

VOLUME 18 (May 2020)

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 18



May 2020

Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies

Volume 18

May 2020

ISSN: 2047-1076

Published by the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies

www.ocbs.org

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

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Editorial

Richard Gombrich

This editorial has to convey two farewells.

On 29 April, Professor Stefano Zacchetti suddenly and quite unexpectedly died at his Oxford home of a massive heart attack. He was 52.

He came to Oxford in 2012 as the Yehan Numata Professor of Buddhist Studies and a Professorial Fellow of Balliol College. He also served as my deputy both as Chair of the Trustees of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies, and as Academic Director of the Centre.

Two lengthy obituaries, one of them in Italian, have already appeared on the internet at <https://glorisunglobalnetwork.org/in-memori-am-stefano-zacchetti/>. In our next issue, forthcoming in November, we intend to publish an obituary with details of his academic career. He was renowned the world over as a scholar of Chinese Buddhism, concentrating on the early translations (i.e., second to fifth centuries) from Indian originals and the commentaries on them in Sanskrit and Chinese. Here we can only write a brief appreciation of his personality, and record our gratitude for his continual and lasting contribution to the lives of those around him as teacher, colleague and friend.

There was in Stefano no trace of arrogance, snobbery or pomposity; he seemed devoid of all the defects commonly associated with eminence, and was simple in the best sense, humble and open to everyone. He was no less concerned to be clear and relevant than to be accurate; he was a superb specialist in his subject without any loss of catholicity in his interests; he gloried in his cultural heritage as an Italian as much as in acquiring profound familiarity with the manifold subtleties of Chinese. In personal relations he combined empathy with humour; he listened as well as he communicated; he made us all feel privileged to know him. Dame Helen Ghosh, Master of Balliol, chose her words admirably when she wrote, on hearing of his death,

that “his wide-ranging knowledge, intellect, warmth and good humour greatly enriched our Senior Common Room”.

When he arrived in Oxford he faced a daunting challenge. Despite the generosity of the Numata Foundation, Oxford had failed to make the best use of the opportunities which that generosity afforded; there existed an ambitious plan for a two-year graduate course in Buddhist studies, but no one had been found to teach it; there was no professor to lead us in the subject. In principle the University did not offer courses unless it also employed at least two scholars able and willing to teach them. (The prudence of that policy is apparent with Stefano’s death.) Indeed, how could Buddhist studies, which consist of materials in so many languages, rest on one set of shoulders? And if there was no teaching in a field at graduate level, how could the University populate it with research students? Though the University had long offered some coverage to Sanskrit and Chinese, that did not extend to the Buddhist materials in those languages.

Stefano, however, had both languages — as well as a more than superficial acquaintance with Pali, Tibetan and Japanese — and he was prepared (as few scholars would have been) to take on beginners. Pupils came flocking, and within a few years he had a body of devoted students. At the time of his death he was supervising nine graduate theses and establishing Oxford as a world centre in his field. That with this teaching load he continued to produce important research publications is a record few can emulate.

The second farewell is my own, as editor of this Journal. I took mandatory retirement from my post at the University, the Boden Chair of Sanskrit, in 2004, when I was 67. As I have explained elsewhere, the University had no post in Buddhist studies, and though I had supervised fifty graduate theses in the field, and had (at the last moment) raised the money in Japan to create the chair at Balliol College, my retirement might well have meant the disappearance of this field from Oxford. I had access to no resources but my own modest income and it was clear that the University would never contribute so much as a postage stamp, but with the help of a few friends — mostly former pupils — I founded the OCBS. A few years later, in 2011, I also founded this Journal. I did not intend to edit it, but no one else volunteered. My hopes for the Journal I set out in my early editorials; since back numbers of the Journal are open access on our website, I need not repeat them here. Readers can amuse themselves by tallying my successes and failures.

I believe that the duty to maintain a tradition of scholarship should pass smoothly down the generations, and I never intended that responsibility for running either the OCBS or the Journal should remain in my hands for more than a few years. The problem has been money. I have never received any emolument from the OCBS — the flow has been the other way — and have been able to live comfortably enough on my pension; recently my wife too has helped support the OCBS. However, we can hardly advertise a job which carries no salary. Keenly aware of this, I have consistently been trying to raise money (preferably an endowment) to pay such a salary, but have failed miserably.

The University has recently decided, for reasons not divulged to us, to withdraw from any institutional connection with the few bodies it has been calling “Recognised Independent Centres”. We are one of them. So w.e.f. 1 August this year we shall be fully independent of the University. The only link will be that the University still permits us to keep the word Oxford in the titles of our Centre and its Journal. Conscious of my declining powers, I have accordingly resigned from my positions at the Centre (Chair of the Trustees, Academic Director) w.e.f. 31 July, by which time, if I escape the corona virus, I shall be 83.

Dr Alexander Wynne, who has always played a constructive part in running the Journal, will take the title of Editor. I propose to try to help him as long as I am viable, but not in any official capacity. What will happen to my other positions and functions cannot yet be predicted; much will depend on our financial position. We do not anticipate changing the aims of the Centre or its status as an educational charity. Buddhism has always depended on patronage, and I suppose we follow in that tradition. Please note.

Ungarbling Section VI of the Sanskrit *Heart Sutra*

*Jayarava Attwood*¹

Abstract

A number of lexical and syntactic problems have already been identified in Section VI of the Sanskrit *Heart Sutra* (Conze 1948, 1967, Nattier 1992, Huifeng 2014, Attwood 2018a). A close parallel reading of the Chinese and Sanskrit texts reveals still more problems of both kinds in this passage. The unidiomatic and at times garbled Sanskrit text is consistent with predictions of Nattier’s Chinese origins thesis (1992). The result has been persistent confusion about how to interpret the *Heart Sutra*. The most egregious misinterpretation has been that the negations in Section V represent a metaphysical stance, e.g. that the *pañcā skandhāḥ* etc. *do not exist* full stop. The ungarbled text reveals that the “negations” are phenomenological absences: in the meditative state of emptiness, the *pañcā skandhāḥ* are absent, they do not arise. I try to show that the ideas in the Chinese *Heart Sutra*, appropriately contextualised, can easily be expressed in idiomatic Sanskrit. Finally, I reflect on the historical significance of the Sanskrit translation.

¹Comments by the first anonymous reviewer saved me from a major blunder for which I am grateful.

Introduction

The 《般若波羅蜜多心經》 *Bōrēbōluómìduō-xīnjīng* or *Heart Sutra* is a text with a reputation for being mysterious. However, a number of articles have appeared in the last few years that undermine this reputation and make the *Heart Sutra* seem more like a victim of obscurantism. Grammatical errors in the standard Sanskrit edition produced by Edward Conze (1948, 1967) have made that version of the text impossible to parse in places (Attwood 2015, 2018a). Jan Nattier (1992) showed that the Sanskrit text is actually a Chinese production based on quotes from Kumārajīva’s translation, the 《摩訶般若波羅蜜經》 *Móhē-Bōrēbōluómì-jīng* (T 223) or *Large Perfection of Gnosis Sutra* (generically *Dājīng* or *Large Sutra*).² Kumārajīva’s source text must have closely resembled an early version of what we now call the *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* or *Perfection of Gnosis Sutra in 25,000 Lines (Pañc)*. Nattier, Matthew Orsborn (writing as Huifeng 2014), and Jayarava Attwood (2017a, 2018b) have further shown that the Sanskrit text contains Chinese idioms and calques.

Being a compilation of reused passages, the *Heart Sutra* fits the early medieval Chinese bibliographical category of *digest text* (抄經 *chāo jīng*), though this is not widely appreciated.³ Hundreds of digest texts were in circulation according to bibliographies of Buddhist texts composed from the 4th to the 7th Century (Storch 2014, Tokuno 1990).

Traditional commentaries have not clarified the meaning of the *Heart Sutra*. Despite all commenting on the same text, exegetes do not seem to have a common point of reference but use the opportunity to expound sectarian doctrines (Wayman 1977: 136; Eckel 1987: 69-70). In other words, the *Heart Sutra* does not provide a common point of reference for commentaries on itself. Modern commentaries have followed this sectarian trend but have also traded on the idea that apparent obscurantism in the *Heart Sutra* was deliberate. In particular, D. T. Suzuki (1934) promoted what he called the “logic of sokuhi”

² “Kumārajīva” is a cipher for a large group of Buddhist monks, led by the Kuchan monk Kumārajīva, who worked collectively to produce the translations that bear his name. His Chinese collaborators had a great deal to do with these texts becoming classics. It is possible that the *Large Sutra* text used to create the *Xīnjīng* was the one embedded in the *Upadeśa* (Commentary) i.e. 《大智度論》 *Dàzhìdùlùn* (T 1509) translated by Kumārajīva concurrently with the *Dājīng* (T 223).

³ Nattier mentions a private communication from Robert Buswell suggesting that the *Heart Sutra* is such a text (1992: 210, n.48). Ji Yun (2012) also argues that the *Heart Sutra* is a digest text.

(i.e. A is not A, therefore it is A) based on his reading of the *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā* as the key to approaching *Prajñāpāramitā* generally. This “logic” was taken up enthusiastically and applied to the *Heart Sutra* by his disciple Edward Conze (1953, 1958) and has become a prominent feature of modern *Heart Sutra* commentaries.

Another contribution to the mystery has been decontextualisation of the *Prajñāpāramitā* texts. The appropriate context has been recovered, to some extent. For example, Matthew Orsborn’s (Huifeng 2014) study of the vocabulary of the *Xīnjīng* revealed that the Translator⁴ misconstrued the Author’s 以無所得故 (*yǐwúsuǒdégu*) as Sanskrit *aprāptivād* “because of a state of non-attainment”. In Kumārajīva’s *Dājīng* (T 223), 以無所得故 regularly represents the Sanskrit word *anupalambhayogena* “by the yoga of nonapprehension”. Where metaphysical readings commonly treat the *Heart Sutra* as an exercise in negation, Orsborn says that this discovery points to the need for an epistemological reading of the *Heart Sutra*. In other words, the *Heart Sutra* does not assert “there is no form” in an unqualified way. Rather it tells us that for one who is engaged in the yoga of nonapprehension there is no experience of form.

Attwood (2017b) picked up this theme, showing that the enigmatic phrase “form is emptiness” (*rūpam śūnyatā*) etc., traced back via *Pañc* to the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra* (*Aṣṭa*), was originally: “form is an illusion” (*rūpam māyā*). This allows us to read it as a modified version of the well-known Buddhist simile that the experience of form (i.e. the appearance as opposed to the thing itself) is like an illusion (*rūpaṃ māyopamaṃ*). Again this suggests the need to think about the *Heart Sutra* in terms of epistemology rather than metaphysics.

We have a model for this kind of approach in Sue Hamilton’s (2000) epistemological reading of the Pāli suttas in which, the five *khandha* (Skt. *skandha*) are characterised as the apparatus of experience. Our *experiential* world is created by the operation of the five *khandha*. Hamilton shows that the Pāli words *dukkha*, *khandha*, and *loka* all refer to experience, “... all three terms refer in effect to the way one’s experience (*dukkha*), the apparatus of which is one’s *khandhas*, is one’s world (*loka*)” (2000: 205). This hermeneutic may also

⁴ I will use “the Author” to refer to the author, redactor, or composer of the Chinese *Heart Sutra*; while “the Translator” refers to the person who translated it into Sanskrit from Chinese. We have no information about either and cannot even assume that single individuals were responsible, so my use of the singular is simply a narrative device.

be applied to *Prajñāpāramitā* texts. In this view, the point of the *Heart Sutra* is not negation per se; rather, it is describing a state of mind and/or point of view that is only reached through the persistent practice of the yoga of nonapprehension, i.e. by withdrawing attention from sense experience. In the absence of attention, there is no contact (*sparśa*) and *dharma*s qua mental objects do not arise. In this situation, the apparatus of sense experience ceases to produce experiences and one's phenomenal world disappears without the loss of consciousness. This state is emptiness (*śūnyatā*). Thus, when the *Heart Sutra* says, *in emptiness (śūnyatāyām)* there are no *skandhas* (*na rūpam... na vijñānam*) this is not a metaphysical statement of the unreality of the *pañcā skandhāḥ*, rather it is an assertion that they stop working, stop producing sensory experiences, in the state of emptiness.

More broadly, the *Heart Sutra* reflects, in microcosm, some of the main currents of early Medieval Chinese Buddhism: the cult of Avalokiteśvara; *Prajñāpāramitā* scholasticism based on Kumārajīva's translation of *Pañc* (T 223) and, more especially, its commentary (T 1509); the inscription and/or chanting of magic spells (*dhāraṇī*, *vidyā*);⁵ and the creation of digest texts from larger texts.

The text of the *Heart Sutra* consists of four main parts, which Conze (1948, 1967) divided into nine sections.

Part 1. (Section's I–II). Section I is the *māṅgala* or auspicious invocation, although no Chinese version of the text has one. Section II is a brief introduction probably inspired by the opening of Chapter 3 of T 223, replacing the generic *bodhisatva* of the Indian *Prajñāpāramitā* tradition with the Chinese *bodhisatva* par excellence, Avalokiteśvara.

Part 2. (Sections III–V). These sections are a single passage quoted from Chapter 3 of T 223 and comprises about half the text.

Part 3. (Sections VI–VIII). These sections incorporate material from or inspired by Chapters 19 and 32 of T 223.⁶

⁵ On the subject of medieval Chinese *dhāraṇī* inscriptions see Copp (2014).

⁶ See Attwood (2017a) and (2017b).

Part 4. (Section IX). Finally, this section is the *dhāraṇī*,⁷ including an introductory phrase.

Punctuation was added as it came into vogue, although in Asia the *Xīnjīng* is still often written without it. There are eight versions of the *Heart Sutra* in the Chinese Canon. Four are translations from the Sanskrit extended version (T 252, T 253, T 254, and T 257) and one is from the Tibetan translation of the extended version (T 255). The provenance of the extended version is unknown, though we can state that all of the Indian commentaries preserved in Tibetan translation are on the extended version and none of the preserved Chinese commentaries is (Lopez 1988, 1996). T 256 is a standard version in transliterated Sanskrit with a Chinese text that resembles T 251 but which appears to have been influenced by the Sanskrit translation. It is now thought to have been created by Amoghavajra (705-774 CE) and thus postdates the earliest evidence by around a century. Most importantly, we have the standard text that is universally considered *the* text throughout East Asia, i.e. the 《般若波羅蜜多心經》 *Bōrēbōluómìduō-xīnjīng* or *Xīnjīng* (T 251).⁸ Chinese Buddhist tradition sees the *Xīnjīng* as a translation from Sanskrit completed in 649 CE by Xuánzàng, though the Chinese is clearly not a translation and is best described as a digest text. We know that the digest must have been assembled in the mid-7th Century after Xuánzàng returned from India in 645 CE⁹ and before the earliest dated *Heart Sutra* on the Fangshan Stele, i.e. 661 CE.¹⁰ Lastly, there

⁷ Fukui and McRae (cited in Nattier 1992: 211, n. 52) point out that the same *dhāraṇī* is found in the 《陀羅尼集經》 (*Dhāraṇīsamuccaya*; T 901) translated by Atikūṭa 653 CE. In a future article I will make the case that this is, in fact, the source of the *dhāraṇī*. Similar *dhāraṇī* can be found in the 《東方最勝燈王陀羅尼經》 *Agrapradīpadhāraṇīvidyārāja-sūtra* (T 1353) translated in the Sui Dynasty (581–618 CE) by **Jñānagupta* and in the 《大方等無想經》 *Mahāmegha Sutra* (T 387) translated by Dharmarakṣa ca. 414 – 442 CE and “the striking similarities between them suggests that a number of variants of this [*dhāraṇī*] must have been circulating out of the context of the *Heart Sutra* itself” (Nattier 1992: 211, n.53).

⁸ Despite being standardised there are a number of variants, mainly using alternative characters. As yet there is no systematic study of the Chinese *Heart Sutra* text in English.

⁹ We know this because the *Xīnjīng* uses new “spellings” of the names Guanyin and Śāriputra that were introduced by Xuánzàng after his return from India.

¹⁰ The Fangshan stele has not previously been discussed (in English) in connection with the history of the *Heart Sutra*. It has been discussed in a number of Chinese language publications, from at least 1958. It has been discussed in English language articles written by art historians, e.g. Lothar Ledderose (2004: 395) and Sonya Lee (2010: 55). For a transcription and study of the stele see the forthcoming issue of the *Journal of Chinese Buddhist Studies* (Vol.32).

is the 《摩訶般若波羅蜜大明呪經》¹¹ *Móhēbōrěbōluómì-dà míngzhòu jīng* or *Dà míngzhòu jīng* (T 250) apocryphally attributed to Kumārajīva (early 5th Century). The received explanations about the relationship between the *Dà míngzhòu jīng* and the *Xīn jīng* have been called into question by modern scholars (summarised by Nattier 1992: 182-189) and the true connection, if there is any, is at present unknown. Since the *Xīn jīng* and the *Dà míngzhòu jīng* are almost identical with respect to the passage in question, and the variant in the latter is inconsequential (I will note it when it occurs), I will focus on the *Xīn jīng* in this article.

In reading the *Heart Sutra* we face a problem that frequently occurs in Chinese Buddhism Studies. The words we meet are early medieval Chinese and have to be read as Chinese in order to appreciate how Chinese Buddhists understood them at the time. At the same time, Chinese Buddhist vocabulary developed from translating Buddhist texts that were composed in a variety of Indic languages (and sometimes transmitted via Central Asian translations), and thus it contains many neologisms, calques, and transliterations that can only be understood with reference to Indic languages. We may also benefit from tracing the extracted passages back to their original context: understanding the *Heart Sutra* requires a good understanding of the *Large Sutra*, which is itself an expansion of a (likely) singular text from an earlier phase that also evolved into *Aṣṭa*. A comprehensive reading of the text requires us to shift between languages and registers in a way that can be extremely challenging, even before we attempt an exegesis.

In this article, I will take up, evaluate, and extend Matthew Orsborn's assessment of the vocabulary in Section VI of the *Heart Sutra*, comparing the Sanskrit and Chinese texts. I move through the passage citing problems previously identified by Nattier (1992), Orsborn (Huifeng 2014) and Attwood (2018a) and introducing several further problems with the text before considering Section VI as a whole and proposing a hermeneutic based on Sue Hamilton's approach to the Pāli *suttas*. Taking all of these observations into account I will show how the Chinese text might be translated into more idiomatic Sanskrit. I then reflect on the relationship between the Sanskrit and Chinese versions of Section VI and what this implies for the historiography of the *Heart Sutra*.

¹¹ The title corresponds to Sanskrit **Mahāprajñāpāramitā-mahāvīdyā-sūtra* "the *Sutra of the Great Spell of the Great Perfection of Wisdom*" although no Sanskrit manuscript of this text is extant or known to have existed.

Parsing Section VI

While we are mainly concerned with Section VI, the passage of interest takes in the end of Section V and the boundary between the two sections is disputed. The Chinese passage from the printed *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* with Matthew Orsborn's (2014) corrections and English translation is:

V. 是故空中。... 無智亦無得。以無所得故。

VI. 菩提薩埵。依般若波羅蜜多故。心無罣礙。無罣礙故。無有恐怖。遠離顛倒夢想¹²。究竟涅槃。

[V] Therefore, Śāriputra, in emptiness... no gnosis, no realization; due to engagement in non-apprehension.

[VI] The Bodhisattvas, due to being supported by transcendental knowledge, have minds which do not hang on anything; due to their minds not hanging on anything, they are without fear; removed from perverted perceptions and views, they ultimately realize nirvāṇa.

The Sanskrit counterpart to this is represented by Conze's edition (1948, 1967) and translation (1958):

V. *Tasmāc Chāriputra śūnyatāyām ... Na jñānam. Na prāptir na-aprāptiḥ.*

VI. *Tasmāc chāriputra aprāptivād bodhisattvo Prajñāpāramitām āśritya viharaty acittāvaraṇaḥ. Cittāvaraṇanāstivād atraastro viparyāsātīkrānto niṣṭhānirvāṇaḥ.*

Therefore, O Śāriputra, in emptiness.... There is no cognition, no attainment and no non-attainment.

Therefore, O Śāriputra, it is because of his nonattainmentness that a Bodhisattva, through having relied on the perfection of wisdom, dwells without thought-coverings. In the absence of thought-coverings he has not been made to tremble, he has overcome what can upset, and in the end he attains to Nirvana. (1975: 89, 93)

¹² In T 250 this phrase is augmented: 遠離一切顛倒夢想 “from *all* (一切) perverted perceptions and views”.

The two English translations given here look at the *Heart Sutra* from quite different points of view. Conze was an early-mid 20th Century German Sanskritist living in England. His background was in Philosophy, with a strong personal interest in astrology and Theosophy. He was translating from a Sanskrit text that he edited (with less than 100% fidelity) under the influence of D. T. Suzuki's Prajñāpāramitā hermeneutic. By contrast Orsborn, a contemporary New Zealand Sinologist and Chinese Prajñāpāramitā specialist, who was at the time a Buddhist monk living in Taiwan. He was translating a Chinese text having just pointed out longstanding problems with the traditional interpretations of it. Still, such circumstantial differences cannot satisfactorily explain why these translations are so very different. To understand the mismatch we must examine and compare the Chinese and Sanskrit versions of the passage in detail.

1. No non-attainment.

The first problem we encounter is in the reused passage from the *Large Sutra* at the end of Section V. In Conze's edition we find the phrase, *na prāptir nāprāptiḥ*, which he translates as, "no attainment and no non-attainment" (1975: 89). The phrase *nāprāptiḥ* is absent from both recensions of *Pañc* and from the *Xīnjīng* and *Dàmíngzhòujīng* (Huifeng 2015: 75). Conze had already flagged it as a "late addition" (1967: 155) but nonetheless retained it in his edition.¹³ The obvious problem is that it is illogical to suggest in one sentence that there is "no non-attainment" and then in the next claim that it is because of "non-attainmentness" that the bodhisatva *attains nirvāṇa*. Conze is aware of such contradictions (1958: 97-8) and prepared to tolerate them. For example, in his *Heart Sutra* commentary, he says, echoing Suzuki, "Obviously the rules of ordinary logic are abrogated in this *sūtra*" (1967: 155). Attwood (2015) argued that exactly this expectation of nonsense led to the propagation of simple grammatical errors in Conze's Sanskrit text.¹⁴

The addition of *nāprāptiḥ* here is the result of overzealous editing by someone who saw the negations in isolation and took them as having a metaphysical connotation despite the context in which they occur (cf. Attwood 2017b: 71-2). I've already introduced Orsborn's argument that negation is *not* the point of this

¹³ The phrase is found in T255 translated from the Tibetan by Fāchéng 法成 in 856 CE, but this reflects the late addition of the phrase.

¹⁴ Compare comments along the same lines by Paul Harrison (2006: 137 ff.) and Richard H. Jones (2012: 22 ff.).

text and will expand on this below. Nattier (1992) simply left this phrase out of her text. I suggest that we formalise this and remove it from the Sanskrit edition.

2. No knowledge, no attainment.

The next problem was identified by Matthew Orsborn (Huifeng 2014) and involves the same, now amended, passage: *Na jñānam, na prāptir*. Orsborn showed that based on the recensions of *Pañc*, we should expect *na prāptir nābhisamayaḥ* “no attainment, no realisation”, which in *Pañc* is followed by a standard list of Mahāyāna Buddhist attainments and realisations, which is an extended version of the Pāli list of the eight *ariyapuggala*.¹⁵ Chinese translations by Mokṣala and Xuánzàng also reflect *Pañc* texts with *na prāptir nābhisamayaḥ* and a list of such attainments.¹⁶ The pair of terms is found many times including several times in *Aṣṭa* (e.g. Vaidya 1960: 94, 151). Abbreviating all but the first and last attainments and realisations, the actual passage from the Gilgit manuscript (with its idiosyncratic spelling), therefore, reads

*na prāptir nābhisamayaḥ na srota āpanno na srota āpattiphalaṃ...
na tatra bodhir na buddhaḥ |*

In other words, the text seems to imply that the “attainment” is stream entrant (*srotāpanna*) and the “realisation” is the fruit of stream-entry (*srotāpattiphala*). In Pāli, the eight *ariyapuggala* are divided into the one who has attained the path (*magga*) and the one who has attained the fruition (*phala*) of stream-entry, once-returning, non-returning, and arahantship. The pair *na prāpti* and *na abhisamaya* (or *aprāpti* and *anabhisamaya*) are also used this way in *Pañc* (Kimura 2009: 1-2.165). However, at other times the terms are used with a broader reference, for example, a long list of *dharmas* including the *skandhas*, the sense organs and objects, the six perfections, and the eighteen kinds of *śūnyatā* (Kimura 2009 2-3: 160).

¹⁵ *na prāptir nābhisamayaḥ na srota āpanno na srota āpattiphalaṃ [na sakṛdāgāmī] [na sakṛdāgāmī]phalaṃ nānāgāmī nānāgāmiphalaṃ nārhan nārhatvaṃ na pratyekabodhir na pratyekabuddhaḥ na tatra mārgākārajñatā na bodhisatvaḥ na tatra bodhir na buddhaḥ*. My transcription of the Gilgit manuscript, Folio 21 verso/recto from Karashima et al. 2016. C.f. Kimura (2009: 1-2: 65)

¹⁶ Mokṣala: 亦無所逮得 亦無須陀洹 (T 221: 8.6a.11-12); Xuánzàng: 無得 無現觀 (T 220: 7.14a.23).

Kumārajīva’s group translated this phrase as 無智亦無得 (*wú zhì yì wú dé* T 223: 8.223a.20), which would conventionally be understood to say “no knowledge and no attainment”.¹⁷ Here 無 = Sanskrit *na* = English *no*, 智 “knowledge” and 得 “attainment”. This is inconsistent with all other texts in either Sanskrit or Chinese. However, Orsborn showed that Kumārajīva used a variety of translations for the pair of words (2014: 89 n.23) and suggested that the terms were seen as interchangeable.

Xuánzàng’s *Dàjīng* translation regularly uses the translation 無得無現觀 (e.g. T 220: 7.14a.23), where 得 and 現觀 represent *prāpti* and *abhisamaya* respectively.¹⁸ In the *Heart Sutra*, the Translator, conventionally enough, read 無智亦無得 as, *na jñānaṃ na prāptiḥ*. This quirk shows that Part 2 (sections III-V) in the *Heart Sutra* was copied from Kumārajīva’s translation of *Pañc* (T 223) and then translated into Sanskrit without reference to Sanskrit Prajñāpāramitā conventions. The expression could not have moved the other way and given the same result. Indeed, the expression *na jñānaṃ na prāptiḥ* is a calque of Kumārajīva’s Chinese (mis)translation of *Pañc*.

Orsborn argues that if the terms in Kumārajīva’s text were inverted to 無得亦無智 then we could understand them as equating to the Sanskrit *na prāptir nābhisamayah*, consistent with the Sanskrit and Chinese *Pañc* (Huifeng 2014: 84-5, 90-1, 102). However, the fact that the phrase was used repeatedly suggests that Kumārajīva intended the present reading, as perverse as this seems.

3. Reliance

In the *Heart Sutra*, the bodhisatva is said to “rely on perfection of gnosis”, 依般若波羅蜜多 (*yī bōrēbōluómìduō*), where the verb “rely” is conveyed by 依 (*yī*). The Translator chose to represent this by: *prajñāpāramitām āśritya viharaty* “he dwells relying on perfection of gnosis”. *Āśritya viharaty* is a very cumbersome way to render 依.

The phrase, 依般若波羅蜜多 is not common in Kumārajīva’s *Dàjīng* (note that his usual translation omits the last character). He uses it three times, two of which correspond to *prajñāpāramitām niśrāya*.¹⁹ The other doesn’t have a clear counterpart in *Pañc*. We don’t find *āśraya* used in this sense in Kimura’s edition of *Pañc*. Some derivative of *niśrī* is used instead.

¹⁷ Kumārajīva’s translation of the *Upadeśa*, 《大智度論》, agrees: 亦無智、亦無得 (T 1509: 25.328a.4).

¹⁸ The idiom occurs 46 times in Xuánzàng’s *Prajñāpāramitā* translations (T 220).

¹⁹ E.g. T 8.288b16-17, b18 = Kimura 2009: II-III:78.

A far more common idiom is seen in the passage from earlier in the *Xīnjīng*, i.e. 行般若波羅蜜(多) “practices perfection of insight”, which is used hundreds of times in the *Dājīng*. In Sanskrit, we see *prajñāpāramitāyām* (in the locative case) with various derivatives of \sqrt{car} which in this context means “practising”, e.g. *prajñāpāramitāyām caran*. Similarly, *Prajñāpāramitā* is also something the *bodhisatva* “trains in” ($\sqrt{śikṣ}$)²⁰, the phrase 學般若波羅蜜 (*xué bōrěbōluómi*) “trains in the perfection of insight” is also used over a hundred times in Kumārajīva’s *Dājīng*. In Sanskrit, we see a similar format, e.g. *evaṃ śikṣamāṇo bhagavan bodhisattvo mahāsattvaḥ prajñāpāramitāyām śikṣate, anupalambhayogena*. (Kimura 2009: I-1: 187) “So training, Bhagavan, the *bodhisatva mahāsatva* should train in the perfection of insight through the yoga of nonapprehension.”²¹ The *bodhisatva* is typically more active in their relation to *Prajñāpāramitā*.

Mention of the yoga of nonapprehension (*anupalambhayogena*) brings us on to the next problem.

4. Through the exercise of non-apprehension

In moving onto Section VI, we leave behind the reused passage from the *Large Sutra* and venture into the conclusion composed by the Author (though with Kumārajīva’s *Dājīng* still firmly in mind). The *Xīnjīng* does not have anything corresponding to *tasmāc chāriputra* and for *aprāptivād* has 以無所得故.

Orsborn’s analysis (Huifeng 2014) reveals a deeper problem. In Kumārajīva’s oeuvre, the Chinese phrase 以無所得故 does not correspond to Sanskrit *aprāptivād* but to *anupalambhayogena*. The word *anupalambhayogena* can be parsed as a negative particle *an-*; a verbal noun *upalambha* “seizing; apprehending, perceiving” (deriving from the verbal root *upa√labh*); another verbal noun *yoga* “connecting, engaging”; and an instrumental case ending *-ena*. It thus means something like “by engaging in non-apprehension”, with the implication of being engaged in the non-apprehension of *mental objects* (*dharmāḥ*). We can parse the Chinese along the same lines. According to Orsborn, the particles 以 and 故, taken together, indicate a noun in the instrumental case;²² 無 is a negative

²⁰ The verb *śikṣati* is properly a desiderative of $\sqrt{śak}$ “be able”.

²¹ *evaṃ śikṣamāṇo bhagavan bodhisattvo mahāsattvaḥ prajñāpāramitāyām śikṣate, anupalambhayogena*. (Kimura 2009: I-1: 187)

²² Compare Lock and Linebarger (2018: 22 n.2): “以 X 故: literally ‘with X as cause’, i.e. because of X.”

particle corresponding to *an-*. Orsborn reads 所 as indicating a nominal form of the verb and 得 here as representing some derivative of *upa√labh* rather than *pra√āp*. This is counter-intuitive since the same character appears to represent two distinct Sanskrit verbs in two adjacent words. However, there is another, more intuitive, way to explain the morphology of the Chinese.

Kumārajīva's *Dājīng* uses two translations of *anupalambhayogena* interchangeably (though never both in the same chapter), i.e. 以不可得故 (*yībùkēdégù*) and 以無所得故 (*yīwúsuōdégù*).²³ This suggests that 可得 and 所得 both represent Sanskrit *upa√labh*, i.e. both are binomial verbs and thus, rather than 得 twice in the *Heart Sutra*, in fact, we first have 得 representing a derivative of *pra√āp* and then the binomial 所得 representing a derivative of *upa√labh*. The use of the case-like markers 以 and 故 themselves tell us we are dealing with a nominal form since verbs don't take inflections. Kumārajīva's translation group always leave off *yoga*, perhaps because it was obvious to them that *anupalambha* was a kind of Buddhist *practice* and *anupalambha-yoga* seemed like a tautology.

In the final analysis, 以無所得故 means *anupalambhayogena* "through the exercise of nonapprehension" and not *aprāptivād*. The Translator should not have inserted *tasmāc chāriputra* before *aprāptivād* at the beginning of Section VI.

Orsborn makes the additional suggestion that since 以無所得故 means *anupalambhayogena* it makes more sense if we read it as the end of section V. Kuījī and Woncheuk are split on this issue. Kuījī (T 1710: 33.541a03) agrees with Orsborn and treats 以無所得故 as the end of Section V, while Woncheuk takes the more traditional approach in which this phrase opens Section VI (T 1711: 33.548b26). The Rev. Samuel Beal's 1863 translation takes 以無所得故 as belonging to section V, despite reading 所得 as "attain" (Beal 1865).²⁴

The *Dhāraṇī Saṃbhāraḥ* chapter of *Pañc*²⁵ gives us further reason to think that Orsborn's suggestion was the right one. At the beginning of the previous chapter, Subhūti asks what Mahāyāna is. The *Dhāraṇī Saṃbhāraḥ* chapter continues the Buddha's answer by describing twenty-one kinds of practice, the

²³ I take this to be indicative of different scribes working on different parts of the text based on Kumārajīva's exegesis over a period of some years.

²⁴ Beal's translation predates 20th Century scholarship on the Sanskrit *Prajñāpāramitā* tradition and is thus a valuable record of how the text was understood in China prior to being encumbered by the presuppositions such scholarship generated.

²⁵ The *Dhāraṇī Saṃbhāraḥ* of *Pañc*, corresponding to Chapter 19 of T 223 and to Chp 16 in Conze's translation (1975: 153ff).

first seven of which constitute the well-known list of *bodhipāksika dharmas*. For example, the chapter begins with a brief description of how a bodhisatva practices the four foundations of mindfulness (*catvāri smṛtyupasthānāni*; 四念處 *sì niànchù*). The description ends with the statement “and that by the exercise of nonapprehension” (*tac cānupalambhayogena*). In Kumārajīva’s *Dājing* (T 223), *tac cānupalambhayogena* is translated by 以不可得故.²⁶

In this chapter, the phrase always comes at the end of explanations of practices suggesting that we should expect this phrase to be sentence-final in the *Heart Sutra*. Reading *anupalambhayogena* this way means that it qualifies all of the negated lists and this changes the sense of them. The Sanskrit of section V ought to read (abbreviating the lists):

śūnyatāyām na rūpam na vedanā... na prāptir na abhisamayo
‘nupalambhayogena |

In emptiness, there is no form, no feeling ... no attainment, no realisation, *through the exercise of nonapprehension*.

This also clarifies that by “in emptiness” (*śūnyatāyām*) the text means “for a person in the meditative state of emptiness”, rather than some more metaphysical reading. I will say more about the relationship between emptiness and the yoga of nonapprehension below.

The text in the printed *Taishō* is ambiguous as to sentence structure here since it only uses a single type of punctuation mark, i.e. “。” and does not indicate paragraphs. CBETA, the electronic version of the *Taishō*, breaks the text into paragraphs and adds additional punctuation:

...無智亦無得。以無所得故，菩提薩埵...
...No knowledge and no attainment. By the exercise of nonapprehension, the *bodhisatva*...

We can now say that this should be:

...無智亦無得，以無所得故。菩提薩埵...
...no knowledge and no attainment, through the exercise of nonapprehension. The *bodhisatva*...

²⁶ It is used twenty-eight times between 8.253b.21 and 8.256a.6

This resolves another problem that Conze wrestled with. In Section V, as noted above Conze has, at different times, given the word *bodhisatva* with genitive singular *-sya* (1948, 1958)²⁷ and nominative singular *-aḥ* (1967) case endings, reflecting an ambivalence on this issue in his witnesses. In his translation, “Therefore O Śāriputra, it is because of his non-attainmentness...” (1975: 93). Conze construed the sentence as meaning that the *bodhisatva* possesses *aprāptitva* (hence the use of the genitive case). If we replace *aprāptitvād* with *anupalambhayogena* and move it to the end of the previous section, then *bodhisatva* begins a new sentence and is clearly the agent of the verb *viharati* “he dwells” and must, therefore, be in the nominative singular, *bodhisatvaḥ*. *Anupalambhayoga* is something the *bodhisatva* does rather than something they possess.

While I am on the subject of the *bodhisatva*, and leaving aside the possibility of hyper-Sanskritisation, I note that in Buddhism we mainly treat the word as a *karmadhāraya* compound, i.e. a *bodhisatva* is a kind of being (in the sense of “living thing”). An electronic search of Monier-Williams’ *Sanskrit-English Dictionary* reveals that compounds ending in *sattva* are *bahuvrīhi* compounds in which *sattva* means “nature” or “essence”. Therefore *bodhi-sattva* should mean “one whose nature is awakening”, rather than “an awakening being”.

5. Mental Obstacles

Orsborn (Hui Feng 2014) further observed that there is a mismatch between the Sanskrit *acittāvaraṇaḥ* and the Chinese 心無罣礙 (*xīn wú guà-ài*).²⁸ The opening of the sentence says 菩提薩埵。依般若波羅蜜多故。心無罣礙。²⁹ i.e. “Since 故 the *bodhisatva* 菩提薩埵 relies on 依 Prajñāpāramitā 般若波羅蜜多... then 心無罣礙”. What does 心無罣礙 mean? The Chinese character 心 means “heart” and it is routinely used to translate both *hṛdaya* “heart” and *citta*

²⁷ Conze 1958 was reprinted in 1975 with *bodhisattvasya*.

²⁸ A previous attempt by Wu Bai-Hui (1992) to essay the word *cittāvaraṇa* (in Max Müller’s 1884 diplomatic edition of the Hōryū-ji manuscript) argues both for and against reading the compound as *citta-āvaraṇa* and succeeds in showing that Müller mistranslated the word in English, but in retrospect, adds little to our understanding of the text.

²⁹ The punctuation here seems superfluous. Certainly the first “。” is superfluous because 菩提薩埵 is the subject, while 依般若波羅蜜多 are the verb and object of the same sentence. No hiatus is needed or wanted in any language.

“thought, mental event, mind” elsewhere.³⁰ The *Xīnjīng* uses the character in both senses. 無 is a negative particle. The basic meanings of the two characters 罣 and 礙 are, according to Kroll (2015):

罣: catch fish; enmesh, ensnare, entangle.

礙: impede, hamper, hinder; obstruct, block off.

The two are both primarily verbs, and here working together as a single word, i.e. another binomial verb. The Chinese phrase 心無罣礙 means something like “mind unhindered” and the Translator has opted for *a-citta-āvaraṇa* “without a mental obstacle”.³¹ Despite Conze’s plural translation “thought coverings”, the term is singular in Sanskrit. Also since *āvaraṇa* is a neuter noun we have to read *acittāvaraṇaḥ* (masculine nominative singular) as an adjective of *bodhisatvaḥ*: i.e. “the *bodhisatva* without a mental obstacle”.

The two terms, 心無罣礙 and *acittāvaraṇa*, could easily be taken for translations of each other. However, Orsborn points out the Chinese characters 罣礙 are routinely associated with another Sanskrit phrase. For example, he cites an illustrative passage from Kumārajīva’s *Dājīng*:

Then Śakra, Lord of the Gods, said to Subhūti: Whatever Subhūti has stated is only for the sake of emptiness, without being hung-obstructed [sic] (無罣礙). Just as an arrow shot up into empty space is not obstructed (無礙), so too is Subhūti’s Dharma teaching not obstructed (無礙). (2014: 92)³²

³⁰ Modern translators seem to be caught in a cleft stick between the assumptions of Romanticism (*citta* = heart) and those of Scientific Rationalism (*citta* = thought). In fact it means both. Ancient Indian Buddhists had many words for emotions, but did not have separate categories for affective and cognitive mental activity.

³¹ Conze’s (1958) discussion of his translation of this part of the passage is not very illuminating. He mainly discusses *āvaraṇa* in relation to the sense of “obstruction”, but does not justify choosing “coverings” as a translation.

³² Orsborn (Huifeng 2014) shows that this passage is also found in *Aṣṭa* (see Vaidya 1960: 224). He conflates it with another simile drawn from archery, in which a skilled archer might keep an arrow from falling by shooting it with a series of subsequent arrows. These look unrelated to me except for the fact that they both involve archery – a common source of metaphors and similes for Buddhists.

In the Sanskrit version of this passage in *Pañc*, the parallel for 無罣礙 is the phrase *na kvacit sajjati* “it is not stuck anywhere”. We need to say a few words about Orsborn’s translation “hung-obstructed”. Orsborn argues that 礙 may mean “hang”; he adopts and defends this translation, going so far as say that the Sanskrit verb √*sañj* or *sajjati* may also mean “hang” (92, 93). While I can see what Orsborn is getting at, I cordially disagree with him. The main sense of the word 礙 is “impede” and this sense fits the context. Neither Apte nor Monier-Williams refers to √*sañj* meaning “hang” in their Sanskrit-English dictionaries. Mayrhofer (1976: 419; s.v. *sájati*) gives the definition “heftet an, hängt an” but translates the latter as “fastens on”. Mayrhofer also notes that *sajjati* is likely a Prakritised passive, from the classical *sajyáte* “hängen, hängen bleiben” i.e. “stuck, caught; to be stuck”. And this is how the word is used in the simile.

Kuñjī’s *Heart Sutra* commentary glosses these terms: 罣 means 障 “barrier, hinder”; and 礙 means 拘 “seize; restrain”. He says, “If one does not rely on enlightened gnosis, attaching to (滯) forms etc, one constantly becomes mired (拘溺) in many hardships and fears.”³³

If we were translating the Chinese phrase 心無罣礙 back into idiomatic *Prajñāpāramitā* Sanskrit we would want to use some combination of the noun *citta* and the verb *sajjati* to convey the sense that the mind of the bodhisatva who relies on *Prajñāpāramitā* is not hindered by or attached to sense experience (because through practising non-apprehension they have bought sense experience to a halt, at least temporarily). This is very different from what we find in the actual Sanskrit *Heart Sutra*.

6. The Non-existence of Mental Obstacles

Attwood (2018a) pointed out that Conze mistakenly places a full stop after *acittāvaraṇaḥ* in his Sanskrit edition (1948, 1967) creating a second sentence: *cittāvaraṇanāstivād atraastro viparyāsātīkrānto niṣṭhānirvāṇaḥ*. This second sentence has no verb or agent, making it impossible to parse. This has caused great difficulty for translators, though it has not stopped many of them from publishing translations.³⁴ The solution here is to simply remove the full stop

³³ 罣者障。礙者拘。未依慧悟。滯色等有拘溺眾苦畏懼恒生 (T 1710: 33.541a7-9)

³⁴ Honourable mention should go to Red Pine who at least acknowledges that there is a problem, although his grasp of *vyākaraṇa* is tenuous and his solution disallowed by the requirements of Sanskrit grammar: “I have read both *viparyasa* (delusion) and *nishtha-nirvana* (finally nirvana) as objects of the verb *atikranto* (see through), which is allowed by the vagaries of Sanskrit grammar in the absence of *prapta*” (2004: 137).

since it is clear that that the adjectives in the second part of the sentence relate to the *bodhisatva* in the first part.

*tasmācchāriputra aprāptivād bodhisatvaḥ prajñāpāramitām
āśritya viharaty acittāvaraṇaś cittāvaraṇa-nāstitvād atrasto
viparyāsa-atikrānto niṣṭhā-nirvāṇaḥ.*

Therefore, Śāriputra, in the absence of attainment, the bodhisatva who is without mental obstruction dwells having relied on perfect understanding, [and] being free of mental obstruction he is unafraid, overcomes delusions, [and] his extinction is complete.

Once we resolve the punctuation problem then the passage becomes comprehensible, if odd, Sanskrit. There are significant differences between the Sanskrit and Chinese texts at this point but with respect to the issue of punctuation we can say that where Conze had a full stop, the *Taishō* uses a generic punctuation mark “ ° ” and CBETA has replaced this with a semicolon. This suggests that the latter source at least understood that the Chinese passage is one long sentence rather than two.

As we have seen, *viharaty acittāvaraṇaḥ* is a poor translation of 心無罣礙 that ignores the conventions established by Kumārajīva (and other Chinese translators) and ignores the sentence structure of the *Xīnjīng*. Having made this choice, the Translator now faces a further problem with the sentence structure. In Chinese, the clause boundary between 心無罣礙 and 無罣礙故 is clear (even without punctuation) because of the repeated verbal form 罣礙 with a qualifier 故 “since”. To get the same clarity using the word choices of the Translator we might have expected them to use the gerund of the main verb, for example:

viharaty acittāvaraṇaḥ vihr̥tya tathā...

i.e. [the bodhisatva] without mental obstruction dwells, dwelling this way...

Instead, having translated the verb as a noun, the Translator opts to provide a connection after the hiatus with *cittāvaraṇanāstitvāt* “because of the non-existence of a mental obstacle”.³⁵ This is unusual, to say the least. *Nāstitvāt* can be parsed as an abstract noun derived from the action noun *asti* “existence,

³⁵ Sanskrit sandhi rules cause the final *t* to become *d* when followed by a vowel, and to *c* when followed by *c*.

existing”,³⁶ with a negative particle, declined as the ablative of cause (i.e. *na-astitva-āt*). On one hand, it is a creative application of Sanskrit morphology to make a neologism. On the other hand, one can do this more elegantly using idiomatic Sanskrit, for example, the “non-existence” of *cittāvaraṇa*, cited as the reason for something, could have been conveyed by the ablative *acittāvaraṇāt*, perhaps with the addition of *ca* “and” to mark the clause boundary: ...*acittāvaraṇo ‘cittāvaraṇāc ca*....

Even better would have been to translate 心無罣礙 as something like *asya cittam na kvacit sajjati* “his mind does not stick anywhere” and then link the following clause using the gerund *asaktvā* “not being stuck” or “being unattached”.

7. ‘Removed from’ versus ‘going beyond’

Another difference between the two texts is that the binomial 遠離 (*yuǎnlǐ*) “far removed” does not correspond to the Sanskrit *atikrantaḥ* “gone beyond”.³⁷ Clearly, there is some semantic overlap, i.e. in order to be “far removed” from something, one must first “go beyond” it, but as a translation of 遠離, *atikrantaḥ* is a poor choice.

The *Digital Dictionary of Buddhism* has a wide range of possible senses for 遠離, including “distancing, breaking off, removing, surpassing, and escaping” and an equally wide range of possible Sanskrit counterparts. Lokakṣema established the use of the two characters to represent words from *vi√vic* e.g. *viveka* “separation, detachment” *vivikta* “isolated, detached” (Karashima 2012: 633-5) and, here, *vivikta* would clearly be a better translation.

In the *Large Sutra* translation (T 233) Kumārajīva used the binomial to represent *parivarjayitavyam* (8.241c7-9, corresponds roughly to Kimura 2009: I-II, 17).³⁸ In the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* (T 262) he uses it in the phrase: 遠離於法我 = *dharmātma-vivarjita* (Karashima 2013: 959). The Sanskrit root *√vrj* basically means “bend” but with the prefixes *pari-* and *vi-* it can mean “avoid, exclude”.

³⁶ Alternatively *asti* can be seen as a present participle.

³⁷ My attention was first drawn to the mismatch by an anonymous reviewer of an earlier version of this article. Orsborn (Huifeng 2014) has accurately translated 遠離, but does not discuss this difference between the versions.

³⁸ Cf. Conze (1975: 116)

We don't find the exact phrases 遠離顛倒夢想 “far removed from delusions and illusions” or 遠離一切顛倒夢想 “far removed from all delusions and illusions” elsewhere, but we do occasionally see 遠離顛倒 “far removed from delusions” in T 233. At 8.257a18 (= Kimura 2009, I-II: 90) and 8.258c08-10 (Kimura 2009, I-II: 99) the expression translates *saṃjñādṛṣṭi-vivarta* “turning away from perceptions and views”. Here it seems that Kumārajīva is using 遠離 to translate *vivarta* “turning away” rather than anything meaning “far removed”.

If we assume, for the sake of argument, that the *Heart Sutra* was composed in Sanskrit and translated into Chinese, it seems highly implausible that a translator of the calibre of Kumārajīva or Xuánzàng would have chosen 遠離 to translate *atikranta*. For example, in the first sentence of the *Heart Sutra* the idea of “going beyond” is represented by the move conventional 度 *dù*, though this has no counterpart in the Sanskrit *Heart Sutra*. Taking the opposing view, we would still say that *atikranta* is not the best translation of 遠離 when a word like *vivikta* would be more accurate, but it is at least plausible.

8. Delusions and Illusions

In the state of emptiness, with no attachment to any sensory experience, the *bodhisatva* is “far removed from” 顛倒 and 夢想 (*diān-dǎo* and *mèng-xiǎng*). Some translators opt to give literal translations of these words along the lines of “upside down and dreamlike thoughts”; however, these terms are intended to convey well known Buddhist Sanskrit technical terms, i.e. *viparyāsa* (顛倒) and *māyā* (夢想). The former is “delusions” about unawakened experience,³⁹ while the latter refers to unawakened experience as an “illusion”. Hence we can succinctly translate both Chinese and Sanskrit expressions into English as “delusions and illusions”, relying on context to convey the exact Buddhist nuances.

Māyā occurs in the Chinese text, it is important for *Prajñāpāramitā* generally (c.f. Attwood 2017b), and it is a very commonly used Buddhist term. Given this, it is curious that the Translator decided not to include it in their Sanskrit translation. An accurate translation of the Chinese into any language would include the word.

³⁹ Specifically: regarding the impermanent as permanent, the painful as pleasant, the insubstantial as substantial, and the ugly as beautiful; and vice versa.

9. Final Extinction

Attwood (2018a) reminded us that *niṣṭhānirvāṇaḥ* is a *bahuvrīhi* compound that describes the *bodhisatva*, whose extinction is complete. Conze's editions give the word as *niṣṭhānirvāṇaḥ* though he notes that many of his witnesses have *niṣṭhānirvāṇa-prāptaḥ* along with other variants (1948: 152; 1967: 36). In his popular presentation of the text (1958: 93), Conze has added *-prāptaḥ* to the end of the compound and translates "and in the end, he attains to Nirvana". He may have been forced into this because his wrongly placed full stop stranded this adjective without a noun or verb.

Nattier identifies *niṣṭhānirvāṇaḥ* as "abbreviated at best" and seems to accept that adding *prāptaḥ* is necessary (1992: 178; 213, n.56). She suggests that the Chinese equivalent 究竟涅槃 (*jiùjìng nièpán*) is more natural than the Sanskrit but does not expand on what she means by "natural". In this context, a word like 究竟涅槃 "ultimate *nirvāṇa*" would not necessarily require the verb "attain" (Skt. *prāṇap*, Ch. 得) because the context strongly implies it. Like the copular verb in Sanskrit nominal sentences, Middle Chinese allows us to take the verb as read in some cases. Another way of looking at it would be that the distinctions between parts of speech in Middle Chinese are more fluid than in English or Sanskrit so that the adjective could take on a verbal connotation. The Chinese phrase could be parsed as like "[the *bodhisatva*] ultimate-*nirvāṇas*". In English, we would understand this to say "[the *bodhisatva*] attains ultimate *nirvāṇa*". In this sense, it would be similar to the use of denominative verbs where the noun subsumes the verb in an English phrase, e.g. the recent example of sports commentators saying that the winner of a contest "medals" rather than "wins a medal".

Of course, Sanskrit has its own denominative verbs, but these are conjugated as verbs, and the Translator has not done this. Rather, they opted to represent 究竟涅槃 as an adjective (*niṣṭhānirvāṇaḥ*) of the *bodhisatva* rather than an action performed by them and Sanskrit adjectives don't have the flexibility of Chinese adjectives. It would be more idiomatic for ultimate *nirvāṇa* to be a noun (*niṣṭhānirvāṇam*) combined with some form of the verb *prāṇap*, which is what we find peppered through the *Heart Sutra* manuscript tradition (see Conze's critical apparatus in 1948: 36, n.44). A similar idiom can be found in the Pāli *Gaṇakamoggallāna Sutta* (MN 107):

Brahmin, when my disciples are advised and instructed by me, some do indeed *succeed to the ultimate goal of nibbāna* (*niṭṭham nibbānaṃ ārādhenti*), and some do not succeed.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ *Appekacce kho, brāhmaṇa, mama sāvakā mayā evaṃ ovaḍḍiyamānā evaṃ anusāsīyamānā*

The Chinese counterpart of this *sutta* in the *Madhyamāgama* (MĀ 144 = T 26: 1.652.c22)⁴¹, has “some... attain final *nirvāṇa*” (...得究竟涅槃), where 得 is the familiar character for “attain” (NB. here the verb is explicit). Unfortunately, we don’t have an Indic version to shed light on the source vocabulary, though the sense is clear enough.

