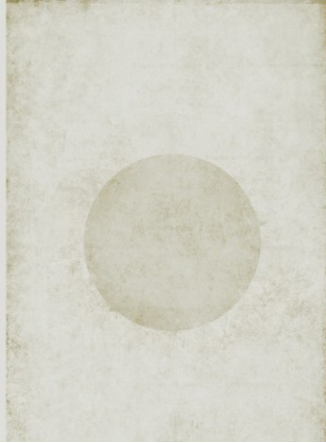


Dharma Drum Institute of Liberal Arts
Research Series ㊦

Dīrgha-āgama Studies

Anālayo



Dharma Drum Institute of Liberal Arts
Research Series ㊦

Dīrgha-āgama
Studies

Anālayo

佛法鼓吹

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***Dīrgha-āgama* Studies**

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Anālayo

Contents

List of Tables and Plates	vii
DILA Series	ix
Foreword	xi
Introduction	1
The 'Early' Discourses	15
<i>Brahmajāla-sutta</i> (DN 1) Part 1	51
<i>Brahmajāla-sutta</i> (DN 1) Part 2	79
<i>Brahmajāla-sutta</i> (DN 1) Part 3	101
<i>Brahmajāla-sutta</i> (DN 1) Part 4	115
<i>Tevijja-sutta</i> (DN 13)	179
<i>Mahāparinibbāna-sutta</i> (DN 16) Part 1	203
<i>Mahāparinibbāna-sutta</i> (DN 16) Part 2	225
<i>Sakkapañha-sutta</i> (DN 21) Part 1	249
<i>Sakkapañha-sutta</i> (DN 21) Part 2	281

<i>Pāyāsi-sutta</i> (DN 23) Part 1	295
<i>Pāyāsi-sutta</i> (DN 23) Part 2	321
<i>Cakkavatti-sutta</i> (DN 26)	349
<i>Dasuttara-sutta</i> (DN 34) Part 1	393
<i>Dasuttara-sutta</i> (DN 34) Part 2	433
Early Buddhist Oral Tradition (1)	449
Early Buddhist Oral Tradition (2)	473
Early Buddhist Oral Tradition (3)	501
Abbreviations	555
References	557
Index	647
Plates	667

List of Tables

Table 1: Translated <i>Dīrgha-āgama</i> Discourses	13
Table 2: The <i>Dīrgha-nikāya</i> and Its Parallels	82
Table 3: The Position of the <i>Mahā</i> -section	94
Table 4: Sequence of Kumārakassapa's Arguments	336
Table 5: Reasons for a Decrease of Lifespan	379
Table 6: Reasons for an Increase of Lifespan	380
Table 7: Overview of the Collections of Long Discourses	395
Table 8: Structure of DĀ 12	444
Table 9: Sound Similarities in the Opening of a Discourse	474
Table 10: The Principle of Waxing Syllables	475
Table 11: Subunits in the Description of Irrelevant Talk	476

List of Plates

Plate 1: The <i>Mahāparinibbāna</i>	667
Plate 2: Sakka Visits the Meditating Buddha (1)	668

Plate 3: Sakka Visits the Meditating Buddha (2) 669

Plate 4: The First Meditation 670

Plate 5: The Future Buddha 671

Dharma Drum Institute of Liberal Arts (DILA) Series

In 1994, Master Sheng Yen (1930–2009), the founder of Dharma Drum Buddhist College, began publishing the series of the Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies. The purposes of publishing this series were to provide a venue for academic research in Buddhist studies supported by scholarships from the Chung-Hwa Institute of Buddhist Studies, to encourage top-quality Buddhist research, and to cultivate an interest in Buddhist research among the readership of the series. Moreover, by encouraging cooperation with international research institutions, Master Sheng Yen hoped to foster the academic study of Buddhism in Taiwan.

In keeping with this vision, in order to promote different aspects of exchange in academic research, we at Dharma Drum Buddhist College began to publish three educational series in 2007:

- Dharma Drum Buddhist College Research Series (DDBC-RS)
- Dharma Drum Buddhist College Translation Series (DDBC-TS)
- Dharma Drum Buddhist College Special Series (DDBC-SS)

In July 2014, the Taiwanese Ministry of Education deliberated on the merging of the Dharma Drum College of Humanities and Social Sciences and the Dharma Drum Buddhist College into the newly formed Dharma Drum Institute of Liberal Arts (DILA).

The new DILA incarnations of the former three series are now:

- Dharma Drum Institute of Liberal Arts Research Series (DILA-RS)
- Dharma Drum Institute of Liberal Arts Translation Series (DILA-TS)
- Dharma Drum Institute of Liberal Arts Special Series (DILA-SS)

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

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Huimin' with a stylized flourish at the beginning.

Bhikṣu Huimin
President, Dharma Drum Institute of Liberal Arts
15 August, 2014

Foreword

The last decade has seen an impressive increase in comparative *Āgama* studies. Such a development is not monocausal; quite the contrary, there are a number of reasons that contribute to this renewed interest. The most important one appears to be the ongoing digitization of the source material. We owe it to the digital age that texts in very different languages and equally different scripts appear rather effortlessly on the very same screen in front of the scholar. Reassuringly, the scholar is still necessary, and in fact he or she is as indispensable a prerequisite as the source material. It is still the scholar who has to make sense of the texts and to arrange them in a way that allows meaningful comparison, and in fact it is difficult to imagine that this kind of work could ever be coped with by a machine. Yet, looking back on the digital development of the last twenty years, nothing seems inconceivable. At present, however, comparison still requires a distinct competence in the languages and the scripts referred to above, and, despite the general upsurge Buddhist Studies has witnessed over the last decades, this requirement naturally narrows down the number of scholars who are in a position to carry out such comparative research.

During the last years Bhikkhu Anālayo has established himself as one of the leading academics within this field of research, and he has probably become its most prolific author. Usually starting from the Pāli version of a canonical discourse, he compares it with its counterpart(s) preserved as translations in the Chinese *Tripitaka*, but he also draws freely on translations into Tibetan and, especially, on Sanskrit parallels whenever available. His studies have led him to engage with questions that go far beyond the mere

comparison of related versions of a text, most notably the questions of orality, historicity, and structure.

His publications on texts of the *Majjhima-nikāya*/*Madhyama-āgama*, the *Samyutta-nikāya*/*Samyukta-āgama*, and the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*/*Ekottarika-āgama* have already been collected into impressive volumes; the purpose of the present volume is to do the same with regard to the discourses contained in the "Long Collection" or, perhaps better, the "Collection of the Long (Discourses of the Buddha)", the *Dīrgha-nikāya*/*Dīrgha-āgama*. This part of the *Sūtrapīṭaka* offers an exceptional case to scholarship in that there are at least three different versions preserved, and not only two, as is normally the case. Two of these three, or even four, versions, the Pāli *Dīrgha-nikāya* and the 長阿含 *Cháng āhán*, the "Long Collection" contained in the Chinese *Tripiṭaka*, are complete. The third, the *Dīrgha-āgama* in Sanskrit, belongs to the literature of the (Mūla-)Sarvāstivādins; only about fifty per cent is available, mostly represented by the remains of a single manuscript that probably stems from the area of Gilgit in Northern Pakistan, and, to a much lesser degree, by its counterpart preserved in manuscript fragments from Central Asia. Despite the rather unsatisfactory state of preservation, the contents and structure of this *Dīrgha-āgama* are fully known and therefore available to comparative research.

Only recently the closer study of a fragment from a version of the *Daśottara-sūtra*, contained in the Schøyen Collection in Norway, revealed a rather surprising result: the fragment preserves part of the final phrases of the *sūtra* and ends with a colophon naming the title of the text and, most likely, its numerical position within the manuscript or within a collection. The number given is *daśama*, "tenth", and this would link the text quite naturally to the version in the 長阿含 *Cháng āhán* where the *Daśottara-sūtra* is arranged as the tenth text. Nevertheless, it is written in Sanskrit

and employs phrases well-known from the diction of the (Mūla-) Sarvāstivādins, and this would link it rather to the Sanskrit *Dīrgha-āgama*. However, it corresponds neither to the known Sanskrit version nor to the version in the Chinese *Dīrgha-āgama*. The Schøyen Collection contains at least one more nearly complete folio, also of a *Daśottara-sūtra*, but from another manuscript, and this text shows equally significant deviations from the three known versions with regard to the order of groups and to characteristic phrases. The evidence is puzzling in various ways, and at present it is probably premature to draw far-reaching conclusions from those observations, but the most natural explanation would seem to presume a first and unexpected glimpse into the remains of another, a fourth and so far unknown, version of the "Long Collection".

Whatever results the final assessment of those folios will yield, it is obvious that they are very welcome from a comparative point of view. Such a perspective appears to be the most promising, if not the only, means for an attempt at disentangling the extremely complex and so far hardly understood history of the genesis and development of Buddhist canonical literature. Although we will never be able to reconstruct with any degree of certainty the processes during the early period of oral transmission, the written testimonies provide insights at least into the later phases. On the Indian subcontinent this begins with the Gāndhārī fragments in the first centuries of the Common Era, and it ends with the manuscripts from Gilgit and Bamiyan in the eighth or ninth century, if we disregard a collection like the *Mahāvastu* that also contains texts from the *Sūtrapiṭaka* and belongs to the literature of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādins, preserved in still younger manuscripts in Nepal.

In the present volume, the *Dīrgha-nikāya* serves as the starting point and the structuring principle. This is a reasonable decision, since the *Dīrgha-nikāya* contains the only complete version of the

"Long Collection" in an Indian language, and it has been perfectly accessible both in its original and in many translations ever since its first edition by the Pali Text Society, published between 1890 and 1911. At the same time, this decision reveals one of the basic problems of every comparative look at a single *Āgama*: sometimes the compilers of the various versions of an *Āgama* or *Nikāya* opted differently when it came to the inclusion or exclusion of a certain text. Apparently the length of a discourse had a bearing on its inclusion in the *Dīrgha-nikāya*/*Dīrgha-āgama* or, respectively, the *Majjhima-nikāya*/*Madhyama-āgama*, but the length of a particular text was evidently not an attribute fixed at a very early time or unanimously agreed upon by all compilers. This is best illustrated here by the cases of the *Sakkhapañha-sutta* (DN 21; chapters 9 and 10) and the *Cakkavatti-sutta* (DN 26; chapter 13): while the compilers of the *Dīrgha-nikāya* and the closely related 長阿含 *Cháng āhán* decided to include these two discourses in the "Long Collection", the editors of the (Mūla-)Sarvāstivāda canon saw reasons and criteria for arranging them in their *Madhyama-āgama*. These criteria are still unknown to us, but it is precisely the task of comparative studies to collect, compare, and analyse such phenomena in order to advance our very limited understanding of the underlying editorial processes.

The comparison of different written versions of a text sheds light not only on the work of the ancient editors. Sometimes it opens a small window into the history of Buddhist thought and, of particular interest here, into the preceding period of an exclusively oral transmission. In several contributions Bhikkhu Anālayo attempts to take a fresh look through that window and deals with questions of orality. Some of his conclusions will perhaps be considered bold by others, but they always advance the field and, no less important, they are always grounded in a meticulous presentation of all the relevant material. He never hesitates to translate a

difficult text, and many readers will be especially grateful for his extensive translations from the Chinese that render these primary sources accessible to them. Anālayo often begins with the Pāli or with the Chinese version of a text for the simple reason that they are complete and do not involve all the additional problems one has to face when dealing with, e.g., some small fragments representing all that is left of a long Sanskrit *sūtra*. He leaves no doubt, however, that methodological considerations require one to proceed beyond these complete versions, and especially beyond the time-honoured Pāli texts, when studying early Buddhist thought and history. The papers collected here convincingly testify to this approach and its results. Further studies, and not only of the discourses arranged in the "Long Collection", will take this book as a stimulus and as an example.

Jens-Uwe Hartmann
6 October, 2016

Introduction

The *Dīrgha-āgama* preserved in Chinese is the first of the four Chinese *Āgamas* in the Taishō edition,¹ just as its Pāli counterpart, the *Dīgha-nikāya*, is the first discourse collection in the Pāli canon. Although the present book with collected papers on the *Dīrgha-āgama* is the last of four such publications in terms of date of appearance, I expect and in fact would recommend that the present collection be the first taken up by the interested reader, to be followed by my *Madhyama-āgama* studies (2012f), *Samyukta-āgama* studies (2015j), and *Ekottarika-āgama* studies (2016b).

By way of introduction to all four volumes, in what follows I briefly survey the four main Chinese *Āgamas*.² In the first of the chapters that follow this introduction, I try to place the early discourses in historical perspective. An assessment of their value as testimonies for early Buddhist thought serves as a foundation for the comparative studies found in this and the other three volumes.

The *Dīrgha-āgama*

According to the information at our disposal, the *Dīrgha-āgama* extant in the Taishō edition as entry 1 was translated into Chinese in the year 413 of the present era by Zhú Fóniàn (竺佛念), based on an original recited by Buddhayaśas that appears to have been

¹ Zacchetti 2016: 83 comments that the expression "the 'Chinese *Āgamas*' is a designation perhaps more appropriate than generally conceded, for in a sense they are, as a group, an entirely Chinese invention. This is a particularly telling example of the active transformative power generated by the Chinese canon."

² What follows is based on extracts from Anālayo 2009n, 2009o, 2014h, and 2015a. In a later chapter I come back to the significance of the term *āgama* (as well as of the term *aṅga*) in relation to the formation of the textual collections of the early discourses; cf. below p. 449ff.

in a Prakrit and with high probability stems from a Dharmaguptaka line of transmission.³ Besides its Pāli parallel in the *Dīghanikāya*, large parts of a Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda collection of long discourses are extant in the form of Sanskrit fragments.⁴

Regarding the different Buddhist schools that transmitted these *āgamas* or *nikāyas*, it might be opportune to note that each of these discourse collections is not so much the product of a school, but rather the final result of oral transmission over long periods of time by successive generations of Indian reciters, of which only the last generations could be considered members of a particular school. Although school affiliation is certainly a relevant aspect to be taken into consideration, the vicissitudes of oral transmission have affected these discourses right from the time they came into existence, not only since they were transmitted by reciters who

³ On the school affiliation of the *Dīrgha-āgama* collection preserved in Chinese translation as Taishō no. 1 cf., e.g., Przyluski 1926: 355, Lamotte 1949/1981: 811 note 1, Demiéville 1951: 252f, Brough 1962/2001: 50, Lü 1963: 242, de Jong 1962/1979: 290 note 7, Bareau 1966, Waldschmidt 1980: 136, Mayeda 1985: 97, Enomoto 1986: 25, Hirakawa 1987: 513, Schmithausen 1987: 318, Oberlies 2003: 44, Salomon 2007: 354 note 14, and Willemen 2008: 60.

⁴ Surveys of this collection have been provided by Hartmann 2000, 2002, and 2004, and Hartmann and Wille 2014. Editions of discourses from this collection, listed in the order of their canonical placing, are: *Govinda-sūtra* (14th): Sadakata 1999 and 2006, *Prāsādhika-sūtra* (15th): DiSimone 2016, *Prasādanīya-sūtra* (16th): DiSimone 2016, *Kāyabhāvanā-sūtra* (20th): Liu 2010, *Bodha-sūtra* (21st): Hartmann 2004 and Silverlock 2009, *Śamkara-sūtra* (22nd): Zhang 2004, *Ājānāta-sūtra* (23rd): Sander 2007 and Dietz 2011, *Tridaṇḍi-sūtra* (25th): Matsuda 2006 and Choi 2015, *Piṅgalātreya-sūtra* (26th): Matsuda 2006 and Peipina 2008, *Lohitya-sūtra I* (27th): Choi 2015, *Lohitya-sūtra II* (28th): Choi 2015, *Kairvartī-sūtra* (29th): Zhou 2008, *Kūṭatāṇḍya-sūtra* (34th): von Criegern 2002, *Ambaṣṭha-sūtra* (35th): Melzer 2006, *Prṣṭhapaśāla-sūtra* (36th): Melzer 2006 and Stuart 2013, *Kāraṇavādisūtra* (37th): Melzer 2006, *Pudgala-sūtra* (38th): Melzer 2006, *Śruta-sūtra* (39th): Melzer 2006, *Mahalla-sūtra* (40th): Melzer 2006, and *Anyatama-sūtra* (41st): Melzer 2006. For a survey of work in progress cf. Hartmann and Wille 2014: 142f.

considered themselves to be members of one or another of the Buddhist schools. In other words, variations between parallel versions need not invariably be the result of sectarian agendas.

Besides the three complete *Dīgha-nikāya*/*Dīrgha-āgama* collections, individual long discourses are also preserved in Chinese translation (T 2 to T 25), in Indic language fragments that do not belong to the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda collection mentioned above, as well as in Tibetan translation.

The distribution of discourses among the different *āgamas/nikāyas* according to principles such as length for the purpose of facilitating their memorization has provided reciters of a particular collection with a somewhat specific coverage of topics.

Such specific coverage appears to be recognized in an explanation given in the Sarvāstivāda **Vinayavibhāṣā* that relates the long discourses collected in the *Dīrgha-āgama* especially to the refutation of heterodox philosophies.⁵ This seems to hold also for the *Dīgha-nikāya*, where the Buddha's ability to convert outsiders and to stand his ground successfully in debate is a prominent theme, together with the inspiration to be gained from the Buddha's exceptional nature and qualities. As debates and eulogies can easily become prolonged, it would only be natural for a collection of long discourses to contain much material of this type.

The exceptional nature of the Buddha as an important topic in the *Dīgha-nikāya* seems to be also reflected in the Pāli commentarial tradition, according to which the transmission of this collection was taken up by the disciples of the Buddha's attendant Ānanda.⁶ In early Buddhist texts, Ānanda stands representative of a deeply devoted attitude towards the Buddha. From the viewpoint of the commentarial tradition, his personal inclinations (which

⁵ T 1440 at T XXIII 504a1; cf. also below p. 339f note 31.

⁶ Sv I 15,2.

would presumably have attracted similarly inclined disciples) fit this particular discourse collection. In other words, the collection of long discourses would have a particular appeal for disciples who feel strong devotion towards the Buddha as their teacher, as well as for disciples who are engaged in winning converts to the tradition and disciples who have to defend Buddhist doctrine against other philosophies and beliefs.

The *Madhyama-āgama*

The *Madhyama-āgama* extant in the Taishō edition as entry 26 appears to have been translated by Gautama Saṅghadeva based on an original that would have been from a Sarvāstivāda line of transmission.⁷ In addition, middle-length discourses are preserved individually in Chinese translation (T 27 to T 98), a number of *Madhyama-āgama* discourses are extant in Indic language fragments, and some exist also in Tibetan translation.

The Pāli *Majjhima-nikāya* is fairly consistent in adopting a pattern of ten discourses per chapter, the sole exception being its penultimate chapter with twelve discourses. The count of discourses per chapter in the *Madhyama-āgama* shows greater diversity. Although a grouping of ten is the most common count, the eleventh chapter, for example, entitled the "Great Chapter", has twenty-five discourses. The sequences of the discourses in the two collections have little in common.

Differences in distribution of discourses over the *āgamas/nikāyas* appear to be the result of an ongoing process of shifts in location. Apparently even whole groups of discourses were moved

⁷ The general consensus among scholars on the school affiliation of the *Madhyama-āgama* has recently been called into question by Chung and Fukita 2011: 13–34, as well as Chung 2014 and 2017 (cf. also Fukita 2017); for critical replies cf. Anālayo 2012f: 516–521 and 2017c. On the underlying language cf. Karashima 2017.

from one collection to another.⁸ This seems to have happened in the case of the first chapter in the *Madhyama-āgama*, for example, where all of the ten discourses revolve around the number seven. Most of the discourses in this chapter have their counterparts among the Sevens of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*. This gives the impression that these discourses could originally have been assembled as part of a numerical collection of Sevens and were then subsequently inserted at the beginning of the *Madhyama-āgama*.

A similar process appears to have happened in the case of the *Majjhima-nikāya* in relation to its last chapter, which combines discourses that in one way or another deal with the topic of the six senses. Parallels to these discourses are found in the *Samyukta-āgama* which, like its Pāli counterpart, the *Samyutta-nikāya*, has an entire section dedicated to the six senses. In this case it seems that ten discourses originally formed a group in a topic-wise collection and subsequently made their way into the *Majjhima-nikāya*.

The rationale behind such moves would be to ensure each collection had a good coverage of various aspects of the teachings and thereby counter the somewhat mechanical allocation to collections according to principles like length of a discourse. The attempt to improve the coverage of a particular collection would have led some reciters to want to incorporate material from other collections which they considered important. The same would also explain the not infrequent doubling of discourses, where the same text appears in whole or in part in more than one collection.

Regarding the somewhat different emphases in the long and middle-length discourse collections, according to the Sarvāstivāda **Vinayavibhāṣā* the *Madhyama-āgama* presents profound doctrines for an intelligent audience.⁹ The Pāli commentarial tradition

⁸ Cf. Bucknell 2014 and 2017.

⁹ T 1440 at T XXIII 503c28.

associates the transmission of the *Majjhima-nikāya* with the disciples of Sāriputta, who in the tradition represents the quality of wisdom par excellence.¹⁰ The perspectives provided by these two works agree in indicating that the middle-length collections would be of particular relevance for disciples who intend to deepen their understanding of the teachings in order to develop their wisdom.

The *Samyukta-āgama*

Three *Samyukta-āgama* collections are extant in Chinese. The first and fairly complete collection now found in the Taishō edition as entry number 99 was based on a Sanskrit original recited by Guṇabhadra and translated by Bǎoyún (寶雲), probably reflecting an original that stemmed from a Mūlasarvāstivāda line of transmission. The manuscript of this discourse collection was apparently acquired in Sri Lanka by the Chinese pilgrim Fǎxiǎn (法顯),¹¹ who stayed at the Abhayagiri monastery.

A partially preserved Chinese translation of a *Samyukta-āgama* collection of uncertain school and translator can be found as entry number 100 in the Taishō edition,¹² followed by another short *Samyukta-āgama* fragment as entry number 101,¹³ and by several individually translated *Samyukta-āgama* discourses (T 102 to T 124). Besides Indic language fragments, a considerable number of *Samyukta-āgama* parallels are extant in Tibetan translation. These appear for the most part in Śamathadeva's *Upāyikāṭikā* on the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*.¹⁴

The circumstance that the *Samyutta-nikāya* and the *Samyukta-āgama* are arranged according to topics makes it natural that a con-

¹⁰ Sv I 15,5.

¹¹ Glass 2010: 200.

¹² Cf. the study by Bingenheimer 2011.

¹³ Cf. the study by Harrison 2002.

¹⁴ Cf. the studies by Dhammadinnā 2012, 2013a, 2013b, 2014, and 2016b.

siderable number of their discourses deal with doctrinal themes like dependent arising, the aggregates, the senses, and aspects of the path. In this way, the two collections provide a range of closely related spotlights following each other in immediate succession on central themes of early Buddhist philosophy and practice. The collection of connected discourses would thus have been of special interest for disciples wishing to develop a comprehensive understanding of specific aspects of the teachings.

The Sarvāstivāda **Vinayavibhāṣā* indicates that the *Samyukta-āgama* is particularly appropriate for providing topics for meditation.¹⁵ The Pāli commentarial tradition associates the transmission of the *Samyutta-nikāya* with the disciples of Mahākassapa,¹⁶ who in the tradition exemplifies the austere forest monk given to ascetic practices, which in turn are often seen as related to intensive meditation. These two works seem to agree in considering the collection arranged topic-wise as providing teachings suitable for meditative reflection, ideally undertaken in seclusion.

The complete *Samyukta-āgama* (T 99) comes in fifty fascicles, of which only forty-eight correspond to the original text. Owing to a misplacing of fascicles at some time in the past, the order of the collection fell into disarray and two fascicles that do not belong to the *Samyukta-āgama* have been accidentally included.¹⁷

The reconstructed *Samyukta-āgama* follows the same basic fivefold division as the *Samyutta-nikāya*. A difference is that the reconstructed *Samyukta-āgama* has a chapter of sayings by disciples, and a chapter with sayings by the Buddha or Tathāgata. More than two thirds of the discourses in the *Samyukta-āgama* have parallels in the *Samyutta-nikāya*.

¹⁵ T 1440 at T XXIII 503c29.

¹⁶ Sv I 15,8.

¹⁷ Anesaki 1908: 70–74.

The *Ekottarika-āgama*

A collection of numerical discourses was translated into Chinese by Zhú Fóniàn (竺佛念) in the year 384 of the present era. The school affiliation of this *Ekottarika-āgama* has been a subject of ongoing discussion among scholars. A Mahāsāṅghika affiliation of the Indic original seems to be the most probable hypothesis, although for the time being it is probably best to consider as uncertain the provenance of the *Ekottarika-āgama* in the form in which it is now extant as entry 125 in the Taishō edition.¹⁸

The Chinese canon has also preserved a partial *Ekottarika-āgama* translation by Ān Shigāo 安世高 (T 150a),¹⁹ as well as individually translated discourses (T 127 to T 149). Parts of a collection of numerical discourses are extant in Sanskrit,²⁰ besides other fragmentary parallels and a few counterparts in Tibetan translation.

The basic principle adopted in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* and the *Ekottarika-āgama* groups together discourses that are in some way related to a particular number. The numbers taken into consideration proceed one by one, which would have earned the collections their title, beginning with the Ones and coming to a conclusion with the Elevens. Not all numerical topics are necessarily covered, since items like the 'four' noble truths or the 'eight'-fold noble path have found inclusion in the topic-wise arrangement in the *saṃyukta* collections instead.²¹ The division between the *saṃyukta* and *ekottarika* collections is not always clear-cut and at times items are present in both collections.

As a result of the inclusion of discourses with an emphasis on doctrinal matters in the topic-wise arrangement in the *saṃyukta*

¹⁸ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2016b: 173–178 and 211–214.

¹⁹ Cf. the study by Harrison 1997.

²⁰ Edited by Tripāṭhī 1995.

²¹ The eightfold path does, however, appear as part of the tenfold path among the Tens, AN 11.113 at AN V 223,3.

collections, the discourses left for assignment according to the numerical principle tend to cover more practical matters and everyday issues, which makes the numerical collection particularly suited to the concerns of the laity, although the collection also has several passages that are related to monastic discipline. The spiritual and mundane needs of the laity are in fact taken into account in a number of early discourses in the *āgamas/nikāyas*, clearly indicating that early Buddhist texts are not solely concerned with teaching monastics. A listing of disciples outstanding for particular qualities in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* and in the *Ekottarika-āgama*, for example, covers not only monks and nuns, but also male and female lay disciples.²²

An emphasis on practical teachings appears to be also reflected in the indication given in the Sarvāstivāda **Vinayavibhāṣā* that various teachings for gods and men are assembled in the *Ekottarika-āgama*.²³ The Pāli commentarial tradition attributes the transmission of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* to the disciples of Anuruddha,²⁴ who was famous for his exercise of a supernatural ability called the divine eye. According to tradition, with the help of the divine eye a practitioner is able to see events far away and in various heavenly spheres, which would presumably have furnished Anuruddha with the kind of information relevant to the concerns of gods and men.

The *Ekottarika-āgama* extant in Chinese appears to have remained open to later influences for a considerably longer time than the other *Āgamas*; in fact a whole discourse appears to have been added and others seem to have been reworked after the collection had reached China.²⁵

²² Cf. AN 1.14.6 to 1.14.7 at AN I 25,32 and EĀ 6.1 to 7.3 at T II 559c9.

²³ T 1440 at T XXIII 503c27.

²⁴ Sv I 15,10.

²⁵ Cf. Anālayo 2013h, 2014/2015, and 2015g.

Contents

The studies in the chapters that follow are revised versions of previously published articles.²⁶ The majority of these studies relate to a *Dīrgha-āgama* discourse, which is translated either in part or full, followed by an examination of aspects that I felt to be of further interest.

In the first chapter I begin by exploring the historical value of the Pāli discourses, and by implication of their *Āgama* parallels. In the next four chapters I take up various aspects related to the *Brahmajāla-sutta* (DN 1) and its *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel. Several of these aspects are of general significance for an appreciation of the early discourses, such as oral features discussed in the first two chapters and the nature of the Tathāgata taken up in the third. In the fourth chapter I turn to the *Brahmajāla*'s analysis of the view-forming process.

The sixth chapter presents a translation of the *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel to the *Tevijja-sutta* (DN 13) and a study of its significance. The next two chapters are based on two extracts from the *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel to the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* (DN 16), based on which I explore the nature of healing in early Buddhist thought and the account of the Buddha's meditative passing away.

An extract from the *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel to the *Sakkapañha-sutta* (DN 21) forms the starting point for a discussion over two chapters of miraculous feats, in particular fire miracles attributed to the Buddha and descriptions of levitation.

²⁶ A translation and study not included in the present selection is Anālayo 2016d, which instead has been included in Anālayo 2017b. In relation to the translations found in this and other publications of mine, I would like to mention that I am not a trained Sinologist, wherefore the contribution I am able to make lies predominantly in the study parts and in attempting to understand the development of early Indian Buddhism, for which the translations are meant as a support.

A translation of the *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel to the *Pāyāsi-sutta* (DN 23) can be found in the next two chapters, together with a study of its debate character. Then I translate the *Dīrgha-āgama* version of the Discourse on the Wheel-turning King (DN 26) and examine its prediction of the future Buddha Maitreya.

The next two chapters offer translations and studies of two *Dīrgha-āgama* discourses that do not have a Pāli parallel, but which belong to the same genre of listings of doctrinal terms as the *Saṅgīti-sutta* and the *Dasuttara-sutta*.

Complementing the study of orality in the first chapters of this collection, the final three chapters take up aspects of the Pāli oral transmission. These are the significance of the *aṅgas*, oral features of the Pāli discourses, and the potential of comparative study for improving our understanding of the Pāli discourses, exemplified by cases taken from the *Madhyama-āgama*. The last of these thereby serves as a lead-over to my *Madhyama-āgama* studies.²⁷

Conventions

Since a considerable part of my target audience will be familiar mainly with the Pāli canon, in what follows I employ Pāli terminology, except for anglicized terms like "bodhisattva", "Dharma", or "Nirvāṇa", without thereby intending to take a position on the original language of the *Dīrgha-āgama* discourses or to suggest that Pāli language is in principle preferable. I hope that this will facilitate access to my studies by those who are more familiar with Pāli terms. For the same reason, I have arranged my studies in the sequence in which the respective discourses are found in the Pāli canon. The original order of the *Dīrgha-āgama* discourses translated and studied in the present monograph can be seen in table 1 below.

²⁷ Anālayo 2012f.

In the notes to the translations, I discuss selected differences in relation to the Pāli and other parallels. Abbreviations in the translation are usually found as such in the Chinese original. These are reproduced with an ellipsis. Instructions in the original that indicate the need to recite the elided text are given in italics.

In the translations, I use square brackets [] to indicate supplementation and angle brackets < > to mark emendation. In order to facilitate cross-referencing, I use square brackets in subscript to provide the pagination of the original Chinese text on which the translation is based and the pagination of the original paper, as well as superscript for its footnote or endnote numbering, whenever these differ from the present annotation.²⁸ When quoting text editions, I have occasionally standardized or adjusted the punctuation.

Translation Terminology

When translating *Ārgha-āgama* discourses, I have attempted to stay close to the terminology adopted by Bhikkhu Bodhi in his renderings of the Pāli equivalents, to facilitate comparison. In the case of 苦, equivalent to *dukkha*, however, I simply keep the Pāli term, which at times does stand for outright "pain", but on many an occasion refers to "unsatisfactoriness", where translations like "suffering" or "pain" fail to convey adequately the sense of the passage in question. The standard rendering of *bhagavant* in the *Ekottarika-āgama* is 世尊, literally "World Honoured One", in which case I follow Bhikkhu Bodhi's translation of the corresponding Pāli term and adopt the rendering "Blessed One". For 慈 I use the Pāli equivalent *mettā*, and for 漏, corresponding to *āsava*, I employ the rendering "influx".²⁹

²⁸ Due to revision of the original papers, at times these references to the earlier pagination or footnote numbering are not in sequential order.

²⁹ For a more detailed discussion of the term *āsava* cf. Anālayo 2012g: 80–82.

Table 1: Translated *Dīrgha-āgama* Discourses³⁰

DĀ no.:	Pāli no.:	Pāli title:
DĀ 2	DN 16	<i>Mahāparinibbāna-sutta</i>
DĀ 6	DN 26	<i>Cakkavatti-sutta</i>
DĀ 7	DN 23	<i>Pāyāsi-sutta</i>
DĀ 11	no parallel	
DĀ 12	no parallel	
DĀ 21	DN 1	<i>Brahmajāla-sutta</i>
DĀ 26	DN 13	<i>Tevijja-sutta</i>

Titles of the original publications:

"Āgama and aṅga in the Early Buddhist Oral Tradition" (2016a);
cf. below p. 449ff.

"The Brahmajāla and the Early Buddhist Oral Tradition" (2014a);
cf. below p. 51ff.

"The Brahmajāla and the Early Buddhist Oral Tradition (2)"
(2015b); cf. below p. 79ff.

"Brahmavihāra and Awakening, A Study of the Dīrgha-āgama
Parallel to the Tevijja-sutta" (2015c); cf. below p. 179ff.

"The Buddha's Fire Miracles" (2015d); cf. below p. 249ff.

"The Buddha's Last Meditation in the Dīrgha-āgama" (2014b); cf.
below p. 225ff.

"Debate with a Sceptic – The Dīrgha-āgama Parallel to the Pā-
yāsi-sutta (1)" (2012c); cf. below p. 295ff.

"Debate with a Sceptic – The Dīrgha-āgama Parallel to the Pā-
yāsi-sutta (2)" (2013b); cf. below p. 321ff.

³⁰ Of these only DĀ 6, DĀ 7, and DĀ 26 are translated in full; of the others only excerpts are translated. In addition to the discourses mentioned in table 1, the studies also contain translations of shorter excerpts from DĀ 14, DĀ 15, and DĀ 20 (parallels to DN 2, DN 21, and DN 24).

- "Healing in Early Buddhism" (2015h); cf. below p. 203ff.
- "The Historical Value of the Pāli Discourses" 2012e; cf. below p. 15ff.
- "Levitation in Early Buddhist Discourse" (2016f); cf. below p. 281ff.
- "Maitreya and the Wheel-turning King" (2014e); cf. below p. 349ff.
- "Oral Dimensions of Pāli Discourses: Pericopes, Other Mnemonic Techniques, and the Oral Performance Context" (2007a); cf. below p. 473ff.
- "Selected Madhyama-āgama Discourse Passages and Their Pāli Parallels" (2016h); cf. below p. 501ff.
- "Some Renditions of the Term Tathāgata in the Chinese Āgamas" (2017d); cf. below p. 101ff.
- "Summaries of the Dharma – A Translation of Ārgha-āgama Discourse No. 12" (2013g); cf. below p. 433ff.
- "Three Chinese Ārgha-āgama Discourses Without Parallels" (2014h); cf. below p. 393ff.
- "Views and the Tathāgata – A Comparative Study and Translation of the Brahmajāla in the Chinese Ārgha-āgama" (2009i); cf. below p. 115ff.

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The 'Early' Discourses

Introduction

By way of introduction to the studies collected in this volume, in this chapter I attempt an evaluation of the historical perspective that forms the basis for comparative studies of the 'early' discourses. In what follows I intend to arrive at an estimate of the time period the Pāli discourses,¹ and by implication their *Āgama* parallels, can be considered as representing.

The questions that occupy me in the following pages are the following: From what time period onwards would the Pāli discourses have been in existence in a form that roughly resembles what we currently have at our disposal (leaving aside minor changes or errors by copyists, etc., such as are evident in variant readings)? What is therefore their historical value? What period in the development of Buddhist thought can they be taken to reflect?

My presentation covers the following topics: additions recorded in the Pāli commentaries, the question of later levelling, additions made in Sri Lanka, the finalization of the Pāli commentaries, and the political and geographical setting of the Pāli discourses. [224]

Additions Recorded in the Commentaries

The Pāli commentarial tradition appears to have been well aware of the fact that the discourses in the four Pāli *Nikāyas* could not have been recited in their present form at the first so-called "council" or better "communal recitation", *saṅgīti*. Thus, for example,

* Originally published in 2012 under the title "The Historical Value of the Pāli Discourses" in the *Indo-Iranian Journal*, 55: 223–253.

¹ By the expression "Pāli discourses" I mean the four *Nikāyas* (DN, MN, SN, and AN), *Sutta-nipāta*, *Udāna*, and *Itivuttaka*.

the commentaries report that the *Bakkula-sutta* was only included in the *Majjhima-nikāya* at the second *saṅgīti*.² In regard to the *Mahā-parinibbāna-sutta*, the commentaries go further. Not only do they indicate that a remark was added to its concluding section at the time of what Theravāda tradition considers to be the third council, but they also report that some stanzas were added at a still later date by the elders from the island of Tambapaṇṇi, i.e., Sri Lanka.³

The fact that the commentaries openly acknowledge such additions clearly shows that the Pāli discourse collections were not considered completely closed at the time they arrived in Sri Lanka. That such an acknowledgement is made, however, also gives the impression that additions and changes in Sri Lanka would not have been the rule, otherwise there would have been little reason for the commentators to record explicitly the addition of a few stanzas regarding the way the Buddha's relics were believed to have been distributed.

Similar stanzas also occur in the Sanskrit fragments of the *Mahā-parinirvāṇa-sūtra*,⁴ and in Chinese and Tibetan versions of this dis-

² Ps IV 197,2: *idaṃ pana suttaṃ dutiyasaṅgahe saṅgahītaṃ ti*; cf. also Anālayo 2010g: 45. Another discourse that would fall into the same category is AN 5.50 at AN III 57–62, which has King Muṇḍa as one of its protagonists, presumably the great-grandson of King Ajātasattu (cf. *Mahāvamsa* 4.2); for a translation of EĀ 32.7, the parallel to AN 5.50, cf. Pāsādika 2006. As already noted by Pande 1957: 47, the doctrinal contents of this discourse do not involve any innovation, as they just repeat what according to AN 5.48 and AN 5.49 at AN III 54,7 the Buddha had taught on earlier occasions to the monks and to King Pasenadi.

³ Sv II 615,16: *aṭṭhadoṇaṃ cakkhumato sarīraṇ ti ādi gāthāyo pana tambapaṇṇi-therehi vuttā*. In his detailed study of these stanzas, Endo 2010: 117 comments that, "as far as the Pāli tradition goes, there is no evidence to deny that the verses were added in Sri Lanka."

⁴ Fragment 376 R5–6 (no. 251), Waldschmidt 1950: 83f.

course preserved in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*.⁵ This makes it fairly probable that these stanzas were already known within the Theravāda and Mūlasarvāstivāda traditions,⁶ but presumably had not yet become part of the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* of the *Dīghanikāya* at the time of its arrival in Sri Lanka. [225] That is, the stanzas that according to the commentaries were added to the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* do not appear to be a Sri Lankan innovation, but would have originated in India.

The Question of Later Levelling

My assessment of the significance of the stanzas found at the end of the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* and its parallels is based on a tacit assumption, which has been questioned in an influential paper by Schopen (1985). Therefore in what follows I examine his arguments in this respect. Criticizing the notion that similarities between parallel versions of a text point to a common early core, Schopen (1985: 17) instead proposes that

⁵ T 1451 at T XXIV 402b24 and Waldschmidt 1951: 451,24 (§51.23–24).

⁶ Waldschmidt 1948: 331 comments that the stanzas common to the final parts of the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* and the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* must stem from an earlier tradition ("auf älterer Tradition beruhen müssen"). Thus it seems probable that a tradition on the distribution of the relics, at first handed down independently from the discourse (perhaps in the form of a commentary), eventually made its way into the discourse itself in different Buddhist schools. There is in fact evidence indicating that, in the course of transmission, the dividing line between commentary and discourse could become blurred; cf. Anālayo 2010c. Granting the possibility that an originally more commentarial type of information became part of the canonical discourses would provide a considerably more plausible explanation than assuming that the Sri Lankan elders invented the stanzas without any input from India (and without adding any reference to a portion of the relics having reached Sri Lanka, so as to boost the local cult), and that this Sri Lankan invention then somehow managed to be incorporated in the Mūlasarvāstivāda discourse version(s) transmitted in India.

if all known versions of a text or passage agree, that text or passage is probably late, i.e. it probably represents the results of the conflation and gradual leveling and harmonization of earlier existing traditions.

To prove his point, he takes up the story of the *stūpa* of the former Buddha Kassapa/Kāśyapa, basing himself on a study of this story in five *Vinayas* preserved in Chinese by Bareau (1960: 257–261). Schopen (1985: 19) summarizes the narrative found in three of these *Vinayas* – belonging to the Mahāsāṅghika, Mahīśāsaka, and Dharmaguptaka traditions – as well as in a Theravāda version of this tale, preserved in Pāli, as follows:

the Buddha is travelling in Kosala; he reaches a spot near a village called Tou-i, Tou-tseu, Todeyya (all = Skt. Toyikā); he has an encounter with a man working in a nearby field as a result of which it becomes known that the *stūpa* of the Buddha Kāśyapa is buried under this spot; the Buddha then makes the *stūpa* momentarily appear and after it disappears he and/or the monks construct a *stūpa* on that spot from mud. [226]

Schopen notes that the Mahāsāṅghika, Mahīśāsaka, Dharmaguptaka, and Theravāda versions of this tale

agree on these basic elements of the 'text', and since each version belongs to a separate school, we can conclude – according to the accepted principle – that the essential elements of this account must go back to a very old or pre-sectarian stage of the tradition.

Schopen (1985: 21) then contrasts this agreement with a version of this tale found in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* preserved in Sanskrit and in the *Divyāvadāna*, noting that these "only knew a form of the relic cult in which the *stūpa* did not yet have a part". Schopen reasons that this must be

the earliest known account which knows nothing of a stūpa at Toyikā – and this is an important stūpa – set over against the versions of the Mahāsāṅghika, Mahīśāsaka, Dharmaguptaka and the Theravāda, all of which must be later and all of which agree that there was a stūpa of Kāśyapa at Toyikā.

Schopen (1985: 15 and 22) concludes that this case serves to show that the tenet "if all known 'sectarian' versions of a text or passage agree, that text or passage must be very old" should be discarded, as in the present case

the Mahāsāṅghika, Mahīśāsaka, Dharmaguptaka and Theravāda accounts agree not because they represent the old pre-sectarian version, but because they almost certainly represent later, conflated, and fundamentally altered versions.

Since Schopen has chosen this tale as a "fine example of how the accepted principle ... is supposed to work, and ... when we can actually check it, it is also clear that it does not seem to work very well at all" (p. 19), it seems fair to examine this particular story in detail as the best way of assessing if the position taken by Schopen is indeed to be preferred over the notion that similarities between parallel versions point to earliness rather than reflecting lateness.

Closer inspection of the relevant primary sources brings to light that the difference between the Mūlasarvāstivāda account and the other versions is not as pronounced as Schopen suggests in his presentation. The Sanskrit and Tibetan Mūlasarvāstivāda versions and the *Divyāvadāna* indeed do not report the display of an ancient stūpa that then disappeared again. However, versions of the tale under discussion found in the Chinese Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, which has been summarized by Bareau (1960: 260) in the study on which Schopen relied in his paper, do report that such a

stūpa had been constructed at the time of the Buddha Kassapa/Kāśyapa.⁷ [227]

Moreover, once the display of the former Buddha's remains is over, according to the Sanskrit and Tibetan Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* as well as the *Divyāvadāna* people piled up balls of clay on the spot where the bodily remains of Kassapa/Kāśyapa had disappeared.⁸ Thus in this respect the Sanskrit and Tibetan Mūlasarvāstivāda versions resemble the narrations found in the Dharmaguptaka, Mahīśāsaka, and Mahāsāṅghika *Vinayas*, which also describe a piling up of balls of clay that results in the construction of a *stūpa*.⁹ In other words, in the Mūlasarvāstivāda version "lay

⁷ T 1451 at T XXIV 249b4 indicates that the king at the time of the Buddha Kāśyapa "raised a *stūpa* [made of the] four gems", 起四寶塔, and in another reference to the present event, T XXIV 261c26, reports that: "he constructed a great *stūpa* made completely out of the four gems", 造大窣覩波皆用四寶 (adopting the variant 窣覩波 instead of 幸堵波); cf. also the summary in Bareau 1960: 260: "[il] éleva un *stūpa*" and "il éleva un grand *stūpa* fait des quatre joyaux."

⁸ The *Bhaiṣajyavastu* reports that a layman offered a ball of clay to the spot where the bodily remains of Kāśyapa had disappeared. When the Buddha eulogized the merit to be gained from such an action, others followed suit; cf. Dutt 1984a: 76,11: *tac chrutvānekaiḥ prāṇīśatasahasrair mṛttikāpiṇḍasamāropanaṃ kṛtaṃ*, with the Tibetan parallel in D 1 *kha* 161a6 or Q 1030 *ge* 149b6: *de thos nas srog chags brgya stong phrag du ma dag gis kyang 'jim pa'i gong bu bcir to*, and a similar passage found in the *Divyāvadāna*, Cowell and Neil 1886: 78,17 (cf. also 467,17): *tataḥ śrutvānekaiḥ prāṇīśatasahasrair mṛttikāpiṇḍasamāropanaṃ kṛtaṃ*.

⁹ The Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 958b7, records that a farmer was tilling the land, whereon "the Buddha went to that furrow, took hold of a ball of clay, came, and placed it in this location", 佛往彼間, 取一搏泥, 來置此處, followed by indicating, T XXII 958b23, that "then, the monks, nuns, male lay followers, and female lay followers all took a ball of clay and placed it in this location, soon completing a great *stūpa*", 時諸比丘, 比丘尼, 優婆塞優婆夷, 皆以一搏泥著此處, 即成大塔. The Mahāsāṅghika *Vinaya*, T 1425

people of the area do end up building a *stūpa* there out of balls of mud or clay (*mṛttikāpiṇḍa*)", as pointed out by Strong (2004: 36).

The Mūlasarvāstivāda versions continue by reporting a stanza spoken by the Buddha in praise of the merits of placing a single ball of clay on the *caityas* of a Buddha.¹⁰ It is not clear to me on what Schopen (1985: 21) bases his assessment that this reference "quite clearly has nothing to do with *stūpas*".¹¹ [228]

Nevertheless, granting for the moment that the reference to *caityas* in the Mūlasarvāstivāda version should indeed be considered as having "nothing to do with *stūpas*", the term used in the Dharmaguptaka, Mahāsāṅghika, and Mahīśāsaka *Vinayas* to describe the construction raised in memory of Kassapa/Kāśyapa, 塔,

at T XXII 497b28, reports that "at that time, the Blessed One soon [began] to make a *stūpa* for the Buddha Kāśyapa in that location. The monks said to the Buddha: 'Blessed One, are we permitted to contribute with clay to it?' The Buddha said: 'I permit you to contribute to it'", 爾時世尊即於彼處作迦葉佛塔, 諸比丘白佛言, 世尊我得授泥不, 佛言得授。The Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 173a2, indicates that "the Buddha in turn put four balls, each of clay, on the location where the *stūpa* had disappeared. One thousand two hundred and fifty monks each also placed four clay balls on top of it. Thereupon the monks wished to raise the clay [balls] in this location into a *stūpa* for the Buddha Kāśyapa. The Buddha said: 'I permit you to raise it,' They in turn soon together raised it. At this time, this was the first *stūpa* raised on the grounds of Jamudvīpa", 佛便以四搏泥泥塔沒處, 千二百五十比丘亦各上泥四搏, 於是諸比丘欲於所泥處為迦葉佛起塔, 佛言聽起, 即便共起, 是時於闍浮提地上最初起塔。

¹⁰ Dutt 1984a: 76,10 and Cowell and Neil 1886: 78,16 (cf. also 467,15): *yo buddha-caityeṣu prasannacitta āropayen mṛttikapiṇḍam ekam*; cf. also D 1 *kha* 161a6 or Q 1030 *ge* 149b5: *gang zhig rab dang sems kyis sangs rgyas kyi mchod rten la ni 'jim gong 'jog byed na*.

¹¹ Judging from Schopen 1975/2005: 28, the distinction between *caitya* and *stūpa* is not necessarily self-evident, at least when it comes to references to the construction of memorials of the type similar to the present case. In relation to the Pāli term *cetiya*, Schopen 1989: 91ff even argues its equivalence to *stūpa*.

can render either *stūpa* or *caitya*.¹² Thus if the construction of a memorial with the help of mud balls should be termed a *caitya* and not a *stūpa*, then Bareau's translation needs to be revised by replacing *stūpa* with *caitya* as the more appropriate rendering for 塔 in the other *Vinaya* versions.

Whether the term adopted is *caitya* or *stūpa*, it seems clear that the form of the relic cult envisaged in the Mūlasarvāstivāda versions is similar to what the other *Vinaya* versions report, and that they all knew of a memorial constructed at Toyikā in honour of the former Buddha Kassapa/Kāśyapa.

The Theravāda version consulted by Schopen differs in so far as it does not report a collecting of mud or clay balls. That is, this version differs in this respect from the summarized narrative given by Schopen (1985: 19) for the four versions – three Chinese *Vinayas* and the Theravāda version – which he sees as being in general agreement, in contrast to the Sanskrit Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* version. Instead of mud or clay balls, the Theravāda version only indicates that, once the magical display was over, a stone *cetiya* remained in that place.¹³

Another *Vinaya* version of the present tale, summarized by Bareau (1960: 260) in the study on which Schopen based his presentation, also does not mention any collecting of clay balls. In fact, it does not mention the coming into being of a new *stūpa* at the time of the Buddha Gautama at all. According to Demiéville (1951: 243 note 6), this text probably belongs to the Sar-

¹² Hirakawa 1997: 301. This case is thus similar to the Tibetan *mchod rten*, found in the above quoted passage from the Tibetan Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*. Schopen 1975/2005: 55 note 15 explains: "Tibetan has only a single term, *mchod rten*, that serves to translate both *caitya* and *stūpa*." The second of the two passages from the Chinese Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, cited above p. 20 note 7, however, uses a transcription of the term *stūpa*.

¹³ Dh-pa III 253,7: *tatth' eva taṃkhaṇe mahantaṃ pāsāṇacetiyaṃ ahoṣi*.

vāstivāda tradition, an identification confirmed by Yuyama (1979: 7).¹⁴ [229]

Now this Sarvāstivāda version differs in nearly all aspects from the other *Vinayas*. It has nothing about the Buddha reaching a certain spot while travelling, about him encountering a man working in the fields, etc. Instead, it reports a visit by King Pasenadi, whom the Buddha tells about a *stūpa* constructed at the time of the passing away of the former Buddha Kassapa/Kāśyapa. The king living at that time in the past worshiped the Buddha's bodily remains with flowers, etc., and decided to construct a *stūpa*, for which he received help from four *nāga* kings. Once the *stūpa* was completed, a young man stole some of the flowers offered to it. This event then leads on to a tale about the karmic retribution he experienced for that theft.¹⁵

Thus already consulting this Sarvāstivāda version shows that the extant versions do not "agree on the basic elements of the text". If Schopen had taken this version into consideration, it would have become clear to him that the various *Vinaya* versions of this tale actually do not go back to a common early core.¹⁶

¹⁴ This is the 鼻奈耶, T 1464 at T XXIV 897c20, on the school affiliation of which cf. also, e.g., Willemen et al. 1998: 85, Karashima 2006: 358, and Clarke 2015: 72. Bareau 1960: 230 just introduces this text as a "*Vinaya* anonyme".

¹⁵ For a summary of this tale and a discussion of some of its features cf. also Strong 2004: 35.

¹⁶ Schopen 1985: 18 indicates that "here, unfortunately, I can give only a very condensed summary of this important case." I find it nevertheless somewhat puzzling that, in a case study aimed at drawing conclusions of considerable methodological significance, Schopen does not mention the existence of this *Vinaya* version at all, even though its relevant aspects were available in Bareau's study. The circumstance that Bareau does not identify the school of this *Vinaya* does not change the fact that we have here a *Vinaya* version that substantially differs from the other accounts.

It seems to me in fact improbable that serious scholars would, just because three *Vinayas* agree, necessarily "conclude – according to the accepted principle – that the essential elements of this account must go back to a very old or pre-sectarian stage of the tradition", this being the position that Schopen (1985: 20) depicts in order to then refute it.¹⁷

Another problem is that the version referred to by Schopen as the "Pāli version" or the "Theravāda version" is actually found in the commentary to the *Dhammapada*. This reflects a methodological problem, since Schopen compares *Vinaya* versions of other schools with a commentary of the Theravāda tradition. Bareau differs in this respect, as he does not consider the *Dhammapada* commentary on a par with the *Vinaya* accounts, but only compares canonical versions with each other. [230]

Staying within the scope of *Vinaya* material, it is quite significant that in the Theravāda *Vinaya* no reference to a *stūpa* of Kassapa is found at all. This suggests the present case to be similar to the topic of monastic regulations for appropriate behaviour in regard to a *stūpa*. In contrast to other *Vinayas*, the Theravāda *Vinaya* has no reference to such behaviour at all and thus appears to testify to an early period when such regulations were not yet in existence.¹⁸

¹⁷ The present case conforms to what to me appears to be a recurrent trope in Schopen's writings, where he depicts naïve conclusions drawn by often unnamed scholars that he then sets out to refute. I sometimes find it difficult to think of reputable scholars who indeed hold such opinions.

¹⁸ The suggestion by Schopen 1989: 95 that "the total absence of rules regarding *stūpas* in the Pāli *Vinaya* would seem to make sense only if they had been systematically removed" has met with immediate criticism by Gombrich 1990b, Hallisey 1990, and von Hinüber 1990. Instead, the absence of any reference to *stūpa* worship indicates that the Pāli *Vinaya* was closed by the time *stūpa* worship came to be generally practised; cf., e.g., Bareau 1960: 230, Sasaki 1979: 196, Roth 1980: 186, Hirakawa 1993/1998: 272, Vetter 1994a: 1248 note 17, and Enomoto 2007: 194. Wynne 2005: 45 notes that "Schopen seems to have

The same would hold true for the Kassapa *stūpa*, in that the absence of any record of this *stūpa* in the Theravāda *Vinaya* suggests that, by the time this story came into vogue, the Theravāda *Vinaya* was already considered closed, so that this tale only found a placing in a Theravāda commentary. In other words, the very fact that in the Theravāda tradition a tale related to the Kassapa *stūpa* is only extant in the commentaries is yet another indicator that the various *Vinaya* versions of this tale do not go back to a common early core.

For a better assessment of the growth of the Kassapa tale, still another *Vinaya* text can be taken into account. This is the *Mahāvastu*, which reports that the Buddha, who is travelling in Kośala, displays a smile. Asked by Ānanda why he smiled, the Buddha explains that on the same spot where they are now, the Buddha Kāśyapa had been seated, as well as two Buddhas previous to Kāśyapa.¹⁹ Ānanda then invites the Buddha to sit on the same place.

A similar tale can be found in the *Ghaṭikāra-sutta* and its *Madhuyama-āgama* parallel, differing in so far as these only mention that the Buddha Kassapa had been seated on this spot, without any reference to other former Buddhas.²⁰ Oldenberg (1912b: 138) sees the *Mahāvastu* reference to three former Buddhas as an at-

proved, inadvertently, that the Pāli canon was relatively closed ... at an early date." On another unconvincing argument by Schopen on the absence of references to *stūpa* construction for nuns cf. Dhammadinnā 2016a: 44–53; and on the absence of the *śikṣādattaka* observance in the Theravāda *Vinaya* as another pointer to a comparatively early closure of this text cf. Anālayo 2016e.

¹⁹ Senart 1882: 318,12. Schopen 1985: 19 note 31 refers to this tale as one of various instances of "the smile of the Buddha".

²⁰ MN 81 at MN II 45,17 and MĀ 63 at T I 499a16. Other versions of this tale can be found in the *Saṅghabhedavastu*, Gnoli 1978: 22,1, and in an *avadāna* collection, T 197 at T IV 172c5. These two versions have a different setting, as they attempt to explain the karmic precedents for Gautama's practice of asceticism. Hence they do not begin with a reference to the spot on which the former Buddha had been seated. For a comparative study of MN 81 cf. Anālayo 2011b: 441–451.

tempt to improve on the narrative, [231] since the sudden reference to two additional former Buddhas contrasts with the preceding account in the *Mahāvastu*, which only mentions the Buddha Kāśyapa. In this respect the *Mahāvastu* appears to show a more developed stage than the *Ghaṭikāra-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel.

The motif of the smile displayed by the Buddha as a marker of the special nature of the spot related to the Buddha Kassapa recurs in the Dharmaguptaka, Mahāsāṅghika, and Mahīśāsaka *Vinayas*.²¹ Ānanda's invitation to sit on the same spot so that this place has been used by two Buddhas is recorded in the Mūlasarvāstivāda versions.²² This and other similarities point to the continuity between the *Ghaṭikāra-sutta* episode and the *stūpa* narrations in the different *Vinayas*. The version in the commentary on the *Dhammapada* in fact explicitly refers to the *Ghaṭikāra-sutta*.²³ Strong (2004: 39) must be correct when he concludes that the *Ghaṭikāra-sutta* tale stands at the beginning point of a textual development that eventually led to the narrations regarding Kassapa's *stūpa*.²⁴

According to Mus (1935: 481), the reference in the *Mahāvastu* to a location used by former Buddhas points to a simple form of cult, before sacred architecture became important. On this reasoning the *Ghaṭikāra-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, together with the *Mahāvastu*, would testify to an early stage when a re-

²¹ The Buddha's smile is reported in the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 958a27, in the Mahāsāṅghika *Vinaya*, T 1425 at T XXII 497b20, and in the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 172a5.

²² Ānanda's invitation to sit is reported in the *Bhaiṣajyavastu*, Dutt 1984a: 74,17 and D 1 *kha* 160a6 or Q 1030 *ge* 148b6, as well as in the *Dīvyāvadāna*, Cowell and Neil 1886: 77,4 (cf. also 466,1).

²³ Dh-p-a III 251,9 reports that the Buddha narrated the *Ghaṭikāra-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* before revealing the *stūpa* of the Buddha Kassapa.

²⁴ As already noted by Strong 2004: 33, the existence of a *stūpa* of the former Buddha Kāśyapa was also known to Fāxiǎn (法顯) and Xuánzàng (玄奘); cf. T 2085 at T LI 861a17 and T 2087 at T LI 900c18.

lationship between the former Buddha Kassapa/Kāśyapa and a particular spot in the Kośala country was established without a reference to his bodily remains or to a *stūpa*. The tales in the *Vinaya* versions then would be subsequent developments of this motif, reflecting the coming into vogue of *stūpa* worship. ^[232]

Even if one were to doubt the continuity between the reference to a mere spot where the Buddha Kassapa/Kāśyapa once sat and the story of his *stūpa*, the absence of any tale related to his *stūpa* in the Theravāda *Vinaya* makes it clear that this motif must indeed be a later development. Thus the case chosen by Schopen does not conflict with the tenet that regards agreement between parallel versions as a criterion for earliness, simply because in the present case the parallel versions do not agree. Close inspection shows that they in fact disagree in significant details, and paying attention to these disagreements and to all the available textual evidence allows us to trace the relative chronology of the different versions.

Instead of disproving this tenet, the present case shows that, although versions of the Kassapa/Kāśyapa *stūpa* tale were known in other *Vinayas* – in fact even a commentary belonging to the Theravāda tradition shows knowledge of this *stūpa* – nevertheless a story related to this *stūpa* was not incorporated in the *Ghaṭi-kāra-sutta* or in the Theravāda *Vinaya*. The present case thereby exemplifies a tendency noted by Norman (1997: 140), where popular Buddhist tales

are known in the Theravādin tradition only in the commentaries, although they are found in texts which are regarded as canonical in other traditions ... we have, therefore, to assume that at least the *Vinaya*- and the *Sutta-piṭaka* had been closed at an earlier date.

Von Hinüber (2009: 47 note 43) explains that

during the past decades the age of the Theravāda tradition has been thrown into doubt occasionally, not rarely in a rather general and sweeping way ... in this context it is remarkable that new concepts sometimes found their way only into the Theravāda commentaries, while they still could be included in the canonical scriptures of other traditions, which points to a rather early closure of the Theravāda canon.

Endo (2012: 41) notes, in regard to the Pāli commentarial tradition, that although

the Sri Lanka *bhāṇakas* had opportunities to homogenize the texts, if they so wished ... nevertheless, what we find in the Pāli commentaries is contrary to our expectation ... in other words, the *bhāṇakas* did not ... homogenize the texts.

If even at the commentarial level a general trend towards homogenization is not evident, it seems fair to assume that in the case of the discourses, perceived by tradition as records of the Buddha's own word and therefore invested with much higher authority, it is rather improbable that they should be the product of wholesale later levelling.

The conclusions that can be drawn from the present case study are applicable to the case of other Pāli discourses in general. Once these are placed side by side with their parallel versions and subjected to a detailed comparative study, in the majority of cases a host of minor variations emerge alongside an impressive degree of similarity. This gives a strong impression that we are indeed dealing with the authentic remains of an oral transmission, not with material that is for the most part the product of later harmonization and levelling.²⁵ [233]

²⁵ My assessment in this respect is based on my habilitation research in which I compared the one hundred and fifty-two discourses of the *Majjhima-nikāya*

In relation to the early discourses in general, Salomon (2017: 261f) points out that

some skeptically inclined modern scholars have doubted the antiquity of the Buddhist canons as we know them, on the grounds that we have no written record of them until many centuries after the time of the Buddha. But I feel that there are two major arguments against what I am inclined to see as a hyper-skeptical point of view.

First, there is the overall agreement, in broad terms, between the different *Sūtra-āgamas* with respect to their contents and arrangement, or at least their principles of arrangement. Secondly, it is striking that even the earliest representations of *Āgama* collections in written form, in the form of selective anthologies, clearly indicate the prior existence of complete *Āgamas* similar to those which we know from later times.

In sum, contrary to the position argued by Schopen, it seems to me quite sensible to assume that, if all known versions of a text or passage agree, that text or passage is probably old.²⁶

Additions Made in Sri Lanka

Returning to the topic of later additions to the Pāli discourses, besides the indications given in the Pāli commentarial tradition itself, modern scholarship has identified several cases that appear to be additions made in Sri Lanka to the canonical discourses.

with over four hundred parallels preserved in Chinese, Sanskrit, Tibetan, etc., cf. Anālayo 2011b.

²⁶ I have slightly reworded the maxim discussed by Schopen, especially replacing "must be very old" with "is probably old", since I would not wish to exclude categorically the possibility of levelling, which I think is a possible, but in most cases the less probable, explanation.

Adikaram (1946/1994: 11) argues that, since the *Paramattha-jotikā* reports that the *Mahā-aṭṭhakathā* did not comment on the last two stanzas of the *Kokālika-sutta* of the *Sutta-nipāta*, it follows that these stanzas must have been added in Sri Lanka.²⁷ Norman (1992: 275), however, points out that

their absence from the *aṭṭhakathā* may simply mean that no cty [commentary] on the verses was brought from India by the early missionaries. It seems unlikely that the two verses were added in Ceylon, for their metre seems to be unique and old. Since the verses give the answer to the question asked in the prose introduction, it is likely that they were composed at the same time as the introduction. [234]

Another suggestion of Sri Lankan influence has been made by Bechert (1957), in that *-e* terminations for nominative singular found in the description of Makkhali Gosala's view in the *Sāmañ-*

²⁷ Pj II 477,13: *avasāne gāthādvayaṃ eva pana mahā-aṭṭhakathāyaṃ vinicchita-pāṭhe n' atthi*, made in relation to Sn 677f (E° title: *Kokāliya-sutta*). Another two cases are noted by Abeynayake 2000: 172f, who quotes the discussion in Prajñārāma 1946: 19 and 31ff to the effect that additions to Pāli discourses made in Sri Lanka took the form of eight sentences added to the *Mūlapariyāya-sutta* and four stanzas added to the *Sammādiṭṭhi-sutta* (MN 1 at MN I 6 and MN 9 at MN I 55), each case betraying the influence of Sinhala Prākṛit. In the case of the *Mūlapariyāya-sutta*, these sentences are *uddānas* placed after the different subsections of the discourse, e.g., after the exposition on the worldling: *puthujjanavasena paṭhamanayabhūmi paricchedo*, where the readings found in the Ceylonese edition differ from the Burmese and Siamese editions, perhaps having suffered some textual corruption. In the case of the *Sammādiṭṭhi-sutta*, a set of four *uddānas* summing up the contents of the whole discourse is found at the end of the Ceylonese and Siamese editions of the *Sammādiṭṭhi-sutta*, but is absent from the Burmese edition. Unlike the case of the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* or the *Kokālika-sutta*, however, these two instances do not add anything new to the content of the discourses itself, since they are only concerned with *uddānas*.

ñaphala-sutta reflect Sinhalese influence.²⁸ However, Norman (1976: 120) has drawn attention to similar *-e* terminations in a Jain text also reporting the views of heretical teachers. This suggests a common source for the form in which the views of these teachers were reported, independent of Sri Lankan influence.²⁹

Substantial changes taking place after the canonical material had reached Sri Lanka have been suggested by Vetter (1994b), based on a comparative study of the *Mahānidāna-sutta* in the light of four Chinese parallels. Since this case exemplifies the type of conclusions that can be drawn based on comparative studies and the dates of the translation of Chinese parallels, in what follows I examine the arguments made by Vetter in some detail.

In an English summary at the end of his paper, Vetter (1994b: 159) explains that the *Mahānidāna-sutta*

appears, in a considerable number of instances, to be more 'developed' than the translations ascribed to An Shigao (late 2nd c. C.E.) and in the *Madhyamāgama* (late 4th c.), but less than the versions in the *Dīrghāgama* (early 5th c.) and by Shi Hu (late 10th c.).

So it seems that even in the first centuries C.E. the Pāli text has been enlarged. Maybe this process came to a standstill as soon as the *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī* (compiled around 400 C.E.?) was accepted as an authoritative commentary and thereby encapsulated the *Sutta*.

In a subsequent paper, Vetter then refers back to his research on the *Mahānidāna-sutta* as the basis for his conclusion that the

²⁸ DN 2 at DN I 53,29; cf. also Anālayo 2011b: 414 note 119.

²⁹ A few cases of Sinhaleseisms in the Pāli canon have been noted by von Hinüber 1985/2001: 172 (§209) and 193 (§248). These concern minor matters related to pronunciation and do not affect the content in any way.

whole of the Pāli canonical texts are of less use for historical purposes than the early Chinese translations.³⁰

If I understand him correctly, the approach Vetter adopts is based on the notion that the date of translation of the Chinese versions reflects their respective degree of development. By assessing the Pāli version's degree of development in comparison, we can then determine the date of its final redaction.

As far as I can see, on seven occasions Vetter explicitly identifies a particular passage in the *Mahānidāna-sutta* as later than one or more of its parallels. [235] In what follows, I briefly survey these seven passages from the viewpoint of how far the suggested stage of development reflects the date of translation or assumed closure.

1) The first passage identified by Vetter as late in the Pāli version has a shorter and thus presumably earlier counterpart in the translation attributed to Ān Shīgāo (安世高, late second century),³¹ in the *Madhyama-āgama* version (late fourth century), and in the translation attributed to Shīhù (施護, late tenth century).³² The *Dirgha-āgama* version (early fifth century) does not

³⁰ Vetter 1996: 49: "der volle Textbestand des Pāli-Kanon ist für historische Zwecke weniger brauchbar als frühe chinesische Übersetzungen." The conclusions by Vetter 1994b are quoted approvingly by Bronkhorst 2000: 77 note 2.

³¹ Vetter 1994b: 139 note 13 refers to Zürcher 1959/1972: 33 and page 331 note 83, who includes T 14 among the translations that can safely be attributed to Ān Shīgāo (安世高); cf. also Nattier 2008: 45, Zacchetti 2010a: 252, and Vetter 2012: 7.

³² The passage in question has an introductory statement regarding the profundity of dependent arising. DN 15 at DN II 55,14 stands alone in indicating that lack of understanding this principle leads beings to rebirth in lower realms, *pajā ... apāyaṃ duggatiṃ vinipātaṃ saṃsāraṃ nātivattati*; Vetter 1994b: 143 comments: "Der Abweg, der sich nur im Pāli-Text (mit den Worten *apāya*-, *duggati*- und *vinipāta*-) findet ... dürfte ein später Zusatz sein." The problem of being subject to *saṃsāra*, without a reference to lower realms, is also mentioned in T 14 at T I 242a7, MĀ 97 at T I 578b20, and T 52 at T I 844b24.

have this passage at all, which Vetter interprets as a sign of loss or intentional removal.³³

2) Regarding the second instance of an alleged lateness in the Pāli version,³⁴ the situation in the parallels is as follows: the translation attributed to Ān Shīgāo (late second century), the *Madhyama-gama* version (late fourth century) and the translation attributed to Shīhù (late tenth century) have a shorter and thus presumably earlier counterpart,³⁵ while the *Dīrgha-āgama* version (early fifth century) goes further than the Pāli discourse.³⁶ [236]

3) In the case of the third identification by Vetter of what he believes to be a late element in the *Mahānidāna-sutta*,³⁷ all of the

³³ DĀ 13 at T I 60b9. Vetter 1994b: 143 comments that in this case such a passage "ist also eher weggefallen oder weggelassen"; cf. also the general reflections in Vetter 1994b: 140 note 14. It is not clear to me why the short version found in DĀ 13 must be either the result of a textual loss or else an intentional omission. Since the discourse would be coherent without the passage in question, it could just as well be that DĀ 13 testifies to an early stage, with the remaining versions being subsequent expansions.

³⁴ This case concerns the initial exposition of the links of dependent arising in reverse order, which begins with old age and death and leads up to the reciprocal conditioning of consciousness and name-and-form, DN 15 at DN II 56,28. Vetter 1994b: 144 then suggests this to be a later addition: "Daß die 'Katechese' schon hier eine Reihe von Alter und Tod bis zu *nāma-rūpa*- und *viññāṇa*-, welch letztere sich gegenseitig bedingen, zeigt, dürfte spät sein."

³⁵ T 14 at T I 242b12, MĀ 97 at T I 578c2, and T 52 at T I 844c15 only go up to craving.

³⁶ DĀ 13 at T I 60b23 continues beyond consciousness by mentioning formations and ignorance.

³⁷ This instance concerns the beginning of a series of conditions that in all versions lead from questing to quarrelling and fighting. DN 15 at DN II 58,31 starts with feeling, where Vetter 1994b: 145 comments that this would be a later addition, "*vedanā*- hat hier aber, wie die anderen Versionen nahelegen, früher wohl nicht gestanden."

four Chinese parallels (late second to late tenth century) show a shorter and thus presumably earlier presentation.³⁸

4) Another passage in the *Mahānidāna-sutta* is according to Vetter a later development of an originally more simple presentation,³⁹ such as found in three of the Chinese parallels (late second to early fifth century),⁴⁰ whereas a counterpart to this exposition is not found at all in the latest Chinese translation (tenth century).⁴¹

5) Another supposedly late part of the *Mahānidāna-sutta* is absent from all of the Chinese parallels (late second to late tenth century).⁴²

6) The next identification of a late passage in the *Mahānidāna-sutta* has counterparts in three of the Chinese parallels (late second to early fifth century),⁴³ but is absent from the latest Chinese translation (late tenth century).⁴⁴ [237]

³⁸ In DĀ 13 at T I 60c19, T 14 at T I 242b18, MĀ 97 at T I 579a1, and T 52 at T I 844c16 the starting point is craving.

³⁹ The passage begins in DN 15 at DN II 62,10, with Vetter 1994b: 150 proposing that only three of the four extant enquiries are original, which, however, would have been simpler, "anfänglich nur drei negative Wenn-dann-Sätze gab, die nicht die Verwicklungen der Pāli-Version besaßen".

⁴⁰ DĀ 13 at T I 61b3, T 14 at T I 243b8, and MĀ 97 at T I 579c7.

⁴¹ In relation to T 52, Vetter 1994b: 147 assumes an intentional omission motivated by lack of understanding, "Verzicht auf eine schwierige und seinerzeit wohl kaum mehr verständliche Diskussion".

⁴² The passage identified as late in DN 15 at DN II 63,27 indicates, in relation to the reciprocal conditioning of consciousness and name-and-form, that it is to this extent that one is born, becomes old, dies, passes away, and appears again. Vetter 1994b: 151 comments on this passage that "in den anderen chinesischen Versionen ist dazu nichts zu finden. Es ist daher möglich, daß es in später Zeit ... aus dem Mahāpadāna-sutta (D II/32) hierher verschleppt wurde", and again Vetter 1994b: 152: "es ist nicht wahrscheinlich, daß der Satz *ettāvatā kho ... uppajjetha* (v.l. *upapajjetha*) vā zum alten Kern ... gehörte."

⁴³ The passage in question concerns an examination of four types of self, DN 15 at DN II 64,3, which according to Vetter 1994b: 154 "gehört kaum zum frü-

7) Another *Mahānidāna-sutta* passage, identified as a later element,⁴⁵ is absent from the earliest and latest translations (second and tenth century), whereas a shorter counterpart can be found in the *Madhyama-āgama* version (late fourth century) and another corresponding passage in the *Dīrgha-āgama* (early fifth century).⁴⁶

In sum, even if all these seven cases should indeed be later additions to the *Mahānidāna-sutta*, which I find rather doubtful,⁴⁷ in each of the above surveyed instances the dates of the Chinese translations do not reflect the suggested stage of development of the respective texts. That is, not a single one of these seven instances conforms to the pattern proposed by Vetter that the Pāli version is

more 'developed' than the translations ascribed to An Shigao (late 2nd c. C.E.) and in the *Madhyamāgama* (late 4th c.), but

hesten Bestand". Counterparts to this passage can be found in DĀ 13 at T I 62a17, T 14 at T I 244a29 and MĀ 97 at T I 580c3.

⁴⁴ Vetter 1994b: 153 note 40 comments that this passage appears to be missing from T 52.

⁴⁵ This concerns the path for designation, *adhivacana*, DN 15 at DN II 68,18, on which Vetter 1994b: 156 comments that "auch hier weist MA also auf ein Stadium hin, in dem weniger Begriffe vorkamen als heutzutage im Pāli."

⁴⁶ DĀ 13 at T I 62a8 and MĀ 97 at T I 580b22.

⁴⁷ Regarding Vetter's assessment of the implications of the above differences, I am under the impression that a central principle behind his analysis is the assumption that the majority of sources must have the correct reading. Although this may often be the case, it seems to me that at times the correct reading could also be preserved in a single version, against the majority of parallels. Regarding the seven cases surveyed above, I for one fail to see a definite reason why some of them could not have been part of the original. Vetter in fact words his judgements in the subjunctive mode, indicating that these are just possibilities. Yet, if these are mere possibilities, it follows that their lateness is not sufficiently well established to use this as a basis for assessing the historical value of the Pāli discourses in general.

less than the versions in the *Dīrghāgama* (early 5th c.) and by Shi Hu (late 10th c.).

The same holds true even if the latest translation attributed to Shīhù is left aside.⁴⁸ In the case of the remaining three Chinese parallels the pattern is still not invariably one of the version attributed to Ān Shīgāo and the *Madhyama-āgama* version preserving what Vetter holds to be earlier than the Pāli version, and the *Dīrgha-āgama* version reflecting further developments.

This illustrates what is in fact a general feature of Chinese translations, of which the present case merely provides an illustration. In principle there is no reason why a fairly early Indic text might not have been translated at a relatively late date in China, because it reached China only at that time. In contrast, a text that had come into being more recently in India may have reached China more quickly and therefore been translated at an earlier date. In other words, the dates of Chinese translations do not necessarily correspond to the chronology of textual composition in India.

Turning to the translation of Buddhist texts into European languages provides a convenient illustration of this principle. [238] The fact that the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra* was translated already in the mid nineteenth century by Burnouf (1852) does not mean that this text must be earlier than the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñā-pāramitā* translated more than a century later by Conze (1973).⁴⁹

As Schopen (2000/2005: 4) rightly points out,

it is not impossible that some – if not a great deal – of what has been said on the basis of Chinese translations about the history of an Indian text has more to do with the history of

⁴⁸ Vetter 1994b: 141 notes at the outset of his examination the somewhat doubtful nature of the version translated by Shīhù.

⁴⁹ This example was given by Douglas Osto in a paper delivered at the fifteenth IABS conference in Atlanta in 2008.

Chinese translation ... than with the history of the Indian text itself.

Moreover, the date at which a text containing a presumably earlier version of a particular passage was translated into Chinese gives us a *terminus ante quem* only for changes in that same text, not for changes in any other text. Changes in the Pāli parallel could have occurred at any time after the respective textual traditions had begun to transmit their versions separately, be this because of geographical separation or for any other reason. This would be the *terminus post quem* for changes in the Pāli version, not the date when any parallel was translated into Chinese.

In other words, the *Mahānidāna-sutta* passages identified by Vetter as later changes could in principle have been present already in the Pāli material that according to the traditional account was brought to Sri Lanka during the reign of Asoka. There is no reason to think that these presumed alterations in the *Mahānidāna-sutta* could only have happened after the parallel version(s) had been translated into Chinese.

The Finalization of the Pāli Commentaries

The assumption by Vetter that the development he sees in the *Mahānidāna-sutta* would have come to a conclusion around the time of the finalization of the Pāli commentaries echoes a position taken by Schopen, hence in what follows I examine the relevance of the finalization of the Pāli commentarial tradition in relation to the Pāli discourses.

In the paper that also takes up the tale of the *stūpa* of the former Buddha Kassapa/Kāśyapa,⁵⁰ Schopen (1985: 10) proposes that

⁵⁰ Schopen 1985: 10f also examines how far extant manuscripts and epigraphy reflect knowledge of the canonical collections. His presentation would need to be revised in light of the recent Sanskrit and Gāndhārī fragment findings, also

it is not until the time of the commentaries of Buddhaghosa,^[239] Dhammapāla and others – that is to say, the 5th/6th Century A.D. – that we can know anything definite about the actual contents of this [Pāli] Canon.

He bases himself for this assessment on a quote from Malalasekera (1928/1994: 44) to the effect that "how far the *Tipiṭaka* and its commentaries reduced to writing at Alu-vihāra resembled them as they have come down to us now, no one can say." This remark needs to be considered within its original context, since on the same page Malalasekera continues by indicating that

in view of the great care with which the orthodox monks attempted to preserve the purity of the Word there is not much probability that the canon underwent any material changes in the interval.

Assessing Schopen's proposal requires defining what "knowing anything definite" refers to. If it refers to the type of certainty that comes from having direct access to manuscripts, then in the case of the Pāli discourses the fifth to sixth centuries C.E. do not offer us anything that enables such definite knowledge, because manuscripts of the Pāli discourses from that period are not extant. According to von Hinüber (1978: 48),⁵¹ in the case of Pāli canonical material we have in general "no manuscript older than about

taking into account the suggestion by Norman 1989: 33 that "it is clear from inscriptional evidence that the *nikāyas* had certainly received their names by the second century BC"; cf. in more detail Salomon 2017. For a reply to the suggestion by Schopen 2010: 127 that the early generations of Buddhist reciters would not have been able to transmit the amount of literature later considered canonical cf. Anālayo 2011b: 870 note 65.

⁵¹ For a critical examination of a suggestion in the same paper by von Hinüber 1978: 57, regarding a case of alleged late influence on the Pāli discourses, cf. Anālayo 2011b: 779f note 118.

400 years", with a few exceptions.⁵² Thus definite knowledge in relation to the Pāli discourses would need to be placed considerably later than Schopen proposes, perhaps as late as the seventeenth century in order to be able to have direct access to manuscripts of all four *Nikāyas*.

If, however, "knowing anything definite" refers to drawing a reasonable inference, then we would be able to go further back into the past. Here the question would be how far we are willing to trust the written transmission of texts in Sri Lanka. [240] If this cannot be trusted in principle, we are back to the date of actual manuscripts of the main Pāli *Nikāyas*, somewhere around the seventeenth century.

Once we assume major changes were possible before the fifth century, affecting the written canonical material transmitted in various manuscript lineages in Sri Lanka, there would be no reason why such changes should not be possible afterwards. If the written transmission up to the fifth century is not trustworthy, there is no reason why it should be trusted after the commentaries were finalized in the fifth or sixth century, based on already existing commentarial traditions. That is, whatever happened in the fifth or sixth century does not offer us real certainty in our knowledge about the Pāli canon that decisively differs from what can be known about the same canon in, say, the third or fourth century.

If the early written transmission in Sri Lanka cannot be trusted, then there would be no reason to trust it in other countries. In the case of the Chinese canon, for example, taking the same sceptical attitude we would have to discount all information we have on dif-

⁵² In the case of the *Samyutta-nikāya*, de Silva 1938: 20 lists a manuscript (no. 70) of this collection with the indication "original copy, copied in 1412 A.C.", although the precise dating seems uncertain, cf. von Hinüber 2000: 89f. There is, however, additional evidence for a long-standing transmission of the *Samyutta-nikāya* and its commentaries in Sri Lanka; cf. von Hinüber 1988: 178.

ferent early translators. Distrusting the written transmission during the early centuries of Buddhism in China, one might then allocate all translated works equally to the time of the eighth century catalogue *Kāiyuán lù*, 開元錄 (or more precisely 開元釋教錄), which had a determining influence on the formation of the Chinese canon and thus would be the closest equivalent to the role the finalization of the Pāli commentaries is presumed to have played for the Pāli discourses.⁵³

Yet, familiarity with the different Chinese translations makes it clear that a development in translation terminology from early to later translators has taken place, making such scepticism an unconvincing position.

The same holds for the Pāli material, where familiarity with the sources shows an evident development in language and content from the discourses via the *Vinaya* and the *Abhidharma* to the commentaries.⁵⁴ Thus to allocate all this material to the fifth century is similarly unconvincing. [241]

⁵³ Cf. esp. the 入藏錄, T 2154 at T LV 680b. As part of a study that highlights the value of studying Chinese translations for identifying changes in the corresponding Indic texts, Harrison 2008/2010: 218 offers the pertinent observation that "scepticism, then, is all very well, but it is no better than blind faith when it chooses not to look at the evidence." Based on a study of pillar inscriptions from Deorkhotar, Salomon and Marino 2014: 37 similarly warn against excessive scepticism, pointing out that "while caution and a healthy scepticism are not only desirable ingredients but absolutely necessary ones for good scholarship, there is always the danger of letting scepticism take over one's thinking, leading to the mindset of 'In the end, we know nothing!'"

⁵⁴ As von Hinüber 1996/1997: 26 points out, "the cultural environment of the first four Nikāyas of the Suttaṭīka is markedly older than that of the Vinaya-ṭīka." Gethin 2006: 84 notes that "in terms of doctrinal development the four primary Nikāyas are clearly older than certain texts of the Khuddaka-nikāya and the texts of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka, which in turn are clearly older than the Pāli commentaries."

Schopen (1985: 19), in the context of his discussion of the Kassapa tale, in fact comes to the conclusion that the version found in the *Dhammapada* commentary "appears to be the latest of all the versions", the rest of which are, as mentioned above, canonical versions found in different *Vinayas*. That is, his own assessment of the sources conforms to the principle according to which the commentaries contain later elements than the canonical scriptures on which they comment.

Assuming that the written transmission, be it in Sri Lanka or in China, can be trusted to have preserved the essentials, with the inevitable minor errors and changes that are natural byproducts of textual transmission, then in the case of the Pāli discourses we could go back all the way to the first century B.C.E., when according to the traditional account the texts were written down at the Alu-vihāra.

Now the Indian commentaries that had been rendered into Sinhala were according to the *Mahāvamsa* written down together with the canonical texts in the first century B.C.E.,⁵⁵ and these were apparently passed on without substantial changes.⁵⁶ Even the additional commentaries by Sri Lankan elders and tales related to Sri Lanka, recorded in the Sri Lankan commentarial tradition,

⁵⁵ *Mahāvamsa* 33.100f. Hartmann 2009: 97 comments that "the wording of the passage appears to presuppose an already well-structured canon with commentary."

⁵⁶ According to Endo 2005: 50, the commentarial tradition stemming from India, which forms the basis for the Pāli commentarial tradition, came to a closing point around the time of the first century B.C.E. He explains that "there is no literary evidence whatsoever to prove that the class of basic ... sources of the present Pāli Commentaries ... was expanded ... [by adding] new elements after the time of King Vaṭṭagāmaṇī-Abhaya. This positively suggests that the expansion of the ... 'Original Commentaries' had come to a completion by the time of this king, when the Buddhist texts were committed to writing."

seem to reflect only a period up to the third century.⁵⁷ Thus if the commentaries (*aṭṭhakathā*) on the Pāli discourses should be considered as in some way encapsulating the discourse material and helping to fix its final form, [242] this would in the main be the case already for the 1st century B.C.E., with the time of definite closure apparently being the 3rd century, instead of the 5th century.

Moreover, Endo (2009: 175) notes that there

is a general practice in the Pāli commentaries that, whenever authorities are sought for the sake of supporting, or going against, a view, or for mere additional information, the '*pālī*' (Canonical Text(s)), the '*Aṭṭhakathā*' ... are cited in this order of importance ... this classification appears to have been established according to the historical evolution of Buddhist texts.

Endo (2008: 165) also explains that on those few occasions when Buddhaghosa expresses disagreement with positions held in the Mahāvihāra tradition, "his criteria were based on giving the first preference to the *Tipiṭaka*", that is to say, Buddhaghosa's regard for what he considered canonical was such that he would

⁵⁷ Regarding the opinions of individual Theras quoted in the commentaries, von Hinüber 1996/1997: 101 points out that "as far as these Theras can be dated, almost all of them lived before AD 100." Mori 1989: 5 explains that "all the datable Sri Lankans appearing in the Commentaries are restricted, with a very few exceptions, to those who were active in the period between the reign of King Devānampiyatissa (reigning: B.C. 250–210) ... and that of King Vasabha (A.D. 65–109)." Mori 1988/1989: 99 adds that "in the reign of Mahāseṇa (A.D. 276–303) the formation of the sources ceases entirely: after that time nothing was added to them; and they were well preserved until the time when the Pāli commentators wrote their *Aṭṭhakathā* texts based upon those sources in the fifth and sixth centuries or thereabouts. Consequently the real and substantial date of the *Aṭṭhakathā* texts should be regarded not as the date of the writing of the texts, but as the date of their source materials." For instances where the Pāli commentaries clearly rely on old material cf. also von Hinüber 2015a: 369 and 376.

venture to disagree with the Mahāvihāra exegetical tradition if he felt that this was not in line with the canonical position.

In sum, if the ancient Indian commentarial tradition that formed the foundation for the Pāli commentaries as we have them now can indeed be considered as coming to a closing point in the first century B.C.E., and keeping in mind the respect given to the canonical material over the commentaries, it follows that the Pāli discourses on which the commentaries comment must also have come to a close by that time. It is in fact hard to imagine how, after the texts had been written down, changes could have been implemented consistently, once copies of the written texts had begun to spread to various monasteries in Sri Lanka.

This is not to propose that what was written down at that time is exactly what we have now. In the course of time most certainly minor changes and errors occurred during the copying of the texts, resulting in the variants to be found between the different extant editions.⁵⁸ But it seems to me realistic to assume that in terms of doctrinal content the Pāli discourses would have been in existence in a form roughly resembling what we have now by the first century B.C.E.⁵⁹ [243]

⁵⁸ A rather substantial 'variant' would be the long exposition on the four noble truths found in the B^e and S^e editions of the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta*, MN 10, which is absent from the C^e and E^e editions; cf. MN I 62,21. Nevertheless, this variant simply follows the example of the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna-sutta*, DN 22 at DN II 304–313, and thus does not involve a real innovation. Trenckner 1888/1993: 534 notes that the long exposition on the four noble truths in MN 10 was in the Burmese manuscript from the India Office Library that he consulted; in fact the long section is already found in the Burmese fifth-council edition.

⁵⁹ Reat 1991: 140 explains that "in recent years the emphasis of Buddhist studies in the West has fallen upon what cannot be ascribed to earliest Buddhism – i.e. that virtually nothing can be attributed with any certainty to earliest Buddhism. For many Western scholars, this position has become an indisputable maxim which justifies neglect of ... the Pāli canon" and provides "an excuse for some

The Political and Geographical Setting

The assumption that the Pāli discourses would have come to a close by the time of the writing down of the canon in Sri Lanka finds support in the fact that the world the discourses reflect in political and geographical terms seems to be earlier than the first century B.C.E.

In relation to knowledge of the political situation, as already pointed out by Rhys Davids (1903/1997: 174), it is significant that the Pāli discourses

make no mention of Asoka. Had they undergone any serious re-editing after the reign of the great Buddhist Emperor (of whom the Buddhist writers, whether rightly or wrongly, were so proud), is it probable that he would have been so completely ignored?⁶⁰

Western academics to ignore ... the Pāli *suttas*". Gómez 1995: 212 remarks that "common among contemporary scholars is the role of ... the guardian of 'secular authority' ... I refer to the scholar's interest in undermining the authority of the tradition he or she studies. Seldom is this role part of the scholar's public role."

⁶⁰ In the same vein, Geiger 1916: 7 comments that "es ist auch sehr zu beachten, daß der Name des in der buddhistischen Gemeinde so hochgefeierten Asoka nirgends im Kanon erwähnt wird. Dieser war eben zu Asokas Zeit inhaltlich so ziemlich abgeschlossen." Pande 1957: 16 similarly points out that "the silence of the canon over Aśoka, which contrasts so strongly with later tradition ... suggests its antiquity", concluding that "it may be asserted that the growth of the Nikāyas falls between the 5th and the 3rd centuries B.C." Another relevant observation regarding political constitution has been made by Ling 1983: 69, who in relation to "the disagreement between canon and chronicles on the concepts of kingship and nationalism" notes that "a disagreement of this sort ... is one of sufficient importance to the Sinhalese that for them to have transmitted it suggests that the canon had been transmitted without interference before Sinhalese historiography began."

The motif of the wheel-turning king, found repeatedly in the Pāli discourses, need not reflect knowledge of Asoka. A century ago Jacobi (1910: 336) pointed out that "the idea of a universal monarch ... is very ancient in India", already found in the pre-Buddhist period. Others have come to similar conclusions.⁶¹ Hence references to the *cakravartin/cakkavattin* need not be considered post-Asokan additions.

In regard to geography, Bareau (1984: 37) points out that the description of the realm of King Reṇu in the *Mahāgovinda-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* reflects a geographical awareness more limited than what would have been known by the time of Candragupta.⁶²

[244] Regarding the reference to Pāṭaliputta in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*, von Hinüber (2008b: 202 and 204) points out that

no mention is made of Pāṭaliputta as the capital (*rājadhānī*, e.g., D II 7,29) of the Maurya empire, in spite of the fact that Mauryas are indeed referred to at the very end of the same text ... [which] makes a lot of sense if the text is pre-Mauryan.⁶³

⁶¹ Cf., e.g., Sastri 1940, Zimmer 1951: 129, Horsch 1957: 73, Wijesekera 1957: 265, Drekmeier 1962: 203, Armelin 1975: 6, Nanayakkara 1977: 592, Strong 1983: 48, Chakravarti 1996: 6, Collins 1998: 470, Mahony 2005: 1350, and Anālayo 2011g.

⁶² DN19 at DN II 235,19. Bareau 1984: 36f explains that the "authors" of the text "defined the kingdom of their hero from a real model which they knew and which was then the largest territory united under the authority of a king in the Ganges basin. If they had known an even more widespread empire encompassing that same region, there is no doubt they would have taken it as an example and consequently pushed the frontiers of Reṇu's ... further back ... In comparison to the territories possessed by the kings ... during the life of the Buddha, this kingdom attributed to King Reṇu was indeed immense, but compared to that which Candragupta, the first sovereign of the Maurya dynasty, placed under his command, it was quite modest."

⁶³ DN 16 at DN II 87,34.

The *Dīgha-nikāya* collection also contains a listing of ten Indian countries,⁶⁴ which several discourses in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* then expand into a listing of sixteen countries, additionally mentioning the inhabitants of Assaka towards the south, Avanti in the west and the Gandhāra and Kamboja regions in the north-west.⁶⁵ Whatever the precise boundaries of these regions, the geographical knowledge reflected in the Pāli discourses is certainly more restricted than what is found in Asokan edicts, which show a wider knowledge, extending to South India and even to Sri Lanka.⁶⁶

Kamboja also occurs in conjunction with another location that according to several scholars reflects knowledge of the Bactrian Greeks and thus points to a time after the conquest of Alexander the Great: Yona.⁶⁷ [245] The reference in question occurs in the *Assalāyana-sutta* and in its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel. The two versions agree that, in a discussion regarding the brahminical

⁶⁴ DN 18 at DN II 200,4 lists the inhabitants of the countries Kāsi, Kosala, Vajjī, Malla, Cetiya, Vamsa, Kuru, Pañcāla, Maccha, and Sūrasena. On the degree of urbanization reflected in the Pāli discourses cf. also Witzel 2009: 298.

⁶⁵ AN 3.70 at AN I 213,1, AN 8.42 at AN IV 252,5, AN 8.43 at AN IV 256,17, and AN 8.45 at AN IV 260,27, which besides Assaka, Avanti, Gandhāra, and Kamboja also mention Aṅga and Magadha, in addition to the locations listed in DN 18 (see above note 64).

⁶⁶ Rock edicts II and XIII refer to Tambapaṇṇi (with several variant readings); cf. Bloch 1950: 93 and 130. In contrast, references to Tambapaṇṇi are not found in the Pāli discourses, but only in other works of the Pāli canon, like the canonical commentary *Mahāniddesa*, Nidd I 415,8, an *uddāna* in Vin II 72,27, and repeatedly in the late *Parivāra* (e.g., Vin V 3,4, 3,30, 5,9, 8,3, 49,7, 49,24, 55,1, 56,4, 81,36, and 82,13); cf. also the discussion in Cousins 2013b. Regarding the significance of the text listed in Asoka's Bhābhārā Edict, the fact that he selected a few textual pieces that could easily be memorized by his subjects does not imply that only those texts were in existence and the four *Nikāyas* or *Āgamas* had not yet come into being at that time; cf. in more detail Anālayo 2011b: 866f.

⁶⁷ Cf. Winternitz 1920/1968: 40, Lamotte 1947: 217, Bechert 1961: 41 note 2, Bronkhorst 2007a: 209 and 2011: 35f.

claim to class superiority, the Buddha asks if his visitor has already heard of a two-class society consisting of masters and slaves existing in some border countries, such as Yona.⁶⁸

Now a well-known example of a two-class society consisting of masters and slaves was Sparta, and closer inspection of the historical context suggests that Indians at the time of the Buddha could indeed have had knowledge of Sparta.⁶⁹

The Spartan leader Leonidas is famous for valiantly resisting, with a small group of followers at the pass of Thermopylae, the army of Xerxes, who in the year 480 B.C.E. had begun an invasion of mainland Greece. This invasion was in revenge for the support the Greeks had offered to a revolt of the Ionians living in Asia Minor against Persian dominion.

According to Herodotus, among the large forces that Xerxes had mustered was a contingent of Indian archers.⁷⁰ During their advance into Greece, the Persian army had found a bypass and circumvented the Greek defenders at the pass of Thermopylae, attacking them from the rear as well. To enable an orderly withdrawal of the remainder of the Greek army, Leonidas remained with a few Spartan companions to defend the pass to the last man. Their heroic resistance deeply impressed the Persian army of mercenaries.

⁶⁸ MN 93 at MN II 149,4: *sutan* (B^e and C^e: *sutaṃ*) *te yonakambojesu* (S^e: *yonakakambojesu*) *aññesu ca paccantimesu janapadesu dveva vaṇṇā, ayyo c'eva dāso ca* and MĀ 151 at T I 664a18: 頗聞餘尼及劬浮國有二種姓, 大家及奴. Another parallel, T 71 at T I 877a13, differs inasmuch as instead of Yona it speaks of the Kuṣāṇās.

⁶⁹ I already drew attention to this in Anālayo 2009m.

⁷⁰ Histories 7.65, Godley 1922/1982: 378: *Ἰνδοὶ δὲ εἴματα μὲν ἐνδεδνκότες ἀπὸ ξύλων πεποιημένα, τόξα δὲ καλάμινα εἶχον καὶ ὀιστοὺς καλαμίνους· ἐπὶ δὲ σίδηρος ἦν. ἐσταλμένοι μὲν δὴ ἦσαν οὕτω Ἰνδοί*, which describes the Indians as clad in cotton and armed with reed bows and iron-tipped arrows.

In view of this historical background, it would not be surprising if by the time the Indian survivors of the unsuccessful campaign of Xerxes had returned home, the rumour had spread of the valiant soldiers of Sparta, who lived in a two-class society of masters and slaves. Since this campaign was in revenge for the support given by the mainland Greeks to the Ionian revolt against Persian dominion, it would also not be surprising if the Indians referred to the Spartans as people from Yona, ^[246] and allocated them to some border countries of which they had no clear geographical awareness.

The fact that according to the *Assalāyana-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel the Buddha first ascertains whether his visitor had already heard about this two-class society gives the impression that this may have been a fairly new piece of information. Thus, instead of being a sign of lateness, the reference to Yona rather seems to be testifying to the earliness of the passage in question.⁷¹

⁷¹ That the reference to Yona or Yauna need not be taken as a sign of lateness has in fact already been pointed out by several scholars. Bühler 1895/1963: 27 note 1 comments that "it seems to me not wonderful that an author ... whose countrymen, the Gandhāras, had furnished a contingent for Xerxes's invasion of Greece, should mention the old Oriental name of the Greeks ... to me it seems absolutely impossible to make the mere occurrence of the word Yavana in Sanskrit works a mark, which proves that they must have been written after the invasion of Alexander." Sircar 1953: 101f comments that "the Greeks of Ionia in Asia Minor ... and the people of north-western India certainly came into contact with each other ... since the time of Darius I (522–486 B.C.)." Given that "Indian archers ... formed an important element in the army of Xerxes and shared the Persian defeat ... the people of Uttarāpatha at least had direct knowledge of the Greeks as early as the sixth and fifth centuries B.C.", so that it is "no wonder that the very word *Yauna*, meaning the Greeks, used for the first time in the records of Darius I, was borrowed by the Indians without any modification." Halbfass 1995: 199 sums up: "references to *yona*,

Conclusion

In sum, it seems to me reasonable to consider the Pāli discourses as fairly closed, in doctrinal terms, by the time of the first century B.C.E., obviously with small variations of the type characteristic of written transmission still taking place.⁷² That is, I would conclude that from that time onwards they were in existence in a form that roughly resembles what we currently have at our disposal. In terms of geographical awareness and in terms of doctrinal development, they seem to go back even further into the past, allowing us to catch a glimpse of Buddhist thought predominantly from the pre-Asokan period.

The reason for such early closure could well be that by the time of Asoka interests in the Buddhist communities began to develop in directions that to some degree led away from a concern with the discourses. The development of narrative material of the *jātaka* and *avadāna* type, evident in the different *Vinayas* and subsequently in autonomous collections dedicated to this genre, [247] alongside the growing interest in abhidharmic philosophy, also leading to a genre of texts on its own, had by then emerged as the central venue for new thoughts and ideas. Soon enough early *Mahāyāna* texts would come to fulfil a similar role. Once any of these texts had acquired a canonical status and/or become closed in turn, commentaries and manuals or *śāstra* texts would have stood in their place, providing the arena for new developments.

In other words, I would hold that, although the Pāli discourses do reflect stages of development up to a certain point, their role

etc., in the Pali canon need not be later interpolations, added after Alexander's campaign. They may well go back to the oldest layers of the canon."

⁷² Cousins 2012: 68 similarly comes to the conclusion that the evidence he has surveyed "is most compatible with the position that the Pali Canon, largely or wholly, dates back to the first century BC."

was soon displaced by other texts.⁷³ This, so it seems to me, is precisely why the Pāli discourses, when studied in comparison with their parallels preserved in Chinese, Sanskrit, Tibetan, etc., offer a window on the early stages of the development of Buddhist thought and doctrine, inasmuch as this has left its traces in literature.

⁷³ [72] Examples for this would be, e.g., the first beginnings of what would eventually become the fully fledged bodhisattva ideal, on which cf. Analayo 2010b and 2017a, or else the beginnings of abhidharmic thought, cf. Analayo 2014c, just to mention two examples where a comparative study of the early discourses enables the construction of informed hypotheses regarding early stages in the development of Buddhist thought and doctrine.

Brahmajāla-sutta (DN 1) Part 1

Introduction

In this chapter I study some aspects of the early Buddhist oral tradition as exemplified by the different versions of the *Brahmajāla*. I begin with the significance of the introductory phrase "thus have I heard". Then I examine the opening narration and the exposition on morality in the first part of the discourse. In the final part of the chapter, I attempt a general assessment of the nature of the early Buddhist oral tradition.

The Introductory Phrase of the *Brahmajāla*

The standard opening of a discourse introduces what follows with the phrase: "thus have I heard". The relationship of this in itself innocuous marker of orality to what follows has led to considerable discussion among scholars.¹ The point at stake is whether the subsequent phrase "at one time" should be considered

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¹ Cf., e.g., Burnouf 1925: 286, Staël-Holstein 1933: iv and xiii notes 7 and 8, Brough 1950, Samtani 1964, von Hinüber 1968: 84–87, Samtani 1971: 68f, Wayman and Wayman 1974, Kajiyama 1977, Schopen 1978: 162–164, Silk 1989, Harrison 1990: 5 note 3, Galloway 1991, Tatz 1993/1997, Vetter 1993: 65 note 48, Bongard-Levin 1996: 90 note 1, Galloway 1997, Tola and Dragonetti 1999, Klaus 2007, Sander 2007: 174–176, and Nattier 2014. Several of these contributions examine relevant information in *śāstra* and commentarial literature, which in the context of my present survey I am not able to cover. My ignorance of Japanese has also prevented me from benefitting from research published in that language on topics taken up in this or subsequent chapters. On "thus have I heard" as a marker of orality cf. also below p. 473f.

as qualifying the preceding phrase "thus have I heard", or rather what follows in the text.² [42]

This discussion is of relevance to the *Brahmajāla*, as a variant in some editions of a full discourse quotation of the *Brahmajāla* in the *Abhidharmakośopāyikā-ṭīkā* presents a slight but significant difference in formulation. The Narthang and Peking editions of this discourse's introductory phrase "thus have I heard" read '*di skad bdag gis thos pa'i dus gcig na*.'³ Taking the addition of the particle

² The first to have broached the subject appears to be Burnouf 1925: 286, who reasoned that "si on supprime la formule complète, y compris les mots *ekasmin samayê*, on a le commencement d'un *Avadāna*, classe de livres qui ... ne diffère guère de celle des *Sūtras* que par l'absence de la formule, 'Il a été ainsi entendu par moi' ... ne peut-on pas dire que les mots *ekasmin samayê* ne se trouvant pas en tête des *Avadānas*, appartiennent forcément à la formule *evaṃ mayā çrutam?*" The same point has then been made again by Staël-Holstein 1933: xiii note 7, pointing out that in several *avadānas* "evaṃ mayā çrutam is missing, and wherever evaṃ mayā çrutam is missing ekasmin samaye is also absent ... this seems to indicate that the words evaṃ mayā çrutam ekasmin samaye constitute *one* phrase." Staël-Holstein 1933: iv also notes that "in all Tibetan and Mongolian preambles known to me a punctuation mark separates the equivalent of ekasmin samaye from the following words. The question as to whether ekasmin samaye belongs to çrutam or to viharati is discussed in a number of Buddhist commentaries attributed to Indians, and most of them seem to regard ekasmin samaye as belonging to the preceding words evaṃ mayā çrutam." A full paper dedicated to a detailed discussion of the same topic then concludes with Brough 1950: 426 stating that "from every point of view, then, it seems to me that the punctuation as preserved in the Tibetan is to be preferred." That is, according to him the specification "at one time" should qualify the phrase "thus have I heard".

³ N (*mngo*) *tu* 151a6 and Q 5595 *tu* 162b7: '*di skad bdag gis thos pa'i dus gcig na*, whereas C (*mngon pa*) *ju* 142a4, D 4094 *ju* 141b5, and G 3598 *tu* 211a6 read: '*di skad bdag gis thos pa dus gcig na* (due to the significance of this difference, in this case I consulted five editions, whereas elsewhere I only cover the Derge and Peking editions); this is Up 3050 in Honjō 1984, who also identifies partial citations of the *Brahmajāla* as follows: Up 2035, Up 2036, Up

-*i* (*kyi*) to *thos pa* here to be indicative of the genitive,⁴ the discourse in these two editions would begin by qualifying the hearing referred to with the phrase "thus have I heard" to have taken place "at one time" (or "at a certain time"). This raises the question whether the specification "at one time" in the introductory phrase of the *Brahmajāla*, and by implication in other early discourses, should indeed be understood in this way.

When examined from the viewpoint of Pāli grammar, the assumption that "at one time", *ekaṃ samayaṃ*, qualifies the expression "thus have I heard", *evaṃ me sutāṃ*, is problematic, since one would not expect an accusative of time to stand after the

2045, Up 3007, and Up 5005. The reading in C, D, and G is also found in the discourse version preserved in Tibetan, Weller 1934: 6,4 (§1): '*di skad bdag gis thos pa dus gcig na*. On the first part of the Tibetan expression in general cf. Hahn 2006: 237f; other occurrences of the formulation *thos pa* 'i have been noted by, e.g., Silk 1989: 160, Harrison 1990: 5 note 3, and Klaus 2007: 314 note 17; cf. also Galloway 1991: 92. The corresponding expressions in the other discourse versions of the *Brahmajāla* (all given on purpose without punctuation) are as follows: DN 1 at DN I 1,1: *evaṃ* (B^e and C^e: *evaṃ*) *me sutāṃ ekaṃ samayaṃ*, DĀ 21 at T I 88b13: 如是聞一時, and T 21 at T I 264a23: 聞如是一時; on the standard Chinese renderings of this expression cf. also Qingzhi 2010: 494 and Nattier 2014; on some formal aspects of the Pāli formulation cf. Allon 1997b: 195 and 246f.

⁴ According to Galloway 1991: 92, "the *kyi* is verbal and indicates a general connection between *thos pas* (*śrutam*) and the whole following sentence, whose verb is *viharati*, and not with *dus gcig na* alone." Klaus 2007: 314f note 17 in reply argues that this would only work if *kyi* were to follow directly after the bare verb *thos*, but not for the present case, where it follows *thos pa*: "diese Auffassung scheitert jedoch daran, daß die Partikel nicht auf den bloßen Verbalstamm *thos*, sondern auf das Verbalnomen *thos pa* folgt." Moreover, even if *kyi* were to follow *thos* directly, it would still have to be considered as a genitive particle, "selbst wenn die Variante nicht *thos pas* 'i, sondern *thos kyi* lautete, wäre *kyi* ... trotzdem als Genitivpartikel zu betrachten", with reference given to the discussion of the genitive particle in Hahn 1996: 133f.

verb.⁵ This would also hold for instances where the discourse itself is not attributed to the Buddha.⁶ In fact the phrase "at one time", ^[43] *ekaṃ samayaṃ*, occurs in some Pāli discourses without being preceded by "thus have I heard". In such contexts it must be referring to the time of the event reported.⁷ The same suggests

⁵ This point has already been clarified by von Hinüber 1968: 86 (§72) who, after noting that, e.g., in Vin II 296,26 *ekaṃ ... samayaṃ* occurs on its own, without being preceded by *evaṃ me sutāṃ*, points out that it would conflict with Pāli word order if the accusative of time were to come after the verb, "zudem würde die Stellung des acc. der Zeit nach dem Verb gegen die Wortstellungsregeln des Pāli verstoßen ... alles spricht also dafür, im Pāli in *evaṃ me sutāṃ* einen abgeschlossenen Satz zu sehen." On the accusative of time cf. also, e.g., Duroiselle 1906/1997: 156, Wijesekera 1936/1993: 56–58, and Warder 1963/1991: 18. Brough 1950: 423 sees an instance corroborating the possibility of positioning the accusative of time after the verb in MN 21 at MN I 124,7: *ārādhayimṣu vata me, bhikkhave, bhikkhū ekaṃ samayaṃ cittaṃ*. In reply, Klaus 2007: 311 note 8 comments that due to the initial position of the verb this is not a conclusive precedent, "ist wegen der Initialstellung des Prädikats in diesem Zusammenhang nicht beweiskräftig".

⁶ DN 34 at DN III 272,1 begins with the standard introduction, before referring to the location where the Buddha was dwelling, and then at DN III 292,6 concludes by indicating that the discourse was spoken by Sāriputta. Schopen 1978: 164 comments that "this makes it clear that what the speaker heard, and was reporting, was not that 'at one time the Blessed One dwelt at Campā, etc.', but what Sāriputta (*sic*) said when he and the Buddha were there. In this case – and by extension all other cases – *ekaṃ samayaṃ* could be attached to either what precedes or what follows it without affecting the meaning." Yet, even when the discourse was believed to have been spoken by Sāriputta in the presence of the Buddha, the introductory indication that at the time of the discourse's delivery the Buddha was living at Campā has the same function. Thus, to take *ekaṃ samayaṃ* as qualifying *evaṃ me sutāṃ* in the case of DN 34 would face the same problems as for DN 1 or any other discourse attributed to the Buddha or to a disciple.

⁷ Klaus 2007: 312 notes that "im *Sutta-* und *Vinayapiṭaka* der Theravādin sind zahlreiche Stellen enthalten, an denen ein Bericht über eine Begebenheit in

itself also from a standard pattern in the Pāli discourses where after the phrase "thus have I heard", *evaṃ me sutam*, and "at one time", *ekaṃ samayaṃ*, the next sentence begins with "at that time", *tena kho pana samayena*. It seems safe to assume that in such cases both occurrences of *samaya* refer to the time of the event described in the discourse.⁸

Moreover, in some Pāli discourses the expression "thus have I heard" stands for hearsay in contradistinction to what one has personally experienced.⁹ This makes it improbable that the function

der jüngeren oder fernerer Vergangenheit mit einem Satz eröffnet wird, der mit *ekaṃ samayaṃ* beginnt und mit *viharati* oder *viharāmi* endet"; for which he provides the examples MN 5 at MN I 31,27 and AN 3.90 at AN I 237,18. In the case of MN 5, the parallel MĀ 87 at T I 569b15 has the corresponding expression 一時, whereas two other parallels instead speak of the reported event being "in the past"; cf. T 49 at T I 841c27: 昔時 and EĀ 25.6 at T II 633c17: 昔. In the case of AN 3.90, the corresponding phrase in the parallel SĀ 830 at T II 213a20 differs and thus does not give any temporal specification. Another example that also has a Tibetan parallel would be MN 121 at MN III 104,6: *ekamidam, bhante, samayaṃ bhagavā sakkesu viharati*, with counterparts in MĀ 190 at T I 737a2: 世尊一時遊行釋中, and in the Tibetan parallel in Skilling 1994: 148,1: *dus gcig na bcom ldan 'das shā kya rnams kyi nang na shā kya rnams kyi grong rdal grong khyer zhes bgyi ba na bzhugs pa*.

⁸ As pointed out by von Hinüber 1968: 144 (§134): "ekaṃ samayaṃ und tena samayena meinen denselben Zeitabschnitt, der verschieden gesehen wird. Der acc. bezeichnet den gesamten Zeitabschnitt, der instr. bestimmt die Zeit einer Handlung, die mit dem Verlauf dieser Zeit eintritt." The need to consider the significance of *ekaṃ samayaṃ* in relation to the subsequent *tena kho pana samayena* has also been highlighted by Tola and Dragonetti 1999: 55.

⁹ This has already been pointed out by Klaus 2007: 318, who mentions as examples DN 5 at DN I 143,16 and MN 127 at MN III 152,7, where the fact that the speaker does not use the expression "thus have I heard" leads to the conclusion that he must have personally witnessed it. The parallels to DN 5 convey a similar sense, but without using the expression "thus have I heard"; cf. fragment 408r2, von Crieger 2002: 35, and DĀ 23 at T I 100b21. In the case of MN 127, the parallel MĀ 79 at T I 551c7 proceeds differently.

of this phrase at the outset of a discourse is to designate that an eyewitness "at one time heard thus". Instead, the phrase "thus have I heard" simply has the function of highlighting that the discourse is something that has been heard thus, *evam*, in this form, instead of being the product of one's own creative improvisation.

Several *Vinayas* report that the expression "thus have I heard" was already used by Ānanda at the time of the first *saṅgīti* that according to tradition took place soon after the Buddha's demise,¹⁰ whereas according to other *Vinayas* he did not use this expression.¹¹ In the case of the *Brahmajāla*,^[44] to take the phrase "thus

¹⁰ According to the Mahāsāṅghika *Vinaya*, T 1425 at T XXII 491c2, the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1451 at T XXIV 406c1, and the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1435 at T XXIII 448b13, Ānanda used the expression 如是我聞 followed by 一時, which then each time led to an indication of the location at which the Buddha was believed to have been dwelling at that time. Brough 1950: 419 refers to Przyluski 1926: 18, 84, and 128 for accounts of the *saṅgīti* that do not have a reference to such a location (as well as to the exegesis on the introductory phrase in T 1509 at T XXV 66a27, translated by Lamotte 1944/1981: 80ff). Two of the texts mentioned by Przyluski provide a location: T 384 at T XII 1058b16 (here given in general terms as 說佛所居處) and T 2027 at T XLIX 6c13 (reference given to Vārāṇasī). Of the remaining two instances (which are two parallels to DN 16), T 6 at T I 191a17 indeed has only "thus have I heard" together with "at one time", without mentioning a location. T 5 at T I 175b26 then also does not mention "at one time" and has only "thus have I heard". In both cases, the audience interrupts at this point by acclamation or by breaking out in tears. Thus both are abbreviations caused by the reaction of the audience, without a deeper implication for the significance of the phrase itself.

¹¹ The Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 968b19, the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 191a19, and the Theravāda *Vinaya*, Vin II 287,16, report that Ānanda's recital of the discourses at the first *saṅgīti* was prompted by a question regarding the location, in reply to which he then gave the required indications. Thus in these versions he does not use the standard phrase, which Klaus 2007: 321 note 29 sees as probably reflecting an earlier form of presentation. The use of the standard phrase by Ānanda at the first *saṅgīti* when re-

have I heard" as expressing the hearing of the discourse by Ānanda at the time of its original delivery would in fact not work so well, since the events described in the introductory narration would have been directly experienced by him, instead of being something he heard.¹² Again, in the final part of the discourse Ānanda poses a question.¹³ The narrative description that introduces him and the words he is believed to have spoken would both not be something he could himself refer to as "thus have I heard".¹⁴ Similarly, the concluding section's report that the monks delighted in what the Buddha had taught would have to be considered something Ānanda directly experienced and took part in, and thus also not something he merely heard.

citing the *Brahmajāla-sutta* is then reported in the commentary on the discourse; cf. Sv I 26,1; on the significance of this phrase as authentication of the teaching given cf. also, e.g., Levering 1989: 61.

¹² This problem has already been noted by Klaus 2007: 317, who points out that "es muß ja doch einfach jeder, der die Worte *evaṃ me sutāṃ (ekaṃ samayaṃ)* hört, glauben, daß der gesamte folgende Bericht und nicht nur die in ihm enthaltene Lehrdarstellung das ist, was da 'so gehört' wurde"; cf. also Przyłuski 1926: 346, who makes a similar observation regarding the concept of what is considered canonical: "dans un *sūtra* commençant par ces mots: 'Ainsi j'ai entendu. Une fois le Buddha demeurait à ...', le cadre même du récit ne peut avoir été prononcé par le Buddha." Brough 1950: 425 takes the fact that parts of the discourse could not have been heard by those present at its original delivery to support a combining of "at one time" with "thus have I heard". As pointed out by Galloway 1991: 97 in reply, however, this issue is independent of how one relates "at one time" to what precedes and follows it.

¹³ Ānanda is on record for enquiring after the name of the discourse in DN 1 at DN I 46,19, Weller 1934: 64,31 (§220), D 4094 *ju* 153b4 or Q 5595 *tu* 177a6, DĀ 21 at T I 94a10, and T 21 at T I 270c15.

¹⁴ Already Franke 1913a: 1 note 3 commented on the phrase *evaṃ me sutāṃ* in DN 1 that "dieser 'ich' kann nicht Buddha's Lieblingsjünger Ānanda sein, wie die einheimische Überlieferung annimmt", and then pointed to another passage in which Ānanda is referred to in the third person singular.

For Ānanda to use the expression "thus have I heard" to introduce a discourse that has any kind of introductory narration or conclusion would only work if he had not been present at that time, but had heard the discourse from someone else. In the case of a discourse like the *Brahmajāla*, the "I" in the phrase "thus have I heard" therefore needs to be understood to stand for the various members of the lineage of reciters that according to tradition was started by Ānanda's original recital of the text.

Now in the case of these subsequent generations of reciters a problem arises if "at one time" is taken to qualify "thus have I heard". In the case of a long discourse like the *Brahmajāla*, it seems highly improbable that an average reciter heard the discourse only at *one* time, simply because it requires more than one hearing to be able to learn such a complex discourse in an oral setting. Except for an exceptionally gifted case like Ānanda, who in the tradition features as foremost among outstanding disciples for being of much learning (which in an oral setting of course requires excellent memory),¹⁵ to master a discourse like the *Brahmajāla* can safely be expected to require several hearings. [45]

Given the length of the discourse in terms of recitation time, such hearings would probably not be continuous, but rather be spread out over several days, with the prospective reciter being allowed time to rehearse what has already been learned before proceeding to learn new material. Even after having mastered the text, a reciter would still from time to time participate in group

¹⁵ AN 1.14.2 at AN I 24,32 and its parallel EĀ 4.7 at T II 558a26; cf. also the *Divyāvadāna*, Cowell and Neil 1886: 396,18, and the *Sanḥabhedavastu*, Gnoli 1978: 54,18. Nyanaponika and Hecker 1997: 151 summarize the traditional belief regarding Ānanda as follows: "he could immediately remember everything, even if he had heard it only once. He could repeat discourses of the Buddha flawlessly up to sixty thousand words, without leaving out a single syllable"; cf. also Th 1024 and the *Avadānaśataka*, Speyer 1909/1970: 155,7.

recitation with other reciters who know the same discourse collection,¹⁶ thereby again coming to hear the discourse earlier learned and ideally getting lapses of memory rectified in this way. Thus, at least inasmuch as the *Brahmajāla* and discourses of comparable length are concerned, it would not make much sense for an average reciter to qualify his hearing as taking place "at one time".

In sum, it seems to me that although with later texts the alternative interpretation that relates "at one time" to "thus have I heard" certainly needs to be taken into account,¹⁷ in the case of the early discourses,¹⁸ preserved in the *Nikāyas* and *Āgamas*, it

¹⁶ Such group recitation is reflected in Vin II 75,31 which, as part of a description of the task of allotting accommodation to incoming monks, indicates that those who recite the discourses are allocated together so that they can do group recitation with each other, *aññamaññaṃ suttantaṃ saṅgāyissanti*. The need to have those who recite and teach the discourses stay together is also reflected in the corresponding passage in the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 587b21, the Mahāsāṅghika *Vinaya*, T 1425 at T XXII 394c12 (correcting the punctuation to read 經唄經唄共, etc.), the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 15a28, the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1442 at T XXIII 695c9, and the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1435 at T XXIII 22a12.

¹⁷ According to Brough 1950: 421 and von Hinüber 1968: 87 note 1, the use of the accusative *ekaṃ samayaṃ* would be earlier than the locative *ekasmiṃ samaye* found regularly in Sanskrit texts. Vetter 1993: 65 note 48 then suggests that "the accusative was the older expression and was replaced by the locative in order to repair a long felt shortcoming, viz. that hearing the tenets a text contained was not sufficiently marked as also having happened at the time when the Lord dwelt there and there and met this or that person, etc." In line with the suggestion by Vetter, the Mahāsāṅghika, Mūlasarvāstivāda, and Sarvāstivāda *Vinayas*, mentioned above p. 56 note 10, appear to reflect the same need for authentication. This would explain a gradual shift in meaning, whereby the phrase "at one time" was increasingly seen as qualifying not only the event reported, but also the hearing of the discourse, resulting in what Harrison 1990: 5 note 3 has referred to as an "*apo koinou* construction".

¹⁸ For a more detailed discussion of the notion of "early discourses" and their historical value, especially of the Pāli discourses, cf. above p. 15ff.

can safely be assumed that the qualification "at one time" begins a new sentence introducing the events described in the discourse.¹⁹ The variant reading *thos pa'i*, found in some Tibetan editions of the *Abhidharmakośopāyikā-ṭīkā* quote of the *Brahmajāla*, is best considered the result of later influences.

The Introductory Narration of the *Brahmajāla*

After the standard phrase at the outset of a discourse, the *Brahmajāla* proceeds with an introductory narration. [46] According to this narration, found with considerable similarity in the parallel versions,²⁰ the Buddha and his monks were on a journey and were being followed by a teacher and his pupil. This teacher kept speaking in dispraise of the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Community, whereas his pupil spoke their praise. The monks then had a discussion about this contrasting behaviour. Having become aware of that, the Buddha decided to join them. Once he had joined the monks, according to all versions he asked what they had been discussing.

A minor but noteworthy difference at this juncture can be found in a version of the *Brahmajāla* preserved in the Chinese

¹⁹ Klaus 2007: 320 concludes that the Pāli phrase *evaṃ me sutam* originally did not function as an indicator that one was present personally at the time of the discourse. Instead, it served to mark that the text originated from oral transmission, rather than being the speaker's own composition, "all das zusammen macht es unmöglich, die Worte *evaṃ me sutam* als eine Formel zu betrachten, mit der man kundtat, Ohrenzeuge der im folgenden Bericht enthaltenen Lehrdarlegung gewesen zu sein. Diese einleitenden Worte können ursprünglich nur als Hinweis darauf gemeint gewesen und ursprünglich auch nur so verstanden worden sein, daß es sich bei dem folgenden Bericht nicht um einen vom Sprecher selbst verfaßten, sondern um einen überlieferten Text handelt."

²⁰ The similarity between the introductory narrations in DN 1 and DĀ 21 had been noted already by Beal 1884: 34–36.

Dīrgha-āgama.²¹ The *Dīrgha-āgama* version differs from its parallels in so far as it indicates that when the Buddha asked the monks what they had been discussing, he did so knowingly.²² None of the other versions accompanies the description of the Buddha's actual enquiry with an explicit specification that he did so knowingly. Instead, the other parallels merely report that he sat down and then asked the monks what they had been talking about.²³

A specification comparable to the one in the *Dīrgha-āgama* version can be found, however, in the Pāli commentary on the *Brahmajāla-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya*. According to this commentary, the Buddha indeed asked knowingly.²⁴ The point of making such a qualification would be to make it unmistakably clear that the Buddha did not ask out of ignorance. Instead, his question should be understood as merely an expedient means in order to start a conversation with the monks. The felt need to make such an additional qualification would be related to the growing tendency to consider the Buddha as omniscient, leading to the concern that even circumstantial information be presented in such a way as to leave no doubt about the Buddha's all-knowing

²¹ Regarding the title 梵動經 of this discourse, Karashima 2006: 361 explains that "the translator(s) confused -jāla ('net') with -cāla ('moving'), both of which may become -yāla in the underlying language, as is common in Middle Indic, including Gāndhārī"; cf. also Weller 1971: 207, who introduces his translation of DĀ 21 as a "Verdeutschung des Brahmācālasūtra" and below p. 176 note 128.

²² DĀ 21 at T I 88b29: 大眾前坐, 知而故問.

²³ DN 1 at DN I 2,23: *nisajja kho bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi*, Weller 1934: 8,8 (§6): *bzhugs nas kyang dge slong rnams la bka' sisal pa*, D 4094 ju 142a4 or Q 5595 tu 163a7: *dge slong gi dge 'dun gyi dbus su gdan bshams pa la bzhugs te, bcom ldan 'das kyiis dge slong rnams la bos te*, and T 21 at T I 264b6: 佛則坐, 佛問諸比丘言.

²⁴ Sv I 49,18: *evaṃ nisinnō pana jānanto yeva kathāsamuṭṭhāpanatthaṃ bhikkhū pucchi*.

condition. Such a concern is not yet a prevalent concern of most of the early discourses, which appear to reflect a period when the Buddha was not yet seen as omniscient.²⁵

Since among the parallel versions only the Chinese *Dīrgha-āgama* discourse has such an explicit qualification at this point, it seems likely that this remark is a later addition. This impression finds confirmation in the fact that the same expression occurs regularly in other discourses in the same *Dīrgha-āgama*,^[47] where again the parallels do not have such an indication.²⁶ Thus the addition of such a specification seems to be characteristic of this *Dīrgha-āgama*.

²⁵ On the attribution of omniscience to the Buddha, based on a survey of relevant early discourses and publications on this issue, cf. Anālayo 2014c: 117–127.

²⁶ The expression 知而故問 occurs also in DĀ 1 at T I 1b24, DĀ 2 at T I 19a29 and T I 25c1, and DĀ 30 at T I 114b14 (the last has no known parallel; cf. below p. 423ff). In the case of DĀ 1, the corresponding passages in the discourse parallels describe the Buddha's enquiry without an explicit indication that he asked knowingly; cf. Fukita 2003: 32,11: *niṣadya bha(ga)vā(ṃ) bhikṣūn āmantrayati*, DN 14 at DN II 1,12: *nisajja kho bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi*, T 2 at T I 150a14: 世尊問曰 (preceded by describing that the monks paid respect to him), T 4 at T I 159b4: 佛即到, 諸比丘所問言, and EĀ 48.4 at T II 790a15: 在中央坐, 爾時世尊告諸比丘. The same holds for the discourse parallels to the first passage in DĀ 2 at T I 19a29 (reading 我知而故問), where again the corresponding passages do not mention that the Buddha asked knowingly; cf. Waldschmidt 1951: 274 (§28.28): *(tam aham evam ā)mantraye*, DN 16 at DN II 131,32: *taṃ purisaṃ etad avocaṃ*, T 5 at T I 168b16: 我問, T 6 at T I 183c27: 吾問, and T 7 at T I 198a24: 我即問言. These sources follow the same pattern for the second instance in DĀ 2 at T I 25c1 (reading just 知而故問), Waldschmidt 1951: 296 (§32.15): *bhagav(ā)n bhikṣūn āman(t)r(ayate)*, DN 16 at DN II 143,24: *bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi*, T 5 at T I 169b13: 佛問比丘, T 6 at T I 184c25: 佛問比丘, and T 7 at T I 200b9: 世尊問餘比丘. In this case, however, an exception can be found in another parallel to this particular passage, EĀ 42.3 at T II 751a23, where the corresponding passage does mention that he asked the monks knowingly, 世尊知而告諸比丘曰 (whereas the above mentioned EĀ 48.4 does not have such a remark, another comparable instance can be found in the same discourse collection in EĀ 40.5 at T II 739b16: 知而問阿難曰, of

Now the circumstance that such a specification is found in the Pāli commentary on the *Brahmajāla* makes it possible that a similar remark could have been found in a Dharmaguptaka commentary on the *Dirgha-āgama* as well. Both traditions can be expected to have incorporated in their respective commentaries material from a common ancient Indian commentarial tradition that would from a relatively early time have begun to develop alongside the discourses.²⁷ In this case, it would not be surprising if such a remark eventually came to influence the wording of the discourse. This would be in line with a general tendency discernible elsewhere in the early discourses, where during the course of oral transmission commentarial material appears to have become part of the discourse on which it commented.²⁸

The Exposition on Morality in the *Brahmajāla*

The influence of commentarial exegesis on the actual discourse can also be discerned in the next portion of the discourse, which takes up the topic of the Buddha's moral conduct.²⁹

In the discourse version of the *Brahmajāla* preserved in Tibetan translation, the relatively short exposition on morality lists the first two precepts, followed by an abbreviation which gives the impression that the remaining precepts should be supplemented.

which no discourse parallel appears to be known). On such formulations in *Vinaya* texts cf. Waldschmidt 1926: 47.

