

Protecting Oneself and Others Through Mindfulness – The Acrobat Simile in the *Samyukta-āgama*

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The present article offers a translation of the *Samyukta-āgama* parallel to the *Sedaka-sutta* of the *Samyutta-nikāya* (SN 47.19), followed by a study of the acrobat simile found in this discourse, which illustrates how the practice of mindfulness becomes the way to protect oneself as well as others.

INTRODUCTION

With this paper I continue a theme already broached in a previous study, in which I had examined the need to balance dedication to one's own inner development with concern for the welfare of others. My earlier study had been based on a comparison of the qualities stipulated in the *Mahā-gopālaka-sutta* and its parallels as requirements for being able to come to growth in the Buddha's dispensation. A quality found in all versions of this discourse mentions the four establishments of mindfulness, *satipaṭ-thāna*.¹

The way these four establishments of mindfulness relate to concern for others is described in the discourse that is the topic of my present investigation: the *Sedaka-sutta* of the *Samyutta-nikāya*.² This discourse delivers a simile that depicts two acrobats who perform with the help of a bamboo pole. In what follows, I translate the *Samyukta-āgama* parallel to the *Sedaka-sutta*, followed by examining the significance of this simile. Besides this *Samyukta-āgama* parallel, which with considerable probability stems from the Mūlasarvāstivāda tradition,³ another parallel to the *Sedaka-sutta* has been preserved as a discourse quotation in the *Bhaiṣajya-vastu* of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*.⁴

TRANSLATION⁵

[Discourse on the Simile of the Pole Acrobat]⁶

Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was dwelling among the Kosalans, in a *siṃsapā* grove north of the town of Sedaka.⁷ At that time, the Blessed One said to the monks:

"In former times, there was a teacher of acrobatics done in dependence on a pole. He placed the pole straight up on his shoulder and told his disciple:⁸ 'Getting up and down on the pole,⁹ you protect me and I will

also protect you. Protecting each other we will put on a show and gain much wealth.'

Then the disciple of acrobatics said to the teacher of acrobatics: 'It won't do, as you said. Instead, we should each take care to protect ourselves. [Like this] we will put on a show and gain much wealth. We will be physically at ease and yet I will get down safely.'

The teacher of acrobatics said: 'As you said, we will take care to protect ourselves, this is correct and is also the meaning of what I said'.¹⁰

[The Buddha said]:¹¹ "Having protected oneself, one right away protects the other; when protecting the other and oneself, this is protection indeed."¹²

[How does protecting oneself protect others?]¹³ Becoming familiar with one's own mind,¹⁴ developing it, protecting it accordingly and attaining realization — this is called 'protecting oneself protects others'.

How does protecting others protect oneself? By the gift of fearlessness, the gift of non-violation, the gift of harmlessness,¹⁵ by having a mind of benevolence and empathy for the other — this is called 'protecting others protects oneself'.

For this reason, monks, you should train yourself like this:¹⁶ 'Protecting myself I will develop the four spheres of mindfulness, protecting others I will develop the four spheres of mindfulness.'¹⁷

When the Buddha had spoken this discourse, the monks, who had heard what the Buddha had said, were delighted and received it respectfully.¹⁸

STUDY

In what follows, I first study the situation described in the simile in order to appreciate its significance. Then I examine in what way mindfulness protects oneself and thereby benefits others; followed by examining the reverse case, where protecting others benefits oneself. In the final part of my study, I turn to the four *satipaṭṭhānas*, trying to ascertain what aspect of their development is particularly related to protecting oneself as well as others.

1) The Acrobat Simile

For the two acrobats to successfully perform their feat, the teacher would have to keep the pole firmly straight up and the disciple would have to maintain balance while being on top of the pole.¹⁹ In view of this need for cooperation, the suggestion made by the teacher that "you protect me and I will also protect you" seems quite meaningful. It appears to imply that he wishes to protect the disciple by keeping the pole firmly upright. At the same time, he hopes that the disciple will protect him by avoiding any jerky movement that upsets the balance of the pole and makes it difficult to keep the pole up straight. The teacher's concern would also be that, whether he makes a mistake or the disciple makes a mistake, in both cases the one who falls down and risks injury is the disciple. Hence as the teacher and with a natural attitude of concern, he expresses himself in terms of protecting the other.

The disapproval voiced by the disciple: "It won't do, as you said" comes somewhat unexpected in view of the fact that the simile introduces her as the disciple.²⁰ The actual perspective introduced by the disciple that "we should each take care to protect ourselves" brings a refinement to the basic principle of harmonious cooperation, indicating that each of them should not give all priority to protecting the other. This indication would not imply a rejection of the need for both to be concerned about the other. Rather, it introduces the proper perspective for achieving smooth cooperation, namely being first of all centred oneself.

If the teacher were to excessively worry about the disciple, this might distract his attention from the need to keep his own balance and result in knocking over the whole set up. Similarly, the disciple should not be overly concerned about the teacher, but needs to first of all pay attention to her own maintenance of balance, otherwise she might get distracted from the need to keep her own balance and risks falling off the pole.

At this point of the simile, a significant difference occurs between the Pāli and Chinese versions. In the Pāli version in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya*, the Buddha simply acknowledges that the remark made by the disciple is the right method.²¹ In the *Saṃyukta-āgama* version, however, the teacher himself acknowledges the correctness of what the disciple has said, after which he adds that this "is also the meaning of what I said", that is, this much was anyway implicit in his presentation. This in itself minor difference results in the two protagonists of the simile appearing in quite a different light.