Note that some Zen commentators are troubled by the idea of attaining *nirvāṇa* since “... this would amount to the attainment of something that cannot be attained” (Pine 2004: 137)⁴², however, the early Buddhist literature does not acknowledge this prohibition. The problem arises from the metaphysical interpretation of Buddhism generally, i.e. using the language of “existent” (*astitā*) and “non-existent” (*nāstitā*), or “real” and “unreal” to describe subjective experience.⁴³ If we treat *nirvāṇa* as real, then something existent has been attained; if we treat it as unreal then nothing has been attained. An epistemological reading allows us to assert that someone has attained *the state of nirvāṇa*. Through the cessation of sensory-cognitive activity, they become unaware of any sensory-cognitive experience while maintaining a bare awareness. To say that sense experience has ceased for a particular meditator does not imply any particular metaphysical conclusions, though of course, the fact that experience can be extinguished without losing basic consciousness is itself fascinating.

The characters 究竟 are often used to translate *niṣṭhā* “state, condition; conclusion, termination”; but they are also used to translate *atyanta* “ultimate, culmination; arrive, reach”, and sometimes *atyanta-niṣṭhā* (*Digital Dictionary of Buddhism* s.v. 究竟). The terms *atyantaśūnyatā* “ultimate emptiness” and *atyantaviśuddhitā* “ultimate purity” are found quite frequently in *Pañc*.

Karashima’s glossary of Kumārajīva’s translation of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra* (*Saddh*) (T 262), offers another possibility (2001: 222-3). Karashima identifies cases where the Chinese phrase 究竟涅槃 stands for *nirvāṇa-paryavasānam*. *Paryavasāna* (*pari+ava√so*) means

accantaṃ niṭṭhaṃ nibbānaṃ ārādhenti, ekacce nārādhenti”ti. (MN iii.4)

⁴¹ Translated late 4th Century CE, probably from Gāndhārī.

⁴² And compare Lock and Linebarger (2018: 22, n.5) commenting on the lack of verb associated with 究竟涅槃: “Note that there is no verb here, In fact, it is hard to think what verb could go here, as from the point of view of emptiness there is nothing to ‘get’ or ‘attain’.

⁴³ Compare the injunction against using the metaphysical dichotomy (*dvāya*) implied by these terms with respect to the world of experience (*loka*) in the *Kaccānagotta Sutta* (SN 12: 15)

“end, conclusion” or “ending, concluding” and thus is a synonym of *niṣṭhā*.⁴⁴ Take this example:

For those following the path of Hearers,⁴⁵ [the Buddha] taught the corresponding Dharma of the four truths, [which] goes beyond (度) birth, old age, illness and death and *culminates in extinction* (究竟涅槃).⁴⁶

The corresponding sentence in the Sanskrit *Saddh* has a slightly different structure.

That Dharma of the Hearers, *culminating in extinction*, dealing with dependent arising connected with the four noble truths of the Hearers, was taught for [the purpose of] *going beyond* (*samatikramāya*) birth, old age, disease, death, grief, lament, misery, despondency, and trouble.⁴⁷

Apparently, Kumārajīva’s source was less prolix than the later manuscripts that form the basis of Vaidya’s edition (1960). Here, 度 (dù) corresponds to *samatikramāya* and 究竟涅槃 to *nirvāṇa-paryavasānam*. The verb is from *sam+ati√kram* and means “going entirely over or beyond”. It is used more often in this context than words from *ati√kram*, which also has the connotation of “transgression”. In his *Saddh* translation, Kumārajīva also translates *nirvāṇa-paryavasāna* with 究竟涅槃 at 9.19c4, 9.50c4, and 9.50c.7. Additionally, he

⁴⁴ It is most often used in *Aṣṭa* as part of the triplet “beginning, middle, or end” (*anto vā madhyaṃ vā paryavasānam* Vaidya 23).

⁴⁵ 求聲聞者 is more literally “those seeking *śrāvaka*-hood”

⁴⁶ 為求聲聞者說應四諦法，度生老病死，究竟涅槃 (9.3c.17). My thanks to Maitiu O’Ceileachair for help with this translation.

⁴⁷ *yad uta śrāvakāṇāṃ caturāryasatyā-saṃprayuktaṃ pratītyasamutpāda-pravṛttaṃ dharmam deśayati sma jāti-jarāvvyādhimaraṇaśoka-paridevaduḥkha-daurmanasyopāyāsānāṃ samatikramāya nirvāṇaparyavasānam* | (Vaidya 1960 12). An anonymous reviewer for an earlier draft pointed out that this sentence must be read in conjunction with the one that follows, which shows that *nirvāṇaparyavasānam* qualifies *dharmam*. There is a similar phrase in *Pañc*, “[The bodhisattva] points out the one path for the purification of beings, for going beyond sorrow and calamity... for the realisation of *nirvāṇa*” (*ekāyanaṃ mārgam upadiśati sattvānāṃ viśuddhaye śokopadravāṇāṃ samatikramāya duḥkhadaurmanasyānām astaṅgamāyāryasya dharmasyādhiḡamāya nirvāṇasya sāksātkriyāyai*, Kimura 4.100). Interestingly, *samatikramam duḥkhadaurmanasyam* might well be a translation of the missing passage at the end of Section II, i.e. 度一切苦厄.

used these characters to translate synonyms of *nirvāṇa-paryavasāna* such as *parinirvāṇa* (9.7c.2) and *samavasaraṇa* (9.12b.5).

This passage of the *Heart Sutra* is not a quote from the *Prajñāpāramitā* literature, but it was very likely influenced by Kumārajīva's translations. And if this is so then we might have expected the Translator to opt for *nirvāṇa-paryavasāna* rather than *niṣṭhā-nirvāṇa* in translating 究竟涅槃. Therefore, *niṣṭhānirvāṇa* appears to be a calque of the Chinese phrase 究竟涅槃 and this is, as Nattier, observed, more “natural” in Chinese.

Translating Section VI

A close reading of Section VI of the Sanskrit *Heart Sutra* reveals the Translator struggling to express the ideas found in the Chinese text. The majority of problems are on the whole idiomatic or aesthetic rather than substantive. If we repair the mistakes made by Conze, the Sanskrit text can be parsed as Sanskrit, albeit rather awkward and lumpy Sanskrit. However, we can also see that the Translator did not quite understand the intent of the Author at times. With so many problems in this short passage, we may wonder if there were problems that went beyond the limitations of the Translator and indicate a problem of translating between two such different languages.

The difficulties are testified to in a *Language Log* blog post⁴⁸ in which Victor Mair posed the question “Are Sanskrit and Chinese ‘congenial languages?’” and supplied answers from various colleagues. His own answer was, “I would say that Chinese is not a particularly suitable language for translating Sanskrit.” The consensus seemed to be that translating Sanskrit into Chinese posed significant difficulties. That said, by the mid-7th Century a huge number of Buddhist texts had been translated from Indic languages into Chinese, often multiple times. The difficulties were surmounted. There can be no doubt that translation in this direction (Indic → Chinese) was feasible although the target language had to be adapted with many neologisms and loan words. Did the Translator face special difficulties going in the opposite direction (Chinese → Sanskrit)?

⁴⁸ <https://languagelog.ldc.upenn.edu/nll/?p=6931>

I decided to answer this question through a pragmatic demonstration. Below is my own translation of the Chinese passage into Sanskrit taking into account all the observations and suggestions collated in this article.

The Chinese passage that we wish to translate into Sanskrit is this.

V. 是故空中。... 無智亦無得。以無所得故。

VI. 菩提薩埵。依般若波羅蜜多故。心無罣礙。無罣礙故。無有恐怖。遠離顛倒夢想。究竟涅槃。

I'll begin by sketching my contextual understanding of this passage before offering a tentative Sanskrit translation along with an English gloss. The text assumes that the reader understands that emptiness (空) is a state attained in or through meditation. This state is typically reached by applying the meditative technique of the yoga of non-apprehension. This leads through the sphere of infinite space (*ākāśānantyāyatana*) and via a series of increasing rarefied states (*āyatana*) to emptiness (*sūnyatā*). Such techniques are not explicit in *Prajñāpāramitā* texts, which adopt the point of view of a successful practitioner. However, the Pāli *Cūḷasuññata Sutta* (MN 121) outlines a practice that culminates in *suññatāvihāra* “dwelling in emptiness”. The technique is not called *anupalambhayoga* but employs the Pāli term *amanasikāra* “not paying attention to” (in various conjugations), which is synonymous with *anupalambha* “nonapprehension”.

Two Buddhist practitioners, Satyadhana (2014) and Anālayo (2015), describe ways of putting the *Cūḷasuññata Sutta* into practice. We can convey the effect of the practice by analogy with losing track of something and having it disappear from our thoughts. While the object gets no attention from us, we have no conscious awareness of it. It is *as though* it does not exist for us. And I stress that this is an epistemological argument, not a metaphysical (Idealistic) one.

Generally speaking, we think of Buddhist meditation as focussing attention on something in order to keep it at the forefront of awareness. The practice of nonapprehension (以無所得故 *yǐ wú suǒdé gù*) makes use of the flip side of this ability, i.e. while we are focussed on one thing, we are unaware of other things. And the more intense the focus, the more exclusive it is.

Experience requires active attention and by deliberately withholding it, we can lose track of the world to the extent that we bring sensory-cognitive experience to a complete halt. In Buddhist terms, the *skandhas* qua apparatus of experience cease functioning because their mode of existence is dependent on attention

(*maniskāra*) and/or apprehension (*upalambha*). Under these conditions, with no apprehension of sensory or mental activity, no dharmas arise. There is no information by which the practitioner can orient themselves in space or time. The sense of self dissolves. This is *emptiness* (*śūnyatā*).⁴⁹ In this state, nothing arises and nothing ceases. The state itself is unconditioned since it does not require the presence of any conditions to exist. Contrarily, it requires that we stop paying attention to and apprehending any and all potential conditions for the arising of sensory and mental experience.

Emptiness is not unconsciousness since afterwards one can vividly remember having been in that state. Watching sensory-cognitive experience cease and then later arise again can create some ongoing changes in one's perception and interpretation of experience. The practitioner of the yoga of nonapprehension views experience as like an illusion (compare Attwood 2017b). One is less likely to become stuck (*sajjati*) on experience. Someone who is "in that state" (*tathā-gata*) is described as *buddha*, i.e. "awakened". They have attained *nirvāṇa*, i.e. extinction of the conditions for rebirth. In the Prajñāpāramitā literature, the understanding that flows from the repeated and prolonged exposure to emptiness is hyperbolically called *sarvajñā* "omniscience" or *prajñāpāramitā* "supreme insight".

Nor is this a merely theoretical state or only based on descriptions in ancient texts. Meditators are dwelling in emptiness, whether they call it this or not, all the time. Any apt pupil can do the same.

We can now see how to read Section VI. When one's refuge or reliance (依) is supreme insight (般若波羅蜜多) then the mind (心) does get caught up (無罣礙) in the phenomenal world. One achieves a certain detachment from experience. And as a result, one is not fearful (無有恐怖) because the attachment that underlies all fear is absent. The delusions and illusions (顛倒夢想) that keep the unawakened in the rounds of rebirth are left behind (遠離), and

⁴⁹ It is not inconceivable that the yoga of nonapprehension was quite common amongst ancient Indian practitioners of meditation. Such is hinted at in the *Ariyapariyesanā Sutta* (MN 26) with reference to the practices taught by Āḷāra Kālāma and Uddaka Rāmaputta. And if so, experience might well be described in Sāṃkhya terms of a real, passive observer (*puruṣa*) of an illusory, active phenomenal world (*prakṛti*). The experience of emptiness could be likened to *puruṣa* seeing *prakṛti* in its quiescent state (*pradhāna*). Even some Buddhists tend to reify the residual awareness present in emptiness. Given that the "experience" of emptiness disrupts spatio-temporal- and self-orientation, a Brahmin experiencing this same state might confirm that they had experienced merging with Brahman.

one is finally extinguished (究竟涅槃) and after that nothing more can be said. The after-death state of the awakened is ineffable (*avyākṛta*).

Taking into account all of the notes and caveats outlined above, one way we could translate the Chinese text into idiomatic *Prajñāpāramitā* Sanskrit would be:

V. *Śāriputra, śūnyatāyām na rūpaṃ na vedanā... na prāptir na abhisamayo anupalambhayogena ||*

VI. *yato prajñāpāramitām niśrayati tato bodhisatvacittam na kvacit sajjati | asaktvā astrasto viparyāsamāyāvivikto nirvāṇaparyavasānañca prāpṇoti |*

V. *Śāriputra*, in the state of emptiness, through practising non-apprehension, there is no form, no feeling ... no attainment and no realisation.

VI. Since he relies on the perfection of insight, the mind of the *bodhisatva* does not get stuck anywhere, being unattached he is unafraid, detached from delusions and illusions, and he attains the culmination of extinction.

I do not argue that this is the best translation that could be achieved or that it should replace the existing translation. I argue only that this is a better translation than the one that has come down to us in the *Heart Sutra*. Although there are difficulties in making such a translation, there are no insurmountable problems as long as we correctly parse the ideas being conveyed. These are concepts that ultimately derive from Indian Buddhism and were first expressed in Indic languages, so all the terminology already exists and we have extensive witnesses to the idiom used by the authors.

Conclusions

The Translator did a passable job of translating most of the *Heart Sutra*, even though they didn't manage to reproduce the idiom of a Sanskrit *Prajñāpāramitā* text and inadvertently included some Chinese idioms and calques. However, in Section V/VI the Translator failed to accurately convey the meaning of the Chinese text partly because they misunderstood it and partly because their knowledge of Sanskrit language and literature seems to have been limited. The resulting translation had some influence in China, but from the time of Müller's

1884 diplomatic edition of the Hōryūji manuscript, the Sanskrit text became increasingly important. The Indian origins of the text were unquestioned for over a century despite the many obvious problems with the text in Sanskrit.

This raises the question of why the discrepancies between the two texts did not come into focus earlier. Woncheuk cites a Sanskrit text, but he appears to be the last scholar of the Chinese text to do so until the late 20th Century, despite an ongoing tradition of textual scholarship. Noticing Chinese calques in a Sanskrit text required a particular mindset: one has to first acknowledge that the Sanskrit text is problematic and then be familiar enough with the relevant Chinese literature to see the reasons for it. Jan Nattier put together a lot of hints from her colleagues' (often unpublished) comments, e.g. Robert Buswell (Nattier 1992: 210 n.48), Fukui Fumimasa (175-6, 185), John McRae (211 n.52), Richard Salomon (214 n.57), Alan Sponberg (1992: 207 n.33), and Yamabe Noboyoshi (211-3 n. 54a), and still, she was the first to look *systematically* at the provenance of the Sanskrit text. One has to first admit the possibility that the tradition might have been contrived before we could look afresh at the all too familiar text and see the calques and mistranslations.

The deeper problem with the Sanskrit *Heart Sutra*, to paraphrase Samuel Johnson, is not that it was done badly; but that it was done at all. In the mid 7th Century, Chinese Buddhists would have been familiar with digest texts and understood what it represented. The *Heart Sutra* does not even take the form of a *sūtra*: it does not begin *evam mayā śrutam*; it does not mention where the *sūtra* was preached, the Buddha does not speak or signify his approval of the words spoken, and the recipient of the teaching doesn't celebrate it at the end (all of which features are added to the extended version). No one in the Chinese Buddhist establishment in the early Tang would have mistaken this text for a *sūtra*, except for three things:

1. a Sanskrit version was in circulation,
2. the Chinese text was explicitly labelled as a translation attributed to the famous pilgrim and translator Xuánzàng, and
3. it had the imprimatur of the Emperor.⁵⁰

⁵⁰ The Fangshan Stele includes the phrase 奉 詔 譯 “translated by imperial decree”. Meaning that the translation was *approved* by the Emperor without necessarily implying an endorsement of the content. The Emperor in 661 CE, Gāozōng 高宗, was not a Buddhist, though his wife, Wǔ zhào 武曌, was and this was around the time that she was the defacto ruler of China due to

A connection with India, a connection with a named and prestigious translator (both deriving from Xuánzàng), and imperial approval were criteria for authenticity developed by Chinese bibliographers. In this case, they would be the *minimal* requirements to force Chinese Buddhists to consider something other than the obvious conclusion.

That a Sanskrit translation was made at all must be related to this. At least I can think of no other reason for both making a Sanskrit translation of a digest text *and* passing it off as Indian. Going to so much trouble to legitimise one digest text when thousands of genuinely Indian *sūtras* were available must have benefited someone, somehow, although I cannot see who it might have been or how they might have benefited.

Despite promoting a revisionist history of the text, I would still say that the *Heart Sutra* is an important and valuable text. It does indeed represent the essence of *Prajñāpāramitā*, i.e. experience understood from the point of view of the state of emptiness. In particular, it draws our attention to the importance of the previously unappreciated *yoga of nonapprehension* and to the profound experience of emptiness, especially as it was expressed by the authors of the *Pañc*. The *Heart Sutra* presents a fascinating insight into consciousness beyond the dissolution of the ego. It also affords us a glimpse into the social history of Chinese Buddhism in the early Tang Dynasty.

Abbreviations

Aṣṭa	Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra
CBETA	Chinese Buddhist Electronic Text Association (an online version of T.)
MN	Majjhima Nikāya
Pañc	Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā-sūtra
SN	Saṃyutta Nikāya
T	<i>Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō</i>

Gāozōng 's illness. One could read all the English language literature on the *Heart Sutra* to date and not encounter Wú zhào, whereas she was, arguably, the most important figure in Chinese history from 655 to 705 CE. For recent critical discussions of the historiography of Xuánzàng see Attwood (2019) and Kotyk (2020).

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A comparison of the Pāli and Chinese versions of *Nāga Saṃyutta*, *Supaṇṇa Saṃyutta*, and *Valāhaka Saṃyutta*, early Buddhist discourse collections on mythical dragons, birds, and cloud *devas*

Choong Mun-keat

Abstract

This article first examines the textual structure of the *Nāga Saṃyutta* (no. 29), *Supaṇṇa Saṃyutta* (no. 30), and *Valāhaka Saṃyutta* (no. 32) of the Pāli *Saṃyutta-nikāya* in conjunction with their Chinese Āgama counterparts. Then it compares the main teachings contained in the two versions. Also, this article for the first time provides a full translation of the relevant Chinese Buddhist texts for comparison. It reveals similarities but also significant differences in both structure and content.

Introduction

The following four Pāli collections, *Nāga Saṃyutta* (no. 29 “Connected with *Nāgas*”), *Supaṇṇa Saṃyutta* (no. 30 “Connected with *Supaṇṇas*”), *Gandhabba Saṃyutta* (no. 31 “Connected with *Gandhabbas*”), and *Valāhaka*¹ *Saṃyutta* (no. 32 “Connected with *Valāhakas*”) in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* are a group of sequential collections about early Buddhist adaptations of Vedic mythical beliefs regarding *nāgas* “mythical dragons/snakes”, *supaṇṇas* “mythical birds”,

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

¹ Or *Valāha* instead of *Valāhaka*. See SN 32.1: SN III 254, n. 1.

gandhabbas “fragrant plant *devas*”, and *valāhakas* “cloud *devas*”.² However, the Pāli SN 31 *Gandhabba Saṃyutta* has no counterpart among the Chinese Āgama discourses. Thus, only SN *saṃyuttas* 29, 30, and 32 and their Chinese Āgama counterparts will be discussed in this article. The purpose of this study is mainly to identify the differences and similarities of the two versions.

Textual structure

The Pāli *Nāga Saṃyutta* (SN 29.1-50), *Supaṇṇa Saṃyutta* (SN 30.1-46), and *Valāhaka Saṃyutta* (SN 32.1-57) are located in *Khandha Vagga*, the Section on Aggregates, which is the third of the five major divisions of the Pāli *Saṃyutta-nikāya*. In these three collections the following discourses/*suttas* have Chinese Āgama parallels:

- SN 29.1 and SN 30.1-2 have a single Chinese parallel located in *Ekottarikāgama*, namely EA 27.8 (in T2, no. 125).
- SN 32.1 has a Chinese parallel in *Saṃyuktāgama*, namely SA 871 (in T2, no. 99).

The Chinese EA version (T.125) was translated by Dharmanandi (曇摩難提) and revised by Saṃghadeva (僧伽提婆) in the fourth century from now lost Indic-language originals.³

The Chinese SA version was translated by Guṇabhadra (求那跋陀羅) in 435-436 CE⁴ from now lost Indic-language originals.⁵ However, the extant Chinese SA version entirely lacks sections corresponding to SN *saṃyuttas* 29, 30, and 31. That these SA discourses are missing may be due to the loss of a part of the original SA textual collection, as suggested by Yinshun.⁶ This makes it possible that the lack of SA counterparts for SN 32.2-57 (in the *Valāhaka Saṃyutta*) is also due to loss of material from the collection.

² Cf. Woodward 1925, 197 n. 1; Bodhi 2000, 850-851.

³ FEA 1, 4; Yinshun 1971, 755. Cf. Mukai 1985, 14. Regarding the question of the translator of the Chinese EA, see Radich and Anālayo 2017; Radich 2017b.

⁴ Nagasaki 2004, 13. Glass 2007, 38 considers that Guṇabhadra was probably not the translator but rather the one who recited the Indic text. See also Glass 2008 [2010], 2, n. 4.

⁵ On Sanskrit fragments corresponding to the Chinese SA, see Chung 2008, 148-151. These are not covered in this study.

⁶ Yinshun 1983, i 47, 50, 56; iii 536 n. 3; Choong 2000, 16, 22, 245; Nagasaki 2004, 54.

The above-mentioned Chinese discourse, SA 871, which is parallel to SN 32.1, is one of twelve discourses, namely SA 861-872, that are treated as part of a grouping whose title, *Tian Xiangying* 天相應 “Connected with *Devas/Heavens*” in the *Combined Edition of Sūtra and Śāstra of the Saṃyuktāgama* version, was supplied by the editor, Yinshun.⁷ This Chinese version of *Tian Xiangying* is located in the *Zayin song* (“Causal Condition Section”), SA section (3), which corresponds to the Pāli *Nidāna Vagga*, SN section (2). According to Yinshun, this Chinese *Tian Xiangyin* pertains to *Fo/Rulai suoshuo song* 佛/如來所說誦 (“Section Spoken by the Buddha” Skt. *Buddha-bhāṣita*),⁸ of the *vyākaraṇa-aṅga* (P. *veyyākaraṇa-aṅga*) portion of SA/SN.⁹

There is no clear evidence found in the texts to explain why the SN *saṃyuttas* 29, 30, 31, and 32 (as a group of early Buddhist adaptations of Vedic mythical beliefs about *nāgas*, *supaṇṇas*, *gandhabbas*, and *valāhakas*) should be located in section (3) *Khandha Vagga*. The same issue applies to the extant Chinese SA version of the discourses (i.e. *Tian Xiangying* and other missing discourses nearby) located in section (3) *Zayin song*.

Disagreements on teachings contained in the Pāli SN 29.1 AND SN 30.1-2 and their Chinese parallel EA 27.8

The Pāli *Nāga Saṃyutta* SN 29 and *Supaṇṇa Saṃyutta* SN 30¹⁰ have been translated into English by Woodward (1925) and by Bodhi (2000).¹¹ The Chinese EA 27.8 is a counterpart of both discourses SN 29.1 and SN 30.1-2. EA 27.8 is a very short discourse, which has not previously been

⁷ Yinshun 1983, i 47, 50 in “Za ahan jing bulei zhi zhengbian 雜阿含經部類之整編 [Re-edition of the Grouped Structure of SA]”; iii 531-536; FSA 2, 947-956; Choong 2000, 21, 245.

⁸ Hosoda 1989, 542; Choong 2000, 17, n. 5; Chung 2008, 190. Cf. Mukai 1985, 13, nn. 29, 30.

⁹ Choong 2000, 9-11, 17, 21, 245. *Vyākaraṇa* is one of the three *aṅgas* represented in the structure of SA/SN: *sūtra* (P. *sutta*) “discourse” (short, simple prose), *geya* (*geyya*) “stanza” (verse mixed with prose), and *vyākaraṇa* (*veyyākaraṇa*) “exposition”. These three *aṅgas* are the first three of nine types of early Buddhist text (*navāṅga*) classified according to their style and form. They are regarded by some scholars as historically the earliest ones to have appeared, in sequence, in the formation of the early Buddhist texts. Also, only these first three *aṅgas* are mentioned in MN 122 (*Mahāsuññatā-sutta*): III, 115 (cf. also the Ceylonese/Burmese version) and its Chinese parallel, MA 191: T1, 739c. This suggests the possibility that only these three *aṅgas* existed in the period of Early (or pre-sectarian) Buddhism (cf. Mizuno 1988, 23; Nagasaki 2004, 51-2; Choong 2010).

¹⁰ SN III 1890, 240-249.

¹¹ Woodward 1925, 192-196; Bodhi 2000, 1020-1024.

translated. The following is a full translation of it, which I now provide for comparison:¹²

Thus have I heard.

Once the Buddha was staying in Jetavana, Anāthapiṇḍika's park at Śrāvastī.

At that time the World-Honoured One said to the monks: "There are four types of *garuḍa* (*jinchi niao* 金翅鳥).¹³ What are the four? They are egg-born *garuḍas*, womb-born *garuḍas*, moisture-born *garuḍas*, and transformation/metamorphosis-born *garuḍas*. These are the four types of *garuḍa*. Similarly, monks, there are four types of *nāga* (dragon). What are the four? They are egg-born *nāgas*, womb-born *nāgas*, moisture-born *nāgas*, and transformation-born *nāgas*. These, monks, are the four types of *nāga*.¹⁴

"Monks, you should know [this]: If egg-born *garuḍas* want to eat *nāgas*, then they go up onto the iron-fork tree (*tiecha shu* 鐵叉樹),¹⁵ and throw themselves into the sea. The sea is two hundred and eighty thousand miles wide. Beneath [its surface] there are four types of *nāga* palace, where exist egg-born, womb-born, moisture-born, and transformation-born *nāgas*.¹⁶

"At that time the egg-born *garuḍas* use their large wings to beat the water in two directions [in order] to catch egg-born *nāgas* for food. But if the *nāgas* that they catch are of the womb-born type, then the egg-born *garuḍas* will die. At that time, the [egg-born] *garuḍas* who beat the water [in two directions] in order to catch *nāgas* go back up the iron-fork tree before the water closes in.¹⁷

¹² T2, 646a-b; FEA 2, 697-699.

¹³ See Malalasekera 1983, 755 about *Garuḍā*.

¹⁴ 爾時。世尊告諸比丘。有四種金翅鳥。云何為四。有卵生金翅鳥。有胎生金翅鳥。有濕生金翅鳥。有化生金翅鳥。是四種金翅鳥。如是比丘。有四種龍。云何為四。有卵生龍。有胎生龍。有濕生龍。有化生龍。是謂。比丘。有四種龍。

¹⁵ This is an interesting word, but no corresponding Indian term or story is found.

¹⁶ 比丘當知。若彼卵生金翅鳥欲食龍時。上鐵叉樹上。自投于海。而彼海水縱廣二十八萬里。下有四種龍宮。有卵種龍。有胎種龍。有濕種龍。有化種龍。

¹⁷ 是時。卵種金翅鳥。以大翅搏水兩向。取卵種龍食之。設當向胎種龍者。金翅鳥身

“Monks, you should know [this]: If womb-born *garuḍas* want to eat *nāgas*, then they go up the iron-fork tree, and throw themselves into the sea. The seawater is two hundred and eighty thousand miles wide. They beat the seawater [into two] and dive in order to catch womb-born *nāgas*. If they meet with egg-born *nāgas*, then they can also catch them from the seawater. If they meet with moisture-born *nāgas*, the *garuḍa* flock will die.¹⁸

“Monks, you should know [this]: If moisture-born *garuḍas* want to eat *nāgas*, then they go up the iron-fork tree, and throw themselves into the sea. If they meet with egg-born *nāgas*, womb-born *nāgas*, [or] moisture-born *nāgas*, then they are able to catch them. If they meet with transformation-born *nāgas*, [however], the *garuḍa* flock will die.¹⁹

“Monks, if transformation-born *garuḍas* want to eat *nāgas*, then they go up the iron-fork tree and throw themselves into the sea. The seawater is two hundred and eighty thousand miles wide. They beat the seawater [into two directions in order] to catch egg-born *nāgas*, womb-born *nāgas*, moisture-born *nāgas*, [or] transformation-born *nāgas*. They are able to catch them all, [and] they return to the iron-fork tree just before the seawater closes in.²⁰

“Monks, you should know [this]: If the *nāga* king were to serve the Buddha, then at that time *garuḍas* would be unable to eat [*nāgas*]. Why is that? Because the *Tathāgata* constantly practiss four kinds of mind, the *garuḍas* are unable to eat. What are the four kinds? The *Tathāgata* constantly practiss loving-kindness, compassion, empathic joy, and equanimity.²¹

即當喪亡。爾時。金翅鳥搏水取龍。水猶未合。還上鐵叉樹上。

¹⁸比丘當知。若胎生金翅鳥欲食龍時。上鐵叉樹上。自投于海。然彼海水縱廣二十八萬里。搏水下至值胎種龍。若值卵生龍者。亦能捉之銜出海水。若值濕生龍者。鳥身即死。

¹⁹比丘當知。若濕生金翅鳥欲食龍時。上鐵叉樹上。自投于海。彼若得卵生龍。胎生龍。濕生龍。皆能捉之。設值化生龍者。鳥身即死。

²⁰若。比丘。化生金翅鳥欲食龍時。上鐵叉樹上。自投于海。然彼海水縱廣二十八萬里。搏水下至值卵種龍。胎種龍。濕種龍。化種龍。皆能捉之。海水未合之頃。還上鐵叉樹上。

²¹比丘當知。若使龍王身事佛者。是時金翅鳥不能食噉。所以然者。如來恒行四等之心。以是故鳥不能食龍。云何為四等。如來恒行慈心。恒行悲心。恒行喜心。恒行護心。

That is to say, monks, the *Tathāgata*, who constantly has the four kinds of mind, is of great power, great strength, and cannot be destroyed. For this reason *garuḍas* are unable to eat *nāgas*. Therefore, monks, you should practise the four kinds of mind. Thus, monks, you should do this practice.”²²

At that time, the monks, having heard what the Buddha had said, were delighted and put it into practice.

In comparison, the Pāli parallels, SN 29.1 and SN 30.1-2 of this Chinese discourse (EA 27.8) mention the same four types (*aṇḍajā*, *jalābujā*, *saṃsedajā*, *opapātikā*), from inferior to superior classes, of *nāgas* and *garuḍas* (called *supaṇṇas* in the Pāli), and that *garuḍas* are only able to carry off (*haranti*) *nāgas* that are of equal or inferior types, but not their superiors. However, only the Chinese version mentions that the “iron-fork tree” is used by *garuḍas* in hunting *nāgas* for food. Also, the reason why the four legendary types of *nāgas* and *garuḍas* are included in the Pāli collections (SN 29 and SN 30) within the Buddhist framework is not clearly revealed.

The Pāli and Chinese versions adapt Indic mythology about the two animal classes: serpent-like beings and birds. Nevertheless, the Chinese version seems to provide a motivation for the inclusion of these two mythical animals in the Buddhist context, by showing the importance of practising the “four kinds of mind”.

Disagreements on teachings contained in the Pāli SN 32.1 and its Chinese parallel, sA 871

For the Pāli *Valāhaka Saṃyutta* (SN 32)²³ there already exist English translations by Woodward (1925) and by Bodhi (2000).²⁴ In this *saṃyutta* (SN 32.1-57) only one *sutta*, SN 32.1, has a Chinese counterpart, namely SA 871 (in *Tian Xiangying*, “Connected with Devas”). It is a very short discourse, and has not previously been translated into English. For the purpose of comparison I now provide the following full translation of the Chinese text:²⁵

²² 是謂。比丘。如來恒有此四等心。有大筋力。有大勇猛。不可沮壞。以是之故。金翅之鳥不能食龍。是故。諸比丘。當行四等之心。如是。諸比丘。當作是學。

²³ SN III 1890, 254-257.

²⁴ Woodward 1925, 200-201; Bodhi 2000, 1028-1030.

²⁵ T2, 220b; CSA iii 535; FSA 2, 954-955.

Thus have I heard.

Once the Buddha was staying in Jetavana, Anāthapiṇḍika’s park at Śrāvastī.

At that time the World-Honoured One said to the monks: “The wind-cloud *devas* [may] have this thought: “Let us now use [our] divine powers to amuse ourselves. When they have this thought, wind-clouds arise. As with the wind-cloud *devas*, the same is also to be said of the lightning-flash *devas*, the thunder-clap *devas*, the rain *devas*, the sunshine *devas*, the coolness *devas*, [and] the warmth *devas*.”²⁶

When the Buddha had finished teaching this discourse, the monks, having heard what the Buddha had said, were delighted and put it into practice.

Speaking in this way, different monks asked the Buddha, [and] the Buddha asked all of the monks.²⁷

The corresponding SN 32.1 reports the Buddha as teaching the monks about “*devas* of the cloud-class/group” (*valāhaka-kāyikā devā*). These include the following five classes/groups:

Cool-cloud *devas* (*sīta-valāhakā devā*), warm-cloud *devas* (*uṇha-valāhakā devā*), thunder-cloud *devas* (*abbha-valāhakā devā*), wind-cloud *devas* (*vāta-valāhakā devā*), and rain-cloud *devas* (*vassa-valāhakā devā*).

Also, another Pāli sutta within the same collection, SN 32.53, reports the Buddha as teaching thus:

Monks, there are so-called cool-cloud *devas*. They may have this thought: “Let us revel in our own class of delight (*sakāya-ratiya rameyyāma*)”. Then, in accordance with their desire, it becomes cool. This, monks, is the cause and reason why it sometimes becomes cool.²⁸

²⁶爾時。世尊告諸比丘。有風雲天作是念。我今欲以神力遊戲。如是念時。風雲則起。如風雲天。如是焰電天。雷震天。雨天。晴天。寒天。熱天亦如是說。

²⁷說如是。異比丘問佛。佛問諸比丘亦如是說。

²⁸ SN III 1890, 256.

A similar account is also given for the other four classes of “cloud *devas*” (*valāhakā devā*) (i.e. warm-cloud, thunder-cloud, wind-cloud, and rain-cloud *devas*). This expression of the *devas*’ desire to change the condition of the weather seems comparable to the above-mentioned Chinese version SA 871: “We (i.e. the wind-cloud *devas* in their thinking) want to use our divine power to amuse ourselves,” which then causes wind-clouds to develop.

Thus, the Pāli version lacks two kinds of cloud *devas* that appear in the Chinese version – namely lightning-bolt *devas* and sunshine *devas* – while the Chinese version lacks the collective term, *valāhaka-kāyikā devā* “*devas* of the cloud-class”, for all of the five cloud *devas*. Also, the power of those *devas* portrayed in the two versions is said to be able to change the weather conditions.²⁹ Nevertheless, the reason why these weather-related mythical *devas* are edited into the Buddhist texts is not clearly stated in either version.

Other doctrinal items found only in the Chinese version of Tian Xiangying and in the Pāli version of Valāhaka Saṃyutta

As mentioned above, SA 871 in the Chinese *Tian Xiangying* (Connected with *Devas*) is a counterpart of SN 32.1, which is just one of the fifty-seven *suttas* in the Pāli *Valāhaka Saṃyutta*. The eleven discourses, SA 861-870, 872, in the *Tian Xiangying* have no Pāli counterparts in *Valāhaka Saṃyutta*, while the Pāli fifty-six discourses, SN 32.2-57, in *Valāhaka Saṃyutta* have no Chinese counterparts in *Tian Xiangying*. Accordingly, the present section will discuss these differences between the two collections, SN 32.2-57 and SA 861-870, 872.

The contents of SN 32.2-57, without parallels in the corresponding SA collection, are as follows.³⁰

(1) SN 32.2-52: Fifty-one *suttas* about the reason why someone is reborn among the cloud *devas*, which are in five classes: Cool-cloud *devas*, warm-cloud *devas*, thunder-cloud *devas*, wind-cloud *devas*, and rain-cloud *devas*. The main reason why someone is reborn there is good conduct of deed, speech, and thought, and also giving. Another important cause is that the person wishes to be reborn there because those cloud *devas* are long-lived, beautiful, and have much happiness.

²⁹ Bhikkhu Bodhi 2000, 1102, n. 293 provides an explanation from the Pāli commentary: “Cool weather during the rainy season or winter is a natural coolness caused by the change of seasons, but when it becomes extremely cold during the cool season, or cold during the summer, that is caused by the power of these *devas*.”

³⁰ Cf. Woodward 1925, 200-201; Bodhi 2000, 1028-1030.

(2) SN 32.53-57: Five *suttas* which discuss the reason why the weather sometimes becomes cool, warm, stormy, windy, or rainy, in connection with the mythical power of the above-mentioned five cloud *devas*.³¹

The Chinese discourses SA 861-870, 872, also without parallels in the corresponding sections of SN, are as follows:

(1) SA 861-863 (T2, 219b; CSA iii 531-532; FSA 2, 947-949):
SA861 (T2, 219b; CSA iii 531; FSA 2, 947):

Thus have I heard.

Once the Buddha was staying in Jetavana, Anāthapiṇḍika's park at Śrāvastī.

At that time the World-Honoured One said to the monks: "Four hundred years in the human lifespan are one day and one night in the Tusita heaven. Thus, thirty days are one month, and twelve months are one year, the lifespan in the Tusita heaven is four thousand years.³² At the end of life the untaught worldling will be reborn in hell, [or in the realm of] animals, or [in the realm of] hungry ghosts. At the end of life the well-taught noble disciple will not be reborn in hell, [or in the realm of] animals, [or in the realm of] hungry ghosts."³³

When the Buddha had finished teaching this discourse, the monks, having heard what the Buddha had said, were delighted and put it into practice.

³¹ Cf. Bodhi 2000, 1102, n. 293. See footnote 29 in this article.

³² One day in Tusita (Skt. Tuṣita) equals four hundred human years, but a Tuṣita year is still made of 12 months of 30 days each. The implication is that each Tuṣita year corresponds to 400 x 30 x 12 = 144,000 human years. Since the lifespan (*shou* 壽) in Tuṣita is 4,000 such years, this will correspond to 144,000 x 4,000 = 576,000,000 human years.

³³ 一時。佛住舍衛國祇樹給孤獨園。

爾時。世尊告諸比丘。人間四百歲是兜率陀天上一日一夜。如是三十日一月。十二月一歲。兜率陀天壽四千歲。愚癡無聞凡夫於彼命終。生地獄·畜生·餓鬼中。多聞聖弟子於彼命終。不生地獄·畜生·餓鬼中。

SA 862 (T2, 219b; CSA iii 531; FSA 2, 948):

Thus have I heard.

Once the Buddha was staying in Jetavana, Anāthapiṇḍika's park at Śrāvastī.

At that time the World-Honoured One said to the monks: "Eight hundred years in the human lifespan are one day and one night in the Nimmānaratī heaven. Thus, thirty days are one month and twelve months are one year, [the lifespan in] the Nimmānaratī heaven is eight thousand years. At the end of life the untaught worldling will be reborn in hell, or in [the realm of] animals, or in [the realm of] hungry ghosts. At the end of life the well-taught noble disciple will not be reborn in hell, [or in the realm of] animals, [or in the realm of] hungry ghosts."³⁴

When the Buddha had finished teaching this discourse, the monks, having heard what the Buddha had said, were delighted and put it into practice.

SA 863 (T2, 219b; CSA iii 531-532; FSA 2, 948-949):

Thus have I heard.

Once the Buddha was staying in Jetavana, Anāthapiṇḍika's park at Śrāvastī.

At that time the World-Honoured One said to the monks: "one thousand six hundred years in the human lifespan are one day and one night in the Paranimmitavasavattī heaven. Thus, thirty days are one month and twelve months are one year, [the lifespan in] the Paranimmitavasavattī heaven is sixteen thousand years. At the end of life the untaught worldling will be reborn in hell, or [in the realm of] animals, or [in the realm of] hungry ghosts. At the end of life the well-taught noble disciple, however, will

³⁴ 爾時。世尊告諸比丘。人間八百歲是化樂天上一日一夜。如是三十日一月。十二月一歲。化樂天壽八千歲。愚癡無聞凡夫於彼命終。生地獄·畜生·餓鬼中。多聞聖弟子於彼命終。不生地獄·畜生·餓鬼中。

not be reborn in hell, or [in the realm of] animals, or [in the realm of] hungry ghosts.”³⁵

When the Buddha had finished teaching this discourse, the monks, having heard what the Buddha had said, were delighted and put it into practice.

These three SA discourses (SA 861-3) are about two ideas: first, the idea that the life span in the heavens is far longer than in the human realm; second, the idea that, at the end of life, the untaught worldlying will be reborn in one of three unhappy realms: hell, or the realm of animals, or the realm of hungry ghosts, whereas the well-taught noble disciple will not be reborn in any of these three realms.³⁶

(2) SA 864-870 (T2, 219b-220b; CSA iii 532-535; FSA 2, 949-954):³⁷
SA 864 (T2, 219b-c; CSA iii 532; FSA 2, 949-950):

Thus have I heard.

Once the Buddha was staying in Jetavana, Anāthapiṇḍika’s park at Śrāvastī.

At that time the World-Honoured One said to the monks: “If, with regard to actions or appearances or signs, a monk detaches himself from sensuality, detaches himself from evil and unwholesome states, then he abides having attained the first *dhyāna*, in which there is thought-and-investigation, [along with] detachment-born joy and pleasure.”³⁸

“He does not recollect or think about such actions, appearances, or signs, but sees the phenomena (*dharmas*) of material form,

³⁵ 爾時。世尊告諸比丘。人間千六百歲是他化自在天一日一夜。如是三十日一月。十二月一歲。他化自在天壽一萬六千歲。愚癡無聞凡夫於彼命終。生地獄·畜生·餓鬼中。多聞聖弟子於彼命終。不生地獄·畜生·餓鬼中。

³⁶ Cf. Pāli AN 3.70 (*Āṅguttara-nikāya*): I 205-215 (particularly 213-214); EA 24.6: T2 624b; T1 nos. 87-89; MA 202: T1 770a.

³⁷ Note: For convenience of references the Chinese terms of various specific heavenly realms (天 *tian*) in the following translations are directly provided with Indic equivalents, e.g. Appamānasubha for wuliangjing tian 無量淨天。

³⁸ 爾時。世尊告諸比丘。若比丘若行·若形·若相。離欲·惡不善法。有覺有觀。離生喜樂。初禪具足住。

feeling, perception, activities, [and] consciousness as sickness, as an abscess, as a dart, as pain; [as] impermanence, [as] suffering, [as] emptiness, [as] not-self. With regard to those phenomena he experiences disgust, fear, and defensiveness. Having experienced disgust, fear, and defensiveness, he practises the gateway to ambrosia³⁹ and gains the benefit of it for himself. Such calm, such excellent subtlety, is what is called renunciation [of all attachment], the remainderless ending of craving, the fading away of desire, cessation, nirvana.”⁴⁰

When the Buddha had finished teaching this discourse, the monks, having heard what the Buddha had said, were delighted and put it into practice.

SA 865 (T2, 219c; CSA iii 532; FSA 2, 950):

Thus have I heard.

Once the Buddha was staying in Jetavana, Anāthapiṇḍika’s park at Śrāvastī.

At that time the World-Honoured One taught the monks the above teaching, but with the following difference: Having known thus, seen thus, his mind is liberated from the influx of sense-desire, liberated from the influx of becoming, [and] liberated from the influx of ignorance. In liberation arises the knowledge [that his mind is liberated]. He truly knows: birth is ended, noble conduct is established, done is what was to be done, there is no more of further becoming.⁴¹

When the Buddha had finished teaching this discourse, the monks, having heard what the Buddha had said, were delighted and put it into practice.

³⁹ 甘露門 *ganlu men* = Skt. *amṛta-dvāra*, meaning nirvana.

⁴⁰ 彼不憶念如是行·如是形·如是相。然於彼色·受·想·行·識法。作如病·如癰·如刺·如殺·無常·苦·空·非我思惟。於彼法生厭·怖畏·防護。生厭·怖畏·防護已。以甘露門而自饒益。如是寂靜。如是勝妙。所謂捨離。餘愛盡·無欲·滅盡·涅槃。

⁴¹ 爾時。世尊告諸比丘。如上說。差別者。如是知·如是見已。欲有漏心解脫·有有漏心解脫·無明漏心解脫。解脫知見。我生已盡。梵行已立。所作已作。自知不受後有。

SA 866 (T2, 219c; CSA iii 533; FSA 2, 950-951):

Thus have I heard.

Once the Buddha was staying in Jetavana, Anāthapiṇḍika's park at Śrāvastī.

At that time the World-Honoured One taught the monks the above teaching, but with the following difference: If [the practitioner] is unable to attain liberation, it may be that, because of longing for the Dharma, recollecting the Dharma, and appreciating the Dharma, he attains the state of the *antarāparinibbāyī*.⁴² If he does not attain that, then he may attain the state of the *upabaccaparinibbāyī*.⁴³ If he does not attain that, then he may attain the state of the *sasāṅkhāraparinibbāyī*.⁴⁴ If he does not attain that, then he may attain the state of the *asaṅkhāraparinibbāyī*.⁴⁵ If he does not attain that, then he may attain the state of the *uddhamṣota*.⁴⁶ If he does not attain that, then because of his merit in longing for the Dharma, recollecting the Dharma, and appreciating the Dharma, he may be reborn as a Mahābrahmā-deva⁴⁷ or as a Brahma-purohita-deva,⁴⁸ or as a Brahmakāyika-deva⁴⁹.⁵⁰

When the Buddha had taught this discourse, the monks, having heard what the Buddha had said, were delighted and put it into practice.

⁴² 中般涅槃.

⁴³ 生般涅槃.

⁴⁴ 有行般涅槃.

⁴⁵ 無行般涅槃.

⁴⁶ 上流般涅槃.

⁴⁷ 大梵天.

⁴⁸ 梵輔天.

⁴⁹ 梵身天.

⁵⁰ 爾時。世尊告諸比丘。如上說。差別者。若不得解脫。以欲法·念法·樂法故。取中般涅槃。若不如是。或生般涅槃。若不如是。或有行般涅槃。若不如是。或無行般涅槃。若不如是。或上流般涅槃。若不如是。或復即以此欲法·念法·樂法功德生大梵天中。或生梵輔天中。或生梵身天中。

SA 867 (T2, 219c-220a; CSA iii 533; FSA 2, 951-952):

Thus have I heard.

Once the Buddha was staying in Jetavana, Anāthapiṇḍika's park at Śrāvastī.

At that time the World-Honoured One said to the monks: "If a monk, as regards such actions, such appearances, and such signs, calms thought and investigation, then he abides having attained the second *dhyāna*. In this there is inner tranquility and one-pointedness of mind, which is without thought and without investigation, and with concentration-born joy and pleasure.⁵¹

"If, as regards such actions, such appearances, and such signs, he is not recollected and mindful, he may still see the phenomena of material form, feeling, perception, activities, and consciousness as a sickness, as an abscess, as a dart, as pain; [as] impermanence, [as] suffering, [as] emptiness, [as] not-self. Regarding those phenomena he experiences disgust, fear, and defensiveness. Having experienced disgust, fear, and defensiveness, he practises for the realm of ambrosia and gains the benefits of it for himself. Such calm, such excellent subtlety, is what is called total renunciation without remainder, the fading away of desire, cessation, nirvana."⁵²

When the Buddha had finished teaching this discourse, the monks, having heard what the Buddha had said, were delighted and put it into practice.

⁵¹爾時。世尊告諸比丘。若比丘如是行。如是形。如是相。息有覺有觀。內淨一心。無覺無觀。定生喜樂。第二禪具足住。

⁵²若不如是行。如是形。如是相憶念。而於色。受。想。行。識法思惟如病。如癰。如刺。如殺。無常。苦。空。非我。於此等法心生厭離。怖畏。防護。厭離。防護已。於甘露法界以自饒益。此則寂靜。此則勝妙。所謂捨離。一切有餘愛盡。無欲。滅盡。涅槃。

SA 868 (T2, 220a; CSA iii 533-534; FSA 2, 952-953):

Thus have I heard.

Once the Buddha was staying in Jetavana, Anāthapiṇḍika's park at Śrāvastī.

At that time the World-Honoured One taught the monks the above teaching, but with this difference: If a monk, as regards such actions, such appearances, such signs, has come to know thus, to see thus, then his mind is liberated from the influx of sense-desire, is liberated from the influx of becoming, [and] iberated from the influx of ignorance. In liberation there arises the knowledge [that his mind is liberated]. He truly knows: birth is ended, noble conduct is established, done is what was to be done, there is no more of further becoming.⁵³

If he is unable to attain liberation, then through longing for the Dharma, recollecting the Dharma, appreciating the Dharma, he will attain *antarāparinibbāyī*. If he does not attain that, then he will attain *upabaccaparinibbāyī*. If he does not attain that, then he will attain *sasaṅkhāraparinibbāyī*. If he does not attain that, then he will attain *asaṅkhāraparinibbāyī*. If he does not attain that, then he will attain *uddhamṣota*. If he does not attain that, then, through longing for the Dharma, remembering the Dharma, appreciating the Dharma, he will be reborn in Ābhassara;⁵⁴ if he does not attain that, then he will be reborn in Appamāṇābha;⁵⁵ if he does not attain that, then he will be reborn in Parittābha^{56,57}

When the Buddha had finished teaching this discourse, the monks, having heard what the Buddha had said, were delighted and put it into practice.

⁵³爾時。世尊告諸比丘。如上說。差別者。彼如是知。如是見。欲有漏心解脫。有有漏心解脫。無明漏心解脫。解脫知見。我生已盡。梵行已立。所作已作。自知不受後有。

⁵⁴自性光音天。

⁵⁵無量光天。

⁵⁶少光天。

⁵⁷若不解脫。而以彼法。欲法。念法。樂法取中般涅槃。若不爾者。取生般涅槃。若不爾者。取有行般涅槃。若不爾者。取無行般涅槃。若不爾者。取上流般涅槃。若不爾者。彼以欲法。念法。樂法生自性光音天。若不爾者。生無量光天。若不爾者。生少光天。

SA 869 (T2, 220a; CSA iii 534; FSA 2, 953-954):

Thus have I heard.

Once the Buddha was staying in Jetavana, Anāthapiṇḍika's park at Śrāvastī.

At that time, the World-Honoured One said to the monks: "If a monk, as regards such actions, such appearances, such signs, by the fading away of joy, abides disinterested, mindful and aware, and experiences with the body the pleasure of which the Noble Ones are able to say "equanimous, mindful, abiding in pleasure", then he abides having attained the third *dhyāna*.⁵⁸

"If he does not attain that as regards such actions, appearances, and signs, but sees the phenomena of material form, feeling, perception, activities, [and] consciousness as a sickness, as an abscess, as a dart, as pain; ... and so on up to *uddhamsota*.⁵⁹

"If he does not attain that, [then] by longing for the Dharma, recollecting the Dharma, appreciating the Dharma, he will be reborn in Subhakiṇṇā;⁶⁰ if he does not attain that, then he will be reborn in Appamāṇasubha;⁶¹ if he does not attain that, then he will be reborn in Parittasubha⁶²."⁶³

When the Buddha had finished teaching this discourse, the monks, having heard what the Buddha had said, were delighted and put it into practice.

⁵⁸ 爾時。世尊告諸比丘。若比丘如是行·如是形·如是相。離貪喜捨住。正念正智。覺身樂。聖人能說能捨念樂住。第三禪具足住。

⁵⁹ 若不爾者。以如是行·如是形·如是相。於受·想·行·識法思惟如病·如癰·如刺·如殺。乃至上流[般涅槃]。

⁶⁰ 遍淨天。

⁶¹ 無量淨天。

⁶² 少淨天。

⁶³ 若不爾者。以彼法·欲法·念法·樂生遍淨天。若不爾者。生無量淨天。若不爾者。生少淨天。

SA870 (T2, 220a-b; CSA iii 534-535; FSA 2, 954):

Thus have I heard.

Once the Buddha was staying in Jetavana, Anāthapiṇḍika's park at Śrāvastī.

