (2010); Bride (2007); Pulido (2007)

⁶ Cullen (2013)

⁷ Tam and Mong (2002, 90)

⁸ Worley (2005); Stewart (2009); Sprang, Clark, and Whitt-Woosley (2007); Deighton, Gurriss, and Traue (2007); Cieslak et al. (2013); Naturale (2007)

⁹ Everall and Paulson (2004, 26); Bride, Radey, and Figley (2007, 156)

¹⁰ Boyle (2011, 3); Bush (2009, 25)

¹¹ Vanheule and Verhaeghe (2005, 286); Tam and Mong (2005, 480)

¹² Baird and Krachen (2006, 181)

¹³ Bride and Kintzle (2011, 22)

¹⁴ (Newell and MacNeil 2010, 60; Robinson-Keilig 2014, 1478)

¹⁵ Collins and Long (2003b, 418-419)

¹⁶ Boyle (2011, 2)

¹⁷ Mathieu (2012, 8)

¹⁸ Slocum-Gori et al. (2011)

a caring service practitioner who empathically works for vulnerable people¹⁹ is overwhelmed by excessive compassionate energy and over-involvement²⁰ over a long period of time, being exposed to service recipients who are suffering from pain, grief, distress, trauma,²¹ and the fragility of life.²² Paradoxically, compassion is the most essential attribute of professional caregivers.²³

Apart from physical and psychosomatic symptoms, such as tiredness and chronic pain,²⁴ compassion fatigue induces three types of affective exhaustion: emotional shrinking, depersonalisation, and the devaluation of personal achievements.²⁵ This exhaustion devastates enthusiasm, job performance²⁶ and peer relationships in the workplace,²⁷ increases irritability,²⁸ worsens a sense of hopelessness and isolation,²⁹ and causes a withdrawal from and avoidance of social connections.³⁰ The health service field has been affected by compassion fatigue³¹ due to the cumulative stressful work of serving clients.³² Gender differences related to this sort of fatigue remain unproven: some research reports no significant disparity,³³ whereas other arguments point to a higher level among female practitioners.³⁴

Compassion fatigue tends to be severe among double role caregivers, such as nurse-daughter practitioners,³⁵ who bear feelings of guilt, anger and hopelessness. Moreover, the risk of compassion fatigue increases in caring professionals who have experienced life's difficulties while exposed to clients' pain³⁶ at a time

¹⁹Dunn (2009); Gilmore (2012)

²⁰Gallavan and Newman (2013); Frandsen (2010)

²¹Bloniasz (2011); Stewart (2009); Nimmo and Huggard (2013)

²²Gilmore (2012); Berzoff and Kita (2010)

²³Barker and Buchanan-Barker (2004, 18); Radey and Figley (2007, 207); Halifax (2013b, 110)

²⁴Gilmore (2012)

²⁵Gallavan and Newman (2013)

²⁶Adam, Boscarino, and Figley (2006, 103); Harr and Moore (2011, 353)

²⁷Negash and Sahin (2011, 5)

²⁸Stewart (2009); Negash and Sahin (2011)

²⁹Figley (2002, 1436)

³⁰Lynch and Lobo (2012)

³¹Stebnicki (2008, 3)

³²Mizuno et al. (2013, 547)

³³Sprang, Clark, and Whitt-Woosley (2007)

³⁴Rossi et al. (2012, 933); Barse et al. (2013, 155); Thompson, Amatea, and Thompson (2014, 67)

³⁵(Ward-Griffin, St-Amant, and Brown 2011)

³⁶Sabo (2011, 3); Figley (2002)

when they have lower sensitivity to accumulated stress and to their own emotional needs.³⁷ Thus both the health service workforce³⁸ and health care costs³⁹ have been beset by a high resignation rate,⁴⁰ which has impelled policy makers to offer programmes designed to reduce symptoms of compassion fatigue,⁴¹ for example, the employee assistance programme, and the “Circle of Life”⁴² for peer support and positive self-caring strategies.⁴³

Whilst most scholars have investigated compassion fatigue based on Western theories, Marr⁴⁴ initiates a discussion on it from the Buddhist perspective, and conceives that compassion fatigue does not actually arise. She explains that compassion is neither a static state nor a concept, but is a praxis by which to eradicate self-centredness and to connect with others in a genuine manner. Her suggestions for approaching patients without suffering from compassion fatigue include non-dualism between “I” as a caregiver and “you” as a service recipient, and focusing on the here-and-now while serving patients non-judgementally. Although she has not elucidated to which school of Buddhist thought she refers, her Zen practices and thread of philosophy align with Mahāyāna (Great Vehicle 大乘佛教). Nevertheless, Marr⁴⁵ does not further discuss how these teachings can be applied to tackle compassion fatigue.

The “Being with Dying Professional Training Programme”, formulated by Halifax,⁴⁶ combines interventions for caregivers, patients and their family members, which employ Buddhist ideas, including the *catvāri apramāṇāni* (the four immeasurables 四無量心). However, insufficient scriptural data support her claims of using Buddhism in this programme.

Huang⁴⁷ has discussed what makes helpers create mental obstructions, using the personal experience of volunteers in a Buddhist organisation, and has explicated what Buddhist compassion is and how it works. His discussion can

³⁷ Bush (2009, 25)

³⁸ Lombardo and Eyre (2011)

³⁹ Joinson (1992, 119)

⁴⁰ Kjellenberg et al. (2014, 127)

⁴¹ Potter et al. (2010); Tyson (2007)

⁴² Running, Tolle, and Girard (2008, 306)

⁴³ Lombardo and Eyre (2011)

⁴⁴ Marr (2009)

⁴⁵ Marr (2009)

⁴⁶ Halifax (2013a)

⁴⁷ Huang (2013)

potentially be developed as a theoretical discourse, offering references to caring professionals to deal with emotional exhaustion.

The current exploratory research delves into the causes of compassion fatigue from the viewpoint of the Mahāyāna, and explores how Buddhists can manage compassion fatigue. Such study makes a significant contribution, in that it proposes alternative ideas for conquering this professional challenge. The research questions consist of the following: first, to what extent do Mahāyāna doctrines explain how compassion fatigue is produced? Second, how can Buddhism help practitioners to tackle and prevent compassion fatigue? This cross-disciplinary project analyses the *Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra* (維摩詰所說經) in order to present the relevant Mahāyāna teachings; they are concordant with the personal experience of the interviewees in this study, who manage compassion fatigue through Buddhist wisdom.

This study encompasses four major parts as follows. It begins by depicting the mixed research method; then looks into the canonical and interview data; then further discusses the insightful references associated with the formation of a coping model; finally, sets out the significance, implications, limitations and conclusion.

Hybrid Research Design

This study gathers primary data by utilising mixed methods which combine references from the *Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra* (維摩詰所說經) and a fieldwork inquiry. This is intended to cross-validate the data from a scriptural text and qualitative interviews, and thus illustrate how a collaborative approach can link the disciplines of Buddhist studies and social sciences.

A Textual Study

The *Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra* (維摩詰所說經) (hereafter simply referred to as the *Sūtra*) was dissected for the present study, with the aid of the ATLAS.ti 7 software package⁴⁸ (refer to Figure 1). This section first expounds how the *Sūtra* connects to this topic of compassion fatigue, and then introduces the significance of the *Sūtra*.

⁴⁸ Cheng (2014d)

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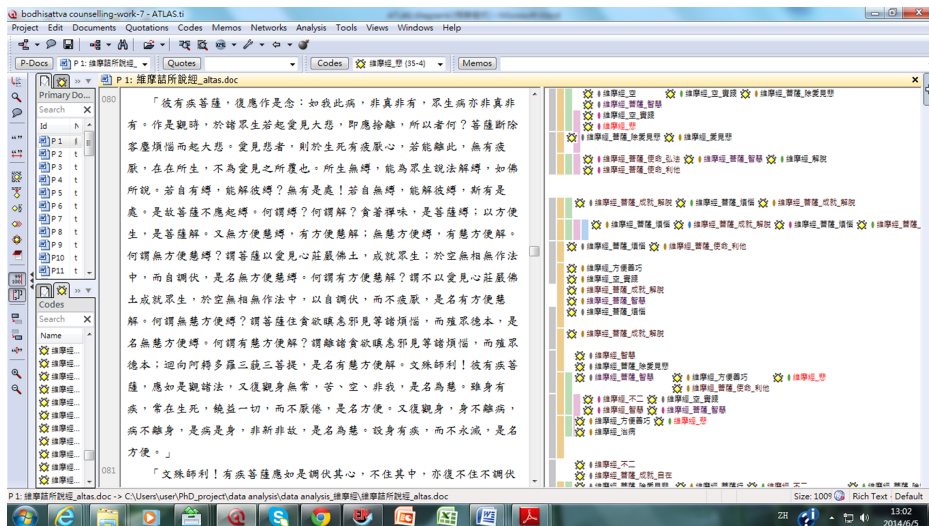


Figure 1: Buddhist Scriptural Studies through the Aid of ATLAS.ti 7

Sentimental compassion. The *Sūtra* is the only Buddhist canon which discusses “sentimental compassion”⁴⁹ (愛見悲、⁵⁰愛見大悲⁵¹) in detail, although the *Bodhisattvapiṭaka Sūtra*⁵² (佛說大乘菩薩藏正法經) also addresses this construct in a cursory manner. In Chapter 5 of the *Sūtra*, *Mañjuśrī’s Condolence Visit*⁵³ (文殊師利問疾品第五), Vimalakīrti explains the causes of sentimental compassion that can induce illnesses in bodhisattvas (有疾菩薩), especially among “novice bodhisattvas”.⁵⁴

A bodhisattva aims to eradicate sentient beings’ distress,⁵⁵ metaphorically

⁴⁹McRae (2004, 112)

⁵⁰《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0545a26

⁵¹《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0545a25-26

⁵²「是故菩薩修法觀時，最極微量悉無所見，於解脫法及菩提道悉皆出離得無障礙，於諸有情不起愛見大悲之想。彼無煩惱及隨煩惱。所以者何？如其了義平等入解人法俱空，無有煩惱之所積集，而能覺悟彼煩惱自性即菩提性，此菩提自性即煩惱性。」《佛說大乘菩薩藏正法經》T11, no. 0316, p. 0877a25-28

⁵³《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0544a26-0545c29

⁵⁴McRae (2004, 177); 「新學菩薩。」《囑累品第十四》T14, no. 0475, p. 0557a17; 「新學者。」《囑累品第十四》T14, no. 0475, p. 0557a22

⁵⁵“This is the term for the bodhisattva who has simultaneously eliminated old age, illness, and death.” (McRae 2004, 111) 「如是兼除老病死者，菩薩之謂也。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0545a18-19

serving as a physician doctor⁵⁶ who cures sickness (of mental problems); the term *bodhi* refers to “enlightenment”⁵⁷ and *sattva* to “sentient beings”.⁵⁸ Although a bodhisattva is able to attain *nirvāṇa* (perfect stillness 涅槃), s/he is willing to enter *saṃsāra*⁵⁹ (the cycle of birth and death 輪迴) and dedicates her/himself to living with sentient beings in order to save them. However, novice bodhisattvas on the one hand sympathetically engage with the afflictions of sentient beings,⁶⁰ while on the other hand suffering from the affectionate compassion they feel towards their misery.⁶¹ This sickness is called sentimental compassion, and this bodhisattva is “the bodhisattva who is ill”.⁶² The sick bodhisattva will then loathe their return to the secular world⁶³ and will be unable to achieve her/his mission. This negative effect is comparable to affective exhaustion among caring practitioners, namely, compassion fatigue, as explicated earlier.

Vimalakīrti pointed out that sick bodhisattvas have not yet attained *prajñā* (wisdom 般若) and misunderstand *dharma*s.⁶⁴ This misunderstanding reinforces the attachment to self and to sentient beings,⁶⁵ and such attachment impacts on compassionate caring negatively, producing sentimental compassion. He therefore preached on how ill bodhisattvas can expunge sentimental compassion, and so relieve themselves from the bondage of affectionate views⁶⁶ by means of a

⁵⁶“Be the physician king, healing the host of illnesses.” (McRae 2004, 110) 「當作醫王，療治眾病。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0544c20

⁵⁷Dayal (1932/1999, 4)

⁵⁸Yao (2006, 191)

⁵⁹“Bodhisattvas enter *saṃsāra* on behalf of sentient beings.” (McRae 2004, 108) 「菩薩為眾生故入生死。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0544b21

⁶⁰“When sentient beings are ill the bodhisattvas are ill also and when sentient beings recover from their illness the bodhisattvas recover also.” (McRae 2004, 108) 「眾生病則菩薩病，眾生病愈，菩薩亦愈。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0544b22-23

⁶¹“The illness of bodhisattvas arises from great compassion.” (McRae 2004, 108) 「菩薩病者，以大悲起。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0544b23

⁶²McRae (2004, 110); 「有疾菩薩。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0544c17

⁶³“If they have an affectionate view of compassion, they would thereby generate aversion toward *saṃsāra*.” (McRae 2004, 112) 「愛見悲者，則於生死有疲厭心。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0545a26

⁶⁴“understand the conception of the extinguished *dharma*s” (McRae 200, 110) 「滅法想。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0544c30

⁶⁵“Furthermore, the arising of this illness is entirely due to attachment to self. ... the conception of ‘self’ and the conception of ‘sentient being.’” (McRae 2004, 110) 「又此病起，皆由著我。…我想及眾生想。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0544c28-29

⁶⁶“... they are subsequently reborn they will not be limited by any affectionate view.” (McRae 2004, 112) 「不為愛見之所覆也。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0545a27

synthesis of *prajñā* (wisdom 般若) and *upāya* (skilful means) (方便), affirming “skilful means with one’s wisdom emancipated”⁶⁷ and “wisdom with one’s skilful means emancipated”.⁶⁸ The former encourages bodhisattvas to deeply understand the nature of beings,⁶⁹ that is, *sūnyatā* (voidness 空性), according to the *pratītya-samutpāda* (the law of dependent origination 緣起法). Simultaneously, the latter exhorts bodhisattvas to serve others flexibly without limiting their methods.⁷⁰ These precepts, emphasised by Vimalakīrti, represent the classical wisdom of *bodhisattva-mārga* (the bodhisattva path 菩薩道) which evolved 2,000 years ago, and which have been narrated in the *Sūtra*. The current research further looks into their applicability and practicality in modern society through the lived experiences of service providers.

Significance of the *Sūtra*. The *Sūtra* embraces the principal Mahāyāna teachings from the perspective of *prajñā* (wisdom 般若); for instance, *pratītya-samutpāda* (the law of dependent origination 緣起法), *sūnyatā* (voidness 空性), *anitya* (impermanence 無常), *advaita* (non-dualism 不二), seed of Tathāgata (suchness 如來種), *buddhakṣetra* (*buddha* land 佛土), and particularly bodhisattva, *bodhisattva-mārga* (the bodhisattva path 菩薩道) and the *catvāri apramāṇāni* (the four immeasurables 四無量心), representing the Mahāyāna views of human nature, life and the world. Its theories have significantly influenced the Chan⁷¹ (Zen 禪宗), Tiantai⁷² (天臺宗), Huayan⁷³ (華嚴宗), Pure Land⁷⁴ (淨土宗), and Vajrayāna⁷⁵ (Tantric Buddhism 密宗) schools of Buddhism.

⁶⁷McRae (2004, 112); 「有方便慧解。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0545a31

⁶⁸McRae (2004, 113); 「有慧方便解。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0545a33

⁶⁹“It is not to use affection to ornament the *buddha* lands and accomplish [the liberation of] sentient beings, and to control oneself so as to be without aversion within [the three emancipations of] emptiness, singleness, and wishlessness.” (McRae 2004, 112) 「謂不以愛見心莊嚴佛土、成就眾生，於空、無相、無作法中，以自調伏，而不疲厭，是名有方便慧解。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0545a31-32

⁷⁰“It is to transcend the afflictions of desire anger, and false views and plant a host of virtuous roots, rededicating [the merit to one’s achievement of] *anuttarā-samyak-sambodhi*.” (McRae 2004, 113) 「謂離諸貪欲、瞋恚、邪見等諸煩惱，而植眾德本；迴向阿耨多羅三藐三菩提，是名有慧方便解。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0545a33-34

⁷¹Wu (2001, 10)

⁷²You (1999)

⁷³Ng (1995, 93-94)

⁷⁴Xie and Pan (2011, 148)

⁷⁵Tam (1995; 1997)

Composed around the first to second centuries A.D.,⁷⁶ the *Sūtra* was translated into seven Chinese versions,⁷⁷ among which Kumārajīva’s (鳩摩羅什) rendition has been used in the current research because of its readability and popularity.⁷⁸ Preaching on the *Sūtra* has been widely assimilated in Chinese culture across different social classes, including aristocrats, gentry,⁷⁹ and scholars,⁸⁰ which is evident in philosophical discourse,⁸¹ art⁸² and literature.⁸³ Furthermore, it has become a folk religion⁸⁴ practised by the grass-roots class.⁸⁵ The *Sūtra* is also well known elsewhere in Asia, including Vietnam,⁸⁶ Japan and Korea,⁸⁷ as well as in the West, in countries such as Germany⁸⁸ and Spain.⁸⁹ In addition, there are various English versions, among which the renditions of McRae⁹⁰ and Watson⁹¹ are employed in this research since their translations were grounded on Kumārajīva’s work.⁹²

Since the *Sūtra* is a Mahāyāna scripture, using it in the present research implies that the analysis and discussion adhere to Mahāyāna theories, particularly its concept of *prajñā* (wisdom 般若).

Qualitative Fieldwork

This research recruited 35 Buddhist participants (refer to Table 1) with a variety of backgrounds (refer to Table 2) into four groups of stakeholders, including helping practitioners, Buddhist masters, volunteers, and beneficiaries, who cope with life challenges through Buddhist principles and help other people afterwards. The

⁷⁶Lin (1997, 147)

⁷⁷Wang (2009, 3)

⁷⁸Tu (2005, 125-130)

⁷⁹Mather (1968)

⁸⁰Demiéville (1962/1988)

⁸¹Shi (2002)

⁸²He (2000)

⁸³Wang (1992)

⁸⁴He (2009)

⁸⁵He (2005)

⁸⁶Lieu (2004)

⁸⁷Miller (1984)

⁸⁸Fuchs (2005)

⁸⁹Bellerin (2005)

⁹⁰McRae (2004)

⁹¹Watson (1997)

⁹²Cheng (2013)

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identity of “Buddhist” in this study is taken in a broad sense, for which ordination is not a prerequisite. Specifically, one participant classifies herself as a Buddhist, even though she has not been officially confirmed in a Buddhist ceremony.

Table 1: Groups of Participants. (Remarks: Those names marked with * are pseudonyms; the remainder are either real names or dharma name used with their consent.

Group of stakeholders (n=4)	Participant (n=35)
Helping practitioners (n=10; 28.6%)	Dr Chan (a professor) Dr Li (a psychiatrist) Hong (a teacher) HW* (a professor) Jackie (a social worker) JC* (a psychiatrist) Joe (a counsellor) KJ* (a psychiatrist) ML* (a counsellor), Polly (a clinical psychologist)
Buddhist masters (n=11; 31.4%)	Rinpoche K* Sister Harmony Venerable Chi Yiu Venerable Foo Chai Venerable Sander Venerable Sinh Nghiem Venerable Thong Hong Venerable Yu Chun VHT*, VHU*, VHY*
Volunteers (n=6; 17.1%) (n=6; 17.1%) (2 focus groups)	Tzu-Chi focus group: Betty, Ming Lai, Yim Na Palliative ward service group: Simon, Wai Hing, Wendy
Beneficiaries (n=8; 22.9%)	Amara, Che Wai, Chi Sim, Dun Li, Esther, Pema Kazhuo, Pu He, Pureté de Lotus

Table 2: Profiles of the 35 Participants

Category	Details	Frequency
Gender	Female	22 (62.9%)
	Male	13 (37.1%)
Age	18-30	3 (8.6%)
	31-45	25 (71.4%)

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Category	Details	Frequency
	46-60	5 (14.3%)
	>60	2 (5.7%)
Education	PhD	5 (14.3%)
	Post-graduate	12 (34.3%)
	University/College	10 (28.6%)
	Secondary school	7 (20%)
	Primary school	1 (2.8%)
Ethnicity	Non-Chinese	1 (2.8%)
	Hong Kong Chinese	28 (80%)
	Mainland Chinese	2 (5.8%)
	Malaysian Chinese	1 (2.8%)
	Singaporean Chinese	2 (5.8%)
	Taiwanese Chinese	1 (2.8%)
Language	Cantonese	32 (91.6%)
	English	1 (2.8%)
	Putonghua/Mandarin	1 (2.8%)
	Tibetan	1 (2.8%)

Data collection. The present project was approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee for Non-Clinical Faculties, The University of Hong Kong. Recruitment methods included social networks, referrals and snowball effects, cold calls, and electronic media (electronic mails and a facebook page). This study mainly conducted interviews in Hong Kong, with 41 individual sessions and two focus group sessions, covering 2,534 minutes in total, by means of face-to-face, long distance calls and written correspondence. Four sets of interview guiding questions were utilised for the different stakeholders, aimed at understanding their service experiences and how they manage their emotions when facing their clients’ afflictions. In addition, supplementary materials were gathered, such as artefacts, autobiographies and expressive art.

Data analysis. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim into Chinese. The unit of analysis was individual and interpretative phenomenological analysis, which specifically examines personal accounts of informants related to a given phenomenon,⁹³ was used for qualitative data analysis, assisted by ATLAS.ti 7 (refer to Figure 1). Transcriptions were read over and over before processing open coding, which was grouped into three “emergent themes”⁹⁴ – *bodhicitta* (enlightened mind 菩提心), *prajñā* (wisdom 般若) and *upāya* (skilful

⁹³McCormack, Joseph, and Hagger (2009, 111)

⁹⁴Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009, 91)

means 方便) – and finalised into one “super-ordinate theme”⁹⁵ (the bodhisattva spirit).

Academic rigour. In order to enhance trustworthiness, this study underwent different levels of triangulation. Member-checking ensured the transcription accuracy and appropriateness of data interpretation by discussion with the participants. Moreover, peer analysis was also adopted, for which the researcher and a co-analyst analysed the transcriptions separately. The researcher then compared the two coding sets and reviewed their similarities and differences, accomplishing an inter-rater reliability of 92%.

Analyses and Results

The lived experiences of the 35 participants add up to one super-ordinate theme (the bodhisattva spirit which is realised through self-benefiting altruism) that has been elaborated upon in the *Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra*, and which is supported by three emergent themes, including *bodhicitta* (enlightened mind 菩提心), *prajñā* (wisdom 般若) and *upāya* (skilful means 方便).

Bodhicitta (Enlightened Mind 菩提心)

Bodhicitta (that is, *anuttarā-samyak-sambodhi*⁹⁶ in Sanskrit) refers to the highest wisdom that yields an “altruistic intention”,⁹⁷ a compassionate commitment to fulfil *bodhisattva-mārga* (bodhisattva path 菩薩道) which is rooted in untainted *karuṇā* (compassion 悲).

Compassionate commitment. Realising *bodhicitta* is the fundamental practice of Buddhists. This “original inspiration”⁹⁸ is the overarching pledge of Mahāyāna devotees who achieve it through serving sentient beings; it is hence also specified as the “aspiration for the Mahāyāna”,⁹⁹ a “commitment” as Polly (a clinical psychologist) called. This strong commitment is made because of the inherent

⁹⁵Smith, Flowers, and Larkin (2009, 107)

⁹⁶「阿耨多羅三藐三菩提心。」《佛國品第一》T14, no. 0475, p. 0538c29

⁹⁷Gyatso (2011, 103)

⁹⁸McRae (2004, 91); 「本心。」《弟子品第三》T14, no. 0475, p. 0540c28

⁹⁹McRae (2004, 90); 「大乘心。」《弟子品第三》T14, no. 0475, p. 0540c26

buddha-nature of all sentient beings,¹⁰⁰ an internal force, Yim Na (a volunteer) stated, a statement also supported by Rinpoche K*.

“All beings have the *buddha*-nature; therefore, all beings have the potential to become buddhas.”

Anyone who practises *bodhicitta* is a bodhisattva, an enlightened sentient being¹⁰¹ with an awakened mind,¹⁰² even someone who is an ordinary person,¹⁰³ as Esther (a beneficiary) understood:

“Bodhisattva: indeed, everyone is a bodhisattva. ... because [anyone] who is willing to help other people is a bodhisattva.”

Venerable Thong Hong endorsed this understanding, relating that

“Everyone can be a bodhisattva, regardless of good people or bad people.”

Sister Harmony (a Buddhist nun) supplemented this discourse:

“You know, after they (criminals) are released from prison, they know their direction in life so that they can contribute their energy, their time in order to make up for what they did wrong in the past, if possible. He or she then becomes a bodhisattva.”

Bodhicitta is “the will to benefit sentient beings”, Joe (a counsellor) affirmed, and this “benefit” refers to altruistic activities, in accordance with which Rinpoche K* explained:

“*Bodhicitta* is associated with a yearning for alleviating suffering of all beings and enabling them to pursue happiness, which is initiated by loving-kindness (*maitrī* 慈) and compassion (*karuṇā* 悲). It leads to fulfil the ultimate goal: becoming a *buddha*.”

Venerable Chi Yiu added the relationship between *bodhicitta* and *bodhisattva-mārga*¹⁰⁴ (bodhisattva path 菩薩道), explaining:

¹⁰⁰ Hsing-Yun (2007a, b)

¹⁰¹ Virtbauer (2010, 96); Yin-Shun (1980/1994, 170)

¹⁰² Yin-Shun (1949/2003, 201); Glaser (2005, 19)

¹⁰³ Conze (1953, 128); Leighton (1998, 1); Suzuki (1938/1981, 61)

¹⁰⁴ “The mind that aspires to *bodhi* is the place of practice, for it is without error or misconception.” (McRae 2004, 55) 「菩提心是道場。」《菩薩品第四》T14, no. 0475, p. 052c12

“*Bodhicitta* equates to the achievement of the *buddha* path and to being a help to sentient beings.¹⁰⁵ Activating *bodhicitta* navigates the bodhisattva path (*bodhisattva-mārga* 菩薩道).”

Untainted *karuṇā* (compassion 悲). *Bodhicitta* arises from *mahā-maitrī-mahā-karuṇā* (great loving-kindness and great compassion 大慈大悲) in the fullest way when a bodhisattva demonstrates parental love.¹⁰⁶ “When others suffer, I feel suffering. When others drown, I also feel [as though I am] drowning. Only when I count the affliction as my personal problem, can I help other people [with my whole] heart,” Venerable Chi Yiu said.

However, this sympathetic immersion will mar the missionary capability to serve sentient beings, if a bodhisattva becomes ill when s/he sympathises with the sickness of sentient beings¹⁰⁷ and is unable to manage this sympathy properly, resulting in sentimental compassion. Analogously, human service practitioners will suffer from compassion fatigue when they are overwhelmed by their emotional reactions to the afflictions of their clients. “This is a trap for counsellors, stunting their work when they fall into such affective compassion”, as Polly (a clinical psychologist) observed.

Sentimental compassion is impure compassion. In contrast, a bodhisattva has been liberated from defilements, so that her/his compassion is pure without taint.¹⁰⁸ This untainted compassion plays a dominant role in feeling the distress that sentient beings are suffering,¹⁰⁹ in heartily helping others without seeking re-

¹⁰⁵ 「上求佛道，下化眾生。」 (Yang 2009, 228)

¹⁰⁶ “It is like an elder whose only son becomes ill, and the parents become ill as well. If the son recovers from the illness, the parents also recover. Bodhisattvas are like this. They have affection for sentient beings as if for their own children.” (McRae 2004, 108) 「譬如長者，唯有一子，其子得病，父母亦病。若子病愈，父母亦愈。菩薩如是，於諸眾生，愛之若子。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》 T14, no. 0475, p. 0544b21-22

¹⁰⁷ “Since all sentient beings are ill, therefore I am ill.” (McRae 2004, 108) 「以一切眾生病，是故我病。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》 T14, no. 0475, p. 0544b20

¹⁰⁸ “Bodhisattvas eliminate the vexations of sensory data and generate compassion.” (McRae 2004, 112) 「菩薩斷除客塵煩惱而起大悲。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》 T14, no. 0475, p. 0545a26

¹⁰⁹ “They must take upon themselves the sufferings of all living beings.” (Watson 1997, 119) 「代一切眾生受諸苦惱。」《香積佛品第十》 T14, no. 0475, p. 0553a29-30

ward,¹¹⁰ in practising indiscrimination and impartiality,¹¹¹ and in serving people with no sentimental hindrances.¹¹²

Similarly, combating compassion fatigue becomes a crucial need for caregivers, for which Venerable Sander suggested, “You (a practitioner) have to stay with yourself and not get taken away with other people’s problems.” This shrinking away from over-involvement can be achieved by discerning the difference between genuine compassion and the “compassion devil” (悲魔), which is the “defilement of compassion that cannot develop authentic compassion,” HW* (a professor) affirmed. She continued,

“I can empathically feel his predicament, but I won’t fall into it. ... I don’t necessarily tumble into such a predicament because if I do, how I can help [the client]. I am totally unable to help. ... [I] keep [my] distance [from such disturbances]. ... and don’t wholly dash ahead regardless of my safety.”

Hong (a teacher) shared his personal experience in peacefully viewing the actual needs of service recipients.

“When you put this thing in your mind purely without tarnish, you’ll easily help them from a clear viewpoint, understanding their needs. ... You’ll manage it easily. You won’t be attached [to their afflictions], ... [They] won’t tie you up. ... If you [try to] help them through sentimental compassion, ... you will help them superficially. Therefore, we don’t merely initiate from feelings, but from wisdom, identifying it wisely. Indeed, [find] what they want, then do it. ... then give them appropriate things, don’t give them what you think is good [for them], but give them what is really adequate for them.”

Untainted compassion not only leads practitioners to discern the actual needs of service recipients, but also reveals that altruism is a *bodhisattva-mārga* (the

¹¹⁰“They benefit sentient beings without seeking recompense.” (Watson 1997, 155) 「饒益眾生，而不望報。」《香積佛品第十》T14, no. 0475, p. 0553a29

¹¹¹“One exercises great compassion in equal measures without seeking reward or recompense.” (Watson 1997, 63) 「無所分別，等於大悲，不求果報。」《菩薩品第四》T14, no. 0475, p. 0544a06

¹¹²“Equanimity is the place of enlightenment, because of the eradication of repugnance and affection.” (McRae 2004, 100) 「捨是道場，憎愛斷故。」《菩薩品第四》T14, no. 0475, p. 0542c14-15; Huang (2013, 13-15)

bodhisattva path 菩薩道) practice. HW* (a professor) gained an insight into mind training and self reflection when activating compassion, illustrating it in this way:

“It (facing others’ distress) is a chance to train [our] mind. By such an opportunity, [you] train [your] mind. ... During this [therapeutic] process, [it] is also a chance to make a commitment. You also activate your compassionate mind through this chance. Therefore, you’re experiencing suffering [of the recipient]. ... In that adventure, you are also in self healing, or self repenting. Or you face yourself. ... We (a practitioner and a recipient) are two persons, but we have the same experience, then at that time we’re experiencing the same feeling. However, I unnecessarily fall [into that feeling].”

Through such mind training, helping professionals can achieve self development for themselves and their clients, Venerable Sinh Nghiem came through this beneficial experience, depicting it by saying:

“[Compassion] gives me energy to help people in actually being in contact with people and understanding their suffering. ... I listen deeply to the suffering. Understanding their suffering gives me a lot of motivation to practise on myself, to be stronger, and to be able to support them when they need it. So that is the energy.”

Moreover, practising compassion is conducive to a deeper self-understanding and a conquest of fragility, as witnessed by Wendy (a volunteer):

“[Serving other people] indeed inspires me, inspires me to let go of attachment. This is a big bombardment for me. I’m so lucky that I can convert this bombardment into [something] positive. ... In this process, I learn to review myself. I empty all [of my thought]. [I understand that I] do not necessarily grasp a set of die-hard issues.”

Pema Kazhuo (a beneficiary) enriched this idea when she provided volunteer service:

“I think Heaven gives me such a chance, lets me try it, experience it, know it, and widen my views, not always feeling my own miseries. ... While other people are living happily, I always fall into negative

emotions. [I] tackle this attachment, letting me better understand this world. ... In fact, this is an issue of mentality. I think heaven gives me such a chance to try it.”

***Bodhisattva-mārga* (bodhisattva path 菩薩道).** *Bodhisattva-mārga* is the practice of a bodhisattva, referring to anyone who is committed to serving other people.¹¹³ However, “to be without the attachment of affection”¹¹⁴ is a challenge to someone who gets involved in the afflictions of the people they serve. The *Sūtra*¹¹⁵ emphasises *prajñā* (wisdom 般若) and *upāya* (skilful means 方便) to fortify service providers’ capabilities against negative emotions. Whereas *prajñā* focuses on cognitive strength, *upāya* is centred around praxis.

***Prajñā* (Wisdom 般若)**

Mahāyāna wisdom refers to the ability to understand the truth of reality which involves *anitya* (impermanence 無常), *śūnyatā* (voidness 空性), *anātman* (non-self 無我) and *duḥkha*¹¹⁶ (suffering 苦); among which the first three collectively represent *pratitya-samutpāda* (the law of dependent origination 緣起法).

Nature of reality. Existence is formed through an assembly of conditions, including *hetu* (cause 因) and *saha-kāri-pratyaya* (contributing causes 助緣), resulting in the phenomenal world,¹¹⁷ which changes when conditions change. Therefore, it has no fixed form¹¹⁸ and constantly alters, which is also called *anitya*¹¹⁹ (impermanence 無常). Impermanence manifests the nature of condi-

¹¹³ Cheng (2014b)

¹¹⁴ McRae (2004, 114); 「不愛著。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0545b27

¹¹⁵ 「智度菩薩母，方便以為父。」《佛道品第八》T14, no. 0475, p. 0549b30

¹¹⁶ “And he should view the body and realise that it is marked by impermanence, suffering, emptiness, and absence of ego. This is called wisdom.” (Watson 1997, 71) 「又復觀身無常、苦、空、非我，是名為慧。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0545a33-34

¹¹⁷ “All things in the phenomenal world are just such phantoms and conjure beings.” (Watson 1997, 43) 「一切諸法，如幻化相。」《弟子品第三》T14, no. 0475, p. 0540b28

¹¹⁸ “Phantoms have no fixed forms.” (Watson 1997, 90) 「幻無定相。」《觀眾生品第七》T14, no. 0475, p. 0548b25

¹¹⁹ “Conditioned dharmas were all entirely impermanent.” (McRae 2004, 79) 「知有為法皆悉無常。」《佛國品第一》T14, no. 0475, p. 0538c30

tioned beings,¹²⁰ that is, *śūnyatā* (voidness 空性) grounded on the principle of non-abiding.¹²¹

In short, *pratītya-samutpāda* (the law of dependent origination 緣起法) signifies the importance of sufficient conditions and causality, including the capability of service providers, as spelled out by HW* (a professor).

“When we don’t have sufficient karmic reward (福報), we’re unable to help other people. ... When we don’t have sufficient conditions or resources, we’re unable to help.”

Jackie (a social worker) supplemented this by elaborating upon it:

“It’s true that the service recipient has a lack of mature conditions [to be saved]. ... This doesn’t matter for a bodhisattva, who is preparing to help anyone who is willing to be helped. If you (recipient) don’t want to be saved, I save others first until you are willing. ... When I have such thoughts, I can release stress and feel hopes. I can wait.”

Likewise, sentient beings carry the characteristics of phenomenal existence as related to physical and psychological aspects. A body cannot stop degenerating, like a drifting cloud,¹²² while the mind mutates with various ideas.¹²³ Sentient beings *per se* are thus *anātman* (without self 無我), powerlessly aging without an ever-lasting form, metaphorically people created by a conjuror.¹²⁴

Duḥkha (suffering 苦). Suffering is inevitable¹²⁵ and is metaphorically referred to as “sickness”¹²⁶ in the *Sūtra*, which elucidates the causes of distress. Negli-

¹²⁰“Form is emptiness – it is not that form extinguishes emptiness but that the nature of form is of itself empty.” (McRae 2004, 145) 「色即是空，非色滅空，色性自空。」《不二法門第九》T14, no. 0475, p. 0551a19

¹²¹“the non-abiding is its fundamental basis.” (McRae 2004, 127) 「無住為本。」《觀眾生品第七》T14, no. 0475, p. 0547c20

¹²²“This body is like a drifting cloud, changing and vanishing in an instant.” (Watson 1997, 35) 「是身如浮雲，須臾變滅。」《方便品第二》T14, no. 0475, p. 0539b14

¹²³“The mind is like a phantasm.” (McRae 2004, 109) 「心如幻故。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0544c12

¹²⁴McRae (2004, 123); 「幻人。」《觀眾生品第七》T14, no. 0475, p. 0547b01

¹²⁵Yalom (1980, 9); Cheng (2011, 153)

¹²⁶“Alternatively suffering and vexatious, it accumulates a host of illnesses.” (McRae 2004, 83) 「為苦、為惱，眾病所集。」《方便品第二》T14, no. 0475, p. 0539b12

gence of phenomenal reality and a misperception of eternity produce *avidyā*¹²⁷ (ignorance 無明), referring to the disregarding of *pratītya-samutpāda* (the law of dependent origination) (緣起法). This ignorance guides false comprehension connected to self, impermanence and happiness, which creates *viparyāsa*¹²⁸ (confusion 顛倒). Such misapprehension fuels *ālambana*¹²⁹ (entanglement 攀緣) to be infatuated by external factors through sensory information, including colour, sound, smell, taste and touch, yielding *abhūta-parikalpa*¹³⁰ (false dichotomy 虛妄分別) causing the viewer to distinguish between “I” and “you”, “good” and “bad”, and so forth. This discrimination reflects *rāga*¹³¹ (greed 貪) and *ātma-grāha*¹³² (self-attachment 我執) so as to retain the perpetuity of body and longevity.¹³³ However, the very truth negates this figment of illusion, which then generates afflictions in those who are ignorant of reality, as experienced by Wendy (a volunteer); “Life is impermanent. The more you attach, the more [you] won’t let go, [and] the more you suffer.”

Karma (action 業). Equally, unceasing karma¹³⁴ determines one’s present life,¹³⁵ which is affected by the behaviour, speech and intentions of past lives.¹³⁶ Rin-

¹²⁷“This illness of mine is born of ignorance and feelings of attachment.” (Watson 1997, 65) 「從癡有愛，則我病生。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0544b20

¹²⁸“This present illness of mine comes entirely from the false concepts, confusions, and afflictions of previous lives.” (McRae 2004, 110) 「今我此病，皆從前世妄想顛倒諸煩惱生。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0544c27

¹²⁹“Where there are troublesome entanglements, these become the source of illness.” (Watson 1997, 69) 「從有攀緣，則為病本。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0545a16

¹³⁰“False discrimination is its fundamental basis.” (McRae 2004, 126) 「虛妄分別為本。」《觀眾生品第七》T14, no. 0475, p. 0547c18

¹³¹“Desire and greed are the root.” (Watson 1997, 86) 「欲貪為本。」《觀眾生品第七》T14, no. 0475, p. 0547c17

¹³²“The body also has no self. Furthermore, the arising of this illness is entirely due to attachment of self.” (McRae 2004, 110) 「身亦無我；又此病起，皆由著我。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0544c28

¹³³“The illnesses of sentient beings arise from the four elements (earth, water, fire and wind).” (McRae 2004, 109) 「而眾生生病，從四大起。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0544c19

¹³⁴“Yet good and bad karma never cease to function.” (Watson 1997, 22) 「善惡之業亦不亡。」《佛國品第一》T14, no. 0475, p. 0537b38

¹³⁵「是身如影，從業緣現。」《方便品第二》T14, no. 0475, p. 0539b13-14

¹³⁶“These are misdeeds of the body, these are the retribution for misdeeds of the body. These are misdeeds of the mouth, these are the retribution for misdeeds of the mouth. These are misdeeds of the mind these are the retribution for misdeeds of the mind.” (Watson 1997, 117) 「是身邪行，

poche K* explained, “Our physical and mental illnesses are incurred by karma in past lives. ... The results show in this life.” Suffering is thus the consequence of our own deeds. Venerable Chi Yiu then urged, “We cannot complain about it, but are responsible for what we have done.”

The concept of karma indeed points to self responsibility while responsibility serves as motivation,¹³⁷ which in turn guides virtue and prevents transgression. Therefore, no one should bear the karmic distress of other people even when *karuṇā* (compassion 悲) has naturally arisen. HW* (a professor) calmly explained, “I (as a helping practitioner) can’t take on his (a client) defilements.”

Upāya (Skilful Means 方便)

Upāya, coping with unfavourable working experience, comprises the skills and quality of practitioners who handle adversity.

Flexibility. Competent professionals are able to identify clients’ individual intelligence¹³⁸ and needs¹³⁹ in order to provide appropriate services, and are also capable to skilfully apply diverse methods to different types of recipients.¹⁴⁰ They are adept in long-term deliberation, as shown by Jackie (a social worker):

“When his (a client) condition is immature, I tune down my expectation in order to pave a better road for the future. To pave the road is to build a more solid relationship with him. If he needs help, he will contact me. ... I will also build a relationship with his family.”

Caring veterans are far-sighted, knowledgeable and versatile in working with clients and understanding themselves well, which averts self blame and over-involvement in clients’ predicaments, while also increasing self confidence in dealing with frustration. This confidence bolsters them to attain an ordinary mind for serving others indiscriminately.

是身邪行報；是口邪行，是口邪行報；是意邪行，是意邪行報」《香積佛品第十》T14, no. 0475, p. 0552c27

¹³⁷Pritchard and Eliot (2012, 202)

¹³⁸“to discriminate the sharp and dull faculties of all sentient beings” (McRae 2004, 114) 「而分別眾生諸根利鈍。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0545b32

¹³⁹“depending upon what is appropriate to the circumstances” (Watson 1997, 126) 「隨其所應。」《菩薩行品第十一》T14, no. 0475, p. 0554a29

¹⁴⁰“employ all manner of expedient means” (Watson 1997, 27-28) 「於一切法方便無礙眾生來生其國。」《佛國品第一》T14, no. 0475, p. 0538a35

Upekṣā (equanimity 捨). Caring veterans buttress the “I-Thou relation”,¹⁴¹ that is, they remove the demarcation between “I” and “you”. Mahāyāna followers go beyond the “I-thou” and accomplish *upekṣā* (equanimity 捨), resulting in egalitarianism,¹⁴² “wise impartiality”,¹⁴³ indiscrimination and non-judgement, as VHY* (a Buddhist nun) said, “*Upekṣā* means no discrimination and equal treatment to all sentient beings.”

Through *upekṣā* (equanimity 捨), practitioners are able to listen to clients sincerely, carefully and unconditionally, from which they can also see their inward worlds and be congruent.¹⁴⁴ Therefore, both practitioners and clients benefit from such congruence,¹⁴⁵ as elaborated on by the experience of Venerable Sinh Nghiem:

“When I’m able to look deeply at my own difficulties, I feel that the process of me helping myself is the same process as helping other people. So as I nourish myself, I nourish other people as well. Going together, I help myself and I help other people. In that way I find that I don’t have compassion fatigue. I don’t suffer from fatigue because I learn to give myself compassion. And in that same process, I give other people compassion too. It is amazing. There is no separation between me and others.”

Self-equipped. Caregiving consumes energy and obliterates physical and psychological satisfaction, which drives service providers to prepare sufficiently for coping with such deterioration,¹⁴⁶ reflecting the fact that practitioners are able to look after other people only when they can take care of themselves,¹⁴⁷ including their physical, mental and spiritual health.¹⁴⁸ Thus, caregivers equip themselves

¹⁴¹ Buber (1923/1937, ix)

¹⁴² “In mind they must be like other living beings, humbling themselves, descending to their level, erecting no barriers.” (Watson 1997, 119) 「等心眾生，謙下無礙。」《香積佛品第十》T14, no. 0475, p. 053a30

¹⁴³ Manne-Lewis (1986, 137)

¹⁴⁴ Rogers (1957)

¹⁴⁵ Rogers (1967)

¹⁴⁶ “It is impossible for someone with bonds to emancipate others from their bonds. It is only possible for someone without bonds to emancipate others from their bonds.” (McRae 2004, 112) 「若自有縛，能解彼縛，無有是處！若自無縛，能解彼縛，斯有是處。」《文殊師利問疾品第五》T14, no. 0475, p. 0545a27-28

¹⁴⁷ Worley (2005)

¹⁴⁸ Braccia (1995); Stewart (2009)

with sturdy qualities in order to serve clients over the long run. VHT* (a Buddhist monk) emphasised that:

“A new bodhisattva should be well-equipped. If you don’t have ability, you have difficulty in saving sentient beings. ... Before helping others, you have to acquire good preparation and train yourself first. ... Such as a secular bodhisattva must cure her/his sickness [first] and then help others.”

Self-awareness. Self-awareness for helping practitioners¹⁴⁹ is critical for creating a psychological balance in their prolonged exposure to the sorrowfulness of clients, including sensitivity to emotional health¹⁵⁰ and the risks of compassion fatigue.¹⁵¹ Polly (a clinical psychologist) reiterated:

“... synchronise ... On the one hand, you are compassionate. On the other hand, you intensively think about how to help your client. This works by simultaneously [acting as] a balance. ... Meanwhile, you observe yourself and assess your feelings. ... A good counsellor is compassionate, showing sympathy, and is trying her/his best to help clients.”

Self-awareness is also knowing the accountabilities of practitioners themselves and the limits of their work.¹⁵² Recognising one’s own limitations is crucial¹⁵³ for altruism, Venerable Sinh Nghiem repeated, “Yes, [we must] know about ourselves, know about our limitations.” “You know, if we work past our limit, we don’t have much to offer. And it is very important that we prioritise what we should do,” Sister Harmony (a Buddhist nun) emphasised.

Self-acceptance leads to clearer perception of one’s own strengths, weaknesses and limitations. It augments self-awareness of feelings and changes in feelings, and promotes living in the present moment. It is a deeper self-caring.

¹⁴⁹Bloniasz (2011)

¹⁵⁰Joinson (1992, 119)

¹⁵¹Injeyan et al. (2011, 535)

¹⁵²Sexton (1999, 399-400)

¹⁵³Gilmore (2012)

Self compassion. By accepting that they have their own limits, practitioners learn how to look after themselves and to recharge their own resources,¹⁵⁴ as stated by Venerable Sinh Nghiem.

“If we don’t recharge our spirit and our ideals, like our desire to help, we don’t know how to nourish ourselves with goodness, joy, happiness, and peace; and then day after day, as we are exposed to people’s problems, we will feel awful. So, you have to learn how to protect yourself. You have to learn to take your care of the mind of love, or the desire to help other people. Of course helping other people is good, but you can only do so much in a day. Sometimes you are limited by circumstances, the systems in society. It also depends on the person you’re trying to help. Also, your ideas about how to help may get in the way of actually being helpful. You want to help him in this way, but another person may think it’s not so helpful. The way you help might not be perceived as helpful because they have their own experience. Wanting to help and actually helping can be quite different. Whether you’re skilful enough, whether you are mindful enough, whether you understand enough of the situation or just think you understand. ... It’s very different.”

Sister Harmony (a Buddhist nun) then added:

“Many of us really want to help, but we may become exhausted and give up. I know people who come for a retreat who don’t know how to recharge themselves. They don’t know how to find the joy to do things; they work for many years consecutively without rest, without a break, without anything to sustain them. Then the friction, the conflict arises. Working with others, there is no way to be reconciled, and they feel that it is not nourishing, so they abandon their career. This is a waste, for us, for the people. So we have to learn how to find the joy of doing these things. You know if you spend hours in counselling work, you have to give yourself at least two hours to do something to nurture yourself. Without [those regular] two [free] hours, I don’t think you can go more than ten years.”

A competent practitioner is willing to ask for help when s/he detects negative emotions. HW* (a professor) said:

¹⁵⁴Gilmore (2012)

“If I feel that if I’m too involved, it may reflect that the client’s defilement corresponds with mine. Then I have to ask [for help]. ... [I will visit] my counsellor or my senior to talk about this problem.”

Venerable Sinh Nghiem described various ways in which she takes care of herself in order to help others.

“I live in a monastery presently, [but] that doesn’t mean that all my difficulties and problems are finished. I encounter conflicts and tensions because of my own ideas or expectations of other people, and my own habits and energies. And so, when I’m able to reflect on myself, transform my difficulties, I’m more able to save energy and space, and have more confidence in the practice of mindfulness. This motivates me to share with other people. This is a very practical and non-religious way to deal with our difficulties and our basic human relationships with each other in everyday life. So, if I’m able to work through my own difficulties, it gives me a lot of confidence in my practice, and gives energy to continue my daily life, to continue my daily practice, and to help other people.”

Bodhisattva Spirit: Self-Benefiting Altruism

Many studies warn that caring practitioners suffer from physical, mental, spiritual and social symptoms¹⁵⁵ when they are “enveloping sadness”.¹⁵⁶ This sadness is yielded by over-exposure to vulnerable clients, and saps individual well-being and deteriorates a healthy workforce. Furthermore, the interaction among the cared for, caregiver and caring professionals affects one another mutually,¹⁵⁷ creating a complicated set of consequences leading to compassion fatigue.¹⁵⁸ Policy makers of health management, therefore, should keep an alert eye to “help the helpers”¹⁵⁹ in order to retain their “professional well-being”.¹⁶⁰

¹⁵⁵Lynch and Lobo (2012)

¹⁵⁶Perry, Dalton, and Edwards (2010, 29)

¹⁵⁷Keidel (2002)

¹⁵⁸Salston and Figley (2003, 169)

¹⁵⁹Inbar and Ganor (2003a, 109)

¹⁶⁰Yildirim (2014, 153); Butt (2002, 17); Zeidner (2014, 91); Gardner and O’Driscoll (2007, 245); Rama-Maceiras and Kranke (2013; 213)

A considerable amount of research reports that self-caring¹⁶¹ and self-reflection¹⁶² contributes to rejuvenating collapsed compassion, enabling human service professionals to be capable of self-soothing,¹⁶³ and desensitising traumatic stressors.¹⁶⁴ Prevalent self-care programmes¹⁶⁵ reinforce the work-life balance,¹⁶⁶ peer support¹⁶⁷ and strong social networks.¹⁶⁸ Self-caring activities involve leisure time and relaxation,¹⁶⁹ sleep, physical exercise,¹⁷⁰ nutrition and a healthy diet,¹⁷¹ and meditation.¹⁷² This series of interventions not only improves psychological health, but also encourages humour¹⁷³ and gratitude,¹⁷⁴ which strengthens those whose personality characterises external locus of control and low optimism.¹⁷⁵ As a result, helping practitioners are able to renew hope, and become stronger and more compassionate.¹⁷⁶

Although these self care programmes cover individual, professional, cognitive-behavioural and social dimensions,¹⁷⁷ Kraus¹⁷⁸ doubts their effectiveness in ameliorating compassion fatigue, probably due to their tendency to focus on skills geared to acquiring immediate outcomes. The findings of the present research reveal a holistic perspective on how to manage compassion fatigue, as elaborated on earlier, finalising the bodhisattva spirit that consummates “self-benefiting altruism”¹⁷⁹ (refer to Figure 2).