The impression that the Pāli version of the simile gives is that the teacher needed to be corrected by his disciple. This is surprising, since he would be the one who taught the disciple the trade of acrobatics. Hence his un-

derstanding of the basic principles of this trade should be better than those of his disciple. In this way, on reading the Pāli version one has the impression that this teacher was not really up to the position of teaching that he had assumed, since in relation to so fundamental a matter as how to perform properly, he needed to get the priorities clarified by his own disciple.

In contrast, in the *Samyukta-āgama* version the teacher indicates that he had already been aware of the point made by the disciple. Even though his concern for the disciple had let him to express his advice in terms of protecting the other, it was implicit in his presentation that they both need to protect themselves by keeping their own balance. In this way, the manner in which the two protagonists interact in the *Samyukta-āgama* version fits the roles given to them better. The disciple's remark does not imply any ignorance on the side of the teacher, but only has the function of throwing into relief a principle that is implicit in the teacher's proposal to protect each other.

In spite of this difference, however, the Pāli and Chinese versions agree on the basic message of the simile, in that for the two acrobats to be able to properly perform their feat, they first of all need to make sure that they are centred themselves. Only based on having in such a way protected themselves will they be able to protect each other.

2) Protecting Oneself

The notion that mindfulness has a protective function is not confined to the present discourse, as it recurs in other passages, according to which mindfulness is the one factor to guard and protect the mind.²² The same nuance of protection can be found, for example, in the context of a simile that illustrates progress on the path with the example of a chariot, where mindfulness corresponds to the shielding function afforded by the canopy of the chariot.²³

Ñāṇaponika (1968/1986: 35 and 23) explains: "Just as certain reflex movements automatically protect the body, similarly the mind needs spontaneous spiritual and moral self-protection. The practice of bare attention will provide this vital function". "The non-violent procedure of bare attention endows the meditator with the light but sure touch so essential for handling the ... evasive and refractory nature of the mind. It also enables him to deal smoothly with the various difficult situations and obstacles met with in daily life".

In other words, mindfulness makes one aware of what is happening in the mind. It is based on such recognition that something can be done about the arising of unwholesome reactions or the presence of detrimental states of mind. Unless recognition through mindfulness is established, greed, anger and delusion will have free range to work havoc in the mind, hiding under any of the various pretences and excuses they are capable of assuming so as to disguise their true nature. Mindfulness, however, enables seeing through these different disguises and rationalizations. By detecting the presence of mental defilements, established mindfulness can counteract one's innate unwillingness to admit to oneself that one is angry, greedy or confused. Whatever diversionary manoeuvre the mental impurities have staged to avoid being detected, bare attention unmasks these and reveals the actual condition of one's own mental household. In this way, mindfulness can indeed become a real protection.

The successful achievement of such self-protection through mindfulness finds illustration in another simile, which compares *sati* to a careful charioteer.²⁴ The implications of this simile are self-evident, as without the presence of mindfulness an 'accident' is prone to happen. Applying the indications given in the *Sedaka-sutta* to this simile, a careful charioteer is one who by maintaining awareness while driving through life's vicissitudes does the needful to avoid an accident, whereby he protects not only himself, but also others.

The protective function of mindfulness receives another illustration in a simile that describes the gatekeeper of a town in a border district. According to a version of the respective discourse found in the *Madhyama-āgama* preserved in Chinese translation,²⁵ the simile runs like this:

"It is just as if in the king's border town a chief officer is appointed as gatekeeper,²⁶ one who is sharp-witted and wise in making decisions, brave and resolute, of excellent counsel, who allows entry to the good and keeps out the bad, in order to ensure peace within and control outside enemies.²⁷ In the same way, the noble disciple continuously practices mindfulness, achieves right mindfulness, always recalling and not forgetting what was done or heard long ago. This is reckoned to be the noble disciple's gaining of the 'gate-keeping chief officer' of mindfulness, which removes what is evil and unwholesome and develops wholesome states."²⁸

The simile of mindfulness as a gatekeeper recurs in another discourse,²⁹ where its task is to show the way to the two 'messengers' of tranquillity and insight so that they can deliver the 'message' of Nirvāṇa to consciousness.

These two similes can be seen to highlight two complementary aspects of the protective function of the gatekeeper of mindfulness. The first simile shows mindfulness in its more general task of preventing the intrusion of evil and encouraging what is wholesome in the mind. The second simile is more specifically addressed to higher levels of insight, where mindfulness protects by guiding the two chief aspects of mental cultivation – tranquillity and insight – in such a way that they lead to their final purpose: liberation.