At that time, the World-Honoured One said to the monks: "As regards such actions, such appearances, such signs, through the giving up of pleasure and pain, through the ceasing of previous happiness and sorrow, a monk attains and abides in the fourth *dhyāna* which is without pain and pleasure, and with disinterestedness, mindfulness-and-purity.⁶⁴

"If he does not attain that, then through being recollected-and-mindful, he sees the phenomena of material form, feeling, perception, activities, and consciousness as a sickness, as an abscess, as a dart, as pain; ... and so on up to *uddhamsota*.⁶⁵

"If he does not attain that, then he will be reborn in Vehapphalā,⁶⁶ if he does not attain that, then he will be reborn in Puṇyaprasavā,⁶⁷ if he does not attain that, then he will be reborn in Anabhrakā.⁶⁸"⁶⁹

When the Buddha had finished teaching this discourse, the monks, having heard what the Buddha had said, were delighted and put it into practice.

As with the four *dhyānas*, the four non-material concentration-realms (*āyatana*) are then similarly taught in this way.⁷⁰

⁶⁴爾時。世尊告諸比丘。若比丘如是行。如是形。如是相。離苦息樂。前憂喜已滅。不苦不樂捨。淨念一心。第四禪具足住。

⁶⁵若不如是憶念。而於色。受。想。行。識思惟如病。如癰。如刺。如殺。乃至上流般涅槃。

⁶⁶因性果實天 (cf. Skt. Brhatphalā).

⁶⁷福生天 (No Pāli term for Skt. Puṇyaprasavā).

⁶⁸少福天 (No Pāli term for Skt. Anabhrakā).

⁶⁹若不爾者。或生因性果實天。若不爾者。生福生天。若不爾者。生少福天。

⁷⁰如四禪。如是四無色定亦如是說。

Thus, the above seven discourses (SA 864-870) link the four *dhyānas* with liberation, *nirvana*, and various specific heavenly realms (天 *tian*). The following names of heavens (here given in Pali or Sanskrit) are mentioned: Mahābrahma, Brahmāpurohita, Brahmakāyika; Ābhassara, Appamāṇābha, Parittābha; Subhakiṇṇa, Appamāṇasubha, Parittasubha; Vehapphalā, Puṇyaprasava, and Anabraka. Also mentioned are the following supramundane stages on the way to the final attainment of *nirvana*: *antarāparinibbāyī*, *upabaccaparinibbāyī*, *sasaṅkhāraparinibbāyī*, *asaṅkhāraparinibbāyī*.

(3) SA 872 (T2, 220b-c; CSA iii 535-536; FSA 2, 956)

Thus have I heard.

Once the Buddha was staying in Jetavana, Anāthapiṇḍika's park at Śrāvastī.

At that time, the World-Honoured One was [going out] on a dark night. [As] the heavens were occasionally sending down light rain and flashes of lightning, the Buddha said to Ānanda: "You may go and get an umbrella and a light." Then the venerable Ānanda, following this instruction, took an umbrella and a light, and walked behind the Buddha. On arriving at a certain place, the Buddha smiled. The venerable [Ānanda] asked the Buddha: "The World-Honoured One does not smile without a reason, but I do not know the reason why the World-Honoured One has smiled today."⁷¹

The Buddha said to Ānanda: "It is so, it is so. The *Tathāgata* does not smile without a reason. You are now holding an umbrella and a light while walking behind me. I, [however], also see the god Brahmā, similarly holding an umbrella and a light, walking behind the monk Ājñāta-kaundinya; [I also see] Śakra, the leader of the devas, similarly holding an umbrella and a light, walking behind Mahākāśyapa; also the heavenly king, Dhṛtarāṣṭra, holding an umbrella and a light, walking behind Śāriputra; also the heavenly king, Virūḍhaka, holding an umbrella and a light, walking behind Mahāmaudgalyāyana; also the heavenly king, Virūpākṣa, holding

⁷¹爾時。世尊於夜闇中。天時小雨。電光焰照。佛告阿難。汝可以傘蓋覆燈持出。尊者阿難即受教。以傘蓋覆燈。隨佛後行。至一處。世尊微笑。尊者阿難白佛言。世尊不以無因緣而笑。不審世尊今日何因何緣而發微笑。

an umbrella and a light, walking behind Mahākauṣṭhila; also the heavenly king Vaiśravaṇa similarly holding an umbrella and a light, while walking behind Mahākālpina.⁷²

When the Buddha had finished teaching this discourse, the venerable Ānanda, having heard what the Buddha had said, was delighted and put it into practice.

This Chinese discourse shows how various *devas* follow, respect and seemingly protect the Buddha's great monk-disciples by holding an umbrella and a light while walking behind them. The Buddha smiled after seeing such behaviour by the *devas*. The actions were also similar to those performed by Ānanda after he was told to do them by the Buddha himself, during their rainy night walk.

To sum up, the three groups of Chinese discourses reviewed above convey the following messages: (1) Inhabitants of the heavens have a far longer life-span than humans, and one should avoid being reborn, at the end of life, in any of the three evil destinies (hell, the realm of animals, and the realm of hungry ghosts). (2) Various stages of heavenly existence are associated with the four *dhyānas*, with liberation, or with *nirvana*. (3) Various *devas* safeguard and respect the Buddha's great monk-disciples by holding an umbrella and a light while walking behind them, just as Ānanda was told to do by the Buddha himself, during their rainy night-walk, thus causing the Buddha to smile.

Accordingly, regarding both content and style in the Chinese and Pāli groups presented here (SA 861-870, 872 and SN 32.2-57), each of the component discourses is totally lacking a parallel in the otherwise corresponding collection (SA and SN).

⁷²佛告阿難。如是。如是。如來不以無因緣而笑。汝今持傘蓋覆燈。隨我而行。我見梵天亦復如是持傘蓋覆燈。隨拘隣比丘後行。釋提桓因亦復持傘蓋覆燈。隨摩訶迦葉後行。袞栗帝羅色吒羅天王亦持傘蓋覆燈。隨舍利弗後行。毘樓勒迦天王亦持傘蓋覆燈。隨大目犍連後行。毘樓訶叉天王亦持傘蓋覆燈。隨摩訶拘絺羅後行。毘沙門天王亦持傘蓋覆燈。隨摩訶劫賓那後行。

Conclusion

This study has presented a comparison of the Pāli SN 29.1 in *Nāga Saṃyutta*, SN 30.1-2 in *Supaṇṇa Saṃyutta* and their Chinese counterpart EA 27.8 in *Ekottarikāgama*; SN 32.1 (including SN 32.53) in *Valāhaka Saṃyutta* and its Chinese counterpart SA 871 in *Tian Xiangying*; and on other doctrinal matters found only in the Chinese version of *Tian Xiangying* or in the Pāli version of *Valāhaka Saṃyutta*.

Regarding the textual collections, SA 871 (the Chinese counterpart of SN 32.1) is one of the twelve discourses (based on the Taishō edition) that make up *Tian Xiangying* (Connected with *devas*). The eleven adjacent discourses, SA 861-870, and 872 in *Tian Xiangying*, lack counterparts in SN 32 (*Valāhaka Saṃyutta*). The extant Chinese SA version also completely lacks counterparts for SN 29 (*Nāga Saṃyutta*), SN 30 (*Supaṇṇa Saṃyutta*), and SN 31 (*Gandhabba Saṃyutta*). Such lack of corresponding SA discourses is perhaps a result of loss of the SA fascicle now numbered 23, from the original SA translation, as proposed by Yinshun. That is, the SA counterparts (in *Tian Xiangying*) for SN *suttas* 32.2-57 (in *Valāhaka Saṃyutta*) may have become lost through being in the missing collection as well.

Also, structurally, no clear evidence is found in the texts that might constitute a reason why the SN version (SN 29-32 *saṃyuttas*) is edited into SN section (3) *Khandha Vagga*, whereas the SA version (*Tian Xiangying*) is located in section (3) *Zayin song*.

It could be that both the Pāli and the Chinese collections are artificial and/or late compilations. It is possible that the discourses were at first attached to, or subordinated to, the relevant sections (*vaggas/songs*), and that the gathering of them into *saṃyuttas/saṃyuktas* grouped in a single section was a later development. The observed structural divergences would then simply reflect differences in how the two schools (*Vibhajjavāda/Vibhajjavāda* and *Sarvāstivāda/Sabbatthivāda*) developed after their separation from their common ancestor (i.e. the *Sthavira* tradition).

As for the contents, this comparison has revealed the following main points:

1. Both the Chinese version (EA 27.8) and the Pāli versions (SN 29.1, SN 30.1-2) mention the same four types of *nāga* and *garuḍa* (*supaṇṇa* in the Pāli).

Only the Chinese version mentions that the iron-fork tree is employed by *garuḍas* in catching *nāgas* for food. No equivalent Indian term or story regarding the iron-fork tree is found. It is a question whether this kind of tree originated in China.

Also, only the Chinese version says that if the *nāga* king serves the Buddha, then *garuḍas* are unable to eat *nāgas*. The reason for this is that the *Tathāgata* constantly practises the “four kinds of mind” (i.e. loving-kindness, compassion, empathic joy, and equanimity). These four kinds of mind give great strength to those who practise them. Thus, the teaching of the four types of *nāga* and *garuḍa* in the Chinese discourse is intended to inspire people to train in the four kinds of mind.

By contrast, the Pāli versions mention only the same four types of *nāga* and of *garuḍa*. The reason why the four legendary types of *nāga* and *garuḍa* are edited into the Pāli collections (SN 29, SN 30) within the Buddhist context is not clear.

However, both the Chinese and the Pāli texts (EA 27.8 = SN 29.1 and SN 30.1-2) are likely to be artificial and/or late collections and arrangements. They both adopt the Indic mythology of the two animals: snake-like beings and birds. Nevertheless, the Chinese version seems to provide a viable rationale for the inclusion of these two mythical animals within the Buddhist background: doing so highlights the significance of practising the “four kinds of mind”.

2. Regarding the cloud *devas*, the Chinese version (SA 871) does not have the collective term “*devas* of cloud-classes” for the five cloud *devas* shown in the Pāli version (SN 32.1), whereas the Pāli version lacks both the lightning-bolt *devas* and the sunshine *devas* indicated in the Chinese version.

Also, the power of the cloud *devas* explained in the two versions (SN 32.53, SA 871) is said to be able to alter the weather conditions. However, it is unclear why these climate-related mythical *devas* are edited into the Buddhist texts.

3. The style of the Chinese *Tian Saṃyukta* and the Pāli *Valāhaka Saṃyutta* is not found in the corresponding collection of the other version. The content of the two versions is likely to be an artificial creation.

Overall, this study has revealed some disagreements in both structure and content between the Pāli and Chinese versions. It has gone some way toward accounting for those differences. The observed structural discrepancies simply reflect transformations in how the Buddhist traditions developed after the separation from their common origin.

Abbreviations

AN	<i>Aṅguttara-nikāya</i>
EA	<i>Ekottarikāgama</i> 增一阿含經 (T2, no. 125)
CSA	<i>Za ahan jinglun huibian</i> 雜阿含經論會編 [<i>Combined Edition of Sūtra and Śāstra of the Saṃyuktāgama</i>]. 3 vols Ed. Yinshun 印順. Taipei: Zhengwen Chubanshe, 1983.
FEA	<i>Foguang dazangjing ahan zang: Zengyi ahan jing</i> 佛光大藏經阿含藏：增一阿含經 [<i>Foguang Tripitaka Ekottarikāgama</i>]. 4 vols. Ed. Foguang Dazangjing Bianxiu Weiyuanhui 佛光大藏經編修委員會. Dashu, Gaoxiong: Foguangshan Zongwu Weiyuanhui, 1987.
FSA	<i>Foguang dazangjing ahan zang: Za ahan jing</i> 佛光大藏經阿含藏：雜阿含經 [<i>Foguang Tripitaka Saṃyuktāgama</i>]. 4 vols. Ed. Foguang Dazangjing Bianxiu Weiyuanhui 佛光大藏經編修委員會. Dashu, Gaoxiong: Foguangshan Zongwu Weiyuanhui, 1983.
MA	<i>Madhyamāgama</i> (T1, no. 26)
PTS	Pali Text Society
SA	<i>Saṃyuktāgama</i> 雜阿含經 (T2, no. 99)
SN	<i>Saṃyutta-nikāya</i>

- T Taishō Chinese *Tripitaka* (the standard edition for most scholarly purposes) *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新脩大藏經. 100 vols. Ed. Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎 and Watanabe Kaikyoku 渡辺海旭. Tokyo: Taishō Issaikyō Kankōkai. 1924–34.

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Objectless Loving-Kindness & Compassion: Why *anārambaṇā maitrīkaruṇā* became unique to *bodhisattvas*.

Tsering Dorji

Abstract

This paper* analyses why *anārambaṇā maitrīkaruṇā* became an important and unique concept in early non-tantric Indian Mahāyāna Buddhism. Through the study of early Mahāyāna *Sūtras* and *Śāstras*, I explore what the early Mahāyāna *Sūtras* and *Śāstras* tell us about ‘objectless loving-kindness and compassion’ in the context of threefold *maitrī* and *karuṇā*. By examining these early Mahāyāna *Sūtras* and *Śāstras*, and also early non-Mahāyāna Pāli *nikāyas*, *abhidhammas* and commentaries, I argue that *anārambaṇā maitrīkaruṇā* became unique to Mahāyāna because of the fundamental shift of goal from mainstream Buddhism; why *śrāvakas* or Hīnayānists do not practise *anārambaṇā maitrīkaruṇā* is not originally because of lack of non-conceptual wisdom or lack of understanding of the emptiness of *dharma*, but because for *śrāvakas* and mainstream Buddhists *maitrī* and *karuṇā* are not essential in attaining their *bodhi*.

Śrāvakas are those who learn and uphold the teachings taught by the Buddha by actualising the true nature of *dharma* (*dharmatām sākṣātkurvanti*).¹

*When this paper was submitted for publication, we saw that it proposed an interesting argument, but the Sanskrit quotations were riddled with mistakes. Both we and the author were under lockdown and had no access to most of the texts. We decided to make the many corrections which seemed obvious, and to leave the other mistakes as received, given that they rarely if ever affect the argument. *Ed.*

¹ Mitra 1888:4 *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*: /*śrāvakā bhāṣante...tathāgatena dharmo deśitaḥ, tatra dharmadeśanāyāṃ śikṣamāṇās te tāṃ dharmatām sākṣātkurvanti dhārayanti*/

Introduction

The question regarding the object of loving-kindness and compassion is bound to be raised in both non-Mahāyāna and Mahāyāna literature because both the mainstream and Mahāyāna texts invariably maintain that person or Self is not found (*avindan*), not seen (*na paśyanti*) and not apprehended (*anupalabdhi*). So, because of the view of non-apprehension and non-perception of metaphysical Self and person, doubts have been raised about taking sentient beings as the object of *maitrī* (loving-kindness) and *karuṇā* (compassion) in various Buddhist texts. In *Vimuttimaggā*, it has been queried, ‘How can sentient beings be the object of loving-kindness, because in the ultimate sense sentient beings do not exist?’². A question has also been raised in the commentary of *Akṣayamatīrdeśa Sūtra* asking, ‘If the sentient beings and dharma are not the objects of loving-kindness, then how can it be a loving-kindness?’³. *Bodhicaryāvatāra* also expresses its puzzlement: ‘If there are no sentient beings, whom shall one feel compassion towards?’⁴. Likewise, *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras* express a similar thought: what an extremely difficult task it is for *bodhisattvas* who do not perceive any sentient beings to have to lead them to enlightenment.

The four immeasurables (*catur apramāṇa*) or divine abidings (*brahmavihāra*) are the standard form of practice in cultivating compassion (*karuṇā*), loving-kindness (*maitrī*), joy (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upekṣā*) in all Buddhist schools and traditions. In both mainstream and Mahāyāna *Sūtras*, there are stock passages on how to cultivate loving-kindness and the three other immeasurables. Despite some variation in wording, the basic instructions for this meditation recorded in some Mahāyāna texts like *The Large Sūtra on Perfect Wisdom*⁵ and *Arthaviniścaya Sūtra*⁶ resembles the stock phrases found in *nikāyas* and *abhidharmas*. These stock passages instruct the practitioners

² *Vimuttimaggā* of Arahant Upatissa, trans. Rev. N.R.M Ehara, Soma Thera and Kheminda Thera, 1961:188: “What is its (*maitrī*’s) object? Being is its object. That is wrong. In the absolute sense there is no being. Why then is it said that beings are its object?”

³ *Blo gros mi zad pas bstan pa rgya cher ’grel pa* (Skt. *Akṣayamatīrdeśa-ṭīkā*). In *bsTan ’gyur* (*dPe-bsdur-ma*), vol. 66, p.429: /galte de ltar gnyi gar mi dmigs na ji ltar byams par ’gyur/

⁴ *Bodhicaryāvatāra*. Ed. V. Bhattacharya, 1960:205, IX:76: Skt. /yadi sattvo na vidyeta kasyopari kripeti cet/ Tib. /gal te sems can yod min na, su la snying rje bya zhe na/

⁵ E.Conze. *The Large Sūtra of Perfect Wisdom*, 1984:133.

⁶ Instruction on four immeasurables in *Arthaviniścaya Sūtra* shows more resemblance to Pāli, 2002:15. N.Samtani says, “It is difficult to say whether the text belongs to Mahāyāna or Hinayāna tradition” p.xvi.

to direct their loving-kindness and the three other immeasurables all over the world. Reading this instruction, it is clear that loving-kindness and compassion are directed towards sentient beings. However, in Mahāyāna literature each of these four immeasurables, especially compassion and loving-kindness, have been subclassified into three types of loving-kindness and compassion, one which has a sentient being as its object (*sattvārambaṇa*), one with *dharma* as its object (*dharmārambaṇa*), and one which is without any object or objectless (*anārambaṇa*). In some Mahāyāna texts, the four immeasurables were even upstaged by the three types of compassion/ loving-kindness, by saying, ‘as a matter of fact there are three, not four (immeasurables)’⁷.

There is no doubt that the formulation of three types of compassion and loving-kindness based on their object is an innovation of Mahāyāna. Even though the mainstream Buddhist schools do talk about the material and subtler aspect of the person or sentient being’s mode of existence, they do not classify or distinguish compassion or loving-kindness based on the subtlety of their objects. However, some Mahāyāna treatises like the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* and *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra* assert that a *bodhisattva*’s *sattvārambaṇā maitrī* (loving-kindness having sentient beings as its object) and *dharmārambaṇā maitrī* (loving-kindness having dharma as its object) are commonly practised by a *śrāvaka*. Though we can find a similar concept and even similar Pali term like *puggala* or *satta-ārammaṇaṃ* and *dhatu-ārammaṇaṃ* corresponding to *sattvārambaṇa* and *dharmārambaṇa* (which are linked to loving-kindness and compassion), the Theravāda concept of ‘*dhātu-ārammaṇaṃ cittaṃ pakkhandati*’ and Mahāyāna’s *dharmārambaṇa-maitrī* are not the same. Regarding *anārambaṇā maitrīkaruṇā*, though we can find a concept similar to *anārambaṇa* in the Theravāda tradition, I could not find a concept of *anārambaṇa* that is any way linked to compassion and loving-kindness.

Anārambaṇā maitrīkaruṇā has become a practice unique to *bodhisattvas*. To study why *anārambaṇā maitrīkaruṇā* became a unique and important concept in Mahāyāna, there is one common motif found in the description of

⁷ *Yongs su mya ngan las ‘das pa theg pa chen po’i mdo* (Skt. *Mahāparinirvāna Mahāyāna Sūtra*) in *bKa’ gyur (dPe bsdur ma)*, Vol. 52, p.536: */bcom ldan ‘das byams pa mang du bsgoms pas zhe sdang ma mchis par ‘gyur te, snying rje’i sems kyis kyang zhe sdang dcod par ‘gyur bas na, ci’i slad du tshad med pa bzhi smos don dang sbyar na gsum du bas ste, bzhir ni ma mchis so/* Trans. “If both loving-kindness and compassion help to remove hatred, why then is it called four immeasurables? In fact there are three, not four. Loving-kindness has three forms of object: sentient being as object, dharma as object, and objectless”.

anārambaṇā-maitrī given in various texts; this clue might give us some more clarification. Early Mahāyāna literature says that *anārambaṇā maitrī* is the quality present in the irreversible *bodhisattvas*, i.e. the *bodhisattvas* who have attained the ‘endurance of the *dharma* of non-production’ (*anutpattika-dharma-kṣānti*); this points to the eighth *bhūmi bodhisattvas* and upwards⁸. *Bodhisattvas* attain ‘endurance of the *dharma* of non-production’ and become irreversible *bodhisattvas* when a *bodhisattva* at the seventh *bhūmi* with his skilful means attains the ever-endowed non-conceptual exalted wisdom (*nirvikalpa jñāna*) by not forsaking other sentient beings. The seventh *bhūmi* is the crucial stage for *bodhisattvas* (who still have not surpassed the *śrāvaka*’s *bhūmi*), at which the *bodhisattvas* could either enter the eighth *bhūmi* and become irreversible *bodhisattvas* or fall to the *śrāvaka*’s *bodhi* by actualising the ‘summit-of-reality’ (*bhūtaḥkoṭi*). According to early Mahāyāna *Sūtras* like the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*, *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* and *Akṣayamatīnirdeśa Sūtra*, it appears that there are two ways to attain an abiding objectless state: either by actualising *bhūtaḥkoṭi* as *śrāvaka* does (breaking away from the conventional world by constantly remaining in a meditative absorption), or by skilfully attaining the dual ability to see sentient beings and simultaneously not to perceive them (by not actualising *bhūtaḥkoṭi*) as the seventh *bhūmi bodhisattva* does in order to become an irreversible *bodhisattva*. In short, the eighth *bhūmi bodhisattvas* have found a skilful means to obtain an ever-endowed non-conceptual wisdom and *maitrī-citta* (benignity) free from ignorance, desire and hatred), a state of *mokṣa* (liberation) in which, in order to help other sentient beings, they do not completely break away from the conventional world (*samsāra*).

The general view that the main reason why *śrāvakas* (‘Hearers’ of the Buddha’s teachings) and adherents of Hīnayāna do not practise *anārambaṇa-maitrīkaruṇā* is that they do not have the concept of selflessness of a *dharma* or the emptiness of a *dharma*. This predominant view is most probably influenced by the description of threefold loving-kindness given by the *Yogācāra* treatises like the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* and its commentaries. However, the early Mahāyāna *Sūtras* like *Akṣayamatīnirdeśa Sūtra*⁹ (which predates the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*) have laid down these three kinds of *maitrī* based on the three main stages of the

⁸ *Blo gros mi zad pas bstan pa rgya cher ’grel pa* (Skt. *Akṣayamatīnirdeśa-ṭīkā*) In *bsTan ’gyur (dPe bsdur ma)* Vol.66, p.429-430: /dmigs pa med pa’i byams pa ni mi skye ba’i chos la bzod pa thob pa’i byang chub sems dpa’ rnam kyī’o. mi skye ba’i chos la bzod pa ni sa bryad pa yan chad la bya/

⁹ According to J. Braarvig, *Akṣayamatīnirdeśa Sūtra* was compiled in the early 2nd century CE. Braarvig, 1993: Xli.

bodhisattva's career. This specific demarcation of *maitrī* into three stages of a *bodhisattva*'s career begs the question why *bodhisattvas* below the eighth *bhūmi* (who have not achieved the 'endurance of the *dharma* of non-production') do not possess *ārambaṇa-maitrīkaruṇā* even if the *bodhisattvas* of the sixth and seventh *bhūmis* enter into *nirodha samāpatti* (meditative absorption of cessation) and have a direct realisation of the emptiness of a *dharma*. In the following, I will argue that the introduction of *anārambaṇā maitrīkaruṇā* in the Mahāyāna became a necessity because of the fundamental shift of goal away from the *śrāvakayāna* and mainstream Buddhist schools. I will also show that according to the early Mahāyāna *Sūtras* like *Prajñāpāramitā*, *Akṣayamatīrdeśa Sūtra* and *Avatamsaka Sūtra*, the sole reason why *śrāvakas* do not practise *anārambaṇā maitrīkaruṇā* is not because they lack non-conceptual wisdom, but they lack great compassion and loving-kindness, and the aspiration to help and lead other sentient beings towards liberation.

1. Concept of *anārambaṇa*, *maitrī* and *karuṇā* in the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras* (*Aṣṭasāhasrikā* and *Ratnaguṇasaṃcayagāthā*).

The Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras (especially the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* and *Ratnaguṇasaṃcayagāthā*), one of the earliest known Mahāyāna *Sūtras* (according to Conze's dating: 100 BCE-500 CE)¹⁰, do not mention the threefold compassion or loving-kindness. However, since *prajñā* (Wisdom: non-apprehension and non-perception of sentient beings, five aggregates and all *dharmas*) and *upāya* (method: how to help and lead non-existing metaphysical beings towards enlightenment) are their two main themes, we can glimpse the concept of *anārambaṇā maitrīkaruṇā* in the *Prajñāpāramitā* texts. For example, the *Ratnaguṇasaṃcayagāthā* (hereinafter *Ratna*) says,

When there arises *Mahākaruṇā* (great compassion) and there is no perception of sentient beings (*na sattvasaṃjñā*), it is the right practice of *prajñāpāramitā* (Perfection of wisdom). If out of the ideation of Self and sentient beings (*ātma sattva parikalpaku*) there arises perception of sentient beings, of their sufferings, and intention to help and relieve those sufferings, it is not the right practice of *prajñāpāramitā*.¹¹

¹⁰ E. Conze. *The Prajñāpāramitā Literature*; 2000:1.

¹¹ *Ratnaguṇasaṃcayagāthā* (Digital-Sanskrit-Buddhist-canon, Supplied by Nagarjuna Institute of Exact Method, Proof-reader Miroj Shakya) I:24-25: /mahatīm janeti karuṇām na ca

Even though the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* (hereinafter *Aṣṭa*) does not mention the term *anārambaṇā maitrīkaruṇā*, it does explain: what *ārambaṇa* and *anārambaṇa* are, how *citta* (consciousness) *karma* arises from *ārambaṇa* (object), how irreversible *bodhisattvas* who attain ‘endurance of the *dharma* of non-production’ lose the perception of sentient beings and five aggregates, see the *dharmas* which are empty of their own characteristics, non-composed and non-produced.

Ārambaṇa and *ālambaṇa* are two synonymous Sanskrit words, which mean support, derived from the Sanskrit word *ālamb* (*√lamb*) meaning to rest or lean upon, or to seize or cling to¹². *Anārambaṇa* and *anālambaṇa* are their opposites, meaning ‘unsupported or without support’. In Buddhism, the object of mind or consciousness is called ‘support’ because the mind or consciousness arises and is sustained with the support of their corresponding objects with which the mind engages. Therefore, the *Aṣṭa* says,

Mind arises (*cittam utpadyate*) with a support/object (*sārambaṇam*) not without support/object (*na anārambaṇam*) because when one sees, hears and cognizes, one’s mind seizes or follows the *dharma* of consciousness (*dr̥ṣṭa-śruta*= *mata-vijñāte dharmeṣu buddhiḥ pravartate*)¹³.

The *Aṣṭa* also explains: ‘How *bodhisattvas* (with the aim of achieving complete enlightenment) through skilful means (*upāyakaūśalyaparigrhīto*) keep loving-kindness, compassion, joy and equanimity undiminished (*na parihīyate maitrīsamādhiṭo na karuṇā muditopekṣā*) by settling in meditative equipoise on *śūnyatā-samādhi*, *ānimittaṃ-samādhi* and *apraṇihitaṃ-samādhi* (*śūnyatām*

sattvasaṃjñā eṣā sa prajñavarapāramitāya caryā || saci sattvasaṃjñā dukhasaṃjñā upādayātī hariṣyāmi duḥkha jagatīm kariṣyāmi artham | so ātmasa(ttva) parikalpaku bodhisattvo na ca eṣa prajñavarapāramitāya caryā || (web accessed date: 19/08/2019).

sDud pa tshigs su cad pa, in *bKa’ gyur* (*dPe bsdur ma*) vol.36,p.60: //’snying rje chen po bskyed kyang sems can ‘du shes med/ ‘di ni shes rab pha rol phyin mchog spyod pa yin/ gal te sems can ‘du shes sdug bsngal ‘du shes skyed/ ‘gro ba rnam kyī don bya sdug bsngal spang snyam ste/ ‘di ni shes rab-pha rol phyin mchog spyod ma yin’//

¹² Monier-Williams with *A Sanskrit Dictionary*, 1960:153

¹³ *Sher phyin brgyad stong pa* (Skt. *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*), *bKa’ gyur* (*dPe bsdur ma*) vol.33, p.469: /sems ni dmigs pa dang bcas pa nyid du skye’i dmigs pa med par ma yin no, mthong ba dang thos pa dang rtogs pa dang rnam par shes pa’i chos rnam la blo ’jug/

Mitra, *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*, 1888:358: I *sārambaṇam eva cittam utpadyate/ /nānārambaṇam dr̥ṣṭaśruta- mata-vijñāte dharmeṣu buddhiḥ pravartate/*

ānimittaṃ apraṇihitaṃ samādhivimokṣamukham) without actualising *bhūtaḥkoṭi* (*na bhūtaḥkoṭiṃ sāḅṣātkaroti*); so that, when they attain complete enlightenment they will be able to eliminate the sentient being's (wrong) view arising from the perception of (*sattva*) sentient being, (*dharma*) phenomena and (*nimitta*) sign (*sattvasaṃjñāyā dharmasaṃjñāyā nimittasaṃjñāyā aprahāṇāyā*).¹⁴ It is interesting to note that the perception of *sattva* and *dharma* correspond to the first two of the threefold *maitrī* and *karuṇā*. The *Aṣṭa* calls them engaging with the object (Skt. *upalambhe caranti*, Tib. *dmigs pa la spyod pa*). The perception of *nimitta* (sign) is the opposite of *anārambaṇa maitrīkaruṇā* as *Mahāparinirvāna Mahāyāna Sūtra*, *Pūrṇaparipṛcchāsūtra* and others describe *anārambaṇa-maitrī* as not engaging with the *nimitta*.¹⁵ Here according to the *Aṣṭa*, out of compassion to help sentient beings to overcome these wrong views, *bodhisattvas* practise and master the three doors of liberation (without actualising it) to acquire 'the view of *anārambaṇa*' (*anārambaṇa-drṣṭi*) that is, non-perception of *sattva*, *dharma* and *nimitta*.

The *Aṣṭa* devotes one whole chapter to irreversible *bodhisattvas*, in which it states:

Irreversible *bodhisattvas* do not perceive each of the five aggregates because irreversible *bodhisattvas* flawlessly approach the *dharma* which is empty of its own characteristics, non-composed and non-produced. So, that is why *bodhisattvas* who have attained the 'endurance of the *dharma* of non-production' are called irreversible *bodhisattvas*.¹⁶

¹⁴ *Sher phyin brgyad stong pa* (Skt. *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*), *bKa'* 'gyur (*dPe bsdur ma*) vol.33, p.491-492: /sems can 'di dag ni yun ring por sems can du 'du shes pas dmigs pa la spyod..chos kyi 'du shes kyi dmigs pa la spyod...mtsha ma'i 'du shes kyi mtshan ma la spyod..byams pa snying rje btang snyoms dang ting nge 'dzin thams cad las yongs su nyams par mi 'gyur ro/

Mitra 1888:376-377: I tenaivam cittam abhinirhartavyam dīrgharātram amī sattvāḥ sattvasaṃjñāyā upalambhe caranti/

¹⁵ See the description of *anārambaṇā maitrī* given by *Mahāparinirvāna Mahāyāna Sūtra* and *Pūrṇaparipṛcchāsūtra* in footnotes 24 and 25 respectively.

¹⁶ *Sher phyin brgyad stong pa*, *bKa'* 'gyur (*dPe-bsdur-ma*) vol.33, p.436: /phyir mi ldog pa ni gzugs kyi..tshor ba'i.. 'du shes kyi.. 'du byed kyi..rnam par shes pa'i 'du shes skyed pa ma yin no/ de chi'i phyir zhe na 'di ltar phyir mi ldog pa'I byang chub sems dpa' chen po ni rang gi mtshan nyid kyi strong pas chos rnam la byang chub sems dpa'i skyon med par 'jug ste chos de yang mi dmigs shing mngon par 'du mi byed mi skyed do/ de bas na mi skye ba'I ye shes kyi bzod pa thob pa zhes bya ste Rab 'byor rnam pa de dag dang rags de dag dang mtshan ma de dag dang ldan pa'i byang chub sems dpa' bla na med pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i byang chub las phyir mi ldog par bzung bar bya'o/

Why I have quoted this passage from the *Aṣṭa* is that the *Akṣayamatīnirdeśa Sūtra* (one of the earliest Mahāyāna *Sūtras* to mention the threefold *maitrī*) without explaining the meaning of *anārambaṇā maitrī* states that *anārambaṇā maitrī* exists in *bodhisattvas* who have attained the ‘endurance of the *dharma* of non-production’. This explains why the *Akṣayamatīnirdeśa Sūtra* mentions that *anārambaṇā maitrī* is to be found in *bodhisattvas* who have attained the ‘endurance of the *dharma* of non-production’ because such *bodhisattvas* (according to the *Prajñāpāramitā*) when they feel compassion towards sentient beings, have no perception of sentient beings that are produced, composed and established by way of their own characteristics. Even though the *Aṣṭa* and *Ratna* do not mention the term *anārambaṇā maitrīkaruṇā*, the concept of *anārambaṇā maitrīkaruṇā* is intertwined with the major theme of the texts.

Karuṇāmaitrī that sees sentient beings and their sufferings, and the wisdom that does not perceive sentient beings and their sufferings, seem contradictory, but the *Prajñāpāramitā* is showing how these two views can be compatible and work together in attaining non-abiding *nirvāṇa*. In the *upāyakaūśalya* (skilful means) section, the *Aṣṭa* repeatedly warns *bodhisattvas* who are on their midway to enlightenment: ‘It is the time to familiarize and investigate (*pratyavekṣate*) into emptiness (*śūnyatām*), ‘summit-of-reality’ (*bhūtakoti*), *śūnyatā-samādhi* (*samādhi* of emptiness), *ānimittam samādhi* (*samādhi* of signless) and *apraṇihitam-samādhi* (*samādhi* of wishlessness) by remaining in a meditative absorption of emptiness (*śūnyatāsamādhi-samāpatta*) and of the three doors of liberation (*śūnyatāsamādhi vimokṣamukhena viharati*) but not to actualise (*na sākṣātkaroti*) them’¹⁷. According to the interpretation of ‘*bhūtakoti na sākṣātkaroti*’ by *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* and *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya*¹⁸, the *Aṣṭa* points to the danger of completely breaking away from the conventional world by actualising emptiness as in *śrāvaka* practices. It is not possible to help sentient beings by attaining *nirvāṇa* and completely breaking away from the conventional world.

¹⁷ *Aṣṭasāhasrikā, bKa'* ‘gyur (*dPe-bsdur-ma*) vol.33, p.484: /‘di ni yongs su ‘dri par bya ba’i dus yin te mngon sum du bya ba’i dus ni ma yin no... rnam par thar pa’i sgo stong pa nyid kyi ting nge ‘dzin la gnas pa de’i tshen na byang chub sems dpa’ sems dpa’ chen pos mtshan ma med pa’i ting nge ‘dzin la gnas par bya ste mtshan ma med pa mngon sum du yang mi bya’o/

Mitra 1888:370-371: I sarvākāvaropetām śūnyatām pratyavekṣate na ca sākṣātkarīṣyām/

¹⁸ See page 22.

As *Ratna* says,

Just as a person jumping from a cliff holding parasols in both hands does not hit the ground, *bodhisattvas* also holding the two parasols of *upāya* (skilful means) and (wisdom) *prajñā* (*prajñā-upāya-dvaya-chatraparigrhīto*), by abiding in compassion (*sthitvā karuṇāṃ*) and enquiring into signlessness, emptiness and wishlessness (*śūnyānimittāpraṇidhiṃ vimṛśati*), do not touch the ground of *nirvāṇa* (*na nirvṛtiṃ sprśati*) and will even see the *dharma* (*paśyanti dharmam*)¹⁹.

So this passage clearly shows that with the conjoined practice of *upāya* and *prajñā*, *bodhisattvas* do not touch *nirvāṇa* and will still be able to see the *dharma* to help sentient beings. I will later argue that *anārambaṇā maitrīkaruṇā* became unique to *bodhisattvas* not because of non-apprehension or non-perception of sentient beings and *dharma* but because of their unique ability (*upāyakauśalya*) to see sentient beings and their sufferings (in order to help them), and not apprehend them through *jñāna* (exalted wisdom).

2. The Threefold *maitrī* and *karuṇā* in early Mahāyāna *Sūtras* and *Śāstras*:

The threefold *maitrī* began to appear in Mahāyāna *Sūtras* like the *Akṣayamatīnirdeśa Sūtra*, *Mahāparinirvāna Mahāyāna Sūtra*, *Sāgaramatīparipṛcchāsūtra*, *Tathāgatamahākaruṇānirdeśasūtra*, *Daśacakrakṣitigarbhasūtra*, etc. Since these Mahāyāna *Sūtras* are the words of the Buddha and written by anonymous authors without any dates, it is difficult to determine the chronological order of these *Sūtras*. According to modern scholars like Jens Braarvig and Stephen Hodge, it is reckoned that *Akṣayamatīnirdeśa Sūtra* and *Mahāparinirvāna Mahāyāna Sūtra* were compiled around the early 2nd century CE and early 3rd century CE respectively.²⁰

¹⁹ *sDud pa tshigs su cad pa. bKa' 'gyur (dPe bsdur ma) vol.34, p.27: //de bzhin byang chub sems dpa' mkhas pa snying rjer gnas/ /thabs dang shes rab gnyis kyi gdugs ni yongs su bzung ste/ /chos rnams stong pa mtshan med smon pa med rtog cing/ /mya ngan 'das la reg pa med la chos kyang mthong//. For Skt. text see Digital Sanskrit Buddhist canon, *Ratnagaṇasaṃcayagāthā* 20:13-14*

²⁰ Braarvig 1993: xli. Hodge 2006:3.

Many of the later Indian commentators and Indian *Ācāryas* have cited and based their interpretation of threefold *maitrī* according to the *Akṣayamatīnirdeśa Sūtra* that is, how *bodhisattvas* of different levels of attainment possess these three kinds of *maitrī*.²¹ *Akṣayamatīnirdeśa Sūtra* explains that:

Śrāvaka's *maitrī* is to rescue oneself (*śrāvakānāṃ maitrī ātmatrāṇatā*), and *bodhisattva*'s *mahāmaitrī* is to rescue other sentient beings (*bodhisattvānāṃ mahāmaitrī sarvasattvaparitrāṇatā*). *Sattvārambaṇā maitrī* is present in those *bodhisattvas* who have developed *bodhicitta* for the first time (*sattvārambaṇā maitrī prathamacittōtpādikānāṃ bodhisattvānāṃ*), *dharmārambaṇā maitrī* is of those *bodhisattvas* who are actively engaged in the *bodhisattva*'s way of life (*dharmārambaṇā maitrī caryāpratipannānāṃ bodhisattvānāṃ*) and *anārambaṇā-maitrī* is of those who have attained the 'endurance of the *dharma* of non-production' (*anārambaṇā maitrī anutpattikadharmakṣānti pratilabdihāṇāṃ bodhisattvānāṃ*).²²

In this description of threefold *maitrī* (also in the above-mentioned lists of *Sūtras*), we cannot find any sectarian elements in making the division of this threefold *maitrī* (especially *dharmārambaṇā* and *anārambaṇā maitrī*) based on differences in the degree of a *śrāvaka*'s and a *bodhisattva*'s realisation of ultimate truth. *Akṣayamatīnirdeśa Sūtra*, on the contrary, points out the differences in the scope of *maitrī* between *śrāvaka* and *bodhisattva*.²³

²¹ Vasubandhu in *Sūtrālaṃkāravivṛtyā* described 'the attainment of peace' (one of the four reasons given by *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* why *anārambaṇa-maitrī* is called *anārambaṇa*) according to the *Akṣayamatīnirdeśa Sūtra*'s description of *anārambaṇā-maitrī*, that is, the attainment of 'endurance of the *dharma* of non-production'. In *bsTan 'gyur (dPe bsdur ma)* vol. 70, p.1337.

Śāntideva cited in *Śikṣāsamuccaya*, Tib. *bSlab pa kun las btus pa, bsTan 'gyur (dPe bsdur ma)* vol.64, pp. 1322-1342 quotes the exact words of *Akṣayamatīnirdeśa Sūtra* that explain the threefold *maitrī*.

²² *Blo gros mi zad pas mdo. bKa' 'gyur (dPe bsdur ma)* vol.60, p.331: /nyan thos rnams kyi byams pa ni bdag skyob pa 'o...dmigs pa med pa 'i byams pa ni mi skye ba 'I chos la bzod pa thob pa 'i byang chub sems dpa' rnams kyi ste./

Akṣayamatīnirdeśa Sūtra, Sanskrit text from Braarvig: 1993:351-352.

²³ *Daśacakrakṣitigarbhasūtra* also points out why *sattvārambaṇā maitrī* is a practice common to *bodhisattva*, *śrāvaka* and *pratyekabuddha*, and why *dharmārambaṇā-maitrī* is unique to the *bodhisattva* alone; it is mainly on the ground of the differences in the scope of *maitrī* in these traditions. Sa'i snying po 'khor lo bcu pa'i mdo, bKa' 'gyur (dpe-bsdur-ma) Vol.65, p.565: /Sems can la dmigs pa 'i byams pa ni nyan thos dang mthun mong..bdag mya-ngan-las-'da'-ba dang, bdag gi sgrub pa bsal ba..byams pa chen po zhes mi bya/

The description of this threefold *maitrī* differs considerably from text to text except for the *anārambaṇā maitrī*, which has the general meaning of ultimate reality. The important and influential Mahāyāna *Sūtras* and *Śāstras* like the *Mahāparinirvāna Mahāyāna Sūtra*, *Pūrṇaparipṛcchāsūtra*, *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*, *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, and *Madhyamakāvātāra* describe the *anārambaṇā maitrīkaruṇā* as loving-kindness and compassion that does not dwell on the signs of *dharma*²⁴, does not grasp material objects or dwell on signs²⁵, which has suchness as its object (*tathatārthatvāt*)²⁶, non-ideation of *dharma* (*dharmān avikalpayaṇ*)²⁷, emptiness of inherent existence (*svabhāvasūnyān*)²⁸ respectively. The *Akṣayamatīrdeśa Sūtra* does not explicitly tell us the meaning of *anārambaṇa*, but we can deduce that *bodhisattvas* at the eighth *bhūmi* achieve the ever-endowed non-conceptual exalted wisdom when they attain the ‘endurance of the *dharma* of non-production’ and do not grasp at the signs of an object.

The description and the meaning of *dharmārambaṇā maitrī* vary widely from one text to another. The *Akṣayamatīrdeśa Sūtra* neither tells us the meaning of *dharmārambaṇa* nor what *dharma* refers to. However, Vasubandhu in his commentary on the *Akṣayamatīrdeśa Sūtra* refers the *dharma* of *dharmārambaṇa* to the ‘teachings of *dharma*’. *Akṣayamatīrdeśaṭīkā* says, “*dharmārambaṇā maitrī* is the *maitrī* of *bodhisattvas* in between the first and seventh *bhūmi* which takes all the teachings of *dharma* like *bhūmis*, *pāramitās*, and *bodhipakṣa-dharmas* as its object and practises them”²⁹.

²⁴ *Mahāparinirvāna Mahāyāna Sūtra*. bKa’ ‘gyur (dPe-bsdur-ma) vol.52, p.537: /mi-dmigs-pa ni chos la mtshan-mar-mi-gnas/

²⁵ *Pūrṇaparipṛcchāsūtra* (Tib. Gang-pos-zhus-pa’i-mdo) bKa’ ‘gyur (dPe-bsdur-ma) vol.42, p.507: /dmigs-pa-med-pa’i-byams-pa ni dngos-po rnam mi len pa gang yin pa’o/ de ci’i phyir zhe na gang mtshan-ma ‘di la gnas par ‘gyur na ‘dod-chags zhe-sdang ‘gti-mug skyed par byed/

²⁶ *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*. bsTan ‘gyur (dPe-bsdur-ma) vol.70, p.861: /de don de-bzhin-nyid phyir dang, byams-pa-dmigs-pa-med-pa-yin/ For Skt. Text see Digital-Sanskrit-Buddhist-canon, XVII:19: ‘tathatārthatvāt.. anālabā-maitrī’

²⁷ Byang-chub-sems-dpa’i-sa (Skt. *Bodhisattvabhūmi*) bsTan-gyur (dpe-bsdur-ma) Vol.73, p.840-841: /Chos-su-rnam-par-mi-rtog-pa-yang-med-par-byams-pa-de-nyid dmigs-pa-med-pa’i-byams-pa-yin/

²⁸ *Madhyamakāvātāra*, bsTan ‘gyur (dPe-bsdur-ma) vol.60, p.555: /‘gro-ba gyo-ba’i chu yi nang gi zla-ba ltar; gyo dang rang-bzhin-nyid kyis stong-par mthong-ba yi/

²⁹ *Akṣayamatīrdeśa-ṭīkā*, bsTan ‘gyur (dPe-bsdur-ma) Vol.66, p.428: /sa-dang-po yan chad sa-bdun pa man chad ni spyod-pa-la-bzhugs-pa’i-byang-chub-sems-dpa’ rnam zhes bya ste de’i tshe sa dangs pha-rol-du-phyin-pa dang byang-chub-kyi-phyogs la sogs pa’i chos thams-cad spyod zhing spyod pas spyod-pa-la-bzhugs-pa zhes bya’o. de dag gi byams-pa ni byang-chub kyi phyogs kyi chos de dag la dmigs-pa’i phyir chos-la-dmigs-pa’o/

Vasubandhu's description of *dharmārambaṇa-maitrī* in *Akṣayamatīnirdeśa Sūtra*'s commentary is probably influenced by *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*, because *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* also gives the meaning of *dharma* in *dharmārambaṇa* as the 'teachings of *dharma*'³⁰ and *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*'s commentary is attributed to Vasubandhu. *Mahāparinirvāna Mahāyāna Sūtra* has a different explanation: it describes *dharmārambaṇa* as 'seeing all *dharma*s as dependent co-arising'.³¹

The *Bodhisattvabhūmi* and *Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra*³² appear to be the first two treatises which give the meaning of *dharma* in the context of *dharmārambaṇā maitrī* to be the compounded phenomena (five aggregates) and whose description of threefold *maitrī* has a sectarian perspective.³³ Both these treatises agree that *dharmārambaṇā maitrī/karuṇā* is the common practice of all *arhats*, *śrāvakas*, *pratyekabuddhas*, *bodhisattvas* and *Buddhas*, but *anārambaṇā maitrī* is present only in *Buddhas* and *bodhisattvas*. These two treatises, in their description of threefold *maitrī*, do not explicitly distinguish between *dharmārambaṇā maitrī* and *anārambaṇā maitrī* on the ground of *pudgalanairātmya*, as the *śrāvakas* and *bodhisattvas* have this realisation in common and the realisation of *dharmanairātmya* is exclusively that of *bodhisattvas*. *Bodhisattvabhūmi* describes *dharmārambaṇā maitrī* and *anārambaṇā maitrī* as follows:

Dharmārambaṇā maitrī is the *maitrī* practised by seeing that sentient beings are designated on the mere (compounded) phenomena (*dharmamātre sattvopacāram āśayataḥ*) which have the perception of mere *dharma* (*dharmamātra-samjñī*). *Anārambaṇā maitrī* is the *maitrī* which does not even have an ideation of *dharma* (*dharmasya api avikalpayan*).³⁴

³⁰ *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*, *bsTan* 'gyur (*dPe bsdur ma*) vol.70, p.860: /nyon mongs can dang de dag bstan bcos dang/

³¹ *Mahāparinirvāna Mahāyāna Sūtra*, *bKa*' 'gyur (*dPe bsdur ma*) vol.52, p.537: //chos thams cad la rten cing 'brel te 'byung bar 'lta ba ni chos la dmigs pa zhes gyi'o//

³² This text is attributed to Nāgārjuna, but it is doubtful whether the real author is the Nāgārjuna who lived around 2nd CE. See footnote 60 for more explanation.

³³ *Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra* (vol.III 2001:1029) says that '*dharmārambaṇā maitrī* is practised by *arhats*, *pratyekabuddhas* and *Buddhas*; *anārambaṇā maitrī* can only be found in *Buddhas*. I think *Buddhas* here refers to *bodhisattvas* as well, otherwise it is not clear what *bodhisattvas* practise.

³⁴ *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, *bKa*' 'gyur (*dPe bsdur ma*) vol.73, p.840-841: /chos tsam du 'du shes pa dang ldan pa chos tsam la sems can du ldog par bsam pa thag pa nas mthong ste, byams pa

However, *Bodhisattvabhūmivyākhyā*, the commentary on *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, makes the distinction between *dharmārambaṇā maitrī* and *anārambaṇā maitrī* based on differences in the degree of *śrāvaka*'s and *bodhisattva*'s realisation of ultimate truth. *Bodhisattvabhūmivyākhyā* says, "Meditative cultivation through seeing the 'Selflessness of person' is called *dharmārambaṇa* (common to *bodhisattva* and *śrāvaka*) and meditative cultivation through seeing 'Selflessness of *dharma*' is called *anārambaṇa* (and is unique to *bodhisattvas*)."³⁵

3. *Anārambaṇā maitrīkaruṇā*:

The term *anārambaṇā karuṇā* encompasses two powerful Buddhist concepts (especially in Mahāyāna): emptiness and compassion. Compassion is a conceptual and dualistic mind, the mind which bears an object, whereas the wisdom that sees the ultimate reality of the object is a non-dual mind which loses the notion of object and is unable to perceive the conventional object. That is why the wisdom which realises emptiness is called wisdom 'without an object' (*anārambaṇa*). The paradox is that if compassion is a deceptive conceptual mind, how can an individual with non-conceptual wisdom, having realised the ultimate truth and seen no basis for any conventional object, develop compassion for not truly existing sentient beings?

As a solution to this problem, *bodhisattvas* through skilful means have acquired a dual ability: to see sentient beings through compassion, and not to apprehend sentient beings through exalted wisdom. Daṃstrasena, in his commentary on the *Prajñāpāramitā*, compared this special ability (*upāyakaśālyā*) of *bodhisattvas* to the ability of amphibians to function both in water and on dry land. Daṃstrasena says,

Even though the compassion that apprehends conventional objects and the wisdom that apprehends ultimate objects have totally contradictory functions like dry land animals and water animals (which cannot exist both in water and on dry land), they however occur and engage simultaneously without contradiction

de nyid sgom par byed pa de ni de'i chos la dmigs pa'i byams pa yin par rig par bya'o/ Chos su rnam par mi rtog pa yang med par byams pa de nyid sgom par byed pa de ni de'i dmigs pa med pa'i byams pa yin par rig par bya'o/

³⁵ *Bodhisattvabhūmi-vyākhyā*, *bsTan 'gyur (dPe bsdur ma)* vol.75, p.1142: /gang zag la bdag med pa'i stobs kyi bsgom pa ni chos la dmigs pa zhes bya'o,

by supporting each other, because they accomplish accumulation of merits (*puṇya-sambhāra*) and accumulation of exalted wisdom (*jñāna-sambhāra*) to attain enlightenment. This is *upāyakausalāya-paramitā* (perfection of skilful means).³⁶

Bodhisattvas have to skilfully balance their practice so that they will not fall into the *śrāvaka*'s path and could also attain the non-abiding *nirvāṇa*. *Bodhisattvas* have to master emptiness (*śūnyatāyām parijayah*) and practise meditative absorption of *śūnyatā-samādhi* (*śūnyatāsamādhiḥ samāpattā*) to remove their own defilement without prematurely actualising emptiness (*śūnyatām na sāḁṣātkaroti*). At the same time, they also have to engage with the world (out of compassion and loving kindness) without completely abandoning all sentient beings (*sarvasattvā aparityaktāḥ*) to mature the roots of virtue.