¹⁶¹Negash and Sahin (2011); Smith (2007); Bride and Figley (2007); Brückner (2012)

¹⁶²Walton and Alvarez (2010, 400)

¹⁶³Figley (2002, 1440)

¹⁶⁴Figley (2002, 1438)

¹⁶⁵Wentzel and Brysiewicz (2014, 96); Lambert and Lawson (2013, 266)

¹⁶⁶Tehrani (2007, 337); Boyle (2011, 5); Wentzel and Brysiewicz (2014, 96)

¹⁶⁷Uren and Graham (2013, 10); Rossetti and Rhoades (2013, 335); Lee and Akhtar (2007, 80)

¹⁶⁸Siu, Yuen, and Cheung (2012, 191)

¹⁶⁹Inbar and Ganor (2003b, 110)

¹⁷⁰Kapoulitsas and Corcoran (2014, 11); Bush (2009, 27)

¹⁷¹Keidel (2002)

¹⁷²Thompson, Amatez, and Thompson (2014, 96); Wentzel and Brysiewicz (2014, 70); Stebnicki (2008, 89-174); Thomas and Otis (2010, 86)

¹⁷³Collins and Long (2003a, 24); Inbar and Ganor (2003a, 110); Wentzel and Brysiewicz (2014, 96)

¹⁷⁴Chan (2010, 176)

¹⁷⁵Injeyan et al. (2011, 533)

¹⁷⁶Worley (2005)

¹⁷⁷Inbar and Ganor (2003a, 110-111)

¹⁷⁸Kraus (2005, 86)

¹⁷⁹Cheng (2014b, 141)

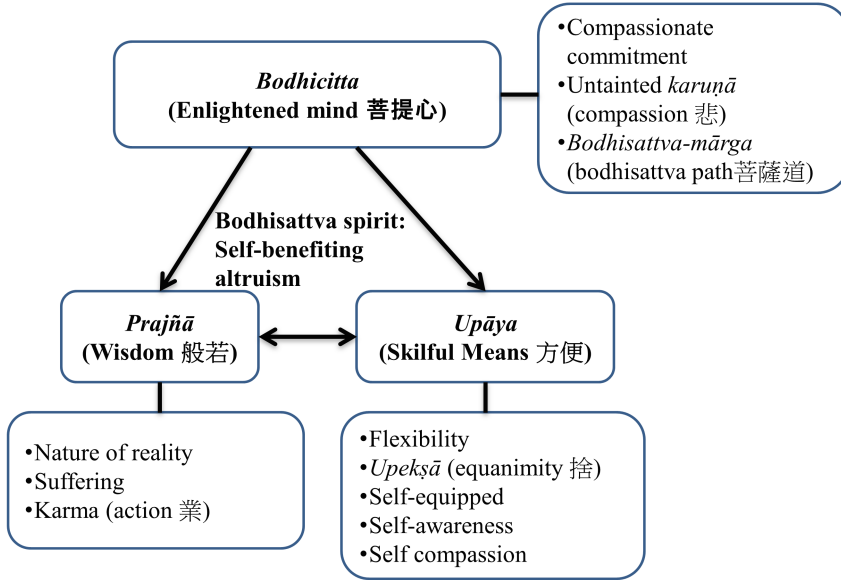


Figure 2: Bodhisattva Spirit Tackling Compassion Fatigue

Compassion fatigue is engendered by sentimental compassion towards the tribulation endured by other people, and is yielded by *avidyā* (ignorance 無明). Mahāyāna heightens *prajñā* (wisdom 般若), through which sentient beings can understand reality,¹⁸⁰ the causes of suffering, karmic causality, and apply untainted *karuṇā* (compassion 悲). Equally significant, *karuṇā* starts from self-kindness¹⁸¹ and self-compassion,¹⁸² prior to being able to unconditionally¹⁸³ and compassionately care for others.¹⁸⁴

When the praxis of untainted *karuṇā* (compassion 悲) couples with *prajñā* (wisdom 般若), it also requires a synthesis of *prajñā* and *upāya*¹⁸⁵ (skilful means 方便) that involves not only competence of service but more importantly personal qualities, including self-appreciation, self-cherishing, self-awareness, self-

¹⁸⁰Williams (1998, 29); Kaklauskas and Olson (2008)

¹⁸¹Wright (2004, 3)

¹⁸²Bush (2009, 26)

¹⁸³Hoyt (2014, 25)

¹⁸⁴Baumrucker (2002, 155)

¹⁸⁵Cheng (2014b, 131)

forgiveness and hope.¹⁸⁶ This blend of these three components (*karuṇā*, *prajñā* and *upāya*) enables practitioners to set an empathic boundary between themselves and recipients:¹⁸⁷ “caring distancing”¹⁸⁸ These qualities are rooted in the internal force of *bodhicitta* (enlightened mind 菩提心).

However, this distance does not dissociate caregivers from recipients but helps them perceive the essence of sentient beings and the nature of *duḥkha* (suffering 苦) more clearly. The inborn *bodhicitta* (enlightened mind 菩提心) substantiates the maintenance of distance when compassionately serving others and attaining inner peace¹⁸⁹ against distress. This compassionate commitment of serving other people marks the cornerstone of *bodhisattva-mārga* (the bodhisattva path 菩薩道), in which a bodhisattva is able to realise the sacred mission.

This model of using the bodhisattva spirit to overcome compassion fatigue focuses on the dynamics of the *prajñā* (wisdom 般若), *upāya* (skilful means 方便) and *bodhicitta* (enlightened mind 菩提心), forming a comprehensive assembly of professional strategies.¹⁹⁰ Germinated from untainted *karuṇā* (compassion 悲), these essentials are composed of intention, cognition and intelligence, and implementation. Referring to such aspects, helping professionals may be inspired through thought transformation regarding the fact that practitioners are not omnipotent. They are thus humble agents, rather than being a saviour, to offer compassionate service. They also enhance personal development through altruistic activities in *bodhisattva-mārga* (the bodhisattva path 菩薩道), recognising that service recipients are indeed bodhisattvas to the caregivers. Such mutual influence between both parties forms the bodhisattva-bodhisattva interplay,¹⁹¹ thereby attaining self-benefiting altruism.

Self-benefiting altruism fundamentally differs from other available theories on altruism, such as “self-serving altruism”,¹⁹² “reciprocal altruism”¹⁹³ and “enlightened self-interested”¹⁹⁴ altruism. It represents a selfless, unconditional, indiscriminate, altruistic vow with unreserved sacrifice, a consonance of “perfect

¹⁸⁶ Bush (2009, 27)

¹⁸⁷ Boyle (2011, 6)

¹⁸⁸ Inbar and Ganor (2003a, 111)

¹⁸⁹ Rossetti and Rhoades (2013, 335)

¹⁹⁰ Huggard (2003, 164)

¹⁹¹ Cheng (2014c)

¹⁹² Gino, Ayal, and Ariely (2013, 285)

¹⁹³ Landry (2006, 957)

¹⁹⁴ Lenart (2010, 26)

altruism”.¹⁹⁵ Although self benefit gains from altruism, it is not the goal of altruistic behaviour. Rather, both active self-benefit, which sharpens the competitive edge of caregivers, and passive self-benefit, which received from altruistic activities fulfils altruism, aim to enrich altruism.

Self-benefiting altruism works only when *catvāri apramāṇāni* (the four immeasurables 四無量心), including *maitrī* (loving-kindness 慈), *karuṇā* (compassion 悲), *muditā* (empathetic joy 喜) and *upekṣā* (equanimity 捨), interact together.¹⁹⁶ When *karuṇā* does not work well, it will affect other elements as well as the unity of the whole, implying a problem in that compassion fatigue inversely impacts self-benefiting altruism. However, *karuṇā* can be substantiated by the other three elements, which illustrates the wholeness of *catvāri apramāṇāni* that realises self-benefiting altruism.

Implications

The Vimalakīrti teachings, as supported by the interview data, construct a model of the bodhisattva spirit to overcome compassion fatigue, suggesting theoretical, practical and methodological considerations.

Theoretical Implications

The concept of self-benefiting altruism for conquering compassion fatigue explicates the interaction among intention, intelligence and behaviour, with the inception of self loving-kindness and self compassion. This self-caring is grounded on the aspiration of altruism, bringing inner happiness through serving other people. This inspires discussion on how the available theories of altruism can escalate into a higher level of pursuing well-being. This concept also offers philosophical underpinning to scholars who investigate helping behaviour and compassion fatigue.

Furthermore, the totality of *catvāri apramāṇāni* (the four immeasurables 四無量心) optimises the power of these individual constituents,¹⁹⁷ in contrast to those who focus on their separable functions.¹⁹⁸ This principle also unveils the cultural differences related to *muditā* (empathetic joy 喜) and *upekṣā* (equanimity

¹⁹⁵ Williams (1998, 29)

¹⁹⁶ Cheng (2014b, 144)

¹⁹⁷ Cheng (2014a, 221)

¹⁹⁸ Wallace (2010)

捨) in Western theories.¹⁹⁹ Studying this probably makes research on compassion fatigue and caregiver resilience more constructive.

Practical Implications

The present work particularly discusses the compassion fatigue experienced by beginners in the caring service field, showing the need to review the training curricula. Such a review may pay attention to the concept of untainted compassion, which helps novices engage compassionate performance and avoid over-devotion to their clients’ predicaments, attaining greater resilience and elasticity.

This model also proposes that clients’ taking part in altruistic activities as a part of rehabilitation and intervention can improve their self-esteem and self confidence, resulting from their shift from being victims to being service providers. This shift may mitigate their distress, while increasing their self appreciation.

This model comprises the philosophy of the bodhisattva spirit and *catvāri apramāṇāni* (the four immeasurables 四無量心) on a theoretical level. Further studies are encouraged in order to develop the theory into practice, formulating therapeutic interventions for human service practitioners for both preventive and curative purposes.

Methodological Implication

This study combines qualitative interviews with references to a classical Buddhist text. It synthesises the research traditions of textual studies and ethnography. As a result, it broadens the horizon of both disciplines in the sense of thematic exploration and methodological sophistication.

Limitations

Despite these implications for relevant studies, the present study pays little attention to the effects of institutional factors and a heavy workload on compassion fatigue. This inclination leaves room for future research directions. Also, if it had captured the voices of family caregivers, service recipients and non-Buddhists, it would have presented a richer data set and analysis, from which interventions for non-Buddhists also involve.

¹⁹⁹Kraus and Sears (2009)

Conclusion

Compassion fatigue attenuates the compassion satisfaction and work performance of caring practitioners. The current project conceptualises a model of the bodhisattva spirit through self-benefiting altruism in order to deal with and prevent this problem. With an emphasis on *bodhicitta*, which is activated by untainted *karuṇā* (compassion 悲), it boosts the synchronisation of *prajñā* (wisdom 般若) and *upāya* (skilful means 方便) within the *bodhisattva-mārga* (bodhisattva path 菩薩道). This brings a critical insight: that helping professionals may do well to increase awareness of their emotional reactions towards clients’ afflictions and thus avoid affective exhaustion.

This research applies classical Buddhist philosophy to overcoming the compassion fatigue suffered by caregivers in modern society. Combining qualitative research through interviews with references to the *Vimalakīrti Nirdeśa Sūtra*, it presents the cogency of Buddhist reasoning. It shows the practicality of the bodhisattva spirit across centuries, and differentiates between the concepts of altruism in Eastern and Western cultures. This attempt may indicate the usefulness of Mahāyāna teachings in coping with life’s difficulties, such as this professional challenge.

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A Comparison of the Pāli and Chinese Versions of the *Gāmaṇi Saṃyutta*, a Collection of Early Buddhist Discourses to Headmen*

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This article first briefly examines the textual structure of the *Gāmaṇi Saṃyutta* of the Pāli *Saṃyutta-nikāya* in conjunction with two other versions preserved in Chinese translation in a collection entitled 聚落主相應 *Juluozhu Xiangying* (Skt. *Grāmaṇi Saṃyukta*) in Taishō vol. 2, nos 99 and 100. Then it compares the main teachings contained in the three versions. It reveals similarities and differences in structure and doctrinal content, thus advancing the historical/critical study of early Buddhist doctrine in this area.

Introduction

The *Gāmaṇi Saṃyutta* of the Pāli *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (abbreviated SN) is represented in Chinese by a collection entitled 聚落主相應 *Juluozhu Xiangying* (Skt. *Grāmaṇi Saṃyukta*) in two versions, one in the *Za Ahan Jing* 雜阿含經 (*Saṃyuktāgama*, abbreviated SA, Taishō vol. 2, no. 99), the other in the *Bieyi Za Ahan Jing* 別譯雜阿含經 (*Additional Translation of Saṃyuktāgama*, abbreviated ASA, Taishō vol. 2, no. 100). This *saṃyutta* in the Pāli version and its counterpart 相應 *xiangying* (*saṃyukta*) in the two Chinese versions are collections of various discourses delivered to headmen (P. *gāmaṇi*, 聚落主 *Juluozhu*). The headmen in the three versions are of various sorts, presenting questions on ethical and religious issues to the Buddha, who then responds to the problems they pose.

* I am indebted to Rod Bucknell for his constructive comments and corrections on a draft of this article.

In this article I first briefly examine the textual structure of the three versions. Then I compare the main teachings contained in them, making use of new editions of SA: Yin Shun's *Za Ahan Jing Lun Huibian* 雜阿含經論會編 [*Combined Edition of Sūtra and Śāstra of the Saṃyuktāgama*] (abbreviated CSA) and the *Foguang Tripitaka Za Ahan Jing* (abbreviated FSA).¹ This will reveal similarities and significant differences in structure and doctrinal content, thus advancing the study of early Buddhist teachings in this area.

1. Textual structure

The Pāli *Gāmaṇi Saṃyutta* (no. 42) is located in the *Ṣaḍāyatana Vagga* (Six Sense Spheres Section) of SN. The two corresponding Chinese versions, in a collection entitled 聚落主相應 *Juluozhu Xiangying* (Skt. *Grāmaṇi Saṃyukta*, Connected with Headmen or Connected Discourses to Headmen) contained in SA and ASA, were translated from now lost Indic-language originals. In the CSA edition the SA version bears the title *Juluozhu Xiangying* supplied by the editor, Yin Shun. In earlier editions of SA, *xiangying/samyukta* titles are lacking and the beginning and end of each *samyukta* have to be inferred from the *sūtra* contents. SA's *Juluozhu Xiangying* (i.e., its counterpart of the Pāli *Gāmaṇi Saṃyutta*) is located in the Path Section (道品誦 *Daopin Song*) in the SA tradition.² The corresponding *Juluozhu Xiangying* of ASA is located in the seventh fascicle (卷 *juan*) of Taishō no. 100, where it is the second fascicle of the Second Section (二誦第二 *Er Song Di Er*) of ASA.³ The *Juluozhu Xiangying/Gāmaṇi Saṃyutta* pertains to the *vyākaraṇa-aṅga* (P. *veyyākaraṇa-aṅga*) portion of SA/SN, according to Yin Shun.⁴

¹These two new editions incorporate textual corrections, modern Chinese punctuation, comments, and up-to-date information on Pāli and other textual counterparts, including different Chinese versions of the text.

²CSA i, p. 47 (in 'Za Ahan Jing Bulei zhi Zhengbian 雜阿含經部類之整編 [Re-edition of the Grouped Structure of SA]') and vol. iii, p. 589; Yin Shun (1971), p. 674. See also Choong (2000), pp. 21, 246.

³Structurally ASA has two sections (初誦 and 二誦). Yin Shun (1971), p. 675; CSA iii, pp. 589-606. Cf. Mayeda (1964), pp. 653, 656; Bucknell (2008), pp. 46-7 (Table 1 and Table 2).

⁴Choong (2000), pp. 9-11, 21-23, 243-251; (2010), pp. 53-64. *Vyākaraṇa* is one of the three *aṅgas* represented in the structure of SA/SN: *sūtra* (P. *sutta*) 'discourse' (short, simple prose), *geyya* (*geyya*) 'stanza' (verse mixed with prose), and *vyākaraṇa* (*veyyākaraṇa*) 'exposition'. These three *aṅgas* are the first three of nine types of early Buddhist text (*navāṅga*) classified according to their style and form. They are regarded by some scholars as historically the earliest ones to have appeared, in sequence, in the formation of the early Buddhist texts. Also, only these first three *aṅgas* are mentioned in MN 122 (*Mahāsuññatā-sutta*): III, 115 and its Chinese counterpart, MA 191:

The Pāli *Gāmaṇi Samyutta* comprises thirteen discourses (SN 42.1-13), whereas each of its Chinese counterparts, the SA and ASA versions, has ten discourses (SA 907-916; ASA 122-131). Thus the Pāli version has three more discourses than either of the two Chinese versions. The full set of Chinese-Pāli and Pāli-Chinese counterparts is shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: Chinese-Pāli correspondences of the *Juluozhu Xiangying*
(= SN 42. *Gāmaṇi Samyutta*)

SA (Chinese)	ASA (Chinese)	SN (Pāli)
907	122	42.2
908	123	42.3 (cf. 42.5)
909	124	None
910	125	42.1
911	126	42.10
912	127	42.12
913	128	42.11
914	129	42.9
915	130	42.7
916	131	42.8

T1, 739c. This suggests the possibility that only these three *āṅgas* existed in the period of Early (or pre-sectarian) Buddhism. Rupert Gethin on H-Buddhism Discussion Network suggests that the PTS reading *suttaṃ geyyaṃ veyyākaraṇassa hetu* in MN 122: III, 115 should be corrected to *suttaṃ geyyaṃ veyyākaraṇaṃ tassa hetu*, following the Ceylonese/Burmese edition's reading: *na kho Ānanda arahati sāvako satthāraṃ anubandhituṃ yadidaṃ suttaṃ geyyaṃ veyyākaraṇaṃ tassa hetu* ("It is not right, Ānanda, that a disciple should seek the Teacher's company for this reason, namely *sutta*, *geyya*, *veyyākaraṇa*?"). This Pāli version's reading is clearly supported by the Chinese version in MA 191: T1, 739c: “佛言。阿難。不其正經、歌詠、記說故。信弟子隨世尊行奉事至命盡也。” (“The Buddha said: Ānanda, it is not for this reason, namely *sūtra*, *geya*, *vyākaraṇa*, that a disciple follows the World Honoured One with respect until the end of life.”). See the discussions on H-Buddhism posted on 21-23, 31 Oct 2011 under the subject: “Disagreement in Renderings of Sutra/Geya/Vyakarana.”

Table 2: Pāli-Chinese correspondences of the *Gāmaṇi Saṃyutta*
(=*Juluoazhu Xiangying*)

SN (Pāli)	SA (Chinese)	ASA (Chinese)
42.1	910	125
42.2	907	122
42.3 (cf. 42.5)	908	123
42.4	None	None
42.5	None	None
42.6	None (cf. MA17)	None
42.7	915	130
42.8	916	131
42.9	914	129
42.10	911	126
42.11	913	128
42.12	912	127
42.13	None (cf. MA20)	None

As can be seen in table 1, the SA and ASA versions agree as regards the sequence of the discourses. Also evident in the two tables is that four of the SN discourses (SN 42. 4-6, 13) have no SA and ASA counterparts. Consequently, the SA and ASA versions are structurally closer to each other than to the SN version.⁵

2. Disagreements on some teachings contained in the three versions

In the following I discuss only the principal disagreements on certain teachings presented in the three versions of *Grāmaṇi Saṃyukta*. These fall under three topics: (1) Sensual pleasure and asceticism, (2) Ruin of families, and (3) Differences from the teachings of Nirgrantha Jñātaputra concerning practices leading to hell.

⁵On Sanskrit fragments corresponding to the Chinese SA (T 99), see Chung (2008), pp. 191-192.

(1) Sensual pleasure and asceticism
(SA 912 = ASA 127 = SN 42.12)

The three versions (SA 912 = ASA 127 = SN 42.12) report the Buddha as instructing a headman (named Rāsiya⁶) about how sensual pleasures and ascetic practices contrast to his teaching on the middle way (P. *majjhima-paṭipadā*, 中道, Skt. *madhyama-pratipad*) of the Noble Eightfold Path. The Pāli version SN42.12⁷ begins with the Buddha instructing the headman thus:

These two extremes (*antā*), headman, should not be followed by one who has gone forth from the household life into the homeless life [as a wanderer] (*pabbajitena*): The pursuit of sensual happiness (*kāma-sukhallika-anuyoga*) in sensual pleasures (*kāmesu*), which is low, vulgar, ordinary, ignoble, unbeneficial; and the pursuit of self-mortification (*attakilamatha-anuyoga*), which is painful, ignoble, unbeneficial.

Its two corresponding Chinese versions, SA 912⁸ = ASA 127,⁹ begin with an almost identical teaching by the Buddha to the headman about the two extremes.¹⁰ However, the three versions are not entirely the same as regards the textual structure and the content of the teaching on the middle way, sensual pleasure (*kāma*), and an ascetic (P. *tapassin*, Skt. *tapasvin*), who leads a rough life (*lūkha-ājīva*), which is a practice of self-mortification (P. *atta-kilamatha*, 自苦, Skt. *ātman-klamatha/kilamatha*). The following four sections discuss these issues.

1. All three versions record differently the detailed explanations of sensual pleasures, one of the two extremes, as follows.

The sensual pleasures in the Pāli SN version are exemplified by three kinds of persons who enjoy sensual pleasures (in summary): 1. One who enjoys sensual pleasures seeks wealth unlawfully (*adhammena*) and by violence (*sāhasena*); 2. One who enjoys sensual pleasures seeks wealth both lawfully and unlawfully, by

⁶ 王頂 in SA 912, 王頂髮 in ASA 127.

⁷ PTS IV, pp. 330-340. Cf. Woodward (1927), pp. 234-244; Bodhi (2000), pp. 1350-1359.

⁸ T 2, pp. 228c-229c; CSA iii, pp. 594-596; FSA 3, pp. 1332-1336.

⁹ T 2, pp. 421c-422c.

¹⁰ SA 912: “今者眾生依於二邊。何等為二。一者樂著卑下、田舍、常人凡夫五欲。二者自苦方便。不正。非義饒益。” ASA 127: “此世間中。多有眾生。依二種法。一貪欲樂。二名習於無益。身事非聖之法。徒受無益損減。習於欲樂。是名下賤繫累之法。” Note: The SN version uses the expression “the homeless [wanderer] (*pabbajitena*)”, which is not found in the Chinese versions.

violence and without violence; 3. One who enjoys sensual pleasures seeks wealth lawfully (*dhammena*) and without violence (*asāhasena*). The very detailed reasons (*thānehi*) which are blameworthy (*gārayho*) for the above-mentioned sensual pleasures are also provided in the text.¹¹

The two Chinese counterparts also explain in detail three kinds of persons who enjoy sensual pleasures,¹² but instead of giving detailed reasons which are blameworthy for the three sensual pleasures, they classify the three ethically into low, middle, and high categories of enjoying sensual pleasures.¹³

2. The three versions also present differently their detailed explanations of the ascetic, the other extreme, as follows.

The Pāli SN version records the Buddha as teaching about an ascetic who leads a rough life, as a wandering (*pabbajito*) practitioner of self-mortification, of whom there are three kinds (in summary): (1) One who goes to extremes in torturing himself but does not achieve (*nādhigacchati*) a wholesome state (*kusaladhamma*), and does not realise (*na sacchikaroti*) superhuman experience in knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones (*uttarimanussadhammā alam ariyāñānadassanavisesam*); (2) One who goes to extremes in torturing himself and achieves a wholesome state, but does not realise superhuman experience in knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones; (3) One who goes to extremes in torturing himself, who achieves a wholesome state, and realises superhuman experience in knowledge and vision worthy of the noble ones. The text also specifies very detailed reasons (*thānehi*) which are blameworthy (*gārayho*) for the above-mentioned ascetics who lead a rough life.¹⁴

¹¹PTS IV, pp. 333-337. Cf. Woodward (1927), pp. 237-241; Bodhi (2000), pp. 1352-1356.

¹²SA 912: “…何等為三種卑下、田舍、常人凡夫樂受欲樂。有受欲者。非法濫取。不以安樂自供。…是名世間第一受欲。復次。…受欲樂者。以法、非法濫取財物。以樂自供。…是名第二受欲樂者。…復次。…有受欲樂者。以法求財。不以濫取。以樂自供。…是名第三受欲樂者。” = ASA 127: “受欲樂者。凡有三種。云何為三。一者聚非法財。殘害物命。自樂己身。而為己身。…是名第一欲樂設受欲樂。或時如法。或不如法。或為殘害。或不殘害。以樂己身…是名第二欲樂。…若有集於財寶。如法而聚。而為殘害。以如法故。不造殘惡故。修自己身。正受其樂。…是名第三受於欲樂。”

¹³SA 912: “聚落主。我不一向說受欲平等。我說受欲者其人卑下。我說受欲者是其中人。我說受欲者是其勝人。…是名我說卑下者受欲。…是名我說第二中人受欲。…是名我說第三勝人受欲。” = ASA 127: “我今為諸受欲樂者。皆悉同說。設受欲樂。我說下賤。設受欲樂。我說為中。設受欲樂。我說為上。…是名為下。…是名為中。…是名為上。”

¹⁴PTS IV, pp. 338-339. Cf. Woodward (1927), pp. 242-243; Bodhi (2000), pp. 1357-1358.

The two Chinese counterparts also describe in detail three kinds of ascetics,¹⁵ but, instead of giving detailed reasons which are blameworthy for the three kinds of ascetics of rough life, they classify the three ethically into low, middle and high categories of rough life.¹⁶

3. In the three versions the Buddha teaches the headman what is the middle way. The SN version, early in the text, soon after mentioning the two extremes, reports the Buddha as saying:

Not approaching either extreme, headman, is the middle way, fully known by the Tathāgata, which gives rise to vision, to knowledge, leading to peace, supernormal knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nirvāṇa. ... It is this Noble Eightfold Path, namely right view ... right concentration.¹⁷

At the end of the text it reports him as teaching:

There are, headman, these three kinds of un-decaying (*nijjarā*) that belong to this very life (*sanditṭhikā*), are timeless (*akālīkā*), inviting one to come and see (*ehipassikā*), leading onward (*opanayikā*), individually to be known by the wise (*paccattam veditabbā viññūhī*). What three?¹⁸

The three kinds of un-decaying refer to when the three negative states of mind, namely desire, hatred, and delusion (*rāga, dosa, moha*), are abandoned (*pahīna*). If these three negative mental states are abandoned, he does not intend (*na ceteti*)

¹⁵SA 912: “何等為三種自苦方便。是苦非法、不正、非義饒益。有一自苦枯槁活。初始犯戒、污戒。彼修種種苦行。…是名第一自苦方便枯槁活。復次。自苦方便枯槁活。始不犯戒、污戒。而修種種苦行。…是名第二自苦方便枯槁活。復次。自苦方便枯槁活。不初始犯戒、污戒。然修種種苦行方便。…是名第三自苦方便枯槁活。”= ASA 127: “何等無益三種苦身。所謂苦非聖法。無有義利。若有苦身。心已變壞。初犯禁戒。身心內外。一切俱熱。…是名初無益苦身法。若復有人。雖不犯戒。心亦不變。…是名第二無益苦身。復次若更有人。雖不犯戒。心不變異。然復稱於身心二業。…是名第三無益苦身。”

¹⁶SA 912: “聚落主。我不說一切自苦方便枯槁活悉等。我說有自苦方便是卑劣人。有說自苦方便是中人。有說自苦方便是勝人。…是名我說自苦方便卑劣人。…是名我說自苦方便中間人。…是名我說自苦方便勝人。”= ASA 127: “聚落主。我亦不說無益苦行。都為一種。有一苦行名為下品。復有苦行。名為中品。又有苦行。名為上品。…是名為下。…是名為中。…是名為上。”

¹⁷PTS IV, p. 331.

¹⁸PTS IV, pp. 339-340. Cf. Woodward (1927), pp. 243-244; Bodhi (2000), pp. 1358-1359.

his own harm (*vyābādhāya*), the harm of others, or the harm of both himself and others. Each of the results is regarded as un-decaying that belongs to this very life, is timeless, inviting one to come and see, leading onward, and individually to be known by the wise.

Corresponding to these two locations (in the early part and at the end) in the SN version of the teachings, the SA and ASA counterparts are all found at the end of the Chinese texts (i.e., after providing the detailed explanation of the two extremes mentioned above in nos. 1 and 2). They are as follows:

SA 912

Headman, what is the path, what is the way that does not follow three kinds of enjoyment of sensual pleasures, [and] three kinds of ascetic practices? ...¹⁹

If the hindrance of desire is abandoned, he does not intend his own harm, the harm of others, or the harm of both himself and others. Not having received bad results in the present time [and] in the future world, his mind and mental conditions are always in joyful pleasure. In the same way, if the hindrances of hatred and delusion are abandoned, he does not intend his own harm, the harm of others, or the harm of both himself and others. Not having received bad results in the present time [and] the future world, his mind and mental conditions are always in peaceful pleasure. In this present time he detaches himself from [affliction] burning. It is timeless, close to Nir-

ASA 127

What is called abandoning three kinds of enjoyment of sensual pleasures, [and] three kinds of unbeneficial asceticism, in order to follow the middle way? ...²⁰

If the hindrance of desire is extinguished, he does not intend his own harm, the harm of others, or the harm of both himself and others. In this present world there is no arising of any suffering. In the future world there is also no arising of any suffering. Based on this meaning, he in this present time abstains from joyful pleasure, detaches himself from the burning of affliction. It is timeless and close to Nirvāṇa. He in this present world is able to obtain the result of the path, to be known individually by the wise, fully enlightened, not following other instructions. This is called the **first middle way**.²¹

¹⁹“聚落主。何等為道。何等為跡。不向三種受欲。三種自苦方便。...”

²⁰“何等名為捨於三種欲樂之事。及以三種無益苦身。向中道耶。...”

vāṇa. This is coming to have insight individually in this very life.²²

Headman, in this way it is in this present time permanently fading away from [affliction] burning, timeless, bound for Nirvāṇa. That way individually coming to have insight in this very life is the Noble Eightfold Path, namely right view ... right concentration.²³

Headman, another middle way which detaches one from the burning of affliction is timeless, close to Nirvāṇa, to be known individually by the wise, not following other instructions. This is called **the second middle way**.²⁴

Accordingly, the SA version is to some extent closer to the SN version, in the sense that the ASA version clearly distinguishes two kinds of middle way which are not found in the SN and SA versions, although the contents of the two kinds are clearly presented in all three versions. The two kinds of middle way are: (1) The mind is fully liberated from harmful unskillful states (such as desire, hatred, affliction), and (2) The Noble Eightfold Path.

Also, the Pāli version structurally presents the teachings in two locations (one at the beginning of the text, the other at the end), whereas the two Chinese counterparts locate them at the end of the text.

4. Finally, the three versions report in common that the headman, after hearing what the Buddha said, was delighted and became a lay follower of the Buddha.

To conclude this section, the teachings that all three versions present about the two extremes of sensual pleasure and ascetic practice, in contrast to the middle way of the Noble Eightfold Path, are rather complicated doctrinally. Although the SA and ASA versions are both structurally and doctrinally closer to each other than to the SN version, the ASA version alone conspicuously recognizes two varieties of middle way which are not found in the SN and SA versions.

²¹“設盡欲結。亦無自苦。亦不苦他。亦復無有自他之苦。現在之世。不集諸苦。於未來世。亦復不集一切眾苦。以是義故。得現法樂。離眾惱熱。不擇時節。得近涅槃。於現在世。能得道果。智者自知。明了無滯。不隨他教。是名初中道。”

²²“若離貪障。不欲方便自害、害他、自他俱害。不現法後世受斯罪報。彼心、心法常受喜樂。如是離瞋恚、愚癡障闕。不欲自害。不欲害他、自他俱害。不現法後世受斯罪報。彼心、心法常受安樂。於現法中。遠離熾然。不待時節。親近涅槃。即此身現緣自覺知。”

²³“聚落主。如此現法永離熾然。不待時節。親近涅槃。即此現身緣自覺知者。為八聖道。正見。乃至正定。”

²⁴“聚落主。復有中道。離於惱熱。不擇時節。得近涅槃。智者自知。不隨他教。所謂正見正語正業正命正定正方便正志正念。是名第二中道。”

(2) **Ruin of families**
(SA 914 = ASA 129 = SN 42.9)

The three versions of this discourse mention the notion of ruin of families in connection with the practice of charitable giving (*dāna*), but also contain some differences. The following first presents the content of SN 42.9,²⁵ and then compares SA 914²⁶ and ASA 129.²⁷

In the Pāli SN 42.9 a headman (named Asibandhakaputta),²⁸ a lay disciple of the Nigaṇṭhas (the Unclothed²⁹), following the advice of his religious teacher Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta (the Unclothed Nāta's Son³⁰), approaches the Buddha and asks him a two-horned question (*ubhatokoṭīkaṃ pañhaṃ puṭṭho* “horns-of-a-dilemma question”), meaning that the Buddha will be able neither to vomit it up nor to swallow it down (*neva sakkhati uggilituṃ neva sakkhati ogilituṃ ti*). The question is about whether the Buddha in many ways praises sympathy (*anudayaṃ*), protection (*anurakkhaṃ*), compassion (*anukampaṃ*) for families (*kulānaṃ*). If so, why does the Buddha with a large assembly of monks (*bhikkhu*) wander on his alms-round in an area that is stricken with famine (*dubbhikkhe*) and scarcity (*dvīhitike*)? By doing this, the Buddha is acting for the destruction (*ucchedāya*), loss (*anayāya*), ruin (*upaghātāya*) of families.

Regarding these the two Chinese counterparts SA 914 and ASA 129 exhibit some differences. The so-called two-horned question of the SN version is called *jili lun* 蒺藜論, “thorn-bush discussion” in the SA version, which is explained as “making the Śramaṇa Gautama able neither to reply nor not to reply”.³¹ In the ASA version it is referred to as *er zhong lun* 二種論, “two kinds of discussion”, and is explained as “like catching a fish with two hooks: he will be able neither to vomit it up nor to swallow it down”.³² Another difference is that both SA and ASA record that the Buddha was accompanied by “one thousand two hundred and fifty monks, one thousand lay followers, and five hundred mendicants”,³³ whereas the

²⁵PTS IV, pp. 322-325. Cf. Woodward (1927), pp. 228-230; Bodhi (2000), pp. 1345-1346.

²⁶T 2, pp. 230b-c; CSA iii, pp. 598-600; FSA 3, pp. 1340-1343.

²⁷T 2, pp. 423b-424a.

²⁸刀師氏聚落主 in SA 914; 閉口姓聚落主 in ASA 129.

²⁹尼捷 in SA 914; 尼乾陀 in ASA 129.

³⁰Note: A corresponding Chinese term is not found in either SA 914 or ASA 129.

³¹“令沙門瞿曇不得語、不得不語。”

³²“如兩緝鉤 鉤取於魚。既不得吐。又不得嚙。”

³³SA 914: “與千二百五十比丘、千優婆塞、五百乞殘食人。” ASA 129: “與千二百五十大比丘僧。千優婆塞。五百乞兒。”

SN version merely says that the Buddha is accompanied by “a large assembly of monks” (*mahatā bhikkhusaṅghena*). The SA and ASA versions’ reference to a very large number of people, including lay followers and mendicants, is obviously an exaggeration.

The responses by the Buddha to the above question in the three versions consist of three thoughts, but with some differences. The Buddha says to the headman:

1. In the SN version: “From ninety-one kalpas (*ekānavutikappo*) ago up to now I do not recall any family having ever having been ruined (*upahatapubbam*) simply by offering (*anuppādāna*) cooked alms food (*pakkabhikkhā*). Those families were rich, with great wealth and property, which all came from charitable giving (*dāna*), truthfulness (*sacca*), and self-control (*saññama*).”

The corresponding SA and ASA versions are in principle similar to the SN version, except that whereas the SN version mentions not only offering/charitable giving but also truthfulness and self-control, the two Chinese versions speak only of charitable giving (*shi* 施).³⁴

2. Eight causes (*hetu*) and conditions (*paccayā*) make for the ruin of families. Families come to be ruined by: (1) kings (*rājato*), (2) thieves (*corato*), (3) fire (*aggito*), (4) water (*udakato*); (5) they do not find (*nādhigacchati*) what they have hidden (*nihitam*); (6) they abandon work (*kammantaṃ jahanti*) through laziness (*duppayuttā*); (7) within a family there arises a wastrel (*kulaṅgāro*) who scatters (*vikirati*), destroys (*vidhamati*) and breaks up (*viddhamseti*) its wealth (*bhoge*); and (8) impermanence (*aniccatā*).

The two Chinese counterparts, instead of eight, have nine causes and conditions for the ruin of families.³⁵ From 1. to 5. the items in the SA and ASA versions are entirely the same in sequence and content as in the SN version, but the remainder differ. In the SA version: 6. they do not repay their debts; 7. they come to be ruined through hatred [of others]; 8. their wealth is wasted by an evil

³⁴SA 914: “佛告聚落主。我憶九十一劫以來。不見一人施一比丘。有盡有減。聚落主。汝觀今日有人家大富。多錢財、多眷屬、多僕從。當知其家長夜好施。真實寂止。故致斯福利。” ASA 129: “佛告之曰。我憶九十一劫已來。無有一家以熟食施而致損減。汝今且觀一切諸家。多饒財寶。眷屬僮僕。象馬牛羊。是富基業。有不從施而得者。不盡從施。我獲斯果報。”

³⁵SA 914: “聚落主。有八因緣。令人損減福利不增。何等為八。王所逼、賊所劫、火所焚、水所漂、藏自消滅、抵債不還、怨憎殘破、惡子費用。有是八種為錢財難聚。聚落主。我說無常為第九句。” ASA 129: “有八因緣。能壞諸家。若為王賊所侵。為火所燒。大水所漂。失所伏藏。生於惡子。不解生業。威逼用財。惡子無理。用於財貨。一切世人皆云。八事能破居家。我今更說第九之破。言第九者。所謂無常。”

son; and 9. impermanence. In the ASA version: 6. their livelihood is ruined by the birth of an evil son; 7. their wealth is forced to be spent; 8. their wealth is unreasonably spent by an evil son; and 9. impermanence.³⁶

3. Because the above-mentioned causes and conditions exist (*santesu*) and are found to be (*saṃvijjamānesu*) for the ruin of families, if any person does not abandon the assertion (*vācam*), thought (*cittam*), and does not give up the view (*diṭṭhim*) that the Buddha is acting for the destruction, loss, ruin of families, that person will fall into hell (*neraya*). The two corresponding Chinese versions say the same.³⁷ Thus, all three versions here agree that if the person does not abandon the assertion, thought, and view that the Buddha is acting for the ruin of families, then that person will fall into hell (*diyu* 地獄 *neraya*) after death.

Finally, the SN version records that the headman, hearing what the Buddha has said, considers it excellent (*abhikkantam*), and becomes a lay follower of the Buddha for life. The SA and ASA counterparts record that the headman, hearing what the Buddha has said, is “frightened” (SA: *kongbu* 恐怖; ASA: *jingbu* 驚怖), confesses his error to the Buddha, asks for forgiveness, and leaves after the Buddha has accepted his confession. The ASA version adds that the headman also “goes to the Buddha as refuge for life” (*guiming yu fo* 歸命於佛).

Overall, despite some differences between the three versions, the SA and ASA versions are closer to each other than to the SN version.

(3) Different teachings of Nirgrantha Jñātaputra concerning practices leading to hell (SA 916 = ASA 131 = SN 42.8)

The three versions, SN 42.8³⁸ and its Chinese counterparts SA 916³⁹ and ASA 131,⁴⁰ record some different teachings regarding practices that will lead to hell (*neraya*, *nili* 泥犁 / *diyu* 地獄). Two issues need to be addressed here.

³⁶SA 914: 1. 王所逼, 2. 賊所劫, 3. 火所焚, 4. 水所漂, 5. 藏自消滅, 6. 抵債不還, 7. 怨憎殘破, 8. 惡子費用, 9. 無常 = ASA 129: 1. 王所侵, 2. 賊所侵, 3. 火所燒, 4. 大水所漂, 5. 失所伏藏, 6. 生於惡子。不解生業, 7. 威逼用財, 8. 惡子無理。用於財貨, 9. 無常。

³⁷SA 914: “如是聚落主。汝捨九因九緣。而言沙門瞿曇破壞他家。不捨惡言。不捨惡見。如鐵槍投水。身壞命終。生地獄中。” ASA 129: “離是九種外。言沙門瞿曇。能破諸家。無有是處。若棄如是九種因緣。言沙門瞿曇。能破諸家。不增長者。無有是處。不捨是語。不捨是欲。如斯等人。猶如拍毬。必墮地獄。”

³⁸PTS, pp. 317-322. Cf. Woodward (1927), pp. 223-227; Bodhi (2000), pp. 1340-1344.

³⁹T 2, pp. 231c-232b; CSA iii, pp. 602-605; FSA 3, pp. 1347-1352.

⁴⁰T 2, pp. 424c-425c.

1. The three versions have similar content: the Buddha asks a question of a headman⁴¹ who is a lay disciple of the Nigaṇṭhas, concerning how Nirgrantha Jñātaputra (P. Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta⁴²) teaches the Dharma to his disciples. The headman replies that Nirgrantha Jñātaputra teaches that whoever destroys life (*pāṇam atimāpeti*), takes what is not given (*adinnam ādiyati*), engages in sexual misconduct (*kāmesu micchā carati*), and tells lies (*musā bhaṇati*) will go to a state of woe (*āpāyiko*), to hell (*nerayiko*⁴³); “by the manner in which one frequently behaves, so one is led [to that destiny]” (*yam bahulaṃ yam bahulaṃ viharati tena tena niyyatī ti*⁴⁴). However, the Buddha’s responses in the three versions regarding the Dharma of Nirgrantha Jñātaputra are not the same, as the following shows.

In the SN and ASA versions the Buddha’s response is that, according to the Dharma of Nirgrantha Jñātaputra, no one will go to hell, because the occasions when a person destroys life, takes what is not given, engages in sexual misconduct, and tells lies are infrequent, whereas the occasions when that person is not doing so are more frequent. However, the SA version has the Buddha reply that according to the Dharma of Nirgrantha Jñātaputra, no one will go to hell, because the occasions when a person has the intention (*youxin* 有心) to do so are infrequent, whereas the occasions when that person does not have the intention (*buyouxin* 不有心) to do so are more frequent. Here, the SA version adds the term, *xin* 心, “mind”, which is lacking in the SN and ASA versions. In other words, both the SN and ASA versions refer to the actual actions, whereas the SA version refers to the person’s mentality.

2. The three versions report the Buddha as teaching the headman that after abandoning and abstaining from destruction of life, taking what is not given, sexual misconduct and false speech one should dwell pervading (*pharivā viharati*) the whole world (*sabbāvantam lokam*) with a mind full of (*sahagatena cetasā*) loving-kindness (*mettā*), compassion (*karuṇā*), empathic joy (*muditā*), and equanimity (*upekkhā*). These practices are to be developed (*bhāvita*) and cultivated (*bahulikata*) into the state of immeasurable (*appamāṇa*) mind-liberation (*ceto-vimutti*) by loving-kindness, compassion, empathic joy, and equanimity. In this way, “any limited *kamma* that was done does not remain there, does not persist

⁴¹Named Asibandhakaputta in SN, 刀師氏聚落主 in SA 916, 結集論者聚落主 in ASA 131.

⁴²尼捷若提子 in SA 916, 尼乾陀若提之子 in ASA 131.

⁴³泥犁 in SA 916, 地獄 in ASA 131.

⁴⁴“以多行故。則將至彼。” in SA 916; “隨作時多。必墮 …” in ASA 131.

there”.⁴⁵ However, the SA and ASA versions add the following:

SA 916

At that time, the World-Honored One used his fingernail to pick up a little soil from the ground, and asked [the follower of] Nirgrantha Jñātaputra: Headman, what do you think: is the soil on my fingernail more, or is the soil in the ground more?⁴⁶

The headman replied to the Buddha: World-Honored One, the soil on [your] fingernail is very little; the soil in the ground is much more.⁴⁸

The Buddha said to the headman: Just as the soil on the fingernail is little and the soil in the ground is much more, similarly one practises thought full of loving-kindness frequently. All limited karmas [that were done], like the soil on the fingernail, do not remain there, do not persist there.⁵⁰ Similarly, taking what is not given in opposition

ASA 131

At that time, the World-Honored One used his fingernail to pick up a little soil from the ground, and asked Nirgrantha Jñātaputra: Do you think the soil on [my] fingernail is more, or the soil in the ground is more?⁴⁷

The headman replied: The soil on [your] fingernail is very little. It cannot compare with the soil in the ground, which is much more by many hundred times, a thousand times, a million times. They cannot compare with each other.⁴⁹

The Buddha said to the headman: All evil karmas are like the soil on the fingernail. The soil in the ground is much more, beyond reckoning. The Headman said: So it is, so it is. Evil karmas [that were done] can be measured, understood. Such limited karmas cannot lead people to hell, neither do they persist there nor remain there.⁵² One

⁴⁵Bodhi 2000, p. 1344; SN 42.8: IV, p. 322: *yam pamāṇakatam kammaṃ na taṃ tatrāvasissati na taṃ tatrāvatiṭṭhati*. Cf. SA 916: “諸有量業者。…不能將去。不能令住。”= ASA 131: “惡業校量可知。如是少業。…亦不能住。亦不可計。”(See the translations indicated in footnotes 50 and 52, below).

⁴⁶“爾時。世尊以爪甲抄少土。語刀師氏聚落主言。云何。聚落主。我爪甲土多。大地為多。”

⁴⁷“爾時世尊。取地少土置於爪上。問造論姓聚落主言。大地土多。爪上土多。”

⁴⁸“聚落主白佛言。世尊。爪甲土少少耳。大地土無量無數。”

⁴⁹“聚落主言。爪上之土。極為少。不可方喻。大地之土。百分千分千億分。不得比喻共相校量。”

to compassion, sexual misconduct in opposition to empathic joy, [and] false speech in opposition to equanimity, cannot compare with each other.⁵¹

who practises with a mind full of loving-kindness gains merit like the soil in the ground; the evil [karma] of the destruction of life is like the soil on the fingernail. Practising compassion is like the soil in the ground; the evil [karma] of taking what is not given is like the soil on the fingernail. Practising empathic joy is like the soil in the ground; the evil [karma] of sexual misconduct is like the soil on the fingernail. Practising equanimity is like the soil in the ground; the evil [karma] of false speech is like the soil on the fingernail.⁵³

Both Chinese versions give the simile of the soil on the fingernail and in the ground (i.e., *zhua shang zhi tu*, 爪上之土, *dadi zhi tu*, 大地之土) to emphasise that the merit of immeasurable mind-liberation by loving-kindness, compassion, empathic joy and equanimity is far loftier and greater than any limited bad karmas that have been committed. No such simile is found in the SN version.

To conclude this section, two main issues are identified:

1. Regarding the point that the occasions when a person destroys life, takes what is not given, engages in sexual misconduct and tells lies are infrequent, whereas the occasions when a person is not doing so are more frequent, the SN

⁵⁰“諸有量業者。…不能將去。不能令住。”= ASA 131: “惡業较量可知。如是少業。…亦不能住。亦不可計。” (See the translation indicated in footnote 52, below). Cf. SN 42.8: IV, p. 322 (Bodhi 2000, p. 1344): *yam pamāṇakatam kammaṃ na taṃ tatrāvasissati na taṃ tatrāvatiṭṭhati*.

⁵¹“佛告聚落主。如甲上之土甚少。大地之土其數無量。如是心與慈俱。修習多修習。諸有量業者。如甲上土。不能將去。不能令住。如是偷盜對以悲心。邪婬對以喜心。妄語對以捨心。不得為比。”

⁵²“惡業较量可知。如是少業。…亦不能住。亦不可計。”= SA 916: “諸有量業者。…不能將去。不能令住。” See the translation indicated in footnote 50, above.

⁵³“佛告聚落主。所有罪業。如爪上土。大地之土。算數譬喻不能量度。聚落主言。如是如是。惡業较量可知。如是少業。不能牽人令墮惡道。亦不能住。亦不可計。夫行慈者。所得功德。如大地土。殺生之罪。如爪上土。悲之功德。如大地土。偷盜之罪。如爪上土。喜之功德。如大地土。邪婬之罪。如爪上土。捨之功德。如大地土。妄語之罪。如爪上土。”

and ASA versions refer to actual actions, whereas the SA version refers to the mindset of the person.

2. The two Chinese versions alone use the simile about the soil on the fingernail and in the ground to emphasise that the merit of immeasurable mind-liberation through loving-kindness, compassion, empathic joy and equanimity is far loftier and greater than any limited bad karmas committed.

Conclusion

Four discourses in the Pāli *Gāmaṇi Samyutta* (SN 42. 4-6, 13) have no counterparts in the Chinese SA and ASA. As regards the sequence of the discourses, the SA and ASA versions are in agreement. Thus the Chinese SA and ASA are structurally closer to each other than to the Pāli SN version. As for the contents, this comparative study has focused on some of the principal disagreements presented in the three versions. The comparison has revealed the following main points:

Relating to SA 912 = ASA 127 = SN 42.12 (Sensual pleasure and asceticism):

(1) The ASA version alone recognizes clearly two kinds of middle way, a distinction not found in the SN and SA versions.

Relating to SA 914 = ASA 129 = SN 42.9 (Ruin of families):

(2) The so-called two-horned question in the SN version is called *jili lun* 蒺藜論, “thorn-bush discussion”, in the SA version and *er zhong lunnan* 二種論難, “two kinds of critique”, in the ASA version. The ASA version appears closer to the SN version.

(3) The SN version states that the Buddha was with “a large assembly of monks”. Both the SA and ASA versions speak of him as with “one thousand two hundred and fifty monks, one thousand lay followers, and five hundred mendicants”, which is clearly an exaggeration.

(4) The SN version reports the Buddha as saying that the families’ great wealth and property came from charitable giving, truthfulness and self-control. The SA and ASA versions mention only charitable giving.

(5) The SN version specifies eight causes and conditions for the ruin of families; the two Chinese counterparts specify nine causes and conditions.

Relating to SA 916 = ASA 131 = SN 42.8 (Teachings of Nigantha Jñātaputra):

(6) Regarding falling into hell, in the SN version the headman considers that the Buddha's teachings are excellent, and becomes a lay follower of the Buddha. But in the SA and ASA counterparts the headman is "frightened", confesses his mistake, asks for forgiveness, and leaves after the Buddha has accepted his confession. The ASA version adds that he also goes to the Buddha for refuge.

(7) Regarding the statement that the occasions when a person destroys life, takes what is not given, engages in sexual misconduct and tells lies are infrequent, while the occasions when he is not doing so are more frequent, the SN and ASA versions refer to actual actions, whereas the SA version refers to the person's state of mind. This is a significant difference in content.

(8) Only the two Chinese versions contain the simile of the soil on the fingernail and in the ground.

Overall, this study has revealed some substantial disagreements among the three versions in the major teachings delivered by the Buddha to various headmen.

Abbreviations

- ASA *Bieyi Za Ahan Jing* 別譯雜阿含經 [*Additional Translation of Saṃyuktāgama*] (T 2, no. 100)
- CSA Yin Shun's *Za Ahan Jing Lun Huibian* 雜阿含經論會編 [*Combined Edition of Sūtra and Śāstra of the Saṃyuktāgama*]. 3 vols, ed. Yin Shun 印順, 1983
- FSA *Foguang dazangjing ahan zang: Za ahan jing* 佛光大藏經阿含藏：雜阿含經 [*Foguang Tripitaka Saṃyukta-āgama*]. 4 vols. Ed. Foguang Dazangjing Bianxiu Weiyuanhui 佛光大藏經編修委員會. Dashu, Gaoxiong: Foguangshan Zongwu Weiyuanhui, 1983.
- PTS Pali Text Society
- SA *Saṃyuktāgama* 雜阿含經 (T 2, no. 99)
- SN *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (PTS edition)
- T Taishō Chinese *Tripitaka* (the standard edition for most scholarly purposes) *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新脩大藏經. 100 vols. Ed. Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎 and Watanabe Kaikyoku 渡辺海旭. Tokyo: Taishō Issaikyō Kankōkai. 1924-34.

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- CBETA Chinese Electronic Tripitaka Version 2007 (Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association, Taipei, 2007).
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The Socio-Religious Dimensions of Dedicatory Inscriptions on Sculptures Donated to a Buddhist Establishment in Early Medieval Magadha: Kurkihar, c.800-1200 CE

Birendra Nath Prasad

In this paper, an attempt has been made to trace the evolving social bases of patronage to the Buddhist monastic establishment of Kurkihar in early medieval Magadha through the prism of dedicatory inscriptions on sculptures donated to the same. I have argued that this monastic establishment attracted patronage from diverse sections of society till the end of the eleventh century CE. The twelfth century witnessed a shrinking of its patronage base.