²⁷ For a study of the Indian source material of the Theravāda commentaries cf. Endo 2005 and 2009.

²⁸ For a detailed discussion with further references and a critical reply to the suggestion by Norman 1997: 158–160 that the commentaries were transmitted independently from the discourses cf. Anālayo 2010c.

²⁹ For a comparative study of the subsequent examination of sixty-two standpoints for views in the parallel versions, including a discourse quotation in T 1548 at T XXVIII 656b19 to 661a7, cf. below p. 115ff.

Then it briefly describes how some recluses and brahmins gain their livelihood in wrong ways. Even after supplementing the precepts that appear to have been abbreviated, the whole exposition is still rather short.³⁰ [48]

The same holds for the discourse quotation in the *Abhidharmaśopāyikā-ṭīkā*, which in fact only refers to the first precept and then abbreviates.³¹ It seems fairly clear that the exposition of morality in the Mūlasarvāstivāda version of the *Brahmajāla* could not have been as long as what is now found in their Dharmagup-taka and Theravāda parallels.

The considerably longer coverage of the same topic of morality in the *Dīgha-nikāya* and *Dīrgha-āgama* versions falls into three distinct parts. The *Brahmajāla-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* explicitly introduces these three as a "short" (*cūla*) exposition on morality, followed by a "middle-length" (*majjhima*) exposition, and then a "great" (*mahā*) exposition.³²

The short exposition on morality starts in both versions with the first four of the five precepts. Following the fourth precept on abstention from falsehood come other forms of wrong speech, thereby completing the standard set of wrong forms of speech, which comprises divisive speech, harsh speech, and frivolous speech.³³

The *Dīrgha-āgama* discourse then continues with the fifth precept regarding abstention from alcohol, instead of which the *Brahmajāla-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* takes up the need to refrain from

³⁰ Weller 1934: 12,6 to 12,30 (§§18 to 21).

³¹ D 4094 *ju* 143a1 to 143a2 or Q 5595 *tu* 164a6 to 164a8.

³² The smaller section on morality in DN 1 ranges from DN I 4,1 to 5,26, the middle-length section then goes from there up to DN I 8,33, and the long section from there up to DN I 12,14.

³³ DN 1 at DN I 4,13 and DĀ 21 at T I 88c24; the same is also the case for T 21 at T I 264b28.

harming seeds (§10).³⁴ Both versions continue with the remaining eight precepts, which are presented together with several basic aspects of ethical conduct incumbent on a recluse in the ancient Indian setting (such as not possessing animals, abstaining from barter, etc.).

Such a basic listing of the precepts together with a few aspects of the proper livelihood of a recluse appears to have been a common starting point of the parallel versions, including the *Mūlasarvāstivāda* discourse preserved in Tibetan translation. This much in fact corresponds to the compass of the section on morality in the exposition of the gradual path in the *Cūlahatthipadopama-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, which corresponds to what the *Brahmajāla-sutta* reckons the short exposition on morality.³⁵

The middling section on morality in the *Brahmajāla-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* then works in detail through the topics of injuring seeds and plants (§11), storing up food (§12), visiting shows and games (§§13 and 14), using luxurious beds, etc. (§15), and using various adornments (§16).³⁶ The same or closely related topics occurred already towards the end of the smaller section on morality (§10).³⁷

³⁴ DĀ 21 at T I 89a5: 沙門瞿曇捨離飲酒; cf. also T 21 at T I 264c5: 不飲酒.

The absence of such a reference in the corresponding section in DN 1 is in line with the observation by Reat 1996/1998: 49f that "abstinence from intoxicants is not included in elucidations of right action in the Pali *sūtras*, and is thereby not nearly as prominent an ethical issue as it came to be in later Buddhism"; cf. also the discussion in, e.g., Schmithausen 1991: 8f note 42, Nattier 2003a: 109 note 11, and Anālayo 2011b: 190f note 245.

³⁵ MN 27 at MN I 179,22 to 180,19 and MĀ 146 at T I 657a14 to 657b27.

³⁶ DN 1 at DN I 5,28 to 7,26, following the paragraph numbering given in E°.

³⁷ DN 1 at DN I 5,4: *bījagāmbhūtagāmasamārambhā paṭivirato ... ekabhattiko ... naccagītavāditavisūkadassanā paṭivirato ... mālāgandhavilepanadhāraṇa-maṇḍanavibhūsanatṭhānā paṭivirato ... uccāsayanamahāsayanā paṭivirato*.

The smaller section on morality mentions not harming seeds, [49] which corresponds to the topic taken up again in §11. Next the smaller section takes up eating a single meal at the right time, which can be seen to stand in a close thematic relationship to the storing up of food in §12. Then the smaller section refers to not visiting shows, not using adornments, and refraining from high beds and seats, which correspond to §§13 to 16 on visiting shows and games, using high beds and seats, and using various adornments (with a difference in sequence in so far as adornments and high seats are in the opposite order).

A comparable pattern of relationship can also be observed in the Chinese *Dīrgha-āgama* version, where the middle-length section on morality describes lack of contentment with food and robes, undertaking commercial transactions and seeking profits, adorning oneself, and engaging in various forms of recreation. These various themes have already been briefly mentioned in the preceding section.³⁸

In this way the middle-length sections in the *Dīrgha-nikāya* version and its counterpart in the *Dīrgha-āgama* discourse appear to have their origin in a commentary on the preceding smaller sec-

³⁸ After the reference to alcohol (cf. above p. 65 note 34), DĀ 21 at T I 89a6 mentions not using adornments, not seeing shows, not sitting on high seats, not eating at the wrong time, and not taking gold and silver, 不著香華, 不觀歌舞, 不坐高床, 非時不食, 不執金銀. The topics of eating at the wrong time and taking gold and silver can be seen to receive a more detailed treatment at T I 89a16 in terms of discontentment with food and robes, 衣服飲食無有厭足, undertaking commercial transactions, 自營生業, and seeking profits, 求諸利養, which also refers to high seats, 高廣大床. The problems of adornments and seeing shows recur in T I 89a23 in terms of trying to adorn oneself, 求自莊嚴, and engaging in various forms of recreation, 嬉戲. Similar correspondences can be observed in the individual translation T 21, where the corresponding section at T I 264c4 begins with the topic of not sitting on high seats, 不坐高綺好牀, a topic then taken up in more detail at T I 264c17.

tion.³⁹ This impression is further strengthened if one turns to the commentary on the *Brahmajāla-sutta* as well as the commentary on the *Cūlahatthipadopama-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* (whose entire exposition of morality, as mentioned above, corresponds to the smaller section on morality in the *Brahmajāla-sutta*). In both cases the commentarial gloss on the need to refrain from harming seeds lists precisely those five types of seeds that are also mentioned at the outset of the middle section on morality in the *Brahmajāla-sutta* itself, when taking up the topic of injuring seeds and plants (§11).⁴⁰ Thus this middle section does indeed seem to stem from a commentarial gloss.

That this apparent commentary is an addition to an already existing shorter exposition of morality finds support in a shift to a different introductory phrase employed in the middle-length section. In both versions this phrase refers to others whose wrong conduct provides a contrast to the proper behaviour of the Buddha,⁴¹

³⁹ This has already been suggested by Franke 1913a: 7 note 2, who commented that the degree of repetition found "spricht wohl dafür, daß die Listen von verwerflichen Beschäftigungen in unseren Paragraphen aus allerlei vorhandenen Schemata zusammengelesen sind. Manche Elemente treten ja auch mehr als einmal, in verschiedenen Paragraphen auf, vielleicht deshalb, weil sie in verschiedenen Schemata vorkamen." In relation to the same section, Weller 1935: 41 note 46 similarly noted that "wahrscheinlich liegen kommentarielle Erweiterungen vor, die einem älteren, einfacheren Textbestande zugewachsen sind." This has also been proposed by Meisig 1987a: 59f, based on a comparison of the smaller and middle-length sections on morality.

⁴⁰ Ps II 208,23 lists *mūlabīja*, *khandhabīja*, *phalubīja*, *aggabīja*, and *bījabīja* as the five types of seed not to be harmed (the corresponding passage in Sv I 77,6 differs in so far as it has *aggabīja* as its third and *phalubīja* as fourth); the same five seeds recur at the outset of the middle section on morality in DN 1 at DN I 5,31.

⁴¹ In the case of DĀ 21 at T I 89a15 the phrase reads: 如餘沙門, 婆羅門, 受他信施. Similarly the middle-length section on morality in DN 1 at DN I 5,28 starts with *yathā va pan' eke bhonto samaṇabrāhmaṇā saddhādeyyāni bhojanāni*

a reference not made in the preceding shorter section on morality.
^[50] Moreover, the *Brahmajāla-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* explicitly marks the end of the preceding section by indicating that the smaller section on morality is concluded.⁴² Since the context of the discourse would not require a subdivision of the section on morality, it seems that this division is the result of an assembling of textual pieces that are of different origins.

In sum, the introductory narration and the exposition on morality appear to be examples of a general tendency during the process of oral transmission for commentarial exegesis at times to influence the wording of the discourse, or even become part of it.

The Early Buddhist Oral Tradition

The above surveyed features of the *Brahmajāla* exemplify patterns at work in the early Buddhist oral tradition in general, where at times major variations can be found between parallel versions. This can at first sight give the impression that improvisation is characteristic of the oral transmission of the early discourses themselves.

A considerable degree of improvisation is in fact a feature of the oral transmission of the ancient Greek and modern Yugoslav-ian epic.⁴³ Applying the research findings in relation to this type

bhuñjivā. In the discourse version preserved in Tibetan, Weller 1934: 12,14 (§20), this reads: *ji ltar 'di na dge sbyong dang bram ze kha cig dad pas byin pa yongs su spyod cing*, and in T 21 at T I 264c19: 譬有異道人,受人信施食. In relation to the phrasing in DN 1, Franke 1913a: 7 note 4 comments: "die folgenden Paragraphe fangen eigentlich alle mit *yathā* 'wie' an. Dieses 'wie' erklärt sich wohl daraus, daß sie teilweise Erläuterungen, Beispielsanführungen zu § 10 enthalten."

⁴² DN 1 at DN I 5,27: *cūlasīlam niṭṭhitam* (B^o and S^o: *cūlasīlam*, C^o: *cullasīlam*).

⁴³ Lord 1960/2000: 4f describes that in the case of the Yugoslav-ian epic literature studied by Parry and himself, "in a very real sense every performance is a separate song; for every performance is unique, and every performance bears the signature of its poet singer." Thus "improvisation is not a bad term for the

of oral tradition to the early Buddhist case, perhaps variations between parallel versions should simply be seen as the result of different creative performances, instead of being divergent versions of a text committed to memory?⁴⁴

A problem with applying the findings made in relation to the oral tradition of the ancient Greek and modern Yugoslavian epic to the transmission of the early Buddhist discourses, however, is that the characteristics of the respective oral traditions differ rather substantially.⁴⁵ From a methodological viewpoint, it is questionable

process, but it too must be modified by the restrictions of the particular style", i.e., by the use of fairly fixed formulas that help the singer to compose his song rapidly during performance. However, as Lord 1960/2000: 36 points out, the singer "does not 'memorize' formulas" in the sense of "repeating something that one regards as fixed". Instead, he learns to employ these creatively for his performance purposes, somewhat similarly to learning the words of a language.

⁴⁴ Cousins 1983: 2 and 5f argues that "if we compare the Pali recensions of the nikayas with other surviving versions, the differences we find are exactly those we might expect to discover between different performances of oral works", "these divergences ... are too frequent to arise from the natural variation of a manuscript tradition or even from a rigidly memorized oral tradition"; cf. also McGovern 2013: 364–401.

⁴⁵ Allon 1997a: 42 points out that "many factors can influence the character of an oral literature and its method of composition and transmission: the nature of the information being relayed; the attitude towards this material and the extent to which accuracy is required; the character of the performers or composers, their status in society, the type of training they have undergone and the circumstances under which they perform; the nature of the audience and its expectations and therefore its demands on the performer or performers; the medium used (verse or prose) and whether the performance requires musical accompaniment. The Buddhist and Yugoslav-Homeric traditions differ in virtually all of these factors." Thus the problem of applying the findings by Parry and Lord to the early Buddhist case is not merely one of using research done on verse for texts that are predominantly in prose, *pace* Cousins 2013a: 99f. In fact Lord 1960/2000: 5 himself clearly recognizes that oral epic differs from the oral transmission of material where exact transmission matters, comment-

whether research done on the oral performance of epic material can just be applied to the oral transmission of material that is not epic and which has been passed on in a different cultural setting.⁴⁶ [51]

Looking for precedents for the early Buddhist oral tradition within the ancient Indian cultural setting, a rather different mode of oral transmission comes into view, namely the transmission of Vedic texts through memorization.⁴⁷ In methodological terms, it would certainly be preferable if the early Buddhist oral tradition were to be approached from the perspective of its Vedic predecessor,⁴⁸ given that the two share the general cultural setting of an-

ing that "if the reader interprets oral learning [of the epic type] as listening to something repeated in exactly the same form many times, if he equates it with oral memorization by rote, then he will fail to grasp the peculiar process involved in learning oral epic." So "if we understand thereby the transmission of a fixed text or the kind of transmission involved where A tells B what happened and B tells C and so on with all natural errors of lapse of memory and exaggeration and distortion, then we do not fully comprehend what oral transmission of oral epic is." Cf. also below p. 473ff.

⁴⁶ Graham 1987: 138 warns that the "oral use and even oral transmission of scripture should not be confused with folk oral tradition in which verbatim accuracy is not aspired to (i.e., in which 'formulaic composition' predominates: see, for example, Albert B. Lord, *The Singer of Tales* ...)." As Gombrich 1990a: 21 points out, "the early Buddhists wished to preserve the word of their great teacher ... the precise wording mattered." Norman 1997: 49 sums up that contrary to "oral literature which ... is essentially of an epic nature where ... no two performances are ever identical because the reciter is free to insert, at any point, material", in the case of "the great majority of Pāli canonical texts, however ... complete accuracy of reproduction is required at each recitation. In these circumstances the findings of modern investigators of oral epic literature seem to have little relevance."

⁴⁷ Gombrich 1990a: 23 notes that "the Buddhist canon has left us more clues that it is modelled on Vedic literature than has been generally recognized"; cf. also Lévi 1915: 441 and von Hinüber 1991: 123.

⁴⁸ This methodological problem is particularly relevant to the case of McGovern 2013: 364–401 who, in spite of the overall theme of his study being the rela-

cient India and both are concerned with texts considered sacred, whose correct wording matters, and recitation is undertaken by religious professionals whose primary aim is not entertainment.⁴⁹

Comparing the Vedic and early Buddhist oral traditions, an important difference between these two is that brahmins were trained from their childhood onwards in memorizing, whereas training as an early Buddhist reciter could have begun only after ordination, which in the average case would have taken place at a later age.⁵⁰ [52] As I have shown elsewhere, the differing memory abilities that result from this basic dissimilarity do indeed explain why even a considerable degree of variation between parallel versions of a discourse could come into existence in an oral tradition that aims at correct and accurate transmission.⁵¹

Nevertheless, perhaps we should at least consider improvisation characteristic of the earliest phase of the coming into being of

tionship between early Buddhists and brahmins, does not evaluate the early Buddhist oral tradition in the light of its Indic antecedents, but instead turns to the culturally and genre-wise unrelated Greek and Yugoslavian oral epic.

⁴⁹ Yugoslavian oral epic is instead performed by singers who come from various walks of life; cf. Lord 1960/2000: 18: "no particular occupation contributed more singers than any other." The actual performance then relies heavily on the singer's ability to entertain; cf. Lord 1960/2000: 17: "the length of the song depends upon the audience", as at times "the singer will realize shortly after beginning that his audience is not receptive, and hence he will shorten his song so that it may be finished within the limit of time for which he feels the audience may be counted on. Or, if he misjudges, he may simply never finish the song."

⁵⁰ This has already been pointed out by von Hinüber 1989: 67f.

⁵¹ Anālayo 2011b: 867–876. As already noted by Allon 1997b: 366, "there is, however, scope for considerable change to occur within a tradition of the transmission of fixed, memorized texts." Similarly, in relation to variations between the above mentioned DN 34 and its parallels, Wynne 2004: 106 points out that such "differences could just as easily have been produced by the natural variations of a relatively fixed oral transmission."

the early discourses?⁵² To be sure, the degree of formalization now found in some of the early discourses would indeed have come into being gradually, but some degree of formalization must have been used right from the outset when a particular discourse came to be orally transmitted. In fact, even the original delivery of a discourse in an oral setting can be expected to employ some degree of formalization, thereby ensuring that the audience better keeps in mind what has been said.⁵³

Besides, we simply have no evidence that would support a shift from an early period of fairly free improvisation to a subsequent period of strictly formalized transmission, except for variations found between parallel versions of a discourse.⁵⁴ Yet in the case of the *Brahmajāla*, for example, a rather substantial difference in the exposition of morality appears to have come into being only at a time when the Mūlasarvāstivāda version of this discourse was transmitted independently from the Dharmaguptaka and Theravāda versions. Such a difference could not result from a very early period of improvisation.

⁵² Cousins 1983: 9f proposes "in the early period ... the possibility of a strong improvisatory element. This can be confirmed by comparisons between the surviving versions derived from different sects", which was then followed by "the gradual fixation of the material at a later period".

⁵³ Ong 1982/1996: 34f even argues that "in a primary oral culture ... you have to do your thinking in mnemonic patterns, shaped for ready oral recurrence. Your thought must come into being in heavily rhythmic, balanced patterns, in repetitions or antitheses, in alliterations and assonances, in epithetic and other formulaic expressions", because "in an oral culture, to think through something in non-formulaic, non-patterned, non-mnemonic terms, even if it were possible, would be a waste of time, for such thought, once worked through, could never be recovered with any effectiveness."

⁵⁴ As pointed out by Wynne 2004: 106, "it is hard to imagine that oral improvisation in the transmission of literature was the norm in the early period of sectarian Buddhism."

In fact at times substantial differences can even be found between discourses of the same Theravāda tradition. Thus pericope descriptions of the same event in versions of the same Pāli discourse found in different *Nikāyas* can show quite substantial variations.⁵⁵ Another and particularly telling example can be found in the two versions of the *Kasibhāradvāja-sutta*, found in the *Samyutta-nikāya* and the *Sutta-nipāta*, which differ in the effect the otherwise same instruction had on its brahmin protagonist: in the *Samyutta-nikāya* he takes refuge as a lay follower, but in the *Sutta-nipāta* he goes forth and becomes an arahant.⁵⁶ Such variations appear to have come into being within the Theravāda transmission lineage and thus would not seem to be just the result of an early improvisation period. [53]

Instead of giving any evidence that during an early period improvisation was considered acceptable, the texts themselves tend to emphasize the importance of accurately memorizing the Dharma. Thus, for example, the *Pāsādika-sutta* reports an instruction by the Buddha that the teachings given by him should be recited together [comparing] meaning with meaning and phrasing with phrasing.⁵⁷ The Chinese *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel to this discourse takes up the same issue in more detail, describing how the monks should behave if there is a disagreement regarding the meaning and the phrasing, regarding only the meaning, only the phrasing, or regarding neither.⁵⁸ In both versions the teachings referred to are those that constitute the thirty-seven qualities or practices that are conducive to awakening (*bodhipakkhiyā dhammā*).⁵⁹

⁵⁵ Cf. Anālayo 2011b: 18f and below p. 477ff.

⁵⁶ SN 7.11 at SN I 173,22 and Sn 1.4 at Sn 15,23 (reference is to the page).

⁵⁷ DN 29 at DN III 127,16: *atthena atthaṃ vyaññanena vyaññanam saṅgāyitabbaṃ*.

⁵⁸ DĀ 17 at T I 74a19: 說句不正, 義理不正, followed by the alternatives 說句不正, 義正, then 說句正, 義不正, and finally 說句正, 義正.

⁵⁹ Sanskrit fragment parallel 281v3, DiSimone 2016: 84, instead mentions the *āngas*.

A concern with correct phrasing is also evident in a *Vinaya* rule which prohibits teaching a layman recitation of the Dharma. Such recitation is qualified in the code of rules (*pātimokkha*) of the Lokottaravāda-Mahāsāṅghika, Mūlasarvāstivāda, Sarvāstivāda, and Theravāda traditions as being done "word by word".⁶⁰ The fact that monks should not teach a lay person in this way of course implies that this was precisely the way they would teach recitation to each other: word by word.⁶¹

The code of rules is in fact perhaps the best example one could choose for assessing the nature of the early Buddhist oral tradition, since its regular recital can safely be expected to have had a determining influence on the early Buddhist oral tradition. The recital of the code of rules obviously involves a text with fixed wording, as is the case for all group recitals, making it clear that an improvisatory model cannot be applied to this text.⁶²

Nevertheless, the different versions of the code of rules that have come down to us show the same type of variation as found between parallel versions of the early discourses: the rules often come in a different sequence, they show variations in terminology, and at times rules can be found in some traditions that are not found in others.⁶³ The degree of variation between parallel versions of the code of rules clearly requires an explanation that goes beyond the parameters of the oral transmission of the Greek and modern Yugoslavian epic. [54] Since the code of rules was transmitted by members of the same Buddhist monastic reciter

⁶⁰ Cf. below p. 495 note 74.

⁶¹ Wynne 2004: 109 comments that this rule implies that "Sutta portions of the early Buddhist literature were learnt verbatim among the ordained."

⁶² As noted by Wynne 2004: 108, the two "*pātimokkhas*, for example, can hardly have been subject to an improvisational method of oral transmission, for their content (monastic rules) is hardly the sort of material suitable for improvisation."

⁶³ Cf., e.g., the study by Pachow 1955.

circles that were responsible for the transmission of the early discourses, it is also clear that similar mechanisms must have been at work. Not only the code of rules, but also the discourses could be performed in group recitation, which makes improvisation a practical impossibility.⁶⁴

In relation to the recitation and transmission of the code of rules, keeping in mind the Vedic background is again helpful. In the case of a monk from a brahmin background transmitting the code of rules it is quite possible that he was trained in memorization in his youth.⁶⁵ The case of a nun would be different, however. Even if she should stem from a brahmin family, as a woman she would not have stood a comparable chance of receiving such training. As one might expect, the different versions of the code of rules for nuns exhibit more pronounced differences from one another than is the case for the different versions of the code of rules for monks.⁶⁶ An important factor influencing this would quite probably have been the lack of memorization training among nuns responsible for transmitting their own code of rules.

The emphasis on accurate transmission, word by word, in the early Buddhist oral tradition can even be seen in some of the trans-

⁶⁴ As already pointed out by Allon 1997b: 366, "communal or group recitation or performance requires fixed wording. It is not possible for more than one individual to perform at the same time in the manner described by Parry and Lord without producing utter chaos, for in that method each individual creates his compositions anew each time he performs." Thus for the reciters of the discourses to perform together in the way described in the *Vinaya* passage cited above p. 59 note 16 would not allow for personal improvisation. Coward 1986: 300 notes that "group listening to check for errors is still an accepted method of verification in rural India today."

⁶⁵ The presence of a rather substantial percentage of brahmins among the Buddhist monastic community suggests itself from the surveys in Sarao 1989: 93–139, Chakravarti 1996: 198–220, and Nakamura 2000a: 360–362.

⁶⁶ Cf., e.g., the study by Kabilsingh 1984.

mission errors that emerge through comparative study, which appear to be the result of lapses of memory rather than the outcome of improvisation. This is particularly evident in those cases where the counterpart to a particular term shows close phonetic similarity, but has a considerably different meaning.⁶⁷ Such errors can only occur in a tradition that aims at accurate memorization of texts.

Whereas the early discourses themselves would not have been considered the proper place for personal creativity, such would have been possible in relation to the commentarial explanations that a reciter might give alongside the main text in an oral teaching situation. The giving of a commentary on the discourse would of course have been open to and influenced by personal notions and ideas as well as views and opinions held by the textual or religious group to which a reciter belonged. Once in the course of time such a commentary has become to some degree fixed and is passed on alongside the discourse, it is easy to see how such material could eventually become part of the discourse itself. This would explain how even substantial differences can come into being, such as the exposition on morality in the different versions of the *Brahmajāla*, namely as the result of the integration of commentarial material into the discourse.

Another aspect that clearly was open to some degree of creativity was the allocation of discourses to and within a particular collection. Thus relatively similar discourse parallels are regularly found in substantially different positions in the same or even in different discourse collections. [55] Just as the giving of a commentary, the grouping of discourses for memorization purposes was clearly open to personal preferences.

In sum, a proper appreciation of the oral legacy of the early discourses needs to be based on contextualizing their transmission

⁶⁷ For examples cf. below p. 480 note 15.

within the ancient Indian setting, taking into account the precedent set by Vedic reciters and the limitations faced by the early Buddhist reciters in their attempt to preserve their sacred texts as accurately as possible. The resultant understanding of early Buddhist orality can accommodate even substantial variations between parallel versions, without needing to resort to foreign models based on improvisation. Such understanding in a way draws out the significance of the phrase found at the beginning of a discourse, which with the terms "thus have I heard" signals that what follows is *not* the product of personal improvisation, but much rather results from an attempt to transmit a text as it has been heard.

***Brahmajāla-sutta* (DN 1) Part 2**

Introduction

In this chapter I continue studying the *Brahmajāla* from the viewpoint of oral transmission. In the previous chapter I took a close-up look at the significance of the introductory phrase "thus have I heard", followed by zooming out, as it were, to take more distant shots of the opening narration of the *Brahmajāla* and of its exposition on morality. In the present chapter I continue along the same trajectory by taking a further step back to look at the discourse as a whole, that is, at its positioning in the *Dīgha-nikāya* and *Dīrgha-āgama* collections.

In what follows I first survey the order of the *Dīgha-nikāya* and *Dīrgha-āgama* collections, and then turn to the principle of concatenation in relation to the *Brahmajāla*. Next I take a further step back to examine the basic division of these three collections and their different positioning of the section containing discourses related to morality. In the final part of the chapter I return to the early Buddhist oral transmission, considered from the viewpoint of modern-day psychological research on the functioning of memory.

The Order of the Collections of Long Discourses

One of the striking features of the early Buddhist discourse collections is the contrast between, on the one hand, the considerable degree of similarity in terms of content between parallel versions of a discourse transmitted by different schools and, on the

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other hand, the substantial degree of disagreement when it comes to the position of a discourse in different collections. In the case of the long-discourse collections this is particularly evident, since here three different versions can be compared with each other: the Theravāda *Dīrgha-nikāya*, DN, the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda *Dīrgha-āgama* preserved in Sanskrit fragments, DĀ (Skt),¹ and the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama* extant in Chinese translation as the first text in the Taishō edition, DĀ (T 1). [80]

An impression of the degree of disparity can be gathered from the comparative chart below in table 2, which takes up only the discourses found in all three collections. The correlations are presented from the viewpoint of the *Dīrgha-nikāya*. As the table clearly shows, the disagreement in the placing of discourses is remarkable.

Only in one single instance do two discourses exactly follow each other in each of the three collections. This is the case for the *Soṇadaṇḍa-sutta*, DN 4, and the *Kūṭadanta-sutta*, DN 5, of the *Dīrgha-nikāya* and their parallels, DĀ (Skt) 33 and DĀ (Skt) 34, as well as DĀ (T 1) 22 and DĀ (T 1) 23.² As the respective numbering shows, even this single pair occurs at different positions in the respective collections.

The differing position of single discourses is quite evident in the case of the *Brahmajāla*. [81] Whereas in the Theravāda *Dīrgha-nikāya* the *Brahmajāla-sutta* is the first of the thirty-four discourses,³ the *Brahmajāla-sūtra* is the last discourse in what

¹ [2] Information on this collection is based on Hartmann and Wille 2014.

² [4] Less than exact correspondences, however, can be seen on several occasions, showing groupings of discourses that did stay together in all three versions, albeit with minor variations in the positioning of the respective discourses vis-à-vis each other.

³ [5] Bodhi 1978/1992: 1 takes this placing to be due to doctrinal motives: "that the *Brahmajāla* was assigned to this strategic position – that of the first discourse of the first collection – is not a matter of chance or haphazard arrange-

appears to have been a Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda *Dīrgha-āgama* collection of forty-seven discourses.⁴ In the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama*, the corresponding discourse is the twenty-first of thirty discourses in this collection.⁵

ment, but a deliberate design on the part of the Elders who compiled the canon and set it in its present form. Its placement reflects a ... keen awareness of the significance of the discourse both intrinsically and in relation to the Buddha's teaching as a whole. For just as our sutta, in terms of its position, stands at the entrance to the total collection of discourses spoken by the Buddha, so does its principal message provide a prolegomenon to the entire Dispensation itself. It is, so to speak, the sentry at the gateway to the Doctrine." Regarding the perceived doctrinal significance of the *Brahmajāla-sutta* in the Theravāda tradition, it is worth noting that the *Mahāvamsa* records its recitation as an important aspect of the conversion of Suvannabhūmi, Mhv 12.51; and the *Samantapāsādikā* reports that the monks to be excluded from the third *saṅgīti* misrepresented the teaching of the Buddha as corresponding to the type of views taken up in the *Brahmajāla-sutta* (i.e., eternalism, semi-eternalism, etc.), Sp I 60,18 (the list of views in the Chinese counterpart, T 1462 at T XXIV 684a29, is shorter and does not correspond as closely to the basic structure of the *Brahmajāla* as the presentation in the *Samantapāsādikā*).

⁴ [6] The position of the *Brahmajāla-sūtra* in the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda *Dīrgha-āgama* can be deduced from the *uddāna* provided in Hartmann 2004: 124f; for a detailed discussion of this *uddāna* cf. also Hartmann 2002. Confirmation comes from the indication in the *Abhidharmakośopāyikā-ṭīkā*, D 4094 ju 68a2 or Q 5595 tu 76a1: *tshul khrims kyi phung po'i zhabs su tshangs pa'i dra ba las bshad pa*; reconstructed by Honjō 1984: 19 (Up 2036) as *śīla-skandikāyām paścime brahmajālasūtre uktam*.

⁵ [7] Notably, the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 968b15, reports that the recitation of the discourses at the first *saṅgīti* began with Mahākassapa asking Ānanda where the *Brahmajāla* had been delivered, 大迦葉即問阿難言：梵動經在何處說？ The fact that here the *Brahmajāla* is mentioned first, corresponding to the position of this discourse in the Theravāda collection as well as in the Theravāda account of the first *saṅgīti*, Vin II 287,16, has already been noted by Oldenberg 1898: 653; for a translation of this passage in T 1428 cf. Przyluski 1926: 193. Taking the listing of discourses in T 1428 to reflect a different and perhaps earlier ordering of the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama*

Table 2: The *Dīgha-nikāya* and Its Parallels

DN	DĀ (Skt)	DĀ (T 1)
1 <i>Brahmajāla-sutta</i>	47	21
2 <i>Sāmaññaphala-sutta</i>	44	27
3 <i>Ambaṭṭha-sutta</i>	35	20
4 <i>Soṇadaṇḍa-sutta</i>	33	22
5 <i>Kūṭadanta-sutta</i>	34	23
8 <i>Kassapasīhanāda-sutta</i>	46	25
9 <i>Paṭṭhapāda-sutta</i>	36	28
11 <i>Kevaddha-sutta</i>	29	24
12 <i>Lohicca-sutta</i>	28	29
13 <i>Tevijja-sutta</i>	45	26
14 <i>Mahāpadāna-sutta</i>	5	1
16 <i>Mahāparinibbāna-sutta</i> ⁶	6	2
18 <i>Janavasabha-sutta</i>	13	4
19 <i>Mahāgovinda-sutta</i>	14	3
20 <i>Mahāsamaya-sutta</i>	24	19
24 <i>Pāṭika-sutta</i>	9	15
28 <i>Sampasādanīya-sutta</i>	16	18
29 <i>Pāsādika-sutta</i>	15	17
33 <i>Saṅgīti-sutta</i>	3	9
34 <i>Dasuttara-sutta</i>	1	10

Concatenation

A central dynamic that appears to have influenced the positioning of a discourse within a collection is the principle of con-

would also entail, however, that the *Brahmajāla* was not part of the section on morality, as the discourses mentioned next in T 1428 do not belong to this section; cf. Anālayo 2014h: 36 note 68.

⁶ [3] In the case of the *Dīgha-nikāya*, the Mahāsudassana tale forms a separate discourse, DN 17.

catenation. Such concatenation is a recurrent feature in the early Buddhist texts, evident, for example, in the monastic code of rules. Taking the case of the Theravāda code of rules, *pātimokkha*, as an example, the phenomenon of concatenation can be illustrated with the sequence of several *pācittiya* rules for monks as follows:⁷

Pācittiya 4 prohibits teaching recitation word by word to someone who has not been "fully ordained".⁸ *Pācittiya* 5 takes up the issue of "lying down" in the presence of someone who has not been "fully ordained".⁹ Here the reference to someone who has not been fully ordained serves to connect otherwise unrelated rules. [82] The same pattern continues with *pācittiya* 6, which turns to "lying down" in the presence of a "woman".¹⁰ In this case it is the act of lying down that connects *pācittiya* rules 5 and 6. *Pācittiya* 7 then regulates teaching the Dharma to "women",¹¹ thereby providing a connection to the presence of a woman mentioned in the preceding *pācittiya* rule.

In this way, *pācittiya* rules that follow each other share a particular expression, such as "fully ordained", "lying down", or "woman". The way these particular rules are related to each other is peculiar to the Theravāda tradition, as the corresponding rules in other *Vīnayas* do not follow the same sequence.¹² In other words, such concatenation is not related to the original delivery of a particular textual

⁷ [8] The following is based on von Hinüber 1999: 20.

⁸ [9] Norman and Pruitt 2001: 46,12: *yo pana bhikkhu anupasampannaṃ padaso dhammaṃ vāceyya, pācittiyaṃ*.

⁹ [10] Norman and Pruitt 2001: 46,15: *yo pana bhikkhu anupasampannaṃ uttari-dirattatirattaṃ sahasseyyaṃ kappeyya, pācittiyaṃ*.

¹⁰ [11] Norman and Pruitt 2001: 46,18: *yo pana bhikkhu mātugāmena sahasseyyaṃ kappeyya, pācittiyaṃ*.

¹¹ [12] Norman and Pruitt 2001: 46,21: *yo pana bhikkhu mātugāmassa uttarichappañcavācāhi dhammaṃ deseyya aññatra viññunā purisaviggahena, pācittiyaṃ*.

¹² [13] Cf. the survey in Pachow 1955: 6 (appendix I).

item, but rather comes into being with the formation of textual collections or lists. The same principle can also be seen at work in the *Udāna* collection,¹³ for example, or in other Pāli discourses.¹⁴

In the case of the first discourse in the *Dīgha-nikāya*, the *Brahmajāla-sutta*, the same basic principle provides connections to the next *Dīgha-nikāya* discourse in several ways. The *Brahmajāla-sutta* shares with the second discourse, the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta*, the giving of a detailed exposition on morality. In addition to this common theme of providing an account of the training in morality (*sīla*), shared among discourses in this section of the *Dīgha-nikāya*, the *Śīlakkhandha-vagga*, the first two discourses are also related to each other by other forms of concatenation.

The *Brahmajāla-sutta* and the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* share the theme of providing a contrast between the Buddha's insightful understanding and the various views held by non-Buddhist teachers.¹⁵ These take the form of sixty-two standpoints for views examined in the *Brahmajāla-sutta*,¹⁶ whereas the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* presents six views attributed to well-known contemporary teachers.¹⁷

¹³ [14] For a study of concatenation in the *Udāna* cf. Anālayo 2009d: 50–53.

¹⁴ [15] Cf., e.g., Allon 2001: 18–22 and Anālayo 2011b: 11–13.

¹⁵ [16] My indications are based on Franke 1913c, who points out similar relations between other discourses in the *Dīgha-nikāya* as well. In view of the general lack of awareness of the nature of oral transmission it is perhaps not surprising that these findings led Franke to arrive at unconvincing conclusions regarding the authorship of the *Dīgha-nikāya* as well as the *Majjhima-nikāya*; cf. Franke 1913a: xff, 1913b, 1914, and 1915, as well as Sferra 2011. For critical replies to Franke cf. the references in Hartmann 2014: 149 note 15.

¹⁶ [17] The examination of sixty-two standpoints for views shows considerable similarity in the different versions of the *Brahmajāla*, including a discourse quotation in T 1548 at T XXVIII 656b19 to 661a7; cf. below p. 115ff.

¹⁷ [18] The parallel versions differ considerably in regard to what particular view should be associated with which of these six teachers; cf. the studies by Bapat 1948, Basham 1951: 21–23, Vogel 1970, Meisig 1987a, and MacQueen 1988.

A formulaic parallelism occurs in the case of the fourth type of equivocation among the sixty-two standpoints for views in the *Brahmajāla-sutta*, whose description uses the same terms and expressions as the record of the position taken by the teacher Sañjaya Belaṭṭhiputta in the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta*.¹⁸ [83] Another instance of formulaic parallelism can be found in the ways those who hold eternalist views in the *Brahmajāla-sutta* qualify the self and the world. These correspond to the qualifications used for the seven basic principles on which according to the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* the teacher Pakudha Kaccāyana based his view.¹⁹

The *Brahmajāla-sutta* indicates that eternalist views can arise after one has achieved the ability to recollect one's former lives. The *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* describes this ability in recollection with the same standardized formula, differing only in so far as here such ability features as one of the fruits of living the life of a recluse.²⁰

The third of the annihilationists in the *Brahmajāla-sutta* refers to a self of mind-made nature. The same terms recur in the description of another of the fruits of living the life of a recluse in the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta*.²¹ The proclamations of Nirvāṇa here and now in the *Brahmajāla-sutta* also share the standard description of the four absorptions with the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta*, where these feature as other fruits of living the life of a recluse.²²

¹⁸ [19] This parallelism involves a substantial portion of text: DN 1 at DN I 27,11 to 27,31 and DN 2 at DN I 58,24 to 59,8, which report in the same terms how someone refuses to give an answer to a series of questions, differing only in so far as in DN 1 this is worded in the third person singular, whereas in DN 2 Sañjaya is the speaker, wherefore the same comes in the first person singular.

¹⁹ [20] DN 1 at DN I 14,2 (again at 15,6, 16,1, and 16,22) and DN 2 at DN I 56,22.

²⁰ [21] DN 1 at DN I 13,14 and DN 2 at DN I 81,12.

²¹ [22] DN 1 at DN I 34,24 and DN 2 at DN I 77,10.

²² [23] For the case of the first absorption cf. DN 1 at DN I 37,1 and DN 2 at DN I 73,23. Such elements found in the standard gradual-path account recur in all the *Dīgha-nikāya* discourses that have this account. In all such discourses these

In this way, the *Brahmajāla-sutta* and the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* as the first two discourses in the Theravāda *Dīgha-nikāya* are related to each other through thematic and formulaic concatenation.

Now in the Dharmaguptaka and the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda *Dīrgha-āgama* collections the corresponding two discourses do not occur together. Nevertheless, some degree of concatenation can be discerned in the case of the Dharmaguptaka counterpart to the *Brahmajāla-sutta*, and its neighbours.

The twentieth discourse in the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama*, DĀ 20, shares with the next discourse, the *Brahmajāla*, DĀ 21, the fact that both of their introductory narrations involve a non-Buddhist teacher and his student. In both discourses one of these two behaves disrespectfully towards the Buddha: in DĀ 20 the student disparages the Buddha to his face, in DĀ 21 the teacher keeps speaking in dispraise of the Buddha while following him closely during a journey.²³ [84]

The two discourses also share the standard description of the four absorptions, which in DĀ 20 is part of its account of the gradual path, whereas in DĀ 21 the same description occurs in its exposition of views on Nirvāṇa here and now.²⁴ Again, the ability to create a mind-made body in DĀ 20 has a counterpart in the mind-made body as the ground for one of the views in DĀ 21.²⁵ The standard description of the ability to recollect one's past lives is also found in both discourses. In DĀ 20 this is part of the account

particular elements could in principle have provided concatenation with DN 1. The fact that DN 2 follows DN 1 would thus be due to those shared elements that are not part of the standard gradual-path account, a relationship then further strengthened during oral transmission by elements such as the present one.

²³ [25] DĀ 20 at T I 82b24 and DĀ 21 at T I 88b16.

²⁴ [26] For the case of the first absorption cf. DĀ 20 at T I 85b12 and DĀ 21 at T I 93b20.

²⁵ [27] DĀ 20 at T I 85c17 and DĀ 21 at T I 93b3.

of the gradual path, whereas in DĀ 21 such ability leads to eternalist views.²⁶

Another motif in common between the two discourses is the image of seeing fishes in water. In DĀ 20 this comes as part of a simile to illustrate the destruction of the influxes, whereas in DĀ 21 this motif features in a simile that explains the function of the whole discourse to be comparable to a fisherman who completely spreads his net over a small pond, thereby being able to catch all the beings that dwell in its water.²⁷

Turning from the discourse that precedes DĀ 21 to the one that follows it, the topic of the Buddha's fame, broached at the outset of DĀ 21 as something on account of which his disciples should not become elated, recurs at the outset of the next discourse in the same collection, DĀ 22. This discourse gives a detailed report of the fame of the Buddha and explains why even for a distinguished brahmin it is appropriate to approach and visit him.²⁸

DĀ 22 also has the account of the gradual path and thus shares with DĀ 21 the four absorptions, the mind-made body, and the recollection of one's past lives.²⁹

In this way, reciters of the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama* would have found their work facilitated by memory aids through concatenation comparable to those available for the reciters of the Theravāda *Dīgha-nikāya*. In other words, the needs of oral transmission appear to have influenced the final shape of the two collections in similar ways, albeit with different results.

²⁶ [²⁸] DĀ 20 at T I 86b2 and DĀ 21 at T I 90a11; needless to say, elements found in the standard gradual-path account recur in all the *Dīrgha-āgama* discourses that have this account. In all such discourses these particular elements could have provided concatenation with DĀ 21.

²⁷ [²⁹] DĀ 20 at T I 86c9 and DĀ 21 at T I 93c28.

²⁸ [³⁰] DĀ 21 at T I 88c13 and DĀ 22 at T I 95a1.

²⁹ [³¹] DĀ 22 at T I 96c5.

In the case of the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda *Ārgha-āgama* collection the fragments that have been preserved of the *Brahmajāla-sūtra* and the discourse that precedes it, the *Kāśyapa-sūtra*, are unfortunately not sufficient to enable a full study of correspondences between these two discourses.³⁰ [85] Nevertheless, both are located in the *Śīlaskandha-nipāta*, which at least implies that they would have shared an exposition of the theme of morality.

The Section on Morality

The exposition on morality in the Tibetan versions of the *Brahmajāla* is rather short.³¹ In addition to being much shorter than the exposition on morality as part of the account of the gradual path in the Theravāda *Brahmajāla-sutta* and its Dharmaguptaka parallel, it is also shorter than the exposition on morality in a version of the gradual-path account preserved in the *Saṅghabhedavastu* of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*.³²

The section on morality in the Dharmaguptaka discourse is similar in length to the sections on morality in the discourses in the Dharmaguptaka *Ārgha-āgama* that have the gradual-path ac-

³⁰ [32] For published fragments of the *Brahmajāla-sūtra* cf. Hartmann 1989: 48f and 54 (including SHT X 4189), Hartmann 1991 §§13 to 16 (for §14 cf. also Ye 2009: 240), Hartmann 2002: 135, SHT III 803 and 882b, Waldschmidt et al. 1971: 5–7 and 131f (on the latter cf. Skilling 1997: 470 note 8), SHT V 1571, Sander and Waldschmidt 1985: 262f, and SHT VI 1248 and 1356, Bechert and Wille 1989: 48 and 95. For published fragments of the *Kāśyapa-sūtra* cf. SHT VI 1296, Bechert and Wille 1989: 70, Hartmann 1991 §§69–73 (including SHT V 1119 and SHT VIII 1874), perhaps Or 15003/77, Wille 2006: 89f, and SHT X 3656, Wille 2008: 147f. I am indebted to Jens-Uwe Hartmann for kindly providing me with a preliminary draft transliteration of the as yet unpublished fragments of these two discourses from the *Ārgha-āgama* manuscript.

³¹ [33] Cf. the discussion above p. 63ff.

³² [34] Gnoli 1978: 232,9 to 240,17.

count.³³ In the case of the Theravāda *Dīgha-nikāya*, the exposition of morality in the *Brahmajāla-sutta* is longer than its counterparts in those *Dīgha-nikāya* discourses that have the gradual path.³⁴

In view of these respective differences in length, it seems that the positioning of the *Brahmajāla* and its counterparts in the section on morality could have been influenced by length, in that the version with the longer exposition on this topic comes first, followed by the comparatively shorter exposition.

Following this rationale, the Theravāda *Brahmajāla-sutta* should indeed be the first in the *Śīlakkhandha-vagga* of the *Dīgha-nikāya*. On the same reasoning, the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda *Brahmajāla-sūtra* should indeed be at the end of the chapter on morality, the *Śīlaskandha-nipāta*, where it comes after all the discourses that share the longer exposition on morality as part of the gradual path, given in full or in abbreviation.³⁵ [86]

³³ [35] DĀ 20 at T I 83c14 to T I 84c13 and DĀ 21 at T I 88c19 to T I 89c18, thus in both versions the exposition on morality corresponds to one page in the Taishō edition.

³⁴ [36] The exposition on morality in DN 1 ranges from DN I 4,1 to 12,14, comprising over eight pages in E^e, whereas the same topic in DN 2 goes from DN I 63,13 to 69,31, less than seven pages in the same edition. The difference appears to be mainly due to the fact that the similar exposition of each aspect of morality is followed by a different concluding statement in the two versions, where DN 1 keeps highlighting that a worldling might praise the Tathāgata for such conduct, whereas DN 2 just briefly notes that such is the conduct (of a monk).

³⁵ [37] Melzer 2006: 23 notes that the full account of the gradual path is only given in the twenty-seventh discourse, which is actually the third discourse in the *Śīlaskandha-nipāta*. This alerts one to the fact that other influences must additionally have shaped the final order in the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda *Dīrgha-āgama* collection as now extant in the recently discovered fragments. Perhaps further relocations within this collection took place at a time when the requirements of oral transmission were no longer as prominent as during an earlier period, given that for one who embarks on memorizing the *Śīlaskan-*

Thus the opposite placing of the two discourses – the Theravāda *Brahmajāla-sutta* at the beginning and the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda *Brahmajāla-sūtra* at the end of the respective collections – could be following the same logic, according to which the longer account on morality is given precedence, and the shorter one comes after it. This comes combined with the fact that their sections on morality, the *Śīlakkhandha-vagga* or *Śīlaskandha-nipāta*, are also found in different positions in the two collections. I will return to the positioning of the section on morality in the next part of this chapter.

In the case of the Dharmaguptaka *Dirgha-āgama*, its version of the *Brahmajāla*, DĀ 21, is the second discourse in the section on morality. DĀ 21 is preceded by DĀ 20, which gives the full account of the gradual path; it is followed by discourses that abbreviate their exposition on morality. It would perhaps have been more natural if DĀ 20 had been placed in second position, thereby functioning as the leader during oral recitation for the ensuing discourses that abbreviate not only its exposition on morality, but also its exposition of the remainder of the gradual path. Nevertheless, given that the expositions on morality in DĀ 21 and DĀ 20 are of the same length, either of the two could take the leading position, so that perhaps concatenation or still other considerations influenced the respective position of these two discourses.

Needless to say, the positioning of the *Brahmajāla* in the collections of long discourses preserved by the Dharmaguptaka, Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda, and Theravāda traditions does not carry any implications about the earliness or otherwise of its contents. If the shifting around of textual material results in a placing that can be identified as comparatively later, this does not mean

dha-nipāta it would have been natural and convenient if already the first discourse in this section gave the full account on morality.

that the contents of the text in question must also be late.³⁶ It is perfectly possible that a text was allocated to a different position without its contents being affected, just as a text that stays in its location can be affected by changes to its content during oral transmission.

The Positioning of the Section on Morality

In an oral setting, the discourses in the *Śīlakkhandha-vagga* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* that share an account of the gradual path of training are easily memorized as a group,³⁷ because of the substantial amount of text common to the discourses, which needs to be learned only once.

After the section on morality, the *Dīgha-nikāya* continues with a group of ten discourses, most of which begin with the qualification "great", *mahā*°. Probably the best known of these "great" discourses is the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* (DN 16), which records the Buddha's last days, [87] decease, and funeral. Another discourse of similar hagiographic interest is the *Mahāpadāna-sutta* (DN 14), which provides a description of former Buddhas. The third section in the *Dīgha-nikāya* then is the *Pāṭika-vagga*, which takes its name from its first discourse, the *Pāṭika-sutta* (DN 24).

Regarding the division of the *Dīgha-nikāya* into these three sections, the *Samantapāsādikā* advises that a beginner in recitation should first of all start with the middle section, entitled the *Mahā-vagga*. This differs from the *Majjhima-nikāya*, where the

³⁶ [38] Cf. also Anālayo 2010g: 45.

³⁷ [39] For studies of this account of the gradual path cf., e.g., Franke 1917: 50–80, Eimer 1976: 26–34, Bucknell 1984, Meisig 1987a: 35–80, Crangle 1994: 149–152, Ramers 1996, Freiburger 2000: 71–86, Melzer 2006: 12–24, and Anālayo 2016d. This gradual account has its counterpart in the *Brahmajāla-sutta* in three graded sections on morality: a short section, a middle-length section, and a great section; for a discussion of which cf. above p. 63ff.

Samantapāsādikā recommends the first of its three sections to a neophyte reciter, the other two sections being for those who have already memorized this first group of fifty discourses.³⁸

Had the *Mahā-vagga* been considered the most important section to be memorized from the outset of the formation of the collection, it would have been natural for it to stand in first place. The fact that this is not the case suggests the possibility that the present order in the *Dīgha-nikāya* might still reflect a time when the expositions on morality were considered to be the material that reciters should learn first of all. These expositions on morality would in fact provide a reciter with basic instructions similar in kind to several of the discourses found among the first of the three sections of the *Majjhima-nikāya*.

With the passage of time, however, it could reasonably be expected that the inspiration provided by discourses like the *Mahā-padāna-sutta* and the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* acquired increasing importance. After the passing away of the Buddha, with the increase of disciples who had never had a chance to meet the master in person, or even meet someone who had been in his living presence, there would have been an increasing demand for such a type of information in order to foster inspiration and strengthen faith. With the notion of several past Buddhas in place, such interest would naturally have included former Buddhas.³⁹ In this situation, it would indeed be preferable for a neophyte reciter of the *Dīgha-nikāya* to take up first the chapter that contains such inspirational

³⁸ [40] Sp IV 789,14: *sace majjhimabhāṇako hoti, mūlapaṇṇāsako uggahetabbo, dīghabhāṇakena mahāvaggo*; cf. also the discussion below p. 427f.

³⁹ [41] The inspirational effect of the account of former Buddhas is in fact explicitly stated in the Chinese version of the discourse itself, DĀ 1 at T I 3c9: "who, being a wise one, would on hearing this [*Mahā*]-*avadāna* not be delighted and give rise to joyful affection in the mind?", 何有智者聞此因緣而不歡喜, 起愛樂心.

material. If there should indeed have been such a shift of interest, it did not lead to a shifting of the *Mahā-vagga* to first position within the *Dīgha-nikāya*, but only influenced the commentarial recommendation.

The situation is different in the *Dīrgha-āgama* collections. The *Mahāvadāna-sūtra* and the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* are the fifth and sixth members of the first of the three sections of the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda *Dīrgha-āgama*, entitled the *Śaṣṭisūtraka-nipāta*. In addition to the *Mahāvadāna-sūtra* and the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, another discourse in the *Śaṣṭisūtraka-nipāta* that is comparable to these two, in the sense of providing hagiographic information, is the *Catuṣpariṣat-sūtra*.⁴⁰ This discourse gives an account of the coming into existence of the four assemblies of Buddhist disciples (monastic and lay, male and female). The *Catuṣpariṣat-sūtra* has its counterparts in other Buddhist schools in the respective *Vinayas*, a situation that suggests a process of textual movement between *Vinayas* and discourse collections. [88] In fact, even the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* may have originally been a *Vinaya* narrative that was subsequently shifted to the collection of long discourses.⁴¹

The *Śaṣṭisūtraka-nipāta* was at times handed down independently of the whole collection.⁴² The importance accorded to the discourses in this set of six is in line with the indication in the *Samantapāsādikā* that the grouping of discourses that contains the

⁴⁰ [42] For a study of the *Catuṣpariṣat-sūtra* cf. Waldschmidt 1951/1967; for a translation cf. Kloppenborg 1973.

⁴¹ [43] Cf., e.g., Frauwallner 1956: 46 and the discussion in Hirakawa 1993/1998: 264. On the interrelation between *Vinaya* and discourse literature cf. also Anālayo 2014f and 2016e.

⁴² [44] The popularity of this group of six discourses has already been noted by Schlingloff 1962: 7; cf. also Skilling 1980: 30f and Hartmann 1994 and 2014: 144–148.

Mahāpadāna-sutta and the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* should be learned first.

The Chinese counterparts to the *Mahāvadāna-sūtra* and the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* are the first two discourses in the *Dīrgha-āgama* preserved in Chinese translation, DĀ 1 and DĀ 2.⁴³ In this way the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama*, the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda *Dīrgha-āgama*, and the Theravāda commentary, the *Samantapāsādikā*, all give pride of place to the grouping of discourses that contains these two discourses.

The overall situation could be summarized by showing the respective placement of the chapter that contains the *Mahāvadāna-sūtra* and the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* in the *Dīrgha-āgama*/*Dīgha-nikāya* collection of each of the three traditions – Dharmaguptaka, Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda, and Theravāda – followed by giving also the indication on the importance of this chapter according to the Theravāda commentary, the *Samantapāsādikā*.

Table 3: The Position of the *Mahā*-section

	<i>Mahā</i> -section
Dharmaguptaka	first in the collection
Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda	first in the collection
Theravāda	second in the collection
Theravāda commentary	first to be learned

Combining the prominent place given to the section that contains the *Mahāvadāna-sūtra* and the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* with the patterns apparently at work within the sections on morality, the diametrically opposed positions of the *Brahmajāla* as the first discourse in the Theravāda collection and the last in the Sarvāstivāda/

⁴³ [45] DĀ 1 has been translated by Jin 2011, DĀ 2 by Weller 1939 and 1940 and Jin 2013, and both by Ichimura 2015: 7–171.

Mūlasarvāstivāda collection could indeed be the results of similar influences.

In the case of the Theravāda *Dīgha-nikāya*, the *Brahmajāla-sutta* would stand in leading position in the section on morality because its treatment of this topic is longer than that given in other discourses in this section. ^[89] Due to what might have been an emphasis on this topic of morality at an early stage in the formation of the whole discourse collection, the *Śīlakkhandha-vagga* is still the first of the three sections in the *Dīgha-nikāya*.

The Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda *Brahmajāla-sūtra* has an account of morality that is shorter than the coverage given to this topic in its version of the gradual path. Therefore the *Brahmajāla-sūtra* stands at the end of the *Śīlaskandha-nipāta*, which perhaps by yielding pride of place to the *Śaṭsūtraka-nipāta* has become the last of the three sections in this collection.

In sum, it seems that the requirements of oral transmission could have influenced the positioning of the *Brahmajāla* in these two collections of long discourses in similar ways, even though the net results of this influence are entirely different placements of the discourse.

Such different placing of the *Brahmajāla* reflects the circumstance that the order of the collection was clearly not seen as something fixed that needed to be kept at all cost, but rather as open to change in order to accommodate the particular needs of different reciter traditions. This stands in contrast to the contents of individual discourses, where accuracy in transmission was clearly an important concern.⁴⁴ In fact, had improvisation been characteristic for the contents of the discourses, one would expect parallel versions to be as different from each other as their order in the discourse collections. This is clearly not the case. Whereas

⁴⁴ [46] Cf. above p. 68ff.

the providing of a commentary on a discourse and its placing within a particular collection were relatively free at least during an early stage, the transmission of its actual contents was quite probably from the outset guided by a concern for accurate reproduction of what had been "thus heard" by successive generations of reciters.

The Issue of Memory

In order to appreciate how a concern for accurate reproduction of what had been "thus heard" could nevertheless result in the kind of differences that can be found between parallel versions of the early discourses in general and of the *Brahmajāla* in particular, modern-day research on memory provides helpful indications.⁴⁵

Such research has for quite some time made it clear that memory is of a constructive nature.⁴⁶ At the time of attempting to recall, the mind constructs the information anew. Moreover, already at the time of hearing something that one intends to remember, information is not simply taken in. Instead, the information received is combined with inferences. These inferences are stored in memory together with the material actually heard. [90] As a result, on recall one is at times not able to distinguish clearly between the original information and the inferences one has drawn.

As a general rule, a text will be better remembered if inferences are drawn.⁴⁷ Recent research has discovered an exception to this basic pattern, which is of importance for understanding the early

⁴⁵ [47] For a more detailed discussion cf. Anālayo 2011b: 855–891, where I take up various features of the early Buddhist oral transmission in relation to memory.

⁴⁶ [48] This has already been pointed out by the pioneer in memory research, Bartlett 1932: 205, who explains that "if we consider evidence rather than pre-supposition, remembering appears to be far more decisively an affair of construction, rather than one of mere reproduction."

⁴⁷ [49] Cf., e.g., Myers and Duffy 1990 as well as Mason and Just 2004.

Buddhist oral transmission in its ancient Indian historical setting. According to this finding, someone who does not understand a particular text at all could remember it with more precision than someone who understands this text.

The experiment in question presented instructions about the use of Microsoft Word and Microsoft Excel to three groups of readers, asking them to remember the text. Subsequently memory was tested through a recognition task in which the participants had to decide if a particular statement had been made in the original text. Of these participants, the first group had no experience with computer software at all, the second group had some experience, and the third group had advanced knowledge of computer software. Contrary to the expectations of the researchers, those who had no experience with computer software at all were more rapidly able to recognize sentences correctly than the other two groups.⁴⁸

This finding on the workings of human memory helps to appreciate the nature and limitations of the early Buddhist oral transmission. Situated in their historical and cultural context, the early Buddhist reciters would have had a precedent in the Vedic oral tradition. This oral transmission had acquired a high degree of precision based on a systematic training of reciters from their early youth onwards. The existence of young brahmins who at the age of sixteen had already mastered the *Vedas* is in fact reflected in the *Assalāyana-sutta* and a Chinese parallel.⁴⁹ Notably, in the

⁴⁸ [50] Caillies et al. 2002; on the need to distinguish between the bare information to be recalled and its relational processing when making sense of a text as a whole cf. also Long et al. 2012.

⁴⁹ [51] MN 93 at MN II 147,10 reports that a sixteen-year-old brahmin had acquired mastery of the three *Vedas*. The parallel T 71 at T I 876c10 also records his age to have been fifteen or sixteen, whereas another parallel, MĀ 151 at T I 663c8

Vedic model young brahmin reciters trained in memorizing texts whose meaning they only learned later.⁵⁰

The early Buddhist oral tradition differs in two basic respects. One is that Buddhist monastics would start training in recitation of the texts only after ordination, which in most cases can safely be assumed to have taken place when they were older than young brahmins embarking on their training in Vedic lore.⁵¹ Moreover, whereas for the Vedic reciters correct wording was of crucial importance, for their early Buddhist counterparts the content of the text to be transmitted was central.⁵² This is neatly exemplified in the *Alagaddūpama-sutta* and a Chinese parallel, according to which those who learn the Buddha's teachings without endeavouring to understand them are fools.⁵³ [91]

In terms of modern research on memory, early Buddhist reciters were encouraged to draw inferences, unlike those memorizing the Vedas, who from early childhood were instead trained in precise textual recall without understanding and thus without drawing inferences. The reason why this worked so well for the Vedic reciters is precisely because they did not understand the text they were memorizing, as the experiment with Microsoft Word and Excel shows. Understanding the text would have hindered their ability to memorize it with high precision.

(which also reports his ability, notably in terms of his knowledge of the *four Vedas*), does not specify his age.

⁵⁰ [52] Cf., e.g., von Hinüber 1989: 67 and Bronkhorst 2016: 164.

⁵¹ [53] Cf. von Hinüber 1989: 67f.

⁵² [54] In the words of Lopez 1995: 37, "the śrotīyas were concerned with the precise preservation of the sounds of the Vedas while the śrāvakas were concerned with the preservation of the meaning of the Buddha's word in the vernacular."

⁵³ [55] MN 22 at MN I 133,23 and MĀ 200 at T I 764a12. Lamotte 1949: 346 explains that "le religieux qui se borne à mémoriser les textes sans essayer de les comprendre manque à son devoir."

This makes it only natural that the early Buddhist oral transmission could not arrive at a level of precision comparable to the Vedic reciters. In fact the Buddhist discourses reflect the use of repetition and other mnemonic aids to a much greater extent,⁵⁴ pointing to the evident need of the Buddhist reciters to boost their ability to recall with precision in a way not required by their Vedic counterparts.

In view of all this, one would indeed expect variations to come into being during successive generations of Buddhist reciters, simply because their attempt to memorize with precision was hampered, if I may use this word, by their understanding. Moreover, the difficulty of distinguishing original text from inference on recall would have facilitated the intrusion of commentarial exegesis into the original discourse.

Conclusion

Studying the *Brahmajāla*, which I have chosen somewhat at random simply by dint of its being the first discourse in the Pāli canon, brings to light the degree to which, from the introductory phrase of the discourse all the way to its location within the long-discourse collections, oral transmission is a key influence. This oral transmission is best understood as the result of an attempt at precise memorization that due to the vicissitudes of memory, combined with lack of training comparable to the Vedic tradition, inevitably resulted in a gradual change of the transmitted material. This manifests in variations due to the constructing nature of memory, loss of material due to memory failure, as well as the intrusion of what originally was only commentarial, due to the inability to distinguish between original and inference. Such gradual change manifesting in different ways in the course of time is

⁵⁴ [56] Cf. von Hinüber 1994b: 6 and Allon 1997b: 363.

precisely what enables us to reconstruct early stages in the development of Buddhist thought through comparative study of parallel versions that have been affected in different ways by the vicissitudes of their oral transmission.

***Brahmajāla-sutta* (DN 1) Part 3**

Introduction

Whereas in the previous two chapters I explored various aspects of oral transmission in relation to the *Brahmajāla*, in the present chapter I turn to its main protagonist, the Tathāgata. My interest in what follows is to explore the significance of the term in its doctrinal context and in comparison with its Chinese renderings. In the first part of the chapter I take up the *Brahmajāla* itself. Then I discuss passages related to the Tathāgata in the 'other' *Samyukta-āgama* and an individual translation, in the *Ekottarika-āgama*, and in the *Madhyama-āgama*.

The Tathāgata in the *Brahmajāla*

The exposition in the *Brahmajāla* revolves around the Tathāgata, this being the term that in the early discourses the Buddha is shown to use when referring to himself. The introductory narration of the *Brahmajāla* depicts a wanderer and his disciple speaking the one disparagingly and the other in praise of the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Community. This prompts the Buddha to expound matters of morality for which others might praise the Tathāgata. The exposition of matters of morality leads on to a penetrative analysis of the grounds for various views as something the Tathāgata has realized and which is considerably more profound than his moral conduct. The finale of the *Brahmajāla* then throws into relief the transcendence of the Tathāgata in contrast to those still subject to entanglement in views.

* Originally published in 2017 under the title "Some Renditions of the Term Tathāgata in the Chinese Āgamas" in the *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology at Soka University*, 20: 11–21.

When faced with the task of rendering the term Tathāgata into other languages, translators had to decide between taking it to imply *tathā āgata*, "thus come", or *tathā gata* "thus gone".¹ Translators of the *Brahmajāla* into Tibetan could preserve the ambiguity of the Indic term with the stock expression *de bzhin gshegs pa*,² where *gshegs pa* can mean either "one who has come" or "one who has gone". The translators of the *Brahmajāla* into Chinese unsurprisingly opted for the standard rendering 如來, "thus come".³ [12]

How far does this reflect the import of the term in its doctrinal setting in the *Brahmajāla*? Closer inspection gives the impression that the notion of being someone who has "thus come" is not relevant to the *Brahmajāla*, whose exposition is rather concerned with highlighting the transcendent nature of the Tathāgata as one who has not only gone beyond all views, but also gone beyond the prospect of future birth.⁴

In this way the *Brahmajāla* presents a perspective on views complementary to that found, for example, in the *Aṭṭhakavagga* of the

¹ [2] Chalmers 1898: 113 proposes still another derivation: "Tathāgata, in my opinion, is derived from the adjective *tatha* and *āgata*, and means 'one who has come at the real truth'." Gombrich 2009: 151 rather suggests that "the word *gata* when it occurs as the second member of a compound of this type often loses its primary meaning and means simply 'being' ... so the Buddha is referring to himself as 'the one who is like that'."

² [3] Weller 1934: 10,34 (§16) and D 4094 *ju* 142a1 or Q 5595 *tu* 163a3. Translations of the term *tathāgata* into Khotanese convey the meaning "gone"; cf. Degener 1989: 348f and Skjærvø 2004: lxxvii. The standard Mongolian and Uighur renditions instead opt for the nuance "come"; cf. Sárkőzi and Szerb 1995: 3 (§1.3 in the Mongolian *Mahāvvyutpatti*) and Röhrborn 2015: 158,12.

³ [4] DĀ 21 at T I 88b23, T 21 at T I 266a2, and T 1548 at T XXVIII 656b21.

⁴ [5] DN 1 at DN I 46,9, Weller 1934: 64,17 (§218), DĀ 21 at T I 94a7, T 21 at T I 270c13, and D 4094 *ju* 153b2 or Q 5595 *tu* 177a4 (T 1548 does not have a corresponding statement, since it only quotes the exposition on views and not the entire discourse).

Sutta-nipāta and its Chinese parallel.⁵ Although some scholars have seen a substantial difference between the rejection of views in this text and the remainder of the early discourses,⁶ the *Brahmajāla* is a good example of a similar attitude, with the difference that the dangers of being entangled in views are not expressed poetically, but rather in the form of an analytical examination.⁷

Needless to say, there is no *a priori* reason for assuming that poetry must be earlier than analysis, in fact some degree of analytical presentation is a typical feature of oral transmission and as such can be expected to have been part of the early Buddhist tradition from its outset. As far as I can see, there is no sound basis for assuming that the *Aṭṭhakavagga* must be reflecting an earlier and substantially different type of Buddhism than that found in the *Brahmajāla* and other such discourses.

In relation to the term 如來, the overall theme and culmination point of the *Brahmajāla* would be in line with considering the Buddha to be a "thus gone" one, gone beyond the entanglement of views and gone beyond rebirth. At least at the explicit level the point at stake does not appear to be his supposedly long preparation during past lives for becoming a Tathāgata.⁸ Thus, although the choice of 如來 by the translators of the Chinese parallels to

⁵ [6] Sn 766 to 975 and T 198 at T IV 174b8 to 189c23.

⁶ [7] Cf., e.g. Gómez 1976, Vetter 1990: 44–52, and Burford 1991: 45–70.

⁷ [8] Norman 2003: 519 concludes that "there is, however, no reason whatsoever for believing that the form of Buddhism taught in the [Aṭṭhaka-]vagga represents the whole of Buddhism at the time of its composition, and that everything not included in it must be a later addition"; cf. also the discussion in Fuller 2005: 148–153, for an appraisal of the philosophy underlying the *Aṭṭhakavagga* Jayawickrama 1948/1978: 45–57 and Premasiri 1972, and on its poetic nature Shulman 2012/2013.

⁸ [9] For a study of the gradual evolution of the bodhisattva ideal cf. Anālayo 2010b and 2017a.

the *Brahmajāla* reflects the established translation terminology, it does not reflect the contents of the translated text too well.

Whereas 如來 appears to have been pervasive in Chinese translations of Buddhist texts, even within the small corpus of *Āgama* translations a few variations can be found. In what follows I turn to one such variation in the partly preserved *Samyukta-āgama* (T 100).⁹

The Tetralemma on a Tathāgata's Existence after Death

The discourse from the partly preserved *Samyukta-āgama* (T 100) to be taken up here is a parallel to the *Aggivacchagotta-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*. Together with parallels in the nearly complete *Samyukta-āgama* (T 99) and in the *Abhidharmakośopāyika-ṭīkā*,^[13] the discourse reports that a wanderer had approached the Buddha and requested him to take a position in relation to what are known as the undeclared questions, a standard set of propositions that the early discourses present as a topic of frequent interest and discussion among non-Buddhist practitioners.¹⁰ These are not so much questions, properly speaking, but rather a set of proposals to which one is expected to react by affirming one of the alternatives they posit. The standard response by the Buddha is to refuse to affirm any of the proposed positions.¹¹

⁹ [10] On this collection cf. Bingenheimer 2011.

¹⁰ [11] For a comparative study of the parallel versions cf. Anālayo 2011b: 389–393.

¹¹ [12] The reason(s) for the Buddha's refusal to take up any of these positions has been a recurrent topic of scholarly discussion; cf., e.g., Oldenberg 1881/1961: 256–263, Schrader 1904/1905, Beckh 1919: 118–121, Keith 1923/1979: 62–67, Thomas 1927/2003: 201f, de La Vallée Poussin 1928, Organ 1954, Murti 1955/2008: 36–50, Nagao 1955/1992: 38, Frauwallner 1956/2003a: 141f, Jayatilleke 1963/1980: 470–476, Smart 1964/1976: 34f, Kalupahana 1975: 177f, Lamotte 1976: 2003–2005, Collins 1982: 131–138, Pannikar 1989/1990: 61–76, Tilakaratne 1993: 109–121, Harvey 1995: 84–87, Vélez de Cea 2004, Manda 2005, Karunadasa 2007 and 2013: 129–149.

Besides affirmations about the eternity and finiteness of the world and the identity of body and soul, these undeclared questions involve four possible descriptions of the fate of a Tathāgata after death. In such contexts the term Tathāgata stands for a fully awakened one in general and is not restricted in meaning to the Buddha. The four propositions are that after death a Tathāgata:

- exists,
- does not exist,
- both exists and does not exist,
- neither exists nor does not exist.

According to the tetralemma of ancient Indian logic, these four possibilities exhaust the pronouncements one could possibly make on this matter. The *Aggivacchagotta-sutta* employs the term Tathāgata in its description of this tetralemma, which has as its counterparts 如來 in the nearly complete *Samyukta-āgama* (T 99) and *de bzhin gshegs pa* in the discourse quotation in the *Abhidharma-kośopāyika-tīkā*.¹² The relevant part of the partly preserved *Samyukta-āgama* proceeds as follows:¹³

The self of living beings which, on passing away here, is born there: does it exist, does it not exist, does it exist as well as not exist, does it neither exist nor not exist?

A reference to the self, 神我, of living beings would have been easily intelligible to the average readership in ancient China.¹⁴ One might only doubt whether this expression would have been under-

¹² [13] MN 72 at MN I 484,27, SĀ 962 at T II 245c5, and D 4094 *ju* 157a6 or Q 5595 *tu* 181b1.

¹³ [14] The translated part is taken from SĀ² 196 at T II 445a18f, which continues with the additional option "nor does it not exist, nor does it not not exist", 非非有, 非非無; this appears to be a textual error.

¹⁴ [15] On 神 in pre-Buddhist China cf., e.g., Andreini 2011 and Park 2012: 166f, and on 識神/神識 Radich 2016.

stood to function as a gloss on the term Tathāgata. In relation this gloss, the Pāli commentarial tradition offers additional information. The commentaries understand the term Tathāgata, when used as part of the undeclared question, to refer to a living being, *satta*.¹⁵ [14] This commentarial gloss intends to explain why the Buddha refused to take any of the four positions on the destiny of a Tathāgata, namely because each position is based on misconceiving a Tathāgata to be an actual living being in the sense of a self.

The basic reason for such rejection can be seen similarly in the refusal to affirm whether the world is eternal or not eternal. In view of the all-pervasive scope of the teaching on impermanence in early Buddhist thought, one would not expect the Buddha to be depicted as having any qualms in stating that the world is not eternal. Therefore the reason for his reported refusal to take a position in this respect suggests that the term "world" in these undeclared questions is employed with implicit assumptions that from a Buddhist viewpoint are misconceived. That is, the world is conceived of as an independently existing world outside, about which predications can be made, whereas from the perspective of early Buddhist thought the term world has its significance only as a referent to experience arisen in dependence on the six senses.¹⁶

The same principle holds for proposals about the identity or difference of body and soul. Given that from the early Buddhist perspective there is no soul in the first place, it is hardly possible to make a meaningful statement about its association with or dissociation from the body.

Returning to the Pāli commentarial gloss, if a Tathāgata is understood in these questions to be an actual living being, a *satta*

¹⁵ [16] Sv I 118,1, Ps III 141,21, Spk II 201,4, and Mp IV 37,22; on this commentarial gloss cf. also Gnanarama 1997b: 236f, Manda 2005, and Karunadasa 2007: 7–12.

¹⁶ [17] Cf., e.g., SN 35.68 at SN IV 39,28 and its parallel SĀ 230 at T II 56a27.

or 眾生, in the sense of a self, then it indeed does not make much sense to take up any of these alternative proposals, as the very concept they employ is misguided.¹⁷

Besides the *Aggivaśchagotta-sutta* and its parallels, another case that also involves the tetralemma on a Tathāgata occurs in a discourse translated individually into Chinese, a parallel to the *Cūḷamāluṅkya-sutta*. In this discourse, for a change, it is one of the Buddha's monastic disciples who insists on being given an answer to these undeclared questions.¹⁸ The individually translated discourse apparently renders the term Tathāgata in this context just as 如此, "like this".¹⁹

Other monastic disciples are also on record for not having always handled the tetralemma on a Tathāgata in the proper manner. One discourse reports a monk flatly stating that a fully awakened one will be annihilated at death. Being taken to task by Sāriputta for this statement, this monk has to admit that he is not able to identify a Tathāgata even while alive with the five aggregates, leaving little ground for him to make any prediction about a Tathāgata after death.²⁰ This confirms that the reason for refusing to take up any of the possibilities envisaged in the

¹⁷ [18] Harvey 1983: 48 concludes that "views on a Tathagata after death ... are set aside because they contain misapprehensions as to what a Tathagata is."

¹⁸ [19] MN 63 at MN I 426,13, which has another parallel in MĀ 221 at T I 804a27 that employs the standard 如來; for a comparative study cf. Anālayo 2011b: 353–355.

¹⁹ [20] The whole tetralemma in T 91 at T I 917b20f proceeds like this: 有如此命終, 無有命終, 有此, 無有此, 無有命終 (although attributed to Ān Shigāo (安世高), T 91 is not included in the list of works that can safely be attributed to him by Zürcher 1991: 297, Nattier 2008: 46, Zschettli 2010a, and Vetter 2012: 7). The way of rendering Tathāgata in this discourse is reminiscent of the interpretation proposed by Gombrich 2009: 151, cited above p. 102 note 1.

²⁰ [21] SN 22.85 at SN III 112,5 and its parallel SĀ 104 at T II 31b1; translated in Anālayo 2014g: 14.

tetralemma reflects indeed the need to clarify first of all what the term Tathāgata stands for. [15]

In the context of the tetralemma, the term Tathāgata concerns a "thus gone" one, as the whole point of the discussion is about the future destiny of such a fully awakened one, about whether a Tathāgata "goes" somewhere or not. Here, too, the translation 如來 found most frequently for this type of discussion is not the best choice for this context.

The Tathāgata's Emergence in the *Ekottarika-āgama*

The passage to be taken up next is part of a relatively short discourse in the *Ekottarika-āgama*, parallel to an even shorter discourse (if it can even be called such) in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*. The Chinese *Ekottarika-āgama* in general has a rather chequered history and it seems clear that material was added in China and the whole collection underwent considerable reworking.²¹ The present discourse, however, does not seem to exhibit evident markers of reworking or addition of later material and thus might represent one of the parts of the collection that still reflect the Indic original, within the limits of the abilities of its translator. Of particular interest in this case is the use of two alternative ways of 'translating' the term Tathāgata. In order to draw attention to these, in my rendering of the discourse I add in brackets the Chinese for occurrences of the term Tathāgata.²²

²¹ [22] On the addition of a whole discourse cf. Anālayo 2013h, on instances reflecting Mahāyāna thought Anālayo 2013d, and on reworking of material by merging together what originally would have been individual discourses cf. Anālayo 2014/2015 and 2015g. The stimulating research by Palumbo 2013 has not yet been able to present a reconstruction of the history of the translation of this collection that can explain such findings; cf. in more detail Anālayo 2015g: 23–31.

²² [23] The translated discourse is EĀ 8.2 at T II 561a8 to 561a16, parallel to AN 1.13.1 at AN I 22,1 to 22,6.

Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was staying at Sāvattthī in Jeta's Grove, the Park of Anāthapiṇḍika. At that time the Blessed One said to the monks:

"If one person emerges in the world, he will greatly benefit people and comfort living beings, out of pity for the creatures of the world wishing to cause *devas* and humans to obtain merits.²³ Who is that one person? That is, it is the Tathāgata (多薩阿竭), the arhat, the fully awakened one. This is reckoned to be the one person whose emergence in the world greatly benefits people and comforts living beings, who out of pity for the creatures of the world wishes to cause *devas* and humans to obtain merits.

"For this reason, monks, constantly arouse reverence towards the Tathāgata (如來). For this reason, monks, you should train yourselves in this."

At that time the monks, hearing what the Buddha had said, were delighted and received it respectfully.

This passage complements the depiction of the exalted nature of the Tathāgata in the *Brahmajāla*, highlighting the beneficial effects and compassionate nature of his teaching activity. Noteworthy in the passage translated above is the change between two modes of translating what in the Indic original would have been the same term, namely 多薩阿竭 and the standard 如來. The expression 多薩阿竭 occurs also in other *Ekottarika-āgama* discourses.²⁴ [16] This is remarkable not only in terms of a lack of consistency of translation terminology, but also inasmuch as in

²³ [24] AN 1.13.1 does not mention a wish for *devas* and humans to obtain merits.

²⁴ [25] A search in the CBETA edition brings up nineteen occurrences, of which eleven are in the same chapter in which EĀ 8.2 is found, the rest occur singly (EĀ 12.3, EĀ 25.3, EĀ 29.3, EĀ 35.10, EĀ 42.3, and EĀ 49.2), except for one case where the phrase appears in two consecutive discourses (EĀ 20.6 and EĀ 20.7).

this instance the idea of having thus come, 如來, fits the context better than in the examples surveyed so far.

A similar alternation between 如來 and 多薩阿竭 can also be found in the 菩薩從兜術天降神母胎說廣普經 (T 384),²⁵ whose translation is attributed to Zhú Fóniàn (竺佛念) who also translated the *Ekottarika-āgama*.²⁶ This gives the impression that perhaps Zhú Fóniàn had a penchant for introducing the phrase 多薩阿竭.²⁷

Such a penchant could have been inspired by occurrences of the comparable phrase 怛薩阿竭 in earlier translations by Dharmarakṣa, Mokṣala, and Lokakṣema.²⁸ Karashima (2010: 98) explains that 怛薩阿竭 is "a transliteration of Gāndhārī **tasa-agada* (< Skt. **tathā-āgata*); cf. Gāndhārī *tasagada* (< Skt. *tathāgata*)".²⁹ The change of the first character from 怛 to 多 might in turn have

²⁵ [26] T 384 at T XII 1023b12. The same pattern can be seen in T 622 at T XV 346a26, which refers to the 如來 and right away in the next line to the 多薩阿竭, and in T 623 at T XV 348b15, where both expressions are in the same line. A single occurrence of 多薩阿竭 can also be found, e.g., in the *Sarvāstivāda Vinaya*, T 1435 at T XXIII 333c20, with the variant 多陀阿竭; this is the main reading at T XXIII 327a6, with the variant 多陀阿伽 (which occurs also, e.g., in SĀ² 208 at T II 451c3 in direct juxtaposition with 如來).

²⁶ [27] For evidence that the *Ekottarika-āgama* extant in the Taishō edition as entry no. 125 with high probability was not the result of a translation undertaken by Gautama Saṅghadeva cf. Hung and Anālayo 2017 and Radich and Anālayo 2017, and for its attribution to Zhú Fóniàn (竺佛念) Radich 2017.

²⁷ [28] Regarding such a penchant in general, Zacchetti 2016: 87 explains that "earlier translations constituted, in effect, a 'canon' to which one could refer for rendering terminology and stock phrases when producing new translations, even of different scriptures. This *modus operandi* may have ultimately contributed to the habit of conserving early translations in the later canon."

²⁸ [29] T 222 at T VIII 151c11 = Zacchetti 2005: 200 (§2.1), T 221 at T VIII 18b27, and T 224 at T VIII 429a27; another example would be T 816 at T XVII 813a16, attributed to 安法欽 (Ān Fāqīn).

²⁹ [30] Cf. also Karashima 2006: 356f.

been inspired by occurrences of such alternative phrases as 多阿竭 and 多訶竭 in translations by Dharmarakṣa.³⁰

From the viewpoint of the semantic polyvalence of the term, transliterations like 多薩阿竭 share with the Tibetan *de bzhin gshegs pa* the advantage that they carry the same ambiguity as the Indic term and thus do not require taking a decision between *tathā āgata* and *tathā gata*. A drawback of the same usage is that the expression 多薩阿竭 would hardly have been intelligible to the average Chinese reader unfamiliar with the term, unless already habituated to this or similar transliterations from their usage in other texts.

Praises of the Tathāgata in the *Madhyama-āgama*

My last example stems from the *Madhyama-āgama*, which offers the only translation of the term Tathāgata among those selected for study in the present chapter that follows the alternative meaning *tathā gata*, "thus gone".³¹ [17]

The *Madhyama-āgama* discourse in question is a parallel to the *Upāli-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*.³² According to the narration that leads up to the relevant passage, a lay follower of the Jains by the name of Upāli had gone to debate with the Buddha. During the ensuing discussion he was converted and attained stream-entry. Back home he told his doorkeeper that Jain mendicants were no longer to be admitted to his house.

³⁰ [31] T 222 at T VIII 148b18 = Zacchetti 2005: 163 (§1.81) (an occurrence of 多阿竭 at 150c24 has the variants 多呵竭 and 多訶竭; Zacchetti 2005: 192 (§1.171) adopts the first of the two) and T VIII 151a28; cf. also the discussion in Karashima 2006: 357 note 6.

³¹ [32] Needless to say, with the present study I do not intend to present a comprehensive survey of Chinese translations of the term Tathāgata; on which cf. also, e.g., Nattier 2003b: 210f and Radich 2011/2012: 254 note 108.

³² [33] For a comparative study cf. Anālayo 2011b: 320–333.

On hearing this unexpected turn of events, the leader of the Jains comes himself for a visit. Upāli behaves somewhat disrespectfully and proclaims that the teachings of the Jains do not withstand closer scrutiny, comparable to a monkey which will not survive being pounded in order to make its hide shiny. When asked by the exasperated leader of the Jains whom he considers his teacher, Upāli breaks out into a series of impromptu verses in praise of the Buddha. One of these reads as follows in the *Madhyama-āgama* version:³³

With craving eradicated, incomparably awakened,
He is without 'smoke' and has no 'flame' [of defilement].
The Tathāgata (如去) is the Well-gone One
Incomparable and without equal.
He is praised for having attained what is right
And Upāli is the Buddha's disciple.

The corresponding verse in the *Upāli-sutta* refers to the Tathāgata, as is the case for a Sanskrit fragment parallel.³⁴ This makes it safe to conclude that the rendering 如去 in the verse above indeed translates this term.

The same line also carries a rendering of another recurrent epithet of the Buddha as the "Well-gone One", *sugata*, translated as 善逝. A discourse in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* identifies the two terms with each other.³⁵ In reply to a query "who is a *sugata*?", this *Aṅguttara-nikāya* discourse has the standard formulation of the arising of a Tathāgata in the world and then concludes that such a one is called *sugata*.

Norman (1990/1993a: 163) comments on the term Tathāgata that one can "assume that *-gata* is used in the same way as in *su-*

³³ [34] MĀ 133 at T I 632c4 to 632c6.

³⁴ [35] MN 56 at MN I 386,28 and Waldschmidt 1979: 12 (§95).

³⁵ [36] AN 4.160 at AN II 147,3.

gata and *duggata*".³⁶ On the assumption that this would indeed have been a prominent sense of the term in its early usage as reflected in *Āgama* and *Nikāya* discourses, the present instance of the translation 如去, which in the *Madhyama-āgama* occurs only in this one passage instead of the otherwise frequently used 如來, is at the same time the only of the alternatives surveyed in this chapter that fully conveys this meaning of a "thus gone" one.

³⁶ [³⁷] On the remainder of the comment made by Norman cf. Griffiths 1994: 210 note 5, and for discussions of the term *tathāgata* in general (in addition to the references above p. 104 note 11) cf., e.g., Chalmers 1898, Senart 1898, Shawe 1898, de Harlez 1899, Hopkins 1911, Franke 1913a: 287–297, Anesaki 1921, Walleser 1930, Thomas 1933/2004: 151f and 1936, Coomaraswamy 1938 (or 1939: 140), Horner 1938/1982: lvi, Lamotte 1944/1981: 126 note 1, Dutt 1960/1971: 295–304, Bodhi 1978, Carter 1978: 70–72 note 31, Harvey 1983, Habito 1988: 136 note 30, Norman 1990/1993a: 162f, Griffiths 1994: 60f, Endo 1997/2002: 195–206, Gnanarama 1997a: 196–209, Saibaba 2005: 129, Anālayo 2008c, Gombrich 2009: 151, Meisig 2010: 67, and Skilling 2013a: 3f.

Brahmajāla-sutta (DN 1) Part 4

Introduction

In the present chapter I translate and study the treatment of the sixty-two ways of developing views in the *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel to the *Brahmajāla-sutta*. After an introductory evaluation of the contrast between holding views and the Tathāgata's transcendence of views, I translate excerpts from the analysis of views in the Chinese *Dīrgha-āgama*, with each major section of this analysis followed by a comparison with the corresponding section in the other versions extant in Pāli, Sanskrit, Chinese, and Tibetan.¹

Views and the proper attitude to them are a recurrent theme in the early discourses. Whereas several passages advocate the abandoning of all views, others present right view as an important factor of the path to liberation. Closer inspection shows that what at first sight might seem to be two differing positions turns out to be two complementary facets of the same attitude.

Right view, *sammā diṭṭhi*, is the first factor of the noble eightfold path. Now the *Cūḷavedalla-sutta* and its parallels place right view in the aggregate of wisdom.² Thus right view being the first factor of the noble eightfold path seems to be a deliberate diver-

* Originally published in 2009 under the title "Views and the Tathāgata – A Comparative Study and Translation of the Brahmajāla in the Chinese Dīrgha-āgama" in *Buddhist and Pali Studies in Honour of the Venerable Professor Kakkapalliye Anuruddha*, K.L. Dhammajoti et al. (ed.), 183–234, Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhist Studies, University of Hong Kong.

¹ Owing to the considerable number of parallels, in what follows I only take up selected differences, a comprehensive survey of variations being beyond the scope of the present chapter.

² MN 44 at MN I 301,9, MĀ 210 at T I 788c11, and D 4094 *ju* 7b6 or Q 5595 *tu* 8b5; cf. also Abhidh-k 2.26 in Pradhan 1967: 55,14.

gence from the usual sequence of the gradual path, which proceeds from morality via concentration to wisdom. This departure from the usual sequence points to the preliminary function of right view as the indispensable directional input for a proper practice of the path. The *Mahācattārīsakā-sutta* and its parallels quite explicitly highlight this role of *sammā diṭṭhi* by presenting right view as the precursor to the entire path.³

According to the definition of the noble eightfold path in the *Saccavibhaṅga-sutta* and its parallel, right view stands for insight into the four noble truths.⁴ [184] Applied to the human predicament, right view recognizes the existence of *dukkha*, detects its cause to be craving, identifies the remedy to be the removal of craving, and prescribes the noble eightfold path as the way to liberation. In sum, right view involves the clear recognition that any form of craving or attachment will inevitably lead to *dukkha*.

Applied in the context of the ancient Indian setting, this recognition of the role of craving and attachment provides a decisive perspective on views in general. The repercussions of holding a view with craving and attachment are thematized in the *Aṭṭhakavagga* of the *Sutta-nipāta*, for example, which repeatedly emphasizes the need to go beyond views.⁵ This emphasis is but an implementation of right view in the sense of the four noble truths, inasmuch as the point is to recognize how craving and attachment manifest in dogmatic adherence to views. That is, *sammā diṭṭhi* is "*sammā*" to the extent to which it sees through

³ MN 117 at MN III 71,22: *sammādiṭṭhi pubbaṅgamā hoti*, MĀ 189 at T I 735c13: 正見最在其前, and D 4094 *nyu* 44b6 or Q 5595 *thu* 84a8: *yang dag pa'i lta ba sngon du 'gro ba*.

⁴ E.g. MN 141 at MN III 251,12 and its parallel MĀ 31 at T I 469a15.

⁵ [6] Cf. in more detail the publications mentioned above p. 103 note 7; a translation of the Chinese counterpart can be found in Bapat 1945 and 1950.

craving and attachment – ideally even in regard to Buddhist viewpoints and positions.

The need to leave behind views in the sense of dogmatic adherence and attachment, and the concomitant need to be endowed with right view by way of a clear vision (and gradual deepening of appreciation) of the four noble truths, is brought out in the concluding verse of the *Metta-sutta* in the *Sutta-nipāta*. This verse describes the one who goes beyond rebirth in a womb as one who does not "go into views", but at the same time is virtuous and "endowed with vision".⁶ In the Pāli original, this involves a word play on the derivatives of $\sqrt{dṛś}$, where "views", *diṭṭhi*, is contrasted to "vision", *dassana*.

The same word play recurs in the *Aggivacchagotta-sutta*, according to which the Tathāgata has put away "views", *diṭṭhi*, since he has "seen", *diṭṭha*, the impermanent nature of the five aggregates.⁷ Parallels to the *Aggivacchagotta-sutta* in the two Chinese *Saṃyukta-āgama* translations and in Tibetan translation provide a complementary perspective on the same matter, as according to them the vision of the Tathāgata concerns the four noble truths.⁸ Whether it be the Tathāgata's vision of the impermanent nature of the five aggregates or of the four noble truths, his vision is reckoned to be of such nature that it leaves behind entanglement in views.

⁶ [7] Sn 152: *diṭṭhiñ ca anupagamma sīlavā dassanena sampanno*.

⁷ [8] MN 72 at MN I 486,12: *diṭṭhaṃ h'etaṃ ... tathāgatena: iti rūpaṃ ... vedanā ... saññā ... saṅkhārā ... viññāṇaṃ, iti viññāṇassa samudayo, iti viññāṇassa atthagamo*.

⁸ [9] SĀ 962 at T II 245c22: 見此苦聖諦, 此苦集聖諦, 此苦滅聖諦, 此苦滅道跡聖諦, SĀ² 196 at T II 445b9: 見苦聖諦, 見苦集諦, 見苦滅諦, 見至苦滅道諦, and D 4094 ju 157b6 or Q 5595 tu 182a7: *sdug bsngal 'phags pa'i bden pa'o zhes yang dag pa'i shes rab kyis ci lta ba bzhin mthong zhing, 'di ni sdug bsngal kun 'byung ba'o, 'di ni sdug bsngal 'gog pa'o, 'di ni sdug bsngal 'gog par 'gro ba'i lam*.

The Tathāgata's transcendence of entanglement in views is in fact the central theme of the *Aggivacchagotta-sutta* and its parallels, which contrast what views have to say about the Tathāgata to what the Tathāgata has to say about views. What views have to say about the Tathāgata takes the form of the tetralemma. ^[185] As already mentioned in the previous chapter, this presentation presumes the future destiny of a Tathāgata to be describable in one out of four alternative logical propositions, tetralemma.⁹ These are:

- the Tathāgata exists after death,
- the Tathāgata does not exist after death,
- the Tathāgata exists and does not exist after death,
- the Tathāgata neither exists nor does not exist after death.

To the bewilderment of his visitor, who had hoped the Buddha would make a pronouncement on the nature of the Tathāgata in accordance with one or another of these four possibilities, according to the *Aggivacchagotta-sutta* and its parallels the Buddha refused to take up any of these positions. The motivation for this refusal – that is, what the Tathāgata has to say about views – appears to have two aspects, both of which relate to the problem of mistaken premises, already mentioned in the previous chapter.

One of these two aspects is that to take up any of these positions is to fall prey to the entanglement of views. According to the *Aggivacchagotta-sutta* and its Tibetan parallel, such entanglement is not conducive to liberation,¹⁰ a point made in the parallels in the *Samyukta-āgama* by indicating that such entanglement will

⁹ ^[10] Cf. above p. 105. The first two of these propositions can be seen to underlie the query posed in the *Kaṭha Upaniṣad*, Kaṭh Up 1.20: *yeyam prete vicikitsā manuṣye 'sīty eke nāyam astīti caike*, translated by Radhakrishnan 1953/1992: 603 as "there is this doubt in regard to a man who has departed, some (holding) that he is and some that he is not"; *ibid.* explains that the query "is about the condition of the liberated soul", cf. also Rhys Davids 1899: 46 note 2.

¹⁰ ^[11] MN 72 at MN I 485,31 and D 4094 *ju* 157b2 or Q 5595 *tu* 181b8.

lead to future birth, old age, and death.¹¹ The other aspect is that a Tathāgata is by his very nature beyond being identified with any of the five aggregates even while he is alive, let alone attempting to identify him after death.¹² Trying to predicate the existence or non-existence of a Tathāgata after death is, according to the *Aggivacchagotta-sutta* and its parallels, comparable to trying to predicate the direction in which a fire has gone once it has been extinguished.¹³

The contrast between entanglement in views and the Tathāgata's aloofness from views, depicted in the *Aggivacchagotta-sutta* and its parallels, receives a more detailed treatment in the *Brahmajāla-sutta* and its parallels. After a survey of matters related to the Buddha's moral conduct as possible instances of praise,¹⁴ the *Brahmajāla-sutta* and its parallels present a penetrative analysis of views as something that has a more justified claim to praise than moral conduct. This part of the *Brahmajāla-sutta* and its parallels thereby draws out in detail the contrast between views and the Tathāgata, showing how certain experiences or ways of reasoning may lead to various views, all of which have been utterly transcended by the Tathāgata. [186]

The *Brahmajāla-sutta*, being the first discourse in the *Dīghanikāya*,¹⁵ has a Chinese counterpart in the twenty-first discourse

¹¹ [12] SĀ 962 at T II 245c14 and SĀ² 196 at T II 445b4.

¹² [13] Karunadasa 1994: 8 explains that "to predicate whether something exists or not one should be able to identify it ... [but] there is no identifiable self-entity called Tathāgata, either to be perpetuated or annihilated after 'death'", wherefore any statement made about a Tathāgata after death becomes meaningless.

¹³ [14] MN 72 at MN I 487,11, SĀ 962 at T II 245c28, SĀ² 196 at T II 445b17, and D 4094 *ju* 158a2 or Q 5595 *tu* 182b2.

¹⁴ Cf. above p. 63ff.

¹⁵ DN 1 at DN I 1,1 to 46,29.

of the *Dīrgha-āgama* preserved in Chinese.¹⁶ In general terms, the section on views in the *Dīrgha-āgama* discourse is fairly similar to its Pāli parallel. A difference in diction is that the *Dīrgha-āgama* version shows recurrent irregularities, in the sense that standard passages and expressions, on being repeated, are not always worded in the same manner.¹⁷ Such variations, however, do not affect the content of the presentation.

Another version of the *Brahmajāla-sutta* is extant as an individual translation, in the sense of being a discourse translated into Chinese on its own, without being part of a translation of a discourse collection.¹⁸ Sections of the *Brahmajāla-sutta* have also been preserved in Sanskrit fragments.¹⁹ As mentioned in a previous chap-

¹⁶ This is the "discourse on the stirring of Brahmā", 梵動經, DĀ 21 at T I 88b12 to 94a13 (where the "stirring", *cāla*, appears to be a translation error for "net", *jāla*; cf. above p. 61 note 21). My translation and study of DĀ 21 and of the Tibetan discourse builds on the pioneering research on these two versions undertaken by Weller 1933, 1934, 1935, and 1971.

¹⁷ [19&20] Thus the introductions to otherwise similar statements can vary at times, or expressions like "knowing and seeing" or "putting forth a doctrine and a view" may come in the opposite sequence as "seeing and knowing" and "putting forth a view and a doctrine", etc. This appears to be a typical feature of the *Dīrgha-āgama*, cf. also Meisig 1990 for a discussion of irregularities in *Dīrgha-āgama* renderings of proper names. According to Zürcher 1991: 288, in the case of early Chinese translations "there is a strong tendency to avoid the monotonous effect of ... the verbatim repetition of whole passages, by introducing a certain amount of diversification and irregularity", as a result of which "in the same translated scripture we often find various alternative forms ... of the same *cliché*."

¹⁸ [21] This is the "discourse (spoken by the Buddha on) Brahmā's net of sixty-two views", 佛說梵網六十二見經, T 21 at T I 264a20 to 270c22. The attribution of this translation to Zhī Qiān (支謙) is doubtful, as Nattier 2008: 121 does not include T 21 in her list of his authentic works.

¹⁹ [23] Cf. SHT III 803 and SHT III 882b (which, as noted by Skilling 1997: 470 note 8, could also be parallel to MN 102), Waldschmidt et al. 1971: 5–7 and

ter, the Sanskrit version of the *Brahmajāla-sūtra* appears to have been the last discourse in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Dīrgha-āgama*.²⁰ A version of the *Brahmajāla-sūtra* is also extant in Tibetan translation.²¹

In addition to these discourses, the *Brahmajāla* treatment is also found as a quotation in two later works. One of these is the **Śāriputrābhidharma*, a treatise preserved only in Chinese and apparently stemming from the Dharmaguptaka tradition.²² The relevant portion covers the entire treatment of views, without, however, the introductory narration and the section on morality. The other quotation is found in Śamathadeva's *Abhidharma-kośopāyikā-ṭīkā* extant in Tibetan translation, which gives the *Brahmajāla-sūtra* in its entirety.²³ [187]

In what follows, I translate the analysis of views from the *Dīrgha-āgama* version section by section,²⁴ alternating between translation and comparison of the main features of each section

131f, SHT V 1571, Sander and Waldschmidt 1985: 262f, Hartmann 1989: 46–57, SHT VI 1248 and SHT VI 1356, Bechert and Wille 1989: 48 and 95, Hartmann 1991: 78–90 (§§13–16) and 2002: 135f, SHT X 4189, Wille 2008: 307, Or 15009/ 217, Ye 2009: 240, and Or 15007/107, Wille 2015: 42.

²⁰ [24] Cf. above p. 81 note 4.

²¹ [25] This is the "discourse on the net of Brahmā", *tshangs pa'i dra ba'i mdo*, which has been edited together with its Mongolian translation by Weller 1934. On the basis of translation terminology employed in the Tibetan version, Weller 1933: 197f comes to the conclusion that the original used for translation would have been in Sanskrit, derived from an earlier version in Prākṛit.

²² [26] T 1548 at T XXVIII 656b19 to 661a7 only has the examination of views, introduced as being the "sixty-two views, as spoken in the discourse on Brahmā's net", 六十二見, 如梵網經說. On the probability that the **Śāriputrābhidharma* stems from the Dharmaguptaka tradition cf. Bareau 1950 and below p. 142 note 62.

²³ [28] The quotation of at D 4094 *ju* 141b5 to 153b7 or Q 5595 *tu* 162b6 to 177b2 is introduced by the title *tshangs pa'i dra ba*.

²⁴ [29] The translated section begins at T I 89c19.

with its parallels, together with an evaluation of the significance of the respective presentation. Within the context of the discourse as a whole, the studied portion sets in by highlighting that, compared with the Buddha's exemplary moral conduct described in the preceding sections, the Buddha's penetrative insight into views is a more profound matter and therefore more worthy of praise. This serves as an introduction to the first type of views examined in the *Brahmajāla*, views about the past that uphold eternalism.

I. Views Related to the Past – Eternalism²⁵

The Buddha told the monks: "There are still other teachings, very profound, sublime, and greatly illuminating teachings. Only a noble disciple is able to praise the Tathāgata for these.²⁶ What are those very profound, sublime, and greatly illuminating teachings, because of which a noble disciple is able to praise the Tathāgata?

"Recluses and brahmins who have views about the past and <speculations> about the past and have views about the future and <speculations> about the future,²⁷ diverse and innumerable, declared in accordance with their mental dispositions, are all comprised among sixty-two views. Views about the past and <speculations> about the past as well as views about the future and <speculations> about the future, diverse and innumerable, declared in accordance with mental dispositions, cannot go beyond being among these sixty-two views.

²⁵ [30] Headings provided here and elsewhere are not found in the original.

²⁶ [31] Adopting the variant 法 instead of 言.

²⁷ [32] DĀ 21 at T I 89c23: 本劫本見, 末劫末見, where my emendation of "aeon" to become "speculation" is based on the assumption that the use of 劫 is due to a confusion of *kappika* with *kappa*.

"For what reasons do recluses and brahmins have those views about the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past and have views about the future and ⟨speculations⟩ about the future, diverse and innumerable, each declared in accordance with their mental dispositions, not going beyond being comprised among these sixty-two views at all?

"Recluses and brahmins have views about the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past, diverse and innumerable, declared in accordance with their mental dispositions, which can all be comprised among eighteen views. ^[90a] These views about the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past, diverse and innumerable, declared in accordance with mental dispositions, cannot go beyond being among these eighteen views.

"For what reason do recluses and brahmins have those views about the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past, diverse and innumerable, each declared in accordance with their mental dispositions, not going beyond being comprised among these eighteen views at all? ^[188]

"Recluses and brahmins who have views about the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past, propounding a doctrine of eternalism, proclaim that 'the self and the world exist eternally', which are all comprised among four views. These views about the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past, proclaiming that 'the self and the world exist eternally', do not go beyond being comprised among these four views at all.

"For what reasons do recluses and brahmins have those views about the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past, propounding a doctrine of eternalism, proclaiming that 'the self and the world exist eternally', not going beyond being comprised among these four views at all?

I.1²⁸ "Some recluses and brahmins by various means attain a meditative concentration of the mind. Relying on their concentrated mind they recollect twenty aeons of evolution and dissolution. They [then] declare: 'The self and the world are eternal, this is true and all else is false.' Why is that so? By relying on various means I attained a meditative concentration of the mind. Relying on this concentrated mind I recollected twenty aeons of evolution and dissolution. Therein the [number of] living beings neither increased nor decreased,²⁹ they were always together and did not disperse. From this I know that 'the self and the world are eternal, this is true and all else is false.'

"This is the first view by recluses and brahmins who, because of having views about the past and <speculations> about the past, speculate that 'the self and the world exist eternally', not going beyond being comprised among these four views at all.

I.2 "Some recluses and brahmins by various means attain a meditative concentration of the mind. Relying on their concentrated mind they recollect forty aeons of evolution and dissolution. They [then] declare: 'The self and the world are eternal, this is true and all else is false.' Why is that so? By relying on various means I attained a meditative concentration of the mind. Relying on this concentrated mind I recollected forty aeons of evolution and dissolution. Therein the [number of] living beings neither increased nor decreased, they were always together and did not disperse. From this I know that 'the self and the world are eternal, this is true and all else is false.'

²⁸ [33] Numbers provided here and elsewhere in the translation are not found in the original.

²⁹ Silk 2015a: 15f highlights that the notion of beings neither increasing nor decreasing has precedents in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*.

"This is the second view by recluses and brahmins who, because of having views about the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past, speculate that 'the self and the world exist eternally', not going beyond being comprised among these four views at all. ^[189]

I.3 "Some recluses and brahmins by various means attain a meditative concentration of the mind. Relying on their concentrated mind they recollect eighty aeons of evolution and dissolution. They [then] declare: 'The self and the world are eternal, this is true and all else is false.' Why is that so? By relying on various means I attained a meditative concentration of the mind. Relying on this concentrated mind I recollected eighty aeons of evolution and dissolution. Therein the [number of] living beings neither increased nor decreased, they were always together and did not disperse. From this I know that 'the self and the world are eternal, ^[90b] this is true and all else is false.'

"This is the third view by recluses and brahmins who, because of having views about the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past, speculate that 'the self and the world exist eternally', not going beyond being comprised among these four views at all.

I.4 "Some recluses and brahmins have swift discriminative knowledge and are skilled at examination. Relying on their swift discriminative knowledge and various means of examination, they reckon their observations to be truth. Relying on their own views, relying on their own discernment, they declare: 'The self and the world are eternal.'

"This is the fourth view by recluses and brahmins who, because of having views about the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past, speculate that 'the self and the world exist eternally', not going beyond being comprised among these four views at all.

"Recluses and brahmins, who have views about the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past, speculate that 'the self and the world exist eternally', are like this completely comprised among these four views. [Views] that 'the self and the world are eternal' do not go beyond being among these four views at all.

"Only a Tathāgata knows the compass of these views, how they are upheld, how they are grasped, and he also knows their result. The Tathāgata's knowledge goes still beyond that, and even though he has such knowledge he is not attached to it. Being already without attachment and having attained quiescence, he knows the arising of feelings, their cessation, their gratification, their disadvantage, and the escape from them. By way of this unbiased vision he has been liberated without remainder, for which reason he is called a Tathāgata. This is another very profound, sublime, and greatly illuminating principle, for which a noble disciple truly and in an unbiased way praises the Tathāgata." [190]

Regarding these four grounds for arriving at eternalist views, a major difference in the various versions of the *Brahmajāla* can be found in regard to the last ground. The Pāli and the *Dīrgha-āgama* versions agree in identifying theoretical speculation as the fourth source for eternalist views, a presentation also found in the **Śāri-putrābhidharma*. The individual Chinese translation, however, describes how someone develops concentration.³⁰ Although this

³⁰ [35] T 21 at T I 266a26: "energetically he [develops] quietness and one-pointedness of the mind, practising the overcoming of evil activities he promptly [attains] such a mental concentration of the mind that [although] a basis in recollection and quietness has been established, his recollection [of the past] is confounded." My rendering of the expression 如其像, literally "that kind of image", follows the suggestion made in general by Kuan 2007: 191 note 24 that

person does not succeed in developing any recollection of the past, his proclamation of the eternal nature of the self and the world is nevertheless related to some degree of meditation practice.

In the two Tibetan versions, the fourth ground for eternalist views clearly involves meditation practice. In this case, such meditation practice has led to the exercise of the divine eye, with the help of which the recluse or brahmin in question sees beings passing away and being reborn.³¹ That is, from the perspective of these two versions the alternative to recollection of the past is not theoretical speculation, but rather meditative proficiency that enables witnessing the passing away and re-arising of beings.

In the case of the other three grounds for eternalist views, however, the different versions are in close agreement in that recollection of the past is responsible for affirming eternalism. What makes the difference between these three cases is the time period recollected, which in the Pāli version is up to several hundred thousand births, up to ten aeons, and up to forty aeons. According to the *Dīrgha-āgama* account, the three time periods are twenty, forty, or eighty aeons. The individual Chinese translation, the Tibetan discourse, and the quotations in the **Śāriputrābhidharma* and in Śamathadeva's *Abhidharmakośopāyikā-ṭīkā* agree with the *Dīrgha-āgama* version in listing time periods of twenty, forty, and eighty aeons.³²

this would render an equivalent to *tathārūpa*, "such", found in the present case in DN 1 at DN I 13,13 in the expression *tathārūpaṃ cetosamādhim phusati*.

³¹ [36] Weller 1934: 20,9: *lha'i mig rnam par dag pa mi'i las 'das pas sems can 'chi ba dang, skye ba dang ... lta ste* and D 4094 *ju 144a4* or Q 5595 *tu 165b5: lha'i mig rnam par dag pas sems can rnam kyī 'chi 'pho ba dang, skye ba dang ... mthong nas*.

³² [37] A difference in T 21 is that whereas the twenty aeons are of the past, T I 266a14: 過去二十劫事, the forty aeons are of the future, T I 266a18: 當來四十劫事, and the eighty aeons are of the past and the future, T I 266a23: 過去

Looking back on the four cases examined so far in the *Brahmajāla* analysis, it is noteworthy that the view arrived at in all cases is the same view, an affirmation of eternalism. From this it follows that, even though the *Brahmajāla* treatment works through altogether sixty-two cases, the actual number of views in the *Brahmajāla* is less than sixty-two. Although a reference to the *Brahmajāla* in the *Isidatta-sutta* speaks of "sixty-two views",³³ the Pāli version of the *Brahmajāla-sutta* itself does not speak of "sixty-two views", but rather of "sixty-two grounds for views", the term used being *vatthu*.³⁴ Whereas the Chinese versions employ 見, a standard rendering for derivatives of $\sqrt{dṛś}$, the Tibetan discourse uses *gzhi* and Śamathadeva's *Abhidharmakośopāyikā-ṭīkā* employs *dn̄gos po*, which, similarly to the Pāli *vatthu*, stand for the "ground" that leads to the arising of a view.³⁵ Thus the *Brahmajāla* exposition does not fix the possible number of views to sixty-two, but only employs sixty-two instances in order to survey the grounds responsible for view-formation. [191]

In fact the count of views held in ancient India tends to vary. The Jain tradition knew of altogether three-hundred-sixty-three

當來八十劫事。This is curious, since to be able to foresee the future would involve a form of determinism that is not compatible with the early Buddhist teachings on causality (cf. in more detail Anālayo 2006a: 5). Hence this presentation is probably best considered due to some error in transmission or translation during which an original expression similar to the Pāli *saṃvatta-vivatta* was misunderstood to intend the future and the past.

³³ [38] SN 41.3 at SN IV 287,12: *dvāsaṭṭhiḍḍiṭṭhigatāni brahmajāle bhaṇitāni*; the parallel SĀ 570 at T II 151a20 only refers to the views, without mentioning the *Brahmajāla* by name or the count of sixty-two.

³⁴ [39] DN 1 at DN I 39,13.

³⁵ [40] Franke 1913a: 22 note 14 comments that *vatthu* in the present discourse, in addition to meaning "ground", can also carry the nuances of being a "point of view", a "way", a "mode", or a "perspective" ("Gesichtspunkt", "Weise", "Form", "Hinsicht").

views.³⁶ The pilgrim Fǎxiǎn (法顯) reports that he came across ninety-six heretical views,³⁷ a count also reflected in a Pāli commentary and a commentary extant in a Gāndhārī fragment.³⁸

A variant count can also be found in a verse in the *Sutta-nipāta*, which speaks of sixty-three heresies.³⁹ The commentary attempts to make this tally with the *Brahmajāla-sutta* by explaining that personality view (*sakkāyadiṭṭhi*) should be added to the sixty-two instances that have been covered in the *Brahmajāla-sutta*.⁴⁰ Yet, according to the *Isidatta-sutta* personality view rather underlies all the views analysed in the *Brahmajāla*.⁴¹ Hence personality view could not be reckoned as something in addition to the sixty-two.

The symbolic nature of the count of sixty-two extends even to the grounds for views. These would also not amount to sixty-two, since the first three grounds for views are all recollection of past lives. What causes a treatment in a threefold manner is variations in the time period that is recollected, variations that do not really make a difference in relation to the mode in which the respective

³⁶ [42] *Sūyagada* 2.2.79; cf. Schubring 2004: 74.

³⁷ [41] T 2085 at T LI 861a8: 此中國有九十六種外道. Deeg 2005: 310 note 1512 draws attention to a passage in the Sarvāstivāda **Vinayavibhāṣā*, which arrives at the same number by counting fifteen groups led by disciples of each of the six heretical teachers. When added to the followers of each teacher himself, this then leads to six times sixteen, hence ninety-six, T 1440 at T XXIII 536a22: 六師者, 一師十五種教, 以授弟子... 師與弟子通為十六種, 如是六師有九十六種 (adopting a variant for the last character).

³⁸ Cf. Spk II 401,10 and Baums 2009: 515f.

³⁹ [43] Sn 538: *yāni ca tīṇi yāni ca saṭṭhi ... osaraṇāni*.

⁴⁰ [44] Pj II 434,26: *yasmā sakkāyadiṭṭhiyā saha brahmajāle vuttadvāsaṭṭhidiṭṭhi-gatāni gahetvā tesasṭṭhi honti*.

⁴¹ [45] SN 41.3 at SN IV 287,13: *imā ... diṭṭhiyo sakkāyadiṭṭhiyā sati honti, sakkāyadiṭṭhiyā asati na honti*, and its parallel SĀ 570 at T II 151a21: 一切皆以身見為本, 身見集, 身見生, 身見轉; cf. also the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, T 1545 at T XXVII 406c12: 身見是六十二見趣根本.

view arises.⁴² If one were to combine the time periods mentioned in the different versions – several hundred thousand births, ten aeons, twenty aeons, forty aeons, and eighty aeons – one could with equal justification distinguish recollection of the past into five cases. In other words, the first three cases mentioned in the *Brahmajāla* treatment amount to just a single cause for the arising of eternalist views, namely recollection of past lives.

This goes to show that the purpose of the *Brahmajāla* analysis is not to establish the number sixty-two, be these sixty-two views or sixty-two grounds for views. Its purpose is rather to analyse how views arise, for which it employs a framework of sixty-two instances. In fact, since according to the *Isidatta-sutta* personality view is the underlying cause for the arising of all these views, one could even speak of a single ground responsible for all of the views depicted in the entire *Brahmajāla*. Or else, in order to stay within the confines of the *Brahmajāla* exposition itself, a single ground for all types of views would be ignorance of the true nature of feelings. This ignorance is highlighted in the concluding passage after each set of views or grounds for views examined in the *Brahmajāla* treatment, to which I return later.

Before turning to the Tathāgata's insight into the true nature of feeling as the decisive contrast to the view-forming process, however, the remaining grounds for the formulation of views in the *Brahmajāla* need to be examined. The next of these are proclamations of partial eternalism.⁴³ [192]

⁴² [46] Maithrimurthi 1999: 134 note 8 comments that, in order to arrive at a total count of four, at times the exposition in the *Brahmajāla-sutta* seems to have incorporated additional grounds that do not necessarily add to the content of the exposition. According to Syrkin 1983: 157f the *Brahmajāla-sutta* shows "an evident tendency to use fours or the multiples of four", adjusting the number of grounds to this pattern.

⁴³ The translation continues from T I 90b16.

II. Views Related to the Past – Partial Eternalism

"There are still other very profound, sublime, and greatly illuminating teachings, for which a noble disciple truly and in an unbiased way praises the Tathāgata. What are these?

"Recluses and brahmins, who have views about the past and <speculations> about the past, propound a doctrine and proclaim that 'the self and the world are partially eternal and partially impermanent.'⁴⁴ Recluses and brahmins who, because of having these views about the past and <speculations> about the past, speculate that 'the self and the world are partially eternal and partially impermanent' do not go beyond being among these four views at all.⁴⁵

II.1 "There is a certain time, at the beginning of an aeon, when the merit of some living being comes to an end, his life-force comes to an end, and his [vital] formation comes to an end. With the ending of life in the Ābhassara realm, he is reborn in an empty Brahmā world. Being reborn in this realm, he in turn craves with a mental state of attachment, further having the wish for other living beings to be reborn in this realm. Once this already born living being has given rise to such a wish out of craving and attachment, subsequently other living beings, whose life-force, [vital] formation, and merit have come to an end, with the ending of their life in the Ābhassara realm come to be reborn in the empty Brahmā world.

"Then the first reborn living being thinks in turn: 'I am Brahmā in this realm, the great Brahmā, I exist on my own, it is impossible to create me. I fully know all meanings and

⁴⁴ [47] DĀ 21 at T I 90b19: 半常半無常; literally: "half eternal and half impermanent", which I take to be intended in a figurative sense, since the first actual view proposes eternal status only for a single living being, in contrast to the impermanent nature of all other living beings.

⁴⁵ [48] Adopting a variant without 或過.

teachings, I am omnipotent among the thousand world realms and most worthy of respect, being one who is able to manifest [others], the most sublime one and the father of living beings.' At first I was here alone, the other living beings came later. [90c] Of those later [born] living beings, I am the creator.'

"Moreover, those later [born] living beings think: 'That is the great Brahmā, who is able to create himself and who is not created by others. He fully knows all meanings and teachings, he is omnipotent among the thousand world realms and most worthy of respect, being one who is able to manifest [others], the most sublime one and the father of living beings. At first he was there alone and we [came into] existence later. He created us living beings.' [193]

"Such a living being in the Brahmā world, whose life-force and [vital] formation have come to an end, is reborn in the next life in the human world. Having come of age, having shaved off his hair and beard, donned the three robes, and left the household life to practise the path, he attains a meditative concentration of the mind. With this concentration of the mind he consequently recollects his past births and in turn declares:

"'The great Brahmā is able to create himself, he is not created by others. He fully knows all meanings and teachings, he is omnipotent among the thousand world realms, being most worthy of respect, one who is able to manifest [others], being the most sublime one and the father of living beings. He remains eternally and does not change, and that Brahmā has created us. We are impermanent and [subject to] change, we do not attain lasting stability. For that reason one should know that 'the self and the world are partially eternal and partially impermanent, this is true and all else is false.'

"This is reckoned the first view by recluses and brahmins who, because of having views about the past and <specula-

tions> about the past, propound the doctrine that 'the self and the world are partially eternal and partially impermanent', not going beyond being among these four views at all.

II.2 "Some living beings are corrupted by pleasure,⁴⁶ in manifold ways they play, laugh, and amuse themselves. At the time of playing, laughing, and amusing themselves, the body [of one of them] becomes in turn extremely tired and he loses his senses.⁴⁷ On losing his senses his life in turn comes to an end. He comes to be reborn in the human world and, having come of age, having shaved off his hair and beard, donned the three robes, and left the household life to practise the path, he attains a meditative concentration of the mind. Relying on this concentration of the mind he recollects his past birth and in turn declares:

"Those other living beings,⁴⁸ who do not frequently play, laugh, and amuse themselves, they remain eternally in that realm, they exist forever and do not change. Because we frequently played and laughed, we came to be impermanent like this and subject to change. Therefore I know that 'the self and the world are partially eternal and partially impermanent, this is true and all else is false.'

⁴⁶ [50] DĀ 21 at T I 90c15: 喜戲笑懈怠, which, as noted by Weller 1971: 231 note 151, Akanuma 1930/1994: 305 identifies as a rendering of *khīḍḍāpadosikā*. A description of these and the next class of *devas* can also be found in the *Pāṭika-sutta* and its *Āgama* parallel, DN 24 at DN III 31,5 and DĀ 15 at T I 69b28; and in the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, T 1545 at T XXVII 190c18. Both are also referred to in the *Mahāsamaya-sutta*, DN 20 at DN II 260,15, and its parallels; cf. Skilling 1997: 532.

⁴⁷ [51] DĀ 21 at T I 90c16: 失意, literally they "lose their mind". DN 1 at DN I 19,14 speaks of mindfulness being lost, *sati mussati*.

⁴⁸ [52] Adopting a variant without 生不數.

"This is the second view by recluses and brahmins who, because of having views about the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past, propound the doctrine that 'the self and the world are partially eternal and partially impermanent', not going beyond being among these four views at all. ^[194]

II.3 "Some living beings, after having looked at each other's characteristics, in turn lose their senses, wherefore their life comes to an end. [One of them] comes to be reborn in the human world and, having come of age, having shaved off his hair and beard, donned the three robes, and left the household life to practise the path, he attains a meditative concentration of the mind. Relying on this concentration of the mind, he recollects his past birth and in turn makes the following declaration:

"As for those living beings who do not lose their senses, because they do not look at each other's characteristics, they exist eternally and do not change. We frequently looked at those characteristics [of others] and, ^[91a] having frequently looked at the characteristics [of others], we in turn lost our senses, came to be impermanent like this and subject to change. Therefore I know that 'the self and the world are partially eternal and partially impermanent, this is true and all else is false.'

"This is the third view by recluses and brahmins who, because of having views about the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past, propound the doctrine that 'the self and the world are partially eternal and partially impermanent', not going beyond being among these four views at all.

II.4 "Some recluses and brahmins have swift discriminative knowledge and are skilled at examination. Relying on swift examination and discriminative knowledge, relying on their own knowledge and arguments, they proclaim: 'The self and the world are partially eternal and partially impermanent, this is true and all else is false.'

"This is the fourth view by recluses and brahmins who, because of having views about the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past, propound the doctrine that 'the self and the world are partially eternal and partially impermanent', not going beyond being among these four views at all.

"Recluses and brahmins, who have views about the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past, propound the doctrine that the self and the world are partially eternal and partially impermanent, do not go beyond being comprised among these four views at all.

"Only the Buddha is able to know the compass of these views, how they are upheld and how they are grasped, and he also knows their result. The Tathāgata's knowledge goes still beyond that and even though he has such knowledge he is not attached to it. Relying on his being without attachment and having attained quiescence, he knows the arising of feelings, their cessation, ^[195] their gratification, their disadvantage, and the escape from them. By way of this unbiased vision he has been liberated without remainder, for which reason he is called a Tathāgata. This is another very profound, sublime, and greatly illuminating principle, for which a noble disciple truly and in an unbiased way praises the Tathāgata."

In regard to the four ways of arriving at partially eternalist views, the *Dīgha-nikāya* and *Dīrgha-āgama* versions are in general agreement, an agreement shared by the **Śāriputrābhidharma*. Whereas the description of the first ground in the *Dīrgha-āgama* and in the **Śāriputrābhidharma* sets in somewhat abruptly with the beginning of an aeon and the exhaustion of merit of a living being, the other versions provide further background to this situation. According to the Pāli account, at the end of the preceding aeon the world had contracted and living beings had mostly been

reborn in the Ābhassara realm. Once the world expanded again the rebirth of a single being in the empty Brahmā world took place. The tale of how Brahmā came to mistakenly believe himself to be a creator, a parody on the creation myth in the *Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad*,⁴⁹ is also found in the *Pāṭika-sutta* and its *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel.⁵⁰

In regard to the remaining grounds for views, a minor difference can be found in regard to the third case, where the *Dīrgha-āgama* version and the **Śāriputrābhidharma* only indicate that the respective beings pass away because of looking at each other. The Pāli discourse, in agreement with the other versions, additionally specifies that they get upset after looking at each other,⁵¹ and it appears to be their getting upset that causes them to fall from their heavenly realm. In this way, the previously mentioned living beings, who fall from their condition owing to excessive delight, and the present case, where a fall is caused by becoming upset, mirror the exhorta-

⁴⁹ [53] Norman 1991/1993b: 272 explains that "in the Brahmajālasutta the Buddha jokes about the way in which Brahmā thinks that he has created other beings, and he makes reference to the creation myth in the Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad." A few verses relevant to this myth are BrĀr Up 1.2.1: *naiveha kiṃcanāgra āsīt*, translated by Radhakrishnan 1953/1992: 151 as "there was nothing whatsoever here in the beginning"; BrĀr Up 1.4.1: *so 'nūvīkṣya nānyad ātmano 'paśyat*, *ibid.* p. 163: "looking around he saw nothing else than the self"; BrĀr Up 1.4.3: *sa vai naiva reme ... sa dvitīyam aicchat*, *ibid.* p. 164: "he, verily, had no delight ... he desired a second"; and (after successful creation of another) BrĀr Up 1.4.5: *so 'vet, ahaṃ vāva sṛṣṭir asmi, ahaṃ hīdaṃ sarvaṃ asṛkṣṭi*, *ibid.* p. 165: "he knew, I indeed am this creation for I produced all this."

⁵⁰ [54] DN 24 at DN III 29,1 and DĀ 15 at T I 69b2.

⁵¹ [55] DN 1 at DN I 20,17. T 21 at T I 266c17 also indicates that anger arises in them on looking at each other, as do the Tibetan versions Weller 1934: 30,25 and D 4094 *ju* 146b3 or Q 5595 *tu* 168b3; cf. also fragment Pelliot bleu 258 Vc in Hartmann 1991: 84 (§15).

tion given at the outset of the discourse by the Buddha to his monks to be neither delighted at praise nor upset at blame.

Another minor difference between the *Dīrgha-āgama* and the *Dīrgha-nikāya* version is that the latter offers a more detailed account of the fourth case of theoretical speculation. According to the Pāli discourse, the theoretician arrives at the conclusion that the self and the world are partially eternal and partially not eternal because he thinks that the bodily senses are impermanent whereas the mind does not change and remains forever.⁵²

A similar notion is found as the second view in the individual Chinese translation, the Tibetan discourse, and the discourse quotation in Śamathadeva's *Abhidharmakośopāyikā-ṭīkā*. A difference is that according to the Tibetan versions the contrast is not between the bodily senses and the mind, but between the material elements and the mind.⁵³ In the individual Chinese translation, the contrast is between the permanent nature of the five aggregates and the impermanent nature of the five material elements (including space).⁵⁴

[196] Another difference is that according to the individual Chinese translation, the Tibetan discourse, and the discourse quotation in the *Abhidharmakośopāyikā-ṭīkā* this type of view is not the outcome of theoretical speculation. Instead, this view was proclaimed by Brahmā. A being in the Brahmā realm heard this view and, after being reborn in the human realm and developing concentration, recollects this proposition made by Brahmā.

⁵² [56] DN 1 at DN I 21,21: *yañ ca kho idaṃ vuccati cittaṃ ti vā mano ti vā viññāṇaṃ ti vā, ayaṃ attā nicco dhuvo sassato avipariṇāmadhammo*.

⁵³ [57] The Tibetan versions, Weller 1934: 26,22 and D 4094 *ju* 145b6 or Q 5595 *tu* 167b5, provide the contrast to the four elements by employing the three terms *sems*, *yiḍ*, and *rnam par shes pa*, corresponding to *citta*, *mano*, and *viññāṇa* listed in the Pāli version.

⁵⁴ [58] T 21 at T I 266c1.

In regard to the other three grounds, the different versions are in agreement. The present case of partial eternalism is thus similar to the previous case of eternalism, in that whereas the Pāli and *Dīrgha-āgama* discourses, as well as the **Śāriputrābhidharma*, consider theoretical speculation as one possible ground for the respective view, the other versions relate the arising of all such views to various forms of meditative experience.

The next topic in the analysis of views given in the *Dīrgha-āgama* treatment revolves around perspectives on the dimensions of the world.⁵⁵

III. Views Related to the Past – The Dimensions of the World

"There are still other very profound, sublime, and greatly illuminating teachings, for which a noble disciple truly and in an unbiased way praises the Tathāgata. What are these?

"Recluses and brahmins, who have views about the past and <speculations> about the past, propound the doctrine that 'the self and the world are limited' [or else] 'unlimited'. Recluses and brahmins who, because of having views about the past and <speculations> about the past, propound the doctrine that 'the self and the world are limited' [or else] 'unlimited' do not go beyond being among these four views at all.

III.1 "Some recluses and brahmins [by relying] on various means attain a meditative concentration of the mind. Relying on this concentrated mind they contemplate the world and produce a limited perception. They [then] declare: 'This world is limited, this is true and all else is false.' Why is that so? By relying on various means I attained a meditative concentration of the mind. Relying on this concentrated mind, I contemplated the

⁵⁵ The translation continues from T I 91a16.

world [and saw that it] is limited. Therefore I know that 'the world is limited, this is true and all else is false.'

"This is reckoned the first view by recluses and brahmins who, because of having views about the past and <speculations> about the past, propound the doctrine that 'the self and the world are limited', not going beyond being among these four views at all. ^[197]

III.2 "Some recluses and brahmins by relying on various means attain a meditative concentration of the mind. Relying on this concentrated mind they contemplate the world and arouse an unlimited perception. ^[91b] They [then] declare: 'This world is unlimited, this is true and all else is false.' Why is that so? By relying on various means I attained a meditative concentration of the mind. Relying on this concentrated mind, I contemplated the world [and saw that it] is unlimited. Therefore I know that 'the world is unlimited, this is true and all else is false.'

