Cristina Pecchia and
Vincent Eltschinger (Eds.)

Mārga

Paths to Liberation in South Asian Buddhist Traditions

ĀRGA
ATHS TO
BERATION

AUSTRIAN
ACADEMY
OF SCIENCES
PRESS

CRISTINA PECCHIA AND VINCENT ELTSCHINGER (EDS.)

MĀRGA
PATHS TO LIBERATION IN SOUTH ASIAN BUDDHIST TRADITIONS

ÖSTERREICHISCHE AKADEMIE DER WISSENSCHAFTEN

PHILOSOPHISCH-HISTORISCHE KLASSE
SITZUNGSBERICHTE, 900. BAND

BEITRÄGE ZUR KULTUR- UND
GEISTESGESCHICHTE ASIENS, NR. 100

HERAUSGEGEBEN VOM INSTITUT
FÜR KULTUR- UND GEISTESGESCHICHTE ASIENS
UNTER DER LEITUNG VON BIRGIT KELLNER

Mārga

Paths to Liberation in South Asian Buddhist Traditions

Papers from an international symposium held at the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, December 17 – 18, 2015

Cristina Pecchia and Vincent Eltschinger (Eds.)

AUSTRIAN
ACADEMY
OF SCIENCES
PRESS

Angenommen durch die Publikationskommission der philosophisch-historischen Klasse der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften:

Accepted by the publication committee of the Division of Humanities and Social Sciences of the Austrian Academy of Sciences by:

Michael Alram, Bert G. Fragner, Andre Gingrich, Hermann Hunger, Sigrid Jalkotzy-Deger, Renate Pillinger, Franz Rainer, Oliver Jens Schmitt, Danuta Shanzer, Peter Wiesinger, Waldemar Zacharasiewicz

Gedruckt mit Unterstützung aus dem Holzhausen-Legat der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften

Printed with support from the Holzhausen-Legat of the Austrian Academy of Sciences

Diese Publikation wurde einem anonymen, internationalen Begutachtungsverfahren unterzogen.

This publication was subject to international and anonymous peer review.

Peer review is an essential part of the Austrian Academy of Sciences Press evaluation process. Before any book can be accepted for publication, it is assessed by international specialists and ultimately must be approved by the Austrian Academy of Sciences Publication Committee.

Die verwendete Papiersorte in dieser Publikation ist DIN EN ISO 9706 zertifiziert und erfüllt die Voraussetzung für eine dauerhafte Archivierung von schriftlichem Kulturgut.

The paper used in this publication is DIN EN ISO 9706 certified and meets the requirements for permanent archiving of written cultural property.

Alle Rechte vorbehalten.
All rights reserved.

ISBN 978-3-7001-8549-9
Copyright © by Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Wien 2020
Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna 2020
Satz/Layout: Vitus Angermeier, Wien
Druck/Printed: Prime Rate, Budapest
https://epub.oeaw.ac.at/8549-9
https://verlag.oeaw.ac.at
Made in Europe

Contents

Foreword 1

Rupert Gethin
Schemes of the Buddhist Path in the Nikāyas and Āgamas 5

Naomi Appleton
The Story of the Path: Indian *Jātaka* Literature and the Way to Buddhahood 79

Vincent Eltschinger
The "*dhyāna*-Master" Aśvaghoṣa on the Path, Mindfulness, and Concentration 99

Vincent Tournier
Stairway to Heaven and the Path to Buddhahood: Donors and Their Aspirations in Fifth- and Sixth-Century Ajanta 177

Nobuyoshi Yamabe
Ālayavijñāna in a Meditative Context 249

Daniel M. Stuart
Map Becomes Territory: Knowledge and Modes of Existence in Middle Period Buddhist Meditation Practice 277

Malcolm David Eckel
The Poetics of the Path: Bhāviveka's *Tattvāmṛtāvatāra* ("Introduction to the Ambrosia of Reality") 303

Jowita Kramer
Concepts of the Spiritual Path in the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* (Part II): The Eighteen *manaskāra*s and the *adhimukticaryābhūmi* . . . 329

Péter-Dániel Szántó
The Road Not to Be Taken: An Introduction to Two Ninth-Century Works Against Buddhist Antinomian Practice 363

Anna Filigenzi
Visual Embodiments of the Buddhist *mārga*: Space, Place and Artistry in Ancient Swat/Uḍḍiyāna 381

Index 415

Foreword

Mārga, the "Path" to attain liberation, is a central notion of Buddhist praxis and thought. Revolving around the practical rather than the theoretical, and interwoven with visions of liberation, *mārga* designates specific patterns of behaviour and methods of practice connected with transformative powers and soteriological goals. Ideologies of the Path have variously influenced the formation and development of Buddhist identities in the religious and intellectual landscape of Asia. In South Asia, in particular, such ideologies were reflected in Buddhist doctrinal and narrative literature, philosophical views and iconographic programmes for more than one-and-a-half millennium.

This volume collects ten papers on *mārga* in Buddhist traditions of South Asia. The papers derive from the contributions presented at the international symposium *Mārga: Paths to Liberation in South Asian Buddhist Traditions*, convened by the editors of this volume from 17 to 18 December 2015 at the Austrian Academy of Sciences in Vienna. On that occasion, seventeen scholars from various areas of Buddhist Studies shared aspects of their research connected with the topic of *mārga*. The principal aim of the symposium was to revisit this topic, which became an explicit focus of consideration for the first time in the 1992 book edited by Robert E. Buswell and Robert M. Gimello, *Paths to Liberation. The Mārga and its Transformations in Buddhist Thought* (Honolulu, University of Hawai'i Press). Its editors identified the concept of *mārga* as "a theme central to the whole of Buddhism" and potentially useful "in the cross-cultural study of religion and in the study of religions other than Buddhism."[1] Their book offered an overview of the meaning and role of Buddhist theories of the Path in premodern Asia. In the same year, Rupert Gethin's *Buddhist Path to Awakening* (Leiden, Brill) presented a thorough study of the "thirty-seven conditions that contribute to awakening" based on Pāli sources, while Wilhelm Halbfass's *Tradition and Reflection* (especially Chapter 7; State University of New York Press, 1991) provided insightful reflections on the relationship between philosophy and soteriology in South Asia. In showcasing the complexity of the concept of

[1] See Buswell and Gimello 1992, Introduction: 2.

Cristina Pecchia and Vincent Eltschinger (eds.), *Mārga. Paths to Liberation in South Asian Buddhist Traditions.* Papers from an international symposium held at the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, December 17 – 18, 2015. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2020, pp. 1–3.

mārga and related issues, these and a few other publications expanded our common understanding of the Path, as reflected in descriptions of "the noble eightfold path" or "the Bodhisattva path".

In the last three decades, the study of (sometimes newly available) texts and other types of sources concerning South Asian Buddhist traditions has increasingly addressed topics concerning the Path, such as the dynamics between insight, meditative practices, and ethical commitment; the interplay between the Path and rituals or ritual-related actions; and the reciprocal influence that soteriological and philosophical discourses exerted on one another. Following the concept of the symposium, the chapters comprising this volume form a partial update of Buswell and Gimello's book insofar as they are a series of case studies on the Buddhist *mārga*, but are limited in scope to traditions of South Asia.

The chapters are loosely arranged according to the chronological sequence of the sources discussed therein. With *mārga* as their common focus, the authors offer new analyses—rather than general pictures—of particular texts, textual corpora or iconographic materials. They explore specific aspects of descriptions of the Path as expounded or reflected in those sources, and show the links between *mārga* and a variety of views and concerns. Also, they unfold some more general research on Buddhism in South Asia.

Overall, this collection of papers makes a significant contribution to our understanding of the Path by displaying important facets of how it was interpreted, discussed and represented in premodern Buddhist traditions of South Asia. Moreover, the volume shows that there are many historically-given embodiments of the Path which still need to be fully explored, thus possibly opening up new avenues of investigation that look into the entanglements between views of the Path and the religious and intellectual discourses of South Asia and beyond.

It is our pleasure to thank the Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia (IKGA) of the Austrian Academy of Sciences for its generous financial and organisational support of the symposium *Mārga: Paths to Liberation in South Asian Buddhist Traditions*, out of which this volume has grown. Our thanks also go to all the symposium participants. In addition to the authors represented in this volume, contributions were presented by Martin Delhey, Harunaga Isaacson, Anne MacDonald, Cristina Pecchia, Francesco Sferra, Federico Squarcini, and Alexander von Rospatt. The initial impulse to organize the symposium came from the need to understand in

more detail the critique of other Paths in a sixth/seventh century philosophical text in Sanskrit, Dharmakīrti's *Pramāṇavārttika*. It was this critique that was the focus of investigations in the project *Indian Buddhist Epistemology and the Path to Liberation* (2013–2016) and is one the subjects of the current project *The Nobles' Truths in Indian Buddhist Epistemology*—both conducted by Cristina Pecchia at the IKGA and financed by the Austrian Science Fund (FWF) (Project Numbers P 26120-G15 and P 30710-G24). Vincent Eltschinger's confidence in the importance of the symposium and the related publication provided and maintained momentum in the course of events. By the end of December 2015, when the symposium took place, he had left the IKGA and become Professor for Indian Buddhism at the École Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris. The editorial work carried out for the completion of this volume has given us a rewarding opportunity for continuing our conversation between Paris and Vienna. For the care they have put into finalizing their respective chapters, we are very grateful to the authors who contributed to this volume.

Cristina Pecchia and Vincent Eltschinger
Vienna and Paris, December 2018

Chapter I

Schemes of the Buddhist Path in the Nikāyas and Āgamas*

Rupert Gethin, University of Bristol

As is well documented in the modern scholarly literature, early Buddhist texts as represented by what survives of the four Nikāyas or Āgamas witness a considerable variety of schemes of the Buddhist path to final awakening.[1] How we are to assess and interpret this variety remains a matter of dispute. The tendency of modern scholars has been to see it as reflecting the disagreement and even confusion among the first generations of the Buddha's disciples as to the nature of the Buddhist path and its goal. This tendency has often been associated with attempts to stratify the Nikāya-Āgama literature chronologically so as to enable us to move closer to and even identify the original teachings of the Buddha himself.

In what follows I prefer to put such considerations aside and approach this literature from a different angle, having in mind not the question "what kind of path to awakening did the Buddha teach?" but rather the question "how did the authors of the Nikāya-Āgama literature wish to present the

* More than ten years ago when on research leave from Bristol University funded by the UK's Arts and Humanities Research Council, I attempted to compile comprehensive lists of schemes of the Buddhist path, primarily with reference to the Pali Nikāyas. Some of those with whom I shared my work at the time made it clear that they thought without a more comprehensive attempt to take account of material from beyond the Theravāda tradition, the exercise was of limited interest. I tried to take heed of this, with the result the present article. More immediately I am grateful to Anālayo, Jin kyoung Choi, Vincent Eltschinger, Jens-Uwe Hartmann, Rita Langer, Bryan de Notariis, Cristina Pecchia, Lin Qian, Blair Silverlock and Daniel Stuart for their help, comments, criticisms and suggestions, as well as for drawing my attention to a number of errors; any that remain are my responsibility.

1 See, for example, La Vallée Poussin 1937, Schmithausen 1981, Griffiths 1981, Cousins 1984, Vetter 1988, Bronkhorst 1993, Zafiropulo 1993, Wynne 2007.

Cristina Pecchia and Vincent Eltschinger (eds.), *Mārga. Paths to Liberation in South Asian Buddhist Traditions*. Papers from an international symposium held at the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, December 17 – 18, 2015. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2020, pp. 5–77.

Buddha's path to awakening?" It seems to me that methodologically this is the more basic question, one that the eagerness to recover the "authentic" voice of the Buddha has prevented from being properly and fully addressed in the scholarly literature. Using this approach I wish to consider the form and extent of the different schemes of the path, and to suggest that the variety of schemes can be reduced to four principal schemes which the authors of the Nikāya-Āgama literature carefully and deliberately integrated with one another.

The principal sources I shall cite are: the four Nikāyas—Dīgha, Majjhima, Saṃyutta, Aṅguttara—of the Theravāda, or perhaps more properly Theriya, tradition surviving in Pali;[2] the (Mūla-)Sarvāstivāda Dīrghāgama as witnessed by the single substantial surviving manuscript and the various fragments recovered from Central Asia; the Chinese translation of the Madhyamāgama (T 26), generally thought to belong to the Sarvāstivāda school; the longer Chinese translation of the Saṃyuktāgama (T 99) also thought to belong to the (Mūla-)Sarvāstivāda school; the Chinese translation of an Ekottarikāgama (T 125) whose affiliation is more problematic; the Chinese translation of a Dīrghāgama (T 1) which is generally thought to belong to the Dharmaguptaka school; and finally in one instance a Gāndhārī fragment from what seems likely to be a Dharmaguptaka Madhyamāgama.[3] The precise school affiliation of the Sanskrit and Chinese Āgama translations can be questioned; nonetheless I shall refer to them as unproblematically belong-

[2] The modern scholarly use of the term *āgama* to refer to the non-Pali or non-Theravāda Buddhist collections of sūtras is a scholarly convention and I follow it here, but it should be noted that it does not strictly reflect ancient usage. While Pali sources in certain contexts prefer the term *nikāya* (e.g. in the account of the first Council at Vin II 287.27 and in listing the divisions of the canon at Sp I 16.5–7, 18.7–16; Sv I 14.28–15.13; As 25.1–26.4), the exegetical sources also routinely use *āgama* to refer to the four collections of sūtras (see, for example, the introductions and conclusions to the commentaries at Sv I 1.12, 2.6–10, (B^{e} 1957) III 250.5–10; Ps I 1.19, 2.10, IV 109.18; Spk I 1.14, 2.18–22, III 308.9; Mp I 1.16, 2.24, 3.4–9, V 98.14, 99.2; cf. As 2.5). Cf. Cousins 2013: 103 (who, on the grounds of the use of *nikāya* in Prakrit inscriptions, suggests that it is likely to represent the earlier Middle Indic and that the use of *āgama* is likely to reflect Sanskritization in the early centuries CE); Tournier 2014: 25 (who, without reference to Cousins, also believes that *āgama* may reflect Sanskritization); Anālayo 2015a: 12–16 (who suggests that *nikāya* replaced *āgama*).

[3] Allon 2007: 5–6; Silverlock 2015: 34–42.

ing to the schools just indicated.[4] This is in part a matter of convenience but also because it is not crucial to my purpose, which is to establish how the Buddhist path is presented in the surviving Nikāya-Āgama literature. Thus the specific school affiliation is less significant than that the material is representative of different redactions of the Nikāya-Āgama material. It is clear that we should view the four primary Nikāyas surviving in Pali as representing a single redaction of the early sūtra corpus. It also seems clear that the Chinese Dīrghāgama translation represents a redaction different from those of the Theravāda and the (Mūla-)Sarvāstivāda; whether or not it should be called Dharmaguptaka is not an issue in the present context. It also seems that the Sanskrit Dīrghāgama manuscript and the Chinese translations of the Madhyamāgama belong to closely related redactions (Mūlasarvāstivādin and Sarvāstivādin).[5] Such a conclusion seems reasonable on the grounds that the Chinese Madhyamāgama (hereafter MĀ) and Sanskrit Dīrghāgama (hereafter DĀ) appear related in terms of contents (there is a symmetry whereby the sūtras of the Sanskrit DĀ are not found in the Chinese MĀ and vice versa) and phrasing (they share certain ways of expressing things, certain formulas, and certain numerical categories). But the issue is complicated by scholarly uncertainty about how to envisage the relationship between "Sarvāstivādin" and "Mūlasarvāstivādin".[6] However, given the lack of scholarly consensus on the issue, in what follows I am content to use "Sarvāstivāda" as a de-

---

4 On the school affiliation of the Chinese translations, see Waldschmidt, 1980: 136–74, and the literature cited by Anālayo 2014a: 46, n. 21; Anālayo, *Comparative Study* I: 7, n. 64, 8, n. 67, 9, n. 68.

5 Bucknell (2014: 59), following Hartmann, comments "whichever school the Chinese *Madhyama-āgama* belongs to, the Sanskrit *Dīrgha-āgama* belongs to the same school".

6 On the problem of Sarvāstivāda and Mūlasarvāstivāda, see especially Enomoto 2000, Skilling 2002: 374–76, Hartmann 2014 (n. 5). It seems likely that we are dealing here with the evolution of distinct but related Vinaya lineages; yet as Peter Skilling and Jens-Uwe Hartmann remind us, it is not at all clear that there is a straightforward one-to-one correspondence between Vinaya lineages and redactions of the Āgamas. Nonetheless, it is not certain that the Āgama material that comes down to us variously surmised to be or tagged by later Buddhist tradition as "Sarvāstivādin" or "Mūlasarvāstivādin" can be straightforwardly collapsed into a single unified redaction. Skilling (2002: 375) notes: "[T]he Chinese *Madhyamāgama* and the *Madhyamāgama* cited by Śamathadeva in his *Upāyikā-ṭīkā* on the *Abhidharmakośa* are intimately related but differ, sometimes significantly, in order of texts, in contents, and title."

liberately vague and broad name to characterise what I assume to be an in some way related, although not unified, Sarvāstivāda-cum-Mūlasarvāstivāda Āgama tradition. In short, "Sarvāstivāda" is used here as a term of convenience meaning "maybe Sarvāstivāda, maybe Mūlasarvāstivāda, maybe both, but probably not neither".

1. The significance of the *sīlakkhandhavagga* and parallels

The obvious place to begin an assessment of the Nikāya-Āgama schemes of the Buddhist path is with the presentation of the gradual scheme of the path found repeatedly in the three surviving versions of the Dīrghāgama. T. W. Rhys Davids was perhaps the first modern scholar to draw attention to the scheme of the Buddhist path found repeated in twelve of the thirteen *sutta*s of the *sīlakkhandhavagga* of the Theravāda Dīghanikāya. Introducing his 1899 translation of the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta*, where the scheme is first set out in the Theravāda canon, he comments how in drawing various elements together into one system, in treating them "as so many steps of a ladder whose chief value depends on the fact that it leads up to the culminating point of Nirvana in Arahatship", the scheme presents a distinctively Buddhist vision. He goes on to comment:

> [T]he whole statement, the details of it, the order of it, must have soaked very thoroughly into the minds of the early Buddhists. For we find the whole, or nearly the whole, of it repeated (with direct reference by name to our Sutta as the oldest and most complete enumeration of it) not only in all the subsequent dialogues translated in this volume, but also in many others.[7]

Rhys Davids goes on to observe that the scheme is found in the eleven *sutta*s that follow in the Dīghanikāya, and also briefly discusses its use in four *sutta*s of the Majjhimanikāya.[8] Since then a number of scholars have returned to the scheme, citing further examples and variations both in the Theravāda Nikāyas and the Āgamas of other schools, principally the Sarvāstivāda and Dharmaguptaka. In the first volume of his *Geschichte der indischen Philosophie* (1953) Erich Frauwallner used the scheme as the basis of his explanation

[7] Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, I: 59.

[8] MN 27, 38, 39, 79.

of "the Buddhist way of deliverance" ("der buddhistische Erlösungsweg").[9] In an influential article published in 1981 Lambert Schmithausen referred to this scheme as "a stereotypical detailed description of the Path to Liberation" (p. 204) and in the course of his article commented on a number of variations on the scheme, citing a range of examples from both the Theravāda Nikāyas and the Sarvāstivāda Madhyamāgama in Chinese translation.[10]

In 1987 Konrad Meisig published a synoptic study of the *Śrāmaṇyaphala-sūtra* laying out the Pali and Sanskrit texts of the versions from the Theravāda Dīghanikāya and Sarvāstivāda *Saṃghabhedavastu* alongside German translations of the three Chinese translations found in the Dazangjing.[11] His work includes a substantial comparison and discussion of four versions of the scheme of the path (pp. 53–80).[12]

In his 2004 Bristol doctoral dissertation, Kin Tung Yit outlined the wider occurrence of the scheme in especially the Theravāda Nikāyas and Chinese Āgamas (pp. 32–92), before undertaking a detailed comparative study of the first part of the scheme from the appearance of the Tathāgata in the world to the abandoning of the five hindrances.[13]

These seem to be the most significant studies for my concerns in the present article, though various other works touch on various aspects of this *sīlakkhandha-vagga* path scheme.[14] While these studies have laid the groundwork, the full extent of the scheme, its variations and in particular their significance for our understanding of the Buddhist path as it is presented in

---

[9] Frauwallner, *Geschichte* I: 160–82; he cites "Dīghanikāya 2, 3 usw.; Majjhimanikāya 27, 38 usw." as sources.

[10] Schmithausen 1981: 200, n. 15 (for references to Theravāda Nikāyas), 221, n. 75 (for references to the Sarvāstivāda Madhyamāgama).

[11] Meisig 1987; the three versions are (1) the Chinese translation (T 1, I.107a–109c) included in the Chinese translation of the complete Dharmaguptaka Dīrghāgama, (2) a freestanding Chinese translation (T 22, I.270c–276b), (3) a version included in the Chinese translation of the Ekottarāgama (T 125, II.762a7–764b12).

[12] The Ekottarāgama version of the *Śrāmaṇyaphala-sūtra* omits the scheme of the path.

[13] Yit 2004.

[14] Eimer 1976: 26–34; Bucknell 1984 (who compares a number of versions of the gradual path found in Pali sources and argues that the scheme can be assimilated to the list of eight or ten constituents of the path); Manné 1995; Anālayo 2016 (who compares the Theravāda and Dharmaguptaka accounts of items 4–12, as listed in Table 3 below).

the earliest Buddhist literature more generally remain unclear. The present article is an attempt to shed further light on this material. In the first place I aim to systematically collate and add to the passages already identified by especially Schmithausen and Yit in the available Theravāda, Sarvāstivāda, and Dharmaguptaka sources in Pali, Sanskrit and Chinese translation, and present these in schematic form in a series of tables with the purpose of revealing the extent of particular schemes of the path and their variations. I should add that in this task I have also benefited particularly from Bhikkhu Anālayo's detailed *Comparative study of the Majjhima-nikāya* (2011) as well as his other studies of individual *sutta*s and their parallels mentioned in the notes. I then wish to offer some observations on the picture of the Buddhist path that emerges in light of this comparison of sources representing three different Indian Buddhist schools.

With regard to the occurrence and place of the gradual scheme of the path specifically in the Dīrghanikāya/Dīrghāgama, the existing comparisons are made primarily with reference to the Theravāda sources in Pali and the Dharmaguptaka sources in Chinese translation. For evidence beyond these two schools, scholars have had to make do with the version of the *Śrāmaṇyaphala-sūtra* that survives in Sanskrit in the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya. But with the coming to light of substantial portions of what appears to have been a single complete Sanskrit manuscript of the Sarvāstivāda Dīrghāgama in the early 2000s and the subsequent work of Jens-Uwe Hartmann and his students on this material, we now have a much clearer picture of the nature and shape of the Dīrghāgama collection of the Sarvāstivāda school.[15] We are now able to compare the Dīrghāgama collections of three different Indian schools, two that flourished in the north of India and one that flourished in the south and in Laṅkā (**Table 1**). While the particular sūtras and number of sūtras included in each collection vary, there is considerable overlap and also a significant similarity in basic structure. All three collections suggest a primary threefold structure, with the fourth part of the Dharmaguptaka collection comprising just one sūtra having the appearance of a cosmological appendix.[16] Regardless of whether this is so, what is more significant is that the Sarvāstivāda and Dharmaguptaka Dīrghāgama collections both have a section that is a counterpart to the Theravāda *sīlakkhandhavagga*, called the *śīlaskhandhanipāta* in the Sarvāstivāda and just numbered as the third sec-

[15] Hartmann and Wille 2014.

[16] Anālayo 2014b: 35–44.

Table 1. The Dīghanikāya/Dīrghāgama

Theravāda Dīghanikāya (34)	Dharmaguptaka Dīrghāgama (30)		Sarvāstivāda Dīrghāgama
Sīlakkhandha-vagga (13)	**Section 1 (4)**		**Ṣaṭsūtraka-nipāta (6)**
1 Brahmajāla-sutta	1 大本經	= Mahāpadāna	1 Daśottara-sūtra
2 Sāmaññaphala-sutta	2 遊行經	= Mahāparinibbāna	2 Arthavistara-sūtra
3 Ambaṭṭha-sutta	3 典尊經	= Mahāgovinda	3 Saṅgīti-sūtra
4 Soṇadaṇḍa-sutta	4 闍尼沙經	= Janavasabha	4 Catuṣpariṣat-sūtra
5 Kūṭadanta-sutta			5 Mahāvadāna-sūtra
6 Mahāli-sutta	**Section 2 (15)**		6 Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra
7 Jāliya-sutta	5 小緣經	= Aggañña	
8 Kassapasīhanāda-sutta	6 轉輪聖王修行經	= Cakkavatti	**Yuga-nipāta (18)**
9 Poṭṭhapāda-sutta	7 弊宿經	= Pāyāsi	7 Apannaka-sūtra
10 Subha-sutta	8 散陀那經	= Udumbarikasīhanāda	8 Sarveka-sūtra(?)
11 Kevaddha-sutta	9 眾集經	= Saṃgīti	9 Bhārgava-sūtra
12 Lohicca-sutta	10 十上經	= Dasuttara	10 Śalya-sūtra
13 Tevijja-sutta	11 增一經	'Inceasing by one'	11 Bhayabhairava-sūtra
	12 三聚經	'Threefold groups'	12 Romaharṣaṇa-sūtra
Mahāvagga (10)	13 大緣方便經	= Mahānidāna	13 Jinarṣabha-sūtra
14 Mahāpadāna-sutta	14 釋提桓因問經	= Sakkapañha	14 Govinda-sūtra
15 Mahānidāna-sutta	15 阿嵬夷經	= Pāṭika	15 Prāsādika-sūtra
16 Mahāparinibbāna-sutta	16 善生經	= Sīgālovāda	16 Prasādanīya-sūtra
17 Mahāsudassana-sutta	17 清淨經	= Pāsādika	17 Pañcatraya-sūtra
18 Janavasabha-sutta	18 自歡喜經	= Sampasādanīya	18 Māyājāla-sūtra
19 Mahāgovinda-sutta	19 大會經	= Mahāsamaya	19 Kāmaṭhika-sūtra
20 Mahāsamaya-sutta			20 Kāyabhāvanā-sūtra
21 Sakkapañha-sutta	**Section 3 (10)**		21 Bodha-sūtra
22 Mahāsatipaṭṭhāna-sutta	20 阿摩晝經	= Ambaṭṭha	22 Śaṃkaraka
23 Pāyāsi-sutta	21 梵動經	= Brahmajāla	23 Āṭānāṭa-sūtra
	22 種德經	= Soṇadaṇḍa	24 Mahāsamāja-sūtra
Pātika-vagga (11)	23 究羅檀頭經	= Kūṭadanta	
24 Pāṭika-sutta	24 堅固經	= Kevaddha	**Śīlaskandha-nipāta (23)**
25 Udumbarikasīhanāda-sutta	25 倮形梵志經	= Kassapasīhanāda	25 Tridaṇḍi-sūtra
26 Cakkavattisīhanāda-sutta	26 三明經	= Tevijja	26 Piṅgalātreya-sūtra
27 Aggañña-sutta	27 沙門果經	= Sāmaññaphala	27 Lohitya-sūtra I
28 Sampasādanīya-sutta	28 布吒婆樓經	= Poṭṭhapāda	28 Lohitya-sūtra II
29 Pāsādika-sutta	29 露遮經	= Lohicca	29 Kaivarti-sūtra
30 Lakkhaṇa-sutta			30 Maṇḍīśa-sūtra I
31 Sīgālovāda-sutta	**Section 4 (1)**		31 Maṇḍīśa-sūtra II
32 Āṭānāṭiya-sutta	30 世記經	'An account of the world'	32 Mahallin-sūtra
33 Saṃgīti-sutta			33 Śroṇatāṇḍya-sūtra
34 Dasuttara-sutta			34 Kūṭatāṇḍya-sūtra
			35 Ambāṣṭha-sūtra
			36 Pṛṣṭhapāla-sūtra
			37 Kāraṇavādī-sūtra
			38 Pudgala-sūtra
			39 Śruta-sūtra
			40 Mahalla-sūtra
			41 Anyatama-sūtra
			42 Śuka-sūtra
			43 Jīvaka-sūtra
			44 Rāja-sūtra
			45 Vāsiṣṭha-sūtra
			46 Kāśyapa-sūtra
			47 Brahmajāla-sūtra

tion in the Dharmaguptaka Chinese translation.[17] When we investigate the contents of this section in each collection we find essentially the same pattern. Central to the plan of the section in each case is what I shall style the Dīrghāgama gradual scheme of the path. And leaving aside for the moment a few minor variations, essentially the same gradual scheme of the path is common to all three versions of this section (**Table 2**). In each version the gradual scheme of the path is presented in full in the narrative frame of a particular sūtra and then presented again in abbreviated form in the series of sūtras that follow.

The Theravāda *sīlakkhandha* section begins with the *Brahmajāla-sutta*, which turns out to be the only *sutta* in the collection not to incorporate the gradual scheme of the path into its narrative, though it does include one portion of it (the *śīla*s, no. 3 in Table 3 below). The scheme is presented in full within the narrative frame of the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta*, the second sutta of the section;[18] the eleven *sutta*s that follow the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* all abbreviate and adapt the scheme to the particular narrative frame in question.[19]

The third section of the Dharmaguptaka DĀ begins with the *Amozhou jing*, the equivalent of the Theravāda *Ambaṭṭha-sutta*, which is the third *sutta* of the Theravāda *sīlakkhandha-vagga*. The gradual scheme of the path is presented in full in the narrative frame of this sūtra.[20] The *Fan dong jing*, equivalent to the *Brahmajāla-sutta*, is the second sūtra. Like its Theravāda counterpart, it is not used to frame the gradual path,[21] but the remaining eight sūtras that constitute this section again, as in the Theravāda *sīlakkhandha-vagga*, all abbreviate and adapt the scheme previously set out in full to the particular narrative frame in question.[22]

---

17 T I.82a6: 第三分.

18 DN I 62.24–84.35. In the PTS edition of the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* the scheme is not presented in full, as we are referred back to the *Brahmajāla-sutta* for the *sīla* section. In S^{e} and B^{e}, for example, it is presented in full.

19 DN 3 (100.5–16), 4 (124.24–35), 5 (147.7–33), 6 (157.21–158.21), 7 (159.16–160.22), 8 (171.26–174/8), 9 (181.3–185.9) 10 (206.18–209.28), 11 (214.23–215.18), 12 (232.10–233.30), 13 (249.25–252.15).

20 T I.83c3–86c16.

21 Yit 2004: 74 notes that an independent translation of the *Brahmajāla-sūtra* (T 21) does include rather more of the gradual scheme of the path, items 3, 4, 5, 7, 8 as set out in Table 3.

22 DĀ-D 22 (96b24–c10), 23 (100c21–23), 24 (102a11–19), 25 (103c20–104a8), 26

Table 2. DN and DĀ sīlakkhandhavagga / section 3 / śīlaskandhanipāta compared

THERAVĀDA **Sīlakkhandha-vagga (13)**		DHARMAGUPTAKA **Section 3 (10)**		SARVĀSTIVĀDA **Śīlaskandha-nipāta (23)**	
1 Brahmajāla-sutta		21 梵動經		47 Brahmajāla-sūtra	
2 Sāmaññaphala-sutta	GP	27 沙門果經	GP	44 Rāja-sūtra	GP
3 Ambaṭṭha-sutta	GP	20 阿摩晝經	GP	35 Ambāṣṭha-sūtra	GP
4 Soṇadaṇḍa-sutta	GP	22 種德經	GP	33 Śroṇatāṇḍya-sūtra	GP
5 Kūṭadanta-sutta	GP	23 究羅檀頭經	GP	34 Kūṭatāṇḍya-sūtra	GP
6 Mahāli-sutta	GP			32 Mahalli-sūtra	GP
7 Jāliya-sutta	GP			30 Maṇḍīśa-sūtra I	GP
8 Kassapasīhanāda-sutta	GP	25 倮形梵志經	GP	46 Kāśyapa-sūtra	GP?
9 Poṭṭhapāda-sutta	GP-n	28 布吒婆樓經	GP-n	36 Pṛṣṭhapāla-sūtra	GP-n
10 Subha-sutta	GP			42 Śuka-sūtra	GP
11 Kevaddha-sutta	GP	24 堅固經	GP	29 Kaivarti-sūtra	GP
12 Lohicca-sutta	GP	29 露遮經	GP	28 Lohitya-sūtra II	GP
13 Tevijja-sutta	GP-a	26 三明經	GP-a	45 Vāsiṣṭha-sūtra	GP-a
				25 Tridaṇḍi-sūtra	GP
				26 Piṅgalātreya-sūtra	GP
				27 Lohitya-sūtra I	GP
				31 Maṇḍīśa-sūtra II	GP
[MN 51 Kandaraka-sutta]	GP			37 Kāraṇavādī-sūtra	GP
				38 Pudgala-sūtra	GP
				39 Śruta-sūtra	GP
				40 Mahalla-sūtra	GP
				41 Anyatama-sūtra	GP
[MN 55 Jīvaka-sutta]				43 Jīvaka-sūtra	GP-a

KEY GP gradual path; -a with *apramāṇa*s; -n with *nirodha*

The Sarvāstivāda *śīlaskandhanipāta* begins with the *Tridaṇḍi-sūtra*, a sūtra without an equivalent in the Theravāda and Dharmaguptaka Dīrgha collections. In the only more or less complete manuscript of the Sarvāstivāda Dīrgha collection to survive, the scheme of the path is not set out quite in full in the first sūtra (*Tridaṇḍi-sūtra*), and the immediately following sūtra (*Piṅgalātreya-sūtra*) abbreviates the scheme with reference back to this.[23] The scheme of the path is given in its fullest form in the third sūtra of the collection, the *Lohitya-sūtra I*.[24] There then follow eighteen sūtras that once more all abbreviate and adapt this scheme to the particular narrative frame in question.[25] In the case of the final two sūtras of the *śīlaskandhanipāta*, the *Kāśyapa-sūtra* and *Brahmajāla-sūtra*, the situation is unclear as the text of these two sūtras is incomplete in the manuscript. Given that in both the Theravāda DN and the Dharmaguptaka DĀ the equivalents of the *Kāśyapa-sūtra*, the *Kassapasīhanāda-sutta* (DN 8) and the *Luoxing fanzhi jing* (DĀ-D 25), include the scheme of the path, we would expect the same to be the case in the Sarvāstivāda DĀ. Similarly, given that in the Theravāda DN and the Dharmaguptaka DĀ the *Brahmajāla-sutta* (DN 1) and the *Fan dong jing* (DĀ-D 21) omit the scheme of the path, we would expect this also to be the case with the Sarvāstivāda *Brahmajāla-sūtra*. This appears confirmed by two Tibetan translations of the *Brahmajāla-sūtra* (presumably of broadly Sarvāstivādin provenance).[26]

(106c10–107a11), 27 (109b7–10), 28 (110a22–c4), 29 (113c17–19).

[23] With reference to the scheme as itemised in Table 3, the *Tridaṇḍi-sūtra* makes explicit items 1–9, 12, and 18–20; items 10–11 are clearly assumed but lost in abbreviation; items 13–17 appear to be omitted. See Choi 2015: 44–51.

[24] Melzer 2006: 20. The *Pṛṣṭhapāla-sūtra*, ten sūtras later, also refers back to the *Tridaṇḍi-sūtra* (Melzer 2006: 38), but it seems unlikely that we should read much significance into this, as the manuscript appears to be unsystematic regarding the sūtras it refers back to (cf. Melzer 2006: 7, n. 37), and moreover does not always name the sūtra it is referring to (cf. Melzer 2010: 20–21).

[25] See Melzer 2004: 15–22: DĀ-S 25 (360v8–366v8), 26 (369r3), 27 (370r8–382r2), 28 (385r4–5), 29 (387v5–6), 30 (390v4–391v1), 31 (391v7), 32 (395r1–v1), 33 (400v1–3), 34 (409r5–6), 35 (442v2–4), 36 (417r8–418r1), 37 (424v1), 38 (426r6–8), 39 (427v1–3), 40 (430r6), 41 (430r7), 42 (432r8–v3), 43 (434v4), 44 (446r6–v1), 45 (450r7–v6).

[26] One in the Sūtra collection (Derge-Tohoku no. 352) and another in Śamathadeva's *Abhidharmakośopāyikā-ṭīkā* (Derge-Tohoku 4049: *mngon pa, ju* 141b4–153b6); for a translation of the former, see Weller 1935; cf. Anālayo 2014a.

In sum, then, we can say that in the three versions of DN-DĀ that survive more or less in full, we find that one of the three principal sections comprises a series of sūtras that employ the same gradual scheme of the Buddhist path in a variety of narrative frames (and in nine cases in principle a parallel narrative frame is used in all three redactions). In the Theravāda DN we have a series of twelve *sutta*s, in the Dharmaguptaka DĀ a series of nine sūtras, and in the Sarvāstivāda DĀ a series of twenty-one or twenty-two sūtras. In the case of the Theravāda and Sarvāstivāda collections, the name of the section derives from the fact that this scheme includes an extended account of the Buddhist monk's *śīla* as the initial stage of the path. As I noted earlier, when considering the Theravāda DN in isolation a century ago, T. W. Rhys Davids took the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* as the original narrative frame. In light of the Dharmaguptaka and Sarvāstivāda versions it would seem better to consider the scheme of the path as having no "original" context, but rather as a freestanding scheme that was deliberately employed in a variety of different contexts for narrative effect.

2. The Dīghanikāya/Dīrghāgama gradual scheme of the path

In the Theravāda version the scheme can be set out in terms of a sequence of twenty stages or items.[27] The account begins with (1) the appearance of a Tathāgata in the world;[28] (2) a householder hears his teaching, gains faith, and gives up his household life to go forth into the life of a Buddhist monk; (3) he lives according to the moral restraint of the Buddhist monastic rule; (4) he lives guarding the senses and (5) being mindful and fully aware in all he does (eating, drinking, urinating, defecating, walking, standing, sitting, lying down, etc.); (6) he thus finds contentment in his life as a monk, and

[27] The division into twenty items is in part interpretative and is not found explicitly articulated in the text itself or in the exegetical tradition. As Manné (1995: 6–12) notes, different scholars have set out this scheme of the path in different ways; she cites Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, I: 57–59, MacQueen 1988: 279–280, Meisig 1987: 39. Yit (2004: 16, n. 34) adds Griffiths 1983: 52–53. In dividing the scheme into twenty items I follow Yit, though in places use different terminology to characterise a stage; in practice this division more or less follows Manné's division, though she combines items (1) and (2) and splits item (20) into three parts.

[28] DN: *idha* […] *tathāgato loke uppajjati*. DĀ-S: *iha* […] *śāstā loka utpadyate tathāgato.* DĀ-D: 如來出現於世.

Table 3. The gradual scheme of the path: Pali, Sanskrit, Chinese, English

1 tathāgato loke uppajjati	śāstā loka utpadyate tathāgato	如來出現於世	the Tathāgata appears in the world
2 pabbajati	pravrajati	出家修道	he goes forth
3 pātimokkha-saṃvarasaṃvuta	prātimokṣasaṃvarasaṃvṛta	具諸戒行	moral restraint
4 indriyesu gutta-dvāro	indriyair guptadvāraḥ	善護六根	guarding the senses
bhojane mattaññu	bhojane mātrajñaḥ	食知止足	knowing the right amount to eat
jāgariyaṃ anuyutto	jāgarikānuyukta	精進覺悟	keeping awake
satipaṭṭhāna	smṛtyupasthāna	念處	application of mindfulness
5 sati-sampajañña	smṛtisamprajanya	常念一心	mindfulness and awareness
6 santuṭṭha	saṃtuṣṭa	趣足而已	content
7 vivittaṃ senāsanaṃ	prāntāni śayanāsanāni	樂在靜	secluded dwelling
8 pañca-nīvaraṇa-pahāna	paṃca-varaṇāni … prahāya	滅五蓋	abandoning the 5 hindrances
9 paṭhama-jjhāna	prathama-dhyāna	初禪	1st absorption
10 dutiya-jjhāna	dvitīya-dhyāna	二禪	2nd absorption
11 tatiya-jjhāna	tṛtīya-dhyāna	三禪	3rd absorption
12 catuttha-jjhāna	caturtha-dhyāna	四禪	4th absorption
mettā	maitrī	慈	kindness
karuṇā	karuṇā	悲	compassion
muditā	muditā	喜	sympathetic joy
upekkhā	upekṣā	捨	equanimity
ākāsānañcāyatana	ākāśānantyāyatana	空處	infinite space
viññāṇañcāyatana	vijñānānantyāyatana	識處	infinite consciousness
ākiñcaññāyatana	ākiñcanyāyatana	不用處	nothingness
nevasaññānāsaññāyatana	naivasaṃjñānāsaṃjñāyatana	有想無想處	neither perception nor non-perception
saññāvedayitanirodha	saṃjñāvedayitanirodha	想知滅定	cessation of perception and feeling
paññāya c' assa disvā	prajñāya cāsya dṛṣṭvā	慧見 / 慧觀	and seeing by means of his wisdom
13 ñāṇa-dassana			knowing and seeing
14 mano-maya-kāya	mano-maya-kāya	心化作化身	mind-made body
15 iddhi-vidha	ṛddhiviṣaya	神通智	various powers of meditation
16 dibba-sota-dhātu	divyaśrotrajñāna	天耳智	the divine ear
17 ceto-pariya-ñāṇa	cetahparyāyajñāna	他心智	knowledge of others' mind
18 pubbe-nivāsānussati-ñāṇa	pūrvanivāsānusmṛtijñāna	宿命智	knowledge of past lives
19 satta-cutūpapāta-ñāṇa	cyutyupapādajñāna	生死智	knowledge of beings' death and birth
20 āsava-kkhaya-ñāṇa	āsravakṣayajñāna	無漏智	knowledge of the destruction of taints

This table includes additional items included in schemes discussed below

(7) retires to a secluded place to sit and practise meditation; (8) he abandons the five hindrances, and (9–12) he attains four successive "absorptions" (*dhyāna*s). Using the unshakeable mental stability and purity established in the fourth *dhyāna* he applies and directs his mind towards further meditative accomplishments: (13) the understanding that his frail body made of the four primary elements is what his consciousness depends on, (14) the ability to produce a mind made body, (15) various powers (becoming many, disappearing, passing through walls, sinking into the earth, walking on water, flying through the air, touching the sun and moon, visiting the world of Brahmā), (16) the divine ear that hears sounds human and divine whether

far or near, (17) the knowledge of others' minds, (18) knowledge of his previous lives, (19) knowledge of the birth and death of beings in accordance with their actions, and finally (20) knowledge of the destruction of defilements (*āsrava*). This final knowledge is expressed in terms that reference the four truths: he knows the defilements, their arising, their ceasing and the way leading to their ceasing; knowing this he is freed from the round of rebirth. Elsewhere in the Nikāya-Āgama literature items 18–20 are referred to collectively as the three knowledges (*vidyā*), items 15–20 as the six higher knowledges (*abhijñā*).[29] For the sake of comparison with the other redactions of this material, these twenty items are set out in Pali, Sanskrit, Chinese and English in **Table 3**, incorporating additional items that occur in some versions or in variations discussed below. In subsequent tables I shall use Sanskrit terminology as the default.

The Dharmaguptaka and Sarvāstivāda Dīrghāgamas present this same scheme with only minor variations (**Table 4**).[30] The Dharmaguptaka version inserts two further items (knowing the right amount of food and being devoted to wakefulness) after no. 4 (guarding the senses), and begins the account of mindfulness in daily activities with the bare formula of the application of mindfulness.[31] Neither the Dharmaguptaka nor Sarvāstivāda versions properly distinguish no. 13, presenting it in a shorter form as part of no. 14.[32] And both the Dharmaguptaka and Sarvāstivāda versions place no. 6 (contentment with the monk's life) after the initial account of the restraint of the monastic rule (no. 3), before its fuller elaboration. There are, of course, various differences and additions in wording and detail, but such differences have little bearing on the overall vision of the structure of the path.[33]

---

[29] See, for example, DN III 275.25–28, 281.13–28; Stache-Rosen and Mittal, *Saṅgīti-sūtra*, I: 91–92, 170; T I.53b4–5, 54b9–11.

[30] For the text of the Dharmaguptaka version, see T I.83c3–86c16; this is partially translated (items 4–12) in Anālayo 2016: 5–11. For the text of the Sarvāstivāda version, see Choi 2015 and SBV II: 216.8–253.23 (the *Śrāmaṇyaphala-sūtra* found in the *Saṃghabhedavastu*).

[31] T I.85a6–10; see Yit 2004: 209–210; Anālayo, *Comparative Study* II: 620, n. 173; Anālayo 2016: 5, 17.

[32] SBV II 245.24–25; T I, 1.85c13–28. Cf. Meisig 1987: 328–35; Yit 2004: 332–33.

[33] These are discussed in some detail with reference to items 1–8 in Yit 2004, and with reference to items 4–12 in Anālayo 2016.

Table 4. The 'Tathāgata appears …' gradual scheme in DN, DĀ-D, DĀ-S

	DN 2–8, 10–12	**DĀ-D** 20, 22–25, 27, 29	**DĀ-S** 25–26	**DĀ-S** 27–29, 32–35, 37–42, 44	**DĀ-S 30–31** Maṇḍiśa I–II (390v4-5, 391v7)	**Śrāmaṇyaphala** (SBV II 230–51)	**DN 9** Poṭṭhapāda (DN 181.3–185.9)	**DĀ-D 28** Buzhapolou (T I.110a21–c3)	**DĀ-S 36** Pṛṣṭhapāla (417r8–418r1)	**DN 13** Tevijja (DN I 249.25–251.15)	**DĀ-D 26** Sanming (T I.106c10–18)	**DĀ-S 43** Jīvaka (434v)	**DĀ-S 45** Vāsiṣṭha (450r–450v)
1 śāstā loka utpadyate tathāgato	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•
2 pravrajati	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	○	•	○	○	○
3 prātimokṣasaṃvarasamvṛta	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	○	•	○	○	○
(6) saṃtuṣṭa		•	•	•	○	•		•	○		○		?
4 indriyair guptadvāraḥ	•	•	•	•	○	•	•	•	○	•	○		?
bhojane mātrajñaḥ		•						•			○		
jāgarikānuyukta		•						•			○		
smṛtyupasthāna		•											
5 smṛtisaṃprajanya	•	•	•	•	○	•	•	•	○	•	•		?
6 saṃtuṣṭa	•						•			•			
7 prāntāni śayanāsanāni	•	•	•	•	○	•	•	•	○	•	○		?
8 paṃca-varaṇāni … prahāya	•	•	•	•	○	•	•	•	•	•	○		?
9 prathama-dhyāna	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		○		?
10 dvitīya-dhyāna	•	•	○	•	•	•	•	•	•		○		?
11 tṛtīya-dhyāna	•	•	○	•	•	•	•	•	•		○		?
12 caturtha-dhyāna	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•		?
maitrī										•	•	•	•
karuṇā										•	•		•
muditā										•	•		•
upekṣā										•	•		•
ākāśānantyāyatana							•	•					
vijñānānantyāyatana							•	•					
ākiñcanyāyatana							•	•					
naivasaṃjñānāsaṃjñāyatana								•					
saṃjñāvedayitanirodha							•	•	•				
13 ñāṇa-dassana	•												
14 mano-maya-kāya	•	•		•	?	•							
15 ṛddhiviṣaya	•	•		•	•	•							
16 divyaśrotrajñāna	•	•		•	•	•							
17 cetaḥparyāyajñāna	•	•		•	•	•							
18 pūrvanivāsānusmṛtijñāna	•	•	•	•	•	•							
19 cyutyupapādajñāna	•	•	•	•	•	•							
20 āsravakṣayajñāna	•	•	•	•		•							

• item explicit
○ item understood in abbreviation
? item probably understood

Turning to the application of the gradual scheme in twelve *sutta*s in the Theravāda DN, we find the full path scheme (items 1–20) indicated in ten of these *sutta*s. In two *sutta*s, however, we find some divergence from the full scheme. In the *Poṭṭhapāda-sutta* (DN 9) the divergence occurs after the attainment of the fourth *dhyāna*: in place of items 13–20 we find an account of the attainment of the first three formless meditations (*ārūpya*) followed by "the progressive attainment of the final cessation of perception of one who is aware" (*anupubbābhisaññānirodha-sampajāna-samāpatti*).[34] It seems likely that this should be taken as indicating what is elsewhere in the Nikāyas called "the cessation of perception and feeling" (*saṃjñāvedayitanirodha*).[35] It is noteworthy that in the context of this discussion between the Buddha and the wanderer (*parivrājaka*) Poṭṭhapāda, the scheme stops short of knowledge of the destruction of the defilements: cessation of perception rather than final awakening marks the end of the scheme. In the *Tevijja-sutta* (DN 13) the divergence occurs after no. 8 (abandoning the five hindrances): in place of the *dhyāna*s and various knowledges (items 9–20) we find the practice of the four immeasurable meditations (*apramāṇa*), namely kindness (*maitrī*), compassion (*karuṇā*), joy (*muditā*) and equanimity (*upekṣā*).[36] And here in the context of a discussion between the Buddha and brahmans the account of the path once more falls short of knowledge of the destruction of de-

[34] DN I 184.24–25.

[35] The precise meaning of *anupubbābhisaññānirodha-sampajāna-samāpatti* is unclear; my translation is influenced by the commentary (*sampajānantassa ante saññānirodhasamāpatti*), which explicitly identifies the attainment with *saññāvedayitanirodha* (Sv II 374).

[36] The abbreviated text perhaps leaves a question as to whether the four *dhyāna*s (items 9–12) should also be included at DN I 249–51. B^{e} (1956) I 234.13–14 (and according to E^{e}, the only Burmese manuscript used) insert *mettā* immediately after *cittaṃ samādhiyati* in the place of the first *jhāna*: *tass' ime pañca nīvaraṇe pahīne attani samanupassato pāmujjaṃ jāyati [...] sukhino cittaṃ samādhiyati. so mettāsahagatena cetasā ekaṃ disaṃ pharitvā viharati.* S^{e} (1894) I 313.4–5, C^{e} (1956) I 636.9–10, S^{e} (BUDSIR) = S^{e} (1922) I 310 all agree. E^{e} (1888) I 250.30–32, following the one Sinhala manuscript used, inserts *pe*, reading *cittaṃ samādhiyati—pe—so mettāsahagatena cetasā* and suggests (250, n. 5) that the manuscript must mean sections from the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta* that include the four *jhāna*s. Sv II 405 seems open (*tattha idha tathāgato ti ādi sāmaññaphale vitthāritaṃ*) but might be read as implying everything; Sv-pṭ does not comment. The Dhammakāya Foundation "pilot version" (Pathum Thani: Dhammachai Institute, 2013) omits *pe* here without comment (241.2–3).

filements and concludes with union with Brahmā (*brahmuno sahavyūpago*, *brahmasahavyatā*) after death.[37]

If we now compare the Dharmaguptaka DĀ, we find a remarkably similar situation. Seven of the nine sūtras that incorporate the gradual scheme of the path set out the full scheme from the appearance of the Tathāgata in the world through to knowledge of the destruction of the defilements. And the equivalents of precisely those *sutta*s where there is divergence in the Theravāda DN, the *Poṭṭhapāda* and the *Tevijja*, show a very similar divergence. Thus in the equivalent of the *Poṭṭhapāda-sutta*, the *Buzhapolou jing* (DĀ-D 28), instead of items 13–20 we find all four (rather than just the first three) formless attainments and explicitly the cessation of perception and feeling.[38] Again there is no account of final awakening through knowledge of the destruction of the defilements. In the equivalent of the *Tevijja-sutta*, the *Sanming jing* (DĀ-D 26), the four immeasurable meditations are inserted following the four *dhyāna*s, replacing in this case just items 13–20; the account ends with birth in the world of Brahmā rather than with knowledge of the destruction of the defilements.[39]

Turning finally to the Sarvāstivāda DĀ, once again we find essentially the same pattern. Ignoring the *Kāśyapa-sūtra* for lack of evidence, we find that fourteen of twenty-one sūtras that present the gradual scheme of the path give the full scheme from the appearance of the Tathāgata in the world to knowledge of the destruction of the defilements. Two further sūtras all but give the full scheme, reducing the "six higher knowledges" (*abhijñā*), items 15–20, to the "three knowledges" (*vidyā*), items 18–20,[40] while two other sūtras omit the final knowledge.[41] Once again we find that the parallel to the

---

37 DN I 252: *so* […] *bhikkhu kāyassa bhedā paraṃ maraṇā vasavattissa brahmuno sahavyūpago bhavissati*.

38 T I.110a22–c4; 1.110b15: 入想知滅定. See Stuart 2013: 56–65, 92–99.

39 T I.106c10–107a11 (生梵天上). Cf. Anālayo 2015: 9–10.

40 The *Tridaṇḍi*- and *Piṅgalatreya-sūtras*; see Choi 2015: 51. It is worth noting that the Sarvāstivāda account appears to consistently employ the term *abhijñā* for items 15–17 and *vidyā* for items 18–20; despite Gnoli's presentation of the text, this applies to SBV's *Śrāmaṇyaphala-sūtra* as well; see Choi 2015: 26–27.

41 The two *Maṇḍīsa-sūtra*s (30, 31) include an abbreviated path scheme, but appear to end with knowledge of the death and rebirth of beings, omitting the final knowledge. Why this is so is not clear, but it is worth noting that the Theravāda *Udumbarikasīhanāda-sutta* (DN 25) likewise does this. In the latter case it is perhaps related to the narrative frame: the Buddha is addressing rowdy and sceptical

Poṭṭhapāda-sutta, the *Pṛṣṭhapāla-sūtra*, diverges, and in a similar—though not quite identical—way. The divergence again occurs following the fourth *dhyāna*, but in this case we move straight to the final attainment of cessation of perception and feeling (*abhisaṃjñāveditanirodha*) without mention of the intervening formless attainments.[42] Again there is no account of final awakening through knowledge of the destruction of the defilements. The Sarvāstivāda parallel to the *Tevijja-sutta* and *Sanming jing* is the *Vāsiṣṭha-sūtra* (DĀ-S 45). In a similar manner the practice of the four immeasurable meditations is here put in place of the final stages of the path, though the abbreviations of the text make it unclear whether this is preceded by the four *dhyāna*s or not.[43] Like its Theravāda and Dharmaguptaka parallels the sūtra makes no mention of knowledge of the destruction of the *āsrava*s, but concludes with rebirth in the company of Brahmā.[44] The Sarvāstivāda DĀ includes a further sūtra, the *Jīvaka-sūtra* (DĀ-S 43), that places the practice of the first immeasurable meditation, *maitrī*, apparently after the initial items, again the abbreviations of the text making it unclear whether we should include the four *dhyāna*s in the scheme or not. However, the wording *yāvac chīlaskaṃdho* suggests that only the material up to and including moral restraint should be understood in this case.[45] The *Jīvaka-sūtra* has

wanderers; pointedly they are not persuaded to become followers and there is a narrative suspense in holding something back.

42 Melzer 2006: 38–39 (ms 417r8–418r1), 253–257. Cf. Stuart 2013: 56–65, 92–99. Stuart considers the possible significance of this difference at length. Nonetheless, that the general context is the progressive attenuation of *saṃjñā* is implied subsequently in the sūtra when the four *dhyāna*s followed by the first three formless attainments (as in the Theravāda version) are presented as culminating in cessation. See Melzer 2006: 40, 262 (ms 418v5–8); Stuart 2013: 30–31, 74–75, 107. In considering such differences we must also acknowledge that we are relying on a single manuscript that contains, according to Hartmann (2014: 143), "countless mistakes, haplographies and dittographies, wrong *akṣara*s and mutilated words, omitted or wrongly added negations, and all this to a degree that often renders whole paragraphs incomprehensible"; noting that the manuscript contains no corrections, Hartmann concludes, "it appears that the manuscript was never read and it surely was not meant to serve as a study book for someone interested in the contents of the texts", which is, of course, how I and others are attempting to use it.

43 Melzer 2006: 22.

44 DĀ-S ms 450v6: *vrahmakasabhāgatāyāṃ upapaddyate*.

45 DĀ-S ms 434v4: *iha Jīvaka śāstā loka utpadyate pūrvavad yāvac chīlaskaṃdho maitrīsahagatena cittena …*

a Theravāda parallel in the Majjhimanikāya (MN 55). While this includes an account of the first immeasurable meditation, it is not placed within the frame of the gradual scheme of the path that begins with the appearance of a Tathāgata in the world.[46] It is also worth noting that the *Kāraṇavādī-sūtra* (DĀ-S 13), too, has a parallel in the Theravāda Majjhimanikāya (MN 51, the *Kandaraka-sutta*); this parallel turns out to be one of ten Majjhimanikāya *sutta*s that include a version of the gradual scheme of the path (see Table 5).[47]

The presentation of the gradual scheme of the path beginning with the Tathāgata's appearance in the world in the three available versions of the Dīrghāgama is summarised in Table 4. We have then in all three versions of this *śīlaskandha* section a sequence of sūtras—ten in the Theravāda, seven in the Dharmaguptaka, and fourteen in the Sarvāstivāda (fifteen if we can count the *Kāśyapa-sūtra*)—that reproduce the same scheme of the path: a scheme that involves the practice the four *dhyāna*s followed by a sequence of six knowledges culminating in the knowledge of the destruction of the defilements. Moreover, in all three versions there are in addition two sūtras—the same two—that diverge in essentially the same way: one replaces the knowledges that follow the practice of the *dhyāna*s with the cessation of perception and feeling (preceded by the formless meditations in two versions); the other replaces those knowledges with the four immeasurable meditations leading to rebirth in the Brahma world. Neither of the divergent schemes ends in the destruction of the defilements and awakening. This is a remarkable congruence and deserves our attention.

With regard to the relationship between the three redactions, either we can regard one among them as the template from which the other two derive or, which seems better to me, we can view all three as deriving from some earlier redaction that no longer survives. But either way, it is clear that at a relatively early point in its development, the compilers of the *dīrgha* collection of sūtras deliberately chose to develop a substantial section that highlights one particular scheme of the path—that involving the practice of the four *dhyāna*s and the sequence of six or three knowledges ending in

---

46 MN I 370.

47 Bucknell (2014: 93) suggests that strictly the *Kāraṇavādī-sūtra* has two parallels in the Theravāda redaction: MN 51, which includes the gradual path, and AN 4.198 (AN II 205–208), which does not. This seems to be an error, as the latter *does* include the gradual path; it is a parallel in that it incorporates much of the same material, but it lacks the frame which mentions the wanderer Kandaraka.

Table 5. The 'Tathāgata appears …' gradual scheme in MN, MĀ, AN, SĀ



• item explicit
o item understood in abbreviation
? uncertain
⊙ close equivalent

the knowledge of the destruction of the defilements—by presenting it in a sequence of sūtras that place it within a variety of narrative frames.[48] The emphasis on this scheme suggests that they regarded this way of presenting the Buddhist path as normative. At the same time it is clear that they wished to accommodate the practice of the formless meditations with cessation and also the immeasurable meditations, but in a way that seems to subordinate these to the former scheme: each occurs in just one sūtra (or two in the case of the *apramāṇa* scheme in DĀ-S), where they are placed in a specific narrative frame that does not explicitly end in awakening. The fact that the Sarvāstivāda redaction effectively reinforces this basic pattern (by adding to the number of sūtras that present the path by way of the four *dhyāna*s and the sequence of six or three knowledges) suggests that the wish to present the Buddhist path in this way was not merely associated with the earliest phase of development, but something that persisted among the reciters of the *dīrgha* collection.[49] And as we shall see this basic pattern is further reinforced by what we find elsewhere in the Nikāya-Āgama literature.

3. The "Tathāgata appears" scheme in the other Nikāyas and Āgamas

As Rhys Davids and others have noted, the *sīlakkhandha* gradual scheme of the path beginning with the appearance of the Tathāgata is also found in the Theravāda Majjhimanikāya. In fact there are exactly nine *sutta*s that present a scheme of the path beginning in the same way as the DN version: "Here a Tathāgata appears in the world …" (*idha tathāgato loke uppajjati*) (See **Table 5**). Seven of these give a straightforward version of the scheme ending in the knowledge of the destruction of defilements; as in the DN, the scheme is abbreviated in *sutta*s placed later in the MN, but not always as radically as in the DN.[50] But the scheme clearly constitutes a distinct MN version: (1) the presentation is generally briefer (the similes for the *dhyāna*s and knowledges

[48] In most, if not all, cases these narrative frames involve the presentation of the Buddhist path to those who are not followers of the Buddha, namely, wanderers of other schools, brahmans, etc.

[49] Cf. Bucknell 2014: 91–95.

[50] *Cūḷa-Hatthipadopama* (MN I 178–84), *Kandaraka* (MN I 344–48), *Apaṇṇaka* (MN I 412–13), *Sandaka* (MN I 521–22), *Cūḷa-Sakuludāyi* (MN II 38–39), *Ghoṭamukha* (MN II 162), *Devadaha* (MN II 226–67).

are omitted,[51] the *śīla* section is much reduced); (2) there are several minor differences in wording (e.g. the introduction to the first *dhyāna* is different from that of the DN version and in fact corresponds more closely to that of the DĀ-D and DĀ-S versions); (3) like the DĀ-D and DĀ-S versions, it places the paragraph on contentment immediately after the account of *śīla*; (4) items 13–17 are missing so that the scheme progresses straight from the fourth *dhyāna* to the "three knowledges" (*vidyā*)—of previous lives, of the birth and death of beings in accordance with their actions, and of the destruction of defilements—and in this it is similar to the Sarvāstivāda DĀ presentation found in the *Tridaṇḍi-* and *Piṅgalatreya-sūtra*s (DĀ-S 25–26). Of the two remaining MN *sutta*s, the *Dantabhūmi-sutta* (MN 125) inserts additional items into the middle of the scheme, while the *Mahā-Taṇhāsaṃkhaya* (MN 38) replaces the items (13–20) that follow the *dhyāna*s with a distinctive account of the final ceasing of unskilful states based on mindfulness of the body and the cessation of the links of dependent origination. I will return to the significance of this below. The items added in the *Dantabhūmi-sutta* are first the two items (knowing the right amount of food and being devoted to wakefulness) that are inserted after no. 4 (guarding the senses) in the Dharmaguptaka DĀ version of the scheme. It also inserts the formula of the four applications of mindfulness in place of the first *dhyāna* (item no. 9).

Elsewhere in the Theravāda Nikāyas we find two further occurrences of the gradual scheme of the path beginning with the appearance of the Tathāgata, both in the Aṅguttaranikāya. The first, although quite abbreviated, is a straightforward reproduction of the MN version of the scheme ending with the four *dhyāna*s and the three knowledges; in fact it reproduces, without the introductory frame, the relevant portion of the *Kandaraka-sutta* (MN 51).[52] The second inserts after the fourth *dhyāna*, replacing the three knowledges (items 18–20), the four formless attainments, and the attainment of the cessation of perception and feeling, and concludes with "having seen with his wisdom, the defilements are destroyed" (*paññāya cassa disvā āsavā parikkhīṇā honti*).[53] In this it resembles the DN/DĀ *Poṭṭhapāda*/*Pṛṣṭhapāla* scheme, although unlike the latter this AN scheme does explicitly conclude

[51] The relevant similes are found elsewhere in MN when the *dhyāna*s and knowledges are presented in other contexts. See MN I 276–280, MN II 15–21, MN III 92–94.

[52] See AN II 208.11–211.22 for the gradual path; but MN I 342.23–349.3 = AN II 206.5–208.29.

[53] AN V 204.4–209.10.

with the destruction of the defilements and awakening. Finally we can note that a Saṃyuttanikāya *sutta* includes the statement of the appearance of the Tathāgata in the world and then progresses to the practice of the immeasurable meditations.[54]

Turning now to the surviving Sarvāstivāda sources, mostly in Chinese translation, we find six sūtras in the Madhyamāgama (MĀ 104, 146, 198, 201, 204, 208) that present the gradual scheme of the path beginning with the phrase "the teacher, the Tathāgata, appears in the world". Three of these (MĀ 104, 146, 204) give what might be regarded as the normal Sarvāstivādin Madhyamāgama version of the gradual scheme of the path; we can probably add MĀ 208 to this list.[55] Like the Majjhima version, it represents a reduced

[54] SN IV 320.10–322.26. This includes the statement attested in the *Tevijja-sutta* (DN I 251) that when these are developed the sphere of action with limits does not remain or persist (*yam pamāṇakataṃ kammaṃ na taṃ tatrāvasissati na taṃ tatrāvatiṭṭhati*), illustrated with the simile of a strong conch blower easily signalling in all four directions.

[55] MĀ 208 straightforwardly introduces the gradual path but the account appears to stall at the fourth *dhyāna*; Anālayo speculates that text may have been lost (*Comparative Study* I: 436). The problem is how to understand the abbreviations in the Chinese translation of MĀ. Initially it is puzzling that the unabbreviated scheme of the path is given not in the earlier MĀ 104 (T I.595a7–12), but in MĀ 146 (T I.656c26–658a17). This, however, is explained by the fact that all but items 1 (the arising of the Tathāgata) and 9–11 (*dhyāna*s 1–3) are already given in full in MĀ 80 (T I.552b13–553c18); the four *dhyāna*s are given in full first in MĀ 2 (T I.422b11–22). With regard to MĀ 204, Anālayo, *Comparative Study* I: 186 suggests that the person who attains the *dhyāna*s is the Buddha, rather than a monk in general (as in MN 26). It seems to me that Anālayo has misconstrued the straightforward insertion here of the abbreviated full scheme of the path, beginning with the arising of the Tathāgata in the world. The wording here is exactly as at T I.785c24–26 (MĀ 208), where Anālayo does not query the insertion of the gradual path scheme or suggest that it is the Buddha who attains the *dhyāna*s (*Comparative Study* I: 436). The manner in which the translators of MĀ abbreviate repetitions is something that requires further examination by careful comparison of the translation with the original Indic wording, but it seems to me that alongside the use of such expressions as 乃至 (*yāvat*) we must assume silent abbreviation in places; cf. T I.595a8–10 (MĀ 104) where 乃至 is omitted but must be assumed. In sum, at T I.778b13 (MĀ 204) I think we need to understand some silent abbreviation and subsequently that the whole of T I.656c29–657c21 (from MĀ 146) is intended and so translate: "O five *bhikṣu*s, when a Tathāgata arises in the world, free from attachment, a perfectly awakened one, perfect in knowledge and conduct, faring well, knower of the world, unsurpassed person, charioteer on the path of dharma, teacher of gods and men, a buddha, the

account when compared with the Dīrghāgama version. In fact the MĀ version is more reduced than the MN version. While the Theravāda Majjhima version omits items 13–17, the Sarvāstivāda Madhyama version appears to routinely omit items 13–19, and thus moves straight from the fourth *dhyāna* to knowledge of the destruction of the defilements.

The Sarvāstivāda MĀ 204 represents a parallel to the Theravāda *Ariyapariyesanā-sutta* (MN 26). The Theravāda version also inserts an account of the stages of the path at this point in the Buddha's sermon to the five monks after his awakening, but its account starts with the four *dhyāna*s, continues with the four formless attainments and ends with the cessation of perception and feeling and the destruction of the defilements. The Sarvāstivāda MĀ 104 is a parallel to the Theravāda *Udumbarikasīhanāda-sutta* (DN 25) and the Dharmaguptaka *Santuona jing* (DĀ 8). Significantly both of these also contain the gradual scheme of the path at this point, but they do not begin with the appearance of the Tathāgata in the world. The Dharmaguptaka version begins with leaving home to enter the religious life; the Theravāda version assumes the state of one who has already entered the religious life. The Dharmaguptaka and Theravāda versions also differ by giving an account of the practice of the four *apramāṇa*s instead of the four *dhyāna*s and

blessed one. [*Silent abbreviation*.] He abandons—*up to*—the five hindrances that are defilements of mind and weaken wisdom; separate from desires, separate from bad unskilful *dharma*s—*to*—he attains and dwells in the fourth meditation." (五比丘。若 時如來出興于世。無所著等正覺明行成爲善逝世間解無上士道法御天人師號佛衆祐。彼斷乃至五蓋心穢慧羸。離欲離惡不善之法。至得第四禪成就遊。) Here I take the initial "he abandons—*up to*—" as abbreviating the twenty-five repetitions of "abandons" (彼斷) at T I.657a15–c20. Significantly the abbreviations of modern editions also mislead modern scholars; with reference to MN II 226.6–13 (MN 101), Richard Gombrich makes precisely the same error when he comments (1994: 1087), "At this point there is an irrelevant insertion of a stock passage (pp. 226–7) about how a Buddha becomes Enlightened." The radically abbreviated stock passage is the gradual scheme of the path and so not about how a buddha becomes enlightened, but how a buddha teaches *others* to become enlightened (and so incidentally perhaps not so irrelevant in a dialogue with a Jain ascetic). In light of all this, the omission of the knowledge of the destruction of the *āsrava*s in MĀ 208 at T I.786b2 might be regarded as a silent abbreviation (cf. Anālayo, *Comparative Study* I: 436), although my survey provides various examples of accounts of the path stopping short of awakening.

stopping short of the destruction of the defilements, mentioning only the knowledges of past lives and of the death and rebirth of beings.[56]

The two remaining MĀ sūtras (MĀ 198, 201) that contain an account of the gradual path beginning with the appearance of the Tathāgata in the world are parallels to the Theravāda *Dantabhūmi-sutta* (MN 125) and *Mahā-Taṇhāsaṃkhaya-sutta* (MN 38) respectively, and just like those two *sutta*s they contain variations—essentially the same variations—on the scheme: like its Theravāda counterpart MĀ 198 inserts the practice of the four applications of mindfulness (*smṛtyupasthāna*) prior to the attainment of *dhyāna*, although these do not replace the first *dhyāna* as in MN 125; MĀ 198 in addition stops short of knowledge of the destruction of the defilements, talking just of the "imperturbability" associated with the attainment of the fourth *dhyāna*; this may be deliberate, but silent abbreviation in the Chinese translation is not impossible.[57] MĀ 201 appears to move straight from the appearance of the Tathāgata in the world and the listing of his qualities to the final formula involving a distinctive account of the final ceasing of unskilful states based on mindfulness of body and the cessation of the links of dependent origination, also found in its Theravāda parallel (MN 38). It seems likely that there is silent abbreviation here and that the gradual path up to the attainment of the fourth *dhyāna* is intended (as in MĀ 104, 204 and 208); otherwise we have an account of how someone who is already awakened (the perfectly awakened Tathāgata) practises to become awakened, which makes little sense.[58]

---

[56] In fact MĀ 104 also mentions the four *apramāṇa*s at T I.594b17–20, before the Tathāgata's arising in the world, and so not as part of the gradual path scheme.

[57] Cf. comments above, n. 55. With regard to the absence of the three knowledges in the MĀ version, Anālayo (2006: 17–18) considers the loss of text a possibility, but then considers "both versions as viable presentations". For a translation of MĀ 198 and a full discussion of the differences, see Anālayo 2006 and Anālayo, *Comparative Study* II: 717–22;

[58] MĀ 201 at T I.769c12–15 has the fixed statement of the Tathāgata's appearance in the world and his qualities ending with "a buddha, the blessed one"; this is immediately followed by "he sees forms with his eye; with regard to a pleasant form he does not become attached" ([…] 佛衆祐。彼眼見色。於好色而不樂著。). In MN 38 the phrase about seeing forms but not being attached occurs after the statement of the gradual path as its conclusion; it seems likely that after 佛衆祐 we should understand a silent abbreviation (as in MĀ 204) and insert: "[…] He abandons—*up to*—the five hindrances that are defilements of mind and weaken wisdom; separate from desires, separate from bad unskilful *dharma*s—*to*—he attains and dwells in

Looking beyond the Madhyamāgama, in the Saṃyuktāgama a sūtra (SĀ 636), belonging to the *smṛtyupasthāna-saṃyukta*, inserts the *smṛtyupasthāna* formula in place of four *dhyāna*s but lacks any additional explicit mention of the destruction of the defilements. In the context of Theravāda Nikāyas I noted above two Aṅguttara examples of the gradual scheme beginning with the arising of the Tathāgata in the world. These have no surviving parallels in the Chinese translation of the Ekottarikāgama, but the Aṅguttara *sutta* that presents the MN version of the Theravāda gradual path, proceeding from the four *dhyāna*s to the three knowledges, has a parallel that survives embedded in the *Abhidharma Saṃgītiparyāya*;[59] this Sarvāstivāda version presents the MĀ Sarvāstivāda gradual path, proceeding from the four *dhyāna*s straight to knowledge of the destruction of the defilements. It should also be noted that MĀ 19, which is parallel to the Theravāda *Devadaha-sutta* (MN 101), one of the seven Majjhimanikāya *sutta*s that contain the gradual path, also contains the scheme of the gradual path, but one that starts with the abandoning of the five hindrances, omitting items 1–7. There are two *sutta*s similar in form in the Saṃyutta and Aṅguttara-nikāyas which I have not included in Table 5, as the wording of the initial statement of the appearance of the Tathāgata in the world does not quite conform.[60] These state that the Tathāgata teaches in the former the aggregates and in the latter the person (*satkāya*), their arising, ceasing and the way leading to their ceasing: when the long lived gods hear this they are seized by a sense of urgency, realising that their existence, too, is limited.

To sum up, the Theravāda Nikāyas contain a total of twenty-four occurrences of this path scheme beginning with the phrase "the Tathāgata arises in the world". Nineteen of these occurrences—ten in DN, eight in MN and one in AN—present the path with reference to the four *dhyāna*s and three knowledges; one further occurrence (MN 38) is similar in principle, but describes awakening without reference to the three knowledges. Two occurrences—one in DN and one in AN—present the path with reference to the formless attainments and cessation, though only one of these explicitly concludes in awakening. Two versions, one in DN and one in SN, present the path with ref-

---

the fourth meditation." See note 55.

59 T (1536) XXVI.406c4–407b7; see Stache-Rosen and Mittal, *Saṅgītisūtra*, I: 124–25.

60 SN III 85.13–19; AN II 33.16–31; they begin with a simile and then state *yadā tathāgato loke uppajjati* rather than *idha tathāgato loke uppajjati*.

erence to the immeasurable meditations; the former concludes with rebirth in the world of Brahmā, the latter is unspecific. In the Sarvāstivāda Āgamas as they survive a similar picture emerges. There are a total of twenty-nine explicit occurrences of the gradual path scheme beginning with the phrase "the Tathāgata arises in the world". Twenty of these occurrences—sixteen in DĀ-S, three in MĀ, and one sūtra source quoted in the Abhidharma—present the path with reference to the four *dhyāna*s ending in destruction of the defilements by way of the six, three or one knowledge(s) (*abhijñā/vidyā*). One similar occurrence (MĀ 201) describes awakening without reference to the three knowledges. Four similar occurrences (DĀ-S 30, 31 and MĀ 198, 208) stop short of awakening. One occurrence (DĀ-S 36) presents the path with reference to the attainment of cessation, though does not explicitly conclude in awakening. Two occurrences (DĀ-S 43, 44) present the path with reference to the immeasurable meditations, although only one of these (DĀ 44) shows their development in full and concludes with rebirth in the world of Brahmā. One occurrence (SĀ 636) replaces the *dhyāna*s with the practice of the *smṛtyupasthāna*s without specifying subsequent awakening.[61]

An initial assessment of the picture that emerges from a comparison focused on the Theravāda Majjhima and Sarvāstivāda Madhyamāgama suggests certain significant features. The first to note is the reduction of the scheme by leaving out certain items from the scheme's beginning, middle or end. In certain cases this means that while parallel sūtras from different redactions contain the scheme of the gradual path, they do not in all cases begin with the phrase describing the appearance of the Tathāgata in the world (compare MĀ 19 with MN 101, DN 25 with MĀ 104, MN 26 with MĀ 204). This leads to other features: (1) the elaboration of the scheme by the addition of certain items (MN 125, MĀ 198); (2) the substitution of certain items with different items (MN 38, MĀ 201, MN 125, SĀ 636); (3) the substitution of one or other of the schemes already indicated in the DN-DĀ collections, namely either the formless attainments and cessation (MN 26, AN V 204–09) or the four *apramāṇa*s (DN 25, DĀ-D 8).

Overall the presentation of the "Tathāgata appears" scheme of the path in the rest of the Nikāyas and Āgamas reiterates the consensus of the *sīlak-*

[61] There is a further occurrence of the statement of the appearance of the Tathāgata in the world in the *Mahāsuññata-sutta* and its parallels, but it is not followed by an account of the gradual path. See MN III 116.22–25; T I.740a3–5; Skilling, *Mahāsūtras* I: 252.

khandha/śīlaskandha section of DN/DĀ. In effect the presentation sets up three schemes of the path. I shall call these:

- the four-*dhyāna* scheme
- the *ārūpya-nirodha* scheme
- the *apramāṇa* scheme

Certainly the work of Rhys Davids, Schmithausen, Yit, and others has in part recognised the significance of such schemes of the path by noting their occurrence in the Nikāya-Āgama material more generally, yet the full extent to which precisely these three schemes are reproduced or adapted in the Nikāya-Āgama material remains only partially appreciated. In the rest of this article I will attempt to present as full a picture as I can based on the available sources.

That some presentations of the gradual path start at some point after the appearance of the Tathāgata in the world (item 1) means that the scope for comparing schemes of the path across the Nikāya-Āgama literature is broadened somewhat. Yet in the case of the account of the gradual path beginning with the phrase "Here … a Tathāgata appears in the world …", we have a straightforward selection criterion, namely, all accounts of the path that begin with this formula. Identifying variations that do not begin with "the Tathāgata arises in the world" has proved less precise. There is a grey area where what precisely qualifies as a scheme of the path is not always clearly distinguishable from a simple listing of, say, the four *dhyāna*s, or four immeasurables (*apramāṇa*).[62] In what follows I believe I have identified all significant occurrences and that the material I present is overall representative, but I have not aimed at capturing every occurrence of the four *dhyāna*s, four immeasurables, and formless attainments in the Nikāya-Āgama literature. Rather I have tried to identify those places where they occur as part of an account of the stages of the path. In places I have also included what I judge as equivalents for especially *śīla* (item 3) and destruction of the defilements (item 20).

[62] For example, I have not included the *Mahāsakuludayi-sutta* (MN 77: III 9–22), which lists sets of items that the Buddha has explained the way to develop: *satipaṭṭhāna*, etc., eight *vimokkha*s, eight *abhibhāyatana*s, ten *kasiṇa*s, four *jhāna*s, six *abhiññā*s; nor have I included the *Ākaṅkheyya-sutta* (MN 6), which lists items that the *bhikkhu* might wish to develop, nor AN V 134–35 (parallel at MĀ 84), which lists the "thorns" that are obstacles to various attainments. On the other hand I have included the *Mahā-Assapura-sutta* (MN 39), which lists the qualities the *samaṇa* should develop.

Table 6. The four-*dhyāna* scheme in MN, MĀ, AN, EĀ

	MN 39 Mahā-Assapura (MN I 271.22–280.8)	MĀ 182 (T 1.725a4–c3) (= MN 39)	EĀ 49.8 (T 2.801c21–802a27)	MN 54 Potaliya (MN I 361.1–367.21–67)	MĀ 203 (T 1.775a17–b4) (MN 54)	MN 65 Bhaddāli (MN I 440.4–442.19)	MĀ 194 (T 1.747c17–748b20) (= MN 65)	MN 107 Gaṇaka-Moggallāna (MN III 2.1–4.20)	MĀ 144 (T 1.652b3–c18) (= MN 107)	T (70) 1.875b2–c8	MN 108 Gopaka-Moggallāna (MN III 11.11–12.30)	MĀ 145 (T 1.654c13–655a25) (= MN 108)	MN 112 Chabbisodhana (MN III 33.4–36.27)	MĀ 187 (T 1.733a16–734a17) (= MN 112)	MN 122 Mahāsuññata (MN III 111.20–115.8)	MĀ 191 (T 1.738a3–740c2)	MĀ 2 (T 1.422b6–26)	AN IV 118.14–20.3	MĀ 3 (T 1.423a11–b19)	AN IV 108.25–13.5	MN 53 Sekha (MN I 354.31–5.24)	MĀ 65 (T 1.508b13–27)	MĀ 80 (T 1.552b13–553c18)	MĀ 218 (T 1.803a7–15)	AN I 163.23–165.19, 166.32–167.26 (×2)	AN III 92.13–93..19	AN III 99.6–100.19	AN III 25.2–29.23
1 śāstā loka utpadyate tathāgato																												
2 pravrajati																												
3 prātimokṣasamvarasamvṛta	⊙	•		⊙		⊙	○	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•		•								
6 saṃtuṣṭa																												
smṛtyupasthāna																												
4 indriyair guptadvāraḥ	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•			•	•		•								
bhojane mātrajñaḥ	•		•																									
jāgarikānuyukta	•		•																									
7 saddharmas																				•								
37 bodhipākṣikaa-dharmas			•																									
5 smṛtisamprajanya	•	•						•	•	•	•		•	•														
7 prāntāni śayanāsanāni	•	•				•		•	•	•	•		•	•														
8 pañca-varaṇāni … prahāya	•	•				•		•	•	•	•		•	•														
9 prathama-dhyāna	○	○		•		•	○	•	○	○	•	⊙	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	○	○	•	•	•	•
10 dvitīya-dhyāna	○	○				•	○	•	○	○	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	○	○	•	•	•	•
11 tṛtīya-dhyāna	○	○				•	○	•	○	○	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	○	○	•	•	•	•
12 caturtha-dhyāna	•	•		⊙		•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
13 [ñāṇa-dassana]																												
14 mano-maya-kāya																												
15 ṛddhiviṣaya																												
16 divyaśrotrajñāna																												
17 cetahparyāyajñāna																												
18 pūrvanivāsānusmṛtijñāna	•	•		•		•		•	•	•	•		•	•														
19 cyutyupapādajñāna	•	•		•		•		•	•	•	•		•	•														
20 āsravakṣayajñāna	•	•	•	•		•		•	•	•	•		•	•			⊙	⊙		⊙		•	•	•	•	•	•	•

• item explicit ○ item understood in abbreviation ⊙ close equivalent

4. The four-*dhyāna* scheme of the path

Table 6 sets out all the examples I have been able to identify of the presentation of the path centring on the four *dhyāna*s, excluding those that describe the Buddha's awakening in the first person, which I deal with separately below. The table first details sūtras from MN and MĀ that are parallels, followed by sūtras from MĀ with no MN parallel but with a parallel elsewhere, then MN and MĀ sūtras with no parallels, and finally AN *sutta*s with no parallel. Interestingly we find one instance where an MN *sutta* omits the *dhyāna*s, but the MĀ has them, and one instance where an MN *sutta* has the *dhyāna*s, but the MĀ omits them. But in both these instances the parallel that omits the *dhyāna*s has some expression that is more or less equivalent to the *dhyāna*s. Accordingly, following the discussion of overcoming the dangers of sense objects (*kāma*), the *Potaliya-sutta* (MN 54) talks of reaching "unified equanimity" (*upekkhā ekattā*) and "the purity of mindfulness achieved through equanimity" (*upekkhā-sati-pārisuddhi*), an expression that is routinely used as part of the standard description of the fourth *dhyāna*.[63] And MĀ 145 talks of a *bhikṣu* delighting in meditation.[64] The *Ganaka-Moggallāna-sutta* is distinctive in omitting the final knowledge of the destruction of defilements.

I noted above the absence of the knowledges of past lives and of the death and rebirth of beings in some Madhyamāgama versions of the gradual scheme of the path. As Schmithausen observes,[65] the version without these two knowledges is certainly the more common in the Madhyamāgama, but it is also found in Theravāda sources—in the Majjhimanikāya in the *Chabbisodhana-sutta* (MN 112) and three times in the Aṅguttara—while the version with three knowledges is also found in Madhyamāgama (MĀ 194). Yet

---

[63] MN I 367.6–10. Cf, DN I 75.28–31: *sukhassa ca pahānā dukkhassa ca pahānā pubbeva somanassadomanassānaṃ atthaṅgamā adukkhamasukhaṃ upekkhāsatipārisuddhiṃ catutthaṃ jhānaṃ upasampajja viharati.*

[64] T I.655a2: 比丘樂於燕坐. Anālayo, *Comparative Study* II: 627, n. 203, observes: "MĀ 145 at T I 655a3 describes how someone 'internally properly practices tranquillity, is not separated from mental investigation and puts into operation insight, increasingly practising emptiness' […] expressions that bring to mind the injunction in MN 6 at MN I 33.10, 'practising internal tranquillity of mind, not neglecting meditation (*jhāna*), being endowed with insight, and being a frequenter of empty places', *ajjhattaṃ cetosamatham anuyutto anirākatajjhāno vipassanāya samannāgato brūhetā suññāgārānaṃ*."

[65] Schmithausen 1981: 221–22, n. 75.

given the unclear manner in which MĀ sometimes abbreviates (see notes 55, 57, 58), there may be a question as to whether this is always a reduction or at least in some cases an abbreviation. However, the reduction in the case of the *Chabbisodhana-sutta* agrees with its MĀ parallel and in this case we know that it reflects the received text, as Buddhaghosa comments on it, explaining that in this *sutta* the monks are asking only about transcendent *dharma* (the context is the eradication of conceit which only comes with arhatship) and so this is a *sutta* with a single response (*ekavissajjitasutta*) and so the two ordinary knowledges are not included.[66]

Schmithausen goes on to refer to André Bareau's arguments that the reduced version in fact represents the older version; I shall return to this issue below as it concerns accounts of the Buddha's awakening, where, *pace* Bareau, all three knowledges are found in Sarvāstivāda accounts of his awakening. It is worth noting that the fuller version with all six knowledges is also found occasionally in both Theravāda and Sarvāstivāda sources beyond DN and DĀ-S. The reduction of the six knowledges to three and the three knowledges to one after the four *dhyāna*s needs also to be understood in the light of the reduction and expansion of items that precede the *dhyāna*s. Thus a number of examples omit some or all of items 1–8. Conversely other examples substitute or add items. Again we find an instance in the Majjhimanikāya where knowing the right amount of food and being devoted to wakefulness are inserted after no. 4 (guarding the senses), though not in MĀ.[67] An EĀ parallel to MN 39, however, does include these two items, adding after them in place of the *dhyāna*s the practice of the thirty-seven *dharma*s that contribute to awakening (*bodhipākṣika-dharma*).[68] While this is not paralleled in the Theravāda MN *sutta*s that present the gradual scheme of the path, the sequence "guarding the sense doors, knowing the right amount of food, being engaged to wakefulness, being engaged in the development of the *dharma*s that contribute to awakening" is found in several places in the Theravāda canonical texts.[69] The *Sekha-sutta* (MN 53) adds instead, af-

[66] Ps IV 94–98.

[67] These two items are not unknown in MĀ: 食知止足 (T I.455b7) and 精進而不懈怠 (T I.455b14) appear to correspond to *bhojane mātrajñaḥ* and *jāgarikānuyukta* respectively.

[68] T II.802a16: 思惟三十七道之法.

[69] AN II 70–71, 300–301; Vibh 244. The significance of these is discussed in Gethin 2001: 289–93.

ter knowing the right amount of food and being devoted to wakefulness, a description of the monk as having seven good qualities (*saddhamma*): faith, self-respect, conscience, learning, energy, mindfulness, and wisdom (*saddha, hirimant, ottappin, bahussuta, āraddhaviriya, satimant, paññavant*). The same qualities are attributed to the monk before the practice of *dhyāna* in MĀ 3.[70] The Madhyamāgama parallel to MN 107 (MĀ 144) also elaborates on the practice of mindfulness in connection with guarding the sense doors.[71]

I have included in these four-*dhyāna* schemes of the path the account found in the *Mahāsuññatā-sutta* (MN 122). This is clearly a distinctive and somewhat unusual presentation of the path that departs from the usual gradual scheme of the path in a variety of ways by focusing on "emptiness" (*suññatā*). Nonetheless at the core of the Theravāda version is the abandoning of the conceit "I am" (*asmimāna*) on the basis of the contemplation of emptiness following the attainment of the four *dhyāna*s. The Sarvāstivādin versions, in Tibetan translation as well as Chinese,[72] imply only the first *dhyāna* as the basis for this.[73]

Adding these treatments to the nineteen identified above, I count thirty-one (including MN 54) presentations of the path ending in knowledge of the destruction of the defilements by way of the four *dhyāna*s in Theravāda Nikāya sources. Of these, twelve (ten in DN, one in MN, and one in AN) specify the six higher knowledges, fourteen just three knowledges, three only the final knowledge, while two give an equivalent to the final knowledge. To the twenty already identified in Sarvāstivāda sources we can add a further ten instances, giving a total of thirty which present the path with reference to the four *dhyāna*s leading to the knowledge of the destruction of the defilements. Of these, sixteen (fourteen in DĀ-S and MĀ 80 and 218) specify six higher knowledges, three (DĀ-S 25, 26 and MĀ 194) just three knowledges, ten only the final, and one (MĀ 3) an equivalent to the final knowledge. Two further sūtras (MĀ 145, 191) describe the path ending in awakening with a reduced account of *dhyāna*.

---

70 T I.423a14–b4: 信, 慚耻, 羞愧, 精進, 多聞, 正念, 智慧.

71 See Anālayo, *Comparative Study* II: 619–21.

72 For the Tibetan version, see Skilling, *Mahāsūtras* I: 188–263, II: 365–400.

73 See Anālayo, *Comparative Study* II: 693.

Table 7. The *ārūpya-nirodha* scheme

	DN 15 Mahānidāna (DN II 70.27–71.16)	MĀ 97 (T I.582a17–29)	MN 8 Sallekha (MN I 40.21–42.2)	MĀ 91 (T I.573b25–c3)	MN 25 Nivāpa (MN I 159.10–160.12)	MĀ 178 (T I.720a9–26)	MN 26 Ariyapariyesanā (MN I 174.9–175.6)	MĀ 204 (T I.778b10–21)	MN 30 Cūḷa-Sāropama (MN I 202.33–204.25)	MN 31 Cūḷa-Gosiṅga (MN I 207.29–209.26)	MĀ 185 (T I.730b1–c2)	EĀ 24.8 (T II.629b23–26)	Gosiṅga-sutra (Gāndhārī)	MN 52 Aṭṭhakanāgara (MN I 349.24–S2.33)	AN V 343.7–346.27	MĀ 217 (T I.802b7–c5)	T (92) 1.916b18–c9	MN 64 Mahāmāluṅkyaputta (MN I 435.26–437.6)	MĀ 205 (T I.779c18–780b4)	MN 66 Laṭukikopama (MN I 454.8–45996)	MĀ 192 (T I.743a29–c12)	MN 106 Āneñjasappāya (MN II 263.25–265.20)	MĀ 75 (T I.542c10–543b20)	MN 111 Anupada (MN III 25.12–28.34)	MN 113 Sapurisa (MN III 42.19–45.5)	MĀ 85 (T I.562a4–10)	MN 120 Saṅkhāruppatti (MN III 99.23–103.21)	MĀ 168 (T I.700c3–701b12)	MN 121 Cūḷasuññata-sutta (M III 104.15–109.15)	MĀ 190 (T I.737a12–c14)	MN 137 Saḷāyatana (MN III 222.12–27)	MĀ 163 (T I.694a28–b9)	MĀ 219 (T I.803b8–28)	Book of Nines Great Chapter: see Table 8	AN IV 410–56	AN V 204.4–209.10
1 śāstā … tathāgato … deśayati								•	⊙																										
2 pravajyā								•	⊙																										
3 śīla																																			
4 santuṣṭhī																																			
5 indriya-saṃvara																																			
6 saṃprajāṇavihārin																																			
7 prāntāni śayanāsanāni																							⊙												
kāya, vedanā-, citta-, dharma-anupaśyanā								•																											
8 pamca-varaṇāni … prahāya																																			
9 prathama-dhyāna			•					•		•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•				•		
10 dvitīya-dhyāna			•					•		•	•	○		•	•	○	○	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•				•		
11 tṛtīya-dhyāna			•					•		•	•	○		•	•	○	○	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•				•		
12 caturtha-dhyāna			•					•		•	•	○		•	•	○	○	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•				•		
maitrī																																			
karuṇā																																			
muditā																																			
upekṣā																																			
ākāśānantyāyatana			•					•		•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•				•		
vijñānānantyāyatana			•					•		•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•				•		
ākiñcanyāyatana			•					•		•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•				•		
naivasaṃjñānāsaṃjñāyatana			•					•		•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•				•		
saṃjñāvedayitanirodha			•					•		•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•				•		
prajñāya cāsya dṛṣṭvā													○																						
14 mano-maya-kāya																																			
15 ṛddhi-viṣaya-jñāna																																			
16 divya-śrotra-jñāna																																			
17 ceto-paryāya-jñāna																																			
18 pūrva-nivāsānusmṛti-jñāna																																			
19 cyuty-upapāda-jñāna																																			
20 āsrava-kṣaya-jñāna																																			

• item explicit ○ item understood in abbreviation ⊙ close equivalent

Table 8. The *ārūpya-nirodha* scheme: from AN navaka-nipāta

	AN IV 410	AN IV 411–14	AN IV 414–18	AN IV 418–22	AN IV 422–26	AN IV 430–32	AN IV 433–34	AN IV 436–38	AN IV 438–48	AN IV 449–50 (×10)	AN IV 450–56 (×10)
1 tathāgato loke uppajjati											
2 pabbajati											
3 sīla											
6 santuṭṭhi											
4 indriya-saṃvara											
5 sati-sampajañña											
7 vivittaṃ senāsanaṃ								•			
8 pañca-nīvaraṇa-pahāna								•			
9 paṭhama-jjhāna	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
10 dutiya-jjhāna	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
11 tatiya-jjhāna	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
12 catuttha-jjhāna	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
ākāsānañcāyatana	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
viññāṇañcāyatana	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
ākiñcaññāyatana	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
nevasaññānāsaññāyatana	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•
saññāvedayitanirodha	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•
paññāya c’ assa disvā			•			•	•	•	•	•	•
14 mano-maya-kāya											
15 iddhi-vidha				•							
16 dibba-sota-dhātu				•							
17 ceto-pariya-ñāṇa				•							
18 pubbe-nivāsānussati-ñāṇa				•							
19 satta-cutūpapāta-ñāṇa				•							
20 āsava-kkhaya-ñāṇa			•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•

5. The *ārūpya-nirodha* scheme

Table 7 summarises all instances I have been able to find of the presentation of the path by way of the formless meditations, apart from the primary example of the *Poṭṭhapāda-sutta* / *Pṛṣṭhapāla-sūtra* found in the *sīlakkhandhavagga* and *śīlaskandha-nipāta* of DN and DĀ-S, respectively, and the sequence of occurrences found in the Book of Nines in the Aṅguttaranikāya (see **Table 8**). Where there are parallels I include these whether or not they also present the path by way of the formless attainments. In fact, in all but one case (MN

26) the parallel also includes some mention of the formless attainments. Apart from this case the parallels generally correspond.

The most common account of the path leading to the destruction of the defilements via the formless attainments culminates in the attainment of the cessation of perception and feeling immediately after the attainment of the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception, followed by the statement that "and having seen by means of his understanding, the defilements are destroyed" (*paññāya cassa disvā āsavā parikkhīṇā honti*).[74] This occurs seven times in the Theravāda DN and MN, and a further twenty-five times in a sequence of *sutta*s in the Book of Nines in the Aṅguttaranikāya.[75] It occurs five times in the Chinese translation of the Sarvāstivāda MĀ and is likely paralleled in the Gāndhārī *Goṣiga-sutra*, which is likely to be from a Dharmaguptaka Madhyamāgama.[76] Alongside this there are also instances of the destruction of the defilements being indicated directly following the attainment of the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception (three clear examples in Theravāda sources, two in Sarvāstivāda sources). These examples are not consistently reflected in the parallels.

Examples where the fourth formless attainment is omitted before the destruction of the defilements (MN 52, MN 64 = MĀ 205, AN IV 422–26) are of some interest. The *Aṭṭhakanagara-sutta* (repeated in full at AN V 342–47) is explicit in presenting the four *dhyāna*s, the four immeasurable attainments not as progressive steps towards the destruction of the defilements but as alternative foundations for their destruction, leading to either arhatship or at least non-return by way of insight into their conditioned and impermanent nature. The omission of the fourth formless attainment here is reflected in the instructions for development of insight in the late Theravāda exegetical tradition. Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga* comments that one

---

74 Cf. T I.720a23: 慧見諸漏盡斷知.

75 This sudden proliferation of *sutta*s in the Book of Nines of AN is clearly related to the reference to the four *jhāna*s, four formless attainments, and attainment of cessation as "nine progressive attainments" (*nava anupubbavihārasamāpattiyo*), e.g. AN IV 410.27, though not all of the following *sutta*s include all nine attainments.

76 Silverlock 2015: 526–531, 545–549. The relevant portion of the manuscript is damaged; on the basis of a calculation of the number of missing *akṣara*s, Silverlock reconstructs the missing text as including the phrase *prañae drispa aravae parakṣiṇa*, but comments that it is impossible to know if it occurred in the gap or was the subject of an abbreviation. He notes, however, that later in the manuscript this exact wording is used four times.

who wishes to accomplish insight "should emerge from any one of the form sphere or formless sphere *dhyāna*s apart from the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception, and discern the characteristic, function, and so on of the associated *dharma*s".[77] Dhammapāla adds in his commentary that this is said because the *dharma*s associated with the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception are difficult for the beginner to discern.[78]

As Anālayo notes, the Sarvāstivāda parallel (MĀ 217) similarly presents each attainment as a basis for insight leading to either non-return or arhatship through "watching *dharma*s as *dharma*s".[79] The Sarvāstivāda parallel includes the fourth formless attainment. While this may, as Maithrimurthi has suggested, be a mistake in the transmission of the sūtra, as he himself acknowledges, the "mistake" is witnessed in a separate additional translation (T 92). [80] In fact, from the perspective of the later tradition, there would seem to be nothing absolutely wrong with including the fourth attainment: using it as a basis for insight is not impossible, just difficult for the beginner. Nonetheless, as again Anālayo notes,[81] in the case of the *Mahā-Māluṅkyaputta-sutta* and its parallel (MĀ 205), which like *Aṭṭhakanagara-sutta* present the four *dhyāna*s and first three formless attainments as the basis for insight leading to nirvana or non-return, there is agreement on omitting the fourth formless attainment. A further presentation of the *dhyāna*s and first three formless attainments forming the basis for insight once a meditator has emerged is found in the Theravāda Aṅguttaranikāya.[82]

The *Cūḷa-suññatā-sutta* (MN 121) and its Sarvāstivādin parallels in the form of Chinese (MĀ 190) and Tibetan translations of Madhyamāgama can also be considered in this context. In all surviving versions this sūtra clearly represents a distinctive presentation of the path, focusing on the formless

---

77 Vism 587 (18.3): *taṃ sampādetukāmena samathayānikena tāva ṭhapetvā nevasaññānāsaññāyatanaṃ, avasesarūpā rūpāvacarajjhānānaṃ aññatarato vuṭṭhāya vitakkādīni jhānangāni taṃ-sampayuttā ca dhammā lakkhaṇarasādivasena pariggahetabbā.*

78 Vism-mhṭ (B^{e}) II 350: *idaṃ bhavaggadhammānaṃ ādikammikassa duppariggahatāya vuttaṃ.* Cf. Ps-ṭ (B^{e}) II 9 as cited by Anālayo, *Comparative Study* I: 310, n. 6. Cf. also Stuart 2013: 41 (citing Sv II 372).

