

Debate with a Sceptic – The *Dīrgha-āgama* Parallel to the *Pāyāsi-sutta* (1)

Anālayo*

Introduction

The *Pāyāsi-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* reports how the monk Kumārakassapa faced a ‘debate with a sceptic’ by the name of Pāyāsi.¹ The *Pāyāsi-sutta* has three Chinese parallels, found in the *Dīrgha-āgama*, a collection apparently transmitted within the Dharmaguptaka tradition;² in the *Madhyama-āgama*, generally assigned by scholars to the Sarvāstivāda tradition;³ and in an individual translation of uncertain school affiliation.⁴

Besides these four Buddhist discourse versions, another parallel can be found in the *Rājaprasānīya*, the second *Upāṅga* of the Śvetāmbara canon (Bollée 2002). Although the Buddhist and

* Centre for Buddhist Studies, University of Hamburg, Germany; Dharma Drum Buddhist College, Taiwan.

¹ DN 23 at DN II 316,1 to 358,3. Another well-known description of a Buddhist monk debating a sceptic attitude towards religious claims is the *Milindapañha*; for a detailed survey of editions and translations of this work cf. Skilling (2010: 14–18).

² DĀ 7 at T I 42b24 to 47a12; on the school affiliation cf., e.g., Demiéville (1951: 252f), Brough (1962/2001: 50), Lü (1963: 242), Bareau (1966), Waldschmidt (1980: 136), Mayeda (1985: 97), Enomoto (1986: 25) and Oberlies (2003: 44).

³ MĀ 71 at T I 525a10 to 532b22; on the school affiliation cf., e.g., Lü (1963: 242), Waldschmidt (1980: 136), Enomoto (1984), Mayeda (1985: 98), Enomoto (1986: 21), Minh Chau (1991: 27) and Oberlies (2003: 48); for a reply to the criticism raised in this respect in Chung (2011) cf. Anālayo (2012).

⁴ T 45 at T I 831a6 to 835c7.

Jain traditions share a range of similarities in general,⁵ for them to have parallel versions of a discourse is a rather remarkable phenomenon.⁶

In what follows, I translate the first part of the *Dirgha-āgama* version, followed by a brief study. A translation of the remainder of the *Dirgha-āgama* version, together with a study of the overall significance of the discourse, will appear in a subsequent paper.

Translation

Discourse to Pāyāsi⁷

At one time Kumārakassapa,⁸ who was dwelling together with five hundred monks in the country of Kosala, had arrived by

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), Jain (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: 297–300).

⁷ The above translated part of DĀ 7 is found at T I 42b24 to 45a28. My rendering of DĀ 7 has been improved by being checked against the Japanese translation (unfortunately my ignorance of Japanese prevents me from doing the same on my own). In the notes to my translation, 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 the present paper. In order to facilitate comparison with the *Pāyāsi-sutta*, I employ Pāli terminology in my translation, without thereby intending to take a position on the language of the original text of the *Dirgha-āgama* or on the Pāli language being in principle preferable.

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.

stages at the brahmin village of Setavyā.⁹ Then Kumāarakassapa stayed in a Simsapā grove north of the village of Setavyā.¹⁰

At that time there was a brahmin by the name of Pāyāsi who was staying in the village of Setavyā.¹¹ This village was rich and delightful, [inhabited] by many people, with abundant timber. King Pasenadi had granted this village as a special fief to the brahmin Pāyāsi, [42c] as a sacred allotment. The brahmin Pāyāsi kept holding a peculiar view, telling people that: “There is no other world, there is no rebirth, there is no result of good and evil.”¹²

At that time, the people from the village of Setavyā heard that Kumāarakassapa, together with five-hundred monks, had by stages come through the country of Kosala, arriving at this Simsapā grove. They said among themselves: “This Kumāarakassapa 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, won’t that 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?”

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 *simsāpa* grove located to the north of a village cf. Anālayo (2011: 559 note 152). Malalasekera (1938/1998: 1278) takes this description to be reflecting actual conditions.

¹¹ DĀ 7 at T I 42b28: 弊宿 (or 蔽宿), identified by Akanuma (1930/1994: 501) as a rendering of Pāyāsi.

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, 無眾生和 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 gaṇibhūtā* (B°, C° and S° read *saṅghasaṅghī*), which Rhys Davids (1910: 350 note 1) qualifies as “somewhat ambiguous”. According to MĀ 71 at T I 525a24, the inhabitants

The attendant replied: “I heard that Kumārakassapa, at the head of five-hundred monks, is dwelling in the country of Kosala and has arrived at the Siṃsapā 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 see him.”