Introduction

Over the years, one may witness an increasing emphasis on the use of archaeological and epigraphic data in exploring the social history of Indian monastic Buddhism.¹ The general emphasis has been on tracing the evolution of the patronage base of Buddhist religious institutions.² In other cases, we see the interesting use of dedicatory inscriptions on sculptures to reconstruct religious affiliations, identities and expectations of donors of sculptures.³ We also find the use

Keywords: Magadha, Buddhist sculptures, Brahmanical sculptures, Buddhist-Brahmanical encounters, decline of Indian Buddhism

¹For a historiographical review, see Prasad 2008.

²Dehejia 1992; Thapar 1992; Singh 1996; Roy Chowdhury 2008; Basu 2006; Bhattacharya 2008; Prasad 2010; 2010a; 2010b; 2013a.

³Schopen 1984; 1988-1989; Kim 2012.

of dedicatory inscriptions to trace the evolution of a particular cult or tradition within Buddhism.⁴ The general emphasis has been on early historic northern and northwestern India, but important beginnings have been made in tracing the patterns of social patronage to Buddhist institutions in early medieval (c.600-1200 CE) Bihar and Bengal, arguably the last strongholds of Indian Buddhism.⁵ In this paper, an attempt will be made to understand the evolving social bases of patronage for the site of Kurkihar in the Gaya district of Bihar against the backdrop of contemporary developments in Indian Buddhism.

Barring some early explorations by colonial explorers (Major Kittoe and Alexander Cunningham), this site has not been subject to systematic archaeological study. During his second visit to the site in 1847, Major Kittoe spent four days collecting “ten cart-loads of idols, all Buddhist and many of the Tantric period.”⁶ He also saw a “vast mound of bricks and rubbish – undoubtedly the site of a great monastery and town.” The site was “studded with Chaityas or Buddhist temples of every dimension from ten inches to perhaps forty to fifty feet, and built one upon the other.” It is apparent that he was referring to votive stupas dedicated to some Buddhist establishment at this site by many pilgrims. When Cunningham surveyed the site, he found numerous Buddhist images, remains of a big stupa and monastery, and innumerable votive stupas, which were “rather characteristic of this place.” In his times, there were “rows after rows of Chaityas extending north and south for several hundred feet.” Though neither Kittoe nor Cunningham provided the number and typology of votive stupas at the site, it is apparent that in sheer number of votive stupas, the site matches Bodh Gaya. These votive stupas were undoubtedly indicators of sustained pilgrimage to this site. That prompted Cunningham to associate this site with the famous Kukkuṭapādāgīrivihāra, where Mahākāśyapa, an important disciple of the Buddha, was believed to have retired to await the arrival of Maitreya, the future Buddha, to whom he would hand over the charge of the Dharma as well as the robe of a monk. This identification has been contested by some later scholars.⁷

Plundering of the site for bricks by local villagers continued even after the exploration by Cunningham. This led to the accidental discovery of a remarkably large hoard of 226 bronze items (including sculptures, bells, etc.) in 1930. All

⁴Schopen 1979; Schopen 1987; Schopen 1988-89; Schopen 2010a; Prasad 2013; 2013b; 2013c; 2014a.

⁵Prasad 2010; 2010a; 2010b; 2013; 2013a; 2013b; 2013c; 2014a; Kim 2012.

⁶For a summary of explorations by Kittoe and Cunningham see Patil 1963: 222-226.

⁷See particularly Pandey 1963: 47-48, 133.

bronze items were found at a single location, where they were probably deliberately buried in the face of an emergency. In this hoard, 93 inscribed sculptures were also found.⁸ These sculptures have been studied mostly from art historical perspectives.⁹ But, as has been rightly remarked, the sociology of the dedicatory inscriptions on them is yet to be traced.¹⁰ In the paragraphs that follow, we shall explore the socio-religious dimensions of dedicatory inscriptions on the sculptures of Kurkihar. Our primary emphasis will be on the dedicatory inscriptions on bronze sculptures, though we shall also look into the reported dedicatory inscriptions on stone sculptures. We shall be mainly looking into those inscriptions which record the name of the donor. We shall not look into those inscriptions which record the Buddhist Creed Formula (*ye dharmā hetu-prabhavā hetun teṣān Tathāgato hy avadat teṣāñ ca yo nirodha evamvādi mahāśramaṇaḥ*) only. Our primary concern will be to trace the evolving patronage base of this monastic establishment. We shall undertake a century-wise analysis.

Our endeavour has some obvious limitations, mainly due to the nature of our database. Out of the sixty inscriptions analysed in this paper, only eight (one in the ninth century, three in the tenth century and four in the eleventh century) have recorded the regnal year of the king ruling when the donation was made. Only these inscriptions can be dated on a surer footing. An overwhelming majority of inscriptions come in a very short dedicatory format, just recording that the image was the *deyadharmā* of a particular donor. In many cases, only the name of the donor is recorded. For these two types of inscriptions, epigraphists have attempted dating on the basis of paleographic features. In such cases, only some broad (i.e., century-wise) dating could be attributed. So when we deal with such inscriptions from a particular century, we do not know if these inscriptions were spaced by days, months, years or decades. Therefore, it is generally very difficult to trace transitions taking place within a particular century. Wherever our database allows, we will make an attempt in that direction. We shall be on a surer footing when tracking the transitions taking place across centuries.

⁸Most of them have been transferred to the Patna Museum. Inscriptions on them were initially published by A. Banerji-Sastri (1940), and, later, by P.L. Gupta (1965). Their readings are identical in most cases. In this paper, I have utilised both versions.

⁹Huntington 1984; Bautze-Picron 1991.

¹⁰Paul 1996-97: 34.

Cultic affiliation of donors of Buddhist images in epigraphic records: some methodological considerations

In the poly-religious landscape of early medieval India, Magadha being no exception, it was natural that a vast section of the population had fluid religious identities: one could continue worshipping the Buddha or other Buddhist deities, and donating their images to a Buddhist establishment, without ever formally becoming 'Buddhist.' That should not, however, lead us to believe that Buddhism as a marker of social and religious identity of some persons was totally non-existent. Some chose to declare their association with Buddhism more formally through dedicatory inscriptions on sculptures donated by them. In full agreement with Schopen (1979), we may state that the adoption of a particular form of dedicatory formula in votive inscriptions on Buddhist sculptures was generally not an eclectic choice on the part of the donor, but a conscious adherence to a particular tradition of Buddhism (Prasad 2013: 186). Thus in the dedicatory formulas on the sculptures donated by donors who opted to identify themselves as followers of the Mahāyāna, there are recorded some characteristic technical, and definitive, words. In many inscriptions, they recorded themselves as *pravara-mahāyāna-anuyāyinaḥ* (follower of the excellent Mahāyāna). In many cases, the donor did not categorically identify himself/herself as such, but other words indicated that the donor wished to be identified as a follower of the Mahāyāna. Schopen noted that in dedicatory inscriptions on sculptures, the words *paramopāsaka* and *paramopāsikā* respectively signified a man or woman who was a Mahāyāna lay worshipper. Similarly *Śākyabhikṣu* and *Śākyabhikṣuṇī* signified a Mahāyāna monk or nun respectively.¹¹ Similarly, the expression of the aim of attainment of *anuttara jñāna* by all sentient beings, the donor's parents, or the donor him/herself was almost exclusive to the Mahāyāna dedicatory formula on sculptures (Schopen 1979: 3-5). The same applies to the formula *yad atra puṇyama*, which was 'virtually the exclusive property of Mahāyāna' (Schopen 1979: 12).

It may also be noted that in dedicatory inscriptions on Buddhist sculptures of early medieval Bihar and Bengal, whenever a donor wished to identify himself/herself with any tradition of Buddhism, that tradition was the Mahāyāna. That

¹¹For a different perspective on the significance of these terms, see Cousins (2003). For a critique of Cousins' thesis, and an explanation of the validity of Schopen's arguments for the Pāla-Sena period (c.750-1200 CE) Bihar and Bengal, see Prasad 2013: 187.

remained the case until the very end of this period (Prasad 2013: 187).¹²

Keeping these issues in mind, we will classify the donors of images into six broad categories: Buddhist monks; Buddhist nuns; male Mahāyāna lay followers; female Mahāyāna lay followers; male donors without any expressed Buddhist affiliation; and female donors without any expressed Buddhist affiliation. One additional category will be used in this paper: ‘unknown donors.’ It comprises those donors whose social or religious background could not be ascertained because their inscriptions are damaged.

Deities and donors: the ninth century CE pattern

Fourteen inscribed images have been reported from the ninth century, of which twelve are Buddhist and two are Brahmanical. They are summarised in the following table.

Table 1: Ninth-century votive inscriptions on sculptures

No.	Cultic identity of the image	Donor(s)	Socio-religious background of donor(s)	Place(s) where donor(s) came from	Expressed motive behind donation (as recorded in the inscription)
1	Buddha in BSM ¹³	Sthavira Nadradeva	Monk	Kāñcī	None expressed
2	Buddha in BSM	Buddhavarmana	Monk	Kāñcī	None expressed
3	Buddha in BSM	<i>paramopāsakī</i> Manju	Female Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Not mentioned	None expressed
4	Buddha in BSM	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known ¹⁴
5	Buddha in DCPM ¹⁵	Vīryavarmana	Monk	Kāñcī	None expressed
6	Buddha in BSM	Nāgendra-varmana	Not mentioned; probably a monk	Kāñcī	None expressed
7	Buddha in BSM	Tāka-Dharmadeva	Male w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation	Not mentioned	None expressed

Continued on next page

¹²This remained the case even in dedicatory inscriptions on overtly Vajrayanist images (Aparājītā, etc.). The word ‘Vajrayāna’ does not occur even once in the corpus of dedicatory inscriptions on sculptures of early medieval Bihar and Bengal, nor did a Vajrayāna dedicatory formula ever evolve (Prasad 2013: 187). This creates conceptual problems in understanding the nature of the relationship between Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna in this period, which may be analysed more thoroughly in future studies. My only observation on the basis of my ongoing cataloguing of dedicatory inscriptions on Buddhist sculptures of Bihar and Bengal is that barring Mahāyāna, we find no dedicatory formula peculiar to any other Buddhist tradition.

THE SOCIO-RELIGIOUS DIMENSIONS OF DEDICATORY INSCRIPTIONS ON SCULPTURES

No.	Cultic identity of the image	Donor(s)	Socio-religious background of donor(s)	Place(s) where donor(s) came from	Expressed motive behind donation (as recorded in the inscription)
8	Buddha in BSM	Vīryavarmana	Monk	Apparently from Kāñci	None expressed
9	Siddhaikavīra	Saha	Male w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation	Not mentioned	None expressed
10	Vāgīśvara	Vaṇika (merchant) Māṇeka, son of Jānu	Male w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation; from mercantile background	Not mentioned	None expressed
11	Tārā	Śākya-Bhikṣuṇī – Guṇamati	Mahāyāna nun	Not mentioned	None expressed
12	Tārā	Umādukā, wife of Iddāka	Female w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation	Not mentioned	None expressed
13	Balarāma	Ajhuka	Female w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation; part of rural aristocracy (wife of a village chief)	Madhugrāma in Vāhiravana	None expressed
14	Viṣṇu	Cobbler (<i>carmakāra</i>) Thisavī	Male w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation; from untouchable background	Not mentioned	None expressed

We see a significant presence (58.3 percent of the reported inscribed images) of the images of the Buddha in Bhūmisparśamudrā in this century. We shall analyse its significance in the last section of the paper.

None of the votive inscriptions are long. Most of them come in a very short dedicatory formula, just recording that the image was the *deyadharmma* of the donor. Barring *carmakāra* Thisavī, none of the donors have referred to his/her *varṇa/jāti* status, indicating that the monastery marginalised *varṇa/jāti*-based identities. Only one donor – Māṇeka, son of the Jānu who donated an image of Vāgīśvara (no. 10) – recorded that he was a *vaṇika* (merchant).¹⁶ *Vaṇika*

¹³BSM stands for Bhūmisparśamudrā.

¹⁴Inscription on the image: just four indistinct letters, hence analysis not possible.

¹⁵DCPM stands for Dharmacakrapravartanamudrā.

¹⁶Gupta 1965: 142, inscription no. 90.

may not necessarily indicate that he belonged to the *vaiśya varṇa*. None of the donors mentioned any particular motive (attainment of *anuttara jñāna*, welfare of parents, teachers or preceptors, etc.). Barring the dedicatory inscriptions on two Brahmanical images – Balarāma (no. 13) and Viṣṇu (no. 14), which were installed respectively at Mallapore and Āpanaka Mahāvihāra – none of the inscriptions record the name of the particular religious centre where the image was installed. This is quite strange given the fact during the ninth century at least four donors came from distant Kāñcī (Tamil Nadu). Travel from Kāñcī to Kurkihar must have been arduous. In fact, if we analyse the entire gamut of votive inscriptions on the sculptures of Kurkihar, an interesting pattern emerges. Including the two inscriptions referred to above, only four inscriptions record the name of the religious centre where the images were donated by donors. We see this in the donation of two images of Vasudhārā by the two wives of Gopālahīno (nos. 27 & 28, both datable to the tenth century). In all four cases the donors have vernacular names, which may indicate that they were locals with no monastic affiliation.

Out of the fourteen inscribed images from this century, at least five (nos. 1, 2, 3, 5 & 6) were donated by donors from Kāñcī, representing 35.7 percent of donors. As a defined group, donors from Kāñcī formed the single largest group at Kurkihar. Apart from them, we have only one example of the recording of the place from which the donors came; i.e., the donation of an image of Balarāma (no. 13) by Ajhuka, wife of Singeka, who was probably a village chief.¹⁷ This inscription records not only the name of the place where the donor came from – Madhugrāma in Vāhiravana – but also the name of the religious centre (Mallapore) where the image was donated.¹⁸

Returning to the donors from Kāñcī of ninth century Kurkihar, we see the donation of five images by them, with three donors categorically stating that they came from Kāñcī. Within this category, we may cite the names of Sthavira Nadra-deva, who donated an image of the Buddha in Bhūmisparśamudrā (no. 1);¹⁹ Sthavira Vīryavarmana, who donated an image of the Buddha in Dharmacakra-pravartanamudrā (no. 5);²⁰ and Nagendrarvarmana, who donated an image of

¹⁷ Gupta 1965: 152-153, inscription no. 149.

¹⁸ Gupta 1965: 152-53, inscription no. 149.

¹⁹ Gupta 1965: 128, inscription no. 9.

²⁰ Gupta 1965: 128, inscription no. 14. Bhikṣu Vīryavarmana from Kāñcī (Bhikṣu Vīryavarmana Kāñcī Vinirgata) appears as the donor of a bronze image of Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara, now kept in the Los Angeles County Museum of Art (Pal 1988: 86). Both denote, apparently, the name of the same person.

the Buddha in Bhūmisparśamudrā (no. 6).²¹ Buddhavarmana, who donated an image of the Buddha in Bhūmisparśamudrā (no. 2), did not mention the place of origin or his social background in the dedicatory inscription.²² But in a tenth century dedicatory inscription, we see one Buddhavarmana and Dharmavarmana jointly donating an image of the Buddha in Bhūmisparśamudrā (no. 15), and both have been referred to as monks (*sthavira*) from Kāñcī.²³ So we may assume that the Buddhavarmana mentioned in this inscription was the same person discussed in the previous inscription, with a Kāñcī origin and monk status reasonably attributed to him. Similarly, Vīryavarmana, who donated an image of the Buddha in Bhūmisparśamudrā²⁴ (no. 8) appears as the donor of an image of the Buddha in Dharmacakrapravartanamudrā (no. 5), with the categorical references to Kāñcī as the place of his origin and Sthavira as his title.²⁵ So we may reasonably assume that he too was a monk from Kāñcī.

The donation of so many bronze images by monks from Kāñcī at Kurkihar raises some interesting questions. Given that Kāñcī remained an important centre for Buddhism until as late as the early fourteenth century, attracting a monk from Magadha,²⁶ the flow of monks from Kāñcī should not come as any surprise. In fact, as we shall later see, pilgrimage from Kāñcī to Kurkihar continued right until the end of the eleventh century. The donation of so many bronze images by Kāñcī monks must have involved a considerable mobilisation of resources. We have no indication whatsoever to suggest that these monks were donating these images on behalf of some lay devotees. In fact, votive inscriptions on all these images categorically record that these images were the *deyadharmma* of the respective monk-donors. From where did they mobilise resources to get these images constructed and enshrined in a Gandhakuṭī at Kurkihar? In fact, we have some indirect references to the effect that some Kāñcī monks constructed some Gandhakuṭī at Kurkihar. P.L. Gupta has catalogued at least four bells from Kurkihar which are inscribed with the legend *Kāñcī – Stha[vira] Buddhavarmana Gandhakuṭya*.²⁷ Gupta has taken it to mean ‘probably recording the gift of the

²¹ Gupta 1965: 128, inscription no. 15.

²² Gupta 1965: 128, inscription no. 11.

²³ Banerji-Shastri 1940: 241, inscription no. 6.

²⁴ Gupta 1965: 129, inscription no. 17.

²⁵ Gupta 1965: 128, inscription no. 14.

²⁶ Prasad 2008: 77; Prasad 2014b: 88.

²⁷ Gupta 1965: 159, inscription nos. 205, 206, 207 & 208.

bell at the Gandhakuṭi by Buddhavarmana of Kāñcī,²⁸ but it may very well represent the construction of a Gandhakuṭi on the orders of Sthavira Buddhavarmana. From where did he mobilise resources for this costly endeavour? Did he mobilise his own resources or did his Magadhan devotees provide the resources?

From the ninth century, we have at least one example of the donation of an image by a Mahāyāna nun. The dedicatory inscription on an image of Tārā (no. 11) records that this image was the *deyadharmma* of Śākya-Bhikṣuṇi Guṇamati.²⁹

We have two more examples of the donation of Buddhist images by women donors during this century. The votive inscription on an image of the Buddha in Bhūmiśparśamudrā (no. 3) records that it was the *deyadharmma* of *paramopāsakī* (i.e., Mahāyāna lay follower) Mañju.³⁰ Other details of her social background are not known. She was probably an unmarried woman, otherwise she would have mentioned the name of her husband. That is what we see in the case of the donation of an image of a standing Tārā (no. 12), now kept in a museum in Switzerland. The provenance of this image has been attributed to Kurkihar on stylistic grounds.³¹ The votive inscription on this image records that it was the *deyadharmma* of Umadūkā, wife of Iddāka.³² One will agree with Bhattacharya that 'both the names of Umadūkā and Iddāka are vernacular.'³³ Compared to *paramopāsakī* Mañju, whose Mahāyāna identity is well defined, Buddhist influence is much less visible in the names of Umadūkā and Iddāka. Umadūkā has not mentioned other details of her social background, but we may infer that she could have been from a non-aristocratic and non-monastic background, by contrasting the votive inscription on an image of Balarāma (no. 13) donated by Ajhuka, the wife of Singeka, who has been referred to as a village chief.³⁴ We may assume that anyone with the vaguest of links to the aristocracy would generally mention details of their social background. In the absence of this in the case of Umadūkā, we may argue that she was from a non-aristocratic background. Similarly, nothing suggests that she had any kind of monastic background. The case with Saha, the donor of an image of Siddhaikavira (no. 9), appears to be similar. The votive inscription on this image records that it was his *deyadharmma* without mentioning

²⁸ Gupta 1965: 159.

²⁹ Bhattacharya 2000a: 463.

³⁰ Gupta 1965: 128, inscription no. 12.

³¹ Bhattacharya 2000a: 464.

³² Bhattacharya 2000a: 465.

³³ Bhattacharya 2000a: 465.

³⁴ Gupta 1965: 152-153, inscription no. 149.

details of his social background.³⁵ We may infer a similar pattern in the donation of an image of the Buddha in Bhūmisparśamudrā (no. 7) by Tākadharmadeva, who has merely mentioned that this image was his *deyadharmma*.³⁶

In this century we also see the flow of mercantile patronage towards Buddhism; for example, via the donation of an image of Vāgīśvara (no. 10) as the *deyadharmma* of *vaṇika* Māṇeka, son of Jānu.³⁷ This is the only example of a donation of an image by a person from a mercantile background during this century.

On the whole, a broad cross-section of society – monks from distant Tamil Nadu, a nun, male and female Mahāyāna lay followers, merchants, rural elites, as well as persons from less distinct social backgrounds – donated images. The vibrant presence of Buddhism and its widespread social base is clearly discernible. This vibrancy is also reflected in the confident attempts of the Saṅgha at Kurkihar to induce an integration of brahmanical cults into Buddhism in a subordinate position by accepting the donation of inscribed brahmanical sculptures.³⁸ There are two such examples from ninth century Kurkihar and they represent donations by the rural aristocracy (Ajhuka, wife of a village chief) and a person from an untouchable background: *carmakāra* Thisavī.³⁹ It has rightly been pointed out that despite suffering untouchability, *carmakāra* Thisavī was a man of considerable wealth, probably not just an ordinary cobbler but a prosperous tanner, who employed several other *carmakāras* to collect and prepare the hides.⁴⁰

³⁵ Gupta 1965: 142, inscription no. 89.

³⁶ Gupta 1965: 129, inscription no. 16.

³⁷ Gupta 1965: 142, inscription no. 90.

³⁸ The patterns of cultic relationship between Buddhism and Brahmanism as discernible in dedicatory inscriptions on brahmanical images donated to different Buddhist establishments in early medieval Magadha has been analysed elsewhere (Prasad 2013). Within Pāla period Magadha, Kurkihar shows the most consistent pattern of findings of inscribed Brahmanical sculptures donated to a Buddhist religious centre, with at least one example from every century. All such inscribed sculptures from Kurkihar have been covered in Prasad 2013. Thus, we shall generally ignore such examples in this paper.

³⁹ Analysing literary sources, Jha (2014: 115-116) has argued that there is no direct evidence of the untouchability of the *carmakāra* until the Gupta period, although his profession was considered to be a low-ranking one. In Brahmanical law texts of the early medieval period, the leather worker slowly became a distinctly untouchable caste, even for a *śūdra*. For similar observations, also see Patra 2009-10: 124.

⁴⁰ Pal (1988: 86) also argued that the un-Sanskritic name of *carmakāra* Thisavī may indicate that he was of tribal origin. This argument is not tenable. Barring the monks of Kāñcī, almost all

Royalty are conspicuous by their absence. In fact, we do not find a single example of donations of images by persons of royal background in subsequent centuries. According to our database, the monastic complex of Kurkihar seems to have survived mainly on the patronage provided by local and non-local donors from non-royal backgrounds throughout its known history.

We here summarise, in tabular form, the segments of society which made donations, as well as the types and numbers of images donated, during this century.

Table 1a

Cultic identity of the image	Monk	Nun	Male Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Female Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Male donor without expressed Buddhist affiliation	Female donor without expressed Buddhist affiliation	Total
Buddha in BSM	4+1(?)			1	1		7
Buddha in DCPM	1						1
Siddhaikavīra					1		1
Vāgīśvara					1		1
Tārā		1				1	2
Balarāma					1		1
Viṣṇu					1		1
Total	6	1		1	5	1	14

Donations of inscribed sculptures at Kurkihar: the tenth century pattern

In the tenth century, twenty-one inscribed sculptures have been reported, out of which one image (Umāmaheśvara) is brahmanical.

donors of Kurkihar sculptures have un-Sanskritic names. Nothing suggests that they were all of tribal origin.

Table 2: Tenth-century votive inscriptions on sculptures

No.	Cultic identity of the image	Donor(s)	Socio-religious background of donor(s)	Place(s) where donor(s) came from	Expressed motive behind donation (as recorded in the inscription)
15	Buddha in BSM	Sthavira Buddha-varmana and Sthavira Dharmavarmana	Monks	Kāñcī	None expressed
16	Buddha in BSM	Candra-varmana	Not mentioned; probably a monk	Kāñcī	None expressed
17	Crowned Buddha	Rāhulavarmana	Monk	Kāñcī	None expressed
18	Crowned Buddha	Prabhākara-siṃha	Monk	Kāñcī	None expressed
19	Avalokiteśvara	Bhadevī (?), a lady	Female w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation	Not mentioned	None expressed
20	Tārā	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known ⁴¹
21	Tārā	<i>upāsakī</i> Gopāli-Sāuka	Female Mahāyāna lay follower	Not mentioned	None expressed
22	Tārā	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known ⁴²
23	Tārā	Dūtasimha	Monk	Kāñcī	None expressed
24	Tārā	Prabhākara-siṃha	Monk	Kāñcī	None expressed
25	Tārā	<i>upāsakī</i> Duva-jha	Female Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Not mentioned	None expressed
26	Tārā	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known ⁴³
27	Vasudhārā	Vāṭukā, wife of Gopālahino	Female w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation	Not mentioned	None expressed
28	Vasudhārā	Gāukā, another wife of Gopālahino	Female, w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation	Not mentioned	None expressed
29	Parṇaśavarī	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known ⁴⁴
30	Group of deities on pedestal: Hārīti, two other goddesses, Mañjuśrī Kumārabhūta	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known

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No.	Cultic identity of the image	Donor(s)	Socio-religious background of donor(s)	Place(s) where donor(s) came from	Expressed motive behind donation (as recorded in the inscription)
31	Prabhāmaṇḍala, probably a Buddhist image	Khamgaka	Person associated with Mahāyāna	Not mentioned	<i>anuttara jñāna</i> for all sentient beings, keeping his parents, teacher and preceptor in the front
32	Naga pedestal of large broken Buddhist image	Prajñāsīmha	Mahāyāna monk, from Brahmin background	Kāñcī	Transferring merit of donation to his parents, teacher, preceptor and all sentient beings
33	Triratha pedestal of an image, probably Buddhist	Sthavira Avalokitasīmha	Mahāyāna monk	Kāñcī, but originally hailing from Keraladeśa (i.e., Kerala)	None expressed
34	Rectangular pedestal, probably a Buddhist image	Sthavira Bud-dhajñāna	Mahāyāna monk	Kāñcī	<i>anuttara jñāna</i> for all sentient beings, keeping his parents, teacher and preceptor in the front
35	Umāmaheśvara	Mulūka, wife of Gopāla Mahiaru, a resident of the Āpanaka Mahāvihāra	Female w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation	Not mentioned	Not mentioned

Tārā seems to be the preferred deity. Donors from Kāñcī formed the single largest group. Compared to the five instances of donation of images by donors from Kāñcī in the previous century, we find nine examples in this century, indicating increasing pilgrimage from Kāñcī. We also see the donation of six images by women donors, out of which two have referred to themselves as *upāsakī*,⁴⁵ which proves that they were Mahāyāna lay donors. Interestingly, both *upāsakī* donors donated the images of Tārā (nos. 21 & 25). One lady, who donated an im-

⁴¹ In the inscription: Buddhist Creed Formula followed by about 10 much obliterated letters, hence, historical analysis is not possible.

⁴² In the inscription: just a few indistinct letters, hence historical analysis is not possible.

⁴³ In the inscription: just a few indistinct letters, hence historical analysis is not possible.

⁴⁴ In the inscription: just two indistinct letters, hence analysis is not possible.

⁴⁵ Gupta 1965: 145, inscription no. 107; Gupta 1965: 146, inscription no. 116.

age of Avalokiteśvara (no. 19) has simply referred to her name (Bhadevī) without providing details of her social background.⁴⁶ We also see two wives of a gentleman named Gopālahīno donating images of Vasudhārā (nos. 27 & 28) around c. 965 CE.⁴⁷ Barring one monk from Kāñcī – Sthavira Prajñāsīnha, who was ‘born in a family of brāhmaṇas well-versed in Vedas and Vedāngas’⁴⁸ – none of the donors mentioned his/her *varṇa/jāti* status. Also, aside from the two wives of Gopālahīno, who categorically recorded that they had donated images of Vasudhārā to the Āpanaka Mahāvihāra, none of the donors cared to record the name of the religious centre where they installed the image. This presents a dilemma for us: why would donors, who undertook an arduous pilgrimage from distant Tamil Nadu, or from within Magadha, not attempt to record the name of the religious centre where they made their donations?. On the whole, instances of the recording of the religious centre where the image was donated/installed by the Magadha and non-Magadha donors at Kurkihar are quite rare. Given their vernacular (un-Sanskritic) names and the lack of details regarding the social and occupational status of their husband or parents, it is apparent that the two wives of Gopālahīno were from a non-aristocratic background. That they were not from a monastic background is self-evident.

Turning our attention to the donors from Kāñcī at Kurkihar, what was the nature of their presence? As a group, Kāñcī donors were of great importance at Kurkihar. Were donors from Kāñcī all monks or were lay donors also present? Did they come simply to make pilgrimages, then return immediately afterwards? Or did some reside in a monastery of Kurkihar for a longer period? How did they mobilise resources to undertake the installation of bronze images, and, arguably, construction of Gandhakuṭīs at Kurkihar? Mobilising resources so far from their place of origin must have been a challenge and, to date, we do not find any examples in which they donate images on behalf of some lay patron. Independent donations were made through mobilisation of resources on their own behalf.

Let us first explore an important question: whether all donors from Kāñcī were monks, as proposed by G. Bhattacharya.⁴⁹ Bhattacharya did not offer any reasons to support this notion. If we analyse the dedicatory inscriptions on sculp-

⁴⁶ Gupta 1965: 137, inscription no. 64.

⁴⁷ Gupta 1965: 150, inscription no. 134-135. Gupta has dated these inscriptions to c.935 CE, but taking into account the revised chronology of the Pāla dynasty by S.C.Mukherji, we have applied the date of c.965 CE to these pieces.

⁴⁸ Gupta 1965: 155, inscription no. 164.

⁴⁹ Bhattacharya: 2000a.

tures donated by donors from Kāñcī, we see that only some donors have recorded that they were monks: *Sthavira* Buddhavarmana and *Sthavira* Dharmavarmana, who jointly donated an image of the Buddha in Bhūmisparśamudrā (no. 50); Prajñāsiṃha, whose name survives on the Nāga pedestal of a big broken image⁵⁰ (no. 32); Avalokitasīṃha, whose name survives on the *triratha* pedestal of a broken image⁵¹ (no. 33); and Buddhajñāna, whose name appears in a Mahāyāna dedicatory inscription formula on the rectangular pedestal of a broken image⁵² (no. 34). This type of reference to the monk status of other donors from Kāñcī is absent in this century.

Contrasting this pattern with the same in votive inscriptions on images donated by Kāñcī monks during the ninth century may offer some clues. During the ninth century, *Sthavira* Nadravarmana, who donated an image of the Buddha in Bhūmisparśamudrā;⁵³ and *Bhikṣu* Vīryavarmana, who donated an image of the Buddha in Dharmacakrapravartanamudrā,⁵⁴ alongside another image of the Buddha in Bhūmisparśamudrā;⁵⁵ have categorically referred to themselves as monks from Kāñcī. Two other donors – Buddhavarmana, who donated an image of the Buddha in Bhūmisparśamudrā;⁵⁶ and Nagendravarmana, who donated a similar image⁵⁷ – despite recording that they came to Kurkihar from Kāñcī, did not categorically state in any votive inscription whether they were monks. Buddhavarmana, however, appears as a *sthavira* in three inscriptions on bells, in which he appears to have had at least one Gandhakuṭī constructed in a monastery at Kurkihar.⁵⁸ In another inscription on a bell, he appears without the qualifying term *stha* or *sthavira*.⁵⁹ Thus, it is apparent that this monk was not particular about recording his monk status in all inscriptions. We are not sure if this observation can be applied to all donors from Kāñcī who did not categorically indicate whether or not they were monks. The possibility that some were lay pilgrims from Kāñcī cannot be ruled out. That at least one donor from Kāñcī remained in Kurkihar for an extended period instead of returning immediately after making the pilgrimage is

⁵⁰ Gupta 1965: 155, inscription no. 164.

⁵¹ Gupta 1965: 155, inscription no. 165.

⁵² Gupta 1965: 156, inscription no. 166.

⁵³ Gupta 1965: 128, inscription no. 9.

⁵⁴ Gupta 1965: 128, inscription no. 14.

⁵⁵ Gupta 1965: 129, inscription no. 17.

⁵⁶ Gupta 1965: 128, inscription no. 9.

⁵⁷ Gupta 1965: 128, inscription no. 15.

⁵⁸ Gupta 1965: 159, inscription nos. 206, 207 & 208.

⁵⁹ Gupta 1965: 159, inscription no. 205.

illustrated by the example of *Sthavira* Buddhavarmana. *Sthavira* Buddhavarmana appears as the donor of an image of the Buddha in Bhūmisparśamudrā during the ninth century.⁶⁰ During the tenth century, we see *Sthavira* Buddhavarmana and *Sthavira* Dharmavarmana jointly donating another image of the Buddha in Bhūmisparśamudrā (no. 15).⁶¹ As both Buddhavarmanas hailed from Kāñcī, we may reasonably assume that they were one and the same. So we can deduce that a monk, Buddhavarmana, made a pilgrimage to Kurkihar, spent a considerable time there, donated at least two images and had at least one Gandhakuṭī constructed. These activities spanned many years, if not decades, and either his local patrons paid for the undertakings or he had to mobilise his own resources.

Why, then, would a person from distant Kāñcī come to Kurkihar and undertake such acts? What did it mean for a person to renounce his former faith and become a follower of Buddhism, especially one from a prestigious brahmin background? The dedicatory inscription on the broken pedestal of a large Buddhist stone image (no. 32) – large enough to entail the mobilisation of considerable expenditure on the part of the donor⁶² – sheds some light on this issue. Here we see a brahmin embracing Buddhism, celebrating it by making a pilgrimage to Kurkihar, and announcing it prominently by having a large image constructed. We are informed that the donor, whose original name was Narasiṃha Caturvedī, was born in a village of Kāñcī to a family of brahmins well-versed in Vedas and Vedāngas.⁶³ Later he became a disciple of *Sthavira* Vairocanasiṃha.⁶⁴ That involved a change in his name, and arguably, his social and religious identities. Narasiṃha Caturvedī became Prajñāsiṃha, a name indicating Mahāyāna influence.⁶⁵ We are not told where – in Magadha or at Kāñcī itself – Narasiṃha Caturvedī met

⁶⁰ Gupta 1965: 128, inscription no. 11.

⁶¹ Banerji-Shastri 1940: 241, inscription no. 6; Gupta 1965: 130, inscription no. 17.

⁶² Huntington (1984: 52) noted that ‘since the pedestal alone measures 33 cm in height, the complete image must have comprised a significant contribution on the part of the donor.’

⁶³ Banerji-Shastri 1940: 246-247, inscription no. 52; Gupta 1965: 155, inscription no. 164.

⁶⁴ Banerji-Shastri 1940: 246-247, inscription no. 52; Gupta 1965: 155, inscription no. 164.

⁶⁵ In Magadha, this is not the only example of a person changing their name after acceptance of a particular form of Buddhism. See, for example, the case of Dhyānabhadra, a monk who received his early training in Buddhism at the Nālandā Mahāvihāra during the latter half of the thirteenth century. Later, he went to Sri Lanka for more specialised training in Mahāyāna, where he was given a new Mahayanist name, Śūnyādiśya, by his *ācārya* (Prasad 2014b: 88). After receiving higher training in Mahāyāna in Sri Lanka, he returned to India. He provided graphic descriptions of the survival of Mahāyāna across India in the latter half of the thirteenth century. Later, he travelled to China, via Tibet, and died in Korea. For details of his life and career, see Waley 1931-32; Prasad 2014b.

Vairocanasimha, or when he assumed a new name. He had a large image installed in a Gandhakuṭī at Kurkihar, Unlike most other donors from Kāñcī, he recorded the regnal year (twenty-eighth) of the ruling king (Rājyapāla) when he donated this image (c.958 CE), which may have been an indication of his greater familiarity with the political situation in Magadha. The image was donated with the aim of transferring religious merit to his *ācārya*, his *upādhyāya*, his parents and all living creatures;⁶⁶ an aim which, true to his new Mahāyāna identity, shows the influence of the Mahāyāna dedicatory formula. In sum, one may accept Bhattacharya's analysis that 'the importance of this inscription lies in the fact that even in the tenth century, learned brahmins of Kāñcīpurama became Buddhist and went to Magadha, the holy spot of Buddhism, to teach or study at some monastery there.'⁶⁷ This is another indication of the vibrancy of Buddhism in tenth-century Kurkihar. Within this context, one more thing of note is that even when Narasimha Caturvedī became a Mahāyāna monk, he proudly remembered his brahmin ancestry. In fact, viewing the entire spectrum of donors at Kurkihar, we see only two persons recording their *jāti* in their dedicatory inscriptions: brahmin Narasimha Caturvedī and *carmakāra* Thisavī, who suffered untouchability, yet whose donation was accepted by the Buddhist Saṅgha. Represent two extremes of the social hierarchy, these two remembered their *jāti* for different reasons: Narasimha Caturvedī due to his pride in his brahmin lineage, even after becoming a Buddhist monk, as well as to announce his conversion to Buddhism emphatically and dramatically;⁶⁸ and *carmakāra* Thisavī due to the untouchability that his *jāti* entailed. For all other donors, the monastic site of Kurkihar provided an avenue for the marginalisation of *varṇa/jāti*-based identities: they were not considered important enough to be recorded in dedicatory inscriptions. In the tenth century, we do not observe examples of donations by nuns, indicating that the Bhikṣuṅīsāṅgha at

⁶⁶ Gupta 1965: 155, inscription no. 164; Banerji-Shastri 1940: 246-247, inscription no. 52; Bhattacharya 2000a: 95.

⁶⁷ Bhattacharya 2000a: 95.

⁶⁸ Brahmin monks formed a large portion of the early Buddhist Saṅgha. 'Nearly half of all the senior Buddhist monks and nuns mentioned in the Pāli Tripiṭaka came from Brahmin families and carried with them Brahmanical notions into the very core of Buddhism' (Sarao 2012: 272). It has been argued that 'the infiltration in huge numbers of such elements, most of whom were never fully converted to the ideals set forth by the Buddha, contributed greatly towards sabotaging the Saṅgha from within' (Sarao 2012: 272). The sociology of Buddhist monks, particularly their *varṇa/jāti* background, and its impact on the decline of Buddhism in early medieval India has yet to be worked out. Narasimha Caturvedī does not look like a scheming brahmin hell-bent upon sabotaging the Saṅgha from within.

this time and location was probably in decline. Ronald Davidson underlined the implications of this decline for the overall waning of Indian Buddhism.⁶⁹ We may safely assume that this must have had implications for Buddhism in Magadha as well.

Despite the apparent vanishing of the order of nuns in the tenth century, we do not see a fall in the donation of images by female donors. Compared to four examples during the ninth century, we find six such examples in the tenth century. Barring the case of Malūka, who donated an image of Umāmaheśvara (no. 35), none of the female donors recorded the place from where she hailed. On the whole, the range of woman donors in Kurkihar appears diverse. We have at least one example of a female donor – Bhadevī, who donated an image of Avalokiteśvara (no. 19) in the late tenth century⁷⁰ – but left no details regarding her social status, indicating that she was from a non-distinctive background. Two donors of the images of Tārā (nos. 21 & 25) – Gopāli Sāuka⁷¹ and Duvajha⁷² – categorically recorded that they were *upāsakī*, that is, Mahāyāna lay followers. They did not leave details of their social background, such as *varṇa/jāti* status of themselves or their parents, or occupational and marital status. We may assume that they were from non-aristocratic backgrounds and probably unmarried, since they would otherwise have mentioned the names of their husbands. Compared to *upāsakī* Gopāli Sāuka, *upāsakī* Duvajha seems to have had a longer association with Kurkihar. We find *upāsakī* Duvajha donating an image of Avalokiteśvara (no. 46) in the eleventh century,⁷³ and while a considerable period may have elapsed since her first donation, she remained an *upāsakī* and opted not to become a nun over the years. In a phase when the Bhikṣuṇīsaṅgha was in decline in Magadha and elsewhere, it may not have been an attractive proposition, even to a committed, *upāsakī* to become a nun.

We have at least one example in which a male donor consciously adopted a Mahāyāna identity for himself in the latter part of his life, and his family continued to support Buddhism for a long time. We arrive at this conclusion by an analysis of votive inscriptions on the images donated by the family of a person named Gopālahīno. Two images were donated by his two wives and one by himself. In c.

⁶⁹ Davidson 2002: 77; 91-98.

⁷⁰ Gupta 1965: 137, inscription no. 64.

⁷¹ Gupta 1965: 145, inscription no. 107.

⁷² Gupta 1965: 146, inscription no. 116.

⁷³ Banerji-Shastri 1940: 242, inscription no. 20; Gupta 1965: 139, inscription no. 73.

965 CE, the regnal year thirty-two of the Pāla king Rājyapāla (i.e., c.964 CE),⁷⁴ we see his two wives, Vāṭukā⁷⁵ and Gāukā,⁷⁶ donating images of Vasudhārā (nos. 27 & 28) to the Āpanaka Mahāvihāra as their *deyadharmma*.⁷⁷ Given the fame of Vasudhārā as a bestower of wealth, it was natural that she attracted the patronage of housewives. In the dedicatory inscriptions on the images donated by them, their husband Gopālahīno was simply referred to by his name. In the eleventh century, thirty-five years after the donations by his wives, Gopālahīno donated an image of the Buddha in Vajraparyankāsana (no. 38).⁷⁸ This time, Gopālahīno flaunted his Mahāyāna identity by recording himself as *paramopāsaka* Gopālahīno.⁷⁹ Buddhism was not yet on the wane, and despite a general brahmanical ascendancy in early medieval Magadha, it held its turf and attracted sustained patronage from committed lay followers.

At Kurkihar, this century witnessed an important development which had significant sectarian implications: the beginning of the cult of the Crowned Buddha, which lasted into the twelfth century. We will explore the socio-religious dimensions of votive inscriptions on the images of the Crowned Buddha in a separate section.

A summary of the segments of society which donated, and the types and numbers of images donated, is presented in the following table.

⁷⁴Both P.L. Gupta and Adris Banerji-Sastri have proposed c.935 CE as the date of these inscriptions. We have followed the revised chronology of the Pāla dynasty given by Ronald Davidson (2002: 52).

⁷⁵Banerji-Shastri 1940: 248, inscription no. 58; Gupta 1965: 150, inscription no. 134.

⁷⁶Banerji-Shastri 1940: 248, inscription no. 59; Gupta 1965: 150, inscription no. 135. The sculptor – Sopālahorā – was the same person in both examples.

⁷⁷It has been rightly pointed out that these two inscriptions display the prevalence of polygamy in society. They also attest to the fact that women had the right to make religious donations and visit the Buddhist *vihāras* (Sharma 2004: 47).

⁷⁸Banerji-Shastri 1940: 249-50, inscription no. 83; Gupta 1965: 130-131, inscription no. 25.

⁷⁹Banerji-Shastri 1940: 249-50, inscription no. 83; Gupta 1965: 130-131, inscription no. 25.

Table 2a

Cultic identity of the image	Monk	Male Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Female Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Male donor without expressed Buddhist affiliation	Female donor without expressed Buddhist affiliation	Unknown donors	Total
Buddha in BSM	1+1(?)						2
Crowned Buddha	2						2
Tārā	2		2			3	7
Avalokiteśvara					1		1
Vasudhārā					2		2
Parṇaśavarī						1	1
Group of deities on pedestal: Hārīti, etc.						1	1
Broken Buddhist images	3	1(?)					4
Umā-maheśvara					1		1
Total	9	1	2		4	5	21

Donation of inscribed sculptures at Kurkihar: the eleventh century CE pattern

An analysis of eleventh century votive inscriptions on sculptures offers some interesting inferences.

Table 3: Eleventh century votive inscriptions on sculptures

No.	Cultic identity of the image	Donor(s)	Socio-religious background of donor(s)	Place(s) where donor(s) came from	Expressed motive behind donation (as recorded in the inscription)
36	Standing Buddha in Abhayamudrā	Bhikṣu Amṛtavarma	Monk	Village near Kāñci	None expressed
37	Buddha in Bhūmiśarśa mudrā	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned ⁸⁰
38	Buddha in Vajraparyankāsana	<i>paramopāsaka</i> Gopāla – Hīno	Male Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Not mentioned	None expressed

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No.	Cultic identity of the image	Donor(s)	Socio-religious background of donor(s)	Place(s) where donor(s) came from	Expressed motive behind donation (as recorded in the inscription)
39	Crowned Buddha	Tiku	Son of Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Not mentioned	None expressed
40	Crowned Buddha	Yekhoḱā, wife of Mahattama Dūlapa	Wife of Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Not mentioned	None expressed
41	Crowned Buddha	Utimāraka, son of Mahattama Dūlapa	Son of Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Not mentioned	None expressed
42	Crowned Buddha	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Only <i>dhāraṇī</i> mantra engraved
43	Crowned Buddha	Pule	Male donor w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation	Not mentioned	None expressed
44	Avalokiteśvara	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned ⁸¹
45	Avalokiteśvara	Gari	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	None expressed
46	Avalokiteśvara	<i>upāsakī</i> Duva-jha	Female Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Not mentioned	None expressed
47	Lokaṇātha	Sthavira Mañjusri-varmana	Monk	Kāncī	None expressed
48	Siddhaikavīra	Nānokara	Female/ male Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Not mentioned	None expressed
49	Manjuśrī Kumārabhūta	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	Not mentioned ⁸²
50	Manjuśrī Kumārabhūta	Jākyā	Probably female donor w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation	Not mentioned	None expressed
51	Manjuśrī Kumārabhūta	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known ⁸³
52	Jambhala	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known ⁸⁴
53	Tārā	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known ⁸⁵
54	Śyāmatārā	Kālitāru	Donor w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation	Not mentioned	Not mentioned ⁸⁶
55	Śyāmatārā	Rājokasa	Donor w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation	Not mentioned	None expressed
56	Śyāmatārā	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known ⁸⁷

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No.	Cultic identity of the image	Donor(s)	Socio-religious background of donor(s)	Place(s) where donor(s) came from	Expressed motive behind donation (as recorded in the inscription)
57	Prajñāpāramitā	Son of Suvarṇakāra Keśava	Male donor w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation; from mercantile/ artisanal background	Not mentioned	None expressed
58	Vasudhārā	Rāno	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	None expressed
59	Sūrya	Padaka, son of Bhaṭa	Male donor w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation	Not mentioned	None expressed
60	Viṣṇu	Subalamati	Donor w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation	Not mentioned	None expressed

In this century, we see an important trend which must have had a negative influence on the fate of Buddhism at Kurkihar: that of decreasing pilgrimage from Kāñcī, which stopped altogether in the twelfth century. In the eleventh century, we see two monks from Kāñcī donating images (nos. 36 & 47), but neither Bhikṣu Amṛtavarmana, ‘born in the village with the name beginning with Akkila, famous as the chief treasure of Avadāta Nāga in the country of Kāñcī;’⁸⁸ nor Sthavira Mañjuśrīvarmana, who donated an image of Lokanātha,⁸⁹ recorded the motives behind their donations.

In the eleventh century, we see diminishing participation by women in the donation of images. We do not find a single example in which the donor has clearly stated that she is a woman. On the basis of their names, it may be as-

⁸⁰Inscription on this image: three indistinct letters, so little analysis possible.

⁸¹Inscription on this image: four indistinct letters, so little analysis possible.

⁸²Inscription on this image: 4 lines containing 12 indistinct letter, so little analysis possible.

⁸³Inscription on the image: 5 indistinct letters, so little analysis possible.

⁸⁴Inscription on the image: 2 indistinct letters, so little analysis possible.

⁸⁵Inscription on the image: fragmented, just recording that it was *deyadharmma* of *** (name missing).

⁸⁶Just the name of the donor is recorded.

⁸⁷Inscription on the image: 2 indistinct letters, so little analysis possible.

⁸⁸Banerji-Shastri 1940: 239, inscription no. 2; Gupta 1965: 127, inscription no. 6.

⁸⁹Banerji-Shastri 1940: 242, inscription no. 18; Gupta 1965: 140, inscription no. 79.

sumed that Jākhyā, donor of an image of Manjuśrī Kumārabhūta⁹⁰ (no. 50), was probably a woman. But evidence of mercantile/artisanal patronage to this monastery in this century comes from the dedicatory inscription on an image of Prajñāpāramitā (no. 57), recording that the image was the Deyadharmma of the son of Suvarṇakāra Keśava in the thirty-first regnal year of the Pāla king Mahipāla, c.1023 CE.⁹¹ Donors of other eleventh century images have neither provided details on the motives behind their donations nor their social backgrounds; nonetheless, we may reasonably assume that they were from non-monastic and non-aristocratic backgrounds.

In terms of cultic preferences, the Crowned Buddha appears to be the most preferred deity (five images), followed by Tārā (four sculptures, including a sculpture of Śyāmatārā), then Avalokiteśvara and Manjuśrī Kumārabhūta (three sculptures each).

Again, we summarise the segments of society which donated, alongside the type and number of images, in this century, in tabular form.

Table 3a

Cultic identity of the image	Monk	Male Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Female Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Male donor without expressed Buddhist affiliation	Female donor without expressed Buddhist affiliation	Unknown donors	Total
Buddha in Abhayamudrā	1						1
Buddha in BSM						1	1
Buddha in Vajraparyankāsana		1					1
Crowned Buddha		2	1	1		1	5
Avalokiteśvara			1			2	3
Lokanātha	1						1
Siddhaikavira					1(?)		1
Manjuśrī Kumārabhūta					1(?)	2	3
Jambhala						1	1
Tārā						1	
Śyāmatārā				1(?)	1(?)	1	3

Continued on next page

⁹⁰ Gupta 1965: 143, inscription no. 95.

⁹¹ Banerji-Shastri 1940: 245, inscription no. 49; Gupta 1965: 149, inscription no, 133.

Cultic identity of the image	Monk	Male Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Female Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Male donor without expressed Buddhist affiliation	Female donor without expressed Buddhist affiliation	Unknown donors	Total
Prajñāpāramitā				1			1
Vasudhārā				1(?)			1
Sūrya				1			1
Viṣṇu				1			1
Total	2	3	2	4+2(?)=6	1+3(?)=4	9	26

Donation of inscribed sculptures at Kurkihar: the twelfth century pattern

At Kurkihar, the twelfth century heralded some ominous portents, which pointed to the challenges that Buddhism was facing.

Table 4: Twelfth century votive inscriptions

No.	Cultic identity of the image	Donor(s)	Socio-religious background of donor(s)	Place(s) where donor(s) came from	Expressed motive behind donation (as recorded in the inscription)
61	Crowned Buddha	Jayata	Donor w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation	Not mentioned	None expressed
62	Crowned Buddha	Gopālīncaro	Donor w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation	Not mentioned	None expressed
63	Tārā	Rāo Aupanisita	Donor w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation; probably from aristocratic background	Not mentioned	None expressed
64	Tārā	Yekhākāyā(?)	Donor w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation	Not mentioned	None expressed
65	Tārā	Māgo	Donor w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation	Not mentioned	None expressed
66	Hārīti	Nāga	Donor w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation	Not mentioned	None expressed
67	Vasudhārā	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known ⁹²
68	Paṇṣavari	Not known	Not known	Not known	Not known ⁹³

Continued on next page

No.	Cultic identity of the image	Donor(s)	Socio-religious background of donor(s)	Place(s) where donor(s) came from	Expressed motive behind donation (as recorded in the inscription)
69	Umāmaheśvara	Kalāṇḍa	Donor w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation	Not mentioned	None expressed
70	Viṣṇu	Karmakāra Mangane	Donor w/ out expressed Buddhist affiliation	Not mentioned	None expressed

There was a visible decline in the number of inscribed sculptures: only ten examples are available to date, of which two were Brahmanical. The only example of mercantile/artisanal patronage in this century was the donation of the image of Viṣṇu (no. 70) by a blacksmith (Karmakāra) Mangane.⁹⁴ Pilgrimage from Kāñcī stopped altogether. We are unaware of donations by women, although Yekhākāyā, who donated an image of Tārā,⁹⁵ (no. 64) may have been female.