The main message for *bodhisattvas* in the *upāyakausalāya* section of the *Prajñāpāramitā Sūtras* is to warn against prematurely actualising emptiness and the summit of reality (*bhūtaḁoṭi na sāḁṣātkaroti*). The term '*na sāḁṣātkaroti*' is difficult to understand and to translate. Modern scholars like Conze, followed by Jenkens, have translated '*sāḁṣāt*' as 'directly' and *sāḁṣātkaroti* as 'directly realising'.³⁷ The term 'realise' is a generic term which usually means experience and understand. If we follow Conze's and Jenkens' translation, then we have to say *bodhisattvas* cannot directly realise emptiness until they attain complete enlightenment, because the *Prajñāpāramitā* says '*bodhisattvas* should realise (actualise) *bhūtaḁoṭi* and *śūnyatā* (only) at the time of their complete enlightenment when the roots of virtues are completely and entirely matured'³⁸ (*kuśalamūlānya*

³⁶ Commentary on *Śatasāhasrikā*, *Pañcaviṁśatisāhasrikā* and *Aṣṭasāhasrikā* by Damstrasena, translated into Tibetan by Ye shes sde, *bsTan 'gyur (dPe-bsdur-mā)* vol.55, p.745: /*thabs mkhas pa'i pha rol du phyin pa ni kun rdzob 'dzin pa'i snying rje dang, don dam pa 'dzin pa'i shes rab gnyis kyis skam la rgyu ba dang chu na rgyu ba'i srog chags kyi sbyor ba bzhin du sbyor ba'i khyad par shin tu 'gal ba yin du zin kyang sbyor ba'i rnam pas 'gal ba med par grogs byed nas cig car sgrub cing 'jug ste, byang-chub kyi bar du bsod nams kyi tshogs dang ye shes kyi tshogs thams cad sgrub/*

³⁷ E. Conze, *A Dictionary of Prajñāpāramitā literature*. 1973:421. S. Jenkens 1999:126-135: 'It reflects the same concern with regard to the danger in directly realizing (*sāḁṣātkaroti*) emptiness, as found in the Perfection of Wisdom *Sūtras*'

³⁸ *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*. *bKa' 'gyur (dPe bsdur ma)* vol.33, p.489: /*gang gi tshe bla na med pa yang dag par rdzogs pa'i byang chub tu dge ba'i rtsa ba de dag yongs su smin cing shin tu smin par 'gyur pa de'i tshes yang dag pa mtha' dam pa mngon sum byed do/*. Conze's *Aṣṭa* translation, p.206: "Only when his wholesome roots are matured, well matured in full enlightenment, only then does he realise that farthest reality-limit"

nuttarāyāṃ samyaksambodhau paripakvāni bhavanti suparipakvāni, tadā tāṃ paramāṃ bhūtaḥkoṭiṃ sākṣātkaṛoti). So I have here translated *sākṣātkaṛoti* as ‘actualise’ because in both Mahāyāna and Pāli texts the term *sākṣātkaṛoti* or *sacchikaṛoti*³⁹ expresses making real a certain attainment or practice.

In Pāli texts *sacchikaṛoti* mostly expresses actual attainment of a certain *magga* (path), *phala* (fruit) or *nibbāna*, such as *sotāpattiphalaṃ sacchikaṛoti*, *sotāpattiphalaṃ sacchikareyyāti*, *sakadāgāmīphalaṃ sacchikareyyāti*, *anāgāmīphalaṃ sacchikareyyāti*, *arahattaphalaṃ sacchikareyyāti*, *nibbānāni sacchikaṛoti*, etc. For example, *Samyutta Nikāya* says, ‘If a Bhikkhu carefully attend to the five aggregates subject to clinging as impermanent, suffering, empty (*suññato*), non-self (*anattato*), then he may (*sacchikareyyāti*) realise (actualise) the fruits of *sotāpattiphalaṃ*, *sakadāgāmīphalaṃ*, *anāgāmīphalaṃ* and *arahattaphalaṃ*⁴⁰. In *Milindapañha*, the King Milinda asked Nagāsenā, ‘If a person is not found or apprehended (*na puḅgalo upalabbhati*) then who attains (*sacchikaṛoti*) the path, fruit and *nibbāna*?’ (*ko maggaphala-nibbānāni sacchikaṛoti*?)⁴¹. In *Aṅguttara Nikāya* as well, *sacchikatvā* is used as the attainment of *anāsavaṃ cetovimuttiṃ* and *paññāvimuttiṃ*⁴². However, *sacchikaṛoti* has also been translated as ‘realise’ in the English translation of Pāli texts.

It is quite difficult to grasp the meaning of ‘*bhūtaḥkoṭi na sākṣātkaṛoti*’ from *Prajñāpāramitā* texts. However, according to the Mahāyāna *Sūtras* and *Śāstras* like the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* and *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya*, it tends to send a warning to *bodhisattvas* not to actualise or attain the *śrāvaka*’s *mārga* and *phala*. These two texts say that ‘*bodhisattvas* from the sixth *bhūmi* abide in ‘meditative absorption of cessation’ (cessation of mental proliferation, emptiness, *bhūtaḥkoṭi*⁴³) but they do not actualise it; instead they come back from that meditative absorption to mature the root of virtue

³⁹ PTS *Pali-English Dictionary* 1952:127.

⁴⁰ *Samyutta Nikāya* III.168, translation by Bodhi: 2000:970. *Samyutta Nikāya of the Sutta-Pitaka*, Part-3, Ed. M. Leon Feer, 1890:167-168.

⁴¹ *Milindapañha*. Ed. V. Trenckner 1880:25.

⁴² *The Aṅguttara Nikāya* Part 2, Ed. Rev. R. Morris. 1888:87-88: //anāsavaṃ cetovimuttiṃ paññāvimuttiṃ diṭṭheva dhamme sayam abhiññā sacchikatvā//

⁴³ Candrakīrti explains that ‘*tathatā* (suchness or ultimate reality) is called *nirodha* because here all mental elaborations have ceased’. Tib. *dBu ma la ‘jug pa’i bshad pa* (Skt. *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya*) *bsTan* ‘gyur (*dPe bsdur ma*) vol.60, p.854: /de bzhin nyid la ‘gog pa zhes brjod de ‘dir spros pa thams cad ‘gag par ‘gyur ba’i phyiro/

(*kuśalamūlā*).⁴⁴ One of the *Aṣṭa*'s commentaries⁴⁵ and Shakya Chogden in his commentary on *Abhisamay-ālankāranāmaprajñāpāramitopadeśaśāstra* make it clearer when they interpret the meaning of 'sākṣātkaroti' as 'always remaining in meditative absorption'.⁴⁶

This explains why the Buddha advises *bodhisattvas* not to actualise *bhūtakoti*, *śūnyatā-samādhi*, *ānimittaṃ-samādhi* and *apraṇihitaṃ-samādhi* because *bodhisattvas* then cannot perceive the conventional world (object) and so lose touch with *samsāra* and are unable to help sentient beings. The *Majjhima Nikāya*'s short discourse on emptiness also tells us how the whole field of perception becomes empty, objectless and cut off from the conventional world when the practitioner enters into the signless concentration of mind (*animittaṃ cetosamādhi*) and realises that signless concentration of mind itself is conditioned and volitionally produced (*ayam pi kho animitto cetosamādhi abhisankhatābhisañcetasiko*).⁴⁷ *Majjhima Nikāya* describes this state of meditative absorption as 'genuine undistorted pure descent into emptiness supreme and unsurpassed'⁴⁸ (*yathābhuccā avipallathā parisuddhā paramānuttarā suññatāvakkanti bhavati*).

⁴⁴ Ibid. /byang chub sems dpa'i sa drug pa yan chad 'gog pa la snyom par 'jug ste, sa bdun pa 'di la gnas pa'i byang chub sems dpa' ni sems kyi skad cig dang sems kyi skad cig la yang 'gog pa la snyom par 'jug cing ldang ste 'gog pa mngon sum du byas zhes ni mi bya'o/

Skt. *Avatamsaka Sūtra* (Tib. *Phal po che'i mdo*) bKa' 'gyur (dPe bsdur ma) vol.36, p.499: has almost the same reading as *Madhyamakāvatārabhāṣya*.

⁴⁵ See page 28.

⁴⁶ *mNgon rtogs rgyan gyi dka' 'grel lung chos rgya mtsho'i snying po* by Shakya Chogden 2008:63:/Chos kyi dbyings ni byang chub sems dpa' rnam kyis mngon du bya rgyu'i yang dag pa'i mtha'de'o, de la dus rtag tu mnyam par bzhag pa ni de mngon du-byed pa'i tshad do/ /De dus ma yin par mngon du byed na chad pa'i myang 'das su 'gyur la, dus la babs pa'i tshe mngon du byas na mi gnas pa'i mya ngan las 'das par 'gyur ro/

Trans. *Yang-dag-mtha'* (*bhūtakoti*) that *bodhisattvas* actualise (*sākṣātkaroti*) is *dharmadhātu* (element of reality), always remaining in a meditative absorption is the defining characteristic of the meaning of 'mngon-du byed' (*sākṣātkaroti*/actualise). If one actualises it prematurely then one falls into lower *nirvāṇa*, when one actualises it at the right time then one attains the non-abiding *nirvāṇa*.

⁴⁷ *Majjhima Nikāya* I. 108-109, Bhikkhus Ñāṇamoli & Bodhi, 2009:969: "He understands: 'This field of perception is void of the perception of the base of nothingness...He understands thus: 'This signless concentration of mind is conditioned and volitionally produced'."

The Majjhima Nikāya vol.1, Ed. V. Trenckner 1888:108-109: //so suññam idaṃ saññāgatam ākiñcaññāyatanaññāyāti pajānāti... So evaṃ pajānāti:-'ayampi kho animitto cetosamādhi abhisankhato ābhisañcetasiko//

⁴⁸ *Majjhima Nikāya* III.109, trans. Ñāṇamoli & Bodhi, 2009:970

Because of the fundamental shift of aim in Mahāyāna Buddhism, we can see the importance and necessity of loving-kindness and compassion throughout the different stages of the *bodhisattva*'s career. One of the most difficult tasks for *bodhisattvas* is how to wade through *śrāvaka*'s *bhūmi* (abiding in three doors of liberation) while not falling into the *śrāvaka*'s path (actualising three doors of liberation). Here falling into the *śrāvaka*'s path means abandoning sentient beings, and actualising emptiness means completely cutting off one's perception of sentient beings and the conventional world. That is why the Buddha told Subhūti:

“With a heart full of love (*anukampā*) and affection (*hita*) engage in the meditative concentration of the three doors of liberation (*samādhivimokṣamukhāny avatarati*) by abiding in compassion and the three other immeasurables (*maitrīvihārī karuṇāvihārī mudītāvihārī upekṣāvihārī*) without actualising ‘summit-of-reality/*bhūtakoṭiṃ (na bhūtakoṭiṃ sāksātkaroti)*. Through this skilful means conjoined with the wisdom of perfection (*upāyakaūśalyena prajñāpāramitayā ca parigrhītaḥ*), *bodhisattvas* do not forsake all sentient beings (*aparityaktāḥ sarvasattvāḥ*) and attains the complete enlightenment (*anuttarāṃ samyaksambodhim abhisamboddhum*).⁴⁹

There is a prevailing view that the main reason why *śrāvaka* and Hīnayānist do not practise *anārambaṇā maitrīkaruṇā* is that *śrāvakas* do not accept or realise the Selflessness or emptiness of *dharma*. This might be because of the predominant view that emptiness or Selflessness of *dharma* is not taught by Buddha in the mainstream school of Buddhism. However, there are early Indian Mahāyāna scholars like Buddhapālita and Candrakīrti who have asserted that the emptiness of *dharma* is also mentioned in *Śrāvakayāna* canons. In what follows, I will argue that the introduction of *anārambaṇā maitrīkaruṇā* into Mahāyāna became a necessity because of the fundamental shift of goal away from *Śrāvakayāna* and the mainstream Buddhist schools.

⁴⁹ *Aṣṭasāhasrikā, bKa' 'gyur (dPe bsdur ma) vol.33, p.487: //Rab 'byor byang chub sems dpa' sems can thams cad la phan pa dang snying brtse ba'i byams pa..nying rje...dga' ba dang btang snyoms la gnas pa thabs mkhas pa dang shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pas yongs su bzung ba..'di ltar yang rnam par thar pa'i sgo strong pa nyid dang mtshan ma med pa dang smon pa med pa'i ting nge 'dzin la 'jug pa de lta na yang nyan thos kyi sa'am rang-sangs-rgyas kyi sa la yang-dag-pa'i-mtha' yang mngon-sum-du mi byed do..des na 'di'i sems can thams cad yongs su mi btang ba yin zyin des na id'is yang-dag-par-rdzogs-par 'tshang rgya par nus so//*

The *Khandhasamyutta* section of *Saṃyutta Nikāya* goes deeper and demonstrates through various similes how not only a person or Self but the five aggregates are also non-apprehendable, empty, unsubstantial and without essence. *Saṃyutta Nikāya* III.141 says,

‘The keen-sighted man should see the body, feeling, perception, activities (formations) and consciousness as a lump of foam, a bubble on the water, a mirage, a plantain trunk and a magical illusion respectively. So seeing it, observing it and looking closely into its nature, he would find it empty, he would find it unsubstantial, he would find it without essence. What essence could there be in the five aggregates?’⁵⁰

This passage from *Saṃyutta Nikāya* is one of the strongest pieces of evidence that shows that the mainstream Buddhist schools like Theravāda also talk about the emptiness of *dharma* (phenomena of aggregates). The *Ratna* and *Aṣṭa* also say that seeing aggregates as a magical illusion and illusion as aggregates is to practice the perfection of wisdom.⁵¹

The *Ratna* says,

One who here understands the five aggregates as a magical illusion (*māyopamāṃ ya iha jānati pañca skandhāṃs*) and does not make a distinction between illusion and five aggregates (*na ca māyā anyā na ca skandhāṃs karoti anyān*), is the supreme practice of *Prajñāpāramitā* (*eṣā sā prajñāvarapāramitāya caryā*)⁵².

⁵⁰ *Saṃyutta Nikāya of the Sutta-Piṭaka*, Ed. M. Leon Feer, part-3, p.141://*Phenaṇiṇḍūpamaṃ rūpaṃ vedanā bubbuḷupamā, Marīcikupamā saññā saṃkhārā kadalūpamā, Māyūpamañca viññāṇaṃ dīpitādiccabandhunā.*// I summarise the *Saṃyutta Nikāya* text III.141 based on the translation by F. M. Woodward 1930:118-119.

⁵¹ *Aṣṭasāhasrikā*, bKa’ ‘gyur (dPe bsdur ma) vol.33, p.21: //gzugs (tshor ba..) nyid sgyu ma lags so, sgyu ma nyid gzugs lags so//

Ratnaguṇasaṃcayagāthā, bKa’ ‘gyur (dPe bsdur ma) vol.34, p.5: //sgyu ma gzhan dang phung po gzhan du mi byed la//

⁵² *Ratnaguṇasaṃcayagāthā*, bKa’ ‘gyur (dPe bsdur ma) vol.34, p.5 //gang ‘dir phung po nga dag sgyu ma ‘drar shes shing, sgyu ma gzhan dang phung po gzhan du mi byed la..’di ni shes rab pha rol phyin mchog spyod pa yin// Sanskrit text from DSBC, *Ratnaguṇasaṃcayagāthā* 1:14.

Two renowned Indian Mahāyāna *ācāryas*, Buddhapālita and Candrakīrti,⁵³ have also quoted the similes of five aggregates similar to this passage from *Samyutta Nikāya* to show that the emptiness of *dharma* is also mentioned by the Buddha in *Śrāvakayāna*'s canon. Buddhapālita, in his commentary on Nāgārjuna's *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, says that 'In the ultimate sense, the compounded phenomena are empty of inherent nature like magical illusion, dream, mirage, shadow, echo etc.'⁵⁴ Candrakīrti in his auto-commentary on the *Madhyamakāvātāra* says that 'It is not the *bodhisattva* alone who sees non-inherent existence, it was also taught to the audience of *śrāvakas* and *pratyekabuddhas*...with the realisation of non-inherent existence, a *bodhisattva* also desires *bodhi*, but out of compassion he remains connected with *samsāra*'.⁵⁵

However, Bhāvaviveka who holds the view that the Buddha has only taught the emptiness of person to *śrāvakas* but not the emptiness of *dharma*, completely disagrees with Buddhapālita:

Sthavira Buddhapālita says that the Buddha gave the example of magical illusion, echo, etc. to show the emptiness of *dharma*, and the meaning of selflessness is the lack of inherent nature because the so-called 'Self' is the word for 'inherent existence' (*svabhāvatā*), but it is unreasonable (*ayukta*) because the source quoted (by Buddhapālita) is taught by the Buddha in *śrāvakayāna* to convey the Selflessness of the person with those examples, not the Selflessness of *dharmanas* as Buddhapālita explains it.⁵⁶

⁵³ *dBu ma la 'jug pa'i bshad pa, bsTan 'gyur (dPe bsdur ma)* Vol.60, p.617. Candrakīrti's quotation of the similes of the five aggregates is almost identical to *Samyutta Nikāya* III.141.

⁵⁴ *dBu ma rtsa ba'i 'grel pa* by Buddhapālita (Skt. *Mūlamadhyamakavṛtti-Buddhapālita*), *bsTan 'gyur (dPe bsdur ma)* Vol.57, p.654: //don dam par ni dngos po ngo bo nyid stong pa sgyu ma dang rmi lam dang smig sgyu dang gzugs brnyan dang brag cag lta bu dag la.//

⁵⁵ *dBu ma la 'jug pa'i bshad pa, bsTan 'gyur (dPe bsdur ma)* Vol.60, p.617: /byang chub sems dpa' rnam kho nas de ltar rang bzhin med pa mthong ba yin no zhe na, de yang yod pa ma yin te, nyan thos rnam kyī dbang du byes nas de skad du gsungs pa'i phyir ro/

⁵⁶ *Shes rab sgron ma rgya cher 'grel pa* (Skt. *Prajñāpradīpikā bKa'* 'gyur (dPe bsdur ma) vol.59, p.381-382: /gnas brtan Buddha pa' li tas bcod ldan 'das kyis chos bdag med pa'i dper sgyu-ma dang brag cag la sogs pa dag bstan to zhes bshad pa dang.... zhes bshad pa'i phyir ro/

Bhāvaviveka adds that ‘If emptiness of *dharmā* is already taught in *śrāvakayāna* then there is no point in having another *yāna* (Mahāyāna)⁵⁷. Candrakīrti, supporting Buddhapaṭita, gives a counter-argument, saying, “Mahāyāna was not revealed solely with the aim of imparting the doctrine of emptiness of *dharmas*, it was revealed also to teach the *bodhisattva-bhūmis*, *pāramitās*, *mahākaruṇā*, *prañidhāna* (aspirations) and *dvaya saṃbhāra* (two accumulations). So it is not pointless to impart the teaching of Mahāyāna separately”⁵⁸.

Abraham de Cea, in his comparative study on the subject of emptiness in Pāli *nikāyas* and Nāgārjuna’s *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*, has also argued that “The emptiness of *svabhāva* (emptiness of inherent existence) and emptiness of all *dharmas* is not a revolutionary innovation of Nāgārjuna or the second turning of the wheel, but these concepts were already there, at least in Theravāda tradition.” He also adds: “The general idea that non-Mahāyāna’s emptiness only refers to the emptiness of person and not the emptiness of all *dharmas* is historically and philosophically inaccurate.”⁵⁹ So there are sufficient reasons to question the sectarian interpretation of the predominant view that *śrāvakas* do not practise *anārambaṇā karuṇā* because they do not understand or realise the emptiness of *dharmā*. I am not saying that a *śrāvaka* practises cultivation of *anārambaṇā karuṇā*, but on the contrary, I will argue that they do not need to cultivate *anārambaṇā karuṇā*.

According to the early Mahāyāna *Sūtras* like *Akṣayamatiniṛdeśa Sūtra* (pre *Bodhisattvabhūmi* and *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra*⁶⁰ texts), the threefold

⁵⁷ Ibid. P.382: /chos bdag med pa nyid bstan par mi nus so, nus par ‘gyur na ni theg pa gzhan yongs su gsungs pa don med pa nyid du ‘gyur ro/

⁵⁸ dBu ma la ‘jug pa ‘i bshad pa, bsTan ‘gyur (dPe bsdur ma) Vol.60, p.618: /theg pa chen po bstan pas ni chos la bdag med pa tsam ‘ba’ zhig ston par byed pa ma yin gyi...chos nyid kyang yin no/

⁵⁹ Abraham de Cea: 2005:2.

⁶⁰ Some have dated *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra*, a commentary on *The Perfection of Wisdom* in 25000 lines, to the 2nd century CE, as the text is attributed to Nāgārjuna, but it is doubtful whether the real author is the Nāgārjuna who lived around the 2nd century CE, because *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra* does not appear (according to Lamotte: *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra* vol.1, 2001:6) in the list of works attributed to Nāgārjuna, the Long chou p’ou sa tchouan, by the Tibetan historian Bu ston and Tāranātha. Moreover, such an important work of Nāgārjuna has never been cited by his well-known students in their surviving works, and the manner in which the threefold *maitrī* is described seems of much later date, resembling Bodhisattvabhūmi’s description, which is attributed to Aśaṅga (4th century CE). *Mahāprajñāpāramitāsāstra* was translated into Chinese by Kumārajīva in the 5th century CE. *Prajñāpāramitā sūtras* like *Aṣṭa* and *Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrikā* do not mention threefold *maitrī*.

compassion is posited on account of the three main stages of a *bodhisattva*'s career. This specific demarcation of loving-kindness into three stages of a *bodhisattva*'s career brings into question why *bodhisattvas* below the eighth *bhūmi* do not possess *anārambaṇā maitrīkaruṇā* even if *bodhisattvas* of the sixth and seventh *bhūmi* have attained *nirodha samāpatti* and have a direct realisation of the emptiness of *dharmas*. Before going into this question there is another important point: why the Buddha repeatedly warns *bodhisattvas* 'not to actualise *bhūtaḥkoṭi*' in the intervening stage of the *bodhisattva* path, especially at the sixth and seventh *bhūmis*. The seventh *bhūmi* is the crucial stage, where the *bodhisattvas* could either enter the eighth *bhūmi* and become an irreversible *bodhisattva* by attaining 'endurance of the *dharma* of non-production' (*anutpattikadharmakṣānti*) or fall into the *śrāvaka* path by prematurely actualising the *bhūtaḥkoṭi*.

Candrakīrti equates *bhūtaḥkoṭi* to *nirodha* in the context of *nirodhaṃ sākṣātkaroti*. He says, "As remaining in a meditative absorption on *nirodha* is called meditative absorption on *bhūtaḥkoṭi*; *tathatā* is called *nirodha* because in *nirodha* all mental elaborations cease"⁶¹. He also explains that "With the attainment of *nirodha* previously at the sixth *bhūmi*, the *bodhisattva* on the seventh *bhūmi* remains in a meditative absorption of *nirodha samāpatti* moment by moment. However, because of his skilful means, he does not actualise *nirodha*, instead he comes back from that meditative absorption."⁶²

Candrakīrti probably based his interpretation of the *bodhisattva*'s *bhūmis* on the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, as we find the same thread of narrative in the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra* as well. In the *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*: "*Bodhisattva rNam par grol ba'i zla ba* asked, 'From which *bodhisattva*'s *bhūmi* onwards do *bodhisattvas* enter the *nirodha samāpatti*?'. *Bodhisattva rDo rje snying po* answered, 'From the sixth *bodhisattva bhūmi* onwards the *bodhisattva* enters *nirodha samāpatti*. *Bodhisattvas* on the seventh *bhūmi* enter *nirodha samāpatti* every moment. Even though they do know how to actualise *nirodha*, they do not do so. It is extraordinary how *bodhisattva* on the seventh *bhūmi*, even by abiding in *bhūtaḥkoṭi*, do not actualise *bhūtaḥkoṭi*."⁶³

⁶¹ *dBu ma la 'jug pa'i bshad pa, bsTan 'gyur (dPe bsdur ma) Vol.60, p.854: /'gog pa la snyoms par 'jug pa ni yang dag pa'i mtha' la snyoms par 'jug pa yin pas, de bzhin nyid la 'gog pa zhes brjod de 'dir spros pa thams cad 'gag par 'gyur ba'i phyir ro/*

⁶² *dBu ma la 'jug pa'i bshad pa, bsTan 'gyur (dPe bsdur ma) Vol.60, p.854. /sa drug pa yan chad... 'gog pa la snyoms par 'jug cing ldang ste/*

⁶³ *Phal po che'i mdo (Skt. Avataṃsaka Sūtra) bKa' 'gyur (dPe bsdur ma) vol.36, p.500: /byang*

Another characteristic feature of the seventh *bhūmi* is that in this *bhūmi* skilful means and wisdom become stronger and more intense. *Upāyakauśalya* in this context means not forsaking sentient beings out of compassion and love (*anukampā*), which is done by not actualising *bhūtaḥkoṭi*. *Prajñā* here means having non-conceptual wisdom by remaining in a meditative concentration of *bhūtaḥkoṭi* at every moment. The transition from the seventh to the eighth *bhūmi* occurs when a *bodhisattva* attains the ‘endurance of the *dharma* of non-production’ — that is, when his *manas* (mind), *citta* (consciousness), and *viññāna* (cognition) become free from ideation (*vikalpa*) and perception (*saṃjñā*) like a boundless sky⁶⁴. So, from the eighth *bhūmi* onwards, a *bodhisattva* has no conceptual thought, but is ever endowed with non-conceptual exalted wisdom (*nirvikalpajñāna*). However, since he has not yet finished his task, the Buddha (because of the *bodhisattva*’s past resolve and aspiration) wakes him from from the meditative absorption of *nirodha* to attain the remaining qualities of Buddha.

Bodhisattvas at the eighth *bhūmi* have achieved blissful *mokṣa* and the ‘endurance of the *dharma* of non-production’. Still, at this stage, there is a possibility of forsaking sentient beings. So, Buddhas wake up the *bodhisattvas* from their meditative absorption by reminding them that this is not the ultimate goal of *bodhisattvas*; mere non-conceptual exalted wisdom is also attained by *śrāvakas* and *pratyekabuddhas*⁶⁵. In *Avatamsaka Sūtra*, Buddha reminds *Bodhisattvas* at the eighth *bhūmi*, ‘You have now achieved the blissful *mokṣa*, but the ordinary sentient beings are still suffering because of their various afflictions (*kleśa*). Reflect on how they are tormented by various forms of conceptual thought. Remember the earlier commitment and aspiration you have made to fulfil the welfare of sentient beings.’⁶⁶

So far, we have seen that the practice of attaining non-conceptual wisdom through *nirodha samāpatti* is the practice common to both *śrāvakas* and *bodhisattvas* under the eighth *bhūmi*. Unlike a *śrāvaka*, who attains the non-conceptual exalted wisdom and *mokṣa* by actualising *nirodha*, always remaining in meditative concentration, seventh *bhūmi bodhisattvas* with skilful means, without actualising the *nirodha*

chub sems dpa’ rNam par grol ba’i bzla-bas smras pa...yang dag pa’i mtha’ la gnas kyang, gnas la yang dag pa’i mtha’ mngon du yang mi byed pa ni ngo mtshar che’o/

⁶⁴ Ibid. p.510: */des rnam pa thams cad du sems dang yid dang rnam par shes pa’i rnam par rtog pa dang ‘du shes dang bral zhing..mi skye ba’I chos la bzod pa thob ces bya’o/*

⁶⁵ *Phal po che’i mdo* (Skt. *Avatamsaka Sūtra*) bKa’ ‘gyur (*dPe bsdur ma*) vol.36, p.513: */nyan thos dang rang sangs rgyas thams cad kyang chos nyid ‘di thob bo/*

⁶⁶ Ibid. p.512-513: */de ltar mi gyo ba’i sa la gnas pa’i byang chub sems dpa’...yes shes kyi sgo bsam gyi mi khyab pa dran par gyi shig/*

or *bhūtaḥkoṭi*, attains endurance of the *dharma* of non-production, *mokṣa*, and ever endowed non-conceptual exalted wisdom at the eighth *bhūmi*. The main reason why *bodhisattvas* at the seventh *bhūmi* do not actualise *bhūtaḥkoṭi* or *nirodha* is their commitment to ‘not forsaking sentient beings’, driven by the force of compassion and loving-kindness. Since *śrāvakas* do not have such a commitment and their sole intention is to liberate themselves from *saṃsāra*, they completely break away from the conventional world (*saṃsāra*).

Only at the eighth *bhūmi* do *bodhisattvas* attain ever endowed non-conceptual exalted wisdom, and at the same time they work for the welfare of sentient beings out of compassion and loving-kindness. This shows how non-conceptual exalted wisdom and compassion/ loving-kindness have become two crucial elements for *bodhisattvas* from the eighth *bhūmi* to attain all the qualities of Buddha. This makes sense when the *Sūtras* say that *bodhisattvas* from the eighth *bhūmi* onwards are endowed with *anārambaṇā karuṇā*. It also makes clear that the reason why *śrāvakas* do not practise *anārambaṇā karuṇā* is not lack of non-conceptual exalted wisdom, but because of the absence of great loving-kindness/compassion and of aspirations to lead sentient beings towards liberation.

The *Samyutta Nikāya* shows how practitioners break away from the conventional world (causal link) when consciousness becomes free from ideation and thought. It says consciousness is supported by its object (*ārammaṇam*). With the ending of thought, consciousness becomes objectless, and when there is no object, there is no support for the establishment of consciousness. When the consciousness is unsupported there is no descent into the next causal links, that is, *nāmarūpa* and the six sense bases, and there is an end of suffering.

“Since, monks, one does not will, or plan, or have a latent tendency: this is not an object (*ārammaṇam*) for the maintenance of discernment (*viññāṇa*); when there is no object, there is no support (*patiṭṭhā*) for discernment. So, when discernment is unsupported (*appatiṭṭhite*) and not growing, there is no descent of the sentient body (*nāmarūpassa avakkanti*). From the stopping of the sentient body comes the stopping of the six-fold sense-sphere [and thus the stopping of all the remaining causal links], all *dukkha*.” *Samyutta Nikāya* II.66⁶⁷

⁶⁷ English trans. P. Harvey. 2004:202

Samyutta Nikāya, Ed. M. Leon Feer, Part-2, p.66: //ārammaṇam etaṃ hoti viññāṇassa ṭhitiyā. Ārammaṇe sati patiṭṭhā viññāṇassa hoti... Evam etassa kevalassa dukkhakkhandhassa samudayo hoti//

As in this passage, the Pāli canon does mention about the state of ‘objectless’ (*anārammaṇam*) which is closely connected with *nibbāna* and not at all with compassion and loving-kindness. *Udāna* 80 (*nibbāna-sutta*), describes the state of end of *dukkha* (*nibbāna*) as without support, non-functioning and objectless (*anārammaṇam*) which is beyond the sphere of form and the four formless spheres:

“There exists, monks, that sphere where there is neither solidity, cohesion, heat, nor motion; nor the spheres of infinite space, infinite discernment, nothingness, or neither-cognition/perception nor non-cognition/perception; neither this world, nor a world beyond, nor both, nor sun-and-moon; there, monks, I say there is no coming, no going, no maintenance, no falling away. no arising; that, surely, is without support, non-functioning, objectless (*appatiṭṭham appavattam anārammaṇam*): just this is the end of *dukkha*.” *Udāna* 80⁶⁸

Conclusion

In this essay, I have explored what the early Mahāyāna *Sūtras* and *Śāstras* tell us about the ‘objectless loving-kindness and compassion’ in the context of threefold loving-kindness and compassion. I have investigated why the practice of *anārambaṇā maitrīkaruṇā* became unique to *bodhisattvas* according to early Mahāyāna *Sūtras* like *Aṣṭa*, *Ratna*, *Akṣayamatīnirdeśa Sūtra* and *Avatamsaka Sūtra*. As a result of this study, I have come to the conclusion that *anārambaṇā maitrīkaruṇā* became unique to Mahāyāna because of the fundamental shift of goal from mainstream Buddhism to Mahāyāna. Why *śrāvakas* do not practise *anārambaṇā maitrīkaruṇā* is not originally because of lack of non-conceptual wisdom or lack of understanding of the emptiness of *dharmas* but because for *śrāvakas* and mainstream Buddhists *maitrī* and *karuṇā* are not essential to attain their *bodhi*. I have not found in any of the early *sūtras* the distinction between *dharmārambaṇā maitrī* and *anārambaṇā maitrī* made on the ground of meditative cultivation of compassion and loving-kindness with the understanding of selflessness of persons and selflessness of *dharmas*. The *Akṣayamatīnirdeśaṭkā* and *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* have even interpreted the *dharma* of *dharmārambaṇā maitrī* as the ‘teaching of *dharma*’, not as compounded phenomena or aggregates.

⁶⁸ Translation by P. Harvey. 2004:203

According to the early Mahāyāna *Sūtras* like the *Aṣṭa, Akṣayamatīnirdeśa Sūtra* and *Avataṃsaka Sūtra*, it appears that *śrāvakas* attain an abiding objectless state by completely breaking away from the conventional world (causal-link) or by constantly remaining in a meditative absorption as a result of actualising *bhūtaḥi*, *nirodha* and meditative concentration of three doors of liberation. As one of the commentaries of *Aṣṭa* explains, “If a *bodhisattva* actualises *bhūtaḥi* before the completion of aspirations and accumulations, he/she will not be able to rise up from that *samādhi*. As a result, it will be impossible for that *bodhisattva* to attain *Sambhogakāya* and *Nirmāṇakāya* (except *Dharmakāya*) and consequently he/she will not be able to work for the welfare of sentient beings as long as *samsāra* remains.”⁶⁹ However, since a *bodhisattva*’s main vow or commitment is ‘not to forsake other sentient beings’, even after achieving complete enlightenment, on the seventh *bhūmi* a *bodhisattva* has found a means to achieve an objectless state (ever-endowed non-conceptual exalted wisdom) without breaking away from the conventional world of *samsāra*.

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⁶⁹ *Phyin bryad stong ba’i rnam shad man ngag rjes su ’brang pa, bsTan ’gyur (dPe-bsdur-ma)* vol.56, p.520: //gal te byang chub sems dpa’ ’di bsod nam dang ye shes kyi tshogs ma rdzogs pa yang dag pa’i mtha’ la mngon du byed par ’gyur ba de’i tshe ’di yongs su ma rdzogs pa’i smon lam dang tshogs ma rdzogs pa’i ting nge ’dzin de las ldang ba yod pa ma yin no/ /de bas na longspyod rdzogs pa dang sprul pa’i sku dag mi srid//

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Under the Gaze of the Buddha Mega-Statue: Commodification and Humanistic Buddhism in Fo Guang Shan

Edward Irons

The Fo Guang Shan Monastery 佛光山寺 near Kaohsiung has been a prominent part of the landscape in southern Taiwan since 1967. Now the largest monastery in Taiwan, its architecture reflects a desire to provide accessible services while consciously incorporating Buddhist symbols.

The neighboring Fo Guang Shan Buddha Museum 佛光山佛陀紀念館, opened by Master Hsing Yun 星雲法師 in 2011, ramps up the symbolic content.¹ Overlooking the entire complex, a massive seated image of the Buddha draws the attention of visitors from the moment they enter.

This paper starts with a focus on this mega-statue. How much does it signify, in itself? How should we interpret it? The discussion applies a fixed framework of interpretation, then moves to discuss the importance of context. Finally, the article examines implications for the theory of religious commodification brought to light in this particular example of mega-statues.

¹ The religious entity will be Romanized as Fo Guang Shan instead of Foguanshan, in keeping with the group's own usage. The founder's name is Romanized as Hsing Yun, instead of Xing Yun, again in keeping with group practice. All other Chinese terms, with the exception of place names, are romanized according to *pinyin* usage.

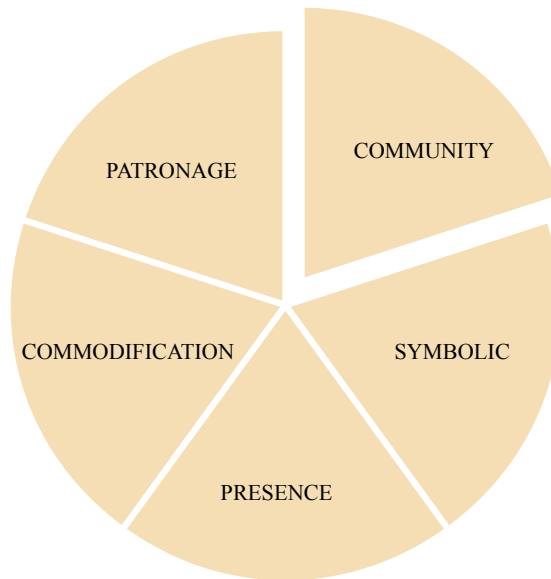
Mega-Statues: A Framework

Mega-statues by their natures dominate the landscape. They serve as visual reference points that feel inescapable. Like having a large mountain nearby, they reorient perspective, economic activity, even ways of thinking. Over time, their presence can also become a source of wonder and mythologizing. The human mind seems to put such objects of immensity in a special cognitive category, and to then build thought systems around them. Until the 1700s Mont Blanc, to use a European example, was known as Mt. Doom, a place inhabited by demons and monsters. At its peak was the land ruled over by “Déesse Blanche,” a fairy who controlled the destiny of people living in the Chamonix valley below.²

The great Buddha at Fo Guang Shan is clearly a mega-statue. The simplest criterion I use to categorize is size: to count as a mega-statue, the image must be at least 20 meters in height. As a religious statue this image also encodes symbolic representations. But there is more to mega-statues than size or symbolism. A previous paper by this author discussed approaches to unpacking their significance. These interpretive dimensions are, briefly: patronage, the material, financial and political capital needed to create the figure; community, the figure’s role in creating and demarking group identity; the symbolic, the layers of meaning attributed to the figure by contemporary viewers; presence, the figure’s immensity and sense of altering the environment; and commodification, the figure’s economic and transactional role in an economic system centered on consumption and leisure.³ This structure is meant to be a platform for discussing mega-statues, not an explanatory model. Nor does it strive to be comprehensive: few mega-statues include all five elements in equal measure. Using the framework as a way to open up interpretations, I will discuss each dimension in relation to the Fo Guang Shan mega-statue.

² “Discover Mont-Blanc, Europe’s highest peak,” on *French Moments* website, <https://frenchmoments.eu/mont-blanc/>.

³ Edward Irons, “Maitreya’s Boundless Gaze: The Religious Implications of Maitreya Mega-Statues,” Chapter Fifteen, *Proceedings from Australia National University Conference*. In press, Brill, 2020.



Unpacking mega-statues: dimensions

Patronage and Financial Support

The religious complex of buildings, gates, gardens, and deity images at Fo Guang Shan is made possible because of massive donations from followers. Like many of the religious organizations in Taiwan, Fo Guang Shan and its related institutions have a large following that reaches around the globe. The scholar of Buddhism André Laliberté estimated that as of 2000 Fo Guang Shan had one million followers. Fo Guang Shan now boasts over 300 subsidiary temples in 173 countries.⁴ Total assets controlled by Fo Guang Shan entities, in one estimate, amount to US\$6 billion.⁵ It is, according the Laliberté, the largest Buddhist organization in Taiwan, and by extension one of the largest in the world.

⁴ “Introduction to Fo Guang Shan,” *Fo Guang Shan Monastery Worldwide Web*, <https://www.fgs.org.tw/en/Organizations/Introduction/>; “Fo Guang Shan” on *Wikipedia* website, https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fo_Guang_Shan.

⁵ André Laliberté, *The Politics of Buddhist Organizations in Taiwan: 1989-2003: Safeguarding the faith, building a pure land, helping the poor* (London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2004).

UNDER THE GAZE OF THE BUDDHA MEGA-STATUE



The Great Buddha, Fo Guang Shan Buddha Museum



The Fo Guang Shan Buddha Museum Visitor's Center Complex

When Hsing Yun (1927-) purchased property and began building the monastery in 1967, none of this was certain. It goes without saying that most if not all of the support given to build Fo Guang Shan can be attributed to reverence for him as an esteemed Dharma holder.⁶ At the same time, those who donate are given some measure of recognition. One wall in the new Buddha Museum complex is inscribed with the names of donors, a common practice in Chinese Buddhist temples.⁷

Fo Guang Shan includes two large religious complexes, the monastery and the Buddha Museum. The new Buddha Museum is extensive and impressive, and clearly represents a large investment. The figures for funding mobilized to build this complex are not available. In fact Fo Guang Shan published sources appear to avoid disclosing such details. One way around this dearth of material is to consider costs from other similar projects. An online article by Peter Wang gives estimates for a few other mega-statues. The Yantai Nanshan standing Sakyamuni Buddha, a 38 meters high bronze figure completed in 2004, was said to have cost the equivalent of \$54 million (360 million Chinese *yuan*). The same source cited a similar figure for the Jilin Dun City Buddha, completed in 2011 at 48 meters. These costs most likely include total project expenses, including grounds and buildings. The project cost for the Spring Temple Buddha in Henan, at 128 meters currently the highest Buddha in the world, is said to have totaled \$55 million, of which \$18 million was spent for the statue alone.⁸ Another online source puts the total cost for the Spring Temple Buddha at 1.2 billion yuan, over \$200 million.⁹ It is safe to assume the Fo Guang Shan Buddha alone cost no less than this \$18 million figure, and we can estimate that costs to build the Museum complex in total, with its extensive halls and world-class museums, at somewhere between \$50 and \$100 million.

⁶ A Dharma-holder is a *dharmadha*, one who is learned in the Dharma. Laliberté, *The Politics of Buddhist Organizations in Taiwan*, 67-8.

⁷ For a discussion of the continuing practice of making merit donations, see Gareth Fisher, "The Spiritual Land Rush: Merit and Morality in New Chinese Buddhist Temple Construction," *The Journal of Asian Studies* Vol. 67, No. 1 (February) 2008, 143-170.

⁸ Peter Wang, "China's New Buddha-building Campaign," on the *China Whisper* website, <http://www.chinawhisper.com/chinas-new-buddha-building-campaign/>. This source, while of interest, is undated and its information is not verified.

⁹ Zhou Mingqi, "Buddha Mania: Understanding China's Buddha Building Boom," *Sixth Tone* website, 23 Oct., 2018, <https://www.sixthtone.com/news/1003089/buddha-mania-understanding-chinas-buddha-building-boom>.

The scholar of east Asian religions Stuart Chandler provides other useful information by estimating the scope of Fo Guang Shan assets. At the time of his writing, around 2002, the total value of all properties held by Fo Guang Shan probably exceeded \$300 million, and perhaps equaled \$400 million.¹⁰ Chandler also lists various sources of income, including religious retreats, tourism and pilgrimage, fund-raising drives, dharma functions, alms processions, activities for the laity, and mortuary rites. Of these, alms processions and laity-targeted activities are funding innovations developed at Fo Guang Shan.¹¹

Laliberté explains the need for active fund-raising as the result of Fo Guang Shan's audacious strategy to transform institutional Buddhism. Buddhism has historically been a monastic institution. Hsing Yun, according to Laliberté, seeks to transform it into a congregational religion fully engaged with mundane society. In order to do this the various Fo Guang Shan organizations need to raise funds by selling paraphernalia, books, and tapes, and offering public lectures and conferences.¹² The importance of these activities will become prominent when we consider the Buddha Memorial Museum.

This brief discussion of asset value and income-producing activities illustrates the importance of cash flow and financial management in the planning and completion of mega-statue projects. The management models adopted by such institutions as Fo Guang Shan may differ, but the requirements of **patronage capital**—recruiting donations and managing finances—remain paramount. And as is the case with most Buddhist institutions, the majority of this capital comes not from the government or financial markets, but from the community.

Community

Community in the broadest sense refers to a group with a natural sense of solidarity. In the particular form of community that the sociologist Ferdinand Tönnies called *Gemeinschaft* there is a “common determinative will” uniting people.¹³ Tönnies saw religious communities in particular as representing the “original unity and equality of a whole people, the people as one family....”

¹⁰ Stuart Chandler, *Establishing a Pure Land on Earth: The Foguang Buddhist Perspective on Modernization and Globalization* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004), 224.

¹¹ Chandler, *Establishing*, 232.

¹² Laliberté, *The Politics of Buddhist Organizations in Taiwan*, 69.

¹³ Ferdinand Tönnies, *Community and Society (Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft)*, with a new introduction by John Samples (New Brunswick, USA, and London: Transaction Partners, 2004 [1887]), 49.

This unity is maintained by means of common ceremonies and places of worship.¹⁴ The various parts of Fo Guang Shan clearly form such a religious community. Beyond this, Fo Guang Shan is a specific form, a *founded* religious community, that derives its initial impetus from the religious experience of the founder.¹⁵ Within such founded communities there are additional distinct subtypes, communities of belief as well as religious orders. Fo Guang Shan has both types.

Monuments work in the context of community to mark identity.¹⁶ As a symbol of Chinese Mahayana Buddhism, the great Buddha at Fo Guang Shan identifies a Buddhist religious space. It also serves as a beacon to all Fo Guang Shan followers. Religious followers include the monastics who live and work in Fo Guang Shan monastery. But lay followers far outnumber the monastics. Most lay members belong to the Buddha Light International Association (BLIA, 國際佛光會 *guoji foguanghai*) and its world-wide branches. The BLIA headquarters was formally inaugurated in Los Angeles in 1992.¹⁷ While the BLIA is an organization positioned for future international growth, the majority of the members still reside in Taiwan. And while non-Chinese membership increases year by year, most members continue to be ethnic Chinese.¹⁸ In short, the Great Buddha presides over two major forms of community, the monastic order in the monastery, and the lay members of the BLIA, primarily in Taiwan.

These two communities are readily distinguished in Fo Guang Shan's own statements. A primary purpose of the Fo Guang Shan monastery, as stated in its official website, is "...providing the public with a Pure Land environment in which to *practice* Buddhism."¹⁹ This can be contrasted to the mission of the Buddha Museum. The Museum was primarily built to enshrine the Buddha

¹⁴Ferdinand Tönnies, *Community and Society*, translated and edited by Charles P. Loomis (Mineola, NY: Dover, 2002 [1887]), 219.

¹⁵ "Religious Communities: Religion, Community, and Society," *Encyclopedia.com*, 3 Apr. 2020, <https://www.encyclopedia.com>.

¹⁶ Constanze Rassmann, "Identities overseas? The long barrows in Denmark and Britain," in Martin Furholt, Friedrich Lüth, Johannes Müller, eds., *Megaliths and Identities: Early Monuments and Neolithic Societies from the Atlantic to the Baltic* (Bonn: Rudolf Habelt, 2011), 167-176, p.169.

¹⁷ Laliberté, *The Politics of Buddhist Organizations in Taiwan*, 68.

¹⁸ Stuart Chandler, "Globalizing Chinese Culture, Localizing Buddhist Teachings: the Internationalization of Fo Guang Shan," *Journal of Global Buddhism* 3 (2002): 46 - 78, p. 58.

¹⁹ *Ibid.*

relic obtained in 1998 by Hsing Yun.²⁰ But it has another, grander mission than housing the relic. According to Hsing Yun, "...the Buddha Museum serves to acquaint the public with the Buddha's qualities, through which the Buddhist practice can be inspired. The Buddha Museum was thus built not only to venerate the Buddha, but more importantly with the interests of sentient beings kept in mind."²¹ The two neighboring institutions, though managed together, are clearly designed to serve different functions, the monastery a place of practice, and the museum a place of inspiration. We can say the monastery is geared toward current practitioners, while the Buddha Museum is oriented toward the vast pool of potential believers.

The Museum and its mega-statue can be seen as part of the natural evolution of Fo Guang Shan's globalization. This globalization process moved from a focus on ethnic Chinese believers to a broad concern with all beings. The process starts with the particular challenges posed by modernity itself. As Stuart Chandler notes, under conditions of globalization individuals increasingly use religion as the basis for communal identity.²² Providing a familiar space in an unstable world remains an important function. It can be argued that all the larger Buddhist groups, including the "four great mountains" of contemporary Taiwanese Buddhism—indeed, all new religions—provide such a sense of community.²³ Fo Guang Shan succeeded well in this function; membership jumped from some 400,000 in 2000 to millions by 2018.²⁴ The next step in Fo Guang Shan's globalization was the establishing of overseas centers. As Fo Guang Shan moved overseas it was also able to offer a "reconstructed sense of

²⁰ "Origin of the Buddha Museum," *Fo Guang Shan Buddha Museum* website, http://www.fgsbmc.org.tw/en/intro_origin.html.

²¹ The English translation of the memorial hall complex was originally "Buddha Memorial Center;" it has since been changed to "Buddha Museum" in English language material. The Chinese name, confusingly, continues to be "Buddha Memorial Hall" 佛光山佛陀紀念館. "Origin of the Buddha Museum," *Fo Guang Shan Buddha Museum* website, http://www.fgsbmc.org.tw/en/intro_origin.html. Italics added.

²² Chandler, "Globalizing Chinese Culture," 47.

²³ The phrase "four great mountains" of contemporary Taiwanese Buddhism refers indirectly to the four sacred mountains of Chinese Buddhism while specifically indicating the four most prominent contemporary Buddhist organizations: Fo Guang Shan, Fagushan 法鼓山, Ciji 慈濟, and Chung Tai Shan 中台山.

²⁴ Chandler's figures for 2000 membership, 400,000, are lower than Laliberté's estimate of one million, fn. 5, above. Chandler, "Globalizing Chinese Culture," 54; Yao, Yu-Shuang and Richard Gombrich. "Fo Guang Shan seen through Telescope and Microscope." *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies*, Vol. 14, May, 2018. 128-155, 129.

home” to expatriate Chinese seeking something familiar. This aspect aligned with Fo Guang Shan’s religious mission, one that sought to reunite practice with values. The third step in globalization went beyond serving ethnic Chinese membership to expand the religious mission to the entire realm of sentient beings. In short, the unique presence of the Buddha Museum implies the importance of a third community, that of Buddhists around the world.

But globalization was not the only process driving growth in Fo Guang Shan’s community. Another possible factor in this evolution, and the building of the Buddha Museum, is pressure of competition in Fo Guang Shan’s home market of Taiwan. Fo Guang Shan, despite decades of rapid growth, has not been immune to competition from other religious groups. Chandler, writing in the early 2000s, noted that support in Taiwan had thinned due to competition and slower economic growth.²⁵ Ironically, his analysis coincided with, and therefore did not include, the greatest building project in Fo Guang Shan’s history—the Buddha Museum. From our perspective, the opening of the Buddha Museum was a bold move to connect with a community beyond Taiwan Buddhists, the global market.

In sum, a number of **communities** cluster around the Fo Guang Shan Museum mega-statue: the monastic community, the community of ethnic Chinese believers, and the potential community of all sentient beings. These communities have grown in tandem with the forces of globalization, demography, and Fo Guang Shan’s own religious mission.

The Fo Guang Shan Buddha as Sacred Object

The Fo Guang Shan Buddha is a well-crafted Sakyamuni image, with all the religious symbolic associations connected to the founder of Buddhism. For example, the image’s curls symbolizes the Buddha’s renunciation of wealth. The Buddha’s topknot (*ushnisha*) symbolizes the various stages he passed through on the way to enlightenment. His elongated earlobes are another reminder of Sakyamuni’s pre-ascetic lifestyle of opulence, when he wore heavy gold earrings. The *ūrṇā* (circular spot) between his eyes symbolizes his ability to perceive the absolute.²⁶ These interpretations are subtle but very present for the devout.

²⁵ Chandler, *Establishing*, 235.

²⁶ Ananda Coorasmawamy, “The Origin of the Buddha Image,” *The Art Bulletin* 9:4 (1927), 287-328, DOI: 10.1080/00043079.1927.11409514, pp. 289-290. See also Cristina Riche, “Symbolism in Asian Statues of the Buddha,” *Intermountain West Journal of Religious Studies*, Vol. 5, No. 1, Spring, 2014, 32-51, pp. 34-36.

Beyond such overt facets of the symbolic, there are non-visual qualities of symbolic import inherent in the statue. One is the symbolism entailed in the very effort to create the image. The building of the Great Buddha image was the result of close collaboration. The Chinese artist Li Jianming 李健明 sketched over one hundred versions of the Buddha in order to find the right flavor. Once the design was approved, the commission to sculpt the Sakyamuni as a standing figure was given to the Chinese sculptor Guo Xuanchang 郭選昌 in 2007. Due to unspecified engineering problems the standing design was revised to be a seated Buddha, also sculpted by Guo.²⁷ Clearly the interaction between the artist, the sculptor, and Master Hsing Yun, as well as engineers and construction companies, was a major effort, one widely acknowledged by devotees as worthy of gratitude. It was, in Buddhist terms, an act of great merit.

Another invisible support for the image's symbolic significance is the ritual act of consecration. No Buddha image is completed until it is formally consecrated. The Buddhist consecration ceremony, *buddhābhiseka*, is called *kaiguang* 開光 (“opening the light”) or *kaiyan* 開眼 (“eye-opening”) in Chinese.²⁸ The ceremony harks back to the Buddha's original enlightenment. As recorded in the Dhammapada, verse 153, the Buddha is said to have uttered the words *anekajātisaṃsāraṃ* following his enlightenment (“infinitely numerous are the existences in the round of rebirths”). This same phrase is used in all consecration ceremonies. While this ceremony may seem a formality, in the eyes of Buddhist believers consecration is the essential difference between a living statue and a lifeless artifact. By means of the eye-opening ceremony the image becomes a living Buddha.²⁹

²⁷ Hsing Yun, 我與藝術家們 [me and artists], Fo Guang Shan website, <http://www.masterhsingyun.org/article/article.jsp?index=8&item=9&bookid=2c907d494b3ecd70014b42f8b1190001&ch=9&se=0&f=1>.

