

VOLUME 8 (MAY 2015)

ISSN: 2047-1076

Journal of the
Oxford
Centre for
Buddhist
Studies



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



A Recognised Independent
Centre of the University of Oxford

JOURNAL OF THE OXFORD CENTRE
FOR
BUDDHIST STUDIES

VOLUME 8



May 2015

Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies

Volume 8

May 2015

ISSN: 2047-1076

Published by the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies

www.ocbs.org

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

Authors retain copyright of their articles.



Editorial board

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

Prof. John Holder: john.holder@snc.edu

Dr Tse-fu Kuan: jeformosa@yahoo.com

Dr Alex Wynne: alxwynne@hotmail.com

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

Production team

Operations and Development Manager: Steven Egan

Production Manager: Dr Tomoyuki Kono

Development Consultant: Dr Paola Tinti

Annual subscription rates

Students: £20

Individuals: £30

Institutions: £45

Universities: £55

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

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

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

Contents

Contents	3
List of Contributors	5
Editorial. RICHARD GOMBRICH	7
Pratyekabuddhas in the <i>Ekottarika-āgama</i> . ANĀLAYO.	10
Heart Murmurs: Some Problems with Conze's <i>Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya</i> . JAYARAVA ATTWOOD	28
The Medicinal Accomplishment (<i>smān sgrub</i>) practice in the Dudjom <i>Meteoric Iron Razor (gnam lcags spu gri)</i> tradition: Reflections on the ritual and meditative practice at a monastery in Southern Bhutan. CATHY CANTWELL	49
Abhidhamma Studies III Origins of the Canonical Abhidha(r)mma Literature. L.S. COUSINS†	96
Coined Money and Early Buddhism. RICHARD FYNES	146
Why is the <i>kaṭhina</i> robe so called? RICHARD GOMBRICH	155
The Self-immolation of Kalanos and other Luminous Encounters Among Greeks and Indian Buddhists in the Hellenistic World. GEORGIOS T. HALKIAS	163

Book Review

*Brains, Buddhas, and Believing: The Problem of Intentionality in
Classical Buddhist and Cognitive-Scientific Philosophy of Mind.*

Dan Arnold. Reviewed by John J. Holder

187

List of Contributors

Bhikkhu ANĀLAYO specializes in early Buddhist studies. He teaches at the Numata Center for Buddhist Studies, University of Hamburg, and carries out research at Dharma Drum Institute of Liberal Arts, Taiwan.

Jayarava ATTWOOD is a member of the Triratna Buddhist Order, and on the editorial board of the *Western Buddhist Review*. His academic background is in the sciences and librarianship, and his main research interest is in the history of Early Buddhist thought

jayarava@gmail.com

Cathy CANTWELL has been a member of the Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Oxford, since 2002. She is a specialist on Tibetan tantric traditions of all periods, with a special focus on ritual texts and practices deriving from the “Early Transmissions” (*snga ’gyur rnying ma*).

catherine.cantwell@orinst.ox.ac.uk

L.S. COUSINS† (died March 2015) was formerly Senior Lecturer in Comparative Religion at the University of Manchester. On moving to Oxford, he became a Member of Common Room and a Supernumerary Fellow of Wolfson College. He taught Pali and some Buddhism in the University of Oxford as a member of the Faculty of Theology and Religions. His main research interests concerned Buddhist meditation, *abhidhamma* and the history of Mainstream Buddhism.

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

fynesclinton@yahoo.com

Richard GOMBRICH founded the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies in 2004, on his retirement from the Boden Chair of Sanskrit at Oxford University, and has been its Academic Director ever since. He wishes that more people shared his interest in most aspects of Buddhism.

richard.gombrich@balliol.ox.ac.uk

Georgios T. HALKIAS holds a DPhil in Oriental Studies from the University of Oxford. He is an Assistant Professor of Buddhism at the Centre of Buddhist Studies, the University of Hong Kong. His research interests include Indo-Tibetan and Himalayan Buddhism, and religious contacts in Hellenistic Central Asia.

halkias@hku.hk

John J. HOLDER is Professor of Philosophy at St. Norbert College (De Pere, Wisconsin, USA). He is a specialist in Asian and comparative philosophy. His publications include a Hackett textbook entitled *Early Buddhist Discourses* that contains translations of twenty discourses from the Pali Canon. He is active in the Society for Asian and Comparative Philosophy and has published articles on early Buddhist epistemology, ethics, and social theory.

john.holder@snc.edu

Editorial

Richard Gombrich

The most important recent development in Buddhist studies is a sad one. On 14 March Lance Cousins died in Oxford of a heart attack, his third, at the age of 72. We must derive some consolation from the fact that he was in excellent form in the weeks before his death, active as a teacher and scholar, and apparently enjoying life; moreover, he probably died with very little suffering.

This is not the place for a full obituary, but we must note the importance of his passing for Buddhist studies. Lance sometimes pointed out that he had a sort of dual Buddhist career. Nearly 50 years ago, when he moved to Manchester to take up his first academic post, he took the leading role in founding the Samatha Trust. He practised Buddhist meditation in both Thailand and Sri Lanka, and became a guide and inspiration to many of those around him – how many and how durably was demonstrated by the number who attended his funeral and the many tributes that then appeared on Facebook. He was explicit, however, in refusing to allow his religious experiences to influence his academic work, which he pursued without deviating from the canon of philological orthodoxy. The time and energy that he devoted to Buddhist practice, both his own and that of others, did however mean that he was slow to publish academic work, so that in worldly terms he had a less successful career than would otherwise have been the case. Only after he took early retirement from Manchester University and moved to Oxford, some ten years ago, did he publish more prolifically and enhance his scholarly reputation.

Those who knew him better, however, had long been aware that his knowledge of the Pali language and of Pali literature (as well as other Indian religious and philosophical traditions) was rivalled by few people anywhere in the world, and the age of e-mail made him the constant target of requests for help and advice – not least from me and my graduate students. His residence in Oxford was fortunate

for the University, in that he could take over the Pali teaching of undergraduates. As I write, it is not clear how he can be replaced in this role.

A list of Lance's publications, 24 papers and 14 book reviews, is on <https://oxford.academia.edu/LSCousins>; naturally it does not include the major article which appears in this volume.

Since the last volume of this Journal appeared, we have also lost Ian Harris, a co-founder and the present Chairman of the UK Association of Buddhist Studies. He died of cancer in December, aged 61. After contributing to other branches of Buddhist studies, in recent years he had learnt Khmer and become an authority on Khmer Buddhism as it seeks to recover from the depredations of Pol Pot. I hope to be proved wrong, but to me it looks as if the scholarly study of Theravada Buddhism world-wide is perilously close to extinction.

Early in my career, nearly 40 years ago, Margaret Cone and I published a book called *The Perfect Generosity of Prince Vessantara* with the aim of introducing the Western public to the *Vessantara Jātaka* and its place in Buddhist culture. While working in Sri Lanka I had found that it was the story most frequently depicted in mural paintings in Buddhist temples – more even than episodes from the Buddha's own life. The painters were not great artists, but their pictures were lively and usually brightly coloured. So I visited many village temples taking photos, and selected the best of them to illustrate Margaret's translation of the text. But when it came to publication we encountered a problem: to publish colour photographs was so expensive that the publishers (Oxford University Press) decreed that we could only have black and white plates. Luckily Sir Isaiah Berlin, who took a kindly interest in me, managed to persuade a benefactor to pay for a few colour plates.

As we all know, the cost of the technology of colour reproduction has dropped to almost nothing. When Cathy Cantwell offered us her article on a Tibetan ritual, it came with 120 fine colour photographs. For a descriptive piece like hers, words, however well chosen, require visual supplementation if the reader is to "get the picture". We decided to display the photos on the OCBS website with a link to her article. This time too, however, we had a snag, and again it was a matter of money: the OCBS is desperately poor and has only been able to afford a website which is too small to take so many colour photos. Luckily we have found another solution, and hope it is good enough to serve its purpose.

This gives me an occasion to remind readers that the OCBS, which has no regular source of income, is so poor that we are always teetering on the edge of

financial collapse. This journal, of which this is the 8th volume, is produced entirely by voluntary labour. We do not know how long this can last. If anyone reading this can make a donation, let them click on the OCBS web site and follow the simple instructions given there.

Pratyekabuddhas in the *Ekottarika-āgama**

Anālayo

In the present article I study material related to Pratyekabuddhas that is found in the *Ekottarika-āgama*, as part of an attempt to contribute to our appreciation of the significance of the figure of the Pratyekabuddha/Pacceka-buddha in Buddhist thought.

Introduction

Among the Chinese *Āgamas* and the Pāli *Nikāyas*, the *Ekottarika-āgama* stands out for having a substantial number of tales and references related to Pratyekabuddhas. My present study of one such tale that involves Mahākāśyapa comes as the third in a series of articles concerned with Pratyekabuddhas in *Ekottarika-āgama* discourses. In what follows I first briefly summarize the two previous studies, before translating the Mahākāśyapa tale.

One of the two stories I translated and studied previously involves a housewife who, on seeing a Pratyekabuddha out on the road begging his food, falls in love with him. Being informed by her that she is particularly enchanted by his beautiful eyes, the Pratyekabuddha gouges out one of them. After this rather drastic action, he gives her a short but penetrative teaching whose putting into practice leads the housewife to a heavenly rebirth.¹ The story itself can be considered in conjunction with the tale of *bhikkhunī* Subhā in the *Therīgāthā*, who also gouges out an eye when confronted by a lustful male.²

* I am indebted to Rod Bucknell, Adam Clarke, and sāmaṇerī Dhammadinnā for commenting on a draft version of this article.

¹ EĀ 38.9 at T II 724a₇ to 724b₂₇; cf. Anālayo 2014a.

² Thī 396.

In as much as the motif of the Pratyekabuddha is concerned, the protagonist of the *Ekottarika-āgama* story delivers a substantial doctrinal teaching, which confirms that Pratyekabuddhas were not invariably seen by tradition as “silent Buddhas”.³ In keeping with the restricted soteriological function of a Pratyekabuddha, however, the housewife does not attain stream-entry or any other level of awakening, but is reborn in a Brahmā world.

The other tale I studied previously is the *Ekottarika-āgama* parallel to the *Isigili-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*.⁴ Among Pāli discourses, the *Isigili-sutta* stands out for featuring a whole series of Paccekabuddhas who formerly dwelled on mount Isigili.⁵ Its *Ekottarika-āgama* parallel similarly provides such a list of Pratyekabuddhas. In addition, it reports that five hundred Pratyekabuddhas rose up into the air and cremated themselves on being told that the future Buddha was about to be born.⁶

The same *Ekottarika-āgama* discourse continues with another story from the past featuring a king who becomes a Pratyekabuddha. This king had been reflecting on the dire prospect of being born in hell to the extent that he eventually decided to renounce the throne and go forth. Contemplating the impermanent nature of the five aggregates he in turn became a Pratyekabuddha.⁷

The tale of how this king attained realization on his own exemplifies a general feature that distinguished Pratyekabuddhas from arhats: they attain awakening without the guidance of a teacher. This appears to be in fact a central implication of the term, which as far as I can see does not imply that a Pratyekabuddha invariably awakens because of an external cause.⁸

³The fact that Pratyekabuddhas usually do not have disciples is explicitly stated in EĀ 32.5 at T II 676c₁₈, however, and EĀ 31.2 at T II 667c₂₁ clarifies that neither a Pratyekabuddha nor an arahant could equal the way of teaching of a Buddha.

⁴EĀ 38.7 at T II 723a₆ to 723c₅; and MN 116 at MN III 68,1 to 71,7; cf. Anālayo 2010b.

⁵On Paccekabuddhas as authors of the *Khaggavisāṇa-sutta* cf. also Anālayo 2014b: 35f.

⁶EĀ 38.7 at T II 723a₂₅; for a similar story cf. the *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1882: 357,3; for further references cf. Anālayo 2010b: 35 note 71.

⁷EĀ 38.7 at T II 723b₂₀.

⁸This has been suggested by Norman 1983; for a critical reply cf. Anālayo 2010b: 11–14.

The depiction of the self-cremation of Pratyekabuddhas on hearing of the impending birth of the Buddha-to-be reflects another characteristic regularly associated with them, which in a way follows from the fact that they awaken without a teacher, namely that Pratyekabuddhas are expected to live only during periods when no Buddha (and his dispensation) is in existence.⁹

The discourse I have chosen for translation and study in the present paper offers further perspectives on the motif of the Pratyekabuddha, in particular linking it to the personality of Mahākāśyapa. The basic storyline in the discourse revolves around the Buddha inviting Mahākāśyapa to give up his ascetic conduct and live a more comfortable life style in view of his advanced age. The same plot recurs in the *Samyutta-nikāya*, in the two *Samyukta-āgamas*, as well as in another discourse in the *Ekottarika-āgama*,¹⁰ although without the Pratyekabuddha motif.

Translation¹¹

Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was staying at Rājagr̥ha in the Bamboo Grove, the Squirrels' Feeding Place, accompanied by a great community of five hundred monks.

At that time the venerable Mahākāśyapa was a forest dweller. When the time came, he begged for food without discriminating between poor and rich. [When meditating] he sat alone and in a solitary place, never moving or changing [posture], at the root of a tree, sitting out in the open, or in a wilderness area. He wore robes of [at least] five patches, keeping to three robes [only]. [At times] he stayed in a cemetery. He took a single meal, eating it [before] noon. [In spite of] being old and advanced in age, he was undertaking [such] ascetic practices.

⁹EĀ 50.10 at T II 814a₁₄ distinguishes between two types of aeon, one in which a Buddha appears in the world and the other when Pratyekabuddhas appear.

¹⁰SN 16.5 at SN II 202,6 to 203,26, SĀ 1141 at T II 301c₇ to 301c₃₀, SĀ² 116 at T II 416b₈ to 416c₆, and EĀ 41.5 at T II 746a₂₁ to 746c₂₄.

¹¹The translated discourse is EĀ 12.6 at T II 570a₂₃ to 570b₁₉, which has already been translated into French by Huyen-vi 1989: 124–126. SN 16.5 has the same setting, the Bamboo Grove at Rājagaha, whereas SĀ 1141, SĀ² 116, and EĀ 41.5 take place at Jeta's Grove.

At the time right after the meal, the venerable Mahākāśyapa went [and sat] under a tree [to practise] meditative concentration. Having [practised] meditative concentration, he rose from his seat, arranged his robes, and approached the Blessed One.¹² Then the Blessed One saw Kāśyapa coming in the distance. The Blessed One said: “Welcome, Kāśyapa.”¹³ Then Kāśyapa approached the Blessed One, paid respect with his head at [the Blessed One’s] feet and sat to one side.

The Blessed One said: “Kāśyapa you are now old and advanced in age, you are feeble and worn out. You could now give up begging for food ... *up to* ... undertaking [such] ascetic practices. You could also accept invitations by householders as well as accepting [ready-made] robes.”¹⁴

Kāśyapa replied: “I will not follow the Tathāgata’s injunction now.¹⁵ The reason is that, if the Tathāgata had not accomplished supreme and right awakening, I would have accomplished Pratyekabuddhahood.¹⁶

“Pratyekabuddhas are all forest dwellers. When the time comes, they beg for food without discriminating between poor and rich. [When meditating] they sit alone and in a solitary place, never moving or changing [posture], at the root of a tree, sitting out in the open, or in a wilderness area. They wear robes of [at least] five patches, keeping to three robes [only]. [At times] they stay in a cemetery. They take a single meal, eating it [before] noon. They undertake [such] ascetic practices.¹⁷ I will not venture to give up my original practice now to train in

¹² Among the parallel versions, only SĀ 1141 at T II 301c₉ and SĀ² 116 at T II 416b₁₀ report that he had been sitting in meditation before approaching the Buddha.

¹³ In none of the parallels does the Buddha explicitly welcome Mahākāśyapa in this way.

¹⁴ EĀ 12.6 at T II 570b₅: 可受諸長者請, 并受衣裳; the translation by Huyen-vi 1989: 125 “*et prendre s’il faut le train d’un bourgeois aisé et reprendre la vie d’un laïc*” does not seem to do justice to the original.

¹⁵ In SN 16.5 at SN II 202,¹⁶ SĀ 1141 at T II 301c₁₃, and SĀ² 116 at T II 416b₁₅ Mahākāśyapa does not openly declare that he will not follow the Buddha’s instruction, but instead points out that he has for a long time been observing ascetic practices and recommending them to others. In EĀ 41.5 at T II 746a₂₄, however, he also openly expresses disagreement, here formulated in terms of his inability to accept (householders’ gifts of) robes and food because he enjoys rag robes and begging alms. SN 16.5 provides a listing of his forms of conduct which mentions forest dwelling, begging alms, rag robes, three robes, as well as several praiseworthy mental qualities; SĀ 1141 lists just forest dwelling, rag robes, and begging alms, and SĀ² 116 mentions only rag robes.

¹⁶ EĀ 12.6 at T II 570b₆: 當如來不成無上正真道者, 我則成辟支佛; the translation by Huyen-vi 1989: 125 “*si je ne parvenais au stade de Bouddha, je deviendrais un Pratyekabuddha*” does not seem to be correct.

¹⁷ This whole paragraph has no counterpart in the parallel versions, which do not refer to Pratyekabuddhas at all.

other forms of conduct instead.”¹⁸

The Blessed One said: “It is well, it is well, Kāśyapa, you are benefitting many, causing countless human beings to cross over, so that all *devas* and human beings far and wide can cross over [*samsāra*].

“Kāśyapa, the reason is that if these ascetic practices exist in the world, then my Dharma will also exist for a long time in the world. If the Dharma exists in the world, then the paths to heaven will increase and the three evil destinies will in turn decrease; and stream-entry, once return, non-return, and the paths of the three *yānas* will all be preserved in the world.”¹⁹

“Monks, you should all train just as Kāśyapa practises. Monks, you should train in this way.”²⁰

Then the monks, having heard what the Buddha said, were delighted and received it respectfully.

Study

A central motif found similarly in the different versions of this discourse is Mahākāśyapa’s ascetic conduct,²¹ thrown into relief as something he wants to continue to observe even when he is being personally invited by the Buddha to live a more comfortable life in view of his advanced age. The version translated above stands alone, however, in reporting that the Buddha explicitly reckoned the ascetic practices as a factor ensuring the longevity of the Dharma.²² The *Samyutta-nikāya* version has no general statement by the Buddha on the ascetic practices, only recording that he permitted Mahākassapa to continue the practices of wearing rag robes, begging food, and dwelling in the forest.²³ The two *Samyukta-āgama*

¹⁸In SN 16.5 at SN II 203,34, SĀ 1141 at T II 301c16, and SĀ² 116 at T II 416b19 he describes the two benefits of his mode of practice, namely a pleasant abiding for himself and his compassionate concern for others by setting an example. The second of these benefits receives a more detailed coverage in EĀ 41.5 at T II 746a25, where Mahākāśyapa depicts in detail the predicament of future monks who are attached to good food and nice robes.

¹⁹The parallel versions differ considerably, cf. the discussion below.

²⁰The parallel versions do not have a comparable injunction that the monks should emulate the example of Mahākāśyapa.

²¹The listing of outstanding disciples, AN 1.14 at AN I 23,18 and EĀ 4.2 at T II 557b8, reckons him foremost in the undertaking of ascetic practices. His eminency in this respect is also recorded in the *Divyavadāna*, Cowell and Neill 1886: 395,23, and in the *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1882: 64,14.

²²For a study of the notion of the decline of the Dharma cf. Nattier 1991.

²³SN 16.5 at SN II 203,23.

versions go a step further than that, proclaiming that one who disparages the ascetic practices disparages the Buddha.²⁴ The other *Ekottarika-āgama* discourse launches into a long description of the deterioration of conditions after the Buddha's demise, one aspect of which is failure to undertake the ascetic practices.²⁵

The *Samyutta-nikāya* discourse makes it clear that undertaking ascetic practices was actually an expression of Mahākassapa's compassion for later generations, explained in the discourse itself as implying that later generations will follow his example.²⁶ In the two *Samyukta-āgama* parallels to the discourse translated above, Mahākāśyapa describes how future generations will recall that monks at the time of the Buddha undertook and spoke in praise of forest dwelling, wearing rag robes, and begging alms.²⁷ The other *Ekottarika-āgama* version describes in detail how future monks would feel free to indulge their desires and attachments if they were to think that monks at the time of the Buddha were also living in a lax manner. It concludes that this would lead to their downfall and eventual rebirth in hell.²⁸ In sum, in different ways the parallel versions throw into relief the importance of Mahākāśyapa's ascetic conduct as a source of inspiration.

²⁴SĀ 1141 at T II 301c₂₅ and SĀ² 116 at T II 416b₂₈, both of which continue by indicating that one who praises ascetic practices praises the Buddha. The reason given in both discourses is that the Buddha himself had spoken in praise of undertaking ascetic practices.

²⁵EĀ 41.5 at T II 746b₉.

²⁶SN 16.5 at SN II 203,5: *pacchimaṃ ca* (B^c, C^c, and S^c: *pacchimaṃ ca*) *janataṃ anukampamāno*, *appeva nāma pacchimā janatā ditṭhanugatiṃ* (B^c, C^c, and S^c: *ditṭhānugatiṃ*) *āpajjeyyūṃ* (C^c and S^c: *āpajjeyya*). Thus Shults 2014: 248f, in a review of Anālayo 2012b, is not correct in assuming that the implications of the expression *pacchimaṃ ca janataṃ anukampamāno* can be clarified only by resorting to the Pāli commentaries. In an entry on *viveka* for the *Encyclopedia of Buddhism* where, according to the editorial guidelines, my task was just to summarize relevant information from the Pāli texts and avoid footnoting, I briefly referred to two occurrences of the phrase *pacchimaṃ ca janataṃ anukampamāno* in MN 4 at MN I 23,3₂ and AN 2.3.9 at AN I 61,1 in relation to the Buddha's *viveka*. Because of the editorial guidelines, I was not able to provide more detailed information or discuss the cultural context, etc. However, a digital search of the phrase would have led Shults quickly to the passage in SN 16.5. An alternative route would have been consultation of relevant scholarship. Here the first that comes to mind is the detailed study of *anukampa* in Pāli sources by Aronson 1980/1986, who p. 11 indeed refers to SN 16.5 and explains that "Mahākassapa, like [the] Buddha, ... undertook beneficial activities with the hope that others would follow him and benefit similarly." As Shults 2014: 248 makes a point of stating that he "certainly would like to know the real significance of the phrase *pacchimaṃ ca janataṃ anukampamāno*", each of these straightforward avenues of research could have quickly clarified the issue for him.

²⁷SĀ 1141 at T II 301c₁₈ and SĀ² 116 at T II 416b₂₁.

²⁸EĀ 41.5 at T II 746a₂₇.

Mahākāśyapa's inspirational role in adopting ascetic conduct is also reflected in the *Mahāgosīṅga-sutta* and its parallels, which agree that he not only engaged in ascetic practices himself, but also encouraged others to do so.²⁹

In the present case, however, it is noteworthy that this role of Mahākāśyapa in providing a source of inspiration for future generations has its counterpart in the above-translated discourse in Mahākāśyapa's proclamation that he would have become a Pratyekabuddha, had the Buddha not attained full awakening.³⁰

The other versions neither bring in the motif of the Pratyekabuddha, nor do they refer to the three *yānas*. The present *Ekottarika-āgama* discourse is in line with a general tendency evident elsewhere in this collection to incorporate later elements not found in this way in other Chinese *Āgamas* or their Pāli discourse parallels, in particular material related to emerging Mahāyāna thought.³¹ Another general tendency in *Ekottarika-āgama* discourses is that the motif of the Pratyekabuddha is considerably more prominent as an actual form of practice or ideal than in other early discourses found outside of this collection. Given that in the present episode the notion of Pratyekabuddhahood forms the counterpart to what in the other versions is the inspirational role of a chief disciple of the Buddha, it seems fair to conclude that the notion of the Pratyekabuddha could have had an inspirational function similar to that of Mahākāśyapa.³²

Such an inspirational role also seems to underlie other passages. A discourse in the *Ekottarika-āgama* reports how someone in a situation of danger and great distress takes refuge in all Pratyekabuddhas in the hope that they will be able to release him from this hardship: "I also take refuge in all Pratyekabuddhas, who awaken on their own, without a teacher — may I be released from this disaster!"³³

²⁹MN 32 at MN I 214,2 and its parallels MĀ 184 at T I 727c2, EĀ 37.3 at T II 711a7, and T 154.16 at T III 81b16.

³⁰In what appears to be a partial commentary on the *Ekottarika-āgama*, Mahākāśyapa actually becomes a former Pratyekabuddha; cf. T 1507 at T XXL 30c5: 迦葉以本是辟支佛 (cf. also T XXL 31b20, and 39a17 as well as the discussion in Palumbo 2013: 185–188). This form of presentation must have originated with someone not too familiar with Buddhist doctrine, making it probable that it reflects the editorial influence of a Chinese hand, instead of stemming from an Indian original.

³¹For a survey of Mahāyāna elements in the *Ekottarika-āgama* cf. Anālayo 2013b.

³²On the inspirational role of Pratyekabuddhas cf., e.g., Wiltshire 1990: 66f and 76ff.

³³EĀ 24.2 at T II 615c5: 諸辟支佛無師自覺亦復自歸, 使脫此厄. According to EĀ 32.1 at T II 674a6, the path to such awakening on one's own as a Pratyekabuddha shares in common with other types of awakening that it requires the cultivation of the five faculties; EĀ 38.11 at T II 727a15 as well as EĀ 51.3 at T II 815c12 report actual instances of awakening as a Pratyekabuddha as the result

Another discourse in the same collection indicates that even just worshipping the relics of a Pratyekabuddha has the potential to lead to rebirth in the heaven of the Thirty-three.³⁴

Another *Ekottarika-āgama* discourse reflects a cult of Pratyekabuddhas as one of four types of living beings that are considered worthy of a *stūpa* (the other three are a Buddha, the disciple of a Buddha, and a wheel-turning king).³⁵ Another such reference in the *Ekottarika-āgama* explains that Pratyekabuddhas deserve a *stūpa* because they have awakened on their own, without having had the assistance of a teacher.³⁶

References to *stūpas* for Pratyekabuddhas are found not only in the *Ekottarika-āgama*, however, but also in Pāli discourses.³⁷ The Pratyekabuddha in fact features regularly in the early discourses in lists of those who are worthy of gifts. Such lists present Pratyekabuddhas as superior to arahants or other noble disciples, but inferior to a fully awakened Buddha.³⁸ By integrating the Pratyekabuddha, as an awakened one from the past or the distant future, into what otherwise comprises the present Buddha and his disciples, the hierarchy of gifts becomes invested with

of contemplation of impermanence. That Pratyekabuddhas are of course also themselves subject to the law of impermanence and will pass away is made explicit in EĀ 26.9 at T II 641a₂₀.

³⁴EĀ 51.3 at T II 817a₂; cf. also Legittimo 2009: 1203.

³⁵EĀ 52.1 at T II 823b₁₃.

³⁶EĀ 26.9 at T II 642b₂₀.

³⁷DN 16 at DN II 142,16 (cf. also the parallels DĀ 2 at T I 20b₂₃ and T 7 at T I 200a₂₄) and AN 4.245 at AN II 245,17; cf. also Kloppenborg 1974: 23.

³⁸MN 142 at MN III 254,29 and its parallels MĀ 180 at T I 722b₁₆, D 4094 *ju* 255b₂ or Q 5595 *tu* 291a₃, Tocharian fragment YQ 1.20 1/2 a₆, Ji et al. 1998: 182, and Uighur fragment folio 9a 2684, Geng and Klimkeit 1988: 202; cf. also SHT III 979 R6, Waldschmidt et al. 1971: 242, which refers to this type of presentation. AN 9.20 at AN IV 395,1 and its parallels MĀ 155 at T I 677c₈, T 73 at T I 879c₂, and T 74 at T I 881b₁₂. AN 10.16 at AN V 23,4. Lists of this type in the *Ekottarika-āgama* can be found, e.g., in EĀ 23.1 at T II 609b₁₉, EĀ 47.3 at T II 781b₂₄, and EĀ 48.5 at T II 792a₂₄; cf. also EĀ 27.5 at T II 645b₆ which, although not corresponding to the pattern found in the other passages listed above, is also related to the theme of making offerings to Pratyekabuddhas. Another instance relevant to the present topic is EĀ 41.4 at T II 739b₃, where Ānanda is puzzled by the fact that the Buddha has given a list of those worthy of merit without mentioning Pratyekabuddhas or disciples at various levels of awakening. The placing of the Pratyekabuddha between the arahant and the Buddha recurs also in EĀ 28.5 at T II 653a₁₀ and EĀ 42.3 at T II 751a₁₈ in a list of levels of awakening (cf. also T II 552b₇, which is part of the introduction to the collection), as well as in a listing of seats in EĀ 24.6 at T II 625c₅. EĀ 43.5 at T II 761b₁, EĀ 51.3 at T II 816c₉, and EĀ 52.1 at T II 823b₁₃ list the Pratyekabuddha alongside the *śrāvaka* (cf. also T II 551a₂₁, which is part of the introduction to the collection). EĀ 17.3 at T II 583a₅ reckons the Pratyekabuddha as one of two persons that rarely arise in the world, the other of course being the Buddha.

a timeless validity that applies to past, present and future times. In the absence of a living Buddha, a Pratyekabuddha then becomes the topmost recipient of gifts. Other discourses suggest that such concern with worthiness to receive gifts was a significant issue in the tradition, as they report occasions when a gift given to a former Paccekabuddha yielded abundant fruit for its giver.³⁹

Artistic representations confirming a cult of Pratyekabuddhas are not easily identified. Owing to their outward resemblance to Buddhas or monks in general, it is only when an associated inscription contains explicit indications that it becomes possible to determine that a particular image is indeed intended to represent a Pratyekabuddha.⁴⁰ One such case is extant from Thailand, where the inscription makes it clear that the figure is in fact a Paccekabuddha.⁴¹

³⁹SN 3.20 at SN I 92,⁴ and its parallels SĀ 1233 at T II 337c₈, SĀ² 60 at T II 394b₁₅, and EĀ 23.4 at T II 613a₅ report the fruitfulness of giving to a former Pratyekabuddha combined with the dire consequence of not having had an attitude of faith towards him; cf. also Ud 5.3 at Ud 50,¹⁶ where not giving to a Paccekabuddha and instead behaving disrespectfully has disastrous results. Another instance of a similar type can be found in MĀ 66 at T I 508c₂₆, which reports that in a past life Anuruddha had offered food to a Pratyekabuddha, as a result of which he reaped abundant merit. Parallels to this tale in the Chinese canon are, e.g., T 44 at T I 829b₁₉, T 190 at T III 928b₂₁, and T 203 at T IV 470c₂₅; in the Pāli tradition, versions of this tale are found only in the commentaries; cf. a short reference in Th-a III 72,²³ (commenting on Th 910) and a more detailed version in Dh-p-a IV 120,²³. For another tale involving an offering to a Pratyekabuddha cf. EĀ 52.2 at T II 824b₁₈.

⁴⁰Kloppenborg 1974: 27 comments that “the fact that the *paccekabuddha* is described as having the outward appearance of a monk . . . sheds some light on the problem of why images or representations of *paccekabuddhas* are so strikingly rare. Most probably representations in art of *paccekabuddhas* occurred, but they cannot be distinguished from those of monks, unless an inscription shows that these are indeed images of *paccekabuddhas*.” Skilling 2013: 132 note 64 adds that although “to aspire to Pratyekabodhi does not seem to have been a popular option . . . there is occasional epigraphical or other evidence for this.”

⁴¹Given the absence of an *uṣṇīṣa*, the present image could alternatively only have been of a monk, similar to image 100, Plate LIII in Griswold 1957. However, it is not entirely clear if the absence of an *uṣṇīṣa* is characteristic of representations of Pratyekabuddhas in general; cf. also Zin 2003 for cases documenting that not only Buddhas were depicted with an *uṣṇīṣa*.



*Figure 1: Paccekabuddha, Lanna, 1592/1593
gilded bronze, height 54 cm
Courtesy of The State Hermitage Museum, St. Petersburg.*

Regarding the function of the Pratyekabuddha motif taken over by Buddhists from common ancient Indian lore, I doubt that this served to accommodate non-Buddhist sages within the Buddhist fold.⁴² The early discourses show a recurrent tendency to set the followers of the Buddha apart from those of other traditions; in fact the Buddha's claim to awakening is explicitly based on the statement that he had realized what had been unheard of before.⁴³ In other words, he openly claimed to have made a new discovery. This does not seem to require authentication by integrating ancient Indian sages into the Buddhist fold. In fact, once the notion of past Buddhas was in place, there would not have been any need to provide further authentication from the past. Given the ranking of recipients of gifts discussed above, it would indeed be rather surprising if such ancient Indian sages were placed in a position superior to arahants. Yet this is precisely the position of the Pratyekabuddha.

In some passages famous ancient Brahmin sages are not included in the Buddhist fold, but instead are quite openly dismissed as bereft of true vision.⁴⁴ Had there been a felt need to include non-Buddhist sages in the Buddhist tradition, these ancient sages should have been turned into Pratyekabuddhas, instead of being brushed aside as blind and unknowing. The same tendency continues with *Jātakas* where ancient Indian ascetics are clearly shown to be inferior to Pratyekabuddhas, instead of being identified with them.⁴⁵

The references above give the impression that the Pratyekabuddha had a more specifically Buddhist function than the mere accommodating of non-Buddhist sages. Given that the Pratyekabuddha is so prominent in the *Ekottarika-āgama* collection, the function of this motif could have had some relation to develop-

⁴²This has been suggested, e.g., by Kloppenborg 1974: 6: "the concept of the *paccekabuddha* ... presented the opportunity to include pre-buddhist recluses and seers in Buddhism ... in order to find a legitimate place within Buddhist teaching, these ascetics had to fit in the system."

⁴³For a comparative study of the parallel versions of what tradition reckons to have been the first discourse given by the Buddha cf. Anālayo 2012a and 2013a.

⁴⁴Cf., e.g., DN 13 at DN I 238,²¹ and its parallels DĀ 26 at T I 105b²⁴ and an as yet unpublished *Dirgha-āgama* Sanskrit fragment of the *Vāsiṣṭha-sūtra*, folio 449r (I am indebted to Jens-Uwe Hartmann for kindly providing me with a preliminary draft transliteration of the fragments). The three versions agree in providing a list of ancient Indian seers who are then disqualified as being blind and bereft of true vision.

⁴⁵Two examples are Jā 490 at Jā IV 328,²³ where a Paccekabuddha humbles the pride of an ascetic by rising into the air and letting dust from his feet fall onto the other's matted hair, and Jā 496 at Jā IV 372,¹, where a Paccekabuddha is shown to be a superior recipient of gifts compared to an ascetic endowed with the five higher knowledges (*abhiññā*).

ments within Buddhist thought at a stage preceding and overlapping with the initial stages of the emergence of the bodhisattva ideal and Mahāyāna thought, reflected in several *Ekottarika-āgama* discourses.⁴⁶ The various passages found in this collection give the impression that, perhaps only for a brief period, the concept of the Pratyekabuddha was of considerable relevance.

Thus it seems to me significant that in the discourse translated above the Pratyekabuddha motif takes the place of what in the parallel versions is Mahākāśyapa's role as a source of inspiration for future generations. A different approach to the role of Mahākāśyapa in relation to future generations can be seen in the other *Ekottarika-āgama* version, which continues after the plot common to the parallel versions by relating Mahākāśyapa to the future Buddha Maitreya.⁴⁷ This seems to be an allusion to a tale found elsewhere in the *Ekottarika-āgama* and in a number of other sources, according to which Mahākāśyapa will remain until the time of the future Buddha Maitreya, to whom he will pass on the Buddha's robe.⁴⁸ Here Mahākāśyapa's function is to bridge the period between one Buddha and the next, thereby clearly acting as an emblem of the continuity of the Dharma. His role of ensuring the continuity of the Dharma is also central in the accounts of the first *saṅgīti*.⁴⁹

In the discourse translated above, he proclaims that he would have become a Pratyekabuddha, had there been no Buddha. In this way Mahākāśyapa quite plainly states that for one like himself full awakening was certain, independent of whether or not a Buddha existed. This goes a step further than just setting an example for future generations, in that it affirms the possibility of attaining awakening in the absence of a Buddha.

⁴⁶ Cf. above note 31.

⁴⁷ EĀ 41.5 at T II 746c₁₃.

⁴⁸ EĀ 48.3 at T II 789a₆, preceded by reference to his undertaking the ascetic practices (= T 453 at T XIV 422b₁₈; cf. Anālayo 2013c: 39f note 112). For studies and translations of this tale cf., e.g., Przyluski 1914: 521–528, Lévi and Chavannes 1916: 193–197, Leumann 1919: 22, Przyluski 1923: 331–334, Lévi 1929: 40–46, Lamotte 1944/1981: 191–195, Ray 1994: 114f, Jaini 1988/2001: 475–477, Deeg 1999: 153–169, Silk 2003: 181–207, Klimburg-Salter 2005: 543–545, and Tournier 2014: 5–18.

⁴⁹ The different *Vinayas* agree in presenting Mahākāśyapa as the convenor of the first *saṅgīti*; cf. the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 966c₁₈, the (Haimvata?) **Vinayamātrkā*, T 1463 at T XXIV 818a₁₁, the Mahāsāṅghika *Vinaya*, T 1425 at T XXII 490b₂₈, the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 190b₂₈, the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1451 at T XXIV 402c₁₉, the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1435 at T XXIII 447b₅, the Theravāda *Vinaya*, Vin II 285₄, and for a comparative study that takes into account other relevant texts as well the classic by Przyluski 1926.

Several *Ekottarika-āgama* discourses report actual predictions that someone will become a Pratyekabuddha in the distant future.⁵⁰ Such predictions fall into the same category, in that they clearly convey the message: awakening will always be possible, even when the Buddha and his teaching have disappeared.⁵¹ The same theme recurs within the context of the relation between making offerings and a Pratyekabuddha. According to two discourses in the *Ekottarika-āgama*, undertaking the practice of giving and making offerings can act as a support for oneself to become a Pratyekabuddha in the future.⁵²

The fact that a Pratyekabuddha embodies the possibility of attaining awakening independently of the existence of a Buddha would have acquired increasing significance once the Buddha Gautama had passed away and his followers were struggling to ensure the survival of their tradition alongside competing groups in ancient India. The lack of a direct contact with the living Buddha as the object in which to take refuge as a Buddhist disciple must have made itself acutely felt, leading to a range of developments in the Buddhist traditions. As an emblem of the possibility of attaining awakening by relying entirely on oneself, in such a setting the figure of the Pratyekabuddha could easily have become a worthy object of worship and a source of inspiration.

Needless to say, to feel inspired by the Pratyekabuddha motif does not necessarily imply aspiring to become a Pratyekabuddha oneself. It could just have served as an inspiration for those aiming at attaining arahantship by relying on the teachings left behind by Gautama Buddha. Nevertheless, in their aspiration to reach this goal, the notion that full awakening is always possible, even when the teachings have disappeared, would have offered a strong source of support. It would have provided a sense of security precisely at a time when the followers of the Buddha were struggling to preserve these teachings.

With the growing prominence of the bodhisattva ideal and the increasing popularity of the possibility of becoming a fully awakened Buddha oneself,⁵³ the

⁵⁰Instances of such predictions can be found in EĀ 35.7 at T II 700b₂₃ (attainment after 60 aeons), EĀ 38.11 at T II 726a₁₆ (attainment after 20 aeons), and EĀ 49.9 at T II 804c₁₂ (attainment after 60 aeons); a description of the manifestation of light at the time a Buddha predicts that someone will in the future become a Pratyekabuddha can be found in EĀ 43.2 at T II 758b₁₇.

⁵¹Oldenberg 1881/1961: 299 comments on the function of the Pratyekabuddha in general: “der Begriff des Paccekabuddha sollte wohl in erster Linie eben dies besagen, daß auch in solchen Zeiten der Zugang zu Erlösung ernstem und kraftvollem Streben nicht verschlossen ist.”

⁵²EĀ 32.10 at T II 681a₂₆ and EĀ 43.2 at T II 757a₁₄.

⁵³On this development cf. in more detail Anālayo 2010a.

symbol of the Pratyekabuddha would have in turn lost importance.⁵⁴ This new ideal no longer needed the Pratyekabuddhas as an emblem of self-reliant awakening. From the viewpoint of the bodhisattva, Pratyekabuddhas would have lost the significance they perhaps earlier had, instead of which past Buddhas would have come to the foreground in their function of predicting and confirming the bodhisattva's progress on the path to Buddhahood.

Probably as a remnant of its by now lost former significance, the Pratyekabuddha has its place in standard references to the three *yānas* of practising for arahantship, for becoming a Pratyekabuddha, or for attaining full Buddhahood, such as found in the discourse translated above.⁵⁵

Given the much more powerful inspiration provided by the idea of becoming a fully awakened Buddha oneself, the motif of the Pratyekabuddha would have naturally become more like a fossil carried along by the tradition. In this way, the motif of the Pratyekabuddha might have gone through a brief period during which it served as an important source of inspiration, soon to be replaced by the bodhisattva ideal.

At present this is of course just a hypothesis based on surveying the early discourses, where in general the Pratyekabuddha appears somewhat peripheral, but then acquires considerably more prominence in the *Ekottarika-āgama*.⁵⁶

Supposing my admittedly hypothetical reconstruction to be correct, the fact that the standard sequence arahant — Pratyekabuddha — Buddha as an ascending hierarchy of recipients of gifts became a hierarchy of spiritual aspirations would to some degree reflect a historical development. This development would have proceeded from aspiring to arahantship at a time when the Buddha was alive, via

⁵⁴Bureau 1985: 649 comments that “le culte des *pratyekabuddha* ... paraît avoir diminué depuis le voyage de Fa-hien.” Perhaps of interest here is also that at times listings of recipients of gifts, such as for example EĀ 23.1 at T II 609b₁₉, list one on the path to Pratyekabuddhahood, followed by a Pratyekabuddha, then one on the path to becoming a Tathāgata (i.e. a bodhisattva), and a Buddha. Such listings show the parallelism of the two concepts and at the same time place the bodhisattva in a hierarchically superior position vis-à-vis the Pratyekabuddha.

⁵⁵References to these three *yānas* abound in the *Ekottarika-āgama*. For occurrences where the Pratyekabuddha is explicitly mentioned (leaving aside instances that just refer to the three *yānas*, 三乘) cf., e.g., EĀ 24.6 at T II 626a₂₁ (which uses the rendering 緣覺, instead of the phrase 辟支佛 used elsewhere in the *Ekottarika-āgama*), EĀ 32.10 at T II 681a₂₆ (adopting a variant reading that adds 佛道 to the list), EĀ 43.2 at T II 757a₁₄, EĀ 45.5 at T II 773b₉, and EĀ 48.5 at T II 792b₁₁ and c₂. On the three *yānas* cf. also, e.g., Nattier 2003: 138–141 and Dhammajoti 2011.

⁵⁶A study of the Pratyekabuddha motif in early Indian Mahāyāna texts as part of an examination of the notion of mahākaraṇā is at present under preparation by Dhammadinnā.

an interim period of aspiring to attain awakening even at a time when a Buddha was no longer alive but his teachings were still available, or perhaps even no longer available, to the wish to become a Buddha oneself.

Abbreviations

AN	<i>Aṅguttara-nikāya</i>
B ^e	Burmese edition
C ^e	Ceylonese edition
D	Derge edition
DĀ	<i>Dirgha-āgama</i> (T 1)
Dhp-a	<i>Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā</i>
DN	<i>Dīgha-nikāya</i>
EĀ	<i>Ekottarika-āgama</i> (T 125)
Jā	<i>Jātaka</i>
MĀ	<i>Madhyama-āgama</i> (T 26)
MN	<i>Majjhima-nikāya</i>
Q	Peking edition
SĀ	<i>Samyukta-āgama</i> (T 99)
SĀ ²	<i>Samyukta-āgama</i> (T 100)
S ^e	Siamese edition
SHT	Sanskrithandschriften aus den Turfanfunden
SN	<i>Samyutta-nikāya</i>
T	Taishō edition (CBETA)
Th	<i>Theragāthā</i>
Th-a	<i>Theragāthā-aṭṭhakathā</i>
Thī	<i>Therīgāthā</i>
Ud	<i>Udāna</i>

References

- Anālayo 2010a: *The Genesis of the Bodhisattva Ideal*, Hamburg: Hamburg University Press.
- Anālayo 2010b: “Pacceka-buddhas in the Isigili-sutta and its Ekottarika-āgama Parallel”, *Canadian Journal of Buddhist Studies*, 6: 5–36.
- Anālayo 2012a: “The Chinese Parallels to the Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta (1)”, *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies*, 3: 12–46.
- Anālayo 2012b: *Excursions into the Thought-world of the Pāli Discourses*, Washington: Pariyatti.
- Anālayo 2013a: “The Chinese Parallels to the Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta (2)”, *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies*, 5: 9–41.
- Anālayo 2013b: “Mahāyāna in the Ekottarika-āgama”, *Singaporean Journal of Buddhist Studies*, 1: 5–43.
- Anālayo 2013c: “Two Versions of the Mahādeva Tale in the Ekottarika-āgama, A Study in the Development of Taishō No. 125”, in *Research on the Ekottarika-āgama (Taishō 125)*, Dhammadinnā (ed.), 1–70, Taipei: Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation.
- Anālayo 2014a: “Beautiful Eyes Seen with Insight as Bereft of Beauty – Subhā Therī and Her Male Counterpart in the Ekottarika-āgama”, *The Journal of the Sati Center for Buddhist Studies*, 2: 39–53.
- Anālayo 2014b: “The Mass Suicide of Monks in Discourse and Vinaya Literature”, (with an addendum by Richard Gombrich), *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies*, 7: 11–55.
- Aronson, Harvey B. 1980/1986: *Love and Sympathy in Theravāda Buddhism*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Bureau, André 1985: “Étude du bouddhisme”, *Annuaire du Collège de France*, 647–658.
- Cowell, E.B. and R.A. Neil 1886: *The Divyāvadāna, A Collection of Early Buddhist Legends, Now First Edited from the Nepalese Sanskrit Mss. in Cambridge and Paris*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Deeg, Max 1999: “Das Ende des Dharma und die Ankunft des Maitreya; Endzeit- und Neue-Zeit-Vorstellungen im Buddhismus mit einem Exkurs zur Kāśyapa-Legende”, *Zeitschrift für Religionswissenschaft*, 7: 145–169.
- Dhammajoti, Bhikkhu K.L. 2011: “From Abhidharma to Mahāyāna, Remarks on the Early Abhidharma Doctrine of the Three yāna-s”, *Journal of the Centre for Buddhist Studies, Sri Lanka*, 9: 153–169.
- Geng, Shimin and H.-J. Klimkeit 1988: *Das Zusammentreffen mit Maitreya, Die ersten fünf Kapitel der Hani-Version der Maitrisimit*, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.

- Griswold, A.B. 1957: *Dated Buddha Images of Northern Siam*, Ascona: Artibus Asiae.
- Huyen-vi, Thích 1989: “Ekottarāgama X”, *Buddhist Studies Review*, 6.2: 122–129.
- Jaini, Padmanabh S. 1988/2001: “Stages in the Bodhisattva Career of the Tathāgata Maitreya”, in *Collected Papers on Buddhist Studies*, ibid. (ed.), 451–500, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Ji, Xianlin et al. 1998: *Fragments of the Tocharian A Maitreyasamiti-Nāṭaka of the Xinjiang Museum, China, Transliterated, Translated and Annotated*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Klimburg-Salter, Deborah 2005: “Mahākāśyapa and the Art of Bāmiyān”, in *South Asian Archaeology 2001, Proceedings of the Sixteenth International Conference of the European Association of South Asian Archaeologists held in Collège de France, Paris, 2–6 July 2001*, C. Jarrige and V. Lefèvre. (ed.), 535–550, Paris: Éd. Recherche sur les Civilisations.
- Kloppenborg, Ria 1974: *The Paccekabuddha, A Buddhist Ascetic, A Study of the Concept of the Paccekabuddha in Pāli Canonical and Commentarial Literature*, Leiden: E.J. Brill.
- Lamotte, Étienne 1944/1981 (vol. 1): *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse de Nāgārjuna (Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra)*, Louvain-la-Neuve: Institut Orientaliste.
- Legittimo, Elsa 2009: “Relics, Relic Worship and Stūpas in the Chinese Translation of the Ekottarika-āgama”, *Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies*, 57.3: 1199–1205.
- Leumann, Ernst 1919: *Maitreya-samiti, das Zukunftsideal der Buddhisten, Die nordarische Schilderung in Text und Übersetzung nebst sieben anderen Schilderungen in Text oder Übersetzung, mit einer Begründung der indogermanischen Metrik*, Strassburg: Trübner.
- Lévi, Sylvain and É. Chavannes 1916: “Les seize arhat protecteurs de la loi”, *Journal Asiatique*, 11.8: 5–50 and 189–304.
- Lévi, Sylvain 1929: “L’inscription de Mahānāman à Bodh-Gaya, essai d’exégèse appliquée à l’épigraphie bouddhique”, in *Indian Studies in Honor of Charles Rockwell Lanman*, 35–47, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Nattier, Jan 1991: *Once Upon a Future Time: Studies in a Buddhist Prophecy of Decline*, Berkeley: Asian Humanities Press.
- Nattier, Jan 2003: *A Few Good Men: The Bodhisattva Path According to The Inquiry of Ugra (Ugraparipṛcchā)*, Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press.
- Norman, K.R. 1983: “The Pratyeka-Buddha in Buddhism and Jainism”, in *Buddhist Studies: Ancient and Modern*, P. Denwood (ed.), 92–106, London: Curzon.
- Oldenberg, Hermann 1881/1961: *Buddha, Sein Leben, Seine Lehre, Seine Gemeinde*, München: Wilhelm Goldmann Verlag.

- Palumbo, Antonello 2013: *An Early Chinese Commentary on the Ekottarika-āgama, The Fenbie gongde lun 分別功德論 and the History of the Translation of the Zengyi ahan jing 增一阿含經*, Taipei: Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation.
- Przyluski, Jean 1914: “Le nord-ouest de l’Inde dans le Vinaya des Mūla-Sarvāstivādin et les textes apparentés”, *Journal Asiatique*, 11.4: 493–568.
- Przyluski, Jean 1923: *La légende de l’empereur Aśoka (Acoka-avadāna) dans les textes indiens et chinois*, Paris: Paul Geuthner.
- Przyluski, Jean 1926: *Le concile de Rājagṛha, introduction a l’histoire des canons et des sectes bouddhiques*, Paris: Paul Geuthner.
- Ray, Reginald A. 1994: *Buddhist Saints in India, A Study in Buddhist Values & Orientations*, New York: Oxford University Press.
- Senart, Émile 1882 (vol. 1): *Le Mahāvastu, texte sanscrit publié pour la première fois et accompagné d’introductions et d’un commentaire*, Paris: Imprimerie Nationale.
- Shults, Brett 2014: [Review of Anālayo 2012b], *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies*, 7: 245–251.
- Silk, Jonathan A. 2003: “Dressed for Success, The Monk Kāśyapa and Strategies of Legitimation in Earlier Mahāyāna Buddhist Scriptures”, *Journal Asiatique*, 291.1/2: 173–219.
- Skilling, Peter 2013: “Vaidalya, Mahāyāna, and Bodhisattva in India”, in *The Bodhisattva Ideal, Essays on the Emergence of Mahāyāna*, bhikkhu Ñāṇatusita (ed.), 69–162, Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society.
- Tournier, Vincent 2014: “Mahākāśyapa, His Lineage, and the Wish for Buddhahood: Reading Anew the Bodhgayā Inscriptions of Mahānāman”, *Indo-Iranian Journal*, 57: 1–60.
- Waldschmidt, Ernst et al. 1971: *Sanskrihandschriften aus den Turfanfunden, Teil 3*, Stuttgart: Franz Steiner.
- Wiltshire, Martin G. 1990: *Ascetic Figures before and in Early Buddhism, The Emergence of Gautama as the Buddha*, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Zin, Monika 2003: “The uṣṇīsa as a Physical Characteristic of the Buddha’s Relatives and Successors”, (lecture transcript), in *Buddhismus in Geschichte und Gegenwart*, University of Hamburg, Asia-Africa-Institute, Department for Indian and Tibetan Studies, 8: 197–228.