Then the brahmin Pāyāsi told the attendant: “You quickly go and tell those people: ‘Just wait, we shall all go together to approach and see [Kassapa]. Why? That person is a fool, he deceives [people in] the world by saying that there is another world, saying that there is rebirth, saying that there is a result of good and evil. Yet, in reality there is no other world, there is no rebirth, 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 see [Kassapa] together.’” The village people replied: “It is well, it is well, if he can come, we shall all go together.” The envoy 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 Siṃsapā 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?”

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.

¹⁴ For a discussion of the pericope description of behavioural variations and the significance of sitting down silently cf. Anālayo (2011: 452f).

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 no rebirth, 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 [in the sky], 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, not human”.

Kassapa replied: “From this you can understand that there certainly is another world, and there is also rebirth and a result of good and evil.”

The brahmin said: “Though 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.”

Kassapa asked: “Is there a reason enabling you to know that there is no other world, there is no rebirth, 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 relatives and friends who had become very sick. I approached them 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,¹⁵ gossips, is covetous, has aversion,¹⁶ and [holds] wrong view, with the breaking up of the body at death these will all go to hell.

¹⁵ The sequence of the four verbal deeds is unexpected, as the standard listings in other discourses usually begin with falsehood.

¹⁶ DĀ 7 at T I 43a14: 嫉妬, which according to Hirakawa (1997: 367) can, besides its more common sense of *īṛṣyā* or *mātsarya*, also render *vidveṣa*. Judging from the standard listings of the ten unwholesome *karmapatha*, this would be more appropriate in the present context.

“From the outset I did not believe this. Why? So far I never saw the dead come back and tell me that they reached such a place. If there were people who come and tell me that they have reached such a place, I would certainly accept and believe it.

“Now you, who are my relatives, 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 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, they have passed away but up to now have not come. They are my relatives; they 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. 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: ‘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 [of the king] are leading that thief to the executioner, that thief says with gentle words to his watchmen: ‘Could you [just] 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, will the watchmen be willing to let him go?”

The brahmin replied: [43b] “No, they won’t.”

Kassapa said further: “So these are fellow human beings, all are in this present world, yet they will not let him go. Let alone your relatives [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 benevolence, they are not of the same species [as humans], the world of the dead and of the living are different. If [your relatives] speak 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. After that I will come back.’ Will they get to be set free?”

The brahmin replied: “No, they won’t.”¹⁷

Kassapa said further: “With the help of this analogy, you can on your own fully understand. Why keep being confused and giving rise to your own wrong view?”¹⁸

The brahmin said: “Though you give this explanation, saying that there is another world, I still say that there is none.”

Kassapa said again: “Is there 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 relatives who had become very sick. I approached them and said: ‘Recluses and brahmins each keep holding a peculiar view, saying that there is another world, saying that 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 [hold] 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. Why? So far I never saw the dead come back and tell me that they reached such a place. If there were people who come and tell me that they have reached such a rebirth, I would certainly believe it.

¹⁷ In DN 23 at DN II 322,12 Pāyāsi is not made to acknowledge that his relatives would not stand a chance to come 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 similar 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 has mentioned the existence of the sun and the moon.

¹⁸ In the corresponding sections in the parallel versions, Kumārakassapa does not explicitly indicate that Pāyāsi is confused or that his view is wrong.

“Now you, who are my relatives, 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, they have passed away but up to now have not come. They are my relatives; they 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 deliver another simile to you. 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.¹⁹ 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 relatives and friends, who were in possession of the ten wholesome [deeds], were certainly reborn in heaven, enjoying themselves with the five cords of sense pleasures, thoroughly enjoying themselves. Would

¹⁹ On the term Jambudvīpa cf. Wujastyk (2004).

they be willing to come back again to this cesspit[-like] Jambudīpa?”

[The brahmin] replied: “No, they won’t.”

Kassapa said further: “With the help of this analogy, you can on your own fully understand. Why keep being confused and giving rise to your own wrong view?”

The brahmin said: “Though you give this explanation, saying that there is another world, I still say that there is none.”

Kassapa said again: “Is there 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 relatives who had become really sick.²⁰ I approached them 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.

“I also do not believe this. Why? So far I never saw the dead come back and tell me that they reached such a place. If there were people who come and tell me that they have reached such a place, I will certainly believe it.