"This is the second view by recluses and brahmins who, because of having views about the past and <speculations> about the past, propound the doctrine that the self and the world are unlimited, not going beyond being among these four views at all.

III.3 "Some recluses and brahmins by relying on various means attain a meditative concentration of the mind. Relying on this concentrated mind they contemplate the world, reckoning that the upward direction is limited, but the four [cardinal] directions are unlimited. They [then] declare: 'The world is limited and unlimited, this is true and all else is false.' Why is that so? By relying on various means I attained a meditative concentration of the mind. Relying on this concentrated mind, I contemplated the world [and saw that] the upward direction is limited, but the four [cardinal] directions are unlimited. Therefore I know that the world is limited and unlimited, this is true and all else is false.'

"This is the third view by recluses and brahmins who, because of having views about the past and <speculations> about the past, propound the doctrine that 'the self and the world are limited and unlimited', not going beyond being among these four views at all.

III.4 "Some recluses and brahmins have swift discriminative knowledge and are skilled at examination. Relying on swift examination and knowledge, relying on their own knowledge and arguments, they proclaim: 'The self and the world are neither limited nor unlimited, this is true and all else is false.'

"This is the fourth view by recluses and brahmins who, because of having views about the past and <speculations> about the past, propound the doctrine that 'the self and the world are [neither] limited [nor] unlimited',⁵⁶ not going beyond being among these four views at all. [198]

"These are the recluses and brahmins who have views about the past and <speculations> about the past and who propound the doctrine that 'the self and the world are limited' [or else] 'unlimited', not going beyond being comprised among these four views at all.

"Only the Buddha is able to know the compass of these views, how they are upheld and how they are grasped, and he also knows their result. The Tathāgata's knowledge goes still beyond that and even though he has such knowledge he is not attached to it. Already being without attachment and having attained quiescence, he knows the arising of feelings, their cessation, their gratification, their disadvantage, and the escape from them. By way of this unbiased vision he has been

⁵⁶ [59] DĀ 21 at T I 91b17 actually reads 有邊無邊, just as in the previous case, which I take to be an error for 非有邊非無邊, a reading found also in the parallel passage in the **Śāriputrābhidharma*, T 1548 at T XXVIII 658a12.

liberated without remainder, for which reason he is called a Tathāgata. This is another very profound, sublime, and greatly illuminating principle, for which a noble disciple truly and in an unbiased way praises the Tathāgata."

The Pāli version agrees closely with the *Dīrgha-āgama* account on the four ways in which views on the dimensions of the world can arise. The Tibetan versions differ inasmuch as in their presentation the fourth view, according to which the world is limited as well as unlimited, also arises out of a meditative experience.⁵⁷

The theme of the dimensions of the world comes up in the standard set of ten unanswered questions.⁵⁸ As discussed in the previous chapter, the rationale behind setting aside such questions appears to be their mistaken premises.⁵⁹ Instead of affirming or rejecting any of these proposals on the dimensions of the world, the *Brahmajāla* analysis reveals how particular subjective experiences lead to a conception of the world in a corresponding way.

The next theme taken up in the *Dīrgha-āgama* treatment is equivocation.⁶⁰ [199]

IV. Views Related to the Past – Equivocation

"There are still other very profound, sublime, and greatly illuminating teachings, for which a noble disciple truly and in an unbiased way praises the Tathāgata. What are these?

⁵⁷ [61] Weller 1934: 40,10 and D 4094 *ju* 148b1 or Q 5595 *tu* 170b7. T 21 at T I 267a28 only describes the four views and how they conflict with one another, but does not indicate whether these arise out of meditative experience or due to theoretical speculation.

⁵⁸ [62] Dutt 1932: 710 draws attention to the relationship between these ten questions and the views in the *Brahmajāla*. For a criticism of his presentation cf. Wijebandara 1993: 90.

⁵⁹ Cf. above p. 106.

⁶⁰ The translation continues from T I 91b25.

"Recluses and brahmins, who have views about the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past, on being asked in one way will answer in another way; at the time of being asked this or that, on being asked in one way they will answer in another way, not going beyond being among these four views at all. Recluses and brahmins, because of having these views about the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past, [91c] on being asked in one way they answer in another way, not going beyond being among these four views at all.

IV.1 "Some recluses and brahmins put forth this doctrine, put forth this view: I do not see and do not know: 'Is there retribution for good and evil,⁶¹ or is there no retribution for good and evil?' Because I do not see or know, I state [in a questioning manner without committing myself]: 'Is there retribution for good and evil? Is there no retribution for it?' In the world there are recluses and brahmins who are widely learned, clever, and wise, who always enjoy seclusion,⁶² being able and skilled debaters, esteemed in the world, who are able to use their wisdom skilfully to tear apart any view. Suppose

⁶¹ [64] Adopting a variant that adds 耶善惡, in accordance with the reading found elsewhere in this type of statement.

⁶² [65] DĀ 21 at T I 91c5: 常樂閑靜 (Hirakawa 1997: 1199 indicates that 閑靜 can render *praviveka* or *rahas*). As already noted by Weller 1971: 240 note 177, this expression does not fit the context. A reference to enjoying seclusion would be more appropriate for describing those given to a life of meditation in solitude instead of clever debaters, whom one would expect to rather delight in meetings in public in order to be able to exercise their skills. Notably, the same qualification of the debaters is also found in the **Śāriputrābhidharma*, T 1548 at T XXVIII 658a28: 常樂閑靜. This recurrence of the same inappropriate qualification supports the hypothesis that the **Śāriputrābhidharma* and the *Dīrgha-āgama* were transmitted by reciters of the same school. At the same time, minor variations between the two versions (cf., e.g., the note just below) show that they are not just identical.

these should ask me about profound matters and I should not be able to answer them, that would be embarrassing. Out of such fear of others, I shall use this [evasive mode of] reply as a refuge, an island, a shelter, and a supreme resort. On being asked by them, I shall answer like this: 'This matter is like this, this matter is true, this matter is otherwise, this matter is not otherwise, this matter is neither otherwise nor not otherwise.'

"This is the first view by recluses and brahmins who, because of being asked in one way will answer in another way, not going beyond being among these four views at all.

IV.2 "Some recluses and brahmins put forth this doctrine, put forth this view: I do not see and do not know: 'Is there another world or is there no other world?' In the world there are recluses and brahmins who by relying on the divine eye know, who have knowledge of the mind of others, being able to see matters far away that others cannot see even though they are already close to it.⁶³ Such people are able to know if there is another world or if there is no other world. I do not know and do not see if there is another world or if there is no other world. If I were to declare it, [200] that would be a falsehood. Because I am averse to and afraid of falsehood, I shall use this to become a refuge, an island, a shelter, and a supreme resort. On being asked by them, I shall answer like this: 'This matter is like this, this matter is true, this matter is otherwise, this matter is not otherwise, this matter is neither otherwise nor not otherwise.'

"This is the second view by recluses and brahmins who, because of being asked in one way will answer in another way, not going beyond being among these four views at all.

⁶³ [66] The parallel passage in T 1548 at T XXVIII 658b8 conveys a different sense, in that those others can see one even from far away, whereas oneself cannot see them even from close by, 在遠處能見我, 我若近猶不能見.

IV.3 "Some recluses and brahmins put forth this view, put forth this doctrine: I do not see and do not know: 'What is wholesome? What is unwholesome?' Not knowing and not seeing it like this, [if] I were to declare: 'This is wholesome! This is unwholesome!', this would lead to the arising of craving in me. From craving arises aversion. There being craving and aversion, there is the arising of grasping.⁶⁴ I wish to eradicate grasping, for which reason I left the household life to practise. Because of that aversion and fear of grasping, I shall use this to become a refuge, an island, a shelter, and a supreme resort. On being asked by them, I shall answer like this: 'This matter is like this, this matter is true, this matter is otherwise, this matter is not otherwise, this matter is neither otherwise nor not otherwise.'^[92a]

"This is the third view by recluses and brahmins who, because of being asked in one way will answer in another way, not going beyond being among these four views at all.

IV.4 "Some recluses and brahmins are dull and blinded by foolishness. On being asked by others, they consequently reply to them: '[As to] this matter like this, this matter is true, this matter is otherwise, this matter is not otherwise, this matter is neither otherwise nor not otherwise.'

"This is the fourth view by recluses and brahmins who, because of being asked in one way will answer in another way, not going beyond being among these four views at all.

"Some recluses and brahmins, who have views about the past and <speculations> about the past and who, on being asked

⁶⁴ [67] DĀ 21 at T I 91c26: 受, which can render *upādāna* as well as *vedanā* (cf. Hirakawa 1997: 228). Elsewhere in the present discourse, 受 renders *vedanā*, yet in the present context I assume that 受 functions as an equivalent to 取, *upādāna*, as suggested in a gloss in the 佛光 edition of DĀ 21, p. 547 note 1.

in one way will answer in another way, all do not go beyond being comprised among these four views at all. [201]

"Only the Buddha is able to know the compass of these views, how they are upheld and how they are grasped, and he also knows their result. The Tathāgata's knowledge goes still beyond that and even though he has such knowledge he is not attached to it. Being already without attachment and having attained quiescence, he knows the arising of feelings, their cessation, their gratification, their disadvantage, and the escape from them. By way of this unbiased vision he has been liberated without remainder, for which reason he is called a Tathāgata. This is another very profound, sublime, and greatly illuminating principle, for which a noble disciple truly and in an unbiased way praises the Tathāgata."

The first three grounds for equivocation manifest with a considerable degree of variety in the different versions of the *Brahmajāla*. In the *Dīrgha-āgama* account and the **Śāriputrābhidharma*, the respective recluse or brahmin in each of these three cases lacks a different type of knowledge and adopts equivocation out of a different type of motivation. In the first case the recluse or brahmin is uncertain about retribution for good and evil and avoids taking a position out of fear of being embarrassed in debate. In the second case he is uncertain about the existence of another world and fears falsehood, and in the third case he is uncertain about the nature of what is wholesome and what is unwholesome and refrains from any statement out of apprehension that this would become a manifestation of craving and aversion.

In the Pāli account, the first three cases share the same lack of knowledge, which is about the nature of what is wholesome and what is unwholesome. In the first case the recluse or brahmin resorts to equivocation out of fear of falsehood, in the second case

out of fear of attachment, and in the third case in order to avoid being worsted in debate. The Tibetan versions agree with the Pāli discourse in presenting the nature of wholesomeness and unwholesomeness as the uniting theme of the first three cases. The rationale for avoiding a definite stance on this matter is, according to them, fear of falsehood, fear of wrong views, and fear of falling prey to ignorance; a presentation that is also reflected in Sanskrit fragments.⁶⁵

The individual Chinese translation offers yet another perspective. Its first case takes up the existence of another world, in regard to which a definite stance is avoided out of fear of a bad rebirth that might ensue from holding a wrong view when confronted with other debaters.⁶⁶ The next case is retribution for good and evil. Here the problem of attachment prevents making a pronouncement, together with fear of being interrogated.⁶⁷ In the third case the nature of wholesomeness is the theme, and a posi-

⁶⁵ [68] Weller 1934: 42,32: *brdzun du smra bas 'jigs pa* (he actually reads *brdsun*); 44,12: *log par lta bas 'jigs pa*; 44,28: *shes bzhin ma yin pas 'jigs pa* (the last would literally be fear of lack of alertness, but Weller 1935: 53 note 303 suggests that in the present context *shes bzhin* could reflect *jñāna* in the Indic original, based on which he renders *shes bzhin ma yin pa* as "ignorance", an interpretation confirmed by the quote in Śamathadeva and the Sanskrit fragment). D 4094 *ju* 149a1 or Q 5595 *tu* 171b1: *rdzun* (D: *brdzun*) *du smra bas 'jigs shing*, D 4094 *ju* 149a5 or Q 5595 *tu* 171b5: *log par lta bas 'jigs par*, D 4094 *ju* 149b1 or Q 5595 *tu* 172a2: *mi shes pas 'jigs shing*. Fragment Hoernle 168/168a V6, Hartmann 1989: 48, reads: (*mṛṣāvā*)*dabhaya*bh[ī]taḥ *mṛṣā*[(*āvādam eva pa*)]*riju*[(*gupsamānas*)]; ibid. R6: (*mityādr*)*[s]**f(i)m* [*e*]*va parijugupsamānas*; and SHT III 803 V4, Waldschmidt et al. 1971: 5, reads: *saṃmoham-eva parijugupsamānas*.

⁶⁶ [69] T 21 at T I 267c15: 死墮惡道. This is unexpected, since one would not expect fear of a bad rebirth to be a prominent motivation among those who are uncertain about the existence of other worlds.

⁶⁷ [70] T 21 at T I 267c19: 為著 and T I 267c23: 疑恐懼來問.

tion on such matters is avoided out of fear of falling into an evil path and in order to avoid being criticized.⁶⁸ [202]

Regarding the fourth case, however, the Pāli and Chinese versions agree that here equivocation is just due to foolishness. Whereas the *Dīrgha-āgama* account, the individual Chinese translation, and the **Śāriputrābhidharma* do not specify the matter on which questions are asked in the fourth case, according to the Pāli version such questions could be on the existence of another world, on spontaneously arisen beings, on retribution for good and evil, and on the destiny of a Tathāgata after death.⁶⁹

According to the Tibetan versions, the topic of enquiry is the existence and nature of another world and an answer is avoided out of fear of foolishness.⁷⁰ Thus, according to them, it is not the foolishness itself that underlies the equivocation, but rather the wish to avoid being shown up as a fool.

In relation to the earlier instances of equivocation, it is noteworthy that in the third case in the *Dīrgha-āgama* the recluse or brahmin does not know what is wholesome and what is unwholesome, yet he refrains from taking a position out of fear of craving and aversion and in order not to succumb to grasping. A similar contrast obtains in relation to the second and third cases in the Pāli version, where the respective recluse and brahmin also does not know what is wholesome and what is unwholesome, yet he refrains from taking a position out of fear of falsehood or out of fear of attachment.⁷¹

Clearly, these recluses and brahmins cannot be totally ignorant of the nature of wholesomeness or unwholesomeness, otherwise

⁶⁸ [71] T 21 at T I 268a6: 恐懼惡道, 若有問事者便共諍.

⁶⁹ [72] DN 1 at DN I 27, 11.

⁷⁰ [73] Weller 1934: 46, 13 *gti mug gis 'jigs pa* and D 4094 *ju* 149b5 or Q 5595 *tu* 172a8: *rmongs pas 'jigs shing*.

⁷¹ [74] DN 1 at DN I 25, 9 and DN I 26, 1.

they would not see a problem with speaking falsehood or with attachment.⁷²

Of interest here is also an explanation given in the Pāli commentary of the way the equivocation is expressed. According to the Pāli discourse, the equivocation runs: "I do not say it is like this. I do not say it is like that. I do not say it is otherwise. I do not say it is not. I do not say it is not not."⁷³ What at first may appear satirical,⁷⁴ according to the commentarial explanation could be seen as a systematic refusal of the different possible propositions that underlie the unanswered questions.⁷⁵ This systematic refusal begins with a general expression of disagreement: "I do not say it is like this." Then the doctrine of eternalism is refused: "I do not say it is like that." Next comes a rebuttal of partial eternalism: "I do not say it is otherwise." Annihilationism is also rejected: "I do not say it is not." The final proposal "I do not say it is not not" then covers the fourth logical alternative, which predicates neither existence nor non-existence after death. Viewed from this per-

⁷² [⁷⁵] Wijebandara 1993: 71 comments (in relation to the first case in DN 1) that "he definitely knows that to tell falsehood is bad ... thus what is apparent is that he has some moral standards to abide by."

⁷³ [⁷⁶] DN 1 at DN I 25,12: *evam pi me no, tathā ti pi me no, aññathā ti pi me no, no ti pi me no, no no ti pi me no.*

⁷⁴ [⁷⁷] Basham 1951: 17 suggests that this description, in the case of Sañjaya Belatṭhiputta, "is probably satirical, a tilt at agnostic teachers who were unwilling to give a definite answer to any metaphysical question put to them"; for critical remarks on Basham's presentation cf. Jayatilleke 1963/1980: 132.

⁷⁵ [⁷⁸] Sv I 116,1: *tathā ti pi me no ti ... sassatavādaṃ paṭikkhipatī, aññathā ti pi me no ti ... ekaccasassataṃ paṭikkhipatī, no ti pi me no ti ... ucchedaṃ paṭikkhipatī, no no ti pi me no ti n' eva hoti na na hotī ti ... paṭikkhipatī* (this is followed by an alternative explanation according to which these answers are simply modes of equivocation). For an examination of these two explanations and an alternative third model that also relates the five aspects of the equivocator's statement to these four views see Jayatilleke 1963/1980: 135–138.

spective, the equivocator is putting up a detailed refusal of those questions the Buddha also was not willing to answer.⁷⁶

The type of reply adopted by the equivocators recurs in the Pāli version of the *Sāmaññāphala-sutta*'s account of the view of Saṅjaya Belaṭṭhiputta, which, however, uses the entire set of replies for each of the four logical alternatives.⁷⁷ The parallels to the *Sāmaññāphala-sutta* show considerable variations in regard to which view should be attributed to which of the six teachers.⁷⁸ [203] Whereas the *Dīrgha-āgama* version agrees with the Pāli account that Saṅjaya was an equivocator, according to an individual Chinese translation equivocation was instead practised by Ajita Kesakambalī, and the *Sanḥabhedavastu* associates equivocation with Pakudha Kaccāyana.⁷⁹

The next theme broached in the *Dīrgha-āgama* treatment is fortuitous origination.⁸⁰

V. Views Related to the Past – Fortuitous Origination

"There are still other very profound, sublime, and greatly illuminating teachings, for which a noble disciple truly and in an unbiased way praises the Tathāgata. What are these?

"Some recluses and brahmins, who have views about the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past, reckon that this world has come into existence without a cause, which are all comprised among two views. These views about the past and

⁷⁶ [79] Collins 1982: 128 remarks that "the 'eel-wrigglers' ... [their] lack of positive assertion has a verbal resemblance to the Buddha's own [lack of positive assertion] in certain other contexts."

⁷⁷ [80] DN 2 at DN I 58,26.

⁷⁸ [81] For a comparative study of the different versions cf. Bapat 1948, MacQueen 1988, and Meisig 1987a.

⁷⁹ [82] DĀ 27 at T I 108c21, T 22 at T I 271c16, and Gnoli 1978: 226,20.

⁸⁰ The translation continues from T I 92a13.

⟨speculations⟩ about the past, [reckoning] that the world has come into existence without a cause, do not go beyond being among these two views at all.

"Because of what matter do recluses and brahmins, who have views about the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past, reckon that existence is without a cause, not going beyond being among these two views at all?

V.1 "Some living beings are devoid of perception and knowing. If such a living being gives rise to a perception, his life will in turn come to an end. [One of them] comes to be reborn in the human world and, having come of age, having shaved off his hair and beard, donned the three robes, and left the household life to practise the path, he attains a meditative concentration of the mind. Relying on this concentration of the mind, he recollects his past birth and declares: 'Having formerly not existed, I have now come into existence spontaneously. This world formerly did not exist and has now come into existence, this is true and all else is false.'

"This is the first view by recluses and brahmins who, because of having views of the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past, reckon that there is no cause for existence, not going beyond being among these two views at all.⁸¹ [204]

V.2 "Some recluses and brahmins have swift discriminative knowledge and are skilled at examination. Having used swift examination and knowledgeable observation, relying on their own knowledge, arguments, and abilities, they declare like this: 'This world has come into existence without a cause, this is true and all else is false.'

⁸¹ [83] Adopting the variant 見 instead of 際, in accordance with the reading found elsewhere in this type of statement.

"This is the second view by recluses and brahmins who, because of having views about the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past, [reckon] that there is no cause for existence, for the existence of this world, not going beyond being among these two views at all. [92b]

Recluses and brahmins, who have views about the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past, that there is no cause for existence, do not go beyond being comprised among these two views at all. Only the Buddha is able to know ... *[the rest is] also [to be recited] further like this.*

"Recluses and brahmins who have views about the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past, diverse and innumerable, declared in accordance with their mental dispositions, are all comprised among these eighteen views. These views about the past and ⟨speculations⟩ about the past, diverse and innumerable, declared in accordance with mental dispositions, do not go beyond being among these eighteen views at all. Only the Buddha is able to know ... *[the rest is] also [to be recited] further like this.*"

In regard to the two modes that lead to views of fortuitous origination, all versions agree that they arise owing to a former life in an unconscious realm or out of intellectual speculation.⁸² A difference can be found in regard to the placing of this passage in the overall treatment, as the individual Chinese translation and the Tibetan versions turn to fortuitous origination already after having examined partially eternalist views,⁸³ and follow fortuitous origi-

⁸² [85] T 21 at T I 267a12 does not describe such intellectual speculation in the way this is done in the other versions, but again refers to what appears to be confused thinking, 意念癡.

⁸³ [86] This sequence is also reflected in fragment Hoernle 149/262, Hartmann 1991: 82 (§14).

nation with the dimensions of the world and equivocation. By in this way placing equivocation at the end of the exposition of views related to the past, and thus at the point of transition from views related to the past to views related to the future, the sequence in these versions indirectly highlights that equivocation does not fit the heading of being related to the "past" particularly well.

In general, the point in grouping these various topics under the heading of being related to the past seems to be related to the ground, *vatthu*, in question.⁸⁴ In the case of the first set of four eternalist views, for example, to associate these with the past would not imply that such views affirm eternal existence only for the past. Once the status of eternal existence is granted, it would automatically follow that what was eternal in the past will also be eternal in the future.⁸⁵ The point rather seems to be that what has led to the arising of these views is related to the past. In the case of eternalism, the most prominent cause is recollection of past lives, which quite evidently is related to the past. [205]

Recollections of past experiences are also a prominent theme in regard to other types of views taken up under the heading of being related to the past. Thus the first three semi-eternalist views are due to recollecting a former life in a heavenly realm. One cause for developing a view of fortuitous origination is also related to such recollection, which in this case only extends up to a former life in an unconscious realm. Hence, even though the label "past" may not fit all of the items listed, it does account for a fair number of grounds for views treated in this section. One might

⁸⁴ Wynne 2010/2011: 144 notes that the "presentation of views according to their temporal significance ... is fundamental to the text's analysis."

⁸⁵ [87] Seidenstücker 1913: 117 remarks that "wer die Frage nach der Ewigkeit von Selbst und Welt einmal aufwirft, wird nicht nur den Anfang, sondern auch das Ende der Dinge in den Kreis seiner Betrachtungen ziehen."

even extend this to conclusions about the dimensions of the world, which are based on some past meditative experience.

But in the case of equivocation an association with the past does not seem to be feasible, in fact the adoption of equivocation is in several instances due to an apprehension of something to come in the future, such as being confronted with other debaters or falling prey to the arising of attachment.

Having concluded its survey of views that have been assembled under the heading of being related to the past, the *Brahmajāla* analysis in the *Dirgha-āgama* turns to the future. The first main topic under this heading is the survival of a self. Views on such survival come in three main categories, namely a sixteen-fold set of propositions on a percipient self, followed by two eightfold sets of propositions on an impercipient self and on a self that is neither-percipient-nor-impercipient. In what follows, I will cover these three main categories together.⁸⁶

VI to VIII. Views Related to the Future – Survival of a Self

"There are still other very profound, sublime, and greatly illuminating teachings. What are these?

"Recluses and brahmins who have views about the future and <speculations> about the future, diverse and innumerable, declared in accordance with their mental dispositions, are all comprised among forty-four views. These views about the future and <speculations> about the future, diverse and innumerable, declared in accordance with mental dispositions, do not go beyond [being among] these forty-four views at all.

"Because of what matter do recluses and brahmins have views about the future and <speculations> about the future, diverse and innumerable, declared in accordance with their

⁸⁶ The translation continues from T I 92b7.

mental dispositions, not going beyond [being among] these forty-four views at all?

"Recluses and brahmins, who have views about the future and ⟨speculations⟩ about the future, give rise to a doctrine of percipency, declaring that the world is percipient, all being comprised among sixteen views. ^[206] These views about the future and ⟨speculations⟩ about the future, giving rise to doctrines of percipency, declaring that the world is percipient, do not go beyond being among these sixteen views at all.

"Because of what matter do recluses and brahmins, who have views about the future and ⟨speculations⟩ about the future, give rise to a doctrine of percipency, declaring that the world is percipient, not going beyond being comprised among these sixteen views at all?

VI.1 "Recluses and brahmins put forth this doctrine, put forth this view, declaring: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn percipient and be material,⁸⁷ this is true and all else is false.' This is the first view.

"Recluses and brahmins, because of having views about the future and ⟨speculations⟩ about the future, give rise to a doctrine of percipency and declare that the world is percipient, not going beyond being among these sixteen views at all.

VI.2 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn percipient and be immaterial, this is true and all else is false.'

VI.3 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn percipient and be material as well as immaterial, this is true and all else is false.'

⁸⁷ [⁸⁸] In relation to the various propositions about a surviving self, the Pāli version qualifies each as *aroga*, "unimpaired" (e.g. DN 1 at DN I 31,6); cf. also Skilling 1997: 480. Although this qualification is not found in the other versions, Schrader 1902: 9 note 2 draws attention to a similar qualification used in Jain texts (he refers to *Sūtrakṛtāṅga* I,1,3,15): *siddhā ya te arogā ya*.

VI.4 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn percipient and be neither material nor immaterial, this is true and all else is false.'

VI.5 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn percipient and be limited, this is true and all else is false.'

VI.6 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn percipient and be unlimited, this is true and all else is false.'

VI.7 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn percipient and be limited as well as unlimited, this is true and all else is false.'

VI.8 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn percipient and be neither limited nor unlimited, this is true and all else is false.'^[207]

VI.9 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn percipient and experience only happiness,^[92c] this is true and all else is false.'

VI.10 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn percipient and experience only pain, this is true and all else is false.'

VI.11 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn percipient and experience happiness as well as pain, this is true and all else is false.'

VI.12 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn percipient and experience neither happiness nor pain, this is true and all else is false.'

VI.13 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn with a single perception, this is true and all else is false.'

VI.14 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn with multiple perceptions, this is true and all else is false.'

VI.15 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn with a narrow perception, this is true and all else is false.'

VI.16 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn with a boundless perception, this is true and all else is false.' This is the sixteenth view.

"Recluses and brahmins, who have views about the future and ⟨speculations⟩ about the future, give rise to a doctrine of percipience, declaring that the world is percipient, not going beyond being among these sixteen views at all. Only the Buddha is able to know ... *[the rest is] also [to be recited] further like this.*

"There are still other very profound, sublime, and greatly illuminating teachings. What are these teachings?

"Recluses and brahmins, who have views about the future and ⟨speculations⟩ about the future, give rise to a doctrine of impercipient, declaring that the world is impercipient, all being comprised among eight views. These views about the future and ⟨speculations⟩ about the future, giving rise to doctrines of impercipient, do not go beyond being among these eight views at all.

"Because of what matter do recluses and brahmins, who have views about the future and ⟨speculations⟩ about the future, give rise to a doctrine of impercipient, declaring that the world is impercipient, not going beyond being among these eight views at all? ^[208]

VII.1 "Recluses and brahmins put forth this view, put forth this doctrine: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn impercipient and be material, this is true and all else is false.'

VII.2 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn impercipient and be immaterial, this is true and all else is false.'

VII.3 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn impercipient and be material as well as immaterial, this is true and all else is false.'

VII.4 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn impercipient and be neither material nor immaterial, this is true and all else is false.'

VII.5 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn impercipient and be limited, this is true and all else is false.'

VII.6 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn impercipient and be unlimited, this is true and all else is false.'

VII.7 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn impercipient and be limited as well as unlimited, this is true and all else is false.'

VII.8 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn impercipient and be neither limited nor unlimited, this is true and all else is false.' These are the eight views.

"Recluses and brahmins who, because of having views about the future and <speculations> about the future, give rise to a doctrine of impercipient, declaring that the world is impercipient, do not go beyond being comprised among these eight views at all. Only the Buddha is able to know ... *[the rest is] also [to be recited] further like this.*

"There are still other very profound, sublime, and greatly illuminating teachings. What are these teachings?

"Recluses and brahmins, who have views about the future and <speculations> about the future, give rise to a doctrine of neither-percipient-nor-impercipient, declaring that the world is neither-percipient-nor-impercipient, all being comprised among eight views. ^[93a] These views about the future and <speculations> about the future, putting forth the doctrine of neither-percipient-nor-impercipient and declaring the world to be neither-percipient-nor-impercipient, do not go beyond being among these eight views at all.

"Because of what matter do recluses and brahmins, who have views about the future and <speculations> about the future,

give rise to a doctrine of neither-percipient-nor-impercipient, declaring that the world is neither-percipient-nor-impercipient, ^[209] not going beyond being among these eight views at all?

VIII.1 "Recluses and brahmins put forth this doctrine, put forth this view: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn neither-percipient-nor-impercipient and be material, this is true and all else is false.'

VIII.2 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn neither-percipient-nor-impercipient and be immaterial, this is true and all else is false.'

VIII.3 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn neither-percipient-nor-impercipient and be material as well as immaterial, this is true and all else is false.'

VIII.4 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn neither-percipient-nor-impercipient and be neither material nor immaterial, this is true and all else is false.'

VIII.5 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn neither-percipient-nor-impercipient and be limited, this is true and all else is false.'

VIII.6 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn neither-percipient-nor-impercipient and be unlimited, this is true and all else is false.'

VIII.7 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn neither-percipient-nor-impercipient and be limited as well as unlimited, this is true and all else is false.'

VIII.8 "Some declare: 'After the end of this, I will be reborn neither-percipient-nor-impercipient and be neither limited nor unlimited, this is true and all else is false.' These are the eight views.

"If recluses and brahmins, because of having views about the future and <speculations> about the future, give rise to a

doctrine of neither-percipient-nor-impercipient, declaring that the world is neither-percipient-nor-impercipient, they do not go beyond being comprised among these eight views at all. Only the Buddha is able to know ... *[the rest is] also [to be recited] further like this.*"

Regarding the sixteen ways of arriving at a view about a percipient self that survives after death, apart from some variations in sequence the different versions are in close agreement.⁸⁸ [210]

The eight grounds for proclaiming the survival of an impercipient self are the same in the different versions, as is the case for the eight grounds for proclaiming the survival of a self that is neither-percipient-nor-impercipient.⁸⁹

A complementary perspective on views that proclaim the survival of a self can be gained by consulting the *Pañcattaya-sutta* and its Tibetan parallel, which similarly treat this topic under the three main categories of a percipient self, an impercipient self, and a neither-percipient-nor-impercipient self.⁹⁰

Unlike the *Brahmajāla* treatments, the Pāli version of the *Pañcattaya-sutta* distinguishes only eight modes of the percipient self. These result from applying the fourfold treatment to the materiality of such a self, and to the nature of its perceptions, envisaging

⁸⁸ [89] A noteworthy difference occurs in the **Śāriputrābhidharma*, which differs in so far as it presents these views as declarations made about oneself in this life, adding that one will not exist after death, e.g., in the first case T 1548 at T XXVIII 659a16: 色是我想是世, 命終已我不復有. Since this does not fit the context, I take this to be a transmission or translation error.

⁸⁹ [92] A minor variation occurs in T 21 at T I 269a9+11, which treats the case of a neither-percipient-nor-impercipient self being material as well as immaterial twice, 有色無色, where the first instance appears to be an error for the otherwise missing immaterial self.

⁹⁰ On the significance of this discourse cf. also the discussion in Skilling 2017.

it to be single or multiple etc.⁹¹ The Tibetan counterpart to the *Pañcattaya-sutta* covers only six out of these eight possibilities, as it does not mention a self that is material-and-immaterial or a self that is neither-material-nor-immaterial.⁹²

When it comes to the impercipient self, the *Pañcattaya-sutta* and its Tibetan parallel are even briefer. Whereas the Pāli version of the *Pañcattaya-sutta* lists four modes of such a self, which are the four possibilities in regard to the materiality of such a self, the Tibetan version lists only a single instance of this self, which is simply the proposition that the surviving self is impercipient.⁹³ In the case of a self that is neither-percipient-nor-impercipient, the Pāli version of the *Pañcattaya-sutta* again covers the four possibilities related to its materiality, whereas its Tibetan counterpart just lists the single view as such.⁹⁴

⁹¹ [93] MN 102 at MN II 229,1. The theme of a self that is limited (or otherwise) and a self that is entirely happy (or otherwise) comes up in MN 102 at MN II 233,19 under the heading of views related to the past. This stands in contrast to the agreement between the different versions of the *Brahmajāla* and to the Tibetan parallel to MN 102 in Skilling 1994: 348,3, which does not list any of these views in its treatment of the past. MN 102 at MN II 233,25 also includes the single or multiple and the narrow or boundless self in its treatment of the past, even though these have been taken up in its earlier presentation at MN II 229,8 under the heading of being related to the future (with a small difference in formulation inasmuch as in the former case the self and the world are mentioned). This suggests that some error in transmission has occurred and that perhaps the limited self and the happy self originally were part of the exposition of views related to the future.

⁹² [94] The Tibetan version in Skilling 1994: 314,12 takes up only *gzugs can* and *gzugs can ma yin pa*, after which it turns to single, multiple, narrow, and boundless types of a percipient self, to which it also adds a self that has become great, *ibid.* 314,17: *'du shes chen por gyur pa* (which, as Skilling 1997: 484 notes, in Sanskrit would be *mahadgatasamjñī*).

⁹³ [95] MN 102 at MN II 230,7 and Skilling 1994: 318,12.

⁹⁴ [96] MN 102 at MN II 231,3 and Skilling 1994: 324,6.

It is noteworthy that, whereas the different versions of the *Brahmajāla* agree closely with one another, the *Pañcattaya-sutta* and its parallel offer such different perspectives on the same topic. These different perspectives show that to analyse views related to the survival of a self can be executed in different manners.

The same can also be seen in a discourse in the *Udāna*, which places fortuitous origination within a scheme of views related to the happiness and pain experienced by the self and the world, proposing that these are self-created, or created by another, or by both, or by neither.⁹⁵

This perspective is intriguing in so far as it invites combining the different grounds for views treated in the *Brahmajāla*. Understood in this way, the present treatment on views about a surviving self can be seen as providing a basic matrix that could be inter-related or combined with other positions in various ways.⁹⁶ This pattern builds on the three main modes of percipience, impercipience, and a combination of both, and then explores the different axes possible in each case. In the case of percipience these are four, namely the materiality of such a self, its limited nature, the nature of its perceptions, and the nature of its feelings. Each of these is treated comprehensively according to the scheme of the fourfold logic. In the other two cases of impercipience and of neither-percipience-nor-impercipience the question of the nature

⁹⁵ [97] Ud 6.5 at Ud 70.4: *sayamkataṃ sukhadukkhāṃ attā ca loko ca ... paraṃkataṃ sukhadukkhāṃ ... sayamkatañ ca paraṃkatañ ca sukhadukkhāṃ ... asayamkāraṃ aparaṃkāraṃ adhiccasamuppannaṃ sukhadukkhāṃ attā ca loko ca.*

⁹⁶ [98] Bodhi 1978/1992: 28 comments that "these views are not mutually exclusive, but simply provide a selection of conceptions of the surviving self which can be combined to form any complete theory. Thus the self might be conceived to be immaterial, finite, of uniform perception and exclusively happy after death etc."

of perception and feelings does not come in, [211] hence these two cases are only taken up from two angles, that of the materiality of such a self and of its limited nature.

Notably, whereas the fourfold logic dominates the details of this presentation, it is not applied to the basic distinction about the percipient or otherwise of the self, since the possibility of a self that is percipient as well as impercipient is not mentioned at all.

Out of the overall analysis of a surviving self in the *Brahmajāla*, a few single instances make an appearance also elsewhere among the discourses. The fourfold proposition about the material nature of a self after death and about its happy or painful condition recurs in a set of discourses in the *Samyutta-nikāya* and their counterpart in the *Samyukta-āgama*, which agree on pointing out that such views arise because of grasping at the five aggregates.⁹⁷

The proposition of a self that is entirely happy after death comes up for discussion in the *Poṭṭhapāda-sutta* and its *Ārgha-āgama* parallel.⁹⁸ Both versions clarify that such a proposal is meaningless, given that it was not made based on personal experience.

The same topic comes up again in the *Cūḷasakuludāyī-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, where the point under discussion is an entirely happy world and the path that leads to such a world.⁹⁹ According to both versions, there is indeed such a world and the path to it can be found in the development of absorption.

⁹⁷ [99] SN 24.37–44 at SN III 219,1 and SĀ 166 at T II 45a17 (to be supplemented from T II 42c20), which also includes the remaining eight positions on a self's survival (i.e., limited, etc., and single perception, etc.).

⁹⁸ [100] DN 9 at DN I 192,14: *ekantasukhī attā hoti arogo paraṃ maraṇā*, a proposal which according to DĀ 28 at T I 111c2 was about the entirely happy nature of the world, 一處世間一向樂.

⁹⁹ [101] MN 79 at MN II 35,27 and MĀ 208 at T I 785b29.

The Pāli commentary on the views envisaging the survival of the self in the *Brahmajāla* considers most of these to be the outcome of meditation experiences.¹⁰⁰ The powerful influence of experiences derived from meditation practice indeed forms a continuous theme throughout the *Brahmajāla* analysis, underpinning views related to the future as much as to views related to the past. This highlights that speculative views are not necessarily seen as being the outcome of excessive theorizing instead of practice, but as possibly resulting from misinterpretations of meditative experiences.¹⁰¹ Judging from the exposition given in the *Brahmajāla*, this applies in particular to experiences related to deeper stages of concentration or mental tranquillity.

The problem of drawing one-sided conclusions is neatly illustrated in the famous simile of the blind men and the elephant in the *Udāna*, a simile also found in a discourse in the *Dīrgha-āgama*.¹⁰² Each of the blind men had touched part of an elephant. When asked about the nature of an elephant, each of them was able to rely on direct personal experience. Nevertheless, what each blind man had experienced was only a part of the whole,

¹⁰⁰ [102] Sv I 119,5.

¹⁰¹ [103] Bodhi 1997: 55f comments that "it is sometimes assumed that the Buddha rejects speculative views simply because these views are distractions from the practice of meditation. Being fabrications of the intellect ... it is held, views keep the individual tied to the level of intellectualisation and produce a complacency that obstructs the single-minded commitment to meditation practice." Yet, as the *Brahmajāla* exposition reveals, "speculative views sometimes arise at the end of a long course of meditative development", which goes to show that "speculative views spring from a root more deeply grounded in the human mind than the disposition to theorisation."

¹⁰² [104] Ud 6.4 at Ud 68,3 and DĀ 30 at T I 128c11; cf. also T 23 at T I 289c17, T 152 at T III 50c24, T 198 at T IV 178b6, T 768 at T XVII 704c7, and T 1592 at T XXXI 98c16. A reference to this simile occurs also in the *Vimuttimaggā*, T 1648 at T XXXII 448a10.

since one had touched a foot of the elephant, another the trunk or the tail. In spite of drawing on personal experience, [212] the blind men came to radically different conclusions. Their partial direct experiences were not sufficient, since owing to their blindness they lacked the overall vision that would have enabled them to put their partial experiences into perspective.

The next theme broached in the *Brahmajāla* treatment is annihilation. In this case, too, the experience of meditation takes a prominent role within a set of seven propositions on the annihilation of a self.¹⁰³

IX. Views Related to the Future – Annihilation

"There are still other very profound, sublime, and greatly illuminating teachings. What are these teachings?

"Recluses and brahmins, who have views about the future and ⟨speculations⟩ about the future, propound a doctrine of annihilation, declaring that living beings are annihilated without remainder, all being comprised among seven views. These views about the future and ⟨speculations⟩ about the future, propounding a doctrine of annihilation, declaring that living beings are annihilated without remainder, do not go beyond being among these seven views at all.

"Because of what matter do recluses and brahmins, who have views about the future and ⟨speculations⟩ about the future, propound a doctrine of annihilation, declare that living beings are annihilated without remainder, not going beyond being among these seven views at all?

IX.1 "Some recluses and brahmins put forth this doctrine, put forth this view: 'This body is the self, with its four elements and six sense-spheres, which has been engendered by

¹⁰³ The translation continues from T I 93a19.

father and mother and raised with milk, which in dependence on food has come to growth, and which is to be rubbed, covered, protected, and guarded. It is impermanent and will certainly fall apart, and this is reckoned [how] to become completely annihilated.' This is the first view.

IX.2 "Some recluses and brahmins declare: 'This self does not reach what is reckoned to be annihilation. [When] the self of the heavenly realm of desire is annihilated without remainder, ^[93b] this becomes complete annihilation.' This is the second view.

IX.3 "Some recluses and brahmins declare: 'This is not annihilation. [When] the created body of the form realm, endowed with all faculties, is annihilated without remainder, this is [complete] annihilation.' ^[213]

IX.4 "Some declare: 'This is not annihilation. [When] the immaterial self of the sphere of [boundless] space is annihilated without remainder, [this is complete annihilation].'¹⁰⁴

IX.5 "Some declare: 'This is not annihilation. [When] the immaterial self of the sphere of [boundless] consciousness is annihilated without remainder, [this is complete annihilation].'

IX.6 "Some declare: 'This is not annihilation. [When] the immaterial self of the sphere of nothingness is annihilated without remainder, [this is complete annihilation].'

IX.7 "Some declare: 'This is not annihilation. [When] the immaterial self of the sphere of neither-perception-nor-no-

¹⁰⁴ [105] The supplementation of the phrase "this is complete annihilation" here and below receives support from the parallel passage in T 1548 at T XXVIII 660a29: "this is not called annihilation. [When] the [self of the] immaterial sphere of [boundless] space is annihilated, this is reckoned complete annihilation of the self without remainder", 此不名斷滅, 無色空處斷滅, 齊是謂我斷滅無餘.

perception is annihilated without remainder, [this is complete annihilation].'¹⁰⁵ This is the seventh annihilationist [view].

"These are the seven views. Recluses and brahmins who, because of having views about the future and <speculations> about the future, propound annihilation without remainder of the classes of living beings, do not go beyond being comprised among these seven views at all. Only the Buddha is able to know ... [*the rest is*] also [*to be recited*] further like this. "

The different versions are in close agreement on the seven modes that lead to annihilationist views. The Pāli version of the *Pañcattaya-sutta* takes up the same theme in a single manner, without offering any listing of instances of this view, whereas its Tibetan parallel has the same listing of seven modes as found in the parallel versions of the *Brahmajāla*.¹⁰⁶

The seven propositions on annihilation offer a remarkable range of possible positions on this topic. Except for the first, which identifies the self with the body and assumes this self to be annihilated with the death of the body, the other propositions could be envisaging annihilation as a goal to be achieved through some kind of practice.¹⁰⁷ This is particularly evident with the last four instances, which correspond to the four immaterial attainments. Since to experience these immaterial spheres requires a considerable degree of meditative proficiency, an annihilationist view related to the attainment or experience of these states could not reasonably assume that all beings are destined to such annihilation.

¹⁰⁵ [106] DN 1 at DN I 35,29 introduces the attainment of neither-perception-nor-non-perception as "peaceful and sublime", *santam etaṃ paññātam etaṃ*.

¹⁰⁶ [107] MN 102 at MN II 232,7 and Skilling 1994: 338,7.

¹⁰⁷ [108] Bodhi 1978/1992: 30 comments that "it may be that these latter six positions do not regard annihilation as the ineluctable fate of all beings, but as the ultimate destiny and highest good of the spiritually perfected saint."

That is, from the perspective of the upholders of such a view, annihilation would have been considered as a goal to be attained through an appropriate form of conduct and meditation practice. The idea behind such an aspiration for annihilation could be a merger with a form of ultimate reality, held to be equivalent to boundless space, or to boundless consciousness, or to nothingness, or to neither-perception-nor-non-perception.¹⁰⁸ Attaining such a merger at the death of the body, any selfhood would be successfully annihilated.^[214]

That annihilation was perceived by some contemporaries of the Buddha as a goal to be attained through a particular mode of conduct and practice would also be implicit in the formulation of the aspiration "may I not be, may it not be for me, I shall not be and it will not be for me", which a discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya* explicitly identifies as an expression of an annihilationist view, *ucchedadiṭṭhi*.¹⁰⁹ A discourse in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* reckons this aspiration as supreme among heterodox views.¹¹⁰ Since this formulation clearly involves an aspiration, what it probably refers to is a form of annihilation that requires some effort and practice, such as would indeed be required for attaining the immaterial spheres.

The final theme in the *Dīrgha-āgama's* *Brahmajāla* treatment is Nirvāṇa here and now in five modes. The last four of these are also the outcome of effort and practice, as they require the attainment of the four absorptions.¹¹¹

¹⁰⁸ [¹⁰⁹] Barua 1968: 11 suggests that here the immaterial attainments appear to be "considered as the ultimate means of stopping the course of *saṃsāra*".

¹⁰⁹ [¹¹⁰] SN 22.81 at SN III 99,4: *evaṃ diṭṭhi hoti: no c'assaṃ, no ca me siyā, na bhavissāmi, na me bhavissatī ti. yā kho pana sā, bhikkhave, ucchedadiṭṭhi ...*

¹¹⁰ [¹¹¹] AN 10.29 at AN V 63,28: *etad aggaṃ ... bāhirakānaṃ diṭṭhigatānaṃ, yad idaṃ: no c' assaṃ, no ca me siyā, na bhavissāmi, na me bhavissatī ti.*

¹¹¹ The translation continues from T I 93b10.

X. Views Related to the Future – Nirvāṇa Here and Now

"There are still other very profound, sublime, and greatly illuminating teachings. What are these teachings?"

"Recluses and brahmins, who have views about the future and ⟨speculations⟩ about the future, give rise to a doctrine of Nirvāṇa here and now, declaring that living beings [attain] Nirvāṇa here and now, all being comprised among five views. These views about the future and ⟨speculations⟩ about the future, propounding Nirvāṇa here and now, do not go beyond being among these five views at all.

"Because of what matter do recluses and brahmins, who have views about the future and ⟨speculations⟩ about the future, declare that living beings [attain] Nirvāṇa here and now, not going beyond being among these five views at all?"

X.1 "Some recluses and brahmins put forth this doctrine, put forth this view, saying: 'I am now endowed with the pleasures of the five senses, this is my attaining of Nirvāṇa here and now.' This is the first view.

X.2 "Again some recluses and brahmins declare: 'This is Nirvāṇa here and now, indeed.'¹¹² [Yet], there is another Nirvāṇa here and now whose subtlety is supreme, which you do not know and only I know. When having left behind sensuality as well as evil and unwholesome states, with [directed] awareness and [sustained] contemplation, ^[215] with joy and happiness born of seclusion, I attain the first absorption: this is reckoned Nirvāṇa here and now.' This is the second view.

¹¹² The **Śāriputrābhidharma* differs inasmuch as in each case the earlier proposal is rejected, T 1548 at T XXVIII 660b23: "this is not called Nirvāṇa here and now", 此不名現在涅槃. DN 1 at DN I 36,30, however, agrees with DĀ 21 that the earlier proposal is accepted.

X.3 "Again some recluses and brahmins declare: 'This is Nirvāṇa here and now, indeed. [Yet], there is another Nirvāṇa here and now whose subtlety is supreme, which you do not know and only I know. When having removed [directed] awareness and [sustained] contemplation, with internal joy and unification of the mind, free from [directed] awareness and [sustained] contemplation, with joy and happiness born of concentration, I attain the second absorption: this is reckoned complete Nirvāṇa here and now.' This is the third view.

X.4 "Again some recluses and brahmins declare: 'This is Nirvāṇa here and now, indeed. [Yet], there is another Nirvāṇa here and now whose subtlety is supreme, which you do not know and only I know. When having mindfully discarded and left behind joy, being established in happiness,¹¹³ [93c] with mindfulness, equanimity, and unification of the mind, knowing by myself bodily happiness as declared by noble ones, I attain the third absorption: this is reckoned complete Nirvāṇa here and now.' This is the fourth view.

X.5 "Again some recluses and brahmins declare: 'This is Nirvāṇa here and now, indeed. [Yet], there is another Nirvāṇa here and now whose subtlety is supreme, which you do not know and only I know. When with the cessation of happiness, with the cessation of pain, earlier having discarded dejection and joy, with neither-pain-nor-happiness, with purity of mindfulness and equanimity, I attain the fourth absorption – this is reckoned supreme Nirvāṇa.' This is the fifth view.

"If recluses and brahmins, who have views about the future and <speculations> about the future, give rise to a doctrine of

¹¹³ [114] DĀ 21 at T I 93b29 reads: 除念, where the syntax suggests that mindfulness is discarded. This would not make sense in a description of the third absorption, in fact the description continues by referring to the presence of mindfulness, hence I render 除念 here as "mindfully discards".

Nirvāṇa here and now, they do not go beyond being among these five views at all. Only the Buddha is able to know ... *[the rest is] also [to be recited] further like this.*

"Recluses and brahmins who have views about the future and <speculations> about the future, diverse and innumerable, declared in accordance with their mental dispositions, do not go beyond being among these forty-four views at all. Only the Buddha is able to know the compass of these views ... *[the rest is] also [to be recited] further like this.*" ^[216]

In regard to the five ways of proclaiming Nirvāṇa here and now, the different versions of the *Brahmajāla* are in close agreement.¹¹⁴ A minor difference in relation to the last four cases is that according to the Pāli version the respective proponent explains why the previous view does not really constitute Nirvāṇa here and now. Thus the identification of sense-pleasure with Nirvāṇa here and now is rejected by the proponent of the first absorption, since sensual pleasures are impermanent and unsatisfactory, wherefore when they disappear sorrow and grief will arise.¹¹⁵

The upholders of the higher absorptions then in turn reproach those who identify a lower absorption as Nirvāṇa here and now by pointing to the grossness of the particular factor which needs to be overcome in order to lead to the next higher absorption in the series.

A noteworthy aspect of these propositions on Nirvāṇa here and now in the *Brahmajāla* analysis is that in the present context the term Nirvāṇa has evidently positive connotations, as it stands for various conceptions of physical well-being and enjoyment, or for the happiness and tranquillity that can be experienced with deep

¹¹⁴ [115] A listing of various types of *ditṭhadhammanibbāna* in AN 9.51 at AN IV 454,4, "in a certain sense", *pariyāyena*, includes also the immaterial attainments.

¹¹⁵ [116] DN 1 at DN I 36,32.

levels of concentration.¹¹⁶ The same can also be seen in the *Māgandiya-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, where the first of these ways of proclaiming Nirvāṇa here and now makes its appearance. According to this discourse, for the wanderer Māgandiya Nirvāṇa represented happiness of bodily well-being and freedom from affliction.¹¹⁷

This concludes the survey of views related to the future. The introductory section to the *Pañcattaya-sutta* and its Tibetan parallel indicates that the five positions – a percipient self, a non-percipient self, a neither-percipient-nor-non-percipient self, annihilation, and Nirvāṇa here and now – can be subsumed under three main categories by speaking of views that propose a self that survives after death, views that propose a self that is annihilated, and views that propose Nirvāṇa here and now.¹¹⁸ That is, these five fall into three different future time periods, namely views concerned with what will happen after death (survival of a self), at death (annihilation of a self), or before death (Nirvāṇa here and now).¹¹⁹ The final part of the *Brahmajāla* treatment then offers a retrospective on the views examined and contrasts these to the aloofness from views of the Tathāgata.¹²⁰ [217]

¹¹⁶ [117] Bodhi 1978/1992: 31 comments that Nirvāṇa is conceived here "as the assuagement of pain and supreme happiness to be experienced in this present life. The first, which proclaims nibbāna here and now through the enjoyment of all sense pleasures, is the position of the hedonist ... the following four positions are held by the attainers of the four jhānas, who mistake the rapture, bliss and peacefulness of their attainments for the supreme good."

¹¹⁷ [118] MN 75 at MN I 509,11 and MĀ 153 at T I 672b5.

¹¹⁸ [121] MN 102 at MN II 228,23: *pañca hutvā tīṇi honti*; and its Tibetan counterpart in Skilling 1994: 314,3: *Inga po de dag yod na gsum du 'gyur la*; cf. also fragment SHT IV 32 folio 1 V6, Sander and Waldschmidt 1980: 109: (*pañca saṃti trī*)[*n*]i bhavanti.

¹¹⁹ [122] Hecker 1972: 217.

¹²⁰ The translation continues from T I 93c11.

The Tathāgata and Views

"Recluses and brahmins who have views about the past and <speculations> about the past and have views about the future and <speculations> about the future, diverse and innumerable, declared in accordance with their mental dispositions, are all comprised among these sixty-two views. These views about the past and <speculations> about the past and these views about the future and <speculations> about the future, diverse and innumerable, declared in accordance with mental dispositions, do not go beyond being among these sixty-two views at all. Only the Tathāgata is able to know the compass of these views ... *[the rest is] also [to be recited] further like this.*

"Recluses and brahmins, who have views about the past and <speculations> about the past, give rise to a doctrine of eternalism, declaring that the self and the world are eternal; these recluses and brahmins produce knowledge that is reckoned [as just] another type of faith, another type of desire, another type of learning, another type of condition, another type of intuition, another type of view, another type of concentration, another type of patience, due to which they produce such knowledge. What these make known is reckoned to be on account of feeling ... *up to ... Nirvāṇa here and now ... [the rest is] also [to be recited] further like this.*¹²¹

"Recluses and brahmins, who give rise to a doctrine of eternalism and declare that 'the world is eternal', [they do so] conditioned by feeling, which produces craving. Craving having arisen they do not realize by themselves that they are being defiled by attachment through craving and are under the power of craving ... *up to ... Nirvāṇa here and now ... [the rest is] also [to be recited] further like this.*

¹²¹ [123] Adopting the variant 布 instead of 希.

"Recluses and brahmins who, having views about the past and <speculations> about the past, give rise to a doctrine of eternalism, declaring that 'the world is eternal', [they do so] conditioned by contact. It is impossible to establish [such a] doctrine without contact ... *up to* ... Nirvāṇa here and now ... *[the rest is] also [to be recited] further like this.*

"Recluses and brahmins, who have views about the past and <speculations> about the past and have views about the future and <speculations> about the future, making declarations in accordance with their view, are all comprised among these sixty-two views. Making declarations in accordance with their view, they all depend on and are established among these and do not go beyond them at all.

"It is just like a skilled trainer of fishermen,¹²² who uses a fine-meshed net to completely cover the surface of a small pond. He will know that all the types of aquatic beings in the pond will get caught in the net, ^[94a] they have no way to escape and do not go beyond it at all. ^[218]

"Recluses and brahmins are also just like that. Views about the past and <speculations> about the past as well as views about the future and <speculations> about the future, these declarations in various ways are all comprised among these sixty-two views and do not go beyond them at all.

"If a monk knows as it really is the arising of the six spheres of contact, their cessation, their gratification, their disadvan-

¹²² [125] DĀ 21 at T I 93c28: 猶如巧捕魚師; cf. also the similar reading in T 1548 at T XXVIII 661a3: 如捕魚師. Usually in the discourse a reference to a skilled teacher is followed by a reference to his disciple. Such a reference is indeed found in DN 1 at DN I 45,29, T 21 at T I 270c3, fragment Pelliot 1400/19/bleu 35 Vw, Hartmann 1991: 86 (§16), and in the Tibetan versions, Weller 1934: 60,32 and D 4094 *ju* 152b4 or Q 5595 *tu* 176a3.

tage, and the escape from them, this is supreme and leads out of all those views.

"The Tathāgata knows that for himself birth and death have been eradicated. He makes use of this existing body because of his wish to bring happiness and deliverance to *devas* and human beings. If there were not that body, *devas* and men in the world would have nothing to rely on. It is just like a Palmyra tree whose top part has been cut off, which will not come to growth again. The Buddha is just like that, having eradicated birth and death he will never come to be born again."

When the Buddha proclaimed this teaching, the great thousand-fold world system shook three times in six ways. At that time Ānanda, who was standing behind the Buddha holding a fan and fanning the Buddha, uncovered his right arm, knelt down with folded hands, and said to the Buddha: "This teaching is very profound, what is its title, how to receive it respectfully?"

The Buddha told Ānanda: "This discourse is called the ⟨net⟩ of the essence, the ⟨net⟩ of the teaching, the ⟨net⟩ of views, the ⟨net⟩ of Māra, and the ⟨net⟩ of Brahmā."¹²³

At that time Ānanda heard what the Buddha had said, was delighted, and received it respectfully.

The final part of the *Brahmajāla* treatment brings me back to the topic taken up at the beginning of this chapter, namely the relationship of the Tathāgata to views. I suggested that the *Aggiva-chagotta-sutta* and its parallels contrast what views have to say about the Tathāgata to what the Tathāgata has to say about views; this contrast between entanglement in views and the aloofness of the Tathāgata, depicted in the *Aggiva-chagotta-sutta* and its par-

¹²³ [126] DĀ 21 at T I 94a12: 義動, 法動, 見動, 魔動, 梵動; the emendation is based on the assumption that the translation 動 is due to a mistaking of °jāla, "net", for °cāla, "stirring"; cf. above p. 61 note 21.

allels, comes in for a more detailed treatment in the *Brahmajāla-sutta* and its parallels.

The above examination of altogether sixty-two grounds for views shows in detail how entanglement in views can take place, by offering a thorough analysis of the view-forming process.¹²⁴ The main point of the *Brahmajāla* treatment as a whole appears to be the contrast between such entanglement and the aloofness of the Tathāgata. In this way, the *Brahmajāla* itself functions as an implementation of right view, ^[219] inasmuch as the task of the exposition is to lay bare the causal undercurrent that is responsible for views, which is none other than craving.¹²⁵

Craving arises based on feeling and contact, hence the recurrent reference to the Tathāgata's insight into the arising of feelings, their cessation, their gratification, their disadvantage, and the escape from them at the conclusion of each of the sections of the *Brahmajāla* analysis.¹²⁶ The Tathāgata is aloof from views by virtue of his penetrative insight into the very condition due to which they arise, which is none other than feeling. Feeling in turn is the product of contact, hence penetrative insight into the dependent

¹²⁴ [127] Katz 1982/1989: 150 speaks of the *Brahmajāla* as a "psychoanalysis of metaphysical claims".

¹²⁵ [128] Bodhi 1978/1992: 9f explains that "the Buddha does not trouble to refute each separate view because the primary focus of his concern is not so much the content of the view as the underlying malady of which the addiction to speculative tenets is a symptom ... the proper way to treat them is the same as that appropriate for the more general malady: to seek out their underlying causes and apply the remedy suitable for eliminating these causes. The remedy is the path which replaced the blindness of views with direct insight, the Noble Eightfold Path."

¹²⁶ Evans 2009: 79 reasons that "because *vedanā* is excluded from explicit awareness and consideration, it distorts experience and [fuels] the formulation of views, from behind as it were."

arising of *dukkha* at the stage of contact will lead a disciple of the Buddha to the same aloofness from views.¹²⁷

The theme of entanglement in views also underlies the title of the discourse, the *Brahmajāla*, which the different versions of the present discourse attribute to the Buddha, together with some alternative titles. The *Dīrgha-āgama* differs inasmuch as it instead speaks of the "stirring of Brahmā". In the translation above I have emended this to the "⟨net⟩ of Brahmā", as the reference to "stirring" is clearly an error due to a mistaking of *jāla*, "net", for *cāla*, "stirring", facilitated by the circumstance that in the original Prākṛit these two would have been spelled similarly.¹²⁸

The imagery of the *Brahmajāla* as a supreme net receives its explanation in the simile of the fisherman who spreads his net over a pond and thereby is able to catch all the living beings inside. In the same way, the net of sixty-two grounds for views is considered capable of covering the whole gamut of speculative views, enabling one to catch the very root of the view-forming process.

According to the Pāli commentary, this supreme net is spread by the Buddha.¹²⁹ The Pāli discourse itself does not give any explicit indication in this respect. According to the Sanskrit fragments, however, the net in which the recluses and brahmins have

¹²⁷ [129] Fuller 2005: 115 concludes that "the *Brahmajāla-sutta* proposes neither a sixty-third view ... nor the rejection of all views ... but knowledge of the cessation of craving. This is right view. It is a clear example of *sammā-diṭṭhi* signifying that all views have been transcended."

¹²⁸ [131] Cf. above p. 61 note 21. A number of references to 梵動, **Brahmācāla*, can be found in the Chinese canon, cf. T 25 at T I 420b1, T 1421 at T XXII 191a20, T 1428 at T XXII 833b25 (cf. also 968b15), T 1709 at T XXXIII 455c3, T 1764 at T XXXVII 812c25, T 1824 at T XLII 159c23, T 1828 at T XLII 348a13, and T 1830 at T XLIII 446b3. Although the quotation in the **Śāri-putrābhidharma* does not include the listing of titles, its introduction speaks of the "net of Brahmā", T 1548 at T XXVIII 656b19: 梵網.

¹²⁹ [132] Sv I 127,18: *kevaṭṭo viya hi bhagavā, jālaṃ viya desanā*.

been caught is Māra's net.¹³⁰ The Tibetan discourse similarly indicates that they have fallen into Māra's net, and the quotation in the *Abhidharmakośopāyikā-ṭīkā* also notes that they have been caught in Māra's net.¹³¹ That is, from the perspective of these versions the supreme net is Māra's net, rather than the Buddha's.

This seems more appropriate, since elsewhere in the discourses Māra is indeed the one who catches and binds other beings, whereas the Tathāgata guides them to liberation from bondage. This contrast is particularly evident in an exchange between the Buddha and Māra reported in the *Samyutta-nikāya* and its *Samyukta-āgama* parallels. According to the Pāli version of this exchange, Māra threatened to catch the Buddha in his snare.¹³² The terminology employed in the two *Samyukta-āgamas* provides an even closer relationship to the *Brahmajāla* imagery, as instead of a "snare" they speak of a net with the help of which Māra hopes to catch the Buddha.¹³³ [220]

The imagery of a net spread out occurs also in the *Śvetāśvara Upaniṣad*, where it illustrates the omnipotent power of a *deva*.¹³⁴

¹³⁰ [133] Fragments Pelliot 1400/19/bleu 35 R1f, Hartmann 1991: 86 (§16): *sarv[e te] a(n)[t](arjā)[l](a)[g](a)[t](ā mārasya pāpīyasa āvaśa)[g](a)[t]ā vaśagat[ā] ... [yathā]kāmakaraṇīyā mārasya pāpīyasaḥ*.

¹³¹ [134] Weller 1934: 62,5: *bdud sdig can gyi dbang du song zhing lag tu*; D 4094 *ju* 152b4 or Q 5595 *tu* 176a2: *bdud sdig to can gyi dra bar chud cing dbang du gyur cing*.

¹³² [135] SN 4.15 at SN I 111,28: *antalikkhacaro pāso ... tena taṃ bādhayissāmi, na me samaṇa mokkhasi*.

¹³³ [136] SĀ 1086 at T II 285a6: 執長繩羈下，正欲縛沙門，不令汝得脫 (adopting the variant 正 instead of 政) and SĀ² 25 at T II 381c7: 羅網遍虛空，沙門於我所，終不得解脫 (for a translation of SĀ² 25 cf. Bingenheimer 2007: 59).

¹³⁴ Śvet Up 5.3: *ekaikaṃ jālam bahudhā vikurvan, asmin kṣetre saṃharaty eṣa devaḥ ... sarvādhīpatyaṃ kurute mahātmā*, translated by Radhakrishnan 1953/1992: 739: "that God who after spreading out one net after another in various ways draws it together in that field ... the great self exercises his lordship over all"; cf. also Franke 1913a: 47 note 3.

This would further support associating the *Brahmajāla* imagery to Māra instead of the Buddha.¹³⁵

Thus the perspective offered by the Sanskrit and Tibetan versions seems to fit the imagery better, in the sense that the net within which the view-holding recluses and brahmins are enmeshed has been spread by Māra. The Tathāgata only lays bare what holds this net together, which is craving, manifest in the sixty-two grounds for views that make up the threads of the net. But the Tathāgata is as aloof from views as he is aloof from the net; he has no need to catch others in a net, as his very aloofness would be beyond such involvement. Far from spreading a net that binds others, the Tathāgata's concern would only be to show the way out of the net of views, the path to liberation.

Mankind delights in conceptual proliferation,
Tathāgatas are free from it.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ [137] Barua 1967: 12 comments that "the expression 'Brahmajāla' can be explained more clearly in comparison with Sanskrit 'Māyājāla' and 'Indrajāla'", concluding that "'Brahmā's net' ... is evidently a metaphorical expression which means 'God's magic' or 'Brahmā's magic'."

¹³⁶ [138] Dhṛp 254c–d: *papañcābhiratā pajā, nippapañcā tathāgatā*, a counterpart in the *Udānavarga* 29.38, Bernhard 1965: 382, similarly reads *prapañcābhiratā bālā, niṣprapañcās tathāgatāḥ*.

Tevijja-sutta (DN 13)

In this chapter I translate the twenty-sixth discourse in the Chinese *Dīrgha-āgama*,¹ which is a parallel to the thirteenth discourse in the Pāli *Dīgha-nikāya* of the Theravāda tradition, the *Tevijja-sutta*, and to the forty-fifth discourse in the *Dīrgha-āgama* extant in Sanskrit fragments, entitled *Vāsiṣṭha-sūtra*.

Translation

The Discourse on the Three Knowledges²

Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was dwelling among the people of the Kosala country together with a large

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¹ ^[2] The translated text is DĀ 26 at T I 104c16 to 107a14. My comparative notes only take up selected differences and do not intend to provide a comprehensive coverage of all variations found between the three parallel versions. I am indebted to Jens-Uwe Hartmann for providing me with a preliminary draft translation of the Sanskrit fragments parallel, the *Vāsiṣṭha-sūtra*.

² ^[3] DN 13 at DN I 252,29 similarly refers to the three knowledges when providing the discourse's title as the *Tevijja-sutta*, whereas according to the Sanskrit fragment *uddāna* this version took the name of one of its brahmin protagonists, *Vāsiṣṭha*, as its title (information on title and position of the Sanskrit fragment version are based on the study of the collection in Hartmann 2004, with an updated version in Hartmann and Wille 2014). Regarding the two titles, it is noteworthy that neither DN 13 nor DĀ 26 covers what are the three higher knowledges in the Buddhist sense (recollection of past lives, divine eye, and destruction of the influxes), so that the title seems to reflect the circumstance that the Brahmins criticized for their limited understanding in the body of the discourses are introduced as endowed with the three knowledges in the Vedic sense, namely knowledge of the three Vedas.

congregation of monks, altogether one thousand two hundred and fifty men.³ He arrived at the village Icchānaṅgala of the Kosalan brahmins and stayed overnight in the forest of Icchā-[naṅgala].⁴

Then a brahmin called Pokkharasāti and a brahmin called Tārukkha had arrived at the village of Icchānaṅgala on some minor matter.⁵ The brahmin Pokkharasāti was of genuine descent on his father's and mother's side for seven generations, beyond being spurned by others.⁶ [2] He was well-versed in

³ [4] DN 13 at DN I 235,3 mentions a great company of five hundred monks instead. The Sanskrit fragment version does not provide information on who accompanied the Buddha.

⁴ [5] According to DN 13 at DN I 235,6, the Buddha stayed in a mango grove on the bank of the river Aciravatī, north of the village of Manasākaṭa. The Sanskrit fragment version mentions an Indian rosewood grove, also north of the village; such a reference to a grove with Indian rosewood (*śimsapā*) forms a standard pericope in Buddhist discourse literature; cf. von Simson 1965: 72, Legittimo 2004: 46, and Anālayo 2011b: 559 note 152.

⁵ [6] DN 13 at DN I 235,9 lists several renowned brahmins who at that time were staying in Manasākaṭa, including, in addition to Pokkharasāti and Tārukkha, also Caṅkī, Jāṇussoni, and Todeyya, as well as others not mentioned by name. The Sanskrit fragment version does not refer to any of these and instead directly introduces the two brahmin youths Vāsiṣṭha and Bhāradvāja.

⁶ [7] In accordance with a standard pattern in Chinese texts, DĀ 26 at T I 104c22 mentions first the father and then the mother, 父母 (cf. also below p. 439 note 17). The Sanskrit fragment, 477v3, in its description of the pure descent of Vāsiṣṭha and Bhāradvāja instead adopts the opposite sequence, reading *mātr-taḥ pitṛtaḥ*. Although DN 13 has no comparable description, elsewhere in Pāli discourses the mother usually comes in first place; cf. a description of a brahmin's pure descent for seven generations in MN 95 at MN II 165,20: *mātito ca pitto*, as well as discussions of this sequential positioning by Horner 1930/1990: 6, Günther 1944: 78 note 1, Karunaratna 2003b: 44, Young 2004: 44, and Anālayo 2011b: 173f note 153. In Śamathadeva's *Abhidharmakośopāyika-ṭīkā*, preserved in Tibetan translation, the father stands in the first place; cf., e.g., the parallel to a reference to "mother and father", *mātāpitāro*, in MN 93 at

reciting the three Vedas, competent in analysing the various scriptures, and competent in the teachings on the characteristics of a great man, in examining [portents] of fortune and misfortune, and in the performance of sacrifices. He had five hundred students whom he continuously instructed.⁷

One of his disciples, called Vāsetṭha, was [also] of genuine descent on his father's and mother's side for seven generations, beyond being spurned by others. He was [also] well-versed in reciting the three Vedas, completely competent in analysing the various scriptures, and also competent in the teachings on the characteristics of a great man, in examining [portents] of fortune and misfortune, and in the performance of sacrifices.⁸ He also had five hundred students whom he continuously instructed.⁹

The brahmin Tārukkha was also of genuine descent on his father's and mother's side for seven generations, beyond being

MN II 157,1, which in D 4094 *ju* 111a6 or Q 5595 *tu* 127b1 becomes a reference to "father and mother", *pha dang ma*. Precedence given to the father can also be seen in a colophon in Mongolian, Nattier 1990: 398: *ečige eke*, whereas precedence given to the mother is attested in a Tocharian fragment, Peyrot 2008: 121: *mātār pā(tār)*. Guang Xing 2005: 98 note 12 attributes the precedence given to the father in Chinese texts to the influence of Confucian norms; cf. also Paul 1980: 216f and Guang Xing 2013: 34–37.

⁷ [8] Neither of the parallel versions provides a description of Pokkharasāti or later of Tārukkha.

⁸ [9] Whereas DN 13 does not describe Vāsetṭha (or Bhāradvāja), the Sanskrit fragment version describes both together, although without referring to knowledge of the characteristics of a *mahāpuruṣa*, but additionally mentioning that they were good-looking. A noteworthy minor difference is that, when describing their learning, the *Vāsiṣṭha-sūtra* refers to four Vedas instead of three, folio 447v4, *caturṇaṃ vedānāṃ pāragau*; on this type of difference cf., e.g., Rhys Davids 1899: 109 note 2, Winternitz 1908: 110, and Anālayo 2011b: 527 note 3.

⁹ [10] The indication that Vāsetṭha or Bhāradvāja had a following of disciples is not given in the parallel versions.

spurned by others.¹⁰ [105a] He was [also] well-versed in reciting the three Vedas, competent in analysing the various scriptures,¹¹ and also competent in the teachings on the characteristics of a great man, in examining [portents] of fortune and misfortune, and in the performance of sacrifices. He also had five hundred students whom he continuously instructed.

One of his disciples, called Bhāradvāja, was [also] of genuine descent on his father's and mother's side for seven generations, beyond being spurned by others. He was [also] well-versed in reciting the three Vedas, completely competent in analysing the various scriptures, and competent in the teachings on the characteristics of a great man, in examining [portents] of fortune and misfortune, and in the performance of sacrifices. He also had five hundred students whom he continuously instructed.

Then in the early morning Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja both went to a park and had a meaningful discussion together, in the course of which they came to dispute with each other. Then Vāseṭṭha said to Bhāradvāja: "My path is genuinely capable of leading to release, to reaching Brahmā. This is what is taught by the great teacher, the brahmin Pokkharasāti."¹² [3]

¹⁰ [11] Here and below adopting the variant 以 instead of 已.

¹¹ [12] Adopting the variant 善 instead of 盡, in keeping with the description used for Pokkharasāti.

¹² [13] The parallels agree that the brahmin Pokkharasāti taught a path to the Brahmā world. This is of further interest since, according to MN 99 at MN II 201,2 and its parallel MĀ 152 at T I 668b5, Pokkharasāti held it to be impossible for a human being to reach a superhuman state, to the extent that he would deride any claim to having reached such a condition. According to the definition of *uttarimanussadhamma* given at Vin III 91,30, attainment of an absorption (*jhāna*) or a deliverance (*vimokkha*) qualifies as a superhuman state (on *uttarimanussadhamma* cf. also Anālayo 2008f). Since from the viewpoint of early Buddhist doctrine the path to the Brahmā world requires attainment of an absorption or cultivation of a *brahmavihāra* as a *cetovimutti*, this confirms what emerges later in the present

Bhāradvāja also said: "My path is genuinely capable of leading to release, to reaching Brahmā. This is what is taught by the great teacher, the brahmin Tārukkha." In this way, Vāseṭṭha proclaimed three times that his path was genuine, and Bhāradvāja also proclaimed three times that his path was genuine. The two discussed it, but neither of them was able to resolve it.

Then Vāseṭṭha said to Bhāradvāja: "I heard that the recluse Gotama, the son of the Sakyans, has gone forth and reached awakening. He is now dwelling among the people of the Kosala country, staying in the forest of Icchānaṅgala. He has a great reputation which has spread in the world, for being a Tathāgata, an arahant, fully awakened,¹³ and complete with regard to the ten epithets.¹⁴

"Among *devas* and people in the world, Māra and *devas* [subject to] Māra,¹⁵ recluses and brahmins, he teaches to others the Dharma he has himself directly realized,¹⁶ which is totally genuine in the beginning, middle, and end, complete with meaning and expression,¹⁷ a holy life that is pure. It is good to approach and visit such an arahant.

discourse, namely that Pokkharasāti (and others like him) was ignorant of what, according to Buddhist soteriology, is required to reach the Brahmā world.

¹³ [14] Adopting an emendation suggested in the CBETA edition of 第 to read 等.

¹⁴ [15] DN 13 at DN I 236, 13 spells out the epithets in full, but does not continue after that with a description of the Dharma taught by the Buddha, nor with the indication that he knows the way to Brahmā.

¹⁵ [16] DĀ 26 at T I 105a19: 魔天; on this couplet cf. Karashima 2010: 328.

¹⁶ [17] My translation of 身 in DĀ 26 at T I 105a20 as "directly" is based on the assumption that this renders an instrumental *kāyena* in the Indic original, which in such contexts functions as an idiomatic expression to convey personal and direct experience; cf. Schmithausen 1981: 214 and 249 ad. note 50, Radich 2007: 263, Harvey 2009: 180 note 10, and Anālayo 2011b: 379 note 203.

¹⁷ [18] DĀ 26 at T I 105a21: 味, literally "taste", which according to Hirakawa 1997: 250 can render *vyañjana*.

"I heard that Gotama knows the path to Brahmā and is able to teach it to people. He often goes back and forth to converse with Brahmā. We should together approach Gotama and resolve this issue together with him. Whatever the recluse Gotama says, we shall both receive it respectfully."

At that time Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja, following each other, both reached the forest of Icchā[naṅgala]. They approached the Blessed One and, having exchanged polite greetings, sat to one side.

At that time the Blessed One, knowing the thoughts in both of their minds, said to Vāseṭṭha: "The two of you went to a park in the early morning and had a discussion such that you disputed with each other, one of you saying: 'My method is genuinely capable of leading to release, to reaching Brahmā. This is what is taught by the great teacher, the brahmin Pokkharasāti.'¹⁸ [105b] The [other] one said: 'My path is genuinely capable of leading to release, to reaching Brahmā. This is what is taught by the great teacher, [the brahmin] Tārukkha.' In this way you kept disputing with each other three times, is it so?"¹⁹ [4]

When they heard the Buddha say these words, Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja were totally surprised and the hair on their bodies stood on end. They thought to themselves: "The recluse Gotama has great virtue, he has foreknowledge of people's minds. All that we wanted to discuss, the recluse Gotama has said already in advance."

Then Vāseṭṭha said to the Buddha: "This path and that path are all claimed to lead genuinely to release and to reaching

¹⁸ [19] Adopting a variant that adds 婆羅門.

¹⁹ [20] Neither of the parallel versions reports the Buddha divining what the two had been discussing. Instead, in DN 13 at DN I 236,27 and in the *Vāsiṣṭha-sūtra*, folio 448v2ff, Vāseṭṭha/Vāsiṣṭha himself informs the Buddha of their disagreement.

Brahmā. Is it the one taught by the brahmin Pokkharasāti? [Or] is it the one taught by the brahmin Tārukkha?"

The Buddha said: "Vāsetṭha, even suppose this path and that path genuinely were to lead to release, to reaching Brahmā, why did you dispute with each other up to three times in the early morning in the park?"

Then Vāsetṭha said to the Buddha: "The three-knowledge brahmins all teach various paths: the path of controlling one's desires, the path of one's action, and the path of [devotion] to Brahmā; and that [each of] these three paths completely leads to Brahmā. Gotama, the brahmins teach that, just as all village paths lead to the city, so all of these different paths lead to Brahmā."

The Buddha said to Vāsetṭha: "Do [they claim that] all of those paths fully lead to Brahmā?"

[Vāsetṭha] replied: "They [claim that all] fully lead to it."

The Buddha kept sternly questioning him three times: "Do [they claim that] all of those paths fully lead to Brahmā?"

[Vāsetṭha] replied: "They [claim that all] fully lead to it."

At that time, having ascertained this statement, the Blessed One said to Vāsetṭha: "How is it, has even one among the three-knowledge brahmins gained a vision of Brahmā?"

[Vāsetṭha] replied: "None has seen him."²⁰

[The Buddha said]: "How is it, Vāsetṭha, has any of the former teachers of the three-knowledge brahmins gained a vision of Brahmā?"

[Vāsetṭha] replied: "None has seen him."

[The Buddha said]: "How is it, Vāsetṭha, the ancient three-knowledge brahmin seers of the distant past, well-versed in

²⁰ [21] In DN 13 at DN I 238,1 the Buddha asks more questions, querying whether any of the three-knowledge brahmins has seen Brahmā, whether any of their teachers has seen Brahmā, whether any out of up to seven generations of the teachers have seen Brahmā, before taking up the ancient seers like Aṭṭhaka, etc.

recitation, competent in teaching people all the ancient recitals, the poetic chants, and the verses, namely the brahmin Aṭṭhaka, the brahmin Vāmadeva, the brahmin Vessāmitta, the brahmin Aṅgiras, the brahmin Yamataggi, the brahmins [Bhāradvāja] and Vāseṭṭha,²¹ the brahmin Kassapa, the brahmin Araṇemi, the brahmin Gotama, the brahmin Setakettu, the brahmin Sunetta, have they gained a vision of Brahmā?"²²

[Vāseṭṭha] replied: "None has seen him."

The Buddha said: "Since none of those three-knowledge brahmins has seen Brahmā, ^[105c] since none of the former teachers of the three-knowledge brahmins has seen Brahmā, and furthermore the ancient three-knowledge brahmins, the great seers, such as Aṭṭhaka, have also not seen Brahmā, it should be understood that the claims made by the three-knowledge brahmins are untrue." ^[5]

He further said to Vāseṭṭha: "It is as if a debauched person were to say: 'I had a liaison with that beautiful girl', proclaiming to have had intercourse with her."²³ Another person says: 'Do you know that girl and where she lives, in the east, west,

²¹ [22] DĀ 26 at T I 105b26: 婆婆悉婆羅門. According to Meisig 1990: 82, the corresponding expression in DĀ 20 at T I 87a18: 婆婆婆悉吒 should be seen as a combined reference to Bhāradvāja and Vasiṣṭha. It is not clear to me how far his suggestion would work for the present instance, hence I only supply Bhāradvāja in brackets.

²² [23] DN 13 at DN I 238,21 and the *Vāsiṣṭha-sūtra*, folio 449r5f, additionally mention Vāmaka and Bhagu/Bhrgu, but do not refer to Araṇemi, Gotama, Setakettu, or Sunetta.

²³ [24] In the parallel versions the claim is not to have had intercourse with the girl, but only to be in love with her; cf. DN 13 at DN I 241,27 and *Vāsiṣṭha-sūtra* folio 449v4. The position of this simile in the overall discussion is also different, as in DN 13 this is the third simile (after the simile of the file of blind men and the simile of the sun and the moon) and in the Sanskrit fragment version the second simile (after the simile of the sun and the moon).

south or north?"²⁴ He says: 'I do not know.' [The other] asks further: 'Do you know in which country, town, and village that girl lives?'²⁵ He replies: 'I do not know.' [The other] asks further: 'Do you know that girl's father and mother and her family name?' He replies: 'I do not know.' [The other] asks further: 'Do you know if that girl is a warrior [class] girl, a brahmin [class], a merchant [class], or a worker [class] girl?' He replies: 'I do not know.' [The other] asks further: 'Do you know if that girl is tall or short, plump or slim, dark or fair, beautiful or ugly?'²⁶ He replies: 'I do not know.' How is it, Vāsetṭha, is that man's claim true?"

[Vāsetṭha] replied: "It is not true."

[The Buddha said]: "In the same way, Vāsetṭha, what the three-knowledge brahmins proclaim is also not true. Why is that? Vāsetṭha, your three-knowledge brahmins see the places where the sun and the moon rise, move ahead, and set. They worship them with folded hands, [but] are they able to say: 'This path genuinely leads to release, to reaching the sun and the moon?'"

[Vāsetṭha] replied: "Indeed, the three-knowledge brahmins see the places where the sun and the moon rise, move ahead,

²⁴ [²⁵] In the parallel versions the first question is concerned with the social class to which she belongs. A query regarding the direction in which she stays is the second question in the *Vāṣiṣṭha-sūtra*, folio 449v5.

²⁵ [²⁶] In DN 13 at DN I 242,2 an enquiry regarding the village or town where she lives comes together with a question about her name and family as well as about the size of her body and the colour of her skin.

²⁶ [²⁷] The parallels do not report an enquiry regarding whether she is beautiful or ugly. Such a query does in fact not fit the context too well, since if she were ugly one would not expect that the person would lay a claim to have had an affair with her (or be in love with her, following the presentation in the parallel versions). For the simile to work, the beauty of the girl is to some extent an implicit condition. In the parallels she is in fact introduced as the *janapada-kalyāṇī*, the foremost beauty of the country.

and set. They worship them with folded hands, but they are unable to say: 'This path genuinely leads to release, to reaching the sun and the moon.'"

[The Buddha said]: "Indeed, Vāsetṭha, the three-knowledge brahmins see the places where the sun and the moon rise, move ahead, and set, and they worship them with folded hands, but they are unable to say: 'This path genuinely leads to release, to reaching the sun and the moon.' Yet they constantly worship and respect them with folded hands. Are they not deluded?"²⁷

[Vāsetṭha] replied: "Indeed, Gotama, they are truly deluded."

The Buddha said: "It is as if a person were to erect a ladder on vacant ground. Another person asks him: 'For what purpose have you erected the ladder?'²⁸ He replies: 'I wish to go up into the hall.' [The other] asks again: 'Where is the hall, is it in the east, the west, the south or the north?' He replies: 'I do not know.' How is it, Vāsetṭha, this person who erects a ladder wishing to go up into the hall, [6] is he not deluded?"

[Vāsetṭha] replied: "Indeed, he is truly deluded."

The Buddha said: "The three-knowledge brahmins are also like that, [what they say] is deluded and untruthful. Vāsetṭha, the five [kinds of] sensual pleasures clearly are very much liked and desired. What are the five? Forms seen by the eye are very much liked and desired, sounds [heard by] the ears ...

²⁷ [28] In the parallel versions, DN 13 at DN I 240,23 and *Vāsiṣṭha-sūtra* folio 449v7, the purpose of this simile is to point out that, even though the brahmins are able to see the sun and the moon, they are unable to teach the path that leads to them. What to say of them teaching the path to Brahmā, whom they have not even seen?

²⁸ [29] In DN 13 at DN I 243,4 the introductory narration already indicates that the staircase is for the purpose of ascending to a hall, thus the other person directly queries about the direction in which the hall is to be found, additionally also asking whether the hall is high, of medium height, or low.

odours [smelled] by the nose ... flavours [tasted] by the tongue ... tangibles [felt by] the body are very much liked and desired. ^[106a]

"In my noble teaching these are [considered] attachments, bondages, and shackles. The three-knowledge brahmins are defiled by these five [kinds of] sensual pleasures, craving for them and being firmly attached to them, without seeing their disadvantage, without understanding the release from them. Being fettered by the five [kinds of] sensual pleasures, even if they worship the sun and the moon, water and fire, reciting: 'Take me away to be reborn as a Brahmā', [for this to be fulfilled] is impossible.²⁹

"It is just as if the river Aciravatī were brimful with water up to the banks so that crows could drink from it, and a person whose body is firmly bound to this bank were to call out vainly to the other bank: 'Come and take me across.' Would that bank come and take that man across?"³⁰

[Vāsetṭha] replied: "No, it would not."

"Vāsetṭha, in my noble teaching the five [kinds of] sensual pleasures, which are clearly very much liked and desired, are

²⁹ ^[30] In DN 13 at DN I 246,2 the description of the impossibility of the three-knowledge brahmins to be reborn in the Brahmā world does not mention any worship of the sun and the moon or of water and fire.

³⁰ ^[31] This corresponds to two similes in DN 13; the first simile at DN I 244,13 describes a man who wishes to cross over and calls out to the other bank to come to him, whereas in the second simile at DN I 245,7 the man wishing to cross over is firmly bound to this bank. The first simile serves to illustrate the inability of the three-knowledge brahmins to reach the Brahmā world by merely calling the name of various *devas*, the second simile illustrates the bondage to sensuality of the three-knowledge brahmins. Since this is the more meaningful presentation, perhaps the two similes were conflated in DĀ 26, as a result of which the man wanting to cross over is firmly bound to this bank and calls for the other bank to come, which is less apt than the presentation in DN 13.

compared to shackles. The three-knowledge brahmins are defiled by these five [kinds of] sensual pleasures, craving for them and being firmly attached to them without seeing their disadvantage, without understanding the release from them. Being fettered by the five [kinds of] sensual pleasures, even if in this way they again worship the sun and the moon, water and fire, reciting: 'Take me away to be reborn as a Brahmā',³¹ [for this to be fulfilled] is also quite impossible.

"Vāseṭṭha, it is as if the river Aciravatī were brimful with water up to the bank so that crows could drink from it, and a person who wishes to cross over were neither to use his hands and feet with his bodily strength nor to rely on a raft. Would he be able to cross?"³²

[Vāseṭṭha] replied: "He would not be able to do it."

"Vāseṭṭha, the three-knowledge brahmins are also like this. They do not cultivate the pure holy life of a recluse, but cultivate other paths that are not pure practices. If they desire and seek rebirth as a Brahmā, [for that to be fulfilled] is impossible.

"Vāseṭṭha, it is as if there were a mountain torrent that has suddenly risen and carried away many people, [7] and there was no boat or raft and also no bridge. A traveller comes by who wishes to cross over to the other bank. He sees that the mountain torrent has suddenly risen and carried away many people, and that there is no boat or raft and also no bridge. That person thinks to himself:

³¹ [32] Adopting the variant 者 instead of 上.

³² [33] In DN 13 at DN I 246,7 the person wishing to cross over covers his head and lies down on this bank of the river Aciravatī, which serves to illustrate that the three-knowledge brahmins are similarly covered by the five hindrances. DN 13 does not have a counterpart to the next passage on cultivating the path of renunciation.

"What if I now gather plenty of grass and sticks, bind them together firmly to make a raft, and with my own physical strength cross over to the other bank?"

"Then he binds them together to make a raft and with his own bodily strength safely crosses over."³³

"Vāseṭṭha, it is also like this when a monk leaves behind the impure practices of a non-recluse and practises the pure holy life of a recluse. For his wish for rebirth as a Brahmā [to be fulfilled] is certainly possible. How is it, Vāseṭṭha, does Brahmā have a mind with hatred or a mind without hatred?"³⁴

[Vāseṭṭha] replied: "His mind is without hatred."

[The Buddha] asked again: "Do the three-knowledge brahmins have minds with hatred or minds without hatred?"

[Vāseṭṭha] replied: "They have minds with hatred."

[The Buddha said]: "Vāseṭṭha, [thus] Brahmā has a mind without hatred and the three-knowledge brahmins have minds with hatred. A mind with hatred and a mind without hatred are dissimilar, _[106b] they are not similarly inclined,³⁵ they do not

³³ ^[34] This simile is not found in the parallels. The *locus classicus* for the simile of the raft is MN 22 at MN I 134,33 and its parallels MĀ 200 at T I 764b21, EĀ 43.5 at T II 760a13 (on which cf. Anālayo 2016b: 75–79), and D 4094 *nya* 74b6 or Q 5595 *thu* 119b7. A reference to this simile in MN 38 at MN I 260,35 has a counterpart in the parallel MĀ 201 at T I 767c7. Another occurrence of the simile of the raft in MĀ 205 at T I 779c1 has no counterpart in the parallel MN 64.

³⁴ ^[35] DN 13 at DN I 247,5 has a series of questions about Brahmā, beginning with the query whether he is with *pariggaha* or without (counterpart to the reference to family and possessions in DĀ 26), and only at the end of this series applies the same questions to the three-knowledge brahmins.

³⁵ ^[36] DĀ 26 at T I 106b1: 不俱解脫, where in my translation I assume that 解脫 renders *adhi + √muc*; for another instance where 解 on its own carries this meaning cf. Anālayo 2010a: 340 note 30.

proceed towards each other. Therefore Brahmā and the brahmins are dissimilar. How is it, Vāsetṭha, does Brahmā have a mind with anger or a mind without anger?"

[Vāsetṭha] replied: "His mind is without anger."

[The Buddha] asked again: "Do the three-knowledge brahmins have minds with anger or minds without anger?"

[Vāsetṭha] replied: "Their minds are with anger."

The Buddha said: "Vāsetṭha, [thus] Brahmā has a mind without anger and the three-knowledge brahmins have minds with anger. A mind with anger and a mind without anger do not proceed similarly, they are not similarly inclined. Therefore Brahmā and the brahmins are dissimilar. How is it, Vāsetṭha, does Brahmā have a mind with resentment or a mind without resentment?"

[Vāsetṭha] replied: "His mind is without resentment."

[The Buddha] asked again: "Do the three-knowledge brahmins have minds with resentment or minds without resentment?"

[Vāsetṭha] replied: "They have minds with resentment."

The Buddha said: "[Thus] Brahmā has a mind without resentment and the three-knowledge brahmins have minds with resentment. A mind with resentment and a mind without resentment do not proceed similarly, they are not similarly inclined. Therefore Brahmā and the brahmins are dissimilar. How is it, Vāsetṭha, does Brahmā have family and property?"

[Vāsetṭha] replied: "He does not have them."

[The Buddha] asked again: "Do the three-knowledge brahmins have family and property?"

[Vāsetṭha] replied: "They have them." [8]

The Buddha said: "[Thus] Brahmā has no family and property and the three-knowledge brahmins have family and property. Having family and property and not having family and property do not proceed similarly, they are not similarly inclined.

Therefore Brahmā and the brahmins are dissimilar. How is it, Vāseṭṭha, is Brahmā unimpeded or is he impeded?"

[Vāseṭṭha] replied: "He is unimpeded."

[The Buddha] asked again: "Are the three-knowledge brahmins unimpeded or are they impeded?"

[Vāseṭṭha] replied: "They are impeded."

The Buddha said: "[Thus] Brahmā is unimpeded and the three-knowledge brahmins are impeded. To be unimpeded and to be impeded do not proceed similarly, they are not similarly inclined. Therefore Brahmā and the brahmins are dissimilar."

The Buddha said: "Suppose a person comes and asks the three-knowledge brahmins about difficult and profound matters, they would be unable to reply fully, is it truly so?"³⁶

[Vāseṭṭha] replied: "It is so."

Then Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja both together said to the Buddha: "For the time being let us leave that discussion.³⁷ We heard that the recluse Gotama has vision and discernment of the path to Brahmā and is able to teach it to other people, and also that he and Brahmā have gone back and forth to visit each other and converse. May the recluse Gotama teach us the path to Brahmā and explain it widely, out of compassion."

The Buddha said: "Vāseṭṭha, I will now ask you a question, answer me according to your understanding. How is it, Vāseṭṭha, is the region of Manasākaṭa far from here or near?"

[Vāseṭṭha] replied: "It is near."

³⁶ [37] In DN 13 at DN I 248,14 the Buddha instead describes the discomfiture of the brahmins and puns on their three knowledges.

³⁷ [38] Here and below, DN 13 at DN I 248,20 and 249,17 does not report a request to change the topic of the discussion. Instead Vāseṭṭha in the first instance mentions that he had heard that Gotama *knows* the path to Brahmā and in the second instance that Gotama *teaches* the path to Brahmā, followed by requesting such a teaching.

[The Buddha said]: "Suppose a person grew up in that region and another person asks him the way to that region. [106c] What do you think, Vāseṭṭha, would that person who grew up in that region be in doubt when replying about that way?"

[Vāseṭṭha] replied: "He will not be in doubt. Why is that? It is because he grew up in that region."

The Buddha said: "Even if that person grew up in that region, he might still be in doubt. If someone comes and asks me about the path to Brahmā, [however], I am in no doubt. Why is that? Because I often explain to others the path to Brahmā."³⁸

Then Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja together said to the Buddha: "For the time being let us leave that discussion. We heard that the recluse Gotama has vision and discernment of the path to Brahmā and is able to explain it to other people, and also that he and Brahmā have gone back and forth to visit each other and converse. May the recluse Gotama explain to us the path to Brahmā, explaining it widely, out of compassion."

The Buddha said: "Listen and attend well to what I shall tell you."

They replied: "Certainly, we are delighted and wish to hear it." [9]

The Buddha said: "A Tathāgata, an arahant, a fully awakened one, manifests in the world, endowed with the ten epithets ... *up to* [someone goes forth under the Tathāgata and eventually reaches] ... the fourth absorption, with which one delights oneself here and now.³⁹ Why is that? It is because of being energetic, with collected and undistracted mindfulness, de-

³⁸ [39] In DN 13 at DN I 249,12 the Buddha does not indicate that he often teaches this path, but only that he knows it.

³⁹ [40] At this juncture the gradual path of training needs to be supplemented from going forth up to the attainment of the fourth absorption, a full exposition of which can be found in DĀ 20 at T I 83c3 to 85c7; cf. Anālayo 2016d.

lighting in secluded and quiet places, and being diligent [that this is attained].

"One dwells with a mind imbued with *mettā* pervading one direction and also the other directions, widely and without limits, without duality, boundless, without [the bondage of] resentment, without [the affliction of] harmful [intentions]; and by dwelling in this mental state one delights oneself.⁴⁰

"One dwells with a mind imbued with compassion ... sympathetic joy ... equanimity pervading one direction and also the other directions, widely and without limits, without duality, boundless, without the bondage of resentment, without the affliction of harmful intentions; and by dwelling in this mental state one delights oneself.

"How is it, Vāsetṭha, does Brahmā have a mind with hatred or a mind without hatred?"

[Vāsetṭha] replied: "His mind is without hatred."

[The Buddha] asked again: "Does a monk cultivating *mettā* have a mind with hatred or a mind without hatred?"

[Vāsetṭha] replied: "His mind is without hatred."

The Buddha said: "[Thus] Brahmā has a mind without hatred and a monk cultivating *mettā* has a mind without hatred. A mind without hatred and a mind without hatred proceed similarly, they are similarly inclined. Therefore Brahmā and the monk are similar to each other. How is it, Vāsetṭha, does Brahmā have a mind with anger or a mind without anger?"

[Vāsetṭha] replied: "[His mind] is without it."

[The Buddha] asked again: "Does a monk cultivating *mettā* have a mind with anger or a mind without anger?"

⁴⁰ [41] DN 13 at DN I 251,5 illustrates the radiation of *mettā* with the example of a conch blower who is able to make himself heard in all directions, explaining that in a similar way *mettā* developed as a boundless radiation in all directions cannot be overruled by other more limited karma.

[Vāseṭṭha] replied: "[His mind] is without it."

The Buddha said: "[Thus] Brahmā has a mind without anger and a monk cultivating *mettā* has a mind without anger. A mind without anger and a mind without anger proceed similarly, they are similarly inclined. Therefore Brahmā and the monk are similar to each other. How is it, Vāseṭṭha, does Brahmā have a mind with resentment or a mind without resentment?"

[Vāseṭṭha] replied: "[His mind] is without it."

[The Buddha] asked again:⁴¹ "Does a monk cultivating *mettā* have a mind with resentment or a mind without resentment?"

[Vāseṭṭha] replied: "[His mind] is without it."

The Buddha said: "[Thus] Brahmā has a mind without resentment and a monk cultivating *mettā* has a mind without resentment. A mind without resentment and a mind without resentment proceed similarly, they are similarly inclined. Therefore Brahmā and the monk are similar to each other. ^[107a] How is it, Vāseṭṭha, does Brahmā have family and property?"

[Vāseṭṭha] replied: "He does not have them." ^[10]

[The Buddha] asked again: "Does a monk cultivating *mettā* have family and property?"

[Vāseṭṭha] replied: "He does not have them."

The Buddha said: "[Thus] Brahmā has no family and property and a monk cultivating *mettā* also has no family and property. Having no family and property and having no family and property proceed similarly, they are similarly inclined. Therefore Brahmā and the monk are similar to each other. How is it, Vāseṭṭha, is Brahmā unimpeded?"

[Vāseṭṭha] replied: "He is unimpeded."

[The Buddha] asked again: "Is a monk cultivating *mettā* unimpeded?"

⁴¹ [42] Adopting a correction suggested in the CBETA edition of 問 to read 問.

[Vāseṭṭha] replied: "He is unimpeded."

The Buddha said: "[Thus] Brahmā is unimpeded and a monk cultivating *mettā* is unimpeded. To be unimpeded and to be unimpeded proceed similarly, they are similarly inclined. Therefore Brahmā and the monk are similar to each other."

The Buddha said to Vāseṭṭha: "You should know that at the breaking up of the body after death a monk cultivating *mettā* will be reborn in the heavenly realm of Brahmā in an instant, as swiftly as an arrow."

When the Buddha gave this teaching, the dustless and spotless Dharma eye in regard to all phenomena arose in Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja while they were seated there.⁴²

At that time Vāseṭṭha and Bhāradvāja, having heard what the Buddha had said, were delighted and received it respectfully.

Study

When compared to its two parallels, the above translated discourse from the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama* shows several variations of the type regularly encountered in early Buddhist discourse literature.⁴³ Particularly noteworthy is the tendency for an event to become more miraculous, evident in the Chinese *Dīrgha-āgama* version's report that the Buddha divined what the two

⁴² [43] Adopting the variant 於諸法中得 instead of 諸法. The *Vāsiṣṭha-sūtra*, folio 450v7, also reports that the two attained the Dharma eye, following which they requested and received the going forth. DN 13 at DN I 252,25 does not report any attainment and just concludes with their taking refuge as lay followers.

⁴³ [44] Differences between DĀ 26 and DN 13 have already been studied by McGovern 2013: 388–399; for a critical reply to his assumption that such differences are best appreciated in the light of oral improvisation of the type studied by Parry and Lord cf. above p. 68ff.

young brahmins had been discussing, whereas in the parallel versions the two themselves inform the Buddha of their disagreement.⁴⁴

Manifestations of this tendency are not confined to texts of the Dharmaguptaka tradition, but can also be found in Theravāda texts.

[11] An example is the record of the Buddha's first meeting with his chief lay supporter Anāthapiṇḍika. According to a discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya* and the Theravāda *Vinaya*, the Buddha divined the name of his visitor.⁴⁵ In the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, however, the Buddha had to ask for the name.⁴⁶ A discourse in the *Samyukta-āgama* and the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* also report that Anāthapiṇḍika had to inform the Buddha of his name.⁴⁷

This example shows that the tendency for the Buddha to become endowed with divining abilities similarly manifests in texts of the Theravāda tradition. The Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama* depiction of the Buddha divining what the two brahmins Vāseṭṭha

⁴⁴ [45] Cf. above p. 184 note 19. Notably, DN 13 at DN I 237,1 reports the Buddha repeating what the two had said. A conflation of such a repetition by the Buddha with the otherwise similar report given by the young brahmins (comparable to the conflation in DĀ 26 of what in DN 13 are two separate items; cf. above p. 189 note 30) could easily have become the starting point for the textual development evident in DĀ 26. Once through such a conflation the Buddha gives a report of their discussion without having been informed by the two, the conclusion that he must have divined it all would be only natural, a conclusion that would then have influenced the wording of the respective passage during subsequent stages in its transmission.

⁴⁵ [50] According to SN 10.8 at SN I 212,10 and Vin II 156,19, the Buddha said: "come Sudatta", *ehi sudattā ti*, when he saw Anāthapiṇḍika approaching, thereby addressing him by his personal name which, according to Spk I 315,9, was not known to anyone except Anāthapiṇḍika himself.

⁴⁶ [51] According to MĀ 28 at T I 460c10, on a later occasion Anāthapiṇḍika reported that "the Buddha asked me: 'What is your name?'" 佛問我：汝名何等？

⁴⁷ [52] SĀ 592 at T II 158b12 and SĀ² 186 at T II 441a18 as well as the *Śayanāsana-vastu* of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, Dutt 1984c: 143,8 and Wille 1990: 117,18 (319v2), with the Tibetan version found in D 1 ga 198a3 or Q 1030 nge 189a6.

and Bhāradvāja had been discussing is therefore just another example of a general tendency for the Buddha's activities and abilities to become gradually more miraculous.

Another remarkable difference between the *Dīrgha-āgama* discourse translated above and its parallels is the effect the teaching had on the two brahmins. Whereas according to the Theravāda *Tevijja-sutta* the two merely took refuge, according to the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama* discourse they attained stream-entry. The Sarvāstivāda and/or Mūlasarvāstivāda Sanskrit fragment version reports not only that they attained stream-entry, but also that they went forth as Buddhist monks.⁴⁸

The present instance is not the only one where a discourse to Vāsetṭha and Bhāradvāja has a stronger effect in the Chinese *Dīrgha-āgama* than in its *Dīrgha-nikāya* counterpart. The same also happens in the case of the *Aggañña-sutta* and its parallels. The *Dīrgha-nikāya* version and a *Madhyama-āgama* parallel just conclude with the delight of Vāsetṭha and Bhāradvāja.⁴⁹ [12] The Chinese *Dīrgha-āgama* account, however, reports that Vāsetṭha and Bhāradvāja became arahants.⁵⁰ The same is also recorded in the

⁴⁸ [54] Cf. above p. 197 note 42. The present case contrasts with the assessment by Hartmann 2014: 150 that in the long-discourse collections "brahmins are hardly ever converted to the Buddhist teaching; normally they do not even become lay followers, let alone monks. Contrary to what one may expect, successful conversion is not at all the topic of the texts ... and, again interesting, there is no difference between the Pali ending of such a discourse and its Sanskrit counterpart. If there was a considerable distance in time between the final redactions of the two, one might be inclined to expect a development in the Buddhology in the sense that a possibly later version would tend to underline the irrefutability of the Buddha's arguments by letting the story end with a complete conversion, but this is not at all the case. On the contrary, the texts prove extremely stable in that regard."

⁴⁹ [55] DN 27 at DN III 98,3 and MĀ 154 at T I 677a5.

⁵⁰ [56] DĀ 5 at T I 39a19.

Pāli commentary on the *Aggañña-sutta*,⁵¹ in a discourse quotation preserved in Tibetan translation,⁵² and in an individual Chinese translation (although in this last case their attainment of liberation takes place after they have gone forth and practised for some time).⁵³

Elsewhere I have argued that in early Buddhist thought neither the *jhānas* nor the *brahmavihāras* constitute an independent path to liberation.⁵⁴ [21] At the same time, however, the texts equally highlight the substantial contribution that the *jhānas* and/or the *brahmavihāras* can make to progress to the final goal.

In fact neither the *Tevijja-sutta* nor its parallels posit the *brahmavihāras* as a self-sufficient path to liberation. Instead, the Buddha's teaching of the path to Brahmā is a natural response to the request by two brahmin students to be given such a teaching and need not be seen as carrying any deeper or hidden meanings.⁵⁵

⁵¹ [57] Sv III 872,21.

⁵² [58] D 4094 *ju* 197b5 or Q 5595 *tu* 225b4.

⁵³ [59] T 10 at T I 222a12.

⁵⁴ Several of these arguments, which were originally part of the article republished in the present chapter, are instead republished in Anālayo 2017b.

⁵⁵ [113] The situation in DN 13 and its parallels seems to be similar in this respect to the detailed teaching on morality and family relationships given according to DN 31 and its parallels (on which cf. Pannasiri 1950) by the Buddha to another layperson. Here, too, the attainment of what according to early Buddhist thought is the final goal does not come under purview. In the case of DN 13, Shults 2013: 123 sums up that the results of his study indicate that "the *Tevijja Sutta* is a response to Vedic ritual culture." In reply to the suggestion by Gombrich 2009: 83 that in DN 13 "joining *brahma* at death is a metaphor for the nirvana which follows the death of an *arahant*", Gethin 2012: 2 notes that "if, as Gombrich claims, the teaching that 'love and compassion can be salvific for the person who cultivates those feelings to the highest pitch' was such a crucial part of what the Buddha taught (p. 195), it remains something of a puzzle that he should have chosen to reveal this principally to brahmin outsiders, and in terms that were obscure to his own followers."

Although in the Chinese and Sanskrit parallels they attain stream-entry at the end of the exposition, neither of the two versions gives any indication that they actually engaged in *brahmavihāra* practice. Instead, what led to their attainment, in line with numerous other such attainments reported in other discourses, appears to have been the detailed explanations given by the Buddha on what constitutes the path to Brahmā, of which the description of *brahmavihāra* practice forms only the culminating point. Crucial here would have been the insightful explanation by the Buddha that the path to Brahmā requires that one becomes like Brahmā.

This is what most of the discussion is about, namely contrasting Brahmā to brahmins in various respects and then showing that a monk who practises the *brahmavihāras* is similar to Brahmā in all these respects. This straightforward indication of the need to cultivate oneself in a way that accords with the goal of one's aspiration is what would have changed the understanding of the two young brahmins on how to reach Brahmā and thus triggered their insight.

Moreover, the final part of this exposition affirms that a monk who practises *brahmavihāra* "will be reborn in the heavenly realm of Brahmā in an instant, as swiftly as an arrow".⁵⁶ The *Tevijja-sutta* also affirms that such a monk will be reborn in the Brahmā world.⁵⁷ Rebirth in the Brahmā world is clearly not the final goal of early Buddhist soteriology. Thus this affirmation of the potential of the *brahmavihāras* to lead to such elevated rebirth at the same time implies that they fall short of fulfilling the final goal of freedom from rebirth.

⁵⁶ DĀ 26 at T I 107a10.

⁵⁷ DN 13 at DN I 252,15; the relevant part of the *Vāsiṣṭha-sūtra*, folio 450v6, speaks of the rebirth in the Brahmā world of a clansman or a clanswoman in general.

Even without the two young brahmins attaining stream-entry, as in the case of the Pāli *Tevijja-sutta*, the basic message remains the same. Cultivation of the *brahmavihāras* is what leads to the fulfilment of the highest aspiration of contemporary brahmins and at the same time can function as a component of the path to the final goal according to early Buddhist thought.

Mahāparinibbāna-sutta (DN 16)

Part 1

Introduction

In the present chapter I explore the Buddhist approach to healing in the way this emerges from the early discourses. I begin with an extract from the *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel to the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*, followed by other selected passages that report how the Buddha or his eminent disciples dealt with a condition of sickness.

A central source of information on the practice of healing in early Buddhism can be found in *Vinaya* narratives. In the Pāli *Vinaya* the cures effected by the royal physician Jīvaka stand out as testimonies of an impressive medical ability, going even as far as the successful performance of cranial surgery.¹ Understandably such material has been somewhat at the forefront of studies of healing as reflected in early Buddhist texts. However, Jīvaka reportedly learned his art in Takkaṣilā, so his abilities should be understood as reflecting general ancient medical knowledge and skills.² In other words, aside from the fact that he was a Buddhist

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¹ Vin I 274,16; a survey of the cures performed by Jīvaka and their relation to *āyurveda* can be found in Zysk 1982 (or Zysk 1991: 120–127) and Mitra 1985: 326–337; on Jīvaka cf. Naqvi 2011: 57–60; on ancient Buddhist medicine cf. also, e.g., Halder 1977 and Talim 2009. For a survey of publications on Buddhist medical ethics cf. Hughes and Keown 1995.

² Vin II 270,1. On the assistance the ancient brahminical sources can offer for interpreting descriptions of healing preserved in the Pāli canon cf. Zysk 1995.

lay follower and offered free medical service to Buddhist monastics, there is nothing particularly Buddhist about his cures. [20] In contrast, a more specific Buddhist approach to healing emerges from the discourse passages surveyed below.

The Buddha's Overcoming of a Disease (1)

The first case I take up is part of a prolonged narrative of the events that preceded the Buddha's demise, found in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* and its parallels. The passage in question describes how the Buddha overcame what appears to have been a rather serious case of illness. In what follows I translate the *Dīrgha-āgama* record of this event and then study the means used by the Buddha to recover. The translated portion has its placing within the overall narrative after the Buddha had met the famous courtesan Ambapālī and accepted the gift of her grove.³

At that time in that region there was a famine and grain was expensive; it was difficult to get food by begging.⁴ The Buddha said to Ānanda: "Tell all the monks who are now within this region to gather in the assembly hall." He replied: "Yes, indeed."

³ [5] The translated text is DĀ 2 at T I 15a8 to 15b15. This has already been translated into German by Weller 1939: 74–78, into French by Jin 2013: 168–182, and into English by Ichimura 2015: 86–89; for a comparative study of this part of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* cf. Waldschmidt 1944: 88–94.

⁴ [6] A reference to famine and its repercussions is not found in DN 16, which at DN II 98,26 only reports the Buddha's injunction that the monks should spend the rains where they have friends. The same injunction forms the starting point for SN 47.9 at SN V 152,13, whose compass corresponds to the section I have chosen from DĀ 2 for translation. The commentaries on DN 16 and SN 47.9, Sv II 546,19 and Spk III 202,1, explain that the Buddha had told the monks to go elsewhere since there were not enough dwelling places and he anticipated that food would not be easily obtainable. A famine is mentioned in the Sanskrit fragment parallel, Waldschmidt 1951: 190 (§13.5), and in the Chinese parallels T 5 at T I 164b27 and T 6 at T I 180a5.

Having received the instruction, he informed those far and near that they should all gather in the assembly hall. Then, when the great community of those within this region had gathered, Ānanda said to the Buddha: "The great community has gathered, may the Noble One know the time has come [for instructing them]."

At that time the Blessed One rose from his seat and approached the assembly hall. He sat on a prepared seat and said to the monks: "There is a famine in this region and it is difficult to get food by begging. ^[21] You should each divide into groups and go to Vesālī or the Vajjī country to spend the rains retreat, according to where you have friends, so that hopefully you will not experience want. I will spend the rains retreat here alone with Ānanda. The reason is lest there be deprivations." Then the monks received the instruction and carried it out. The Buddha and Ānanda remained alone.

Afterwards, during that summer's rainy season, a disease arose in the Buddha's body and his whole body was completely in pain.⁵ The Buddha thought to himself: 'Now a disease has arisen in me and the whole body is in much pain. All my disciples are not with me.'⁶ It would not be appropriate for me to

⁵ [7] The Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda and Theravāda parallels specify that the feelings were of the type bordering on death, Waldschmidt 1951: 192 (§14.2) and DN 16 at DN II 99,4 (= SN 47.9 at SN V 152,22). According to T 5 at T I 164c5, the Buddha's body was in great pain and he wished to enter Nirvāṇa. DN 16 at DN II 99,5 (= SN 47.9 at SN V 152,23) notes that the Buddha endured the pain with mindfulness and clear comprehension, *sato sampajāno*.

⁶ [8] According to DN 16 at DN II 99,7 (= SN 47.9 at SN V 152,25) the Buddha reflected that it was not proper for him to pass away without having addressed his attendants and having taken leave from the community of monks. T 5 at T I 164c6 similarly reports the Buddha reflecting on his inability to instruct the monks. The Buddha then informed Ānanda of his wish to enter Nirvāṇa, at which point Ānanda begged him not to do so until the community of monks

take up [entry into final] Nirvāṇa now. I shall energetically with my own strength keep on living.⁷

Then the Blessed One came out of his hut and sat in a cool spot. Having seen him, Ānanda quickly approached him and said to the Buddha: "Now seeing the Venerable One's face it seems as if the disease has diminished."

Ānanda further said: "When the Blessed One was ill, my mind was in fear and tied up with worry. I was lost and confused, no longer recognizing the directions. Yet I slightly recovered myself as your breath had not stopped,⁸ thinking quietly [to myself]: 'The Tathāgata has not yet attained final Nirvāṇa, the Eye of the World has not yet ceased, the great Dharma has not yet suffered a loss. Why has there up to now not been a [final] instruction to the community of disciples?'"

The Buddha said to Ānanda: "What does the community of monks expect from me? If someone were to say of himself: 'I manage the community of monks, I control the community of monks', such a person should give a [final] instruction to the community. The Tathāgata does not say: 'I manage the community of monks, I control the community of monks.' Why should he give a [final] instruction to the community?"^[15b]

"Ānanda, the Dharma I have taught is already complete, within and without. I never kept to myself what I have seen and realized. Indeed I am already old, having been eighty years for some time. My body is just like an old cart which by being

had been assembled. T 6 at T I 180a13 just records the Buddha's reflection that the community should be assembled before he enters Nirvāṇa.

⁷ [9] The parallel versions differ in their description of how the Buddha kept alive; cf. the discussion below.

⁸ [10] DN 16 and SN 47.9 do not report Ānanda reflecting that the Buddha's breath had not stopped; the corresponding section in Waldschmidt 1951: 194 (§14.9) has preserved (*ā*)*śvāsamātram*.

expediently patched up and adjusted reaches the place to which it is going. By expedient strength I can maintain it alive a little [longer], through my own strength and energy,⁹ [22] putting up with these painful feelings.

"When I do not give attention to any signs and enter <signless> concentration,¹⁰ then my body is at ease and there are no afflictions.

"Therefore, Ānanda, you should be a light to yourself, a light in the Dharma, without another light;¹¹ you should be a refuge to yourself, a refuge in the Dharma, without another refuge. How can you be a light to yourself, a light in the Dhar-

⁹ [11] During my presentation of the present research at the UKABS conference it became clear that my rendering of 精進, equivalent to Pāli *virīya*, as "energy" can result in misunderstandings. Just to clarify: the term does not refer to an equivalent to the concept of *qì* (氣), but to the mental quality of making an effort. In the course of the ensuing discussion, Peter Harvey aptly summarized the chief import of *virīya* to be the principle of "get to it and keep at it" and thus a form of "active engagement".

¹⁰ [12] DĀ 2 at T I 15b4 actually reads 不念一切想, 入無想定, according to which the Buddha did "not give attention to any perceptions and entered unconscious concentration". My translation is based on emending this to 不念一切相, 入無相定, i.e., emending 想 to 相, following a suggestion made by Weller 1939: 77 note 292. The characters 想 and 相 are frequently confused with each other; cf. Anālayo 2011b: 274f note 54 for a survey of several instances. This makes it fairly probable that such confusion happened in the present case as well and that the Indic original used for translating DĀ 2 into Chinese referred to *animitta*, similarly to what is found in the parallels preserved in Sanskrit and Pāli.

¹¹ [13] The corresponding term in DN 16 at DN II 100,20 (= SN 47.9 at SN V 154,5) is *attadīpa*, and in the Sanskrit fragment version, Waldschmidt 1951: 200 (§14.24), similarly *ātmadvīpa*. T 5 does not have a comparable instruction. T 6 at T I 180b2 speaks of taking the Dharma as one's "lamp", 錠, by taking refuge in oneself. On this expression cf., e.g., Bapat 1957, Brough 1962/2001: 210, Schneider 1980/1992: 113 note 69, Norman 1990/1993b: 87, Nakamura 2000b: 95, Wright 2000, and below p. 350 note 3.

ma, without another light, a refuge to yourself, a refuge in the Dharma, without another refuge?

"Ānanda, a monk contemplates the body internally, diligently without laxity, with undistracted mindfulness, removing desire and discontent with the world. He contemplates the body externally ... contemplates the body internally and externally, diligently without laxity, with undistracted mindfulness, removing desire and discontent with the world.¹² He contemplates feeling ... mental states ... dharmas ... *also in this way*.

"Ānanda, this is reckoned being a light to yourself, a light in the Dharma, without another light, being a refuge to yourself,¹³ a refuge in the Dharma, without another refuge."

The Buddha said to Ānanda: "After my final Nirvāṇa, those who are able to cultivate this teaching are truly my disciples and foremost in the training."

In the extract translated above the Buddha falls ill and this then causes mental affliction to Ānanda. In response to being told of this mental affliction, the Buddha gives him a teaching on self-reliance through mindfulness practice. The way the Buddha overcame his own physical disease, however, was through making an effort. In addition, signless concentration receives a highlight as being particularly helpful for bringing about a sense of physical ease.^[23]

The Buddha's actual overcoming of his disease in the Theravāda version in the *Dīrgha-nikāya* is similar. The passage reads as follows:

¹² [14] A distinction between internal, external, and internal-and-external *satipaṭṭhāna* practice is not made in DN 16 and SN 47.9; nor does T 6 employ such a distinction. T 5 does not mention *satipaṭṭhāna* at all. The Sarvāstivāda/Mūla-sarvāstivāda version, however, also refers to internal, external, and internal-and-external practice; cf. Waldschmidt 1951: 200 (§14.25).

¹³ Adopting a variant without 當.

Then the Blessed One dwelled, having overcome this illness with energy, determined on the life-force. Then the illness of the Blessed One abated.¹⁴

Later on the Theravāda version also refers to the signless concentration as what helped the Buddha to dwell without pain.¹⁵ In the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda version preserved in Sanskrit fragments, signlessness already features in the Buddha's overcoming of his actual disease, together with energy. Here is the relevant passage:

Then the Blessed One, having overcome certain feelings by means of energy and not giving attention to any signs, dwelled having accomplished the direct realization of the signless concentration of the mind. Thereby the Tathāgata was more at ease and in a better condition.¹⁶

One of the parallels preserved in Chinese translation reports that the Buddha used his supernormal power and did not give attention to the pain, whereby his condition improved.¹⁷ The other individual Chinese translation describes him making an effort

¹⁴ [15] DN 16 at DN II 99,12: *atha kho bhagavā taṃ ābādhaṃ viriyena paṭippanā-metvā* (B^e: *vīriyena paṭipāṇāmetvā*) *jīvitasāṅkhāraṃ adhiṭṭhāya vihāsi. atha kho bhagavato so ābādhō paṭippassambhi*. Unlike DN 16, SN 47.9 at SN V 153,2 does not have the last indication that the Blessed One's disease abated. This difference does not affect the meaning, since SN 47.9 continues, in agreement with DN 16, by referring to "the Blessed One who had recovered from the illness. Soon after he had recovered from the illness", *bhagavā gilānā vuṭṭhito aciravuṭṭhito gelaṇṇā*, and then describes what happened next.

¹⁵ [16] DN 16 at DN II 100,16 (= SN 47.9 at SN V 154,1).

¹⁶ [17] Waldschmidt 1951: 194 (§14.6).

¹⁷ [18] T 5 at T I 164c13: "Now my body is totally in pain. Taking hold of the power of a Buddha to control the disease and no longer give mental attention to the disease, my condition thus slightly recovers."

with his own strength and entering concentration without being aware of any signs.¹⁸

In this way the parallel versions can be seen to agree in referring in some way to the use of energy. In addition, signless concentration features either as what led to the actual overcoming of the disease,¹⁹ or else as part of a description given by the Buddha of his aging condition, where with the help of this concentrative attainment he can dwell at ease.²⁰ What emerges from these descriptions is the Buddha's ability to deal with the diseased condition of his body through his meditative power, in particular through the exercise of energy. [24]

The Buddha's Overcoming of a Disease (2)

The use of energy comes up again in another passage that describes what appears to be a different occasion when the Buddha became sick. Here is the *Samyukta-āgama* report of this occasion:²¹

Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha, who was travelling among the villages of the Malla people, was staying between the city Kusinārā and the river Hīraññaṭṭī.²² By the

¹⁸ [19] T 6 at T I 180a14: "I should make an effort with my own strength in relation to this disease, entering concentration without being aware of the multitude of signs. By entering such kind of concentrative attainment, attending to concentration without being aware of the multitude of signs, my mind will bear up with it" (my rendering is based on emending two instances of 想 to read 相).

¹⁹ [20] For a detailed study of signless forms of meditation cf. Harvey 1986.

²⁰ [21] Here it needs to be kept in mind that in the case of DĀ 2 and T 6 my renderings are based on emending 想, "perception", to read 相, "sign".

²¹ [22] The translated text is SĀ 727 at T II 195b29 to 196a11, already translated in Anālayo 2013f: 212–214.

²² The location in SĀ 727 would fit the *Mahāparinirvāṇa* narrative, as already pointed out by Waldschmidt 1967: 243. The parallel SN 46.16 at SN V 81,1

side of a village he said to the venerable Ānanda: "Arrange the Blessed One's outer robe by folding it four times, I now have back pain and wish to lie down to rest a little."²³

Having received the instruction and arranged the outer robe by folding it four times, the venerable Ānanda said to the Buddha: "Blessed One, the outer robe has been arranged by being folded four times, may the Blessed One know the time [has come to lie down]."

At that time the Blessed One, using a thick fold of the outer robe as a pillow for the head, placing one foot on the other, with collected mindfulness and clarity of perception lay down on the right side.²⁴ With right mindfulness and right comprehension he was aware of the idea of rising up again. He said to Ānanda: "Proclaim the seven factors of awakening."²⁵

Then the venerable Ānanda said to the Buddha: "Blessed One, they are reckoned to be the mindfulness awakening factor, which the Blessed One realized himself through full awakening and taught as being supported by seclusion, supported by dispassion, and supported by cessation, leading to letting go.

has instead the Squirrels' Feeding Place in the Bamboo Grove at Rājagaha as its venue.

²³ SN 46.16 at SN V 81,3 only briefly reports that the Buddha was sick and therefore has no counterpart to the narration in SĀ 727 that precedes the recitation of the awakening factors. This narration, together with the subsequent stanzas, is part of the Sanskrit fragment version of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, Waldschmidt 1951: 286–292, and of the Chinese and Tibetan translations of the corresponding section in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*, Waldschmidt 1951: 287–293 and T 1451 at T XXIV 391c26 to 392b9. Parallels to the stanzas have been preserved in Sanskrit and Uighur fragments; cf. von Gabain 1954: 13 and Waldschmidt 1967: 244.

²⁴ The translation is based on adopting the variant reading 想 instead of 相.

²⁵ [23] In SN 46.16 at SN V 81,8 the monk whom the Buddha requests to recite the awakening factors is Mahācunda.

The investigation-of-dharmas ... energy ... joy ... tranquillity ... concentration ... equanimity awakening factor, which the Blessed One realized himself through full awakening and taught as being supported by seclusion, supported by dispassion, and supported by cessation, leading to letting go."

The Buddha said to Ānanda: "Did you say: energy?" Ānanda said to the Buddha: "I said energy, Blessed One, I said energy, Well-gone One."

The Buddha said to Ānanda: "Energy indeed, which I cultivated, cultivated much, to reach supreme and full awakening."²⁶ Having said this, he sat up with a straight body and mindfulness established.²⁷

Then another monk spoke these stanzas:
 "Delighting in hearing the wonderful Dharma,
 Enduring a disease, [the Buddha] told someone to proclaim it.
 A monk proclaimed the Dharma,
 The unfolding of the seven awakening factors.
 "Well done, venerable Ānanda,
 Skilfully you proclaimed
 A teaching that is superbly pure,
 Stainless and sublime is what you proclaimed:
 "Mindfulness, investigation-of-dharmas, energy,
 Joy, tranquillity, concentration, and the awakening [factor]
 of equanimity,
 These are indeed the seven awakening factors,
 They are sublime and well taught.
 "Hearing the seven awakening factors being proclaimed
 Thoroughly experiencing the flavour of full awakening,

²⁶ [24] SN 46.16 at SN V 81,21 does not single out energy in particular, but only reports that the Buddha confirmed that these are the factors of awakening.

²⁷ [25] SN 46.16 at SN V 81,23 indicates that the Buddha recovered from the disease, with which the discourse concludes.

[Although] the body had been afflicted by great pain
[The Buddha] sat up straight to listen, enduring the illness.
"See the master of the true Dharma,²⁸
Who always teaches it widely to people,
How he delighted in hearing what was being proclaimed,
How much more do those who have not yet heard it.
"[Sāriputta], the one foremost in great wisdom,²⁹
Esteemed by the One with the ten powers,³⁰
He, too, on being afflicted by disease,
Came to hear the right Dharma being proclaimed.
"Those who are well learned and of clear understanding
In the discourses and the higher teachings,³¹ [196a]
Capable at reciting the teachings and the discipline
Should listen to it, let alone others.
"Hearing the Dharma being proclaimed, as it really is,
Listening with a collected mind, intelligently and wisely,
To the Dharma proclaimed by the Buddha
One attains delight and joy free from sensuality.
"With delight and joy the body becomes tranquil,
The mind also becomes happy by itself,
The happy mind gains attainments,

²⁸ Adopting the variant 主 instead of 王.

²⁹ According to the Sanskrit fragment parallel, this is a reference to Sāriputta.

³⁰ The "One with the ten powers" would refer to the Buddha, who according to tradition was endowed with the ten powers of a Tathāgata; cf., e.g., MN 12 at MN I 69,31 and its parallel T 757 at T XVII 592c3 (for a survey of other references to the ten powers cf. Anālayo 2011b: 110–112).

³¹ SĀ 727 at T II 195c29 here speaks of the Abhidharma, 阿毘曇, which I have rendered as "higher teachings"; for a survey of references to the Abhidharma in the early discourses cf. Anālayo 2014c: 69–79. The Sanskrit fragment parallel instead refers to the bearers of the *māṭṛkās*, Waldschmidt 1967: 245 (§7): (*sūtra*)*dharā māṭṛk(ā)dharāś caiva*; on the *māṭṛkās* and their possible relationship to the Abhidharma cf. Anālayo 2014c: 21–53.

And proper insight into becoming, realms, and formations.
 "Those who are disenchanted with the three destinations,
 Abandon desire and liberate the mind,
 Being disenchanted with all becoming and destinations,
 They do not arise among humans or *devas*,
 Without remainder, like an extinguished lamp,
 They [enter] final Nirvāṇa.
 "It is very beneficial to hear the Dharma
 That has been proclaimed by the supreme victor.
 Therefore one should, with unified attention,
 Listen to what the great teacher has proclaimed."

Having spoken these stanzas, that other monk rose from his seat and left.

The Sanskrit parallel indicates that "having heard the exposition on the awakening factors and experienced the flavour of the awakening factors ... he thereby recovered from the disease."³² This clearly puts a spotlight on the awakening factors as what brought about a betterment of the Buddha's physical condition.³³

³² [27] Waldschmidt 1967: 244 (§4): *bodhyaṅgakathāṃ śrutvā, bodhyaṅgānāṃ rasam sa vijñāya ... ābādhād vyutthitas tasmāt*. The Tibetan version of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* also explicitly states that the Buddha's recovery came about through savouring the taste of the awakening factors; cf. Waldschmidt 1951: 291,10 (§30.22): *byang chub yan lag ro ni rnam mkhyen pas*.