Heart Murmurs: Some Problems with Conze's *Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya*¹

Jayarava Attwood

In his critical edition of the Sanskrit text of the *Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya*, first published in 1948, Edward Conze treated the verb *vyavalokayati* as intransitive and declined *pañcaskandha* as nominative plural, making the first sentence in the text difficult to parse. A comparison of some of the extant manuscripts, the canonical versions in Chinese and Tibetan, the Tibetan manuscripts found at Dūnhuáng, and the Indian commentaries preserved in Tibetan shows that they all understand *vyavalokayati* to be transitive and thus requiring an object. They also show that the most obvious object for *vyavalokayati* is *pañcaskandha*. I show that a simple amendment to the critical edition solves these and two other minor problems with the Sanskrit text. Conze's own translation not only reflects the grammatical problems of his Sanskrit edition, but may give us insights into the reasoning behind his Sanskrit text by highlighting the role his religious faith played in his reading of the text.

Introduction

In this article I will examine some minor details in Edward Conze's critical edition of the *Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya*, or Heart Sutra, with particular attention to the

¹I am grateful to Vincenzo Vergiani and the Sanskrit Manuscript Project at Cambridge University for arranging access to the Cambridge Manuscripts. Also to Donald Lopez, Jonathan Silk and Jan Nattier for answering questions that arose from their work on the *Hṛdaya*. Thanks to Eivind Kahrs and Eric Zsebenyi for their helpful comments on early drafts. I'm very grateful to the anonymous reviewer for being so conscientious and meticulous; their comments improved the article considerably. And lastly thanks to Richard Gombrich for his generosity over several years of acquaintance, not least as editor of JOCBS. All remaining errors and infelicities are mine.

short text. The critical edition was originally published along with some critical comments in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (1948); then again with minor changes and notes on several more Nepalese manuscripts in *Thirty Years of Buddhist Studies* (1967).² A translation and commentary of the short text appears in *Buddhist Wisdom Books* (1st ed. 1958; 2nd ed. 1975a); while in *Perfect Wisdom* (1973) Conze published translations of both the long and short texts (which appear to be based on the 1948 Sanskrit edition). Conze gave each source text a code, and this article uses the codes found in Conze (1967: 154).³

The argument presented here is that Conze failed to make a small, but obvious and necessary correction to his Sanskrit short text, at some cost to the sense of the passage concerned. Since the alternate reading occurs in several of his sources we want to try to understand why he made the choice he did. I argue that Conze's choice was motivated by his Buddhist faith as expressed in his translation and commentary of the *Heart Sutra*. That philology lost out to mythology. We'll begin by examining Conze's short text, then move on to his long text, the Chinese and Tibetan versions, and Indian commentaries preserved in Tibetan before suggesting a solution to the problems identified.

In producing a critical edition of this text Conze had access to two previously published editions (Müller 1881, Shaku 1923) as well as many manuscript and epigraphic versions of the Sanskrit: twelve Nepalese versions; six from China; two from Japan (in several transcriptions); as well as translations from the Chinese and Tibetan Canons. The two Japanese manuscripts were the basis of editions of the short and long texts by Max Müller (1881⁴ = Conze J^a, J^b). The edition by Shaku Hannyā (1923 = Conze J^b) is largely based on the same Japanese manuscripts as Müller, but also references a Tibetan Canonical version.⁵ Though Conze cites D. T. Suzuki (1934) as an "edition" in fact, it merely reproduces Müller's short text. Vaidya's (1961) edition is also based on Müller (1884) and is not mentioned by Conze. In preparing the following analysis, Conze's sources were rechecked directly where possible rather than relying on his notes – see *Editions of the Sanskrit Text* below.

²The 1967 article has more sources, but the 1948 ed. gives much fuller bibliographical information; and there are minor differences in some passages, so the two are generally used together.

³In this code N=Nepalese; J=Japanese; and C=Chinese. The superscript letters are sequential.

⁴Müller had access to a photograph of the manuscript, as well as two copies, one made before considerable damage had occurred to the manuscript.

⁵Shaku does not specify which he used. Comparison with Silk (1994) shows that his version is a variant of Recension A, but it does not precisely match any of Silk's exemplars.

As Conze's notes show, variations occur at every point in the text. Even the earliest extant Sanskrit manuscript, from Japan and traditionally dated 609 CE, is obviously corrupt in places.⁶ Bendall's (1883) catalogue of Sanskrit manuscripts describes one of the Nepalese manuscripts:

“Our black-paper MS., Add. 1485 (A.D. 1677), has the appearance of being written to be looked at rather than to be read. The usual case, indeed, with these MSS. is that the letters are hard to distinguish and the readings corrupt and barbarous.”⁷

This judgement is probably overly harsh. The text is certainly difficult to read and contains some mistakes, but it is far from barbarous. The idea that a text would be written to be looked at, however, is not far-fetched. A text like the *Heart Sutra* was most likely learned and commented on primarily as an oral text.⁸ As Donald Lopez says, “It is recited daily in Tibetan, Chinese, Japanese, and Korean temples and monasteries, and we have evidence of its recitation in India”. (1996: 5) However, it also existed in an atmosphere described by Gregory Schopen (1975) as a “cult of the book” where sutras themselves were the object of worship.⁹ As such, copying the text was also seen as an important practice.¹⁰

The variety in the “corrupt and barbarous” manuscripts meant that the task of creating a critical edition was difficult. The editor was forced to make many decisions about the correct reading. The decisions that concern us here relate to the first sentence of the short text, but also have implications for the long text.

Conze's text

Conze's Roman script Sanskrit (1948) and translation (1975a) read:

⁶The date, four decades before Xuánzàng's Chinese version T 251, is dubious as well. Georg Bühler notes in Müller (1881) that a comparison of the script with Indian manuscripts and inscriptions argues for a date in the 8th century. He hypothesises that all of those later scribes and stone masons of other editions were deliberately using archaic forms, but this is rather far-fetched. The simpler hypothesis is that the Hōryūji manuscript is late, though it is still probably the oldest extant Sanskrit manuscript. Note also that the same ms. contains a copy of the *Uṣṇiṣavijaya-dhāraṇī Sūtra*, which was not translated into Chinese until 679 though it may have been known much earlier. (Copp 2014: 158)

⁷Conze himself refers to the “the execrable nature of the Nepalese Mss.” in the preface to *The Large Sutra on perfect Wisdom* (1975b: x)

⁸This is how the present author first learned it.

⁹For a summary of the cult of the book see also Nattier (2003:184-86).

¹⁰Many fine examples of calligraphy of the *Hṛdaya* can be seen in Stevens (1995).

ārya-avalokiteśvaro bodhisattvo gambhīrāṃ prajñāpāramitā-caryāṃ
caramāṇo vyavalokayati sma: pañca-skandhās tāṃś ca svabhāva-
śūnyān paśyati sma.

Avalokita, the Holy Lord and Bodhisattva, was *moving* in the deep course of the Wisdom which has gone beyond. He *looked down* from on high, He *beheld* but five heaps, and *saw* that in their own-being they were empty. (Emphasis added; verbs are in italics to facilitate the discussion below)

The problems that concern us here involve the verb *vyavalokayati sma*, particularly whether or not it is transitive; the declension of *pañcaskandha*; the way editors have punctuated the Sanskrit; and the placement of *ca*.

Note that in translation Conze breaks the compound name Āryāvalokiteśvara into its major units: *ārya*, *avalokita* and *īśvara*; then takes *ārya* and *īśvara* together as epithets, “Holy Lord”, and *avalokita* as a proper name. There are of course precedents for treating the name as Avalokita. Though the *Heart Sutra* doesn't use this form, Śāntideva cites it in the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*: “And the Lord Avalokita...” (*taṃ cāvalokitaṃ nāthaṃ...* 2.51). This detail is important partly because it allows Conze to highlight the *ava-* prefix that generally means “downwards”. In fact he glosses the name: “Avalokiteśvara is called Avalokita because he ‘looks down’ compassionately on this world” (1975a: 78). By isolating and emphasising the name *Ava-lokita* Conze is (probably consciously) invoking the myth of Avalokiteśvara. This sense is reinforced by his capitalisation of the pronoun, “He”, when referring to the bodhisattva in imitation of Christians referring to their god.

Monier-Williams' *Sanskrit-English Dictionary* (MW) and Edgerton's *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary* (BHSD) agree that *avalokita* means “seen, viewed, observed; a look, gaze”. Peter Alan Roberts (2012: 236-7) points out that the word *avalokita* has a different meaning in the *Mahāvastu*, which contains two sub-texts both called *Avalokita Sutra*. According to Roberts, because the *Mahāvastu* is the product of the Lokottaravādin branch of the Mahāsāṅghika sect, it may well represent a kind of proto-Mahāyāna view of what the word means. “In the *Avalokita Sūtras*, *avalokita* does not refer to a being, but means that which has been seen by those who have crossed over *saṃsāra*, and is therefore a synonym for enlightenment.” (Roberts 2012: 7).

Despite this “looking down” is a broadly accepted translation of *ava√lok* apparently based on the elements *ava-* “downwards” and *√lok* “to look”. This is confirmed for example by the Indian commentaries preserved in Tibetan, viz. “Because he looks down on all sentient beings at all times and in all ways with great love and compassion, he is the one who looks down (*avalokita*)” (Lopez 1988: 43); “Because he is superior and is the lord who looks down, he is called the ‘Noble Lord Who Looks Down (*Āryāvalokiteśvara*)’” (Vimalamitra in Lopez 1996: 52). Looking down on the world and its inhabitants is one of the prominent characteristics of this figure in Buddhist mythology.

This observation about the story of Avalokiteśvara provides a clue to understanding how Conze translates this passage. It may well have been this that led Conze to treat *vyavalokayati sma* as an intransitive verb meaning “he looked down”. The verb *vyava√lok* is clearly related to *ava√lok* as it simply adds the prefix *vi*. BHS suggests that it means “inspect, examine, scrutinise”. MW does not list *vyava√lok*, but the entry in the *Pali Text Society Dictionary* for the Pāli equivalent, *voloketi*, confirms the usage. BHS gives several examples of the verb that show it being used transitively. Contrarily, according to Conze’s translation, the gaze of Avalokiteśvara has no specific object. “He” is simply “up there”, looking down in a general kind of way seeing “but five heaps”. Treating *vyava√lok* as intransitive causes several downstream problems.

The next word in the sentence appears in the various manuscripts in two forms (with *sandhi* changes and scribal errors): nominative plural (*pañcaskandhāḥ*) and accusative plural (*pañcaskandhān*). Conze chooses the nominative even though in his translation the *skandhas* are “beheld” implying that they are the object of a verb “to see” or “to look” and thus that they ought to be in the accusative. Thus, it’s not clear how Conze arrives at “He beheld but five heaps”. Also, the implication of “but” in the translation is that Avalokiteśvara could *only* see “five heaps”. The text does not state such a limitation, though it is consistent with Buddhist doctrine generally.

Another consequence is that Conze sees *vyavalokayati sma* as the end of a sentence and chooses to mark the perceived hiatus after *vyavalokayati sma* with a colon. Most of the long text manuscripts have a *daṇḍa* here, though most of the short texts have no punctuation at all, e.g. there is none in Müller (1881), Milloué (1883), Mironov (1933) or Benveniste (1940) (Conze’s J^a, J^b, C^b, C^c, C^d, C^e, and C^g). Thus Conze may merely be repeating the practice of previous redactors or editors who added punctuation, but it must have made sense to him to retain their

additions here.

Making *vyavalokayati sma* the end of the sentence also creates a problem with the placement of *ca*. Here *ca* seems to be joining two sentences each with its own verb. Conze's commentary confirms that he sees *pañcaskandhās* as forming part of a "second sentence" (1975a: 79). If this is so then the second sentence must begin with *tāmś* because of the position of *ca*. In Conze's translation there are four verbs (highlighted above), while in Sanskrit there are three verbal forms: *caramāṇaḥ*, *vyavalokayati sma*, and *paśyati sma*; and thus three phrases. *Pañcaskandhāḥ* cannot be the agent of the sentence with the verb *paśyati sma*, since clearly it was Avalokiteśvara who "saw". And thus, *pañcaskandhāḥ*, a nominative plural in Conze's edition, has no obvious relationship to the words around it. It is perhaps this that forces him to use four phrases in English where the Sanskrit has three.

There is one more problem that emerges from Conze's translation of this passage that is incidental, but worth noting. Where Conze has "... and saw that in their own-being they were empty." it suggests that the *skandhas* have an "own-being" (*svabhāva*) which is empty. In Prajñāpāramitā thought generally we expect to read that *dharmas* and *skandhas* lack (i.e. are empty of) *svabhāva*. Donald Lopez, for example, uses the phrase "empty of intrinsic/inherent existence" throughout his studies of the Tibetan translations of the Indian *Heart Sutra* commentaries (1998, 1996). Also compare Conze's translation of the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*: "Since therefore *all dharmas are without own-being*, what is that form, etc., which cannot be seized, and which is something uncreated? Thus the fact that *all dharmas are without own-being* is the same as the fact that they are uncreated." (2006: 92. Emphasis added). Surely *svabhāvaśūnyān* must be a *tatpuruṣa* meaning "the *skandhas* are empty of *svabhāva*" rather than the "*skandhas* have *svabhāva* which is empty".

Since Conze understands the short text to be a condensation of the long text (1948: 34; 1967: 150) it may be that his edition of the long text sheds light on these problems.

Long text

The phrase we are interested in occurs in two variations in the long text: first in a description of what Avalokiteśvara is doing; and second in response to the question posed by Śāriputra about what a practitioner ought to do.

In the first case – describing the activity of Avalokiteśvara – Conze (1967: 149) has:

*tena ca samayena Ārya-avalokiteśvaro bodhisattvo mahāsattvo gam-
bhīrāyāṃ prajñāpāramitāyāṃ caryāṃ caramāṇa evaṃ vyavalokayati
sma: pañca-skandhās tāṃś ca svabhāva-śūnyān vyavalokayati.*

Conze retains more or less the same syntax as the short text with two changes. Firstly the addition of *evaṃ* after *caramāṇa*; and secondly the verb *paśyati sma* is replaced by *vyavalokayati* with dropping of the periphrastic past particle *sma*.

Regarding the latter, Müller's long text has the same change of verb (1881: 51-54; = Conze J^b). The two Tibetan recensions seem to reflect a similar change (see below). There are no Sanskrit manuscript sources that do not have a change in verb from *paśyati sma* to *vyavalokayati* suggesting that it occurred in the progenitor of all the extant versions of the long text. In the short text in its most basic sense, Avalokiteśvara *looked* (*vyava√lok*)¹¹ and *saw* (*√drś*); but in the long text, he *looked* and *looks*. Conze's choice of two different translations of *vyavalokayati* in his long text – "looked" and "surveyed" (1973: 140) – obscures the problem of exchanging *paśyati* for *vyavalokayati*.

At first glance, the dropping of the particle *sma* from the second occurrence of *vyavalokayati* looks like a change of tense. However, as noted in Speyer (1886), the use of *sma* in an historical present is variable. It can be and is dropped in many situations when the context makes it redundant.¹² Arguably, this is true of the present passage. That said several of Conze's manuscript sources have *vyavalokayati sma* here (e.g. Nb, Ne, Ce, Jb) and he retains *sma* in the counterpart of this passage in the short text. It would have been more consistent to retain it here also. It's possible that the two Tibetan recensions of the long text display different ways of dealing with this problem (see note 22 below).

In the second case – in response to Śāriputra's question – Conze's two editions (1948, 1967) and the translation (1973) show him equivocating. His translation of the long text (1973:140) contains two phrases cut into two paragraphs:

“The son or daughter of good family who wants to course in the
course of this deep perfection of wisdom should thus consider:

¹¹I am aware that *vyava√lok* does not simply mean 'to look' but I want to highlight the fundamental difference between a verb deriving from *√lok* and one deriving from *√drś*; and *vyava√lok* retains a clear semantic relationship to the act of looking.

¹²I'm grateful to the anonymous reviewer for pointing out this nuance.

There are the five skandhas, and those he sees in their own-being as empty.”

In the earlier Sanskrit edition (1948: 34) he gives the first part of the passage as:

*yaḥ kaścic Chāriputra kulaputro vā kuladuhitā vā asyāṃ gambhīrāyāṃ
prajñāpāramitāyāṃ caryāṃ cartukāmas tenaivaṃ vyavalokitavyaṃ.*

This, Conze tells us, concludes the introduction of the long text, and he ends with a full stop. He says the short text condenses the whole introduction to “*ārya-avalokiteśvaro bodhisattvo gambhīrāṃ prajñāpāramitā-caryāṃ caramāṇo vyavalokayati sma.*” Again with a full stop in (1948: 34) though this is replaced with a colon in (1967). The text common to both then continues:

pañca skandhās tāṃśca svabhāva-śūnyān paśyati sma.

Conze is aware that there is a variant reading in two manuscripts (N^b and N^c) which add “*pañcaskandhān svabhāvaśūnyān vyavalokitavyaṃ*” after the first *vyavalokitavyaṃ* (1948: 35: n.7-8). In 1948 he appears to conflate this variant with the phrase from the short text, i.e. *pañca-skandhās tāṃś ca svabhāvaśūnyān paśyati sma.* He includes it in the translation of the long text in a way that suggests a hybrid of the two: “There are the five skandhas, and those he sees in their own-being as empty.” (1973: 140)

That this is a conflation is indicated by his translation note that the verb is “*vyavalokayati*” (1973: 140, n. 3) which is not “to see” but “to look”; and by the fact that the edition footnote is connected with the beginning of the short text, rather than the end of the long text; and we know that the short text definitely has *paśyati*. Also the translation begins a new paragraph with “There are the five skandhas...” but equivocates by ending the previous paragraph with a colon rather than a full stop. It is as though Conze unconsciously sees the problem in ending the sentence where he does, but cannot see an alternative, so he tries to mitigate the problem using punctuation.

Despite the two manuscript sources for the variant reading both having *pañca-skandhān* (the accusative plural) agreeing with *svabhāvaśūnyān*, Conze opts to read it as nominative. Sanskrit convention then allows him to infer a verb “there are” (such as *santi* or *bhavanti*) to account for the nominative case. The phrase becomes a simple assertion of the existence of five *skandhas*. This is not implausible, but there is a more straightforward reading, which I will give below.

In the later edition (1967), the second phrase is dropped altogether from the long text. The introduction of the long text ends with *vyavalokitavyaṃ* followed by a full stop. The short text “condensation” of the introduction now includes the phrase beginning with “*pañca-skandhās*”. So we can see that the 1973 translation of the long text comes from the 1948 text.

What all this shows is that Conze is committed to treating *vyavalokayati* as an intransitive verb, and *pañcaskandha* as a nominative plural despite it causing him difficulty, and despite his attempts to resolve the problems in his translations.

Since, following Nattier (1992), we now know that the prototype for the Sanskrit *Heart Sutra* was most likely Xuánzàng's Chinese short text, it may be profitable at this point to examine the Chinese recensions.

Chinese texts

Xuánzàng's Chinese version (T 251), has:

觀自在菩薩行深般若波羅蜜多時，照見五蘊皆空，度一切苦厄。

Guānzìzài púsà xíng shēn bōrěbōluómìduō¹³ shí, zhàojiàn wǔyùn jiē kōng, dù yīqiè kǔ è.

When Avalokiteśvara bodhisattva practised the deep perfection of wisdom, he clearly observed that all the five *skandhas* were empty, and went beyond all states of suffering.

As noted by others the last phrase in Chinese, 度一切苦厄, has no corresponding phrase in any Sanskrit source.¹⁴ In the first two phrases there are two verbs: firstly 行 *xíng* “practice” which (construed with the character 時 “time”) means “while/when practising” and corresponds to *caramāṇa*; and secondly 照見 *zhàojiàn*, a difficult term¹⁵ corresponding probably to *vyavalokayati sma*, but

¹³般若波羅蜜多 *bōrěbōluómìduō* transcribes *prajñāpāramitā*. The Pinyin transcription does not, of course, capture the pronunciation of Xuánzàng's (pre-Mandarin) Early Middle Chinese accurately.

¹⁴To my knowledge, there is no plausible explanation for the absence of this phrase in the Sanskrit. It seems likely that the Chinese archetype used for the first Sanskrit translation lacked this phrase and thus cannot have been either T 250 or T 251.

¹⁵The *Digital Dictionary of Buddhism* definition (sv. 照見) includes, “To shed light on; to observe clearly; to come to understand. To take a view. To distinguish; to determine by seeing.”

incorporating *paśyati sma*, i.e. both looking and seeing. 照 can also have a sense of “reflecting”, or “illuminating”, or perhaps “comparing”; while 見 just means “to see”; and on its own would usually correspond directly to *paśyati*. The two characters can be read like a verbal compound “illuminate and see”, or 照 can be adverbial, giving meanings of the type “clearly see, distinguish”. In Yu (2000) several experts in Chinese literature with varying knowledge of Buddhology approach the *Hṛdaya* as literature and are split on how to interpret this phrase. Stephen F. Teiser (Yu 2000: 113) translates 照見 as “illuminating vision” (照 as an adverb), while Stephen H West (116) opts for “Shining upon and making manifest” (照見 as a verbal compound). Michael A. Fuller does not translate, but expresses the ambiguity: “I encounter a metaphor when it would have been simpler *not* to have one: why *zhao* [i.e. 照]? What is the lore here? Does the wisdom emit light? That is, is such wisdom an active use of the mind that engages the phenomena of the world, or is it simply receptive?” (119).

The Chinese has a two phrase structure: practising deep perfection of wisdom and observing/seeing the *skandhas*. The difference is that the Sanskrit short text uses two separate verbs for “looking” (*vyava√lok*) and “seeing” (*√drś*). We have to keep in mind that while much of the text is a quotation from existing Buddhist texts, this introductory passage appears to have been composed in China by a Chinese Buddhist. We cannot simply treat 照見 as a translation of a Sanskrit term because Nattier (1992) showed that the opposite is more likely to be true. However, for the Sanskrit text to be a plausible translation, the translator who made it must have understood 照 as an adverb.

The version attributed to Kumārajīva (T 250), and traditionally dated ca. 400 CE¹⁶ begins:

觀世音菩薩，行深般若波羅蜜時，照見五陰空，度一切苦厄。
Guānshìyīn púsà, xíng shēn bōrěbōluómì shí, zhàojiàn wūyīn kōng,
dù yīqiè kǔ è.

The relevant phrase is 照見五陰空 “He observed that the five skandhas are empty.” Though there are minor differences between the two versions, such as a different transcription for Avalokiteśvara, dropping the last character of 般若波

¹⁶This date is disputed as this text is absent from earlier catalogues which list Kumārajīva’s translations. It’s likely that this text has been edited to more closely conform with Kumārajīva’s *Long Perfection of Wisdom* text translation and attributed to him in retrospect (Conze 1948: 38; Nattier 1992: 184ff.).

羅蜜多, a different character for *skandha* (陰 instead of 蘊) and dropping the redundant 皆 “all”, the two versions are essentially the same in this passage.

The remaining Chinese versions are all long texts. T 253, translated by Prajñā ca. 788 CE, follows Xuánzàng where possible and his phrasing here is very close to T 251: 名觀自在。行深般若波羅蜜多時，照見五蘊皆空，離諸苦厄。 This is more or less identical to the opening of Xuánzàng's short text.

T 252, translated by 法月 Fǎyuè (Skt. *Dharmacandra?), reads:

照見五蘊自性皆空。彼了知五蘊自性皆空

“Clearly observing (照見) that the five skandhas were empty of self-existence (自性); he knew (了知) the five skandhas were empty of self-existence.”

This appears to involve the widely used metaphor that *seeing is knowing*. When Avalokiteśvara “sees” that the five skandhas are empty of self-existence in Sanskrit, we understand him to “know” this. Fǎyuè concretises the metaphor. If we take seeing and knowing as synonymous, then T 252 appears to replicate the Sanskrit verbal distinction between looking and seeing, whereas Xuánzàng's version does not.

T 254 (translated by Prajñācakra, 861 CE) and T 257 (translated by Dānapāla, 1005 CE) have 照見五蘊自性皆空 “He observed that the five skandhas were all empty of self-existence” without the follow-up provided by T 252.

T 255 (translated from the Tibetan by Fǎchéng 法成 856 CE) has another variation: 觀察照見五蘊體性悉皆是空. This largely seems to add reinforcement to a text like T 257: here 觀察 means “perceive, investigate” and is thus a synonym of 照見; 體 and 性 can both mean *svabhāva*; while 悉 “fully, wholly” is a synonym for 皆 “all”.

This brief survey shows that in each case the verbs for looking and/or seeing are transitive and that Avalokiteśvara's gaze is specifically on the *skandhas* in the Chinese texts.

Tibetan Texts

No translation of the short text version of the *Hṛdaya* was included in the Tibetan Kanjur. However, a number of manuscripts of a translation of the short text into Tibetan were discovered at Dūnhuáng. Of these, just two have been published in any form: Or8212/77 is dated to the 9th century and appears as an

image in Zwalf (1985) and another (high resolution) image on the International Dūnhuáng Project website; and India Office Library (IOL) catalogue #120(26) is transcribed and commented in Ueyama (1965).¹⁷ Jan Nattier has examined several other manuscripts and confirms that IOL #120(26) is typical. Nattier transcribes and translates:¹⁸

*'di ltar 'phags pa kun du spyan ras gzigs gyi dbang po byang chub sems dpa' shes rab gyi pha rol du phyin pa zab mo spyad pa spyod pa'i tshe // rnam par bltas na lnga phung de dag ngo bo nyid gyis stong par mthong ngo //*¹⁹

“In this way, at the time when the Noble Avalokiteśvara bodhisattva was practicing the practice of the profound *prajñāpāramitā*, when he looked (*rnam par bltas na*) [at them] he saw (*mthong ngo*) the five *skandhas* as devoid of essence (*ngo bo nyid, svabhāva*).”

Here the verb “when he looked” (*rnam pas bltas na*) does not have an explicit object, but it need not be read as intransitive since, as Nattier’s translation suggests, there is an implied object, i.e. when he looked *at the five skandhas*. Also note that this text has two different verbs: *rnam pas bltas* corresponds to Sanskrit *vyava√lok* and *mthong* corresponds to *√dṛś*. Thus, the Dūnhuáng texts confirm the observations made in looking at the Chinese texts.

IOL #120(26) would seem to be a translation from a Sanskrit source rather than either of the extant Chinese short texts (T 250 and T 251), but certain features suggest a Chinese influence. The addition of the particle *na* with the verb *rnam pas blta* which conveys “when” is suggestive of the Chinese texts which use the two characters 行 and 時 to convey, “when he was practising”. Also in paragraph L (Silk 1994: 124-125) IOL #120(26) has *kha dog dang... myed* “and no colours” for A *gzugs med* “without form” or B *gzugs med do* “it is without form”. This is

¹⁷I’m grateful to the anonymous reviewer for bringing these references to my attention and outlining what the text says.

¹⁸Jan Nattier, personal communication, 7 Feb 2015.

¹⁹Ueyama (1965: 781) transcribes, *ḥdi ltar ḥphags pa kun tu spyan ras gzigs kyi dbaṅ po byaṅ chub sems dpaḥ śes rab kyi pha rol to phyin pa zab mo spyad pa spyod paḥi tche // rnam par bltas na lña chuṅ de dag ṅo bo ṅid kyis stoṅ par mthoṅ ṅo //*. Or8212/77 omits *rnam par bltas na* from beginning of the last sentence and reads: *'di lta 'phags pa kun tu spyan ras gzigs gyi dbang po byang chub sems dpa' shes rab gyi pha rol tu phyin pa zab mo dpyad spyod pa'i tshe // [rnam par bltas na] lña chuṅ de dag ṅo pa ṅid kyis stoṅ par mthoṅ ṅo //*. My thanks to Joy Vriens for help with transcribing Or8212/77.

reminiscent of T 251 無色 *wú sè*, where 色 is the standard translation for Sanskrit *rūpa*, but literally means “colour”.

As with the Sanskrit and Chinese, comparing the Tibetan translations of the long text is less straight-forward.²⁰ The long text was preserved in the transmitted Tibetan canons in two major recensions (A and B) and multiple variations associated with different editions of the Kanjur. The history of the text in Tibetan is almost as complex as the history in Sanskrit. However Silk (1994) has provided us with a thorough critical edition based on exemplars of 14 editions. Tibetan canonical versions of the Heart Sutra have a significant difference to the Sanskrit in the passages we are considering. In the first case, describing the activities of Avalokiteśvara (Recension A; paragraph E):

yang de'i tshes byang chub sems dpa' sems dpa' chen po 'phags pa spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug shes rba kyi pha rol tu phyin pa zab mo spyod pa nyid la rnam par lta zhing | phung po lnga po de dag la yang rang bzhin gyis stong par rnam par lta'o | (Silk 1994: 110)²¹

Now, at that time the Bodhisattva, mahāsattva Ārya Avalokiteśvara, observing the practice itself of the profound Perfection of Wisdom, observed that even those five aggregates are intrinsically empty. (Silk 1994: 174-5)²²

Here Avalokiteśvara's gaze has a definite object. He observes “the practice of the profound Perfection of Wisdom”. Tibetan *spyod pa nyid la* “practice itself” (A) or *spyod pa* “practice” (B) represents Sanskrit *caryā* and is the object of the verb in the first phrase of the sentence. It seems that Vimalamitra, who translated this text into Tibetan, had a version with the present participle *caramāṇo* missing (as do N^b and N^c). Both Tibetan recensions only say “the practice of...” and not “practising the practice of” (*caryāṃ caramāṇo* = Tibetan *spyod pa spyad par*). With *caramāṇo*

²⁰I'm reliant on the excellent translations and studies by Lopez (1988, 1996) and Silk (1994) to facilitate access to the Tibetan texts. My thanks again to Donald Lopez and Jonathan Silk for generously replying to email queries on the Tibetan text and Tibetan grammar.

²¹Recension B has a *shad* after *chen po*; replaces *rnam par lta zhing* with *rnam par blta ste*; replaces *de dag la yang rnga bzhin ghyis stong* with *dag la de dag ngo nyid kyi stong*. These differences are not significant to the present article.

²²Silk provides a reasonable disclaimer that his translations are provided as a “guide to the two different recensions for those who do not know the Tibetan language” (1994: 171). His translations are cited in this spirit.

missing, it may well have seemed natural for *caryāṃ* (accusative singular) to be the object of *vyavalokayati sma*. In any case it shows that Vimalamitra understood the verb *vyava√lok* to take an object, and this is true in both recensions and all the variant readings.

The verb “observe” is *rnam par lta* (A) or *rnam par blta* (B), where *rnam par* is used to indicate the prefix *vi-* in its sense of “completely, fully”; and *lta* or *blta* means “to see”.²³ Thus *rnam par lta* translates *vyavalokayati* and this tells us that the Tibetan texts also had the verb change from *paśyati* to *vyavalokayati* discussed above. The second time it is used, the object observed is “those five skandhas” (*phung po lnga po de dag la*).

In the second passage, the response to Śāriputra’s question (Recension A, Paragraph I) the text says:

shā ri’i bu rigs kyi bu ’am rigs kyi bu mo gang la la shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa zab mo spyod pa spyad par ’dod pa des ’di ltar rnam par blta bar bya ste | phung po lnga po de dag kyang rang bzhin gyis stong par rnam par yang dag par rjes su blta’o || (Silk 1994: 118)

Śāriputra! Whichever gentle son or daughter desires to practice the practice of the profound Perfection of Wisdom should observe thus, and he will behold that even those five aggregates are intrinsically empty. (Silk 1994: 176)

Here the situation is complicated by differences between the recensions. The phrase *’di ltar rnam par blta bar bya* might at first glance appear to have an intransitive verb. The instruction is simply that “he should observe *in this way*” (*’di ltar*). In fact there is an implied object here, “he should observe [things] in this way”.²⁴ Recension B also continues as per manuscripts N^b, N^e, and Vaidya (1961), with a further injunction to observe the five skandhas and in this phrase, the verb is clearly transitive.

²³The anonymous reviewer points out that *lta* is the present stem of the verb and that *blta* is actually a future stem. They further suggest that at the end of passage E in Recension B (*rnam par blta ’o*) the future form might be the result of miscopying. An original *rnam par bltas ’so* (past stem) is typically abbreviated in manuscripts as *rnam par bltaso* and may subsequently have been miscopied as *rnam par blta ’o*. This could indicate that the two recensions attempt to handle the dropping of the periphrastic past marker *sma* in the Sanskrit text in different ways.

²⁴I’m grateful to the anonymous reviewer for alerting me to this reading.

Recension B is the same up to “...*'dod pa des |*” but misses out “*di ltar rnam par blta bar bya ste*”, and continues “*phung po lnga po de dag ngo bo nyid kyis stong par yang dag par rjes su mthong ba de ltar blta bar bya ste |*”. The result is similar however.

Śāriputra! Whichever gentle son or daughter desires to practice the practice of the profound Perfection of Wisdom, he remarks that those five aggregates are intrinsically empty, and he should observe thus: (Silk 1994: 177)²⁵

Again the verb “to see” (*lta ba*) is used intransitively “he should see thus” (*blta bar bya ste*). And thus the two Tibetan recensions agree on this point. Presumably, the Tibetan text faithfully records the usage in a Sanskrit original that is different from our extant versions. The structure of these sentences is less problematic than the Sanskrit in the same way that Conze’s English is – they have been constructed to make sense of the difficulty. Note that in Recension B, Paragraph I that, as in Conze (1973), the implied object of observation is the content of the rest of the text.

Paragraph I may have been an influence on Conze, though it’s not clear from his notes whether he consulted the Tibetan, let alone which recension. A Tibetan translation is noted in the Bibliography of Conze (1948) in two Kanjurs – the Peking and Derge.

The Indian commentators recorded in Tibetan translation have very little to say about this part of the sutra. Only two comment directly on the words of this passage. They both take *vyava√lok* as transitive and its object as the five *skandhas*. “Here, the Bhagavan, the noble Avalokiteśvara, views the categories of phenomena with the supramundane wisdom of subsequent attainment (*prṣṭalabdha-jñāna*)” (Kamalaśīla in Lopez 1996: 107). “The object that is viewed is the aggregates” (Śrīsimha in Lopez 1996: 111). Thus, the Indian commentators whose work is preserved in Tibetan also understand *vyava√lok* as a transitive verb.

Having assembled the evidence we can now proceed to revisit the problems that were outlined at the beginning of this article and see how Conze might have made a better choice.

²⁵The anonymous reviewer comments that “remarks” is an unusual translation for *rjes su mthong ba* where *rjes su* is the regular equivalent of the Sanskrit prefix *anu-* and *mthong ba* means ‘to see’ and is the equivalent of Sanskrit $\sqrt{dr̥ṣ}$ or \sqrt{pas} ; we expect *anu√pas* ‘he looks at’, ‘he perceives’ or ‘he notices’.

Solution

Beginning with the interpretation of *vyavalokayati sma* as intransitive, Conze sets in motion a domino effect producing further problems in understanding the rest of the words in this sentence and how they fit together. These problems caused him some difficulty judging by his treatment of the long text. There is a simple solution to all of these problems which is suggested by his sources themselves. This is that *vyavalokayati sma* is a transitive verb; and *pañcaskandhās* is in fact an accusative plural, *pañcaskandhān*, and the object of *vyavalokayati sma*. Although usual Sanskrit word order is “subject object verb” this is not fixed and there is no reason it should not be “subject verb object” as here.

This change can be accomplished simply by adding an *anusvāra* above *dhā* in the existing text; *pañcaskandhās* (nominative) is transformed into *pañcaskandhāṃs* (accusative).²⁶ The loss or addition of *anusvāra* is one of the most common errors that occur in copies of Sanskrit manuscripts, and is rife in the manuscripts of the *Heart Sutra* itself, so it is plausible that our text lost one; and several of our sources have *-dhāṃs* or *-dhān*. We now also see that *tāṃs* refers back to *pañcaskandhān*.

This tiny change improves the text considerably and allows us to dispense with extraneous punctuation, since now *ca* unequivocally marks the boundary of the two sentences. The amended passage now reads (with my translation):

*āryāvalokiteśvaro bodhisattvo gambhīrāṃ prajñāpāramitācaryāṃ
caramāṇo vyavalokayati sma pañcaskandhāṃs tāṃs ca svabhāva-
śūnyān paśyati sma.*

Practising the deep practice of the perfection of wisdom, the bodhisattva Noble Avalokiteśvara examined the five *skandhas* and saw them to be empty of self-existence.²⁷

²⁶Sanskrit *sandhi* rules demand that *-ān* followed by *t* should change to *-āṃs*, just as *tān* changes to *tāṃs* when followed by *ca*.

²⁷I've left “*skandhas*” untranslated because the single word translations employed to date do more to obscure the meaning than reveal it. “Aggregates”, though widely used, is particularly opaque and unhelpful. In my view the best explanation of what the *skandhas* (Pāli: *khandhas*) represent is Sue Hamilton (2000). Hamilton shows that in the Pāli texts the *khandhas* represent the “factors of experience” or even the “experiencing factors” with the emphasis on experience rather than on reality. Gombrich links the *skandhas qua* experiencing processes to extended use of fire as a metaphor for unawakened experience, drawing on Vedic imagery and visible in the characterisation of the

Not only is the grammar of the Sanskrit improved, but the result is now more clearly consistent with the Chinese short texts.

The proposed amendment allows us to see something else that has been obscured by Conze. We now see that what Avalokiteśvara was doing when he practiced the perfection of wisdom was examining the *skandhas*. This is consistent with Xuánzàng's Chinese, and also with Śrīsiṃha's reading as mentioned above. It is also implied in Vimalamitra's commentary: "The very practice that has that object or purpose is *viewing*... In order to indicate how many objects were viewed, it says five aggregates" (Lopez 1996: 54).²⁸ Examining the *skandhas* is a living practice in Buddhism. For a detailed study of this practice based on Pāli sources see Anālayo (2003: 201ff).

Part of what makes this problem interesting is the possibility that Conze's beliefs about Avalokiteśvara, his faith in the *bodhisattva* looking down from on high, appear to have led him to overlook the grammatical or syntactic problems in his text. The solution was available to him in several of his sources, but he did not employ it. This vividly demonstrates that the redactor/editor/translator is not a neutral player in the process of transmitting texts. As philologists, we are always at risk of believing we know what the text says without being entirely sure why it says that, the more so with a familiar text. It was the student exercise of attempting to parse the grammar of this passage that led me to question Conze's Sanskrit text, which, to my knowledge, had been unchallenged for some sixty years, despite being the subject of intense fascination and scrutiny. For as almost every writer on this text reminds the reader in their introduction: this is probably the most popular Mahāyāna Buddhist text for both scholars and practitioners. Did our very familiarity with the text lead to complacency?

In any case, Conze's work requires checking and updating, since this study has not highlighted all the apparent flaws in his text, or his translations and commentaries. We need a new critical edition of the *Hṛdaya*, which takes into account recent scholarship: especially Nattier's (1992) discovery that the text was composed in Chinese, work on the Tibetan recensions by Jonathan Silk (1994), and the Indian commentaries preserved in Tibetan (Lopez 1988, 1996). The editions of the Chinese Canon no doubt also include variations that ought to be noted in a critical

āyatanas as being aflame (*āditta*) and in such Pāli terms as *upādāna(aggi)khandha* and *nibbāna*. (2009: 111 ff.)

²⁸And this is despite the fact that Vimalamitra's text is missing *caramāna* and takes *caryāṃ* as the direct object of *vyaavalokayati sma*.

edition. Considerable attention has been paid to the *Hṛdaya* by Japanese scholars, but almost none of that work is available to non-Japanese speakers. An English language survey of the Japanese literature would be very welcome if anyone were to undertake it. A survey of the Tibetan short texts is also highly desirable to give us a more complete history of the *Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya*.

Abbreviations

BHSD	Edgerton's Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Dictionary
MW	Monier-Williams' Sanskrit-English Dictionary
PED	Pali Text Society, Pali-English Dictionary
T	Taishō Tripiṭaka (CBETA Ed.)

Editions of the Sanskrit *Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya*

Cambridge Manuscripts (Transcribed Dec 2012)

Add 1164 (date uncertain, the script is similar to Add 1553)

Add 1485 (1677 CE)

Add 1553 (18th century)

Add 1680 (ca. 1200 CE)

Benveniste, Émile. (1940) *Textes Sogdiens: édités, traduits et commentés*.

Conze, Edward (1948) 'Text, Sources, and Bibliography of the *Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya*.' *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, April 80(1-2): 33-51.

Conze, Edward. (1967) 'The *Prajñāpāramitā-Hṛdaya Sūtra*' in *Thirty Years of Buddhist Studies: Selected Essays*, Bruno Cassirer, pp. 147-167. Modified version of Conze (1948).

Matsumoto, Tokumyo. (1932) *Die Prajñāpāramitā Literatur*. Rheinischen Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität zu Bonn. [based on T 8.256]

Milloué, L de (1883) 'Quelques mots sur les anciens textes sanskrits du Japon, à propos d'une traduction inédite du *Prajñāpāramitā-hṛdaya-sūtra* par MM. Paul Regnaud et Y. Ymaizoumi d'après un vieux texte sanskrit-japonais.' *Actes du Sixième Congrès international des orientalistes tenu en 1883 à Leide, 3e partie, section 2: Aryenne* (Leide, E. J. Brill, 1885), p. 181-197. [Sanskrit text based on Freer's polyglot edition] Online: <http://archive.org/stream/actesdusiximecoo1unkngoog#page/n200/mode/1up>

- Mironov, N.D. (1933) 'The Prajñāpāramitāhṛdayasūtra as an inscription.' *Urusvati Journal*. Vol 3: 73-78. Online: http://emrism.agni-age.net/english/Urusvati/Urusvati_3_73-78.pdf
- Müller, Max. (1881) 'The Ancient Palm Leaves containing the Prajñāpāramitā-Hṛdaya Sūtra and Uṣṇiṣa-vijaya-Dhāraṇi.' in *Buddhist Texts from Japan* (Vol 1.iii). Oxford University Press. Online: <http://archive.org/details/buddhisttextsfrombhgoog>
- Shaku Hannya (1923) 'The Prajna-Paramita-Hridaya Sutra,' *The Eastern Buddhist*. 2 (3 & 4): 163-175.
- Vaidya, P.L. (1961) *Mahāyāna-sūtra-saṃgrahaḥ (part 1)*. *Buddhist Sanskrit Texts No. 17*. Darbhanga: The Mithila Institute. Online: <http://dsbc.uwest.edu/> [Based on Müller 1881]
- Xuánzàng (Mid 7th Century) 唐梵翻對字音-般若波羅蜜多心經. [Sanskrit *Prajñāpāramitāhṛdaya Sūtra* transliterated with Hanzhi]. Taishō Tripiṭaka. Vol 8, no.256. [Transcribed in Matsumoto, 1932.]

Tibetan Short Text

Or. 8212/77

— *International Dunhuang Project*. <http://idp.bl.uk/database/large.a4d?recnum=7852&imageRecnum=122101> (Record has no date).

— in Zwalf, W. (1985) *Buddhism, Art and Faith*. p. 61, 64. London: British Museum.

UEYAMA Daijun (1965) 敦煌出土のチベット訳般若心經 [=Tibetan Version of the *Prajñāpāramitāhṛdayasūtra* from Dūnhuáng]. *Indogaku bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 13(2): 783-779 [sic]. https://www.jstage.jst.go.jp/browse/ibk1952/13/2/_contents [Article is in Japanese].

Bibliography

All Chinese texts are from the CBETA edition of the *Taishō Tripiṭaka*.

Anālayo. (2003) *Satipaṭṭhāna: The Direct Path to Realization*. Windhorse Publications.

Bendall, Cecil. (1883) *Catalogue of the Buddhist Sanskrit Manuscripts in the University Library, Cambridge, with Introductory Notices and Illustrations of the Palaeography and Chronology of Nepal and Bengal*. Cambridge University Press.

Bühler, G (1881) "Palaeographical Remarks on the Horiuzi Palm-Leaf Mss." in Müller (1881) [above], p.63-95.

- Conze, Edward. (1973) *Perfect Wisdom: The Short Prajñāpāramitā Texts*. Buddhist Publishing Group
- Conze, Edward. (1975a) *Buddhist Wisdom Books: The Diamond Sutra and the Heart Sutra*. 2nd Ed. London: George Allen & Unwin.
- Conze, Edward. (1975b) *The Large Sutra on Perfect of Wisdom: With the Divisions of the Abhisamayālaṅkāra*. University of California Press.
- Conze Edward. (2006) *The Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines and its Verse Summary*. San Francisco: City Lights. [First published 1973, Four Seasons Foundation]
- Copp, Paul. (2014) *The Body Incantatory: Spells and the Ritual Imagination in Medieval Chinese Buddhism*. Columbia University Press.
- Gombrich, Richard. (2009) *What the Buddha Thought*. London, Equinox.
- Hamilton, Sue. (2000) *Early Buddhism: A New Approach*. Routledge.
- Jayarava. (2011) *Visible Mantra: Visualising and Writing Buddhist Mantras*. Cambridge: Visible Mantra Books.
- Lopez, Donald S. (1988) *The Heart Sūtra Explained: Indian and Tibetan Commentaries*. State University of New York Press.
- Lopez, Donald S. (1996) *Elaborations on Emptiness: Uses of the Heart Sutra*. Princeton University press.
- Nattier, Jan. (1992) "The Heart Sūtra: a Chinese apocryphal text?" *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*. Vol. 15 (2), p.153-223. <http://archiv.ub.uni-heidelberg.de/ojs/index.php/jiabs/article/view/8800/2707>
- Nattier, Jan. (2003) *A few good men: the Bodhisattva Path According to the Inquiry of Ugra (Ugraparipṛcchā)*. University of Hawaii Press.
- Roberts, Peter Alan. (2012) "Translating Translation: An Encounter with the Ninth-Century Tibetan Version of the Kāraṇḍavyūha-sūtra." *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies*. 2: 224-242.
- Śāntideva. *Bodhicaryāvatāra. (Polyglot Edition) Bibliotheca Polyglotta*. Online: <http://www2.hf.uio.no/polyglotta/index.php?page=volume&vid=24>
- Schopen, Gregory. (1975). "The Phrase 'sa pṛthivīpradeśaś caityabhūto bhavet' in the Vajracchedikā: Notes on the Cult of the Book in Mahāyāna." *Indo-Iranian Journal*, 27: 147-181.
- Silk, Jonathan A. (1994) *The Heart Sūtra in Tibetan: a Critical Edition of the Two Recensions Contained in the Kanjur*. Arbeitskreis für tibetische und buddhistische Studien, Universität Wien.
- Speyer, J. S. (1886) *Sanskrit Syntax*. Leyden: E.J. Brill.
- Stevens, John. (1995) *Sacred Calligraphy of the East*. (3rd ed.) Boston & London: Shambhala.

Suzuki, D. T. (1934) *Essays in Zen Buddhism III*. London: Luzac.

Yu, Pauline, et al. [eds] (2000) *Ways With Words: Writing about reading Texts from Early China*. University of California Press.

The Medicinal Accomplishment (*sman sgrub*) practice in the Dudjom Meteoric Iron Razor (*gnam lcags spu gri*) tradition: Reflections on the ritual and meditative practice at a monastery in Southern Bhutan.¹

Cathy Cantwell

“Medicinal Accomplishment” (*sman sgrub*) practices for compounding and empowering medicinal pills have received some attention in studies of Tibetan medical traditions, although it is clear that in the contemporary medical context, their religious significance has been toned down. This paper examines an elaborate “Medicinal Accomplishment” ritual and its Buddhist meditative framing, as performed in a religious monastic context in Bhutan. It explores aspects of the practice, especially the transformations of the substances considered to be enacted through the meditative ritual and tantric accomplishment, raising the question of whether an important aspect of Tibetan medicine in the past may have been neglected in the contemporary focus on the active natural ingredients in Tibetan pills.

Medicinal Accomplishment (*sman sgrub*) practices in Tibetan Buddhism have received some scholarly attention in the past few years. Put simply, the practice concerns the preparation and consecration of medicinal pills, in the context of a

¹I acknowledge the support of the Arts and Humanities Research Council of the UK, who funded the research project on which this paper is based. I also thank Lopon P. Ogyan Tanzin Rinpoche, who has acted as the research project’s lama consultant, and with whom I have discussed the Tibetan texts discussed in this paper at length. Thanks are also due to the lamas and monks of Pema Yoedling Dratsang, Gelegphu, Bhutan, especially Lama Kunzang Dorjee Rinpoche and Lopon Lhundrup Namgyal. Further, I must acknowledge Nicolas Chong, who attended the rituals with me in Bhutan, who took videos which have been most helpful to the study, and who also took photographs, some of which I am including here. Geoffrey Samuel, and also an anonymous peer reviewer, provided useful feedback in the final revision stages, for which I am grateful.

meditative tantric ritual. In this paper, I look at a particular example, with reference to its textual tradition and ethnographic observation of its performance, in particular focusing on the Buddhist meditative framing of the practice. In doing so, I wish to consider some issues relating to the boundaries between Tibetan medicine and Tibetan Buddhism. It is well known that Buddhism has had a considerable impact on the development of Tibetan traditions of medicine and healing, while at the same time Tibetan medicine developed its own relatively autonomous or specialised spheres of practice. This was even the case in the pre-modern period, when there was considerable overlap, including the dominance of lamas and monks in the performance of healing rites. Yet some aspects of medical theory and practice diverged or contrasted with Buddhism, for example, matters of sexuality or diet;² and training in medicine and healing was often vested in hereditary lineages of doctors who learnt medicine in the family home, relatively independently from formal training in Buddhism. With the processes of modernisation and professionalisation in Tibetan medicine, perhaps beginning roughly from the seventeenth century founding of a state supported medical college,³ Tibetan medicine has increasingly developed its own niche of Tibetan learning and specialised practice. The tendency to separate medicine from religion in Tibet has grown considerably since the second half of the twentieth century, both in Tibet, where secularisation of traditional medicine has been encouraged by the state, and in exile, with the development of a modernised curriculum of training at the Men-Tsee-Khang Institute in Dharamsala. Much academic work has been looking at these and related developments, but here I am concerned with the other side of the picture, that is, aspects of the joint heritage of Tibetan medicine and Buddhism which may have lost their centrality or even disappeared in Tibetan medicine, yet remain vibrant within Buddhist practice.

Medicinal Accomplishment practices are still used in Tibetan medical practice. Frances Garrett (2009: 224-225) has discussed the interesting interconnection in this case between medical and religious domains, in which a practice rooted in rNying ma tantric circles has persisted within the dGe lugs pa orien-

²In medical practice, the gratification of sexual impulses or the consumption of meat might form part of a health-promoting or treatment regime. In Buddhist teachings, even when sex and meat-eating are not actively discouraged, they are rarely condoned or considered as beneficial; they are perhaps only enjoined in certain advanced tantric practice for virtuosi who could offset their negative effects through the power of meditation.