“Now you, who are my relatives, are in possession of these five moral observances. With the breaking up of the body at the end of life 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

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 life in heaven (introduced with 復次, corresponding to *puna ca param*), without this exposition being prompted by a corresponding argument by Pāyāsi.

such a fortunate heaven, you should come back to tell me and let me know, afterwards I shall believe it.²¹

“Kassapa, they have passed away but up to now have not come. They are my relatives; they 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 month make a year like this, and the life span of those *devas* is a thousand years. How is it, brahmin? Those relatives of yours, who were in possession of the five moral observances, at the breaking up of the body, at death, were certainly reborn up in the heaven of the Thirty-three. Being reborn as *devas*, they thought: ‘I have just been reborn here. I shall for two or three days enjoy myself and after that go down and tell you.’ Would you get to see them?”

[The brahmin] replied: “No, I wouldn’t. I would already have passed away, how could I meet and see them?” The brahmin said [further]: “I do not believe you. Who has come and told you that the *devas* of the Thirty-three have a life span like that?”

Kassapa said: “Wise ones understand with the help of a simile, so I will now deliver another simile to you. Just like, for example, a man who is blind since birth, [44a] who does not recognize the five colours, [does not recognize] blue, yellow, red, white,²² [does not recognize] what is gross or subtle, what is long

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 wonder why they should come and inform him.

²² Even though DĀ 7 speaks of five colours, it only lists four. 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 among the Pāli discourses the same listing of four colours recurs as part of the simile of a blind men in MN 75 at MN I 509,15 and MN 99 at MN II 201,14, and again in relation to dyeing a cloth in MN 7 at MN I 36,17. In addition to these four, Vin I 25,31 lists crystal colour (*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 MN II 13,28 and MN II 14,33.

or short, and who also has not seen the sun, the moon, the constellation of the stars,²³ hills and valleys. Another person asks him: ‘Blue, yellow, red, white, the five colours, how are they?’ The blind man answers: ‘There are no five colours’; (*like this for*) what is gross or subtle, what is long or short, the sun, the moon, the constellation of the stars, hills and valleys – regarding 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. Why? In the world there are the five colours, there is blue, yellow, red, 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 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: “Though you say that this exists, I still do not believe it.”²⁴

Kassapa said again: “Is there another reason that makes you know that this does not exist?”

[The brahmin] replied: “Kassapa, in the village that is my fief some person committed thievery.²⁵ 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.’

²³ Adopting the variant 像 instead of 象.

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.

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 for Pāyāsi himself, i.e., if he knew that on doing good he will 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 if 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,²⁶ 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 dependents that stay in your house guard you?”

[The brahmin] replied: “They guarded me.”

[Kassapa] asked: “Brahmin, did those family dependents see your consciousness go out or come in?”²⁷

[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 [seeing it] 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,²⁸ 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.²⁹ Through the power of the divine eye they

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.

²⁷ DĀ 7 at T I 44a22 refers to the consciousness that goes out or comes in as 識神, on which cf. Zacchetti (2010: 173 note 87).

²⁸ Adopting the variant 損 instead of 捐.

²⁹ The corresponding section in DN 23 at DN II 334,2 does not refer to the development of the divine eye. The same is, however, found in MĀ 71 at T I

observe how living beings on passing away here are reborn there, and from there are reborn here, with long or short life span, beautiful or ugly complexion, receiving results according to their actions in good and evil destinies. The [monks] 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. [44b] Brahmin, from this you can understand that there certainly is another world.”

The brahmin said: “Though you give this explanation, saying that there is another world, according to my view, there still is none.”

Kassapa said again: “Is there 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 some 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 for the consciousness, yet we all did not see it. I again told my attendants to cut off the meat and seek for the consciousness, yet we still did not see it. I again told my attendants to sever the tendons and veins and seek for the consciousness between the bones, yet we still did not see it. I again told my attendants to break the bones and extract the marrow to seek for 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, at a time long 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 the merchants all stayed overnight and left at dawn.

528c15 and T 45 at T I 833c12, where the same point has already been made earlier (see above note 17).

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.³⁰ The brahmin thought again: ‘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, so 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 should go 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 thereupon went 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.³¹ He took an axe 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. At this time the fire had already gone out.’

³⁰ MĀ 71 at T I 529a4 explains that the merchants had set out in a haste and therefore forgotten the small child.

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.