In terms of cultic preference, Tārā seems to have been the preferred deity (three inscribed sculptures), followed by the Crowned Buddha (two inscribed sculptures). Donors did not leave details of their socio-religious backgrounds, although we may assume that they were non-aristocratic and non-monastic.

The following table summarises the overall religious affiliations of donors in this phase.

Table 4a

Cultic identity of the image	Monk	Male Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Female Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Male donor without expressed Buddhist affiliation	Female donor without expressed Buddhist affiliation	Unknown donors	Total
Crowned Buddha				2			2
Tārā				1	2(?)		3
Hārītī				1			1
Vasudhārā						1	1
Parṇaśavarī						1	1
Umāmaheśvara				1			

Continued on next page

⁹² Inscription on the image: just two indistinct letters, so analysis not possible.

⁹³ Inscription on the image: just two indistinct letters, so analysis not possible.

⁹⁴ Banerji-Shastri 1940: 251, inscription no. 32; Gupta 1965: 153, inscription no. 152.

⁹⁵ Gupta 1965: 145, inscription no. 111.

Cultic identity of the image	Monk	Male Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Female Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Male donor without expressed Buddhist affiliation	Female donor without expressed Buddhist affiliation	Unknown donors	Total
Viṣṇu				1			
Total				6	2	2	10

It is apparent that not only monks and nuns, but even male and female donors with expressed Buddhist affiliation, are no longer discernible. At this point, Buddhism as a form of social and religious identity has faded.

In the thirteenth century, we do not find any examples of inscribed sculptures, indicating that the monastery has been in decline.

Votive inscriptions on sculptures of the Crowned Buddha

Before analysing the socio-religious dimensions of votive inscriptions on sculptures of the Crowned Buddha, let us first view the sectarian developments in Buddhism to which the rise of this new imagery was strongly linked. The cult of this deity seems to have started at ‘some point in the tenth century, but its real proliferation in Magadha took place in the twelfth century.’⁹⁶ It has been claimed that ‘development of the cult of Crowned Buddha must in some way have been related with the rise of initiation ceremonies in which monks were crowned.’⁹⁷ Woodward, on the basis of Tibetan Tantric texts, has tried to show that as per the legends in some of these texts, Siddhārtha could become a Manifest Complete Buddha (Abhisambuddha), when he, having failed to attain this status through *samādhi* alone, was given *vastra-abhiṣeka* (garment initiation) and *mukūṭa-abhiṣeka* by Jina Buddhas (Buddhas of all the ten directions), after which he became an Abhisambuddha as Mahāvairocana, the Sambhogakāya.⁹⁸ But ‘it is an event having a significance that goes beyond the life of the historical Buddha – it is an event that occurs in the life of all Buddhas, including the followers of the Tantric way.’⁹⁹ One will largely agree with Woodward that the spread of the image and cult of the Crowned Buddha surely had Tantric connections and a sectarian significance.¹⁰⁰ Its main attraction could have been among the Vajrayāna

⁹⁶Woodward 1990: 19.

⁹⁷Ibid.

⁹⁸Woodward 1990: 20.

⁹⁹Ibid.

¹⁰⁰Woodward 1990: 23.

monks who might have aspired to attain the Abhisambuddha status through the worship of this image, or through undergoing the *mukūṭa-abhiṣeka* ceremony. It may also have simply been a tool for meditation by monks. Whatever the real reason, the earliest known donors of this image at Kurkihar (in the tenth century) – Rāhulavarmana and Prabhākarasiṃha¹⁰¹ (nos. 17 & 18) – were from Kāñcī. Both were probably monks. One wonders if this cult was initiated at Kurkihar by monks from Kāñcī.

If monk donors from Kāñcī were the earliest known donors of images of the Crowned Buddha at Kurkihar, we see some changes in this pattern during the eleventh century in which we do not find a single example of donations of this image by monks. Instead, all inscribed images of this deity, containing information of any kind about the donor, were donated by non-monastic members. Out of the four available examples, at least three were donated by members of a single family over a span of not less than sixteen years. The votive inscription on an image of the Crowned Buddha (no. 39) records that this image was the *deyadharmma* of Tiku, son of *pravara-mahāyāna-anuyāyina paramopāsaka* Dūlapa in the third regnal year (c.1061 CE) of Vīgrahapāladeva, identifiable with the Pāla ruler Vīgrahapāla III.¹⁰²

Here two things must be taken into account: the ‘vernacular’ names of the father and the son; and the proud use of *paramopāsaka* (a great lay follower) of *pravara-mahāyāna* for the father of the donor. The donor son has, notably, not used any such title for himself, and has donated an overt Vajrayāna image. What sort of cultic equation did this represent between Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna?

The cult of the Crowned Buddha seems to have attracted sustained patronage from the family of Dūlapa. In c.1074 CE, we see lady Yekhokā, wife or daughter-in-law of Dūlapa, donating an image of the Crowned Buddha (no. 40).¹⁰³ By this time, Dūlapa’s family seems to have enjoyed upward social mobility, for he was now *mahattama* Dūlapa.¹⁰⁴ In the same year, his other son – Utīmāraka – do-

¹⁰¹ Banerji-Shastri 1940: 248, inscription no. 63; Banerji-Shastri 1940: 243, inscription no. 25; Gupta 1965: 135, inscription no. 50.

¹⁰² Banerji-Shastri 1940: 240, inscription no. 65; Gupta 1965: 131, inscription no. 30. The approximate dates of the Pāla kings given in this paper are in accordance with the table supplied by Davidson (2002: 52), which includes the two newly found Pāla rulers Mahendrapāla and Gopāla (II).

¹⁰³ Gupta 1965: 133, inscription no. 33. The word used in the inscription is Dūlapavadhu; and vadhu can be used in the sense of either wife or daughter-in-law.

¹⁰⁴ Gupta 1965: 133, inscription no. 33; Banerji-Shastri 1940: 240, inscription no. 4.

nated another image of the Crowned Buddha, where he was once again referred to as *mahattama* Dūlapa.¹⁰⁵ The *mahattamas*, identical with the *mahattaras* mentioned in the copper plate inscriptions of early medieval Bengal, represented an upper stratum of peasantry. They were leaders of village society, and enjoyed high social status.¹⁰⁶ To sum up, the cult of the Crowned Buddha received sustained patronage from an upwardly mobile peasant family. The head of this family remained a committed *paramopāsaka* (Mahāyāna lay follower), yet the family saw no problem in being committed worshippers of an overtly Vajrayāna cult.

As far as eleventh and twelfth century dedicatory inscriptions on images of the Crowned Buddha are concerned, there is little useful material for our analysis. An eleventh century dedicatory inscription on the image of this deity (no. 43) simply records the name of the donor – Pule – without providing details on his social background or motive behind the donation, etc.¹⁰⁷ During the twelfth century, two images of the Crowned Buddha were donated by two individuals – Jayata (no. 61)¹⁰⁸ and Gopālīñcaro (no. 62).¹⁰⁹ Neither has provided details of social background or religious expectations. We may assume, however, that donors who have not mentioned such detail are likely of non-aristocratic and non-monastic backgrounds. We have no clear references to donations by monks in this or previous centuries, which is surprising given that the development of this cult was probably related to the rise of initiation ceremonies in which monks were crowned.

Concluding observations

(a) Onomasticism and the nature of Buddhist penetration in society

Let us first analyse the significance of the ‘vernacular’ names of many of the donors. Gregory Schopen, in the context of the significance of the names of the donors at early historical Sāñcī, noted that the degree of imbibement of Buddhist influence by a donor may be analysed through an onomastic analysis of the name of the donor:

¹⁰⁵ Gupta 1965: 133, inscription no. 34.

¹⁰⁶ Sayantani Pal 2012: 281.

¹⁰⁷ Gupta 1965: 134, inscription no. 45.

¹⁰⁸ Gupta 1965: 134, inscription no. 48.

¹⁰⁹ Gupta 1965: 136, inscription no. 58; Banerji-Shastri 1940: 249, inscription no. 67.

The appearance of Arabic names in what has been a Persian onomasticon in medieval Iran has been used to a good effect to track the spread and penetration of Islam there; like ‘onomastic change’, the appearance of Christian names in early Byzantine Egypt has been used to determine the degree and depth of ‘conversion’ to Christianity that was occurring at that time. Though they remain to be systematically pursued, many of the same methods may hold considerable promise for determining something about the local history and the degree of penetration of Buddhism in various part of early India.¹¹⁰

Following this methodology, he calculated the number and percentage of distinct Buddhist names among the donors whose names are inscribed in the donative inscriptions at Sāñcī Stūpa 2, to arrive at the conclusion that:

The number of distinctly Buddhist names – only about one fifth of the total at Sāñcī Stūpa 2 – is comparatively small and may indicate that the Buddhist presence in central India at the time of these records was neither old nor extensively rooted, although it must have already been a presence for at least a generation. Such a study may also show that a significant number of individuals might have made donations to Buddhist establishments without, however, ever being ‘Buddhist’ to the degree that they had been given or took Buddhist names: Buddhism, in other words, may never have been a significant component of these individuals’ self-identity.¹¹¹

This approach may not be fully applicable to the names of donors at Kurkihar, where, barring the names of the monks and nuns, practically no donor had a ‘Buddhist’ name, although many had donated images for a considerable period of time. Many *upāsakīs* and *paramopāsakas* also did not have ‘Buddhist’ names. However, Mahāyāna Buddhism was very much part of the self-identity of many donors with overtly vernacular names: *upāsakī* Gopāli-Sāuka, *upāsakī* Duvajha (tenth and eleventh century), *pravara-mahāyāna-yāyinaḥ* – Tiku and *paramopāsaka* Dūlapa (eleventh century), etc. *pravara-mahāyāna-anuyāyina paramopāsaka* Dūlapa himself did not take a Buddhist name nor did he give one to his son. Clearly, the issue is more complex than what a purely onomastic analysis may suggest.

¹¹⁰Schopen 2010: 384.

¹¹¹Ibid.

**(b) Donation of Buddhist images at Kurkihar:
dominated by monks and nuns?**

Schopen's recent research has highlighted the role of Buddhist monks as donors of images. Per his analysis, monks (including nuns) remained the single largest group of donors in the early historic period, their role increasing over time.¹¹² His analysis of eighty Mahāyāna inscriptions yielded similar results. Amongst these inscriptions, donors were monks or nuns (mostly the former) in over 70 percent of the cases.¹¹³ This led him to conclude that the Mahāyāna was a monk-dominated movement and that it continued to be so until the thirteenth century.¹¹⁴

Our analysis of dedicatory inscriptions on sculptures of Kurkihar offers a different picture, as summarised in the following table.

Table 5: Century-wise breakdown in patterns of donation at Kurkihar by different social groups

Cultic identity of the image	Monk	Nun	Male Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Female Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Male donor without expressed Buddhist affiliation	Female donor without expressed Buddhist affiliation	Unknown donors	Total
Ninth	6	1	0	1	5	2	1	15
Tenth	9	0	1	2	0	4	5	21
Eleventh	2	0	3	2	6	4	9	26
Twelfth	0	0	0	0	6	2	2	10
Total	17	1	4	5	17	12	17	72
Overall percentage	23.6	1.3	5.5	6.9	23.6	16.6	23.6	100

As indicated in the table above, monks were not the dominant donors. In each century, male and female donors without any expressed Buddhist affiliation comprised the largest segment of donors. As far as nuns were concerned, we see their total disappearance after the ninth century. Donations from male Mahāyāna lay worshippers (*paramopāsaka* or *mahāyāna-anuyāyina* donors) fluctuated (ranging from zero percent in the ninth and twelfth centuries to 4.7 percent and 11.5 percent in the tenth and eleventh centuries, respectively). The proportion of fe-

¹¹²Schopen 2010a: 31.

¹¹³Ibid.

¹¹⁴Ibid.

male Mahāyāna lay worshippers (*paramopāsikā* or *upāsakī* donors) was similar (6.6 percent in the ninth century, then 9.5 percent in the tenth, 7.6 percent in the eleventh and zero in the twelfth centuries).

The twelfth century held some ominous portents for Buddhism at this site. Not to speak of monks and nuns, we do not even find donations by *paramopāsakas* or *paramopāsikā/upāsakī*. Mahāyāna Buddhism as a social and cultic identity was gradually fading.

**(c) The practice of Buddhism at Kurkihar:
futuristic and dominated by the cult of the cosmic Buddhas?**

Jacob Kinnard, on the basis of the predominance of the images of the Buddha in Bhūmisparśamudrā and Dharmacakrapravartanamudrā, and the paucity of the images of the Pañcatathāgatas, in general, and Akṣobhya, in particular, in early Pāla period Magadha, has noted that Buddhists did not emphasise the future, coming of Maitreya. Nor did they emphasise the transcendent cosmic present of the pure lands occupied by Akṣobhya and other Pañcatathāgatas.¹¹⁵ They remained focused on the cult of the Buddha in Bhūmisparśamudrā, which signified the Enlightenment of the Buddha and represented a continuation of Mahāyāna. All this forced him to conclude that Mahāyāna, not Vajrayāna, was the most commonly practised form of Buddhism in Magadha during the early Pāla period.¹¹⁶

If the Kurkihar pattern is contrasted with his generalisation, we get some interesting inferences. We see a progressive decrease in the number of inscribed images of the Buddha in Bhūmisparśamudrā (seven in the ninth century, two in the tenth, one in the eleventh and none in the twelfth) and Dharmacakrapravartanamudrā (one in the ninth century and none subsequently). This visible decline in the donation of such images at Kurkihar did not result in a corresponding increase in the donation of images of the Pañcatathāgatas and Maitreya. To date, we have not found a single inscribed image of any of the Pañcatathāgatas or Maitreya at Kurkihar. While images of the Crowned Buddha could have been regarded as a manifestation of Mahāvairocana, this cult could never become the predominant cult at Kurkihar (two inscribed images in the tenth century, five in the eleventh and two in the twelfth), despite its increasing social base. Most probably initiated by monks in the tenth century, this cult witnessed the diversification

¹¹⁵Kinnard 1996: 292-294.

¹¹⁶Kinnard 1996: 297.

of donors in subsequent centuries. Even in the eleventh century, which witnessed the highest number of donations of inscribed images of the Crowned Buddha, traditional Mahāyāna deities (Buddha in Abhayamudrā, Buddha in Bhūmisparśamudrā, Buddha in Vajraparyankāsana, Tārā, etc.) remained dominant.¹¹⁷ Nor do we have donations of ferocious Vajrayāna deities (Trailokyavijaya, Aparājita, Heruka, etc.) or of deities associated with extreme aspects of Vajrayāna (Yab-yum deities, etc.). What we see is the continued donation of some of the instrumental deities;¹¹⁸ i.e., deities worshipped for fulfilling some *laukika* (worldly) needs – Siddhaikavīra, Vāgīśvara, Parṇasabar, Vasudhārā, Hārīti – by a cross section of society for most of the period under study.

Finally, the total absence of inscribed sculptures of Maitreya makes us question the identification of Kurkihar with the Kukkuṭapādagirivihāra, where the Buddha was supposed to reappear as Maitreya and take over charge of the Dharma from Mahākāśyapa. This site remained a great pilgrimage centre during the Pāla period, but this was probably not due to any supposed identification with the Kukkuṭapādagirivihāra.

(d) Decline of Buddhism at Kurkihar

The decline of Buddhism in Magadha has been a debatable issue: explanations range from a protracted conflict with, and persecution by, Brahmanism (Verardi 2011) to its slow metamorphosis after the Turkic destruction of its monasteries (Prasad, et al 2009; Prasad 2013). Explanations concerned with the functional aspects of decline have also been provided: decline of the order of nuns, decreasing participation by women, dwindling mercantile patronage, thus rendering it entirely dependent on royal patronage (Davidson 2002). Recently, it has also been proposed that one of the fundamental factors in this decline was a near total lack of support of Buddhism by the peasantry (Sarao 2012: 208).

One of the most dominant explanations has been provided by N.N. Bhat-tacharya. Let me quote him fully:

If Buddhism declined after Pala period... what was the real condition of Buddhism? Was it not a bundle of popular cults and superstitions,

¹¹⁷ A similar pattern has been observed during a village-to-village archaeological survey in the ten kilometre radius of the Nālanda Mahāvihāra (Prasad 2010c; 2011: 81-83; 2013a; 2014).

¹¹⁸ We have borrowed the term from Umakant Mishra (2011: 149).

which could be called in any name? True there were few monasteries, patronised by kings and landlords and also monkish culture proclaiming the world as void entity. But the Buddhist monks were parasites living on the financial support of kings and landlords, and as soon as this financial support was withdrawn, monks of the great monasteries at once turned into beggars for whom none was to shed tears. *Had Buddhism in its later forms been an organised religion with followers among the people it could not perish all of a sudden.* (Bhattacharya 1987: 15) (emphasis added)

Our analysis of dedicatory inscriptions on the sculptures of Kurkihar offers an altogether different picture. We have seen that we do not find a single donation of an inscribed sculpture to Kurkihar by any donor from a royal background. We also do not see donations by members of the royal bureaucracy. We have seen that the monastic establishment at Kurkihar depended solely on patronage provided by local and non-local pilgrims, peasants, merchants/artisans, women from not distinctive families, women from the rural aristocracy, and monks and nuns. It was certainly an organised religion, drawing patronage from diverse sections of society. A crisis seems to have set in only in the twelfth century in terms of social bases of patronage. Before we conclude, one more thing may be added. We have seen that both male and female Mahāyāna lay followers always formed a small percentage of donors. Among persons with expressed Buddhist identities, monks formed the highest contingent. Generally male and female donors without any expressed Buddhist affiliation formed the highest percentage in every century under discussion. Buddhism at Kurkihar was considerably dependent on male and female donors without any expressed Buddhist affiliation. This was probably but natural in the early medieval phase, when Brahmanical cults were experiencing sustained expansion throughout Magadha. Yet, among all Buddhist religious centres of Magadha, Kurkihar consistently took the most active part in attempting a subordinate integration of Brahmanical cults to Buddhism by accepting inscribed Brahmanical sculptures from persons without any expressed Buddhist affiliation. This risky adventurism was bound to hasten a gradual assimilation of Buddhism into Brahmanism after the Turkic destruction of its monastic centres.¹¹⁹

¹¹⁹A fuller analysis of this process has been attempted in Prasad 2013. Also see Prasad et al. 2009.

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Orality, Memory, and Spiritual Practice: Outstanding Female Thai Buddhists in the Early 20th Century¹

Martin Seeger

Through a study of a number of biographies of outstanding female Thai Buddhists in the period between 1880 and 1950, I want to investigate the access of Thai women to Buddhist teachings and practice. Here I will give particular attention to the religious life and work of Khunying Yai Damrongthammasan, who appears to have produced one of the first significant Buddhist treatises ever authored by a Thai woman. In addition, I will also examine how her major teacher Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn Jaroen Nāṇavaro conveyed and reflected on Buddhist knowledge. In order to add further evidence to the major arguments I intend to develop in this article, I will also investigate, albeit only briefly, or refer to relevant aspects of the

¹This paper is the result of a development of ideas presented during a talk I gave at the University of Oslo as part of The Oslo Buddhist Studies Forum on 1 April 2014. I would like to thank Khun Naris Charaschanyawong, who has sent me a number of sources relevant for this article. In addition, he has given valuable comments on previous drafts of this paper and was my co-researcher on the research I have done on Khunying Yai Damrongthammasan (Seeger and Naris, 2556a/b). I also would very much like to thank Bhikkhu Anālayo, Justin McDaniel, Caroline Starkey, Victor King and Adcharawan Seeger for their comments on and help with this paper. I am also very grateful to Khun Prasop Wisetsiri for his most generous support in the course of this research project. The translations from Thai are my own unless stated otherwise. I wish to thank The British Academy for a grant that allowed me to do research on the life of Khunying Yai Damrongthammasan and the authorship of the text *Dhammānudhammapaṭṭipatti*. I also wish to thank the School of Languages, Cultures and Societies (LCS), University of Leeds, for providing me with a grant that enabled me to conduct additional interviews in Thailand. I have used my own standardized phoneticization of Thai script except in cases where the author's or person's name mentioned in this paper have an established transliteration. Throughout this paper, Thai words are differentiated from Pali words by underlining (Pali words are italicized; Thai words are italicized and underlined).

religious life of a number of female Buddhist practitioners of the same time period, many of whom did not come from a privileged social stratum as Khunyng Yai did; she belonged to the nobility. The case studies will allow me to examine the significance of orality and memory for female Buddhist practice and education in early 20th century Thai Buddhism.

*“Better than a thousand useless verses
is one useful verse,
hearing which one attains peace.
Better than reciting a hundred meaningless verses
is the reciting of one verse of Dhamma,
hearing which one attains peace.”*²

Introduction

In her study of the “History of Women’s Education and Activism in Thailand”, Costa argues that “... as women were barred from the monkhood by virtue of their sex, they were denied learning at the *wat* [monastery] and, as a result, prohibited access to an enormous body of knowledge considered to be culturally and socially valuable.”³ She also writes that “In 1915, the government initiated an [...] education plan [that] attempted to give girls more educational opportunities. But prevailing cultural attitudes slowed such advancement for a number of reasons. First, the general public still believed that women should care for the home and family and that book learning was unsuitable for girls. Second, the majority of schools were located in provincial monasteries, and it was thought indecorous for women to attend school in these principally male religious spaces.”⁴ Similarly, Darunee Tantiwiramanond argues that “The most important consequence of banning women from the order, however, was to deprive women of literacy. Prior to the early 20th century, literacy was imparted solely in Buddhist monasteries.

² *Dhammapada*; verse 101 and 102, Acharya Buddharakkhita (transl.), 1985, p. 39.

³ Costa, 1997, [online resource]; see also Barmé, 2002, pp. 21-22. Costa notes however that “It is clear that elite women *did* receive formal education in the palace, though subjects were gender specific.” (Costa, 1997, [online resource]).

⁴ Scholars have stated that only around 1921, when the Thai state made education compulsory for both genders, did the number of literate women begin to increase significantly. See e.g. Barmé, 2002, p. 135. Relying on Vella (1978), Keyes writes that “between 1921 and 1925 the percentage of female students throughout the country jumped from seven to thirty-eight” (Keyes, 1991, p. 96). See also footnote 13.

Female education was suppressed by religious mechanism: physical contact between the lay female and (male) monks was considered sinful. Consequently, women were barred from knowledge...⁵ The seven case studies examined in this article will show that both Darunee's and Costa's statements appear to be too simplistic with regard to women's access to (text-based) knowledge, and the roles of women in Thai Buddhism; they certainly require qualification.⁶ As I will show, a shortcoming of Darunee's and Costa's statements is that they overlook the importance of orality and memory in Buddhist learning environments, at the very least when it comes to the transmission of Buddhist knowledge. My case studies will not only show that women had access to (sometimes high-ranking) monk teachers who taught them; it will also suggest that in the study of Buddhist teaching, literacy did not often play a decisive role in the pedagogical relationships between a Buddhist master and his students, and this applies to both male and female students.

In Thailand, there has been a strong oral/aural culture for a long time, as monks have committed large amounts of Pali texts to memory, be it for giving blessings, as a part of their meditation practice, or as part of their preparation for Pali language exams. In fact, until 1912 Pali language translation examinations were held entirely in oral form; only then was the written examination for Pali language gradually introduced.⁷ It has been argued that during the reign of Rama IV (1851-1868), the acquisition of knowledge through reading started to become increasingly important.⁸ Also, with the arrival of print technology and the proliferation of printed books in Thailand during the 19th century, oral transmission of knowledge certainly decreased in importance.⁹ Nonetheless, it seems that the increasing availability of printed texts and the arrival of a modern educational system have not eclipsed the importance of orality and memory.

Thus, Thai historian Nidhi Eosewong believes that "it is possible that the majority of Thai people are still in a culture of listening rather than of reading and the very reason why Thai people read little is because we are not familiar with

⁵Darunee Tantiwiranond, 1997, p. 172.

⁶Even though Darunee alludes to *maechis* (see below) in this context, she does not mention their educational opportunities here, but rather discusses the "inferiority" and "the derogatory status of ... *mae chi*" (Darunee Tantiwiranond, 1997, pp. 172-173).

⁷Ministry of Education (publisher), 2527 [1984], p. 44. For an interesting study on the importance of orality and memory in northern Thai Buddhism see Veidlinger, 2006.

⁸Saichol Satayanurak, 2546 [2003], p. 252.

⁹See Pathom Takhananan, 2551 [2008], p. 14.

this form of receiving information.”¹⁰ He argues that a considerable amount of old (*boran*) Thai literature was to be read out so that people could listen to it. Even nowadays, he observes, Thai bestsellers still have an oral character: “[authors] for example create texts that are like a conversation with the reader.”¹¹ Thai scholar Chetana Nagavajara also underscores the importance of orality and memory in traditional textual practices when he argues that “texts were written down in an effort to safeguard them against oblivion and at the same time to constitute a kind of literary trust for the benefit of the general public and posterity. But the quest for permanency does not preclude dissemination through the oral tradition. Those who could read continued to commit the fruits of their reading to memory, ...” He recalls how his grandmother, “who was among a small number of women in those days who could read and write, ... [g]rowing up in the oral tradition... [n]aturally, ... was endowed with an extraordinary memory (which was common to her contemporaries) and possessed a large repertoire of literary works that she could recite. It was perfectly natural for her to recite... for a few hours.”¹²

Through a study of a number of biographies of female Thai Buddhists and the teaching approaches of one of the most eminent Thai monks in the period between 1880 and 1950, I want to make a contribution to the study of Thailand’s educational history by investigating these women’s access to Buddhist teachings and practice. Thus, in my study of the women’s life stories and, if available, texts they have authored, I will focus on how they conceived knowledge and their acquisition of it. It must be emphasized, though, that my article will deal neither with formal public education¹³ nor with formal monastic education in Thai history; nor will I directly engage with the above-mentioned arguments regarding

¹⁰Nidhi Eoseewong, 2549 [2006], p. 74.

¹¹Nidhi Eoseewong, 2549 [2006], p. 74.

¹²Chetana Nagavajara, 1994, p. 33.

¹³It has been argued that before the introduction of compulsory education in Thailand (until 1939 known as Siam) in 1921 there were significant differences in the education of men and of women. Terwiel for example writes that “Since prior to the 1930s girls were not allowed to learn in the monastery schools, only a limited number of privileged women could read and write.” (Terwiel, 2012, p. 104) Similarly, Keyes has argued that “Some women in premodern urban settings did become literate, but rural women were, almost without exception, illiterate until after the compulsory primary education was instituted.” (Keyes, 1991, p. 123) Terwiel also states that “it can be shown that traditional monastic education was remarkably effective. During the first half of the nineteenth century, when the traditional system was still operative, European and American residents remarked on the large proportion of adult Thai males who could read and write, Not [sic] only government officials and princes possessed these skills, but also ordinary workmen, farmers, and fishermen.” (Terwiel, 2012, p. 106).

gendered differences in the acquisition of reading and writing skills. I will, however, demonstrate and investigate the importance and persistence of orality and memorization in Buddhist learning environments before and after compulsory education was introduced in 1921. I will argue that the women in my study have achieved a level of knowledge that was perceived to be on par with that of men. This type of knowledge has been deemed as the most valuable and desirable type of knowledge. My case studies will help to demonstrate that memorisation and recitation have been regarded as an integral and important part of the spiritual training of both monks and female monastic practitioners for a long time in Thai history.

In the first part of this article I will discuss in some detail how Khunying Yai Damrongthammasan (1886-1944) and her major teacher Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn Jaroen Ñāṇavaro (1872-1951) acquired, conveyed and reflected on knowledge. A study of their educational ideas and practices is particularly revealing for a variety of reasons. First of all, Khunying Yai appears to have produced one of the first significant Buddhist treatises ever authored by a Thai woman. Secondly, both have been praised for their advanced knowledge of Buddhist teaching and the way they have conveyed it. Thirdly, a study of the gendered aspects of this student- teacher relationship is insightful and of significant interest for the study of the complex roles of women in (Thai) Buddhism more generally. The fact that we have relevant sources concerning their lives encourages us to examine and reflect on them in detail.

In order to strengthen my major arguments I will also examine, albeit only briefly, or refer to the religious life of a number of other female Buddhist practitioners of the same time period, many of whom did not come from a privileged social stratum as Khunying Yai did; she belonged to the nobility. Some women were from socially privileged classes whereas others were from rather poor families, so at the moment it is not clear how far these case studies and the network of female practitioners I am investigating are representative of the situation of a larger number of female practitioners of that time. At the very least these case studies give some interesting insights into these women's study of the *Dhamma* (the teachings of the Buddha) and the support they have received. Some women in my study actually knew each other and seem to have belonged to a network of female practitioners; others were probably only loosely connected to this network; sometimes it is however not entirely clear if these women met each other or knew of each other (in some cases this seems rather unlikely); but they were all at

least contemporaries. These investigations will allow me to reflect on the significance of orality and memory for female Buddhist practice in early 20th century Thai Buddhism.

My case studies will also demonstrate in what ways women had access to what they deemed to be (the most) valuable knowledge, despite the fact that they were illiterate. In fact, in the following investigation I will also show that for many of these women literacy did not play an important, if any, role in their quest for knowledge. The women of my study received their knowledge in or near monasteries, often with the support of or directly from monks. Thus, while adding more nuances to the educational history of Thailand, my study will also offer insights into how knowledge and education were conceptualised before modern concepts of education became prevalent in Thailand. It will also add to our understanding of gender relations within Thai Buddhism, in particular between monks and women, both *maechis* (ordained women who shave their hair, wear white robes and keep the Eight or Ten Precepts) and lay-women (*upāsikā*).

Case Study 1: Khunying Yai Damrongthammasan

Dhammānudhammapaṭṭipatti is the title of a collection of five dialogical texts, which were first published anonymously and separately between 1932 and 1934.¹⁴ These five texts, which are still being reprinted and widely disseminated either together or as single texts, have widely been praised as outstanding and valuable pieces of Thai Buddhist literature. This is thanks to the profundity and obvious extraordinary scholarly competence with which numerous difficult Pali canonical teachings have been explained in these texts. The original editions of these five texts have been published without naming an author. Moreover, they exhibit an unusually advanced understanding of the *Dhamma* of its author. These two factors combined must have lent to the authorship of these texts being attributed to the ‘Father of the Thai Forest Tradition’, Luang Pu Man Bhūridatto (1870-1949). This happened probably some 20 years ago, if not earlier, but it is not clear as to how exactly this attribution took place. Luang Pu Man certainly is one of Thailand’s most eminent and famous monks and often referred to as a “national saint”, many people believing that he has achieved full awakening. This attribution of au-

¹⁴[no author mentioned], 2475a [1932a]; [no author mentioned], 2475b [1932b]; [no author mentioned], 2476a [1933a]; [no author mentioned], 2476b [1933b]; [no author mentioned], 2477 [1934]. These texts have also been published as a collection with the title “Achieving Awakening within Seven Days” (*jetwanbanlutham*), Praphot Setthakanon (ed.), [no date].

thorship happened despite the fact that Luang Pu Man never claimed to have written these texts. In fact, the content and style of the *Dhammānudhammapaṭipatti* texts together with the major biographies of Luang Pu Man clearly show that it is extremely unlikely that he was involved in the production of these texts.

In recent research, together with my Thai co-researcher Naris Charaschanya-wong, I have been able to find evidence that conclusively shows that the real author of these texts is Khunying Yai Damrongthammasan.¹⁵ Thus, Khunying Yai can be regarded as one of, if not the first, female author of a significant Buddhist treatise in Thai Buddhist history. These facts make it compelling to study her texts and biography in more depth in order to explore how she acquired her enormously detailed and comprehensive knowledge, and how she conceptualised knowledge.

Unfortunately, despite her extraordinary life, her high social status and closeness to a number of high-ranking monks, there is a scarcity of biographical sources on her. One reason for this may be her humility; people who knew her personally consistently described Khunying Yai as a very humble person (*thomtua*).¹⁶ Her humility is also likely to be a reason why she published her major texts anonymously. The biographical data we have on her life make consistently clear that Khunying Yai was not interested in promoting herself, despite the high respect many people had for her deep understanding of Buddhist doctrine and what was perceived to be highly developed Buddhist practice. At the moment, we are in the process of reconstructing her fascinating and inspiring life story, and there are still numerous significant gaps in what we know about her life. In the following I will only focus on aspects of her biography that are related to education.¹⁷

Khunying Yai was born into the nobility and received private education at home. She belonged to one of the richest families in Thailand. She had been interested in the study of Buddhist teachings since a very early age (see below). She was married to a famous judge, Phra Ya Damrongthammasan (Sang Wisetsiri),

¹⁵See Seeger and Naris, 2556a [2013a] and 2556b [2013b]; Seeger, [in press]; see also Disanayake, 2013 [online resource].

¹⁶Here it should also be noted that authorship questions in Thai Buddhism are often complex. Many Buddhist texts have emerged with the (partly significant) help or input of monks, *maechis* or laypeople; but despite this, often the text is then ascribed to a single teacher (who may not have had a significant, if any, impact on the final text version) or, as in the case of Khunying Yai's texts, is published anonymously (see e.g. McDaniel, 2008, p. 180; Seeger, [in press]).

¹⁷At the moment, together with Khun Naris I am working on a book with the title "*pucchā-vissajjanā wa duai kan patibat tham*" (*pucchā-vissajjanā on the practice of Dhamma*) that will contain all her texts and a detailed and comprehensive biography of her.

who was a noble and a devout Buddhist too. From a young age she suffered from a severe form of diabetes. As a consequence of this she must have been in a lot of physical pain, and increasingly so towards the end of her life. In 1922 together with her husband she started to build the monastery Wat Thammikaram in the southern province of Prajuabkhirikhan. The construction of this monastery was supported by the King of Siam, Rama VI (r. 1910-1925), who even visited the construction site. During the last ten years of her life she was living in the white robes of a *maechi*. After the death of her husband in 1940, she spent most of her time practising Buddhist meditation at Wat Thammikaram, which has become one of the most important temples in the whole province. Her cremated remains together with those of her husband are buried in this monastery underneath the major Buddha figure in the ordination hall (*uposathāgāra*).¹⁸

Much of what we know about her knowledge acquisition and Buddhist practice comes from the recollections of the abbot of Wat Sattanartpariwat in Ratburi, Phra Thepsumethi (Yuak Cattamalo, 1914-2002), who as a young monk listened to Khunying Yai's explanations of Buddhist teachings. He reported: "She had an excellent memory and was able to recollect the content of long-ago discussions with a high degree of precision."¹⁹ According to Phra Thepsumethi, from a young age she was able to recite all the 423 verses of the canonical book *Dhammapada*. In addition she was also able to memorise a large number of *Dhamma* principles/teachings (*laktham*). Based on her unusually advanced knowledge Khunying Yai was teaching monks. Even highly educated monks were in awe of Khunying Yai's vast knowledge and precise understanding of Buddhist teaching. At a very early age she herself was a student of the still highly revered monk Somdet Phra Wanarat (Thap Buddhasiri, 1806-1891)²⁰ of the prestigious Bangkok temple Wat Somanaswihara. Later she then became a student of another highly revered and high ranking monk: Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn, abbot of the Bangkok monastery Wat Thepsirin (see below). Whilst still living in Bangkok, in the tallest building in Siam at the time (owned by her family), she is reported to have been able to develop a highly concentrated state of mind of one-pointedness (*ekaggatā*) and then able to recollect former life times. But according to Phra

¹⁸ Khunying Yai's husband, Phra Ya Damrongthammasan (Sang Wisetsiri), was a student of Pali language; he was ordained as a monk for a short period of time and later pursued a career as a judge. He generously supported the famous Bangkok monastery Wat Mahadhatu as well.

¹⁹ In: Somphong Suthinsak, 2537 [1994], p. 95.

²⁰ As Khunying Yai was born in 1886, she must have been extremely young when she became a student of Somdet Phra Wanarat Thap.

Thepsumethi's account she was not only capable of remembering her own former lives but could also recollect (*huanraluek*) the lives of some relatives. Phra Thepsumethi writes that these types of knowledge are comparable to *pubbenivāsānussati-ñāṇa* (recollection of one's former life times) and *dibbacakkhu* (divine eye). He also seems to believe that Khunying Yai may have achieved transcendental states of mind.²¹ This is of course highly reminiscent of the Buddha's own biography: in the night he found awakening the Buddha went through these stages of insight into the workings of *kamma* before he finally gained complete liberation (*vimutti*). Thus, Khunying Yai's life has been understood to integrate successfully the theoretical study of Buddhist doctrine (*pariyatti*), Buddhist practice (*paṭipatti*) and, possibly, "penetration" (*paṭivedha*).

When compared to her own biography, the *Dhammānudhammapaṭipatti* texts seem to contain several clues to key events in her own life and concerns. Thus, even though not certain, but at least possible, the themes of *viveka* (seclusion) and renunciation that recur throughout these texts seem to correspond to key events in her own life, such as when her adopted son²² was starting school, which allowed her to become a *maechi*.

Her texts contain numerous highly interesting features that deserve much more detailed study. One of the most important features for the purpose of this article is the many lists that can be found throughout Khunying Yai's texts, such as the 10 *saṃyojanas* (the fetters that bind human beings to rebirth), the 4 *vesārajjas* (types of self-confidence), the 10 *balas* (types of power) or the 15 *carāṇas* (practices/conducts). There are also numerous quotations in Pali with their translations given in Thai. The way that these lists and quotations are embedded in these dialogues makes clear that they had been learned by heart by the people involved in these dialogues²³ and their function was to trigger discussions and explanations. The content of the texts makes it clear that the author must have had a close familiarity with Abhidhammic teachings; in fact the popular 10/11th century Abhidhamma compendium *Abhidhammatthasaṃgaha* is referred to and seems to have been an important source text for Khunying Yai's own work.²⁴ Also,

²¹ Somphong Suthinsak, 2537 [1994], p. 95.

²² Khun Prasop Wisetsiri was the son of Phra Ya Damrongthammasan with another wife, but Khunying Yai brought him up since birth.

²³ As I argue elsewhere, it is not clear how far, if at all, these conversations may have actually taken place or are imaginary (Seeger, [in press]).

²⁴ At that time this influential Pali text *Abhidhammatthasaṃgaha* had already been available in a Thai translation.

another prominent feature of Khunying Yai's texts is the comparison between different *Dhammas*. Often *Dhamma* teachings are explained by showing the differences from seemingly similar teachings (*tangkan*). The structure of Khunying Yai's texts is also quite obviously similar to the textual structure of the Pali canonical *suttas*, incorporating numerous repetitions and embedding *Dhamma* lists in a narrative. In addition, there are numerous references to orality. Thus, rather than being read, a book is "listened to" (*fangnangsue*) and the study of *Dhamma* teachings is often described with the word *fang* (to listen) rather than with "to read" or "look at". The word "listen" (*fang*) is mentioned more than 80 times in the *Dhammānudhammapaṭipatti* texts,²⁵ often in phrases such as "to listen to" "an explanation", "a speech", "teaching", "sermon" (*thet*), specific *suttas* or "verses from the Buddha" (*tamkathaphraphutthaphasit*), the *Dhamma* or "*Dhamma* expositions" (*thammapariyai*). In addition to this, *sadap*, which also has the meaning "to listen to", occurs eight times in the texts. The words "to write" (*khian*) and "to read" (*an*), however, are not mentioned once. In the "Eight Questions on the *Dhamma*" (*Atthadhammapañha*), a text she authored before the publication of the *Dhammānudhammapaṭipatti* texts (and which crucially helped to prove conclusively her authorship of her subsequent, anonymously published texts), when not familiar with a specific phrase in one of the questions she literally replies: "I have never heard and never listened to this within the tradition."²⁶ Another typical statement can be found in *paṭipattivibhāga*, one of the five *Dhammānudhammapaṭipatti* texts, where she states that "We are very fortunate in that we were born [into a time period during which] the Buddhist teaching is available; this enables us to listen [*fang*] to the *Dhamma*..."²⁷ Moreover, in her texts Khunying Yai rather often refers to memorisation, using words like "to recollect/recall" (*raluek*) and "memorise" (*jamsongwai*). Her texts make it abundantly clear that for Khunying Yai there is a close connection between (right) memory, (real) knowledge and (right) Buddhist practice. This is also evidenced in the following dialogical passages:

²⁵I should mention that this includes the occurrences of the word *fang* when it is used in connection with the Buddhist teaching on the six senses (*āyatana*), which is referred to quite frequently throughout the texts. Here it is of course not surprising that *fang* is used.

²⁶Khunying Yai Damrongthammasan, 2474 [1931], p. 9.

²⁷[no author mentioned], 2475a [1932a], p. 35. My emphasis.

“Question

I am a [Buddhist] practitioner, which means I observe the precepts and lead a virtuous life [*mitham*]. I also possess an understanding of numerous *Dhamma* teachings. Why then am I still affected by worldly conditions [*lokadhamma*]?

Answer

Your knowledge is only on the level of *saññā* [perception, recognition]; you have not gained insight [*ruhen*] on the level of *paññā* [wisdom]; but you understand that you know because when thinking about a specific *Dhamma* teaching you have memorised [*jamsongwai*] you gain clarity about it on the level of *saññā*; but this is not really knowing, which would be knowing on the level of *paññā*, like the knowing of a noble disciple [*ariyasāvaka*] ... Remembering numerous *Dhamma* teachings is called *pariyatti*...”²⁸

Elsewhere Khunying Yai gives the following explanation:

“Question

Paying homage [to the Triple Gem], using flowers, incense and candles, and saluting the Triple Gem, reciting holy texts [*suatmon*], such as the daily morning and evening chanting and the chanting of other texts that are the words of the Buddha [*buddhabhāsita*], does this all not [simply] constitute worship by offering material things [*āmisapūjā*], as it is not [the practice of] *sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā*?

Answer

Do not misunderstand this point! For example, when showing respect to and prostrating in front of the Triple Gem, this constitutes Right Action [*sammākam-manto*], to recite the virtues of the Buddha, *Dhamma* and *Saṅgha* constitutes *sammāvācā* [Right Speech]; both of them are parts of the *sīla* group. As for the mind that recollects the virtues of the Buddha, *Dhamma* and *Saṅgha*, this should be seen as a part of the *samādhi* group. As for the morning chanting that describes the five *khandha* as impermanent [*anicca*] or not-self [*anattā*] and the reciting of other *suttas* that contain the teaching of the Three Characteristics [*tilakkhaṇa*], when recited with a focussed and attentive mind [*jaikamnottam*], clarity about

²⁸[no author mentioned], 2475a [1932a], pp. 6-8.

impermanence, un-satisfactoriness and not-self will arise. Thus, when reciting [in this way] this should be seen as a part of the *paññā* group. This means that the Threefold Training is complete and thus constitutes *paṭipattipūjā*, the worship through practice.”²⁹

These passages show that for her reciting Buddhist texts with a correctly focussed and attentive mind constitutes mind-development (*citta-bhāvanā*) in accordance with the spiritual path. This is in line with early Buddhist ideas about recitation, as observed by a number of Buddhist studies scholars. Thus Bhikkhu Anālayo, for example, argues that “early Buddhist oral tradition also served as a way of meditating or reflecting on the *Dhamma*... recitation undertaken for its own sake does seem to function as a means of mental development (*bhāvanā*) in a wider sense, and as such could become a tool for progress on the path to liberation.”³⁰ Similarly, Collins states that “The oral/aural dimension of Buddhist texts is not only a matter of learning and public performance: it plays a role in meditation also.”³¹ Or as expressed in the words of Gethin: “mindful recitation of a text ... operates as a kind of recollection of Dhamma (*dhammānusati*), a traditional subject of meditation.”³²

What is also remarkable is that one of her major source texts for the *Dhammānudhammapaṭipatti* texts is *Soḷasapañha*,³³ which forms the last part of the canonical book *Suttanipāta*. The fact that Khunying Yai refers to or quotes from this text quite often is noteworthy for several reasons. First of all, like the structure of the *Dhammānudhammapaṭipatti* texts *Soḷasapañha* is also based on questions and answers: 16 Brahmin students approach the Buddha with questions, to which the Buddha provides answers. But what is at least equally interesting is the fact that in the *Nandamātāsutta* of the *Aṅguttaranikāya* the female lay-follower Veḷukaṇṭakī Nandamātā is reported to have risen in the morning and recited this very text. The deva king Vessavaṇa, who happened to overhear her chanting, praised her for this with the words “*sādhu, sādhu*” (“well done, well done!” AN. IV.63). Also, in the *Aṅguttaranikāya*, Veḷukaṇṭakī Nandamātā along with Khujjuttarā is said to be a model of a female lay follower (AN.I.89). In the commentaries she is described as an *anāgāmī* (non-returner; that is someone who has achieved the third level of awakening) and able to recite the Pali canon (SnA.I.369).

²⁹[no author mentioned], 2475b [1932b], pp. 15-16.

³⁰Anālayo, 2007, p. 16.

³¹Collins, 1992, p. 126.

³²Gethin, 1992, p. 166.

³³In the West, this text is more widely known as *Pārāyanavagga*.

Of course we do not know whether the textual structure of *Soḷasapañha* and the fact that this text was recited by an outstanding lay woman influenced Khunying Yai in her decision to refer to it so often. But it is certainly worthwhile to point out these similarities. In fact there are other canonical elements she was integrating in her texts and that combine outstanding spiritual practice by women with the status of lay disciple. In her *Aṭṭhadhammapañha* text, apart from referring to the Buddha, she refers to only three other Pali figures, all of whom are female lay followers.³⁴ For Khunying Yai, these three female figures are examples of persons with unshakable confidence in the *Dhamma*. One of them is Mallikā, the wife of the Senāpati (general) and also later judge (!), Bandhula. The other one is Uttarā, who hired the prostitute Sirimā for her husband so that she could keep the Eight Precepts. The third one is Queen Sāmāvātī, who was the mistress of another remarkable canonical figure, Khujjuttarā. Khujjuttarā is said to have been able to memorise sermons by the Buddha which later became the canonical book *Itivuttaka*. She memorised what the Buddha taught in order to teach Queen Sāmāvātī and her 500 ladies-in-waiting. The Buddha praised Khujjuttarā as the foremost of his laywomen disciples in terms of her learning (AN.I.26).

These biographies of Pali (post-)canonical figures clearly resemble a number of elements in Khunying Yai's own biography. In particular, the resemblances in terms of memory, orality, and recitation of Buddhist texts as an important part of female Buddhist teaching and learning are noteworthy. Despite the relatively frequent references to female canonical figures in the *Aṭṭhadhammapañha*, her texts do not discuss matters related to gender at all. This is of course not surprising, given her understanding of the *Dhamma*.

From our interviews with Khunying Yai's adopted son, Khun Prasop Wisetsiri, we know that the *Dhammānudhammapaṭipatti* texts were to a large extent, if not entirely, produced orally: whilst she dictated these texts from memory, Khunying Yai's servant Khun Phueng Chuenjit noted them down. This is remarkable in that even though she must have possessed at least basic writing skills and was able to read, she preferred to dictate these rather complex texts. That this method of text production seems to have been quite normal for her is shown by the fact that Khunying Yai even dictated private letters.³⁵ We do of course not know, and probably never will, exactly how the *Dhammānudhammapaṭipatti* texts were produced, and it

³⁴Khunying Yai Damrongthammasan, 2474 [1931], p. 7.

³⁵Seeger and Naris, 2556b [2013b], p. 142.

seems likely that Khunying Yai read the texts (or had them read out) once Khun Phueng had noted them down, and edited them. Not only did she produce her texts orally but she also had a servant read out Buddhist texts to her, sometimes for large parts of the day. In addition, she received a significant amount of her knowledge through listening to the teachings of her main teacher Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn Jaroen Ñāṇavaro. For a certain period of time, probably for several years, she visited him in his monastery Wat Thepsirin almost daily in order to learn from his oral instructions and explanations.

Despite the enormous memory an oral production of the *Dhammānudhammapaṭipatti* texts would require, in the light of what I have described above this does make perfect sense. We not only know that she must have possessed an enormously precise and highly developed memory, but she also grew up in an oral culture in which the memorisation of long texts seems to have been rather common. We also know that people she knew, or must have been close to, memorised long texts as an integral part of their Buddhist practice.

Case Study 2: Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn Jaroen Ñāṇavaro

In order to investigate further these themes of orality and memory in the context of Buddhist teaching, learning, and practice, I would now like to explore the biography of Khunying Yai's main teacher, Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn Jaroen Ñāṇavaro. Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn has not only been celebrated as an expert on the Pali canon and Pali language, but also as an accomplished administrator of the monastic community.³⁶ His admirers also often refer to his strict adherence to the monastic rules (*vinaya*), describing him as an exemplary monk.³⁷ He was the editor of 11 books of one of the most influential Thai editions of the Pali canon and also edited fundamental Thai textbooks for the monastic study of Pali language and Buddhist teaching.³⁸ Some people believed him to have achieved the state of a noble person (*ariyapuggala*), that is Buddhist sainthood.³⁹

Phra Dunlayaphaksuwan, a judge and student of Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn, writes that Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn was 'very strict' (*khreng khratmak*) with monks of his monastery in requiring them to attend the daily

³⁶See e.g. Prasok, 2554 [2011], p. 53.

³⁷See e.g. Buddhādāsa, 2554 [2011], p. 125.

³⁸Thirachai Thongthammachat, 2554 [2011], p. 186.

³⁹See e.g. Thirachai Thongthammachat, 2554 [2011]. The following description and discussion is based on letters written by his students and texts produced by himself.

communal recitation of Buddhist texts, twice a day, in the morning and in the evening.⁴⁰ Only newly ordained monks were allowed to use chanting books as a memory aid. In this context Phra Dunlayaphaksuwaman also refers to one of Thailand's most famous monk, Buddhadāsa Bhikkhu, who "said that 'to attend the daily chanting is like meeting the Buddha.'" ⁴¹ Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn's *Dhamma* teachings have been described as "profound" and "impressive" (*truengjai*) but at the same time as "easily accessible" ⁴² and "pleasant sounding".⁴³ Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn even gave *Dhamma* teachings to the Thai King (Rama VII), who praised him for his sermons.⁴⁴

Phra Dunlayaphaksuwaman, paraphrasing (or directly quoting?) Chao Khun Dhammatrailokajarn, a close student of Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn, writes that "The *Dhamma* teachings [of Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn] were organised in a system and pleasant sounding from the beginning to the end. [He distinguished clearly] different aspects of a *Dhamma* teaching and then provided appropriately detailed explanations of each. This was done in a way that avoided confusion [in the minds of the students] and allowed the listeners to gain clarity of what he presented. Sometimes he translated Pali quotations from the *tipitaka* [*phrabali*] into rhyme with the aim of helping his listeners to memorise [what they had heard]..."⁴⁵

In a small book with the title "Questions and Answers about *sīla*, *samādhi* and *paññā*", which he edited (*truatkae*) and whose content he approved (*hENCHOP DUAI*), the foreword indicates that the 32 questions and answers the book consists of are for the memorisation of the Buddhist teaching: "Once the different *Dhamma* points have been memorised, their content can be contemplated..."⁴⁶

For the author of this foreword these questions and answers seem to serve as a kind of key when listening (!) to *Dhamma* sermons (*dhammadesanā*) or discussions (*dhammasākacchā*). This key is to facilitate understanding of what was heard. The reader of the book is addressed:

⁴⁰These daily recitations of Buddhist texts by heart are still widely practised in many monasteries, other monastic communities and even private houses.

⁴¹Dunlayaphaksuwaman, 2554 [2011], p. 18.

⁴²Luang Parinyayokhawibun, 2554 [2011], p. 58.

⁴³See e.g. Vāsana, 2554 [2011], p. 106.

⁴⁴Vāsana, 2554 [2011], pp. 106-107.

⁴⁵Dunlayaphaksuwaman, 2554 [2011], p. 23.

⁴⁶Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn, 2481 [1938], [foreword].