79 Anālayo, *Comparative Study* I: 310–11.

80 Maithrimurthi 1999: 97, n. 136.

81 Anālayo, *Comparative Study* I: 310, n. 6, and 355–58.

82 AN IV 422–26.

meditations and a "signless concentration" developed on their basis which leads to destruction of defilements. In the Sarvāstivāda versions, the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception is omitted.[83]

These treatments, taken alongside those ending with the cessation of perception and feeling followed by seeing with understanding, suggest a number of questions about how these attainments are understood to function as a vehicle for insight: is insight possible while in the attainments or are the attainments merely the objects of insight, or a preparation for insight? These are complex and wide ranging questions and I will only comment on them briefly here. The *Anupada-sutta*, a Theravāda text which has no parallel, has been called late and linked to the emergence of the Abhidharma.[84] Whether or not this is the case, it addresses in part some of these questions.

The *sutta* presents the Buddha's account of how Śāriputra achieved awakening in the space of a fortnight.[85] He did so by attaining all nine attainments—the four *dhyānas*, the four formless attainments, and cessation. With regard to each of the first seven, Śāriputra is described as defining the particular *dharma*s that constitute the attainment: known to him the *dharma*s arise, known to him they are present, known to him they disappear. The implication is that this knowledge occurs within each attainment.[86] In the case of the last two attainments—the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception and the cessation of perception and feeling—the wording is different: Śāriputra is said to have first emerged from these attainments and subsequently contemplated the *dharma*s that were past, that had ceased and changed.[87] Nonetheless, with regard to the last attainment the phrase "and having seen by means of his understanding, the defilements were destroyed" (*paññāya c' assa disvā āsavā parikkhīṇā honti*) occurs immediately follow-

---

83 Skilling, *Mahāsūtras* I: 146–86 (174–75); II: 345–59 (355–56).

84 Perhaps the first to do so was C. A. F. Rhys Davids, *JRAS* 34 (1902), 477, 481, followed by Deleanu 2006: 516 and Anālayo 2014: 100–110.

85 Śāriputra's awakening while standing fanning the Buddha is also referred to in brief in the *Dīghanakha-sutta* (M I 501.1–2); Migot 1954: 452–455 discusses various redactions of the *Dīghanakha-sutta*, but says nothing about the *Anupada-sutta*. Śāriputra's practice of the nine attainments is also referred to at SN III 235–38.

86 MN III 25–28 passim: *tyāssa dhammā anupadavavatthitā honti. tyāssa dhammā viditā uppajjanti, viditā upaṭṭhahanti, viditā abbhatthaṃ gacchanti.*

87 MN III 28.16–17, 28.27–29: *so tāya samāpattiyā sato vuṭṭhahitvā ye dhammā atītā niruddhā vipariṇatā te dhamme samanupassati.*

ing the attainment of cessation, and so before the statement that makes his emergence from the attainment explicit. But seeing with wisdom while in the attainment is counterintuitive.

The commentary is clear that we should understand that this refers to Śāriputra's combining calm and insight in two distinct meditation attainments: the fruit of arhatship and cessation.[88] Taking it as given that *nirodhasamāpatti* is only achieved after non-return or arhatship, the commentary first suggests that we have here to do with Śāriputra's ability either to obtain the fruit of arhatship or to attain cessation; but it then records an alternative understanding of the passage (attributed to "the elders of India"): that Śāriputra accomplished *nirodhasamāpatti* after he had achieved non-return and then subsequently gained arhatship.[89] Either way the commentary associates "having seen by means of his understanding, the defilements were destroyed" with something distinct from the attainment of cessation and, mindful of the fact that contemplating the immaterial *dharma*s of an attainment in which the functioning of *citta* has been temporarily suspended is problematic even after emerging from it, goes on to suggest that in this case the *dharma*s he watches are either the three kinds of material *dharma* (produced by *kamma*, food and season) that persist within the body of the meditator even during the attainment of cessation, or the *dharma*s that occurred in the earlier attainment of the sphere of neither perception nor non-perception.[90]

Whether or not these specific commentarial explanations are regarded as contrived, they clearly address somewhat obvious questions arising from the presentation of the material in the sūtras which are difficult to ignore. I will return to them in the context of accounts of the Buddha's awakening, but in this context it is worth noting also the Aṅguttaranikāya treatment, which presents each of the nine attainments as preparing the mind for achieving any of the various higher knowledges culminating in knowledge of the destruction of the *āsrava*s: attaining and emerging from these attainments, a

---

88 Ps IV 90.24–91.2: *sāriputtattherassa samathavipassanaṃ yuganaddhaṃ āharitvā arahattaṃ pattavāro pi atthi, nirodhasamāpatti samāpannavāro pi.*

89 Ps IV 91.7–10: *jambudīpavāsino therā pana vadanti sāriputtatthero samathavipassanaṃ yuganaddhaṃ āharitvā anāgāmiphalaṃ sacchikatvā nirodhaṃ samāpajji, nirodhā vuṭṭhāya arahattaṃ patto ti.*

90 Ps IV 91.11–13*: te dhamme ti anto samāpattiyaṃ pavatte tesamuṭṭhānikarūpadhamme heṭṭhā nevasaññānāsaññāyatanasamāpattiyaṃ pavattadhamme vā te.*

monk's mind becomes soft and workable, his concentration becomes immeasurable and well developed; he is able to apply his mind to the realization of any of the higher knowledges.[91]

Nearly all examples present the formless attainments as preceded by the four *dhyāna*s, either immediately or with intervening attainments (the four *apramāṇa*s). Four of the exceptions present the formless attainments in the context of the eight liberations (DN 15, MĀ 97, MN 137, MĀ 163), which in effect assumes the *dhyāna*s.[92] The *Cūḷa-suññatā-sutta* probably should be read as assuming the attainment of *dhyāna* on the basis of the earth *kasiṇa*.[93] In one case in the Madhyamāgama (MĀ 219) we find the four formless attainments preceded by the practice of *smṛtyupasthāna* and the four *apramāṇa*s without the prior attainment of the *dhyāna*s. The presentation of the formless attainments in a sequence following the immeasurable meditations is characteristic of the Madhyamāgama: it occurs five times (MĀ 178, 185, 217, 192, 219) as opposed to just once in the Majjhimanikāya (MN 52, but repeated in AN). The sequence of the four *dhyāna*s and the formless attainments without the immeasurable meditations occurs four times in the Madhyamāgama (MĀ 91, 205, 85, 168) and nine times in the Majjhimanikāya (MN 8, 25, 26, 30, 31, 64, 66, 111, 113). Thus in sum the four-*dhyāna* sequence followed by

---

91 AN IV 421.7–13: *yato kho bhikkhave, bhikkhu taṃ tad eva samāpattiṃ samāpajjati pi vuṭṭhāti pi, tassa mudu cittaṃ hoti kammaññaṃ. mudunā kammaññena cittena appamāṇo samādhi hoti subhāvito. so appamāṇena samādhinā subhāvitena yassa yassa abhiññā sacchikaraṇīyassa dhammassa cittaṃ abhininnāmeti abhiññā sacchikiriyāya tatra tatr' eva sakkhibhabbataṃ pāpuṇāti sati sati āyatane*.

92 DN 15 (D II 68–71) appends lists of the seven *vijñānasthiti*s, two *āyatana*s and eight *vimokṣa*s; MĀ 97 likewise (T I.581b13–c2), but here the eight *vimokṣa*s occur as eight progressive stages culminating in the attainment of cessation, seeing by wisdom and the destruction of the *āsrava*s. DĀ 13 (T I.62a25–b25), T 14 (T I.246a5–22) and T 52 (T I.846a14–b24) also list seven *vijñānasthiti*s, two *āyatana*s and eight *vimokṣa*s, but in a manner closer to DN 15, without including the destruction of the *āsrava*s with the last.

93 All versions speak of the unified perception of earth; the language of MN III 105.12 is most explicit in its reference to meditation: "he directs his attention to the oneness that is dependent on the perception of earth; his mind is disposed towards, settles, rests, and becomes focused on the perception of earth" (*paṭhavīsaññaṃ paṭicca manasikaroti ekattaṃ. tassa paṭhavīsaññāya cittaṃ pakkhandati pasīdati santiṭṭhati adhimuccati*); the commentary plausibly takes this as referring to the attainment of *dhyāna* on the basis of the earth *kasiṇa* (Ps IV 152.20–53.6). Cf. Skilling, *Mahāsūtras* I: 156–59; II: 355.

the formless attainments (with or without the immeasurable meditations) occurs eight times in the Madhyamāgama and ten in the Majjhimanikāya. As for the sequence of four formless attainments followed by cessation, seeing by wisdom, and the destruction of defilements, this is found six times in the Majjhimanikāya (MN 25, 26, 30, 31, 111, 113) and proliferates in the Book of Nines in the Aṅguttaranikāya with twenty-five occurrences.[94] In the Madhyamāgama it occurs five times (MĀ 97, 178, 168, 163, 219).

6. The *apramāṇa* scheme

Table 9 summarises all occurrences of schemes of the path incorporating the four *apramāṇa*s in the four Theravāda Nikāyas, DĀ-S, DĀ-D, and the Chinese translations of MĀ, SĀ and EĀ, excluding those associated with the formless attainments included in Table 7.

In nearly all cases the parallels agree on two points: the inclusion of the immeasurable meditations and the final outcome. There are two exceptions with regard to each of these points. The Theravāda *Mahāgovinda-sutta* (DN 19) explains that Govinda practises the four immeasurables, but the Dharmaguptaka version (DĀ-D 13) does not; both versions agree nonetheless that Govinda was reborn in the Brahmaloka. I have not had access to the Sarvāstivāda version (DĀ-S 14). As I noted above, the Theravāda and Dharmaguptaka versions of the *Udumbarikasīhanāda-sutta* agree on presenting a version of the gradual path with the four *apramāṇa*s; the Sarvāstivāda (MĀ 104) parallel has instead the four *dhyāna*s. In this case the difference in path scheme coincides with a difference in the final goal: the Theravāda and Dharmaguptaka versions present the path only as far as the knowledge of the death and rebirth of beings, stopping short of knowledge of the destruction of the defilements. The Theravāda *Vatthūpama-sutta* (MN 7), however, does include knowledge of the destruction of the defilements after the four

[94] In Gethin 2001: 163, n. 88, I suggested that in calculating the number of times a particular formula occurs in the Nikāya-Āgama literature, it is sometimes useful to make a distinction between the number of "occasions" on which a given list is itemised and the number of "times"; "occasions" takes no account of the repeated itemizing of a list within an extended *Saṃyutta* or *Aṅguttara* treatment; "times" takes into account all repetitions, even when lost in the abbreviations. Thus the sequence of formless attainments, cessation, seeing by wisdom, destruction of defilements occurs on twelve "occasions" in the Theravāda Nikāyas, but thirty-one "times".

Table 9. The *apramāṇa* scheme

	DN 13 Tevija (D I 249.25–251.21)	DĀ-D 26 (T I.106c10–18)	DĀ-S 45 Vāsiṣṭha (450r–450v)	DN 17 Mahāsudassana (DN II 186.12–187.5)	DĀ-D 2 (T I.23c18–28, 24b15) DĀ-S 6 Mahāparinirvāṇa (MSu 31.3–12, 43.8–45.8) MĀ 68 (T I.517a17–19, 518a3–b6)	DN 19 Mahāgovinda (D II 250.9–251.23)	DĀ-D 13 (T I.33c24–34a16)	DN 25 Udumbarikasīhanāda (DN III 47.23–52.16)	MĀ 104 (T I.595a7–12)	DĀ-D 8 (T I.48c3–49a10)	DN 26 Cakkavattisīhanāda (DN III 77.15–78.27)	DĀ-D 6 (T I.42a25–b16)	MN 7 Vatthūpama (MN I 37.28–39.2)	MĀ 93 (T I.575c10–14)	EĀ 13.5 (T II.574a7–c4)	MN 40 Cūḷa-Assapura MN I 283.7–284.27)	MĀ 183 (T I.726b22–c2)	MN 55 Jīvaka (MN I 369.4–371.17)	DĀ-S 43 Jīvaka (434v)	MN 99 Subha (MN II 207.14–208.8)	MĀ 152 (T I.669c4–670a6)	SN IV 320.10–322.26	SN V 117.20–121.15	SĀ 743 (T II.197b21–c14)	AN I 196.25–197.3
1 śāstā loka utpadyate tathāgato	•	•	•																						
2 pravrajati	•	o	o				•	•																	
3 prātimokṣasaṃvarasamvṛta	•	o	o					•																	
6 saṃtuṣṭa		o	?																						
4 indriyair guptadvāraḥ	•	o	?																						
bhojane mātrajñaḥ		o																							
jāgarikānuyukta		o																							
5 smṛtisaṃprajanya	•	o	?																						
6 saṃtuṣṭa	•																								
7 prāntāni śayanāsanāni	o	o	?					•																	
8 paṃca-varaṇāni … prahāya	•	o	?					•	•				⊙			⊙	•			•			•	•	
9 prathama-dhyāna		o		•	• • •				•		•	•								•					
10 dvitīya-dhyāna		o		•	•				•		•	•													
11 tṛtīya-dhyāna		o		•	•				•		•	•													
12 caturtha-dhyāna		•		•	•				•		•	•													
maitrī	•	•	•	•	• • •			•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•
karuṇā	•	•	•	•	• • •			•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
muditā	•	•	•	•	• • •			•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•
upekṣā	•	•	•	•	• • •			•		•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•	o	•	•	•	•	•	•
ākāśānantyāyatana																									
vijñānānantyāyatana																									
ākiñcanyāyatana																									
naivasaṃjñānāsaṃjñāyatana																									
saṃjñāvedayitanirodha																									
13 [ñāṇa-dassana]																									
14 mano-maya-kāya																									
15 ṛddhiviṣaya																									
16 divyaśrotrajñāna																									
17 cetaḥparyāyajñāna																									
18 pūrvanivāsānusmṛtijñāna								•		•					•										
19 cyutyupapādajñāna								•		•					•										
atthi idaṃ … pajānāti													•				•								•
brahmaloka				•	• • •	•	•				•	•								•	•				
20 āsravakṣayajñāna										•		•	•			⊙	•								•

• item explicit
o item understood in abbreviation
? uncertain
⊙ close equivalent

*apramāṇa*s, but only after the monk is described as knowing "there is this, there is the inferior, there is the superior, there is the escape beyond what is connected with this perception" (*so atthi idaṃ, atthi hīnaṃ, atthi paṇītaṃ, atthi imassa saññāgatassa uttariṃ nissaraṇan ti pajānāti*). The Sarvāstivāda parallel (MĀ 93) lacks both these elements. An Ekottarikāgama parallel has

instead the three knowledges, of past lives, of the death and rebirth of beings, and of the destruction of the defilements.[95]

The *Cūḷa-Assapura-sutta* (MN 40) presents the development of the four *apramāṇa*s by someone following the way of practice taught by the Buddha as the way of gaining inner peace (*ajjhattaṃ vūpasamo*), as a result of which he or she may be said to have set out on the path proper to the ascetic (*ajjhattaṃ vūpasamā samaṇasāmīcippaṭipadaṃ paṭipanno ti vadāmi*), while someone who has realised the freedom of the mind and understanding that is without *āsrava*s can be said to be the true ascetic (*āsavānaṃ khayā samaṇo hoti*). This suggests that the practice of the four *apramāṇa*s is a way of approaching the final destruction of the defilements. As Anālayo has noted, however, the Sarvāstivāda (MĀ 183) parallel inserts instead, following the four *apramāṇa*s, the same formula of insight leading to the destruction of the defilements ("there is this …") that is used in the Theravāda *Vatthūpama-sutta*.[96] The formula is also found following the immeasurable meditations in the Aṅguttaranikāya. Thus while there are clear examples of the scheme of the path based on the immeasurable meditations leading to the final goal, it is clear that these are associated with some additional practice of insight, and that the default outcome for the bare practice of the immeasurable meditations is rebirth in the Brahmaloka.

The close association of the four immeasurable meditations and the formless meditations, apparent in especially the Sarvāstivāda Madhyamāgama, seems likely to be related to a sūtra paralleled in the Theravāda and Sarvāstivāda *bojjhaṅga-saṃyutta/bodhyaṅga-saṃyukta*. This is one of a number of sūtras which begin with wanderers of other schools (*anyatīrthika-parivrājaka*) claiming that they teach the same thing as the Buddha and demanding that his monks explain the difference.[97] In this sūtra the wanderers claim to a group of monks that, like the Buddha, they too teach the abandoning of the five hindrances and the practice of the four *apramāṇa*s. The monks take the matter to the Buddha, who suggests that if asked how kind-

---

[95] Two further parallels are found in the Chinese Tripiṭaka as freestanding texts: T 51, T 582; the former coincides with MĀ 93, the latter does not mention the immeasurable meditations. See Anālayo, *Comparative Study* I: 53–55.

[96] See Anālayo, *Comparative Study* I: 55 (n. 46), 261 (n. 282); at T I.726b27–28 he suggests reading with the variant: 有有，有麤，有妙，有想來上出要.

[97] MN I 84, SN V 108–11, 112–15, 115–21, AN V 48; cf. MĀ 30, SĀ 713, 714, 743, EĀ 46.8.

ness, compassion, joy and equanimity are developed, where they lead, and what their perfection, fruit, and goal are, the wanderers of other schools would be unable to respond. The Buddha then explains that the perfection of *maitrī* is the liberation that is the "beautiful" (*śubha*), the perfection of compassion the liberation that is the sphere of infinite space, the perfection of joy the liberation that is infinite consciousness, and the perfection of equanimity the liberation that is the sphere of nothingness. In the Theravāda version the Buddha also talks in this context of developing each of the immeasurable meditations accompanied by the constituents of awakening; in the Saṃyuktāgama this detail is given in a separate immediately following sūtra.[98]

I noted with reference to their presentation in the *sīlakkhandha-vagga*/*śīlaskandha-nipāta* that there is some ambiguity about whether the immeasurable meditations are preceded by the four *dhyānas* or inserted in their place. In the case just mentioned, in both the Theravāda and Sarvāstivāda versions the immeasurable meditations apparently follow immediately on the abandoning of the hindrances. In two Majjhimanikāya *sutta*s (MN 7 and 40), but not their Madhyamāgama parallels, they are preceded by a formula associated in the Dīghanikāya gradual path scheme with the abandoning of the hindrances immediately prior to the attainment of the first *dhyāna*:

> He gains […] gladness. When one is glad, joy arises. The body of one whose mind is joyful becomes tranquil. One whose body is tranquil experiences happiness. The mind of one who is happy becomes concentrated.[99]

This suggests the immeasurable meditations in place of the *dhyāna*s. Overall, it is apparent that there are examples from Theravāda, Sarvāstivāda, and Dharmaguptaka sources of both patterns. I will return to this in my concluding remarks.

---

[98] SĀ 744 at T II.197c15–22, translated and usefully discussed in Martini 2011: 150–51.

[99] MN I 37.31–33: *labhati* […] *pāmojjaṃ. pamuditassa pīti jāyati. pītimanassa kāyo passambhati. passaddhakāyo sukhaṃ vedeti. sukhino cittaṃ samādhiyati*. Cf. MN I 283.21–25; DN I 73.20–23). On this standard description of the process of becoming concentrated in meditation and its occurrence in the Nikāya-Āgamas and other sources, see Gethin 2017: 225–24.

Table 10. The Buddha's awakening

	MN 4 Bhayabherava (MN I 21.20–23.28)	EĀ 31.1 (T II.666b10–c20)	MN 19 Dvedhāvitakka (MN I 117.4–22)	MĀ 102 (T I.589c5–23)	MN 26 Ariyapariyesanā (MN I 163.9–167.29)	MĀ 204 (T I.776b4–777a18)	MN 36 Mahāsaccaka (MN I 240.17–249.21)	DĀ-S 20 Kāyabhāvanā-sūtra (331r6–338v4)	MN 85 Bodhirājakumāra (MN II 93.15–24)	DĀ-S 21 Bodha-sūtra (342r4–7)	MN 100 Saṅgārava (MN II 21.271–212.19)	DĀ-S 22 Śaṃkaraka (348 r4–5)	MN 128 Upakkilesa-sutta (MN III 157.29–162.25)	MĀ 72 (T I.536c19–539b8)	AN IV 302.9–305.5	MĀ 73 (T I.539b21–540c16)	AN IV 176.16–179.13 = Vin III 3.37–6.2	MĀ 157 (T I.679c10–680b5)	AN IV 439.20–448.20	Saṃghabhedavastu I 97–119
2 prāvrājya					•	•	•	•	•	•	•	•								•
Ārāḍa: ākiṃcanyāyatana					•	•	•	•	•	○	•	○								•
Udraka: naivasaṃjñānāsaṃjñāyatana					•	•	•	•	•	○	•	○								•
Uruvilvā					•	•	•	•	•	○	•	○								•
(3 similes)							•		•		•									
austerities							•	•	•	○	•	○								•
(3 similes)								•		○		○								•
recollection of 1st dhyāna							•	•	•	○	•	○								•
9 prathama-dhyāna	•	•	•	○			•	•	•	○	•	○	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	•	•	•	
10 dvitīya-dhyāna	•	•	•	•			•	•	•	○	•	○	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	•	•	•	
11 tṛtīya-dhyāna	•	•	•	•			•	•	•	○	•	○	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	•	•	•	
12 caturtha-dhyāna	•	•	•	•			•	•	•	○	•	○	⊙	⊙	⊙	⊙	•	•	•	
ākāśānantyāyatana																			•	
vijñānānantyāyatana																			•	
ākiñcanyāyatana																			•	
naivasaṃjñānāsaṃjñāyatana																			•	
saṃjñāvedayitanirodha																			•	
prajñāya cāsya dṛṣṭvā																			•	
15 ṛddhiviṣaya																				•
16 divyaśrotrajñāna																				•
17 cetaḥparyāyajñāna																				•
18 pūrvanivāsānusmṛtijñāna	•	•	•				•	•	•	○	•	○			⊙	⊙	•	•		•
19 cyutyupapādajñāna	•	•	•				•	•	•	○	•	○			⊙	⊙	•	•		•
20 āsravakṣayajñāna	•	•	•	•	⊙	•	•	•	•	○	•	○	⊙	•	⊙	⊙	•	•	•	•

• item explicit ○ item understood in abbreviation ⊙ close equivalent

7. The Buddha's awakening

Table 10 presents all complete accounts of the Buddha's awakening known to me in the extant Nikāya-Āgama sūtra literature; I append one Vinaya account from the Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya.[100] As with other schemes, there is

[100] The account of the Buddha's awakening in MN 85 and 100 is radically abbreviated in the PTS edition, but repeated in full in Asian editions: MN (S^{e}) II, 443–61, 669–88; (B^{e}) II 279–91, 425–38. In the Sarvāstivāda parallels, it is given in full only in DĀ-S 20; DĀ-S 21 and 22 abbreviate with reference back to this sūtra; see Liu

a grey area where it is not quite clear whether to include any reference to the bodhisattva's practice before his awakening. I will discuss this briefly at the end of this section.

It seems likely that the scheme of the Buddha's awakening functions as paradigmatic for the path to awakening in general. Associating a scheme with the Buddha's awakening is also no doubt intended in part to give it legitimacy. With this in mind, it is remarkable that five of the eight sūtras in both surviving versions give the same account of the Buddha's awakening by way of the four *dhyāna*s and three knowledges. The departure from this scheme in the *Ariyapariyesanā-sutta* (MN 26) and its parallel (MĀ 204) represents not so much an account of the Buddha's awakening according to an alternative scheme, as simply the omission of the details of any scheme. The *Dvedhavitakka-sutta* (MN 19) and its Sarvāstivāda parallel (MĀ 102) is the only example where two parallel discourses appear to disagree on their account of the Buddha's awakening: MĀ 102 omits the first two knowledges (of past lives and the death and rebirth of beings), and so conforms to the default MĀ four-*dhyāna* path scheme. On the basis of this omission, Bareau has argued that the Sarvāstivādin sources preserve an older account of the Buddha's awakening.[101] As Schmithausen and Anālayo have noted, the text of this account is anomalous in other minor ways: it appears to change from the first to the third person, and the first *dhyāna* seems to be missing.[102] But Bareau's argument is anyway somewhat undermined by the fact that MĀ 157 (which he overlooked) includes all three knowledges, as does DĀ-S 20 (which he did not have access to). In light of this and in the context of the overall pattern of the scheme of the four *dhyāna*s and *abhiññā*s in the Sarvāstivāda Dīrghāgama and Madhyamāgama, MĀ 102's omission of the two knowledges begins to look more like a simple reduction of the fuller scheme than the preservation of a more primitive version.[103]

2008: 55–66; Hartmann 2004:129; Zhang 2004: 13.

101 Bareau, *Recherches* I: 81–83, 88–89.

102 On the change of person, see Schmithausen 1981: 221, n. 75. On the missing first *dhyāna* Anālayo, *Comparative Study* I: 140, nn. 200, 201, speculates that text has been lost.

103 Schmithausen 1981: 221–22, n. 75, takes up the argument that a version with only the last knowledge might be earlier, commenting on the change of tense in the Pali version: aorist in the final knowledge, but present in the first two. Such a change of tense is not witnessed in the subsequently discovered Sarvāstivāda *Kāyabhāvanā-*

The *Saṃghabhedavastu* account is an interesting counterpoint to the Sarvāstivāda sūtra accounts in that it substitutes the battle with Māra and his armies for the *dhyāna*s and includes all six higher knowledges. The elaboration of the battle with Māra is, of course, a feature of all developed narratives of the Buddha's awakening, sometimes mentioning the four *dhyāna*s, sometimes not.[104]

The most distinctive of the Nikāya-Āgama accounts of the Buddha's awakening is one found in the Aṅguttaranikāya: it departs from the scheme of the four *dhyāna*s and three knowledges and uses instead the *ārūpya-nirodha* scheme. This account occurs in the *navaka-nipāta* in a *sutta* which is one of a sequence of twenty-eight; each presents the nine attainments, beginning with the four *dhyāna*s and ending in the cessation of perception and feeling.[105] It appears to be without any parallel. How we understand the significance of this account of the Buddha's awakening is obviously related to how we understand the significance of the *ārūpya-nirodha* scheme more generally, a topic I intend to address in a separate paper.

While the association of the scheme with the awakening of the Buddha has no known parallel in what survives in the Sarvāstivāda Āgamas, it does seem to have been known to the Sarvāstivāda tradition. Before the publication of the Sanskrit manuscript, Louis de La Vallée Poussin drew attention to a comment in the *Abhidharmakośa* that seems to allude to something like

sūtra, where the present is used throughout; see Liu 2008: 129–32. This, of course, does not necessarily mean the change in the Theravāda version is without significance.

[104] For example, the *Mahāvastu* gives accounts of Dīpaṃkara's and Gautama's awakening in terms of the four *dhyāna*s and three knowledges (Mvu I 227–29, II 283–85), but then an account of Gautama's awakening in terms of the defeat of Māra without reference to the *dhyāna*s (Mvu II 399–416); the *Lalitavistara* places the *dhyāna*s and three knowledges after the defeat of Māra (Lal 299–350); the *Jātaka* commentary describes the defeat of Māra and awakening without reference to the *dhyāna*s and knowledges (Ja 71–75).

[105] As Anālayo (2014c: 27) notes, in this *sutta* each attainment is introduced by the phrase "at another time" (*aparena samayena*). This raises the interesting question of whether the accounts of the Buddha's awakening (and of gradual path generally) are intended as descriptions of the progress of meditation over an extended or shorter time period.

this account.[106] In discussing how and when the Buddha achieves success in the attainment of cessation, Vasubandhu explains:

> The lord buddhas gain this [attainment of cessation] at the same time as knowledge of the destruction [of defilements]; they do not require any preparation. For in their case actualizing the accomplishment of all qualities is associated with the mere wish [to do so]. They therefore have gained complete dispassion. But how, when the attainment of cessation has not yet been produced, does the Buddha achieve the success of one who is liberated both ways? He achieves that success as if it had been produced because of his mastery. But the westerners say that the bodhisattva produces the attainment earlier, when still in the state of one in training. And why not go along with this? To do so means accepting the authority of precisely the Elder Upagupta's *Netrīpada*, where it is stated that when someone produces the knowledge of destruction having produced the attainment of cessation, he is to be declared the Tathāgata.[107]

This passage addresses an obvious question for the tradition. A buddha must be accomplished in all meditative attainments, including cessation, but since cessation is regarded as accessible only by non-returners and arhats, at what point does a buddha acquire this accomplishment? Vasubandhu's suggestion appears to be that he achieves this accomplishment not by actually attaining cessation, but simply by becoming a buddha: at the moment he becomes a buddha he has the ability to enter into any attainment he wishes. The alternative view that Vasubandhu rejects suggests that the bodhisattva achieved cessation before reaching buddhahood when he was a non-returner.

It is possible to read the Aṅguttara account of the Buddha's awakening with reference to the formless attainments and cessation as addressing the

---

[106] La Vallée Poussin 1937: 221.

[107] Abhidh-k-bh 70.22–71.3 (*bhāṣya* to Abhidh-k II 44a): *kṣayajñānasamānaṃ kālaṃ buddhā bhagavanta enāṃ labhante nāsti kiñcid buddhānāṃ prāyogikaṃ nāma | icchāmātrapratibaddho hi teṣāṃ sarvaguṇasaṃpatsaṃmukhībhāvaḥ | tasmād eṣāṃ sarvavairāgyalābhikam | kathaṃ khalv idānīm anutpāditāyāṃ nirodhasamāpattau kṣayajñānakāle bhagavān ubhayatobhāgavimuktaḥ sidhyati | sidhyaty utpāditāyām iva tasyāṃ vaśitvāt | prāg eva tāṃ bodhisattvaḥ śaikṣyāvasthāyām utpādayatīti pāścāttyāḥ | atha kasmād evaṃ neṣyate | evaṃ ca sthaviropaguptasyāpīdaṃ netrīpadaṃ prāmāṇikaṃ bhaviṣyati | nirodhasamāpattim utpādya kṣayajñānam utpādayatīti vaktavyaṃ tathāgata iti |*

same general issue Vasubandhu raises: a buddha must be accomplished in all attainments, and the suggestion here appears to be that the Buddha accomplished cessation in some way at the same time as gaining awakening.[108] Yet this account seems to be in tension with the accounts of the Buddha's awakening by way of the fourth *dhyāna* and three knowledges that are, as we have seen, routinely found in the Majjhimanikāya; but neither the Theravāda commentary nor the subcommentary offers any comment.[109] The issues here are, of course, related to those raised by the account of Śāriputra's awakening discussed above.

Two further accounts, both paralleled in the Nikāyas and Āgamas (MN 128 with MĀ 72 and AN IV 302.9–305.5 with MĀ 73), also depart from the common description, but these I think are to be understood with reference to it. The first describes the Bodhisattva's difficulties in developing *samādhi* when he can no longer perceive light (*obhāsa*) or see forms (*rūpa*). By overcoming various mental defilements (*citta-upakkilesa*) he is able to develop various kinds of *samādhi*. Reference to *samādhi* with and without "thinking" (*vitarka*) and "examining" (*vicāra*) in both versions clearly indicates the *dhyāna*s, possibly all four.[110] The sūtra concludes with a statement of the

[108] Cf. S II 210–17, where two *sutta*s present the Buddha as attaining the nine attainments and five *abhiññā*s at will. The parallels at T II.302a2–b2 (SĀ 1142) and T II.416c8–417a23 (SĀ-2 117), however, have the four *dhyāna*s, four *apramāṇa*s, four formless attainments and six *abhijñā*s, omitting cessation.

[109] With regard to the latter accounts, Buddhaghosa is explicit that, taking the fourth *dhyāna* as the basis of insight, the bodhisattva applied his mind in order to achieve knowledge of the destruction of the *āsrava*s, that is, the path of arhatship; this is called "destruction of the *āsrava*s" because it puts an end to them, and this knowledge is there because it belongs to that destruction. Ps I 126.34–127.3: *so evaṃ samāhite citte ti vipassanāpādakaṃ catutthajjhānacittaṃ veditabbaṃ. āsavānaṃ khayañāṇāyā ti arahattamaggañāṇatthāya. arahattamaggo hi āsavavināsanato āsavānaṃ khayo ti vuccati tatra c' etaṃ ñāṇaṃ tappariyāpannattā ti.*

[110] The talk of limited (*paritta*) and immeasurable (*appamāṇa*) forms and concentration recalls the language of the eight "spheres of mastery" (*abhibhāyatana*), which in turn seem related to the eight "liberations" (*vimokkha*) and formless attainments (e.g. DN II 110.5–112.20). The two versions both conclude by listing seven *samādhi*s (MN III 162.14–19; T I.539b2–5), agreeing on the first three (with *vitarka* and *vicāra*, without *vitarka* but with *vicāra*, without *vitarka* and *vicāra*), but then diverging; MN 128 then has with joy (*pīti*), without joy, with pleasure (*sāta*), with equanimity (*upekkhā*); MĀ 72 has "exclusive *samādhi*" (一向定 = **ekānta-samādhi*), "mixed *samādhi*" (雜定 = **miśraka-samādhi*), "limited *samādhi*" (少定 = *parītta-*

Buddha's awakening. In Table 10, I have entered this account as an equivalent to the four-*dhyāna* scheme.

The second account begins similarly with reference to the Bodhisattva's perceiving light and seeing forms in meditation, but then progresses differently, setting out in all eight successive stages prior to awakening: (1) perceiving light, (2) seeing forms, (3) associating with the gods, (4) knowing the class of gods, (5) knowing the actions that brought about their rebirth, (6) knowing their food, and experience, (7) knowing their lifespan, (8) knowing if he had previously dwelt among those gods. The account concludes by stating that when the Bodhisattva's knowledge and vision of the gods had been thoroughly purified in these eight rounds, he had achieved awakening. These eight rounds of purification seem to reference the *dhyāna*s and particularly the first two of the three knowledges (of former lives, and of the death and rebirth of beings). In Table 10, I have entered this account as an equivalent to the four-*dhyāna* scheme with three knowledges.

I should note also that SN and AN contain a number of *sutta*s which describe the Bodhisattva's practice in various ways. Rather than setting out competing views of how the Buddha achieved awakening, they seem intended to be inclusive and complementary: contemplation of dependent origination, the enjoyment, danger, and letting go of things indicating approaches to insight; the *iddhipāda*s and mindfulness of breathing approaches to *samādhi*.[111]

samādhi), immeasurable *samādhi* (廣無量 = *aparītta-*/ *apramāṇa-samādhi*); however, MN also talks of limited and unlimited *samādhi* earlier (III 161.29–33), while "mixed *samādhi*" perhaps references the earlier talk (MN III 160.13–14; T I.538b5) of "perception of diversity" (*nānatta-saññā*). Both concluding lists clearly attempt to summarise the process of refining the *samādhi* described. On refining *samādhi* cf. also AN I 257–58 (= SĀ 1247).

[111] Contemplation of the links of dependent origination (SN II 10, 104; SĀ 285, 287); contemplation of enjoyment, danger, and letting go with reference to the four elements (SN II 170), the aggregates (SN III 27), the six senses (SN IV 7–9; SĀ 243), past, future, and present sense objects (SN IV 97; SĀ 211), feelings (SN IV 233), the world (AN I 258–59); practice of the *iddhipāda*s (SN V 263, 281, AN III 82–83), and of the sixteen stages of *ānāpānasati* (SN V 317.1–11; SĀ 814 T II.209a23).

8. The *smṛtyupasthāna* scheme

I have noted that in a number of places the practice of *smṛtyupasthāna* is brought into the gradual schemes of the path. In the Dharmaguptaka DĀ gradual path, the bare *smṛtyupasthāna* formula of contemplating body as body, feelings as feelings, mind as mind, and *dharma*s as *dharma*s is inserted as an introduction to mindfulness and awareness (see Table 4); in MĀ 107 it is associated with guarding the senses (see Table 6). More interesting are examples where *smṛtyupasthāna* appears to be directly associated with the practice of concentration and the *dhyāna*s. This is possibly the case in MĀ 219 (see Table 7), but becomes explicit in SĀ 636, where the *smṛtyupasthāna* formula is placed immediately following the abandoning of the five hindrances in the position of the *dhyāna*s, and in the *Dantabhūmi-sutta* and its MĀ parallel, where the *smṛtyupasthāna* formula is placed again immediately following the abandoning of the five hindrances and followed by the attainment of the *dhyāna*s—all four in MĀ, the second to fourth in MN (see Table 5). The *Mahā-Taṇhāsaṃkhaya* (MN 38) and its parallel (MĀ 201) also conclude with a distinctive account of the final ceasing of unskilful states based on mindfulness of body.

This is striking given the tendency of some modern scholarship to treat the gradual scheme of the path involving the four *dhyāna*s as radically different from and even in contradiction to the practice of *smṛtyupasthāna* as paradigmatically presented in the *(Mahā-)Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* and its parallels. In a 1981 article, Paul Griffiths, for example, suggests that *smṛtyupasthāna* "may be taken as a paradigm example of how insight meditation operates" and that in the *(Mahā-)Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* "we find the clear implication that *nibbāna* can be attained by the practice of mindfulness alone without the concentration games involved in *samādhi-bhāvanā*"; he goes on to comment of concentration (i.e. *dhyāna* practice) and insight that "[t]he methods and aims of each kind of practice—both equally prominent in the texts—are radically at odds, and it is difficult to see how they can be reconciled".[112] Subsequent studies, however, such as my own *Buddhist Path to Awakening* (1992), Anālayo's *Satipaṭṭhāna* (2003) and Kuan's *Mindfulness in Early Buddhism* (2008) have sought to explore the relationship between *smṛtyupasthāna* and concentration practice in the Nikāya-Āgama literature.[113] I think we can

[112] Griffiths 1981: 614–15.

[113] See Gethin 2001[1992]: 44–59; Anālayo 2003: 61–91; Kuan 2008: 59–80.

Table 11. The *smṛtyupasthāna* scheme

	MN 10: Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta MN I 55–63	MĀ 98: T I.582b8–584b28	MN 119: Kāyagatāsati-sutta MN III 89–99	MĀ 81: T I.554c12–557c12	MN 118: Ānāpānasati-sutta MN III 78–88	SĀ 803 (T II.206a14–b14), 815 (T II.209b15–210a5)
4 smṛtyupasthāna	•		•	•		
contemplation of body	•		•	•	•	•
7 secluded dwelling	•		•		•	•
breathing in and out	•1	•5	•1	•5	•	•
cittaṃ … samādhīyate			•			
5 posture	•2	•1	•2	•1		
cittaṃ … samādhīyate			•			
5 activities	•3	•2	•3	•2		
cittaṃ … samādhīyate			•	•		
abandoning unskilful thoughts		•3		•3		
cittaṃ … samādhīyate				•		
restraint of the mind		•4		•4		
cittaṃ … samādhīyate				•		
9 vivekaja-prītisukha: 1st dhyāna		•6	•15	•6		
cittaṃ … samādhīyate			•	•		
10 samādhija-prītisukha: 2nd dhyāna		•7	•16	•7		
cittaṃ … samādhīyate			•	•		
11 niṣprītika-sukha: 3rd dhyāna		•8	•17	•8		
cittaṃ … samādhīyate			•	•		
12 pariśuddha-citta: 4th dhyāna		•9	•18	•9		
cittaṃ … samādhīyate				•		
conception of light		•10		•10		
cittaṃ … samādhīyate				•		
reviewing the sign of contemplation		•11		•11		
cittaṃ … samādhīyate				•		
parts of the body	•4	•12	•4	•12		
cittaṃ … samādhīyate			•	•		
attention to elements	•5	•13	•5	•13		
cittaṃ … samādhīyate			•	•		
dead bodies	•6–14	•14–18	•6–14	•14–18		
cittaṃ … samādhīyate			•	•		
contemplation of feeling	•15	•15			•	•
contemplation of mind	•16	•16			•	•
contemplation of dharmas	•	•			•	•
5 varaṇa	•17	•17				
5 skandha	•18					
6 āyatana	•19	•18				
7 bodhyaṅga	•20	•19			•	•
4 satya	•21					
benefits					•	•
9–12 4 dhyānas			•	•		
15 ṛddhiviṣaya			•	•		
16 divyaśrotrajñāna			•	•		
17 cetaḥparyāyajñāna			•	•		
18 pūrvanivāsānusmṛtijñāna			•	•		
19 cyutyupapādajñāna			•	•		
anāgāmitva	•			•		
20 ājña / āsravakṣayajñāna	•		•	•	•	•

take this further and demonstrate how the *smṛtyupasthāna* scheme is related rather more explicitly to the gradual path scheme in the Nikāya-Āgama literature.

Certainly the examples just cited seem to bear witness to a clear desire in Nikāya-Āgama literature to bring the practice of *smṛtyupasthāna* into the schemes of the gradual path. Moreover there is also clear evidence in this literature of a desire to bring elements of the gradual path schemes into the accounts of the practice of *smṛtyupasthāna*. That this evidence has sometimes been overlooked is perhaps connected with a failure to read such *sutta*s as the *Kāyagatāsati-sutta* and *Ānāpānasati-sutta* as deliberate elaborations of the general *smṛtyupasthāna* framework set out in the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta*. **Table 11** presents these *sutta*s and their parallels in MĀ and SĀ with reference to elements of the gradual scheme of the path.

Schematically the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* and its parallel might be read as similar to *sutta*s such as the *Aṭṭhakanagara* and *Mahā-Mālunkyaputta* (Table 7). These *sutta*s employ the elements of the gradual scheme not so much as successive steps ending in awakening as a number of alternative routes to awakening: eleven in the *Aṭṭhakanagara* (but twelve in MĀ 217), and seven in the *Mahā-Mālunkyaputta* and also MĀ 205. Similarly the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* sets out a series of different ways of applying mindfulness: fourteen with reference to the body, one with reference to feelings, one with reference to mind, and five with reference to *dharma*s, making a total of twenty-one. Each of these ways of practising mindfulness concludes by stating "he dwells independent; he does not grasp anything in the world" (*anissito ca viharati na ca kiñci loke upādiyati*). The commentary takes this phrase as equivalent to the arhatship and thus characterises the *sutta* as "a teaching that is taught culminating in arhatship in twenty-one places' (*ekavīsatiyā pi ṭhānesu arahattanikūṭena desitaṃ desanaṃ*).[114] The *sutta* as a whole concludes with a statement that anyone who practises the four applications of mindfulness for anything from seven years down to just seven days can expect one of two outcomes: arhatship or non-return. The Sarvāstivāda parallel (MĀ 98) has essentially the same elements, although the objects of mindfulness and number of ways of practising mindfulness differ: eighteen with reference to the body, one with reference to feelings, one with reference to mind, and three with reference to *dharma*s, making a total of twenty-three. The wording of

[114] Sv III 806; Ps I 302. Cf. Gethin 2001[1992]: 45–46, 55.

the repeated formula also differs, though is similar in intent, concluding with "he acquires knowledge, vision and understanding".[115]

The manner in which the Theravāda version of the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* should relate to the gradual scheme of the path and the *dhyāna*s is not immediately obvious, but that the practice of *smṛtyupasthāna* is assumed to be related to the abandoning of the hindrances and the practice of *dhyāna* is perhaps suggested by a formula repeated in a number of places in the Theravāda Nikāyas that sums up the Buddhist path as involving "abandoning the five hindrances, defilements of the mind that weaken wisdom, and, with a mind well established in the four applications of mindfulness, truly developing the seven constituents of awakening".[116] Significantly this formula is used to introduce the practice of *smṛtyupasthāna* in the Sarvāstivāda version of the sūtra.[117]

The relationship of the practice of *smṛtyupasthāna* to *dhyāna* begins to become more apparent when the *sutta* is read alongside the *Kāyagatāsati-sutta* (MN 119), which surely is intended. The *Kāyagatāsati-sutta* is essentially a more detailed treatment of precisely the same fourteen practices of mindfulness of body set out under watching body as body in the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta*, but significantly adds the four *dhyāna*s to make a total of eighteen. In addition in this *sutta*, after the account of each of these eighteen practices, the following is inserted:

> When one dwells like this, attentive, ardent, determined, the memories and thoughts connected with the household life are abandoned, and with their abandoning the mind becomes stilled within, composed, unified and concentrated.[118]

This suggests that each exercise is orientated towards the development of concentration and *dhyāna*. A similar phrase is inserted after each way of

---

[115] T I.582b23: 有知有見有明有達. On the translation of this, see Kuan 2008: 208–209, n. 13, where he argues that although fourfold, this reflects equivalents of *jñāna*, *darśana*, and *vidyā* in the Indic original.

[116] DN II 83 = III 101 = SN V 160–61 = AN III 387 = AN V 195: *pañca nīvaraṇe pahāya cetaso upakkilese paññāya dubbalīkaraṇe catūsu satipaṭṭhānesu supatiṭṭhitacittā sattabojjhaṅge yathābhūtaṃ bhāvetvā*. Cf. Gethin 2001[1992]: 58–59, 169, 172, 258.

[117] T I.582b12–13: 悉斷五蓋心穢慧羸。立心正住於四念處。修七覺支。

[118] *tassa evaṃ appamattassa ātāpino pahitattassa viharato ye gehasitā sarasaṅkappā te pahīyanti. tesaṃ pahānā ajjhattam eva cittaṃ santiṭṭhati sannisīdati ekodi hoti samādhiyati*

practising mindfulness of body in the Sarvāstivādin parallel (MĀ 81),[119] while the four *dhyāna*s are also included as objects of mindfulness of body by way of the feelings that suffuse the body in each *dhyāna*. In fact these are also included under the first application of mindfulness in the Sarvāstivāda *Smṛtyupasthāna-sūtra* (MĀ 98) itself. Moreover, the sequence of items presented by way of mindfulness of body in both sūtras (MĀ 81 and 98) suggests a meditative progression related to the sequence of items 5, and 9–12 of the gradual path. The practice of mindfulness of body begins with mindfulness of the postures and activities, described using essentially the same formulas used for item 5 in the gradual path scheme. Next come the controlling and restraining of unskilful thoughts, described using formulas that are found in the context of the Theravāda *Vitakkasaṇṭhāna-sutta* (MN 20) and the Sarvāstivāda parallel "The discourse on higher consciousness" (MĀ 101), a discourse that sets out various techniques for dealing with unwanted unskilful thoughts in meditation practice. This is followed by mindfulness of breathing in and out, described using the first four of a scheme of sixteen stages set out elsewhere in both traditions. This in turn is followed by mindfulness of the successive feelings that suffuse the body in the *dhyāna*s: respectively, the joy and happiness born of seclusion in the first, the joy and happiness born of concentration in the second, the happiness that is distinct from joy in the third, and finally the purity of mind in the fourth.[120]

Both the *Kāyagatāsati-sutta* and its Sarvāstivāda parallel conclude with a list of the benefits of practising mindfulness of body. These include attaining the four *dhyāna*s and all six higher knowledges culminating in knowledge of the destruction of the *āsrava*s, relating the *smṛtyupasthāna* scheme once more to the gradual scheme of the path.

Finally the Theravāda *Ānāpānasati-sutta* and Sarvāstivāda parallels such as SĀ 803 and 815 present *smṛtyupasthāna* by way of a scheme of sixteen ways of contemplating the breath divided into four groups of four, each as-

[119] T I.555a21–24: 彼若如是在遠離獨住。心無放逸修行精勤。斷心諸患而得定心。得定心已則知上如眞是謂比丘修習念身。Kuan (2008: 156–57) translates: "Thus however his body behaves, a monk knows the supreme as it really is. He thus lives alone in solitude, with a vigilant mind, practices diligently, abandons defilements in the mind, and obtains a concentrated mind. Having obtained a concentrated mind, he knows the supreme as it really is." See also Kuan's discussion, 2008: 86–90.

[120] 離生喜樂 (T I.582c20) = *vivekaja-prītisukha*; 定生喜樂 (582c28) = *samādhija-prītisukha*; 無喜生樂 (583a7) = *niṣprītika-sukha*; 清淨心 (583a16–17) = *pariśuddha-citta*.

sociated with mindfulness of body, feelings, mind and *dharma*s respectively. Thus the first group of four is presented under the category of mindfulness of body in both the *Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta* and *Kāyagatā-sutta* and their MĀ parallels. The Theravāda and Sarvāstivāda accounts of these sixteen stages essentially agree, although there are some minor differences in wording.[121] The sixteen stages in the Theravāda version are in summary:

> He breathes in and out with a long breath;
> he breathes in and out with a short breath;
> he breathes in and out experiencing the whole body (*sabbakāyapaṭisaṃvedī*);
> he breathes in and out calming the activity of the body (*passambhayaṃ kāyasaṃkhāraṃ*).
>
> He breathes in and out experiencing joy (*pītipaṭisaṃvedī*);
> he breathes in and out experiencing happiness (*sukhapaṭisaṃvedī*);
> he breathes in and out experiencing the activity of the mind (*cittasaṃkhārapaṭisaṃvedī*);
> he breathes in and out calming the activity of the mind (*passambhayaṃ cittasaṃkhāraṃ*).
>
> He breathes in and out experiencing the mind (*cittapaṭisaṃvedī*);
> he breathes in and out fully gladdening the mind (*abhippamodayaṃ cittaṃ*);
> he breathes in and out concentrating the mind (*samādahaṃ cittaṃ*);
> he breathes in and out freeing the mind (*vimocayaṃ cittaṃ*).
>
> He breathes in and out watching impermanence (*aniccānupassī*);
> he breathes in and out watching dispassion (*virāgānupassī*);
> he breathes in and out watching cessation (*nirodhānupassī*);
> he breathes in and out watching letting go (*paṭinissaggānupassī*).

As Kuan has indicated, the terminology of a number of these stages is suggestive of stilling the mind in *dhyāna*.[122] The language of calming the body

[121] The one substantive difference is in the fourth tetrad: Sarvāstivāda versions insert "watching abandoning" (*prahāṇānudarśin*) after no. 13 and then omit no. 16. See Anālayo 2007: 137–150, Dhammajoti 2008: 251–288, Anālayo, *Comparative Study* II: 664–73, Anālayo 2013: 227–33, Cousins 2015: 1–24, Anālayo 2016a: 242–49.

[122] Kuan 2008: 70–8.

and of then experiencing joy and happiness references the recurring Nikāya-Āgama description of this process already noted.[123]

Again as Kuan and more recently Cousins have argued,[124] the sequence from experiencing joy (no. 5), through experiencing and calming the activity of the mind (7–8), to concentrating and freeing the mind (12) seems to assume the refining of feeling (*vedanā*) and perception (*saṃjñā*)—what the Nikāya-Āgama texts mean by "activity of the mind"—that comes with the attainment of the higher *dhyāna*s and formless attainments. In doing so they in part agree with interpretations found in later Buddhist tradition; Cousins cites the exegetical sources of various Buddhists schools which read the sixteen stages with reference to the practice of the *dhyāna*s. But it seems that there is no consensus in the later tradition about how precisely to do this. For Buddhaghosa the first group of four refers to the practice of the beginner, while the other three groups refer to the practice of someone who contemplates feelings, mind and *dharma*s having first achieved *dhyāna*.[125] Cousins suggests that taking the sixteen exercises in mindfulness of breathing in this way is to see them as "modes" of practice rather than stages, and that this is characteristic of a later, Abhidharma approach. He argues that in the original *sutta* context the sixteen exercises must certainly have been regarded as stages: the first group of four describes the initial stages, the second group progresses through the four "form" (*rūpa*) *dhyāna*s, the third group progresses through the formless attainments, while the fourth turns to insight.

While tying the second and third groups respectively to the *dhyāna*s and formless attainments is not without its attractions, it also seems possible that the terminology of the sixteen stages was always intended to be open ended, and that this is precisely why specific *dhyāna*s are not mentioned. In this case it is in line with presentations of the path as found in the *Aṭṭhakanagara-sutta* and other places (MN 52, 64; MĀ 205, 217, see Table 7): successive attainment of all four *dhyāna*s and formless attainments is not assumed; rather one of these attainments is required as a basis for reaching the knowledge of the destruction of the defilements. Indeed, it is tempting to suggest that presenting the path in this way, namely, by way of a scheme of

---

123 On this formula, see note 99 above.

124 Kuan 2008: 70–80; Cousins 2015.

125 Vism 277 (8.186): *idam eva catukkaṃ ādikammikassa kammaṭṭhānavasena vuttaṃ. itarāni pana tīṇi catukkāni ettha pattajjhānassa vedanācittadhammānupassanāvas ena vuttāni*.

progressive stages in which each stage can itself be understood as somehow subsuming the whole path is in fact a significant feature of the presentation of the Buddhist path in the Nikāya-Āgama literature, perhaps especially in the context of *smṛtyupasthāna*. Thus from the perspective of the *Kāyagatāsati-sutta* (and its parallel), the whole of the Buddhist path is presented in terms of mindfulness of body, without explicit reference to mindfulness of feelings, mind or *dharma*s. On the other hand, from the perspective of the sixteen stages of mindfulness of breathing it is rather that when mindfulness of body is fully developed in the form of mindfulness of breathing, it must also include mindfulness of feelings, mind and *dharma*s.[126] This variety in presentation is thus a device that guards against too rigid a conception of the stages of the gradual path.

As a final point in this context, it is worth noting how the *Saddharma-smṛtyupasthāna-sūtra* (probably a second or third century CE text) seems in effect to present the fourth application of mindfulness (watching *dharma*s) as a series of ten progressive stages (*bhūmi*), of which each involves the meditator (*yogācāra*) in observing *dharma*s internally (*yogācāra adhyātmike dharma dharmānupaśyī viharati*). The successive stages involve observing various aspects of feeling (*vedanā*), perception (*saṃjñā*), the sense spheres (*āyatana*), etc., in a manner that focuses on the complexity of their conditioning. Yet the culmination of this practice is the attainment of the four *dhyāna*s and the understanding of the rise and fall of *dharma*s generally.[127] Thus once again we have a relatively ancient text which bears witness to the manner in which the path was understood by bringing different schemes of the path together rather than abstracting them.

9. Conclusions

In a recent review of scholarship concerned with early Buddhist meditation, Daniel Stuart notes that the conceptions offered in a number of scholars' work he cites are "basically imagined reconstructions of a putative earliest (set of) practice(s)". Characterising Lance Cousins' and my own contribution as by way of contrast "more faithful to an actual lived tradition of meditative practice", he nonetheless complains that within our work

[126] Cf. Gethin 2001[1992]: 56–58.

[127] Stuart, *Less Traveled Path* I: 55–106, 536–37.

> the homogenizing force of the Theravāda commentarial project tends to drown out the voices of the individual meditative traditions that most likely made up a very colorful fabric of religious practice during the first half of the first millennium in India, Sri Lanka and elsewhere. [128]

The extent to which the Theravāda commentarial project should be characterised as a "homogenizing force" might be debated.[129] However, in the present article, rather than approach the Nikāya-Āgama literature with an ear attuned to the Theravāda commentaries, I have tried to listen to the voices of the composers and compilers—the *bhāṇaka*s—of the Nikāya-Āgama literature drawn from (at least) three different redactions (Theravāda, Dharmaguptaka and Sarvāstivāda), and in doing so I have tried to attune myself to what they might have wanted to say about the Buddhist path. Certainly those voices bear witness to a variety of schemes of the Buddhist path in the early literature, but there is also a certain harmony in those voices that bears witness to a certain consensus, in the first place about the specific different schemes presented, in the second place about the interchangeability of certain elements within these schemes, in the third place about the permutations and patterns of variation, and finally about how those different schemes should be related to each other. Thus the composers of the Nikāyas combine the same set(s) of items in similar ways to produce similar patterns of variation that, far from being random, are informed by an understanding of certain principles that determines which elements are appropriate for a given context.[130]

To elaborate, the Theravāda, Sarvāstivāda, and (although the evidence is more limited) the Dharmaguptaka reciters of the Āgamas appear to be of one voice on the following points:

---

[128] Stuart, *Less Traveled Path* I: 14.

[129] I would argue that the account of meditation practice found, for example, in Buddhaghosa's *Visuddhimagga* remains broadly accommodating of a significant variety of approaches and practices.

[130] Cf. Gethin 1992: 155–56, where I argue that early Buddhist literature is characterised by a set of interconnected lists that govern the structure and pattern of the presentation of the Buddha's teaching, facilitating various options (expositions that are full and exhaustive, bare and concise, or focused on a particular aspect) provided one is familiar with and sensitive to the underlying principles that inform the way different lists relate to each other.

- The presentation of the gradual path by way of three principal variations: (1) the four-*dhyāna* scheme, (2) the *ārūpya-nirodha* scheme and (3) the *apramāṇa* scheme.
- The presentation of an additional scheme by way of the applications of mindfulness (*smṛtyupasthāna*).
- The presentation of the four-*dhyāna* scheme as the normative gradual path; this scheme assumes commitment to *śīla* and such general practices as guarding of the sense doors and mindfulness of activities as a basis for the attainment of the four *dhyāna*s, leading on to knowledge of the destruction of the defilements, typically by way of knowledge of past lives, and the death and rebirth of beings.
- The association of the four-*dhyāna* scheme followed by the three knowledges with the awakening of the Buddha.
- The elaboration of the two further schemes of the gradual path—the *ārūpya-nirodha* scheme and the *apramāṇa* scheme—as complementary to the first scheme; the former by way of attainments additional to the four *dhyāna*s (namely, the four formless spheres and sometimes also cessation); the other by way of the practice of the four *apramāṇa*s (which are presented sometimes as attainments additional to the four *dhyāna*s, sometimes as the initial stages of the practice of the formless meditations, and sometimes in place of the *dhyāna*s).[131]
- The inclusion in all three principal variations of the gradual path—whether involving the *dhyāna*s, formless attainments, cessation, or immeasurable meditations—of some account of the gaining of knowledge in addition to the attainments themselves. The attainment of the four *dhyāna*s, the immeasurable meditations, the formless meditations, or cessation does not of itself entail awakening; awakening is consistently distinguished from

[131] It is worth noting in this context that for the later Theravāda tradition, the formless attainments are characterised as the fourth *dhyāna* "accompanied by perception of infinite space", etc. (*ākāsānañcāyatanasaññāsahagataṃ* […] *catutthajjhānaṃ*); see Dhs 55–56 (§§ 265–68), and cf. Abhidh-s-mhṭ 78.28–79.13; and the *dhyāna*s are generic practices to be attained using various alternative subjects of meditation, including kindness, compassion, joy and equanimity; see Vism 111 (3.106–107), and Vim 63–64 (T 1648: 32.411a19–b4).

these attainments and requires some form of additional knowledge, usually expressed in terms that reference the four truths, or understanding the impermanence, etc., of things.

- The presentation of schemes that take the form of a step by step gradual path, apparently assuming the successive attainment of all items mentioned (whether the *dhyāna*s, immeasurable meditations, or formless attainments), alongside presentations that regard just one of the items mentioned as a sufficient basis for destruction of the defilements.
- Presentations that integrate the three principal schemes of the gradual path with the *smṛtyupasthāna* scheme, and vice versa.
- Instances of *all* schemes stopping short of final awakening; in most cases it seems possible to identify an internal narrative logic to this omission.

What is revealed by the pattern of different schemes of the path, it seems to me, is not a record of the Nikāya-Āgama authors' disputes and confusion about the nature of the Buddhist path and its goal, but rather an early attempt to produce a coherent and unified vision of the Buddhist path: to borrow Stuart's metaphor, the threads of the different schemes are skilfully and creatively woven together to produce a single yet variegated and colourfully patterned fabric.

Of course, the survey undertaken in the present article does not address in full all the questions concerning different schemes of the path raised in the existing scholarly literature. I shall briefly comment on three questions. The first two are similar in form. What is the precise relationship of the *ārūpya-nirodha* scheme to the normative four-*dhyāna* scheme? Similarly, what is the relationship of the four-*apramāṇa* scheme to the normative four-*dhyāna* scheme?

In part the same answer can be given in response to both questions, and in fact I have given it already: there is a clear consensus that neither cessation nor the immeasurable meditations are sufficient in themselves to bring about the final destruction of the defilements; an additional knowledge is required, although this knowledge is not always stated in the same way. Nonetheless the practice of the formless attainments or of the immeasurable meditations is straightforwardly and unproblematically presented as a basis for acquiring that knowledge. Thus the kind of argument elaborated by Richard Gombrich about the place of kindness and compassion in early

Buddhist presentations of the path seems to me something of an unnecessary complication.[132] I hope to elaborate on the matter of the cessation of perception and feeling in a forthcoming article, but in brief, I would suggest that the inclusion of cessation in the scheme of the path is best understood as part of an inclusivist strategy whereby meditation attainments regarded by non-Buddhist wanderers as the goal of the religious life are accommodated within an overall Buddhist scheme of the path. This reflects the attempt of

[132] Gombrich set out his argument again in *What the Buddha Thought* (2009: 78–85). He argues that in the *Tevijja-sutta* "companionship with Brahmā" (*brahma-sahavyatā*) after death is understood by the Buddha and his brahman interlocutors to refer to their highest religious goal; thus when the Buddha redefines "companionship with Brahmā" as a meditative state that involves pervading the six directions with a mind that is full of kindness, he must intend to substitute his own highest religious goal, namely awakening. According to Gombrich, the Buddha's followers misunderstood what the Buddha was up to and so arrived at the "dogma that someone who practised the *brahma-vihāra*s was reborn in the Brahma world but no higher" (p. 88). If, as Gombrich claims, the teaching that "love and compassion can be salvific for the person who cultivates those feelings to the highest pitch" was such a crucial part of what the Buddha taught (p. 195), it seems somewhat implausible that he should have chosen to teach this principally to brahman outsiders and in terms that were obscure to his own followers. Gombrich refers also to the *Metta-sutta* (pp. 86–7). Yet this short poem talks not simply of pervading the world with thoughts of love, but also of "not embracing opinion" (*diṭṭhiñ ca anupagamma*) and "having achieved insight" (*dassanena sampanno*). This sounds closer to "seeing things as they are" (*yathā-bhūta-dassana*), which is, Gombrich acknowledges, the way "enlightenment is commonly referred to by the Buddha" (p. 159). While it seems possible to understand pervading the six directions with a mind full of love as a significant step on the way to seeing things as they are, it is not obvious why it should of itself simply be regarded as one and the same thing. Part of the problem is what it means in this context to speak of something as "salvific". If the constituents of awakening can be developed in association with the immeasurable meditations (SN V 119.3–121.5; T II.197c15–22); and if, as the Theravāda commentaries put it (Ps I 85 = Spk III 139 = Mp II 98–9 = Vibh-a 316.), the constituents of awakening (*bojjhaṅga*) are present in *jhāna* achieved through the practice of kindness and compassion (as through the practice of mindfulness of breathing and so on), does this not in fact suggest that later Theravāda thought presents kindness and compassion as no less "salvific" than other meditation practices? And is it not just as plausible to read the *Tevijja-sutta* as reinterpreting "companionship with Brahmā" as the achievement of immeasurable kindness and compassion but then, rather than presenting this as a simple equivalent to awakening, placing it within an overall scheme of the path where awakening is conceived as seeing things as they are? For a helpful and critical discussion of the role of the *apramāṇa*s in early Buddhist meditation, see Martini 2011.

the Nikāya-Āgama authors to position the Buddhist way as a distinctive approach to the quest for liberation in the religious world of eastern India in the fourth to third centuries BCE.

The third question concerns the place of schemes of the path that may *not* involve the *dhyāna*s, the immeasurable meditations, or formless meditations. That such an understanding of the Buddhist path is evidenced in the Nikāya-Āgama literature was perhaps first articulated by La Vallée Poussin in his 1937 article "Musīla et Nārada", where he cited a number of *sutta*s in support of such a view. La Vallée Poussin's article has prompted a variety of responses over the years and once more, there is not the space to consider the issues here.[133] It might be suggested that the approach adopted here—taking as a starting point the gradual scheme of the path presented in the *sīlakkhandhavagga/śīlaskandhanipāta*—will inevitably fail to capture the material in the Sūtra literature that sets out a path without reference to the *dhyāna*s, etc. Perhaps what is required is a survey and assessment of contexts in the Nikāya-Āgama literature where accounts and formulas of awakening occur without explicit and immediate reference to the *dhyāna*s.[134] Nonetheless it should be clear from the present survey that taking the *smṛtyupasthāna*s as a paradigmatic Nikāya-Āgama presentation of the path without reference to *dhyāna* fails to take into account the considerable amount of material in that same literature that explicitly combines elements of *smṛtyupasthāna* and *dhyāna* practice.

The final point I would like to make is a more general one about the nature of Nikāya-Āgama literature and the search for the earlier and more "archaic" form of a sūtra (often with the implication that this is in some sense more "authentic"). Often the approach has been to take a single sūtra text and to consider its parallel redactions and then to make some judgement about a more archaic version. The present survey of schemes of the path as presented in a range of sūtras and their parallels reveals a pattern of insertion and omission of various "formulas", "stock passages" or "pericopes" across the different redactions. It seems to me that such a pattern of insertion and

---

[133] See for example Gómez 1999, Bodhi 2003, 2007, and 2009, and Cousins 1984 and 2009.

[134] For example, the account of the past Buddha Vipassin's awakening at DN II 34–35 and parallels (e.g. T I.7c); here the bodhisattva contemplates the links of dependent origination and then separately (*aparena samayena*) the rise and fall of the aggregates (though the latter is not found at T I.7c).

omission raises problems for the chronological stratification of early Buddhist literature that are not always sufficiently recognised.

Let us compare, for example, the scheme of the path as presented first in the *Devadaha-sutta* (MN 101) and its parallel MĀ 19, and then in the *Ariyapariyesanā-sutta* (MN 26) and its parallel MA 204. The Theravāda tradition transmits the *Devadaha-sutta* inserting the full Majjhimanikāya gradual scheme of the path, beginning with the formula of the arising of the Tathāgata in the world (items 1–12, 18–20). The Sarvāstivāda tradition transmits the sūtra inserting at the same narrative point its version of the Madhyamāgama gradual scheme of the path but omitting the initial stages and so begins with retiring to a secluded dwelling (items 7–12, 20). In the case of the *Ariyapariyesanā-sutta* and its parallel we find the inverse of this situation with an added difference. The Sarvāstivāda tradition transmits the sūtra inserting its full version of the Madhyamāgama gradual scheme of the path beginning with the formula of the arising of the Tathāgata in the world (items 1–12, 20). The Theravāda version inserts at the same narrative point the *ārūpya-nirodha* scheme of the path without reference to the appearance of the Tathāgata in the world.

In the case of both texts, the *Devadaha-sutta* and *Ariyapariyesanā-sutta*, we might approach such differences with the assumption that one or the other version results from either a deliberate change or an accidental error in the transmission of the sūtra, and thus seek to recover the more archaic, "more authentic" or even "the original" version. But the strictly scholarly grounds for deciding which scheme of the gradual path is the one that "truly" belongs here seem to be very shaky. Alternatively, we might conclude that at least these portions of these two sūtras were at the time of their composition and during their early transmission not regarded as fixed, and that the notion of a single authentic version is misconceived and inappropriate. It seems to me that the latter conclusion better fits the patterns of insertion, addition and omission that we find in the material surveyed in this article. This is not to suggest, however, that the insertion, addition or omission of a particular formula at a particular point is not of interest or of significance. There may be a variety of considerations influencing the use or omission of a particular formula in a particular context: a wish to extend or shorten a text, literary and aesthetic sensibilities, didactic and doctrinal concerns, to name a few. Yet how such considerations relate to matters of relative chronology is not straightforward: the literary and aesthetic do not necessarily coincide with the didactic and doctrinal, and either might override the other. Moreover,

the current survey of schemes of the path reveals patterns of expansion and reduction that seem to me to indicate that a shorter exposition might just as easily be considered a later summary as an earlier core. The danger in such contexts is that scholarly judgements about what is earlier and later amount to little more than intuitions or preferences. This is, of course, not to deny that it is impossible to make any scholarly judgements about relative chronology, only that we need to be aware of the limitations imposed by the nature of the particular sources we are using.[135]

Above all, the present survey of schemes of the path in the Nikāya-Āgama literature seems to confirm Étienne Lamotte's general judgement, made sixty years ago. What a comparison of the Pali Nikāyas and Āgamas shows is that certainly "the number of pericopes is not the same: some are added, others omitted, and yet others relocated".

> However, […] the variations in question affect hardly anything save the method of expression or the arrangement of the subjects. The doctrinal basis common to the āgamas and nikāyas is remarkably uniform. Preserved and transmitted by the schools, the sūtras do not however constitute scholastic documents, but are the common heritage of all the sects. […] Any attempt to reconstruct a "pre-canonical" Buddhism deviating from the consensus between the āgamas and nikāyas can only end in subjective hypotheses.[136]

---

[135] It is surely possible in some instances to trace the development in the use of certain technical and doctrinal terms. Thus, for example, on the basis of an examination of the use of *cetiya* and *thūpa* in Pali texts, Cousins 2018 seems to me to adduce reasonable grounds for concluding, contra Schopen, that the Theravāda redaction of the Vinaya is indeed earlier than the Mūlasarvāstivādin (while not denying that this contains equally ancient material), and that parts of the Vinaya (the *Suttavibhaṅga*) along with the four primary Nikāyas are demonstrably generally earlier than other canonical texts (the *Parivāra*, *Jātaka*, *Petavatthu* and *Vimānavatthu*, and *Apadāna*).

[136] Lamotte 1988: 156; for the original French, see Lamotte 1958: 171: "Le nombre de péricopes n'est pas le même: certaines sont ajoutées, d'autres supprimées, d'autres d'enfin déplacées. […] Cependant, […] les variations en question n'affectent guère que le mode d'expression ou la disposition des matières. Le fonds doctrinal commun aux āgama et aux nikāya est remarquablement uniforme. Conservés et transmis par les écoles, les sūtra ne constituent pas autant des documents d'école, mais l'héritage commun à toutes les sectes. […] Tout essai de reconstruction d'un bouddhisme « précanonique » s'écartant du consensus entre āgama et nikāya ne peut aboutir qu'à des hypothèses subjectives."

Lest I be misunderstood, in appealing to Lamotte here, I am not suggesting (just as Lamotte was not suggesting) that the comparison of the Nikāyas and Āgamas is somehow a futile exercise. Whether or not our scholarly quest is "pre-canonical" Buddhism, clearly, as Lamotte's own scholarship perfectly exemplifies, the scholarly study of ancient Buddhism should draw on as broad a range of sources as possible. Besides, we also need to test Lamotte's general judgement with specific focused studies. And the more we study the pattern of addition, omission and relocation of "pericopes", the better our understanding of the nature of the consensus between the Āgamas and Nikāyas. Indeed, I would hope that the present study precisely illustrates this.

Bibliography

Sources and Abbreviations

Abhidh-k-bh	*Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, ed. P. Pradhan, rev. 2nd ed. Aruna Haldar. Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1975.
Abhidh-s-mhṭ	*Abhidhammatthavibhāvinī-ṭīkā*, ed. Hammalawa Saddhatissa. Oxford: 1989.
As	*Atthasālinī*, ed. Edward Müller, London: PTS, 1897.
AN	*Aṅguttaranikāya*, ed. R. Morris, E. Hardy, 5 vols. London: PTS, 1885–1900.
B^{e}	Burmese edition in Burmese script
C^{e}	Ceylonese edition in Sinhala script
DĀ	Dīrghāgama
DĀ-D	Dharmaguptaka Dīrghāgama (= T 1)
DĀ-S	Sarvāstivāda Dīrghāgama
DN	*Dīghanikāya*, ed. T.W. Rhys Davids, J. E. Carpenter, 3 vols. London: PTS, 1890–1911.
Dhs	*Dhammasaṅgaṇi*, ed. Edward Müller. London: PTS, 1890.
EĀ	Ekottarikāgama (= T 125)
E^{e}	European edition in Roman script
Ja	*Jātaka*, together with its commentary, ed. V. Fausbøll, 6 vols. London: PTS, 1877–1896.
Lal	*Lalitavistara*, ed. S. Lefmann, 2 vols. Halle: Verlag d. Buchhandlung des Waisenhauses, 1902–1903.

MĀ	Madhyamāgama (= T 26)
MĀ-S	Sarvāstivāda Madhyamāgama
MN	*Majjhimanikāya*, ed. V. Trenckner, R. Chalmers, 3 vols. London: PTS, 1887–1902.
Mp	*Manorathapūraṇī*, ed. M. Walleser, H. Kopp. London: PTS and Luzac, 1936–1957.
MSu	The *Mahāsudarśanāvadana* and the *Mahāsudarśanasūtra*, ed. Hisashi Matsumura. Delhi: Sri Satguru Publ., 1988.
Mvu	*Mahāvastu-avadāna*, ed. É. Senart, 3 vols. Paris: L'Imprimerie Nationale, 1882–1897.
Nett	*Nettipakaraṇa*, ed. E. Hardy. London: PTS, 1902.
Ps	*Papañcasūdanī*, ed. J. H. Woods, D. Kosambi, I.B. Horner, 4 vols. London: PTS, 1933–1938.
Ps-ṭ	*Papañcasūdanī-ṭīkā*, B^{e}, 3 vols. Rangoon: Buddhasāsana-samiti, 1961.
PTS	Pali Text Society
SĀ	Saṃyuktāgama (= T 99)
SBV	*The Gilgit Manuscript of the Saṅghabhedavastu,* ed. R. Gnoli, T. Venkatacharya, 2 vols. Rome: Istituto italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1977–1978.
S^{e}	Siamese edition in Thai script
SN	*Saṃyuttanikāya*, ed. L. Feer, 5 vols. London: PTS, 1884–1898.
Spk	*Sāratthappakāsinī*, ed. F.L. Woodward, 3 vols. London: PTS, 1929–37.
Śrāv-bh	*Śrāvakabhūmi*, ed. K. Shukla. Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1973.
Sv	*Sumaṅgalavilāsinī*, ed. T. W. Rhys Davids, J. E. Carpenter, W. Stede, 3 vols. London: PTS, 1886–1932.
Sv-pṭ	*Dīghanikāyaṭṭhakathā-ṭīkā*, ed. L. de Silva, 3 vols. London: PTS, 1970.
T	*Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō*, ed. Junjirō Takakusu, Kaigyoku Watanabe. Tokyo: Issaikyō Kankōkai, 1924–1932.
Vibh	*Vibhaṅga*, ed. C. A. F. Rhys Davids. London: PTS, 1904.
Vibh-a	*Sammohavinodanī* (Vibhaṅga-aṭṭhakathā), ed. A. P. Buddhadatta. London: PTS, 1923.
Vim	Vimuttimagga (= T 1648) *The Path of Freedom* (*Vimuttimagga*) of Arahant Upatis-

sa, transl. by N. R. M. Ehara, Soma Thera and Kheminda Thera. Colombo: Buddhist Publication Society, 1967.

Vism *Visuddhimagga*, ed. C. A. F. Rhys Davids. London: PTS, 1920–1921.

Vism-mhṭ *Visuddhimagga-mahāṭīkā*, B^{e}, 2 vols. Rangoon: Buddhasāsana-samiti, 1960.

Secondary Sources

Allon 2007

Mark Allon, "Introduction: The Senior Manuscripts", in Andrew Glass, *Four Gāndhārī Saṃyuktāgama Sūtras. Senior Kharoṣṭhī Fragment 5*. [Gandhāran Buddhist Texts 4] Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2007, pp. 3–25.

Anālayo 2003

Bhikkhu Anālayo, *Satipaṭṭhāna: The Direct Path to Realization*. Birmingham: Windhorse Publications, 2003.

Anālayo 2006

———, "The Chinese Version of the *Dantabhūmi Sutta*", *Buddhist Studies Review* 23 (2006), 5–19.

Anālayo 2007

———, "Mindfulness of Breathing in the *Saṃyukta-āgama*", *Buddhist Studies Review* 24 (2007), 137–150.

Anālayo 2013

———, *Perspectives on Satipaṭṭhāna*. Cambridge: Windhorse Publications, 2013.

Anālayo 2014

———, *The Dawn of Abhidharma*. Hamburg: Hamburg University Press, 2014.

Anālayo 2014a

———, "The *Brahmajāla* and the Early Buddhist Oral Tradition", *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology* 17 (2014), 41–59.

Anālayo 2014b

———, "Three Chinese Dīrgha-Āgama Discourses Without Parallels", in Dhammadinnā (ed.), *Research on the Dīrgha-Āgama*. Taipei: Dharma Drum, 2014, pp. 1–55.

Anālayo 2014c
———, "The Buddha's Last Meditation in the *Dīrgha-Āgama*", *The Indian International Journal of Buddhist Studies* 15 (2014), 1–43.
Anālayo 2015
———, "Brahmavihāra and Awakening: A Study of the *Dīrgha-āgama* Parallel to the *Tevijja-sutta*", *Asian Literature and Translation* 3 (2015), 1–27.
Anālayo 2015a
———, "*Āgama* and *aṅga* in the Early Buddhist Oral Tradition", *Singaporean Journal of Buddhist Studies* 3 (2015), 9–37.
Anālayo 2016
———, "The Gradual Path of Training in the Dīrgha-Āgama: From Sense-Restraint to Imperturbability", *The Indian International Journal of Buddhist Studies* 17 (2016), 1–24.
Anālayo 2016a
———, *Mindfully Facing Disease and Death: Compassionate Advice from Early Buddhist Texts*. Cambridge: Windhorse Publications, 2016.
Anālayo, *Comparative Study*
———, *A Comparative Study of the Majjhima-nikāya*, 2 vols. Taipei: Dharma Drum, 2011.
Bareau, *Recherches*
André Bareau, *Recherches sur la biographie du Buddha dans les Sūtrapiṭaka et les Vinayapiṭaka anciens*, 2 parts in 3 vols. Paris: École Française d'Extrême-Orient, 1963–1971.
Bodhi 2003
Bhikkhu Bodhi, "Musīla and Nārada Revisited: Seeking the Key to Interpretation", in Anne M. Blackburn and Jeffrey Samuels (eds.), *Approaching the Dhamma: Buddhist Texts and Practices in South and Southeast Asia*. Seattle: Pariyatti, 2003, pp. 47–68.
Bodhi 2007
———, "The Susīma-sutta and the Wisdom-liberated Arahant", *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 29 (2007), 51–75.
Bodhi 2009
——— "Susīma's Conversation with the Buddha: A Second Study of the Susīma-sutta", *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 30 (2009), 33–80.
Bronkhorst 1993
Johannes Bronkhorst, *The Two Traditions of Meditation in Ancient India*, 2nd edn. New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1993.

Bucknell 1984
Roderick S. Bucknell, "The Buddhist Path to Liberation: An Analysis and Listing of the Stages", *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 7 (1984), 7–40.
Bucknell 2014
———, "The Structure of the Sanskrit Dīrgha-Āgama from Gilgit vis-à-vis the Pāli Dīgha-Nikāya", in Dhammadinnā (ed.), *Research on the Dīrgha-Āgama*. Taipei: Dharma Drum, 2014, pp. 57–101.
Choi 2015
Jin kyoung Choi, *Three Sūtras from the Gilgit Dīrghāgama Manuscript: A Synoptic Critical Edition, Translation and Textual Analysis*. Ph.D. Diss., Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, 2015.
Cousins 1984
Lance S. Cousins, "*Samatha-Yāna* and *Vipassanā-Yāna*", in G. Dhammapala, R. Gombrich, K. R. Norman (eds.), *Buddhist Studies in Honour of Hammalava Saddhātissa*. Nugegoda: University of Jayewardenepura, 1984, pp. 56–68.
Cousins 2009
———, "Scholar Monks and Meditator Monks Revisited", in John Powers and Charles S. Prebish (eds.), *Destroying Māra Forever: Buddhist Ethics Essays in Honor of Damien Keown*. Ithaca, NY: Snow Lion Publications, 2009, pp. 31–46.
Cousins 2013
———, "The Early Development of Buddhist Literature and Language in India", *Journal of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies* 5 (2013), 89–135.
Cousins 2015
———, "The *Sutta* on Mindfulness with In and Out Breathing", in K. L. Dhammajoti (ed.), *Buddhist Meditative Praxis: Traditional Teachings and Modern Applications*. Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhist Studies – University of Hong Kong, 2015, pp. 1–24.
Cousins 2018
———, "*Cetiya* and *Thūpa*: The Textual Sources", in Janice Stargardt and Michael Willis (eds.), *Relics and Relic Worship in Early Buddhism: India, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka and Burma*. London: The British Museum, 2018, pp. 18–30.

Deleanu 2006
Florin Deleanu, *The Chapter on the Mundane Path (Laukikamārga) in the Śrāvakabhūmi: A Trilingual Edition (Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese), Annotated Translation, and Introductory Study*, 2 vols. Tokyo: International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 2006.
Dhammajoti 2008
Kuala Lumpur Dhammajoti, "The Sixteen-mode Mindfulness of Breathing", *Journal of the Centre for Buddhist Studies Sri Lanka* 6 (2008), 251–288.
Eimer 1976
Helmut Eimer, *Skizzen des Erlösungsweges in buddhistischen Begriffsreihen. Eine Untersuchung*. Bonn: Religionswissenschaftliches Seminar der Universität Bonn, 1976.
Enomoto 2000
Fumio Enomoto, "'Mūlasarvāstivādin' and 'Sarvāstivādin'", in Christine Chojnacki, Jens-Uwe Hartmann, Volker M. Tschannerl (eds.), *Vividharatnakaraṇḍaka: Festgabe für Adelheid Mette*. Swisttal-Odendorf: Indica et Tibetica Verlag, 2000, pp. 239–250.
Frauwallner, *Geschichte*
Erich Frauwallner, *Geschichte der indischen Philosophie*, 2 vols. Salzburg: Otto Müller, 1953–1956.
Gethin 1992
Rupert Gethin, "The Mātikās: Memorization, Mindfulness and the List", in Janet Gyatso (ed.), *In the Mirror of Memory: Reflections on Mindfulness and Remembrance in Indian and Tibetan Buddhism*. Albany: State University of New York, 1992, pp. 149–172.
Gethin 2001
———, *The Buddhist Path to Awakening: A Study of the Bodhi-Pakkhiyā Dhammā*, 2nd edition. Oxford: OneWorld, 2001 (1st ed., Leiden: Brill, 1992).
Gethin 2017
———, "Body, Mind and Sleepiness: On the Abhidharma Understanding of *styāna* and *middha*", *Journal of the International College for Postgraduate Buddhist Studies* 21 (2017), 254–216.
Gombrich 1994
Richard Gombrich, "The Buddha and the Jains: A Reply to Professor Bronkhorst", *Asiatische Studien* / *Études Asiatiques* 48 (1994), 1069–1096.

Gombrich 2009
———, *What the Buddha Thought*. London: Equinox, 2009.
Griffiths 1981
Paul Griffiths, "Concentration or Insight: The Problematic of Theravāda Buddhist Meditation-Theory", *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 49 (1981), 605–624.
Griffiths 1983
———, *Indian Buddhist Meditation-Theory: History, Development and Systematization*. Ph.D. Diss., University of Wisconsin-Madison, 1983.
Gómez 1999
Luis O. Gómez, "Seeing, Touching, Counting, Accounting: Sāṃkhya as Formal Thought and Intuition", *Asiatische Studien* / *Études Asiatiques* 53 (1999), 693–711.
Hartmann 2004
Jens-Uwe Hartmann, "Contents and Structure of the Dīrghāgama of the (Mūla-)Sarvāstivādins", *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology at Soka University* 7 (2004), 119–137.
Hartmann 2014
———, "The Dīrgha-āgama of the (Mūla-)Sarvāstivādins: What Was the Purpose of this Collection?", in Dhammadinnā (ed.), *Research on the Dīrgha-āgama*. Taipei: Dharma Drum, 2014, pp. 138–166.
Hartmann and Wille 2014
Jens-Uwe Hartmann and Klaus Wille, "The Manuscript of the Dīrghāgama and the Private Collection in Virginia", in Paul Harrison and Jens-Uwe Hartmann (eds.), *From Birch Bark to Digital Data: Recent Advances in Buddhist Manuscript Research.* Papers Presented at the Conference Indic Buddhist Manuscripts: The State of the Field, Stanford, June 15–19, 2009. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2014, pp. 137–155.
Kuan 2008
Tse-fu Kuan, *Mindfulness in Early Buddhism: New Approaches through Psychology and Textual Analysis of Pali, Chinese and Sanskrit Sources*. London: Routledge, 2008.

Lamotte 1958
Étienne Lamotte, *Histoire du bouddhisme indien: Des origines à l'ère Śaka*. Louvain: Publications Universitaires, 1958 (Reprint, Peeters, 1976).
Lamotte 1988
———, *History of Indian Buddhism: From the Origins to the Śaka Era*. Translated from the French by Sara Webb-Boin. Under the supervision of Jean Dantinne. Louvain-la-Neuve: Institut Orientaliste de l'Université Catholique, 1988.
La Vallée Poussin 1937
Louis de La Vallée Poussin, "Musīla et Nārada: Le chemin du *nirvāṇa*", *Mélanges chinois et bouddhiques* 5 (1937), 189–222.
Liu 2008
Zhen Liu, *Versenkung und Askese: Eine neue Sanskrit-Quelle zur Buddha-Legende*. Ph.D. Diss., Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, 2008.
MacQueen 1988
Graeme MacQueen, *A Study of the Śrāmaṇyaphala-Sūtra*. Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz, 1988.
Maithrimurthi 1999
Mudagamuwe Maithrimurthi, *Wohlwollen, Mitleid, Freude und Gleichmut: Eine ideengeschichtliche Untersuchung der vier apramāṇas in der buddhistischen Ethik und Spiritualität von den Anfängen bis hin zum frühen Yogācāra*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner, 1999.
Manné 1995
Joy Manné, "Case Histories from the Pāli Canon I: The *Sāmaññaphala Sutta* Hypothetical Case History *or* How to be Sure to Win a Debate", *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 21 (1995), 1–34.
Martini 2011
Giuliana Martini, "The Meditative Dynamics of the Early Buddhist *appamāṇa*s", *Canadian Journal of Buddhist Studies* 7 (2011), 137–180.
Meisig 1987
Konrad Meisig, *Das Śrāmaṇyaphala-sūtra: Synoptische Übersetzung und Glossar der chinesischen Fassungen verglichen mit dem Sanskrit und Pāli*. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 1987.
Melzer 2006
Gudrun Melzer, *Ein Abschnitt aus dem Dīrghāgama*. Ph.D. Diss., Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, 2006.

Migot 1954
André Migot, "Un grand disciple du Buddha: Śāriputra. Son rôle dans l'histoire du bouddhisme et dans le développement de l'Abhidharma", *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 46 (1954), 405–554.
Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha*
T. W. Rhys Davids, *Dialogues of the Buddha*, 3 vols. London: PTS, 1899–1921.
Schmithausen 1981
Lambert Schmithausen, "On Some Aspects of Descriptions or Theories of 'Liberating Insight' and 'Enlightenment' in Early Buddhism", in Klaus Bruhn and Albrecht Wezler (eds.), *Studien zum Jainismus und Buddhismus: Gedenkschrift für Ludwig Alsdorf.* Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1981, pp. 199–250.
Silverlock 2015
Blair Alan Silverlock, *An Edition and Study of the Goṣ iga-sutra, the Cow-Horn Discourse (Senior Collection scroll no. 12)*: *An Account of the Harmonious Aṇarudha Monks.* Ph.D. Diss., University of Sydney, 2015.
Skilling 2002
Peter Skilling, review of Christine Chojnacki, Jens-Uwe Hartmann and Volker M. Tschannerl (eds.), *Vividharatnakaraṇḍaka: Festgabe für Adelheid Mette.* Swisttal-Odendorf: Indica et Tibetica Verlag, 2000, in *Indo-Iranian Journal* 45 (2002), 373–377.
Skilling 2017
———, "The Many Lives of the *Pañcatraya* and *Māyājāla Sūtras*", in Dhammadinnā (ed.), *Research on the Madhyama-āgama*. Taipei: Dharma Drum, 2017, pp. 269–326.
Skilling, *Mahāsūtras*
———, *Mahāsūtras: Great Discourses of the Buddha*, 2 vols. Oxford: PTS, 1994–1997.
Stache-Rosen and Mittal, *Saṅgītisūtra*
Valentina Stache-Rosen and Kusum Mittal, *Das Saṅgītisūtra und sein Kommentar Saṅgītiparyāya*, 2 vols. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1968.
Stuart 2013
Daniel M. Stuart, *Thinking about Cessation: The Pṛṣṭhapālasūtra of the Dīrghāgama in Context*. Wien: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 2013.

Stuart, *Less Traveled Path*

———, *A Less Traveled Path:* Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra *Chapter 2: Critically edited with a Study on its Structure and Significance for the Development of Buddhist Meditation*, 2 vols. Beijing, Vienna: China Tibetology Publishing House and Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2015.

Vetter 1988

Tilmann Vetter, *The Ideas and Meditative Practices of Early Buddhism*. Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1988.

Tournier 2014

Vincent Tournier, "Mahākāśyapa, His Lineage, and the Wish for Buddhahood: Reading Anew the Bodhgayā Inscriptions of Mahānāman", *Indo-Iranian Journal* 57 (2014), 1–60.

Waldschmidt 1980

Ernst Waldschmidt, "Central Asian Sūtra Fragments and their Relation to the Chinese Āgamas", in Heinz Bechert (ed.), *Die Sprache der ältesten buddhistischen Überlieferung: The Language of the Earliest Buddhist Tradition*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck und Ruprecht, 1980, pp. 136–174.

Weller 1935

Friedrich Weller, "Das tibetische Brahmajālasūtra", *Zeitschrift für Indologie und Iranistik* 10 (1935), 1–61.

Wynne 2007

Alexander Wynne, *The Origin of Buddhist Meditation*. London: Routledge, 2007.

Yit 2004

Kin Tung Yit, *A Study of a Standard Path-structure in Early Buddhist Literature: A Comparative Study of the Pāli, Chinese and Sanskrit Sources*. Ph.D. Diss., University of Bristol, 2004.

Zafiropulo 1993

Ghiorgo Zafiropulo, *L'Illumination du Buddha de la quête à l'annonce de l'éveil: Essais de chronologie relative et de stratigraphie textuelle*. Innsbruck: Institut für Sprachwissenschaft der Universität Innsbruck, 1993.

Zhang 2004

Lixiang Zhang, *Das Śaṃkara-sūtra: Eine Übersetzung des Sanskrit-Textes im Vergleich mit der Pāli Fassung*. MA Thesis, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München, 2004.

Chapter II

The Story of the Path: Indian *Jātaka* Literature and the Way to Buddhahood

Naomi Appleton, University of Edinburgh

1. Introduction

In the commentator's preface to the *Jātakatthavaṇṇanā*, which probably dates to the fifth or sixth century CE, we hear that *jātaka* stories are tales "in which the Teacher, the Leader, desirous of carrying the world across, brought to fruition over a long time the endless conditions for awakening" (*yāni yesu ciraṃ Satthā lokanittharaṇatthiko | anante bodhisambhāre paripācesi nāyako*[1]) and that the text illuminates "the unimaginable magnificence of the deeds of a Great Man" (*mahāpurisacariyānaṃ ānubhāvaṃ acintiyaṃ*[2]). We might, therefore, expect this monumental Pāli collection to illustrate the Buddha's path to buddhahood and his pursuit of the perfections that come to be inseparable from discussions of this path. However, we do not have to read many of the 547 stories of the collection before we notice a discrepancy: few of the stories are presented as being about progress on a path, the perfections are barely mentioned, and the stories are not ordered chronologically either in terms of the stories of the past or the frame narratives that are set in the teaching career of the Buddha.

As I argued in my 2010 book *Jātaka Stories in Theravāda Buddhism*, evidence suggests that *jātaka*s were not actually composed as part of a multi-life biography, nor as an illustration of a path. Rather, the earliest stories in Pāli texts, embedded in *sutta* and *vinaya*, tend to highlight the inferiority of the Bodhisatta compared to the Buddha. For example, the Bodhisatta teach-

1 Fausbøll vol. 1, 1

2 Idem.

Cristina Pecchia and Vincent Eltschinger (eds.), *Mārga. Paths to Liberation in South Asian Buddhist Traditions.* Papers from an international symposium held at the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, December 17 – 18, 2015. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2020, pp. 79–98.

es the way to the heavens, while the Buddha teaches the way to *nibbāna*.[3] As *jātaka*s were collected together into the great Pāli *jātaka* book, this emphasis on the Buddha—rather than the Bodhisatta or his path—remains, in declarations of the Buddha's ability to see and reveal past lives, and to tell the right story for every occasion. The Buddha is presented as storyteller *par excellence*, visionary, teacher, and participant in (or observer of) every heroic tale known to the community.[4] Only later was this collection reframed as exemplifying the Buddha's long path and his acquisition of the ten perfections.[5] The preface of the *Jātakatthavaṇṇanā*, therefore, represents the end of a process of development in understanding the *jātaka* genre.

Although this understanding of the *jātaka* genre as illustrative of the Buddha's path did not develop until after the initial collecting together of the stories that later became the *Jātakatthavaṇṇanā*, the definition has nonetheless been very influential. It interplayed in complex ways with developing notions of the *bodhisatta* path and the nature of buddhahood in the Pāli *imaginaire*.[6] It also participated in the rising emphasis on biographical accounts of varying kinds (including *apadāna*s and *vaṃsa*s), and influenced the ways in which other *jātaka* texts framed themselves.[7] For example, the *Cariyāpiṭaka*, a late-canonical Pāli scripture, uses the idea of *jātaka* stories as illustrative of the path to frame its retelling of several stories according to the perfection demonstrated, though the late—and much missed—Lance Cousins long ago demonstrated that the authors were working with a different list of perfections to the ten that became the standard in Pāli tradition.[8] More famously, the final ten stories of the *Jātakatthavaṇṇanā*, which to-

---

3 Appleton 2010: 47–51.

4 Appleton 2015a.

5 Appleton 2010: 53–64.

6 Ibid.: 85–108. To use Steven Collins' term, which has become the norm in the study of Pāli Buddhism.

7 Ibid.: 109–122.

8 In an unpublished conference paper that he shared with me in discussion, Cousins argued that the list of perfections demonstrated in the *Cariyāpiṭaka* (*dāna*, *sīla*, *adhiṭṭhāna*, *sacca*, *mettā*, *upekkhā*, and perhaps *nekkhamma*) may have been combined with the list of six common in Sanskrit literature (*dāna*, *śīla*, *kṣānti*, *vīrya*, *samādhi/dhyāna* [which becomes *nekkhamma*] and *prajñā*) to make the list of ten that became standard in the Pāli tradition. See the discussion in Appleton 2010: 98–103.

gether make up the *Mahānipāta* or "Great Chapter", have become associated with the ten perfections, and are traditionally understood to narrate the final ten lives of the Buddha. This tradition exists, despite the fact that the ordering of the stories of the *Jātakatthavaṇṇanā* is based on the number of verses contained within each story, and there is no real sense of chronology in the collection as a whole.[9]

In this paper I would like to step outside this Pāli milieu and broaden my study of the generic conventions of *jātaka* stories to other Indian Buddhist texts, asking to what extent the idea that *jātaka*s are illustrative of a path has influenced their presentation and reception. For the purposes of this paper I understand a *jātaka* to be a story of a past life of the Buddha, and refer to stories of this definition as *jātaka*s regardless of whether or not they are called such in the text, though the latter distinction receives some comment during the course of my discussion. Although this paper forms part of a longer project to understand the *jātaka* genre as it varies across early South Asian texts and contexts, I will limit my comments herein to three important narrative collections from early India, namely the *Jātakamālā*, the *Avadānaśataka* and the *Mahāvastu*, comparing these to one another and to the Pāli tradition that I have just outlined. For each of these textual collections I will be asking two interrelated questions relevant to this volume: (1) To what extent are *jātaka*s used to demonstrate the Buddha's own path to buddhahood? (2) Where this is the case, to what extent is this path deemed to be exemplary and suitable for others to follow? These questions are, of course, closely related to the tension in early Buddhism between advocates of the *bodhisattva* path, and those who understood that it was possible to achieve another form of awakening thanks to the great benefits brought by the extraordinary Buddha.

---

[9] For example, the first story of the *Mahānipāta*, the *Mūgapakkha-jātaka* or *Temiya-jātaka*, begins with the Bodhisatta recalling a recent past birth in a hell, which would be impossible according to later understandings of the *bodhisatta* path. Nonetheless, the high place of these ten stories is not arbitrary: after all, at some stage a decision was made to preserve them at a far greater length than others in the collection. For a discussion of the developing traditions surrounding the *Mahānipāta* stories, see the introduction to Appleton and Shaw (trans.) 2015.

2. *Jātakamālā*

A well-known collection of *jātaka* stories, renowned for its elegance, is the *Jātakamālā* of Ārya Śūra, a collection of thirty-four stories retold in Sanskrit prose and verse dating from around the fourth century CE. Thirty of the stories have parallels in the Pāli collection, in some cases sharing whole verses and phrases, suggesting a common source. Of the four stories that do not have a Pāli parallel (1, 8, 18, 30), three relate the bodily sacrifice of the Bodhisattva, a theme not prominent in the Pāli collection; these include the famous story of the hungry tigress with which the collection begins. The basis on which the stories were selected or grouped and ordered is not made explicit. Although later traditions record that Ārya Śūra intended to write one hundred *jātaka*s, ten illustrating each of the ten perfections,[10] there is little indication that this is the case, and indeed the word perfection (*pāramī* or *pāramitā*) does not feature in the text. However, certain of those qualities that we know from lists of perfections—whether from the list of six that became associated with the Mahāyāna or the ten of the standard Pāli tradition—do feature, with *dāna* (generosity), *śīla* (good conduct) and *kṣānti* (forbearance) having particular prominence. The first ten stories of the collection address *dāna*, with smaller clusters focusing on, for example, the power of truth (14–16), or the importance of renunciation (18–21).