“[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 first-sticks and wood to make fire appear.³² He added more fire wood until it was burning. He told the small child: ‘That is the proper method, like this, if one wishes to get fire. One should not break up the fire wood or pound it with a pestle, trying to get it.’³³

“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 life span, beautiful or ugly complexion, receiving results according to their actions in good and evil destinies. The [monks] 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: “Though you give this explanation, saying that there is another world, according to my view, there still is none.”

Kassapa said again: “Is there another reason for you to know that there is no other world?”

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.

³³ Adopting the variant 薪 instead of 析.

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 some 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: ‘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.³⁴ 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: “Mankind is 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: “Though you give this explanation, saying that there is another world, according to my view, there certainly is none.”

Kassapa said: “Is there another reason for you to know that there is no other world?”

³⁴ According to DN 23 at DN II 334,19 and MĀ 71 at T I 528b2 they strangled him.

[The brahmin explained: “There is!”

Kassapa asked: “What is the reason for you to know that?”]

The brahmin replied: “I had relatives who had become very sick.³⁵ Then I approached them and said [to my assistants]: ‘Take this sick man and put him on his right side.’ [The sick person] bended 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 bended 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 bended 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: ‘You, make a sound, you, make a sound!’³⁶ 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

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.

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 smashing the conch to get it make sound.

hand and mouth and by blowing air that afterwards it makes sound.’

“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 your own suffering and vexation.”

(To be continued).

Study

The basic pattern of arguments and counterarguments in the above translated *Dīrgha-āgama* discourse and its Buddhist parallels proceeds similarly, with some variations in sequence, which is a natural feature of orally transmitted material.³⁷ In what follows, I survey the progression of the debate up to the present point, in order to get an impression of its overall dynamics.

(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 sceptic of religious claims cannot easily dismiss and thus would have 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

³⁷ Cf. in more detail Anālayo (2011: 874–876).

“another world” shows Kassapa’s debating skill in quickly devising an argument that his opponent cannot easily dismiss.

(2) Being in this way pressed for some evidence that supports his position, Pāyāsi comes out with the story of those 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 precepts. The point here could be that by highlighting the keeping of the precepts of those who passed away it becomes a little less credible that they would not keep their promise just because coming to earth is for them like approaching a cesspit.

Kassapa meets this variation with the argument that time in heaven is different from earth. This reply invalidates the idea that they must be coming in order not to break their promise, as by the time they keep their 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.

(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 that the fact that one does not have 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 *Dirgha-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 *Dirgha-āgama* version, not translated in the present paper.

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 thus become the heir to the family property. As a result of her foolish action, she and the foetus pass away. With this lively parable Kassapa drives home the fact that the maturation of fruits is something one better leaves to time, instead of forcefully trying to interfere with it.

(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.³⁸

(7) In reply to Kassapa's illustration of the inability to see the mind travelling, in the *Dirgha-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 is too foolish to make a fire.

The *Dīgha-nikāya* version adopts a slightly different sequence in its series of argument. In reply to Kassapa's reference

³⁸ MĀ 71 and T 45 do not have this as the first in their series of thief illustrations, but only as their second.

to the theme of visibility, 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 topic in the *Dīrgha-āgama* discourse:

(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 thoroughly 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.³⁹ 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.⁴⁰ 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 dynamics 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 quite directly for being a fool. This impression finds confirmation in what follows, as from now on in all versions Pāyāsi simply refuses to accept Kassapa's presentation, but is no longer able to come up with counterarguments. A translation and study of this part of the discourse will be the topic of a subsequent paper.

³⁹ See above note 35.

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 nāma' assa jīvaṃ nikkhamantaṃ passeyyāma ti*.

Already with this first 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 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.

Acknowledgement:

I am indebted to Rod Bucknell, Sean Fargo, Giuliana Martini and Ken Su for comments and suggestions.

Abbreviations:

B ^c	Burmese edition
C ^c	Ceylonese edition
DĀ	<i>Dīrgha-āgama</i> (T 1)
DN	<i>Dīgha-nikāya</i>
MĀ	<i>Madhyama-āgama</i> (T 26)
MN	<i>Majjhima-nikāya</i>
T	Taishō edition (CBETA)
S ^c	Siamese edition
Vin	<i>Vinaya</i>

Bibliography:

- Akanuma, Chizen 1930/1994. *A Dictionary of Buddhist Proper Names*, Delhi: Sri Satguru.
- Anālayo 2011. *A Comparative Study of the Majjhima-nikāya*, Taipei: Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation.
- Anālayo 2012. *Madhyama-āgama Studies*, Hamburg: Hamburg University Press (forthcoming).
- Balbir, Nalini 2000. “Jain-Buddhist Dialogue: Materials from the Pāli Scriptures”, *Journal of the Pali Text Society*, 26: 1–42.