“I ask you ... diligently to memorise this book, for once you can remember its content, you will see the benefits through your own mind.”⁴⁷

The questions of the book then trigger numerous *Dhamma* lists, such as the five *khandhas*, 40 *kammaṭṭhānas*, 12 *āyatanas*, and the 6 *viññāṇas*. Similar to Khunying Yai’s understanding, this book makes it clear that memorisation of *Dhamma* lists does not solely aim at retaining information and facilitating understanding of sermon texts (listened to), but clearly also has a transformative aspect. The text, once memorised, becomes a part of one’s life.⁴⁸

Another book by Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn is also revealing in this regard. In *Uposathasīla*, published in 1929, he states that this book forms a part of “the curriculum for female and male householders and is to replace *vinaya*” studies of monks in the case of lay people’s studies. This text was developed as a textbook for the newly created *Dhamma* learning system for lay people and offers a translation of the *Uposathasutta* in the *Aṅguttaranikāya* (IV.248). In the first paragraph of his translation into Thai, Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn highlights twice the oral character of the sermon and that the Buddha wanted his monks to listen attentively, that is with mindfulness. His translation is followed by a commentary that consists of questions and answers, starting off with a short explanation of the word *uposatha*, and then giving the Eight Precepts in a list “in order to facilitate their memorisation [*jamngaingai*].”⁴⁹ One of the initial questions is: “When the one who knows this content recites this text, and does so with a mind that focuses on the content, this will very effectively make his heart peaceful and [make him] experience wholesomeness [*kusala*], positive qualities and benefits; it may even sometimes allow the temporary suppression of the hindrances [*nīvaraṇa*], which is called ‘*tadaṅga-pahāna*’ (the momentary abandoning of [*kilesa*; mental defilements]); can this be regarded as the meditative development of the recollection of morality [*sīlānussati*]?” And the answer to this question is “Yes!” (*dai*).⁵⁰ Albeit in slightly different terms, this certainly is in line with Khunying Yai’s understanding of proper recitation and the objective of

⁴⁷ Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn, 2481 [1938], [foreword].

⁴⁸ See e.g. Anālayo, 2011, pp. 857-858.

⁴⁹ Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn, 2522 [1979], p. 7.

⁵⁰ Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn, 2522 [1979], p. 8.

When providing an explanation of the first of the four “virtues that lead to welfare and happiness in the future”, the *saddhā-sampadā* (accomplishment in faith), Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn writes that “to be accomplished by faith means to believe that the Buddha really gained true understanding of reality and that his teachings are correct. Thus, you will not have doubts nor will you hesitate; you

it, as described above. Recitation of memorised Pali texts can, or perhaps better, should be understood as a meditation of and for mindfulness.

The pervasiveness and importance of orality and memory in Buddhist education of that time also become clear in Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn's scholarly work. When producing a Thai translation of the *Dhammacakkappavattanasutta*, Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn "translated it and a Pali scholar monk of the Third Pali Level [*parian3prayok*] noted down what was dictated."⁵¹ Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn did this translation following the request of a female lay follower: when she listened to the chanting of the *sutta* in Pali "confidence/faith arose" in her. She wished to have a translation that would allow her not only to understand the meaning of this *sutta*, but also to recite (*suat*) its Thai translation. Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn's translation of the *Mahāsatiṭṭhānasutta*, another major Pali canonical text, emerged in a similar way. When he learned that Noi Paurohit, another female lay follower, was able to recite the entire *sutta* by heart, he prepared a Thai translation of the text, by asking the son of this Thai woman to note down his oral translation. This took place in 1896. Noi Paurohit then also learned the translation by heart (the Pali text of the *Mahāsatiṭṭhānasutta* comprises some 27 pages!) and was then not only "able to recite the complete *sutta* both in Pali and Thai by heart, but also practise in accordance with it until her death [in 1931]."⁵² What the background of these two translations shows is that writing was perceived as a means for memorisation. Memorisation is to enable "real" understanding of these texts by internalisation, contemplation, and ultimately realisation.

What I have shown is that with regard to their formal elements, origin and objectives, the texts of Khunying Yai and Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn are strongly influenced by early Buddhist texts. In the following I want to provide some shorter case studies in order to add further weight to my arguments and show that both Khunying Yai and Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn were not exceptions in their pursuits. They accurately preserved text content and form, and also followed a variety of textual practices characteristic of text production and preservation in early Indian Buddhism.⁵³

will attentively listen to his teachings and memorise them...." (Sathiankoset Nakhapraphip Foundation, 2523 [1980], pp. 85-86).

⁵¹ Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn, 2474a [1931a], [preface].

⁵² Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn, 2474b [1931b], p. (๓).

⁵³ See Anālayo, 2007 and 2011, pp. 855-877.

Case Study 3: Upāsikā Ki Nanayon

The scholar monk Ṭhānissaro Bhikkhu correctly observes of Upāsikā Ki Nanayon (1901-1978) that she is “one of the best-known Dhamma teachers, male or female, in Thailand”,⁵⁴ and Buddhādāsa Bhikkhu praises her as an “extraordinary woman”, whose “objective was genuine understanding of the *Dhamma*.”⁵⁵ Upāsikā Ki, also known under her pen name Ko Khao Suan Luang, was born into a family of Chinese merchants in the province of Ratburi. Like Khunying Yai she developed a strong interest in Buddhist teaching from a young age. Even though not ordained as a *maechi*, she started to observe the Eight Precepts from the age of 24. In 1945, together with her aunt and uncle, she moved to a remote hill in Ratburi province in order to devote her life entirely to the practice of meditation. This hill, Khao Suan Luang (thus her pen name), has now become one of the most famous meditation centres for female practitioners in the whole country. During the second part of her life, Upāsikā Ki gave a large number of sermons. These texts were recorded, transcribed and then printed or disseminated as audio-tapes. In the course of the last nine years of her life, once her sermon texts had been transcribed and edited by her followers, they were read out to Ki Nanayon so that she could then approve of the content. In this way, four large volumes of her texts emerged.⁵⁶ In an autobiographical text, Ki Nanayon recounts how her mother taught her how to memorise and recite Buddhist texts when she was only three to four years old: “Before going to bed, her mother taught her how to recite holy texts every night. If [Ki Nanayon] forgot to recite the Buddhist texts before falling asleep, [she] had to get up again and do her chanting before she was [allowed] to sleep again.”⁵⁷ Only at the age of 11-12 did Ki Nanayon start to practise how to read. She received her reading lessons at home.⁵⁸ After her eyesight had deteriorated, she started to compose her *Dhamma* poems in her mind. Her biography reports that “It was amazing that she was able to compose long texts entirely in her mind ... entirely flawlessly [without any need to edit and correct these texts. These texts] rhyme and are pleasant to listen to whilst conveying profound and impressive *Dhamma* teachings.”⁵⁹

⁵⁴Thanissaro, 1995 [online resource].

⁵⁵Cited in Khao Suan Luang (publisher), 2544 [2001], pp. 198-199.

⁵⁶Khao Suan Luang (publisher), 2547 [2004], p. 7.

⁵⁷Khao Suan Luang, 2544 [2001], p. 200.

⁵⁸Khao Suan Luang, 2544 [2001], p. 201.

⁵⁹Khao Suan Luang (publisher), 2547 [2001], pp. 3-4.

Case Study 4: Mae Chi Kau Saetan

Mae Chi Kau Saetan (1870-1968) was ordained as a *maechi* at the age of 40 at one of Thailand's most famous and historically significant monasteries, Wat Phra Pathomjedi, Nakhon Pathom. Three years later, together with four or five other *maechis*, she then moved to the newly founded monastery Wat Saneha, also located in Nakhon Pathom. There, in the afternoon, when monks were instructed in meditation practice, the female practitioners would listen to those instructions too. During the night they then put the instructions into practice.⁶⁰ Mae Chi Kau was to a large extent responsible for the construction of the ordination hall (*uposathāgāra*) of Wat Saneha, which is regarded as one of the most beautiful in the area. She contacted laypeople and encouraged them to make donations.⁶¹ Her biography tells us that she must have had a very influential position in her temple: she is described as an advisor (*khu-khit*) to the abbot.⁶² According to her biography she was like an elder sister to the abbot.⁶³ The success of the then only recently founded monastery Wat Saneha in terms of Buddhist practice, numbers of monastic residents, and education has been ascribed to the successful teamwork of Mae Chi Kau and the abbot. She is described as self-confident and speaking with a firm voice. Mae Chi Kau was famous not only in the local area but also known amongst senior monks in Bangkok, which is some 60 kilometres away. She was in charge of a community of about 80 *maechis*.⁶⁴ She is consistently described as outspoken, and would admonish monks and novices when she perceived them showing 'inappropriate' behaviour.⁶⁵ Women wishing to become ordained as a *maechi* at Wat Saneha had to undergo intensive training first in order to internalise the rules of the female monastic community. Once ordained, they were required to pursue meditation practice during the night time. They were also required to participate in the recitation of Buddhist texts twice a day. Mae Chi Kau also regularly took other female practitioners to the graveyard to practise meditation there.⁶⁶ The biography reports that in its early years Wat Saneha was visited by a respected and experienced meditation teacher who gave daily instruction in meditation to the female monastics. Some of the highest ranking monks and famous meditation

⁶⁰The Monastic and Lay Community of Wat Saneha (publisher), 2511 [1968], p. 9.

⁶¹The Monastic and Lay Community of Wat Saneha (publisher), 2511 [1968], p. 14.

⁶²The Monastic and Lay Community of Wat Saneha (publisher), 2511 [1968], p. 15.

⁶³The Monastic and Lay Community of Wat Saneha (publisher), 2511 [1968], p. 19.

⁶⁴The Monastic and Lay Community of Wat Saneha (publisher), 2511 [1968], p. 16.

⁶⁵The Monastic and Lay Community of Wat Saneha (publisher), 2511 [1968], p. 19.

⁶⁶The Monastic and Lay Community of Wat Saneha (publisher), 2511 [1968], p. 24.

masters of her time, such as Chao Khun Upāli Guṇūpamācariya (Jan Siricando, 1857-1932) also visited the monastery and taught meditation there. Her biographer also mentions that Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn often frequented Wat Saneha and knew Mae Chi Kau. It is not clear, though, how far she also received *Dhamma* teachings from him.⁶⁷ Mae Chi Kau's spiritual practice also consisted of daily meditation with a focus on mindfulness of breathing (*ānāpānasati*). Her biography says that due to her regular meditation practice, she was able to develop and maintain until old age an extraordinarily precise and vast memory.⁶⁸

Case Study 5: Upāsikā Nu-nueang Thapmeng

Upāsikā Nu-nueang's (1887-?) biography was published by the accomplished Pali scholar, one of Thailand's most influential insight meditation (*vipassanā*) teachers in the Burmese style, Phra Chodok Nāṇasiddhi (1918-1988). Already a high ranking monk, in 1968 Phra Chodok praises her highly in the foreword of this biography (when Upāsikā Nu-nueang was still alive): Upāsikā Nu-nueang "has consistently been trying to establish herself in the noble quest [*ariyapariyesanā*; the quest for *nibbāna*]. She should be very much congratulated [*anumodanā*] on this by the sages; there is only a rather small number of people who consistently lead their lives in accordance with the *Dhamma*, being able to reach the other shore."⁶⁹

Her biography tells us that Upāsikā Nu-nueang was the daughter of farmers and had no opportunity to go to school. From a young age she had the intention of becoming a *maechi*, but "I cannot read. How then can I memorise and recite texts [*thongbon*]...?"⁷⁰ She asked her uncle to teach her how to read and divided her time between developing her reading skills and working in the rice-fields. Her biographer describes her as having a good memory.⁷¹ At the age of 17, when eventually able to read, she intended to become ordained as a *maechi*. When she told her friends about her wish, they mocked her, saying that someone so young could not do so. However, around 1905 she "often had the opportunity to visit the local monastery in order to listen [*fang*] to Buddhist teachings [*Dhamma*] and

⁶⁷The Monastic and Lay Community of Wat Saneha (publisher), 2511 [1968], p. 16.

⁶⁸The Monastic and Lay Community of Wat Saneha (publisher), 2511 [1968], p. 26-27.

⁶⁹Phra Ratchasitthimuni (publisher), 2511 [1968], p. (๗-๘).

⁷⁰Phra Ratchasitthimuni (publisher), 2511 [1968], p. 2.

⁷¹Phra Ratchasitthimuni (publisher), 2511 [1968], p. 2.

this increased her familiarity with the [Buddhist] religion.”⁷² She pursued intensive meditation practice (*bamphenphawanapenkanyai*). At the age of 19, together with a *maechi* she wanted to practise a specific set of austere practices (*dhutaṅga*) which are widely followed by monks of the forest tradition. These practices may involve dwelling in the jungle or in graveyards and sleeping in the open air under a special umbrella with a mosquito net attached to it. But she was told by her teacher that “for young women this is demeritorious [*pāpa*].”⁷³ This was why she continued her practice of keeping precepts and meditation in a monastery. Only when she nearly died of cholera, and her father had made a vow that if she escaped death he would allow her to become a *maechi*, was she finally able to be ordained. This must have happened around the year 1906.⁷⁴ Mae Chi Talap, who, the biographer says, had been a minor wife of King Rama IV (r. 1851-1868) and ordained as a *maechi* after the King’s death,⁷⁵ became Mae Chi Nu-nueang’s mentor. Mae Chi Talap took her student to numerous monasteries to study the *Dhamma*. It is noteworthy that Mae Chi Talap studied and practised the *Dhamma* as a student of the famous meditation master Somdet Phra Wanarat (Thap Buddhasiri),⁷⁶ who, as mentioned above, was also the teacher of Khunying Yai. Mae Chi Nu-nueang’s biographer describes Mae Chi Talap as “an advanced master [*ajanchansung*] who has *listened* a lot to higher *Dhamma* [teachings].”⁷⁷ What is also of interest for the purpose of this article is the way that Mae Chi Talap’s teaching is described: “Mae Chi Talap taught [Mae Chi Nu-nueang] a lot: first, on a basic level she taught her to have faith in the qualities of the Buddha, of which there are three...” What then follows are other *Dhamma* lists. It seems that Mae Chi Talap wanted her student to memorise these lists in order not only to learn the Buddha’s teach-

⁷² Phra Ratchasitthimuni (publisher), 2511 [1968], p. 4.

⁷³ Phra Ratchasitthimuni (publisher), 2511 [1968], p. 5.

⁷⁴ Phra Ratchasitthimuni (publisher), 2511 [1968], p. 10.

⁷⁵ It seems that the biographer may have been confused here, as another source states that the minor wife of R.IV with the name Talap passed away in 1885 (Wannaphon Bunyasathit, 2553 [2010], p. 288). If this is correct it is not possible for her to have become Mae Chi Nu-nueang’s mentor. In this case it may be possible that the biographer is referring here to Talap Ketutath (1852-1928), a minor wife of Rama V (r. 1868-1910). I have not been able to clarify this at this stage (but see footnote 76).

⁷⁶ As Somdet Phra Wanarat passed away in 1891, this fact, together with all the other significant biographical dates given, makes it more likely that Mae Chi Nu-nueang’s biography is correct with regard to the biography of Mae Chi Talap (see footnote 75). According to Mae Chi Nu-nueang’s biography Mae Chi Talap must have died around 1908/9.

⁷⁷ Phra Ratchasitthimuni (publisher), 2511 [1968], p.14.

ing, but also to increase faith and confidence in the *Dhamma*.⁷⁸ Mae Chi Talap must have been an effective teacher, as many “influential people” (*phuyai*) and lay women (*upāsikā*) from Bangkok followed her instructions.⁷⁹ Mae Chi Talap also took Mae Chi Nu-nueang to practise *dhutaṅga*. Mae Chi Nu-nueang studied the *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha*; she actually was literally “chanting/reciting” this text.⁸⁰ In her fourth year as a *maechi* she was able to recite the entire translated version of the *Mahāsatipatṭhānasutta*. She also managed to complete the study of “five Pali grammar books” (this must have happened around 1910).⁸¹ Further noteworthy features of her biography are the extensive travels she undertook as a *maechi* in order to study the *Dhamma*, and the (probably informal) networks of male and female practitioners of which she was a member. On her journeys, Mae Chi Nu-nueang was even able to study the *Dhamma* with the great meditation teacher Luang Pu Man.⁸² In addition, she often visited Wat Saneha; there Phra Khruvinaysangworn⁸³ “paid a lot of attention” to teaching female lay followers. “When he wanted to learn about the level of understanding of the *upāsikās* he would use the technique of asking them questions”, the answers to which he would then assess. His questions, so Mae Chi Nu-nueang’s biographer tells us, were on the highest level of monastic *Dhamma* studies (*nakthamek*) and the *upāsikās* were giving their answers based on their understanding of the famous Theravāda manuals *Visuddhimagga* and *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha*.⁸⁴ The knowledge of Pali language, Buddhist doctrine and meditation that Mae Chi Nu-nueang was able to accumulate over the course of her ordained life must have been hugely impressive, in particular when taking into account that she had not had access to formal education. But even though it contains many distinctive biographical features, Mae Chi Nu-nueang’s biography makes it clear that she was not exceptional in being a female Buddhist with an extraordinarily advanced level of understanding of the Buddhist doctrines, as there were numerous other Buddhist women whose knowledge of Buddhist teachings was no less impressive.

⁷⁸ Phra Ratchasitthimuni (publisher), 2511 [1968], p. 15. My emphasis.

⁷⁹ Phra Ratchasitthimuni (publisher), 2511 [1968], p. 15.

⁸⁰ Phra Ratchasitthimuni (publisher), 2511 [1968], p. 18.

⁸¹ Phra Ratchasitthimuni (publisher), 2511 [1968], p. 19.

⁸² Phra Ratchasitthimuni (publisher), 2511 [1968], p. 31.

⁸³ This should probably read “Phra Khrusangwornvinay” and refer to Phra Khrusangwornvinay (At Jutindharo). See *The Monastic and Lay Community of Wat Saneha* (publisher), 2511 [1968], p. 13.

⁸⁴ Phra Ratchasitthimuni (publisher), 2511 [1968], p. 26.

Case Study 6: Maechi Kaew Sianglam

Mae Chi Kaew Sianglam (1901-1991) arguably is the most famous female direct monastic disciple of Luang Pu Man.⁸⁵ She is believed to have realised the fruit of *arahant*-ship (*arahattaphala*) in 1952. Her sainthood has been celebrated in the construction of two rather expensive and large stupas (relic containers) in which visitors can pay their respect to her remains. Parts of her bones that are on display in these stupas have transformed into crystals. Such crystallised bones are powerful signifiers of spiritual perfection, as it is widely believed within Thai Buddhism that these transformations only occur in the bones of someone who has achieved Buddhist sainthood. As I have investigated Mae Chi Kaew's extraordinary biography and the veneration of her in some detail elsewhere,⁸⁶ here I want to focus on how she obtained her knowledge. In her teenage years, Mae Chi Kaew received instruction from Luang Pu Man on an individual level and was able to achieve some unusually quick successes in her spiritual development. But due to her gender, her ordained life began only when she was 36 years old: before then she was several times denied permission to become ordained. Luang Pu Man is reported to have told her that "If you were a boy, I would have ordained you as a novice so that you could have come with me. But since you are a girl, accompanying me would be difficult with regard to the *Dhammavinaya*... Stop practising meditation!" At the age of 17 she was married and her husband forbade her practising meditation at the temple. He allowed her to recite Buddhist texts, though. In the then rather remote area in the northeast of Thailand where she lived, there was no local school. One of her major biographies literally tells us that "She was not able to study books; learning how to write and read was even more out of reach for her. The only thing she could do was to memorise the teachings of her teachers. She was [however] able to memorise all [she learned from her teachers]. She committed it to memory and then recited it until it entered her mind. Formerly, when she observed others reading and writing, she was jealous, thinking that 'In this life time I was born as a stupid hillbilly who had no opportunity to acquire literacy.' But now as she had become old, she understood that being literate or illiterate does not make any difference. It is just the same, for her Buddhist practice has been a clever approach in following the teachings of her highly revered masters."⁸⁷

⁸⁵ See: Silaratano, 2009; Seeger, 2010; Suniwan Tangphaithunsakun, 2549 [2006].

⁸⁶ Seeger, 2010.

⁸⁷ Group of Followers, 2550 [2007], p. 77.

Case Study 7: Mae Bunruean Tongbuntoem

Mae Bunruean Tongbuntoem (1895-1964) was born into a rather poor family.⁸⁸ As with other women in this study, Mae Bunruean's interest in the study of Buddhist doctrine began at a very young age and she also received support in this from a rather well-known monk. Her biographer assumes that the teachings of the famous and highly revered Luang Ta Phring, abbot of the monastery Wat Bangpakok, were the catalyst for her spiritual career. Even though she probably received some very basic education in the Thai language when young, at the age of around 60 she 'wrote' that "I can only write my name. I am not educated [*mai dairiannangsue*]."⁸⁹ However, for the occasion of the celebrations of the Buddhist year 2500 her disciples implored her "to compile [her] *Dhamma* [teachings]" with the intention of donating 7,500 copies of her book to monks. Mae Bunruean was highly revered by her followers, of whom she had many during her life time. In contrast to Mae Chi Kaew, she has left quite a number of her *Dhamma* teachings. She is still highly revered by what appears to be an increasing number of Thai people. She is believed to have achieved the highly advanced transcendental level of non-returner (*anāgāmi*), if not *arahant*; thus it is believed that she was able to enter the mental state of *nirodha-samāpatti* (level of 'extinction') which, according to Theravāda Buddhism, is accessible only to a non-returner or fully awakened one. Unusually for a woman, she produced Buddha amulets that have become highly sought after objects on the booming Thai amulet market, even though she produced 100,000. Due to her rigorous practice, she is believed to have possessed a wide range of supernormal powers, that is five, or even all, of the six *abhiññās* (higher knowledges), which she also used to cure people. Though believed to have achieved transcendental states of mind, Mae Bunruean has become more famous for her supernatural powers, altruism and effective healing. High-ranking monks, amongst them the future Supreme Patriarch, praised her spiritual practice highly. Her main teacher, the eminent monk and abbot of the famous Bangkok monastery Wat Samphanthawong, Phra Maharatchamangkhalajan (Thet Niddesako, 1886-1967), reports how Mae Bunruean together with numerous other women received *Dhamma* teachings on a regular basis for up to more than an hour, the level of teaching gradually and adequately increasing. "Once the *Dhamma* teachings have finished, the women were asked questions in order to assess their understanding and check what they had memorised

⁸⁸ For a more detailed account and analysis of her biographies see Seeger, 2013.

⁸⁹ Mae Bunruean Tongbuntoem, 2528 [1985], p. 9.

[*thamkhwamkhaujailaekhwamkamnodjotjam*].”⁹⁰ Her followers built a house for her in Bangkok. In this house they regularly met her and listened to her teachings and discussed what she had presented. Mae Bunruean has also been praised for her pedagogical skills: “She applied a variety of different, individualised methods [even including physical methods] by using her special knowledge to read her students’ mental dispositions in order to adjust her teachings [most effectively].”⁹¹ From her biographies it seems rather clear that Mae Bunruean gained her knowledge of Buddhist teachings mostly through oral teachings from various well-known and highly revered meditation masters of her time. Her transcribed sermon texts give impressive evidence of the enormously advanced and precise memory she must have had, given that she seems to have acquired most of her knowledge aurally.

Discussion

Even though the case studies above consider female educational experiences in the period between 1880 and 1950, the teaching and learning practices and relations between male monastics and the female Buddhists discussed seem to be the continuation of much older practices and ideas. Thus, we know that in the 1850s Western visitors observed that *maechis* were reciting Buddhist texts.⁹² In addition, accounts by Western travellers from the 17th century confirm that *maechis* were regularly listening to sermons. Thus, Nicolas Gervaise e.g., who visited Siam in 1683, wrote that *maechis* “listen to sermons every day and they spend much time praying in the temples.”⁹³ “Praying” here probably means reciting holy texts. Given that these Western observers did not give very detailed descriptions of *maechis*, it seems that *maechis*’ reciting of Buddhist texts must have been perceived as an important characteristic of their ordained life. This is of course fully corroborated by the evidence given above. It seems likely that for Siamese women practising Buddhism, the chanting/recitation and memorisation of Pali texts has been an important part of their spiritual practice for a long time and is not just a recent phenomenon. Thus, due to the existence and importance of oral modes of teaching and learning in Thailand before and after compulsory education was

⁹⁰ Phra Maharatchamangkhalajan in: Sujarit Thawonsuk (ed.), 1964 [2507], p. (13).

⁹¹ <http://www.dharma-gateway.com/ubasika/boonruen/ubasika-boonruen-08.htm> (accessed 07/01/2014)

⁹² Kameniar, 2009, p. 285.

⁹³ Cited in Skilling, 1995, p. 57.

introduced in 1921, women's access to knowledge and gender relations between monks and women seem to have been much more complex issues than presented by Darunee and Costa. Though some customs were/are there to ensure "appropriate" physical distance between monks and women, female Buddhists from different social strata had the opportunity to gain access to culturally significant knowledge in a monastic environment and with the help of (often high-ranking or famous) monks. Whilst this knowledge was to a large extent text-based, as it derived from canonical or other influential Theravāda texts, it was often transmitted orally. This type of knowledge has been regarded as the most valuable and desirable type of knowledge. The case studies above suggest that intensive pedagogical relationships between monks on the one side and *maechis* and laywomen (*upāsikā*) on the other existed well before the significant increase in literacy amongst Thai women during the first half of the 20th century. True, various restrictive cultural practices and gendered prohibitions, such as the refusal to ordain women as *bhikkhunīs*, had an impact on women's access to knowledge, as confirmed by some of the case studies above. Thus, from Mae Chi Kaew's biography we learn that as a girl she was allowed to go to the monastery only when accompanied by her parents. In addition, she had to sit as far away from the monks as possible.⁹⁴ Also, as mentioned above, Luang Pu Man did not accept her as his monastic student and forbade her continuing her meditation practice, because of her gender. But, at the same time, we also know from her biography that Mae Chi Kaew nonetheless had access to "great teachers", such as Luang Pu Man and Luang Ta Mahabua, and received individualised and direct teachings from them. Thus, even though the biographies of Mae Chi Kaew etc. refer to obstacles and disadvantages women had to face, in line with what I argued in my article on Mae Chi Kaew,⁹⁵ these gender specific challenges are depicted as somewhat minor when compared to their major objective of achieving liberation (*vimutti*).

As Mae Chi Kaew's biographies show, illiteracy did not prevent her from gaining access to the knowledge she and her community deemed the most valuable; this was possible because she was relying on oral modes of teaching and on memory. Moreover, note that, Luang Pu Man's practice has been described as very strict in terms of avoiding associating with women, in line with the instructions the Buddha gave to his monk attendant Ānanda in the *Mahāparinibbānasutta*,

⁹⁴Seeger, 2010, p. 568.

⁹⁵Seeger, 2010.

advising his monks if possible to avoid looking at and speaking with women.⁹⁶ Nonetheless, for monks of the forest tradition and other teachers introduced in this study, keeping the “right” distance from women did not preclude intensive and regular teaching of female students. Thus, Mae Chi Kaew was not the only female disciple whose spiritual progress Luang Pu Man paid a lot of attention to. During the last five years of his life, Luang Pu Man was staying at a forest monastery in the north-eastern part of Thailand, near the village Baan Noong Phue. There he was teaching meditation to local villagers. In this community, already before his arrival, many female villagers had decided to take the robes and become *maechis*. Once ordained, they were living in a separate monastic residence close to the main monastery, so that they could “listen to the *Dhamma* sermons by Ajarn Lui Candasāro [a monastic disciple of Luang Pu Man] whenever the opportunity to do so arose.” Following his instructions, they were also practising meditation in graveyards. Whenever they encountered problems in their meditation they were able to consult the master about these. Female practice included not only intensive meditation and listening to sermons but also reciting Pali texts.⁹⁷ One of the *maechis* of the Baan Noong Phue community, Mae Chi Kang Thephin, was praised for her enormously advanced meditation and is believed to have achieved *ariyapuggala* status.⁹⁸ In Luang Ta Mahabua’s biography of Luang Pu Man, which is widely regarded as the most authoritative one, it is said that “[Luang Pu Man] made a point of advising her every time she came [and she consulted him often]. On such occasions, the monks would sneak up to listen quietly at one side of the meeting hall where their discussions were held, eager to hear her questions and his answers. Because her questions arose directly from her own experiences in meditation, these exchanges fascinated the monks.”⁹⁹ It is reported that up to 50 monks listened to Mae Chi Kang’s conversations with Luang Pu Man.¹⁰⁰ Luang Ta Mahabua even states that one of the reasons why Luang Pu Man stayed unusually long at this place was because of this woman’s practice.¹⁰¹ This and other biographies referred to above show that

⁹⁶“Kathaṃ mayā, bhante, mātugāme paṭipajjāma”ti? “Adassanaṃ, ānanda”ti. “Dassane, bhagavā, sati kathaṃ paṭipajjitabban”ti? “Anālāpo, ānanda”ti. “Ālapantena pana, bhante, kathaṃ paṭipajjitabban”ti? “Sati, ānanda, upaṭṭhāpetabbā”ti.” (D.II.141)

⁹⁷<http://www.luangpumun.org/watpab5.html> (27/06/2014)

⁹⁸Wat Pa Ban Tat, 2554 [2011], p. 205.

⁹⁹Mahā Boowa, 2003, pp. 341-342. (transl. from the Thai by Bhikkhu Dick Silaratano)

¹⁰⁰Wat Pa Ban Tat, 2554 [2011], p. 204.

¹⁰¹Mahā Boowa, 2003, p. 343.

even though there was no established institutional route of monastic education for women, many of them received individualised and intensive instruction from their monastic teachers (*phraajarn*). Rather than excluding women from Buddhist practice and knowledge, the major concern of these monk teachers seems to have been the “appropriate” physical and mental distance in these pedagogical relationships between monks and women. Luang Ta Mahabua’s biography of Luang Pu Man says: “Monks are especially vulnerable to the sounds of the opposite sex. If their *samādhi* is not strong enough, concentration can easily be destroyed. I must apologize to women everywhere because my intention here is not to criticize women in any way. It is the unsuccessful meditator that I am addressing here so that he may arouse mindfulness as an antidote to counter these influences and not merely surrender meekly to them.”¹⁰²

The importance of orality and memory can also be demonstrated by how Luang Pu Man taught monks. It is reported that he had an astonishingly high number of monastic students, more than 800. Most of his teachings were passed on to them directly, without making use of any written notes. “The reason for this may be sought in the fact that the teaching and studying of the *Dhamma*, according to the insight meditation lineage, does not regard books or manuals as important or necessary for the realisation of the truth as one’s own practice.”¹⁰³ Indeed, we have only one rather short text that is believed to have been written by Luang Pu Man himself. Moreover, Luang Pho Wiriyang, one of Luang Pu Man’s major direct disciples, writes: “Phra Ajarn Man never allowed anybody to write down his sermons. These have only been memorised, committed to one’s heart. If anybody tried to write down his sermons, he would have certainly scolded and reprimanded him for that.” In fact, one major text of Luang Pu Man, *Muttodaya*, came into being only because Luang Pho Wiriyang “secretly” and “thievishly” wrote down sermon texts by Luang Pu Man after having committed their content to memory.¹⁰⁴ Luang Pu Man himself was able to memorise numerous texts both in Thai and Pali.¹⁰⁵ Luang Pu Man also required those who wanted to study with him to learn by heart specific books with Pali texts together with the *pāṭimokkha* (the 227 training rules of the *bhikkhus*) within 3 years. “If they were not able to achieve this, they were not allowed to stay with him in the same monastic residence.”¹⁰⁶

¹⁰² Mahā Boowa, 2003, pp. 92-93. (transl. from the Thai by Bhikkhu Dick Silaratano)

¹⁰³ Wirasak Jansongsaeng, 2553 [2010], p. 48.

¹⁰⁴ For more on this, see Seeger, [in print].

¹⁰⁵ Thongkham, 2552 [2009], p. 70; see also Mahā Boowa, 2003, pp. 316-317.

¹⁰⁶ Thongkham, 2552 [2009], pp. 70-71.

Even some of Luang Pu Man's more famous male monastic disciples were not able to read and write, as they did not attend school. Thus, Ajarn Kongma, for example, had to learn by heart the *pāṭimokkha* rules orally (*paktopak*) before he was allowed to receive his ordination as a monk of the Dhammayuttika-nikāya (the congregation Luang Pu Man belonged to).¹⁰⁷ This and the examples above make it very clear that orality and memory were regarded as of the utmost importance and seen as an integral part both of male and female spiritual practice. These concepts of Buddhist knowledge are in line with Khunying Yai's definition of Buddhist learning (*pariyatti*), which nicely demonstrates that *pariyatti* is not necessarily to be understood as learning directly from written texts, but first of all and most importantly from orally transmitted texts: "The method to reach the *Dhamma* is by *pariyatti* because one has listened to the teachings of the Buddha; these teachings include numerous points and all are *niyyānikadhamma*, i.e. they can lead the practitioner to the release from *dukkha* [unsatisfactoriness] and cause the arising of faith and respect; this is called reaching the level of *pariyatti*."¹⁰⁸

In many of the biographies discussed above, writing was not perceived as being crucial for spiritual development. Only in Mae Chi Nu-nueang's, and to some extent in Mae Chi Kaew's, biography was the inability to write initially a concern. But what is interesting in Mae Chi Nu-nueang's biography is that even though literacy was initially thought to play a significant role in Mae Chi Nu-nueang's spiritual life, for her it was 'only' instrumental in getting access to the texts she wanted to learn by heart. As for Mae Chi Kaew, later in life she understood that for her spiritual practice, reading and writing skills were not important at all; what was a far more important concern than having *direct* access to written Buddhist texts was access to teachers. Despite being able to read and write because of her privileged social background, Khunying Yai preferred not only to listen to texts and instructions by her teachers, but also to dictate her own texts. At the same time, her texts consistently emphasize the importance of orality and memory as an integral part of Buddhist practice. In fact, there are instances that show that it is only due to the memory of female Thai Buddhists that texts by famous monks were being preserved. Thus, based on what she remembered from listening to sermons given by the famous meditation master Luang Pho Li Dhammadharo,

¹⁰⁷Thongkham, 2552 [2009], pp. 70-71.

¹⁰⁸[no author mentioned], 2475b [1932b], p. 10.

Mae Chi Abhivaṇṇā made notes. These notes were later on published.¹⁰⁹ Similarly, Princess Wapibutsabakorn (1891-1982), a daughter of King Rama V (r. 1868-1910), committed to memory the teachings of Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn of Wat Thepsirin, which she had listened to and noted down later. Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn corrected and made further comments on these notes. These hand-written texts have been published in three volumes and have become an important source text for the teachings of Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn.¹¹⁰ Princess Beatrice Bhadravuvadi (1876-1913), also a daughter of Rama V, is another good example. She “was very pleased to listen to *Dhamma* sermons.” She noted down what she remembered so that others could read and benefit from it.¹¹¹ In fact, when she listened to a sermon given by Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn, first “when listening to the sermon, I did not intend to remember it, but as [Somdet Phra Buddhaghosajarn] was talking slowly and clearly and the sermon was not too long, once it had finished it appeared that his words arose in the correct sequence in my mind.”¹¹²

The case studies above also reveal the extensive networking between their subjects allowing them to exchange knowledge and experience. They were travelling the country extensively as part of their ascetic practice (*dhutaṅga*) or/and in the search of a teacher. Wat Saneha in Nakhon Pathom, Wat Sattanartpariwat in Rattaburi, Wat Thammikaram in Prajuapkhirikhan and the Bangkok temples Wat Somanaswiharn, Wat Prok and Wat Thepsirin, to name only a few, seem to have been important monasteries for female practice, knowledge exchange and networking. In these monastic centres, female practitioners were actively supported by monks in their pursuit of acquiring Buddhist knowledge (*pariyatti*) and spiritual practice (*paṭipatti*). During my research I discovered possible links between the outstanding female practitioners and teachers Khunying Yai, Ki Nanayon, Khunying Rabiap Sunthornlikhit and Ajarn Naep Mahaniranon.¹¹³

Between 1880 and 1950 there was a significant number of women with an impressive knowledge of Buddhist teaching. This is also confirmed by Narin Phasit,

¹⁰⁹ Sutthithamrangsikhaphiramethajan, Phra (Phra Ajarn Li Dhammadharo), 2552 [2009], p. 8.

¹¹⁰ Wapibutsabakorn, Princess, 2522 [1979].

¹¹¹ Beatrice Bhadravuvadi, Princess, 2517 [1974], p. 13.

¹¹² Beatrice Bhadravuvadi, Princess, 2517 [1974], p. 19.

¹¹³ Ajarn Naep (1898-1983) is the first famous female Abhidhamma teacher in Thailand. It seems that Wat Prok has been another important centre for the networking of female practitioners of that time. But further research is needed on the extensive networking between these women.

who has become famous for his unsuccessful attempt to re-establish the *bhikkhuni* order in Thailand in the 1920s.¹¹⁴ In 1929 he wrote that “In fact, I believe that in our time there are numerous women with Buddhist knowledge and authentic Buddhist practice comparable to that of men; there are even women who are better than men in these regards.”¹¹⁵ He then also refers to a number of individual *maechis* in various parts of the country as examples of women with an enormous knowledge of Buddhist teaching or outstanding spiritual practice.¹¹⁶

The Buddhist studies scholar Naomi Appleton has argued that “The female ordination lineage in Theravāda countries has long since died out, and attempts to reintroduce it have met with little support from the established institutions. Buddhist women are thus left with no role models for renunciation or spiritual achievements. The best they can hope for is to discharge their societal responsibilities well, give generously to the monastic community, including perhaps, the gift of a son for ordination, and aspire to rebirth as a man. This established tradition that women are not able to – or expected to progress on the path to awakening...”¹¹⁷ In light of the evidence presented in this article, Appleton’s argument appears to be incorrect and too simplistic, at least in the case of Thai Buddhism. While I do not deny that one may encounter the views described by Appleton, both in academia and in Thai Buddhism itself, here it must be reiterated that the religious roles of women and the relations between the (male) *saṅgha* and female practitioners in Thai Buddhism are much more multi-faceted and complex. The absence of a *bhikkhuni* order has undoubtedly had a major impact on women’s religious roles in Theravāda Buddhist countries, including Thailand. It is also clear from my case studies that women had to face barriers in their religious learning and practice that men did not have to. Nonetheless, in Thai Buddhism¹¹⁸ there have been numerous women who have pursued the path to awakening whilst being highly revered for their knowledge and genuine practice by sometimes a large number of Thai Buddhists, both male and female. At the same time, these women were intensively and generously supported by monks. In fact I conclude that in many respects the biographies of the women introduced in this article contain many elements that seem to be remarkably similar to textual and spiritual practices in early Buddhism.

¹¹⁴See e.g. Varaporn, 2006, pp. 73-108; Sakdina Chatrakun, 2536 [1993]; Seeger, 2006; Ito, 1999.

¹¹⁵Narin Phasit, 2544 [2001], p. 10.

¹¹⁶Narin Phasit, 2544 [2001], pp. 10-11.

¹¹⁷Appleton, 2011, p. 50.

¹¹⁸I would not be surprised if this also is the case in other Theravāda Buddhist countries.

Epilogue

In 1944 Khunying Yai attended the funeral of her long-term spiritual friend (*sahadhammika*) Khun Nai Thang Kotchasut (1858-1944), who was also a highly respected female practitioner, at the Ratburi monastery Wat Sattanartpariwat. There – it is at the moment not entirely clear why – she was examined by a famous physician who attested to her that “you will live for a long time.” Khunying Yai replied: “There is no need to console me, doctor!” Shortly afterwards, she invited a learned Pali scholar monk to recite her favourite Pali texts and discuss the *Dhamma* with her. Then she prostrated in front of him three times, and collapsed. The monk could not believe that Khunying Yai had died. The way she died combines what had been important to her throughout her life: respect for and closeness to the *saṅgha*, to listen to the *Dhamma* (*dhammassavanaṃ*) and to discuss the *Dhamma* (*dhammasākacchā*).

From the famous canonical text *Maṅgalasutta*:

...*kālena dhammassavanaṃ, etaṃ maṅgalam uttamaṃ.*
 *Samaṇānañca dassanaṃ;*
kālena dhammasākacchā, etaṃ maṅgalam uttamaṃ.

“...listening to the *Dhamma* on due occasions
 — this is the greatest blessing.
 ..., seeing recluses and having religious discussions on due occasions
 — this is the greatest blessing.”¹¹⁹

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¹¹⁹I thank Bhikkhu Anālayo for his comments on this translation.

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Japanese Buddhism in the Third Reich

Brian Victoria

While the Tripartite Pact between Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and the Empire of Japan is well known, the cultural ties that paralleled this military pact have been far less studied. In particular, the influence this pact had on the religious relationships between the participating countries is little known. Yet, the reality is that there was surprisingly strong Nazi interest in Japanese Buddhism. This article traces the roots of German interest in Japanese Buddhism, especially Zen, from pre-Nazi Germany through the Nazi's own fascination with what appeared to many of them to be a mirror of their own *völkisch* religiosity. Additionally, those German and Japanese figures promoting this relationship are introduced.

Introduction

In the course of conducting research on the relationship of the Zen school (both Rinzai and Sōtō) to Japanese militarism, I came across an intriguing statement in the 1941 book *Bushidō no Shinzui* (*The Essence of Bushido*). In introducing D.T. Suzuki's article "Zen and Bushido", the book's editor, Handa Shin, wrote: "Dr. Suzuki's writings are said to have strongly influenced the military spirit of Nazi Germany." Unfortunately, Handa offered no proof of his assertion, and I remember thinking, could this possibly be true?

It was with this question in mind that, over the intervening years, I slowly began gathering materials that would, one way or the other, answer it. Although, as noted below, I came across tantalizing bits of information, it was not until I attended the first ever international workshop on Buddhism under the Nazis, held

at the University of Vienna in early May 2012, that I encountered the depth of engagement between Buddhism, Suzuki included, and National Socialism.

In particular, I gratefully acknowledge my indebtedness to the conference paper presented by Sarah Panzer of the University of Chicago. Her post-conference support, together with that of other German and Austrian colleagues, especially Prof. Karl Baier of the University of Vienna, have made this article possible. In the aggregate, this support led me to the realization that Suzuki's wartime writings in German translation, important as they are, were only the tip of the iceberg in a much deeper and broader relationship between Buddhism, especially Zen, and the Nazis.

What follows is only a brief introduction to this much broader relationship, albeit one that includes D.T. Suzuki's role. As the title suggests, the discussion is generally limited to the role played by Japanese Buddhism, especially Zen, with no reference to a second important dimension of the Nazi-Buddhist connection, Nazi interest in esoteric Tibetan Buddhism. That topic has already been at least partially explored by those better qualified than myself.¹

For those readers who are incredulous that the compassionate faith of Gautama Buddha had anything to do with the Nazis, no less a figure than Adolf Hitler is quoted as having said: "Why didn't we have the religion of the Japanese, who regard sacrifice for the Fatherland as the highest good?"²

While it might be comforting to imagine that Hitler's lament applied only to the Shinto faith, this article will reveal that Nazi interest in Japanese Buddhism, particularly Zen, was also strong. Nazi (and Italian) interest in Japan, including its religious faiths, should not be all that surprising. After all, the Tripartite Pact of 1940, and before that the Anti-Comintern Pact of 1936, had locked the fate of these three nations together in what would become a fight to the death. Knowing your "friends", let alone your "enemies", was a natural result, even a military necessity, in the 20th century era of total war.

The Nazis, however, readily admitted that, like other Germans, they originally had but little knowledge of Japan. In a 1942 booklet, Prince Albrecht of Urach, a Nazi expert on the Far East, wrote:

¹See, for example, Alexander Berzin's introduction to this topic, "The Nazi Connection with Shambhala and Tibet," May 2003. Available on the Web at: http://www.berzinarchives.com/web/en/archives/advanced/kalachakra/shambhala/nazi_connection_shambhala_tibet.html#neea7f249202ac6437 (accessed 28 June 2014).

²Speer, *Inside The Third Reich*, p. 96.

What did the rest of the world, or we in Germany, know only two generations ago about Japan? Let's be honest. Very little. One had heard of an island nation in the Far East with peculiar customs, of an island nation that produced fine silk and umbrellas from oiled paper, that honored a snow-capped mountain as if it were a god. They drank tea and had the curious custom of slitting their bellies open.... But one was not sure if the small and sturdy men of this peculiar people, some of whom came to Europe to learn eagerly, wore pigtailed and ate rotten eggs back home, or whether one was confusing them with the Chinese, since both peoples after all had slit eyes."³

This ignorance first began to change as a result of Japan's victory in the Russo-Japanese war of 1904-5. For the first time in modern history, a non-Western nation had defeated a white imperial power. Western leaders took notice of the rapid growth of Japan's military might and sought to understand the reasons for Japan's success. They hoped to be able to inculcate in their own troops the same spirit of self-sacrifice that Japanese soldiers appeared to have in such abundance.

Though he was not yet a Western "leader", it is noteworthy that the young Adolf Hitler was also impressed by Japan's victory. Lieutenant-General Yamashita Tomoyuki (1885-1946), head of the Japanese military mission to the Axis, later reported that Hitler had assured him that he had been intensely interested in Japan since boyhood and had carefully studied Japan's war tactics during the Russo-Japanese War, a war begun with a surprise assault on the Russian fleet at Port Arthur.⁴

Nitobe Inazō's Role

One of the first writers to explain the historical and spiritual background to Japan's military rise was Nitobe Inazō (1862-1933), author of *Bushido, The Soul of Japan*. Although the first edition of his book was published in English in 1900, i.e., prior to the Russo-Japanese War, he described a Japan that had already established itself as a growing military power thanks to its victory in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-5. At the time Japan's victory over another Asian nation was but little noticed in the West.

³Albrecht Fürst von Urach, *Das Geheimnis japanischer Kraft (The Secret of Japan's Strength)*, Introduction, partial English translation available on the Web at: <http://www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/japan.htm> (accessed 27 July 2012).

⁴Quoted in Tolischus, *Tokyo Record*, p. 158.

However, after Japan's victory over Russia in 1905, Nitobe's work found a much wider readership in the West. U.S. President Teddy Roosevelt was so taken by the book that he distributed some sixty copies to family and friends.⁵ This interest extended to Germany, where in 1905 a German translation, entitled: *Der Weg des Kriegers, Die Seele Japans: Eine Darstellung des japanischen Geistes*, first appeared.

As the title suggests, Nitobe attributed Japan's modern military success to its long martial history as incorporated in the *Bushidō* code. From the outset, Nitobe took pains to show that the *Bushidō* code, and hence the Japanese martial spirit, had long been closely connected with both Buddhism and Zen. In introducing the sources of *Bushidō*, Nitobe wrote:

I may begin with Buddhism. It furnished a sense of calm trust in Fate, a quiet submission to the inevitable, that stoic composure in sight of danger or calamity, that *disdain of life and friendliness with death*. A foremost teacher of swordsmanship, when he saw his pupil master the utmost of his art, told him, "*Beyond this my instruction must give way to Zen teaching.*"⁶ (Italics mine)

Significantly, Nitobe also found Shinto to be another cause of Japan's martial success. He wrote:

The tenets of Shintoism cover the two predominating features of the emotional life of our race – Patriotism and Loyalty.... Shintoism never pretends to be a systematic philosophy or a rational theology. This religion – or, is it more correct to say, the race emotions which this religion expressed? – thoroughly imbued Bushido with loyalty to the sovereign and love of country.⁷

Taken together, Buddhism promoted both a disdain of life and friendliness with death while Shinto promoted patriotism and loyalty to the sovereign. What leader of any country, especially a country at war, wouldn't find in these elements an attractive package worthy of emulation? No wonder, then, that Hitler questioned why Germany didn't have the religion of the Japanese.

⁵Dennett. *Roosevelt and the Russo-Japanese War*, p. 35.

⁶Ibid., pp. 4.

⁷Ibid., p. 5.

Perhaps because Nitobe makes it clear that he is a Christian Quaker, he does not attempt to present a sustained explanation of either Buddhism or Zen. Nevertheless, as we shall see shortly, his book made a lasting impression on at least some Nazi leaders. The Nazis inherited a deep fascination not only with the warrior code of *Bushidō* but with its samurai practitioners as well, not to mention both Buddhism and Shinto. The influence this would have on the subsequent creation in the 1930s of the most barbaric organization the world has ever known, the SS, is the most surprising, if not frightening, legacy of this period.

Nitobe was not the only Japanese promoting the unity of Zen Buddhism and *Bushidō* in the West at this time. In a 1906 English-language article in the *Journal of the Pali Text Society* entitled: “The Zen Sect of Buddhism”, D.T. Suzuki also promoted this unity while at the same time defending Japanese soldiers against the charge of having embraced fatalism in their willingness to die:

The *Lebensanschauung* of *Bushido* is no more nor less than that of Zen. The calmness and even joyfulness of heart at the moment of death which is conspicuously observable in the Japanese, the intrepidity which is generally shown by the Japanese soldiers in the face of an overwhelming enemy; and the fairness of play to an opponent so strongly taught by *Bushido*—all these come from a spirit of the Zen training, and not from any such blind, fatalistic conception as is sometimes thought to be a trait peculiar to Orientals.⁸

Unlike Nitobe, Suzuki had the advantage of writing his comments in the aftermath of Japan’s victory over Russia, a victory that had however cost the lives of more than 40,000 young Japanese men. Yet, according to Suzuki, these soldiers died with “calmness and even joyfulness of heart” derived from the spirit of Zen training.

During the war, in 1904, Suzuki had invoked Buddhism in his attempt to convince Japanese youth to die willingly for their country: “Let us then shuffle off this mortal coil whenever it becomes necessary, and not raise a grunting voice against the fates.... Resting in this conviction, Buddhists carry the banner of Dharma over the dead and dying until they gain final victory.”⁹

⁸Suzuki, “The Zen Sect of Buddhism.” *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 5, 1906, p. 34.

⁹Suzuki, “A Buddhist View of War.” *Light of Dharma* 4, 1904, pp. 181–82.

Ōhazama Shūei's Role

In 1925, the first serious anthology of Zen writings was published in Germany by Heidelberg University-related figures, Ōhazama Shūei (author) and philosopher August Faust (editor). The book was entitled: *Zen - der lebendige Buddhismus in Japan (Zen - The Living Buddhism of Japan)*. Eugen Herrigel served as the proofreader. As the following quote reveals, even at this early date the unity of Zen and the patriotic warrior had become an integral part of this work.

The most famous Japanese commander and loyal patriot Masashige Kusunoki (1290-1336) sacrificed himself and his family for the endangered empire. He was an excellent strategist who had long practiced Zen under the guidance of Zen Master Daitō, [who had been given the title of] “Teacher of the Nation”. *This hero became the model and ideal for all Japanese patriots who later fought and sacrificed themselves for their country.* His bronze equestrian statue stands in front of the Imperial Palace in the middle of Tokyo. (Italics mine)

Ōhazama's work only marked the beginning of Zen's impact on Germany.

Eugen Herrigel's Role

In 1924, shortly after assuming teaching duties at the University of Heidelberg, Eugen Herrigel (1884-1955) accepted an offer to teach at Tohoku Imperial University in Sendai. While in Japan Herrigel explored various traditional Japanese disciplines, especially *kyūdō* (traditional Japanese archery). He returned to Germany in 1929 in order to take a position at Erlangen University, where he began to describe his impressions of Zen and its relationship to Japanese culture. He formally joined the Nazi Party in December 1937 and, thanks to having done so, became Rector of Erlangen in 1945.

Like D.T. Suzuki, Herrigel claimed that Zen was at the root of the Japanese martial ethos. He linked the warrior's ability to embrace death to the transcendence of the individual through the practice of Zen meditation (*zazen*). As the following quotation makes clear, for Herrigel the true effect of Zen's influence on Japanese culture was that it fostered an embrace of death among the entire Japanese people.