An important hint at the purpose of the *Jātakamālā* is found in the four-verse prologue, in which Ārya Śūra states he wishes his poem to celebrate "the glorious deeds performed by the sage in his previous births" (*pūrvaprajanmasu muneś caritādbhutāni*; 1.1), and follows by saying that "these deeds have become the signposts by which the way to buddhahood is pointed out" (*ślāghyair amībhir abhilakṣitacihnabhūtair ādeśito bhavati yat sugatatvamārgaḥ*; 1.2). Ārya Śūra thus appears to understand the *jātaka* genre as demonstrating the amazing multi-life path of the Buddha. The celebration of his past lives pays honour to the Buddha's great achievements, but it also outlines a path, albeit not one with any obvious chronology or progression, and it thus implicitly seems possible—even desirable—that others follow in the Buddha's footsteps. However, later in the same introductory stanzas the Buddha's actions are also described as being without peer or

[10] This tradition, which is found in Tibetan and Mongolian sources, is discussed in Khoroche's introduction to his translation, pp. xi–xii.

"inimitable" (*naivānvagamyata*; 1.4), and Ārya Śūra offers homage to "the one without equal" (*tam asamaṃ*; 1.4).

These introductory verses to the *Jātakamālā* thus provide us with a helpful starting point for our exploration, for they demonstrate a key tension that is present even when *jātaka* stories are understood to illustrate a path. On the one hand, the stories are understood as demonstrating how amazingly wonderful and perfect the Buddha is—and has been in past lives too. As such he is lauded as inimitable and worthy of praise and awe. However, on the other hand the stories are understood as constituting a path that serves explicitly or implicitly as a model for Buddhists to aspire to. This tension is present in some of our other *jātaka* texts too, as we will shortly see.

3. *Avadānaśataka*

The next text that I would like to explore is the *Avadānaśataka*, a collection of one hundred stories in Sanskrit, mostly prose (with some verses), dating from perhaps the second to fourth centuries CE and probably aligned with the Sarvāstivāda or Mūlasarvāstivāda school. The collection is divided into ten decades of ten stories each, and two of these decades—the second and fourth—contain stories of the Buddha's past lives, though these are not explicitly labelled *jātaka* stories. As I explored in a recent article,[11] these two decades contain very different understandings of the *jātaka* genre. In many ways these two generic types further illustrate the tension we just identified in the *Jātakamālā*.

The stories of the second decade all begin with a situation—usually some great act of praise or service for the Buddha—that puzzles the monks. In order to explain, the Buddha tells a story of the time of a past *buddha*, and of some person in the past who performs some act of service towards this *buddha*; this person is then revealed to be none other than the present Buddha. For example, the Buddha's praise of a past *buddha* led to him being praised, and the Buddha's offering of a boat ride to a past *buddha* led to him receiving one. In the concluding formulae to each of these stories, the Buddha explains the fruiting of deeds and exhorts his monks to pay honour to their teacher.

In contrast to the second decade, the stories of the fourth decade tell of

[11] Appleton 2015b. I revisit and further develop some of these questions in relation to the notion of buddhahood in a forthcoming book on the first four chapters of the text: Appleton 2020.

the Buddha's impressive actions in a past time uninhabited by past *buddha*s. For example, story 31 begins with the monks being troubled by illness, while the Buddha remains perfectly healthy. When they express wonder at this he tells of how in the past he had been a king who was so determined to cure an epidemic amongst his citizens that he killed himself in order to be reborn as a great curative fish, and then allowed the citizens to eat him alive. The Buddha concludes by teaching that the monks should cultivate compassion towards all beings. The other stories of the fourth decade contain similar events: the surprise of the monks at some peculiar situation or unexpected teaching is met with a story of the Bodhisattva's extraordinary actions in the past. Each story ends with a different moral teaching, but the overall message is that the monks should emulate the Bodhisattva's great qualities, which include generosity, compassion, friendliness, merit, reverence for the *dharma*, and respect for one's parents.

Neither decade of the *Avadānaśataka* that contains *jātaka*s presents a chronological path or any sense of progression towards buddhahood, indeed there is no obvious ordering principle within any of the decades. The six perfections are not mentioned at all in the fourth decade, and only appear in the second decade stories in a formulaic list of the accomplishments of a *buddha*. (They also appear elsewhere in the text in the same formula, as well as in predictions of future buddhahood in another chapter.[12]) The Buddha-to-be is also not generally referred to as a *bodhisattva*, but only called such at certain points in four tales of the fourth decade (stories 31, 36, 37 and 38). It is therefore difficult to see the stories as illustrative of the *bodhisattva* path, though there is evidence that some of the Buddha's actions were considered exemplary for Buddhist audiences.

Perhaps the most interesting difference between the two decades is that in the fourth decade the Buddha's followers are exhorted to follow his example, while in the second decade they are told to take the stories as a reason to praise, honour and entrust themselves to the Buddha and his teachings. Once again we see the central tension that is present in many *jātaka* texts, between the stories as illustrating the glorious and awe-inspiring path of the Buddha, and the idea that this path can—and should—be emulated by the Buddha's followers. Strikingly, in this text it is extreme stories of bodily sacrifice—

[12] Predictions of buddhahood are found in stories 1–10 and 20. The numerical list of the accomplishments of a *buddha* is found in stories 13, 14, 15, 17, 18, 23, 50, 56, 79, 80, 81, 92.

such as jumping into an oven in return for a verse of the *dharma*, or dying in the act of saving one's herd—that are said to inspire emulation, while the stories of simple gifts to *buddha*s of the past inspire praise and faith.

Whatever their differences, all twenty of the *jātaka* stories of the *Avadāna-śataka* are *avadāna*s; indeed, the stories are not called *jātaka*s at all in the text and need to be viewed within the generic concerns of the *avadāna*. In accordance with the understanding of the *avadāna* genre in this text (which is not necessarily consistent with other texts and contexts), the stories are primarily concerned with the workings of karma.[13] As such, we might ask what the stories tell us about the relationship between the Buddha's path and karmic fruition. Many of the stories demonstrate how the honour and service received by the Buddha results from similar acts of service performed by him for past *buddha*s in previous lives. In addition, two stories (36 and 39) show the Buddha-to-be doing bad deeds in the past, and while in the former he experiences the fruits in a hell realm, in the latter he at least appears to experience the negative karmic fruition in his final life.[14] That karmic merit is relevant even to *buddha*s is further reinforced by the frame story of number 34, the tale of the ever-generous King Śibi. In this delightful little narrative, a monk is struggling to thread a needle in order to mend his robe and cries out in frustration, "Who in the world desires merit?" (*ko loke puṇyakāma iti*; 182–3) to which the Buddha, who happens to be passing, responds that he does. When the monk, somewhat flustered, points out that the Buddha has accumulated the six perfections over innumerable aeons, the Buddha insists that he is never satiated (*tṛpta*) with merit. Thus the *Avadānaśataka* makes clear that even *buddha*s are affected by karmic merit (and, perhaps, demerit) and that the pursuit of merit is not made irrelevant by the pursuit of the perfections or the achievement of awakening.

Thus if we learn something about the path to buddhahood from the *jātaka*s of the *Avadānaśataka* it is that it involves merit. This merit may result from

---

13 The majority of stories explain the great benefits of acts of merit, often with a formulaic combination of gift plus vow. For a helpful exploration of the "rupalogical" and "dharmalogical" dimensions of these acts of merit, see Strong 1979.

14 In *Avadānaśataka* 39 the Buddha is prevented from crossing a line in the sand until Anāthapiṇḍada discharges a debt on his behalf. This is because in a past life the Buddha-to-be gave surety for Anāthapiṇḍada's gambling debt but never paid it. However, the wording of the text leaves it ambiguous as to whether or not the Buddha *chose* to be bound by his debt, in order to teach about the consequences of deeds. See further discussion in Appleton 2015b.

positive encounters with *buddha*s of the past, as in the stories of the second decade, or from actions carried out in a time with no *buddha*s. The emphasis of these stories may be on the connection between past and present, rather than on a chronological or systematic path, yet the tales do still exemplify something of the route to buddhahood. And those of the fourth decade at least encourage others to emulate the virtuous deeds of the Bodhisattva.

4. *Mahāvastu*

We have now seen two early Sanskrit texts that present *jātaka* stories as in some way illustrating the path to buddhahood, whether for the purpose of inspiring awe or encouraging emulation, or a potentially paradoxical mixture of both. However, we would be wrong to conclude that this is the mainstream understanding of the *jātaka* genre amongst early Buddhist communities. As I have already mentioned, the understanding of the *jātaka*s as illustrating the path to buddhahood was only applied in the later layers of the Pāli *jātaka* literature, while earlier layers highlighted the greatness of the Buddha as being far superior to his past lives, and as being the source of all stories and participant in all heroic tales. Another text that uses *jātaka*s to comment on the Buddha's "present" life is the *Mahāvastu*, a broadly biographical and buddhological composition in Buddhist Sanskrit prose and verse from the first half of the first millennium CE that once formed part of the *vinaya* of the Lokottaravādin School.[15] The text is tricky to navigate, containing an exploration of the ten *bhūmi*s, the life of Dīpaṅkara Buddha, and the life of Śākyamuni Buddha including his early community.

There are 41 stories labelled as *jātaka*s in the *Mahāvastu*, and a few others that would certainly count as such but are not given that label, and many of these resonate with tales found in the *Jātakatthavaṇṇanā*. The reason given for telling the stories varies, as does the form each *jātaka* takes, though the basic structure that puts them in the mouth of the Buddha and ends with him identifying the births is recognisably standard. These *jātaka* stories are not ordered as a prelude to the Buddha's final life, and not presented as illustrative of his path. Instead, they are told during the account of the Buddha's final life, in order to illustrate how apparently curious experiences are either explained by or paralleled in his past lives. For example, a cluster

[15] For the latest scholarship on the history of the text and its contents, see Tournier 2012 and 2017.

of eight *jātaka* stories surround his wooing of his wife Yaśodharā in the past (*Mahāvastu* 2.48–72 and 82–115), in parallel to his present-life experiences.[16] Another two clusters of four stories, including the longest *jātaka* contained in the *Mahāvastu*,[17] illustrate Māra's multiple attempts to destroy the Buddha in his past lives, and the latter's repeated escape (*Mahāvastu* 2.237–55 and 2.419–3.33). Some of the *jātaka*s, especially those that feature later on in the Buddha's life story, show the Buddha-to-be performing *bodhisattva*-like actions, such as sacrificing himself in return for a verse of teaching (*Surūpa-jātaka*, *Mahāvastu* 2.255–257), speaking in praise of merit (*Puṇyavanta-jātaka*, *Mahāvastu* 3.33–41) or crossing an illusory hell pit in order to fulfil a gift (*Vijitāvin-jātaka*, *Mahāvastu* 3.41–47). However, such stories are not the majority, and neither are they integrated into any presentation of a path; indeed, even these tales are framed as parallels to the present, to show how the Buddha also valued the teachings or spoke in praise of good deeds in the past.[18]

In addition to showing how "present" experiences have happened in the past too, another key motivation for these *jātaka* stories is explaining something in the karmic history of somebody that the Buddha has encountered, and a few of the *Mahāvastu jātaka*s are really about other characters altogether. Indeed, four of the stories that are explicitly labelled *jātaka*s do not even feature the Buddha in the identification of the births.[19] In addition, there

---

[16] A few later stories also address this theme, indeed more than a quarter of the *jātaka* stories overall focus on the Buddha's relationship with his wife, with only one suggesting his indifference to her: the Śyāmā-jātaka, told during the account of the Buddha's renunciation (*Mahāvastu* 2.166-177).

[17] The *Kuśa-jātaka*, which is recounted twice, in prose (*Mahāvastu* 2.419-96) and then verse (3.1-27). The first is introduced as being another occasion on which Māra's army was routed by the Buddha's cough, though there are many other preoccupations at play in the story, especially once we reach the verse version.

[18] Rahula (1978: 91) states that the majority of the *jātaka*s of the *Mahāvastu* are about the qualities of the Bodhisattva. It is true that the stories tend to paint the Buddha-to-be in a fairly positive light, but the focus is usually on a repeated action, and many of these are rather mundane. Thus although it is possible to say they are about the qualities of "the Bodhisattva", meaning the Buddha in his past lives, we cannot really say they are about the qualities of "a *bodhisattva*".

[19] The *Anaṅgaṇa-jātaka* (2.271-276) explains the karmic merit acquired by the householder Jyotiṣka during his past life as a merchant named Anaṅgaṇa. The first of the two *jātaka*s of Ajñāta Kauṇḍinya (3.347-349) explains what meritorious deed allowed him to be the first to learn the *dharma*. The *Yaśoda-jātaka* (3.413-415) tells

is little sign of the perfections here, with the six together only mentioned once, in a comment about the qualities of all *buddha*s (*Mahāvastu* 3.226), the perfection of wisdom mentioned twice (*Mahāvastu* 1.170; 3.67), and a single mention each of the perfections of generosity (*Mahāvastu* 1.102) and forbearance (*Mahāvastu* 2.368).

These observations about the place of the *jātaka* stories in the *Mahāvastu* will not be surprising to anybody familiar with the *Jātakatthavaṇṇanā*, for there too we barely hear of the perfections, and we see little notion of the *jātaka*s functioning as part of the preparation for buddhahood. That is not to say that the *jātaka*s in the *Jātakatthavaṇṇanā* and *Mahāvastu* do not have biographical agendas, of course, but there is little sense of a path, exemplary or otherwise, and the stories function primarily to augment the final-life biography of the Buddha and demonstrate his skills as visionary and teacher.

In addition to the forty-something *jātaka* tales that are found in the narration of the Buddha's final life, however, there are two other types of *jātaka* tale in the *Mahāvastu*, albeit not labelled as such. The first is found in discussions of the four stages of the path to buddhahood, which are exemplified through tales of different past existences of Śākyamuni Buddha. We learn that during the "ordinary" stage of his *bodhisattva* career (*prakṛticaryā*), the person who would later become Śākyamuni was a universal emperor who planted the necessary roots of merit during the time of the Buddha Aparājitadhvaja. In the time of another past *buddha*, known as Śākyamuni, the one who would become the Śākyamuni Buddha of our time made his first vow during a lifetime as a merchant caravan leader, marking the "resolving" or "vowing" stage of his career (*praṇidhānacaryā*). The third stage, in which he was "conforming" to his vow (*anulomacaryā*), is marked by his birth as a universal emperor in the time of the Buddha Samitāvin. And the final stage, in which his progress became irreversible (*anivartanacaryā*), involves the Bodhisattva's vow and confirmation at the feet of the Buddha Dīpaṅkara. Each of these past lives is recounted in varying levels of detail during the opening portion of the *Mahāvastu*, as are several others in which the Bodhisattva made offerings to *buddha*s of the past and repeated his vow. These stories are

---

of Yaśoda's gift to a *pratyekabuddha* in the past, which earned him the ability to master the powers. The *jātaka* of the three Kāśyapas (3.432-434) is told to explain the good karmic roots planted by these important converts during the time of a past *buddha*. In all cases the stories might be more aptly labelled *avadāna*s.

reminiscent of the formulaic stories found in the Pāli *Buddhavaṃsa*, as well as resonating with the second decade of the *Avadānaśataka*.

The third type of *jātaka* found in the *Mahāvastu* is found in the explanation of the ten *bhūmi*s that follows the discussion of the four stages. Most of the *bhūmi*s are explained in general terms, but a few contain stories of Śākyamuni Buddha's past-life exploits. Thus in the section on the third *bhūmi* we find eight very short accounts of occasions on which the Bodhisattva gave extraordinary gifts in return for a verse of wisdom (*subhāṣitā gāthā*), followed by four more references to general actions he carried out to that end, making twelve allusions in total (*Mahāvastu* 1.91–95). All these examples are provided in order to illustrate the general principle that *bodhisattva*s in this stage will do anything to acquire nuggets of wisdom.[20] Similarly, in the account of the fifth *bhūmi* we hear of ten past *buddha*s who were honoured by the Bodhisattva during this stage of his own career (*Mahāvastu* 1.111–120). The formulaic accounts of a gift plus a vow are reminiscent of the earlier discussion of the four stages. Five more *jātaka* tales are recounted during the discussion of the seventh *bhūmi* to illustrate how *bodhisattva*s of this stage constantly teach against killing (*Mahāvastu* 1.128–133).

The *jātaka*s that are alluded to or (briefly) recounted during the discussion of the four stages and ten *bhūmi*s are clearly considered to exemplify the path of a *bodhisattva*. Śākyamuni Buddha is taken as the central example, and his relations to past *buddha*s and extraordinary acts of commitment to his path demonstrate both his awesome qualities and his place in a long lineage of similarly awesome beings.[21] These stories are not labelled as *jātaka*s, however, unlike the stories that are told to explain or parallel events in the Buddha's final life. Intriguingly, during the discussion of the fourth *bhūmi* the elder monk Mahā-Kātyāyana informs his fellow monk Kāśyapa that "the *jātaka* stories told by the Conqueror apply to the eighth *bhūmi* onwards" (*jātakāni jinabhāṣitāni imāṃ aṣṭamāṃ bhūmīṃ prapadyanti*, *Mahāvastu* 1.105). Although this might be taken to indicate that the stories recounted in discussions of the third, fourth and seventh *bhūmi*s are not considered

[20] A similar sentiment is behind *Avadānaśataka* 35 and 38, and indeed number 35, the story of Surūpa, is alluded to directly in this passage of the *Mahāvastu*.

[21] Indeed, one might see the *Mahāvastu* as being structured around the placing of Śākyamuni in his lineage, most explicitly making the comparison between Śākyamuni and Dīpaṅkara, thereby demonstrating that *buddha*s can be emulated, if only by other *buddha*s.

*jātaka*s, an inconsistency remains, for in the same passage he states that "beginning in the eighth *bhūmi*, *bodhisattva*s renounce all their belongings and make difficult sacrifices" (*aṣṭamāṃ bhūmiṃ prabhṛti … bodhisatvāḥ sarvasvapariyāgāṃś ca parityajanti duṣkaraparityāgāṃś ca kurvanti, Mahāvastu* 1.105), yet we have already heard about the impressive acts of sacrifice performed by the Bodhisattva in exchange for a teaching in the third *bhūmi*.

That there is some inconsistency in the presentation of *jātaka* stories should not surprise us by this point in our enquiries. The *Mahāvastu* adds to the evidence already explored that there are multiple ideas about the function of the Buddha's past life stories in early Indian Buddhism. Even within this single—albeit long and complex—text, we find several distinct emphases. The stories that are called *jātaka*s tend to mirror or explain events in the final life of the Buddha, ignoring any ideas of progress or chronology or the path to buddhahood. Another set of stories about the Buddha's encounters with *buddha*s of the past are told to illustrate the long career of a *bodhisattva*, involving as it does the repetition of a vow at the feet of an extensive lineage of perfected beings. In addition, some stories are told about Śākyamuni Bodhisattva's exemplary deeds in the past, occasionally in times without other *buddha*s present, in order to illustrate the qualities of *bodhisattva*s at various stages in their career. As in the *Avadānaśataka*, interactions with past *buddha*s tend to involve straightforward acts of giving or service, while the more extreme acts of self-sacrifice are reserved for times without a *buddha* present.

The *Mahāvastu*, being a complex and many-layered text, thus provides us with three different rationales for *jātaka* stories, only two of which associate the stories with the path to buddhahood. These two types, involving gifts to past *buddha*s and extraordinary acts on the *bodhisattva* path, mirror the two decades of the *Avadānaśataka*, as well as the distinction between the *Buddhavaṃsa* and the *Cariyāpiṭaka* in the Pāli tradition. Given the absence of *buddha*s in our own world at present, we might assume, as the *Avadānaśataka* suggests, that it is those stories set in a time with no past *buddha*s, in which the Bodhisattva performs amazing acts of self-sacrifice, that should inspire emulation by Buddhists.

5. Conclusion

What can we learn from these rather different presentations of *jātaka* stories? On a very basic level we are reminded that the *jātaka* genre varied in

use both within texts and across different texts, and that generic associations evolved over time. The earliest examples we have of *jātaka* stories in Pāli and Sanskrit suggest that the stories were not initially told as illustrative of a path, and certainly not associated with a regular list of "perfections" that needed to be fulfilled in order to attain buddhahood. Rather, it would appear that many of the Buddhists who compiled and preserved *jātaka* stories in the early period were less interested in the path to buddhahood, and more interested in glorifying their Buddha, as master storyteller, who overcame his karmic bonds, who served many *buddha*s in the past, and who can see all past lives of himself and others.

That said, the genre still tells us something rather interesting about developing understandings of the Buddha's long career. The *Jātakamālā* presents *jātaka* tales as illustrative of the great qualities of the Buddha in his past lives, implying at least the possibility of emulation by Buddhists, alongside their awe at the Buddha's magnificent deeds. The *Avadānaśataka* separates these two responses: the second decade stories suggest that the appropriate audience response is to praise the Buddha and to live in reliance upon him, while the tales of the fourth decade advocate emulation of the Buddha's deeds. These exemplary deeds include extraordinary acts of sacrifice and compassion, in contrast to the simple acts of service to *buddha*s of the past found in the second decade. The *Mahāvastu*, meanwhile, contains *jātaka* stories (and references to *jātaka* stories) in its discussion of the path to buddhahood, to demonstrate both the Buddha's interactions with *buddha*s of the past and his great deeds at different stages of the path. In neither the *Avadānaśataka* nor the *Mahāvastu*, however, are these stories labelled as *jātaka* tales, while those stories that are labelled as such in the *Mahāvastu* show little concern for illustrating a path.

There are several intertwined conclusions to be drawn from this diversity. First of all, we must address the question of labels. Why, we must ask, do some stories of the Buddha's past lives get preserved with a label other than *jātaka*? In relation to the *Avadānaśataka* the answer can be straightforward: the text is a collection of *avadāna*s, or karmic consequence tales, and so all the stories are labelled according to that over-arching identification. However, when we look at the *Mahāvastu* we see that this assessment may be too simple. It is notable that in the *Mahāvastu* it is those stories that share their form—and, often, their content—with parallels in the *Jātakatthavaṇṇanā* that are labelled *jātaka*s. The form in this case requires a story to be told by the Buddha about a time in the past without any *buddha*s and with an identi-

fication of his character at the end. It may be significant that the two stories that are told by someone other than the Buddha about his past lives are not labelled *jātaka*.[22] Although this might be taken to indicate a reasonably established generic understanding of a *jātaka*—one shared with the Pāli tradition—the four *Mahāvastu* stories that are labelled *jātaka*s but do not feature the Buddha suggest otherwise. In any case, of course, we cannot be certain when these labels were appended to the stories. Nonetheless the labels help us to trace the different types of story told of the Buddha's past lives and the different place they might have in relating his path.

Closely related to this, we must be mindful of the distinction between stories in which past *buddha*s are present and those in which they are absent, for this appears to be a very important distinction within the early Indian texts. When the Buddha-to-be meets a *buddha* of the past, he usually engages in an act of service or makes an offering, and often this is accompanied by a vow, which in turn is often confirmed by a prediction made by the past *buddha*. This formula is familiar not only from the Sanskrit texts examined above (though in the *Avadānaśataka* a vow is only found in three of the ten stories), but also from the Pāli *Buddhavaṃsa*, which also forms the basis for the biographical preface to the *Jātakatthavaṇṇanā*, known as the *Nidānakathā*. From an early period we see these tales carefully establishing the Buddha in a long auspicious lineage, with the many *buddha*s of the past often named. In contrast, in times without a past *buddha* the Buddha-to-be often demonstrates more extraordinary virtues, such as sacrificing himself out of compassion for others or in exchange for teachings.

I am not, of course, the first to notice this distinction. Frank E. Reynolds laid out the two types as providing two different lineages of the Buddha in a 1997 article, for example, and John S. Strong built on this in his exploration of the Buddha's role in ending (and transforming) lineages.[23] For Strong, *jātaka*s in which the Bodhisattva serves past *buddha*s exhibit "chronology without progression", whereas the stories without *buddha*s provide us with "progression without chronology".[24] While this is a helpful observation that certainly has currency in some textual collections, it does not map very

[22] *Mahāvastu* 1.267-70 has the story of past relations between the Buddha and the brahmin Vāgīśa, told by the latter; 3.204-224 has the tale of the Buddha's past life as Mahāgovinda, partly related by Pañcaśikha, who has heard it from Brahmā.

[23] Reynolds 1997; Strong 2011.

[24] Ibid., 2011: 181.

neatly onto either the *Avadānaśataka* or *Mahāvastu*. As I have discussed in greater detail elsewhere[25] none of the stories of the *Avadānaśataka* exhibit any sense of chronology, and neither do they show much interest in the Bodhisattva's progress towards buddhahood. In the *Mahāvastu*, in contrast, there is a fairly clear chronology in those stories that are found in explications of the stages of the *bodhisattva* path, and there is also a general sense of progress along the path, regardless of whether or not there are past *buddha*s present. The *jātaka*s that feature in the Buddha's final-life story, however, are concerned with neither chronology nor progress.

Both types of *jātaka*—with and without *buddha*s of the past—can serve to demonstrate the Buddha's path, albeit not in a systematic form, but they may offer different lessons in terms of emulation. As Reiko Ohnuma has commented,[26] the distinction between these two different types of story serves to highlight the great benefits brought by a *buddha*, who activates a powerful field of merit that means it is no longer necessary to give away one's own body. Indeed, the many *avadāna* stories that demonstrate the extraordinary benefits that come from a simple gift to a Buddha or Buddhist object (such as a *stūpa* or Buddha-image) align with the *jātaka*s in which the Buddha himself experiences such benefits.[27] This would imply that Buddhists should emulate the simple acts of service or devotion practiced by the Buddha in, for example, the second decade of the *Avadānaśataka*. Yet it is not these, but rather the more extreme acts of the fourth decade that are presented as worthy of emulation.

Another area of consideration is what it even means to emulate a great deed of the Buddha-to-be. Being inspired to follow the example of the Buddha may not, of course, imply that one has become a *bodhisattva*, for some of the tales allow for the possibility of a weaker form of emulation. Thus in the fourth decade of the *Avadānaśataka* the lesson that is presented to the monks at the end of each story is a general one which does not require extraordinary resolve. For example, after a story of the Bodhisattva giving

---

25 Appleton 2015b: 21

26 Ohnuma 2007: 43.

27 While I find Ohnuma's analysis very valuable, I do not agree with her mapping of these two types of story onto *jātaka* (times of no *buddha*) and *avadāna* (times of merit-making in the dispensation of a *buddha*). As we have seen, the *Avadānaśataka* labels both sorts as *avadāna*s, while the *Buddhavaṃsa* stories were eventually included in the *Jātakatthavaṇṇanā* through the *Nidānakathā*.

away his last mouthful of food the monks are told to give gifts and make merit (*Avadānaśataka* 32), while the Bodhisattva's bodily sacrifice in return for a verse of the *dharma* should inspire the monks to revere the *dharma* (*Avadānaśataka* 35 and 38). As the *Mahāvastu* (1.105) acknowledges, extraordinary acts of sacrifice are only performed by advanced *bodhisattva*s. Emulation may therefore be merely a weak reflection of the Buddha's actions, just as the Bodhisattva's gift of his eyes as King Sivi has inspired Sri Lankan Buddhists to donate their corneas at death.[28] Presenting *jātaka*s as exemplary does not necessarily imply that they are advocating a *bodhisattva* path, though of course this can come into play in some textual contexts. Indeed the placing of Śākyamuni in a lineage of *buddha*s implies both that emulation is possible and that it is rare.

Finally, we might ask whether or not those *jātaka*s that are not presented as exemplary, such as those that pepper the Buddha's final life story in the *Mahāvastu* and many of those in the *Jātakatthavaṇṇanā*, have anything to tell us about Buddhist paths. A repeated refrain from the *Mahāvastu* might give us a clue to how we might interpret such stories. Seven of the *jātaka* stories in this text end with the words: "Thus the Blessed One, free [now] from affliction, fear and sorrow, related in the midst of his community of monks this birth of his, the immeasurably great suffering of the ups and downs of his former conduct."[29] Is the message here that *jātaka* stories illustrate the tedious round of rebirth, the repeated ups and downs of life that bring about suffering? If this is indeed the case, we might see the inclusion of *jātaka* stories in texts that emphasise the eventual liberation of the Buddha (including both the *Mahāvastu* and the *Jātakatthavaṇṇanā*) as using the tales to amplify the importance of that attainment. They are the mundane backdrop from which the Buddha finds escape. As such the stories exemplify *saṃsāra* rather than the path out of it, but in so doing they inspire Buddhists to follow the path taught by the Buddha.[30]

It should now be apparent that there are many different insights that a study of *jātaka* stories can contribute to our understanding of how Buddhist

---

[28] Simpson 2004: 843–847.

[29] *evam idam aparimitaṃ bahuduḥkhaṃ | uccanīcaṃ caritaṃ purāṇaṃ || vigatajvaro vigatabhayo aśoko svajātakaṃ | bhagavāṃ bhāṣati bhikṣusaṃghamadhye ||* – *Mahāvastu* 1.282, 2.94, 2.188, 2.237, 3.26, 3.90 and 3.300.

[30] I make a similar argument in relation to the *Jātakatthavaṇṇanā* in Appleton 2010, 117–118.

paths were conceived of. Stories, as many scholars now acknowledge, have the important ability to *explore* ideas as much as they outline or communicate them. *Jātaka*s are not, of course, the only genre of Buddhist narrative that is used to explore paths—many people have experienced the power of a good story of karmic consequences, for example, or the story of grieving Kisagotamī or the reformed murderer Aṅgulimāla—but the *jātaka* genre is uniquely able to shed light on conceptions of the path to buddhahood. In particular, *jātaka* stories speak to an important question that is central to Buddhist ideology and practice: Is the Buddha's path one that others can follow? The answers to this question may not be straightforward, but they are certainly valuable.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Avadānaśataka

References are to story number or page number in:
J. S. Speyer, ed., *Avadānaçataka*: *A century of edifying tales belonging to the Hīnayāna*. The Hague: Mouton & Co., 1958 [1902–09].
See also:
Appleton 2020 (listed under Secondary Sources below).
Léon Feer, trans., *Avadâna-Çataka: Cent légendes bouddhiques*. Amsterdam: APA-Oriental Press, 1979 [1891].
P. L. Vaidya, ed., *Avadāna-śataka*. Darbhanga: The Mithila Institute, 1958.

Buddhavaṃsa

I. B. Horner, trans., *The Minor Anthologies of the Pali Canon, Part III: Chronicle of Buddhas (Buddhavaṃsa) and Basket of Conduct (Cariyāpiṭaka).* Oxford: Pali Text Society, 1975.
N. A. Jayawickrama, ed., *Buddhavaṃsa and Cariyāpiṭaka.* London: Pali Text Society, 1974.

Cariyāpiṭaka

I. B. Horner, trans., *The Minor Anthologies of the Pali Canon, Part III: Chronicle of Buddhas (Buddhavaṃsa) and Basket of Conduct (Cariyāpiṭaka).* Oxford: Pali Text Society, 1975.

N. A. Jayawickrama, ed., *Buddhavaṃsa and Cariyāpiṭaka.* London: Pali Text Society, 1974.

Jātakamālā

References are to story number or verse numbering as in GRETIL edition of:

P. L. Vaidya, ed., *Jātaka-mālā.* Darbhanga: Mithila Institute, 1959.

See also:

Peter Khoroche, trans., *When the Buddha Was a Monkey:* Ārya Śūra's *Jātakamālā.* Chicago & London: University of Chicago Press, 1989.

J. S. Speyer, ed., *The Jātakamālā: Garland of Birth-Stories of* Āryaśūra (Sacred Books of the Buddhists, vol. 1). London: Henry Frowde, 1895.

Jātakatthavaṇṇanā

References are to story number or volume and page of:

V. Fausbøll, ed., *The Jātaka Together with its Commentary being Tales of the Anterior Births of Gotama Buddha*, 6 vols. London: Trübner & Co., 1877–96.

See also:

Naomi Appleton and Sarah Shaw, trans., *The Ten Great Birth Stories of the Buddha: The Mahānipāta of the Jātakatthavaṇṇanā.* Chiang Mai: Silkworm, 2015.

E. B. Cowell, ed. – several translators, *The Jātaka, or Stories of the Buddha's Former Births*, 6 vols. Cambridge University Press, 1895–1907.

Mahāvastu

References are to volume and page of:

Émile Senart, ed., *Mahāvastu*, 3 vols. Paris: Imprimerie Nationale, 1882–97.

See also:

J. J. Jones, trans., *The Mahāvastu*, 3 vols. London: Luzac & Co., 1949–56.

Secondary Sources

Appleton 2010

Naomi Appleton, *Jātaka Stories in Theravāda Buddhism: Narrating the Bodhisatta Path*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2010.

Appleton 2015a
———, "The Buddha as Storyteller: The Dialogical Setting of Jātaka Stories", in Laurie Patton and Brian Black (eds.), *Dialogue in Early South Asian Religions: Hindu, Buddhist, and Jain Traditions*. Farnham: Ashgate, 2015, pp. 99–112.
Appleton 2015b
———, "The '*Jātaka-avadāna*s' of the *Avadānaśataka*: An Exploration of Indian Buddhist Narrative Genres", *Journal of the International Association for Buddhist Studies* 38 (2015), 9–31.
Appleton 2020
———, *Many Buddhas, One Buddha: A Study and Translation of Avadānaśataka 1–40.* Sheffield: Equinox [forthcoming 2020].
Ohnuma 2007
Reiko Ohnuma, *Head, Eyes, Flesh, and Blood: Giving Away the Body in Indian Buddhist Literature*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007.
Rahula 1978
Telwatte Rahula, *A Critical Study of the Mahāvastu*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidas, 1978.
Reynolds 1997
Frank E. Reynolds, "Rebirth Traditions and the Lineages of Gotama: A Study in Theravāda Buddhology", in Juliane Schober (ed.), *Sacred Biography in the Buddhist Traditions of South and Southeast Asia*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997, pp. 19–39.
Simpson 2004
Bob Simpson, "Impossible Gifts: Bodies, Buddhism and Bioethics in Contemporary Sri Lanka", *The Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute* 10,4 (2004), 839–859.
Strong 1979
John S. Strong, "The Transforming Gift: An Analysis of Devotional Acts of Offering in Buddhist *Avadā*na Literature", *History of Religions* 18,3 (1979), 221–237.
Strong 2011
———, "The Buddha as Ender and Transformer of Lineages", *Religions of South Asia* 5,1–2 (2011), 171–188.

Tournier 2012
Vincent Tournier, "The *Mahāvastu* and the *Vinayapiṭaka* of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādins", *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology* 15 (2012), 87–104.
Tournier 2017
———, *La formation du Mahāvastu.* Paris: EFEO, 2017.

Chapter III

The "*dhyāna*-Master" Aśvaghoṣa on the Path, Mindfulness, and Concentration

Vincent Eltschinger, École Pratique des Hautes Études (EPHE), PSL University (Paris)

In two recent publications, I have attempted to show that Aśvaghoṣa (1st–2nd cent. CE), while composing the *Buddhacarita* (hereafter BC), relied heavily on (Mūla)sarvāstivāda recensions of the biographical sūtras.[1] Even more recently, I have come to the conclusion that the poet was likely familiar with textual materials that, though probably considered Sarvāstivādin in his time, later (?) came to be labelled *Mūla*sarvāstivādin.[2] This may look little surprising given the traditional accounts that consistently portray Aśvaghoṣa as a Sarvāstivādin hierarch ordained by Pārśva (or Pūrṇa/Puṇyayaśas) and/or involved in the redaction of the *Mahāvibhāṣā*. However, since E.H. Johnston, who regarded the poet as a Bahuśrutīya, several scholars have doubted Aśvaghoṣa's Sarvāstivāda affiliation, insisting instead on his doctrinal proximity with Sautrāntika, Dārṣṭāntika and/or Yogācāra ideas. The Yogācāra connection was made especially attractive by the fact that early fifth-century Central Asian and Chinese traditions regarded Aśvaghoṣa as a *dhyāna*-master, a claim plausibly supported by the poet's repeated mentions of Yogācāra(s) in his *Saundarananda* (hereafter SNa). However, there is little doubt that the Sautrāntikas, the Dārṣṭāntikas and the Yogācāras were not ordination lineages, sects or monastic orders in their own right. In other words, they most probably had no independent "canon"—neither a *vinaya* nor *sūtra*s—which means that Aśvaghoṣa could very well have

[1] See Eltschinger 2012 and 2013. Unless otherwise stated, all translations of the BC and the SNa are tacitly borrowed from Johnston 1984 and Johnston 1932, respectively. References are provided in full whenever I have modified Johnston's translation.

[2] See Eltschinger forthcoming a.

Cristina Pecchia and Vincent Eltschinger (eds.), *Mārga. Paths to Liberation in South Asian Buddhist Traditions*. Papers from an international symposium held at the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, December 17 – 18, 2015. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2020, pp. 99–176.

been a (Mūla)sarvāstivādin in terms of monastic lineage *and* an occasional opponent of Sarvāstivāda(/Vaibhāṣika) dogmatics, or the perfectly orthodox representative of a certain (non-Kashmirian?) Sarvāstivāda community that later came to regard itself as Mūlasarvāstivāda.[3] Be that as it may, it has become increasingly clear to me that Aśvaghoṣa was indeed a Sautrāntika *at least in the most literal sense of the expression*, i.e., a specialist of Buddhist sūtra literature[4] who relied on sūtras and reasoning alone and who either criticized Abhidharma dogmatics or remained uncommitted to it. The poet's ideas on the path abundantly confirm this conclusion, showing that, personally committed to Buddhist practice as he may have been according to Chinese traditions, Aśvaghoṣa did not venture beyond sūtra accounts of the path while describing the Buddhist soteric practices.

1. Aśvaghoṣa as a *dhyāna*-Master

1.1. Legendary accounts of Aśvaghoṣa (Bodhisattva) likely reached China before any of his works. One of the earliest Chinese references to Aśvaghoṣa Bodhisattva occurs in Sengzhao's (僧肇, 384–414) commentary on the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa* (hereafter Vkn; T. 1775), which records numerous exegetical explanations by Kumārajīva (344–413). According to the great Kuchean translator, the non-Buddhist Aśvaghoṣa (**tīrthika*, 外道師, T. 1775, 399b12) was converted to Buddhism by Pārśva, who after composing an exegesis of the Threefold Canon (三藏論議, T. 1775, 399b6-7), received and practised the methods of *dhyāna* (禪法, T. 1775, 399b8). Aśvaghoṣa "had sharp faculties, wisdom, […] completely understood all of the scriptures […], was […] greatly eloquent and could refute all arguments"[5]; but when he invited Pārśva to debate with him, the latter remained silent, which eventually led to Aśvaghoṣa's subjugation and subsequent conversion.[6] A fairly similar account appears in the *Tradition of Aśvaghoṣa Bodhisattva* (馬鳴

[3] Note, albeit in a different context, Schmithausen 1987: 340: "denn es spricht, soweit ich sehe, nichts dagegen, daß nur ein Teil der Anhänger der Vinaya-Schule der Mūlasarvāstivādins dogmatisch gesehen Yogācāras war, ein anderer dagegen die Sarvāstivāda-Position vertrat."

[4] See, e.g., BCAP 434,18-435,2 on BCA 9.44.

[5] T. 1775, 399b12-13: 利根智慧一切經書皆悉明練。[…] 有大辯才。能破一切論議。 Translation Young 2015: 46.

[6] On this biographical account, see Lévi 1927: 113–116 and Young 2015: 45–47.

菩薩傳) found at Nanatsu-Dera in Nagoya and which could go back to the time of Kumārajīva.[7] Here, it was Pūrṇa's silence that led to the conversion of the brahmin Aśvaghoṣa by causing him to acknowledge that he had "not yet escaped the fetters of words" (未免於言). In fact, the only writings of Aśvaghoṣa certainly known in China in the first years of the fifth century CE likely were the sixty-five stanzas[8] quoted by Kumārajīva in a manual of *dhyāna* that he compiled upon arriving in Chang'an in 401, the *Dhyāna Essentials of All the Schools* (眾家禪要), alias the *Scripture on Seated Dhyāna Samādhi* (T. 614, 坐禪三昧經).[9] Sengrui (僧睿, 371–438?), one of Kumārajīva's Chinese associates, accompanied his revision of the work (completed early in 407) by a *Preface to the Dhyāna Scriptures Translated within the Passes* (T. 2145, 關中出禪經序). Here is Sengrui's oft-quoted description of Kumārajīva's meditation treatise:

> The first forty-three verses were composed by Kumāralāta. The concluding twenty verses were composed by Aśvaghoṣa Bodhisattva. Therein the five gateways came from among the compiled *Dhyāna Essentials* of Vasumitra, Saṅgharakṣa, Upagupta, Saṅghasena, *bhikṣu* Side (Pārśva), Aśvaghoṣa and Kumāralāta. The verses within the [section on the] six kinds of thought are those cultivated by Aśvaghoṣa Bodhisattva in order to explain these six thoughts. The initial contemplations of the marks of desire, anger and delusion and then of their three gateways were all compiled by Saṅgharakṣa. The six elements of *ānāpānasmṛti* were spoken by all [of these] discourse masters. The middle and latter bodhisattva methods for practicing *dhyāna* were all based on the *Vasudharasūtra* and [used to] augment the *Twelve Causes and Conditions* in one scroll and the *Essential Exposition* in two scrolls, which were compiled and published at another time.[10]

---

7 See Young 2015: 251–263, with bibliographical references to the numerous studies by Ochiai Toshinori 落合俊典 (Young 2015: 316–317).

8 As far as I can judge from Yamabe and Sueki's references (2009, passim), the following stanzas of the SNa are quoted in Kumārajīva's treatise (the BC seems not to be quoted at all): 15.8, 15.9, 15.11-21, 15.31-49, 15.54-62, 15.64, 15.66, 15.67, 16.49-69.

9 For an English translation of this sūtra, see Yamabe/Sueki 2009.

10 T. 2145, 65a28-b6: 初四十三偈。是究摩羅羅陀法師所造。後二十偈。是馬鳴菩薩之所造也。其中五門。是婆須蜜僧伽羅叉漚波崛僧伽斯那勒比丘馬鳴羅陀禪要之中。抄集之所出也。六覺中偈。是馬鳴菩薩修習之。以釋六覺也。初觀婬恚癡相及

Aśvaghoṣa was thus famed as a *dhyāna*-master even before the BC reached China or at least was translated into Chinese (by Dharmarakṣa [385–433] in 420 CE),[11] even though his great skill as a writer might have been already well known by that time.[12] His expertise in *dhyāna* meditation finds another early echo in Huiyuan's (慧遠, 334–416) *Comprehensive Preface on the Cultivation of Expedient Means Translated at Mount Lu* (廬山出修行方便禪經統序). As Huiyuan has it,

> I always grieved that since the great teaching had been disseminated eastward, techniques of *dhyāna* were very rare, the three trainings [of *śīla*, *samādhi*, and *prajñā*?] thus lacked their complete order, and the Way was in danger of dying out. Then Kumārajīva promulgated Aśvaghoṣa's exposition, such that this discipline [of *dhyāna* (*samādhi*)] appeared [in China]. Although his Way has not yet been fully disseminated, [it can eventually be established just as] a mountain starts with but a single basket [of earth]. It is a joyous occasion to encounter this timely arrival, as we can [finally] experience the wondrous purport of such a person. He relinquished his arguments for overcoming [opponents] and instead embraced the wordless teaching. Thereupon he vowed to take on the *saṃnāha* (armor) [of the *bodhisattva*'s resolve to liberate beings], and made it his personal charge to achieve ultimate tranquility (i.e., *nirvāṇa*). Embracing the virtues and never forgetting them, he bequeathed his teachings to this land.[13]

其三門。皆僧伽羅叉之所撰也。息門六事諸論師説也。菩薩習禪法中。後更依持世經益十二因緣一卷要解二卷。別時撰出。 Translation Young 2015: 55. On the scriptures referred to at the end of Sengrui's description, see Young 2015: 55, n. 98, and especially the useful synoptic table in Yamabe/Sueki 2009: xvi–xvii. On this passage, see also Demiéville 1951: 354, n. 2, and Yamabe 1999: 78–79. Kumārajīva also translated Harivarman's **Tattvasiddhi* (T. 1646), which quotes (372a15-16) two verses of Aśvaghoṣa's SNa (16.14 and 15cd). On this quotation, see Johnston 1984, part II: xxxvi–xxvii.

[11] Provided, of course, as everybody seems inclined to accept nowadays, that the 大莊嚴論經 (T. 201) alias **Sūtrālaṅkāra*/**Mahālaṅkāra(śāstra)*, i.e., the *Kalpanāmaṇḍitikā*, is a work by Kumāralāta and not Aśvaghoṣa, a work, moreover, that was never translated by Kumārajīva. See, e.g., Tomomatsu 1931. On traces of a genuine *Sūtrālaṅkāra* of Aśvaghoṣa, see Hanisch 2007.

[12] See Young 2015: 263, and 260–261.

[13] T. 2145, 65c28-66a4: 每慨大教東流禪數尤寡。三業無統斯道殆廢。頃鳩摩耆婆宣

Huiyuan's *Preface* thus also portrays Aśvaghoṣa as a skilled debater who eventually converted to the "wordless teaching" (不言之辯) of the Mahāyāna, thus confirming Mañjuśrī's opinion, in the Vkn, that "all *dharma*s are without words, without explanations, without purport, without cognition, removed from all questions and answers."[14] As Stuart Young points out, then,

> in addition to the conception of Aśvaghoṣa […] according to which he was a master of non-Buddhist learning converted to Buddhism through debate with his silent interlocutor Pārśva (Pūrṇa), as well as a great champion of the True Dharma at a time when the teaching had fallen into decay, Aśvaghoṣa was also seen as a purveyor of *dhyāna* essentials to a Chinese *saṅgha* that had long been deficient in this regard.[15]

1.2. Now of course, Aśvaghoṣa's close relationship to the (predominantly Sarvāstivāda[16]) milieu(x) of meditators (*yogācāra*, SNa 14.19 and 15.68) that eventually gave rise to the Yogācāra tradition(s) and whose representatives composed meditation treatises such as Saṅgharakṣa's *Yogācārabhūmi* (T. 607, T. 606) has long been recognised. But as scholars such as Harada Wasō 原田和宗, Honjō Yoshifumi 本庄良文 and Yamabe Nobuyoshi 山部能宜 have noted, these early Yogācāras were at times also very critical of Sarvāstivāda orthodoxy. This can be seen from Kumārajīva's *Scripture on Seated Dhyāna Samādhi*, which, as pointed out by Yamabe, exhibited

---

馬鳴所述乃有此業。雖其道未融。蓋是爲山於一簣。欣時來之有遇感。寄趣於若人。捨夫制勝之論而順不言之辯。遂誓被僧那。以至寂爲己任。懷德未忘。故遺訓在茲。Translation Young 2015: 58–59. On Huiyuan's *Preface*, see also Demiéville 1951: 396.

14 T. 475, 551c18-19: 於一切法無言無説。無示無識離諸問答。Translation Watson 1997: 110, as quoted in Young 2015: 47. See also Lamotte 1987: 317, and n. 43, pp. 317–318, and Nagao 1955, for useful materials on this "wordless teaching".

15 Young 2015: 57. See also Young 2015: 59.

16 On Sengrui's list of authorities, note Yamabe/Sueki 2009: xvii–xviii: "Most of the authors […] were affiliated with the Sarvāstivāda tradition, though not all of them were faithful to the orthodox tenets of this tradition […] [M]any of the […] masters […] were active in northwestern India. Therefore, by and large the methods described in the Traditional [i.e., non-Mahāyāna, VE] portion of this manual were based on the meditative tradition within the Sarvāstivāda community in that area. Kumārajīva probably based his manual on the meditation methods he learned while he was there." On the Sarvāstivāda connections of early Yogācāra authors, see Demiéville 1951.

significant deviations from Sarvāstivāda orthodoxy. Its negation of pleasant sensation (*sukhā vedanā*, T. 614, 278c12-279a1),[17] for instance, is clearly reminiscent of a Dārṣṭāntika doctrine found in Harivarman's **Tattvasiddhi* (T. 1646, 281c-282c) and fairly well represented in Aśvaghoṣa's BC (11.36 and 39-42) and SNa (9.40 and 17.19).[18] Moreover, Kumārajīva's compilation contained a quotation from the *Paramārthaśūnyatāsūtra* (勝義空性經) to the effect that an entity "did not exist before but now exists; having existed [for the present moment], it will again not exist."[19] This doctrine obviously contradicts the "school's" very name, "Sarvāstivāda," which postulates the existence of the three times. Here again, Aśvaghoṣa's SNa (17.18ab) contains a very similar statement which was already labelled "Sautrāntika" by Johnston (1984, part II: xxv): "Since inevitably in this world all phenomena come into being from not-being and pass away again from being into not-being."[20] As a matter of fact, the above-mentioned Japanese scholars have shown that Aśvaghoṣa's SNa contains several other doctrines that frontally contradict Sarvāstivāda orthodoxy and can be termed "Sautrāntika", "Dārṣṭāntika" and/or "Yogācāra". This is the case of Aśvaghoṣa's interpretation of *anuśaya* in SNa 15.5-6, which states, in Yamabe's translation (2003: 232), that

> [t]he potential (*anuśaya*, i.e., the potential of the *kāma*s) remains, like a fire covered up with ashes. O friend, you should quench that [*anuśaya*] with practice, like fire with water. For those [*kāma*s] arise again from that [*anuśaya*], like sprouts from a seed (*bīja*). [But] those [*kāma*s] would not exist when that [*anuśaya*] is destroyed, as sprouts [do not exist] when the seed is destroyed.[21]

It is well known that, contrary to the Sautrāntikas (AKBh 278, 18-24), the "Sūtrakāra" (T. 1562, 596c24-597a2), the Dārṣṭāntikas (ADīpa 222,3-223,1) and the *Viniścayasaṅgrahaṇī* of the *Yogācārabhūmi* (P *Zi* 118b1-3/T. 1579, 623a22-24), the Vaibhāṣikas did not acknowledge the *anuśaya* as the latent

---

17 See Yamabe/Sueki 2009: 49–50.

18 On this point, see Yamabe 2003: 234–238.

19 T. 614, 279a2-3: 本無今有已有還無. Translation Yamabe 1999: 79–80; see also Yamabe/Sueki 2009: 50. On the *Paramārthaśūnyatāsūtra* and the wording of this sentence, see Yamabe 1999: 80, n. 64.

20 SNa 17.18ab. For the Sanskrit, see below, n. 162.

21 SNa 15.5-6: *tiṣṭhaty anuśayas teṣāṃ channo 'gnir iva bhasmanā | sa te bhāvanayā saumya praśāmyo 'gnir ivāmbunā || te hi tasmāt pravartante bhūyo bījād ivāṅkurāḥ | tasya nāśena te na syur bījanāśād ivāṅkurāḥ ||.*

or "dormant" form of a defilement.[22] Similarly, Aśvaghoṣa's understanding of the *abhūtaparikalpa* and related notions in SNa 13.49-53 (see below, §6.3) bears close affinities with doctrines labelled "Dārṣṭāntika" in the **Nyāyānusāra* (T. 1562, 639b4-10) and the *Mahāvibhāṣā* (T. 1545, 288b16-27) and well represented in Yogācāra sources.[23] Yamabe concludes (2003: 243–244) that

> it seems very likely that Aśvaghoṣa was close to the meditation tradition that later formed the Yogācāra school [and that his] texts contain many points that are akin to the Dārṣṭāntika or Sautrāntika tradition. Further […], many of these Sautrāntika-like elements are also found in the *Yogācārabhūmi*. Considering these points, it appears that the Yogācāra tradition and the Sautrāntika-like elements were almost inseparably interconnected long before the compilation of the *Yogācārabhūmi*. […] The critiques of the orthodox Sarvāstivāda theories transmitted to us as Dārṣṭāntika or Sautrāntika views were perhaps the opinions of more practice-oriented people who found the Sarvāstivāda system at times too artificial to follow. Of course, there would have been variant opinions even among these practice-oriented people, and so it is not surprising that scholars have noticed very different opinions within the Dārṣṭāntika or Sautrāntika tradition.

1.3. If Aśvaghoṣa belonged to this early, pre-Mahāyānistic Yogācāra environment, one may be justified in expecting his ideas on the path to reflect a personal commitment to ethical-behavioural, meditative and soteric practices rather than to consist in a mere arrangement of scriptural materials of a stereotyped character. Before focusing on the poet's ideas on meditative practices, let me deal with his views on the eightfold path (*aṣṭāṅg[ik] amārga*), which possibly reflect yet another deviation from "orthodox" Sarvāstivāda conceptions.

2. The Eightfold Path

2.1. Aśvaghoṣa's understanding of the noble eightfold path confronts us with two important problems from the very outset. For not only do the poet's two accounts of the path look mutually contradictory; they also seem to disagree with the little we know of the (Mūla)sarvāstivāda versions of the eightfold

[22] See Yamabe 2003: 231–234.

[23] See Yamabe 2003: 238–242.

path. In the BC, to begin with, Aśvaghoṣa describes the eightfold path immediately after presenting the Buddha's exposition of the middle way:[24]

> The sun of right views illumines it, the chariot of pure right thought fares along it, the rest-houses (*vihāra*) are right words rightly spoken, and it is gay with a hundred groves of good action. It enjoys the great prosperity (*subhikṣa*) of noble livelihood, and has the army and retinue of right exertion; it is guarded on all sides by the fortifications of right mindfulness and is provided with the bed and seat of concentration. Such in this world is this most excellent eightfold path, by which comes release from death, old age and disease; by passing along it, all is done that has to be done, and there is no further travelling in this world or the next.[25]

This passage apparently presents the eight constituents of the path in the following sequence: (1) insight (*prajñā*, two items: right views [*samyagdṛṣṭi*] and right thought [*samyaksaṅkalpa*]); (2) morality (*śīla*, three items: right speech [*samyagvāc*], right activity [*samyakkarmānta*], right livelihood [*samyagājīva*]); (3) concentration (*samādhi*, three items: right exertion [*samyagvyāyāma*], right mindfulness [*samyaksmṛti*], right concentration [*samyaksamādhi*]). Aśvaghoṣa's second formulation of the eightfold path appears in chapter 16 of the SNa. Here it is in Johnston's translation (slightly modified) and according to the Nepalese manuscript(s):

> The means to attain this end is the path with its threefold insight and double tranquillity. It should be duly cultivated by the prudent man, governing himself by the pure threefold morality. Right action of voice and body and right livelihood, these three, based on morality, should be practised in the department of conduct for the mastery of

---

[24] See BC_{Weller} 15.27-34 (BC_{Tib} D57a4-b4), and Johnston 1984, part III: 11.

[25] BC_{Weller} 15.35-37 (BC_{Tib} D57b4-6/): | *yaṅ dag lta ba'i ñi mas rab tu gsal byas śiṅ* | | *rnam dag yaṅ dag rtog*[a] *pa'i śiṅ rtas draṅs pa ste* | | *yaṅ dag brjod pa'i yaṅ dag ṅag ni gtsug lag khaṅ* | | *dge ba'i bya ba'i skyed tshal brgya phrag mṅon par dga'* | | *smad pa med pa'i 'tsho ba lo legs chen po ste* | | *yaṅ dag rtsol bas stobs daṅ rjes su 'gro ba can* | | *kun tu yaṅ dag dran pa'i sbas pas sbas pa ste* | | *tiṅ 'dzin gzims mal daṅ ni gdan daṅ bźugs pa yis* | | *de ltar mchog gi yan lag brgyad 'dir 'di lam ste* | | *'chi daṅ rga daṅ na ba rnams las 'dren pa'o* | | *gaṅ las draṅs nas bya ba thams cad byas pa ste* | | *'di daṅ che ge mor ni sṅar yaṅ 'gro ba med* | [a]*rtog* em.: *rtogs* BC_{Weller}, BC_{Tib}. Translation Johnston 1984, part III: 12, with "action" for "conduct", "exertion" for "effort", "mindfulness" for "attention", "concentration" for "concentrated thought"; see also Weller 1928: 155.

> the actions. The noble view with respect to the truths regarding suffering, etc., right thought and exertion, these three, resting on insight, should be practised in the department of knowledge for the abolition of the defilements. Right mindfulness used in accordance with the plan in order to approach the truths and right concentration of thought, these two, based on tranquillity, should be practised in the department of Yoga for the mastery of the mind.[26]

Even a superficial look at the two accounts reveals a fairly diverging distribution of the eight factors into the three headings (*śikṣā*, "courses", *skandha*, "groups/aggregates") of morality (*śīla*, *vṛtta*), concentration (*samādhi*, *praśama*, *yoga*) and insight (*prajñā*, *jñāna*),[27] even though the BC is not explicit about this. For while the two texts agree on the three factors belonging to morality, i.e., right speech, right activity and right livelihood, they reflect different understandings of concentration and insight, depending on the place allotted to right exertion (*samyagvyāyāma*, *parākrama*): with right views and right thought (*samyaksaṅkalpa*, *vitarka*) to form a threefold insight (and a twofold concentration) in the BC, but with right mindfulness and right concentration to form a threefold concentration (and a twofold insight) in the SNa. Did, then, Aśvaghoṣa hold two different and partially contradictory doctrines of the eightfold path and its tripartition?

2.2. There is in fact every reason to believe that he did not, for as has been shown in detail by Hartmann and Salomon, the above-quoted version of the SNa passage, based on the Nepalese recension, is very unlikely to reflect the original wording of SNa 16.30-33 and can be shown to have undergone transmission errors and corrections/revisions. Essentially closer to Aśvaghoṣa's composition is indeed the reading of a fragment of a second- to

---

[26] SNa 16.30-33: *asyābhyupāyo 'dhigamāya mārgaḥ prajñātrikalpaḥ praśamadvikalpaḥ | sa bhāvanīyo vidhivad budhena śīle śucau tripramukhe sthitena || vākkarma samyak sahakāyakarma yathāvad ājīvanayaś ca śuddhaḥ | idaṃ trayaṃ vṛttavidhau pravṛttaṃ śīlāśrayaṃ karmaparigrahāya || satyeṣu duḥkhādiṣu dṛṣṭir āryā samyag vitarkaś ca parākramaś ca | idaṃ trayaṃ jñānavidhau pravṛttaṃ prajñāśrayaṃ kleśaparikṣayāya || nyāyena satyādhigamāya yuktā samyak smṛtiḥ samyag atho samādhiḥ | idaṃ dvayaṃ yogavidhau pravṛttaṃ śamāśrayaṃ cittaparigrahāya ||*. Translation Johnston 1932: 91–92, with "insight" for "wisdom", "morality" for "discipline", "view" for "doctrine", "defilements" for "vices", "mindfulness" for "attention".

[27] On the eightfold path and its tripartition, see Eimer 1976: 18–25 and 34–41; see also *Traité* III.1129-1132, AVSū 34,17-42,13 (Samtani 2002: 26–30) and 231,1-233,3 (Samtani 2002: 161–166), Gethin 2001: 190–226, and especially pp. 207–212.

third-century palm-leaf manuscript written in Kuṣāṇa script and discovered in Šorčuq in the framework of the third German Turfan expedition.[28] Initially published by Waldschmidt (1971), the fragment has been identified by Hartmann (1988) and discussed in great detail by Salomon (1999) and Choi (2010).[29] In the light of this important fragment, SNa 16.30-33 might have originally read as follows (with the main variants underlined and adapting Johnston's translation accordingly):

> The means to attain this end is the path with its twofold insight and triple tranquillity. Both should be duly cultivated by the prudent man, governing himself by the pure threefold morality. Right action of voice and body and right livelihood, these three, based on morality, should be practised in the department of conduct for the mastery of the actions. Mindfulness used in accordance with the plan in order to approach the truths as well as concentration and exertion, these three, based on tranquillity, should be practised in the department of Yoga for the mastery of the mind. The noble view with respect to the truths regarding suffering, etc., as well as right thought …, these two, resting on insight, should be practised in the department of knowledge for the abolition of the defilements.[30]

As we can see, SNa 16.32 and 33 appear here in reverse order, with the result that concentration is described before insight, which accords well with the sequence of the description of the three groups found in SNa 16.34-36 and, though in reverse order, with the sequence as it is spelled out in SNa 16.30. More importantly, concentration turns out to be threefold (*smṛti*, *samādhi*, *parākrama* ≈ *vyāyāma*) instead of twofold, as in the Nepalese recension,

---

[28] For brief descriptions of the manuscript, see Hartmann 1988: 67(/15) and Salomon 1999: 223.

[29] See especially Hartmann 1988: 66(/14)–70(/18), Salomon 1999: 231–241 and Choi 2010.

[30] *asyābhyupāyo 'dhigamāya mārgaḥ prajñādvikalpaḥ praśamatrikalpaḥ | tau bhāvanīyau vidhivad budhena śīle śucau tripramukhe sthitena || vākkarma samyak sahakāyakarma yathāvad ājīvanayaś ca śuddhaḥ | idaṃ trayaṃ vṛttavidhau pravṛttaṃ śīlāśrayaṃ karmaparigrahāya || nyāyena satyādhigamāya yuktā smṛtiḥ samādhiś ca parākramaś ca | idaṃ trayaṃ yogavidhau pravṛttaṃ śamāśrayaṃ cittaparigrahāya || satyeṣu duḥkhādiṣu dṛṣṭir āryā samyag vitarkaś ca .. ..[a] | idaṃ dvayaṃ jñānavidhau pravṛttaṃ prajñāśrayaṃ kleśaparikṣayāya ||*. [a]These five syllables cannot be reconstructed on the basis of the available materials. Sanskrit text according to Salomon 1999: 258; see also Hartmann 1988: 69(/17)–70(/18) and Choi 2010: 33–34.

while insight is now twofold (*dṛṣṭi*, *vitarka* ≈ *saṅkalpa*) instead of threefold, a situation that is reflected in the wording of SNa 16.30, where the path is said to be twofold as regards insight (*prajñādvikalpa*) and threefold with respect to tranquillity (*praśamatrikalpa*). The original wording of SNa 16.30-33 thus exhibits the same tripartition of the eight items as BC 15.25-26 (twofold insight, threefold morality and threefold concentration). There is little doubt, then, that this pattern faithfully reflects Aśvaghoṣa's understanding of the eightfold path.

2.3. As already suggested by Salomon (1999: 238) and substantiated by Choi, however, at least part of the correction/revision process that resulted in the wording of the Nepalese version might have been dictated by doctrinal and maybe sectarian imperatives, for this version closely matches (Mūla)sarvāstivāda materials concerning the eightfold path and its tripartition. Thus it is that Vasubandhu's *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* (hereafter AKBh) contains a clear statement to the effect that insight is threefold: "Right view, right thought and right exertion are referred to as the group of insight."[31] Even more striking are the two (Mūla)sarvāstivāda recensions of the **Dharmadinnābhikṣuṇīsūtra* (法樂比丘尼經) hinted at by Choi.[32] Here is the Chinese version (Sarvāstivādin) of the relevant passage:

> [The Upāsaka Viśākha] further asked: 'Are the three groups included in the noble eightfold path or is the noble eightfold path included in the three groups?' The nun Dharmadinnā replied: 'The three groups are not included in the noble eightfold path; [rather, it is] the noble eightfold path [that] is included in the three groups. Right speech, right activity and right livelihood, these three members of the path are included in the group of morality; right mindfulness and right concentration, these two members of the path are included in the group of concentration; right view, right thought and right effort, these three members of the path are included in the group of insight.'[33]

---

[31] AKBh 55,14-15: *samyagdṛṣṭisaṅkalpavyāyāmāś ca prajñāskandha uktāḥ* |. See Johnston 1932: 91, note on SNa 16.31, Salomon 1999: 237–238, and Choi 2010: 36.

[32] Since Choi's references are somewhat difficult to follow and the author neither quotes nor translates the two texts, I allow myself to provide the materials in full. See also Honjō 1983 and Honjō 1984: 2–3 (item no. 5). For remarks on the different versions of the *Dharmadinnābhikṣuṇīsūtra*, see Schmithausen 1987: 337–343.

[33] T. 26, 788c7-12: 復問曰: 賢聖, 八支聖道攝三聚, 爲三聚攝八支聖道耶. 法樂比丘尼答曰: 非八支聖道

A Mūlasarvāstivāda version of the *sūtra* exhibiting a distinct wording but a similar doctrinal content is quoted by Śamathadeva while commenting on AKBh 4,7 (*asabhāgo nirodhaḥ*):

> O noble lady, [as regards] the three groups (*skandhatraya*?), [i.e.,] the group of morality (*śīlaskandha*), the group of concentration (*samādhiskandha*) and the group of insight (*prajñāskandha*), and what is called the noble eightfold path, is the noble eightfold path included in the three groups, or are the three groups included in the noble eightfold path? O Venerable, the noble eightfold path is included in the three groups, but the three groups are not included in the eightfold path. [O noble lady,] how is the noble eightfold path included in the three groups and the three groups not included in the eightfold path? O Venerable, among them, the Blessed One has presented right speech, right activity and right livelihood as [forming] the group of morality; the Blessed One has presented right mindfulness and right concentration as [forming] the group of concentration; and the Blessed One has presented right view, right thought and right exertion as [forming] the group of insight.[34]

攝三聚，三聚攝八支聖道．正語正業正命，此三道支聖戒聚所攝．正念正定，此二道支聖定聚所攝．正見正志正方便，此三道支聖慧聚所攝.

[34] AKUṬ D *Ju* 7b2-6: *'phags ma gaṅ 'di phuṅ po gsum po tshul khrims kyi phuṅ po daṅ | tiṅ ṅe 'dzin gyi phuṅ po daṅ | śes rab kyi phuṅ po daṅ | gaṅ yaṅ 'phags pa'i lam yan lag brgyad pa źes 'byuṅ ba ci phuṅ po gsum gyis 'phags pa'i lam yan lag brgyad bsdus sam | 'on te 'phags pa'i lam yan lag brgyad kyis phuṅ po gsum bsdus | tshe daṅ ldan pas ga phuṅ po gsum gyis 'phags pa'i lam yan lag brgyad bsdus kyi | 'phags pa'i lam yan lag brgyad kyis ni phuṅ po gsum bsdus pa ma yin no| |ji ltar phuṅ po gsum gyis 'phags pa'i lam yan lag brgyad bsdus śiṅ'phags pa'i lam yan lag brgyad kyis phuṅ po gsum ma bsdus śe na | tshe daṅ ldan pas ga de la yaṅ dag pa'i ṅag daṅ | yaṅ dag pa'i las kyi mtha' daṅ | yaṅ dag pa'i 'tsho ba dag ni bcom ldan 'das kyis tshul khrims kyi phuṅ por bśad do| |gaṅ yaṅ yaṅ dag pa'i dran pa daṅ | yaṅ dag pa'i tiṅ ṅe 'dzin ni bcom ldan 'das kyis tiṅ ṅe 'dzin gyi phuṅ por bśad do| |gaṅ yaṅ yaṅ dag pa'i lta ba daṅ | yaṅ dag pa'i rtog pa daṅ | yaṅ dag pa'i rtsol ba ni bcom ldan 'das kyis śes rab kyi phuṅ por bśad do| |*. To these witnesses, one should add ŚrBh I.230,5-7 (see also Eimer 1976: 36, n. 8): *tatra yā ca samyagdṛṣṭir yaś ca samyaksaṅkalpo yaś ca samyagvyāyāmo 'yaṃ prajñāskandhaḥ | tatra ye samyagvākkarmāntājīvā ayaṃ śīlaskandhaḥ | tatra yā ca samyaksmṛtir yaś ca samyaksamādhir ayaṃ samādhiskandhaḥ |*. "Among them, right view, right thought and right exertion, this is the group of insight; among them, right speech, activity and livelihood, this is the group of morality; and among them, right mindfulness and

As pointed out by Choi, the "original" wording of SNa 16.30-33, to which we must add the doctrinally homogenous BC 15.25-26, reflects a tripartition that is similar to the one found in the Theravāda counterpart of the **Dharmadinnābhikṣuṇīsūtra*, the *Cūḷāvedallasutta* (MN I.299-305). Here, the *sīlakkhandha* consists of *sammāvācā*, *sammākammanta* and *sammā-ājīva*, the *samādhikkhandha* consists of *sammāvāyāma*, *sammāsati* and *sammāsamādhi*, and the *paññākkhandha* consists of *sammādiṭṭhi* and *sammāsaṅkappa*.[35] Far from being restricted to Theravāda conceptions, however, this pattern is also reflected in Vasubandhu's (?) commentary on MSA 18.64-65,[36] a text of undetermined sectarian affiliation.

3. Morality (*śīla*)

3.1. Morality, the first of the three above-mentioned groups of the path-factors, is traditionally regarded as the foundation of the other two (concentration and insight), hence of Buddhist soteriology if not of Buddhism as a whole.[37] His insistence on the priority of faith notwithstanding,[38] Aśvaghoṣa fully agrees with this, making the earth—the ground—(*vasundharā*, Tib. *sa*, **pṛthivī*/**bhūmi*, etc.) his dominant metaphor for morality: "As the earth is the support of all beings, moving and stationary, so morality is the best support of all virtues."[39] Or else: "For by taking your stand on morality all actions take place in the sphere of the supreme good, just as standing and other actions of the body are performed by taking your stand on the earth."[40] Passages such as SN V.45-46 are the likely source of the poet:

> Bhikkhus, just as whatever strenuous deeds are done, are all done based upon the earth, established upon the earth, so too, based upon

---

right concentration, this is the group of concentration."

35 MN I.301; see Choi 2010: 35 and 37, n. 7, and, for a discussion, Gethin 2001: 211–212.

36 See MSABh 145,20-146,5 (Johnston 1932: 91, note on SNa 16.31).

37 See Gethin 2001: 255–257.

38 See below, §4.

39 BC 23.17 (BC_{Tib} D80b6/P97b1-2): |*'byuṅ po rgyu daṅ mi rgyu yi*| |*rten ni ji ltar sa yin pa*| |*de ltar yon tan thams cad kyi*| |*rten ni tshul khrims dam pa'o*|. Translation Johnston 1984, part III: 70, with "morality" for "discipline".

40 SNa 13.21: *śīlam āsthāya vartante sarvā hi śreyasi kriyāḥ | sthānādyānīva kāryāṇi pratiṣṭhāya vasundharām* ||. Translation Johnston 1932: 73, with "morality" for "discipline".

> morality, established upon morality, a bhikkhu develops and cultivates the Noble Eightfold Path. […] Bhikkhus, just as whatever kinds of seed and plant life attain to growth, increase, and expansion, all do so based upon the earth, established upon the earth, so too, based upon morality, established upon morality, a bhikkhu develops and cultivates the Noble Eightfold Path, and thereby he attains to growth, increase, and expansion in [wholesome] states.[41]

According to Aśvaghoṣa, morality consists, "to sum up, in good behaviour" (*ācāro 'yaṃ samāsataḥ*, SNa 13.19b); as a religious observance (*vrata*), it is equivalent to (good) conduct (*cāritra*, *vṛtta*[42]), i.e., to "recognising the danger of even the smallest faults"[43]; as a word, *śīla* is a derivative of the verbal root √*śīl*, "to practise repeatedly" or "to be intent upon" in the sense of exercising or cultivating (*śīlana*, "repeated practice").[44] Morality can be characterized as the purification of bodily and vocal actions[45] so that (s)he

---

41 SN V.45-46: *seyyathāpi bhikkhave ye keci balakaraṇīyā kammantā karīyanti sabbe te pathaviṃ nissāya pathaviyaṃ patiṭṭhāya evam eva te balakaraṇīyā kammantā karīyanti | evam eva kho bhikkhave bhikkhu sīlaṃ nissāya sīle patiṭṭhāya ariyam aṭṭhaṅgikam maggam bhāveti ariyam atthaṅgikam maggam bahulīkaroti* | […] *seyyathāpi bhikkhave ye keci bījagāmā bhūtagāmā vuddhiṃ virūḷhiṃ vepullaṃ āpajjanti sabbe te pathaviṃ nissāya pathaviyaṃ patiṭṭhāya evam ete bījagāmā bhūtagāmā vuddhiṃ virūḷhiṃ vepullam āpajjanti | evam eva kho bhikkhave sīlaṃ nissāya sīle patiṭṭhāya ariyam aṭṭhaṅgikam maggam bhāvento ariyam aṭṭhaṅgikam maggam bahulīkaronto vuddhiṃ virūḷhiṃ vepullam pāpuṇāti dhammesu*. Translation Bodhi 2000: 1553, with "morality" for "virtue". On ideas about the earth as a foundation and the earth simile, see Anālayo 2015: 66, n. 21.

42 *vṛtta* in SNa 13.10d.

43 Cf. SNa 13.20: *tasmāc cāritrasampanno brahmacaryam idaṃ cara | aṇumātreṣv avadyeṣu bhayadarśī dṛḍhavrataḥ* ||. "Therefore live the holy life, endowed with good conduct, firmly attached to your vows and recognising the danger of even the smallest faults."

44 MW 1079ab s.v. *śīl-* and *śīlana*. Note SNa 13.27: *śīlanāc chīlam ity uktaṃ śīlanaṃ sevanād api | sevanaṃ tannideśāc ca nideśaś ca tadāśrayāt* ||. "Discipline is so-called from its disciplining, disciplining comes from habitual repetition, habitual repetition from keen desire for a thing and keen desire from dependence on it."

45 Cf. SNa 13.11ab: *prayogaḥ kāyavacasoḥ śuddho bhavati* […] |. The notion of a purification of actions occurs repeatedly in the context of morality, e.g., in BC 26.27ab (BC_{Tib} D90a5/P108b4): *lus daṅ ṅag gi las ni rnam par dag 'dod pas*, "(s)he who desires to purify her/his bodily and verbal actions", or in SNa 13.13: *śarīravacasoḥ śuddhau* […] *ājīvasamudācāraṃ* […] *saṃskartum arhasi*, "you should perfect

who cultivates it becomes candid (*uttāna*) from giving expression to the feelings, open (*vivṛta*) from not concealing anything, guarded (*gupta*) from concentration on self-government, and without defect (*anavacchidra*, *acchidra*) from sinlessness.[46]

3.2. If it is comparable to the earth, what is morality the basis for, then? As we have just seen, it is the foundation of all good qualities/virtues (Tib. *yon tan thams cad*, **sarvaguṇa*).[47] But morality is also described as what is relied upon by the yogins in all their different undertakings toward liberation (*etat sthānam anyeṣu ca mokṣārambheṣu yoginām*, SNa 13.29cd), as that in the absence of which "there can be no proper life either as a mendicant or as a householder",[48] as the means to obtain deathlessness (*amṛtasyāptaye*, SNa 13.10c$_1$), and as that which, "when observed and adorned, removes all danger of the evil spheres of existence below and cannot but raise a man to the heavens above."[49] In short, "morality is the refuge, the guide as it were in the wilderness, the friend, the kinsman, the protector, wealth and strength."[50] However, Aśvaghoṣa's most striking statement concerning morality as the touchstone of soteriology and salvation is SNa 13.22-26:

[your] practice of [right] livelihood in the purification of [your] body and language." See also SNa 13.18, below, §3.3.

46 SNa 13.11cd. Cf. SNa 13.12: *uttāno bhāvakaraṇād vivṛtaś cāpy agūhanāt | gupto rakṣaṇatātparyād acchidraś cānavadyataḥ ||*. On *uttāna*, see BHSD 124b s.v.; on being open and candid, see also BC 26.29, below, n. 58.

47 See above, n. 39. In BC 26.32cd (BC$_{Tib}$ D90b2/P109a1) morality is the support of good qualities (*yon tan dam pa rnams kyi rten yin no*). Note BC 23.9-10 (BC$_{Tib}$ D80b2-3/P97a4-5): |*gzugs daṅ dpal daṅ stobs la sogs*| |*bkur maṅ rnams daṅ ldan pa ni*| |*khyed kyi chos la gus 'di gaṅ*| |*de las lhag par mdzes pa ñid*| |*tshul khrims la sogs yon tan gyis*| |*ji ltar 'jig rten mdzes de ltar*| |*lus ni sna tshogs gos sam rgyan*| |*phreṅ ba rnams kyis*[a] *ma yin no*|. [a]D: P *kyi*. "This devotion of yours to the Law far exceeds in value your distinction such as beauty of form, sovereignty and strength. Neither your beauty, nor your magnificent clothes, nor your ornaments or garlands, have the same brilliance as the virtues of morality and the like have." Translation Johnston 1984, part III: 70, with "morality" for "discipline".

48 Cf. SNa 13.19cd: *asya nāśena naiva syāt pravrajyā na gṛhasthatā ||*.

49 BC 18.6bd (BC$_{Tib}$ D64b7-65a1/P78b1-2): |*(tshul khrims ñid ni) bsruṅ ba daṅ ni rgyan yin źiṅ*| |*'og tu soṅ ba rnams kyi rnam par ldog byed do*| |*nam mkha'i steṅ gi ṅes par rdzogs pa po ñid yin*|.

50 SNa 13.28: *śīlaṃ hi śaraṇaṃ saumya kāntāra iva daiśikaḥ | mitraṃ bandhuś ca rakṣā ca dhanaṃ ca balam eva ca | |*. Translation Johnston 1932: 74, omitting the initial "For" (*hi*).

> My friend, comprehend that salvation is based on freedom from passion, freedom from passion on right understanding, and right understanding on the apprehension of knowledge. Realise that knowledge is based on mental concentration and mental concentration on bliss of body and mind. Bliss of body and mind is based on supreme serenity, and know too that serenity is based on joy. Similarly joy is deemed to be based on pre-eminent cheerfulness and cheerfulness on freedom from remorse over misdeeds and omissions. But the freedom of the mind from remorse is based on purity of morality. Therefore purify your morality, realising that morality goes in front of the foremost.[51]

By making remorse impossible, morality prompts various states of ease which are themselves responsible for psychic concentration, discernment, and liberation. In the perspective of Buddhist monasticism, morality finds expression in the prescriptions of the *vinaya*, itself an amplification of the *prātimokṣa(sūtra)* regarded by the Buddha as an epitome of his teaching and the very teacher of the *saṅgha* once he has passed away into *parinirvāṇa*.[52] Encapsulated in the *prātimokṣa*, morality is nothing but the Law and serves as the foundation of all subsequent attainments:

> In this way the Prātimokṣa is the summary of morality (*śīla*), the root of liberation; from it arise the concentrated meditations, all forms of knowledge and the final goals. For this reason he has the Law, in whom is found pure inviolable morality neither rent nor destroyed; and without it all these (advantages) are absent.[53]

---

[51] SNa 13.22-26: *mokṣasyopaniṣat saumya vairāgyam iti gṛhyatām | vairāgyasyāpi saṃvedaḥ saṃvido jñānadarśanam || jñānasyopaniṣac caiva samādhir upadhāryatām | samādher apy upaniṣat sukhaṃ śarīramānasam || praśrabdhiḥ kāyamanasaḥ sukhasyopaniṣat parā | praśrabdher apy upaniṣat prītir apy avagamyatām || tathā prīter upaniṣat prāmodyaṃ paramaṃ matam | prāmodyasyāpy ahṛllekhaḥ kukṛteṣv akṛteṣu vā || ahṛllekhasya manasaḥ śīlaṃ tūpaniṣac chuci | ataḥ śīlaṃ nayaty agryam iti śīlaṃ viśodhaya ||*. Translation Johnston 1932: 74, with "morality" for "discipline", "serenity" for "buoyancy", and "joy" for "ecstasy". For sources and parallels, see Johnston 1932: 74, n. 22 (e.g., AN V.311-312); for *upaniṣad* in this and similar contexts, see Renou 1978: 149–151.

[52] See MN III.10/MĀ no. 145 (Anālayo 2011, II: 625), MPSū III.386 (41.1-2), BC 26.26, and Eltschinger forthcoming b, §3.2.

[53] BC 26.30-31c (BC_{Tib} D90a7-b2/P108b7-109a1): *|rnam pa de ltar tshul khrims yaṅ dag bsdus pa 'di| |thar pa'i rtsa ba źes pa so sor thar pa ste| |'di las tiṅ ṅe 'dzin rnams rab tu skye ba ste| |ye śes thams cad rnams daṅ mthar thug rnams[a] 'di'o[b] | |de*

3.3. As we have seen above (§§2.1–3), morality as a group comprises right speech, right activity, and right livelihood. As far as I can see, Aśvaghoṣa never discusses right speech and right activity separately. But in two closely parallel passages, he singles out right livelihood, and this in the footsteps of the Buddha himself, to whom he ascribes the following statement:

> This livelihood is explained by Me separately from the physical actions, namely those of body and voice, because it is so difficult to purify. For it is difficult for the householder attached to many varied doctrines to attain purity of doctrine and for the mendicant whose means of existence are dependent on others to obtain purity of livelihood.[54]

The second stanza also appears in the *Mahāvibhāṣā*[55] and in AKBh 255,7-8, where Vasubandhu makes the doctrinal context more explicit than Aśvaghoṣa has. Here is the relevant passage:

> When the Blessed One says 'Right speech, right action, [and] right livelihood,' [does it mean that] this right livelihood is [something] distinct from the [first] two [i.e., from right speech and right action]? [Answer: No,] it is not [something] distinct [from them]. Rather, wrong livelihood consists of that bodily and verbal action alone that is born of greed. But [when they are] born of hostility and error, they are [termed wrong] bodily and verbal actions. This [wrong livelihood] is singled out [from the other two] because it is [especially] difficult to purify. For the greed factor (*lobhadharma*) is a thief (*hārin*), [so that] thought is not easy to guard from the action it generates. Therefore, since livelihood is [especially] difficult to purify, [the Blessed One] has taught it separately in order that one gives rise to the endeavour [necessary to purify it]. And in connection to this he[?] has uttered [the following stanza]: 'For it is difficult for the householder attached to many varied doctrines to attain purity of doctrine

phyir ma ral ma ñams dbrog bya ma yin pa'i| |*gaṅ gi*[c] *tshul khrims gtsaṅ ma yod pa de yi chos*| |*de med gal te 'di yi thams cad med pa ste*|. [a]P: D *rnam*. [b]P: D *'da'o*. [c]P: D *gis*. Translation Johnston 1984, part III: 95, with "morality" for "discipline".

[54] SNa 13.17-18: *karmaṇo hi yathādṛṣṭāt kāyavākprabhavād api | ājīvaḥ pṛthag evokto duḥśodhatvād ayaṃ mayā || gṛhasthena hi duḥśodhā dṛṣṭir vividhadṛṣṭinā | ājīvo bhikṣuṇā caiva pareṣv āyattavṛttinā ||*. Translation Johnston 1932: 73, omitting the initial "For" (*hi*).

[55] T. 1545, 605c14.

> and for the mendicant whose means of existence are dependent on others to obtain purity of livelihood.'[56]

In other words, insofar as it arises from greed—a manifestation of craving, the cause of suffering—wrong livelihood is so difficult to correct that it deserves being designated by an expression of its own. According to Yaśomitra (AKVy 420,9), the "superstitions of the laymen" (La Vallée Poussin) alluded to in the stanza are the beliefs (*dṛṣṭi*) in (the favourable influence of) ceremonies (*kautuka*), magical rituals (*maṅgala*), the stars (*nakṣatra*), the lunar days (*tithi*), and the (auspicious?) moments (*muhūrta*), etc.[57]

3.4. But what does right livelihood consist of, then? In the BC, Aśvaghoṣa characterizes it as follows:

> In order to purify your bodily and vocal actions give up all worldly concerns (*vyavahāra*), and, as from grasping a fire, refrain from accepting lands, living beings, grain, wealth and the rest. The proper means of livelihood is to abstain from the cutting and felling of what grows on the earth, from digging and ploughing the surface of the ground, and from medicine and astrology. There is neither moderation nor contentment nor life in resorting to the knowledge of go-betweens, in the practice of charms and philtres, in not being open and candid, or in the attainments not forbidden by the Law.[58]

---

[56] AKBh 254,23-255,8: *yad bhagavatā mithyāvāṅ mithyākarmānto mithyājīva ity uktaṃ ko 'yam anyas tābhyāṃ mithyājīvaḥ | nāyam anyo 'sti | yad eva tu lobhajaṃ kāyavākkarma mithyājīvaḥ* [AK 4.86ab$_1$] | *dveṣamohajau tu kāyavākkarmāntau | sa caiṣa tābhyāṃ pṛthak kṛtaḥ | duḥśodhatvāt* [AK 4.86b$_2$c$_1$] | *hārī hi lobhadharmaḥ | tatsamutthāt karmaṇaś cittaṃ na surakṣyam | ata ājīvo duḥkhaśodha ity ādarotpādanārthaṃ tatrāsau pṛthaṅ nirdiṣṭaḥ | āha cātra – duḥśodhā gṛhiṇāṃ dṛṣṭir nityaṃ vividhadṛṣṭinā | ājīvo bhikṣuṇā caiva pareṣv āyattadṛṣṭineti* |. See also *Kośa* III.188-190.

[57] On *kautuka* and *maṅgala*, see YBh 159,13-15 and Eltschinger 2015: 226.

[58] BC 26.27-29 (BC$_{\text{Tib}}$ D90a5-7/P108b4-7): |*lus daṅ ṅag gi las ni rnam par dag 'dod pas*| |*de bźin 'jig rten tha sñad thams cad 'dor ba daṅ*| |*sa daṅ srog chags sa bon rdzas la sogs rnams kyis*[a]| |*rab tu 'dzin pa las ni me bźin ldog pa'o*| |*sa la skye ba gcod daṅ 'byed pa dag las daṅ*| |*sa yi lgos la rko daṅ rmo ba dag las daṅ*| |*gso ba daṅ ni skar rtsis mtshan ñid rnams las*[b] *ni*| |*ṅes par ldog pa bza' ba'i cho ga dus yin no*| |*pho ña›i rig*[c] *pa sman daṅ sṅags ni bsñen rnams la*| |*sbyor min ñid daṅ 'chab pa ñid ni med pa ñid*| |*chos las ma bkag pa yi sgrub pa rnams la ni*| |*tshod śes ñid daṅ tshim daṅ srog*[d] *pa ma yin no*|. [a]D: P *kyi*. [b]D: P *la*. [c]P: D *rigs*. [d]em.: DP *sogs*. Translation Johnston 1984, part III: 94–95, with "wealth" for "treasure".

Here is the description in the SNa:

> You should sanctify the conduct of your livelihood in the purification of your body and speech and in the sevenfold work, [b]y not giving way to the five faults, hypocrisy etc., and by abandoning the four destroyers of good conduct, astrology and the rest, [b]y refusing what is to be avoided, living beings, rice, wealth etc. and by accepting the authorised rules of mendicancy with their definite limits. Contented, upright, pleasing in voice and pure in livelihood, you should practise the remedy for suffering till you reach emancipation.[59]

The two passages have various elements in common. Both refer to things that are forbidden to monks—lands (Tib. *sa*), living beings (*prāṇin*), grain/rice (Tib. *sa bon*, **bīja*; *dhānya*), and wealth (Tib. *rdzas*, **dravya*; *dhana*). All items mentioned by Aśvaghoṣa feature in the detailed list given at DN I.5: fields and plots (*khettavatthu*), women and young girls (*itthikumārika*), male and female slaves (*dāsīdāsa*), sheep and goats (*ajeḷaka*), cocks and pigs (*kukkuṭasūkara*), elephant, cattle, horses and mares (*hatthigavāssavaḷavā*), seed (*bījagāma*) and grain (*dhañña*), gold and silver (*jātarūparajata*).[60] The SNa's "four destroyers of good conduct" (*vṛttighātin*), which apparently include astrology (*jyotiṣa*), plausibly coincide with the BC's "(im)proper means of livelihood," i.e., "cutting and felling of what grows on the earth, […] digging and ploughing the surface of the ground, […] medicine and astrology", all of which have literal or close equivalents in the *Brahmajālasutta*.[61] The five faults alluded to in the SNa most likely refer to the five attitudes traditionally taken to characterize wrong livelihood (*mithyājīva*), i.e., hypocrisy (*kuhanā*, a "display of behaviour designed to stimulate lay-

---

[59] SNa 13.13-16: *śarīravacasoḥ śuddhau saptāṅge cāpi karmaṇi | ājīvasamudācāraṃ śaucāt saṃskartum arhasi | doṣāṇāṃ kuhanādīnāṃ pañcānām aniṣevanāt | tyāgāc ca jyotiṣādīnāṃ caturṇāṃ vṛttighātinām || prāṇidhānyadhanādīnāṃ varjyānāṃ apratigrahāt | bhaikṣāṅgānāṃ niśṛṣṭānāṃ niyatānāṃ pratigrahāt || parituṣṭaḥ śucir mañjuś caukṣayā jīvasampadā | kuryā duḥkhapratīkāraṃ yāvad eva vimuktaye ||.*

[60] See also MN I.179-180 (Anālayo 2011, I: 191), 345, and the tenfold list of SN V.470-472 (mentioned in Johnston 1932: 73, note on SNa 13.15): dancing (*nacca*), beds (*sayaṇa*), money (*rajata*), grain (*dhañña*), meat (*maṃsa*), young girls (*kumāriya*), slaves (*dāsī*), goats and sheep (*ajelaka*), cocks and pigs (*kukkuṭasūkara*), and elephants (*hatthino*). Aśvaghoṣa's "lands" do not appear in the list.

[61] On cutting and felling of what grows on the earth and digging and ploughing the surface of the ground, see DN I.5 and I.180; on medicine, see DN I.11; on astrology, see DN I.10.

men to give gifts", BHSD 189b s.v.), boasting (*lapanā*, "of one's own religious qualities, to extract gifts from patrons", BHSD 461a s.v.), hinting (*naimittikatā*, "at desires to get particular gifts", BHSD 312a s.v.), extracting of gifts (*naiṣpeṣikatā*, "[from laymen, by monks] by means of threats", BHSD 313b s.v.), and extraction of a profitable gift by referring to a gift received from others (*lābhena lābhaniścikīrṣā*, or °*niṣpādanatā*, see BHSD 306b s.v. *niścikīrṣā*).[62] As for the SNa's "sevenfold work" (*saptāṅgaṃ karma*), it must refer to the inauspicious courses of bodily and verbal action (*akuśalakarmapatha*), i.e., taking life (*prāṇātipāta*), theft (*adattādāna*), and illicit sexual conduct (*kāmamithyācāra*/*abrahmacarya*, "unchastity"), and lying (*mṛṣāvāda*), harsh speech (*pāruṣya*), slander (*paiśunya*), and frivolous talk (*sambhinnapralāpa*), several of which are alluded to in SNa 3.30-34.[63] Finally, I am not aware of any definite *locus classicus* for the last items mentioned in the BC, i.e., "the knowledge of go-betweens (**dūtavidyā*?), the practice of charms and philtres, not being open and candid, or the attainments not forbidden by the Law", even though, again, the knowledge of go-betweens is prohibited at DN I.8 and the practice of charms and philtres, e.g., at DN I.11.

3.5. The descriptions of morality considered so far were concerned mainly with the ethical code and religious expectations of Buddhist monastics. But as we have seen, morality is also said to remove "all danger of the evil spheres of existence below and cannot but raise a man to the heavens above."[64] These match the eschatological expectations of laymen and ordinary people (including non-Buddhist sectarians and ascetics, brahmins, etc.)

---

[62] These five elements are listed in BoBh 168,21-23 and discussed by Wogihara (BoBh 21-26); see also MVy 2493-2497, *Kośa* III.165, n. 4, and *Kośa* III.189, n. 3; AVSū 38,14-41,1 (Samtani 2002: 28–29) contains interesting definitions of the five items.

[63] *prāṇātipāta* in SNa 3.30, *adattādāna* in SNa 3.31, *kāmamithyācāra*/*abrahmacarya* in SNa 3.32, *mṛṣāvāda*, *pāruṣya* and *paiśunya* in SNa 3.33. Johnston (1932: 18, note on stanza 3.37) conjectured that "a verse has dropped out between 33 and 34; it must have described the two missing vocal actions, the opposites of *pāruṣya* and *sambhinnapralāpa*." If SNa 33b (*ṛtam api jajalpa nāpriyam*) could be interpreted to point to *(a)pāruṣya* (cf. AVSū 37,9: *paraduḥkhacikīrṣor aniṣṭavacanaśrāvanaṃ pāruṣyam*, "To address hurtful words to another desiring to cause anguish is harsh speech", translation Samtani 2002: 27; see also DN I.4 and I.179-180, 345), the whole passage (SNa 3.30-37) certainly lacks an allusion to frivolous talk.

[64] See above, BC 18.6bd, n. 49.

such as the Licchavis and general Siṃha, to whom the Buddha preaches the many advantages of morality in BC 23: "This morality should be ever present in you, so that your riches (*svārtha*?) in this world and the next cannot be snatched away by the passions. Great is the reward of morality, – a contented mind, honour, gain, renown, trust and delight, and in the hereafter bliss."[65] The following part of the sermon provides us with a masterly illustration of Aśvaghoṣa's style in interreligious controversy—note, in particular, the polemical allusions to the Brahmanical practices of religious mendicancy (*parivrāj*), ablutions (*tīrthasnāna*), and oblation (*agnihotra*), as well as to various forms of severe asceticism and, to crown it all, the poet's *pastiche* of the Vedic idea according to which the sacrifice is the ship leading to heaven (*nauḥ svargā*)[66]:

> The man who, having renown and beauty and wealth, resiles from morality, resembles a tree loaded with flowers and fruit, yet covered with thorns. A man may live in a palace and wear gorgeous clothes and ornaments, but, if he have morality, his way of life is equal to that of a seer. All are to be known as shams, who, though they wear dyed or bark garments and dress their hair in the various ascetic styles, have ruined their morality. Though he bathe three times a day at a sacred spot (*tīrtha*), though he pour oblations twice in fire, though he be scorched by fiery heat, if he have no morality, he is nothing. Though he deliver his body to beasts of prey, though he cast himself down a mountain, though he leap into fire or water, if he have no morality, he is nothing. Though he subsist on a modicum of fruit and roots, though he graze the grass like a deer, though he desire to live on air, if he have no morality, he is not cleansed. The man, whose morality is vile, is like the birds and beasts; he is not a vessel of the Law, but like a leaky vessel of water. In the present life he reaps fear, ill report, mistrust and discontent, and in the hereafter he will incur

---

[65] BC 23.15-16 (BC_{Tib} D80b5-6/P97a8-b1): |*khyed cag rnams la tshul khrims de*| |*rtag par 'gyur bar 'os pa ste*| |*bdag gi don ni 'dod rnams kyi*| |*'dir daṅ soṅ nas dbrog bya min*| |*yid ni tshim źiṅ bkur maṅ daṅ*| |*rñed daṅ grags daṅ yid ches ñid*| |*dga' ba ñid daṅ soṅ nas bde*| |*tshul khrims kyi ni 'bras bu che*|. Translation Johnston 1984, part III: 70, with "morality" for "discipline."

[66] See, e.g., ŚB 4.2.5.10 (as quoted in Lévi 2003: 87, n. 6): *sarva eva yajño nauḥ svargyā*, "the sacrifice, as a whole, is the heavenly ship." "The heavenly ship", or: "the ship that leads to heaven". See also Lévi 2003: 87–88.

(lit. eat) calamity. Therefore morality, like the guide in the desert, should not be killed; morality, which is self-dependent and hard to acquire, is the boat that conveys man to Heaven. He whose mind is overcome by the sins loses everything in life. Taking your stand on morality, make (every) effort to destroy the sins.[67]

4. Faith (*śraddhā*) and energy (*vīrya*)

4.1. Several items of the noble(s') eightfold path such as right speech and right thought are not dealt with separately in Aśvaghoṣa's extant works. On the contrary, two mental dispositions that, literally at least, do not belong to the list are offered detailed treatment, i.e., faith/belief in SNa 12.30-43 and energy/endeavour in SNa 16.93-98.

4.2.1. Aśvaghoṣa's concept of *śraddhā*, *śraddadhānatā*, *śrad√dhā* is significantly broader than that of "(to have) faith".[68] It of course covers "confidence", as in SNa 12.30, where the Buddha exhorts Nanda to have faith "in the ultimate immaterial good" (*naiṣṭhike sūkṣme śreyasi*). But it also

---

[67] BC 23.19-28 (BC_{Tib} D80b7-81a5/P97b2-98a1): |*me tog 'bras bus khyab pa'i śiṅ*| |*tsher ma can gyur ji lta bur*| |*thos daṅ gzugs don phun tshogs pa*| |*tshul khrims 'chal ba de ltar ro*| |*sna tshogs gos daṅ rgyan ldan źiṅ*| |*khaṅ bzaṅs rnams su gnas na yaṅ*| |*tshul khrims daṅ ldan skye bo gaṅ*| |*de yi draṅ sroṅ daṅ mñam 'gros*| |*ṅur smrig śiṅ śun zur phud daṅ*| |*gtsug phud spyi bo ral pa rnams*| |*tshul khrims ñams pa kun rnams kyi*| |*bcos ma ñid du śes par bya*| |*stegs las dus gsum khrus byas nas*| |*me la lan gñis bsregs nas daṅ*| |*gduṅ ba drag por gduṅs nas kyaṅ*| |*tshul khrims med na bdag ma yin*| |*śa za rnams la lus byin nas*| |*ri yi logs nas bor nas sam*| |*me 'am chur ni bdag mchoṅs na*| |*tshul khrims med na bdag ma yin*| |*'bras bu rtsa ba chud*[a] *za źiṅ*| |*ri dags bźin du rtswa za'am*| |*rluṅ gi bza' ba 'dod pa yaṅ*| |*tshul khrims med na dag*[b] *mi 'gyur*| |*mi gaṅ tshul khrims kyis dman pa*| |*de ni bya daṅ ri dags mtshuṅs*| |*rdol ba'i snod ni chu yi*[c] *bźin*| |*de ni chos kyi snod ma yin*| |*'jigs pa daṅ ni gtam ṅan daṅ*| |*yid mi ches daṅ mi dga'*[d] *ñid*| |*mṅon sum 'dir ni thob pa ste*| |*soṅ nas don med za bar 'gyur*| |*de phyir tshul khrims gźom mi bya*| |*'brog dgon dag na lam mkhan bźin*| |*raṅ dbaṅ dag ni rñed dka' ba'i*| |*tshul khrims mtho ris dag na gru*| |*skyon rnams kyis bcom sems kyis ni*| |*thams cad bcom nas 'jug pa ste*| |*tshul khrims rab tu gnas byas nas*| |*ñon moṅs 'joms la 'bad*[e] *pa gyis*|. [a]P: D *chu*. [b]P: D *bdag*. [c]P: D *yis*. [d]D: P *dga'i*. [e]D: P *dad*. Translation Johnston 1984, part III: 70–71, with "morality" for "discipline". In the last *pāda*, I have read *'bad pa* with D and not *dad pa* with P, and translated accordingly "and make (every) effort to destroy the sins" for "destroy the sins and cherish faith."