³³ [28] In relation to SN 46.16 (which has no stanzas explaining what happened), de Silva 1993: 33 reasons that "when one is reminded of the spiritual qualities one has already cultivated ... great joy must be arising in the mind. Such joy is perhaps capable of altering the body's chemistry in a positive manner." Regarding the power associated in the Theravāda tradition with the recitation of the awakening factors, Suvimalee 2012: 175f comments that nowadays "the *Bojjhaṅgaparitta-sutta* is recited to the sick in the devout belief that merely listening to the recitation itself has a therapeutic effect in the way the words are put together and pronounced to produce a particular sound and vibration which is thereby invested with a certain magical power." As Cathy Cantwell

[25] Most versions specifically emphasize the awakening factor of energy, which is in line with the importance given to energy in the previously translated passage, where the Buddha used energy to overcome his disease. The *Samyukta-āgama* version makes it clear that this is not just any type of energy, but rather the energy that led the Buddha to full awakening. In other words, energy that functions as an awakening factor.

The *Samyutta-nikāya* reports two other such instances, where chief disciples recover their health on hearing the Buddha recite the awakening factors for them.³⁴ In these two discourses, as well as in the *Samyutta-nikāya* parallel to the *Samyukta-āgama* discourse translated above, the whole set of the seven awakening factors brings about the cure, not just the third awakening factor of energy.

In fact energy as an awakening factor cultivated on its own would require at the very least a foundation in well-established mindfulness. Mindfulness in the form of *satipaṭṭhāna* functions as the starting point and basis for the cultivation of the other awakening factors.³⁵ According to the sequential building up of the

pointed out during the UKABS conference, the present discourse clearly shows a ritualization of the healing situation in support of the actual words spoken and the meaning conveyed, where the Buddha requests someone else to perform a recitation of what he must have been only too familiar with himself and what in principle he could also have just recited for himself.

³⁴ [29] SN 46.14 at SN V 79,17 and SN 46.15 at SN V 79,17. SN 46.14 has a parallel in Tibetan, D 40 *ka* 281b1 or Q 756 *tsi* 298a8, a discourse apparently translated from a Pāli original; cf. Skilling 1993. Another related instance can be found in EĀ 39.6 at T II 731a22, where the Buddha visits a sick monk (Cunda?) and commends that the monk should himself recite the seven awakening factors. The sick monk recites them and recovers from his disease.

³⁵ [30] As part of a presentation that shows which awakening factor should be cultivated at which time, SN 46.53 at SN V 115,6 and its parallels SĀ 714 at T

awakening factors described elsewhere in the early discourses, the awakening factor of energy arises when the first two awakening factors of mindfulness and investigation-of-dharmas have been established.³⁶ So a reference to the awakening factor of energy would implicitly also be a reference to the first two awakening factors and thereby to mindfulness.

The early discourses present the awakening factors as a distinct Buddhist teaching, proclaiming that their manifestation happens once a *Tathāgata* arises, comparable to the manifestation of seven treasures that were believed to come into being with the arising of a wheel-turning king.³⁷ This makes the use of the awakening factors of mindfulness and energy a distinctly Buddhist approach to facing a disease. [26]

The Buddha Bears Pain with Mindfulness

Mindfulness comes up again in a discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya* and its parallels in the two *Samyukta-āgama* collections in relation to the Buddha's ability to bear pain. In what follows I translate the first part of the relevant discourse from a partially preserved *Samyukta-āgama*.³⁸

II 192a22 and D 4094 *nyu* 53a6 or Q 5595 *thu* 94a5 indicate that mindfulness is the one out of the set of seven that is always required.

³⁶ [31] MN 118 at MN III 85,26 and its parallel SĀ 810 at T II 208b20.

³⁷ [32] SN 46.42 at SN V 99,8 and its parallels MĀ 58 at T I 493a16, T 38 at T I 822a29, SĀ 721 at T II 194a19, SĀ 722 at T II 195a6, and EĀ 39.7 at T II 731b19; cf. also SHT VIII 1857, Bechert and Wille 2000: 50. Although this clearly presents the awakening factors as a distinctly Buddhist teaching, other passages show contemporaries of the Buddha also engaging in the cultivation of these qualities. As pointed out by Gethin 1992: 180 after a survey of such passages, these convey the message that "the full potential inherent in this practice is not understood or fulfilled" by such non-Buddhist practitioners.

³⁸ [33] The translated text is SĀ² 287 at T II 473c27 to 474a3.

Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was dwelling at Rājagaha in the Sattapaṇṇi Cave by the side of Mount Vebhāra. Then the Buddha's foot had been pierced by a [piece] of acacia wood,³⁹ and he was in extreme pain. The Tathāgata silently endured it. He required nothing even with recurrent strong pain.

At that time there were eight *devas* of beautiful complexion who approached the Buddha. ^[474a] One *deva* among them said: "The recluse Gotama is truly a lion among brave men. Even experiencing strong pain, he does not relinquish the awakening [factor] of mindfulness and his mind is not troubled or altered."

The two parallel versions agree that the Buddha's ability to endure severe pain when his foot had been hurt was because of his mindfulness, although they do not explicitly specify that this was the awakening factor of mindfulness.⁴⁰

Anuruddha Bears Pain with Mindfulness

Mindfulness also features prominently in another passage, which shows that the ability to cure oneself in this way is not confined to the Buddha. The passage reports Anuruddha being visited by other monks, after he had recovered from being sick. In what follows I translate the *Samyukta-āgama* version:⁴¹

³⁹ ^[34] According to SN 1.38 at SN I 27,14, his feet had been pierced by a stone splinter, which the commentary, Spk I 78,1, explains to have been the result of an attempt by Devadatta to kill the Buddha. For detailed comparative studies of the Devadatta narrative cf. Mukherjee 1966 and Bareau 1991.

⁴⁰ ^[35] In SN 1.38 at SN I 28,8 the *deva* compares the Buddha to a lion for his ability to endure the pain with mindfulness and clear comprehension, *sato sampajāno*, or right mindfulness and clear comprehension in SĀ 1289 at T II 355a21: 正智正念; cf. also DN 16 at DN II 99,5 (= SN 47.9 at SN V 152,23), quoted above p. 205 note 5, where the same two qualities of mindfulness and clear comprehension recur in relation to the Buddha's ability to endure pain.

⁴¹ ^[36] The translated text is SĀ 541 at T II 140c13 to 140c24.

Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was staying at Sāvattthī in Jeta's Grove, Anāthapiṇḍika's Park. The venerable Anuruddha was then staying at Sāvattthī in a dwelling in a pine forest, having recently recovered from being sick.⁴² Then a group of many monks approached [the venerable] Anuruddha. Having exchanged polite and friendly greetings, they sat to one side.

They asked the venerable Anuruddha: "Are you happy and dwelling at peace?"⁴³ [The venerable] Anuruddha said: "I am happy and dwelling at peace. All my bodily pains have gradually calmed down." [27] The monks asked the venerable Anuruddha: "Dwelling in what [meditative] dwelling did all the bodily pains become gradually appeased?"⁴⁴

The venerable Anuruddha said: "Dwelling in the four establishments of mindfulness all my bodily pains have been gradually appeased."⁴⁵ What are the four? That is, the establishment of mindfulness by contemplating the body as a body internally ... *up to* ... the establishment of mindfulness by contemplating dhammas as dhammas.⁴⁶ These are called the four establishments of mindfulness. Because of dwelling in these four establishments of mindfulness, all my bodily pains have gradually calmed down."

⁴² [37] According to SN 52.10 at SN V 302,12, Anuruddha was staying in Blind Men's Grove (also located at Sāvattthī).

⁴³ [38] In SN 52.10 at SN V 302,15 the visiting monks directly ask him about his [meditative] dwelling which enables him to dwell with his mind not being afflicted by the pain, without any preceding enquiry about his present condition. In fact in SN 52.10 he appears to be still sick.

⁴⁴ [39] Adopting a variant that adds 漸.

⁴⁵ [40] SN 52.10 SN V 302,18 specifies that his way of dwelling in the four *sati-paṭṭhānas* was with "the mind well established" in them, *supatīṭṭhitacitta*.

⁴⁶ [41] SN 52.10 at SN V 302,21 does not bring in the distinction between internal and external *satipaṭṭhāna* practice.

Then the worthy ones, having discussed this together, rejoiced in it and were delighted. They each rose from their seats and left.

This passage clearly points to the potential of mindfulness, practised by way of the four *satipaṭṭhānas*, to bring about a diminishing of the pains caused by a disease. When considered in conjunction with the other passages surveyed above, the mental qualities shown to be capable of healing in early Buddhist thought are the awakening factors, either the whole set or else the mental qualities of energy and mindfulness. In addition, engaging in signless concentration also has a potential to counter pain.⁴⁷

Not only monastics, but lay people were also expected to use their mental abilities to handle the pain of disease. When an elderly layman reports his deteriorating health condition to the Buddha, he receives the succinct instruction that he should train himself so that, when the body is sick, his mind will not be sick.⁴⁸

Mindfulness and Stress Reduction

The passages surveyed above show that early Buddhist texts give considerable room to psychological means of healing.⁴⁹ In

⁴⁷ [42] A set of ten meditation practices whose recitation was able to cure a monk of his diseased condition can be found in AN 10.60 at AN V 112,16 and its Tibetan parallel, D 38 *ka* 279a1 or Q 754 *tsi* 295b6, which in a similar manner to the Tibetan parallel to SN 46.14, mentioned above p. 215 note 34, appears to have been translated from a Pāli original; cf. Skilling 1993. For a translation of the Tibetan version and a detailed study cf. Anālayo 2016g: 99–109.

⁴⁸ [43] SN 22.1 at SN III 1,16 and its parallels SĀ 107 at T II 33a15 (cf. Anālayo 2014g: 27 note 58 and 2016g: 18ff) and EĀ 13.4 at T II 573a9.

⁴⁹ [44] Skorupski 1999: 153 notes that "in addition to a wide range of proper medical remedies, Buddhism also offers a great variety of religious devices to prevent and heal diseases. Within this category we find meditation, moral conduct, recitations of Buddhist texts, rituals, exorcism, and amulets."

recent times, the practice of mindfulness in particular has proven its value in the modern-day clinical setting.⁵⁰ Mindfulness, a term used by researchers with varying connotations,⁵¹ has been successfully used to treat chronic pain and anxiety, [28] binge-eating disorders, depression, fibromyalgia, etc.⁵²

Although such benefits are not the main aim of early Buddhist meditation practice, the passages surveyed above do show that the physical healing effect of awakening factors like mindfulness and energy were not lost on the early Buddhists. These were clearly recognized as benefits to be encouraged.

Good health and digestion feature as one among five factors of striving, required for progress on the path.⁵³ Health and a good digestion are also among the benefits of walking meditation.⁵⁴ So physical health was clearly given consideration in early Buddhist

⁵⁰ [45] Particularly well known is MBSR (Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction); cf. especially Kabat-Zinn 1982, Kabat-Zinn et al. 1985, and Kabat-Zinn et al. 1987.

⁵¹ [46] Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2013e and for a recent survey of, and contribution to, the dialogue between traditional understandings of mindfulness and its clinical employment cf. Monteiro et al. 2015.

⁵² [47] Baer 2003: 139 concludes a detailed survey of research publications by summing up that "the current literature suggests that mindfulness-based interventions may help to alleviate a variety of mental health problems." Another detailed survey by Grossman et al. 2004: 35f on MBSR in particular notes that "preliminary reports have suggested substantial benefits for individuals suffering from chronic pain, fibromyalgia, cancer, anxiety disorders, depression and the stresses of contexts as diverse as medical school and prison life". According to *ibid.* p. 39, "our findings suggest the usefulness of MBSR as an intervention for a broad range of chronic disorders and problems."

⁵³ [48] MN 85 at MN II 95,20 and its Sanskrit fragment parallel 343 verso2f, Silverlock 2009: 80. Kitagawa 1989: 12 notes that "Buddhism was concerned with physical health as an important condition for striving after spiritual health."

⁵⁴ [49] AN 5.29 at AN III 30,1, with parallels in EĀ² 20 at T II 879a8 and T 212 at T IV 755a15.

thought.⁵⁵ Physical well-being then facilitates the cultivation of mental health, which a Pāli discourse considers to be more difficult to encounter than physical health.⁵⁶

The central aim of early Buddhist practice is of course such mental health. The proper approach to the gaining of mental health emerges as the theme of the first teaching delivered according to the traditional account by the recently awakened Buddha, disclosing the four noble truths.⁵⁷ Notably, this teaching appears to be based on a medical diagnosis scheme. We do not have certain proof that ancient Indian medicine had such a scheme.⁵⁸ Nevertheless, the comparison of the four truths to medical diagnosis occurs explicitly in several early Buddhist texts, a comparison that suggests some such diagnostic scheme was known and in use in daily life.⁵⁹ In this way the most fundamental teaching of early Buddhist thought seems to be intentionally couched in ancient Indian medical terms.⁶⁰ [29]

⁵⁵ [50] Concern with health emerges also from descriptions of the Buddha repeatedly visiting the sick, on one occasion even personally washing a sick monk; cf. Vin I 302,4 and for a study of the parallels Demiéville 1974: 236f.

⁵⁶ [51] AN 4.157 at AN II 143,1 (of which no parallel seems to be known) distinguishes between physical and mental health, concluding that, compared to the relative ease of encountering people who are physically well, it is much harder to find those who are healthy in the mind; cf. also Wichit 2002: 96f.

⁵⁷ [52] For a detailed study cf. Anālayo 2012a and 2013a.

⁵⁸ [53] Cf. Har Dayal 1932/1970: 159, Filliozat 1934: 301, and Wezler 1984: 312–324.

⁵⁹ [54] For a more detailed discussion cf. Anālayo 2011e.

⁶⁰ [55] Thus the assumption by Lopez 2012: 123 that the "buddha had no interest in being compatible with science" is not correct. Not only this aspect of Lopez's presentation but his entire study of "the scientific Buddha" (the title of his monograph) seems to me to suffer from a methodological problem that undermines the reliability of his presentation and conclusions. The study indiscriminately uses elements from various Buddhist traditions and historical periods as a contrast to modern Western science. As far as the historical Buddha is con-

One who has successfully eradicated *dukkha* would also be beyond any form of anxiety, depression, mental agitation, or fear, thereby being beyond major manifestations of stress. Not only the final goal, but even the path to this goal in the early Buddhist texts appears to involve the reduction of stress. In case one has unwholesome thoughts in the mind, for example, the *Vitakkasaṇṭhāna-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel recommend five different methods. Only the last of these five requires a forceful exercise of will to emerge out of the situation, as a last resort when all else has failed. Before resorting to such an emergency brake, however, the parallel versions describe how one can gradually reduce unwholesome thoughts in one's mind through meditative attention. One mode of such deployment of mental attention finds illustration in a simile. Here is the *Madhyama-āgama* version of this simile, which is closely similar to its parallel in the *Vitakkasaṇṭhāna-sutta*.⁶¹

"It is just like a man who walks on a path, hurrying along quickly. He reflects: 'Why am I hurrying? Shall I rather walk more slowly now?' and so he walks slowly. He reflects again: 'Why am I walking slowly? Shall I rather stand still?' and so he stands still. He reflects again: 'Why am I standing? Shall I

cerned, an assessment of the degree to which his teaching could be reckoned scientific or otherwise needs to be based on those sources that reflect the early Buddhist period, not on practices and notions that came into being many centuries later. Moreover, the scientific character of early Buddhist thought can only be adequately assessed based on a comparison with ancient Indian scientific thought and thus within its own historical and cultural context, instead of imposing modern Western definitions of science on a different culture; cf. also below p. 341f.

⁶¹ [56] The translated text is MĀ 101 at T I 588b29 to 588c6, parallel to MN 20 at MN I 120,22; for a comparison of the five methods described in the *Vitakkasaṇṭhāna-sutta* with modern psychology cf. de Silva 2001.

rather sit down?" and so he sits down. He reflects again: "Why am I sitting? Shall I rather lie down?" and so he lies down. In this way that man gradually quietyens the body's gross activities."

This passage shows Buddhist meditation actively reducing stress, which forms part of an overall practice aimed at liberating the mind from all those qualities and factors that might cause the experience of stress.

In sum, the use of meditative qualities like mindfulness for healing purposes has a precedent in the passages surveyed above. This precedent clearly comes together with a substantially different outlook on the world, a different conception of health, and perhaps most importantly a radically different overall aim. When viewed from the perspective of the final goal of total freedom, the beneficial repercussions of meditation practice on one's physical health condition are clearly secondary. In fact the Buddha's role as the supreme physician concerns his teaching of the four noble truths.

Yet, alongside such differences there are noticeable similarities when compared to the modern-day clinical use of mindfulness for healing purposes. Although not constituting the final goal of practice, such healing purposes are certainly welcome aids for those engaging in the Buddhist path to liberation. As a stanza found in the different *Dharmapada* collections highlights, health is supreme among what one can gain, and supreme happiness is achieved with the attainment of Nirvāṇa.⁶² [30]

⁶² [57] Dhṛp 204, with parallels in the Gāndhārī *Dharmapada* 162, Brough 1962/2001: 145, the Patna *Dharmapada* 76, Cone 1989: 123, the *Udānavarga* 26.6, Bernhard 1965: 319. Health as the supreme gain and Nirvāṇa as the supreme happiness recur in MN 75 at MN I 508,30 and its parallel MĀ 153 at T I 672a28, in which case the context suggests the implications to be that, whereas non-Buddhists might mistake physical health as the final goal, from an early

Conclusion

A survey of passages in the early discourses that report how the Buddha or his disciples faced pain and disease shows that the awakening factors, in particular mindfulness and energy, were employed to handle pain and overcome disease. This in turn implies that the modern-day clinical use of mindfulness for similar purposes has a precedent in early Buddhist thought, even though this precedent is based on a substantially different value system and its conception of health goes far beyond the modern-day medical definition of health.

Buddhist viewpoint true health (especially in its mental dimension) will only be reached by realizing Nirvāṇa.

Mahāparinibbāna-sutta (DN 16)

Part 2

Introduction

In the present chapter I study the last moments of the Buddha's life in the way these are reported in the Chinese *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel to the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* of the *Dīrgha-nikāya*. I begin by translating the relevant section from the *Dīrgha-āgama* version,¹ and then turn to a comparative study with a particular emphasis on the description of the Buddha's meditative attainments just before passing away.

Translation

The Buddha said to the monks: "If you have doubts about the Buddha, the Dharma, the Community, or doubts about the path, you should swiftly ask [for clarification]. This is proper and the time for it, do not regret it later. As long as I am still present, I shall explain it to you." Then the monks were silent and without a word.

The Buddha said again: "If you have doubts about the Buddha, the Dharma, the Community, or doubts about the path, you should swiftly ask [for clarification]. This is proper and the time for it, do not regret it later. As long as I am still present, I shall explain it to you." Then the monks were still silent. [2]

* Originally published in 2014 under the title "The Buddha's Last Meditation in the *Dīrgha-āgama*" in the *Indian International Journal of Buddhist Studies*, 15: 1–43.

¹ The translated part of DĀ 2 is found at T I 26b1 to 26c14, which has already been translated into German by Weller 1940: 181–184, into French by Jin 2013: 618–642, and into English by Ichimura 2015: 149–151.

The Buddha said further: "If you feel personally ashamed and do not dare to ask, you should rely on a good friend to come and swiftly ask [for clarification]. This is proper and the time for it, do not regret it later." Then the monks were still silent.

Ānanda said to the Buddha: "I am confident that all in this community possess serene faith, not a single monk has doubts about the Buddha, the Dharma, the Community, or doubts about the path."

The Buddha said to Ānanda: "I, too, know myself that the least [developed] monks amidst this community now have all seen the tracks of the path, will not proceed to an evil destiny and will certainly eradicate the origin of *dukkha*, returning at most seven times [to be born]." At that time the Blessed One declared that the one thousand two hundred [and fifty] disciples had attained [at least] the fruit of the path [of stream-entry].²

Then the Blessed One opened his upper robe, stretched out his golden-coloured arm and said to the monks: "You should contemplate that a Tathāgata emerges in the world [only] occasionally, just as an *udumbara* flower manifests [only] at a single time."³ At that time the Blessed One, contemplating its meaning again, spoke in verse:

"The purplish golden-coloured right arm

² DĀ 2 at T I 26b13 mentions only one thousand two hundred disciples, 千二百弟子. Such a count of disciples is unusual in the *Dīrgha-āgama*, which regularly presents the Buddha in the company of one thousand two hundred and *fifty* disciples; for instances within the same discourse (although related to different episodes) cf. DĀ 2 at T I 11a9, 13c4, and 14b11. The use of such numbers is, of course, symbolic. Other discourses in the Pāli *Nikāyas* and in other *Āgamas* regularly employ the number five hundred instead; for a more detailed discussion cf. Anālayo 2011b: 417–419. In the present case, I take it that a textual error has occurred; hence in the translation I supplement the missing fifty.

³ For a study of the Indian myth regarding the flowering of the *udumbara* tree cf. Norman 1991/1993a.

The Buddha displayed, like an *udumbara* [flower].⁴

Past and future formations are impermanent,

Present ones [also] cease, do not be negligent.

"Therefore, monks, do not be negligent. Through not being negligent, ^[3] I reached right awakening myself. An immeasurable multitude of goodness as well can be attained by not being negligent. All the ten thousand existing things are impermanent. These are the Tathāgata's last words."

Then the Blessed One entered the first absorption.⁵ He rose from the first absorption and entered the second absorption. He rose from the second absorption and entered the third absorption. He rose from the third absorption and entered the fourth absorption.

He rose from the fourth absorption and entered concentration on the sphere of [infinite] space. He rose from concentration on the sphere of [infinite] space and entered concentration on the sphere of [infinite] consciousness. He rose from concentration on the sphere of [infinite] consciousness and entered concentration on nothingness. He rose from concentration on nothingness and entered concentration on neither-perception-nor-non-perception. He rose from concentration on neither-perception-nor-non-perception and entered concentration on the cessation of perception.⁶

⁴ The formulation gives the impression of being a reciter's remark, not something said by the Buddha.

⁵ Adopting a variant without 定, in keeping with the formulation used in the rest of the passage.

⁶ DĀ 2 at T I 26b26: 入滅想定, which Ichimura 2015: 151 translates as "he then entered the final state of cessation, transcendent from senses and ideation, equivalent to third saintly state of an *anāgāmin*." Besides the problem that most of this passage has no basis in the Chinese original, it is unfortunately also wrong, since the Buddha entered cessation as a fully awakened one, not as a non-returner.

Then Ānanda asked Anuruddha: "Has the Blessed One attained Nirvāṇa?" Anuruddha said: "Not yet, Ānanda. The Blessed One is now in the concentration on the cessation of perception. Formerly I heard from the Buddha that he will attain Nirvāṇa on rising from the fourth absorption."

Then the Blessed One rose from concentration on the cessation of perception and entered concentration on neither-perception-nor-non-perception. He rose from concentration on neither-perception-nor-non-perception and entered concentration on nothingness. He rose from concentration on nothingness and entered concentration on the sphere of [infinite] consciousness. He rose from concentration on the sphere of [infinite] consciousness and entered concentration on the sphere of [infinite] space.

He rose from concentration on the sphere of [infinite] space and entered the fourth absorption. He rose from the fourth absorption and entered the third absorption. He rose from the third absorption and entered the second absorption. He rose from the second absorption and entered the first absorption. ^[4]

He rose from the first absorption and entered the second absorption. He rose from the second absorption and entered the third absorption. He rose from the third absorption and entered the fourth absorption. Rising from the fourth absorption, the Buddha attained Nirvāṇa.

At that time there was a great earthquake and all the *devas* and the humans in the world were greatly frightened. All the remote and dark places not illuminated by the sun and the moon were completely covered by a great brightness, so that each could see the other, and they said to each other: "Other beings are reborn here, other beings are reborn here!" That light was everywhere, surpassing the light of the heavens.

Then the *devas* of the Thirty-three who were in mid-air strewed *mandārava* flowers, *uppala*, *paduma*, *kumuda*, and *puṇḍarīka* flowers on the Tathāgata and the assembled community; and they strewed heavenly sandalwood powder on the Buddha and the great community.

Study

The *Dīrgha-āgama* account of the Buddha's passing away has discourse counterparts in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya*, in Sanskrit fragments of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, and in three discourses preserved as individual translations in Chinese.

The extract translated above begins with the Buddha inviting the monks to have their doubts clarified. The parallel versions report a similar invitation, although with some minor differences in their descriptions as to what such doubts might concern. In agreement with the *Dīrgha-āgama* version, the Pāli *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* indicates that such doubts could be in regard to the three jewels (the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Community) or in regard to the path.⁷

The *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* preserved in Sanskrit fragments also refers to the three jewels, besides which it mentions *dukkha*, its arising, its cessation, and the path [to its cessation].⁸ [5] That is, the doubts might be about the four noble truths. The same is also the case for one of the individually translated Chinese versions.⁹ Another of the individually translated Chinese versions, however, records a single enquiry about doubts in regard to the

⁷ [6] DN 16 at DN II 154,25 mentions doubts about the *magga* and the *paṭipadā*, alongside the three jewels; the same is also the case for a parallel to this section of DN 16 in AN 4.76 at AN II 79,13.

⁸ [7] Waldschmidt 1951: 390 (§42.2): *yasya syāt kāṅkṣā vā vimatir vā buddhe vā dharme vā saṅghe vā duḥkhe vā samudaye vā nirodhe vā mārge vā*.

⁹ [8] T 6 at T I 188b4: 有疑望非意在佛及法, 聖眾, 苦, 習, 盡, 道.

discourses.¹⁰ The third of the individually translated versions just mentions doubts, without further specifications.¹¹ In this way the parallel versions show some variations regarding this last exchange between the Buddha and his disciples.

In reply to this enquiry by the Buddha, Ānanda made it clear on behalf of the assembled monks that they had no doubts, something of which the Buddha had already been aware. In one of the individual translations, the monks themselves explicitly confirm that they indeed had no doubts.¹²

The Sanskrit fragments of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* explain why the Buddha had invited the monks to ask questions to clarify their doubts, even though he already knew this was not required as they had no doubts. The Buddha had to act like this out of compassion for later generations.¹³ In other words, the point of the description is to convey to future disciples that at the time of the Buddha's death there had been no doubts at all regarding the teachings, etc., among the disciples present on this occasion,¹⁴ [6] thereby

¹⁰ [9] T 5 at T I 172c7: 於經有疑結者; on the translator attribution for the cases of T 5 and T 6 cf. Park 2010.

¹¹ [10] T 7 at T I 204c8: 若有疑難. This version agrees with DN 16 and DĀ 2 that the Buddha made his enquiry three times; cf. T 7 at T I 204c12.

¹² [11] T 5 at T I 172c11: 吾等無疑.

¹³ [12] Waldschmidt 1951: 392 (§42.8): *api tu karaṇīyam etat tathāgatena yathāpi tat paścimāṃ janatām anukāmpamānaḥ*.

¹⁴ [13] As noted by von Hinüber 2008b: 208, no nuns are mentioned among those present on this occasion. This is only to be expected, since according to a rule found in the different *Vinayas* monks and nuns were not allowed to travel together; cf. the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1429 at T XXII 1018c21, the Lokotaravāda Mahāsāṅghika *Vinaya*, Tatia 1975: 21,15, the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1422 at T XXII 197b14, the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, Banerjee 1977: 34,15, the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, von Simson 2000: 210,5, and the Theravāda *Vinaya*, Vin IV 62,28. Given that this rule is attributed to the Buddha, it is no surprise that in a description of his passing away during one of his journeys the Bud-

providing a contrast to disagreements about the teachings that arose in later times.

According to early Buddhist doctrine, the complete removal of doubt takes place with stream-entry;¹⁵ in fact in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* and the *Dīrgha-āgama* discourse the Buddha reveals that all of the monks present had at the very least attained stream-entry.¹⁶ In one of the individually translated versions the Buddha instead indicates that those monks present on this occasion who have not yet attained [full] awakening will reach the eradication of the influxes after his Nirvāṇa.¹⁷ The nuance of assurance that emerges with this proclamation becomes more prominent with the other two individually translated discourses, as in them the Buddha predicts the advent of another Buddha in the future. Thus the impending demise of the Buddha as a teacher of mankind will eventually be followed by the emergence of another Buddha.¹⁸

The *Dīrgha-āgama* discourse translated above continues from the level of accomplishment of the assembled monks to the uniqueness of a Buddha appearing in the world. Similarly to the *Dīrgha-āgama* presentation, several of the parallel versions also compare the appearance of a Buddha to an *udumbara* flower.¹⁹ The *Dīrgha-āgama* account stands alone, however, in reporting that the Buddha revealed his right arm.²⁰ According to the Sanskrit fragments of the

dha is accompanied only by monks; for a comparable case in relation to the funeral of Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī cf. Dhammadinnā 2016a: 43.

¹⁵ [14] Cf., e.g., Sn 231, with a counterpart in the *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1882: 291,23.

¹⁶ [15] DN 16 at DN II 155,28 and DĀ 2 at T I 26b11.

¹⁷ [16] T 7 at T I 204c16.

¹⁸ [17] In T 5 at T I 172c3 he indicates that in fifteen *koṭīs* and 70,600,000 years there will be another Buddha. According to T 6 at T I 188b14, in one *koṭi* and 40,000 years the Buddha Maitreya will appear.

¹⁹ [18] This is the case for the Sanskrit version, Waldschmidt 1951: 394 (§42.10), and for two of the individual translations, T 5 at T I 172c6 and T 6 at T I 188b15.

²⁰ [19] DĀ 2 at T I 26b14.

Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra, the Buddha rather displayed his (upper) body and invited the monks to look at it.²¹ An earlier version of this description might have been about the Buddha displaying how old age had affected his body, thereby providing a vivid reminder of impermanence to the assembled disciples.²² [7] With the growth of docetic tendencies this might then have become an act of revealing the extraordinary nature of the Buddha's body.

Impermanence is then also the theme of the Buddha's final statement, which the parallel versions report with some differences. According to the Sanskrit fragments of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, the Buddha told the monks to be silent and declared that "all formations are of a nature to decay."²³ The *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* combines a similar indication with an injunction to be diligent: "Formations are of a nature to decay, strive on with diligence."²⁴ One of the individual translations reports the Buddha's final words as follows:

You should know that all formations are entirely impermanent. Even though I now have this *vajra* body, I too am not exempt from being changed by impermanence. Being amidst birth and death is highly fearful, you should diligently make an effort, try to be free quickly from this fiery pit of birth and death. This is my last teaching, the time for my Nirvāṇa has come.²⁵

²¹ [20] Waldschmidt 1951: 394 (§42.10): *avalokayata bhikṣavas tathāgatasya kāyam, vyavalokayata bhikṣavas tathāgatasya kāyam*.

²² [21] Waldschmidt 1948: 248 comments: "der Buddha nahm von seinen Jüngern Abschied, indem er seinen Körper vor ihnen entblößte und ihnen die Vergänglichkeit alles Irdischen am Verfall seines eigenen Körpers vor Augen führte"; cf. also Waldschmidt 1939/1967: 87f.

²³ [22] Waldschmidt 1951: 394 (§42.11).

²⁴ [23] DN 16 at DN II 156,1. As Law 1933: 99 points out, this saying "strikes the key-note of the Buddha's philosophy and mission".

²⁵ [24] T 7 at T I 204c25; this part has already been translated into German by Waldschmidt 1939/1967: 82. Bareau 1971b: 14 comments on a similar reference to

In the other two individual translations the Buddha points out that half of the night has already passed. According to one version he then tells the monks that they should make an effort; ^[8] according to the other he indicates that there should be silence now.²⁶

The main theme underlying these different records of the last words spoken by the Buddha would be that he used his own death as a final illustration of impermanence,²⁷ and that he encouraged his disciples to devote themselves fully to their practice.²⁸

In contrast to the considerable number of variations found among the parallel versions so far, these same versions are in close agreement when describing the Buddha's meditative progression. Except for one individual translation, they all report that the Buddha proceeded through the nine successive meditative attainments up and down, and then went up from the first to the fourth absorption to

the impermanence of the Buddha's *vajra* body in DĀ 2 at T I 27b12, where it forms part of stanzas spoken by an unnamed monk after the Buddha had passed away: "the author of this strophe probably had the idea that the body of the Beatific could not be constituted of the same flesh as men's, but that it was made of a substance if not truly precious at least more capable of resisting the forces of destruction and, in consequence, extraordinary"; for a detailed study of the *vajrakāya* notion cf. Radich 2011/2012.

²⁶ ^[25] T 6 at T I 188b18: 汝其勉之, 夜已半矣, and T 5 at T I 172c12: 夜已且半, 勿復有聲. Waldschmidt 1939/1967: 86 understands the passage in T 5 to be an indication that the Buddha will not say anything further, "kein Laut soll mehr (von mir) vernommen werden." Pachow 1946: 25, however, takes the passage in T 5 to be an injunction to the monks to be silent, which he paraphrases as "the Buddha ordered the Bhikkhus to keep quiet."

²⁷ ^[26] As Gethin 1996: 210 points out, "one might go so far as to say that it is precisely his own death that constitutes the Buddha's profoundest teaching: whoever one is, whatever one does, one cannot avoid death, this is the nature of the world."

²⁸ ^[27] Gnanarama 1997a: 16 comments that "even in the last few hours of His existence the Buddha was mindful to instill energy, exhorting the monks to exert themselves and strive for Liberation."

attain Nirvāṇa. The individual translation that differs from this general consensus nevertheless has a reference to the Buddha mentally proceeding from the four heavenly kings up to the sphere of [neither-perception-nor-]non-perception, and from there returning to come back to his own body.²⁹

At first sight a variant appears to occur elsewhere in the Pāli tradition, as the Pali Text Society edition of a *Samyutta-nikāya* parallel to this episode does not mention his attainment of cessation.³⁰ Yet, the cessation attainment is found in all Asian editions, [9] so that this difference is probably a textual error in the manuscripts used for the PTS edition.³¹

This *Samyutta-nikāya* discourse shows several other differences when compared to the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*, however, which are also attested in the Asian editions. The *Samyutta-nikāya* discourse does not report the exchange between Anuruddha and Ānanda regarding the Buddha's attainment of cessation,³² nor does

²⁹ [28] T 5 at T I 172c14: 從四天王上至不想入, 從不想轉還身中。

³⁰ [29] Rhys Davids 1917/1979: 196 note 1, Geiger 1930/2003: 246 note 3, and Nakamura 2000b: 292 note 111 observed that the cessation attainment mentioned in DN 16 is not found in a parallel to this episode in SN 6.15 at SN I 158,11, where the Buddha just goes up to neither-perception-nor-non-perception and then descends again. Nakamura 2000b: 292 note 111 then even drew the conclusion that "this fact suggests that this term was a later addition to the *Mahāparinibbāna-suttanta*."

³¹ [30] According to B^e, C^e, and S^e, as well as the new PTS edition by Somaratne 1998: 340, the Buddha proceeded up to the attainment of cessation; cf. also Bodhi 2000: 442 note 421. Another textual error on the part of the manuscripts used for the old PTS edition appears to be that SN 6.15 at SN I 158,1 has the two parts of the Buddha's final injunction in the opposite order to DN 16, where again B^e, C^e, and S^e, as well as the new PTS edition by Somaratne 1998: 340, agree on recording this in the same way as DN 16 at DN II 156,1.

³² [31] The episode where Ānanda enquires from Anuruddha whether the Buddha has already passed away is mentioned only in the commentary on SN 6.15, Spk I 223,15. Another difference is that in SN 6.15 at SN I 158,35 the stanzas

it record that an earthquake marked the occasion.³³ The *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* and its parallels, however, agree that an earthquake marked the Buddha's passing away.³⁴

Other partial parallels to the present episode in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* and its parallels can be found in the two *Samyukta-āgamas*. The completely preserved *Samyukta-āgama* (T 99) contains two short discourses, one of which narrates the episode involving the conversion of Subhadda, concluding with a brief reference to the Buddha's passing away.³⁵ [10] This episode is also reported in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* and its parallels. Since this *Samyukta-āgama* discourse only takes up the Subhadda episode, it refers just briefly to the Buddha's passing away to mark the fact that Subhadda had entered Nirvāṇa before the Buddha. The narrative context makes it natural that no further details are given regarding the Buddha.

Another discourse in the same collection then takes as its main theme the various stanzas that were held to have been spoken by

spoken by Ānanda in relation to the Buddha's passing away come before those of Anuruddha, whereas DN 16 at DN II 157,12 adopts the opposite sequence. Yet another difference occurs in relation to the stanzas spoken by Anuruddha, where according to DN 16 at DN II 157,13 he referred to the moment "when the sage passed away", *yaṃ kālaṃ akarī muntī*, whereas according to the corresponding part in SN 6.15 at SN I 159,4 he stated that "the one with vision [entered] final Nirvāṇa", *cakkhuma parinibbuto*.

³³ [32] SN 6.15 at SN I 158,24 continues directly from stating that the Buddha had attained final Nirvāṇa to the stanza spoken on this occasion by Brahmā Sahampati; the great earthquake is then reported in the commentary, Spk I 224,25, with explicit reference to the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*. For a study of earthquakes in Buddhist literature cf. Ciurtin 2009 and 2012.

³⁴ [33] DN 16 at DN II 156,35, Waldschmidt 1951: 398 (§42.19), T 5 at T I 172c17, T 6 at T I 188c6, and T 7 at T I 205b1.

³⁵ [34] The relevant part of SĀ 979 at T II 254b29 reads: "Then, after the venerable Subhadda had first [entered] Nirvāṇa, the Blessed One [entered] Nirvāṇa", 時尊者須跋陀羅先般涅槃已, 然後世尊般涅槃。

devas and men present on this occasion. Here, too, the actual passing away of the Buddha is not the main theme, but is only referred to in the introductory narration.³⁶ Hence here, too, it is natural that no further details are given.³⁷

Another relevant discourse is found in the partially preserved *Samyukta-āgama* (T 100). As already suggested by Bareau, this discourse is simply a combination of what in the completely preserved *Samyukta-āgama* (T 99) are two discourses.³⁸ This discourse in the partially preserved *Samyukta-āgama* (T 100) also has only a brief reference to the Buddha's passing away, presented together with the indication that Subhadda passed away before him.³⁹

Similar to the two discourses in the completely preserved *Samyukta-āgama* (T 99), [11] the *Avadānaśataka* also has two tales that briefly mention the Buddha's passing away. As in the *Samyukta-āgama*, one of these tales reports the Subhadda episode, while the other records the stanzas spoken after the Buddha had passed away.

³⁶ [35] SĀ 1197 at T II 325b10 indicates that: "At that time the Blessed One, in the middle of the night, [entered] Nirvāṇa in the Nirvāṇa [element] without remainder", 爾時世尊即於中夜, 於無餘涅槃而般涅槃.

³⁷ [36] The Subhadda episode can also be found in EĀ 42.3, which has several episodes that in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* and its parallels occur in close vicinity to their description of the Buddha's passing away. Nevertheless, EĀ 42.3 concludes with Subhadda's final Nirvāṇa, T II 752c10 and the Buddha's last instruction regarding how the monks should address each other in future, T II 752c16, without even mentioning the Buddha's own passing away; for a translation cf. Bareau 1987: 28f.

³⁸ [37] Bareau 1979a: 60 suggests that SĀ² 110 (his version C) would be the result of combining SĀ 979 and SĀ 1197 (his versions B and D): "la série C ... semble donc résulter d'une combinaison des séries B et D."

³⁹ [38] According to SĀ² 110 at T II 413c22: "Subhadda then first entered Nirvāṇa, after that the Tathāgata also entered Nirvāṇa", 須跋陀羅即時先入涅槃, 如來於後亦入涅槃 (adopting the variant 槃 instead of 盤).

Here, too, the actual passing away of the Buddha is merely mentioned in passing, without further details.⁴⁰

Taking into account the narrative contexts of the *Samyukta-āgama* discourses and the tales found in the *Avadānaśataka* makes it clear that these need not be considered as alternative accounts of the Buddha's passing away. Instead, they appear to be simply extracts that focus on a particular aspect of a wider tale. In fact the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* has preserved a full version of the *Mahāpariṇirvāna-sūtra*, and this full version records the Buddha's passing away in detail. In agreement with the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* and its parallels, the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* reports that the Buddha proceeded through the nine meditative attainments in forward and backward order, followed by again ascending up to the fourth absorption in order to enter Nirvāṇa.⁴¹ So this tale was clearly known among Mūlasarvāstivāda reciters.

A comparable pattern can be seen regarding what tradition reckons to be the Buddha's first discourse. A *Samyukta-āgama* discourse has preserved a version of this first discourse without any reference to the need to avoid the two extremes of sensual indulgence and self-mortification.⁴² The two extremes are instead found in another discourse in the same *Samyukta-āgama*

⁴⁰ [39] The first tale reports that "then the venerable Subhadra first [entered] final Nirvāṇa, after which the Blessed One [entered final Nirvāṇa]", Speyer 1906/1970: 234,6: *tatrāyusmān subhadraḥ prathamataraṃ parinirvṛtaḥ, tataḥ paścād bhagavān*. According to the second tale, "then in the middle watch of the night the Blessed One [entered] final Nirvāṇa in the Nirvāṇa element without a remainder", Speyer 1909/1970: 198,1: *tatra bhagavān rātrīyā madhyame yāme 'nupadhiṣeṣe nirvāṇadhātāu parinirvṛtaḥ*.

⁴¹ [40&41] T 1451 at T XXIV 399b13 and the Tibetan version in Waldschmidt 1951: 397,36; on the close correspondence between the accounts of the Buddha's passing away in the *Avadānaśataka* and the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* cf. Przyluski 1918: 488–496.

⁴² SĀ 379 at T II 103c13, translated in Anālayo 2012a: 17–19.

collection.⁴³ The *Sanḅhabhedavastu* of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, however, has the two extremes as part of the first discourse.⁴⁴ [12] Nevertheless, another section of the same *Vinaya*, the *Kṣudrakavastu*, has a version of the first discourse without the two extremes. Moreover, the identical text, attributed to the same Yījīng (義淨) who translated the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, is found as an individual discourse in the Taishō edition.⁴⁵ It seems fair to conclude that what we have here are intentional extracts from a larger account known to the reciters of the Mūlasarvāstivāda tradition, not different versions of the first teaching given by the Buddha.⁴⁶

The same also applies to the *Samyukta-āgama* discourses that describe the final moments in the life of the Buddha. These similarly appear to be extracts from a larger account.

Supposed Lateness of the Meditative Progression

In this way a comparative study of the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* and its parallels gives the impression that the Buddha's gradual progression through the four absorptions and the immaterial spheres up to cessation is fairly common ground among most of the otherwise quite different parallel versions. Nevertheless, several modern scholars consider this episode to be the result of a later addition.

⁴³ SĀ 912 at T II 228c18, parallel to SN 42.12 at SN IV 330,26.

⁴⁴ T 1450 at T XXIV 127b24, translated in Anālayo 2012a: 21–24; cf. also Gnoli 1977: 134,10 and Waldschmidt 1957: 140 (§11.14).

⁴⁵ T 110 at T II 504a7 = T 1451 at T XXIV 292a29, translated in Anālayo 2012a: 39f. The identity between these two texts has already been noted by Chung 2006: 78.

⁴⁶ Pace Bureau 1963: 181, who holds that "à une lointaine époque, une partie au moins de docteurs du Bouddhisme ignoraient quel avait été le thème du premier sermon ou refusaient de considérer comme tel les quatre saintes Vérités." For a more detailed critical reply cf. Anālayo 2012a and 2013a.

In what follows, I critically survey the reasons given to support this view.

In his comparative study of the accounts of the Buddha's passing away, Bareau comes to the conclusion that the description of his meditative progression is a late element invented on purpose for the *Mahāpariṇirvāna-sūtra*.⁴⁷ Bareau bases his assessment on the *Samyukta-āgama* discourses mentioned above, [13] which he sees as different accounts of the Buddha's passing away extant in Chinese translation.⁴⁸ He takes these to represent an ancient tradition which rejected the detailed account in the *Mahāpariṇirvāna-sūtra*.⁴⁹

Bareau's discussion ignores the detailed study and translation of these two *Samyukta-āgama* discourses by Przyluski, published more than half a century earlier in the *Journal Asiatique* as part of a set of four successive papers on the theme of the Buddha's *pari-nirvāṇa*.⁵⁰ In this study, Przyluski comes to rather different conclusions. After noting the close resemblance between the two *Sam-*

⁴⁷ Bareau 1979a: 55: "le long récit de l'Extinction du Buddha, récit célèbre qui décrit les méditations et recueils atteints successivement par le Bienheureux avant de parvenir à la paix suprême de la Délivrance définitive, a sans doute été inventé spécialement pour le *MPNS* [*Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*]."

⁴⁸ Bareau 1979a: 55: "la preuve en est que deux autres *sūtra*, qui ne nous sont parvenus que dans leur version chinoise et qui racontent chacun, en une courte série, des épisodes précédant et suivant celui du Parinirvāṇa, ne font que mentionner très brièvement celui-ci, sans donner aucun détail à son propos."

⁴⁹ Bareau 1979a: 59 sees SĀ² 110 (his version C) and SĀ 1197 (his version D) as representing "[des] auteurs [qui] étaient demeurés fidèles ... à la vieille tradition qui avait implicitement ne savoir du Parinirvāṇa du Buddha que le simple fait qu'il avait eu lieu et qu'ils rejetaient comme apocryphe le récit très détaillé que nous en donnent les six versions du *MPNS* [*Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*]" (in the original the part I have quoted takes the form of a question, the question being whether EĀ 42.3 can also be seen as reflecting the same supposedly ancient tradition).

⁵⁰ Przyluski 1918, 1919a, 1919b, and 1920.

yukta-āgama discourses and the two *Avadānaśataka* tales, he suggests that these would have originally come into being as intentional discourse extracts, whose purpose was to introduce the accounts of the so-called councils (*saṅgīti*),⁵¹ thereby investing these accounts with authority.⁵² In fact, one of the two *Avadānaśataka* tales (no. 100) has the title *saṅgītiḥ*,^[14] clearly marking this as its chief topic. Przyluski's suggestion offers a considerably more convincing explanation than Bareau's assumption.

Bureau's remark that the presentation in the *Samyukta-āgama* discourses is only extant in Chinese translation shows that he was unaware of the parallel versions in the *Avadānaśataka*. He also did not take into account the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* version. This reflects a basic methodological problem with Bareau's study of the biography of the Buddha in general, in that he did not base his various hypotheses on a study of all relevant versions.

In the case of the *Samyutta-nikāya* discourse that also reports the Buddha's meditative progression, Bareau summarily dismisses this version as a text that has been reworked to accord with the pres-

⁵¹ Oldenberg 1879/1997: xxviii assumed that differences between the *Mahā-parinibbāna-sutta* and the account of the first *saṅgīti* at Vin II 284,2 implied that the reciters of the one text were ignorant of the other; cf. also Franke 1908: 66–74, Dutt 1957: 102, and An 2001: 52. Critical replies to this assumption can be found in Thomas 1927/2003: 165, Finot 1932: 243, Obermiller 1932, Thomas 1933/2004: 29, Frauwallner 1956: 45, Ch'en 1958, Upadhyaya 1971: 43–45, de La Vallée Poussin 1976: 13 note 39, Jinananda 1993: 93, Witanachchi 2006: 723, and Anālayo 2011b: 863 note 43.

⁵² Przyluski 1918: 505: "les récits des Conciles relatant des événements postérieurs à Ācāryamuni ne pouvaient prétendre d'eux-mêmes à la haute autorité qui s'attachait aux Sūtra. Par un détour assez habile, on leur conféra en quelque sorte une authenticité factice en les faisant précéder d'un Sūtra ou d'un fragment de Sūtra. Les textes racontant la fin du Maître furent naturellement désignés pour servir de lien et de transition entre les écrits reproduisant la parole du Buddha et les chroniques des premiers siècles de l'Église."

entation in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*.⁵³ The evidence at our disposal stands in contrast to this conclusion. As mentioned above, there are several substantial differences between the *Samyutta-nikāya* discourse and the relevant section of the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*.⁵⁴ These differences are remarkable, given that these two discourse versions pertain to the same Theravāda Pāli canon. Thus the *Samyutta-nikāya* discourse cannot be regarded as merely a late reworking based on the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*.

In sum, it seems preferable to follow the lead of Waldschmidt who, based on his detailed study and on taking into account the research by Przyluski, concludes that a comparative study of the relevant sources provides no support for the assumption that the progression of the Buddha through the nine meditative attainments on the eve of his passing away is a later expansion of an earlier shorter account.⁵⁵ [15]

The Buddha's Attainment of the Immaterial Spheres

In what follows I survey other arguments raised in support of the assumption that the description of the Buddha's attainment of

⁵³ Bareau 1979a: 55 refers to SN 6.15 as "un *sutta* pāli qui, selon toute vraisemblance, a été remanié plus tard pour le rendre identique à la version pālie de notre ouvrage, ce qui rend donc nul son témoignage."

⁵⁴ For a survey of differences between the two versions cf. Przyluski 1918: 506–508.

⁵⁵ Waldschmidt 1948: 251: "der Vergleich der verschiedenen überlieferten Parinirvāṇatexte gibt keine Anhaltspunkte zur Stütze dieser Annahme", written in relation to the suggestion that the reference to the immaterial spheres is a later addition to the description of the Buddha's passing away (in the introduction to his study, Waldschmidt 1944: 3 note 11 explicitly mentions that he benefited from the work by Przyluski). As a methodological point in relation to studying the *Mahāparinirvāṇa* narrative in general, Snellgrove 1973: 409 comments "how unsatisfactory a proceeding it is to produce a plausible biography from these materials by simply accepting the parts which seem humanly possible and rejecting the miraculous elements as obvious accretions."

the immaterial spheres on the verge of his death is a later addition. Due to the complexity of the topic, my discussion will also include an examination of the Buddha's pre-awakening meditation practice.

In addition to arguments derived from the comparative study of the parallel versions of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, Bareau also supports his hypothesis by pointing out that no one could possibly have known what went on in the Buddha's mind. As the Buddha passed away right at the end of his meditative progression through the absorptions and immaterial spheres, he would not have been able to tell others what took place in his mind right on the verge of his own death.⁵⁶ Bareau is not the first one to make this point, as already T.W. Rhys Davids had expressed a similar view.⁵⁷

To be sure, it is not really possible for us to reconstruct historical facts based on mere textual accounts that are the final products of a prolonged period of transmission. This is especially true in the case of the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* and its parallels, which are clearly interspersed with hagiographic elements.⁵⁸ Nevertheless,

⁵⁶ Bareau 1979a: 62: "puisque, de toute évidence, le Bienheureux n'a pu expliquer à ses disciples par quelle méthode psychique, en ses derniers instants, il est parvenu au Parinirvāṇa, lui qui en était le seul témoin silencieux, il est donc certain que cette description est purement imaginaire."

⁵⁷ Rhys Davids 1910: 174 note 1 comments that "no one, of course, can have known what actually did occur."

⁵⁸ Williams 2000: 26f explains that "the life-story of the Buddha is not a historical narrative but a *hagiography* ... in which how it was, how it should have been, and how it must have been ... are united under the overriding concern of exemplary truth ... the life-story reflects the unification of is and ought in the vision and needs of the subsequent community ... the 'is' of historical fact was only one dimension, and a subordinate one, in the construction of the original hagiography. Thus the hagiography as a whole is to be read as an ideological document ... the Buddha's hagiography should be read as an illustration of what is to Buddhists important."

[16] it is possible to consider whether a particular narration is internally coherent and in line with general ideas and notions found in other early Buddhist texts.

According to early Buddhist thought, meditative expertise enables knowing the state of mind of another. Such ability is regularly mentioned among a set of supernormal abilities held to be accessible once the mind has been cultivated up to the depth of concentration and inner stability of the fourth absorption, an example in case being the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* and its parallels.⁵⁹

It would therefore be in keeping with such assumptions on the power of the mind when the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* and its parallels attribute the information about the Buddha's meditative experience to Anuruddha.⁶⁰ Anuruddha features in the early Buddhist tradition as an outstanding disciple in the exercise of a supernormal ability called the divine eye.⁶¹ Evidently he was reckoned to have been an adept in meditative concentration. Hence, at least from the perspective of the textual tradition, the idea that no one could possibly have known what went on in the Buddha's mind overlooks the role of Anuruddha in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa* narrative, where he explicitly informs Ānanda that the Buddha has entered cessation.⁶² [17]

⁵⁹ DN 2 at DN I 79,26 and its parallels DĀ 27 at T I 109b8 (which abbreviates and thus needs to be supplemented from DĀ 20 at T I 86a23), T 22 at T I 275b26, and the *Saṅghabhedavastu*, Gnoli 1978: 248,16.

⁶⁰ In reply to the comment by Rhys Davids quoted above p. 242 note 57, Walshe 1987: 575 note 454 points out that "since Anuruddha is said to have had highly developed psychic powers, we cannot be so sure." As Nyanaponika and Hecker 1997: 208 explain in relation to DN 16, according to the presentation in the discourse "Anuruddha, an arahant endowed with the divine eye, had been able to gauge the level of meditation into which the Buddha had entered."

⁶¹ AN 1.14.1 at AN I 23,20 and EĀ 4.2 at T II 557b9.

⁶² In fact according to MN 31 at MN I 209,22 and its parallel EĀ 24.8 at T II 629b25 (cf. also Senior Kharoṣṭhī fragment 12r50), on another occasion Anuruddha dis-

Another argument raised by Bareau is that he finds it difficult to understand why the Buddha would have gone up and down these various levels of meditative experience. According to Bareau, this difficulty makes it probable that the original description just mentioned the four absorptions and, having attained the fourth absorption, the Buddha entered Nirvāṇa.⁶³

Here, too, Bareau is not the first one to make such a suggestion. In a detailed study of the absorptions in Buddhism, Heiler (1922: 44) drew a distinction between what he considered to be the ancient tradition of the Buddha's meditation practice on the eve of his passing away and the four immaterial spheres and cessation as what according to him is a later addition. Similar suggestions have also been made by other scholars.⁶⁴

In the case of Heiler, his presentation is part of an overall argument that the immaterial spheres are a late addition to early Buddhist meditation theory. As I have argued elsewhere, what has

played knowledge of his companions' abilities to enter the same range of attainments, from the first absorption up to cessation (another parallel, MĀ 185 at T I 730b28, mentions the six supernormal knowledges instead of the cessation attainment). The same type of explanation would then also work for SN 6.15, even though this version does not record an explicit exchange between Anuruddha and Ānanda. Nevertheless, SN 6.15 at SN I 159,1 reports stanzas spoken by Anuruddha, which shows that he was on record as present on this occasion and would thus have been able to understand through his psychic powers what was going on.

⁶³ Bareau 1971a: 155f: "ces montées et descentes successives paraissent assez étranges, et l'on ne comprend pas bien, à première vue, pourquoi le Buddha n'est pas entré dans le Parinirvāṇa en sortant du recueillement de cessation, ni les deux premières fois où il a quitté la quatrième méditation ... on est ainsi conduit à admettre une version primitive réduite à cette seconde partie, dans laquelle le Bienheureux montait tout de suite jusqu'à la quatrième méditation, puis s'éteignait."

⁶⁴ Thomas 1927/2003: 153 note 2, Falk 1939/2004: 339f, Foucher 1949: 313, King 1980/1992: 15, and Zafiropulo 1993: 67; cf. also Rhys Davids 1927: 713, who speaks of a "curious insertion of the Jhāna formulas into the account of the moment of his passing."

been proposed in support of the assumption that the immaterial spheres are a later addition to the descriptions of meditative practice in the early discourses is not convincing.⁶⁵ [24] This in turn implies that the mere fact that the immaterial spheres occur in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* and its parallels as part of the meditative practice of the Buddha on the verge of his death is not in itself a sign of later addition. [25] Nevertheless, according to the query raised by Bareau it needs to be explained why the Buddha would have been depicted as going up and down these various levels of meditative experience before passing away.

A discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya* and its *Samyukta-āgama* parallels report the Buddha proclaiming that he can freely attain each of the four absorptions and each of the four immaterial spheres.⁶⁶ This proclamation implies that to be able to do so is a mark of meditative mastery. Hence for the Buddha to be on record as proceeding through the same series on the verge of his death, in spite of being about to pass away, is simply a way of throwing into relief that he was still in full possession of his meditative mastery.

There is thus a fairly straightforward rationale behind the description of the Buddha's meditative progression at this moment. This rationale is fully in keeping with the general tendency in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* and its parallels to show the self-possession of the Buddha when confronted with the most fearful of all human experiences: one's own death. The same is also evident, for example, in the depiction in the same *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* and its parallels of his deliberate giving up of his life-force on an

⁶⁵ Several of these arguments, which were originally part of the article published in the present chapter, are instead republished in Anālayo 2017b.

⁶⁶ [86] SN 16.9 at SN II 211,5 and its parallels SĀ 1142 at T II 302a18 and SĀ² 117 at T II 416c24. A difference is that the attainment of cessation is only mentioned in SN 16.9 at SN II 212,8.

earlier occasion.⁶⁷ The step-by-step progression through this range of meditative attainments in forward and backward order is thus not a detour, let alone a tortuous procedure,⁶⁸ but from a Buddhist perspective much rather depicts the most peaceful and self-possessed way to meet one's own death, exemplifying the Buddha's high degree of self-mastery. [26/33]

In this way, even on the verge of his death the Buddha is endowed with complete mastery over all these attainments, the four absorptions and the four immaterial attainments. He is able to attain and leave each of them freely, proceeding onwards until he reaches what goes beyond the teachings and attainments known among his contemporaries, the attainment of cessation.

His degree of detachment and self-mastery is such that he executes this progression in the forward order and the reverse direction, in line with what in early Buddhist meditation theory is a criterion for true meditative mastery: being able to proceed through a series of meditative attainments in the forward and backward order.⁶⁹ After this demonstration of his meditative mastery, he uses the same step-by-step approach once again up to the fourth absorption, as a basis for his entry into final Nirvāṇa.

The main point made in this way also emerges when turning to Buddhist art, such as a depiction of the Buddha's *Mahāparinirvāṇa* from cave 26 at Ajañṭā.⁷⁰ The depiction of the Buddha's

⁶⁷ [87] DN 16 at DN II 106,21, Waldschmidt 1951: 212 (§16.14), DĀ 2 at T I 15c20, T 5 at T I 165a23, T 6 at T I 180c6, and T 7 at T I 191c8; cf. also Cowell and Neil 1886: 203,7.

⁶⁸ [88] Pande 1957: 105 wonders: "one may ask why this tortuous procedure?"

⁶⁹ [111] Cf., e.g., AN 9.41 at AN IV 448,8, which relates the Buddha's attainment of awakening precisely to his ability to progress through the nine meditative attainments in forward and backward order.

⁷⁰ [112] Cf. below p. 667 plate 1.

passing away in this image conveys an air of calm self-possession, of being at ease and in peace.

Conclusion

When considered from the viewpoint of early Buddhist meditation theory in the way this has been preserved in the early discourses, there seems to be nothing inherently incoherent or problematic in the depiction of the Buddha's meditation practice on the verge of his passing away. The main point of the passage is simply to show the Buddha's meditative mastery right on the eve of his passing away, and at the same time exemplify his transcendence of meditative attainments, esteemed among contemporary practitioners in ancient India, with his attainment of Nirvāṇa.

Sakkapañha-sutta (DN 21) Part 1

Introduction

In this chapter I examine a few selected passages in which the Buddha manifests miracles that involve a display of fire. My main aim in what follows is to attempt to discern stages in the textual depiction of such miraculous performances through comparative study of these passages in the extant parallel versions. The cases I will be studying are Sakka's visit, a visit to a Brahmā, Pāṭikaputta's challenge, and the twin miracle, after which I take a brief look at the fire element in the early discourses.

Sakka's Visit

I begin with the *Sakkapañha-sutta*'s depiction of the first meeting between Sakka, the ruler of the *devas* in the Heaven of the Thirty-three, and the Buddha. The *Sakkapañha-sutta* reports that on an earlier occasion Sakka had already tried in vain to visit the Buddha, not being allowed to disturb the Buddha's meditation. At the end of the discourse he receives on the present occasion, Sakka attains stream-entry.

The story of Sakka's humbled pride on initially not being given an audience with the Buddha and his eventual conversion to the Buddhist fold could be compared to a general narrative strategy of "inclusivism" in early Buddhist texts. ^[10] This strategy refers to a tendency to include, although in a subordinate position and at times with significant modifications, central elements of other traditions within the framework of one's own.¹ In the case of Sakka,

* Originally published in 2015 under the title "The Buddha's Fire Miracles" in the *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies*, 10: 9–42.

his role in early Buddhist texts involves the transformation of the ancient Indian warrior god Indra into a peaceful and devout Buddhist disciple.² As part of this narrative strategy, the specific significance of the *Sakkapañha-sutta* lies in its recording his successful and complete conversion by dint of becoming a stream-enterer.

Lest I be misunderstood, my presentation in no way intends to downplay the fact that in the early discourses Sakka and other *devas* feature as actually existing celestial beings. In fact the *Saṅgārava-sutta* and its Sanskrit fragment parallel report a discussion during which the Buddha asserts the existence of *devas*.³ The *devas* fea-

¹ On inclusivism cf., e.g., Oberhammer 1983, Mertens 2004, Kiblinger 2005, and Ruegg 2008: 97–99.

² Cf., e.g., Masson 1942: 46, Godage 1945: 70f, Lamotte 1966: 116, Barua 1967: 184, Arunasiri 2006: 629, Bingenheimer 2008: 153, and Anālayo 2012i: 9f.

³ MN 100 at MN II 212,26 and the Sanskrit fragment counterparts in Hartmann 1991: 260 (§ 147) and Zhang 2004: 11 (346v); on the position of this exchange within the overall discourse cf. Anālayo 2011b: 582f and note 269 in particular on the expression *thānaso me taṃ ... veditaṃ yadidaṃ atthi devā*. As pointed out by Harvey 1995: 82, in this passage the Buddha "clearly distinguished between his 'certain knowledge' that gods existed and the commonly held belief that they did". Norman 1977 (cf. also Norman 1985) suggests emending the question that begins the discussion in MN 100 from reading *atthi devā* to *atthi adhideva*, based on which Norman 1977: 336 then concludes that the Buddha, "far from conceding the existence of the brahmanical devas as Saṅgārava presumed, was merely saying that there were in the world earthly princes who were by convention called devas". This is to my mind an unconvincing suggestion and is also without support in the Sanskrit fragment parallels. I find similarly unconvincing the interpretation of the present passage by Marasinghe 1974: 128, who holds that it "does not mean anything more than that the Buddha recognized the fact that the belief in the gods was quite commonly known at that time. Hence, its very wide popularity itself would have convinced the Buddha that a direct denial was not the most expedient method of dealing with it." As far as I can see the text simply and clearly conveys an affirmation of the existence of *devas*; for further discussion and secondary sources on this passage cf. also Saibaba 2005: 3–6.

ture also as the object of one of the standard recollections described in the early discourses.⁴ Thus in what follows my aim is decidedly not to attempt to strip early Buddhism entirely of its miraculous elements,⁵ [11] but only to discern, wherever possible, stages in their gradual growth.

The introductory section of the *Sakkapañha-sutta* describes Sakka getting ready for his second attempt to visit the Buddha:⁶

⁴ Recollection of *devas* is one of the traditional set of six recollections; cf., e.g., AN 6.10 at AN III 287,21 and its parallels SĀ 931 at T II 238a21 and SĀ² 156 at T II 433a22, which agree in asserting the existence of various types of *devas* and then direct recollection to the qualities that have led to their celestial rebirth.

⁵ Waldschmidt 1930: 8f notes the prominence of the Buddha's magical powers already in the early tradition and advises against going so far as to turn early Buddhism into a pure philosophy, which would be in contrast to its nature, where the profound and the magic go hand in hand; "es wird im allgemeinen viel zu wenig betont, wie sehr auch im älteren Buddhismus die magischen Kräfte des Buddha in den Vordergrund treten ... man sollte nicht soweit gehen, aus dem älteren Buddhismus eine reine Philosophie zu machen. Das widerspricht ganz und gar dem Wesen der Religion, bei der immer das Tiefsinnige und das Wunderbare Hand in Hand gehen." Gethin 1996: 204 explains that "there has been a tendency to play down the tradition of the 'miraculous' in Buddhism and to see it as peripheral, but it is hard to treat this tendency as anything but revisionist." Brown 1998: 50 comments that "the attempt to strip the texts of the legendary to reveal the true historical Buddha has been the focus of many scholars. How successful their attempts have been appears to me largely to rely on predetermined notions of the Buddha as a modern man." Fiordalis 2010/2011: 403 points out that "scholars have been too quick to conclude ... that Buddhism rejects the miraculous wholesale in favor of some sort of rational humanism that reflects modern predilections ... making this argument requires that one disregard the many Buddhist stories in which the Buddha or his eminent disciples perform acts of ... displaying their superhuman powers. Scholars have suggested that such stories are merely 'popular' or represent 'later' (often a euphemism for degenerate) traditions. Yet, these are problematic conclusions."

⁶ DN 21 at DN II 264,10 to 264,25.

Then Sakka, the ruler of *devas*, surrounded by the *devas* of the Thirty-three and with the *gandhabba* Pañcasikha leading in front,⁷ just as a strong man might stretch a bent arm or bend a stretched arm, in the same way he disappeared from the Heaven of the Thirty-three and reappeared in Magadha to the east of Rājagaha, on Mount Vediya, to the north of the brahmin village called Mango Grove.

At that time, due to the divine power of the *devas*, a very bright light manifested on Mount Vediya and in the brahmin village Mango Grove, so much so that the people in the surrounding villages said: "Today Mount Vediya is indeed on fire, today Mount Vediya is indeed burning, today Mount Vediya is indeed ablaze. How is it that today a very bright light manifests on Mount Vediya and in the brahmin village Mango Grove?",^[12] and they were excited with their hair standing on end.

In the *Sakkapañha-sutta* the mountain appearing to be on fire is clearly related to the divine power of the celestial visitors, *devānaṃ devānubhāvena*, whose arrival has caused this effect to manifest. The *Sakkapañha-sutta* has parallels preserved in Chinese translation as well as in Sanskrit fragments. In what follows I translate the corresponding section from the *Madhyama-āgama* version.⁸

Then Sakka, the ruler of the *devas*, the *devas* of the Thirty-three, and the *gandhabba* Pañcasikha, just as quickly as a strong man might bend or stretch his arm, they suddenly disappeared from the Heaven of the Thirty-three, being no more to be seen there, and reappeared in the country of Magadha to the east of Rājagaha, not far from the cave on Mount Vediya, to the north of the village Mango Grove. Then Mount Vediya shone with a bright

⁷ B° and C° qualify the *gandhabba* Pañcasikha to be a *devaputta*.

⁸ MĀ 134 at T I 633a8 to 633a13.

light like fire. Seeing this, the people dwelling around the mountain thought: "Mount Vediya is on fire, burning everywhere."

The *Madhyama-āgama* discourse does not have an explicit indication that the mountain's appearance was due to the divine power of the *devas*, corresponding to the expression *devānaṃ devānubhāvena* in the *Sakkapañha-sutta*. Nevertheless, the same idea is clearly implicit, since the mountain shines with a bright light as soon as the celestial visitors have arrived. Similar references to the mountain manifesting a fire-like brilliance, once the *devas* have arrived, but without an explicit attribution of this phenomenon to their power, can be found in a parallel preserved as a discourse translated individually into Chinese, and in another parallel that forms part of a collection of *avadāna*-type of tales, also extant in Chinese translation.⁹ A parallel extant in Sanskrit fragments, however, does have a phrase similar to the Pāli version.¹⁰

The individually translated discourse just mentioned also reports that Sakka and his host disappeared from their celestial abode just as quickly as a strong man might bend or stretch an arm and appeared on the mountain, ^[13] which thereupon was illuminated by a great light. Its account differs from the other versions in so far as, after describing the reaction of the people on seeing the mountain illuminated in this way, it relates this effect also to the Buddha's presence. This takes the form of an indication given by Sakka to Pañcasikha in the following way:¹¹

⁹ ^[10] T 15 at T I 246b21 and tale no. 73 in T 203 at T IV 476a28, translated by Chavannes 1911: 53–69.

¹⁰ ^[9] Although this is not the case for the relevant part of the Sanskrit fragment version which, together with translations and a study of the parallels, can be found in Waldschmidt 1932: 65–67, the phrase is found in the British Library fragment Or 15009/549 r6, Nagashima 2015: 380: *devānāṃ ca devatānubhā[v]e*.

¹¹ T 15 at T I 246b24f; the significance of this statement has already been highlighted by Waldschmidt 1932: 66f note 2.

Do you see the special appearance of this mountain in this way? This is because the Buddha, the Blessed One, dwells within.

This indication could still be read in line with the passages surveyed so far, in as much as it is the presence of the Buddha in the mountain which motivates the arrival of the *devas*, and their arrival is then what makes the mountain appear as if it were on fire. Taken out of context, however, the statement could alternatively give the impression that the fiery appearance of the mountain is the result of the Buddha's presence. Yet, in this version this fiery appearance manifests only once the *devas* have arrived.¹² This makes it safe to assume that its presentation is still in line with the basic plot in the versions discussed so far.

The *Dīrgha-āgama* preserved in Chinese translation also has a version of the *Sakkapañña-sutta*, and its presentation foregrounds the effect of the Buddha's presence. The section corresponding to the parts translated from the *Sakkapañña-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel proceeds as follows:¹³

Then Sakka, the ruler of the gods, the *devas* of the Thirty-three, and Pañcasikha disappeared from the Dharma Hall, being no more to be seen there and, just as quickly as a strong man might bend or stretch an arm, they reappeared on Mount Vēdiya to the north of the [village Mango Grove] in the country of Magadha. At that time the Blessed One had entered concentration on fire and Mount Vēdiya appeared to be completely on fire. Then the country people, on seeing this, said to each

¹² After reporting how Sakka and his host came to the mountain, T 15 at T I 246b21 continues by introducing the great brilliance of the mountain with the phrase "at this time", 是時, thereby clearly marking the temporal relationship, also evident in the other versions, between the arrival of the celestial visitors and the appearance of the mountain.

¹³ DĀ 14 at T I 62c10 to 62c14.

other: "Due to the power of the Tathāgata and the *devas*, this Mount Vediya appears to be completely on fire." [14]

Unlike the other versions surveyed so far, in the *Dīrgha-āgama* discourse the motif of the mountain appearing on fire is due to the power of the Buddha, and not just the presence of the *devas*.¹⁴ Moreover, the *Dīrgha-āgama* version also furnishes an explanation for how the power of the Buddha leads to this effect by reporting that he was in meditation on the fire element (*dhātu*).¹⁵

In principle this variation could be either a case of loss in the other versions or a case of addition in the *Dīrgha-āgama* discourse. When evaluating these two possibilities, whereas for the Buddha to make a whole mountain appear to be in flames appears to be unique among the early discourses, the description of *devas* who on arrival cause a whole place to be lit up is well attested in other discourses.

One out of numerous examples of the effect associated with the arrival of a *deva* can be found in the *Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-sutta* and its parallels in a *Madhyama-āgama* discourse, an individual Chinese translation, and parallels extant in Tibetan

¹⁴ Waldschmidt 1932: 66 considers the expression 如來諸天之力 to refer to the divine powers of the Tathāgata, "Götterkräfte des Tathāgata". It seems to me more probable that the plural indicator 諸 points to the *devas*, wherefore I take the whole expression to refer to the "power", 力, "of", 之, "the Tathāgata", 如來, and "the *devas*", 諸天. Zwalf 1996: 198 draws attention to a Tibetan biography of the Buddha, translated in Schiefner 1849/1851: 255, which in relation to the Buddha indicates that, after arrival at the venue of the present event, "nahm er in der im *Magadhagebiet* gelegenen *Sālahöhle* von *Indraçaila* Feuer-gestalt an und erfüllte die ganze Höhle mit seinem Körper. Solche Gestalt behielt er sieben Tage." I suppose the idea of the Buddha taking on the appearance of fire implies an effect similar to that described in DĀ 14, although in this Tibetan biography the Buddha apparently does so for a period of seven days.

¹⁵ On meditation on the fire element cf., e.g., Dantinne 1983: 272–274.

translation.¹⁶ The parallel versions agree in describing a *deva* who, on visiting a monk, lights up the whole place with its radiance.

Recurrent examples of the same type of description can be found in the *Devatā-saṃyutta* of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya*. Just taking the first discourse in this collection as an example, a description of the brilliant light caused by the arrival of the *deva* protagonist in this discourse can similarly be found in parallels in the two *Saṃyutta-āgama* collections.¹⁷ In sum, the notion that the arrival of a *deva* can result in lighting up a whole place is a common motif in the early discourses.

Another point to be taken into consideration is how far the Buddha's manifestation of fire fits the present narrative context. [15] The *Sakkapañha-sutta* and its parallels continue with Sakka asking Pañcasikha to approach the Buddha on his behalf and request an audience. This narrative element needs to be read in the light of Sakka's earlier unsuccessful attempt to visit the Buddha. This previous attempt stands in stark contrast to the way in which according to his own report he had been received by other recluses he had visited previously, who got so excited on receiving a visit from Sakka that they wanted to become his pupils. Another element leading up to this second visit is that Sakka had witnessed the rebirth in his heaven of those who during their earlier human existence had become disciples of the Buddha.¹⁸

¹⁶ MN 133 at MN III 192,7 and its parallels MĀ 165 at T I 696c5, T 1362 at T XXI 881c8, and D 313 *sa* 161b3 or Q 979 *shu* 171b1 (the discourse recurs in the Tibetan canon as D 617 or Q 599 and again as D 974; cf. the discussion in Skilling 1997: 81–83).

¹⁷ SN 1.1 at SN I 1,9 and its parallels SĀ 1267 at T II 348b9 and SĀ² 180 at T II 438c14.

¹⁸ Greene 2013: 290 comments on DĀ 14 that the "episode in the *Dīrghāgama* ... states that Indra came to visit the Buddha because he saw the light emitted when the Buddha entered the 'fire-radiance *samādhi*'." As far as I can see DĀ

Against this narrative background, for Sakka not to dare to approach the Buddha directly highlights his humbled pride and throws into relief the appropriate attitude towards the Buddha adopted even by the ruler of the *devas* of the Thirty-three. It also demarcates the aloofness of the Buddha compared to other recluses Sakka had approached earlier. Sakka's deferential attitude moreover reflects his respect as the result of having witnessed the favourable rebirths of disciples of the Buddha, a message that in an ancient Indian setting would surely not have been lost on the audience listening to the discourse.

These elements are somewhat lost from sight once the Buddha is in fire meditation to the extent that the whole mountain appears to be in flames. This description runs the risk of giving the impression that the Buddha's attainment of fire meditation is what makes Sakka ask someone else to find out if the Buddha is willing to grant him an audience. Such an impression would result in a loss of the humour and of a considerable part of the soteriological message that seem to underlie the scene in the other versions.¹⁹

In view of the general tendency in Buddhist texts towards an increasing apotheosis of the Buddha,²⁰ an intentional omission of the fire motif in the other versions is highly improbable. The individually translated discourse in fact testifies to a tendency towards

14 does not indicate that Sakka came to visit the Buddha because he saw any light. The decision to visit the Buddha is simply presented as being a particularly wholesome state of mind making him wish to meet the Buddha, DĀ 14 at T I 62c2: 發微妙善心, 欲來見佛. The fire and light motif comes up only later, after Sakka has assembled his entourage, left the Heaven of the Thirty-three, and arrived at Mount Vēdiya.

¹⁹ This corresponds to a pattern I noted in Anālayo 2008a: 146 in relation to the tale of *Āṅgulimāla* where "the introduction of wonders and miracles, as well as the successive amplification of narrative details, can at times obfuscate the main message of the text."

²⁰ Cf., e.g., Anālayo 2010b: 130.

giving more prominence to the Buddha's superior powers, as it already highlights the effect of the Buddha's presence, even though in its presentation the arrival of the *devas* is still what causes the mountain to appear as if lit up by fire. ^[16] In fact the individually translated discourse does not provide any indication that the Buddha either manifests fire or is immersed in meditation on it.

In sum, a comparative study of the introductory narration to the *Sakkapañha-sutta* and its parallels shows that the Buddha's performance of a fire miracle is only attested in the *Dīrgha-āgama* version. Given that the illuminating effect of *devas* on the surroundings is well attested elsewhere among the discourses, and that the fire miracle does not fit the narrative context of this discourse too well, it seems safe to conclude that this effect is a later addition in the *Dīrgha-āgama* discourse. In this way the fiery appearance of the mountain, originally seen as the result of the presence of *devas*, has come to be attributed to the Buddha's presence, more specifically to his dwelling in meditation on fire.

The episode described in the *Sakkapañha-sutta* and its parallels has also inspired ancient Indian artists,²¹ with examples from Gandhāra showing the Buddha seated in the cave, surrounded by spectators in respectful adoration.²² ^[17]

What makes these two iconographies particularly relevant to my present discussion is that in plate 2 flames can be seen to emerge from the Buddha's shoulders, and in plate 3 a circle of

²¹ For surveys of different artistic representations cf., e.g., Foucher 1905: 492–497, Coomaraswamy 1928, Lamotte 1944/1981: 181 note 2, Buchthal 1945: 167f, Soper 1949: 254–259, Zhu 2009, Parlier-Renault 2014, and Rhi (forthcoming). Fǎxiǎn (法顯) and Xuánzàng (玄奘) refer to the location where the present discourse was believed to have been spoken; cf. T 2085 at T LI 862c4 and T 2087 at T LI 925a26.

²² Cf. below p. 668f plates 2 and 3; plate 2 has already been published in Kurita 2003: 171 fig. 331, plate 3 in Foucher 1905: 493 fig. 246.

flames surrounds the outlines of the cave. Such a mode of depiction would be in line with the *Dīrgha-āgama*'s textual account. However, the depiction of flames emerging from someone's shoulders can also just express that the person in question is meditating.²³ The same metaphorical nuance is already relevant to the aniconic stage in ancient Indian Buddhist art, [18] where for episodes like the first meditation under the Jambu tree the artists represented the presence of the Buddha-to-be simply by means of a fire,²⁴ as can be seen in a specimen from Bodhgaya.²⁵

Textual examples for a metaphorical use of the fire motif in relation to this particular episode can be found in the *Lalitavistara*

²³ Waldschmidt 1930: 4 notes the tendency to depict flames emerging from the shoulders of a Buddha or an arahant as a way of expressing their supernatural power; cf. also Schlingloff 2015: 34, who explains that fire has been a symbol for meditation since ancient times and flames emerging from the Buddha or a monk serve to represent their absorbed condition: "Feuer ist das aus alter Zeit überkommene Symbol für die Meditation; Flammen, die ein Buddha oder ein Mönch ausströmt, zeigen seinen Trancezustand an." Rhi 1991: 75 note 76 points out that, in the case of depictions of the fire miracle leading to the conversion of the Kassapa brothers, "no representations of this theme in art depict shoulder flames on the Buddha, although the fire shrine was sometimes represented as being enveloped in flames ... the representation of shoulder flames seems to have been limited to the 'visit of Indra'." In relation to figure 2, Coomaraswamy 1928: 37 considers the flames to be just reflecting the "effect produced by the presence of deities, Indra and his following"; cf. also Coomaraswamy 1928: 39, who in relation to DN 21 reasons that "there we learn, not only that the representation of flaming rocks is appropriate in this scene, but that this illumination is not, as usual in Buddhist legend, to be connected with the glory of the Buddha himself, but with that of the gods ... this explains the representation of flames in all the reliefs."

²⁴ Stache-Weiske 1990: 110; for another study of fire symbolism in Buddhist art cf. Taddei 1974.

²⁵ Cf. below p. 670 plate 4, which has already been published in Cunningham 1892 plate 8 figure 11; for further publications cf. the survey in Schlingloff 2000: 56.

and the *Mahāvastu*, where the bodhisattva's father describes the splendour of his son seated in meditation under the Jambu tree by comparing him to a sacrificial fire on a mountain top.²⁶ [19] In the *Divyāvadāna* the fire image then illustrates the splendour of the Buddha in general.²⁷ A similar usage can be found in the *Dhammapada* and its parallels, which employ the fire motif to describe the Buddha's brilliance;²⁸ and the *Sutta-nipāta* illustrates the brilliance of the new-born bodhisattva with fire imagery.²⁹ In sum, the relationship of fire in a figurative sense to the Buddha, and in particular to his meditation practice, is well attested in art and texts.

Elsewhere I have argued that, in the case of the Buddha's descent from the Heaven of the Thirty-three, it seems fairly probable that a textual motif inspired art and artistic representation, which in turn gave rise to a literal interpretation evident in textual accounts.³⁰ In the case of my present topic I wonder if a similar process of cross-fertilization between text and art might underpin textual depictions of the meditating Buddha emanating actual fire.³¹ In this way the metaphorical motif of the 'fire of *samādhi*' used in art would have supported the idea of a *samādhi* that re-

²⁶ Lefmann 1902: 132,13 and Senart 1890: 47,14.

²⁷ Cowell and Neil 1886: 158,24.

²⁸ Dh 387 indicates that the Buddha shines like fire, a comparison that has parallels in stanza 50 in the Gāndhārī *Dharmapada*, Brough 1962/2001: 125, stanza 39 in the Patna *Dharmapada*, Cone 1989: 114, and stanza 74 of chapter 33 in the *Udānavarga*, Bernhard 1965: 501.

²⁹ Sn 687 describes Asita seeing the bodhisattva as a young prince who is "blazing like fire".

³⁰ Anālayo 2012i: 20; for a discussion of a comparable instance in relation to the narrative and artistic depiction of the conception of the future Buddha cf. Foucher 1949: 38, and in relation to the thirty-two marks Anālayo 2017a.

³¹ Zhu 2009: 501f and 504 argues for another closely related instance of cross-fertilization, where iconography depicting the scene of Sakka's visit would in turn have influenced Buddhist texts in China.

sults in the visible appearance of fire as a phenomenon evident to those in the vicinity, independent of their engaging in, or even having any proficiency in, meditative practice.

In view of the well-established notion that the arrival of *devas* can result in lighting up the whole place, the idea that in the scene depicted in the *Sakkapañha-sutta* the Buddha should in some way be responsible for this phenomenon is not natural. Although the fire motif does seem to be a bit out of place and not a natural product of the narrative scene, the present instance is not as unequivocal as the Buddha's descent from the Heaven of the Thirty-three, where the influence of artistic representation must have played a crucial part.

In contrast, the description in the *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel to the *Sakkapañha-sutta* could simply be a result of textual literalism, although I would surmise that such literalism, ^[20] if not originating from artistic representations, would certainly have been encouraged by them. I will return to this hypothesis at the end of this chapter.

A Visit to Brahma

My next example continues the theme of the Buddha's superiority to ancient Indian gods, evident in all versions of the *Sakkapañha-sutta*. In this next example, however, the same tendency manifests in relation to Brahmā instead. The narrative plot in the relevant *Samyutta-nikāya* discourse and its parallels in the two *Samyukta-āgama* collections extant in Chinese depicts the Buddha and some of his senior disciples humbling the pride of a conceited Brahmā, who believed that nobody was able to reach him in his lofty celestial abode. The passage relevant to my discussion occurs at the beginning of the discourse, after the conceited belief of this Brahmā has been introduced. The *Samyukta-āgama* extant

in the Taishō edition as entry 99 describes what happens next as follows:³²

At that time the Blessed One knew the thought that the Brahmā had in his mind. He entered a concentration attainment of such a type that he disappeared from Sāvattthī and appeared in the Brahmā's heavenly palace, seated cross-legged, with straight body and collected mindfulness, in mid-air above the head of that Brahmā.

The *Samyutta-nikāya* version of the same event differs in so far as it brings in the fire element.³³ Here is the relevant passage:³⁴

Then the Blessed One, knowing with his mind the thought in the mind of the Brahmā, just as a strong man might stretch a bent arm or bend a stretched arm, he disappeared from Jeta's Grove and appeared in that Brahmā realm. Then the Blessed One sat cross-legged in the air above that Brahmā, having attained the fire element.

According to the explanation provided in the Pāli commentary on this passage, the expression "having attained the fire element" implies that the Buddha was manifesting flames emerging from his whole body.³⁵ [21] Another version of the Buddha's visit to this Brahmā, found in the partially preserved *Samyukta-āgama* extant in the Taishō edition as entry 100, does not mention any fire display.³⁶

³² SĀ 1196 at T II 324c20 to 324c23.

³³ I already drew attention to this difference in Anālayo 2011a: 14 note 7; the same has also been noted by Choong 2014: 186 note 27.

³⁴ SN 6.5 at SN I 144,13 to 144,17 (in E° the text is partially abbreviated).

³⁵ Spk I 212,19.

³⁶ SĀ² 109 at T II 412c22 only reports that "at that time the Blessed One entered concentration and, disappearing from Jambudīpa, he appeared seated in mid-air above the Brahmā."

Similarly to the case of the *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel to the *Sakkapañha-sutta*, in the present case, too, the bringing in of the fire motif seems a bit out of place. According to the narrative context, the issue at stake is to humble the pride of the Brahmā who had thought himself to be in such an elevated position that nobody could reach him. As the rationale for the Buddha's visit is to dispel this illusory belief of the Brahmā, an appearance in mid air suffices to make the point. The circumstance that according to all versions the Buddha even sat above the head of the Brahmā fully drives home the message of the Buddha's superiority, visually conveying that the Buddha not only reaches this Brahmā easily, but is actually superior to him.³⁷ The manifestation of fire seems an unnecessary element in this context.

Whereas the manifestation of fire in the *Samyutta-nikāya* version might be a later addition, for the Buddha and his disciples to commute freely to different heavenly realms is a recurrent feature in the early discourses. The three versions of the present discourse in fact agree in this respect. The three versions also agree that not only the Buddha but also some of his chief disciples joined the meeting, similarly appearing in the realm of this Brahmā. According to the *Samyutta-nikāya* account, these disciples also manifested fire.

The motif of a disciple of the Buddha manifesting fire recurs in the *Udāna* account of an act of actual self-cremation undertaken by the monk Dabba.³⁸ In a comparative study of this epi-

³⁷ Conversely, as noted by Strong 2008: 117, "magical flyers of all sorts are unable to fly over the Buddha ... it is as though there is a superior force field that forces them to stop, land, and pay their respects to the Blessed One." On the related motif of the impossibility for anyone to look down on the top of the Buddha's head cf. Durt 1967.

³⁸ Ud 8.9 at Ud 92,33 (an event the Buddha then reports to his monks in Ud 8.10) and its parallels SĀ 1076 at T II 280c7 and SĀ² 15 at T II 378b9.

sode I suggested that the depiction of self-cremation in this tale might be the result of a literal interpretation of a metaphor that illustrates the nature of an arahant with the example of a burning splinter that flies up into the air and is then extinguished.³⁹ [22] Several aspects of the resultant story recur in later texts like the *Saddharmapundarīka-sūtra* and others. These eventually came to provide a model for the real-life undertaking of self-cremation in fourth-century China and later times,⁴⁰ dramatically showing the impact of literalism on the living tradition.

Pāṭikaputta's Challenge

The next example of fire miracles of the Buddha I have chosen for study is found in the *Pāṭika-sutta* and its parallel. The narrative plot of the *Pāṭika-sutta* involves the monk Sunakkhatta, who according to the Pāli commentarial tradition was one of the Buddha's attendants before Ānanda took this role.⁴¹ In the *Pāṭika-sutta* Sunakkhatta wants to disavow the training because the Buddha had not displayed any miracles.⁴² The Buddha clarifies that he had

³⁹ Anālayo 2012b.

⁴⁰ Cf. especially the detailed study by Benn 2007 (further references can be found in Anālayo 2012b).

⁴¹ Spk I 258,24; cf. also Malalasekera 1938/1998: 1206, Eimer 1987: 110f, and Eimer and Tsering 2012: 1.

⁴² DN 24 at DN III 3,10 and DĀ 15 at T I 66a27; DĀ 15 has been translated into German by Weller 1928. Sunakkhatta recurs in MN 12 at MN I 68,7 and its parallel T 757 at T XVII 591c19, where he has in the meantime disrobed. Sunakkhatta then defames the Buddha for his presumed inability to perform miracles, a passage which leads Evans 2012a: 132 to the conclusion that "one who insists that Gotama lacks superhuman states will be reborn in hell, and this seems to be the case even if the utterer is telling the truth about what he or she believes." This does not seem to reflect the situation depicted in MN 12 correctly. In DN 24 Sunakkhatta still features as a monk, showing that its narration should be considered to be an earlier episode than the one in MN 12.

never promised to display miracles in the first place. The discourse continues with some episodes that set a contrast between Sunakkhatta being impressed by some ascetics and the Buddha's ability to predict with precision how these ascetics will soon reveal their lack of true accomplishment.⁴³ [23]

The last of these episodes involves the ascetic Pāṭikaputta, who publicly boasts that he will best the Buddha in performing miracles.⁴⁴ The Buddha goes to Pāṭikaputta's place, predicting that Pāṭikaputta will be too afraid even to meet him face to face. This is indeed what happens. Even after being repeatedly urged by spectators, who have come to witness the anticipated competition in miraculous performances, to come forward to meet the Buddha,

From this it follows that the claims he reportedly makes in MN 12 need to be read as having been made in spite of all the proofs that according to DN 24 the Buddha had given of his abilities. Thus the point made in MN 12 is about intentional defamation of the Buddha, and it is on this account that Sunakkhatta is reckoned liable to rebirth in hell.

⁴³ Whereas such predictions are indeed instances of divination (cf. Latin *divinare*: "to foresee, foretell, predict"), the same does not hold for the exercise of the divine eye, *pace* Fiordalis 2014: 97, who proposed that "the notion of the divine eye of knowledge of the arising and passing away of beings nicely captures ... the spatial and temporal dimensions of divination." The divine eye rather seems to be conceived of as the ability to witness directly, with the mind's eye as it were, the arising and passing away of beings that take place at the moment this ability is exercised.

⁴⁴ According to his claim, however many miracles the Buddha might perform, he was ready to perform twice as many; cf. DN 24 at DN III 13,3 and DĀ 15 at T I 67c17; part of this claim has also been preserved in SHT IV 32.7 R, Sander and Waldschmidt 1980: 113. Several sources attribute a similar claim to the six teachers as part of the events leading up to the Buddha's performance of the twin miracle at Sāvattthī; cf., e.g., the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 947a2, the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1451 at T XXIV 329b16 and D 6 da 42a2 or Q 1035 ne 39b1, the *Dīvyāvadāna*, Cowell and Neil 1886: 149,4, and the Chinese counterpart to the *Aṭṭhakavagga*, T 198 at T IV 180c14.

Pāṭikaputta is too afraid to face the Buddha and fails to live up to his earlier claims. The scene ends with the Buddha giving a teaching to the crowd that has assembled at Pāṭikaputta's place. In the *Dīrgha-āgama* version, the Buddha concludes his own description of this episode as follows:⁴⁵

I taught the Dharma to that great assembly in many ways, explaining, benefitting, and delighting them. Having in that assembly thrice roared a lion's roar, I rose into the air with my body and returned to the place where I had been before.

In the corresponding section in the *Pāṭika-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya*, the Buddha reports his departure in this way:⁴⁶

Having instructed, urged, roused, and gladdened that assembly with a talk on the Dharma, having made them become delivered from great bondage, having rescued eighty-four thousand beings from the great abyss, I attained the fire element, rose into the air to the height of seven palm trees, created a flame another seven palm trees high, blazing and fuming, and reappeared in the Gabled Hall in the Great Wood.

Elements specific to the presentation in the *Pāṭika-sutta* are the liberating effect of the teaching given by the Buddha and his manifestation of fire. [24] Given that the *Dīrgha-āgama* discourse does depict the Buddha departing by way of levitation and thus by manifesting a supernormal feat, it can safely be assumed that it would also have reported the display of fire, had this idea already been around when the *Dīrgha-āgama* passage translated above reached its present form.

A Sanskrit fragment parallel has preserved part of this episode. In the fragment the Buddha similarly reports his "having instructed,

⁴⁵ DĀ 15 at T I 69a25f.

⁴⁶ DN 24 at DN III 27,9 to 27,15.

urged, roused and gladdened that assembly with a talk on the Dharma", followed immediately by the name Sunakṣatra Lecchavīputra in the accusative.⁴⁷ Even though the fragment unfortunately stops at this point, it seems unmistakably clear that here the Buddha's report of what happened continues directly by indicating that he addressed his attendant, instead of giving any description of the way in which he departed.⁴⁸

This leaves open the possibility that even the ascent into the air, described in the *Dīgha-nikāya* and *Dīrgha-āgama* versions alike, could be a later development. On this assumption, the Sanskrit fragment would have preserved an earlier version in which the Buddha, having described his delivery of a talk on the Dharma to the assembly, simply continues by reporting what he then said to his attendant Sunakkhatta. This would be in keeping with the pattern observed for the previously reported episodes involving Sunakkhatta, where each time the Buddha reports what he said to his attendant. In line with this pattern the *Pāṭika-sutta* continues, right after the description of the Buddha's miraculous departure, with his report of what he said to Sunakkhatta.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ SHT IV 165.3+4 V5, Sander and Waldschmidt 1980: 178: *t(aṃ pariṣadam dhārmīyā katha)yā sandarśa(yitvā samādā)[pa]yitvā sa[mu](ttejayi)tvā saṃpraharṣayitvā (suna)kṣatram lecchav[ī](putram)*.

⁴⁸ Schlingloff 2015: 94 note 30 has already pointed out that the Sanskrit fragment version does not report the miracle depicted in DN 24.

⁴⁹ DN 24 at DN III 27,9: *taṃ parisam dhammiyā kathāya sandassetvā samādapetvā samuttejetvā sampahaṃsetvā*, followed by the reference to the delivery of eighty-four thousand beings and the Buddha's miraculous departure, and then at DN III 27,18: *sunakkhattaṃ licchaviputtaṃ etad avocaṃ*. The two parts I have given in Pāli match the Sanskrit fragment quoted in the previous note, making it safe to restore it to *taṃ pariṣadam dhārmīyā kathayā sandarśayitvā samādāpayitvā samuttejayitvā saṃpraharṣayitvā sunakṣatram lecchavīputram etad avocaṃ*. DĀ 15 at T I 69a27 is of no help here, as it directly turns from the Buddha's departure to the next episode in the discourse.

Support for the assumption that the Buddha's miraculous departure is indeed a later element can be found in the *Pāṭika-sutta* itself, precisely in what the Buddha reportedly said to Sunakkhatta at this narrative juncture. After getting Sunakkhatta to confirm that Pāṭikaputta had acted exactly as the Buddha had predicted he would, [25] the Buddha concludes:

What do you think, Sunakkhatta, given that this is the case, has a miracle of a nature beyond [the ability of ordinary] men been performed or not?⁵⁰

Sunakkhatta confirms that this is indeed the case. This exchange relates back to the theme at the outset of the discourse and Sunakkhatta's wish to disavow the training because the Buddha did not display any "miracle", *iddhipāṭihāriya*, "of a nature beyond [the ability of ordinary] men", *uttarimanussadhamma*.⁵¹ Now, had the Buddha at the present narrative juncture been wanting to press the point that he had performed miracles, his act of levitation would certainly have been more impressive than his prediction that Pāṭikaputta will be unable to meet him face to face, and even more impressive would have been his manifesting fire.⁵² The fact that they are not mentioned here at all gives the impression that, at the time when the present passage was formulated, the idea that the Buddha had performed an act of levitation and manifested fire had not yet arisen.

The impression that the episode in the *Pāṭika-sutta* translated above is late is reinforced by its reference to rescuing eighty-four thousand beings from the great abyss and delivering them from great bondage. According to the commentarial explanation,⁵³ the

⁵⁰ DN 24 at DN III 27,24 to 27,26.

⁵¹ On the term *uttarimanussadhamma* cf. Anālayo 2008f.

⁵² This has already been pointed out by Weller 1922/1987: 635f.

⁵³ Sv III 829,22.

great bondage mentioned here is the great bondage of defilements, *kilesa*, and the abyss stands for the four floods, *ogha*, which are the floods of sensuality, becoming, views, and ignorance.⁵⁴ Being delivered from the bondage of defilements and rescued from these four floods would entail that these eighty-four thousand beings all attained full awakening during the talk given by the Buddha.

According to the preceding section in the discourse, Sunakkhatta had called together various Licchavīs to witness the contest in miraculous abilities between the Buddha and Pāṭikaputta. It follows that the assembled crowd should be understood to have been various spectators from the nearby location. [26] The presentation in the *Pāṭika-sutta* thereby implies that a single talk on the Dharma turned this whole crowd of spectators into arahants. Although the early discourses do recognize the possibility that lay people can become arahants,⁵⁵ this usually is conceived of as the outcome of considerable practice and acquaintance with the teachings, not as something that such a large group of chance spectators could attain during a single meeting with the Buddha. Such a hyperbolic depiction of the effects of the Buddha's teaching is uncommon at least among the early discourses.⁵⁶ The apparent lateness of this

⁵⁴ For a listing of the four floods cf., e.g., DN 33 at DN III 230,11 and its Sanskrit fragment parallel, Stache-Rosen 1968: 117.

⁵⁵ On laity and the attainment of arahant-ship cf. Anālayo 2010g: 61f note 2.

⁵⁶ Another such reference to attainment by eighty-four thousand beings occurs in DN 14 at DN II 44,3 as part of a description of the followers of the former Buddha Vipassī. Having on an early occasion attained stream-entry and gone forth under him, these eighty-four thousand attain full awakening on being "instructed, urged, roused, and gladdened with a talk on the Dharma" by the Buddha Vipassī. In the parallels the attainment of full awakening of those monks is not just the result of a talk on the Dharma by the Buddha Vipassī; it rather happens after the performance of the three miracles. According to the Sanskrit fragment version, Waldschmidt 1956: 154f, the two chief disciples of Vipassī, Khaṇḍa, and Tiṣya, performed the miracle of psychic power, *ṛddhiprātihārya*, and the miracle of te-

description further confirms the impression that this part of the *Pāṭika-sutta* has gone through some development.

Given that Pāṭikaputta has been thoroughly defeated, and the whole crowd of spectators has been successfully converted, at the present narrative juncture the performance of any miracle is quite superfluous, be it an act of levitation or the manifestation of fire.⁵⁷

I will return to this part of the *Pāṭika-sutta* and its parallels in the next chapter in relation to the topic of levitation.

The Twin Miracle

Continuing with my main theme of fire miracles, a well-known instance of the Buddha manifesting fire is the famous twin miracle. Although not reported in Pāli discourse literature, descriptions of this miracle can be found in the Pāli commentaries. According to the *Jātaka* commentary, one of the four instances when (according to the Theravāda tradition) the Buddha performed the twin miracle was precisely on the occasion described in the *Pāṭika-sutta*.⁵⁸ [27] Thus by the time this commentarial gloss came into

lepathy, *ādeśanāprātihārya*, respectively, and the Buddha himself performed the miracle of instruction, *anuśāsanāprātihārya*. DĀ 1 at T I 9c18 and T 3 at T I 157b18 report that the Buddha himself performed all of these three miracles, leading to the attainment of arahant-ship by the eighty-four thousand (or else eighty thousand) monks. None of these versions comes close to the indication in DN 24 that a similarly sized crowd could reach full awakening on the spot during a single discourse by the Buddha.

⁵⁷ Walshe 1987: 598 note 749 comments: "could this peculiarly unnecessary miracle have been inserted later?"; cf. also Rhys Davids and Rhys Davids 1921: 2f.

⁵⁸ Jā I 77,23; in fact Neumann 1912/2004: 778 note 760 sees the present passage in DN 14 as the starting point for a development eventually leading to the depiction of the twin miracle at Sāvattihī (cf. also the parallelism between DN 24 and several depictions of the Śrāvastī miracle in the claim to double the Buddha's abilities, mentioned above p. 265 note 44). On the motif of the twin miracle cf., e.g., Foucher 1909: 10–16, Waldschmidt 1930, Lüders 1941/1966: 62–73,

existence, the miracle believed to have been performed by the Buddha after Pāṭika's discomfiture had developed from being a manifestation of fire alone to a miracle that combines this with the simultaneous manifestation of water.⁵⁹

A reference to the Buddha performing the twin miracle can also be found in the *Samyukta-āgama* parallel to the *Āditta-sutta* (or *Ādittapariyāya-sutta*). According to the traditional reckoning, the *Āditta-sutta* is one of the chief discourses delivered by the Buddha soon after his awakening. The *Āditta-sutta* has the three Kassapa brothers and their Jaṭila followers as its audience, whom the Buddha had earlier impressed by performing various miracles.⁶⁰ Having in the meantime become Buddhist monks, at the present narrative juncture they receive a penetrating instruction that leads them to full awakening.

According to the *Āditta-sutta* and its Theravāda *Vinaya* counterpart, the talk delivered by the Buddha on this occasion presented all aspects of sense-experience as being "on fire",⁶¹ a way of teaching apparently adjusted to the interest of the discourse's audience in fire worship.⁶² The *Samyukta-āgama* parallel reports that on this occasion the Buddha displayed the three miracles (the

Brown 1984, Verardi 1988: 1540f, Karetzky 1990: 72f, Rhi 1991, Schlingloff 1991, Skilling 1997: 303–315, Schlingloff 2000: 488–515, Zhu 2006: 255f, Anālayo 2009f, Fiordalis 2010/2011: 401f, and Anālayo 2015i.

⁵⁹ This seems to be comparable in kind to the apparent development of the miracle related to Sakka's visit where, as mentioned above p. 255 note 14, in a Tibetan version translated in Schiefner 1849/1851: 255 the Buddha apparently manifested fire for seven days.

⁶⁰ For a survey of textual accounts and artistic representations cf., e.g., Zin 2006: 136–166.

⁶¹ SN 35.28 at SN IV 19,24 (= Vin I 34,16). For comparative studies that take into account some of the parallels cf. Bareau 1963: 317–320 and Fiordalis 2010/2011: 398f.

⁶² On the fire imagery cf. Gombrich 2009: 111ff.

miracle of psychic power, the miracle of telepathy, and the miracle of instruction). The *Samyukta-āgama* discourse's depiction of the Buddha's display of the first miracle of psychic power is as follows.⁶³ [28]

The Blessed One entered into an attainment of concentration appropriate for the manifestation of his ascent into the air towards the east to perform [the miracle of psychic power] in the four postures of walking, standing, sitting, and reclining. He entered into concentration on fire, emitting flames of various types in blue, yellow, red, white, crimson, and crystal colours.⁶⁴ He manifested fire and water concurrently. The lower part of his body emitted fire and the upper part of his body emitted water, or else the upper part of his body emitted fire and the lower part of his body emitted water. In the same way he kept going around the four directions. Then, having performed various miracles, the Blessed One sat among the assembly.

After having displayed the miracle of telepathy as well, the Buddha gives his talk on all aspects of sense-experience being on fire. The Buddha's display of all three miracles on this occasion is also recorded in a discourse in the *Ekottarika-āgama*,⁶⁵ in the *Catuṣpariṣat-sūtra*,⁶⁶ in the Dharmaguptaka, Mahīśāsaka, and

⁶³ SĀ 197 at T II 50b18 to 50b23.

⁶⁴ A description of the same miracle in the *Sanḥabhedavastu* of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* also reports that the Buddha manifested flames of various colours, having attained meditation on fire or the fire element; cf. Gnoli 1977: 230,18: *tejodhātum samāpannasya*, T 1450 at T XXIV 134b9: 入火光定, Waldschmidt 1962: 319,9 (§26.6): *me'i ting nge 'dzin la snyoms par zhugs pa* (the transliteration style has been adjusted).

⁶⁵ EĀ 24.5 at T II 622b10.

⁶⁶ Waldschmidt 1962: 316,9 (§26.3).

Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinayas*,⁶⁷ and in some biographies of the Buddha preserved in Chinese translation.⁶⁸

Although the events leading up to the conversion of the Jaṭilas are clearly pervaded by the topic of miracle performance, when it comes to the actual instruction at the present juncture in the narrative it seems unnecessary for the Buddha to perform further miracles. Once the Jaṭilas have gained sufficient faith to go forth under the Buddha, there would be no need to continue to improve on his earlier performance of miraculous feats by undertaking the twin miracle. Instead, what fits the present occasion well is the "miracle of instruction", the Buddha building his presentation skilfully on a theme of central importance to these Jaṭilas before their conversion, [29] putting their concern with fire to use for cultivating liberating insight.

Judging from the narrative context it seems probable that the *Āditta-sutta* and its Theravāda *Vinaya* counterpart have preserved an earlier version of the Buddha's third sermon in this respect,⁶⁹ when the theme of displaying miracles, leading to the conversion of the three Kassapa brothers and their following, had not yet spilled over into the occasion of giving them the teaching that led to their liberation.

Another miraculous event relating the Buddha to fire is reported in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* and a range of parallels. When the Buddha had passed away, his corpse could not be burned until Mahākassapa arrived. Once Mahākassapa had come and paid

⁶⁷ T 1428 at T XXII 797a13, T 1421 at XXII 109b25, and Gnoli 1977: 230,12, with its Chinese and Tibetan counterparts in T 1450 at T XXIV 134b6 and Waldschmidt 1962: 317,12 (§26.3); cf. also Dhammadinnā 2015: 42f.

⁶⁸ T 185 at T III 483a11, T 191 at T III 962a14, and T 196 at T IV 152a1; cf. also the brief reference in T 189 at T III 650a23, which appears to mean the same, and the comparative survey in Waldschmidt 1951/1967: 193.

⁶⁹ This has already been suggested by Bareau 1963: 320.

his respects, the pyre spontaneously ignited.⁷⁰ In this case, too, some versions do not report such a miracle and instead indicate that either lay people or else Mahākassapa himself ignited the pyre.⁷¹

The Fire Element

Among Pāli discourses found in the four *Nikāyas*, the visit to Brahmā (2) and the *Pāṭika-sutta* (3) are the only references to an *attaining* of the fire element that I have been able to identify.⁷² [30]

⁷⁰ DN 16 at DN II 164,2, a Sanskrit fragment parallel, Waldschmidt 1951: 430,5 (§49.21), DĀ 2 at T I 29a26, T 6 at T I 190a12, T 7 at T I 207a11, the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 966c11, the (Haimavata?) *Vinayamāṭṛkā*, T 1463 at T XXIV 818a4, the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1451 at T XXIV 401b19, and its Tibetan counterpart in Waldschmidt 1951: 431,12 (§49.21). According to *Mahāvamsa* 17.44 and 31.99, Geiger 1958: 137,13 and 254,11, even the Buddha's relics manifested fire as part of performances of the twin miracle in Sri Lanka, during which the relics rose up into the air to the height of seven palm trees; on miracles in the *Mahāvamsa* cf. also Scheible 2010/2011. Halkias 2015: 178 holds that "self-immolations are intimately related to Buddha Śākyamuni, who is reported by some influential recountings to have ended his own life by auto-cremation." This is not correct. The episode in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa* narrative of the auto-combustion of the Buddha's corpse took place after he had passed away and thus has no direct relationship to the ending of his life. An 'intimate relationship to self-immolation' emerges only much later in the history of Chinese Buddhism, where according to Benn 2007: 37 "the imitation of the Buddha's *parinirvāṇa* and subsequent cremation is suggested in many accounts of auto-cremation in China."

⁷¹ According to T 5 at T I 174b11 and the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1435 at T XXIII 446a20, the pyre was lit by householders, and according to the Mahāsāṅghika *Vinaya*, T 1425 at T XXII 490b20, by Mahākāśyapa; cf. also Waldschmidt 1948: 305.

⁷² Instances found outside the four *Nikāyas* are Ud 8.9 at Ud 92,33 (= Ud 8.10), mentioned above p. 263 note 38, and performances of miracles in the *Vinaya*; cf. Vin I 25,5, Vin II 76,4, (=Vin III 159,21), and Vin IV 109,8. These report the Buddha's subduing of a serpent (as part of the conversion story of the Kassapa broth-

In both cases comparison with the parallel versions makes it probable that these references are the results of later developments.

Elsewhere in the four Pāli *Nikāyas* the fire element occurs regularly in meditative contexts, but in such occurrences the fire element comes together with other elements and is moreover something to be *experienced* instead of being *attained*.⁷³ In such contexts the fire element can be part of a set of four elements or else part of a set of six elements, which in addition to earth, water, and wind also comprises space and consciousness.⁷⁴

The implications of the fire element in such listings are spelled out in the *Mahāhatthipadopama-sutta* and the *Dhātuvibhaṅga-sutta*, together with their parallels. The two discourses differ only in so far as the *Mahāhatthipadopama-sutta* takes up the fire element as part of the set of four, whereas the *Dhātuvibhaṅga-sutta* presents it as part of the set of six elements. The two discourses and their parallels agree, however, that the fire element stands for physical warmth and bodily manifestations of heat.⁷⁵ Here is the relevant passage from the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Dhātuvibhaṅga-sutta*:

Now in this body of mine there is the internal fire element, which was received at birth. What is it? That is, it is bodily heat,

ers), the monk Dabba's ability to set fire to his finger and use this to show the way to incoming monks late at night, and the monk Sāgata's subduing of a serpent.

⁷³ An occurrence of the fire element on its own that is related to meditation can be found in AN 1.14.4 at AN I 25,14, which lists the monk Sāgata as foremost in (meditative) ability regarding the fire element, obviously a reference related to Vin IV 109,8, mentioned above in the previous note.

⁷⁴ An example would be DN 33 at DN III 247,19 (§6.16) and its parallels in Sanskrit fragments, Stache-Rosen 1968: 165 (§6.15), and DĀ 9 at T I 52a6 (§6.10).

⁷⁵ MN 28 at MN I 188,5 and its parallel MĀ 30 at T I 465c16; MN 140 at MN III 241,13 and its parallels MĀ 162 at T I 691a5, T 511 at T XIV 780a23, and D 4094 *ju* 37b3 or Q 5595 *tu* 41a2.

bodily warmth, bodily discomfort, warmth from bodily nourishment, that is, from digesting food and drink, and whatever else is of this nature and exists in this body internally, is contained in it internally, and is fiery, of a fiery nature, and hot internally.⁷⁶ [31]

The description of the fire element is not concerned with a visual apperception of flames, but rather with the physical experience of heat.⁷⁷ This implication then informs meditative approaches to the fire element, which are about the experience of warmth as one of the characteristics of matter and which do not require any form of visualization. In this sense the fire element features among the objects of *satipaṭṭhāna* meditation,⁷⁸ and can lead to insight into the absence of a self.⁷⁹ For arahants it is in turn characteristic that they will be free from any notion of a self in regard to the fire element (as well as the other elements).⁸⁰

This well-attested use of the fire element in the sense of warmth as part of a set of elements contrasts to the fire element in the *Pāṭika-sutta* and in the *Samyutta-nikāya* report of the visit to Brahmā, where the fire element is something to be *attained* and that attainment then results in the visual manifestation of fire.

⁷⁶ MĀ 162 at T I 691a5 to 691a8.

⁷⁷ Soper 1950: 73 reasons, in relation to fire miracles and *kaṣiṇa* meditation, that "what seems to have begun in the Pāli tradition as a part of the technique of meditation – the adept visualizing fire as he would the other elements – developed in an age of miracles into the exteriorization of the fire element." It seems to me that the starting point for a process of exteriorization of the fire *element* in the Pāli discourses, however, did not yet involve a meditative form of visualization.

⁷⁸ MN 10 at MN I 57,37 (= DN 22 at DN II 294,16) and its parallels MĀ 98 at T I 583b18 and EĀ 12.1 at T II 568a24.

⁷⁹ AN 4.177 at AN II 165,3 and its parallel SĀ 465 at T II 119a3.

⁸⁰ MN 112 at MN III 31,28 and its parallel MĀ 187 at T I 733a5.

Since these two instances appear to be late, it seems safe to conclude that this alternative use of the term "fire element" reflects a later development.

Fire also features in a list of ten "totalities", *kaṣiṇa*, where it similarly occurs preceded by the earth and water *kaṣiṇas*, and is followed by the *kaṣiṇas* of wind, space, and consciousness. In addition to these six, the remaining four that make up the full list of ten *kaṣiṇas* are colours.⁸¹

Regarding these remaining four *kaṣiṇas*, the *Visuddhimagga* describes how one fashions an object of the corresponding colour as the basis for meditation practice.⁸² In fact the commentaries employ the term *kaṣiṇa* for such objects rather than for the "totality" of experience that is to result from their use.⁸³ [32] Although in the case of colours the situation is quite straightforward, with the other six *kaṣiṇas* the idea of contemplating them as visual objects is not without difficulties.

Already the *kaṣiṇas* of wind and space are not easily experienced as visual objects, as wind can be observed mainly by its effects and space becomes visible only in the form of an absence of visual objects. In the case of the consciousness *kaṣiṇa*, it seems hardly possible to think of a way of turning this into a visual object. In fact the *Visuddhimagga* drops consciousness from the list

⁸¹ Cf., e.g., AN 10.26 at AN V 47,11 and its parallel SĀ 549 at T II 143a23 or AN 10.29 at AN V 60,19 and its parallel MĀ 215 at T I 800b5.

⁸² In order to cultivate the meditative vision of the blue *kaṣiṇa*, for example, Vism 173,2 suggests arranging blue flowers on a tray, covering the mouth of a bucket with a blue cloth, or fashioning a disk coloured blue as the basis.

⁸³ Vetter 1988: 66f comments that "in the *Visuddhimagga* we no longer find that a Kasina sphere is considered as being immeasurable. It is even characteristic of the technique that one first concentrates on a limited" object; on the *kaṣiṇas* cf. also Karunaratna 1996, Wynne 2007: 31–34, and Chapple 2014.

in its exposition of *kaṣiṇa* practice and replaces it with the light *kaṣiṇa*.⁸⁴

As far as the early discourses are concerned, it seems improbable that the whole set of ten *kaṣiṇas* was meant to refer to visual experiences, *pace* later exegesis. Besides, even in the *Visuddhimagga* the fire *kaṣiṇa* is something experienced internally and there is no indication that others, on seeing a meditator engaged in this practice, will also be able to apperceive fire. In fact, had the fire *kaṣiṇa* been the starting point for the idea of seeing someone emanate fire, one would expect the *Pāṭika-sutta* and the *Samyutta-nikāya* discourse on the visit to Brahmā to speak of attaining the "fire *kaṣiṇa*", instead of referring to the attainment of the "fire element".

In view of this it seems to me quite possible that the notion of fire manifesting outwardly as a result of someone having attained the fire element would have been facilitated by some form of pictorial depiction. This could have been a sort of canvas taken around to aid oral performance with some visual stimulation, a usage already attested in a discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya*.⁸⁵ The use of such a type of visual depiction could have influenced the texts already at a comparatively early stage in their transmission. [33]

⁸⁴ Vism 174,19 (although Vism 609,14 does refer to the consciousness *kaṣiṇa* as one of various objects for the cultivation of penetrative insight); cf. also Anālayo 2009j: 668 and 2011b: 592f note 33.

⁸⁵ SN 22.100 at SN III 151,23 (the formulation in the parallel SĀ 267 at T II 69c18 could be due to a misunderstanding of the translator; cf. Anālayo 2013c: 45 note 119) seems to reflect the employment of pictures as aids in oral teaching. According to Spk II 327,18 it refers to a canvas with paintings taken around by wandering brahmins to illustrate teachings on karma and its fruits; cf. also Mair 1988: 17–37, Dehejia 1990: 377, and Brown 1997: 81, as well as on a similar custom in medieval China Teiser 1988: 446.

Conclusion

The selected examples of fire miracles performed by the Buddha surveyed in this chapter seem to be for the most part identifiable as later developments, probably the result of literal interpretations of metaphorical usages of the fire motif attested in text and art.⁸⁶ At the same time, examining these instances clearly testifies to other type of supernormal abilities as integral to the early Buddhist world. Celestial travels by the Buddha and his disciples, a topic to which I return in the next chapter, or *devas* lighting up a place on arrival form a common heritage among the early discourses and it would not be doing justice to their testimony if one were to consider all such elements as the result of later influences.

Taken together this suggests to my mind the appropriateness of a middle-way approach to the topic of supernormal feats and miracles in early Buddhist thought. This middle-way approach steers clear of ignoring supernormal elements and according the status of genuine teachings only to the type of textual material that conforms to modern-day Western expectations and values.

At the same time this middle-way approach also avoids reading the early discourses through the lenses of later tradition and ignoring the development in the depiction of miracles,⁸⁷ the his-

⁸⁶ As pointed out by Gombrich 1996: 21, "unintentional literalism has been a major force for change in the early doctrinal history of Buddhism."

⁸⁷ An example of this tendency would be McClintock 2011, who on the basis of some miracle tales in the commentary on the *Dhammapada* comes to the conclusion that in early Indian Buddhist narratives the Buddha functions as a trickster. Such uncritical employment of one Pāli commentary as if it were to reflect the whole of early Buddhist narrative traditions needs to be counterbalanced by taking into account literature reflecting the commentarial period that has been preserved outside the Pāli canon and, even more importantly, historical contextualization of such tales by way of comparison with what can be gathered about the Buddha's role in the material common to the discourses in the four Pāli *Nikāyas* and their Chinese *Āgama* parallels, where I for one am

torical stages of which can be detected with the help of comparative study of versions of a text transmitted by different reciter traditions.

not aware of evidence that would corroborate an assessment of the Buddha's role as that of a trickster.

Sakkapañha-sutta (DN 21) Part 2

Introduction

In this chapter I continue examining descriptions of supernatural feats, broached in the last chapter. Here I turn in particular to instances of levitation, in the sense of the ability of a human being to rise up into space and at times traverse even considerable distances by supernatural means.

Departure by Levitation

Two instances from the previous chapter are of direct relevance to the present topic. One of these two instances is the *Pāṭika-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya*, which takes its occasion from a monk wanting to leave the Buddhist fold because the Buddha had not displayed any miracles.¹ The episode relevant to my present purposes describes the Buddha's departure from the park of an ascetic by the name of Pāṭikaputta who, in spite of earlier boasting how he would defeat the Buddha, had been too afraid even to come forward and meet the Buddha. The *Pāṭika-sutta* and its *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel agree that the Buddha departed by flying away.² Remnants of a version of this episode preserved in a Sanskrit fragment parallel, [12] however, make it safe to conclude that

* Originally published in 2016 under the title "Levitation in Early Buddhist Discourse" in the *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies*, 10: 11–26. None of the instances surveyed in this chapter occurs in the *Sakkapañha-sutta*, wherefore the title of the present chapter only intends to convey that the continuous study of various excerpts in this and the previous chapter begins with an episode that stems from the *Sakkapañha-sutta*.

¹ Cf. above p. 264f.

² DN 24 at DN III 27,12 and DĀ 15 at T I 69a26.

this version did not report an act of levitation at this narrative juncture.³

As already mentioned in the previous chapter, the ensuing part of the *Pāṭika-sutta* shows the Buddha pointing out to the monk who wants to disrobe that he has performed a miracle, namely by predicting that the ascetic Pāṭikaputta would be too afraid even to come forward for a meeting. Although such a prediction is impressive, for the Buddha to show that he did perform a miracle, an act of levitation would certainly have been much more impressive. This makes it fairly certain that, at the time the passage reporting the Buddha's reference to his successful prediction in order to document his performance of a miracle came into being, the idea that he levitated had not yet arisen.⁴ Besides, since at this narrative juncture the ascetic Pāṭikaputta has been utterly defeated, the performance of any miracle, such as an act of levitation, is superfluous. In sum, the departure by levitation reported in the *Pāṭika-sutta* and its *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel seems to be a later addition to the discourse.

Celestial Travels

Another instance, which I also took up in the previous chapter, is a discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya* that has as its main protagonist a Brahmā. This Brahmā has the conceited belief that nobody can reach him in his lofty celestial abode. To dispel this conceit, the Buddha and his disciples pay him a visit, manifesting themselves seated above him in mid-air.⁵ Unlike the case of the *Pāṭika-sutta* and its parallels, in this case the entire story is based on the ability of the Buddha and his accomplished disciples to travel to

³ SHT IV 165.3+4 V5, Sander and Waldschmidt 1980: 178; cf. above p. 267.

⁴ This has already been noted by Weller 1922/1987: 635f.

⁵ SN 6.5 at SN I 144,14, SĀ 1196 at T II 324c21, and SĀ² 109 at T II 412c22; cf. above p. 262.

heaven. It could not have come into being without the basic presumption that it is possible for humans to travel to the Brahmā world. In fact the *Samyutta-nikāya* version and its two *Samyukta-āgama* parallels agree in this respect.

The need to dispel the mistaken belief of another deluded Brahmā, who held the notion that his realm was permanent, forms the setting for another celestial journey of the Buddha, reported in the *Brahmanimantanika-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* and its parallels.⁶ [13] Here, too, the Buddha has to be able to ascend to the heavenly dwelling place of this Brahmā in order to provide a meaningful setting for delivering a teaching on the nature of this realm. In fact part of this teaching takes the form of the Buddha disappearing from the sight of Brahmā and his assembly, a feat that Brahmā had earlier attempted unsuccessfully. The entertaining idea of such celestial "hide-and-seek" of course presupposes the Buddha's supernormal abilities.

Another example of the Buddha's celestial travels is a visit paid to the Pure Abodes, described similarly in a discourse in the *Dīgha-nikāya* and its parallels in Sanskrit fragments and in Chinese translation.⁷ The *Dīgha-nikāya* and *Dīrgha-āgama* versions report that the visit was motivated by the Buddha's reflection that during his past lives he had been born in all kind of places, except for the Pure Abodes.⁸ Such a reflection makes it indeed natural for the Buddha to decide to visit the Pure Abodes, thereby complementing his knowledge of the different realms of existence.

⁶ MN 49 at MN I 326,12 (= SN 6.4 at SN I 142,18) and its parallel MĀ 78 at T I 547a16. The visit of a former Buddha and his chief disciple to a Brahmā world reported in SN 6.14 at SN I 155,23 does not appear to have a known parallel.

⁷ DN 14 at DN II 50,10 and its parallels in a Sanskrit fragment version, Waldschmidt 1956: 161 (which has preserved the final words of the description of the Buddha's arrival), DĀ 1 at T I 10b12, and T 3 at T I 158b9.

⁸ DN 14 at DN II 50,6 and DĀ 1 at T I 10b10.

Unlike this visit to the Pure Abodes, in general meetings with *devas* do not necessarily require that the Buddha ascend to heaven. Such meetings could also take place by way of the *devas* descending to earth to meet the Buddha. An example illustrating this possibility is the *Sakkapañha-sutta*, which formed the starting point of my discussion in the previous chapter. Another example involves a group of *devas* from the same Heaven of the Thirty-three who speak in front of the Buddha in praise of the four limbs of stream-entry. Whereas in the *Samyutta-nikāya* version the Buddha comes to visit their celestial abode, however, in a *Samyukta-āgama* parallel the *devas* rather come to visit the Buddha.⁹

Yet in other cases it is an indispensable requirement for the whole tale to work that the Buddha be indeed able to levitate up to this celestial realm. An example would be the Buddha's sojourn in the Heaven of the Thirty-three during a rainy-season period.^[14] In fact the parallel versions only vary in their depiction of his descent back to earth, but agree that he had actually ascended to this heaven.¹⁰

In addition to the Buddha, his disciple Mahāmoggallāna is also regularly on record for celestial journeys. The *Cūḷatanhāsāṅkhaya-sutta* reports an occasion when Mahāmoggallāna visited the Heaven of the Thirty-three.¹¹ In the course of his visit he caused the heav-

⁹ SN 55.20 at SN V 367,22 and SĀ 1135 at T II 299b17. The same holds for similar conversations between the *devas* and Mahāmoggallāna, where SN 55.18 at SN V 366,12 and SN 55.19 at SN V 367,18 report that he went up to their abode, whereas according to the parallel SĀ 507 at T II 134c25 the *devas* rather came to visit Mahāmoggallāna.

¹⁰ Cf. Anālayo 2012i.

¹¹ MN 37 at MN I 252,14 and its parallels SĀ 505 at T II 133b29 and EĀ 19.3 at T II 594a3 (for a translation and study of SĀ 505 cf. Anālayo 2011f). Another visit by the Buddha to the Heaven of the Thirty-three is on record in SN 40.10 at SN IV 269,22, which does not appear to have a parallel (Akanuma 1929/1990: 89 lists SĀ 988 and SĀ 989 as parallels, but both discourses seem to be too dif-

only palace to tremble, an episode that also clearly requires his presence up in heaven.

Another discourse involves an unnamed monk who proceeds through different heavens to ask a question that has kept puzzling him, until he eventually reaches Mahābrahmā.¹² Here, too, the monk's ability to travel from one of these different heavenly realms to the next is indispensable for the plot of his persistent questioning of *devas* who dwell at increasingly higher celestial levels.

These instances make it clear that the notion of celestial travels by those adept in meditation has to be considered as an integral part of early Buddhist thought, inasmuch as this has been preserved in textual records. In fact the ability to rise up into the air is a recurrent feature in the standard description of supernormal abilities that make up the first of the six higher knowledges, *abhīññā*.¹³ The gaining of such ability is part of a series of attainments that, according to the report in the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* and its par-

ferent to be reckoned parallels to SN 40.10; both also do not report a celestial visit by the Buddha). Visits paid by Mahāmoggallāna to Brahmās (in addition to SN 6.5 and its parallels, mentioned above p. 282 note 5, where Mahāmoggallāna is one of the disciples who join the meeting between the Buddha and Brahmā) are on record in AN 6.34 at AN III 332,5 and AN 7.53 at AN IV 75,28; in each case no parallel appears to be known.

¹² DN 11 at DN I 215,26 and its parallels in *Kaivartī-sūtra* fragment 387v9, Zhou 2008: 5, DĀ 24 at T I 102a26, and D 4094 *ju* 62b4 or Q 5595 *tu* 69b1; cf. also T 1545 at T XXVII 670b29.

¹³ On the notion of such *iddhis* and their performance in Indian Buddhism cf., e.g., de La Vallée Poussin 1925/1980: 98, Har Dayal 1932/1970: 106–116, van Zeyst 1961, Lamotte 1976: 1809–1827, French 1977, Gómez 1977, Jones 1979: 189, Gethin 1992: 97–102, Meisig 1993, Nanayakkara 1993, Gokhale 1994/2001b, Granoff 1996, Gombrich 1997: 176f, Kalupahana 2002, Karunaratna 2003a, Strong 2008, Clough 2010/2011, Fiordalis 2010/2011, Gómez 2010/2011, Gethin 2011, Clough 2012, Strong 2013; and for the case of such notions in the Jain tradition cf., e.g., Mitra 1939, Deo 1956: 316f, 334f, and 562–564, and Granoff 1998. On "magic" in Buddhism cf. also Reynolds 2016.

allels, are within the purview of a meditator who has reached the imperturbable concentration of the fourth absorption. ^[15] The relevant passage in the *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel to the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* proceeds like this:¹⁴

With his concentrated mind that is pure, without blemish, pliant, disciplined, established in the stage of imperturbability, and mentally unified, he cultivates the realization of supernatural ability. He is able to perform various transformations, transforming his single body into innumerable bodies, as well as joining the innumerable bodies back into a single one. With his body he is able to fly, without being impeded by stone walls, and he moves through space like a bird. He steps on water as if it were earth. From his body smoke and flames emerge as if it were a great heap of fire. With his hands he touches the sun and the moon. He straightaway reaches the Brahmā Heaven.

As for the ability to fly, the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta*, a parallel preserved individually in Chinese translation, and another parallel found as part of the *Saṅghabhedavastu* of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* specify that this takes place in the cross-legged posture.¹⁵ The *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* and the *Saṅghabhedavastu* also indicate

¹⁴ DĀ 20 at T I 86a6 to 86a11; the passage has already been translated into German by Meisig 1987a: 337; for comparative studies of the different versions of this discourse cf. also Bapat 1948 and MacQueen 1988. The parallels, DN 2 at DN I 78,4, T 22 at T I 275b10, and Gnoli 1978: 246,19, mention the ability to enter the earth as if it were made of water, in addition to the ability to walk on water as if it were earth. None of them mentions the feat of manifesting smoke and flames. On imperturbability cf. also Anālayo 2009a.