The unmatched hard training of body and mind that the samurai received over hundreds of years was joined to a Zen made all the more

durable by its introspective nature. This allowed the samurai to not only trust in life but in death as well. The samurai were thoroughly liberated from the fear of death and knew no fear of death.... Bushido has now become the way of the entire Japanese people, and it is self-evident that it is most clearly expressed in the Japanese military.¹⁰

Compare Herrigel with D.T. Suzuki, who wrote in his 1938 book *Zen and Its Influence on Japanese Culture*: “The spirit of the samurai deeply breathing Zen into itself propagated its philosophy *even among the masses*. The latter, even when they are not particularly trained in the way of the warrior, *have imbibed his spirit and are ready to sacrifice their lives for any cause they think worthy*. This has repeatedly been proved in the wars Japan has so far had to go through.”¹¹ (Italics mine)

The similarity in thinking between the two men is obvious, for Herrigel frequently referenced Suzuki as his authority on Zen. Herrigel wrote:

In his *Essays on Zen Buddhism*, D.T. Suzuki sought to demonstrate that Japanese culture and Zen are intimately related. He further claims that the Japanese arts, the mental attitude of the samurai, the moral, practical, and aesthetic aspects of the Japanese lifestyle, and even to a certain extent the intellectual life of the Japanese, cannot be understood without recourse to their basis in Zen.¹²

For Herrigel, Zen was the root of the “chivalric spirit” in the Japanese people as a whole, something that allowed them to sacrifice themselves “for the sake of the Fatherland” (*um des Vaterlandes willen*). Like Suzuki, Herrigel asserted that the Zen spirit had successfully permeated all aspects of Japanese culture. During the war years Herrigel became a popular guest speaker for meetings of the Deutsch-Japanische Gesellschaft (German-Japanese Association) throughout Germany, and, additionally, for the militarily far more important Deutsche Gesellschaft für Wehrpolitik und Wehrwissenschaften (German Association for Defense Policy and Military Sciences).

As Sarah Panzer notes, it was thanks to men like Herrigel, among many others, that following the rise to power of the Nazis in 1933, “Zen itself became politically

¹⁰Quotation contained in a speech to the Deutsche Gesellschaft für Wehrpolitik und Wehrwissenschaften (German Association for Defense Policy and Military Sciences), 1944.

¹¹Suzuki, *Zen and Its Influence on Japanese Culture*, pp. 64-65.

¹²“Die ritterliche Kunst des Bogenschießens” (“The Knightly Art of Archery”) in *Nippon-Zeitschrift für Japanologie* 2, no. 4 (October 1936), pp. 195-96.

mobilized, so to speak ‘weaponized,’ in Germany as a way of conceptualizing an idealized image of Japanese heroic masculinity that was meant to make Japanese culture more immediately recognizable and sympathetic to a German audience.”¹³

Yet in his 2009 book, *Shots in the Dark*, Yamada Shoji revealed that Herrigel never underwent formal Zen training during his five-year stay in Japan from 1924-29. Yamada further informs us that Awa Kenzō, Herrigel’s archery instructor, “never spent any time at a Zen temple or received proper instruction from a Zen master.”¹⁴ Thus, readers who first became acquainted with Herrigel through his famous postwar classic, *Zen in the Art of Archery*, had no way of knowing either of his Nazi past let alone that Awa’s alleged Zen teaching of *Daishadōkyō* (“Great Doctrine of the Way of Shooting”) was simply Awa’s personal philosophy.

This did not prevent D.T Suzuki, however, from praising Herrigel in the preface to the 1953 English edition of *Zen in the Art of Archery*. Suzuki wrote:

In this wonderful little book, Mr. Herrigel, a German philosopher who came to Japan and took up the practice of archery toward an understanding of Zen, gives an illuminating account of his own experience. Through his expression, the Western reader will find a more familiar manner of dealing with what very often must seem to be a strange and somewhat unapproachable Eastern experience.¹⁵

If Zen is “strange and somewhat unapproachable”, it is no more so than the relationship of these two men to the Nazis. Further details on Suzuki’s own relationship to the Nazis will be presented below.

Giuseppe Tucci’s Role

Giuseppe Tucci (1894-1984) was closely linked with the wartime fascism of his own country, Italy, an Axis member, thus playing a prominent role in the *Zeitgeist* of the 1930s. Tucci, a noted scholar of Tibetan Buddhism, also came under Suzuki’s influence, especially following the 1938 publication of *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture*. The following year Tucci published “Lo Zen e

¹³Panzer, “Mobilizing Zen: Esoteric Theory and Martial Practice in National Socialist Germany,” in a paper presented at a workshop entitled: “Buddhismus im Nationalsozialismus” (Buddhism under National Socialism) held at the University of Vienna on 4-5 May 2012.

¹⁴Yamada, *Shots in the Dark*, p. 66.

¹⁵Quoted in Yamada, *Shots in the Dark*, p. 207.

il carattere del popolo giapponese” (“Zen and the Character of the Japanese people”) in which, like Suzuki, he claimed Zen had made the greatest single contribution to the formation of the Japanese character. Zen was particularly useful, he wrote, in freeing oneself from social constraints and allowing men to become “men among men, soldiers of an army that marches toward a fate that equalizes everyone.”

As E. Bruce Brooks of the University of Massachusetts at Amherst has noted, Tucci was also active in Japan during the war years:

In 1937, following the Marco Polo Bridge incident and the beginning of the Pacific War, Tucci was sent by the Italian Government to strengthen cultural ties between Japan and Italy. The Italian Cultural Institute was established in Tokyo, and Tucci traveled around the country giving lectures on Tibet and on racial purity. In books, and in the magazine *Yamato*, Tucci explained to his new public that he found in Zen a doctrine of freedom echoed in Bushido and in the practice of war. Success, Tucci held, calls for transcendence of the boundaries of the finite self: only here may one find liberation from the “tyranny of time”. Zen and war, then, are both ways to escape from “the cold rationality and impersonality of the modern age.”¹⁶

In the midst of his lectures, Tucci found time to write “Il Giappone moderno e la sua crisi spirituale,” (“Modern Japan and its Spiritual Crisis”), published in 1940. Tucci took this opportunity to tell his fellow Italians of his admiration for Zen monks as trainers of the *samurai*. He further praised them for the way in which they had successfully applied Zen immediacy and spontaneity to the battlefield. Tucci was a strong supporter of Mussolini and Italian fascism from as early as the 1920s and frequently wore a fascist uniform during the war years.

Wilhelm Gundert’s Role

In addition to Herrigel, a second German scholar to make an explicit connection between Zen and masculine heroism was Wilhelm Gundert (1880–1971). He left for Japan in 1906 and remained there as a German language instructor into the 1930s, aside from a 2-year period when he returned to Germany to complete a doctorate in *Japanologie* (Japanese studies) in Hamburg.

¹⁶E Bruce Brooks, “Giuseppe Tucci,” available on the Web at: <http://www.umass.edu/wsp/sinology/persons/tucci.html> (accessed August 8, 2012).

In 1927 Gundert became the German head of the Japanisch-Deutsche Kulturinstitut (Japan-German Cultural Institute) in Tokyo. He joined the Nazi Party in 1934 and succeeded his mentor as chair in *Japanologie* at Hamburg University in 1936. The following year he was nominated as dean of the philosophy department by the Berlin authorities. From 1941 until his dismissal in 1945 for his pro-Nazi views, Gundert served as Rector of the University of Hamburg.

In 1935 Gundert published *Japanische Religionsgeschichte (Japanese Religious History)*. Regarding Zen he wrote: “The profession of the warriors and knights (i.e., *samurai* or *bushi*) ... called upon Zen with its masculinity and discipline, its simple art of living and scorn of death, and its nobility and chivalry.”

In 1937 Gundert wrote of a shared chivalric past in *Die religiösen Kräfte Asiens (The Religious Strengths of Asia)*. After discussing the “heroic element in genuine Buddhism”, he continued:

Following closer contact with the Zen form of Buddhism, one cannot suppress the feeling that here, in a remarkable detour from Aryan India, is an expression of the most genuine Nordic spirit in the Far East. A form to which, despite the strange forms the outer covering has taken, we nevertheless readily feel internally related and close. The Japanese knight and warrior ideal of Bushido is born from the spirit of Zen. This spirit is yet alive today in the Japanese army and beyond, and thus you can still meet many Japanese officers who want to deepen [their understanding of] the writings of the ancient Zen masters or occasionally participate in meditation in a Zen monastery.¹⁷

It should be noted that, at least initially, Gundert’s positive evaluation of Japanese Buddhism was at odds with two trends regarding Buddhism in Germany (and in Europe generally). First, he challenged Buddhism’s popular reputation as not only a pessimistic faith but also one that promoted a fatalistic attitude toward life. Secondly, in European scholarly circles the Mahāyāna school, including Zen, found in East Asia was viewed as a corrupt and degenerate expression of the pure, original Theravāda school of Buddhism present in South and Southeast Asia.

In the Nazis Gundert found a ready audience for his positive evaluation of Japanese Buddhism, especially Zen, based on the masculine conception of honor and self-sacrificing heroism he promoted. Further, as will be described in detail

¹⁷Gundert, “Nationale und übernationale Religion in Japan” in *Die religiösen Kräfte Asiens*, p. 16.

below, the SS welcomed Gundert's writings, for he located Zen within the nexus of socially circumscribed elite groups (i.e., the *samurai* and the modern Japanese officer corps). It was precisely such an elite group that the SS aspired to become. An elite group that would, once Germany had emerged victorious from the war, rule the greatly expanded Third Reich under Hitler's leadership.

Throughout the war Gundert continuously promoted the importance of Zen and *Bushidō*, notably including in his 1942 article in *Deutschlands Erneuerung*: "Quellen japanischer Kraft" (*Germany's Renewal: "Sources of Japanese Power"*). Like Herrigel, he became a popular lecturer through the Deutsch-Japanische Gesellschaft, giving lectures on the *Weltanschauung* (world-view) of the Japanese, of which Zen was presented as an important constituent part, in major German cities throughout 1942-43.

Kitayama Junyū's Role

In the midst of the heightened interest in Germany concerning Japan's allegedly male-oriented heroic faith, it is not surprising that German-speaking, Japanese Buddhist priests had a role to play. The role played by Pure Land priest Kitayama Junyū (1902–1962) is particularly notable. One need only look at the title of one of his books, *Heroisches Ethos. Das Heldische in Japan* (*Heroic Ethos. The Heroic in Japan*) to recognize the contribution he made toward the transformation of Japanese religion into a martial faith.

As is typically the case in the modern Japanese priesthood, Kitayama was the son of a Pure Land priest who, following his undergraduate study of Buddhism in Japan, was sent to pursue his graduate studies in Germany by order of the Pure Land sect in 1924. This eventually led him to the University of Heidelberg, where he wrote his doctoral thesis on the metaphysics of Mahāyāna Buddhism under the famous philosopher Karl Jaspers in 1931.

Kitayama's commitment was not simply to the Mahāyāna school in general but to its Japanese manifestations in particular. Like so many of his fellow Buddhists in Japan, Kitayama claimed that Japanese Mahāyāna constituted "the final stage and fulfillment of Buddhist religiosity."¹⁸

Although Kitayama was active in both Japanese and religious studies, his influence was greatest in the field of intercultural exchange. In 1926 he accepted

¹⁸Quoted in Kubota, "Strategies in Representing 'Japanese Religion' during the National Socialist Period: The Cases of Kitayama Junyū and Wilhelm Gundert," p. 623.

the role of deputy to the Japanese director of the Berlin Japan-Institut, which had been established to foster both cultural and academic mutual understanding and cooperation between Germany and Japan. Characterized as “a warm and upright friend of National Socialism” in an article by Kubota Hiroshi, Kitayama’s reward for his support of the Nazis was appointment as director of the Department of Japanese Studies at the German-speaking Karls-Universität in Prague in 1944.¹⁹

The year 1944 also marked the publication of Kitayama’s *Heroisches Ethos. Das Heldische in Japan*. In this book we encounter a major difficulty Kitayama faced in his efforts to promote Japanese Buddhism to his German readers. This difficulty stemmed from his affiliation with the Pure Land sect of Japanese Buddhism rather than Zen. Kitayama explained:

As a result of the fact that D.T. Suzuki published his works on Zen in English, followed by translations into other languages, the general impression in Europe is that the Zen sect is the only Buddhist school of thought to have played a role in Japanese intellectual history. This is because Suzuki devoted his works exclusively to the Zen sect of which he is a priest. Few significant works have been published about the other sects. Hence, no one in Europe has access to other or better materials on Japanese Buddhism than the writings of D. T. Suzuki.²⁰

On the one hand, Kitayama’s remarks about D.T. Suzuki alert us to the importance of Suzuki’s role in Nazi Germany, a more detailed description of which follows below. As for Kitayama, he felt it was important to point out that the heroic nature of Japanese Buddhism was not just a product of Zen but sprang from the very nature of Japanese Buddhism. He wrote:

The heroic spirit of Japan comes from the union of individual Buddhism with state Buddhism. Japanese Buddhism seeks the ideal human existence not only in the past and future, but finds it in the present at the place where the eternal is united with the transitory.... For this reason, it was possible to combine Buddhism with the thinking of the Japanese government. Therefore, in Japan there were patriots in priestly robes, priests as great patriotic figures, and heroes as followers of Buddhism.²¹

¹⁹Ibid., p. 618.

²⁰Kitayama, *Heroisches Ethos. Das Heldische in Japan (Heroic Ethos. The Heroic in Japan)*, p 62.

²¹Ibid., pp. 68-70.

Kitayama, like German enthusiasts for Japanese Buddhism, was faced with the further challenge of explaining the relationship of Buddhism to the indigenous Shintō faith. This was a far more important topic than might appear, since it mirrored a parallel struggle in Nazi ranks between an acceptance of Christianity despite its Jewish roots and an embrace of a putative pre-Christian “pure” Germanic (or Aryan) religious faith.

Nazi leaders held contrasting views concerning Christianity’s acceptability. On the one hand, there were figures like Heinrich Himmler and Adolf Hitler himself, powerful though relatively few in number, who rejected all forms of Jewish-tainted Christianity. In particular, Himmler saw it as his task to restore, or if necessary create, a truly pre-Christian Germanic or Aryan faith.

There were, however, far more Nazi leaders like Alfred Rosenberg, one of the principal ideologues of the Nazi party and editor of the chief Nazi paper *Völkischer Beobachter*. Rosenberg and his cohorts considered such German figures as Martin Luther and Meister Eckhart to have been major reformers of Christianity who created an authentically *Germanic* faith. Thus, despite its decadent roots in Judaism, the claim was made that Christianity in Germany had, as a result of a struggle lasting many centuries, taken on an authentic Germanic character.²² This latter position was acceptable to the vast majority of Germans, both Catholic and Protestant, who continued to regard themselves as Christians.

Kitayama and many of his German colleagues argued that something similar had occurred in the case of Buddhism: despite the allegedly fatalistic and pessimistic nature of early Indian Buddhism, the subsequent Mahāyāna school had transformed Buddhism into an active faith engaged with the world. Building on this, Buddhism in Japan had been further transformed into a masculine, heroic faith that initially sustained the warrior class, thereby serving as the spiritual basis for Japan’s modern soldiers, who pledged loyalty unto death to the emperor and country.

Chapter Three of Kitayama’s book was entitled “The Japanese Sword as a Symbol of the Heroic Spirit.” In it Kitayama united Shintō mythology with Buddhism into an organic whole via the history and function of the samurai sword:

²²For further details of this little known but critical split in Nazi ‘religiosity,’ see Baier, “The Formation and Principles of Count Dürckheim’s Nazi Worldview and his interpretation of Japanese Spirit and Zen.” Available on the Web at: <http://japanfocus.org/-Karl-Baier/4041> (accessed 3 July 2014).

Early in Japan's mythological era the measure of a sword lay in its ethical and religious significance. One of the jewels that the Sun Goddess, ancestress of the Imperial Family, sent her grandson was a sword, symbol of his regency and granted for the purpose of defending justice.

For this reason, the sword later became recognized within Buddhism as "The Sword of Demon Conquest". Accordingly, the sword must not be used as a murder weapon, but only as a weapon to combat evil and injustice.²³

Kitayama went on to identify the unity of Buddhism, particularly Zen, and the sword as a major characteristic of Japan's medieval feudal lords and *samurai*. Kitayama, like Suzuki, focused on the teachings the 17th century Zen master Takuan (1573 – 1645) gave to his *samurai* disciples. These teachings demonstrated, Kitayama claimed, that "through the art of swordsmanship, one can reach that state of consciousness known as enlightenment or release (*Erlösung*) in Buddhism."²⁴

And finally, in what must have resonated deeply to Nazi ears, Kitayama ended this chapter as follows:

Swordsmanship training in preparation for death is the Alpha and Omega of the Japanese hero spirit.... One is no longer the bearer of life but of death, standing above life and everything that happens in life, able to freely, undeterred and courageously master whatever takes place. Therefore, the Japanese heroic spirit is decisive to finding the right place to die.²⁵

One is left to wonder whether Kitayama himself was able "to courageously master whatever takes place", in that at the end of the war he was interned as a pro-German collaborator by the Soviet Union. Following his release, Kitayama became a teacher of Japanese and judo but would never see his homeland again, for the Czechoslovakian government refused to approve his repatriation to Japan. Kitayama was thus forced to stay in Prague until his death in 1962.

²³Kitayama, *Heroisches Ethos. Das Heldische in Japan (Heroic Ethos. The Heroic in Japan)*, p. 88.

²⁴Ibid., p. 109.

²⁵Ibid., p. 119.

Walther Wüst, Heinrich Himmler and the SS

In 1937 Himmler directed a booklet be published to which he wrote the foreword: *Samurai. Ritter des Reiches in Ehre und Treue* (*Samurai, Knights of the Empire in Honor and Loyalty*). He had 52,000 copies of the booklet printed in order that one could be distributed to every member of the SS. "Using this short history of the *samurai*," Himmler wrote, "we wish to call to mind some long forgotten truths: The fact, that even in antiquity, *this Far-Eastern nation had the same honorary laws as our forefathers* ... and moreover, recognizing that these are usually *elite minority groups that endow the worldly existence of a nation with eternal life*." (Italics mine)

Although the SS had originally been created as Hitler's personal bodyguard, under Himmler's direction it expanded dramatically and assumed a far more important role. From 1937 onwards it became the "elite minority group" Himmler described. The plan was for the SS to rule the German Reich in both war and in peace. The *samurai*, who constituted only 7-10

As mentioned above, Himmler sought to resurrect Germany's pre-Christian, pagan faith. The religious traditions of India attracted him, for, thanks to the alleged Aryan invasion of India in antiquity, the religions of India appeared to be extant expressions of authentic Aryan spirituality, especially because (it was claimed) the Aryan invaders had established a martial society based on a rigid social structure with strict caste distinctions.

Himmler was well aware that meditation was a key component of Indian religious practice, for he confided to his Finnish masseur, Felix Kersten: "I admire the wisdom of the founders of Indian religion, who required that their kings and dignitaries retreat every year to monasteries for meditation. We will later create similar institutions."²⁶

For Himmler, the Vedas, Upanishads and Buddhist texts, especially the *Visuddhi-magga* (*The Path of Purification*) were all of interest, as were such figures as Buddha Śākyamuni and Krishna. In particular, Himmler valued Krishna's advice to warrior-prince Arjuna in the *Bhagavad Gita*, that, nothing was more important than doing one's duty, no matter how disagreeable it might be.

In 1937 Himmler appointed Professor Walther Wüst, one of the leading Sanskrit scholars of his time, as director of the Ahnenerbe (Bureau for the Study of Ancestral Heritage), an official organization that had just been attached to the SS. Wüst became a colonel in the SS and, later, Rector of the Ludwig-Maximilian

²⁶Quoted in Palash Ghosh, "Heinrich Himmler: The Nazi Hindu." Available on the Web at: <http://www.ibtimes.com/heinrich-himmler-nazi-hindu-214444> (accessed 1 July 2014).

University in Munich in 1941. As such, he was one of the Third Reich's most influential scholars, operating on the assumption that the then secret Nazi religion being created (or 'revived') should be rooted in the Vedic and Buddhist writings of India. With Himmler's blessing, Wüst from June 1936 onwards repeatedly delivered a speech to SS-personnel asserting the existence of a direct line of racial ancestry from the old Aryans of India to present-day National Socialists. And the greatest Aryan of them all was, according to Wüst, Buddha Śākyamuni.

Wüst claimed that 2500 years after the Buddha's birth something wondrous had occurred in Austria. Namely, the 'Führer', then an unskilled worker living in Vienna, became acquainted with the hardship of the poor when walking through the pitiful flats of the workers. It was this experience in Vienna that had prevented Hitler from either getting lost in abstract theories or becoming subject to a shallow realism. Instead, Hitler acquired an inspired vision of reality similar to the one the Buddha once had. It was because the Buddha and Adolf Hitler belonged to the same hereditary community that they reacted in the same way to the problems of their time; it was their common Aryan identity that endowed them with the capacity to guide their people from subjugation to freedom.²⁷

Wüst also had something to say about Japan, claiming:

From even a Japanese citizen with the most modern point of view shines forth the oldest *samurai*. If one wants to plant a new seed in his heart, one simply has to stir up the sediment that has settled in its depths over the course of centuries. The man who said this was a Japanese man soaked through with the unbelievable spirituality and power of tradition, a type of man that we luckily have in Germany, too, but we must attempt to develop far more vehemently, if we want to claim the certain victory of our weapons and to fulfill the deepest meaning of the Greater German Empire. May a merciful fate grant that this young but eternal German Man quietly, surely and constantly develop the character into which the Japanese are born.²⁸

In Wüst's reference to a Japanese man "soaked through with the unbelievable spirituality and power of tradition," we clearly see a reference to Nitobe Inazō, for in *Bushido, The Soul of Japan*, Nitobe wrote in reference to Japan's victory in the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-5:

²⁷ For further details, see Junginger, "From Buddha to Adolf Hitler: Walther Wüst and the Aryan Tradition," *The Study of Religion under the Impact of Fascism*, p. 125.

²⁸ Quoted in Maltarich, *Samurai and Supermen*, p. 237.

What won the battles on the Yalu, in Corea (*sic*) and Manchuria, was the ghosts of our fathers, guiding our hands and beating in our hearts. They are not dead, those ghosts, the spirits of our warlike ancestors. To those who have eyes to see, they are clearly visible. *Scratch a Japanese of the most advanced ideas, and he will show a samurai.*²⁹ (Italics mine)

In light of Wüst's comments, it is not strange that Deputy Führer Rudolph Hess once claimed:

We, too, [like the Japanese] are battling to destroy individualism. We are struggling for a new Germany based on the new idea of totalitarianism. *In Japan this way of thinking comes naturally to the people!*³⁰ (Italics mine)

In reading these comments, one is almost moved to pity the poor Nazis who, unlike the Japanese, had to struggle to embrace the “new idea” of totalitarianism!

D. T. Suzuki's Role

For someone, especially a scholar, to claim that totalitarianism “comes naturally to the people” (the Japanese in this instance) would be to invite a well-founded rebuke from the scholarly community. Nevertheless, there was one scholar of religion who made the following claim about the Japanese character in an article written for Imperial Army officers in June 1941:

Although Zen originally came from India, in reality it was completed in China while its real efficacy was supplied to a great extent after coming to Japan. The reason for this is that there are things about the Japanese character that are amazingly consistent with Zen. I think the most visible of these is rushing forward to the heart of things without meandering about. *Once the goal has been determined, one goes directly forward to that goal without looking either to the right or to the left. One goes forward, forgetting where one is.* I think this is the most essential element of the Japanese character.³¹ (Italics mine)

²⁹Nitobe, *Bushido, The Soul of Japan*, p. 64.

³⁰Quoted in Tolischus, *Tokyo Record*, p. 159. Hess is quoted by the former Japanese ambassador to Berlin, Kurusu Saburō, who, Tolischus claims, knew Hess well.

³¹Suzuki. “Makujiki Kōzen,” *Kaikō-sha Kiji* (June, 1941), p. 17.

As readers will have guessed, the scholar who wrote these words was D.T. Suzuki. In the same article he added:

In one sense it can be said that “rush forward without hesitation” and “cease discriminating thought” are characteristics of the Japanese people. Their implication is that, disregarding birth and death, one should abandon life and rush ahead. It is here, I think, that Zen and the Japanese people’s, especially the warriors’, basic outlook are in agreement.³²

While some readers may find it a stretch of imagination to link these words to totalitarianism, the noted scholar of totalitarianism, Hannah Arendt, wrote: “Under conditions of tyranny it is far easier to act than to think.”³³ Equally, while it may not have been Suzuki’s intent, in light of subsequent events his words cannot but remind us of those poorly armed Japanese troops rushing forward against Allied machine guns in suicidal and tactically futile “banzai charges” (to say nothing of *kamikaze* pilots).

Suzuki’s Zen writings first appeared in German in 1935 with an article “Japanese Culture and Zen” in a German art review, followed by an article in *Nippon-Zeitschrift für Japanologie* in April 1936. This was followed by the German edition of *An Introduction to Zen Buddhism*, i.e., *Die Einführung in den Zen-Buddhismus*, in 1939, and *Zen und die Kultur Japans* in 1941. This latter book was the German edition of Suzuki’s 1938 English language book *Zen and Its Influence on Japanese Culture* (shortened to *Zen and Japanese Culture* in post-war editions).

The clearest indication of Suzuki’s influence on the Nazis, apart from the influence he exerted on Herrigel, Tucci and other Nazis, was the reception accorded the 1941 publication of *Zen und die Kultur Japans*. On 11 January 1942 the official newspaper of the Nazi Party, the *Völkischer Beobachter*, carried an article featuring a full four pages of Suzuki’s book. Inasmuch as these same pages are readily available in English editions there is no need to include them here.³⁴

Let it be sufficient to note that the words, “death”, “die”, “deadly” occur no less than fourteen times in these four pages. Typical of these death-related passages is the very first one: “The problem of death is a great problem with every one of us; it

³²Ibid., p. 24.

³³Hannah Arendt, available at: http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/h/hannah_arendt_2.html (accessed on July 27, 2012).

³⁴See pp. 47-50 of the original 1938 edition of *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture* (later shortened to *Zen and Japanese Culture* in slightly revised postwar editions).

is, however, more pressing for the samurai, *for the soldier*, whose life is exclusively devoted to fighting, and fighting means death to either side of fighters.”³⁵ (Italics mine)

As Suzuki makes clear with his reference to “for the soldier,” he wanted his readers to understand that his words about Japan’s past applied equally to its present. And this was not the only time he did so; for example, only two pages earlier he had noted:

There is a document recently very much talked about *in connection with the military operations in China*. It is known as the *Hagakure*, which literally means “Hidden under the Leaves,” for it is one of the virtues of the samurai not to display himself, not to blow his horn, but to keep himself away from the public eye and be doing good for his fellow-beings.³⁶

Inasmuch as Japanese troops had already committed the infamous “Rape of Nanking” in December 1937, a year before the publication of the original English edition of his book, one can only wonder how Suzuki could, *in connection with the military operations in China*, be touting the Japanese soldier as someone who went about “doing good for his fellow-beings”.

Suzuki returned to elaborate on the theme of the *Hagakure* in the four pages of the Nazi newspaper article. There he added:

We read the following in the *Hagakure*: “*Bushido* means the determined will to die. When you are at the parting of the ways, do not hesitate to choose the way of death. No special reason for this except that your mind is thus made up and ready to see to the business. Some may say that if you die without attaining the object, it is a useless death, dying like a dog. But when you are at the parting of the ways, you need not plan for attaining the object. We all prefer life to death and our planning and reasoning will be naturally for life. If then you miss the object and are alive, you are really a coward. This is an important consideration. In case you die without achieving the object, it may be a dog-death – the deed of madness, but there is no reflection here on your honour. In *Bushidō* honor comes first.

³⁵Ibid., p. 47.

³⁶Ibid., p. 45.

Therefore, every morning and every evening, have the idea of death vividly impressed on your mind. When your determination to die at any moment is thoroughly established, you attain to perfect mastery of *Bushidō*, your life will be faultless, and your duties are fully discharged.”³⁷

Inasmuch as the SS was modeled on the *samurai*, honor did indeed come first, equated, of course, with loyalty, the other key virtue of the *samurai* that Suzuki often promoted in his writings. As if this were not enough, Suzuki was introduced yet again in the same newspaper on January 15, 1942, only four days later. The article’s author, Ernst Meunieur, wrote:

The Japanese D. T. Suzuki recently wrote a book about the meaning of the Zen sect, published by Deutsche Verlagsanstalt in German. We published a section of his book describing the Japanese warrior’s preparedness for death in Vol. No. 11 of the *Völkischer Beobachter*.

Suzuki is a Zen priest and professor at a Buddhist university in Kyoto. If one attempts to characterize the Zen sect scientifically, which is difficult, one can conclude that in it Buddhism has been completely revamped to meet Japanese conditions. This is not a unique process but one that has also happened to Christianity in the past, for example with the birth of Puritanism and certain of its oriental forms.

The recent decade in particular has once again led the Zen sect to increased importance in Japan. The battle for Japan’s survival is taking place against the powerful backdrop of a history that has been able to survive for two and a half millenniums in a rare concord of race, religion and politics. It is quite understandable that in this difficult time for the existence of the Japanese people, they would retreat to the intellectual roots of their history and regard them as being quite valid for their present. The outstanding national virtues of the Japanese are anchored in the Zen sect, a fact that signifies a monumental endorsement of this practical life-art.

In words that seem to spring directly out of Suzuki’s pen, we learn in this article that Zen is “a practical life-art forming the very essence of the Japanese

³⁷Ibid., p. 49.

that also determines and directs, to a degree hardly conceivable by a European, Japan's public life."

The Nazis celebrated and promoted Suzuki's writings. At the very least his presentation of Zen served to reassure German readers that they were indeed fortunate to be allied with the Zen-inspired Japanese, who, like themselves, were expected to embrace death unconditionally in a fight to the finish.

In a booklet first printed in 1942, the Nazi expert on the Far East mentioned above, Prince Albrecht of Urach, sought to explicate the "secret" of the Japanese soldier's strength. First he wrote about Japanese religion in general:

The Japanese are fortunate in having never experienced serious conflict between national interests and personal religious beliefs.... Shinto is Japan's primeval faith, it corresponds to the Japanese character so completely that it is never discussed.³⁸

As for Japanese Buddhism, Albrecht claimed:

Japanese Buddhism is much more positive and activist than Indian Buddhism.... There are countless very active sects of both Buddhism and Shinto that express their religious life not only in Japan itself, but go out into the areas dominated by Japan to give local people an idea of the power and strength of Japanese state religion.

Nevertheless, the Nazi Prince reserved his highest praise for Zen:

The active and yet stoic Buddhism of the Zen-sect perfected and refined the ethos of the Japanese warrior, and gave him the highly ascetical note that still today is the *essential feature* of Japanese soldiery. (Italics mine)

Compare this latter claim with Suzuki's own description in his 1941 book, *Zen und die Kultur Japans*:

Zen discipline is simple, direct, self-reliant, *self-denying*, and this *ascetic* tendency goes well with the fighting spirit. The fighter is to be always single-minded with just one object in view, which is to fight

³⁸Prince Albrecht of Urach, *Das Geheimnis japanischer Kraft* (The Secret of Japanese Power), partial English translation available on the Web at: <http://www.calvin.edu/academic/cas/gpa/japan.htm> (accessed 27 July 2012).

and not to look either backward or sidewise. To go straight forward in order to crush the enemy is all that is necessary for him.... *Good fighters are generally ascetics or stoics*, which means to have an *iron will*. When needed, *Zen supplies them with this*.³⁹ (Italics mine)

In light of Kitayama's earlier comments on the important role Suzuki played in the dissemination of Zen in Europe, I suspect I am not alone in recognizing Suzuki's influence on the Nazi Prince.

Count Karlfried Dürckheim

No discussion of the wartime relationship between Japanese Buddhism, especially Zen, and the Nazis would be complete without introducing the seminal role played by Count Karlfried Dürckheim (1896-1988). However, as I have written a lengthy article about him elsewhere, here I will only trace the outline of Dürckheim's role. Interested readers are invited to read my more detailed description.⁴⁰

Dürckheim, an academic working for Ambassador Joachim von Ribbentrop in London, received a research assignment from the German Ministry of Education in mid-1938 that included exploring the possible use of cultural activities in the promotion of Germany's political aims both within Japan and in those areas of Asia under Japanese influence.⁴¹ Dürckheim described his arrival in Japan as follows:

I was sent there in 1938 with a particular mission that I had chosen: to study the spiritual background of Japanese education. As soon as I arrived at the embassy, an old man came to greet me. I did not know him. "Suzuki," he stated. He was the famous Suzuki who was here to meet a certain Mister Dürckheim arriving from Germany to undertake certain studies. Suzuki is one of the greatest contemporary Zen Masters. I questioned him immediately on the different stages of Zen. He named the first two, and I added the next three.

³⁹Suzuki, *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture*, p. 35.

⁴⁰See "A Zen Nazi in Wartime Japan: Count Dürckheim and his Sources—D.T. Suzuki, Yasutani Haku'un and Eugen Herrigel." Available on the Web at: <http://japanfocus.org/-Brian-Victoria/4063> (accessed 18 July 2014).

⁴¹Wehr, "The Life and Work of Karlfried Graf Dürckheim." Available on the Web as a pdf download at: <http://www.stillnessspeaks.com/assets/books/1/Karlfried%20Graf%20Durkheim%20Becoming%20Real.pdf> (accessed October 23, 2013).

Then he exclaimed: “Where did you learn this?” “In the teaching of Meister Eckhart!” “I must read him again...” (though he knew him well already)... It is under these circumstances that I discovered Zen. I would see Suzuki from time to time.⁴²

Although the exact sequence of events leading up to their meeting is unknown, a few points can be surmised. First, while Dürckheim states he had been sent to Japan on an educational mission, specifically to study “the spiritual foundations of Japanese education,” it should be understood that within the context of Nazi ideology, education referred not only to formal academic, classroom learning but, more importantly, to any form of “spiritual training/discipline” that produced loyal citizens ready to sacrifice themselves for the fatherland. Given this, it is unsurprising that following Dürckheim’s return to Germany in 1939 the key article he wrote was entitled “The Secret of Japanese Power” (*Geheimnis der Japanischer Kraft*).

Dürckheim was clearly aware of and interested in Suzuki’s new book, for in records from his first visit to Japan Dürckheim occasionally mentions Zen, including D. T. Suzuki’s recently published book, *Zen Buddhism and Its Influence on Japanese Culture*. In this connection, Dürckheim comments: “Zen is above all a religion of will and willpower; it is profoundly averse to intellectual philosophy and discursive thought, relying, instead, on intuition as the direct and immediate path to truth.”⁴³

Here we see an echo of Suzuki in his 1938 book. Suzuki wrote: “Good fighters are generally ascetics or stoics, which means to have an iron will. When needed Zen supplies them with this.”⁴⁴ Additionally: “From the philosophical point of view, Zen upholds intuition against intellection, for intuition is the more direct way of reaching the Truth.... Besides its direct method of reaching final faith, Zen is a religion of will-power, and will-power is what is urgently needed by the warriors, though it ought to be enlightened by intuition.”⁴⁵

We know relatively little about the frequency of Suzuki’s meetings with Dürckheim during his first visit to Japan. However, Suzuki did include the following entries in a diary he kept in English: (January 16, 1939), “Special delivery

⁴² Goettmann, *The Path of Initiation: An Introduction to the Life and Thought of Karlfried Graf Dürckheim*, p. 29.

⁴³ Wehr, *Karlfried Graf Dürckheim. Ein Leben im Zeichen der Wandlung*, p. 96.

⁴⁴ See fn.39 above.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 34-37.

to Durkheim (*sic*), at German Embassy”;⁴⁶ (January 17, 1939), Telegram from Dürckheim”;⁴⁷ (January 18, 1939), “Went to Tokyo soon after breakfast. Called on Graf [Count] Dürckheim at German Embassy, met Ambassador [Eugen] Otto [Ott], and Dr. [space left blank] of German-Japanese Institute. Lunch with them at New Grand [Hotel].”⁴⁸ It is likely that this flurry of activity in early 1939 was connected to Dürckheim’s impending return to Germany. If so, Dürckheim’s luncheon invitation may well have been to thank Suzuki for the latter’s assistance during his stay.

Dürckheim’s Second Visit to Japan

Dürckheim returned to Japan in January 1940 and remained there throughout the war. It was during this time that his most important work for the Nazis was undertaken. This time Dürckheim travelled to Japan by train through Russia, taking advantage of the new, and once unthinkable, non-aggression pact between Germany and the Soviet Union.

It was, however, this very treaty that had produced a crisis in Germany’s relationship with Japan. That is to say, the promising negotiations of 1938 between the two countries had led to nothing, mostly because of Japan’s hesitant attitude. As a result, Germany changed its plans and on August 23, 1939 Ribbentrop, now Nazi Foreign Minister, signed a “Treaty of Non-Aggression between Germany and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics,” thereby allying Germany with Japan’s arch-enemy. This ruptured the Anti-Comintern pact, and the relationship between the two countries hit rock bottom.

By the spring of 1940, however, Germany had achieved an impressive list of military victories leading to the occupation of Denmark, Norway, the Netherlands, and, most important, France. The defeat of England seemed to be only a matter of time. This led Japan to approach Germany with the goal of ensuring protection of its own sphere of influence in East Asia.

When it became clear that the defeat of England would take longer than expected, especially in the face of possible US intervention in Europe as well as East Asia, Germany once again became interested in a military alliance with Japan. This time renewed negotiations bore fruit in the form of the Tripartite Pact between Germany, Japan and Italy, signed on September 27, 1940.

⁴⁶Suzuki, “English Diaries,” No. 26, 2012, p. 3.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 3.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 3.

Dürckheim continued to work for Ribbentrop during his second stay in Japan. This time his work included collecting information about Japanese opinion concerning Germany and its policies as well as organizing propaganda for the Nazis, especially at the academic level. About this, Dürckheim recalls:

Then the war started. The day after [Germany's invasion of Poland on September 1, 1939] Ribbentrop summoned me and said: "We need somebody to maintain contact with scientists in Japan." I answered: "Mr. Von Ribbentrop, I can't wait to return to Japan." "OK," he answered, "then come back tomorrow and tell me what you want to have [to carry out your task]." The next day I said to him: "I want eighty libraries consisting of one hundred volumes each." "What do you mean?" "Eighty libraries with one hundred volumes in each is a library for every teacher at German schools [in Japan]." He said "OK, approved. I think this is reasonable."⁴⁹

In addition, Dürckheim sought to place pro-Nazi articles in important Japanese journals while supplying the German Foreign Office's propaganda magazine, *Berlin-Rom-Tokyo*, with articles about Japan. He also claims to have played a role in the preparation of the Tripartite Pact signed on September 27, 1940.⁵⁰ Despite his lack of official status in Germany's Foreign Ministry, Dürckheim was clearly an important, even key, figure in promoting the wartime relationship between the two countries.

The View of Dürckheim within Japan

As for Dürckheim's activities in Japan, we have one observer who knew them well. He was a German academic by the name of Dr. Dietrich Seckel. Seckel taught in Japan from 1937 to 1947 and later at Heidelberg University from 1965 to 1976. He described Dürckheim's wartime activities in Japan as follows:

Dürckheim also went to Zen temple[s], where he meditated. However, his study and practice of Zen Buddhism have been extremely exaggerated. In particular, I felt this way because, at the same time, he was propagating Nazism. There was something incongruous about

⁴⁹Dürckheim *Der Weg ist das Ziel*, p. 40.

⁵⁰See Dürckheim: *Der Weg ist das Ziel*. Gespräch mit Karl Schnelting in der Reihe "Zeugen des Jahrhunderts," pp. 41-42.

this. I recall seeing him at a reception at the German Embassy. At that time he was poking his finger into the breast of one of the most famous Japanese professors of economics, who was wearing a brown silk kimono. While explaining the ideology of the German Reich to him, Dürckheim kept pushing the poor professor back until the latter reached the wall and could go no further. I could not help but feel pity for this professor who was the object of Dürckheim's indoctrination.

Dürckheim thought of himself as a friend and supporter of German teachers [in Japan]. He provided us with everything he could think of. He lectured everywhere ceaselessly, his lectures first being translated into Japanese and then, later on, distributed to all German residents in the original German. His speeches arrived in the mail on an almost daily basis. It was extremely unpleasant. He was what might be called an excellent propagandist who, possessed of a high intellectual level, traveled throughout Japan teaching Nazism and the ideology of the Third Reich."⁵¹

Neither Dürckheim's intelligence nor his dedication to propagating Nazi ideology can be in doubt. In fact, he was so dedicated to his work that he was awarded the War Merit Cross, Second Class on Hitler's birthday, April 20, 1944. Dürckheim shared this honor with such prominent Nazis as Adolf Eichmann and Dr. Josef Mengele. Yet, what of his interest in Zen? "... his study and practice of Zen Buddhism have been extremely exaggerated," Seckel informs us.

Does this mean, then, that Dürckheim never practiced with a recognized Zen master in Japan? No, for the record is clear that Dürckheim did indeed train, albeit for only a few days, with Yasutani Haku'un, then a Sōtō Zen priest, who in the postwar era became a well-known Zen master in the West, particularly the U.S. We know about Dürckheim's training with Yasutani thanks to Hashimoto Fumio, a former high school teacher of German, who served as Dürckheim's interpreter and translator at the German embassy in Tokyo.

Hashimoto described his relationship to Dürckheim as follows:

When Dürckheim first arrived in Japan, he was surrounded by Shintoists, Buddhist scholars, military men and right-wing thinkers, each of whom sought to impress him with their importance. The

⁵¹Arai, "Shūsenzen tainichi doitsujin no taiken," p. 112.

Count found it difficult to determine which of them was the real thing, and I stepped in to serve as his advisor. In addition, a great number of written materials were sent to him, and my job was to review them to determine their suitability....

In the end, what most interested the Count was traditional Japanese archery and Zen. He set up an archery range in his garden and zealously practiced every day. In addition, he went to Shinkōji temple on the outskirts of Ogawa township in Saitama Prefecture, where he stayed to practice Zen for a number of days. His instructor in *zazen* was the temple abbot, Master Yasutani [Haku'un]. I accompanied the Count and gladly practiced with him.⁵²

Hashimoto relates that it was he who first took an interest in Yasutani because of the latter's strong emphasis on both the practice of *zazen* and the realization of enlightenment. This emphasis on practice was a revelation for him, for until then his only knowledge of Buddhism had come from scholars who "had never properly done *zazen* or realized enlightenment."⁵³

In particular, Hashimoto was impressed by Yasutani's 1943 book on Zen Master Dōgen, and a modern-day compilation of Dōgen's teachings for the laity known as the *Shūshōgi*. Hashimoto claimed that Yasutani's book revealed "the greatness of this master [i.e., Yasutani] and the profundity of Buddhism."⁵⁴ So impressed was Hashimoto that he not only provided Dürckheim with a detailed description of the book's contents but went on to translate the entire book into German for him.

Yasutani's book, coupled with Hashimoto's recommendation, was the catalyst for Dürckheim's training at Shinkōji, albeit for only "a number of days". Dürckheim could not help being aware of Yasutani's extremely right-wing, if not fanatical, political views, which are clearly expressed in his book. For example, Yasutani described the purpose of his book as follows:

Asia is one. Annihilating the treachery of the United States and Britain and establishing the Greater East Asia Co-prosperity Sphere is the only way to save the one billion people of Asia so that they can, with peace of mind, proceed on their respective paths. Furthermore,

⁵²Quoted in Victoria, *Zen War Stories*, pp. 88-89.

⁵³Ibid., p. 89.

⁵⁴Ibid., p. 89.

it is only natural that this will contribute to the construction of a new world order, exorcising evil spirits from the world and leading to the realization of eternal peace and happiness for all humanity. I believe this is truly the critically important mission to be accomplished by our great Japanese Empire.

In order to fulfill this mission it is absolutely necessary to have a powerful military force as well as plentiful material resources. Furthermore, it is necessary to employ the power of culture, for it is most especially the power of spiritual culture that determines the final outcome. In fact, it must be said that in accomplishing this very important national mission the most important and fundamental factor is the power of spiritual culture....

It is impossible to discuss Japanese culture while ignoring Buddhism. Those who would exclude Buddhism while seeking to exalt the Spirit of Japan are recklessly ignoring the history of our imperial land and engaging in a mistaken movement that distorts the reality of our nation. In so doing, it must be said, such persons hinder the proper development of our nation's destiny. For this reason we must promulgate and exalt the true Buddha Dharma, making certain that the people's thought is resolute and immovable. Beyond this, we must train and send forth a great number of capable men who will be able to develop and exalt the culture of our imperial land, thereby reverently assisting in the holy enterprise of bringing the eight corners of the world under one roof.⁵⁵

The words "it is most especially the power of spiritual culture that determines the final outcome" must have been particularly attractive to Dürckheim inasmuch as they paralleled his Nazi creed. However, without knowledge of modern Japanese Buddhist history, it is unlikely that he would have understood the reference to "those who would exclude Buddhism while seeking to exalt the Spirit of Japan..."

Yasutani's reference is to Shinto and Neo-Confucian-inspired criticism, dating back to the late Edo period (1600-1867), that condemned Buddhism as a foreign, degenerate religion defiling a divine Japan properly headed by a "living (Shinto) god" (*arahito-gami*). The reference, of course, is to the emperor. As late as the 1930s Shinto and Neo-Confucian advocates maintained that Buddhism, an out-

⁵⁵Quoted in Victoria, *Zen War Stories*, pp. 69-70.

dated foreign import, had nothing to offer modern Japanese society, a position Yasutani vehemently rejected.

Note, too, that the basis of the martial spirit of the Japanese people was described as the “Spirit of Japan” (*Yamato-damashii*). Yasutani clearly concurred with this belief, though he asserted that it was Japanese Buddhism that made the cultivation of this ultranationalist and xenophobic spirit possible. Yasutani even turned Zen Master Dōgen, the 13th century founder of the Sōtō Zen sect in Japan, into the model of an Imperial subject:

The Spirit of Japan is, of course, unique to our country. It does not exist in either China or India. Neither is it to be found in Italy or Germany, let alone in the U.S., England and other countries.... We all deeply believe, without the slightest doubt, that this spirit will be increasingly cultivated, trained, and enlarged until its brilliance fills the entire world. The most remarkable feature of the Spirit of Japan is the power derived from the great unity [of our people]....

In the event that one wishes to exalt the Spirit of Japan, it is imperative to utilize Japanese Buddhism. The reason for this is that as far as a nutrient for cultivation of the Spirit of Japan is concerned, I believe there is absolutely nothing superior to Japanese Buddhism.... That is to say, all the particulars [of the Spirit of Japan] are taught by Japanese Buddhism, including the great way of ‘no-self’ (*muga*) that consists of the fundamental duty of ‘extinguishing the self in order to serve the public [good]’ (*messhi hōkō*); the determination to transcend life and death in order to reverently sacrifice oneself for one’s sovereign; the belief in unlimited life as represented in the oath to die seven times over to repay [the debt of gratitude owed] one’s country; reverently assisting in the holy enterprise of bringing the eight corners of the world under one roof; and the valiant and devoted power required for the construction of the Pure Land on this earth.

Within Japanese Buddhism it is the Buddha Dharma of Zen Master Dōgen, having been directly inherited from Shākyamuni, that has emphasized the cultivation of the people’s spirit, for its central focus is on religious practice, especially the great duty of reverence for the emperor.⁵⁶

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 70.

Yasutani excludes even wartime allies, Germany and Italy, from sharing in the uniquely Japanese “Spirit of Japan”. The reader might suspect that Dürckheim would have been somewhat alienated by Yasutani’s words; but in fact the Nazis readily recognized that every *Volk* (people/nation) had their own unique spirit and culture. Thus it was self-evident that the equally unique “German Spirit” (*Deutscher Geist*) propagated by the Nazis would have excluded the Spirit of Japan.

Nevertheless, there was nothing to prevent the unique spirits of the three peoples from working closely together against common enemies, while simultaneously learning and sharing with one another. Not least of their common enemies were the Jews, for Yasutani was also an anti-Semite:

We must be aware of the existence of the demonic teachings of the Jews, who assert things like [the existence of] equality in the phenomenal world, thereby disturbing public order in our nation’s society and destroying [governmental] control. Not only this, these demonic conspirators hold the deep-rooted delusion and blind belief that, as far as the essential nature of human beings is concerned, there is, by nature, differentiation between superior and inferior. They are caught up in the delusion that they alone have been chosen by God and are [therefore] an exceptionally superior people. The result of all this is a treacherous design to usurp [control of] and dominate the entire world, thus provoking the great upheavals of today. It must be said that this is an extreme example of the evil resulting from superstitious belief and deep-rooted delusion.⁵⁷

Since anti-Semitism was not typical of wartime Zen masters, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that for Dürckheim among the most attractive features of Yasutani’s teaching were both his embrace of a militarism based on “no-self” and his virulent antipathy to Jews.

At the war’s end Dürckheim was imprisoned in Tokyo’s Sugamo prison by the Allies for some eighteen months as a suspected Class A war criminal. However, he was eventually released and repatriated to West Germany in 1947, where he enjoyed a long successful postwar career as a psychotherapist, hiding his Nazi past. He did, however, continue to promote his understanding of Zen, claiming to have had an enlightenment experience, i.e., *satori*, while in Japan.

⁵⁷Ibid., p. 73.

Conclusion

What all the Buddhist-related figures, both Japanese and German, introduced in this article ultimately have in common with each other and the Nazis is their willingness to *instrumentalize*, i.e., to *weaponize*, Buddhism, most especially Japanese Buddhism and Zen, in the service of the state at war, in the service of *both their personal and collective self-interest*, and, ultimately, *in the service of death*.

This is encapsulated in the following wartime statement attributed to Hitler by Lieutenant-General Yamashita Tomoyuki. “Hitler emphasized,” said Yamashita, “that in the coming age, the interests of Japan and Germany would be identical, because the two have *a common spiritual foundation*. And he hinted that he would leave instructions to the German people to bind themselves eternally to the Japanese spirit.”⁵⁸ (Italics mine)

Sadly, the historical reality is that something similar can be said about religious leaders from other faiths in Germany and elsewhere. To give but one example in a German context: in December 1942, the Roman Catholic Church’s Office of Military Affairs wrote the following at the height of Germany’s invasion of the Soviet Union:

God gave the German people a noble mission in this war—reordering Europe. This reconstruction should be done in the name of Christ. Bolshevism means a Europe without God, and without and against Christ. The front of young nations led by Germany wants a Europe with God, with Christ.... So we celebrate the birth of Christ very purposely. Christianity is after all not just a workshop for the highest spiritual culture but also a construction site for national greatness and power.⁵⁹

The question is, has the effort to ‘weaponize’ Buddhism (and other religions), to suit the aims of state and religious leaders, come to an end? Or, on the contrary, are we already in the midst of the next round of bloodletting based on the realization that, as stated by the Japanese Imperial Army, “Faith is power”?⁶⁰

An Associated Press article during the Iraq War described the role of military chaplains as follows:

⁵⁸ Quoted in Tolischus, Tokyo Record, p. 158.

⁵⁹ Quoted in Missalla, Für Gott, Führer und Vaterland (For God, Führer and Fatherland), p. 151.

⁶⁰ Quoted in Victoria, Zen at War, 2nd ed., p. 111. The phrase “Faith is Power” (J. Shin wa chikara nari) was the title of a section in the Field Service Combatant’s Code (Senjinkun), promulgated by Tōjō Hideki on 8 January 1941.

As American troops cope with life—and death—on a faraway battlefield, military chaplains cope with them, offering prayers, comfort and spiritual advice to keep the American military machine running.... Chaplains help grease the wheels of any soldier's troubled conscience by arguing that killing combatants is justified. Capt. Warren Haggray, a 48-year-old Baptist Army chaplain said: "I teach them from the scripture, and in the scripture I can see many times where men were told...to go out and defeat the enemy. This is real stuff. You're out there and you gotta eliminate that guy, because if you don't, he's gonna eliminate you." "I agree," said Lt. Cmdr. Paul Shaughnessy, a Navy chaplain and Roman Catholic priest from Worcester, Massachusetts."⁶¹ (Italics mine)

As for the putative unity of Zen and *both* a metaphorical *and physical* sword professed by Suzuki and so many other wartime Japanese Zen leaders, the following quotation reveals that this understanding has already crossed the wide Pacific and is alive and well *in the U.S. military*. At the dedication in October 2007 of the "Vast Refuge Dharma Hall Chapel" at the Air Force Academy in Colorado Springs, CO., Wiley Burch, a Buddhist priest affiliated with the Hollow Bones Order of the Rin-zai Zen sect, said:

I understood there was a possibility of a place for Buddhism in the military. I understand the culture very well, and I understand the diversity of it. From that place, rather than being hard and coming in against, I came in willing to accept all. That's a Buddhist teaching, not to set yourself up against things so much as to just be, we say, like clouds and like water, just flow.... Without compassion, war is nothing but criminal activity. It is necessary sometimes to take life, but we never take it for granted.⁶²

Germany's God-given mission to reorder Europe; Japanese Buddhism, especially Zen's, promotion of *selflessly* dying for a divine emperor; U.S. Christianity's greas-

⁶¹ Associated Press article of 29 August 2004.