[68] For a detailed discussion of the concept of *śraddhā*, see Gethin 2001: 106–115.

includes the sense of "(*hic et nunc* unverifiable/unfalsifiable) belief", as in the examples of someone believing that there is water underground (SNa 12.33), of the man who does not believe that fire comes from firesticks (SNa 12.34), and of the farmer who does not believe that corn grows in the earth (SNa 12.35). Finally, *śrad√dhā* and its derivatives entail a distinctly volitional/desiderative and conative aspect: having faith or confidence in the law also means aspiring to the law (*dharmacchanda*), "for desire is specifically the originating cause of all the elements of existence"[69]: Someone proceeds to walking when (s)he wants to move (*gamanabuddhi*), to lying down when (s)he wants to lie down (*śayyābuddhi*), and to standing when (s)he wants to stand (*sthānabuddhi*, SNa 12.32).

4.2.2. According to Aśvaghoṣa's Buddha, "faith is the chief agent in the production of the law" (*dharmasya cotpattau śraddhā kāraṇam uttamam*, SNa 12.40a$_2$b). Therefore, says the Buddha,

> take heed to cherish this shoot of faith; for as it grows the Law grows, as a tree grows with the growth of its root. As for the man whose doctrinal sight is dim and resolution weak, his faith is unreliable; for it does not work to the desired end. For so long as the real truth is not seen or heard, so long faith does not become strong or firm, but when a man by restraining his senses with self-control sees the real truth, the tree of his faith bears fruit and becomes the vehicle [of further advance].[70]

This primacy of faith is the reason why the Buddha has designated it with many different names (*tathā tathā*, "so and so") in different contexts (*tatra tatra*, i.e., in different teaching circumstances) on account of its effect (*kāryatas*):

> Therefore I call faith especially the Hand since it grasps the Holy Law of itself, as a hand takes a gift. It is described as the Faculty from its being the most important, as Strength from its steadfastness, and as Wealth from its abolishing poverty of virtue. It is called

---

[69] SNa 12.31bd: *sarvadharmā hi* […] *niyamāc chandahetavaḥ* |. On *chanda* and its relationship with *śraddhā*, see also below, n. 76.

[70] SNa 12.41-43: *śraddhāṅkuram imaṃ tasmāt saṃvardhayitum arhasi | tadvṛddhau vardhate dharmo mūlavṛddhau yathā drumaḥ || vyākulaṃ darśanaṃ yasya durbalo yasya niścayaḥ | tasya pāriplavā śraddhā na hi kṛtyāya vartate || yāvat tattvaṃ na bhavati hi dṛṣṭaṃ śrutaṃ vā tāvac chraddhā na bhavati balasthā sthirā vā | dṛṣṭe tattve niyamaparibhūtendriyasya śraddhāvṛkṣo bhavati saphalaś cāśrayaś ca | .*

> the Reed-arrow from its power of protecting the Law, and is named the Jewel from the difficulty of finding it in this world. Further, it is said to be the Seed in that the highest good originates from it and the River too from its property of cleansing from sin.[71]

4.3. If faith "is the chief agent in the production of the law", "[i]t is indolence, not his enemy, that is the cause that a man capable of success, on hearing of the method, fails to progress, that, knowing the supreme Law, he does not gain an abode above and that, having left his home, he does not attain peace in Salvation."[72] In other words, practitioners who are eager to reach liberation should cultivate energy,[73] "for it is the foundation for carrying through

---

[71] SNa 12.36-39: *ataś ca hasta ity uktā mayā śraddhā viśeṣataḥ | yasmād gṛhṇāti saddharmaṃ dāyaṃ hasta ivākṣataḥ || prādhānyād indriyam iti sthiratvād balam ity ataḥ | guṇadāridryaśamanād dhanam ity abhivarṇitā || rakṣaṇārthena dharmasya tatheṣīkety udāhṛtā | loke 'smin durlabhatvāc ca ratnam ity abhibhāṣitā || punaś ca bījam ity uktā nimittaṃ śreyasotpadā | pāvanārthena pāpasya nadīty abhihitā punaḥ ||*. For canonical references concerning some of these metaphors, see Johnston 1932: 70, n. 36. *indriya* and *bala* are ubiquitous; Vism 464 (also quoted in Gethin 2001: 115, n. 51) knows of the similes of *hattha*, *vitta*, and *bīja*; on *vitta*/*dhana*, see also SN I.42, Bodhi 2000: 485, n. 597, Uv 10.3 and10.9; on *bīja*, see also SN I.172 and Bodhi 2000: 450, n. 461. I have not succeeded in locating the similes of *iṣīkā*, *ratna*, and *nadī*. ThaG 694 and 1090, AN III.346, and Mil 413 contain yet other similes.

[72] SNa 16.96: *nayaṃ śrutvā śakto yad ayam abhivṛddhiṃ na labhate paraṃ dharmaṃ jñātvā yad upari nivāsaṃ na labhate | gṛhaṃ tyaktvā muktau yad ayam upaśāntiṃ na labhate nimittaṃ kausīdyaṃ bhavati puruṣasyātra na ripuḥ ||*. According to AN III.3, bad destinies (*duggati*, *niraya*) come from being lazy (*kusīta*), whereas good destinies (*sugati*, *sagga*) come from being energetic (*āraddhaviriya*).

[73] *vīrya* could possibly be interpreted as a functional (if not strictly semantic) equivalent of *vyāyāma* ("exertion"), one of the three items included in the group/course of *samādhi* (see above, §2.1–3). In SN V.268, the verbs *vāyamati* and *viriyam ārabhati* seem to be equivalent: *chandaṃ janeti vāyamati viriyam ārabhati cittam paggaṇhāti padahati*, "he makes an effort, arouses energy, applies his mind, and strives" (translation Bodhi 2000: 1730); passages such as this are often regarded as providing a definition of *samyagvyāyāma* (see *Traité* III.1130-1131). Recall also that in SNa 16.32b, Aśvaghoṣa refers to *(samyak)vy*āyāma (see above, n. 26) by means of the word *parākrama*, apparently a synonym. In MN I.356 (see also MN II.95), the expressions *āraddhaviriya* and *daḷhaparakkama* are closely related: *āraddhaviriyo viharati akusalānaṃ dhammānaṃ upasampadāya, thāmavā daḷhaparakkamo anikkhittadhuro kusalesu dhammesu*. "He is energetic in abandoning unwholesome states and in undertaking wholesome states; he is steadfast, firm in striving, not

what is to be done and without energy nothing can be accomplished; all success in the world arises from energy, and if there be a lack of it there is nothing but sin."[74] As a consequence, says the Buddha, "be ever energetic and control your minds; with diligence practise the deeds that lead to good. For life is like the flame of a lamp in the wind, flickering and subject to much suffering."[75]

4.4. Interestingly, the two factors of faith and energy appear together in a passage of the MN:[76]

> Bhikkhus, for a faithful disciple who is intent on fathoming the Teacher's Dispensation, it is proper that he conduct himself thus: 'The Blessed One is the Teacher, I am a disciple; the Blessed One

---

remiss in developing wholesome states." Translation Ñāṇamoli/Bodhi 2001: 463; see also Anālayo 2011, II: 484. The same can be said of MN I.480-481 (see below, n. 77, and Anālayo 2011, I: 386–387), where *(purisa)viriyena* and *(purisa)parakkamena* are somehow equivalent.

74 SNa 16.94: *vīryaṃ paraṃ kāryakṛtau hi mūlaṃ vīryād ṛte kācana nāsti siddhiḥ | udeti vīryād iha sarvasampan nirvīryatā cet sakalaś ca pāpmā ||*. Translation Johnston 1932: 99, omitting the initial "(Energy) is of the greatest import". Note also SNa 16.95 and Johnston 1932: 99. See also AN I.10 (cf., e.g., AN I.153, III.2, IV.234, 332-335, 352, 358, V.24, 27-28, 91; SN I.217) and SN II.29.

75 BC 25.80 (D88b5-6/P196b7-8): *de phyir brtson 'grus ma spaṅs bsdams pa'i sems rnams kyis| |dge ba'i las rnams la ni bag daṅ ldan par gyis| |sdug bsṅal du ma ñe bar 'dus śiṅ g.yo ba ste| |srog ni thor ṅas mar me daṅ ni mtshuṅs pa ñid |*. Translation Johnston 1984, part III: 90, omitting the initial "Therefore" (*de phyir*). Note also SNa 16.98d: *tad vīryaṃ kuru śāntaye viniyataṃ vīrye hi sarvarddhayaḥ ||*. "Therefore show energy for the sake of tranquillity; for of a certainty all prosperity lies in energy."

76 As pointed out by Gethin (2001: 114), the AS's definition of *śraddhā* is interesting in this regard (AS 48b4-5): *dad pa gaṅ źe na | yod pa ñid daṅ yon tan can daṅ nus pa rnams la mṅon par yid ches pa daṅ dad pa daṅ 'dod pa ste | 'dun pa'i rten byed pa'i las can no| |*($AS_{Skt.\ Rec.}$ 6,9-11: *śraddhā katamā | astitvaguṇavattvaśaktatveṣv abhisampratyayaḥ prasādo 'bhilāṣaḥ | chandasanniśrayadānakarmikā |*). "What is *śraddhā*? *śraddhā* is confidence (*abhisampratyaya*), trust (*prasāda*) and wish (*abhilāṣa*) with regard to existence (*astitva*), worthiness (**guṇavat*; ASBh 5,10 *guṇatve*; to be read **guṇavattva*-?) and capacity(/realizability) (**śakti/*śakta/*śakya*; ASBh 5,10 *śakyatve*)[, respectively]. It serves as(/provides) a basis for [one's] desire to act (*chanda*, cf. AS 48b2)." Tib. *byed pa'i las* is attested as a translation of Skt. *kāritrakarman* (Negi 2002: 3870b s.v.); *byed pa'i las can* could, then, render **kāritrakarmika*. The Sanskrit equivalents are borrowed from ASBh 5,9-10. See also Rahula 1980: 8.

> knows, I do not know.' For a faithful disciple who is intent on fathoming the Teacher's Dispensation, the Teacher's Dispensation is nourishing and refreshing. For a faithful disciple who is intent on fathoming the Teacher's Dispensation, it is proper that he conduct himself thus: 'Willingly, let only my skin, sinews, and bones remain, and let the flesh and blood dry up on my body, but my energy shall not be relaxed so long as I have not attained what can be attained by manly strength, manly energy, and manly persistence.' For a faithful disciple, who is intent on fathoming the Teacher's Dispensation, one of two fruits may be expected: either final knowledge here and now or, if there is a trace of clinging left, non-return.[77]

Could these two dispositions have been somehow connected in Aśvaghoṣa's view as well? To answer this question, let me compare the metaphorical repertoires associated with faith and energy in some detail. In SNa 12.33-35, Aśvaghoṣa adduces three examples for *śraddhā*:

> For instance, when a man believes that there is water in the earth (at a particular spot) and he has need of it, then he makes the effort of digging the earth there. Again, no one rubs the fire-stick, if he has no need of fire or does not believe in its existence in the fire-stick; if the contrary is the case, he does so. Similarly the husbandman would not sow seed in the earth, unless he believes in the growth of corn in the ground and has need of it.[78]

Now consider SNa 16.97ab and 98a:

---

[77] MN I.480-481: *saddhassa bhikkhave sāvakassa satthu sāsana pariyogāya vattato ayam anudhammo hoti: satthā bhagavā sāvako 'ham asmi; jānāti bhagavā nāhaṃ jānāmīti. saddhassa bhikkhave sāvakassa satthu sāsave pariyogāya vattato rumhaniyaṃ satthu sāsanaṃ hoti ojavantaṃ. saddhassa bhikkhave sāvakassa satthu sāsane pariyogāya vattato ayam anudhammo hoti: kāmaṃ taco ca nahāru ca aṭṭhī ca avasissatu; sarīre upasussatu maṃsalohitaṃ, yan taṃ purisatthāmena purisaviriyena purisaparakkamena pattabbaṃ na taṃ apāpuṇitvā viriyassa santhānaṃ bhavissatīti. saddhassa bhikkhave sāvakassa satthu sāsane pariyogāya vattato dvinnaṃ phalānaṃ aññataraṃ phalaṃ pāṭikaṅkhaṃ: ditthe va dhamme aññā, sati vā upādisese anāgāmitā ti*. Translation Ñāṇamoli/Bodhi 2001: 583–584; see also Anālayo 2011, I: 386–387.

[78] SNa 12.33-35: *antarbhūmigataṃ hy ambhaḥ śraddadhāti naro yadā | arthitve sati yatnena tadā khanati gām imām || nārthī yady agninā vā syāc chraddadhyāt taṃ na vāraṇau | mathnīyān nāraṇiṃ kaścit tadbhāve sati mathyate || sasyotpattiṃ yadi na vā śraddadhyāt kārṣakaḥ kṣitau | arthī sasyena vā na syād bījāni na vaped bhuvi ||.*

> A man obtains water if he digs the earth with unremitting energy; he produces fire from the fire-sticks by continuous friction; […] by ploughing the soil and by guarding [his field] with infinite pains man obtains a splendid crop.[79]

There can thus be no doubt that faith/belief and energy/endeavour were closely related in Aśvaghoṣa's view. The three similes are the same, but they are considered from a cognitive perspective in the context of faith, and in connection with the resulting action in the context of energy. In other words, faith/belief is the cognitive event stimulating a practical answer in the form of energy/exertion. Recall also that rivers, jewels, and arrows were to be found in the metaphors resorted to by the Buddha to refer to faith. Now, these expressions also occur in the context of *vīrya*: "For streams, by ever running swiftly, wear away even mountains. […] [b]y diving strenuously into the ocean he rejoices in splendid jewels; by overwhelming the might of his enemies with arrows he enjoys the splendour of sovereignty."[80] The two similes of the stream/river and the fire-sticks are also (already?) to be found in the BC:

> A stream, whose waters ever flow, however softly, in time wears away the surface of the rock. Energy finds nothing impossible of attainment. Therefore be strenuous and do not put down your loads. The man who stops repeatedly in drilling with fire-sticks finds it hard to get fire from wood, but by the application of energy it comes easily. Therefore where there is diligence, the task is accomplished.[81]

---

[79] SNa 16.97ab and 98a: *anikṣiptotsāho yadi khanati gāṃ vāri labhate | prasaktaṃ vyāmathnan jvalanam araṇibhyāṃ janayati | […] kṛṣṭvā gāṃ paripālya ca śramaśatair aśnoti sasyaśriyam* […] | |.

[80] SNa 16.97d and 98bc: *drutaṃ nityaṃ yāntyo girim api hi bhindanti saritaḥ* || […] *yatnena pravigāhya sāgarajalaṃ ratnaśriyā krīḍati | śatrūṇām avadhūya vīryam iṣubhir bhuṅkte narendraśriyam* […] ||.

[81] BC 26.60-61 (BC_{Tib} D92a2-3/P110b6-7): | *rtag par rab źugs chu yi rgyun ni mñen na yaṅ| |rdo yi*[a] *logs la dus su rnam par 'bigs pa ste| |brtson 'grus kyis ni rñed par dka' ba ci yaṅ med| |de phyir khur rnams mi 'bor bar ni bzod bgyis daṅ| |gaṅ źig yaṅ yaṅ ṅal gso*[b] *nas ni srub byed pa| |de yis*[c] *śiṅ la me ni rñed par sla min źiṅ| |brtson 'grus brtsams pas rñed par sla bar 'gyur ba ste| |de phyir sbyor ba yod na bya ba 'grub*[d] *pa ñid|*. [a]D: P *ba'i*. [b]P: D *bso*. [c]P: D *yi*. [d]D: P *grub*.

5. Insight (*prajñā*)

5.1. Unfortunately, Aśvaghoṣa provides no detailed account of his views on insight, the third group of factors.[82] The following is meant as a brief and partly conjectural reconstruction of his ideas on the matter. Aśvaghoṣa twice compares insight with a boat (Tib. *gru [po]*) sailing on, and enabling one to cross, the ocean of ignorance (Tib. *mun pa'i rgya mtsho*) whose waves are wrong views (**kudṛṣṭi*?) and whose water is craving (**tṛṣṇā*?), or the great ocean of old age and death (Tib. *rga daṅ śi ba'i mtsho chen*), i.e., nescience and *saṃsāra*. This boat's two oars are mindfulness (*smṛti*) and energy (*vīrya*). The antinomy between insight and nescience is reflected in a second metaphor, that of insight as a lamp (Tib. *sgron ma*) in the darkness of delusion (Tib. *rmoṅs pa'i mun pa*). Needless to say, insight is also compared with an eye (*cakṣus*), i.e., with true, nonphysical vision.[83] In safely bringing its passengers to the other side of transmigration, insight brings about salvation. This is cer-

---

[82] I allow myself to deal with *prajñā* before *samādhi* due to the comparably scarce treatment of the former in the extant works of Aśvaghoṣa.

[83] Cf. BC 20.52 (BC_{Tib} D74b4-5/P90a6-7): |*mun pa'i rgya mtsho la ni lta ṅan dba' rlabs can*| |*sred pa'i chu la srog chags rnam par 'phyo rnams su*| |*śes rab gru po dran daṅ brtson 'grus skya*[a] *ba ni*| |*gaṅ gi*[b] *yod pa de ni de las*[c] *sgrol ba yod*|. [a]P: D *skye*. [b]em.: DP *gis*. [c]em.: DP *la*. "Among the folks struggling in the ocean of ignorance (*tamas*), whose waves are wrong views and whose water craving*, only he who has the boat of insight (*prajñā*) with the oars of mindfulness and energy is rescued therefrom." Translation Johnston 1984, part III: 55, with "insight" for "mystic wisdom", and "mindfulness" for "awareness". *I read "craving" with DP *sred* (**tṛṣṇā*?), and not "existence" with Johnston, who must have read *srid* (**bhava*?); T. 162, 39c10 (群生隨愛流, "Beings follow the currents of desire", translation Willemen 2009: 149) corroborates this reading. BC 26.67-68 (BC_{Tib} D92a7-b2/P111a5-7): |*śes rab rga*[a] *daṅ śi*[b] *ba'i mtsho chen dag la gru*| |*rmoṅs pa'i mun pa rnams la ji ltar sgron ma ste*| |*nad rnams thams cad 'joms pa dag gi*[c] *sman yin źiṅ*| |*ñon moṅs ljon śiṅ 'joms byed mtshon cha rnon po yin*| |*de phyir thos pa bsam*[d] *pa bsgom pa rnams kyi ni*| |*śes rab rnam par 'phel la rab tu 'jug par bya*| |*gaṅ gi*[e] *śes rab raṅ bźin lta byed mig yod pa*| |*de ni mig daṅ bral yaṅ mig daṅ ldan pa ñid*|. [a]P: D *dga'*. [b]P: D *'chi*. [c]D: P *gis*. [d]D: P *bsams*. [e]D: P *gis*. "Insight is the boat on the great ocean of old age and death, a lamp, as it were, in the darkness of delusion, the medicine that smites all illnesses, the sharp axe that cuts down the trees of the sins. Therefore practise learning (*śruta*, VE), reflection (*cintā*, VE) and cultivation (*bhāvanā*) for the increase of insight; for he who has the eye that is of the nature of insight, though without ocular vision, has indeed sight." Translation Johnston 1984, part III: 99-100, with "insight" for "mystic wisdom", "reflection" for "knowledge", "cultivation" for "meditation".

tainly due to its capacity to eliminate whatever binds one to painful existence, i.e., wrong views (*[ku]dṛṣṭi*), defilements (*kleśa*, including *rāga*, desire), moral faults (*doṣa*), and influxes (*āsrava*). Indeed, as Aśvaghoṣa has it, "insight completely cuts away the faults, like a river the trees of its banks in the rains. Burnt up by it, the faults cease to grow, like trees burnt by the fire of the thunderbolt which strikes them."[84]

5.2. The poet is well aware of the tripartition of insight into "born of learning/hearing" (*śrutamaya*), "born of reflection" (*cintāmaya*), and "born of cultivation" (*bhāvanāmaya*).[85] The first stage of insight, which Aśvaghoṣa does not comment upon, is best illustrated by Nanda developing understanding through the teaching of the Buddha.[86] As for the third one, which is generally said to presuppose mental concentration, it seems to overlap with liberating insight, as the following excerpt testifies (keeping in mind that, in the formulation of the eightfold path, insight coincides with right view): "For when anyone sees that name-and-corporeality is impermanent, his views are correct, and seeing correctly he attains complete detachment and by the abolition of complaisance [in the things of this world] his desire is abolished."[87] Extrapolating from this passage, one should not be too far off the mark in conjecturing that insight consists in the practitioner's discernment of all factors, physical (*rūpa*) as well as nonphysical (*nāman*), as impermanent, painful, selfless, etc., i.e., under both their general (*sāmānya-*) and their specific (*sva-*) aspects or characteristics (*lakṣaṇa*). This is the exact import of SNa 16.46-48, with its typical allusion to dependent origination:

> For I say that for him who recognises and understands the nature of name-and-corporeality, its cause and its disappearance, the influxes are abolished. Therefore, applying your utmost energy, strive quickly for the destruction of the influxes, and in especial examine the elements which are full of suffering, impermanent and devoid of self.

---

[84] SNa 16.36: *prajñā tv aśeṣeṇa nihanti doṣāṃs tīradrumān prāvṛṣi niageva | dagdhā yayā na prabhavanti doṣā vajrāgninevānusṛtena vṛkṣāḥ ||*. Translation Johnston 1932: 92, with "insight" for "intuitive wisdom", and omitting the initial "But" (*tu*).

[85] SNa 26.68a; see above, n. 83.

[86] See also, by way of contrast, SNa 17.13-14 (Johnston 1932: 102).

[87] SNa 16.44: *yadaiva yaḥ paśyati nāmarūpaṃ kṣayīti tad darśanam asya samyak | samyak ca nirvedam upaiti paśyan nandīkṣayāc ca kṣayam eti rāgaḥ ||*. Translation Johnston 1932: 93, with "name-and-corporeality" for "corporeality", and "desire" for "passion".

> For he who understands the six elements, earth, water, fire, etc., both in their general and their specific characteristics and understands that there is nothing other than them understands complete liberation from them.[88]

This passage also enjoins Nanda to examine (*pari√īkṣ*) the true nature of reality in order to generate and to nurture liberating insight. As I have emphasized elsewhere, *parīkṣā* is one of the most important concepts in Aśvaghoṣa.[89] In the present context, this examination likely coincides with the second type of insight, the one born of rational reflection (*cint[an]ā*), of which the poet gives us a remarkable overview in SNa 17.15-22:

> Then in possession of his soul and devoted to escape from being, he duly examined the elements of existence according to their prerequisites, their causation, their nature, the sensations with which they are experienced and their individual defects. He investigated the body in order to see its entire material and immaterial substance. Then he deemed it to be impure, subject to suffering, impermanent, without owner or self. For from a consideration of the body's impermanence, its absence of individuality, its lack of self and its liability to suffering he made the tree of the vices shake by the supreme mundane Path. Since inevitably in this world all phenomena come into being from not-being and pass away again from being into not-being, and since they all have a cause and that a transitory cause, therefore he concluded that the world is impermanent. Since the union with *karman* of whatever is born is continually operative and is the cause of bondage and destruction, and since what is called pleasure is but the means of countering suffering, he saw that mundane existence is suffering. Since the individual is a mere creature of the *saṃskāra*s and there is neither agent nor knower and active being originates from the complex [of the causes], he saw that this world is devoid [of

---

88 SNa 16.46-48: *yathāsvabhāvena hi nāmarūpaṃ taddhetum evāstagamaṃ ca tasya | vijānataḥ paśyata eva cāhaṃ bravīmi samyak kṣayam āsravāṇām || tasmāt paraṃ saumya vidhāya vīryaṃ śīghraṃ ghaṭasvāsravasaṅkṣayāya | duḥkhān anityāṃś ca nirātmakāṃś ca dhātūn viśeṣeṇa parīkṣamāṇaḥ || dhātūn hi ṣaḍ bhūsalilānalādīn sāmānyataḥ svena ca lakṣaṇena | avaiti yo nānyam avaiti tebhyaḥ so 'tyantikaṃ mokṣam avaiti tebhyaḥ ||*. Translation Johnston 1932: 93, with "name-and-corporeality" for "corporeality", and "influxes" for "infections".

89 See Eltschinger 2014b: 6–12.

> individuality]. Since the world has no motive force of its own and is not self-dependent, and since there is no one being who exercises paramountcy over actions, and since states of being arise from dependence on other states, he understood the world to be without soul. Then he reached the inaccessible supermundane Path, as one might obtain a breeze in the hot weather by fanning or the fire which abides in the wood by friction or the water in the ground by digging.[90]

Nanda is seen to proceed to the examination prescribed above (*vidhivat*, SNa 17.15; cf. SNa 16.47-48). Enquiring into the *dharma*s, he identifies, mostly by way of inferences, the characteristic features of reality—the body's being impure, painful, impermanent, and selfless, the contrary of the four wrong notions (*viparyāsa*). This examination seems to coincide, or at least to bear close relationship, with the "supreme mundane path", and is the surest cathartic-purgative method before reaching the supermundane path. Note, however, that the acquisition of the four aspects by means of rational examination seems to bring the practitioner to the threshold of the supermundane path (recall that Nanda was said to be desirous to see the supreme noble path, *panthānam* āryaṃ *paramaṃ didṛkṣuḥ*, SNa 17.13c).[91]

---

[90] SNa 17.15-22: *sambhārataḥ pratyayataḥ svabhāvād āsvādato doṣaviśeṣataś ca | athātmavān niḥsaraṇātmataś ca dharmeṣu cakre vidhivat parīkṣām || sa rūpiṇaṃ kṛtsnam arūpiṇaṃ ca sāraṃ didṛkṣur vicikāya kāyam | athāśuciṃ duḥkham anityam asvaṃ nirātmakaṃ caiva cikāya kāyam || anityatas tatra hi śūnyataś ca nirātmato duḥkhata eva cāpi | mārgapravekeṇa sa laukikena kleśadrumaṃ sañcalayāṃ cakāra || yasmād abhūtvā bhavatīha sarvaṃ bhūtvā ca bhūyo na bhavaty avaśyam | sahetukaṃ ca kṣayihetumac ca tasmād anityaṃ jagad ity avindat || yataḥ prasūtasya ca karmayogaḥ prasajyate bandhavighātahetuḥ | duḥkhapratīkāravidhau sukhākhye tato bhavaṃ duḥkham iti vyapaśyat || yataś ca saṃskāragataṃ viviktaṃ na kārakaḥ kaścana vedako vā | sāmagryataḥ sambhavati pravṛttiḥ śūnyaṃ tato lokam imaṃ dadarśa || yasmān nirīhaṃ jagad asvatantraṃ naiśvaryam ekaḥ kurute kriyāsu | tat tat pratītya prabhavanti bhāvā nirātmakaṃ tena viveda lokam || tataḥ sa vātaṃ vyajanād ivoṣṇe kāṣṭhāśritaṃ nirmathanād ivāgnim | antaḥkṣitisthaṃ khananād ivāmbho lokottaraṃ vartma durāpam āpa ||.*

[91] On the supermundane path, see below, §8.2.

6. On mindfulness (*smṛti*)

6.1. In order to understand Aśvaghoṣa's description of mindfulness,[92] one must get first an idea of his views on the senses (*indriya*, or sense organs/faculties). Quite unsurprisingly, frequent epithets of the senses are "restless" (*capala*, e.g., SNa 13.33) and "roving" (*lola*, SNa 9.23). The senses are compared with the ocean (*samudra*) since they can never be "filled to satisfaction with their objects, though perpetually supplied with them" (*na tṛptim adhigacchaty ajasraṃ pūryamāṇo 'pi*, SNa 13.40), and with hungry dogs (*śunām āśāvatām*), which "in their greed can never have enough" (SNa 13.39). In SNa 13.35, Aśvaghoṣa compares the five senses with arrows (*śara*) "tipped with the poison of fancies" (*saṅkalpaviṣadigdha*); they "have anxieties for their feathers and pleasure for their target and fly in the air of the objects of the senses. They are discharged by Love the hunter and strike men, the deer, in the heart and, if they are not warded off, men fall pierced by them."[93] As this extended metaphor suggests, the senses constantly "strike" (*vi*√*han-*) human beings, a recurrent description of their action in the SNa (note the verbs √*han-*, √*bādh-*, √*pīḍ-* in SNa 13.31, 33, 34, 42). And indeed,

> [r]abid foes oppress some people sometimes or they may not do so, but everyone is always everywhere harassed by the senses. And a man does not go to Hell when killed by foes etc., but he is dragged there helplessly when beaten down by the restless senses. The man who is struck down by the former may or may not suffer in soul, but the man who is harried by the senses suffers in body and soul alike.[94]

---

[92] Literature on mindfulness is increasing dramatically. See, first and foremost, Anālayo 2003 and Gethin 2001: 29–68. On *smṛti*/*sati* especially, see Gethin 2001: 36–44 and Anālayo 2003: 44–66. Note Gethin 2001: 44: "To sum up, it seems to me that there are basically four elements to the notion of *sati* in the literature: (i) *sati* remembers or does not lose what is before the mind; (ii) *sati* is, as it were, a natural 'presence of mind'; it stands near and hence serves and guards the mind; (iii) *sati* 'calls to mind', that is, it remembers things in relationship to things and thus tends to know their value and widen the view; (iv) *sati* is thus closely related to wisdom; it naturally tends to seeing things as they truly are."

[93] SNa 13.35cd-36: *cintāpuṅkhā ratiphalā viṣayākāśagocarāḥ || manuṣyahariṇān ghnanti kāmavyādheritā hṛdi | vihanyante yadi na te tataḥ patanti taiḥ kṣatāḥ ||*.

[94] SNa 13.32-34: *dviṣadbhiḥ śatrubhiḥ kaś cit kadā cit pīḍyate na vā | indriyair bādhyate sarvaḥ sarvatra ca sadaiva ca || na ca prayāti narakaṃ śatruprabhṛtibhir hataḥ | kṛṣyate tatra nighnas tu capalair indriyair hataḥ || hanyamānasya tair*

Aśvaghoṣa's representation of the senses as arrows naturally leads us to his central metaphor for them, that of enemies (*ari*, *śatru*, SNa 13.32, 33, 38) who have to be defeated on the battlefield. These enemies or "archenemies" (*dgra bo chen po*, **mahāśatru*? BC 26.34, BC_{Tib} D90b4/P109a3) are portrayed as hostile (*dviṣat*, SNa 13.32) and ferocious (*viṣama*, SNa 9.46, BC 26.35, BC_{Tib} D90b4-5/P109a5 [*dgra bo ma ruṅs*]), as people wishing others' misfortune (*anarthakāmaḥ... janaḥ*, SNa 9.46) and in whose hands one suffers bitterly (*sdug bsṅal 'thob par 'gyur te*, BC 26.34, BC_{Tib} D90b4/P109a4) if one falls into their power (*dbaṅ du soṅ ba*, ibid.). One has to wage war (*kuruṣva yuddhaṃ saha... indriyaiḥ*, SNa 9.23) against their army, which is equipped with horses, chariots and elephants (*sāśvarathadvipa*, SNa 9.23), and crush it on the battlefield (*ajira*, SNa 13.37, *raṇājira*, SNa 17.23). However, men "may overcome foes, […] yet they are not counted such heroes as the wise men who overcome the six restless senses."[95] And indeed, "a man should not so fear an enemy, fire, a snake or a thunderbolt as he should his own senses; for the latter are ever aggressive."[96]

6.2. It does not come as a surprise, then, that Aśvaghoṣa's dominant metaphors for mindfulness revolve around battle and protection. SNa 13.36 warned men to ward off the arrows of the senses lest they fall pierced by them. In SNa 13.37, mindfulness becomes part of the fighter's equipment: "[The arrows] should be kept off as they fall by the strong man who stands on the battle-ground of self-control and is armed with the bow of steadfastness and the armour of mindfulness."[97] Armour (*varman*) is indeed Aśvaghoṣa's

---

duḥkhaṃ hārdaṃ bhavati vā na vā | indriyair bādhyamānasya hārdaṃ śārīram eva ca ||.

95 SNa 9.23: *tathā hi vīrāḥ puruṣā na te matā jayanti ye sāśvarathadvipān arīn | yathā matā vīratarā manīṣiṇo jayanti lolāni ṣaḍindriyāṇi ye ||.*

96 SNa 13.31: *bhetavyaṃ na tathā śatror nāgner nāher na cāśaneḥ | indriyebhyo yathā svebhyas tair ajasraṃ hi hanyate ||*. In BC 26.36 (BC_{Tib} D90b5-6/P109a5-6), Aśvaghoṣa speaks in a very similar fashion of the restless mind: *|raṅ gi g.yo ba'i sems las 'jigs*[a] *pa ji lta bar| |stag*[b] *rnams las daṅ sbrul daṅ 'bar ba'i me las daṅ| |dgra bo las ni de ltar 'jigs par mi bya ste| |gaṅ gis*[c] *sbraṅ rtsi daṅ ni yaṅ dag rtog pa med|*. [a]D: P *'jig*. [b]D: P *rtag*. [c]D: P *gi*. "One should not fear tigers or snakes or blazing fires or enemies in the world so much as one's own restless mind, which sees the honey but overlooks the danger (*śaṅkā*)."

97 SNa 13.37: *niyamājirasaṃsthena dhairyakārmukadhāriṇā | nipatanto nivāryās te mahatā smṛtivarmaṇā ||*. Translation Johnston 1932: 75, with "mindfulness" for "attention".

favourite metaphor for mindfulness, as is made clear, e.g., in SNa 14.38: "[H]e who lacks the armour of mindfulness is a target for the vices, as the unarmed man is a target on the battlefield for the enemy."[98] The metaphor recurs in the BC in a most eloquent way:

> When mindfulness is present, the faults do not enter into activity; there is no friend or protector equal to mindfulness, and if mindfulness is lost, all certainly is lost. Therefore do not lose hold of mindfulness directed toward the body. The firm in mind, putting on the armour of mindfulness towards the body, conduct themselves in the battlefield of the objects of sense like heroes, who gird on their armour and plunge fearlessly into the ranks of their foes.[99]

This applies, first and foremost, to Nanda himself, of whom Aśvaghoṣa declares that, "holding the bow of holy knowledge, girding on the armour of mindfulness and taking up his post on the chariot of the vows of pure discipline, he prepared for victory, ready to join battle with the foes of vices arrayed on the battlefield of the thoughts."[100] Mindfulness is further said to protect against the vices as a doorkeeper's (*dvārādhyakṣa*, SNa 14.36), being mindful of the door, guards (√*gup-*) a town (*pura*) from its foes (*ari*).[101] Other similes involving protection and guidance include mindfulness towards the body (*kāyagatā smṛtiḥ*, SNa 14.37) being regarded as guarding a

---

[98] SNa 14.38: *śaravyaḥ sa tu doṣāṇāṃ yo hīnaḥ smṛtivarmaṇā | raṇasthaḥ pratiśatrūṇāṃ vihīna iva varmaṇā* |. Translation Johnston 1932: 79, with "mindfulness" for "attention".

[99] BC 26.62-63 (BC_{Tib} D92a4-5/P110b8-111a2): |*dran pa yod na skyon rnams 'jug pa ma yin te*| |*dran pa daṅ mñam mdza' po med ciṅ bsruṅ ba med*| |*dran pa ñams las ṅes par thams cad ñams pa ste*| |*de phyir lus la soṅ ba'i dran pa spaṅ mi bya*| |*ji ltar dpa' po rnams ni go cha bzuṅ nas su*| |*dgra bo'i sde la 'jigs pa med rnams 'jug pa ste*| |*de bźin lus la dran pa'i go cha bgos nas su*| |*brtan pa rnams ni yul gyi g.yul rnams la spyod do*|. Translation Johnston 1984, part III: 99, with "mindfulness" for "awareness".

[100] SNa 17.23: *sajjñānacāpaḥ smṛtivarma baddhvā viśuddhaśīlavratavāhanasthaḥ | kleśāribhiś cittaraṇājirasthaiḥ sārdhaṃ yuyutsur vijayāya tasthau* ||. Translation Johnston 1932: 103–104, with "mindfulness" for "attentiveness". See also below, §8.2.

[101] The simile may be inspired from SN IV.194-195 (Bodhi 2000: 1252–1253) or, perhaps more likely, AN IV.110-111 (Bodhi 2012: 1078), both too long to be quoted here in full. See Anālayo 2003: 55–56, and especially Anālayo 2013: 28–30 (T. 99, 315c19-28 and T. 26, 423c14-29).

person's thoughts "in all circumstances, as a nurse guards a child" (*sarvāsv avasthāsu bālaṃ dhātrīva rakṣati*);[102] (s)he whose mind "is not guarded by mindfulness is to be recognised as unprotected, like a sightless man walking over uneven ground without a guide"[103]; finally, mindfulness goes after the virtues (*guṇa*), discipline (*śīla*), etc., "like a herdsman after his scattered cows" (*vikīrṇā iva gā gopaḥ*, SNa 14.41).[104]

6.3. The armour of mindfulness acts thus as protection against the arrows of the senses. As such, mindfulness is closely connected to the restraint of the senses (*indriyasaṃvara*) that forms an important part of morality (*śīla*).[105] For it is due to a wrong cognitive and affective reaction to sensory stimulation that false conceptions, erroneous decisions and hence bad actions and retributions take place. An important statement to this effect recurs with high frequency in the sūtras and is, as we shall see, the basis of Aśvaghoṣa's elaborations of restraint and mindfulness:

> On seeing a form with the eye, he does not grasp at its signs and features. Since, if he left the eye faculty unguarded, evil unwholesome states of covetousness and discontent might invade him, he practises the way of its restraint, he guards the eye faculty, he undertakes the restraint of the eye faculty. On hearing a sound with the ear… On smelling an odour with the nose… On tasting a flavour with the tongue… On touching a tangible with the body… On cognizing a mind-object with the mind, he does not grasp at its signs and features. Since, if he left the mind faculty unguarded, evil unwholesome

---

[102] The image, which I have been unable to trace in the canon, recurs in T. 614, 272a18-19; see Yamabe/Sueki 2009: 13.

[103] SNa 14.39: *anāthaṃ* […] *mano jñeyaṃ yat smṛtir nābhirakṣati | nirṇetā dṛṣṭirahito viṣameṣu carann iva ||*. Translation Johnston 1932: 79, with "mindfulness" for "attention". I have not succeeded in locating a canonical parallel.

[104] A very likely source for this simile is MN I.116-117: *seyyathā pi bhikkhave gimhānaṃ pacchime māse sabbasassesu gāmantasambhatesu gopālako gāvo rakkheyya, tassa rukkhumūlagatassa vā abbhokāsagatassa vā satikaraṇīyam – eva hoti: etā gāvo ti; evam eva kho bhikkhave satikaraṇīyam – eva ahosi: ete dhammā ti.* "Just as in the last month of the hot season, when all the crops have been brought inside the villages, a cowherd would guard his cows while staying at the root of a tree or out in the open, since he needs only to be mindful that the cows are there; so too, there was need for me only to be mindful that those states were there." Translation Ñāṇamoli/Bodhi 2001: 209; see also Anālayo 2003: 53 and Anālayo 2011, I: 139.

[105] On this aspect, see, e.g., Anālayo 2003: 50, 60 (and n. 71), 71, 122-123, 145, 225-226.

> states of covetousness and discontent might invade him, he practises the way of restraint, he guards the mind faculty, he undertakes the restraint of the mind faculty.[106]

Like several other scriptural statements on (non)restraint,[107] this sūtra makes no explicit mention of mindfulness. But while commenting on "he left the eye faculty unguarded", Buddhaghosa explains: "remained with eye door unclosed by the door panel of mindfulness" (*satikavāṭena* […] *apihita-cakkhudvāraṃ hutvā*, Vism I,56 [21,12-13], translation Ñāṇamoli 1991: 24); and commenting on "he practises the way of its restraint", he says: "he enters upon the way of closing that eye faculty by the door panel of mindfulness" (*tassa cakkhundriyassa satikavāṭena pidahanatthāya paṭipajjati*, Vism I,56 [21,15-16], translation Ñāṇamoli 1991: 24). In much the same way, other sūtras make the relationship between sense restraint and mindfulness quite explicit:

> And how, bhikkhus, is there nonrestraint? Here, having seen a form with the eye, a bhikkhu is intent upon a pleasing form and repelled by a displeasing form. He dwells without having set up mindfulness of the body, with a limited mind, and does not understand as it really is that liberation of mind, liberation by wisdom, wherein those evil unwholesome states cease without remainder. […] It is in such a way that there is nonrestraint. And how, bhikkhus, is there restraint? Here, having seen a form with the eye, a bhikkhu is not intent upon a pleasing form and not repelled by a displeasing form. He dwells having set up mindfulness of the body, with a measureless mind, and he understands as it really is that liberation of mind, liberation

[106] MN I.180-181: *so cakkhunā rūpaṃ disvā na nimittaggāhī hoti nānubyañjanaggāhī. yatvādhikaraṇam enaṃ cakkhundriyaṃ asaṃvutaṃ viharantaṃ abhijjhādomanassā pāpakā akusalā dhammā anvāssaveyyuṃ tassa saṃvarāya paṭipajjati rakkhati cakkhundriyaṃ cakkhundriye saṃvaraṃ āpajjati. sotena saddaṃ sutvā* […] *ghānena gandhaṃ ghāyitvā* […] *jivhāya rasaṃ sāyitvā* […] *kāyena phoṭṭhabbaṃ phusitvā* […] *manasā dhammaṃ viññāya na nimittaggāhī hoti nānubyañjanaggāhī. yatvādhikaraṇam enaṃ manindriyaṃ asaṃvutaṃ viharantaṃ abhijjhādomanassā pāpakā akusalā dhammā anvāssaveyyuṃ tassa saṃvarāya paṭipajjati. rakkhati manindriyaṃ manindriye saṃvaraṃ āpajjati.* Translation Ñāṇamoli/Bodhi 2001: 274. Parallels include MN I.223, 273, AN I.113, SN IV.104, 112, 176. See also Anālayo 2003: 225 (and n. 35). Buddhaghosa has devoted an important explanation to this passage in Vism I,53-59.

[107] See, e.g., SN IV.79-80 (Bodhi 2000: 1180–1181).

> by wisdom, wherein those evil unwholesome states cease without remainder. […] It is in such a way that there is restraint.[108]

The expression "door panel of mindfulness" (*smṛtikavāṭa*) used by Buddhaghosa is precisely the one Aśvaghoṣa resorts to in the present context: "Then, closing up the dam of the senses with the door panel of mindfulness […]" (*atha smṛtikavāṭena pidhāyendriyasaṃvaram*, SNa 16.1). The same type of relationship between restraint and mindfulness is suggested by another of Aśvaghoṣa's statements on the subject: "Then you should hold back your senses from their objects by resting upon mindfulness, since they are by nature restless."[109] Thus according to both Buddhaghosa and Aśvaghoṣa, mindfulness is the instrument of sense restraint, that which, so to say, prevents and neutralizes the conceptual and emotional (mis)appropriation of the raw sensory data. For of course, as Aśvaghoṣa insists, the senses cannot—and most certainly should not—be expected *not* to operate (√*vṛt*-) anymore (SNa 13.41ab).[110] Rather, they should not grasp (√*grah*-) the characteristics (*nimitta*) and the secondary marks (*anuvyañjana*) when something visible is seen by the eye (ālokya *cakṣuṣā rūpam*, SNa 13.42). In other words, upon seeing something visible, one should refrain from conceptualizing it *as a woman* or *as a man*—or, if one does (*sacet strīpuruṣagrāhaḥ*, SNa 13.43), one should at the very least abstain from "looking on their hair, teeth, etc., as beautiful" (*śubhataḥ keśadantādīn*

---

[108] SN IV.198 and 199-200: *kathañ ca bhikkhave asaṃvaro hoti. idha bhikkhave bhikkhu cakkhunā rūpaṃ disvā piyarūpe rūpe adhimuccati. appiyarūpe rūpe vyāpajjati. anupaṭṭhitakāyasatī ca viharati parittacetaso. tañca cettovimuttim paññāvimuttiṃ yathābhūtaṃ nappajānāti. yatthassa te uppannā pāpakā akusalā dhammā aparisesā nirujjhanti.* […] *evaṃ kho bhikkhave asaṃvaro hoti. kathañ ca bhikkhave saṃvaro hoti. idha bhikkhave bhikkhu cakkhunā rūpaṃ disvā piyarūpe rūpe nādhimuccati. appiyarūpe rūpe na vyāpajjati. upaṭṭhitakāyasatī ca viharati appamāṇacetaso. tañca cettovimuttim paññāvimuttiṃ yathābhūtaṃ pajānāti. yatthassa te uppannā pāpakā akusalā dhammā aparisesā nirujjhanti.* […] *evaṃ kho bhikkhave saṃvaro hoti.* Translation Bodhi 2000: 1255–1256. The whole sūtra with its simile of the six different animals (the six senses) and their respective dietary preferences (the six domains) as well as the role of mindfulness is relevant here.

[109] SNa 13.30: *tataḥ smṛtim adhiṣṭhāya capalāni svabhāvataḥ | indriyāṇīndriyārthebhyo nivārayitum arhasi |*. Translation Johnston 1932: 74, with "resting upon mindfulness" for "fixing your attention".

[110] See Anālayo 2003: 225 (referring to MN III.298, on which see also Anālayo 2011, II: 849).

anupra√sthā-, SNa 13.43). What should be avoided is not the per se unavoidable sense perception itself, but (mental) conceptualization (*manasaḥ parikalpaḥ*, SNa 13.49, 50, 53), false conceptualization (*abhūtaparikalpa*, SNa 13.51) or imaginings (*saṅkalpa*, SNa 13.35).[111] Upon perceiving something, one should care for (*vyavasthita*, or "limit oneself to") its component elements alone (*dhātumātra*, SNa 13.42) and keep to its true reality (*tattva*, SNa 13.45). In short, to quote a stanza that Mādhyamika authors from Nāgārjuna onward would be very fond of, "nothing should be subtracted from the object, nothing added to it; it is to be seen as it really is according to its nature and kind."[112] For according to Aśvaghoṣa, "the senses, even though in activity, do not adhere to their objects, so long as imaginations about the latter are not conceived in the mind."[113] Or, put in terms of dependent origination, "as fire flames when wind and fuel are both present, so the fire of defilements arises when the objects of the senses and imaginations about them are both present."[114]

6.4. Indeed, what is really at stake in restraining the senses and mindfulness as components of a Buddhist salvational dispositif is the elimination of the defilements (*kleśa*). Now both in the above-mentioned sūtra pericope and in the SNa, what is to be neutralised, or deprived of a foothold (*padasthāna*, SNa 13.45), is covetousness (*abhidhyā*) and discontent (*daurmanasya*), which SNa 13.46-47 defines in the following way:

---

111 See Yamabe 2003: 238–242, with abundant parallels and a discussion.

112 SNa 13.44: *nāpanetuṃ tataḥ kiñcit prakṣepyaṃ nāpi kiñcana | draṣṭavyaṃ bhūtato bhūtaṃ yādṛśaṃ ca yathā ca yat* ‖. On this stanza, see La Vallée Poussin 1932: 393–395. Stanza 7 of (Nāgārjuna's?) *Pratītyasamutpādahṛdaya* reads as follows: *nāpaneyam ataḥ kiñcit prakṣeptavyaṃ na kiñcana | draṣṭavyaṃ bhūtato bhūtaṃ bhūtadarśī vimucyate* ‖. "Nothing should be subtracted from the [object], nothing added to it; it is to be seen as it really is, [for] he who sees it as it really is is liberated." To be connected with Ud 8: *diṭṭhe diṭṭhamattaṃ bhavissati, sute sutamattaṃ bhavissati, mute mutamattaṃ bhavissati, viññāte viññātamattaṃ bhavissati*. "When in the seen will be only what is seen, in the heard only what is heard, in the sensed only what is sensed, in the known only what is known […]." Translation Anālayo 2003: 230. Anālayo 2003: 229–232 also refers to Sn 793, 798, 802, 812, and 914, MN III.30, MN I.136 and MN III.261.

113 SNa 13.49: *nendriyaṃ viṣaye tāvat pravṛttam api sajjate | yāvan na manasas tatra parikalpitaḥ pravartate* ‖.

114 SNa 13.50: *indhane sati vāyau ca yathā jvalati pāvakaḥ | viṣayāt parikalpāc ca kleśāgnir jāyate tathā* ‖. Translation Johnston 1932: 76, with "defilements" for "sin".

> Covetousness destroys the passion-filled world by means of attractive forms, like an enemy with friendly face, having pleasant words on his lips and evil in his heart. But what is known as discontent is repulsion with regard to any object; by giving way to it out of delusion a man is ruined in this world and hereafter.[115]

As Aśvaghoṣa's reference to *kāma* and his gloss of *daurmanasya* as *pratigha* make sufficiently clear, covetousness and discontent stand here for desire[116] (*rāga*; *lobha*, "greed") and hostility/hatred (*dveṣa*), the two roots of evil traditionally regarded, together with *moha* ("delusion"), as the source of all other faults and vices. In other words, the type of sense restraint made possible by mindfulness prevents the defilements ultimately conditioned by delusion (*moha*, i.e., *avidyā* or "nescience") from occurring and hence triggering detrimental actions and rebirth. The cognitional, moral and eschatological aspects of sense restraint and mindfulness are best expounded in the concluding stanzas of canto 13:

> On seeing a certain form one man is attracted, another dislikes it and a third is indifferent, while yet another feels compassionate disgust for the same object. Hence an object of the senses is not of itself a determining cause either of bondage or of emancipation. Association with a special imagination may make it such or it may not. Therefore one should strive one's hardest for the control of the senses; for unguarded senses lead to suffering and the continuance of existence.[117]

---

[115] SNa 13.46-47: *abhidhyā priyarūpeṇa hanti kāmātmakaṃ jagat | arir mitramukheneva priyavāk kaluṣāśayaḥ || daurmanasyābhidhānas tu pratigho viṣayāśritaḥ | mohād yenānuvṛttena paratreha ca hanyate ||*. Translation Johnston 1932: 76, with "Covetousness" for "The desire of possession", and "discontent" for "desire of avoidance".

[116] See SN II.271 (Bodhi 2000: 711), and MN I.462, DN II.141, Anālayo 2003: 57, as well as, for a more detailed (involving *ayoniśomanasikāra*) SĀ parallel (T. 99, 345c14-17), Anālayo 2013: 22.

[117] SNa 13.52-54: *dṛṣṭvaikaṃ rūpam anyo hi rajyate 'nyaḥ praduṣyati | kaścid bhavati madhyasthas tatraivānyo ghṛṇāyate || ato na viṣayo hetur bandhāya na vimuktaye | parikalpaviśeṣeṇa saṅgo bhavati vā na vā || kāryaḥ paramayatnena tasmād indriyasaṃvaraḥ | indriyāṇi hy aguptāni duḥkhāya ca bhavāya ca ||*.

7. *Yoga*, *samādhi* and *bhāvanā*

7.1. Aśvaghoṣa devotes important parts of cantos 15 and 16 of the SNa to the issue of "meditation" or "cultivation" (*bhāvanā*). As suggested by the dominant metaphor for this topic, the refining of gold by the goldsmith,[118] mental cultivation consists of various procedures (or methods, *vidhi*, SNa 16.6; *krama*, SNa 16.70) aimed at eliminating defilements (*kleśa*), faults (*doṣa*) as well as unwholesome/bad (*aśubha*, SNa 16.70, 73; *asat*, SNa 16.82; *akuśala*, SNa 16.77) thoughts (*vitarka*).[119] The good practice[120] (*guṇavān prayogaḥ*, SNa 16.70; *samyakprayoga*, SNa 16.71) of mental cultivation is a daunting task insofar as the habit of these thoughts has become very strong (*svabhyastabhāva*, SNa 16.70) due to their being accumulated from a beginningless time (*anādikālocitātmaka*, SNa 16.71). The various meditative procedures described in this passage are nothing but *yoga* (SNa 16.49, 52, 86, 92), the path (*mārga*, SNa 16.85-86) for the elimination of the defilements (*kleśaprahāṇa*, SNa 16.86) which, via the attainment of the four *dhyāna*s and the six *abhijñā*s (SNa 16.1-2), leads to the "seisin of the noble Truths" (*āryasatyādhigama*, SNa 16.85). From a psychological point of view, Aśvaghoṣa's ideas on the topic rely on two basic doctrines, that of the *anuśaya*s ("[latent] tendencies", "proclivities" of the defilements), which he understands in a way that strongly echoes Sautrāntika/Dārṣṭāntika/Yogācāra, i.e., non-Vaibhāṣika interpretations, and that of the *pratipakṣa*s ("counteragents"), which relies on the opposition between the defilements and their respective antidotes.[121] From a text-historical point of view, Aśvaghoṣa's elaborations on the subject can be shown to be little more than a recast of various sūtras whose recensions have been preserved in the *Aṅguttara-*, the *Saṃyutta-* and the *Majjhimanikāya* as well as in the *Madhyamāgama* and the *Saṃyuktāgama*.[122] This does not come as a surprise, however, for Aśvaghoṣa

---

[118] For an in-depth study of this metaphor in the SNa, see Covill 2009: 184–214.

[119] On *vitarka* in the context of "purgative" cultivation, see MN I.118-122 (Ñāṇamoli/Bodhi 2001: 211–214, Anālayo 2011, I: 140–143, and Anālayo 2013: 149–154).

[120] *Prayoga* occurs very frequently in the context of Buddhist meditation in the sense of "exercise" ("*Übung*"); it is, then, semantically very close to *parīkṣā*, "consideration, contemplation" ("*Betrachtung*"). See Schlingloff 1964: 26–29, and n. 4, p. 29.

[121] On counterbalancing unwholesome factors with wholesome ones, see Anālayo 2003: 192–200 and 2013: 149–159.

[122] Aśvaghoṣa borrows the overall structure of his account from a sūtra that was very

puts the entire exposition in the mouth of the Buddha, who is traditionally regarded as having full command of the revelation of salvific means and their judicious application:[123]

> Thus the Blessed One spoke to him of the right plan and of abandoning the wrong one and, knowing all the varieties of behaviour, He further explained the processes for the elimination of thought. As the physician prescribes the treatment for the cure of disease according to which one of the three humours it is that has become deranged, so the Buddha prescribed the treatment for the faults.[124]

7.2.1. SNa 15.5-6 have been shown by Honjō and Yamabe to reflect an interpretation of *anuśaya*s that contradicts the orthodox Vaibhāṣika doctrine according to which no distinction between actual (the so-called *paryavasthāna*)

---

similar in wording to AN I.253-258 and SĀ no. 1246. Both the SNa and the sūtra open with a detailed comparison between the goldsmith refining gold and the yogin cleansing his mind (SNa 15.66-69; AN I.253-255 [Bodhi 2012: 335–336]; T. 99, 341b26-c24 [Anālayo 2013: 155–156]). The simile extends to the result of the two operations, i.e., reaching such a wieldiness of gold that "whatever kind of ornament the goldsmith wishes to make from it […] he can achieve his purpose", and such a malleability of mind that the yogin "is capable of realizing any state realizable by direct knowledge toward which he might incline his mind". Like his model, but in a much shorter way, Aśvaghoṣa then turns to the six supernatural knowledges (*abhijñā*) that are now within easy reach for the yogin's mind (SNa 16.1-2; AN I.255-256). After a short introduction (SNa 16.49-52; SNa 16.3-48, which are mostly dedicated to the four nobles' truths and insight into them, are entirely independent from the AN/SĀ passage), Aśvaghoṣa deals with the pragmatics of meditation and the choice of a meditation subject, which he does first by following the AN/SĀ and its exposition of the three *nimitta*s to be chosen by a yogin according to his psychological dispositions (SNa 16.53-58; AN I.256-257), then by drawing on additional sūtras on the same topic (SNa 16.59-64; SN V.112-115; MN I.424-425, on which see Anālayo 2011, I: 349–352). Aśvaghoṣa then reverts to the AN/SĀ passage and borrows its second formulation of the goldsmith-yogin simile (SNa 16.65-66; AN I.257). The last part of his exposition, which takes place after a short transition (SNa 16.67-69) is modelled on yet another sūtra of the MN/MĀ; it deals with the dangers inherent in the choice of a wrong subject of meditation (SNa 16.70-83; MN I.119-122/MĀ no. 101).

123 See SN V.112, one of Aśvaghoṣa's sources, and Bodhi 2000: 1605.

124 SNa 16.68-69: *ity evam anyāyanivartanaṃ ca nyāyaṃ ca tasmai sugato babhāṣe | bhūyaś ca tat tac caritaṃ viditvā vitarkahānāya vidhīn uvāca || yathā bhiṣak pittakaphānilānāṃ ya eva kopaṃ samupaiti doṣaḥ | śamāya tasyaiva vidhiṃ vidhatte vyadhatta doṣeṣu tathaiva buddhaḥ ||*.

and virtual (the *anuśaya*s proper) forms of the defilements can be justified.[125] Suspensive wisdom[126] (*pratisaṅkhyāna*, SNa 15.4) of any kind only neutralizes the actual occurrence of the defilements, not their root (*mūla*, SNa 15.7), their seed (*bīja*) or their proclivity (*anuśaya*), which mental cultivation alone can destroy. But what should be cultivated in order to uproot them? Their antidote, because all negative psychological events or thoughts (*akuśalā dharmāḥ*/*vitarkāḥ*) stand in opposition (*virodha*, SNa 15.13) to a specific counteragent which is capable of weakening and ultimately eliminating them. For just as "through habit a man's thoughts become inclined to whatever he reflects on continually" (SNa 15.18), this person will eliminate this if (s)he repeatedly practises the opposite thought. In SNa 15.12-19, Aśvaghoṣa expounds the counteragency principle by discussing the examples of malevolence (*vyāpāda*) and desire to hurt (*vihiṃsā*) as opposed to benevolence (*maitrī*) and compassion (*karuṇā*)[127]; other examples include muddied water (*ākulaṃ jalam*) and a jewel (*maṇi*, SNa 15.12), light (*prakāśa*) and darkness (*tamas*), wedge (*kīla*) and counter-wedge (*pratikīla*, SNa 15.29),[128] and disease (*gada*) and antidote (*agada*, SNa 15.65).[129]

7.2.2. Aśvaghoṣa's treatment of mental cultivation opens with the following simile:

> Just as a man, who washes dirt to obtain gold, first eliminates the grosser pieces of dirt and then the finer ones for its cleansing and, having cleansed it, retains the particles of gold, [s]o the man, who has concentrated his mind for the sake of emancipation, first eliminates

[125] See above, §1.2, and Yamabe 2003: 231–234.

[126] On *pratisaṅkhyā(na)*, see Eltschinger 2014a: 287–289, and n. 151, p. 288, for definitions and references.

[127] See MN I.424, T. 125, 581c-582c, and Anālayo 2011, I: 349.

[128] See also SNa 16.72, below, n. 148.

[129] In SNa 15.30-63, Aśvaghoṣa successively considers the counteragents of thoughts regarding the prosperity and adversity of one's kinsfolk (*jñātijana*, SNa 15.30-41), one's country (*janapada*, SNa 15.42-51), and one's own life and person (SNa 15.52-63). This provides additional evidence for Aśvaghoṣa's indebtedness to a passage very close to AN I.254, which terms "subtle defilements" (*upakkilesa*) to be thoughts "about [one's] relations, thoughts about [one's] country, and thoughts about [one's] reputation" (*jātivitakko janapadavitakko anavaññattipaṭisaṃyutto vitakko*; according to Bodhi [2012: 1668, n. 557], the Chinese parallel at SĀ [T. 99, 341c12-13] reads "thought about rebirth in heaven" [生天覺]; see Anālayo 2013: 156).

> the grosser vices and then the subtler ones to cleanse his mind and, having cleansed it, retains the constituents of the Law. Just as the goldsmith in this world heats in the fire and turns over repeatedly the gold, after it has been gradually separated from the dirt by washing it with water, so the Yoga adept cleanses his mind from the defilements till it is completely separated from the sins in this world, and then he brings it to tranquillity and concentrates it. And as the goldsmith at his will reduces the gold in many ways so as to be easy to work in the various kinds of ornaments, so when the mendicant's mind is cleansed and has also secured control of the supernatural sciences, he reduces it to tranquillity and employs it as he will and where he will.[130]

Let us now turn to Aśvaghoṣa's short introduction to the topic of mental cultivation in SNa 16.49-52:

> And he who has set his mind on the abolition of the defilements must consider the time and the method; for even Yoga, when practised out of season and by the wrong method, leads to calamity and not to its proper result. For if a man should milk a cow which has not calved, he would not obtain milk, because he would be milking at the wrong season; or again, given the right season, he would not obtain milk if through ignorance he were to milk a cow by the horn. And a man who wants a fire will not obtain one from damp wood, however much he tries, nor because of using the wrong method will he obtain a fire even from dry wood, if he merely throws it down.[131] Examining duly

---

[130] SNa 15.66-69: *suvarṇahetor api pāṃsudhāvako vihāya pāṃsūn bṛhato yathāditaḥ | jahāti sūkṣmān api tadviśuddhaye viśodhya hemāvayavān niyacchati || vimokṣa-hetor api yuktamānaso vihāya doṣān bṛhatas tathāditaḥ | jahāti sūkṣmān api tadviśuddhaye viśodhya dharmāvayavān niyacchati || krameṇādbhiḥ śuddhaṃ kanakam iha pāṃsuvyavahitam yathāgnau karmāraḥ pacati bhṛśam āvartayati ca | tathā yogācāro nipuṇam iha doṣavyavahitaṃ viśodhya kleśebhyaḥ śamayati manaḥ saṅkṣipati ca || yathā ca svacchandād upanayati karmāśrayasukhaṃ suvarṇaṃ karmāro bahuvidham alaṅkāravidhiṣu | manaḥśuddho bhikṣur vaśagatam abhijñāsv api tathā | yathecchaṃ yatrecchaṃ śamayati manaḥ prerayati ca ||*. Translation Johnston 1932: 87, with "defilements" for "vices".

[131] As Johnston (1932: 94, n. 50) remarks, Aśvaghoṣa may have borrowed these two similes from III.141-142 (see Ñāṇamoli/Bodhi 2001: 999); see also MSABh 4,13-15 (see Lévi 1911: 9–10). For the parallel in MĀ no. 173 and a useful comparative chart of the similes, see Anālayo 2011, II: 724–725.

> the conditions of time and place as well as the scope and method of Yoga, a man should strive his utmost while having regard to the strong and weak points of his self and not doing what is contrary thereto.[132]

With its emphasis on timeliness and expediency, this short introduction again reveals Aśvaghoṣa's indebtedness to AN I.253-258/SĀ no. 1246, a sūtra in which the Buddha spells out some of the requirements of mental concentration. To this end, the Blessed One mentions three *nimitta*s ("subjects of meditation," Johnston 1932: 94, n. 58)[133]: *samādhinimitta*, "subject of meditation inducing concentration"; *paggāhanimitta*, "subject of meditation inducing exertion/energy"; and *upekkhānimitta*, "subject of meditation inducing equanimity".[134] The Buddha warns the monks against practising any of these *nimitta*s exclusively (*ekānta*); rather, they should pick them up alternately, practising each of them "from time to time" (*kālena kālam*). The alternate cultivation of these three *nimitta*s most likely corresponds to the time (*kāla*) and the expedient (*abhyupāya*) Aśvaghoṣa has in mind in this passage which, as we have seen, he puts in the mouth of the Buddha prescribing the "right plan" or method (*nyāya*).[135] But Aśvaghoṣa's introduc-

---

[132] SNa 16.49-52: *kleśaprahāṇāya ca niścitena kālo 'bhyupāyaś ca parīkṣitavyaḥ | yogo 'py akāle hy anupāyataś ca bhavaty anarthāya na tadguṇāya || ajātavatsāṃ yadi gāṃ duhīta naivāpnuyāt kṣīram akāladohī | kāle 'pi vā syān na payo labheta mohena śṛṅgād yadi gāṃ duhīta || ārdrāc ca kāṣṭhāj jvalanābhikāmo naiva prayatnād api vahnim ṛcchet | kāṣṭhāc ca śuṣkād api pātanena naivāgnim āpnoty anupāyapūrvam || taddeśakālau vidhivat parīkṣya yogasya mātrām api cābhyupāyam | balābale cātmani sampradhārya kāryaḥ prayatno na tu tadviruddhaḥ ||*. Translation Johnston 1932: 94, with "defilements" for "vices".

[133] For another use of *nimitta* in the context of Buddhist meditation, see Schlingloff 1964: 47-49, and n. 6, p. 47. On *nimitta*, see Deleanu 2006: II.473, n. 17, and Anālayo 2003: 237, n. 21. Deleanu proposes the following definition: "In its basic usage, *nimitta* refers to the characteristic(s)/mark(s)/sign(s) (as directly perceived but more often as defined *a priori* by the Buddhist doctrine) which is/are grasped and internalised through meditation or reflection." Note also Schmithausen 1982: 63, n. 15a: "Der Terminus *nimitta* bezeichnet […] zunächst das charakteristische Merkmal oder die typische Erscheinungsform des als Übungsobjekt gewählten (äußeren) Gegenstandes, das man zu Beginn der Übung 'aufnimmt' (*(ud-)grah-*), oder einfach dieser selbst."

[134] On the three *nimitta*s, see also ŚrBh I.54,12-13 and 56,9-10 (*śamathanimitta*, *pragrahanimitta*, *upekṣānimitta*).

[135] See also SNa 16.67. In addition, SNa 16.52 mentions place (*deśa*) and "scope"

tion also mentions untimeliness (*akāla*) and the need, for the yogin, to adapt the method to his own strengths and weaknesses, i.e., to his psychological dispositions (in SNa 16.68, the Buddha is said to know "all the varieties of behaviour", *tat tac caritaṃ viditvā*).[136] These two features of his introduction to *samādhi* are missing in AN I.253-258, but appear in SN V.112-115, a sūtra addressing a similar topic. This sūtra does not allude to the three *nimitta*s, but speaks instead of *(sam)bojjhaṅga*s ("factors of awakening[137]"), distinguishing two sets of them: on the one hand, *passaddhi* ("tranquillity", Skt. *praśrabdhi*), *samādhi* ("concentration"), *upekkhā* ("equanimity", Skt. *upekṣā*), and on the other hand *dhammapavicaya* ("discrimination of states/factors", Skt. *dharmapravicaya*), *viriya* ("energy", Skt. *vīrya*), and *pīti* ("rapture", Skt. *prīti*). Whereas using the first set of factors is untimely when one's mind is sluggish (*līna*) and the second, when one's mind is excited (*uddhata*), using the first set of factors is appropriate when the mind is excited and the second, when the mind is sluggish.[138] Contrary to AN I.253-258, SN V.112-115 relates the prescribed subjects of meditation to different states of mind; in addition, SN V.112-115 adduces examples for each case examined. As I mentioned above, the overall structure of SNa 15.66-69 and 16.49-69 is borrowed from AN I.253-258. In SNa 16.53-58, which immediately follows the above-quoted introduction, Aśvaghoṣa merges the two sūtras in the following way: the threefold *nimitta*-structure and terminology is maintained, but it is now distributed into the psychological dispositions of SN V.112-115, themselves subdivided into timely and untimely; the examples are drawn mostly from the SN passage:

> But when the soul is excited, he should not resort to the subject of meditation known as "inducing energy"; for thus the mind does not

(*mātrā*, Johnston; "extent", Covill 2007: 305). Whereas the precise meaning of the latter remains unclear to me (does it refer to the "measure", i.e., to the duration of the practice?), the former may refer to solitary places such as a forest, which Aśvaghoṣa evokes several times in the SNa. See also SNa 15.1-2, SNa 14.46-52, and SNa 16.84-86.

136 The *locus classicus* for the adaptation of meditation subjects to the various temperaments is Vism III.121; see also AKBh 337,9-341,6 and *Kośa* IV.148-158.

137 On the *bodhyaṅga*s/*bojjhaṅga*s, see also below, §8.2.

138 For a parallel in the SĀ, see T. 99, 191c25-192a23, translated in Anālayo 2013: 202; see also Anālayo 2003: 235–239.

reach tranquillity, as fire fanned by [the wind] does not die down.[139] It is when the mind is excited that it is the time for the subject of meditation which is prescribed for tranquillity; for thus the thoughts can assume tranquillity, as a blazing fire would be quenched by water.[140] When the mind is sluggish, he should not resort to the subject of meditation for inducing tranquillity; for thus the mind becomes still more sluggish, like a fire of little substance when not fanned.[141] It is

---

[139] Cf. SN V.114: *seyyathāpi bhikkhave puriso mahantam aggikhandhaṃ nibbāpetukāmo assa. so tattha sukkhāni ceva tiṇāni pakkhipeyya sukkhāni gomayāni pakkhipeyya sukkhāni ca kaṭṭhāni pakkhipeyya mukhavātañca dadeyya na ca paṃsukena okireyya. bhabbo nu kho so puriso mahantam aggikhandhaṃ nibbāpetun ti. no hetam bhante. evam eva* […]. "Suppose, bhikkhus, a man wants to extinguish a great bonfire. If he throws dry grass, dry cowdung, and dry timber into it, blows on it, and does not scatter soil over it, would he be able to extinguish that great bonfire? – No, venerable sir. – So too, bhikkhus […]." Translation Bodhi 2000: 1606. T. 99, 192a6-7: 譬如熾火欲令其滅。足其乾薪。於意云何。豈不令火增熾燃耶。"It is just as a blazing fire which one wants to extinguish by adding dry firewood. What do you think, would the fire not burn even more?" Translation Anālayo 2013: 202.

[140] Cf. SN V.114: *seyyathāpi bhikkhave puriso mahantam aggikhandhaṃ nibbāpetukāmo assa. so tattha allāni ceva tiṇāni pakkhipeyya allāni ca gomayāni pakkhipeyya allāni ca kaṭṭhāni pakkhipeyya udakavātañca dadeyya. paṃsukena ca okireyya. bhabbo nu kho so puriso mahantam aggikhandhaṃ nibbāpetun ti. evam bhante. evam eva* […]. "Suppose, bhikkhus, a man wants to extinguish a great bonfire. If he throws wet grass, wet cowdung, and wet timber into it, sprays it with water, and scatters soil over it, would he be able to extinguish that great bonfire? – Yes, venerable sir. – So too, bhikkhus […]." Translation Bodhi 2000: 1607. T. 99, 192a19-20: 譬如燃火欲令其滅。足其燋炭。彼火則滅。"It is just as a blazing fire that one wants to extinguish by adding burned-out charcoal. That fire will indeed die out." Translation Anālayo 2013: 203.

[141] Cf. SN V.112-113: *seyyathāpi bhikkhave puriso parittam aggim ujjāletukāmo assa. so tattha allāni ceva tiṇāni pakkhipeyya allāni ca gomayāni pakkhipeyya allāni ca kaṭṭhāni pakkhipeyya udakavātañca dadeyya paṃsukāna ca okireyya bhabbo nu kho so puriso parittam aggim ujjāletum. no hetam bhante. evam eva* […]. "Suppose, bhikkhus, a man wants to make a small fire flare up. If he throws wet grass, wet cowdung, and wet timber into it, sprays it with water, and scatters soil over it, would he be able to make that small fire flare up? – No, venerable sir. – So too, bhikkhus […]." Translation Bodhi 2000: 1605–1606. T. 99, 191c28-192a1: 譬如小火。欲令其燃增以燋炭。云何比丘。非爲增炭令火滅耶。"It is just as a small fire that one wants to flare up by adding burned-out charcoal. What do you think, O monks, would adding [burned-out] charcoal not make the fire die out?" Translation Anālayo 2013: 202.

> when the mind is sluggish that it is the time for the subject of meditation prescribed for inducing energy; for thus the mind can become capable of action, like a sinking fire through fuel.[142] The subject of meditation inducing indifference is not recommended when the thoughts are either sluggish or excited; for thus it might bring about a grievous calamity, like the illness of a sick man if it is neglected. When the thoughts have attained equilibrium, then is the time for the subject of meditation inducing indifference; for thus there would be application to the duty in hand, like a chariot starting off with well-trained horses.[143]

Aśvaghoṣa has more such cases to present, however; these he borrows for the most part from MN I.424-425. The cases considered here are also three. That the former ones amounted to three was obviously due to the fact that Aśvaghoṣa conformed to the three-*nimitta* structure of AN I.253-258. The rationale behind the number of the new cases is to be sought in the fact that they refer to persons afflicted with the three basic defilements of desire (*rāga*), malevolence (*vyāpāda*, or hatred/hostility,

---

[142] Cf. SN V.113: *seyyathāpi bhikkhave puriso parittam aggim ujjāletukāmo assa. so tattha sukkhāni ceva tiṇāni pakkhipeyya sukkhāni gomayāni pakkhipeyya sukkhāni kaṭṭhāni pakkhipeyya. mukhavātañca dadeyya paṃsukena okireyya. bhabbo nu kho so puriso parittam aggim ujjāletun ti. evam bhante. evam eva* […]. "Suppose, bhikkhus, a man wants to make a small fire flare up. If he throws dry grass, dry cow-dung, and dry timber into it, blows on it, and does not scatter soil over it, would he be able to make that small fire flare up? – Yes, venerable sir. – So too, bhikkhus […]." Translation Bodhi 2000: 1606. T. 99, 192a12-14: 譬如小火欲令其燃足其乾薪。云何比丘。此火寧熾燃不。"It is just as a small fire that one wants to get to flare up by adding dry firewood. What do you think, O monks, will this fire flare up and burn?" Translation Anālayo 2013: 203.

[143] SNa 16.53-58: *pragrāhakaṃ yat tu nimittam uktam uddhanyamāne hṛdi tan na sevyam | evaṃ hi cittaṃ praśamaṃ na yāti [---]nā vahnir iveryamāṇaḥ || śamāya yat syān niyataṃ nimittaṃ jātodbhave cetasi tasya kālaḥ | evaṃ hi cittaṃ praśamaṃ niyacchet pradīpyamāno 'gnir ivodakena || śamāvahaṃ yan niyataṃ nimittaṃ sevyaṃ na tac cetasi līyamāne | evaṃ hi bhūyo layam eti cittam anīryamāṇo 'gnir ivālpasāraḥ || pragrāhakaṃ yan niyataṃ nimittaṃ layaṃ gate cetasi tasya kālaḥ | kriyāsamarthaṃ hi manas tathā syān mandāyamāno 'gnir ivendhanena || aupekṣikaṃ nāpi nimittam iṣṭaṃ layaṃ gate cetasi sodbhave vā | evaṃ hi tīvraṃ janayed anartham upekṣito vyādhir ivāturasya || yat syād upekṣā niyataṃ nimittaṃ sāmyaṃ gate cetasi tasya kālaḥ | evaṃ hi kṛtyāya bhavet prayogo ratho vidheyāśva iva prayātaḥ ||.

dveṣa) and delusion (*moha*), which parallel the three roots of demerit (*akuśalamūla*, i.e., greed, *lobha*, hatred, and delusion) and can be easily compared with persons subject to the three "humours" of Indian medicine, i.e., phlegm (*śleṣman*, *kapha*), bile (*pitta*), and wind (*vāta*).[144] Here is the passage in question:

> When the mind is disturbed by the excitement of desire, the method of cultivating the idea of benevolence should be avoided; for the man of passionate nature goes wrong through benevolence, like a man disturbed by phlegm through unctuous treatment. But when the mind is excited by desire, the subject of meditation called "impure" should be selected so as to reach steadfastness; for thus the man of passionate nature obtains relief, like the man subject to phlegm who uses astringent remedies. But when the mind is agitated by the vice of malevolence, do not choose the subject of meditation known as "impure"; for that meditation tends to the destruction of the man whose nature is full of hate, just as pungent treatment does for the man of bilious temperament. But when the mind is troubled by the vice of malevolence, practise thoughts of benevolence by considering the application [of hurt] to yourself; for benevolence tends to tranquillising the nature full of hate, like cooling treatment the man of bilious temperament. When the working of the mind is subject to delusion, the subjects of benevolence and impurity are unsuitable; for from them a man is overtaken by further delusion, as a man of windy temperament is overtaken by further unconsciousness, if given astringent treatment. When the working of the mind is affected by delusion, the subject of reflection should be causality; for this is

[144] Remember that the Buddha prescribing the right method of eliminating polluting and evil thoughts was compared with a physician prescribing "the treatment for the cure of disease according to which one of the three humours it is that has become deranged" (SNa 16.69; see above, n. 124). Aśvaghoṣa's examples, the origin of which I am unaware of, become intelligible once one knows that each humour has three dominant properties: phlegm is cold (*śīta*), unctuous (*snigdha*), and heavy (*guru*), hence weakened/eliminated by a dry (*rūkṣa*) treatment, and strengthened by an unctuous one; wind is cold, dry, and light (*laghu*), hence weakened/eliminated by an unctuous treatment, and strengthened by a dry one; finally, bile is hot (*uṣṇa*), pungent and strong (*tīkṣṇa*), hence weakened/eliminated by a cold treatment, and strengthened by a strong one.

the path to peace for the deluded mind, like unctuous treatment for the man of windy temperament.[145]

[145] SNa 16.59-64: *rāgoddhavavyākulite 'pi citte maitropasaṃhāravidhir na kāryaḥ | rāgātmako muhyati maitrayā hi snehaṃ kaphakṣobha ivopayujya || rāgoddhate cetasi dhairyam etya niṣevitavyaṃ tv aśubhaṃ nimittam | rāgātmako hy evam upaiti śarma kaphātmako rūkṣam ivopayujya || vyāpādadoṣeṇa manasy udīrṇe na sevitavyaṃ tv aśubhaṃ nimittam | dveṣātmakasya hy aśubhā vadhāya pittātmanas tīkṣṇa ivopacāraḥ || vyāpādadoṣakṣubhite tu citte sevyā svapakṣopanayena maitrī | dveṣātmano hi praśamāya maitrī pittātmanaḥ śīta ivopacāraḥ || mohānubaddhe manasaḥ pracāre maitrāśubhā caiva bhavaty ayogaḥ | tābhyāṃ hi sammoham upaiti bhūyo vāyvātmako rūkṣam ivopanīya || mohātmikāyāṃ manasaḥ pravṛttau sevyas tv idampratyayatāvihāraḥ | mūḍhe manasy eṣa hi śāntimārgo vāyvātmake snigdha ivopacāraḥ ||*. Translation Johnston 1932: 95, with "desire" for "passion." SNa 16.59-64 can be usefully compared with ŚrBh I.50,14-52,1: *katham anurūpa ālambane cittam upanibadhnāti | saced revata bhikṣur yogī yogācāro rāgacarita eva sann aśubhālambane cittam upanibadhnāti |* […] *dveṣacarito vā punar maitryām | mohacarito vedampratyayatāpratītyasamutpāde | mānacarito vā dhātuprabhede | saced revata sa bhikṣur yogī yogācāro vitarkacarita eva sann ānāpānasmṛtau cittam upanibadhnāti | evaṃ so 'nurūpa ālambane cittam upanibadhnāti |*. "How does [the monk, the yogin, the yoga-practitioner] fix his mind on the proper object-support? O Revata, the monk, the yogin, the yoga-practitioner, if he is inclined to desire, fixes his mind on the loathsome as an object-support. Or [if] he is inclined to hatred, on benevolence; or [if] he is inclined to delusion, on causality and dependent origination; or [if] he is inclined to conceit, on the division [of what seemingly exists] into [constitutive] elements; O Revata, the monk, the yogin, the yoga-practitioner, if he is inclined to [distracting and polluting] thoughts, fixes his mind on being mindful of breathing in and out." As remarked by Johnston, Aśvaghoṣa's description of the treatment of the deluded mind by means of causality (*idampratyayatā*) has no clear equivalent in MN I.424-425. In my opinion, Aśvaghoṣa likely conflated the antidote to delusion and the antidote to doubt as it is prescribed in a SĀ passage such as T. 99, 192c14-16: 何等爲疑蓋不食。彼緣起法思惟。未生疑蓋不起。已生疑蓋令滅。"What is the de-nourishment from the hindrance of doubt? Giving attention to dependent arising, the not yet arisen hindrance of doubt does not arise, the already arisen hindrance of doubt is removed." Translation Anālayo 2013: 184. Note also AN IV.358 (quoted Vism III.122 as part of the *Meghiya Sutta*): *bhikkhunā* […] *cattāro dhammā uttariṃ bhāvetabbā. asubhā bhāvetabbā rāgassa pahānāya mettā bhāvetabbā vyāpādassa pahānāya ānāpānasati bhāvetabbā vitakkūpacchedāya aniccasaññā bhāvetabbā asmimānasamugghātāya. aniccasaññino* […] *anattasaññā saṇṭhāti anattasaññī asmimānasamugghātaṃ pāpuṇāti diṭṭh'eva dhamme nibbānan ti*. "The bhikkhu should develop further [another] four things. [The perception of] unattractiveness should be developed to abandon lust. Loving kindness should be developed to abandon ill will. Mindfulness of breathing should be developed to cut

AN I.253-258 ends with a comparison between the choice of a subject of meditation by the yogin and the goldsmith's concern for the proper operations in his treatment of gold:

> Suppose, bhikkhus, a goldsmith or his apprentice would prepare a furnace, heat up the crucible, take some gold with tongs, and put it into the crucible. Then from time to time he would blow on it, from time to time sprinkle water over it, and from time to time just look on. If the goldsmith or his apprentice were to exclusively blow on the gold, it is possible that the gold would just burn up. If he were to exclusively sprinkle water on the gold, it is possible the gold would cool down. If he were exclusively to look on, it is possible the gold would not reach the right consistency. But if the goldsmith or his apprentice from time to time blows on it, from time to time sprinkles water over it, and from time to time just looks on, the gold would become malleable, wieldy, and luminous, pliant and properly fit for work. Then whatever kind of ornament the goldsmith wishes to make from it—whether a bracelet, earrings, a necklace, or a golden garland—he can achieve his purpose.[146]

---

off thoughts. The perception of impermanence should be developed to eradicate the conceit 'I am'. When one perceives impermanence, the perception of non-self is stabilized. One who perceives non-self eradicates the concept 'I am,' which is nibbāna in this very life." Translation Bodhi 2012: 1250. However, MN I.424-425 is not entirely without correspondence to SNa 16.64 provided one takes the perception of impermanence (*aniccasaññā*) to be symmetrical with causality (*idampratyayatā*), and the conceit "I am" (*asmimāna*) to be equivalent to delusion (*moha*): "Rāhula, develop meditation on the perception of impermanence; for when you develop meditation on the perception of impermanence, the conceit 'I am' will be abandoned." (*aniccasaññaṃ rāhula bhāvanaṃ bhavehi, aniccasaññaṃ hi te rāhula bhāvanaṃ bhāvayato yo asmimāno so pahīyissati* |. Translation Ñāṇamoli/Bodhi 2001: 531). As we have just seen, also the ŚrBh regards causality and dependent origination (*idampratyayatāpratītyasamutpāda*, I.70,18 and 72,1) as the counteragent of delusion. After having defined them, the ŚrBh (I.72,1-3) states: *yad* ālambanaṃ *manasikurvan mohādhikaḥ pudgalo mohacarito mohaṃ prajahāti tanūkaroti mohacaritāc cittaṃ viśodhayati* |. "Meditating on this (*yat*) object-support, a person with much delusion [and] inclined to delusion abandons [and] weakens delusion, purifies his(/her) mind from the inclination for delusion."

146 AN I.257: *seyyathāpi bhikkhave suvaṇṇakāro vā suvaṇṇakārantevāsī vā ukkaṃ bandhati ukkaṃ bandhitvā ukkāmukhaṃ ālimpeti ukkāmukhaṃ ālimpetvā saṇḍāsena jātarūpaṃ gahetvā ukkāmukhe pakkhipitvā kālena kālaṃ abhidhamati*

Aśvaghoṣa's indebtedness to this or a very similar passage is obvious:

> Compare the goldsmith in this world who, placing gold in the mouth of the forge, applies the bellows at the proper time, wets it with water at the proper time and gradually at the proper time allows it to cool off. For by using the bellows at the wrong time he would burn it too soft and by letting it cool off at the wrong time he would not bring it to maturity properly.[147]

As Aśvaghoṣa strongly insists, once again in close reliance on a sūtra (MN I.119-122), a wrong subject of meditation (*akuśalaṃ nimittam*, SNa 16.72; *aśubhaṃ nimittam*, SNa 16.74; *asan nimittam*, SNa 16.78) should by no means be resorted to, "by attachment to which disaster might ensue" (*yatrāvasaktasya bhaved anarthaḥ*, SNa 16.78). As in the sūtra, five successive alternatives are considered. (1) Rather than cultivating a wrong subject, one should try another method (*dvitīyaṃ kramam* ārabheta, SNa 16.71) and pick up a new one: "As a man, skilled in the job, uses a small wedge to knock out another bigger one, so a subject of meditation that has bad results should be driven out by selecting another one."[148] (2) If this still does not yield the expected result, one should weaken the evil thoughts "by examining the faults

---

kālena kālaṃ udakena paripphoseti kālena kālaṃ ajjhupekkhati. sace bhikkhave suvaṇṇakāro vā suvaṇṇakārantevāsī vā taṃ jātarūpaṃ ekantaṃ abhidhameyya ṭhānaṃ taṃ jātarūpaṃ ḍaheyya. sace bhikkhave suvaṇṇakāro vā suvaṇṇakārantevāsī vā taṃ jātarūpaṃ ekantam udakena paripphoseyya ṭhānaṃ taṃ jātarūpaṃ nibbāpeyya. sace bhikkhave suvaṇṇakāro vā suvaṇṇakārantevāsī vā taṃ jātarūpaṃ ekantaṃ ajjhupekkheyya ṭhānaṃ taṃ jātarūpaṃ na sammā paripākaṃ gaccheyya. yato ca kho bhikkhave suvaṇṇakāro vā suvaṇṇakārantevāsī vā taṃ jātarūpaṃ kālena kālaṃ abhidhamati kālena kālam udakena paripphoseti kālena kālaṃ ajjhupekkhati taṃ hoti jātarūpaṃ muduñ ca kammanīyañ ca pabhassarañ ca na ca pabhaṅgu sammā upeti kammāya yassā yassā ca pilandhanavikatiyā ālaṅkhati yadi paṭṭakāya yadi kuṇḍalāya yadi gīveyyake yadi suvaṇṇamālāya tañ c'assa atthaṃ anubhoti. Translation Bodhi 2012: 338.

147 SNa 16.65-66: *ulkāmukhasthaṃ hi yathā suvarṇaṃ suvarṇakāro dhamatīha kāle | kāle pariprokṣayate jalena krameṇa kāle samupekṣate ca || dahet suvarṇaṃ hi dhamann akāle jale kṣipan saṃśamayed akāle | na cāpi samyak paripākam enaṃ nayed akāle samupekṣamāṇaḥ ||*.

148 SNa 16.72: *aṇvyā yathāṇyā vipulāṇir anyā nirvāhyate tadviduṣā nareṇa | tadvat tad evākuśalaṃ nimittaṃ kṣipen nimittāntarasevanena ||*. Aśvaghoṣa's source here is MN I.119 (Ñāṇamoli/Bodhi 2001: 211). For a parallel in the MĀ, see T. 26, 588a10-c21 and its partial translation in Anālayo 2013: 149–150. Note, however, that Aśvaghoṣa's simile is closer to the one in the MN than to the one in the MĀ.

inherent in them" (*taddoṣaparīkṣaṇena*, SNa 16.73) or, as the sūtra says, by examining the "danger" in those thoughts, "[f]or men of noble birth are ashamed of the active workings of the mind towards impurity, the invisible, unholy desires, as a spirited and handsome youth is ashamed of unsightly and ill-arranged objects attached to his neck."[149] (3) Should this method remain ineffective, the yogin should try to obliterate[150] the evil, distracting thoughts "by some other means such as study, action, etc." (*kāryāntarair adhyayanakriyādyaiḥ*, SNa 16.77). (4) It might be that trying to forget or "obliterate" these thoughts does not work either; then one ought to "driv[e] them out in the order of their grossness" (*yathāsthūlanibarhaṇena* […] *praheyāḥ*, SNa 16.80), "like the impurities of gold" (*suvarṇadoṣā iva*, SNa 16.80).[151] (5) And

---

[149] SNa 16.76: *vyapatrapante hi kulaprasūtā manaḥpracārair aśubhaiḥ pravṛttaiḥ | kaṇṭhe manasvīva yuvā vapuṣmān acākṣuṣair aprayatair viṣaktaiḥ ||*. Aśvaghoṣa's source here is MN I.119-120 (Ñāṇamoli/Bodhi 2001: 211–212). See also Anālayo 2013: 150 (MĀ; same simile).

[150] The term Johnston translates as "obliteration" is *vismaraṇa*, i.e., literally "forgetting". This is an allusion to MN I.120: *tassa ce bhikkhave bhikkhuno tesam pi vitakkānaṃ ādīnavaṃ upaparikkhato uppajjant'eva pāpakā akusalā vitakkā chandūpasaṃhitā pi dosūpasaṃhitā pi mohūpasaṃhitā pi tena bhikkhave bhikkhunā tesaṃ vitakkānaṃ asati-amanasikāro āpajjitabbo*. "If, while he is examining the danger in those thoughts, there still arise in him evil unwholesome thoughts connected with desire, with hate, and with delusion, then he should try to forget those thoughts and should not give attention to them." Translation Ñāṇamoli/Bodhi 2001: 212. Note that the sūtra does not allude to *adhyayanakriyādi*. The MĀ parallel (see Anālayo 2013: 151) is quite different: "It is just like a clear-sighted person who, not wishing to see forms that are out in the light, either closes the eyes or turns the body away and leaves" (T. 26, 588b15-16: 猶有目人色在光明。而不用見。彼或閉目或身避去。).

[151] SNa 16.81: *drutaprayāṇaprabhṛtīṃś ca tīkṣṇāt kāmaprayogāt parikhidyamānaḥ | yathā naraḥ saṃśrayate tathaiva prājñena doṣeṣv api vartitavyam ||*. "As a man exhausted with strenuous erotic practices takes to walking quickly, etc., so does the wise man deal with the vices." Aśvaghoṣa's illustration remains somewhat obscure to me due to the lack of any allusion to love-making (is *kāmaprayogāt* a corruption?) in the poet's obvious source, MN I.120: *seyyathā pi bhikkhave puriso sīghaṃ gaccheyya tassa evam assa: kin nu kho ahaṃ sīghaṃ gacchāmi yan nūnāhaṃ saṇikaṃ gaccheyyan ti. so saṇikaṃ gaccheyya tassa evam assa: kin nu kho ahaṃ saṇikaṃ gacchāmi yan nūnāhaṃ tiṭṭheyyan ti. so tiṭṭheyya tassa evam assa: kin nu kho ahaṃ ṭhito yan nūnāhaṃ nisīdeyyan ti. so nisīdeyya tassa evam assa. kin nu kho ahaṃ nisinno yan nūnāhaṃ nipajjeyyan ti. so nipajjeyya, evaṃ hi so bhikkhave puriso*

> [i]f evil thoughts are not allayed owing to failure to find the correct counteragent, still they must not be tolerated for a moment without opposition, any more than snakes in the house would be. A man may do his best by setting the teeth, pressing the edge of the gums with the tongue and restraining the mind with the mind, but in any case they will not be readily docile.[152]

Aśvaghoṣa concludes his treatment of *yoga* in SNa 16 with a short appendix on energy (*vīrya*, SNa 16.93-98) motivated by his praise of the courage (*vikrama*) of the sixty-two chief disciples of the Buddha (SNa 16.87-92), and

---

oḷārikaṃ oḷārikaṃ iriyāpaṭhaṃ abhinivajjetvā sukhumaṃ sukhumaṃ iriyāpathaṃ kappeyya. evam eva […]. "Just as a man walking fast might consider: 'Why am I walking fast? What if I walk slowly?' and he would walk slowly; then he might consider: 'Why am I walking slowly? What if I stand?' and he would stand; then he might consider: 'Why am I standing? What if I sit?' and he would sit; then he might consider: 'Why am I sitting? What if I lie down?' and he would lie down. By doing so he would substitute for each grosser posture one that was subtler. So too…" Translation Ñāṇamoli/Bodhi 2001: 212. Note also T. 26, 588b29-c6: 猶人行道進路急速。彼作是念。我何爲速。我今寧可徐徐行耶。彼即徐行。復作是念。我何爲徐行。寧可住耶。彼即便住。復作是念。我何爲住寧可坐耶。彼即便坐。復作是念。我何爲坐。寧可臥耶。彼即便臥。如是彼人漸漸息身麤行。"It is just as a person who walks on a path, hurrying along quickly, and then reflects: 'Why am I hurrying? Wouldn't I rather walk more slowly now?' and so the person walks slowly. Then that person reflects again: 'Why am I walking slowly? Wouldn't I rather stand still?' and so the person stands still. Then that person reflects again: 'Why am I standing? Wouldn't I rather sit down?' and so the person sits down. Then that person reflects again: 'Why am I sitting? Wouldn't I rather lie down?' and so the person lies down. In this way that person gradually quietens the body's gross activities." Translation Anālayo 2013: 163. In the MN I.120-121 and its MĀ parallel, the method thus exemplified is that of "giving attention to stilling the thought-formation of those thoughts" (*tesaṃ vitakkānaṃ vitakkasaṅkhārasanthānaṃ manasikātabbam*, translation Ñāṇamoli/Bodhi 2001: 212), which has no equivalent in SNa 16.80-81.

[152] SNa 16.82-83: *te ced alabdhapratipakṣabhāvā naivopaśāmyeyur asadvitarkāḥ | muhūrtam apy aprativadhyamānā gṛhe bhujaṅgā iva nādhivāsyāḥ || dante 'pi dantaṃ praṇidhāya kāmaṃ tālvagram utpīḍya ca jihvayāpi | cittena cittaṃ parigṛhya cāpi kāryaḥ prayatno na tu te 'nuvartyāḥ ||*. Cf. MN I.120-121 (Ñāṇamoli/Bodhi 2001: 213). See also the MĀ parallel in Anālayo 2013: 153–154. The example adduced in the MN and the MĀ (two strong men grabbing a weak man, taking hold of him, and subduing him) is not echoed in the SNa.

by the fact that "the task of right effort is precisely to overcome what is unwholesome and cultivate what is wholesome."[153]

8. The four applications of mindfulness and the supermundane path to salvation

8.1. The instigator(s) of the Sarvāstivāda *abhisamayavāda* somehow relegated most of the Buddhist meditation practices to the status of more or less remote preliminaries of the path *stricto sensu*. This is in particular the case of the four applications of mindfulness—application of mindfulness to the body (*kāya*), to the affective sensations (*vedanā*), to the mind (*citta*), and to the *dharma*s.[154] In the new path structure, the four applications of mindfulness are little more than one of several (admittedly high) steps toward the clarification of the nobles' truths and the removal of any remaining doubt concerning them with the *darśanamārga*.[155] However, there are reasons to believe that the four applications of mindfulness played a more prominent role in Aśvaghoṣa's ideas on the path, this, again, in close dependence on sūtra materials. Consider the following description:

> Then he reached the inaccessible supermundane path, as one might obtain a breeze in the hot weather by fanning or the fire which abides in the wood by friction or the water in the ground by digging. Hold-

---

153 Anālayo 2013: 148. On *vīrya*, see above, §§4.3–4. Skt. *vikrama* is semantically close to *parākrama*/Pali *parakkama*, "energy, exertion", etc., which is a nearly synonymous with *viriya* and *thāma* in the Pali canon (see above, n. 73). Aśvaghoṣa's intention in listing the 62 chief disciples of the Buddha was to depict them as paragons of Buddhist *yoga* worthy to be taken as models by Nanda (on the list of the Buddha's chief disciples, see Thomas 1929, Johnston 1932: 97–99, n. ad 87, and Johnston 1984, part II: xxvii–xxviii (referring to T. 125, 557-558 and T. 126, 831-833; see also AN I.23-26 and Jāt. IV.158).

154 For a discussion of the Pāli expression *satipaṭṭhāna*, see Gethin 2001: 30–36 (see also above, n. 92) and Anālayo 2003: 29–30. As pointed out by Anālayo, the fourth application of mindfulness does not refer to *dharma*s as "mental objects/factors", but rather as "classificatory schemes" or "categories" (at least in the context of the two *Satipaṭṭhānasutta*s (MN I.55-63, DN II.305-315; see Anālayo 2003: 15, n. 3 for further scriptural references) serving as "frameworks or points of reference to be applied during contemplation" (Anālayo 2003: 183).

155 See AKBh 341,7-343,9 and *Kośa* IV.158-162; see also Eltschinger 2014a: 260–270, esp. 262–264, and Schmithausen 1976, Hurvitz 1977, Cox 1992a.

> ing the bow of holy knowledge, girding on the armour of mindfulness and taking up his post on the chariot of the vows of pure morality, he prepared for victory, ready to join battle with the foes of the defilements arrayed on the battlefield of the thoughts. Then taking the sharp weapons of the constituents of enlightenment and standing on the excellent chariot of right efforts, with an army containing the elephants of the constituents of the Path, gradually he pierced the battle-line of the defilements. With the four arrows of the application of mindfulness working each along its own line of activity, he destroyed in a moment his foes, the four wrong notions, the causes of suffering. With the five unequalled noble powers he burst asunder the five obstructions of the mind[156] and he put to flight the eight elephants of the constituents of the false path with the eight elephants of the constituents of the true Path.[157]

This passage makes clear that according to Aśvaghoṣa, the path toward salvation, besides consisting in the *aṣṭāṅgamārga*, can validly be accounted for in terms of another, no less venerable canonical description, that of the factors/conditions favourable to awakening (*bodhipākṣikadharma*, *bodhipakṣyadharma*, Pāli *bodhipakkhiyā dhammā*) whose standard formulation includes thirty-seven factors distributed into seven sets.[158] Verses 24-26 successively allude to the factors of awakening (*bodhyaṅga*, generally seven), the right endeavours (*samyakpradhāna*, *samyakprahāṇa*, generally four),

---

[156] On the five *cetokhilā*s (mental "barrennesses", i.e., doubt concerning the Buddha, the law, the community and the training, and anger against one's fellow disciples), see, e.g., DN III.237-238 and 278, SN I.101-104, AN III.248-249, 460, and V.17.