²⁸ The earliest reference to such consecration ceremonies in the Mahayana canon are relatively late, in the fifth century CE. Richard Gombrich notes that the earliest reference to an eye-opening ceremony anywhere is by Buddhaghosa in the fifth century CE. See Richard Gombrich, “The Consecration of a Buddhist Image,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 26, no. 1, 1966: 23-36, p.26. See also Foshuo yiqie rulai anxiang sanmei yigui jing 佛說一切如來安像三昧儀軌經 (T1418, Sūtra Spoken by the Buddha on the Samādhi of all the Tathāgatas for the Proper Installation of Icons), attributed to Dānapāla of the Northern Song. See James Robson, “The Buddhist Image Inside-Out: On the Placing of Objects Inside Statues in East Asia,” in Tansen Sen, ed., *Buddhism Across Asia: Networks of Material, Intellectual, and Cultural Exchange 1* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 2014), 295–96.

²⁹ “Eye-opening ceremony,” Nichiren Buddhism Library, online at <https://www.nichirenlibrary.org/en/dic/Content/E/109>.

The consecration ceremony is essentially a transaction. Meritorious actions are being offered in exchange for the deity's continued compassion and benevolence. It is this interactional quality which results in sacredness. As the art historian Michelle Wang notes, "The interaction between the sculpture and others, whether the Buddha himself or eminent monks, is...key to the endowment and recognition of its sacredness."³⁰ Hsing Yun agrees, saying that consecration is essential. Yet he emphasizes that it is not the Buddha who is in need of initiation. Instead, it is we humans who need the ceremony. For it is the human's "light" which is being consecrated. For Hsing Yun, consecration means *illuminating the minds of humans*.³¹

Already, then, we see how seemingly inert religious symbolism, once brought to life, can be translated into religious experience. This religiosity is amplified by the image's quality of presence.

Presence: Sakyamuni Sees You

The massive image—having been consecrated by a tonsured monk, Hsing Yun himself—has been "given light." This event took place on December 25, 2011. From that point on the mega-statue was charged with religious potency. But how does this change the *viewer*? This fourth dimension of immense statuary deals with its impact on the viewer, its charged presence. This is the phenomenological dimension.

The key feature of the mega-statue, as mentioned previously, is its *immensity*. This immensity creates an immediate and direct connection between image and viewer. As noted in my earlier work,

Each encounter with immensity can be said to create a field where the limited, that which can be measured, is juxtaposed against the limitless, where the Apollonian sense of measured control meets the Dionysian urge to release. Erecting a pole of immensity, a mega-statue, creates the field in which such eternal dualities arise.³²

³⁰ Michelle C. Wang, "Early Chinese Buddhist Sculptures as Animate Bodies and Living Presences," *Ars Orientalis* 46, available online at <http://dx.doi.org/10.3998/ars.13441566.0046.002>.

³¹ "佛像那裡需要人來替他開光，所謂「開光」者，人們為自己的心開光耳!" See "Affairs of humanity, 8-humanity's energy" 人間萬事8-人間的能源, Master Hsing Yun website, <http://www.masterhsingyun.org/article/article.jsp?index=62&item=91&bookid=2c907d49496057d001499dc331700145&ch=4&se=20&f=1>. Emphasis added.

³² Irons, "Maitreya's Boundless Gaze."

The idea of a field is key here. Like an object circling the sun, the visitor senses she is within the gravitational pull of a powerful entity.

A parallel trait to the image's immensity is its *monumentality*. Monuments remind the viewer of something. The viewer asks, what is the referent to which this great monument points? Such a referent is not easily pinned down. It will, firstly, change from person to person. It will also change based on the times, for the modern mind sees things in a different light from the medieval. And it will change with the setting—the same Buddha found on a mountaintop in Afghanistan will *feel* different from one placed on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.

Whatever the association, a monument as an architectural construction, including a sculptured image, is meant to transmit something to posterity, namely the memory of a person, an event, or, for religious monuments, an idea. Monuments are thus intimately connected with memorialization.³³ The presence of this mega-object confirms and verifies the referent's existence. As I discussed above, as a religious symbol there are inbuilt ripples of associations. Most viewers recognize the towering image as Sakyamuni, the enlightened one, the Buddha, and from this may flow a thousand other associations: the Buddha as prototype of a life devoted to enlightenment, the guide, the teacher able to connect with hearers on multiple levels, the wandering monk, the renouncer, Dvija, twice-born, sage.

While not all viewers will have the same associations, most will feel a gravitational pull of immensity. The visitor first becomes *aware* of the image; she steps into the field of presence. Like a magnet, the image's gaze draws one closer. The Buddha is now watching, and somehow seems to be directing thought, if only on a subconscious level. This gaze in turn has the potential to dredge up associations from the viewer's psyche. And in doing so, it becomes a site of negotiation, "making tangible the unseen realm of spiritual response and predestination."³⁴ This at least is the interpretation given to Buddha sculptures in medieval China, as described by the scholar Robert Campany. In this period there was an active trade in miracle stories, and these in turn impacted the experience of seeing the image. In a way the

³³ Cassen, Serge, Pierre Pétrequin, Chrisine Boujot, Salvador Dominguez-Bell, Mikaël Guitavarc'h and Guirec Querré, "Measuring distinction in the megalithic architecture of the Carnac religion: from sign to material," in Martin Furholt, Friedrich Lüth, Johannes Müller, eds., *Megaliths and Identities: Early Monuments and Neolithic Societies from the Atlantic to the Baltic* (Rudolf Habelt, 2011), 225-248, p. 228.

³⁴ Michelle C. Wang, "Early Chinese Buddhist Sculptures."

sculptures came to life because, again in Michelle Wang's words, they had been *written* into life through a milieu already vibrating with their potency.³⁵

We live in a different era. In our age some Buddhas may continue to perform miracles, just as they did in medieval times. But so does science. So does the Great Leader. So does the State. So do millions of competing actors, all claiming agency, potency and power. Such competing claims may lead some to have a sense of individual powerlessness or irrelevance. For such visitors the relevant question that comes to mind may be about the value of subjective experience. Isn't the Fo Guang Shan Buddha, despite the sense of awe felt working its way into awareness, in the end just another site to see, a commodified way to pass the time, another selfie at Disneyland?

Not everyone will be subject to postmodern angst. But the possibility of such gnawing doubt leads to consideration of the final dimension of mega-statues, commodification.

Fo Guang Shan as Commodity

The commodity is something traded, labelled, packaged and stored. The world is awash with commodities. It is fair to call the current middle-class lifestyle one centered on commodified consumption. In this lifestyle tourism, including religious experience, is seen as another commodified experience to be consumed.

Mega-statues today are bound up with tourism. Regardless of when they were built, each statue becomes a site to be experienced. The stream of visitors then becomes a question of traffic flows and headcounts. For many religious institutions, income from tourism supports the entire enterprise, impacting much more than the grounds around the statue. The scholar of Buddhism Justin McDaniel has recently categorized some religious tourism locales as "sites of leisure." Visitors to such sites experience a "socially disengaged" form of Buddhism. Visitors walk around the grounds searching for the best shots and planning their dinners; there is scant evidence of religious motivation.³⁶

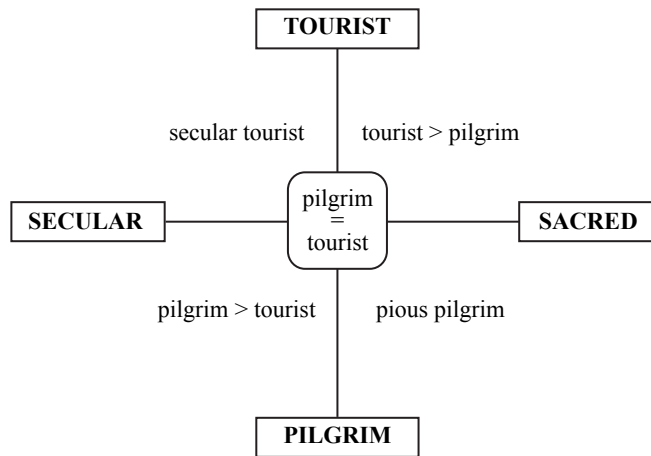
Not all visitors are socially disengaged in this way. Many still come for religious reasons. Religious pilgrims and leisure tourists cross paths repeatedly at sacred sites. Shi Miao Guang 釋妙光, a Fo Guang Shan monastic, offers a convenient model to distinguish the religious from the leisure tourist. The

³⁵ Michelle C. Wang, "Early Chinese Buddhist Sculptures."

³⁶ Justin Thomas McDaniel, *Architects of Buddhist Leisure* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2017), 11-17.

traditional religious pilgrim travels, often from a great distance, and after arrival performs religious acts. Today such trips tend to be fast and short, instead of being once-in-a-lifetime experiences. Nevertheless, these travelers tend to engage in ritual and meditation once they arrive.

Using Miao Guang’s framework we can draw a distinction between religious and secular tourism, focusing on the key variable of participation in religious acts while visiting. And we can now see a third possibility, the secular pilgrim. Secular pilgrimage refers to serious travel for non-religious aims. These may include a desire to understand another culture, reverence for political leaders or events, or a nostalgic desire to return “home.”³⁷ The secular pilgrim’s openness to experiencing the religious site contrasts with the secular tourist’s perspective, which seeks personal satisfaction while remaining in the secular world.³⁸ In the end, however, distinguishing between motives for travel is notoriously difficult. Many of us have mixed or multiple purposes when we visit a site, and in one visit we may pass through various roles. We are dealing with a spectrum of identities, as summarized below:



The Pilgrim-Tourist Continuum (from Collins-Kreiner and Kliot, 2000)

³⁷ Shih, Miao Guang, “Modern Religious Tourism in Taiwan: A Case Study of Fo Guang Shan Buddha Memorial Center,” in 「人間佛教在東亞與東南亞的開展」國際學術研討會 [international scholarly conference on the development of humanistic Buddhism in east and southeast Asia], (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Center for Research in Humanistic Buddhism, 2015).

³⁸ Shih, Miao Guang, “Modern Religious Tourism,” 4.

Miao Guang agrees that visitors may shift roles during a visit to Fo Guang Shan. They often begin with an appreciation of the abundant works of art and a desire to satisfy a cultural curiosity during the long walk up to the central hall. This may develop into an urge to participate in religion. And in some cases the visitor becomes a religious pilgrim.³⁹ Such transformation is encouraged. Indeed, inculcating just such a receptiveness to religiosity in the visitor is one of the major stated aims of building the Buddha Museum.

Beyond these distinctions in types of visitors, there is no question that the Fo Guang Shan's Buddha Museum and monastery have become a major tourist attraction. Miao Guang gives these numbers for annual visitors:

<u>FOGUANGSHA TOTAL VISITORS</u>	
2011-2	9,059,987
2013	10,300,364
2014	11,099,894
2015	7,725,417 ⁴⁰
2016	774,000 ⁴¹

Such numbers are impressive, and comparable to those for the Louvre (9,300,000 visitors in 2014).

The Fo Guang Shan experience, when the Buddha Museum is included, is a good fit for the tourism industry. As such it could be analyzed purely as a commodified tourist product. Yet it is too simplistic to limit discussion of Fo Guang Shan to such terms. Fo Guang Shan has a broader goal, and shares it openly. The religious plan, in Hsing Yun's words, is to "widely establish positive affiliations with others (*guangjie shanyuan* 广结善缘).⁴² "Before achieving the Way of Buddha," he says, "we should first making connections with people" (*weicheng fodao, xianjie renyuan* 未成佛道，先

³⁹ Shih, Miao Guang, "Modern Religious Tourism," 15.

⁴⁰ Figures for 2014 are incomplete. Shih, Miao Guang, "Modern Religious Tourism," 9.

⁴¹ Shi, Xiuhua 石秀華, "高雄最熱門觀光遊憩區 連5年奪冠都是它 [Kaohsiung's most popular tourist spot, champions for the past five years]," on Fo Guang Shan website, 15 April, 2017, http://www.fgsbmc.org.tw/news_latestnews_c.aspx?News_Id=201704080.

⁴² Hsing Yun, official Facebook page, 2013.

結人緣).⁴³ Fo Guang Shan's use of the concept of affinity (緣 "yuan") has been explored by Chandler and others, and will be discussed further below. Here it is sufficient to note that "sowing seeds of affinity" is the movement's major strategy.⁴⁴ Criticisms of Fo Guang Shan as a commodified experience should be tempered with reference to this purpose.

In summing up this first section, the paper has discussed five separate portals to understanding the Fo Guang Shan mega-statue: patronage, community, religious symbolism, presence, and commodification. The reader will notice that discussions can easily lose sight of the image itself and follow threads leading into the surroundings, the realm of context. Rather than being a diversion, an expanded discussion of context appears to be necessary for a full understanding of any image. This expanded context is the topic of section two.

Setting: Moving into the garden

The *Bodhimanda*

The Fo Guang Shan Sakyamuni is impressive on its own terms. As the visitor moves forward, her gaze is repeatedly drawn to the massive image, its refined features hinting at the possibility of another state of being. At the same time the overall impression left from a visit to Fo Guang Shan today is that of an effigy implanted in a unique setting. The site itself is an object of awe. That context adds a new layer to the approach to mega-statues in the preceding section, which primarily focused on the image. This paper suggests that Fo Guang Shan's Sakyamuni, including its phenomenological field, exists in large part as a piece of a larger puzzle, the *religious complex*.

Chinese traditional religion has a specific term for this complex, *daochang* 道場. In Sanskrit this is the *bodhimanda*, the seat of enlightenment. In this original Sanskrit sense the first *bodhimanda* was the site of the Buddha's enlightenment.⁴⁵ This event took place at Bodhgaya, which helps explain the incorporation of design elements from the Mahabodhi Temple at Bodhgaya in the Fo Guang Shan Memorial Center.

⁴³ Li Bo, "First Enticing With Desires: A Material Approach to Fo Guang Shan and Humanistic Buddhism," Master's thesis, University of Alberta, 2014, <https://doi.org/10.7939/R3DF6K93V>." 150.

⁴⁴ Jonathan Mair, "Fo Guang Shan Buddhism and Ethical Conversations across Borders: Sowing Seeds of Affinity," in Leena Kaunonen, ed., *Cosmopolitanism and Transnationalism: Visions, Ethics, Practices* (Helsinki: Helsinki Collegium for Advanced Studies, 2014), 66-89, p. 68.

⁴⁵ "又作菩提道場、菩提場。中印度菩提伽耶的菩提樹下之金剛座上佛陀成道之處。" 舊華嚴經卷一世間淨眼品、悲華經卷三諸菩薩本授記品。" *Fo Guang Dictionary* 佛光大辭典，online at https://www.fgs.org.tw/fgs_book/fgs_drser.aspx.

The classic Mahayana discussion of a *bodhimanda* is found in chapter four of the Vimalakīti Nirdeśa (c.100 CE). In an exchange with the Buddha the novice Prabhāvīyūha explains how he once visited Vimalakīti and learned that a *bodhimanda* is a place of intense practice. Such demanding practice, said Vimalakīti, includes a litany of activities: upholding the precepts, applying vigor, patience, kindness, compassion, joy, and the spirit of giving.⁴⁶

Fo Guang Shan English language materials frequently use the term *bodhimanda* for *daochang*. It is a key term, for instance, in the photo biography of Hsing Yun, *Yunshui sanqian* 雲水三千 [Cloud and water], published in 2003.⁴⁷ But the two complexes at Fo Guang Shan, the temple and the Buddha Museum, appear to be different kinds of *daochang*. They follow different architectural rules, for instance: while the temple complex next door was intended from the start to adhere to an imperial architecture style 中國宮殿式 (*zhongguo gongdianshi*), the newer Buddha Museum is an elegant postmodern pastiche, including replication of elements in the Bodhgaya style.⁴⁸ And what goes on within each space differs. In general the temple complex is a place of devotion where one can also live, study and cultivate. The Museum feels more like public space open to all. It offers classes in chanting, sutra recitation, writing, yoga, drawing, calligraphy, Buddhist painting, Chinese painting, vegetarian cooking, chess, dance, drama, poetry, flower arranging, body-building, taiga, cosmetics, etiquette, and languages.⁴⁹ It has a full schedule of lectures, performances, exhibitions, and conferences. While both complexes are Buddhist *daochangs*, their orientations toward practice differ.

In later Buddhist usage a *daochang* referred to more than the location of enlightenment. It came to refer to a place to worship or cultivate. According to the Avatamsaka sutra, *daochang* activities included recitation, lectures, receiving precepts, writing, and storing sutras—in other words, what happened at a temple. In addition, certain *daochang* were given special reverence.

⁴⁶ “Bodhimanda”, on *Unborn Mind* website, <https://unbornmind.com/2012/03/03/bodhimanda/>.

⁴⁷ Jack Meng-Tat Chia, “Modern Buddhist Hagiography: The Life of Hsing Yun in Popular Media,” *Asian Ethnology*, Vol. 74, No. 1, 2015, 141-165, p. 154.

⁴⁸ Shang Rong 尚榮, interview with Ven. Hui Kong 惠空法師, in 佛光山佛教藝術理念探析—從太虛大師到星雲大師看近現代佛教藝術的開展 [seeing the development of modern Buddhist arts from Master Taixu to Venerable Master Hsing Yun], in 程恭讓/ 妙凡 Cheng Gongrang and Miao Fan, eds., 星雲大師人間佛教理論實踐研究 [practical research in Master Hsing Yun’s theory of humanistic Buddhism], Vol. 2 (Fo Guang Shan Publishing, 2017), 318-355.

⁴⁹ Zheng Zimei, “Explicating Master Hsing Yun,”

Traditionally in Chinese Buddhism there are four primary sites of bodhisattva practice, the four sacred mountains of Mt. Puto, Mt. Hua, Mt. Emei, and Mt. Wutai, each said to be the abode of the four major bodhisattvas—Guan Yin, Kṣitigarbha, Samantabhadra, and Mañjuśrī. All these mountains are *daochangs*. In addition the term *daochang* took on a general sense; to this day it remains a common term used for temple in Daoist and Yiguandao as well as Buddhism. Crucially, there may or may not be a physical structure at the *daochang* site, so in its broadest sense *daochang* refers to sacred sites in general.⁵⁰

Hsing Yun broadens the abstract sense of *daochang* one step further. When asked why he creates so many *bodhimandas* around the world, the Master replied, “Bodhimandas are everywhere. You are a Bodhimanda; he/she is a Bodhimanda; there are at least 93 Bodhimandas illuminating different parts of the world. They shine upon one another and are everywhere. Currently, the energy of murder and violence overwhelms the world and beings suffer greatly. How can we not cultivate with vigor when we see the holy teaching declining and living beings suffering?”⁵¹

As mentioned in the discussion of community, Fo Guang Shan’s temples can serve as “homes” for lay members. But Fo Guang Shan’s *daochang* conceptualization goes beyond community. As Chandler notes, each temple is defined as an archetype of a *homeland*, a miniature pure land.⁵² Fo Guang Shan’s dispersed temples around the world form a pureland network. Hsing Yun says he desires to plant the seed of Dharma in every nation through ensconcing each outpost in a web of local connections. Chandler calls such connections links of affinity 結緣 (*jieryuan*).⁵³ In concrete terms this means establishing ties with wealthy potential donors and patiently waiting for a trickle-down effect to spread the Dharma message.⁵⁴ The process of creating affinity also includes building immense monuments.

⁵⁰ *Fo Guang Dictionary*, 佛光大辭典, online at https://www.fgs.org.tw/fgs_book/fgs_drser.aspx.

⁵¹ Heng Mao, “Dharma Banners Everywhere - A Few Words for Lay Bodhisattva Preceptees.” Angela Li, trans. *Bodhi Field* (金剛菩提海), 7 July, 2007: 32-33. <http://www.drbachinese.org/vbs/publish/447/vbs447p032.pdf>.

⁵² Chandler, “Globalizing Chinese Culture,” 60.

⁵³ Chandler, “Globalizing Chinese Culture,” 60.

⁵⁴ Chandler, “Globalizing Chinese Culture,” 65.

The Fo Guang Shan website specifically defines Fo Guang Shan as a bodhisattva *daochang*. This means, in Fo Guang Shan's terminology, that it prioritizes engagement with the world; saving the living (instead of the departed); first shrinking before enlarging; emphasizing the residents and Buddhist affairs; and promoting such areas as education, culture, charity, and healing.⁵⁵ It is these priorities that led to the building of the Fo Guang Shan Buddha and Buddha Museum.

Popular Culture and Fo Guang Shan: A Marriage Made on Earth

In addition to housing the Buddha tooth, the Buddha Museum is intended to exhibit the “essentials” of Buddhism.⁵⁶ But these essentials are not immediately apparent. The massive museum hall remains distant from the main gate, a long walk up a hill. The first building most visitors enter is actually the Front Hall (禮敬大廳 *lijing dating*), a visitors' center. Once inside, each person should quickly feel as if she has entered familiar ground, because the layout and ambience match such up-scale consumer goods venues as department stores and airport departure lounges. These are the familiar non-spaces of connection and transfer that characterize much of modern life in more and more of the world.⁵⁷ The scene at the Front Hall is vibrant and at times chaotic. Tour groups continuously file in. Some smaller groups gather around individual nuns. Families from China sit where they can, tired from the wear and tear of tourism. The Front Hall, roomy and cool, offers respite. Food and gift booths line up on each side of the main walkway. There are a Starbucks and a few restaurants. Tourist trinkets are prominently displayed.

⁵⁵ Fo Guang Shan Yuanqi 佛光山缘起 [the origins of Fo Guang Shan],” on *Know Fo Guang Shan* website 认识佛光山, <https://www.fgs.org.tw/introduction.aspx>

⁵⁶ Yao, Yu-Shuang and Richard Gombrich. “Fo Guang Shan seen through Telescope and Microscope.” *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies*, Vol. 14, May, 2018. 128-155, p. 146.

⁵⁷ Marc Augé, *Non-Places: An Introduction to Anthropology of Supermodernity* (Paris: Le Seuil, 1992).

The reason such goods and services are made available is given in a quote from Hsing Yun:

Whatever dharma instruments and Buddhist gifts are needed by contemporary society, Fo Guang Shan can offer and satisfy....⁵⁸

In other words, the visitor's "basic needs," whether dharmic or physical, must be satisfied when they visit Fo Guang Shan. In this way Fo Guang Shan comes to terms with popular culture, which is *consumption* culture. Ultimately this approach is part of the strategy of Humanistic Buddhism 人間佛教 (*renjian fojiao*) espoused by Fo Guang Shan.

The historian Jack Chia notes how Fo Guang Shan harnesses the power of popular culture and technology in depictions of Hsing Yun, in particular as a way to connect with the younger generation.⁵⁹ In his teachings Hsing Yun discourages sole focus on sitting meditation. Instead he urges engagement with the world, in accord with Humanistic Buddhism.⁶⁰ Chia also contends that the frequent focus on the master's hagiography is a way to teach Buddhism to the "IT-savvy" young generation.⁶¹ The Buddhism scholars Yao Yu-shuang and Richard Gombrich add that Fo Guang Shan has a particular strong bias toward "feeding the enthusiasms" of young people."⁶²

It appears that Humanistic Buddhism lies behind much of the Fo Guang Shan activity. What is Humanistic Buddhism, and how is it related to the Sakyamuni mega-statue?

The Garden of Humanistic Buddhism

Humanistic Buddhism as a teaching focuses on the creation of a Pure Land on earth through practices of compassion and kindness.⁶³ For Hsing Yun, Buddhism

⁵⁸ “當代社會需要的法物與佛教精神產品，佛光山 都可以提供並滿足。” Zheng Zimei, 鄧子美, 解读星云大师人間佛教思想 [Explicating Master Hsing Yun's humanistic Buddhism thought], 2016. Article online at Chinese University of Hong Kong website, <http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/arts/cshb/lecture/2016/真實的佛教觀察PPT.pdf>.

⁵⁹ Chia, "Modern Buddhist Hagiography," 144.

⁶⁰ Chia, "Modern Buddhist Hagiography," 146.

⁶¹ Chia, "Modern Buddhist Hagiography," 154.

⁶² Yao and Gombrich, "Telescope and Microscope," 130.

⁶³ Tracy Mann, "Continuing Political Force of Relics in the Modern Asian Society: The Buddha's Tooth Relic at Fo Guang Shan," University of Michigan Thesis, 2011, <http://deepblue.lib.umich.edu/bitstream/2027.42/96469/1/stlymann.pdf>, p. 2.

is not meant to be an abstract theory, it is a religion that brings joy and happiness to humanity. “The greatest treasures in life,” he says, “are happiness and joy. Therefore to live happily, joyously, in the present, is the point of humanistic Buddhism, and is the fulfillment of the spirit of Buddhism in the world. (人生最寶貴的就是歡喜、快樂，因此活得快樂、幸福、自在，就是人間佛教所倡導的，是佛教精神在世間的實踐.)⁶⁴ In this sense Humanistic Buddhism is Buddhism, not a new “brand” or branch.

The roots of the Humanistic Buddhism movement go back to Yin Shun 印順 (1906-2005) and his master Tai Xu 太虛 (1890-1947). Yin Shun’s *New Treatise on the Pure Land* (Jingtu Xinlun 淨土新論, 1952) caused a stir in Taiwanese Buddhism by directly criticizing traditional monastic practice. Yin Shun emphasized that bodhisattvas are not gods. “Relying on others for salvation,” he said, “was only for the “dimwitted who have no other way.” In this work he emphasized the term Humanistic Buddhism, “Buddhism for the human realm” 人間佛教 (*rejianfojiao*), over “Buddhism for human life” 人生佛教 (*renshengfojiao*).⁶⁵

The sociologist Zheng Zimei notes three traits of the Humanistic Buddhism *daochang*:

- A strong spirit of service
- De-emphasis on funerary ritual and chanting
- High educational attainment of the monks, residents, and volunteers⁶⁶

These succinct principles are the animating spirit of the religious complex at Fo Guang Shan.

To sum up, this discussion of the Fo Guang Shan *daochang*, has brought us face-to-face with its animating ideology of Humanistic Buddhism as well as the idea of cultivating a vibrant *daochang* through connection to popular culture.

Conclusion: Liquified culture meets humanistic buddhism

It makes no sense to see the Sakyamuni image without reference to the Fo Guang Shan *daochang*. The mega-statue is but one element in a carefully-

⁶⁴ Hsing Yun 星雲大師. 成就的祕訣:金剛經 [The secrets of attainment: the Diamond Sutra], (Taipei: Route Culture, 2010), 23.

⁶⁵ Tracy Mann, “Continuing Political Force,” 19. “Dimwitted” quote taken from Charles Brewer Jones, *In Taiwan: Religion and the State 1660-1990* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 1999), 126-133.

⁶⁶ Zheng Zimei, “Explicating Master Hsing Yun.”

crafted institutional and built environment that includes traditional sacred relics, the active participation of the sangha, an involved laity, civil society activities, and international image-management, to name only a few elements. Such a complex structure requires management, and cannot be fully unpacked without considering its governance structure, an aspect that will not be discussed here. But how does this situated complexity relate to the mega-statue? We can say the giant Sakyamuni functions as mega-statue, but only within this complex milieu. Its strength is present only in light of the *daochang*.

At the same time Fo Guang Shan itself needs to be contextualized. It is not simply a matter of understanding Humanistic Buddhism. Other new Buddhist groups have risen in prominence since the 1980s, and the humanistic label is insufficient to explain their growth overall. The internationalization of Taiwanese religious groups—here including Yiguandao, Maitreya Great Tao, Lu Shengyan’s True Buddha School, Supreme Master Ching Hai’s organization, and more recently Weishin Shengjiao—is a widespread religious phenomenon that calls for a macro view. All such groups participate in globalization.

The method for approaching mega-statues developed here includes the following proposed elements, now complicated by the two new proposed, dimensions, *bodhimanda* and globalization:

MEGA-STATUE DIMENSION	DAOCHANG (BODHIMANDA) DIMENSION	GLOBALIZED CONTEXT DIMENSION
PATRONAGE	Project management	International expansion and financing
COMMUNITY	Cultural home	Cultural assimilation strategy
RELIGIOUS SYMBOLISM	Planting the seeds of affinity	Religious internationalization/ missiology
SACRED PRESENCE	Space of practice	Network of daochangs
COMMODIFICATION	Web of consumption	International brand management

The added dimensions result from broadened contextualization. At the level of methodology, we move from the realm of personal psychology (the individual in the presence of the image), to the complex religious institution (*daochang*), to the global stage.

At this point this proposed dimensional framework is suggestive. The one area that calls for immediate explication, in my opinion, is commodification of the *daochang*. This study will close with consideration of the significance of such commodification.

The theologians Eamonn Conway and Vincent J. Miller, in their work on religious consumption, offer provocative ways to think of the relationship between tradition, practice, and consumption. Miller in particular argues that under conditions of modernity the human becomes “enslaved in a lifestyle and value system.” That condition, according to Miller, is ultimately dehumanizing.⁶⁷ Miller contends that ideological battle with the forces of consumption is insufficient, because “consumer culture infects our very capacity to perceive what is valuable.”⁶⁸ The consumerist mode works in two ways. First, through the “liquification” of tradition; second, through the separation of belief from practice.⁶⁹ Over time the individual’s engagement with belief becomes inconsistent and incoherent. It thus becomes necessary to interrogate the consumerist mode of interpretation itself.

It is hard not to see the presence of some such incoherence in the experience of the Fo Guang Shan *daochang*. The visitor to the Buddha Museum is free to dip into any number of troughs: conferences, performances, donations, art appreciation, plus a few religious rituals and some shopping. Despite efforts to tie it all together, centrifugal forces pull at the seams. The overlapping fields of experience become difficult to form into a coherent whole. And unlike the Fo Guang Shan temple complex next door, the Buddha Museum complex is not a place of sustained religious practice. Instead it is a vast site of brief, touristy multiple-exposures. The Museum is thus a truly postmodern *daochang*, one buzzing with activity yet fraught with disjunction.

⁶⁷ Eamonn Conway, “The Commodification of Religion and the Challenges for Theology: Reflections from the Irish Experience.” *Bulletine ET*. 17. 2006/1, 142-163, p. 143; see also Vincent J. Miller, *Consuming Religion: Christian Faith and Practice in a Consumer Culture* (New York and London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2005).

⁶⁸ Conway, “Commodification,” 144.

⁶⁹ Conway, “Commodification,” 144.

This incoherence may not be as negative as Conway and Miller imply. It may arise inevitably in any space in which ideology and practice collide. Instead of serving as a hermetically sealed space of practice, Fo Guang Shan in the Buddha Museum has created a platform for chaotic interaction, a dramatic move full of potential and risk in equal measure.

And where in all this is the mega-statue? Still there, but surrounded by other fields of power. We can conclude that this Fo Guang Shan *daochang* is a complex set of interconnected fields. One of those centers on the mega-statue, but others include the relic (hardly a minor element), the prestige of Fo Guang Shan as a center of world Buddhism, and its status as a tourist center. In all this complexity it is understandable if the mega-statue, like the visitor, may feel a bit overwhelmed.

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Merchants and Their Family Members as Donors of Inscribed Sculptures in Early Medieval Bihar and Bengal

Birendra Nath Prasad

Abstract

Through an analysis of dedicatory inscriptions on Buddhist and Brahmanical sculptures donated by merchants and their family members in early medieval Bihar and Bengal, this paper explores the nature of mercantile patronage of Buddhism and Brahmanism in this area. An overwhelming percentage of such reported inscriptions record mercantile patronage through donation of a Buddhist image, indicating that merchants and their families sought social mobility primarily through their patronage of Buddhism

Introduction

Over the years, Indian historiography has witnessed an important debate on the nature of the economy during the early medieval period (c. 600- 1200 CE). The proponents of the 'Indian Feudalism' school of historiography, who preferred to build Pan- Indian models, have generally argued that this period was largely marked by a decline in long distance trade, commerce and urbanisation. This theorization gradually impacted some studies on the decline of Indian Buddhism as well. Thus, in a significant study, Ronald Davidson has argued that during the early medieval period, Indian Buddhism entered into a spiral of 'Systemic Crisis', which had its genesis in a combination of factors: evaporating mercantile

patronage due to decline in the long distance trade and the Arab domination of the high seas, rendering it increasingly dependent on royal, feudal patronage; lessening participation of women in Buddhism¹; militant Śaiva competition; and a serious dent in the 'previous Buddhist monopoly of dealing with the barbarians, outcastes, tribals, and foreigners' made by the Brahmins who were now willing to travel great distances in search of land and patronage.² All this resulted in a gradual spatial shrinkage of Buddhism, and its contraction to select areas of strength. Thus there was a creeping realization within the Indian Buddhist community that their faith was a 'tradition in duress'³ and the evolution of esoteric, Tantric Buddhism was the result of adaptations by a 'tradition in duress' to feudalism for its very survival.

Some other studies in the decline of Indian Buddhism emphasize the Buddhist monastic failure on agrarian frontiers and in the detribalisation process.⁴ Andre Wink has added one more variable: by the eleventh century CE, Islam replaced Buddhism as the 'greatest trading religion of Asia' while the agrarian world within India was gradually lost to the Brahmins by the Buddhists. This simultaneous loss of agrarian and mercantile space precipitated a systemic crisis within Indian Buddhism.⁵ More recently, K.T.S. Sarao has argued that the decline of urbanization and long distance trade were among the central factors that precipitated the decline of Indian Buddhism.⁶

As more micro studies of select regions and sub-regions of different parts of India were undertaken by historians, these Pan-Indian theorizations were increasingly challenged. In the context of early medieval Bihar and Bengal, it has been generally argued that the Samatāṭa-Harikela sub-region of early medieval Bengal, comprising the areas to the east of the Surma-Meghna rivers, witnessed the continuation of long-distance trade and high-quality metallic

¹ Ronald Davidson, *Indian Esoteric Buddhism: A Social History of the Tantric Movement*, Columbia University Press, New York, 2002, pp.91-98.

² *Ibid.*, p.85.

³ *Ibid.*, pp.111-112.

⁴ R.S.Sharma, *Urban Decay*, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd., Delhi, 1987, p.131. For a review of this approach, see Birendra Nath Prasad, "Major Trends and Perspectives in Studies in the Functional Dimensions of Indian Monastic Buddhism in the Past One Hundred Years: A Historiographical Survey", *Buddhist Studies Review* (Journal of the UK Association for Buddhist Studies, London), Vol.25, No. 1, pp. 78-79.

⁵ Andre Wink, *Al-Hind: The Making of the Indo-Islamic World*, Vol. II, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1999, pp.349-350.

⁶ K.T.S. Sarao, *The Decline of Buddhism in India: A Fresh Perspective*, Munshiram Manoharlal, Delhi, 2012, p.208.

currency in gold and silver.⁷ Prof. B.N. Mukherjee has extended this argument further. He has argued that in the whole of early medieval Bihar and Bengal, there was ‘no sign of unusual decline of trade and commerce in the period and zone under study; but evidences for brisk trading activities in the area’.⁸

It may be stated here that the issue of trade has been looked into in some available studies on the economy of early medieval Bihar and Bengal, but the issue of the religious behaviour of merchants and their family members remains understudied. Which religion did they patronise? How did the pattern evolve as we move from Bihar to Bengal? What implications did these issues have, if any, in the decline of Buddhism in early medieval Bihar and Bengal? In the present paper, an attempt will be made to understand the evolving pattern of mercantile patronage to Buddhism and Brahmanism as reflected in dedicatory inscriptions on sculptures. We will also try to situate our inferences in the broader debate on the decline of Buddhism in early medieval Bihar and Bengal.

Some limitations of our study must be put on record at the very outset. As this study is based solely on the use of only one genre of database (dedicatory inscriptions on sculptures), it has some limitations of its own. Most of the dedicatory inscriptions on sculptures we will analyse in the present paper come in a very short dedicatory format, just recording that the donated image was the *deyadharmā* of a particular donor. Very few of them are inscribed with the regnal year of the king when the donation was made. Only these inscriptions can be dated on a surer footing. Other inscriptions, assigned to a particular century on the basis of palaeographic features, do not offer this kind of surer dating. In this kind of situation, we cannot be sure if some inscriptions of the same century were spaced by decades, years, months or days. Due to these reasons, it is difficult to trace the transitions taking place within a particular century.⁹

⁷ Birendra Nath Prasad, “Votive Inscriptions on the Sculptures of Early Medieval *Samatāṭa–Harikela*: Explorations in Socio-religious History” *Religions of South Asia*, London, Vol. 4, no.1, 2010, pp.29-30; Idem, “Brahmanical Temples, Mathas, Agrahāras and a Buddhist Establishment in a Marshy and Forested Periphery of Two ‘Frontier’ States: Early Medieval Surma Valley (Sylhet and Cachar) , c.600 CE -1100 CE”, *Religions of South Asia*, London, Vol. 6.1, 2012, pp. 36-37.

⁸ B.N. Mukherjee, “Commerce and Money in the Western and Central Sectors of Eastern India (c. AD 750-1200)”, *Indian Museum Bulletin*, Vol. XVII, 1982, p.75.

⁹ In an earlier study, similar problems were noted in the analysis of dedicatory inscriptions on sculptures donated to the Buddhist establishment of Kurkihar in early medieval Magadha. See Birendra Nath Prasad, “The Socio-Religious Dimensions of Dedicatory Inscriptions on Sculptures Donated to a Buddhist Establishment in Early Medieval Magadha: Kurkihar, c.800 CE-1200 CE” *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies*, Vol. 7, 2014, p. 118.

Similarly, as this study is based solely on the use of one genre of database (dedicatory inscriptions on sculptures), it has some limitations of its own. The inferences arrived at through this study need to be contrasted with other kinds of sources.

The donation of sculptures by merchants and their family members in early medieval Bihar and Bengal: the evolving pattern

The data from the published examples of donations of images by persons from mercantile backgrounds in early medieval Bihar and Bengal is summarized in the following table:

No	Cultic identity of the image	The place and sub-region where the image was discovered	Donor and his/her gender	Social background of the donor	Places where donors came from	Expressed motive behind donation	Period
1	Tārā	Mahābodhi (Magadha)	Nattukā	A merchant's wife, without expressed Buddhist identity	Not mentioned	None expressed	early 8 th century
2	Vāgīśvara	Kurkihar, Gaya district (Magadha)	Vaṇika Māṇeka, son of Jānu	male donor without an expressed Buddhist identity	Not mentioned	Do	9 th century
3	Seated Buddha	Guneri, Gaya district (Magadha)	Paramopāsaka Śrīpā(la), son of <i>Vaṇika</i> Haridatta	male donor with an expressed Buddhist identity	Not mentioned	Do	Latter half of the 9 th century
4	Aparājītā	Some unspecified site of Magadha	Krodhanandin, son of Vanika-Sresthi Kalyanandin	male donor with an expressed commitment to Vajrayāna	Not mentioned	Do	late 9 th or early 10 th century

Table 1

MERCHANTS AND THEIR FAMILY MEMBERS AS DONORS OF INSCRIBED SCULPTURES

No	Cultic identity of the image	The place and sub-region where the image was discovered	Donor and his/her gender	Social background of the donor	Places where donors came from	Expressed motive behind donation	Period
5	Dvādaśāditya	Rajauna or Valagudar (Aṅga)	Ranoka, son of <i>Vanika</i> Śrīdhara.	non-aristocratic; from a mercantile background	Not mentioned	Do	9 th century
6	Gaṇeśa	Mandhuk, Comilla district (Samataṭa)	<i>Vṛddha Sārtha</i> Jambhala-mitra	Mercantile, with an expressed Buddhist identity.	Apparently from within Samataṭa	Anuttara Jñāna by all creatures	c. 967 A.D.
7	Viṣṇu	Baghaura, Comilla district (Samataṭa)	Lokadatta	Mercantile	From within Samataṭa	for the increase of religious merit of his parents and himself.	c.995 A.D.
8	Vināyaka	Narayanpur, Comilla district (Samataṭa)	Buddhamitra, son of Jambhala-mitra	Mercantile, with an expressed Paramavaiṣṇava identity	Bilakandhaka in Samataṭa	for the religious merit of his parents and himself.	c.996 A.D.
9	Pedestal of an unidentified image	Arma in Munger district (Aṅga)	Sonikā, wife of a merchant	Mercantile	Not mentioned	None expressed	11 th century
10	Mahāśrī Tārā	Lakhisarai (Aṅga)	Jaśadevaka, son of merchant Cāju.	male donor without expressed Buddhist identity	Not mentioned	Do	12 th century

Table 1

No	Cultic identity of the image	The place and sub-region where the image was discovered	Donor and his/her gender	Social background of the donor	Places where donors came from	Expressed motive behind donation	Period
11	Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara.	Chandimou, Nalanda district (Magadha)	<i>Paramopāsaka Pravara-Mahāyāna –Anuyā-yina</i> Vaṇika Sādhu Saharaṇa	male donor with an expressed Buddhist identity	Not mentioned	Do	c. 1129 A.D.
12	Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara.	Giriyek, Nalanda district (Magadha)	<i>Dānapati Sādhu</i> Śrīkara and Sādhu Dāgonmata.	male donor without expressed Buddhist identity	Mathurā.	Do	first quarter of the 12 th century
13	Maitreya	Unspecified site of Magadha or Aṅga	Sādhu Chamvivra	male donor without expressed Buddhist identity	Not mentioned	Do	12 th century

Table 1

An analysis of this table offers some interesting inferences. The total number of sculptures donated through mercantile patronage, which happens to be just thirteen, is certainly not impressive, especially given the fact that in the Pāla period Bihar and Bengal witnessed an impressive proliferation of sculptures inscribed with the names of donors.¹⁰ In the reported assemblage of thirteen inscribed sculptures donated by merchants or their family members, six sculptures have been reported from Magadha; three from Aṅga; one from an unspecified site of either Magadha or Aṅga; and three from the plains of Comilla in Samatāṭa. No such sculpture has been reported from North Bihar, Varendra, Rāḍha or Vaṅga as yet.

¹⁰ The reported dedicatory inscriptions on the sculptures of early medieval Bihar and Bengal have been analysed in Birendra Nath Prasad, *Buddhism in a Poly-Religious Context: An Archaeological History of Buddhist, Brahmanical and Jaina Religious Centres in Early Medieval Bihar and Bengal*, Manohar Publishers and Distributors, Delhi, 2020, pp. 231-381. Most of the inscriptions discussed in the present paper were also discussed in the same, but without analysing the evolving pattern of mercantile patronage of the donation of images. The present paper hopes to fill that gap.

Out of the thirteen reported sculptures, three sculptures (no. 5, 7, 8 in Table 1) are Brahmanical; nine sculptures (no. 1, 2,3,4,6, 10,11,12,13 in Table 1) are Buddhist. The cultic affiliation of one sculpture (no. 9 in Table 1) is difficult to determine due to the fragmentary nature of the sculpture. In the available state of our database, Buddhist sculptures seem to have been more successful in attracting mercantile donation than Brahmanical sculptures.

Out of the thirteen inscribed sculptures donated by merchants or their family members, only one (no.1 in Table 1) was donated in the pre-Pāla period. In the Pāla period, four were donated in the 9th century, three in the 10th century, one in the 11th century, and four in the 12th century.

The earliest available example of donation of a sculpture by a person from a mercantile background is the 8th century sculpture of Tārā (no.1 in Table 1), whose provenance has been traced to the Bodh Gaya area on stylistic grounds. The dedicatory inscription on this image records that this image was the *Deyadharmā* of *Vaṇijakī* Nattukā.¹¹ G. Bhattacharya has rightly argued that the term *Vaṇijakī* has been used in the sense of “merchant’s wife” in the present inscription.¹² This is the only epigraphically recorded example of feminine participation in the donation of any image at Bodh Gaya.

It must be noted here that the name of the husband or father of *Vaṇijakī* Nattukā is not recorded in the dedicatory inscription, indicating that she had access to wealth and she utilized that wealth in donating an image on her independent initiative. Given the fame of Tārā as a saviouress, it was but natural that Nattukā donated her sculpture, most probably to some shrine or sanctuary in Bodh Gaya.

Reported examples of donations of sculptures during the 9th century are the donation of an image of Vāgīśvara (no.2 in Table 1) as the *Deyadharmā* of Vaṇika Māṇeka, son of Jānu, to the Buddhist establishment of Kurkihar¹³; and an image of the seated Buddha discovered at Guneri in Gaya district (no. 3 in Table 1). The dedicatory inscription on the image of the seated Buddha records that this image was the *Deyadharmā* of Paramopāsaka Śrīpā(1a), son of *Vaṇika* Haridatta.¹⁴ This image was donated in the 9th regnal year of the Pāla king

¹¹ G. Bhattacharya, *Essays on Buddhist Hindu Jaina Iconography and Epigraphy*, The International Centre for Study of Bengal Art, Dhaka, 2000, p.464.

¹² *Ibid.*, p. 464.

¹³ P.L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue of Antiquities*, Patna Museum, Patna, 1965, p. 142, Inscription no. 90.

¹⁴ R.D. Banerji, *Pālas of Bengal*, Memoirs of the Asiatic Society of Bengal 3, Calcutta, 1915, p. 110.

Mahendrapāla at the illustrious Guṇacarita (Śrī-Guṇacarita).¹⁵ Guṇacarita was, most probably, the name of the Buddhist establishment where this image was donated. The modern name of the place (Guneri) is obviously derived from that, indicating that the Buddhist establishment of this site attracted patronage from a person from mercantile background. In early medieval Magadha, Buddhism was successful in attracting patronage from such donors not only in the case of its famous monastic and pilgrimage centres (Mahābodhi, Nalanda and Kurkihar) but also in the case of lesser known Buddhist religious centres like Śrī-Guṇacarita.

An interesting trend is seen in the dedicatory inscription on a big inscribed stone sculpture of Aparājītā (no.4 in Table 1), attributed to late 9th or early 10th century Magadha on stylistic grounds and palaeographic features.¹⁶ Given its big size, this stone image was most probably enshrined in a public religious centre; it was not just an object of worship in a home shrine. The dedicatory inscription on this image, besides recording the Buddhist Creed Formula, records that this image was the *Deyadharmā* of Krodhanandin, son of *Vanika-Śreṣṭhī* Kalyānandin.¹⁷ Bhattacharya interprets ‘*Vanika-Śreṣṭhī*’ in the sense of a ‘leading merchant of his times of the area’.¹⁸ But, as has been noted in some other studies, Śreṣṭhī’ also functioned as bankers.¹⁹ Krodhanandin, the son of a leading merchant-banker, patronised the donation of the image of a Buddhist deity (Aparājītā) that displayed an overt triumph of Buddhism over Śaivism after a violent conflict, to a public religious centre. In the context of early medieval Magadha, where Śaivism had an entrenched presence, Krodhanandin’s patronage of the cult of Aparājītā was a very audacious act: in early medieval Magadha, the general pattern was the coexistence of Buddhism and various

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 110.

¹⁶ G. Bhattacharya, “An inscribed Stone Image of the Buddhist Deity Aparājītā” *Journal of Bengal Art*, Vol.8 , 2003 , pp.95-101.

¹⁷ Ibid., p.99.

¹⁸ Ibid., p.100.

¹⁹ Birendra Nath Prasad, “Urbanisation at Early Historic Vaiśālī , c. BCE 600 –CE 400”, in D.N. Jha (ed.), *The Complex Heritage of Early India: Essays in Memory of R.S. Sharma*, Manohar Publishers and Distributors, Delhi, 2014, pp. 229- 231; Birendra Nath Prasad, “Some Observations on the Inscribed Stone Sculptures of Aparājītā and Trailokyavijaya from Early Medieval Magadha” *Kalā* (Journal of Indian Art History Congress), Vol. XXV, 2019-20, pp. 77-82; Birendra Nath Prasad, *Buddhism in a Poly-Religious Context: An Archaeological History of Buddhist, Brahmanical and Jaina Religious Centres in Early Medieval Bihar and Bengal*, Delhi, 2020, pp. 259-260.

Brahmanical sects (Vaiṣṇavism, Śaivism) at the sites located away from Buddhist monastic sites, and attempts at subordinate integration of Śaivism into Buddhism within the religious space of important monastic centres. An open display of violent conflict between Buddhism and Śaivism was not the general pattern in early medieval Magadha and Aṅga.²⁰ Brahmanism was not without mercantile support either.

This will be amply clear through the analysis of dedicatory inscriptions of some 9th and 10th century sculptures of Aṅga and Samatata. A 9th century inscribed sculpture of Dvādaśāditya (no.5 in Table 1), discovered at Rajauna or Valgudar near Lakhisarai, records that “these Dvādaśāditya were set up by Ranoka, son of *Vaṇika* Śrīdhara, a resident of Kṛmilā, during the fifth regnal year of the illustrious Surapāla”.²¹ This image was an object of public worship, most probably in the shrine/temple caused to be constructed by Ranoka, to gain social prestige for his family. This image inscription may be contrasted with the inscription on a fragmented image of Vasudhārā, which was discovered at Naulagarh in Begusarai district. This inscription records that this image was donated by Āśokā, wife of Dhāmmajī, and the daughter of Śaundika (vintner) Mahāmati of Kṛmilā, in the 24th regnal year of the Pāla king Vīgrahapāla (latter half of the 11th century).²² The daughter of a Śaundika donated an image of a Buddhist goddess (Vasudhārā), who was believed to offer material wealth and prosperity. We may presume that her father too could have been devoted to this deity. Apparently, the mercantile class in the city of Kṛmilā patronised both Buddhism and Brahmanism.

²⁰ For an analysis of these patterns, see Birendra Nath Prasad, *Buddhism in a Poly-Religious Context: An Archaeological History of Buddhist, Brahmanical and Jaina Religious Centres in Early Medieval Bihar and Bengal*, Delhi, 2020, pp. 544-569.

²¹ Priyatosh Banerjee, “Some Inscriptions from Bihar”, *Journal of Ancient Indian History*, Vol. VII, 1-2, 1973-74, pp.107-108.

²² D.C. Sircar, “Some inscriptions from Bihar”, *Journal of Bihar Research Society*, XXXVII, 3-4, 1951, p.4.

A similar pattern is discernible in the 10th century inscribed sculptures discovered in the plains of Comilla district in Samatāṭa. So far, five inscribed sculptures containing the names of donors have been reported from the plains of Comilla district, out of which merchants appear as donors in three instances.²³ All sculptures donated by merchants are datable to the 10th century. Dedicatory inscriptions on them show the evolution of an interesting pattern. In the earliest example of this century (no. 6 in Table 1), we see a *vr̥ddha* (senior) *sārtha*[*vāha*] Jambhālamitra donating an image of Gaṇeśa (discovered at Mandhuk) in the first regnal year of the Pāla king Gopāla II (i.e. c.967 A.D.) for the attainment of *anuttara jñāna* by all creatures but firstly by his parents'.²⁴ This senior Sārthavāha (leader of the caravan of merchants) was, as indicated by the use of the developed format of Mahāyāna dedicatory formula in the dedicatory inscription on sculpture donated by him, was a Mahāyāna Upāsaka. The image donated by him was also donated as a Buddhist image. Gaṇeśa had an ambivalent character in Buddhist art: Gaṇeśa was worshipped as the remover of obstacles (*vighna-hartā*) and at the same time as the creator of obstacles (*vighna-kartā*) or the obstacle incarnate (*vighna*).²⁵ This Mahāyāna Upāsaka most probably worshipped Gaṇeśa as *vighna-hartā*.

It may be noted that Jambhālamitra appears in another dedicatory inscription on a stone image of Gaṇeśa/Vināyaka (no. 8 in Table 1), dated to the fourth regnal year of the Pāla king Mahipāla I (i.e., c. 996 A.D.), which was discovered at Narayanapur in Comilla district. The dedicatory inscription on this image informs us that this image of Vināyaka was caused to be established by *Vaṇika* Buddhāmītra, son of *Vaṇika* Jambhālamitra, for the religious merit of his parents and himself.²⁶ It has been rightly argued by D.C. Sircar that the Jambhālamitra mentioned in this inscription is identical with the one

²³ Birendra Nath Prasad, "Votive Inscriptions on the Sculptures of Early Medieval *Samatāṭa-Harikela*: Explorations in Socio-religious History", *Religions of South Asia*, London, Vol. 4, no. 1, 2010, pp. 27–43.

²⁴ D.C. Sircar, "Pāla Rule in the Tippera District", *Indian Historical Quarterly*, Vol., XXVIII 1952, p. 57.

²⁵ G. Bhattacharya, *Essays on Buddhist Hindu Jaina Iconography and Epigraphy*, ICSBA, Dhaka, 2000, pp. 97-106.