The gate-keeping function of mindfulness comes up again in another discourse from the *Madhyama-āgama* in the context of a description of sense-restraint. According to the indications given in this discourse, to restrain the senses requires to be "guarding and protecting the mind with mindfulness and becoming accomplished [in such protection]".³⁰ Although in this case the Pāli parallel does not mention the protective role of mindfulness,³¹ the same is explicitly related to sense-restraint in another Pāli discourse found in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*.³²

The *Indriyabhāvanā-sutta* and its *Samyukta-āgama* parallel confirm that to deal appropriately with the senses is a task that requires some form of inner protection, clarifying that simply to block out sensory input is not the way how mental cultivation should be undertaken. They report that the Buddha, somewhat tongue in cheek, told a contemporary Brahmin practitioner that, if the solution were simply to avoid seeing and hearing in principle, then the blind and the deaf must be reckoned highly accomplished practitioners.³³

The above passages indicate in what way through mindfulness one can "become familiar with one's own mind, develop it, protect it accordingly and attain realization", as suggested by the *Samyukta-āgama* parallel to the *Sedaka-sutta*. The two parallel versions agree in proposing that by protecting oneself in such a way one also protects others.³⁴ According to the Pāli commentary on the *Sedaka-sutta*, the implication of this dictum can be seen when a monk successfully develops his practice until he becomes an arahant. Others who see him become inspired and, because of having aroused faith in him, are reborn in heaven.³⁵

This seems a somewhat narrow interpretation of the simile, which in a way restricts the efficacy of protecting others through self-protection to the case of arahants, or at least to those who are so well advanced that the inspiration they provide will lead others to rebirth in heaven. One might also wonder if the protection to be given to others is just about a heavenly rebirth, since the inspiration gained from witnessing accomplished

practitioners would be more fruitful if it leads to developing one's own meditation practice.

In a short study dedicated to the *Sedaka-sutta*, Ñāṇaponika (1967/1990: 5–7) envisages a considerably broader scope of implications for the effects of self-protection on others. He explains that, in particular from an ethical perspective, "self-protection will safeguard others, individuals and society, against our own unrestrained passions and selfish impulses ... they will be safe from our reckless greed for possessions and power, from our unrestrained lust and sensuality, from our envy and jealousy; safe from the disruptive consequences of our hate and enmity".

In contrast, "if we ourselves think of nothing else than to crave and grasp ... then we may rouse or strengthen these possessive instincts in others ... our own conduct may induce others to join us in the common satisfaction of rapacious desires; or we may arouse in them feelings of resentment and competitiveness." In the end, "greed and hate are, indeed, like contagious diseases. If we protect ourselves against these evil infections, we shall to some extent at least also protect others."

Hence protecting oneself through mindfulness can have a rather broad range of possible benefits for others, even if one has not yet become an arahant. In sum, in the words of Ñāṇaponika (1967/1990: 8), "he who earnestly devotes himself to moral self-improvement and spiritual self-development will be a strong and active force for good in the world", a succinct statement with wide ramifications.

3) Protecting Others

The commentary on the *Sedaka-sutta* illustrates how protecting others leads to protecting oneself with the example of a monk who gains the four *jhānas* through practice of the *brahmavihāras* and, having made *jhāna* the basis for reviewing formations, develops insight and becomes an arahant.³⁶ This commentarial explanation again seems to present a somewhat narrow perspective.

Ñāṇaponika (1967/1990: 11f) explains that someone who is patient and forbearing towards others "will protect himself better than he could with physical strength or with any mighty weapon". "He who does not resort to force or coercion will, under normal conditions, rarely become an object of violence himself ... and if he should encounter violence, he will bring it to an early end as he will not perpetuate hostility through vengeance".³⁷

Hence, even without having developed the *brahmavihāras* up to *jhāna* level and then using this to develop insight and become an arahant, there seems to be considerable scope for protection of others to benefit oneself. As the *Samyukta-āgama* parallel to the *Sedaka-sutta* points out, one who protects others gives them "the gift of fearlessness, the gift of non-violation, the gift of harmlessness". Making the '*dāna*' preparations required to be able to offer such gifts will immediately have considerable wholesome repercussions on one's own mind. Such form of '*dāna*' involves a training and educating of the mind in wholesomeness that has its own intrinsic value, independent of whoever may eventually be the recipients of these gifts.

Here it is perhaps also noteworthy that the so-called *Metta-sutta* of the *Sutta-nipāta* refers to mindfulness. After describing the radiation of benevolence in all directions without any obstruction, which involves a pervasion of the whole world with benevolence that should be maintained in any bodily posture, the discourse continues by enjoining that "one should practise this mindfulness".³⁸ This expression hints at a close relationship between the practice of mindfulness and the opening of the heart achieved through such boundless meditative cultivation of benevolence.

As the disciple in the *Sedaka-sutta* and its *Samyukta-āgama* parallel clarifies, protecting others needs to have a firm foundation in self-protection. The same requirement is illustrated in the *Sallekha-sutta* with the example of drowning in a quagmire. The *Madhyama-āgama* parallel to the *Sallekha-sutta* presents this simile as follows:

"For one who is untamed himself to tame others who are untamed – this is impossible. For one who is drowning himself to rescue others who are drowning – this is impossible ... [However], for one who is tamed himself to tame others who are untamed – this is possible. For one who is not drowning himself to rescue others who are drowning – this is possible."³⁹

Ñāṇaponika (1967/1990: 8) explains that "if we leave unresolved the actual or potential sources of social evil within ourselves, our external social activity will be either futile or markedly incomplete. Therefore, if we are moved by a spirit of social responsibility, we must not shirk the hard task of moral and spiritual self-development. Preoccupation with social activities must not be made an excuse or escape from the first duty, to tidy up one's own house first."