¹⁵ DN 2 at DN I 78,7, Gnoli 1978: 246,21, and T 22 at T I 275b11 (the Pāli discourse and the *Saṅghabhedavastu* also mention additional solid objects through which the adept is able to pass during his flight; cf. DN 2 at DN I 78,3 and Gnoli 1978: 246,18).

that the ability to reach Brahmā Heaven is performed by "exercising control with the body",¹⁶ in relation to which the discourse preserved in Chinese translation offers the information that this takes place by "transforming the body".¹⁷

Another description of this ability in the *Mahāvastu* relates how the Buddha in a past life as a seer had acquired the four absorptions and the five higher knowledges. The bodhisattva's ability to reach the Brahmā world is described as follows: [16]

Seated cross-legged in his hermitage, he touched the orb of the moon and the orb of the sun with his hand, and he exercised mastery with his body up to the retinue of Brahmā.¹⁸

Here the performance of these feats must have been envisaged as being undertaken by some sort of mind-made body, enabling the bodhisattva to undertake them while his physical body remains seated in meditation in his hermitage. A similar understanding appears to be reflected in the *Vimuttimaggā*, which takes up the question of what happens to a traveller in space if the absorption is lost. The reply is that one simply finds oneself back on the seat from which one had departed.¹⁹

The creation of such a mind-made body features in the same *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* and its parallels just before their description of the supernormal ability to levitate, etc., corresponding to the section translated above from the *Dirgha-āgama* version.²⁰ This

¹⁶ DN 2 at DN I 78,9: *kāyena vasaṃ vatteti* (following B^c, C^c, and S^c, against E^c: *kāyena va saṃvatteti*) and Gnoli 1978: 246,23: *kāyena vaṣe vartayati*.

¹⁷ T 22 at T I 275b13: 變身.

¹⁸ Senart 1882: 284,4; the significance of this passage has already been noted by Schlingloff 2015: 90 note 3.

¹⁹ T 1648 at T XXXII 442a21; a passage already discussed by Clough 2012: 85.

²⁰ Cf. DN 2 at DN I 77,10, Gnoli 1978: 245,26, DĀ 20 at T I 85c27, and T 22 at T I 275a23. As already pointed out by Gombrich 1997: 176, "there is much tex-

gives the impression that the ability to create a mind-made body may have been considered a precondition for feats like levitation,²¹ just as the earlier mentioned four absorptions clearly serve as a precondition for the creation of the mind-made body, as well as for the other supernormal feats described subsequently.

Travels on Earth by Levitation

Several discourses also report feats of levitation done on the ground. One example is a discourse in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* which, in agreement with a parallel in the *Madhyama-āgama* and another parallel preserved as an individual translation in Chinese, describes the Buddha paying a visit to his disciple Anuruddha by traversing a considerable distance. The passage employs a standard pericope that depicts the Buddha disappearing from where he was and reappearing at Anuruddha's location, ^[17] just as a strong man might stretch a bent arm or bend a stretched arm.²² According to a stanza found at the end of this *Āṅguttara-nikāya* discourse and again in the *Theragāthā*, on a later occasion Anuruddha recollected this visit and described that the Buddha "approached me with a mind-made body by supernormal power".²³ A parallel to the *Theragāthā* stanza in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*

tual evidence that this mind-created body was not conceived of as merely imagined; it is as real as a normal body but made of a subtler kind of matter."

²¹ This has already been suggested by Franke 1913a: 78 note 3: "dieser geistige Körper wird hier vielleicht als Grundlage für die in den späteren Parteen erörterten übernatürlichen Fähigkeiten angenommen."

²² AN 8.30 at AN IV 229,8 and its parallels MĀ 74 at T I 540c29 and T 46 at T I 835c20; on this pericope description cf. von Simson 1965: 92 (§15.28) and Allon 1997b: 97–105.

²³ Th 901 and AN 8.30 at AN IV 235,21; on the mind-made body cf. also Vism 405,13 (Paṭi II 210,31 just quotes the relevant discourse passage), as well as the discussion in, e.g., Eimer 1976: 55, Johansson 1979/1985: 35–39, Hamilton 1996: 144–164, Radich 2007: 224–287, and Lee 2014.

agrees that the Buddha visited him by way of a "mind-made body".²⁴

Parallel versions to the *Āṅuttara-nikāya* discourse preserved in the *Madhyama-āgama* and in a discourse translated individually into Chinese do not have such an explicit indication.²⁵ According to a parallel in the *Ekottarika-āgama*, Anuruddha instead came to see the Buddha.²⁶ This difference leaves open the possibility that the entire motif of the Buddha flying over to see Anuruddha is not original to this context. Nevertheless, the *Āṅuttara-nikāya* discourse as well as the *Theragāthā* stanza and the counterpart in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* agree with the *Mahāvastu* and the *Vimuttimaggā* in indicating that descriptions of the ability to traverse long distances, just as easily and quickly as bending or stretching one's arm, were envisaged as feats done with the mind-made body.²⁷ [18]

²⁴ Hofinger 1954: 113,20: *yid las byung ba'i sku yis*, "by way of a mind-made body". A quote of this stanza in T 1448 at T XXIV 86c12 reads: 佛身意神通 where I suggest emending the sequence of the characters to become 佛意身神通, "the supernormal ability of the Buddha's mind-made body".

²⁵ The corresponding stanza in MĀ 74 at T I 542a20 only notes in relation to the Buddha that "with body upright and his mind entering concentration, traversing space he immediately arrived", 正身心入定, 乘虛忽來到. The stanzas in T 46 at T I 836c21 do not provide any indication on the Buddha's mode of locomotion; it earlier describes the Buddha's arrival as involving actual flying, T 46 at T I 835c21: 飛. I have already drawn attention to variations in the reports of this episode in Anālayo 2013a: 20 note 34.

²⁶ EĀ 42.6 at T II 754a29.

²⁷ Demiéville 1954: 380 explains that "certain textes précisent qu'il ne s'agit pas d'un déplacement corporel au sens littéral, mais d'un simple 'transport' spirituel." Schlingloff 1985: 333 points out that the commentarial tradition considers feats like touching the moon and the sun to be done while the practitioner remains at the place of his meditation: "all dies vollführt er, so betonen die Kommentatoren, ohne seinen Standort zu verlassen." The assumption that the motif of levitation in early Buddhist sources had as its beginning point meditative experiences of travel with a mental body is also in line with what accord-

Travel on earth done through a mind-made body would presumably only work for a certain type of visit, namely for visits paid to those who are either *devas* or adepts in meditation and thus able to perceive and communicate with the visitor's mind-made body.²⁸ On the assumption that this might reflect an early stage in the conception of such terrestrial modes of long-distance travel, the same idea would then have been applied to other instances, resulting in acts of levitation done with the physical body.²⁹

One example would be the *Mahāpadāna-sutta* and its *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel, according to which the previous Buddha Vipassī levitated from his seat under the Bodhi tree to approach the two who were to become his first disciples.³⁰ These two are a prince and his chaplain, who probably should not be reckoned as adepts in meditation at the time of this visit.³¹ In fact a Sanskrit fragment

ing to Eliade 1956: 4 would be a general pattern regarding levitation in various religious traditions: "c'est donc dans l'expérience extatique de l'ascension que l'on doit chercher la situation existentielle originelle responsable des symboles et des images relatifs au 'vol magique'."

²⁸ Examples are when Mahāmoggallāna flies over to visit Anuruddha, reported in SN 52.1 at SN V 294,10 and SN 52.2 at SN V 296,31, together with their parallels SĀ 535 at T II 139b1, SĀ 536 at T II 139c7 (the reference is to his return, the description of his arrival is abbreviated), and D 4094 *nyu* 13b2 or Q 5595 *thu* 46b6, or when the Buddha levitates in order to pay a visit to Mahāmoggallāna, reported in AN 7.58 at AN IV 85,17 and its parallels MĀ 83 at T I 559c5 and T 47 at T I 837a14.

²⁹ Both understandings can be found side by side in SN 51.22 at SN V 282,18, where the Buddha informs Ānanda that he has travelled to the Brahmā world with his mind-made body as well as with his physical body. No parallel to SN 51.22 is known to me.

³⁰ DN 14 at DN II 40,16 and DĀ 1 at T I 8c26.

³¹ The situation differs in the case of a visit paid by the Buddha Gotama to his chief disciple Sāriputta, where according to AN 2.4.5 at AN I 64,30 he flies over to meet him, a feat not recorded in the parallel MĀ 21 at T I 449b10.

parallel gives the impression that Vipassī rather employed ordinary means of travelling,³² [19] which is definitely the case in another parallel preserved individually in Chinese.³³

The same basic pattern recurs in relation to a visit paid by the Buddha to Soṇa, who is about to disrobe because his meditation practice has not been successful. This detail also makes it fairly probable that he was not a meditative adept able to perceive mind-made bodies. According to the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* and the Dharma-guptaka and Theravāda *Vinayas*, the Buddha traversed the distance just as a strong man might stretch or bend an arm.³⁴ A parallel in the *Ekottarika-āgama* and the Mahāsāṅghika *Vinaya* also report that he travelled through space.³⁵ The Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya* instead relates that the Buddha used ordinary modes of locomotion.³⁶ According to a Sanskrit fragment parallel as well as counterparts in the *Madhyama-āgama*, the *Samyukta-āgama*, and the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, the Buddha had rather told another monk to call Soṇa to his presence.³⁷

With this example my exploration moves from stories found only in discourses to instances that have counterparts in *Vinaya*

³² Fragment S 360 144 V5, Waldschmidt 1953: 31, has preserved: *[dh]im[ūlaṃ ya]thābhiramyam [vih]ṛtya yena [ba]n[dhu]matī rājadh[ā]*. In spite of the incompleteness of the fragment, it seems safe to assume that the passage did not have the pericope description usually employed for miraculous flights, in that it would have continued after *rājadhānī* simply with *tenopajagāma*, which is in fact reconstructed by Waldschmidt 1956: 149 (§10b1).

³³ T 3 at T I 156c18.

³⁴ AN 6.55 at AN III 374,19, T 1428 at T XXII 844b13, and Vin I 182,11.

³⁵ EĀ 23.3 at T II 612a29 and T 1425 at XXII 481c18.

³⁶ In T 1421 at T XXII 146a27 the Buddha comes down from the mountain where he is staying and, after an exchange with Ānanda, approaches Soṇa.

³⁷ Waldschmidt 1968: 775 (which has preserved the description of Śroṇa approaching the Buddha and paying respect), MĀ 123 at T I 612a8, SĀ 254 at T II 62b29, and the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, Gnoli 1978: 142,16.

texts, which tend to feature miraculous feats with more frequency than the early discourses. Another example of this type involves the Buddha's departure after having been unable to settle a quarrel among the monks of Kosambī.³⁸ According to the *Upakkilesa-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*, a discourse in the *Ekottarika-āgama*, as well as the Theravāda *Vinaya*, the Buddha walked away.³⁹ A *Madhyama-āgama* parallel reports that the Buddha flew away, [20] a feat also recorded in the Dharmaguptaka, Mahīśāsaka, and Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinayas*, and in an *Udāna* collection preserved in Chinese.⁴⁰

Variations regarding the Buddha's form of locomotion can also be observed in relation to an episode in *Vinaya* texts concerning a monk who had not come for the *uposatha* observance.⁴¹ In the Dharmaguptaka, Mahīśāsaka, Mūlasarvāstivāda, Sarvāstivāda, and Theravāda *Vinayas* the Buddha flew over to call on him personally,⁴² but in the Mahāsāṅghika *Vinaya* he instead sent a monk to summon him.⁴³

³⁸ I briefly discussed this instance in Anālayo 2015c: 10f.

³⁹ MN 128 at MN III 154,28: "then the Blessed One, having spoken these stanzas while standing, went to the village of Bālakaloṇakāra", *atha kho bhagavā ṭhita-kova imā gāthā bhāsivā yena bālakaloṇakāragāmo tenupasaṅkami*; cf. also EĀ 24.8 at T II 629a13 and Vin I 350,15. For a comparative study of the stanzas spoken by the Buddha cf. Dietz 1998.

⁴⁰ MĀ 72 at T I 535c17: "then the Blessed One, having spoken these stanzas, departed by travelling through the air by means of his supernormal powers", 爾時世尊說此頌已,即以如意足乘虛而去; cf. also the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 882c25, the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 160a9, the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, Dutt 1984b: 186,5 and D 1 ga 129b1 or Q 1030 nge 124b5, and an *Udāna* collection T 212 at T IV 694c26 (with the difference that in this version the Buddha rose up into the air already before speaking stanzas).

⁴¹ This instance has already been noted by Gangopadhyay 1991: 28.

⁴² The Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 818b2, the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 121c29, the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, Dutt 1984d: 83,8, the

An apparent tendency to improve on the Buddha's abilities can even be seen in the comparatively rare instances where discourse parallels agree that an act of levitation with the physical body took place. This holds for the *Dirgha-āgama* and *Madhyama-āgama* parallels to the *Udumbarika(-sīhanāda)-sutta*. Here the Buddha departs, after an unsuccessful attempt to convince some ascetics to accept his teachings, by flying away, carrying one of his lay disciples along with him.⁴⁴ The *Udumbarika(-sīhanāda)-sutta* and another parallel preserved as an individual translation agree that the Buddha flew away,⁴⁵ yet they do not report his carrying his disciple along.⁴⁶ In fact the Pāli version continues by reporting that the disciple returned to town and thus clearly did not accompany the Buddha on his flight.⁴⁷ [21]

Conclusion

A comparative study of reports that the Buddha and his disciples journeyed to celestial realms or traversed considerable distances on earth through the power of levitation gives the impression that at an early stage these would have been envisaged as being done with a mind-made body. Probably as a result of literalism, a tendency that makes itself felt in various ways in the early

Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1435 at T XXIII 158a23, and the Theravāda *Vinaya*, Vin I 105,15.

⁴³ T 1425 at T XXII 447c26.

⁴⁴ DĀ 8 at T I 49b22 and MĀ 104 at T I 595c7.

⁴⁵ T 11 at T I 226b24, which previously reports that the Buddha sent out a fiery radiance from his body. No reference to the fire element is found in the other versions.

⁴⁶ Differences in regard to whether the Buddha during a flight was accompanied by his disciples also appear in the *Mahāparinirvāṇa* narrative of the miraculous crossing of the Gaṅga; cf. Waldschmidt 1944: 60–65.

⁴⁷ DN 25 at DN III 57,21. The addition of *sīhanāda* to the title is not found in the Asian editions.

Buddhist texts and which has led to a range of developments in the Buddhist traditions,⁴⁸ at a relatively early stage this would then have led to the idea that such feats involve acts of levitation done with the physical body.

⁴⁸ The impact of a tendency to literalism has already been noted by Gombrich 1996: 21; for instances that corroborate his observation cf. Anālayo 2008e: 379f, 2010b: 55–71, 2012b: 160–163, 2012i: 19–21, 2014e: 18f, 2015d: 33, 2015f: 11–15, and 2016d.

Pāyāsi-sutta (DN 23) Part 1

Introduction

In the present and the next chapter I translate and study the *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel to the *Pāyāsi-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* and their report of how the monk Kumārakassapa faced a debate with a sceptic by the name of Pāyāsi.¹ In addition to the *Dīrgha-āgama* version,² the *Pāyāsi-sutta* has another two Chinese parallels, which are found in the *Madhyama-āgama* and in an individual translation.³

Besides these four Buddhist discourse versions, another parallel occurs in the *Rājaprasānīya*, the second *Upāṅga* of the Śvetāmbara canon.⁴ Although the Buddhist and Jain traditions share a range of similarities in general,⁵ [2] for them to have parallel versions of a discourse is remarkable.⁶

* Originally published in 2012 under the title "Debate with a Sceptic – The *Dīrgha-āgama* Parallel to the *Pāyāsi-sutta* (1)" in the *Indian International Journal of Buddhist Studies*, 13: 1–26.

¹ DN 23 at DN II 316,1 to 358,3. Another well-known description of a Buddhist monk debating a sceptical attitude towards religious claims is the *Milindapañha*; for a survey of editions and translations of this work cf. Skilling 2010: 14–18.

² DĀ 7 at T I 42b24 to 47a12.

³ MĀ 71 at T I 525a10 to 532b22 and T 45 at T I 831a6 to 835c7.

⁴ Bollée 2002.

⁵ On similarities between the Buddhist and the Jain tradition cf., e.g., Jacobi 1880, Bohn 1921: 25–32, Jain 1926, Bapat 1928, von Glasenapp 1951, Jain 1966 and 1972, Jaini 1974, Tatia 1980, Nakamura 1983, Tatia 1983, Norman 1989/1993, Bronkhorst 1993/2000, Tatia 1993, Chaudhary 1994, Gombrich 1994, Bronkhorst 1999, Balbir 2000, Caillat 2003, Jaini 2003, and Watanabe 2003.

⁶ A comparison of the Buddhist and Jain versions of the present discourse can be found in Leumann 1885: 470–539 and Ruben 1935: 143–151; cf. also Frauwallner 1956/2003b: 192–194.

In what follows, I translate and briefly study the first part of the *Dīrgha-āgama* version. A translation of the remainder of the *Dīrgha-āgama* version, together with a study of the overall significance of the discourse, can be found in the next chapter.

Translation

Discourse to Pāyāsi (first part)⁷

At one time Kumārakassapa,⁸ who was sojourning together with five hundred monks in the country of Kosala, had arrived by stages at the brahmin village of Setavyā.⁹ [3] Then Kumārakassapa stayed in a *siṃsapā* grove north of the village of Setavyā.¹⁰

At that time a brahmin by the name of Pāyāsi was staying in the village of Setavyā.¹¹ This village was rich and delightful, [inhabited] by many people, with abundant timber. King Pase-nadi had granted this village as a special fief to the brahmin Pāyāsi, [42c] as a sacred allotment.

⁷ The translated part of DĀ 7 is found at T I 42b24 to 45a28, which has been translated into English by Ichimura 2015: 245–259. In the notes to my translation, here and in the next chapter, I record only a few significant variations found in comparison with the Pāli parallel, the *Pāyāsi-sutta* (DN 23), the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel (MĀ 71), and the individually translated discourse (T 45), as to attempt a comprehensive survey of the extant variations would go beyond the bounds of what is feasible in the context of these two chapters.

⁸ DĀ 7 at T I 42b25 introduces Kassapa as 童女, which would render *kumārī*. T 45 at T I 831a10 employs the more appropriate expression 童子.

⁹ DĀ 7 at T I 42b26: 斯波醯 (or 斯婆醯), identified by Akanuma 1930/1994: 612 as a rendering of Setavyā.

¹⁰ On the pericope description of a *siṃsapā* grove located to the north of a village cf. above p. 180 note 4.

¹¹ DĀ 7 at T I 42b28: 弊宿 (or 蔽宿), identified by Akanuma 1930/1994: 501 as a rendering of Pāyāsi.

The brahmin Pāyāsi kept holding a peculiar view, telling people that: "There is no other world, there is no rebirth, and there is no result of good and evil."¹²

At that time, the people from the village of Setavyā heard that Kumārakassapa, together with five hundred monks, had by stages come through the country of Kosala and arrived at this *śimsapā* grove. They said among themselves:

"This Kumārakassapa has a great reputation for having become an arahant, being a senior elder who is widely learned, intelligent, and wise, eloquent and capable at replying, skilful at discussions. To get to see him now, will that not be good?" Then, day after day, the people of the village went in regular order to visit Kassapa.

At that time, Pāyāsi was upstairs in his palace. He saw the village people following each other in groups without knowing where they were going.¹³ He asked the attendant who was holding his umbrella: "Why do those people follow each other in groups?" [4]

¹² The view held by Pāyāsi in DN 23 at DN II 316,12 denies another world, the existence of spontaneously arisen beings (*sattā opapātikā*), and the results of good and bad deeds. A denial of the good and bad deeds is not mentioned in the other two versions, according to which Pāyāsi only rejects the existence of another world and of living beings that are reborn or spontaneously arisen; cf. MĀ 71 at T I 525b16: 無有後世, 無眾生生 and T 45 at T I 831b24: 無有來世, 復無有人亦無化生.

¹³ The counterpart to the notion of "following each other in groups" in DN 23 at DN II 317,12 reads *saṃghā saṃghī gaṇībhūtā* (B^e, C^e, and S^e read *saṅgha-saṅghī*), which Rhys Davids 1910: 350 note 1 qualifies as "somewhat ambiguous". According to MĀ 71 at T I 525a24, the inhabitants of Setavyā were walking in groups, brahmins with brahmins, householders with householders, 梵志, 居士, 各與等類相隨而行, a formulation that helps to make sense of the succinct indications in the other versions.

The attendant replied: "I heard that Kumārakassapa, at the head of five hundred monks, has been travelling in the country of Kosala and has arrived at the *śimsapā* grove. I further heard that this man has a great reputation for having become an arahant, a senior elder who is widely learned, intelligent, and wise, eloquent and capable at replying, skilful at discussions. Those people, who follow each other in groups, wish to approach Kassapa and meet with him together."

Then the brahmin Pāyāsi told the attendant: "You quickly go and tell those people: 'Just wait, we shall all go together to approach and meet him. Why is that? That person is a fool, he deceives [people in] the world by saying that there is another world, saying that there is rebirth, and saying that there is a result of good and evil. Yet, in reality there is no other world, there is no rebirth, and there is no result of good and evil.'"

Then, having received these instructions, the messenger went to tell those people from the village of Setavyā: "The brahmin [Pāyāsi] says: 'Just wait, we shall all approach and meet him together.'"

The village people replied: "It is well, it is well, if he can come, we shall all go together."

The messenger returned and said: "Those people have stopped; you can go with those who are going."

Then the brahmin went downstairs from his palace, told his attendant to harness the chariot and, surrounded by the village people, approached the *śimsapā* grove. On arriving, he descended from the chariot and approached Kassapa on foot, exchanged friendly greetings, and sat to one side.

Of the village people – the brahmins and the householders – some worshipped Kassapa and then sat down, some exchanged friendly greetings and sat down, some [introduced themselves] by announcing their names and sat down, some

held their hands [in a gesture of respect] and sat down, and some sat down silently.¹⁴

Then the brahmin Pāyāsi said to Kumārakassapa: "Now I would like to ask you some questions. Would you be free and willing to listen to them?"^[5]

Kassapa replied: "Ask according to your [wish], having heard it I shall know [what you are asking about]."^[43a]

The brahmin said: "Now I hold this doctrine: 'There is no other world, there is also no rebirth, and there is no result of good and evil.' What is your doctrine?"

Kassapa replied: "I shall now ask you, answer according to your understanding. Now the sun and the moon above us, are they of this world or of another world? Are they human or celestial?"

The brahmin replied: "The sun and the moon are of another world, not of this world. They are celestial, they are not human."

Kassapa replied: "From this you can understand that there certainly is another world, there is also rebirth, and there is a result of good and evil."

The brahmin said: "Although you say there is another world, there is rebirth, and there is a result of good and evil, according to my understanding all these do not exist."¹⁵

¹⁴ For a discussion of the pericope description of behavioural variations and the significance of sitting down silently cf. Anālayo 2011b: 452f.

¹⁵ DĀ 7 at T I 43a7: 汝雖云有他世, 有更生及善惡報, 如我意者, 皆悉無有, which Ichimura 2015: 247 translates as "although you assert that there is another world, rebirth, and reward and retribution of good and bad, my reply to your previous question, that the sun and moon belong to the other world, leads to my theory that these three (i.e., afterlife, rebirth, and reward or retribution for good and bad) are impossible." This exemplifies a general tendency by Ichimura to add in his translations material that is not found in the Chinese original, such as the part beginning with "my reply to your previous question". The same is also evident to a lesser extent in the next statement by the brahmin, DĀ 7 at T I 43a10:

Kassapa asked: "Is there a reason enabling you to know that there is no other world, there is no rebirth, and there is no result of good and evil?"

The brahmin replied: "There is such a reason."

Kassapa asked: "What is the reason for proclaiming that there is no other world?"

The brahmin said: "Kassapa, I had a relative and friend who had contracted an illness and become very sick. I approached him and said: 'Recluses and brahmins each keep holding a peculiar view, saying that whoever kills living beings, steals, commits sexual misconduct, has a divisive tongue, says what is evil, speaks falsehood,¹⁶ gossips, is covetous, has aversion,¹⁷ and has wrong view, with the breaking up of the body at death these will all go to hell. [6]

"From the outset I did not believe this. The reason is that so far I never saw the dead come back and tell me that they reached such a place. If people were to come and tell me that they have reached such a place, I would certainly accept and believe it.

"Now you, who are my relative, are in possession of these ten evils. If it is as those recluses say, on passing away you will certainly enter the great hell. Now I have full confidence in you, from you I can certainly accept it. If on examination

有緣, which Ichimura 2015: 247 translates as "I have some reason for ascertaining my theory", where the "ascertaining my theory" could have been marked in some way so as to signal that it is not found in the Chinese text.

¹⁶ [15] The sequence of the four verbal deeds is unexpected, as the standard listings in other discourses usually begin with falsehood.

¹⁷ [16] DĀ 7 at T I 43a14: 嫉妬, which according to Hirakawa 1997: 367 can, besides its more common sense of *īrṣyā* or *mātsarya*, also render *vidveṣa*. Judging from the standard listings of the ten unwholesome *karmapatha*, this would be more appropriate in the present context.

you find that there really is a hell, you should come back to tell me and let me know, afterwards I shall believe it.'

"Kassapa, he has passed away but up to now has not come. He is my relative; he would not deceive me and, [in spite of] having promised, just not come. Hence there certainly is no other world."

Kassapa explained: "Wise ones understand with the help of a simile, so I will now explain it to you so that you understand. It is just like, for example, a robber, who is constantly intent on wickedness and deceit, who violates the law of the king. He has been caught by the inspectors and is led to the king with the words:¹⁸ 'This man is a thief, may your majesty punish him.'

"The king tells his attendants: 'Take that man, bind him, parade him through the streets and alleys and then take him out of town and hand him over to the executioner.' Then, when the attendants are leading that thief to the executioner, that thief says with gentle words to his watchmen: 'Could you let me go, so that I can see my relatives and neighbours and say farewell to them? After that I will come back.' How is it brahmin, would the watchmen be willing to let him go?"

The brahmin replied: ^[43b] "No, they would not do it."

Kassapa said further: "These are fellow human beings, all are in this present world, yet they will not let him go. Let alone your relative [being allowed to go] who, being fully in possession of the ten evils, at the death of the body, with the end of life, certainly went to hell. The spirits of hell have no be-

¹⁸ DĀ 7 at T I 43a24: 伺察所得, 將詣王所白言. Here and on subsequent occasions, Ichimura 2015: 248 translates this expression as "when such a person is caught redhanded, with clear evidence, he is brought before the king and charged", where the reference to being caught "redhanded, with clear evidence" appears to be a gloss not marked as such.

nevolence, they are not of the same species [as humans], the world of the dead and of the living are different. If [your relative] speaks with gentle words to those hell spirits, beseeching them: 'You set me free temporarily so that I can return to the world, see my relatives and say farewell to them. [7] After that I will come back.' Would he get to be set free?"

The brahmin replied: "No, he would not."¹⁹

Kassapa said further: "With the help of this analogy, you can fully understand it by yourself. Why keep confusing yourself by giving rise to wrong view?"²⁰

The brahmin said: "Although you give this explanation, saying that there is another world, I still say that there is none."

Kassapa said again: "Is there still another reason enabling you to know that there is no other world?"

The brahmin explained: "There is still another reason for me to know that there is no other world."

Kassapa asked: "What is the reason for you to know that?"

The brahmin replied: "Kassapa, I had a relative who had contracted an illness and become seriously sick. I approached him and said: 'Recluses and brahmins each keep holding a peculiar view, saying that there is another world, saying that

¹⁹ [17] In DN 23 at DN II 322,12 Pāyāsi is not made to acknowledge that his relatives would not stand a chance of coming back, as instead of asking such a question Kassapa directly presses his point that there is another world (etc.). MĀ 71 at T I 526a17 and T 45 at T I 832a14 proceed similarly to DĀ 7 in this respect, but then continue with Kumārakassapa explaining to Pāyāsi how a recluse who develops the divine eye is able to know about rebirth (etc.), an argument found in DN 23 at DN II 329,15 at the conclusion of a subsequent exchange (after the parable of the blind man). This argument has been raised in T 45 at T I 831c4 already at the outset, right after Kassapa had mentioned the existence of the sun and the moon.

²⁰ [18] In the corresponding sections in the parallel versions, Kumārakassapa does not explicitly indicate that Pāyāsi is confused or that his view is wrong.

whoever does not kill, does not steal, does not engage in sexual misconduct, does not deceive, does not have a divisive tongue, does not say what is evil, does not speak falsehood, does not gossip, is not covetous, has no aversion, and does not have wrong view, with the breaking up of the body at death these will all be reborn in the higher heavens.

"From the outset I did not believe this. The reason is that so far I never saw the dead come back and tell me that they reached such a place. If people were to come and tell me that they have reached such a rebirth, I would certainly believe it. [8]

"Now you, who are my relative, are in possession of the ten wholesome [deeds]. If it is as those recluses say, at the end of life you will certainly be reborn in the higher heavens. Now I have full confidence in you, from you I can certainly accept it. If on examination you find that there really is such a heavenly reward, you should certainly come back to tell me and let me know, afterwards I shall believe it.'

"Kassapa, he has passed away but up to now has not come. He is my relative; he would not deceive me and, [in spite of] having promised, just not come. Hence there certainly is no other world."

Kassapa said: "Wise ones understand with the help of a simile, so I will now again deliver a simile to you. It is just like, for example, a man who has fallen into a deep cesspit, with his body submerged in it up to the head. The king tells his attendants: 'Take this man out, take a bamboo spatula and scrape his body three times, bathe him with [bathing] powder and clean ashes. Having properly washed him, use fragrant liquid to bathe his body, apply fine powder of various fragrances to his body, and order the master barber to clean his beard and hair.'

"On being told, the attendants [of the king] respectfully lead [the man] to be washed like this three times, then they bathe him with fragrant liquid and apply fragrant powder, dress him in

reputable clothes, adorn his body, offer him hundreds of sweet delicacies to fill his mouth as he likes, and lead him to a palace where he can enjoy himself with the five cords of sense pleasures. Would that man be willing to return and enter the cesspit again?"

[The brahmin] replied: ^[43c] "He would not be willing. That place is evil and stinky, how could he return and enter it?"

Kassapa said: "For *devas* it is also like that, this Jambudīpa is stinky, dirty, and impure.²¹ For those *devas* dwelling up high, they smell the stench of humans from afar, up to a hundred leagues' distance, [like] a very dirty cesspit. Brahmin, your relative and friend, who was in possession of the ten wholesome [deeds], was certainly reborn in heaven, enjoying himself with the five cords of sense pleasures, thoroughly enjoying himself. Would he be willing to come back again to this cesspit[-like] Jambudīpa?" ^[9]

[The brahmin] replied: "No, he would not."

Kassapa said further: "With the help of this analogy, you can fully understand it by yourself. Why keep confusing yourself by giving rise to wrong view?"

The brahmin said: "Although you give this explanation, saying that there is another world, I still say that there is none."

Kassapa said again: "Is there still another reason enabling you to know that there is no other world?"

The brahmin explained: "There is still another reason for me to know that there is no other world."

Kassapa asked: "What is the reason for you to know that?"

The brahmin replied: "Kassapa, I had a relative who had contracted an illness and become seriously sick.²² I approached

²¹ [19] On the term Jambudvīpa cf. Wujastyk 2004.

²² [20] This argument seems to have been lost in T 45, which at T I 832b16 continues from the previous topic directly with Kassapa's argument about the length of

him and said: 'Recluses and brahmins each keep holding a peculiar view, saying that there is another world, saying that who does not kill, does not steal, does not engage in sexual misconduct, does not deceive, does not drink liquor, with the breaking up of the body at death these will all be reborn in the Heaven of the Thirty-three.²³

"I also do not believe this. The reason is that so far I never saw the dead come back and tell me that they reached such a place. If people were to come and tell me that they have reached such a place, I will certainly believe it.

"Now you, who are my relative, are in possession of these five moral observances. With the breaking up of the body at death you should certainly be reborn in the higher Heaven of the Thirty-three. Now I have full confidence in you, from you I can certainly accept it. If on examination you find that there really is such a fortunate heaven, ^[10] you should come back to tell me and let me know, afterwards I shall believe it."²⁴

"Kassapa, he has passed away but up to now has not come. He is my relative; he would not deceive me and, [in spite of] having promised, just not come. Hence there certainly is no other world."

Kassapa replied: "What here is a hundred years equals one day and night up in the Heaven of the Thirty-three. Thirty days like this make one month, twelve months make a year like this, and the life span of those *devas* is a thousand years. How is it, brahmin? The relative of yours, who was in possession of the

life in heaven (introduced with 復次, corresponding to *puna ca param*), without this exposition being prompted by a corresponding argument by Pāyāsi.

²³ Adopting a correction in the CBETA edition of 懷 to read 壞.

²⁴ ^[21] In MĀ 71 at T I 527a3 Pāyāsi further tells his relatives that he will give them wealth if they come back, forestalling that they might lack an incentive to come back and inform him.

five moral observances, at the breaking up of the body, at death, was certainly reborn up in the Heaven of the Thirty-three. Being reborn as a *deva*, he thought: 'I have just been reborn here. I shall for two or three days enjoy myself.' After that he comes down to tell you. Would you get to see him?"

[The brahmin] replied: "No, I would not. I would already have passed away, how could I meet and see him?" The brahmin said [further]: "I do not believe you. Who has come and told you that the *devas* of the Thirty-three have a lifespan like that?"

Kassapa said: "Wise ones understand with the help of a simile, so I will now deliver another simile to you. It is just like, for example, a man who has been blind since birth, ^[44a] who does not distinguish the five colours of blue, yellow, red, and white,²⁵ [does not distinguish] what is gross or subtle, what is long or short, ^[11] and who also has not seen the sun, the moon, the constellation of the stars,²⁶ hills and valleys. Another person asks him: 'Are blue, yellow, red, and white the five colours?' The blind man answers: 'There are no five colours' ... *in the*

²⁵ ^[22] Even though DĀ 7 speaks of five colours, it only lists four (Ichimura 2015: 252 adds "black", which is not found in the Chinese original). The listings of colours in the parallel versions show some variations: MĀ 71 at T I 527a24 mentions only two colours, black and white. T 45 at T I 832b28 lists four colours: blue, yellow, red, and white. DN 23 at DN II 328,4 also lists four colours, but without mentioning white: blue, yellow, red, and crimson. Elsewhere in the Pāli discourses the same listing of four colours recurs as part of the simile of a blind man in MN 75 at MN I 509,15 and MN 99 at MN II 201,14, and again in relation to dying a cloth in MN 7 at MN I 36,17. In addition to these four, Vin I 25,31 lists the colour of crystal (*phalika*). A description of perception in MN 43 at MN I 293,16 mentions the ability to perceive blue, yellow, red, and white (*odāta*). The same four recur in listings of the spheres of transcendence, *abhibhāyatanas*, and in listings of *kaṣiṇas*, cf., e.g., MN 77 at MN II 13,28 and MN II 14,33.

²⁶ ^[23] Adopting the variant 像 instead of 象.

same way for ... what is gross or subtle, what is long or short, the sun, the moon, the constellation of the stars, hills and valleys – of all of these, he says that they do not exist. How is it, brahmin? Is the reply given by the blind man correct?"

[The brahmin] replied: "No, it is not. The reason is that in the world there are the five colours of blue, yellow, red, and white; there is what is gross or subtle, what is long or short; there are the sun, the moon, the constellation of the stars; there are hills and valleys, even though he says they do not exist."

[Kassapa said]: "Brahmin, you are also like that [blind man], the lifespan of the *devas* of the Thirty-three really exists, it is not a vain [assertion]. Because you do not see it yourself, you say that it does not exist."

The brahmin said: "Although you say that this exists, I still do not believe it."²⁷

Kassapa said again: "Is there yet another reason that makes you know that this does not exist?"

[The brahmin] replied: "Kassapa, in the village that is my fief a person committed thievery.²⁸ The inspectors caught him, led him to me, and told me: 'This man is a thief, may you punish him.' I replied: 'Take that man, bind him and put him into a big cauldron, cover it with soft leather and with a thick layer of mud, so that [the covering] is firm and thick, let there be no leak. Dispatch people to surround [the cauldron] and boil it over fire.'^[12]

²⁷ [24] In MĀ 71 at T I 527b9 and T 45 at T I 832c6 Pāyāsi remonstrates with Kassapa for being compared to a blind man.

²⁸ [25] The next topic taken up in DN 23 at DN II 330,7 is why well-behaved recluses and brahmins do not commit suicide. A similar argument is made in MĀ 71 at T I 527b11 in terms of Pāyāsi himself committing suicide, i.e., if he knew that on doing good he would definitely go to heaven, he would now do good and then kill himself. In T 45 at T I 832c8 and 832c25 Pāyāsi makes a comparable argument twice.

"Then I wanted to observe and come to know whether that spirit comes out at some place. Leading my retinue we surrounded the cauldron and watched, but none of us saw that spirit come or go at any place. We again opened the cauldron to look and did not see the spirit coming or going at any place. For this reason I know that there is no other world."

Kassapa said: "I now ask you, you can reply according to your understanding. Brahmin, at the time when you lie down to sleep in your palace,²⁹ do you then in your dream see mountains and forests, rivers, pleasure gardens, ponds and pools, countries and cities, streets and alleys?"

[The brahmin] replied: "I have seen these in my dream."

[Kassapa] asked: "Brahmin, at the time when you were dreaming, did the family dependants that stay in your house guard you?"

[The brahmin] replied: "They guarded me."

[Kassapa] asked: "Brahmin, did those family dependants see your consciousness go out or come in?"³⁰

[The brahmin] replied: "They did not see it."

Kassapa said: "Now, while you were still alive, the consciousness went in and out and yet could not be seen, let alone [be seen] when one has passed away. You cannot observe with [normal] eyes such matters [even] in living beings right in front of you.

"Brahmin, there are monks who get rid of and discard sloth-and-torpor during the first and last watch of the night,³¹ engag-

²⁹ [26] In T 45 at T I 833c6 the person asleep is not Pāyāsi himself, but just a man in general. The argument that develops out of this also differs, as the point made by Kassapa is that what the man has seen in his dreams is unreal.

³⁰ [27] DĀ 7 at T I 44a22 refers to the consciousness that goes out or comes in as 識神, on which cf. Zacchetti 2010b: 173 note 87 and Radich 2016.

³¹ [28] Adopting the variant 損 instead of 捐.

ing in mindfulness of the factors pertaining to the path with diligence, without remiss, who through the power of concentration develop the pure divine eye.³² Through the power of the divine eye they observe how living beings on passing away here are reborn there, ^[13] and from there are reborn here, with long or short lifespan, beautiful or ugly complexion, receiving results according to their actions in good and evil destinies. They completely know and see all that.

"With the turbid and polluted eye of the flesh you are really unable to see the destiny of living beings and then you say that it does not exist. ^[44b] Brahmin, from this you can understand that there certainly is another world."

The brahmin said: "Although you give this explanation, saying that there is another world, according to my view, there still is none."

Kassapa said again: "Is there yet another reason for you to know that there is no other world?"

The brahmin said: "There is!"

Kassapa said: "What is the reason for you to know that?"

The brahmin replied: "In the village that is my fief a person committed thievery. The inspectors caught him, led him to me, and told me: 'This man is a thief, may you punish him.' I told my attendants to take and bind that man, take off his skin while he is alive and seek the consciousness, yet we all did not see it. I again told my attendants to cut off the meat and seek the consciousness, yet we still did not see it. I again told my attendants to sever the tendons and veins and seek the consciousness between the bones, yet we still did not see it. I again told

³² [29] The corresponding section in DN 23 at DN II 334,2 does not refer to the development of the divine eye. The divine eye is, however, found in MĀ 71 at T I 528c15 and T 45 at T I 833c12, where the same point has already been made earlier; cf. above p. 302 note 19.

my attendants to break the bones and extract the marrow to seek the consciousness among the marrow, yet we still did not see it. Kassapa, for this reason I know that there is no other world."

Kassapa said again: "Wise ones understand with the help of a simile, so I will now deliver another simile to you. In the distant past, a long time ago, a country had become ruined, it had been deserted and had not recovered. Then five hundred merchants were passing through that territory in their chariots.

"There was a brahmin fire worshipper who was staying in a forest. Then all the merchants, who had stayed overnight, left at dawn. ^[14] Then the fire-worshipping brahmin thought: 'There, in this forest, merchants stayed overnight and now they have left. Perhaps they forgot something, let me go and have a look.'

"He went there to look all over the place and saw nothing except for a small child of just one year old, sitting there alone.³³ The brahmin further thought: 'Can I now bear to see this small child die in front of me? I would rather lead this small child to where I stay and nourish it!' He took the small child in his arms, went towards the place where he was staying and brought it up. The child in turn grew up until it was over ten years old.

"Then for some minor reason the brahmin wished to go among people. He told the child: 'For some minor reason I wish to leave temporarily. You should guard this fire well, take care that it does not go out. If the fire goes out, you should use fire-sticks and wood to get the fire burning.' Having thoroughly instructed him, he went out of the forest to travel.

"After the brahmin had left, the small child desired to play and did not keep looking after the fire. The fire in turn went

³³ [30] MĀ 71 at T I 529a4 explains that the merchants had set out in haste and therefore forgotten the small child.

out. The small child came back from playing and saw that the fire had gone out. He felt remorseful and said: 'I have done what I should not have done. When my father left, he thoroughly instructed me to guard this fire, taking care that it does not go out. My desire to play resulted in the fire going out. [44c] Now what should I do?'

"Then the small child blew the ashes, trying to get fire, but could not get any.³⁴ He took an axe in turn and chopped up the fire wood, trying to get fire, but still could not get it. He further chopped the fire wood and put it into a mortar, pounding it with a pestle, trying to get fire, but still could not get it.

"At that time, the brahmin came back from having been among people. Arriving in the forest, he asked the small child: 'Earlier I told you to guard the fire. Did the fire not go out?'

"The small child replied: 'I went out to play without paying attention or looking after it in time, and now the fire has already gone out.' [15]

"[The brahmin] asked the small child again: 'With what means did you try to get fire?'

"The small child explained: 'As fire comes out of wood, I took an axe and chopped up the fire wood, trying to get fire, but did not get fire. I further chopped it into pieces and put them into a mortar, pounding it with a pestle, trying to get fire, but still could not get it.'

"Then the brahmin took the fire-sticks and wood to make fire appear.³⁵ He added more fire wood until it was burning. He told the small child: 'That is the proper method, like this, if

³⁴ [31] The parallel versions do not mention any blowing on the ashes, which would show at least some degree of familiarity with making a fire.

³⁵ [32] DN 23 at DN II 341,26 and MĀ 71 at T I 529a27 report a reflection by the brahmin that the child is foolish to have acted like this, something which in T 45 at T II 834a20 he even tells the child.

one wishes to get fire. One should not break up the fire wood or pound it with a pestle, trying to get it.³⁶

"Brahmin, like this you are also without the [proper] means when you search for the consciousness by skinning a dead person. You cannot observe with [normal] eyes such matters [even] in living beings right in front of you.

"Brahmin, there are monks who get rid of and discard sloth-and-torpor during the first and last watches of the night, engaging in mindfulness of the factors pertaining to the path with diligence, without remiss, who through the power of concentration develop the pure divine eye. Through the power of the divine eye they observe how living beings on passing away here are reborn there, and from there are reborn here, with long or short lifespan, beautiful or ugly complexion, receiving results according to their actions in good and evil destinies. They completely know and see all that.

"With the turbid and polluted eye of the flesh you are unable really to see the destiny of living beings, and then say what does not exist. Brahmin, from this you can understand that there certainly is another world."

The brahmin said: "Although you give this explanation, saying that there is another world, according to my view, there still is none."

Kassapa said again: "Is there yet another reason for you to know that there is no other world?"^[16]

The brahmin explained: "There is!"

Kassapa asked: "What is the reason for you to know that?"

The brahmin said: "In the village that is my fief a person committed thievery. The inspectors caught him, led him to me, and told me: 'This man is a thief, may you punish him.' I told

³⁶ [33] Adopting the variant 薪 instead of 析.

my attendants: 'Take that man and weigh him.' My attendants took him while he was alive and weighed him. Then I told the attendants: 'You take this man and slowly kill him without damaging his skin or flesh.' They followed my instruction and killed him without any damage.³⁷ I again told my attendants: 'Again weigh him.' He was heavier than before.

"Kassapa, we weighed that man when he was alive, when his consciousness was still there, his complexion was pleasing, [45a] he was still able to speak and his body was light. When he was dead we weighed him again, when his consciousness had become extinct, he had lost his complexion, was unable to speak, and his body had become heavy. For this reason I know that there is no other world."

Kassapa said to the brahmin: "I now ask you, reply to me according to your understanding. When a man weighs iron, first having weighed it when it is cold and then weighing it later again when it is hot – when is it brighter, more supple, and light; when is it without brightness, hard, and heavy?"

The brahmin said: "When the iron is hot it has colour, is supple, and light, when the iron is cold it has no colour, is hard, and heavy."

Kassapa said: "People are just like that, when they are alive they have complexion, are supple, and light, when they are dead they have no complexion, are stiff, and heavy. From this you can understand that there certainly is another world."

The brahmin said: "Although you give this explanation, saying that there is another world, according to my view, there certainly is none."

Kassapa said: "Is there yet another reason for you to know that there is no other world?" [17]

³⁷ [34] In DN 23 at DN II 334,19 and MĀ 71 at T I 528b2 they strangle him.

[The brahmin explained: "There is!"]

Kassapa asked: "What is the reason for you to know that?"

The brahmin replied: "I had a relative who had contracted an illness and become seriously sick.³⁸ Then I approached him and told [my assistants to help the sick relative change sides]: 'Take this sick man and put him on his right side.' [The sick person] bent and stretched, looked around and spoke, as always. Then I told them to put him on his left side. Again and again we turned him round. He bent and stretched, looked around and spoke, as usual.

"When he had in turn died, I again told my people to turn him around, put him on his left and right side, again and again carefully observing him. He no longer bent and stretched, or looked around, or spoke. For this reason I know that there is no other world."

Kassapa said again: "Wise ones understand with the help of a simile, so I will now explain it to you. In the past there was a country where people had never heard the sound of a conch. Then a man who was skilled at blowing a conch came to that country. He entered a village, took the conch, and blew it three times. Then he placed it on the ground.

"Then the village people, men and women, heard the sound and were startled. They all came close and asked: 'What sound is this, so lovely and clear like this?' That man pointed with his fingers at the conch and said: 'This thing makes the sound.' Then the village people touched the conch with their hands and said:

³⁸ [35] In the corresponding argument in DN 23 at DN II 336,7, the one who is put from one side to the other (etc.) is a thief who is half dead due to the punishment inflicted on him. In MĀ 71 at T I 527c25 and in T 45 at T I 833a2 Pāyāsi just describes relatives who earlier spoke with him, but no longer do that after having passed away.

'You, make a sound, you, make a sound!'³⁹ The conch did not make any sound.

"The owner took the conch, blew it three times and placed it on the ground. The village people said: 'Earlier, the beautiful sound was not due to the power of the conch. It is by putting one's hand and mouth and by blowing air that afterwards it makes a sound.'^[18]

"Human beings are like that. When the life faculty and consciousness are there, they breathe in and out, are able to bend and stretch, to look around and speak. When the life faculty and consciousness are no longer there, they do not breathe in and out, do not bend and stretch, do not look around or speak."

He further told the brahmin: "You should now give up this evil and wrong view, let it not for a long time increase suffering and vexation for yourself."

(To be continued in the next chapter).

Study

The basic pattern of arguments and counterarguments in the above translated *Dīrgha-āgama* discourse and its parallels proceeds similarly, with some variations in sequence (a natural feature of orally transmitted material).⁴⁰ In what follows, I survey the progression of the debate up to the present point, in order to appreciate its overall dynamics. I add numbers to the different arguments in preparation for a survey of the whole discussion in the next chapter.⁴¹

³⁹ [36] In the parallels they take stronger action, such as hitting the conch in various ways, DN 23 at DN II 337,25, or kicking it with their feet, MĀ 71 at T I 528a9, in order to get sound. In T 45 at T I 833a13 they threaten to smash the conch to get it make sound.

⁴⁰ [37] Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2011b: 874–876.

⁴¹ Cf. below p. 336.

1) The debate begins with Pāyāsi's basic claim that there is no other world (etc.), presented without further argument in order to see how Kassapa will respond to this proposition. Kassapa reacts by pointing out that the sun and the moon clearly do exist. That is to say, he immediately turns to something evidently visible as a proof that there are things beyond this world.

By in this way presenting Pāyāsi with an argument based on evidence of an empirical type, Kassapa puts himself at the level of his visitor and replies in a way that someone sceptical of religious claims cannot easily dismiss and thus has to take seriously.

Needless to say, Pāyāsi would have been well aware of the existence of the sun and the moon. The point of bringing these up in the present context is thus not a logical proof, as it does not follow from the existence of the sun and the moon that there is rebirth and a result of good and evil. Instead, the reference to the sun and the moon as a self-evident instance of the existence of "another world" shows Kassapa's debating skill in quickly devising an argument that his opponent cannot easily dismiss. [19]

2) Being in this way pressed for some evidence that supports his position, Pāyāsi comes out with the story of someone who did evil but never came back to tell him about their rebirth in hell. Kassapa quickly dismisses Pāyāsi's argument with the example of a culprit on his way to execution who will not get respite to visit and greet others.

3) Pāyāsi right away turns to what appears to be an opportunity afforded by the reply given by Kassapa, coming out with another example for which Kassapa's argument will not work: someone reborn in heaven. In such a case Kassapa will no longer be able to argue that, like a culprit led to execution, such a person will be prevented by some heavenly wardens from coming to visit Pāyāsi.

Kassapa meets this challenge by changing track and delivering another argument, describing how someone who has been rescued

from a cesspit and thoroughly cleaned will have no wish to return to that cesspit. Hence it is quite understandable that those heavenly beings did not wish to come back to the filthy and inferior earth in order to deliver their message to Pāyāsi.

4) Pāyāsi is not willing to let the opportunity he has seen pass without another try and thus keeps pressing the same issue with a slightly different example based on the same principle of heavenly rebirth, this time in terms of rebirth in the Heaven of the Thirty-three as the recompense for keeping the moral precepts. The point here could be that by highlighting the keeping of the precepts of the one who passed away it becomes a little less credible that he would not keep his promise just because coming to earth is for him like approaching a cesspit.

Kassapa meets this variation with the argument that time in heaven is different from time on earth. This reply invalidates the idea that the person who passed away either should already have come or else must have broken his promise, as by the time he keeps his promise Pāyāsi would no longer be around. By highlighting the relativity of the perception of time Kassapa seems to hint at the problem of drawing definite conclusions based on one's own limited perceptual appraisal of a situation, the very reason that apparently led Pāyāsi to upholding his view. [20]

5) Pāyāsi right away notices that Kassapa has switched from using similes to making affirmations about the nature of heavenly existence. He therefore immediately quips back by pointing out that Kassapa's reply is not based on verifiable information, questioning the sources on which Kassapa bases his knowledge of the conditions in the Heaven of the Thirty-three. Kassapa is not short of a reply, illustrating with the simile of a blind man the fact that not having direct experience of something need not mean that this does not exist.

At this point a difference in sequence occurs between the parallel versions. The *Dīrgha-āgama* discourse does not continue

with an argument by Pāyāsi, found in the other versions, that those who do good deeds might as well kill themselves to get the good fruits that are to be expected of such conduct. The same argument is raised only in a later part of the *Dīrgha-āgama* version, translated in the next chapter.

In the other versions, Kassapa replies to this challenge with the simile of a pregnant woman who cuts up her belly to see if the child she has is male and will become the heir to the family property. As a result of her foolish action, she and the foetus pass away. With this parable Kassapa drives home the fact that the maturation of fruits is something best left to time, instead of being something one can forcefully try to interfere with.

6) The next arguments made by Pāyāsi are related to various punishments inflicted on a thief. The description of boiling a thief in a tightly closed cauldron without being able to see the consciousness emerging finds its match in Kassapa's description of the mind's journeys during a dream, which are also not externally visible.⁴²

7) In reply to Kassapa's illustration of the inability to see the mind travelling, in the *Dīrgha-āgama* version Pāyāsi next comes out with a closely related example, only that now the body of the culprit is cut to pieces. Kassapa replies with a longer story about a child that foolishly tries to make a fire by cutting the firewood to pieces.

The *Dīrgha-nikāya* version adopts a slightly different sequence in its series of arguments. In reply to Kassapa's reference to the theme of visibility, [21] Pāyāsi comes back at him by taking up the example of an executed criminal who is weighed. He thereby tackles the same issue in a way that does not require the consciousness to be visible. This is the next argument raised in the *Dīrgha-āgama* discourse.

⁴² [38] MĀ 71 and T 45 do not have this as the first in their series of illustrations related to a thief, but only as their second.

8) Pāyāsi describes the difference between a living person and a corpse in terms of their bodily condition and weight. The point behind this argument seems to be that, since Kassapa denies the possibility that the consciousness to be reborn can be seen, there should at least be some other evidence for it, such as weight. That is, if something was there during life and has left the body at death, why is the body heavier now than before?

Kassapa again shows himself master of the situation, this time by coming up with a scientific comparison, namely the difference in weight between heated iron and cold iron.

9) The next argument raised by Pāyāsi compares the reactions of a living person to the condition of a corpse. The parallel versions show some differences in their presentation of this case.⁴³ Judging from the Pāli version, the point of Pāyāsi's argument might be that the corpse is no longer able to act even though no soul has been seen departing from it.⁴⁴ Kassapa in reply compares Pāyāsi's condition to that of people who have never heard a conch being blown and therefore search for the sound in a foolish manner.

The overall dynamic of the exchange up to this point gives the impression that Kassapa is slowly gaining the upper hand, as his similes become more elaborate and he is confident enough to challenge Pāyāsi directly for being a fool. This impression finds confirmation in what follows, as from now on Pāyāsi simply refuses to accept Kassapa's presentation, but is no longer able to come up with counterarguments. [22]

Already with the part translated above it becomes clear that the present discourse portrays a rather entertaining debate in which the two opponents use all their skill, eloquence, and fantasy in order

⁴³ [39] Cf. above p. 314 note 38.

⁴⁴ [40] DN 23 at DN II 336,9 makes the additional specification that the moving around of the person in various ways is done so as to see his soul emerging, *appeva nām' assa jīvaṃ nikkhamantaṃ passeyyāma ti*.

to trump the other. The appeal of the present description of how a sceptic is thoroughly defeated in debate would account for its popularity in the Buddhist as well as the Jain traditions.

Pāyāsi-sutta (DN 23) Part 2

Introduction

This chapter continues the theme broached in the previous chapter, in which I translated and studied the first part of the *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel to the *Pāyāsi-sutta* and its report of a debate between the sceptic Pāyāsi and the Buddhist monk Kumārakassapa. In what follows I summarize the salient points of the first part, before moving on to a translation of the second part.

The doctrine which Pāyāsi is trying to argue in front of Kumārakassapa is formulated in the *Dīrgha-āgama* version in this manner: "there is no other world, there is no rebirth, there is no result of good and evil." [2] Pāyāsi's proclamation of this view meets with Kumārakassapa's quick reply that the sun and the moon are a visible proof that there are things beyond this world.

This argument in a way sets the pattern for the ensuing debate, making it clear that the arguments raised in such a setting are not so much about providing logical proofs – after all the existence of the sun and the moon are certainly no proof for rebirth and karmic retribution – but about exhibiting one's rhetorical skills through using good arguments when in the midst of a public debate.

Pāyāsi continues with descriptions of people he knew who, on the assumption that there is karmic retribution, should have been reborn in hell or in heaven, yet none of them ever came back to confirm having indeed been reborn in this way. Kumārakassapa is able to dismiss these stories with the help of a series of similes.

* Originally published in 2013 under the title "Debate with a Sceptic – The *Dīrgha-āgama* Parallel to the *Pāyāsi-sutta* (2)" in the *Indian International Journal of Buddhist Studies*, 14: 1–27.

Next Pāyāsi describes various ways of executing a thief, which never yielded any evidence that some sort of consciousness does emerge from the body at death. But Kumārakassapa is not short of replies either, and by this juncture of events he seems to be slowly gaining the upper hand over Pāyāsi. In fact, during the remainder of the discussion, Pāyāsi no longer replies with arguments on his own, but simply refuses to relinquish his position.

In what follows I translate the remainder of the *Dīrgha-āgama* version, beginning with Pāyāsi's refusal to give up his view.¹

Translation

Discourse to Pāyāsi [second part] [3]

The brahmin [Pāyāsi] said: "I am not able to give up [my view]. The reason is that from my own birth onwards for a long time I have been repeating it, making it a firm habit."² [45b]
How could I give it up?"

Kassapa said again: "Wise ones understand with the help of a simile, so I will now deliver another simile to you. In the distant past, a long time ago, there was a country whose border area had been deserted by the population. In that country there were two men, one wise and one foolish. They said to each other: 'I am your friend, let us together go out of town, selecting [each other] as companions, in search of wealth.'

¹ [6] The translated part of DĀ 7 is found at T I 45a28 to 47a12, which has been translated into English by Ichimura 2015: 259–268.

² [7] The other versions stress his loss of reputation if he were to give up the view he had been holding for such a long time. According to DN 23 at DN II 342,9, King Pasenadi and other kings would think him a fool if he were to give up his view. MĀ 71 at T I 529b14 indicates that people in other countries would know that he had been refuted by Kumārakassapa; cf. also T 45 at T I 834a28. Johansson 1983: 21 comments that "Pāyāsi could not give up his view, since his self-image would then be destroyed."

"They in turn followed each other and came to a pile in an empty [place]. On seeing that there was hemp on the ground, [the wise one] told the foolish one: 'Let us together take it and bring it back.' Then the two men each took one load on a shoulder pole.

"When they had gone past the next village, they saw there was hemp thread [abandoned on the ground]. The wise one said: 'What a success! There is hemp thread, which is finer, we can take it.' The other one said: 'I have already taken the hemp and bound it up firmly, I am not willing to drop it.' Then the wise one took the hemp thread, made it into a load, and left.

"A little further on, they saw hemp cloth. The wise one said: 'What a success! There is hemp cloth, which is finer, we can take it.' The other man said: 'I have taken the hemp and bound it up firmly, I am not willing to drop it.' Then the wise one dropped the hemp thread and took the cloth to make himself a load.

"Walking together a little further they saw some raw cotton.
[4] The wise one said: 'Raw cotton is very valuable. This is finer, we can take it.' The other man said: 'I have taken the hemp, bound it up firmly, and carried it a long way, I am not willing to drop it.' Then, the wise one dropped the hemp cloth and took the raw cotton.

"Walking like this a little further they saw cotton thread, and further on they saw stacks of white [cotton], further on they saw white copper, further on they saw white silver, further on they saw gold. The wise one said: 'If there were no gold, one should take white silver, if there were no white silver, one should take white copper ... *up to* ... hemp thread, if there were no hemp thread, one should take hemp. Now in this village there is a large [amount] of gold, a supreme and massive treasure. You should drop that hemp, I shall drop the silver, and we together take the gold, load ourselves and go back.' The

other man said: 'I have taken this hemp, bound it up firmly, and carried it a long way, I am not willing to drop it. You take what you like, load yourself with it according to your wish.'

"The wise one dropped the silver and took the gold, loaded it on a shoulder pole and returned home. His family members, who saw from afar that he had gained a big treasure of gold, were delighted to receive him. When the one who had gained the gold saw how his family members received him, he was greatly delighted. The ignorant man carried the hemp and returned home. His family members on seeing him were not pleased and did not rise to receive him. That carrier of hemp was very sad and ashamed.

"Brahmin, you should now give up this evil and wrong view, let it not for a long time increase suffering and vexation for yourself. Like the man who carried the hemp and who was firmly determined not to take the gold treasure, he returned carrying hemp and vainly tired himself, ^[45c] did not please his family members, remained poor for a long time, and increased his own sadness and suffering."

The brahmin said: "I am after all not willing to give up this view. Why is that? It is because I have often taught this view [to others], with much benefit. The kings in the four directions have all heard my name and they know me thoroughly for being a follower of annihilationism."

Kassapa said again: "Wise ones understand with the help of a simile, ^[5] so I will now deliver another simile to you. In the distant past, a long time ago, there was a country whose border area had been deserted by the population. Then there were merchants with a thousand carts who had to cross this territory where supplies of water, cereals, wood, and grass were insufficient for them. Then the leader of the merchants thought: 'Our company is too large, the supplies of water, cereals, wood, and

grass are insufficient for us. We should now rather divide into two groups.'

"The first group went ahead. The leader who was in front of the group that had been dispatched [first] saw a man with a large and crude body, red eyes and dark face, his body splashed with mud.³ Seeing him coming from afar, he asked: 'Where do you come from?'

"He replied: 'I come from the village that lies ahead.'

"[The leader] asked him again: 'Where you are coming from, is there much water, cereal, wood, and grass?'

"That man replied: 'Where I am coming from, there is an abundance of water, cereal, wood, and grass without end. In the midst of the road I encountered torrential rain. At that place there is much water and also plenty of wood and grass.' He further told the leader of merchants: 'The cereal and grass you have on your column of carts you could completely discard. There will be plenty of it for yourselves, no need to burden the carts.'

"Then that leader of merchants said to the group of merchants: 'I was walking in front and saw a man, with red eyes and dark face, his body splashed with mud. From afar I asked him: "Where do you come from?"'

"He replied to me: 'I come from the village that lies ahead.'

"I asked him again: 'Where you are coming from, is there much water, cereal, wood, and grass?'

"He replied to me: 'There is a great abundance of it.' He told me further: 'Ahead, in the midst of the road I encountered torrential rain. At that place there is much water and also plenty

³ [10] Verpoorten 2010: 175 relates the version of this description found in DN 23 to Varuṇa: "on ne peut s'empêcher de reconnaître en lui le dieu védique Varuṇa transformé par le bouddhisme populaire."

of wood and grass." [6] He further told me: "Sir, the cereal and grass you have on your carts you could completely discard. There will be plenty of it for yourselves, no need to burden the carts." So you should each discard the cereal and grass, the lightened carts will proceed swiftly.'

"As he had told them, together they each discarded the cereal and grass, so that the lightened carts proceeded swiftly. Like this they went for one day and did not see water or grass, for two days, three days ... *up to* ... seven days and still they did not see any. Then the merchants were exhausted and in a wilderness marshland they were eaten up by ghosts.

"The latter group followed the road in turn. The leader who was in front also saw a man with red eyes and dark face, his body splashed with mud. Seeing him coming from afar, he asked: 'Where do you come from?' That man replied: 'I come from the village that lies ahead.' [46a]

"[The leader] asked him again: 'Where you are coming from, is there much water, cereal, wood, and grass?'

"That man replied: 'There is a great abundance of it.' He further told the leader of merchants: 'In the midst of the road I encountered torrential rain. At that place there is much water and also plenty of wood and grass.' He further told the leader of merchants: 'Sir, the cereal and grass you have on your column of carts you could in turn discard. There will be plenty of it for yourselves, no need to burden the carts.'

"Then that leader of merchants turned back and said to the group of merchants: 'I was walking in front and saw a man, who instructed me like this:⁴ "Sir, the cereal and grass you are having on your carts you could completely discard. There will be plenty of it for yourselves, no need to burden the carts."'

⁴ [11] Adopting the variant 導 instead of 道.

"Then, the leader of merchants said: 'You should be careful and not discard the cereal and grass. We must first get new [supplies], after that we can discard it. Why is that? Continuously replacing old [supplies] with new ones, we will subsequently get to cross this wilderness.'

"Then the merchants continued with their heavy carts. Like this they went for one day and did not see water or grass, for two days, ^[7] three days ... *up to* ... seven days and still they did not see any. But they saw that the men who had gone in front had been eaten up by ghosts and their bones were left scattered around.⁵

"Brahmin, that red-eyed and dark-faced one was a *yakkha*. All who follow your teaching will experience suffering for a long time and shall be like that group of merchants that went in front who, because they lacked wisdom and followed what their leader said, lost their own bodies.

"Brahmin, there are recluses and brahmins who have progressed in wisdom. What they say, if such teachings are upheld and made use of, one will for a long time gain peace.⁶ It is like that later group of merchants who, because of being wise, escaped from the danger. Brahmin, you should now give up this evil view, let it not for a long time increase suffering and vexation for yourself."

The brahmin said: "I am after all not willing to give up this view. Suppose people then [think they can] come and strongly admonish me, that will arouse my anger, hence I am not giving up this view."

⁵ ^[12] According to DN 23 at DN II 346,11 and MĀ 71 at T I 530b17, the leader of the second group of merchants tells his followers to take from the merchandise that had been carried by the first group. The tale in T 45 differs from the others, as at T I 834c4 the second group arrives in time to rescue the first group.

⁶ ^[13] Such a remark is not found in the parallel versions.

Kassapa said again: "Wise ones understand with the help of a simile, so I will now deliver another simile to you. In the distant past there was a country whose border area had been deserted by the population.

"Then one man was fond of rearing pigs. On going to an empty village, he saw that there was dry dung. He in turn thought to himself: 'At this place there is plenty of dung, my pigs and piglets are hungry. Now I shall take straw to bind up this dry dung, put it on my head, and return.' He then took straw, bound up the dung, and put it on [his head]. On the way he came across torrential rain. The dung became wet and started to flow down until it reached his heels.

"People who saw him all said: 'Madman, that dung is to be discarded in a stinky place, ^[8] even when the sky is clear one should not carry it [on one's head], let alone carry it [on one's head] when going amidst the rain.'

"That man thereupon got angry and with abusive words retorted: 'You are foolish yourselves, you do not know that in my house the pigs and piglets are hungry, ^[46b] if you knew you would not call me a fool.'

"Brahmin, you should now give up this evil view, let it not keep you confused, experiencing suffering for a long time, like that foolish and childish person who went carrying dung [on his head], and who on being scolded by people became angry and retorted with abusive words, saying that they did not know."

The brahmin said to Kassapa: "If on practising what is reckoned to be wholesome you are reborn in heaven, then death is better for you than being alive. You should take a knife and cut your own throat, drink poison to die, or with a fivefold noose [hang] yourself, or throw yourself from a high cliff. Now you are greedy for life and thus unwilling to kill yourself, therefore I know that death is not better [for you] than being alive."

Kassapa said again: "Wise ones understand with the help of a simile, so I will now deliver another simile to you. In the past in this village of Setavyā a brahmin, who was very old, one hundred and twenty years, had two wives. The first had a son, the other was pregnant. Then, not long after that, the brahmin passed away.

"The child of the elder mother said to the younger [step-]mother: 'Whatever there is of wealth and treasures, that is completely mine, you will not get any part of it.' Then the younger [step-]mother said: 'You wait a little, you must give me a part for [the child with which] I am pregnant. If I give birth to a boy, you should give him part of the wealth. If I give birth to a girl, you can marry her yourself and get the property.'

"That child kept eagerly requesting the wealth three times. The younger [step-]mother replied as before, but that child kept pressing his [demand] unceasingly. Then the younger [step-]mother took a sharp knife with the determination to know for herself whether in her abdomen there was a male or a female."

[Kassapa] said to the brahmin: "The mother killed herself and also injured the foetus. Brahmin, you are also like that, already killing yourself, ^[9] you also wish to kill other people. If a recluse or a brahmin diligently cultivates what is wholesome and is in possession of moral virtue, as long as he is in the world, he is of much benefit for *devas* and men to obtain peace. I shall now deliver a last simile for you, so that you shall know that this evil view is a calamity.⁷

⁷ [15] The simile of the woman who cut open her own belly comes earlier in the other versions; cf. DN 23 at DN II 330,26, MĀ 71 at T I 527b20, and T 45 at T I 832c11. At the present juncture in DĀ 7 Kumārakassapa continues after this simile right away with another simile, without any reply by Pāyāsi to the earlier simile. This gives the impression that some accidental shift during trans-

"In the past in this village of Setavyā there were two players who were good at dice. When the two men were competing by playing, one of them won. Then the loser told the winner: 'Let us stop for today, we shall try again tomorrow.' The loser returned to his home, took the dice for playing, applied poison to it, and exposed it to the sun so that it dried.⁸

"The next day he took the dice and approached the winner, saying: 'We can compete in playing.' Before they played together, he first gave the poisoned dice to the winner. The winner swallowed it.⁹ When the loser had given him the poisoned dice and got him to swallow it, that poison worked its effect and his body was in cramps. Then the loser spoke these abusive words:

"I have applied a concoction to the dice
And you swallowed it without realizing it, [46c]
Inferior player, you have swallowed it,
In future you will know this for yourself."

Kassapa said to the brahmin: "You should now give up this evil view, let it not engross you in confusion, poisoning your-

mission would have been responsible for the present location of this simile in DĀ 7.

⁸ [16] Adopting the variant 曝 instead of 暴.

⁹ [17] It seems that the translators did not fully understand the point of this simile; in fact MĀ 71 at T I 530b29 speaks of gambling with "cakes", 餅 (T 45 does not have this simile at all). What according to DN 23 at DN II 348,20 the other player swallowed is a *kali*, i.e., a "bad throw"; cf. the discussion below. The translation of DN 23 in Walshe 1987: 364 that the two were "using nuts as dice" seems to be without support in the original. The same is the case for the translation of DĀ 7 by Ichimura 2015: 265 that the loser "gave the dice to the winner who, on receiving them, licked them to moisten them before casting. Then the man who had poisoned the dice picked them up and moistened them by licking them." Besides not reflecting the original, this does not seem to work, as the one who poisoned the dice would hardly lick them himself.

self with increasing suffering, like that player who swallowed the poison without realizing it." ^[10]

Then the brahmin said to Kassapa: "When the venerable one at first set forth the simile of the moon, I already understood at that time. ¹⁰ I consequently kept on advancing and retreating and did not at the time accept [defeat], since I wished to see Kassapa's skill and wisdom, and to arouse and strengthen my faith. Now I have faith and accept it, taking refuge in Kassapa." ¹¹

Kassapa explained: "Do not take refuge in me. You should take refuge in the superior venerable one in whom I have taken refuge."

The brahmin said: "I did not investigate in whom to take refuge. That superior venerable one, where is he now?"

Kassapa explained: "My teacher, the Blessed One, has attained final extinction recently." ¹²

¹⁰ [18] Pāyāsi's indication that he had already been pleased with the first simile (found in the first part of the discourse translated in the previous chapter) and just wanted to continue discussing comes in DN 23 at DN II 352,10 after the simile of the two men carrying hemp. MĀ 71 at T I 531b8 has a similar remark by Pāyāsi, preceded at T I 531a7 by the report that Kumārakassapa explicitly announced that he would deliver a last simile. This simile, not found in DN 23 or DĀ 7, describes a pig challenging a tiger for a fight; cf. also the discussion below.

¹¹ [19] Whereas MĀ 71 at T I 531b11 and T 45 at T I 835b29 also report that Pāyāsi wanted to take refuge in Kumārakassapa, according to DN 23 at DN II 352,19 he straight away took refuge in the Buddha, the Dharma, and the community of monks.

¹² [20] The information that the Buddha had recently passed away is not given explicitly in the parallel versions, although the circumstance that DN 23 at DN II 316,2 begins without a reference to the Buddha's whereabouts would imply the same; in fact the commentary on the stanzas attributed in the *Vimānavatthu* to Pāyāsi, reborn as a *deva*, Vv-a 297,15 (commenting on stanzas 1104f, Vv 109,21), explicitly indicates that the discussion between Pāyāsi and Kumāra-

The brahmin said: "If the Blessed One were still alive, I would personally have gone to see him, taken refuge and worshipped him, without bothering whether he [stayed] far or near.¹³ Now that I hear from Kassapa that the Tathāgata has attained final extinction, I take refuge in dependence on the completely extinguished Tathāgata, the Dharma, and the Community. [11]

"Kassapa, accept me in the right Dharma as a lay follower, from now for my whole life I shall not kill, not steal, not commit sexual misconduct, not deceive, and not drink alcohol; and I also shall undertake a great offering for everyone."¹⁴

Kassapa said: "If you slaughter living beings and with beatings make servants work for the sake of a sacrificial gathering, your merit will not be pure. It is just like barren, stony, and infertile ground, with much thorny undergrowth, if one cultivates it, one will certainly get nothing. If you slaughter living beings and with beatings make servants work for the sake of a great sacrificial gathering, making offerings with wrong view to the community, the merit will not be pure.

"If you undertake a great offering where living beings are not harmed, where servants are not made to work by being beaten with sticks, but joyfully arrange a sacrificial gathering, a pure giving to the community, you will get great merit. It is

kassapa took place after the Buddha's funeral. The Jain version in Bollée 2002: 15 has a different setting, as here Mahāvīra tells his chief disciple Goyama how a certain *deva* has attained its present glory. This *deva* lived in the past in Setavyā as a materialistic king by the name of Paesi (the counterpart to Pāyāsi in the Buddhist versions). Thus here the debate takes place in the past, before the time of Mahāvīra and the Buddha.

¹³ [21] An indication that Pāyāsi would have approached the Buddha himself, if he had still been alive, is not recorded in the parallel version.

¹⁴ [22] T 45 concludes with Pāyāsi's conversion and does not refer to a sacrifice or other subsequent events.

just as by cultivating a good field according to the proper time one will certainly get fruits."¹⁵

[The brahmin said]: "Kassapa, from now on I shall constantly make pure offerings to the community without interruption."

At that time, there was a young brahmin, by the name of Madhu[ka],¹⁶ who was standing behind Pāyāsi. Pāyāsi turned around and said: ^[12] "I wish to arrange a great offering for everyone. You should carry it out for me and organize it."

Then, having heard what Pāyāsi had said, the young brahmin carried it out. After the great offering, he said: "May Pāyāsi not get its meritorious rewards in this world or in the next."¹⁷ Then Pāyāsi heard that that [young] brahmin, after carrying out the offering, spoke like this: "May Pāyāsi not get its meritorious rewards in this world or in the next."

¹⁵ [23] In DN 23 at DN II 352,26 the issue at stake is also the type of sacrifice that involves killing living beings, comparable to broken seeds sown in a barren field without a proper water supply. MĀ 71 at T I 531b17 proceeds differently, as here Kumārakassapa asks how long Pāyāsi's intended charity will last and how many people will benefit from it. On being told that up to a thousand people may come and the charity will last for one to seven days, Kumārakassapa objects that some may not come in time for this and thus the king will miss out on the merit to be gained by giving to them, a situation he then illustrates with the example of good seeds sown in a fertile field that does not receive water in due time. Kumārakassapa then suggests that Pāyāsi should rather institute a constant alms giving, which would be comparable to good seeds sown in a fertile field that receives water in due time.

¹⁶ [24] DĀ 7 at T I 46c22: 摩頭; Akanuma 1930/1994: 351 lists 摩頭 as the first two out of four characters corresponding to Madhukula, and Hirakawa 1997: 562 s.v. 摩頭 gives as equivalent Madhuka. DN 23 at DN II 354,18 speaks of the young brahmin Uttara, as does MĀ 71 at T I 532a6: 優多羅.

¹⁷ [25] The formulation in MĀ 71 at T I 532a7 is similar, but in DN 23 at DN II 355,2 Uttara states that through this charity he will be associated with Pāyāsi in the present life, not in the next life.

He commanded the [young] brahmin [to come] and said: "Are you speaking like this?"

He replied: "Like this is truly what I said. The reason is that the food that is being arranged to be given to the community is gross, ^[47a] harmful, and bad. If it were to be shown to the king,¹⁸ the king would not even be able to take it with his hands for a moment, let alone eat it. It is not possible to delight in what is at present being arranged, how could it give pure results in the next world?"

"The king [Pāyāsi] gives to the community clothes made just of hemp cloth. If these were to be shown to the king, the king would not even for a moment be able to move his feet towards it, let alone being able to wear it himself. It is not possible to delight in what is at present being arranged, how could it give pure results in the next world?"

Then the brahmin [Pāyāsi] said to the [young] brahmin: "From now on, you make offerings to the community with food as I eat and with clothes as I wear."

Then the [young] brahmin carried out the instruction and supplied the community with food as the king ate and clothes as the king wore. Then, for having arranged this pure giving, at the breaking up of the body at death the brahmin [Pāyāsi] was reborn in an inferior heaven.¹⁹ ^[13] For actually carrying out [the offering] to the assembly, at the breaking up of the body at death the [young] brahmin was reborn in the Heaven of the Thirty-three.

At that time, the brahmin Pāyāsi, the young brahmin and the brahmins and householders of Setavyā, having heard what

¹⁸ [26] Here DĀ 7 switches to speaking of him as a "king"; in MĀ 71 and T 45 Pāyāsi is throughout referred to as a king; cf. also Lévi 1932a: 80,4.

¹⁹ [27] DN 23 at DN II 356,4 and MĀ 71 at T I 532a23 report that he was reborn in the realm of the Four Great Kings.

Kumārakassapa had said, delighted in it and received it respectfully.²⁰

Study

The above translated part of the *Dīrgha-āgama* account of the debate between Pāyāsi and Kumārakassapa shows several variations in sequence when compared to the parallel versions, as can be seen below in table 4, which takes the sequence of the arguments in the *Dīrgha-āgama* version as its point of reference. [14] The table shows that the *Dīrgha-āgama* discourse and the *Dīgha-nikāya* parallel have the same kind of arguments, although differing in the sequence, a fairly natural occurrence in orally transmitted literature.²¹

The individual translation differs from the other versions inasmuch as it does not have the simile of the two dice players. In the parallel versions the point of this simile is also not entirely clear, as one might wonder why one of the players should swallow the dice in the first place.²²

The *kali* that according to the Pāli account is swallowed by one of the players appears to refer to an unlucky throw in an ancient Indian dice game. The same expression recurs in a stanza in the different *Dharmapadas*, which refers to a dice player who cheats by trying to hide such a *kali* throw.²³

²⁰ [28] DN 23 at DN II 356,11 and MĀ 71 at T I 532a25 continue at this point with another episode involving the monk Gavampati; cf. also the discussion below.

²¹ [29] On this topic cf. in more detail Anālayo 2011b: 874–876.

²² [30] Cf. above p. 330 note 9.

²³ [31] The stanza begins by indicating that someone hides his own faults and then illustrates this with the hiding of a *kali* throw by a cheat, Dhṛp 252: *kalim va kitavā saṭho*, with Indic-language parallels in Patna *Dharmapada* 166, Cone 1989: 146: *kalim va kṛtavām saṭho*, Gāndhārī *Dharmapada* 272, Brough

Table 4: Sequence of Kumārakassapa's Arguments

DĀ 7	DN 23	MĀ 71	T 45
sun and moon (1)	1	1	1
criminal on way to execution (2)	2	2	2
man fallen into cesspit (3)	3	3	3
lifespan in heaven (4)	4	4	4
blind man and colours (5)	5	5	5
experiences in dream (6)	13	13	13
child chops up fire-sticks (7)	6	9	9
weighing hot and cold iron (8)	8	8	8
searching for sound of conch (9)	9	6	6
carry hemp instead of gold (10)	7	7	7
two merchant caravans (11)	11	10	11
carrying dung on head (12)	12	11	10
pregnant woman cuts open belly (13)	14	14	12
dice player cheats (14)	10	12	pig
		pig	

Lüders (1940: 161) explains that this type of ancient Indian dice game might have involved a considerable number of unmarked dice. At first a random number of these dice are thrown. The task of the gamblers now is to recognize as quickly as possible the number of dice that have been thrown in order to be able

1962/2001: 161: *kali va kidava śaḍha*, and *Udānavarga* 27.1, Bernhard 1965: 333: *kṛtvā yadvat kaliṃ śaṭhaḥ*.

to throw another number of dice in addition to those already out with the aim of arriving at one or the other of several total numbers considered fortunate. Falling short of such a total number, or exceeding it, is considered a failure. ^[15]

Thus hiding or swallowing a dice would be a way of cheating, as in this way the total number of dice can be changed and a *kali*, an unfortunate throw, can be altered and the game be won. In the present simile, the other player anticipates that the cheat will again swallow a dice to turn a *kali* into a lucky throw, hence he devises the stratagem of poisoning the dice.

Another difference is that the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse and the individual translation have an additional argument about a pig that challenges a tiger or a lion for a fight.²⁴ According to the *Madhyama-āgama* version of this simile,²⁵ a large pig, with a following of five hundred pigs, encounters on its path a tiger (or a lion, according to the individual translation).²⁶ The pig reflects that if it were to fight with the tiger it would certainly get killed, but if it were to run away, its followers would look down on it. Thinking of some stratagem to solve this dilemma, the pig challenges the tiger to let it pass or to engage in a fight. The tiger accepts the challenge for a fight.

The pig asks to be excused for a moment, as it has to put on its armour, which the tiger allows. Thereon the pig goes to a cesspit and rolls around in the faeces until its entire body is smeared with excrement. Armed in this way, the pig returns to challenge the tiger. The tiger is utterly disgusted, will not even go near the pig, and lets the pig pass. Once having passed by the tiger, the pig again challenges the tiger for a fight, insinuating that the tiger is

²⁴ [32] Cf. above p. 331 note 10.

²⁵ [33] MĀ 71 at T I 531a7.

²⁶ [34] T 45 at T I 835b12.

afraid. The tiger, unable to bear the stench of the pig, concedes victory to the pig.

With this last in his series of similes in the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse and in the individual translation, Kumārakassapa makes it clear to Pāyāsi that he is not going to continue discussing endlessly, if his opponent keeps on refusing to give in to reason.

Another difference between the parallel versions concerns the final part of the discourse. Whereas the individual translation concludes with Pāyāsi's conversion by taking refuge and the five precepts, the other versions continue with a description of his attempt to make merit through an offering or a 'sacrifice'. [16]

In this way, after Pāyāsi has been depicted as unable to stand his ground in debate, now he is also shown to be a fool when it comes to making merit. The *Dīrgha-nikāya* version and the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse further expand on this topic with the episode of the monk Gavampati, who meets the recently reborn Pāyāsi.²⁷ The *deva* who formerly was Pāyāsi asks Gavampati to inform people on earth that they should not give grudgingly, as he had done.

Rhys Davids (1910: 347) notes that this final part of the *Pāyāsi-sutta* "shows us a messenger from the gods coming down from heaven to teach the doctrine of generosity (*dāna*)"; a teaching with an obvious intent to instruct the audience of the discourse. Norman (1983: 40f) reasons that perhaps "the death of the Buddha had led to a falling-off in the gifts made to the *Saṅgha*", hence the tale of Pāyāsi reborn as a god was "employed as a fit means of reminding ... Buddhists ... of the need to be generous". In short, this last part of the discourse has the fairly evident purpose of propagating the importance of open-handed generosity.

Evans (2012b: 533), however, suggests that the present passage in the *Dīrgha-nikāya* version "illustrates how desire for a

²⁷ [35] Cf. above p. 335 note 20.

happy rebirth diminishes the goodness of deeds", since because Pāyāsi's "motivation was a happy rebirth rather than true generosity, he was reborn in the lowest region of heaven in a lonely, empty mansion". It seems to me that this is not what the text indicates; in fact the *Pāyāsi-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* explicitly reports that Pāyāsi's low rebirth was due to his giving charity in a careless manner,²⁸ not because of any aspiration he may have had. That is, as far as I can see the present passage does not imply that desire for a happy rebirth adversely affects the acquisition of merits. The point rather seems to be to inculcate in the audience the need to give in a considerate and generous manner.

The absence from the individual translation of this whole episode about Pāyāsi's miserly offerings and their meagre results gives the impression that this part could be a later addition,²⁹ [17] although it needs to be kept in mind that the individual translation on other occasions shows signs of textual loss.³⁰

The Debate Character of the Discourse

The central topic of the present discourse is the debate between Pāyāsi and Kumārakassapa.³¹ This debate has been inter-

²⁸ [36] DN 23 at DN II 356,1: *asakaccaṃ dānaṃ datvā asahatthā dānaṃ datvā acittikataṃ* (B^e and C^e: *acittīkatam*) *dānaṃ datvā apaviddham* (S^e: *apaviṭṭham*) *dānaṃ datvā*.

²⁹ [37] The Jain version in Bollée 2002: 166 proceeds differently. After his conversion to Jainism, Paesi no longer pays attention to his royal duties as before and also neglects his harem. The queen decides to poison him. Paesi meets the pain of the poisoning with the composure befitting a Jain follower and is reborn as a *deva* in heaven. Mahāvīra concludes his account of events with a prediction that this god, the former Paesi, will in future be reborn as a human and become a *kevalin*.

³⁰ [38] Cf. above p. 304f note 22 and p. 330 note 9.

³¹ [39] DN 23 is thus well in line with a general tendency of *Dīgha-nikāya* discourses described by Manné 1990: 79 as being "for the purposes of propa-

preted in different ways by modern scholars. Jayatilleke (1963/1980: 104f) focuses on the arguments used by Pāyāsi, which he sees as evidence for ancient Indian materialism. According to his assessment, the present discourse shows that

by this time, if not earlier, some people had thought of consciously devising experiments to test the validity of a theory ... and either accepted or rejected the theory on the basis of the results obtained.

I am under the impression that this interpretation does not fully take into account the debate character of the present discourse. I doubt we can conclude that Pāyāsi must have actually undertaken those gruesome experiments by killing various arrested criminals. What the present discourse presents is a public verbal combat, where it is less relevant whether Pāyāsi ever inflicted all the tortures he describes or not. He may equally well just have imagined them as good arguments.

The same holds for his earlier arguments, which work independently of whether he indeed asked his friends on the verge of death to come back and tell him about their rebirth or whether his description should be understood as having been made up for the sake of debating. With all of the arguments put forward by Pāyāsi, the dynamics of the debate would work just as well if those stories had only been invented by him.

Regarding the arguments employed by Kumārakassapa in reply, ^[18] Evans (2008: 61) notes that the

opening argument is to ask whether the sun and the moon are of this world or another ... [which involves] right away the use of false dilemma ... and consequent equivocation of the

ganda, to attract converts and lay-supporters to the new religion"; cf. also above p. 3.

'other world' of the sun and the moon and the 'other worlds' of rebirth, with results of deeds thrown in gratuitously.

According to Evans (2008: 66), the type of arguments used by Kumārakassapa make it clear

that he would never have agreed that any specific observation would falsify the kamma-rebirth mythology ... with his use of false dilemma, equivocation, begging the question, and fear, he may as well be arguing for the existence of flying saucers or for divine creation as against evolution. The *Pāyāsi-sutta*, in short, offers a strong rejection of the thesis that Buddhism is scientific, and, indeed, Kassapa wants *Pāyāsi* to believe *in spite* of what he knows empirically. The *sutta* thus seems to contradict the usual interpretation of, for example, the *Kālāmasutta*, that we should not merely believe but rather that we should come to know for ourselves through, perhaps empirical, inquiry.³²

In sum, Evans (2008: 67) concludes that the *Pāyāsi-sutta* "offers a clear rejection of the thesis that Buddhism is scientific" in the sense of allowing for the falsifiability of claims.

This seems to me to be another instance of losing sight of the debate character of the *Pāyāsi-sutta*, which I see as a natural result of an approach that relies on modern Western definitions of science and Western conceptions of logic to evaluate the scientific character of early Buddhist thought. Such an evaluation, I would contend, rather needs to be undertaken by taking into account the ancient Indian setting.³³ [19]

³² [40] On the *Kālāma-sutta* cf. Evans 2007; with a reply by Pāsādika 2012.

³³ [41] Evans 2008: 54f explains that "the presumption that Buddhism is scientific in some modern sense retains much popular currency" and thus he wishes to engage "the question whether or not Buddhism is scientific, as part of an attempt to clear the air of unexamined projections onto Buddhist epistemology with the hope eventually to gain a better, positive understanding of that epis-

Relevant to an appreciation of the scientific character of early Buddhism within its historical context would then be, for example, the four noble truths as perhaps the most central teaching of early Buddhism. The formulation of these four truths appears to have been deliberately modelled on an ancient Indian medical diagnostic scheme in contrast to the apparently prevalent philosophical speculations in ancient India.³⁴

Regarding the topic of belief as against free enquiry, a relevant discourse would be, for example, the *Vīmaṃsaka-sutta* and its Chinese parallel. According to this discourse, the Buddha openly invited prospective disciples to undertake a rather searching investigation of his claim to being an awakened teacher through various forms of direct and indirect observation.³⁵ When considered within its historical context, in particular keeping in mind ancient Indian conceptions of the role of a teacher, this is a rather impressive instance of advocacy of a principle of free enquiry.

The *Vīmaṃsaka-sutta* and its parallel, just as the so-called *Kālāma-sutta*,³⁶ reflect a basic pattern that is also evident in

temology". For the sake of a better understanding of early Buddhist thought, I think it would be important first of all to acknowledge that an ancient Indian system of thought cannot be adequately understood if it is taken out of its context and then evaluated through the lenses of modern Western philosophical concepts. In fact Evans 2012a: 121 is aware of this problem in general, as he states that "one danger in interpreting texts from times and cultures far removed from our own is the tendency – perhaps inevitability – of projecting our own presuppositions into the material." Applied to the present case, then, the question to be asked could be: "can early Buddhism be considered scientific from the viewpoint of ancient Indian scientific thought?"

³⁴ [42] Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2011e.

³⁵ [43] For a study of this discourse, MN 47 at MN I 317,20 to 320,25 and its parallel MĀ 186 at T I 731a29 to 732a8, cf. Anālayo 2010f.

³⁶ [44] Cf. below p. 509. The title *Kālāma-sutta* could be reconstructed from the Chinese, MĀ 16 at T I 438b13: 伽藍經 (which in keeping with a standard pattern

early Buddhist meditation theory, according to which doubt is not to be overcome through a mere act of faith,³⁷ but much rather requires a process of investigation and scrutiny. Such investigation then provides the basis for placing one's faith or confidence in a teacher or a teaching in a way that the *Vīmaṃsaka-sutta* and its Chinese counterpart consider to be commendable.³⁸^[20] This reflects a remarkable attitude towards the appropriate means for arousing faith, when considered within the ancient Indian context.

Keeping in mind the ancient Indian setting would also make it clear that the *Pāyāsi-sutta* and its parallels are not about scientific methods or about epistemology, but much rather about a debate. Thus it seems to me beside the point to take the replies given by Kumārakassapa as evidence for evaluating the scientific character of early Buddhist thought.

Given that a similar discourse exists in the Jain tradition,³⁹ the arguments employed to refute the sceptical visitor do not only represent Buddhist thought. Instead, the whole discussion shows a monk – be he Buddhist or Jain – standing his ground in a debate with a materialist.

A proper appreciation of the *Pāyāsi-sutta* also needs to take into account that the point at stake is not to refute an argument with proofs, but to do so with success in order to win the debate.

This much can also be seen in the parallel Jain version, where the Jain monk, as pointed out by Balcerowicz (2005: 573),

gives only the first two syllables of the name), whereas the title of AN 3.65 at A I 188 in B^e is rather *Kesamutti-sutta* (the other editions do not give a title).

³⁷ [45] Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2009h.

³⁸ [47] MN 47 at MN I 320,18 speaks of "reasonable faith rooted in vision", *ākā-ravaṭī saddhā dassanamūlikā*, MĀ 186 at T I 732a5 of "faith rooted in vision that is indestructible, being conjoined with knowledge", 信見本, 不壞, 智相應.

³⁹ [48] Evans 2008 appears to have been aware only of the Pāli version, as he does not refer to any of the parallels or to the Jain version in his paper.

gains victory in the debate not through his rigid logic and well-founded argument, but by virtue of verbal aggression and by taking recourse to social etiquette which he claims Paesi has apparently abused by not accepting the teaching of a learned monk.

In the case of the *Pāyāsi-sutta* and its parallels, obviously the existence of the sun and the moon – whether conceived of as planets or as denizens of the ancient Indian pantheon – does not imply that there is rebirth or a result of good and evil deeds. The point is simply that Kumārakassapa has given a quick reply with an illustrative example. [21]

According to the rules of debate, a defeated opponent has to accept the winner as his teacher and follow the victor's doctrine.⁴⁰ This makes it clear why Kumārakassapa immediately extends his argument to the full doctrine he is defending, thereby insinuating that Pāyāsi will have to accept the whole lot unless he is able to come up with a good rejoinder. Thus his reference to rebirth and karmic retribution is a challenge to his opponent to reply, not an ill-conceived logical consequence of the existence of the sun and the moon.

As Ganeri (2001: 490) explains, in relation to Buddhist debate as described in the *Kathāvatthu*,

the primary aim is not to *disprove* the thesis, but to force a *retraction* of commitment. So when we evaluate the argumentation used ... it is to be evaluated as good or bad with reference to how well it succeeds in forcing such a retraction, and not simply or only or even in terms of its deductive or inductive soundness.

⁴⁰ [49] On debate in ancient India cf., e.g., Solomon 1978: 833–875, Matilal 1987, and Bronkhorst 2007b; on principles of debate in the Buddhist tradition Todeschini 2011 and on debate in the *Dīrgha-nikāya* Manné 1992.

Regarding Kumārakassapa as a debater, Rhys Davids (1910: 348) comments that,

as becomes a flowery speaker (*citra-kathî*) he is lavish in illustration, and tells a number of stories, some of them quite good, and all of them bearing more or less relation (usually less) to the particular point in dispute. They are sufficient, however, to throw dust into the eyes of Pâyāsi.⁴¹

The whole point in the end is that "Kassapa refutes his arguments with apt illustrations", [22] as noted by Dasgupta (1922: 106). That his illustrations were indeed apt can be seen from the fact that some of his tales made their way into the Pāli *Jātaka* collection.⁴² Clearly, the narrations employed by Kumārakassapa had a considerable entertaining appeal in ancient Indian oral society.

⁴¹ [50] The reference to being a *citta-kathika* relates to the listing of outstanding disciples in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya*, AN 1.14.3 at AN I 24,28, according to which Kumārakassapa was foremost among the Buddha's disciples in this respect; his abilities as a speaker are also mentioned in the listing of outstanding disciples in EĀ 4.6 at T II 558a12. Presumably he would have earned himself the title accorded to him in AN 1.14.3 on previous occasions, given that the present discourse takes place after the Buddha had passed away and thus could not, *pace* Mp I 285,14, have been considered the reason for the Buddha to assign him the rank of eminent disciple. In fact the instructions Kumārakassapa receives in the *Vammika-sutta*, MN 23 at MN I 142,12 (which has parallels in T 95 at T I 918b21, SĀ 1079 at T II 282a22, SĀ² 18 at T II 379c3, and EĀ 39.9 at T II 733b12; for a comparative study cf. Anālayo 2011b: 158ff), show the Buddha explaining to him a teaching that takes into account Kumārakassapa's propensity to imagery and similes.

⁴² [51] As already noted by Oldenberg 1912a: 192, the tale of the two dice players recurs in the *Litta-jātaka*, Jā 91 at Jā I 380,25, whereas the story of the two merchant caravans has a parallel in the *Apannaka-jātaka*, Jā 1 at Jā I 106,9, in addition to which parallels can be found in T 203.38 at T IV 465c22, translated in Chavannes 1911: 32 and Willemen 1994: 91, and in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*, D 1 *kha* 243b6 or Q 1030 *ge* 228a3; cf. also Panglung 1981: 44. For a

The need to come up with a good argument at the right moment, independent of whether the point made is strictly speaking correct, can be seen by turning to a modern instance of debate in the Tibetan tradition. Dreyfus (2003: 258) reports from his own training in debating that when one is in an actual debate situation,

it is crucial to remain calm and good-humored, while keeping an eye out for sharp rejoinders that can turn the presence of a large crowd to one's advantage. I remember an incident that took place while I was answering [challenges in a debate session] in Se-ra Jay. The abbot, Geshe Lob-zang Thub-ten, who was my teacher, made a joke at my expense, implying that my answers were weak. The whole assembly burst into laughter. I was not fazed and without blinking I replied, "Some may laugh, but I challenge them to back up their laughter!" The audience exploded. I had won the exchange.

The actual argument made has of course no logical weight, it does not prove anything. But the quick and clever way he replied won him the approval of the audience and thereby the upper hand in the debate situation. The same basic principle holds for the present discourse. The need to appreciate the debate character of the *Pāyāsi-sutta* and its parallels is also evident in their report that, in spite of being already convinced, Pāyāsi continued to oppose Kumārakassapa in order to witness the latter's debating skills.

In sum, this discourse is an instance of ancient Indian recluse traditions poking fun at materialism by depicting how a materialist is thoroughly defeated in debate by a monk. ^[23] This explains the type of arguments employed by both sides, which need not reflect actual events, nor be taken as an expression of early Bud-

study of these two tales as exemplifying a tendency for parables to become *jātakas* cf. Anālayo 2010b: 60f.

dhist or Jain epistemology. It also explains the popularity of this discourse in the Jain and Buddhist traditions, where the entertaining aspects of this debate were evidently not lost on the respective audiences.

Cakkavatti-sutta (DN 26)

Introduction

In this chapter I translate the sixth discourse in the Chinese *Dīrgha-āgama*, parallel to the twenty-sixth discourse in the *Dīgha-nikāya*, the *Cakkavatti-(sīhanāda-)sutta*, and the seventieth discourse in the *Madhyama-āgama*, the Discourse on the Wheel-turning King. After translating the *Dīrgha-āgama* version,¹ I study its prediction of the future advent of the Buddha Maitreya.

Translation

The Discourse on the Practice of the Noble Wheel-turning King

Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was sojourning among the people of Mātulā, together with one thousand two hundred and fifty monks who had in stages arrived in the region of Mātulā.²

* Originally published in 2014 under the title "Maitreya and the Wheel-turning King" in *Asian Literature and Translation: A Journal of Religion and Culture*, 2.7: 1–29.

¹ The translated text is DĀ 6 at T I 39a21 to 42b19, which has been translated into English by Ichimura 2015: 225–243. For the name of the future Buddha I use the better-known Sanskrit Maitreya instead of its Pāli equivalent. In the notes I only take up selected differences and do not intend to provide comprehensive coverage of all variations found between the three parallel versions.

² The parallels DN 26 at DN III 58,2 and MĀ 70 at T I 520b18 agree on the location Mātulā. DN 26 adds that this place was found in the Magadha country and MĀ 70 specifies that the Buddha was staying in a mango grove by the side of a river. The location in DĀ 6 at T I 39a22 reads 摩羅醯樓 (with the variants 摩醯樓 and 摩羅醯樓), but then the next line refers to 摩樓, with the variant 摩羅樓. Judging from the context, the location mentioned in both instances should be the same. The second reference would not be to the Magadha country, as

At that time the Blessed One said to the monks: "You should be a light unto yourselves,³ with the Dharma as your light, without any other light; you should be a refuge unto yourselves, with the Dharma as your refuge, without any other refuge. How will a monk be a light unto himself, with the Dharma as his light, without any other light; be a refuge unto himself, with the Dharma as his refuge, without any other refuge?

"Here a monk contemplates the body as a body internally, being diligent without laxity, with undistracted mindfulness, leaving behind greed and sadness in the world. He contemplates the body as a body externally ... he contemplates the body as a body internally and externally, being diligent without laxity, [2] with undistracted mindfulness,⁴ [39b] leaving behind greed and sadness in the world. He contemplates feeling ... mental states ... dharmas *also in this way*.⁵

elsewhere in the *Dīrgha-āgama* this is rendered as 摩竭國; cf. DĀ 2 at T I 30a10, DĀ 4 at T I 34b20, DĀ 14 at T I 62b29, and DĀ 21 at T I 88b13.

³ The corresponding term in DN 26 at DN III 58,7 is *attadīpa* which, as pointed out by Norman 1990/1993b: 87, "could mean either 'a lamp for oneself' or 'an island, i.e., refuge, for oneself' ... either *ātma-dīpa* or *ātma-dvīpa*". Franke 1913a: 271 in translating *attadīpa* opts for the sense of being a "light" or "lamp" (Leuchte) to oneself; cf. also Wright 2000. According to Bapat 1957, however, in the context of the present type of injunction *dīpa* is better understood as "island"; cf. also, e.g., Brough 1962/2001: 210, Schneider 1980/1992: 113 note 69, and Nakamura 2000b: 95. MĀ 70 at T I 520b20 renders the corresponding expression as a "lamp" or "light", 燈.

⁴ Adopting the variant 憶 instead of 識, in line with the formulation found earlier.

⁵ DĀ 6 at T I 39b1: 受, 意, 法觀亦復如是; the translation by Ichimura 2015: 225: "it is the same with observing one's sense perception, intellect, psychophysical aggregation of elements, and analytical introspection" does not reflect that this refers to the other three *satipaṭṭhānas*. DN 26 at DN III 58,11 describes *satipaṭṭhāna* meditation without bringing in a distinction between internal and external modes; for a more detailed discussion of this distinction cf. Anālayo 2003: 94–99 and 2013f: 17–19. MĀ 70 at T I 520b23 proceeds directly from the injunction to

"This is how a monk is a light unto himself, with the Dharma as his light, without any other light; is a refuge unto himself, with the Dharma as his refuge, without any other refuge. One who practises in this way cannot be charmed by Māra and his virtue will increase day by day.⁶ Why is that?

"In the distant past, a long time ago, there was a king by the name of Daḷhanemi. He was a head-anointed warrior king who had become a noble wheel-turning king and was reigning over the four continents.

"At that time the king freely governed by means of the Dharma. He was extraordinary among the people in being endowed with the seven treasures: 1) the golden wheel-treasure, 2) the white elephant-treasure, 3) the purplish horse-treasure, 4) the lustrous jewel-treasure, 5) the precious woman-treasure, 6) the householder-treasure, and 7) the counsellor-treasure.

"He was endowed with a thousand sons who were courageous, mighty, and valiant, capable at subduing enemies. Without making use of soldiers equipped with weapons,⁷ naturally and peacefully, King Daḷhanemi had been governing the world for a long time when the golden wheel-treasure suddenly left its original place in the sky.⁸ Then the person in charge of the wheel quickly approached the king and said: 'Great King, you should know that the wheel-treasure has now left its original place.'⁹

be a lamp unto oneself to the story of Daḷhanemi, without referring to *satipaṭṭhāna* or to Māra, which in this version come only at the end of the discourse.

⁶ In DN 26 at DN III 58,18 the instruction is to dwell in one's pasture (*gocara*) in order to prevent Māra from gaining an opportunity.

⁷ Here and below my translation is based on adopting the variant 仗 instead of 杖.

⁸ Ichimura 2015: 226 adds "but finally he was approaching the end of his life", which is a gloss not found in the Chinese original.

⁹ [8] DN 26 at DN III 59,11 precedes this with the king instructing someone to keep a lookout for the wheel slipping from its place.

"Having heard it, King Daḥhanemi then remembered: 'I once heard from the ancients that if the wheel-treasure of a noble wheel-turning king shifts [from its original place], the [remaining] lifespan of the king is not much. I have now already experienced good fortune among human beings,¹⁰ it is proper for me to make further effort for experiencing divine good fortune. I will establish the crown prince to reign over the four continents, set aside as a fief one village for the barber,¹¹ [3] command him to shave off my hair and beard, and donning the three monastic robes I will go forth to cultivate the path.'¹²

"King Daḥhanemi then summoned the crown prince and said: 'My dear [son], did you know this? I once heard from the ancients that if the golden wheel of a noble wheel-turning king leaves its original place, the [remaining] lifespan of the king is not much. I have now already experienced good fortune among human beings, I should make further effort so as to proceed to

¹⁰ [9] Here I adopt a correction suggested in the CBETA edition of 己 to 巳, in line with the formulation used when the king informs the crown prince.

¹¹ [10] The idea of giving the grant of a village to the barber is unexpected in the present context. Such a remark could be the result of a (perhaps even accidental) borrowing from the Mahādeva tale. In the Mahādeva tale the barber has a more prominent role. He announces to the king that white hair has appeared on the king's head, which then motivates the king to go forth. Different versions of the Mahādeva tale report a grant given thereupon by the king: in MN 83 at MN II 75,16 the king grants a village to the barber, according to EĀ 1 at T II 552a11 he gives him some treasures, and according to EĀ 50.4 at T II 808b13 the king bestows some farmland on the barber. A barber also receives the gift of a village in the *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1897: 191,16, which in this case is motivated by his having accomplished the feat of cutting the king's hair and beard while the latter was asleep. In the present instance, however, it seems a little out of proportion to give a whole village as a fief to the barber, since all he does is to shave off the king's hair and beard.

¹² [11] The parallels do not report any reflection by the king, but directly proceed to his summoning the crown prince.

the experiencing of divine good fortune. I now wish to shave off my hair and beard, don the three monastic robes, and go forth for the sake of the path. I entrust these four continents to you. It is proper for you to exert yourself strongly and to have consideration for people's affairs.'¹³

"When the crown prince had received the instruction from the king, then King Daḷhanemi shaved off hair and beard, donned the three monastic robes, and went forth to cultivate the path. When the [former] king had gone forth already for seven days, the golden wheel-treasure suddenly disappeared. The person in charge of the wheel approached the [new] king and said: 'Great King, you should know that the wheel-treasure has now suddenly disappeared.'

At this the king was unhappy. He approached the [former] king Daḷhanemi. Having arrived, he said to his royal [father]:¹⁴ 'My royal father, you should know that the wheel-treasure has now suddenly disappeared.'

"Then the [former] king Daḷhanemi replied to his son: 'Do not worry or be unhappy. This golden wheel-treasure has not been delivered to you by your father. You should just diligently practise the right Dharma of a noble king. [39c]

¹³ [12] DN 26 at DN III 60,2 does not record that the king indicated in what manner the crown prince should govern. In MĀ 70 at T I 520c7 the king tells the crown prince that he should rule by the Dharma and make sure the country is free from evil. Moreover, the king additionally tells the crown prince that he should also go forth when the wheel slips from its original place; cf. MĀ 70 at T I 520c9. This indication fits the remainder of the story in all versions well, where it is not following this injunction, with all its dire consequences, that exemplifies the dire consequences of not following the Buddha's instructions.

¹⁴ [13] I have added "[former]" and translated the second instance of 王 as "royal [father]" since strictly speaking he is no longer the king. The parallel versions in fact refer to him as a royal sage, DN 26 at DN III 60,18: *rājisi* (on the term cf., e.g., Wiltshire 1990: 33) and MĀ 70 at T I 520c16: 王仙人.

"Having practised the right Dharma, on the fifteenth day [of the month], at the time of the full moon, having bathed and anointed yourself, surrounded by your women, ascend to the top of the Palace of the Right Dharma and the golden wheel-treasure will spontaneously manifest, as a wheel with a thousand spokes and endowed with brilliant colour, made by a divine artisan, such as does not exist anywhere in the world.'

"The son said to his royal father: 'What is the right Dharma for a noble wheel-turning king? How should I practise?'

The royal [father] said to his son: 'You should depend on the Dharma, be established in the Dharma, be endowed with the Dharma, ^[4] respect, revere, and examine the Dharma. By means of the Dharma as your leader, you should guard the right Dharma.

"Again, by means of the Dharma you should instruct your women; again by means of the Dharma you should guard, look after, instruct, and admonish the crown prince, the ministers, the many officials, the hundreds of administrators, and all people, recluses, brahmins, down to birds and animals. You should guard and look after them all.'

"He also said to his son: 'Again, whatever recluses and brahmins are in your territory whose practice is pure and true, who are endowed with virtue, who are energetic without laxity, who have departed from arrogance, who are patient and benevolent, who cultivate themselves while being in seclusion, who being in solitude tranquillize themselves and who being in solitude reach Nirvāṇa;¹⁵ who themselves have left behind lustful de-

¹⁵ [14] The parallels describe in less detail the recluses and brahmins whom the crown prince should approach, leaving open the possibility that the present passage in DĀ 6 could be the result of the intrusion of a commentarial gloss. The counterpart in MĀ 70 at T I 521a8 does not refer to Nirvāṇa at all, but just speaks of those who are respected and renowned for their virtue. The corre-

sires and who teach others the leaving behind of lustful [desires]; who themselves have left behind anger and hatred and who teach others the leaving behind of anger [and hatred]; who themselves have left behind stupidity and ignorance and who teach others the leaving behind of [stupidity and] ignorance; who among the defiled are undefiled, among the wicked are not wicked, among fools are not foolish, who are not attached to what one could be attached to, who do not take a stance on what one could take a stance on, who do not dwell on what one could dwell on; whose bodily activities are upright, whose speech is upright, whose thinking is upright; whose bodily activities are pure, whose speech is pure, whose thinking is pure, and whose right livelihood is pure;¹⁶ who are kind and forbearing without becoming wearied,¹⁷ who are contented with robes and food, who take their bowl to beg for food for the sake of [being a source of] merit for living beings, you should frequently approach people like this and at the proper time ask them questions about what should be practised by the common people:

"What is wholesome? What is evil? What is an offence? What is not an offence? With what should one become intimate? With what should one not become intimate? What should be done? What should not be done? Carrying out the practice of what things will one for a long time experience happiness?"

"Having asked them questions, you should examine [their replies] in your mind. You should practise what is to be practised and relinquish what is to be relinquished. You should aid

sponding description in DN 26 at DN III 61,¹³ indicates that these recluses and brahmins appease themselves, *parinibbāpentī*, thereby using a term that alludes to Nirvāṇa; on this phrase cf. also Gombrich 1987.

¹⁶ [15] The translation is based on adopting the variant 命 instead of 念.

¹⁷ [16] The translation is based on adopting the variant 惠 instead of 慧.

and provide for any solitary elderly people that are in the country. Do not reject any poor or feeble people who come to you with requests.¹⁸ Do not change the ancient customs of the country.¹⁹ This is the Dharma practised by a noble wheel-turning king. You should receive it respectfully."²⁰ [5]

The Buddha said to the monks: "Then the [future] noble wheel-turning king,²⁰ having received instructions from his father, practised as he had been told. Later, on the fifteenth day [of the month], at the time of the full moon, having bathed and anointed himself, he ascended to the top of the high palace, surrounded by his women, and the wheel-treasure spontaneously manifested in front of him. It was a wheel with a thousand spokes and endowed with brilliant colour, made by a divine artisan, such as does not exist anywhere in the world. The wheel was made of real gold and measured fourteen feet across."²¹ [40a]

¹⁸ [17] The translation is based on adopting the variant 求 instead of 取.

¹⁹ [18] The parallels do not warn against changing ancient customs.

²⁰ [19] I have added "[future]" since at this point he still has to become a wheel-turning king, which happens after the wheel has appeared.

²¹ [20] DĀ 6 at T I 39c29: 丈四, which Ichimura 2015: 229 translated as "thirty-two feet". My rendering follows an interpretation suggested to me in a private communication by Roderick Bucknell (email of 13 June 2014), which is to take 丈四 to mean 一丈四尺. The parallels do not specify the size (or the material) of the wheel. MĀ 70 at T I 521b6 continues by simply noting that he acquired the seven treasures and the four types of success, indicating that details should be supplemented from the description given earlier (a similar reference occurs already at T I 520b26, when the seven treasures and the four types of success come up for the first time). I take it that this reference relates to MĀ 67, which at T I 512a2 refers similarly to the seven treasures and the four types of success (here possessed by King Mahādeva) and as part of its exposition of the wheel-treasure at T I 512a16 describes the wheel-turning king's peaceful conquest. In my comparative notes, I will refer to MĀ 67 for those parts that are abbreviated in MĀ 70.

"Then the wheel-turning king was silent. He thought to himself: 'I once heard from the ancients that if a head-anointed warrior king on the fifteenth day [of the month], at the time of the full moon, having bathed and anointed himself, ascends to the top of the precious palace, surrounded by his women, and the golden wheel-treasure spontaneously manifests in front of him, as a wheel with a thousand spokes and endowed with brilliant colour, made by a divine artisan, such as does not exist anywhere in the world, the wheel being made of real gold and measuring fourteen feet across, then he is [to be] called a noble wheel-turning king. This wheel that has now manifested, would it not be that one? Let me now test this wheel-treasure.'

"Then the wheel-turning king summoned his fourfold army. With his right arm bared, kneeling down with his right knee on the ground and facing the golden wheel-treasure, he stroked the golden wheel with his right hand, saying: 'Roll according to the Dharma towards the eastern direction, continuously without obstruction.' The wheel rolled east.

"Then the king, at the head of his retinue, with the four divisions of the army,²² followed the golden wheel-treasure in front, which was [like] having four divine leaders.²³ Wherever the wheel halted, the king stopped his chariot.

"At that time the kings of the minor countries in the eastern direction saw that the great king had arrived. With a golden bowl filled with grains of silver and a silver bowl filled with grains of gold they came towards the king, paid respect with their heads [at his feet], and said:²⁴ [6]

²² [21] The four divisions of an army in ancient India comprise elephant troops, cavalry, charioteers, and infantry.

²³ [22] DĀ 6 at T I 40a10: 有四神導; my rendering of which is conjectural.

²⁴ [23] DN 26 at DN III 62,13 and MĀ 67 at T I 512a23 (this is the Mahādeva tale) do not report that the minor kings made offerings of gold and silver.

"Welcome, Great King. This territory in the eastern direction is now abundant and pleasant, flourishing with people who are of a kind and peaceful disposition, who are benevolent, dutiful, and loyal. May the noble king govern us rightly. We shall provide attendants who will be receptive to what ought to be done.'

"Then the great wheel-turning king said to the minor kings: 'Enough, enough, virtuous ones. You have indeed given me your support already. Just govern by means of the right Dharma. Do not have anything to do with partiality or crookedness. Let this country be without practices that are contrary to the Dharma. This will amount to it being governed by me.'²⁵

"When the minor kings had heard this instruction, they followed the great king on a tour of the country up to the borders of the eastern sea. Next he went to the southern direction, the western direction, and the northern direction, following wherever the wheel reached. The kings of each of the countries there offered their territory, just as those of the minor countries in the eastern direction had done.

"Then the wheel-turning king followed the golden wheel on a tour of the four seas. Having in this way edified and consoled the multitudes of people, he returned to his original country. Then the golden wheel-treasure remained in mid-air above the entrance to the palace. Then the wheel-turning king was thrilled and said: 'This golden wheel-treasure is truly my good fortune. I am truly a noble wheel-turning king, which has been accomplished by the golden wheel-treasure.'²⁶

²⁵ [24] In DN 26 at DN III 63,11 the king instructs them in the five precepts; in MĀ 67 at T I 512a27 the king (which here is Mahādeva) tells them to rule by the Dharma and make sure the country is without evil.

²⁶ DĀ 6 at T I 40a25: 是為金輪寶成就; contrary to the translation by Ichimura 2015: 231 that "this is called the realization of the first treasure, the golden wheel",

"When that king had governed the world for a long time, the golden wheel-treasure suddenly left its original place in the sky. The person in charge of the wheel quickly approached the king and said: 'Great King, you should know that the wheel-treasure has now left its original place.'

"Then, having heard this, the king reflected: 'I once heard from the ancients that if the wheel-treasure of a noble wheel-turning king moves, the [remaining] lifespan of the king is not much. ^[40b] I have now already experienced good fortune among human beings, it is proper for me to make further effort for experiencing divine good fortune. I will establish the crown prince to reign over the four continents, set aside as a fief one village for the barber, command him to shave off my hair and beard and, donning the three monastic robes, I will go forth to cultivate the path.'

"Then the king summoned the crown prince and said: 'My dear [son], did you know this? I once heard from the ancients that if the golden wheel-treasure of a noble wheel-turning king leaves its original place, the [remaining] lifespan of the king is not much. I have now already experienced good fortune among human beings, I should make an effort so as to proceed to the experiencing of divine good fortune. I now wish to shave off my hair and beard, don the three monastic robes, and go forth to cultivate the path. I entrust these four continents to you, it is proper for you to exert yourself strongly and to have consideration for people's affairs.' ^[7]

"When the crown prince had received the king's instruction, the king shaved off hair and beard, donned the three monastic robes, and went forth to cultivate the path. When the king had

the wheel-treasure has already been realized earlier and the point at the present juncture is rather the realization of the king's world-wide dominion.

gone forth already for seven days, the golden wheel-treasure suddenly disappeared. The person in charge of the wheel approached the king and said: 'Great King, you should know that the wheel-treasure has now suddenly disappeared.' When the king had heard this, he was not worried and he moreover did not approach to ask his royal father's opinion. Then his royal father suddenly passed away.²⁷

"Six previous wheel-turning kings had each turned the wheel and received [instructions] from their predecessor on governing by means of the right Dharma.²⁸ Only this one king governed the country on his own, he did not continue the ancient Dharma. His government was unstable, everyone was complaining, the territory was declining, and the people were withering away.

"Then one brahmin minister approached the king and said: 'Great king, you should know that the territory is now declining and the people are withering away. Things are not turning

²⁷ [25] The parallels do not report the passing away of the father. According to DN 26 at DN III 64,25, the king is unhappy about the disappearance of the wheel, but that does not motivate him to approach his father and enquire what to do. In MĀ 70 at T I 521b25 the king is not worried about the wheel's disappearance, as he is very attached to sensual pleasures. This fits the context well, since it serves as a warning to the monastic audience of the discourse that the attraction of sensuality can make them swerve from their proper resort and practice.

²⁸ [26] At an earlier juncture DN 26 at DN III 63,22 indicates that seven wheel-turning kings followed the same pattern, so that here it would be the eighth wheel-turning king who does not take action when the wheel disappears. In MĀ 70 at T I 521b23 already the grandson of King Daḥhanemi neglects his duty, and that even though his father had explicitly told him that he should follow his father's example; cf. T I 521b18. The employment of the number seven in DĀ 6 and DN 26, although undertaken with different results, could reflect the symbolic function of this number in the early discourses; cf. in more detail Anālayo 2014c: 51 note 110.

out as usual. Now the king has many good friends in the country, who are wise and erudite, knowledgeable in things ancient and modern. They are equipped with knowledge of how earlier kings governed rightly by the Dharma.²⁹ Why not command them to gather and ask what they know, so that they will personally give their replies?"

"Then the king summoned his many ministers and asked them about the way earlier kings had governed. Then the wise ministers provided answers on these matters. The king heard what they said and implemented the old way of governing and protecting the world by means of the Dharma. However, he was unable to aid solitary elderly people as well as to provide for the lowly and destitute.³⁰

"Then the people of the country in turn became quite impoverished. Consequently they took from one another by force and theft increased greatly. It being investigated, they seized one of them,³¹ took him to the king, and said: 'This man is a thief. May the king deal with him.'^[8]

"The king asked him: 'Is it true that you are a thief?'

²⁹ [27] The translation is based on adopting the variant 正 instead of 政.

³⁰ [28] The translation is based on adopting the variant 猶 instead of 由. Harris 1997: 9 highlights the importance accorded to compassion in this discourse, inasmuch as it shows that "lack of compassion for the poor leads to the disintegration of society."

³¹ [29] Whereas DN 26 at DN III 66,10 does not specify who caught the thief, in MĀ 70 at T I 522b1 the thief is caught by the owner himself, 主. This indication fits the flow of the narration well, since when later thievery is being punished, people take up weapons and start to kill those they rob. This would be a logical consequence of thieves earlier being arrested by the owners, since by killing the owner(s) one could indeed avoid being arrested and then punished by the king. In fact MĀ 70 at T I 522b27 reports that people, on taking up arms, think that "when stealing goods, if we catch the owner of those goods, we will cut off his head", 若從劫物者, 捉彼物主, 而截其頭.

"He replied: 'It is true. I am poor and hungry, unable to maintain myself. Therefore I have become a thief.'³²

"Then the king supplied him with goods from his treasury and said: 'With these goods support your parents and care for your relatives. From now on, do not become a thief again!'

"Other people in turn heard that the king was giving wealth to those who engage in theft. ^[40c] Thereupon they further engaged in stealing the property of others.³³

"It being investigated, they again seized one of them, took him to the king, and said: 'This man is a thief. May the king deal with him.'

"The king asked again: 'Is it true that you are a thief?'

"He replied: 'It is true. I am poor and hungry, unable to maintain myself. Therefore I have become a thief.'

"Then the king again supplied him with money from his treasury and said: 'With these goods support your parents and at the same time care for your relatives. From now on, do not become a thief again!'

"Again people heard that the king was giving wealth to those who engage in theft. Thereupon they further engaged in stealing the property of others.

"It being investigated, they again seized one of them, took him to the king, and said: 'This man is a thief. May the king deal with him.'

³² DĀ 6 at T I 40b27: 故為賊耳; the translation by Ichimura 2015: 233 as "hence, I could not help doing it, sir" does not do full justice to the original.

³³ ^[30] DN 26 at DN III 66,9 continues directly with the second case of stealing and only after this second case reports that people heard that the king made offerings to those who steal. MĀ 70 at T I 522b5 records only a single case of stealing that meets with reward, followed by reporting that people heard about it and then engaged even more in stealing, as a result of which their lifespan decreased to 40,000 years.

"The king asked again: 'Is it true that you are a thief?'

"He replied: 'It is true. I am poor and hungry, unable to maintain myself. Therefore I have become a thief.'

"Then the king thought: 'At first, seeing that they were poor, I gave the thieves wealth, so that they would stop. But other people have heard of it and in turn imitated each other even more, and robbery increases daily. This will not do. Let me now rather have that man pilloried. I will command that he be [paraded through] the streets and alleys, and then taken out of the city to be executed in the wilds, as a warning to other people.'

"Then the king ordered his attendants: 'Have him bound, beat a drum to announce the command,³⁴ and [parade] him through the streets and alleys. This done, take him out of the city and execute him in the wilds.'

"The people in the country all came to know that someone who had become a thief had been taken and bound by the king, who commanded that he be [paraded] through the streets and alleys and executed in the wilds. Then the people said to one another in turn: ^[9] 'If we are labelled as thieves, we will be like that, not different from him.' Then the people in the country, to protect themselves, consequently made themselves weapons to fight with, swords and bows with arrows. They repeatedly killed and injured each other when attacking to plunder.

"From the time this king came [to the throne], poverty started. There being poverty, robbery started. There being robbery, fighting with weapons started. There being fighting with weapons, there was killing and harming. There being killing and harming, [people's] complexions became haggard and their lifespan shorter. Then, from having been forty thou-

³⁴ ^[31] The translation is based on adopting the variant 擊 instead of 聲.

sand years, people's actual lifespan subsequently became less and in turn was twenty thousand years.³⁵

"Although there were living beings who had such a lifespan, some died prematurely, and some were distressed and some were delighted. Those who were distressed in turn gave rise to adultery, their minds being in the grip of lust. Many devised ways and schemed to get the property of others. Then people who were poor robbed and fought with weapons. Killing and harming in turn increased greatly.³⁶ People's life [expectancy] in turn diminished and their lifespan was ten thousand years.³⁷

³⁵ [32] DĀ 6 at T I 40c23 here describes a shortening of lifespan that proceeds from 40,000 to 20,000, without mentioning an original lifespan of 80,000. This is noteworthy, since its account of how things become better eventually arrives at a lifespan of 80,000. According to DN 26 at DN III 68,16, the original lifespan was indeed 80,000, which due to theft and killing decreases to 40,000 (the reference to falsehood in the E^e and S^e editions of the discourse appears to be a textual error, in fact the B^e and C^e editions do not mention falsehood at this juncture), and then false speech leads to a further decrease to 20,000; cf. DN III 69,1. In MĀ 70 at T I 522b13 a decrease from an original lifespan of 80,000 to 40,000 takes place because of theft. Killing then leads to a further decrease from 40,000 to 20,000; cf. T I 522c4. DN 26 and MĀ 70 also make explicit what would be implicit in DĀ 6, in that the shortening of lifespan (as well as later its increase) affects the next generation. On the notion of decline in Buddhist traditions in general cf. Nattier 1991; for an observation relating the present depiction of decline to the Maitreya motif cf. also Nattier 1988: 39 note 15.

³⁶ [33] The translation is based on adopting the variant 更 instead of 轉.

³⁷ [34] In DN 26 at DN III 69,13 a decrease from 20,000 to 10,000 comes about through slander. Notably, the actual story does not involve slander, as it describes how someone reports a thief, who indeed had committed thievery, to the king. Franke 1913a: 266 note 2 comments on his translation of the passage in question that *pisuṇā vācā* actually means slander, but he opts for changing this to boasting, "eigentlich 'Verleumdung' ... hier aber müssen wir die Bedeutung etwas modeln." Walshe 1987: 601 note 793 comments on the same passage: "even though the charge was justified! But the denunciation was malicious."

"At the time of becoming ten thousand years old, living beings further robbed each other. It being investigated, they seized one of them, took him to the king, and said: 'This man is a thief. May the king deal with him.' The king asked: 'Is it true that you are a thief?'^[41a] He replied: 'I did not do it.' Then he intentionally spoke falsehood in the midst of the assembly.

"Because of poverty, those living beings had turned to engaging in robbery. Because of robbery, there was in turn fighting with swords. Because of fighting with swords, there was in turn killing and harming. Because of killing and harming, there was being in the grip of lust and adultery.³⁸^[10] Because of being in the grip of lust and adultery, there was falsehood. Because of falsehood, their lifespan in turn decreased until it was a thousand years.³⁹

As far as I can see the actual description in DN 26 at DN III 69,6 provides no basis for assuming that this could be a case of boasting or of malicious intent. It just indicates that someone committed theft and another person told the king that so-and-so had committed theft. In MĀ 70 at T I 522c17 a decrease from 20,000 to 10,000 comes about through false and slanderous speech.

³⁸ ^[35] The logic of this part of the presentation is not entirely straightforward and the reference to adultery seems out of place, since the narration in all versions relates the arising of falsehood to theft and killing, not to adultery. According to MĀ 70 at T I 522c22, sexual misconduct arises once falsehood and slander have come into being. This seems a more natural pattern, since the loss of commitment to truth and to harmony could indeed be envisaged as leading to a lack of concern about the repercussions of indulging in sexual misconduct.

³⁹ ^[36] DN 26 at DN III 69,25 proceeds from a lifespan of 10,000 to 5,000 years because of sexual misconduct. This is then followed by harsh speech and gossip leading to 2,500 or 2,000 years, and covetousness and ill will resulting in a further decrease of the lifespan to 1,000 years. In MĀ 70 at T I 522c23 the lifespan of 10,000 years decreases to 5,000 because of sexual misconduct. A further decrease to 2,500 comes about through unlawful desires, greed, and wrong teachings. This then decreases to 1,000 because of slander, harsh speech, and gossip. Parts of a description of the gradual decline of lifespan from 10,000

"At the time of becoming a thousand years old, there began in turn to emerge three [more] evil verbal activities in the world: 1) slanderous speech, 2) harsh speech, and 3) gossip. When these three evil [verbal] activities in turn flourished, the lifespan of people decreased to five hundred years.⁴⁰

"At the time of becoming five hundred years old, living beings gave rise to three more evil practices: 1) unlawful sexual desires, 2) unlawful greed, and 3) wrong views. When these three evil activities flourished in turn, the lifespan of people decreased to three hundred ... two hundred ... until, as in our present time,⁴¹ people reach one hundred years, few exceeding this and many achieving less.⁴²

"In this way, because of endless evil, their lifespan in turn diminishes until it [eventually] reaches ten years. When people become ten years, females are married off when they are five months old.

"At that time one no longer hears in the world the names of ghee, rock honey, dark rock honey, or of any sweet delicacies. Rice seeds and rice seedlings turn into grass and weeds. Silk, silken cloth, brocade, cotton, white wool, what now in the world

onwards can be found in the Sanskrit fragments SHT V 1333 and 1334, Sander and Waldschmidt 1985: 228–230.

⁴⁰ [37] DN 26 at DN III 70,11 and MĀ 70 at T I 523a3 agree that wrong view causes a decline from 1,000 to 500 years.

⁴¹ [38] Adopting a variant that adds 如 before 我.