[157] SNa 17.22-26: *tataḥ sa vātaṃ vyajanād ivoṣṇe kāṣṭhāśritaṃ nirmathanād ivāgnim | antaḥkṣitisthaṃ khananād ivāmbho lokottaraṃ vartma durāpam āpa || sajjñānacāpaḥ smṛtivarma baddhvā viśuddhaśīlavratavāhanasthaḥ | kleśāribhiś cittaraṇājirasthaiḥ sārdhaṃ yuyutsur vijayāya tasthau || tataḥ sa bodhyaṅgaśitāttaśastras samyakpradhānottamavāhanasthaḥ | mārgāṅgamātaṅgavatā balena śanaiḥ śanaiḥ kleśacamūṃ jagāhe || sa smṛtyupasthānamayaiḥ prṣatkaiḥ śatrūn viparyāsamayān kṣaṇena | duḥkhasya hetūṃś caturaś caturbhiḥ svaiḥ svaiḥ pracārāyatanair dadāra || āryair balaiḥ pañcabhir eva pañca cetaḥkhilāny apratimair babhañja | mithyāṅganāgāṃś ca tathāṅganāgair vinirdudhāvaṣṭābhir eva so 'ṣṭau ||*. Translation Johnston 1932: 103–104, with "mindfulness" for "attention", "morality" for "discipline", "defilements" for "vices", and "wrong notions" for "perversions of knowledge",

[158] On the 37 factors contributing to awakening, see Gethin 2001.

the constituents of the path (*mārgāṅga*, generally eight; see above, §§2.1–3), the four applications of mindfulness, and the powers (*bala*, generally five). Considering that the five faculties (*indriya*) overlap with the five powers, only one among the seven sets is missing in Aśvaghoṣa's description, i.e., the four bases of success (*ṛddhipāda*). But something else is striking about this description. In verse 25, the four applications of mindfulness are claimed to counteract all four misconceptions or wrong notions (*viparyāsa*), which the poet regards as the very causes of suffering, i.e., taking what is impermanent (*anitya*) to be permanent (*nitya*), what is painful (*duḥkha*) to be pleasurable (*sukha*), what is impure (*aśuci*) to be pure (*śuci*), and what is selfless (*anātman*) to be a self (*ātman*).[159] In so doing, Aśvaghoṣa apparently departs from traditional accounts of these factors, thus providing additional evidence for his close connection with (one denomination of) the Sarvāstivāda. As pointed out by Schmithausen, the Sarvāstivādins were responsible for a "decisive transformation" ("*entscheidende Umgestaltung*") of the four *smṛtyupasthāna*s in that "they brought to its completion a tendency to transform this exercise into a form of contemplation interpreting its objects in the sense of the Buddhist analysis of existence."[160] A first step in this direction likely consisted in reinterpreting the four applications of mindfulness in such a way that the mindful yogin was now taken to contemplate the body as impermanent, painful, empty, and selfless. This conception is attested in early Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma literature, e.g., in the *Dharmaskandha*, which associates the application of mindfulness to the body with *anitya*, *duḥkha*, *śūnya*, and *anātman*.[161] It seems to underlie SNa 17.16 as well: "He investi-

[159] Just before introducing the four applications of mindfulness in great detail, Kumārajīva's T. 614, 278c3-5 declares: 身實無常苦不淨無我以身顛倒故常樂我淨。以是故事事愛著其身。是則底下衆生。"The body is in fact impermanent, painful, impure, and without self. Due to perverted views on the body, one thinks that it is permanent, blissful, having self, and pure. For this reason, one is attached to one's body on every occasion. This is the lowliest sentient being." Translation Yamabe/Sueki 2009: 48.

[160] Schmithausen 1976: 257: "[…] sie die Tendenz der Umformung dieser Übung in eine ihre Gegenstände im Sinne der buddhistischen Daseinsanalyse *bewertende* Betrachtung […] zuende führten."

[161] See T. 1537, 476b4-6 (無常苦空非我, 476b6). Note also AKBh 341,11-13: *kāyaṃ svasāmānyalakṣaṇābhyāṃ parīkṣate vedanāṃ cittaṃ dharmāṃś*[a] *ca* | *svabhāvaś caiṣāṃ svalakṣaṇam* | *sāmānyalakṣaṇaṃ tv anityatā saṃskṛtānāṃ duḥkhatā sāsravāṇāṃ śūnyatānātmate sarvadharmāṇām* |. [a]*dharmāṃś* em.: *dharmāś* Ed. "He ex-

gated the body in order to see its entire material and immaterial substance. Then he deemed it to be impure, subject to suffering, impermanent, without owner or self."[162] As for SNa 17.25, it reflects a second stage in the reinterpretation of the four *smṛtyupasthāna*s, according to which each of them counteracts one of the four misconceptions.[163] That this was Aśvaghoṣa's firm conviction is made clear by a very interesting passage from canto 24 of the BC, in which the Buddha comforts Ānanda by instructing him on the way and the attitude to be adopted after his demise. In the Sanskrit ([Mūla] sarvāstivādin) *Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra*, Aśvaghoṣa's obvious source for cantos 22-28, the Buddha exhorts his followers to "have themselves as an island, themselves as a refuge, the law as an island, the law as a refuge, nothing else as an island, nothing else as a refuge",[164] and regards the four applications of mindfulness as the privileged means for religious autonomy.[165] This

---

amines the body under its specific and general characters, [and so also] the affective sensation, the mind and the factors. Their intrinsic nature is their specific character. As for [their] general character, [it consists in] the impermanence of conditioned [things], the painfulness of impure [things, and] the emptiness and selflessness of all factors."

[162] SNa 17.16: *sa rūpiṇaṃ kṛtsnam arūpiṇaṃ ca sāraṃ didṛkṣur vicikāya kāyam | athāśuciṃ duḥkham anityam asvaṃ nirātmakaṃ caiva cikāya kāyam* ||. This first conclusion is then generalized to the world/existence in its entirety, an analyis Aśvaghoṣa refers to as the supreme mundane path (*mārgapravekeṇa laukikena*, SNa 17.17c; is the initial conclusion already part of this supreme mundane path?). See SNa 17.17-21.

[163] The same idea is reflected in Nett. 83,19-20 and 28-29, 84,5-6 and 14-15: *kāye kāyānupassī viharanto asubhe subhan ti vipallāsaṃ pajahati* […] *vedanāsu vedanānupassī viharanto dukkhe sukhan ti vipallāsaṃ pajahati* […] *citte cittānupassī viharanto anicce niccan ti vipallāsaṃ pajahati* […] *dhammesu dhammānupassī anattani attā ti vipallāsaṃ pajahati*. "One who dwells watching body with regard to body abandons the perversion [that sees] the beautiful in the ugly … One who dwells watching feeling with regard to feelings abandons the perversion [that sees happiness in suffering] … One who dwells watching mind with regard to mind abandons the perversion [that sees] the permanent in the impermanent … One who dwells watching *dhamma* with regard to *dhamma*s abandons the perversion [that sees] the self in what is not-self." Translation Gethin 2001: 42. See also Anālayo 2003: 25–26, and n. 27, p. 25.

[164] MPSū II.200 (§§14.23): *ātmadvīpā ātmaśaraṇā dharmadvīpā dharmaśaraṇā ananyadvīpā ananyaśaraṇāḥ.*

[165] See MPSū II.200-202 (§§14.24–26). This passage also appears in the GASū 369,3-371,9 (see Kritzer 2014: 100–102); see also, e.g., Gethin 2001: 66–68. On the no-

description, however, does not precisely say how the *smṛtyupasthāna*s are soteriologically relevant. Consider now Aśvaghoṣa's version of the last part of the sermon:

> For obtaining the highest bliss, there are four spheres of action (*gocara*), to wit, the body, the affective sensation, the mind, and selflessness. There is no attachment to the body for him who sees the impurity in the body, enveloped as it is with bones, skin, blood, sinews, flesh, hair, etc. The idea of pleasure is overcome by him who sees that the affective sensations are but suffering, each arising from their respective [causes and] conditions. For him who sees with tranquil mind the birth, duration and decay of the factors, the belief in permanence ceases. For him who sees that the constituents arise from [causes and] conditions, the belief in a self which is prompted by egotism ceases to be active. This path is the direct path (*ekāyana*) to take to annihilate suffering; accordingly, the path [consists in] the applications of mindfulness with respect to these four. Today or after my passing, those who take their stand on this will obtain the excellent stage that does not pass away, the *summum bonum*.[166]

Let me mention only three among the many interesting features of this excerpt. First, Aśvaghoṣa replaces the *dharma*s, the object traditionally ascribed to the fourth application of mindfulness, by selflessness (*nairātmya*), a substitution which, as far as I can see, is unparalleled at least as far as the *wording* of the fourth *smṛtyupasthāna* is concerned.[167] Second, Aśvaghoṣa

---

tions of "internal", "external" and "internal and external", see Gethin 2001: 53 and Anālayo 2003: 94–102.

[166] BC 24.24-30 (BC$_{\text{Tib}}$ D84a1-4/P101a3-8): |*dge legs ñe bar thob bya'i phyir*| |*de dag rnams kyi spyod yul bźi*| |*lus daṅ tshor ba ñid daṅ ni*| |*sems daṅ bdag med pa ñid do*| |*rus lpags khrag daṅ rgyus pa daṅ*| |*śa daṅ spu sogs rnams kyis dkris*| |*mi gtsaṅ lus su mthoṅ bas ni*| |*lus la chags pa ma yin no*| |*de lta de ltar rkyen rnams kyis*| |*'jug pa'i tshor ba rnams su ni*| |*sdug bsṅal źes de ltar mthoṅ ba'i*| |*bde ba'i śes rab rab tu 'joms*| |*skye ba daṅ ni gnas pa daṅ*| |*chos kyi 'god pa ñid dag ni*| |*źi ba'i sems kyis mthoṅ ba yi*[a]| |*rtag par 'dzin pa ldog pa'o*| |*rkyen rnams las ni skyes pa rnams*| |*phuṅ po rnams ni mthoṅ ba yi*| |*ṅar 'dzin gyis ni skyed pa po*| |*bdag tu 'dzin pa 'jug ma yin*| |*sdug bsṅal* ñe *bar* źi *ba'i phyir*| |*bgrod*[b] *pa gcig pa'i lam 'di ni*| |*lam ni bźi po de rnams su*| |*de ltar dran pa* ñe *bar gźag*| |*da*[c] *ltar ram ni bdag 'das tshe*| |*gaṅ rnams 'di la gnas 'gyur ba*| |*de rnams 'god med go 'phaṅ mchog*| |*ṅes par legs pa thob par 'gyur*|. [a]P: D *yin*. [b]D: P *'grod*. [c]em.: DP *de*. Cf. Johnston 1984, part III: 78–79.

[167] T. 614, 279a12-23 clearly reflects this doctrinal stance; see Yamabe/Sueki 2009: 51.

distinctly describes the path of the four applications of mindfulness as "the direct path to take to annihilate suffering" (*sdug bsṅal* ñe *bar* źi *ba'i phyir bgrod pa gcig pa'i lam 'di ni*, BC 24.29ab),[168] a claim that was not made, at least not explicitly, in Aśvaghoṣa's model, the MPSū. It most probably stems from a famous sūtra dedicated to the four applications of mindfulness, for there we read: "Bhikkhus, there is a one-way path for the purification of beings, for the overcoming of sorrow and lamentation, for the passing away of pain and displeasure, for the achievement of the method, for the realization of Nibbāna, that is, the four applications of mindfulness."[169] There can be no doubt that Aśvaghoṣa conflated parts of the two sūtras in order to emphasize the salvational relevance of the four applications of mindfulness.[170] Third, and more importantly in the present context, each of the four applications of mindfulness is regarded as counteracting one of the four wrong notions and bringing about, *mutatis mutandis*, the first four of the sixteen real aspects of the nobles' truths: being mindful of the body counteracts the notion of something pure; being mindful of the affective sensations counteracts the notion

---

168 As Gethin (2001: 59) points out, the expression *ekāyana* only applies to the four applications of mindfulness in the Pāli Nikāyas. Gethin (2001: 59–66) and Anālayo (2003: 27–29; see also 2013: 8–12) have criticized the fairly common translation of *ekāyana* as "the one (i.e., only) way" (see Gethin 2001: 60, n. 132, for references), partly on the basis of a traditional fivefold interpretation of *ekāyana* (Gethin 2001: 60–61, summarized in Anālayo 2003: 27). Anālayo concludes (2003: 26) that "*ekāyano*, conveying a sense of directness rather than exclusiveness, draws attention to *satipaṭṭhāna* as the aspect of the noble eightfold path most 'directly' responsible for uncovering a vision of things as they truly are. That is, *satipaṭṭhāna* is the 'direct path', because it leads 'directly' to the realization of *Nibbāna*." On the question of *ekāyano magga*, see also Nattier 2007.

169 DN II.290 ≈ MN I.55-56 ≈ SN V.141, 167, 185: *ekāyano ayaṃ bhikkhave maggo sattānaṃ visuddhiyā sokapariddavānaṃ samatikkamāya dukkhadomanassānaṃ atthagamāya ñāyassa adhigamāya nibbānassa sacchikiriyāya yad idaṃ cattāro satipaṭṭhānā*. Translation Bodhi 2000: 1627, with "applications" for "establishments." See also MN I.340 (Ñāṇamoli/Bodhi 2001: 444).

170 Note also AN IV.459-460: *imesaṃ kho bhikkhave pañcannaṃ macchariyānaṃ pahānāya* […] *cattāro satipaṭṭhānā bhāvetabbā ti*. "These four applications of mindfulness are to be developed for abandoning these five lower fetters." Translation Bodhi 2012: 1328, with "applications" for "establishments". Other claims to the decisive importance of the four *smṛtyupasthāna*s include MN II.11, SN IV.363-364, and AN IV.457-461. See also Gethin 2001: 56–58, with references (n. 124, p. 59) to AN V.194-195, DN II.83 = 101 = SN V.161, AN III.387, and Nett. 94.

of something pleasurable; being mindful of the factors counteracts the notion of something permanent; and being mindful of selflessness counteracts the notion of (something possessing) a self.[171] Aśvaghoṣa's conception of the four applications of mindfulness and their soteriological relevance reflects distinctly Sarvāstivāda ideas as they can be found, e.g., in the *Saṃyuktābhidharmahṛdaya*:

> The application of mindfulness to the body has been preached in order to counteract [one's] wrongly taking [something] impure [to be] pure; the application of mindfulness to the [affective] sensations has been preached in order to counteract [one's] wrongly taking [something] painful [to be] pleasurable; the application of mindfulness to the mind has been preached in order to counteract [one's] wrongly taking [something] impermanent [to be] permanent; the application of mindfulness to the *dharma*s has been preached in order to counteract [one's] wrongly taking [something] selfless [to be(/have)] a self.[172]

The closest parallel to Aśvaghoṣa's ideas I am aware of occurs in the pseudo-Nāgārjuna's *Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa*, whose author notoriously was well acquainted with Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma, and whose translator—provided the MPPU was ever translated—Kumārajīva, regarded Aśvaghoṣa as a doctrinal authority (see above, §1):

> Question: What are the four applications of mindfulness? Answer: The application of mindfulness to the body and the applications of mindfulness to the affective sensation, to the mind and to the *dharma*s, these are the four applications of mindfulness. [A yogin] considers these four things under four modalities: he considers the impurity of the body; he considers the painfulness of affective sensation; he considers the impermanence of the mind; and he considers the selflessness of the *dharma*s. Even though all of these four things possess the four modalities, he should mostly consider impurity in the body; painfulness in affective sensation; impermanence in the mind; and selflessness in the *dharma*s. Why? When ordinary persons have

---

[171] On the sixteen aspects and the four wrong notions, see Eltschinger 2014a.

[172] T. 1552, 908c11-14: 彼治不淨淨想顛倒故説身念處. 治苦樂想顛倒故説受念處. 治無常常想顛倒故説心念處. 治無我我想顛倒故説法念處. Cf. Dessein 1999: I.316.

> not yet entered the path, they are mistaken with regard to these four things and produce four wrong notions: the wrong notion of purity with regard to impure things, the wrong notion of pleasure with regard to suffering, the wrong notion of permanence with regard to impermanence, and the wrong notion of a self with regard to what is selfless. In order to destroy these four wrong notions, [the Blessed One] has preached the four applications of mindfulness: he has preached the application of mindfulness to the body in order to destroy the wrong notion of purity; he has preached the application of mindfulness to the affective sensation in order to destroy the wrong notion of pleasure; he has preached the application of mindfulness to the mind in order to destroy the wrong notion of permanence; and he has preached the application of mindfulness to the factors in order to destroy the wrong notion of a self. This is the reason why he has preached four [of them], not less, not more.[173]

In this perspective, the four applications of mindfulness of SNa 17.25 as well as their result—counteracting the four wrong notions and replacing them by the right ones—can be read as intrinsically connected to the nobles' truths, whose true or real aspects they implement.

8.2. As far as I can tell, Aśvaghoṣa shows no awareness of what has come to be known as the *abhisamayavāda* ("doctrine of the [gradual] comprehension [of the nobles' truths]"), the influential path structure plausibly developed, or perhaps rather systematized, even before the *Vibhāṣā*, by Dharmaśreṣṭhin/Dharmaśrī.[174] This fully rationalized description of the path famously entails two major phases, a predominantly gnostic/illuminative path of vision (*darśanamārga*) and a mainly cathartic/purgative path of (mental) cultivation (*bhāvanāmārga*, or "path of contemplation"). The absence of any clear hint at the *abhisamayavāda can*, but *needs not* be ex-

---

[173] T. 1509, 198c10-20: 問曰. 何等是四念處. 答曰. 身念處受心法念處, 是爲四念處. 觀四法四種. 觀身不淨. 觀受是苦. 觀心無常. 觀法無我. 是四法雖各有四種, 身應多觀不淨, 受多觀苦, 心多觀無常, 法多觀無我. 何以故. 凡夫人未入道時, 是四法中邪行起四顛倒. 諸不淨法中淨顛倒, 苦中樂顛倒, 無常中常顛倒, 無我中我顛倒. 破是四顛倒故, 説是四念處. 破淨倒故説身念處. 破樂倒故説受念處. 破常倒故説心念處. 破我倒故説法念處. 以是故説四不少不多. Cf. *Traité* III.1150-1151. The association between the four wrong notions and the four applications of mindfulness is anticipated at MPPU 192b23–26 (*Traité* II.1076).

[174] See Frauwallner's classic study of the *abhisamayavāda* in Frauwallner 1995: 149–184; see also Cox 1992b: 74–77.

plained in terms of Aśvaghoṣa's hypothetical unfamiliarity with the new system, for he may just as well have decided not to mention it, either because the doctrine had originated in a concurrent Sarvāstivāda milieu, or (and?) because it was not attested in canonical Abhidharma, or because the poet could find no scriptural support for the *abhisamayavāda* (after all, a given idea's traceability to the sūtras would indeed have been a minimum requirement to someone whose "Sautrāntika" leaning has often been highlighted). There was, however, a description of the path to salvation that, in contradistinction to the *abhisamayavāda*, could claim scriptural support and actually did find frequent expression in the sūtras. One of its formulations is as follows:

> In one case a monk, having abandoned three fetters, becomes a stream-enterer, not liable to states of woe, firmly set on the path to enlightenment. Again, a monk who has abandoned the three fetters and has reduced his desire, hatred and delusion, becomes a once-returner who, having returned to the world once more, will make an end of suffering. Again, a monk who has abandoned the five lower fetters takes a spontaneous birth [in a higher sphere] and, without returning from that world, gains enlightenment. Again, a monk through the extinction of the corruptions reaches in this very life the uncorrupted deliverance of mind, the deliverance through wisdom, which he has realised by his own insight.[175]

This path structure operates with ten fetters (*samyojana*) and does not resort to proclivities (*anuśaya*): (1) personalistic false view (*satkāyadṛṣṭi*), (2) attachment to (non-Buddhist) practices and observances (*śīlavrataparāmarśa*), (3) doubt (*vicikitsā*), (4) desire for lusts (*kāmacchanda*), (5) malevolence (*vyāpāda*), (6) desire for (subtle) corporeality (*rūparāga*), (7) desire for incorporeality (*ārūpyarāga*), (8) indolence (*auddhatya*), (9) conceit (*māna*),

[175] DN I.156: *idha bhikkhu tiṇṇaṃ saṃyojanānaṃ parikkhayā sotāpanno hoti avinipātadhammo niyato sambodhiparāyano* […]. *puna ca paraṃ bhikkhu tiṇṇaṃ saṃyojanānaṃ parikkhayā rāgadosamohānaṃ tanuttā sakadāgāmī hoti sakid eva imaṃ lokaṃ āgantvā dukkhass' antaṃ karoti* […]. *puna ca paraṃ bhikkhu pañcannaṃ orambhāgiyānaṃ saṃyojanānaṃ parikkhayā opapātiko hoti tattha parinibbāyī anāvattidhammo tasmā lokā* […]. *puna ca paraṃ bhikkhu āsavānaṃ khayā anāsavaṃ ceṭovimuttiṃ paññāvimuttiṃ diṭṭhe va dhamme sayaṃ abhiññā sacchikatvā upasampajja viharati* […]. Translation Walshe 1995: 145–146, with "stream-enterer" for "Stream-Winner", and "desire" for "greed".

and (10) nescience (*avidyā*).[176] Among them, the first five are considered lower fetters (*avarabhāgīya*) because they relate to the realm of desire (*kāmadhātu*), whereas the last five are upper fetters (*ūrdhvabhāgīya*) relating to the two higher realms of (subtle) corporeality (*rūpadhātu*) and incorporeality (*ārūpyadhātu*).[177] According to this and similar accounts of the path, a Buddhist practitioner becomes a stream-enterer (*srotaāpanna*) by eliminating the first three lower fetters, a once-returner (*sakṛdāgāmin*) by reducing the next two lower fetters (plus delusion in certain formulations), a non-returner (*anāgāmin*) by eradicating them entirely, and an *arhat* by giving up the five upper fetters.[178] To put it in slightly different but conceptually equivalent terms, one does not eliminate the personalistic false view, the attachment to (non-Buddhist) practices and observances and doubt unless one correctly sees the four nobles' truths (in *abhisamayavāda* terms: unless one goes through the *darśanamārga*).[179] Desire for lusts and malevolence are held responsible for the fact that one does not go beyond the realm of desire (*kāmadhātuṃ nātikrāmati*, AKBh 310,7). As for the five upper fetters, they

---

176 On the fetters, see Anālayo 2003: 219–222 and 251.

177 See DN III.234, AN IV.459-460, AN V.17, AKBh 309,24-311,13, and *Kośa* IV.84-87.

178 See, e.g., DN II.92 and DN II.251-252.

179 See AKVy 492,7-14, which quotes a sūtra: *kiyatā bhadanta srotaāpanno bhavati | yataś ca mahānāman āryaśrāvaka idaṃ duḥkham āryasatyam iti yathābhūtaṃ prajānāti | ayaṃ duḥkhasamudayaḥ | ayaṃ duḥkhanirodhaḥ | iyaṃ duḥkhanirodhagāminī pratipad āryasatyam iti yathābhūtaṃ prajānāti | trīṇi cāsya samyojanāni prahīṇāni bhavanti parijñātāni | tadyathā satkāyadṛṣṭiḥ śīlavrataparāmarśo vicikitsā ca | sa eṣāṃ trayāṇāṃ samyojanānāṃ prahāṇāt srotaāpanno bhavaty avinipātadharmā sambodhiparāyaṇaḥ saptakṛdbhavaparamaḥ saptakṛtvo devāṃś ca manuṣyāṃś ca saṃsṛtya sandhāvya duḥkhasyāntaṃ kariṣyatīti |*. "O Venerable, what makes one a stream-enterer? Because, O Mahānāman, a noble disciple correctly discerns that such is the nobles' truth of suffering, such [the nobles' truth] of the origin of suffering, such [the nobles' truth] of the cessation of suffering, [and] such the nobles' truth of the path leading to the cessation of suffering, his three [lower] fetters are known [to be] eliminated, i.e., the personalistic false view, attachment to (non-Buddhist) practices and observances, and doubt. Since he has eliminated these three [lower] fetters, he becomes a stream-enterer who is not liable to fall [to evil existences], who tends towards perfect awakening, who is destined to be reborn not more than seven times, and who, having been reborn (*saṃsṛtya*) and having had rebirth (*sandhāvya*) seven times among gods and humans, will put an end to suffering." In *Kośa* IV.85, n. 4, La Vallée Poussin refers to the EĀ (T. 125, 630a8ff.) and the SĀ (T. 99, 264b24ff. and 342b25ff.).

are thus called "because one does not proceed to the higher realms without abandoning them" (*eṣām aprahāṇenordhvadhātvanatikramāt*, AKBh 311,13).

That this salvational scheme underlies Aśvaghoṣa's account of Nanda's salvation is easily demonstrated:

> Then by shaking off entirely the false view of the self, by becoming free from doubt in the four Truths and by taking the true view of pure morality, he reached the stage of the first fruit of the Law. He rid himself of hesitation in the practice of the Law by means of his understanding of the noble Tetrad […].[180]

The first fruit is none other than that of a stream-enterer, which Nanda secures by seeing the four nobles' truths (*darśanād* āryacatuṣṭayasya) and driving away the false view of a self (*ātmadṛṣṭi* ≈ *satkāyadṛṣṭi*), freeing himself of doubt (*akathaṅkatha*) concerning the four truths, and perceiving the characteristics of the pure practices and observances (*viśuddhaśīlavrata*). Then, as a stream-enterer,

> [f]irm in himself, with the same Yoga he reduced to small proportions desire for lusts and hostility, and so he, whose body was broad-chested, by reducing these two obtained the second fruit of the noble Law. The small remains of the great foe, desire, whose bow is greed and arrows imaginations, he overwhelmed by the missiles of the weapon of Yoga, the arrows of meditation on impurity, which are acquired by considering the very nature of the body. Malevolence, the foe who is pregnant [of evil], whose weapon is hate and who discharges the arrows of wrath, he struck down by the arrows of benevolence which are placed in the quiver of firmness and fitted to the bowstring of patience.[181]

---

[180] SNa 17.27-29: *athātmadṛṣṭiṃ sakalāṃ vidhūya caturṣu satyeṣv akathaṅkathaḥ san | viśuddhaśīlavratadṛṣṭadharmā dharmasya pūrvāṃ phalabhūmim āpa || sa darśanād āryacatuṣṭayasya* […] *niḥsaṃśayo dharmavidhau babhūva ||*. Translation Johnston 1932: 104, with "false view" for "theory of the existence", and "pure morality" for "discipline to be followed".

[181] SNa 17.37-39: *sa kāmarāgapratighau sthirātmā tenaiva yogena tanū cakāra | kṛtvā mahoraskatanus tanū tau prāpa dvitīyaṃ phalam āryadharme || sa lobhacāpaṃ parikalpabāṇaṃ rāgaṃ mahāvairiṇam alpaśeṣam | kāyasvabhāvādhigatair bibheda yogāyudhāstrair aśubhāpṛṣatkaiḥ || dveṣāyudhaṃ krodhavikīrṇabāṇaṃ vyāpādam antaḥprasavaṃ sapatnam | maitrīpṛṣatkair dhṛtitūṇasaṃsthaiḥ kṣamādhanurjyā-*

The second fruit consists in the state of a once-returner. In strict conformity with the above-mentioned sūtra description of the path, Nanda obtains it by reducing (*tanū√kṛ-*) desire for lusts (*kāmarāga*) and hostility (*pratigha*), i.e., desire and malevolence (described in association with its secondary defilement [*upakleśa*] wrath or anger [*krodha*]), according to the method of *yoga*, i.e., by cultivating their respective counteragents consisting in the loathsome (*aśubha*) and benevolence (*maitrī*).[182] SNa 17.40-41 next describes Nanda's reaching the stage of a non-returner:

> Then the hero cut away the three roots of evil with the three bases of liberation, as an enemy cuts down with three steel-tipped arrows three enemies standing at the head of the hostile array and holding bows. Having overcome those foes who attack from the rear, in order to pass out of the Kāmadhātu sphere, and having reached by Yoga the fruit of not being subject to rebirth on earth, he stood as it were at the gate of the city of Nirvāṇa.[183]

As a once-returner, Nanda has uprooted desire and hatred—the two fetters which impeded his progression towards the two higher realms—in addition to the two false views and doubt already given up by seeing the truths. In other words, Nanda has now eliminated the five lower fetters in their entirety and moves out of the sphere of desire to become a non-returner. As Aśvaghoṣa says, Nanda is now at the gate of the city of *nirvāṇa*, for only two steps still keep him away from the fourth fruit, the state of an *arhat*, i.e., going through the four *dhyāna*s[184] and eliminating the five upper fetters. Here is the description of Nanda's achievements as a non-returner:

> Then relying on the fourth trance, he set his mind on attaining Arhatship, like a king, wishing to conquer hitherto unconquered provinces, who unites himself with a strong noble ally. Then he cut entirely through the five upper fetters, the hindrances of the supreme good, the final bonds, with the sword of insight which he wielded

---

visṛtair jaghāna ||. Translation Johnston 1932: 105–106, with "desire for lusts" for "desire", "hostility" for "hatred", and "desire" for "passion".

[182] See above, §7.2.

[183] SNa 17.40-41: *mūlāny atha trīṇy aśubhasya vīras tribhir vimokṣāyatanaiś cakarta | camūmukhasthān dhṛtakārmukāṃs trīn arīn ivāris tribhir āyasāgraiḥ || sa kāmadhātoḥ samatikramāya pārṣṇigrahāṃs tān abhibhūya śatrūn | yogād anāgāmiphalaṃ prapadya dvārīva nirvāṇapurasya tasthau* ||.

[184] The four *dhyāna*s are minutely described in SNa 17.42-55.

> through cultivation. And with the seven elephants of the constituents of enlightenment he crushed the seven evil latent tendencies of the mind,[185] as Time with the seven planets crushes the seven continents when the time of their destruction has arrived. For Nanda applied to the faults, by extinguishing, uprooting, burning and drying up, the same action that clouds, wind, fire and the sun exert on fire, trees, ghee and water respectively.[186]

This overview of Aśvaghoṣa's ideas on the path deliberately leaves several aspects of the original account out of consideration. Some of them, such as the four *dhyāna*s, are well known and appear in a stereotyped way in the SNa and the BC. Others require further research but are not directly relevant for our understanding of the basic features of Aśvaghoṣa's position.

---

[185] Aśvaghoṣa's allusion to the "seven evil tendencies of the mind" (*saptaiva cittānuśayān*) might provide an additional clue to the fact that the poet either was not aware of, or deliberately ignored, the Sarvāstivāda *abhisamayavāda*. For as demonstrated by Frauwallner (1995: 155–158), the *abhisamayavāda* presupposes a conscious reformulation of the old sevenfold list of *anuśaya*s into a tenfold one. In the canonical list of seven proclivities, i.e., desire for sensual pleasures (*kāmarāga*), hostility (*pratigha*), desire for existence (*bhavarāga*), conceit (*māna*), nescience (*avidyā*), false view (*dṛṣṭi*), and doubt (*vicikitsā*), Dharmaśreṣṭhin/Dharmaśrī—or whoever it was who reorganized the dispositif—coalesced the two forms of desire (thus making the list sixfold) and replaced false view by the five "classic" false views (thus making the list tenfold), viz. personalistic false view, false view consisting in the belief in (the two) extremities (*antagrāhadṛṣṭi*), erroneous (nihilistic) view (*mithyādṛṣṭi*), attachment to false views (*dṛṣṭiparāmarśa*), and attachment to (non-Buddhist) practices and observances. Needless to say, Aśvaghoṣa may also have resorted to the sevenfold list for the sake of symmetry with the seven constituents of enlightenment, but he would not have done so at the cost of doctrinal consistency.

[186] SNa 17.56-59: *dhyānaṃ sa niśritya tataś caturtham arhattvalābhāya matiṃ cakāra | sandhāyamaitraṃbalavantamāryaṃrājevadeśānajitānjigīṣuḥ||cicchedakārtsnyena tataḥ sa pañca prajñāsinā bhāvanayeritena | ūrdhvaṅgamāny uttamabandhanāni samyojanāny uttamabandhanāni || bodhyaṅganāgair api saptabhiḥ sa saptaiva cittānuśayān mamarda | dvīpān ivopasthitavipraṇāśān kālo grahaiḥ saptabhir eva sapta || agnidrumājyāmbuṣu yā hi vṛttiḥ kabandhavāyvagnidivākarāṇām | doṣeṣu tāṃ vṛttim iyāya nando nirvāpaṇotpāṭanadāhaśoṣaiḥ ||*. Translation Johnston 1932: 108, with "insight" for "intuitive wisdom", and "cultivation" for "meditation". For an explanation of the cosmological motifs alluded to in SNa 17.58cd, see Johnston 1932: 108, n. ad v. 58.

9. In Lieu of a Conclusion

Aśvaghoṣa's SNa has not only been, as a tale of human passion, conversion and redemption, an inexhaustible source of inspiration for Buddhist painters and sculptors throughout "Greater India". As a story about salvation, it has also been regarded, at least in Central Asia and China, as a treasure trove of spiritual advice, meditative exercises and soteric techniques. To what extent does the SNa reflect first-hand personal experience, on the part of Aśvaghoṣa, of the practices he describes with such a wealth of similes and technical details? Close scrutiny of the text reveals that a large part of the descriptions as well as the soteriological programme itself are built on sūtra materials. Were, then, Kumārajīva and those who took the poet as a *dhyāna*-master acquainted with now lost works dedicated to the same topic? But if their representation of Aśvaghoṣa relied on the SNa, one may wonder what was expected from a work to be labelled a "meditation treatise". Was it supposed to commit to language "private" non-linguistic experiences of a psychophysiological character, or, rather, to provide an epitome of graded exercises in self-restraint, mindfulness and visualization, borrowing if needed from scriptural descriptions? At this point, we would do well not to forget that the sūtras are nothing but the word of the supreme physician and ultimate authority concerning salvational means. As such, this word is credited with the highest possible degree of soteriological relevance, a truth grounded in, and legitimated by, the successful personal experience of the (future) Buddha. In this regard, the predominantly modern dichotomy between direct personal experience and scripturally based knowledge loses much of its cogency, if it ever had any. Aśvaghoṣa can be considered a *dhyāna*-master in the sense that, through the medium of his medicine-like poetry, he made the salvational truth again present and palatable to contemporary practitioners. Adding to the sūtras or altering their teaching could only threaten the fragile possibility of salvation. And this might well be the deepest and most obvious meaning of "Sautrāntika" when—anachronically—applied to Aśvaghoṣa.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

ADīpa — *Abhidharmadīpa with Vibhāṣāprabhāvṛtti*, ed. Padmanabh S. Jaini. Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1977.

AK(Bh) — *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam of Vasubandhu*, ed. Prahlad Pradhan. Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1975 [1967[1]].

AKUṬ — *Abhidharmakośa Upāyikā Ṭīkā* (Śamathadeva). D no. 4094, *Ju* 1b1-*Ñu* 95a6.

AKVy — *Sphuṭārthā Abhidharmakośavyākhyā, the Work of Yaśomitra*, ed. Unrai Wogihara. Tokyo: Sankibo Buddhist Book Store, 1989 [1936[1]].

AN I — *The Aṅguttara-Nikâya*, Part I: *Ekanipâta, dukanipâta, and tikanipâta*, ed. Richard Morris. Second Edition Revised by A.K. Warder. London: Pali Text Society, 1961 [1885[1]].

AN III — *The Aṅguttara-Nikāya*, Part III: *Pañcaka-nipāta, and chakka-nipāta*, ed. E. Hardy. London: Pali Text Society, 1896.

AN IV — *The Aṅguttara-Nikāya*, Part IV: *Sattaka-nipāta, aṭṭhaka-nipāta, and navaka-nipāta*, ed. E. Hardy. London: Pali Text Society, 1899.

AN V — *The Aṅguttara-Nikāya*, Part V: *Dasaka-nipāta, and ekādasaka-nipāta*, ed. E. Hardy. London: Pali Text Society, 1900.

AS — *Abhidharmasamuccaya* (Asaṅga). D no. 4049, *Ri* 44b1-120a7.

$AS_{Skt.\ Rec.}$ — *Abhidharma Samuccaya of Asaṅga*, ed. Prahlad Pradhan. Santiniketan: Visva-Bharati, 1950.

ASBh — *Abhidharmasamuccaya-bhāṣyam*, ed. Anantalal Thakur. Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1976.

AVSū — *The Arthaviniścaya-sūtra and Its Commentary (Nibandhana)*, ed. N.H. Samtani. Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1971.

BC — *Buddhacarita* (Aśvaghoṣa). Sanskrit text of BC 1.8-14.31 in Johnston 1984, part I: 1-161. See also BC_{Tib} and BC_{Weller}.

(My numbering of the stanzas follows Johnston even when the text quoted is the one edited by Weller.)

BC_{Tib} *Buddhacarita* (Aśvaghoṣa), Tibetan version. D no. 4161, *Ge* 1b1-103a2/P no. 5356, *Ṅe* 1-124b8.

BC_{Weller} *Buddhacarita* (Aśvaghoṣa), Tibetan Text of BC 9-17 as edited in Weller 1928.

BCA(P) *Bodhicaryāvatārapañjikā, Prajñākaramati's Commentary to the Bodhicaryāvatāra of Çāntideva*, ed. Louis de La Vallée Poussin. Calcutta: Asiatic Society, 1904–1914.

BHSD Franklin Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*, Vol. II: *Dictionary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1970 [New Haven: Yale University Press 1953[1]].

BoBh *Bodhisattvabhūmi: A Statement of Whole Course of the Bodhisattva (Being Fifteenth Section of Yogācārabhūmi)*, ed. Unrai Wogihara. Tokyo 1930–1936.

D Derge (sDe dge) Edition of the Tibetan Buddhist Canon: *The Tibetan Tripiṭaka, Taipei Edition*, ed. A. W. Barber. Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc., 1991.

DN I-II *The Dīgha Nikāya*, Parts I and II, eds. T. W. Rhys Davids and J. Estlin Carpenter. London: Pali Text Society, 1890, 1903.

DN III *The Dīgha Nikāya*, Part III, J. Estlin Carpenter. London: Pali Text Society, 1911.

EĀ *Ekottarikāgama*. T. 125.

GASū Robert Kritzer, *Garbhāvakrāntisūtra, The Sūtra on Entry into the Womb*. Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 2014 (Critical Edition of *Garbhāvakrāntisūtra*, pp. 225–385).

Jāt. IV V. Fausbøll, *The Jātaka together with Its Commentary, Being Tales of the Anterior Births of Gotama Buddha*, Vol. IV. London: Trübner & Co., 1887.

Kośa Louis de La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu. Traduction et annotations*, 6 vols. Bruxelles: Institut Belge des Hautes Études Chinoises, 1980 [Paris – Louvain: Paul Geuthner and J. B. Istas, 1923–1931[1]].

MĀ *Madhyamāgama*. T. 26.

Mil. *The Milindapañho, Being Dialogues between Kind Milinda and the Buddhist Sage Nāgasena*, ed. V. Trenckner.

	London: Williams and Norgate, 1880.
MN I	*The Majjhima-Nikāya*, Part. I, ed. V. Trenckner. London: Pali Text Society, 1935.
MN II-III	*The Majjhima-Nikāya*, Parts II and III, ed. R. Chalmers. London: Pali Text Society, 1898 and 1899.
MPPU	*Mahāprajñāpāramitopadeśa* (pseudo-Nāgārjuna). T. 1509. See also *Traité*.
MPSū	Ernst Waldschmidt, *Das Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra. Text in Sanskrit und Tibetisch, verglichen mit dem Pali nebst einer Übersetzung der chinesischen Entsprechung im Vinaya der Mūlasarvāstivādins auf Grund von Turfan-Handschriften herausgegeben und bearbeitet*, 3 vols. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1950–1951.
MSA(Bh)	*Asaṅga. Mahāyāna-Sūtrālaṃkāra. Exposé de la doctrine du Grand Véhicule*, ed. Sylvain Lévi. Paris: Librairie Honoré Champion, 1907.
MVy	*Mahāvyutpatti*, Ryozaburo Sakaki 榊亮三郎: *Hon-yaku myogi taishu: Bonzokanwa shiyaku taiko* 飜訳名義大集：梵蔵漢和四訳対校, 2 vols. Tokyo: Suzuki Research Foundation, 1962 [Kyoto 1916[1]].
MW	Monier Monier-Williams, *A Sanskrit-English Dictionary. Etymologically and Philologically Arranged with Special Reference to Cognate Indo-European Languages*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1993 [Oxford 1899[1]].
Nett.	*The Netti-Pakaraṇa with Extracts of Dhammapāla's Commentary*, ed. E. Hardy. London: Pali Text Society, 1902.
P	*The Tibetan Tripitaka, Peking Edition, Kept in the Library of the Otani University, Kyoto*, ed. D. T. Suzuki. Tokyo and Kyoto: Tibetan Tripitaka Research Institute, 1957.
SĀ	*Saṃyuktāgama*. T. 99.
ŚB	*The Çatapatha-Brâhmaṇa in the Mâdhyandina-Çâkhâ* […], ed. Albrecht Weber. Leipzig: Otto Harrassowitz, 1924 [Berlin 1855[1]].
Sn	*Suttanipāta*, eds. Dines Andersen and Helmer Smith. London: Pali Text Society, 1965 [1913[1]].
SN I	*The Saṃyutta-Nikâya of the Sutta-Piṭaka*, Part I: Sagâtha-Vagga, ed. Léon Feer. London: Pali Text Society, 1884.
SN II	*Saṃyutta-Nikāya*, Part II: Nidāna-Vagga, ed. Léon Feer.

London: Pali Text Society, 1888.

SN IV — *Saṃyutta-Nikāya*, Part IV: Saḷāyatana-Vagga, ed. Léon Feer. London: Pali Text Society, 1894.

SN V — *Saṃyutta-Nikāya*, Part V: Mahā-Vagga, ed. Léon Feer. London: Pali Text Society, 1898.

SNa — E. H. Johnston, *The Saundarananda of Aśvaghoṣa. Critically Edited with Notes*. London: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1928. See also Covill 2007.

ŚrBh — Śrāvakabhūmi Study Group, *Śrāvakabhūmi. Revised Sanskrit Text and Japanese Translation*, 2 vols. Tokyo: The Sankibo Press, 2007.

T. — *Taishō shinshū daizōkyō* 大正新脩大蔵経, eds. Takakusu Junjirō 高楠順次郎 and Watanabe Kaikyoku 渡邊海旭. Tokyo: Taishō Issaikyō Kankōkai 大正一切經刊行會, 1924–1932.

ThaG — *Thera- and Therīgāthā (Stanzas Ascribed to Elders of the Buddhist Order of Recluses)*, eds. Hermann Oldenberg and Richard Pischel. London: Pali Text Society, 1883.

Traité II-II — Étienne Lamotte, *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse de Nāgārjuna (Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra)*, Vols. II and III. Louvain: Université de Louvain, Institut Orientaliste, 1981 [1949[1]] and 1970.

Ud — *Udāna*, ed. Paul Steinthal. London: Pali Text Society, 1982 [1885[1]].

Uv — *Udānavarga (Sanskrittexte aus den Turfanfunden X)*, ed. Franz Bernhard. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1965.

Vism — *The Visuddhi-Magga of Buddhaghosa*, ed. C. A. F. Rhys Davids. London: Pali Text Society, 1975 [1920–1921[1]].

Vkn — *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa(sūtra)*: Chinese version by Kumārajīva: T. 475. Sanskrit text: *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa, A Sanskrit Edition Based on the Manuscript Newly Found at the Potala Palace*, ed. Study Group on Buddhist Sanskrit Literature. Tokyo: Taisho University Press, 2006. See also Lamotte 1987.

YBh — *The Yogācārabhūmi of Ācārya Asaṅga*, ed. Vidhushekhara Bhattacharya. Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1957.

Secondary Sources

Anālayo 2003
Bhikkhu Anālayo, *Satipaṭṭhāna. The Direct Path to Realization*. Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 2003.

Anālayo 2011
———, *A Comparative Study of the Majjhima-nikāya*, 2 vols. Taipei: Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation, 2011.

Anālayo 2013
———, *Perspectives on Satipaṭṭhāna.* Cambridge, UK: Windhorse Publications, 2013.

Anālayo 2015
———, *Saṃyukta-āgama Studies*. Taipei: Dharma Drum Publishing Corporation, 2015.

Bodhi 2000
Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha. A Translation of the Saṃyutta Nikāya*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2000.

Bodhi 2012
Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Numerical Discourses of the Buddha. A Translation of the Aṅguttara Nikāya*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2012.

Choi 2010
Jin Kyoung Choi, "The Eightfold Path in Aśvaghoṣa's *Saundarananda*", *Bukkyō Daigaku Daigakuin Kiyō, Bungaku Kenkyūka Hen* 佛教大学大学院紀要. 文学研究科篇 (*The Bukkyo University Graduate School review, compiled by the Graduate School of Literature*) 38, March (2010), 31–38.

Covill 2007
Linda Covill, *Handsome Nanda by Ashva-ghosha*. New York: New York University Press and JJC Foundation, 2007.

Covill 2009
———, *A Metaphorical Study of Saundarananda*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 2009.

Cox 1992a
Collett Cox, "Mindfulness and Memory: The Scope of *Smṛti* from Early Buddhism to the Sarvāstivādin Abhidharma", in Janet Gyatso (ed.), *In the Mirror of Memory. Reflections on Mindfulness and Remembrance in Indian and Tibetan Buddhism*. Albany: State University of New York, 1992, pp. 67–108.

Cox 1992b

———, "Attainment through Abandonment: The Sarvāstivādin Path of Removing Defilements", in Robert E. Buswell and Robert M. Gimello (eds.), *Paths to Liberation. The Mārga and Its Transformations in Buddhist Thought*. Honolulu: Kuroda Institute, University of Hawai'i Press, 1992, pp. 63–105.

Deleanu 2006

Florin Deleanu, *The Chapter on the Mundane Path (Laukikamārga) in the Śrāvakabhūmi. A Trilingual Edition (Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese), Annotated Translation, and Introductory Study*, 2 vols. Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 2006.

Demiéville 1951

Paul Demiéville, "La Yogācārabhūmi de Saṅgharakṣa", *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême-Orient* 44,2 (1951), 339–436.

Dessein 1999

Bart Dessein, *Saṃyuktābhidharmahṛdaya, Heart of Scholasticism with Miscellaneous Additions*, 3 vols. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1999.

Eimer 1976

Helmut Eimer, *Skizzen des Erlösungsweges in buddhistischen Begriffsreihen, eine Untersuchung.* Bonn: Religionswissenschaftliches Seminar der Universität Bonn, 1976.

Eltschinger 2012

Vincent Eltschinger, "Aśvaghoṣa and His Canonical Sources II: Yaśas, the Kāśyapa Brothers and the Buddha's Arrival in Rājagṛha (*Buddhacarita* 16.3-71)", *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 35,1-2 (2012 [2013]), 171–224.

Eltschinger 2013

———, "Aśvaghoṣa and His Canonical Sources I: Preaching Selflessness to King Bimbisāra and the Magadhans (*Buddhacarita* 16.73-93)", *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 41,2 (2013), 167–194.

Eltschinger 2014a

———, "The Four Nobles' Truths and Their Sixteen Aspects: On the Soteriological Presuppositions of the Buddhist Epistemologists' Views on *niścaya*", *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 42 (2014). Birgit Kellner and Sara McClintock (guest eds.), *Ākāra in Buddhist Philosophical and Soteriological Analysis*, 249–273.

Eltschinger 2014b
———, *Buddhist Epistemology as Apologetics. Studies on the History, Self-understanding and Dogmatic Foundations of Late Indian Buddhist Philosophy*. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2014.
Eltschinger 2015
———, "The Yogācārabhūmi against Allodoxies (*paravāda*): 1. Introduction and Doxography", *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens* 55 (2013–1014 [2015]), 191–234.
Eltschinger forthcoming a
———, "Aśvaghoṣa and His Canonical Sources III: The Night of Awakening (Buddhacarita 14.1-87)".
Eltschinger forthcoming b
———, "Aśvaghoṣa and His Canonical Sources IV: On the Authority and the Authenticity of the Buddhist Scriptures".
Frauwallner 1995
Erich Frauwallner, *Studies in Abhidharma Literature and the Origins of Buddhist Philosophical Systems*. Translated from the German by Sophie Kidd. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1995.
Gethin 2001
Rupert M. Gethin, *The Buddhist Path to Awakening*. Oxford: Oneworld Publications, 2001 [Leiden: E. J. Brill, 1992[1]].
Hanisch 2007
Albrecht Hanisch, "New Evidence of Aśvaghoṣa's *Sūtrālaṃkāra*: Quotations from the *mDo sde rgyan* of gŹan la phan pa'i dbyaṅs in the Tibetan version of Dharmakīrti's *Jātakamālāṭīkā*", in Konrad Klaus and Jens-Uwe Hartmann (eds.), *Indica et Tibetica, Festschrift für Michael Hahn zum 65. Geburtstag von Freunden und Schülern überreicht*. Vienna: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 2007, pp. 193–205.
Hartmann 1988
Jens-Uwe Hartmann, *Neue Aśvaghoṣa- und Mātṛceṭa-Fragmente aus Ostturkistan*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht (Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen I. Philologisch-Historische Klasse, Jahrgang 1988, Nr. 2), 1988, pp. 53(/1)–92(/40).
Honjō 1983
Yoshifumi Honjō, "Śamathadeva no tsutaeru *Daigoufunbetsukyou* to *Hossebikunikyou* シャマタデーヴァの傳へる「大業分別経」と「法施比丘尼経」", *Bukkyobunkakenkyu* 仏教文化研究 通号 28 (1983), 95–112.

Honjō 1984
———, *A Table of Āgama-citations in the Abhidharmakośa and the Abhidharmakośopāyikā*, Part I. Kyoto 1984.
Hurvitz 1977
Leon Hurvitz, "The Abhidharma on the 'Four Aids to Penetration'", in L. S. Kawamura and K. Scott (eds.), *Buddhist Thought and Asian Civilization. Essays in Honor of Herbert V. Guenther on His Sixtieth Birthday*. Emeryville, California: Dharma Publishing, 1977, pp. 59–104.
Johnston 1932
E. H. Johnston, *The Saundarananda or Nanda the Fair. Translated from the Original Sanskrit of Aśvaghoṣa*. London: Humphrey Milford, Oxford University Press, 1932.
Johnston 1984
———, *Aśvaghoṣa's Buddhacarita or Acts of the Buddha (in three parts: Sanskrit Text of Cantos I–XIV with English Translation of Cantos I–XXVIII, Cantos I to XIV translated from the Original Sanskrit supplemented by the Tibetan Version and Cantos XV to XXVIII from the Tibetan and Chinese Versions)*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1984 [Lahore 1936[1]].
Kritzer 2014
See GASū.
La Vallée Poussin 1932
Louis de La Vallée Poussin, "Notes et bibliographie bouddhiques", *Mélanges chinois et bouddhiques* 1 (1932), 377–424.
Lamotte 1987
Étienne Lamotte, *L'Enseignement de Vimalakīrti (Vimalakīrtinirdeśa)*. Louvain-la-Neuve: Université Catholique de Louvain, Institut Orientaliste, 1987 [1962[1]].
Lévi 1927
Sylvain Lévi, "La Dṛṣṭānta-Paṅkti et son auteur", *Journal Asiatique* 211 (juillet–septembre 1927), 96–127.
Lévi 2003
———, *La doctrine du sacrifice dans les Brāhmaṇas*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2003 [Paris 1898[1]].
Nagao 1955
Gadjin M. Nagao, "The silence of the Buddha and its Madhyamic Interpretation", in *Yamaguchi Hakase Kanreki Kinen: Indogaku Bukkyōgaku Ronsō* 山口博士還曆記念, 印度學佛教學論叢 *(Studies in*

Indology and Buddhology: Presented in Honour of Professor Susumu Yamaguchi on the Occasion of his Sixtieth Birthday). Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1955, pp. 137–151.

Ñāṇamoli 1991

Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli, *The Path of Purification (Visuddhimagga) by Bhadantācariya Buddhaghosa.* Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1991 [1956[1]].

Ñāṇamoli/Bodhi 2001

Bhikkhu Ñāṇamoli and Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha. A Translation of the Majjhima Nikāya.* Boston: Wisdom Publications, 2001 [1995[1]].

Nattier 2007

Jan Nattier, "'One Vehicle' (一乘) in the Chinese *Āgama*s: New Light on an Old Problem in Pāli", *Annual Report of The International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology* 10 (2007), 181–200.

Negi 2002

J.S. Negi, *Bod skad daṅ legs sbyar gi tshig mdzod chen mo*/*Tibetan-Sanskrit Dictionary*, Vol. IX. Sarnath, Varanasi: Dictionary Unit, Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 2002.

Ochiai/Saitō 2000

Ochiai Toshinori 落合俊典 and Saitō Takanobu 齊藤隆信, "Memyō bosatsu den 馬鳴菩薩傳 (Tradition of Aśvaghoṣa Bodhisattva)", in Makita Tairyō 牧田諦亮 and Ochiai Toshinori 落合俊典 (eds.), *Nanatsu-dera koitsu kyōten kenkyū sōsho* 七寺古逸經典研究叢書 (*The Long Hidden Scriptures of Nanatsu-dera Research Series*), Vol. V. Tokyo: Daitō shuppansha, 2000, pp. 265–295.

Rahula 1980

Walpola Rahula, *Le Compendium de la super-doctrine (philosophie) (Abhidharmasamuccaya) d'Asaṅga.* Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1980 [1971[1]].

Renou 1978

Louis Renou, *L'Inde fondamentale. Études d'indianisme réunies et présentées par Charles Malamoud.* Paris: Hermann, 1978. The article referred to, "« connexion » en védique, « cause » en bouddhique," was first published in *Dr. Kunhan Raja Presentation Volume*, Madras, 1946, pp. 1–5.

Salomon 1999
Richard Salomon, "Aśvaghoṣa in Central Asia: Some Comments on the Recensional History of His Works in Light of Recent Manuscript Discoveries", in Erik Zürcher, Lore Sander, et al. (eds.), *Collection of Essays: Buddhism across Boundaries. Chinese Buddhism and the Western Regions*. Taiwan: Fo Guang Shan Foundation for Buddhist and Culture Education, 1999, pp. 221–263.

Samtani 2002
N.H. Samtani, *Gathering the Meanings. The Compendium of Categories. The Arthaviniścaya Sūtra and its Commentary Nibandhana*. Berkeley: Dharma Publishing, 2002.

Schlingloff 1964
Dieter Schlingloff, *Ein buddhistisches Yogalehrbuch (Sanskrittexte aus den Turfanfunden 7)*. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1964.

Schmithausen 1976
Lambert Schmithausen, "Die vier Konzentrationen der Aufmerksamkeit", *Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft und Religionswissenschaft* 60,4 (1976), 241–266.

Schmithausen 1982
———, "Versenkungspraxis und erlösende Erfahrung in der Śrāvakabhūmi", in Gerhard Oberhammer (ed.), *Epiphanie des Heiles. Zur Heilsgegenwart in indischer und christlicher Religion. Arbeitsdokumentation eines Symposiums*. Vienna: Sammlung De Nobili, 1982, pp. 59–85.

Schmithausen 1987
———, "Beiträge zur Schulzugehörigkeit und Textgeschichte kanonischer und postkanonischer buddhistischer Materialien", in Heinz Bechert (ed.), *Zur Schulzugehörigkeit von Werken der Hīnayāna-Literatur*, Vol. II. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1987, pp. 304–435.

Thomas 1929
Edward J. Thomas, "Review of Johnston 1928" (see SNa), *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 2, April (1929), 352–354.

Tomomatsu 1931
Entai Tomomatsu, "Sûtrâlaṃkâra et Kalpanâmaṇḍitikā. 1re partie", *Journal Asiatique*, juillet–septembre (1931), 135–174.

Waldschmidt 1971
Ernst Waldschmidt, *Sanskrithandschriften aus den Turfanfunden*, Vol. III. Wiesbaden: Franz Steiner, 1971.
Walshe 1995
Maurice Walshe, *The Long Discourses of the Buddha. A Translation of the Dīgha Nikāya*. Boston: Wisdom Publications, 1995 [1987[1]].
Watson 1997
Burton Watson, *The Vimalakīrti Sūtra.* New York: Columbia University Press, 1997.
Weller 1928
Friedrich Weller, *Das Leben des Buddha von Aśvaghoṣa. Tibetisch und Deutsch*, Vol. II. Leipzig: Verlag Eduard Pfeiffer, 1928.
Willemen 2009
Charles Willemen, *Buddhacarita. In Praise of Buddha's Acts (Taishō Volume 4, Number 192).* Berkeley: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 2009.
Yamabe 1999
Nobuyoshi Yamabe, *The Sūtra on the Ocean-Like Samādhi of the Visualization of the Buddha: The Interfusion of the Chinese and Indian Cultures in Central Asia as Reflected in a Fifth Century Apocryphal Sūtra*, Ph.D. Diss., Yale University, 1999. Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Services.
Yamabe 2003
———, "On the School Affiliation of Aśvaghoṣa: 'Sautrāntika' or 'Yogācāra'?", *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 26,2 (2003), 225–254.
Yamabe/Sueki 2009
Nobuyoshi Yamabe and Fumihiko Sueki, *The Sutra on the Concentration of Sitting Meditation*. Berkeley: Numata Center for Buddhist Translation and Research, 2009.
Young 2015
Stuart H. Young, *Conceiving the Indian Buddhist Patriarchs in China*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2015.

Chapter IV

Stairway to Heaven and the Path to Buddhahood: Donors and Their Aspirations in Fifth- and Sixth-Century Ajanta*

Vincent Tournier, École française d'Extrême-Orient, Paris

> Voialtri pochi che drizzaste il collo
> per tempo al pan de li angeli, del quale
> vivesi qui ma non sen vien satollo,
> metter potete ben per l'alto sale
> vostro navigio, servando mio solco
> dinanzi a l'acqua che ritorna equale.
>
> Dante, *La Divina Commedia*,
> *Paradiso* 2:10–15

Dedicato alla memoria di Stefano Zacchetti

Introduction

The important soteriological trend placing at its core the ambition to become a perfect *buddha* progressively suffused Indian Buddhism throughout the Middle Period, that is, between the first and sixth centuries CE. At the beginning of this period, the ambitious *virtuosi* embarking on and promoting this Bodhisattvayāna were likely a minority, although their dynamism and

* I am grateful to the dearly remembered Luis Gómez for enabling the occasion of my first visit to Ajanta, to his pupil Leela Wood for her enthusiastic guidance at the site and for facilitating my access to some of the caves, and to Arlo Griffiths, *bhikkhunī* Dhammadinnā, and Nicolas Morrissey for their comments and corrections on drafts of this article.

Cristina Pecchia and Vincent Eltschinger (eds.), *Mārga. Paths to Liberation in South Asian Buddhist Traditions*. Papers from an international symposium held at the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, December 17 – 18, 2015. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2020, pp. 177–248.

influence in some regional centres such as Greater Gandhāra was far from negligible. Across South Asia, evidence of various kinds concurs in identifying the late fourth to early sixth century as marking a shift, when the ideas propounded by the Bodhisattva movement became, so to speak, the "main stream". Through a stratigraphic study of some of the canons, whose boundaries were the object of a constant effort of definition during this period, one can observe how this ideal was endorsed by several monastic orders.[1] At the same time, the study of manuscript troves such as those found in Gilgit and in the Bāmiyān valley allows a glimpse into the religious eclecticism of local communities, and into the stratification of archives.

The public impact of the Bodhisattva movement may also be measured by tracing shifts in the ideology of merit. To explore this issue historically, literary sources—and in particular those texts concerned with the generation and assignment of merit—need to be considered in close connection with epigraphical, visual, and archaeological evidence. These sources generally do not present a coherent picture of a gradual path to liberation in the same way as doctrinal works. Yet, the study of what religious agents define as their goal(s) may allow some understanding of the multi-life trajectory that *bodhisattva*s expected for themselves. It is particularly informative to scrutinize statements of motivation that accompanied pious donations: these contain numerous expressions marking donors' aspiration to Awakening (*praṇidhāna*) or other indications of their soteriological outlook.

Inscriptions, which are predominantly donative in genre, yield very interesting information on the evolution of religious aspirations among Buddhists, and thus constitute the primary material of this enquiry.[2] In the epigraphic corpus of the Deccan, on which my research currently focuses, these donative inscriptions can be subsumed under two main categories:[3] (1) Formulaic records in prose, sometimes accompanied by verse quotations. These are generally written in Sanskrit from the fourth century onwards, but this language remains heavily permeated by Middle Indo-Aryan features and is subject to the influence of the vernaculars. (2) Ornate *ad hoc* compositions, whether copper-plate land grants or stone inscriptions. After the fading of

---

1 For a contribution to that issue, with a focus on the Mahāsāṅghika schools, see Tournier 2017: 255–351.

2 For a survey of donative inscriptions of the Eastern Ghats, across the whole of the Middle Period, see: Tournier in preparation.

3 For a typology of epigraphic records across South Asia, see Salomon 1998: 110–126.

Middle Indo-Aryan languages in the epigraphic medium, they are usually composed in a more polished kind of Sanskrit and not uncommonly in verse. While short donative inscriptions have proven useful to map the spread of formulae employed to express religious aspirations, ornate records are qualitatively important, since they showcase the background and motivations of individual donors. Both types also draw on a pool of literary and scriptural tropes, which provide us with glimpses of the circulation of texts and the evolution of normative discourses. This is especially valuable in regions like the Deccan, where so little is known of the literary traditions of the regional Buddhist communities. Both epigraphic text-types attest to the spread of formal assignment of the merit arising from a gift to the goal of Buddhahood in the fifth and sixth centuries.

This phenomenon might in turn be related to broader evolutions in *mentalités* and ritual praxis, such as the increasing identification at that time of the Buddha with his image. Gérard Colas has suggested that, by the fifth century, the identification of the icon as a sentient and a juridical person had spread widely across Indian religious traditions.[4] In the Buddhist case, this was anticipated by several centuries, with the treatment of the relics—and, by extension, the *stūpa*—as a sacred receptacle of his qualities and as a legal substitute. But the understanding of the Buddha's image as (one of) his *corps substitué*(*s*)—to borrow Paul Mus' famous expression—indeed would appear to come into full bloom around the period identified by Colas. This phenomenon is also accompanied, between the third and the fifth century, by evolutions in monastery layout. The mature plan ensuing from these developments allocates the "perfumed chamber" (*gandhakuṭī*) or *cella* where the Buddha(-image) is established to the centre of the back wall of monasteries.[5] As noticed by Gregory Schopen, this period is also marked by unambiguous references in inscriptions to the Buddha as a permanent resident.[6]

The evolution sketched here may in part account for the spread of aspirations to Buddhahood in the epigraphic record. Indeed, a crucial concern for candidates to Awakening was precisely that their aspiration be somehow *witnessed* and *validated* by a *buddha*. In narrative literature, *praṇidhāna*s

---

4 Colas 2012: 109–122. As specified by the author, this identification was also contested in some circles, for instance among Mīmāṃsakas.

5 On the antecedents to this layout, see Dhavalikar 1981; Owen 2001. On the term *gandhakuṭī*, see recently Schopen 2015.

6 Schopen 1990.

are generally conceived in the presence of a *buddha*, and they have a strongly emulative tone. There was no agreement at the time about what or who qualified as a valid witness, and while a conservative point of view insisted that it be a living *buddha*, others recognized the possibility of aspirations formulated in front of a *stūpa*, an image, or at the *bodhimaṇḍa*.[7] And indeed, manuals for *bodhisattva*s and ritual texts used in their daily practice also make frequent reference to the presence of images in the ceremonies during which the practitioner conceives the aspiration to Buddhahood, or receives the rules of *bodhisattva* training (*bodhisattvaśikṣā*).[8] Moreover, some of the iconographic types that were especially popular in the period considered here were inspired by the donors' wish to identify themselves with the awakened state they were aiming at, or by their eagerness to gain assurance that their wish would be fulfilled.[9]

Although the representation of and identifications with Buddhahood may have played a central role in devotional activities of the late Middle Period, it would seem far too schematic to suppose that perfect Awakening was the sole goal motivating the act of giving. The present contribution will attempt to determine how donors self-identifying as *bodhisattva*s in fact harmoniously combined and hierarchically structured mundane and supramundane goals. I will argue that both categories of expectations are in fact reconciled by an implied multi-life path to liberation, whereby benefits such as auspicious rebirths serve, *inter alia*, as markers of one's progress toward Awakening. I will also suggest that, at the prominent and well-documented site of Ajanta, the concern for rebirth among gods and high-born, beautiful human beings, may well relate to the commemorative dimension of many of the fifth- and sixth-century cave dedications. The jewel of a site that is Ajanta has been scrutinized from multiple angles and has been the focus of an intimidating number of publications. Nevertheless, I would like to suggest that a close, context-sensitive, (re-)reading of the epigraphic record can still yield precious clues for the historian of Buddhism. To illustrate my point, I will draw on two examples: (1) a series of short donative inscriptions transmitting a formulaic assignment of merit along with a scriptural quotation; (2) an elaborate record in verse composed by a prominent monastic donor and rep-

7 See Tournier 2014: 38–40.

8 See, for instance, the discussion in Griffiths 2020.

9 On the Māravijaya iconographic type and its coexistence with inscriptions expressing aspirations to reach the Awakening of a perfect *buddha*, see Tournier 2014.

resenting a unique document for understanding the ideology of the gift current in that time and place.

Part 1: For the Supreme Knowledge, and High Births Along the Way

Gregory Schopen, whose ground-breaking scholarship has inspired much of the present study, has analysed on several occasions the spread of a donative formula from the fourth century onwards in inscriptions and manuscripts colophons.[10] The formula patches together two textual blocks,[11] one presenting the gift itself (with *deyadharmo 'yaṃ* followed by title and name), the other by assigning the merit (*puṇya*) arising from it to a given goal. This goal is most commonly the attainment of "supreme knowledge" (*anuttarajñāna-avāpti*), typically—if not always clearly[12]—by all beings. Following a pan-Indian conception according to which merit can be divided into shares,[13] a supplementary clause (typically constructed with *-pūrvaṅgamaṃ kṛtvā*) commonly identifies a group of persons that are prioritized as beneficiaries. The "supreme knowledge" can now safely be equated with perfect Awakening, which implies that donors adopting this formula may have espoused a soteriological model consistent with the Bodhisattvayāna. The supramundane aspirations that this formula conveys diverge at first sight from what is found in earlier donative records. According to Schopen, these records, when they contain a formal assignment of merit towards a specific aim, mention a variety of goals, such as health or the well-being of one's dead parents, and more rarely *nirvāṇa*. Schopen therefore contrasted earlier "Hīnayāna inscriptions" where dedications of merits are concerned with "something less than the religious goal sanctioned by the literary tradition", with "Mahāyāna inscriptions" where "the merit of the act […] is always said to be intended specifically for the attainment of *anuttarajñāna*".[14] He continued that "in none of our Mahāyāna inscriptions is merit ever transferred to deceased par-

[10] See Schopen 1979; 1985; 2000. For further references, see Tournier 2018: 44–45, nn. 60, 66, 70.

[11] See the outline in Tournier 2018: 44.

[12] Tournier 2014: 36–42.

[13] See, e.g., Hara 2002: 106ff.

[14] Schopen 1985: 38–39.

ents or for such things as conferring health or granting long life".[15] Schopen's presentation did not do full justice to the complexity of the data, and this was in part due to a division of the record—very common in the 1980s, but now outdated—into discrete entities labelled Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna. First, even before the influence of the Bodhisattva movement became significant, the soteriological goal of *nirvāṇa* gained some currency in certain regional corpora, at least from the third century onwards.[16] Moreover, mundane benefits do occasionally coexist with the supreme goal—whether it be *nirvāṇa* or *samyaksambodhi*—in epigraphic formulae.[17] While Schopen's assumption with respect to so-called formulas of "merit-transfer" is essentially correct for fourth to sixth-century donative records aiming at Buddhahood, consideration of the formulae in their broader context at Ajanta allows for a refinement of our understanding of donors' motivations. Indeed, a qualitative approach to individual inscriptions reveals that donors who considered themselves as *en route* for Awakening at the same time nourished lower expectations, and in particular aimed at auspicious rebirths for themselves and for their relatives.

Out of the ninety-seven inscriptions recovered so far from Ajanta, forty-seven—whose beginning is preserved—introduce the gift with *deyadharmo 'yaṃ*. All of these inscriptions—save one, AjI 17, to be considered below—are engraved in relation to images described by Walter Spink as "intrusive" in the sense that they seem not to have been part of the original iconographic planning of the caves in which they were found. According to

---

15 Schopen 1985: 43.

16 Half of the forty-four inscriptions from Āndhradeśa engraved during the period roughly coinciding with the Ikṣvāku rule, which mention donors' motivations, hence identify *nirvāṇa* as a goal. One has to account for the fact that many of these inscriptions are connected to a single individual, the prominent *upāsikā* Cāntisirī, and were engraved at the *mahācaitya* of Nagarjunakonda. But if we consider the single individuals involved in patronage, still eight of the twenty-two donors mention *nirvāṇa* as a goal in their records. None of the inscriptions of this sub-corpus mention *anuttarajñāna* or Buddhahood. For more details, see: Tournier in preparation.

17 In the Nagarjunakonda corpus, see for instance inscriptions EIAD 24 and 28 in the online corpus *Early Inscriptions of Āndhradeśa* (http://epigraphia.efeo.fr/andhra), where Cāntisirī's aim at *nirvāṇa* coexists with the granting of long life and victory of the king, who was the donor's son-in-law. I will return to the interesting formula used in EIAD 136, a sixth-century inscription from Jaggayyapeta, in the conclusion to this study, pp. 219–220.

Spink, these intrusive dedications appeared around the year 480 CE, shortly after the demise of the last significant ruler of the Vatsagulma branch of the Vākāṭakas, Hariṣeṇa (ca 477–478).[18] Spink's chronology year by year—and even month by month!—of the developments at the site represents, in the words of Oskar von Hinüber, a "chronological wonderland".[19] It cannot however be simply dismissed as a work of historical fiction, for the rich evidence Spink has accumulated over decades may still serve our understanding of the development of the site, as long as *relative chronology* is concerned.[20] Thus, it seems indeed possible that many of the small donative inscriptions in the major caves may have flourished once the patronage of whole caves by elite donors had dwindled. Until a detailed palaeographic analysis of the corpus is carried out, we can provisionally assume a tentative dating of this sub-corpus to the late fifth and the sixth century. Out of these donative inscriptions, at least twelve included the formula assigning the merit produced by the gift to the attainment of supreme knowledge.[21] Two of these inscriptions, as well as a third one containing the simpler *deyadharmo 'yaṃ* phrase, have in common an additional stanza, placed either before or after the donative formula. The first of these inscriptions (AjI 90) is found on the right wall of the *cella* of the small cave XXII, below what is certainly the best example of a popular motif at the site, namely the series of eight *buddha*s, including Śākyamuni, his six predecessors, and Maitreya.[22] Each *buddha* is seated under his *bodhi*-tree, of a distinct kind, and above each tree a label indicating its name was painted. In a first band below each *buddha*, another set of labels state their names. It is below a frieze with geometrical patterns that the donative record

---

18 This dating of Hariṣeṇa's death is accepted by Bakker 1997: 49. Ajay Mitra Shastri (1997: 203–205) situates instead the ruler's death around 510.

19 See Hinüber 2008: 66. For a detailed unpacking of this chronology, see Spink 2005–2016, vol. IV.

20 See the remarks in that sense, formulated in a letter by H. Stietencron, reproduced in Spink 2005–2016, vol. I: 23–26.

21 These are nos. 11, 14–18, 65, 70–71, 73, 90, and 94 in Cohen's catalogue (2006), the numbering of which I follow here (referring to individual inscriptions with the abbreviation AjI). The exact number of cases is very difficult to evaluate, since the later part of these records is often lost. As previously noted, some of the Ajanta inscriptions end before the mention of *anuttarajñāna*, merely directing the merit produced to all beings (*sarvasattvānām*), without further characterizing the benefit. See Tournier 2014: 40, n. 158. Cf. McCombs 2014: 350–351, 357–358.

22 On this motif at Ajanta, see Zin 2003: 457–469.

proper is found, apparently written by the same hand. The wall has been heavily damaged between the publication of an eye copy prepared for John Griffiths in 1896 and today (figs. 1 and 2). This is particularly unfortunate for the epigraphist, since only hand copies of the inscriptions were published so far, and these do not allow confident verification of the reading proposed by former editors. The donative inscription consists of two parts (marked A and B) that are separated by a vertical line, and can be read as follows:[23]

A. **(1)** (¶ de)///yadharmmo yaṃ śākyabhikṣo⟨r⟩ ma[ṣa] ? ? + ? ◊ + (sarvasatvā)nām anuttara[jñā]nāvāptaye |

B. [saurū]pyasaubhāgyaguṇopapaṃnnā
guptendriye bhāsvaradīpta[yas te]
bhavaṃnti [lo]⟨ke⟩ nayanābhirāmā –
(2) ye kārayaṃtī[ha ji]nasya biṃbaṃ |

1. (¶ de)yadharmmo yaṃ *deya dharmmo yaṃ* I; ¶ *deyadharmmo yaṃ* Ch, C. **śākyabhikṣo⟨r⟩ ma[ṣa] ? ? + +** *śākyabhikṣo maṣaraśaila* … I; *śākyabhikṣo⟨r⟩ ma*(*hā*)*yāna* … Ch, suggesting to reconstruct *ma(hā)yānayāyinaḥ*; *śākyabhikṣo m aparaśaila .i* C, suggesting a reconstruction *aparaśaila(n)i(kayasya)* (sic, for -*nikāyasya*). ◊ + **(sarvvasatvā)-nām** … *nī susya mātāpitṛ* … *tranya .. sarvvasatvānām* I; … *(sarvasatvā)nām* Ch;

[23] The editions of all inscriptions discussed in this article were made from a preliminary set of photographs taken in December 2012 and checked against the original during my second visit to the site in January 2017. Unfortunately, I lacked the equipment to produce publishable photographic documentation of most inscriptions discussed here. Besides Cohen's 2006 reading (marked C), variant readings by Indraji (I) in Burgess and Indraji 1881: 88, and Chakravarti 1955: 112 (Ch) are given in the apparatus. The editorial conventions adopted throughout this article for inscriptions follow those of the EIAD corpus. Hence, physical line numbers are given in parentheses and bold face; square brackets [ ] surround readings of damaged *akṣara*s; parentheses ( ) editorial restorations of lost text; angle brackets ⟨ ⟩ editorial additions of omitted text; double angle brackets ⟪ ⟫ an insertion due to the engraver (or scribe in charge of painted inscriptions); question marks represent entirely illegible *akṣara*s; the sign + *akṣara*s that are entirely lost; the diamond symbol ◊ horizontal space left blank in the text layout (for punctuation or other purposes); triple slash /// the left or right edge of the support if it is fragmentary. In the few instances where a reading of a manuscript is provided, I follow the closely related conventions established by the editors of the Schøyen collection.

> … *nīyasya ... [u]tranya . [o] [sa]rvvasatvānām* C.[24] **-paṃnnā** Ch, C; *-pannā* I. Emend *-pannā*. **guptendriye** *guṇendriyair* I; *guṇendriye* Ch, C. This is unlikely to constitute a rare case of nom. pl. in *-e* (on which, see BHSG § 8.80). Following the reading of the parallel in AjI 52, emend *guptendriyā*. **bhāsvaradīpta[yas te]** Ch, C; *bhāsvaradiptayaṣṭe* I. **bhavaṃnti [lo]⟨ke⟩** *bhavanti te* I, Ch, C. Ch suggests reading *⟨cai⟩te*. **nayanābhirāmā –** *nayanābhirāmā* I, C; *nayanābhirāmā* | Ch. The sign –, besides marking the end of a *pāda*, points here at the continuation of the text in the line below. **2. biṃbaṃ |** Ch; *biṃbaṃ* I, C.
>
> This is the pious gift of the *śākyabhikṣu* Maṣa… for the attainment of the supreme knowledge (by all beings—priority being given to … his parents?).
> Reborn[25] with the qualities of beauty and prosperity, they become of well-protected senses and, resplendent as the sun, are a delight to look at in the world, they who commission here (i.e., in this life) an image of the Jina.

The interpretation of the word coming immediately after the monastic title *śākyabhikṣu* has been much debated. Only the first *akṣara* and part of the second are preserved today (see fig. 3), and so it is impossible to be sure what this part of the formula originally read. To me, the most likely hypothesis is that the word following the monastic title was either an indication of the

---

[24] The lacuna of *ca* 24 *akṣara*s after the space, and before *(sarvasatvā)nāṃ*, whose reconstruction is rather secure, suggests there was a formula of assignment of merit starting with *yad atra puṇyaṃ tad bhavatu*, followed by a clause determining the primary beneficiaries of the gift. In light of their common mention at Ajanta, these would have probably consisted of the donor's parents, as also suggested by the hand copy on which Indraji's and Cohen's readings are based. Perhaps the formula originally read *mātāpitṛpūrvaṅgamaṃ kṛtvā* since this parenthetical clause—common outside Ajanta—is also partly attested in AjI 65, to be discussed below. But this is unsure.

[25] Previous translations of this oft-cited stanza have rendered *upapanna* as "possessed of" (Salomon and Schopen 1984: 120; DeCaroli 2015: 129), "endowed with" (Cohen 2006a: 331; Skilling 2017: 28) or "possess" (Vinītā 2010: 217). In Pāli (DP, s.v. *upapajjati*) and Buddhist Sanskrit (BHSD, s.v. *upapadyate*), this past participle can both mean "reborn" and "endowed with". I am inclined to opt for the first interpretation on three grounds: (1) the use of *iha* in *pāda* d implies a contrast between the present condition of the donor and his future enjoyment; (2) the scriptural context of the stanza (on which see below, pp. 191–192) makes it clear that the stanza is concerned with future rebirths; (3) *upapanna* is unambiguously used, in composition with *abhijana-*, in the sense of being (re)born, in st. 14 of AjI 93, thereby proving that this meaning of the word was current at the site.

monk's name or a toponym pointing to his origin or place of residence.[26] It is much less likely that precisely this damaged word was the only occurrence of the word *mahāyāna* at the site.[27] Similarly, it is highly problematic to see in it a rare mention of a Buddhist *nikāya*—that of the Aparaśailas.[28] Indeed, no Buddhist order is otherwise named in the epigraphic record of Ajanta,

[26] This is already the interpretation of Burgess and Indraji 1881: 88, which is also followed by Morrissey 2009: 69–71 and McCombs 2014: 342, n. 86.

[27] Chakravarti (1955: 112), who affirms he read the inscription from the original, proposes that the reading "may have been the usual *Mahāyānayāyinaḥ*". There is however a clear vertical stroke to the right of the second *akṣara*, which excludes its being read *hā*. Moreover, in inscriptions where the epithet *pravaramahāyānayāyin* occurs, it generally precedes the title *śākyabhikṣu* (or, for that matter, *paramopāsaka*). See Schopen 1979: 10, where the only apparent exception to this pattern is provided by the inscription under discussion. See also Mitra 1998: 285.

[28] Cohen (1995a: 11) confidently claimed that "[i]n the place where the previous epigrapher had found 'Mahāyāna,' I discovered the term *Aparaśaila*", which he interprets as pointing to the *nikāya* belonging to the Mahāsāṅghika fold. There are reasons to be suspicious of Cohen's edition of this inscription, since in particular he does not use any bracket indicating the parts of the word that were damaged or lost on the wall that he claims to have examined. Cohen expresses his intention "to publish a more technical assessment in the near future", but when indeed he did in his 2006 publication of the Ajanta corpus, he kept his reading *aparaśaila* (without brackets), ignoring the fair criticism of method formulated in Schopen 2000: 17, n. 31. There is no reason to suspect that Cohen saw and recorded the inscription in a better state than it was in 2012, when I could access it. Indeed, the only picture of the cave XXII painting he published, in support of an unrelated argument (2006b: 76, fig. 3.2), shows the fresco in a similar state to the one I myself witnessed. That the portion of plaster bearing the word in question was already lost to the epigrapher by 1991 at the latest is shown by Leese 1991: fig. 18. One cannot escape the conclusion that Cohen has in fact relied on the eye-copy published in Griffiths 1896: pl. 91, which he holds (2006a: 331) to provide "the best evidence for the first part of the inscription". Since, for the second part of the inscription, where the eye-copy can be compared to the preserved inscription, Cohen has to admit that the former "clearly deviates from the actual inscription here", there is no particular reason to trust that it was reliable only in the half of the inscription that is lost. It should thus be altogether discarded. Even admitting the possibility of reading *pa* instead of *ṣa*, Cohen does not account for the fact that the *akṣara* following *kṣo* is not an initial *°a* or a *ra*, but a clear *ma*. In his 2006 edition, he seems to be treating it as an epenthesis (although he does not say so), but the use of the *sandhi* consonant *-m-* after an *-o*—itself an odd gen. sg. ending—is extremely rare; see BHSG § 4.59; von Hinüber 2014: 87. This rarity even further complicates Cohen's hypothesis.

and the other presumed exception is also almost certainly a red herring.[29] Furthermore, the Aparaśailas are otherwise only known in inscriptions from Āndhra,[30] the other presumed exception from Maharashtra being—once again—the result of a fanciful reading.[31] Therefore, while Schopen ought, as I have argued elsewhere, probably not to have dismissed the possible co-

[29] AjI 58, an inscription painted at the feet of a *buddha* on a pillar from cave X, reads as follows, according to Cohen: *vi(pa)[śvī] samya[k]saṃbu[ddhaḥ] cetika ? rikasya*. My inspection of the inscribed pillar did not allow me to improve this reading substantially. After the genitive, the inscription breaks off, and the formula must at least have originally included the name of the donor. Dikshit has suggested (1942: 63) identifying the word *cetika* with the name of the Caitika/Śaila school, a hypothesis developed by Leese (1991: 136–140) and Cohen (1995a: 9–11 and, less forcefully, 2006a: 304). See also Zin 2003: 374f. However, the compound in the genitive must probably be reconstructed as *cetika(vā)rikasya* and be considered a monastic title pointing to the monk in charge of a shrine. On monastic titles in *-vārika/-cāraka*, see Silk 2008a: 101–125; Kieffer-Pülz 2010: 78–79. Dikshit's theory according to which the Caitika school of Āndhra was also attested in Junnar (IBH, Junnar no. 18) and Nasik (IBH, Nāsik no. 9) is equally speculative.

[30] I return to this evidence in: Tournier forthcoming.

[31] Dikshit (1942) again has argued for the occurrence of this school's name in Kanheri cave LXXVI. However, upon personal inspection of the stone (see also fig. 4) his reading *atha aparīselesu*, accepted by Gokhale (1991: 91), whose reading is reproduced in Tsukamoto's corpus (IBH, Kaṇheri no. 38, l. 6), is clearly mistaken. Bracketing the details about the donor's relatives, the donative formula may be read as follows (with the variant readings of Gokhale [G] and Bühler [B] in Burgess 1883: 85):

> **(2)** pava°itikāya sā[pā](ya) […] **(4)** leṇa deyadhama ◊ pāṇiyapoḍhi ca ◊ […] **(6)** cātudise bhikhusaghe ◊ °aṭhasu puri[s](esu) + + **(7)** lesu ◊ patiṭhāpita …
>
> **2. pava°itikāya** G; *pavaītikāya* B. **4. pāṇiya-** B; *pāniya-* G. **6. °aṭhasu puri[s](esu) + + lesu-** *aṭhasu puri[sesu] lesu* B; *atha aparīselesu* G. Comparison with the following line makes it clear that at least one and probably two more *akṣara*s were originally engraved after *puri-[s](esu)*, thus making G's reading all the more unlikely. The frequent occurrence of the term *sapurisa* (Skt. *satpuruṣa*) in early epigraphic records, and the possibility that *sa* has been dropped after *su* in the engraving process through pseudo-haplography, make it tempting to restore *⟨sa⟩puri[s](esu)*.
>
> The female renunciant Sāpā […] has established as pious gift this cave as well as a cistern […] for the community of the four directions, for [use by] eight (excellent?) individuals...

There is thus nothing in this donative formula that hints at the monastic order of the recipients.

existence of the *anuttarajñāna* formula with named *nikāya*s,[32] epigraphic evidence from Ajanta cannot be safely used as evidence against his claim.

As far as this site is concerned, the Mūlasarvāstivāda is the only *nikāya* which we can reasonably suspect to have been present at Ajanta in the fifth to sixth centuries. The (or rather a) *Vinaya* of this school was likely the most influential source for visual narratives painted at the site, and its prescriptions for the decoration of a monastery likely informed the iconographic programs of the fully painted caves (i.e., caves I, II, XVI, and XVII).[33] As we shall shortly see, the source of the stanza featured in the second part of the cave XXII inscription was transmitted along with Mūlasarvāstivāda scriptures in the region of Gilgit.[34]

Indeed, the importance of this inscription lies not so much in the elusive word following the title *śākyabhikṣu*, but in the well-preserved second part. The stanza in Upajāti meter it contains, connecting image dedication to auspicious rebirth, is known to occur in one other painted inscription (AjI 52), found on a lotus below a standing *buddha* in *varadamudrā* painted on a pillar of cave X (figs. 5 and 6). In light of the better-preserved inscription at cave XXII, I would propose the following edition, distinguishing as above between the two textual blocks:[35]

---

[32] Tournier 2018: 43–46, confirming a suggestion first made in Tournier 2014: 42–43, with n. 163.

[33] See Przyluski 1920; Lalou 1925 and 1928; Schlingloff 1988; Zin and Schlingloff 2007. Mention should also be made of Āryaśūra's *Jātakamālā*, verses of which are quoted *in extenso* in three captions of cave II. See Lüders 1903; Schlingloff 1988, esp. chap. 14, 15, 23; Hanisch 2005, vol. I: xiii, n. 1. On roughly coeval manuscript fragments from Bāmiyān and the Turfan region, see Hartmann 2002. Besides this source, other "Buddhist classics" such as Kumāralāta's *Kalpanāmaṇḍitikā* and Aśvaghoṣa's *Saundarananda* might also have been known and used at Ajanta. See Schlingloff 1988: 49–58, 117–122. Affinities interestingly exist between Kumāralāta and Aśvaghoṣa and the (Mūla-)Sarvāstivādin scriptural traditions. See respectively Hahn 1985: 255–256 and Eltschinger 2013a and 2013b. On Āryaśūra, see Hanisch 2005, vol. I: xvii–xx. Among Mahāyāna scriptures, the possibility of the *Saddharmapuṇḍarīka* having informed the imagery of the site is discussed in Schlingloff 1988: 175–180; Schopen 2005.

[34] On the fruitfulness of reading Ajanta paintings in connection with Gilgit manuscripts, see the observations of Cohen 1995b: 130.

[35] Variants indicated for Indraji (I, in Burgess and Indraji 1881: 86), Chakravarti (1946: 92; Ch), and Cohen (C) are given.

A. (1) (saurū)[pya](saubhāgya)g[uṇo](papannā)
(guptendri)y[ā] bhāsva[rad](ī)ptayas te
(2) + + + + + (na)[yanābh](irāmā ◊)
[ye] kārayant[īha] [j]inasya bi[ṃ]baṃ ||

B. (3) (deyadha)rm[m]o [yaṃ ś]ākyabhikṣo(ḥ) [°ācā]ryabhada(ṃ)ta-(bu)ddhasenasya

1. (saurū)[pya](saubhāgya)g[uṇo](papannā) … I; … *guṇo* … Ch, C; **(guptendri)-y[ā] bhāsva[rad](ī)ptayas** …*ndriyā bhāsura[dī]ptayas* I; … yā *bhāsuradiptayas* Ch; *bhāsuradīptayas* C. **2. (na)[yanābh](irāmā ◊)** … I; …*yanābh*… Ch, C. **[ye] kārayant[īha]** … *kārayaṃtīha* I; *ye kārayaṃtīha* Ch, C. **3. (deyadha)rm[m]o [yaṃ]** *[deyadha]rmmo yaṃ* I; *[deyadha]rm[m]o yaṃ* Ch; *[deyadha]rm[m]o 'yaṃ* C. **[ś]ākyabhikṣo(ḥ)** *śākyabhikṣor* I; *[ś]ākyabhikṣo(r)* Ch, C. **[°ācā]ryabhada(ṃ)-ta(bu)ddha-** *ācāryabhadantabuddhasenasya* I; *(ācārya)bhada(ṃ)ta(bu)ddha-* Ch; *(ācā)r[ya]bhada(ṃ)ta(bu)ddha-* C.

What was not noticed so far is that a few *akṣara*s of the *saurūpyasaubhāgya* stanza can also be recognized in a third inscription from cave XI (AjI 65), painted below a badly damaged Buddha image (fig. 7).[36] This inscription was first edited by Cohen, but he misread the few remaining *akṣara*s (see fig. 8) that make it clear that the same stanza was represented in that inscription as well:

A. (1) (deya)dha[rmm]o (yaṃ) + + + + + + + + + + (mātāpitṛ)-[p]ūrvvaṅga(maṃ) [kṛ]tvā + + + + + + + + + ? + ? + sarvvasatvānā(ṃ) anu◊tta[ra]jñānāvāpta[y]e stu ◊

B. [saur]ūpyasau⟨bhā⟩gyag(uṇopa)[pan]n[ā]
+ + + + + + + + + + ?
(bha)[va](ṃ)[t](i) lok[e na](yanābhirāmā)
+ + + + + + + + + + +

1. (deya)dha[rmm]o *(deya)ddha[rmm]o* C. **+ + + + + + + + + +** There seems to be little more than the space needed here for the expected formula *yad atra puṇyaṃ tad bhavatu*. This implies either that the name of the donor was very short (i.e., disyllabic) or that something was omitted. **(mātāpitṛ)[p]ūrvvaṅga(maṃ)** *(mātā)-[p]itṛ[pū]rvvaṅga(ma)* C. **+ + + + + + + + + ? + ? +** *(yad atra puṇyaṃ tad bha)va(tu)* C. C's reconstruction is dubious here, since the clause marking a priority among

[36] Spink (2005–2016, vol. III: 113) describes it as follows: "Near the left end of the rear wall, there was once a standing Buddha, with bodhisattva attendants, and flying dwarfs above. This group, except for the very upper portions[,] is obliterated, but one can still make out the ja[ṭā] headdress of Avalokite[ś]vara at the left of the ruined main image."

> the recipients of the merit produced as a rule occurs after *tad bhavatu.* Moreover, C does not remark that the lacuna extends over *ca* 13 *akṣara*s, whereas his reconstruction implies only 9 missing *akṣara*s. **[saur]ūpyasau⟨bhā⟩gyag(uṇopa)[pan]n[ā]** ... *[tā]py asau tya* ... C. **(bha)[va](ṃ)[t](i) lok[e na](yanābhirāmā)** … *[va]tālo* … C.

That the epigraphic corpus of Ajanta yields three examples of the same stanza alone suffices to suggest it was considered a particularly appropriate companion to inscriptions recording image donations. Given the presence of the stanza in three different caves and taking into consideration the fragmentary nature of many donative inscriptions, it is fairly likely that the same stanza originally accompanied other image dedications as well. That this stanza was extracted from an authoritative textual source was already suspected by Salomon and Schopen, who noticed its proximity with verses found in the *Tathāgatabimbakārāpaṇasūtra* preserved in Gilgit.[37] Its exact source, the *Prasenajidgāthā* or *Prasenajitparipṛcchā*, was only recently identified, thanks to its presence within a sūtra collection preserved in a thirteenth-century palm-leaf manuscript recovered from the Potala palace. An earlier recension of this short verse-text was in fact already known from two unpublished Gilgit witnesses, being part of two different *Sammelhandschriften*. The editor of the Potala sūtra collection, *bhikṣuṇī* Vinītā, collated the Gilgit folios with her main witness and, for the verse that concerns us here, included the text of part B of AjI 90.[38] Focused as she was on establishing an edition

---

[37] Salomon and Schopen 1984: 120.

[38] Prp 214–215. On the two copies of the text from Gilgit, one complete, the other fragmentary, see Hinüber 2014: 100, no. 13d.5; 110, no. 59c. Both copies are written in Gilgit/Bāmiyān Type II script and can thus approximately be dated to the seventh/eighth century. On palaeographical features of the complete version of the *Caitya-pradakṣiṇagāthā*, transmitted in the same manuscript as the complete version of the *Prasenajidgāthā*, see Melzer in Tropper 2010: 56–57. The stanza that interests us here is only preserved in the complete copy, and, on the basis of colour pictures newly published by Kudo (2017: 62, fol. 281b8–282a1) one can edit it as follows:

> saurūpyasaubhāgyaguṇopapannaṃ
> gu(p)[t]endriyā bhāskaradiptayas te •
> bhavaṃti loke nayanābhirāmā
> ye kārayaṃtīha jina(sya) biṃbaṃ •
>
> **saurūpyasaubhāgyaguṇopapannaṃ** Emend *-pannā.* **-dipta-** Emend *-dīpta-*. **gu(p)[t]endriyā** *gu ? ndriyā* Vinītā.

In the beginning of *pāda* b, there is enough of the subscript *-ta* to suggest that the reading in the Gilgit manuscript was originally *gu(p)[t]endriyā*, as is also the case in the Tibetan translation (reading *dbang po bsdams*) and in AjI 52. Thus *guṇendriyair/guṇendriye* should be considered simply a misreading of the cave XXII inscription

and translation of this text, Vinītā simply reproduced Chakravarti's reading and did not comment on this identification. It thus remained little-noticed,[39] and the *Prasenajidgāthā*'s importance for both the history of Ajanta and that of donors' aspirations in the Middle Period has yet to be fully established.

To that end, one needs first to determine whether the one stanza quoted at Ajanta may be attributed with confidence to the *Prasenajidgāthā* and not to another, unknown, collection of floating verses. There is in fact enough evidence to consider the *Prasenajidgāthā* as the ultimate source of the quote. In the two Sanskrit recensions, the stanza occurs as the fifth of the work, and occupies a key position. Indeed, it occurs immediately after a brief preamble describing the encounter between king Prasenajit and the Buddha: the former asks the latter how to secure one's happiness in future rebirths, in a post-*parinirvāṇa* world.[40] In stanza 4, the Buddha invites his royal disciple to listen carefully to

---

by previous editors, and *guhyendriyā* preserved in the later palm-leaf manuscript from the Potala is likely the result of a scribal confusion between the *akṣara*s *pta* and *hya* at some point in the manuscript transmission. In other words, all early Indic witnesses support Vinītā's emendation of her copy-text.

39 The source of the Ajanta stanza is thus not known to DeCaroli (2015: 129) and Skilling (2017: 27–28), even if the latter refers (p. 33, and n. 132) to the *Prasenajidgāthā* as an important representative of what he identifies as the *anuśaṃsa* genre.

40 Prp 212–213, st. 2:

hitāśayānāṃ karuṇātmakānāṃ
tathāgatānāṃ parinirvṛtānām |
vidhāya pūjāṃ katham agrabuddhe
sukhaṃ labhante 'nyabhaveṣu martyāḥ ||

agrabuddhe Ms.; *agrabuddheḥ* em. Vinītā. My understanding of *agrabuddhe* as a vocative is also supported by the one Gilgit manuscript preserving this verse (fol. 281b6: *agryabuddhe*) and by the syntax of the Tibetan parallel. Compare Silk 2013: 71.

How, supremely sagacious one, would mortals obtain happiness in other existences, by paying homage to *tathāgata*s—who are intent on the well-being [of others], and who have compassion as their nature—when they have entered *parinirvāṇa*.

A comparable conversation, in verse, on the merit associated with image-dedication, is for example found at the end of sūtra no. 36.5 in the **Ekottarikāgama*. The conversation takes place between the Buddha and king Udayana, but four other kings including Prasenajit are present. See T 125, II, 708a21–b12. The *Maitreyamahāsiṃhanādasūtra* features a dialogue between the Buddha and Mahākāśyapa disparaging monks that would seek to make profits out of the business of *buddha* images. In that context, the great disciple alludes to an earlier discourse delivered by the Buddha to Prasenajit, according to which great merit ensues from making an image of the Buddha. See T 310, XI, 512b26–27, trans. Demiéville 1937: 213; D 67, *dKon brtsegs*, *Ca* 108a1–2,

his answer, and what follows—the *saurūpyasaubhāgya* stanza under discussion—consequently marks the beginning of his teaching. The contents of the stanza itself moreover anticipates most of the meritorious fruits that are produced by the cult of images, *stūpa*s, or *caitya*s, that form the central topic of the whole text.[41] In other words, this stanza does not merely introduce the teaching attributed to the Buddha in the *Prasenajidgāthā*, but it actually epitomizes its content. Given the importance of this stanza in the architecture of the work, it thus seems difficult to consider it merely as a free-floating module. Therefore, we can reasonably consider that the knowledge of the verse at Ajanta presupposed that of (one version of) the text as a whole. The *Prasenajidgāthā* is thus, together with Āryaśūra's *Jātakamālā*, the only known work to be quoted in the Ajanta corpus. It should be considered a critical source to understand what informed the numerous individual dedications of images at the site.

When the stanza is compared to the donative formula, which it accompanies in the inscriptions of cave XI and XXII, what is striking is the coexistence of mundane and supramundane benefits expected from the gift. In the *Prasenajidgāthā*, both categories of benefits also appear to coexist harmoniously, although mundane outcomes are expounded in much greater detail. Indeed, the ritual interactions with the Buddha's "substitutes" encouraged in this text are often connected with positive outcomes in future rebirths, including the guarantee not ever to be reborn as a poor person (*daridra*), a slave (*dāsa*), or as someone whose faculties are deficient (*vaikalya-indriya*).[42] Only one stanza shared by both Sanskrit recensions promises liberation as the final outcome of devotional engagement with a *caitya*:[43]

> narendralakṣmīm amarendralakṣmīṃ
> prāpyottamām apy anubhūya saukhyām |
> vimuktipaṭṭaṃ labhate viśiṣṭaṃ
> vibaddhapaṭṭaṃ sugatasya caitye ||

trans. Schopen 2005: 124. This allusion is too vague to connect this sūtra specifically to (a version of) the *Prasenajidgāthā*, but it illustrates that the Buddha's prescriptions to the king were considered representative of the promotion of image dedication.