³The medical college of *lCags po ri* in Lhasa was founded through the patronage of the Fifth Dalai Lama's Regent, Sangye Gyamtso, in the late seventeenth century.

tated medical institutions in Central Tibet. She rightly underlines the importance of the contemplative and yogic curriculum of which it is part, the purification and accomplishment of the doctor practitioner as much as the medicine, and the central place of the practice within the *bdud rtsi yon tan* (“Elixir Qualities”) class of Mahāyoga texts in the rNying ma tantric corpus.⁴ At the same time, she notes that the *smān sgrub* practice is often presented in Tibetan medical contexts today as though it were a component added simply to enhance the efficacy of the medicinal pills.⁵

In contrast, in rNying ma pa Buddhist monasteries, the production of medicinal pills is an addition to the principal tantric ritual, which is the Major Practice session or Drupchen (*sgrub chen*) focused on attaining realisation. A Medicinal Accomplishment text does not constitute a self-sufficient rite, but rather a practice to be integrated within the ritual sequences of intensive practice of the main Ritual Manual. It need not be done each time a Major Practice session takes place, and how many medicinal pills are made will depend on the expertise of the team of lamas and the level of sponsorship received.

Major Practice sessions are the most elaborate and important periodic rituals performed in rNying ma pa monasteries of any size.⁶ They consist of intensive communal ritual and meditation, led by a group of lamas of advanced spiritual stature, together with a supporting team of expert ritualists. Participation in such a session is considered to produce considerable spiritual benefits, in the best case even to equal a three year retreat. This is not simply hyperbole: Buddhist tantric theory bases itself on the principle of a community of practitioners bound by the tantra commitments or *samaya*, all destined to attain Enlightenment in a single maṇḍala, and the fruits of spiritual practice are considered to depend more on the maintenance of this tantric bond than on the meditative practice as such. Thus in a Major Practice session a participant who acts correctly in the practice and plays their communal part will reap benefits accordingly. The boy blowing the horn in the right place is supporting the practice of the seasoned meditators, so he will

⁴Garrett (2009: 214-220) discusses the historical background of *smān sgrub* texts, their importance both within the transmitted tantric scriptures, and within the revelation cycles of the foremost early masters whose works were seminal for the later rNying ma tradition. The medical tradition relies on the *g.yu thog snying thig* cycle, which is one branch among many.

⁵See Craig 2011 for an example of such a simplified *smān sgrub* ritual performed in contemporary Lhasa.

⁶Small monasteries may manage only Ceremonial Practice (*sgrub mchod*) sessions, similar to but rather less elaborate than Major Practice sessions.

share in their spiritual attainments. Moreover, since Major Practice sessions are the key events in the annual ritual calendar, they may take on a significance in binding together scattered members of the religious community. Ex-monks and other lay practitioners may be enjoined to attend.⁷ Furthermore, Major Practice sessions provide the occasion for renewing the relationship between the specialist practitioners and the wider lay community. Dedicated lay people may attend the practice on a daily basis. The final day may attract huge numbers of people from the local community and beyond, since this is when the consecrations are publicly bestowed with the sacred statues and other items: the spiritually charged pills, liquids and foods.

The Buddhist Context: Consecration Practices

The tantric rituals considered here may be seen as a sub-type of Buddhist consecration practices. The repeated charging of the medicinal pills and other items with spiritual efficacy is not dissimilar from pan-Asian Buddhist practices, such as those for consecrating Buddha images.⁸ Essentially, the material articles are transformed through the ceremony into the tangible presence of the Buddha's enlightened qualities, and this nature persists beyond the ceremony itself. Key to the efficacy are the transmission of virtues and powers from a previous generation of articles, the various chants recited throughout the practice, and the transference of psychic energies of practitioners adept in the meditation practices (Tambiah 1984: 254). In the case here described, the rituals have much in common with the tantric consecration rites described by Bentor, although there are minor differences because her examples are taken from New Transmission (*gsar ma*) sources, whereas the monastic tradition here is of the Old Transmissions (*rnying ma*). Thus, here the keynote throughout is the inner tantric view that buddhahood is not somewhere else, nor does it need to be developed. Here the Mahāyāna doctrine that in its true nature, conditioned existence is no different from unconditioned existence – that is, *nirvāṇa* or liberation – is taken to its logical conclusion. If they are no different, then conditioned existence actually *is nirvāṇa*, and all the different aspects or phenomena of conditioned existence are really the display of buddha qualities, if only we could realise this. The point of the spiritual path is not to get rid of conditioned phenomena and to produce

⁷ In fact, Lama Kunzang Dorjee insists on the attendance of those who trained at his monasteries and graduated as local lamas serving their home communities.

⁸ See, in particular, Swearer 2004, and 1995, Tambiah 1984: 243-257, Bentor 1996 and 1997.

enlightened phenomena, but simply a gnosis: to realise the buddha nature of all phenomena, which is already fully developed. Thus, an important technique in the rNying ma system is known as “mindfulness of total purity” (*rnam dag dran pa*) or simply “total purity” (*rnam par dag pa*),⁹ in which the practitioner comes to experience all phenomena as pure enlightened qualities. But it is anticipated that such results are only at all likely in the special context of an introduction supported by accomplished meditators, themselves supported by the transmissions received from their spiritual mentors and their connection to the spiritual masters of the past. In these circumstances, it may be possible to wake up to realisation simply through an introduction to the powerful tantric methods for directly experiencing the enlightened view. Thus the repeated consecrations of the pills and other ritual items are not designed to transform anything, but rather to focus the mind on their inherent nature – which is present all along – so that this should be actualised and made fully accessible to all.

Tantric Transformations and Bestowal of the Pills

It will be readily seen that not only the medicinal pills, but the entire *maṇḍala* construction erected within the temple for the event, becomes the outer “support” (*rten*) on which the meditative transformations are focused: the palace supporting the enlightened tantric deities and their symbolic receptacles. A series of protective circles are created around the temple, and within it around the *maṇḍala*, so that no interference with the progress of the consecrations is possible. It then becomes the “medicinal mansion” (*sman khang*), and the medicinal substances are repeatedly charged through the mantra recitations led by the Head Lama, from whose heart the mantra cord is stretched around the items in the *maṇḍala*.

We shall see that sexual imagery is a prominent feature of the ritual and meditations of the Medicinal Accomplishment practice. It is not only that the repeated variations on that theme in the meditations of the male and female deities in union produce fluids which become or transform the elixir to be consumed. The imagery is also expressed in the outer ritual performance, such as in the ritual grinding, which is performed ideally by the Spiritual Master and his consort – in this case by the Head Lama, with the ritual specialist taking the part of the consort. This sexual component to the rites may not seem surprising consider-

⁹See *gnam lcags spu gri bsnyen yig*, Dudjom Collected Works Volume Da: 115-119; and the *Phur pa bcu gnyis* root tantra (various editions) Chapter 16.

ing that this is a tantric Buddhist tradition, but contrary to popular representations about “tantra”, sexual symbolism is not central to many Tibetan Buddhist practices. Most rNying ma pa tantric rituals, including the deity practices discussed here, are essentially rooted in Mahāyoga, which works on transforming vision and experience, so that all forms are realised as *buddha* body, all sounds are heard as *buddha* speech, and all thoughts arise as *buddha* mind. All or any of the emotional afflictions may be enlisted in the development of this pure vision of the world as the deity’s celestial *maṇḍala*, and of all beings as the deity’s enlightened entourage. In fact, the specifically sexual yogas are mostly associated with the *anuyoga* practices performed intensively in retreat, often as additional or branch practices. The main Vajrakīlaya deity practice is considered to work with and transform all five emotional poisons, but as a fierce wrathful deity, Vajrakīlaya is especially associated with the transformation of hatred and violence, and the imagery of killing pervades the Vajrakīlaya symbolism of “liberating” or releasing negative spirits into the *buddha* fields. But Tibetan tantric rites focused on longevity are rooted in sexual symbolism, and it is clear that these rites for Medicinal Accomplishment, connected with bodily healing as well as the gaining of spiritual enlightenment, are using visualisations of sexuality in the same way as do longevity practices. As with the use or transformation of the other emotional afflictions, the bliss of the deities is visualised as transcending ordinary passion and clinging, yet fully engaging with the creativity or pure energy of enlightened passion which is evoked through the recitations.

It may appear to be stating the obvious, but much of the intended psychological impact of the practice is connected to the *physical* nature of the ritual meditations, and the linkage of the spiritual inspiration with the bodily experience. Components and adornments of the three-dimensional *maṇḍala* are painstakingly assembled as perfectly as possible in the days before the Major Practice session. This *maṇḍala* is then considered actually to embody the celestial palace and its divine inhabitants, and it becomes the “support” (*rten*) for the meditations. It is physically present, and the practitioners come into direct physical contact with it, for instance by bowing and touching their heads to it when they enter at the start of each day. Three times in the course of the practice session, the meditation on oneself as the deity is reinforced by everyone symbolically dressing up as the *heruka* or male tantric deity, and this entails the *heruka* marks being painted on the face and neck and touching all the items of clothing. On the final consecrations day, the bestowal of consecrations is above all a physical experience. The

sacred items are put on top of the head, some are put on the neck, the heart, or the hands, and the edible and drinkable items are consumed. The bestowals also create a physical encounter between the Head Lama and the students, and this kind of ritualised contact and directed experience of receiving consecration is part of the milieu of the tantric *samaya* or bond which links the great spiritual masters of the past, the lama of the present, and the students. The efficacy of the medicinal pills is not only seen in terms of the proficiency of the lama and his team in producing an effective product, but more in terms of effectively transmitting the blessings of the practice and its lineage of masters. Thus not only is it crucial to include the Dharma medicinal pills of the great teachers of the tradition, but it is equally important not to sully this special embodiment of their blessings with those with which one does *not* have the same personal connection. So the medicinal substances should not include Dharma medicines of lamas from lineages which are not closely connected. Many practitioners avoid altogether medicinal pills from uncertain sources, or from lamas who represent lineages with which they are not personally connected.

The Major Practice session in Gelegphu in Southern Bhutan

The case discussed here is a Major Practice session connected with the popular tantric deity Vajrakīlaya [Image 01]. The specific tradition of the Dudjom “Meteoric Iron Razor” (*gnam lcags spu gri*) is based on a famous nineteenth century revelation, the texts for which were brought to completion by a towering twentieth century master, Dudjom Jigdral Yeshe Dorje Rinpoche (*bdud ’joms ’jigs bral ye shes rdo rje*, 1904-1987). The practice is now widespread, perhaps especially in Bhutan, where Dudjom Rinpoche had many students. Indeed, when I attended the Major Practice session in Gelegphu in Southern Bhutan in November 2013, another “Meteoric Iron Razor” Major Practice session was taking place not far away with a different team of lamas.¹⁰

[Image 02] The temple in Gelegphu,¹¹ where the practice was established on an annual basis some years ago, is still in the process of construction. In the early years, the practice was performed in a marquee. Now the main building is complete, but work is continuing on the statues and decoration, and was interrupted

¹⁰Namkhai Nyingpo Rinpoche was leading a group of 300 practitioners at a football ground in Gyalpoizhing in Mongar, organised by Mongar Threma tshogpa, with more than 5,000 expected for the consecrations (news report in *Kuensel*, November 9th 2013).

¹¹Pema Yoedling Dratsang, <http://pemayoedling.org/>.

for the duration of the practice session. The lamas and monks are all part of the Jangsa Dechen Choling Monastery in Kalimpong in West Bengal, India [Image 03], and the new temple was founded specifically as a Vajrakīlaya temple by the Jangsa Monastery's head lama, Lama Kunzang Dorjee. Only a few monks and practitioners had been based there during the hot summer months, so there was an influx of practitioners from Kalimpong and elsewhere in the lead up to the practice session. As may be clear from the decision to dedicate the Gelegphu temple to Vajrakīlaya, Lama Kunzang is a specialist in Vajrakīlaya, and the Jangsa team are particularly proficient in this practice. Lama Kunzang received the main Vajrakīlaya transmissions from his father, Lama Pema Longdrol, who had been appointed as the Head Lama of Jangsa Monastery by Dudjom Rinpoche and the Bhutan Queen Mother. Thus the older generation Jangsa lamas had considerable experience in Vajrakīlaya practice long before Lama Kunzang took the helm.



02. Pema Yoedling Dratsang, Gelegphu, Bhutan (photo Cathy Cantwell 2013)

Preparations

[Images 04, 05, 06] Preparations began in earnest several days before the nine full days of the practice session. Sixteen monks were assigned to perform various recitations in the temple, e.g. the *Prajñāpāramitā* in one hundred thousand verses, in order to generate virtue to support the practice and remove obstacles so that previous bad karma would not interfere with it. Meanwhile, other monks ornamented the temple building and surrounding area, decorating the gateway to the monastery grounds and erecting mantra flags which lined the route from the gate to the temple. [Images 07, 08, 09, 10, 11, 12, 13] Ritual preparations began with making the decorative *tormas* (*gtor ma*) or ritual sculptures, which may serve as icons for the tantric deities, or as offerings to them. One group worked principally on shaping the *tormas* from dough, painting them and adding some basic ornamentation, while a group in another building focused on making the elaborate butter/wax decorations (“white ornaments,” *dkar rgyan*) to add to the *tormas*.



09. Working on a Wrathful food offering torma (photo Cathy Cantwell 2013)



11. Decorating the main body of the tormā (photo Cathy Cantwell 2013)

[Images 14, 15, 16, 17] Three days before the practice session began, a select group of four senior practitioners started work on creating the two-dimensional sand *maṅḍala*, which depicts a plan of the tantric deity's celestial palace. It took two days to complete. In the final days before the practice, the assembly room was prepared, with thrones for the principal lamas, seating and little tables for other practitioners; the ritual items needed for the three-dimensional *maṅḍala* construction were also prepared. The day before the practice was to start, the Senior Master of Ceremonies (*dbu mdzad*), who had been Dudjom Rinpoche's own Master of Ceremonies, and who retains an important advisory role, sitting next to the Head Lama during practice sessions, sought out the main current Master of Ceremonies in the temple. He passed to him a number of already prepared packets of the key medicinal ingredients, which he had just brought with him from Kalimpong.

[Images 18, 19, 20] The first day of the Major Practice session was devoted entirely to preparatory ritual meditations to create the appropriate atmosphere for the session: the consecration of the space; the demarcation of ritual boundaries so that the practitioners should be symbolically bound together in the group with disturbing influences excluded; the construction of the three-dimensional

maṇḍala containing the symbolic supports and the items to be consecrated through the ritual; and the symbolic preparation of the assembly as tantric practitioners. These preparations were sandwiched within the short regular Vajrakīlaya practice, beginning after the mantra session and closing before the final section of the practice. Some important sections of the main Vajrakīlaya Ritual Manual were integrated within appropriate parts of the preparatory rituals, but it was not performed in full. The initial consecration of the space entails an Earth Ritual, in which offerings are made to the Earth Goddess and other local deities, and the site is ritually appropriated for the tantric practice. The boundaries around the site are then drawn, beginning with establishing the presence of the Four Great Kings, protective deities placed outside the temple building at its four sides. Further boundaries are set up, progressing towards the centre: in front of the temple; outside and inside the temple doors (respectively keeping obstacles out and the tantric attainments within); and around the space where the three-dimensional *maṇḍala* is to be constructed. This inner boundary of the ten Wrathful Deities who form a circle around Vajrakīlaya in the centre of the *maṇḍala* was set up through a ritual dance performed by the Head Lama; wearing the Black Hat costume of the tantric master, he hammered *phurbu* daggers into their holders in the ten directions of the *maṇḍala* area, while the assembly chanted the mantras of the individual deities in turn. The final secret and indestructible boundary is created through awareness of the sameness of *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, and here the Ritual Manual's section on "Demarcating the Boundaries" was recited. This is followed by a ritual liberation of negative forces, performed by the Head Lama, accompanied by a dance of two masked dancers taking the part of the ritual functionaries, the white and the dark *ging* deities. Having changed back into his usual robes, but wearing his ceremonial hat, the Head Lama then circled the *maṇḍala* table, sprinkling it with consecrated elixir. [Image 21] Then both he and the Master of Offerings, each holding one end of a long string of twisted threads of five-colours, circled the *maṇḍala* table, marking out the primeval lines which outline the principal lines of the *maṇḍala*.

[Image 22] During the break in the practice which followed, the full three-dimensional structure for the *maṇḍala* was erected, and the two-dimensional sand *maṇḍala* was placed on the lower table surface within it. [Images 23, 24, 25] The ritual resumed with a purificatory rite specifically for the elixir medicinal substances. After an elaborate expulsion of hindering spirits, an Ablutions Ritual was performed, its main section dramatised by the Master of Offerings standing

before the medicinal substances on the *maṇḍala* table, holding a mirror out in his left hand, and pouring saffron water from a flask with his right hand. The ritual is performed in many contexts, usually in relation to *buddha* images; the recitation makes clear that the purpose is to cleanse one's own defilements with the water of wisdom and compassion, so that the image is seen purely. In this case, it is all the *maṇḍala* items which are to be seen as *buddha* manifestations, but especially the medicinal substances. A further ritual sequence performed by the Head Lama, wearing his ceremonial hat and standing before the *maṇḍala*, served to consecrate the *maṇḍala* items. [Images 26, 27, 28] There was then a procession of the lamas and key practitioners carrying the different items; it circumambulated the *maṇḍala* three times. Each article was then in turn placed in the *maṇḍala* while an appropriate verse was recited. First, the *phurbu* ritual daggers representing the *maṇḍala* deities were positioned in the appropriate directions above the two-dimensional *maṇḍala* depiction. Next, the medicinal substances were put in place, with a recitation from the specific Medicinal Accomplishment text, inviting the medicinal substances as *buddha* body emanations (Volume Tha: 313). The other sacred articles were then put in place with further lines from the manual for the Major Practice session, the Ritual Practice Framework (*sgrub khog*) text (Volume Tha: 253). [Images 29, 30, 31] After this, the three-dimensional *maṇḍala* structure was ornamented with silks and other decorations, and surrounded by *tormas* and offerings.



27. Standing before the *Maṇḍala*, holding the bowl of Medicinal Substances (photo Nicolas Chong 2013)



28. Placing the items in turn (photo Cathy Cantwell 2013)

The Medicinal Ingredients

At this stage, the *Medicinal Accomplishment* text refers to the *maṅḍala* as the medicinal mansion (*sman khang*). For the first half of the Major Practice session, the medicinal substances are described as unground (*khrol sgrub* or *sman khrol bu*), and a turning point in the progress of the ritual is when the substances are ground up, mixed, and formed into small medicinal pills or tiny lumps. However, it would be too difficult to grind up all the substances in the middle of the practice session, and the quantity of medicinal powders needed is too large to place

them all at the uppermost section of the *maṇḍala*. [Images 32, 33] Therefore, a mix of ready prepared medicinal powders was placed in a large sack, while small quantities of unground medicine pieces were kept in a large bowl to be placed at the top of the *maṇḍala*. They were arranged in the bowl in accordance with the *Medicinal Accomplishment* text, which specifies five groups of specific ingredients, positioned separately in the centre and the cardinal directions, with additional substances in the intermediate directions. There was a skull-cup for the central ingredients, while the other types were placed in small bowls, all of which were individually covered by pieces of cloth in appropriate colours. The large sack was not given so much ritual attention: it was not carried in the procession around the temple, but left in front of the *maṇḍala*; and whereas the bowl of medicines was put at the top of the *maṇḍala*, the sack was put at the bottom. Nonetheless, all the *maṇḍala* items were linked together by *dhāraṇī* threads (see below), so that they were all connected and the consecrations could travel along the linked cords.



32. *The bowl of the unground Medicinal Substances*
(photo Cathy Cantwell 2013)



33. *The bowl of Medicinal Substances placed at the top of the Maṇḍala (photo Nicolas Chong 2013)*

I am not here going to give details of the identifications of the many substances used: in any case, I currently have too many uncertainties about these identifications. I focus instead on the text's overarching classification of the different types of ingredients. The *Medicinal Accomplishment* text mentions first (Volume Tha: 308-309) the five tantric elixirs and five fleshes. These are the tantric substances par excellence: the transmuted emotional poisons, embodying the five *buddha* qualities. The five fleshes are meats which were taboo in the Indian context: human, cow, horse, dog and elephant; while the elixirs are human products: urine, excrement, semen, menstrual blood and brains. In the Indian tantric context, their use was deeply transgressive in a society governed by laws of pollution, but in Tibet the potencies ascribed to the substances have been more connected with emotionally charged connotations which may be universally human, as well as Tibetan ideas about their magical efficacy; in the Buddhist context, connotations of engagement in violence and sex are of particular significance. To collect these substances literally is problematic, but they are considered to be present in the Dharma medicines made by the great tantric masters of the past, and the primary active ingredient to be used in the pills is the sacred "fermenting agent" (*phab*

gta') of previous batches of consecrated pills, passed on in an unbroken line from an authentic and appropriate lineage source. When *Medicinal Accomplishment* rituals are performed, small amounts of sacred pills coming from previous generations of practice are always added to the mix, and especially pills from relevant deity practices of great lamas in one's own lineage.

Next in importance are *the eight principal medicines*: briefly, the list consists of maroon sandalwood, roots of inula plants, cloves, juniper leaves, saffron, nutmeg, camphor, and cinnamon.¹² The large number of subsidiary medicines includes plants considered to have life-giving properties, such as the three myrobalan fruits, which are fundamental also in Tibetan medicine and here in fact make up the largest quantity and the basis for the medicinal powders.¹³

For the large bowl with the skull-cup and four bowls of unground medicinal substances which are to be placed at the top of the *maṅḍala*, a list of ingredients needed for each specific bowl is given in the text (Volume Tha: 312). Interestingly, here each bowl is considered to contain one of the five fleshs and one of the tantric elixirs. Thus the central skull-cup is seen as containing human flesh and urine, the eastern bowl beef and excrement, the southern bowl horse meat and semen, the western bowl dog meat and blood, the northern bowl elephant meat and brains. Each of the main five groups of herbal substances also covers one (or more) type(s) of taste: the central skull-cup should contain bitter and hot-tasting substances, the

¹²More fully, and giving what appear to be the ideal species equivalents for the Tibetan names, 1. maroon sandalwood (*tsandan smug po*), the wood of *Pterocarpus santalinus*, 2. *mū la pa tra*, the dried roots of inula plants, most probably, *Inula racemosa*, 3. cloves (*li shi*), the flower buds of *Syzygium aromaticum*, 4. *gandhabhadra* (*gandha bha dra*), the leaves of *Juniperus indica*, 5. saffron (*gur gum*), the dried stigmas of *Crocus sativus* flowers, 6. nutmeg (*dzā ti*), the kernel of the fruit of *Myristica fragrans*, 7. camphor (*ga bur*), perhaps produced from *Cinnamomum camphora*, and 8. cinnamon (*shing tshwa*), generally, the bark of *Cinnamomum cassia*, but other varieties may be used. Tibetan plant names are often used for a broad range of species. It is probable that for all the eight, slightly different species may be used, depending on local availability. Note that this category of *the eight principal medicines* (*sman rtsa brgyad*) is ubiquitous in ritual manuals, mentioned not only in *Medicinal Accomplishment* texts, but also in *sādhanas*, in the section on offering elixir (*bdud rtsi*) or medicinal cordial (*sman mchod*), when the consecrated liquid is visualised as containing the primary medicinal ingredients. Yet the category is apparently unknown in standard Tibetan medical sources (Barbara Gerke, personal communication 7/12/2009).

¹³Relative quantities of the different substances to be used are spelt out in the *Medicinal Accomplishment* text Volume Tha: 310. The text (309) also mentions other categories, such as powdered gemstones (which would need to be refined and purified, as done in the medical tradition), and animal products from different groups of animals, although these can be included symbolically through the use of the dough animal stamp discussed below.

eastern bowl should contain sweet-tasting substances, the southern bowl sour-tasting, the western bowl salty-tasting, and the northern bowl astringent-tasting substances. The text adds that the substances are made into essences through their blending with the five elixirs and fleshes. Above the central skull-cup, a further small golden bowl is placed, containing relics from the great lineage lamas of the past, and the sacred “fermenting agent” (*phab gta*) of consecrated pills (“*samaya* substance *dharma* medicine”, *dam rdzas chos sman*). The Master of Ceremonies explains that some of these sacred Dharma pills should also be added to each of the bowls.

Installation of the Practitioners

[Images 34, 35, 36, 37, 38] The *maṇḍala* set up, the final part of the preliminary rituals is to prepare the active participants themselves by installing them as suitable tantric practitioners. Thus the Vajra Master (*rdo rje slob dpon*)¹⁴ stood and read out the appropriate sections of the *Public Address for the Major Practice Session* (*gtong thun*), informing or reminding the assembly of the special nature of the practice and the auspiciousness of the occasion, and that everyone present must take the part of the yogic master, taking on the appearance of the tantric deity. He then led the assembly in chanting lines relating to the donning of the tantric *heruka* costume and its significance, and each item of dress was in turn offered first to the Head Lama, and then taken around the hall, and individually bestowed upon everyone. After this section, the Head Lama gave a ritual authorisation, so that those who had not previously received empowerment would be able to take part, and everyone was bound by the tantric bond or *samaya*. Some preliminary sections of the main Vajrakīlaya Ritual Manual were recited, and then mantras were recited with *mudrās* (tantric hand gestures) to bless the *vajra* and bell to be used in the practice. [Image 39] A separate text for *The Descent of Consecrations* (*byin ’bebs*) was then used for the final main event of the day. The principal lamas and practitioners, wearing ceremonial hats and holding five-coloured silk streamers, stood before the *maṇḍala*, and at the end of each verse they ritually brought down consecrations, waving the streamers towards the *maṇḍala*. Finally, they processed around the *maṇḍala* and central shrine of the temple three times,

¹⁴Here this does not refer to the Head Lama, who is the Vajra Master of the tantric practice, but to the monastic role of *rdo rje slob dpon*, who should be a senior and advanced tantric practitioner, who takes a leading role in many of the rituals, acting as the Regent (*rgyal tshab*) who stands in for the Vajra Master in tantric ceremonies.

stopping to wave the streamers down at each of the cardinal directions. The root Vajrakīlaya mantra was then sung. This ritual was repeated at the end of every day of the Major Practice Session until the *maṇḍala* dissolution on the final day. On this preparatory day, a few further rituals concluded the session.

The Structure of the Daily Practice

Clearly, there is not space here to give details of the full practice over the nine day session, so I will summarise and focus on the *Medicinal Accomplishment* sections. Each of the main days followed a similar structure, with some variations. The communal practice began at around 6am each day, and finished around 6pm. It was divided into morning and afternoon sessions, both with breaks in the middle. The lunch breaks were usually around an hour and a half, allowing time for ritual preparations for the afternoon sessions, and also the chance for visitors to pay their respects to Lama Kunzang in his house. There were in fact two further sessions performed during the night, since the principle of a Major Practice session is for the practice to be continuous throughout the day and night. The night sessions consisted of intensive practice of the main *sādhana* and the *Medicinal Accomplishment* text, and were attended only by a small group. The monks took turns in attending, and other monks stood in for the key practitioners, such as the Master of Ceremonies, who did not attend the night sessions.

[Images 40, 41, 42] In each morning session, the tantric foundation practices were followed by the main Vajrakīlaya Ritual Manual. The principal *sādhana* practice of generating and accomplishing oneself as the deity was practised intensively through the two morning sessions. There were extended mantra recitation periods, and following the mantras for the central deity, the other deities of the *maṇḍala* were addressed in turn and their mantras also recited. After this extended mantra recitation, for the first three of the main days the same sections from the *Medicinal Accomplishment* text (Volume Tha: 314-319) were performed, focusing on purifying the unground medicinal substances. The notes in the text remind the reader that the correct basis of the practice is to meditate on the three aspects of oneself as the practitioner, the deity's *maṇḍala* in front of one, and the practice substances, all partaking of the same enlightened nature. The main basis of the *sgrub chen* practice is oneself as the principal *yidam* deity and the deity's *maṇḍala* palace in front. But at this point the focus shifts slightly to pay particular attention to the medicinal substances themselves. First, they are visualised as the deity, green Amṛtakunḍalī (Tib. *bdud rtsi 'khyil ba*, Pooling Elixir), holding a

crossed *vajra* and a skull-cup of elixir, in union with his consort, Vajra Elixir Lady, who holds a lotus and a skull-cup of elixir. Following various practices which reinforce this visualisation, the medicinal guardians are invited: the great *vidyā-dharas*, gods and sages of the past who attained *siddhis* (tantric powers) by perfecting the alchemical transmutation of medicinal substances. They are pictured gathering like clouds in the sky above the medicinal mansion *maṇḍala*. During this invocation, the lamas wave five-coloured streamers, symbolically bringing the medicinal guardians down into the temple; music is played, and the Master of Offerings circumambulates the *maṇḍala*, stopping and waving five-coloured streamers in each of the cardinal directions. A recitation then focuses on the need to transcend the distinction between purity and impurity, and the medicinal *vidyādharas* are requested to bestow consecrations on the practitioners and the substances, and in particular, to expunge clinging to notions of the pure and the impure, thereby bestowing *siddhis*. With the mantra recitation, the Head Lama takes the *vajra* with the attached *dhāraṇī* cord and attaches it to the robes near his heart. Throughout a *sgrub chen*, during mantra sessions, the end of a *dhāraṇī* cord which winds around all the practice substances in the *maṇḍala* is given to the Head Lama, so that the mantra meditations in his heart can travel along the cord and empower the *maṇḍala* items. In this case, the *dhāraṇī* cord was not used for every mantra session,¹⁵ but it was consistently used for every one of the medicinal mantra sessions. The meditation was of light radiating from one's heart to the substances as emanations of Amṛtakuṇḍalī in front, so that the impurities in the substances, the poisons of the animate and inanimate universe, are cleansed, and they become pure elixir. The appropriate mantra is recited, and then the essence liquids produced through the union of the male and female deities are visualised mixing with the medicinal substances, becoming one taste. Finally the medicinal *vidyādharas* are meditated upon, raining down the elixir of *saṃsāra* and *nirvāṇa*, which softly melts into the practice substances. The substances become inseparable from blissful primordial wisdom elixir, their colour, smell, taste, potencies and essence qualities perfected. The main medicinal mantra is then recited. At the end of the session, there is a further meditation on clouds of blissful deities generated in front, producing creative seeds of light, dissolving into the medicinal substances, which become the jewels from which *siddhis* arise.

¹⁵It was used for the first mantra session each day of the main Vajrakīlaya deity practice, but not for all the sessions repeated throughout the day.

After this specific practice on the medicinal substances, there is a ritual which drives out distracting spirits, followed by the consecrations section of the main Vajrakīlaya Ritual Manual. A few of the medicinal mantras are added to the mantra following the consecrations mantra. Then the practice continues with a repeat of the main sections of the Ritual Manual, up to and including the mantra sections.

On the first and the final full day, the afternoon session began with Vajrakīlaya dances from the Pema Lingpa (*padma gling pa*) tradition, and the other afternoon practices were shortened, in particular by omitting the self-empowerment ritual. On the other days, the afternoon began with further Vajrakīlaya mantra practice, along with the introductory consecration of the flask for the self-empowerment. The self-empowerment ritual serves to renew the tantric bond which dates from each practitioner's first empowerment in this deity practice tradition, and this renewal is considered important from time to time, especially during a *sgrub chen*, when there is the support of a good lama and the consecrated *maṅḍala*. But it was not considered an indispensable part of the daily *sgrub chen* practice, so that it could be omitted if there was not enough time. Repetition of the Medicinal Accomplishment practice was, on the contrary, considered crucial. Thus for the afternoon sessions of the first three main days, following the initial practices, the same sections of the *Medicinal Accomplishment* text as were done in the morning (Volume Tha: 314-319) were repeated. On the third day, further mantras for the mixing together of different medicinal substances (Volume Tha: 323) were added.

[Images 43, 44, 45, 46] The daily afternoon practice continued with the tantric *tshogs* feast, based on the practice in the main Vajrakīlaya Ritual Manual, and the recitations which usually accompany it. Apart from the first and last day, the main sections of the self-empowerment ritual were inserted within the practice, before the final offering and consumption of the foods. Also, the supplications and offerings to the Dharma protectors were made at this point. In the final afternoon session, the tantric *tshogs* feast and the final sections of the Vajrakīlaya Ritual Manual were concluded. After this, there was an elaborate expulsion of disturbing evil spirits, in which the Vajra Master (*rdo rje slob dpon*), wearing the Black Hat costume, performed the ritual of “liberating” or “releasing” the hostile forces. At the same time, two masked dancers as the white and the dark *ging* deities, who danced on the preliminary day, performed a dance while an invocation to them was recited, requesting them to destroy all hostile forces. This was followed by the invocation and masked dance of Kun thub rgyal mo (the Om-

nipotent Queen), and as she danced out of the temple, the Black Hat Vajra Master followed, pelting the retreating disruptive spirits with small white pebbles. [Images 47, 48, 49] A further dance of the male and female spiritual warriors in the entourage of the buddha, Guru Rinpoche, was accompanied by chanting a verse requesting Guru Rinpoche's presence, and the consecration of the place and the practitioners. The practice was then concluded with the same consecrations ceremony which had been performed at the end of the preliminary day (see above), now adding the medicinal mantra to the root mantra which is sung at the end.

The Practice focused on the Compounded Medicinal pills

On the fourth main day of the practice, the unground medicines were powdered, and all the medicinal substances were mixed up to make the small medicinal pills. The morning sessions began in the usual way, and the same *Medicinal Accomplishment* practice was performed in the morning, but after the mantra practice a recitation was added to complete the practice focusing on the unground medicines (Volume Tha: 320). First, the Elixir Offering from the Vajrakīlaya Ritual Manual (Volume Tha: 114-116) was recited, as a way of celebrating the enlightened qualities of the medicinal substances, and a further verse of praise was added. Then the Master of Offerings recited a verse and offered the bowl of medicinal substances to the Head Lama, who recited a mantra while visualising little globules of light being absorbed in the heart as the *siddhis*.

Instead of further practice on the main Ritual Manual, as on the other days, the second part of the morning practice repeated in a slightly simplified form the section on bestowing the tantric *heruka* costume which had been performed on the preliminary day (see above). The focus was for the practitioners to maintain the view of themselves as the enlightened tantric deity (Volume Tha: 321). [Images 50, 51, 52] Then, while the root mantra was chanted, the Head Lama and the Master of Offerings stood before the *maṇḍala* holding five-coloured streamers (the Head Lama also carrying his *vajra* and bell, the Master of Offerings the incense thurible). They performed circumambulations of the *maṇḍala* in opposite directions, at each side waving the streamers towards the *maṇḍala*. Meanwhile, the invocation of the *maṇḍala* deities and their vows from the main Ritual Manual (Volume Tha: 122-123) was recited with music. Then they were seated in front of the *maṇḍala*, facing each other, and they performed the ritual grinding of the medicinal substances from the bowl which had been kept at the top of the *maṇḍala*, while the appropriate mantra was recited. The *Medicinal Accomplish-*

ment text describes the meditation for this (Volume Tha: 321-322). The Master of Offerings is here seen as the consort, and he holds the mortar with slightly opened hands, while the Head Lama holds the pestle with the consecration *mudrā* (*byin dbab pa'i rgya*). As he pounds the substances, the visualisation is of the union of the male and female deities. At first he is said to grind with passion, so that white and red *bodhicitta* is produced. Then he grinds with hatred, smashing all obstacles to enlightenment; and finally he grinds with delusion, so that all discursive thoughts regarding the medicines are released in the unfabricated spatial field.



51. Ritual grinding with pestle and mortar (photo Cathy Cantwell 2013)

[Image 53] The next sections (Volume Tha: 322-323) concern sieving and mixing, and here the various mantras were recited for adding the different substances in turn. The Head Lama and the Master of Offerings again circumambulated the *maṇḍala*, this time in the same direction with the Head Lama leading and the Master of Offerings carrying the bowl of medicinal substances. At each side, the Head Lama stopped and mixed the contents of the bowl. The session ended with the usual closing prayers. [Images 54, 55, 56, 57, 58] There was a long break before the afternoon assembly, but during this time one group, led by the Vajra Master (*rdo rje slob dpon*), performed a pacifying burnt offerings ritual in the courtyard, while another took out the sack of medicinal substances from the

maṅḍala, and made the medicinal pills in the temple. A large plastic sheet was laid out on the ground, and the sack of powdered medicines was emptied out onto it. Meanwhile, the special ingredients were further prepared. Using the pestle in a cup and in a bowl, both the Master of Ceremonies and the Head Lama ground the large pieces further, adding more of the sacred pills and other key substances.



57. Grinding the special unground ingredients (photo Cathy Cantwell 2013)

[Images 59, 60] An important additional item was some water in a saucer, in which a long curled strip of dough had been placed. This dough strip had been stamped with moulds of animal figures, a procedure referred to in the *Medicinal Accomplishment* text (Volume Tha: 309-310). The strip is to be meditated upon as embodying all beings in existence, visualised as animals who have died natural deaths, and are released and liberated by the practice. This is a further symbolic representation of the five fleshes, specifically connected to the “union and releasing” (*sbyor sgrol*) practice in which all beings of the three realms are meditated upon as being liberated from the ocean of *samsāra*. The day before, the dough strip had been put in the saucer and placed near the effigy during the tantric *tshogs* feast, when the Head Lama wielded a *phurbu* dagger to “liberate” hostile forces into the *buddha* realms. Thus the consciousnesses of the beings

represented in the strip would be summoned at the same time as the evil spirits. After this practice, water was added to the saucer, which then had a day to absorb the essence of the animal stamp. Only the water which had taken on this essence was then mixed into the medicinal substances.



*59. The dough strip stamped with animal moulds
(photo Nicolas Chong 2013)*

[Images 61, 62] The special medicinal substances were poured into a cauldron with warm liquid ingredients, and this mixture was added to the heap of powdered medicines. [Images 63, 64] A group of practitioners, including the Head Lama and his consort, then sat around the medicinal powders, wearing face masks so as not to defile the pure substances, and kneaded the mixture, which gradually formed into pieces with the characteristic appearance of Tibetan Dharma medicinal pills. At first its texture was like pastry, but it suddenly changed to become the characteristic small hard pieces.



64. *Adding liquids and kneading the medicinal mix*
(photo Nicolas Chong 2013)

[Image 65] When it was ready, it was measured out into new sacks by the Head Lama, using a skull-cup as a measuring unit, with the help of a group observing and calling out each number. The purpose of this counting is the check on how much the medicinal pills increase in size over the next days. Yeast is included in the mix, lit butter lamps are put under the container to keep it warm, and it is expected that the pills will become larger to some degree. The more they expand in size, the more auspicious it is considered to be. The Head Lama took charge of the counting and involved the group, following a previous occasion in his experience when there had been some error and discrepancy between the first and second measuring techniques. The bulk of the substances were packed into two large red sacks and a smaller amount was put into a smaller blue bag. The tops were tied, leaving expansion room at the top.



65. Measuring the medicinal pieces, using the skull-cup, and putting into a red sack
(photo Nicolas Chong 2013)

[Images 66, 67, 68, 69] Two medicinal cauldrons were prepared, one large (for the red sacks) and one small (for the blue bag). The *dhāraṇī* cords of five-coloured twisted threads were placed first, so that they would go right around the medicine bags, later to be attached to the *dhāraṇī* cord which went round all the other *maṇḍala* items. Both containers were lined with juniper foliage. In the small container, the blue medicine bag was placed within a skull-cup, and another skull-cup was put upside down on top. The idea here is that the substances are contained within the male and female union. In the large container, instead of two skull-cups, the male and female seed syllables of the five *buddha* families were represented in gold lettering on two red pieces of material, the cloth with the female letters below, and that with the male letters above. Damp grains were also added. [Images 70, 71, 72] The containers were then covered with decorative brocades, and each of them was topped with a five-lobed *buddha* family headdress with a high black topknot adorned with a jewel, as well as a *vajra* and bell secured with a ceremonial white scarf (see Volume Tha: 325). Such symbolism is used because the medicinal pills represent tantric deities and should be shown respect; the *maṇḍala* sands are treated similarly when they are gathered up at the end of the ten day session.



From top to bottom:

*68. Preparing the large medicinal container; note the seed syllables of the male buddhas
(photo Cathy Cantwell 2013)*

*71. Placement of the medicinal containers to the sides of the maṇḍala
(photo Cathy Cantwell 2013)*

[Images 73, 74, 75, 76] Before the afternoon session, the medicinal containers were ritually sealed. This was performed only by the Head lama, his consort, and the current and senior Masters of Ceremonies. The large container was to the left of the *maṇḍala* while the small container had been placed on a table in front of the *maṇḍala*. The group of four stood before the *maṇḍala* and containers, and recited the verse (Volume Tha: 324), after which the Head Lama made a crossed *vajra* sign, placing his *vajra* on the two containers, first one way and then at right angles to this position.

[Images 77, 78, 79, 80] The afternoon session commenced with a ritual placement of the medicinal containers into the *maṇḍala*. The lamas donned ceremonial hats, everyone stood, and the principal lamas and ritualists stood before the *maṇḍala*. After preliminary mantras, the section from the *Medicinal Accomplishment* text (Volume Tha: 313) for the placing of medicinal substances in the *maṇḍala*, which had been included in the first day's preliminary rituals (see above), was again recited. Then a procession circumambulated the *maṇḍala* three times while the musical instruments were played. A monk carrying the incense thurible walked ahead, followed by the trumpet players, after which came the Head Lama holding a bunch of incense sticks, leading the Vajra Master (*rdo rje slob dpon*), who carried the small medicinal container on his shoulder, while a monk with a butter lamp took the rear. Then the small medicinal container was placed inside the *maṇḍala*, and the *dhāraṇī* cords were attached. A new medicinal mantra was recited (Volume Tha: 327), after which the main Vajrakīlaya practice from the Ritual Manual was performed up to the mantra recitation. At this point, the generation practice for the section on *Accomplishing the Elixir in the Powdered Medicines* (*bdud rtsi phye mar sgrub pa*) was performed (Volume Tha: 325-326). Oneself, the *maṇḍala* in front, and the substances, are meditated upon as the enlightened manifestation, taking the form of the assembled deities of the dark green Elixir, in union with his consort, with the seed syllable and mantra rosary in his heart. Here, the practitioners turn back, and repeat the previous section on inviting the medicinal guardians, and on clearing away discursive thoughts of the pure and the impure (Volume Tha: 317-318; see above). They then return for a new mantra meditation (Volume Tha: 326-327) on the *dhāraṇī* cord and the mantra light rays radiating from one's heart to the visualised deities in front. The deities passionately unite, blazing in bliss and drawing in the essence juices of the universe, which are absorbed as great clouds of elixir in the form of blazing light rays. The new medicinal mantra was recited; this now becomes the main medic-

inal mantra for the fourth and fifth main practice days, and is also added to the root mantra which is sung at the end of the consecrations practice, both during the morning and at the final moment of the afternoon practice. After the mantra practice, there is a recitation on the deities melting into light and dissolving, becoming an oceanic pool of the elixir of immortality (Volume Tha: 327). The practice then continued with the tantric *tshogs* feast and the other rituals performed in the afternoons of the previous days.

[Images 81, 82] Essentially, this same Medicinal Accomplishment practice focusing on the powdered medicines was repeated in both the morning and afternoon sessions of the fifth main practice day. Then on the morning and afternoon of the sixth day, following this practice, an extension was added before the dissolution of the deities. This is the second section on the actual practice of accomplishing the powdered medicines, invoking the deities' heart vows, reminding them of their *samaya* tantric commitments and requesting them to grant the *siddhis* (Volume Tha: 328-329). A different mantra is then recited, and becomes the Day 6 medicinal mantra, repeated again in the Consecrations section in the morning and at the end of the day. After the mantra, a further invocation to the medicinal *vidyādhara*s evokes the charnel ground symbolism as part of the tantric *samaya*, and in transcending concepts of the pure and impure, light rays of great bliss are visualised radiating. The potencies of the medicinal elixirs are then said to be reabsorbed. The *vidyādhara*s are enjoined to display manifest signs. The earlier recitation on the deities dissolving is then returned to (Volume Tha: 327), and the practice continues as before (see above).



81. Large medicinal container, the *dhāraṇī* cord attached to the items in the *Maṇḍala* (photo Cathy Cantwell 2013)



82. Day 6 Medicinal Mantra meditation; note the *dhāraṇī* cord held at the heart (photo Cathy Cantwell 2013)

On the seventh day, the Day 6 Medicinal Accomplishment practice was repeated, but again with a further extension before the dissolution (Volume Tha: 329-331). The first part of this is a visualisation of the *maṇḍala* deities above the skull-cups containing the medicinal pills, uniting and producing white and red *bodhicitta*, which glistens like liquid mercury, trickling down into the skull-cups of medicine, flowing and pooling there. The second part involves transforming the substances into essence juice elixir, through invocation of the charnel ground *mamo* deities, further inducing passion in the male deities, which produces more *bodhicitta* flowing down from all the deities, so that the *samaya* substances become perfected in colour, smell, taste and potencies. A new medicinal mantra which is recited at this point becomes the Day 7 mantra. In the afternoon session, yet another extension is added (Volume Tha: 331-332), to gain possession of the elixir. The five family *herukas* are invoked and reminded of the *samaya* to grant *siddhis* to the destined practitioners. They bring down the essence juices of the universe into the heart in the form of red light, and through a stream of *bodhicitta* mixing with the elixir medicines, and travelling along the *dhāraṇī* cord, light rays dissolve into oneself and one meditates on obtaining the *siddhis* in such a way that no one can take them away.

Imbibing the Accomplishments (*Siddhis*)

The final day of the Major Practice session, in which the *siddhis* are imbibed, attracts large numbers of lay people for the blessings. The practitioners convene at about 2 am, since the *siddhis* should be taken at dawn, and it is necessary to complete the full main practice before this. The previous days' morning practice is therefore performed from this early hour, up to and including the Day 7 Medicinal Accomplishment practice. Following a break, from around 5 am, the ritualised acceptance of the *heruka* costume which had been performed on the preliminary and the fourth main day was again repeated (see above). As in the previous mornings' practice following the Medicinal Accomplishment recitation, there was a ritual for driving out distracting spirits, followed by the consecrations section of the main Vajrakīlaya Ritual Manual. But rather than continuing with a repeat of the other sections of the Ritual Manual as usual, the *Ritual Practice Framework* (*sgrub khog*) text was then turned to for a recitation on the appropriate meditation for the mantra practice when taking the *siddhis* (Volume Tha: 264-265). The visualisation is of oneself as the principal deity with his consort, and their union incites the five family *herukas* residing in the consort's skull also to unite. They produce white and red fluids which flow down through the body's central channel into the consort's *lotus*, and are then sucked up through the male deity's *vajra* to the heart, which takes on a vibrant lustrous nature, and one rests in bliss and emptiness free from grasping. There is then a mantra recitation session, in which a *siddhi* accomplishment mantra is added to the main mantra. After the recitation, there is an invocation of the *maṇḍala* deities, and an elaborate version of the Elixir Offering performed in the regular Ritual Manual (Volume Tha: 114-116), combining it with a *rakta* or symbolic blood offering, so that both the male and female liquids are included in the single offering. [Images 83, 84, 85, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91] Finally, there is a recitation preceding the distribution of *siddhi* substances (Volume Tha: 266-267), recalling that the practice has been completed correctly and the right time has come, so that the deities should take heed and grant the *siddhis*. For this recitation, the Head Lama remained seated, folding his hands in supplication throughout, but the other principal lamas stood up, donned their ceremonial hats, and were given various sacred items from the *maṇḍala*. As the verses were recited, they stood in a group facing the Head Lama, with the young tulku (*sprul sku*, incarnation) of the Jangsa Monastery's previous Head Lama in front, holding the flask. At the end, with the music continuing, the Head Lama took the flask, put it on his head and took a little of the water to drink,

after which he bestowed it on the lamas and some of the main lay practitioners in turn. Further consecrations were then similarly bestowed with other items: the *phurbu*, the deity *torma*, the elixir liquid, the collection of texts wrapped in blue silk, and a red dough human-like figure.¹⁶

At this stage, further practice from the *Medicinal Accomplishment* text was done (Volume Tha: 332-335). This was like an extended version of the *Ritual Practice Framework* (*sgrub khog*) text's request for the granting of *siddhis*, beginning with an invocation of the heart *samaya*, and then petitioning the deities to heed and grant the *siddhis*. During the petitioning section, the Vajra Master (*rdo rje slob dpon*), wearing his ceremonial hat, stood in front of the Head Lama, and at the end with the mantra, he circumambulated the *maṅḍala*, ringing his bell. [Image 92] The next recitation describes the *siddhis* which are being requested, and during it the Vajra Master stood before the *maṅḍala*, in front of the small medicinal container, which had been put on a small table under a white canopy in front of the *maṅḍala*. For the final verse of the section (Volume Tha: 334-335), which was sung very slowly, the Vajra Master put on an extra turquoise and multi-coloured brocade shawl over his left shoulder, took up the small medicinal container, and stood before the Head Lama. The medicinal mantra which had been practised intensively on Days 4 and 5 was then sung slowly several times, and then, following the appropriate verses, the Head Lama took the medicinal container and put it on his head, receiving empowerment. The visualisation is of primordial wisdom light dissolving into oneself, and the deities flowing into the elixir and dissolving, so that all beings are pervaded with the elixir's smell, taste and potencies, and transformed into the enlightened deity. Then the students make a ritual request to the Master, and he responds by reciting a number of lines (Volume Da: 556; Volume Tha: 335-336) instructing them to focus on themselves as the deity *maṅḍala*, the elixir dissolving into them, and to receive the medicinal elixir in their body, speech and mind, so that it bestows empowerment upon them. While the Day 4/5 mantra was sung, the principal lamas and lay people came up and the Head Lama put the medicinal container on each person's head. Finally, he recited another verse advising the students that seeing, smelling and tasting the medicinal elixir would purify their defilements and enable them effortlessly to attain blissful primordial wisdom. Then the medicinal container

¹⁶This is associated with the Fulfilment practice (*bskang ba*); its hands hold two small bowls for medicinal cordial and *rakta* (red liquid or symbolic blood), it has a butter lamp in front, and a *torma* placed on top of its head.

was taken away:

*“By seeing the colour, defilements of the body are purified,
lifespan, merits, and youthfulness increase.
By smelling the fragrance, defilements of the speech are purified,
Capacities blaze up and are mastered.
By experiencing the taste, defilements of the mind are purified,
greatly blissful primordial wisdom arises effortlessly.
You become equal to the Great Glorious wrathful tantric deity,
and can accomplish all supreme and ordinary actions.”¹⁷*

Thus we can see that the medicinal pills are not only considered to bestow “liberation through taste”, but to impact on the other senses as well.

In the next section (Volume Tha: 336-337), the container was ritually opened. First, there was a meditation on entrusting the elixir to the deity, Mañjuśrī Sharpness (Skt *mañjuśrī tikṣṇa*, Tib. *'jam dpal rnon po*), as the one who absorbs or gathers elixir, so his heart vows are invoked, and he bestows the elixir back in return. Then the Master of Offerings, taking the role of the consort, offered the medicinal elixir back to the Master. He put the turquoise and multi-coloured shawl over his left shoulder, returning with the medicinal container. As he gave it to the Head Lama, he recited a verse praising the practice. The Head Lama then said an elixir mantra, accepting the container, and after this the Master of Ceremonies led the assembly in chanting a mantra for unwrapping. After putting the container to his head in respect, the Head Lama and several helpers untied the fastenings at the top of the container. With a further mantra, the upper skull-cup over the top of the medicinal bag was opened, accompanied by a meditation on the lustrous essences of the medicinal elixir, in the form of white, red and blue lights, dissolving into the body, speech and mind centres of one's body (respectively the forehead, throat and heart).