⁴² [39] In DN 26 at DN III 70,17 a lifespan of 500 decreases to 250 or 200 years because of unlawful desires, excessive greed, and wrong teachings. Lack of respect for parents and for recluses and brahmins then leads to a further decrease to 100 years. In MĀ 70 at T I 523a6 lack of respect for parents and for recluses and brahmins, not doing meritorious deeds, and not seeing a future retribution for offences lead to a decrease of lifespan from 500 to 250 or 200 years, a description followed by a comment that nowadays people live up to 100 years.

is called a 'garment', are at that time not seen at all. Fabrics woven from coarse hair will be the best kind of clothing.

"At that time many thorny bushes grow on this earth and there are many mosquitoes, gadflies, flies, fleas, snakes, vipers, wasps, centipedes, and poisonous worms. Gold, silver, lapis lazuli, pearls, what are called gems, completely disappear into the earth. On the earth there are only clay stones, sand, and gravel.⁴³

"At that time living beings never ever hear any more the names of the ten wholesome [actions]. The world will be just full of the ten unwholesome [actions]. [11] When the names of the good qualities are no longer present, how could those people get to cultivate wholesome conduct?

"At that time living beings are capable of being extremely evil. There is no filial piety towards parents, no respect for teachers and elders, no loyalty, and no righteousness. Those who are rebellious and without principles are esteemed.⁴⁴ It is just as nowadays those are esteemed who are [instead] capable of cultivating wholesome conduct, of filial piety towards parents, of respecting teachers and elders, of being loyal, trustworthy, and righteous, of following principles and cultivating compassion.⁴⁵

"At that time living beings recurrently engage in the ten evils and often fall into evil ways. On seeing one another,

⁴³ [40] The translation is based on adopting the variant 唯 instead of 遂.

⁴⁴ [41] The translation is based on adopting the variant 反 instead of 返, and 更 instead of 便.

⁴⁵ [42] The translation is based on adopting the variant 仁 instead of 行. The corresponding passage in DN 26 at DN III 72,2 describes esteeming those who respect parents, recluses, brahmins, and the elders of the clan; MĀ 70 at T I 523a19 refers to esteeming those who practise the ten wholesome courses of action.

living beings constantly wish to kill one another.⁴⁶ They are just like hunters on seeing a herd of deer. Then on this earth there are many ravines, deep gorges with rushing rivers. The earth is a wasteland. Human beings are scarce. People go about in fear.⁴⁷ At that time fighting and plundering will manifest, grass and sticks taken in the hand will all become [like] halberds and spears. For seven days they will turn to mutual harming.⁴⁸

"Then those who are wise escape far away into [the mountains and] forests and rely on hiding in pits. During those seven days they harbour fear and terror in their hearts. ^[41b] They speak [to one another] uttering wholesome words of *mettā*: 'Do not harm me and I will not harm you.'⁴⁹

"By eating grass and the seeds of trees they stay alive. When the seven days are over, they come out of the mountains and forests. Then, on getting to see one another, those who have survived are delighted and congratulate [one another] saying: 'You are not dead? You are not dead?'

"It is just like parents who have a single son, from whom they have been separated for a long time. On seeing one an-

⁴⁶ [43] According to DN 26 at DN III 72,14 and MĀ 70 at T I 523a25, mutual hatred will even arise between close relatives (like mother and son, etc.). DN 26 at DN III 72,8 stands alone in showing the breakdown of family relationships as also affecting sexual conduct, in that people will copulate with each other like animals, without respect for one's mother, aunt, or teacher's wife.

⁴⁷ [44] The translation is based on adopting the variant 人 instead of 來.

⁴⁸ [45] DN 26 at DN III 73,4 explains that people will get a perception of each other as deer, *migasaññaṃ paṭilabhissanti*. This takes up the motif of the deer simile found in all versions to illustrate the hatred human beings have towards each other.

⁴⁹ [46] This description expresses a basic meaning of *mettā* or *maitrī*, conveying the sense of an almost contractual agreement to enter into a relationship of friendship and mutual protection; cf., e.g., Collins 1987: 52 and Schmithausen 1997.

other they are delighted without limit.⁵⁰ Those people are each delighted like this in their hearts and repeatedly congratulate one another. After that they enquire about their family [and learn] that many of their family members and relatives are dead, so they cry and weep with one another for another seven days. When those seven days are over, they congratulate one another for another seven days, full of joy and delight. ^[12]

"Reflecting on their own [situation], they say: 'We accumulated much evil, therefore we encountered this difficulty. Our relatives are dead, our family members have disappeared. We should now together cultivate a little what is wholesome. What kind of wholesomeness would it be proper to cultivate? We will not kill living beings.

"At that time living beings harbour *mettā* in their hearts,⁵¹ they do not harm one another. Thereupon the appearance and lifespan of these living beings increases, having been ten years, their lifespan becomes twenty years. At the time of becoming twenty years old, people further have this reflection:

"'Because we cultivated a little what is wholesome, because we did not harm one another, our lifespan has lengthened to twenty years. At present we should better cultivate a little more what is wholesome. What should we cultivate that is wholesome? Already we are not killing living beings, we should [also] not steal.' Having cultivated not stealing, their lifespan lengthens to forty years.

"At the time of becoming forty years, people further have this reflection: 'Because we cultivated a little what is wholesome, our lifespan has lengthened. At present we should better culti-

⁵⁰ [47] Whereas DN 26 does not have such a comparison, MĀ 70 at T I 523b7 presents a similar illustration, which here involves just a mother whose only son returns home after a long absence.

⁵¹ [48] Adopting a variant without 盡.

vate a little more what is wholesome. What is wholesome? What should we cultivate? We should not commit adultery.' Then these people do not commit adultery at all and their lifespan lengthens to eighty years.⁵²

"People becoming eighty years further have this reflection: 'Because we cultivated a little what is wholesome, our lifespan has lengthened. At present we should better cultivate a little more what is wholesome. What is wholesome? What should we cultivate? We should not speak falsehood.' Then these people do not speak falsehood at all and their lifespan lengthens to one hundred and sixty years.

"At the time of becoming one hundred and sixty years, people further have this reflection: 'Because we cultivated a little what is wholesome, our lifespan has lengthened. At present we should better cultivate a little more what is wholesome.'⁵³ What is wholesome? What should we cultivate? We should not speak slander-

⁵² [49] DN 26 at DN III 74,7 at this point summarizes the ensuing cultivation of various wholesome forms of conduct leading to a gradual increase from 20 years to 40 years, 80 years, 160 years, 320 years, 640 years, 2,000 years, 4,000 years, 8,000 years, 20,000 years, 40,000 years, until their lifespan eventually becomes 80,000 years. MĀ 70 at T I 523b29 proceeds similarly to DĀ 6 in that it indicates that gradually building up the remaining eight of the ten wholesome courses of action leads to an ever increasing lifespan. In this way no longer engaging in sexual misconduct the lifespan increases from 40 to 80 years, no longer speaking falsehood it increases to 160 years, no longer engaging in slander it increases to 320 years, abstaining from harsh speech it increases to 640 years, refraining from gossip it increases to 2,500 years, being without covetousness it increases to 5,000 years, having no ill will it increases to 10,000 years, leaving behind wrong views it increases to 20,000 years, leaving behind three unwholesome states it increases to 40,000 years, and being respectful to parents, recluses, and brahmins it increases to 80,000 years.

⁵³ [50] The translation is based on adopting the variant 少 instead of 小.

ous speech.' Then these people do not speak slanderous speech at all and their lifespan lengthens to three hundred and twenty years.

"At the time of becoming three hundred and twenty years, people further have this reflection: 'Because we cultivated a little what is wholesome, our lifespan has lengthened. At present we should better cultivate a little more what is wholesome.

[13] What is wholesome? What should we cultivate? We should not speak harsh speech.' Then these people do not speak harsh speech at all and their lifespan lengthens to six hundred and forty years.

"At the time of becoming six hundred and forty years, people further have this reflection: [41c] 'Because we cultivated what is wholesome, our lifespan has lengthened. At present we should better cultivate a little more what is wholesome. What is wholesome? What should we cultivate? We should not speak gossip.' Then these people do not speak gossip at all and their lifespan lengthens to two thousand years.⁵⁴

"At the time of becoming two thousand years, people further have this reflection: 'Because we cultivated what is wholesome, our lifespan has lengthened. At present we should better cultivate a little more what is wholesome. What is wholesome? What should we cultivate? We should not be covetous.' Then these people are not covetous at all, but practise generosity and their lifespan lengthens to five thousand years.

"At the time of becoming five thousand years, people further have this reflection: 'Because we cultivated what is whole-

⁵⁴ [51] MĀ 70 at T I 524a8 proceeds instead from 640 years to 2,500 years. Both the shift from 640 to 2,000 in the other versions and the shift from 640 to 2,500 in MĀ 70 no longer conform to the doubling of numbers adopted up to this point. For what comes afterwards, however, 2,500 seems to fit better, since through further doublings this yields 5,000, 10,000, 20,000, 40,000, and 80,000. The same is not the case for 2,000.

some, our lifespan has lengthened. At present we should better cultivate a little more what is wholesome. What is wholesome? What should we cultivate? We should not have ill will.' Then these people have no ill will at all, with a mind that is well cultivated in *mettā*, and their lifespan lengthens to ten thousand years.⁵⁵

"At the time of becoming ten thousand years, people further have this reflection: 'Because we cultivated what is wholesome, our lifespan has lengthened. At present we should better cultivate a little more what is wholesome. What is wholesome? What should we cultivate? We should practise right view, without giving rise to distortions.' Then these people completely practise right view, without giving rise to distortions, and their lifespan lengthens to twenty thousand years.

"At the time of becoming twenty thousand years, people further have this reflection: 'Because we cultivated what is wholesome, our lifespan has lengthened. At present we should better cultivate a little more what is wholesome. What is wholesome? What should we cultivate? We should eliminate these three unwholesome states: 1) unlawful sexual desires, 2) unlawful greed, and 3) wrong view.'⁵⁶ Then these people completely eliminate

⁵⁵ [52] DĀ 6 at T I 41c9 refers to the absence of 嫉妬, which according to Hirakawa 1997: 367 can, in addition to its more common meaning of *īṣyā* and *mātsarya*, also render *vidveṣa*. The context (opposition to *maitrī*), the parallels, and the pattern provided by the ten wholesome courses of action suggest that this alternative sense of the term is the appropriate choice here.

⁵⁶ [53] DĀ 6 at T I 41c17: 邪見, which here seems out of context since wrong views would have already been left behind with the previous stage, when right view, 正見, was cultivated (although its occurrence here does mirror the earlier description of a gradual decline, where wrong view did occur as part of the same set of three). Ichimura 2015: 239 translates 正見 as "right perception" and 邪見 as "wrong views of life" (on the earlier occasion of a gradual decline at T I 41a9, he translates 邪見 instead as "erroneous views"). MĀ 70 at T I 524b16

these three unwholesome states and their lifespan lengthens to forty thousand years. ^[14]

"At the time of becoming forty thousand years, people further have this reflection: 'Because we cultivated what is wholesome, our lifespan has lengthened. At present we should better cultivate a little more what is wholesome. What is wholesome? What should we cultivate? We should be dutiful to our parents and have respect for teachers and elders.' Then these people are dutiful to their parents and have respect for their teachers and elders, and their lifespan lengthens to eighty thousand years.

"At the time when people become eighty thousand years, females leave and are married off when they are five hundred years old. Then people will have [only] nine types of disease: 1) cold, 2) heat, 3) hunger, 4) thirst, 5) defecation, 6) urination, 7) desire, 8) gluttony, and 9) old age.⁵⁷

"Then this great earth will be open and level, without ravines, wastelands, or thorny bushes, and there will also be no mosquitoes, gadflies, snakes, vipers, or poisonous worms. Clay stones, sand, and gravel will become [like] lapis lazuli. People will flourish, the five grains will be common and cheap, and there will be abundant happiness without end. Eighty thousand great cities will manifest, with neighbouring villages [only] a cock's crow away from one another.

at this point speaks of 行邪法 as a further step to be taken once wrong view has been given up. DN 26 at DN III 74,12 in its summary presentation similarly distinguishes between wrong view and wrong states as two distinct things to be given up. Perhaps the reference to 邪見 as the third of three unwholesome states here and on the earlier occasion in DĀ 6 is the result of a textual error and the proper reading in both instances should rather be 邪法.

⁵⁷ [54] DN 26 at DN III 75,7 lists only three diseases: desire, not eating, and old age. MĀ 70 at T I 524b28 lists cold and heat, defecation and urination, desire, fasting, and old age.

"At that time a Buddha will appear in the world by the name of Maitreya Tathāgata, ^[42a] an arahant, a fully awakened one, endowed with the ten epithets, just as I am now a Tathāgata endowed with the ten epithets.⁵⁸

"In [this world with its] *devas*, Sakka, Brahmā, and Māra, he will attain direct realization by himself [right] amidst this world with its *devas* and humans, [such as] *devas* [subject to] Māra, recluses, and brahmins; just as I now in [this world with its] *devas*, Sakka, Brahmā, and Māra, have attained direct realization by myself [right] amidst this world with its *devas* and humans, [such as] *devas* [subject to] Māra, recluses, and brahmins.

"He will teach the Dharma, which is good in the beginning, good in the middle and in the end, endowed with [appropriate] meaning and expression,⁵⁹ [and he will teach] the pure practice of the holy life; just as I now teach the Dharma that is [good] in the beginning, [good] in the middle and in the end, all completely genuine, endowed with [appropriate] meaning and expression, a holy life that is pure.

"He will have a community of innumerable thousands of ten thousands of disciples,⁶⁰ just as I nowadays have several hundred disciples. At that time people will address those disciples by the epithet 'Sons of Maitrī', just as my disciples are addressed by the epithet 'Sons of the Sakyan'.⁶¹ ^[15]

"At that time there will be a king by the name of Saṅkha, a head-anointed warrior and noble wheel-turning king, who will

⁵⁸ [55] In DN 26 at DN III 76,1 the future Buddha is mentioned later, after the description of the wheel-turning king endowed with seven treasures. MĀ 70 does not mention the future Buddha at all.

⁵⁹ [56] DĀ 6 at T I 42a5: 味, literally 'taste', which according to Hirakawa 1997: 250 can also render *vyañjana*.

⁶⁰ [57] DN 26 at DN III 76,19 speaks just of several thousands of disciples of Maitreya.

⁶¹ [58] Such a remark is not found in the parallels.

rule over the four quarters of the world by means of the right Dharma, without any force. He will be endowed with the seven treasures: 1) the golden wheel-treasure, 2) the white elephant-treasure, 3) the purplish horse-treasure, 4) the lustrous jewel-treasure, 5) the precious woman-treasure, 6) the householder-treasure, and 7) the counsellor-treasure.

"The king will have a thousand sons, who will be courageous and heroic, capable of overcoming enemy forces, respected in the four directions, naturally peaceful, not [needing to rely on] soldiers equipped with weapons.

"At that time the noble king will raise a great jewelled pillar (*yūpa*) of sixteen fathoms in circumference and a thousand fathoms high.⁶² The pillar will be adorned and ornamented in a thousand different colours, it will have a hundred edges, each edge having a hundred subsections, all embroidered with jewels and with many jewels attached in between.

"Having dismantled this pillar, the noble king will then offer [the jewels] as gifts to recluses and brahmins, and to the destitute in the country. Then he will shave off his hair and beard, put on the three monastic robes and leave the home life to practise the path. Practising the supreme path he will directly realize by himself here and now that birth and death have been extinguished, the holy life has been established, what had to be done has been done, there will be no more becoming hereafter."

The Buddha told the monks: "You should diligently cultivate wholesome conduct. Through cultivating wholesome conduct, your lifespan will be prolonged, your complexion

⁶² [59] DĀ 6 at T I 42a15: 幢, for which Hirakawa 1997: 423 lists *yūpa*, besides its usual meaning of *ketu* or *dhvaja*. According to DN 26 at DN III 76,23, the *yūpa* raised by Saṅkha had been constructed by Mahāpanāda; cf. Leumann 1919: 195f and Anālayo 2010b: 102 note 21. MĀ 70 does not mention a *yūpa* at all.

will improve, you will be tranquil and happy, richly provided with wealth, and endowed with awesome strength.

"It is just as kings who conducted themselves according to the ancient customs of wheel-turning kings had a prolonged lifespan, their complexion improved, they were tranquil and happy, richly provided with wealth, and endowed with awesome strength. In the same way, monks, by diligently cultivating wholesome practices you will have a prolonged lifespan, your complexion will improve, you will be tranquil and happy, richly provided with wealth, and endowed with awesome strength.

"What is prolonged lifespan for a monk? It is in this way: A monk cultivates concentration [through] desire, being diligent without laxity and endowed with formations of striving,⁶³ as a basis for cultivating supernormal power; he cultivates concentration [through] energy... concentration [through] mental intention ... concentration [through] discrimination, being diligent without laxity and endowed with formations of striving,^[16] as a basis for cultivating supernormal power. ^[42b] This is prolonged lifespan [for a monk].⁶⁴

"What is improved complexion for a monk? It is in this way: A monk is endowed with the moral precepts, is accomplished in deportment; seeing that there is a small transgression arouses in him great trepidation. He evenly trains in morality and is completely and in every way equipped with it. This is improved complexion for a monk.

⁶³ [60] DĀ 6 at T I 42a28: 滅行; a rendering which would go back to an original *prahāṇa/pahāṇa* instead of *pradhāṇa/padhāṇa*; on this issue in general cf., e.g., Minh Chau 1964/1991: 327, Bapat 1969: 5, and Gethin 1992: 70–72.

⁶⁴ [61] Before taking up the four bases for supernormal power, DN 26 at DN III 77,8 and MĀ 70 at T I 524c15 present the practice of the four *satipaṭṭhānas* as the way to keep to one's own resort, corresponding to the indication made in DĀ 6 at the outset of the discourse; cf. above p. 350f note 5.

"What is tranquillity and happiness for a monk? It is in this way: By abandoning and leaving behind sensual desire, being remote from unwholesome states, with [directed] awareness and [sustained] contemplation, with joy and happiness arisen from seclusion,⁶⁵ he dwells in the first absorption. With the leaving behind and ceasing of [directed] awareness and [sustained] contemplation, with delightful confidence within, the mind being collected and mentally unified, without [directed] awareness and without [sustained] contemplation, with the joy and happiness that arise from concentration, he dwells in the second absorption.

"With the relinquishing of joy he maintains equipoise, his unified mind is without distractions, with his whole being he personally experiences happiness,⁶⁶ as sought after by noble ones, and dwelling in equipoise with mindfulness and happiness he dwells in the third absorption.

"With the relinquishing and ceasing of pain and happiness, and with the earlier leaving behind of sadness and joy, with neither-pain-nor-pleasure and with the purity of equipoise and

⁶⁵ DĀ 6 at T I 42b5: 離生喜樂; translated by Ichimura 2015: 242 as "while the sense of joy and bliss increase through removal of the cause of rebirth (i.e., reaching the supramundane sphere)". Besides not reflecting the Chinese original particularly well, the translation, as well as the explanation added in brackets, seems to misconstrue the implication of this standard phrase in the description of the first absorption, which has no implicit relation to reaching a supramundane condition of to the cause of rebirth. Instead, the point at stake appears to be merely that the joy and happiness arisen during the first absorption are based on temporary seclusion from sensual distractions, cf. Anālayo 2014d and on seclusion in general 2011c.

⁶⁶ [63] My translation is based on the assumption that the reference to 身 in DĀ 6 at T I 42b8 renders an instrumental *kāyena* in the Indic original, which in such contexts functions as an idiomatic expression to convey personal and direct experience; cf. above p. 183 note 16.

mindfulness, he dwells in the fourth absorption. This is tranquil happiness for a monk.

"What is being richly provided with wealth for a monk? It is in this way: A monk cultivates a mental state of *mettā* and completely pervades one direction with it, and the other directions as well, completely pervading everywhere without difference and without confines, leaving behind the multitude of resentments, with a mind that is without irritation and dislike, which has become still, naturally enjoying the gentleness of *mettā*. The mental state of compassion ... sympathetic joy ... and equanimity ... *is also like this*. This is being richly provided with wealth for a monk."⁶⁷

"What is being endowed with awesome strength for a monk? It is in this way: A monk knows as it really is the noble truth of *dukkha* ... of its arising ... of its cessation ... and he also knows as it really is the noble truth of the path. ^[17] This is being endowed with awesome strength for a monk."⁶⁸

The Buddha said to the monks: "Having now examined all those who possess strength, there is none that exceeds the strength of Māra. Yet, a monk who has eradicated the influxes has the strength that enables him to win victory over [Māra]."⁶⁹

At that time the monks, who had heard what the Buddha had said, were delighted and received it respectfully.

⁶⁷ [64] MĀ 70 does not take up the topic of a monk's wealth and consequently does not mention the *brahmavihāras*.

⁶⁸ [65] DN 26 at DN III 78,23 and MĀ 70 at T I 524c25 present the destruction of the influxes (*āśava*) as what constitutes the power of a monk.

⁶⁹ [66] MĀ 70 at T I 524c29 similarly indicates that the power of Māra will be overcome by the superior wisdom power of one who has destroyed the influxes. DN 26 at DN III 79,1 instead contrasts the power of Māra to an increase of merit by building up wholesome states; the commentary Sv III 858,9 then relates the notion of merit to the destruction of the influxes.

Study

The three versions in the *Dīrgha-āgama*, the *Dīgha-nikāya*, and the *Madhyama-āgama* agree in presenting their description of decline and prosperity as an exegesis of the basic injunction to take refuge in oneself and the Dharma. A central theme in this description of decline and prosperity is the importance of moral conduct or its absence, as can be seen in table 5.

Table 5: Reasons for a Decrease of Lifespan

Reasons given in DĀ 6	Lifespan decreases to
theft and killing	20,000
adultery	10,000
falsehood	1,000
slander, harsh speech, gossip	500
unlawful sexual desires/greed, wrong views	300 or 200 or 100

Reasons given in DN 26	Lifespan decreases to
theft and killing	40,000
false speech	20,000
slander	10,000
sexual misconduct	5,000
harsh speech, gossip	2,500 or 2,000
covetousness, ill will	1,000
wrong view	500
unlawful lust/greed, wrong teachings	250 or 200
lack of respect	100

Reasons given in MĀ 70	Lifespan decreases to
theft	40,000
killing	20,000
false and slanderous speech	10,000
sexual misconduct	5,000
unlawful desires/greed, wrong teachings	2,500
slander, harsh speech, gossip	1,000
wrong view	500
lack of respect	250 or 200

[18] As the survey in table 5 shows, the reasons for a decreasing lifespan seem for the most part to correspond to the ten courses of action (*kammāpatha*). In their unwholesome mode these cover the three bodily aspects of killing, stealing, and sexual misconduct; the four verbal aspects of false speech, slander, harsh speech, and gossip; and the three mental aspects of covetousness, ill will, and wrong view.

In the case of the gradual increase of lifespan, the relationship to the ten courses of action is even more evident, as can be seen below in table 6. Clearly, a central function of the tale is to inculcate morality. The present form of the discourse as a description of what actually happened in the past and will happen in the future might be an example of a general tendency to literalism evident in the early discourses, in that its depictions could have their origin in what were parables for the sake of illustration.

Table 6: Reasons for an Increase of Lifespan

Reasons given in DĀ 6	Lifespan increases to
no killing	20
no stealing	40
no adultery	80
no falsehood	160
no slander	320
no harsh speech	640
no gossip	2,000
no covetousness	5,000
no ill will	10,000
no wrong view	20,000
no unlawful sexual desires/greed, wrong view	40,000
no disrespect	80,000

Reasons given in DN 26	Lifespan increases to
no killing	20
no stealing ... <i>up to</i>	40 ... <i>up to</i>
no disrespect	80,000

Reasons given in MĀ 70	Lifespan increases to
no killing	20
no stealing	40
no sexual misconduct	80
no falsehood	160
no slander	320
no harsh speech	640
no gossip	2,500
no covetousness	5,000
no ill will	10,000
no wrong view	20,000
no unlawful desires/greed, wrong teachings	40,000
no disrespect	80,000

Elsewhere I have argued that the tendency to literalism is particularly evident with some *jātaka* tales, where what originally would have been a parable becomes something that actually happened.⁷⁰ [19] In the present case, the description of decline and prosperity could similarly have its origins in a parable whose purpose was to inculcate the importance of moral conduct.⁷¹

In another publication I have suggested that in the early discourses the depiction of the wheel-turning king has a didactic

⁷⁰ [68] Anālayo 2010b: 55–71.

⁷¹ [69] Rhys Davids and Rhys Davids 1921: 53 conclude that "the whole is a fairy tale. The personages who play their part in it never existed. The events described in it never occurred." Gombrich 1988: 84 puts into question "the seriousness of the ... myth, in which a mythical emperor of the world retires and instructs his son in the principles of good rule." Collins 1998: 481 explains that "the intention (at least in part) of the long-drawn-out sequence of decline and revival, in all its detailed specificity, numerical and otherwise, and also of the humor and irony of the parable, is to induce in its audience — or at least make possible as a reaction for some among them — a sense of detachment" (which he sees in particular aimed at detachment towards the passage of time, but I would take this also in a general sense); for a survey of humorous elements in DN 26 cf. also Collins 1996.

purpose.⁷² Through a hyperbolic description of the acme of worldly power the employment of this motif serves to convey a soteriological message on the superiority of renunciation and liberation.⁷³ A concise statement of the same basic message can be found in a discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya* and its *Samyukta-āgama* counterpart. The two versions throw into relief the superiority of the four qualities of a stream-enterer that surpasses even the dominion a wheel-turning king has over the four continents.⁷⁴

It is against this background of the possible origin of the above depiction as a parable that aims to inculcate morality and high-

⁷² [70] Cf. Anālayo 2011g and 2012h, which are based on a study of the Mahādeva tale, whose relevance to the present context can be seen in the apparent intrusion of the grant given to the barber in DĀ 6 and the reference to the full description of the wheel-turning king in the Mahādeva tale in MĀ 70; cf. above p. 352 note 11 and 356 and note 21.

⁷³ [71] Pace, e.g., Kalupahana 1995/2008: 131 and 125, who holds that "the conception of a Universal Monarch was presented as an ideal for any individual or community to adopt", hence according to him the present discourse "provides the most detailed account of the Buddha's conception of kingship". Yet, as noted by Reynolds 1972: 20, it is "in the later strata of the tradition" that the wheel-turning king takes on such a function and then "becomes an important element ... which exerts a strong influence on religious attitudes and has a significant impact on political affairs as well." In the words of Gethin 2014: 73, "we should be cautious about reading a text such as the *Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta* as preaching a Buddhist form of constitutional law and monarchy."

⁷⁴ [72] SN 55.1 at SN V 342,2 and SĀ 835 at T II 214a23 (both explain that the stream-enterer's superiority lies in being freed forever from the prospect of a lower rebirth, unlike the wheel-turning king). The superiority of stream-entry over world dominion is also highlighted, e.g., in Dhṛp 178, its counterpart in the Patna *Dharmapada* 338, Cone 1989: 193, as well as in a quote of this stanza in the *Karmavibhaṅgopadeśa*, Kudo 2011: 29,8 (= Lévi 1932a: 160,6); cf. also the two *Dharmapada* collections preserved in Chinese translation, T 210 at T IV 566b10 and T 211 at T IV 594a28, the Chinese parallel to the *Aṭṭhakavagga*, T 198 at T IV 185c23, and the *Vimuttimagga*, T 1648 at T XXXII 458a14 (these references have already been noted by Kudo 2011: 29 note 53).

light the superiority of liberation over worldly dominion that the most prominent difference between the three versions is best evaluated: the arising of the future Buddha Maitreya.

The passage on the arising of the future Buddha Maitreya occurs before the description of the wheel-turning king in the *Dīrgha-āgama* version translated above, after this description in the *Dīrgha-nikāya* parallel, and in the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse it is not found at all.⁷⁵

The absence of any reference to Maitreya in the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse could in principle be either because this version lost the relevant portion of text or else because it was added to the other two versions. A loss due to intentional omission by those who transmitted the *Madhyama-āgama* can safely be discarded, since another discourse in the same collection does report the advent of the future Buddha Maitreya.⁷⁶ [20] The present *Madhyama-āgama* discourse also shows no evident signs of textual loss. As I have argued elsewhere in more detail, given that the Maitreya episode occurs at different places in the *Dīrgha-āgama* and *Dīrgha-nikāya* versions, that the *Madhyama-āgama* version at this point has a smoother transition than its parallels, that such precise and detailed predictions of a future event are not found elsewhere among the early discourses, and that the probable main purpose of the present discourse to inculcate moral behaviour would not require the motif of a future Buddha, it seems safe to conclude that the description of Maitreya is a later addition.⁷⁷

⁷⁵ [73] The absence of the Maitreya motif in MĀ 70 has already been pointed out by Karashima et al. 2000: 310f note 121 (a publication which due to my ignorance of Japanese I am not able to consult); cf. Karashima 2013: 178.

⁷⁶ [74] MĀ 66 at T I 510b24.

⁷⁷ [75] Anālayo 2010b: 107–113; cf. also, e.g., Gokhale 1994/2001a: 139, who concludes that "the prophetic part alluding to the coming Buddha Metteyya is obviously a later accretion." In the words of Collins 1998: 494, "it may well

Now the *Madhyama-āgama* continues after its description of the wheel-turning king by referring to the monks as having gone forth from home to homelessness out of faith, having shaved off hair and beard, and put on the monastic robes.⁷⁸ Here this description is part of an injunction given by the Buddha to the monks that they should keep to their own resort.

A similar description occurs in the *Dīrgha-āgama* version, with the difference that here it is the wheel-turning king who shaves off his hair and beard, puts on the three monastic robes, and leaves the home life to practise the path.⁷⁹ In the *Dīrgha-nīkāya* account it is also the wheel-turning king who shaves off hair and beard, puts on yellow robes, and goes forth from home life to homelessness.⁸⁰

Thus perhaps the description of the future wheel-turning king's going forth came into being based on a simple change of the subject of a phrase of the type now still found in the *Madhyama-āgama*. Such a change could easily occur during transmission. The result of such a change would be fully in line with what according to all versions previous wheel-turning kings did (after their wheel-treasures had disappeared),⁸¹ namely go forth.

seem odd, indeed unacceptable, to the dour-faced and humorless positivism with which these texts are so often read ... that the earliest text-place where a reference to the future Buddha is found should be a humorous parable."

⁷⁸ [76] MĀ 70 at T I 524c10: 剃除鬚髮, 著袈裟衣, 至信, 捨家, 無家.

⁷⁹ [77] DĀ 6 at T I 42a18: 剃除鬚髮, 服三法衣, 出家.

⁸⁰ [78] DN 26 at DN III 76,27: *kesamassuṃ* (C^c: *kesamassūṃ*) *ohāretvā kāsāyāni vatthāni acchādetvā agārasmā anagāriyaṃ pabbajissati*.

⁸¹ [79] Although a future disappearance of the wheel-treasure is not reported in DĀ 6 or its parallels DN 26 and MĀ 70, it can be found in an account paralleling the description of the world at the time of the future wheel-turning king in the *Divyāvadāna*, Cowell and Neil 1886: 61,15 (cf. also T 1448 at T XXIV 25a21): As soon as Maitreya attains full awakening, the seven treasures of the wheel-turning king Śaṅka disappear. This signals to the king that the time has come

Once the future wheel-turning king also goes forth, the tale would have developed further in line with a tendency to improve on the story that is evident, for example, in the *Dīrgha-āgama* version's "great jewelled pillar (*yūpa*)" and its *Dīrgha-nikāya* counterpart, both presumably functioning as a symbol of the *axis mundi*.⁸² In line with the same tendency, it would be an improvement over previous wheel-turning kings and their going forth if the future wheel-turning king were to go forth without waiting for his wheel-treasure to disappear and if then he were to become an arahant.^[21] Such a superior form of going forth, compared to the going forth of previous wheel-turning kings, would be in line with the soteriological thrust of the discourses as a whole in building up towards the theme of liberation and Nirvāṇa.

The only problem with this is that, for him to become an arahant, a Buddha would be required. Once a Buddha is present, it becomes possible for the wheel-turning king to go forth under this Buddha and to receive the teachings whose putting into practice can lead him to full awakening.

The notion of future Buddhas in general is well attested in other early discourses.⁸³ Such references serve the purpose of pre-

to go forth. At the same time, as already noted by Abegg 1946: 13, it symbolizes that all worldly dominion pales beside the spiritual dominion of a Buddha.

⁸² [80] Cf., e.g., Irwin 1980 (on which cf. de Jong 1982). The *Divyāvadāna*, Cowell and Neil 1886: 61,10 (cf. also T 1448 at T XXIV 25a17), and a *Maitreyavyākaraṇa*, stanza 54 in Lévi 1932b: 386,24, indicate that it is precisely on witnessing the destruction of the *yūpa* that Maitreya is motivated to withdraw into a forest, where he then attains full awakening. Another instance of the same tendency can be seen earlier in the description of those whom a crown prince should approach after the wheel-turning king has abdicated the throne; cf. above p. 354f note 15. The corresponding description in DN 26 employs a term that alludes to Nirvāṇa, and DĀ 6 actually speaks of reaching Nirvāṇa.

⁸³ [81] Explicit references to future Buddhas in general are found in several Pāli discourses as well as their parallels. One such case is DN 16 at DN II 144,25 and

senting something as a feature common to Buddhas in general, indicating that this is not characteristic of the present Buddha Gotama only. With the basic notion of future Buddhas already in place, it is less surprising if the present situation leads to the arising of a reference to a specific future Buddha.

In this way, a closer look at several aspects of the present discourse and its parallel versions suggests the appearance of the Maitreya motif to have been a natural development. A further stage in the development of the Maitreya motif then appears to be reflected in another discourse in the *Madhyama-āgama* collection, the Discourse on an Explanation about the Past. In this discourse the Buddha gives a description of the future reign of King Saṅkha in terms closely similar to the *Dīrgha-āgama* discourse translated above and its parallels. According to the Discourse on an Explanation about the Past, people's lifespan will be eighty thousand years, they will be free from diseases, women will marry when they are five hundred years old, and general living conditions will be very pleasant. The wheel-turning king Saṅkha will arise, endowed with the seven treasures and a thousand valiant sons, and eventually he will go forth under the Buddha Maitreya and become an arahant.

On hearing this description, a monk by the name of Ajita gets up and formulates the aspiration to be the future wheel-turning king, followed by another monk by the name of Maitreya getting up and aspiring to be the future Buddha at that time.⁸⁴ The Bud-

its parallels Waldschmidt 1951: 298,14 (§32.24), DĀ 2 at T I 25c12, T 5 at T I 169b20, T 6 at T I 185a1, T 7 at T I 200b22, and EĀ 42.3 at T II 751b3. Another case is DN 28 at DN III 100,4 (= SN 47.12 at SN V 159,23) and its parallels fragment 290v3, DiSimone 2016: 103, DĀ 18 at T I 76c8, T 18 at T I 255b1, and SĀ 498 at T II 130c14. Yet another case is SN 6.2 at SN I 140,4 (= AN 4.21 at AN II 21,12) and its parallels SĀ 1188 at T II 322a5 and SĀ² 101 at T II 410a18.

⁸⁴ [82] MĀ 66 at T I 510a1 (Ajita) and 510c10 (Maitreya). Maitreya's aspiration to be the future Buddha is also reported in T 44 at T I 830b17, but here the other

dha rebukes Ajita for generating the inferior aspiration to become a wheel-turning king, whereas Maitreya receives praise for aspiring to future Buddhahood.

A reference to this discourse in the *Karmavibhaṅga* employs both of these names alternatively, Ajita and Maitreya, for the future Buddha.⁸⁵ The same can be seen in the *Sikṣāsamuccaya*,⁸⁶ as well as in the *Mahāvastu*.⁸⁷ In a different context in the same *Mahāvastu*, however, Ajita and Maitreya occurs side by side as two different future Buddhas.⁸⁸ [22] Besides other textual references, Ajita as a future Buddha is also attested in a Kanaganahalli inscription.⁸⁹

monk aspiring to future wheel-turning kingship is not named; cf. T I 830b1. A discourse quotation in the *Abhidharmakośopāyikā-ṭīkā* has only preserved Maitreya's aspiration; cf. D 4094 *nyu* 91a3 or Q 5595 *thu* 139a2. For a more detailed discussion of this whole episode cf. Anālayo 2010b: 118–127.

⁸⁵ [83] Kudo 2004: 56,9 (= Lévi 1932a: 40,1).

⁸⁶ [84] In the *Sikṣāsamuccaya* Bendall 1902/1970: 97,8, Ajita is asked a question and in the next line Maitreya replies.

⁸⁷ [85] Senart 1882: 51,6: *ajito bodhisatvo mama atyayena buddho loke bhaviṣyati iti. ajito nāmena maitreyo gotreṇa*. Senart 1897: 246,13: *ajite ... maitreyo bhaviṣyati anāgate*. Ajita as a name of the Buddha Maitreya occurs also in the *Anāgatavaṃsa*, cf., e.g., stanza 43, Minayeff 1886: 46,4: *ajito nāma nāmena metteyyo dvipaduttamo*.

⁸⁸ [86] As part of a listing of the radiances of several Buddhas, the *Mahāvastu* indicates, Senart 1897: 330,8: *ajito dvādaśayojanaprabho siddhārtho vimśadyojanaprabho maitreyo dvādaśayojanaprabho*. As already noted by Edgerton 1953/1998: 7 (s.v. *Ajita*), here Ajita is the "name of a future Buddha, but seemingly distinguished from Maitreya"; for further references to Ajita cf. *ibid.* and Lamotte 1958/1988: 702–706.

⁸⁹ [87] Nakanishi and von Hinüber 2014: 79: *sidha bhagavā bodhisato ayito anāgato budho upāsakena vākāḍ(h)icāna[m]*, *visāghena saputakena kārīto sa-valokasa hitasughā ca*, "Success! The Lord Bodhisatva Ayita (Ajita), the future Buddha, was ordered to be made by the lay practitioner (*upāsaka*) Vi-sāgha (Viśākha) from the Vākāḍhica family with his son(s) for the well-being

These various occurrences point to the narrative found in the Discourse on an Explanation about the Past (and elsewhere) as an influential text in the context of the evolving Maitreya narratives. Particularly significant is the fact that Ajita at times features as the name of the future Buddha on its own, as evident in the *Mahāvastu* or in the Kanaganahalli inscription, instead of merely being an epithet of Maitreya.

This makes it fairly safe to conclude that the name Ajita need not be the result of Iranian influence.⁹⁰ In fact the name Ajita can be found frequently in the Pāli discourses, [23] where it refers to a variety of personalities.⁹¹ Ajita is also attested as the name of a

and happiness of the whole world." For a survey of Maitreya iconography in general cf. Behrendt 2014; for a specimen from Kanaganahalli cf. below p. 671 plate 5.

⁹⁰ [88] Przyluski 1929: 10 and 1931: 6, Lévi 1932b: 360, Rowland 1938: 75, and Soper 1949: 265 note 30 consider occurrences of the term Ajita as supporting an Iranian origin of the Maitreya motif, given that one of the epithets of Mithra is "invincible", *ajita*; cf. also von Gabain 1987: 28. Yet, the choice of such a term would seem natural for designating someone about to become a wheel-turning king, which is Ajita's role in MĀ 66. By dint of possessing the seven treasures a wheel-turning king is so invincible that he does not even need to engage in a fight. The application of the same qualification to the future Buddha is similarly not surprising, as pointed out by Filliozat 1950: 147f, in view of the protective qualities associated in the Buddhist traditions with *maitrī* (on which cf. the detailed study by Schmithausen 1997); cf. also Renou and Filliozat 1953/2001: 539, who note that in the case of Maitreya "le nom est un métonymique formé sur *maitrī* 'bienveillance' et la *maitrī* fonctionne comme un charme d'invulnérabilité, ce qui explique l'épithète d' 'invaincu'."

⁹¹ [89] The Pāli discourses know a variety of persons by the name Ajita, including one of the six well-known contemporary teachers, Ajita Kesakambālī, DN 2 at DN I 55,5; a Licchavī general, DN 24 at DN III 15,2; a wanderer (*paribbājaka*), AN 10.116 at AN V 229,26; a brahmin student (*māṇava*), Sn 1032–1039; and a *thera*, Th 20; cf. also Vin II 305,35 for a reference to a *bhikkhu* by the name of Ajita and for further references Malalasekera 1937/1995: 35–38.

Jain Tīrthaṃkāra.⁹² These instances hardly require Iranian influence to come into being.⁹³

Returning to the *Dīrgha-āgama* discourse translated above and to its *Dīrgha-nikāya* parallel, be it noted that Maitreya has no messianic implications of any type in this context.⁹⁴ The paradisiacal conditions at the time of the future wheel-turning king are entirely the outcome of people's wholesome conduct. This much is evident in all versions, but can be seen particularly well in the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse, where conditions are similarly beatific without the appearance of a future Buddha. Clearly, the function of the future Buddha in what appears to have provided the context for the arising of the idea of Maitreya is merely to serve as an op-

⁹² [90] Filliozat 1950: 147 points out that the second of the Jain Tīrthaṃkāras has the name Ajitanātha, where a relationship to Mithra can safely be set aside; von Glasenapp 1925/1999: 297 explains that according to tradition "he got his name from the fact that he was not vanquished (*ajita*) by passions or that his father could not defeat his mother in game when she was pregnant with him."

⁹³ [91] Thus, in the words of Gonda 1973: 98, "the supposition that he [i.e., Maitreya] is historically identical with the Vedic Mitra, received with a slightly different name into the august assembly of Buddhist 'saints', is doubtful and, as far as I am able to see, incapable of proof"; cf. also Deeg 1999: 148 note 13: "eine direkte Entlehnung ist eher zweifelhaft".

⁹⁴ [92] An entertaining suggestion in this respect can be found in Carus 1897: 195: "Buddha prophesied that the next Buddha after him would be Maitrêya ... this prophecy *may* be said to be fulfilled in Jesus of Nazareth. Thus the Christians may be said to be Buddhists that worship Maitrêya under the name of Christ." Snodgrass 2003: 231 notes that this suggestion was based on an indication in Eitel 1888/2004: 92, according to which the Buddha "appointed him to issue thence as his successor after the lapse of 5,000 years. Maitrêya is the expected Messiah of the Buddhists." Snodgrass explains that "by slipping a zero, Carus quoted the text predicting Maitreya's appearance in the world five hundred years after the death of Sakyamuni, a date approximating the birth of Christ." Carus was not the first in construing a link between Maitreya and Jesus, an idea which has a precedent in Manichean texts; cf. Baruch 1946: 78.

portunity for the wheel-turning king to go forth under a Buddha and become an arahant.⁹⁵

This confirms the impression that the arising of the Maitreya motif would not be the result of the influence of an Iranian saviour god,⁹⁶ unlike subsequent developments of the Maitreya narratives, [24] which may well have received input from outside of the Buddhist tradition.⁹⁷ In the texts that appear to testify to the arising of the notion, the Buddha Maitreya does not fulfil a role

⁹⁵ [93] Lancaster 1987/2005: 5619 notes that "scholars have suggested that the idea of the future Buddha may be derived from the Iranian concept of the savior Saoshyant. In this light, Maitreya would represent the establishment of a world in which there is peace and abundance." Kim 1997: 11 similarly points out that a central plank of the theory of Iranian origin is "the similarity in their nature – as a future saviour"; cf. also above p. 388 note 90. Yet, in the words of Latourrette 1926: 43, "Maitreya n'est donc pas un Messie"; cf. also Dani 1978: 95 and 97, who rightly points out that "even when he is regarded as the future Buddha, the concept is not of the same kind as that of a Messiah ... the Messianic role given to him is of later growth. It is only after this growth that the scholars began to think in terms of the Iranian belief in the *saoshayant*, 'the Avestic leader of the Pure Ones', and this was attributed to Maitreya."

⁹⁶ [94] According to another argument in support of this theory by Jaini 1988/2001: 451, "one would expect such an heir apparent to have been a historical person closely associated with the Buddha ... or one would suppose him to have been a contemporary king", but "Maitreya, at least in the Theravāda canon, is neither, and hence there has lingered the suspicion that this legendary figure was added to the earlier genealogy of the Buddhas under the influence of a foreign cult of the Messiah (e.g., the Zoroastrian Saošyant or the Persian-Greek Mithras Invictus)." Given that in DN 26/DĀ 6 we appear to have the beginning stage of the Maitreya motif, where it merely serves to complete an account that is predominantly concerned with another theme, it is only natural that a relationship to the present Buddha through a disciple aspiring to become Maitreya only manifests subsequently, as evident in the narration in MĀ 66/T 44.

⁹⁷ [95] For a survey of the main stages of development leading to the Maitreya cult cf. Kloppenborg 1982: 38f.

comparable to that of a saviour god.⁹⁸ Instead, he is the teacher of the wheel-turning king who embarks on self-salvation through practice of the path to awakening.⁹⁹

The wheel-turning king's going forth and becoming an arahant conveys the same teaching as the discourse as a whole. Based on moral conduct one should take refuge in the Dharma and in oneself by keeping up the practice of mindfulness as one's proper resort, thereby progressing to awakening. The basic message throughout is to throw into relief the superiority of progress to Nirvāṇa over all other worldly gains and positions.

⁹⁸ [96] Tiele 1912: 159 reasons that "no one who has studied the Zoroastrian doctrine of the *Saoshyants* or the coming saviour-prophets can fail to see their resemblance to the future Buddha Maitreya"; cf. also Sheonarian 1934: 19. Tiele refers in support to Grünwedel, yet Grünwedel 1919: 167 seems to be concerned only with the development of the Maitreya motif in the northern traditions, not with its origins; the same holds for, e.g. Rosenfield 1967: 228 and Foltz 2004: 72. In sum, as pointed out by Scott 1990: 68, the "speculation that Maitreya's role as the future Buddha ... was influenced in its genesis by the pre-existing Zoroastrian idea of the future *Saoshyant* ... this alluringly simple proposition ignores weighty internal Buddhist roots."

⁹⁹ [97] Needless to say, in early Buddhist thought even the Buddha Gotama is not a saviour, but only one who shows others the path for self-salvation; cf., e.g., AN 10.95 at AN V 195,8 and its parallel SĀ 965 at T II 248a10, which point out that the Buddha is not concerned with whether the whole world or only part of it will reach liberation (another parallel, SĀ² 199 at T II 447c12, is less explicit in this respect, although the basic implications seem to be the same).

Dasuttara-sutta (DN 34) Part 1

Introduction

In the present chapter I examine three discourses in the *Dīrgha-āgama* preserved in Chinese translation that are not found in the collections of long discourses extant in Pāli and Sanskrit. My presentation proceeds through four main parts: I begin by surveying the extant collections of long discourses and then turn to three *Dīrgha-āgama* discourses that are without parallels: DĀ 11, the Discourse Increasing by One, of which I provide a translation; DĀ 12, the Discourse on the Three Groups, which is similar in type and which I translate in the next chapter; and DĀ 30, the Discourse on a Record of the World. The main thrust of my investigation is towards gaining a better understanding of the nature of these three discourses and to ascertain if they should be reckoned as later additions to the *Dīrgha-āgama* extant in Chinese translation.

The Collections of Long Discourses

The *Vinayas* of different Buddhist schools report that a division of the scriptural collections into *āgamas* or *nikāyas* was already used at the first "communal recitation", *saṅgīti*,¹ which according to the traditional account was held soon after the Buddha's decease. Although the traditional accounts are of course influenced by later conceptions of canonicity, the fact that, in spite of various differences, they agree on this basic fourfold division

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¹ On the term *saṅgīti* cf., e.g., Tilakaratne 2000b and Skilling 2009: 55–60; on the *āgamas* as a grouping of texts cf. below p. 449ff.

makes it fairly probable that this way of arranging the discourse material for oral transmission is relatively early. Most *Vinayas* first mention the collection of long discourses when listing the four *āgamas* or *nikāyas*.² Perhaps considerations of length influenced this choice, in that the collection of long discourses was placed before collections of discourses that are shorter in length.³

Table 7 below gives an overview of the three extant collections of long discourses, listing the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama* discourses as the reference point to the left as "DĀ (Chin)" and to the right of these then their counterparts in the Theravāda *Dīgha-nikāya* and the Sarvāstivāda and/or Mūlasarvāstivāda *Dīrgha-āgama*, referred to as "DN" and "DĀ (Skt)" respectively.⁴

² The *Dīrgha-āgama* is mentioned in first place in the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 968b19, the Mahāsāṅghika *Vinaya*, T 1425 at XXII 491c16 (with a variant listing at 492c18), in the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 191a24, and in the Theravāda *Vinaya*, Vin II 287,16 (which does not list the order explicitly, although the position of the *Dīgha-nikāya* is implicit in the circumstance that the *Brahmajāla* (DN 1) and the *Sāmaññaphala* (DN 2) are on record as having been the first discourses recited at the *saṅgīti*). An exception is the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1451 at T XXIV 407b27, which has the *Samyukta-āgama* in first place. Translations of several of these *Vinaya* accounts can be found in Przyluski 1926 and Anuruddha et al. 2008.

³ Alternatively it might also be that this decision was influenced by the principle of waxing syllables. According to this principle, words with fewer syllables in a series of terms are followed by words with an equal or a greater number of syllables; cf. below 474ff. Following the principle of waxing syllables, the *dī(r)gha* would come in first position when the four *āgamas/nikāyas* are listed (as in the *Vinaya* accounts mentioned in the previous note), because the term *dī(r)gha* is the only one that has just two syllables. In an oral setting the order of reciting the listing could then have influenced the actual placement of the collections. Both of my suggestions remain speculative, however, as I am not aware of evidence that would support these hypotheses.

⁴ [12] For DĀ (Skt) 15 my presentation follows Hartmann and Wille 2014: 140. The indication in Hartmann 2004: 126, which relates DĀ (Skt) 15 to DN 28

Table 7: Overview of the Collections of Long Discourses

T 1	DN	Skt
DĀ (Chin) 1	DN 14	DĀ (Skt) 5
DĀ (Chin) 2	DN 16 & 17 ⁵	DĀ (Skt) 6
DĀ (Chin) 3	DN 19	DĀ (Skt) 14
DĀ (Chin) 4	DN 18	DĀ (Skt) 13
DĀ (Chin) 5	DN 27	DĀ (Skt) 3 DĀ (Skt) 1
DĀ (Chin) 6	DN 26	
DĀ (Chin) 7	DN 23	
DĀ (Chin) 8	DN 25	
DĀ (Chin) 9	DN 33	
DĀ (Chin) 10	DN 34	DĀ (Skt) 9 DĀ (Skt) 15 DĀ (Skt) 16 DĀ (Skt) 24
DĀ (Chin) 11		
DĀ (Chin) 12		
DĀ (Chin) 13	DN 15	
DĀ (Chin) 14	DN 21	
DĀ (Chin) 15	DN 24	
DĀ (Chin) 16	DN 31	
DĀ (Chin) 17	DN 29	
DĀ (Chin) 18	DN 28	
DĀ (Chin) 19	DN 20	
DĀ (Chin) 20	DN 3	DĀ (Skt) 35
DĀ (Chin) 21	DN 1	DĀ (Skt) 47
DĀ (Chin) 22	DN 4	DĀ (Skt) 33
DĀ (Chin) 23	DN 5	DĀ (Skt) 34
DĀ (Chin) 24	DN 11	DĀ (Skt) 29
DĀ (Chin) 25	DN 8	DĀ (Skt) 46
DĀ (Chin) 26	DN 13	DĀ (Skt) 45
DĀ (Chin) 27	DN 2	DĀ (Skt) 44
DĀ (Chin) 28	DN 9	DĀ (Skt) 36
DĀ (Chin) 29	DN 12	DĀ (Skt) 27
DĀ (Chin) 30		

and DĀ (Skt) to DN 29, reflects the then still unclear correspondences, which a more detailed study of the fragments has in the meantime clarified.

⁵ The *Mahāsudassana-sutta*, DN 17, which is a separate discourse in the *Dīgha-nikāya*, is just a part of the discourses DĀ (Chin) 2 and DĀ (Skt) 6.

Table 7 conveys the impression that the Chinese *Dīrgha-āgama* is somewhat closer to the Theravāda *Dīgha-nikāya* than to the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda *Dīrgha-āgama*. An exception is the Chinese *Dīrgha-āgama*'s adoption of a fourfold division.⁶ [9]

The impression of closeness finds confirmation when examining the situation from the viewpoint of how the *Dīgha-nikāya* relates to the other two collections. Out of the forty-seven discourses in the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda *Dīrgha-āgama*, twelve are without known parallels anywhere in the four Pāli *Nikāyas*,⁷ and another eleven discourses are not found in the *Dīgha-nikāya*, but only in other *Nikāyas*.⁸ Together these amount to twenty-three dis-

⁶ [13] The introduction to the *Dīrgha-āgama* explicitly draws attention to this fourfold division; cf. T I 1a12: 此《長阿含》四分。The indication by Hartmann and Wille 2014: 139 that "all three versions of the Long Discourses are divided into three sections" and that each of the sections of the Chinese collection contains ten discourses does not seem to be correct. In the Taishō edition the second section begins with the fifth discourse (cf. T I 36b28: 第二分), the third section with the twentieth discourse (cf. T I 82a6: 第三分), and the fourth section then contains just DĀ 30 (cf. T I 114b7: 第四分); cf. also Choi 2012a: 77f and 2012b: 18f (included in the list of works cited in Hartmann and Wille 2014: 154), whose tables reflect the four divisions as they are found in the Chinese collection (although the description of the fourth section as having "12 texts" could be corrected to "12 sections", as this is only a single text).

⁷ [14] These are the *Arthavastara-sūtra* (2nd), the *Catusparīṣat-sūtra* (4th), the *Sarveka(?)sūtra* (8th), the *Māyājāla-sūtra* (18th), the *Tridaṇḍi-sūtra* (25th), the *Piṅgalātreyasūtra* (26th), the first *Lohitya-sūtra* (27th), the second *Maṇḍīśasūtra* (31st), the *Kāraṇavādi-sūtra* (37th), the *Śruta-sūtra* (39th), the *Mahalla-sūtra* (40th), and the *Anyatama-sūtra* (41st).

⁸ [15] These are: the *Apannaka-sūtra* (7) ≈ (perhaps) MN 60, the *Śālyasūtra* (10) ≈ MN 105, the *Bhayaḥhairava-sūtra* (11) ≈ MN 4, the *Roma(harṣa)ṇasūtra* (12) ≈ MN 12, the *Pañcatrayasūtra* (17) ≈ MN 102, the *Kāmaṭhikasūtra* (19) ≈ MN 95, the *Kāyabhāvanā-sūtra* (20) ≈ MN 36, the *Bodhasūtra* (21) ≈ MN 85, the *Śaṃkara-sūtra* (22) ≈ MN 100, the *Puḍgala-sūtra* (38) ≈ AN 4.198, and the *Jīvaka-sūtra* (43) ≈ MN 55.

courses not shared with the *Dīgha-nikāya*, which correspond to 49% of the number of discourses in the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda *Dīrgha-āgama*. In the case of the thirty discourses of the Dharmaguptaka collection, three are without counterparts in the *Dīgha-nikāya*, corresponding to 10% of the number of discourses in the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama*.^[10] In what follows I examine these three Chinese *Dīrgha-āgama* discourses without parallels.⁹

The Discourse Increasing by One (DĀ 11)

The Discourse Increasing by One (DĀ 11) and the Discourse on the Three Groups (DĀ 12) occur after the Chinese *Dīrgha-āgama* parallels to the *Saṅgīti-sutta* (DĀ 9 / DN 33) and the *Dasuttara-sutta* (DĀ 10 / DN 34). These four discourses are of a similar nature, in that they provide lists of doctrinal items.

The list in the different versions of the *Saṅgīti-sutta* has as its main structural element the progression from Ones to Tens, under which various numbers of doctrinal items are arranged. The *Dasuttara-sutta* differs in so far as it invariably assigns ten items to each of the numerical divisions from Ones to Tens. Moreover, these ten items follow a consistently applied thematic pattern for each exposition, from Ones to Tens. In the case of the Chinese *Dīrgha-āgama* version, the thematic pattern proceeds as follows:

- "greatly successful", 多成,¹⁰
- to be "cultivated", 修,
- to be "understood", 覺,^[11]
- to be "extinguished", 滅,
- leading to "decline", 退,
- leading to "increase", 增,

⁹ [16] For a study of two discourses without parallels in T 100 cf. Bingenheimer 2013.

¹⁰ [18] For the case of the Ones cf. DĀ 10 at T I 53a2, where for the first quality here and below in the translation of DĀ 11 I follow a variant reading that adds 多 to 成.

- "difficult to comprehend", 難解,
- to be "aroused", 生,
- to be "known", 知,
- to be "realized", 證.

Such a clearly structured discourse is certainly easier to memorize than the listing given in the *Saṅgīti-sutta*, where the items under each number vary considerably and also do not follow a consistent thematic pattern. Thus the *Dasuttara-sutta* and its parallels would have been of considerable appeal to disciples who were not part of the circle of professional reciters, but who nevertheless wished to learn by heart such a summary of the teachings.¹¹

The Discourse Increasing by One proceeds in a similar way to the *Dasuttara-sutta*, with the difference that, instead of using ten topics, it works through the listing of Ones to Tens based on five topics. In what follows I translate this discourse.¹² [12]

Translation

The Discourse Increasing by One

Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was at Sāvattthī in Jeta's Grove, the park [given by] Anāthapiṇḍika, accompanied by a great community of one thousand two hundred and fifty monks.

¹¹ [19] For a study of the function of such summaries cf. Anālayo 2014c.

¹² [20] DĀ 11 at T I 57b25 to 59b8, which has been translated into English by Ichimura 2016: 3–15. In order not to overburden the notes to this translation, I have taken into account only what seemed relevant from the material in the parallels to the preceding discourse in the *Dīrgha-āgama* (DĀ 10 at T I 52c17 to T I 57b24), found in the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda and the Theravāda collections; cf. Mittal 1957 and Schlingloff 1962, as well as DN 34 at DN III 272,1 to DN III 292,7. Thus my survey does not cover another parallel to DĀ 10, preserved individually in Chinese translation: T 13 at T I 233b23 to T I 241c19. A comparative study of DĀ 10 in the light of all its three parallels can be found in de Jong 1966/1979.

At that time the Blessed One said to the monks: "I will teach you the sublime Dharma, whose words in the beginning, middle, and end are all true and correct, which is flavoured with meaning and endowed with the purity of the holy life, that is to say, states increasing by one.¹³ Listen and pay proper attention to what I will teach you." ^[57c] Then the monks received the instruction and listened.

1.¹⁴ The Buddha said to the monks: "States increasing by one are [as follows]: one state is greatly successful,¹⁵ one state is to be cultivated, one state is to be understood, one state is to be extinguished, and one state is to be realized.

1.1 "What one state is greatly successful? It is: not neglecting wholesome states. ^[13]

1.2 "What one state is to be cultivated? It is: constant mindfulness of one's own body.

1.3 "What one state is to be understood? It is: being contacted by the influxes.¹⁶

1.4 "What one state is to be extinguished? It is: the conceit 'I am'.

1.5 "What one state is to be realized? It is: the unimpeded liberation of the mind.¹⁷

¹³ DĀ 11 at T I 57b29: 一增法也, which Ichimura 2016: 3 translates as "the 'teaching comprising ten fivefold groups of doctrines'", which does not accurately reflect the original.

¹⁴ I have added numbering to the translation in order to make it easier to recognize the underlying structure.

¹⁵ ^[21] DĀ 11 at T I 57c2: 一成法, where my translation follows a variant reading that adds 多 before 成. Ichimura 2016: 3 translates this as "the group of doctrinal items that are very useful for religious salvation", which appears to be a gloss instead of a close rendering of the original.

¹⁶ DĀ 11 at T I 57c5: 有漏觸, which Ichimura 2016: 3 translates as "the fact of contact of the [sense] faculties with their respective objects under the influence of defilement." This also seems to be a gloss rather than a translation.

2. "Again, two states are greatly successful, two states are to be cultivated, two states are to be understood, two states are to be extinguished, and two states are to be realized.

2.1 "What two states are greatly successful? They are: knowing shame and knowing fear of wrongdoing.¹⁸

2.2 "What two states are to be cultivated? They are: tranquillity and insight.

2.3 "What two states are to be understood? They are: name and form.¹⁹

2.4 "What two states are to be extinguished? They are: ignorance and craving for existence.²⁰

¹⁷ [22] DĀ 11 at T I 57c6: 無礙心解脫, translated by Ichimura 2016: 4 as the "deliverance of the mind that is unshakeable or undisturbed toward the realm that is beyond the influence of defilements", which again is more of a gloss than a translation. Regarding the expression 無礙心解脫 in DĀ 10, de Jong 1966/1979: 255 queries whether this represents "*asaṅgā cetovimuktiḥ*?" The Indic language parallels to DĀ 10 have *akopyā cetovimuktiḥ* or *akuppā cetovimutti*; cf. Mittal 1957: 55 (§i.10) and DN 34 at DN III 273,13.

¹⁸ [23] DĀ 11 at T I 57c8: 知慚, 知愧, which Ichimura 2016: 4 translates as "knowing shame upon self-reflection and knowing shame before others", where the reference to self-reflection and to others are not found in the original. The Indic language parallels to DĀ 10 instead list mindfulness and clear comprehension; cf. Mittal 1957: 56 (§ii.1) and DN 34 at DN III 273,22. The qualities of shame and fear of wrongdoing do occur elsewhere in the Sanskrit fragment version, where they are found instead under the heading of two states that lead to distinction; cf. Mittal 1957: 56 (§ii.6).

¹⁹ DĀ 11 at T I 57c9: 名與色, which Ichimura 2016: 4 translates as "the (noetic) category of name, i.e. the four mental *skandhas*, and the (corporeal) category of form, i.e., the one material *skandha*." Besides adding material not found in the original, this is also not correct, since name as part of name-and-form does not necessarily correspond to the four mental aggregates; cf. Anālayo 2011b: 70f.

²⁰ DĀ 11 at T I 57c9 here has 無明 and for the next item the corresponding 明, which in the translation by Ichimura 2016: 4 become "ignorance of the Four Noble Truths" and "acquisition of insight on (sic) the Four Noble Truths".

2.5 "What two states are to be realized? They are: knowledge and liberation. [14]

3. "Again, three states are greatly successful, three states are to be cultivated, three states are to be understood, three states are to be extinguished, and three states are to be realized.

3.1 "What three states are greatly successful? The first is associating with good friends, the second is [lending] an ear to hear the Dharma being expounded, and the third is becoming accomplished in the Dharma [in accordance with] the Dharma.²¹

3.2 "What three states are to be cultivated? They are the three concentrations: concentration on emptiness, concentration on signlessness,²² and concentration on non-activity.²³

3.3 "What three states are to be understood? They are the three feelings: painful feeling, pleasant feeling, and neutral feeling.²⁴

3.4 "What three states are to be extinguished? They are the three cravings: craving for sensual pleasures, craving for existence, and craving for non-existence.²⁵ [15]

²¹ [24] The third state mentioned in the Sanskrit fragment parallel to DĀ 10 is rather "thorough attention", *yoniso manasikāraḥ*; cf. Mittal 1957: 58 (§iii.1).

²² [25] Adopting the variant 相 instead of 想; on this type of variation cf. Anālayo 2011b: 274f note 54.

²³ [26] DĀ 11 at T I 57c13: 空三昧, 無想三昧, 無作三, which in the translation by Ichimura 2016: 4 become: "first, the concentration on the emptiness of the self and things attributed to it; second, the concentration on signlessness or the nondifferentiation of things; and third, the concentration on the objectless or goal-free state of existence." The Indic language parallels to DĀ 10 list another set of three concentrations: with *vitarka/vitakka* and *vicāra*, without *vitarka/vitakka* but still with *vicāra*, and without either; cf. Mittal 1957: 58 (§iii.2) and DN 34 at DN III 274,25. On the significance of these two absorption factors cf., e.g., Cousins 1992 and Anālayo 2014c: 79–84.

²⁴ [27] The Sanskrit fragment parallel to DĀ 10 lists the three types of becoming, *bhava*; cf. Mittal 1957: 58 (§iii.3).

3.5 "What three states are to be realized? They are the three knowledges: the knowledge of recollection of past lives, the knowledge of the divine eye, and the knowledge of the destruction of the influxes."²⁶

4. "Again, four states are greatly successful, four states are to be cultivated, four states are to be understood, four states are to be extinguished, and four states are to be realized.

4.1 "What four states are greatly successful? The first is dwelling in the middle country, the second is associating with good friends, the third is self-restraint, and the fourth is having planted wholesome roots in the past."²⁷

4.2 "What four states are to be cultivated? One dwells in the four establishments of mindfulness. A monk contemplates the body as a body internally, diligently without negligence, with recollective mindfulness that is not lost, abandoning lust and discontent for the world; he contemplates the body as a body externally, diligently without remiss, with recollective mindfulness that is not lost, abandoning lust and discontent for the world; he contemplates the body as a body internally and externally, diligently without remiss, with recollective mindfulness that is not lost, abandoning lust and discontent for the world. Contemplating feeling ... mind ... and dharms *is also like this*."²⁸

²⁵ [28] The Sanskrit fragment parallel to DĀ 10 has craving for immateriality as its third; cf. Mittal 1957: 59 (§iii.4). This reflects a recurrent difference, where references in Dharmaguptaka and Theravāda discourses to the three types of craving, with non-existence as the third, are not found in this way in Sarvāstivāda and Mūlasarvāstivāda counterparts; cf. below p. 519f.

²⁶ [29] The Sanskrit fragment parallel to DĀ 10 qualifies these three as being beyond training, *aśaikṣa*; cf. Mittal 1957: 60 (§iii.10).

²⁷ [30] Adopting the variant 植 instead of 殖.

²⁸ [31] DĀ 11 at T I 57c23: 受, 意, 法觀亦復如是, which in the translation by Ichimura 2016: 5 becomes: "It is the same with the second application: observing one's sense perceptions; the third application, observing one's mind or intellect;

4.3 "What four states are to be understood? They are the four nutriment: the nutriment of morsels [of edible food], the nutriment of contact,²⁹ ^[16] the nutriment of [intentional] thought, and the nutriment of consciousness.

4.4 "What four states are to be extinguished? They are the four clings: clinging to sensual pleasures, clinging to a self, clinging to precepts,³⁰ and clinging to views.³¹

4.5 "What four states are to be realized? They are the four fruits of recluship: the fruit of stream-entry, the fruit of once-return, the fruit of non-return, and the fruit of arahantship.³²

5. "Again, five states are greatly successful, five states are to be cultivated, five states are to be understood, five states are to be extinguished, and five states are to be realized.

and the fourth application, observing one's psychophysical elements (*skandhas*).³³ The Indic language parallels to DĀ 10 do not bring in the distinction between internal and external; cf. Mittal 1957: 61 (§iv.2) and DN 34 at DN III 276,10.

²⁹ DĀ 11 at T I 57c24: 觸食, for which Ichimura 2016: 5 gives "nutrition ingested by contact through touch." This involves a misunderstanding, as contact is reckoned a nutriment in the sense of providing the raw data for sense experience, not some form of actual nutrition.

³⁰ DĀ 11 at T I 57c25: 戒受, for which Ichimura 2016: 5f gives "attachment to the vow of precepts belonging to other schools". Besides not reflecting the original, this is also not correct, as such clinging can take place in relation to the rules of one's own tradition; cf. Anālayo 2003: 220 note 12.

³¹ ^[32] The Pāli parallel to DĀ 10, DN 34 at DN III 276,19, lists the four floods (*ogha*) of sensuality, becoming, views, and ignorance.

³² ^[33] The Sanskrit fragment parallel to DĀ 10, Mittal 1957: 64f (§iv.10), instead mentions things to be realized directly (literally "with the body") through recollection, through the [divine] eye, and through wisdom. A similar set, although in a different sequence, can be found in the Pāli parallel to DĀ 9, DN 33 at DN III 230,7, according to which recollection of past lives is to be realized through recollection, the passing away and re-arising (of living beings) is to be realized through the [divine] eye, the eight liberations are to be realized directly, and the destruction of the influxes is to be realized through wisdom.

5.1 "What five states are greatly successful? They are the five limbs of exertion.³³ The first is faith in the Buddha, the Tathāgata, the arahant, who is endowed with ten epithets; ^[58a] the second is being without illness, with a body that is constantly at ease; the third is being honest without crookedness, truly advancing on the Tathāgata's path to Nirvāṇa; ^[17] the fourth is having a collected mind that is not confused, [being able] to recite without forgetfulness; the fifth is being skilled in contemplating the rise and fall of phenomena, and through noble practice extinguishing the roots of *dukkha*.

5.2 "What five states are to be cultivated? They are the five faculties: the faculty of faith, the faculty of energy, the faculty of mindfulness, the faculty of concentration, and the faculty of wisdom.³⁴

5.3 "What five states are to be understood? They are the five aggregates of clinging: the bodily form aggregate of clinging, the feeling ... perception ... formations ... and the consciousness aggregate of clinging.

5.4 "What five states are to be extinguished? They are the five hindrances: the hindrance of lustful desire, the hindrance of ill will, the hindrance of sloth-and-torpor, the hindrance of restlessness-and-worry,³⁵ and the hindrance of doubt.

5.5 "What five states are to be realized? They are the five groups that are beyond training: the group of morality beyond training, the group of concentration beyond training, the group

³³ [34] DĀ 11 at T I 57c29: 五滅盡支 (with 枝 as a variant for 支), a rendering which would go back to an original *prahāṇa* instead of *pradhāṇa*; cf. above p. 376 note 63.

³⁴ [35] The Pāli parallel to DĀ 10, DN 34 at DN III 277,25, instead lists fivefold right concentration.

³⁵ [36] DĀ 11 at T I 58a7: 掉戲蓋, where the second character has rather the sense of "frivolity".

of wisdom beyond training, the group of liberation beyond training, and the group of knowledge and vision of liberation beyond training.³⁶

6. "Again, six states are greatly successful, six states are to be cultivated, six states are to be understood, six states are to be extinguished, and six states are to be realized. [18]

6.1 "What six states are greatly successful? They are the six principles of respect. Supposing a monk cultivates the six principles of respect, which should be esteemed and respected, for being in harmony with the community and without dispute, not different from practising alone. What are the six? Thus a monk constantly performs bodily acts with *mettā*, extending it to those who cultivate the holy life,³⁷ being established in a mental attitude of affectionate goodwill – this is called a principle of respect, which should be esteemed and respected, for being in harmony with the community and without dispute, not different from practising alone.

"Again, a monk speaks with *mettā* ...

"[Again], he thinks with *mettā* ...³⁸

"[Again], he shares with others his own supplies, up to what has remained in his bowl, without keeping it back from them ...

"Again, a monk does not violate the precepts that are practised by the noble ones, does not break them and is without a

³⁶ [37] The Indic language parallels to DĀ 10 do not qualify these five as being beyond training; cf. Mittal 1957: 74 (§v.10) and DN 34 at DN III 279,14. The Sanskrit fragment version does, however, qualify them as "noble".

³⁷ DĀ 11 at T I 58a13: 及修梵行; the translation by Ichimura 2016: 7 as "pays respect toward those who uphold the practice of austerity", adds an unwarranted paying of respect and does not recognize that 梵行 renders *brahmacārin*.

³⁸ At this juncture Ichimura 2016: 7 adds "a *bhikṣu* may obtain material support on the basis of the doctrinal teaching", which does not correspond to anything in the Chinese original.

stain [in this respect], as praised by the wise, being well endowed with the upholding of the precepts ...³⁹

"[Again], he is accomplished in right view, which is noble and transcending, and which evenly eradicates *dukkha*, extending [this mental attitude] to all [companions] in the holy life – this is called a principle of respect, which should be esteemed and respected, for being in harmony with the community and without dispute, not different from practising alone.

6.2 "What six states are to be cultivated? They are the six recollections: recollection of the Buddha, recollection of the Dharma, recollection of the Community, recollection of morality, recollection of charity, and recollection of *devas*.⁴⁰ [19]

6.3 "What six states are to be understood? They are the six internal spheres: the eye sphere, the ear sphere, the nose sphere, the tongue sphere, the body sphere, and the mind sphere.

6.4 "What six states are to be extinguished? They are the six cravings:⁴¹ craving for forms, craving for sounds, craving for odours, craving for tastes, craving for tangibles, and craving for mental objects.

6.5 "What six states are to be realized? They are the six higher knowledges: the first is the higher knowledge of super-normal abilities, the second is the higher knowledge of the divine ear, the third is the higher knowledge of knowing the minds of others, the fourth is the higher knowledge of recol-

³⁹ Ichimura 2016: 7 adds "and realizes the state of mental concentration", which does not correspond to anything in the Chinese original.

⁴⁰ [38] The Sanskrit fragment parallel to DĀ 10, Mittal 1957: 76 (§vi.2), instead speaks of remaining balanced with what is experienced through the six senses. A similar quality can be found in the Pāli parallel to DĀ 9, DN 33 at DN III 250,14.

⁴¹ DĀ 11 at T I 58a23: 六愛, translated by Ichimura 2016: 8 as "the six kinds of craving desire that are directed to external bases of cognition respectively", most of which has no basis in the Chinese.

lecting past lives, the fifth is the higher knowledge of the divine eye, and the sixth is the higher knowledge of the eradication of the influxes.

7. "Again, seven states are greatly successful, seven states are to be cultivated, seven states are to be understood, seven states are to be extinguished, and seven states are to be realized.

7.1 "What seven states are greatly successful? They are the seven assets: the asset of faith, the asset of morality, the asset of shame, the asset of fear of wrongdoing, the asset of learning, the asset of charity, and the asset of wisdom.⁴² These are the seven assets.

7.2 "What seven states are to be cultivated? They are: the seven awakening factors. Here a monk cultivates the awakening factor of mindfulness in dependence on dispassion, ^[58b] in dependence on cessation, and in dependence on seclusion; he cultivates the [awakening factor] of [investigation of] phenomena ... he cultivates the [awakening factor] of energy ... he cultivates the [awakening factor] of joy ... he cultivates the [awakening factor] of tranquillity ... he cultivates the [awakening factor] of concentration ... he cultivates the [awakening factor] of equanimity in dependence on dispassion, ^[20] in dependence on cessation, and in dependence on seclusion.⁴³

7.3 "What seven states are to be understood? They are: the seven stations of consciousness. Suppose living beings are of different body and different perception, [such as some] *devas* and humans – this is the first station of consciousness.

⁴² [39] Adopting the variant 慧 instead of 惠.

⁴³ [40] The Pāli parallel to DĀ 10, DN 34 at DN III 282,7, simply lists the seven awakening factors, without indicating on what their cultivation depends (which usually comprises four aspects, with seclusion in first place and the fourth aspect then being that the awakening factor culminates in letting go). The Sanskrit fragments edited in Mittal 1957 have not preserved this part of the discourse.

"Again, there are living beings of different body but of the same perception, such as the ⟨Brahmā *devas*⟩ at the time of first being born – this is the second station of consciousness.⁴⁴

"Again, there are living beings of the same body and different perception, such as the Ābhassara *devas* – this is the third station of consciousness.

"Again, there are living beings of the same body and the same perception, such as the Subhakiṇṇa *devas* – this is the fourth station of consciousness.

"Again, there are living beings established in the sphere of [infinite] space – this is the fifth station of consciousness. [21]

"Again, there are living beings established in the sphere of [infinite] consciousness – this is the sixth station of consciousness.

"Again, there are living beings established in the sphere of nothingness – this is the seventh station of consciousness.

7.4 "What seven states are to be extinguished? They are the states of the seven underlying tendencies: the underlying tendency to craving for sensual pleasures, the underlying tendency to craving for becoming, the underlying tendency to

⁴⁴ [41] DĀ 11 at T I 58b5: 梵光音天最初生時是, 是二識住, which in the translation by Ichimura 2016: 9 becomes: "the god Brahmā was initially born in Ābhāsvara Heaven, where communication is transmitted by light instead of sound. This is the second abode of consciousness", where the part on communication by light is not found in the original. His rendering of the next station of consciousness as: "when sentient beings possess one and the same body but different ideations, this is Ābhāsvara Heaven", results in attributing two stations of consciousness to the same heavenly realm. My translation here and below (in relation to the nine states to be understood) is based on emending 梵光音天 to 梵天, on the assumption that the reading for the next station of consciousness, 光音天, has in the course of transmission or translation influenced the formulation for this station of consciousness. The use of 梵光音天 is a recurrent pattern in descriptions of the stations of consciousness in the *Dīrgha-āgama*; cf. also Behrsing 1930: 51 note 92.

views, the underlying tendency to conceit, the underlying tendency to resistance, the underlying tendency to ignorance, and the underlying tendency to doubt.⁴⁵

7.5 "What seven states are to be realized? They are: the seven powers of one who has eradicated the influxes. Here a monk who has eradicated the influxes has understood and seen as it really is the entirety of *dukkha*, its arising, its cessation, its gratification,⁴⁶ its danger, and the escape [from it].

"He contemplates sensual pleasures as being like a fiery pit or like a knife or sword; knowing sensual pleasures and seeing sensual pleasures, he does not lust for sensual pleasures and his mind does not dwell in sensual pleasures.⁴⁷ Herein having further well examined them and having gained knowledge as it really is, vision as it really is, he does not give rise to sensual lust in the world, to evil and unwholesome states, and he is without influxes.

"He cultivates the four establishments of mindfulness, cultivating them much and practising them much ... the five faculties ... the five powers ... the seven awakening factors ... the noble eightfold path, [22] cultivating them much and practising them much.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ [42] The order of enumeration differs from the standard presentation of the underlying tendencies in the Pāli discourses which, e.g., in the case of DN 24 at DN III 282,17, proceeds as follows: sensual desire (1), resistance (2), view (3), doubt (4), conceit (5), desire for becoming (6), and ignorance (7).

⁴⁶ [43] My translation follows an emendation in the CBETA edition of 昧 to 味.

⁴⁷ DĀ 11 at T I 58b14: 知欲見欲, 不貪於欲, 心不住欲, translated by Ichimura 2016: 9 as "though he knows the arising of desire and sees it, he is not attached to it nor does he abide in it." The minor lack of accuracy in the translation is nevertheless problematic in so far as it risks giving the misleading impression that the original text refers to an arahant as one who still experiences the arising of sensual desire, but does so just without being attached to it.

⁴⁸ [44] The Pāli parallel to DĀ 10, DN 34 at DN III 284,3, does not mention the five powers, but only the five faculties; cf. also Anālayo 2014c: 52. Its addi-

8. "Again, eight states are greatly successful, eight states are to be cultivated, eight states are to be understood, eight states are to be extinguished, and eight states are to be realized.

8.1 "What eight states are greatly successful? They are: the eight causes and conditions for gaining the wisdom in the holy life that has not yet been gained, and for increasing the wisdom in the holy life that has been gained. What are the eight?

"In this way a monk dwells in dependence on the Blessed One, or in dependence on a senior teacher, or in dependence on a wise companion in the holy life, and having affection and esteem [for them] he arouses a mental attitude of shame and fear of wrongdoing – this is the first cause and condition for gaining the wisdom in the holy life that has not yet been gained, and for increasing the wisdom in the holy life that has been gained.

"Again, dwelling in dependence on the Blessed One ... at the proper time he asks questions: 'What is the meaning of this teaching? What is its gist?' The Blessed One discloses to him its deep meaning – this is the second cause and condition ...⁴⁹ [23]

Since he has heard the teaching, his body and mind are happy and calm – this is the third cause and condition ...⁵⁰

"He does not join various unprofitable discussions which obstruct the path. When he arrives among the community, either he teaches the Dharma himself or he invites another to

tional quality (third) then is being inclined to and intent on seclusion, *viveka*. In relation to the first in this set, DN 34 at DN III 283,15 speaks of having seen the impermanent nature of all formations. Whereas the Sanskrit fragments edited in Mittal 1957 have not preserved this part of the discourse, a Sanskrit fragment parallel to this item can be found in fragment Or 15009/164 (Hoernle 149/185), Hartmann 1991: 135f (§62) and Melzer 2009: 208.

⁴⁹ [45] Adopting the variant 世尊 instead of 尊長.

⁵⁰ [46] The parallels to DĀ 10 speak of a twofold withdrawal (*vyapakaṛṣa/vūpakāsa*) by body and mind; cf. Mittal 1957: 84 (§viii.1.3) and DN 34 at DN III 285,13.

teach it; yet he also does not neglect noble silence – this is the fourth cause and condition ...⁵¹

"He is widely learned, retaining without loss the deep teachings which are good in the beginning, middle, and end, [58c] which are flavoured with meaning and truth, with which the holy life is endowed; what he has heard enters his mind and his view does not fluctuate – this is the fifth cause and condition ...

"He cultivates energy for the cessation of unwholesome activities and the daily increase of wholesome activities, he makes an effort and keeps firm, does not neglect these [wholesome] states – this is the sixth cause and condition ...

"Again, he knows the rise and fall of phenomena with the wisdom aroused by noble ones, enabling the complete eradication of *dukkha* – this is the seventh cause and condition ...⁵²

"Again, he contemplates the five aggregates of clinging, the mark of their arising and the mark of their cessation.⁵³ this is bodily form, this is the arising of bodily form, and this is the cessation of bodily form; this is feeling ... perception ... formations ... consciousness, this is the arising of consciousness, and this is the cessation of consciousness – this is the eighth cause and condition for gaining the wisdom in the holy life that has not yet been gained, [24] and for increasing the wisdom in the holy life that has been gained.

8.2 "What eight states are to be cultivated? They are the [factors of the] noble eightfold path: right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.

⁵¹ [47] The fourth condition in the Pāli parallel to DĀ 10, DN 34 at DN III 285,16, instead mentions being virtuous and restrained by the precepts.

⁵² [48] Adopting the variant 起 instead of 趣.

⁵³ [49] Adopting the variant 相 instead of 想; cf. above p. 401 note 22.

8.3 "What eight states are to be understood? They are the eight worldly conditions: gain and loss, infamy and fame, praise and blame, pain and happiness.

8.4 "What eight states are to be extinguished? They are the eight [types of] wrongness: wrong view, wrong intention, wrong speech, wrong action, wrong livelihood, wrong effort, wrong mindfulness, and wrong concentration.

8.5 "What eight states are to be realized? They are the eight liberations: having form one contemplates forms – this is the first liberation. Not perceiving form internally one contemplates forms externally – this is the second liberation.⁵⁴ The liberation by purity – this is the third liberation.⁵⁵ Surpassing perceptions of form, with the disappearing of perceptions of resistance one dwells in the sphere of [infinite] space – this is the fourth liberation. Surpassing the sphere of [infinite] space, one dwells in the sphere of [infinite] consciousness – this is the fifth liberation. [25] Surpassing the sphere of [infinite] consciousness, one dwells in the sphere of nothingness – this is the sixth liberation. Surpassing the sphere of nothingness, one dwells in the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception – this is the seventh liberation. Surpassing the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, one dwells in the cessation of perception and knowing – this is the eighth liberation.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ [50] My translation follows an emendation in the CBETA edition of 有 to 無.

⁵⁵ [51] The Indic language parallels to DĀ 10 speak of the liberation by beauty, *śubhavamokṣa*, or else of being determined on beauty, *subhan't' eva adhimutto*; cf. Mittal 1957: 93 (§viii.7) (where this is the seventh in the tenfold exposition of Eights and thus one of eight things that are difficult to penetrate; cf. also Pauly 1957: 290) and DN 34 at DN III 288,2 (to be supplemented from DN III 262,1).

⁵⁶ Ichimura 2016: 12 adds "which is equivalent to the third saintly state of anāgāmin", which is not found in the Chinese original.

9. "Again, nine states are greatly successful, nine states are to be cultivated, nine states are to be understood, nine states are to be extinguished, and nine states are to be realized.

9.1 "What nine states are greatly successful? They are the states of the nine factors of exertion for purification: the factor of exertion for purification of morality, the factor of exertion for purification of the mind, the factor of exertion for purification of view, the factor of exertion for purification by surmounting doubt, the factor of exertion for purification by distinguishing [what is the path from what is not the path], the factor of exertion for purification by [knowledge and vision of] the path, the factor of exertion for purification by elimination, the factor of exertion for purification by dispassion, and the factor of exertion for purification by liberation.⁵⁷ [26]

9.2 "What nine states are to be cultivated? They are the nine states that are a root of joy: the first is joy [itself], the second is affection, the third is delight, the fourth is happiness, the fifth is concentration, the sixth is knowledge as it really is, the seventh is relinquishing, the eighth is dispassion, and the ninth is liberation.⁵⁸

⁵⁷ [52] The Indic language parallels to DĀ 10 have as the fifth to eighth factors in their list: 5) knowledge and vision of what is the path and what is not the path, 6) knowledge and vision of the path, 7) knowledge and vision, 8) wisdom; cf. Schlingloff 1962: 18 (§ix.1) and DN 34 at DN III 288,20 (where this is the second set in the list of Nines and thus describes the nine things that are to be cultivated). Although in the case of the fifth and sixth factors it is possible that the description in DĀ 11 has preserved part of a similar expression (hence my supplementations), in the case of the seventh and eighth factors the original, on which the translation is based, must have been different.

⁵⁸ [53] The Pāli parallel to DĀ 10, DN 34 at DN III 288,8, has a similar list as its first quality, with the difference that it indicates how each quality leads on to the next. As already noted by Schlingloff 1962: 18 note 2, the same is also the case for a similar listing in the *Mahāvīyutpatti*; cf. Mvy 1585–1595, Sakaki 1926: 127f.

9.3 "What nine states are to be understood? They are: the nine abodes of living beings. There are living beings of different body and different perception, such as some *devas* and humans – this is the first abode of living beings.

"Again, there are living beings of different body but of the same perception, such as the *⟨Brahmā devas⟩* at the time of first being born – this is the second abode of living beings.⁵⁹

"Again, there are living beings of the same body and different perception, such as the *Ābhassara devas* – this is the third abode of living beings.

"Again, there are living beings of the same body and the same perception, such as the *Subhakiṇṇa devas* – this is the fourth abode of living beings.

"[Again, there are living beings] without perception, who do not feel or know anything, such as the unconscious *devas* – this is the fifth abode of living beings.

"Again, there are living beings established in the sphere of [infinite] space ^[59a] – this is the sixth abode of living beings.

"Again, there are living beings established in the sphere of [infinite] consciousness – this is the seventh abode of living beings.

"Again, there are living beings established in the sphere of nothingness – this is the eighth abode of living beings. ^[27]

"Again, there are living beings established in the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception – this is the ninth abode of living beings.

9.4 "What nine states are to be extinguished? They are the nine [states] that are rooted in craving: in dependence on craving there is searching, in dependence on searching there is gain, in dependence on gain there is use, in dependence on use there is desire, in dependence on desire there is attachment, in de-

⁵⁹ Cf. above p. 408 note 44.

pendence on attachment there is jealousy, in dependence on jealousy there is guarding, and in dependence on guarding there is protection.⁶⁰

9.5 "What nine states are to be realized? They are: the nine eradications. Entering the first absorption, the thorn of sound ceases.⁶¹ Entering the second absorption, the thorn of [directed] awareness and [sustained] contemplation ceases. Entering the third absorption, the thorn of rapture ceases. Entering the fourth absorption, the thorn of breathing in and out ceases. Entering the sphere of [infinite] space,⁶² the thorn of the perception of form ceases. Entering the sphere of [infinite] consciousness, the thorn of the perception of space ceases. Entering the sphere of nothingness, the thorn of the perception of consciousness ceases.⁶³ Entering the sphere of neither-perception-nor-non-perception, [28] the thorn of the perception of nothingness ceases. Entering the concentration on cessation, the thorn of perception and feeling ceases.

10. "Again, ten states are greatly successful, ten states are to be cultivated, ten states are to be understood, ten states are to be extinguished, and ten states are to be realized.

⁶⁰ [54] The Pāli parallel to DĀ 10, DN 34 at DN III 289,6, indicates that such protection leads to the taking up of weapons, quarrelling, and falsehood.

⁶¹ [55] The Pāli parallel to DĀ 10, DN 34 at DN III 290,6 (to be supplemented from DN III 266,6), instead highlights that with the attainment of the first absorption, perceptions of sensuality cease. That sound is a thorn for the first absorption is stated elsewhere in the Pāli discourses; cf. AN 10.72 at AN V 135,1 (the same position is also taken in its parallel MĀ 84 at T I 561a7). Whereas the Sanskrit fragments edited in Mittal 1957 have not preserved this part of the discourse, a Sanskrit fragment parallel to this item can be found in Or 15009/542 (Hoernle 149/Add.2), Hartmann 1991: 140 (§67).

⁶² Ichimura 2016: 13 adds that this is the "initial formless state of concentration", which has no basis in the Chinese.

⁶³ [56] Here and with the next two items, my translation follows an emendation in the CBETA edition of 刺] to 刺], in keeping with the character used earlier.

10.1 "What ten states are greatly successful? They are: the ten states of protection.⁶⁴ The first is when a monk is endowed with the two hundred and fifty precepts and endowed with dignified deportment, seeing a minor offence arouses in him great trepidation, he evenly trains in morality with a mind that does not incline to wrongness.

"The second is gaining a good friend.

"The third is speaking what is balanced and correct, and having much patience.⁶⁵

"The fourth is seeking well [to learn] the good Dharma and sharing it [with others] without stinginess.

"The fifth is to assist his companions in the holy life in what they have to arrange without becoming weary, being able to do what is difficult to do, and to teach others in doing it.

"The sixth is being learned, able to retain what has been heard without ever forgetting it.

"The seventh is being energetic in eradicating unwholesome states and increasing wholesome states.

"The eighth is being oneself constantly with undivided mindfulness, without being [carried away] by different perceptions, [able] to recall former good activities as if they were in front of one's eyes.

"The ninth is being accomplished in wisdom, contemplating the arising and cessation of states, and through noble discipline abandoning the root of *dukkha*. [29]

"The tenth is delighting in seclusion, giving attention with undivided mindfulness and being without restlessness between meditations.⁶⁶

⁶⁴ DĀ 11 at T I 59a13: 十救法, which in the translation by Ichimura 2016: 14 become "ten kinds of refuge for religious salvation".

⁶⁵ DĀ 11 at T I 59a16: 堪忍, which Ichimura 2016: 14 understands to imply that "he is able to understand the meanings beyond words".

10.2 "What ten states are to be cultivated? They are the ten right practices: right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration, right liberation, and right knowledge.⁶⁷

10.3 "What ten states are to be understood? They are the ten physical spheres: the sphere of the eye, the sphere of the ear, the sphere of the nose, the sphere of the tongue, the sphere of the body, the sphere of forms, the sphere of sounds, the sphere of odours, the sphere of tastes, and the sphere of tangibles.

10.4 "What ten states are to be extinguished? They are the ten wrong practices: wrong view, wrong intention, wrong speech, wrong action, wrong livelihood, wrong effort, wrong mindfulness, wrong concentration, wrong liberation, and wrong knowledge.⁶⁸ [30]

10.5 "What ten states are to be realized? They are the ten states beyond training: the right view beyond training, [59b] the

⁶⁶ [57] The ten states of protection in the Pāli parallel to DĀ 10, DN 34 at DN III 266,27, are being 1) morally restrained, 2) learned, 3) a good friend, 4) gentle and patient, 5) capable at assisting companions in the holy life, 6) delighted by the Dharma, 7) contented, 8) energetic, 9) mindful, and 10) wise. The Sanskrit fragment parallel in Schlingloff 1962: 23f (§x.1), which has not preserved the first state, lists: 2) morally restrained, 3) a good friend, 4) secluded, 5) energetic, 6) mindful, 7) wise, 8) gentle, 9) delighted by the Dharma, and 10) capable at assisting companions in the holy life.

⁶⁷ [58] The Pāli parallel to DĀ 10, DN 34 at DN III 290,16, presents the ten spheres of totality, *kaṣiṇāyatana*, as what should be cultivated. Regarding the positioning and implications of right knowledge cf. Bucknell 1984: 9f, 15, and 31, and Anālayo 2011b: 663 note 114.

⁶⁸ [59] The Sanskrit fragment parallel to DĀ 10, Schlingloff 1962: 26 (§x.4), lists the five hindrances in a twofold manner (cf. also SHT VII 1646A, Bechert and Wille 1995: 60; identified by M. Schmidt in Bechert and Wille 2004: 423). Similar presentations, where a doubling of the five hindrances results in ten, can be found in SN 46.52 at SN V 110,1 and its parallels SĀ 713 at T II 191b11 and D 4094 *ju* 60a1 or Q 5595 *tu* 66a2.

right intention ... right speech ... right action ... right livelihood ... right effort ... right mindfulness ... right concentration ... right liberation ... and right knowledge [beyond training].

"Monks, these are called states increasing by one. Now having taught you the Dharma in this way, as the Tathāgata I have done for my disciples what is appropriate, with which you are now all completely familiar. I have taught you out of kindness and concern. You should also be diligent and receive it respectfully.

"Monks, you should dwell in seclusion, at the root of trees, in empty places, energetically sit in meditation. Do not be negligent yourselves. If you do not exert yourselves now, what benefit will it be later to harbour regrets? This is my injunction, uphold it diligently."

At that time the monks, hearing what the Buddha had said, were delighted and received it respectfully. [31]

Study

Overall the Discourse Increasing by One stays well within the doctrinal world of early Buddhist thought. That is, even though this discourse does not have a known parallel, in doctrinal terms nothing seems to mark it off as substantially late.

Perhaps the only difference worth explicit mention is in regard to the "nine factors of exertion for purification". The rendering of some factors here suggests that the Indic original used for the translation of the *Dīrgha-āgama* into Chinese differed from the terms used in the corresponding schemes found in the *Daśottara-sūtra* of the Sarvāstivāda and/or Mūlasarvāstivāda *Dīrgha-āgama* and in the *Dasuttara-sutta* of the Theravāda *Dīgha-nikāya*.⁶⁹

⁶⁹ [60] Cf. above p. 413 note 57.

Elsewhere I have argued that the scheme of seven purifications, which is part of this ninefold set, did originally not play as central a role in Buddhist thought as it eventually acquired in the Theravāda tradition, due to forming the basic scaffolding of the *Visuddhimagga*.⁷⁰ Thus it would not be surprising if some variation in terminology occurred in what would not have been considered to be a scheme of central doctrinal importance, at least in the early stages of transmission.

The presentation in the Discourse Increasing by One (DĀ 11) corresponds exactly to the version of the *Dasuttara-sutta* in the *Dīrgha-āgama* (DĀ 10) for the five topics they both cover:

- "greatly successful", (1st of DĀ 10 = 1st of DĀ 11),
- to be "cultivated", (2nd of DĀ 10 = 2nd of DĀ 11),
- to be "understood", (3rd of DĀ 10 = 3rd of DĀ 11),
- to be "extinguished", (4th of DĀ 10 = 4th of DĀ 11),
- to be "realized", (10th of DĀ 10 = 5th of DĀ 11). [32]

In other words, the main difference between the Discourse Increasing by One (DĀ 11) and the Dharmaguptaka version of the *Dasuttara-sutta* is their compass. The former takes up five topics, the latter takes up ten that include the former five. In principle, it would be possible that an earlier presentation of five topics was later expanded to ten, and this expansion became a separate discourse, or else that the five topics were extracted from an earlier presentation of ten topics to form a separate discourse.

Since the mode of presentation by way of ten topics recurs in the Sarvāstivāda and/or Mūlasarvāstivāda *Daśottara-sūtra* and in the *Dasuttara-sutta* of the Theravāda tradition, as well as in an individually translated Chinese version, it seems safe to conclude that this form of presentation is the earlier one, given that it is shared by different transmission lineages. From this it would fol-

⁷⁰ [61] Anālayo 2012g: 70–77 and below p. 507 note 14.

low that the Discourse Increasing by One is an extract from this tenfold presentation, achieved by leaving out five topics:

- leading to "decline",
- leading to "increase",
- "difficult to comprehend",
- to be "aroused",
- to be "known".

Such an abridgement would make it easier to memorize the list and thus making is easier for those outside of the circle of professional reciters to commit to memory a summary of the teachings.

The Discourse on the Three Groups (DĀ 12)

Similarly to the Discourse Increasing by One (DĀ 11), the Discourse on the Three Groups (DĀ 12), which I will translate in the next chapter, works its way through a list of doctrinal items based on the same pattern of proceeding from Ones to Tens. ^[33] It differs by adopting a threefold scheme, which distinguishes between:

- what leads towards a bad destiny, 趣/向惡趣,
- what leads towards a good destiny, 趣/向善趣,
- what leads towards Nirvāṇa, 趣/向涅槃.

Like the Discourse Increasing by One (DĀ 11), the Discourse on the Three Groups (DĀ 12) appears to be based on the *Dīrgha-āgama* version of the *Dasuttara-sutta* (DĀ 10). Thus the exposition of what "should be cultivated" in this *Dasuttara-sutta* recurs in the Discourse on the Three Groups under the heading of what leads towards Nirvāṇa. This is the case for each of the sets, from the Ones to the Tens. The exposition of what leads to either a bad destiny or else a good one in the Discourse on the Three Groups corresponds to what leads to decline or else to increase according to this *Dasuttara-sutta* in the case of the Twos, Threes, Sixes, Nines, and Tens. Moreover, in the case of the Eights the states that lead to a bad destiny in the Discourse on the Three Groups correspond to what should be "extin-

guished" according to the *Dīrgha-āgama* version of the *Dasuttara-sutta*.

In this way, whereas the Discourse Increasing by One in its entirety appears to be simply a straightforward extract from this *Dasuttara-sutta*, the Discourse on the Three Groups is based on such an extract in the case of its third category, regarding what leads towards Nirvāṇa. This appears to be the nucleus out of which the Discourse on the Three Groups evolved, that is, by taking over the entire listing of states to be cultivated from the *Dīrgha-āgama* version of the *Dasuttara-sutta*. The other two categories – what leads towards a bad or a good destiny – are only in part inspired by this discourse.

The following scenario emerges: at an earlier point in the evolution of what was to become the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama*, the collection would have had versions of the *Saṅgīti-sutta* and the *Dasuttara-sutta*,^[34] similarly to the Theravāda *Dīgha-nikāya* and the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda *Dīrgha-āgama* collections. The appeal of such summaries of the Dharma would then have led to the emergence of an abbreviated version of the *Dasuttara-sutta* in the form of the Discourse Increasing by One (DĀ 11).⁷¹ The same tendency would have inspired the reciters to develop an even shorter summary of the teachings in the form of the Discourse on the Three Groups (DĀ 12).

In comparison to the development that in this way can be discerned in the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama* collection, the Sar-

⁷¹ [63] It is noteworthy that a discourse with the same title is mentioned in the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya* account of the first *saṅgīti*, T 1421 at T XXII 191a19: 增一經, followed by references to the 增十經 and the 僧祇陀經, counterparts to the *Dasuttara-sutta* and the *Saṅgīti-sutta*. This conveys the impression that a similar discourse was also part of the Mahīśāsaka *Dīrgha-āgama*. In a personal communication, Matsuda Kazunobu told me that this reference in T 1421 has already been noted in Karashima et al. 2000: 14, which due to my ignorance of Japanese I had not been able to consult when writing the present paper.

vāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda *Dīrgha-āgama* reciters pursued a somewhat different course, resulting in the *Arthavistara-sūtra*.⁷² This discourse is found in their *Dīrgha-āgama* between the *Daśottara-sūtra* and the *Saṅgīti-sūtra*. The *Arthavistara-sūtra*, attributed to Śāriputra, no longer follows a numerical order in its presentation. Instead, the items in its list proceed thematically, following a trajectory that builds up to the attainment of full liberation and freedom from rebirth. This trajectory of building up towards liberation is also evident in the schemes employed in the *Dasuttara-sutta* and its parallels as well as in the two discourses found only in the Chinese *Dīrgha-āgama* (the Discourse Increasing by One and the Discourse on the Three Groups).^[35] What appears to be a specific line of development taken in the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda collection is that with the *Arthavistara-sūtra* a numerical scheme is no longer evident. This shows that attempts to construct a summary survey of central aspects of the Dharma were not confined to numerical listings.

In this way, whereas the *Saṅgīti-sutta* and the *Dasuttara-sutta* and their parallels reflect the shared heritage of the Dharmaguptaka, Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda, and Theravāda traditions, the basic tendency underlying these two discourses has found different modes of expression in the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda *Dīrgha-āgama* and the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama*. These different modes point to the same need to provide the disciples of the Buddha with a succinct summary of the Dharma, a map to be memorized, contemplated, and recited as a way of

⁷² [64] The discourse has been preserved in Sanskrit fragments, a Tibetan translation, and two Chinese translations: *Arthavistara-sūtra*, Hartmann 1991: 319–336; *'phags pa don rgyas pa zhes bya ba'i chos kyi nram grangs*, D 318 *sa* 188a7 to 193b7 or Q 984 *shu* 197b6 to 203a5; [佛說]廣義法門經, T 97 at T I 919b22 to 922a23, and [佛說]普法義經, T 98 at T I 922b5 to 924c28.

ensuring proper understanding of the teachings and expressing communal harmony through group recitation.⁷³

The Discourse on a Record of the World (DĀ 30)

The fourth division of the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama* contains just a single discourse. This discourse, the Discourse on a Record of the World,⁷⁴ comprises five fascicles in the Taishō edition and is by far the longest discourse in any of the *Āgama* or *Nikāya* collections.⁷⁵ [36]

The Discourse on a Record of the World begins with the Buddha staying in Jeta's Grove in the company of one thousand two hundred and fifty monks. Sitting in the assembly hall together after the meal, the monks discuss the topic of the nature of the heavens and the earth, and of living beings.⁷⁶ The Buddha over-

⁷³ [65] For a more detailed discussion of the function of such lists cf. Anālayo 2014c.

⁷⁴ [66] DĀ 30 at T I 114b7 to 149c21; several parts of DĀ 30 have been translated by Howard 1986: 115–156; a detailed survey of the discourse can be found in Denis 1977b: 289–301, a comparison with the *Lokapaññatti* in Denis 1977a: xxv. Whereas Mizuno 1961: 70 speaks of the "*Loka-utsthāna-sūtra* of the *Dīrgha Āgama*", Dhammajoti 2002/2007: 108 and van Put 2007: 207 reconstruct the title 世記 as *Lokaprajñapti*; cf. also Bareau 1979b: 301: "Description du monde". Willemen 2008: 60 remarks that "*ji* in the title means *jishuo* 記說, explanation. This most probably means *prajñapti*, but a form of *sthā* ... or a compound (e.g. *vyavasthāna*), are not impossible."

⁷⁵ [67] By way of comparison, the Dharmaguptaka counterpart to the longest discourse in the Pāli *Nikāyas*, the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* (DN 16), covers three fascicles: DĀ 2 at T I 11a7 to 30b4. Another rather long discourse is MĀ 222, though due to being abbreviated this is not so evident; cf. Anālayo 2014c: 44–47.

⁷⁶ [68] DĀ 30 at T I 114b10: "It is marvellous, venerable friends, now what causes the destruction of this heaven and earth? What causes its formation? What are the living beings that dwell in its countries?", 諸賢, 未曾有也, 今此天地何由而敗? 何由而成? 眾生所居國土云何? The terms 敗 and 成 recur in the title of a discourse mentioned in the account of the first *saṅgīti* in the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya* as being part of the *Dīrgha-āgama*, the "Discourse on the Forma-

hears their conversation through his supernormal ability of the divine ear. [37] He joins them and the monks report what they had been discussing. The Buddha praises them for broaching such a topic and asks if they wish him to expound on this theme, to which the monks happily agree. After this introductory exchange, the discourse proper starts, providing a detailed description of matters of cosmology in twelve chapters.

The first two chapters of the discourse describe Jambudīpa and Uttarakuru, followed by a chapter that portrays a *cakravartin* with his various endowments and a chapter that surveys the hells. The discourse continues with chapters on *nāgas* and *garuḍas*, on the *asuras*, on the Four Heavenly Kings, and on the *devas* of the Thirty-three, together with various other matters. Then come chapters on the three calamities (i.e., the destruction of the world

tion and Destruction of the World", 世界成敗經. Except for the first two discourses in this account's listing, found in T 1428 at T XXII 968b15, the titles of the other discourses do not necessarily correspond to what appear to be their equivalents in the *Dīrgha-āgama*: 1st (梵動經) ≈ DĀ 21 (梵動經), 2nd (增一) ≈ DĀ 11 (增一經), 3rd (增十) ≈ DĀ 10 (十上經), 5th (僧祇陀經) ≈ DĀ 9 (眾集經), 6th (大因緣經) ≈ DĀ 13 (大緣方便經), 7th (天帝釋問經) ≈ DĀ 14 (釋提桓因問經). The 4th in this listing, the 世界成敗經, could correspond to DĀ 5, 小緣經, translated in Meisig 1988, since this discourse briefly refers to the destruction of the world, T I 37b28, and then takes up the formation of the world in detail; a possible correspondence already suggested by Oldenberg 1898: 653. According to Bareau 1966: 50, however, the reference 世界成敗經 is to DĀ 30, the 世記經. On this identification it would follow that at the time of the translation of the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya* this discourse was already part of the *Dīrgha-āgama* (according to an introduction that prefaces the *Dīrgha-āgama*, the translation of the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya* was completed before the translation of the *Dīrgha-āgama*; cf. T 1a28). It is possible, however, that the reference was added to the listing in the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya* during a subsequent revision of the translation, the undertaking of which is mentioned in the introduction to the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya* itself, T 1428 at T XXII 567b3; cf. also Heirman 2006: 415.

by fire, water, and wind), on warfare between the *devas* and the *asuras*, on three types of *kalpas* during which the lifespan and morality of beings decrease, and on the coming into being of the world after one of the three calamities. The discourse concludes with the standard description of the delight of the listening monks.

Much of the information given in these chapters can be found elsewhere among the early discourses, although often put to a different purpose. Thus, for example, the function of the *cakravartin* in the early discourses is not yet to provide a model that Buddhist kings should emulate, ^[38] which appears to be a later development. Instead, the main function of the *cakravartin* motif seems to be rather to convey the soteriological message that even the acme of worldly power is vastly inferior to renunciation and liberation.⁷⁷ Such a message is no longer evident in the third chapter of the Discourse on a Record of the World, whose function is merely to provide a detailed description of a *cakravartin*.⁷⁸

The overall impression conveyed by the discourse is as if all kinds of information on cosmological matters had been collected from various discourses and passages to form a single text that gives an exhaustive account of the world from a Buddhist viewpoint.⁷⁹ As a result, the Discourse on a Record of the World is not only exceptionally long, but also has a somewhat different thrust when compared to cosmological descriptions found elsewhere in the early discourses, as these usually serve to illustrate some doctrinal teaching.

⁷⁷ [70] Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2011g.

⁷⁸ [71] DĀ 30 at T I 119b26.

⁷⁹ [72] On Buddhist (and Indian) cosmology cf., e.g., de La Vallée Poussin 1911, Kirfel 1920, Günther 1944, Bhattacharyya 1969, Gombrich 1975, Reynolds and Reynolds 1982, Kloetzli 1983, Jayawardhana 1984, Nattier 1991, Kongtrul 1995, Gethin 1997, Sadakata 1997/2004, Sankarnarayan et al. 2002, Gethin 2004, and Zhu 2006.

Although doctrinal teachings are also found in the Discourse on a Record of the World, these appear for the most part to have made their way into the description accidentally, simply because they were found in the original discourse from which a particular passage was taken.⁸⁰

In sum, the function of the Discourse on a Record of the World appears to be mainly a descriptive one – providing "a record of the world", as the title indicates – and in its basic thrust this discourse is thereby similar to texts like the Jain *Ṭhāṇaṅga*, for example, where Mahāvīra is shown to give all kinds of detailed description of cosmological matters.⁸¹ [39] In sum, it seems that the Discourse on a Record of the World could be a comparatively late text.⁸²

The impression that the Discourse on a Record of the World could be a latecomer to the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama* collection is strengthened when the entire collection is examined from a structural viewpoint. In what follows I consider the function of such structuring by looking at the other *Āgamas* and *Nikāyas*, in order to be able to apply this to the case of the Chinese *Dīrgha-āgama*.

In the case of the *saṃyukta* and *ekottarika* collections, the fact that these collections are subdivided by way of topics or numbers – the *saṃyukta* is arranged according to topics, the *ekottarika* groups discourses according to a numerical principle ranging from Ones to Elevens – would have facilitated portioning off parts of the collection for memorization purposes.

⁸⁰ [73] Anesaki 1908: 35 comments that texts like DĀ 30 "may have been one of the products of the period in which many manuals of Buddhist philosophy and tradition were compiled".

⁸¹ [74] For an edition of the *Ṭhāṇaṅga* cf. Jambūvijaya 1985; on its structure cf. Krümpelmann 2006.

⁸² [75] Pande 1957: 79 comments that this "single long cosmological sūtra ... appears apocryphal". He appears to have come to this conclusion based on the survey of the chapters of DĀ 30 given in Nanjio 1883/1989: 137.

The same procedure is less easily applied to the long and middle-length discourse collections, as these are not structured by topic or a numerical principle. Nevertheless, a similar effect can still be achieved. This can be seen by taking a closer look at the *Majjhima-nikāya*, transmitted by the Theravāda tradition, where a basic threefold division appears to have fulfilled this purpose.⁸³ This basic threefold division of the *Majjhima-nikāya* collects the discourses in three fifties:

- the *Mūla-paṇṇāsa*, "the root fifty" (50 discourses),
- the *Majjhima-paṇṇāsa*, "the middle fifty" (50 discourses),
- the *Upaṇṇāsa*, "the top fifty" (52 discourses).^[40]

The *Visuddhimagga* indicates that these three fifties were to be learned by a prospective reciter one after the other in succession. That is, reciters would at first memorize the first fifty, and when this was accomplished they would turn to the middle fifty. When these had been successfully committed to memory, they would learn the final fifty.⁸⁴ According to the *Samantapāsādikā*, a monk who wants to become a reciter of the *Majjhima-nikāya* needs to memorize at least the first set of fifty.⁸⁵ From this it would follow that the first set of fifty is the minimum that needs to be learned, to which the middle and the final fifty could then be added. Although these descriptions are only found in commentarial texts, they may well reflect ancient patterns among reciters.

Extrapolating from the indications given in the commentaries, the subdivision into three fifties could reflect the need to accommodate differences in the memory skills of those who wish to be-

⁸³ [76] What follows is based on extracts from Anālayo 2010g.

⁸⁴ [77] Vism 95,23 describes that a prospective reciter of the *Majjhima-nikāya* needs first to memorize the first fifty, then the middle fifty, and then the final fifty, *mūlapaṇṇāsaṃ sajjhāyantassa majjhimapāṇṇāsako āgacchati, taṃ sajjhāyantassa upariṇṇāsako*.

⁸⁵ [78] Sp IV 789,14; cf. above p. 92 note 38.

come reciters of the *Majjhima-nikāya*. A reciter of less talent in memorization may only learn the first fifty, as suggested in the *Samantapāsādikā*. The first set of fifty in fact collects discourses that take up the most essential themes required for a monastic's training and practice. Thus learning the first fifty would provide a reciter with expositions on the most foundational matters.

A reciter with more abilities could then continue and learn also the second fifty. Having learned two fifties would enable such a reciter to take up preaching on a broader scale. For such purposes the five chapters assembled in the second fifty would be particularly apt, as they collect discourses spoken to householders, monks, wanderers, [41] kings, and brahmins.⁸⁶ These five groups are the main audiences that a reciter would encounter when preaching on a broader scale, so that learning this second set of fifty would provide a selection of discourses related to each of these groups, as occasion demands.

A reciter who trains further and becomes a fully fledged *majjhima-bhāṇaka*, in the sense of memorizing all of the discourses in this collection, would also be versed in the more detailed descriptions of meditation practice and related topics provided in several of the discourses collected under the third fifty. This would enable such a reciter not only to be a preacher in general, but also to act as a teacher for more advanced disciples and fellow monastics, guiding them in their practice.

In this way the division into three fifties appears to suit the exigencies of oral transmission, where reciters of differing degrees of ability need to be provided with a foundational set of discourses, with the option of adding more material for teaching

⁸⁶ [79] This is evident from the titles of the subdivisions of the middle fifty: *gahapati-vagga*, *bhikkhu-vagga*, *paribbājaka-vagga*, *rāja-vagga*, and *brāhmaṇa-vagga*.

the wider society through the second fifty, and eventually more expositions for adepts in memorizing the *Majjhima-nikāya* by learning the final fifty.

The counterpart to the *Majjhima-nikāya* of the Theravāda tradition, the *Madhyama-āgama* extant in Chinese and apparently transmitted by Sarvāstivāda reciters, has considerably more discourses than its Pāli counterpart and does not show evidence of having been partitioned in a threefold manner.

Coming back to the collections of long discourses, the Theravāda *Dīgha-nikāya* also adopts a threefold division, similar to the *Majjhima-nikāya*, as follows:⁸⁷ [42]

- the *Śīlakkhandha-vagga*, the chapter on the aggregate of morality,
(13 discourses),
- the *Mahā-vagga*, the great chapter,
(10 discourses),
- the *Pāṭika-vagga*, the chapter [beginning with] Pāṭika,
(11 discourses).

Whereas the tripartite division of the *Majjhima-nikāya* does not seem to have an equivalent in the Sarvāstivāda *Madhyama-āgama*, the threefold division of the *Dīgha-nikāya* does have a counterpart in the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda *Dīrgha-āgama* preserved in Sanskrit fragments, which also falls into three main sections:

- the *Śaṣṭsūtraka-nipāta*, a section with six discourses,
(6 discourses),
- the *Yuga-nipāta*, a section on pairs [of discourses],
(18 discourses),
- the *Śīlaskandha-nipāta*, a section on the aggregate of morality,
(23 discourses).

⁸⁷ [81] On this threefold division cf. also Bapat 1926.

Although the Theravāda *Dīgha-nikāya* and the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda *Dīrgha-āgama* agree on this basic threefold division, the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama* instead falls into four main chapters.⁸⁸ For the Dharmaguptaka collection to differ from its Theravāda counterpart on an issue where the Theravāda and Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda versions agree is noteworthy, since the general tendency is for the results of the Theravāda and Dharmaguptaka transmissions of the collection of long discourses to be similar.⁸⁹ In view of the relationship of these two traditions in the history of the Buddhist schools, for their collections of long discourses to disagree on such a fundamental matter as the basic division of the collection, especially when the Theravāda and Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda collections are in agreement in this respect, is significant. [43]

This supports the impression that the Discourse on a Record of the World is a later addition to the collection, since without this discourse the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama* would also follow the subdivision into three chapters, similar to its Theravāda and Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda counterparts.

In principle, the integration of such an addition could have happened at any time during the transmission in India of the *Dīrgha-āgama* or even at the time of its translation into Chinese.⁹⁰ Be

⁸⁸ Cf. above p. 396 note 6.

⁸⁹ [82] On the otherwise close relation between the Theravāda *Dīgha-nikāya* and the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama* cf., e.g., Lamotte 1949/1981: 811 note 1 and Waldschmidt 1980: 149, as well as the discussion above p. 396f.

⁹⁰ [83] In view of the case record of the translator Zhū Fóniàn (竺佛念), studied by Nattier 2010, it cannot *a priori* be excluded that the Discourse on a Record of the World became part of the *Dīrgha-āgama* only in China. At the time of the translation of the *Dīrgha-āgama*, a comparable discourse on cosmological matters had already been translated: T 23 at T I 27a3, 大樓炭經, which according to the information given in the Taishō edition happened during the Western Jin and thus towards the end of the third or the beginning of the

that as it may, it seems clear that this discourse is a latecomer to the collection, an addition that in view of the nature of the discourse can be assumed to have happened subsequent to the addition of the two discourses surveyed in the first part of this chapter.

What these additions have in common is the attempt to provide a map. In the case of the Discourse Increasing by One (DĀ 11) and the Discourse on the Three Groups (DĀ 12), this attempt is an extension of a concern already evident in the *Saṅgīti-sutta* and the *Dasuttara-sutta* found in all three collections of long discourses. [44] The need to have a map of central doctrinal teachings must have made itself felt soon after the teacher's demise. In fact the parallel versions of the *Saṅgīti-sutta* explicitly indicate that the main purpose of the discourse is to forestall disputes about the teachings once the Buddha has passed away.⁹¹ The Discourse on a Record of the World (DĀ 30), however, reflects concerns of a later period.⁹² Interest in an exhaustive account of the world from a Buddhist

fourth century. Nanjio 1883/1989: 139 refers to T 23 (his no. 551) as one instance of what he calls "earlier translations" of DĀ 30. An interest in cosmological matters is also evident in EĀ 40.1 at T II 735c15, translated by the same Zhú Fóniàn before undertaking the translation of the *Dīrgha-āgama*. EĀ 40.1 precedes its exposition of the destruction of the world by seven suns with a long cosmological description, and after the destruction continues by depicting the re-emergence of the world, T II 736c16, material that bears similarities to DĀ 30, but is absent from the parallels to EĀ 40.1: AN 7.62 at AN IV 100,1, MĀ 8 at T I 428c7, T 30 at T I 811c19, and D 4094 *ju* 102b3 or Q 5595 *tu* 117a7 (edited and translated in Dietz 2007, together with an edition of relevant Sanskrit fragments).

⁹¹ [84] For a more detailed discussion cf. Anālayo 2014c.

⁹² [85] De La Vallée Poussin 1911: 129 begins his survey of Buddhist cosmogony and cosmology with the remark: "in the earliest times, speculations on the universe were apparently regarded as wrong"; cf. also Bhattacharyya 1969: 49f: "the Buddha did not encourage speculations on the universe, which, according to him, were nothing but foolish questions ... but in [the] course of time the Buddhists developed a systematic cosmographical outlook."

viewpoint would have arisen only once the making of maps had already acquired a momentum of its own for quite some time.

Conclusion

The three discourses in the Chinese *Dīrgha-āgama* that are without parallels in other early discourse collections appear to be later additions to the collection. They have in common an attempt to map doctrinal terrain. Whereas the Discourse Increasing by One (DĀ 11) and the Discourse on the Three Groups (DĀ 12) still seem to belong to an early stage in the development of such maps, the Discourse on a Record of the World (DĀ 30) appears to reflect a later stage.

The circumstance that all of the three discourses in the Chinese *Dīrgha-āgama* that are without parallels appear to be later additions should not be taken to reflect a general rule, ^[45] however, assuming that any discourse without parallels must be a latecomer to the collection. It is always possible that a discourse is now extant from only one textual lineage due to the vicissitudes of transmission. An example is the *Jīvaka-sūtra* of the Sarvāstivāda/Mūla-sarvāstivāda *Dīrgha-āgama*. Until the recent discovery of fragments of this *Jīvaka-sūtra*, only the *Majjhima-nikāya* version of this discourse was known. This was because the Sarvāstivāda/Mūla-sarvāstivāda reciters had allocated this discourse to their long discourse collection, whereas the Theravāda reciters placed their version of this discourse in their middle-length collection.⁹³ This goes to show that lack of a parallel can simply be the result of differences in the distribution of discourses among the four discourse collections, transmitted by various Buddhist schools, of which we only have a complete set in the case of the Theravāda tradition.

⁹³ [86] For a more detailed discussion cf. Anālayo 2012f: 528–532.

Dasuttara-sutta (DN 34) Part 2

Introduction

In this chapter I translate the twelfth discourse in the Chinese *Dīrgha-āgama*. As already mentioned in the previous chapter, this discourse, which is without known parallels, presents a summary of essential Buddhist teachings in the form of a list. The "Discourse on the Three Groups" is the last of four discourses in the *Dīrgha-āgama* that offer such a summary of the Dharma.

The first of these four discourses is the Dharmaguptaka parallel to the *Saṅgīti-sutta*, which lists diverse sets of doctrinal terms and teachings in a numerically ascending order from Ones to Tens. Versions of this discourse are as follows:

- the thirty-third discourse in the Theravāda *Dīgha-nikāya*,¹
- the third discourse in the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda *Dīrgha-āgama*,² extant in Sanskrit fragments;³

* Originally published in 2013 under the title "Summaries of the Dharma – A Translation of *Dīrgha-āgama* Discourse No. 12" in *Asian Literature and Translation: A Journal of Religion and Culture*, 1.6: 1–14.

¹ [3] DN 33 at DN III 207,1 to DN III 271,22.

² [4] According to the reconstructed order of the Sanskrit *Dīrghā-āgama* in Hartmann 2004: 125, the *Saṅgīti-sūtra* comes in third position, preceded by the *Daśottara-sūtra* as the first and the *Arthavistara-sūtra* as the second discourse.

³ [5] The chief edition of the discourse is Stache-Rosen 1968; cf. also Hoernle 1916: 18–22, Waldschmidt 1955, Tripāṭhī 1985, and Hartmann 1991: 251–259 (§§138–146). Fragments published subsequent to the edition by Stache-Rosen are, e.g., SHT III 895 and 991, Waldschmidt et al. 1971: 143 and 253; SHT IV 412.33, Sander and Waldschmidt 1980: 66f; SHT VI 1414 (identified by M. Schmidt in Bechert and Wille 2004: 420) 1559, and 1597 (identified by S. Dietz in Bechert and Wille 1995: 302), Bechert and Wille 1989: 127, 188, and 207; SHT VII 1654Ay-z, Bechert and Wille 1995: 64; SHT VIII 1922, Bechert and Wille 2000: 103; SHT IX 2214, 2273, 2362+7119, and 2787,

- the ninth discourse in the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama*,⁴ [2]
- a version of uncertain school affiliation preserved as an individual translation in Chinese.⁵

The parallel versions agree that the discourse was spoken by Sāriputta as a way to help ensure communal harmony through the group recitation, *saṅgīti*, of the Buddha's teaching. The introductory narration to the discourse reports that a quarrel had broken out among the Jains after the demise of their teacher. To forestall something similar happening among Buddhist disciples once their teacher also passed away, Sāriputta expounded the discourse.

In the Dharmaguptaka and Theravāda collections of long discourses, the *Saṅgīti-sutta* is followed by the *Dasuttara-sutta*, another discourse attributed to Sāriputta. Versions of this discourse are:

- the thirty-fourth discourse in the Theravāda *Dīgha-nikāya*,⁶
- the first discourse in the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda *Dīrgha-āgama*,⁷

Bechert and Wille 2004: 137, 158, 185, and 279, cf. also SHT I 168 in Bechert and Wille 2004: 382–389; Or 15003, Wille 2006: 76, 106, 107, 120, 125f, 138, and 143f; SHT X 3684?, 3738, 4175h, 4178, 4220, and 4305, Wille 2008: 154, 165, 292, 295, 322f, and 368; Or 15004, Wille 2009: 94; Or 15009, Hirabayashi 2009: 160, Fukita 2009: 322 and 323, Melzer 2009: 201; SHT XI 4597, 5263, 5608, Wille 2012: 138, 288, and 359. Relevant discourse quotations in Śamathadeva's *Abhidharmakośopāyikā-ṭīkā*, preserved in Tibetan, have been identified by Honjō 1984: 22, 30, 42, 46, 70, 112, and 114; on Gāndhārī fragments cf. Salomon 1997: 355.

⁴ [2] DĀ 9 at T I 49b26 to T I 52c11; translated and studied by Behrsing 1930.

⁵ [6] T 12 at T I 226c3 to T I 233b19.

⁶ [9] DN 34 at DN III 272,1 to DN III 292,7.

⁷ [10] Chief editions of the discourse are Mittal 1957 and Schlingloff 1962; cf. also Pauly 1957: 287–292 and 1959: 248, Tripāthī 1980, and Hartmann 1991: 128–142 (§§53–68). Fragments published subsequent to the editions by Mittal and Schlingloff are, e.g., SHT III 863 and 915, Waldschmidt et al. 1971: 111f and 171; SHT VII 1646A (identified by M. Schmidt in Bechert and Wille 2004: 423) and 1682, Bechert and Wille 1995: 60 and 90; SHT IX 2101, 2215,

- the tenth discourse in the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama*,⁸
- an individual translation preserved in Chinese.⁹

As already mentioned in the previous chapter, whereas in the *Saṅgīti-sutta* and its parallels the main structural element is the progression from Ones to Tens, under which various numbers of doctrinal items are arranged, the *Dasuttara-sutta* and its parallels invariably assign ten items to each of the numerical divisions from Ones to Tens, and these ten items follow a consistently applied thematic pattern for each exposition. [3]

The Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama* then continues with two discourses attributed to the Buddha that are without a parallel in the Theravāda *Dīgha-nikāya* or the Sarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivāda *Dīrgha-āgama*. The first of the two is the eleventh discourse in the collection and carries the title "Discourse Increasing by One", translated and studied in the previous chapter. This discourse appears to be simply an abridged version of the *Dasuttara-sutta* in the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama*. Instead of using ten topics, it works through the listing of Ones to Tens based on five topics.

Another discourse in this group of four summaries of the Dharma is the twelfth discourse in the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrgha-āgama*, the Discourse on the Three Groups. This discourse, which I already introduced in the previous chapter, works its way from Ones to Tens based on a threefold scheme, distinguishing between:

2537, 2538, 2681, and 2785, Bechert and Wille 2004: 99f, 137, 230f, 257, and 278; cf. also SHT I 168 in Bechert and Wille 2004: 381–391; Or 15003, Wille 2006: 75, 80, 110, 124, 141 and 142; Or 15004, Wille 2009: 88 and 89; Or 15009, Nagashima 2009: 158, Melzer 2009: 208, and Ye 2009: 239; and SHT XI 4465c, Wille 2012: 71; cf. also Hori 2003: 103f. Discourse quotations in Śamathadeva's *Abhidharmakośopāyikā* have been identified by Honjō 1984: 14, 22, and 96; cf. also Skilling 1980: 26–30.

⁸ DĀ 10 at T I 52c17 to T I 57b24; for a comparative study cf. de Jong 1966/1979.

⁹ [11] T 13 at T I 233b23 to T I 241c19.

- what leads towards a bad destiny, 趣/向惡趣,
- what leads towards a good destiny, 趣/向善趣,
- what leads towards Nirvāṇa, 趣/向涅槃.

With this succinct presentation, this discourse well exemplifies the tendency towards creating summaries of the teachings based on combining numerical divisions with soteriologically relevant themes. In what follows I translate the Discourse on the Three Groups.¹⁰

Translation

The Discourse on the Three Groups

Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was at Sāvattthī in Jeta's Grove, the park [given by] Anāthapiṇḍika, accompanied by a great community of one thousand two hundred and fifty monks.

At that time the Blessed One said to the monks: "I will teach you the sublime Dharma, which is flavoured with meaning and endowed with the purity of the holy life, namely the three groups of states. Listen, pay attention to and be mindful of what I will teach you." Then the monks listened to receive the teaching. [4]

The Buddha said to the monks: "One groups states in three: One state leads towards a bad destiny, one state leads towards a good destiny, and one state leads towards Nirvāṇa.

1)¹¹ "What one state leads towards a bad destiny? It is: being without *mettā* and cherishing harmfulness in the heart. This is reckoned one state that leads towards a bad destiny.

"What one state leads towards a good destiny? It is: not imposing, out of evilness in the heart, on living beings. This is one state that leads towards a good destiny.

¹⁰ [14] DĀ 12 at T I 59b14 to T I 60a27, which has been translated into English by Ichimura 2016: 17–22.

¹¹ For the sake of easy reference, I have numbered the ten sections of the discourse, which is not found in the original.

"What one state leads towards Nirvāṇa? It is: being able to make a diligent effort to cultivate the establishing of mindfulness on the body.¹² This is one state that leads towards Nirvāṇa.

2) "Again, two states lead towards a bad destiny; again, two states lead towards a good destiny; and again, two states lead towards Nirvāṇa.

"What two states lead towards a bad destiny? The first is: breaches of morality,¹³ the second is: destructive views.

"What two states lead towards a good destiny? The first is: being endowed with morality, the second is: being endowed with [right] view.

"What two states lead towards Nirvāṇa? The first is: tranquillity, the second is: insight. [59c]

3) "Again three states lead towards a bad destiny, three states lead towards a good destiny, and three states lead towards Nirvāṇa.

"What three states lead towards a bad destiny? They are the three unwholesome roots: the unwholesome root of lust, the unwholesome root of hatred, and the unwholesome root of delusion.