- Bapat, P.V. 1928. “A Comparative Study of a Few Jain Ardhamāgadhi Texts with the Texts of the Buddhist Pali Canon”, *Sir Asutosh Memorial Volume*, Patna: J.N. Samaddar, 2: 91–105.
- Bareau, André 1966. “L’origine du Dīrgha-Āgama traduit en chinois par Buddhayaśas”, in *Essays Offered to G.H. Luce by his Colleagues and Friends in Honour of his Seventy-fifth Birthday*, B. Shin et al. (eds.), Switzerland, Ascona: Artibus Asiae, 49–58.
- Bohn, Wolfgang 1921. *Die Religion des Jina und ihr Verhältnis zum Buddhismus*, München: Oskar Schloss.
- Bollée, Willem B. 2002. *The Story of Paesi (Paesi-kahāṇayam), Soul and Body in Ancient India, A Dialogue on Materialism, Text, Translation, Notes and Commentary*, Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz.
- Bronkhorst, Johannes 1993/2000. *The Two Traditions of Meditation in Ancient India*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Bronkhorst, Johannes 1999. “The Buddha and the Jainas Reconsidered”, in *Approaches to Jaina Studies: Philosophy, Logic, Rituals and Symbols*, N.K. Wagle et al. (ed.), Toronto: University of Toronto, Centre for South Asian Studies, 86–90.
- Brough, John 1962/2001. *The Gāndhārī Dharmapada, Edited with an Introduction and Commentary*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Caillat, Colette 2003. “Gleanings from a Comparative Reading of Early Canonical Buddhist and Jaina Texts”, *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*, 26(1): 25–50.
- Chaudhary, Angraj 1994. “Jain Culture and Śramaṇa Tradition in the Pāli Tipiṭaka”, in *Essays on Buddhism and Pāli Literature*, A. Chaudhary (ed.), Delhi: Eastern Books, 124–135.
- Chung, Jin-il and Fukita, Takamichi 2011: *A Survey of the Sanskrit Fragments Corresponding to the Chinese Madhyama-āgama, Including References to Sanskrit Parallels, Citations, Numerical Categories of Doctrinal Concepts and Stock Phrases*, Tokyo: Sankibo Press.

- Demiéville, Paul 1951. “A propos du Concile de Vaiśālī”, *T'oung Pao*, 40: 239–296.
- Enomoto, Fumio 1984. “The Formation and Development of the Sarvāstivāda Scriptures”, in *Proceedings of the Thirty-First International Congress of Human Sciences in Asia and North Africa, Tokyo-Kyoto 31st August - 7th September 1983*, T. Yamamoto (ed.), Tokyo: Tōhō Gakkai, 197–198.
- Enomoto, Fumio 1986. “On the Formation of the Original Texts of the Chinese Āgamas”, *Buddhist Studies Review*, 3: 19–30.
- Frauwallner, Erich 1956. *Geschichte der indischen Philosophie - Die naturphilosophischen Schulen und das Vaisesika-System, das System der Jaina, der Materialismus*, Salzburg: Otto Müller, vol. 2.
- Glaserapp, Helmuth von 1951. “Die Polemik der Buddhisten und Brahmanen gegen die Jainas”, in *Beiträge zur indischen Philologie und Altertumskunde, W. Schubring Felicitation Volume*, Hamburg: Cram de Gruyter, 74–83.
- Gombrich, Richard F. 1994. “The Buddha and the Jains, A Reply to Professor Bronkhorst”, *Asiatische Studien*, 48: 1069–1096.
- Hirakawa, Akira 1997. *Buddhist Chinese-Sanskrit Dictionary*, Tokyo: Reiyukai.
- Jacobi, Herman 1880. “On Mahāvīra and His Predecessors”, *Indian Antiquary*, 158–163.
- Jain, Bhagchandra 1966. “The Jaina Theory of Karma as Reflected in Pāli Literature”, *Nagpur University Journal*, 16 (2): 168–176.
- Jain, Bhagchandra 1972. *Jainism in Buddhist Literature*, Nagpur: Alok Prakashan.
- Jain, Kamta Prasad 1926. “The Jaina References in the Buddhist Literature”, *The Indian Historical Quarterly*, 2: 698–709.
- Jaini, Padmanabh S. 1974. “On the Sarvajñatva (Omniscience) of Mahāvīra and the Buddha”, in *Buddhist Studies in Honour of I.B. Horner*, L.S. Cousins et al. (ed.), Dordrecht: D. Reidel, 71–90.