²⁶ D.C. Sircar, "Narayanpur Vināyaka Image Inscription of King Mahipāla, Regnal Year 4", *Indian Culture*, IX, 1942-43, p. 125.

mentioned in the Mandhuk image inscription.²⁷ *Vaṇika* Buddhāmītra belonged to the village *Vīlikandhaka* of Samatāṭa.²⁸ We may assume that his father too belonged to the same village.

If contrasted with the previous inscription, we get some interesting inferences. The name of the donor —Buddhāmītra— like that of his father shows Buddhist influence. But this influence seems to be confined to his name only. Unlike his father, he did not use a Mahāyāna dedicatory formula in the dedicatory inscription on the sculpture, nor do we have any indication to suggest that the image donated by him was a Buddhist image. His father was no longer a *Sārthavāha*, and Buddhāmītra too did not claim this status. In other words, this family of merchants witnessed an economic decline and this decline made Buddhāmītra less emphatic in claiming an expressed Buddhist identity.

These two image inscriptions need to be contrasted with the dedicatory inscription on a stone image of Viṣṇu, discovered at Baghaura (no. 7 in Table 1), dated to the third regnal year of the Pāla king Mahīpāla I (i.e. c.995 A.D.). This inscription records that this image was donated by the *Paramavaiṣṇava Vaṇika* Lokadatta, a resident of the village Vilakīndaka in Samatāṭa, in the kingdom of Śrī Mahīpāladeva, for the increase of the religious merit of his parents and himself.²⁹ D.C. Sircar has rightly argued that Vilakīndaka and Vīlikandhaka referred to the same village.³⁰ The three merchants —Jambhālamītra with an expressed Buddhist identity, Buddhāmītra without any expressed Buddhist identity and *Paramavaiṣṇava* Lokadatta — belonged to the same village. What we noted in the context of the urban centre of Kṛmilā in Aṅga was true for a rural centre of Samatāṭa as well.

No 11th century inscribed sculpture donated by persons from mercantile background has been reported as yet. Five such sculptures have been reported from the 12th century, all belonging to either Magadha or Aṅga. Four of them are Buddhist; the cultic affiliation of one image is not known due to its fragmented nature. Thus, the dedicatory inscription on the pedestal of a fragmented, unidentified image, discovered at Arma in Munger district (no. 9 in Table 1),

²⁷ D.C. Sircar, “Pāla Rule in the Tippera District”, *Indian Historical Quarterly*, XXVIII, 1952, p. 57.

²⁸ D.C. Sircar, “Narayanpur Vināyaka Image Inscription of King Mahīpāla, Regnal Year 4”, *Indian Culture*, IX, 1942-43, p.125.

²⁹ N.K. Bhattasali, “Some Image Inscriptions from East Bengal”, *EI*, XVII, 1923-24, p. 355.

³⁰ D.C. Sircar, “Narayanpur Vināyaka Image Inscription of King Mahīpāla, Regnal Year 4”, *Indian Culture*, IX, 1942-43, p.123.

records that this image was donated by Sonikā, wife of the merchant Vāmbha.³¹ Due to the fragmented nature of the image, it is not possible to identify its cultic affiliation (Brahmanical or Buddhist). However, a short dedicatory inscription on an image of Mahāśrī Tārā discovered at Lakhisarai (no. 10 in Table 1) informs us that this image was donated by *Vaṇika* Jaśadevaka, son of *Māthura—Vaṇika Dānapati* Cāju.³² As per G. Bhattacharya, who deciphered this inscription, the term ‘*Māthura*’ may mean a person from *Mathurā* or may indicate the *Kāyastha* caste of the donor.³³ The use of the term *Dānapati* for Cāju indicates that this image was donated by his son Jaśadevaka to fulfil the religious vow of his father.

How did the merchants perceive their profession? Two 12th century image inscriptions from Magadha help in looking into this issue. The dedicatory inscription on an image of *Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara* (no. 11 in Table 1), besides recording the Buddhist Creed Formula, records the donation of this image in the 42nd regnal year of Rāmapāla (i.e., c. 1129 A.D.) by *Pravara-Mahāyāna- Anuyāyina Vaṇika Sādhu* Saharaṇa, son of *Sādhu* Bhādūlva, for the attainment of *Anuttara Jñāna* for all creatures, keeping his Ācārya, *upādhyāya* and parents in the forefront.³⁴ *Sādhu* Saharaṇa was originally an inhabitant of Rājagṛha.³⁵ Similarly, the dedicatory inscription on another image of *Khasarpaṇa Avalokiteśvara* (no. 12 in table 1) , discovered at Giriyeek , records that this image was donated as the *Deyadharmā* of two merchants (*Vaṇikas*) from Mathurā: *Dānapati Sādhu Śrīkara* and *Sādhu Dāgonmata*.³⁶ As four *Vaṇikas* —two from within Magadha (*Vaṇika Sādhu* Saharaṇa and *Sādhu* Bhādūlva) and two from distant Mathurā (*Sādhu Śrīkara* and *Sādhu Dāgonmata*)— have used the epithet *Sādhu* for themselves, it may be reasonably inferred that the use of this epithet in 12th century Magadha was a common trend. These *Vaṇikas* believed that they were in a noble profession and trading was a pious work, hence they adopted this epithet.

³¹ *IAR* 1960-61, p.44. The full inscription has not been published. Only the summary of the same has been provided, so we do not know the exact Sanskrit term for ‘merchant’ used in this inscription.

³² G. Bhattacharya, op.cit., p.467.

³³ *Ibid.*, p. 467.

³⁴ R.D. Banerji, “Four Inscriptions from Chandimou”, *Annual Report of the Archaeological Survey of India*, 1911-12, pp.161-62.

³⁵ *Ibid.*, pp. 161-62.

³⁶ Priyatosh Banerjee, “Two Medieval Inscriptions”, *Journal of Asiatic Society Letters*, Vol. XIX, 1953, p. 107. This inscription records the name of the Samvata of an unspecified era. Dating has been based on stylistic grounds.

The case with Sādhu Chamvivra, who donated a miniature metal image of Maitreya, either from southern Magadha or the Aṅga area of south Bihar,³⁷ could have been similar.

Some concluding observations

It may be difficult to attempt any macro theorisation on the basis of thirteen dedicatory inscriptions on sculptures spread across Bihar and Bengal, and donated in a period spanning not less than five hundred years. Yet some broad trends stand out. We see an overwhelming preference for Buddhist sculptures in the donation of sculptures by persons from mercantile background. Brahmanism too attracted mercantile patronage in the donation of inscribed sculptures. But, at the available state of our database on inscribed sculptures, Buddhism seems to be the primary beneficiary of mercantile patronage in the donation of inscribed sculptures, especially in Magadha, where it also had assertive patrons like Krodhanandin, who used their weight in favour of Buddhism in the Buddhist-Brahmanical sectarian rivalry and conflict. This pattern demands some explanation.

Some clues to the factors behind mercantile preference for Buddhism in the donation of inscribed sculptures may be found in the dedicatory inscriptions on the sculptures donated by merchants, who used the *Sādhu* epithet for themselves. In the early medieval phase, when the Brahmanical normative texts equated the ritual status of a Vaiśya with that of a Śūdra, the donation of sculptures provided a mechanism to traders for claiming that they were in a noble profession.

³⁷ S.L. Huntington and John. C. Huntington, *Leaves from the Bodhi Tree: The Art of Pāla India (8th - 12th Centuries) and Its International Legacy*, Dayton Art Institute in association with the University of Washington Press, Dayton, Ohio, 1990, pp.176-77.

Women as Donors of Inscribed Buddhist Sculptures in Early Medieval Bihar and Bengal

Birendra Nath Prasad

Abstract

Through an analysis of dedicatory inscriptions on Buddhist sculptures donated by women in early medieval Bihar and Bengal, this paper explores the nature of female patronage of Buddhist religious centres in this area. It argues that there were important regional differences in the sculptures donated by women. Buddhist religious centres of Magadha were very enthusiastic in attracting and retaining patronage from such donors. Similar patterns prevailed in the Kiul-Lakhisarai area of Aṅga. Women from diverse social backgrounds donated sculptures to Buddhist religious centres in both areas as objects of worship, which may be one of the reasons for the survival of the Bhikṣuṇī saṅgha in the Kiul-Lakhisarai area as late as the late 12th century AD.

East of the Kiul-Lakhisarai area in general, and Bengal in particular, Buddhist religious centres seem to have been reluctant to enter into ritual engagements with their non-monastic non-aristocratic women devotees. This had a significant bearing on the social history of Buddhism in that area.

Introduction

In some Pan-Indian theorisations on the decline of Indian Buddhism during the early medieval period (c. 600- 1200 AD), it has been argued that the lessening participation of women in Buddhism was one of the central factors

in precipitating this decline.¹ One would hardly underestimate the role of female patronage in the institutional survival of any religion: women devotees play a great role in inculcating affiliation to any particular religion not only in their own generation but also in the next generation. For this reason a study of evolving feminine patronage of Buddhism from a regional and sub-regional perspective assumes significance. This kind of study may force us to question some commonly held Pan-Indian theorisations. In this paper, an attempt will be made to understand the issue of patronage of Buddhism by women in early medieval Bihar and Bengal through an analysis of dedicatory inscriptions on Buddhist sculptures donated by them.²

A study of participation by women in Buddhism in this period through an analysis of dedicatory inscriptions on Buddhist sculptures donated by them has some important bearings on the issues of the social bases of patronage of Buddhism and its eventual decline. The donation of sculptures to Buddhist religious centres involved considerable monetary expense on the part of the donor: the donor needed to find a sculptor and pay him for making the sculpture. As these Buddhist images were donated to Buddhist monasteries, shrines and sanctuaries as objects of worship, the donor also needed to pay something to the ritual specialist who would perform the *Prāṇapratīṣṭhā* ritual for the donated image, without which it would not acquire the required sanctity to become an object of worship.³ Even with the involvement of this kind of monetary expense by the donors of sculptures, only some Buddhist religious centres in early

¹ Ronald Davidson, *Indian Esoteric Buddhism: A Social History of the Tantric Movement*, New York, 2002, pp.91-98.

² Excluding the dedicatory inscriptions on the sculptures of Kurkihar, the reported corpus of dedicatory inscriptions on Buddhist and Brahmanical sculptures of early medieval Bihar and Bengal has been analysed in Birendra Nath Prasad, *Buddhism in a Poly-Religious Context: An Archaeological History of Buddhist, Brahmanical and Jaina Religious Centres in Early Medieval Bihar and Bengal*, Delhi, 2020, pp. 231-381. Dedicatory inscriptions on sculptures donated to the Buddhist establishment of Kurkihar were analysed in Birendra Nath Prasad, “The Socio-Religious Dimensions of Dedicatory Inscriptions on Sculptures Donated to a Buddhist Establishment in Early Medieval Magadha: Kurkihar, c. 800 CE-1200 CE”, *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies*, Vol. 7, 2014, pp. 116-152. Most of the inscriptions discussed in the present paper were also discussed in the book and paper referred to above, but without analysing the evolving pattern of feminine patronage through the donation of Buddhist images and its implications for the decline of Buddhism. The present paper hopes to fill that gap.

³ Birendra Nath Prasad, *Buddhism in a Poly-Religious Context: An Archaeological History of Buddhist, Brahmanical and Jaina Religious Centres in Early Medieval Bihar and Bengal*, Delhi, 2020, pp. 239-40.

medieval Bihar and Bengal were able to attract or willing to accept donations of sculpture by women donors. The question which needs to be explored, then, is: which Buddhist religious centre was willing to accept donations from women donors? Which part of the religious space of such religious centres was made available to women donors? How did the pattern evolve as one move from Bihar to Bengal? What kind of bearing did it have on the decline of Buddhism in this area in the long run? In some Pan-Indian theorizations, it has been argued that not only the *Bhikṣuṇī saṅgha* declined by the 7th century AD, but ‘more broadly, though, the early medieval period saw the dramatic deterioration of support for and involvement of women in Buddhist activities at any and every level, whether in the monastery, in the lay community, or in the newly evolving Siddha systems’⁴ Do the patterns observed in early medieval Bihar and Bengal conform to this broad pattern? This paper hopes to explore some of these issues.

So far, 19 Buddhist sculptures inscribed with the names of their women donors have been reported from early medieval Bihar and Bengal. None of them indicate donation of sculpture by any woman from royal background. The data from them are summarised in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Buddhist sculptures donated by women donors in early medieval Bihar and Bengal

Sl. No	Cultic identity of the image	The place where the image was discovered	Donor	Social background of the donor	Places where donors came	Expressed motive behind donation	Period
1	Tārā	Mahābodhi	Nattukā	A merchant’s wife, without expressed Mahāyāna identity	Not mentioned	Not mentioned	early 8 th century
2	Pancika, Bronze	Nālandā	Vikhākā (Viśākhā?)	probably from aristocratic background, without expressed Buddhist identity.	village <i>Purika</i> in the <i>Viṣaya</i> of Rājagṛha	None expressed	c. 813 A.D.

⁴ Ronald Davidson, *Indian Esoteric Buddhism: A Social History of the Tantric Movement*, New York, 2002, p.91.

WOMEN AS DONORS OF INSCRIBED BUDDHIST SCULPTURES

Sl. No	Cultic identity of the image	The place where the image was discovered	Donor	Social background of the donor	Places where donors came	Expressed motive behind donation	Period
3	Buddha in BSM, stone	Nalanda	<i>Paramopāsikā</i> Gangākā, a woman	non-monastic, non-aristocratic, with expressed Mahāyāna identity	Not mentioned	<i>Annutara Jñāna</i> by all creatures	8 th or 9 th century A.D.
4	Tārā	Kurkihar	Śākyabhikṣuṇī Guṇamati	A Mahāyāna nun	Not mentioned.	None expressed	9 th century A.D.
5	Buddha in BSM	Kurkihar	Paramopāsiki Mañju.	A female Mahāyāna lay follower	Not mentioned.	None expressed	9 th century A.D.
6	Tārā	Kurkihar	Umādukā, wife of Iddāka.	non-monastic, non-aristocratic, without expressed Buddhist identity	Not mentioned.	None expressed	9 th century A.D.
7	Avalokiteśvara	Kurkihar	Bhadevī (?)	non-monastic, non-aristocratic, without expressed Buddhist identity	Not mentioned	None expressed	10 th century
8	Tārā	Kurkihar	Upāsakī Gopāli-Sāuka	Female Mahāyāna lay follower	Not mentioned.	None expressed	10 th century
9	Tārā	Kurkihar	Upāsakī Duvajha	Female Mahāyāna lay follower	Not mentioned	None expressed	10 th century
10	Vasudhārā	Kurkihar	Vāṭukā, wife of Gopālahino	Female without expressed Buddhist identity	Not mentioned	None expressed	10 th century
11	Vasudhārā	Kurkihar	Gāukā, another wife of Gopālahino	Female without expressed Buddhist identity	Not mentioned	None expressed	10 th century

WOMEN AS DONORS OF INSCRIBED BUDDHIST SCULPTURES

Sl. No	Cultic identity of the image	The place where the image was discovered	Donor	Social background of the donor	Places where donors came	Expressed motive behind donation	Period
12	Crowned Buddha	Kurkihar	Yekhoḱā, the wife of Mahattama Dūlapa	Wife of a Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Not mentioned	None expressed	11 th century
13	Avalokiteśvara	Kurkihar	Upāsakī Duvajha	A female Mahāyāna lay worshipper	Not mentioned	None expressed	11 th century
14	Mañjuśrī Kumārabhūta	Kurkihar	Jākhyā	non-monastic, non-aristocratic, without expressed Buddhist identity	Not mentioned	None expressed	11 th century
15	Avalokiteśvara	Nalanda	Apparikā, daughter of Rambhu	Non-monastic, non-aristocratic, without expressed Mahāyāna identity	Not mentioned	None expressed	Late 10 th or 11 th century A.D.
16	Vasudhārā	Nauagarh, Begusarai district	Āśokā, wife of Dhāmmajī	non-aristocratic non-monastic without expressed Buddhist identity	Daughter of a merchant of Kṛmilā	None expressed	Latter half of the 11 th century
17	Puṇḍeśvarī	Lakhisarai	<i>pravara-mahāyāna-yāyinyā-paramopāsikā Śoma</i>	non-aristocratic non-monastic with expressed Buddhist identity	Not mentioned	None expressed	11 th century
18	Buddhist Tantric Siddhāchārya	Somewhere in Varendra (North Bengal)	Ālasī	Non-monastic non-aristocratic woman without expressed Mahāyāna identity	Not mentioned	None expressed	11 th century
19	Khasarapaṇa Avalokiteśvara	Kiul-Lakhisarai area	Śākya-Sthavirā Vijayaśrībhadrā	A nun with expressed Mahāyāna identity	Not mentioned	None expressed	12 th century

It has been noted elsewhere that in the Pāla- Sena period (c. 750-1210 AD) Bihar and Bengal witnessed a significant proliferation of Buddhist and Brahmanical sculptures.⁵ 158 Buddhist sculptures, inscribed with the names of their donors, have also been reported from this area and period.⁶ Of these, dedicatory inscriptions on 19 Buddhist sculptures record the name of their women donors, which forms 12% of reported Buddhist sculptures inscribed with the names of their donors. It is apparent that women were not the dominant group of donors of Buddhist sculptures in early medieval Bihar and Bengal. We may infer that it was not easy for women to access wealth and it was probably more difficult for them to come out of their homes. This paper is about those women who could mobilize wealth to visit some Buddhist religious centres and install Buddhist sculptures there as objects of worship.

Out of the 19 reported Buddhist sculptures inscribed with the names of their women donors, 15 have been reported from Magadha, 1 from North Bihar, 2 from the Kiul-Lakhisarai area of Aṅga, and 1 from Varendra (north Bengal). No such inscribed sculpture has been reported from other sub-regions (i.e. Rāḍha, Vaṅga, Samatāṭa-Harikela) of early medieval Bengal. It may also be noted that all pre-11th century examples are confined to Magadha. Within Magadha, Kurkihar has reported the highest number of inscribed sculptures donated by women, followed by Nālandā and Mahābodhi. It must however, be noted that such sculptures reported from Kurkihar are mostly miniature bronze sculptures, and, unlike big stone sculptures, they were unlikely to have been prominent cult-objects of public worship.

In terms of cultic preferences, Tārā was the most preferred deity (5 examples), followed by different forms of Avalokiteśvara (4 examples), Vasudhārā (3 examples), Buddha in Bhūmiśparśamudrā (2 examples), Puṇḍeśvarī (1 example), a Buddhist Tantric Siddhācārya who was devoted to Tārā (1 example), Crowned

⁵ Birendra Nath Prasad, *Buddhism in a Poly-Religious Context: An Archaeological History of Buddhist, Brahmanical and Jaina Religious Centres in Early Medieval Bihar and Bengal*, Delhi, 2020, pp. 83-230. Within this general pattern, some significant variations existed. In South Bihar, Buddhism was practically absent in the areas to the west of the Sone river. In West Bengal, it was practically absent in the districts of Purulia and Bankura, where Jaina sculptures and temples dominated. On the whole, this period saw the proliferation of Brahmanical sculptures in all parts of Bihar and Bengal. Buddhism was an expanding religion, but Brahmanical expansion was more profound and its patronage base was more diversified (pp. 83-230.)

⁶ Birendra Nath Prasad, *Buddhism in a Poly-Religious Context: An Archaeological History of Buddhist, Brahmanical and Jaina Religious Centres in Early Medieval Bihar and Bengal*, Delhi, 2020, pp. 231-361. See particularly p.345.

Buddha (1 example), Pañcikā (1 example), and Mañjuśrī Kumārabhūta (1 example). Tārā was a saviour deity par excellence, especially in her *Aṣṭamahābhaya* form.⁷ Vasudhārā was a bestower of wealth and prosperity. Buddha in Bhūmisparśamudrā basically signified the Māravijaya episode of the life of the Buddha Śākyamuni and represented a continuation of Mahāyāna.⁸ Puṇḍeśvarī was local goddess in the Kiul-Lakhisarai area of Aṅga, who was gradually integrated into the institutional form of Mahāyāna Buddhism, most probably as a goddess who protected children and bestowed fertility to women.⁹ Pañcikā as a deity is often depicted in the company of Hārītī in the sculptural art of early medieval Bihar and Bengal. The Crowned Buddha was regarded as a form of Vairocana.¹⁰ It is apparent that the Buddhist goddesses associated with protection, wealth, prosperity and fertility were preferred objects of worship and donation by epigraphically recorded women donors of early medieval Bihar and Bengal.

None of the women donors have recorded their Varṇa-Jāti background. The same of their male relatives is not recorded either.

In Bihar and Bengal, the earliest epigraphically recorded instance of the association of a woman in the donation of an inscribed Buddhist sculpture is provided by the fragmentary dedicatory inscription on a stone image of seated Buddha, dated to the year 64 of Mahārāja Trikamala of an unknown dynasty, and found near the Mahābodhi temple. On stylistic grounds, this sculpture has been dated to the 4th century AD by Frederick Asher.¹¹ Asher has also shown convincingly that this sculpture, despite being heavily influenced by the Kuṣāṇa period Mathurā idioms, was made locally at Bodh Gaya by local sculptors. In other words, patrons who

⁷ For an analysis of the role of Tārā as a saviour deity, see N.N. Bhattacharya, “The Cult of Tārā in Historical Perspective”, in N.N. Bhattacharya (ed.), *Tantric Buddhism: Centennial Tribute to Dr. Benoytosh Bhattacharya*, Delhi, 2005, pp. 190-207.

⁸ Jacob N. Kinnard, “Reevaluating the 8th-9th Century Pāla Milieu: Icono-Conservatism and the Persistence of Śākyamuni”, *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, Vol.19, no.2, 1996, pp.290-92.

⁹ Birendra Nath Prasad, “A Folk Tradition Integrated into Mahāyāna Buddhism: Some Observations on the Votive Inscriptions on Sculptures of Puṇḍeśvarī/ Pūrṇeśvarī/ Puṇyeśvarī Discovered in the Kiul-Lakhisarai Area, Bihar”, in G. Mevissen (ed.), *Berlin Indological Studies*, Vol.21, 2013, p. 302.

¹⁰ Hiram W. Woodward Jr., “The Life of the Buddha in the Pāla Monastic Environment”, *Journal of Walters Art Gallery*, Vol.48, 1990, p. 20; Claudine Bautze-Picron, *The Bejewelled Buddha: From India to Burma*, New Delhi, 2010, p.141.

¹¹ Frederick Asher, “The Bodh Gaya Image of the Year 64: A Reconsideration”, *Journal of Bihar Research Society*, Vol. LVIII, 1972, pp.151-57.

donated this sculpture to the Mahābodhi undertook a pilgrimage to the Mahābodhi and installed this stone sculpture as an object of worship with the help of some monks. Thus, the dedicatory inscription on this sculpture records that a *Vinayadhara* ('expounder of the *Vinaya*') *Bhikṣu*, who was the companion of another *Vinayadhara Bhikṣu*, caused one Simharatha to dedicate this image of the Bodhisattva in the year 64 of Mahārāja Trikamala.¹² We are also informed of another *Vinayadhara Bhikṣu* and an *Upāsikā*, whose name is also not recorded.¹³ This sculpture was donated with the aim of *Mātā-pitunāma –Pujāye Bhavatu Upādhyāy*.¹⁴ Gregory Schopen has shown that this dedicatory formula is generally found in the cases of donation of sculptures by persons associated with some tradition of Hīnayāna.¹⁵

The much mutilated nature of this inscription does not allow us to draw many inferences. It is, though, very interesting to note that the names of the three *Vinayadhara Bhikṣus* and an *Upāsikā* are not recorded, despite the fact that they all had some role in the dedication of the sculpture. Only the name of Simharatha, who actually funded the installation of the sculpture, has been recorded. A woman with an expressed Buddhist identity (i.e. the *Upāsikā* referred to in the inscription) was present, but her role was considered not important enough to be recorded in the dedicatory inscription. We are also not informed what kind of relationship, if any, she had with Simharatha.

If contrasted with the next epigraphically recorded instance of the donation of a Buddhist sculpture by a woman donor, we see some fundamental changes in the initiative and agency of woman vis-à-vis her male relatives and monks. Thus, the dedicatory inscription on a stone image of Tārā (no. 1 in table 1), attributable to the 8th century Bodh Gaya area on stylistic grounds, records that this image was the *Deyadharmā* of *Vaṇijakī* ('merchant's wife') Nattukā.¹⁶ The name of the woman donor was recorded, but that of her husband was not. Similarly, the name(s) of monks, who must have helped her in the *prāṇapratīṣṭhā* rituals of the donated image, were also not recorded. This woman had access to wealth and agency, which were utilized in the donation of this image.

¹² S.L. Huntington, *The 'Pāla-Sena' Schools of Sculpture*, Leiden, 1984 p. 204.

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ Ibid.

¹⁵ G. Schopen, *Indian Monastic Buddhism: Collected Papers on Textual, Inscriptional and Archaeological Evidence*, Part I, Delhi, 2010, p.37.

¹⁶ G. Bhattacharya, *Essays on Buddhist Hindu Jaina Iconography and Epigraphy*, Dhaka, 2000, p.464.

Among the 9th century donors, *Paramopāsikā* Gangākā, the donor of a massive stone sculpture of the Buddha in Bhūmisparśamudrā (no. 3 in table 1), Śākyabhikṣuṇī (i.e. Mahayana nun) Guṇamati, the donor of an image of Tārā, Kurkihar (no. 4 in Table 1), Paramopāsakī Mañju, the donor of a bronze image of the Buddha in Bhūmisparśamudrā, Kurkihar (no. 5 in Table 1), indicate the independent agency of women in donation of images and their access to wealth. None of them have recorded the names of their male relatives or the name of any monk. Barring the inscription on the image donated by Gangākā, other dedicatory inscriptions are in a very short dedicatory format, just recording that these images were *Deyadharmma* of Śākyabhikṣuṇī Guṇamati and Paramopāsikā Mañju respectively.¹⁷ In none of the cases, are the names of the male relatives (father or husband) of the donor women mentioned.

Among these donors, *Paramopāsikā* Gangākā and Śākyabhikṣuṇī Guṇamati stand out. The donation of an image of Tārā by Śākyabhikṣuṇī Guṇamati indicates the survival of the Bhikṣuṇī saṅgha in the 9th century as well, and contradicts those pan-Indian theorizations that argue for the disappearance of the order of nuns within Indian Buddhism by the 7th century. The question that needs to be explored, then, is: was Śākyabhikṣuṇī Guṇamati a local Bhikṣuṇī or from outside? Śākyabhikṣuṇī Guṇamati has not stated anything to this effect in the dedicatory inscription on the image, which renders our task difficult. One may, however, recall that Kurkihar had a significant presence of monks from Kāñcī in Tamil Nadu and they were very careful in recording their Kāñcī origin in the dedicatory inscriptions on images donated by them to the Buddhist establishment of Kurkihar.¹⁸ We don't see any effort of this kind in the dedicatory inscription on the image donated by Guṇamati. We cannot rule out the possibility that she was a local Bhikṣuṇī *therī*.

The dedicatory inscription, datable to late 8th or 9th century on palaeographic grounds, on a massive (almost 6 feet high) stone sculpture of Buddha in Bhūmisparśamudrā that was discovered amidst the excavated ruins of the Nālandā Mahāvihāra begins with the Buddhist Creed Formula and records

¹⁷ For the short dedicatory inscription on image donated by Paramopāsikā Mañju, see P.L. Gupta, *Patna Museum Catalogue of Antiquities*, Patna, 1965, p. 128, inscription no. 12. For the short dedicatory inscription on the image donated by Śākyabhikṣuṇī Guṇamati, see G. Bhattacharya, op. cit., p.463.

¹⁸ Birendra Nath Prasad, "The Socio-Religious Dimensions of Dedicatory Inscriptions on Sculptures Donated to a Buddhist Establishment in Early Medieval Magadha: Kurkihar, c. 800 CE-1200 CE", *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies*, Vol. 7, 2014, pp. 116-152.

the names of Ārya Śāriputra, Ārya Mahāmaudgalyāyana, Ārya Maitreyañātha and Ārya Vasumitra.¹⁹ It also records that the image was the Deyadharmma of *Paramopāsikā* Gangākā.²⁰ As indicated by the use of the term *Paramopāsikā*, Gangākā was a woman with expressed Mahāyāna identity and she took care to get recorded the names of some famous Mahāyāna Ācāryas in the dedicatory inscription. Ārya Maitreyañātha was the founder of the *Yogācāra* or *Vijñānavāda* school of Mahāyāna and Ārya Vasumitra was the founder of the Vaibhāṣka school. Similarly, Ārya Śāriputra and Ārya Mahāmaudgalyāyana were the two chief disciples (*Aggasāvakas*) of Śākyamuni Buddha.²¹ Given the massive size of the donated image, its donation must have involved the mobilization of considerable resources on the part of the donor and it must have been a prominent object of public worship within the Nālandā Mahāvihāra.²² The authorities of the Mahāvihāra were willing to accept patronage from a Mahāyāna Upāsikā without any expressed aristocratic pedigree (no claim to this effect has been made by Gangākā in the dedicatory inscription) and allow the installation of this image as a prominent object of public worship.²³

The 9th century also witnessed donation by women who identified themselves as housewives. We have two reported examples of this kind: Umādukā, wife of Iddāka, who donated a sculpture of Tārā to the Buddhist establishment of Kurkihar²⁴; and Vikhākā, who donated the bronze image of Pañcikā to the Nālandā Mahāvihāra. The dedicatory inscription on the bronze sculpture of Pañcikā (no.2 in Table 1) records that “in the third regnal year of Devapāla, Vikhākā (Viśākhā), the sole wife of the ‘destroyer of the Kalchuris’, and a resident of the village of Purikā in Rājagṛha *Viṣaya*, together with the people, set up this image

¹⁹ B. Sahai, *The Inscriptions of Bihar (From Earliest Times to the Middle of the 13th century A.D.)*, Ramananda Vidya Bhavan, Delhi, 1983, p.126.

²⁰ C.S. Upasaka, *Nalanda: Past and Present*, Nava Nalanda Mahavihara, Nalanda, 1977, p. 180.

²¹ Birendra Nath Prasad, *Buddhism in a Poly-Religious Context: An Archaeological History of Buddhist, Brahmanical and Jaina Religious Centres in Early Medieval Bihar and Bengal*, Delhi, 2020, p. 269.

²² *Ibid.*, pp.269-70.

²³ At present, this image is locally known as Dhelvā Bābā. Some local villagers believe it to be a demon and throw stones at it to ward off evil and keep away calamity. This is one of the indications of the profound transformation Buddhism has undergone in Magadha.

²⁴ G. Bhattacharya, *Essays on Hindu Buddhist and Jaina Iconography and Epigraphy*, Dhaka, 2000, p. 464. The dedicatory inscription on this image is very short, just recording that the image was the Deyadharmma of Umādukā, wife of Iddāka.

at the famous Nālandā²⁵. No political epithet (*Sāmanta*, *Mahāsāmanta*, etc.) has been used for her husband. Even his name is not recorded. But the donation of this image to the Nālandā Mahāvihāra offered her an opportunity to announce that she was the sole wife of her husband.

All five reported examples of the donation of Buddhist sculptures by women donors during the 10th century are from the Buddhist establishment of Kurkihar. Among the donors who have not recorded the names of their male relatives are Upāsakī Gopāli Sāuka²⁶ and Upāsakī Duvajha²⁷, donors of the bronze images of Tārā (no. 8 and 9 in Table 1), and Bhadevī, the donor of a bronze image of Avalokiteśvara²⁸ (no. 7 in Table 1). Dedicatory inscriptions donated by them come in a very short dedicatory format, just recording that these images were their *Deyadharmā*. Due to this factor, it is difficult to read much social history in them. It may be noted that Upāsakī Duvajha appears as the donor of the image of Avalokiteśvara (no. 13 in Table 1) in the 11th century.²⁹ This indicates that she had a longer association with the Buddhist establishment of Kurkihar, yet she remained an Upāsakī and did not become a Bhikṣuṇī. Nor do we have any example of donation of a sculpture to the monastic establishment of Kurkihar after Guṇamati. All this indicates the decline of the Bhikṣuṇīsaṅgha at Kurkihar after the 9th century.

This decline was despite the presence of non-monastic non-aristocratic devotees who patronized the Buddhist establishment of Kurkihar for many years. We may infer this through an analysis of the dedicatory inscriptions on sculptures donated by a man named Gopālahino and his two wives. His two wives — Vāṭukā³⁰ and Gāukā³¹— donated images of Vasudhārā, the Buddhist goddess of wealth and prosperity (no. 10 and 11 in Table 1) to the Āpaṇaka Mahāvihāra as their *Deyadharmā*. In the dedicatory inscription on both sculptures, their husband Gopālahino has been simply referred to by his name.³² But, in the 11th

²⁵ H. Sastri, *Nalanda and Its Epigraphic Material*, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India, no. 66, Delhi, 1942, p.87.

²⁶ P.L. Gupta 1965, op. cit., p. p. 145, inscription no.107.

²⁷ Ibid., p.146, inscription no. 116.

²⁸ Ibid., p.137, inscription no. 64.

²⁹ Ibid., p. 139, inscription no. 73.

³⁰ P.L. Gupta, op.cit.,p.150, inscription no. 134.

³¹ Ibid., p.150, inscription no. 135.

³² Birendra Nath Prasad, “The Socio-Religious Dimensions of Dedicatory Inscriptions on Sculptures Donated to a Buddhist Establishment in Early Medieval Magadha: Kurkihar, c. 800 CE-1200 CE”, *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies*, Vol. 7, 2014, P.134.

century, at least 35 years after the donation of images by Vātukā and Gāukā, Gopālahīno donated an image of the Buddha in Vajraparyankāsana.³³ In the dedicatory inscription on that image, he referred to himself as *Paramopāsaka* Gopālahīno.³⁴ That is to say, he was more emphatic in asserting his Buddhist identity now. Despite commanding the patronage of such committed devotees, the Bhikṣuṇī saṅgha at Kurkihar declined after the 9th century.

Seven inscribed Buddhist sculptures donated by women have been reported so far for the 11th century. They show one important trend. Unlike the reported examples of the previous centuries, which are confined to Magadha, this century witnessed the donation by women in the Aṅga area, North Bihar, and Varendra as well. In the previous centuries, images of the donated Buddhist deities were either of the Buddha Śākyamuni in different *mudrās* or of those deities that were worshipped for different *laukika* needs: Tārā, Vasudhārā, Pañcīkā and Avalokiteśvara. In this century, the donation of an image of Puṇḍeśvarī indicates the continuation of the trends of the previous centuries. However, the donation of an image of the Crowned Buddha and an image of a Tantric Siddhācārya indicates the patronage of Tantric Buddhism by women.

The reported examples from Kurkihar are miniature bronze sculptures. Only one donor (Yekhoḳā, wife of *Mahattama* Dūlapa, donor of a sculpture of the Crowned Buddha—no. 12 in Table 1) has recorded the name of her husband.³⁵ Two other donors to Kurkihar—Upāsakī Duvajha, who donated an image of Avalokiteśvara³⁶ (no. 13 in Table 1) and Jākhya, who donated an image of Mañjuśrī Kumārabhūta³⁷ (no. 14 in Table 1)—have not recorded any information regarding their social background or the names of their male relative, indicating their independent agency, initiative and access to wealth in the donation of Buddhist sculptures. They all appear to be from the non-monastic non-aristocratic section of society. Similarly, Apparīkā, who donated a large and beautifully carved stone image of Avalokiteśvara to the Nālandā Mahāvihāra (no. 15 in Table 1), was most probably from the same section of society.³⁸ As

³³ P.L. Gupta, op. cit., pp.130-31, inscription no. 25.

³⁴ Ibid., pp.130-131, inscription no. 25.

³⁵ P.L. Gupta, op. cit., p.133, inscription no. 33.

³⁶ For the short dedicatory inscription on this image, see Ibid., p.146, inscription no. 116.

³⁷ For the short dedicatory inscription on this image, see Ibid., p. 143, inscription no. 95.

³⁸ For the dedicatory inscription on this image, see Jinah Kim, “Unheard Voices: Women’s Roles in Medieval Buddhist Artistic Production and Religious Practices in South Asia”, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Vol. 80, No. 1, 2012, pp. 218-219. We agree with her

she has recorded the name of her father, and not of her husband, we have some reason to believe that she was an unmarried woman at the time of the donation of this image.

Three other reported examples of the 11th century— a stone sculpture of Vasudhārā donated by Āśokā, wife of Dhāmmajī, to some Buddhist religious centre of Naulagarh in the Begusarai district of North Bihar (no.16 in Table 1)³⁹; a stone sculpture of Puṇḍeśvarī donated by *Pravara-mahāyāna-yāyinyā-paramopāsikā* Śoma in the Kiul-Lahisarai area (no. 17 in Table 1);⁴⁰ and the stone sculpture of Buddhist Tantric Siddhācārya donated by a donor called Ālasī in some part of Varendra (no. 18 in Table 1)⁴¹— indicate two different trends. In the dedicatory inscription on the image donated by Dhāmmajī, not only the name of her husband but also that of her father has been recorded. In contrast, Śoma and Ālasī did not record the name of any male relative. In fact, in the dedicatory inscription on the image donated by Ālasī, we have the earliest epigraphically recorded example of devotion to a Buddhist Siddhācārya by any devotee in early medieval Bihar and Bengal. The Siddhācāryas, it has been rightly argued by Ronald Davidson, represented the non-institutional form of Buddhist esoterism, having an ambivalent relationship with monastic Buddhism.⁴² They were generally not mindful of the prevailing social norms on sexuality, *Varṇa* and *Jāti*. If a woman became a devotee of a Siddhācārya and publicly acknowledged her association with him by inscribing her name on the image of the Siddhācārya, it must have been an act of exceptional courage.

In the stone image donated by Ālasī, we see a central male figure, almost nude, surrounded by subsidiary figures, and a seated image of Tārā on the top of the relief.⁴³ The dedicatory inscription on this image records that this image

suggestion that the donation of this big and beautifully carved stone image must have involved the mobilization of considerable wealth on the part of the donor.

³⁹ For the dedicatory inscription on this image, see D.C. Sircar, “Some inscriptions from Bihar”, *Journal of Bihar Research Society*, Vol. XXXVII, 3-4, 1951, p.4.

⁴⁰ For the text of the dedicatory inscription on the image of this deity, see Frederick Asher, “An Image at Lakhi Serai and its Implications”, *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. LIX/3-4, 2000, p.301. For an analysis of this inscription, see Birendra Nath Prasad, “A Folk Tradition Integrated into Mahāyāna Buddhism: Some Observations on the Votive Inscriptions on Sculptures of Puṇḍeśvarī/Pūrṇeśvarī/Puṇyeśvarī Discovered in the Kiul-Lakhisarai Area, Bihar”, *Berlin Indological Studies*, Vol. 21, 2013, p. 303.

⁴¹ For the text of the dedicatory inscription on this image, see G. Bhattacharya, op.cit., p.380-81.

⁴² Ronald Davidson, op.cit., pp. 293-335.

⁴³ G. Bhattacharya, op.cit., p.380.

was the *Deyadharmma* of a woman called Ālasī.⁴⁴ It has been rightly argued by G. Bhattacharya that the central figure of this sculpture was a Siddha and he was the preceptor of the donor. This Siddhācārya, as indicated by the depiction of Tārā in the upper portion of the sculpture, was a devotee of Tārā.⁴⁵ We may add that Ālasī too, like her preceptor, could have been a devotee of Tārā.

To sum up the patterns in the 11th century, we see the donation of images by women donors of diverse social backgrounds. Even Tantric Buddhism was not without its women patrons.

This diversity probably explains the survival of a *Bhikṣuṇī saṅgha* in the Kiul-Lakhisarai area of Aṅga in the 12th century. The inscription (datable to c.1150 A.D.) on an image of Simhanāda Avalokiteśvara that was discovered at Jaianagar near Lakhisarai (no. 19 in Table 1), records that this image was the *Deyadharmma* of Śākya-Sthavirā Vijayaśrībhadrā belonging to the branch (*Viṭapi*) of Mallikādevī (*Mallikādevī -Viṭovi-Sthitā* –Śākya-Sthavirā *Vijayaśrībhadrāya Deyadharmmoyama*).⁴⁶ Though J. Kim takes the term ‘Śākya-Sthavirā’ in the sense of ‘elderly Buddhist nun’, on the analogy of Śākya-*bhikṣuṇī* we infer that this term may have been used in the sense of a Mahāyāna nun. It has been rightly argued that the ‘*Viṭovi*’ mentioned in this inscription is an incorrect rendering of *Viṭapi*.⁴⁷ Mallikādevī was the head of a *Bhikṣuṇī saṅgha* and Vijayaśrībhadrā belonged to that *Bhikṣuṇī saṅgha*. Like Guṇamati of Kurkihar, Vijayaśrībhadrā did not record if she was a local nun or came from outside. It has been noted elsewhere that those non-local monk-donors of sculptures, who came to Bihar on pilgrimage, were very careful in recording their place of origin.⁴⁸ We don’t see any attempt of this kind in the dedicatory inscriptions on sculptures donated by nuns Guṇamati and Vijayaśrībhadrā. This indicates that a *Bhikṣuṇī saṅgha* existed in the late 12th century Kiul-Lakhisarai area.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p.380.

⁴⁵ Ibid., p.380.

⁴⁶ J. Kim, “Unheard Voices: Women’s role in Medieval Buddhist Artistic Production and Religious Practice in South Asia”, *Journal of the American Academy of Religion*, Vol.80, no.1, 2012, p.207.

⁴⁷ J. Kim, op.cit., pp.207-210.

⁴⁸ Birendra Nath Prasad, *Buddhism in a Poly-Religious Context: An Archaeological History of Buddhist, Brahmanical and Jaina Religious Centres in Early Medieval Bihar and Bengal*, Delhi, 2020, pp. 231-381.

Summing up

The limited database of just 19 inscribed Buddhist sculptures donated by women in early medieval Bihar and Bengal does not allow us to offer macro theorizations. Some broad patterns, though, stand out. Major Buddhist religious centres of Magadha —Bodh Gayā, Nālandā, Kurkihar— were willing to accept donations of inscribed Buddhist sculptures from women donors of diverse social backgrounds. Buddhist religious centres of the Kiul-Lakhisarai area of Aṅga too displayed a similar pattern. The pattern seems to change when we move to the areas east of Kiul-Lakhisarai. No example of an inscribed sculptures donated by a woman has been reported from Vikramaśilā or any monastic centre of Bengal. It has been noted elsewhere that monastic centres of early medieval Bengal were reluctant to enter into ritual engagement with their non-monastic non-aristocratic devotees.⁴⁹ One wonders if this reluctance was responsible for some women devotees like Ālasī finding spiritual solace in the *Siddhācāryas*.

⁴⁹ Ibid., pp. 231-381; 493-533.

Between Universal Consciousness and Cultural Patterns of Thought: Perspectives on Yu Yu's Notion of Logic in the 1930s

Jan Vrhovski

Abstract

This article aims at pinpointing the main characteristics of the notion of logic in the work of Yu Yu, a renowned propagator of Buddhist philosophy and Indian *hetuvidyā* in Republican China. In so doing, it focusses exclusively on Yu's work in the late 1920s and 1930s, when Chinese discussions on Buddhism and logic were at their height. The study sets out from Yu Yu's early investigations into the *hetuvidyā*, from whence it then gradually traces the development of a comprehensive notion of logic. In the main analysis, it aims at shedding some light on Yu's later view on the relationship between Western and Chinese logic and his subsequent adoption of a special kind of language-conditioned "logical relativism". Concurrently, the study also aims at presenting a few preliminary insights into how Yu's notion of logic was influenced by contemporary reinterpretations of Buddhist epistemology on one side and contemporary Chinese discourse on logic and language on the other.

Keywords: Buddhism, Chinese logic, *hetuvidyā*, Yu Yu, Republican China

1. Prologue

In 1920s and 1930s China, Buddhist philosophy once again became regarded as an important source of philosophical ideas. From the beginning of the

1920s on, members of both the senior and the younger generation of Chinese intellectuals, such as Ouyang Jian (歐陽漸, courtesy name Jinghu 鏡湖, later changed his name into Jingwu 竟無, 1871-1943), Chen Daqi (陳大齊, 1886-1983), Liang Shuming (梁漱溟, 1893-1988),¹ Xiong Shili (熊十力, 1885-1968), Lü Cheng (呂澂, 1896-1989), Dharma master Taixu (太虛法師, original name Lü Peilin 呂沛林, 1890-1947) as well as other lay and clerical adherents of Buddhism, persistently endeavoured to reintroduce various aspects of Buddhist philosophy into the contemporary intellectual discourse. Although the revival of Buddhist philosophy had in fact started much earlier – e.g. the revival of the Yogācāra tradition (*Yuqie xingpai* 瑜伽行派) which had started as early as the late 1890s (Makeham 2014, 2) – a major step forward was made only by the May Fourth generation of philosophers, who, each in his own capacity, managed to take the theoretical adaptations of ideas from Buddhist philosophy to a brand new level.

Apart from the extremely popular Consciousness Only (*Weishi* 唯識) school of Yogācāra Buddhism, which became a synonym for the latter (together with *Faxiang* 法相 (*dharma-lakṣaṇa*) “Dharma Characteristics”), in the late 1920s, the notion of Buddhist logic suddenly gained relevance in circles of Chinese intellectuals who maintained an interest in Buddhist philosophy. On the one hand, it may be assumed that the emergence of Buddhist logic was stimulated by the ongoing debates on ancient Chinese logic and Western logic, which developed in line with the intellectual trends related to the May Fourth movement 1919. On the other hand, by the gradual reinvigoration of the entire tradition of Indian logic – the *yinming* 因明 literally “understanding of reasons,” Skt. *hetuvidyā* – the Chinese adherents of Buddhist philosophy were able to furnish their modern philosophical meditations with a methodological basis, comparable to those applied by Chinese propagators of either Western or traditional philosophical or scientific worldviews. (Cf. Zhou Yunzhi 1989, 133-24; 2004, 301-52)

¹ Liang was also among the first Chinese adherents of Buddhism to have advanced a critical view on Russell’s philosophy. As early as 1917, Liang composed a critical essay directed against Russell’s *Problems of Philosophy* (1912). A few years later (1920), Liang also raised his voice against Russell’s logicism in his *Outline of Yogācāra* (*Weishi shuyi* 唯識述義), where he described Russell’s mathematical epistemology as pure delusion. In 1921, when Russell was still in China, Liang composed another critical article entitled “My Reservations Against Russell.” Liang’s critical evaluations of Russell’s philosophy were most reverberating and influential examples of Buddhist criticisms of logicism and New-Realist epistemology in 1920s China (Schwarcz 1991-2, 137).

Moreover, the rise of *yinming* between the late 1920s and early 1930s derived its significance from the fact that its occurrence took place within the context of the debates on Chinese traditional logic, and subsequently matured in the intellectual climate of cultural relativism and intense neo-traditionalist tendencies of the 1930s. The significance of Buddhist logic, as a special kind of logic, grew in the pivotal moment of Chinese intellectual history, when many influential Chinese philosophers engaged in developing new systems of modern Chinese philosophy, where concepts and categories from Chinese tradition would be intertwined with modern methodologies from the West.

Among those who made the greatest contribution to the introduction and dissemination of the notion of *yinming*, which was also referred to as “Buddhist” or “Indian logic” (*Yindu luoji* 印度邏輯), was also the Buddhist philosopher and psychologist Yu Yu (虞愚, original name Deyuan 德元 courtesy name Foxin 佛心, Zhuyuan 竹園, 1909-1989). Although Yu was arguably one of the leading proponents of Buddhist logic in 1930s China, and left a significant imprint on the general discourse on Western and Chinese logic, unfortunately his logic-related ideas have not yet been extensively studied. As of today, in China there only exist a few articles focusing mostly on Yu’s exposition of *yinming*, while Western studies that even superficially touch on Yu’s logic-related thought are unfortunately even rarer. (See “Appendix”)

In this study, I will provide a general outline of Yu Yu’s notion of logic in the 1930s, focusing on his first considerable contributions to the spread of Buddhist or Indian logic in China. In my analysis of the main characteristics of Yu’s understanding of logic, where possible I will also try to highlight how these were linked to other ideas which co-shaped the development of the discourse on Western and Chinese logic in the 1930s, as well as how and why Yu’s ideas differed from those of other Chinese intellectuals at the time. But first, I shall present to the reader some basic biographical information about Yu Yu.

2. A Biographical Sketch

Yu Yu, originally known as Yu Deyuan, was born in the year 1909 in the city of Amoy (Ch. Xiamen 廈門), Fujian province (Liu Peiyu 1990, 32). After he finished elementary and secondary school in his home town, in 1926 he enrolled in the Wuchang Buddhist Academy (Wuchang Foxueyuan 武昌佛學院) in Wuhan (Yu Yu 1937a, p. 2), established by the famous Buddhist monk Taixu (太虛) in the early 1920s (around 1922), becoming one of his most faithful disciples. (Cai 1931, 12) Studying under Taixu, Yu first engaged in intensive studies of Buddhist

doctrine (*neixue* 內學 or “inner studies”). In the context of his basic training in Buddhist philosophy in Wuhan, Yu became familiar with the immensely popular Consciousness. Only philosophy as well as *Dharmalakṣana* philosophy, then equally influential. Two years later (1928), in pursuit of deeper and more updated knowledge of Yogācāra philosophy, Yu decided to enrol in the prestigious Chinese Institute for Inner Studies (Zhina neixueyuan 支那內學院) in Nanjing. The institute was established in 1922 by a group of leading Chinese Buddhist philosophers and influential exponents of the learning of *yinming*, headed by Ouyang Jian and Lü Cheng. The Institute for Inner Studies, which at the time was one of the major centres of study of Buddhist philosophy in China, was also the venue of Yu’s contact with Buddhist logic or, more specifically, Indian *hetuvidyā* (*yinming* 因明).

In 1930, Yu moved to Shanghai and enrolled in the preparatory school of the recently (1924) established Great China University (Daxia daxue 大夏大學). In 1931, after completing the preparatory course at the university, Yu became an undergraduate student of psychology at that university. (Liu Peiyu 1990, 32) Yu completed his studies of psychology three years later, when he graduated from the department of psychology at Xiamen University (廈門大學).

In the years between 1928 and his graduation in 1934, apart from topics related to his studies of psychology, Yu also invested great effort into researching Indian and Chinese logic (later referred to as *mingxue* 名學). Thus, as early as 1929, Yu already started publishing introductory articles on the *yinming(xue)*, in which he probed into different historical or theoretical aspects of both Western and Indian logic.² At the same time, according to Yu’s own reminiscences, he also started intensively researching Western formal logic (Yu Yu 1937a, p.2). In 1936 Yu’s research of logic was epitomised in his first independent monograph *The Learning of Hetuvidyā* or *Yinmingxue* 因明學.

Upon his graduation from Xiamen University in 1934, Yu decided to stay at the university, assuming the post of lecturer in logic at the preparatory level (Liu Peiyu 1990, 32). In the following year, he was invited to the Minnan Buddhist Academy (Minnan Foxueyuan 閩南佛學院), where he taught sociology and Chinese logic (Yu Yu 1937a, p. 2). A few months later, he assumed the post of a senior editor at the Control Yuan (Jiancha yuan 監察院) in Nanjing and remained working there until the outbreak of war in 1937. (Liu Peiyu 1990, p. 32)

² The first such article appeared in 1929 in the first issue of the *Chinese Academic Research Quarterly* (*Zhongguo xueshu yanjiu jikan* 中國學術研究季刊). The article bore the title “The Essentials of *Hetuvidyā*” (*Yinmingxue yao* 因明學要).

In 1937, Yu published his third³ major monograph entitled *Chinese Logic* (*Zhongguo mingxue* 中國名學). Two years later, he completed a revised version of his *Yinmingxue* 因明學 of 1936. The new book, which was extended to include further aspects of *hetuvidyā* as well as its correlations with Western formal logic, was now published under the title *Indian Logic* (*Yindu luoji* 印度邏輯). The book was published by the Commercial Press in Chongqing.

In 1941, Yu resumed his academic career as a lecturer in logic and later also as assistant professor of logic at the wartime Guizhou University (Guizhou daxue 貴州大學). Two years later he rejoined his *alma mater* Xiamen University as an assistant professor of philosophy. In 1946 he was promoted to the rank of professor, and following the establishment of the People's Republic (1949), to be head of the Logic Research Group at the same university. In the following years he also worked as a professor at the Chinese Buddhist Academy, while in 1979 he became a member of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. (Ibid.) Yu passed away in his hometown of Amoy (Xiamen) in 1989.