41 Only the last four stanzas of the text, in its two Sanskrit recensions, have a slightly different focus since they address the benefits of honouring the Saṅgha. See Prp 244–247, st. 30–33.

42 Prp 228–230, st. 18.

43 Prp 218–219, st. 7.

> Having attained the fortune of the lords among men, and of the lords among gods, and having also experienced the supreme happiness, he obtains the distinguished turban of liberation, he who ties a turban at the shrine of the Sugata.

The integration of rebirth among prominent men and gods into a broader path leading to liberation is commonly met in texts which address karmic fruition of pious actions across various lives.[44] It provides a key for determining how both outcomes were meant to coexist in the inscriptions of caves XI and XXII. It is unsure to what extent the expression "turban of liberation" (*vimuktipaṭṭa*) may match here the *anuttarajñāna* of the epigraphic record. In the *Karuṇāpuṇḍarīka*, we encounter the same motif where the tying (√*bandh*) of a turban—in this context, on the head of a *dharmabhāṇaka*—leads one to the state of being "bound [to perfect Awakening] by one rebirth" (*ekajātipratibaddha*), with the "status of crown prince" (*yuvarāja*). Further in the same chapter, Maitreya is similarly characterized as a "crown prince" wearing the "turban of liberation".[45] Thus, *vimuktipaṭṭa* functions there as a marker of future Awakening, with the guarantee, after countless royal rebirths among gods and men, to be the next in line in a dynasty of *buddha*s understood as Dharma-kings. But *vimuktipaṭṭa* in the *Prasenajidgāthā* could more simply point to the guarantee of reaching *nirvāṇa*—a common goal to the followers of all paths[46]—and not the omniscient state exclusive to *buddha*s. Consequently, the soteriological outlook of the Sanskrit version of the *Prasenajidgāthā* is unclear.[47] The *versio ornatior* of this text preserved in Tibetan, however, does include a clear allusion to the specific goal of *bodhisattva*s. In this

---

[44] See below, pp. 203–205.

[45] See Kpu 29.15–18, 42.13–15. The passage is discussed in Tournier 2017: 248, n. 429.

[46] It is as a generic equivalent of liberation that the same compound occurs (as a *karmadhāraya*) in two of the Indic versions of the dreams of Kṛkin, preserved in the *Sumāgadhāvadāna* and the *Abhidharmakośavyākhya*. See AKV 278.26–28 and, for the Gilgit recension of the *Sumāgadhāvadāna*, Kudo 2016: 341. The version of the story cited in Śamathadeva's *Abhidharmakośopāyika-ṭīkā* and attributed to a **Kāñcanamālāvadāna* (gSer phreng can gyi rtogs pa brjod pa) similarly refers to the turban of liberation (Tib. *rnam par grol ba'i snam bu*). See D 4095, *mNgon pa*, *Ju* 128b2–3. See also Dhammadinnā 2016b: 77 and n. 36. On the dream of Kṛkin in general and the version preserved in Pelliot tibétain 977 in particular, see Silk 2018.

[47] Compare McCombs's statement (2014: 359) that "the *Prasenajit-gāthā* does not appear to be a Mahāyāna text."

recension, two stanzas are inserted within the work's preamble, so as to immediately precede the *saurūpyasaubhāgya* verse:[48]

> bcom ldan 'das kyi mchod rten rnams dang ni |
> sku gzugs rnams la rdul phran ci song ba |
> de yi grangs snyed de byed mi rnams kyis |
> lha yul sa steng nges par rgyal srid 'thob |
> gzugs dang gzugs med khams kyi ting nge 'dzin |
> phun sum tshogs pa'i sa mchog kun myong nas |
> tha mar skye dang rga la sogs pa yi |
> sdug bsngal med pa'i sangs rgyas go 'phang 'thob |
>
> Men who make a great number of reliquaries of the Bhagavant [as well as] images, [even the size] of a seed, they will certainly obtain the status of a king in heaven [or] on earth.
> Having experienced all the supreme stage of accomplishment of the *samādhi* of the form and formless realms, they will thereafter obtain the station of *buddha* (**buddhapada*) that is free of the suffering of birth and old age.

The composers and early transmitters of the *Prasenajidgāthā* may not have considered Buddhahood to be a possible outcome of the ritual engagement with an image and *stūpa* cult. Yet, it is clear from the above stanzas that one version at least of this work was influenced by the outlook of the Bodhisattvayāna. The closely related *Tathāgatabimbakārāpaṇasūtra*, also transmitted in Gilgit, likewise appears to have first identified *nirvāṇa* as a goal before being "updated" to be aligned with the ideals spearheaded by *bodhisattva*s. Indeed, in the frame-story of this text, prince Suvarṇaprabha, the main interlocutor of the Buddha Śākyamuni, is told how, as a result of making an image of the Buddha Vipaśyin in his former existence, he was reborn thousands of times as Indra, Brahmā, and as king, before taking rebirth in his present condition. [49] Then he is predicted to soon reach, "in the midst of gods and humans, the state that is imperishable, not characterized by old age or death, beneficial, and peaceful".[50] And indeed, at the end of this story, Suvarṇaprabha is said to enter the religious life and to realize the state of *arh-*

[48] See Vinītā 2010, vol. I: 250.

[49] Tbk 135.15–136.12, fol. 2a6–3a5.

[50] Tbk 136.13–14, fol. 3a6: *suvarṇaprabho rājakumāraḥ antike devamanu(ṣyāṇā)ṃ [a]cyutaṃ ajaraṃ amaraṇaṃ śivaṃ śāntaṃ padaṃ labhiṣyatīti.*

ant.[51] So there is no hint, from this story, at anyone following the *bodhisattva* path, and it is only the central part of the sūtra that presents perfect Buddhahood as a "generalized goal" [52] achievable through merit-making. This part has loose ties with the frame story and clearly patches together materials of various provenances. It starts by prescribing to whomever aims at one's own as well as others' well-being (*ātmahitaparahitakāma*) to commission a *buddha*-image: whatever the material, the size, or the manner in which the image is consecrated (with bodily relics or the *pratītyasamutpāda[gāthā]*), he or she who commissions and honours an image will obtain a great mass of merit.[53] The sūtra then proceeds to give further details on the positive outcomes derived from this practice, thereby sketching a "fast track" to Awakening:[54]

> **(3a7)** punar aparaṃ bhikṣavaḥ yaḫ kaścid bhikṣur vā bhikṣuṇī vā upāsako ⟨vā⟩ upāsikā vā • kṣatṛyo vā brāhmaṇo vā • vaiśyo vā • śūdro vā evaṃrūpā**(3b1)**su jātiṣu • śrutidharo bhavati • jātismaro bhavati • svajanaparijanadāsīdāsakarmmakaranauruṣeyaprabhṛtiṣu sa ādeyavākyo bhavati • **(2)** sarvasatvapṛyadarśanaharo bhavati • sarvaguṇalakṣaṇadharo bhavati sarvasatvādhipatir bhavati • sarvabuddhapratyekabuddhaśrāvakārhadguṇa**(3)**samāga[to] bhavati • nityaṃ bodhicittaparāyaṇo bhavati • yasya yatrābhikāṃkṣati • tatra tatra-m-etaṃ labhati • rāgadveṣamoherṣyāmātsar[y]a**(4)**lobhatṛṣṇādikleśādibhi⟨ḥ⟩ • vivarjito bhavati • ◯ buddhatvam anuttaraṃ adhigacchati • kṣipraṃ ca parinirvāṇaṃ śāntam adhigacchatīti vadāmi bhikṣava⟨ḥ⟩ •
>
> **3a7. kṣatṛyo** Understand *kṣatriyo*. **3b1 -nauruṣeya-** *-pauruṣeya-* M (silent emendation). Emend accordingly. **3b2 -pṛya-** Understand *-priya-*. **-darśanaharo** *-darśanadharo* M (silent emendation). Emend accordingly. **3b4 anuttaraṃ** *anvantaram* M. **ādeyavākyo** *ādeyavādyo* M.

---

[51] Tbk 138.14–22, fol. 5a3–7.

[52] On this notion, see Schopen 1977 and 1983.

[53] Tbk 136.15–28, fol. 2b6–3a6. The list of materials from which an image of the Buddha can be prepared bears some similarities with that of the *Tathāgatabimbaparivarta* quotation preserved in the *Sūtrasamuccaya* and with a recently published scripture of the same genre from the Schøyen collection. See Harrison, Hartmann, and Matsuda 2016: 289 with n. 21.

[54] Tbk 138.29–139.7, fol. 3a7–b4. Readings by the first editor Adelheid Mette (M) are indicated in the apparatus.

> Moreover, monks, whomever he(/she) [who commissions an image] is, whether a monk, or a nun, a male or a female lay follower, whether a *kṣatriya*, a *brāhmaṇa*, a *vaiśya* or a *śūdra*, in these very existences he becomes learned, able to recall his [former] existences, his speech becomes authoritative to his people, his entourage, his male and female slaves, his servants, his men, and so on, he becomes pleasing to the sight of all beings, possessed with all qualities and external marks, [and] he becomes an overlord for all beings. He gathers the qualities of all [perfect] *buddha*s, *pratyekabuddha*s, and the *buddha*s' *śrāvaka*s—[that is,] *arhant*s—, is constantly intent upon the thought of Awakening and he obtains whatever he wishes for, he rejects the impurities such as lust, aversion, delusion, jealousy, selfishness, avarice, and avidity; he realizes supreme Buddhahood and quickly realizes peace, that is, *parinirvāṇa*. Thus, I say, o monks.

It is therefore quite clear that the textual layers of the *Tathāgatabimbakārāpaṇasūtra* testify to an evolution in soteriological outlook. Both this work and the *Prasenajidgāthā* apparently followed a comparable trajectory, being progressively invested with vocabulary typical of the Bodhisattvayāna. While we cannot determine which recension would have been known to the monks at Ajanta, it must at least have been considered by them as compatible with their self-representation as *bodhisattva*s and, possibly, as Mūlasarvāstivādin monks.[55] At roughly the same time, monks belonging to other *nikāya*s similarly engaged in the cult of *stūpa*s and images with similar expectations. This is suggested, for instance, by the *Avalokitasūtra/Avalokanasūtra*, another product of the Middle Period, promoting especially the cult of *caitya*s, whose wide dissemination attests to its influence. Indeed, a version of this sūtra was incorporated into the *Vinaya* of the Mahāsāṅghika-Lokottaravādins, around the fourth or fifth century, as an "appendix" (*parivāra*) to the *Mahāvastu* (II.293.16–397.7); a parallel version to the final verse section of this scripture (II.362.3–397.7) is transmitted as a self-standing work, prefaced by a prose *nidāna*, in the bKa' 'gyur under the name *Āryāvalokana-mahāyānasūtra* (D 195); segments of these verses are also cited at length in Śāntideva's *Śikṣāsamuccaya*.[56] In these verses, the guarantee to reach supreme Awakening,

[55] On the spread of Buddhahood as a soteriological goal in (Mūla-)Sarvāstivādin scriptures, see, e.g., Dhammadinnā 2016a.

[56] Śikṣ 89.15–90.3; 297.10–309.4. See Tournier 2017: 114–118, 272–278. For a synoptic presentation of the three versions, together with the Chinese translation of the

after many "mundane" (including celestial) enjoyments, as a result of ritual engagement with the Buddha's *caitya*s, occurs repeatedly as a refrain.[57]

The textual development of the *Prasenajidgāthā* and related works allows for the coexistence of auspicious rebirths and the ultimate goal of Buddhahood as outcomes of karmic activity, the former serving as a stepping stone to the latter. Their different status in the hierarchy of religious goals can be better inferred by the epigraphic context of the quotes at Ajanta. Indeed, it is certainly significant that—as remarked by Schopen—inscriptions of the period generally assign the merit produced by the gift to the achievement of supreme knowledge. Expectations with respect to auspicious rebirths, when articulated as in the inscriptions at caves XI and XII, are merely presented as a natural outcome of the gift. In doing so, the formulaic part of these two records may have been informed by prescriptions surrounding the "perfection of giving" (*dānapāramitā*) found in *bodhisattva* manuals. For example, the influential *Bodhisattvabhūmi* exhorts that the *bodhisattva* "direct all gift to the supreme and perfect Awakening",[58] while the *Pāramitāsamāsa*, attributed to Āryaśūra, prescribes him never to give "what is not assigned to

---

Śikṣāsamuccaya, see Sugimoto 1984: Appendix I. On the verses shared between this work and the popular *Caityapradakṣiṇagāthā*, see Belanger 2000: 8–14, 27ff.; Melzer in Tropper 2010: 54–55, 58.

[57] See for instance, Mvu II.367.1–2/Ms. Sa, fol. 229a5–6:

> kalpakoṭīsahasrāṇi śatāni nayutāni ca |
> bhuñjitvā saukhya saprajño budhyate bodhim uttamāṃ ||
>
> **saukhya** *saukhyaṃ* em. Senart. This however leads to an irregular scansion. It is thus preferable to take *saukhya* as an uninflected form of acc. sg., common in the *Mahāvastu*'s verses. See BHSD, § 8.34.
>
> Having enjoyed bliss for thousands of crores of eons, and hundreds of *nayuta*s [of them], possessed of wisdom he awakens to the supreme Awakening.

A partial parallel to this stanza (not noticed by Belanger) is *Caityapradakṣiṇagāthā* 50, st. 32. For stanzas of similar content in the *Avalokitasūtra*, see Mvu II.375.1–4; 377.2–5; 378.17–20; 389.3–6. While most of these verses occur in the Tibetan parallel, none of them feature in the extracts of the *Avalokanasūtra* cited in the *Śikṣāsamuccaya*. These passages do not relate the cult of *stūpa* to the attainment of Awakening. Whether this has any bearing on the issue of the particular recension of the work available to Śāntideva remains to be investigated.

[58] BoBhū (W) 121.2–3; (D) 84.21–22: *sarvaṃ ca dānam anuttarasamyaksaṃbodhau pariṇāmayati* |.

omniscience" (*sarvajñabhāva-apariṇāmita*).[59] A more elaborate articulation of both mundane and supramundane religious goals into a multi-life path is encountered in a unique record from the same site and period. It was composed by the most prominent monastic donor to have left traces of his activity at Ajanta. This donor, as we shall see, was moved by complex motivations, including filial piety, the promotion of his social standing, as well as an eagerness to contrast his soteriological outlook with that of the Śrāvakayāna.

Part 2: Memorials on Earth, Residences in Heaven, and Awakening Beyond

Buddhabhadra is the sole sponsor of cave XXVI, a majestic apsidal shrine (*caityagṛha*) sheltering a monolithic *stūpa* with a protruding Buddha seated in *bhadrāsana*.[60] The inscription (AjI 93) commemorating the foundation is carved in neat Southern Brāhmī script on the rear wall of the cave, above and to the right of the shrine's porch. On palaeographical grounds, it can be dated to the late fifth or the first half of the sixth century (fig. 9).[61] This Sanskrit record, composed by Buddhabhadra himself,[62] consists of seventeen lines and nineteen stanzas composed in nine different metres. The donor provides interesting details about himself: he claims to have been born into

---

[59] Psam 1:43. On the problematic attribution of this work to the fourth-century author known in Ajanta, see for instance Meadows 1986: 1–21; Hahn 1993: 36–40. The earliest witness of this text, preserving the stanza referred to here, is a recently identified manuscript from Gilgit, in Gilgit/Bāmiyān type II script datable to the seventh/eighth century. See Kudo 2013: 264f.

[60] For detailed discussions of this cave, see Spink 2005–2016, vol. II: 22–96; vol. V: 311–342; Singh 2012. Both authors argue that this cave belongs to a vaster complex sponsored by Buddhabhadra, involving at least caves XXV and XXVII, if not the whole series of caves ranging from cave XXI to XXIX. I fail to see in their writings any compelling evidence of Buddhabhadra's involvement in the excavation of any cave other than XXVI, for the only historical record left by him—the inscription under discussion—mentions a single "mansion" (*veśman*, stt. 14, 18), also called "residence of the Sugata" (*sugatālaya*, st. 13); no *vihāra* or monastic cell is anywhere alluded to in this detailed record.

[61] Chhabra (1955: 450) proposes a range between 450 and 525 CE.

[62] AjI 93, st. 19ab: *pūrvvāpi ceya[ṃ] tenaiva dribddhācāryyena saugatī* |, "And the above [eulogy] of the Sugata has also been composed by this master [i.e., Buddhabhadra]." On the common use of *pūrvā* as a referent to a *praśasti*, see IEG, s.v.

a noble family and to have been ordained as a monk at a young age (st. 16). He moreover presents himself as a close friend of Bhavirāja, minister of the Aśmaka king (stt. 9–13).[63] By contrast to the other major inscriptions at caves XVI and XVII, no mention is made of Hariṣeṇa or of Vākāṭaka suzerainty. This may imply that the cave XXVI inscription was issued after the demise of Hariṣeṇa and the loss of Vākāṭaka control over the Ajanta region, in favour of one of their previous feudatories.[64] Buddhabhadra's prominent background and connections explain why he is the only monk epigraphically recorded at Ajanta who sponsored the excavation of a whole cave.[65] Not only did he have the means to carry out this costly undertaking, but he also had two assistants—named Dharmadatta and Bhadrabandhu[66]—overseeing the

---

[63] On the identification of the Aśmaka country with the present-day Ahmednagar and Beed districts of Maharashtra, to the South of Ajanta, see Mirashi 1962: 160–163. Compare Sircar 1971: 189–193. The other mention of the Aśmakas at the site, in the fragmentary *praśasti* of cave XVII, st. 10, has been the object of competing interpretations among historians. See CII V 122ff.; Bakker 1997: 37ff.; Shastri 1997: 46–49; Cohen 1997: 130–134.

[64] See Bakker 1997: 50. This naturally has bearing on the chronology of the caves, a highly complex and contentious issue. Cave XXVI has been generally understood to be one of the latest excavations at the site. See, e.g., Stern 1972: 52ff.; Williams 1982: 181–187. Features interpreted as early, observed primarily at caves XXV and XXVII, led Spink to suggest that the cave XXVI complex was an "inaugural" monument, initiated in the beginning of the revival of the site, in the 460s, before being discontinued (between 468 and 475) and completed by 478, the inscription being dated by him to "mid-478" (!). Since the dating of possible phases of the excavation of cave XXVI has little implication for the understanding of its inscription, I prefer to leave to experts in art and architecture of the cave sites the evaluation of Spink's intricately detailed—if impressionistic and often confusing—arguments. For an uncompromising criticism of Spink's dating of cave XXVI, see Khandalavala 1991, in addition to the responses reproduced in Spink 2005–2016, vol. II.

[65] The much smaller cave XI may have been sponsored by a monk as well, if the portrait of a single, individualized devotee, in the *cella* at the feet of the Buddha, may be taken as evidence of actual patronage. Spink 2005–2016, vol. II: 222–224; VI: 66, fig. 1. But there is no inscription left in that cave that would substantiate this possibility.

[66] A monk also named Dharmadatta, bearing the title *bhadanta*, is mentioned in a set of inscriptions at cave XVI (AjI 70–72), recording the gift of two series of two *buddha*s on both sides of a single monastic cell. It is impossible to be sure that this Dharmadatta was the individual involved in cave XXVI, given the commonness of this name. See Zin 2003: 379; Cohen 2006a: 315–316; Spink 2005–2016,

work in his stead (st. 14), presumably while he was closer to the Aśmaka court. Finally, Buddhabhadra had the learning and ambition to compose an *ad hoc* record commemorating his generosity (stt. 16, 19).

Several key stanzas in this record reveal a rather sophisticated conception of Buddhabhadra's gift, its recipient, beneficiaries, and outcomes. Since the inscription as a whole has been served with a good edition by B. C. Chhabra, I shall focus only on the stanzas that deserve a closer reading for the present discussion. Buddhabhadra's composition opens with a well-crafted homage to the Buddha. The second stanza (in Aupacchandasaka meter), in particular, is key to the definition of the Tathāgata:[67]

> **(2)** punar api maraṇādi yena samya[g]
> [j]itam ajarāmaradharmmatā ca labdhā ◊
> śivam abhayam anālayaṃ gato pi
> praśamapuraṃ jagatāṃ karoti cārttha[ṃ]
>
> Moreover, he is also the one who perfectly conquered death and so on and realized the fundamental nature of things (*dharmatā*), which is free from old age and death. Although he entered the city of appeasement that is beneficial, without fear and without a basis, he [still] benefits the world.

This stanza insists on the Buddha's transcending of death in particular, and on his ability to make himself available to beings beyond his *parinirvāṇa*. This praise may appear slightly banal at first sight, but its rich implications become apparent when the stanza is read in its broader textual and physical context. Among the various reliefs covering the wall of the shrine's portico, the most prominent—and the first to be found, in the southern ambulatory, by a devotee entering the cave to perform the *pradakṣiṇa*—is the largest depiction of the Buddha's final extinction at the site.[68] The proximity

---

vol. III: 122–123. As for Bhadrabandhu, he is identified by st. 14 as the good disciple (*sacchiṣya*) of Buddhabhadra, from whom he must have inherited the element *bhadra-* of his ordination name.

67 Only the occasional variants in Chhabra's edition (1955: 115–116) are systematically indicated in the apparatus. Cf. Cohen 2006a: 333–334.

68 See, e.g., Behl 1998: 51. For an argument according to which this image was part of the programme envisioned by Buddhabhadra, see Spink 2005–2016, vol. III: 259. The second major and likely "programmatic" image, in the ambulatory, is a finely executed Māravijaya. See, e.g., Bautze-Picron 1998: 36–37 and pl. XIX. This episode is also hinted at in the first hemistich of this stanza. On other epigraphic allu-

between the inscription and the figuration suggests that the eulogy may in part have served as a "preface" framing the cave's visual program, as has been proposed for the inscription at cave XVII.[69] The epithets used to define *nirvāṇa*, while drawn from a set of common canonical tropes, are skilfully chosen and are evocative in the wider context of this inscription: *śiva* and *abhaya*, for example, relate to stanza 5, in which the *buddha*s are praised as *bhayavipramukta*, "freed from fear", contrasted in that regard to the gods like Śambhu (i.e., Śiva) and Kṛṣṇa, both of whom demonstrated their deficiencies.[70] Similarly, the description of *nirvāṇa* as the city of appeasement that is "without a basis" (*anālaya*) is echoed by the qualification of the cave excavated by the donor as a *sugatālaya*, "residence of the Sugata" (st. 13). This echo, if it is indeed intentional, would suggest a learned strategy employed in order to evoke the Buddha's dynamic presence. The two other major donative inscriptions at Ajanta, namely the *praśasti*s of caves XVI (AjI 67) and XVII (AjI 77), do not problematize the Buddha's relation to his dwelling and image.[71] A certain tension between absence and presence may

---

sions to this iconographic type in epigraphy, see Tournier 2014: 31–32 with n. 123, and Griffiths 2020: 239–240.

69 See Wood 2004, with due notice of the reservations expressed in Hinüber 2008: 50.

70 This stanza reads as follows:

> **(5)** devā nirastavijayās savipattikatvāc chāpena śaṃbhur api kācaralocano bhū⟨t·⟩ || kṛṣṇo vaśo pi vaśam āpatito ntakasya tasmāj jaya[ṃ]ti **(6)** sugatā bhayavipramuktāḥ ||
>
> **kācaralocano** Understand *kaccaralocano*, with Ch. **bhū⟨t·⟩** *bhūt* Ch.
>
> Gods, because they are subject to misfortunes, are deprived from [lasting] victory; even Śambhu, because of a spell, became the horrid-eyed one (i.e., Virūpākṣa); Kṛṣṇa, although he was of unrestrained power, fell to the power of Death. Thus, victorious [only] are the *sugata*s, being entirely freed from fear.

The apologetic stance adopted by Buddhabhadra, clearly responding to the two dominant cults of the day, runs closely parallel to that articulated already in the early fourth century, in the bilingual inscription engraved on a Dharmacakra-pillar at Phanigiri (EIAD 104). See Baums et al. 2016: 369ff., with slight modifications updated in the record dedicated to that inscription on the EIAD website. Both Śiva and Kṛṣṇa's vulnerability is also contrasted in a single stanza with the Buddha's immunity in the *Viśeṣastava* by Udbhaṭasiddhasvāmin, a work of uncertain dating but whose *terminus ante quem* is the early ninth century. See Schneider 1993: 54–55 (st. 9), 96–103. On the presentation of the Buddha as the "real" Śiva(/*śivaṃkara*) in the *Sarvajñamaheśvarastotra* by the same author, see Schneider 1995, esp. pp. 178–179.

71 On the vocabulary used to refer to the Buddha's residence at caves XVI and XVII, see below, nn. 90, 99. See also Schopen 1990: 183–184; DeCaroli 2015: 134.

have been expressed there through visual means, for instance by pairing representations of the Śrāvastī and Sāṅkāśya miracles.[72] Buddhabhadra, as a learned monastic *bodhisattva*, may have been willing to stress further that the Buddha is not anywhere a "permanent resident", since he transcends the constraints of space and time and is "not fixed in duality" (*advayaniśrita*), to borrow an expression from the *Ratnāvalī* (1:51).[73] The latter work may in fact be relevant to the present context for, as noted by Cristina Scherrer-Schaub, "[t]he inscription of cave XXVI at Ajanta […] is very close in its phraseology and meaning to the *Ratnāvalī*'s bodhisattva and political program."[74] The following stanzas of the *Ratnāvalī* may support this hypothesis:[75]

> sarvajña iti sarvajño budhais tenaiva gamyate |
> yenaitad dharmagāmbhīryaṃ novācābhājane jane || [74]
> iti naiḥśreyaso dharmo gambhīro niṣparigrahaḥ |
> anālaya ity proktaḥ saṃbuddhais sarvadarśibhiḥ || [75]
> tasmād anālayād dharmād ālayābhiratā janāḥ |
> astināstyavyatikrāntā bhītā naśyanty amedhasaḥ || [76]
> te naṣṭā nāśayanty anyān abhayasthānabhīravaḥ |
> tathā kuru yathā rājan †naṣṭair na vipraṇāśyase† || [77]

75d sarvadarśibhiḥ E; *tattvadarśibhiḥ* H. **77c rājan** H; *rājaṃs* E. **77d †*naṣṭair na vipraṇāśyase*†** H; *(tair naṣṭair na praṇāśyase)* E; *ci nas mi phung de ltar gyis* Tib.

> This is precisely why the wise ones understand the omniscient as omniscient, given that [the Buddha] did not teach the depth of the teaching to those people who were unfit receptacles. Thus, the *sambuddha*s, who see everything, have declared the teaching leading to the *summum bonum* as deep, without grasping, and without a basis.[76] People who hold onto a basis, fear this teaching that is without a basis. [Thus,] not transcending being and non-being,[77] these foolish

[72] See Cohen 1995b: 271–297; Strong 2010. For a detailed survey of the visual representation of both miracles at Ajanta, see Schlingloff 2000: 476–515.

[73] On this notion, see Scherrer-Schaub 2007: 766 and n. 30.

[74] Scherrer-Schaub 2007: 788, n. 105.

[75] Rā 1:74–77. I cite variant readings by the editor M. Hahn (H) and in Eda 2005: 245–254 (E). The first two of these stanzas are also briefly discussed in Shulman 2011: 319–320.

[76] See also Ast 37–39.

[77] See Scherrer-Schaub 1991: 116.

> people go astray. Lost, terrified of that which is without fear, they lead others astray. O king, act so that those lost people won't cause your loss!

The common articulation, in both texts, of the key notions of (*a*)*bhaya* and (*an*)*ālaya*, and their use to contrast those perceiving the ultimate truth and those shrouded in misconceptions, make it tempting to suggest—however difficult it remains to prove such an idea—that this passage might have informed Buddhabhadra's composition.[78]

By their superior nature (*māhātmya*), also expressed through their accessibility-in-transcendence and their deep compassion,[79] the *tathāgata*s are established as the best possible recipients of human devotion (*bhakti*, st. 4). Within this framework, the third stanza of the Ajanta inscription extols the merit of cultic activities directed in particular to "our" Buddha:

> **(3)** tato namaskāraguṇābhidhānaṃ ◊
> bhavaty avandhyaṃ vipulaṃ mahārthaṃ
> pradattam ekaṃ kusumaṃ ca yatra
> svarggāpava[rggā]khyaphalasya hetu[ḥ]
>
> Therefore, expressing homage and praises [to him] leads to a great result, profuse and abundant, and [even] a single flower offered to him yields a [double] fruit called heaven (*svarga*) and final emancipation (*apavarga*).

The first hemistich of this Upajāti situates the homage that Buddhabhadra is paying to the Buddha within the broader accumulation of merit he is aiming at.[80] The second half of the stanza recalls the mass of merit arising from the

---

78 Among the works by Nāgārjuna, the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* at least appear to have circulated widely in the period under consideration, as is suggested, in the realm of epigraphy, by the quotation of its *maṅgalaśloka* in the Schøyen copper scroll, dating from 492/93 or 495/96 CE. See Melzer 2006: 273. For a detailed discussion of the relevance and implications of this quotation, see Scherrer-Schaub 2018. Note also that, closer to the Aśmaka domain, the legacy of Nāgārjuna in the period considered might be suggested by two sixth/seventh-century inscriptions of Āndhradeśa. See EIAD 125, edited in Baums et al. 2016: 362; EIAD 136, discussed below, pp. 219–220.

79 Scherrer-Schaub 2007: 780.

80 On the merit associated with the paying of homage, see for instance Prp 232, st. 21. Note that the compound *guṇābhidhāna* also occurs in the introductory stanza of the cave XVII *praśasti* (AjI 77). There, it announces the unfolding of the qualities of the

slightest possible gift presented to him. The motif of the offering of a single flower and its result may at first appear as a common trope, yet it is interestingly found in a very similar phrasing, mentioning both divine rebirth and liberation, within the *Anavataptagāthā*.[81] Sumanas (also known as [Karṇe-]Sumana and Kusuma) is one of the elders to unfold the "fabric of his [past] actions" (*karmaploti*) at this Himalayan synod. He relates the offering of a flower (*kusuma*) to the *stūpa* of Vipaśyin in a former rebirth to his spiritual progress and final emancipation. The Gilgit version of the work concludes thus:[82]

> ekapuṣpaṃ parityajya varṣakoṭiśatāny aham·
> deveṣu paricaryeva śeṣeṇa parinirvṛtaḥ [66]
> [...]
> na hi cittaprasādasya svalpā bhavati dakṣiṇā
> tathāgate vā saṃbuddhe buddhānāṃ śrāvakeṣu vā [69]
>
> (66) Having offered one single flower, I revelled among the gods for hundreds of crores of years, and through the remainder of [this merit] I entered complete extinction.
> […]
> (69) For there is no small gift for him who conceives faithful clarity (*prasāda*) in his mind towards a *tathāgata*, a complete *buddha*, or towards the disciples of *buddha*s.

---

donor of the monastery (*vihāradātṛ*). This lay *bodhisattva* is apparently unnamed, but he is called a ruler (*dharādhipa*), whose brother was named Ravisāmba. See CII V 124, st. 1. On the issue of the donor's name, see Bakker 1997: 36, n. 124.

[81] This work is preserved in the three versions—Sanskrit, Chinese, and Tibetan—of the *Bhaiṣajyavastu* of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, in Turfan fragments, in the *Fo wubai dizi zishuo benqi jing* (佛五百弟子自說本起經, T 199) a Chinese translation by Dharmarakṣa, and in two Gāndhārī manuscripts, one of which preserves the chapter I will briefly touch upon here. For a survey of this textual family and its complex ramifications, see Salomon 2009: 5–80. Since there is reason to believe that a Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* was in use at Ajanta and given that the usefulness of approaching this site in light of the textual collection found in Gilgit has already been demonstrated, I privilege here that particular version.

[82] AnG 83. Cf. T 199, IV, 191c7–8, 11–12; T 1448, XXIV, 79c13–15, 17–19. The stanza is not preserved in the Turfan fragments; see Bechert 1961: 112. A parallel version of the first stanza is attributed to Kusuma in the British Library Gāndhārī version of the *Anavataptagāthā* and to Khaṇḍa-Sumana in the *Theragāthā*. See Salomon 2009: 322–323; Th 14.16–17, st. 96.

That Sumanas' offering of a single flower had become somewhat proverbial is suggested by the *Karmavibhaṅga*. This influential treatise on karmic retribution indeed contains a section dedicated to the offering of a single flower. There, after listing ten benefits arising from this meritorious deed which culminates—like many other similar gifts—in rebirth in heaven and swift attainment of *nirvāṇa* thereafter, a reference to the same monk is made, illustrated by a different version of stanza 66 above.[83] Therefore, whether directly or mediated by a *Karmavibhaṅga*-type treatise, there is some ground to speculate that the story of Sumanas may have been part of Buddhabhadra's cultural background.

The remaining of the inscription makes it likely that the Aśmaka monk associated the gift of a flower to someone with a more modest background, and indeed a lesser goal than his own. Stanzas 6–8 of the cave XXVI inscription, forming a textual block in Āryā metre, return to both outcomes of *svarga* and *apavarga*, and refer—this time explicitly—to the deeds of yet another *arhant*:

---

[83] See Kv 101.2–4:

> atra karṇesumanasya pūrvajanmani prasāde jāte ekaikapuṣpapradānasya vipāko vaktavyaḥ. yathā sa eva āha:
> ekapuṣpapradānena aśītikalpakoṭayaḥ
> durgatiṃ nābhijānāmi buddhapūjāya tat phalam.

Compare Kudo 2004: 204. Lévi translates as follows (1932: 149):

> Il faut rappeler ici comment Karṇesumana, étant devenu pieux dans une vie antérieure, fit don d'une simple fleur, et quelles conséquences il en eut. Comme lui-même l'a dit :
> « Par le don d'une seule fleur, pendant quatre-vingts dizaines de millions d'Eons — je n'ai pas connu de mauvaise destination, tel est le fruit du culte du Buddha. »

See also Kv-u 154.11–13; Kudo 2009: 25. This stanza, like the one attributed to Sundarananda by the same work (Kv 38.18–19), likely stems from a distinct recension of the *Anavataptagāthā*. Cf. Salomon 2009: 36. The second hemistich is also found among the verses attributed to Sumana and the well-named Ekapupphiya in the *Apadāna*. See Ap 117.20–21, 240.14–15. On the various versions of these verses, see Bechert 1961: 109–111; Kudo 2004: 320–322. On Sumanas, see also Lamotte 1944–1980, vol. III: 1426–1427, n. 3; vol. IV: 1894–1895. In addition to the references provided by Lamotte, see also a brief allusion to this story in the *Kalpanāmaṇḍitikā Dṛṣṭāntapaṅkti*, T 201, IV, 263a20–22. On a non-canonical Pāli stanza connecting the gift of one flower with liberation (P. *mokkha*) and used in a devotional context in modern Sri Lanka, see Gombrich 1971: 136. Dhammadinnā confirmed to me (personal communication, 07/2018) that it is still very commonly chanted on the island at daily *pūjā*s today.

(6) sthavirācalena muninā śāsanam udbhāvayaṃ kṛtajñena
kṛtakṛtyenāpi satā śailagṛhaṃ kāritaṃ śāstuḥ || [6]
(7) prāg eva bodhisatvair bhavasukhakāmaiś ca mokṣakāmaiś ca
saṃvidyamānavibhavaiḥ katha[ṃ] na kāryyā bhavet kīrtti⟪ḥ⟫ || [7]
yāvat kīrttir lloke tāvat svargge**(8)**ṣu modati ca dehī
candrārkkakālakalpā kāryyā kīrttir mahīdhreṣu || [8]

6. udbhāvayaṃ Understand *udbhāvayat*, as suggested by Ch. **7. kīrtti⟪ḥ⟫** *kīrttiḥ* Ch. The *visarga* is inserted slightly below the line, suggesting it is a secondary insertion.

(6) The venerable Acala, a Sage, even though he had done what had to be done (and was thus an *arhant*), out of gratitude [to his mother][84] made a dwelling in stone for the Teacher that makes apparent [his] Teaching.
(7) All the more, why should *bodhisattva*s, who desire happiness for the world (or: in worldly existences) as well as liberation, and who possess abundant wealth, not establish a memorial (*kīrti*)?
(8) As long as [his] renown (or: a memorial, *kīrti*) is present in the world, so long a man revels in the heavens. A memorial (*kīrti*) should [therefore] be established inside mountains, [since a foundation of that sort is] fit to endure as long as the sun and the moon.

Stanzas 7 and 8 clearly play on the semantic multivalence of the word *kīrti*, which means at the same time "renown" or "legacy" and a "memorial" or "temple".[85] By connecting the durability of the karmic outcome to that of one's *kīrti*, stanza 8 presents the cave temple as the ideal expression of donors' devotion and generosity: while the gift of a putrescible flower is enough to cause rebirth in heaven, this majestic and unperishable foundation ensures the lasting of the rebirth that is sought after. This stanza provides, as far as I know, the clearest articulation of a rationale for cave excavation in the Buddhist inscriptions of the Western Ghats.[86]

Let us consider briefly the web of related ideas that may lie behind this statement. One of the possible ways for donors—especially lay donors—

[84] For a justification of this commentarial interpolation, see below pp. 215–216.

[85] On this word, see Vogel 1906 and the references cited in Willis 2009: 300, n. 236.

[86] It may incidentally be compared to the insistence on the durability of images carved into stone at the Longmen 龍門 cliffs in China. See, for instance, the long inscription of the Binyang 賓陽 South Grotto (dated to 648 CE) cited in McNair 2007: 173–177, esp. § 5D.

to earn their way to heaven was to sponsor a *caitya* or a *vihāra*.[87] A trope circulating in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* as well as in Ajanta and other coeval epigraphic records likens the beauty of monasteries to that of celestial residences.[88] Ajanta's pictorial language also makes especially obvious the analogies existing between the royal and divine palaces.[89] The Buddha, established in a palace-like and yet monastic environment, is regularly referred to as a royal ascetic in the inscriptions, and less frequently as the god among gods.[90] His partaking of a royal and (supra-)divine imagery is especially striking in the *bhadrāsana* iconographic type that spreads at the site in

---

87 On the sub-category of *brāhmapuṇya*, see Tournier 2018: 35–37 and the references cited therein.

88 The *Pravrajyāvastu*, for instance, preserves several instances of a set description of a richly adorned monastery "shining with splendour like the dwelling of gods" (*devabhavanam iva śriyā jvalantam*). See Vogel and Wille 1996: 254.30–31. For further references, see Schopen 1998: 168; 2004: 28, 32, 42–43, n. 60. This is close to the description of the *vihāra*s built by the Viṣṇukuṇḍin ruler Govindavarman as "producing a brilliance rivalling with that of the dwellings of the gods" (*vibudhabhavanapratisparddhiśobhāsamudaya*), in the second set of Tummalagudem copper plates (EIAD 175), dated 566 CE. See Tournier 2018: 34–35. AjI 67 develops at greater length the analogy between monastery and celestial abodes. The fragmentary st. 28 says, for instance, that the *vihāra* "possesses the brilliance of Indra's palaces and is like the caves in Mount Mandara" (*surendramandirāṇāṃ ruciran mandarakanda[rānurūpaṃ]*). See CII V 109.

89 Compare, for instance, the representation of the royal palace in the *Janakajātaka* mural of cave I, with the section of the *saṃsāracakra* allotted to the realm of gods in the porch of cave XVII. See Schlingloff 2000: 218; Zin 2003: 455.

90 Hence, cave XVII is described (AjI 77, st. 24) as a "monolithic jewel of a hall, within which a *caitya* of the king among Munis has been established" (*niveśitāntarmunirājacaityaṃ ekāśmakaṃ maṇḍaparatnaṃ*). See CII V 127. On the vocabulary employed in AjI 67, st. 22, see below, n. 99. The royal epithets attributed to the Buddha form part of an imagery that pervades these two inscriptions—and the iconographic programs of both caves XVI and XVII—but which is also attested in Buddhabhadra's composition. Indeed, the fragmentary st. 18 of AjI 93 describes the slope of the mountain ridge where the cave has been excavated as being "presided upon by the lord of ascetics" (*yogīśvarādhyāsita*). Given the synonymy existing between *yogīśvara*, *yatīndra*, *munirāja*, as well as *munīndra* (AjI 77, st. 28), I take all these to refer to the Buddha. Compare Chhabra 1955: 118. On the Buddha as the "immortal among the immortals" (*amaro 'marāṇāṃ*), a variant of the more common *devātideva*, in the opening stanza of the Ghatotkacha cave, see CII V 115.

the later Vākāṭaka and post-Vākāṭaka caves. The main cult images at caves XVI and XXVI exemplify this type.[91]

Buddhabhadra's *kīrti* may therefore have been conceived as a "stairway to heaven" (*svargasopāna*) not merely because it was a meritorious gift,[92] but also because it offered a glimpse on earth of heavenly abodes. More than offering a way to celestial rebirth, stanza 8 shows the concern to make this outcome as permanent as allowable within Buddhist cosmology. Both the longevity and the use of an object relinquished by a donor are crucial to the discourse on merit. According to a distinction known, for instance, in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, and an exceptional copper-plate inscription from Āndhra, the merit arising from the relinquishment (*tyāgānvaya*) is complemented by that arising from use (*paribhogānvaya*).[93] This leads the *Vinaya* to promote permanent endowments (*akṣayanīvī*), whose interest will ensure the upkeep of the foundation and facilitate its use. Grants in land or money are well represented epigraphically from the Sātavāhana period onwards, and commonly include a formula assigning part of the revenue to the maintenance and repairing of buildings.[94] Cave XXVI's inscription, although it says nothing of a permanent endowment—none of the Ajanta inscriptions contain such a reference—points at least to a solution to the problem of maintenance. In other words, the permanence of the cliff may be considered to respond to a similar concern to gifts in perpetuity in cases where brick and timber would constitute the main building material. This, to be sure, did not resolve the problem of use, and the endurance of *kīrti* should, if considered through the lens of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, imply the regular recitation of the names of deceased donors within formulas of assignment of the kar-

---

91 See Spink 2005–2016, vol. VI: 88–90, figs. 23–25. For an overview of *bhadrāsana buddha*s at Ajanta, see Revire 2016: 134–154.

92 For the comparison of gift-giving in general to a stairway to heaven, see, e.g., Cv 69.4–6. This motif also occurs twice in the *Dānaparikathā* of a Pseudo-Nāgārjuna (stt. 5, 9), on which see Hahn and Saito 2013.

93 See AKBh 272.5–6; La Vallée Poussin 1924: 244. On the highly elaborate discourse on merit in the first set of Tummalagudem copper-plates, see EIAD 174, ll. 19–23. Only the Sanskrit term *paribhogānvaya* is preserved in the Gilgit manuscript of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, yet passages in the Tibetan version of the *Vibhaṅga* make it clear that the pair (*pari*)*tyāga* (Tib. *yongs su btang ba*)/*paribhoga* was also current in this work. See Schopen 1994: 546; 1996: 112ff., and the references cited in Kragh 2006: 247, n. 397.

94 See, for instance, Njammasch 1971; Schopen 1994; Hinüber 2013.

mic reward (*dakṣiṇā* + *ā√diś*)[95]. But there may have been another way—not supported, as far as I know, by coeval prescriptive literature—for donors to ensure the generation of a continuous stream of merit. The exploration of this possibility requires us to turn to the commemorative dimension of most of the major foundations at Ajanta, and the use of portraiture therein.

Buddhabhadra's record specifies, before the formal assignment of merit to be considered below, that he had commissioned this cave "on behalf" (*uddiśya*, st. 13)[96] of his minister-friend Bhavirāja, as well as of his mother and father. The verb *ud√diś* possesses a very complex semantic range, partly overlapping with that of *ā√diś*.[97] When used in relation to gifts or pious foundations, it generally qualifies the assignment of a gift or the merit ensuing from a gift to a recipient or a beneficiary. In some—although by no means all—contexts, *uddiśya* may have been used to single out deceased individuals in whose memory an action is performed.[98] And indeed, in cave XXVI, we know from st. 12 that Bhavirāja had passed away, which makes one wonder whether Buddhabhadra's parents may not have been deceased as well. Here again, comparison with other major cave dedications at Ajanta is fruitful. Cave XVI was similarly built by Varāhadeva "on behalf" of his parents, and the context of the dedicatory stanza—dwelling on the donor's realization of impermanence—suggests that they were probably deceased.[99] The

---

95 Śv 37.6–7, cited in Schopen 1994: 70; Hinüber 2014: 81.

96 This stanza reads as follows:

> **(11)** taṃ bhavvirājam uddiśya mātapitaram eva ca
> bhikṣuṇā buddhabhadreṇa **(12)** kāritaḥ sugatālaya⟨ḷ⟩ ||
>
> **sugatālaya⟨ḷ⟩** *sugatā[layaṃ]* Ch, who rightly notices that the *la* is the result of a correction of a *ya*, before the engraver realized he had forgotten one syllable.
>
> The monk Buddhabhadra has commissioned a residence of the Sugata, on behalf of this Bhavirāja as well as his [own] parents.

97 See CPD, s.v. *uddisati*; Schmithausen 1986: 208–216; Schopen 1996: 92; 2004: 27 with n. 48; Fujimoto 2004 (with reservations); Hinüber and Skilling 2016: 25–26.

98 See Schopen 1984: 118 with n. 33. The strongest evidence in support of this interpretation is in fact AjI 93 itself.

99 See CII V 108–109 (AjI 67), st. 22:

> °āyurva[yovi]ttasukhāṇi – –
> ⏑ – ◡ – – ◡ ◡ [cañca]lāni
> °u[ddiśya] mātāpitarāv udāraṃ
> nyavīviśad veśma yatīndrasevyaṃ
>
> **a. -sukhāṇi** Understand *sukhāni*. **d. nyavīviśad** C. *nyavīśad* M.

inscription at cave XVII insists on the loss of the donor's younger brother Ravisāmba, struck by the "lightning of impermanence" (*anityatāśani*). This marked a turning point in the older brother's life and led him to cultivate "the great tree of [his] merits" (*puṇyamahāmahīruh*).[100] The monastery is not explicitly said to have been built in Ravisāmba's memory in what is left of the inscription, but the sculptural program strongly suggests it was.

Ajanta and Aurangabad (especially cave III) are well known for their exquisite representations of devotees in attendance to the Buddha, performing various acts of worship. These figures appear often to be rather standardized and cannot always be matched with the individuals named in accompanying inscriptions when they exist. In other cases, however, these representations are highly individualized and have been understood as portraits of the devotees involved, in one way or another, in the original gift.[101] Cave XVII represents one such case, with two standing princely figures facing one another in the *cella*, each holding a bowl, at the Buddha's feet: these have been convincingly identified as figuring the donor and his departed brother.[102] A similar composition may have been at work in cave XXVI. There remains, to the proper right of the Buddha, the lower parts of three figures: one kneeling, two cross-legged (fig. 10). To the Buddha's proper left remains only the hole for a tenon, where a group of devotees, carved separately, was probably slotted.[103] Assuming the distribution of devotees, on both sides of the Buddha's pedestal, to have been symmetrical, one could surmise that six individuals might initially have formed the whole group. This interestingly corresponds to the number of primary recipients of the assigned merit, in stanza 15 of the inscription. The fragmentary state of the group of devotees makes this reconstruction speculative, but it is at least conceivable, in light of the fact that the memorialization of donors and dedicatees—dead and alive—represented in the act of making *pūjā* is well attested at the site. These snapshots of Buddhist devotion, whether representing the ritual consecration of individual caves or a less formalized

---

> [Realizing that] life, youth, wealth and happiness … are unstable, he established this lofty mansion, to be used by the lord of ascetics, on behalf of his parents.

100 See CII V 125–126 (AjI 77), st. 12–13.

101 On the representation of devotees at Ajanta and Aurangabad, see for instance Zin 2003: 380–384; Spink 2005–2016, vol. II: 223–227; Brancaccio 2011: 94–98; Bautze-Picron 2015.

102 See Wood 2004: 128, with pl. 9.13–14.

103 Spink 2005–2016, vol. V: 337.

homage, could have been considered in themselves, as argued by Pia Brancaccio, "perennial producers of merit".[104] Portraits of the individuals named in Buddhabhadra's inscriptions *could* thus have participated in the continuous production of merit in their stead, as they revelled in heaven.

The study of the main inscriptions of Ajanta in their broader context therefore suggests that the commemorative dimension of many excavations at the site may thus far have been underestimated. A related, and better appreciated dimension of donors' motivations at Ajanta is the issue of filial piety. Indeed, while we cannot know for sure whether Buddhabhadra's parents were dead or alive at the moment of the cave's inauguration, it is less disputable that he was—or wanted to appear as—a devoted son. This value is not exclusive to the Bodhisattva ideal that he embraced, yet it is fully compatible with it.[105] Filial piety cannot only be shown to have been a key motivation for Buddhabhadra, but it also features prominently in the record left by another major patron. Cave IV, the largest *vihāra* ever excavated at Ajanta, is the fourth and last cave to be discussed here. It preserves an inscription (AjI 17) testifying to its being commissioned by a single donor.[106] Perhaps because it was unfinished, no large inscription was engraved by the cave's entrance, but the donor left a short donative record on the pedestal of the Buddha image in the *cella* (figs. 11 and 12), thereby attesting that the main image cult had been ritually inaugurated. Despite its brevity, it contains some interesting information on the owner's background and motivations, and it deserves to be re-read:[107]

> **(1)** [¶] deyadharmmo ya[ṃ] vihārasvāmino bhayanandiskandavasupu[tra]sya māthurasya kārvvaṭe[ya]sagotrasya yad atra puṇya[ṃ]

---

[104] Brancaccio 2011: 95. A similar argument has, for instance, been made by Sharf (2013) with respect to donor's portraits at Dunhuang. Sharf interestingly includes a brief allusion to Ajanta (p. 60) in his thought-provoking discussion of "funerary Buddhism".

[105] Respect for parents features prominently, for instance, in the list of virtues to be cultivated by a *bodhisattva* during the first of the four phases of his career (*caryā*), according to the *Bahubuddhakasūtra* I[A] of the *Mahāvastu* and the *Fo benxing ji jing* 佛本行集經 (T 190). See Tournier 2017: 206–208.

[106] I set here aside the inscription found on a porch's pillar of cave XX, recording the gift of the cave, designated as a *maṇḍapa*, by a donor whose name starts with Upendra-, for it is too fragmentary for its analysis in the present context to be informative. See Cohen 1997: 134–137; 2006a: 327, no. 84.

[107] Variant readings by Sircar 1959–1960: 262 (S) and Cohen (C) are given in the apparatus.

(2) tad bhavatu mātāpitros tātāmbāyāś cāgrāṅśatāyās tu ◊ + + s sarvvasatvānāñ cā[nu]ttarajñāṇāvāptaye [ti]

1. kārvvaṭe[ya]- C; *kārvvaṭiy[ā]-* S. **2. cāgrāṅśatāyās tu ◊ + + s sarvva-** *cāgrāṅva[vā]yasu + + + + + + ssarvvasatvānāñ* S; *cāgrāṅśatāyā STU s sarvva-* C.[108] **-jñāṇāvāptaye** Understand *-jñānā-*, as indicated by S. **[ti]** S; C misinterprets this as an auspicious symbol or abbreviation.

This is the pious gift of the *vihārasvāmin* (i.e., the patron of the monastery) Māthura(?),[109] son of Abhayanandin [and] Skandavasu, of the *kārvaṭeya gotra*.[110] The merit that there is in this [gift] may it be for the attainment of the supreme knowledge by his parents—the share of father and mother[111] being the first one—and (thereafter?) by all beings.

---

[108] As noticed by Cohen, Sircar was misled by his working from an estampage, not realizing that the space left in the middle of the second line was in part due to the fact that the engraver left some space uninscribed around the throne's *dharmacakra*, which cuts across the line of text. There is in fact only room for two *akṣara*s after the wheel, but the area of the stone is abraded in that area, and no trace of writing is left. However, Cohen's understanding of what he prints as *STU* as a character without "a grammatical or a syntactical function", but instead an indication that the text "continues after the physical break" is erroneous, as already stated in Tournier 2014: 41–42. Comparison with the Kura inscription cited below confirms that Cohen's interpretation is untenable. The same may allow us to suggest a possible reconstruction of the following as *(tata)s*.

[109] Although the reading seems secure enough, I wonder whether the *akṣara thu* may not be an engraving mistake for *ṭha*, considering that Māṭhara is a very common personal name, while Māthura is extremely rare.

[110] As noted by Sircar (1959–1960: 260), no such *gotra* is attested elsewhere in the record. Cf. Cohen 1995b: 180–181.

[111] Sircar comments (1959–1960: 261): "The expression *tāt-āmbāyāḥ* in the singular may of course mean 'the *ambā* (i.e. mother) of [one's] *tāta* (i.e. father)', that is to say, 'one's father's mother'. There are, however, words of common use in Sanskrit to indicate one's father's mother, and *tāt-āmbā* is not such an expression. It is, therefore, not improbable that the expression has been used in the inscription to convey a special meaning as that of one's father's step-mother or aunt." This interpretation has been accepted in NWS, s.v. *tātāmbā*. Cohen (2006a: 284) simply translates the compound as "maternal grandmother" without commenting. But the form *tātāmbau* (voc. du. nt.) is attested to point collectively to father and mother in the *Anavataptagāthā*. See AnG 100, st. 268. Thus, it seems more reasonable to take the present form as a gen. sg. fem. used in lieu of the gen. du.—probably under the influence of

The formula is too terse to allow us to understand whether the donor's parents were still alive, but it is in any case an eloquent expression of filial piety. Parents, as Gregory Schopen has already observed, feature prominently in the short donative records at the site.[112] The parenthetical statement *tātāmbāyāś cāgrānśatāyās* uncovered here, according to which the first share of merit is owed to parents, is unique in the Ajanta corpus, and points us in the direction of prescriptive literature on filial duty. A related and more developed parenthetical statement is interestingly found in the roughly coeval inscription, found at Kura (Khewra) in the Salt Range and dating to the reign of Toramāṇa Ṣāhi (d. 515), recording the gift of yet another *vihārasvāmin*:[113]

> **(8)** yad atra puṇyaṃ tad bhavatu **(9)** mātāpitro āpāyaka poṣaka citrasya jaṃbudvīpasya darśayitāro agrebhāvapratyaṃśatāyās tu tathā vihārasvāmino **(10)** roṭasiddhavṛddhi sarveṣāṃ bhrātarāṇāṃ bhaginīnāṃ patnīnāṃ putrāṇāṃ duhitṝṇāṃ […] **(11)** ca sarvasatvānāṃ anuttarajñānāvāptaye
>
> **9. āpāyaka poṣaka citrasya** *āpāyapoṣakacitrasya* Bühler. **agrebhāva-** Emend *agrebhāga-*.[114]
>
> The merit that there is in this [gift], may it be for the attainment of the supreme knowledge by his parents—a preferential share being allotted to them, who have nurtured and supported him, and who have shown him fair Jambudvīpa—as well as all the brothers, sisters,

---

the following abstract in *-tā*—and to interpret it as part of a parenthetical statement, developing upon the preceding expression.

112 Schopen 1984: 117–119.

113 Bühler 1892: 240, ll. 8–11; Sircar 1942: 398–399.

114 Bühler suggests understanding *agrebhava-*, while Sircar proposes to understand the whole passage as *agrabhāgapratyaṃśāya* (or: *-śatāyai*) | *astu.* The relative proximity between *va* and *ga* in the nail-headed variety of Northern Brāhmī script suggests the emendation *-bhāga-* is less speculative than it may seem at first. It is moreover supported by the parallel Gāndhārī expression *agrabhagapaḍiyaṃśa* used in the Wardak reliquary dated year 51 of Kaniṣka. See Baums 2012: 243–244, no. 43. It is unproblematic to keep *agre-* and understand the compound as an *aluksamāsa*. As for the word division suggested by Sircar, which introduces a second imperative in the formula, it represents a viable alternative to the one tentatively favoured here for both the Kura and the Ajanta inscriptions. It does not, however, account well for the abstract *-tā*. It also implies in both cases to postulate either an irregular dat. sg. fem. in *-āya* or *-āyā*, which occurs only rarely in Buddhist Sanskrit prose (BHSG § 9.54), or else an irregular *sandhi*, without the expected hiatus *-āyā astu*.

> wives, sons and daughters of the *vihārasvāmin* Roṭasiddhavṛddhi[115] […] and by all beings.

This inscription contains a construction, using a rare abstract in -(*praty*)-*aṃśatā*, strikingly similar to the one at Ajanta. The phrase *āpāyaka poṣaka citrasya jaṃbudvīpasya darśayitāro*, developing on the element *mātapitroḥ* of the standard formula, does not employ the genitive dual forms one would expect (i.e., *āpāyakayoḥ poṣakayoḥ citrasya jaṃbudvīpasya darśayitro*). The apparent irregularity of this phrase may in part be explained by the fact that it is a thus-far unnoticed scriptural pericope. This pericope may have been taken from a source where duals were represented by plurals (hence the apparent nom. pl. *darśayitāraḥ*) and patched onto the record without being adapted to the syntactic environment. The closest formulation that I could locate to its epigraphic occurrence appears—once again—in narratives transmitted within or stemming from the Mūlasarvāstivādin *Vinaya*,[116] while other versions of the trope are found in a sermon on filial piety transmitted within the *aṅguttara/ekottarika* section of the canons.[117] In the *Pūrṇāva-*

---

[115] The name of the donor is uninflected; the syntax implies taking it as gen. sg.

[116] See, for instance, AvŚat I.204.16–205.1: *duṣkarakārakau hi bhikṣavaḥ putrasya mātāpitarau āpāyakau* [*āpyāyakau* ed.] *poṣakau saṃvardhakau stanyasya dātārau citrasya jambūdvīpasya darśayitārau* |. I have been unable to locate the phrase in the *Vinaya* of the Mahīśāsakas, which is the school named later on in the record (l. 12)—possibly after the name of another *nikāya* was erased. But that a version of the sūtra was known to the Mahīśāsakas is certain. See T 1421, XXII, 140c16–20. Besides the *Pūrṇāvadāna* cited below, for further references to this trope in the *Mūlasarvāstivādavinaya*, see Schopen 1995: 112–113 and n. 31; 2007: 124 and n. 40, 128. A close parallel to the first compound of this pericope is also found in a much shorter statement featuring in the first-century Senavarman inscription. In this record, the section of the inscription where the ruler of Oḍi pays homage to his parents and his other relatives is introduced by the nominal sentence *matapita dukaracara* (Skt. *mātāpitarau duṣkaracārau*). See Salomon 1986: 279; Hinüber 2003: 28, § 8d. This passage thus seems to represent an early echo of a pervasive prescriptive statement on filial piety. For its occurrence in Gilgit colophons, see Hinüber 2004: 77–79.

[117] The Pāli version of the sentence reads instead: *bahukārā bhikkhave mātāpitaro puttānaṃ āpādakā posakā imassa lokassa dassetāro.* See, e.g., AN I.62.8–9. Cf. T 125, II, 601a16–17: 父母恩重，抱之、育之，隨時將護，不失時節，得見日月。 Chinese 日月 probably renders a term corresponding to P. *loka*, while Jambudvīpa is generally transcribed in this work as *Yanfuti* 閻浮提. This means that, of all the canonical versions of the phrase known to me, the Mūlasarvāstivādin one aligns most closely to that quoted in the Kura inscription.

dāna, the Buddha's teaching on the matter is recalled by Maudgalyāyana. This leads the great disciple to set out to visit his mother in the Marīcika world-system where she has been reborn after her passing, in order to introduce her to the teaching, which is considered the best possible way for a son to repay his debt.[118] The same principle, identified—in Mahāsāṅghika and Mūlasarvāstivādin circles, at least—as one of the necessary deeds any *buddha* must perform (*buddhakārya*, *avaśyakaraṇīya*), leads Śākyamuni himself to pay a visit to his mother Māyā in Trāyastriṃśa heaven.[119]

To return to Ajanta, the motif of filial piety is key to the very origins of the site according to a local legend which, I believe, is reflected in AjI 93 itself. The *arhant* Acala mentioned in st. 6 of Buddhabhadra's inscription appears indeed to have been known to Xuanzang.[120] He is mentioned three times in the *Datang Xiyuji*, as the founder of three large monasteries: in "Greater Āndhra" (*Da Andaluo* 大安達邏), near Veṅgīpura,[121] in Lāṭa near

---

[118] The sentence under discussion is cited at Divy 51.19–22; Burnouf 1844: 270. See also T 1448, XXIV, 16a19–20; D 1, *Dul 'ba*, *Kha* 5b1–2. On the passage immediately following this sentence, in the *Pūrṇāvadāna*, see Silk 2007: 173–175; 2008b. On this account more generally, see Tatelman 2000. The connection in this discourse between Maudgalyāyana's ability to see and visit other worlds and his filial piety had, as is well known, a considerable legacy in China. See Strong 1983; Teiser 1988; Wang-Toutain 1998: 132–135.

[119] On the duties of a *buddha*, see Tournier 2017: 239ff.; Tournier and Strong 2019: 28–30. In the **Ekottarikāgama*, the two sūtras (nos. 24.5 and 35.2), focusing on the conversion of both parents, are introduced by a prologue containing this list of duties. See T 125, II, 662c11–15, 699a4–8. On the Buddha's visit to the Thirty-Three, see for instance Skilling 2008; Anālayo 2012. On the manifestation of the Buddha's filial duty towards his foster-mother Mahāprajāpatī on the occasion of her funeral, see Lamotte 1944–1980, vol. I: 587–588; Heirman 2015: 44–49; Dhammadinnā 2016c.

[120] The Arhant's name is indeed transcribed, thrice, in Xuanzang's travelogue, as 阿折羅 **ʔa-tɕiat-la*, which, according to Max Deeg (personal communication, 25/11/2013), could theoretically transcribe *ǎcǎla*, *ǎcǎra*, *ǎjǎla*, or *ǎjǎra*. Twice, this transcription is followed by a translation into Chinese as 所行, which corresponds to *Ācāra. See T 2087, LI, 930b7, 935b8, 936c1–2. See also T 2088, LI, 966b27–c4; T 2131, LIV, 1065a4. It thus seems likely that the interchange between *ra* and *la*, and the fluctuation in vocalic lengthening in an oral environment could have led the Chinese pilgrim to misunderstand the meaning of the Arhant's name. Note that a *buddha* bearing the name Acala is known to the *Avadānaśataka* (I.53.18), while *Ācāra would represent a distinctly odd and otherwise unattested name.

[121] On the section of the *Xiyuji* dealing with Āndhra, see: Deeg forthcoming.

Valabhī, and in Eastern Mahārāṣṭra, in a deep valley surrounded by cliffs, whose detailed description very much recalls—and may indeed correspond to—Ajanta.[122] The description of the Mahārāṣṭra monastery is the only of the three passages to provide any detail about Acala's legend.[123] First, he is described as a native of Western India, which, according to Xuanzang's subdivision of the subcontinent, encompassed regions to the North of Valabhī, up to Sindh. Realizing that his mother, after passing away, had been reborn in Mahārāṣṭra as a girl, he decided to pay her a visit and to introduce her into the Dharma, following as it were the Buddha's prescription in the above-mentioned sūtra on filial piety. After describing that their encounter led her to obtain the "fruit of holiness" (Ch. 聖果)—which in this case might point to the fruit achieved by the "Stream Enterer" (*srota-āpattiphala*)—the account concludes:[124]

> 羅漢感生育之恩，懷業緣之致，將酬厚德，建此伽藍。
>
> Grateful [towards his mother] for the benefit of having given birth and raised him, and willing to bring about karmic fruition [for her], the Arhant built this monastery to repay [her] favour.

The insistence of both this passage and of the Ajanta's inscription on the *arhant*'s gratitude (*kṛtajña*) is probably not coincidental and may point to Buddhabhadra's knowledge of a similar story.[125] The story reported by Xuanzang encourages us to read, between the lines of AjI 93, Acala's mother as the object of his gratitude, and this filial dimension is fully coherent with that pervasively expressed at Ajanta. Thus, it becomes possible to suggest overlapping motivations between the legendary figure of Acala and that of Buddhabhadra.

---

[122] See, for instance Fergusson and Burgess 1880: 282–283; Beal 1884: 257–258; Watters 1905: 239–240.

[123] T 2087, LI, 935b6–15.

[124] T 2087, LI, 935b14; Ji 1985: 895. Cf. Li 1996: 297.

[125] Gratitude is also one of the two motivations mentioned by Vasubandhu in relation to the gift made by a liberated person to a *caitya*. See AKBh 269.3–5 (ad 4:114ab):

> yad āryo vītarāgaś caitye dadāti sthāpayitvā dṛṣṭadharmavedanīyaṃ tad dānam ubhayeṣāṃ nārthāya | tad dhi kevalaṃ gauravakṛtajñābhyāṃ [*gauravaṃ* ed.] dīyate |
>
> What a noble one devoid of passion gives to a *caitya*—unless [its result] is experienced in the present existence—this gift is for the sake of neither of them, but this is only given out of reverence and gratitude.

On another level, the categories of *arhant* and *bodhisattva* are clearly contrasted and hierarchized in stanzas 6–7, as made clear by the use of *prāg eva*. Buddhabhadra likely considered a *bodhisattva*'s gift, although made by a non-liberated being, to be superior to that of the Arhant Acala, given its higher and wider ambitions.[126] The two stanzas not only operate a vertical hierarchization of the models of perfection, but they also express the ethos of a wealthy *bodhisattva*, a self-perception which—considering especially the cave XVII *praśasti*—could be shared with some of the prominent lay donors (*dānapati*) active at the site.[127] In the specific case of Buddhabhadra, who,

---

[126] Compare AKBh 270.14–18 (*ad* 4:117cd), where both types of gifts are equally valued:

> sarveṣāṃ tu dānānām
> *agraṃ muktasya muktāya* [117c]
> yad vītarāgo vītarāgāya dattvātidānam idaṃ śreṣṭham āmiṣadāneṣu dānam ity uktaṃ bhagavatā |
> *bodhisattvasya ca* [117d]
> yad vā dānaṃ bodhisattve dadāti sarvasattvahitahetos tad muktasyāpy amukte 'bhyādānam agram |
>
> Out of all the gifts,
> *the best is the one of the liberated to the liberated...*
> The Bhagavant said: "What a person devoid of passion has given to one who is devoid of passion is a superior gift, the best of all material gifts."
> *… and that of the bodhisattva [as well].*
> Or else, in the case of a *bodhisattva*, that gift he gives to cause the welfare of all beings, even if a non-liberated [gives] to a liberated, this is the best gift.

On the sources of the canonical dictum alluded to by Vasubandhu in this passage, see Dhammadinnā 2016b.

[127] See especially CII V 127 (AjI 77), st. 28:

> ◡ – ◡ – – ◡ ◡ – ◡ – ◡ –
> (jaga)ddhitāyoddyatasarvvakarmmaṇa[ḥ]
> munīndrabhāvapraṇidhānasiddhaye
> bhavantv abhīṣṭāḥ bhuvi sarvvasampadaḥ
>
> May all the possessions dear on earth to him (i.e., the donor) whose actions are all intent on the well-being of the world be for the fulfilment of his wish for the state of lord among Munis!

Cf. Wood 2004. The donor's *praṇidhāna* is mentioned one more time in st. 19. Interestingly, the *locus classicus* of a *praṇidhāna* scene, namely the encounter between the future Śākyamuni and Dīpaṅkara, features twice in cave XVII's paintings. A beautiful version of the episode has also been engraved by the entrance of cave XIX, which was likely excavated together with cave XVII, and a smaller one is also found in cave XXVI. See Vasant 1992.

like Acala, was a "renunciant", one could further speculate that a "horizontal transfer" may have been suggested, between his eminent social status and what he aimed to achieve as a religious specialist.[128] Buddhabhadra's aim at Buddhahood—and not merely *nirvāṇa*—for himself, his parents, members of his entourage, and the whole world is clear from the Anuṣṭubh by which he formally transfers the merits produced by his foundation:

> **(12)** yad atra puṇyaṃ tat teṣā[ṃ] ◊ **(13)** jagatāṃ ca bhavatv idaṃ sarvvāmalaguṇavyātamahābodhiphalāptāye || [15]
>
> **c. -vyāta-** Emend -*vyāpta*-.[129]
>
> Whatever merit there is in this [act], let it be for the attainment of the fruit of the superior Awakening that is pervaded with all pure qualities, by them (i.e., Bhavirāja, Buddhabhadra and his parents, Bhadrabandhu and Dharmadatta)[130] and by the [whole] world.

The rationale transpiring from Buddhabhadra's description of his meritorious deeds across his composition is best summarized in diagrammatic form (Diagram 1). The schematic outline drawn here includes the social network of the main donor, and shows the distinction between the soteriological goal openly stated in stanza 15 and the expected outcome of temple dedication—namely rebirth in heaven—revealed in stanza 8.

Concluding remarks

Analysis of selected fifth- to sixth-century inscriptions from Ajanta has led us—through a slightly meandering path—to consider issues such as the stratification of prescriptive works about the cult of images and *stūpa*s and their influence on donative practices, the ritual commemoration of dead relatives, and *bodhisattva*s' assertions of superiority over the old ideal of *arh-*

---

[128] In making this observation, I draw inspiration from the Weberian reading of Pelagianism by J.-M. Salamito (2005: 30ff.).

[129] This emendation was already suggested in Burgess 1883: 134. Indraji had earlier read -*dhyāta*- (Burgess 1881: 78), but the reading is clearly -*vyā*-. Chhabra (1955: 116, n. 5) suggested emending -*vrāta*-, an emendation also accepted by Cohen (2006a: 334, n. 26) and McCombs (2014: 338, n. 76).

[130] These are the individuals mentioned in stt. 13–14, also in Anuṣṭubh, with which st. 15 forms a block. It is less clear whether Bhavirāja's son Devarāja, mentioned st. 12, was also to benefit from the benefits aimed at by Buddhabhadra.

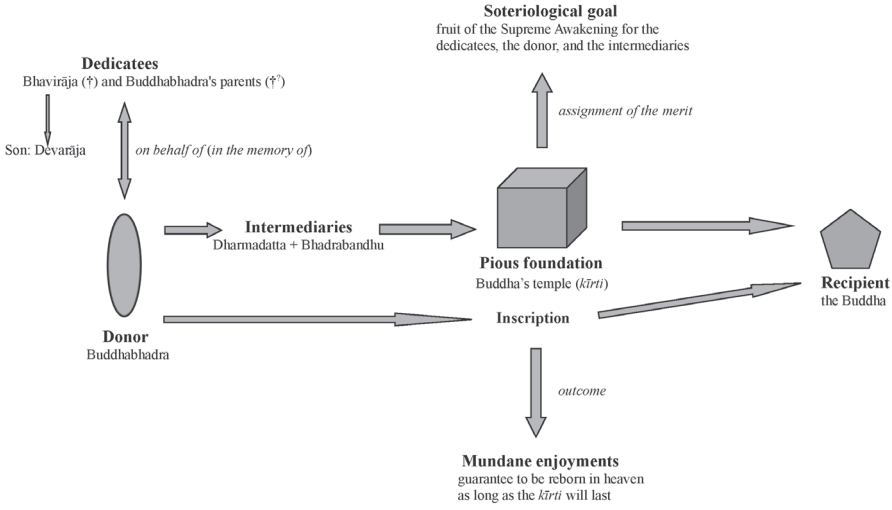


Diagram 1: The rationale underlying Buddhabhadra's gift, according to AjI 93.

*ant*s. I hope to have shown how these issues, as distant as they might seem at first sight, are worth considering together to reconstruct the culture and *imaginaire* of those who shaped this remarkable site.

Let me return here, in particular, to what this discussion may contribute specifically to our understanding of living *bodhisattvas*' aspirations and conceptions of their spiritual progress. What unites the modest donative records discussed in Part 1 of this study and the ambitious *ad hoc* composition of the prominent donor of cave XXVI that was the object of Part 2 is the co-presence of both the soteriological goal that constitutes the end point of the spiritual path—and to which auspicious deeds are explicitly directed—and a lesser outcome (i.e., auspicious rebirth) spontaneously ensuing from merit-making. I have argued that rebirth in heaven and among prominent human beings forms an integral part of the trajectory that leads *bodhisattva*s to the *summum bonum*. In other words, committed *bodhisattva*s at Ajanta were far from being mere hedonists,[131] and may not have seen any contradiction between expecting positive rebirths in their extremely long path to Buddhahood and their supramundane aspirations: in fact, high births could themselves be the marker of spiritual progress. The convergence of purposes

[131] Compare Spink 2010: 960.

observed at Ajanta was not exceptional, and may in fact represent a broader trend, both within and outside the Buddhist tradition. A sixth-century inscription from Jaggayyapeta in the Krishna district of Andhra Pradesh, engraved on the pedestal of a stela on which a standing *buddha* is carved in low relief (figs. 13 and 14) deserves to be quoted here:[132]

> **(1)** svasti bhadantanāgārjunācāryyasya **(2)** śiṣya ◊ jayaprabhācāryya tacchiṣyeṇa ca(ndra)**(3)**prabheṇa kārāpitā ◊ satusugatagataprasādaviśeṣaviśiṣṭasaṃsāre devamanu(ṣ)[ya]**(4)**vibhūtipūrvvakaṃ buddhattvaprāptinimittaṃ buddhapratimā pratisthāpitā ◊
>
> **2. śiṣya jayaprabhācāryya** Understand *śiṣyo jayaprabhācāryyas*. **3. kārāpitā** *kārāpitāṃ* B. **satu-** Burgess suggests emending *satya-*, which I tentatively accept. **devamanu(ṣ)[ya]-** *devamanu(ja)-* B. **4. buddhattva-** Understand *buddhatva-*. **buddhapratimā** *buddhapratimāṃ* B. **pratisthāpitā** *pratisthāpitāṃ* B. Emend *pratiṣṭhāpitā*.
>
> Prosperity! Jayaprabhācārya (was) the pupil of the Venerable Master Nāgārjuna. His pupil, Candraprabha, caused to be made (this) image of the Buddha, which is established for the attainment of Buddhahood, preceded by the fortune among gods and humans, in *saṃsāra* that is distinguished by [Candraprabha's] superior faith in him by whom the [noble] truths have been well understood (**satyasugata*?).

This donative record, harmoniously combining concerns for mundane enjoyments and for liberation, shows with even greater clarity than the Ajanta material that both goals have to be considered in succession, within the framework of a *bodhisattva* career developing over many lives. The blending of heaven (*svarga*), followed by prominent human rebirths, with final emancipation (*apavarga*), or—to use a related pair of concepts—mundane enjoyment (*bhukti*) with liberation (*mukti*), was also current in contemporary discourses on merit of Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva milieux.[133] For instance, discussing the section on the establishment of a *liṅga* in the Śivadharma to shed light on donative inscriptions from the Licchavi period in the Kathmandu

---

[132] EIAD 136 was first edited by Fleet in Burgess 1882: 57; an improved edition appeared in Burgess 1887: 112. The latter's variant readings are marked here as B. For more detailed reference and discussion of the problematic last sentence omitted here, see the entry dedicated to this record on the EIAD website.

[133] On the pair *bhukti/mukti* in the Vaiṣṇava *Purāṇa*s, see for instance Agrawala (1960), who characteristically mis-represents the Buddhist attitude on the matter. See also Gonda 1977: 133–134, n. 126.

valley, Nina Mirnig has recently observed that this important prescriptive work outlines "[a] spiritual trajectory that first leads to heaven and then, optionally, to liberation or mundane goals such as rebirth as king."[134] Thus the pattern highlighted in the materials discussed here, much like conceptions relating to Buddhist icons, is best understood against the backdrop of broader developments characterizing multiple devotional traditions in the period under consideration.

Bibliography

Primary Sources and Reference Works

AjI	Corpus of Ajanta Inscriptions. See Cohen 2006a.
AKBh	*Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam of Vasubandhu*, ed. Prahlad Pradhan, revised second edition. Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1975.
AKV	*Sphuṭārthā Abhidharmakośavyākhyā by Yaśomitra*, ed. Unrai Wogihara. Tokyo: Sankibō, 1971.
AN I	*The Aṅguttara-Nikāya. Part I. Ekanipâta, Dukanipâta, and Tikanipâta*, ed. Richard Morris, revised edition by A.K. Warder. London: Luzac & Co, 1961.
AnG	*Anavataptagāthā*. See Wille 1990: 65–107.
Ap	*The Apadāna of the Khuddaka Nīkāya*, ed. Mary E. Lilley. London: Pali Text Society, 1925.
Ast	*Acintyastava*. See Lindtner 1982: 140–161.
AvŚat	*Avadānaçataka: A Century of Edifying Tales Belonging to the Hīnayāna*, ed. J.S. Speyer, 2 vols. St.-Petersburg: Académie Impériale des Sciences, 1906.
BHSD, BHSG	Franklin Edgerton, *Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary*. 2 vols. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953.
BoBhū (D)	*Bodhisattvabhūmiḥ. Being the XVth Section of Asaṅgapāda's Yogācārabhūmiḥ*, ed. Nalinaksha Dutt. Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1966.

[134] Mirnig 2016: 352.

BoBhū (W)	*Bodhisattvabhūmi. A Statement of Whole Course of the Bodhisattva*, ed. Unrai Wogihara. Tokyo, 1930.
CII V	Vasudev V. Mirashi, *Inscriptions of the Vākāṭakas*. Ootacamund: Government Epigraphist for India (Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum, 5), 1963.
CPD	Trenckner, Vilhelm et al., *A Critical Pāli Dictionary*. 3 vols. Copenhagen – Bristol: Royal Danish Academy and Pali Text Society, 1924–2011.
Cv	*Cīvaravastu*, in *Gilgit Manuscripts*, Vol. III, part 2, ed. Nalinaksha Dutt. Delhi: Sri Satguru, 1984 [1942[1], Srinagar], pp. 1–148.
Divy	*The Divyâvadâna: A Collection of Early Buddhist Legends*, ed. E.B. Cowell and R.A. Neil. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1886.
D	sDe dge bKa' 'gyur and bsTan 'gyur. A.W. Barber, *The Tibetan Tripiṭaka*, Taipei Edition. Taipei: SMC Publishing Inc., 1991.
DP	Margaret Cone, *A Dictionary of Pāli*. 2 vols. Oxford – Bristol: Pali Text Society, 2001.
EIAD	Arlo Griffiths and Vincent Tournier, with contributions by Stefan Baums, Emmanuel Francis, and Ingo Strauch, *Early Inscriptions of Āndhradeśa*. Online publication, 2017–: http://epigraphia.efeo.fr/andhra/.
IBH	Tsukamoto Keishō 塚本　啓祥, *Indo Bukkyō himei no kenkyū* インド仏教碑銘の研究 / *A Comprehensive Study of the Indian Buddhist Inscriptions*. 3 vols. Kyoto: Heirakuji Shoten 平楽寺書店, 1996–2003.
IEG	Dinesh Chandra Sircar, *Indian Epigraphical Glossary*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1966.
Kpu	*Karuṇāpuṇḍarīka*, *Edited with Introduction and Notes*, Vol. II, ed. Isshi Yamada. London: School of Oriental and African Studies, 1968.
Kv, Kv-u	(*Mahā-*)*Karmavibhaṅga* and *Karmavibhaṅga-upadeśa*. See Lévi 1932.
Mvu	*Le Mahâvastu*, ed. Émile Senart. 3 vols. Paris: Imprimerie nationale, 1882–1897. For the oldest manuscript of this text, see Yuyama 2001, vol. I.

NWS Jürgen Hanneder and Walter Slaje, *Nachtrags-Wörterbuch des Sanskrit. Ein kumulatives Nachtragswörterbuch zu den Petersburger Wörterbüchern von Otto Böhtlingk und den Nachträgen von Richard Schmidt*. Online publication, 2017: http://nws.uzi.uni-halle.de/

Prp *Prasenajitparipṛcchā* (or *Prasenajidgāthā*). See Vinītā 2010, vol. I: 207–258. For the Gilgit manuscripts, see Kudo 2017: 62–64, 137.

Rā *Nāgārjuna's Ratnāvalī*, Vol. I: *The Basic Texts (Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese)*, ed. Michael Hahn. Bonn: Indica et Tibetica, 1982. See also Eda 2005.

Śikṣ *Çikshāsamuccaya: A Compendium of Buddhistic Teaching*, ed. Cecil Bendall. Osnabrück: Biblio Verlag, 1970 [1897–1902[1], St.-Petersburg].

T Takakusu Junjirō 高楠　順次郎, Watanabe Kaigyoku 渡邊　海旭 and Ono Gemyo 小野　玄妙, *Taishō Shinshū Daizōkyō* 大正新脩大藏經 / *The Tripiṭaka in Chinese*, 100 vols. Tokyo: Taishō Issaikyō Kankōkai 大正一切經刊行會, 1924–1934.

Tbk *Tathāgatabimbakārāpaṇasūtra*. Adelheid Mette, "Zwei kleine Fragmente aus Gilgit: I. Tathāgatabimbakārāpaṇasūtra (Gilgit-Ms. No. 18); II. Devatāsūtra und Alpadevatāsūtra (Gilgit-Ms. No. 13)", *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 7 (1981), 133–151.

Th *The Thera- and Therî-gâthâ: (Stanzas Ascribed to Elders of the Buddhist Order of Recluses)*, eds. Hermann Oldenberg and Richard Pischel. London: Pub. for the Pali Text Society, by Henry Frowde, 1883.

Secondary Sources

Agrawala 1960

V. S. Agrawala, "*Bhukti-mukti* ideal in the *Purāṇa*s", *Purāṇa* 1, 2 (1960), 160–162.

Anālayo 2012

Bhikkhu Anālayo, "Teaching the Abhidharma in the Heaven of the Thirty-Three: The Buddha and His Mother", *Journal of the Oxford Centre of Buddhist Studies* 2 (2012), 9–35.

Baums 2012
Stefan Baums, "Catalog and Revised Texts and Translations of Gandharan Reliquary Inscriptions", in David Jongeward et al. (eds.), *Gandharan Buddhist Reliquaries*. Seattle: Early Buddhist Manuscripts Project, 2012, pp. 200–251.

Baums et al. 2016
Stefan Baums et al., "Early Inscriptions of Āndhradeśa: Results of Fieldwork in January and February 2016", *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 102 (2016), 355–398.

Bautze-Picron 1998
Claudine Bautze-Picron, "Lumière et Obscurité: l'Éveil de Śākyamuni et la victoire sur Māra des débuts à l'époque Gupta", *Annali dell'Istituto Universitario Orientale* 58, 1–2 (1998), 1–49.

Bautze-Picron 2015
———, "Incense, Flowers and Prayers in Honour of the Buddha: Ritualistic Scenes in Ajanta and Other Buddhist Sites of Maharashtra, Fifth to Eighth Century", in Arundhati Banerji (ed.), *Ratnaśrī: Gleanings from Indian Archaeology, Art History and Indology (Papers Presented in Memory of Dr. N R Banerji)*. New Delhi: Kaveri Book Service, 2015, pp. 51–70 and pp. 237–245.

Beal 1884
Samuel Beal, *Si-Yu-Ki: Buddhist Records of the Western World*. Vol. II. London: Trübner & Co., 1884.

Bechert 1961
Heinz Bechert, *Bruchstücke buddhistischer Versammlungen aus zentralasiatischen Sanskrithandschriften — 1. Die Anavataptagāthā und Sthaviragāthā*. Berlin: Akademie-Verlag, 1961.

Behl 1998
Benoy K. Behl, *The Ajanta Caves: Ancient Paintings of Buddhist India*. London: Thames & Hudson, 1998.

Belanger 2000
Warner A. Belanger, III, *Caityapradakṣiṇā Gāthā*: *A Critical Edition of the Tibetan Text Based on Six Editions of the Kanjur*. MA Diss., University of Texas at Austin, 2000.

Brancaccio 2011
Pia Brancaccio, *The Buddhist Caves at Aurangabad: Transformations in Art and Religion*. Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2000.

Bühler 1892
Georg Bühler, "The New Inscription of Toramana Shaha", *Epigraphia Indica* 1 (1892), 238–241.
Burgess 1882
James Burgess, *Notes on the Amaravati Stupa*. Madras: E. Keys, 1882.
Burgess 1883
———, *Report on the Elura Cave Temples and the Brahmanical and Jaina Caves in Western India, Completing the Results of the Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Seasons' Operations of the Archæological Survey, 1877–78, 1878–79, 1879–80*. London: Trübner & Co., 1883.
Burgess 1887
———, *The Buddhist Stupas of Amaravati and Jaggayyapeta in the Krishna District, Madras Presidency, Surveyed in 1882*. London: Trübner & Co., 1887.
Burgess and Indraji 1881
James Burgess and Bhagwanlal Indraji, *Inscriptions from the Cave-Temples of Western India*. Bombay: Government Central Press, 1881.
Burnouf 1844
Eugène Burnouf, *Introduction à l'histoire du buddhisme indien*. Paris: Imprimerie royale, 1844.
Chakravarti 1946
N.P. Chakravarti, "A Note to the Painted Inscriptions of Caves VI–XVII", in Ghulam Yazdani (ed.), *Ajanta: The Colour and Monochrome Reproductions of the Ajanta Frescoes Based on Photography*, vol. III. London: Oxford University Press, 1946, pp. 85–96.
Chakravarti 1955
———, "Notes on the Painted and Incised Inscriptions of Caves XX–XXVI – The Painted Inscriptions", in Ghulam Yazdani (ed.), *Ajanta: The Colour and Monochrome Reproductions of the Ajanta Frescoes Based on Photography*, vol. IV. London: Oxford University Press, 1955, pp. 111–112.
Chhabra 1955
B.Ch. Chhabra, "Notes on the Painted and Incised Inscriptions of Caves XX–XXVI – The Incised Inscriptions", in Ghulam Yazdani (ed.), *Ajanta: The Colour and Monochrome Reproductions of the Ajanta Frescoes Based on Photography*, vol. IV. London: Oxford University Press, 1955, pp. 112–124.

Cohen 1995a
Richard Cohen, "Discontented Categories: Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna in Indian Buddhist History", *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 63, 1 (1995), 1–25.
Cohen 1995b
———, *Setting the Three Jewels: The Complex Culture of Buddhism at the Ajaṇṭā Caves*. Ph.D. Diss., University of Michigan, 1995.
Cohen 1997
———, "Problems in the Writing of Ajaṇṭā's History: The Epigraphic Evidence", *Indo-Iranian Journal* 40, 2 (1997), 125–148.
Cohen 2006a
———, "Appendix. Ajaṇṭā Inscriptions", in Walter Spink, *Ajanta: History and Development*, vol. II. Leiden: Brill, 2006, pp. 273–339.
Cohen 2006b
———, *Beyond Enlightenment: Buddhism, Religion, Modernity*. New York: Routledge, 2006.
Colas 2012
Gérard Colas, *Penser l'icône en Inde ancienne*. Turnhout: Brepols, 2012.
DeCaroli 2015
Robert DeCaroli, *Image Problems: The Origin and Development of the Buddha's Image in Early South Asia*. Seattle – London: University of Washington Press, 2015.
Deeg forthcoming
Max Deeg, "Chinese Reports about Buddhism in Early Āndhra and Early Myanmar", in Arlo Griffiths et al. (eds.), *Proceedings of the Conference "From Vijayapurī to Śrīkṣetra? The Beginnings of Buddhist Exchange across the Bay of Bengal"*, held at the EFEO Centre of Pondicherry, 31 July–4 August 2017. Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient.
Demiéville 1937
Paul Demiéville, "Butsuzō 佛像", in Paul Demiéville (ed.), *Hōbōgirin. Dictionnaire encyclopédique du bouddhisme d'après les sources chinoises et japonaises*. Paris: Librairie d'Amérique et d'Orient, 1937, pp. 210a–215a.
Dhammadinnā 2016a
Bhikkhunī Dhammadinnā, "Women's Aspirations and Soteriological Agency in Sarvāstivāda and Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya* Narratives", *Buddhism, Law & Society* 1 (2015–2016 [2016]), 33–67.

Dhammadinnā 2016b

———, "From a Liberated One to a Liberated One: An *avadāna* Quotation in the *Abhidharmakośopāyikā-ṭīkā*", *Dharma Drum Journal of Buddhist Studies* 19 (2016), 63–91.

Dhammadinnā 2016c

———, "The Funeral of Mahāprajāpatī Gautamī and Her Followers in the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*", *Indian International Journal of Buddhist Studies* 17 (2016), 25–74.

Dhavalikar 1981

M.K. Dhavalikar, "The Beginnings of Mahayana Architecture at Ajanta", in M.S. Nagaraja Rao (ed.), *Madhu: Recent Researches in Indian Archaeology and Art History – Shri M.N. Deshpande Festschrift*. Delhi: Agam Kala Prakashan, 1981, pp. 131–138.

Dikshit 1942

Moreshwar G. Dikshit, "A New Buddhist Sect in Kanheri", *Indian Historical Quarterly* 18 (1942), 60–63.

Eda 2005

Akimichi Eda, *Untersuchungen zur Nāgārjunas Ratnāvalī unter besonderer Berücksichtigung des Kommentars des Rgyal tshab*. Ph.D. Diss., Philipps-Universität Marburg, 2005.

Eltschinger 2013a

Vincent Eltschinger, "Aśvaghoṣa and His Canonical Sources: I. Preaching Selflessness to King Bimbisāra and the Magadhans (*Buddhacarita* 16.73–93)", *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 41, 2 (2013), 167–194.

Eltschinger 2013b

———, "Aśvaghoṣa and (His) Canonical Sources: II. Yaśas, the Kāśyapa Brothers and the Buddha's Arrival in Rājagṛha (*Buddhacarita* 16.3–71)", *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 35, 1–2 (2013), 171–224.

Fergusson and Burgess 1880

James Fergusson and James Burgess, *The Cave Temples of India*. London: W. H. Allen, 1880.

Fujimoto 2004

Akira Fujimoto, "*Dāna* and *Dakkhiṇā* in the Context of 'Offer of Donation': *dakkhiṇaṃ ādis-*, *dānaṃ uddis-*, etc.", *Buddhist Studies / Bukkyō Kenkyū* 32 (2004), 83–114.

Gokhale 1991
Shobhana Gokhale, *Kanheri Inscriptions*. Pune: Deccan College Post Graduate and Research Institute, 1991.
Gombrich 1971
Richard F. Gombrich, *Precept and Practice: Traditional Buddhism in the Rural Highlands of Ceylon*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1971.
Gonda 1977
Jan Gonda, *Medieval Religious Literature in Sanskrit.* Wiesbaden: Otto Harrassowitz Verlag, 1977.
Griffiths 2020
Arlo Griffiths, "The Old Malay Mañjuśrīgṛha Inscription from Candi Sewu (Java, Indonesia)", in Vincent Tournier, Vincent Eltschinger, and Marta Sernesi (eds.), *Archaeologies of the Written: Indian, Tibetan, and Buddhist Studies in Honour of Cristina Scherrer-Schaub*. Naples: Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale", 2020, pp. 225–268.
Griffiths 1896
John Griffiths, *The Paintings in the Buddhist Cave-Temples of Ajanta*. Vol. I. London: W. Griggs, 1896.
Hahn 1985
Michael Hahn, "Vorläufige Überlegungen zur Schulzugehörigkeit einiger buddhistischer Dichter", in Heinz Bechert (ed.), *Zur Schulzugehörigkeit von Werken der Hīnayāna-Literatur*, vol. I. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1985, pp. 239–257.
Hahn 1993
———, "Notes on Buddhist Sanskrit Literature: Chronology and Related Topics", in Maeda Egaku 前田 惠學 (ed.), *Genshi Bukkyō to Daijō Bukkyō : Watanabe Fumimaro Hakushi Tsuitō Kinen Ronshū* 原始仏教と大乗仏教 : 渡邊文麿博士追悼記念論集. Kyoto: Nagata Bunshōdō 永田文昌堂, 1993, pp. 31–58.
Hahn and Saito 2013
Michael Hahn and Naoki Saito, "Pseudo-Nāgārjuna's Sermon About Giving (*Dānaparikathā*)", in Sarah F. Haynes and Michelle J. Sorensen (eds.), *Wading into the Stream of Wisdom: Essays in Honor of Leslie S. Kawamura*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2013, pp. 193–208.
Hanisch 2005
Albrecht Hanisch, *Āryaśūras Jātakamālā*. 2 vols. Marburg: Indica et Tibetica, 2005.

Hara 2002
Minoru Hara, *Pāśupata Studies.* Vienna: Sammlung de Nobili, 2002.
Harrison, Hartmann, and Matsuda 2016
Paul Harrison, Jens-Uwe Hartmann, and Kazunobu Matsuda, "The Final Folio of a Version of the Larger *Sukhāvatīvyūhasūtra* and Fragments of a Text Possibly Related to the *Tathāgatabimbaparivarta*", in Jens Braarvig (ed.), *Buddhist Manuscripts*, vol. IV. Oslo: Hermes Publishing, 2016, pp. 283–293.
Heirman 2015
Ann Heirman, "Buddhist Nuns Through the Eyes of Leading Early Tang Masters", *The Chinese Historical Review* 22, 1 (2015), 31–51.
Hinüber 2003
Oskar von Hinüber, *Beiträge zur Erklärung der Senavarma-Inschrift*. Stutgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2003.
Hinüber 2004
———, *Die Palola Ṣāhis: Ihre Steinenschriften, Inschriften auf Bronzen, Handschriftenkolophone und Schutzzauber.* Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 2004.
Hinüber 2008
———, Book Review of Bakker, Hans T. (ed.), *The Vākāṭaka Heritage. Indian Culture at the Crossroads*. Gröningen: Egbert Forsten, 2004, *Indo-Iranian Journal* 51, 1 (2008), 65–69.
Hinüber 2013
———, "Behind the Scenes: The Struggle of Political Groups for Influence as Reflected in Inscriptions", *Indo-Iranian Journal* 56 (2013), 365–379.
Hinüber 2014
———, "The Gilgit Manuscripts: An Ancient Library in Modern Research", in Paul Harrison and Jens-Uwe Hartmann (eds.), *From Birch Bark to Digital Data: Recent Advances in Buddhist Manuscript Research. Papers Presented at the Conference Indic Buddhist Manuscripts: The State of the Field, Stanford, June 15–19 2009.* Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2014, pp. 79–135.
Hinüber and Skilling 2016
Oskar von Hinüber and Peter Skilling, "An Inscribed Kuṣāṇa Bodhisatva from Vadnagar", *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology* 19 (2016), 21–28.

Ji 1985

Ji Xianlin 季 羨林, *Datang xiyuji jiaozhu* 大唐西域記校注 [A Critical Edition of the *Datang Xiyuji*]. Beijing: Zhonghua shu ju 中華書局, 1985.

Khandalavala 1991

Karl Khandalavala, "The Chronology of Caves 16, 17, 19, 26, 1 and 2 at Ajanta and the Ghatotkacha Cave", in Ratan Parimoo (ed.), *The Art of Ajanta: New Perspectives*, vol. I. New Delhi: Books & Books, 1991, pp. 105–129.

Kieffer-Pülz 2010

Petra Kieffer-Pülz, Book Review of Silk 2008a, *Indo-Iranian Journal* 53, 1 (2010), 71–88.

Kragh 2006

Ulrich T. Kragh, *Early Buddhist Theories of Action and Result: A Study of Karmaphalasambandha, Candrakīrti's Prasannapadā, Verses 17.1–20*. Vienna: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 2006.

Kudo 2004

Kudo Noriyuki 工藤 順之, *The Karmavibhaṅga: Transliterations and Annotations of the Original Sanskrit Manuscripts from Nepal*. Tokyo: International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology, Soka University, 2004.

Kudo 2009

———, "The *Karmavibhaṅgopadeśa*: A Transliteration of the Nepalese Manuscript A (1)", *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology* 12 (2009), 21–27.

Kudo 2013

———, "A Newly Identified Manuscript of the *Pāramitāsamāsa* in the Gilgit Buddhist Manuscripts", *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology* 16 (2013), 255–266.

Kudo 2016

———, "Sumāgadhā-avadāna" girugitto sha hon: utsu A 『スマーガダー・アヴァダーナ』ギルギット写本: 写 *A* / Gilgit Manuscripts of the *Sumāgadhā-avadāna* (1): Manuscript A. *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology* 19 (2016), 319–344.

Kudo 2017

———, *Avadānas and Miscellaneous Texts*. New Delhi — Tokyo: National Archives of India and The International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology, Soka University, 2017.

La Vallée Poussin 1924
Louis de La Vallée Poussin, *L'Abhidharmakośa de Vasubandhu traduit et annoté : quatrième chapitre*. Paris – Louvain: P. Geuthner and J.-B. Istas, 1924.
Lalou 1925
Marcelle Lalou, "Trois récits du Dulva reconnus dans les peintures d'Ajaṇṭā", *Journal asiatique*, oct.-déc. (1925), 333–337.
Lalou 1928
———, "Note sur la décoration des monastères bouddhiques : à propos d'un livre récent de M. Goloubew", *Revue des Arts Asiatiques* 5, 3 (1928), 183–185.
Lamotte 1944–1980
Étienne Lamotte, *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse de Nāgārjuna (Mahāprajñāpāramitāśāstra)*. 5 vols. Louvain-la-Neuve: Institut Orientaliste, 1944–1980.
Leese 1991
Marilyn E. Leese, "Coalescence of Purpose: Monastic and Royal Ideals at Ajanta", in Ratan Parimoo (ed.), *The Art of Ajanta: New Perspectives*, vol. I. New Delhi: Books & Books, 1991, pp. 135–143.
Lévi 1932
Sylvain Lévi, *Mahā-karmavibhaṅga (La grande classification des actes) et Karmavibhaṇgopadeśa (Discussion sur le Mahā Karmavibhaṅga)*. Paris: Ernest Leroux, 1932.
Li 1996
Rongxi Li, *The Great Tang Dynasty Record of the Western Regions*. Berkeley: BDK America, 1996.
Lindtner 1982
Christian Lindtner, *Nāgārjuniana: Studies in the Writings and Philosophy of Nāgārjuna*. Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1982.
Lüders 1903
Heinrich Lüders, "Ârya Śūra's *Jâtakamâlâ* and the Frescoes of Ajaṇṭâ", *The Indian Antiquary* 32 (1903), 326–329.
Lüders 1961
———, *Mathurā Inscriptions: Unpublished Papers*, edited by Klaus L. Janert. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1961.
McCombs 2014
Jason M. McCombs, *Mahāyāna and the Gift: Theories and Practices*. Ph.D. Diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2014.