"What three states lead towards a good destiny? They are the three wholesome roots: the wholesome root of absence of lust, the wholesome root of absence of hatred, and the wholesome root of absence of delusion.

"What three states lead towards Nirvāṇa? They are the three concentrations: concentration on emptiness,¹⁴ concentration on signlessness, and concentration on non-activity.

¹² DĀ 12 at T I 59b25: 修身念處, which Ichimura 2016: 17 renders as "the practice of mental awareness of one's inner and outer physical senses"; the inner and outer senses are not mentioned in the original.

¹³ DĀ 12 at T I 59b27: 毀戒, which Ichimura 2016: 18 renders as "the transgression of precepts and associating with the wicked"; the idea of an association with the wicked is an addition without support in the original.

4) "Again four states lead towards a bad destiny, four states lead towards a good destiny, and four states lead towards Nirvāṇa.

"What four states lead towards a bad destiny? They are: speaking with craving, speaking with hatred, speaking in fear, and speaking with delusion.

"What four states lead towards a good destiny? They are: speaking without craving, speaking without hatred, speaking without fear, and speaking without delusion. ^[5]

"What four states lead towards Nirvāṇa? They are the four establishments of mindfulness: the establishment of mindfulness on the body, the establishment of mindfulness on feeling, the establishment of mindfulness on the mind, and the establishment of mindfulness on phenomena. ¹⁵

5) "Again five states lead towards a bad destiny, five states lead towards a good destiny, and five states lead towards Nirvāṇa.

"What five states lead towards a bad destiny? They are: breaking the five precepts: killing, stealing, adultery, false speech, and drinking liquor. ¹⁶

"What five states lead towards a good destiny? They are upholding the five precepts: not killing, not stealing, not engaging in adultery, not deceiving, and not drinking liquor.

¹⁴ DĀ 12 at T I 59c5: 空三昧, which Ichimura 2016: 18 renders as "concentration on the emptiness of the self and things attributed to it"; the original has no explicit reference to the self or to things attributed to it.

¹⁵ DĀ 12 at T I 59c10: 身念處, 受念處, 意念處, 法念處; Ichimura 2016: 18 renders this reference to the four *satipaṭṭhānas* as "first, the inner and outer physical senses; second, sensation or feeling, third, the mind or intellect; and fourth, the psychophysical elements (aggregates)". The original has no distinction between inner and outer senses and no psychophysical elements; cf. also above p. 350 note 5.

¹⁶ DĀ 12 at T I 59c13: 飲酒, translated by Ichimura 2016: 19 as "states of indolence arising from [the use] of intoxicants"; the original has no explicit reference to states of indolence.

"What five states lead towards Nirvāṇa? They are the five faculties: the faculty of faith, the faculty of energy, the faculty of mindfulness, the faculty of concentration, and the faculty of wisdom.

6) "Again six states lead towards a bad destiny, six states lead towards a good destiny, and six states lead towards Nirvāṇa.

"What six states lead towards a bad destiny? They are the six [forms of] disrespect: being disrespectful towards the Buddha, being disrespectful towards the Dharma, being disrespectful towards the community, being disrespectful towards morality, being disrespectful towards concentration, and being disrespectful towards one's father and mother.¹⁷

"What six states lead towards a good destiny? They are the six forms of respect: being respectful towards the Buddha, being respectful towards the Dharma, being respectful towards the community, being respectful towards morality, being respectful towards concentration, and being respectful towards one's father and mother.

"What six states lead towards Nirvāṇa? They are the six recollections: recollection of the Buddha, recollection of the Dharma, recollection of the community, recollection of morality, recollection of generosity, and recollection of *devas*.

7) "Again seven states lead towards a bad destiny, seven states lead towards a good destiny, [6] and seven states lead towards Nirvāṇa.

"What seven states lead towards a bad destiny? They are: killing living beings, taking what is not given, adultery, false speech, divisive speech, harsh speech, and frivolous speech.

¹⁷ [15] DĀ 12 at T I 59c18: 父母. In Indic texts the mother tends to come in first position (other *Āgama* discourses agree in this respect with DĀ 12, as they also list the father in first place; cf., e.g., MĀ 15 at T I 437c5, SĀ 88 at T II 22b23, SĀ² 18 at T II 379c25, and EĀ 10.3 at T II 564a25); cf. also above p. 180 note 6.

"What seven states lead towards a good destiny? They are: not killing living beings, not stealing, not engaging in adultery, not deceiving, not speaking divisively, not speaking harshly, and not speaking frivolously.

"What seven states lead towards Nirvāṇa? They are the seven factors of awakening: the awakening factor of mindfulness,¹⁸ the awakening factor of investigation of phenomena, the awakening factor of energy, the awakening factor of tranquillity, the awakening factor of concentration, the awakening factor of joy,¹⁹ and the awakening factor of equanimity.

8) "Again eight states lead towards a bad destiny, eight states lead towards a good destiny, and eight states lead towards Nirvāṇa.

¹⁸ DĀ 12 at T I 59c26: 念覺意, translated by Ichimura 2016: 19f as "first, a *bhikṣu* practices the discipline of mindfulness on the basis of nondesire and quiescence, distancing [himself from worldly matters]", most of which has no basis in the original.

¹⁹ [¹⁶] Joy seems to be out of sequence, as usually this awakening factor stands in fourth position. The sequence in which these factors are listed is significant, since they build upon one another; cf. MN 118 at MN III 85,8 and its parallel SĀ 810 at T II 208b15, and for a discussion of the meditative dynamics involved Anālayo 2013f: 231–235. Thus, whereas in the standard presentations the awakening factor of joy is the outcome of the awakening factor of energy (third) and leads on to the awakening factor of tranquillity (fifth), in DĀ 12 at T I 59c27 joy occurs in sixth position, between concentration and equanimity. This appears to be an error, since elsewhere in the same *Dīrgha-āgama* the standard sequence of the awakening factors can be found, with joy in fourth position; cf. DĀ 2 at T I 12a4, DĀ 9 at T I 52b8, DĀ 10 at T I 54b18, DĀ 11 at T I 58b2, DĀ 18 at T I 77a20, and DĀ 25 at T I 103b18. It seems less probable that such an error could have occurred during oral transmission, since a reciter who has memorized an *Āgama* collection could be expected to be sufficiently familiar with the standard sequence of the awakening factors. The same does not hold for a copyist, so that this change of sequence would more probably be an error that occurred in the written medium.

"What eight states lead towards a bad destiny? They are the eight wrong practices: wrong view, wrong intention, wrong speech, wrong action, ^[60a] wrong livelihood, wrong effort, wrong mindfulness, and wrong concentration.

"What eight states lead towards a good destiny? They are: worldly right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.²⁰

"What eight states lead towards Nirvāṇa? They are the [members of the] noble eightfold path: right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, and right concentration.

9) "Again nine states lead towards a bad destiny, nine states lead towards a good destiny, and nine states lead towards Nirvāṇa.

"What nine states lead towards a bad destiny? They are the nine vexations: a person has encroached upon and vexed me, now encroaches upon and vexes me, or will encroach upon and vex me; he has encroached upon and vexed those who are dear to me, is encroaching upon and vexing them now, or will encroach upon and vex them; he had loving regard for those whom I dislike, has loving regard for them now, or will have loving regard for them.²¹ ^[7]

"What nine states lead towards a good destiny? They are the nine absences of vexation: 'He has encroached upon me' – what benefit would it be for me to be vexed by this? [Reflecting thus] vexation did not arise, vexation does not arise now, and vexation will not arise. 'He has encroached upon and vexed those who are dear to me' – what benefit would it be for me to be

²⁰ Ichimura 2016: 20 translates: "They are the eight criteria of the secular world: gain and loss; infamy and fame; praise and blame; and suffering and happiness." None of this is found in the original.

²¹ On these nine cf. also Hartmann 2011.

vexed by this? [Reflecting thus] vexation did not arise, vexation does not arise now, and vexation will not arise. 'He has loving regard for those whom I dislike' – what benefit would it be for me to be vexed by this? [Reflecting thus] vexation did not arise, vexation will not arise, and vexation does not arise now.²²

"What nine states lead towards Nirvāṇa? They are the nine states [productive] of joy:²³ the first is joy [itself], the second is affection, the third is delight, the fourth is happiness, the fifth is concentration, the sixth is knowledge as it really is, the seventh is giving up, the eighth is dispassion, and the ninth is liberation.

10) "Again ten states lead towards a bad destiny, ten states lead towards a good destiny, and ten states lead towards Nirvāṇa.

"What ten states lead towards a bad destiny? They are the ten [courses of] unwholesomeness: the bodily [courses] of killing, stealing, and adultery; the verbal [courses] of divisive speech, abuse, false speech, and frivolous speech;²⁴ and the mental [courses] of covetousness, aversion, and wrong view.

²² [17] DĀ 12 at T I 60a13: 已不生惱, 當不生惱, 今不生惱; thus here the past is followed directly by the future, and the present comes in last position, whereas in the presentation up to this point the occasions for being vexed proceed from past occasions via present ones to future ones, as is the case for an exposition of the same topic in DĀ 10 at T I 56b11. The change in sequence in DĀ 12 would be an unusual occurrence in oral material, where maintaining the same pattern throughout facilitates memorization and recitation. It would appear more probable for this type of variation to have come into being in the written medium.

²³ [18] Adopting the variant 喜 instead of 善. In DĀ 10 at T I 56a26 and DĀ 11 at T I 58c21 the same set of nine is introduced as 九喜本. Ichimura 2015: 330 and 2016: 12 and 21 translates all such instances as "the nine roots of proper mental attention". The original rather refers to the nine roots of joy.

²⁴ [19] DĀ 12 at T I 60a19: 口不兩舌, 惡罵, 妄言, 綺語, where the listing seems to be out of order, as usually false speech is the first of the verbal deeds in such tenfold listings; cf., e.g., MN 41 at MN I 286,25, MĀ 63 at T I 499b15,

"What ten states lead towards a good destiny? They are the ten courses of wholesomeness: the bodily [courses] of not killing, stealing, or engaging in adultery; the verbal [courses] of no divisive speech, abuse, false speech, or frivolous speech; and the mental [courses] of no covetousness, aversion, or wrong view.

"What ten states lead towards Nirvāṇa? They are the ten [members of the] straight path: right view, right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration, right liberation, and right knowledge.²⁵ Monks, in this way these ten states lead to reaching Nirvāṇa.

"This is called the sublime true Dharma of the Three Groups. Being the Tathāgata, I have done for the assembly of my disciples what is appropriate, without deficiencies. Because of thoughts of concern for you, I have expounded this discourse on the path.

"It is becoming for you to have also concern for yourself, you should dwell in secluded places, [8] meditate at the root of trees. Do not be negligent. If you do not exert yourself now, later it will be of no benefit to harbour regrets."

The monks who had heard what the Buddha had said were delighted and received it respectfully.

SĀ 490 at T II 128a18, SĀ² 198 at T II 446a26, and EĀ 48.1 at T II 786a3; giving one example from the Pāli discourses and from each of the other *Āgamas*. However, the same unusual sequence, with false speech in third position, recurs in the same *Dirgha-āgama* collection in DĀ 10 at T I 57a25, which also agrees with DĀ 12 at T I 60a18 in listing 嫉妬 as the ninth of the ten courses of action, on which cf. above p. 300 note 17.

²⁵ [20] In the Pāli discourses, the two path factors of right knowledge and right liberation tend to occur in the opposite sequence; cf. in more detail Anālayo 2011b: 663.

Study

In what follows I survey the structure of the exposition as well as the length and overall character of the Discourse on the Three Groups. A noteworthy feature of this discourse is the overall structure of its exposition. At times its adoption of a systematized mode of listing results in a nice match, such as when four out of the six forms of disrespect or respect – towards the Buddha, the Dharma, the community, and morality – are also the object of four out of the six recollections (6). Moreover, by dint of the topic they take up, the nine vexations (and their absence) stand in a meaningful relationship to the nine states of joy (9). Again, after the ten courses of unwholesomeness or wholesomeness it seems indeed fitting to continue with the tenfold path (10).

Elsewhere, the items listed in the third group regarding what leads towards Nirvāṇa seem to have relatively little relation to the items listed in the two preceding groups regarding future destinies. This can be seen from the survey below in table 8, which from left to right lists the numerical group to which this applies, what in this group leads towards a bad or a good destiny, and what leads towards Nirvāṇa:

Table 8: Structure of DĀ 12

Ones	benevolence and its opposite	mindfulness of the body
Twos	morality and view	tranquillity and insight
Threes	the three roots	the three concentrations
Fours	the four types of speech	the four <i>satipaṭṭhānas</i>
Fives	the five precepts	the five faculties
Sevens	the seven deeds	the seven awakening factors

In the case of the Eights, the third group regarding what leads towards Nirvāṇa repeats the same factors that have already been listed in the previous group regarding what leads towards a good destiny (8). The difference between the two is that the listing of the

factors that lead towards a good destiny begins with the qualification "worldly", 世, corresponding to *laukika* in Sanskrit and *lokiya/lokika* in Pāli. This case appears to reflect a distinction of the eightfold path into worldly and supramundane manifestations, a distinction of considerable significance for Abhidharma thought.²⁶

In sum, the application of the systematized mode of listing from Ones to Tens only at times results in a meaningful unit for all three groups. In the majority of cases the third category of what leads towards Nirvāṇa does not appear to stand in a clear relationship with the other two groups that belong to the same number.

In terms of overall length, the Discourse on the Three Groups is the shortest of the discourses found in the *Dīrgha-āgama*. Compared to the remaining discourses in this collection,²⁷ the above translated discourse represents about 22% of the average length of a *Dīrgha-āgama* discourse.²⁸ [9] In the case of other discourses in the collection that are also relatively short, this is usually because they employ abbreviation.²⁹ The Discourse on the Three Groups, however, does not have any abbreviations at all.

²⁶ [21] For a discussion of another instance where this distinction manifests in a Pāli discourse, in this case the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta*, MN 117 at MN III 72,4, as apparently reflecting the influence of Abhidharma thought cf. Anālayo 2010d.

²⁷ [22] In what follows I leave out the last discourse in this collection, DĀ 30 at T I 114b7 to 149c23. Due to its extreme length of five fascicles this discourse would further enhance the difference between DĀ 12 and the remainder of the long discourses in the collection.

²⁸ [23] After removing the introduction, punctuation, translator's information, etc., from the digital CBETA edition of T 1, but leaving intact the titles, I arrive at 1,172 characters for DĀ 12 and 147,884 characters in total for the other twenty-eight discourses (i.e., DĀ 1 to DĀ 11 and DĀ 13 to DĀ 29). It follows that the other discourses would have an average of 5,282 characters per discourse.

²⁹ [24] One example of a rather short discourse, although still longer than DĀ 12, is DĀ 29. DĀ 29 at T I 113c17 abbreviates the whole exposition of the gradual path. If this were given in full, DĀ 29 would be considerably longer.

For being included in a collection of 'long' discourses, the Discourse on the Three Groups seems too short. The most natural explanation for this situation would be that this discourse only came into being as a derivative of another long discourse when the collection had already been formed.

As already mentioned in the previous chapter, the exposition of what "should be cultivated" according to the *Dīrgha-āgama* version of the *Dasuttara-sutta* (DĀ 10) recurs in the Discourse on the Three Groups under the heading of what leads towards Nirvāṇa in the case of each set, from the Ones to the Tens.³⁰ This appears to be the nucleus out of which the Discourse on the Three Groups evolved, namely by simply taking over the entire listing of states to be cultivated from the *Dasuttara-sutta*.³¹

The exposition of what leads to either a bad destiny or else a good one in the Discourse on the Three Groups corresponds to what leads to decline or else to increase according to the *Dīrgha-āgama* version of the *Dasuttara-sutta* in the case of the Twos, Threes, Sixes, Nines, and Tens.³² Moreover, in the case of the

³⁰ [25] The corresponding states to be cultivated in DĀ 10 are: mindfulness of the body, T I 53a5; tranquillity and insight, T I 53a14; the three concentrations, T I 53a23; the four *satipaṭṭhānas* (given with more details), T I 53b11; the five faculties, T I 53c3; the six recollections, T I 54a19; the seven factors of awakening (given with more details), T I 54b17; the noble eight[fold] path, T I 55a7; the nine states that are a basis for joy, T I 56a26; and the ten[fold] path, T I 57a19.

³¹ [26] At times these differ from the parallels to DĀ 10, e.g., the five states to be cultivated are not the five faculties, but rather the fivefold concentration in DN 34 at DN III 277,25 and five types of concentration in T 13 at T I 234b21 (the implications of the similar expressions in these two versions differ).

³² [27] The states leading to decline or increase in DĀ 10 are: breaches of morality and destructive views as opposed to being endowed with morality and [right] view, T I 53a15; the three unwholesome and wholesome roots, T I 53a26; the six [forms] of disrespect and respect, T I 54a23; the nine vexations and their

Eights the states that lead to a bad destiny in the Discourse on the Three Groups correspond to what should be "extinguished" according to the *Dīrgha-āgama* version of the *Dasuttara-sutta*.³³

This last case is of further interest, since the *Dīrgha-āgama* version of the *Dasuttara-sutta* actually has in two categories what the Discourse on the Three Groups presents in a threefold manner. The *Dīrgha-āgama* version of the *Dasuttara-sutta* just lists the noble eightfold path as what should be cultivated, and its opposite as what should be extinguished. The Discourse on the Three Groups develops this into a threefold presentation by distinguishing between "worldly" manifestations of the eight path factors as what leads towards a good destiny and the noble eightfold path as what leads towards Nirvāṇa. [10] As already mentioned above, this mode of presentation appears to reflect Abhidharma thought.³⁴

In sum, as already noted in the previous chapter, the Discourse on the Three Groups (DĀ 12) seems to be a derivative of the *Dīrgha-āgama* version of the *Dasuttara-sutta* (DĀ 10), similar to the case of the Discourse Increasing by One (DĀ 11).³⁵ Whereas the Discourse Increasing by One is simply a straightforward extract from the *Dīrgha-āgama* version of the *Dasuttara-sutta*, the Discourse on the Three Groups is based on such an extract in the case of its third category, regarding what leads towards Nirvāṇa. The other two categories – what leads towards a bad or a good destiny – are in part inspired by this *Dasuttara-sutta*. In the case

absence, T I 56b11; and the ten courses of unwholesomeness and of wholesomeness, T I 57a24.

³³ [28] This is the eightfold wrong path in DĀ 10 at T I 55a10.

³⁴ [29] For a more detailed examination of the relation of discourse summaries, such as the *Sanṅgīti-sutta*, the *Dasuttara-sutta*, etc., to emerging Abhidharma thought cf. Anālayo 2014c.

³⁵ [30] Warder 1982: xxxi to xxxiv notes that the Pāli parallel to DĀ 10, the *Dasuttara-sutta* (DN 34), has had an influence on the *Paṭisambhidāmagga*.

of the Eights, an existing topic has been rephrased in such a way as to make room for what appears to be emerging Abhidharma thought.

Conclusion

Comparing the Discourse on the Three Groups with the *San-gīti-sutta* makes the advantages of such a short and at the same time systematized presentation immediately apparent. The concise nature of the material makes it fairly easy to memorize the discourse. This is further enhanced by the threefold grouping, which provides a basic pattern that facilitates recognition if a failure of memory occurs.

At the same time, this discourse also shows the limitations that naturally arise when a particular scheme is applied consistently to a numerically ascending series of items. Occasionally, it seems as though the demands of the system lead to filling out an empty slot in a way whose practical relevance is not easily discerned.

This neatly exemplifies the unintended results that can emerge from an attempt to provide the disciples of the Buddha with succinct summaries of the Dharma, maps to be memorized, contemplated, and recited as a way of ensuring proper understanding of the teachings and communal harmony.

Early Buddhist Oral Tradition (1)

Introduction

With this chapter I return to the topic of the oral transmission of the early discourses, already broached in the first chapters of this book. This results in a shift of focus from the *Dīrgha-āgama* to material that is of relevance to appreciating the character of the early discourses as orally transmitted texts in general. In what follows I take up the significance of the set of nine or twelve *aṅgas* of texts as reflected in early Buddhist discourse literature and in relation to the division of texts into *āgamas* or *nikāyas*.

The Term *Āgama* in the Singular

The term *āgama* used in the singular occurs in several Pāli discourses, often qualifying a learned monk to be *āgatāgama*, literally one to whom the coming down has come down, that is, one who has "obtained the *āgama*" in the sense of being versed in it.¹ Such references often form part of a description of learned elders whom one would approach to receive clarifications regarding the teachings given by the Buddha.² [10] Alternatively, the passage in question may take up the need for such learned elders to give teachings.³

* Originally published in 2016 under the title "Āgama and aṅga in the Early Buddhist Oral Tradition" in the *Singaporean Journal of Buddhist Studies*, 3: 9–37.

¹ Similar references can also be found in Vin I 119,22, Vin I 127,30, Vin I 337,12, Vin I 338,20, Vin II 8,28, Vin II 55,19, Vin II 98,5, Vin II 299,16, and Vin IV 158,18 (notably the last case involves a learned layman). The significance of the term *āgama* itself is succinctly captured by Silk 2015b: 7 as "what has come down to us, what has been transmitted, tradition", which "in a Buddhist context [is] also a term for a collection of the Buddha's sermons."

² AN 3.20 at AN I 117,28, AN 6.51 at AN III 361,23, and AN 10.11 at AN V 15,30.

³ AN 4.160 at AN II 147,29 and AN 5.156 at AN III 179,2.

Most of these references occur in discourses in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya*, of which no parallels have been preserved. In the case of one such reference in the *Mahāgopālaka-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*, however, three parallels extant in Chinese translation also mention such elders. Yet they only qualify them as "learned", without bringing in the other epithets used in the *Mahāgopālaka-sutta* and thus also without a counterpart to *āgatāgama*.⁴

In the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* elders who are *āgatāgama* feature as possible sources of a teaching that requires further verification in order to determine whether it is indeed in accordance with the teachings already known and accepted.⁵ A Sanskrit fragment parallel has preserved only a reference to such elders in terms of their being upholders of the discourses and the *Vinaya*, to which the Tibetan version adds also the upholders of the summaries.⁶ A *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel extant in Chinese translation describes these elders as being learned and alternatively as being upholders of the discourses, the *Vinaya* (as a whole), [11] or just its code of rules.⁷ In a counterpart in the *Ekottarika-āgama* preserved in Chinese translation, the elders qualified as learned are capable

⁴ MN 33 at MN I 221,21 (=AN 11.18 at AN V 349,16) describes the elders as "learned, have obtained the *āgama*, bearers of the Dharma, bearers of the discipline, and bearers of the summaries", *bahussutā āgatāgama dhammadharā vinayadharā mātikādharā*. SĀ 1249 at T II 343a25 and a discourse quotation in T 1509 at T XXV 74a28 use the expression 多聞; an individually translated discourse, T 123 at T II 546c4, instead employs the expression 學問 to qualify the elders as "learned".

⁵ DN 16 at DN II 125,6 (=AN 4.180 at AN II 169,18), where this forms part of the formulation of the four great standards, *mahāpadesa*.

⁶ Fragment 360 folio 181 V6, Waldschmidt 1950: 24: *sūtradharā vina[yadharā]* and folio 182 R2 *[vi]nayadh[arā]*; Waldschmidt 1951: 243 (§24.16): *mdo sde 'dzin pa 'dul ba 'dzin pa ma lta bu 'dzin pa* (the transliteration style has been adjusted).

⁷ DĀ 2 at T I 17c15: 多聞 (T 7 at T I 195c23 and 196a3 has comparable references to being learned) and DĀ 2 at T I 17c27 and 18a11: 持法, 持律, 持律儀者.

in reciting the discourses and upholding the Dharma.⁸ In sum, none of the parallels to the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* has a counterpart to *āgatāgama*.

This does not mean, however, that the expression *āgatāgama* is only attested in Pāli discourses. Two discourses in the *Madhyama-āgama* have the same phrase as part of a description of a learned monk. In these two cases, the Pāli counterparts do not have the corresponding expression.⁹

In a discourse in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* a monk, who has not yet memorized the discourses, is encouraged to "learn the *āgama*", *āgamaṃ pariyāpuṇassū ti*.¹⁰ Another *Madhyama-āgama* discourse somewhat similarly speaks of being capable at *āgama* recitation, which here is part of the description of a learned monk who might pride himself on his learning.¹¹

In sum, the expression *āgama* in the singular serves as one of several terms to express that a learned monk was familiar with the orally transmitted discourses by the Buddha and his disciples.¹²

[12] Although this type of usage is attested in discourses of more than one tradition, actual instances of its occurrence are as a rule not supported by their respective parallels.

⁸ EĀ 28.5 at T II 652b17, 652c3, and 652c10: 誦經, 持法 ... 博學多聞.

⁹ MĀ 1 at T I 421b19, 421b21, and 421b23: 阿含及所得 and MĀ 95 at T I 577b8, 577b11, and 577b14: 阿含及其所得; these references to being *āgatāgama* have no counterpart in the listing of otherwise comparable qualities in the parallels AN 7.64 at AN IV 114,3 and AN 10.53 at AN V 96,6.

¹⁰ AN 10.44 at AN V 80,23; a recommendation also given in Vin II 249,16.

¹¹ MĀ 85 at T I 561b27, 561b28, 561c1, and 561c2: 諳阿含. The corresponding passage in the parallel MN 113 at MN III 39,18+31 has two separate cases, where a monk could be "learned", *bahussuto*, or else an "upholder of the *Vinaya*", *vinayadharo*, none of which involves a reference to *āgama*.

¹² Barua 1923: 359 comments that "in the Pāli discourses, ascribed to the Buddha himself, the expression *Āgama* is often met with, no doubt in the sense of a floating body of Buddhist literary traditions."

A usage of the term *āgama* comparable to these instances in Pāli texts and *Madhyama-āgama* discourses can be seen in Asoka's Rock Edict XII, which combines a reference to being learned, *bahusrutā*, with *kallāṇāgamā* (Girnār version).¹³ Similarly, the Jain *Vavahāra* refers to a learned monk as *babbhāgamam*.¹⁴

The Four *Āgamas*

Accounts of the first *saṅgīti* in the Dharmaguptaka, Haimavata (?), Mahāsāṅghika, Mahīśāsaka, and Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinayas* employ the plural form *āgamas* in their description of the compilation of the teachings that according to tradition took place under the leadership of Mahākassapa soon after the Buddha's demise.¹⁵ The different *Vinayas* reporting this event agree that the Buddha's attendant Ānanda recited the discourses on this occasion. [13]

They further report that the resultant textual material was divided into groups, presumably to facilitate oral transmission, by collecting long discourses and discourses of middle-length into

¹³ Bloch 1950: 123,29, Gīrnār: *bahusrutā ca assu kallāṇāgamā ca*, Kālsī: *bahuṣ-ṣuta cā kayyānāgā ca*, Śāhbāzgarhī: *bahuśruta ca kalaṇagama ca*, Mānsehrā: *bahuśruta ca kayānagama ca*.

¹⁴ *Vavahāra* 1.35, Schubring 1918: 15,4+6; cf. also Caillat 1965: 50.

¹⁵ The Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 968b19, the Haimavata (?) **Vinayamāṭṭrkā*, T 1463 at T XXIV 820a23, the Mahāsāṅghika *Vinaya*, T 1425 at T XXII 491c16, and the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 191a24, agree on using the expression 阿含; the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1451 at T XXIV 407b27, uses the expression 阿笈摩 with its counterpart in *lung* in D 6 da 314a7 or Q 1035 ne 297a4; on *lung* cf. the discussion in Eimer 1983: 23. Although the account of the first *saṅgīti* in the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya* does not use either *āgama* or *nikāya* to refer to the textual collections, elsewhere the expression 阿含 occurs repeatedly in this text in evident reference to textual collections that are to be memorized and recited; cf., e.g., T 1435 at T XXIII 453c17 for an occurrence, alongside a reference to the *Vinaya*, in relation to the undertaking of recitation. On the school affiliation of T 1463 cf. Anālayo 2011d: 270f note 11.

corresponding *āgamas*; and short discourses were further separated into those assembled according to topic and those assembled according to a numerical principle (a discourse can discuss one or more items and can accordingly be allocated to the Ones, the Twos, the Threes etc.).

This division corresponds to the four *Āgamas*, which comprise a *Dīrgha-āgama* containing mostly long discourses, a *Madhyama-āgama* that assembles predominantly middle-length discourses, a *Samyukta-āgama* with discourses that tend to share a common topic, and an *Ekottarika-āgama* that follows an incremental numerical principle from Ones to Elevens (earlier perhaps only up to Tens).¹⁶

The accounts of the first *saṅgīti* in the Mahāsāṅghika and Mahīśāsaka *Vinayas* adopt the above sequence of *dīrgha*, *madhyama*, *saṃyukta*, and *ekottarika*,¹⁷ which corresponds to the order of the corresponding four collections adopted in the Theravāda canon.¹⁸ The Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya* is closely similar, in so far as it adopts the sequence *dīrgha*, *madhyama*, *ekottarika*, and *saṃyukta*, thereby having only the last two in the opposite order.¹⁹ [14] These four traditions thus agree on beginning with the long discourses, followed by those of middle-length and then the shorter discourses.

The Haimavata (?) *Vinaya* instead adopts the sequence *ekottarika*, *madhyama*, *dīrgha*, and *saṃyukta*,²⁰ and the Mūlasarvāsti-

¹⁶ For a survey of the four *āgamas* cf. Anālayo 2015a.

¹⁷ T 1425 at T XXII 491c16 (another sequence can be found in a different context in T 1425 at T XXII 492c18, which lists the *Vinaya*, the Abhidharma, and then the *Samyukta-āgama*, the *Ekottarika-āgama*, the *Madhyama-āgama*, and the *Dīrgha-āgama*) and T 1421 at T XXII 191a24.

¹⁸ The account of the first *saṅgīti* in the Theravāda *Vinaya*, Vin II 287,16, only mentions the *Brahmajāla* (DN 1) and the *Sāmaññaphala* (DN 2) as the first two discourses recited and thus does not explicitly indicate the order of the four collections, except for positioning the *Dīgha-nikāya* in first place.

¹⁹ T 1428 at T XXII 968b19.

²⁰ T 1463 at T XXIV 820a23.

vāda *Vinaya* has the exact opposite by listing the four collections as *saṃyukta*, *dīrgha*, *madhyama*, and *ekottarika*.²¹ These two versions thereby do not follow the pattern observed in the other versions of proceeding from long to short discourses, nor do they adopt the opposite pattern of moving from short to long discourses.

The central point conveyed by the account of the first *saṅgīti* in the different *Vinayas* is that the distinction into four *āgamas* was considered a creation by the reciting elders soon after the Buddha's demise, a shared division whose sequential order underwent some independent evolution in the different traditions. The discourse passages mentioned earlier that use the term *āgama* in the singular as a referent to what appears to be the whole body of discourses might then reflect a stage preceding this basic structural division into four collections, a time when the body of orally transmitted texts had not yet been systematically structured in the way reported in the accounts of the first *saṅgīti*. [15]

The Theravāda *Vinaya* account of this first *saṅgīti* differs in so far as it does not use the expression *āgama*, but instead refers to the same type of collections of discourses as *nikāyas*.²² Another

²¹ T 1451 at T XXIV 407b27 and D 6 da 314a7 or Q 1035 ne 297a5. Similarly to the case of the Theravāda *Vinaya*, the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya* does not give a full list, but only mentions the discourse recited first, which in its account is the first discourse spoken by the Buddha, parallel to the *Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta* (SN 56.11); cf. T 1435 at T XXIII 448b13. The prominent place given to the Buddha's first discourse here might in part be related to what appears to be a reworking of this discourse in the Mūlasarvāstivāda and Sarvāstivāda traditions. As a result of this apparent reworking, the three turnings become the essence of the first discourse, with the perplexing result that Kauṇḍinya (Pāli Koṇḍañña) attains stream-entry after hearing about these three turnings to be applied to the four truths, but only afterwards receives information on what these four truths actually mean; cf. in more detail Anālayo 2012a.

²² Tournier 2014: 25 note 95 notes that "among the southern Mahāsāṅghika sub-schools, which transmitted a canon in Prakrit, there is epigraphical evidence

difference is that the Theravāda *Vinaya* speaks of five *nikāyas*.²³ In addition to the four *nikāyas* that correspond to the four *āgamas*, this expression includes the *Khuddaka-nikāya*, a miscellany of texts also known in other traditions, where this fifth grouping is at times rather considered to be a *piṭaka*.²⁴

Not only do the *Vinaya* accounts of the first *saṅgīti* differ in their usage of *āgama* or *nikāya*, but also accounts of the first *saṅgīti* in the *Samantapāsādikā* and its Chinese counterpart differ. The Pāli version's reference to the "four *nikāyas*" (as distinct from the fifth) has as its equivalent the "four *āgamas*" in its Chinese counterpart.²⁵

It is noteworthy that the Pāli *Vinaya* and its commentary give preference to the term *nikāya*, which is not employed in the Pāli discourses as a referent to scriptural collections. Instead, the Pāli discourses rather employ the expression *āgama*.

This is significant in so far as it gives the impression that expressions like *āgatāgama* or *āgamaṃ pariyāpuṇassu*, after having been introduced, were kept in place without being adjusted to the eventual predilection in the Theravāda tradition for the term *nikāya*. [16]

that at least the Aparamahāvīnaseliyas also called the divisions of their *Sūtra-piṭaka nikāya*."

²³ Vin II 287,27 speaks of the recitation of the *pañca nikāye*.

²⁴ For the classic study on the topic cf. Lamotte 1956.

²⁵ Sp I 16,14: *cattāro nikāye* and T 1462 at TXXIV 675b22: 四阿含, translated in Bapat and Hirakawa 1970: 9; a difference already noted by Lamotte 1958: 167. Heirman 2004: 385 comments that "when the translator adapted the text to the Chinese environment, he hereby translated all five *nikāyas* as *āgama*." The usage of the term *āgama* nevertheless continues in Pāli commentarial literature. Thus, e.g., Vism 442,30 defines knowledge of *āgama* to be mastery of the teachings of the Buddha, be it only the Chapter on Similes (the third chapter in the *Majjhima-nikāya*), and Mp II 189,17 equates the *nikāyas* with the *āgamas* and concludes that *āgatāgama* refers to mastery of one of these.

The Nine *Aṅgas*

A recurrent reference in the Pāli discourses provides a list of nine items that eventually came to be known under the heading of being *aṅgas*, although the term *aṅga* itself is not used for these in the discourses. In what follows I list the nine items, translating them in a way that reflects my current understanding of the probable implications of each, without any pretence at presenting a definite solution to their individual significance:

- discourses [involving lists] (*sutta*),²⁶
- prose combined with verse (*geyya*),²⁷
- explanatory expositions (*veyyākaraṇa*),²⁸
- stanzas (*gāthā*),
- inspired utterances (*udāna*), [17]
- quotes (*itivuttaka*),

²⁶ According to Przyluski 1926: 341, the use of the expression *sutta* in the context of the *aṅgas* has the specific sense of an exposition that begins with an enumeration of a particular item, "un *sūtra* était un sermon commençant par un exposé numérique" (e.g., "there are four things ... what are the four", etc.). Nyanaponika 1977: 13f explains that *sutta* in its Buddhist usage refers to a presentation of the Dharma that is internally connected by a thread, as it were, "eine zusammenhängende Lehrdarstellung ... durch die sich ein gemeinsamer Faden hindurchzieht." The need to 'string together' material for recitation also emerges from a reference to the nine *aṅgas* in Vin III 8,7, according to which the teachings of former Buddhas who did not give much instruction in terms of the nine *aṅgas* were quickly lost, comparable to flowers not held together by a string; for a survey of publications relevant to the alternative explanation that derives *sūtra* from *su* + *ukta*, "well spoken", cf. Anālayo 2011b: 150 note 22.

²⁷ Jayawickrama 1959: 12 comments that "*geyya* (from $\sqrt{\text{gai}}$ *gāyati*, to sing), seems to represent the *ākhyāna*-type containing stanzas punctuated with narrative prose." According to Mayeda 1964: 24, *geyya* "is not, however, a simple juxtaposition of prose and verse. The prose section which comes first is repeated once again in the verse section which follows. This *repetition* of similar contents is the key point of *geyya*"; cf. also Burnouf 1844/1876: 47.

²⁸ For a detailed discussion of this term cf. Anālayo 2008h.

- birth stories (*jātaṅka*),
- marvels (*abbhutadhamma*),
- answers to questions [between disciples] (*vedalla*).²⁹

Comparison with similar listings in the discourse parallels of other traditions shows that these usually take the form of an expanded listing of twelve.³⁰ This expanded listing in turn suggests an adjustment to the sequence of the nine *aṅgas* as reflected in Pāli sources. On adopting this adjustment, marvels (*abbhutadhamma*) come to stand in last position, preceded by answers to questions (*vedalla*).³¹

For *abbhutadhamma* to be the last member of the list would conform to the principle of waxing syllables, which I study in more detail in the next chapter. Suffice it for the present context to say that, according to this principle, several terms in a list tend to be arranged in such a way that words with fewer syllables are followed by words with an equal or a higher number of syllables.³²

This in turn implies that the assumed shift of *vedalla* to last position would have taken place only at a time when the demands of facilitating oral transmission no longer made themselves felt as

²⁹ Karashima 2015b: 136 explains that "the most original form ... could have been **vedulla*, a Middle Indic form corresponding to *vaitulya* (> *vetulla* > **vedulla*), which might mean 'not' (*vi*) 'of the same kind' (*tulya*, MW, s.v.), i.e. 'unusual, irregular'. Scriptures consisting of repeated questions and answers, not always between the Buddha and another person, but rather between two disciples, might have been labelled as **vedulla*, because they were 'unusual, irregular'. This form presumably changed in the Pāli tradition to *vedalla*."

³⁰ Lamotte 1956: 263 note 2 explains that this twelvefold presentation prevails in the *Āgamas*, in the Chinese *Vinayas* (except for the Mahāsāṅghika *Vinaya*), in the main treatises of the Sarvāstivāda, Sautrāntika, Vaibhāṣika, and Yogācāra traditions, and in most Mahāyāna *sūtras*. For studies of listings of twelve cf., e.g., Hirakawa 1963: 61–65, Lamotte 1980: 2281–2305, and Nattier 2004.

³¹ Cf. the survey provided in table form in Mayeda 1964 and Skilling 2013b: 157.

³² Cf. below p. 474ff.

acutely as earlier. [18] The possible demotion of *vedalla* to the last place in Pāli listings of the nine *aṅgas* might be related to the negative associations that *vedallakathā* carries in a discourse in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* as leading to the future corruption of the Dhamma and *Vinaya*,³³ and to the even more negative connotations of the term *vetulla* in Theravāda chronicles.³⁴

Regarding the principle of waxing syllables, items in longer lists can be arranged into subgroups that are often based on some thematic or formal connection, and these subgroups then internally follow the principle of waxing syllables. From the viewpoint of oral transmission,³⁵ a conveniently structured pattern results in this way that provides a rhythm for catching one's breath during recitation and at the same time facilitates memorization.³⁶ Applying this principle to the adjusted listing of the *aṅgas*, the resulting subsections together with their syllable count would be as follows:

1. *sutta*, *geyya*, *veyyākaraṇa*, 2+2+5, [19]
2. *gāthā*, *udāna*, *itivuttaka*, 2+3+5,
3. *jātaka*, *vedalla*, *abbhutadhamma*, 3+3+5.

Following the model of other subgroups in such long listings, it could be expected that the resultant three subsections have some thematic or formal connection. In view of the uncertainty that surrounds the exact implications of each of these *aṅgas*,³⁷

³³ AN 5.79 at AN III 107,4; discussed in Skilling 2013b: 87.

³⁴ Skilling 2013b: 88 explains that in the Ceylonese chronicles and later texts "Vetulla in Vetullavāda is used only negatively for unacceptable ideas or theories, in connection with doctrinal controversies that arose from the third to the second centuries BCE onwards."

³⁵ For a more detailed discussion cf. the next chapter, below p. 473ff, and for other aspects of the early Buddhist oral tradition above p. 15ff.

³⁶ Cf. the discussion below p. 476f.

³⁷ On the significance of the nine *aṅgas* cf., e.g., Jayawickrama 1959, Kalupahana 1965, and von Hinüber 1994a; for a summary cf. Anālayo 2011b: 150f.

however, thematic continuity is less easily determined. Nevertheless, perhaps the following themes could be taken as approximate summaries of the import of each of the three subsections:

1. basic modes of exposition: "discourses, prose and verse, expositions",
2. shorter textual pieces: "stanzas, inspired utterances, quotes",
3. others: "birth stories, marvels, answers to questions".

The Function of the Nine *Aṅgas*

My above presentation of the nine *aṅgas* is to some extent based on the assumption that the original import of the *aṅgas* is to designate textual types instead of collections of texts.³⁸ It is in fact hard to see how this list of nine, or even the more evolved list of twelve, [20] could have functioned as an organizational principle for allocating discourses into textual collections. The problem here is that dividing the texts according to individual *aṅgas* would not yield groupings of material suitable for division of labour among reciters, which requires portions of at least roughly comparable size that provide the respective reciters with a representative selection of teachings.

³⁸ According to Dutt 1957: 89, "the list [of *aṅgas*]... rests on an analysis of different forms of composition found in the canon." Jayawickrama 1959: 11 states that "it is a mere description of the literary types". Kalupahana 1965: 616 similarly indicates that "this classification ... does not refer to nine different groups of literature, but to nine types of composition." Nyanatiloka 1952/1988: 193 explains that the *aṅga* system "is a classification according to literary styles, and not according to given texts". Lamotte 1980: 2282 clarifies that the *aṅgas* are not literary genres, but types of composition for forming texts, "ces *Aṅga* ne sont pas des genres littéraires, mais simplement des types de composition concernant la forme des textes." Norman 1983: 16 points out that "despite the fact that books called *Jātaka*, *Udāna* and *Itivuttaka* actually exist in Pāli, it is probable that the list of nine *aṅgas* did not originally refer to specific works in the canon."

An *aṅga* like marvels, for example, is a fairly rare occurrence in the early discourses and would hardly have sufficed for creating a corresponding textual collection. Moreover, one might wonder what would happen if some reciters were to memorize a textual collection with only marvels. Even the division into four *Āgamas* or *Nikāyas* led to differences of opinion and understanding among their respective reciters.³⁹ A distribution of the texts to be memorized over different reciters according to the *aṅga* system would have inevitably resulted in rather lopsided understandings and quickly become a source of conflict.

The Pāli commentaries explain *aṅgas* like *udāna*, *itivuttaka*, and *jātaka* as corresponding to the respective collections in the Pāli canon.⁴⁰ Yet among the discourses in the four *Nikāyas* (and thus apart from the canonical *Udāna*, *Itivuttaka*, and *Jātaka* collections) *udānas* explicitly identified as such occur repeatedly,⁴¹ making it clear that this textual type is not confined to the *Udāna* collection. Similarly, quotations marked with the help of the quotative *iti* and introduced as something said, *vutta*, are not confined to the collection of discourses known as the *Itivuttaka*. Instead, quotations explicitly marked in this way are a recurrent feature in the discourses in the four *Nikāyas*.⁴² [21] In the case of *jātakas* found

³⁹ Cf., e.g., Adikaram 1946/1994: 27–32, Goonesekera 1968: 689, Dutt 1978: 42, Mori 1990: 127, and Endo 2003a and 2003b.

⁴⁰ Cf., e.g., Sp I 28,18.

⁴¹ For a survey of occurrences cf. Anālayo 2008e: 381f note 1.

⁴² One of two examples to illustrate this type of usage can be seen when a statement to be explained is introduced with the construction *iti kho pan' etaṃ vuttaṃ, kiñc' etaṃ paṭicca vuttaṃ*, the explanation of which then concludes with *idaṃ etaṃ paṭicca vuttaṃ*, found, e.g., in MN 54 at MN I 361,1. Another example can be seen when quotes are introduced by stating *vuttaṃ kho pan' etaṃ bhagavatā*, and are concluded with *iti*, a usage even employed in a passage that shows the Buddha quoting himself, cf., e.g., MN 3 at MN I 13,11. On the use of *iti* in commentarial literature cf. the study by Kieffer-Pülz 2014.

among the early discourses, these actually fall into a distinct class by being all in prose, whereas the *Jātaka* collection is entirely in verse and the stories are only found in its commentary.⁴³ Clearly the *aṅga* of *jātakas* could not originally have referred to the transmitted *Jātaka* collection.⁴⁴ This makes it safe to conclude that the commentarial explanation is better not taken as reflecting the original significance of these *aṅgas*.

Shorter Lists of *Aṅgas*

In what follows I turn to theories that assume the list of nine or twelve *aṅgas* to have evolved from a supposedly earlier stage with a shorter listing of *aṅgas*. Such theories do not avoid the problem that the *aṅgas* are not easily amenable to a system of textual divisions. Adopting such theories implies that the supposedly earlier listings eventually evolved into the listings of nine and twelve. This in turn would entail that at a very early stage a presumably workable scheme subsequently lost its presumed function and usability by being expanded to nine, and in spite of that the list subsequently still continued to expand to twelve. This seems hardly convincing. [22]

Such shorter listings of *aṅgas* are found in two Pāli discourses. One occurs among the Fives of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*. In the passage in question, a brahmin proclaims that one will no longer be interested in the teachings of others once one has heard the Buddha's teaching in the form of *sutta*, *geyya*, *veyyākaraṇa*, and *ab-*

⁴³ Cf. von Hinüber 1998: 187.

⁴⁴ Jayawickrama 1959: 13 comments that "there is no justification for equating the *Aṅga* called *Jātaka* with the extant *Jātaka* collection ... firstly, the stories themselves have no Canonical status, which is reserved for ... the stanzas only. Secondly, there is no reason why *Jātakas* of Canonical antiquity such as those incorporated in other suttantas ... should be excluded."

bhutadhamma.⁴⁵ This reference may well reflect the presumably original sequence of the listing of the nine *aṅgas*, attested in other traditions, when *abbhutadhamma* was still occupying the last place. The fact that the full list is not given would then simply be a case of abbreviation, following a standard pattern where the first three and the last member of a list are given in full.⁴⁶

Only *sutta*, *geyya*, and *veyyākaraṇa* are mentioned in the other instance to be discussed, which occurs in the *Mahāsuññata-sutta*.⁴⁷

[23] The same three are found in a parallel preserved in the *Madh-*

⁴⁵ AN 5.194 at AN III 237,17+23. Bodhi 2012: 1744 note 1196 comments about the brahmin protagonist, "for some reason, he cites only four of the nine divisions of the Dhamma. Perhaps it was only these with which he was familiar" (this is one of two possible explanations proposed by him). I take this to imply that, since in this instance the speaker is neither the Buddha nor one of his well-known disciples, the brahmin protagonist of this discourse could perhaps on purpose have been depicted as not being fully acquainted with the whole set of nine *aṅgas*. In line with a general tendency in the discourses to present brahmins as particularly concerned with the marvellous qualities of the Buddha, such as his physical marks, in this instance he might presumably be shown to remember only *abbhutadhamma* out of the six *aṅgas* mentioned usually after *sutta*, *geyya*, and *veyyākaraṇa*.

⁴⁶ In reply to the hypothesis by von Hinüber 1994a (repeated in 2015c: 38f) that this passage points to an early stage in the evolution of the *aṅgas*, Choong 2010: 60 argues that it is "likely that the unique Pāli list of just four *aṅgas* ... is, rather, an abbreviation of the entire set of nine *aṅgas* in their original sequence; that is 'sutta, geyya, veyyākaraṇa, ... abbhuta-dhamma.'" The idea that these four were an early division of the textual material is also not easily reconciled with the problem I mentioned above, in that a reciter who specializes in marvels would have relatively little material to learn and would moreover stand good chances of acquiring an unbalanced understanding of the teachings.

⁴⁷ MN 122 at MN III 115,18. For a critical reply to the suggestion by Sujato 2005: 62 that Sanskrit fragments of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* support the notion of a special emphasis being accorded to the first three *aṅgas* cf. Anālayo 2011b: 698 note 69.

yama-āgama extant in Chinese translation, whereas a Tibetan parallel has the full set of twelve.⁴⁸

According to the context of this reference in the *Mahāsuññata-sutta* and its parallels, one should not follow the Buddha for the sake of *sutta*, *geyya*, and *veyyākaraṇa* (or the twelve *aṅgas*). Instead one should follow him for the sake of beneficial types of talks. The *Mahāsuññata-sutta* and its parallels agree that such beneficial types of talk are on the topics of morality, concentration, wisdom, liberation, and knowledge and vision of liberation.⁴⁹

In view of this narrative context, the earlier reference to *sutta*, *geyya*, and *veyyākaraṇa* (or the twelve *aṅgas*) could not be reflecting a scheme that stood representative of the entirety of the textual collections that comprise the teachings given by the Buddha and his disciples.⁵⁰ If all the textual collections comprising the teachings given by the Buddha and his disciples are set apart as insufficient grounds for following him, there would be nothing left for the sake of following him. His teachings on morality, concentration, wisdom, liberation, and knowledge and vision of liberation are of course contained in precisely those textual collections that would all have been already mentioned earlier if the reference to *sutta*, *geyya*, and *veyyākaraṇa* did indeed stand for some scheme of division of the whole corpus of the textual collections.

It seems therefore reasonable to assume that this passage was not originally about a listing of textual divisions that represented the whole of the canonical texts, however short or expanded it may have been. Instead, the original point of what now is a reference to *sutta*, *geyya*, and *veyyākaraṇa* must have been more limited in scope. [24]

⁴⁸ MĀ 191 at T I 739c4 and Skilling 1994: 242,13.

⁴⁹ MN 122 at MN III 115,25, MĀ 191 at T I 739c8, and Skilling 1994: 244,13.

⁵⁰ Pace Choong 2000: 9f and Sujato 2005: 61f.

Perhaps at an early stage the present passage was just about following the teacher merely for the sake of ever more explanations, *veyyākaraṇassa hetu*, instead of putting the teachings already received into practice.⁵¹ During oral transmission such a reference could have led the reciters to supplement the first two *aṅgas*, something happening at a stage early enough in the transmission of the discourses to affect both the *Majjhima-nikāya* and the *Madhyama-āgama* versions. In continuity of the same tendency, such a reference could then have led to further supplementation, as evidenced in the Tibetan version's twelve *aṅgas*.

Although this is of course hypothetical, it would yield a meaningful reading in the present context. The point would have been to contrast following the teacher for ever more explanations of the teachings, a quest not necessarily related to the questioner's personal progress on the path, to following him just for the sake of those teachings that directly help one develop morality, concentration, wisdom, liberation, and knowledge and vision of liberation.

Be that as it may, on taking into account the narrative context it does not seem convincing to consider the reference to three *aṅgas* in the *Mahāsuññata-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel as originally reflecting a scheme that organizes the texts transmitted orally by the Buddha's disciples. In other words, the reference to three *aṅgas* does not appear to be reflecting an early stage in the evolution of the *aṅgas*, instead of which it is more probable that this reference is simply the result of a textual corruption.

According to another theory proposed by Japanese scholars, a listing of five *aṅgas* rather formed the starting point for the nine

⁵¹ This would correspond to the understanding reflected in the Pāli commentary on the present passage, Ps IV 164,9, translated Ñāṇamoli 1982: 30, which explains that, even though to acquire much learning has been compared by the Buddha to a soldier acquiring weaponry, the learning acquired does not function as weaponry if it is not put into practice.

or twelve *āṅgas*.⁵² [25] In the **Karmavibhaṅgopadeśa* a listing of six *āṅgas* can be found.⁵³ Closer inspection shows this to be the result of a textual corruption, as the same **Karmavibhaṅgopadeśa* continues right away by summing up its presentation as being about the nine *āṅgas*.⁵⁴ Variations can also be found in the Jain tradition, where the *Viyāhapannāti* has a reference to eleven *āṅgas* only,⁵⁵ differing from the standard count of twelve that forms the foundation for the Śvetāmbara canon.⁵⁶

In sum, it seems fair to conclude that references in Pāli discourses and elsewhere that in their present state involve fewer than nine *āṅgas* are probably best seen as the results of errors or abbreviation during oral transmission, instead of being evidence of a supposedly early stage in the evolution of the nine and twelve *āṅgas*.⁵⁷ [26]

⁵² Mayeda 1964: 26 and 34 and Nakamura 1980/1999: 28.

⁵³ Another reference to three *āṅgas* can be found in Nett 78,9, which here comprises *sutta*, *veyyākaraṇa*, and *gāthā*.

⁵⁴ Lévi 1932a: 161,8: *sūtram geyam vyākaraṇam itivṛttam gāthodānam, evaṃ* (Kudo 2012: 106: *evan*) *navāṅgaśāsanam*.

⁵⁵ Lalwani 1973b: 177,14.

⁵⁶ For a survey of the twelve *āṅgas* according to the Śvetāmbara Jain tradition cf. Dundas 1992: 64f.

⁵⁷ In relation to the hypothesis by von Hinüber 1994a that the listing of four *āṅgas* reflects an early attempt at organizing the texts, Klaus 2010: 518 points out that such hypotheses are not supported by the texts, which do not present the *āṅgas* as an attempt at ordering the texts, but rather as attempts at classification or just enumeration, "mir kommt es auf die Feststellung an, daß Vermutungen in diese Richtung sich nicht an die Texte anknüpfen lassen. Die Texte präsentieren uns die verschiedenen Aṅga-Listen nicht als Versuche, einen wie auch immer gearteten Gesamtbestand an Texten zu ordnen, sondern als Versuche, die verschiedenen Arten von Dhamma-Texten zu klassifizieren oder auch nur aufzuzählen." Cousins 2013a: 105 concludes that "short versions are sometimes interpreted as earlier lists of '*Āṅgas*', but that seems quite anachronistic to me." Skilling 2017: 293 note 55 comments on my discussion in the

Pāli Discourse References to the Nine *Aṅgas*

In what follows I survey Pāli discourse references to the nine *aṅgas* within their narrative and doctrinal contexts, and in comparison with their parallels, wherever extant. Such contextual considerations can help to corroborate or else counter the significance of the nine *aṅgas* suggested above, in so far as the narrative context can indicate whether listings of these nine were meant to refer to textual divisions or textual types.

A discourse among the Fours of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* mentions the nine *aṅgas* as part of an exposition of the benefits of memorization.⁵⁸ In this context the nine *aṅgas* stand representative of what one would learn by heart. The same sense recurs in a discourse among the Fives, where not learning the teachings in the form of the nine *aṅgas* is a factor that leads to the decline of the Dharma.⁵⁹

A discourse among the Sevens of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* employs the nine *aṅgas* in a definition of knowledge of the Dharma,⁶⁰ distinct from knowledge of the meaning. The same distinction is drawn in parallels to this *Aṅguttara-nikāya* discourse found in the *Madhyama-āgama*, in the *Ekottarika-āgama*, and in a discourse translated individually into Chinese (although in terms of the twelve *aṅgas* instead).⁶¹ According to this distinction, mere memorization does not suffice for true knowledge, a theme that continues with other references to the *aṅgas*. [27]

article that forms the basis for this chapter: "I am in accord with Anālayo's main point, which is that the *Aṅgas* are not actual collections of texts."

⁵⁸ AN 4.191 at AN II 185,7.

⁵⁹ AN 5.155 at AN III 177,6.

⁶⁰ AN 7.64 at AN IV 113,13; the same contrast recurs in Vibh 294,22 in terms of *dharmapaṭisambhidā* and *atthapaṭisambhidā*.

⁶¹ MĀ 1 at T I 421a17, T 27 at T I 810a11, and EĀ 39.1 at T II 728c3. A Sanskrit fragment parallel has preserved part of the listing of *aṅgas*; cf. SHT III 878 R4, Waldschmidt et al. 1971: 127.

Such a contrast between mere learning and true understanding becomes particularly evident in the *Alagaddūpama-sutta*, which features the monk Aritṭha obstinately holding on to a mistaken view. His obstinacy features in the different *Vinayas* as the occasion for a *pācittiya* regulation against such behaviour,⁶² giving the impression that his stubbornness was considered a serious problem. According to the Pāli commentary on the *Alagaddūpama-sutta*, Aritṭha had been well learned in the Dharma.⁶³ This suggests his behaviour to be in part due to the arrogant belief that by mere learning he had actually understood the teachings.

It is against this narrative background that the reference to the nine *aṅgas* falls into place as part of the famous simile of the snake.⁶⁴ According to this simile, someone trying to catch a snake would incur harm if he were to grasp it by its tail. This predicament illustrates the situation of someone who learns the teachings in the form of the nine *aṅgas* without examining their meaning and without cultivating wisdom, just for the sake of being able to debate with others. Conversely, one who learns the teachings in the form of the nine *aṅgas* not for the sake of debating with others, but rather to understand them and cultivate wisdom, is comparable to someone who catches the snake by its neck, making sure that it cannot bite.

In this context the nine *aṅgas* stand representative of a way of learning the teachings which could have wholesome or unwhole-

⁶² The Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 682a9, the Mahāsāṅghika *Vinaya*, T 1425 at T XXII 367a3, the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 56c12, the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1442 at T XXIII 840b21, with its Sanskrit and Tibetan counterparts in Yamagiwa 2001: 86,7 and 87,9, the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1435 at T XXIII 106a3, and the Theravāda *Vinaya*, Vin IV 133,32.

⁶³ Ps II 103,1.

⁶⁴ MN 22 at MN I 133,24.

some consequences. The same holds for the parallel versions to the *Alagaddūpama-sutta* preserved in the *Madhyama-āgama* and the *Ekottarika-āgama* (again with the difference that they employ the listing of twelve *aṅgas* instead).⁶⁵ [28]

Similar implications are relevant for a range of other occurrences of the nine *aṅgas*. A discourse among the Fours of the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* distinguishes those who have learned the nine *aṅgas* into those who do not understand the teachings and those who do.⁶⁶ Another two discourses among the Fours restate the same contrast in terms of those learned in the nine *aṅgas* who either have or lack an insight into the four noble truths.⁶⁷ The first of these two discourses has an *Ekottarika-āgama* parallel which, instead of mentioning the four noble truths, distinguishes those who learn the *aṅgas* into those who do and those who do not teach others.⁶⁸

Two consecutive discourses among the Fives express the same basic contrast by way of defining one who is a *dharmavīhāri*. Mere learning of the teachings in the form of the nine *aṅgas* is not sufficient for being a *dharmavīhāri*, as such a one might still neglect seclusion and the cultivation of tranquillity of the mind or else not understand with wisdom the meaning of what has been learned.⁶⁹

⁶⁵ MĀ 200 at T I 764a14 and EĀ 50.8 at T II 813a16.

⁶⁶ AN 4.6 at AN II 7,2; a distinction that recurs in Pp 62,33.

⁶⁷ AN 4.102 at AN II 103,8 and AN 4.107 at AN II 108,3; the presentation in AN 4.107 recurs in Pp 43,29.

⁶⁸ EĀ 25.10 at T II 635a10, which illustrates mere learning of the twelve *aṅgas* with the same simile of a cloud that thunders but does not rain, found also in AN 4.102. Another parallel, EĀ² 10 at T II 877b10, also employs the same simile, but does not mention the *aṅgas*. Here the one who is like a cloud that thunders but does not rain learns the discourses but does not understand the Dharma himself.

⁶⁹ AN 5.73 at AN III 86,25 and AN 5.74 at AN III 88,7.

Another discourse in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* highlights that, even though the Buddha had taught much in the form of the nine *aṅgas*, for being "learned" it suffices to have penetrated the meaning of a four-line stanza and practised accordingly.⁷⁰ [29] Parallels to this discourse in the *Madhyama-āgama*, in an individually translated discourse, and as part of an *Udāna* collection preserved in Chinese translation make the same point.⁷¹ These references highlight that one need not be familiar with a variety of teachings in the form of the nine (or twelve) *aṅgas*, instead of which thorough understanding of a single specimen from one of these *aṅgas*, a *gāthā*, can make one become truly learned.

This conveys the impression that the contrast to the single stanza mentioned is not the entirety of texts in nine (or twelve) textual collections, but rather the variety of teachings the Buddha had given as exemplified by these *aṅgas*. Out of these, a single stanza can fulfil the purpose of becoming truly learned.

One more occurrence in a discourse in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* brings me back to the topic taken up at the outset of this chapter, namely the term *āgama*. This discourse lists several praiseworthy qualities, one of which is having learned the teachings in the form of the nine *aṅgas*. Another quality is to spend the rainy season with elders who are *āgatāgama*, who have "obtained the *āgama*", and to use this opportunity to get the teachings clarified by asking them questions.

In this discourse the *aṅgas* occur side-by-side with a reference to being *āgatāgama*, each expression applied to different persons. This gives the impression that the two terms were not seen as being in conflict with each other.

⁷⁰ AN 4.186 at AN II 178,12.

⁷¹ MĀ 172 at T I 709b6, T 82 at T I 901c19, and T 212 at T IV 643b25 (each lists twelve *aṅgas*).

In line with the conclusion arrived at earlier, it seems safe to infer that the *aṅgas* do not function as a supposedly early system of apportioning the discourses which eventually fell into disuse, to be replaced by the system of the four *āgamas* or *nikāyas*. Instead, all of the passages surveyed above are well compatible with an understanding of the listing of *aṅgas* as referring to textual types.⁷² [30]

Besides this corroboration, what emerges from the above passages is that the nine *aṅgas* reflect the variety of the teachings that can be learned and as such function as a convenient reference to a considerable degree of learning, which in the ancient oral context of course required memorization. Many of these references draw attention to the shortcomings of mere rote learning without penetrating the meaning of the teachings. A particularly stark example for such drawbacks is the case of Ariṭṭha in the *Alagaddūpama-sutta* and its parallels, where mere learning of the teaching in the form of the nine *aṅgas* compares to catching a snake in such an unskilful way that one will get bitten. In short, learning the different types of presentations of the teachings in the form of the nine *aṅgas* does not necessarily imply that one has understood the meaning of what the Buddha taught, which instead can take place even with a single stanza that is well understood.

Conclusion

The overall impression that suggests itself from the evidence surveyed in this chapter is that an at first somewhat undifferentiated body of discourses, the *āgama* (singular), developed into separate *āgamas* (or *nikāyas*), a development which as far as I am able to ascertain did not involve an intermediate period during

⁷² Cousins 2013a: 106 sums up that "there is no indication anywhere that any of this has anything to do with an arrangement of the canonical literature in some kind of earlier recension."

which the *aṅgas* fulfilled the purpose of forming textual collections. Instead, the *aṅgas* appear to stand for textual types, for kinds of compositions, and their main function, as reflected in the early texts, is to highlight the importance of a penetrative understanding of the meaning of the teachings over mere rote learning of its different manifestations. [31]

"One is not wise,
Because one speaks much.
Being peaceful, free from anger and fear,
One is called wise."⁷³

⁷³ Dhṛp 258.

Early Buddhist Oral Tradition (2)

Introduction

In this chapter I continue examining the topic of the early Buddhist oral tradition, in particular formal and functional aspects of Pāli discourses that reflect their nature as orally transmitted material. I begin by taking up formal elements, such as sound similarities, the principle of waxing syllables, the frequent use of repetition, and pericopes. Then I turn to functional aspects of the Pāli oral tradition, examining its purposes and the reciters responsible for its performance.

Formal Elements – Sound Similarities

A phrase discussed already in detail in a previous chapter is the standard opening to a discourse in the form "thus have I heard, at one time".¹ Not only does this opening quite explicitly draw attention to the oral nature of what follows, but even the very form of this formulaic beginning testifies to oral transmission. Among these first few words, found at the beginning of each discourse, sound and metrical similarities can be detected that are used throughout the discourses to facilitate memorization and recitation. Such sound similarities can involve alliteration, repetition of an initial sound, [6] assonance, repetition of a sound found in the middle of a word, and homoioteleuton, repetition of the final sound.

As illustrated in table 9, the two parts of the standard opening of a Pāli discourse, *evaṃ me sutaṃ* and *ekaṃ samayaṃ*, each con-

* Originally published in 2007 under the title "Oral Dimensions of Pāli Discourses: Pericopes, Other Mnemonic Techniques, and the Oral Performance Context" in the *Canadian Journal of Buddhist Studies*, 3: 5–33.

¹ Cf. above p. 51ff.

sist of five syllables. The first word in each part is closely similar, *evaṃ* and *ekaṃ*, differing only in respect to their second consonant. The words *evaṃ*, *sutaṃ*, *ekaṃ*, and *samayaṃ* share the *-aṃ* ending,² and the words *sutaṃ* and *samayaṃ* also share the same initial consonant *s-*.³ In this way, even though these few words are merely the standard prose introduction to a discourse, a closer inspection reveals sound similarities that occur with considerable frequency in other prose sections of the early discourses, especially in listings of similar words or in formulaic expressions.

Table 9: Sound Similarities in the Opening of a Discourse

<i>evaṃ me sutaṃ</i>	<i>ekaṃ samayaṃ</i>
<i>e(v)aṃ</i>	<i>e(k)aṃ</i>
<i>(ev)aṃ (sut)aṃ</i>	<i>(ek)aṃ (samy)aṃ</i>
<i>s(utaṃ)</i>	<i>s(amayaṃ)</i>

Formal Elements – The Principle of Waxing Syllables

Another oral feature of the early discourses can be found in the frequent use of strings of synonyms. Such a string of synonyms serves to safeguard against textual loss, since a whole set of similar words stands a much greater chance of being remembered than a single word and also better impresses itself on the audience.⁴

A closer look at such strings or clusters of words brings to light that their members tend to occur in a metrical sequence that follows the principle of waxing syllables, already mentioned in the previous chapter. According to this principle, words with fewer syllables in a

² [4] The choice of the accusative *ekaṃ samayaṃ* instead of the locative *ekasmiṃ samaye* (cf. Wijesekera 1936/1996: 56) might even be related to the sound similarity this creates with the preceding *evaṃ me sutaṃ*.

³ [5] Allon 1997b: 195 and 242.

⁴ [6] Oldenberg 1917: 42 comments that the use of such strings of synonyms gives the impression of a certain childlike insistence that ensures that all aspects of a particular matter find expression.

series of terms are followed by words with an equal or greater number of syllables. This principle can also be applied to listings and enumerations whose members do not share the same meaning. A few selected examples in table 10 below show how a particular theme can be expressed with the help of a string of terms that follow an ascending syllable count. The crescendo effect that results from the application of this principle is a typical stylistic feature of the early discourses, further enhanced when word sequences arranged in this way also share sound similarities.

Table 10: The Principle of Waxing Syllables

Theme:	Pāli terms:	Syllable count:
old	<i>jiṇṇo</i> <i>vuddho</i> <i>mahallako</i> <i>addhagato</i> <i>vayo-anuppatto</i>	2+2+4+4+6
growth	<i>vuddhiṃ</i> <i>virūḷhiṃ</i> <i>vepullaṃ</i>	2+3+3
fear	<i>bhūto</i> <i>samviggo</i> <i>lomahaṭṭhajāto</i>	2+3+6
to (mis)-meditate	<i>jhāyanti</i> <i>pajjhāyanti</i> <i>nijjhāyanti</i> <i>apajjhāyanti</i>	3+4+4+5
able to attain	<i>nikāmalābhī</i> <i>akicchalābhī</i> <i>akasiralābhī</i>	5+5+6
poor	<i>daliddo</i> <i>assako</i> <i>anāḷhiyo</i>	3+3+4
wealthy	<i>aḍḍho</i> <i>mahaddhano</i> <i>mahābhogo</i>	2+4+4

The examples chosen in the table above cover only cases of up to five words.⁵ [7]. If a sequence of words becomes relatively long, the principle of waxing syllables is not applied to the sequence as a whole, but to subunits within the sequence. Such subunits can share a similar nuance of meaning or can belong to the same category. The division into subunits would presumably have the function of setting a rhythm that allows the reciter to take a breath before continuing with the recitation of the text.

A case in point for the formation of such prosodic subunits is the description of various types of talks that are unbecoming and better avoided, presented in table 11 below.⁶

Table 11: Subunits in the Description of Irrelevant Talk

1st subunit, syllable count 4+4+6:

rājakathaṃ, corakathaṃ, mahāmattakathaṃ,

talk related to government: "kings, robbers, ministers".

2nd subunit, syllable count 4+4+4:

senākathaṃ, bhayakathaṃ, yuddhakathaṃ,

talk related to war: "armies, dangers, battles".

3rd subunit, syllable count 4+4+4+5:

annakathaṃ, pānakathaṃ, vatthakathaṃ, sayanakathaṃ,

talk related to requisites: "food, drink, clothing, beds".

⁵ [7] Examples are from MN 12 at MN I 82,26, MN 16 at MN I 101,7, MN 35 at MN I 231,37, MN 50 at MN I 334,23, MN 53 at MN I 354,36, MN 66 at MN I 450,34 and 451,36; taking a lead from von Hinüber 1994b: 16–30 and Smith 1948: 35. Von Hinüber 1994b: 33 draws attention to similar formulas found also in Jain scriptures, such as *naṭṭā, gā, vāiṃya*, corresponding to *nacca, gāta, vāḍita* found, e.g., in MN 27 at MN I 180,6; cf. also Allon 1997b: 266.

⁶ [8] Taken from MN 76 at MN I 513,23; cf. the discussion of this example in Allon 1997a: 48 and Anālayo 2009k: 740f.

4th subunit, syllable count: 4+4+4+4:

mālākathaṃ, gandhakathaṃ, ñātikathaṃ, yānakathaṃ,
talk on lay life: "garlands, perfumes, relatives, vehicles".

5th subunit, syllable count: 4+5+5+6:

gāmakathaṃ, nigamakathaṃ, nagarakathaṃ, janapadakathaṃ,
talk on localities: "villages, towns, cities, counties". [8]

6th subunit, syllable count: 4+4+5+6+6:

itthikathaṃ, sūrakathaṃ, visikhākathaṃ, kumbaṭṭhānakathaṃ,
pubbapetakathaṃ,
talk on gossip: "women, heroes, streets, wells, the departed".

The same principle of waxing syllables can also be responsible for the order of members in *dvanda* compounds. An example would be the *pācittiya* regulation according to which a monk in particular circumstances should not teach more than a certain number of words, specified to be "six or five", *cha-pañca*. The sequence of the numerals seems to follow the principle of waxing syllables against the natural ascending order of the numbers five and six.⁷ Another case is the expression *Dhamma-vinaya*, where the reason for *Vinaya* to stand in second position may well be its syllable count of three against the two syllables of *Dhamma*. The application of the principle of waxing syllables to *dvanda* compounds is in fact a rule recognized by Pāṇini.⁸

Formal Elements – Repetition

The oral nature of the early discourses also easily impresses itself on their audience due to the frequent occurrence of repeti-

⁷ [9] Vin IV 21,37.

⁸ [10] Caland 1931: 59–68 quotes Pāṇini 2.2.34 and provides a series of examples where, due to following the law of waxing syllables, the compound members in a *dvanda* come in a sequence that is in opposition to their natural order.

tion. When treating a particular topic in its positive and negative manifestations, for example, it is a standard procedure in the discourses that the same passage will be repeated with precisely the same words and formulations used for the positive case, making only the most minimal changes required in order to adjust these to the negative case. The same procedure becomes even more prominent when a series of different perspectives on a particular topic are explored. A treatment of, for example, four different types of persons or modes of acting will use four times nearly the same text in order to achieve its aim.

In addition to the frequent occurrence of repetition within a single discourse, the early discourses also make recurrent use of "pericopes", formulaic expressions or phrases that depict a recurrent situation or event and whose purpose is to facilitate memorization.⁹ Whether they are descriptions of how someone approaches the Buddha or of how someone attains liberation, peri-

⁹ [11] Cousins 1983: 1 refers to the "widespread use of mnemonic formulae" as a typical feature of early Buddhist oral literature. Griffiths 1983: 58 explains that the use of pericopes is "a direct result of the methods by which sacred material was preserved and handed down in the early Buddhist communities; the demands of mnemonic convenience ... meant that the units of tradition ... had to be ... reduced to an easily memorized standard form." Von Simson 1965: 47 compares the function of such pericopes in Buddhist prose to the bones and tendons in the human body, in that both provide stability and support for the other parts. Smith 1987: 598, in an examination of modern oral literature in India, reports the finding that a Rajasthani epic that made frequent use of pericopes (which, according to his description, has the result that "every battle ... is the same battle, every journey is the same journey, every meeting the same meeting") was transmitted with considerably greater accuracy than other comparable epics. Smith 1977: 151 explains that the reason for the employment of pericopes and the resulting greater accuracy "may lie in the fact that the epic is not merely sung for entertainment, but has a religious function", a reason that would hold true also for the use of pericopes in the oral transmission of the early Buddhist discourses.

copies will be employed with a fixed set of phrases and expressions, with only the most minimal changes introduced to adapt these pericopes to the individual occasion. These two features, the repetition of passages within a discourse and the use of pericopes throughout a discourse collection, [9] are responsible for the highly repetitive nature of the early discourses.¹⁰

These various oral characteristics of the early discourses testify to the importance given to precise recall in the early Buddhist oral tradition.¹¹ As already discussed in a previous chapter, in this respect the early Buddhist oral tradition differs from oral traditions where improvisation is a prominent feature.¹² The performance of oral literature of an epic or narrative type often demands innovation and improvisation from the performer, whose task is to present the main elements of a tale in such a way as to best entertain the audience. This type of oral literature is thus freely re-created every time it is told.¹³ In contrast, the purpose of the early Buddhist oral tradition was the preservation of sacred material of a type for which free improvisation is inappropriate. Moreover, recitation was often undertaken communally by the reciters, which leaves little scope for free improvisation.¹⁴

¹⁰ [12] In his detailed study of these features in a *Dīgha-nikāya* discourse, Allon 1997b: 359 comes to the conclusion that about 87% of the text of this discourse involves some form or other of repetition. He concludes (p. 360) that "repetition thus thoroughly permeates every dimension of this class of Buddhist literature."

¹¹ [13] Allon 1997b: 252 explains that "it is surely easier to remember a sequence of words arranged ... according to syllable length", just as "it is easier to remember two different words when they share sound similarities and have the same metrical pattern"; cf. also Wynne 2004: 108–112.

¹² Cf. above p. 68ff.

¹³ [14] Lord 1987: 71 notes that this involves "never merely memorizing a fixed entity, but ... ever re-creating a new version of older forms and stories".

¹⁴ Cf. above p. 75.

The emphasis on precise transmission in the early Buddhist oral tradition can even be detected in some errors, where at times in otherwise closely similar Pāli and Sanskrit passages the counterpart to a particular term shows close phonetic similarity but a considerably different meaning. In such cases, it seems as if the attempt of the reciters to remember precisely has preserved formal aspects, even though the meaning has been lost.¹⁵

As is only to be expected of material that has been orally transmitted over longer periods of time, in spite of the various measures undertaken to ensure correct transmission, variations occur. Such differences not only occur between material transmitted by different Buddhist schools, but can also be found in texts of a single school, such as the Pāli texts transmitted by the Theravāda reciters. One type of difference that tends to occur involves variations in the use of pericopes. Such pericope variations usually affect those parts of a discourse that were added by the reciters in order to provide a background narration to the teachings given by the Buddha or his disciples. [10]

Formal Elements – Pericope Variations

A difference in the use of pericopes can be seen, for example, between a discourse in the *Dīrgha-nikāya* and its parallel in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, both of which report the same event, namely a visit paid by the minister Vassakāra to the Buddha in order to find out what the Buddha had to say about the plan by King Ajātasattu to attack the Vajjians.¹⁶ Whereas the *Dīrgha-nikāya* version describes in detail how Vassakāra got his chariot ready, drove with it, and then descended from it to proceed on foot, its *Aṅguttara-nikāya*

¹⁵ [17] Von Simson 1965: 137f gives the following examples: *vivattacchaddo* - *vighuṣṭaśabdo*; *brahmuijuggatto* - *bṛhadṛjugātro*; *muducittam* - *muditacittam*; *aññataro* - *ājñātavān*; *sammodi sammodanīyam* - *sammukhaṃ sammodanīm*.

¹⁶ [19] Allon 1997b: 39.

counterpart does not mention Vassakāra's mode of arrival at all, but simply notes that he approached the Buddha. Here are translations of the respective part in the *Dīgha-nikāya* (a) and *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (b) versions:

a) Vassakāra ... assented [to the order given to him] by Ajātasattu Vedehiputta, the king of Magadha, got the state carriages ready, mounted them, left Rājagaha by state carriage, and went towards Mount Vulture Peak. After going as far as the ground was passable for carriages, he descended from the carriage and approached the Blessed One on foot.¹⁷

b) Vassakāra ... assented [to the order given to him] by Ajātasattu Vedehiputta, the king of Magadha, and approached the Blessed One.¹⁸

Another case where the records of the same event differ in the detail in which they depict how someone approaches the Buddha can be observed by comparing the altogether four discourses that describe the famous last meeting between Māra and the Buddha, in which the Evil One asked the Buddha to pass away.¹⁹ The *Dīgha-nikāya* and the *Udāna* versions report that Māra approached the Buddha, stood at one side, and then addressed the Buddha. The *Samyutta-nikāya* version of the same event does not mention that he stood at one side, but only records that he approached the Bud-

¹⁷ [21] DN 16 at DN II 73,4.

¹⁸ [23] AN 7.20 at AN IV 18,4. Allon 1997b: 39 notes that a description of how someone approaches by chariot can, however, be found elsewhere in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* collection; cf., e.g., AN 5.50 at AN III 59,27 (King Muṇḍa approaches the monk Nārada), AN 8.12 at AN IV 181,23 (General Sīha approaches the Buddha), and AN 10.30 at AN V 65,9 (King Pasenadi approaches the Buddha), although the description given in these discourses is shorter than the "chariot approach" pericope employed in the *Dīgha-nikāya*.

¹⁹ [24] Allon 1997b: 62.

dha. [11] The *Aṅguttara-nikāya* version does not record any approach at all. Below are the *Dīgha-nikāya/Udāna* (a), *Samyutta-nikāya* (b), and *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (c) versions:

a) Not long after the venerable Ānanda had left, Māra the Evil One approached the Blessed One. Having approached, he stood on one side. Standing on one side, Māra the Evil One said this to the Blessed One.²⁰

b) Not long after the venerable Ānanda had left,²¹ Māra the Evil One approached the Blessed One.²² Having approached,²³ he said this.²⁴

c) Not long after the venerable Ānanda had left, Māra the Evil One said this to the Blessed One.²⁵

Pericopes also differ when it comes to describing the respectful attitude with which someone listens to a sermon given after a meal by the Buddha or by a monk. For such occasions, the *Dīgha-nikāya*, the *Majjhima-nikāya*, the *Udāna*, and the *Sutta-nipāta* employ a pericope that describes how the listener(s) take(s) a low seat, an obvious expression of respect.²⁶ Similar situations in the *Vinaya*

²⁰ [25] DN 16 at DN II 104,12 and Ud 6.1 at Ud 63,13.

²¹ [26] C^e does not have *acīrapakkante āyasmante ānande*.

²² [27] S^e adds (*ekamantaṃ aṭṭhāsi. ekamantaṃ ṭhito kho māro pāpimā*).

²³ [28] B^e and S^e add *bhagavantam*.

²⁴ [29] SN 51.10 at SN V 260,25.

²⁵ [30] AN 8.70 at AN IV 310,11.

²⁶ [31] The pericope of "taking a low seat", *aññataraṃ nīcaṃ āsanaṃ gahetvā*, leads from the pericope that describes the giving of a meal to a sermon, e.g., in DN 3 at DN I 109,36 (for further references and a discussion of this variation cf. Allon 1997b: 122). The same pericope can also be found regularly in the *Madhyama-āgama*, e.g., MĀ 132 at T I 625b17: 取一小床; in this case it is also found in the Tibetan counterpart at D 1 *kha* 105b3 or Q 1030 *ge* 97b1: *stan ches* (Q: *chem*) *dma' ba zhig blangs te*, whereas in the parallel MN 82 at MN II

and in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya*, however, do not mention a low seat at all.²⁷ This difference is particularly notable in the case of a meal given by Prince Bodhi, as the same meal is recorded in the *Majjhima-nikāya* and the *Vinaya*, so that in this case the same event is described once with and once without the taking of a low seat. Here are the *Majjhima-nikāya* (a) and *Vinaya* (b) accounts:

a) When the Blessed One had eaten and had removed [his] hands from the bowl, Prince Bodhi took a low seat and sat down on one side.²⁸ [12]

b) When the Blessed One had eaten and had removed [his] hands from the bowl, Prince Bodhi sat down on one side.²⁹

The application of a pericope can at times result in inconsistencies within a discourse. An example is the pericope that describes how the Buddha or a monk gets ready to beg for alms. Since food has to be taken before noon, such preparations are usually made in the early morning, so that this pericope describes how "in the morning" the Buddha or a monk dresses and takes his

64,23 the whole episode is not found. Some examples for Sanskrit occurrences can be seen in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, Dutt 1984a: 265,15: *nīcataram āsanam gṛhītvā*, counterpart to Sn 3.7 at Sn p. 111,9: *aññataram nīcam āsanam gahehvā*; *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* fragment S 360 folio 187 V5, Waldschmidt 1950: 26: (*nīcata*)[*r*](*a*)[*k*](*a*)*m-āsanam gṛhītvā*, parallel to DN 16 at DN II 126,26, where the low seat is not mentioned; or the *Saṅghabhedavastu*, Gnoli 1977: 145,14: *nīcataram āsanam gṛhītvā*, parallel to Vin I 18,9, where the low seat is not mentioned.

²⁷ [32] Instead of the pericope of "taking a low seat" after the pericope that describes the giving of a meal, only the pericope "sat down at one side", *ekam-antaṃ nīṣīdi*, leads over to a sermon, e.g., in AN 4.57 at AN II 63,4 (for further references cf. Allon 1997b: 123).

²⁸ [33] MN 85 at MN II 93,9.

²⁹ [34] Vin II 128,36.

bowl and robe in order to approach the next village or town.³⁰ The frequent occurrence of this pericope has caused it to be also applied to a passage in the *Vinaya* and the *Udāna* where it does not fit its context. This passage records how the Buddha was traveling and arrived at a particular place where he was invited to come to the local hall. The villagers then approached the same hall and listened to a discourse by the Buddha that went on well into the night. Even though the circumstances make it clear that the invitation to come to the local hall must have taken place in the late afternoon or evening, the *Vinaya* and the *Udāna* nevertheless report that it was "in the morning" that the Buddha followed the invitation by dressing and taking his bowl and robe in order to approach the local hall.³¹

The relatively circumstantial differences noted so far may seem negligible, since they do not affect essential matters. Not all such errors, however, are of such circumstantial character. A more significant variation in the use of the pericopes employed at the conclusion of a discourse can be found between the *Samyutta-nikāya* and the *Sutta-nipāta* versions of the *Kasibhāradvāja-sutta*. These

³⁰ [35] Cf., e.g., MN 5 at MN I 31,29: *pubbanhasamayam nivāsetvā pattacīvaram ādāya*.

³¹ [36] Vin I 227,10 = Ud 8.6 at Ud 86,13: *bhagavā pubbaṇhasamayam nivāsetvā pattacīvaram ādāya saddhiṃ bhikkhusaṅghena yena āvasathāgāraṃ ten' upasankamī*, followed by a description that the laity heard a discourse from the Buddha and were then dismissed, *bhagavā ... upāsake bahud eva rattiṃ dhammiyā kathāya sandassetvā samādapetvā samuttejetvā sampahaṃsetvā uyyojesi*, where the reference to *bahud eva rattiṃ* makes it clear that the discourse was given at night time, so that the earlier reference to "the morning", *pubbanhasamayam*, does not fit the context. Allon 1997b: 141 notes this error and also draws attention to instances where the pericope is properly adjusted to its context, such as in MN 53 at MN I 354,12 or in SN 35.202 at SN IV 183,16, which introduce a similar situation only with *nivāsetvā pattacīvaram ādāya*, without the specification *pubbanhasamayam*.

two discourses record the same event but differ in their conclusion, as according to the *Samyutta-nikāya* account Kasibhāradvāja took refuge and declared himself to be a lay follower, whereas according to the *Sutta-nipāta* version he took refuge, requested ordination and became an arahant. The two versions, in the *Samyutta-nikāya* (a) and the *Sutta-nipāta* (b), proceed as follows:

a) I go for refuge to the venerable Gotama, to the Dharma, and to the community of monks, may the venerable Gotama remember me as a lay follower who from today on has gone for refuge for life.³² [13]

b) I go for refuge to the venerable Gotama, to the Dharma, and to the community of monks,³³ may I receive the going forth in the presence of the venerable Gotama and the full admission ... and the venerable Bhāradvāja became one of the arahants.³⁴

An additional perspective on variations in the use of pericopes emerges when comparing their employment in Pāli discourses with the corresponding usage in the Chinese *Āgamas*. Taking as an example the *Madhyama-āgama* collection preserved in Chinese, discourses found in this collection regularly describe that a monk fans the Buddha,³⁵ a circumstance noted only rarely in discourses found in its Pāli counterpart, the *Majjhima-nikāya*.³⁶ On frequent occasions

³² [38] SN 7.11 at SN I 173,23.

³³ [39] S° adds *upāsakaṃ maṃ bhavaṃ gotamo dhāretu ajjatagge pāṇupetaṃ saraṇaṃ gataṃ* before *labheyāhaṃ* etc.

³⁴ [41] Sn 1.4 at Sn p. 15,23. The Chinese parallels SĀ 98 at T II 27b26, SĀ² 264 at T II 466c10, and SĀ³ 1 at T II 493b8 agree with Sn 1.4 in reporting that he went forth and became an arahant.

³⁵ [42] An example is MĀ 33 at T I 474a19: 執拂侍佛.

³⁶ [43] MN 12 at MN I 83,20 and MN 74 at MN I 501,1 report that a monk was fanning the Buddha.

Madhyama-āgama discourses also mention the sitting mat,³⁷ one of the standard requisites of a monk, whereas their Pāli counterparts tend to refer to the same accessory only on rare occasions.³⁸

Another standard pericope in *Madhyama-āgama* discourses describes how a visitor or a monk will depart from the presence of the Buddha by performing three circumambulations, a circumstance not mentioned in *Majjhima-nikāya* discourses.³⁹ The two collections also differ in their descriptions of how listeners will express their appreciation of the teachings. In a *Majjhima-nikāya* discourse such a person will exclaim "wonderful, wonderful"; in a *Madhyama-āgama* discourse such a person will rather inform the Buddha: "I understood, I realized."⁴⁰

In discourses in the *Madhyama-āgama* collection, when someone asks the Buddha or a monastic a question, the actual enquiry will be preceded by a request to be given permission to put a question,⁴¹ a pericope found only rarely in the *Majjhima-nikāya*.⁴²

³⁷ [44] An example is MĀ 9 at T I 430b10: 尼師檀 (with the variant 尼師壇); cf. also Minh Chau 1964/1991: 29.

³⁸ [45] MN 24 at MN I 147,5 and MN 147 at MN III 277,30.

³⁹ [46] For example MĀ 132 at T I 623b23: 繞三匝 has as its counterpart in the parallel MN 82 at MN II 56,22: *padakkhiṇaṃ katvā*. A reference to three circumambulations can be found in DN 16 at D II 163,27, where Mahākassapa pays homage to the Buddha's funeral pyre with three circumambulations. Part of the pericope on three circumambulations has been preserved in a Sanskrit fragment parallel to an occurrence in MĀ 161 at T I 686a18; cf. SHT V 1148 R4, Sander and Waldschmidt 1985: 147: *triprada(kṣiṇīkrtvā)*.

⁴⁰ [47] An example is MN 7 at MN I 39,27: *abhikkantaṃ ... abhikkantaṃ*, which has a counterpart in MĀ 93 at T I 576a10: 我已知 ... 我已解.

⁴¹ [48] A case in point is MĀ 29 at T I 461b27: 我欲有所問, 聽我問耶?

⁴² [49] MN 35 at MN I 229,35, MN 109 at MN III 15,23, and MN 144 at MN III 264,30. Notably, although none of these three Pāli discourses has a parallel in the *Madhyama-āgama*, each has a parallel in the *Samyukta-āgama*, where in each case this pericope is not found; cf. SĀ 110 at T II 35c11 (parallel to MN 35), SĀ 58 at T II 14b17 (parallel to MN 109), and SĀ 1266 at T II 347c23

Other pericopes found in the *Majjhima-nikāya* are absent from the *Madhyama-āgama*. One example is the pericope employed regularly at the beginning of a *Majjhima-nikāya* discourse, in which the Buddha addresses his disciples with "monks", and the monks reply "venerable sir", after which the Buddha announces his topic and proceeds to deliver the discourse.⁴³

A closer inspection shows that this pericope does not fit too well with the remainder of the Pāli discourses in which it occurs, inasmuch as the vocative "monks", *bhikkhavo*, used in this passage, differs from the vocative address "monks", *bhikkhave*, used in all remaining instances in the discourse.⁴⁴ [14] Similarly, the first vocative "venerable sir", *bhadante*, used by the monks, is not the same as the vocative "venerable sir", *bhante*, found in the remainder of the discourse.⁴⁵ Since there would be no reason for starting with one particular vocative and then switching to another type of vocative for the remainder of the discourse, this difference suggests that this pericope would have been added during oral transmission.

Although this pericope is not found in the *Madhyama-āgama*, it does occur in an individual translation. Notably, this discourse stems from a *Madhyama-āgama* collection.⁴⁶

(parallel to MN 144). A Tibetan version of this pericope can be found in the parallel to MN 90, D 1 *kha* 88a1 or Q 1030 *ge* 81a6, in which case this particular pericope is also found in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the same discourse, MĀ 212 at T I 793b15, but not in the Pāli version.

⁴³ [50] Cf., e.g., MN 1 at MN I 1,3: *bhikkhavo ti. bhadante ti te bhikkhū bhagavato paccassosum*; on the use of this pericope in the *Dīgha-nikāya* and the *Majjhima-nikāya* cf. also Manné 1990: 33; on its relative lateness Meisig 1987b: 225.

⁴⁴ [51] MN 1 at MN I 1,5 continues with *bhikkhave*. On the vocative *bhikkhave* cf. also Lüders 1954: 13, Bechert 1991: 11, and Collett and Anālayo 2014.

⁴⁵ [52] MN 1 at MN I 1,7 continues with *bhante*.

⁴⁶ [53] T 48 at T I 837c25: "the Buddha said: 'monks!' The monks replied: 'yes, indeed!' The monks listened to the Buddha. The Buddha said ... "; 佛告諸比丘, 比丘應曰唯然, 比丘從佛聽, 佛說. According to an introductory remark in T

Functional Aspects – The Purposes of Recitation

To help make the above collected information on the formal aspects of Pāli orality come more alive, in what follows I try to gather what the Pāli sources indicate to have been the purposes of oral recitation. I also take up the topic of individuals who, according to these same sources, were involved in carrying out the transmission of the Pāli discourses to later generations.

The oral transmission of the early texts is seen as being as old as Buddhism itself. According to the different *Vinayas*, soon after his awakening the Buddha sent his first arahant monk disciples out to teach others.⁴⁷ For these disciples to engage in teaching activities, they would presumably have taken some teachings along, teachings they would then have passed on to their disciples.⁴⁸

Such teachings would obviously have been in an oral form. Some of the first monk disciples, like Yasa and his friends, were not brahmins trained in the art of oral transmission, so the material to be taken along must have been relatively easy to memorize. Although the discourses at that time would have been few, already at that time some degree of formalization of these discourses, to facilitate their oral transmission, would most likely have been taking place.

In fact some oral features would already have been in use when the discourses were first delivered, as even today repetition is em-

48 at T I 837c21, this discourse stems from a *Madhyama-āgama* collection, 出中阿含.

47 [54] This account can be found in the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 793a7, in the *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1897: 415,8, in the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 108a7, in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1450 at T XXIV 130a20, in the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1440 at T XXIII 511a12, and in the Theravāda *Vinaya*, Vin I 21,1; cf. also SN 4.5 at SN I 105,24 and its parallel SĀ 1096 at T II 288b3.

48 [55] Gombrich 1990a: 25.

ployed as a tool to drive home a point when giving a speech, whereas such repetition is avoided in a written presentation.⁴⁹ In this way some formalized features could already have been integral to the discourses when they were first delivered, to ensure that the listeners kept the main points well in mind. [15]

A discourse in the *Anguttara-nikāya* highlights that, even though the listeners may be paying attention when they are being taught, once they leave some of them might quickly forget what they have heard.⁵⁰ In view of the need to avoid that this happens on a wider scale, a to some degree formalized body of oral material could well have already come into existence during the Buddha's lifetime.⁵¹

Besides facilitating preaching and teaching, such a formalized body of oral material would also have had the function of creating a sense of unity and communal concord through group recitation. In fact the *Saṅgīti-sutta* and its parallels explicitly take their occasion from the need to ensure harmony in the face of the strife that according to these discourses had occurred among the Jains after the death of their leader.⁵² The fortnightly recitation of the code of rules (*pātimokkha*) would have functioned as another important manifestation of communal harmony, and a discourse reports that even monks who otherwise lived in complete seclusion would

⁴⁹ [57] Williams 1970: 166 argues that "it is possible that the Buddha's teaching methods included repetition and stylized formulae to aid memorization."

⁵⁰ [58] AN 3.30 at AN I 130,29, which compares the case of someone who listens but then forgets it all again after leaving to someone who has different types of seeds on his lap and then gets up quickly, as a result of which the seeds will all be scattered around.

⁵¹ [56] Davidson 1990/1992: 293 argues that the "processes of ... consolidation must have begun during the life of the Buddha".

⁵² [59] DN 33 at DN III 210,18, DĀ 9 at T I 49c6, and Sanskrit fragment K 484 folio 11 Rc, Stache-Rosen 1968: 17.

come to join the nearest monastic community on such occasions.⁵³ The relevance of group recitation to communal harmony can also be seen in the accounts of the later *saṅgīti*s, where success in establishing communal harmony finds expression in the performance of a communal recital.⁵⁴

In addition to functioning as a tool for the preservation of the teachings and for expressing communal harmony, some discourses indicate that oral recitation in early Buddhism had still other functions. A discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya* and its parallels in two *Samyukta-āgama* translations report that on one night, just before dawn, Anuruddha was reciting texts by himself.⁵⁵ A woman overheard him and told her child to be quiet, in order to avoid disturbing Anuruddha's recitation.

According to another discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya*, on one occasion the Buddha similarly recited a discourse to himself while being alone and in seclusion.⁵⁶ A monk chanced by and overheard

⁵³ [60] MN 77 at MN II 8,30 reports that even disciples who excelled in living in seclusion would come for the fortnightly recitation of the code of rules, *te anvaddhamāsaṃ saṅghamajjhe osaranti pātimokkhuddesāya*; in fact according to Vin I 105,26 a monk should come for the fortnightly recitation even if he is living apart.

⁵⁴ [61] Tilakaratne 2000b: 175f explains that "the fundamental purpose of the act of *saṅgāyana* and therefore of the events described as *saṅgīti* is the assurance of the unity of the Buddhist monastic organisation ... in the act of *saṅgāyana* ... the key activity was to recite together ... memorization or preservation of the Canon ... was not its main purpose ... the act of *saṅgāyana*, first and foremost, was meant to be a public expression of one's allegiance to the organisation which was represented by the Dhamma and the Vinaya", adding that "the recital of the Pātimokkha by the members of the Saṅgha every fortnight serves virtually the same purpose." Witanachchi 2006: 721 notes that "what is relevant in a *saṅgīti* is not so much the reciting of the text together, but the absence of any discordance"; cf. also Bareau 1955: 134 and Anālayo 2014c: 15f.

⁵⁵ [62] SN 10.6 at SN I 209,19, SĀ 1321 at T II 362c10, and SĀ² 320 at T II 480c21.

⁵⁶ [63] SN 12.45 at SN II 74,15: *bhagavā rahogato paṭisallīno imam dhammapariyāyam abhāsi*; no parallel seems to be known.

the recitation. The circumstances make it clear that the recitation was undertaken merely for its own sake, without any teaching purpose in mind.

Whereas one might suppose that Anuruddha is shown to be privately rehearsing, the Buddha would not be presented as needing to rehearse his own discourses. In fact, what he is on record as having recited on this occasion is a treatment of the six senses from the perspective of dependent arising (*paṭicca samuppāda*), a treatment that would have been familiar enough to him not to require any private rehearsing. This suggests that his recitation is best interpreted as a recollection of what he had realized, perhaps similar to the inspired utterances that according to the *Udāna* he made soon after his awakening, ^[16] a time when he was also alone and in seclusion.⁵⁷

The above passage suggests that the early Buddhist oral tradition also served as a way of meditating or reflecting on the Dharma. This impression is confirmed by a list of five possible occasions for reaching liberation, given in several discourses, according to which recitation can even issue in awakening.⁵⁸ These discourses explain that during recitation a deeper understanding can arise that eventually culminates in attaining liberation. Thus, recitation undertaken for its own sake can function as a means of mental cultivation (*bhāvanā*) in a wider sense, and as such can become a tool for progress on the path to liberation.

⁵⁷ ^[64] Ud 1.1–3 at Ud 1.1 or Vin I 1.1; cf. also, e.g., T 212 at T IV 775c19.

⁵⁸ ^[65] DN 33 at DN III 241,26, DN 34 at DN III 279,12 (abbr.), AN 5.26 at AN III 22,14, DĀ 9 at T I 51c10, DĀ 10 at T I 53c22, and SĀ 565 at T II 149a6; cf. also Collins 1992: 126f. Coward 1986: 300f explains that "the mere memorization of the text is not judged to be the most important aspect of the oral tradition ... by chanting or listening to the rhythmic words of a sacred text, the teaching and inspiration in the words becomes renewed and reinforced. In this sense the oral recitation of a text is a sacramental act."

Another occasion for reaching liberation, according to the same discourses, occurs when listening to someone else expounding the teachings. Other discourses indicate that the oral delivery of a discourse can also help the listener to overcome a physical disease. One such instance is the *Girimānanda-sutta*. According to the Pāli and Tibetan versions of this discourse, the Buddha had told Ānanda to recite a teaching on ten types of perception to a sick monk. The monk recovered from his illness while listening to this.⁵⁹ [17]

Such instances support the impression that recitation, whether performed by oneself or by another, served as a tool for meditation in early Buddhism.⁶⁰ A discourse in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* and its Chinese parallels make this point explicitly, as they advise to practise recitation to overcome sloth-and-torpor.⁶¹ According to the Pāli commentaries, recitation can not only act as an antidote to sloth-and-torpor, but can also help to overcome any type of unwholesome thought.⁶²

In this way, the early Buddhist oral tradition was not perceived only as a means to preserve texts, but also as an integral part of the practice of the path to liberation. In fact oral recitation continued for a considerable time even after the writing down of the texts and is to some degree still practised today, which shows that

⁵⁹ [66] AN 10.60 at AN V 112,16 and its Tibetan parallel, D 38 ka 279a1 or Q 754 tsi 295b6; cf. above p. 219 note 47.

⁶⁰ [70] Kwellā 1978: 173 reasons that "the texts repeat very often the same words ... the *citta* ... comes to the same subtle pictures ever and ever again ... a comparatively high concentration of the mind ... will be the ... result."

⁶¹ [71] AN 7.58 at AN IV 86,9: *yathāsutaṃ yathāpariyattaṃ dhammaṃ vitthārena sajjhāyaṃ kareyyāsi*, a recommendation which has counterparts in MĀ 83 at T I 559c13: 當隨本所聞法, 隨而受持廣布誦習 and in T 47 at T I 837a21: 聞法如所誦法, 廣當誦習.

⁶² [72] Ps II 91,4 recommends reciting with a loud voice to overcome unwholesome thoughts, *mahāsaddena sajjhāyitabbo*.

it serves a greater purpose than just ensuring the preservation of the texts.⁶³

Functional Aspects – The Reciters

With this range of purposes, it seems probable that oral recitation of at least some key texts would have been part of the general training of monks and nuns.⁶⁴ The commentaries explain that a monk who wishes to live a life of seclusion in the forest should memorize at least the code of rules (*pātimokkha*) and two or three recitation sections from a discourse collection.⁶⁵

Such ability is depicted in a passage that records the first meeting between the Buddha and the monk Soṇa Koṭikanna. During this meeting, the Buddha asked Soṇa to recite some teachings,⁶⁶ and Soṇa complied by reciting the sixteen discourses of the *Aṭṭhaka-vagga*, a collection now found in the *Sutta-nipāta*.⁶⁷ The narrative

⁶³ [73] Bechert 1992: 53: explains that the oral tradition continued to exist side by side with written scriptures for many centuries. Malalasekera 1928/1994: 46 notes that the "practice of learning up portions of the Scriptures continued ... for a very long time" even after they had been written down. This finds confirmation in the travel records by Fāxiān (法顯), who towards the end of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century searched in vain for *Vinaya* manuscripts all over India, as the material was still transmitted purely through oral means, T 2085 at T LI 864b18: 皆師師口傳, although, as pointed out by Demiéville 1951: 247 note 1, the lack of *Vinaya* manuscripts could also have been at least in part due to the intentionally restricted circulation of such material.

⁶⁴ [74] Cousins 1983: 5 explains that "every monk would need a stock of small pieces for chanting when visiting the sick or for recitation after receiving food."

⁶⁵ [75] Pj II 194,32: *pātimokkhaṃ dve tīṇi bhāṇavārasuttantāni ca paṇuṇaṃ katvā*, cf. also Collins 1992: 123.

⁶⁶ [76] Ud 5.6 at Ud 59,20: *paṭibhātu taṃ, bhikkhu, dhammaṃ bhāsituṃ* (following S^e; B^e and C^e read *dhammo* and E^e *paṭibhātu bhikkhūnaṃ*); cf. also Vin I 196,34.

⁶⁷ [77] Ud 5.6 at Ud 59,22: *soḷasa aṭṭhakavaggikāni sabbān' eva sarena abhaṇi*. On the texts that according to different *Vinayas* Soṇa recited cf. Lévi 1915.

setting conveys the impression that the Buddha, who had already been pleased by Soṇa's meditative conduct, wanted to see if Soṇa was also able to recite some section of the early Buddhist oral tradition, which would have been considered a complementary qualification of a well-trained monk. This particular incident is also noteworthy in so far as it portrays the Buddha as himself checking to see if oral recitation was correctly undertaken. [18]

Although every monastic disciple might have had to memorize some material, as the oral material grew in size, its preservation must have become an increasingly specialized and demanding task. The Pāli *Vinaya* reports that the reciter monks would sometimes pass the whole night busily reciting the discourses.⁶⁸ At times, the concern with oral recitation appears to have become excessive and the discourses consequently voice criticism of those who neglect seclusion for the sake of recitation.⁶⁹

The recitation of the early Buddhist texts is attributed not only to monks, but also to nuns. The Theravāda *Vinaya* records that the nuns Thullanandā and Bhaddā Kāpilānī were well-learned preachers and reciters.⁷⁰ In a similar vein, the *Dīvyāvadāna* refers to nuns

⁶⁸ [78] Vin I 169,6: *suttantikehi suttantaṃ saṅgāyantehi*, mentioned in addition to *dharmakathikehi dhammaṃ sākacchantehi*, discussion on the *Dhamma* by those who teach the *Dhamma*, and *vinayadharehi vinayaṃ vinicchinantehi*, investigation of *Vinaya* matters by the *Vinaya* specialists; this makes it clear that the first of these three refers to mere recitation of the texts.

⁶⁹ [79] AN 5.73 at AN III 86,25; cf. also AN 6.46 at AN III 355,6 on the conflict between the monks who emphasized theoretical learning and those who emphasized meditation and, for a study of this discourse, Cousins 2009.

⁷⁰ [80] Vin IV 254,4, Vin IV 255,4, Vin IV 256,23, Vin IV 285,18, Vin IV 290,4, Vin IV 292,14, and Vin IV 302,21 present the nun Thullanandā as *bahussutā bhāṇikā*, epithets accorded at Vin IV 290,6 and Vin IV 292,14 also to Bhaddā Kāpilānī. Skilling 2000: 61 note 43, however, suggests taking *bhāṇikā* not in the sense of "reciter", as the term with this meaning is found only in later texts, but in the sense of "eloquent".

who were knowledgeable in the *Tripitaka*,⁷¹ and the *Dīpavaṃsa* records that nuns in Ceylon were capable at reciting the *Vinaya*, the five *Nikāyas*, and the seven works of the Abhidharma.⁷²

In general, the oral transmission of the texts was probably the domain of the monastic disciples.⁷³ In fact, a regulation found in the different *Vinayas* prohibits a monk or a nun from teaching recitation "word by word" to someone who has not received full ordination.⁷⁴ This would prevent training the laity in recitation to such an extent that they could fully participate in the preservation of the texts.

⁷¹ [81] Cowell and Neil 1886: 493,8: *bhikṣuṇyas tripitā dhārmakathikā*; cf. also Skilling 2000: 62.

⁷² [82] *Dīp* verse 18.13, Oldenberg 1879: 97,6; cf. also Skilling 2000: 64.

⁷³ [83] Gombrich 1990: 25 explains that, although some lay people knew texts by heart, "only monks and nuns ... were so organized that they could hand them on to future generations."

⁷⁴ [84] These are the *pācittiya/pātayantika* rule no. 6 in the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 639a5, which prohibits "reciting together", 共誦者; rule no. 6 in the Mahāsāṅghika *Vinaya*, T 1425 at T XXII 336c20, which prohibits "teaching ... to speak the Dharma by sentence", 教 ... 說句法, which in the Sanskrit version, Tatia 1975: 19,16, reads: *padaśo dharmam vāceya*; rule no. 6 in the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 39c22, which prohibits "teaching ... to recite the discourse(s)", 教 ... 誦經; rule no. 6 in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1442 at T XXIII 771c22, which prohibits "teaching the Dharma in sentence and phrases by joint recitation", 同句讀誦教授法者, which in the Sanskrit version, Banerjee 1977: 32,11, reads: *padaśo dharmam vācayet* (the Tibetan version in Vidyabhusana 1915: 77,3 reads *tshig gis chos 'don na lhung byed do*); rule no. 6 in the Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, T 1435 at T XXIII 71a7, which prohibits "teaching the Dharma by way of sentence", 以句法教, which in the Sanskrit version, von Simson 2000: 205,3, reads: *padaśo dharmam vācayet*; and rule no. 4 in the Theravāda *Vinaya*, Vin IV 14,30, which enjoins that one should not "make recite the Dhamma sentence by sentence", *padaso dhammam vāceyya*; cf. also Norman and Pruitt 2001: 46,12. The background narration in the Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya* reports that the promulgation of this rule was occasioned by monks teaching recitation in the manner of brahmins, T 1428 at T XXII 638c22: 如婆羅門誦書聲無異, whereas according to

Another *Vinaya* ruling suggests that, nevertheless, the laity also memorized discourses. According to the Theravāda version of this rule, monks are allowed to forgo the travelling restrictions during the rains-retreat period for a variety of compelling reasons, one among them being that a lay disciple asks them to come in order to learn a discourse from him, lest it be lost.⁷⁵ The Sarvāstivāda *Vinaya* has preserved the narrative leading to the promulgation of this rule differently. According to its report, the reason was not that the monks should come to learn the discourse from the lay disciple, but rather that the lay disciple had forgotten a discourse and wanted the monks to come to teach it to him again.⁷⁶

Independent of which version of the story may appear more probable, it seems clear that, at least to some degree, householders were also held to have been involved in memorizing the discourses. An example for this would be the householder Citta, [19] who appears to have been well acquainted with the teachings. As part of a discussion with monks, he is on record for referring to the *Brahmajāla-sutta*,⁷⁷ suggesting his familiarity with this rather long discourse, and his knowledge of the teachings was reportedly such that at times monks found it difficult to reply to his

the Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya* the problem was that the monks who taught recitation came from different parts of the country and thus some did not recite the phrases correctly, T 1421 at T XXII 39c15: 誦讀經偈音句不正; cf. also Lévi 1915: 436f. Thus in these two *Vinayas* the basic issue at stake seems to be the same, even though they do not use the specification "word by word" in the actual rule. For a comparative study of the different *Vinaya* accounts of this rule cf. Lévi 1915: 422f and 436–441.

⁷⁵ [85] Vin I 140,36: *āgacchantu bhaddantā imaṃ suttantaṃ pariyāpuṇissanti pur' āyaṃ suttantaṃ palujjati.*

⁷⁶ [86] T 1435 at T XXIII 174b28: 若先學忘欲誦, 大德來教我受學讀誦問義.

⁷⁷ [87] SN 41.3 at SN IV 286,12. The parallel SĀ 570 at T II 151a12 differs, as according to its presentation he referred to the exposition of views without using the name of the discourse.

deep questions. In fact in some discourses times he takes his turn in teaching the Dharma to monks.⁷⁸ The list of eminent disciples in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* reckons him as chief among lay expounders of the Dharma.⁷⁹

Another prominent case is the laywoman Khujjuttarā, who according to the traditional account had memorized the whole of the *Itivuttaka* collection and thereby played a crucial role in preserving this collection for posterity. The Pāli commentary to this work explains that she passed the discourses she had memorized on to the nuns, who in turn passed them on to the monks.⁸⁰

A closer inspection of the *Itivuttaka* shows that its discourses are set apart from other discourses by their use of peculiar pericopes. Instead of beginning with "thus have I heard", *evaṃ me sutam*, discourses in the *Itivuttaka* begin with "this was said by the Blessed One, said by the arahant, so I have heard", *vuttaṃ h' etaṃ bhagavatā vuttaṃ arahatā ti me sutam*, a peculiarity also preserved in its Chinese counterpart.⁸¹

⁷⁸ [88] In SN 41.1 at SN IV 282,28 and its parallel SĀ 572 at T II 152a12, Citta gives an exposition on the topic of the fetters to a group of monks who had been unable to resolve a discussion on this issue. SN 41.5 at SN IV 292,1 and its parallel SĀ 566 at T II 149b14 report how Citta explained the meaning of a verse (found in Ud 7.5 at Ud 76,26) to a monk.

⁷⁹ [89] AN 1.14.6 at AN I 26,5: *etad aggaṃ mama sāvakānaṃ upāsakānaṃ dhammakathikānaṃ yadidaṃ citto gahapati*; whereas its counterpart EĀ 6.1 at T II 559c10 extols his superior wisdom, 智慧. Pāsādika 1972: 23 notes that Citta can be considered as a precursor to Vimalakīrti.

⁸⁰ [90] It-a 32,15. According to AN 1.14.7 at AN I 26,19, Khujjuttarā was outstanding for "having heard much", *bahussutā*; the listing of eminent disciples in EĀ 7.1 at T II 560b1 instead reckons her outstanding for her wisdom, 智慧; cf. also AN 2.12.4 at AN I 89,2, which presents Khujjuttarā as an exemplary lay disciple, worthy of being emulated by others.

⁸¹ [91] It 1.1 at It 1,4, with its counterpart in T 765 at T XVII 662b15: "from the Blessed One, I heard these words", 吾從世尊, 聞如是語.

Moreover, the conclusions of *Itivuttaka* discourses are also unique, as are its transitions from prose to verse.⁸²

This is noteworthy in so far as these peculiarities seem to have resisted the natural tendency of oral transmission to stereotype the introduction and conclusion of a discourse. The present example complements the above listed examples of pericope variations, where changes appear to have occurred at some point during oral transmission. In the case of the *Itivuttaka*, however, it seems as if its formal aspects are related to the nature of its first recipient(s) and would presumably have come into being not too long after their original delivery. These formal aspects were then apparently passed on unchanged for many generations of reciters to come, without being adapted to fit the form of other discourses. This reinforces the impression that some degree of formalization of the material for oral transmission would have taken place at a comparatively early stage. If the formalization of the discourses had been undertaken at a late point in time, one would expect the procedure used in the case of other discourses to have been applied similarly to the discourses in the *Itivuttaka*. [20]

Conclusion

The formal aspects of the Pāli discourses – the use of pericopes, the occurrence of metrical and sound similarities, the ap-

⁸² [92] The conclusion of a discourse, e.g., in It 1.1 at It 1,16, states that: "this meaning was also said by the Blessed One, so I have heard it", *ayam pi attho vutto bhagavatā, iti me sutam* (T 765 has not preserved a conclusion to its discourses). The pericope employed to lead over from the prose section to verse(s), e.g., in It 1.1 at It 1,8, reads: "this is the meaning of what the Blessed One said. In regard to this, it was said like this", *etam attham bhagavā avoca, tatth' etam iti vuccati*. The counterpart to this transition pericope in T 765 at T XVII 662b20 reads: "at that time the Blessed One, taking up this matter again, spoke in verse", 爾時世尊, 重攝此義, 而說頌曰.

plication of the principle of waxing syllables, and the recurrent use of repetition – testify to the oral nature of these discourses as the final product of a prolonged period of oral transmission. The present form of the Pāli discourses is clearly shaped by the exigencies of oral recitation, something to which the formulaic beginning of a discourse with the phrase *evaṃ me sutaṃ* explicitly draws attention.

Oral recitation in early Buddhism was not only considered a means for preserving texts for later generations. Oral group performance could become an expression of communal harmony, and individual recitation – besides its obvious public function for preaching purposes – appears to have been put to use privately as a tool for contemplation as well. Those involved in the oral transmission of the texts would have been predominantly monastic disciples, although lay followers also are on record for having memorized sections of the teachings and at times even for acting as teachers. In the case of Khujjuttarā, a female lay disciple apparently performed a rather crucial role in the transmission of a whole collection of discourses.

Early Buddhist Oral Tradition (3)

Introduction

In this chapter I continue to study the early Buddhist oral tradition, here in particular highlighting its potential vicissitudes in the way these can be identified through comparative study. My main aim is to document the contribution Chinese *Āgama* passages can offer for an alternative understanding, or even for a correction, of their Pāli counterparts. For this purpose I survey some passages from the *Madhyama-āgama* preserved in Chinese translation.¹ As a result of taking up examples from this collection, the present last chapter in this book in a way takes the function of leading over to my collected studies of *Madhyama-āgama* discourses (2012f).

The evidence I survey is quite variegated; some differences have considerable consequences for our understanding of early Buddhist thought, whereas others merely testify to the type of errors that tend to occur during oral transmission, similar to cases mentioned in the preceding chapter. When considered collectively, these instances make it in my view impossible, methodologically speaking, to consider the Pāli version as invariably the earliest and most trustworthy specimen of a particular discourse.² Instead,

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¹ This chapter was originally presented at a seminar on the *Madhyama-āgama* held at the Dharma Drum Institute of Liberal Arts in October 2015. It incorporates cases discussed in more detail in Anālayo 2011b; cf. also Anālayo 2005a and 2005b; for a survey of instances that corroborate the main point I make in this chapter cf. Bodhi 2012: 72–74.

² Here I am forced to disagree with von Hinüber 2015b: 198, who in reply to criticism I raised in Anālayo 2008d (of a hypothesis presented by von Hinüber

a proper appreciation of Buddhist thought and history makes a comparative study of all parallel versions indispensable. I believe that the selected *Madhyama-āgama* passages I present below suffice to bear out the methodological need to go beyond basing one's research on Pāli material only.³ Needless to say, the same holds even more so the other way round, in that a study of the Chinese *Āgamas* must take into consideration their Pāli parallels. [5] The fact that in this chapter I focus on the potential contribution of a Chinese *Āgama* to a study of the Pāli discourses is simply motivated by the circumstance that this potential is not as widely recognized as the help the Pāli texts offer for understanding and studying their Chinese parallels.

My presentation follows the sequence of the discourses in the *Madhyama-āgama* collection and thereby can also be read as a commentary alongside the translation of the collection that is at present under preparation.⁴ In the case of differences that I have already examined in detail elsewhere as part of a study of the respective discourse, I just summarize my findings and refer to those publications for further details.

2008a) argues that "concentration on the Theravāda tradition is neither a 'methodological problem' (p. 114) nor a 'methodological shortcoming' (p. 122), but a methodological necessity. Only the oldest levels of the Buddhist tradition we can reach might occasionally tell something about the very early history of Buddhism."

³ The decision to focus on *Madhyama-āgama* discourses simply reflects the topic of the seminar to which I contributed this study. The same potential exists for parallels preserved in the other *Āgamas*, in Indic language fragments, in Tibetan translation, etc. In fact von Hinüber 2015b: 197 note 4 refers to my study of the *Nandakovāda-sutta*, Anālayo 2010a, which clearly shows that the *Samyukta-āgama* parallel has preserved an earlier presentation than its Pāli counterpart; cf. also p. 553 note 157 below.

⁴ The first volume has already been published, Bingenheimer et al. 2013; the remainder has been translated and is being prepared for publication.

MĀ 9: The Seven Stages of Purification

The seven stages of purification are a central topic in the *Rathavinīta-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, where they form part of a discussion between the Buddha's chief disciple Sāriputta and another eminent disciple named Puṇṇa Mantāniputta. In the *Rathavinīta-sutta*, the question asked by Sāriputta to get the discussion started takes the following form:

Venerable friend, is the holy life lived under our Blessed One?⁵

The form this question takes is somewhat unexpected. It makes little sense for a Buddhist monk to ask another Buddhist monk whether the holy life or *brahmacariya*, a standard reference to the monastic life, is being lived under the Buddha. The *Madhyama-āgama* version of the question, with which Sāriputta begins the discussion, reads as follows:

Venerable friend, are you practising the holy life under the recluse Gotama?⁶ [6]

Although the question in the *Madhyama-āgama* version as such reads more meaningfully, it is unusual for a disciple of the Buddha to be depicted as referring to his teacher as "the recluse Gotama". In such contexts in the early discourses the respectful expression *bhagavant* would be the appropriate form of reference. That the expression found in the *Madhyama-āgama* version is not simply the result of an error by the translator can be seen from another parallel preserved in Sanskrit fragments, which contains the word "recluse", *śramaṇa*, in a context paralleling one of Sāri-

⁵ MN 24 at MN I 147,16: *bhagavati no, āvuso, brahmacariyaṃ vussaṭi ti?*

⁶ MĀ 9 at T I 430b26: 賢者從沙門瞿曇修梵行耶? This question has already been translated by Minh Chau 1964/1991: 144, without discussing this indeed very minor difference in formulation from MN 24.

putta's questions about the purpose of the holy life under the Buddha.⁷

Close inspection of the narrative setting indicates that this is more likely to be the original reading. The parallel versions agree in reporting that Puṇṇā was surprised to find out, at the end of their discussion, that the person with whom he had been conversing was the Buddha's chief disciple Sāriputta. This part reads as follows in the *Madhyama-āgama* version:

Now I have been discussing with a disciple of the Blessed One without knowing it, I have been discussing with the second most respected one without knowing it,⁸ I have been dis-

⁷ SHT VI 1329 B1, Bechert and Wille 1989: 84 (identified by J. Chung and M. Schmidt in Bechert and Wille 2000: 201). The version of the question in EĀ 39.10 at T II 734b18 instead employs the expression "Blessed One"; also here Sāriputta addresses Mantāniputta by his name. This does not seem a particularly meaningful presentation, because later the same discourse reports that, at the end of their discussion, Sāriputta asked for Mantāniputta's name, EĀ 39.10 at T II 735a19: 汝今為名何等? (a query also reported in the parallels). This shows that the wording of the passage at T II 734b18 is not reliable, as it conflicts with the remainder of the same discourse.

⁸ In MN 24 at MN I 150,27 Puṇṇa calls Sāriputta "the disciple who is comparable to the teacher", *sattukappa sāvaka*. Although this does involve high praise, it does not put him on the same level as the Buddha; Sāriputta remains merely a disciple. This conforms to the way he is presented in other early discourses, *pace* Karashima 2015a: 186f, who proposes that "in the *Suttanipāta* ... disciples, such as Sāriputta/Śāriputra, are designated as *buddhas*. Śākyamuni proclaimed that anybody, who follows his teachings and his practices together with its mode of living, can become a *buddha*", and then states that "much later ... the hierarchy of lay Buddhists, disciples, *pratyekabuddhas* and Śākyamuni Buddha was formed." Karashima does not provide a more specific reference and I have not been able to identify a passage in the *Suttanipāta* that presents Sāriputta as a Buddha or even as completely on a par with the Buddha. In fact, whereas the hierarchy mentioned by Karashima is consistently reflected in the early discourses extant from various transmission lineages, the idea of be-

cussing with the general of the Dharma without knowing it, [7] I have been discussing with the disciple who keeps the wheel of Dharma rolling without knowing it. If I had known this was the venerable Sāriputta, I would not have been able to say a single sentence in reply, let alone discuss in such depth.⁹

Another point relevant to the narrative background against which the above episode is probably best read emerges from an episode found in the different *Vinayas*, according to which the typical Buddhist way of sewing up robes would have been decided only at an already somewhat evolved stage in the development of Buddhist monasticism.¹⁰ Considering the present discourse from the viewpoint of this depiction, it would follow that during earlier times members of the monastic community would presumably not have been easily recognizable by their outer appearance as Buddhist monks, in that they would supposedly have dressed in the way used in general among recluses and wanderers roaming the Ganges valley. The appropriateness of such a reading can be seen from yet another episode found in the *Mūlasarvāsti-*

coming a Buddha is clearly a later development; cf. in more detail *Anālayo* 2010b.

⁹ MĀ 9 at T I 431b27 to 431c1. The parallel passages are MN 24 at MN I 150,27 and EĀ 39.10 at T II 735b1; cf. also SHT II 163b R6, Waldschmidt et al. 1968: 16.

¹⁰ According to the episode in question, the Buddha told Ānanda that from now on the robes should be sewn together conforming to the pattern of paddy fields; cf. the *Dharmaguptaka Vinaya*, T 1428 at T XXII 855a20, the *Mahāsāṅghika Vinaya*, T 1425 at T XXII 454c27 (where the instruction is given not to Ānanda, but to unnamed monks), the *Mahīśāsaka Vinaya*, T 1421 at T XXII 137a22, the *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*, Dutt 1984b: 50,11, the *Sarvāstivāda Vinaya*, T 1435 at T XXIII 194c25, and the *Theravāda Vinaya*, Vin I 287,7. As Ānanda is on record for becoming the Buddha's personal attendant only about twenty years after the Buddha's awakening (cf. Th 1041ff), it would follow that the regulation concerning the way to sew Buddhist robes should not be reckoned as belonging to an early stage in the history of the Buddhist monastic order.

vāda and Sarvāstivāda *Vinayas*, according to which King Bimbisāra worshipped a heterodox practitioner, mistaking him to be a Buddhist monk.¹¹ [8]

If the same perspective should hold for the narrative setting of the *Rathavinīta-sutta*, it would follow that Sāriputta can be visualized as someone who need not have been immediately recognizable as a Buddhist monk. On this assumption, in order not to reveal his identity prematurely by betraying that he is a disciple of the Buddha, it would indeed make sense for Sāriputta to be shown as using the expression "the recluse Gotama".¹² If this should indeed be the more original formulation, it could easily have happened, in the course of transmission, that the apparent inappropriateness of Sāriputta using such an expression resulted in it being replaced by the term *bhagavant*.

This in itself minor variation carries further significance, since the narrative context to which it points also makes it fairly probable that the topic of discussion chosen by Sāriputta would have been one of general interest among ancient Indian wanderers and recluses. Had he been shown instead to broach a topic characteristic of Buddhist thought, then in the narrative setting of the discourse this would have also run the risk of prematurely revealing his identity as a disciple of the Buddha.

Now the main doctrinal topic of the *Rathavinīta-sutta*, the seven stages of purification, occurs in fact only in this discourse and its parallels, and as part of a set of nine purifications in the *Dasuttara-sutta* and its parallels.¹³ Only with the *Visuddhimagga* do the seven stages of purification come to the foreground as the chief framework for progress on the path.

¹¹ Cf. Dutt 1984b: 49,3 and T 1435 at T XXIII 194c12.

¹² Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2012g: 70–77.

¹³ DN 34 at DN III 288,16 and its parallels in Sanskrit fragments, Schlingloff 1962: 18, DĀ 10 at T I 56a23, and T 13 at T I 238c25.

In the *Rathavinīta-sutta* and in the *Dasuttara-sutta* the seven stages lead up to liberation, but do not include liberation itself. Liberation instead constitutes a separate stage of purification mentioned only in the *Dasuttara-sutta*, placed after the set of seven stages.^[9]

Yet in his *Visuddhimagga* Buddhaghosa assigns the four levels of awakening to the seventh purification.¹⁴ This does not square with the implications of the seventh purification either in the

¹⁴ Vism 672,4: *sotāpattimaggo sakadāgāmimaggo anāgāmimaggo arahattamaggo ti imesu pana catusu maggesu ñāṇaṃ ñāṇadassanavisuddhi nāma*; cf. in more detail Anālayo 2005c and 2009g: 8–11. In reply to my suggestions in these two papers, Endo 2015: 55 argues that the circumstance that the discussion in MN 24 was not reported to the Buddha implies that "the topic of the seven stages of purification was a well-known subject among the Buddhists in ancient times." Yet the reporting of a discussion to the Buddha usually happens when a disciple is uncertain whether he or she has represented the Buddha's position correctly in a debate-type situation. This is not the case in the present instance. Endo 2015: 68 also comments that "the scheme of 'seven stages of purification', it is contended, was commonly practiced and aspired to among the various contemplative and philosophical traditions in ancient India. But this contention does not supply the reason why the Buddhists *should* adopt this scheme." In Anālayo 2009g I suggested that the reason for adoption of the scheme could be related to Buddhaghosa's compilation of the *Visuddhimagga* in competition with the *Vimuttimagga*. Endo 2015: 70 also argues that it can "be inferred that Buddhaghosa did *not* adopt the scheme of sevenfold purification (*satta-visuddhi*) as the structural scaffolding of the *Visuddhimagga*, but that by reducing and incorporating the last two items of '*paññā*' and '*vimutti*' of the 'nine factors of exertion for purity' (*nava pārisuddhi-padhāniyaṅga*) into the category of '*ñāṇadassana*' ... the list of purifications finally *became* 'seven' in the *Visuddhimagga*." This suggestion does not seem to work, as the terminology used by Buddhaghosa corresponds to the *visuddhi* terminology in MN 24, not to the expression *pārisuddhi-padhāniyaṅga* used in DN 34. Moreover, Endo's suggestion does not solve the problem, since Buddhaghosa does include under the seventh purification what does not belong there, whether this seventh purification is taken from the scheme in MN 24 or from the scheme in DN 34.

Rathavinīta-sutta or in the *Dasuttara-sutta*, where the seventh stage leads up to but differs from arrival at the final goal. This in turn gives the impression that even Buddhaghosa himself was not sufficiently familiar with the significance of the seven stages of purification.¹⁵ In this way, an in itself rather minor difference in the *Madhyama-āgama* version provides a significant perspective on the main teaching in the *Rathavinīta-sutta*, which acquired a position of central importance in later Theravāda exegesis. [10]

MĀ 15: Karma and Its Fruit

A topic closely related to the theme of purification is karma. The *Karajakāya-sutta* among the Tens of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* begins broaching this topic with a statement on karma that reflects Jain thought,¹⁶ a statement not found in its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel and presumably the result of an error in transmission.¹⁷ The *Karajakāya-sutta* also appears to have lost an exposition of the ten unwholesome courses of action, found in the *Madhyama-āgama* par-

¹⁵ The present case would conform to a pattern noted by von Hinüber 2015a: 354 in regard to the commentators Buddhaghosa and Dhammapāla, who "did not always work with the same care and concentration. Consequently, oversights and weakness in systematization help to trace the material they had at hand, and to detect their method of approach."

¹⁶ AN 10.208 at AN V 299,14: *na tvevāhaṃ, bhikkhave, sañcetanikānaṃ kam-mānaṃ katānaṃ upacitānaṃ appaṭisaṃveditvā* (B^c: *appaṭisaṃveditvā dukkhass'antakiriyaṃ vadāmi*; "yet, monks, I do not say that there is a making of an end of *dukkha* without having experienced [the fruits of] intentional deeds that have been undertaken and accumulated." According to, e.g., the Jain *Dasaveyāliya-sutta*, Lalwani 1973a: 212,1, liberation will be attained only when one's former bad deeds have been experienced, wherefore it is impossible to reach liberation without karmic retribution being either experienced or else expiated through asceticism.