The final part of the Medicinal Accomplishment ritual performed at this stage (Volume Tha: 337) was for offering and sharing the medicinal elixir. The Head Lama opened the blue medicinal bag, spooned some of the medicinal pieces into the skull-cup, and mixed them around. There was an invocation of the *maṇḍala*

¹⁷ *kha dog mthong bas lus sgrub dag: tshe dang bsod nams lang tsho rgyas: dri la bsnam pas ngag sgrub dag: nus pa 'bar zhing dbang du 'du: ro la myang bas yid sgrub dag: bde chen ye shes rtsol med 'char: dpal chen he ru ka dang mnyam: mchog thun phrin las thams cad 'grub: (Dudjom Rinpoche Collected Works Volume Tha: 336).*

deities arising in the sky in front, and the regular Elixir Offering in the Ritual Manual (Volume Tha: 114-116), was recited in the usual way, with the Head Lama flicking liquid from his small medicinal cordial offering bowl, while the Master of Offerings in front of the *maṇḍala* spooned the liquid in the similar bowl from the shrine. Meanwhile, the Vajra Master (*rdo rje slob dpon*) stood in front of the Head Lama, holding the skull-cup with the medicinal pieces and adding more from the bag. At the end of the section, a single line was added from the *Medicinal Accomplishment* text, specifying the visualisation of a sun disc upon one's own tongue, on which there is a horizontally placed *vajra* which has a hollow central spoke, with the deity's seed syllable. It is through this hollow spoke that the elixir is to be visualised as taken in. The main Ritual Manual then continues with the Imbibing *Siddhis* section (Volume Tha: 116-117), which once more reiterates that the *bodhicitta* elixir flows from the great bliss of the male and female deities, bringing *siddhis* of the transcendence of birth and death. With the appropriate hand gesture, the Head Lama took up a small amount of the medicinal pieces, and with the final *siddhis* mantra he touched them to his forehead, throat and heart centres, and finally tasted them. Singing the root mantra, the Head Lama then bestowed a spoonful of the medicinal pieces on the principal lamas and prominent lay people, who came to the front. [Images 93, 94] He then rose, and a procession of the lamas with the various sacred substances was formed. Led by a monk carrying an incense bundle with a white ceremonial scarf, and two monks playing trumpets, the Head Lama went first with the flask of sacred water, and the lamas with the other items followed in roughly the same order as that in which they had earlier been ritually bestowed, except that the Vajra Master with the small medicinal container was now the fourth in line. One by one, everyone present, including all those in the crowd gathered outside the temple, was given the consecrations by the lamas in the procession, which snaked up and down all the rows of people. The root mantra continued to be recited throughout. When the procession finally returned, a single line from the *Ritual Practice Framework* text (Volume Tha: 267) was recited, dissolving the deities and *siddhis* into light which is absorbed into the heart, so that *buddha* body, speech and mind are attained.

Final Rituals and Preparations of the Pills

During the break before the afternoon session, there were two burnt offerings rituals performed simultaneously in the area around the temple, one a pacifying and the other an increasing burnt offerings rite. [Images 95, 96, 97, 98, 99] Meanwhile,

a group of practitioners convened in the temple to work further on the medicinal substances. The larger container was also opened, and the sacks again emptied onto a large plastic sheet. [Images 100, 101, 102, 103, 104] The Head Lama and his consort joined the group, and once again the total amount was measured using the skull-cup, again with the group calling out the count. It now came to just over one hundred and eight skull-cups (he piled up the final one to count it as a hundred and eight). Before, there had been ninety-three, and this increase of fifteen was considered very auspicious. At this stage, the medicinal pieces were still slightly moist and there were some rather large lumps. Several of the group remained to rub the pieces between their fingers, breaking up the lumps. [Images 105, 106, 107] The Senior Master of Ceremonies worked on sewing further large red cloth sacks, into which some medicinal pieces were put. Both ends of each sack were sewn up with a hem at each end, allowing long pieces of wood to be inserted as handles.



99. Emptying out the medicinal pieces onto the plastic sheet
(photo Cathy Cantwell 2013)



101. Measuring the medicinal pieces, using the skull-cup
(photo Cathy Cantwell 2013)

[Images 108, 109, 110] Pairs of volunteer helpers – mostly lay women – then held the two ends of each sack and worked on rolling the pieces by moving the sack ends up and down. This process helps to expedite the drying out process. Eventually, they ran out of cloth for making sacks, so some of the pieces were stored beneath the shrine to work on later.



109. Rolling the medicinal pieces to dry them out (photo Cathy Cantwell 2013)

[Images 111, 112, 113, 114, 115, 116, 117, 118] In fact, the work of rolling the pieces in the cloth sacks and making them smaller continued over the following two days, and included chopping up the larger pieces, mincing and sieving. At the end, the volunteers all received small bags of pills which they could use over time.



113. chopping the medicinal pills (photo Cathy Cantwell 2013)

The afternoon session of the final day included the usual supplications and offerings to the Dharma protectors, as well as the tantric *tshogs* feast, and the remaining sections of the main Ritual Manual. Some of these were done more elaborately, since it was the final day. For instance, during the section of the *tshogs* feast when the deities are offered the foods to consume, the paper effigies which had been used for the “liberating” ritual performed each afternoon by the Black Hat Vajra Master were set alight in an iron dish as a burnt offering. On this occasion, the Head Lama also gave the Vajrakīlaya empowerment. This is not generally done on the last day of the Major Practice session, and in fact it had not been

scheduled, but the Lama decided to bestow the empowerment since the practice had gone well, and a large number of visitors had travelled a long distance in hope of receiving empowerment. The scheduled afternoon practice includes a longevity ritual, with the distribution of the longevity pills which had been kept within the *maṇḍala*, and this time the longevity ritual was integrated with the empowerment. When the main practice had been completed, the boundaries which had been symbolically erected at the start were sequentially opened. Offerings of thanks were made to the Four Great Kings outside the temple at each side, their icons were taken down and they were visualised as departing. The deities guarding the temple doors were also given offerings, and the inner boundary of the *phurbus* of the ten Wrathful Deities was ritually dismantled. Finally, the sand *maṇḍala* was destroyed. The Head Lama drew his *vajra* through the sands from the centre to the east, after which the sands were swept up and put into a treasure vase. The Butter Lamp Aspirations ritual was the main formal concluding rite of the Major Practice session. This ritual is for dedicating the merit and making aspirations, in the hope that having practised together, the practitioners may persevere and the lamp of compassion illuminate the path to enlightenment. The Vajra Master read from the *Public Address (gtong thun)* to explain the significance of this practice, and then everyone was linked together by a continuous line of white ceremonial scarves and butter lamps while they held incense sticks in their hands. The Vajra Master stood and recited each line of the verses from the *Ritual Practice Framework (sgrub khog)* text (Volume Tha: 271-275), and the assembly repeated it after him.

The following day, the *maṇḍala* sands were taken to a nearby river, and further practice was done for this ritual disposal into flowing water. On the group's return to the temple, after a ritualised approach to the temple by a procession following the path of the auspicious emblem of a "jewel coil of joy" (*nor bu dga' khyil*) outlined on the ground, an auspicious offering was made at the temple porch. As a final purificatory blessing ritual, the Head Lama then sprinkled water all around the temple, using water brought back from the river in the treasure vase in which the sands had previously been placed. The Master of Offerings afterwards took the treasure vase water and also sprinkled it outside in the temple grounds.

Conclusion

The entire congregation received a small portion of the pills during the distribution of the consecrated items on the final day. At least some were to be consumed immediately, but some could be preserved and later given to friends or relatives. Even after this distribution, large quantities remained, to be worked further during the following days. Monasteries may generate stores of such pills, carefully labelled with the occasion and the officiating lama. Small amounts may be given to the monk practitioners and retreatants during the early morning practice, as a kind of spiritual tonic. Bags of the pills may also be given to visiting lamas, who can then distribute small quantities to their students. Although the main effects are clearly considered to relate to the spiritual consecrations of the lama and the tantric deity practice, medicinal pills may also be prescribed in cases of ill-health, and are considered to help in restoring the body to good health, regardless of the specific condition.

I would like finally to raise the question of what we might learn from this Medicinal Accomplishment example which might have some relevance for understanding Tibetan medicine, and may support the kinds of approaches exemplified in much recent academic work on Tibetan medicine and its broader social contexts of practice.¹⁸ Now, the Buddhist practice is not only addressing medical health: as we have seen, it is interested in spiritual development. But in this case, health benefits are claimed to be linked to the spiritual well-being said to be engendered by the practice. Not only are claims made for the health as well as spiritual benefits of the substances given out on the final day. Other kinds of beneficial health impacts are also assumed. For instance, at his house outside the formal practice sessions, the Head Lama had to cater to many requests for individual or family protective blessings, generally for those who were sick. Such requests are apparently very typical in Bhutanese contexts when a major ritual performance takes place. He performed a short protective ritual (*bka' bsgo*) based on the *Meteoric Iron Razor* regular practice for each of these occasions. Clearly, this practice had the advantage for the recipients of focusing the lama's attention on their individual concerns. However, the lama commented that such additional practices are really unnecessary while the Major Practice session is in progress, since essentially the same protective ritual with the same name is included within the practice, and people can benefit from this simply by attending. Of course,

¹⁸See, for example, Vincanne Adams, Mona Schrempf and Sienna R. Craig, 2011; and Sienna R. Craig, 2012.

greater benefits are assumed to result from participating in the meditative transformations, such as the consecrations bestowed by the medicinal deities etc. It would not be easy to study efficacy in the case of a major monastic rite like this, but it is worth noting that in this case, although the medicinal pills are assumed to have some natural ingredients with medical benefits, far greater attention is paid to the symbolic and meditative manipulations throughout the ritual. Indeed, the most crucial active ingredients are: first, the substances carrying the tantric blessings of the great tantric saints of the past; secondly, the tantric ingredients of the five fleshs and five elixirs, which are considered to be symbolically embodied within the bowls of herbal substances with the added “*samaya* substance *dharma* medicine” (*dam rdzas chos sman*) placed at the top of the *maṇḍala* on the first days of the ritual. The fleshs are also considered to be contained within the water in which the dough strip with the animal stamps was soaked. In other words, much of the efficacy of the pills is thought to derive not from the natural substances in them, but more from transformations of the substances enacted through meditative ritual and tantric accomplishment. This would seem quite different from the modern medical context, in which it seems that the ritual consecrations are merely a matter of enhancing the effects of the natural substances in the pills. But it is worth asking whether the Buddhist ritual and the medical contexts are really so very different, or whether the tendency for Tibetan medical practitioners within the mainstream institutions today to focus principally on the actual ingredients in Tibetan medicines and the physiological effects attributed to them may be detracting from an important aspect of Tibetan medicine in the past.

Glossary

anuyoga (skt.): The second of the three Inner Tantras in the rNying ma classification, *anuyoga* teachings are generally focused on spiritual transformation through meditation on the internal subtle body, with its *cakras*, channels, subtle airs and seminal seeds.

bodhicitta (skt.): In tantric teachings, the Mahāyāna notion of *bodhicitta* (“thought of enlightenment”) has a further connotation, symbolised by the “white *bodhicitta*” of the tantric deity’s seminal fluid, productive of realisation in its fusion with the female “blood” (or “red *bodhicitta*”) embodying emptiness.

dhāraṇī (skt.): Collections of sacred syllables for recitation, sometimes equivalent to the term *mantra*, but its sense in Buddhism is broader and not specifically associated

with the Vajrayāna teachings. Many *dhāraṇī* recitations are included in Mahāyāna *sūtras*.

ging (tib.): Deriving from Sanskrit, *kiṃkara* (servant, attendant), *ging* are celestial male messengers, often with a slightly wrathful appearance. In rNying ma imagery, they are male spiritual warriors of Guru Rinpoche and act as his messengers, heralding his imminent arrival.

heruka (skt.): A wrathful male tantric deity, considered to embody enlightened wisdom and terrifying to the negative forces and spirits which obstruct enlightenment. *Herukas* are generally depicted with fearsome bone ornaments and skins. The Tibetan equivalent term, *khrag 'thung*, literally means “blood-drinker”.

Inner Tantras: The rNying ma pa classify tantric texts into outer and inner tantras. The three outer tantras are considered to depend on a dualistic view of a contrast between the defiled practitioner and the pure enlightened deity needed to consecrate and transform the practitioner. The three inner tantras, which are the basis for most rNying ma practices, assume a primordial identification between the practitioner and the wisdom deity.

maṇḍala (skt.): A tantric circle or symbolic representation through which tantric transformation of everyday realities is effected. In the ritual described here, the transformation involves the establishment of “pure vision”, such that the ordinary world and its beings are experienced as the wisdom *maṇḍala* of the divine palace and the tantric deities embodying enlightenment.

mamo (tib. *ma mo* = skt. *mātṛkā, mātaraḥ*): “Mother” deities, this class of female deities includes both enlightened or wisdom deities and worldly deities, often fearsome, some of whom are incorporated into tantric rites as protective deities on the margins of the celestial *maṇḍala*.

mudrā (skt.): A multivalent term, its basic sense is that of a symbolic gesture or movement conveying some aspect of enlightened realisation; in the tantric path, all movements should become *mudrās* expressing wisdom.

phurbu (tib. *phur bu* or *phur pa*): A tantric ritual dagger, wielded by the lama in tantric rituals for purposes such as striking and destroying representations of the emotional poisons or defilements, or pinning down worldly spirits so that they act as a basis for the transformed tantric *maṇḍala*. *Phurbus* also represent the popular *heruka* wisdom deity, Vajrakīlaya (Tib. *rdo rje phur pa*), and his entourage. In the ritual described here, *phurbus* of different sizes are placed in the appropriate positions within the three-dimensional *maṇḍala* to represent the deities.

rakta (skt.): Symbolic blood, offered as one of the “inner offerings” in tantric *sādhana*s. It is coupled with the elixir offering, conceived of as the “male” fluid. The two offerings are represented by red and white liquids offered in miniature skull-cup shaped offering bowls. Black tea or a reddish coloured alcoholic drink are used for the *rakta* offering.

- sādhana* (skt.): A tantric liturgy which gives the basic practice for visualising and identifying with a tantric wisdom deity, so that meditative accomplishment is attained.
- samaya* (skt. = tib. *dam tshig*): The sacred bond or connection between the practitioners and the enlightened vision, established through initiation into the tantric *maṇḍala*. It is embodied in the sacred relationship between the tantric master and his students, which is considered to persist from one lifetime to another, and it is upheld through adherence to a tantric code of discipline or *samaya* vows.
- siddhi* (skt.): The tantric accomplishments, classified into worldly accomplishments such as magical powers to influence everyday realities, and the supreme accomplishment of enlightenment. In tantric rites such as those described here, symbolic items and consumable substances installed in the *maṇḍala* for the duration of the practice are considered to become *samaya* substances, so that their bestowal at the end confers *siddhis* upon the recipients.
- sgrub chen* (tib.; pronounced and often written as Drupchen): A Major Practice session or intensive communal tantric practice focused on attaining realisation, held over a number of days, and typically requiring a large team of lamas and ritualists as the principal practitioners.
- sman sgrub* (tib.): A tantric ritual of “Medicinal Accomplishment”, involving the preparation of medicinal pills and their transformation into sacred substances, considered efficacious in healing disturbances of body, speech and mind.
- sgrub khog* (tib.): A class of tantric texts which describe the framework of rituals needed for a Major Practice session, and elaborate on important features of the rites.
- sgrub mchod* (tib.): A Ceremonial Practice session of intensive tantric rituals, generally sharing many features of a Major Practice session, but performed more simply, or with a smaller team of lamas, usually omitting some requirements, such as continuous day and night recitation.
- torma* (= tib. *gtor ma*, equivalent to skt. *bali*): Sculptured food offerings, generally formed from a roasted barley flour dough, and decorated with adornments of coloured butter and wax. The relationship between tantric practitioners and deities is mediated through *torma* offerings. Elaborately designed *tormas* are also used as symbolic representations of the *maṇḍala* deities and their divine residences.
- tshogs* (tib., short for *tshogs kyi 'khor lo*, equivalent to skt. *gaṇacakra*): Literally a gathering, assembly or accumulation, the circle of *tshogs* is a tantric communion feast, in which the assemblies of deities and practitioners gather, share the assembled offerings and restore their tantric bond. The practice, which incorporates extensive confessions, is considered a powerful antidote to breakages in the tantric *samaya*, and is performed on a regular periodic basis in rNying ma monasteries. In Major Practice sessions, a *tshogs* feast will be offered each day.

- vajra* (skt. =tib. *rdo rje*): A development on the Indian symbolism of the *vajra* as the god Indra's most potent and indestructible weapon, "*vajra*" implies the indestructible nature of enlightenment and the tantric means for realising it. Buddhist tantric practitioners are endowed with a symbolic *vajra* implement (representing means) and bell (representing wisdom), and these are used throughout tantric rituals. In sexual yoga and tantric imagery, the male deity's sexual organ is the *vajra*, which penetrates the female deity's "lotus".
- vidyādhara* (skt. = tib. *rig 'dzin*): A bearer or "holder of pure awareness", a *vidyādhara* is a realised tantric adept. Tibetan tantric mythology has much to say on various sets of historical *vidyādhara*s of India and *vidyādhara*s of Tibet.
- vidam* (tib. *yi dam*): A tantric deity to be meditated upon in order to attain enlightenment. Each *yi dam* incorporates specific features considered to embody specific qualities of enlightened realisation. A tantric practitioner may take a particular *yi dam* as their tutelary deity, although it is also common for an individual to practise a number of *yi dams*. Monasteries will specialise in one or more *yi dams* of the tantric lineage they are affiliated to, but several *yi dams* are likely to feature in their regular cycles of tantric practice.

Bibliography

Tibetan Sources

(with Anglicised names for frequently mentioned lamas, but arranged in Tibetan alphabetical order by the main name or *sprul sku* title)

Note: The TBRC reference numbers refer to the electronic texts made available by the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center (TBRC), Cambridge, Massachusetts (<http://www.tbrc.org>).

Kongtrul: 'jam mgon kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas, *Rin chen gter mdzod chen mo*, 111 volumes, 1976-1980, Ngodrub and Sherab Drimay, dPal spungs dgon pa'i par khang, Paro reproduction. See specifically, *bla ma gsang ba 'dus pa*, compiled texts, Volume Ja 7: 461-614; Volume Ki 49: *rdo rje phur pa yang gsang spu gri'i dbang bskur bklags chog tu bkod pa baiḍū'i bum bzang* 251-281, and *phur pa yang gsang bla med kyi las byang phrin las spu gri kha 'phangs rnam dkyus su bkod pa* 505-553 (TBRC W20578).

Guru Chōwang (gu ru chos kyi dbang 'phyug) 1979 the *bKa' brgyad gsang ba yongs rdzogs* Ngodrup and Sherab Drimay, Paro (TBRC W23819). Specific texts consulted: 1. *yongs rdzogs bsgrub chen khog 'bugs*, Volume 1: 299-456. 2. *zhi khro bka' brgyad las bdud rtsi sman bsgrub*, Volume 3: 277-303.

Nyang ral, Nyi ma 'od zer *bKa' brgyad bde gshegs 'dus pa'i chos skor*, 1979-1980. 1. *bka' brgyad bde gshegs 'dus pa las: khro bo'i dgos bsgrub: bdud rtsi sman bsgrub kyi bsgom rim*, Volume 8: 347-375. 2. *bka' brgyad bde gshegs 'dus pa las: mchod rdzas bdud rtsi'i bsgrub pa*, Volume 8: 377-419. 3. *bka' brgyad bde gshegs 'dus pa las: bdud rtsi sman sgrub thabs lag khrid du bsdebs pa*, Volume 8: 421-507. Paro, Lama Ngodrup Kyichu Temple. (TBRC W22247).

Terdak Lingpa (*gter bdag gling pa*) (TL) *smin gling gter chen rig 'dzin 'gyur med rdo rje'i gsung 'bum*, 16 volumes, 1998, Dehra Dun, D.G. Khochhen Tulku (TBRC W22096). In particular, compilations of Guru Chöwang: (i) the Lama Heart Accomplishment Practice, *gsang 'dus bla ma'i las byang snying po rab gsal*, Volume 10: 1r-20r (and other texts relating to the cycle, Volume 10: 21r-37v); (ii) the Ultra Secret Razor Vajrakīlaya, *rdo rje phur bu yang gsang spu gri'i las byang kun bzang rol mtsho*, Volume 9: 275r-301, and *dpal rdo rje phur bu'i sgrub pa chen po'i rim pa gsal bar byed pa dngos grub kyi dga' ston*, Volume 9: 305r-332v; *dpal rdo rje phur bu'i dmar chen gtor zlog gi las rim bdud 'joms rnam rol*, Volume 9: 338r-361r; *thun gtor 'bul ba*, Volume 9: 362r-363v; *gtor bzlog bdud 'jom rnam rol gyi bskul mthar gser skyems 'bul ba*, Volume 9: 364r-372r; *dpal rdo rje phur bu'i phrin las dgra bgegs sgröl ba'i man ngag rdo rje'i me char*, Volume 9: 373r-382v. Also, Medicinal Accomplishment manual, *Methods to Accomplish Sacred Ingredient Elixir, dam rdzas bdud rtsi'i sgrub thabs gsang chen gi myur lam*, Volume 9: 107r-152v.

Dudjom Lingpa *Collected Works*: (DL¹) *gter chos/ bdud 'joms gling pa; sprul pa'i gter chen bdud 'joms gling pa'i zab gter gsang ba'i chos sde*, 21 volumes, 2004, Lama Kuenzang Wangdue, Thimphu, Bhutan (TBRC W28732). Note that a version of the *Collected Works* (DL²) in *dbu med* script had been published in 1978 in Kalimpong (TBRC W21728).

Specific texts consulted:

zab gsang mkha' 'gro'i snying thig las: thugs sgrub gsang ba'i rgya can: dpal chen phrin las kyi sgrub pa: rdo rje gzhon nu'i gsang sgrub/ las bzhi lhun grub: Volume Nga: 43-492.

zab gsang mkha' 'gro'i snying thig las: thugs sgrub gsang ba'i rgya can: dpal chen phrin las kyi sgrub pa: rdo rje gzhon nu'i las byang ye shes sgyu 'phrul gyi gsang mdzod: Volume Ca: 33-56.

Dudjom Rinpoche *Collected Works* (DJYD): *The collected writings and revelations of H. H. bDud-'joms Rin-po-che 'jigs bral ye shes rdo rje*, 25 volumes, 1979-1985, Dupjung Lama, Kalimpong. An electronic version is available from the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Centre (<http://www.tbrc.org>), under the title, *bDud 'joms 'jigs bral ye shes rdo rje'i gsung 'bum*, W20869 0334-0358.

Specific texts referred to:

bla ma thugs kyi sgrub pa'i las byang dngos grub 'dod 'jo'i dga' ston Volume Ca: 1-39.

gu ru'i thugs sgrub kun 'dus kyi brgyud 'debs byin rlabs dbang gi bum bzang Volume Ca: 41-42.

bla ma'i thugs sgrub las byang snying por dril ba skal bzang 'dod 'jo Volume Ca: 43-59.

bla ma thugs kyi sgrub pa'i byin rlabs gtor ma'i dbang bskur gyi cho ga skal bzang 'dod 'jo Volume Ca: 61-76.

dpal bka' 'dus kyi mchog gi phrin las dam rdzas bdud rtsi'i sgrub thabs bde chen grub pa'i bcud len, Volume Ca: 591-633.

bla ma'i thugs sgrub nor bu rgya mtsho'i las byang padma'i ljon shing khrigs su bsdebs pa rig 'dzin dgongs rgyan Volume Cha: 1-47.

dpal rdo rje phur pa yang gsang srog gi spu gri'i las byang phrin las rnam par rol pa'i rgyan, Volume Cha: 405-456.

dpal rdo rje phur pa yang gsang srog gi spu gri'i sbyin sreg gi cho ga phrin las mngon par rol pa'i dbyig, Volume Cha: 543-565.

dpal rdo rje phur pa yang gsang srog gi spu gri'i smad las bdud dpung mthar byed gnam lcags thog chen, Volume Cha: 567-622.

dam chos dgongs pa yongs 'dus las/ yang gsang bla ma'i las byang khrigs su bsdebs pa rig pa 'dzin pa'i dgongs rgyan Volume Ja: 207-265.

dam chos dgongs pa yongs 'dus las dam rdzas bdud rtsi'i sgrub thabs gsal bar bkod pa 'chi med 'dod 'jo'i gter bum, Volume Ja: 365-410.

The Meteoric Iron Razor texts:

dpal rdo rje phur bu thugs kyi sgrub pa gsang ba'i rgya can bdud 'joms gnam lcags spu gri'i las byang khrag 'thung mngon par rol pa'i dga' ston (the main Ritual Manual), Volume Tha: 77-153.

dpal rdo rje phur bu bdud 'joms gnam lcags spu gri'i brgyud pa'i bla ma rnam las gsol ba 'debs pa byin rlabs dga' ston, Volume Tha: 155-156.

zab gsang mkha' 'gro'i snying thig las: dpal chen rdo rje gzhon nu'i bskang ba dpag bsam ljon shing rgyas pa: thugs sgrub gsang ba'i rgya can gyi skor., Volume Tha: 157-162.

dpal chen phur bu'i tshogs kyi mchod pa dang 'brel bar bskang ba bya ba, Volume Tha: 173-175.

rdo rje phur bu bdud 'joms gnam lcags spu gri'i stod las sgrub chen gyi khog dbub grub gnyis 'dod 'jo'i dga' ston, Ritual Practice Framework text), Volume Tha: 227-277.

zab gsang mkha' 'gro'i snying thig las/ dpal chen rdo rje gzhon nu'i byin 'bebs byin rlabs char 'bebs, Volume Tha: 285-291.

phur bu'i sgrub chen skabs kyi nyer mkho gtong thun mdor bsdu, Volume Tha: 293-303.

dpal rdo rje phur bu bdud 'joms gnam lcags spu gri'i mchog gi phrin las dam rdzas bdud rtsi'i sgrub thabs dngos grub rgya mtsho'i dga' ston (Medicinal Accomplishment manual), Volume Tha: 305-343.

dpal rdo rje phur bu bdud 'joms gnam lcags spu gri'i bdag 'jug gi ngag 'don snying po'i dril ba, Volume Tha: 345-360.

dpal rdo rje phur bu bdud 'joms gnam lcags spu gri'i sbyin sreg gi cho ga phrin las lhun gyis grub pa'i dga' ston, Volume Tha: 361-388.

phur pa'i sgo nas bka' bsgo bya ba'i tshul khyer bder bkod pa, Volume Da: 15-18.

rdo rje phur pa bdud 'joms gnam lcags spu gri'i sgrub chen 'dra 'bag tshul gyi lag len zin bris mthong ba don rtogs, Volume Da: 505-558.

Padma Gling pa *Collected Works: rig 'dzin padma glin pa yi zab gter chos mdzod rin po che*, 21 volumes, 1975-1976, Thimphu, Kunsang Tobgay (TBRC W21727). Specifically consulted here: *rtsa brgyad yan lag stong gi lde mig* (*The Key to the Eight Principal [Medicines] and Thousand branches*), from the Elixir Medicinal Accomplishment cycle (*bdud rtsi sman sgrub kyi skor*), Volume Ta: 391-397.

Dictionaries in Tibetan

Bod rgya tshig mdzod chen mo 1985 (Tibetan-Tibetan and Chinese dictionary, Chengdu, Szechuan), Mi rigs dpe skrun khang.

Tshul khriims skal bzang 2008 *Bod kyi gso rig dang a yur we dha krung dbyi'i sman gzhung bcas las bstan pa'i skye dngos sman rdzas kyi dpar ris dang lag len gces btus blo gсар rig pa'i sgo 'byed*, Dharamsala, Men-Tsee-Khang (*bod gzhung sman rtsis khang*).

Works in other languages

Adams, Vincanne, Mona Schrempf and Sienna R. Craig: *Medicine between Science and Religion: Exploration on Tibetan Grounds*, New York, Berghahn Books, 2011.

Bentor, Yael: "Literature on Consecration (*Rab gnas*)" in José Cabezón and Roger Jackson (eds): *Tibetan Literature: Studies in Genre*, Ithaca, New York, Snow Lion, 1996: 290-311.

Bentor, Yael: "The Horseback Consecration Ritual" in Donald S. Lopez (ed.): *Religions of Tibet in Practice*, Princeton University Press, 1997: 234-254.

Craig, Sienna R.: "From Empowerments to Power Calculations: Notes on Efficacy, Value, and Method" in Adams, Schrempf and Craig (eds), 2011: 215-240.

Craig, Sienna R.: *Healing Elements: Efficacy and the Social Ecologies of Tibetan Medicine*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012.

Garrett, Frances: “The Alchemy of Accomplishing Medicine (*smān sgrub*): Situating the *Yuthok Heart Essence* Ritual Tradition,” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 37 (3), 2009: 207-230.

Kuensel, Bhutan’s daily news site <<http://www.kuenselonline.com/>>

Swearer, Donald K.: “Consecrating the Buddha” in Donald S. Lopez (ed.): *Buddhism in Practice*, Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 1995: 50–58.

Swearer, Donald K.: *Becoming the Buddha: The Ritual of Image Consecration in Northern Thailand: Sources and Interpretation*. Princeton, NJ, Princeton University Press, 2004.

Tambiah, Stanley J.: *The Buddhist Saints of the Forest and the Cult of Amulets: A Study in Charisma, Hagiography, Sectarianism and Millennial Buddhism*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1984.

Abhidhamma Studies III¹ Origins of the Canonical Abhidha(r)mma Literature

L.S. Cousins†

In the first part of this paper I begin by making some general remarks on the early *abhidhamma* literature and then turn to the part played in European *abhidhamma* studies by the researches of Erich Frauwallner.² I examine in detail the topics explored by him and others. His chronological and compositional analysis of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* and *Vibhaṅga* is considered. He believed the earliest portions of the latter work to be the *suttantabhājanīya* sections at the start of most *vibhaṅgas* (chapters). I look at the opposite possibility: that it is the subsequent *abhidhammabhājanīya* sections which represent the original core.

In the second part I examine the precise nature of the contents of these sections and show that they fall into two distinct groups. On the basis of this and in the light of the parallels from the *abhidha(r)mma*³ works preserved in Chinese translation, I envisage the Pali *Abhidhammapiṭaka* as originally a work in several parts with strong parallels to the four part arrangement of the **Śāriputrābhidharma*. I then turn to consider more fully the process by which the Pali *Abhidhamma* works took their current form, setting out an alternative hypothesis which sees the World sets and the Awakening sets of the *Vibhaṅga* as having a different history.

¹For Abhidhamma Studies (AS) I, see Cousins 2011. For AS II: *Sanskrit Abhidharma Literature of the Mahāvihāravāsins* see Cousins 2015. AS IV *The Saccasaṅkhepa and its Commentaries* is in hand.

²An earlier version of the material in this article was given in two lectures as Bukkyo Dendo Kyokai Visiting Professor in February 2005 at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London and part of it earlier still in a paper given at the Spalding Symposium in Oxford in 2001.

³I utilize the form *abhidha(r)mma* to combine the Pali form *abhidhamma* with the most usual form in older Buddhist Sanskrit sources: *abhidharmma*. The spelling *abhidharma* probably derives mainly from modern Sanskrit conventions.

The third part of this article looks at Frauwallner's two (differing) statements on the chronology of the earlier Pali *abhidhamma* literature and argues for a date no later than the first century B.C. Some issues connected with the notion of *mātikā* as the origin of *abhidha(r)mma* are then addressed. *Mātikā*, often understood as originally meaning a mnemonic keyword or heading, is usually found in the plural: "headings". This gives rise to the later sense in the singular of "table of contents". I then try to place Frauwallner's work in the context of a chronological account of the development of European scholarship in the latter half of the last century. In conclusion, I reconsider in the light of this analysis the thesis put forward by Frauwallner and A.K. Warder that we should see the origin of the *abhidha(r)mma* literature in the development of mnemonic lists of topics (*mātikā/mātrkā*).

PART ONE: FRAUWALLNER AND ABHIDHA(R)MMA STUDIES

Piṭaka and Nikāya

I have elsewhere discussed the idea that at an earlier stage the Canon was divided into *Āṅgas* and rejected this as without foundation.⁴ I discussed also the division into *Nikāyas* or *Āgamas*, a division which I believe to be both ancient and clearly founded upon the institutional arrangements for the oral transmission of the teachings.⁵ I now address the alternative organization of the Canon into three *Piṭakas* or "Baskets".

Although it is clear that for the school of Buddhaghosa this was already the accepted division, he cites earlier sources for which it was equally possible to divide

⁴Cousins 2013, pp.104ff. See now: Klaus 2010.

⁵*Nikāya* in this sense is mainly found in Pali, but occasionally also in Sanskrit sources: Dutt, Bhattacharya, and Sharma 1984, 4. 139, 18: *catūrṇāṃ sūtranikāyānām* etc. = *Vinayavastu* IV (*Varṣāvastu* 1.8.2.1.7; 1.8.2.3.2). Lañk X 221: *naikāyikās* (opp. to *tīrthas*) and (acc. BHSD) Lañk X 211f.: *nikāyagati* (questionable in the light of *Abhidh-dīp* 251: *prakāranaiamyena tu duḥkhadarśanaprahātavyaiḥ sarvatragaiḥ pañcasu nikāyeṣvāmbanataḥ saṃyuktaḥ | tatsaṃprayukteṣu saṃprayogataḥ | asarvatragaistu svanaikāyikeṣvāmbanataḥ | saṃprayukteṣu saṃprayogataḥ*). Monks versed in the five *Nikāyas* gave donations at Sāñci: *Devagirino pacanekāyikasa bhichuno* (Lüders 299); Bhārḥūt: *Budharakhīta pa[m]canekāyikasa* (Lüders 867) and Pauni: *Nāgasa pacanekāyikasa* (EI XXXVIII p.174). At Nāgārjunakoṇḍa a pupil of the Mahāsaṃghika Aparamahāvīnāseliyas is twice referred to as a master of the *Dīgha* and *Majjhima nikāyas*: *Dīgha-Majjhima-nikāyadharena* (EI XX pp.15–17 & 19f. — so read).

the Canon into five *Nikāyas* or *Āgamas*. And indeed that remains a theoretical alternative in Pali literature down to the present day. Probably scholars have usually considered this as something of a scholastic exercise rather than any kind of historical development. With this I do not agree. It seems to me rather that this is the earlier arrangement from which the Three Baskets develop.

We see that the Fifth *Nikāya* contains one other work with the title *piṭaka*. It is easy to envisage in this context a work entitled *Abhidhammapiṭaka* also included in this collection. We should note also the existence of an early Mahāyāna text or texts with the name *Bodhisattvapīṭaka*. Although the arrangement as cited by Buddhaghosa includes also the *Vinayapiṭaka*, I suspect that originally the Five *Nikāyas* contained only *Dhamma* literature; *Vinaya* literature was treated differently and was part of a separate oral tradition.

I would suppose that the decision to separate the *Abhidhamma* work or works and to add the *Vinaya* texts is precisely what created the *tipiṭaka* in something approaching the form in which we know it. According to Oskar von Hinüber:

“The origin and the idea behind this designation are not known.”⁶

This seems to me to slightly overstate the case. Unlike the term *nikāya*, which is frequently used in the older literature in the sense of “class” or “category”, the word *piṭaka* is not found often in precisely that kind of sense.⁷ But the usage seems clearly extracted from the expression *piṭakasampadā(na)* found in the *Majjhimanikāya* and the *Aṅguttaranikāya*, as well as in later Pali and Sanskrit texts.⁸ The context is always that of depending on an external source of authority rather than direct personal experience. I take *piṭaka* here to have precisely the sense of “authoritative collection”.

Applied to the Buddhist texts, it occurs first in an inscription from Bhārhūt, where a *peṭakin* is referred to in a context which could refer to a monk who knows the Baskets, but is also open to several other possible interpretations. It could simply mean someone who has mastered the authoritative texts in general with no reference to a specific collection. This would be similar to the sense it has in the *Peṭaka* or *Peṭakopadesa*. Or, indeed, it could be referring to mastery of the *Peṭaka* method. Otherwise we meet references to the “three Baskets” first in the *Parivāra*

⁶Hinüber 1996, p. 7; Collins 1990.

⁷The literal sense of ‘basket’ is of course found, e.g. Vin I 225; 240.

⁸MN I 520; AN I 189–96; II 191ff.; NiddI 360; 400; 482; NiddII; Peṭ 74. *Yogācārabhūmi* 405S: *āgamaḥ katamaḥ | tatpratīyuktānuśravaparamparāpiṭakasampradānayoṅgenaiṣām āgataḥ bhavati vidyata* eva hetau phalam iti ||*

as part of the verses expounding the lineage (*paramparā*). In fact these verses occur some thirteen times.⁹ In that context the arrangement of the Canon into the *Vinayaṭṭakā*, the five *Nikāyas* and the seven Manuals (*pakāraṇe*)¹⁰ is explicit. The three Baskets seem also to be mentioned in an *uddāna* to the *Cūḷavagga* (Vin II 293), but that is difficult to date. The three categories of *Vinaya*, *Suttanta* and *Abhidhamma* are mentioned at Vin IV 344, but *ṭṭakā* is not.

The paracanonical *Milindapañha* contains a number of references to three Baskets and to the individual *Abhidhammapṭakā* and *Vinayaṭṭakā*. Of particular interest here is the occurrence of stanzas attributed to the Ancients (Porāṇā):¹¹

“and those monks, possessors of Three Baskets and those of
Five Nikāyas,
and those too of Four Nikāyas attended upon Nāgasena.”

These verses should precede the *Milindapañha* in date and seem to reflect a time when honorific titles related to both earlier and later arrangements of the canonical literature were still in use.

In the light of all this and the ubiquity in Sanskrit literature too of the concept of Three Baskets, it seems that the existence of the Three Baskets probably precedes the first century A.D.

four or five Abhidha(r)mmapṭakas

So it is very likely that it was in the course of the last century B.C. that the growing numbers of *abhidhamma* works achieved canonical status in some or all of the schools of Ancient Buddhism. By canonical status I mean simply that they were formed into collections of literature, oral or written, which had a recognized authority as *Buddhavacana* — whoever had actually written them. We cannot tell from earlier references to *Suttanta* or even *Dhamma* (in *Dhammavinaya*) whether or not *Abhidha(r)mmapṭaka* works were included.

⁹Vin V 3 etc.. The exact number of times this occurs varies with the editions and manuscripts, depending on how far the repetitions are expanded.

¹⁰m.c.

¹¹Mil 22: *tenāhu Porāṇā*:

bahussuto citrakathī nipuṇo ca visārado |
sāmayiko ca kusalo paṭibhāne ca kovido ||
te ca tepṭakā bhikkhū pañcanekāyikā pi ca |
catunekāyikā cēva Nāgasenaṃ purakkharuṃ ||

How much such canonical *abhidha(r)mma* literature there originally was, we do not know. At present the Pali Canon preserves the only surviving *Abhidhammapiṭaka* that is complete in its original language. An apparently complete version of another is extant in a Chinese translation. This work is generally known as the **Śāriputrābhidharma*, although it may in fact have been written in the Gāndhārī dialect of Middle Indian. I believe that it was most probably the shared canonical text of the three Vibhajjavādin schools of the North-West, but it has usually been thought to belong specifically to one of them: the Dharmaguptakas.¹² As far as I know, little or none of their later exegetical literature survives, with the possible exception of some recently discovered and fragmentary exegetical works in Gāndhārī. A third *Abhidharmapiṭaka*, for Eastern and Northern Buddhism the most influential of all, survives in Chinese translation. This is part of the Canon of the Sarvāstivādins. The version in Chinese is not quite complete, but some of the missing material is preserved in Tibetan. There are also extant fragments and portions of some of the Sarvāstivādin *abhidharma* texts in Sanskrit, as well as a number of citations in later works. It is possible that the original language of the oldest of these works was not Sanskrit, but whether that is so or not, all subsequent literature of that school in India appears to have been written in Sanskrit.

We do not know for sure how many other such *abhidha(r)mma* canons there were. It is sometimes suggested that all of the supposed “eighteen schools” would have each had their own *Abhidha(r)mmapiṭaka*.¹³ This is most unlikely. More reasonably, Bareau in 1951 affirmed the certain existence of the following *Abhidharmapiṭaka*: Theravādin, Sarvāstivādin, Mahāsaṃghika, Dharmaguptaka and Haimavata. He discussed the possibility of a number of other schools also having an *Abhidharmapiṭaka*. Of these, he considered it likely that the Mahīśāsakas and the Vātsīputrīyas and their sub-sects would have each had an *Abhidharmapiṭaka*. However, he also thought it likely that the *Abhidharmapiṭaka* shared by both the Dharmaguptakas and the Haimavatas was in fact the **Śāriputrābhidharma*. This would give a total of at least six.

I agree that there must have been an *Abhidha(r)mmapiṭaka* of some kind among the Pudgalavādin schools, but there is no reason at present to suppose they had more than one. Indeed, Paramārtha (who himself possibly came from Western India) specifically states that they shared a single **Dharmalakṣaṇābhidharma*,

¹² Another possibility is that it may have been shared with the Pudgalavādin schools too, but that seems less likely.

¹³ See Bareau 1951a.

also described by them as the *Abhidharma of Śāriputra*.¹⁴ Similarly, there was probably an *Abhidha(r)mmapiṭaka* in Prakrit among the Mahāsaṃghikas of the Deccan, probably in six parts, and possibly also one belonging to the Lokottaravādins (in Sanskrit?). It is also possible (but not certain) that some schools might have rejected or not participated in the development of *abhidha(r)mma*. So we should not multiply instances! At present, all we can say is that there were probably around six distinct canonical *Abhidha(r)mmapiṭakas*.¹⁵ Of these, only three are extant.

the work of Frauwallner

A leading role in more recent European studies of these works has been played by Erich Frauwallner. His influential series of *Abhidharma-studien* (published between 1963 and 1973) are widely held to be the most important recent attempt at understanding the historical development of *abhidharma*.¹⁶ They are, for example, largely followed by Oskar von Hinüber in his survey of Pali literature.¹⁷ Moreover, as a result of their translation into English, they have more recently been brought to the attention of a wider audience.¹⁸

One cannot read these and other writings of Frauwallner without being impressed by the clarity of his thought and the lucidity of his expression. I remain unconvinced by most efforts to determine the nature of the earliest form of Buddhism by separating earlier and later strata. But of the attempts to do so, Frauwallner's analyses of the formation of the *Vinayapiṭaka* and of the development of the Sarvāstivādin *abhidharma* works still seem to be some of the best available. I am much less happy with what he has to say about the Pali *abhidhamma*. This article is an attempt to give my reasons for this and, in part, to provide an alternative.

Before doing so, let me note that Frauwallner himself seems much less confident of his handling of this material. He writes: "There is still much exact philological work to be done here. Regretfully, I have only had limited access to the Pāli literature and the relevant secondary literature. I hope that I have not over-

¹⁴Demiéville 1932, p. 57f. See also Lamotte 1944, p. = *Traité*: T1509. ch. 2, p. 70a.

¹⁵I do not doubt that slightly varying recensions of some of these were also produced as time went on.

¹⁶Frauwallner 1963; Frauwallner 1964; Frauwallner 1971a; Frauwallner 1971b; Frauwallner 1972; Frauwallner 1973. Also: Frauwallner 1971c.

¹⁷Hinüber 1996, pp. 64–73.

¹⁸Frauwallner 1995.

seen anything of importance.” (Kidd’s translation)¹⁹ Unfortunately, I think he did indeed miss some important points.

Frauwallner’s concern is to write a history of Indian Philosophy and perhaps also to some extent to rehabilitate Indian philosophy in the eyes of European philosophers. In doing so, he makes much use of the distinction between philosophy and scholasticism. This — with all its resonances of mediaeval darkness versus renaissance enlightenment and so on — is something of a distorting mirror in the Indian context. It belongs rather in an arena which one can refer to as ‘triumphalist religious advocacy’. One is reminded of similar ‘Aunt Sally’ distinctions between Christian and Jewish positions in New Testament and Theological studies. Or, indeed, closer to home, certain types of Mahāyāna polemic against ‘Hinayāna’. As a result, differences in literary genre and style are elevated into differences of principle and kind in a manner which is historically quite anachronistic.

This philosophical interest makes Frauwallner rather scornful at times of texts whose *raison d’être* is of a different kind. The Pali *abhidhamma* works are much more concerned with the practice of Buddhism than with constructing an intellectual edifice, although that is certainly not absent. Frauwallner recognizes the intellectual aspects of this, but is rather unsympathetic to anything else. So his article on the *abhidharma* “of the Pali School” at intervals refers to “its rampant scholasticism” (p. 45) and to “the formalism of the Abhidharma which has overgrown and almost smothered it” (p. 58). Essentially, he emphasizes this formalism, the *abhidharma*’s pointless repetition and what he considers to be a lack of intellectual content or systematic philosophical thought. So in his article on the earliest *abhidharma* we are told that: “This degeneration is probably at its worst in the Pāli school, which confined itself exclusively to the transmitted doctrinal material, and never really developed any original thought of its own.” (p. 11)

No doubt, all of this (and there is much more in the same vein) tells us more about Frauwallner than about the history of the *abhidhamma* literature. Let us note that he takes no account of the needs of oral literature, which requires a considerable measure of “pointless” repetition to guarantee the preservation of necessary content. Probably because of a lack of interest in how Buddhists actually use these works, he is quite unaware of them as compositions for chanting with both

¹⁹Frauwallner 1971b, p. 107 n.7: *Für exacte philologische Arbeit ist hier noch sehr viel zu tun. Mir war leider die Pāli-literatur und die Arbeiten darüber immer nur in beschränktem Masse zugänglich. Hoffentlich habe ich nichts zu Wichtiges übersehen.*

a devotional aspect and a meditational aspect. Of course, Frauwallner is hardly unusual in this and his attitude to the canonical *abhidhamma* works stems largely from earlier European interpreters. Perhaps the greatest influence in this regard was the seemingly tireless labour of Caroline Rhys Davids. Let us note, however, two comments from the introduction to her edition of the *Vibhaṅga* in 1904. She refers to the *Vibhaṅga* as compiled for oral teaching and for learning by rote and comments that this is what “makes it and all Abhidhamma matter so impossible as food for the reader” (p. xx). She then compares “our own books of symbolic logic” which are “not so very possible for him either”. Later she comments that the only possible way “for the burdened memory” was “that endless but orderly repetition of a verbal framework, wherein, it might be, only one term of a series was varied at a time.”

In fact, it might be better to view the canonical *abhidhamma* works as transitional literature, rather than as pure oral literature. By this, I mean that they were composed at a time when memorized literature was still the norm for religious purposes. Yet writing had been adopted under the Mauryas and so written notes could be used as an aid to composition, allowing the production of more complex texts. The registers for individual *dhammas* used in most of the canonical *abhidhamma* works look as if they might be the product of a systematic jotting down on palm-leaves of different terms from the still entirely oral *sutta* literature.²⁰ It is probable that some *abhidhamma* works had already been preserved in written form for some time before the Canon as a whole was set in writing.

Returning to Frauwallner, it is perhaps a second aspect of his approach which is more critical. In the first of his *Abhidharma-studien* (published in 1964) Frauwallner makes much of the distinction between what he calls the **Pañcavastuka*²¹ and the *Pañcaskandhaka*. He puts forward the thesis that the shift from an analysis in terms of the five aggregates to an analysis in terms of *citta*, *caitta*, *rūpa*, *viprayukta* and *asaṃskṛta* is a crucial stage in the development of *abhidharma*.²² This must be in some sense correct, but unfortunately it is tied to developments specifically in the Sarvāstivādin school in a manner which is rather questionable.

²⁰The use of slips at a later date in the work of Buddhaghosa has been suggested by von Hinüber: Hinüber 1996, §240 & n.421. A second reference to the use of slips is perhaps found in the *Kṣudrakavastu* of the *Mūlasarvāstivādinaya*: Schopen 1997 = Schopen 2004, pp. 395-407, particularly p. 402. (email OVH 13.4.2014).

²¹Or, **Pañcadharmaka*.

²²Note that such an analysis (excluding *viprayukta*) is implied at Dhs §§1187-90.

The result of this is that Frauwallner is compelled by the logic of his own theory to assert the relative lateness of the Pali material even against his own observations.

I shall return to this later, but let me first set out the precise details of Frauwallner's theory of the development of the early canonical material. I shall then offer some criticisms of his arguments before attempting to provide an alternative account of the growth and formation of these works.

the Pali Abhidhammapiṭaka

There are seven works included in the *Abhidhammapiṭaka*. Of these, we can ignore for present purposes the *Yamaka* and *Paṭṭhāna*, usually considered to represent a later development in their present form. The *Kathāvatthu* and the *Puggala-paññatti* are also largely irrelevant to Frauwallner's thesis. This leaves three works to which he refers, but I shall not here have very much to say about the (relatively small) *Dhātukathā*. So our main concern is with the first two works of the *Abhidhammapiṭaka*: the *Dhammasaṅgaha* or *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* and the *Vibhaṅga*.

Frauwallner's analysis of the Dhammasaṅgaha

TABLE 1
STRUCTURE OF THE DHAMMASAṅGAHA

MĀTIKĀ	TIKA 22 TRIPLETS DUKA: ABHIDHAMME 100 COUPLETS SUTTANTE 42 COUPLETS
A. CITTUPPĀDA-KAṆḌA	
B. RŪPA-KAṆḌA	MĀTIKĀ EKUTTARA METHOD: 1 TO 11
C. NIKKHEPA-KAṆḌA	TIKA (ABHIDHAMMA-)DUKA SUTTANTIKA-DUKA
D. ATTHUDDHĀRAKA-KAṆḌA OR AṬṬHAKATHĀ-KAṆḌA	TIKA (ABHIDHAMMA-)DUKA

As regards the *Dhammasaṅgaha*, Frauwallner proposes that the triplet *mātikā* and the *abhidhamma* couplet *mātikā* together with the parallel portions of the *Nikkhepakaṇḍa* are the earliest parts of this work. The *Suttanta* couplets and the corresponding portion of the *Nikkhepakaṇḍa* have been added to this at some

point.²³ The *Cittuppāda*kaṇḍa and the *Rūpa*kaṇḍa are separate works which have been inserted between the *Mātikā* and the *Nikkhepa*kaṇḍa. Frauwallner in fact erroneously refers to the *Cittuppāda*kaṇḍa as the *Cittaka*kaṇḍa.²⁴ He has been misled by the Nāgarī edition, where this must be a simple error. Finally, the *Atthuddhāra*kaṇḍa is influenced by the “*Cittaka*kaṇḍa” and is alien to the “pure *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* tradition” (p. 86). The general outlines of this are based on the work of André Bareau in his supplementary thesis, published in 1951 (Bareau 1951b).

The weakness of this analysis lies in its treatment of the *Rūpa*kaṇḍa. According to Frauwallner, this “was evidently included as a counterpart to the *Cittaka*kaṇḍa. A somewhat artificial link between the two texts is established by means of a connecting paragraph. The following description is entirely independent.” The correct name *Cittuppāda*kaṇḍa makes the *Rūpa*kaṇḍa slightly less of a counterpart, but the crucial point here is: how far is it truly independent? It is after all hardly a surprise that matter is described in a rather different way from mentality.

Other than a discussion of the list of *rūpas* implicit in the *Rūpa*kaṇḍa, Frauwallner has in fact rather little to say about it, seeing it as “largely without significance”. This I believe to be a mistake. So I want now to look at the manner in which it is structured. It is arranged after the *ekuttara* method, which proceeds numerically from single items to pairs of items and so on. At first sight it looks like a simple collection of things you can say about *rūpa*, but in fact it is arranged in a specific way and one which is linked directly to the *Abhidhammamātikā* at the beginning of the *Dhammasaṅgaha*.

TABLE 2
THE RŪPAKAṆḌA AND THE TRIPLET MĀTIKĀ

tikamātikā	rūpaṃ ekavidhena	includable
1. kusalā/akusalā/avyākatā	avyākatam	1.
2. sukhāya vedanāya sampayuttā/dukkhāya vedanāya sampayuttā/ adukkhamasukhāya vedanāya sampayuttā	×	
3. vipākā/vipākadhamma/ nevavipākanavipākadhammadhammā	nevavipākanavipākadhammadhammam	2.
4. upādiṇṇupādāniyā/anupādiṇṇupādāniyā/ anupādiṇṇaanupādāniyā	2	

²³Frauwallner suggests that they have probably come from a work corresponding to the *Saṅgītiparyāya*, i.e. a commentary on the *Saṅgītisuttanta*.