McNair 2007
Amy McNair, *Donors of Longmen: Faith, Politics, and Patronage in Medieval Chinese Buddhist Sculpture*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2007.
Meadows 1986
Carol Meadows, *Ārya-Śūra's Compendium of the Perfections: Text, Translation and Analysis of the Pāramitāsamāsa*. Bonn: Indica et Tibetica, 1986.
Melzer 2006
Gudrun Melzer, "A Copper Scroll Inscription from the Time of the Alchon Huns", in Jens Braarvig (ed.), *Buddhist Manuscripts*, vol. III. Oslo: Hermes Publishing, 2006, pp. 251–278.
Mirashi 1962
Vasudev V. Mirashi, "Were the Vākāṭakas the Rulers of Aśmaka?", in *Studies in Indology*, vol. II. Nagpur: Vidarbha Samshodhana Mandal, 1962, pp. 155–161 [1946[1], *Indian Historical Quarterly* 22 (1946), 309–315].
Mirnig 2016
Nina Mirnig, "Early Strata of Śaivism in the Kathmandu Valley: Śivaliṅga Pedestal Inscriptions from 466–645 CE", *Indo-Iranian Journal* 59 (2016), 309–362.
Mitra 1998
Debala Mitra, "Lintels with the Figures of the Eight Great Bodhisattvas and a Tathāgata – An Iconographical Study", in C. P. Sinha (ed.), *Facets of Indian Culture Gustav Roth Felicitation Volume Published on the Occasion of His 82nd Birthday*. Patna: Bihar Puravid Parishad, 1998, pp. 276–300.
Morrissey 2009
Nicholas Morrissey, *Śākyabhiksus, Palimpsests and the Art of Apostasy: The Emergence and Decline of Mahāyāna Buddhism in Early Medieval India*. Ph.D. Diss., University of California, Los Angeles, 2009.
Njammasch 1971
Marlene Njammasch, "Akhayanivi-Schenkungen an Klöster und Tempel im Dekhan unter den Sātavāhanas", *Acta Orientalia Academiae Scientiarum Hungaricae* 24, 2 (1971), 203–215.

Owen 2001
Lisa Owen, "Constructing Another Perspective for Ajaṇṭā Fifth-Century Excavations", *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 24, 1 (2001), 27–59.
Przyluski 1920
Jean Przyluski, "La roue de la vie à Ajaṇṭā", *Journal asiatique*, oct.-déc. (1920), 313–330.
Revire 2016
Nicolas Revire, *The Enthroned Buddha in Majesty: An Iconological Study*. Ph.D. Diss., Université Sorbonne Nouvelle, Paris, 2016.
Salamito 2005
Jean-Marie Salamito, *Les virtuoses et la multitude : aspects sociaux de la controverse entre Augustin et les pélagiens*. Grenoble: Millon, 2005.
Salomon 1986
Richard Salomon, "The Inscription of Senavarma, King of Oḍi", *Indo-Iranian Journal* 29, 4 (1986), 261–293.
Salomon 1998
———, *Indian Epigraphy: A Guide to the Study of Inscriptions in Sanskrit, Prakrit, and the Other Indo-Aryan Languages*. New York – Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998.
Salomon 2008
———, *Two Gāndhārī Manuscripts of the Songs of Lake Anavatapta (Anavatapta-gāthā): British Library Kharoṣṭhī Fragment 1 and Senior Scroll 14*. Seattle – London: University of Washington Press, 2008.
Salomon and Schopen 1984
Richard Salomon and Gregory Schopen, "The Indravarman (Avaca) Casket Inscription Reconsidered: Further Evidence for Canonical Passages in Buddhist Inscriptions", *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 7, 1 (1984), 107–122.
Scherrer-Schaub 1991
Cristina A. Scherrer-Schaub, *Yuktiṣaṣṭikāvṛtti, commentaire à la soixantaine sur le raisonnement ou Du vrai enseignement de la causalité par le Maître indien Candrakīrti*. Bruxelles: Institut Belge des Hautes Études Chinoises, 1991.
Scherrer-Schaub 2007
———, "Immortality Extolled with Reason: Philosophy and Politics in Nāgārjuna", in Birgit Kellner et al., *Pramāṇakīrtiḥ. Papers Dedicated to Ernst Steinkellner on the Occasion of His 70th Birthday*, vol. II. Vi-

enna: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 2007, pp. 757–793.

Scherrer-Schaub 2018

———, "The Quintessence of the Mādhyamika Teaching Blossoms Again. Some Considerations in View of the 5th–7th c. A.D. (I) Reading the Alkhan's Document (Schøyen MSS 2241) in Religious and Political Context", *Journal asiatique* 306, 1 (2018), 115–146.

Schlingloff 1988

Dieter Schlingloff, *Studies in the Ajanta Paintings: Identifications and Interpretations*. Delhi: Ajanta Publications, 1988.

Schlingloff 2000

———, *Ajanta: Handbuch der Malereien / Handbook of the Paintings. 1 Erzählende Wandmalereien / Narrative Wall-paintings*. Vol. I. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2000.

Schmithausen 1986

Lambert Schmithausen, "Critical Response", in Ronald W. Neufeldt (ed.), *Karma and Rebirth: Post Classical Developments*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1986.

Schneider 1993

Johannes Schneider, *Der Lobpreis der Vorzüglichkeit des Buddha: Udbhaṭasiddhasvāmins Viśeṣastava mit Prajñāvarmans Kommentar*. Bonn: Indica et Tibetica Verlag, 1993.

Schneider 1995

———, "Der Buddha als der wahre Śiva: Udbhaṭasiddhasvāmins *Sarvajñamaheśvarastotra*", *Berliner Indologische Studien* 8 (1995), 153–187.

Schopen 1977

Gregory Schopen, "Sukhāvatī as a Generalized Religious Goal in Sanskrit Mahāyāna Literature", *Indo-Iranian Journal* 19, 3–4 (1977), 177–210.

Schopen 1979

———, "Mahāyāna in Indian Inscriptions", *Indo-Iranian Journal* 21, 1 (1979), 1–19.

Schopen 1983

———, "The Generalization of an Old Yogic Attainment in Medieval Mahāyāna Sūtra Literature: Some Notes on *jātismara*", *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 6, 1 (1983), 109–147.

Schopen 1984
———, "Filial Piety and the Monk in the Practice of Indian Buddhism: A Question of "Sinicization" Viewed from the Other Side", *T'oung Pao* 70 (1984), 110–126.
Schopen 1985
———, "Two Problems in the History of Indian Buddhism: The Layman / Monk Distinction and the Doctrines of the Transference of Merit", *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik* 10 (1985), 9–47.
Schopen 1990
———, "The Buddha as an Owner of Property and Permanent Resident in Medieval Indian Monasteries", *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 18, 3 (1990), 181–217.
Schopen 1994
———, "Doing Business for the Lord: Lending on Interest and Written Loan Contracts in the *Mūlasarvāstivāda-Vinaya*", *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 114, 4 (1994), 527–553.
Schopen 1995
———, "Monastic Law Meets the Real World: A Monk's Continuing Right to Inherit Family Property in Classical India", *History of Religions* 35, 2 (1995), 101–123.
Schopen 1996
———, "The Lay Ownership of Monasteries and the Role of the Monk in Mūlasarvāstivādin Monasticism", *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 19, 1 (1996), 81–126.
Schopen 1998
———, "Marking Time in a Buddhist Monastery: On Calendars, Clocks, and Some Liturgical Practices", in Paul Harrison and Gregory Schopen (eds.), *Sūryacandrāya: Essays in Honour of Akira Yuyama on the Occasion of His 65th Birthday.* Swisttal-Odendorf: Indica et Tibetica Verlag, 1998, pp. 157–179.
Schopen 2000
———, "The Mahāyāna and the Middle Period of Indian Buddhism: Through a Chinese Looking-Glass", *The Eastern Buddhist* 32, 2 (2000), 1–25.
Schopen 2004
———, "Art, Beauty, and the Business of Running a Monastery in Early Northwest India", in idem, *Buddhist Monks and Business Mat-*

ters: Still More Papers on Monastic Buddhism in India. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004, pp. 19–44.

Schopen 2005

———, "On Sending the Monks Back to Their Books: Cult and Conservatism in Early Mahāyāna Buddhism", in idem, *Figments and Fragments of Mahāyāna Buddhism in India: More Collected Papers*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005, pp. 108–153.

Schopen 2007

———, "The Buddhist *Bhikṣu*'s Obligation to Support His Parents in Two Vinaya Traditions", *Journal of the Pali Text Society* 29 (2007), 107–136.

Schopen 2015

———, "The Fragrance of the Buddha, the Scent of Monuments, and the Odor of Images in Early India", *Bulletin de l'École française d'Extrême-Orient* 101 (2015), 11–30.

Sharf 2013

Sharf, Robert. 2013. "Art in the Dark: The Ritual Context of Buddhist Caves in Western China", in David Park, Kuenga Wangmo, and Sharon Cather (eds.), *Art of Merit: Studies in Buddhist Art and its Conservation. Proceedings of the Buddhist Art Forum 2012*. London: Archetype Publications, 2013, pp. 38–65.

Shulman 2011

Eviatar Shulman, "*Ratnāvalī*: A Precious Garland of Buddhist Philosophical Systems", *Indo-Iranian Journal* 54, 4 (2011), 301–329.

Silk 2007

Jonathan A. Silk, "*Bauddhavacana*: Notes on Buddhist Vocabulary", *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology* 10 (2007), 171–179.

Silk 2008a

———, *Managing Monks: Administrators and Administrative Roles in Indian Buddhist Monasticism*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Silk 2008b

———, "**Parikarṣati* Reconsidered", *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology* 11 (2008), 61–69.

Silk 2013

———, "Review Article: Buddhist Sūtras in Sanskrit from the Potala", *Indo-Iranian Journal* 56 (2013), 61–87.

Silk 2018

———, "A Present Future Foretold: The Ten Dreams of King Kṛkin in Pelliot Tibétain 977", in Oliver von Criegern, Gudrun Melzer, and Johannes Schneider (eds.), *Saddharmāmṛtam. Festschrift für Jens-Uwe Hartmann zum 65. Geburtstag*. Vienna: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 2018, pp. 427–439.

Sircar 1942

Dinesh Chandra Sircar, *Select Inscriptions Bearing on Indian History and Civilization. Volume I: From the Sixth Century B.C. to the Sixth Century A.D.* Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1942.

Sircar 1959–1960

———, "Inscription in Cave IV at Ajaṇṭā", *Epigraphia Indica* 33 (1959–1960 [1963]), 259–262.

Sircar 1971

———, *Studies in the Geography of Ancient and Medieval India*. Second Edition Revised and Enlarged. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1971.

Skilling 2008

Peter Skilling, "Dharma, Dhāraṇī, Abhidharma, Avadāna: What Was Taught in Trayastriṃśa?", *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology* 11 (2008), 37–60.

Skilling 2017

———, "*Ānisaṃsa*: Merit, Motivation and Material Culture", *Journal of Buddhist Studies* 14 (2017), 1–56.

Spink 2005–2016

Walter Spink, *Ajanta: History and Development*. 7 vols. Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2005–2016.

Spink 2010

———, "To Keep One's Memory Green: Ajanta's Major Inscriptions", in Monika Zin and Eli Franco (eds.), *From Turfan to Ajanta. Festschrift for Dieter Schlingloff on the Occasion of His Eightieth Birthday*, vol. II. Lumbini: Lumbini International Research Institute, 2010, pp. 955–966.

Stern 1972

Philippe Stern, *Colonnes indiennes d'Ajantâ et d'Ellora : évolution et répercussions*. Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1972.

Strong 1983

John Strong, "Filial Piety and Buddhism: The Indian Antecedents to a 'Chinese' Problem", in Peter Slater and Donald Wiebe (eds.), *Traditions*

in Contact and Change. Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 1983, pp. 171–186.

Strong 2010

———, "The Triple Ladder at S[ā]ṃkāśya: Traditions About the Buddha's Descent from Trayastriṃśa Heaven", in Monika Zin and Eli Franco (eds.), *From Turfan to Ajanta. Festschrift for Dieter Schlingloff on the Occasion of His Eightieth Birthday*, vol. II. Lumbini: Lumbini International Research Institute, 2010, pp. 967–978.

Sugimoto 1984

Sugimoto Takushū 杉本 卓洲, *Indo Buttō no Kenkyū: Buttō Sūhai No Seisei to Kiban* インド仏塔の研究: 仏塔崇拝の生成と基盤 / *Studies in Buddhist Stūpa Cult in India*. Kyoto: Heirakuji Shoten 平楽寺書店, 1984.

Tatelman 2000

Joel Tatelman, *The Glorious Deeds of Pūrṇa: A Translation and Study of the Pūrṇāvadāna*. Richmond: Curzon, 2000.

Teiser 1988

Stephen F. Teiser, *The Ghost Festival in Medieval China*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1988.

Tournier 2014

Vincent Tournier, "Mahākāśyapa, His Lineage, and the Wish for Buddhahood: Reading Anew the Bodhgayā Inscriptions of Mahānāman", *Indo-Iranian Journal* 57, 1–2 (2014), 1–60.

Tournier 2017

———, *La formation du Mahāvastu et la mise en place des conceptions relatives à la carrière du bodhisattva*. Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 2017.

Tournier 2018

———, "A Tide of Merit: Royal Donors, Tāmraparṇīya Monks, and the Buddha's Awakening in 5th–6th-century Āndhradeśa", *Indo-Iranian Journal* 61, 1 (2018), 20–96.

Tournier forthcoming

———, "Following the Śaila Trail: Epigraphic Evidence on the History of a Regional Buddhist School", in Arlo Griffiths et al. (eds.), *Proceedings of the Conference "From Vijayapurī to Śrīkṣetra? The Beginnings of Buddhist Exchange across the Bay of Bengal*, held at the EFEO centre of Pondicherry, 31 July–4 August 2017. Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient.

Tournier in preparation
———, "Worldly Power, Heavenly Enjoyments, and Beyond: Donors' Motivations and the Assignment of Merit in Āndhra".
Tournier and Strong 2019
Vincent Tournier and John Strong, "Śākyamuni: South Asia", in Jonathan A. Silk et al. (eds.), *Brill's Encyclopedia of Buddhism. Vol. II. Lives*. Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2019, pp. 3–38.
Tropper 2010
Kurt Tropper, with and appendix by Gudrun Melzer, "The *Caityapradakṣiṇagāthā* Inscription in Alchi: A Valuable Witness for Kanjur Studies", *Berliner Indologische Studien* 19 (2010), 15–70.
Vasant 1992
Suresh Vasant, "Dīpaṅkara Buddha at Ajanta", in Ajay Mitra Shastri (ed.), *The Age of the Vākāṭakas*. New Delhi: Harman Publishing House, 1992, pp. 209–217.
Vinītā 2010
Bhikṣuṇī Vinītā, *A Unique Collection of Twenty Sūtras in a Sanskrit Manuscript from the Potala*. 2 vols. Beijing, Vienna: China Tibetology Publishing House and Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2010.
Vogel and Wille 1996
Claus Vogel and Klaus Wille, "The Final Leaves of the *Pravrajyāvastu* Portion of the *Vinayavastu* Manuscript Found near Gilgit, Part 1, *Saṃgharakṣitāvadāna*", in *Sanskrit-Texte aus dem Buddhistischen Kanon: Neuentdeckungen und Neueditionen III*. Göttingen: Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, 1996, pp. 241–296.
Vogel 1906
Jean Ph. Vogel, "Sanskrit *kīrti*", *Bijdragen tot de Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde* 59 (1906), 344–348.
Wangchuk 2007
Dorji Wangchuk, *The Resolve to Become a Buddha: A Study of the Bodhicitta Concept in Indo-Tibetan Buddhism*. Tokyo: International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 2007.
Wang-Toutain 1998
Françoise Wang-Toutain, *Le Bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha en Chine du Ve au XIIIe siècle*. Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient, 1998.
Watters 1905
Thomas Watters, *On Yuan Chwang's Travels in India (629–645 A.D.)*. Vol. II. London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1905.

Wille 1990
Klaus Wille, *Die handschriftliche Überlieferung des Vinayavastu der Mūlasarvāstivādin*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1990.
Williams 1982
Joanna G. Williams, *The Art of Gupta India: Empire and Province*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1982.
Willis 2009
Michael Willis, *The Archaeology of Hindu Ritual: Temples and the Establishment of the Gods*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009.
Wood 2004
Leela A. Wood, "The Ajanta Cave 17 as a Preface to the Local King's Vihāra: History, Religious Story and Homology", in Hans Bakker (ed.), *The Vākāṭaka Heritage: Indian Culture at the Crossroads*. Groningen: Egbert Forsten, 2004, pp. 109–131.
Yuyama 2001
Akira Yuyama, *The Mahāvastu-Avadāna in Old Palm-Leaf and Paper Manuscripts*. 2 vols. Tokyo: Toyo Bunko, 2001.
Zin 2003
Monika Zin, *Ajanta. Handbuch der Malereien — 2. Devotionale und ornamentale Malereien*, Vol. I. Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz, 2003.
Zin and Schlingloff 2007
Monika Zin and Dieter Schlingloff, *Saṃsāracakra. Das Rad der Wiedergeburten in der indischen Überlieferung*. Düsseldorf: EKO-Haus der Japanischen Kultur, 2007.

List of Captions

Fig. 1 Eye copy of the fresco representing the group of eight *buddha*s, right wall of the *cella* of cave XXII, Ajanta (after Griffiths 1896: pl. 91).

Fig. 2 Fresco representing the group of eight *buddha*s, right wall of the *cella* of cave XXII, Ajanta (photo V. Tournier).

Fig. 3 Detail of the painted inscription AjI 90, corresponding to the reading: *śākyabhikṣo ma[ṣa]* ? ?/// (photo V. Tournier).

Fig. 4 Inscription by the porch of cave LXXVI at Kanheri (photo V. Tournier).

Fig. 5 Standing *buddha* in *varadamudrā*, pillar of cave X, Ajanta (photo V. Tournier).

Fig. 6 Inscription (AjI 52) painted upon a lotus below the standing *buddha* of cave X, Ajanta (photo V. Tournier).

Fig. 7 Heavily damaged *buddha* image with *bodhisattva* attendants, rear wall of cave XI, Ajanta (photo V. Tournier).

Fig. 8 Detail of the painted inscription AjI 65, corresponding to the reading: *[saur]ūpyasaugyag.*/// (photo V. Tournier).

Fig. 9 Dedicatory inscription of cave XXVI (AjI 93), Ajanta (photo V. Tournier).

Fig. 10 Kneeling and cross-legged devotees to the proper right of the main Buddha image, cave XXVI (photo V. Tournier).

Fig. 11 Buddha image in the *cella* of cave IV, on the pedestal of which AjI 17 is engraved (photo V. Tournier).

Fig. 12 Estampage of the pedestal of the Buddha image of cave IV (after Sircar 1959–1960).

Fig. 13 Inscribed stela with standing Buddha image from Jaggayyapeta (photo V. Tournier).

Fig. 14 Estampage of the pedestal of the Buddha image from Jaggayyapeta (after Burgess 1887, pl. LXIII.4).



Fig. 1

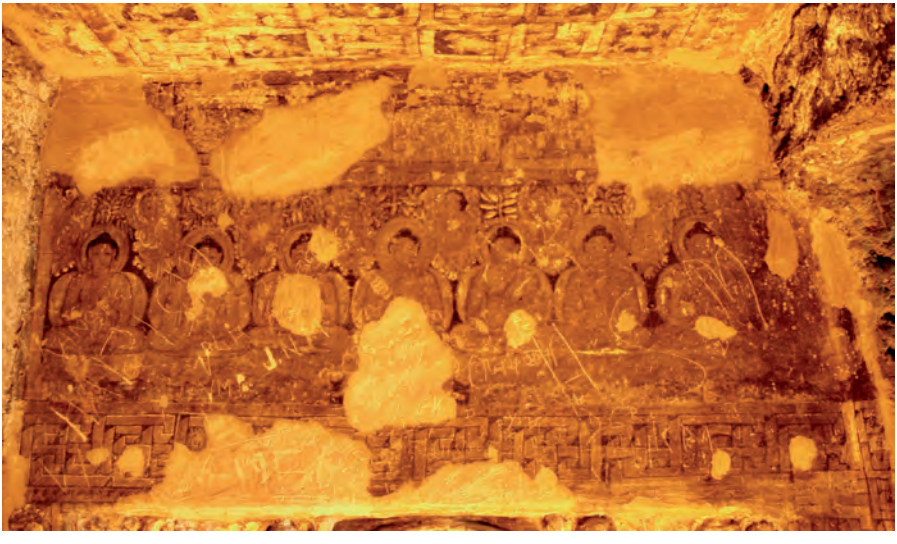


Fig. 2



Fig. 3

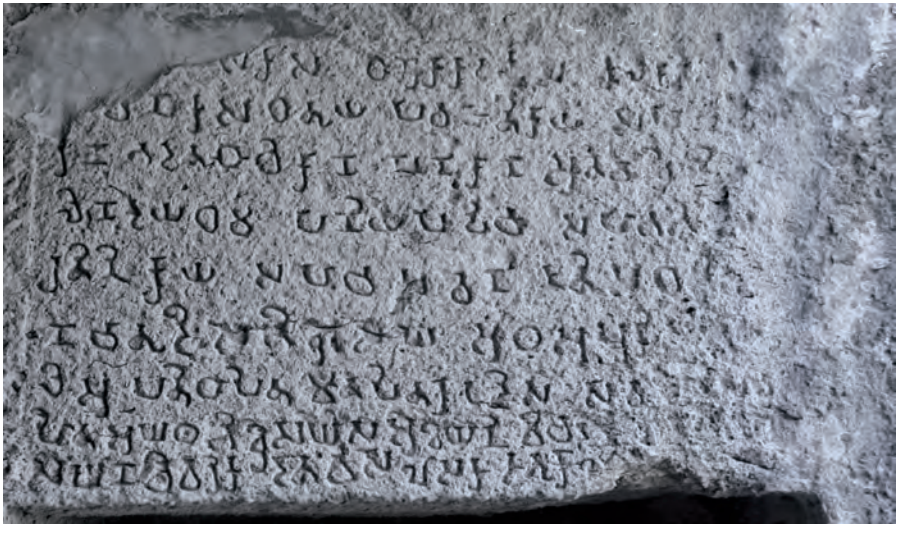


Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8



Fig. 9



Fig. 10



Fig. 11

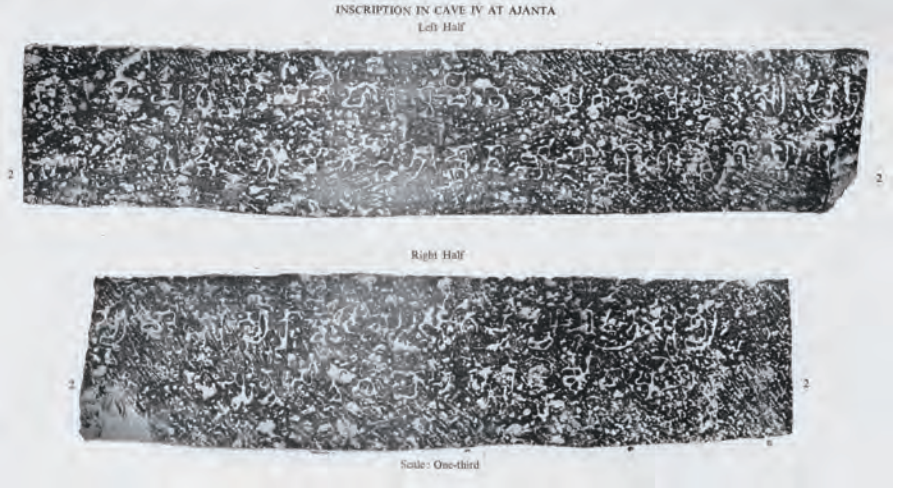

INSCRIPTION IN CAVE IV AT AJANTA
Left Half
Right Half
Scale: One-third

Fig. 12



Fig. 13



Fig. 14

Chapter V

Ālayavijñāna in a Meditative Context*

Nobuyoshi Yamabe, Waseda University

In recent years, one of my projects has been to clarify the meditative background of *ālayavijñāna*. *Ālayavijñāna* is usually understood to be the deepest layer of mind, which, of course, is correct. However, as Lambert Schmithausen has pointed out,[1] it also has the biological function of maintaining the body.[2] I believe this aspect of *ālayavijñāna* deserves more attention, particularly in meditative contexts. In earlier papers,[3] I have suggested that the concept of *ālayavijñāna* originated in the context of mind-body transformation through meditative practice. Apparently *ālayavijñāna*, which supports both the surface layers of mind and the body, played a key role in this transformation.

Since it would be pointless to repeat all the arguments I have already made in these publications, in this paper I would like to refer to several key passages and elaborate on a few points I could not sufficiently cover in my earlier papers. In the process, some overlap with my former articles is unavoidable. On this point, I beg for the indulgence of the reader.

---

* The original draft (in English) of this paper was read at the conference "Mārga: Paths to Liberation in South Asian Buddhist Traditions" (17–18 December 2015, Vienna), organized by Professor Vincent Eltschinger and Dr. Cristina Pecchia. I thank them for kindly inviting me to this conference. While this paper was being edited for publication, I translated it into Japanese and published it as Yamabe 2017a. However, due to space limitations, I had to cut some details and quotations in that version. Therefore, the present paper contains more information. I thank Professor Robert Kritzer for kindly checking the English of this paper and Professor Eltschinger for his meticulous editorial assistance. The research for this paper was funded by a Waseda University Grant for Special Research Projects (Project Number: 2016B-064) and a JSPS Kakenhi Grant (Project Number: 17K02218).

1 Schmithausen [1987] 2007.

2 See Schmithausen [1987] 2007, §2.13.4.

3 Yamabe 2012, 2015, 2016a, 2016b, 2017.

Cristina Pecchia and Vincent Eltschinger (eds.), *Mārga. Paths to Liberation in South Asian Buddhist Traditions*. Papers from an international symposium held at the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, December 17 – 18, 2015. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2020, pp. 249–275.

1. *Ālayavijñāna* and Meditative Bliss

The first passage I would like to discuss is one from the *Xiǎnyáng shèngjiào lùn* 顯揚聖教論. It contains a discussion of *vivekaja-prītisukha* in the first *dhyāna*.

> 建立定者。如經中説。離欲惡不善法故。有尋有伺離生喜樂。初靜慮具足住。……
> 喜者謂已轉依者依於轉識心悦心勇心適心調安適受受所攝。
> 樂者謂已轉依者依阿賴耶識能攝所依。令身怡悦安適受受所攝。
>
> T31:486c24-487a6 [No. 1602]

As Schmithausen has pointed out,[4] this passage is quoted in the *Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya* and so the Sanskrit original can be retrieved:

> *kathaṃ tatra manobhūmikaṃ sukham | yat tad ucyate prītisukham iti, yathoktam –*
> *"prītiḥ katamā | yā parivṛttāśrayasya pravṛttivijñānāśritā* citta*tuṣṭiḥ cittaudbilyaṃ cittaharṣaḥ cittakalyatā sātaṃ veditaṃ vedanāgatam | sukhaṃ katamat | yaḥ parivṛttāśrayasyālayavijñānāśrita* āśrayā*nugraha āśrayahlādaḥ sātaṃ veditaṃ vedanāgatam" iti |*
>
> *Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya,* Yugagyō Shisō Kenkyūkai ed., 409.10-15[5]
>
> What is the bliss belonging to *mano*[*vijñāna*] here? [It refers to] what is mentioned as "joy[6] and bliss" in the following way:
> What is joy (*prīti*)? The satisfaction, delight, rapture, and soundness of *mind* based on *pravṛttivijñāna*s for a practitioner whose personal basis has been transformed. It is pleasant feeling subsumed under *vedanā.*
> What is bliss (*sukha*)? The benefit and pleasure of the *body* based on *ālayavijñāna* for a practitioner whose personal basis has been transformed (*parivṛttāśraya*). It is pleasant feeling subsumed under *vedanā.*

The structure of this passage can be summarized in a chart:

---

4 Schmithausen [1987] 2007: 315–16, n. 297.

5 Corresponding to Tatia ed., 61.1-5 (§61H[iii]), corrected following Schmithausen [1987] 2007, 315-316, n. 297. Regarding punctuation, I follow Tatia (here and below).

6 For the implications of *prīti* (*pīti* in Pāli), see Cousins 1973: 120–122.

prīti:	*pravṛttivijñānāśrita*	*citta-tuṣṭi*, etc.
sukha:	*ālayavijñānāśrita*	*āśrayānugraha*, etc.

Chart 1

In Abhidharma and Yogācāra literature, *āśraya* without contextual specification often means "body", and in this passage also, the *āśraya* juxtaposed with *citta* is very likely used in that sense.[7] Thus, a practitioner whose personal basis (*āśraya*, again, closely associated with "body") has been transformed through *āśrayaparivṛtti* experiences a pleasant sensation in his body and mind.

This passage is interpreted in the subsequent portion of the *Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya* as follows:

> *tad etad uktaṃ bhavati | sukhavedanā prathamadvitīyayor dhyānayor utpadyamānā yena cittacaittakalāpena saṃprayujyate taṃ ca harṣākāreṇa prīṇayati,* āśrayaṃ cālayavijñānasvabhāvaṃ *prasrabdhisukhena hlādayati | atas tadubhayakṛtyakaratvād ubhayathaivāsyā vyavasthānaṃ veditavyaṃ prītiḥ sukhaṃ ceti |*
>
> *Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya*, Yugagyō Shisō Kenkyūkai ed., 409.15-18[8]
>
> What it means is as follows. When the sensation of bliss belonging to the first and second *dhyāna*s is arising, that [sensation] gladdens the bundle of mind and mental functions with which it is associated in the mode of rapture. It also pleases *the body, which has the nature of ālayavijñāna*, with the bliss of meditative ease. Therefore, because it performs these two functions, one should know that the [sensation of bliss] is posited in two ways: as joy and bliss.

From this statement, we find that bodily bliss (*sukha*) is equated with *prasrabdhi* (a variant spelling of *praśrabdhi*), which is a sense of ease attained only in meditation.[9] The expression *āśrayaṃ cālayavijñāna-svabhāvaṃ* is

---

[7] As we shall discuss below (n. 24), the word *āśraya* is often closely associated with the bodily aspect of our existence, but apparently the mental aspect is also included in this concept. In this paper, when *āśraya* seems to refer primarily to the physical aspect, I translate it simply as "body". It should, however, be noted that the mental aspect is not necessarily excluded from this concept.

[8] Corresponding to Tatia ed., 61.5-7 (§61H[iii]).

[9] See also Deleanu 2006: 532, n. 169.

also highly noteworthy. As we have seen, in this context *āśraya* very likely means "body". Thus, this passage seems to equate the body with *ālaya-vijñāna*. It is also curious that *sukha* or *praśrabdhi* is tied to *ālayavijñāna* because, according to the classical Yogācāra system (already attested in the "Pravṛtti Portion" of the *Viniścayasaṃgrahaṇī*), *ālayavijñāna* is associated (*saṃprayukta*) only with neutral sensation.[10] Since actual experience in meditation and doctrinal/systematic considerations might not always match, this apparent contradiction may indicate that the passage contains some trace of practitioners' meditative experience.

In what follows, I discuss these points. For now, Chart 1 can be modified as Chart 2:

prīti:	*pravṛttivijñānāśrita* (*harṣākāra*)	*citta-tuṣṭi*, etc. (*citta-caitta-kalāpa*)
sukha:	*ālayavijñānāśrita* (*prasrabdhi-sukha*)	*āśrayānugraha*, etc. (*āśraya=ālayavijñāna*)

Chart 2

2. *Parivṛttāśrayasya*

In order to understand the context of this passage, first let us see what happens during *āśrayaparivṛtti*, which the expression *parivṛttāśraya* clearly presupposes. For an early example of *āśrayaparivṛtti*, see this passage from the *Śrāvakabhūmi* (part of the "Basic Section" of the *Yogācārabhūmi*):

> *tatrāśrayanirodhaḥ prayogamanasikārabhāvanānuyuktasya yo dauṣṭhulyasahagata āśrayaḥ, so <'>nupūrveṇa nirudhyate, praśrabdhisahagataś cāśrayaḥ parivartate |*
>
> Shukla ed., 283.6-8; quoted from Sakuma 1990b: (72), n. 3, corresponding to Sakuma 1990a: 17 [§C.1.1]

[10] See the following passage: *sems las byung ba de dag las kyang kun gzhi rnam par shes pa dang mtshungs par ldan pa'i tshor ba gang yin pa de ni gcig tu* sdug bsngal yang ma yin bde ba yang ma yin pa *dang | lung du ma bstan pa yin no ||* (Pravṛtti Portion, §I.2.(b)B, Hakamaya [1979] 2001: 393) 又阿賴耶識相應受。一向不苦不樂無記性攝。(T30: 580b3-4[No. 1579]) – "Of those [five universal] mental functions, the sensation (*vedanā*) associated with *ālayavijñāna* is exclusively *neither-painful-nor-blissful* (*aduḥkhāsukha*) and morally neutral (*avyākṛta*)".

> Among the [list of the tasks of *yoga* (*yogakaraṇīya*)], the extinction of the personal basis of a person engaged in the practice of preliminary meditation [means that] the personal basis accompanied by inertness gradually disappears, and the personal basis accompanied by ease evolves.

According to this explanation, *āśrayaparivṛtti* means a transformation of *āśraya* from the *dauṣṭhulya* mode to the *praśrabdhi* mode.

See also this portion of the *Pañcaskandhakavibhāṣā*:

> ***prasrabdhiḥ katamā | dauṣṭhulyapratipakṣaḥ kāyacittakarmaṇyatā |*** *dauṣṭhulyaṃ kāyacittayor akarmaṇyatā* sāṅkleśikadharmabījāni[11] *ca | tadapagame prasrabdhisadbhāvād dauṣṭhulyapratipakṣaḥ | lakṣaṇaṃ tu prasrabdheḥ kāyacittakarmaṇyatā |*
>
> Kramer ed., 47.8-11
>
> **What is meditative ease? It is a well-functioning state of the body and mind[12] and a remedy for inertness.** Inertness is an ill-functioning state of the body and mind and *the seeds of polluted elements*.[13] Because meditative ease exists when that [inertness] has been abandoned, it [meditative ease] is a remedy for inertness. On the other hand, the essential characteristic of meditative ease is the well-functioning state of the body and mind.

This passage shows that *praśrabdhi* is a remedy for *dauṣṭhulya*, that *praśrabdhi* is experienced in both body and mind, and that *dauṣṭhulya* and *praśrabdhi* are defined as *akarmaṇyatā* and *karmaṇyatā* respectively. We can conclude that in *āśrayaparivṛtti*, transformation takes place as shown in Chart 3[14]:

---

[11] Text, *sāṅkleṣika-*.

[12] *Kāyacittakarmaṇyatā* is explained as follows in the same text: *tatra* kāyakarmaṇyatā *kāyasya svakāryeṣu laghusamutthānatā yato bhavati |* cittakarmaṇyatā *samyaṅmanasikāraprayuktasya hlādalāghavanimittaṃ yac caitasikaṃ dharmāntaram |* (Kramer ed., 47.11-12) – "In the [quotation from the *Pañcaskandhaka*], *a well-functioning state of the body* is what enables the smooth operation of the functions of the body. *A well-functioning state of the mind* is a distinct mental element that causes pleasure and quickness in [a person] practicing correct contemplation".

[13] The significance of "the seeds of polluted elements" will be discussed below.

[14] See also the following passage*: tasyaivam ātāpino viharato yāvad vinīya loke <'>bhidhyādaurmanasyaṃ pūrvam eva samyakprayoga<sa>mārambhakāle*

kāya-dauṣṭhulya (*akarmaṇyatā*)	→	*kāya-praśrabdhi* (*karmaṇyatā*)
citta-dauṣṭhulya (*akarmaṇyatā*)	→	*citta-praśrabdhi* (*karmaṇyatā*)

Chart 3

This paradigm indicates that personal transformation (*āśrayaparivṛtti*) takes place in the practitioner's body and mind concomitantly. The *Xiǎnyáng shèngjiào lùn* passage on *vivekaja-prītisukha,* which I discussed at the beginning of this article, seems to presuppose this type of experience.

Further, compare the scheme in Chart 3 with the following statement from the *Śrāvakabhūmi*:

> *īpsitābhilaṣitārthasamprāpteḥ, prītau cādoṣadarśanāt, sarvadauṣṭhulyāpagamāc ca vipulapraśrabdhicittakāyakarmaṇyatayā* ***prītisukham***
>
> > *Śrāvakabhūmi*, quoted from Deleanu 2006: 331 [§3.28.3.1.5], corresponding to Shukla ed., 450.11-14; see also Schmithausen [1987] 2007: 316, n. 300
>
> Due to the great meditative ease, namely a well-functioning state of the mind and body, [the first *dhyāna* is said to have] **joy and bliss**

sūkṣmā <cittaikāgratā kāya>cittapraśrabdhir durupalakṣyā pravartate | yā tatra śamathaṃ vā bhāvayato vipaśyanāṃ vā prasvasthacittatā prasvasthakāyatā cittakāyakarmaṇyatā, iyam atra kāyacittapraśrabdhiḥ | tasya saiva sūkṣmā cittaikāgratā cittakāyapraśrabdhiś cābhivardhamānā audārikāṃ sūpalakṣyāṃ cittaikāgratāṃ <citta>kāyapraśrabdhim āvahati, yaduta hetupāraṃparyādānayogena, tasya nacirasyedānīm audārikī cittakāyapraśrabdhiś cittaikāgratā ca sūpalakṣyotpatsyatīti ... (*Śrāvakabhūmi*, Sakuma 1990a, 2:26.3-27.1 [§G.2], referred to in Schmithausen 2014, §8.3, n. 30) – "Subtle mental concentration [and] not easily perceivable body-mind ease arise for the [practitioner] thus practicing eagerly when he first undertakes the correct practice after removing desire for and dejection with the world. In that situation, the soundness of the body and mind, namely the well-functioning state of the body and mind of [the practitioner] who is practicing calming or contemplation, is the meditative ease of the body and mind here. The same subtle mental concentration and the mind-body ease of the [practitioner], while increasing, bring about intense and easily perceivable mental concentration and mind-body ease. Namely, in the manner of successive causality, now intense and easily perceivable ease of the mind and body and mental concentration will arise for him shortly" (*Śrāvakabhūmi*, Sakuma 1990a, 2: 26.3-27.1 [§G.2], referred to in Schmithausen 2014: 18 [§8.3], n. 30).

> [resulting] from attaining the longed for and desired goal, from not seeing faults in joy, and from abandoning all [types of] inertness.[15]

This can be represented as Chart 4[16]:

prīti:	*citta-karmaṇyatā* (*vipula-praśrabdhi*)
sukha:	kāya-*karmaṇyatā* (*vipula-praśrabdhi*)

Chart 4

Compare this with the interpretation of the *Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya*:

prīti:	*pravṛttivijñānāśrita* (*harṣākāra*)	*citta-tuṣṭi*, etc. (*citta-caitta-kalāpa*)
sukha:	*ālayavijñānāśrita* (*prasrabdhi-sukha*)	āśrayā*nugraha*, etc. (*āśraya=ālayavijñāna*)

Chart 5 (identical to Chart 2, but with emphasis added)

By comparing the parts in roman typeface, we can reconfirm that *kāya* corresponds to *āśraya*, which is further identified with *ālayavijñāna*, and that *kāya-karmaṇyatā* (i.e., *kāya-praśrabdhi*) corresponds to bodily *sukha*.

---

[15] For translating this passage, I have referred to the English translation in Deleanu 2006: 454. Cf. also the following passages: (1) 復次唯靜慮中具二種樂故名樂住。一樂受樂二輕安樂。前三靜慮皆具二樂。第四靜慮雖無受樂。而輕安樂勢用廣大勝前二樂。(*Mahāvibhāṣā* [*Āpídámó dà pípóshā lùn*] 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論, T27:419c24-28 [No. 1545]) – "Next, because only in *dhyāna* there are two types of bliss, [*dhyāna*] is called *sukha-vihāra*: one is the bliss of pleasant sensation, and the other is the bliss of meditative ease. The first three *dhyāna*s all have these two [types of] bliss. In the fourth *dhyāna*, though there is no bliss of sensation, the power of meditative ease is so overwhelming that it surpasses the two types of bliss in the former [three *dhyāna*s]." (2) 云何樂。謂離欲惡不善法者。已斷身重性心重性。身不堪任性。心不堪任性。所得身滑性。心滑性。身軟性。心軟性。身堪任性。心堪任性。身離蓋性。心離蓋性。身輕安性。心輕安性。身無燋惱性。心無燋惱性。身調柔性。心調柔性。總名爲樂。(*Dharmaskandha* [*Āpídámó fāyùn zú lùn*] 阿毘達磨法蘊足論, T26:483c2-7 [No. 1537]) – "What is bliss? The smoothness, softness, well-functioning state, freedom from obstructions, meditative ease, freedom from anxiety, and well-controlled state of body and mind attained by a [practitioner] who is detached from evil and bad elements and who has already severed the heaviness and ill-functioning state of the body and mind. [These elements] as a whole are called bliss".

[16] Note that *prīti* is a subcategory of *sukha*.

3. *Sāṅkleśika-dharma-bījāni* in the *Pañcaskandhakavibhāṣā*

Next, let us note that in the *Pañcaskandhakavibhāṣā* passage quoted above, *dauṣṭhulya* is also equated with *sāṅkleśika-dharma-bījāni*.[17] Actually a somewhat comparable expression is found in the *Mahāyānasaṃgraha* §I.61A:

> *yang gnas ngan len gyi mtshan nyid dang | shin tu spyangs pa'i mtshan nyid do || gnas ngan len gyi mtshan nyid ni* nyon mongs pa dang nye ba'i nyon mongs pa'i sa bon *gang yin pa'o | shin tu spyangs pa'i mtshan nyid ni zag pa dang bcas pa'i dge ba'i chos kyi sa bon gang yin pa ste | de med du zin na rnam par smin pas*[18] *gnas kyi las su mi rung ba dang | las su rung ba'i bye brag mi rung bar 'gyur ro |*
>
> *Mahāyānasaṃgraha* §I.61A, Lamotte 1973: 23, Nagao 1982: 54–55
>
> 復有麁重相及輕安相。麁重相者謂煩惱隨煩惱種子。輕安相者謂有漏善法種子。此若無者。所感異熟無所堪能。有所堪能所依差別應不得成。
>
> *Shè dàshènglùn běn* 攝大乘論本 [Xuanzang's 玄奘 Chinese translation], T31: 137b27-c1 [No. 1594]
>
> **punar dauṣṭhulyalakṣaṇaṃ praśrabdhilakṣaṇaṃ ca | dauṣṭhulyalakṣaṇaṃ yat* kleśopakleśabījaṃ | *praśrabdhilakṣaṇaṃ yat sāsravakuśaladharmabījaṃ*[19] | *tasminn avidyamāne vipākāśrayasya karmaṇyākarmaṇyaviśeṣo na yujyate |*
>
> Nagao 1982: 55, originally reconstructed by Noritoshi Aramaki.
>
> Then, [there is ālayavijñana] characterized by inertness and ease. [*Ālayavijñāna*] characterized by inertness (*dauṣṭhulya*) is that [*ālayavijñāna*] holding *the seeds of primary and secondary defilements*. [*Ālayavijñana*] characterized by meditative ease (*praśrabdhi*) is that [*ālayavijñāna*] holding the seeds of defiled good *dharma*s. If this [distinction] does not exist, the distinction between the well-

---

[17] *dauṣṭhulyaṃ kāyacittayor akarmaṇyatā sāṅkleśikadharmabījāni ca |* (*Pañcaskandhakavibhāṣā*, Kramer ed., 47.8-9)

[18] Both editions have *pas* here, but probably it should be read *pa'i*.

[19] Emended from *sāsravaṃ kuśala-*.

> functioning and ill-functioning [states of the] maturation-body is not reasonable.

I think this passage also implies a similar mind-body correlation in the context of meditation, as shown in Chart 6:

āśraya:	*akarmaṇya*	*karmaṇya*
	↑	↑
ālayavijñāna:	*dauṣṭhulya-lakṣaṇa*	*praśrabdhi-lakṣaṇa*
	kleśopakleśa-bīja	*sāsrava-kuśala-dharma-bīja*

Chart 6

According to this passage from the *Mahāyānasaṃgraha*, the *karmaṇya* and *akarmaṇya* distinction of *āśraya* is based on the *dauṣṭhulya* and *praśrabdhi* aspects of *ālayavijñāna*. In addition, we should note that *ālayavijñana* is characterized by *dauṣṭhulya* when it is accompanied by *kleśôpakleśa-bīja*. Thus, the structures of the *Pañcaskandhakavibhāṣā* 47.8-11 and the *Mahāyānasaṃgraha* §I.61A are very similar:

dauṣṭhulya=sāṅkleśika-dharma-bījāni	(*Pañcaskandhakavibhāṣā*)
dauṣṭhulya-lakṣaṇa=kleśopakleśa-bīja	(*Mahāyānasaṃgraha*)

Chart 7

4. *Bīja*, *dauṣṭhulya*, and *āśraya*

Next, we need to discuss how *bīja*s of apparently ethical elements, *kleśôpakleśa* and *sāsrava-kuśala-dharma*, are connected to the distinction between *akarmaṇyatā* and *karmaṇyatā* of the body. What is *bīja* in the first place? I think a clue is found in the passage below:

> *āśrayaviśeṣād etat sidhyati | āśrayo hi sa āryāṇāṃ darśana-bhāvanāmārgasāmarthyāt tathā parāvṛtto bhavati yathā na punas tatpraheyāṇāṃ kleśānāṃ prarohasamartho bhavati | ato 'gnidagdha-vrīhivad*[20] *abījībhūte*[21] *āśraye kleśānāṃ prahīṇakleśa ity ucyate |*
>
> *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Pradhan ed., 63.18-20[22]

[20] Original edition, *-brīhi-*.

[21] Original edition, *avījī-*.

[22] See Yamabe 1997a: 197-198.

> The [distinction between noble ones and ordinary ones] is made in terms of the distinct states of the personal bases (*āśraya-viśeṣa*). [This distinction is possible] because the personal basis (*āśraya*) of noble ones is transformed (*parāvṛtta*) by the power of the paths of seeing and practice (*darśana-bhāvanā-mārga*), so that [the personal basis] is no longer capable of generating the defilements to be abandoned by the [paths of seeing and practice]. Therefore, when one's personal basis has ceased to be the seed of defilements (*abījī-bhūte āśraye kleśānām*), like a grain of rice consumed by the fire, [that personal basis] is said to be [a basis] that has abandoned defilements.[23]

This can be summarized as Chart 8:

*kleśa*s	×
↑	↑
pṛthagjana's āśraya (= *bīja*)	*ārya's āśraya*

Chart 8

Thus, *kleśa*s are not simply a matter of the ethical status of our mind. They are rooted in a distinctive state of *āśraya*, which, again, has a strong connotation of "body".[24] *Bīja*s are not material grains hidden somewhere in our

---

[23] As Hyōdō 1980: 68-75 has pointed out, in the system of *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, *bīja* and *bījabhāva* are differentiated. As we shall see in the following note (n. 24), *bīja* appears to be directly equated with *āśraya* and *nāmarūpa*, namely the totality of personal existence (centring on the body). On the other hand, *bījabhāva* is defined as follows: *ko 'yaṃ bījabhāvo nāma | ātmabhāvasya kleśajā kleśotpādanaśaktiḥ |* (Pradhan ed., 278.20-21) – "What is this *bījabhāva*? It is the capacity of *ātmabhāva* that is generated by *kleśas* and can generate *kleśas*". Thus:

> *bīja=āśraya=nāmarūpa*
> *bījabhāva=śakti*

I have benefitted from personal discussions with Professor Hideyo Ogawa on this matter.

[24] Here, it should be noted that just after the passage quoted above (Pradhan ed., 63.18-20), the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* states: *kiṃ punar idaṃ bījaṃ nāma | yan nāmarūpaṃ phalotpattau samarthaṃ sākṣāt pāraṃparyeṇa vā |* (Pradhan ed., 64.4-5) – "What is this 'seed'? It is the *nāmarūpa* that is capable of giving rise to its fruit immediately or in due course (i.e., after some period of succession of the momentary seed)". In the first passage, *bīja* is equated with *āśraya* (as far as it can give rise to *kleśa*s*),* and in the second passage, *bīja* is equated with *nāmarūpa*. Thus, the paradigm here seems to be: *bīja=āśraya=nāmarūpa*. If so, it follows that mental

body. They are simply designations of a particular state of our personal existence. Taken together with this statement, the *Mahāyānasaṃgraha* passage above (§I.61A) would mean that when our "personal basis" (which definitely includes the body) is in an unworkable state, *kleśa*s arise, but when it is in a workable state, they do not. The passage also shows that the state of *āśraya* is linked to the state of *ālayavijñāna*. If it is admissible to interpret this passage in conjunction with the aforementioned passage from the *Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya* that equates *āśraya* with *ālayavijñāna* (Yugagyō Shisō Kenkyūkai ed., 409.15-18; see Chart 2), it follows that from a Yogācāra point of view *āśraya-viśeṣa* is a *viśeṣa* of *ālayavijñāna* itself. As we shall see below, according to the *Pañcaskandhakavibhāṣā* (Kramer ed., 106.11-12), *ālayavijñāna* pervades the body (*kāya*, *śarīra*). If so, it is easily imaginable that *āśraya* and *ālayavijñāna* are inseparable.

When we discuss the implications of *āśraya-viśeṣa*, we should also take into consideration the cognate phrase *ṣaḍāyatana-viśeṣa* found in the famous definition of *gotra* in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* (part of the "Basic section" of the *Yogācārabhūmi*):[25]

---

elements are also included in the concept of *āśraya*. In addition, we find the following line in the *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣya*: *āśraya ātmabhāvaḥ sādhiṣṭhānam indriyarūpaṃ nāma ca* | (Lévi ed., 19.16-17; Buescher ed., 52.14-15) – "*Āśraya* means *ātmabhāva*, namely physical sense-faculties with their bases and mental elements". Here, *āśraya*, *ātmabhāva*, and *sādhiṣṭhanam indriyarūpaṃ nāma ca* are equated (see Schmithausen [1987] 2007: 329, n. 372). The expression *āśraya-parivṛtti/-parāvṛtti* likewise refers to a transformation of the totality of our body and mind, as the above quotation from the *Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya/Xiǎnyáng shèngjiào lùn* clearly shows. Thus, perhaps a more exact translation of *āśraya* would be "a personal basis" (comprising both body and mind). In my translation of the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* passage just above, I have used this expression. Nevertheless, as the numerous passages quoted in this article indicate, it remains true that the word *āśraya* is often closely associated with the bodily side of our existence. We might say that in the narrower sense *āśraya* means "body", but in the wider sense it means "mind and body", namely our personal existence as a whole. It might also be the case that the boundary between body and mind was not so clear-cut to the authors of these works. In this paper, often I translate *āśraya* simply as "body", but it should be noted that the mental aspect is not necessarily excluded from this concept.

[25] Similar descriptions are found in the *Śrāvakabhūmi* as well; see, e.g., *'o na rigs de'i rang bzhin ji lta bu zhe* (Pek. *zha*) *na* | *de ni lus las khyad par du gyur pa dang* | *skye mched drug gis zin pa dang* | *chos nyid kyis 'thob pa dang* | *thog ma med pa'i dus nas brgyud de 'ongs pa de lta bu yin te* | (Pek. Wi 2b1-2, D. Dzi 2a2-3).

tatra prakṛtisthaṃ gotraṃ yad bodhisattvānāṃ ṣaḍāyatanaviśeṣaḥ | sa tādṛśaḥ paramparāgato 'nādikāliko dharmatāpratilabdhaḥ |

Wogihara ed., 3.2-4

The *gotra* existing by nature[26] is a distinct state of the six-sense-basis (*ṣaḍāyatanaviśeṣa*) of *bodhisattva*s. That [distinct state] was naturally acquired in the beginningless past and has been transmitted as such [to the present].

What does *ṣaḍāyatana-viśeṣa* mean here? I think this expression should be interpreted in conjunction with the traditional idea that the six senses of the Bodhisattva were keen, as found in this passage:[27]

問。曾聞菩薩六根猛利。云何於境知猛利耶。答。菩薩宮邊有無滅舍。彼於舍内然五百燈。菩薩爾時住自宮内。不見燈焰但見其光。即知彼燈數有五百。於中若有一燈涅槃即記之言一燈已滅。是名菩薩眼根猛利。

**Mahāvibhāṣā* [*Āpídámó dà pípóshā lùn*] 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論, T27: 65b5-10 [No. 1545]

Question: I have heard that the six sense organs of the Bodhisattva[28] are keen. In what way does he know objects keenly?
Answer: Next to the palace of the Bodhisattva, there is an "imperishable house". When five hundred lamps burn in the house, the Bodhisattva, staying in his own palace, knows that the number of those lamps is five hundred just by seeing the light without seeing the

---

問今此種姓以何爲體. 答附在所依有如是相. 六處所攝. 從無始世展轉傳來法爾所得. (T30: 395c24-26) – "Then, what is the nature of *gotra*? It is a distinct state of the body (*lus las khyad par*, **āśrayaviśeṣa*)# comprised in the six sense-realms, transmitted as such from the beginningless past, and naturally attained". As we have seen above, *āśraya* and *nāmarūpa* can be equated (n. 24), and *nāmarūpa* and *ṣaḍāyatana* are largely equivalent. Thus, it is natural to compare *āśraya-viśeṣa* to *ṣaḍāyatana-viśeṣa*.
#This corresponds to 附在所依 in Xuanzang's 玄奘 Chinese version. 附在所依 suggests **āśrayasanniviṣṭa* (or perhaps **āśrayasanniveśa*). Here it is difficult to reconstruct a Sanskrit expression that explains both the Chinese and Tibetan versions, so I follow the Tibetan version.

26 On this concept, see Yamabe 1997a: 195–197, 1997b: 216–217, and 2017b: 15-25.

27 See Kawamura 1975: 351–353.

28 In this context, "Bodhisattva" must refer to Śākyamuni before his attaining Awakening.

flames of the lamps. If one of them goes out, he says that one lamp has already gone out. Thus, it is said that the Bodhisattva's visual sense organ is keen.

His other senses are also keen:

無滅舍中有五百妓一時奏樂。菩薩爾時不見彼妓但聞樂聲。即知其中作五百樂。若一絃斷或一睡眠。即記之言今減爾所。是名菩薩耳根猛利。

**Mahāvibhāṣā*, T27:65b10-13

When five hundred maidens play music simultaneously in the "imperishable house", the Bodhisattva instantly knows, just by hearing the music without seeing the maidens, that five hundred [maidens] are playing the music. If one string breaks, or if one maiden falls asleep, he instantly tells what is missing. Thus, it is said that the Bodhisattva's auditory sense organ is keen.

菩薩宮内燒百和香。菩薩嗅之知有百種。彼合香者欲試菩薩。於百種中或增或減。菩薩嗅已即記之言。此於先香增減爾所。是名菩薩鼻根猛利。

**Mahāvibhāṣā*, T27:65b13-17

In the Bodhisattva's palace, a hundred types of incense are burned. The Bodhisattva smells them and knows that there are a hundred kinds. The one who arranges the incense wants to test the Bodhisattva and adds or subtracts some of the hundred types. The Bodhisattva smells them and instantly tells what has been added or subtracted compared with the former types of incense. Thus, it is said that the Bodhisattva's olfactory sense organ is keen.

菩薩食時侍者常以百味丸進。菩薩嘗之即知其中百味具足。時造食者欲試菩薩。於百味中或增或減。菩薩嘗已即知其中增減爾所。是名菩薩舌根猛利。

**Mahāvibhāṣā*, T27:65b17-20

When the Bodhisattva eats, an attendant always serves dumplings with a hundred flavours. When the Bodhisattva tastes them, he instantly knows that there are a hundred flavours. At one time a cook wants to test the Bodhisattva and adds or subtracts some of the hundred flavours. The Bodhisattva tastes them and immediately knows

what has been added or subtracted. Thus, it is said that the Bodhisattva's gustatory sense organ is keen.

菩薩浴時侍者即以洗浴衣進。菩薩觸之即知織者。或進衣者有如是病。是名菩薩身根猛利。

**Mahāvibhāṣā*, T27:65b20-23

When the Bodhisattva bathes, an attendant provides him with a bathrobe. When the Bodhisattva touches it, he instantly knows who wove it, or what kind of disease the attendant who provides the garment has. Thus, it is said that the Bodhisattva's tactile sense organ is keen.

菩薩善知諸法自相及與共相。而無罣礙。是名菩薩意根猛利。

**Mahāvibhāṣā*, T27:65b23-24

The Bodhisattva knows well the individual and common characteristics of various elements without any hindrance. Thus, it is said that the Bodhisattva's mental organ is keen.

These are discussions of innate keen sensitivity and have no direct relevance to meditation. Nevertheless, we should note that a state of physical sense organs, expressed in a very concrete way, is considered to be a basis for the bodhisattva practice. I think it is likely that this kind of idea was behind the phrase *ṣaḍāyatana-viśeṣa* in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*.[29]

In the Yogācāra system, as is well known, *gotra* refers to a potentiality that predetermines one's course of practice. We should also note here that in this system, *gotra* is just another name for *bīja*. Thus, here again, we observe that *bīja* is understood to be a distinct state of the totality of our physical organs, namely our body.

Thus, in terms of its relationship to the body (and to *ālayavijñāna* itself), *bīja* and *gotra* have a similar structure. When the body is in an unfavourable state, it gives rise to *kleśa*s. When the body is in a favourable state, it is conducive to smooth progress in meditative practice (which constitutes a significant element of the *mārga*).

---

[29] Cf. the following text: *tatrāyam indriyakṛto viśeṣaḥ | prakṛtyaiva bodhisattvas tīkṣṇendriyo bhavati pratyekabuddho madhyendriyaḥ śrāvako mṛdvindriyaḥ |* (*Bodhisattvabhūmi*, Wogihara ed., 3.23-4.2) – "Among the [four distinctions of *bodhisattva*s over *śrāvaka*s and *pratyekabuddha*s], this is the distinction given by his *indriya*s: a *bodhisattva* by nature has keen *indriya*s, [while] a *pratyekabuddha* has middling, and a *śrāvaka* weak *indriya*s".

5. *Upādāna* and *ekayogakṣema*

Here, let us once again recall the structure of the *Mahāyānasaṃgraha* passage shown in Chart 6. In this framework, the state of the body and that of *ālayavijñāna* are correlated. This is not surprising if we keep in mind that *āśraya* and *ālayavijñāna* are sometimes directly equated. Let us examine the close relationship between *ālayavijñāna* and *āśraya* (body) in more detail, referring to two keywords: *upādāna*[30] and *ekayogakṣema*. First, see this passage:

> *upāttam iti ko 'rthaḥ | yac cittacaittair adhiṣṭhānabhāvenopagṛhītam* anugrahopaghātābhyām *anyonyānuvidhānāt | yal loke sacetanam ity ucyate |*
>
> *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, Pradhan ed., 23.16-17
>
> What does "appropriated" mean? [It refers to] something that is held as a [physical] basis by the mind and mental functions, because [the physical basis on the one hand and the mind and mental functions on the other] are consonant with each other in terms of *benefit* and *harm*. [This is] what in common usage is called "[being] sentient".

According to this passage, when *rūpa* is appropriated (*upa-ā-dā-*) by mind, *rūpa* and mind are consonant with each other in terms of benefit (*anugraha*) and harm (*upaghāta*). In Yogācāra texts, this kind of mind-body correlation is described by the term *ekayogakṣema* or *anyonyayogakṣema*.

In the portions of the *Yogācārabhūmi* where *ālayavijñāna* is not presupposed, it is *vijñāna* without further specification that appropriates the body. Therefore, the structure is fairly similar to that of the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* passage quoted just above. The same structure is observed in the passage below from the *Vastusaṃgrahaṇī* (this portion is extant only in Chinese):

> 執受法者。謂諸色法爲心心所之所執持。由託彼故心心所轉安危事同。同安危者。由心心所任持力故。其色不斷不壞不爛。即由如是所執受色。或時衰損或時攝益。其心心所亦隨損益。與此相違。名非執受。
>
> *Vastusaṃgrahaṇī* [*Shèshìfēn*] 攝事分 of the *Yogācārabhūmi* T30: 880a1-6 [No. 1579]

[30] For *upādāna* in Yogācāra sources, see Schmithausen 2014, §213ff.

> Appropriated (*upātta*) elements refer to the *rūpa*s appropriated by the mind and mental functions. Because [the *rūpa*s] rely on these [mind and mental functions], the [*rūpa*s] are correlated with the operation of the mind and mental functions. Correlation (*ekayogakṣema*) means that due to the power of appropriation by the mind and mental functions, the *rūpa*s do not terminate, perish, or decay. When there is *harm* (*upaghāta*)[31] or *benefit* (*anugraha*) in the *rūpa*s that have been thus appropriated, the mind and mental functions also have harm or benefit accordingly. If not, the [elements] are called unappropriated [*rūpa*s].

Upa-ā-dā- literally means "to appropriate", but since *rūpa*s decay if not appropriated, what it means here is that the mind with mental functions keeps the body alive. Thus, *upādāna* in this context amounts to "physiological maintenance"[32] (Schmithausen's translation is "biological appropriation"[33]). Here also, the *cittacaitta* and the "appropriated" *rūpa*s share favourable and unfavourable conditions (*anugraha* and *upaghāta*).

In portions of the *Yogācārabhūmi* that presuppose *ālayavijñāna*, what keeps the body alive is *ālayavijñāna*, as seen in the passage below, where *citta* refers to *ālayavijñāna*[34]:

---

[31] Elsewhere in the *Yogācārabhūmi* (*Manobhūmi* of the Basic Section), 衰損 (T30: 286a7) corresponds to *vipatti*, "adversity" (Bhattacharya ed., 34.5). Here, however, judging from the standard pattern of describing *ekayogakṣema/anyonyayogakṣema*, I think *upaghāta* is a more likely correspondence.

[32] According to the website of *Organismal Biology Journal*, "Human physiology seeks to understand the mechanisms that work to keep the human body alive and functioning" (http://www.omicsonline.org/organismal-biology-journal.php, accessed October 16, 2016). If human physiology is defined as this website does, it is very close to the mechanism of *upādāna* performed by *ālayavijñāna*. I have benefitted from private discussions with Professor Daniel Stuart on this matter.

[33] For example, see Schmithausen [1987] 2007: 31 (§2.13.4).

[34] Whether or not the *Manobhūmi* originally presupposed *ālayavijñāna* here is a little questionable. See Schmithausen [1987] 2007: 127-32 (§6.3.1-4). Nevertheless, the current version of this text clearly presupposes *ālayavijñāna*. An argument similar to the quoted passage is also found in the Proof Portion of the *Viniścayasaṃgrahaṇī*: *aṣṭābhir ākārair ālayavijñānasyāstitā pratyetavyā | tadyathā 'ntareṇālayavijñānaṃ* (i) *āśrayopādānāsaṃbhavataḥ* (Hakamaya [1978] 2001: 327) – "The existence of *ālayavijñāna* should be understood in eight aspects. Namely, without *ālayavijñāna*, (i) the appropriation of the body is not possible…". Note that here also, *āśraya* is clearly used in the sense of "body".

> *citta*(=*ālayavijñāna*)*vaśena ca tan* (=*kalala-rūpaṃ*) *na pariklidyate, tasya ca* anugrahopaghātāc *cittacaittānām* anugrahopaghātaḥ | *tasmāt tad anyonyayogakṣemam ity ucyate* |
>
> *Manobhūmi*, Bhattacharya ed., 24.16-17; quoted from Schmithausen [1987] 2007: 290, n. 184
>
> Due to the power of the mind (*ālayavijñāna*), that [body of the early embryo (*kalala*)] does not decay, and due to the *benefit* and *harm* of that [body of the early embryo], the *benefit* and *harm* of the mind and mental functions [are brought about]. Therefore, the [relationship between the body of the early embryo and the mind with its mental functions] is said to be mutual correlation.

In short, because *ālayavijñāna* is the physiological basis of the body, *ālayavijñana* and the body share favourable and unfavourable conditions (*anugraha* and *upaghāta*).

At this juncture, we should also note that according to the *Pancaskandhakavibhāṣā*, *ālayavijñāna* pervades the body:

> *kāyo 'tra sendriyaṃ śarīram | samantaṃ hi śarīraṃ vyāpyālayavijñānaṃ vartate* |
>
> Kramer ed., 106.11-12
>
> Here, "body" means the body endowed with sense organs, for *ālayavijñāna* operates pervading the whole body.

Thus, as a physiological basis pervading the body, *ālayavijñāna* is really inseparable from the body. Therefore, it is not surprising that sometimes *ālayavijñāna* is directly equated with the body.[35] If so, it is natural that *ālayavijñāna* and the body share the same destiny.

But, what do these terms *anugraha* and *upaghāta* mean concretely? I think they primarily refer to *sukha* and *duḥkha* respectively, as suggested in the following passage from the *Savitarkādi-bhūmi* of the "Basic Section" of the *Yogācārabhūmi*:[36]

---

[35] Refer to the passage from the *Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya* (Yugagyō Shisō Kenkyūkai ed., 409.15-18) and Chart 2 above.

[36] See also the following passage: ***aduḥkhāsukho yasyotpāda ubhayaṃ na bhavatī****tyādi | tatra kāyacittopacayapravṛttatvān manojñasvabhāvatvāc ca sukho 'nubhava iti nirodhe punas tatsamyogābhilāṣaḥ pravartate | kāyacittāpacayapravṛttatvāt svabhāvataś ca pratikūlo duḥkho 'nubhava iti tasyotpāde tadviyogacchando bhavati* |

> *sacet skandheṣu* | *sa nityo vā syād anityo vā* | *sacen nityaḥ* | *nityasya* sukhaduḥkhābhyām anugrahopaghāto *na yujyate* |
>
> Bhattacharya ed., 132.15-17
>
> If [*ātman* exists] in the *skandha*s, it would be permanent or impermanent. If permanent, it is not reasonable for something permanent *to be benefited or harmed by blissful or painful* [*sensation*].

Therefore, the basic scheme can be shown as Chart 9:

sukha	→	*anugraha*
duḥkha	→	*upaghāta*

Chart 9

We should also recall the *Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya* passage that connects *sukha* with *āśrayānugraha*. In addition, there is another noteworthy statement in the *Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya*:

> *cakṣuṣā vijñānaṃ cakṣurvijñānam, tadvaśenāvikṛte 'pi rūpe vijñānasya vikriyāgamanatvāt* | *tadyathā kāmalavyādhyupahatena*[37] *cakṣuṣā nīlādirūpeṣv api pītadarśanam eva bhavatīti* |
>
> *Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya*, Yugagyō Shisō Kenkyūkai ed., 115.6-9, corresponding to Tatia ed., 16.24-17.1 [§12(vi)b]
>
> The consciousness [influenced] by the eye [is called] eye-consciousness because the transformation of consciousness is caused by the

---

yas tu nobhayapravṛtto 'sti ca so 'nubhavo 'duḥkhāsukhaḥ, akṛṣṇāśuklakarmavat | *ata eva c*ānanugrahānupaghātapravṛtta*tvāt tadaduḥkhāsukhotpāda ubhayecchābhāvaḥ* || (*Pañcaskandhakavibhāṣā*, Kramer ed., 27.7-14) – "[The *Pañcaskandhaka* states:] '**Neither-pleasant-nor-painful [sensation (*anubhava*)] is [a type of sensation for which one does not develop the wish] either [to be connected to or to be separated from it] when the [sensation] arises** and so forth. With regard to this, because blissful sensation arises from a prospering body and mind, and because it has agreeable nature, when it perishes there is a wish to be united [with it] again. Because painful sensation arises from a declining body and mind, and because it has a disagreeable nature, when it arises there is a wish to be separated [from it]. On the other hand, there is also neither painful nor blissful sensation that has arisen from neither [a prospering nor a declining body and mind], like neither black nor white karma. Therefore, because it has *not arisen from benefit or harm*, when the [aforementioned] neither pleasant nor painful [sensation] arises, neither wish exists".

[37] Text, *-vyādgy-*

> power of the [eye] even if there is no transformation in the visual object. For example, an eye harmed by jaundice sees only yellow even in blue and other colours.

This passage shows that an *indriya* harmed (*upa-han-*) by a disease affects *vijñāna*.[38] Probably all sorts of beneficial or harmful conditions are included in the concepts of *anugraha* and *upaghāta*. Thus, *ekayogakṣema* must be a term that primarily refers to the interrelationship between mind and body in general.

More specifically, however, *anugraha* can be linked to *praśrabdhi*:

> *anugrāhikaḥ* prasrabdhiḥ*, tayā kāyacitt*ānugraha*karaṇāt* |
>
> *Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya*, Yugagyō Shisō Kenkyūkai ed., 565.7; Tatia ed., 87.25 [§92(iv)(b)]
>
> "What benefits" refers to *meditative ease*, because it (=meditative ease) brings about *benefits* of body and mind.

If so, it is natural to suspect that the antonym of *praśrabdhi*, *dauṣṭhulya*, corresponds to *upaghāta*. This suspicion is supported by the following statement:

> 麁重差別者。謂欲界中麁重麁而損害。
>
> *Xiǎnyáng shèngjiào lùn* 顯揚聖教論, T31:484c28
>
> In regard to the classification of *dauṣṭhulya*, in the *kāmadhātu dauṣṭhulya* is gross and *harmful*.

As we have seen, *anugraha* and *upaghāta* are broad concepts not used exclusively in meditative contexts. We should also recall that the *Manobhūmi* passage quoted above discusses the process of reincarnation and has no direct relevance to meditation.

Nevertheless, it is also certain that meditative practice transforms *indriya*s, as is clearly shown in the following quotation from the *Pañcavijñānakāyasaṃprayuktā bhūmiḥ* and the *Manobhūmiḥ* in the *Viniścayasaṃgrahaṇī* of the *Yogācārabhūmi*:

---

[38] See also the following quotation from the *Śrutamayī-bhūmi* in the Basic Section of the *Yogācārabhūmi*: *varṇabhrāntiḥ katamā. yo 'nyavarṇe tadanyavarṇābhimānaḥ, tadyathā kāmalena vyādhinopahatendriyasyāpīte rūpe pītarūpadarśanam* (Yaita 1992: 521.3-5) – "What is a misperception of colour? [It refers to] an erroneous conception of a colour as another colour. For example, one whose sense organ is harmed by jaundice sees yellow colour in [something that is] not yellow".

gzhan yang mdor bsdu na rgyu bzhis dbang po rnams 'gyur bar blta bar bya ste | . . . (2) *nang gi rkyen las skye ba ni 'di lta ste* | *so so'i nang gi tshul bzhin ma yin pa yid la byed pa las skyes pa'i 'dod chags kyis kun nas dkris pa la sogs pa kun nas nyon mongs pa rnams dang* | *tshul bzhin yid la byed pa las skyes pa'i* snyoms par 'jug pa *la sogs pas 'gyur bar byed pa'o* |

Pek. Zi 59a6-b1; D. Zhi 56a6-b1; corresponding to T30: 600c4-8

Also, one should know that in sum the sense organs are transformed due to four causes. . . . (2) They are transformed due to internal conditions, namely, polluted [elements] (*saṃkleśa*) such as the fetter (*paryavasthāna*) of craving (*rāga*) caused by incorrect internal reflection and *meditative absorptions* (*samāpatti*) and so forth caused by correct reflection.

In addition:

kāyasya punaḥ spraṣṭavyaviśeṣa eva prītyāhṛtaḥ kāyaprasrabdhir veditavyā | ***prītamanasaḥ kāyaḥ prasrabhyata*** *iti sūtre vacanāt* | *atra caitasikādhikārād acaitasiky api kāyaprasrabdhiḥ prasrabdhisambodhyaṅgatvenoktā,* kāyakarmaṇyatā *vā* cittakarmaṇyatām *āvāhayatīty ato 'caitasiky api kāyakarmaṇyatātroktā* | *iyaṃ ca tadbalenāśrayaparāvṛttito 'śeṣakleśādyāvaraṇaniṣkarṣaṇakarmikā* ||

Pañcaskandhakavibhāṣā, Kramer ed., 47.14-48.6

Meditative ease of the body should be understood as a specific tactile sensation of the body brought about by joy because it is said in a sūtra: "**The body of a person whose mind is gladdened becomes at ease".** Here, since it is affected by a mental function, the meditative ease of the body, though not mental, is said to be meditative ease as a factor of awakening. Or, because the *well-functioning state of the body* brings about the *well-functioning state of the mind*, the meditative ease of the body is here mentioned even though it is not mental. Because this [meditative ease] also [brings about] the transformation of the personal basis by its power, it has the function of uprooting the obstructions of defilements and so forth without remainder.

This passage clearly shows the interactions between body and mind in the meditative context. On the one hand, mental joy (*prīti*) brings about *kāyakarmaṇyatā*, but on the other hand, *kāyakarmaṇyatā* induces

cittakarmaṇyatā. The importance of the interrelationship between mind and body in meditative practice is thus clearly indicated.

Regarding physical transformation, the following exchange is also noteworthy:

> 問何故世尊説入出息名飲食耶。
> 答能損益故。謂無上妙飲食益身。如有方便調入出息。亦無麁惡飲食損身。如無方便調入出息。是故世尊説爲飲食。
>
> *Mahāvibhāṣā*, T27:134a15-18

> Question: Why did the Blessed One say that breathing is called food and drink?
> Answer: Because it can benefit or harm [the body]. Namely, the best types of excellent food and drink benefit the body, in the same way as *well-regulated breathing.* Also, the worst types of poor food and drink harm the body in the same way as *unregulated breathing.* Therefore, the Blessed One called [breathing] food and drink.

In addition to being affected by the mind, the condition of the body seems to be strongly affected by the way of breathing. This point deserves further attention.

In sum, *ekayogakṣema* is an expression that refers to the mind-body correlation in general, but I suspect that this concept also covers the mind-body interrelation in the meditative context. Bodily aspects are often discussed in the relevant texts. This must be because practitioners were well aware of the importance of the body in the meditative context.

6. The Simile of the *Vīṇā*

Before closing this paper, let us look at just one more passage, this time from a Pāli text.

> *"Yadā pana te Soṇa vīṇāya tantiyo na accāyatā honti na atisithilā same guṇe patiṭṭhitā, api nu te vīṇā tasmiṃ samaye saravatī vā hoti kammaññā vā" ti? "Evaṃ bhante."*
>
> *Aṅguttara-Nikāya* VI.LV, PTS ed., 3:375.15-18

> "Soṇa, when the strings of a lute are stretched not too tightly nor too loosely but are tuned to the middle pitch, are they well-sounding and playable?"[39] "Yes, Master."

Of course, this passage is chronologically distant from the Yogācāra sources we have discussed in this paper, so it is not directly relevant to the present topic. Nevertheless, this passage seems to show a concrete image of *karmaṇya* in actual practice. When our way of life is well balanced, our body and mind function naturally and smoothly. This seems to have been the traditional goal of Buddhist practice, and the Yogācāra practitioners would have pursued the same goal through their meditative practice.

7. Tentative Conclusions

Not everything is clear yet, but based on the foregoing discussions, we can draw a few tentative conclusions.

Through *āśrayaparivṛtti*, a practitioner's personal basis is transformed from a poorly functioning (*akarmaṇya*) state to a well-functioning (*karmaṇya*) state. This transformation takes place concomitantly in body and mind. In particular, bodily transformation is very important, and it induces mental transformation as well. In this bodily transformation, regulated breathing seems to play a key role.

After the introduction of *ālayavijñāna* into the Yogācāra system, *ālayavijñāna* was considered to maintain the body physiologically. Thus, *ālayavijñāna* was thought to be in close correlation with the state of the body. In the mind-body correlation called *ekayogakṣema*, *ālayavijñāna* shares benefit (*anugraha*) and harm (*upaghāta*) with the body. It is noteworthy that *anugraha* can refer to benefit brought about by meditative ease (*praśrabdhi*), while *upaghāta* can refer to harm caused by inertness (*dauṣṭhulya*). Thus, *ekayogakṣema* seems applicable to the process of mind-body transformation through meditative practice as well.

As we have seen, *ālayavijñāna* pervades the whole body. Thus, it is really inseparable from the body as long as we are alive. However, as a latent physiological basis, its own functions are very subtle and hard to perceive. Apparently Yogācāra practitioners realized in the course of their medita-

[39] The word *saravatī* might be used here in association with the music goddess Sarasvatī. I thank Professor Alexander von Rospatt for helpful suggestions on this passage.

tion that their bodies' functionality was determined by the condition of this subtle physiological basis. In this paper I have presented only a few supplements to my former arguments, but I hope I have made modest progress in my project. In the future, I would like to extend the scope of my study and aim for a more comprehensive view of this issue.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Abhidharmakośabhāṣya of Vasubandhu

Abhidharm-koshabhāṣya of Vasubandhu, ed. P. Pradhan. Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1967.

Abhidharmasamuccaya

Bon Zō Kan taikō E-Text *Abhidharmasamuccaya and Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya* 梵蔵漢対校 E-Text *Abhidharmasamuccaya* and *Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣya*, ed. Yugagyō Shisō Kenkyūkai 瑜伽行思想研究会, 3 vols. 2003 (Grant report for MEXT Kakenhi Grant Number 13610019).

Abhidharmasamuccayabhāṣyam

Abhidharmasamuccaya-bhāṣyam, ed. Nathmal Tatia. Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1976.

Aṅguttara-Nikāya

The *Aṅguttara-Nikāya*. Part 3. London: The Pali Text Society, 1976.

Bodhisattvabhūmi

Bodhisattvabhūmi: A Statement of Whole Course of the Bodhisattva (Being Fifteenth Section of Yogācārabhūmi), ed. Unrai Wogihara. Tokyo: Sankibo Buddhist Book Store, 1971.

Dharmaskandha

Dharmaskandha [*Āpídámó fǎyùn zú lùn*] 阿毘達磨法蘊足論, T26: 453-514 [No. 1537].

Mahāvibhāṣā

**Abhidharma-mahāvibhāṣā* [*Āpídámó dà pípóshā lùn*] 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論, T27:1-1004 [No. 1545].

Mahāyānasaṃgraha

Étienne Lamotte, *La Somme du grand véhicule d'Asaṅga* (*Mahāyānasaṃgraha*). Tome I: *Versions tibétaine et chinoise (Hiuan-tsang)*. Louvain: Université du Louvain, [1938]1973.

Gadjin M. Nagao 長尾雅人, *Shōdaijō ron: Wayaku to chūkai* 摂大乗論和訳と注解. Vol. 1. Tokyo: Kōdansha 講談社, 1982.

Shè dàshènglùn běn 攝大乘論本 [Xuanzang's 玄奘 Chinese translation], T31:137b27-c1 [No. 1594]).

Manobhūmiḥ

in the *Viniścayasaṃgrahaṇī* of the *Yogācārabhūmi*.

Pañcaskandhakavibhāṣā of Sthiramati

Sthiramati's Pañcaskandhakavibhāṣā. Part 1: *Critical Edition*, ed. Jowita Kramer. Beijing, Vienna: China Tibetology Publishing House and Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2013.

Pañcavijñānakāyasaṃprayuktā Bhūmiḥ

in the *Viniścayasaṃgrahaṇī* of the *Yogācārabhūmi*.

Savitarkādi-bhūmi

Savitarkā savicārā avitarkā vicāramātrā avitarkāvicārā bhūmiḥ of the Basic Section of the *Yogācārabhūmi*.

Śrāvakabhūmi

Śrāvakabhūmi of Ācārya Asaṅga, ed. Karunesha Shukla. Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1973.

Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣya of Sthiramati

Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi. Deux traités de Vasubandhu "Viṃśatikā" (*La Vingtaine*) *accompagnée d'une explicaiton en prose et "Triṃśikā"* (*La Trentaine*) *avec le commentaire de Sthiramati*, ed. Sylvain Lévi. Paris: Librairie Ancienne Honoré Champion, 1925.

Sthiramati's Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣya: Critical Editions of the Sanskrit Text and Its Tibetan Translation, ed. Hartmut Buescher. Vienna: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2007.

Yogācārabhūmi

The Yogācārabhūmi of Ācārya Asaṅga, ed. Vidhushekhara Bhattacharya. Calcutta: University of Calcutta, 1957.

Xiǎnyáng shèngjiào lùn 顯揚聖教論, T31: 480-583 [No. 1602].

Secondary Sources

Cousins 1973

Lance S. Cousins, "Buddhist *Jhāna*: Its Nature and Attainment according to the Pali Sources", *Religion* 3, 2 (1973), 115–31.

Deleanu 2006

Florin Deleanu, *The Chapter on the Mundane Path (Laukikamārga) in the Śrāvakabhūmi: A Trilingual Edition (Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese), Annotated Translation, and Introductory Study*. 2 vols. Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 2006.

Hakamaya [1978] 2001

Noriaki Hakamaya 袴谷憲昭, "Ārayashiki sonzai no hachi ronshō ni kansuru shobunken アーラヤ識存在の八論証に関する諸文献", in *Yuishiki shisō ronkō* 唯識思想論考. Tokyo: Daizō Shuppan 大蔵出版, [1978] 2001, pp. 321–361.

Hakamaya [1979] 2001

———, "*Viniścayasaṃgrahaṇī* ni okeru ārayashiki no kitei, *Viniścayasaṃgrahaṇī* におけるアーラヤ識の規定", in *Yuishiki shisō ronkō* 唯識思想論考. Tokyo: Daizō Shuppan 大蔵出版, [1979] 2001, pp. 362–445.

Hyōdō 1980

Kazuo Hyōdō 兵藤一夫, "*Kusharon* ni mieru Setsu issai ubu to Kyōryō bu no ijukusetsu『倶舎論』に見える説一切有部と経量部の異熟説", in *Bukkyō shisōshi* 仏教思想史 3: *<Bukkyō naibu ni okeru tairon> Indo* <仏教内部における対論>インド. Ed. Zennō Ishigami 石上善應 and Keishō Tsukamoto 塚本啓祥. Kyoto: Heirakuji Shoten 平楽寺書店, 1980, pp. 57–88.

Kawamura 1975

Kōshō Kawamura 河村孝照, *Ubu no Budda ron* 有部の佛陀論. Tokyo: Sankibō Busshorin 山喜房佛書林, 1975.

Sakuma 1990a

Hidenori S. Sakuma 佐久間秀範, *Die Āśrayaparivṛtti-Theorie in der Yogācārabhūmi*. 2 vols. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 1990.

Sakuma 1990b

———, "*Yugashijiron* ni okeru tenne shisō 『瑜伽師地論』における転依思想", *Indogaku bukkyōgaku kenkyū* 印度學佛教學研究 39, 1 (1990) (66)–(74).

Schmithausen [1987] 2007
Lambert Schmithausen, *Ālayavijñāna: On the Origin and the Early Development of a Central Concept of Yogācāra Philosophy*. 2 vols. Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, [1987] 2007.
Schmithausen 2014
———, *The Genesis of Yogācāra-Vijñānavāda: Responses and Reflections*. Tokyo: The International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 2014.
Yaita 1992
Hideomi Yaita 矢板秀臣, "*Yugaron* no inmyō: Bonbun tekisuto to wayaku 瑜伽論の因明: 梵文テキストと和訳", in *Bukkyō shisōshi ronshū* 仏教文化史論集 2. Narita: Naritasan Shinshōji Bukkyō kenkyūjo 成田山新勝寺仏教研究所, 1992, pp. 505–76.
Yamabe 1997a
Nobuyoshi Yamabe 山部能宜, "The Idea of *Dhātu-vāda* in Yogacara and *Tathāgata-garbha* Texts", in Jamie Hubbard and Paul L. Swanson (eds.), *Pruning the Bodhi Tree: The Storm over Critical Buddhism*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997, pp. 193–204, pp. 441–52.
Yamabe 1997b
———, "Riposte", in Jamie Hubbard and Paul L. Swanson (eds.), *Pruning the Bodhi Tree: The Storm over Critical Buddhism*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1997, pp. 208–219, pp. 453–61.
Yamabe 2012
———, "Ārayasiki ron アーラヤ識論", in Shōryū Katsura 桂紹隆 et al. (eds.), *Yuishiki to yugagyō* 唯識と瑜伽行. Tokyo: Shunjūsha 春秋社, 2012, pp. 181–219.
Yamabe 2015
———, "A Reexamination of *On Being Mindless*: Possible Meditative Implications of the Eightfold Proof of *Ālayavijñāna*", in: K. L. Dhammajoti (ed.), *Buddhist Meditative Praxis: Traditional Teachings & Modern Applications*. Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhist Studies, The University of Hong Kong, 2015, pp. 137–176.
Yamabe 2016a
———, "Āraya shiki setsu no jissenteki haikei ni tsuite アーラヤ識説の實踐的背景について", *Tōyō no shisō to shūkyō* 東洋の思想と宗教 33 (2016), (1)–(30).
Yamabe 2016b
———, "*Yugashijiron Shō kecchaku bun* ni okeru ārayasiki no daiichi ronshō no kaishaku ni tsuite『瑜伽師地論』「摂決択分」におけるアーラ

ヤ識の第一論証の解釈について", *Indo ronrigaku kenkyū* インド論理学研究 8 (2016), 123–143.

Yamabe 2017a

———, "Shinshinron no kanten kara mita Yugagyōha no ningenkan — Ārayashiki setsu o chūshin ni 身心論の観点からみた瑜伽行派の人間観–アーラヤ識説を中心に", *Nippon Bukkyō Gakkai nenpō* 日本佛教學會年報 82 (2017), 165–87.

Yamabe 2017b

———, "Once Again on '*Dhātu-vāda*'". *Critical Review for Buddhist Studies* 21 (2017), 9-43.

Yokoyama 1979

Kōitsu Yokoyama 横山紘一, *Yuishiki no tetsugaku* 唯識の哲学. Kyoto: Heirakuji Shoten 平楽寺書店, 1979.

Chapter VI

Map Becomes Territory: Knowledge and Modes of Existence in Middle Period Buddhist Meditation Practice*

Daniel M. Stuart, University of South Carolina

1. Introduction

Many years ago, Robert Buswell observed a key distinction between two important śāstric sources on the Buddhist path. He noted how the **Abhidharmamahāvibhāṣāśāstra* (ca. 150 CE) is largely *retrospective* in its outlook, surveying the path as if from the standpoint of its final goal. Conversely, the *Visuddhimagga* (ca. 430 CE) is largely *proleptic* or developmental in its outlook, presenting the path from the perspective of a practitioner traveling it, as if looking out at the path with the final goal in the distance.[1] He suggested that these different approaches lead to different ways of theorizing the entailments of the path or practically engaging it. In this article, I present an analysis of some aspects of a relatively little-known treatment of the Buddhist path of practice, found in a middle period *sūtra* attributed to the Buddha, the *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra* (hereafter *Saddhsu*; ca. 150–400 CE or possibly earlier).[2] The text's historical position and likely connection to on-

* I would like to express my gratitude to Cristina Pecchia and Vincent Eltschinger for their helpful comments on earlier drafts of the article. It is much improved thanks to their critical feedback.

1 Buswell 1997: 607–09.

2 On the reasons for the scholarly notion of Buddhism's "Middle Period"—the first five centuries of the Common Era when Indian Buddhism can be characterized by an established sedentary monasticism—see Schopen 1995: 360–367 and Boucher 2008: 67.

Cristina Pecchia and Vincent Eltschinger (eds.), *Mārga. Paths to Liberation in South Asian Buddhist Traditions.* Papers from an international symposium held at the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, December 17 – 18, 2015. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2020, pp. 277–301.

the-ground meditation practice make it a key source for understanding some of the central dynamics that broadened the scope of theorization on Buddhist practice during the early centuries of the Common Era in South Asia.[3] The path of practice set out in the *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra* walks an interesting line between the two approaches to the path noted by Buswell. It presents a largely developmental model of practice, but its narrative structure also provides for a retrospective stance. And it is this amalgamation of—or perhaps accommodation of— perspectives that provides the *Saddhsu* with its particular outlook on the path.[4]

I suggest here that this way of framing the Buddhist path should be understood as a key early development that contributed to new and expansive forms of conceptualizing the Buddhist path in history. The text presents a theorization on how the path of Buddhist practice allows for the cultivation of a meta-knowledge that is comprehensive and powerful, in every sense of the term.[5] Such developments most likely set the historical stage for a wide variety of new approaches to the path, in both practice traditions and philosophical traditions.

I propose that the path outlined in the *Saddhsu* functions prescriptively and is informed by an incipient doxographical perspective. The text draws

---

[3] There are a number of reasons why I think the *Saddhsu* provides evidence for traditions connected to on-the-ground meditation practice, some of which I have presented in Stuart 2015. Most importantly, the text is shot through with incidental evidence of the realia of meditation contexts: meditation advice for daily encounters with the material world (see below), paintings of corpses produced in order to help meditator monks develop dispassion (e.g. Ms 146a6; D ra 88b2–3; T 721, 17: 136b2–3), and particular kinds of donations for the support of meditator monks who have attained certain meditative states (e.g. Ms 187b7–188a1 ff.; D ra 176a4–b2 ff.; T 721, 17: 165b4–8 ff.). The narrative aspects of the text bring this material into play in ways that most *śāstra*s would not allow for. The text also contains many techniques of meditation that have no explicit counterparts in the early tradition (see, for example, Appendix 6 in Stuart 2015 [II], particularly 326–339). This material suggests to me that the text is incorporating new and dynamic on-the-ground meditation teachings into its more traditional—though still somewhat radical—deployment of canonical practices.

[4] See Stuart 2015a: 178–187 for a discussion of how the *Saddhsu*'s three-tiered narrative structure—in which a master *yoga* practitioner or meditation practitioner (*yogācāra*) is described observing the development of a meditator monk—creates space for both perspectives.

[5] Stuart 2015a.

on early canonical *sūtra* accounts of fundamental Buddhist ethical and ontological categories, then pushes beyond them into more elaborate Abhidharma frameworks, theories/experiences of cognitive constructivism, and finally into cosmological visions in which a meditator envisions diverse cosmological realities and cultivates a comprehensive knowledge of action and its results (*karmaphalavipāka*). In the process, it describes a meditation practitioner engaging each of these epistemological registers in a series of meditative encounters that build on one another. I thus propose to read the text as prescribing a practical contemplative epistemology by which diverse ontological frames left over on the palimpsest of early middle period Buddhist tradition are evoked, experientially negotiated, and enacted as modes of existence. The path then becomes a tool by which traditional or conventional frames of reference can be masterfully enacted, while giving way to unconventional or unorthodox ones in an unfolding of contemplative and philosophical possibility. In many ways, this use of the path harkens back to early canonical attempts—in texts such as the *Brahmajāla-sutta* of the Dīghanikāya and its parallels—to quantify all views and show how they can be accounted for through meditative experience.[6] The *Saddhsu*, however, inverts the approach of the *Brahmajāla-sutta*, allowing various views to be engaged and negotiated through meditative processes. In doing so, the text presages in certain ways the epistemological/doxographical śāstric traditions that emerge in force from the end of the fifth century CE onward in Buddhist South Asia.[7]

---

[6] DN 1 at DN I 1–46. Interpreting this discourse, Bhikkhu Bodhi (2007 [1978]: 9) writes that "the primary focus of [the Buddha's] concern is not so much the content of the view as the underlying malady of which the addiction to speculative tenets is a symptom." I would suggest that we should not overdetermine a "primary focus." It seems to me that the text does indeed emphasize the basic malady of craving, which undergirds all views. However, it also appears that the content and construction of the various views is essential to what the text is doing, accounting for how and why the mind of a spiritual practitioner creates and constructs conceptions of the self and the cosmos in time, space, and tradition. This early doxographical urge no doubt influenced later Buddhist philosophical traditions in a variety of ways.

[7] These developments are of course tied in to parallel developments within non-Buddhist philosophical traditions. The early epistemological tradition (*pramāṇavāda*) within Buddhism is exemplified by scholars such as Dignāga (ca. 480–540) while the beginning of formal doxographical philosophy within Buddhism is marked by Bhāviveka (ca. 500–560 CE). On these dates, see Eckel 2008: 24–25.

To show how this engagement with the path works, I will highlight four key passages of the *Saddhsu*, turning points in the text that indicate shifts of epistemic perspective and correlate to a range of ontological possibilities. In these shifts, we can interpret the text as negotiating realist, idealist, and enactivist frames of reference, categories to which I will return below. I have presented much of this material elsewhere, but here I want to contextualize the material differently and put a finer point on the relationships between key points in the text.[8] While my approach is primarily descriptive, I also attempt to contextualize the material historically and provide basic interpretations of it. In this way, we can see how the *Saddhsu* connects early Buddhist practice traditions to stridently new theorizations of the path, theorizations that enact an emergent practical epistemology. This practical epistemology presages later scholastic epistemologies and the tiered ontologies of developed philosophical and śāstric traditions that emerge from the fourth and fifth centuries onward.[9]

2. The *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra*

The *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra* is an understudied text. It is a massive compendium connected with the Sarvāstivāda traditions of Greater Gandhāra. While the text contains a range of material—from descriptions of basic meditative practices to Abhidharma theoretics to cosmological visions—it is also a sūtra with a frame story depicting the entire text as the teaching of the Buddha to his disciples. For reasons I won't go into now, but which are presented in a recently published monograph, I suggest that the text was composed some time between the years 150 and 400 of the Common Era.[10] This means that it was circulating during a key period in the development of Buddhist tradition, when the new genre of Mahāyāna sūtras was truly coming into vogue, and śāstric and philosophical traditions were

[8] See Stuart 2015, 2015a and Stuart 2018.

[9] On such developments, see Dreyfus 1997: 15–21; Dreyfus and McClintock 2003: 1–33; Eckel 2008: 1–17; and Eltschinger 2014: 1–72 (particularly 71–72).

[10] Stuart 2015 (I): 43–46. It remains possible that the text was composed earlier than 150 CE, but this cannot be determined with certainty at the moment. Much of the material in the text certainly goes back to much earlier layers of Buddhist textual history.

beginning to dominate the landscape of Buddhist thought, particularly in the Northwest of India.

The text is voluminous—a veritable encyclopedia of Middle Period Buddhist thought—and presents challenges to the editor since it survives only in a single manuscript. Despite these difficulties, access to the text in its original Sanskrit opens many new avenues for study. The present article is one step towards opening up the text to a wider audience of scholars. Early research by Lin Li-kouang on the Chinese and Tibetan translations of the *Saddhsu* made it clear that the text contained important material for the history of Buddhist meditative and philosophical traditions.[11] Unfortunately, Lin died before he could complete his study, and few scholars followed up on his work. The discovery several years ago of a partial Sanskrit manuscript of the *Saddhsu*, held at Norbulingka in Lhasa, has aroused new interest in the text.[12] I recently published an edition and study of the text's second chapter, and several other scholars are working on other sections of it.[13] However, it will be many years until the text is available in its entirety.

Elsewhere I have shown how the core of the text has been constructed primarily on the basis of textual materials drawn from the early mainstream Buddhist canon, reframed in a comprehensive practice of *dharmasmṛtyupasthāna* with an Abhidharma inflection.[14] The text is then expanded into a vast compendium of Buddhist cosmology, framed as a series of meditations in which a visionary meditator or *yoga* practitioner (*yogācāra*) observes and understands the process by which a meditator monk comes to discern a wide range of possible karmic trajectories (*karmaphalavipāka*) for beings in vari-

---

11 Lin and Demiéville 1949.

12 My work on the text is based on a photocopy of the manuscript kept in the collection of the China Tibetology Research Center (Box 12, No.1) in Beijing.

13 See Stuart 2015, in which I also edit some short sections of the sixth chapter of the text. Vesna Wallace is preparing an edition of the first chapter of the text, and Mitsuyo Demoto of its third chapter. The first three chapters only account for approximately one third of the extant Sanskrit manuscript, which itself covers only the first half of the entire text as it has come down in Tibetan and Chinese translation. So, much work remains to be done. Additionally, Mitsuyo Demoto (2009) has published a short article on the system of hells in the *Saddhsu*, in which she provides a very basic overview of the text with a focus on its third chapter.

14 Stuart 2015 (I): 35–197 and Stuart 2015a: 169–72. See also Lin and Demiéville 1949, particularly pages 99–146, where Lin provides reference to a range of material that is both directly and indirectly related to the constitution of the text.

ous realms of the Buddhist cosmos. This expanded practice gestures towards a tacit Mahāyāna soteriology while allowing for other possible soteriological goals to be accommodated.[15]

So, the *Saddhsu* draws on early Buddhist traditions but expands well beyond them to develop an expansive soteriology and an elaborately figured practice involving discernment of the process of karma in all realms of existence. It does so through a literary structure that brings a wide range of historically layered material—material with varied ontological and epistemological entailments—into an ordered set of epistemological engagements. A key point to emphasize is the fact that the *Saddhsu* is, at its core, a text on the stages of meditation. While it contains a wide range of narrative and scholastic material, its basic structure is built around a description of a meditator's (*yogācāra*) practice of *dharmasmṛtyupasthāna*. It outlines the various stages of practice (*yogācārabhūmi*) that a meditator engages in order to master such meditative practices. This fundamental aspect of the text indicates that the *Saddhsu*, though not strictly speaking a *śāstra*, belongs to a broad genre of proto-śāstric and śāstric *yogācārabhūmi* texts produced primarily in greater Gandhāra in the early centuries of the Common Era.[16]

3. Varieties of Realism

The core meditative practice depicted in the *Saddhsu* is a reworking and expansion of an early canonical Buddhist sūtra, the **Ṣaḍdhātuvibhaṅgasūtra* ("Sūtra on Distinguishing the Six Elements").[17] In traditional canonical depictions of this practice, a monk is described as simply mentally dividing his experience into constituents of materiality and mind, and seeing that the entire range of psycho-physical phenomena available to human experience is impermanent, ultimately subject to decay, and therefore devoid of selfhood. In line with basic Buddhist ideas, this practice was considered to lead to a state of mind liberated from the suffering that stems from identifying with the psycho-physical process. Most scholars read these early depictions as modes of realist

[15] Stuart 2015 (I): 198–224.