- Jaini, Padmanabh S. 2003. “Cātuyāma-saṃvara in the Pāli Canon”, in *Essays in Jaina Philosophy and Religion*, P. Balcerowicz (ed.), Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 119–135.
- Leumann, Ernst 1885. “Beziehungen der Jaina-Literatur zu anderen Literaturkreisen Indiens”, *Actes du Sixième Congrès International des Orientalistes tenu en 1883 à Leyde, Troisième partie, Section 2, Aryenne*, Leiden: Brill, 3 (2): 467–564.
- Lü, Cheng 1963. “Āgama”, in *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*, G.P. Malalasekera (ed.), Sri Lanka: Department of Buddhist Affairs, 1 (2): 241–244.
- Malalasekera, G.P. 1938/1998. *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names*, Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal, vol. 2.
- Mayeda [=Maeda], Egaku 1985. “Japanese Studies on the Schools of the Chinese Āgamas”, in *Zur Schulzugehörigkeit von Werken der Hīnayāna-Literatur, Erster Teil*, H. Bechert (ed.), Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1: 94–103.
- Minh Chau, Thich 1991: *The Chinese Madhyama Āgama and the Pāli Majjhima Nikāya*, Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Nakamura, Hajime 1983. “Common Elements in Early Jain and Buddhist Literature”, *Indologica Taurensia*, 11: 303–330.
- Norman, K. R. 1989/1993. “Common Terminology in Early Buddhist and Jain Texts”, in *Collected Papers*, K.R. Norman (ed.), Oxford: Pali Text Society, 4: 264–270.
- Oberlies, Thomas 2003. “Ein bibliographischer Überblick über die kanonischen Texte der Śrāvakayāna-Schulen des Buddhismus (ausgenommen der des Mahāvihāra-Theravāda)”, *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens*, 47: 37–84.
- Rhys Davids, T.W. 1910. *Dialogues of the Buddha, Translated from the Pāli of the Dīgha Nikāya*, London: Oxford University Press, vol. 2.
- Ruben, Walter 1935. “Materialismus im Leben des alten Indiens”, *Acta Orientalia*, 13: 128–162.

- Skilling, Peter 2010. “Problems with Milinda (1), The Opening Verses and Prose of the Printed Siamese Milindapañha”, *Journal of the Centre for Buddhist Studies, Sri Lanka*, 8: 1–24.
- Tatia, N. 1980. “The Interaction of Jainism and Buddhism and Its Impact on the History of Buddhist Monasticism”, in *Studies in the History of Buddhism, Papers presented at the International Conference on the History of Buddhism at the University of Wisconsin, Madison, WIS, USA, August 19–21, 1976*, A.K. Narain (ed.), Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation, 321–338.
- Tatia, N. 1983. “Parallel Developments in the Meaning of Parijñā (Prakrit Pariṇṇā, Pāli Pariññā) in the Canonical Literature of the Jainas and the Buddhists”, *Indologica Taurinensia*, 11: 293–302.
- Tatia, N. 1993. “The Affinity Between Early Jainism and Buddhism”, *Indian Journal of Buddhist Studies*, 5 (2):1–17.
- Waldschmidt, Ernst 1980. “Central Asian Sūtra Fragments and their Relation to the Chinese Āgamas”, in *The Language of the Earliest Buddhist Tradition*, H. Bechert (ed.), Göttingen. Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 136–174.
- Watanabe, Kenji 2003. “A Comparative Study of Passages from Early Buddhist and Jaina Texts: Āyār 2.15 : Dhṛp 183 and Isibh 29.19 : Dhṛp 360, 361”, in *Essays in Jaina Philosophy and Religion*, P. Balcerowicz (ed.), Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 137–152.
- Wujastyk, Dominik 2004. “Jambudvīpa: Apples or Plumes?”, in *Studies in the History of the Exact Sciences in Honour of David Pingree*, C. Burnett et al. (ed.), Leiden: Brill, 287–301.
- Zacchetti, Stefano 2010. “Some Remarks on the Authorship and Chronology of the Yin Chi Ru Jing Zhu 陰持入經註, The Second Phase in the Development of Early Chinese Buddhist Exegetical Literature”, in *Buddhist Asia 2, Papers from the Second Conference of Buddhist Studies Held in Naples in June 2004*, G. Orofino and S. Vita (ed.), Kyoto: Italian School of East Asian Studies, 141–198.