²⁴It is tacitly corrected in: Hinüber 1996, p. 67.

5. saṃkiliṭṭhasaṃkilesikā/asaṃkiliṭṭha-saṃkilesikā/asaṃkiliṭṭhasaṃkilesikā	asaṃkiliṭṭha-saṃkilesikaṃ	3.
6. savitakkasavicārā/avitakkavicāramattā/avitakkaavicārā	avitakkaavicāraṃ	4.
7. pītisahagatā/sukhasahagatā/upekkhāsahagatā	×	
8. dassanena pahātabbā/bhāvanāya pahātabbā/neva dassanena na bhāvanāya pahātabbā	neva dassanena na bhāvanāya pahātabbaṃ	5.
9. dassanena pahātabbahetukā/bhāvanāya pahātabbahetukā/neva dassanena na bhāvanāya pahātabbahetukā	neva dassanena na bhāvanāya pahātabbahetukaṃ	6.
10. ācayagāmino/apacayagāmino/nevācayagāmināpacayagāmino	nevācayagāmināpacayagāmi	7.
11. sekkhā/asekkhā/nevasekkhanāsekkhā	nevasekkhanāsekkhaṃ	8.
12. parittā/mahaggatā/appamāṇā	parittaṃ	9.
13. parittārammaṇā/mahaggatārammaṇā/appamāṇārammaṇā	×	
14. hīnā/majjhimā/pañīta	2	
15. micchattaniyatā/sammattaniyatā/aniyatā	aniyataṃ	10.
16. maggārammaṇā/maggahetukā/maggādhipatino	×	
17. uppannā/anuppannā/uppādino	?uppannaṃ (2)	11. ?
18. atītā/anāgatā/paccuppannā	3	
19. atītārammaṇā/anāgatārammaṇā/paccuppannārammaṇā	×	
20. ajjhattā/bahiddhā/ajjhatabhiddhā	3	
21. ajjhattārammaṇā/bahiddhārammaṇā/ajjhatabhiddhārammaṇā	×	
22. sanidassanasappaṭighā/anidassanasappaṭighā	3	

Table Two lists the items of the Triplet mātikā in order on the left with the items from the singlefold analysis in the *Rūpakaṇḍa* to the right. The thirteen items given in the table under the heading “includable” are taken from eleven of the triplets. Of the missing eleven triplets, six are purely mental and five contain *rūpa* in more than one category. The eleven items given here are then the only

possible cases and they occur in exactly the same order as they do in the triplet *mātikā*.

Similarly, the 29 items beginning with *na hetu* given in Table Three below are likewise taken from the 100 couplets (numbered on the right). They too occur in precisely the same order as in the couplet *mātikā*. Since there is some duplication between triplets and couplets, I list on the left related triplets.

TABLE 3
THE RŪPAKAṄḌA AND THE COUPLET MĀTIKĀ

tika	ekavidhena rūpaṃ	duka
	na hetu	1.
	ahetukaṃ	2.
	hetuvippayuttaṃ	3.
	sappaccayaṃ	7.
	saṅkhatāṃ	8.
	rūpaṃ [rūpiyaṃ (C ^o)]	11.
	lokiyaṃ	12.
	sāsavaṃ	15.
	saṃyojaniyaṃ	21.
	ganthaniyaṃ	27.
	oghaniyaṃ	33.
	yoganiyaṃ	39.
	nīvaraṇiyaṃ	45.
	parāmatṭhaṃ	51.
	upādāniyaṃ	70.
	saṃkilesikaṃ	76.
1.	avyākataṃ	
	anārammaṇaṃ	55.
	acetasikaṃ	57.
	cittavippayuttaṃ	58.
3.	nevavipākanavipākadhammadhammaṃ	
5.	asaṃkiliṭṭhasaṃkilesikaṃ	
6.	na savitakkasavicāraṃ	
6.	na avitakkavicāramattaṃ	
6.	avitakkaavicāraṃ	87–88.
	na pītisahagataṃ	89–90.
	na sukhasahagataṃ	91.
	na upekkhāsahagataṃ	92.

8.	neva dassanena na bhāvanāya pahātabbaṃ	
9.	neva dassanena na bhāvanāya pahātabbahetukaṃ	
10.	neva ācayagāmi na apacayagāmi	
11.	nevasekkhanāsekkhaṃ	
12.	parittaṃ	
	kāmāvacaraṃ	93.
	na rūpāvacaraṃ	94.
	na arūpāvacaraṃ	95.
	pariyāpannaṃ	96.
	no apariyāpannaṃ	
15.	aniyataṃ	98.
	aniyyānikaṃ	97.
17.	uppannaṃ	
	chahi viññāṇehi viññeyyaṃ	?13
	aniccaṃ	
	jarābhibhūtaṃ.	

The crucial fact that emerges is that the singlefold section of the *Rūpakaṇḍa* is structurally closely related to the *Abhidhammātikā* and cannot be separated from it. By itself, this might cast doubt on Frauwallner's claim that the *Rūpakaṇḍa* has been inserted into the *Dhammasaṅgaha*. And of course, that could lead even to questioning how far the so-called *Cittakaṇḍa* is an insertion, given that the presence of the *Rūpakaṇḍa* by itself would make very little sense. However, matters are not quite so simple, since virtually all of the singlefold *mātikā* to the *Rūpakaṇḍa* is also found in the first section of the *Vibhaṅga*, i.e. that on the aggregates (*khandhas*). We could then suppose that the *Rūpakaṇḍa* derives from there.

Moreover, the rest of the *ekuttara* analysis of *rūpa* is closely parallel to the *ekuttara* analyses for the other four aggregates. They clearly belong together. Also, the fourfold analysis in part uses terminology closely associated with accounts of the five aggregates: *dūre/santike*; *oḷārika/sukhuma*. The set: *diṭṭha/suta/muta/viññāta* is otherwise rare in the Pali *Abhidhammapiṭaka*, except in the first part of the *Dhammahadayavibhaṅga*.²⁵ Indeed, even for the twofold, threefold and fivefold analysis it is clear that this *khandha* material is a source of part. Finally, it may be noted that the twofold analysis uses all the couplets from the *dukamātikā* for which both components include *rūpa*, with the exception of couplet 13 (*kenaci*

²⁵Vibh 429f.; but cf. Vibh 387.

viññeyya).²⁶ It also uses triplet four (*upādiṇṇupādāniya*) — the only other triplets which could have been used are 14 (*hīna*) and 17 (*uppanna*): both doubtful. These same couplets and triplet are subsequently employed for the first part of the three-fold analysis. This is all intimately related to the *mātikā*.

Thus far it is clear that Frauwallner's analysis is unsatisfactory and needs to be substantially replaced. But first let us turn to the theory that relates *mātikā* (in a somewhat different sense) to the origins of *abhidha(r)mma*.

mātrkā and the origins of abhidha(r)mma

It was in the first two of Frauwallner's *Abhidharma-studien*, which appeared in 1963 and 1964, that he first expounded the theory of the *mātrkā*. He writes: "The oldest Buddhist tradition has no *Abhidharmapiṭaka*, but only *mātrkā*." (p. 3). He understands this statement to mean that comprehensive lists of doctrinal concepts were collected, initially from the Buddha's sermons. "Lists of this kind," he says, "were called *mātrkā*, and it was from these lists that the *Abhidharma* later developed." Frauwallner was not the originator of this view, but he has been widely influential in its propagation and his position has been further developed by others.²⁷

I have problems with this terminology, since I do not think that just any list is a *mātikā*. Of course, any list could in principle be used as a *mātikā*, but I am not sure that we should confuse the two things. As a result of doing so, Frauwallner has to introduce the rather strange term "attribute-*mātrkā*" (*Eigenschaften-Mātrkā*) to refer to what seems to me to be the typical or normal kind of *mātikā*.

In fact, the view that the term *mātrkā* originally refers to some kind of *abhidhamma* or proto-*abhidhamma* seems to me to be poorly founded. It is true that several Sarvāstivādin sources refer to the *Abhidhammapiṭaka* as the *Mātrkāpiṭaka*, but that is plainly a late development. It belongs in the context of the period of conflict between Mahāyāna and Mainstream Buddhism which arose around the third century A.D. and continued a little longer until the Yogācāra synthesis of Mahāyāna and Abhidharma took the edge off matters. Part of this conflict was an inevitable attempt to downgrade the authority of *abhidharma* traditions, an attempt which took the form of the Sautrāntika critique.

²⁶Probably not practical.

²⁷See for example: Bronkhorst 1985.

In such a context the notion of *māṭṛkā* could be used by both sides — either to claim references to the *Abhidharmapiṭaka* in the *Sūtrapiṭaka* or to claim that references to *māṭṛkā* or *abhidharma* simply mean lists such as the *bodhipākṣikadharma*. All of this is much too late to give us any useful information on the early period.

The expression *mātikādhara* occurs 22 times in the *Vinayapiṭaka*, always in a stock expression describing the qualities of a learned monk (*bahussuto āgatāgamo dhammadharo vinayadharo mātikādharo paṇḍito vyatto medhāvī lajjī kukkuccako sikkhākāmo*).²⁸ It is striking that it is only found in the *Khandhaka* and is therefore entirely unknown to what are probably the earliest parts of the *Vinayapiṭaka*. It is found 19 times in the *Suttapiṭaka*, always in a shorter version of the above phrase, referring to a monk or monks who are *bahussutā āgatāgamā dhammadharā vinayadharā mātikādharā*. In the *Dīghanikāya* it is found only in the account of the four *mahāpadesas* in the *Mahāparinibbānasuttanta* (D II 124f.). In the *Majjhimanikāya* it is found only in the *Mahāgopālakasutta* (M I 221; 223). Significantly, it is never found in either the *Samyuttanikāya* or the *Khuddakanikāya*; so the great majority of passages are in the *Ānguttaranikāya*. This strongly suggests a connexion with the *ekuttara* approach of the *Ānguttarabhāṇakas*. Most striking of all is the fact that it does not occur at all in the *Abhidhammapiṭaka*.²⁹

We can note here in passing that for Buddhaghosa the expression refers purely to *Vinaya*, although Dhammapāla the *ṭikākāra* rejects that.³⁰ There seems, in fact, no way of determining with certainty whether the reference is to the *Pātimokkha*, to early *abhidhamma* in some form, or to both. Other than this, the word *mātikā* occurs in one simile in the *Ānguttaranikāya* where *mātikāsampanna* is one of the qualities of a good field. On the authority of the commentary, this is usually taken as meaning some kind of irrigation channel.³¹ This seems quite doubtful.

²⁸Two are in the plural. (Oldenberg's edition abbreviates many of these references.)

²⁹The only other pre-Buddhaghosa reference(s) in Pali is probably: Mil 344. Also in a passage found only in Mil (S^c) 32 (after the verses cited above in n.10).

³⁰Mp II 189; III 382; Mp-ṭ II 189: *Abhidhamme āgatā kusalādikkhandhādibhedabhinnā dhammā Suttanta-piṭake pi otarantī ti dhammadharā ti Suttanta-piṭaka-dharā icc eva vuttaṃ; na hi ābhidhammikabhāvena vinā nippariyāyato Suttanta-piṭaka-ññūtā sambhavati. Dvemātikā-dharā ti bhikkhu-bhikkhuni-mātikā-vasena dve-mātikā-dharā ti vadanti; Vinayābhidhamma-mātikā-dharā ti yuttaṃ. Vism-mhṭ I (B^c) 141: Suttābhidhamma-saṅkhātassa dhammassa dhāraṇena dhammadharā. Vinayassa dhāraṇena Vinayadharā. Tesam yeva dhamma-vinayānaṃ mātikāya dhāraṇena mātikādharā.*

³¹A IV 238: *mātikāsampanna*. Or, does this mean “having good soil” from *mṛttikā* ‘clay, soil’. (It probably corresponds to *sammāsati* here). If it does derive from *māṭṛkā*, the meaning is perhaps “water source”, i.e. the field is “well-watered”.

In fact, the only place where the meaning of the word *mātikā* seems clear is in the *Vinaya-piṭaka*.³² Here it refers (in the plural) to a number of keywords or heading words for doing one of several activities connected with robes.³³ In canonical Pali, we should probably assume that *mātikā* is almost always nominative plural: “headings”.³⁴ The sense of summary or “table of contents” (in the singular) would be a subsequent development.

I don’t believe that this tells us anything about the origins of *abhidhamma*, although it does suggest, as Oskar von Hinüber points out, that there may be some influence of the technical vocabulary of “Buddhist law” here. Neither, I suppose, do most of the rare mentions of *abhidhamma* in early texts.³⁵ As has long been recognized, in context with *abhivīnaya* it undoubtedly means originally “concerning the *dhamma*”. Obviously, this is later extracted to give a name to an already prestigious (or aspiring) proto-*abhidhamma* literature.³⁶ The fact that this was done suggests to me that this literature was already well-developed before the name was adopted. Earlier it would simply have been classed as *dhamma*.

Frauwallner’s analysis of the Vibhaṅga

The *Vibhaṅga*, the second book of the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka*, has eighteen chapters referred to as *vibhaṅgas* “detailed analysis” and concerned with specific topics. The first fifteen *vibhaṅgas* contain a section referred to as the *Abhidhammabhājanīya* “belonging to *abhidhamma*” and in all but one of them that is followed by a *Pañhāpucchaka* (*pañha* + *āpucchaka*) or questionnaire section applying the *abhidhamma-mātikā* of the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* to the specific topic. In twelve cases these are preceded by one referred to as the *Suttantabhājanīya* “belonging to *suttanta*”. The last three *vibhaṅgas* are organized somewhat differently.

³²Vin I 255; 266; 309ff.; II 123(vl); III 196; 199; 204; V 136f.; 172ff.; cf. I 98 = V 86; IBH usually translates “grounds”.

³³Hinüber 1994, p. 116f.: *Stichwörter*.

³⁴The later sense is found at: Paṭi I 1–3; II 177; 242–246; 246 (vl); Mil 362–5; 416; vl to 296; Dhātuk 1; Dhs 124–133; Vibh 142; 245?; 305–18; 344–349; Pp 1–10; Paṭṭh II 449f.; 34 occurrences in Paṭṭh III & IV.

³⁵The exception is no doubt: Vin IV 144: *iṅha tvam suttante vā gāthāyo vā abhidhammaṃ vā pariyāpunassu, pacchā vinayaṃ pariyāpunissasi” ti bhaṇāti*. This must represent a stage at which both some of the verse literature preserved for us in the *Khuddaka-nikāya* and some *abhidhamma* had developed on a sufficient scale to warrant separate mention. Anderson 1999, p. 154ff.

³⁶I do not believe, however, that *Abhidhamma-piṭaka* is correctly translated as “the Basket of Things Relating to the Teaching”. The new name was adopted precisely because it was understood as or could be argued to mean “higher or superior *dhamma*”.

The basis for Frauwallner's explanation of the development of the *Vibhaṅga* is his theory of the *mātrkā*. That I shall turn to later. For now, it is sufficient to address the result of his method. He supposes (following Bareau³⁷) that the *Suttantabhājanīya* represents the earliest portion of each *vibhaṅga*, while the *Abhidhammabhājanīya* and the *Pañhāpucchaka* represent later additions. Moreover, he considers that two of the three last *vibhaṅgas* represent independent works that have been subsequently appended to the *Vibhaṅga*. Lastly, he points to the subject matter of the different *vibhaṅgas* as falling mainly into two groups. One group is the well-known seven sets which later tradition names as the *bodhipakkhiyadhammas*: “the *dhammas* which contribute to awakening” together with some additional related topics. I shall refer to these here as the Awakening sets, without trying to define a fixed number. The second group includes such things as the aggregates, elements, bases; I shall refer to these as the World sets.

In fact, contrary to Bareau and Frauwallner, it is just as possible to argue that it is precisely the *Abhidhammabhājanīya* that represents the earliest form of this work. Obviously *Suttanta* is older than *Abhidhamma*, but it would be really rather naïve to suppose that this necessarily means that *Suttantabhājanīya* is older than *Abhidhammabhājanīya*. In this connexion it is perhaps crucial to note that only the *Abhidhammabhājanīya* is complete. It would have been extremely difficult to add a *Pañhāpucchaka* for the *Paccayākāravibhaṅga* by the nature of its subject matter. The twenty two *indriyas* do not have any treatment as a collected group in the *suttas* and so no *Suttantabhājanīya* could be added. Similarly, for the five training rules.

What of the three last *vibhaṅgas*, two of which Frauwallner considers to be independent treatises which have been appended to the *Vibhaṅga*? The first of these is the *Ñāṇavibhaṅga*. Frauwallner has relatively little to say about this and what he does say is fairly unsympathetic — he speaks of the “dull and meaningless fashion” in which items are combined and talks of lists which “in their vapidity are of little importance for the development of the doctrine” (p. 46). However, there is more here than Frauwallner allows. In fact, the *Ñāṇavibhaṅga* begins with a rather similar list to the one which we have already seen in the *Rūpakaṇḍa* and in the *Khandhavibhaṅga* (p.14 above). This is the start of an *ekuttara* analysis, giving a number of distinct kinds of knowledge of the five sense discriminations (*viññāṇa*). What is interesting about the initial list of 42 items is that, unlike the previous list, this one is not taken directly from the *Abhidhammamātikā*. It is in

³⁷ Bareau 1951b, p. 27.

fact closely parallel to the list for *rūpa* and can only have originated in relationship to that. See Table Four below.

TABLE 4
COMPARISON OF SINGLE ITEMS IN
THE RŪPAKAṄḌA & THE ÑĀṄAVATTHU

ekavidhena rūpaṃ	ekavidhena ñāṇavatthu: pañca viññāṇā
1. na hetu	1. na hetu
2. ahetuka	2. ahetuka
3. hetuvippayutta	3. hetuvippayutta
4. sappaccaya	4. sappaccaya
5. saṅkhata	5. saṅkhata
6. rūp(iya)	6. arūpa
7. lokiya	7. lokiya
8. sāsava	8. sāsava
9. saṃyojaniya	9. saṃyojaniya
10. ganthaniya	10. ganthaniya
11. oghaniya	11. oghaniya
12. yoganiya	12. yoganiya
13. nīvaraṇiya	13. nīvaraṇiya
14. parāmatṭha	14. parāmatṭha
15. upādāniya	15. upādāniya
16. saṃkilesika	16. saṃkilesika
17. avyākata	17. avyākata
18. anārammaṇa	18. sārammaṇa
19. acetasika	19. acetasika
20. cittavippayutta	
21. nevavipākanavipākadhamma	20. vipāka 21. upādinnupādāniya
22. asaṃkiliṭṭhasaṃkilesika	22. asaṃkiliṭṭhasaṃkilesika
23. na savitakkasavicāra	23. na savitakkasavicāra
24. na avitakkavicāramatta	24. na avitakkavicāramatta
25. avitakkaavicāra	24. avitakkaavicāra
26. na pītisahagata	26. na pītisahagata
27. na sukkasahagata	
28. na upekkhāsahagata	
29. neva dassanena na bhāvanāya pahātabba	27. neva dassanena 28. na bhāvanāya pahātabba

30. neva dassanena na bhāvanāya pahātabbahetukā	29. neva dassanena na bhāvanāya pahātabbahetukā
31. nevācayagāmināpacayagāmin	30. nevācayagāmināpacayagāmin
32. nevasekkhanāsekkha	31. nevasekkhanāsekkha
33. paritta	32. paritta
34. kāmāvacara	33. kāmāvacara
35. na rūpāvacara	34. na rūpāvacara
36. na arūpāvacara	35. na arūpāvacara
37. pariyāpanna	36. pariyāpanna
38. no apariyāpanna	37. no apariyāpanna
39. aniyata	38. aniyata
40. aniyyānika	39. aniyyānika
41. uppanna	40. uppanna
42. chahi viññānehi viññeyya	41. manoviññānaviññeyya
43. anicca	42. anicca
44. jarābhibhūta	43. jarābhibhūta

The items shown in blue in the above table differ between the lists, generally for obvious reasons. Other differences are quite few. Three items which cannot apply to the five *viññāna* as a group are omitted;³⁸ one item which does not apply to all *rūpa* is added here.³⁹ Much more significantly, a number of triplets and couplets which might have been expected are missing.⁴⁰ (See Table Five below.) So this and the *rūpa* section have been constructed in close connexion.⁴¹ We may conclude thus far then that the *Ñāṇavibhaṅga* is not likely to have been an independent work. It is more probably part of the original portion of the *Vibhaṅga* together with the *Abhidhammabhājanīyas* of all or some of the previous 15 *vibhaṅgas*. This was also the view of André Bareaux.⁴²

³⁸They are: *cittavippayutta, na sukhasahagata, na upekkhāsahagata*.

³⁹*Upādiṅṅupādāniya*.

⁴⁰Missing both here and for singlefold *rūpa*: from the triplets — *majjhima*; from the couplets — (*no*) *citta, appitika, sauttara, saraṇa*. Missing but expected here: from the triplets — *parittārammaṇa, paccupannārammaṇa, anidassanaapaṭiṅgha*; from the couplets — *anidassana, apaṭiṅgha, ajjhattika, no upādā*.

⁴¹The anomalies might also be accounted for by supposing that some or all of these items had not yet been added to the *abhidhammāmātikā* at this point.

⁴²Bareaux 1951b, p. 27 n.42: “Car le *Ñāṇavibhaṅga*, seizième chapitre, a son parallèle dans les deux autres *Abhidharmapiṭaka*.”

TABLE 5
FIVE DISCRIMINATIONS COMPARED TO TRIPLETS & COUPLETS

tika		duka
	1. na hetū	1.
	2. ahetukā	2.
	3. hetuvippayuttā	3.
	4. sappaccayā	7.
	5. saṅkhatā	8.
	6. arūpā	11.
	7. lokiyā	12.
	8. sāsavā	15.
	9. saṃyojaniyā	21.
	10. ganthaniyā	27.
	11. oghaniyā	33.
	12. yoganiyā	39.
	13. nīvaraṇiyā	45.
	14. parāmatṭhā	51.
	15. upādāniyā	70.
	16. saṃkilesikā	76.
1.	17. avyākatā	
	18. sārammaṇā	55.
	19. acetasikā	57.
3.	20. vipākā	
4.	21. upādinnupādāniyā	cf. 68
5.	22. asaṃkiliṭṭhasaṃkilesikā	
6.	23. na savitakkasavicārā	cf. 87-88
6.	24. na avitakkavicāramattā	
6.	25. avitakkaavicārā	
	26. na pītisahagatā	90; cf. 89
8.	27. neva dassanena na bhāvanāya pahātabbā	
9.	28. neva dassanena na bhāvanāya pahātabbahetukā	
10.	29. nevācayagāmināpacayagāmino	
11.	30. nevasekkhanāsekkhā	
12.	31. parittā	
	32. kāmāvacarā	93.
	33. na rūpāvacarā	94.
	34. na arūpāvacarā	95.
	35. pariyāpannā	96.
	36. no apariyāpannā	

15.	37.	aniyatā	98.
	38.	aniyyānikā	97.
17.	39.	uppannā	
	40.	manoviññāṇaviññeyyā	?13
	41.	aniccā	
	42.	jarābhibhūtā	

The penultimate *Khuddakavatthuvibhaṅga* was considered by Frauwallner to be a part of his original core, largely on the basis of a parallel with a similar section in the *Dharmaskandha*. It is possible that this is correct, given the *ekuttara* arrangement. However, given its similarity to some of the material in the *Suttanta-mātikā*, it seems more likely that it has been added at the same time as that. If so, it may not have been part of the original Pali *Abhidhammapiṭaka*.

The final chapter of the *Vibhaṅga* is the *Dhammahadaya*. Frauwallner rightly points out that this contains three distinct sections.⁴³ I shall call them A, B, and C. The middle section B begins with a passage also found near the end of the *Nikkhepaṅḍa*.⁴⁴ The rest of the section is in a style which resembles the *Niddesa* and may perhaps represent the intrusion of a palm-leaf with a piece of an old commentary. If so, it represents evidence for the existence of an earlier written version of the *Nikkhepaṅḍa* with a written commentary.⁴⁵

The final section concludes with its own separate *uddāna*, which might lead one to suppose that it was originally a separate work. Frauwallner was in fact uncertain whether the sections I am calling A and C were originally one work or not. He believed that it was not in any case part of the original *Vibhaṅga*. As to this, I am less sure. *Dhammahadaya* C is partially based on *mātikā* categories.⁴⁶ Both sections utilize a list of world sets very close to that used in the *Cittuppādaṅḍa*.

⁴³He (rather inconveniently) gives references to the page numbers of the *Nāgarī* edition, instead of giving the PTS page numbers which are provided in the margin of that edition. The references he gives correspond to Vibh 401–420; 421– 426; 426–436.

⁴⁴Note also that the singlefold analysis for *rūpa* omits the last two *abhidhamma* couplets and reverses the order of the previous two. It may then be the case that some of the four final couplets are a later addition. If so, this passage may have originally been at the very end of the *Nikkhepaṅḍa*. It is commented on in the *Abhidhamma Commentary*. It is also found at Paṭi I 83f.

⁴⁵The oldest known Buddhist text appears to be an *avadāna* text in Gāndhāri radiocarbon dated to the second century B.C. See Falk 2011, p.19. According to Falk (email 6.4.14) the Ms contains copying errors that indicate it has been copied from another Ms.

⁴⁶The ten sections are based upon three couplets (55, 11, 12), five of the first six triplets (in order: 1, 2, 3, 4, 6) together with a fourfold and a fivefold list.

The difference, however, is perhaps significant. The *Dhammahadaya vibhaṅga* adds to the seven world sets used in the *Cittuppādakaṇḍa* the set of the four truths, but does not utilize any of the awakening sets used there.

TABLE 6
CONTENT OF THE 18 VIBHAṄGAS

vibhaṅgas	abhidhamma-bhājanīya	enlarged by:
1. khandha	<i>ekuttara</i> – to 10 or 11 +	<i>mātikā</i>
2. āyatana	<i>ekuttara</i> – <i>mana</i> + 3 <i>khandha</i>	<i>mātikā</i>
3. dhātu	<i>ekuttara</i> – 3 <i>khandha</i>	<i>mātikā</i>
4. sacca	moves <i>dhammas</i> between <i>saccas</i>	<i>lokuttara cittuppādas</i>
5. indriya	<i>ekuttara</i> – <i>mana</i>	<i>mātikā</i>
6. paccayākāra	16 × 9 types	all <i>cittuppādas</i>
7. satipaṭṭhāna	4 separately & as one <i>dhamma</i>	<i>lokuttara kusala</i> and <i>vipāka cittuppādas</i>
8. sammappadhāna	4 separately & as one <i>dhamma</i>	<i>lokuttara cittuppādas</i>
9. iddhipāda	4 separately & as four <i>dhammas</i>	<i>lokuttara cittuppādas</i>
10. bojjhaṅga	7 separately & as 7 <i>dhammas</i>	<i>lokuttara kusala</i> and <i>vipāka cittuppādas</i>
11. maggaṅga	eightfold/fivefold & as <i>dhammas</i>	<i>lokuttara kusala</i> and <i>vipāka cittuppādas</i>
12. jhāna	fourfold/fivefold	(a)rūpāvacara and <i>lokuttara cittuppādas</i>
13. appamañña	3 in 3 <i>jhānas</i> ; 1 in 4th <i>jhāna</i>	<i>rūpāvacara cittuppādas</i>
14. sikkhāpada	as <i>virati</i> , <i>cetanā</i> or 55 <i>dhammas</i>	eight <i>kusala cittuppādas</i>
15. paṭisambhidā	4 or 3 by object [<i>cittas</i>]	all <i>cittuppādas</i>
16. ñāṇa	<i>ekuttara</i> – to 10	<i>mātikā</i>
17. khuddakavatthu	<i>ekuttara</i> – to 10 + 108 & 62	? <i>duka-mātikā</i>
18. dhammahadaya (world sets)	A: B: intrusion? C: ten sections	? <i>cittuppāda-kaṇḍa</i> ? <i>mātikā</i>

In Part One, after an initial look at the questions as to whether the early Buddhist Canon(s) were originally structured on the basis of Piṭakas or of Nikāyas and how many distinct *Abhidha(r)mma-piṭakas* there would have originally been, I examine the theories concerning the development of the earlier Abhidhamma works developed by André Bareau and Ernst Frauwallner. I show that Frauwallner's work does not adequately understand the structure and contents of the *Rūpa-*

kaṇḍa of the *Dhammasaṅgaha*. In particular its relationship to the *Abhidhamma-mātikā* is not recognized. After some discussion of the origins and nature of *mātrkā* in the canonical literature, I look at Frauwallner's analysis of the *Vibhaṅga* and raise the question as to whether Bareau and Frauwallner are right to see the *Suttanta-bhājanīya* sections of that as earlier.

**PART TWO:
WHAT LIES BEHIND THE ABHIDHAMMA WE KNOW**

an original three or four part Abhidhammapiṭaka?

I now examine the core of the *Vibhaṅga* which emerges if the *Abhidhammabhājanīya* sections are considered more likely to be original. What is immediately striking if we tabulate the contents is that it falls sharply into two groups. (See Table Six above.) One group is constituted by the World sets of the first three and the fifth *vibhaṅga*, together with the *Nānavibhaṅga* and possibly the two final sections. The main features here are the use of an *ekuttara* method together with enlargement by utilizing the *abhidhamma-mātikā*. The second group includes all the groupings which could be classified as or with the Awakening sets, plus one or two additions. In these there is no sign of either the *ekuttara* method or the influence of the *mātikā*. Instead we see classification in terms of *dhammas* and *cittuppādas*. This is given in more detail in Tables Seven and Eight.

TABLE 7
WORLD SETS IN THE VIBHAṄGA

Vibhaṅga	Abhidhamma-bhājanīya	enlarged by:
1. khandha	ekuttara to 10/11 +	mātikā
2. āyatana	ekuttara: mana + 3 khandhas	mātikā
3. dhātu	ekuttara: 3 khandhas	mātikā
5. indriya	ekuttara: mana	mātikā
16. nāṇa	ekuttara to 10	mātikā
17. khuddakavatthu	ekuttara to 10/108/62	?duka-mātikā
18. dhammahadaya	Part C: 10 sections	?mātikā

TABLE 8
AWAKENING SETS IN THE VIBHAṄGA

Vibhaṅga	Abhidhamma-bhājanīya	enlarged by cittuppādas:
4. sacca	moves dhammas between saccas	two are lokuttara
6. paccayākāra	16 × 9 types	all
7. satipaṭṭhāna	4 separately & as one dhamma	lokuttara
8. sammappadhāna	4 separately & as one dhamma	lokuttara
9. iddhipāda	4 separately & as one dhamma	lokuttara
10. bojjhaṅga	7 separately & as 7 dhammas	lokuttara
11. maggaṅga	eightfold/fivefold & as dhammas	lokuttara
12. jhāna	fourfold/fivefold	(a)rūpāvacara & lokuttara
13. appamañña	3 in 3 jhānas; 1 in 4th jhāna	rūpāvacara
14. sikkhāpada	as virati, cetanā or 55 dhammas	8 kusala
15. paṭisambhidā	4 or 3 by object [cittas]	all

My hypothesis at this point is that these two groups represent a remainder from an earlier situation in which they were part of two separate works or sections. (I omit from consideration at this stage the *Puggalapaññatti* and the *Dhātukathā*.) If that were the case, then what we would have is something like the following:

TABLE 9
EARLY ABHIDHAMMA WORKS

Dhammasaṅgaha	Abhidhamma-mātikā A. Cittuppāda-kaṇḍa B. Rūpa-kaṇḍa C. Nikkhepa-kaṇḍa
Uncertain	17. Khuddakavatthu-vibhaṅga 18. Dhammahadaya-vibhaṅga
Vibhaṅga A World sets analysed by the <i>Abhidhamma-mātikā</i>	1. khandha (5) 2. āyatana (12) 3. dhātu (18) 5. indriya (22) 16. nāṇa (many)
Vibhaṅga B Awakening sets analysed by <i>Cittuppādas</i>	4. sacca (4) 6. paṭiccasamuppāda 7. satipaṭṭhāna (4) 8. sammappadhāna (4) 9. iddhipāda (4) 10. bojjhaṅga (7)

11. maggaṅga (8)
12. jhāna (4/5)
13. appamañña (4)
14. sikkhāpada (5)
15. paṭisambhidā (4)

It is clear from what we have already seen that the groups listed under *vibhaṅga* A are closely related to the *Abhidhammāmātikā*, while the *Cittuppāda*kaṇḍa and the *Rūpakaṇḍa* are intrusive in their present position. So we can further rearrange as follows:

TABLE 10
EARLY ABHIDHAMMA REARRANGED

World sets analysed by the <i>Abhidhammāmātikā</i> (now found in <i>Dhammasaṅgaha</i> and <i>Vibhaṅga</i> A)	Abhidhamma-mātikā = uddesa? Nikkhepa-kaṇḍa = niddesa? old commentary? = paṭiniddesa? khandha (5) old commentary? (Rūpa-kaṇḍa) āyatana (12) dhātu (18) indriya (22) ñāṇa (many)
Uncertain	17. Khuddakavatthu-vibhaṅga 18. Dhammahadaya-vibhaṅga
Awakening sets analysed by <i>Cittuppādas</i> (now found in <i>Vibhaṅga</i> B)	6. paṭiccasamuppāda 7. satipaṭṭhāna (4) 8. sammappadhāna (4) 9. iddhipāda (4) 10. bojjaṅga (7) 11. maggaṅga (8) 12. jhāna (4/5) 13. appamañña (4) 14. sikkhāpada (5) 15. paṭisambhidā (4) 16. sacca (4)

We have already seen the close connexion between the *Rūpakaṇḍa* and the *Rūpakhandhavibhaṅga*. The singlefold *mātikā* for the *Rūpakaṇḍa* is identical to the singlefold treatment of the *rūpa* aggregate. The latter then may simply be the source for the former. Since such a treatment would always have required a

more detailed explanation, we may infer the presence of an old commentary to the *Rūpa* aggregate material. What then of the *Cittuppādakaṇḍa*? Logically, we might expect that it would derive from the treatment in the same chapter of the four mental aggregates. That is in fact partially the case, but only partially.

The fundamental structure of the *Cittuppādakaṇḍa* is a division by the first triplet, which is then subdivided by the four levels (*kāmadhātu*, etc.) and where that is appropriate subdivided again by the second couplet (*sahetukaduka*). This is the precise analysis into twofold, threefold and fourfold that we do in fact find at the beginning of the *ekuttaras* for the mental aggregates. So the structure for the *Cittuppādakaṇḍa* has indeed been taken from there.⁴⁷

In fact, however, there is a simple explanation. If we look around for a source that could have contained all of the material on the *citta* arisings, there is in fact only one: the *Paṭiccasamuppādavibhaṅga*. That is slightly concealed in present-day editions, which tend to give only the first type of mentality in each group. But the commentaries are quite clear that you are meant to supply the remainder and indeed the whole treatment makes no sense without that. In that case, the work that I am calling *Vibhaṅga* 'B' began with a full treatment of the *cittuppādas*. Subsequent *vibhaṅgas* can then refer to that in their own treatment, which inevitably then becomes abbreviated. Of course, it is quite possible that much of the material was originally compiled into the *Paṭiccasamuppādavibhaṅga* from other individual *vibhaṅgas*, e.g. the eight skilful *cittuppādas* may derive from the *Sikkhāpadavibhaṅga*, and so on.

The kind of arrangement postulated here has some parallel in the *Abbhantaramātikā* to the *Dhātukathā*.

⁴⁷It would also be possible to suppose that the remaining material comes from the postulated old commentary to the *Khandhavibhaṅga* material. Or, more probably, that could have been an intermediate stage.

TABLE 11
ABBHANTARA-MĀTIKĀ OF THE DHĀTUKATHĀ

1.	5 khandha
2.	12 āyatana
3.	18 dhātu
4.	4 sacca
5.	22 indriya
6.	paṭiccasamuppāda
7.	4 satipaṭṭhāna
8.	4 sammappadhāna
9.	4 iddhipāda
10.	4 jhāna
11.	4 appamañña
12.	5 indriya
13.	5 bala
14.	7 bojjhaṅga
15.	8 magga
16.	phassa vedanā saññā cetanā citta
	adhimokkha manasikāra
17.	tika-mātikā
18.	duka-mātikā

Note that the sixteenth section is effectively a list of single items, followed by threefold and twofold analysis. The list falls clearly into three groups, but if we assume that the third group belongs originally with the first, we would have something quite similar to what I have proposed.

In putting forward this analysis I am obviously, like Frauwallner and others before him, influenced by the arrangement of the early *abhidhamma* works surviving in Chinese translation. So let us now turn briefly to that.

TABLE 12
THE FOURFOLD *ŚĀRIPUTRĀBHIDHARMA
(after Lamotte p. 180; Yoshimoto 1996; Cox 1995 p. 7f. & n.)

A: With Questions	B: Without Questions	C: *Saṃyukta- saṃgraha	D: *Prasthāna or *Nidāna
World sets	Path sets		

Chinese preface to the translation of the almost certainly Dharmaguptaka **Dirghāgama* refers to an *Abhidharma* in four sections and five recitations:

A: With Questions	B: Without Questions	C: *Saṃyukta- saṃgraha	D: *Prasthāna or *Nidāna
-------------------	----------------------	---------------------------	-----------------------------

The Chinese translation of the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya refers to an *Abhidharma* in five (or four) sections:

A: *Sasaṃcodana- viveka	B: *Asaṃcodana- viveka	C: *Saṃyoga	D: *Prayoga	E: *Sthāna
----------------------------	---------------------------	-------------	-------------	------------

The Chinese translation of a Vinaya work (Haimavata or Dharmagupta)

A: With Questions	B: Without Questions	C: *Saṃgraha	D: *Saṃyoga	E: *Sthāna
-------------------	-------------------------	--------------	-------------	------------

These must all be different ways of referring to versions of the same work. Slightly more aberrant is the **Nandimitrāvadāna*:

A: *Saṃgraha	*Ṣaṭpraśnaka	C: *Saṃyoga	D: *Prasthāna
--------------	--------------	-------------	---------------

The Chinese translation of the **Śāriputrābhidharma* is in four parts. This closely corresponds to the description of an *abhidharma* in four sections and five recitations, found in the preface to the Chinese *Dirghāgama*. Analogous *abhidharmas* in five sections are referred to in the Chinese translations of the *Dharmaguptaka Vinaya* and of a *Vinaya* text which is variously attributed to the Haimavatas or to the Dharmaguptakas.⁴⁸ It has long been known that the subject matter

⁴⁸Yoshimoto 1996; Cox 1995, 7f. & n. Slightly more aberrant is the **Nandimitrāvadāna* with four sections: A. **Saṃgraha*; B. **Ṣaṭpraśnaka*; C. **Saṃyoga*; D. **Prasthāna*.

of the third section is closely related to that of the Pali *Dhātukathā*.⁴⁹ It is this third section which is subdivided into two to make the fivefold versions. It is possible that the original structure was fourfold, but the final section corresponds in title to the *Paṭṭhāna* and the *Jñānaprasthāna* which, as we have them, are both later works. We should remember also the Dharmaguptaka penchant for fourfold arrangements — as has been mentioned, their *Vinayapiṭaka* and their *Suttapiṭaka* were also arranged in four sections.⁵⁰

The first and second sections deal precisely with the World sets and the Awakening sets. According to Yoshimoto, the first section is analysed throughout in a twofold, threefold and fourfold way.⁵¹ This obviously parallels the triplet and couplet *mātikā*. So it is very natural to suppose that this and the Pali *abhidhamma* works have, as might be expected, a shared ancestry.

We might then suppose that the Pali *Abhidhammapiṭaka* originally looked like this:

TABLE 13
EARLY RECENSION OF THE PALI ABHIDHAMMA?

A. With Questions	B. Without Questions	C. Saṅgha-sampayoga?
Abhidhamma-mātikā	Awakening Sets ⁵³	Dhātukathā:
Nikkhepaṅga	Puggalapaññatti?	Saṅgha/asaṅgha
World Sets ⁵²		Sampayutta/vippayutta
Khuddakavatthu?		

I will postpone for the moment any attempt to explore the pre-history of this.

the subsequent development of the canonical abhidhamma literature

I turn now to the subsequent development of the canonical literature. We can take the hypothesis so far advanced as Phase 1. At some later point the need was perhaps felt to link all this more clearly to the earlier *Suttanta* material and at the

⁴⁹Kimura; La Vallée Poussin 1924, vol. I, pp. LX–LXII. According to Bareau 1951b, p. 27, the parallel is “*assez lointain*”, but exact in the *Prakaraṅga*.

⁵⁰Przyluski 1927, pp. 353–361; Bareau 1950.

⁵¹Yoshimoto 1996.

⁵²World sets = *khandha*; *āyatana*; *dhātu*; *indriya*; *ñāṇa*.

⁵³*satipaṭṭhāna*; *sammappadhāna*; *iddhipāda*; *bojjhaṅga*; *maggaṅga*; and probably also: *jhāna*; *appamañña*; *sikkhāpada*; *paṭisambhidā*; *paṭicasamuppāda*; *sacca*.

same time to point up the contrasts. It was then that the *Suttanta* couplets were added to the *mātikā* and to the *Nikkhepakāṇḍa*. We can call this Phase 2A.

Frauwallner himself considered the *Suttanta* couplets and their commentary in the *Nikkhepakāṇḍa* to be a later addition.⁵⁴ He in fact considered that both were inserted in Dhs by the redactors of the *Abhidhammapiṭaka* from a Pali work corresponding to the *Saṅgītiparyāya* of the Sarvāstivādins i.e. an old commentary on the *Saṅgītisutta*. But I did not earlier give in full my reasons for rejecting Bareaux's and Frauwallner's claim that the core portion of the *Vibhaṅga* is constituted by the *Suttantabhājanīya* sections. Frauwallner lays considerable emphasis on the parallel with the *Dharmaskandha* here. His essential point is that the two texts both proceed by presenting a *sūtra* text and then subsequently explaining it.⁵⁵ He considers that the *Vibhaṅga* is using the same method, except that the typical setting of the *sūtra*, the *nidāna*, has been omitted. This method of treatment is, in his view, unusual and rare in both *Abhidharmas* and is therefore an important feature of correspondence between the two texts.

I am doubtful as to whether one work out of seven in each case can really be called "rare". The method itself is not in fact unusual. In Pali we have the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*, effectively an *abhidhamma* work, and commentarial material such as the *Niddesa* and parts of the *Peṭakopadesa* and *Nettipakaraṇa*. Indeed, the *Saṅgītiparyāya* itself in the Sarvāstivādin *Abhidhammapiṭaka* is a type of commentary. But Frauwallner has in mind a particular method of comment.

It is important to note that in fact such a method is adopted in only five of the eighteen *vibhaṅgas* — all of them concerned with the Awakening sets. It is precisely these which Frauwallner singled out as particularly close to the *Dharmaskandha*.⁵⁶ There is no evidence that such a method has ever been adopted for the World sets. For the remaining *Suttantabhājanīyas*, what we have is rather a presentation of the viewpoint of the *suttantas*, followed by a more detailed exposition in question and answer format. It is important to note that this is a presentation of the *Suttanta* viewpoint as an *ābhidhammika* might see it. They often contain the kind of *abhidhamma*-like elements which are usually considered evidence of lateness when actually found in *suttas*. We can note in particular the presence of a number of the registers for particular *dhammas*.⁵⁷

⁵⁴p. 83; cf. p. 54.

⁵⁵p. 19.

⁵⁶p. 17, n.14. The sets in question are those of *vibhaṅgas* 10–13.

⁵⁷e.g. the register for the three *lokuttara indriya* is the same as in Dhs.

We have already seen that two of the *vibhaṅgas* do not have a *suttantabhājanīya* at all. At most, then, the second section of our postulated early recension, i.e. the section “Without Questions”, could have contained old *suttantabhājanīyas* in a more commentarial style. Even if they did, we can suppose that at the same point that the *Suttanta* couplets were added to the couplet *mātikā*, new more *abhidhamma*-style *suttantabhājanīyas* were added to at least the World sets, and probably some of the Awakening sets were modified in the same direction. I have called this Phase 2A to distinguish it from Phase 2B when the *pañhāpucchakas* and the *Atthuddhārakaṇḍa* were added (see below). By the conclusion of Phase 2, however, we would, I believe, have had the *Dhammasaṅgaha* and *Vibhaṅga* substantially as we have them now.

That the final commentarial section – the *Atthuddhārakaṇḍa* – to the *Dhammasaṅgaha* is a later addition has in fact long been recognized. Indeed, in 1885 Edward Müller, the PTS editor of this work, already points out the distinctive nature of this work and the fact that it substitutes the term *nibbāna* for the term “unconstructed element” used in the rest of the *Dhammasaṅgaha*. This proves a rather acute observation. The term *asaṅkhatā dhātu* is frequent in the *Nikkhepa-kaṇḍa* and otherwise found almost nowhere else in the *Abhidhammapiṭaka*. Apart from a passage quoted from the *Majjhimanikāya* in the *Kathāvatthu*, the only other place in which the phrase is found is in the *Vibhaṅga*: three times in the *Āyatanavibhaṅga* and three times in the *Dhātuvibhaṅga*, i.e. precisely in the World sets.⁵⁸

Further indications of the lateness of this section were identified by Caroline Rhys Davids in an Appendix to her translation of Dhs.⁵⁹ (She in fact did not translate the *Atthuddhārakaṇḍa*.) Frauwallner links the *Commentarial section* to the *Cittuppādaṅga* and it does indeed utilize the system of the *cittuppāda* from there. Caroline Rhys Davids was however right to emphasize the link to later literature shown by the use of the ablatival forms: *kusalato*, *vipākato* and *kiriyato*.⁶⁰ This is the terminology of the commentaries of a later period. Also striking is the

⁵⁸ It is found once also in the passage of the *Dhammahadaya-vibhaṅga* which is an intrusion from the *Nikkhepa-kaṇḍa* (Vibh 421). Elsewhere it is found at: D III 274 (*Dasuttara*); M III 63 (*Bahudhātuka*); Paṭis I 84 in a passage from the *Nikkhepa-kaṇḍa*. cf. also Nett 48.

⁵⁹ Rhys Davids 1900, pp. 367–369.

⁶⁰ *Kusalato* and *kiriyato* are not found in the *Abhidhammapiṭaka* outside the final section of Dhs, except in a late addition to the *Paṭisambhidā-vibhaṅga* (Vibh 303). Similarly, *vipākato* is only found in the *Dhammahadaya-vibhaṅga* and twice in the *hetu-gocchaka* of the *Nikkhepa-kaṇḍa*.

use of the terms *kiriyaṅvyākata* and *vipākāvyākata* so typical of the *Paṭṭhāna*.⁶¹ We can also note that the structure of the *gocchakas* in the couplet *mātikā* seems to imply the absence of the kind of analysis given in the *Aṭṭhakathākaṇḍa*.

We can be confident then that the *Atthuddhārakaṇḍa* is a later addition. What then of the *pañhāpucchakas*? We cannot easily analyse individual word forms there, because most of the vocabulary is taken from the *mātikā*. It does seem clear that some items in the *pañhāpucchakas* imply the detailed analysis of *cittuppādas* given in the *Atthuddhārakaṇḍa*. An example of this would be the case of *bahiddhārammaṇa* in the *Jhānavibhaṅga*. In the *Nikkhepakaṇḍa* the *ajjhatta* triplet is explained simply: internal or personal *dhammas* are those of oneself, while external *dhammas* are those of other people. In the following *ajjhattārammaṇa* triplet, *bahiddhārammaṇa dhammas* are simply those whose object is the *dhammas* of other people. However, in the *Atthuddhārakaṇḍa*, these triplets are explained in more detail. So we learn that all *dhammas* can be internal or external with the exception of *nibbāna* and *rūpa* that is not included in the *indriyas*. It follows from this that the transcendent paths and fruits which have only *nibbāna* as their object must always be classified as having an external object. And the *pañhāpucchakas* consistently classify in this way.

But why are the other *rūpāvacara jhānas* said invariably to have an external object? They cannot have been thought to have had *nibbāna* as their object. So the natural assumption would be that their object is *anindriyabaddharūpa*, although that is understood by the commentators to mean external inanimate matter. In fact, the commentators unanimously explain that the object of these *jhānas* is a concept, but this doesn't seem to be clearly stated anywhere in the Canon itself. However one takes this, it is clear that the discussion of especially the *ārammaṇa* triplets in the *pañhāpucchakas* presupposes the details given in the *Atthuddhārakaṇḍa*.⁶²

Given the close connexion of the two, we could presume that the *pañhāpucchaka* appendixes to the *vibhaṅgas* and the *Atthuddhārakaṇḍa* appendix to the *Dhammasaṅgaha* have been added at the same time.

⁶¹ *Kiriyaṅvyākata* is also found at Paṭis I 79 ff. in a section giving an early version of the *citta-vīthi* and in the later parts of the *Kathāvatthu* (from Kvu 444 (*anusayakathā*) onwards). It is found only once in Dhs outside the *Atthuddhārakaṇḍa*: Dhs §1062. In Vibh it is found only in the last three *Vibhaṅgas*.

⁶² Note in particular the special treatment of skilful and *kiriya* fourth *jhāna*.

a new proposal

I have up to this point been operating on the basis of my own initial hypothesis that the *suttantabhājanīyas* are late. Frauwallner’s hypothesis, of course, was that they were early. It is perhaps possible to combine the advantages from both positions. Originally, we have two works or sections. (Table Fourteen) The first “with questions” consisted of *Mātikā* followed by their *Vibhaṅga*. This would closely parallel the arrangement of the *Vinayapiṭaka*. Appended to or part of that *vibhaṅga* were the World sets with their questionnaire sections. The second “without questions” consisted of a detailed account of conditioned origination with an explanation of how it operated in different *cittuppādas*. This was followed by an expanded version of the Awakening sets, each with its own *suttanta*- and *abhidhammabhājanīya*.

The advantage of combining the two positions is that for the *Abhidhamma* “with questions” the *suttantabhājanīya* is indeed a later addition, as I have suggested. For the *Abhidhamma* “without questions” the *suttantabhājanīya* portions are at least somewhat older, as Frauwallner believed. It remains possible that they are no older than the accompanying *abhidhammabhājanīya* and were constructed by the *ābhidhammikas* to contrast their understanding with that of the *Suttantas*.

TABLE 14
THE EARLY RECENSION – AN ALTERNATIVE HYPOTHESIS

A. With Questions (World sets analysed by the Abhidhamma-mātikā)	B. Without Questions (Awakening sets analysed by Cittuppādas)
Abhidhamma-mātikā Vibhaṅga to the Mātikā Nikkhepakaṇḍa (old commentary?) khandha (5) old commentary? pañhâpucchaka āyatana (12) pañhâpucchaka dhātu (18) pañhâpucchaka indriya (22) pañhâpucchaka	6. paṭiccasamuppāda a) suttanta-bhājanīya b) abhidhamma-bhājanīya 7. satipaṭṭhāna (4) a) suttanta-bhājanīya b) abhidhamma-bhājanīya 8. sammappadhāna (4) a) suttanta-bhājanīya b) abhidhamma-bhājanīya 9. iddhipāda (4) a) suttanta-bhājanīya b) abhidhamma-bhājanīya 10. bojjhaṅga (7)

<p>ñāna (many) pañhāpucchaka? Khuddakavatthu?</p>	<p>a) suttanta-bhājanīya b) abhidhamma-bhājanīya</p> <p>11. maggaṅga (8) a) suttanta-bhājanīya b) abhidhamma-bhājanīya</p> <p>12. jhāna (4/5) a) suttanta-bhājanīya b) abhidhamma-bhājanīya</p> <p>13. appamañña (4) a) suttanta-bhājanīya b) abhidhamma-bhājanīya</p> <p>14. sikkhāpada (5) a) suttanta-bhājanīya b) abhidhamma-bhājanīya</p> <p>15. paṭisambhidā (4) a) suttanta-bhājanīya b) abhidhamma-bhājanīya</p> <p>16. sacca (4) a) suttanta-bhājanīya b) abhidhamma-bhājanīya</p> <p>Puggalapaññatti?</p>
---	---

Uncertain are:

17. Khuddakavatthu-vibhaṅga
18. Dhammahadaya-vibhaṅga

Once the decision was taken to integrate the two, then the two main changes follow logically. The World sets were moved in with the Awakening sets and an attempt was made to provide *pañhāpucchakas* and *suttantabhājanīyas* throughout. To do this effectively, it would have been necessary to clarify some of the hitherto undeveloped details of the *mātikā* explanation. This was done in two ways. The first major change was to introduce systematic accounts of *cittuppādas* and *rūpas* between the *Mātikā* and the *Nikkhepaṅgaṇḍa*, taking the material mainly from the first World set and the account of conditioned origination at the head of the Awakening sets. The second change was to replace any existing commentary to the *Nikkhepaṅgaṇḍa* with an updated one explaining the relationship between the *Mātikā* and the new material.