The same conclusion suggests itself also from a study of the *Mahāgopālaka-sutta* and its parallels. While this discourse clearly highlights the

importance of concern for others as an integral aspect of growth in the Dharma, at the same time it puts such concern for others into proper perspective by subordinating it to the principal task of progress towards liberation.⁴⁰

4) The Four *Satipaṭṭhānas*

The *Sedaka-sutta* and its parallel conclude with the Buddha recommending the practice of the four establishments of mindfulness as the way to protect oneself and others. This points to the way such self protection and protecting of others should be practically implemented. Here the question may be asked if any particular aspect of the development of the four *satipaṭṭhānas* could be specifically related to this interrelation between protecting oneself and others.

Now according to the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* and its parallels, the practice of mindfulness should be undertaken "internally", "externally" and "internally and externally".⁴¹ The same specification is associated with *satipaṭṭhāna* in a range of other texts, for example in Abhidharma works like the *Dharmaskandha* and the *Śāriputrābhidharma*,⁴² or in the *Daśabhūmika-sūtra*,⁴³ as well as in *Prajñāpāramitā* literature.⁴⁴ Thus, this injunction can safely be taken to represent a key aspect of *satipaṭṭhāna* practice recognized in various Buddhist traditions.

A discourse in the *Samyutta-nikāya* and its *Madhyama-āgama* parallel report an instruction to a monk who had requested the Buddha for a brief teaching that would enable him to engage in intensive practice. The instruction he received was that he should practise the four *satipaṭṭhānas* internally, externally and internally-and-externally.⁴⁵ The *Samyutta-nikāya* discourse explicitly specifies that this instruction is about a three-fold mode of practice, *tividha*. In other words, practice of *satipaṭṭhāna* in this way evolves through three distinct levels. These begin with internal mindfulness as a foundation and then proceed to mindfulness directed externally, which eventually culminates in a mode of practice that is internal-and-external. Moreover, such practice is explicitly recommended to someone who wishes to strive earnestly for progress towards liberation, indicating that externally developed mindfulness is as much required for such progress as its internal counterpart.

According to an indication provided in the *Janavasabha-sutta* and its *Dīrgha-āgama* parallel, contemplating internally refers to developing mindfulness in regard to oneself, while to undertake external contemplation involves awareness of the same phenomena in others.⁴⁶ This suggests that mindfulness practice undertaken according to the

scheme of the four *satipaṭṭhānas* can also include directing awareness to others.⁴⁷ Elsewhere I have discussed in more detail that such awareness need not be taken to require supernatural powers, but can be implemented by becoming aware of the feelings and mental states of another through carefully observation of their facial expression, tone of voice and physical posture.⁴⁸

Practice undertaken in this way would require continuity of mindfulness during activities and thus is obviously not confined to formal sitting, where in fact the opportunities to observe another would be rather limited. Needless to say, this three-level approach is clearly based on first of all establishing mindfulness internally, for which formal meditation, ideally undertaken periodically under strict retreat conditions, provides the necessary foundation. But based on having laid and maintained such foundation, mindfulness could then continue to observe those phenomena, which have already been seen with awareness within oneself, as and when they manifest in others.

In this way, awareness of a particular condition within oneself would naturally lead to becoming aware of and eventually developing empathy for the same condition when it occurs within others. In turn, empathy developed for others makes it easier to maintain a balanced state of observation when the same happens within oneself, without immediately reacting and trying to suppress, or else avoiding recognition of what takes place in order to safeguard one's self esteem. This eventually leads to a level of practice where, whatever happens within oneself and within others, is seen concurrently and in its reciprocal conditioning relationship.⁴⁹

Although awareness of oneself and others would be the result of a natural evolution, the fact that the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* devotes explicit instructions on these three modes makes it clear that such natural evolution needs to be consciously encouraged. That is, one who is too much concerned with contemplating internally needs to make a conscious effort to extend practice to external phenomena, just as one who is too much given to the external needs to strengthen formal practice undertaken internally. As a result of such practice, eventually introversion and extroversion could be brought into a harmonious balance.⁵⁰

Protecting oneself and others through *satipaṭṭhāna* in this way does not appear to be an extraneous addition to mindfulness practice, whose real purpose is something different. Instead, the acrobat simile seems to point to an essential and intrinsic part of properly undertaken mindfulness

practice. If developed in this balanced manner, mindfulness meditation, while giving clear priority to self development, concurrently fosters the benefit of others and of society at large.⁵¹

"Those streams that are in the world,
Are held in check by mindfulness".⁵²

ABBREVIATIONS

- AN *Aṅguttara-nikāya*
B^e Burmese edition
C^e Ceylonese edition
D Derge edition
DĀ *Dīrgha-āgama* (T 1)
DN *Dīgha-nikāya*
EĀ *Ekottarika-āgama* (T 125)
MĀ *Madhyama-āgama* (T 26)
MN *Majjhima-nikāya*
Mp *Manorathapūraṇī*
Pj *Paramatthajotikā*
Q Peking edition
S^e Siamese edition
SĀ *Samyukta-āgama* (T 99)
SĀ² 'other' *Samyukta-āgama* (T 100)
SN *Samyutta-nikāya*
Sn *Sutta-nipāta*
Spk *Sāratthappakāsinī*
Sv *Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*
T Taishō (CBETA)
[] text has been supplemented