3. Yu's Notion of Logic: Cultural Relativity, Ethics, and the Question of Epistemological Limitations of Logic

3.1 Preliminary Notes on Buddhist Philosophy and Intellectual Trends in the 1930s

Before I proceed to a closer examination of Yu Yu's notion of logic in the 1930s, I shall present to the reader the following few preliminary notes, related to the general intellectual climate of the period under examination. I think this could assist our understanding of the context and theoretical foundations of the emergence of the notion of *hetuvidyā* in the 1930s.

The following five points will serve as the theoretical and historical framework within which we will observe Yu Yu's notion of logic in the 1930s:

1. Since the notion of *hetuvidyā* resurfaced at the moment when the modern Chinese discourse on logic started to overlap with the ongoing ideological contest between the leading philosophical worldviews, the emerging notion of Buddhist logic was also deeply immersed in this intellectual atmosphere. As such, it tended to be generally portrayed as a methodological

³ The second one was *The Psychological Principles of Calligraphy* (*Shufa xinli* 書法心理) published in 1937.

foundation of Buddhist philosophy, by virtue of which the latter would be able to counter the objectivist claims of the proponents of contending worldviews – such as dialectical materialism and the Western scientific worldview.

2. Because the discourse on Buddhist philosophy emerged at the time when traditional worldviews were directly challenged by the import of Western discourse on science and metaphysics, in which the objectivism of the Western scientific worldview was contrasted with the subjectivist “view on life”, the subsequent discourse on Buddhist logic would also revolve around the dichotomy between subjective sensation and objective knowledge (facts), relevant also to similar meditations on the relationship between epistemology and logic.
3. Because, in the intellectual struggles of the 1930s, Buddhist philosophy was considered as an integral part of the intellectual currents associated with traditional Chinese thought, the Buddhist discourse on logic would also develop in a natural congruity with the philologically oriented main current in contemporary discourse on “Chinese logic” (*mingxue* 名學).
4. Beside the current philosophical trends, dominated by the confluence of reinvention of traditional philosophical concepts and influx of modern ideas, the development of the notion of Buddhist logic in the 1930s was also influenced by the relatively strong wave of “cultural relativism”. This *quasi* Boasian relativistic stance had emerged already in the late 1920s, and was, on the one hand, an indirect consequence of the recent establishment of modern social sciences in China, (Cf. Li Guannan 2012, 109-37) and on the other, also proliferated as a fitting standpoint to be adopted by the proponents of Chinese tradition in their defence against the allegedly aggressive Westernisation of Chinese modern thought. In this sense, this “cultural relativism” could also be understood as a possible theoretical foundation of “neo-traditionalism”, promulgated by the GMD government in the early 1930s.

5. Finally, the Buddhist interpretations of the relationship between Buddhist *yinming(xue)* and alternative types of logic were conditioned by the epistemological or psychological tenets of the prevalent Buddhist philosophical doctrines, such as the *Yogācāra* tradition mentioned above. In the same regard, the main objective of Chinese expositions of Buddhist logic would have been to present an epistemologically limited notion of logic, derived from the main doctrinal tenets of Buddhist ontology (e.g., the underlying ontological emptiness (*xukong* 虛空, Skt. *śūnyatā*) of all phenomena (*xiang* 相, Skt. *lakṣana*) or appearances (*se* 色, Skt. *rūpa*)) as well as the perception or experience-based epistemological methods of discerning the illusory and transient nature of the universe as proposed in the Consciousness Only philosophy.⁴

Although some of the above points would usually find their rightful place in the conclusion of such a discussion, I have decided to list them as a general framework preceding the central discussion on Yu Yu's notion of logic. My main reason for that is that some of the circumstances listed cannot be directly deduced from the specialised discussion which is about to follow, and yet can serve as a general context of such a discussion. Moreover, by having already provided the context, I will be able to focus more on specific internal aspects of Yu's thought and their possible connections with the ideas of other, non-Buddhist Chinese intellectuals from the period, who also took part in the public discourse on logic in 1930s China.

3.2 Initial Explorations into the Hetuvidyā and Western Logic - Late 1920s

Although Chinese publications – mainly articles and a few books (e.g. Lü Cheng 1926) – on *hetuvidyā* already started to emerge at the beginning of the 1920s,

⁴ A solid example thereof would be Xiong Shili's *New Treatise on the Uniqueness of Consciousness* (*Xin weishilun* 新唯識論) (1932). In his final version of the treatise (the vernacular version was published only in 1944), Xiong Shili devotes much energy to deriving logical reasoning from the basic epistemological apparatus of human consciousness. By and large, Xiong intended to demonstrate that logic cannot replace the experience and sensation of the essence of reality (Xiong 2015, p. 34). Moreover, in Xiong's adaptation of the Buddhist notion of logic, the latter serves merely as a tool for processing propositions about already established states of affairs. This further implies that an excessive formalization of logic would lead only to senseless sophistry (ibid., p. 56).

the bulk of Yu Yu's own contributions on the topic appeared within the first minor surge of written discussions on the topic in the last years of the 1920s. Eventually, also with regard to the time of their publication, his articles from 1929 became an important part of only a few essential introductions to the topic which had been published in the 1920s.

Between 1929 and 1930, Yu published a series of articles intended to serve as a general introduction to the study of Buddhist logic. These early articles focused largely on the applications of Indian *hetuvidyā* in Buddhist philosophy; they were published in the *Great China Monthly* (*Daxia yuebao* 大夏月報) journal. More importantly, in 1929 an epitomised version of his introduction to *hetuvidyā* was published in the *Chinese Academic Research Quarterly*. The treatise bore the title “The Essentials of *Hetuvidyā*” (Yu 1929). To a certain degree, these articles from 1929 also outlined the future developments of Yu's general notion of logic.

In the introductory part of “The Essentials of *Hetuvidyā*” Yu set out to define the place of what is called Buddhist logic in the pantheon of the logics of the World. In order to achieve that, Yu compared the main features of the syllogistic method of the former with the deductive syllogism in Western formal logic (*lunli zhi xingshi* 論理之形式).⁵ Even though Yu clearly recognized that Indian and Western formal logic both developed a form of syllogistic reasoning, he claimed that the essential difference between the two consisted in the “direction of reasoning” (Yu 1929, p. 2). Whereas the Western syllogism starts with a “major premise” and continues with the “minor premise”, on the basis of which it reaches a final judgment, the line of reasoning in *hetuvidyā* proceeds in the opposite direction. It commences by setting out the main assertion (*zong* 宗), the truth of which is then tested in the remaining two (or three) steps. An assertion of cause (*hetu*) serves as a minor premise, while the major premise, given in the final step, consists of two separate propositions, which ultimately prove the initial statement by providing the verifying analogical examples (*yu* 喻). (ibid.)

In the abovementioned article from 1920, Yu concluded his comparison between *yinming* and Western formal logic by providing the following list of contrasting features:

⁵ At this point, Yu still used the commonly used term *lunli(xue)* 論理(學) to refer to logic in general. At the same time, he also pointed out that Western logic can also be translated as *luoji* 邏輯 or *mingxue* 名學. (Yu 1929, p. 1)

- a. Formal logic embodies the (formal) rules of human *reasoning* (*sikao* 思考); and the *yingming* gives a set of rules for *disputing matters* (*bian shi* 辯事) and *investigating the principles* (*cha li* 察理).
- b. As revealed by the direction of its syllogistic method, formal logic embodies a *deductive form* of reasoning, while the *yingming* is essentially a method of *proving* (*zhengming*) propositions.
- c. The ultimate goal of formal logic consists in *correct reasoning*, whereas the main objective of *yingming* consists in *proving* the main postulates of Buddhist doctrine.
- d. And finally: while, on the one hand, formal logic focuses mostly on its theory of *fallacies* (*guoshilun* 過失論), on the other hand, the *yingming* expands its domain by encapsulating the *inductive method*. (Ibid., p. 3)

Yu Yu's early perspective on "Buddhist" and Western logic, as outlined in this article, emphasized a general limitation of logical methods in respect of human accumulation of positive knowledge of the universe. However, the view described also painted a contrast between Western logic and the logic of Buddhist philosophy, which ascribed to the latter a greater degree of practical application, and thereby also a lesser degree of epistemological narrowness. As the pivotal methodology for testing the facts and correctness of doctrinal postulates, Buddhist logic was believed to take an active part in shaping a unified teaching about the laws of the universe (*dharma* 法). It may be assumed that, for Yu, the pragmatic or "verifiable" nature of *yingming* became greater by virtue of the recognition that it also contained the inductive method.

3.3 Developing a Discourse on *Yinming(xue)*, 1930-1935

The number of publications on Indian logic and Buddhism started to grow steeply in the years following 1929. Between the late 1920s and the early 1930s, Chinese publications on the topic almost doubled in number and continued to increase in successive years. At the same time, monographs on Buddhist and Indian logic also started to appear. In 1930, a relatively noteworthy monograph *Logic* (*Lunlixue* 論理學) was published as a part of the *General Discussions on Buddhology* (*Foxue tonglun* 佛學通論) series, edited by Master Cirensi

(Cirensi zhuren 慈忍室主人, ?) and Taixu. This was soon followed by a number of monographs on *yinmingxue* and related topics. Among the most noteworthy early monographs were Chen Wangdao's (陳望道) *Yinmingxue* 因明學 from 1931 and the notoriously long and peculiar work *The New Philosophical Yinmingxue* (*Zhexue xin yinmingxue* 哲學新因明學) by Tan Shougong 譚壽公. Concurrently, several annotated reproductions of Xuanzang's translation of Śāṅkara Svāmin's (Shangjieluo Zhu 商羯羅主) *Treatise on Mastering Logic* (*Yinming ruzheng lilun* 因明入正理論, Skt. (*Hetuvidyā*) *Nyāya praveśa tarka śāstra*) (Vidyabhusana 2006, p. 302) were produced by various authors. Yu Yu himself composed a short introduction to the history of the text for An Outline of the *Treatise on Mastering Logic* (*Yinming ruzheng lilun kepan* 因明入正理論科判⁶) which was published in 1933. The volume was issued by the influential Three Ages Study Society in Peking, which had been established in 1927, with the aim to advance research and propagation of the Consciousness Only philosophy.

Throughout the following few years, Yu continued to publish historical and theoretical overviews of *hetuvidyā*. In 1930, for instance, he composed "A Comparative Study on Ancient and Modern *Hetuvidyā*" (*Yinmingxue gu-jin bijiao zhi yanjiu* 因明學古今比較之研究), which revolved almost exclusively around the transformation of the classical five-step syllogism from the *Nyāya Sūtras* to the later Buddhist innovation of the three-step formula (*sanzhishi* 三支式). He completed another historical writing in 1931, when he reviewed the "Important Metamorphoses in the Development of *Hetuvidyā*" (*Yinmingxue fazhan zhong zhongyao zhi bianzhi* 因明學發展中重要之變態).

Yu's early thought and introductory work on *hetuvidyā* started condensing around the year 1935, when Yu also started to publish much longer treatises; as for instance the "Introduction to *Hetuvidyā*" (因明學發凡) from 1934. In many ways these publications were already announcing Yu's forthcoming major work on *hetuvidyā*. In the "Introduction to *Hetuvidyā*", for instance, Yu already expounded on a wide array of theoretical similarities between Indian and Western formal logic. Yu's past endeavours were crowned two years later (1936) with the publication of his quintessential work *Yinmingxue* 因明學. Although, at a general level, the book more or less recapitulated his earlier views on the topic, as well as the results of Yu's Chinese predecessors in the field (such as Liang

⁶ The term *kepan* 科判 denotes a method of organizing or outlining the content of a text by dividing it into chapters and paragraphs.

Shuming, Xiong Shili and others), on the other hand, the main aim of the book, stated in the introduction, clearly reflected the prevalent spirit of the time. In that way, the work voiced a more straightforward statement about the position of Indian logic in the global pantheon of logic, proceeding in the direction towards establishing the cultural autonomy of Asian thought in general. In one of the prefaces to the book, Jiang Kanghu (江亢虎, 1883-1954) captured the overall notion of logic expounded in the book in the following manner: if one does not comprehend Chinese logic (*mingxue* 名學), one's words will not be in proper order (*shun* 順, "in compliance") and one will not be successful in handling affairs (*shi* 事); if one does not comprehend Indian logic (*yinming*), then one's exposition of doctrine (i.e. Buddhist) and analysis of the principle (*li* 理) will be without solid foundations; and without comprehension of Western logic (*luoji* 邏輯) one will be unable to establish the "spiritual and social sciences" (Yu 1936a, p. 1). In many ways, these ideas efficiently summarized the general notion of logic contained in Yu Yu's work on *yinming*. The latter's view on logic approached maturity just in the years around the publication of the above-named book, when his intellectual journey took a deep incursion into the realms of Western formal logic and, most importantly, Chinese logic. Yu's treatment of the remaining two kinds of logic originated in the idea of inherent (epistemic) partiality of individual kinds of logic, which also entailed a certain degree of equality between the "logics of the World".

When Yu's ideas are put into combined perspective with other contemporary comparative explorations into the realm of Buddhist logic, we will discover a relatively wide spectrum of mutual divergences, pertaining mainly to their general idea of logic. Concurrently, as the most fervent advocators of Buddhist philosophy closed ranks and spoke out for the contemporary relevance of Buddhist logic, in these treatises we can also observe an increased degree of congruence between their discursive approaches. Thus, for instance, in his *Logic and Hetuvidyā* (*Luoji yu yinming* 邏輯與因明) from 1935, Gong Jiahua (龔家驊, ?) argued for a relatively high degree of content-related congruence between Western formal logic and Indian *hetuvidyā*, ascribing to the latter a proportional degree of practical effectiveness as possessed by Western formal logic.⁷ (Gong Jiahua 1935: p. 155) In contrast

⁷ As its title suggests, Gong's *Logic and Hetuvidyā* outlines the main characteristics of both Western and Indian logic. Gong pointed out ten major features shared by both, including the syllogistic form, some aspects of inductive reasoning, extension and intension of concepts, the notions of necessity and probability. Strikingly, Gong also considered dialectical method (or dialectical logic) as an integral part of Western logic, indicating that a similar kind of

to Gong's extremely modernist attempt, in his *New Precedents of Hetuvidyā* (*Yinming xinli* 因明新例) from 1936, the established Chinese Buddhologist and professor of philosophy, Zhou Shujia (周叔迦, 1899-1970) presented a slightly less ambitious image of *hetuvidyā*. In his moderate opinion on the “logicity” of *hetuvidyā*, Zhou pointed out that the latter is not as practically applicable as Western formal logic. Because, since the time immemorial, its discursive method was only put to use in problems related to the unity and consistence of Buddhist dogma. Hence, Zhou maintained, in its history the *hetuvidyā* was critically devoid of positive inquiry about the fabric of the universe. On the other hand, Zhou noted that the Chinese modern revival and redefinition of *hetuvidyā* was bound to be an extremely difficult task, mainly for the following two reasons: the current lack of philological studies in Indian thought (contextual and conceptual ambiguities) and, most importantly, the fact that every type of logic necessarily encapsulates a culture/language conditioned type of thought. Zhou pointed out that Chinese, European and Indian logic “were all generated based on the grammar of their [respective] languages. Grammar constitutes the rules of a language. It is the ordered pattern of the people’s (*minzu* 民族, “nation”) thought.” (Zhou 1936, p. 2) Consequently, because the Chinese language greatly differs from Indian and European languages, so do the types of logic which developed in the Chinese past. Zhou further attributed the historical lack of formal logic in China to the “most active/lively” (最活動的) development of Chinese language, which considerably hindered the process of its grammaticalisation. (Ibid.)

Between 1935 and 1936, this form of language-based “cultural relativity” permeated the Buddhist discourse on logic. In consequence, during the same period of time, meditations about the differences between the three kinds of “World logic” also became the main focus of a new series of Yu Yu’s treatises on

propensity towards comprehensiveness and unity of substance was also inherent in the *hetuvidyā*. Concurrently, Gong also recognized three main categories of divergence between them. Apart from having acknowledged two kinds of formal difference between them – sequence of propositions in the syllogism and rules of inference – he also pointed out that they differ in their “substance”: Western logic focuses mainly on reasoning, whereas the *hetuvidyā* is concerned almost exclusively with “comparison and inference” (*biliang* 比量); while Western logic is inextricably connected to Western philosophy, the *hetuvidyā* is concerned with inner realization (*neiming* 內明) and the principles of Buddhist doctrine. Finally, according to Gong, the two also differed in the scope of their “effectiveness”: while Western formal logic is most suitably applied in reasoning, the usefulness of *hetuvidyā* pertains to its elementary nature of being a “discourse on discourses” (*lun zhi lun* 論之論), and it is thereby most suitably applied in logical demonstration and proof (*lunzheng* 論證). (Gong Jiahua 1935, pp. 138-155).

logic, where *hetuvidyā* has been replaced by Chinese logic (*mingxue* 名學) and a special notion of logical relativism became the defining feature of Yu's notion of universal logic.

3.4 From Hetuvidyā to Western and Chinese Logic: The Rise of a Language-Based Notion of Logic, 1935-6

An interpretational tendency similar to that found in Zhou and Gong's thought on formal logic and *hetuvidyā* was also conveyed in Yu Yu's thought on Chinese and Western logic. Around the year 1935, when the Chinese publishing activities on *hetuvidyā* reached another significant peak, Yu set out to publish articles on Chinese and Western (deductive) logic. Although Yu's first article on Western logic emerged already in 1931 – an article comparing logic to dialectical method – his studies in Chinese logic came to expression only in 1935, when Yu's comprehensive view on logic started to bear its first concrete results. According to Yu Yu's own account, his studies of Chinese logic started in the early 1930s. (Yu 1937a, 3) The first considerable results, however, went through the printing press only around 1935. In this new stage of development, as a scholar of logic, Yu did not completely depart from his early interests in Indian or Buddhist *hetuvidyā*, but rather used his former studies as a prism through which he evaluated the nature and results of Chinese logic.

Thus, in 1935, Yu published a long text entitled “A New System of Mohist Science of Logic” (Mojia lunlixue de xin tixi 墨家論理學的新體系), in which he aimed at presenting a new evaluation of the inner structure of Mohist logic, observed through the perspective of the theoretical frameworks of *hetuvidyā* on one side and Western formal logic on the other. An important aspect of Yu's initial evaluations of Chinese logic was related to his close attention to the epistemological foundations of ancient Chinese studies of logic. At the same time, as a major standard of modernity, Yu endeavoured to identify in ancient Chinese logical thought (*mingxue* 名學) elements of Western inductive method, which he regarded as the pinnacle of evolution of logic in general (Yu 1935a, p. 390-1). However, at the same time, as an ardent follower of the Consciousness Only school of philosophy,⁸ Yu relied heavily on the Buddhist notion of psychology together with its main epistemological tenets, which also ascribed great importance to human perception and its “fallacies” (Skt. *pakṣābhāsa*, or *pratyakṣābhāsa* “false perceptions”). In the same context, he also recognized a great value in

⁸ In the same year, Yu also published two articles on the psychological thought of Consciousness Only school of philosophy, entitled “General Notion of Psychology in Consciousness Only” (Weishi xinlixue dayi 唯識心理學大意) (See: Yu 1935b).

the use of inferential (Skt. *anumāna*) validation of knowledge. Yu believed that the development of logical method in Mohist philosophy rested upon Mozi's consideration of logic as a significant source of knowledge. The logical method developed in Mohism subsequently followed six major guidelines: to separate right from wrong, to tell apart consistent and inconsistent lines of reasoning (*ji* 級), to understand the locus of identity and difference, to comprehend the patterns (*li* 理) of names (*ming* 名) and actualities (*shi* 實), to differentiate between benefit and harm, and to dispel (doctrinal) doubts. (Ibid., p. 398) In the remaining parts of the discussion Yu devoted much energy to showing how, akin to Indian logic, Mohism already contained profound elements of inductive reasoning and a *quasi*-formal notion of syllogistic inference. Adhering to the earlier Chinese discussion on Mohist logic and the School of Names (*mingjia* 名家) – in particular Zhang Shizhao's writings from the mid-1920s, Yu also tried to highlight the fact that Mohist and Indian logic both possessed something called “the logic of the middle term”(ibid. pp. 413-4), as well as their own theories of logical fallacy. Generally speaking, in his attempt to demonstrate a certain degree of modern formality of Chinese logic, Yu apparently emulated the manner and structural layout of contemporary Chinese textbooks on Western logic – most of all Tu Xiaoshi's (屠孝實, 1898-1932) *Logic Primer (Mingxue gangyao 名學綱要)*. While in respect to contemporary Western discourse on logic, possibly due to its high degree of philosophical consonance with one of the currently prevalent synthetic notions of Buddhist epistemology as well as its profound agreement with the idea of “cultural relativism”, Yu relied mainly on Dewey's notion of experimental logic.

In the same year, Yu also composed an independent study on “Logical Thought of the School of Correct Names” (Zhengming xuepai de lunli sixiang 正名學派的論理學派) and a review of theories of logical paradox (fallacies) in Western logic, with examples from ancient Chinese philosophy, entitled “Errors in Deductive Inference” (Yanyi tuili shang de miuwu 演繹推理上的謬誤). In the article on the school of “correct names” (*zhengming* 正名) Yu listed three kinds of logical method in early Confucian thought – instituting names (*zhiming* 制名), systematic inquiry (*gezhi* 格致), and pursuit of truth (*qiucheng* 求誠), claiming that the most potent amongst them (*gezhi*) came to expression only in neo-Confucian thought, due to neo-Confucians' openness to ideas from Daoism and Chan Buddhism. (Yu 1935d, p. 15) In general, Yu characterized the logical thought of Confucianism as predominantly ethical in nature, remarking that quite possibly this tendency was not a flaw at all.

Observed from the perspective of Yu's notion of Chinese logic, a significant

aspect of his writings on *mingxue* 名學 from 1935 and 1936 resided in his interpretational approach, which defined logic through language. Although the term *mingxue*, which by the 1930s was already synonymous with “Chinese logic”, on its own already implies a language-based or semantic theory (*mingxue* means literally “the learning of names”), on the other hand, the language-based theory of logic, which Yu adopted in his writings, was also inextricably related to a special idea of “cultural relativism” adopted by many prominent Chinese intellectuals since the end of the 1920s. The fact that similar language-based approaches were not only used to explain the phenomenon of Chinese logic but any other kind of logic as well, speaks strongly in favour of the second option. Moreover, as I have indicated in the foregoing discussion, similar ideas have been adopted by other exponents of Buddhist logic in the years before 1935. Regardless of the concrete provenance of the above-named approach, a superficial overview of treatises on *mingxue* or *mingjia* 名家 from the late 1920s also reveals that there also existed a continuity between the underlying style of philological commentary and the later “language-based” approach in defining Chinese logic. In Yu’s case, however, this approach became most emphatically expounded in his writings on *mingxue* in the years following 1935. Quite curiously, in the same period the terminology used in Yu’s discussions also underwent some minor changes, mainly in the direction of standardization and disambiguation.

As the representative example of the intellectual vicissitudes in Yu’s logical writings from mid-1930s we could name his article “Introduction to Chinese Logic” (*Mingxue daoyan* 名學導言, or “Introduction to the Learning of Names”) from 1936. One year later a slightly modified version of the text was included as a preface in Yu’s book *Chinese Logic* (*Zhongguo mingxue* 中國名學). The main objective of the book was:

... to enumerate the four schools of Chinese logic with respect to their historical evolution, their thought, and the attitude which we need to adopt in our future research [into Chinese logic]. The objective of this discussion will also be to describe the meritorious applications of logic, all in order to highlight the value of understanding the structure of substance. Even though in our exposition we will make use of the old, in fact what we will try to promote here will be a survey of pure logic in China. (Yu 1937, 4)

In his “introduction to Chinese Logic”, and in consequence also in his book *Chinese Logic*, Yu adopted a similar explanation of the notion of Chinese logic to Zhou Shujia before him, with some major differences. In contrast to Zhou, Yu presented a much broader discussion on language and its relationship with logic and, more importantly, also indirectly revealed the source of his ideas, namely the thought of the reformists Liu Shiwei (劉師培, 1884-1919) and Zhang Taiyan (章太炎, later changed his name to Binglin 炳麟, 1869-1936). Both represented a more than suitable theoretical source for Buddhist discourse on logic. While Liu Shiwei’s theory of the abstract origin of language, in which onomatopoeias and phonetic mimicry were considered as its first (abstract) evolutionary stage and the formation of mental representations (*yixiang* 意象) as the next step towards concretization of language, Zhang Taiyan spoke more in favour of the original concreteness of language, and the *a posteriori* of spoken language. (See Kaske 2008, pp. 352-3.) If the theory of Liu Shiwei implied that concretization and grammaticalization of language were the key prerequisites for the cultural and intellectual development of a nation – the same thought was expressed by Zhou Shujia; on the other hand, Zhang Binlin’s strong affinity for Buddhist and Indian philosophy (e.g. the *vaiśeṣika* philosophy), as alternatives to a Western solution to Chinese intellectual challenges (Ibid., p. 353), made his philosophy even more suitable for application in Buddhism-centred discourse.

Origins of Language and Logic

Yu’s preface to the book *Chinese Logic* was divided into three main parts: origins of names, their meaning, and their use. While the second and the third part answered the questions of the ontological nature of language and its application in matters of a practical nature, the first part was concerned with what we can also call the cultural foundations of language⁹ and in turn also with logic. Like Zhou before him, Yu wanted to reveal the basic nature of logic by tracing it back to its origins in human language, saying: “The written language (*wenzi* 文字) is based on spoken language (*yuyan* 語言) and the spoken language originates from sounds.” (Yu 1936, p. 607) He described language as a main medium through which our thoughts and emotions are communicated, akin to “routes of transportation and the vehicles [travelling] on them.” (Ibid.) In order to highlight the general importance of language Yu pointed out that without language, one would be unable to communicate compassion between the individual own-mind (*zixin* 自心, Skt. *svacitta*) and the collective mind or

⁹ He defined *ming* 名 as spoken (語言) and written language (文字) combined. (Ibid.)

the mind of the masses (*zhongxin* 眾心), emphasizing that language “is in no way inferior to mathematics”. (Ibid.) In his remaining discussion on the origin of language Yu quoted his mentor Taixu’s interpretation of Liu Shipei and Zhang Taiyan’s views on language. By combining both Liu Shipei’s theory of the abstract origins of language (名) and Zhang Taiyan’s theory of concreteness as the original form of language,¹⁰ Yu ultimately decided to choose the middle path. He stated that regardless of whether the origins of language had been abstract or concrete, the names used in language all originate from human sensations (*chu* 觸, Skt. *sparśa*) and perception (*shou* 受, Skt. *vedana*), take root as mental images, and end in human reflection (*si* 思). (Ibid.) According to Yu, the main difference between names was that those that arise from subjective impressions are initially abstract, while those that arise from objective images are from the beginning concrete. Finally, from abstract concepts develop sound-based (onomatopoeic) names (*ming* 名). (Yu 1937a, p. 352) Concurrently, Yu also adopted Zhang Taiyan’s positive (ontological) notion of language, which entailed that a sufficiently ordered language would be capable of conveying a clear image of the world. In Yu’s view, this was also the reason why logic first arose: in order to establish correct relations between names and substances, and order the process of inference. On the other hand, this fact also entailed that the form or variety of logic was inextricably connected to the nature or state of the language in which it operated.

Yu recognized three separate evolutionary stems of global logic, every single one of which was rooted in its own specific language-related environment, namely: Western (Greek) logic or *luoji* 邏輯, Indian logic or *yinming* 因明 and Chinese logic or *mingxue* 名學. Alongside these three specialized terms, Yu further used the word *lunli(xue)* 論理學 as a general term for “logic”. Such a tripartite division of “World logic” was not Yu’s innovation, but can be traced back to a relatively great number of his predecessors in the debate on logic. The same view was, for instance, propagated already by Chen Qitian (陳啓天, 1893-1984) in his treatise *Mingxue jigū* 名學稽古 (*Logic – Studies in Ancient Texts*) from 1922. In a nutshell, in his introductory discussion on the origin of language and logic Yu proposed a version of a culturally relative notion of logic, which I suspect was established on epistemological principles from the Consciousness

¹⁰ Yu quoted from Liu Shipei’s *Expounding on Subtleties of Philology* (*Xiaoxue fawei bu* 小學發微) and Zhang Taiyan’s *The Origin of Language* (*Yuyan yuanqi shuo* 語言緣啓說) (orig. publ. 1907 and 1908).

Only school of philosophy and at the same time connected to a major current of Chinese contemporary philological discourse, which had originated in the final years of the Qing dynasty. Concurrently, Yu's theory also drew its modernity and discursive relevance from its thorough theoretical affinity with Western formal logic, established in his early comparative evaluation of "Indian logic".

Finally, the last and central pillar of Yu's work from the mid-1930s was his interpretation of the development and nature of Chinese logic.

The Character and Classification of Chinese Logic

Essentially Yu maintained that, akin to Indian *hetuvidyā*, ancient Chinese logic had also contained an abundance of elements of deductive and inductive inference. While in his opinion the main source of deductive logic in Chinese antiquity had been the Mohist school of philosophy, he believed that invaluable inductive logic could be found in the "Xiao qu" 小取 chapter of the Mohist Dialectics and Xunzi's doctrine on *zhengming* 正名. With regard to the question of Gongsun Long (公孫龍) and the genealogy of the School of Names, Yu advocated the view that the latter constituted an independent school of philosophy which, however, followed similar doctrinal principles to those of neo-Mohist philosophers. In that way he distinguished between four major schools of Chinese logic: school of namelessness (*wuming xuepai* 無名學派), school of correct names (*zhengming xuepai* 正名學派), school of establishing names (*liming xuepai* 立名學派) and school of "shapes and names" (*xingming xuepai* 形名學派). As the names suggest, the main trait of each of the four schools resided in its idea of "language" (*ming* 名, "names").

Nonetheless, in the analytical conclusion of the treatise, Yu claimed that the four schools actually represent only two main schools of logic: the school of correct names (*zhengming* 正名) and the school of non-names (*wuming* 無名). He further asserted that, with respect to its philosophical tenets, the logical thought of Hui Shi 惠施 was in fact Daoist epistemology imported into the school of "shapes and names" (*xingming* 形名). Mozi's ideas, on the other hand, are essentially of the same stock as the school of correct names, while Gongsun Long's logic represented a special "side branch" (*pangpai* 旁派) of the same school. (Ibid., p. 120)

Following a brief discussion on the underlying ontological character of language and logic, which closely resembled an atomistic approach, Yu concluded with Liang Qichao's words; saying that in the final analysis knowledge alone cannot unlock the fundamental principles of the universe, but needs to be assisted by logic and the establishment of correct relations between names and

actualities. (Ibid., p. 121) In this sense, he noted that albeit the school of non-names (無名) did not focus on real phenomena (*xiang* 相), it still possessed an effective logical methodology for processing inferences within the domain of pure knowledge. But “since I cannot attain ‘the state of abandoning reason and returning purity of [consciousness]’ or ‘the unity of right and wrong’ again and again I am forced to select words to express my emotions or infer what is right and wrong.” (Ibid.) This was Yu’s way of emphasizing that in practical matters the preferring of *zhengming* 正名 to *wuming* 無名 is an utter necessity.

In the concluding part of his assessment of Chinese Logic, Yu reflected on the historical underdevelopment of Chinese logic in comparison with Indian and Western logic, for which he proposed the following four causes: excessive attention to practical matters and human affairs (*renshi* 人事), excessive diversity and theoretical divergence among the schools of logic (lack of a unified theory), excessive influence of tradition, and irrefutability of tradition. (Ibid., pp. 121-4) In the same regard, Yu’s strong adherence to Buddhism became most apparent. His inclination towards the idea of the intellectual superiority of Buddhism found its strongest expression in the assertion that the later advances in Chinese logic had been marked by the introduction of Buddhist logic into Chinese philosophy. More specifically, he claimed that the entry of Buddhist logic into the Chinese intellectual sphere had in fact initiated the first wave of formalization and systematization of Chinese logical thought. (Ibid., p. 12)

3.5. Late 1930s: Indian Logic and Maturation of Yu’s Cultural Relativism

In 1936, Yu produced one more article on logic. In the essay entitled “Deductive Logic and *Hetuvidyā*” (Yanyi luoji yu yinming 演繹邏輯與因明) Yu once again reiterated his views on the relationship between Western formal logic and Indian logic. The article from 1936 was published again two years later, when Yu was preparing his last major monograph from the 1930s, his *Indian Logic* from 1939.

Concurrently, following the year 1936, when Yu published a wide array of treatises on the nature and classification of religion, including three articles on the “The Character of Religion and Its Types” (Zongjiao de xingzhi jiqi zhonglei 宗教的性質及其種類), “Scientific Study of Religion” (Zongjiao de kexue yanjiu 宗教的科學研究) and so on, his theory of the language-based origin of logic slowly matured into a comprehensive view of “cultural relativity”. Thus in September 1939, almost exactly one year after the first publication of Zhang Dongsun’s (張東蓀, 1886-1973) influential writing “Thought, Language and Culture” (Sixiang, yuyan yu wenhua 思想語言與文化) (June, 1938), Yu published his own discussion

on the “The Character of Culture and Its Types” (Wenhua de xingzhi yu zhonglei 文化的性質與種類), in which he also expounded on the pivotal role of language in culture. His article appeared in the same year as the final version of Zhang Dongsun’s treatise “Different Types of Logic and Culture – Discussed Together with Chinese Neo-Confucianism,” which elicited a wide response in Chinese intellectual circles.

4. Epilogue: From Buddhist Modernist Apologetics to an Alternative Version of Cultural Relativism

It is beyond doubt that Yu’s writings on logic in the 1930s represented a mere fragment of the contemporary Buddhist discourse on *hetuvidyā*, and a small stone in the wide mosaic of Buddhist discussions on epistemology, which were conducted in the framework of contemporary perspectives on logic. However, as I have shown in the foregoing outline, Yu’s thought also contained a series of what were at the least original adaptations of ideas and concepts from the contemporary Chinese debate on logic and Buddhism. On the other hand, Yu’s main contribution resided more in his extensive propagation of a certain notion of, first the logic of *hetuvidyā*, and later also Chinese logic.

Firstly, his notion of logic rested on a firm belief in a universal relevance of *hetuvidyā* as a central methodological means of rational “inquiry” in Buddhism. Nonetheless, even though in his treatises Yu relied heavily on Western formal logic as the main discursive norm, in matters related to epistemology and ontology Yu usually relied upon his interpretation of the teaching of Consciousness Only. Consequently, although his early major writings almost certainly aimed at providing both a contrast with and a similarity between *hetuvidyā* and Western logic, in his early treatises logic was sometimes portrayed as a blunt and limited instrument — as a tool devised as a supplement to the epistemological process (from sensation, intuition, and experience to thought), overseeing the correct alignment of true and false statements.

Secondly, in confluence with the current debates on logic and culture Yu’s early studies of *hetuvidyā* gradually developed into a general notion of logic, including Western as well as Chinese logic. Thus around the year 1935, Yu started also publishing articles on Chinese logic. As in his work on *hetuvidyā*, the underlying idea of Yu’s interpretations of Chinese logic was a fundamental correspondence between basic Western formal logic and Chinese logic. In consequence, he advocated the view that ancient Chinese logic, for instance the logic of the *zhengming* 正名 school, contained both deductive and inductive reasoning, as well as a series of other significant formal characteristics inherent in Western formal logic.

The development of Yu's thought on Chinese logic reached its peak with the publication of his book *Chinese Logic* in 1937. Here Yu's general ideas about logic were expressed alongside his general discussion on the content of ancient Chinese logic. This general notion of logic presupposes a tripartite division of "global logic", in which its three main stems – Chinese, Indian and Western logic – were considered as parallel phenomena and thus closer to being equal in their core value, whereas the superiority of Western logic resided in its advanced formalization of the same principles as were contained equally in Indian and Chinese logic. In this very context, the equality of logics, suggested by the adherents of the cultural theory of logic, including Yu Yu, denoted primarily the equal *epistemic* value of each particular logic, derived from its *embodiment* of the *principles* of the universe, while the degree of its *formalisation* (symbolic or linguistic expression) was probably understood more in light of its utility. (Cf. Gong 1935, pp. 138-155) Hence the formal "underdevelopment" of Chinese and Indian logic meant that they could not be as effectively applied in practical matters related to "physical" reality, such as science, industry and so on. However, in the eyes of the Chinese advocates of culture-relative theory of logic, this did not completely diminish the "objective" value of Chinese or Indian logic, for both could be as effectively used within one's inner spiritual domain, assisting one's moral self-perfection or pursuit for higher awareness by providing various insights into the underlying tissue of a universe in which the subjective is complementary to the objective.

Furthermore, the inherent value of Chinese and Indian logics was considered relative to the variety of language (*ming* 名) from which they originated. In the same context, Yu borrowed extensively from Liu Shipei and Zhang Taiyan's theories of the origin of the (Chinese) language, which were ultimately shrouded in Buddhist ideas on the nature of cognition. Although Yu maintained that language constituted the pivotal "vehicle" (*cheng* 乘) of human thought and emotion, he did not explicitly state that the consequent fact of "logical relativism" entailed by the overall linguistic differences would also imply a pluralist theory of thought. On the contrary, the same Buddhist notion of epistemological universality which permeated his early writings on *hetuvidyā* was present also in his later notion of logic. Consequently, in Yu's vision of logic and language, relativism seems only to have existed at the level of language, which, similar to his notion of logic, was portrayed as a rather formal and thus also limited

vessel.¹¹ Moreover, the universal essence of knowledge and enlightenment would only temporarily assume the form of a particular language, namely in the process of intersubjective transmission through speech and writing. In Yu's view of linguistic relativism, logic developed as an efficient tool for rectifying and ordering the imperfect linguistic expression of human awareness. Due to the extremely important role of intersubjectivity in Buddhism – the bridge between self-mind and others is crucial for dissemination of *Buddhadharma* in this world, Yu understood, not only from the treatises of important Chinese intellectuals like Liu Shipai and Zhang Taiyan, that logical improvement of language (systematisation and grammaticalization) was crucial for the development of knowledge. Akin to many other Buddhist or non-Buddhist thinkers from the period, he believed that deficiencies in development of Chinese logic were related to intellectual rigidity in the past Confucianism-dominated tradition as well as to the general lack of systematisation of language on one side and logical thought on the other. As a proponent of Buddhism, Yu also believed that the introduction of *hetuvidyā* to China represented the main event in development of Chinese logical thought, which led to blossoming of the logical method of *gezhi* 格致 under the wings of neo-Confucian synthesis of Buddhist and Daoist ideas with Confucian philosophy.

Concurrently, in his re-evaluation of the Chinese logical past Yu distinguished between two main currents of thought, that differed mainly in their view on the ontologically positive nature of language: the adherents of the Daoist-dominated school of non-names (*wuming xuepai* 無名學派) rejected the existence of any positive relationship between substance and language, whereas the school of correct names (*zhenming xuepai* 正名學派), led by Confucians and Mohist, advocated the view that language (*ming* 名) can effectively reflect the underlying patterns of reality. It also appears that in the very same period Yu gravitated towards recognising a far more positive value of logic than in his previous writings. Yu's relative distancing from the epistemologically negative notion of logic also entails a certain degree of deviation from conventional Consciousness-only epistemology, similar to that which can be found in Liang Shuming's synthesis of *Yogācāra* and Confucian philosophy, which is also in line with Xiong Shili's criticism of *Yogācāra*. (See Meynard 2014; Hammerstrom 2014) Since such a synthesis is possible only through maintaining an ontologically

¹¹ A similar relationship can be also recognised in Zhang Dongsun's view on the cultural conditionality of logic. See, for example: Rošker 2010, pp. 44-56.

positive notion of knowledge (*zhi* 知 or *zhi* 智 “wisdom”), this would also explain the borderline character of Yu Yu’s general idea of logic (culture-specific as well as universal aspects of logic) revealed throughout the foregoing outline of Yu’s work. Correspondingly, the general idea of logic based on this kind of synthetical epistemology would also entail that the Chinese ontological concept of the “pattern” (*li* 理) of substance (Yu 1937, p. 4) be conjoined with the Buddhist concept of *dharma* (*fa* 法).

With respect to its quest for common ground, Yu Yu’s idea of logic was very much in consonance with the endeavours of other contemporary proponents, or rather interpreters, of Buddhist philosophy in China, who struggled to establish a harmonic synthesis between traditional psychologistic epistemology on one side and that of the modern scientific worldview on the other. In the context of these general intellectual propensities that permeated the intellectual debate in 1930s China, Yu Yu stood out as the Chinese Buddhist community’s foremost commentator on the idea of logic, whose main mission was to reconcile the three main competing logics of the time, while preserving their inner cultural essence.

Towards the end of the 1930s, Yu’s language-conditioned “logical relativism” also received a cultural dimension. In the same year as Zhang Dongsun (1939) published the revised and enlarged version of the lengthy treatise in which he expounded the inextricable connection between language, culture and logic, Yu published a much more modest meditation on differences between cultures. Akin to Zhang, in his essay of 1939 Yu treated language as the main conditioning factor of culture. In this very context, Yu’s philosophical undertakings of the 1930s followed the main trajectory of Chinese intellectual trends. While in some respects his thought converged with the spirit of neo-traditionalism and the rising Chinese version of cultural relativism, at the same time his excursions into the realm of Indian, Chinese and Western logic promulgated a Buddhist vision of Chinese intellectual modernity. While he emphatically advocated universality in the realm of knowledge and consciousness, he recognised an unbounded, yet still historically indisputable, pluralism of its linguistic and cultural expression.

In my understanding, in its concrete embodiment as Chinese, Indian or Western logic, logic was thus seen as culturally or linguistically conditioned, while at the same time, as a partial manifestation of the underlying patterns of the universe, it was also universal and unconditioned by grammar or form of expression. In other words: if there is originally only one “pure” logic, whose laws are in uniformity with those of the universe, the expression of logic

diversifies through linguistic expression, while its overall theoretical disposition is additionally conditioned by various other aspects of cultural perception.

Still, in Yu's Buddhist world of ideas the development of human awareness does not end with a pluralism of truth-expressions. Instead, Yu hoped that the linguistic and cultural boundaries in the plural expression of truth may be gradually overcome through correct application of Western, Chinese or Indian logic, and all divergent threads of cultural experience be rewoven into one unified network of knowledge.

Appendix: A Brief Overview of Contemporary Scholarship on Yu Yu and *Hetuvidyā*

The earliest Chinese article on Yu Yu and *hetuvidyā* (*yinmingxue*) appears to be “Yu Yu Discusses the Transmission and Development of Indian logic in China” (Yu Yu tan yinming zai Zhongguo de zhuanbo he fazhan 虞愚談因明在中國的轉播和發展) published in 1983 by the renowned historian of Chinese logic, Cui Qingtian 崔清田. In the following years up until now, ten more articles have been devoted exclusively to Yu Yu's thought. The most recent and the most relevant to the present discussion are Zhang Zhongyi's 張忠義 “Yu Yu and his *Yinmingxue*” (Yu Yu he ta de *Yinmingxue* 虞愚和他的《因明學》) (2009), Yang Wujin's 楊武金 “On Yu Yu's Application of *yinming* and Logic in Studies of Mohist Dialectics” (Yu Yu Mobian yanjiu zhong dui yinming he luoji de yingyong 虞愚墨辯研究中對因明和邏輯的應用) (2010) and Zhang Xiaoxiang's 張曉翔 “Yu Yu's Contributions to the *yinming*” (Yu Yu xiansheng dui yinming de gongxian 虞愚先生對因明的貢獻) (2013). In 2009, Liu Peiyu and others compiled and published the monograph *Shu xue, chang shi, han mo xiang: Jinian Yu Yu xiansheng* 述學昌詩翰墨香：紀念虞愚先生, a few chapters of which also indirectly involved the topic of this article. Following the year 1995, a series of different collections of Yu's works were published in China.

Yu's notion of logic is analysed briefly in the epilogue to Joachim Kurtz's *The Discovery of Chinese Logic* (2011). However, in the essay preliminary to that book, entitled “Matching Names and Actualities: Translation and the Discovery,” Kurtz (2004, 472) indicates that the “Chinese historians of logic and philosophy...focus their analysis on the first systematic studies, written at least a decade later, by trained logicians such as Hu Shi, Zhang Shizhao, Guo Zhanbo or Yu Yu.” Here Kurtz is probably referring to general outlines of the history of Chinese logic, written from the late 1980s on; the

same enumeration, though, appears also in the work of Liu Peiyu 劉培育 (2010, p. 2). However, a closer look at the literature reveals that even in later specialised histories of Buddhist logic in China, as for instance *The History of Buddhist Logic in China* (*Zhongguo Fojiao luoji shi* 中國佛教邏輯史) edited by Shen Jianying 沈劍英 (2001), Yu Yu's studies in Buddhist logic are touched on only superficially (Shen 2001, pp. 379-380). Yu's later work (after 1949) is discussed in a chapter reviewing contemporary Chinese research into "Indian Syllogistic Logic" in Guo Qiyong's *Studies on Contemporary Chinese Philosophy (1949-2009)* (Guo 2018, 478-481). As for the remaining Chinese histories of logic: the fifth volume of the monumental *History of Chinese Logic* (*Zhongguo luoji shi* 中國邏輯史), edited by Li Kuangwu 李匡武 and written by Zhou Yunzhi 周云之 and others, focuses mainly on the contributions by Lü Cheng, Xiong Shili and Chen Daji, and again mentions Yu Yu only briefly (see: Zhou Yunzhi 1989: 133-206). Albeit in the shadow of other important contributors to the study of Indian logic in China (1919-1930s), Yu is also mentioned in Yang Peisun's 楊沛蓀 *A Course in the History of Chinese Logical Thought* (1988, pp. 352-360). Similarly, in their *A Course in the History of Chinese Logic* Wen and Cui (2012, 382-387) cover mainly the contributions of Lü Cheng. In the comprehensive study *History of Hetuvidyā in China* (*Zhongguo yinmingxue shi* 中國因明學史), edited by Zheng Dui 鄭堆, a short chapter (three pages) is also devoted to Yu Yu's contribution in the 1930s and 1940s (Zheng Dui 2017, pp. 219-223). A similar situation recurs in recent Chinese articles on the topic. As an example of a broader overview of studies of *hetuvidyā* we can mention, for instance, Yao Nanqiang's (姚南強, 1948-) "A Survey of Chinese Research in Hetuvidyā in the Last One Hundred Years" (Bainian lai Zhongguo yinmingxue de yanjiu gaikuang 百年來中國因明學的研究概況) (1995).

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When the Little Buddhas are no more *Vinaya transformations in the early 4th century BC*

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Abstract

The *Verañja-kaṇḍa*, which introduces the Pali Vinaya, is as unusual as it is important. It will be argued here that its peculiar narrative, set in the obscure North-West and focusing on the six Buddhas of the past, is a veiled reference to Buddhist debates of the mid 4th century BC. Part of a major restructuring of the Vinaya around the time of the Second Council, the *Verañja-kaṇḍa* helped distinguish ‘Pātimokkha Buddhism’ from the looser, more ascetic movement of Gotama.

In the standard overviews of the Pali Vinaya, the *Verañja-kaṇḍa* has generally been overlooked. Perhaps because of the text’s mythic content (the failures and successes of past Buddhas) and strange setting (the remote Brahminical town of Verañjā), it was completely ignored by K. R. Norman (1983). More attention was paid to it by von Hinüber, although even he could only hypothesise that it was composed ‘to build a general introduction to the Suttavibhaṅga, which runs parallel to the one of the Mahāvagga’ (1996: 15). While this is a reasonable guess, there are no compelling arguments for placing the *Verañja-kaṇḍa* after the *Mahā-vagga*, and some very good reasons for supposing it was composed beforehand, as part of the *Sutta-vibhaṅga*.

The text’s setting and mythic content mark the *Verañja-kaṇḍa* as an oddity in the Pali canon. But it is precisely its strangeness which merits a detailed study.

Unless they are obviously an attempt to construct a system mythic belief (as in the *Mahāpadāna Sutta*), legendary texts most probably conceal an ulterior purpose. This seems to be the case with the *Verañja-kaṇḍa*, which has nothing remarkable to say about past Buddhas, but instead refers to fairly technical textual and disciplinary matters. Its connection with the *Sutta-vibhaṅga* is just as important. If both texts were composed together, and if the mythic content is a commentary on an actual state of affairs, the *Verañja-kaṇḍa* could turn out to be the most historically important text in the Pali Vinaya. For it would then explain the motivation for a major reformation of the Vinaya – the inclusion of the *Pātimokkha* within a biography of the Buddha – and also provide crucial evidence on the time and place of its production.

An outline of the *Verañja-kaṇḍa*

1. **Vin III.1-6 (Ee; Be para 1-15).** While residing in the town of Verañjā, the Buddha is visited by the Brahmin Verañja. The Buddha adeptly answers the hostile questions, Verañja takes refuge in the triple gem, and finally invites the Sangha to spend the rains in Verañjā. As von Hinüber (1996: 14) has pointed out, much of this exchange corresponds to a canonical Sutta (AN 8.11); the absence of this account in the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya parallel suggests it was a later addition to the *Verañja-kaṇḍa*.¹
2. **Ee III.6-7 (Be 16-17).** Facing a serious famine in Verañjā, the Sangha survives on ‘small portions of steamed grain’ (*pattha-pattha-mūlaka*).² Moggallāna offers to turn the world upside down, so that the *bhikkhus* can eat the ‘nutritive essence of the water plants’ (*pappaṭakojaṃ*) on the earth’s lower surface. The Buddha rejects this idea, because people might become deranged, and also rejects Moggallāna’s idea of wandering off to Uttarakuru for alms.
3. **Ee III.7-9 (Be 18-20).** When Sāriputta wonders about the dispensations (*brahma-cariyas*) of previous Buddhas, the Buddha tells him that they did not last long for Vipassin, Sikhin and Vessabhū: while keen on teaching meditation, these ‘lazy’ (*kiḷāsuno*) Buddhas did not teach much Dhamma and did not establish monastic law (*sikkhāpada/pātimokkha*). However,

*I am grateful to Ann-Lee Hsieh for providing information on the content of the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya.

¹ *Sifen lü* (四分律, Vinaya in four parts, translated by Zhu Fonian and Buddhayasas c. 410-412 C.E.

² See Horner (1949: 12) for a discussion.

the dispensations of Kakusandha, Koṇāgamana and Kassapa did endure, precisely because they taught a sufficient amount of Dhamma and established monastic law.

4. **Ee III.9-10 (Be 21).** Sāriputta requests that the Buddha lay down the monastic law, by reciting the Pātimokkha (*bhagavā sāvakānaṃ sikkhāpadaṃ paññāpeyya, uddiseyya pātimokkhaṃ*). The Buddha tells him to wait, as he will only establish rules when ‘corruption-inducing practices’ (*āsava-tṭhānīyā dhammā*) arise. The Buddha adds that at present the Sangha is pure, but corruption will arise when the Sangha has grown large (*vepulla-mahattaṃ patto*), achieved renown (*rattaññu-mahattaṃ patto*), is in receipt of excellent gifts (*lābhagga-mahattaṃ patto*) and highly learned (*bāhusacca-mahattaṃ patto*).
5. **Ee III.10-11(Be 22-23).** The Buddha sets off on tour (*janapada-cārikaṃ*), taking a route through Soreyya, Saṅkassa, Kaṇṇakujja, Payāga-tiṭṭha and Bārāṇasī before eventually arriving at the Kūṭāgāra-sālā of Vesālī, where the account ends. Thus the scene is set for the first *pārājika* offence: the recitational section on Sudinna (*Sudinna-bhāṇavāra*) narrates how this *bhikkhu* impregnated his former wife, causing the Buddha to lay down the first rule prohibiting sexual misconduct.

The composition of the *Verañja-kaṇḍa*

The *Verañja-kaṇḍa* introduces the *Sutta-vibhaṅga*, which in turn encloses the *Pātimokkha*: the *Sutta-vibhaṅga* explains the occasion on which the Buddha pronounced each Pātimokkha rule, and also includes a brief ‘word commentary’ (*pada-bhājanīya*) on each rule. This complex arrangement is generally considered a reworking of older material. According to Rhys Davids & Oldenberg (1899: xiv; Oldenberg 1997: xviff), the *Pātimokkha* pre-existed its current position within the *Sutta-Vibhaṅga*; von Hinüber (1996: 13) agrees that the *Sutta-vibhaṅga* narratives ‘are separated from the rules by a considerable period of time’.