If this alternative hypothesis should prove correct, then it would seem highly likely that all these changes took place at one specific point.

COMPARISON OF THE POSTULATED EARLY ABHIDHAMMA
WITH THE NORTHERN SOURCES
TABLE 14 WITH QUESTIONS

Precursor to Pali works	*Śāriputrābhidharma	Dharmaskandha (second part)
Mātikā + Nikkhepaṅga khandha āyatana dhātu indriya ñāṇa khuddakavatthu dhammahadaya	āyatana dhātu khandha sacca indriya bojjaṅga 3 akusalamūla 3 kusalamūla 4 mahābhūta	khuddakavatthu† āyatana indriya khandha dhātu paṭīcasamuppāda†

TABLE 15
WITHOUT QUESTIONS

Precursor to Pali works	*Śāriputrābhidharma	Dharmaskandha (first part)
paṭīcasamuppāda satipaṭṭhāna sammappadhāna iddhipāda bojjaṅga maggāṅga jhāna appamañña sikkhāpada paṭisambhidā sacca	dhātu kamma puggala ñāṇa paṭīcasamuppāda satipaṭṭhāna sammappadhāna iddhipāda jhāna maggā akusalā dhammā	sikkhāpada sotāpatti-aṅga † aveccappasāda sāmaññaphala paṭipadā ariyavaṃsa sammappadhāna iddhipāda satipaṭṭhāna sacca jhāna appamañña āruppa samādhībhāvanā bojjaṅga

† omitted in seventh chapter of Prakaraṇa

It is perhaps useful at this point to note the parallels with the two closest works of the North-western *abhidha(r)mma* traditions. (Tables 14–15) I have put all

items in Pali, as we do not know the language of the **Śāriputrābhidharma* and the items from the *Dharmaskandha* are in any case restorations from Chinese. The items marked in red are found in all three cases. The *khuddakavatthu* is missing in the “With Questions” section of the **Śāriputrābhidharma*, but perhaps has its correspondence in the final item of the “Without Questions” section: *akusalā dhammā*. The two items: *sacca* and *bojjhaṅga* are given in the “With Questions” section of the **Śāriputrābhidharma*, but are included with the Awakening Sets in the other two works. This looks like a late amendment — from some points of view the truths belong with the World Sets, while the *bojjhaṅgas* have been joined with the indriyas. Of course, the *indriyas* are a World Set if one thinks of the 22, but an Awakening Set if one thinks of the 5. The only anomaly in the *Dharmaskandha* list is the *paṭiccasamuppāda*, but this begins the *Dharmaskandha* in the extant Sanskrit fragments (followed immediately by *upāsakasya śikṣāpada*) and so is probably just a mistake in the Chinese translation.

Similarly, in the “Without Questions” section those which I count as in all three works are given in red, those in two of the three in blue. It is possible that the *paṭisambhidā* set in the first column is a late addition to the Pali tradition. The four initial items of the “Without Questions” section of the **Śāriputrābhidharma* have their correspondence in the *Puggalapaññatti* and in the final part of the *Dhammsaṅgaha*. We can note too that there are a few extra items in the list from the *Dharmaskandha*. André Bareau comments on the fact that the seven last chapters of the **Śāriputrābhidharma* do not have a *pañhāpucchaka*.⁶³

The most plausible explanation of the early origin of all of this would seem to be the following. Just as the *Khandhakas* and *Parivāra* are sometimes considered as *abhivinaya* i.e. an additional portion or appendix to the *Vinaya* (i.e. both *Vibhaṅga*), so perhaps at some point there were *abhidhamma* appendices created by the Saṃyuttabhāṅakas and Aṅguttarabhāṅakas to their own *Nikāyas*, each using their own typical methodology. Subsequently, these were removed from their original context and collected into the earliest version of the *Abhidha(r)mma-piṭaka*.

I now turn to a different aspect of Frauwallner’s views.

⁶³Bareau 1951b, p. 27 n. 41.

PART THREE
FRAUWALLNER & THE DEVELOPMENT OF
EUROPEAN SCHOLARSHIP

the dating of the Pali abhidhamma works

Frauwallner declares: "... the works of the Pāli *Abhidharma* — apart from the oldest core of texts — were written in the period between 200 B.C. and A.D. 200 in the mother country and were brought to Ceylon from there." (p. 42)

It is possible that this closing date is intended to accommodate in particular the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*, which Frauwallner believed to be the last work of the Pali *abhidhamma* to be added to the Canon, albeit in the *Khuddakanikāya* rather than in the *Abhidhammapiṭaka*. If so, I cannot share his reasoning. The *Paṭisambhidāmagga* does not know the system of the *Paṭṭhāna* in its final form.⁶⁴ The latest substantial elements in the *Paṭisambhidāmagga* must be in fact earlier than the *Paṭṭhāna*.

Frauwallner's late dating is in fact dependent upon Sylvain Lévi's argument for a late date of the *Niddesa*.⁶⁵ Lévi showed that the *Niddesa* had geographical knowledge of locations in South-East Asia which were not known to classical writers before Ptolemy in the second century A.D. Since he also showed that the *Niddesa* lacked knowledge of the eastern coast of India, this might argue for an early date for the *Niddesa*. In any case, Roman ships did not sail further east because they could not do so and still catch the monsoon in both directions. So sailing further east meant a very substantial and uneconomic extension to the duration of the voyage.⁶⁶ Given that they embarked cargoes in southern India, it is unlikely that they could easily have obtained information about locations much further east. Middlemen are notoriously reluctant to tell their buyers much about their sources!

In any case Frauwallner seems subsequently to have modified his view. He is perhaps initially influenced by the late dates adopted in Bareaux's early work, before carrying out his own analysis of the Pali works. In 1971 he stated:

⁶⁴Paṭis II 49–55; 59f.; 73–77 knows five *paccayas*: *sahajāta-*, *aññamañña-*, *nissaya-*, *sampayutta-* and *vippayutta-* (perhaps *hetu* is implied). But this is likely to be based upon an earlier system of *paccayas*, given the obvious omissions.

⁶⁵Rejected in Norman 1983, p. 86f. See also: Sarkar 1977; Sarkar 1981; Stargardt 1990, p. 43; Ray 2000 [1994].

⁶⁶Bopearachchi 1997, p. xviii.

“... since ... these texts predate the redaction of the *Abhidharmapiṭaka* in which they were included, I would like to assign them a date of between 250–50 B.C.” (p. 125)

It seems clear from this that Frauwallner does not intend to give so late a date to the actual canonical works of the *Abhidhammapiṭaka*, only to the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*.⁶⁷ So it is unfortunate that von Hinüber cites only the later dating, as if for the canonical *abhidhamma* works.⁶⁸ Frauwallner does perhaps then intend to accept the writing down of the Canon in the first century B.C. as a closure date.

Elsewhere I have discussed what texts were written down with particular reference to the works of the *Khuddakanikāya*.⁶⁹ Regardless of that, the works preserved since time memorial (as it were) were the four *Nikāyas* together with the *Pātimokkha*, its *Vibhaṅga* and the *Khandhakas*. Major institutions of the Saṅgha existed to preserve these orally by means of group chanting. The decision to write them down officially had to be a major step. Nothing prevents the writing down of commentaries and *sāstras* long before this. Most probably, nothing prevented individuals from writing down particular *suttas* and so on for their own use — in larger monasteries at least. In small monasteries and for peripatetic monks, it must at first have been difficult or impossible to obtain writing materials.⁷⁰

There must have been a council of some kind to establish the standard form of the Canon we know. It could not possibly be a hole in the corner minor event. Anyone who suggests that cannot have considered just what a major undertaking this would have been. There is no plausibility in the suggestion that this could be a local activity of a small group. It can only have been carried out under a royal or princely aegis. We can see this as associated with the writing down of the texts somewhere in the region of Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh. Or, we could see it as the Council in Ceylon which authorized those texts, thereby establishing a new canonical standard and eventually creating the Tambapaṇṇiya school as a group separate from other Vibhajjavādins.

But, quite clearly, there are those who will reject the idea of a council and suppose instead that the texts were written down piecemeal over a long period.

⁶⁷ Also probably to additions at the end of Kv and similar intrusions.

⁶⁸ Hinüber 1996, p. 64. OvH has perhaps not realized that Frauwallner’s dating depends on the late date for the *Niddesa* (which he had earlier discussed cautiously: p. 58f.).

⁶⁹ Cousins 2013.

⁷⁰ This might not be the case in the North-West, where writing had probably been in use much longer.

I think this is quite incompatible with the kind of *Abhidhammapiṭaka* which we have. But, nonetheless, let us consider what other options we have to establish a dating for the Pali canonical *abhidhamma* works. I believe that we can, in the following way. For this we have to proceed backwards from the time of the commentaries.

The date of Buddhaghosa remains uncertain, since there is no good reason to accept the very late traditions that place him in the fifth century A.D. Petra Kieffer-Pülz has shown evidence that the Vinaya commentary probably dates from the fourth century A.D.⁷¹ She in fact concluded that the writing of the *Samantapāsādikā* was completed in 387 A.D. I believe this to be plausible. The *Vinaya* and *Abhidhamma commentaries* are probably works of the school of Buddhaghosa rather than actual writings of the famous commentator himself. On the evidence of the colophons, etc. we can suppose that Buddhaghosa wrote the *Visuddhimagga* and at least presided over the compilation of the four *Āgama* commentaries. He probably then wrote his works no later than the fourth century A.D.

No figure later than the reign of king Vasabha is mentioned in the authentic commentaries of Buddhaghosa. Even in the works of the “school of Buddhaghosa” there is only one possible later reference, i.e. in the *Vinaya commentary*, which refers to a King Mahāsenā. But the story is otherwise unknown in the early sources and may easily not refer to the historical king Mahāsenā. Or, it may have been added by the fourth century *Vinaya* commentator, since it would certainly be to Mahāsenā’s discredit.

The *Abhidhamma commentary*, which was written at the specific request of “*bhikkhu* Buddhaghosa”, gives a detailed account of controversies concerned with the detailed working out of the *Paṭṭhāna* system, as it applies to resultant *citta*. These discussions are attributed to the views of named individuals: *tipiṭaka-Cūlanāga-tthera*, *Moravāpivāsī Mahādatta-tthera*, and *tipiṭaka-Mahādhammarakkhita-tthera*. It is quite clear that the old Sinhalese commentaries prior to Buddhaghosa already contained accounts of these debates. Since they presume

⁷¹Kieffer-Pülz 1992, pp. 163–167. Hinüber 1996, p. 102f.; 142f. has a different view. Part of the problem here is that he dates the *Niddesa commentary* (Nidd-a) of Upasena to the ninth century. I am not really convinced by his arguments for this, but he goes on to claim that Nidd-a quotes Dhammapāla and thereby establishes that Dhammapāla is earlier than the ninth century. This, however, appears to be an error. He cites Nidd-a I 177–184 with reference to Ud-a 128–155. But the same passage is found in the *Paṭisambhidā-magga commentary* (I 207–13), the work of Mahānāma in the sixth century A.D. It is far more likely that Nidd-a is quoting Paṭis-a (or vice versa), since these works have many similarities.

the existence of the *Paṭṭhāna* system, we can be sure that at the date these *ābhidhammikas* lived, the *Paṭṭhāna* system had already been established in general.⁷² It is certain that the commentaries situate these elders in the reigns of Vaṭṭagāmini and his successor.

The post-canonical *abhidhamma* discussions which we would expect immediately after the establishing of the *Abhidhammapiṭaka* in its present form are then precisely located to the first century B.C. Moreover, what is depicted there is plainly a time of great interest in *abhidhamma* discussion. Again, the major work involved in establishing the *Abhidhammapiṭaka* in its present form could only have taken place in such a period.

To add to this, we should note that several controversies in the later parts of the *Kathāvatthu* refer to the *paccayas* and the *paccaya-kathā* in particular seems to clearly presuppose the *Paṭṭhāna-niddesa*.⁷³ It is quite possible, however, that some *kathā* have been added to Kv at a very late date. Similarly, the *Parivāra* knows a number of *paccayas*, but again the date is disputed.⁷⁴

the development of European scholarship

In the first volume of his history of Indian philosophy (published in 1953) Frauwallner lays some stress on the standard form of what we are calling the Awakening sets as likely to be the oldest form of Buddhism.⁷⁵

The first to develop the notion of the importance of the lists subsequently referred to as *mātrkā* was probably André Bareau.⁷⁶ He gives a fairly clear statement of his position in an article published in 1951.⁷⁷ I will translate the whole paragraph as his work on this has remained remarkably little known:

“The result of an examination of the three complete works which have come down to us and of some brief summaries⁷⁸ is that all the

⁷²Mori 1989, 121–136.

⁷³Kv 508ff.; cf. 313; 618ff.

⁷⁴Vin V 173: *anantara-*, *samanantara-*, *nissaya-*, *upanissaya-*, *purejāta-*, *pacchājāta-* and *sahajāta-*. This could be based upon an earlier set of *paccayas*, but in fact many of the missing ones could not have been used here, e.g. because they are purely mental. So the full set is probably implied.

⁷⁵Frauwallner 1953, p. 174ff. = Trsl. p. 138ff.

⁷⁶Bureau 1951b.

⁷⁷Bureau 1951a, p. 4f.; cf. Bureau 1951b, p. 11.

⁷⁸In a footnote he refers to T1509, p. 70ab (i.e. the *Upadeśa*) and to Lamotte's translation: Lamotte 1944, p. 105–114; to Przyluski 1923, p. 322f.; Przyluski 1927, *passim*.

Abhidharmapiṭakas contain certain parts that are similar: the list of *dharmas* and their definitions; the *defining and dividing up between the different dharmas of the skandha, āyatana, dhātu, satya, indriya, smṛtyupasthāna, samyakpradhāna, ṛddhipāda, bodhyaṅga, dhyāna, jñāna, pratyāya (sic), mārgāṅga*; the list of *dharmas* which are *samprayukta* and *saṃgraha*; often a list of *pudgalas* and a work containing refutations of heresies. That did not prevent the general structure of these works from varying considerably between each other. Likewise, the details of each of these parts differed greatly, and that is more serious because it here concerns precisely those numerous propositions, regarding which the sects were in opposition to one another. We might be able to fill these gaps to a certain degree, thanks to various documents which cite heresies, that is to say extraneous opinions, but we would obtain in that way only a reconstruction that would be very partial and very doubtful.”

We may note that the list of thirteen groupings given here is in large part made up of precisely those which I am calling the World sets and the Awakening sets.

This no doubt influenced A.K. Warder when in 1961 in his PTS edition of Kassapa’s commentary (c. A.D. 1200) on the *mātikā* to the seven canonical *abhidhamma* works, he set forth his theory of the development of *abhidhamma* literature from an original *mātikā* of twenty one items.⁷⁹

There are two main sources for what he says. The first is a Sarvāstivādin account, found in the *Kṣudrakavastu* and in the *Aśokāvadāna*, of the First Communal Recitation. There we are told that Kāśyapa was responsible for the recitation of the **Matrkāpiṭaka*. Its contents are listed as twenty one items beginning with the standard seven Awakening sets. The list was known to him from the translations of Rockhill and Przyluski.⁸⁰ The second main source was the account of the contents of the *Dharmaskandha* given by Takakusu in 1904–5.⁸¹ In fact, Nyanatiloka had already pointed out in 1939 the similarities between the *Vibhaṅga* and the *Dharmaskandha*, but Warder probably did not know this.⁸²

⁷⁹Warder 1961, p. xx ff.

⁸⁰Rockhill 1884, p. 160; Przyluski 1923. See also: Przyluski 1927, p. 45f. and, for a more recent translation of the list, Watanabe 1983, p. 44.

⁸¹Takakusu 1904–5.

⁸²Nyanatiloka 1938.

Warder arranges his suggestions in three groups of seven. The first is made up of the standard Awakening sets, the last mainly of World sets with the middle grouping mostly composed of the additional items we have already met in the *Vibhaṅga*. Warder makes it clear that this is “very conjectural” and even offers a second alternative version of the third set.⁸³ He also takes the position that the triplet and couplet *mātikās* are a rather late development, although he does not give in full his reasons.⁸⁴ Possibly he is following André Bareau in this respect.

At all events, in his supplementary thesis (published in 1951) Bareau had already given a rather detailed analysis of the development of the triplets and couplets. As we have seen, this approach is flawed and needs to be redone. It does, however, underlie much of the later work.⁸⁵ Let us note that Bareau concluded that there was a primitive set of five couplets and also one of four or five triplets. Frauwallner (p. 5f.; 143) follows him in this, but is more aware of the possibility that earlier longer *mātikā* lists have been shortened. One problem here is that Bareau has falsely invented an early Theravādin list which by chance coincides with some of the material in Sarvāstivādin sources. Another is that he counts all of the numerous occurrences of the standard Theravādin list as one and then includes under a series of titles a number of lists from late sources which are of doubtful relevance.⁸⁶

The first two of Frauwallner’s *Abhidharma-studien* appear in 1963 and 1964; so it is unclear whether he was aware of Warder’s work, but he does refer to Nyātiloka and Bareau. The essence of his theory of the development of *abhidharma* is that it originates with lists of fundamental concepts. In particular, he sees the groups that I am calling the World sets as important. “Lists of this kind constitute the first attempt at systematization and formed the basis for the Pañcaskandhaka.” (p. 4) The method of composing lists of “attributes” with which to discuss the World sets (i.e. the *mātikā* proper) he sees as a development in parallel, found quite early on. He notes that early *abhidharma* also involved various methods

⁸³The account in Jaini and Buswell 1996, p. 89 slightly over-simplifies Warder’s position.

⁸⁴Warder 1961, p. xxvii.

⁸⁵As well as Frauwallner himself, see also: Jaini 1960, pp. 41–45; Jaini and Buswell 1996, pp. 84–88.

⁸⁶It is clear that the Sarvāstivādin canonical works, the **Śāriputrābhidharma* and the Pali *Abhidhammapiṭaka* all share a list of couplets, which begins with nearly all of the *cūlantaraduka*, follows with a list of eight or more negative *dharmas* similar to the *gocchakas* and then has something resembling the *mahantaradukas*. See Bareau, *op. cit.*, p. 18. This might suggest that some of the *piṭṭhiduka* were added when the decision was made to integrate the treatment of the World sets and the Path sets.

of considering the relationships between elements and adds that the treatment is often in the form of question and answer.

The justification of this theory comes some pages later in his treatment of the canonical works of the Sarvāstivādins, particularly the *Dharmaskandha*. He compares this with the *Vibhaṅga* as Warder had already done, but in a much more careful and detailed way. He understands that the *Dharmaskandha* is in three parts. The first part consists of chapters based on an extended list of what I am calling Awakening sets. The second part is the *Kṣudrakavastuka*, dealing with afflictions and minor afflictions. The third part contains chapters dealing with World sets.

Frauwallner concludes on the basis of a comparison of this with the chapters of the *Vibhaṅga* that the two are “versions of the same work” (p. 20). He can therefore use them to derive his understanding of the *mātrkā* which he supposes to underlie both works. It is important to realize that at this point, when Frauwallner had already formed his theory, neither he nor A.K. Warder had taken the material in the **Śāriputrābhidharma* into account. Indeed, he specifically states that he has “not taken the *Śāriputrābhidharma* into account as it is as far removed from the Abhidharma of the other schools as the Vinaya of the Mahāsaṅghika is from the other Vinaya.” (p. 211, n. 23) When Frauwallner renewed his work on *abhidharma* at the end of the 1960s, he substantially modified that judgement. We should also note that at this point neither he nor Warder seems to have been directly aware of some of the work on *abhidharma* done in the pre-War period by Far Eastern scholars.⁸⁷

By the end of the 1960s Warder too had become aware of the importance of the **Śāriputrābhidharma*. He now elaborated a new model of the development of the early canonical works.⁸⁸ In particular, he concluded that “the earliest form of *Abhidharma* that we can reconstruct” (p. 222) consisted of three sections. These were: 1) the Awakening sets; 2) the World sets; and 3) a study of conditionality. Note the similarity of the first two to the kind of early recension that I have proposed above. Of course, Warder presumably reached his conclusions purely on the basis of a comparison of the chapter headings in the three works, whereas I

⁸⁷ Bareau, however, does refer to the work of T. Kimura and Baiyū Watanabe: see Bareau 1950, p. 1. All three scholars would have known the brief summary of Kimura’s work in Demiéville 1932, p. 57f.. See also: Mizuno 1961; Cox 1995, p. 7–10 and notes.

⁸⁸ Warder 1970, pp. 220–224.

have based what I have to say on detailed analysis of differences in the actual texts of the *Dhammasaṅgaha* and *Vibhaṅga*.⁸⁹

When, in his 1972 publication, Frauwallner did come to refer in detail to the **Śāriputrābhidharma*, he was already fully committed to his three part analysis of the *Dharmaskandha* and to his reconstruction of the *māṭṛkā* on which it was based. So he interprets what he found as a secondary development. He declares: “the first two parts of the *Śāriputrābhidharma* are based on the first two parts of the *Vibhaṅga māṭṛkā*.” (p. 103). With this I cannot quite agree. However, Frauwallner does go on to make the following interesting observation. The **Śāriputrābhidharma*, he tells us, differs “in that its first part is only treated in the style of the *Pañhāpucchaka*, and the second in the style of the *Suttantabhājanīya*, which corresponds to the method of the *Dharmaskandha*.”

European scholarship after Frauwallner

In 1982 A.K. Warder returned to the subject of the history of *Abhidhamma* in more detail than before.⁹⁰ He indicates that what he has to say is highly tentative, but in fact makes some important points. He comments on the “organic” nature of much of the growth of the *Abhidhamma* texts, suggesting that as new triplets or couplets were added, a text “would be correspondingly elaborated internally by incorporating these new classifications” (p. xxix).

The important point for us is that he postulates that after the initial schism with the *Mahāsaṃghikas* the “*Theravāda* school” had an *Abhidhamma* with four sections. “The first two of these correspond in content to the extant *Vibhaṅga*, the third to the *Dhātukathā* and the fourth to the *Paṭṭhāna*, though no doubt with comparatively little of the elaboration we now find in all of these texts, especially the last.” (p. xxx) He clearly recognizes that the treatment of the World sets was in the form of questions and answers, elaborated by applying to them some at least of the couplets and triplets. In contrast, the World sets “were expounded simply by quoting relevant passages from the *suttas*.”

Warder goes on to argue that a “collation of all the available sets” (p. xxx) of couplets and triplets indicates that even before the First Schism there was a set of twelve couplets and three triplets. This dating is quite worthless, as it depends

⁸⁹Warder’s theory was developed a little further around this time by his pupil Fumimaro Watanabe in his doctoral thesis (not seen) and subsequently published as: Watanabe 1983.

⁹⁰In the section entitled: “The History of *Abhidhamma* and the Date of the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*” in Warder 1982, pp. xxix–xxxix.

on the (unlikely) possibility that the **Tattvasiddhiśāstra* is a Bahussutika work. In any case such later sources cannot be used to fully reconstruct the old *mātikā* lists. As Rupert Gethin points out: “the triplets and couplets are not treated fully in the *Visuddhimagga*, a comparable Pāli summary work”⁹¹

What Warder has to say in regard to Dhs and Vibh is obviously quite similar to part of what I have been arguing above; so I should make clear that there are also important differences. I have not so far been discussing the situation at the time of the “First Schism”, only the nature of an earlier recension of Dhs and Vibh. This may well be close to or even identical with the common ancestor of these works and the **Śāriputrābhidharma*, but it will require much more detailed and careful study of all of these texts to determine the exact relationships with certainty. I do not believe that it is possible at present to determine whether there was a fourth section or not.

I do not doubt that some kind of proto-*Abhidha(r)mma* was inherited by all of the non-Mahāsaṃghika schools, but much more study is needed before we can say exactly what it contained. On the other hand, we are not in a position to say whether the early Mahāsaṃghikas also had such a text. This is because no Mahāsaṃghika *abhidha(r)mma* recension survives. In actual fact, if it were not for the survival of the Mahāsaṃghika *Vinaya* in Chinese translation (and some portions in Sanskrit), we would be in precisely the same situation for *Vinaya* studies. This should make us extremely cautious in any claim that that school had no *Abhidha(r)mmaṭṭaka*.

I therefore do not at all agree with Étienne Lamotte when he states: “If ... the various Buddhist schools used an identical Sūtraṭṭaka and several similar Vinayaṭṭakas, it must be accepted that, if they had an Abhidharmaṭṭaka at their disposal, they had put it together themselves.”⁹² This overstates the case; perhaps he is influenced too much by Kumārajīva’s systematic dethroning of the *Abhidharma*. Nothing at present rules out the possibility that some kind of *Abhidha(r)mmaṭṭaka* is as old as the *Khandhakas* of the *Vinayaṭṭaka*.

Subsequently to Warder, the most important contribution seems to be that of Rupert Gethin.⁹³ Gethin analyses in detail the use of the term *mātikā* in the *Abhidhammaṭṭaka*, taking it as meaning: “... any schedule or table of items or lists — but especially one built up according to a system of numerical progression

⁹¹Gethin 1992, p. 172 n.64.

⁹²Lamotte 1988, p. 180.

⁹³Gethin 1992. Gethin’s suggestions are further developed in Anderson 1999, pp. 108–130.

— that acts as a basis for further exposition.” (p. 160) I would prefer to say that the word *mātikā* in the sense of “headings” precedes its use to mean a table of items or lists and only subsequently does it come to be used in the singular with that meaning.

Gethin emphasizes the relationships of the “core *mātikā*” i.e. the list of *mātrkā* as identified by Frauwallner and the triplet-couplet *mātikā* with the *Samyutta-* and *Aṅguttaranikāyas* respectively. He goes on to stress that in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* and *Vibhaṅga* as we have them these two approaches are interdependent and quite fundamental to the development of the *abhidhamma* method. This is obviously correct and no doubt is part of the reason that they have been combined in the way they have.

Lastly, Gethin lays some stress on the strong relationship between the *mātikās* and Buddhist meditation. I would want to stress also the fundamental importance of actual chanting methods to the development of both Buddhist “meditation” and as a form of devotion. I suspect that changes in such methods may of themselves sometimes account for the popularity of new forms of literature.

in conclusion

Clearly any conclusions as to the development of the earlier works of the *Abhidhammapitaka* can at present only represent a hypothesis — at least until more detailed analysis of the **Śāriputrābhidharma* is available. Nevertheless, it seems plausible that the *abhidha(r)mma* material now contained in the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi* and *Vibhaṅga* on the one hand and the first two sections of the **Śāriputrābhidharma* on the other had its origins in appendices developed by the *Samyutta-* *bhāṅakas* and *Aṅguttarabhāṅakas*. This neatly accounts for the mixture of numerically and thematically organized material.

More certainly, when this pre-existent material was organized into a single work, its structure, but not necessarily its detailed content, was essentially that of the first two sections of the **Śāriputrābhidharma*. (The final two or three sections would correspond to the material preserved in the *Dhātukathā* and an earlier recension of the *Paṭṭhāna*.) In the Pali tradition the first two sections were reorganized and integrated into the first two books of the *Abhidhamma-pitaka*. This made it possible to set out an *abhidhamma* system based on the *mātikā*. It is likely, however, that most of the material utilized is much older.

Bibliography

- Anderson, Carol S. (1999), *Pain and its Ending. The Four Noble Truths in the Theravāda Buddhist Canon*, eds Charles S. Prebish and Damien Keown (Curzon Critical Studies in Buddhism; Richmond, Surrey: Curzon Press).
- Bureau, André (1950), 'Les origines du Śāriputrābhidharmaśāstra', *Le Muséon*, LXIII, 69–95.
- (1951a), 'Les sectes bouddhiques du petit véhicule et leurs Abhidharmapiṭaka', *Bulletin de L'École française d'Extrême-Orient*, XLIV (1947–1950), 1–11.
- (1951b), *Thèse: Dhammasaṅgaṇi, traduction annotée* (Paris: Tournier et Constans).
- Bopearachchi, Osmund (1997), 'Foreword', in D.P.M. Weerakkody (ed.), *Taprobanē: ancient Sri Lanka as known to Greeks and Romans* (Indicopleustoi 1; Turnhout (Belgium): Brepols), ix–xxii.
- Bronkhorst, Johannes (1985), 'Dharma and Abhidharma', *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 48, 305–20.
- Collins, Steven (1990), 'On the Very Idea of the Pali Canon', *Journal of the Pali Text Society*, XV, 89–126.
- Cousins, L.S. (2011), 'Abhidhamma Studies I: Jotipāla and the Abhidhamma *Anuṭikā*', *Thai International Journal for Buddhist Studies*, II, 1–36.
- (2013), 'The Early Development of Buddhist Literature and Language in India', *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies*, 5, 89–135.
- (2015), 'Abhidhamma Studies II: Sanskrit abhidharma literature of the Mahāvihāravāsins', *Thai International Journal for Buddhist Studies*, IV ([2556] 2013), 1–61.
- Cox, Collett (1995), *Disputed Dharmas. Early Buddhist Theories on Existence. An Annotated Translation of the Section on Factors Dissociated from Thought from Saṅghabhadra's Nyāyānusāra* (Studia Philologica Buddhica, Monograph Series XI; Tokyo: International Institute for Buddhist Studies).
- Demiéville, Paul (1932), 'L'origine des sectes bouddhiques d'après Paramārtha', *Mélanges chinois et bouddhiques*, I, 15–64.
- Dutt, Nalinaksha, Bhattacharya, D. M., and Sharma, Shivnath (1984), *Gilgit manuscripts* (Delhi: Sri Satguru).
- Falk, Harry (2011), 'The 'Split' Collection of Kharoṣṭhī Texts', *Annual Report of The International Institute for Advanced Buddhology at Soka University*, XIV (March), 11–23.
- Frauwallner, E. (1963), 'Abhidharma-Studien I. Pañcaskandhakam und Pañcavastukam', *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd- und Ostasiens*, 7, 20–36.

- (1964), 'Abhidharma-Studien II. Die kanonische Abhidharma-werke', *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd- und Ostasiens*, 8, 59–99.
- (1971a), 'Abhidharma-Studien III. Der Abhisamayavāda', *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd- und Ostasiens*, 15, 69–102.
- (1971b), 'Abhidharma-Studien IV. Der Abhidharma der anderen Schulen. Der Abhidharma der Pāli-Schule und der Śāriputrābhidharma', *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens*, 15, 103–21.
- (1972), 'Abhidharma-Studien IV. Der Abhidharma der anderen Schulen. (Fortsetzung)', *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd- und Ostasiens*, 16, 95–152.
- (1973), 'Abhidharma-Studien V. Der Sarvāstivāda. Eine entwicklungsgeschichtliche Studie', *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens*, 17, 97–121.
- Frauwallner, Erich (1953), *Geschichte der indischen Philosophie. Vol. I Die Philosophie des Veda und des Epos der Buddha und der Jina. Das Sāṃkhya und der klassische Yoga-System* (Reihe Wort und Antwort 6; Salzburg: Otto Muller).
- (1971c), 'Die Entstehung der buddhistischen Systeme', *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen, Philologisch-Historische Klasse*, 6, 115–27.
- (1995), *Studies in Abhidharma Literature and the Origins of Buddhist Philosophical Systems*, trans. Sophie Francis Kidd and Ernst Steinkellner (SUNY Series in Indian Thought: Texts and Studies; Albany, NY: State University of New York Press).
- Gethin, Rupert (1992), 'The Mātīkā: Memorization, Mindfulness and the List', in Janet Gyatso (ed.), *In the Mirror of Memory: Reflections on Mindfulness and Remembrance in Indian and Tibetan Buddhism* (Albany: State University of New York), 149–72.
- Hinüber, Oskar von (1994), 'Vinaya und Abhidhamma', *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik*, 19 (Festschrift G. Buddruss), 109–22.
- (1996), *A Handbook of Pāli Literature* (Indian Philology and South Asian Studies 2; Berlin: Walter de Gruyter).
- Jaini, P.S. and Buswell, Robert E. (1996), 'The Development of Abhidharma Philosophy', in Karl H. Potter, et al. (ed.), *Abhidharma Buddhism to 150 A.D.* (Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies, Vol. VII; Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass), 73–119.
- Jaini, Padmanabh S. (1960), *Abhidharmadīpa with Vibhāṣhāprabhāvṛtti* (2nd edn., Tibetan Sanskrit works series 4; Patna: Kashi Prasad Jayaswal Research Institute).
- Kieffer-Pülz, Petra (1992), *Die Simā: Vorschriften zur Regelung der buddhistischen Gemeindegrenze in älteren buddhistischen Texten* (Monographien zur indischen Archäologie, Kunst und Philologie 8; Berlin: D. Reimer).
- Klaus, Konrad (2010), 'Zu den buddhistischen literarischen Fachbegriffen *sutta* und *suttanta*', in Eli Franco and Monika Zin (eds.), *From Turfan to Ajanta: festschrift for Dieter Schlingloff on the occasion of his eightieth birthday* (Bhairahawa, Rupandehi: Lumbini International Research Institute), Vol. I pp.513–26.

- La Vallée Poussin, Louis de (1924), *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu* (Paris: P. Geuther).
- Lamotte, Étienne (1944), *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse de Nāgārjuna (Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra). Première Partie (Traduction annotée)* (Bibliothèque du Muséon 18, I Chaps I–XV; Louvain: Institut Orientaliste, Université de Louvain).
- (1988), *History of Indian Buddhism: from the origins to the Śāka era*, trans. Sara Webb-Boin and Jean Dantinne (Publications de l'Institut orientaliste de Louvain, 36; Louvain-la-Neuve: Université catholique de Louvain Institut orientaliste).
- Mizuno, Kōgen (1961), 'Abhidharma Literature', in G.P. Malalasekera (ed.), *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism, Vol. I* (Government of Ceylon), 64–80.
- Mori, Sodō (1989), *Studies of the Pāli Commentaries: A Provisional Collection of Articles* (Saitama: Sodo Mori).
- Norman, K. R. (1983), *Pāli literature: including the canonical literature in Prakrit and Sanskrit of all the Hīnayāna schools of Buddhism*, ed. J. Gonda (A History of Indian Literature, vol. vii, fasc. 2; Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz).
- Nyanatiloka (1938), *Guide through the Abhidhamma-pitaka, being a synopsis of the philosophical collection belonging to the Buddhist Pali canon, followed by an essay on the paticca-samppāda* (Colombo: Printers: The Associated Newspapers of Ceylon Ltd).
- Przyluski, Jean (1923), *La légende de l'empereur Açoka (Açoka-avadāna) dans les textes Indiens et Chinois* (Paris: Paul Geuthner).
- (1927), *Le concile de Rājagrha: introduction à l'histoire des canons et des sects bouddhiques* (Buddhica. Documents et travaux pour l'étude du bouddhisme. Mémoires 2; Paris: P. Geuthner).
- Ray, Himanshu P. (2000 [1994]), *Winds of Change: Buddhism and the Maritime Links of Early South Asia* (Oxford India Paperbacks; New Delhi: OUP).
- Rhys Davids, C.E. (1900), *A Buddhist manual of psychological ethics of the fourth century B.C.: being a translation ... of the first book in the Abhidhamma piṭaka entitled Dhamma-saṅgaṇi (Compendium of states or phenomena)* (Oriental Translation Fund. New series XII; London: Royal Asiatic society).
- Rockhill, William Woodville (1884), *Life of the Buddha and the Early History of his Order. Derived from Tibetan Works in the Bkah-hgur and Bstan-dgyur. Followed by Notices on the Early History of Tibet and Khotan* (London: Trübner).
- Sarkar, Himansu Bhusan (1977), 'The date of the Pali Niddesa and its implication for the history of South-East Asia', *Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 19, 44–45.
- (1981), 'The date of the Pali Niddesa and its Implications for the History of South-East Asia', *K.P. Jayaswal Commemoration Volume* (Patna), 207–29.

- Schopen, Gregory (1997), 'If you can't remember, how to make it up. Some Monastic Rules for Redacting Canonical Texts', in Petra Kieffer-Pülz and Jens-Uwe Hartmann (eds.), *Bauddhavidyāsudhākara: studies in honour of Heinz Bechert on the occasion of his 65th birthday* (Indica et Tibetica 30; Swisttal-Odendorf: Indica et Tibetica Verlag), 571–82.
- (2004), *Buddhist Monks and Business Matters: Still More Papers on Monastic Buddhism in India* (Studies in the Buddhist traditions; Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press).
- Stargardt, Janice (1990), *The Ancient Pyu of Burma* (I; Cambridge: PACSEA in association with the Institute of Southeast Asian Studies Singapore).
- Takakusu, J. (1904–5), 'The Abhidharma Literature of the Sarvāstivādins', *Journal of the Pali Text Society*, 67–146.
- Warder, A. K. (1961), *Mohavichchedanī Abhidhammāmātikathavaṇṇanā by Kassapa-tthera of Coḷa* (London: Luzac & Co. for the Pali Text Society).
- (1970), *Indian Buddhism* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass).
- (1982), 'Introduction', *The Path of Discrimination* (London: Pali Text Society), v–lxiv.
- Watanabe, Fumimaro (1983), *Philosophy and its Development in the Nikāyas and Abhidhamma* (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass).
- Yoshimoto, Shingyo (1996), 'Śāriputrābhidharmaśāstra', in Potter Karl, et al. (ed.), *Abhidharma Buddhism to 150 A.D.* (Encyclopaedia of Indian Philosophies, Vol. VII; Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass), 317–25.

Coined Money and Early Buddhism

Richard Fynes

This brief article examines the origins of coined money in India in the light of a panel from the Bharhut stupa. It argues that the use of coined money was known to the Buddha, and that it impacted on the social relationships within which lay donations were made.

Did coined money circulate in the Ganges valley during the Buddha's lifetime, and if so, what did the Buddha think about it? The purpose of this note is to address these two questions. Of course, coined money may well have had an impact on the early development of Buddhist thought if it came into general use in northern India in the decades following the Buddha's death, even if it was not used in his lifetime. However, my view is that a monetary economy developed at a rapid rate during the Buddha's lifetime and that the Buddha was well aware of the issues concomitant with the circulation of coinage.

The earliest indigenous coins to be produced in India are now known, from their method of manufacture, as punch-marked coins. The original name of one of these coins was probably *kārṣāpaṇa* (see Cribb writing in Eagleton and Williams 2007, 114). Punch-marked coins consist of thin pieces of silver of a standard weight, on which a number of marks made by punches had been separately, but at the same time, applied, to one of the sides of the metal flan. This method of manufacture differed from that in general use in the contemporary Mediterranean world, by which a coin was produced by placing a metal flan between a pair of engraved dies and striking it with single blow, thus leaving the impression of a design on both its sides. This latter method of manufacture eventually superseded the production of punch-marked coins in India with the introduction by

the Indo-Greek rulers of northwest India of Greek methods of coin production. Some of the punch-marked symbols are purely geometric, others are figurative, among them elephants, deer, bulls and human figures. Symbols familiar from other areas of Indian iconography also appear on the coins, such as a tree in railings, a sun or *cakra* symbol, and the *caitya* symbol of three hills.

There is a variety of design and fabric among the earliest punch-marked coins, and probably the earliest of all are some dish-shaped coins that bear a single punch mark. At some point in time the coins became more standardised, bearing initially four and later five punch marks and having a fabric that was roughly rectangular, since the individual coins were cut from thin sheets of silver. Ancillary marks were sometimes applied to the coins and it has been suggested that they were added in the course of their circulation, perhaps by traders, merchants or money-changers.

Numismatists and historians have assigned the earliest punch-marked coins to various towns and *janapadas* that are attested in literary sources, the coins bearing four punch marks to the kingdom of Magadha, and the ones bearing five punch marks to the Mauryan empire. However, as Shailendra Bhandare (2012) recently emphasised, the symbols on the coins do not provide any evidence that can now enable them to be attributed to their issuers. The significance of the punch-marked symbols is lost to us. The coins bearing five symbols are highly likely to be imperial issues of the Mauryan empire, especially in view of the almost pan-Indian distribution of discoveries of hoards of these coins: hoards plotted on a distribution map of late issues bear a close correlation to the distribution of Aśokan inscriptions (Errington 2003, 70). It seems safe to assume that only the Mauryan rulers would have had the authority necessary to impose the high degree of standardisation attested by the coins bearing five symbols.

There is a consensus among historians and numismatists that punch-marked coins were being produced and circulating widely during the time of the Mauryas, and also that their production came to end some time in the second century BC, perhaps as a consequence of the decline of Mauryan authority (Chakrabarti 2006, 418; Cribb 2003, 15; Allan 1936, lvii; Gupta and Hardaker 2014, 62); but what of their origins? When did the punch-marked coinage begin? On this question there is less agreement. There are two main schools of thought: one views the punch-marked coinage as a development from contemporary western models of coinage and argues for a late dating, whereas the other views their origin as completely indigenous, with an origin prior to the spread of coinage in the Greek world.

Allan (1936 lviff) based his chronology primarily on evidence provided by a hoard of coins from the Bhir mound at Taxila, which besides containing what are now considered to be fairly late varieties of punch-marked coins also contained an Achaemenid siglos, two coins of Alexander the Great and a coin of Alexander's half-brother, Alexander Arrhidaeus, who died in 317 BC. Allen thought that the period of circulation of punch-marked coins was the third and second centuries BC, with the possibility that they might go back to the fourth century BC. Cribb (2003) has also argued for a late dating for the origin of the punch-marked coins on the basis of evidence provided by a hoard of coins from Kabul, in which Hellenistic coins are found in association with Achaemenid bent-bar coins, which he and other numismatists believe to be the prototypes of the dish-shaped punch-marked coins bearing a single punch that are found in the Ganges valley. Cribb believes that the hoard provides evidence for dating the earliest phase of Indian coinage to the fourth century BC, although he suggests that it might be possible to push the date back to the late fifth century. He regards an earlier date as implausible.

Chakrabarti (2006, 418) argues for an indigenous origin of coinage in India, independent of Greek or Achaemenid influences. He links the circulation of the punch-marked coins to the distribution of Northern Black Polished Ware ceramics (NBP). He believes that NBP began to be produced as early as the eighth century BC in the central Ganges plain, and that this date should also apply to the beginning of the punch-marked coins. However, given the general agreement that the production of punch-marked coins ended in the second century BC, an origin in the seventh century would seem too early, as the relative chronology of the length of their production seems to indicate intense production over a much shorter period, perhaps no more than about two hundred years (Allan 1936, lviii).

Is there a middle way between the early chronology proposed by Chakrabarti and the late chronology advocated by Allan and Cribb, which would place the origins of the punch-marked coins too late for them to have been in use during the life of the Buddha? Hardaker (Gupta and Hardaker, 2014, 49) would place their origin at about 430 BC, or somewhat earlier, which would be well within the Buddha's lifetime according to the widely accepted revised chronology proposed by Gombrich, according to which the Buddha would have died in c. 404 BC. Recent research by Susmita Basu Majumdar supports a dating similar to that of Hardaker. This as yet unpublished research depends primarily on archaeological evidence and eschews reconstructions based on lists of rulers found in the *Purāṇas* and

the Pali canon. Although conclusive evidence is lacking, I follow Hardaker and Gupta in accepting a date of around 430 BC for the origin of the punch-marked coins, and at this point I would like to introduce visual and epigraphic evidence provided by a roundel from the stupa at Bharhut, which is now in the Indian Museum, Calcutta. Epigraphic evidence dates the panels from Bharhut to the time of the Śunga dynasty, in the second century BC, a time when the production of punch-marked coins in good quality silver was coming to an end but their use and circulation was continuing.



Figure 1

The photograph of the panel (Figure 1), one of a series depicting events from the Buddha's present and past lives, was taken by J. D. Beglar, Alexander Cunningham's assistant at the excavation of the site in the 1870s. Below the panel is an

inscription in Brahmi script reading *jetavana anādhapeḍiko deti koṭisaṃthatena ketā*, which may be translated: “Anāthapiṇḍika presents the Jetavana, having bought it for a layer of hundreds of thousands.” The roundel depicts punch-marked coins being unloaded from a bullock-wagon and being placed in a layer on the ground of what is the Jetavana park. The story of the merchant-banker Anāthapiṇḍika’s purchase of this park is related in the sixth book of the *Cullavagga*. The merchant wished to present the park as a resting place for the Buddha and his followers, but its owner, the young prince Jeta, not expecting to be taken at his word, said that he would only sell it if Anāthapiṇḍika were to cover its ground with money. When Anāthapiṇḍika said that he would buy the park at that price, Prince Jeta was reluctantly compelled to sell it.



Figure 2

A panel from Bodh Gaya (Figure 2), dating perhaps from the first century BC, depicts the same event, although the scene is given in less detail than in the roundel from Bharhut. In this panel punch-marked coins are being delivered and spread over the ground of the park. Although my discussion is based on the evidence from the earlier Bharhut panel, the Bodh Gaya panel nevertheless provides

supporting evidence for the importance of the story of the donation of the Jetavana park in the foundation stories of early Buddhism, and of the central place of the motif of the spreading of punch-marked coins within that story. (My thanks are due to the anonymous reviewer of this note for informing me that the two panels now reside together in the same gallery of the Indian Museum, Kolkata.)

Can we learn anything about the use of coinage in the time of the Buddha from the panel? Anāthapiṇḍika possessed a huge number of coins, and punch-marked coins were produced in huge quantities. Hardaker may not be exaggerating by much when he states that they “were in their time perhaps even more plentiful than the Roman denarius, judging from the numbers that survive today.” (Gupta and Hardaker 2014, 19). There is no doubt that the use of coined money became widespread in the urbanised areas of the Ganges valley within a very few years of the first introduction of the punch-marked coinage. In this regard, the situation in India was doubtless very similar to that consequent to the first introduction of coined money in ancient Greece: in about thirty years from its first invention in western Asia Minor shortly before 600 BC, coinage spread throughout the Greek city-states.

Richard Seaford (2004) has discussed at length the impact of the spread of coined money on intellectual thought in ancient Greece and the questions he addresses also have great relevance for ancient India. Seaford believes that the abstract substance of money was a precondition for the genesis and subsequent form of pre-Socratic metaphysics in its search for a universal ground of being. However, I do not intend to follow Seaford in his argument that the introduction of coinage led to a similar development in Indian thought. I intend rather to consider the more immediate ways the spread of a monetary economy impacted on social relations in India in the context of early Buddhism.

Coined money facilitates the redistribution of wealth and it may be that one of its original purposes in India was to enable kings to make payments to Brahmins in return for their performance of Vedic sacrifices. Coined money also facilitated donations by merchants to the Buddhist *saṅgha*, as is evidenced by visual representations from Buddhist monuments, dating perhaps from the second century BC. Furthermore, an increased production of coinage may well imply an increase in exchange transactions that are not based on an asymmetrical hierarchical relationship between giver and receiver, but imply equality, since the participants’ relationship is often temporary and is determined solely by their willingness to give and accept money in the form of coins. Money facilitates anonymous ex-

change and thus enables its possessor and receiver to enter into relationships that are based on choice rather than on ascribed status. The growing availability of coined money may well have had a profound influence on social relationships and cultural expression in ancient India. Punch-marked silver coins facilitated medium to low value transactions between people who stood in a temporary relationship that was over once the money and the item purchased had changed hands. Silver coinage was intended to circulate. Gold, on the other hand, facilitated storage of wealth. Golden torques (*niṣka*) are attested in Vedic texts as part of fees given to Brahmins by those sponsoring the sacrifices which the Brahmins performed. The torques were not meant to circulate; they were a store of value and also an expression of an asymmetrical relationship between the sponsor of the sacrifice and the priests performing it. As Richard Seaford has noted, the individual with money has the ability, if he wishes, to buy in as and when needed the benefits provided by belonging to a structured kinship group without having to give anything further by way of obligation (Seaford 2004, 293). Networks of obligation and dependence become looser and societies become more individualistic once they are pervaded by relationships based around the use of coined money.

The young Prince Jeta, as an aristocratic landowner, was reluctant to enter the world of equal relations implicit in transactions based on the acceptance of coined money. Nevertheless, he must have had a shrewd idea of the actual monetary value of his land, since, according to the story in the *Cullavagga*, he was able to demand a price in coined money that was so far in excess of its value that he was certain it would be rejected. Anāthapiṇḍika called the Prince's bluff, but it was only on the enforcement of the contract by the ministers that he reluctantly agreed to the sale of the land.

The Jetavana monastery became an important institution that was still flourishing in the time of Fa-hsien in the early fifth century AD, and the memory of its foundation was preserved in oral texts and visual images (Dutt 1962, 64). All the sources agree that its foundation donation of coined money was given while the Buddha was visiting Sravasti. The laying of the layer of coins is stressed in the label inscription of the panel from Bharhut. The label inscriptions are, according to Skilling (2009, 65) "keywords that connect visual representation to pools of narrative resources..." In practice, the label could have served as a prompt for a guide's relating of the story in which a money purchase was a key element. This could well preserve the memory of an actual event in the Buddha's lifetime. Although conclusive evidence is lacking, the panel at Bharhut and its descriptive label provide

corroborative evidence that coined money was circulating in the Ganges valley during the Buddha's lifetime and that the Buddha himself was keenly aware of its advantages and disadvantages.

The panel not only served as a record of the foundation story of a key institution in early Buddhism; it also provided those viewed it with an example of generosity (*dāna*). Generosity is one of the three grounds of merit, the others being virtue and mental development. Generosity is the antithesis of thirst for possessions. The merchant banker is depicted an exemplar of generosity. The close association between the development of early Buddhism and the growth of a mercantile class in ancient India has long been noted (see for instance Gombrich 1988, 49ff). The merit generated by means of generosity is linked to a mercantile ethos. In the words of Rotman (2009): Giving becomes aligned with the mercantile notion of exchange, and the mercantile ethic informs the operation of karma." The merit generated by giving can be transferred for the benefit of others, causing further merit to accrue during the process. Merit can be seen to operate in a way very similar to a circulating currency, which often generates profit for those who benefit from of its use.

A secondary aspect of the illustration could have been to provide an example of the correct use of money, especially in relation to the *saṅgha*. Money should circulate, as it is shown to be doing in the panel. The hoarding of money could be considered a form of greed. The merchant does not give his money directly to the *saṅgha*; he rather gives it to a third party to purchase a gift that he then presents to the *saṅgha*. That the acceptance by monks of gifts of money from the laity became problematic in the years following the Buddha's death is attested by the condemnation of the practice at the Council of Vesali, which probably took place in circa 365 BC. The twelfth chapter of the *Cullavagga* describes how the monks of Vesali had been soliciting gifts of coined money from their lay followers on the ground that it was needed for the purchase of utensils. To make matters worse, the money they were given was not held in common by the *saṅgha*, but divided among themselves individually. They were admonished by the venerable Yasa, who reminded them that the possession of gold and silver had been forbidden by the Buddha. Coined money is thus morally neutral in early Buddhism; on one hand its correct use as a circulating medium can generate merit; on the other its abstraction from circulation can be a cause of greed and attachment.