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NOTES

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- ¹ Cf. Anālayo 2010: 7.
- ² SN 47.19 at SN V 168 to 169; studies of the significance of this discourse can be found in Debes 1964 and Ñāṇaponika 1967/1990.
- ³ Cf. e.g. Lü 1963: 242, Waldschmidt 1980: 136, Mayeda 1985: 99, Enomoto 1986: 23, Schmithausen 1987: 306, Choong 2000: 6 note 18, Hiraoka 2000, Harrison 2002: 1, Oberlies 2003: 64, Bucknell 2006: 685, and Glass 2010.
- ⁴ T 1448 at T XXIV 32b9 to 32c1, noted as a parallel to SĀ 619 by Chung 2008: 157. The corresponding part in the Tibetan translation of the *Bhaiṣaj-yavastu* is abbreviated and only gives the title of the discourse.
- ⁵ SĀ 619 at T II 173b5 to 173b19. For ease of comparison, in my translation I employ Pāli terminology, without thereby intending to take a position on the original language of the *Samyukta-āgama* manuscript used for translation, which according to de Jong 1981: 108 would have been Sanskrit.
- ⁶ The *Samyukta-āgama* does not give a title, hence I adopt the title given in a reference to this discourse in D 1 *kha* 62a7 or Q 1030 *ge* 57b8 as *shing 'dzeg gi shing lta bu 'i mdo*, literally: "the discourse on the simile of the pole of [one] who climbs up a pole".
- ⁷ SĀ 619 at T II 173b6: 私伽陀, identified as corresponding to Sedaka or Setaka by Akanuma 1930/1994: 608. SN 47.19 at SN V 168,16 locates Sedaka among the Sumbhas (Spk III 226,6 explains that Sumbha is the name of a *janapada*), the same village is also mentioned, e.g., in SN 46.30

at SN V 89,8 (B^c, C^c and S^c: Setaka) and SN 47.20 at SN V 169,26. While SN 47.19 does not give any indication regarding the grove in which the Buddha was dwelling, the otherwise unrelated DN 23 at DN II 316,6 refers to a *siṃsapā* grove (*Dalbergia sisu*) north of a town in Kosala, although in this case the name of the town is Setavyā.

⁸ SN 47.19 at SN V 168,18 does not give further specification about where the pole was put; the *Bhaisajyavastu* version, T 1448 at T XXIV 32b11, also reports that it was placed on the shoulder.

⁹ SN 47.19 does not specify that the protecting of each other should be done while getting up and down the pole, in fact in its account the teacher at first told the disciple to get up on his shoulders, which the latter then did, so that in SN 47.19 their discussion takes place with the disciple already standing on the shoulders of his teacher.

¹⁰ SN 47.19 at SN V 169,9 does not have a reply by the teacher, continuing only with a brief remark: "that is the method", *so tattha nāyo*. While Woodward 1930/1979: 149 takes this to be still part of the disciple's speech, Bodhi 2000: 1648 translates it as part of the explanation subsequently given by the Buddha. The passage in question reads: ... *orohissāmā ti, so tattha nāyo ti bhagavā avoca* (C^c: *orohessāmā*, B^c: *bhagavā etad avoca*). Since the first *ti* would conclude the disciple's remark, the subsequent section would indeed be part of the Buddha's explanation. In the *Bhaisajyavastu* version, T 1448 at T XXIV 32b19, no reply by the teacher is found, instead of which the Buddha comments that the indications made by the disciple are the correct method.

¹¹ In SĀ 619 it is not clear at what point the speech of the teacher ends and the comment by the Buddha starts. My assumption that this occurs at the present junction is based on the parallel versions. Judging from the narrative flow in SĀ 619, it could alternatively be the teacher who draws this general conclusion, in which case the Buddha's comment would only start with the remark regarding becoming familiar with one's own mind.

¹² In SN 47.19 at SN V 169,11 the Buddha at first recommends the practice of *satipaṭṭhāna* to protect oneself and to protect another, followed by indicating that protecting oneself one protects others and protecting others one protects oneself, *attānam, bhikkhave, rakkhanto paraṃ rakkhati, paraṃ rakkhanto attānaṃ rakkhatī ti*. The corresponding passage in the *Bhaisajyavastu*, T 1448 at T XXIV 32b20, differs: "If one is able to protect oneself, one is able to protect others. If one [just] has the wish to protect others, one is in turn not able to protect oneself", 若能守護自身, 即能守護於他, 若欲守護於他, 即便不能自守. In evaluating this difference, it needs to be taken into account that the intrusion of negations into a context where they were not originally found is not an unusual occurrence in the early discourses, cf. Anālayo 2007: 40 and Anālayo 2009: 14, so that it is possible that the final part of the present passage in the *Bhaisajyavastu* is the result of a similar type of error and that the reading should rather be, in closer correspondence to the parallels: "If one has the wish to protect others, one is in turn able to protect oneself".