⁶² Quoted on the 'Buddhist Military Sangha' website available at: <http://buddhistmilitary-sangha.blogspot.jp>, posted on Thursday, 1 November 2007 (accessed on 11 December 2013). Note that many other allegedly Buddhist justifications for killing in wartime can be found on this website. Ironically, many of these justifications are similar to if not identical with those given by Japanese Zen and other Buddhist leaders in wartime Japan.

ing the wheels of a soldier's troubled conscience; the necessity sometimes to take life, etc. are all truly "real stuff". They are, in fact, the stuff of *death*.

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Book Reviews

Fire and Cognition in the R̥gveda. By Joanna Jurewicz. Warsaw: Dom Wydawniczy ELIPSA.* 2010. 485 pp. ISBN 978-83-7151-893-5.

This book would be of great interest to anyone working to understand not only what the Buddha meant by the things he said, but why he said them in the particular way he did. The book doesn't deal with Buddhism at all, yet as Prof. Jurewicz lays out her new understanding of what the R̥gvedic poets were doing with their verses – illuminating not just their meaning but their methods – what she finds presents compelling parallels to the Buddha's own methods and his message. Further study of her work and of other scholars working in the field of Vedic studies can only help increase our understanding of what the Buddha was saying. The period she is studying provided much of the cultural context for the times in which he came to his insights, developed his methods, and taught. The methods then used to convey information are likely to be closer to those he used than are methods that evolved much later.

When we in the West began our encounter with the Vedas, in the 18th and 19th centuries, one of the first impressions that seemed to stick was that they were filled with bad puns, outlandish linkages through unlikely pairings, and, in general, disorganized thinking. For example, this is what F. Max Müller had to say:

“...a literature for which pedantry and downright absurdity can hardly be matched anywhere.”¹

*Because the book is hard (impossible?) to find in the West, here are the publisher's contact details: ul. Inflancka 15/198, 00-189 Warszawa; tel/fax 22 635 03 01, 22 635 17 85; e-mail: elipsa@elipsa.pl; website: www.elipsa.pl.

¹As quoted by Brian K. Smith, *Reflections on Resemblance, Ritual, and Religion*. New York: Oxford University Press (1989).

This Western chauvinism is being slowly dispelled as scholars discover that it may well be that these ancient authors were as clear as anyone in their thinking, and as skilled in the artistry applied to their presentation of new and hard-to-describe ideas about cosmology and cognition as any modern writer. It wasn't that the ancient poets lacked sophistication, but that we, as interpreters, have assumed that our way of explaining what we see is the best, perhaps even the only way to go about it. Consequently we have been unable to apply clear thinking and an open mind to those ancient hymns. In our ignorance, caught in our preconceptions, we could not see the depth in these works, nor fully appreciate their beauty.

Jurewicz's book goes a long way toward remedying this failure. Using the relatively new science of cognitive linguistics, she first untangles and then neatly reties various references, mostly to activities that were both familiar to the audience the poets were addressing, and of critical importance to them. Two of the main themes she picks up on are expansion (from the experiences of the Aryans moving east) and the appearance of the morning light.

As she describes her work in the book:

“The present book will therefore treat the RV as evidence as to how Indian philosophical thinking began. Though Rgvedic thought is immersed in dense figurative language and seems to lack the discipline of rational thought, I will show that such a discipline can be found and it is possible to reconstruct its main lines.”²

After a brief history of the works she covers, she begins with an introduction to cognitive linguistics, which I will summarize, far too briefly. It is the study of how we use our common experiences to describe something new or unfamiliar to our listeners, with the expectation that they will be able to leap to an intuitive understanding of what we are trying to convey. This idea is already familiar to us via similes and metaphors, but what is being described here is often much more subtle and complex.

In the book “The Way We Think: Conceptual Blending And The Mind's Hidden Complexities” (2003) early explorers of cognitive linguistics, Gilles Fauconnier and Mark Turner, provide an example of the way an “input space” is used to generate a fresh insight into a new skill. In this case the speaker is trying to describe to an apprentice waiter how to carry a tray one-handed through a crowded

²*Fire and Cognition*, p. 22.

restaurant. The skill involves adopting a special gliding step to manoeuvre between tables, and the “input space” that’s called on is how a skier moves downhill avoiding bumps and manoeuvring around curves. In order to acquire the skill the new employee will take from the input space just those aspects that would apply, leaving out, for example, how the skier’s two feet remain more or less parallel, rather than walking.

So, for example, in Jurewicz’s book, images of the restrictions of darkness are touched upon and overlaid with many other claustrophobic situations like being trapped in a rocky enclosure, as one might when migrating through the mountains in an attempt to take over new territory. Daylight is associated with freedom of movement and the ability to see clearly, even to know. One’s enemies are associated with enclosure, with darkness, and with ignorance.

All these images and concepts are here amply demonstrated, building up an intriguing map of the ways in which the Vedic poets consciously used this method of describing and layering common cultural events, and the ways they were perceived, into “input spaces” that were intended to bring the recipient to understanding obscure and unfamiliar concepts. Those concepts are not, in our time, easily spotted by those of us who were raised in a culture that simply doesn’t speak or teach in quite that way. And, as Jurewicz points out, our lack of familiarity with the cultural context also makes it difficult for us to understand the imagery.

“The basis for metonymic and metaphoric conceptualisation comes from experience and each linguistic community builds a consistent net of concepts that facilitate thinking about the world. The more the speaker’s experience is remote from the hearer’s, the more difficult is mutual understanding, and the experience of the Rgvedic poets is very remote from ours.”³

One of the things being described through references to the light of dawn is the process of cognition, of the perceived special ability of the poets and their audiences to see and therefore to understand what their enemies, caught in darkness, could not. We use these same images of “seeing the light” and having understanding “dawn on” us. Our use of these metaphors is so familiar we often don’t even think about the origins of the phrases. It may well be that the methods of the Vedic poets – though rather different from ours – were equally familiar to their listeners.

³ibid p. 43

By the conclusion of her book, she has built a convincing case for the poets' careful and elegant use of what we now call "cognitive linguistics" using their own ingenious (though to us obscure) style to describe metaphysical concepts through the language of everyday reality.

As she describes the ultimate meanings of their messages, it is possible to hear echoes of the Buddha's insights, or perhaps more aptly, the Buddha echoing their insights and their methods. It seems to me that he is playing off the rishis in about the same way they played off cultural knowledge. Stephanie Jamison describes this as the poets using cultural knowledge of gods and rituals and the way they are expected to be discussed to "play with and play against these expectations."⁴ This seems to me to be very much what the Buddha was doing.

One of the ideas the Buddha may have been playing off is the idea of darkness, as an equivalent of ignorance, against the idea of light as represented by him through Awakening.

"The symbols of darkness convey the idea of lack of freedom, while freedom appears with the symbol of light... In this way That One manifests itself as the Other which is totally opposed to itself – the Other who is not free. We may presume that its lack of freedom is caused by its lack of cognition."⁵

In other words, in the Vedic understanding, there is Self and Other, and Other is none too smart, in darkness, and is not free. To be free, Self must defeat Other (and its ignorance). This is, in a sense, what the Buddha is saying: that we must free our Buddha-nature from the dark, enclosing, limiting ignorance of the enemy of freedom we have ourselves created.

I suggest that, just as we have not understood the Vedic poets because they were conjuring ideas using methods that are not familiar to us, so we may have misunderstood some of what the Buddha was saying for the very same reasons. I am not suggesting that his methods were exactly the same as theirs, but it would be useful for us to consider the possibility that he refined and built on both their ideas and the sophisticated techniques they used.

Considering the use of language as something that evolves, it is easy to see that the Buddha's methods will have a much closer kinship to the indirect and poetic

⁴ibid p. 33. Jurewicz quoting Jamison in her book, *The Rig Veda Between Two Worlds / Le Rgveda entre deux mondes*. Quatre conférences au Collège de France en mai 2004 (Publications de l'Institut de Civilisation Indienne). Paris: de Boccard (2007).

⁵ibid p. 439.

style of the Vedic poets, than they will have to the rather bald and straightforward speech that we use more than two thousand years later.

What I see as possible is that he was aware of their methods and used them consciously, but as a kind of “spin”, almost a reverse of what they were doing. They used everyday, familiar experiences, and concepts drawn from them, to describe something too obscure to be talked about otherwise. By the time the Buddha lived, several centuries later, the ideas the poets had introduced had become commonplace. Now the discussion of how we come into being, how we think about things, and the cosmic order and gods’ effects on us had become what was normal and understood and talked about widely in society; this was the new common ground. The Buddha used what was once obscure but by then commonplace, to describe something hard to see and hard to describe: what we do that builds the sense that we have a lasting self, which we do through everyday experiences, when we feel, and perceive, and react. If this is the case, then there is a certain very beautiful symmetry to his methods. He took what was once obscure, that had been described by the mundane, and then had, by the time he taught, become quite familiar; and he used the by then familiar to describe his new idea, which is at first obscure but which, once we understand what he’s describing (the everyday experience of life), we will find to be quite mundane! From the mundane to the sublime, which became mundane, and was then used to describe the sublime which is really mundane.

“Thus That One reintegrates its unity of a free reality and, at the same time, freedom becomes an inherent feature of its manifested aspect.”⁶

Beyond what seems obvious to me – that the Buddha was playing with and playing on the methods and ideas of the Vedic poets – I would argue that the Buddha used rebirth as an “input space” in the way the poets used dawn light: not to talk about the apparent subject, but to get the listener to conjure up something else entirely. They might have said, for example, that it is dawn light – or the fire god leading them, as dawn light – that gives them the power to win battles. This might well be true. But battles aren’t always won; so is it necessarily true? No, and so light to win battles isn’t the always-truth that’s being discussed when those ancient poets talked of dawn winning battles: they were really talking about the light in our minds, which is an ultimate truth. And the Buddha was talking about the same

⁶ibid p. 439.

thing – about ignorance and the way we think – though both his reasoning and the point he was making were different from theirs.

Jurewicz discusses the definition of general domains as superordinate categories (like “animal” or “furniture”). The subordinate categories are the finest (like “retriever” or “rocker”). But the base levels (like “dog” or “chair”), which are in between are, according to cognitive linguistics, psychologically the most significant to us. She then says that the superordinate level, which I would say is the level the Buddha is addressing when he speaks about karma and rebirth, has:

“...an overall perceived shape which is mentally represented by a single image... Each general domain serves as the source domain for several target domains... The general domains refer to natural phenomena, objects and activities... in the case of conceptual blends, they often provide organizing frames for the whole conceptual network and give it consistency. If elaborated, they also facilitate understanding of an abstract concept in terms of a more concrete one and highlight various aspects of their target domains, or the concepts in focus, in the blends.”⁷

This is what I see Gotama doing with the natural processes of conception, consciousness, and birth into name-and-form – which are superordinate processes – as well as when he gives a particular set of names to the ordinary experiences we have of contact, feeling, and so on. Those particular names (e.g. *taṇhā* and *upādāna*) would recall fire rituals to the minds of his audience. He is using the very familiar (to his audience) concepts of the origins of self and the way rituals create and modify self, as well as the supposed outcome of those rituals, as a superordinate general domain. If it works as intended in the mind of the recipient, this will help them come to see the “target domain” of what it is we do that creates the certainty that we have a lasting self, as well as where this leads. I would further suggest that in all his descriptions of the way karma and rebirth work, he is doing the same thing: using ideas familiar to his audience as a general domain that models the concepts he is trying to get across. Over and above what the Vedic poets may have been doing with their methods, the Buddha adds another level of usefulness to the general domain of karma and rebirth, providing insight into the flow of actions – the processes – that cause us to create a sense of self from the conditions of our nature and the societies we live in. The lessons he teaches about

⁷ibid p. 38.

karma and rebirth would have been useful to his audience even if they never “got” the “target domain” of the deeper lessons he was trying to teach. A large part of my point is that, though we cannot understand the Vedic poets without great effort, it must have been easier for their audience, because they were accustomed to their teachers speaking in that way. They knew that something was being addressed other than the obvious, and that they were expected to make the leap from the “input space” to the “target space” – from the skier’s stance to how it applies to the waiter’s. Apparently, that style of speaking was common enough during the Vedic period to be understood by the contemporary listener, because if it were otherwise – if the Vedas were as incomprehensible and apparently foolish to the audience then as they have been, until recently, to us – it’s doubtful they would have been passed on. Even though these techniques are uncommon now, it is reasonable to consider that the Buddha made use of them. In both the case of the poets and of the Buddha, we tend to fail to understand the very different methods that were in use, and thereby miss some of what would have been much clearer to their original audiences.

Jurewicz’s book describes and explains many linkages of the everyday to the obscure, the profane to the sublime, and many of them seem likely to underpin the Buddha’s thinking, or at the very least to have been familiar concepts he was “playing with, on, or against”. Even though the book is dense with scholarly arguments and evidence, it is quite readable. Indeed, for anyone serious about understanding the Buddha’s words in the context of his times, it is a must-read.

Linda S. Blanchard

***Reflections on Buddhist Social Philosophy.* By Laksiri Jayasuriya. 2014. Colombo. S. Godage & Brothers (PVT) Ltd. ISBN 9789553050731.**

This book makes an important contribution to what, as Jayasuriya himself observes, has been a relatively overlooked area of Buddhist studies. In bringing together a collection of essays on Buddhist social questions, such as its relationship to politics, statecraft and war, Jayasuriya indicates how Buddhist thought remains useful for resolving issues generated by the modern world. He argues that questions pertaining to Buddhist social philosophy cannot be adequately answered in isolation from the Buddhist stance on metaphysics, epistemology, ethics and soteriology. The author's long academic career in the social sciences, his sustained intellectual interest in Buddhism, and his Sri Lankan heritage render him well-equipped to evaluate the complexities of the Buddhist attitude to ethics, particularly the ethics of war.

There are five chapters in total. Chapters one and two focus, respectively, on establishing Buddhism's intellectual value in the modern world and on arguing that the methodologies and ethical concerns of secular/ scientific humanism and Buddhist humanism are remarkably similar. The remaining three chapters are concerned with 'engaged' Buddhism: the application of Buddhist principles and values to the resolution of social/ political problems.

In the first chapter Jayasuriya questions the extent to which the more intellectually developed aspects of Buddhist discourse could prove useful in what he terms the 'Asian Century' - i.e. the 21st century, which, he anticipates, will be dominated by the political power and economic growth of China and India. In his opinion, the two dominant features of modern times are: (i) a 'rampant and growing' anti-intellectualism, associated with religious fundamentalism, and (ii) the increase of greed and selfishness. Unfortunately, due to a lack of evidence, his justification for thinking of these vices as *dominant* is not especially clear. While *creationist* theorists may be propagating anti-scientific ideas, more statistical evidence would be needed to show that anti-intellectual trends in general were 'rampant and growing'.

On the other hand, he does provide a robust argument as to why thinking through contemporary social issues from a Buddhist perspective should be helpful. He considers that commitment to rationalism and empiricism is shared by descendants of the European Enlightenment and by Buddhists alike. A further similarity can be found in their unequivocal emphasis on *humanist* values. Jaya-

suriya suggests that the spiritual and social success of the ‘Asian Century’ will depend on the adoption of rational and empirical approaches to the sciences, both physical and social, and of humanist ethical values. With support from canonical sources, such as the *Cūlahatthipadopama Sutta*, MN 27, Jayasuriya argues that the Buddhist tradition has unswervingly advocated empiricism as the means of acquiring knowledge. Although, compared with other religions, the Buddhist epistemological approach may be more attractive in that the Buddha repeatedly advises his followers to test the truth of what he says against experience and evidence, as in the *Kālāma Sutta*,¹ AN 3.65, Jayasuriya over-estimates the extent to which Buddhism and modern science are comparable. For example, he states that “Buddhism stands unique among the mainstream religions of the world in that it sees no [such] qualitative difference between a scientific and religious world view” (p.22).

In concluding his first chapter Jayasuriya claims that the code of ethical conduct arising from a Buddhist view of morality “is both pragmatic and utilitarian” (p.38). This statement is surprising. What does he mean? A distinctive characteristic of Buddhist ethics is that the moral quality of an action can largely, and primarily, be decided by determining the intention (*cetanā*) of the agent. Buddhist ethics, therefore, is not usually described as utilitarian. Whereas the one system evaluates an act by the mental processes preceding it, the other grounds its evaluation in the outcomes achieved. Of course, this is not to say that the importance of securing good consequences is absent in Buddhist thought. Buddhists are not unfamiliar with the idea of negligence (i.e. the possibility of acting from excellent intentions but producing dreadful consequences). To describe Buddhist ethics as utilitarian suggests that an action is right *because* it produces good consequences, but in Buddhism an act is right when motivated by good intention. Actions performed with good intention will *usually* also have good consequences, provided they are combined with intelligence.

Further, it would have been helpful for Jayasuriya to clarify what he means by his use of the word ‘pragmatic’. If he means that the Buddhist ethical code is designed to resolve ‘real world’ problems, then this conclusion is supported by the Pāli texts. However, another, more philosophically technical, meaning of the word is employed by proponents of pragmatism, as developed by such philoso-

¹“Come Kālāmas, do not go by oral tradition, by lineage of teaching, by hearsay, by a collection of scriptures... But when, Kālāmas, you know for yourselves “These things are unwholesome’... then you should abandon them.”

phers as William James and John Dewey. Those thinkers claim that the truth of a proposition relies upon its functionality. The Buddha, unlike the pragmatists, held a proposition to be true on grounds other than its usefulness. Buddha thought that ascribing to his ethical ideology and believing in his doctrines is useful *because* they are true, and not the other way around.

Chapter two develops the idea that Buddhist humanism, like secular humanism, constitutes a powerful force against the emergent trends of anti-intellectualism and selfishness. The writings of Bertrand Russell, a pioneering figure in the revision of social/ ethical norms in the 20th century, are cited extensively. The aim of the chapter is to assess how far these two varieties of humanism are congruent, asking whether Russell's criticisms of Abrahamic religions apply to Buddhism. Russell's philosophical objections to religions purporting to prove the existence of God (through cosmological, teleological and moral arguments) are not applicable to Buddhism for the obvious reason that the Buddhist *religion* does not posit the existence of a supreme deity. Russell's objection to belief in the afterlife takes two forms: an intellectual and a moral. In the first place, he argues that there is insufficient evidence susceptible to reasoned scrutiny in support of the belief. On this count the Buddhist theory of rebirth is also subject to Russell's criticism. Secondly, Russell holds that belief in the afterlife has resulted in a pre-occupation with personal virtue at the expense of acting for the social good. Are the Saṅgha guilty of neglecting society by living a life orientated towards the goal of securing personal spiritual liberation? In brief, Jayasuriya's answer is *no*. He argues that concern for one's own liberation and concern for the good of society are mutually dependent. He relies on the *Sallekha Sutta*, MN 8, for canonical support of this view: it is stated "that one who is himself sinking in the mud should pull out another who is sinking in the mud is impossible; that one who is not himself sinking in the mud should pull out another who is sinking in the mud is possible". In other words, concern for one's own spiritual development is a pre-requisite for anyone wishing to assist the spiritual growth of others. Russell disagreed. Instead, he was convinced that "the Buddhist priesthood – as it exists, for example, in Tibet – has been obscurantist, tyrannous, and cruel in the highest degree".²

Although Jayasuriya's strategy of comparing Buddhist social ethics with Russell's humanism may initially perplex the reader (why *justify* Buddhism thus?), it is helpful to remember that as a champion for thinking through social ethics

²Bertrand Russell, *Has Religion Made Useful Contributions to Civilization?* (Routledge: Oxon, 2005), 21.

without recourse to religion, Russell succeeded. Perhaps, therefore, Jayasuriya's pouring of Buddhist humanism into the mould of Russell's secular humanism should be interpreted as illustrating that the revision of social/ ethical norms is possible and is now needed, given the growth of selfishness for which he holds 'post-industrial capitalism' responsible.

In chapter three Jayasuriya notes that the emphasis placed on understanding the causes of things is common to both Buddhism and the scientific West. From this, Jayasuriya draws a very interesting, and provocative, conclusion: "What this signifies is that there is no qualitative difference between the rational empiricism of the western scientific discourse and the Buddhist metaphysic" (p.60). Whether such a conclusion is warranted is highly questionable. The fact that both Buddhism and modern science share an interest in causes does not render them qualitatively identical. Much more by way of argument would need to be added to make this view convincing. Also, how would the Buddhist use of the Tetralemma (affirmation, negation, both affirmation and negation and neither affirmation nor negation of a proposition) in answering metaphysical questions square with modern scientific discourse?

The purpose of this chapter is to refute the suggestion, made by Toynbee, Weber and others, that Buddhism, because it is world-renouncing, is steeped in individualism and is divorced from the realities of social life. Instead, the social dimensions of Buddhist ethics are shown to have been present from the time of the Buddha himself. 'Engaged' Buddhism, he argues, is not a new phenomenon. Rather, the principles, and even some of the practices, of engaged Buddhism are *latent* in all forms of Buddhism. Each part of the eight-fold path attests to the idea that an individual has moral duties towards the community. For although it is by following the eight-fold path and internalizing the truth of impermanence, suffering and insubstantiality that the *individual* is liberated, it should not be forgotten that following the eight-fold path necessitates some *social* interaction. Where the content of the eight-fold path indicates that the Saṅgha has social responsibilities, there are canonical texts (e.g. *Sigālovāda Sutta*, DN 31) which confirm that the laity should fulfil their social/ ethical duties for the sake of human welfare.

Unsurprisingly, Jayasuriya focuses on the Theravāda conception of the relationship between the individual and society. It is, however, worth remembering that the figure of the bodhisattva in the Mahāyāna traditions can play an important role in challenging the idea that Buddhism, as a religion, is exclusively inward-looking and egocentric. Although the notion of altruism may, strictly

speaking, be precluded in a system which denies the ultimate reality of the self, because the very concept relies on the validity of distinguishing between *self* and *other*, Mahāyāna thinkers have persistently stressed the need to extend compassion (e.g. Śāntideva).

Chapter four uses the foregoing conclusions to investigate Buddhism's relationship to politics and statecraft. Jayasuriya confines his enquiry to an historical and text-based analysis of the Buddhist attitude to politics, rather than undertaking case studies. The Buddha's rejection of the traditional ordering of society (in the caste system) and his preference for smaller tribal oligarchies over large monarchical kingdoms is, Jayasuriya argues, partly explained by the fact that the Buddha was living through a period of considerable social and economic change. Such change was made possible by agricultural developments, urbanization and the emergence of a new mercantile community. Some have interpreted the Buddha's rejection of the caste system as indicating a *specific* political agenda on his part. This interpretation, Jayasuriya thinks, lacks sufficient support.

However, it is argued that "the Buddhist approach to social philosophy and political governance derive from the principles and practices governing the organization of the monastic community" (p.82). In other words, we should look to the structure of the Saṅgha in attempting to gauge the Buddhist view on social and political issues. The notions of brotherhood, equality and mutual respect should be at the heart of the religious community. When disagreement arises within the community, a combination of intelligence and compassion should be used to achieve resolution. The Buddha's eventual agreement to admit women into the community indicates his commitment to equality. To argue that the Buddha advocated *democracy*, as the term is now used in the West, would be misleading. Yet, he certainly maintained that a ruler's authority was not *absolute*. Indeed, in the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*, DN 2, the assumption of the divine right of kings is questioned. Other texts, such as the *Aggañña Sutta*, DN 27, make clear the Buddha's belief that a healthy relationship between subjects and sovereign depends on the reciprocal fulfilment of duties.

The chapter closes by remarking that the Asokan *welfare state* (promoting the values of compassion, liberty, justice, non-aggression and tolerance) might be seen as the manifestation of an ideal Buddhist state. The legacy of Emperor Asoka has left its mark on Buddhist social theory and remains important today as an *ideal* to be striven after. The principles endorsed by Asoka perhaps influenced Nāgārjuna's *Jewel Garland of Royal Counsel* and the Ambedkar Buddhist

movement alike.

The final chapter addresses the Buddhist attitude to the ethics of war. Jayasuriya introduces the distinction made in Christian *just war* theory between *jus ad bellum* and *jus in bello* (i.e. the distinction between the principles governing the right to go to war and those governing the conduct of war). In contrast with Christianity, for which the idea of a Holy war can be legitimated, Buddhism cannot justify acts of organized aggression for the purposes of proselytizing. The principle of non-violence, a basic tenet of Buddhism, is expressed in the first precept. The foundational role that this principle plays in the Buddhist ethical system explains the anti-war attitude of Buddhism. The doctrine of *ahimsā* is integral to the practices of engaged Buddhists, e.g. Thich Nhat Hanh and Ghosananda.³

Jayasuriya first turns his attention to the *jus in bello* aspect of the *just war* theory, arguing that, due to the emphasis on individual responsibility resulting from the doctrine of karma, a soldier at war must bear the full responsibility for his actions. He claims that, “moral responsibility is not overridden by any notion of ‘military necessity’ which could seriously impinge on the morality of conduct” (p.107). Therefore a soldier cannot justify the mistreatment of prisoners or the deliberate killing of innocent civilians. A soldier’s belief that he is personally accountable for his conduct in war may prevent him from inflicting disproportionate harm, but if the war has been waged by a democratically elected government, then to some degree those elected are also responsible for the methods used to secure victory.

Jayasuriya dedicates a large portion of the final chapter to assessing Buddhist *just war* thinking through the lens of the recently concluded civil war in Sri Lanka. This is certainly one of the most interesting sections in the book. Many Buddhists perceived the tactics of the Tamil rebels as constituting an “attack on the integrity of the Sinhalese nation and [this was] taken to be the just cause of the civil war” (p. 117). Rendering such an outlook compatible with the first precept is difficult, but Jayasuriya suggests that it was uncertainty about whether priority should be given to the prescription to protect the dharma, on the one hand, or, on the other, to the prohibition of violence which caused many Buddhists in Sri Lanka, including monks, to support the civil war. Sometimes, particularly in Mahāyāna traditions where the *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* is used for support, Buddhists attempt to justify

³http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Preah_Maha_Ghosananda Accessed 13/10/2014.

the non-observance of the precepts for the sake of dharma protection.⁴ However, the natural question to be asked is, how far can one go for the preservation of the dharma? Further, if the precepts are, in some sense, foundational to the dharma, how can one hope to protect it through contradicting it?

This book addresses key issues in engaged Buddhism and demonstrates the value of intellectual Buddhist discourse for the modern world. It is certainly an important contribution to the field, not least because it surveys the issues from a wide range of perspectives, backing up the arguments with contributions from modern scholarship and canonical sources alike. Unfortunately the book is marred by numerous typographical errors (at least five per page). There are no diacritics to indicate the correct Pāli and Sanskrit spellings. This affects the quality of the reader's experience and will undoubtedly inhibit the distribution of the work. A further point is that, though Jayasuriya does state in the preface that these essays were originally published elsewhere, the editorial work undertaken to make them suitable for publication alongside each other is of a low standard. For example, at several points the reader experiences what feels like *déjà vu*: in fact it is a case of 'copy and paste'. However, these imperfections do not detract from the fact that this is a thought-provoking book which is well worth reading.

Katie Javanaud

⁴The *Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra* should not be confused with the *Mahāparinibbāna Sutta*, DN 16. It is a Mahāyāna *sūtra*, preserved in an expanded version in Chinese. In Chapter 19 are told that "The Bodhisattva may have occasion to transgress against the precepts if he knows he can indeed make others possess the Mahāyāna *sūtras*... on such an occasion he may transgress the precepts" without fear of the Avīci Hell.

Studies in Pāli Commentarial Literature, Sources, Controversies and Insights. By Endo Toshiichi. HKU: CBS Publication Series. Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhist Studies at the University of Hong Kong, 2013, xiv + 270 pp. ISBN: 978-988-16843-2-5.

The present book is a collection of Endo's previously published articles with new additions that update his studies to reflect the latest research standards. As the title of his work aptly captures, he treats three main issues: the sources of the Pāli commentaries, some controversies and important insights into their chronology. Building upon Sodo Mori's monumental work "A Study of the Pāli Commentaries: Theravādic Aspects of the *Aṭṭhakathās*" (Tokyo: Sankibo, 1984), Endo discerns five important sources of the Pāli commentaries: the *aṭṭhakathā*, the *Mahā-aṭṭhakathā*, views of different *bhāṇakā* (reciters), the views of *keci* (some) and *apare*, (others) and references to *pothaka* (book or manuscript). The author introduces two highly useful concepts in his work: the IOC and the SRIOC. The commentaries brought by Mahinda from India in the 3rd century B.C. are called the 'Indian Original Commentaries (IOC)'. Since they were subsequently translated and preserved in Sinhalese, these translations are called the 'Sinhala Rendition of the Indian Original Commentaries (SRIOC)', which Endo identifies with the *aṭṭhakathā* (singular number). The *aṭṭhakathā* (plural number) on the other hand, are complex in nature and cannot be used as effectively in evidence as its singular form.

Endo emphasizes that it is important to distinguish the *Mahā-aṭṭhakathā* and the *aṭṭhakathā* (sg.) as two separate sources of the present Pāli commentaries. The *Mahā-aṭṭhakathā* are sometimes misunderstood as the Sihaḷa commentaries. This misunderstanding was already rectified to a great extent by E.W. Adikaram, the pioneer of the Pāli commentarial studies in Sri Lanka, whose research (Adikaram 1946, *Early History of Buddhism in Ceylon*) opened a new horizon in the field of Pāli commentarial literature as independent source-material for the study of Theravāda Buddhism. Endo demonstrates how the time difference is the key to understanding how the *Mahā-aṭṭhakathā* were the commentaries to both the *Tipitaka* and the *aṭṭhakathā* (sg.) and as such played the role of giving additional information for exegetical purposes often interspersed with anecdotes. They were utilized for further elaboration and added information, which again implies that they were compiled at a later time than the *aṭṭhakathā* (sg.). Also, the fact that 'pāli' (sacred texts), *aṭṭhakathā* (sg.) and *Mahā-aṭṭhakathā*, in this order of im-

portance, are referred to as authorities in the Pāli commentaries, suggests that they were distinct sources.

The expansion of the SRIOC had been completed by the time of King Vaṭṭa-gāmaṇī-Abhaya of the 1st century B.C., when the Buddhist texts were committed to writing. During the reign of this king, a famine lasting twelve years struck Sri Lanka, a disaster resulting in turmoil within the country. This socio-political chaos was to change many aspects relating to the hitherto accepted Buddhist traditions in Sri Lanka. One of the changes the Saṅgha had to initiate was the method of transmission of the Buddhist texts from oral to written. Under these circumstances, that were unfavorable to the perpetuation of the Mahāvihāra tradition, the *bhikkhus* of the Mahāvihāra decided to homogenize the Buddhist texts and commit them to writing. The *Tipiṭaka*, together with its commentaries, were then in written form. Once the *aṭṭhakathā* (sg.) became written documents during that so-called Fourth Buddhist Council, a new class of Sinhalese commentaries became necessary, namely the *Mahā-aṭṭhakathā* (and also some other commentaries like the *Mahāpaccarī-aṭṭhakathā*, *Kurundī-aṭṭhakathā* were compiled) to provide a forum for the Mahāvihāravāsins to add new exegeses and other anecdotes of later origins, necessary for the preservation of the Mahāvihāra identity against its rivals. This suggests a very important historical evolution of the Sinhalese commentaries. Endo's vision of the chronological sequence of events and the formation of the *Sihala-aṭṭhakathā*, is an important yardstick for the investigations that follow in his book.

It is further demonstrated how two sets of names play a decisive role in determining which source is referred to when quoted in the Pāli commentaries: if they are in what Endo calls "the first class of names" (*Dīgha-aṭṭhakathā*, *Majjhima-aṭṭhakathā*, etc.), it is rather difficult to determine whether a commentary referred to is an old commentary (*sihala-aṭṭhakathā*) or a Pāli one and therefore other circumstantial evidence has to be called in aid. But if "the second class of names" (*Sumaṅgalavilāsini*, *Papañcasūdanī*, etc.) is employed, the source referred to is undoubtedly a Pāli commentary. This determination of whether these sources were Sihala sources or Pāli ones is a key element in Endo's search to clarify the ambiguity of identification of the references in the Pāli commentaries.

In addition to the types of *bhāṇakas* already examined by Adikaram and Mori in the works cited above, the book under review also treats *akkhara bhāṇakā*, reciters or specialists in 'phonetics'; *vyañjanabhāṇakā*, specialists in the letters or sound of words; *vaṇṇabhāṇaka*, probably specialists in praising; (all three related

to different branches of the science of writing including phonetics); *padabhāṇaka*, specialists in syllables or sentences. The author's investigation of the views attributed to different *bhāṇakas* in the Pāli commentaries indicates that the source material, specifically the *Mahā-atthakathā*, utilized by the commentators for the writing of the Pāli commentaries contained more information than was actually translated. This inference becomes more realistic as many views ascribed to different *bhāṇakas* cannot be verified or corroborated in the existing Pāli canon or commentaries.

Next, the author presents an important and in-depth study of the views of 'some' or 'others' found in the commentator Dhammapāla's *Paramatthadīpanī*. In addition to the sources that represent the Mahāvihāra orthodoxy, the Pāli commentaries often refer to different views of people or groups of individuals. The content of the views of 'some' or 'others' ranges from simple grammatical discrepancies in cases, different readings of the canonical passages, historical facts, and disciplinary rules, to very intricate doctrinal matters. Their views, sometimes rejected, at other times supplementing and used to strengthen the Mahāvihāra stance, can be roughly classified into 2 basic categories: individuals or groups of individuals within the Mahāvihāra fraternity and those of the non-Mahāvihāra fraternity. They are quoted in the forms of views or opinions of 'some', or 'others' (*keci*, *apare*, *eke*, *aññe*, *ye...te*, *ekacce*, *itare*, etc.) However, the different use of terms does not in any way indicate that the commentators had specific individuals or traditions in mind when referring to the views of others. On the contrary, these terms are in many cases interchangeable. On the other hand, when some teachers of the Mahāvihāra fraternity are specifically referred to by the commentators, the term 'ācariyā' (teachers) preceded by *eke*, *ekacce*, *aññe*, and *keci* is invariably used. Identification in these instances is thus less problematic than independently used anonymous words like *keci*, *apare*, and so on. Yet another method adopted by the commentators when referring to 'some' or 'others' is that they employ the additional word 'elders' (*therā*): *eke therā*, *ekacce therā*, *keci therā*, *ye therā*, *apare therā* and *itare therā*. Endo demonstrates how these 'elders' (*therā*) refer only to the Mahāvihāravāsins and the non-Mahāvihāravāsins, but not to the Abhayagirivāsins and its allies.

Very valuable for future research is the author's specification of expressions of disagreement as found in Dhammapāla's *Paramatthadīpanī*: 'taṃ atthakathāsu paṭikkhitam' (that is rejected in the commentaries), 'taṃ akāraṇam' (that is unreasonable), 'taṃ na sundaram' (that is not good or proper), 'taṃ na gahetabbam'

(that should not be taken or adopted), ‘*taṃ ... matimattaṃ*’ (that is mere speculation), ‘*taṃ asiddham*’ (that is not complete). These phrases will certainly help future scholars to reach further results for the other commentaries.

The chapter on the use of ‘*potthaka*’ (book or manuscript) in the Pāli commentaries seeks to investigate the very complex nature of this source. The term *potthaka* denotes any kind of written book or manuscript, and in a much broader sense any book or manuscript of any period, whereas the *aṭṭhakathā* refer to a specific genre of literature. This difference is an important distinction between these two terms. *Aṭṭhakathā* is the name given to a specific source while *potthaka* can be one or more written manuscripts of that *aṭṭhakathā*, either in Sīhala or Pāli. Still, their identification remains difficult, since one single text may have had plural manuscripts and written books or manuscripts may have been preserved at different monasteries.

The Pāli *Tipiṭaka* contains references to the possible disappearance of the True *Dhamma* (*saddhamma-antaradhāna*), which cannot be adequately understood and appreciated without comprehension of the socio-political and religious changes surrounding the famous famine during the time of King Vaṭṭagāminī-Abhaya (103-102, 89-77 B.C.), already referred to above. This turmoil had far-reaching effects and exercised a considerable impact upon the concept of the True *Dhamma* coming to an end and safeguarding it with particular emphasis on ‘*pariyatti*’. This move towards preservation was probably also due to a sense of rivalry the Mahāvihāravāsins seemingly had towards the Abhayagiri fraternity after its establishment in the 1st century B.C.

In his chapter on the ‘*Shan-chien-lü-p’i-pò-sha*’, attempts are made to critically examine Guruge’s arguments (Ananda Guruge 2005, “*Shan-jian-lu-piposha* as an Authentic Source on the Early History of Buddhism and Asoka”, in *Dhamma-Vinaya: Essays in Honour of Bhikkhu Dhammavihari*, edited by Asanga Tilakaratne, et al. Maharagama: Sri Lanka Association of Buddhist Studies, pp. 95-96) that the ‘*Shan-chien-lü-p’i-pò-sha*’ is not a direct translation of the Pāli *Samantapāsādikā*. According to Endo, Guruge’s hypothesis ignores the chronological sequence of events and formation of the *Sīhala-aṭṭhakathā* in general. The latter has not paid adequate attention to the circumstances under which the present Pāli commentaries were translated and edited from the *Sīhala-aṭṭhakathā*. Guruge’s arguments are by no means convincing enough to reverse the opinion that has been hitherto held by many scholars. For similarities between the two, which fact Guruge has not referred to adequately, are evidently far greater than what he claims are

differences, and even most of those differences can be explained logically and reasonably to support the thesis that the ‘*Shan-chien-lü-p’i-p’ò-sha*’ is an abridged translation of the Pāli *Samantapāsādikā*. Endo then turns to the evidence that the translation was done from Pāli and that the translator knew Pāli sources. I can supplement his argument with a recent article of mine that shows the same results, based on a study of the entries from T24n1462 in the *Fanfanyu* (T54n2130), Baochang’s Sanskrit-Chinese lexicon that was compiled as early as A.D. 517 (G. Pinte 2012, “False Friends in the *Fanfanyü* “ in *Acta Orientalia*, 65 (1), pp. 97-104).

The final chapters in Endo’s book focus on the editorial methods of Buddhaghosa and the other commentators. There is ample reason to believe that the commentators edited and rearranged the content of the *Sīhaḷa-aṭṭhakathā* to a great extent while translating them into Pāli. The author concludes that Buddhaghosa was free to use his discretion whenever need arose even against the views of the Mahāvihāra tradition. The Theravāda tradition, as found in the Pāli commentaries, is not always coherent and intelligible. Among the commentaries, incongruent exegeses are seen, suggesting that the tradition was a mixture of diverse views expressed and upheld by individual members of the Mahāvihāra fraternity. Further, many references to views of other schools are made in the Pāli commentaries. Undoubtedly there must have been diverse circumstances that compelled or created a necessity for the commentators to add their own comments in order to render the contextual meanings more intelligible: when differences or discrepancies can be discerned between the sacred texts (*pāḷi*) and the old commentaries (*Sīhaḷa-aṭṭhakathā*) or between the old commentaries themselves; when and if the views of elders (*ācariyas*) of the Mahāvihāra fraternity were different from those according to the sacred texts or the old commentaries or when criticizing the views of other schools. Endo shows how Buddhaghosa was giving his own comments even by subjecting the *Mahā-aṭṭhakathā*, one of the most important and authoritative old commentaries within the Mahāvihāra tradition, to a critical perusal. This testifies that Buddhaghosa was not just blindly editing and translating the old commentaries into Pāli. This line of research is extended to the question as to whether the introductions and epilogues are actually translations of the old sources or new additions made by the commentators themselves.

The author concludes his comprehensive study with indications that some Buddhist texts favoured a particular textual tradition. He shows, more specifically, that the textual tradition of the *Vinaya-aṭṭhakathā* often followed that of

the *Majjhima-aṭṭhakathā*, but the opposite direction of indebtedness was not the case.

Although some aspects of the Pāli commentaries treated in this book have been known for a while now, the added value of the book under revision lies in bringing together all relevant material, including the important results reached by Japanese scholars, which is otherwise not easily accessible for those who can't read Japanese. Continuing the monumental work of Sodo Mori, the author has reached valuable new results, especially on the chronological sequence of events and the formation of the *Sihala-aṭṭhakathā*. Toshiichi Endo has hereby succeeded in creating a basic work of reference, worthy to be read by everyone working on Pāli commentarial literature.

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Excursions into the Thought-World of the Pāli Discourses. By Bhikkhu Anālayo. Onalaska: Pariyatti Publishing. 2012. v + 326 pp. ISBN: 978-1-928706-98-4.

Apart from the two-page introduction, the table of contents, the list of abbreviations, the bibliography, and the index, the bulk of *Excursions into the Thought-World of the Pāli Discourses* is comprised of “revised versions of entries originally published in the Encyclopedia of Buddhism, Sri Lanka” (p. 1). Accordingly, the book does not present a connected narrative which introduces the Pāli discourses and progressively builds towards one or more conclusions about those discourses or the “thought-world” we encounter in them. Rather, in keeping with its origins, the main part of the book consists of twenty-four chapters which “can be read in whatever sequence the reader may prefer” (p. 2). The topic of each freestanding chapter is indicated by its title. A partial list of topics covered includes: “Craving”, “Grasping”, “Personality View”, “Volitional Formations”, “Contemplation of feelings”, “Happiness”, “Knowledge and Vision according to Reality”, “Wise Attention”, “Insight”, and “Liberation”. These are translations of Pāli terms, which are also given in the chapter titles.

To give an example, Chapter 3 is titled “Passion / *Rāga*”. The chapter begins with a short commentary on the meaning of the Pāli term *rāga*, in which Bhikkhu Anālayo explains that *rāga* stands for “lust” or “passion” (p. 39), the latter being the author’s preferred translation. Bhikkhu Anālayo notes that “passion is one of the fundamental defilements recognized in early Buddhism” (p. 39), buttressing his explanation of how we are to understand *rāga* by drawing on the work of his illustrious predecessor Ñāṇaponika. After this brief introduction, the remainder of the chapter consists of three sections: “The Nature of Passion” (pp. 39-44), “The Removal of Passion” (pp. 44-45), and “Passion and Dispassion” (pp. 45-53). In these and most of the other essays which make up the main part of the book, Bhikkhu Anālayo deploys uncomplicated prose and a knack for marshalling evidence to illuminate the topic under discussion. The following excerpt from “The Removal of Passion” (pp. 44-45) gives a flavor of the book as a whole:

Compared with “anger”, *dosa*, passion is less blameable, though it takes longer to be overcome (AN I 200). The arising of passion can be traced to two main conditions: the “sign of beauty”, *subhanimitta*, often attributed to the physical body of the other gender, and “unwise attention”, *ayoniso manasikāra* (AN I 87). The obvious counter

method, therefore, is wise attention to the less appealing aspects of the body, examining its anatomical constitution and the unattractive nature of its parts (AN III 323). Additional counter strategies include developing restraint of the senses, contentment with food, wakefulness and mindfulness together with clear comprehension (AN IV 166).

In order to ensure that one's mind is not overwhelmed by passion, recollection of the Buddha, the *Dhamma* and the *Saṅgha* can be undertaken (AN III 286). From among the four divine abodes, *brahmavihāra*, the meditative development of equanimity... stands out as an "escape", *nissaraṇa*, from passion (DN III 249).

These passages indicate that the development of mental tranquillity, *samatha*, can also function as an antidote to passion. This point is made explicitly in a discourse... (AN I 61).

This excerpt is illustrative of an important feature found throughout the book. It is that when Bhikkhu Anālayo sets out to illuminate a term or topic, he tends to anchor his comments – if not every sentence then at least a large proportion of them – to a passage in a Pāli text. The Pāli texts mostly cited are "early Pāli discourses" (p. 1). Other sources such as "later Pāli works, Chinese parallels, or secondary publications" are considered "only in a supplementary fashion" (p. 1). In some of the book's essays the density of references to Pāli texts is not as high as in the above example, but even in those cases references to Pāli texts are still relatively plentiful. One effect achieved by constantly citing Pāli texts in this way is that the author of *Excursions into the Thought-World of the Pāli Discourses* often recedes into the background, and what emerges into the foreground of the reader's consciousness is an impression of a large – and for many it will be a largely convincing – web of references whereby the Pāli discourses readily seem to explain themselves.

Another important aspect of *Excursions into the Thought-World of the Pāli Discourses* can perhaps be discerned in what is said in the excerpt above, and in how it is said. Also important is what Bhikkhu Anālayo does not say, but this dimension of his art will be more appreciated by those who already have some familiarity with the Pāli discourses. The aspect of the book to which I am referring is the manner in which the author assembles his material and shapes his mes-

sage, and I believe that the author is not wrong when he speaks of the book's suitability for "those who approach Buddhism as a system of mental development" (p. 2). That is to say, *Excursions into the Thought-World of the Pāli Discourses* seems to be oriented more towards readers seeking textual grounding with respect to Buddhist-style mental development than it is towards those readers who approach the study of Buddhism or Pāli texts from a more historical or academic perspective. Bhikkhu Anālayo himself puts the matter somewhat differently, saying that he has tried to adapt the book for "the general readership" and present "material of practical interest" – hopefully in a way that does not sacrifice "academic rigour" (p. 2). The book's large payload of Pāli vocabulary and text citations make it unusual among books on Buddhist teachings which are designed for "the general readership". Bhikkhu Anālayo is to be commended for producing a book that backs up claims about Buddhist teachings by constant and direct appeal to the incomparable Pāli discourses, and there can be no doubt that many readers will enjoy and benefit from this admirable work.

But for all the book's positive qualities, this reviewer cannot avoid expressing a certain degree of dissatisfaction with *Excursions into the Thought-World of the Pāli Discourses*. To my mind the Pāli discourses, besides being incomparable sources for understanding early Buddhist teachings, are an inexhaustible and priceless treasure of wisdom and culture from the ancient world. Like the dialogues of Plato or the New Testament, the Pāli discourses will not be adequately systematized. They abound in obscurities, curiosities, and references that we probably cannot now reasonably hope to understand – just as surely as they hold important but neglected pieces of information which still await "discovery" in the modern era. There are real or apparent contradictions in these texts, as well as beauty and sound advice, but they also convey a message whose full implications are both terrible and sublime. Should a series of excursions into the Pāli discourses and their "thought-world" not expose the voyager to the wonders of these texts, and teach him or her to appreciate them, rather than simply sampling the discourses for a set of doctrinal warrants? To this reviewer's way of thinking, Bhikkhu Anālayo's book inclines too much to the latter.

Let us also consider Bhikkhu Anālayo's statement to the effect that in this book his emphasis is on "exploring" particular terms "from the perspective of the early Pāli discourses" (p. 1). As readers we can appreciate an author's statement of intention, even as we question it. Are we to understand that the early Pāli discourses have only one perspective? Bhikkhu Anālayo makes a valiant effort to

show us just what that one perspective of the early Pāli discourses is on a variety of topics, and as mentioned above, the main and well-crafted impression one gets from the book is that the early Pāli discourses are magnificently clear and internally self-reinforcing documents which perhaps really do speak with one voice. Now I do not deny that Pāli discourses often support one another, and that they can be, and often are, straightforward. I simply wonder if things are always as neat and clear as they appear to be according to Bhikkhu Anālayo. Curiosity led me to test some explanatory statements drawn from the book at random. The very first statement I picked for this purpose comes from “Living in Seclusion” (p. 259):

To set an example was in fact a prominent reason why the Buddha would live in seclusion himself, in addition to the pleasure he found in secluded dwellings (MN I 23 and AN I 60).

The wording is confident, even authoritative, and typical of Bhikkhu Anālayo’s approach to the subject matter: among other things he is going to mine the Pāli discourses and come up with the “facts” about what happened so many centuries ago. But as it turns out, neither of the Pāli texts cited in the above statement actually says anything about setting an example. Here is what the relevant passage at MN I 23 does say (Pāli text according to the Burmese Chaṭṭha Saṅgāyana Tipiṭaka edition):

Dve kho ahaṃ, brāhmaṇa, atthavase sampassamāno araññavana-patthāni pantāni senāsanāni paṭisevāmi – attano ca ditṭhadhamma-sukhavihāraṃ sampassamāno, pacchimañca janataṃ anukampamāno ti.

Seeing two reasons, Brahmin, I frequent forests and jungle groves, secluded places to sit and lie in. I am seeing a pleasant dwelling in this very life, for myself, and I am showing compassion for later generations of people.

The passage at AN I 60 is much the same, but in it the Buddha speaks to monks, first asking and then answering his own rhetorical question. Neither passage mentions setting an example. Neither passage says why the Buddha’s residing in a secluded place is supposed to be compassionate. I certainly would like to know the real significance of the phrase *pacchimañca janataṃ anukampamāno*, “and I am showing compassion for later generations of people”. Probably many other readers would too. But we must accept the limitations of the texts and our situation. It may or may not be true that the historical Buddha reckoned he was being

compassionate by setting an example of residing in a secluded place, because this would motivate others to reside in a secluded place, which would benefit them. But this is not the perspective of either text cited as we have it. It is, rather, the perspective of the commentarial tradition, and it is the commentarial tradition on which Bhikkhu Anālayo apparently has drawn, without saying so, in making the explanatory statement above.

This little irregularity does nothing to diminish my respect for Bhikkhu Anālayo's many achievements in this book and elsewhere. It merely serves to illustrate the truth of what critics so often have said about Pāli texts and the Theravāda Buddhist tradition: that when it comes to explaining the Pāli discourses, what they contain and what they mean, and what their significance to us can be, the representatives of the Theravāda tradition are not above sometimes confusing what their tradition says the Pāli discourses mean with what the texts actually say.

I am happy to report that some of the book's other explanatory statements were, upon investigation, entirely unproblematic. But then I came across the following (p. 159):

According to the *Bodhirājakumāra-sutta*, before his awakening the Buddha himself had accepted the belief common in ancient India that all pleasures have to be shunned in order to be able to reach liberation (MN II 93).

The claims in this statement could have been broken up into discrete units, but that is not how the author gives them to us: we must take them as a whole. Now on the basis of that part of MN II 93 which is incorporated by reference from the *Mahāsaccaka-sutta*, and perhaps that part of MN II 93 which is incorporated by reference from the *Ariyapariyesanā-sutta*, it is possible to claim that Gotama before his awakening, i.e., the character as he appears in the Pāli texts, believed that all pleasures have to be shunned in order to be able to reach liberation – but not that this idea was “common in ancient India”. I think however that Bhikkhu Anālayo may be referring to a belief which in MN II 93 a character called Prince Bodhi says that he holds, and which the Buddha says that he himself once held (and which the Buddha at MN I 93 attributes to a band of Nigaṇṭhas). This belief is: *na kho sukkena sukhaṃ adhigantabbaṃ dukkhena kho sukhaṃ adhigantabbaṃ*. One straightforward translation of this could be: “Not by happiness is happiness to be attained; happiness is to be attained by pain”. If this is the basis for the statement above – and I see no other reason to cite MN II

93 – then this, by itself, would not be enough to support all the claims made in the above statement. My problem is that despite having tried in good faith, I cannot clearly see the basis in MN II 93 for those claims.