To conclude, there is evidence to suggest that the circulation of coined money in the Ganges valley began and became pervasive during the lifetime of the Bud-

dha, and that it had a weakening effect on formerly hierarchical relationships, as exemplified in the story of Anāthapiṇḍika and Prince Jeta. Coined money impacted on the social relationships of the lay supporters of early Buddhism, facilitated their making of donations, and was clearly an enabling factor in the foundation of an important early Buddhist institution.

Bibliography

- Allan, J. (1936), *Catalogue of the Coins of Ancient India in the British Museum*, London.
- Bhandare, S. (2012), “From Kauṭilya to Kosambi and beyond: The quest for a ‘Mauryan/Aśokan Coinage’”, in P. Olivelle et al. (eds.), *Reimagining Aśoka: Memory and History*, New Delhi.
- Chakrabarti, D. K. (2006), *The Oxford Companion to Indian Archaeology: The Archaeological Foundation of Ancient India*, New Delhi.
- Cribb, J. (2003), “The origins of the Indian Coinage Tradition”, *South Asian Studies* 19, 1-20.
- Dutt, S. (1962), *Buddhist Monks and Monasteries of India: Their History and Contribution to Indian Culture*, London.
- Eagleton, C. and Williams, J. (2007), *Money: A History*, London.
- Errington, E. (2003), “A survey of late hoards of punch-marked Indian coins”, *Numismatic Chronicle*, 69-122.
- Gombrich, R. F. (1988), *Theravāda Buddhism: A Social History from Ancient Benares to Modern Colombo*, London and New York.
- Gupta, P.L. and Hardaker, T.R. (2014), *Punchmarked Coinage of the Indian Subcontinent: Magadha-Mauryan Series* (revised edition), Mumbai.
- Lüders, H. (1998), *Bharhut Inscriptions* (revised edition by E. Waldschmidt and M. A. Mehendale), New Delhi.
- Rotman, A. (2009), *Thus Have I Seen: Visualizing Faith in Early Buddhism*, Oxford and New York.
- Seaford, R. (2004), *Money and the Early Greek Mind: Homer, Philosophy, Tragedy*, Cambridge.
- Skilling, P. (2009), “Redaction, recitation and writing: transmission of the Buddha’s teaching in India in the early period”, in S.C. Berkwitz et al (eds.), *Buddhist Manuscript Cultures: Knowledge, Ritual and Art*, London and New York, 53-75.

Why is the *kaṭhina* robe so called?

Richard Gombrich

Every Theravādin monastery is supposed to hold an annual ceremony at which a monastic robe is made and offered to a monk considered particularly deserving. The decision to award it is one of the very few formal acts of the Saṅgha laid down in the canonical *Vinaya*, and the only one which is prescribed to happen annually. The robe (*cīvara*) is known as the *kaṭhina cīvara*, and the name *kaṭhina* also attaches to the ceremony as a whole. However, the etymology of *kaṭhina* has been forgotten.

This article describes the modern ceremony. Comparing the *kaṭhina* ceremony with funerals, I trace the origin of making monastic robes out of pieces stitched together to the earliest times. This reveals that *kaṭhina* means “rough”, because originally that is what the robes were. Though nowadays lay piety demands that monks wear the finest cloth, the *kaṭhina* ceremony reflects the prestige of the archaic.

Finally I garner some corroborative evidence from the Pali *Vinaya* section on the *kaṭhina*, though I show that part of the account of how the ceremony came into being has been lost. The Ven. Analayo has kindly checked for me the parallel sections of the *Vinayas* surviving only in Chinese, but they turn out to be of little use. Though itself damaged, the Pali version is clearly the oldest.

Every Theravādin monastery is supposed to hold a ceremony soon after the end of the annual rains retreat, at which a monastic robe is made and offered to a monk who has been considered by the abbot to be particularly deserving. Typically this monk will have spent the preceding three months of the rains retreat locally. The decision who is to receive the robe is made formally by a gathering

of monks, to whom the proposal is made in a precisely worded *ñatti* (“motion”). This is one of the very few formal acts of the Saṅgha laid down in the canonical *Vinaya*, and the only one which is prescribed to happen annually. The subsequent proceedings are fairly elaborate, involve the participation of both monks and laity, and are usually the occasion for a large public celebration. My breadth of knowledge is not sufficient for me to say with certainty that this ceremony survives in every part of the Theravāda tradition; but given its place in the *Vinaya*, I think it likely.

The robe (*cīvara*) is known as the *kaṭhina cīvara*, and the name *kaṭhina* also attaches to the ceremony as a whole. Strangely, however, the etymology of *kaṭhina* has been forgotten; it is considered to be a technical term of obscure origin. Margaret Cone’s *Dictionary of Pāli* (vol. 1, pp.614-5) gives two entries, i.e., considers that there are two homonyms. The first is an adjective meaning “hard, stiff; harsh; fierce”; the second is the *kaṭhina* which figures in this ceremonial context. The very long entry for this second word begins “a framework (covered with a mat) to which the cloth for making robes was attached while being sewn.” It would therefore seem that Cone posits that the word originally referred to the technology of making the robe and was transferred from that context to a specific robe. This suggests the question why only this one robe, made on one occasion in the year, receives this name.

In this short article I shall argue that the word *kaṭhina* should receive only a single dictionary entry and that the technical meaning is just a specific usage of the normal adjective. The key to this lies in cultural history.

The *kaṭhina* ceremony is the topic of a section of the *Vinaya*; in the Pali Canon it is *Mahāvagga* chapter 7 (*Vin.II. 253-267*). I take it that this is enough to prove that the custom is very old, which is not to say that it has undergone no modification over time. I myself witnessed the ceremony in central Sri Lanka in 1964, and what I saw showed no obvious discrepancy with what J.F. Dickson described in an article published in 1884.¹ He writes that in the month of *Kattiko* (Oct-Nov) “... on some convenient day the material for the *kaṭhinaṃ* is presented. The people ascertain beforehand which of the three robes the priest is in need of, and they subscribe, everyone giving something, to purchase the required calico or linen.”

¹Dickson, J.F. “Notes illustrative of Buddhism as the daily religion of the Buddhists of Ceylon and some account of their ceremonies before and after death,” *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (Ceylon Branch)*, v.VIII (29), 1884, pp.203-36.

In the morning the laity go in procession to the monastery and present the cloth with the words “*imaṃ kaṭhina-dussaṃ saṅghassa dema*”.²

The monks then set about making the robe; according to Dickson the participants must be fully ordained, and eight to ten of them are needed, “as the robe must be dyed and completed before sunset”. The laity supply everything required, such as scissors and dye. “The cloth is cut, if for the outer robe (*saṅghāṭi*) into thirty pieces, if for the upper robe (*uttarasamgo*) into fifteen pieces, if for the under robe (*antaravāsako*) into fifteen pieces – and the pieces are sewn together into the proper shape. The robe is then washed and dyed yellow, and, if practicable, dried in the sun. When this is done, the priests resume their seats in chapter, and the priest to whom the robe has been allotted takes it, and kneeling, says, “*imaṃ saṅghāṭiṃ adhiṭṭhāmi*” (“I appropriate this robe”), and he proceeds to mark it, saying, “*imaṃ kappabinduṃ karomi*” (“I put this mark upon it”); he then puts it over his knee, saying “*imaṃ saṅghāṭiṃ attharāmi*” (“I spread out this robe”).³

Let me add some short comments. Firstly, when I saw it, fewer monks were needed. I have also seen photographs of a recent *kaṭhina* ceremony at a Theravāda monastery in Bangladesh where it is clear that the robe is being prepared by lay-women; I have no idea how widespread this is. Secondly, a *kappabindu* is literally a “legitimate spot”, i.e., a mark of legitimation. I assume (but do not know) that this will act as a permanent reminder that possession of this particular robe is an honour.

More relevant to my theme are the cutting and dyeing. Nowadays the cloth supplied is new white cloth of high quality, bought from a shop which supplies ecclesiastical materials. It seems obvious that originally the robe did not start out as a single piece of cloth which had to be cut up before it was put together, but that the material used consisted of several pieces and the sewing was necessary in order to create the robe. In other words, the material was not provided by a donor, let alone bought in a shop, as happens nowadays, but consisted of rags, pieces of cloth, which were collected to be used for this purpose. Monks wear robes of which the colour varies widely throughout the Theravādin world; the commonest colour is yellow to orange, and in European languages it tends to be referred to as “saffron”. The variety of colours used is perfectly understandable, because the Pali word is *kasāya* or *kasāva*, which, so far from meaning “saffron”, means “stain”. If the cloth begins as white, the colour of purity and newness, it

²“We give this *kaṭhina* cloth to the Saṅgha.”

³Dickson, pp.226-7.

needs to be dyed simply in order to match the rest of any monk's wardrobe. But if the robe is assembled from pieces of stained cloth, whatever their precise colour or colours, dyeing would be required to make them at least somewhat uniform.

Some of the earliest features of monastic living seem to be preserved for us in the voluntary ascetic practices known as *dhutaṅga*. Before I go further, I would like to offer my own etymology of the word, which the commentaries explain as “one who shakes off either evil dispositions (*kilese*) or obstacles to spiritual progress (*vāra, nīvarana*)”;⁴ they thus connect it with the verb *dhunāti*. I suggest that the word comes from *dhuti-aṅga*,⁵ where *dhuti* is from Sanskrit *dhṛti* and the compound means “constituent of firmness / resolve”. My only evidence for this is that it seems to fit the context.

One of the *dhutaṅgas* is to wear *paṃsu-kūla*, “rag robes”. The *PED* gives *paṃsu-kūlika* as “one who wears clothes made of rags taken from a dustheap”.⁶ I do not doubt this traditional interpretation, but at the same time I wonder how easy it can have been in ancient India to find discarded on dustheaps pieces of cloth which were large enough to be useful as components of a robe. However, there was certainly one reliable source of supply: the shrouds used at funerals.

In the article already cited, Dickson also describes a funeral, though his account is very brief. The body is carried to the cemetery on a bier, covered by a cloth. It “is placed on sticks at the top of the grave. The cloth which covers it is removed and presented to the priest, who says: – *Aniccā vata saṃkhārā* ... [the verse said to have been recited by the king of the gods when the Buddha died]. The priest departs, taking with him the cloth; the friends of the deceased remain to bury the body.”⁷

My own account⁸ goes into more detail, but I shall only reproduce what is relevant here. The funeral I witnessed was more prosperous, with several monks and a coffin. I write: “When the coffin has been placed in the pyre or over the grave, according to whether the body is to be cremated or buried, a white cloth is laid on it.” Those present recite a Pali formula giving the cloth to the Saṅgha, at which the monks spread out the cloth across the coffin. After reciting the *Aniccā* verse, they then “pick up the cloth, symbolically appropriating it, and someone takes it away.”

⁴ *PED*, 342a.

⁵ For the loss of final *-i* in external sandhi before a vowel, cf. *sat-ādhipateyya*.

⁶ *PED*, 379a.

⁷ Dickson, p.233. For the full text of the verse and a translation, see my account (see next fn.).

⁸ *Precept and Practice*, pp.241-2.

The ideal for Theravāda Buddhists is to be cremated; in theory, burial is only for children and those who have met sudden untimely deaths. However, cremation costs more because a pyre requires a lot of firewood. In Dickson's account, I surmise that the family could not afford cremation and made do with the sticks he mentions, to symbolize a pyre. In ancient India, it was normal for poor people to be unable to afford cremation, and they left the corpses of their relatives in charnel grounds, where they were soon devoured by vultures, jackals, worms, etc.

In my book I comment: "By picking up the cloth from the coffin, the monk is symbolically taking the winding sheet ... and thus conforming to the letter of the *paṃsukūla* practice. On the other hand the dead man's next of kin are giving the cloth, which therefore is the best new white cloth, to enhance the value of the gift; they have made the funeral an occasion for transferring [to the deceased] the merit earned by a gift to the Saṅgha, thus destroying the spirit of the *paṃsukūla* idea so that the original meaning of the term has been completely lost."

The main point of this article is to claim that that is not the only loss of the original meaning of a term. I owe this insight to my wife, Dr. Sanjukta Gupta. When applied to cloth, *kathina* means "rough", the opposite of smooth. No one is going to waste their money on a shroud of high quality, smooth cloth, when it is either going to be burnt with the body or, as in most cases, left covering the body in a charnel ground – where a wandering mendicant can pick it up. Normal people could not reuse a cloth which had served such an impure purpose.

My wife also suggests that the robes were dyed so that at least their colour was somewhat uniform, and this was done by soaking them in mountain streams which ran with mineral dyes, ranging from yellow through orange and red to ochre.

The Buddha urged his monks to live frugally; but from the beginning they were the victims of their own success,⁹ in that the Buddhist laity honoured them and wanted to treat them as well as was permitted, even bending the rules to that end. Giving to the Saṅgha has always been the most obvious way of making merit, and an expensive gift is thought to earn more merit – the principle that it is only the intention that counts is soon lost sight of.¹⁰ Not only, therefore, should monks not be left to find rags from which to make up their robes; they should always have robes made of the finest quality cloth. Dressing in a dirty old shroud becomes

⁹This problem, particularly as related to the *dhutaṅgas*, is discussed in my *Theravāda Buddhism: A social history*, 2nd ed., p.96.

¹⁰I discuss this at some length in *Precept and Practice*, pp.248-250.

virtually unthinkable. And yet, at the same time, the prestige of the archaic also remains. Though the *dhutaṅga* practices are somewhat discouraged, a minority of monks in every Theravāda tradition do adopt them, though usually only for a limited period. Thus a robe which symbolically can be linked to the rough, stained cloth which the Buddha originally envisaged for his followers still finds its place in a ceremony which in terms of function has become wholly redundant, for no monk depends on a *kaṭhina* presentation to maintain his supply of robes. The whole *kaṭhina* ceremony is nothing but a re-enactment of archaic Buddhist values, and the robe at its centre is the quintessence of this.

The reader may be wondering why, if the *kaṭhina* ceremony is described in the *Vinaya*, I have chosen rather to base my article on modern descriptions. The composition of the chapter in the Theravādin *Vinaya* that has come down to us is strange. It starts with a brief narrative. A group of thirty monks who practise various *dhutaṅgas* intend to come and see the Buddha. Their *dhutaṅgas* include that they wear rag robes (*paṃsukūlika*) and possess only three of them (*tecīvarika*).¹¹ Before they reach the Buddha, the rainy season starts, so they cannot travel, but have to spend three months immobile, though they are only six *yojanas* away from him. As soon as the rains retreat formally ends, they complete their journey, but it is still raining, so that when they arrive they are drenched. The Buddha receives them with the usual courtesies, and they tell him what has happened.

Here the narrative ends abruptly; we never hear of these monks again. The Buddha now lays down the rules for the *kaṭhina* ceremony, and the rest of the chapter elaborates on those rules in great detail, with many technical terms which are hard to translate or understand. There is nothing here to further our historical understanding, and it is obvious that such detailed prescriptions must have been elaborated over time.

I would deduce that an important chunk of text continuing the narrative and leading naturally into the Buddha's decision to give certain monks new robes has been lost. The monks have behaved with strict rectitude because, despite their frustration, they have not moved during the rains retreat. However, they are now in a bad way because their robes are soaked, and they possess no others to change into. This explains the timing of the ceremony. Moreover, as they have taken a vow to wear rag robes, they need something as close as possible to such robes, and

¹¹ Because the costume of a monk consists of three robes, each with its name and function, someone who has only three is minimally equipped and has nothing to change into.

if only better cloth is available, it can be cut up and then sewn together to at least simulate a rag robe.

While this text explains certain major features of the ceremony, it does not get us back to the intimate connection between such rag robes and shrouds. I would however assume that in ancient India, for the reasons explained, this was too obvious to require spelling out.

I hoped that a more coherent or informative version of this story might be found in one of the five versions of the *Vinaya* extant in Chinese translation. Not knowing Chinese, I asked the Ven Analayo to help me. I am extremely grateful to him for his willingness to do so, even though the results were disappointing.

The five *Vinayas* in question are the Mahīśāsaka, the Dharmaguptaka, the Sarvāstivādin, the Mahāsāṃghika and the Mūlasarvāstivādin. In comparative studies, it is common to find that the first three listed differ increasingly from the Theravāda as one moves down the list, and the last two differ most. We shall see that here too the data roughly conform to this pattern.

He found that all five have a section on *kaṭhina* robes. He writes¹²: “The Mahāsāṃghika goes completely its own way and has nothing whatsoever in common with the other versions. Here a wife of the king offers 500 cloths, whereupon the Buddha makes various regulations, such as that they can be kept for 10 days, and after those 10 days are over they can be made into *kaṭhina* robes.

The other four versions have the story about the monks who at the end of the rains want to visit the Buddha (though not necessarily with the detail that they spent the rains close by; this is peculiar to the Theravāda and the Mahīśāsaka). On their way they get caught in heavy rain and their robes become heavy, so that they become exhausted by having to carry the wet robes around.

Only in the Dharmaguptaka version is it specified (as it is in the Theravāda) that the visiting monks are wearing rag-robes. In the other versions there is no indication that they are following any ascetic practice.” However, this could be a secondary development, for the Ven Analayo writes: “My impression is that the Dharmaguptaka has a doubling of stories. It looks as if to an original version in which the monks are simply monks in general (as in the other versions) was added another version in which the monks are identified as *paṃsukūlikas*.”

Since the central argument of this article is that the association between the *kaṭhina* robe and the rag-robe is ancient and original, my hypothesis about the

¹²I am quoting directly from the Ven Analayo’s e-mails, though I have taken some minor liberties with the wording.

Dharmaguptaka double version would rather be that it reflects the use of two sources, not necessarily at the same time, one of which mentioned that monks were *paṃsukūlikas* and the other didn't.¹³ Whatever the sequence of events in the creation of the Dharmaguptaka version, I feel sure that the identification of those monks as *paṃsukūlikas* is original. It explains why, when the monks needed to be given new robes, the material for those robes was cut up to make them resemble rag-robes.

Bibliography

- Cone, Margaret: *A Dictionary of Pali*, Pali Text Society: part I, Oxford 2001; part II, Bristol 2010.
- Dickson, J.F.: "Notes illustrative of Buddhism as the daily religion of the Buddhists of Ceylon and some account of their ceremonies before and after death," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (Ceylon Branch)*, v.VIII (29), 1884, pp.203-36.
- Gombrich, Richard: *Precept and Practice*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1971.
- Gombrich, Richard: *Theravāda Buddhism: A social history*, 2nd ed., Abingdon, Oxon.: Routledge, 2006.
- Rhys Davids, T.W. and William. Stede (edd.): *The Pali Text Society's Pali-English Dictionary*, Pali Text Society, Oxford 1921-5; reprinted with corrections Bristol 2015.

References to the *Vinaya* are to the editions published by the Pali Text Society.

¹³Such a mixing of sources is known in textual criticism as "contamination".

The Self-immolation of Kalanos and other Luminous Encounters Among Greeks and Indian Buddhists in the Hellenistic World

Georgios T. Halkias

This work is a revisionist reading on the impact of the historical meeting of Alexandrian philosophers with Indian ascetics in Gandhāra during the far eastern campaigns of Alexandros of Macedonia (356–323 BCE). A comparative re-examination of Greek and Indian sources yields new evidence that situates the religious identity of the Indian *gymnosophist* Kalanos in early ascetic traditions of Buddhism in NW India that upheld the practice of ritual suicide by immolation on specific occasions during the later part of the fourth century BCE. It supports previous research on the Hellenistic period that philosophically links Pyrrhon of Elis (c.360–c.270 BCE) with Indian Buddhism through his encounters with Kalanos and on the basis of shared soteriological conceptions and practices.

I. Introduction: Indian ascetics and Hellenistic traditions of philosophy

Ancient authors long debated whether there had been oriental influence on Hellenic philosophy, without ever doubting the readiness and capacity of the Greeks to engage in genuine dialogue with foreigners.¹ In fact, informative interactions and exchanges between Greek and non-Greek sages is a documented constant in the long history of Hellenic civilization. To this history we can assign deliberate meetings between Greek philosophers and Indian ascetics in Gandhāra re-

¹Diogenes Laertios (hereafter Diog. Laert.), who flourished in the 3rd century CE, is reluctant to admit foreign influence on Greek philosophy from the “barbarians” (βαρβάρους), but nevertheless provides several compelling accounts to the contrary by Greek writers in his *Lives and Opinions of Eminent Philosophers*.

ported by the companions of Alexandros of Macedonia (356-323 BCE).² Drawing critical evidence from Greek and Indian scriptures, this study argues for the Buddhist identity of a well-known Indian *gymnosophist* or “naked master”³ (Grk. *γυμνοσοφιστής*) known as Kalanos (Καλανός) from Takṣaśilā (Taxila), a prosperous and vibrant centre of learning, education and commerce by the time of the historical Buddha.⁴ Kalanos left a lasting impression on the Greeks by spending the remaining few years of his life as a teacher to Hellenes in the private entourage of Alexandros, and by ending his life with the utmost nobility on a blazing pyre.⁵ His identification as a Buddhist teacher offers new perspectives on the formation of some early ascetic Buddhist traditions in NW India that appear to have practised self-immolation during the later part of the 4th century BCE. Furthermore,

²Several meetings recorded by Alexandros’ historians preserved in the so called “Alexandros Romance” were embellished by later Hellenistic and Roman accounts; see Stoneman (1994). Kingsley (1995b:195) is duly critical of frequent claims by classicists that the “Greeks cannot have been taught anything meaningful by foreign cultures” because “they were so insular, so self-contained, that they had no real knowledge of foreign languages and no wish at all to learn them.” He maintains that though the Greeks didn’t have translation schools they learned foreign languages on a need-to-know basis and there are numerous examples in the sources of Greeks picking up foreign languages. A case in point is the statement by Halbfass (1988:18) that the Greeks would not give up their reluctance to learn foreign languages, and one made by Bett (2003:176-77), who writes that they were “notorious for their dismissiveness of all languages other than Greek.” The implications of such distortions are notable in Bett’s seminal study on Pyrrho (2003:177-78) where he overstates the difficulties of communication between Hellenes and Indians and discounts genuine religious contact between them.

³The term *sophist* (*σοφιστής*) refers to someone who has mastery over something, e.g., divination, art, poetry, oration, philosophy, and so forth – in short, a master of a certain craft or type of knowledge.

⁴Dani (1986:42). In *Jātaka* narratives Taxila is praised as a centre for the study of the three *vedas* and the eighteen branches of knowledge (Raychaudhuri, 1953:24-26). In addition to its Brahmanical heritage, Taxila featured as a major centre of Buddhist monasticism and scholarship, not least because it was strategically situated on the trading routes that connected Bactria, Kāpiśi, Puṣkalāvati and the capital of Magadha Pāṭaliputra through the “royal highway” as reported by Megasthenes. It is said that the king of Gandhāra Pukkusāti maintained friendly relations with the powerful sovereign of Magadha Bimbisāra, who was a patron and student of the Buddha and supporter of the Buddhist community (Hazra, 2009:14).

⁵Before his self-immolation, Kalanos distributed his ascetic belongings of “cups and rugs” to his Greek pupils. One of his students ‘to be cured by wisdom’ (*τῶν τινι θεραπευόντων αὐτὸν ἐπὶ σοφίᾳ*) was the Macedonian general Lysimachos (c.360-281) who received as a parting gift his horse, a Nisaeen breed (Arr. *Anab.* 7.3.4). Tarn (1979:110) commented that the general did not seem to have profited from Kalanos’ teachings on mastering oneself and not others, considering later historical events.

it supports previous studies demonstrating striking parallels between Buddhism and the teachings of Pyrrhon of Elis (c. 360–c. 270 BCE) on the basis of their use of antinomian methods of contemplation in the service of soteriological ends.⁶ Pyrrhon had ample opportunities to learn from Kalanos and other *gymnosophists* in his journey to the far eastern borderlands of the defeated Persian Empire and in Alexandros' own mobile court.⁷

II. Buddhist *gymnosophists* in Gandhāra and the Greeks

Despite claims by classicists to the contrary, as early as the 1900s, scholars have argued that Pyrrhon's encounter with the *gymnosophists* of Taxila had a transfor-

⁶ Arguably, Pyrrhon and the Buddha alike would agree that the quest for liberation has its roots in human ignorance. Our being ignorant of the real nature of phenomena causes us to relate to the world in compulsive and deceptive ways that eventually cause *ταραχή*, 'unease, or suffering' (*dukkha*). But the meaning of reality can't be found in conditioned phenomena (including our thoughts and sense-impressions), rejected by the Buddha as sources of true knowledge (wisdom). This rejection mirrors Pyrrhon's own stance against all forms of mental proliferation and reification: "no single thing is this or that much of anything" (*οὐ γὰρ μᾶλλον τὸδε ἢ τὸδε εἶναι ἕκαστον*) (Diog. Laert. 9.11). Furthermore, both Pyrrhon and the Buddhists did not employ negative disputation for the sole reason of beating their opponents in philosophical argument. Rather they did so as means for arriving at wisdom and as "philosophical therapy" to gain release from internal disturbances caused by erroneous views. Indian influences on Pyrrhon's thought have been examined by Conze (1963), Flintoff (1980:105, n. 5) and Bett (2003:169-177). For a number of recent studies see Kuzminski (2007) & (2008); Bruseker (2012); Halkias (2014); and Beckwith (2015).

⁷ We should recall that Pyrrhon was an innovative Alexandrian philosopher who developed scepticism as a "way of life" (*ἀγωγή*) and as a soteriological discipline. During his travels to Gandhāra he was greatly inspired by the teachings of Indian masters and decided to "renounce the world" (*ἐρημάζειν*) (Diog. Laert. 9.66). He had joined Alexandros' inner circle of companions because of his teacher, the philosopher Anaxarchos from Abdera, who is mentioned in Timon's *Silloi*, our earliest source of information on Anaxarchos. Mentor and pupil spent a total of three years in Bactria (330-327 BCE) and nearly two in NW India, the prosperous region of Gandhāra, a sufficiently long time to "fraternise" (*συνμιξαι*) with Iranian Zoroastrian adepts (*Μάγοι*) and Indian recluses called by the Greeks *gymnosophists* (*γυμνοσοφισταί*) (ibid: 9.11). The impact of his encounters with Indian ascetics is seen in his transformation from a mediocre painter and unknown disciple of philosophy, to an enlightened master likened to a luminous emanation, the "orb of a burning sphere" (*σφαίρας πυρικάντορα κύκλον*) by his followers back in Greece (Bett 2003:63-94). For ancient testimonies on the travels of Anaxarchos in Central Asia and India and his close connection with Pyrrhon, see Clayman (2009: 25, n.69). For the chronology of Alexandros' far eastern campaigns see Bosworth (1988).

mative impact on his philosophical views and attitudes.⁸ Their interpretations however diverge as to the religious identity of these influential ascetic communities flourishing at the borderlands of the Achaemenid Empire and fringes of orthodox Brahmanical India. It is beyond the scope of this study to discuss all the different arguments and their shortcomings, but a few clarifications are in order. To start with, we have no evidence for speculating on the prevalence of ascetic traditions at that time in Gandhāra other than what we can broadly characterize as Buddhism and Brahmanism (Dani 1986). Buddhists were active in the region for some time before winning popular support and securing patronage to construct *vihāras* in the 3rd century BCE.⁹

There is no reason to entertain the hypothesis that the *gymnosophists* were Jains (Craven, 1976:33). Their presence in Gandhāra and surrounding areas is not corroborated by any archaeological evidence (Dani, 1986:93).¹⁰ The Jain tradition holds non-violence as its highest precept and forbids ascetics to handle fire so that they may not cause harm to flying insects (Dundas, 1992:50). It follows

⁸Parallels between Pyrrhon's scepticism and Indian philosophy have long been posited by Burnet (1908-1927:229), who wrote that he was some sort of a Buddhist *arhat* – “and that is doubtless how we should regard him. He is not so much a sceptic as an ascetic and quietist.” There is no denying that Pyrrhon was educated in Greek philosophy and communicated his insights in Greek philosophical terms and for a Hellenic audience. Nevertheless, Flintoff (1980:91) is right to argue that Pyrrhon's “salvific scepticism” cannot be read exclusively within a Greek intellectual milieu by forcing on it a series of separate positions taken from equally detached positions in early Greek philosophy. Bett (2003:169-77), who is otherwise unduly sceptical of Indo-Greek exchanges transpiring at a doctrinal level, notes that the “most distinctive” part of Pyrrhon's philosophy is the way in which “tranquillity” (*ἀταραξία*) is combined with the indeterminacy thesis. He writes: “[N]either Plato and the Eleatics nor Anaxarchus furnish a parallel here, and nor, with the possible exception of the Indian sages, does anyone else.”

⁹Archaeological excavations in Taxila and Swāt confirm Buddhist material cultures from as early as the third century BCE (Behrendt & Brancaccio, 2011:11). The encounter of the Hellenes with Buddhists in Taxila is historically tenable since their arrival in India dates nearly a century after the death of Buddha Śākyamuni. The chronology of the Buddha has been the subject of controversy. For a review of positions see Gombrich (1992) and Bechert (1995).

¹⁰Jaina monks in Mathurā, which was commercially linked with Gandhāra, date from the times of the Kuṣāṇa Empire onwards (Jaini 1995). We should not presume that the *gymnosophists* (lit. “naked masters”) referred to “sky-clad” Jains of the *Digambara* tradition, for their presence is not attested until several centuries later. After all, nudity or near nudity was not exclusive to Jains (Arora, 2005:76). Three figurative representations of ambassadors from Gandhāra in Persepolis dating to the Achaemenid rule are telling in this respect. The Indians are depicted almost naked save for some sort of a turban on their heads, a loin cloth, and a long sword hanging by a strap from their shoulders (Dani, 1986:45).

that at least the *gymnosophist* Kalanos, who chose to immolate himself because of his illness, could not have been a Jain. Jains may under strict rules perform a slow non-violent “suicide by fasting” (*sallekhanā*), should they be struck by an incurable illness or infirmity that prevents them performing the “obligatory actions” or *āvaśyakas* (Dundas, 1992:180).¹¹ However, such cases of *samādhi*-death are attested as late as the 7th century CE, and in any case they do not involve self-immolation (Settar, 1989:133-134), which is condemned by Jains as an impure form of self-killing (Laidlaw, 2005:190).

There is also the hypothesis, put forth by Barua in 1921 (1988 reprint), that the naked contemplatives encountered by the Greeks were followers of Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta, a contemporary of Buddha Śākyamuni.¹² From the Indian side, the relevant extract comes from the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* in which the Indian King Ajātaśatru asks Sañjaya to describe the goal of religious life. In a Buddhist caricature of the encounter of the king with the “eel-wiggler” (Pāli. *amarāvikkhepika*) Sañjaya, the latter resorts to the safety of the *tetralemma* and fails to provide an answer in any direct terms – and we are left pondering how he ever managed to attract disciples and form a school if all that he taught was conceptual ineffability.¹³ The characterization of Sañjaya as someone who defends a position of

¹¹Wiltshire (1983:126) explains: “to kill oneself by a direct, singular act – sudden suicide – interrupts the natural sequence of bodily processes...is therefore construed as a deed of *himsā* [violence] against one’s own person; this is outlawed by Jainism, which seeks to interfere as little possible in the natural processes. On the other hand, to allow oneself to die slowly, by fasting over a period of years in accordance with carefully laid-out ordinances [*sallekhanā*], is to create the opportunity to watch and monitor one’s own death and thereby master and transcend it” [brackets mine].

¹²Scholars rely on Buddhist texts to historically date the Jains and Sañjaya to the times of Śākyamuni. The claim that he was a contemporary of the Buddha is substantiated by several Buddhist sources, such as the *Kosala Saṃyutta*, *Catuṣpariṣatsūtra*, and the *Mahāsakuludāyī-sutta*. According to the *Mahāvagga* (1.23-24), two distinguished disciples of the Buddha, Sāriputta and Moggallāna, were previously followers of Sañjaya. In fact there were many ascetic groups and traditions in India; some of them did not survive and we don’t hear of them again, and others changed over time or were subsumed by more dominant groups. Our two earliest sources for a variety of Indian ascetics are the Pāli sermons of the Buddha collected in the *Dīgha Nikāya*: a) the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* that lists six non-Buddhist teachers, said to have been contemporaries of the Buddha; and b) the *Brahmajāla-sutta* that catalogues 62 views prevalent among ascetic groups.

¹³Sañjaya reportedly said: “If you ask me if there exists another world [after death], if I thought that there exists another world, would I declare that to you? I don’t think so. I don’t think in that way. I don’t think otherwise. I don’t think not. I don’t think not not. If you asked me if there isn’t another world... both is and isn’t... neither is nor isn’t... if there are beings who transmigrate... if there aren’t... both are and aren’t... neither are nor aren’t... if the Tathāgata exists after death... doesn’t... both... neither exists nor doesn’t exist after death, would I declare that to you? I don’t

radical scepticism but has nothing relevant to say about the benefits of this contemplative training is contrasted with Pyrrhon and the Buddha who promoted a state of embodied mental tranquillity and peace.¹⁴

Flintoff (1980) overstated the similarities between Sañjaya's use of fourfold negation (*catuṣkoṭi*) and Pyrrhon's *tetralemma* (τετράλημμα).¹⁵ Jayatilleke (1998: 130) has since noted that the four logical alternatives attributed to the school of Sañjaya were also widely employed by the Buddhists,¹⁶ and possibly by other Indian religious schools. It is quite plausible that the *catuṣkoṭi* was a commonly-shared Indian method of philosophical argumentation (Kuzminski, 2008), while

think so. I don't think in that way. I don't think otherwise. I don't think not. I don't think not not." *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* (DN 2), translated from Pāli by Thanissaro Bhikkhu (1997). Online access: <http://www.accesstoinsight.org/tipitaka/dn/dn.02.o.than.html>.

¹⁴Sextos Empirikos (fl. c.200 CE), our major source for ancient scepticism and a "Pyrrhonist", cherishes a striking recollection of the ascetic philosopher Pyrrhon who substantiated scepticism in more "corporeal" (σωματικώτερον) and "physically manifest" (ἐπιφανέστερον) ways than those so called "Pyrrhonians" who followed after him (*Outlines of Pyrrhonism* 1.7). His serenity and calming presence must have been striking for the spirited Hellenes who passed on endearing anecdotes and lampoons that draw the picture of a benevolent, absent-minded yogi who "led a life faithful to his doctrines" (ἀκόλουθος δ' ἦν καὶ τῷ βίῳ). Pyrrhon taught from the perspective of getting release from experiences governed by "beliefs" (δόξαι) and "sense experiences" (αἰσθήσεις) and arriving at an "inexpressible state" (ἀφασία) followed by "cessation of suffering" (ἀταράξια) and "physical bliss" (ἡδονή) (*Praep.evan.* 14.18.3-4). This pragmatic, uncompromising orientation is in accordance with the teachings of the Buddha, for whom, as aptly described by Conze (1963:9, 11): "[T]he conditioned world as it appears to us is fundamentally and irreparably undesirable... and all its philosophical statements are subordinate to its soteriological purpose; [hence] salvation can be found only through escape to the Unconditioned, also called 'Nirvāṇa'. Everything else is elaboration."

¹⁵Pyrrhon's fourfold negation states: no single phenomenon is other than A, or A, or A and A, or not A and not A (Eusebios *Praep.evan.* 14.18.3-4). The *tetralemma* is identified with an Indian method of negation known in Sanskrit as the *catuṣkoṭi*. Kuzminski (2008:45) is right to criticize Flintoff (1980:93) for erroneously stating that the use of the *tetralemma* by Greek Sceptics has no precedent in "Greek philosophical or indeed any other thinking" and was derived from India. This combined way of argumentation, though rarely used in its full tetradic formulation before the Sceptics, was certainly not foreign to Platon's *Parmenides* (165d) and Aristoteles' *Metaphysics* (1028a).

¹⁶The ubiquitous use of the *tetralemma* and other fourfold ways of inquiry and negative argumentation (in various forms) in early and later Buddhist discourses, such as the *Book of the Fours* in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* and Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* (18.8), suggests that it originated with the Buddhists and was used retrospectively to describe Sañjaya's views. Since no works from Sañjaya and his followers survive, it is not possible to resolve this issue in any definitive way, any more than we can meaningfully maintain the proposition that the *gymnosophists* belonged to their school.

parts of its formulation were known to pre-Hellenistic philosophers (McEvelley, 1982).¹⁷ After all, for Pyrrhon the *tetralemma* was just one contemplative stemma in a larger fourfold arrangement deconstructing the certainty of dogmas.¹⁸

The diverse and often conflicting character of interpretations in contemporary scholarship reflects not only a variety of seeming contradictions in the extant sources, but also the liability of some key texts to have competing readings. Though there are several factors to take into account in any historical reconstruction,¹⁹ some notable contradictions in the Greek texts may be less compelling if we recognize that the designation *gymnosophists* initially comprised two main groups: *brachmanes* (βραχυᾶνες) and *sarmanes* (σαρμᾶνες) or *sarmanai* (σαρμᾶναι). The *brachmanes* often served in hereditary succession the interests of the ruling class and the *sarmanai* comprised wandering renunciants who shared in the social and economic resources of Taxila. While this fine distinction between *brachmanes* and *sarmanes* is often missed by some Greek authors, for all practical purposes we can surmise that several meetings took place between Indian and Hellenic philosophers in nearly 2 years and were only later conflated in

¹⁷McEvelley (1982) has argued persuasively that the *tetralemma* could have been conceived in Hellenic philosophical circles prior to Pyrrhon's encounter with the Buddhists. What is quite distinct in the case of Pyrrhon is his employment of this contemplative method of negation to arrive at an experiential state of "inexpressibility" (ἀφασία) followed by "cessation of disturbance" (ἀταραξία).

¹⁸The crux of the matter lies in a debated passage quoted by Eusebios (*Praep. evan.* 14.18.2-5) in which Aristoboulos outlines Pyrrhon's teachings in a condensed and philosophically structured form. He presents three interrelated topics presented in a series of negations. These concern: a) the nature of "things" or "phenomena" (πράγματα); b) the dispositions we ought to cultivate in our dealings with them; and c) the benefits gained through this practice. Pyrrhon's pithy instructions to his disciples are framed in four *via negationis* contemplations: 1) ascertain the nature of phenomena "without differentiation" (ἀδιάφορα), "without measurement" (ἀστάθμητα), and "without judgment" (ἀνεπίκριτα); 2) challenge the truth value of sense perceptions and views/opinions we may hold about them (μήτε τὰς αἰσθήσεις ἡμῶν μήτε τὰς δόξας ἀληθεύειν ἢ ψεύδεσθαι); 3) cultivate an impartial (ἀδόξαστους), non-judgmental (ἀκλινεῖς) and unwavering (ἀκραδάντους) disposition towards all phenomena (pleasant and unpleasant); and 4) recognize that no single phenomenon is other than A, A, A and A, or not A and not A (οὐ μᾶλλον ἔστιν ἢ οὐκ ἔστιν ἢ καὶ ἔστι καὶ οὐκ ἔστιν ἢ οὔτε ἔστιν οὔτε οὐκ ἔστιν).

¹⁹A clear demarcation between Indian ascetic schools construed in terms of exclusive doctrines and specific practices dates to a later, so called "normative" phase, characterized by institutional differentiation and doctrinal systematization prompted by the proliferation of organized monastic hierarchies and the canonization and production of religious scriptures. It is plausible that during the time in question ascetics from different traditions shared aspirations for liberation attained by a variety of ascetic regimes and contemplative practices.

single reports that appear muddled.²⁰

Megasthenes, the Hellenistic ambassador to the Indian Emperor Candragupta Maurya, is our oldest non-Indian source for the distinction between *brachmanes* (Skt. *brāhmaṇa*) and *garmanes* (γαρμᾶνες), which is either a scribal error for *sarmanes* (Skt. *śramaṇa*), or more likely how *śramaṇa* sounded to the ears of a Hellene at that time (Halbfass, 1995:256). Among the *garmanes* (i.e., σαρμᾶνες), Megasthenes mentions the *pramnās* (πράμνας), an ascetic group that openly criticised the doctrines of the *brachmanes*.²¹ This reactionary movement was further divided into several groups including the *gymnetas* (γυμνήτας) held in high esteem. As their name suggests, they were naked or nearly so, living mainly out in the open air, and women could practise with them without intimate cohabitation (Strab. 15.1.70).²² Among the *garmanes* we also find the “physicians” (ιατρικούς) who had knowledge of medicine and could effect cures by regulating diet and applying ointments and plasters. They were hosted in Alexandros’ camp for being the “wisest” (σοφώτατοι) Indian physicians (Arr. *Ind.* 15.11). Like others among the *pramnās*, they practised fortitude in enduring physical pain and could stand in the same posture a whole day without moving (Strab. 15.1.60). It is very likely

²⁰The Greeks were often mistaken in grouping all *brachmanes* / *brachmanai* (βραχμᾶνες / βραχμᾶναι) as ascetics and all ascetics as *brachmanes*; see Strab. (15.1.66) and for a discussion of such incidents see Tola & Dragonetti (1991:121). For example, Onesikritos and Aristoboulos seem to contradict each other on whether Alexandros met the Indian ascetics. This observation has led scholars to prematurely dismiss the event of their meeting altogether as fiction (Arora, 2005:67). It is plausible that we are dealing with two different occasions. In on one of them Alexandros did invite the Indian masters to his dinner table and they partook of their meal standing. After all, Strabon does not report on any contradictions in the sources he consulted. Elsewhere he has been keen to discuss a disagreement among historians as to the manner and cause of Kalanos death (Strab. 15.68). Bosman (2010) also identifies two separate incidents and two separate sets of Indian sages.

²¹It is tempting to read *πράμνας* as a Greek rendition of *pramāṇa*, referring to an important Buddhist philosophical term for the criterion, or “measure”, of truth.

²²Halbfass (1995:201) reiterates an old debate among scholars concerning Megasthenes’ *γαρμᾶνες* referring either to renouncers in general or Buddhists in particular. While he provides evidence that *σαρμᾶνες* is a term for Buddhists, he maintains (without convincing reasons, in my opinion) the interpretation that Megasthenes is referring to “renouncers in general”. For Saint Jerome (c.342-420) the confusion as to who were the *gymnosophists* was adequately resolved in favour of the *σαρμᾶνες*. He explicitly writes, making reference to the Buddha’s legendary birth, that they were in fact Buddhists: “To come to the Gymnosophists of India, the opinion is authoritatively handed down that Budda (sic), the founder of their religion, had his birth through the side of a virgin” (*adv. Jovin* 1. 43). Curiously, John of Damascus appropriates elements of this Buddhist narrative into the life of the Christian saint Josephat (Ἰωάσαφ) (deriving from the Sanskrit bodhisattva) canonized in the Martyrology of Pope Gregory XIII (Banerjee, 2009: 27).

that the *garmanes* of Megasthenes correspond to the non-*brāhmaṇas* mentioned by Nearchos, who “studied the nature of things” (σκοπεῖν τὰ περὶ τὴν φύσιν) and allowed “women to debate philosophy with them” (συμφιλοσοφεῖν δ’ αὐτοῖς καὶ γυναικάς) (Strab. 15.1.60). For unlike the Buddhists, who admitted women in their order from the time of the Buddha, the *brachmanes* did not communicate knowledge of philosophy to their wives (Strab. 15.1.59).

There are references in the Pāli scriptures to “an ill-defined category of ascetics (*yogin*-s, *yogāvacara*-s, later *yogācāra*-s)” that included “saints and irregulars, schismatics or heretics” alongside “monks of strict observance.” They were “men of the forests (*āraṇyaka*) or of cemeteries (*śmāsānikas*)” who declined “novitiate and communal living” and were “stringent in their practice of the rigorous rules of asceticism.”²³ In the *Visuddhimagga*, Bhadantācariya Buddhaghoṣa describes Buddhist renunciant groups whose eccentric behaviour correlates with descriptions furnished in the Greek sources. There are intriguing similarities between the *gymnetas* and early Buddhist groups known as the “refuse-rag wearers” (*paṃsukūlika*), who refused robes given by householders and clothed themselves with rags procured in a variety of ways,²⁴ and also with those ascetics known as “open-air dwellers” (*abbhokāsika*).²⁵ Though writing centuries after Megasthenes, the Christian theologian Clement of Alexandria (c.150-215 CE) may very well be reflecting current views in his identification of the *sarmanai* as Mahāyāna

²³La Vallée Poussin quoted in Silk (2000:276). The development of meditative traditions of the Yogācāra School in NW India and Kashmir alludes to a long presence of Buddhist traditions in the region. Arguably, at an early stage the doctrines of the Yogācāra were not yet idealistic in the later Mahāyāna sense that refutes the independent existence of an external reality. Rather we find the assertion of the existence of an external reality that is perceptible to us, dependent on the mind and not apart from it. Their position is that of an epistemological realism focusing on the process of cognition, in that we can only know the “external world” through mental content or representations of our mind, without explicitly denying that external things exist or asserting that our mind is the only reality.

²⁴These are explained as follows: “One...should get a robe of one of the following kinds: one from a charnel ground, one from a shop, a cloth from a street, a cloth from a maiden, one from a childbed, an ablution cloth, a cloth from a washing place, one worn going to and returning from [the charnel ground], one scorched by fire, one gnawed by cattle, one gnawed by ants, one gnawed by rats, one cut at the end, one cut at the edge, one carried as a flag, a robe from a shrine, an ascetic’s robe, one from a consecration, one produced by supernormal power, one from a highway, one borne by the wind, one presented by deities, one from the sea. Taking one of these robe cloths, he should tear off and throw away the weak parts, and then wash the sound parts and make up a robe. He can use it after getting rid of his old robe given by householders” (*Visud.* 2.15).

²⁵*Visud.* (2.69; 2.63; 2.87; 2.91).

followers of the Buddha (Βοῦττα) who out of excessive piety worship him as a god (θεόν). And there is no reason to doubt the reliability of Clement's sources, for he also mentioned (*Strom.* 1.15) Buddhists (*sarmanai*) in Bactria (Σαμαναῖοι Βάκτρων), a fact well attested at the time of his writing.²⁶

III. An incandescent liberation

κἄν παραδῶ τὸ σῶμά μου, ἵνα καυθήσωμαι, ἀγάπην δὲ μὴ ἔχω, οὐδὲν ὠφελοῦμαι
 - and even if I surrender my body to the pyre, if I don't have love I gain no profit -
 (Corinthians, 13.3)

Nearchos, a reliable historian and Alexandros' admiral, was the first to introduce a division between *brāhmaṇas* and non-*brāhmaṇas*. He explicitly states that the Indian ascetic Kalanos belonged to the second group and was not one of the *brāhmaṇas* who engaged in politics and served as counsellors to kings (Strab. 15.1.66).²⁷ Following Megasthenes' division, Kalanos belonged to the *śramaṇa* order that contemplated the nature of reality and allowed women to do the same. It is reported that Alexandros admired the power of endurance of the *śramaṇas* and requested that one of them come to live with him. It seems unreasonable that Kalanos would forsake his ascetic lifestyle at an advanced age and follow Alexandros on an arduous journey from Taxila to Persia which he would have known to

²⁶The presence of Buddhists in Bactria, however minimal during the times of Alexandros' campaigns, cannot be ruled out given explicit references that assign Bactrians among the Buddha's earliest disciples; Halkias (2014:79, n.39).

²⁷Ploutarchos (*Alex.* 65) writes that Kalanos' real name was Sfines (Σφίνης) "but because he greeted those whom he met with *kale* (καλέ), the Indian word of salutation, the Greeks called him Καλανός." The word *kale* (καλέ) may derive from the Sanskrit form *kalyāṇa*, which is often used in Buddhist scriptures along with the term *mitta* (friend) to mean an "agreeable companion" or a "virtuous friend". This term was commonly used by the Buddha to indicate the sort of companion or spiritual friend who enables and encourages one to engage in steady contemplation on the nature of phenomena. In the same passage Ploutarchos relates how Kalanos "performed" for Alexandros a lesson on "middle-way" governance. He flung on the ground a dry, shrunken hide, and then trod upon the edges, and as he trod it down in one place, it rose up in all the others. He walked all round the edge of it, illustrating that this kept taking place until at length he stepped into the middle making all sides lie flat. Although Ploutarchos interprets this incident as a warning that Alexandros should concentrate on the middle of his empire and not venture on distant journeys, a Buddhist lesson on the middle-way approach (between extremes in actions and thoughts) is also plausible in lieu of our discussion.

be his last. He was over 70 years of age when he joined the Greeks and we must seriously question the naive interpretations of some ancient historians that he followed Alexandros to “rehearse praises for him”, having “no control over himself” and being “a slave to his table” (Strab. 15.68). Aristoboulos, who confused Dandamis with Kalanos and wrongly characterized them both as *brāhmaṇas*, saw in Taxila one master with long hair and one with a shaven head surrounded by their Indian disciples. The shaved renunciant “accompanied the king to the last” and “during his stay he changed his dress, and altered his mode of life.” When reproached for his conduct, he answered that he had completed the forty years of discipline which he had promised to observe, and an appreciative Alexandros made “presents to his children” (Strab. 15.1.61).

It would appear that Kalanos became a teacher of Alexandros to seek benefits in his court for himself and his family, hardly the aspirations we would expect of a professional renunciant who had completed no less than 40 years of asceticism and who, as we have seen, had no money or gold among his sparse belongings but cups and rags that he shared with his Greek disciples. We are in a better position to understand Kalanos’ decision if we turn to a description of *śramaṇa* customs recorded by Porphyry (*de Abst.* 4.17).

Having likewise the superfluities of his body cut off, he receives a garment, and departs to the Samanaeans, but does not return either to his wife or children, if he happens to have any, nor does he pay any attention to them, or think that they at all pertain to him. And, with respect to his children indeed, the king provides what is necessary for them, and the relatives provide for the wife. And such is the life of the Samanaeans.

Given that Kalanos decided to be under the patronage of another king, Alexandros ought to make provision for the welfare of his children according to prevailing customs, which would explain why he presented them with “gifts” before departing from Taxila. After all, we must bear in mind that the portrayal of Kalanos as an opportunist is hardly compatible with the daring and fearless manner that so impressed Alexandros and the Hellenes – namely of a man who stood motionless with utmost dignity as the fire engulfed him. Our sources relate stories of an Indian sage who had allegedly attained the *siddhi* (power/ability) of foreknowledge as a result of practising austerities. Having made his prayers and casting some of his hair on the pyre, he bade farewell to his attending students but not to Alexan-

dros, saying that he would be seeing him in a year's time in Babylon, a prophetic vision of the Macedonian leader passing away a year later.²⁸

Onesikritos explains that the *gymnosophists* regard disease of the body “as most disgraceful, and he who apprehends it, after preparing a pyre, destroys himself by fire; he (previously) anoints himself, and sitting down upon it orders it to be lighted, remaining motionless while he is burning” (Strab. 15.1.65). This description placed in the mouth of Dandamis describes the way Kalanos decided to end his life on a pyre in 323 BCE in Susa,²⁹ staging in public his self-immolation after falling seriously ill. According to Strabon (15.1.68) and Diodorus Siculus, Kalanos was 73 years of age when “his health became delicate, though he had never before been subject to illness” (Diod. *Lib.* 17.107). Aware that his illness could not be remedied by conventional *śramaṇa* treatments such as diet, incantations and medicine, he told Alexandros that he was not willing to lead the life of a man in infirm health. “In such circumstances he thought it best for him to put an end to his existence, before he came to experience any disease which might compel him to change his former mode of living” (Arr. *Anab.* 7.3.1). Since his former mode of living did not entail a lifestyle of physical comforts, we can understand that his illness would prevent him from engaging in his usual contemplative practices.³⁰

Arrianos (*Anab.* 7.3) and Ploutarchos (*Alex.* 69) report that at the moment of his death Kalanos displayed no signs of fear, remorse or pain, but sat firm to

²⁸For narratives on Kalanos' prophetic powers; see (Arr. *Anab.* 18); (Cic. *de Divin.* 1.47); (Plout. *Alex.* 69.3-4); and Valerius Maximus (*Facta et dicta memorabilia* 1.8 ext. 10).