- ¹³ The supplementation of this query suggests itself from the context and the parallel versions, SN 47.19 at SN V 169,¹⁵ and T 1448 at T XXIV 32b22, where such a query serves as introduction to the corresponding explanation.
- ¹⁴ SN 47.19 at SN V 169,¹⁶ does not explicitly specify that the mind is the object of development, reading (in reply to the Buddha's question on how one protects oneself): "by practising, developing and making much of it", *āsevanāya bhāvanāya bahulīkammaena*, which according to the commentarial explanation, Spk III 227,2, refers to one's meditation practice in particular, *kammaṭṭhānāsevanāya*. The *Bhaisajyavastu* version, T 1448 at T XXIV 32b22, also does not mention becoming familiar with the mind.
- ¹⁵ Instead of these three, SN 47.19 at SN V 169,¹⁹ speaks only of patience and harmlessness, *khantiyā avihimsāya*. The *Bhaisajyavastu* version, T 1448 at T XXIV 32b24, mentions not annoying, not angering and not harming another, 由不惱他, 亦不瞋他, 并不損害. The three versions agree that one protects others through benevolence and empathy.
- ¹⁶ An injunction to the monks that they should train themselves like this is not found in SN 47.19. The *Bhaisajyavastu* version, T 1448 at T XXIV 32b26 and 32c1, has such an injunction twice, before and after the statement according to which, in order to protect oneself and to protect another, one should practice the four *satipaṭṭhānas*.
- ¹⁷ The *Bhaisajyavastu* version, T 1448 at T XXIV 32b29, continues by briefly listing the four *satipaṭṭhānas* (body, feelings, mental states and dharmas), 所謂身受心法念等住處.
- ¹⁸ Such a standard conclusion to the discourse is not found in SN 47.19.
- ¹⁹ Olendzki 2010: 127f explains that the image of the acrobat needing to pay attention to his or her own physical sense of balance mirrors the task of a meditator, in that "the acrobat, like the meditator, is bringing conscious awareness to a process that is always occurring but is generally overlooked". The simile thus exemplifies that "mindfulness is a tool for looking inward, adjusting our balance".
- ²⁰ Whereas SĀ 619 does not mention the name of the disciple or make any further indications, SN 47.19 at SN V 168,²⁴ gives the disciple's name as Medhakathālikā, where the feminine ending gives the impression that the disciple would have been a girl. This is, however, not the position taken in the commentary, Spk III 226,7, which explains *itthilingavasena laddhanāmaṃ* and then refers to Medhakathālikā as *antevāsiko*, and thus as a male disciple; cf. also Bodhi 2000: 1925 note 167. Hecker 2003: 303 follows the indication in the discourse and refers to Medhakathālikā as "Gehilfin", i.e., a female assistant. According to the *Bhaisajyavastu* version, T 1448 at T XXIV 32b12, the task of the disciple was to get on top of the pole and do a "dancing spectacle", 舞戲. Based on the information from these two canonical sources, it seems that the performance perhaps combined an acrobatic feat with a display of female charms, something fairly common in acrobatic performances.
- ²¹ Cf. above note 10.
- ²² DN 33 at DN III 269,²⁷: *bhikkhu satārakkhena cetasā sammannāgato hoti, evaṃ kho, āvuso, bhikkhu ekārakkho hoti*; cf. also AN 10.20 at AN V 30,²⁴.

A brief reference to what appears to be the same quality in DĀ 10 at T I 57b1 does not spell out the implications. A counterpart to AN 10.20, EĀ 46.2 at T II 775c28, only speaks of protecting the mind, without bringing in the role of mindfulness in this respect. Sv III 1051,15 and Mp V 8,11 understand the above passage in DN 33 and AN 10.20 to imply that an arahant will be protected at any time by mindfulness in regard to the three pathways of action.

²³ SN 1.46 (1.5.6) at SN I 33,11, with parallels in SĀ 587 at T II 156a20 and SĀ² 171 at T II 437a22.

²⁴ SN 45.4 at SN V 6,10: *sati ārakkhasārathi* (C^e: *ārakkhasārathī*). The parallel version SĀ 769 at T II 201a4 indicates that the imagery of the skilled driver stands for "being well protected by right mindfulness", 正念善護持.

²⁵ According to modern scholarship, the *Madhyama-āgama* preserved in Chinese translation can probably be attributed to a Sarvāstivāda line of transmission; cf. e.g. Lü 1963: 242, Waldschmidt 1980: 136, Enomoto 1984, Mayeda 1985: 98, Minh Chau 1991: 27 and Oberlies 2003: 48, with a recent contribution in Chung 2011: 13–34 and a reply in Anālayo 2012: 516–521.

²⁶ MĀ 3 at T I 423c14: 大將; Hirakawa 1997: 392 gives, as equivalents for 將, such terms as *pariṇāyaka*, *vināyaka*, *senāpati*. The version of this simile found in AN 7.63 at AN IV 110,29 does not have a comparable specification of the gatekeeper.

²⁷ A reference to ensuring peace within and controlling outside enemies is not found in the parallel AN 7.63.

²⁸ AN 7.63 at AN IV 111,5 adds that, besides overcoming what is unwholesome and faulty and developing what is wholesome and faultless, the noble disciple in this way also preserves himself in purity, *suddham attānaṃ pariharati*. Other instances of this simile can be found in the *Ekottarika-āgama*, EĀ 39.4 at T II 730b6, and in an *Udāna* collection preserved in Chinese translation, T 212 at T IV 652c9.

²⁹ SN 35.204 at SN IV 194,34 identifies mindfulness as the gatekeeper, whereas the parallel version SĀ 1175 at T II 316a3 speaks of four gatekeepers which then illustrate the four *satipaṭṭhānas*, 四守門者, 謂四念處. In a parallel preserved as a discourse quotation in Śamathadeva's compendium of discourse quotations from the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, D 4094 *nyu* 43b4 or Q 5595 *thu* 83a2, the gatekeeper represents mindfulness of the body, *lus su gtogs pa'i dran pa*, equivalent to the Pāli term *kāyagatāsati*.