Another source of dissatisfaction with this book is that it pays too little attention, for my taste, to the cultural context which informed the creation of the Pāli discourses. Not every book to do with Buddhism must be a treatise on Indian religious and cultural history; I suppose it is possible to understand basic Buddhist teachings without any knowledge of the religious and cultural history of the sub-continent. But I cannot see how it is possible to venture into the Pāli discourses and appreciate them in any meaningful way without such knowledge. It is one thing to know that the Pāli discourses say this or that. It is another thing to come to grips with the extent to which the “thought-world” of the Pāli discourses does or does not overlap with the “thought-world” of other ancient but non-Buddhist Indian texts. It is a weakness of *Excursions into the Thought-World of the Pāli Discourses*, in my opinion, that it does not do more to impart knowledge of and inculcate a respect for context. It is true “ancient India” is mentioned some six times in the 305 pages which make up the main part of the book, so that from time to time the reader is reminded that the Pāli discourses come from an actual time and place. But this is too little, too late. Without an adequate introduction, the book plunges into an examination of terms and ideas which make it seem as if the early Buddhist teachings – to use the words a prominent critic once used – “resonate autonomously in timelessness”.¹ What one thinks of *that* idea will probably determine what one thinks of *Excursions into the Thought-World of the Pāli Discourses*.

If the title of the book were different – perhaps *Excursions into the Thought-World of Buddhist Terms and Ideas Taken from the Pāli Discourses as They are Understood by the Theravāda Tradition* – I probably would not be making these complaints. But as it stands, potential readers of the book Bhikkhu Anālayo has written (or any book that purports to discuss Buddhist teachings and Pāli texts) may want to keep some of the above points in mind, because unless one is reading the Pāli text for oneself, and in a way that is sensitive to context, one can never be quite sure whose thought-world one is entering.

In spite of the criticisms expressed above, I believe that *Excursions into the Thought-World of the Pāli Discourses* is a worthwhile book which deserves consideration. More than that I believe that excursions into the Pāli discourses ought

¹ Gombrich, R. (1992) *The Buddha's Book of Genesis?* Indo-Iranian Journal 35, pp. 159-178.

to be undertaken by anyone interested in Buddhism, the ancient world, ancient philosophy, ancient religions, Indian culture and history, or related subjects. If one is in need of a companion on the journey, Bhikkhu Anālayo makes for an agreeable guide. Much of what he has to say in this book is neither obviously true nor obviously untrue, and that – by prompting a closer examination of the Pāli discourses themselves – makes his book worth reading.²

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²Adapted from a line by Kraut, R. (2008) *How to Read Plato*. Granta.

Studies in Āgama Literature – With Special Reference to the Shorter Chinese Saṃyuktāgama. By Marcus Bingenheimer. (Dharma Drum Buddhist College, Special Series 1) Taipei: Shin Wen Feng. 2011. 345 pp. ISBN: 978-957-17-2139-2.

The Chinese canon contains, as is well known, a substantial corpus of translations of non-Mahāyāna *sūtras*, including several collections (*Āgamas*) roughly corresponding to the Pāli *Nikāyas*. The study of this literature, often very challenging from a linguistic and philological point of view, had long remained, with some important exceptions, the preserve of Japanese scholars. However, recent years have witnessed a flourishing of *Āgama* studies by Western scholars: for example, one could mention Paul Harrison's ground-breaking articles on two *Āgama* anthologies ascribable to the 2nd century translator An Shigao (Harrison 1997 and 2002), the numerous important studies by Ven. Anālayo (see especially Anālayo 2011 and 2012), or Antonello Palumbo's masterful monograph centred on the Chinese translation of the *Ekottarikāgama* (2013). Also the recent discoveries of Buddhist manuscripts in the Gāndhārī language have played a role in fostering renewed interest in the study of the Chinese parallels (*Āgama* included) to these important documents (see for example Glass 2007, especially pp. 26-70 and 219-223).

The book under review, which fully belongs to this new wave of *Āgama* studies, consists of a detailed study and a partial annotated translation of a (partial) anonymous Chinese version of a *Saṃyuktāgama*, transmitted in the canon with the title *Bieyi za ahan jing* 別譯雜阿含經 T 100 (hereafter BZA).¹ The author, Marcus Bingenheimer, has published extensively on the Chinese *Āgamas*² and, more generally, on various aspects of Chinese Buddhism. In many ways, this is an

¹The title of this collection (*Other Translation of Saṃyuktāgama* according to Bucknell 2008: 25) is given in contrast to the main *Saṃyuktāgama* transmitted in the Chinese Canon, the *Za ahan jing* 雜阿含經 T 99. The BZA is found in vol. 2 of the *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新修大藏經, the modern standard edition of the Chinese Buddhist Canon (Tokyo 1924-1932), and in vol. 33 of the *Zhonghua dazangjing* 中華大藏經, another important edition of the canon published in China (Beijing, 1984-1996, hereafter ZH).

²As a recent, important contribution of the author in this field one could mention his co-authorship of the translation of the *Madhyamāgama* (T 26), whose first volume has recently appeared in the BDK English Tripitaka Series: Marcus Bingenheimer, Anālayo, Roderick Bucknell. *The Madhyama Āgama (The Middle Length Discourses)*. Vol.1 Berkeley: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation & Research, 2013.

important and welcome contribution: it is not common to see early Chinese Buddhist translations being made the object of a historical study and a philologically-oriented annotated translation of this kind. As pointed out in the Introduction (§ 1.1, pp. 2-3) this book is part of a larger project focused on this particular canonical collection, including an impressive digital edition of the entire BZA (see <http://buddhisticinformatics.ddbc.edu.tw/BZA/>).

The book can be subdivided into two main parts: while chapters 1 and 2 form an introductory portion devoted to some general issues pertaining to the BZA, chapters 3-6 contain the annotated translation of four sections selected from this *Samyuktāgama*. Each chapter of this second part is in fact conceived as a kind of short monograph centred on a specific section of the BZA: the relevant translation is always preceded by an essay devoted to particular lexicographical issues. The book is completed by two appendixes, a bibliography, and various indexes. Appendix 1 (pp. 245-302) consists of an extremely useful “Comparative Catalog” of the BZA, listing the available Pāli, Chinese, Sanskrit, and Tibetan parallels to each of its *sūtras*. Appendix 2 (“Simple quantitative comparison of the ZA and the BZA”, pp. 303-308) contains a Stylometric comparative analysis of the BZA and the corresponding portions of the main *Samyuktāgama* collection translated into Chinese, the *Za ahan jing* 雜阿含經 T 99 (hereafter ZA).

The main parts of Chapter 1 (Introduction) are § 1.2, on the date of the translation, and §§ 1.3-1.4, discussing the structure of the BZA. The author follows Mizuno Kōgen in dating the translation to the Western Qin 秦 dynasty (385-431 CE). While I find Mizuno’s argument convincing,³ this section of the book contains some inaccuracies. For instance we read (p. 4) that “his [viz. Mizuno’s] main argument is that the sutras translated in the Former and Later Qin, which were ruled from Chang’an, are generally included in the *Chu sanzang jiji*, which

³ A gloss contained in the BZA (T 100 p. 483b 5-6) suggests that the text was translated during a Qin 秦 dynasty. Three dynasties with this name are known to have existed in North China between 4th and 5th century CE: two – Former and Later Qin – ruled successively over different areas of northern China from their capital Chang’an 長安, while the third, the Western Qin, controlled part of present day Gansu province. Mizuno (1970: 46-47) observed that the BZA is not mentioned in Sengyou’s *Chu sanzang ji ji* T 2145, our main bibliographical source for early Chinese Buddhist translations, which is well informed on translations produced in Chang’an during Former and Later Qin, but contains almost no record of works produced under the more peripheral Western Qin, which were generally unknown in Central China (華中). This in turn suggests that the BZA, having remained unknown to Sengyou, is likely to have been translated in the area controlled by the latter dynasty.

was itself written in Chang'an".⁴ But Mizuno does not say that: in fact he explicitly mentions the southern origin of Sengyou's *Chu sanzang ji ji* 出三藏記集 T 2145 (see Mizuno 1970: 488), which indeed is one of the most remarkable and representative works of 6th century Southern Buddhism.⁵

On p. 5 the author quotes an interesting observation on the historical background of the BZA by the 18th century Japanese monk 法幢 Hōdō (not Hōdo, as the name is transcribed throughout chapters 1-2) contained in his commentary to the *Abhidharmakośa* (*Abidatsumakusharon keiko* 阿毘達磨俱舍論稽古 T 2252). The incipit of this passage reads as follows (the punctuation is mine):

今檢譯文體裁，蓋在魏晉之間，全非東晉以下語氣。(T 2252 p. 446a 27-28)

The author translates this as:

If we now consider the translation style [of the BZA], it should rather belong to the Wei Jin dynasty [the Western Jin (265-317)]. Nothing in it is of the kind of language used after the Eastern Jin [317-420].

I fail to see how the expression 魏晉之間 could possibly refer just to the Western Jin dynasty (and there has never been a single "Wei Jin dynasty" in Chinese imperial history). I would rather translate this passage as:

Now, if we examine the translation style [of the BZA], it should probably belong to the period encompassing the Wei [dynasty of the Three Kingdoms period, 220-265 CE] and the Jin [i.e., the Western (265-316 CE) and Eastern (317-420 CE) Jin]. It is absolutely not the language used after the Eastern Jin.

The next two paragraphs (§§ 1.3-1.4, the latter being specifically devoted to an analysis of the BZA's *uddānas*, or summary verses listing the subjects of a preceding section) deal with the structure of the BZA collection, and to the changes it underwent over the course of its transmission. Here the author gives a detailed

⁴Cf. also the discussion of the circulation of Western Qin translations on p. 5: "It must be assumed that sutras translated in the Gansu corridor under the rule of the Xianbei Qifu 伏, whose dynasty came to be known as the Western Qin, were not well known in Chang'an in the early 6th century when Sengyou compiled the *Chu sanzang jiji*."

⁵On Sengyou, see Link 1960 (especially pp. 29-40 on the *Chu sanzang ji ji*); on the *Chu sanzang ji ji* and its textual history, see also Palumbo 2003: 197, with n. 87 and 2013: 50 with n. 96 and 164-168.

overview of the recent research on this subject (particularly of Roderick Bucknell's ground-breaking works), providing an interesting and generally convincing discussion of several complex issues. I found this part of the introduction, with its discussion of some ancient editions of the Chinese Buddhist canon, of particular interest.⁶ It is rare to see this subject treated in western scholarship, and the author is certainly to be commended for having devoted so much attention to it.

The BZA has been transmitted, in the various ancient editions of the canon, in two versions, having almost the same content, but arranged differently and consisting respectively of 16 and 20 scrolls (*juan* 卷). On p. 9, the author refers to Roderick Bucknell's hypothesis that the BZA included in the earliest printed edition of the Chinese Buddhist canon, the late 10th-century Northern Song edition known as *Kaibao zang* 開寶藏 ("Canon of the Kaibao [era]", of which only scant fragments survive) was edited in 16 scrolls (*juan* 卷).⁷ Bucknell's argument can be further corroborated thanks to an important source of first-hand information on the *Kaibao zang* that ought to be consulted systematically when reconstructing the textual history of Chinese Buddhist translations: this is Weibo's 惟白 early 12th century detailed survey of the entire canon, the *Dazangjing gangmu zhiyao lu* 大藏經綱目指要錄 (*Shōwa hōbō sōmokuroku* 昭和法寶總目錄 no. 37, pp. 571-772; ZH vol. 56, pp. 116-250), which, as demonstrated by Li Fuhua and He Mei (2003: 78-79), was based on a copy of the *Kaibao zang*. The entry on the BZA in Weibo's work (*Shōwa hōbō sōmokuroku* p. 699b-c; ZH pp. 200-201) describes a BZA in 16 scrolls, leaving no doubts that this was indeed the format of this collection in the *Kaibao zang*.⁸

⁶A terminological problem occurring in some passages of the book dealing with issues of textual history and criticism is the use of "stemma" to refer to a group or family of textual witnesses, rather than to the schematic representation of their relationship, as in this passage on p. 17: "... this manuscript is an ancestor of the stemma of Chinese editions referenced in the Taishō with the sigla 宋元明 and not of the Tripitaka Koreana - Qisha - Taishō stemma" (see also p. 20, n. 74 p. 89 etc.). This use seems slightly imprecise to me: I am not aware that "stemma" as a term of philology is used with a different meaning from that recorded by the online version of the *Oxford English Dictionary* (<http://www.oed.com/>): "A diagram which represents a reconstruction on stemmatic principles of the position of the surviving witnesses in the tradition of the transmission of a text, esp. in manuscript form."

⁷See Bucknell 2008: 26-29. According to Bucknell, "[m]odern catalogues state that the BZA contained in it [viz. in the *Kaibao zang*] consisted of twenty fascicles" (p. 27). This is also true of Tong Wei's monograph, which is specifically devoted to reconstructing the content of the *Kaibao zang* (Tong 1991: 82, entry no. 647).

⁸See also Li and He 2003: 85. In this connection, it should also be noted that three scrolls of the BZA from the 11th century first Koryō national edition of the Canon (itself a direct offspring of the

The final paragraph of chapter 1 (pp. 20-22) discusses an “anomaly”⁹ (to quote the author’s expression) occurring in the Jin edition of the canon.¹⁰ While very interesting in many respects, this discussion contains a few inaccuracies. On p. 21 one reads: “In the early days of printing (10th to 12th centuries), printed sheets were pasted together, fitted with rollers and turned into *juan* scrolls, because this was the manuscript-era format that readers were familiar with. Concertina-style folding, string-bound books and other formats appeared only later. In the Qisha canon, as opposed to the Jin canon, the original numbering of the sheets that were pasted together for each *juan* is preserved.”

I think that there is some confusion here. The so-called “concertina binding”, or “*sūtra* binding” (*jingzhezhuang* 經摺裝), typical of Buddhist texts and already used in some Dunhuang manuscripts dating to the early 10th century (Li Jining 2002: 37), was adopted by the *Chongning zang* 崇寧藏, the earliest private edition of the entire canon produced in Fuzhou between the late 11th and the early 12th centuries (see Zacchetti 2005: 111), which fully belongs to “the early days of printing” as defined by the author. In fact I wonder if the distinction scroll/concertina format is really relevant to the point at issue here.¹¹ It is also not correct that the Jin canon does not contain “the original numbering of the sheets”: the number of each folio (except the first folio of each scroll) is given on the right, immediately before the first column of text.¹²

Kaibao zang, which survives only in part) have been preserved: they are scrolls no. 3 (covering one portion of the BZA translated in the book), 5, and 8. Until recently, photographs of the surviving scrolls of this edition were accessible through the magnificent website of the Research Institute of Tripitaka Koreana (http://kb.sutra.re.kr/ritk_eng/index.do), but at present (September 2014) unfortunately this seems to be no longer the case.

⁹The anomaly consists in the fact that after the *uddāna* found at the end of *sūtra* no. 223 (ZH vol. 33 p. 401c 23-402a 1; cf. T 100 p. 456b 21-23, corresponding to folio 12 of scroll 12 in the second Koryō edition), in the Jin edition (see the next note) there is a second *uddāna* (ZH vol. 33 p. 402a 2-3), also attested in some southern editions collated by ZH and *Taishō*. (Here more precise reference to the original sources would have been helpful.)

¹⁰The so-called *Jin zang* 金藏, or “Jin Canon”, is an early printed edition of the canon produced during the 12th century in north China, during the Jin dynasty (1115-1234). Approximately 5000 scrolls of this canon were discovered in Shanxi province in 1933, while another 555 scrolls printed in the 13th century were found in Tibet in 1959 (see Zacchetti 2005: 99-100). A significant portion of the Jin Canon is reproduced in ZH.

¹¹In the “*sūtra* binding” the sheets of paper are pasted together exactly as in traditional scrolls, the main difference from the latter lying in the fact that folios are folded (usually, for printed editions of the canon, five or six-fold) “in accordion”.

¹²See for example ZH vol. 33, beginning of p. 259c (this is the first folio in the Jin edition of the BZA to be numbered): 別譯雜阿含經卷第一 第二張 不字號, “*Bieyi za ahan jing* scroll 1 folio 2,

Footnote 34 on the same page states that “The BZA text in the Jin canon references the Liao canon edition at the beginning of fascicle 12, saying, ‘in the Liao edition [the following starts] at fascicle 6, sheet 12’”. The passage at issue is in ZH vol. 33 p. 398b (first folio of scroll 12). Even if most of scroll 12 of the BZA in this edition does indeed reproduce the Jin canon, some folios of the latter were damaged, and were thus replaced – as is customarily done in such cases in ZH – with the corresponding folios of the 13th century second Koryŏ edition (see ZH’s apparatus on p. 408b). This is also the case with the initial folio of this scroll: in fact interlinear glosses mentioning variants from the Liao canon¹³ are a distinctive and exclusive feature of the second Koryŏ national canon,¹⁴ which bears witness to remarkable text-critical work at the basis of this edition (on which see Buswell 2006). On the other hand, while it is possible to demonstrate that some time after their carving the woodblocks of the Jin edition were indeed altered, in some cases, on the basis of the Liao canon, the latter is not explicitly mentioned in our only source describing this collation work.¹⁵

Chapter 2 discusses the sectarian affiliation of the BZA. The author, who follows Fumio Enomoto’s attribution of the BZA to the (Mūla)sarvāstivādin tradition (§ 2.3, pp. 40-44), devotes a large part of this chapter (§ 2.1-2.2, pp. 23-40) to discussing and refuting other hypotheses. On the whole, I found this chapter clear and well documented.

As noted above, chapters 3-6 contain an annotated translation of four sections of the BZA, partly corresponding to the *Bhikkhusaṃyutta*, the *Mārasaṃyutta*, the *Bhikkhunīsaṃyutta*, and the *Sakkasaṃyutta* of the Pāli *Samyuttanikāya*. In fact

character *bu* 不 in the [*Thousand-character text*] sequence”. On the use of the *Qian zi wen* 千字文 (*Thousand-character text*) character sequence as a device for “numbering” the cases containing the scriptures of the canon, see Zacchetti 2005: 64 with n. 76.

¹³The Liao canon (*Liao zang* 遼藏, also known as *Qidan zang* 契丹藏) was a woodblock edition of the canon produced during the first half of the 11th century in North China, under the Liao dynasty, and now almost completely lost (see Zacchetti 2005: 102-104, and especially n. 128 p. 103 on the dating of this edition).

¹⁴The wooden printing blocks of this famous edition of the Chinese Buddhist canon (the so-called *Pālman Taejanggyŏng* 八萬大藏經, or “Canon in eighty-thousand [blocks]”), which are still preserved, were carved between 1236 and 1251. On the interlinear glosses found in this edition see Zacchetti 2005: 101-102; for such notes in the BZA, see Bucknell 2008: 28-30. Incidentally, I do not think that the modern neologism “Tripitaka Koreana”, used by Bingenheimer with reference to the *Pālman Taejanggyŏng* (e.g. see p. 9 and *passim*), is really a historically accurate definition, even if it seems endorsed by the Research Institute mentioned in n. 8 above.

¹⁵On this issue see Zacchetti 2011 (cf. 2005: 100 and 124-125); cf. also n. 15 p. 9 of the book under review.

the author has adopted these Pāli titles in his translation, applying them to the relevant BZA sections, without discussing this choice in the introduction. However, it should be remarked that in the BSZ the thematic sections (*samyuktas*) bear no title, and in fact they are not even identified or marked off in any particular way in the original Chinese text.

Let me start with some general remarks on this part of the book. The translation is generally very good, and indeed often excellent, being fluent and yet faithful to the original Chinese text. This is all the more remarkable, as these often difficult scriptures are being rendered for the first time into a Western language.¹⁶ In preparation for this review I read the whole Chinese text covered by this translation, and in a number of cases it was only after consulting Bingenheimer's version that I was able to grasp the correct understanding of the original text. It is important to bear this in mind when reading the rest of this review, for, in general, it is far easier to point out errors in a translation than to do justice to its positive qualities.

Having said this, I think that a general introduction to the translation, placed in a more strategic position at the beginning of the second part of the book (i.e., before chapter 3), would have been useful. Instead, only a short paragraph at the end of the introduction to just the *Bhikkhusamyutta* section (§ 3.3, p. 58) is devoted to discussing translation policies which are in fact adopted in the entire book. This is far too little for a work of this kind, which, after all, involves several complex translation issues. Thus a number of important questions are addressed only in passing, or even not addressed at all.

The author's decision to render in Pāli the words – mainly names – transcribed phonetically in the BZA (as well as section titles, as remarked above) is a case in point. This question, far from trivial, and in fact full of important implications, is dispatched in just one sentence: "As the intended readership is likely to be more familiar with the Pāli parallels to these texts, Pāli names and terms are in general preferred to Sanskrit ones" (p. 58).

I am not sure that this is a reason strong enough to justify the price of this choice, which is high, particularly in view of the scholarly nature of this book. It amounts to a loss of historical accuracy in the representation of the BZA (which, as noted above, is ascribed by Bingenheimer to the [Mūla]sarvāstivādin school), because while it might not be entirely clear what original language the phonetic

¹⁶The author mentions a Korean translation (n. 12 p. 58) which, however, he has not been able to access.

transcriptions found in this text reflect, it was certainly not Pāli. As the author himself states, “We do not know enough about the original to offer a more precise description of its language. We know for sure that it was neither Pāli nor Sanskrit, but closer to the latter.”¹⁷

If so, one wonders if Sanskrit would not have been a better choice (though it goes without saying that this too would just be a provisional and conventional device), especially because some forms found in the BZA indeed seem to point in this direction. But in any case greater care and consistency in the rendition of phonetic transcriptions would have been preferable. So, for example, while 憍尸迦 (T 100 p. 384c 24), *kiawēikia* in Early Middle Chinese (as reconstructed by Pulleyblank 1991), which seems to correspond quite closely to the Sanskrit Kauśika,¹⁸ is represented in the translation by the Pāli form Kosiya (p. 201), on the next page 因陀羅 *Ṭjindala* (T 100 p. 385a 1) – a form, again, seemingly reflecting a Sanskrit original – is indeed rendered with the Sanskrit Indra.

Some inconsistencies in the interpretation of technical terms and idiomatic expressions are noticeable in the translation and could occasionally generate confusion (see for example the renditions of *changye* 長夜 and *fanxing* 梵行 discussed below).

The notes to the translation mainly deal with philological and lexicographical questions, often of considerable interest. Several notes provide Indic equivalents to Chinese terms and words found in the BZA, but this, which at first glance might seem a strength of the book, in fact turns out to be, in many cases, one of its weaknesses. The author seems to place full confidence in Akira Hirakawa’s *Buddhist Chinese-Sanskrit Dictionary* (1997), which is quoted almost thirty times in the notes to the translation. I venture to say that this confidence is misplaced. Hirakawa’s *Dictionary* is not a particularly sound lexicographical work, chiefly due to a crucial shortcoming: it does not provide references, but a bare list of Sanskrit supposed “equivalents” to a given Chinese word, leaving the reader in the dark as to where and when the latter was actually used to render the former,¹⁹ and

¹⁷Incidentally, this, which is the most explicit discussion of the important issue of the language of the Indic original of the BZA I could find in the book, is buried in a brief footnote in chapter 5 (n. 5 p. 153); cf. also pp. 37-40 for a discussion of Mizuno Kōgen’s hypothesis concerning this question (cf. Mizuno 1970: 50-51), and pp. 153-160.

¹⁸For a Sanskrit fragment corresponding to this portion of the *sūtra*, see Enomoto 1994: 28 no. 1106.

¹⁹It is true that one of the main sources of Hirakawa’s *Dictionary* is Wogihara Unrai’s Sanskrit-Japanese dictionary (Wogihara Unrai 荻原雲来 [ed. by Naoshiro Tsuji]. *Kanyaku taishō Bon-wa*

without quoting the contexts within which these lexical correspondences occur. The usefulness of this *Dictionary* as a tool for the philological study of Chinese translations is very limited, and it should never be trusted blindly.

Also (but not only) as a result of the author's reliance on Hirakawa's *Dictionary*, Chinese words are quoted in the notes with an abundance of alleged Indic parallels which is inversely proportional to the number of actually documented correspondences. A clear example of this rather cavalier approach is in n. 17 p. 59: “*jiafa* 家法 *kula-dhamma*. Both the Indian term and the Chinese term have several shades of meaning within their respective cultures. ...”. However, the Pāli parallel to this BZA *sūtra* (SN II 278-278) does not contain this expression (in fact the compound *kula-dhamma* does not even seem attested in Pāli canonical literature, even though there are a handful of occurrences in later texts), so here the reader is left wondering how the author arrived at this reconstruction.

These notes betray a somewhat simplistic view of Chinese Buddhist translations. My own experience in working on these texts (especially the early ones) is that even when we have several Indic parallels to a given Chinese version, it may often prove difficult or even impossible to identify the specific original terms underlying a particular Chinese word. This is chiefly due to two reasons: fluidity in the textual development and transmission of Indian Buddhist literature on the one hand, and rather flexible translation policies in China on the other.

Here I will confine myself to just two examples.

A passage from *sūtra* 20 of the BZA (T 100 p. 380b 4-5: 嗜欲在心, “desire pervaded [his] mind”) is translated on p. 100 as “his mind desiring sensuality”.²⁰ The expression *shiyu* 嗜欲 is then discussed in n. 100 on the same page as follows: “*shiyu* 嗜欲 **paribhoga-kāma*. The expression appears in the BZA (6 times), in the ZA (twice) and in various *Udānavarga* texts (T.210, T.211, T.212), pointing again to a common tradition for these texts.”

I find this note misleading, as it gives the impression that the equivalence *shiyu* 嗜欲 = **paribhoga-kāma* (which, incidentally, does not seem to be attested in Pāli) is unproblematic and well attested. But then one wonders why, if so, no detailed reference to any Indic parallel is provided. The disyllabic word *shiyu* al-

daijiten 漢訳対照梵和大辞典, Tokyo, 1978), which lists the Chinese translations of many Sanskrit words, providing basic references (see Hirakawa 1997: 3-7). Yet even Wogihara's dictionary does not go beyond quoting the titles of the Sanskrit scriptures in whose translations these renditions are attested.

²⁰ Another occurrence of this word (世間嗜欲, in BZA no. 21, T 100 p. 380c 12) is rendered, more accurately, as “worldly desires” (p. 103).

ready occurs in pre-Han classical Chinese (see HD vol. 3 p. 456a; note also the form 嗜欲, HD vol. 8 p. 641b, which is attested even earlier), so we are not facing a calque produced *ad hoc* to render a particular Indic expression. In fact, a closer analysis of two occurrences of *shiyu* in the BZA and in another early translation, compared with their available Pāli and Sanskrit parallels, shows that the picture is not nearly as simple as depicted by the author.

We can start from the passage at issue (BZA *sūtra* no. 20): 有一比丘在天祠邊，心念惡覺，嗜欲在心。(T 100 p. 380b 4-5; tr. p. 100: “At a *deva* shrine [he saw] a monk, his thoughts filled with evil, his mind desiring sensuality”). This corresponds to AN I 280: *addasā kho bhagavā ... aññataraṃ bhikkhuṃ rittassādaṃ bāhirassādaṃ ...* (“the Blessed One saw a certain monk enjoying empty and outward things ...”). As such, this Pāli passage would not seem to contain any clear parallel of *shiyu zai xin* 嗜欲在心 (“desire pervaded [his] mind”). It is interesting, though, that Buddhaghosa’s commentary, the *Manorathapūraṇī* (PTS ed. vol. 2 p. 378), glosses *bāhirassādaṃ* as “enjoying outward things out of pleasure in objects of sensual desire (*kāmaguṇasukhavasena*)”. It is thus possible that the BZA here reflects a similar interpretation, or perhaps even a variant in its original stemming from it (cf. Anālayo 2010 for similar patterns of textual development).

In the *Faju jing* 法句經, an early 3rd century Chinese translation of a *Dharma-pada*, 亦莫嗜欲樂 (T 210, p. 562, c4; for a convenient synoptic edition see Mizuno 1981: 92-93) corresponds to *Dhammapada* 27b (von Hinüber and Norman 2003: 8): *mā kāmaratisanthavaṃ*,²¹ i.e., “... nor to acquaintance with delight in sensual pleasures” (the verb is in the preceding *pāda*: *mā pamādam anuyuñ-jetha*: “You should not apply yourselves to carelessness ...”; I have quoted K.R. Norman’s translation, 2000: 4).

I will refrain from pushing this analysis of *shiyu* 嗜欲 – in itself, admittedly, a fairly trivial matter – any further. The point I am trying to make is – simply – that

²¹This reading is confirmed by the parallel in the *Udānavarga* (IV *Apramādavarga* 12, ed. Bernhard 1965: 129: *kāmaratisamstavam*) collated by Mizuno (loc. cit.). In the note on this passage of his *Dhammapada* translation, Norman remarks (2000: 68): “It would also be possible to explain *kāmaratisanthava* as a dvandva compound: ‘sensual pleasures, delight and acquaintance’”. On the Gāndhārī parallel, see Brough 1962: 137, no. 129-130; see also p. 214 for the commentary on stanza 129. There Brough also discusses this Chinese translation (亦莫嗜欲樂). He does not interpret the string 嗜欲 as a disyllabic word but, quoting Sylvain Lévi’s rendition (“ne recherchez ni désir ni plaisir”), he takes instead *shi* 嗜 as verb and *yu* 欲 and *le* 樂 as its objects, representing respectively *kāma* and *rati*. This too seems a possible interpretation of this particular passage, especially in view of its Indic parallels which suggest a certain stability in the textual transmission, and hence corroborate that *kāmarati*- is indeed the original underlying this Chinese translation.

establishing lexical equivalences between Chinese translations and Indic parallels is, as already pointed out above, a much more complex matter than is suggested by some of the notes contained in this book.

Another example is provided by the discussion of the expression *wuyu* 五欲 (lit. “five desires”) in n. 45 p. 130: “*wuyu* 五欲, **pañca kāma*. The prevalent term in Pāli, *pañca kāma-guṇā*, is well attested in the Chinese *Āgamas*, as *wu yu gongde* 五欲功德, with over 200 occurrences, but none in the BZA. The term 五欲 appears 46 times in the BZA, though never, as far as I can see, followed by something which might mean *guṇā*. 五欲 does not in itself specify whether what is referred to is pleasurable sensory objects or the mental response to these.”

My objection to this is that Chinese translations – particularly the early ones – are never to be taken as rigid calques of their Indic originals, and in fact it is easy to quote many passages where *wu yu* 五欲 (a well-established expression in Buddhist Chinese) appears to be used alone to translate *kāmaguṇa*.²²

I think that there is an important methodological issue at stake here: what we really need to establish when studying Chinese Buddhist translations from a philological and lexicographical point of view is not a set of generic, perhaps possible but unverified, lexical equivalences (such as those provided by Hiraakawa’s *Dictionary*), but specific and actually attested correspondences between a *particular* Chinese translation and its Indic parallel (or parallels). Doing this requires long and generally tedious work, which is however the price we have to pay for a solid understanding of Chinese Buddhist translations. Of course, it is crucial that we remain aware of the fact that the available *parallel* (or parallels) is unlikely to be the actual *original* of a given Chinese word (and indeed this is a common situation when comparing Chinese *Āgama* translations with their Pāli or Sanskrit parallels), but identifying and analysing such parallels remains an indispensable preliminary step in any serious study in this field.

In other words, the lexicographical model here should be the glossary *à la* Karashima (1998, 2001, and 2010), rather than the general dictionary exemplified by Hiraakawa 1997. We have not yet reached the stage when we can afford the confidence to provide Indic originals of Chinese translations in the way suggested by the notes in this book. In a work such as this, it would have been far more useful (and more meritorious in academic terms) to provide a systematic comparison of

²²For example, *wu yu* 五欲 it is often used to render *pañca- kāmaguṇa-* in translations by Dharmarakṣa (e.g. see Karashima 1998: 479, and Zacchetti 2005: 202-203, § 2.7-2.8) and Kumārajīva (see Karashima 2001: 292).

the BZA *sūtras* with all the available Sanskrit and Pāli parallels (always providing references to the PTS editions of the latter), as has been done in a number of cases (e.g. see n. 43 p. 129).

Before moving on to discussing some specific passages of the translation, let me add a further observation – again, more a general remark prompted by the importance of this book, especially as a potential model for future similar translations.

The study of Medieval Chinese (and, more specifically, of the language of Chinese Buddhist translations) is nowadays a flourishing field, especially in mainland China. It is important, when working on Chinese Buddhist translations, to take into account the research by Chinese and Japanese sinologists specializing in Medieval Chinese. This is rarely done in western publications, and, unfortunately, the book under review is no exception.

I think that here, too, we are facing a general and more important issue of method. Chinese Buddhist translations are written in a variety – or, more properly, in several varieties – of written Chinese, certainly influenced, to varying degrees, by their Indic originals, but also open to other linguistic influences: especially that of medieval (colloquial) Chinese, but also of literary Chinese. To properly understand these texts, it is not enough to consult Pāli and Sanskrit parallels; ideally, one has to be aware of their complex linguistic background also on the Chinese side.²³

In the following pages I will list my remarks on some specific passages of the translation.

- p. 62: “Then he turned into a small child adorned with jewels, pearls and jade, his body beautiful” (T 100 p. 374b 16: 又化作小兒，眾寶瓔珞莊嚴其身) → “Then he turned into a small child with a string of various jewels adorning his body”.

- p. 63: “You should not develop a covetous mind, as Devadatta has done” (T 100 p. 374b 26-27: 汝等不應於提婆達[v.l. + 多]所生願羨心). I do not think that the Chinese allows this interpretation. Here *suo* 所 has to be construed with the preceding noun, and means “towards, with respect to”.²⁴ So I would in-

²³See the important methodological remarks by Dong Zhiqiao, one of the best contemporary specialists in Medieval Chinese, in his review article on the modern annotated versions of two Chinese Buddhist translations (Dong 2007: 64-74; see especially pp. 64-65).

²⁴On this usage, see for example Ōta 1988: 16.

interpret this passage as “you should not generate envy²⁵ towards Devadatta”, or, in plain English, “you should not envy Devadatta”. One of the Pāli parallels to this BZA *sūtra* has a passage of a similar tenor: *mā bhikkhave Devadattassa lābhasakkārasilokam pihāyittha* (SN II p. 242).

In the BZA there are also other occurrences of the *yu* 於 ... *suo* 所 construction before the verb *sheng* 生 (“to produce, to generate etc.”): e.g., 汝今勿於彼二人所生嫌恨心 (T 100 p. 470a 20-21), literally “now you should not generate hatred towards those two persons”.²⁶

- p. 63: “This Devadatta will harm himself for the sake of gain and profit”; 此提婆達必為利養之所傷害 (T 100 p. 374b 27-28). Here the coverb *wei* 為 does not mean “for the sake of”, but introduces the agent in the passive construction *wei* 為 ... *zhi suo* 之所 + verb, particularly frequent in Medieval Chinese (Yang and He 680-681; Ōta 1988: 53). Therefore this passage is to be rendered as “this Devadatta will certainly be harmed by profit”. The same passage²⁷ is repeated on p. 374c 2-3.

- p. 63: “Devadatta ... will suffer because of this in the long night [of rebirths in ignorance]” (T 100 p. 374c 2: 長夜受苦) → “he will suffer for long time”. The Buddhist Chinese idiom *changye* 長夜, “(for) a long time”, is well known and studied (e.g. see Karashima 1998: 36-37; Li Weiqi 2004: 40-41). This expression, already attested in pre-Buddhist literature with the more literal meaning of a “very long/endless night” (see HD vol. 11 p. 590a), came to be used in Buddhist translations as a calque of the Sanskrit compounds *dirgharātra-*, *cirarātra-*²⁸ (Pāli

²⁵ *Yuanxian* 願羨 is a disyllabic word (not recorded in HD and very rare in the canon); see Zacchetti forthcoming § 2.3. Incidentally, CBETA Reader 2014 suggests amending 羨 (which is also the form found in the Jin canon (see ZH vol. 33 p. 260a 14) to 羨; this, however, seems unnecessary, as the former is simply a graphical variant of the latter.

²⁶ Note also 汝等今者勿於彼所生下劣想 in BZA 2 (T 100 p. 374a 27), appropriately translated on p. 61 as “You must not think that he is inferior”. Here 於 ... 所生 ... 想 probably reflects an underlying *-saṃjñām utpādayati* + locative (see BHSD p. 552); cf. for example the following passage from Kumārajīva’s translation of the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa*: 我等初見此土，生下劣想 (T 475 p. 554a 28-29), “when we first saw this land, we considered it inferior”, corresponding to *asmābhir iha buddhakṣetre hīnasamjñotpādītā* in the Sanskrit text (see *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa: A Sanskrit edition based upon the manuscript newly found at the Potala*. Tokyo: Taishō University 2006, p. 104, f. 63a 4).

²⁷ Note, however, that in this case the coverb occurs in the disyllabic form 為於 (為於利養之所危害), rare, but attested elsewhere in the canon (see Zacchetti forthcoming § 2.4).

²⁸ While *dirgharātra* seems to be more frequent in Buddhist Sanskrit (especially in the adverbial accusative: see BHSD p. 265; SWTF vol. 2 p. 444), *cirarātra-* too is attested (see SWTF vol. 2 p. 255; *cirarātram*; Karashima 2012 vol. 1 p. 38, § 4.18: *cirarātrāya* [adv.]).

dīgharatta-, *cīraratta-*), especially frequent in adverbial forms.

The treatment of this expression is inconsistent throughout the book. In two other passages, *changye* 長夜 is translated, as in its first occurrence, with a slightly negative nuance which seems unjustified (“in the long night [of *saṃsāric* existence]”, p. 100; “during the long night [of *saṃsāra*]”, p. 209). However, elsewhere *changye* is simply rendered as “always” (p. 224 and 233). The reasons for these variations are not altogether clear: from a contextual point of view, these passages do not seem substantially different from the one translated on p. 209.

Only in footnote 75 on p. 215, where 長夜入寂定 (BZA *sūtra* 41, T 100 p. 387a 17) is translated as “[Those who have left home ...] enter silent meditation for a long time”, do we find a discussion of this expression: “*changye ru jiding* 長夜入寂定; ZA: 長夜入正受; SN: *cīrarattasamāhite*. 長夜 here as in Pāli *cīrarattam* ‘for a long time,’ not *cīraratti* ‘long night [of *saṃsāra*]’.”

I wonder where this interpretation comes from (no other reference is provided here), but at any rate it does not appear to be accurate: apart from other considerations, I could not find any attestation of the compound *cīraratti* (which, as one could infer from this note, seems implicitly assumed by the author to be the form underlying the other occurrences of *changye* 長夜 listed above) in Pāli canonical literature.²⁹

- p. 67: “upright, endowed with pleasant appearance” (T 100 p. 375a 22: 容儀端正) → “of beautiful appearance” (this might correspond to *pāsādiko* in the Pāli parallel in AN IV p. 166, though the overall context there is quite different). On the use of *duanzheng* 端正 (also written 端政) in the sense of “beautiful, of pleasant aspect” in medieval Chinese, and especially in Buddhist sources, where this expression is particularly frequent, see for example Wang Yunlu and Fang Yixin 1992: 133-135; Li Weiqi 2004: 88-90.

- p. 68: “In order to practice the path” seems too vague as a translation of 為修梵行 (T 100 p. 375a 28), which corresponds fairly closely to the Pāli parallel in AN IV p. 167: *brahmacariyānuggahāya*, “in order to further the holy life”. Elsewhere in the book the term *fanxing* 梵行 (a calque of *brahmacariya/-carya*) is rendered in a variety of ways, for example: “pure life” (p. 60 = T 100 p. 374a 13), “a pure and chaste life” (p. 71 = T 100 p. 375 c 11), “abstinence” (p. 90 = T 100 p. 378c 26) etc.

²⁹The Sanskrit form *cīrarātrim* is recorded in SWTF vol. 2 p. 255 as occurring in a manuscript of the *Udānavarga* (VI.6), corresponding (obviously with the same meaning) to *cīrarātram* in Bernhard 1965: 121.

- p. 70: “He often talked a lot, but when the other monks said little in return, he became angry” (T 100 p. 375b 24: 每常多言。若諸比丘少有所說，便生瞋恚。). The strength of *shao you* 少有 ... *bian* 便 is different: I would rather render the Chinese as “he often talked a lot, and if other monks had [even] a little to say, he then became angry”. The point is not that Tīṣya/Tissa gets angry because the other monks say *only* a little, but because they dare to say *even* a little.

- p. 83: “Couldn’t you now use some ‘skillful means’ to revenge my anger?” (T 100 p. 377c 13-14: 而汝今者，寧不為我設諸方便，報彼怨耶?) → “Couldn’t you devise for me any expedients in order to take revenge against him?” (literally: “to take revenge against his hostility”).

- p. 83: “But wouldn’t it be slander to accuse someone who has been pure in keeping the precepts?” (T 100 p. 377c 17-18: 我當云何於淨戒人而作毀謗?) → “How could I slander a person [upholding the] pure precepts?”

- p. 92: “in the last light of the day” (possibly misreading *wei* 未 as *mo* 末? Cf. T 100 p. 379a 24: 天未明曉) → “when the sky was not yet clear”, that is, at dawn (so also the Pāli parallel, in SN I p. 8: *rattiyā paccūsasamayam*; note that the PTS text here has *paccusa-*).

- p. 94: “Whoever says that the signs / arising from name-and-form do truly exist, know that this person / is on the road of death. Perceiving in name-and-form / emptiness and absence of self-nature this is called to respect the Buddhas / for ever free from the realms of existence.”

In the *Taishō* edition (and in the Jin edition, as reproduced in ZH vol. 33 p. 266b-c) this passage reads as follows: 名色中生相，謂為真實有， / 當知如斯人，是名屬死徑。 / 若識於名色，本空無有性， / 是名尊敬佛，永離於諸趣。(T 100 p. 379b 15-18). Here the text is admittedly, at least in part, obscure and the available parallels (SN I pp. 8-12 and ZA no. 1078, T 99 p. 281c 3-282a 21) are of no help in interpreting it. But even if we allow for a certain syntactic flexibility in verses, I am not sure that the initial portion (名色中生相，謂為真實有) can be interpreted as the author does (“Whoever says that the signs / arising from name-and-form do truly exist”): apart from other considerations, the clear parallelism with the following verse (若識 … 無有性) shows that the point here is awareness of the unreality of *nāmarūpa*. According to ZH’s apparatus (p. 271a), the Qisha canon (a printed edition produced between the 13th and 14th centuries), followed by other later editions (e.g. Yuan and Ming in the *Taishō*’s apparatus), reads 名色中生想，and I think that this could well be the correct reading. The construction 中生/起 … 想，corresponding to *saṃjñām utpādayati*

and related forms (see BHSD p. 551), is rather common in Chinese Buddhist translations, although normally *xiang* 想 = *saṃjñā* is preceded by another element modifying it (see Zacchetti forthcoming § 2.1 and cf. n. 26 above). I would then tentatively render this passage as: “If one produces a [wrong] notion with respect to name-and-form, considering³⁰ [it] really to exist, [then] one should know that such a person is called [one who] is on the road of death. If one knows that³¹ name-and-form is fundamentally empty and without [self-]nature, [then] this is called etc.”

- p. 143: (Māra is speaking) “I should go there and try to mislead him” (T 100 p. 383a 22: 我當詣彼，伺求其便) → “I should go there to seek an opportunity [to attack] him”. I do not think that “try to mislead him” is an accurate rendition of *siqiu qi bian* 伺求其便. There is an already considerable literature on this particular use of *bian* 便, which is rather common in the canon, particularly in the idiom *de qi bian* 得其便, “to get an opportunity [for attacking a particular person = *qi* 其]”,³² usually used in Buddhist translations to render the expression *avatāram* + √*labh* and related forms. See, for example, Matsuo 1988: 39-41, Zhu 1992: 84; Karashima 1998: 23 and 2010: 41-42; Zhang 2000: 226-227. This Chinese idiom seems to reflect a semantic development based on the meaning “opportunity, chance” of *bian* 便, corresponding to Sanskrit *avatāra* / Pāli *otāra* in the sense of “opportunity for attack, weak point etc.” (see BHSD p. 71; Cone 2001: 568). In this particular BZA passage, 伺求其便 seems to correspond quite neatly to *otārāpekkho* (“longing for a weak point”)³³ in the Pāli parallel (SN I 122), even if the narrative frame in the two texts is rather different.

³⁰On *weiwei* 謂為 (“to consider” etc.) in Medieval Chinese, see Wang Yunlu and Fang Yixin 1992: 384-385.

³¹Here *yu* 於 is used as a coverb introducing the object after a transitive verb (on this common usage see, for example, Karashima 1998: 558-560).

³²The idiom *de qi bian* 得其便 occurs in another passage of the same *sūtra*: 魔不得其便 (T 100 p. 383b 14). This is translated on p. 144 as “Māra will not overpower them”. A similar rendition is given also in n. 8 p. 115, where 魔王波旬不得其便 (ZA T 99 p. 344b 19) is translated as “So that King Māra the Bad does not overwhelm him/her.” These are better renditions of this acceptance of *bian* 便, though still not entirely accurate.

³³Bhikkhu Bodhi (2000: 215) translates this expression as “seeking to gain access to him”. As made clear by n. 316 p. 422, this interpretation is based on Buddhaghosa’s commentary (*Sāratthapākāsinī*, London: Pali Text Society, 1929, vol. 1 p. 185), which paraphrases *otārāpekkho* as *evam vivaram apekkhamāno* (“thus looking for a fault”, but lit. also “an opening” or “a leak”). Māra’s thoughts as presented by this passage of the commentary are translated by Bhikkhu Bodhi as follows: “He [viz. Māra] thought: ‘If I see anything improper in the ascetic Gotama’s conduct through the body door, etc., I will reprove him.’”

- p. 143: “Of radiant countenance and with celestial body // all senses [perceiving] happiness, ...” (T 100 p. 383a 25: 光顏顯神體 諸根悉悅豫). The verb *xian* 顯 (“to manifest”) is omitted in the translation. I would then interpret *shenti* 神體 in its normal Chinese meaning (see HD, vol. 7 p. 891a), linking it to the *zhu gen* 諸根 in the following segment: “[your] radiant countenance manifests the fact that all [your] spiritual and physical faculties are entirely delighted”.

The immediately following lines read: 譬如失財者 後還獲於財 / 汝今翫禪寂 歡喜亦如是 (T 100 p. 383a 26-27). In the translation, this has been linked to the preceding line, and rendered as: “... like someone who had lost his fortune // and later regained it. You are idling your time away in the silence of meditation // and the enjoyment that comes with it.”

I think that this translation is based on a wrong punctuation of the Chinese text: one should put a period before *piru* 譬如, which is typically picked up by the final *yi ru shi* 亦如是. I would render this passage as: “Now in your intensive cultivation of the quiet resulting from *dhyāna*, you are as delighted as someone who has lost his fortune and later regained it.”

- p. 205: “... there were two monks who got into an argument during a meeting” (T 100 p. 385b 8-9: 有二比丘於僧斷事時, 共生忿爭). Although it is not entirely clear to me how we should translate 於僧斷事時 (neither the Pāli parallels listed in Appendix 1, p. 256, nor ZA T 99 p. 291b 28-29 are helpful in this respect), there seems to be little doubt that (*seng*) *duanshi* (僧)斷事 must indicate something more specific than just “a meeting”. *Duanshi* 斷 (probably to be interpreted in the general sense of “deciding a matter”, see Durt 1979: 437 and cf. also Nakamura 1981: 944b) and other related expressions are quite common in the canon, especially in *Vinaya* literature. As pointed out by Silk (2008: 172 n. 40) the expression *duanshi ren* 斷事人 refers to a particular monastic administrator, the “dispute resolver”. So a possible rendition of this BZA passage could be “there were two monks who, during [a meeting for] resolving disputes in the *saṃgha*, etc.”. Be that as it may, this passage would probably have deserved a few lines of discussion in a footnote.

- p. 205: “The *Tathāgata* ... heard [the clamor] clearly with his *deva*-like hearing, which surpasses human hearing and can discern sounds from far away” (T 100 p. 385b 12-13: 如來... 以淨天耳, 過於人耳, 遙聞是聲) → “The *Tathāgata* ... with his pure divine hearing, which surpasses human hearing, heard this clamour from afar” (the subject of the verb *yaowen* 遙聞 is *rulai* 如來).

- p. 223: “We therefore came ourselves // desiring to ask a boon” (T 100 p. 388b 24: 我等故自來，欲乞索所願) → “We have come especially to ask a boon”. On this meaning of *gu* 故 / *guzi* 故自 (*zi* 自 here is simply an adverbial suffix, and need not be translated) as “especially, on purpose etc.”, see Dong and Cai 1994: 205. This particular use of *gu* 故 occurs also elsewhere in the BZA, for example in *sūtra* no. 31: 我故來供養，與佛策使。(T 100 p. 383c 2-3), tr. p. 145: “We have come to worship you and be at your service” (literally: “we have come especially to worship you etc.”).

- p. 225 with n. 87: “Please dispel my doubts!” (T 100 p. 389a 4: 唯願為我法眾疑). The translation is essentially correct, even if the text of the *Taishō* is wrong. The author remarks in n. 87: “The 法 must be a scribal error for 祛 or 去.” In fact the character *fa* 法 is, in all likelihood, an error introduced into the text by the editors of the *Taishō*: in this scroll ZH reproduces the second Koryō canon (on which the *Taishō* is based), which reads *jue* 決 (see ZH vol. 33 p. 285b 16): 唯願為我決眾疑, “please resolve my doubts”.

The same situation occurs again, *mutatis mutandis*, in *sūtra* no. 52 (T 2 100 p. 390c 11: 諸摩訶等圍遶在右); see n. 113 p. 238, where the author correctly observes that “*zai* 在 in this sentence must be a mistake for *zuo* 左.” Here, too, the Koryō canon has the expected reading *zuo* 左 (ZH vol. 33 p. 288a 7), and hence the error 在 must be ascribed to the *Taishō* editors.³⁴

Finally, I list here a few typos or minor imprecisions:

- The name 道安 is transcribed as Daoan in n. 22 p. 15; the correct *pinyin* transcription should be Dao'an, as given on p. 7.

- I wonder if the “Prof. Fan Guangzhang” mentioned in n. 17 p. 12 might not be Prof. Fang Guangchang 方廣錫, the well-known specialist in the Chinese canon.

- p. 59: “paid homage by touching the Buddha’s feet” (T 100 p. 374a 9: 頂禮佛足) → “paid homage by touching the Buddha’s feet with the top of [his] head”.

- p. 67: “Among those teaching the *Dhamma*” → “Among those skilled in expounding the *Dharma*” (T 100 p. 375a 21: 善說法中).

- p. 76: “She got dressed, put on her jewellery” (T 100 p. 376b 24: 著衣服瓔珞, 種種莊嚴, etc.); the string 種種莊嚴 (“she adorned herself in various ways”) is missing from the translation.

³⁴Note that both errors appear corrected in the CBETA Reader 2014.

- p. 218: “Tusita” (T 100 p. 387c 23: 忉利) → Tāvatiṃsa (Trāyastrimśa / Trayastrimśa).

- A work by Enomoto Fumio is quoted several times in Appendix 1 (p. 257 and *passim*) as “Enomoto 1997”, but is not listed in the bibliography. This seems to be the following article: “Sanskrit Fragments from the *Saṃgītanipāta of the *Samyuktāgama*”, in Petra Kieffer-Pülz and Jens-Uwe Hartmann (eds.), *Bauddhavidyāsudhākaraḥ: Studies in Honour of Heinz Bechert On the Occasion of His 65th Birthday* (Swisttal-Odendorf: Indica et Tibetica Verlag, 1997, pp. 91-106).

In conclusion: the book under review no doubt constitutes a valuable contribution to the study of *Āgama* literature and of Chinese Buddhist translations in general, and I hope that my criticism does not detract from the considerable merits of Bingenheimer’s work. Probably there is always some unfairness inherent in reviews of works of this kind: it is easy to attract attention to mistakes in matter of detail to the detriment of the work as a whole (and here one might think of Erasmus’ bitter remarks about pedantic critics: “id solum annotant, id solum meminerunt”).³⁵ Let me stress, then, that my observations on this book, and especially on the annotated translation, should be rather seen as a testament to its importance, and to be taken as suggestions for those who contribute in such vital ways to our field by undertaking works of this kind.

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