¹⁷ MĀ 15 at T I 437b27 instead points out that unintentionally performed deeds do not entail karmic retribution; cf. also D 4094 *ju* 236b3 or Q 5595 *tu* 270a5.

allel, which would have originally led to its inclusion among the Tens of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*. Clearly the *Karajakāya-sutta* has suffered from errors during its transmission that can be corrected by recourse to its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel (as well as a parallel in the *Abhidharmakośopāyikā-ṭīkā*).¹⁸

MĀ 16: The Kālāmas and Doubt

According to another discourse in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, the Buddha told the Kālāmas that it is appropriate for them to have doubts about various views. In the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, however, he rather told them not to have doubts.¹⁹

Although in this case it is not easy to decide which of the two versions has preserved the earlier reading, the difference is significant in so far as the advice to the Kālāmas given in the Pāli version is not supported by its parallel and thus its claim to represent early Buddhist thought does not stand on as firm a ground as it would have if the same position had also been reflected in its parallel.²⁰ [11] In other words, discussions of the advice to the Kālāmas need to keep in mind the possibility that the Pāli version could be the result of a change that occurred during transmission and that its testimony regarding the early Buddhist attitude towards free enquiry and the resolution of doubt is comparatively less certain than other discourses on this topic that are supported by their parallels.

¹⁸ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2009e and Martini 2012.

¹⁹ AN 3.65 at AN I 189,6 and MĀ 16 at T I 438c12; the same type of difference recurs between SN 42.13 at SN IV 350,15 and MĀ 20 at T I 447a22.

²⁰ According to Bodhi 2012: 73f, "in contemporary Buddhist circles it has become almost *de rigueur* to regard the Kālāma Sutta as *the* essential Buddhist text ... held up as proof that the Buddha anticipated Western empiricism, free inquiry, and the scientific method, that he endorsed the personal determination of truth ... it has become one of the most commonly quoted Buddhist texts, offered as the key to convince those with modernist leanings that the Buddha was their forerunner."

MĀ 19: A Critique of the Jains

Returning to the topic of the Jains, a minor difference between a Pāli discourse and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel that is also related to Jain thought can be found in the case of the *Devadaha-sutta* and its parallel, which report the Buddha examining the fruitlessness of Jain asceticism. In the Pāli version the Buddha announces ten grounds for censuring the Jains.²¹ Following this announcement, however, he specifies only five. These are that pain may be caused by:

- one's former deeds (1),
- a creator god (2),
- the company one keeps (3),
- one's type of life form (4),
- one's present practice (5).

In each of these five cases the Jains are to be censured for experiencing such pain. [12] Then the Buddha points out that even in the absence of each of these five, the Jains are to be censured. Yet the absence of these five does not provide any real ground for censure, let alone five more grounds. Thus the exposition does not contain what the initial announcement promises.

In the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel the exposition of grounds for censure works through a similar set of five topics, although in a different sequence. Here, too, the Jains are to be censured for their experience of pain, if this experience is attributable to:

- former deeds (1),
- the company one keeps (2),
- one's destiny (3),
- one's view (4),
- a supreme god (5).

²¹ MN 101 at MN II 222,2: *dasa sahadhammikā vādānūvādā*; on the expression *sahadhammiko vādānūvādo* cf. also Alsdorf 1959.

In the *Madhyama-āgama* version this exposition does not result in an internal inconsistency, however, as here the Buddha announces at the outset that he will deliver five grounds for criticism.²²

This gives the impression that an error in textual transmission has affected the *Devadaha-sutta*, resulting in the incorrect count of ten grounds for criticism. Recourse to the *Madhyama-āgama* version helps to clarify this situation.

MĀ 29: Right View and the End of *dukkha*

Moving from the fruitlessness of Jain asceticism to the fruits of the Buddhist path, the *Sammādiṭṭhi-sutta* concludes expositions of arrival at right view, a reference to stream-entry, by mentioning the making of an end of *dukkha*.²³ This statement seems out of context, since to make an end of *dukkha* represents full awakening. [13]

The *Sammādiṭṭhi-sutta* follows each reference to making an end of *dukkha* by declaring that "to that extent", *ettāvatā*, a noble disciple is endowed with right view and has gained perfect confidence in the teaching. Such right view and perfect confidence are already gained with stream-entry, at which stage the making of an end of *dukkha* is yet to be accomplished. Hence the expression "to

²² MĀ 19 at T I 443c18: 得五詰責.

²³ MN 9 at MN I 47,22: *so sabbaso rāgānusoṃsaṃ pahāya paṭighānusoṃsaṃ paṭi-vinodetvā asmī ti diṭṭhimānānusoṃsaṃ samūhanitvā avijjāṃ pahāya vijjāṃ up-pādetvā diṭṭhe va dhamme dukkhass'antakaro* (C^o: *antaṅkaro*) *hoti. ettāvatā pi kho, āvuso, ariyasāvako sammādiṭṭhi hoti*; "by completely abandoning the underlying tendency to lust, having abolished the underlying tendency to irritation, having exterminated the underlying tendency to the conceited view 'I am', abandoning ignorance and having given rise to knowledge, he here and now is one who makes an end of *dukkha*; to that extent, friend, a noble disciple is of right view." This formulation continues for subsequent expositions of right view in the discourse.

that extent" does not tally with the content of the passage to which it refers.²⁴

The *Madhyama-āgama* version and other parallels, however, describe right view without any comparable statement regarding the overcoming of *dukkha*,²⁵ making it safe to conclude that the passage in the *Sammādiṭṭhi-sutta* is the result of an error in transmission.

MĀ 32: The Bodhisattva Already Supreme at Birth

Shifting from the right view gained with stream-entry to qualities of the Buddha, the *Acchariyabbhutadhamma-sutta* presents a listing of the Buddha's marvellous qualities, one of which is that the Buddha-to-be, right after being born, made the following proclamation:

I am highest in the world, I am best in the world, I am supreme in the world, ^[14] this is my last birth, there will be no more renewed becoming.²⁶

For the bodhisattva Gotama to make such a proclamation right after his birth implies that he was inevitably destined to awakening, that his struggle to reach awakening by various methods was anyway destined to be successful. This is the case to such an extent that already as a baby he can proclaim to have reached the transcendence of future birth that is reached when full awakening is attained.²⁷

²⁴ Ps I 197,24 records a discussion between the rehearsing monks on the significance of the present passage. Evidently they also had difficulties reconciling the statements made in this passage with the main theme of the discourse.

²⁵ MĀ 29 at T I 461c8 and its parallels S 474 folio 16R7, Tripāṭhī 1962: 51, and SĀ 344 at T II 94b24; cf. also Anālayo 2011e: 20.

²⁶ MN 123 at MN III 123,21: *aggo'ham asmi lokassa, seṭṭho'ham asmi lokassa, jeṭṭho'ham asmi lokassa* (B^e and S^e have the last two in the opposite sequence), *ayam antimā jāti, natthi dāni punabbhavo ti*.

²⁷ Silk 2003: 864 points out that, according to this proclamation of supremacy, the bodhisattva "is virtually fully awakened ('enlightened') from the moment

This passage reflects a mature stage in the apotheosis of the Buddha, whereby the qualities that according to other discourses were the outcome of his struggle for awakening came to be considered as already in his possession at the time when he was born.

No such proclamation is recorded in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, confirming the impression that the above passage in the Pāli version reflects distinctly late developments.²⁸ Nevertheless, the *Madhyama-āgama* version also offers a distinctly late indication, which comes at the outset of the listing of marvellous qualities of the Buddha. This reads as follows:

The Blessed One, at the time of the Buddha Kassapa, made his initial vow to realize Buddhahood.²⁹

No such statement is found in the *Acchariyabbhutadhamma-sutta*.^[15] Together with the apotheosis of the Buddha-to-be evident in the Pāli version, this evidently late statement in the *Madhyama-āgama* about a time in the past when the future Buddha Gotama presumably took the vow to attain Buddhahood can be seen to reflect the beginnings of what was to become the bodhisattva ideal.³⁰

Even though my survey in this chapter focuses on cases where the *Madhyama-āgama* version provides significant indications regarding its Pāli counterpart, the present case reflects the fact, al-

of his birth", highlighting the resulting contrast where "the infant, upon his birth, knows everything; the young man he becomes knows nothing."

²⁸ As already noted by Nakamura 1980/1999: 18, "the verse claimed to have been proclaimed by the Buddha at his birth was composed very late."

²⁹ MĀ 32 at T I 469c24: 世尊迦葉佛時始願佛道. Minh Chau 1964/1991: 160f has already translated this passage and also summarized the statement quoted above from MN 123. In his comparison he mentions, in relation to the first, that this vow is usually associated with Dīpaṅkara Buddha. In relation to the second, he notes that the Pāli version additionally mentions that the bodhisattva stood on his own feet and faced north.

³⁰ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2010b.

ready mentioned in the introduction, that the same potential certainly applies the other way around, in that the Pāli discourses often offer significant indications regarding their *Āgama* parallels. In fact the *Madhyama-āgama* contains some distinctly late discourses that have no Pāli parallel.

One example is a discourse that works through a series of topics that form the scaffolding of the *Dharmaskandha*.³¹ Yet another example is the last discourse in the collection. This could only have come into being in the written medium, since giving the full texts of all of its abbreviations would make it longer than the remainder of the *Madhyama-āgama* collection.³² Still another example is a listing of noble beings that refers to an arahant who can fall away from his attainment, a notion that reflects a school-specific development in the conception of what becoming an arahant implies.³³

MĀ 34: Acela Kassapa's Repeated Going Forth

The conception of an arahant is also the topic of my next example from the *Bakkula-sutta*, which reports that the marvellous qualities of the monk Bakkula inspired the ascetic Acela Kassapa to go forth.³⁴ [16] Having gone forth he in due course became an arahant. The *Madhyama-āgama* parallel does not give the name of Bakkula's visitor and, even though he clearly was delighted on

³¹ MĀ 86 at T I 562a19; cf. Watanabe 1983/1996: 54 and Anālayo 2014c: 41–44. Incidentally this discourse and MĀ 127 are strong indicators for the school affiliation of the *Madhyama-āgama*, on which cf. also Anālayo 2008g: 7, 2012f: 516–521 (in reply to Chung and Fukita 2011) and 2017c (in reply to Chung 2015 and 2017).

³² MĀ 222 at T I 805c10; cf. Anālayo 2014c: 44–47.

³³ MĀ 127 at T I 616a18; for the counterpart expression in a quotation of this discourse in the *Abhidharmakośavyākhyā* cf. Wogihara 1936: 566,34.

³⁴ MN 124 at MN III 127,14.

hearing about the marvellous qualities of Bakkula, he did not go forth, nor is there any indication that he reached any level of awakening.³⁵

Such variations regarding the effect of a discourse on its listeners are a recurrent feature that emerges from comparative studies of parallel versions. What makes this case of particular interest is the circumstance that Acela Kassapa's going forth recurs in other Pāli discourses. A discourse in the *Dīgha-nikāya* reports that Acela Kassapa went forth after hearing a discourse by the Buddha on asceticism.³⁶ In this case the *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel agrees that Acela Kassapa went forth.³⁷ According to both versions, after going forth he became an arahant.

A discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya* also reports that Acela Kassapa went forth and eventually became an arahant, this time after hearing a different discourse by the Buddha on the topic of what causes pleasure and pain.³⁸ According to three parallels to this discourse, however, Acela Kassapa instead attained stream-entry during the discourse, did not go forth, and was soon after killed by a cow.³⁹

In another discourse in the same *Samyutta-nikāya* Acela Kassapa once more goes forth and eventually becomes an arahant, this time after being inspired by a meeting with the householder

³⁵ MĀ 34 at T I 475c13 just reports that he rejoiced together with the monks who were present. Minh Chau 1964/1991: 75 already noted that only the Pāli version reports his going forth and attaining of arahantship.

³⁶ DN 8 at DN I 176,29.

³⁷ DĀ 25 at T I 104c11, which at T I 102c26 introduces him as 俱形梵志姓迦葉; listed in Akanuma 1930/1994: 4 as corresponding to the name Acela Kassapa.

³⁸ SN 12.17 at SN II 21,26.

³⁹ SĀ 302 at T II 86b3, T 499 at T XIV 768c20, and fragment S 474 folio 14R2, Tripāṭhī 1962: 47; cf. also SHT V 1133a A3, Sander and Waldschmidt 1985: 128.

Citta.⁴⁰ [17] A parallel in the *Samyukta-āgama* reports the same happy outcome, with the difference that it does not provide the name of the one who was so inspired by the householder Citta as to go forth as a Buddhist monk.⁴¹

In sum, according to the Pāli discourses Acela Kassapa went forth and became an arahant on these four occasions:

- DN 8 after meeting the Buddha (discourse on asceticism),
- MN 124 after meeting Bakkula,
- SN 12.7 after meeting the Buddha (discourse on pleasure etc.),
- SN 41.9 after meeting Citta.

Although the same person can go forth on several occasions, it would not be possible for the same person to become an arahant each time.⁴² Nor does it seem particularly probable that four different persons by the same name of Acela Kassapa went forth and became arahants. This makes it possible that Acela Kassapa's going forth in the *Bakkula-sutta* is a case of integrating material that stems from an originally different context. Judging from the situation in the Chinese *Āgama* parallels, the *Dīgha-nikāya* discourse in which he gets to hear a discourse from the Buddha about asceticism could well have been the place of origin of the depiction of his going forth and eventual attainment of full awakening.

MĀ 59: The Marks of a Buddha

Another *Dīgha-nikāya* discourse, the *Lakkhaṇa-sutta*, lists the thirty-two marks that adorn the body of a *mahāpurisa* and then proclaims that one endowed with these marks will become either

⁴⁰ SN 41.9 at SN IV 302,9; von Hinüber 1997: 68 already noted this instance and MN 124 as separate occasions where Acela Kassapa is on record for having gone forth.

⁴¹ SĀ 573 at T II 152b24.

⁴² In fact Malalasekera 1937/1995: 26 finds it difficult to reconcile the different reports of Acela Kassapa's going forth.

a wheel-turning king or a Buddha. ^[18] The *Madhyama-āgama* parallel concludes after a similar exposition.⁴³ The *Lakkhaṇa-sutta*, however, continues with a detailed exposition of what karmic deeds done in the past will lead to a particular mark and in what way these karmic deeds relate to qualities of a wheel-turning king or a Buddha. This exposition appears to be a commentarial type of presentation that has become part of the Pāli discourse.⁴⁴

MĀ 70: The Future Buddha Maitreya

Proceeding from the past of the Buddha Gotama to the future, the advent of the next Buddha Maitreya is not reported at all in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Cakkavatti-(sīhanāda-)sutta*.⁴⁵ A closer study of the narrative context makes it safe to conclude that the motif of the future Buddha is a later addition.⁴⁶

MĀ 79: The Radiance of *devas*

Moving from Buddhas to *devas*, the *Anuruddha-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel illustrate the radiance of a congregation of *devas* with the example of several lamps that have been brought into a room, as a result of which their radiance becomes unified and it is no longer possible to distinguish the individual radiance of each lamp.

⁴³ MĀ 59 at T I 494b6, corresponding to DN 30 at DN III 145,17.

⁴⁴ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2017a: 107ff.

⁴⁵ DN 26 at DN III 76,1 (cf. also DĀ 6 at T I 41c29); for the description of the future wheel-turning king under whose reign in DN 26 the arising of the next Buddha takes place cf. MĀ 70 at T I 524b29. The absence of any such reference in MĀ 70 has already been noted by Karashima et al. 2000: 310f note 121 (cf. Karashima 2013: 178; owing to my ignorance of Japanese I am not able to consult Karashima et al. 2000). The addition of *sīhanāda* to the title is not found in the Asian editions.

⁴⁶ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2010b: 107–113 and above p. 349ff.

When the *devas* disperse again, however, their individual radiance can be recognized. [19] To illustrate this, the *Anuruddha-sutta* describes removing the lamps from the house in which they had been placed.⁴⁷ This illustration seems to be slightly incomplete. Although removing the lamps would indeed stop the merging of their radiance, one would expect some additional specification in the simile to illustrate the radiance of individual *devas*.

The *Madhyama-āgama* parallel furnishes such additional information. It describes that, after being removed from the room in which they had been together, the lamps are put into separate rooms.⁴⁸ This helps to appreciate the point the simile is meant to illustrate.

MĀ 85: The Conceit of Being from a High Family

Another difference of similarly minor significance can be seen in the *Sappurisa-sutta*, which in agreement with its parallels examines various occasions for the arising of conceit. The first such occasion in the parallel versions concerns someone who comes from a high-ranking family.⁴⁹ This seems indeed a potential source of conceit, particularly in the hierarchical society in ancient India.

The *Sappurisa-sutta* covers the same topic in four different ways, all of which in one way or another refer to a superior type of family. Each of these receives a separate and full treatment as a distinct occasion for conceit. The four are:

- the *uccākula*, the "high family",
- the *mahākula*, the "great family",
- the *mahābhogakula*, "the family of great wealth", [20]

⁴⁷ MN 127 at MN III 148,5: *seyyathāpi, gahapati, puriso tāni sambahulāni telappadīpāni tamhā gharā nīhareyya*.

⁴⁸ MĀ 79 at T I 550b15: 猶如有人從一室中出眾多燈, 分著諸室。

⁴⁹ MĀ 85 at T I 561a26: 豪貴族, T 48 at T I 837c29: 大姓, and EĀ 17.9 at T II 585a23: 豪族。

- the *ulārabhogakula*, "the family of outstanding wealth".⁵⁰

Although there could indeed be a difference between a family of high social standing and a family that has much wealth, the four types of family described in the *Sappurisa-sutta* do not seem to result in four distinct occasions for the arising of conceit.

The *Madhyama-āgama* parallel as well as other parallels have only a single reference to conceit based on one's family, after which they continue with quite different qualities that could arouse conceit. This suggests that perhaps during the course of oral transmission this part of the *Sappurisa-sutta* underwent expansion through attracting synonyms. Eventually these synonyms would have become independent qualities, resulting in its present listing of four types of family.

MĀ 97: The Three Types of Craving

Shifting from conceit to craving, the *Mahānidāna-sutta* refers to three types of craving: craving for sensual pleasures, craving for becoming, and craving for non-becoming, *kāmatanḥā*, *bhava-tanḥā*, and *vibhava-tanḥā*. In its ensuing exposition it then refers back to "those two states", *ime dve dhammā*.⁵¹ This reference is puzzling. The commentary understands this to refer to the difference between primordial craving and craving arisen during action.⁵²

A similar reference to two dhammas occurs also in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, with the decisive difference that here this reference is preceded by indeed mentioning only two types of

⁵⁰ MN 113 at MN III 37,15.

⁵¹ DN 15 at DN II 61,33: *ime dve dhammā dvayena vedanāya ekasamosaraṇā bhavanti*. Rhys Davids 1910: 58 translated this as "these two aspects [of craving] from being dual become united through the sensation" and Walshe 1987: 225 as "these two things become united in one by feeling."

⁵² Sv II 500,18: *ime dve dhammā ti vaṭṭamūlataṇhā ca samudācārataṇhā cā ti*.

craving, [21] craving for sensual pleasures and for becoming.⁵³ Two further parallels preserved in Chinese agree with the *Madhyama-āgama*, in that they speak of two types of craving, namely for sensual pleasure and for becoming, and then refer back to these as "two states".⁵⁴ Sanskrit fragment parallels have also preserved references to the two types of craving or else to the two dharmas.⁵⁵

This reflects a recurrent difference between Pāli (and *Dīrgha-āgama*) discourses on the one hand and *Madhyama-āgama* (and *Samyukta-āgama*) discourses on the other hand.⁵⁶ The fact that in the present context the Pāli version has preserved a reference to two states would lend support to the hypothesis that this passage originally only mentioned two types of craving. If that should indeed be the case, then the idea of craving for non-becoming would be a later addition at least in the case of this discourse.⁵⁷ [22]

⁵³ MĀ 97 at T I 579b22: 欲愛及有愛, 此二法因覺; this case has already been noted by Choong 2000: 166 note 78.

⁵⁴ T 14 at T I 243a19: 欲愛亦有愛, 是二皆痛相會 and T 52 at T I 845a9: 欲愛, 有愛, 由此二法生諸過失. Another parallel in DĀ 13 at T I 61a22 just refers to craving at the present juncture, although at an earlier point at T I 60c13 it does mention three types of craving: 欲愛, 有愛, 無有愛者.

⁵⁵ SHT III 822R7f, Waldschmidt et al. 1971: 40: *dve ānanda trṣṇe, kāmatr[ṣṇ]ā bhavatrṣṇā ca* (identified as a parallel to DN 15 by Tang Huyen in Bechert and Wille 1995: 268) and Or 15009/140Ar3, Kudo 2009: 191: *dvau dharmau dvayena vedanā*.

⁵⁶ In regard to a reference to the three types of craving in EĀ 49.5 at T II 797c8: 欲愛, 有愛, 無有愛, it needs to be kept in mind that this discourse appears to be the result of a reworking of parts of the *Ekottarika-āgama* collection in China; cf. Anālayo 2014/2015: 65. This makes it uncertain whether a reference to three types of craving was already present in the Indic original of the collection.

⁵⁷ The suggestion by Choong 2016: 37 note 19 that variations between listings of either two or three types of craving imply that both are late, in that "this implies that in early Buddhism craving may have meant simply craving for the six sense objects" is unconvincing. Variations like the one observed in the

MĀ 98: The Four Noble Truths and *Satipaṭṭhāna*

According to the teaching of the four noble truths, craving is the chief culprit for the arising of *dukkha*. The exposition of contemplation of dhammas in the *Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* has a long exposition on these four noble truths, a topic not found at all in its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel.⁵⁸ The same holds for a parallel in the *Ekottarika-āgama*; in fact even the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya*, otherwise similar, only has a short reference to the four noble truths.⁵⁹ This makes it safe to conclude that the long exposition in the *Dīgha-nikāya* discourse reflects a later development.⁶⁰

MĀ 101: Thought Control and Awakening

Proceeding from *satipaṭṭhāna* to thoughts, early Buddhist meditative theory recognizes a variety of unwholesome thoughts that need to be overcome in order to progress to awakening. For the purpose of dealing with such types of thought, the *Vitakkasaṇṭhāna-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel describe five methods that are to be employed in order to prevent unwholesome thoughts from remaining in the mind. This exposition being completed, the *Vitakkasaṇṭhāna-sutta* concludes its presentation with the following statement:

Whatever thought he will wish, that thought he will think;
whatever thought he will not wish, that thought he will not think.

present instance point to the possibility of a gradual evolution from two to three cravings; they do not imply that both are late.

⁵⁸ DN 22 at DN II 304,22 to 313,27 and MĀ 98 at T I 584a14 (here and below for EĀ 12.1, the reference is to the beginning of the exposition of contemplation of dhammas).

⁵⁹ EĀ 12.1 at T II 569a18 and MN 10 at MN I 62,21 to 62,24.

⁶⁰ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2014c: 91–100.

He has cut off craving, done away with the fetters, and made an end of *dukkha* through rightly comprehending conceit.⁶¹ [23]

This reads as if mere control of one's thoughts results in full awakening. Such a conclusion is not easily reconciled with what other early Buddhist discourses indicate regarding requirements for progress to full awakening. The corresponding passage in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel proceeds as follows:

He thinks what he wishes to think and does not think what he does not [wish] to think. If a monk thinks what he wishes to think and does not think what he does not wish to think, then such a monk is reckoned as thinking according to his intentions and as having mastery over the courses of thought.⁶²

With this the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse concludes. The absence of any reference to making an end of *dukkha* is certainly more pertinent to the context. In fact closer inspection shows that in the *Vitakkasaṇḥāna-sutta* the making of an end of *dukkha* is formulated in the past tense, unlike the mastery over one's thoughts, which is in the future tense. To stand in a meaningful relationship to each other, the use of the two tenses should be the reverse. This confirms the impression that also suggests itself from the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, in that the reference to cutting off craving and making an end of *dukkha* are spurious elements in the *Vitakkasaṇḥāna-sutta*. That is, it seems that in this case a passage not

⁶¹ MN 20 at MN I 122,3: *yaṃ vitakkaṃ ākaṅkhissati taṃ vitakkaṃ vitakkessati, yaṃ vitakkaṃ nākaṅkhissati na taṃ vitakkaṃ vitakkessati, acchecchi taṇhaṃ, vāvattayi saṃyojanaṃ* (B^e and S^c: *vivattayi saññojanaṃ*), *sammā mānābhisa-mayā antamākāsi dukkhassā ti*.

⁶² MĀ 101 at T I 589a6: 欲念則念, 不念則不念. 若比丘欲念則念, 不欲念則不念者, 是謂比丘隨意諸念, 自在諸念跡. The fact that MĀ 101 does not have a reference to cutting off craving has already been pointed out by Minh Chau 1964/1991: 244.

belonging to the discourse has come to be part of it at some point during its transmission.

Another difference of minor relevance concerns the title of the discourse. The stilling of thought, *vitakkasaṇṭhāna*, is only one of the five methods that both discourses present for the purpose of cultivating the higher mind.⁶³ The title of the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse is rather "On the Higher Mind". This expresses the content of the whole exposition, whereas the Pāli title reflects only one of its aspects.⁶⁴ [24]

MĀ 102: A Simile out of Context

Continuing with the topic of thoughts, the *Dvedhāvitakka-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel report how the Buddha, in the period before his awakening, handled the arising of unwholesome thoughts. Whenever an unwholesome thought arose, the future Buddha would quickly dispel it, as he was aware of the danger inherent in such thoughts.

The *Madhyama-āgama* discourse compares this to a cowherd who will stop the cows from straying into the ripe crop, as he knows that he will incur trouble if he does not prevent them from eating the crop.⁶⁵ After having explained this approach to thought and illustrated it with the cowherd simile, in the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse the Buddha turns to the general nature of the mind, explaining that whatever one frequently thinks about will eventually lead to a corresponding inclination of the mind.

The *Dvedhāvitakka-sutta* presents the same topics in a different sequence. It first takes up the dispelling of unwholesome thought, then describes how the mind follows the course set by

⁶³ The title of the discourse is given in MN 20 at MN I 122,8.

⁶⁴ MĀ 101 at T I 588a3: 增上心經.

⁶⁵ MĀ 102 at T I 589a27.

whatever one frequently thinks about, and only after that brings in the simile of the cowherd.⁶⁶ Its sequence is thus as follows:

- dispelling of unwholesome thought,
- frequent thinking leads to mental inclination,
- cowherd simile.

Here the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse presents a more straightforward sequence, since the purpose of the cowherd simile is to illustrate the need to take firm action and have fear of unwanted consequences, not to exemplify that frequent thoughts lead to a mental inclination.^[25] Therefore the simile of the cowherd finds its best placing right after the exposition of unwholesome thoughts, as an illustration of this exposition, the placing it has in the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse. In contrast, the placing of the simile in the Pāli version seems to be the result of a shift of the passage from its proper location. Such shifting of a passage within a text is in fact a recurrent feature of orally transmitted literature.⁶⁷

MĀ 104: Conversion and Its Consequences

Another topic related to the period before the Buddha's awakening is asceticism. The *Udumbarika(-sīhanāda)-sutta* reports a detailed exposition to a group of wanderers on this topic of asceticism,⁶⁸ evidently suited to their interest. At the end of his talk the Buddha invited the wanderers to join his ranks, stating that they should not think he wanted them to abandon the recitation of their rules, *uddesa*,⁶⁹ or their way of life, *ājīvā*. Instead, they will be free to follow their own *uddesa* and *ājīvā*.⁷⁰

⁶⁶ MN 19 at MN I 115,29.

⁶⁷ For several examples cf. Anālayo 2011b: 874–876.

⁶⁸ The addition of *sīhanāda* to the title is not found in the Asian editions.

⁶⁹ Regarding this term cf., e.g., the phrase *ekuddeso* in the definition of *saṃvāsa* at Vin III 28,20. Upasak 1975: 43 defines *uddesa* as "recitation (particularly of the Pātimohkha (*sic*))"; Cone 2001: 428 lists, besides "recitation" and "brief state-

This is unexpected, since according to what tradition reckons to have been the first sermon delivered by the recently awakened Buddha, to implement his teaching requires a middle path of practice avoiding the two extremes, one of which is asceticism.⁷¹ This rather gives the impression that ascetics joining the Buddhist order would be required to give up their *uddesa* and *ājīvā*,^[26] instead of which they would have to adopt the type of rules observed by other Buddhist monastics and their type of livelihood.

The *Madhyama-āgama* parallel in fact does not have a reference to *uddesa* or *ājīvā*. It agrees with the Pāli version in stating that the Buddha was not motivated by desire for disciples,⁷² after which the next two reasons given are that the Buddha was also not desirous of offerings or fame.⁷³ The final reason in the *Madhyama-āgama* version takes the form of a reference to the wholesome teachings of these wanderers which the Buddha supposedly is going to destroy, probably corresponding to the last of the four reasons given in the Pāli version, according to which the wander-

ment", etc., also "that to which one refers, point of authority" as a possible meaning of *uddesa*.

⁷⁰ DN 25 at DN III 56,14: *yo eva vo uddeso, so eva vo uddeso hotu ... yo eva vo ājīvo so eva vo ājīvo hotu* (C^e: *yo eva te uddeso, so eva te uddeso hotu ... yo eva te ājīvo so eva te ājīvo hotu*, S^e: *yo evaṃ te uddeso, soyeva te uddeso hotu ... yo ca te ājīvo soyeva te ājīvo hotu*).

⁷¹ For a study of the *Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta* in the light of its Chinese parallels cf. Anālayo 2012a and 2013a.

⁷² Before mentioning the desire for disciples, MĀ 104 at T I 595b18 lists as its first topic the desire to be the teacher. This seems redundant, as this topic is implicitly covered by a reference to desire for disciples, found in both versions.

⁷³ MĀ 104 at T I 595b22 and 595b24 lists the suspicions that "the recluse Gotama teaches the Dharma because he is desirous of offerings", 沙門瞿曇貪供養故說法, and "the recluse Gotama teaches the Dharma because he is desirous of fame", 沙門瞿曇貪稱譽故說法.

ers might suspect that the Buddha wants to establish them in things that they consider unwholesome.⁷⁴

In this way, between the reference to desiring disciples and this last reference, shared by the two versions, the *Madhyama-āgama* version presents a natural continuity of the theme of desire by mentioning offerings and fame, whereas the Pāli version instead brings in *uddesa* and *ājīvā*. To my knowledge the present passage in the *Udumbarika(-sīhanāda)-sutta* is unique in suggesting that wanderers could join the Buddhist order without needing to adopt the rules and form of livelihood incumbent on Buddhist monastics.⁷⁵ In this respect the *Madhyama-āgama* version has preserved a presentation that concords better with what other texts convey. [27]

MĀ 111: The Cause and Result of Feeling

Proceeding from asceticism to feeling, a discourse among the Sixes of the *Anguttara-nikāya* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel agree in presenting contact as what causes feeling, but differ when it comes to the result (*vipāka*) of feeling. Whereas the *Madhyama-āgama* refers to craving, a presentation clearly in line with the standard exposition of dependent arising (*paṭicca samuppāda*),

⁷⁴ MĀ 104 at T I 595b26 and DN 25 at DN III 56,19.

⁷⁵ Walshe 1987: 600 note 777 concludes on this part of DN 25 that "the extreme tolerance of Buddhism is shown here. This can be quoted to those who, wishing to practise, e.g. Buddhist meditation, are worried about their prior allegiance to another faith. But see DN 29.4" (in fact the passage quoted, DN 29 at DN III 119,3, stands in direct contrast to what he concludes from DN 25). Brekke 1996: 19 sees in the same passage more a defensive spirit, as "one gets the impression ... that the Buddha is used to accusations about ruthless missionary activity among members of other sects." Freiburger 2000: 126 suggests two possible interpretations of the passage in DN 25: a) the Buddha indeed invited the wanderers to continue with their way of life, etc., b) the passage is a rhetorical means for the purposes of conversion.

the Pāli discourse rather speaks of the production of individual existence as the result of one's merit or demerit.⁷⁶

The same is already mentioned in the preceding passage in the Pāli version, which takes up the topic of the result of sensual pleasures. The *Aṅguttara-nikāya* discourse and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel agree that sensual pleasures indeed result in a form of existence related to one's merit and demerit.⁷⁷ This makes it safe to conclude that the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* discourse would have suffered from an error in transmission whereby a passage originally only meant to explain the results of sensual pleasures was accidentally also applied to the results of feeling.⁷⁸ [28]

MĀ 112: Wholesome and Unwholesome Qualities

Feelings and their relation to craving are of course central in the arising of either wholesome or else unwholesome qualities. The distinction between these two is taken up in another discourse among the Sixes of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, which describe different individuals according to the wholesome or unwholesome quality of their mind.⁷⁹ The second case taken up in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* version con-

⁷⁶ MĀ 111 at T I 599c12 and AN 6.63 at AN III 411,23.

⁷⁷ MĀ 111 at T I 600a14 and AN 6.63 at AN III 412,25 (the sequence of topics differs in the two versions).

⁷⁸ The same type of error during transmission can also be seen in MĀ 111 at T I 600b11 and 600b14, which seems to have mixed up the result and the diversity of *dukkha*, in contrast to the preferable presentation in AN 6.63 at AN III 416,14, according to which the diversity of *dukkha* is to be seen in its different manifestations (strong or weak, etc.) and the result of *dukkha* in being afflicted.

⁷⁹ A difference in relation to their respective introduction to this exposition is similar to a difference between MN 136 at MN III 209,12 and its parallel MĀ 171 at T I 707a19, which I discussed in Anālayo 2011b: 778. In the present case, too, MĀ 112 at T I 601a15 has the complete sentence, whereas AN 6.62 at AN III 404,5 seems truncated.

cerns someone who manifests wholesome qualities but the roots of unwholesomeness are still in the mind and will eventually lead to the decline of that person. The second case in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel is someone who manifests unwholesome qualities but still has the roots of wholesomeness, which will eventually also be cut off.

The two versions agree in illustrating their respective second case with good seeds sown in a place where they cannot grow.⁸⁰ The simile seems appropriate for illustrating wholesome roots that will not lead to wholesome states, as is the case of the *Madhyama-āgama* version, not unwholesome roots as in the Pāli version, for which spoiled seeds would be more appropriate.

This can in fact be seen in relation to the case of someone who is thoroughly unwholesome, in which case both versions speak of spoiled seeds. In the *Madhyama-āgama* version's illustration of this thoroughly unwholesome case the spoiled seeds are sown in a barren field without timely water, whereas in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* discourse the spoiled seeds are sown in a well-prepared field.⁸¹ [29] As an illustration of the utterly hopeless case of someone completely immersed in unwholesomeness the *Madhyama-āgama* illustration appears to fit better. In sum, it seems fair to assume that the similes in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* discourse have suffered from an error in transmission.

Another puzzling aspect in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* discourse is a reference in yet another simile, which mentions midnight as the time for the meal.⁸² The *Madhyama-āgama* parallel agrees with

⁸⁰ In MĀ 112 at T I 601b29 the seeds will not grow because they do not receive timely rain; in AN 6.62 at AN III 405,20 they will not grow because they have been put on a rock.

⁸¹ MĀ 112 at T I 601c14 and AN 6.62 at AN III 406,14.

⁸² AN 6.62 at AN III 407,19: *aḍḍharattaṃ* (B^e: *addharattaṃ*) *bhattachālasamaye*. Based on the commentarial gloss on *bhattachālasamaye* at Mp III 406,7 as *rā-*

the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* version in regard to the preceding part of the simile, which refers to the rising of the sun. It differs in so far as it next describes that the sun has risen higher and mealtime has arrived.⁸³ This is a more natural phrasing of the simile and the reference to a meal at midnight could be the result of some confusion in the transmission of this part of the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* discourse.

MĀ 113: Two Parallels – One Discourse

Proceeding with another example that involves the *Āṅguttara-nikāya*, a discourse in the *Madhyama-āgama* actually has two parallels in this collection, found among the Eights and the Tens of the *Āṅguttara-nikāya*. The parallel versions agree in presenting a series of short questions and their replies. The difference between the two *Āṅguttara-nikāya* versions is that the one among the Tens has two additional questions, which query what all things culminate in and what constitutes the consummation of all things. The reply is that all things culminate in the deathless and all things have Nirvāṇa as their consummation.⁸⁴ [30] As already pointed out by Bodhi (2012: 1845 note 2069), these two replies "seem to be synonymous".

The *Madhyama-āgama* parallel agrees with its *Āṅguttara-nikāya* counterparts in mentioning that wisdom is supreme among all things, whose essence is liberation, which are the last two quali-

jakulānaṃ bhattakālasaṅkhāte samaye, Bodhi 2012: 1767 note 1408 reasons that "perhaps in the Buddha's time the royal court ended the day with a midnight meal."

⁸³ MĀ 112 at T I 601a28: "the sun has risen high and the time of the meal has arrived", 日轉昇上, 至于食時; although the wording seems clearly preferable, the placing of this simile in MĀ 112 is less apt.

⁸⁴ AN 10.58 at AN V 107,10; neither topics is covered in the otherwise similar AN 8.83 at AN IV 339,4.

ties in the listing given in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* discourse found among the Eights and the two qualities that in the discourse among the Tens lead up to the references to the deathless and Nirvāṇa.

The *Madhyama-āgama* version just mentions a single item at this juncture, which is Nirvāṇa as the completion of all things.⁸⁵ The *Madhyama-āgama* discourse then continues with an exposition that parallels the next discourses among the Tens of the *Āṅguttara-nikāya*.⁸⁶ This gives the impression that perhaps during oral transmission the last reference to Nirvāṇa came to be doubled by adding the synonymous deathless and in some way the remainder of the text also became a separate discourse. In fact this separate discourse starts off with the phrase "therefore monks, you should train like this", *tasmā ti ha bhikkhave, evam sikkhitabbaṃ*, which does hang a little in the air.⁸⁷ Such a phrase would serve naturally as a connector to something described earlier, as it does in the *Madhyama-āgama* version.⁸⁸ The same is considerably less natural as an introductory phrase for a new exposition. [31]

MĀ 116: The Buddha's Refusal to Ordain Women

Another discourse among the Eights in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* reports that the Buddha, on being requested to grant the going forth

⁸⁵ MĀ 113 at T I 602c16: 涅槃為諸法訖。Another parallel preserved as an individual translation, which shows several differences compared to MĀ 113 and thus seems to be reflecting a different lineage of transmission, agrees in also mentioning only a single item, namely Nirvāṇa as the completion of all things; cf. T 59 at T I 855c16.

⁸⁶ This has already been pointed out by Bodhi 2012: 1845 note 2069.

⁸⁷ AN 10.59 at AN V 107,14.

⁸⁸ MĀ 113 at T I 602c16 continues after the reference to Nirvāṇa as the completion of all things with the phrase "therefore, monks, you should train like this", 是故比丘, 當如是學, to introduce the remainder of its exposition. A comparable transition can also be found at this juncture in the other parallel, T 59 at T I 855c21: "monks, train like this", 諸比丘, 當學是。

to his fostermother and thereby found an order of nuns, flatly refused.⁸⁹ According to the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, however, he offered her the alternative of shaving off her hair and donning robes to live a form of celibate life,⁹⁰ presumably in the more protected environment at home instead of wandering around freely in India.

Given that a number of other discourses consider the existence of an order of nuns an integral aspect of the teaching of the Buddha, the *Madhyama-āgama* version seems to have preserved an earlier version of the Buddha's reaction to the request of his fostermother, in that the point at issue would have been how her going forth should take place, not whether to grant it to her at all.⁹¹

MĀ 128: Giving to Outsiders

Still continuing with the *Āṅguttara-nikāya*, a discourse among the Fives of this collection has a verse according to which fools give to those outside (of the Buddha's dispensation).⁹² This stands in direct contrast to a discourse among the Threes of the same *Āṅguttara-nikāya*,^[32] which in agreement with several parallels reports that the Buddha quite explicitly denied that he had ever stated that gifts should only be given to those in his dispensation and not to others.⁹³ Another contrastive example is the report in the *Upāli-sutta* and its parallel that the Buddha encouraged the recently converted Upāli to continue giving alms to his former teachers, the Jains.⁹⁴

⁸⁹ AN 8.51 at AN IV 274,7.

⁹⁰ MĀ 116 at T I 605a17.

⁹¹ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2011d and 2016c.

⁹² AN 5.179 at AN III 214,14: *bālā ca avijānantā, dummedhā assutāvino, bahid-dhā denti* (B^c: *dadanti*) *dānāni*.

⁹³ AN 3.57 at AN I 161,13 and its parallels SĀ 95 at T II 26a14, SĀ² 261 at T II 465c11, and SĀ³ 2 at T II 493b22.

⁹⁴ MN 56 at MN I 379,16 and MĀ 133 at T I 630b8.

The *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the discourse from the Fives of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* has a different version of the respective verse. This version instead proclaims that giving to a fool will bring little fruit.⁹⁵ Such a formulation of the verse implies no negative assessment of outsiders as recipients of gifts and concords with the presentation of the fruitfulness of gifts found elsewhere in the discourses. This leaves open the possibility that the present version of the verse in the discourse from the Fives of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* is the result of a later change. In fact the *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga-sutta* and a range of parallels explicitly describe the worthiness of a gift made to an outsider free from lust,⁹⁶ thereby confirming that the presentation in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* discourse is out of keeping with the position taken in general in early Buddhist discourse.

The *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga-sutta* itself has another noteworthy instance, also related to the worthiness of making gifts. The Pāli version states that a gift received by an immoral and evil monk will be of incalculable merit, [33] as long as it is given to the community as a whole.⁹⁷

The *Madhyama-āgama* discourse instead just speaks of a gift to a monk who is not energetic.⁹⁸ In the case of the *Dakkhiṇāvi-*

⁹⁵ MĀ 128 at T I 617b10: "to a fool who knows nothing, who has no wisdom and has learned (literally: 'heard') nothing, giving to him will yield little fruit", 愚癡無所知, 無慧無所聞, 施彼得果少。

⁹⁶ MN 142 at MN III 255,8, Bajaur Kharoṣṭhī fragment 1 line 20, MĀ 180 at T I 722b18, and D 4094 *ju* 255b6 or Q 5595 *tu* 291a7; cf. also Tocharian fragment YQ 1.20 1/2a8, Ji et al. 1998: 182, and Uighur fragment folio 9a2700, Geng and Klimkeit 1988: 204, which refer to a seer and thus implicitly to an outsider. A reference to this exposition in EĀ 23.1 at T II 609b15 also refers to a seer free from lust. Another parallel, T 84 at T I 903c29, does not explicitly qualify the recipient to be an outsider or a seer and thus just speaks of someone free from lust.

⁹⁷ MN 142 at MN III 256,5.

⁹⁸ MĀ 180 at T I 722b1; cf. in more detail Anālayo 2011b: 817.

bhaṅga-sutta the suggestion that an immoral monk is a worthy recipient of gifts stands in contradiction to the remainder of the same discourse, which highlights the importance of the ethical behaviour of the recipient (as well as of the giver) of a gift. This clearly accords better with the position taken in general in the early discourses, making it fair to assume that the incalculable merit accrued by a gift received by an immoral and evil monk is the result of a later change in the Pāli discourse.

MĀ 153: Similes out of Context

Moving from gifts to sensual pleasures in general, my next example involves similes, found in the *Māgandiya-sutta* as part of a detailed examination of the drawbacks of sensual pleasures. The *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Māgandiya-sutta* begins with a simile describing a leper who scratches and cauterizes his wounds over a fire.⁹⁹ Although the leper experiences momentary pleasure, his scratching and cauterizing results in the wounds becoming infected and his condition becoming worse. This illustrates indulgence in sensual pleasures, which likewise yields momentary gratification but results in worsening one's mental condition, as the tendency to crave for sensual pleasure is strengthened.

The next simile describes a king or minister who has easy access to sensual pleasures, yet is unable to experience mental peace if he is not free from desire for sensual pleasures. This expands on the point made above, in that indulgence in sensuality does not lead to true inner peace of mind. ^[34]

The *Madhyama-āgama* discourse next describes how someone healed from leprosy would not find it attractive to see another leper, who is still sick, scratching and cauterizing his wounds. Yet another simile depicts how someone healed from leprosy would re-

⁹⁹ MĀ 153 at T I 671b25.

sist with all his strength being forcefully dragged close to a fire. This simile provides a contrast to the earlier situation mentioned in the first simile, when he was still sick and therefore attracted to fire in order to cauterize his wounds. The last two similes of seeing another leper and of being dragged close to fire illustrate how one who has overcome sensual desire no longer delights in what earlier, when still under the influence of sensual desire, seemed so attractive. The sequence of the similes in the *Madhyama-āgama* is thus as follows:

- leper scratches and cauterizes wounds,
- king not free from sensual desire,
- healed leper sees other leper scratching and cauterizing wounds,
- healed leper dragged forcefully close to fire.

Whereas the *Madhyama-āgama* presentation follows an inherent logic in its presentation, the *Māgandiya-sutta* has the following sequence:¹⁰⁰

- healed leper sees other leper scratching and cauterizing wounds,
- healed leper dragged forcefully close to fire,
- leper scratches and cauterizes wounds,
- king not free from sensual desire.

This sequence appears jumbled. The point made by the two similes of the healed leper comes out fully only if the situation of the sick leper worsening his own condition by scratching and cauterizing his wounds has already been described. Moreover, the sequence in the *Māgandiya-sutta* lacks the gradual build-up that can be observed on reading the *Madhyama-āgama* presentation, where the culmination point comes with the image of struggling to avoid being dragged towards the fire that earlier was eagerly sought. [35]

¹⁰⁰ MN 75 at MN I 506,6.

In contrast, in the Pāli version the simile of the king comes almost as an anticlimax. This makes it possible that the *Māgandiya-sutta* has suffered from a positional alteration of the four similes, which can be corrected with the help of its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel.

MĀ 154: Reasons for Pasenadi's Respect

Shifting from similes to the topic of caste, as part of a discussion of claims to caste superiority by brahmins the *Aggañña-sutta* and its parallels describe the reasons why King Pasenadi pays respect to the Buddha. According to several Pāli editions, the king thinks that the Buddha is of superior birth to him, a reading followed by translators of this passage into German and English.¹⁰¹ This reading fails to make sense in its context, since the whole point of the passage is to undermine claims of superiority based on birth.

In the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, as well as several other parallels extant in Chinese and Tibetan, the corresponding passage instead indicates that it is *not* because of superiority of birth that the king pays respect to the Buddha.¹⁰² This fits the context,

¹⁰¹ DN 27 at DN III 84,3: *nanu sujāto samaṇo gotamo, dujjāto 'ham asmi* (same in C° and S°). Neumann 1912/2004: 478: "'ist denn nicht', sagt er, 'der Asket Gotamo wohlgeboren? Unwohlgeboren bin ich'"; Franke 1913a: 276: "der Samaṇa Gotama ist ja doch hochwohlgeboren, ich bin (ihm gegenüber) von niederer Herkunft"; Rhys Davids and Rhys Davids 1921: 80: "for he thinks: Is not the Samaṇa Gotama well born? Then I am not well born"; Walshe 1987: 409: "thinking: 'If the ascetic Gotama is well-born, I am ill-born.'"

¹⁰² MĀ 154 at T II 674b8: "the king does not think like this ... 'The recluse Gotama is from a superior clan, I am from an inferior clan'", 王不如是意 ... 沙門瞿曇種族極高, 我種族下. Similar statements are found in the parallels DĀ 5 at T I 37b23: "he does not think: 'The recluse Gotama has gone forth from an excellent clan, my clan is inferior'", 彼不念言: 沙門瞿曇出於豪族, 我姓卑下, and T 10 at T I 218a20, according to which "it is not because the king thinks that the recluse Gotama is from a superior clan, yet the king does

making it clear that the king's respect is not related to any birth superiority, but is rather due to regard for the Dharma taught by the Buddha. [36] This concurs with the reading of the Pāli passage found in the Burmese edition.¹⁰³ Thus in this case the Chinese versions help to decide which variant reading is the most appropriate one.

A comparable case can be found in the *Dhammacetiya-sutta*, which in agreement with its parallels reports that King Pasenadi described several reasons why he respected the Buddha. Reasons given in the Pāli version are that they are both from the warrior clan, both from Kosala, and both eighty years old.¹⁰⁴ Besides confirming that the presentation in most editions of the *Aggañña-sutta* even conflicts with other Pāli discourses, where the king and the Buddha are presented as being of the same clan, the present passage is yet another instance where the topic of Pasenadi's respect can be considered from the viewpoint of the relevant *Madhyama-āgama* parallel. The problem with the presentation in the *Dhammacetiya-sutta* is that the mere fact of being from the same clan and country, and of the same age, is not easily conceived as a reason to inspire respect.

Besides mentioning the fact that the two are from the same clan and Kosala country, as well as of the same age, the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel highlights that, whereas Pasenadi is the king of the country, the Buddha is the king of Dharma.¹⁰⁵ This marks a difference that would indeed provide a meaningful reason for respect,

not come from a superior clan", 其王不以沙門瞿曇是高勝族, 王亦不起高勝族意; cf. also D 4094 *ju* 192a5 or Q 5595 *tu* 219b1. SHT V 1583 V1, Sander and Waldschmidt 1985: 264, has preserved a reference to being *duvarṇa*.

¹⁰³ The B^e edition reads: *na naṃ sujāto samaṇo gotamo, duijāto 'ham asmi*.

¹⁰⁴ MN 89 at MN II 124,16.

¹⁰⁵ MĀ 213 at T I 797b12: 我亦國王, 世尊亦法王. A similar distinction is made in a parallel in the *Kṣudrakavastu* of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*; cf. Anālayo 2011b: 518 note 367.

making it reasonable to assume that some such statement might have been lost in the *Dhammacetiya-sutta*.

MĀ 158: Brahmins of Different Types

Continuing from brahminical claims to caste superiority to the theme of differences among brahmins, [37] a discourse found in the Fives of the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel describe brahmins of different types. In the Pāli version the first type of brahmin, having completed his period of celibacy and study of forty-eight years, goes begging so as to make an offering to his teacher.¹⁰⁶ Then he goes forth, practises the four *brahmavihāras*, and is reborn in the Brahmā world. In the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel this type of brahmin also completes his period of celibacy and study of forty-eight years, and goes begging so as to make an offering to his teacher. The description continues by just mentioning his cultivation of the four *brahmavihāras*, without any reference to going forth.¹⁰⁷

This squares better with what we know about brahminical practices in ancient India. Perhaps during oral transmission the reference to the forty-eight years of celibacy, *brahmacariya*, and to begging, *bhikkhācariya*, might have led to the interpolation of the standard description of going forth.

Another noteworthy difference can be seen in relation to the next type of brahmin described in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* discourse. After having completed the period of study and made an offering,

¹⁰⁶ AN 5.192 at AN III 225,3. Bodhi 2012: 1742f note 1185 comments on the impression conveyed by AN 5.192 that it "suggests, contrary to a common assumption, that during the Buddha's time brahmins were not obliged to marry and adopt the life of a householder ... that in this period some brahmins, after completing their training, chose to renounce secular life even in their youth and maintained their renunciant status throughout their lives."

¹⁰⁷ MĀ 158 at T I 680c24.

this type of brahmin gets married, then goes forth, cultivates the four absorptions, and is reborn in a heavenly world.¹⁰⁸ This brahmin is considered in the *Āṅguttara-nikāya* discourse to be like a *deva*, in contrast to the previous type who is like a Brahmā. Yet the type of rebirth suiting a brahmin who is like a *deva* would be one of the heavenly realms of the sense-sphere, not the heavenly realms of the form-sphere or Brahmā world to be expected for one who cultivates the four absorptions. [38]

The *Madhyama-āgama* parallel in fact does not describe any meditation practice in the case of this type of brahmin (nor any going forth), but just reports that he cultivates good bodily, verbal, and mental conduct, as a result of which he is reborn in a heavenly world.¹⁰⁹ This seems more appropriate for a description of a brahmin who is like a *deva*.

MĀ 163: Three *Satipaṭṭhānas*

Turning from brahmins to a form of mindfulness associated specifically with the Buddha, the *Salāyatanavibhaṅga-sutta* describes three *satipaṭṭhānas* practised by the Buddha when teaching disciples. According to its presentation, when the disciples do not listen, the Buddha is not satisfied.¹¹⁰ But when all of them listen, he is satisfied. In the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel the Buddha remains unaffected by the behaviour of his disciples.¹¹¹ This presentation receives support from a range of other sources and may well be closer to the original intention behind the presentation of these three *satipaṭṭhānas*.¹¹²

¹⁰⁸ AN 5.192 at AN III 227,1.

¹⁰⁹ MĀ 158 at T I 681a10.

¹¹⁰ MN 137 at MN III 221,10.

¹¹¹ MĀ 163 at T I 693c29.

¹¹² Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2013f: 240–243.

MĀ 164: A Summary without Its Exposition

Continuing with the topic of the Buddha's teaching activities, my next example comes from the *Uddesavibhaṅga-sutta*. The beginning part of the discourse reports the Buddha's announcement that he will give a summary and its exposition:

Monks, I will teach you a summary and its exposition.¹¹³

Nevertheless, according to the *Uddesavibhaṅga-sutta* the Buddha only taught a summary and then withdrew into his dwelling. This problem does not arise in the *Madhyama-āgama* version,^[39] as here the Buddha does not make such an announcement. Instead he introduces his teaching as follows:

I will teach you the Dharma that is sublime in its beginning, sublime in its middle, and sublime in its end, with its meaning and phrasing.¹¹⁴

Hence in the *Madhyama-āgama* version for the Buddha to teach only in brief and then withdraw does not create a comparable inconsistency. The problem observable in the *Uddesavibhaṅga-sutta* con-cords with a pattern for discourses in this chapter of the *Majjhima-nikāya* of referring to a summary and its exposition in ways that do not fit the remainder of the discourse.¹¹⁵ In the present case this is particularly noteworthy, since the initial proclamation about giving a summary, *uddesa*, and its exposition, *vibhaṅga*, corresponds to the title of the Pāli discourse.¹¹⁶ The *Madhyama-āgama* discourse instead has the title "Analytical Contemplation of Dharmas".¹¹⁷

¹¹³ MN 138 at MN III 223,5: *uddesavibhaṅgaṃ vo, bhikkhave, desissāmi* (B^o: *desessāmi*).

¹¹⁴ MĀ 164 at T I 694b16: 我當為汝說法, 初妙, 中妙, 竟亦妙, 有義有文.

¹¹⁵ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2008g and 2010g: 48f.

¹¹⁶ The title is found in MN 138 at MN III 229,32.

¹¹⁷ MĀ 164 at T I 694b13: 分別觀法.

MĀ 179: The Path-factors of an Arahant

Shifting from the Buddha to the arahant, the *Samaṇamaṇḍikā-sutta* briefly refers to the ten path factors of an arahant at the outset of its exposition, but has the corresponding exposition only at a considerably later point. In this way the standard procedure of following an announcement of a particular topic directly with its exposition is not followed.

Judging from its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, the relationship between these two pieces of text has been lost during oral transmission, resulting in a displacing of the introductory statement to its present position.¹¹⁸ [40] This is one of several aspects of the Pāli discourse that can be clarified with the help of its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel.¹¹⁹

MĀ 181: Impossibilities for Women

Returning to the Buddha, one of a set of five impossibilities in the *Bahudhātuka-sutta* stipulates that a woman cannot be a Buddha. The whole set of five impossibilities is absent from the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel.¹²⁰ A study of the context shows this dictum to be probably a later addition to the *Bahudhātuka-sutta*.¹²¹

MĀ 184: Mahāmoggallāna and Abhidharma

Shifting again from the Buddha to an arahant, my next case concerns Mahāmoggallāna in the *Mahāgosinga-sutta*. In agree-

¹¹⁸ MN 78 at MN II 25,18 (introduction) and 28,34 (exposition), compared to both being found consecutively in MĀ 179 at T I 721c14.

¹¹⁹ Cf. Anālayo 2009f and 2011b: 424–431.

¹²⁰ MN 115 at MN III 65,24 (cf. also T 776 at T XVII 713b20, T 1537 at T XXVI 502b16, D 297 *sha* 300b1 or Q 963 *lu* 329a5, and D 4094 *ju* 32a3 or Q 5595 *tu* 35a4); the exposition of various impossibilities, which does not include any impossibility for women, can be found in MĀ 181 at T I 723c26.

¹²¹ Cf. Kajiyama 1982: 57 and in more detail Anālayo 2009b.

ment with its parallels, the *Mahāgosiṅga-sutta* reports an occasion when several eminent monks extolled their special qualities or abilities in a poetic contest on a moonlit night. In the *Mahāgosiṅga-sutta*, after Ānanda, Revata, Anuruddha, and Mahākassapa have expressed themselves in line with the way their personality is depicted elsewhere in the early discourses, Mahāmoggallāna comes out with the following statement that supposedly illustrates his special and characteristic abilities:

Two monks talk Abhidharma talk. They ask each other a question. On asking each other a question, they respond and do not founder, and their talk on the Dharma goes forward.¹²² [41]

Instead of such ability at discussing the "higher Dharma" (*abhidharma*),¹²³ the early discourses usually represent it as characteristic of Mahāmoggallāna to have supernormal abilities.¹²⁴ This is indeed what the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Mahāgosiṅga-sutta* records as his statement on this occasion, which reads as follows:

A monk has great supernormal power, great and mighty virtue, great merit, great and mighty power, mastery of immeasurable supernormal powers.¹²⁵

¹²² MN 32 at MN I 214,24: *dve bhikkhū abhidhammakathaṃ kathenti, te añña-maññaṃ pañhaṃ* (S^e does not have *pañhaṃ*) *pucchanti, aññamaññaṃ pañhaṃ puṭṭhā vissajjenti, no ca saṃsādentī, dhammī ca nesaṃ kathā pavattanti* (B^e: *pavattinī*) *hoti*.

¹²³ On the significance of the term *abhidharma* in such contexts cf. Anālayo 2014c: 69–79.

¹²⁴ As already pointed out by Horner 1941: 309, "Moggallāna is chiefly famed for his psychic powers and there is little reason to suppose him to have had gifts of an *abhidhamma* nature or we should have heard more about them."

¹²⁵ MĀ 184 at T I 727c15: 比丘有大如意足, 有大威德, 有大福祐, 有大威神, 自在無量如意足.

The *Madhyama-āgama* version of Mahāmoggallāna's statement continues by describing various feats that according to early Buddhist thought can be performed by someone endowed with such supernormal powers, such as walking on water, levitation, etc.¹²⁶ In a similar vein, parallels to the *Mahāgosiṅga-sutta* preserved in the form of Sanskrit fragments, in a discourse in the *Ekottarika-āgama*, and in a discourse extant as an individual translation into Chinese consider supernormal powers to be characteristic of Mahāmoggallāna.¹²⁷

The *Madhyama-āgama* discourse also has a statement on Abhidharma type of talk, [42] but in its presentation this is instead characteristic of the monk Mahākaccāna. The relevant part proceeds in this way:

Two monks who are Dharma teachers discuss with each other the profound Abhidharma. Whatever matter they ask about, they understand it well and know it completely. They reply without hesitation and expound the Dharma eloquently.¹²⁸

To associate such a statement with Mahākaccāna is more in line with the way the discourses represent him elsewhere than to attrib-

¹²⁶ On levitation cf. above p. 281ff.

¹²⁷ SHT V 1346 V2, Sander and Waldschmidt 1985: 233, introduces *mahāmau [dga](lyāyan)*, and the next line has preserved *bhikṣūr-bhavaṭi mahardhiko ma[h]*, followed by parts of the standard description of the exercise of supernormal abilities in the next lines. In EĀ 37.3 at T II 711a18 Mahāmoggallāna similarly refers to a monk endowed with supernormal ability, 比丘有大神足, and then describes various feats. The same is the case for the statement attributed to him in T 154 at T III 81b29: 比丘得大神足.

¹²⁸ MĀ 184 at T I 727b23: 二比丘法師共論甚深阿毘曇. 彼所問事善解悉知, 答亦無礙, 說法辯捷. Already Anesaki 1908: 57 had pointed out that in MĀ 184 "besides the other theras there is Mahākaccāna. He plays the role of Moggallāna in Pāli and the utterances of Moggallāna which we find in Chinese are wanting in Pāli."

ute this statement to Mahāmogallāna.¹²⁹ This makes it safe to conclude that an error in oral transmission led to a loss of Mahākaccāna in the Pāli version and to a statement originally attributed to him becoming instead associated with Mahāmogallāna. [43]

MĀ 187: Loss of One of the Purities of an Arahant

Continuing with the topic of an arahant, the *Chabbisodhana-sutta* expounds five purities of an arahant, even though its title

¹²⁹ Minh Chau 1964/1991: 76 concludes that "the Chinese version here is more faithful and more reliable as Mahākaccāna is well known as being expert in Dharma discussion and Mogallāna is well known as being expert in supernatural powers." This reasonable conclusion is based on the criterion of coherence. The relevance of coherence for assessing early Buddhist discourse material in general has been called into question by Sujato 2011: 213, who argues instead that contradiction is a feature "found in Buddhism, for Sāriputta is the disciple who is 'like the Teacher', yet the Buddha is 'without a counterpart'. The Indic mind is simply less concerned with contradiction than the European ... this is true even in the sphere of logic. For Aristotle, any proposition was either true (A) or false (not-A) ... but the Indians had a four-fold scheme: A; not-A; A & not-A; neither A nor not-A." Neither example is a case of actual contradiction. Sāriputta is only qualified as a disciple comparable to the teacher, not as his equal; cf. above p. 504f note 8. The tetralemma is compatible with the principle of coherence; cf. Anālayo 2011b: xxvii. The early discourses in fact explicitly indicate that consistency was regarded as a criterion of truth. Examples are debate situations, where the Buddha is shown to employ the criterion of consistency when countering incoherent statements made by an opponent; cf. Anālayo 2010e: 49 note 27. Jayatilleke 1963/1980: 334 concludes that "in the Nikāyas, consistency is regarded as a criterion of truth." Vetter 1988: ix notes that the doctrine of "ancient Buddhism ... does not give any reason for proposing ... inconsistency as a characteristic of it"; cf. also Watanabe 1983/1996: 74f. Reat 1996/1998: 34 reasons that "one must assume that the historical Buddha's teachings were coherent ... when they were given. Therefore any reconstruction of these teachings should reveal a coherent framework of doctrine." Tilakaratne 2000a: 14 points out that the *mahāpadesas* are based on the premise "that what is called Dhamma and Vinaya is characterised by internal consistence and coherence".

speaks of six.¹³⁰ By having recourse to the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel the missing sixth purity can be restored.¹³¹ In this case a whole portion of a discourse was apparently lost during the transmission from India to Sri Lanka, as the commentarial tradition preserves a reference to reciters from India who were still aware of the nature of the missing purity.¹³²

MĀ 189: Supramundane Path Factors

Turning from textual loss to its addition, a case of substantial addition can be identified in the exposition of the path factors in the *Mahācattārīsaka-sutta*, whose presentation of supramundane path factors is without a counterpart in its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel.¹³³ The evident addition of the supramundane dimension in the Pāli version reflects the influence of evolving Abhidharma thought.¹³⁴ [44]

MĀ 190: Emptiness and Neither-perception-nor-non-perception

Another apparent addition can be found in the *Cūḷasuññata-sutta*, which describes a gradual meditative descent into emptiness that employs the perceptions related to the first three immaterial attainments. Whereas its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel

¹³⁰ The title is found in MN 112 at MN III 37,5.

¹³¹ The missing purity concerns the nutriments, expounded in MĀ 187 at T I 732b18.

¹³² Ps IV 94,23; cf. in more detail Anālayo 2008b.

¹³³ The supramundane exposition in the case of right intention can be found in MN 117 at MN III 73,11; for the treatment of this same path factor cf. MĀ 189 at T I 736a1 and D 4094 *nyu* 44b7 or Q 5595 *thu* 84b2. The absence of the supramundane path treatment from MĀ 189 has already been noted by Meisig 1987b: 226; for a more detailed discussion cf. Anālayo 2010d.

¹³⁴ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2014c.

proceeds from the perception of nothingness to signlessness, the *Cūḷasuññata-sutta* has as an interim step the attainment of neither-perception-nor-non-perception.¹³⁵ This appears to be the result of an error in transmission, where the fact that usually in other contexts a reference to the three immaterial attainments will be followed by the fourth would have led to its intrusion in the present context.¹³⁶

MĀ 192: Loss of a Transition

Returning from textual addition to its loss, the *Laṭukikopama-sutta* reports that the monk Udāyin has just described an event from the past. Udāyin concludes by expressing his appreciation for the rules on restraint with food which the Buddha had promulgated. This then motivates the Buddha to describe foolish people who are not willing to follow his rules on restraint. The transition to this topic in the *Laṭukikopama-sutta* takes the form of the Buddha replying to Udāyin's expression of appreciation in the following manner:

In the same way, Udāyin, there are some foolish people ...¹³⁷

The use of the expression "in the same way", *evam eva*, does not fit the present context well, since the foolish people whom the Buddha is about to describe are the opposite of Udāyin. Therefore it does not seem meaningful to introduce them with an expression that conveys similarity. [45] In the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel, the corresponding transition to a description of foolish people, who are unwilling to follow the Buddha's injunctions, proceeds as follows:

¹³⁵ MĀ 190 at T I 737c3 (emending 無想 to 無相; cf. also Anālayo 2012d: 30 note 16) and MN 121 at MN III 107,10; cf. also Skilling 1994: 172,5.

¹³⁶ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2015e: 134–136.

¹³⁷ MN 66 at MN I 449,10: *evam eva pan' udāyi, idh' ekacce moghapurisā ...*

The Blessed One praised him: "It is well, it is well, Udāyin, you are now not like those foolish people. Those foolish people, on being taught by me ..." ¹³⁸

This confirms the impression that some sort of transition might have been lost in the *Laṭukikopama-sutta*.

The Pāli passage translated above is not preceded by an indication that a change of speaker has taken place. Only the circumstance that the actual speech is addressed to Udāyin makes it clear that at this point he is no longer the speaker, but rather the one to whom something is being said.

Perhaps an explicit indication of the change of speaker, as found in the *Madhyama-āgama* discourse, was lost in the *Laṭukikopama-sutta* together with an introductory reference by the Buddha to foolish people that stand in contrast to Udāyin. Some such reference seems required to provide a reference point to which the expression "in the same way" could refer.

MĀ 198: Satipaṭṭhāna and the Second Absorption

Another apparent loss of text involves the *Dantabhūmi-sutta*, which describes a progression of practice where cultivation of *satipaṭṭhāna* meditation free from thoughts directly leads to attainment of the second absorption. ¹³⁹ Consultation of its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel shows that here the first absorption is taken into account. ¹⁴⁰ _[46] This makes it fairly safe to assume that the reference to being free from *vitakka* in the description of the

¹³⁸ MĀ 192 at T I 741b23: 世尊歎曰：善哉，善哉，烏陀夷，汝今不爾如彼癡人。彼愚癡人，我為其說 ...

¹³⁹ MN 125 at MN III 136,26.

¹⁴⁰ MĀ 198 at T I 758b25, which gives the introductory formula for the first absorption and then abbreviates up to the attainment of the fourth, a standard procedure in the collection to represent attainment of all four absorptions.

preceding *satipaṭṭhāna* practice accidentally caused a loss of the description of the first absorption during oral transmission by directly continuing with the second absorption, whose standard description refers to being free from *vitakka*.¹⁴¹

MĀ 201: The Tathāgata and the Gradual Path

Moving again from loss of text to its addition, my next case comes from the *Mahātaṇhāsāṅkhaya-sutta*. The relevant passage in this discourse and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel begins with a reference to the arising of the Tathāgata in the world. The *Madhyama-āgama* discourse continues by describing detachment towards sensory experience and being established in mindfulness of the body.¹⁴²

The *Mahātaṇhāsāṅkhaya-sutta* similarly refers to detachment towards sensory experience and mindfulness of the body,¹⁴³ with the difference that between this reference and the remark on the arising of a Tathāgata it provides a detailed account of the gradual path of practice.¹⁴⁴ As a result, it deals with the issue of how to handle sensory experience twice, once in the form of sense-restraint as part of the gradual path and again in the passage just mentioned, which is the one that is also found in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel. [47]

The resultant sequence of topics in this part of the *Mahātaṇhāsāṅkhaya-sutta* is as follows:

¹⁴¹ This is one of several findings that emerge from a comparative study of this discourse; cf. Anālayo 2006b and 2011b: 717–722.

¹⁴² MĀ 201 at T I 769c14. The transition from the arising of a Tathāgata to this exposition is not entirely smooth, however, as the passage just refers to the one who is detached as "he", 彼, thereby lacking any explicit indication that this should be understood to refer to a disciple of the Tathāgata.

¹⁴³ MN 38 at MN I 270,9.

¹⁴⁴ On the gradual path of practice cf. in more detail Anālayo 2016d.

- arising of a Tathāgata,
- going forth,
- moral restraint,
- contentment,
- sense-restraint,
- clear comprehension of bodily activities,
- removal of the five hindrances,
- attainment of the four absorptions,
- detachment and mindfulness of the body.

In this way the last reference to detachment in relation to the senses and mindfulness of the body comes in the *Mahātaṇhāsaṅkhaya-sutta* after the gradual path has been completed up to the successful attainment of the four absorptions. This is contrary to the usual sequence of practice depicted in the early discourses, where mindfulness of the body and detachment in relation to sensory experiences are pre-conditions for the attainment of absorption and therefore mentioned earlier. In the scheme above, both should come in the place now occupied by sense-restraint and by clear comprehension of bodily activities.

Taken together these features suggest that a reference to the arising of a Tathāgata has misled the reciters of the Pāli version to insert a full account of the gradual path where this was not originally required. Such an error could happen easily, since the standard description of the arising of a Tathāgata does often function as an introduction to an account of the gradual path.

MĀ 204: Brahmā's Intervention

The arising of a Tathāgata was according to tradition due to the famous intervention of Brahmā to convince the recently awakened Buddha to teach his discovery to mankind. This intervention is not mentioned at all in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the

Ariyapariyesanā-sutta,¹⁴⁵ [48] which leaves open the possibility that this episode could be a later addition.¹⁴⁶

MĀ 207: The Path of Practice

Proceeding from the Buddha's decision to teach to a description of his qualities, the *Mahāsakuludāyi-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel agree in listing five qualities of the Buddha. Under the fifth of these, the Pāli version offers a long and detailed survey of various aspects of the path of practice, absent from its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel.¹⁴⁷ Closer inspection of this list and its context makes it fairly probable that this is a case of expansion on the part of the *Mahāsakuludāyi-sutta*.¹⁴⁸

MĀ 208: The Gradual Path Again

Another example related to the description of the path of practice can be observed in the *Cūḷasakuludāyi-sutta*. In this case the Pāli discourse and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel agree in presenting an account of the gradual path, but this account occurs in the two versions at different places within the discourse. The narrative context is a teaching to a non-Buddhist wanderer on how to reach an entirely pleasant world, which the Buddha shows to be possible through absorption attainment. [49]

The *Madhyama-āgama* version leads up to a description of the attainment of absorption with an account of the gradual path of

¹⁴⁵ Brahmā's intervention is reported in MN 26 at MN I 168,18; the parallel MĀ 204 at T I 777a18 continues directly from the Buddha's awakening to his reflection on whom he might teach first. The absence of this episode in MĀ 204 has already been noted by Minh Chau 1964/1991: 155.

¹⁴⁶ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2011a.

¹⁴⁷ MN 77 at MN II 11,3 to 22,15 and thus over eleven pages compared to just two lines of text in its parallel MĀ 207 at T I 783b15 to 783b17.

¹⁴⁸ Cf. in more detail Anālayo 2009c: 155–158.

training.¹⁴⁹ This is a meaningful placement, since the account serves to indicate to the non-Buddhist wanderer in what manner progress to absorption attainment takes place according to early Buddhist thought.

In the *Cūḷasakuludāyi-sutta* the account of the gradual path instead comes after the Buddha has explained to the non-Buddhist wanderer that attainment of the third absorption is the way to reach an entirely pleasant world, and also after he has further made it clear that full realization of an entirely pleasant world requires attainment of the fourth absorption. After this clarification, the Buddha indicates to the non-Buddhist wanderer that Buddhist monks practise for the sake of states that are still superior and more refined. The wanderer then asks:

Venerable sir, what are the superior and more refined states for the sake of realizing which the monks practise the holy life under the Blessed One?¹⁵⁰

It is in reply to this question that in the *Cūḷasakuludāyi-sutta* the Buddha delivers the gradual-path account. When he comes to the part of the gradual-path account that describes the successive attainment of the absorptions, the Buddha indicates after each such attainment that this is superior and more refined. This serves to relate each of these aspects of the gradual-path account to the question posed by the non-Buddhist wanderer. In the case of the first absorption, the statement reads:

¹⁴⁹ MĀ 208 at T I 785c24 abbreviates the account, a standard practice in the early discourses. The gradual-path account is usually spelled out in full only on its first occurrence in the collection, subsequent occurrences being abbreviated.

¹⁵⁰ MN 79 at MN II 38,1: *katame pana te, bhante, dhammā uttaritarā ca paññitarā ca yesaṃ sacchikiriyāhetu bhikkhū bhagavati brahmacariyaṃ carantī ti?*

He dwells having attained the first absorption. Udāyin, this is also a superior and more refined state for the sake of realizing which monks practise the holy life under me.¹⁵¹ [50]

In this way, the first absorption becomes a state superior and more refined than the fourth absorption mentioned before. The same inconsistency continues with the other levels of absorption that form part of the gradual-path account. Since the first to third absorptions are obviously inferior and less refined than the fourth, it seems fair to conclude that some shifting in place of the gradual-path account has resulted in the presentation now found in the *Cūlasakuludāyi-sutta*. The placement of the same account in its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel in contrast is clearly preferable.

MĀ 209: The Peak of Sensual Pleasure

Moving from the pleasure of absorption to sensual pleasure, in the *Vekhanassa-sutta* the Buddha makes a somewhat cryptic statement that appears to extol the highest type of sensual pleasure, which the commentary then takes to be a reference to Nirvāṇa.¹⁵² In the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel a comparable statement involves merely an acknowledgement that the sense-objects of sensual pleasures appear to provide supreme happiness when contrasted to the sense-objects of undesirable sense-experiences.¹⁵³

Another puzzling aspect of the *Vekhanassa-sutta* is its report that the Buddha agreed with what appears to be an unjustified criticism raised by his visitor, whereas in the *Madhyama-āgama*

¹⁵¹ MN 79 at MN II 38,8: *paṭhamam jhānam* (E^c: *paṭhamajjhānam*) *upasampajja viharati. ayam pi kho, udāyi, dhammo uttaritaro ca pañītatara ca yassa sacchikiriyāhetu bhikkhū mayi brahmacariyaṃ caranti.*

¹⁵² MN 80 at MN II 43,4 and Ps III 277,19.

¹⁵³ MĀ 209 at T I 787a21; for a more detailed discussion of this and the next points cf. Anālayo 2007b and 2011b: 437–440.

parallel the Buddha does not agree with the criticism.¹⁵⁴ The *Madhyama-āgama* version also helps to understand better a simile made in both versions that illustrates bondage with the example of an infant, ^[51] and it also provides a more natural conclusion to the discourse. Whereas in the *Vekhanassa-sutta* the wanderer Vekhanassa takes refuge as a lay disciple, in the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel he goes forth under the Buddha,¹⁵⁵ a considerably more natural choice for someone who has already been living as a wanderer. In sum, in the case of this discourse several aspects of the Pāli version can be corrected or improved by having recourse to its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel.

MĀ 214: Censure of the Buddha

Turning from going forth under the Buddha to his being censured by others, the *Bāhitika-sutta* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel report a meeting between King Pasenadi and Ānanda, in which the former tried to ascertain whether the Buddha would engage in the type of conduct that would be censured by other recluses and brahmins. The editions of the Pāli discourse differ on whether the king qualified these recluses and brahmins as wise, or whether this qualification was only introduced by Ānanda in his reply that the Buddha would not engage in such conduct; according to the *Madhyama-āgama* parallel this qualification was only introduced by Ānanda.¹⁵⁶

Since in both versions the king expresses his appreciation for the finer distinction introduced in this way, which implicitly sets aside censure by those who are not wise and only takes up justi-

¹⁵⁴ MN 80 at MN II 44,3 and MĀ 209 at T I 787b28.

¹⁵⁵ MN 80 at MN II 44,20 and MĀ 209 at T I 788a1.

¹⁵⁶ The king's enquiry in MN 88 at MN II 113,33 and in S° already qualifies the recluses and brahmins as wise, a qualification not found in his enquiry in B° and C° and in the parallel MĀ 214 at T I 798a13; for a more detailed discussion cf. Anālayo 2007c and 2011b: 508.

fied types of censure, the reading in the *Madhyama-āgama* version, and those Pāli editions that correspond to it, is clearly the preferable one. [52]

Conclusion

The selected passages from the *Madhyama-āgama* surveyed above confirm in my view the methodological requirement mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, namely the need to proceed beyond the Pāli material when studying early Buddhist thought and history.¹⁵⁷ The cases surveyed range from very minor issues to at times significantly different presentations in the *Madhyama-*

¹⁵⁷ Regarding the hypothesis by von Hinüber 2008a, mentioned above p. 501f notes 2 and 3, as far as I am able to see for purposes of historical reconstruction the Pāli discourses in the four *Nikāyas* are better not used on their own, without taking into account their parallels preserved in the Chinese *Āgamas*, etc. (by "parallels" I mean early discourse parallels, not later texts such as, e.g., the Mahāyāna *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, mentioned by von Hinüber 2015b: 198), as well as whatever other sources of information we can marshal for this purpose. An illustrative example is the *Nandakovāda-sutta*, whose relevance to the topic of the existence of nuns during the Buddha's lifetime I already mentioned in Anālayo 2008d: 117, and which I discussed in more detail in Anālayo 2010a. Comparative study shows that the more negative presentation of the nuns in the Pāli discourse is with high probability the result of later change. Thus when von Hinüber 2008a: 24 notes that in this Pāli discourse the Buddha "does not even talk to her ... as if Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī would not exist", then I contend that this should be treated as historical information about the attitude of the reciters of the Pāli discourse, rather than as a source of historical information about the actual situation on the ground at the time of the Buddha. In sum, in my view it is indeed a "methodological problem" and a "methodological shortcoming" when one relies on the four Pāli *Nikāyas* on their own for purposes of historical reconstruction of what happened on the ground, contrary to the assessment by von Hinüber 2015b: 199 that "this methodological virtue is the only possible way to access the early Buddhist tradition."

āgama discourses, which offer indications that help to improve our understanding of the relevant Pāli passage or discourse and thus must be taken into account in any attempt at historical reconstruction of early Buddhist thought.

The findings in the present chapter also complement the position I argued in the first chapter regarding the historical value of the 'early' discourses. In that chapter I concentrated in particular on the Pāli discourses, reflecting the fact that their value or lack of value for reconstructing the early stages in the history of Buddhist thought has received considerable attention by other scholars. Given that the examples in the present chapter show several instances where an *Āgama* collection preserved in Chinese translation appears to have preserved an earlier version of a particular passage when compared with the respective Pāli discourse, it seems reasonable to extend the conclusion drawn in the first chapter to the 'early' discourses in general. In other words, it seems to me safe to conclude that the Pāli discourses and their *Āgama* parallels (with the exception of the *Ekottarika-āgama*, where there is clear evidence that the collection underwent substantial change in China) can indeed be considered as textual testimonies to trends in the early stages in the development of Buddhist thought.

A proper appreciation of such thought requires a systematic reading of the early discourses, as opposed to focussing on isolated instances only. Such a systematic reading involves evaluating any particular passage against the background of relevant passages found elsewhere and based on a clear appreciation of the oral nature of these texts. Due to their prolonged oral transmission, the possibility of accidental errors has to be taken into account, the occurrence of which can at times be identified with the help of comparative study of the extant parallel versions.

Abbreviations

Abhidh-k	<i>Abhidharmakośabhāṣya</i>
AN	<i>Aṅguttara-nikāya</i>
B ^e	Burmese edition
BṛĀr Up	<i>Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad</i>
C	Cone edition
CBETA	Chinese Buddhist Electronic Tripiṭaka Association
C ^e	Ceylonese edition
Chin	Chinese
D	Derge edition
DĀ	<i>Dīrgha-āgama</i> (T 1)
Dhp	<i>Dhammapada</i>
Dhp-a	<i>Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā</i>
Dīp	<i>Dīpavaṃsa</i>
DN	<i>Dīgha-nikāya</i>
EĀ	<i>Ekottarika-āgama</i> (T 125)
EĀ ²	<i>Ekottarika-āgama</i> (T 150A)
E ^e	PTS edition
G	Golden Tanjur
It	<i>Itivuttaka</i>
It-a	<i>Itivuttaka-aṭṭhakathā</i>
Jā	<i>Jātaka</i>
Kāth Up	<i>Kāṭha Upaniṣad</i>
MĀ	<i>Madhyama-āgama</i> (T 26)
Mhv	<i>Mahāvaṃsa</i>
MN	<i>Majjhima-nikāya</i>
Mp	<i>Manorathapūraṇī</i>
Mvy	<i>Mahāvvyutpatti</i>
N	Narthaṅg edition

Nett	<i>Nettipakaraṇa</i>
Nidd I	<i>Mahāniddesa</i>
Or	Oriental
Paṭis	<i>Paṭisambhidāmagga</i>
Pj	<i>Paramatthajotikā</i>
Pp	<i>Puggalapaññatti</i>
Ps	<i>Papañcasūdanī</i>
PTS	Pali Text Society
Q	Peking edition
SĀ	<i>Saṃyukta-āgama</i> (T 99)
SĀ ²	<i>Saṃyukta-āgama</i> (T 100)
SĀ ³	<i>Saṃyukta-āgama</i> (T 101)
S ^e	Siamese edition
SHT	Sanskrithandschriften aus den Turfanfunden
Skt	Sanskrit
SN	<i>Saṃyutta-nikāya</i>
Sn	<i>Sutta-nipāta</i>
Sp	<i>Samantapāsādikā</i>
Spk	<i>Sāratthappakāsinī</i>
Sv	<i>Sumaṅgalavilāsinī</i>
Śvet Up	<i>Śvetāśvara Upaniṣad</i>
T	Taishō edition (CBETA)
Th	<i>Theragāthā</i>
Ud	<i>Udāna</i>
Up	<i>Abhidharmakośopāyikā-ṭīkā</i>
Vibh	<i>Vibhaṅga</i>
Vin	<i>Vinaya</i>
Vism	<i>Visuddhimagga</i>
Vv	<i>Vimānavatthu</i>
Vv-a	<i>Vimānavatthu-aṭṭhakathā</i>
◇	emendation
[]	supplementation

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Index

A

abbhutadhamma, position of...457
 Abhayagiri..... 6
Abhidharmakośabhāṣya..... 115
Abhidharmakośavyākhyā .. 514
Acchariyabbhutadhamma-sutta
 see MN 123
 Aciravatī, simile of..... 189f
Āditta-sutta..... see SN 35.28
āgama, usage of term449ff
Aggañña-suttasee DN 27
Aggivacchagotta-sutta .see MN
 72
 Ajātasattu 16, 480f
 Ajita386ff
 Ajita Kesakambalī..... 149
ājīvā 524
ākhyāna 456
Alagaddūpama-sutta .see MN 22
 Alexander the Great 46
 alliteration 473
Ambaṣṭha-sūtra 2
 Ān Fǎqīn 110
 Ān Shīgāo..... 8, 32f, 36, 107
 Ānanda.....3, 25f, 56ff, 81, 174,
 204ff, 226ff, 264, 290f, 452,
 482, 492, 505, 541, 552
 Anāthapiṇḍika, first meeting
 with Buddha..... 198
 Aṅga (location) 46
aṅgas
 function of459ff
 nine or twelve 457
 shorter lists.....461ff

Āṅgiras..... 186
 Āṅgulimāla..... 257
Āṅuttara-nikāya
 AN 1.13 108f
 AN 1.149, 58, 243, 275,
 345, 497
 AN 2.4 290
 AN 2.12 497
 AN 3.20 449
 AN 3.30 489
 AN 3.57 531
 AN 3.65 343, 509
 AN 3.70 46
 AN 3.90 55
 AN 4.6 468
 AN 4.21 386
 AN 4.57 483
 AN 4.76 229
 AN 4.102 468
 AN 4.107 468
 AN 4.157 221
 AN 4.160 112, 449
 AN 4.177 276
 AN 4.180 450
 AN 4.186 469
 AN 4.191 466
 AN 4.198 396
 AN 5.26 491
 AN 5.29 220
 AN 5.48 16
 AN 5.49 16
 AN 5.50 16, 481
 AN 5.73 468, 494
 AN 5.74 468
 AN 5.79 458

AN 5.155	466
AN 5.156	449
AN 5.179	531
AN 5.192	537f
AN 5.194	462
AN 6.10	251
AN 6.34	285
AN 6.46	494
AN 6.51	449
AN 6.55	291
AN 6.62	527f
AN 6.63	527
AN 7.20	481
AN 7.53	285
AN 7.58	290, 492
AN 7.62	431
AN 7.64	451, 466
AN 8.12	481
AN 8.30	288
AN 8.42	46
AN 8.43	46
AN 8.45	46
AN 8.51	531
AN 8.70	482
AN 8.83	529
AN 9.41	246
AN 9.51	170
AN 10.11	449
AN 10.26	277
AN 10.29	167, 277
AN 10.30	481
AN 10.44	451
AN 10.53	451
AN 10.58	529
AN 10.59	530
AN 10.60	219, 492
AN 10.72	415
AN 10.95	391
AN 10.116	388

AN 10.208	508
AN 11.18	450
AN 11.113	8
nature of	8
annihilationism	164ff, 324
Anuruddha ...	9, 217f, 228, 234f, 243f, 288ff, 490f, 517f, 541, 554
<i>Anuruddha-sutta</i> ...	see MN 127
<i>Anyatama-sūtra</i>	2, 396
<i>Apannaka-sūtra</i>	396
Araṇemi	186
Aritṭha	467, 470
<i>Ariyapariyesanā-sutta</i> ..	see MN 26
<i>Arthavistara-sūtra</i>	396, 422
<i>āsava</i> , as 'influx'	12
Asita	260
Asoka	37, 44ff, 452
Assaka	46
<i>Assalāyana-sutta</i>	see MN 93
assonance	473
<i>Ātānāta-sūtra</i>	2
<i>attadīpa</i>	207, 350
Atṭhaka, brahmin	186
<i>Atṭhakavagga</i>	102f, 116, 493
<i>Avadānaśataka</i>	58, 236f, 240
Avanti	46
awakening factors	
cultivation of	407, 440
recitation of	211
<i>āyurveda</i>	203

B

<i>Bāhitika-sutta</i>	see MN 88
<i>Bahudhātuka-sutta</i> ..	see MN 115
Bakkula	515
<i>Bakkula-sutta</i>	see MN 124

Bāoyún 6
 barber, motif of gift to 352
 beautiful girl, simile of 186f
 Bhaddā Kāpilānī 494
Bhaiṣajyavastu (Skt) 20, 26
bhante/bhadante 487
 Bhāradvāja 180ff
Bhayabhairava-sūtra 396
bhikkhave/bhikkhavo 487
 Bimbisāra 506
 blind, simile of 163, 306
Bodha-sūtra 2, 396
 Bodhi, prince 483
 Brahmā..235, 261ff, 282ff, 374,
 538
 believes he is creator..... 131f
 intervention of..... 548f
 net of..... 176
 path to 182ff
Brahmajāla-suttasee DN 1
Brahmajāla-sūtra 88
Brahmanimantanika-sutta... see
 MN 49
Bṛhadāranyaka Upaniṣad..124,
 136
 Buddha
 asked to pass away..... 481f
 back pain of 211
 descent from heaven of.. 260
 distribution of relics of.... 16
 funeral of 273f
 and immaterial spheres...242f
 meets Anāthapiṇḍika 198
 miracles of249ff
 omniscience of..... 62
 passing away of225ff
 previous asceticism of..... 25
 recites to himself..... 490f
 sickness of 205f, 217

Buddhaghosa 38, 42, 507f
 Buddhas, interest in former .. 92
 Buddhayaśas 1

C

caitya/stūpa 22
Cakkavatti-(sīhanāda-)sutta.....
 see DN 26
cakravartin ... see wheel-turning
 king
 Candragupta 45
 Caṅkī 180
Catuspariṣat-sūtra .. 93, 272, 396
 cesspit, simile of..... 303
 Cetiya 46
Chabbisodhana-sutta ... see MN
 112
 Chinese *Āgamas*
 school affiliation of..... 2
 use of expression 1
 Chinese translations, variations
 in 120
 circumambulations 486
 Citta..... 496f, 516
 code of rules
 concatenation in 83
 memorization of..... 493
 recital of..... 74f, 489f
 concatenation 79, 83ff, 90
 conch, simile of blowing ... 314f
 consistency, criterion of 543
 cosmology, Buddhist..... 425
 cowherd, simile of..... 523f
 craving, three types of..... 519f
Cūlahatthipadopama-sutta.. see
 MN 27
Cūlamālunkya-sutta...see MN 63
Cūlasakuludāyi-sutta .. see MN 79

Cūlasuññata-suttasee MN 121
Cūlataṇhāsāṅkhaya-suttasee
 MN 37
Cūḷavedalla-sutta.... see MN 44

D

Dabba..... 263f, 275
Dakkiṇāvibhaṅga-sutta.....see
 MN 142
 Daḷhanemi..... 351ff
Dantabhūmi-sutta..see MN 125
 Darius I48
Dasaveyāliya-sutta 508
Daṣottara-sūtra ... 398ff, 433ff,
 506
 debate
 strategies of 339ff
 tactics of 315ff
 decline, motif of..... 363ff
 Derge edition
 D 120f, 26, 198, 292, 345,
 482, 487
 D 6265, 452, 454
 D 38.....219, 492
 D 40.....215
 D 297.....540
 D 313.....256
 D 318.....422
 D 617.....256
 D 974.....256
 D 4094.....52, 57, 61, 64, 81,
 102, 105, 115ff, 121, 127,
 136f, 141, 146f, 173, 177,
 181, 191, 200, 216, 275,
 285, 290, 387, 417, 431,
 508, 532, 536, 540, 544
deva, brilliance on arrival .255f
Devadaha-sutta..... see MN 101

Devadatta217
 Devānampiyatissa42
Dhammacakkappavattana-sutta
 see SN 56.11
Dhammacetiya-sutta ..see MN 89
Dhammapada
 Dhp 178.....382
 Dhp 204.....223
 Dhp 252.....335
 Dhp 254.....178
 Dhp 258.....471
 Dhp 387.....260
Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā...22, 26
 Dhammapāla38, 508
dhammavihāri468
 Dharmaguptaka *Vinaya* ... see T
 1428, T 1429
 Dharmarakṣa 110f
Dharmaskandha.....514
Dhātuvibhaṅga-sutta ... see MN
 140
 dice, game of..... 330, 336f
Dīgha-nikāya
 allocation of discourses..80ff
 DN 1..51ff, 79ff, 101f, 115ff,
 394, 453
 DN 2...31, 85f, 89, 149, 204ff,
 243, 286f, 388, 394, 453
 DN 3482
 DN 480
 DN 555, 80
 DN 8515f
 DN 9162
 DN 11285
 DN 13179ff, 200f
 DN 14...62, 91, 269f, 283, 290
 DN 1532ff, 519
 DN 16.45, 62, 91, 203ff, 225ff,
 274, 385, 423, 450, 481ff

- DN 17 82, 395
 DN 18 46
 DN 19 45
 DN 20 133
 DN 21 249ff
 DN 22 43, 276, 521
 DN 23 295ff, 321ff
 DN 24 ... 91, 133, 136, 264ff,
 281, 388, 409
 DN 25 293, 525f
 DN 26 349ff, 517
 DN 27 199, 535
 DN 28 386, 394
 DN 29 73, 394, 526
 DN 30 517
 DN 31 200
 DN 33 ... 269, 275, 397, 403,
 406, 433, 489, 491
 DN 34 .. 54, 71, 393ff, 433ff,
 491, 506f
 nature of 3
 recitation of sections of ... 93f
Dīpavaṃsa 495
Dīrgha-āgama
 DĀ 1..62, 92, 94, 270, 283, 290
 DĀ 2.....62, 94, 225ff, 274,
 350, 386, 423, 440, 450
 DĀ 4 350
 DĀ 5 199, 424, 535
 DĀ 6 349ff, 517
 DĀ 7 295ff, 321ff
 DĀ 8 293
 DĀ 9 275, 397, 403, 406,
 424, 434, 440, 489, 491
 DĀ 10....397ff, 435ff, 491, 506
 DĀ 11 393ff, 440ff
 DĀ 12 393ff, 436ff
 DĀ 13 33ff, 424, 520
 DĀ 14 254ff, 350, 424
 DĀ 15 .. 133, 136, 264ff, 281
 DĀ 17 73
 DĀ 18 386, 440
 DĀ 20 86ff, 186, 194,
 243, 286f
 DĀ 21 53ff, 86ff, 102,
 120ff, 350, 424
 DĀ 22 87
 DĀ 23 55
 DĀ 24 285
 DĀ 25 440, 515
 DĀ 26 179ff
 DĀ 27 149, 243
 DĀ 28 162
 DĀ 29 445
 DĀ 3062, 163, 393ff, 445
 fourfold division of 396
 overview of discourses .. 395
 school affiliation of 2
 translation of 1
 discourses
 allocation of 4f, 76, 80ff
 formalization of 72, 473ff
 later leveling of 18ff
 oral transmission of 68ff,
 97ff, 449ff, 473ff, 501ff
 without parallels 393ff
 divine eye 9
Divyāvadāna .. 18f, 26, 58, 260,
 265, 384f, 494
dukkha, translation of 12
 dung, simile of carrying 328
Dvedhāvitakka-sutta ..see MN 19
- E**
ekaṃ samayaṃ 53ff
Ekottarika-āgama (T 125)
 additions to 9, 108

EĀ 1	352
EĀ 4.2	243
EĀ 4.6	345
EĀ 4.7	58
EĀ 6.1	9, 497
EĀ 7.1	497
EĀ 8.2	108f
EĀ 10.3	439
EĀ 12.1	276, 521
EĀ 12.3	109
EĀ 13.4	219
EĀ 17.9	518
EĀ 19.3	284
EĀ 20.6	109
EĀ 20.7	109
EĀ 23.1	532
EĀ 23.3	291
EĀ 24.5	272
EĀ 24.8	243, 292
EĀ 25.3	109
EĀ 25.6	55
EĀ 25.10	468
EĀ 28.5	451
EĀ 29.3	109
EĀ 32.7	16
EĀ 35.10	109
EĀ 37.3	542
EĀ 39.1	466
EĀ 39.6	215
EĀ 39.7	216
EĀ 39.9	345
EĀ 39.10	504f
EĀ 40.1	431
EĀ 40.5	62
EĀ 42.3.62, 109, 236, 239, 386	
EĀ 42.6	289
EĀ 43.5	191
EĀ 48.1	443
EĀ 48.4	62

EĀ 49.2	109
EĀ 49.5	520
EĀ 50.4	352
EĀ 50.8	468
school affiliation/translation of	8
translator of	110
<i>Ekottarika-āgama</i> (T 150A)	
EĀ ² 10	468
EĀ ² 20	220
elephant, simile of	163
equivocation	141ff
<i>evaṃ me sutam</i>	53ff, 473f

F

father and mother, sequence of	180f, 439
Fāxiǎn	6, 26, 129, 258, 493
fire	
display of	249ff
element	255, 262, 266, 272, 274ff
<i>samādhi</i> of	260
worshipper, simile of	310f
first <i>saṅgīti</i>	15f, 56, 81, 240, 393f, 421, 423, 452ff
fisherman, simile of	87, 173, 176
fortuitous origination	149ff

G

Gāndhārī <i>Dharmapada</i>	223, 260, 335
Gāndhārī fragments	37, 129, 243, 434, 532
Gavampati	335, 338
geyya, significance of	456
<i>Ghaṭikāra-sutta</i>	see MN 81
<i>Girimānanda-sutta</i>	see AN 10.60

girl, simile of beautiful 186f
 gold, simile of carrying 324
 Gotama, brahmin 186
Govinda-sūtra 2
 Goyama 332
 gradual path 91f, 549ff
 Greek epic 69
 Guṇabhadra 6

H

hall, simile of going up to .. 188
 healing 203ff
 Heaven of the Thirty-three
 Buddha's descent from... 260
 devas visit Buddha 284
 lifespan in 305f
 hemp, simile of carrying ... 323f
 Herodotus 47
 homoioteleuton 473

I

iddhis 285ff
 impicience, doctrine of.. 156f
 inclusivism 249f
 Indian contingent in army 47
 Indra 250
 inferences and memory 96ff
 intoxicants, abstinence from .. 65
 iron, simile of weighing 313
Isidatta-sutta see SN 41.3
Itivuttaka 497f

J

Jambu tree, meditation under .. 260
 Jāṇussoṇi 180
Jātaka
 Jā (no.) 1 345
 Jā (no.) 91 345

Jā I 77 270
 origin in parables 381
 Jaṭilas, conversion of 271
 Jesus as Maitreya 389
 Jīvaka 203
Jīvaka-sūtra 396, 432

K

Kairvarti-sūtra 2, 285
 Kālāmas 509
Kālāma-sutta see AN 3.65
kali 330, 335
Kāmaṭhika-sūtra 396
 Kamboja 46
kammapatha 380
Kāraṇavādi-sūtra 2, 396
 karma, debate on 299ff
Karmavibhaṅga 387
Karmavibhaṅgopadeśa .. 382, 465
 Kāsi 46
Kasibhāradvāja-sutta ... see SN 7.11
kaṣiṇa 277f, 306
kaṣiṇāyatana 417
 Kassapa, Acela 514ff
 Kassapa, brahmin 186
 Kassapa, Buddha 18ff, 513
 Kassapa brothers 271
Kāśyapa-sūtra 88
Kaṭṭha Upaniṣad 118
Kathāvatthu 344
Kāyabhāvanā-sūtra 2, 396
khiḍḍāpadosikā 133
Khuddaka-nikāya 455
 Khujjuttarā 497ff
Kokālika-sutta 30
 Koṇḍañña 454
 Kosala 18, 46

<i>Kṣudrakavastu</i>	238
Kumārakassapa	295ff, 321ff
Kuru	46
<i>Kūṭadanta-sutta</i>	see DN 5
<i>Kūṭatāṇḍya-sūtra</i>	2

L

ladder, simile of	188
<i>Lakkhaṇa-sutta</i>	see DN 30
<i>Laṭṭikopama-sutta</i> ...	see MN 66
Leonidas	47
leper, simile of	533f
levitation	266ff, 281ff
lifespan, de- or increase of ..	364ff
<i>Lohitya-sūtra</i>	2, 396
Lokakṣema	110
<i>Lokapaññatti</i>	423

M

Maccha	46
<i>Madhyama-āgama</i>	
MĀ 1	451, 466
MĀ 8	431
MĀ 9	486, 503ff
MĀ 15	439, 508f
MĀ 16	342, 509
MĀ 19	510f
MĀ 20	509
MĀ 21	290
MĀ 28	198
MĀ 29	486, 511f
MĀ 30	275
MĀ 31	116
MĀ 32	512f
MĀ 33	485
MĀ 34	514f
MĀ 58	216
MĀ 59	516f

MĀ 63	25, 442
MĀ 66	383ff
MĀ 67	356ff
MĀ 70	349ff, 517
MĀ 71	295ff, 322ff
MĀ 72	292
MĀ 74	288f
MĀ 78	283
MĀ 79	55, 517f
MĀ 83	290, 492
MĀ 84	415
MĀ 85	451, 518f
MĀ 86	514
MĀ 87	55
MĀ 93	486
MĀ 95	451
MĀ 97	32ff, 519f
MĀ 98	276, 521
MĀ 101	222, 521ff
MĀ 102	523f
MĀ 104	293, 524ff
MĀ 111	526f
MĀ 112	527ff
MĀ 113	529f
MĀ 116	530f
MĀ 123	291
MĀ 127	514
MĀ 128	531f
MĀ 132	482, 486
MĀ 133	112, 531
MĀ 134	252
MĀ 146	65
MĀ 151	47, 97
MĀ 152	182
MĀ 153	171, 223, 533f
MĀ 154	199, 535f
MĀ 158	537f
MĀ 161	486
MĀ 162	275f

- MĀ 163..... 538
 MĀ 164..... 539
 MĀ 165..... 256
 MĀ 171..... 527
 MĀ 172..... 469
 MĀ 179..... 540
 MĀ 180..... 532
 MĀ 181..... 540
 MĀ 184..... 541f
 MĀ 185..... 244
 MĀ 186..... 342f
 MĀ 187..... 276, 543f
 MĀ 189..... 116, 544
 MĀ 190..... 55, 544f
 MĀ 191..... 463
 MĀ 192..... 545f
 MĀ 198..... 546f
 MĀ 200..... 98, 191, 468
 MĀ 201..... 191, 547f
 MĀ 204..... 548f
 MĀ 205..... 191
 MĀ 207..... 549
 MĀ 208..... 162, 549ff
 MĀ 209..... 551f
 MĀ 210..... 115
 MĀ 212..... 487
 MĀ 213..... 536
 MĀ 214..... 552
 MĀ 215..... 277
 MĀ 221..... 107
 MĀ 222..... 423, 514
 school affiliation/translation
 of 4
 Magadha..... 46
Māgandiya-sutta.....see MN 75
Mahācattārīsaka-sutta..see MN
 117
 Mahādeva352ff
Mahāgopālaka-sutta ..see MN 33
Mahāgosīṅga-sutta....see MN 32
Mahāgovinda-sutta .. see DN 19
Mahāhatthipadopama-sutta.....
 see MN 28
 Mahākaccāna..... 542f
Mahākaccānabhaddekaratta-
suttasee MN 133
 Mahākassapa.....7, 81, 273f,
 452, 486, 541
Mahalla-sūtra 2, 396
 Mahāmoggallāna 284f, 290,
 540ff
Mahānidāna-sutta ... see DN 15
Mahāniddeśa..... 46
Mahāpadāna-sutta .. see DN 14
Mahāparinibbāna-sutta16f,
 30, 45, see also DN 16
Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra16,
 204, 214, 229, 450, 483
Mahāsakuludāyi-sutta ..see MN
 77
Mahāsamaya-sutta .. see DN 20
 Mahāsāṅghika *Vinaya*..see T 1425
Mahāsatipatṭhāna-suttasee
 DN 22
 Mahāsena 42
Mahāsuññata-sutta ..see MN 122
Mahātaṇhāsāṅkhaya-sutta .. see
 MN 38
Mahāvadāna-sūtra 283, 291
Mahāvamsa 16, 41, 81, 274
Mahāvastu.....25f, 231, 260,
 287, 289, 352, 387, 488
 Mahāvihāra 42
 Mahāvīra 332, 339, 426
Mahāvvyutpatti 102, 413
 Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya* ...see T 1421,
 T 1422
 Maitreya231, 349ff, 517

Maitreyavyākaraṇa.....385

Majjhima-nikāya

MN 1	30, 487
MN 3	460
MN 4	396
MN 5	55, 484
MN 7	306, 486
MN 9	30, 511
MN 10	43, 276, 521
MN 12.....	213, 264, 396, 476, 485
MN 16	476
MN 19	524
MN 20	222, 522f
MN 21	54
MN 22	98, 191, 467
MN 23	345
MN 24	486, 503ff
MN 26	549
MN 27	65, 476
MN 28	275
MN 31	243
MN 32	541
MN 33	450
MN 35	476, 486
MN 36	396
MN 37	284
MN 38	191, 547
MN 41	442
MN 43	306
MN 44	115
MN 47	342f
MN 49	283
MN 50	476
MN 53	476, 484
MN 54	460
MN 55	396
MN 56	112, 531
MN 60	396

MN 63	107
MN 64	191
MN 66	476, 545
MN 72	105, 117ff
MN 74	485
MN 75	171, 223, 306, 534
MN 76	476
MN 77	306, 490, 549
MN 78	540
MN 79	162, 550f
MN 80	551f
MN 81	25
MN 82	482, 486
MN 83	352
MN 85	220, 396, 483
MN 88	552
MN 89	536
MN 90	487
MN 93	47, 97, 180
MN 95	180, 396
MN 99	182, 306
MN 100	250, 396
MN 101	510
MN 102..	120, 160, 166, 171, 396
MN 105	486
MN 109	486
MN 112	276, 544
MN 113	451, 519
MN 115	540
MN 117	116, 445, 544
MN 118	216, 440
MN 121	55, 545
MN 122	462f
MN 123	512f
MN 124	514ff
MN 125	546
MN 127	55, 518
MN 128	292

MN 133.....	256
MN 136.....	527
MN 137.....	538
MN 138.....	539
MN 140.....	275
MN 141.....	116
MN 142.....	532
MN 144.....	486f
MN 147.....	486
nature of.....	4ff
recitation of sections of... 91f	
three sections of.....	427ff
Makkhali Gosala	30
Malla	46
<i>Maṇḍīśa-sūtra</i>	396
<i>Manorathapūraṇī</i>	
Mp I 285	345
Mp II 189.....	455
Mp III 406.....	528
Mp IV 37	106
Māra..174, 177f, 183, 351, 374,	
378, 481f	
Māra's net	177
<i>mātrkāś</i>	213
<i>Māyājāla-sūtra</i>	396
MBSR	220
meal, time of taking	528f
meditation, under Jambu	260
memory, constructive nature of	
.....	96f
merchants, simile of.....	324ff
<i>mettā</i> and protection.....	368
<i>Metta-sutta</i>	117
mindfulness, clinical usage of...	
.....	220
mind-made body	287ff
miracles.....	249ff
Mithra.....	388f
Mokṣala.....	110

moon, worship of	187f
morality, section on... 63ff, 88ff	
mother and father, sequence of	
.....	180f, 439
<i>Mūlapariyāya-sutta</i> ...see MN 1	
Mūlasarvāstivāda <i>Vinaya</i> (Chin).	
..see T 1442, T 1448, T 1450,	
T 1451	
Mūlasarvāstivāda <i>Vinaya</i> (Skt)	
.....291f, 483, 505, see also	
<i>Bhaiṣayavastu, Saṅghabhe-</i>	
<i>davastu, Śayanāsanavastu</i>	
Muṇḍa	16

N

<i>Nettipakaraṇa</i>	465
<i>nikāya</i> , instead of <i>āgama</i> ...	454f
Nirvāṇa here and now	168ff

O

orality...51ff, 79ff, 449ff, 473ff,	
501ff	
oral recitation, functions...488ff	

P

<i>pācittiya</i> rules, concatenation ..83	
Paesi	332, 339, 344
Pakudha Kaccāyana	85, 149
Pāli commentaries, closure ...37ff	
Pāli discourses	
closure of	15ff
historical setting of	44ff
manuscripts of.....	38f
Sri Lankan influence on. .29ff	
Palmyra, simile of	174
Pañcāla	46
Pañcasikha.....	252ff
<i>Pañcatraya-sūtra</i>	396

Pañcattaya-sutta ... see MN 102

Papañcasūdanī

Ps I 197.....512

Ps II 91492

Ps II 103467

Ps II 20867

Ps III 141106

Ps III 277551

Ps IV 94.....544

Ps IV 164.....464

Ps IV 197.....16

parable becoming *jātaka*381

Paramatthajotikā

Pj II 194.....493

Pj II 434.....129

Pj II 477.....30

Pāsādika-sutta see DN 29

Pasenadi..16, 23, 296, 322, 481,
535f, 552

Pāṭaliputta, reference to45

Pāṭikaputta264ff, 281f

Pāṭika-sutta..... see DN 24

pātimokkha..... see code of rules

Paṭisambhidāmagga ...288, 447

Patna *Dharmapada*223, 260,
335, 382

Pāyāsi..... 295ff, 321ff

Pāyāsi-sutta see DN 23

Peking edition

Q 599.....256

Q 754.....219, 492

Q 756.....215

Q 963.....540

Q 979.....256

Q 984.....422

Q 1030..... 20f, 26, 198, 292,
345, 482, 487

Q 1035.....265, 452, 454

Q 5595.....52, 57, 61, 64, 81,

102, 105, 115ff, 121, 127,

136f, 141, 146f, 173, 177,

181, 191, 200, 216, 275,

285, 290, 387, 417, 431,

508, 532, 536, 540, 544

pericopes.....477ff

Persian army, Indians in47

pig (similes)

fight with tiger/lion.....337

rearing of328

Piṅgalātreyā-sūtra2, 396

Pokkharasāti..... 180ff

Poṭṭhapāda-sutta see DN 9

poverty leading to theft.... 361ff

Prajñāpāramitā36

Prasādanīya-sūtra2

Prāsādika-sūtra2

pregnant wife, simile of329

Prṣṭhapāla-sūtra2

Pudgala-sūtra2, 396

Puggalapaññatti468

Puṇṇa Mantāniputta 503f

purification, seven stages ...503ff

Q

questions, undeclared..... 104ff

R

Rājaprasānīya295

rebirth, debate on299ff

recitation,

functions of.....488ff

word by word74

refuge, to oneself208, 350

Reṇu.....45

repetition, as oral feature .477ff

Revata541

right view.....115ff, 175f

river, simile of 189
 robber, simile of 301
Roma(harṣa)ṇa-sūtra 396

S

Saccavibhaṅga-sutta see MN
 141

Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra..36,
 264

Sāgata 275

Sakka.....249ff, 374

Sakkapañha-sutta see DN 21

Saḷāyatanavibhaṅga-sutta... see
 MN 137

Śālya-sūtra 396

Samāṇamañḍikā-sutta .. see MN
 78

Sāmaññaphala-sutta... see DN 2

Samantapāsādikā

Sp I 16..... 455

Sp I 28..... 460

Sp I 60..... 81

Sp IV 789..... 92, 427

Śaṃkara-sūtra 2, 396

sammā diṭṭhi..... see right view

Sammādiṭṭhi-sutta see MN 9

Samyukta-āgama (T 99)

SĀ 58 486

SĀ 88 439

SĀ 95 531

SĀ 98 485

SĀ 104 107

SĀ 107 219

SĀ 110 486

SĀ 166 162

SĀ 197 272

SĀ 230 106

SĀ 254 291

SĀ 267 278

SĀ 302 515

SĀ 344 512

SĀ 379 237

SĀ 465 276

SĀ 490 443

SĀ 498 386

SĀ 505 284

SĀ 507 284

SĀ 535 290

SĀ 536 290

SĀ 541 217

SĀ 549 277

SĀ 565 491

SĀ 566 497

SĀ 570 128f, 496

SĀ 572 497

SĀ 573 516

SĀ 592 198

SĀ 713 417

SĀ 714 215

SĀ 721 216

SĀ 722 216

SĀ 727 210ff

SĀ 810 216, 440

SĀ 830 55

SĀ 835 382

SĀ 912 238

SĀ 931 251

SĀ 962 105, 117, 119

SĀ 965 391

SĀ 979 235f

SĀ 988 284

SĀ 989 284

SĀ 1076 263

SĀ 1079 345

SĀ 1086 177

SĀ 1096 488

SĀ 1135 284

SĀ 1142.....	245	SN 1.38.....	217
SĀ 1188.....	386	SN 4.5.....	488
SĀ 1196.....	262, 282	SN 4.15.....	177
SĀ 1197.....	236, 239	SN 6.2.....	386
SĀ 1249.....	450	SN 6.4.....	283
SĀ 1266.....	486	SN 6.5.....	262, 282, 285
SĀ 1267.....	256	SN 6.14.....	283
SĀ 1289.....	217	SN 6.15.....	234f, 241, 244
SĀ 1321.....	490	SN 7.11.....	73, 485
school affiliation/translation		SN 10.6.....	490
of.....	6	SN 10.8.....	198
<i>Samyukta-āgama</i> (T 100)		SN 12.17.....	515f
discourse without parallels		SN 12.45.....	490
in.....	397	SN 16.9.....	245
SĀ ² 15.....	263	SN 22.1.....	219
SĀ ² 18.....	345, 439	SN 22.81.....	167
SĀ ² 25.....	177	SN 22.85.....	107
SĀ ² 101.....	386	SN 22.100.....	278
SĀ ² 109.....	262, 282	SN 24.37ff.....	162
SĀ ² 110.....	236, 239	SN 35.28.....	271
SĀ ² 117.....	245	SN 35.68.....	106
SĀ ² 156.....	251	SN 35.202.....	484
SĀ ² 180.....	256	SN 40.10.....	284
SĀ ² 186.....	198	SN 41.1.....	497
SĀ ² 196.....	105, 117, 119	SN 41.3.....	128f, 496
SĀ ² 198.....	443	SN 41.5.....	497
SĀ ² 199.....	391	SN 41.9.....	516
SĀ ² 208.....	110	SN 42.12.....	238
SĀ ² 261.....	531	SN 42.13.....	509
SĀ ² 264.....	485	SN 46.14.....	215, 219
SĀ ² 287.....	216	SN 46.15.....	215
SĀ ² 320.....	490	SN 46.16.....	210ff
<i>Samyukta-āgama</i> (T 101)		SN 46.42.....	216
SĀ ³ 1.....	485	SN 46.52.....	417
SĀ ³ 2.....	531	SN 46.53.....	215
<i>Samyutta-nikāya</i>		SN 47.9.....	204ff, 217
manuscripts of.....	39	SN 47.12.....	386
nature of.....	6f	SN 51.10.....	482
SN 1.1.....	256	SN 51.22.....	290

- SN 52.1 290
 SN 52.2 290
 SN 52.10 218
 SN 55.1 382
 SN 55.18 284
 SN 55.19 284
 SN 55.20 284
 SN 56.11 454
Saṅghabhedavastu (Skt)..... 25,
 58, 88, 149, 238, 243, 272,
 286, 483
Saṅghadeva 4
saṅgīti,
 first..... 15, 56, 81, 240, 393f,
 421, 423, 452ff
 function of 434, 490
 second 16, 490
 third 81, 490
Saṅgīti-sūtra.....269, 275, 422,
 433, 489
Saṅjaya Belatṭhiputta .. 85, 148f
Saṅkha..... 374f, 386
 Sanskrit fragments
 Dīrgha-āgama 2, 88, 121,
 179ff, 220, 250, 422, 433f
 Hoernle/Or 88, 121, 146,
 151, 253, 410, 415, 433ff,
 520
 Pelliot..... 136, 173, 177
 S 474..... 512, 515
 SHT I 168 434f
 SHT II 163b 505
 SHT III 803 88, 120, 146
 SHT III 822 520
 SHT III 863 434
 SHT III 878 466
 SHT III 882b 88, 120
 SHT III 895, 991 433
 SHT III 915 434
 SHT IV 32 171, 265
 SHT IV 165.3+4 267, 282
 SHT IV 412.33 433
 SHT V 1119 88
 SHT V 1133a 515
 SHT V 1148 486
 SHT V 1333, 1334 366
 SHT V 1346 542
 SHT V 1571 88, 121
 SHT V 1583 536
 SHT VI 1248 88, 121
 SHT VI 1296 88
 SHT VI 1329 504
 SHT VI 1356 88, 121
 SHT VI 1414, 1559, 1597.....
 433
 SHT VII 1646A 417, 434
 SHT VII 1654 433
 SHT VII 1682 434
 SHT VIII 1857 216
 SHT VIII 1874 88
 SHT VIII 1922 433
 SHT IX 2101 434
 SHT IX 2214 433
 SHT IX 2215 434
 SHT IX 2273, 2362+7119...
 433
 SHT IX 2537, 2538, 2681,
 2785 435
 SHT IX 2787 433
 SHT X 3656 88
 SHT X 3684, 3738, 4175h,
 4178 434
 SHT X 4189 88, 121
 SHT X 4220, 4305 434
 SHT XI 4465c 435
 SHT XI 4597, 5263, 5608....
 434
Sappurisa-sutta see MN 113

Sāratthappakāsinī

Spk I 78	217
Spk I 212	262
Spk I 223	234
Spk I 224	235
Spk I 258	264
Spk I 315	198
Spk II 201	106
Spk II 327	278
Spk II 401	129
Spk III 202	204
<i>Śāriputrābhīdharmā</i>	see T 1548
<i>Śāriputta</i>	6, 54, 107, 213, 290, 422, 434, 503ff, 543
<i>Sarvāstivāda Vinaya</i> ..	see T 1435
<i>Sarveka(?) -sūtra</i>	396
<i>satipaṭṭhāna</i>	208, 215, 218f, 276, 350, 376, 409, 438, 444, 446, 521
and absorption	546f
three	538
<i>Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta</i>	see MN 10
<i>Śaṭṣūtraka-nīpāta</i>	93ff
<i>Śayanāsanavastu</i> (Skt)	198
scientific character, Buddhism ..	341f
seat, taking of low	482f
seeds, simile of	528
self-cremation	264
self-views	153ff
<i>Setakettu</i>	186
seven stages of purification	503ff
seven treasures	216, 351, 356, 374f, 384, 386, 388
<i>Shīhū</i>	32ff
signless concentration	207ff
<i>śikṣādattaka</i>	25

<i>Sikṣāsamuccaya</i>	387
<i>siṃsapā</i>	180, 296
six teachers	84, 149
snake, simile of	467
<i>Soṇa</i>	291, 493f
sound of conch, simile of	314f
sound similarities, oral feature ..	473f
<i>Sparta</i>	47
<i>Śruta-sūtra</i>	2, 396
staircase, simile of	188
<i>stūpas</i> , not mentioned	24f
<i>Subhadda</i>	235f
<i>sugata</i>	112
<i>Sumaṅgalavilāsinī</i>	
Sv I 15	3, 6f, 9
Sv I 26	57
Sv I 49	61
Sv I 77	67
Sv I 116	148
Sv I 118	106
Sv I 119	163
Sv I 127	176
Sv II 500	519
Sv II 546	204
Sv II 615	16
Sv III 829	268
Sv III 858	378
Sv III 872	200
sun, worship of	187f
<i>Sunakkhatta</i>	264ff
<i>Sunetta</i>	186
<i>Sūrasena</i>	46
<i>Sūtrakṛtāṅga</i>	154
<i>sutta</i> , significance of term ..	456
<i>Suttanīpāta</i>	
Sn (no.) 1.4	73, 485
Sn (no.) 3.7	483
Sn 152	117

Sn 231	231
Sn 538	129
Sn 677f	30
Sn 687	260
Sn 766 to 975	103
Sn 1032 to 1039	388
<i>Sūyagada</i>	129
Śvetāmbara canon	295, 465
<i>Śvetāśvara Upaniṣad</i>	177

T

Taishō edition

T 1	see <i>Dīrgha-āgama</i>
T 2	62
T 3	270, 283, 291
T 4	62
T 5	56, 62, 204ff, 230ff, 274, 386
T 6	56, 62, 204ff, 229ff, 274, 386
T 7	62, 230ff, 274, 386
T 10	200, 535
T 11	293
T 12	434
T 13	398, 435, 446, 506
T 14	32ff, 520
T 15	253f
T 18	386
T 21	53ff, 102, 120ff
T 22	149, 243, 286f
T 23	163, 430f
T 25	176
T 26	see <i>Madhyama-āgama</i>
T 27	466
T 30	431
T 38	216
T 44	386, 390
T 45	295ff, 322ff
T 46	288f
T 47	290, 492
T 48	487, 518
T 49	55
T 52	32ff, 520
T 59	530
T 71	47, 97
T 82	469
T 84	532
T 91	107
T 95	345
T 97	422
T 98	422
T 99, T 100, T 101	see <i>Samyukta-āgama</i>
T 110	238
T 123	450
T 125	see <i>Ekottarika-āgama</i>
T 152	163
T 154	542
T 185	273
T 189	273
T 191	273
T 196	273
T 197	25
T 198	103, 163, 265, 382
T 203	253, 345
T 210	382
T 211	382
T 212	220, 292, 469, 491
T 221	110
T 222	110f
T 224	110
T 384	56, 110
T 499	515
T 511	275
T 622	110
T 623	110
T 757	213, 264

T 765	497f	T 1824	176
T 768	163	T 1828	176
T 776	540	T 1830	176
T 816	110	T 2027	56
T 1362	256	T 2085	26, 129, 258, 493
T 1421 ... 21, 26, 56, 59, 176, 273, 291f, 394, 421, 452f, 467, 488, 495f, 505		T 2087	26, 258
T 1422	230	T 2154	40
T 1425	20, 26, 56, 59, 274, 291, 293, 394, 452f, 467, 495, 505	Tambapaṇṇi	16, 46
T 1428 ... 20, 26, 56, 59, 81f, 176, 265, 273f, 291f, 394, 424, 452f, 467, 488, 495, 505		Tārukkha	180ff
T 1429	230	Tathāgata	
T 1435	56, 59, 110, 274, 293, 452, 454, 467, 495f, 505f	after death	105ff, 118f
T 1440 3, 5, 7, 9, 129, 488		significance of term	101ff
T 1442	59, 467, 495	and views	172ff
T 1448	289, 384f	tetralemma	105ff, 118f, 543
T 1450	238, 272f, 488	<i>Tevijja-sutta</i>	see DN 13
T 1451..17, 20, 56, 211, 237f, 265, 274, 394, 452, 454		<i>Thāṇaṅga</i>	426
T 1462	81, 455	<i>Theraḡāthā</i>	
T 1463	274, 452f	Th 20	388
T 1464	23	Th 901	288
T 1509	56, 450	Th 1024	58
T 1537	540	Th 1041	505
T 1545	129, 133, 285	Thermopylae	47
T 1548. 63, 84, 102, 121, 140, 142f, 159, 165, 168, 173, 176		thief, execution of	363
T 1592	163	Thullanandā	494
T 1648	163, 287, 382	"thus have I heard"	53ff, 473f
T 1709	176	Tocharian fragment	532
T 1764	176	Todeyya	180
		treasures, seven..	216, 351, 356, 374f, 384, 386, 388
		<i>Tridaṇḍi-sūtra</i>	2, 396
		twin miracle	270ff
		U	
		<i>Udāna</i>	
		concatenation in	84
		Ud 1.1–3	491
		Ud 5.6	493
		Ud 6.1	482

Ud 6.4	163
Ud 6.5	161
Ud 7.5	497
Ud 8.6	484
Ud 8.9	263, 274
Ud 8.10	263, 274
<i>Udānavarga</i> ..178, 223, 260, 336	
Udāyin.....	545f, 551
<i>uddesa</i>	524
<i>Uddesavibhaṅga-sutta</i> ..see MN	
138	
<i>udumbara</i>	226f, 231
<i>Udumbarika(-sīhanāda)-sutta</i> ...	
.....see DN 25	
Uighur fragments	211, 532
undeclared questions	104ff
<i>Upakkilesa-sutta</i> ... see MN 128	
Upāli, conversion of.....	111f
<i>Upāli-sutta</i>	see MN 56
<i>uttarimanussadhamma</i> ..182, 268	

V

Vajjī	46
<i>vajrakāya</i>	233
Vāmadeva	186
Vaṃsa	46
Varuṇa	325
Vasabha.....	42
Vāsetṭha	181ff
<i>Vāsiṣṭha-sūtra</i>	179ff
Vassakāra	480f
Vatṭagāmaṇī-Abhaya	41
<i>Vavahāra</i>	452
<i>vedalla</i> , significance of	457
Vedas, three or four.....	181
Vedic oral tradition	70f, 97f
<i>Vekhanassa-sutta</i> ... see MN 80	
Vessāmitta.....	186

<i>veyyākaraṇa</i> , significance of....	
.....	456
<i>Vibhaṅga</i>	466
views, count of sixty-two ..128f	
Vimalakīrti	497
<i>Vīmaṃsaka-sutta</i>see MN 47	
<i>Vīmānavatthu</i>	331
<i>Vimuttimagga</i>	see T 1648
<i>Vinaya</i> (Theravāda)	
Vin I 1	491
Vin I 18.....	483
Vin I 21	488
Vin I 25.....	274, 306
Vin I 34.....	271
Vin I 105.....	293, 490
Vin I 119, 127	449
Vin I 140.....	496
Vin I 169.....	494
Vin I 182.....	291
Vin I 196.....	493f
Vin I 227.....	484
Vin I 274.....	203
Vin I 287.....	505
Vin I 302.....	221
Vin I 337f.....	449
Vin I 350	292
Vin II 8, 55.....	449
Vin II 72	46
Vin II 75	59
Vin II 76	274
Vin II 98	449
Vin II 128.....	483
Vin II 156.....	198
Vin II 249.....	451
Vin II 270.....	203
Vin II 284.....	240
Vin II 287... 56, 81, 394, 453,	
455	
Vin II 296.....	54

Vin II 299	449
Vin II 305	388
Vin III 8	456
Vin III 28	524
Vin III 91	182
Vin III 159	274
Vin IV 14	495
Vin IV 21	477
Vin IV 62	230
Vin IV 109	274f
Vin IV 133	467
Vin IV 158	449
Vin IV 254ff	494
Vin V 3ff	46
<i>Vinayavibhāṣā</i>	see T 1440
Vipassī	269, 290
<i>virīya</i> , translation of	207
<i>Visuddhimagga</i>	
Vism 95	427
Vism 173	277
Vism 174	278
Vism 405	288
Vism 442	455
Vism 609	278
Vism 672	507
<i>Vitakkasaṇṭhāna-sutta</i> . see MN	
20	

<i>Viyāhapaṇṇati</i>	465
----------------------------	-----

W

waxing syllables	394, 457f, 473ff, 499
wheel-turning king	45, 216, 351ff, 424f, 517
wife, simile of pregnant	329

X

Xerxes	47f
Xuánzàng	26, 258

Y

Yamataggi	186
Yījīng	238
Yona	46ff
Yugoslavian epic	69

Z

Zhī Qiān	120
Zhú Fóniàn	1, 8, 110, 430f

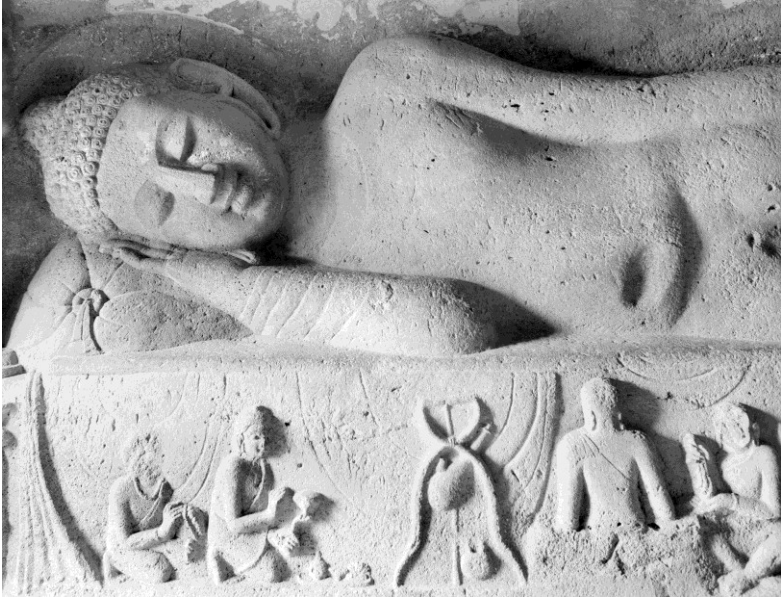


Plate 1

The Mahāparinibbāna

Ajaṇṭā, courtesy John C. Huntington



Plate 2

Sakka Visits the Meditating Buddha (1)

Gandhāra, courtesy Kurita Isao



Plate 3
Sakka Visits the Meditating Buddha (2)
Gandhāra



Plate 4

The First Meditation

Bodhgaya, courtesy Monika Zin



Plate 5

The Future Buddha

Kanaganahalli, courtesy Christian Luczanitz