³⁰ MĀ 144 at T I 652b11: 守護念心而得成就. Another parallel, T 70 at T I 875b12, recommends to "protect one's own mind [by] protecting the mind [through] mindfulness", 自護其意護意念.

³¹ MN 107 at MN III 2,13.

³² Yit 2004: 185 points out that AN 5.114 at AN III 138,20 also associates sense-restraint with "protective mindfulness", *ārakkhasatino*, and speaks of being "endowed with a mind protected by mindfulness", *satārakkhena cetasā samannāgata*, a nuance of protection found in relation to sense-restraint also in the *Mahāvastu*, Senart 1897: 52,4: *ārakṣāsmṛti ... araktena cetasa samanvāgataḥ*, and in the *Saṅghabhedavastu*, Gnoli 1978: 240,20: *gupta-*

smṛtimānasaḥ; cf. also the *Śrāvakabhūmi*, Śrāvakabhūmi Study Group 1998: 100,8+18 and 101,2, with its Chinese counterpart in T 1579 at T XXX 406b24 and 406c3+10, which gives a detailed exposition on the implications of *āraḥṣitasmṛti*/防守正念, *nīpakasmṛti*/委正念, and *smṛtyāraḥṣitamānasa*/念防護意, under the heading of *indriyasamvara*.

³³ Whereas MN 152 at MN III 298,¹⁷ reports that the Buddha mentioned the blind and the deaf, according to SĀ 282 at T II 78b1 he only referred to someone who is blind, the case of someone who is deaf then being brought up by Ānanda. That the remark about the deaf was made by Ānanda is also recorded in the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, T 1545 at T XXVII 729b6; cf. also T 1546 at T XXVIII 271a18 (Buddhavarman) and T 1547 at T XXVIII 439c19 (Saṅghabhūti). Bronkhorst 1993/2000: x sees a contradiction between this criticism of the "development of the faculties" through avoiding sights and sounds on the one hand and the approving attitude shown in other discourses towards deeper states of concentration during which sights or sounds are no longer experienced on the other hand, e.g., in DN 16 at DN II 131,²⁰. Yet, the present passage does not imply a criticism of deeper stages of concentration during which sensory experience is absent, but rather a criticism of attempting to deal with sensory impact during daily life by simply trying to avoid it, instead of developing equanimity towards whatever is experienced. In fact, the theme of MN 152 at MN III 298,⁸ is *indriyabhāvanā*, the "development of the faculties", a formulation that clearly points to a close relationship of the discourse's topic with *indriyasamvara*, "sense-restraint". For a critical review of Bronkhorst's argument cf. also Pāsādika 2009: 92f.

³⁴ Cf. above note 12.

³⁵ Spk III 227,3: *yo bhikkhu ... mūlakammaṭṭhānaṃ asevanto bhāvento arahattaṃ pāpuṇāti, atha naṃ paro disvā ... tasmim cittaṃ pasādetvā sagga-parāyano hoti – ayaṃ attānaṃ rakkhanto paraṃ rakkhati nāma.*

³⁶ Spk III 227,13: *yo bhikkhu ... brahmavihāresu tika-catukka-jhānāni nibbatetvā, jhānaṃ pādakaṃ katvā, saṅkhāre sammāsanto vipassanaṃ vaḍḍhetvā arahattaṃ pāpuṇāti – ayaṃ paraṃ rakkhanto attānaṃ rakkhati nāma ti veditabbaṃ.*

³⁷ Cf. also Debvedi 1990: 42f, who speaks of using "our practice to improve the world, by training to see it in a more skillful way ... one who practises like this practices correctly in relation to oneself and also ... practises in the world in such a way as to be helpful, not harmful. Helping others also helps us to develop good qualities in ourselves ... in this way the practitioner sees the relationship between his own personal practice and the practice of relating to the world".

³⁸ Translation by Norman 1992: 17 of Sn 151: *etaṃ satim adhiṭṭheyya*; cf. also Bodhi 2011: 26. Maithrimurthi 2004: 177 additionally mentions SN 42.8 at SN IV 322,4 and AN 8.1 at AN IV 150,16 as instances where the practice of *mettā* is related to being mindful, *patissata*. Sn 151 continues by indicating that being determined on this [form of] mindfulness is said to be [one's] divine abode, *brahman etaṃ vihāraṃ idha-m-āhu*. Kuan 2008: 56 comments that Sn 151 "probably does not mean that loving-kindness itself is a

kind of *sati*, but it implies that the process of developing loving-kindness involves *sati*".