Despite this no doubt complex textual history, there is no reason to doubt an intrinsic connection between the *Verañja-kaṇḍa* and the *Sutta-vibhaṅga*. A common authorship seems quite clear. In the *Verañja-kaṇḍa*, the Buddha refuses to lay down the *Pātimokkha* until it is required, telling Sāriputta that the Sangha

is ‘devoid of tumours, dangers and stains, pure, established in the essence’.³ Similarly, the *Sudinna-bhāṇavāra* narrates how various classes of god lament the loss of purity occasioned by Sudinna’s entanglement with his former wife: ‘The community of mendicants was certainly devoid of tumours and danger, but Sudinna, a native of Kalandaka, has created a tumour and danger’.⁴

The *Verañja-kaṇḍa* and *Sudinna-bhāṇavāra* thus belong to a single narrative. But this is only to be expected. Once it was decided to enclose the *Pātimokkha* in a momentous Vinaya biography of the Buddha, an introduction is unlikely to have been an afterthought. For historical purposes this is fortuitous, since the *Verañja-kaṇḍa* includes important details on the time and place of its composition. The North-western town of Verañjā lies well beyond the Buddha’s sphere of activity, ‘from Śrāvastī, the capital of Kosala, in the north-west to Rājagṛha, the capital of Magadha, in the south-east’ (Bronkhorst 2007: 4). Indeed, canonical texts on Verañjā are marginal,⁵ suggesting that the *Verañja-kaṇḍa* (and *Sutta-vibhaṅga*) was composed some time after the Sangha had spread beyond its original home.

Verañjā was also located close to Mathurā/Madhurā,⁶ a town mentioned in only two Pali Suttas, both of which are placed after the Buddha’s death.⁷ The composers of the *Verañja-kaṇḍa/Sutta-Vibhaṅga* thus belonged to the early missionary community of Verañjā/Mathurā, established by the time of the Second Council of Vesālī. In the Pali account of this Council (Vin II.294ff), venerable Sāṇavāsīn is said to reside at Mt. Ahogaṅga, known in later Sanskrit sources as Mt. Urumuṇḍā, the residence of Upagupta in the Aśokan era.⁸ According to Frauwallner (1956: 27ff), Upagupta was the local saint of Mathurā, whose Vinaya

³ Vin III.10: *nirabbudo hi sārīputta bhikkhusaṅgho nirādīnavo apagatakāḷako suddho sāre paṭiṭṭhito*.

⁴ Vin III.18: *nirabbudo vata bho bhikkhu-saṅgho nirādīnavo, sudinnena kalandaka-puttena abbudaṃ uppāditam ādīnavo uppādito ti*.

⁵ Apart from the *Verañja-kaṇḍa* and its Sutta parallel (AN 4.53 = Vin III.1-6), Verañjā is only mentioned in three other canonical texts (MN 42, AN 8.11, AN 8.19). There is no evidence for the DPPN’s statement that ‘[t]here was evidently frequent intercourse between Sāvattī and Verañjā’.

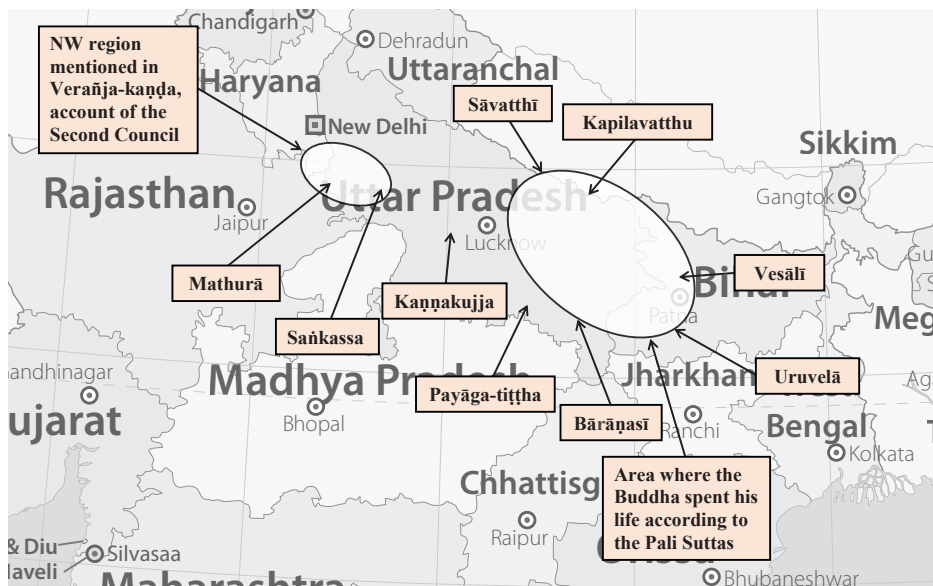
⁶ AN 4.53 (Ee II.57): *ekaṃ samayaṃ bhagavā antarā ca madhuraṃ antarā ca verañjaṃ addhāna-magga-paṭipanno hoti*.

⁷ MN 84, AN 2.39. Both involve Mahā-kaccāna, and both are set after the Buddha’s death as the introduction suggests (Ee MN II.83): *ekaṃ samayaṃ āyasmā mahā-kaccāno madhurāyaṃ viharati gundāvane*.

⁸ Strong (1994: 147-48).

was preserved by the Mūlasarvāstivādins.⁹ The Pali Vinaya must be related to a pre-sectarian phase of this tradition, as must the Dharmaguptaka Vinaya (see n.1 above), which contains a close parallel to the *Verañja-kaṇḍa*, including all the main elements: a famine in Verañjā, Moggallāna’s miraculous abilities, the account of former Buddhas’ dispensations, and the Buddha travelling to Vesālī to establish the *Pātimokkha*.

Frauwallner (1956: 37) has noted that a North-Western Buddhist network played ‘an important role already at the time of the council of Vaiśālī’. The *Verañja-kaṇḍa* is merely an earlier product of this network. But just how close in time to the Second Council is the text? Most probably, it was composed just after the council. At the end of the text, the Buddha travels to Vesālī via Soreyya, Saṅkassa, Kaṇṇakujja, Payāga-tiṭṭha and Bārāṇasī. Similarly, the Pali account of the Second Council narrates how Yasa, after enlisting Sāṅavāsīn’s support in Ahogaṅga, looked for Revata in Soreyya, Saṅkassa, Kaṇṇakujja, Udumbara, Aggaḷapura and Sahajāti.



*Map showing the major Buddhist sites of the 5th-4th centuries BC, including places mentioned in the *Verañja-kaṇḍa* and Pali account of the Second Council.*

⁹ Frauwallner (1956: 24ff), Wynne (2008).

The DPPN (s.v.) notes that the route followed by the Buddha in the *Verañja-kaṇḍa* ‘may have been the very road followed by Revata when going from Sankassa to Sahajāti, this road passing through Kannakujja, Udumbara, and Aggalapura (Vin.ii.299).’ The parallel is indeed uncanny. In both accounts, a Western contingent travels East, from the region of Mathurā to Vesālī, in order to resolve disciplinary problems.

This can hardly be a coincidence. It suggests that just as an account of the Second Council closes the Pali Vinaya, the *Verañja-kaṇḍa* opens the Vinaya with a veiled reference to it. An intriguing possibility is therefore raised. If the *Verañja-kaṇḍa* was composed at the time of the Second Council, was it a response to the problems caused by the Vajjiputtaka fraternity? Perhaps we can put the question like this. If the *Sutta-vibhaṅga* was composed after the *Pātimokkha*, to legitimise it as *buddha-vacana*, did this occur around the time of the Second Council, in response to the Vajjiputtakas adopting a less strict attitude towards it? Another correspondence suggests just this.

Former Buddhas and ‘little Buddhas’

The *Verañja-kaṇḍa* section on former Buddhas who were too lazy (*kilāsu*) to teach the Dhamma in detail and establish the *Pātimokkha* reads as follows:

Sāriputta, the Blessed Vipassin, Sikhin and Vessabhū were lazy in teaching the Dhamma to their disciples in detail. Few were their Suttas, Geyyas, Veyyākaraṇas, Gāthās, Udānas, Itivuttakas, Jātakas, Abbhuta-dhammas and Vedallas. They did not lay down the rules of training for their disciples; they did not recite the *Pātimokkha*.¹⁰

So these lazy Buddhas left few Dhamma teachings, of the nine categories,¹¹ and did not lay down ‘rules of training’, that is to say, the recitational text of the *Pātimokkha*. This led to the break-up of their Sanghas:

¹⁰ Vin III.8: *bhagavā ca sāriputta vipassī bhagavā ca sikhī bhagavā ca vessabhū kilāsuno ahesuṃ sāvakānaṃ vitthārena dhammaṃ desetum. appakañ ca nesaṃ ahoṣi suttaṃ geyyaṃ veyyākaraṇaṃ gāthā udānaṃ itivuttakaṃ jātakaṃ abbhutadhammaṃ vedallaṃ. apaññattaṃ sāvakānaṃ sikkhāpadaṃ, anuddiṭṭhaṃ pātimokkhaṃ.*

¹¹ The Dharmaguptaka text refers to a twelvefold list; on the elaboration of such lists, see Cousins (2013: 105).

Sāriputta, it's just like various flowers laid out on a board: if they are not securely tied together with string (*suttena*), the wind will scatter, disperse and destroy them. Why is that? It's just how it is because of not being securely tied together by string. In the same way, Sāriputta, with the disappearance of those Blessed Buddhas, and with the disappearance of their 'little Buddha' disciples, the disciples who came later – of various names, lineages and classes, gone forth from various families – brought about the disappearance of the holy life very quickly.¹²

The term *anubuddha*, here translated as 'little Buddha', requires some explanation. According to Cone's *A Dictionary of Pāli (anubujjhati s.v.)*, the primary meaning of *anubuddha* is 'realised, understood', but as a masculine noun the term can also refer to 'one who has understood in succession; a disciple or successor of the Buddha'. This is how the term is used in a few places where it refers to *Koṇḍañña*,¹³ one of the first five disciples, and reputed to be the first person who understood the Buddha. Just as the *Verañja-kaṇḍa* refers to 'disciples awakened in succession from the Buddha (*buddhānubuddhānaṃ sāvakānaṃ*), so too is *Koṇḍañña* referred to as 'an elder awakened in succession from the Buddha' (*buddhānubuddho ... thero*). Theragāthā 1248 also refers to *Koṇḍañña* as an 'heir of the Buddha' (*buddha-dāyādo*). The term in the *Verañja-kaṇḍa* must in general refer to prominent disciples of past Buddhas, those close enough to the past Buddhas to be regarded as their Dharma heirs. Such disciples could loosely be called 'little Buddhas'.

It is in the generation after the 'little Buddhas' that things went wrong for some past Buddhas. But if the term 'little Buddha' (*anubuddha*) refers to a Buddha's prominent disciples, this story resembles the account of the Second Council very closely. The most important figure at this council was Sabbakāmin, a companion of Ānanda (Vin II.303: *āyasmato ānandassa saddhi-vihāriko*). Sabbakāmin thus represents precisely the next generation

¹² Vin III.8: *seyyathāpi sāriputta nānā-pupphāni phalake nikkhittāni suttena asaṅghitāni, tāni vāto vikirati vidhamati viddhamseti. taṃ kissa hetu? yathā taṃ suttena asaṅghitattā. evaṃ eva kho Sāriputta, tesam buddhānaṃ bhagavantānaṃ antaradhānena buddhānubuddhānaṃ sāvakānaṃ antaradhānena ye te pacchimā sāvakā nānā-nāmā nānā-gottā nānā-jaccā nānā-kulā pabbajitā, te taṃ brahmacariyaṃ khippaññā eva antaradhāpesuṃ.*

¹³ SN I.194 (= Thag 1246), Thag 679.

after Ānanda.¹⁴ The description of diverse Sanghas of the past Buddhas, after their little Buddhas had passed away, also sounds suspiciously like how Gotama's Sangha would have been at the time of the Second Council: widely spread, and no doubt with disciples 'of various names, lineages and classes, gone forth from various families'.

Contrary to the activity of lazy Buddhas and the demise of their dispensations, Kakusandha, Koṇāgamana and Kassapa left numerous Dhamma teachings, and established the *Pātimokkha*. Their Sanghas were 'well tied together' (*susaṅgahita*) by the *Pātimokkha* 'thread' (*sutta*), so that the holy life endured long (Vin III.9: *te taṃ brahmacariyaṃ ciraṃ dīghaṃ addhānaṃ ṭhapesuṃ*). The image of a network of flowers well tied together symbolises the aim of the authors of the *Verañja-kaṇḍa*: a diffuse but unitary Sangha bound by a common disciplinary commitment to the *Pātimokkha*.

The message would seem to be quite clear. When the principle disciples of the Buddha have passed away, it is not just the *Pātimokkha* which guarantees concord, but a *Pātimokkha* laid down by a Buddha. As a set of *Pātimokkha* rules codified by the Buddha, the *Sutta-vibhaṅga* achieves exactly this. And surely this was its sole purpose. As a stand-alone recitational text, the *Pātimokkha* does not look anything like a teaching of the Buddha. As such, its observance might not have been deemed obligatory. This was the problem faced by the conveners of the Second Council; the creation of the *Sutta-vibhaṅga* makes sense as a response to it.

The *Pātimokkha* in the Suttas

For this thesis to be plausible, there must be good reasons to suppose that the *Pātimokkha* post-dates the Buddha. This is not the traditional understanding, of course. According to the *Uposatha-kkhandā* of the Pali Vinaya, the Buddha decided to convert 'points of training' (*sikkhā-pada*) into the recitational text of the *Pātimokkha*:

Why don't I allow those points of training, declared by me to the *bhikkhus*, to be their *Pātimokkha* recitation? That can be their Uposatha ritual.¹⁵

¹⁴ It is unlikely that at the Second Council, Sabbakāmin was 120 years old since his ordination, as claimed in the Vinaya (Vin II.203: *vīsa-vassa-satiko upasampadāya*).

¹⁵ Vin I.102: *yaṃ nūnāhaṃ yāni mayā bhikkhūnaṃ paññattāni sikkhā-padāni, tāni nesam*

There can be little doubt that something like this happened at some point: *sikkhā-padas*, found throughout the Sutta-piṭaka (most notably in the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta*, DN I.63ff), were arranged into the recitational text of the *Pātimokkha*. But did this occur during the Buddha's life, or even in the early phase(s) of Sutta composition? This obviously depends on how the Sutta evidence is understood. Perhaps the most important text is the 'Pātimokkha pericope':

The mendicant becomes virtuous, abiding restrained by the *pātimokkha* restraint, pasturing in good conduct, seeing danger in even a minute transgression, training in conformity with the points of training.¹⁶

Variants on this pericope occur throughout the Suttas. From this it might be concluded that the Pātimokkha belongs to a very early period of Sutta composition. But this is not the case. The 'Pātimokkha pericope' can only be regarded as a dubious part of the earliest Buddhist tradition: brief and formulaic, it could have been added to any text mentioning moral virtue (*sīla*). A number of parallels to the Majjhima Nikāya prove just this: although found in MĀ 145, the Chinese Āgama parallel to MN 108 (Anālayo 2011: 626), the pericope is not found in the Chinese parallels to MN 6, 107 and 125.¹⁷ According to Anālayo (Anālayo 2011: 618, 718), the parallels to MN 107 and 125 focus on cultivating purity of body, speech and mind, rather than observing the *Pātimokkha*. But he underestimates the importance of this (Anālayo 2011: 718):

This in itself relatively minor difference is part of a recurring pattern, where the Pali discourses appear to have a predilection for the injunction to scrupulously observe the rules, while their Madhyama-āgama counterparts place more emphasis on the purpose of observing the rules in terms of the need to develop bodily, verbal, and mental purity.

This difference between the Chinese and Pali Buddhist canons is not 'relatively minor'. The MĀ parallels suggest that 'Pātimokkha pericope' does

pātimokkhuddesaṃ anujāneyyaṃ? so nesam bhavissati uposatha-kamman ti.

¹⁶ M III.11: *bhikkhu sīlavā hoti, pātimokkha-saṃvara-saṃvuto viharati, ācāra-gocara-sampanno, aṇumattesu vajjesu bhaya-dassāvī, samādāya sikkhati sikkhā-padesu.*

¹⁷ MN 6 = MĀ 105, EĀ 37.5; MN 107 = MĀ 144, T 70; MN 125 = MĀ 198; see Anālayo (2011: 46-47, 618, 718).

not belong to the earliest phase(s) of MN Sutta composition. An early form of the pericope, which does not mention the *Pātimokkha*, can even be seen in the Chinese parallel to MN 6: EĀ 37.5 refers to ‘being afraid of a small transgression, what to say of a major one’ (Anālayo 2011: 47 n.104), apparently a parallel to a small section of the *pātimokkha*-pericope (*anumattesu vajjesu bhaya-dassāvī*).

If an early stage of Sutta composition did not know the *Pātimokkha*, the general lack of Sutta evidence for the *Pātimokkha* ceremony should come as no surprise. Most of the Suttas which mention Uposatha days refer to the lay activities of Buddhists and non-Buddhists alike.¹⁸ A few Suttas also describe Uposatha gatherings of the Buddha and his followers, but make no mention of the *Pātimokkha*.¹⁹ This leaves only three Suttas which actually refer to the *Pātimokkha* recitation on the Uposatha day. One of these is set after the Buddha’s death (MN 108), the narrative in another is completely fictitious (Ud 45), and the other (Ud 48) concerns the schismatic machinations of Devadatta, probably not a part of the earliest Buddhist tradition.

Udāna 48 is a straightforward ‘Devadatta text’: when Devadatta declares that he will hold the Uposatha and Sangha acts separately, Ānanda informs the Buddha that Devadatta will split the Sangha. The Buddha then utters an inspired utterance: ‘It is easy for the good to do good, but difficult for the bad to do it. It is easy for the bad to do bad, but difficult for the noble to do it.’²⁰ This story must belong to the same period as similar stories about Devadatta in the Vinaya Khandhaka.²¹ But according to Ray’s summary of the evidence, the account of Devadatta as a schismatic does not appear in the ‘earliest core of the Skandhaka discussion of *saṃghabheda*, as reflected in the Mahāsāṃghika version’ (Ray 1994: 172). If Devadatta’s schism ‘arose not only after the death of the Buddha but also after the split between Mahāsāṃghikas and Sthaviras’ (Ray 1994: 172), *Udāna* 48 must be a relatively late text.

The *Gopaka-Mogallāna Sutta* (MN 108) comments on an early form of the Uposatha ceremony, when the *Pātimokkha* was considered a means of maintaining Sangha unity (*sāmaggiya*):

¹⁸ DN 17, DN 18, DN 19, DN 26, MN 83, AN 3.71, AN 7.53, AN 10.46, AN 10.119, AN 10.167. See Rhys Davids & Oldenberg (1899: x) on the Vedic background to the ceremony.

¹⁹ MN 109, MN 110 (= SN 22.82), MN 118, SN 8.7, AN 4.190, AN 10.67, SN 3.12.

²⁰ Ud p.61: *sukaraṃ sādhuṇā sādhu, sādhu pāpena dukkaraṃ, pāpaṃ pāpena sukaraṃ, pāpaṃ ariyehi dukkaran ti.*

²¹ Vin II.185ff.

There is, Brahmin, a rule of training which has been declared to the mendicants, a *Pātimokkha* which has been recited by the completely awakened Blessed One, an Arahant who knows and sees. On an Uposatha day, as many of us who live near to a village field gather together, and then request someone who knows it. When it is being recited, if there is an offence, a transgression, for a mendicant, we regulate him according to the law, according to the instruction. The honourable sirs do not regulate us – the Dhamma regulates us.²²

From this we learn of an apparently simply *Pātimokkha* ceremony, after the Buddha, with Buddhist mendicants in a general area – no monastic boundary (*sīmā*) is mentioned – gathering for the Uposatha ceremony. The ceremony and rules are considered Dhamma, not Vinaya: ‘the Dhamma regulates us’. Could this mean that when MN 108 was composed, the *Pātimokkha* had not yet been assigned to a separate class of ‘Vinaya’ tradition? It was possibly the case that the *Pātimokkha* was still considered part of the oral tradition of Suttanta/Dhamma, just as early lists of ‘points of training’ (*sikkhā-pada*) are found in such texts as the *Sāmañña-phala Sutta*.

The text is certainly late, however. Focusing on the activities of Ānanda after the Buddha’s death,²³ it is similar to the *Kosambi Sutta* (SN 12.68), also set after the Buddha’s death, and involving Musīla, Savitṭha, Nārada and Ānanda. Another Sutta involving Nārada (AN 5.50) is set in Pāṭaliputta under the reign of King Muṇḍa, apparently the great-grandson of Ajātasattu (DPPN s.v.; Wynne 2019: 153). SN 12.68 and MN 108 probably belongs to the same period as Nārada, i.e. 30-50 BE.

The only other Sutta which mentions the *Pātimokkha* is *Udāna* 45. It describes how Ānanda, at a Sangha gathering on an Uposatha night, requests the Buddha to recite the *Pātimokkha* on three occasions (the first, middle and last

22 MN III.10: *atthi kho brāhmaṇa tena bhagavatā jānatā passatā arahatā sammāsambuddhena bhikkhūnaṃ sikkhāpadaṃ paññattaṃ, pātimokkhaṃ uddiṭṭhaṃ. te mayaṃ tad-ahuposathe yāvaticā ekaṃ gāma-khettaṃ upanissāya viharāma, te sabbe ekajjhaṃ sannipatāma, sannipatitvā yassa taṃ vattati taṃ ajjhesāma. tasmim ce bhaññamāne hoti bhikkhussa āpatti hoti vītikkamo, taṃ mayaṃ yathā-dhammaṃ yathānusiṭṭhaṃ kāremā ti. na kira bhavanto kārenti, dhammo no kāretī ti.*

23 MN III.7: *ekaṃ samayaṃ ānando rājagahe viharati veḷu-vane kalandaka-nivāpe acira-parinibbute bhagavati.* ‘On one occasion, Ānanda was staying in Rājagaha, in the Bamboo grove, in the squirrels’ feeding ground, not long after the Buddha had attained Parinirvana.’

watches of the night). The Buddha finally states that ‘the assembly is impure, Ānanda’ (Ud p.52: *aparissuddhā ānanda parisā*), at which point Moggallāna surveys the minds of the *bhikkhus* and locates the offender: ‘a person of poor virtue, wicked, his conduct impure and dubious, concealing his deeds, not an ascetic but claiming to be, not following the holy life but claiming to, rotten within, drenched (with lust), full of rubbish’.²⁴

What happens next is bizarre. After identifying the offender using his supernatural powers, Moggallāna plays the role of a nightclub bouncer, grabbing the errant *bhikkhu* by the arm and throwing him out of the portcullis.²⁵ Moggallāna then requests that the Buddha recite the *Pātimokkha*, but the Buddha first praises Moggallāna: ‘It is marvellous and extraordinary, Moggallāna, how that stupid man waited until you grabbed him by the arm!’²⁶ The Buddha then tells the assembly that from now on the *Pātimokkha* is their concern:

Mendicants, I will no longer perform the Uposatha ritual, or recite the *Pātimokkha*. Henceforth, mendicants, only you can perform the Uposatha ritual, and recite the *Pātimokkha*. It’s not possible, there’s no chance, that the Tathāgata will perform the Uposatha ritual, and recite the *Pātimokkha* in an impure assembly.²⁷

This story is also found at the conclusion to the Vinaya rules dealing with the *bhikkhu-saṅgha* (Vin II.236-37).²⁸ It is indeed a suitable fiction with which to end the Vinaya. Its function is quite explicit: the text both authenticates the Uposatha ritual as part of the Buddha’s teaching career, and yet distances him from it, so that it becomes a concern of the Saṅgha beyond the Buddha.

²⁴ Ud p.52: *taṃ puggalaṃ dussīlaṃ pāpa-dhammaṃ asuci-saṅkassara-samācāraṃ paṭicchanna-kammantaṃ asamaṇaṃ samaṇa-paṭiññaṃ abrahmacāriṃ brahmacāri-paṭiññaṃ anto-pūtiṃ avassutaṃ kasambu-jātaṃ.*

²⁵ Ud p.52: *taṃ puggalaṃ bāhāyaṃ gahetvā bahi-dvāra-koṭṭhakā nikkhāmetvā sūci-ghaṭikaṃ datvā...*

²⁶ Ud p.53: *acchariyaṃ moggallāna abbhutaṃ moggallāna, yāva bāhā-gahaṇā pi nāma so mogha-puriso āgamessatī ti.*

²⁷ Ud p.53: *na dānāhaṃ bhikkhave ito paraṃ uposathaṃ karissāmi, pātimokkhaṃ uddisissāmi. tumh’eva dāni ito paraṃ uposathaṃ kareyyātha, pātimokkhaṃ uddiseyyātha. aṭṭhānam etaṃ bhikkhave anavakāso, yaṃ tathāgato aparissuddhāya parisāya uposathaṃ kareyya, pātimokkhaṃ uddiseyya.*

²⁸ The text is also found at AN 8.20.

The Pātimokkha as a ritual recitation

Within the sprawling mass of Suttanta traditions, the material on the Uposatha/*Pātimokkha* forms a marginal and undoubtedly late part of it. A study of some of the formal aspects of the Pātimokkha supports the idea that it post-dates the Buddha. According to Dutt, the *Pātimokkha* ‘originally consisted in periodical meetings for the purpose of confirming the unity of the Buddha’s monk-followers by holding a communal confession of faith in a sort of hymn-singing.’²⁹ A similar point was made earlier by Rhys Davids and Oldenberg (1899: xxvii-xxviii), albeit with greater insight into the term *pātimokkha*:

Prati-muc (ātmanep.) means ‘to free oneself, to get rid of;’ and it is precisely through the recitation of this formular, and the answering of questions contained in it, that the conscience of the member of the Brotherhood was set free from the sense of the offence he had incurred. Pātimokkha or Prātimoksha means therefore ‘Disburdening, Getting free.’

Noting that the term *patimokkha* occurs in the *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* with the meaning ‘a sort of remedy, purgative’, Gombrich comments as follows (1991: 35):

The original *pātimokkha*, the Pali-English Dictionary tells us, is ‘a name given to a collection of various precepts contained in the Vinaya... as they were recited on Uposatha days for the purpose of confession.’ In other words, it denotes not just a set of rules, a text, but also the ceremony of reciting those rules after confessing any transgression against them.

When the term *pātimokkha* occurs in the Suttas and Vinaya, it is almost always something to be ‘recited’ (*uddisati*). The ritual aspect of the *Pātimokkha* is even written into the formulation of its rules. As von Hinüber has noted (1998: 262), most rules include the adversative particle ‘but’ (*pana*) for no apparent reason, for example the 11th rule ‘involving forfeiture’ (*nissaggiya-pācittiyā*):

*yo pana bhikkhu kosiya-missakaṃ santhatam kārāpeyya,
nissaggiyaṃ pācittiyaṃ.*

²⁹ Dutt (1960: 71), as quoted by Gombrich (1991: 31-32).

‘If any bhikkhu should have a rug made mixed with silk, there is an offence entailing expiation with forfeiture’ (Pruitt & Norman, 2001: 36-37).

This translation overlooks the adversative meaning of *pana*; a more accurate translation would begin ‘But the *bhikkhu* who ...’. Von Hinüber (1998: 262) comments as follows:

Now it is by no means immediately obvious, what is meant by “but (*pana*) a monk who...”, as long as these rules are considered individually. If, on the other hand, the Pātimokkhasutta as whole is taken into consideration, the use of the adversative particle *pana* not only makes sense, but is required by context.

The context to which von Hinüber refers is what he calls ‘the Pātimokkhanidāna’, an introductory passage now found in the *Uposatha-kkhandhaka* (Vin I.103). This introduction, to be recited by a senior *bhikkhu* in an Uposatha gathering, begins by asking if any of the congregation has committed an offence:

May the community hear me, venerable sir. Today is the fifteenth, the Uposatha. If it is suitable to the community, the community should perform the Uposatha, it should recite the *Pātimokkha* ... For whom there may be a transgression, he should reveal it. There being no transgression, let silence prevail; through silence, I will know that the venerable sirs are pure. As, however, for each individual questioned there is (to be) an explanation, just so (must it) be announced up to the third time in such an assembly.³⁰

The speaker of this ritual introduction is obviously not the Buddha. The text continues as follows:

‘**But** the *bhikkhu* who does not reveal an existing offence, for him there is intentional false speech ...’

³⁰ Vin I.102-03: *suñātu me bhante saṃgho, ajj’ uposatho pannarasa. yadi saṃghassa pattakallaṃ saṃgho uposathaṃ kareyya pātimokkhaṃ uddiseyya ... yassa siyā āpatti so āvikareyya. asantiyā āpattiyā tuñhī bhavitabbaṃ. tuñhībhāvena kho pan’ āyasmante parisuddhā ti vedissāmi. yathā kho pana paccekapuṭṭhassa veyyākaraṇaṃ hoti, evam eva eva-rūpāya parisāya yāvatiyaṃ anussāvitaṃ hoti.*

Vin I.103: *yo pana bhikkhu ... santiṃ āpattiṃ nāvikareyya, sampajāna-musāvād’ assa hoti.*

According to von Hinüber (1998: 262), the term *pana* ‘clearly contrasts this monk and his behaviour to those being pure, and this entails the use of *pana* here and in all subsequent rules’. The *Pātimokkha* rules thus continue the introductory formula; neither was uttered by the Buddha. The *Sutta-vibhaṅga*, introduced by the *Verāṅja-kaṇḍa*, creates an entirely different presentation: not of a text composed for ritual recitation, but of individual rules pronounced by the Buddha when circumstances demanded them.

The evolution of the Pātimokkha

So far we have seen that the *Pātimokkha* was a ritual formula of the early Buddhist era, and not initially regarded as taught by the Buddha. It also seems, moreover, that the *Pātimokkha* rules were periodically revised, as part of an ongoing creation of tradition. Von Hinüber has noted that one Sutta (AN 3.83) refers to ‘just over 150 points of training’ (*sādhikam ... diyaḍḍha-sikkhā-padasatam*), a figure that can be reached ...

... by subtracting the 75 Sekhiyas, which have been created on the basis of the Vattakkhandhaka, the eighth chapter of the Cullavagga. Furthermore, it seems that there might have been only 90 instead of 92 Suddhika-Pācittiyas originally, if rules such as Pācittiya XXII and XXIII were split up at a later date. If correct, this assumption would lead to a set of exactly 150 rules at a very early period.³¹

Apart from an expansion of an early set of around 150 rules, many of the rules were also elaborated from a simpler formulation. This can be seen in the citation of certain rules in the account of the Second Council (von Hinüber 1998: 260). The first point of contention is whether it is suitable to store salt in an animal’s horn (Vin II.306: *kappati bhante siṅgi-loṇa-kappo ti*). In rejecting this practice, Sabbakāmin cites a Pācittiya rule: ‘In eating from a store, there is expiation’ (Vin II.306: *sannidhi-kāraka-bhojane pācittiyan ti*). However, in the extant *Pātimokkha* (*Suddha-pācittiya* 38) this rule reads as follows:

³¹ von Hinüber (1998: 258).

yo pana bhikkhu sannidhi-kāraṇaṃ khādanīyaṃ vā bhojanīyaṃ vā khādeyya vā bhuñjeyya vā, pācittiyaṃ.

‘But should a *bhikkhu* chew or eat solid food or soft food which comes from a store, there is expiation.’³²

All five of the *Pātimokkha* rules cited in the account of the Second Council have this truncated form, with an offence in the locative followed by the term ‘expiation’ (*pācittiya*). For example, on the final point of whether it is suitable to accept gold or silver (Vin II.307: *kappati bhante jātārūpa-rajatan ti*), Sabbakāmin cites a *Pācittiya* rule: ‘in accepting gold or silver, there is expiation’ (*jātārūparajata-paṭiggahaṇe pācittiyān ti*). But the actual rule in the *Pātimokkha* (*Nissaggiya-pācittiya* 18) is more complex:

yo pana bhikkhu jātārūpa-rajataṃ uggaṇheyya vā uggaṇhāpeyya vā upanikkhitaṃ vā sādīyeyya, nissaggiyaṃ pācittiyaṃ.

‘But should a mendicant receive or have received gold or silver, or accept a deposit, there is expiation entailing forfeiture.’³³

Although the *Pātimokkha* was also revised to ensure greater legal exactitude, some of the extant *Pācittiya* rules have retained their older formulation, with a prohibited item in the locative case followed by the word ‘expiation’. We can consider the eighth point of the Second Council: whether ‘it is suitable to drink *jaḷogī*’ (Vin II.307: *kappati bhante jaḷogim pātun ti*). Sabbakāmin’s reply, ‘In drinking liquor and spirits, there is expiation’ (*surā-meraya-pāne pācittiyān ti*) is identical to *Suddha-pācittiya* 51 (Vin IV.110). Strangely, however, in this case the ‘word commentary’ (*pada-bhājanīya*) section of the *Sutta-vibhaṅga* cites the term ‘should drink’ (Vin IV.110: *piveyyā ti*), indicating that while the word commentary knew an updated version of the rule (to something like *yo pana bhikkhu surā-merayaṃ piveyya, pācittiyān ti*), by oversight the updated version was omitted and the original rule retained.

³² Vin IV.87; Pruitt & Norman (2001: 58-59).

³³ Vin III.237; Pruitt & Norman (2001: 38-39).

Move to the monastery, or stay in the forest?

We have seen that the *Pātimokkha* was devised as a means of affirming Sangha unity, through asserting moral purity. At some point in the early Buddhist era, prior to the Second Council of Vesālī, ‘points of training’ were transformed into a recitational text performed on Uposatha days. This happened after the Buddha’s death: the Sutta evidence for the *Pātimokkha* is marginal, fictitious and in some cases demonstrably a later addition. Once the ceremony was established, the content of the *Pātimokkha* was periodically expanded and its legalistic formulations refined.

The *Verañja-kaṇḍa* should be understood against this background of *Pātimokkha* development. Its rules were a script for a senior *bhikkhu* to recite at the Uposatha ritual. But the *Sutta-vibhaṅga*, introduced by the *Verañja-kaṇḍa*, presented the rules afresh within a legendary biography of the Buddha. As von Hinüber has noted (1995: 7), the *Sutta-vibhaṅga* underlines the important point that

the rules of conduct must be promulgated by the Buddha himself. He is the only law giver, and thus all rules, to which every single monk has to obey, are thought to go back to the Buddha.

This repackaging of the *Pātimokkha* was a suitable response to those fraternities which did not take it very seriously. Indeed, the *Verañja-kaṇḍa* contains enough clues for the real circumstances of its composition to be decoded. The Buddha’s journey East to Vesālī, the idea of corruption arising when ‘little Buddhas’ are no more, and indiscipline among the Vajjiputtakas: all this is the events of the Second Council reimagined as a mythic fantasy. But the *Sutta-vibhaṅga* was probably not aimed at the Vajjiputtakas alone. The story of venerable Mahā-kappina, who decides not to attend the Uposatha ritual, illustrates other forms of opposition to the new institution:

Whether I go to the Uposatha or not, whether I go the Sangha’s ritual act or not, I have been purified by the highest purification.³⁴

³⁴ Vin I.105: *gaccheyyaṃ vāhaṃ uposathaṃ na vā gaccheyyaṃ, gaccheyyaṃ vā saṃgha-kammaṃ na vā gaccheyyaṃ, atha khvāhaṃ visuddho paramāya visuddhiyā ti.*

In response to this individualism, Mahā-kappina is implored to respect the Uposatha ritual, because if Brahmins do not respect it, who else will?³⁵ Like the Vinaya in general, this is not a story of what happened in the lifetime of the Buddha, but of resolving Sangha tensions in the early Buddhist era. Mahā-kappina symbolises the forest ideal, of meditators bent on solitary spiritual perfection, but now in conflict with the new ‘Pātimokkha Buddhism’. Awareness of this difference is also coded into the *Verañja-kaṇḍa*. Its account of the meditative teaching of ‘lazy’ Buddhas can be read as praise for, but ultimately a critique of, the forest vocation:

But those Blessed Ones, encompassing mind with mind, were not lazy in exhorting their disciples. One time, Sāriputta, the Blessed Vessabhū, a fully awakened Arahant, was in a certain scary forest thicket. Encompassing mind with mind, he exhorted and instructed a community of a thousand mendicants:

Think like this, do not think like that! Pay attention like this, do not pay attention like that! Abandon that, abide having attained this!

And then, Sāriputta, being exhorted and instructed thus by Vessabhū, the minds of that thousandfold community of mendicants were released from the corruptions without grasping.³⁶

This is no more than a mythic exaggeration of Gotama’s own teaching. It reflects the fact that the Buddha was an austere sage, rather than a legal scholar who established a monastic order; a meditation master, rather than a disciplinarian who devised the *Pātimokkha* rules. The message of the *Verañja-kaṇḍa* is clear enough. Just as Vessabhū’s dispensation failed because there was no *Pātimokkha*, so too will Gotama’s unless things change. And so while partially recognising the importance of the forest vocation, the *Verañja-kaṇḍa* subsumes it within a call for textualism and *Pātimokkha* Buddhism.

³⁵ Vin I.105: *tumhe ce brāhmaṇā uposathaṃ na sakkariṣṣatha na garu-kariṣṣatha na mānessatha na pūjessatha, atha ko carahi uposathaṃ sakkariṣṣati garu-kariṣṣati mānessati pūjessati?*

³⁶ Vin III.8: *akilāsuno ca te bhagavanto ahesuṃ sāvake cetasā ceto paricca ovadituṃ. bhūtapubbaṃ Sāriputta vessabhū bhagavā arahaṃ sammā-sambuddho aññatarasmim bhimsanake vana-saṇḍe, sahasaṃ bhikkhu-saṃghaṃ cetasā ceto paricca ovadati anusāsati: evaṃ vitakketha mā evaṃ vitakkayittha, evaṃ manasi-karotha mā evaṃ manasā-kattha, idaṃ pajahatha idaṃ upasampajja viharathā ti. atha kho sāriputta tassa bhikkhu-sahasassa vessabhunā bhagavatā arahatā sammā-sambuddhena evaṃ ovadiyamānānaṃ evaṃ anusāsiyamānānaṃ anupādāya āsavehi cittāni vimuccimṣu.*

Further evidence for a change from the more ascetic tradition of Gotama is contained in SN 16.5. In the bamboo grove of Rājagaha, the Buddha observes that since Mahā-Kassapa is old, his hempen rag-robles must be a burden, and so why not accept the robes of a householder, and invitations to eat? Why not also live close to the Buddha? In response Kassapa outlines what he has long practised and advocated: dwelling in the forest, eating almsfood, wearing rag-robles, wearing the triple-robe, having few wishes and abiding content, secluded, aloof and resolute.

Why does Kassapa live like this and praise this lifestyle, asks the Buddha? Kassapa says it is for his own blissful abiding in the present and out of compassion for the later generation (SN II.203: *attano diṭṭhadhamma-sukhavihāraṃ sampassamāno, pacchimañ ca janataṃ anukampamāno*), thinking ‘perhaps the later generation will come to follow my view’ (SN II.203: *app eva nāma pacchimā janatā diṭṭhānugatiṃ āpajjeyyūṃ*). Kassapa then makes a revealing comment about this ‘later generation’:

(When the later generation hears) ‘Those who were apparently a Buddha’s disciples, his ‘little Buddhas’, were long-term forest dwellers, and spoke in praise of forest dwelling ... were resolute and spoke in praise of being resolute’, the (later generation) will strive for just that (lifestyle, *tathattāya*), which will be for their wellbeing and happiness in the long-term.³⁷

The Sutta ends with the Buddha praising Kassapa and telling him to carry on with his asceticism: ‘Wear hempen rag-robles, Kassapa, wander for alms, and live in the forest!’³⁸ SN 16.5 thus resists the move to the monastery – living near to the Buddha – and sticks to the ascetic ways of the forest. It is also the only canonical text apart from the *Verañja-kaṇḍa* which refers to ‘little Buddhas’. If it belongs to the same era as the *Verañja-kaṇḍa*, after the Buddha’s principle disciples had passed away, it clarifies that a major concern of the age was to

³⁷ SN II.203: *ye kira te ahesuṃ buddhānubuddha-sāvaka te dīgharattaṃ ārañṇakā c’eva ahesuṃ ārañṇakattassa ca vaṇṇa-vādino ... pe ... piṇḍa-pātikā c’eva ... pe ... paṃsukūlikā c’eva ahesuṃ ... tecīvarikā c’eva ahesuṃ ... appicchā c’eva ahesuṃ ... santuṭṭhā c’eva ahesuṃ ... pavivittā c’eva ahesuṃ ... asaṃsaṭṭhā c’eva ahesuṃ ... āradha-vīriyā c’eva ahesuṃ vīriyārambhassa ca vaṇṇa-vādino ti. te tathattāya paṭipajjissanti, tesam taṃ bhavissati dīgharattaṃ hitāya sukhāya.*

³⁸ SN II.203: *tasmā-t-īha tvam kassapa sāṇāni c’eva paṃsukūlāni dhārehi nibbasanāni, piṇḍapātāya ca carāhi arañṇe ca viharāhī ti.*

avoid slipping away from the austere ways of old. Although the *Pātimokkha* was an attempt to codify this austerity within a developing monasticism, not everyone agreed with this solution.

The Vajjiputtaka problem reconsidered

The texts on Mahā-kappina's disdain for the Uposatha, and Mahā-kassapa's forest asceticism, show that within the Sangha of the early 4th century BC, some resisted the rules of the developing monasticism. The Vajjiputtakas also resisted the *Pātimokkha*, albeit for different reasons: they wished not to return to the forest, but to follow a more relaxed sort of monasticism. This can be seen in AN 3.83, a Vajjiputtaka document which sets out an opposition between essential spiritual ideals and the *Pātimokkha*:

At one time, the Blessed One was residing in Vesālī, in the Great Wood, in the hall with a peaked roof. And then a certain Vajjiputtaka *bhikkhu* approached the Blessed One, saluted him and sat to one side. Seated to one side, he said to this to the Blessed One.

‘Respected sir, this recitation of more than 150 points of training is recited every half-month. I am unable, sir, to train in them.’

‘Are you able, *bhikkhu*, to train in the triple training of higher virtue, higher mind and higher insight?’

‘I am able, sir, to train in the triple training of higher virtue, higher mind and higher insight.’

‘Therefore, *bhikkhu*, you may train in the triple training of higher virtue, higher mind and higher insight. When you train in this triple training, your passion, hatred and delusion will be abandoned as you train in it. And with the abandoning of passion, hatred and delusion, you will not do anything unskilful, you will not resort to any evil.’

On another occasion, that *bhikkhu* trained in the triple training of higher virtue, higher mind and higher insight. As he trained in it, his passion, hatred and delusion were abandoned. And with the abandoning of passion, hatred and delusion, he did not do anything unskilful, and did not resort to any evil.

Perhaps the Vajjiputtakas can now be viewed in a different light, not simply as breakers of the Buddha's monastic code, but rather as adopting a more flexible approach to an early Buddhist innovation: 'Pātimokkha Buddhism'. When the older way of the *bhikkhu* was giving way to settled monasticism, *Pātimokkha* Buddhism was a rule-heavy attempt to assimilate the austere forest ideal into the new monasteries. The Vajjiputtaka response to this was effectively a warning against the danger of missing the wood (the 'triple training' of virtue, meditation and wisdom) for the trees (a copious rule-book).³⁹ And yet we can also easily understand the perspective of the *Verañja-kaṇḍa*: 'without *vinaya* there is no order (*samgha*), and without the community of monks there is no Buddhism' (von Hinüber, 1995: 7).

The situation around the time of the Second Council was no doubt complicated. There were tensions not only between Vesālī and the North-West network around Verañjā, but probably also within different lineages. So while the Verañjā-kaṇḍa says that the period of corruption occurs when the Sangha has 'attained the eminence of great learning' (Vin III.10: *bāhusacca-mahattaṃ patto*), it also laments the lack of Dhamma teachings (in nine categories) given by the lazy Buddhas of the past. In other words, a critique of scholasticism is somehow bound up in the call for increasing textualism.

Other tensions in the proto-Theravādin tradition can be made out. The *Verañja-kaṇḍa* and the account of the Second Council have a clear ascetic tendency: from the Buddha praising the diet of streamed grain in the famine of Verañjā (Vin III.6-7), to the description of the meditative teaching of Vessabhū, and also the account of the Pāveyyaka *bhikkhus* residing at Ahogaṅga, 'all forest dwellers, all alms-rounders, all rag-robbers, all three-robbers, all arahants' (Vin II.299: *sabbe ārañṇikā, sabbe piṇḍapātikā, sabbe paṃsukūlikā, sabbe tecīvarikā, sabbeva arahanto*). The proto-Theravādins were ascetically inclined, and yet strongly in favour of a code for settled monasticism (the *Pātimokkha*).

Stronger support for the ascetic vocation found expression in the lineage of Devadatta, whose attempted reform was merely a more adamant voice from the forest, one more clearly opposed to the compromises of the *Pātimokkha*. Yet another response was the more relaxed monasticism of the Vajjiputtakas:

³⁹ Perhaps the Vajjiputtakas would have agreed with Oldenberg's estimation (1997: xxiii) of the Second Council: 'We thus perceive that the grand intellectual movement which we call Buddhism had even at that time lost the spirit of freedom upon which it was founded, and that it had degenerated into monkish ceremoniousness'.

whereas Devadatta's tradition rejected *Pātimokkha* Buddhism, the Vajjiputtakas preferred a relaxed version of it, arguing for a greater focus on the spirit rather than the rules.

The Pali Vinaya thus suggests a multitude of orientations within the Sangha of the early 4th century BC: the forest ideal (*Verañja*, Mahā-kappina), strict asceticism (Mahā-kassapa, Devadatta) strict monasticism (*Verañja*, *Pātimokkha*), relaxed monasticism (Vajjiputtakas), the new vocation of scholasticism (*Verañja-kaṇḍa*) and so on. At a key moment, an attempt was made to resolve some of the tensions by establishing Pātimokkha Buddhism as *buddha-vacana*. The *Verañja-kaṇḍa* introduction to the *Sutta-vibhaṅga* suggests that this occurred at the time of the Second Council, when the 'little Buddhas' had passed away.

Appendix 1: Dating the Second Council

Rhys Davids & Oldenberg (1899, xxiii) dated the Second Council to the mid 4th century BC, within 'thirty years of 350 B.C.', but this assumes that the Buddha died in 'the period 420-400 B.C.' Dating the Buddha's death to c. 400 BC would push the Second Council to around 340 BC. Cousins (2005: 54-55) has dated it even later, c.70-80 BE, i.e. 330-320 BC, but this is probably too late. While it is reasonable for Cousins to assume (2005: 54) that Ānanda 'might have lived until around 20 BE', he also assigns the latest date possible for Sabbakāmin, 'the presiding monk (very probably the oldest living monk)' at the Second Council, who he views as 'a pupil of Ānanda' (2005: 54). This allows Cousins to suppose that if Sabbakāmin was a young ordinand at the end of Ānanda's life, he could have lived for another 50-60 years, placing the Second Council around 70-80 BE.

It is not clear why Cousins insists on the longest possible period between the death of Ānanda and Sabbakāmin's age at the Second Council. For the Pali account of the Second Council does not refer to Sabbakāmin as Ānanda's pupil, but calls him his 'religious companion' (Vin II.304: *saddhi-vihārika*). It follows that a gap of fifty years or more between Sabbakāmin and Ānanda is an exaggeration. Placing Sabbakāmin within a generation or two of Ānanda suggests that he lived for another 20-40 years after him. This would put the Second Council within the period 40 – 60 BE (360-340 BC), which would correspond to the rough date of MN 108 proposed above (c. 30 – 50 BE). Further support for the mid 4th century BC is suggested by the *Pātimokkha* rules on wealth and money (*Nissaggiya-pācittiya* 18-19):

18. *yo pana bhikkhu jātarūpa-rajataṃ ugganheyya vā ugganhāpeyya vā upanikkhattaṃ vā sādiyeyya, nissaggiyaṃ pācittiyaṃ.*

‘But should a mendicant receive or have received gold or silver, or accept a deposit, there is expiation entailing forfeiture.’

19. *yo pana bhikkhu nāna-ppakāraṃ rūpiya-saṃvohāraṃ samāpajjeyya, nissaggiyaṃ pācittiyaṃ.*

‘But should a mendicant engage in various types of *rūpiya*-transaction, there is expiation entailing forfeiture.’⁴⁰

Rule 18 refers to ‘gold and silver’ rather than money, and so is substantially the same as one of the Suttanta ‘points of training’ (e.g. DN I.64: *jātarūpa-rajata-paṭiggahaṇā paṭivirato hoti*). Rhys Davids (1877: 7) doubted whether the term *rūpiya*, in rule 19, refers to money, preferring instead to understand the notion of ‘transactions in silver’ (*rūpiya-saṃvohāra*) as a reference to ‘silver as a medium of exchange’, rather than actual money. If so, the rule could be seen as a complement to rule 18, adding that besides accepting gold and silver, it is an additional offence to undertake a transaction with it. On the other hand, rule 19 could be an attempt to update the older rule on gold and silver to more recent economic conditions; Pruitt and Norman (2001: 39) have translated *rūpiya-saṃvohāra* as ‘monetary transaction’.

Whatever the meaning of *rūpiya*, one of the practices of the Vajjiputtakas was requesting money: ‘Give, sirs, a *kahāpaṇa* to the community, or a half or a quarter or a Māsaka coin.’⁴¹ Even Rhys Davids (1877: 3) admits that a *kahāpaṇa* was a type of coin, and if so the Second Council can be understood, at least in part, as a response to changes in Buddhist behaviour brought about by the innovation of money. The Second Council must therefore belong to a period in which money was circulating in northern India.

According to Cribb (1985: 550), Indian coinage was derived from the ‘Graeco-Iranian world’, the first examples being Gandharan Punch Marked Coins, which ‘were in circulation at a date in the mid 4th century BC’. If these coins can probably be dated to ‘the early 4th century BC’, and allowing some time for the new technology to catch on, coinage must have become normal

⁴⁰ Vin III.237ff; Pruitt & Norman (2001: 38-39).

⁴¹ Vin II.294: *deth’ āvuso saṅghassa kahāpaṇam pi aḍḍham pi pādam pi māsakarūpam pi.*

in the period after Ānanda's death (c.380 BC), and quite possibly before it. Although this does not provide definite dates for the Second Council, it suggests that a date towards the mid 4th century BC is more likely than a date towards its end. This roughly agrees with Gombrich's (1992) dating of the Second Council around 345 BC. But assuming the circulation of coins prior to 350 BC, and given the period after c. 380 BC as the time when the little Buddhas were no more, a date closer to 360/350 BC is perhaps more likely.

Appendix 2: AN 3.83 (Ee I.230-31)

evaṃ me sutam. ekaṃ samayaṃ bhagavā vesāliyaṃ viharati mahāvane kūṭāgāra-sālāyaṃ. atha kho aññataro vajjiputtako bhikkhu yena bhagavā ten' upasaṅkami ... pe ... ekam antaṃ nisinno kho so vajjiputtako bhikkhu bhagavantam etad avoca:

sādhikam idaṃ bhante diyaḍḍha-sikkhāpada-sataṃ anvaddhamāsaṃ uddesaṃ āgacchati. nāhaṃ bhante ettha sakkomi sikkhituṃ ti. sakkhasi pana tvaṃ bhikkhu tīsu sikkhāsu sikkhituṃ, adhisīla-sikkhāya adhicitta-sikkhāya adhipaññā-sikkhāyā ti? sakkom' ahaṃ bhante tīsu sikkhāsu sikkhituṃ — adhisīla-sikkhāya adhicitta-sikkhāya adhipaññā-sikkhāyā ti. tasmā-t-īha tvaṃ bhikkhu tīsu sikkhāsu sikkhassu, adhisīla-sikkhāya adhicitta-sikkhāya adhipaññā-sikkhāyā.

yato kho tvaṃ bhikkhu adhisīlam pi sikkhissasi, adhicittam pi sikkhissasi, adhipaññam pi sikkhissasi, tasmā tuyhaṃ bhikkhu adhisīlam pi sikkhato adhicittam pi sikkhato adhipaññam pi sikkhato, rāgo pahīyissati doso pahīyissati moho pahīyissati. so tvaṃ rāgassa pahānā dosassa pahānā mohassa pahānā, yaṃ akusalam taṃ na karissasi yaṃ pāpaṃ tvaṃ sevissasī ti.

atha kho so bhikkhu aparena samayena adhisīlam pi sikkhi adhicittam pi sikkhi adhipaññam pi sikkhi. tassa adhisīlam pi sikkhato adhicittam pi sikkhato adhipaññam pi sikkhato, rāgo pahīyī doso pahīyī moho pahīyī. so rāgassa pahānā dosassa pahānā mohassa pahānā, yaṃ akusalam taṃ na kāsi yaṃ pāpaṃ taṃ na sevī ti.

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