²⁹Strabon (15.1) is mistaken when he writes that Kalanos' immolation took place at Pasargadae, for according to Diodoros (17.107) it happened at Susa, a statement confirmed by Nearchos, who was present at the funeral pyre. For Greek and Roman references to Kalanos' self-immolation see Cicero, *Tusculanae* (2.52); *De divinatione* (1.23.47); Diodoros, *Biblioteca Historica* (17.107); Strabon (15.1; 15.4; 15.68); Ploutarchos, *Life of Alexandros* (69.3-4); Arrianos, *Anabasis*, (7.3; 7.18; 7.16); Aelian, *Varia Historia* (2.41); Loukianos, *The Death of Peregrinos* (25); and Valerius Maximus, *Facta et dicta memorabilia* (1.8 ext. 10).

³⁰We should perhaps suspect a religious mission behind Kalanos' decision to forsake Taxila, which was by all means a prosperous and religious city and “the largest of those situated between the rivers Indus and Hydaspes” (Arr. *Anab.* 7.2). The Buddhists were known for their missionary activities aimed at the powerful classes of society now occupied by Greek rulers and for their acceptance of anyone into their order regardless of their social and ethnic background. It is possible that the Greeks forged a certain level of trust with the Buddhists, who openly repudiated the doctrines of the powerful and defiant Brahmins and challenged the Brahmanical socio-political system of the four castes that relegated Greeks and other foreigners to the status of outcasts.

be consumed by flames.³¹ According to Cicero (*Divin.* 1.47), as he was about to die he proclaimed this to be a glorious death, like that of Herakles, for when “this mortal frame is burned the soul will find the light.”³² The spectacle of an unmoving human torch provoked different reactions among Greek spectators: for some he was mad; for others he was vain in seeking glory for his ability to withstand pain; and many simply marvelled at his fortitude and contempt for death (Diod. *Lib.* 17.107). Ploutarchos (*Alex.* 69) was keen to notice a comparable suicide of another *śramaṇa* who joined a mission sent by the Indian King Poros (Πῶρος) to Augustus Caesar (63 BCE-14 CE) with a Greek letter written on a parchment (Strab. 15.1.73). The sources are sparse, and for reasons unknown to us the Indian ascetic Zarmanos (Dion Cassius, *Liv.* 4.), a likely variant of *śramaṇa* with the alias Zarmanochegas (Ζαρμανοχηγᾶς), leaped naked and anointed with a smile onto a pyre in Athens wearing a “girdle round his waist” (*mekhalā*).³³

IV. Ablaze in honour of the Buddha

There are compelling similarities between the reasons behind Kalanos’ suicide and canonical descriptions of Buddhist ascetics who didn’t wish to fall into disturbing psycho-physical states because of their deteriorating health that would prevent them from engaging in and/or sustaining contemplative ways of living.

³¹ Although further details are not furnished in the sources, it would seem that Kalanos sat in a meditation posture and probably in a state of *samādhi*, during which one can withdraw from the “sense-objects, the senses and their operations (the 18 *dhātu*) and so experience temporary respite by attenuating or eliminating sensation (*vedanā*)” (Wiltshire, 1983:133). In *The Death of Peregrinos* (25) Loukianos explains that the Indians do not leap into the fire as recounted by Onesikritos. When the pyre is lit, they “stand quietly roasting in front of it, and when they do get on top, there they sit, smouldering away in a dignified manner, never budging an inch.”

³² Though references to self-immolations by Greeks in the name of a cult of Herakles would not have been missed by learned Roman readers, it seems unlikely that Kalanos would compare himself to a Greek hero who immolated himself, according to certain stories. This fabricated narrative implicitly argues for a common ancestry of self-immolation practices upheld by some Greek and Indian sects.

³³ For passing reference to the *mekhalā* or “garland for the private parts,” see *Visud.* (7.64). According to Banerjee (2009:23) Ζαρμανοχηγᾶς is a phonetic rendering of *śramaṇa-ācārya*, a Buddhist teacher. The Athenians were quite impressed with Zarmanochegas from Bargose (Βαργόση) and built a tomb inscribed for him with the words: “Zarmanochegas, an Indian from Bargose who immortalized himself according to Indian custom, lies here” (Strab. 15.1.73). We may follow Puri (1963:179, n.3), who identifies Bargose as Barygaza (present day Bharoch and capital of the Gaikwar), the great commercial port on the Narbada river mentioned in the Periplus of the Erythraean Sea.

The Pāli *suttas* contain several references to Buddhist renunciants ending their own lives because they were struck by a grave or incurable disease, or because they didn't wish to relapse from an acquired spiritual state (Delhey, 2006); as in the case of Godhika, who finds it impossible to sustain “mind-release through *samādhi*” (Wiltshire, 1983:133). The majority of examples of ritual suicide or self-administered euthanasia in the Pāli canon concern spiritual adepts who were seeking alleviation of pain due to physical illness and who sought death as a way of release from their mortal confines. As noted by Wiltshire (1983:137-38), “if this body has lost its essential usefulness – and Buddhism seems to recognize that such circumstances do sometimes exist – then the body can be relinquished.” This should only be done provided that “it is understood that all bodies are intrinsically impermanent and bankrupt of self.”³⁴

The practice of cremation follows Vedic/Hindu and ancient Greek mortuary rites, and it was the “normative Buddhist way of disposing of bodies, at least the bodies of monks, in ancient India” (Strong 2004:115). Strong explains that the cremation of the Buddha (and his monks) is precisely that which ritually differentiated him and members of his order “from orthodox brahmanical ascetics and renunciants, who were typically *not* cremated... [but]...buried in sand or abandoned in a river.” The tradition of self-cremation of Hindu widows (*satī*) who burn themselves on their husband's funeral pyre is reported by Megasthenes, who further explains that self-destruction is not a dogma of the Indian philosophers (Strab. 15.68). Arora (2005:71) cites a few passing references to self-immolation in Brahmanical texts, like the contested *Vasiṣṭha sūtra* and other Upaniṣads, but these seem to be descriptive of a custom that was by no means a general practice among the *brāhmaṇas*. For them, ritual suicide, if condoned at all, was more commonly prescribed by drowning in a sacred river for purification.³⁵ This is confirmed by Pliny the Elder (*Nat.Hist.* 6.22), who wrote that the Indian ascetics accustomed to self-immolation were not part of the system of the four *varnas* (i.e., *brāhmaṇas* and the rest), but belonged to a “fifth class” that was devoted to the “pursuit of wisdom”.

Bardaisan or Bardesanes (154-222 CE), a Gnostic Christian from Syria, derived his knowledge from a meeting at Edessa with a delegation of Indian *gym-*

³⁴For Buddhism suicide is not condoned, but as Keown (1996) points out, there are certain circumstances in which such action may be permissible (i.e., severe and incurable illness) provided that the agent who takes his life is not motivated by desire for death, or driven by fear or delusion.

³⁵According to the *Manusmṛti* (11.74), suicide by fire was not a common practice among the *brāhmaṇas* and their ascetic orders but was reserved for the slayer of a *brāhmaṇa*.

nosophists sent to the Roman Emperor Elagabalus (r. 218-222 CE). He describes a renunciant order of *śramaṇas* who went forth (*pabbajjā*) in search of wisdom in contrast to the Brahmins who “receive divine wisdom of this kind by succession, in the same manner as the priesthood.” The *śramaṇas* abandon all wealth and property and in order to join the order they shave their heads, wear robes and take on bowls for alms. They reside in temples and monasteries and unlike the Brahmins they allow open membership to all nations, sects and castes of Indians. This monastic order described by Bardaisan is clearly organized according to Buddhist concepts and rituals. Most importantly, they practise self-immolation and die in a way that is most admired by all *śramaṇas*.

...they unwillingly endure the whole time of the present life, as a certain servitude to nature, and therefore they hasten to liberate their souls from the bodies [with which they are connected]. Hence, frequently, when they are seen to be well, and are neither oppressed, nor driven to desperation by any evil, they depart from life. And though they previously announce to others that it is their intention to commit suicide, yet no one impedes them; but, proclaiming all those to be happy who thus quit the present life, they enjoin certain things to the domestics and kindred of the dead: so stable and true do they, and also the multitude, believe the assertion to be, that souls [in another life] associate with each other. But as soon as those, to whom they have proclaimed that this is their intention, have heard the mandates given to them, they deliver the body to fire, in order that they may separate the soul from the body in the purest manner, and thus they die celebrated by all the Samanaeans.³⁶

While suicide figures in the logic of several Indian religions (Wiltshire, 1983), the evidence suggests that the *śramaṇa* order favouring suicide by fire were in fact Buddhists, who share a long history of self-immolation not only in India, but in China, Vietnam, and more recently in Tibet.³⁷ There are explicit references

³⁶Cited in Porphyry, (*de Abst.* 4.18); translated by Thomas Taylor. References to the “soul” should not deter us, for the subtle doctrine of *anātman* may not have been widely discussed outside Buddhist circles.

³⁷For a landmark study on self-immolations performed by Chinese Buddhists from the 5th to the 10th centuries see Gernet (1960) and Benn’s (2007a) comprehensive treatment of the topic. Strong (2004:103) explains that in China self-immolations were called *shao shen* (one of the terms used for cremation) and there were all sorts of “related devotional practices, such as suicides by

to ritual suicide in general, and auto-cremation in particular, in early canonical and later Indian Buddhist scriptures and in Chinese reports by the monks Faxian (320?-420?) and Xuanzang (600-664), who travelled to India in search of the Buddha's teachings (Benn, 2007b:105-106). It seems that Buddhist contemplatives across Asia "treated suicide as something distinctly different from killing other sentient beings and that in contrast to Western notions of human life as sacred, life does not have such basic value in Buddhism" (Zimmermann, 2006:7). The Buddhist tradition makes a clear distinction between the suicide of an ordinary person (an act that is met with categorical disapproval) and the giving up of the body by one who has attained the culmination of Buddhist discipline. Those who have completed their spiritual training may "sever their last link with the world and voluntarily pass into *nirvāṇa*, thus definitely escaping from the world of rebirths" (Lamotte, 1987:106).

More pertinently, self-immolations are intimately related to Buddha Śākyamuni, who is reported by some influential recountings to have ended his own life by auto-cremation,³⁸ and in former times threw himself into "a great abyss, ablaze and on fire for the sake of the well-spoken [dharma]" (*Rāstrapālapariṣcchā-sūtra*, 36.11; Boucher, 2008:144). A Buddhist narrative from the *Mahāvastu* tells that at the moment of Śākyamuni's conception in his mother's womb five hundred *pratyekabuddhas* assembled at the Deer Park in Sarnath (where Śākyamuni would later deliver his first sermon) and liberated themselves from their bodies in a spectacular manner. Rising high up in the air to a height of seven palm trees they immolated themselves, bursting into flames (Lamotte, 1987:108). This pyrotechnic phantasmagoria anticipates the Buddha's enlightening teachings at the Deer Park and suggests some ancient form of sacrifice/offering that marks the birth of a great leader.³⁹

fire or the burning off of fingers and arms." In truth, they were so widespread in China that the famous 6th century Chinese text of memoirs, the *Gaoseng zhuan* (*Lives of Eminent Monks*) lists "self-immolators" (*wang shen*) among ten categories of Buddhist vocation (Lopez, 2008:208). Recently, there have been an alarming number of self-immolations by lay Buddhists and monastics in Tibet. They resemble similar public outcries of despair and hope performed by Vietnamese monks who faced oppression of religious freedom and persecution in the 70s.

³⁸The recounted death of the Buddha was certainly not a typical cremation, for the pyre beneath his body reportedly ignited of its own accord. Attempting to cremate the Buddha's body, the Malla chieftains found that they could not light the pyre. It was only with the arrival of Mahākāśyapa along with a company of five hundred monks that the funeral pyre began to burn (Wilson, 2003:37).

³⁹On the prevalence of sacrificial immolations and cosmogonic myths Eliade (1972:184-186) explains: "The mythical motif of a 'birth' brought about by an immolation is found in countless

When he was still a bodhisattva, the past Buddha Maṅgala is said to have wrapped his whole body in the manner of “making a torch”. As an offering to the *caitya* of another Buddha, he set his body “ablaze, along with a golden thousand-wick butter lamp” (Strong, 2004:103). But he was not the only one, for the *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka-sūtra* narrates the story of the bodhisattva Sarvasattvapriyadarśana, who “ate resins and drank oil for twelve years and then wrapped his body in garments and bathed in oil before setting himself ablaze in honour of a buddha; he burned, we are told, for twelve thousand years.”⁴⁰

There are many references to the ritual significance of Buddhist cremation and the symbolic potency of fire.⁴¹ According to Strong (2004:103), in at least one tradition the emperor Aśoka is said to have “honoured the relics of the Buddha by setting himself on fire” in the manner of a “wheel-turning monarch” (*cakravartin*), having his body first “wrapped in cotton...and having himself soaked with five hundred pots of scented oil.” He argues that virtually all later auto-cremations by Buddhists were done in honour of their master’s relics and are intimately linked to the Buddha’s own funeral. These incidents in the Buddhist tradition are not simply sacrifices, but “acts of imitation and appropriation, attempts to repeat the Buddha’s own cremation and creation of relics.”⁴²

A Buddhist preoccupation with the physical and symbolic properties of fire has given rise to the most common religious metaphor for the state of attaining *nibbāna*: a fire fuelled by “desire” (*rāga*), “aversion” (*dosa*) and “ignorance” (*moha*) going out.⁴³ The truth of human suffering has the “characteristics of af-

contexts: it is not only the Cosmos that is born as the result of the immolation of a Primordial Being and from his own substance; the same is true of food plants, human races, or different social classes...On the plane of construction rites the immolated being, as we have seen, acquires a new body: the building that it has made a ‘living,’ hence enduring, thing by its violent death. In all these myths death by violence is creative.”

⁴⁰Cuevas & Stone (2007:35). *Jātaka* narratives about the bodhisattva’s past lives abound with compassionate stories of self-sacrifice, as in the case of the white rabbit king who “was able to give up his body for the cause of the religion and jumped into fire as an offering to the hungry religious man” (Jan 1981:128).

⁴¹Whenever they reveal themselves to bodhisattvas Buddhas assume the aspect of emitting flames, we are told in the *Suvarṇaprabhāsa-sūtra* (Taddei, 1992:106), and reliefs from Amarāvati depict the Buddha as a pillar of fire (Wilson, 2003:44, n.20).

⁴²A modern adaptation on the theme of sacrificial relics is artistically portrayed in Ki-duk Kim’s film (2003), “Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter...and Spring,” where the Korean Buddhist teacher sets himself ablaze on a wooden boat leaving behind relics to be discovered by his disciple.

⁴³In his English translation of the *Visuddhimagga* (*Visud.*), Bhikkhu Ñānamoli explains that the original meaning of the word *nibbāna* (Skt. *nirvāṇa*) meant ‘extinction’ of a fire by ceasing to

flicting [and] its function is to burn” (*Visud.* 16.23). The “accessories of enlightenment” are often compared to the “light of a blazing fire” which burns up obscuration and is called “the radiating” (*Mahāyānasūtrālaṅkāra*, 10.34). In the *Fire Sermon* (SN 35.28), the Buddha discourses on conventional reality constructed by the five senses that are metaphorically speaking on fire.⁴⁴ Elsewhere he resorts to apotropaic visions of self-incineration to admonish his disciples against the dangers of sexual desire, for it is better for an ascetic “to sit or lie down embracing that mass of fire burning, blazing and glowing” than “embracing a warrior-noble maiden or a brahman maiden or a maiden of householder family, with soft, delicate hands and feet” (AN 7.68).⁴⁵

Consumption by “fire” (Pāli. *tejo*) figures prominently in Buddhist eschatology, for it is the medium by which our universe will come to the end of its cycle in a massive conflagration.⁴⁶ Arguably, the entire universe will undergo a fiery process of death, rebirth and purification, for in early Buddhism fire also takes on the element of cleansing and serves as a potent metaphor of a single force that both consumes/destroys and illuminates/creates. Fire is a tangible force that corresponds to one of the four “primary elements” (*mahā-bhūta*) of the material world and our physical constitution, the element that gives rise to heat and mat-

blow and it has been extended to mean extinction of fire by any means, for example the going out of a lamp’s flame (Buddhaghosa, 2010:289, n.73). Compare with a stanza from the Tibetan *Mahāyānasamgraha* (47a-3.4), *la lar me bzhin mya ngan ’das // nam yang med pa ma yin te*, “like a fire, *nirvāṇa* is shown to some and annihilation to others.” For instances of “fire” similes and metaphors in early Buddhism see Thānissaro Bhikkhu (1993).

⁴⁴“Monks, all things are on fire. And what are all things which are on fire? The eye is on fire. Forms are on fire. Eye-consciousness is on fire. Impressions received by the eye are on fire. And whatever sensation, pleasant, unpleasant, or indifferent, originates in dependence on impressions received by the eye is also on fire. And with what are these on fire? [There are] with the fire of desire, with the fire of aversion, and with the fire of ignorance.”

⁴⁵“I say to you, bhikkhus, I declare to you, bhikkhus, that it would be better for one who is unvirtuous, who is evil-natured, of unclean and suspect habits, secretive of his acts, who is not an ascetic and claims to be one, who does not lead the life of purity and claims to do so, who is rotten within, lecherous, and full of corruption, to sit down or lie down embracing that great mass of fire burning, blazing and glowing.” Translation from Pāli by Bhikkhu Ñānamoli, *The Path of Purification* (2010:50-51).

⁴⁶The Buddha prophesied that our world will be destroyed by the gradual appearance of seven consecutive suns during which “the whole world-sphere together with the hundred thousand million other world-spheres catches fire.” As long as there is anything left “the size of an atom” the fire will not go out until “all formed things have been consumed. And like the flame that burns ghee and oil, it leaves no ash.” (*Anguttara Nikaya* 7.62; *The Sermon of the Seven Suns*).

uration.⁴⁷ In its luminous form it serves as an object (*kaṣiṇa*) of meditation that can lead to the attainment of supernormal faculties. Buddhaghosa (*Visud.* 5.30) explains that the fire *kaṣiṇa* is the basis for such powers as “smoking, flaming, causing showers of sparks, countering fire with fire, ability to burn only what one wants to burn... causing light for the purpose of seeing visible objects with the divine eye, [and] burning up the body by means of the fire element at the time of attaining Nibbāna.”

Hence, a Buddhist practitioner accomplished in *samatha*, like the Elder Sañjīva, can't be burnt by fire (*Visud.* 23.37). Fire will not harm one who has gone through the “meditative absorptions” (*jhāna*) and has attained “the base consisting of boundless consciousness.” Such is the case of Mahā Nāga, who attained cessation in his mother's living-room unaffected when the establishment went up in flames (23.36), and of Saṅkicca, who was still in his mother's womb when she was pierced by stakes and placed on a pyre. He miraculously survived the pyre through “success by intervention of knowledge” and later attained Arhatship (12.28). Uttarā, a lay woman devotee of the Buddha attained loving-kindness and did not burn when hot oil was thrown at her by the jealous harlot Sirimā (12.34). An adept who has mastery over the element of fire may willingly combust into flames like the aged bhikkhu Subhadda, who did not want to die after his master had passed away, so he “seated himself before the Buddha and incinerated his body completely, passing into final *nirvāṇa* as the Buddha lay dying” (Wilson, 2003:39). Arguably, the most impressive display of self-immolation reported in the Pāli canon is that of Dabba Mallaputta, the bhikkhu who died bursting into flames while seated cross-legged in the air so that “neither ashes nor soot could be discerned” (*Udāna Sutta*, 8.9).

V. Ancient histories of a luminous silence

Several aspects examined in this study suggest a certain depth and intensity in the exchanges that transpired between Hellenes and Buddhists in Hellenistic times. The impact of the encounter between Buddhists and the Hellenistic world is not

⁴⁷Just as “earth” (*paṭhāvi*) is the material aggregate of solidity and hardness, “air” (*vāyo*) is for distension and motion, and “water” (*āpo*) for liquidity and cohesion (Buddhaghosa, 2010:845). Buddhaghosa further elaborates on the properties of fire when he conjures up image of burned flesh to illustrate the repulsiveness of human “skin” (*taca*). He writes: “The inner skin envelops the whole body...But as to colour, the skin itself is white; and its whiteness becomes evident when the outer cuticle is destroyed by contact with the flame of fire” (*Visud.* 8.93).

simply the outcome of something entirely new coming from the outside, but the inside acquiring renewed forms of articulation in its contact with the “outside-other”. For while Indian religious concepts were translated into Hellenistic and Roman cultural idiom and philosophical terminology, more subtle ways of contemplation were adopted that were not entirely foreign to the spiritual and philosophical heritage of the ancient Greeks.⁴⁸ As I have argued elsewhere (Halkias 2014), intricate processes of cultural and philosophical innovation are not simply the results of historical encounters between “East” and “West” as discreet geographical entities, nor are they the single outcome of symmetrical transfers of knowledge. In the cosmopolitan milieu of the Hellenistic period contacts between Hellenes and Buddhists in Alexandria, Gandhāra and Bactria led to a revitalization and elucidation of existing trends within each tradition, and to an eclectic appropriation of religious concepts and imagery by later Indo-Greek converts to Buddhism and Indian Buddhists.

It has been especially instructive to explain the enigmatic practice of Kalanos’ death within the Buddhist tradition – which as we have seen exhibits an ongoing preoccupation with fire and cremation and permits suicide under the circumstances recounted by Kalanos. The evidence suggests that ritual suicide by fire was upheld by some early Indian Buddhist sects. The frequency of such incidents did not pass unnoticed by Greeks and Romans and triggered cultural and intellectual responses in the Hellenistic world. For even if the incandescent spectacle of Kalanos’ auto-cremation exceeded what some Greek wisdom-seekers envisioned as an end of their contemplative life, this radical form of self-transcendence left its deep impression on Hellenistic and Roman writers who domesticated it as a literary *topos* for romanticising the triumph of Indian asceticism over that which is human, mortal and transitory (Halbfass, 1988:13). And yet the influence of India on Greco-Roman times is just one aspect of a more intriguing story that predates Alexandros and the historical Buddha. Narratives of self-immolating *śramaṇas* could and did find voice in pre-Hellenistic esoteric traditions that considered

⁴⁸A comparative study of Hellenistic and Buddhist systems of soteriology should account for the history of Greek ascetic traditions (i.e., Heraklitos, Pythagoras, Diogenes), the pre-Hellenistic use of “sceptical doctrines” and the “therapeutic aspects of philosophy” (i.e., Pythagoras, Asklepios, Plato) prior to the advent of Buddhism. A case in point is the ubiquitous use of medical analogies of “illness and therapy” in Buddhist soteriology and several schools of Hellenistic philosophy, e.g., Epikourian, Stoic and Pyrrhonian (Gowans, 2010). These parallels may very well be shown to reflect cases of individual articulations with shared roots and are not the by-product of direct borrowing. For an illuminating treatment of medical analogies in Epikouros see Nussbaum (2013:102-139).

death by fire “a standard way of attaining heroic status” – especially by lightning, which was seen as “the purest form of fire” (Kingsley 1995a:258). Heroic acts of immortalization by auto-cremation featured in Orphic mysteries and in the earliest traditions surrounding Herakles’ fiery death on Mt. Oeta and Empedokles’ plunge into the active volcanic crater of Etna. So when, centuries later, the Greek Cynic Peregrinos (c.100-165 CE) staged his self-apotheosis on a pyre at the Olympic festival, he acted in the same way as the Olympic pancratiast Timanthes of Kleonai had done six centuries before him in Peloponnesos, emulating the heroic sacrifice of Herakles (Paus. 6.8.4). Loukianos reports (*Περὶ τῆς Περεγγρίνου Τελευτηῆς*) that Peregrinos burned himself publicly on stage not far from Olympia soon after delivering his own funeral oration. His devoted disciple Theagenes saw his master going up in smoke “riding upon the fire” (*ὄχουόμενος ἐπὶ τοῦ πυρός*) to join the immortal gods.

I wish to thank the University of Hong Kong for providing a research grant and the resources in support of this study as part of the research project “Entangled Histories between East and West: Sources and Interpretations for the Development of Buddhism in Hellenistic Central Asia,” hosted by the Centre of Buddhist Studies.

References

- Arora, U. P. (2005). ”The Fragments of Onesikritos on India - An Appraisal”. *Indian Historical Review*, 32(1), 35-102.
- Banerjee, G. (2009). *India as Known to the Ancient World*. Charleston: BiblioBazaar.
- Barua, B. (1998). *A History of Pre-Buddhistic Indian Philosophy*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Bechert, H. (Ed.). (1995). *When Did the Buddha Live? The Controversy on the Dating of the Historical Buddha*. Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications.
- Beckwith, C. (2015). *Greek Buddha: Pyrrho’s Encounter with Buddhism in Central Asia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Behrendt, K., & Brancaccio, P. (2011). *Gandharan Buddhism: Archaeology, Art, and Texts*. Washington: University of Washington Press.
- Benn, J. A. (2007a). *Burning for the Buddha: self-immolation in Chinese Buddhism*. Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press.

- (2007b). "Spontaneous Human Combustion: Some Remarks on a Phenomenon in Chinese Buddhism." In P. Granoff and K. Shinohara (Eds.), *Heroes and Saints: The Moment of Death in Cross-cultural Perspectives* (pp. 101-135). Cambridge: Cambridge Scholar Publishing.
- Bett, R. (2003). *Pyrrho, His Antecedents, and His Legacy*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bosman, P. B. (2010). "The Gymnosophists' Riddle Contest (Berol. P. 13044): A Cynic Text?" *Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Studies*, 50, 175-192.
- Bosworth, A. B. (1988). *Conquest and empire: the reign of Alexander the Great*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Boucher, D. (2008). *Bodhisattvas of the forest and the formation of the Mahāyāna: a study and translation of the Rāṣṭrapālāparipṛcchā-sūtra*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Bruseker, G. (2012). "Calanus and Dandamis: A Greek sketch of ancient Indian Thought". *Talanta, XLII-XLIII (2010/2011)*, 1-49.
- Buddhaghosa. (2010). *The Path of Purification: Visuddhimagga* (Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoḷi, Trans. 4th ed.). Sri Lanka: Colombo: Buddhist Publication Society.
- Burnet, J. (1908-1927). "Sceptics". In J. Hastings (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Religions and Ethics* (Vol. 11, pp. 229-231). New York: Charles Scribner & Sons.
- Clayman, D. L. (2009). *Timon of Phlius: Pyrrhonism Into Poetry*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Conze, E. (1963). "Buddhist Philosophy and its European Parallels". *Philosophy East and West*, 13(1), 9-23.
- Craven, R. C. (1976). *A concise history of Indian art*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Cuevas, B. J., & Stone, J. I. (2007). *The Buddhist Dead: Practices, Discourses, Representations*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Dani, A. H. (1986). *The historic city of Taxila*. Paris: Unesco.
- Delhey, M. (2006). "Views on Suicide in Buddhism". In M. Zimmermann (Ed.), *Buddhism and Violence* (Vol. 2, pp. 25-64). Lumbini: Lumbini International Research Institute.
- Dundas, P. (1992). *The Jains*. London and New York: Routledge.
- Eliade, M. (1972). *Zalmoxis, the Vanishing God: Comparative Studies in the Religions and Folklore of Dacia and Eastern Europe*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Flintoff, E. (1980). "Pyrrho and India" *Phronesis*, 25(1), 88-108.
- Gernet, J. (1960). "Les suicides par le feu chez les bouddhistes chinois du Ve au Xe siècle".

- Gombrich, R. (1992). "Dating the Buddha: A Red Herring Revealed." In H. Bechert (Ed.), *Datierung des Historischen Buddha* (Vol. 2, pp.237-259). Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht.
- Gowans, C. W. (2010). "Medical Analogies in Buddhist and Hellenistic Thought: Tranquility and Anger." In C. Carlisle & J. Ganeri (Eds.), *Philosophy as Therapeia* (pp. 11-34). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Halbfass, W. (1988). *India and Europe: An Essay in Understanding*. Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Halbfass, W. (1995). "Early Indian References to the Greeks and the First Encounters between Buddhism and the West". In H. Bechert (Ed.), *When Did the Buddha Live? The Controversy on the Dating of the Historical Buddha* (pp. 195-210). Delhi: Sri Satguru.
- Halkias, G. (2014). "When the Greeks Converted the Buddha: Asymmetrical Transfers of Knowledge in Indo-Greek Cultures". In P. W. a. V. Rabens (Ed.), *Religions and Trade: Religious Formation, Transformation and Cross-Cultural Exchange between East and West* (Vol. 5, pp. 65-116). Leiden: Brill.
- Hazra, K. L. (2009). *Buddhism in India: A Historical Survey*: Buddhist World Press.
- Jaini, P. (1995). "Jaina Monks from Mathura: Literary Evidence for their Identification on Kuṣāṇa Sculptures." *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 58(3), 479-494.
- Jan, Yün hua. (1981). "The Bodhisattva Idea in Chinese Literature: Typology and Significance." In L. Kawamura (Ed.), *The Bodhisattva Doctrine in Buddhism* (pp. 125-152). Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.
- Jayatilke, K. N. (1998). *Early Buddhist Theory of Knowledge*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass Publishers.
- Keown, D. (1996). "Buddhism and Suicide: The case of Channa". *Journal of Buddhist Ethics*, 3, 8-31.
- Kingsley, P. (1995a). *Ancient Philosophy, Mystery and Magic. Empedocles and Pythagorean Tradition*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Kingsley, P. (1995b). "Meetings with Magi: Iranian Themes among the Greeks, from Xanthus of Lydia to Plato's Academy." *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Third Series, 5, pp. 173-209.
- Kuzminski, A. (2007). "Pyrrhonism and the Mādhyamaka." *Philosophy East and West*, 57(4), 482-511.
- Kuzminski, A. (2008). *Pyrrhonism: How the Ancient Greeks Reinvented Buddhism*. Plymouth: Lexington Books.
- Laidlaw, J. (2005). "A Life worth leaving: fasting to death as telos of a Jain religious life." *Economy and Society*, 34(2), 178-199.

- Lamotte, É. (1987). "Religious Suicide in Early Buddhism". *Buddhist Studies Review*, 4(2), 105-118.
- Lopez, D. S. (2008). *Buddhism & science: a guide for the perplexed*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- McEvelley, T. (1982). "Pyrrhonism and Mādhyamika". *Philosophy East and West*, 32(1), 3-35.
- Nussbaum, M. C. (1994). *The Therapy of Desire: Theory and Practice in Hellenistic Ethics*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Puri, B. N. (1963). *India in Classical Greek Writings*. Ahmedabad: New Order Book Company.
- Raychaudhuri, H. (1953). *Political History of Ancient India: From the Accession of Parikshit to the Extinction of the Gupta Dynasty*. Calcutta: University of Calcutta.
- Settar, S. (1989). *Inviting Death: Indian Attitude towards the Ritual Death*. Leiden: Brill.
- Silk, J. (2000). "The Yogācāra Bhikṣu". In J. Silk (Ed.), *Wisdom, Compassion and the Search for Understanding: The Buddhist Legacy of Gadjin M. Nagao* (pp. 265-314). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Stoneman, R. (1994). "Who are the Brahmins? Indian Lore and Cynic Doctrine in Palladius' De Bragmanibus and Its Models." *Classical Quarterly*, 44(2), 500-510.
- Strong, J. S. (2004). *Relics of the Buddha*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Taddei, M. (1992). "The Dīpamkara-jataka and Siddhartha's meeting with Rahula – How are they linked to the flaming Buddha?". *Annali dell'Istituto Orientale di Napoli*, 52, 103-107.
- Tarn, W. W. (1979). *Alexander the Great: Volume 1, Narrative*. Cambridge University Press.
- Thānissaro Bhikkhu, (1993). *The Mind Like Fire Unbound*. MA: Dhamma Dana Publications, Barre Centre for Buddhist Studies.
- Tola, F., & Dragonetti, C. (1991). "India and Greece from Alexander to Augustus". In U. P. Aroa (Ed.), *Graeco-Indica: India's Cultural Contacts with the Greek World* (Vol. XXVI, pp. 119-149). Delhi: Ramanand Vidya Bhawan.
- Wilson, L. (2003). "Human Torches of Enlightenment: Autocremation and Spontaneous Combustion as Marks of Sanctity in South Asian Buddhism". In L. Wilson (Ed.), *The Living and the Dead: Social Dimensions of Death in South Asian Religions* (pp. 29-50). Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Wiltshire, M. G. (1983). "The 'Suicide' Problem in the Pāli canon". *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 6(2), 124-140.
- Zimmermann, M. (Ed.). (2006). *Buddhism and Violence*. Lumbini: Lumbini International Research Institute.

Book Review

***Brains, Buddhas, and Believing: The Problem of Intentionality in Classical Buddhist and Cognitive-Scientific Philosophy of Mind.* By Dan Arnold. New York: Columbia University Press, 2012.**

In his recent book, *Brains, Buddhas, and Believing*, Dan Arnold has waded into what is known in philosophy and cognitive science as the “really hard problem”: how to explain our reflexively self-aware mental experience (consciousness) in a world that seems to be made up of stuff (matter and energy) that is decidedly not consciously self-aware. Arnold draws on scholastic Buddhist philosophy and contemporary physicalist philosophies of mind to demonstrate that these disparate traditions possess important philosophical similarities regarding their attempts to solve “the really hard problem.” But, as Arnold ably shows in this book, these similarities (i.e., attempts to “naturalize” the mind by explaining mental processes in terms of underlying causes that are themselves not reflexively aware) leave both traditions open to the same effective counterarguments that doom causally reductive accounts of the mind.

A notable feature of Arnold’s book is that it is fundamentally a work in *philosophy*, not intellectual history. There’s nothing wrong, of course, with intellectual history, and there is plenty of excellent intellectual history in the book, too. But Arnold goes beyond intellectual history to make the ideas of historical thinkers part of a current philosophical conversation. Specifically, Arnold demonstrates that contemporary research on the philosophy of mind would do well to take account of the arguments of scholastic Buddhist philosophy, as scholastic Buddhist philosophy has much to say about some of the same issues that frame contemporary metaphysics and epistemology. The book’s major themes are addressed

by weaving together philosophical ideas and arguments drawn from an exceptionally long list of heavy hitters in modern and contemporary (Western) philosophy (Kant, Sellars, Dennett, McDowell, Locke, Hume, Wittgenstein, Fodor... just to name a few). On the Buddhist side, the main focus is on the contributions of the seventh century Buddhist philosopher Dharmakīrti, and to a lesser extent Dignāga —contributions that are developed within the broad continuities of Buddhist thought from the Abhidharmikas to the Sautrāntikas and, finally, to the Madhyamika philosophers Nāgārjuna and Candrakīrti. In handling such a broad sweep of philosophical ideas East and West, Arnold excels at explaining what is inherently difficult to grasp, making the main thread of argumentation intelligible, if not always easily accessible.

As a Yogācāra idealist, Dharmakīrti would appear to be at the opposite end of the philosophical spectrum from contemporary cognitive-scientific philosophers of mind who argue that the mental can be reduced to brain processes. So it is an unexpected and brilliant insight on the part of Arnold that there is important philosophical common ground shared by Dharmakīrti and contemporary physicalist philosophers of mind. But rather than offer further support for the theories of scholastic Buddhism and physicalist philosophies of mind, Arnold argues that these similarities show that these traditions share vulnerabilities to objections that threaten all causally reductive explanations of the mind.

Giving a plausible account of mental experience (reflexively aware consciousness) has long been a philosophical problem of the first rank. The crux of the problem lies in the fact that the mind is *intentional*. Whether one is thinking of a tree, seeing one's hand, or considering menu options in a restaurant, all such mental activities have a common intentional structure. In other words, intentionality refers to the fact that consciousness has an object; experience is always *about* something. But because of the mind's intentional structure, mental events are vastly different (different in *kind*) from other (non-intentional, non-experiential) events. It is a peculiarity of mental events (like perceiving, thinking, and believing) that they *exist as* one kind of thing (as events in a mind/brain), but they are *about* something else (e.g., a perceived tree). Despite the difference between the intentional and the non-intentional, many contemporary cognitive scientists (and the philosophers of mind who build their theories on the cognitive sciences) hold that the mental is caused by, and ultimately reducible to, complex neuro-chemical processes in the brain. Philosophically, this means explaining the intentional in terms of the non-intentional or, what amounts to roughly the same thing, giving an ac-

count that reduces the mind to brain processes. Arnold's main purpose here is to demonstrate that such a reduction inevitably runs into serious philosophical obstacles.

Arnold traces how the same causally reductive move found in contemporary physicalism is evident in the Yogācāra (idealist) philosophy of Dharmakīrti. Ostensibly, Dharmakīrti's philosophy attempts to work out a number of philosophical problems about knowledge, consciousness, and reality using what he understood to be the essence of Buddhist philosophy as it was expressed in the Abhidharma literature. Yet, what is clear from Arnold's presentation is just how acceptance of key Buddhist doctrines such as dependent arising (*pratītyasamutpāda*) and the no-self doctrine (*anātma*), filtered through a certain version of the Abhidharma interpretation of these theories, ends up painting Dharmakīrti into a philosophical corner. All Buddhists have urged a reductionist account of persons because there is no enduring self; but in the scholastic interpretation this becomes the claim that only particular and momentary causes are themselves real. Thus, Dharmakīrti must provide an account of the mind that is compatible with the scholastic interpretation of Buddhist ontological and epistemological commitments. For example, Dharmakīrti is at great pains to explain how perceptual knowledge is possible without ever committing himself to the existence of anything permanent: what is finally real are only momentary particulars (as will be discussed below). Most importantly, this means avoiding giving universals (e.g., what makes all trees "trees") a fundamental ontological status. For Dharmakīrti, this implies that "whatever has the capacity for causal efficacy is ultimately existent, everything else is just conventionally existent." (p. 4)

According to Arnold, Dharmakīrti holds a "solipsistic and causalist position in the philosophy of mind." (p. 197) On this view, experience is subjectively private, and there are underlying causes that give rise to the appearances that are apprehended in consciousness. Arnold calls such a position "cognitivism." Cognitivism has had a number of proponents in Western philosophy, including George Berkeley and the contemporary philosopher of mind Jerry Fodor. Like many early modern (Western) empiricists, Dharmakīrti's conception of the mind is modeled on the structure of perceptual experience. For this reason, he recognizes only perception (*pratyakṣa*) and inference (*anumāna*) as valid means of knowing (*pramāṇa*); all other modes of knowledge are reducible to these. As a consistent empiricist, Dharmakīrti's ultimate ontology contains only two kinds of things: unique particulars and the abstractions inferred from perceptions that conven-

tionally form universals (universals are what allow us to categorize or label particular objects that occur in our experiences—recognizing a tree as a “tree,” for example).

From reading Arnold’s account of Dharmakīrti’s epistemology, one cannot help but see the strong similarities to Berkeley’s representationalist model of the mind — a model that led Berkeley to metaphysical idealism just as it did Dharmakīrti. Both philosophers take the phenomenal content of experience as an ontological constraint: they reject the naïve realist notion that the causes of perceptual representations are real (physical) objects external to the mind (as Locke and the Sautrāntikas held, for example). Dharmakīrti went beyond the Berkeleyan model by claiming that the representations apprehendable by the mind are the causal effect of a unique particular that remains beyond what the mind itself can conceptually or directly grasp (i.e., something that is a raw, non-intentional, fact). On Dharmakīrti’s view, the representations we are directly aware of are not even the kinds of things that can be the causes of the representations; the truly real are unique particulars that act as causes for the representations, and thus are non-intentional by definition. Arnold shows how this view harkens back to the position taken in the Abhidhamma literature that atomic particulars are real, but it is not atomic particulars as such that appear before the mind; instead, what appear to a mind are whole things like tables, trees, and bodies.

The fact that the things we are aware of, namely representations or appearances, cannot be the causes of cognition poses a grave problem for Dharmakīrti’s epistemology. Put simply, how are we to give a causal account of these unique particulars that we have no direct empirical access to? It would be like observing a film in a movie theater and being asked whether the things appearing on the screen are real. If one could never leave the movie theater to check, there’s really no way to find out the source or accuracy of the images that appear on the screen. This leaves Dharmakīrti’s project in a quandary because his model of experience makes impossible an account of the non-conceptual causes of what appears to a mind. In fact, on such a view there’s really no reason to posit anything other than appearances — and certainly no reason to think that appearances are the effects of causes. As Arnold effectively argues, Dharmakīrti’s only recourse is to impute intentionality to the causes of appearances that he has already determined to be non-intentional.

Dharmakīrti must also explain the apparent (and ultimately false) continuities in experience and personal identity in terms of an ontology that claims that

all existents are *momentary*. It is problematic for Dharmakīrti that he accepts momentariness as the metaphysical implication of Buddhism's central doctrine of dependent arising. This is unfortunate for Dharmakīrti's philosophy because such a view (which is *not* the understanding of dependent arising that one finds in the Pali Nikāyas) adds an insuperable difficulty to his account of consciousness and his explanation of the "appearance" of personal identity over time. Conscious awareness, for Dharmakīrti, can have only other moments of conscious awareness as its cause, but given that each instance of consciousness is a momentary particular, it seems impossible to explain how our experience presents a *continuity* that has a *history*—that is, momentariness cannot explain even the appearance of personal identity through time (even if we think that the appearance of personal identity is an illusion).

A key philosophical issue regarding intentionality is that non-intentional causes do not carry semantic content. That is, meaning is something that requires intentionality. But, then, how can the non-intentional (electro-chemical brain states, for example) give rise to intentionality, that is, to an awareness that is reflexively *about* something else? Such questions only widen the gap between the non-intentional and the intentional. In an early chapter, Arnold explores Jerry Fodor's physicalist philosophy of mind, a position wherein brain states (non-intentional) can cause semantic (meaning-laden) experience. But, as Arnold relates, it just is not clear how brain events, which few would doubt are closely related to someone having an experience, can cause an experience that is *of* something else, since it is not brain events themselves that are the objects of experience. Thus, even though Dharmakīrti is an idealist (not a physicalist), and Fodor is a physicalist, both are in effect trying to "naturalize" intentionality. And yet, as Arnold convincingly shows, such projects make a mystery out of trying to get the meaningful out of a causal account of the non-intentional (i.e., the "natural"). The prospects for any such causal reduction of the mind are very dim indeed.

The heart of Arnold's study of Dharmakīrti's philosophy relates how Dharmakīrti tries to explain the phenomenal content of experience — that is, how such experience can appear to be meaningful. Here Dharmakīrti espoused a variant of the *apoha* doctrine that was developed earlier by Dignāga. Brahmanical philosophies like Pūrva Mīmāṃsā argued that language is the eternal reality that makes things what they truly are. Thus for Pūrva Mīmāṃsā a tree is really a tree because there is an ontologically real linguistic *universal* that makes trees the kind of thing they are. In Pūrva Mīmāṃsā, to think of something conceptually is a kind

of judgment that requires an objectively real universal, because to judge that one is perceiving a *tree* requires a prior knowledge of what it takes to “be a tree.” But given the Buddhist claim that everything is dependently arisen—everything is a nexus of change and thus lacks a permanent essence—it is the hallmark of Buddhist thought that the existence of such (permanent) ontologically fundamental universals is rejected. However, rejecting the objective ontology of universals requires Buddhists to give an explanation of semantic content (that a word carries a certain meaning, for example) by some other means consistent with dependent arising—and the *apoha* doctrine claims to accomplish just that.

Apoha means “exclusion.” Using this doctrine, a concept, say “dog,” is defined by excluding everything that is non-dog. Philosophically, what is important here is that rather than have to account for something that all dogs share in the positive, which would lend credence to the reality of a universal that makes all dogs “dogs,” a *via negativa* is employed that purports to pick out dogs as “dogs” without ever claiming that all dogs share something in common. This is nominalism in the extreme. In short, the *apoha* doctrine is a very clever, if counterintuitive, way that scholastic Buddhists used to define semantic content without committing themselves to the objective reality of universals. Furthermore, the *apoha* doctrine has the fortunate implication for idealists like Dharmakīrti of making universals subjectively phenomenal: there need be no real similarities between things which appear to fall under a certain concept, only illusory abstractions. This doctrine fits into Dharmakīrti’s causal model of experience because what is excluded from coming under a concept is for Dharmakīrti everything that does not produce the same kinds of effects (images or representations in the mind). But the reply from philosophers in the tradition of Pūrva Mīmāṃsā, some of Dharmakīrti’s strongest critics, is that to classify something by what it excludes requires that we know what “non-dog” means, and yet we cannot define or recognize perceptually “non-dog” without already presupposing we know what “dog” means. Arnold agrees that such criticisms have “purchase” because there seems to be no way to use the *apoha* doctrine to avoid invoking the existence of linguistic universals without falling into a circularity which begs the question.

Arnold explores further semantic problems with Dharmakīrti’s epistemology. Without contact between the mind and objects external to the mind, it is hard to see what provides the meaning content of an experienced object (a representation in the mind). For example, why is a tree experienced as a “tree?” For Dharmakīrti, given his representationalism, *seeming to be* is no different from *really being such*.

(Berkeley said as much in his famous pronouncement *esse est percipi*: “To exist is to be perceived”.) Thus experience for Dharmakīrti is intelligible without reference to anything external to the appearance, and certainly there is no need for a causal connection to a real object outside the mind (as Sautrāntika philosophy argued). Whatever constitutes the cause of an appearance and provides the ground for its meaning content must be the mind because, on Dharmakīrti’s view, we can only experience things as experienced by us, i.e., as the content of awareness itself. However, experience *does seem* to be about things that have intrinsic similarities to one another. For example, my perception of a tree seems to involve an awareness of how this particular tree has something it shares with other trees. Yet this cannot be true in any real sense, because, on Dharmakīrti’s model, experience is comprised of nothing more than unique particulars. This, and similar conundrums, pose significant difficulties for developing a plausible case for intentionality that is based on a causal link to the non-intentional. For example, this raises the question about how semantic content arises at all from the non-intentional. In response to such a challenge, Dharmakīrti argued that the semantic content of an experience is derived from the “sameness of effect” in terms of the representations that appear before the mind. While that answer seems logically consistent with his cognitivist epistemology, Arnold shows in a carefully traced argument that any attempt to unpack what “sameness” means will end up either begging the question or invoking the ontologically real universals that Dharmakīrti was at pains to reject.

The intentionality of perception, according to Dharmakīrti’s model of experience, requires a foundational kind of perception that he calls reflexive self-awareness (*svasaṃvitti*). *Svasaṃvitti* is foundational to experience because, by a kind of phenomenological analysis, it is revealed as a necessary concomitant to all perception. Without *svasaṃvitti*, the semantic content of experience could not become intelligible to a mind. Furthermore, the theory of *svasaṃvitti* reveals that that which appears before the mind is known indubitably by a subject due to the immediacy of objects presented. All semantic contentfulness (meaning or judgments) must be explained in terms of such *intra-subjective* presentation via *svasaṃvitti*. Dharmakīrti was willing to embrace the subjectivism that such a solipsistic model of experience implies, but this leaves him open to the charge that his epistemology cannot account for language use or communication. Meaningful linguistic communication requires *inter-subjective* semantic agreements; that is, communication can only occur when language users mean roughly the same

thing when they use a certain word. But isolated minds attuned only to their own subjective presentations can never establish the inter-subjectivity required to account for semantic agreement. So, for Dharmakīrti, there simply is no way to account for “meaning the same thing” across subjectively enclosed minds. Using philosophically technical terms, Arnold asks: “what is it in virtue of which Dharmakīrti’s first-personally known, phenomenal ‘sameness’ can be a constraint on the objectively normative character of linguistic conventions?” (p. 146) A philosophy of mind such as Dharmakīrti’s that renders meaningful linguistic communication impossible can be dismissed by *reductio ad absurdum*.

Not only is the inter-subjectivity of linguistic meaning difficult for Dharmakīrti to explain, but the metaphysical question of just how events on a non-intentional level (e.g., sound, a vibration in the air) can cause something on the intentional level (e.g., understanding the meaning of a sentence). How mere sounds become a symphony or clusters of molecules can exhibit aesthetic meanings as a painting is just another version of the “really hard problem.” This has long been a central issue in philosophy. Semantic theory that attempts to explain meaningful (contentful) experiences by means of raw perceptions that are not themselves semantically meaningful faces a huge, perhaps unbridgeable, gap. In other words, there’s no easy way to explain how the factual/non-intentional can become semantic/intentional. Arnold is convinced that Madhyamika philosophers have demonstrated that the intentional level of description is ineliminable: all experience is conceptually or semantically mediated. Thus there really is no gap to bridge. One might think that an idealist who holds a representationalist theory of mind, like Dharmakīrti, would have been keen to adopt a similar view, since it would appear to reinforce the idea that there is no ground of experience outside of the mind itself. But rather surprisingly, and inconsistently as it turns out, Dharmakīrti continued to hold that the non-intentional is the ground for self-aware experience.

Arnold sums up the many strands of argumentation in this book by stating categorically that the mental cannot be explained in terms of an ontology of unique particulars — whether those particulars are mental or physical. Arnold has made a strong case for the fact “that insofar as the project of ‘naturalizing’ intentionality consists in advancing essentially causal explanations of the contentful character of thought, there is something about intentionality that *cannot* be accounted for thereby.” (p. 236) As most of us today are not idealists like the Yogācāra Buddhists, but have a preference for the physicalist ontology associated

with the natural sciences, this result means that the rising expectations that neuroscience is on the verge of a complete reductive explanation of mental processes that will answer basic philosophical questions about the mind may well be disappointed. Maybe the philosophical issues at stake just are not something a natural science that only treats the non-intentional as real can solve. It remains a mystery within the paradigm of the natural sciences that something semantically contentful like thought can be gotten out of a reality that is characterized as semantically meaningless. So, in the end, “any philosophical account on which *meaning* is not real cannot, *ipso facto*, be a complete account.” (p. 237)

In conclusion, this is a difficult book that operates at the cutting edge of scholarship. It is certainly not a book for those looking for an introduction to Buddhism (or an introduction to the philosophy of mind, for that matter). Some non-academic reviewers of the book have expressed disappointment in the book because its primary title (*Brains, Buddhas, and Believing*) gave them the erroneous impression that this text, like several other popular books, focuses on how Buddhist meditation positively changes the brain. Had these reviewers given greater consideration to the sub-title (*The Problem of Intentionality in Classical Buddhist and Cognitive-Scientific Philosophy of Mind*), such misunderstandings would have been averted. Those with intellectual interests in Buddhism will appreciate Arnold’s work for showing how much scholastic Buddhist philosophy has to contribute to contemporary philosophical inquiry. For scholars whose research focuses more narrowly on scholastic Buddhism, Arnold’s book ranks as essential reading.

Although the book covers the connections between Dharmakīrti’s philosophical ideas and certain earlier textual sources, it does not explore how Dharmakīrti’s arguments relate back to the Pali Nikāyas, except in an indirect way by showing how the Madhyamikas (e.g., Nāgārjuna) develop an emergentist (non-reductivist) view of dependent arising much like the view expressed in the Pali Nikāyas. Neither the Madhyamikas nor the earliest discourses attempt to give a causally reductionist, non-intentional, grounding to self-aware experience. Thus, the philosophies of scholastic Buddhists like Dignāga and Dharmakīrti suffer from weaknesses that, from a longer view of the history of Buddhist philosophy, are self-created. Taking a cue from Arnold’s grand analogy, perhaps contemporary philosophers of mind may finally resolve the problems of “naturalizing” the mind by abandoning the reduction to the non-intentional and accepting, not dualism, but some form of emergentism. If they were to pursue that path, Buddhist philosophy

BOOK REVIEW

may well be a key resource for a viable contemporary philosophy of mind after all—in spite of the fact that certain scholastic Buddhist philosophies offer only a dead end on this issue.

John J. Holder
Professor of Philosophy
St. Norbert College
(De Pere, Wisconsin, USA)