- ³⁹ MĀ 91 at T I 574b2, parallel to MN 8 at MN I 45,3, which indicates that the predicament in question is sinking in a quagmire; for another parallel cf. EĀ 47.9 at T II 784a20. A discourse quotation thematizing the need to tame oneself before taming others, apparently from the present discourse, can be found in T 212 at T IV 712c9, which at T IV 723b17 also quotes the simile of pulling someone out of the mud. Mahāsi 1981/2006: 34f explains that "only the man who has disciplined himself ... and extinguished the fires of defilements will be able to help another man in regard to discipline ... and extinction of defilements", "just as a fire cannot be used for putting out another fire, so also a defilement cannot neutralize another defilement".
- ⁴⁰ Cf. Anālayo 2010: 10.
- ⁴¹ DN 22 at DN II 292,1, MN 10 at MN I 56,27, MĀ 98 at T I 582b27 and EĀ 12.1 at T II 568a11. MĀ 98 differs from the other versions in so far as it does not speak of contemplating "internally-and-externally", in addition to contemplating "internally" and contemplating "externally". In regard to other aspects of *satipaṭṭhāna*, the expositions in MĀ 98 and EĀ 12.1 show considerable variations when compared to DN 22 and MN 10; cf. also Kuan 2008 and Anālayo 2013.
- ⁴² T 1537 at T XXVI 475c28 and T 1548 at T XXVIII 613a11.
- ⁴³ Rahder 1926: 38,17: *'dhyātmaṃ kāye kāyānudarśī viharaty ... bahirdhā kāye ... adyātmaṃ bahirdhā kāye*, etc.
- ⁴⁴ Cf., e.g., Dutt 1934/2000: 204,2; cf. also Lamotte 1970: 1122.
- ⁴⁵ SN 47.3 at SN V 143,11 and MĀ 76 at T I 543c12.
- ⁴⁶ DN 18 at DN II 216,15 speaks of practising *satipaṭṭhāna* "externally in relation to the bodies of others ... the dharmas of others", *bahiddhā parakāye ... bahiddhā paradhammesu*, something to be undertaken based on having at first contemplated internally and thereby developed proficiency in concentration. The parallel DĀ 4 at T I 36a1 instructs: "having contemplated the body internally, one arouses knowledge of the bodies of others; having contemplated feelings internally, one arouses knowledge of the feelings of others; having contemplated mental states internally, one arouses knowledge of the mental states of others; having contemplated dharmas internally, one arouses knowledge of the dharmas of others", □身觀已, 生他身智, □觀受已, 生他受智, □觀意已, 生他意智, □觀法已, 生他法智. This passage is preceded by distinguishing between internal and external contemplation, indicating that its implications would be similar to DN 18. Another instance reflecting this understanding can be found in a recently discovered Chinese manuscript, possibly a text by Ān Shìgāo (安世高), which explicitly speaks of undertaking *satipaṭṭhāna* contemplation in regard to oneself, 觀自, and in regard to others, 觀他人, cf. Zacchetti 2003: 255f. EĀ 12.1 at T II 568a11, however, relates the qualification "oneself" to internal and to external contemplation, reading: 內自觀 and 外自觀.
- ⁴⁷ E.g. MN 141 at MN III 252,5.

- ⁴⁸ Anālayo 2003: 96; cf. also Anālayo 2013. For a detailed examination of interpretations of internal and external mindfulness cf. Schmithausen 2012.
- ⁴⁹ On the significance of this internal-and-external practice cf. also Anālayo 2003: 98.
- ⁵⁰ Cf. in more detail Ñāṇaponika 1951.
- ⁵¹ For a case study of the effects of the internal development undertaken by the monks described in MN 31 on their environment cf. Ariyaratne 2010.
- ⁵² Sn 1035: *yāni sotāni lokasmiṃ, sati tesam nivāraṇaṃ*; Pj II 586,8 explains that the 'streams' stand for craving, etc.; on this verse cf. also Ñāṇananda 1973/1984: 29f. A similarly worded parallel can be found in the *Yogācāra-bhūmi*, cf. Enomoto 1989: 34 (edited together with a survey of parallel occurrences, to which now could be added Zieme 1997: 751): *yāni srotāṃsi lokasya, smṛtiḥ teṣāṃ nivāraṇaṃ*; the Chinese parallel in T 1579 at T XXX 386b21 reads: "all the streams that flow in the world, mindfulness is able to stop their flowing", 世間諸流漏, 是漏念能止; D 4035 *tshi* 257b7 or Q 5536 *dsi* 299b7: "whatever flows there are in the world, mindfulness restrains them", 'jig rten rgyun ni gang yin pa, de dag bzlog par dran pa ste; cf. also Wayman 1989: 208. The same verse is quoted in the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, T 1545 at T XXVII 230b23: "all the flowing torrents in the world, right mindfulness is able to hold them in check", 世間諸瀑流, 正念能防護, with a somewhat different formulation in the same work at T XXVII 379b14: "wherever streams are about to leak out, right mindfulness is able to restrain them", 諸處將流泄, 正念能制防; cf. also T 1546 at T XXVIII 285b16 (Buddhavarman): "any streams in the world, they should be restrained with right mindfulness", 世間所有流, 當以正念制, and T 1547 at T XXVIII 455a1 (Saṅghabhūti): "all the streams in what is called the world, mindfulness restrains these streams", 謂世諸流, 念者制流. The query about how the streams should be kept in check, which precedes Sn 1035, occurs also in the Jain *Isibhāsiyāiṃ* 29.1, Schubring 1969: 532: *savanti savvato sotā, kiṃ ṇa soto-nivāraṇaṃ? puṭṭhe muṇī āikkhe, kaḥaṃ soto pihijjati?* This question receives a detailed reply on how to restrain the five senses, which does not mention mindfulness. This is remarkable in view of the considerable degree of parallelism between the early Buddhist and Jain traditions, as well as the acquaintance with Jain doctrine and tenets reflected in Buddhist texts, on which 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, Watanabe 2003. This difference highlights the significance of the role accorded to mindfulness in Sn 1035 and in other discourses, discussed in the present paper, as part of a distinctly Buddhist approach to liberation.