[16] On the *yogācārabhūmi* as a textual genre, see Demiéville 1954, Yamabe 1999, and Deleanu 2006.

[17] D 4094, *mngon pa*, ju 34b6–43a3 and Q 5595, *mngon pa'i bstan bcos*, tu 38a1– 46b5; T 26, 1:690a19–692b21; MN 140 at MN III 237–247.

philosophical discourse that take for granted the basic existence of mind and materiality in elemental form.

The meditative process depicted in the first four stages of meditative practice in the *Saddhsu* is more or less a simple rehashing of the canonical *Ṣaḍdhātuvibhaṅgasūtra*. Both texts describe a practitioner looking one by one at the five different elements that make up his material body, and then meditatively isolating consciousness:

Khams drug rab tu rnam par 'byed pa'i chos kyi rnam grangs[18]	*Dhātuvibhaṅgasutta*[19]	分別六界經 *Fenbieliujie Jing*[20]
The remaining consciousness, being pure and definitely cognized, is discernable.	"Then there remains only consciousness, purified and clear.	There is only consciousness remaining.
What does it cognize?	"And what does one cognize with that consciousness?	What does it cognize?
It knows pleasure, pain, happiness, sadness, and equanimity.	"He cognizes 'pleasure,' 'pain,' and 'neither-pain-nor-pleasure.'"	It cognizes pleasure, pain, happiness, sadness, and equanimity.

Table 1: The **Ṣaḍdhātuvibhaṅgasūtra* on isolating consciousness

[18] D 4094, *mngon pa*, ju 38b6–7 and Q 5595, *mngon pa'i bstan bcos*, tu 42a6–7 (see Stuart 2015 [II]: 260–61): *rnam par shes pa khyad par can dag cing nges pa rnam par shes shing yongs su shes so || ci zhig rnam par shes zhe na | bde ba rab tu shes so || sdug bsngal rab tu shes so || yid bde ba rab tu shes so || yid mi bde ba rab tu shes so || btang snyoms rab tu shes so ||* I remain uncertain about the rendering of the first sentence here. Its lack of parallelism with the other versions of the text makes me suspect that the text was mistranslated or that the translation was made from a corrupt Sanskrit version.

[19] MN 140 at MN III 242 (see Stuart 2015 [II]: 260–61): *athāparaṃ viññāṇaṃ yeva avasissati parisuddhaṃ pariyodātaṃ. tena ca viññāṇena kiṃ vijānāti? "sukhan" ti pi vijānāti, "dukkhan" ti pi vijānāti, "adukkhamasukhan" ti pi vijānāti.* This *sutta* also has the alternative title of *Chadhātuvibhaṅgasutta* in some editions.

[20] T 26, 1:691b4–5 (see Stuart 2015 [II]: 260–61): 唯有餘識。此何等識? 樂識，苦識，喜識，憂識，捨識。

However, when the *Saddhsu* comes to treat the last of the six elements, the consciousness element (*vijñānadhātu*), it evidences a significant doctrinal development:

> [The *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra* (Chapter Two, Stage Two) on isolating consciousness]
>
> Now what is the mind-element (*manodhātu*)? The mind-element is connected with the twelve sense-spheres (āyatana). One experiences the [visual] object that is experienced by eye-consciousness by way of mind-consciousness (*manovijñāna*). In this way ear[-consciousness], nose[-consciousness], tongue[-consciousness], body[-consciousness], and mind-consciousness (*manovijñāna*) have their origin in the mind-consciousness element (*manovijñānadhātu*), and are rooted in the mind (*manas*)…
>
> … He cognizes the arising of pleasure, he cognizes the arising of pain, he knows the arising of joy and sadness, and cognizes equanimity.[21]

In this passage, we find an attempt—employing Abhidharmic categories—to outline a causal framework for the process of cognition. Consciousness is no longer a simple element of human experience, standing separate from sense experience and only capable of cognizing feelings/sensations. It is a complex of relational cognitions, dynamically intertwined with and engaged in filtering the data of sense experience. We remain in a realist frame of reference, but the relational categories of an Abhidharma phenomenology now govern the text's theory of mind. This is our first key epistemic shift, and such a shift can be seen within and across early canonical Sūtra traditions.[22]

This development indicates the way that Abhidharma accounts of the process of sense experience exert increasing influence on more elemental conceptions of consciousness, such as those found in the *Ṣaḍdhātuvibhaṅgasūtra*.

---

[21] *Saddhsu* II, §2.9–3.2 (Stuart 2015 [I]: 336–44): *tatra kataro mano*(*dhā*)*tuḥ? mano*-(*dhā*)*tur dvādaśabhir ā*(*yatanair saṃyuktaḥ*)*. cakṣurvijñānānubhūtam arthaṃ manovijñānenānubhavati. evaṃ śrotraghrāṇajihvākāyamanovijñānāni manovijñānadhātuprabhavāni manomūlāni ... sa sukham utpadyamānam vijānāti. duḥkham utpadyamānaṃ vijānāti. saumanasyaṃ jānāti. daurmanasyaṃ jānāti. upekṣām vijānāti.* On this passage, see also Stuart 2015: 119–121, 288–293 and Stuart 2018: 199–201, particularly n. 21.

[22] On this issue, and how it leads to the need for something like the *ālayavijñāna*, see Waldron 2003.

Yet the elemental component does not disappear. Rather, it cedes some ground to more content-oriented conceptions of consciousness while maintaining the possibility of a more basic consciousness—which is pre-reflective yet intentional—in line with the phenomenology of the early practice tradition.

4. Sense Experience and Phenomenal Consciousness: Emergent Idealism

In looking at the next relevant meditative and epistemic shift in the development of the *Saddhsu*'s practice program, we might look at a representative passage from the fifth stage of practice. After discerning the mind-element, a meditator goes on in the third and fourth stages of practice to analyze feelings (*vedanā*), first in ways that accord with the basic framework of the *Ṣaḍdhātuvibhaṅgasūtra* and then in a variety of new and creative ways. This process involves observing feelings at ever subtler levels, first in connection with the equanimity constitutive of the immaterial attainments,[23] then in connection with all of the possible objects of sense experience,[24] and finally in connection with their ethical and karmic valence.[25] It is in discerning the ethical valence of feelings that a meditator begins to see how such observation entails a process of purification, which is metaphorically figured as the process of producing refined sugar from sugarcane.[26] This process of purification leads to the possibility of a meditator observing even subtler aspects of mental life, and in the fifth stage he turns his attention to the aggregates of perception (*saṅjñā*)[27] and mental constructions (*saṃskāra*).[28] It is in this context that a meditator develops the ability to discern various additional *dharma*s and their relationships. In coming to discern *dharmas* in this way, the meditation practitioner of the *Saddhsu* attains certain realizations about the mentally constructed nature of experienced phenomena. This development emerges most saliently in a series of meditations in which a monk—the

[23] *Saddhsu* II, §3.1–4.1.6 (Stuart 2015 [I]: 342–55).

[24] *Saddhsu* II, §4.1.7–§4.1.11 (Stuart 2015 [I]: 356–60).

[25] *Saddhsu* II, §4.2.1–4.2.28 (Stuart 2015 [I]: 360–97)

[26] *Saddhsu* II, §4.2.29–4.2.33 (Stuart 2015 [I]: 396–403)

[27] *Saddhsu* II, §5.1–§5.1.24 (Stuart 2015 [I]: 402–37).

[28] *Saddhsu* II, §5.1.20–§5.2.12.25 (Stuart 2015 [I]: 424–66).

primary agent of the meditative narrative of the text—discerns the material sense-spheres (*āyatana*).[29] This mode of discernment occurs in the fifth stage of practice of the *Saddhsu* and is described in the following manner:

> [The *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra* (Chapter Two, Stage five [2]) on the 'material' sense-spheres as mere cogitation (*saṅkalpamātra*)]
>
> That monk, knower of the reality of the sphere of the nose and scent, investigates precisely according to reality: "Is there [anything of] substance here, [anything] permanent, stable, or eternal? [This] sense-sphere, which is subject to change, has the characteristic of being impermanent, suffering, empty and not-self." Having understood the sphere of the nose and scent [in this way,] he thinks: "All of this is not mine, and I do not belong to it," and he discriminatingly examines [it] in this way: "The sphere of the nose and scent is, in every way, mere cogitation, which oppresses all dim-witted foolish worldlings."[30]

In this meditative analysis of the olfactory sense door and its objects, a meditator discerns that what are traditionally referred to as the nose and scent are, in fact, experienced only as constructions of the mind (*saṅkalpamātraka*). This realization indicates a fundamental shift of the practitioner's relationship to the world of experience. That is, one realizes that sense experience is accessed only in a process mediated by mental entanglements. What is more, within the larger framework of practice of the *Saddhsu*, this relationship cannot be divorced from the earlier analysis of how all sense experience is mediated by the mind-element or *manodhātu*. This shift represents an emergent epistemological idealist frame of reference, one that possibly opens the door for the emergence of a true ontological idealism.[31]

---

[29] *Saddhsu* II, §5.2.1–7. (Stuart 2015 [I]: 438–452).

[30] *Saddhsu* II §5.2.5.2 (Stuart 2015 [I]: 448–449): *sa bhikṣur ghrāṇagandhāyatanatattvajñas tattvata evānveṣayati: "kim atra sāraṃ nityaṃ dhruvaṃ śāśvatam? vipariṇāmadharmikasyāyatanasyānityaduḥkhaśūnyānātmakam." ghrāṇagandhāyatanaṃ jñātvā, "sarvaṃ naitan mama. nāsyāham," iti matvā, "kevalaṃ saṅkalpamātrakam evedaṃ ghrāṇagandhāyatanaṃ yena bādhyanti sarvabālapṛthagjanāḥ mandabuddhayaḥ," prakāro 'yaṃ pratyavekṣyate.*

[31] Some of the passages parallel to the one quoted above contain statements such as the following (*Saddhsu* II §5.2.3.5 [Stuart 2015 (I): 444]): "This entire world is encompassed by cogitation [connected with] rapture and anger …" (*kevalam ayaṃ lokaḥ*

We find in the text comparable descriptions of a practitioner discerning all of the material sense-spheres (*āyatana*)—the eye, the ear, the tongue, the body and their respective sense-objects. The text then describes how a meditator turns his attention to the sphere of *dharma*(s) (*dharmāyatana*).[32] The traditional Sarvāstivāda understanding of the sphere of *dharma*(s) is that it comprises all mental factors excluding consciousness, the three unconditioned *dharma*s, and unmanifest materiality (*avijñaptirūpa*).[33] Here in the *Saddhsu*, however, we find a treatment of the *dharmāyatana* with several somewhat puzzling differences. Most importantly, the text seems to suggest that the entire world of materiality can come to be subsumed within the

prītikrodhasaṅkalpagṛhītaḥ...). One way to interpret this is that the text does not intend to make an argument about the ontological status of sense-objects themselves, but simply about how an ignorant person experiences them. Entailed in this interpretation is the notion that were one to observe sense-objects absent of such cogitations, with equanimity, one would be able to observe those actual sense-objects. I think the above description (*Saddhsu* II, §2.9 [Stuart 2015 (I): 336–37]) of mind as a mediating factor in all sense experience precludes this interpretation. Further, observing sense-objects with equanimity does not seem to necessarily entail the absence of *saṅkalpa*, and could theoretically entail a process of ignorance/delusion (*moha*). However, the text remains silent on this issue.

[32] Our text makes no reference here to the sphere of the mind (*manaāyatana*). It seems likely that this is a deliberate omission, as discernment of mind (*citta*) becomes the central topic later on in the text, in the seventh stage of practice.

[33] See the definition of the sphere of *dharma*(-s) in the *Mahāvibhāṣā* (T XXVII 65a29–b2):「法處有七種。謂前四蘊及三無為。於色蘊中取無表色。三無為者。謂虛空擇滅。非擇滅。」 – "The sphere of *dharma* has seven aspects, the previously stated four aggregates [excluding the consciousness aggregate] along with the three unconditioned [*dharma*s]. With respect to the materiality aggregate, we refer to unmanifest materiality. The three unconditioned [*dharma*s] are space, cessation through discriminatory observation, and cessation without discriminatory observation."

This conforms with AKBh 11.2–5: *ete punas trayaḥ | vedanāsaṃjñāsaṃskāraskandhā{ḥ} āyatanadhātuvyavasthāyāṃ dharmāyatanadhātvākhyāḥ sahāvijñaptyasaṃskṛtaiḥ* ||15|| *ity etāni sapta dravyāṇi dharmāyatanaṃ dharmadhātuś cety ākhyāyante* | – "And these three—the aggregates of feeling/sensation, perception, and constructions in their roles as spheres and elements—along with unmanifest materiality and the [three] unconditioned [*dharma*s] are termed the sphere of *dharma*(s) or the element of *dharma*(s). ||15|| In this way, these seven things are termed the 'sphere of *dharma*(s)' and the 'element of *dharma*(s).'"

dharmāyatana. This idea comes out implicitly in the *Saddhsu*'s definition of the three unconditioned *dharmas*:[34]

[34] *Saddhsu* II §5.2.8.1–5.2.10 (Stuart 2015 [I]: 452–457): *punar api sa yogācāra ādhyātmike dharme dharmānupaśyī viharati: kathaṃ sa bhikṣur daśa rūpīṇy āyatanāni avalokya, dharmāyatanatattvadarśī dharmāyatanam avalokayati? sa paśyati śrutamayena jñānena divyena vā cakṣuṣā:*

"dharmāyatanasaṅgṛhītās trayo dharmāḥ: pratisaṅkhyāyanirodho 'pratisaṅkhyāyanirodha ākāśaṃ ca. tatra dharmo yat kiñcid avidyamānam, tad dharmasaṅgṛhītaṃ kṛtvā, ākāśāyatanaṃ bhavati. pratisaṅkhyānirodho nirvāṇam. pratisaṅkhyā nāma prajñām anekavidhāṃ sākṣīkṛtvā, viharati. pratisaṅkhyānaṃ kṛtvā, kleśān vidhamati kṣapayati nāśayati, paryāvṛṇīkurute sarvān āsravān. apratisaṅkhyānirodhaḥ: apratisaṅkhyā nāma yad ajñānaṃ yan na jānāti na samprativedayati na jānīte na saṃbudhyate na pratarkayate. paramparavijñānaśatasahasrāṇy utpannāni naśyanti, cakṣuḥśrotraghrāṇajihvākāyamanovijñānāni. teṣāṃ dhvastānāṃ na punarutpādaḥ, eṣa apratisaṅkhyāyanirodhaḥ. tṛtīyam ākāśam. ete trayo dharmā ajātā nityā. adhvanāpy ete na jātā na janiṣyante na jāyante."

punar api sa bhikṣuḥ kathaṃ dharmāyatanaṃ dvividhaṃ vibhajati, rūpaṃ cārūpaṃ ca?

"tatra rūpijagad daśa rūpīṇy āyatanāni. tatra katham anidarśanāpratighena cakṣurvijñānena sapratighaṃ sanidarśanaṃ rūpam upalabhyate? evaṃ śrotravij ñānenānidarśanāpratighena kathaṃ śabdo gṛhyate? evaṃ ghrāṇavijñānenānid arśanenāpratighena kathaṃ gandho gṛhyate? evaṃ jihvāvijñānenāpratighenān idarśanena kathaṃ raso gṛhyate? evaṃ kāyavijñānenānidarśanenāpratighena kathaṃ spraṣṭavyo gṛhyate? evaṃ etāni bāhyāni pañcāyatanāni adhyātmikāni pañcāyatanāni. katham anidarśanāpratighānāṃ sanidarśanasapratighānāṃ cāyatanānāṃ upalabdhir bhavati?"

sa paśyati bhikṣuḥ: "yāvad vividham ālambanaṃ bhavati, tāvad vividham eva vijñānam utpadyate, mudrāpratimudrakavat. tatra visadṛśā mudrāyasy akaṭhinaṃ mudrakam. mṛdu sātaptakaṭhinam. kaṭhinākaṭhinayoḥ pratimudrā utpadyate. evam evānidarśanāpratighaṃ vijñānaṃ sanidarśanapratigham ālambanaṃ gṛhṇīte. tṛtīyaṃ pratimudrakam utpadyate. visadṛśānāṃ sarveṣāṃ visadṛśam upalabhyate. evaṃ visadṛśe visadṛśam utpadyate. prathamā koṭiḥ.

"dvitīyā koṭiḥ: sadṛśaiḥ sadṛśam utpadyate. tadyathā: śuklais tantrabhiḥ śuklaṃ vastraṃ paṭasañjñakam.

"tṛtīyā koṭiḥ: vidhurād vidhuram utpadyate. tadyathāraṇibhyo vahniḥ, kāṣṭhāgnyor virodho dṛṣṭaḥ.

"caturthī koṭiḥ: acchād ghanaṃ jāyate. yathā kṣīrād acchād ghanaṃ dadhi, tadevam asadṛśair api bhāvaiś cakṣurvijñānādibhir hetupratyayaviśeṣaiś cakṣurvijñānādaya utpadyante."

[The *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra* (Chapter Two, Stage five) on the *dharmāyatana*, mentality and materiality, seals and impressions]

And further, the *yoga* practitioner dwells observing *dharma*s among internal *dharma*[s]: How does that monk, having scrutinized the ten material sense-spheres, being a seer of the reality of the sphere of *dharma*(s), scrutinize the sphere of *dharma*(s)? He sees according to knowledge of scripture, or with the divine eye:

"Three *dharma*s are subsumed (˚*saṃgṛhīta*) by the sphere of *dharma*(s): [1.] cessation through observation (*pratisaṅkhyāyanirodha*), [2.] cessation through absence of observation (*apratisaṅkhyāyanirodha*), and [3.] space. In this respect, that *dharma* which does not exist at all, being [nonetheless] taken as a *dharma*, becomes the sphere of space. Cessation through observation is *nirvāṇa*. Observation means that one dwells realizing discernment of various sorts. Having observed [with discernment] (*pratisaṅkhyānaṃ kṛtvā*), one dispels, obliterates, and destroys the mental defilements, and eradicates (*paryāvṛṇīkurute*) all the fluxes. Cessation through absence of observation: absence of observation is unknowing (*ajñāna*), that by which one does not know (*jānāti*), does not experience (*samprativedayati*), does not cognize (*jānīte*), does not understand (*saṃbudhyate*), and does not reflect upon (*pratarkayate*). Successive hundreds of thousands of cognitions that have arisen—consciousness of the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind—disappear. Once they have perished, there is no further arising. This is cessation through absence of observation. The third [*dharma*] is space. These three *dharma*s are unborn and permanent. They are not born, will not be born, and are not being born."

How does that monk then discriminate between the two-fold *dharma*-sphere, the material and the immaterial?

"In this respect, the ten material spheres are the world of materiality. And how is it that a visible form, which is tangible and visible, can be appropriated (*upalabhyate*) by eye-consciousness, which is invisible and intangible? Similarly, how can a sound be grasped by an invisible and intangible ear-consciousness? Similarly, how can a scent be grasped by an invisible and intangible nose-consciousness? Similarly, how can a taste be grasped by an intangible and invisible

> tongue-consciousness? Similarly, how can a touch be grasped by an invisible and intangible body-consciousness? These are the five external sense-spheres and the five internal sense-spheres. How is there the engagement (*upalabdhi*) of sense spheres, which are [both] visible and tangible and invisible and intangible?"
>
> That monk sees: "To the extent that there are various objects, various consciousnesses arise, like a seal and its impression. In this respect, there is a distinct iron seal and soft material to be imprinted. The soft [material] becomes hard when heated. From [the contact of] hard and soft, an impression appears. Similarly, an invisible and intangible consciousness grasps a visible and tangible object (*ālambana*), and a third [element], an impression, appears. A thing is appropriated by all things dissimilar [to it]. In this way, a dissimilar thing appears within a dissimilar thing. [This is] the first angle (*koṭi*).
>
> "The second angle: Something appears (*utpadyate*) due to things that are similar [to it]. For example: A white cloth, known as a *paṭa*, [comes about] through the use of white threads.
>
> "The third angle: A distinct thing appears because of [another] distinct thing. For example: Fire appears from two fire-sticks, [even though] wood and fire are known to be distinct.
>
> "The fourth angle: Something opaque is produced from something pellucid. Just as opaque curd [is produced] from pellucid milk, so also sense-consciousnesses (*cakṣurvijñānādi*) appear from [already] existent but dissimilar sense-consciousnesses, due to specific causes and conditions."

For the present purposes, I want to highlight one key element of this passage. It emerges in the second part of the definition (§5.2.9–10), when a query is raised about the twofold nature of the sphere of *dharma*(s): how does one distinguish between the immaterial and material aspects of the sphere of *dharma*(s)? The answer is an unusual one: The ten material sense-spheres (*āyatana*s) comprise the material aspect of the sphere of *dharma*(s).[35] This

[35] The traditional position is clearly elucidated in the *Śrāvakabhūmi*: *rūpam ucyate daśa rūpīṇy āyatanāni yac ca dharmāyatanaparyāpannaṃ rūpam sa ca rūpaskandhaḥ* (Śrbh J^{e}: 236) – "The aggregate of materiality is what we call materiality: the ten material sense-spheres and that materiality which is subsumed within the sphere of *dharma*(s)*."*

position is radical, though not unknown to early doctrinal debates.[36] In light of the preceding meditative realizations, however, this position carries deeper implications. That is, we have already seen our monk experientially deconstruct the material existence of the sense doors and sense-objects that construct phenomenal experience. By subsuming all of the putative sense doors and sense-objects within the sphere of *dharma*s—in what appears to be a more ontologically oriented meditative query—the text here opens the door to a true ontological idealism, though this idea is not carried to its final conclusion in the way that eventually happens in later Vijñānavāda philosophical treatises.[37] In connection with the subsequent larger question of the

---

The position presented in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* allows us to see how most orthodox Vaibhāṣikas probably conceived of this form of materiality: *tad yad evātra rūpam anidarśanam apratighaṃ coktaṃ tad evāstu dharmāyatanaparyāpannam* | (AKBh 198.18–19) – "Whatever materiality here is described as invisible and intangible, that should be subsumed within the sphere of *dharma*(s)." Furthermore, *na cāvijñaptiṃ virahayyāsti rūpam anidarśanam apratighaṃ nāpy ⟨an⟩āsravam* | (AKBh 196.13–14) – "Except for unmanifest materiality, no materiality is invisible and intangible, nor is it free of fluxes."

[36] The position that appears to be advocated in the *Saddhsu* is presented in the *Mahāvibhāṣā* as the view of "other masters" and subsequently refuted: 「有餘師說：法界總攝一切法盡。」(T 1545, 27: 370c19-20) – "There are some masters who say: 'The **dharmadhātu* entirely subsumes all *dharma*s.'"; 「或說：法處攝一切法。」(T 1545, 27: 985b6-8) – "Some say: 'The **dharmāyatana* subsumes all *dharma*s.'" On these passages see Dhammajoti 2007: 37–43. Dhammajoti associates this view with the "Sautrāntika" master Śrīlāta.

[37] Another way to interpret what is happening in this part of the text is to read the reference to the material sense-spheres as a reaffirmation of the existence of materiality. Dhammajoti outlines the intractability of this interpretive problem in doctrinal terms when he writes the following (Dhammajoti 2007: 39): "While on the one hand, influenced by the intention in the *sūtra*, the Sarvāstivādins speak of the 'mental objects' as including all possible types of *dharma*s, at the same time they would not state that *dharmadhātu* subsumes the 'totality' of real existents—even though some Sarvāstivāda masters apparently maintain precisely that. One reason for this is that the Vaibhāṣikas must maintain their ontology which includes *dharma*s other than those seven mental objects specified by the tradition as being *dharmadhātu*, as real existents." Dhammajoti's doxographical reification of the Vaibhāṣika school is somewhat problematic, but he nonetheless illuminates why it is difficult to sort out where the *Saddhsu* stands on this key question. One thing seems quite clear: the authors/compilers/redactors of the *Saddhsu* were not orthodox Vaibhāṣikas. I think it is possible that we can read their position as in line with what Dhammajoti calls the "Sautrāntika" position.

fifth stage of practice, the question of how immaterial states come about based on material objects (§5.2.10), this opening nonetheless reveals a deep preoccupation with the possibility that the traditional categories of mind and matter—sense doors, sense-objects, and the cognitions that facilitate their interaction—are somehow ontologically suspect. Here, then, is another significant shift in the text, an apparent reorientation in outlook. We might talk about this as a move from a more straightforward epistemological idealism towards an actual ontological idealism—or at least that interpretive possibility emerges.

5. Enactive Frames

It is important to emphasize that the meditation practitioner of the *Saddhsu* does not carry through with an explicit elaboration of the philosophical entailments suggested above. Rather, perhaps because of its emphasis on practice, the text appears to hold off on taking a strong ontological position. It seems instead to suggest that a set of tiered epistemological engagements allows for a set of tiered, provisional ontologies that are conditioned by the way in which a practitioner knows the world through meditation. This approach appears to allow for a contemplative middle path between the philosophical modes of realism (exemplified in premodern South Asia by some Abhidharma traditions and Vaiśeṣika thought), idealism (exemplified in premodern South Asia by certain strands of Yogācāra-vijñānavāda and Vedānta thought), and relativism (exemplified in premodern South Asia by certain strands of Madhyamaka and [differently] Jaina thought). I do not contend here that the *Saddhsu* is explicitly engaging these categories as they have come to be understood in various (and later) classical South Asian or European philosophical traditions. Rather, I would suggest that the approach of the text accommodates such perspectives in their broad contours, and that it points to the idea that many of the key positions and points of contention of the classical Indian philosophical schools—some of which find family resemblances with basic divisions in European thought systems—are constrained by a set of basic assumptions and categories that are already largely taken for granted in the practical gestures of a text like the *Saddhsu*.

I would call particular attention to the initial possibility of the *catuṣkoṭi* (§5.2.11.1–4) presented in the above passage. The simile of a seal and its impression (*mudrāpratimudrā*) suggests an emergentist model of phenomenal

consciousness.[38] At the same time, there remains in the background a more basic notion of consciousness—à la *manodhātu* presented initially above—as a fundamental and pre-reflective element of reality. The simile of the seal and its impression reflects an attempt to address the difficulty of the problem of phenomenal consciousness and its connection to elemental consciousness while at the same time not providing a hard and fast answer to the problem. This model allows for phenomenal consciousness to be enacted, embodied, experienced, and engaged, while also suggesting that in and of itself it does not constitute a concretely existent phenomenon.

This open epistemic frame of reference—which allows for divergent perspectives on the ontology of consciousness—gets fully developed in a final key point of the text, a series of metaphor-based meditative cognitions that can be found in the *Saddhsu*'s description of the seventh stage (*bhūmi)* of meditative practice. At this point in the text, a practitioner comes to observe the mind or *citta* in its role as the generative force of *saṃsāra*:[39]

> [The *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra* (Chapter Two, Stage Seven) on the painter mind]
>
> 7.12.7 Further, that monk is [thus] established in the practice of *yoga*: "This very painting of the flow [of existence] has three realms, five destinations in five pigments, and states of existence on three levels (*tribhūmyavastha*): [1.] the level of the sphere of sensuality, [2. the level of] the sphere of subtle materiality, and [3. the level of] the

[38] On the complexities of the idea of emergence and theories of emergentism in early South Asia and in more recent developments, see Ganeri 2011.

[39] *Saddhsu* II §7.12.7–7.13 (Stuart 2015 [I]: 490–93): *punar api sa bhikṣur yogam āsthitaḥ: "tad eva traidhātukaṃ pañcagatikapañcaraṅgaṃ saṃsāracitrapaṭaṃ tribhūmyavasthaṃ—kāmadhātubhūmikaṃ rūpadhātukam ārūpyadhātukam. tatra sa cittacitrakarmakaraḥ kāmasevanayā kāmadhātvālambanāni nanavidhāni rūpāṇi ālikhate. viṃśatividhāni rūpadhātvālambanāśritāni kāmavisaṃyuktāni caturdhyānakūrcena tadāśritāni ṣoḍaśabhūmyavasthitāni rūpadhātāv abhilikhati. rūpadhātvālambanavisaṃyuktāni samāpatticatuṣkādisamālambanāny ārūpyadhātāv abhilikhati cittacitrakarmakaraḥ. āyato hy ayaṃ traidhātukapaṭaḥ.*

punar api sa bhikṣuś cittacitrakaraṃ paśyati sattvān ālikhamānam anyena prakāreṇa: "tatra citrakarasadṛśaṃ cittacitrakaram. raṅgabhājanasadṛśaṃ śarīram. dṛḍhakasadṛśāni rāgadveṣamohāni. sopānasadṛśam ālambanam. kūrcasadṛśānīndriyāṇi. raṅgasadṛśā bāhyaviṣayāḥ śabdasparśarasarūpagandhāḥ. bhittisadṛśaḥ saṃsāraḥ. ālokasadṛśaṃ jñānam. hastasadṛśo vīryārambhaḥ. citrarūpasadṛśāni rūpāni anekaveṣarūpavastravṛddhijātāny anekakarmaphalavipākakṛtāni."

> sphere of immateriality. On that [painting], the actions of the mind, like a painter, by engaging in sensuality, paint various images [based on] objects [of consciousness] of the sphere of sensuality. With the brush of the four meditations in the sphere of subtle materiality, [it] paints twenty types of [images], which are based on objects [of consciousness] of the subtle material sphere, and which are separate from sensuality. [These images appear in] sixteen states of existence that have these [meditations] as a support (*tadāśrita*). The action of the mind, like a painter, [also] paints [images] in the sphere of immateriality. They are separated from the objects of the sphere of subtle materiality, and have as a basis the four [immaterial] attainments. [In this way,] this painting of the three realms is extensive."
>
> 7.13 Further, that monk, using another method, sees the painter-mind as it paints beings: "Here, the painter-mind is similar to a painter. The body is similar to pigment vessels. Desire, aversion and delusion are similar to a base coat (*dṛḍhakasadṛśa*). An object [of consciousness] is similar to a ladder [on which a painter stands]. The sense-faculties are like paint brushes. The external sense-objects—sounds, touches, tastes, visible forms and scents—are similar to pigments. The flow [of existence] is similar to a wall [on which a painter paints]. Knowledge is similar to light [that illuminates a painting]. The application of effort is similar to [a painter's] hands. The bodies [of beings], like the images in a painting, are born in a multitude of appearances, shapes, attires and fortunes, and are created as the ripening of the fruit of various actions."

This elaborate metaphor is developed from a canonical simile found in the *Saṃyuktāgama*.[40] In the canonical text, the mind of an ignorant worldling is compared to a master painter who paints images in conformity with his mind.[41] In the extended metaphor of the *Saddhsu*, however, the early concep-

[40] SĀ 267 (with a Pāli parallel in SN 22.100 at SN III 152).

[41] See Stuart (forthcoming) for a discussion of the painter-mind passages of the *Saddhsu* in connection with the development of the relationship between visual and contemplative practice cultures. For a treatment of painter similes with an eye to Buddhist texts from Central Asia, see Martini 2008 and 2011. Cristina Scherrer-Schaub (2009) has also brilliantly analyzed the painter metaphor in the *Saddhsu* in a discussion of painting and writing practices in Central Asia. She does not, however, contextualize the metaphor within the larger meditative and philosophical program

tion is transfigured to portray the mind of a meditator at an advanced stage of discernment. Here the text develops the meta-cognitive outlook presented in the *catuṣkoṭi* similes of the fifth stage of practice. The outlook of the painter-mind metaphor is more expansive, however, and provides conceptual space for all of the ways of knowing—which are also ways of being—presented in the previous stages of practice. This comprehensive metaphor opens up a space for an *enactive* mode of meditative existence. By this, I mean a theory-cum-practice of mind in which the world of human experience is produced through a process of enactment.[42] That is, instead of conceptualizing cognition as a process whereby cognizing agents passively gain access to the world that is experienced, theories of enactivism suggest that cognition is embodied, a way of acting in a world of experience that thereby plays a role in producing that very world of experience. The *Saddhsu*'s painter-mind metaphors gesture towards such a theory of enactive cognition, and the text's previous shifts in modes of engaging the mind and cognition appear to lead up to such gestures.

A meditation practitioner first discerns basic mental and material phenomena. He then comes to see how the entire world, a world of mental content that makes up his reality, emerges from those basic structures. In that process, he ultimately deconstructs the very existence of such structures. Finally, however, he returns to the fundamental aspects of mind and materiality, but engages them in a soteriological play that acknowledges and allows for the entire range of mental life to manifest in a spectrum of mundane and supramundane experiences.[43]

6. Conclusion

These key developmental shifts outlined in the *Saddhsu*'s path of meditative practice suggest two avenues of interpretation. On the one hand, we can read the text as very much in line with traditional canonical schemes of

---

of the text. See also Hamar 2014 for a discussion of the metaphor in the East Asian Buddhist tradition.

42 On enactivism, see Varela et al. 1992: 9, Thompson 2010: 1–88, Hutto and Myin 2013, and MacKenzie 2013.

43 The soteriology of the *Saddhsu* is a complex topic, and it remains unclear how the practices represented in the text relate to the supramundane path. On the soteriology of the *Saddhsu*, see Stuart 2015 (I): 198–224.

the path. A practitioner carries out an analysis of mind and materiality, sees their interrelationship, and comes to understand all facets of psycho-physical life. But the *Saddhsu* complicates this simple model in that its basic path scheme contains a range of historically layered materials, which are themselves framed as the objects of a process of meditative discernment, the objects of a comprehensive practice of *dharmasmṛtyupasthāna*.[44] In this way, the text explicitly engages what European philosophical traditions refer to as realist, idealist, and enactivist frames of reference.[45] While these categories of Western philosophical thought are not a perfect fit for the meditative gestures of the text—or for Indian philosophical contexts in general—by looking at the text through such lenses, we can begin to make sense of many of the developments in Indian Buddhist philosophy that emerge in the centuries after the *Saddhsu* was composed. But the text is more than just a historically important signpost. Rather, it is an approach to the path that must be taken seriously in its own right. The path of the *Saddhsu* provides a set of traditional categories and procedures through which to know the world, and these categories and procedures in turn prescribe a set of modes of existence in the world, as the world, or in relation to a world of experience. If taken seriously as a model for contemplative development, the *Saddhsu* provides a take on the Buddhist path that suggests that the maps we use—and are provided with by our traditions—construct and become the territory of our practice.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

AKBh *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam of Vasubandhu*, ed. P. Pradhan. Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1967.

D Derge Edition of the Tibetan Tripiṭaka, published by the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center 2002 (based on a scanning of the photomechanical reprint of the *par phud* print-

[44] See Stuart 2015a: 178–187.

[45] The idea that enactivism is simply a "Western" category is, however, somewhat misleading, since the category owes its origins, at least in part, to the Buddhist philosophical tradition's influence on Francisco Varela's systems theory.

	ing published in Delhi by Karmapae chodhey gyalwae sungrab partun khang, 1976–79).
DN	*Dīghanikāya*
Mahāvibhāṣā	T 1545: **Abhidharmamahāvibhāṣāśāstra* (*Apidamo da piposha lun* 阿毘達磨大毘婆沙論).
MN	*Majjhimanikāya*
Ms	A photocopy of the single known Sanskrit manuscript of the *Saddharmasmṛty-upasthānasūtra* kept in the collection of the China Tibetology Research Center (Box 12, No.1), the original of which is held at Norbulingka in Lhasa
Q	The Tibetan Tripiṭaka: Peking Edition, kept in the Library of the Otani University, Kyoto, ed. D. T. Suzuki. Tokyo: Tibetan Tripitaka Research Institute, 1955–1958.
Saddhsu	*Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra*
SĀ	*Saṃyuktāgama* (Taishō no. 99)
SN	*Saṃyuttanikāya*
Śrbh J[e]	*Śrāvakabhūmi*, The First Chapter, Revised Sanskrit Text and Japanese Translation, ed. The Śrāvakabhūmi Study Group. Tokyo: The Institute for Comprehensive Studies of Buddhism, Taisho University, 1998.
T	Taishō

References to Pāli texts are to Pali Text Society editions unless otherwise noted.
References to the Taishō edition of the Chinese Buddhist canon are to the CBETA 電子佛典集成光碟 2011 version. I regularly repunctuate Taishō texts.

Secondary Sources

Bodhi 2007

Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Discourse on the All-embracing Net of Views, The* Brahmajāla Sutta *and Its Commentaries.* Kandy, Sri Lanka: The Buddhist Publication Society, 2007 [1978].

Boucher 2008
Daniel Boucher, *The Bodhisattvas of the Forest and the Formation of the Mahāyāna*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2008.
Buswell 1997
Robert E. Buswell, Jr., "The 'Aids to Penetration' (*Nirvedhabhāgīya*) According to the Vaibhāṣika School," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 25, 6 (1997), 589–611.
Deleanu 2006
Florin Deleanu, *The Chapter on the Mundane Path (Laukikamārga) in the Śrāvakabhūmi: A Trilingual Edition (Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese), Annotated Translation, and Introductory Study*. Tokyo: International Institute for Buddhist Studies of the International College for Postgraduate Buddhist Studies, 2006.
Demiéville 1954
Paul Demiéville, "La *Yogācārabhūmi* de Saṅgharakṣa," *Bulletin de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient* 44 (1954), 340–436.
Demoto 2009
Mitsuyo Demoto, "Die 128 Nebenhöllen nach dem *Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra*," in Martin Straube, Roland Steiner, Jayandra Soni, Michael Hahn (eds.). *Pāsādikadānaṃ: Festschrift für Bhikkhu Pāsādika*. Marburg: Indica et Tibetica Verlag, 2009, pp. 61–88.
Dhammajoti 2007
Bhikkhu K. L. Dhammajoti, *Sarvāstivāda Abhidharma*. Hong Kong: Centre of Buddhist Studies, The University of Hong Kong, 2007.
Dreyfus 1997
Georges B. J. Dreyfus, *Recognizing Reality: Dharmakīrti's Philosophy and Its Tibetan Interpretations.* Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997.
Dreyfus and McClintock 2003
Georges B. J. Dreyfus and Sarah L. McClintock, *The Svātantrika-Prāsaṅgika Distinction*. Somerville, Massachusetts: Wisdom Publications, 2003.
Eckel 2008
Malcom David Eckel, *Bhāviveka and His Buddhist Opponents.* Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Department of Sanskrit and Indian Studies at Harvard University, 2008.

Eltschinger 2014
Vincent Eltschinger, *Buddhist Epistemology as Apologetics, Studies in the History, Self-Understanding and Dogmatic Foundations of Late Indian Buddhist Philosophy*. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2014.
Ganeri 2011
Jonardon Ganeri, "Emergentisms, Ancient and Modern," *Mind* 120, 479 (2011), 671–703.
Hamar 2014
Imre Hamar, "The Metaphor of the Painter in the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra* and Its Chinese Interpretations," *Studia Orientalia Slovaca* 13, 2 (2014), 175–198.
Hutto and Myin 2013
Daniel D. Hutto and Erik Myin, *Radicalizing Enactivism: Basic Minds without Content*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press, 2013.
Lin and Demiéville 1949
Li-kouang Lin and Paul Demiéville, *L'aide-mémoire de la vraie loi*. Paris: Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1949.
MacKenzie 2013
Matthew MacKenzie, "Enacting Selves, Enacting Worlds: On the Buddhist Theory of Karma," *Philosophy East and West* 63, 2 (2013), 194–212.
Martini 2008
Giuliana Martini, "Tracing the Sources of the *Book of Zambasta*: The Case of the *Yakṣa* Painter Simile and the *Kāśyapaparivarta*," *Journal of Inner Asian Art and Archaeology (Circle of Inner Asian Art of the School of Oriental and African Studies, London)* 3 (2008), 91–97.
Martini 2011
———, "A Large Question in a Small Place: The Transmission of the *Ratnakūṭa (Kāśyapaparivarta)* in Khotan." *Annual Report of The International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhology* 14 (2011), 135–183.
Scherrer-Schaub 2009
Cristina Scherrer-Schaub, "Scribes and Painters on the Road: Inquiry into Image and Text in Indian Buddhism and its Transmission to Central Asia and Tibet," in Pande Anupa (ed.), *The Art of Central Asia and the Indian Subcontinent in Cross-cultural Perspective*. New Delhi: National Museum Institute, 2009, pp. 29–40.

Schopen 1995
Gregory Schopen, "Deaths, Funerals, and the Division of Property in a Monastic Code," in Donald Lopez, Jr. (ed.), *Buddhism in Practice*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1995, pp. 473–502.
Stuart 2015
Daniel M. Stuart, *A Less Traveled Path:* Saddharmasmṛtyupasthānasūtra *Chapter 2*, *Critically edited with a Study on Its Structure and Significance for the Development of Buddhist Meditation*, Vol. I and II. [Sanskrit Texts From the Tibetan Autonomous Region 18]. Beijing, Vienna: China Tibetology Publishing House and Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2015.
Stuart 2015a
———, "Power in Practice: Cosmic Sovereignty Envisioned in Buddhism's Middle Period," *Critical Review for Buddhist Studies* 18 (2015), 165–96.
Stuart 2018
———, "Yogācāra Substrata? Precedent Frames for Yogācāra Thought Among Third-Century Yoga Practitioners in Greater Gandhāra," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 46, 2 (2018), 193–240.
Stuart forthcoming
———, "Brush Strokes of Sentience: The Painting of *Saṃsāra* in Buddhist Yoga," in Charles DiSimone (ed.), *Reading Outside the Lines: On the Intersection of Art and Texts in Buddhist Studies*. Contemporary Issues in Buddhist Studies. Berkeley, California: Institute for Buddhist Studies.
Thompson 2010
Evan Thompson, *Mind in Life: Biology, Phenomenology, and the Sciences of Mind*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2010 [2007].
Varela et al. 1991
Francisco J. Varela, Evan Thompson, Eleanor Rosch, *The Embodied Mind: Cognitive Science and Human Experience*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press 1991.
Waldron 2003
William Waldron, *The Buddhist Unconscious*. London and New York: RoutledgeCurzon, 2003.

Yamabe 1999

Nobuyoshi Yamabe, *The Sūtra on the Ocean-Like Samādhi of the Visualization of the Buddha: The Interfusion of the Chinese and Indian Cultures in Central Asia as Reflected in a Fifth Century Apocryphal Sūtra.* Ph.D. Diss., Yale University, 1999. Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Services.

Chapter VII

The Poetics of the Path: Bhāviveka's *Tattvāmṛtāvatāra* ("Introduction to the Ambrosia of Reality")

Malcolm David Eckel, Boston University

To explore the significance of the Buddhist path in the tradition of the Indian Mahāyāna, a natural place to turn would be Śāntideva's well-known *Bodhicaryāvatāra* ("Introduction to the Practice of Awakening"). This text has been well translated and has been the subject of extensive commentary, not only in scholarly circles, but also among contemporary practitioners. To take a step further in the history of the tradition, one could open up the pages of Kamalaśīla's *Bhāvanākrama* ("Stages of Practice") and Atiśa's *Bodhipathapradīpa* ("Lamp for the Path of Awakening"). Both of these texts had wide influence on the path literature of Tibet, most notably Tsongkhapa's great treatise on the *Lam rim chen mo* ("Stages of the Path"). To understand the antecedents of Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, one could turn to Candrakīrti's *Madhyamakāvatāra* ("Introduction to the Middle Way"). This text has been less widely studied, but it too had great influence in Tibet, and it is likely to have more impact on contemporary Buddhist scholarship as its Sanskrit text becomes more widely available.[1]

In this essay I would like to focus on another text in this distinguished lineage, one that is not as widely known but that predates all the texts that I have just mentioned. This is Bhāviveka's *Tattvāmṛtāvatāra*, which can be translated as "Introduction to the Ambrosia of Reality." Bhāviveka's *Tattvāmṛtāvatāra* now comprises the first three chapters of his *Madhyamakahṛdayakārikāḥ* ('Verses on the Heart of the Middle Way'; hereafter MHK), but there are reasons to believe that these three chapters were originally conceived as a

[1] As in Li 2015.

Cristina Pecchia and Vincent Eltschinger (eds.), *Mārga. Paths to Liberation in South Asian Buddhist Traditions*. Papers from an international symposium held at the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, December 17 – 18, 2015. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2020, pp. 303–327.

separate work.[2] The text is now available for study in both Sanskrit and Tibetan versions, edited by Heitmann in MHK (1998). In effect, it is the first of the great Madhyamaka "introductions," and it deserves study for that reason alone. But it also is an accomplished work of literature. Its metaphors are richly developed; its language is thick with literary allusions; it has a sharp philosophical edge; and it explores the narrative structure of the path with unusual sensitivity. In this essay I would like to show how the narrative structure of the text (what in Aristotle's *Poetics* is called its *muthos*)[3] is reflected in the metaphorical texture of its language, and how both its narrative structure and the character of its metaphors can give us a rich and varied picture of what it means to follow a distinctively Mahāyāna path.

1. The Narrative Structure of the Bodhisattva Path

When a reader comes to Bhāviveka's *Tattvāmṛtāvatāra* for the first time, especially with the later "introductions" by Śāntideva and Candrakīrti in mind, Bhāviveka's text seems utterly conventional. As is common in such texts, Bhāviveka begins with homage to the Buddha, designated in this case as "the Teacher who spoke the truth." Then he moves on to state the topics of his three chapters: "not relinquishing the awakening mind," "taking the vow of an ascetic," and "seeking the knowledge of reality."[4]

> *mahābodhau kṛtadhiyāṃ parārthodayadīkṣayā* |
> *tattvāmṛtāvatārāya śaktitaḥ kiṃcid ucyate* || (1.4)
>
> For those who aspire to great awakening, vowing to benefit others, I say a few words, as far as possible, to introduce the ambrosia of reality.

---

[2] V. V. Gokhale (1972) was the first to suggest that the first three chapters were composed separately. More recent scholarship on the Tibetan transmission of this text (He and Kuijp 2014) has shown that the relationship between these three chapters and the rest of the work is more uncertain and complex.

[3] Following the translation in Halliwell 1998: 23–24.

[4] All quotations from the Sanskrit and Tibetan texts of the *Madhyamakahṛdayakārikā* chapters 1–3 are taken from Heitmann 1998. Translations of the first chapter are informed by V. V. Gokhale's original study of this text in Gokhale 1985. Translations of verses in chapter 3 are either original or adapted from those in Eckel 1994.

> *bodhicittāparityāgo munivratasamāśrayaḥ |*
> *tattvajñānaiṣaṇā ceti caryā sarvārthasiddhaye* || (1.5)
>
> Not relinquishing the awakening mind, taking the vow of an ascetic, and seeking the knowledge of reality—this practice is meant to accomplish all [human] goals.

With the content of the three chapters in view, he takes on the role of a commentator and expands on the meaning of the first term on the list, the "awakening mind" (*bodhicitta*):

> *bodhicittam mahāmaitrīkaruṇājñānabhūṣaṇam |*
> *buddhabījaṃ yato vidvān tadatyāgāya yujyate* || (1.6)
>
> The awakening mind is adorned by great benevolence, compassion, and knowledge; since it is the seed of buddhahood, a wise person should strive not to relinquish it.

How does someone put the awakening mind into practice? Bhāviveka answers in the next two verses:

> *dhīmatā sattvamahatā paraduḥkhāsahiṣṇunā |*
> *samyagārabdhavīryeṇa yuktaṃ śaktimatā satā* || (1.7)
> *lokam ālokya sakalaṃ prajñālokatiraskṛtam |*
> *saṃsārāmedhyapātālāt tīrtvā tārayituṃ svayam* || (1.8)
>
> A wise person who is capable and intelligent—one who has strength of character, cannot bear the suffering of others, and acts with the true courage—should see that the whole world has lost the light of wisdom, and should save it, along with himself, from the foul netherworld of *saṃsāra*.

These first few verses give us nothing more than an initial orientation to the bodhisattva journey, but they already tell a great deal about Bhāviveka's intellectual style and the expectations he has for his readers. The first thing to notice is how methodical he is in elaborating his categories. The text itself has three chapters (the awakening mind, the vow of an ascetic, and the knowledge of reality); the first chapter has three topics (great benevolence, compassion, and knowledge); and the first of these topics has four aspects (saving all sentient beings, liberating them, waking them up, and taking them to nirvana). Of these four aspects, I have quoted only the first. This tendency to divide categories into subdivisions and to divide subdivisions into sub-subdivisions is certainly not unique to Bhāviveka, but he was a master of this strategy, and it stood him in good stead in later chapters, where his

classification of Indian philosophical views virtually created the genre of the philosophical compendium.

These verses also show how attuned he is to the nuances of language and to the images embedded in his words. The line *lokam ālokya sakalaṃ prajñālokatiraskṛtam* has the condensed musicality of Aśvaghoṣa's *Life of the Buddha*, and it demands the same attention to nuances of meaning. The Tibetan translator took *prajñālokatiraskṛtam* to mean that the world does not have the "light of wisdom" (*shes rab snang ba med pa*). This is a plausible translation, but we see in a later verse (3.297) that the world is "covered by a net of false conceptuality (*kalpanājālasaṃvṛtam*)." The bodhisattva sees this unfortunate situation and undertakes to lead ordinary people out of *saṃsāra*. I don't think it would be reading too much into this verse to think that Bhāviveka's first image of the activity of a bodhisattva contains a thinly veiled reference to Avalokiteśvara, who looks down with compassion, and Tārā, who "saves" sentient beings or carries them over saṃsāra.

But the most striking imagery in these early verses comes from another tradition altogether. Bhāviveka starts his account of the path with a reference to the bodhisattva's "vow to benefit others," but, instead of using the standard term for a vow (*praṇidhāna*), he calls this vow the bodhisattva's *dīkṣā*. One would normally think of this as a Vedic term for the consecration that prepares a person for a religious ceremony. Monier-Williams explains that it is used in the *Mahābhārata* for "any serious preparation (as for battle)." The ceremonial associations continue a few lines later when Bhāviveka refers to *saṃsāra* as *amedhya*, "impure or unfit for sacrifice." Bhāviveka exploits these associations most fully in the next chapter on "taking the vow of an ascetic." Here he depicts the bodhisattva, in the words of V. V. Gokhale, as "a fully accoutred Muni of the Brahmanical tradition—a Muni with his matted hair, deerskin, water jug, girdle, reed mat, sacrificial fire, Sun-worship, and whatnot, all of which he seems to admire, if not envy."[5] All these are taken to be symbolic of Buddhist virtues, including the Sāvitrī (or Gāyatrī), which is interpreted as the chant of *pratītyasamutpāda*. Whether these symbolic equivalents express envy or something closer to irony is debatable. These lines were written by the same person who later said that advanced bodhisattvas worship the Supreme Brahman by "the discipline of no-worship" (MHK 3.290).

By referring to the initial aspiration as a "vow" to benefit others, Bhāviveka gives a ritual dimension to something that might otherwise seem

[5] Gokhale 1972: 45.

to be merely a series of moral and cognitive aspirations. The ritual dimension of this vow is elaborated with particular clarity in the first three chapters of Śāntideva's *Bodhicaryāvatāra*, where Śāntideva offers "praise to the awakening mind" and embeds this praise in a practice that Kate Crosby and Andrew Skilton identify as "an important and widespread Mahāyāna liturgy, the *anuttara-pūjā* or Supreme Worship."[6] Compassion and other related concepts also function as decisive motivating factors in more traditional accounts of Buddhist lives. One thinks, for example, of the interplay of "sympathy" (*anukampa*), "compassion" (*karuṇā*), "pity" (*kṛpā*), and "grief" (śoka) in Siddhārtha's decision to seek release, as recounted in verses 3.43, 3.45, 5.5, and 5.6 of Aśvaghoṣa's *Buddhacarita*.[7] Each of these terms has its own traditional echoes in Hindu as well as Buddhist sources, especially the terms "pity" and "grief." In the *Bhagavadgītā*, Krishna criticizes both of these emotions as signs of weakness. Here they are signs of the bodhisattva's sensitivity to the need for freedom from suffering. By framing this impulse in ritual terms, Śāntideva gives it the karmic weight that eventually begins to accumulate, as the path unfolds, around the practice of the bodhisattva "vows" (*praṇidhāna*).[8] This vow not only motivates the practice of the bodhisattva, but it makes the power of the bodhisattva's compassion available to others.

As Bhāviveka indicated in his opening verse, his first two chapters on the aspiration and the initiation of the bodhisattva set the stage for his discussion of "the quest for knowledge of reality" in chapter 3. With its analysis of the different categories of Indian thought, this chapter is the one that most appeals to students of Buddhist philosophy, not just for its classification of con-

---

6 Crosby and Skilton 1996: 9.

7 See Olivelle 2008.

8 The vows begin as an expression of the Supreme Worship in verse 3.6: "With the good acquired by doing all this as described, may I allay all the suffering of every living being" (*evaṃ sarvam idaṃ kṛtvā yan mayāsāditaṃ śubham | tena syāṃ sarvasattvānāṃ sarvaduḥkhapraśāntikṛt* ||) and it is brought to its culmination in the final chapter on the dedication (*pariṇāmanā*) of merit, as, for example, in verse 10.2: "Through my merit may all those in any of the directions suffering distress in body and mind find oceans of happiness and delight" (*sarvāsu dikṣu yāvantaḥ kāyacittavyathāturāḥ | te prāpnuvantu matpuṇyaiḥ sukhaprāmodyasāgarān* ||) (translation quoted from Crosby and Skilton 1996: 20 and 138). For more on the significance of the bodhisattva vow in Madhyamaka tradition, see Eckel 1994: 73–94, and Crosby and Skilton 1996: 133–137.

cepts and categories, but for its distinctive application of Dignāga's three-part inference. But this chapter too is framed as a form of practice:

> *abhiyujyeta medhāvī samādhānāya cetasaḥ |*
> *tathā śrutamayajñāne tadanyajñānahetutaḥ* || (3.14)
>
> A wise person should practice mental concentration, and also knowledge that comes from hearing, because it is the cause of other knowledge.

> *na paśyati yathā vaktraṃ kauṣapracale jale |*
> *tathāsamāhite citte tattvaṃ nivaraṇāvṛte* || (3.15)
>
> Just as you cannot see your face when water is muddy or turbulent you cannot see reality when the mind is unconcentrated and covered with obstructions.

> *nibadhyālambanastambhe smṛtirajjvā manogajam |*
> *unmārgacāriṇaṃ kuryāt prajñāṃkuśavaśaṃ śanaiḥ* || (3.16)
>
> When the mind strays from the path like an elephant, bind it to the post of the object with the rope of mindfulness and bring it slowly under control with the hook of wisdom.

Here wisdom, or the systematic analysis of the categories of reality, is like a hook to control the elephant of the mind. Without ever having witnessed the training of a wild elephant, one gets a sense of the pain this process might require and also a sense that this process will take time. In this respect, Bhāviveka gives the impression of an old-fashioned pedagogue; this diligent analysis will not be completed in a day.

The third chapter moves on from the analysis of reality to an account of the "stages" (*bhūmi*) of the bodhisattva path and ends with a vision of Buddhahood. In other words, the chapter completes Bhāviveka's step-by-step account of the bodhisattva path, from the initial aspiration that opens the text to the final attainment of Buddhahood. And he gives us a unifying image that we can use to picture the ascent to Buddhahood.

> *tattvaprāsādaśikharārohaṇaṃ na hi yujyate |*
> *tathyasaṃvṛtisopānam antareṇa yatas tataḥ* || (3.12)
> *pūrvaṃ saṃvṛtisatyena praviviktamatir bhavet |*
> *tato dharmasvasāmānyalakṣaṇe suviniścitaḥ* || (3.13)
>
> It is certainly impossible to climb the peak of the palace of reality without the steps of the correct relative [truth]. For this reason,

> one should first discriminate with respect to relative truth,
> and then analyze the particular and universal characteristics of *dharma*s.

It is not entirely clear what kind of "palace" Bhāviveka has in mind. The word *prāsāda* can apply to a temple as well as to the palace of a king. Since it involves an act of climbing, we might picture this "palace" as having a series of terraces, like the *stūpa* at Borobudur, where a practitioner might travel from one level of reality to another, with each level marked by its own distinctive narrative, until the practitioner reaches the still point at the top. But it would be more accurate to compare this palace to an Indian temple, where the eye makes a visual ascent of the central tower (the *śikhara* mentioned in Bhāviveka's verse) to reach not just the still point at the top, but the sky beyond. In either case, Bhāviveka's reference to the "ladder" or "steps" makes it clear that this is not a sudden ascent. One has to attend, metaphorically, to the demands of each stage in the process before reaching the goal.

Here Bhāviveka is giving his own distinctive interpretation of the image contained in Nāgārjuna's famous account of the relationship between the two truths in the *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā*:

> *dve satye samupāśritya buddhānāṃ dharmadeśanā* |
> *lokasaṃvṛtisatyaṃ satyaṃ ca paramārthataḥ* || (24.8)
> *ye 'nayor na vijānanti vibhāgaṃ satyayor dvayoḥ* |
> *te tattvaṃ na vijānanti gambhīre buddhaśāsane* || (24.9)
> *vyavahāram anāśritya paramārtho na deśyate* |
> *paramārtham anāgamya nirvāṇaṃ nādhigamyate* || (24.10)
>
> Buddhas rely on two truths to teach the Dharma: ordinary relative truth and ultimate truth.
> Those who do not know the distinction between the two truths do not know the reality in the buddhas' profound teaching.
> Without relying on the conventional, it is impossible to teach the ultimate; without understanding the ultimate, it is impossible to attain *nirvāṇa*.

There is a crucial ambiguity at the heart of this sequence of verses. What does it mean to say that teaching the ultimate "relies on" the conventional? The term *āśritya* could simply mean an act of verbal reference: teachings about the ultimate must inevitably "refer to" the conventional, since all teachings involve the use of words. But the word *āśritya* also can have a spatial implication, as if teachings about the ultimate are somehow "located in" or "based upon" the conventional. Bhāviveka's reimagining of this verse

takes the spatial implication of the word *āśritya* and elaborates it into the picture of a wise person or practitioner who climbs step by step up a physical structure. Whether this is true to Nāgārjuna's intention might be a point of debate, but it provides a perfect frame for Bhāviveka's methodical analysis of the conventional categories of reality as they were understood by Buddhist and non-Buddhist schools. It also lays the groundwork for his methodical presentation of the stages of the bodhisattva path. Bhāviveka's image of the palace and its steps anticipates the famous defense of the "gradualist" position that is attributed to Kamalaśīla in the so-called "debate at bSam-yas," in which certain influential parties turned away from the dangers of a "sudden" view of awakening toward a more gradual and analytical view of the path. One of the interlocutors in the debate made this point with the same comparison that Bhāviveka used to explain the relationship between conventional and ultimate truths: "Now, when you ascend a mountain, you must do it step by step, but you are not capable of doing it at once. In a similar manner, if it be difficult to attain the first Stage (even by degrees), what is there to say of the attainment of Omniscience?"[9]

On the face of it, the gradualist framework is unsurprising. It is the narrative structure one would expect from an Indian scholar with Bhāviveka's analytical interests. But Bhāviveka's narrative frame is not as simple as it seems. He actually has set a trap for himself in the middle of the text that transforms the solid image of the palace of reality into a figment of the imagination, a palace in a dream. He does this at the beginning of the third chapter by plunging directly into the analysis of emptiness. Before he says anything about the practice of the "perfections" (*pāramitā*) or the elevated attainments of a bodhisattva on the advanced stages of the bodhisattva path, he pushes his analysis of the categories of reality to a classic Madhyamaka conclusion, not just by concluding that all conventional categories are empty of reality, but by concluding that emptiness too is empty of reality. And whatever is true of emptiness is also true of the awareness of emptiness.

> *śūnyatādisvabhāvena yataḥ śūnyā hi śūnyatā* |
> *na paśyati tato vidvāñ chūnyatety api śūnyatām* || (3.263)
>
> Since emptiness is empty of the identity of emptiness and so forth, a wise person does not see emptiness as "emptiness."

[9] Quoted from Bu-ston's account of the debate in his *Chos hbyung*, (see Obermiller 1932: 193–196, here 195).

The person who initially set out to ascend the palace and "see" reality, now realizes that there is nothing to climb and nothing to see.

Bhāviveka signals this transition by returning to the image of the palace, but in a different register.

> *yathā prasuptaḥ putrastrīvimānabhavanādikam |*
> *paśyen middhavaśāt tatra pratibuddho na paśyati ||* (3.253)
>
> Someone who feels drowsy and falls asleep sees such things as young men, young women, palaces and dwelling places, but he does not see them when he wakes up.

> *saṃvṛtyādhigatāṃs tadvad unmīlitamatīkṣaṇaḥ |*
> *ajñānanidroparamāt pratibuddho na paśyati ||* (3.254)
>
> So also, when someone has opened the wisdom-eye, stopped the sleep of ignorance, and woken up, he does not see things as they are understood in a relative sense.

Here the physical structure that gave such a clear intellectual form to Bhāviveka's view of the path is transformed into a palace of dreams. With this transformation, the conventional image of the path as a methodical movement from step to step and stage to stage, toward the final stage of buddhahood, has been exploded or, to be more accurate, it has been dissolved into thin air. And the same can be said of the narrative structure of the bodhisattva path. With nothing to climb and nothing to see, what more can the bodhisattva do, and where can the bodhisattva go? To frame the question more precisely, how can Bhāviveka, as a scholar of the path, resituate himself, to get from the "emptiness of emptiness" and from the palace of dreams back to the practice of the bodhisattva path?

As I pointed out in *To See the Buddha*,[10] Bhāviveka marks this crucial transition by engaging once again with a concept of place: he locates his rarefied account of emptiness in the figure of the buddha:

> *nirvikalpārthaviṣayā nirvikalpāpi dhīr mṛṣā |*
> *anātmādisvabhāvatvāt tadyathā savikalpadhīḥ ||* (3.265)
>
> A non-conceptual cognition with a non-conceptual object also is false, because it has no self, and so forth, like a conceptual cognition.

[10] Eckel 1994, especially pp. 39–42.

> *jñeyasya sarvathārthāsiddher nirvikalpāpi yatra dhīḥ |*
> *notpadyate tad atulyaṃ tattvaṃ tattvavido viduḥ ||* (3.266)
>
> Since there is nothing at all that can be known, those who know reality know that the highest reality is that of which not even a nonconceptual cognition arises.

> *tadbodhād ucyate buddho yo 'sāv anudayo dhiyaḥ |*
> *abodhabodhato mukhyo vikalpasvapnasaṃkṣayāt ||* (3.267)
>
> The no-arising of cognition is called "buddha" because it understands this; it is primary, because it is the understanding that is no understanding and because it dispels the sleep of concepts.

This verse serves as an occasion for Bhāviveka to comment on several common epithets of the Buddha, all understood from the ultimate point of view. The buddha is called "*sugata*," for example, because he has "well understood" (*sugata*) what needs to be understood by the method or approach of no-understanding (*agati-nayena*), and he is called "*sambuddha*" "because he has understood the equality (*samatā*) of all things without understanding equality." Bhāviveka gives a similar account of the term "Tathāgata" and various descriptive epithets, such as "immeasurable" (*ameya*), "incalculable" (*asaṃkhyeya*), and "unthinkable" (*acintya*).

At this point in the text, it is important to pause and consider exactly what Bhāviveka means by this string of negations. What does it mean, for example, to say that the buddha is a "no-arising" (*anudaya*) of cognition? There is a temptation built into the language of emptiness to imagine that the term "no-arising" refers to the place where that "no-arising" occurs, just as emptiness occurs in a place that is empty. But to use the word "occur" in this context is, of course, to speak metaphorically. What is meant is simply that a particular place is empty of a particular thing, the way a table might be empty of a book or a mind might be empty of a thought. This is the model suggested by the Tibetan translation of verse 3.267, in which Bhāviveka speaks of the buddha as the "no-arising of cognition": "that in which a cognition does not arise is the primary buddha, because it understands this" (*de rtogs phyir na gang zhig la || blo skye med pa sangs rgyas dngos*). Following the tradition that the term "buddha" refers primarily to an awareness, one could assume that the intention is to say that the word "buddha" refers to a mode of awareness in which no specific cognitive act occurs. In that sense it is empty of thought. As tempting as this interpretation may be, it does not coincide with Bhāviveka's interpretation of negation. To negate something ultimately

is to negate it in a way that leaves nothing behind, not even the "awareness" in which this non-occurrence might be said to "occur." This interpretation also does not coincide with Bhāviveka's understanding of consciousness. His argument against the Yogācāra approach to the concept of mind-only in the fifth chapter of the MHK is meant to show that consciousness in its subjective aspect is no more real than the external objects that the Yogācāra is intended to negate. Subject and object are equally empty.[11]

This leaves the reader with a radically negative understanding of Bhāviveka's concept of "no arising": what he means literally is that nothing happens, and the "place" where this non-occurrence takes place is also just a figment of the conventional imagination. As stark as this idea may be, it has important resonances with other Mahāyāna literature on the path. It has close kinship, for example, with the idea of "sudden" awakening associated with the Chinese monk Mahāyāna, Kamalaśīla's alleged rival in the debate at bSam-yas:

> If you commit virtuous or non-virtuous deeds, because you go to heavens and hells, (you still) are not liberated from *saṃsāra*. The path to Buddhahood is obscured…. Whoever does not think anything; the one who does not ponder will become completely liberated from *saṃsāra* … he is instantaneously enlightened. He is equal to one who has mastered the tenth bhūmi.[12]

This negative language also has close kinship with accounts of awakening in Tantric tradition and in the language of Zen.[13] It is as if an element of anti-structure has been thrown into the middle of the rigorously structured narrative of the bodhisattva path. And its significance is not reserved only for the final stages of the path. It expresses the premise, the quality of insight, on which the rest of the story rests. It is only when Bhāviveka has thrown down the challenge of this ultimate negation that he can consider the systematic unfolding of the bodhisattva path.

---

[11] This is the force of Bhāviveka's critique of "mind-only" in MHK 5.17-54 (Eckel 2008: 232–261).

[12] Williams 2009: 192. Williams quotes this translation from G. W. Houston, *Sources for a History of the bSam-yas Debate* (Sankt Augustin, Germany: V.G.H. Wissenschaftsverlag, 1980): 98. Houston's translation is taken from the account by Bu-ston.

[13] On the complex historical and typological connections among these different traditions, see Ruegg 1992.

He makes the transition from his negative account of the buddha to the more affirmative vision of the bodhisattva path by posing a simple question: If the buddha ultimately is no-understanding, who is able to approach this buddha in the right way? The answer is a great bodhisattva, like Avalokiteśvara or Maitreya, who can worship the buddha by the discipline of no-worship.

> *āryāvalokiteśāryamaitreyādyāś ca surayaḥ |*
> *anupāsanayogena munayo yad upāsate* || (3.290)
>
> [The Dharma Body] is worshipped by sages and saints such as Ārya Avalokiteśvara and Ārya Maitreya with the discipline of no-worship.

Once this has been said, it is possible for Bhāviveka once again to lay out the stages of the bodhisattva path—to say, in other words, how Avalokiteśvara and Maitreya achieved such extraordinary powers and how others might do so as well.

I will not go into the details of Bhāviveka's outline of the stages of the path, except to say that it follows a pattern that is rather different from the standard list of six or ten perfections in other Madhyamaka *avatāra* texts. He divides the progress of the bodhisattva path into four stages: (1) the first arising of the mind of awakening (*prathamacittotpādika*), (2) the practice of six perfections (*ṣaṭ-pāramitā-caryā-pratipanna*), (3) the irreversible stage (*avinivartanīya*), and (4) the stage that is one birth away from awakening (*ekajātipratibaddha*). The first of these stages was discussed in the first two chapters of the text; the last three occupy verses 292–345 of the third chapter.

What is most intriguing from our point of view is that he returns once again to the image of a palace. In the symbolic world of Indian temple architecture, the "palace/temple" (*prāsāda*), with its central tower (*śikhara*) is the equivalent of Mount Meru, the mountain at the center of Indian cosmology. Bhāviveka appropriates this image in order to indicate that the bodhisattva in this stage of the path has completed the ascent of the palace and can look back into the world below. Bhāviveka echoes the *Mahābhārata* (and *Dhammapada*) when he says that the bodhisattva in the sixth stage "who, out of compassion, has climbed the mountain peak of wisdom and, with no grief, looks with compassion on the world that suffers and is burned by grief."[14]

> *sa prajñāmeruśekharam ārūḍhaḥ karuṇāvaśāt |*
> *aśokaḥ śokasaṃtaptaṃ prekṣate duḥkhitaṃ jagat* || (3.296)

[14] The traditional sources of this verse are discussed in Eckel 1994: 28.

But this is not the only reference to a palace or a palace-like object in this section of the text. At the end of his account of the advanced bodhisattva who has acquired the super-knowledges (*abhijñā*) and is only one birth away from Buddhahood, the bodhisattva's final act is to "manifest bodies in as many Buddha-fields as there are grains of dust in innumerable world systems" and with these bodies to offer worship to the buddha. The last objects of worship are ornate "pavilions" (*kūṭāgāra*) that shine with hundreds of lamps, glow with the light of radiant jewels, reach to the clouds, and fill every direction with their light.[15] Are these new palace-like structures "real"? Yes and no. In this section of the text, Bhāviveka dwells at length on the advanced bodhisattva's power to manipulate the perception of reality, with particular emphasis on the word "power." It is as if Bhāviveka were offering his own commentary on Nāgārjuna's classic statement: "Everything is possible for someone for whom emptiness is possible."[16] Finally the bodhisattva path yields to the attainment of buddhahood, and not to the rarefied and paradoxical "ultimate" buddha that we encountered earlier in the text, but to a richly imagined "conventional" buddha who acts in myriads of ways to satisfy the needs of sentient beings.

It is a familiar point in accounts of the bodhisattva to say that the Mahāyāna path has a circular or recursive structure. As Masatoshi Nagatomi used to say to his introductory students at Harvard University, the bodhisattva path involves "two-way traffic," as the bodhisattva approaches nirvana but returns to *saṃsāra* out of compassion for others. This recursive pattern is given visual form in the version of the ten ox-herding pictures that is particularly popular in Japan, where the seeker catches a glimpse of the ox (or his true nature) as if it were different from himself, then reaches a state of non-duality where ox and self are forgotten, and finally closes the circle by returning the marketplace with empty hands.[17] Here Bhāviveka has charted a similar circular structure. He began with the ultimate Buddha, the

---

15 MHK 3.337-342, Eckel 1994: 187–188.

16 *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* 24.14: *sarvaṃ ca yujyate tasya śūnyatā yasya yujyate*.

17 I am grateful to Dan Lusthaus for pointing out that there are two Chinese versions of the ten ox-herding pictures. The one favored in Japan locates the circle of emptiness in frame 8, then returns to the marketplace in frame 10 "with bliss-bestowing hands."

A second version, more popular in Korea, concludes with the circle of emptiness in frame 10 (http://philosophy.lander.edu/oriental/reader/reader/x5038.html).

understanding that is no understanding; then he moved to the conventional path that leads to buddhahood; and finally he returned to the concept of buddhahood, but viewed through a conventional lens. This movement from the ultimate buddha to a conventional account of the path and then to a conventional picture of the buddha is reminiscent of Zhiyi's outline of the three truths, where the ultimate and conventional truths are unified in the truth of the middle. Whether this comparison is accurate or not, I think we can agree that Bhāviveka has devised a brilliant solution to the problem of what comes after the abstract account of emptiness. His answer has three parts: the ultimate buddha, the path that leads to buddhahood, and the buddha who serves as a *cintāmaṇi* or "wishing jewel" to fulfill all the aspirations, wishes, and intentions of living beings. In this way, Bhāviveka has given us a strikingly imaginative "introduction" to the bodhisattva path.

The three-part structure of Bhāviveka's thought can be read as a response to the tension that Buswell and Gimello identified between "Mārga and the 'Anti-Mārga' Tradition in Buddhist Thought":

> In the Buddhist world of cognitive indeterminacy, all things or events are so thoroughly transient as to be actually instantaneous, so radically interdependent that none may be assigned its own fixed and discrete identity; thus is the lie given to all apparent differentiation and imagined substantiality. Yet in this unstructured and unstructurable world, some order, sequence, and stringency of disciplined practice are still deemed necessary.[18]

Bhāviveka draws this "unstructured and unstructurable world" into the center of his account of the path, and he tames it, not simply with the discursive device of a philosophical argument, although that is always one of his most important rhetorical resources, but with a form of poetic imagery. And the imagery that gives his path its structure is also the image of a structure: the structure of a temple tower, the structure of a palace seen in a dream, and the palace-like structure imagined by a bodhisattva to pay homage to the Buddha. With this image in view, we can understand the structure of Bhāviveka's vision of the path without ever descending into its innumerable, practical details.

---

[18] Buswell and Gimello 1992: 24

2. The Metaphorical Texture of Bhāviveka's Language

I mentioned above that I would like to comment not only on the narrative structure of Bhāviveka's text, but also on the metaphorical texture of its language. Bhāviveka's composite image of a palace/temple/mountain clearly gives structural form to his account of the path, but this image is only part of a much broader pattern of metaphor that gives formal integrity to his text. It is easy to see what this means by looking back at the first few verses of the third chapter, the chapter that Bhāviveka calls *tattvajñānaiṣaṇā* ("seeking the knowledge of reality"). He begins this chapter with two verses about knowledge as vision:

> *yasya jñānamayaṃ cakṣuś cakṣus tasyāsti netarat* |
> *yatas tasmād bhaved dhīmāṃs tattvajñānaiṣaṇāparaḥ* || (3.1)
>
> Someone who has the eye of knowledge and not the other eye is the one who sees; so a wise person should focus on seeking the knowledge of reality.

> *paśyaty andho 'pi matimān didṛkṣur viprakṛṣṭakān* |
> *sūkṣmavyavahitān arthāṃs trailokyāhatadarśanaḥ* || (3.2)
>
> Even if a wise person is blind, he sees the three worlds without any obstruction; he sees whatever he wants to see, whether it is far away, subtle, or concealed.

This quest for vision then occasions this verse about the bodhisattva quest as the ascent of a palace:

> *tattvaprāsādaśikharārohaṇaṃ na hi yujyate* |
> *tathyasaṃvṛtisopānam antareṇa yatas tataḥ* || (3.12)
> *pūrvaṃ saṃvṛtisatyena praviviktamatir bhavet* |
> *tato dharmasvasāmānyalakṣaṇe suviniścitaḥ* || (3.13)
>
> It is certainly impossible to climb the peak of the palace of reality without the steps of the correct relative [truth]. For this reason, one should first discriminate with respect to relative truth, and then analyze the particular and universal characteristics of *dharma*s.

The initial verses about the philosopher's eyes add another dimension to the image of the palace or temple tower: the purpose of the wise person's ascent is not merely to pass through a number of requisite stages to

reach a goal, but to reach a vantage point where it is possible to see reality clearly. This image of the bodhisattva's sight returns in verse 3.296, where the bodhisattva who has attained the perfection of wisdom and entered the sixth bodhisattva stage stands on the mountain peak of wisdom (*prajñāmeruśekhara*, like the *tattvaprāsādaśikhara* of verse 3.12) and gazes compassionately on those who suffer below. At this elevated level, vision actually points in two directions: not just toward the valley, but also upward toward what Bhāviveka calls the "ambrosia of reality" (*tattvāmṛta*) which is as clear as the autumn sky. Bimal Krishna Matilal once suggested that the term *avatāra* in the title of this text does not mean "introduction," as it is commonly understood, but "descent" in the Hindu sense, like the descent of Viṣṇu into the realm of *saṃsāra*.[19] In that case, the "ambrosia of reality" would be the nectar that flows down from the bodhisattva on the mountain peak of wisdom. This is a strong proposal, but it does not exactly match Bhāviveka's language. When the bodhisattva is on the mountain (in verse 3.296) he looks into the sky to see the ambrosia of reality:

> *śive prapañcopaśame śaradgagananirmale* |
> *tattvāmṛte nirālokadhīpracāram alocanam* || (3.300)
>
> The ambrosia of reality, the welfare that consists of calming manifoldness, is as clear as the autumn sky. But [ordinary people], whose minds function so that they do not see it, lack the eye [of wisdom].[20]

To help these ordinary people, the bodhisattva sends forth rivers whose water consists of merit, born from the six perfections (verse 3.303). The bodhisattva showers them with water, not with ambrosia, but the water still finds a way to satisfy their thirst. This water is simply a more palpable expression of the bodhisattva's tears of compassion in verse 3.297. More could be said

---

[19] Matilal made this comment in a private communication. This understanding of "ambrosia" (*amṛta*) as descending from above is consistent with Étienne Lamotte's point in Appendix Note VIII of his translation of the *Vimalakīrtinirdeśa*, where he points out that *amṛta* does not come from the depths of the ocean, as in Hindu tradition, but from above (Lamotte 1976: 307–313).

[20] This verse is filled out by carrying terms down from the preceding verses and by explanation in the commentary. See Eckel 1994: 174–176. The translation of *prapañcopaśama* follows the suggestion of Anne MacDonald in her translation of Candrakīrti's *Prasannapadā* (MacDonald 2015, vol. 2: 42–43).

about the sensory dimensions of this complex image: it includes not only the kinesthetic and visual dimensions of the bodhisattva's ascent of the mountain, but also the sense that the bodhisattva can satisfy sentient beings with the water of his merit. But let me set the sensory images connected with the bodhisattva's vision and comment briefly on a pair of verses that show what Bhāviveka thinks it means to move along a path to Buddhahood.

In chapter 5 of the MHK, the text in which the *Tattvāmṛtāvatāra* is now embedded, Bhāviveka responds to a Yogācāra critic by saying:

> *atrocyate pramāṇaṃ naḥ sarvaṃ tathāgataṃ vacaḥ |*
> *āptopadeśaprāmāṇyād bhadro hi pratipadyate* || (5.8)
>
> In response we say, All the Tathāgatas' teachings are authoritative for us, because the teachings of a reliable person are authoritative; clearly a good person understands.
>
> *nāgamāntarasaṃdigdhaviparyastamatiḥ paraḥ |*
> *tasmāt tatpratipattyarthaṃ tanmṛgyo yuktimannayaḥ* || (5.9)
>
> But the opponent, whose mind is confused and misled by other traditional doctrines, does not.
> For this reason, he[21] should follow a rational approach so that [the opponent] will understand.

The second of these two verses bears a strong resemblance to a parallel verse by Dharmakīrti in *Pramāṇavārttika* 2.30:

> *jñānavān mṛgyate kaścit taduktapratipattaye |*
> *ajñopadeśakaraṇe vipralambhanaśaṅkhibhiḥ* ||
>
> Those who suspect deceit in the teaching of an ignorant person seek some knowledgeable person in order to put into practice what is taught by him.[22]

The similarity between these two verses can hardly be accidental, but who borrowed from whom? Is it Bhāviveka who rewrites Dharmakīrti or the other way around? All we can say is that the verses contain at least one key difference. For Dharmakīrti the thing to be sought is a knowledgeable person; for Bhāviveka, it is what I call a "rational approach." Franco argues that we

---

[21] Bhāviveka identifies the "he" in this sentence simply as a "debater" (*smra ba po / vādin*). Presumably this is a reference to the "good person" (*bhadra*) of the previous verse who is entering into debate with an opponent who does not understand.

[22] Franco 2018.

should treat the two concepts as equivalent. But that would blind us to one of the most characteristic features of Bhāviveka's thought: his use of the term *nīti* or *naya* functions as part of a consistent metaphorical system to build a verbal picture of a bodhisattva's movement along the path to awakening.

In a thoughtful appendix to her translation of the first chapter of the *Prasannapadā*, Anne MacDonald reviews the possible translations of the terms *naya* and *nīti* and recommends the use of the word "method," especially in the term *prajñāpāramitā-nīti* or the "method of the perfection of insight."[23] She is generous enough to acknowledge that my word "approach" appears to work in the context of Bhāviveka's MHK, but she prefers not to apply it elsewhere. It is true that "approach" is an awkward choice, but it is meant to draw attention to an aspect of the text that is almost impossible to capture in translation. The words *nīti* and *naya* are both verbal nouns based on the root to "lead." In a sense, then, they are "leadings." This is why MacDonald likes Iida's term "guiding principle." But the terms also have a doctrinal function: they name a system, doctrine, position, or viewpoint (to pick just a few of the many possible dictionary meanings), hence Iida's compound designation "guiding principle."[24] You could say that the term *prajñāpāramitā-nīti* refers to the Perfection of Wisdom as a way of thinking, with the understanding that it is a distinctive doctrinal approach among others. One of the most important doctrinal resonances of the terms *nīti* and *naya* is the Jain classification system of seven *naya*s, a system that is distinct from but related to the Jain system of 363 doctrines.[25] These numerical schemes acquired great importance in the tradition of Jain doxography that was just beginning to emerge in the time of Bhāviveka, and they lie behind one of the most intractable philological problems in the *Tarkajvālā* ("Flame of Reason"), the list of 363 *darśana*s ("views") in the commentary on verse 9.20. The identity of most of these views remains obscure, but the list itself seems to be an archaic snapshot of the diversity of Indian philosophical views.

Just a glance at the language in MHK 5.8-9 shows that the terms *naya* and *nīti* are not simply devices for classification; they reflect Bhāviveka's metaphorical understanding of philosophy as a form of movement. A "rational approach" is the focus of a particular action: it is something "to be

23 MacDonald 2015, vol. 2: 357–358.

24 Iida 1980: 80.

25 Folkert 1993.

sought" (*mṛgya*). This word comes from the same root *mṛg* that is found in our word *mārga* or "path." When the commentary glosses the word *naya* ("approach") in verse 5.9 as *lam* (presumably the Tibetan for *mārga*), it is treating *naya* as an "approach to be followed." And if it is followed, where does it lead? The terms *pratipadyate* and *pratipatti* in 5.8 and 5.9 could be translated by variations of the word "understand," as I do, or as "put into practice," as favored by Franco. But it is possible to get closer to the root meaning by translating these words as "move forward" or "make progress," with the understanding that this movement involves progress in a cognitive sense. This meaning is enshrined in the analysis of the path in Haribhadra's *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* ("Ornament of Realization")—a tradition that was almost certainly known to Bhāviveka—and, of course, it is the meaning that lies concealed in the term "Middle Path" (*madhyamā pratipad*), which could just as easily be translated as the middle way of making progress.[26]

Bhāviveka's word-play with the terms *nīti* and *naya* is not limited to the Yogācāra chapter; he also uses it to frame his response to the Śrāvakas in chapter 4.

> *durvigāhām imāṃ nītiṃ boddhum durbalaśaktayaḥ |*
> *asthānatrāsasaṃrabdhaḥ prāhur hīnādhimuktayaḥ* || (4.1)
>
> Those who have low aspirations cannot understand this difficult approach; shaken by baseless fear, they make the following claims.
>
> *tatra prāguktanītyā tu svanītivipadaṃ paraḥ |*
> *yad amṛśyann upādikṣat tan na yuktam itīṣyate* || (4.15)
>
> "According to the approach explained earlier, the opponent's approach has gone wrong; what he said in his impatience is unreasonable." This is our position.

Here we could note Bhāviveka's use of the term *vipad* ("gone wrong"), which carries the implication that the opponent's approach has been a "disaster." It also is related to the root *pad*, like the term *pratipatti*, but here the opponent is not making progress; he has made a misstep. The most intriguing expression of motion in these verses, however, is *asthāna*. This could mean that the opponent's fears are "baseless," as I indicate in

[26] As in *Mūlamadhyamakakārikā* 24.18: *yaḥ pratītyasamutpādaḥ śūnyatāṃ tāṃ pracakṣmahe | sā prajñaptir upādāya pratipat saiva madhyamā* || – "Dependent co-arising we call emptiness; it is a dependent designation and it is the middle path.'

my translation, or it could mean that the opponent is afraid of "not standing," or perhaps of having no place to stand, as in the Mahāyāna concept of *apratiṣṭhita-nirvāṇa*, a *nirvāṇa* that is not located in either *nirvāṇa* or *saṃsāra*. Bhāviveka defines *apratiṣṭhita-nirvāṇa* in verse 3.294 by saying: "[A bodhisattva] does not leave *saṃsāra* but is free from the harm of *saṃsāra*; [a bodhisattva] does not attain *nirvāṇa* but it is as if [the bodhisattva] were located in *nirvāṇa*."[27]

Sometimes Bhāviveka's distinctive use of these words for movement is known less by what he includes than by what he leaves out. One of the peculiarities of Bhāviveka's account of the Yogācāra, for example, is that he makes almost no mention of the exegetical distinction between *nītārtha* and *neyārtha* ("definitive and provisional meanings"). This distinction is an important feature of Yogācāra literature, but it also figures prominently in Madhyamaka, as in the first chapter of the *Prasannapadā* and in Tibetan texts like Tsongkhapa's *Drang-nges-legs-bshad-snying-po* ("The Heart of the Correct Explanation of Provisional and Definitive Meanings"). Why would Bhāviveka ignore this key distinction, especially when it so clearly relates to his use of the term *naya*? Curiously, I think it has to do with his vision of the unity of Buddhist thought. We have already seen that he begins his response to the Yogācāra by saying: "All the Tathāgatas teachings are authoritative for us, because they are the authoritative teaching of a reliable person." As an exegetical principle this hardly seems exceptional, but he applies it in a striking way. For example, he does not claim that the statements of "mind-only" in texts like the *Daśabhūmika Sūtra* reflect a lesser level of authority. He says that they are true, but simply need to be properly interpreted. How? By following a "rational approach" and subjecting them to the proper Madhyamaka critique. In chapter 4, the Śrāvaka objector claims that the Mahāyāna constitutes a different path and, for that reason, cannot be the teaching of the Buddha. Bhāviveka responds that the Mahāyāna teaches exactly the same path, but insists that the path is to be followed with a different approach. Here the key text is MHK 4.20cd-22ab:

> *samyagdṛṣṭyādimārgaṃ ca bhavaty abhyasyato yadā* ||
> *adarśanam asaṃkalpo vāgavyāhṛtir akriyā* |
> *anājīvo 'samārambho 'saṃpramoṣo 'sthitis tathā* ||

[27] MHK 3.294: *na nirgataś ca saṃsārāt saṃsārāc ca gatavyathaḥ* | *asaṃprāptaś ca nirvāṇaṃ nirvāṇa iva ca sthitaḥ* ||.

> *tadānenaiva mārgeṇa buddhabodhir matā hi naḥ* |
>
> When someone practices the path that begins with right views as no views, no thought, no speech, no action, no livelihood, no effort, no mindfulness, and no concentration, we think that person achieves a Buddha's awakening by this very same path.

These verses could be read as an example of the same irony that Bhāviveka brought to the way bodhisattvas "worship" Brahman by no-worship, but they are perhaps better read in a more positive light, as a statement of Bhāviveka's own understanding of what makes a proper "path." It is not, as it were, a track marked across the landscape or even a series of carefully demarcated states. It is a certain cognitive attitude, an approach, or a way of thinking that can be brought to bear on any practice. This was his approach to the word *pratipad*, and also to the words *naya* and *nīti*. As far as I know, he does not apply the same logic to his elucidation of the word *mārga* itself, although he does use *mārga* in its verbal form in verse 5.9 when he says that a rational approach should be "followed" (*mṛgya*). What is a *mārga* but another example of the modes of cognitive and affective progress that constitute the journey to awakening?

Much more could be said about Bhāviveka's use of the metaphorical complex that surrounds the terms for "seeing" and "going." The different modalities of "seeing" and "going" can each, in its own way, represent the cognitive process that leads a person from the state of ignorance to the knowledge of Buddhahood. These terms can also be brought together in striking ways, as in the Mīmāṃsā critique of the Mādhyamika reliance on inference in chapter 9:

> *dūṣayitvā trayīmārgaṃ hetubhir hetuvādinaḥ* |
> *anumānapradhānatvāt svanayaṃ dyotayanti ye* || (9.14)
>
> When logicians (*hetuvādin*) use reasons to criticize the Veda (*trayīmārga*), they reveal their own approach, because they give priority to inference.
>
> *pādasparśād ivāndhānāṃ viṣame pathi dhāvatām* |
> *anumānapradhānānāṃ pātas tesāṃ na durlabhaḥ* || (9.15)
>
> They are like blind men who run on a dangerous road by touching it with their feet. When they give priority to inference, it is easy for

them to fall.[28]

Bhāviveka responds to this criticism (in verses 157–158) that it is just as counter-productive to rely on someone else's directions without analyzing them and testing them for oneself. Words that are simply taken on faith can easily mislead. Behind this simple image lies a complex discourse about the means of valid cognition (*pramāṇa*) and the relative relationship of inference, perception, and scriptural authority.

Bhāviveka's masterful "introduction," the *Tattvāmṛtāvatāra*, communicates in many ways. For some readers, the process of inference that Bhāviveka uses to establish his view of emptiness will be the primary concern. For others, it might be his distinctive use of ethical concepts, such as compassion (*karuṇā*) or the perfections (*pāramitā*), to chart the path to awakening. But for any of these readers, an attention to Bhāviveka's poetic strategies makes possible a more nuanced and inclusive view of Bhāviveka's view of a meaningful Buddhist life. We can see its structure; we can see how he accommodates and domesticates the anti-structural elements that are crucial part of Buddhist tradition; and we can see how his understanding of the cognitive quest reflects and is mapped onto the ordinary actions of seeing and knowing. In short, we can see the hand of the poet at work and sense how his vision of the world might come to life.

[28] Kawasaki Shinjō (1976: 13, n. 7) notes that this verse quotes, with modest changes, *Vākyapadīya* 1.42: *hastasparśād ivāndhena viṣame pathi dhāvatā | anumānapradhānena vinipāto na durlabhaḥ* || "Fall is not unlikely in the case of one who relies on reasoning, as in the case of a blind man who walks along a difficult path by groping with his hands." In his own version of this verse Bhāviveka changes "hand" (*hasta*) to "feet" (*pāda*). Assuming that this change is not just a textual variant, it seems to be an indication of Bhāviveka's attention to detail. It would make no sense to "run" (*dhāv*) and also touch the ground with your hands. The comparison only works if you touch the ground with your feet.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Abhisamayālaṃkārālokā of Haribhadra

Abhisamayālaṃkār'ālokā Prajñāpāramitāvyākhyā (Commentary on *Aṣṭasāhasrikā-prajñāpāramitā*) by Haribhadra. Together with the text commented on. Edited by Unrai Wogihara. 3 Vols. Tokyo: Toyo Bunko, 1932–1937.

Bodhicaryāvatāra of Śāntideva

Bodhicaryāvatāra of Śāntideva with the Commentary Pañjikā of Prajñākaramati, ed. by P. L. Vaidya. [Buddhist Sanskrit Texts Series 12] Darbhanga: Mithila Institute, 1960.

Buddhacarita of Aśvaghoṣa

See Olivelle 2008.

MHK = *Madhyamakahṛdayakārikā* of Bhāviveka

Annette L. Heitmann, *Textkritischer Beitrag zu Bhavyas Madhyamakahṛdayakārikā, Kapitel 1–3.* Copenhagen: Videnskabsbutikkens Forlag, Københavns Universitet, 1998.

Mūlamadhyamakakārikā of Nāgārjuna

Mūlamadhyamakakārikāḥ, ed. by J. W. de Jong. Madras: The Adyar Library and Research Centre, 1977.

Secondary Sources

Buswell and Gimello 1992

Robert E. Buswell, Jr. and Robert M. Gimello (eds.), *Paths to Liberation: The Mārga and Its Transformations in Buddhist Thought*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 1992.

Crosby and Skilton 1996

The Bodhicaryāvatāra. Trans. Kate Crosby and Andrew Skilton. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

Eckel 1994

Malcolm David Eckel*, To See the Buddha: A Philosopher's Quest for the Meaning of Emptiness*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1994.

Eckel 2008
———, *Bhāviveka and His Buddhist Opponents*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Department of Sanskrit and Indian Studies, 2008.
Folkert 1993
Kendall Wayne Folkert, *Scripture and Community: Collected Essays on the Jains*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Center for the Study of World Religions, 1993.
Franco 2018
Eli Franco, "Xuanzang's Silence and Dharmakīrti's Dates," *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Südasiens* 56-57 (2015–2018), 117–141.
Gokhale 1972
V. V. Gokhale, "The Second Chapter of Bhavya's *Madhyamakahṛdaya* (Taking the Vow of an Ascetic)," *Indo-Iranian Journal* 14 (1972), 40–45.
Gokhale 1985
———, "*Madhyamakahṛdayakārikā Tarkajvālā* Chapter 1," in Christian Lindtner (ed.), *Miscellanea Buddhica*. Indiske Studier 5. Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1985, pp. 76–107.
Halliwell 1998
Stephen Halliwell, *Aristotle's Poetics*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998.
He and Kuijp 2014
Huanhuan He and Leonard W. J. van der Kuijp, "Further Notes on Bhāviveka's Principal Oeuvre," *Indo-Iranian Journal* 57 (2014), 299–352.
Iida 1980
Shotaro Iida, *Reason and Emptiness: A Study in Logic and Mysticism*. Tokyo: Hokuseido Press, 1980.
Kawasaki 1976
Shinjō Kawasaki, "The Mīmāṃsā Chapter of Bhavya's *Madhyamakahṛdaya-kārikā.* Text and Translation, (1) Pūrva-pakṣa," *Studies*, Institute of Philosophy, The University of Tsukuba (1976), 1–16.
Lamotte 1976
Étienne Lamotte, *The Teaching of Vimalakīrti (Vimalakīrtinirdeśa)*. English translation by Sara Boin. London: Pali Text Society, 1976.
Li 2015
Xuezhu Li, "*Madhyamakāvatāra-kārikā* Chapter 6," *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 43 (2015), 1–30.

MacDonald 2015
Anne MacDonald, *In Clear Words: The Prasannapadā, Chapter One*. Vol. I–II. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2015.
Obermiller 1932
The History of Buddhism in India and Tibet (*Chos hbyung*) *by Buston*. Trans. E. Obermiller. Part 2. Heidelberg: Institut für Buddhismuskunde, 1932.
Olivelle 2008
Life of the Buddha by Aśvaghoṣa. Trans. Patrick Olivelle. New York: New York University Press, 2008.
Ruegg 1992
David Seyfort Ruegg, "On the Tibetan Historiography and Doxography of the 'Great Debate of bSam yas,'" in Shōren Ihara (ed.), *Tibetan Studies, Proceedings of the 5th Seminar of the International Association of Tibetan Studies, Narita* 1989. Narita: Naritasan Shinshoji, 1992, pp. 237–244.
Williams 2009
Paul Williams, *Mahāyāna Buddhism: The Doctrinal Foundations*. 2nd edition. New York: Routledge, 2009.

Chapter VIII

Concepts of the Spiritual Path in the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* (Part II): The Eighteen *manaskāra*s and the *adhimukticaryābhūmi*‡

Jowita Kramer, Ludwig-Maximilians-Universität München

1. Introduction

This paper is the second in a series of three articles dealing with various concepts of spiritual practice found in the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*, a commentary on the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* attributed to the Indian Yogācāra scholar Sthiramati (6th cent.). The first paper focussed on a passage explaining eighteen kinds of "attention" (*manaskāra*) included in the eleventh chapter of the text, called "Investigation of the Doctrine" (*dharmaparyeṣṭi*), and discussed the first nine of the eighteen *manaskāra*s.[1] The present study investigates the remaining nine *manaskāra*s as well as the structure of the "stage of the practice of zealous application" (*adhimukticaryābhūmi*). In a third article to follow in the near future, I will examine further concepts related to the spiritual path found in the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*, including the "fivefold stage of spiritual practice" (*pañcavidhā yogabhūmiḥ*), a list of six "mental states" (*citta*) and two further lists of *manaskāra*s.

As already mentioned in the first paper on the *manaskāra*s, the traditional meaning of the concept of *manaskāra* was modified within the Yogācāra school. The term usually refers to the everyday attention that accompanies

‡ I would like to thank Vincent Eltschinger, Paul Harrison, Robert Kritzer, Cristina Pecchia and Lambert Schmithausen for very valuable comments on earlier drafts of this paper.

1 See Kramer 2018.

Cristina Pecchia and Vincent Eltschinger (eds.), *Mārga. Paths to Liberation in South Asian Buddhist Traditions*. Papers from an international symposium held at the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, December 17 – 18, 2015. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2020, pp. 329–361.

every mental moment and focusses the mind on the object of perception. In the course of time some Yogācāras employed the term in a more specific meaning, closely related to spiritual practice.[2] It cannot be said with certainty when exactly the Yogācāras began to use the term *manaskāra* in this contemplative context. But the earliest list of practices called *manaskāra* is probably preserved in the *Śrāvakabhūmi*.[3] This sevenfold group of *manaskāra*s seems to represent a specific spiritual practice that enables the practitioner to enter the four absorptions (*dhyāna*) and the four non-material attainments (*ārūpyasamāpatti*). The way the *manaskāra*s are presented as seven consecutive steps suggests that the seven contemplations are members of a specific meditative technique, consisting of seven parts. In another part of the *Yogācārabhūmi*, namely the *Samāhitā Bhūmi*, we find a different set of *manaskāra*s, which includes forty categories.[4] In contrast to the seven, the forty *manaskāra*s do not represent an integral contemplative method but a collection of many different practices, of which some overlap. It seems probable that the author of the list was aiming at compiling various kinds of spiritual techniques, to be practiced each on its own.

As the seven *manaskāra*s lead to the four *dhyāna*s, which originally are equated with the state of *samādhi*, the *manaskāra*s do not seem to be understood as being identical to *samādhi*, at least not in its traditional meaning. At the same time, the seven *manaskāra*s appear to represent contemplative states or at least the application of attention within a particular contemplative practice.

2. Eighteen *Manaskāra*s

In contrast to the seven *manaskāra*s of the *Śrāvakabhūmi*, the set of eighteen *manaskāra*s found in Vasubandhu's *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkārabhāṣya*[5] does not represent a specific technique or method with eighteen consecutive steps. Vasubandhu seems to apply the term *manaskāra* in a sense that is closer to its original meaning, namely as an accompanying attention that is pres-

[2] See Kramer 2018: 269f.

[3] See Deleanu 2006: 29–34.

[4] See Delhey 2009: 157–162.

[5] The *manaskāra*s are explicitly classified into eighteen specific categories only in Vasubandhu's commentary (MSABh 56,22-26), not in the root text of the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*.

ent while the practitioner is engaged in various practices and mental states. These practices, such as for instance the thirty-seven "factors belonging to awakening" (*bodhipakṣadharma*), are not necessarily defined by the practice of *manaskāra* in the first place. A comparison of the eighteen *manaskāra*s with the set of forty *manaskāra*s suggests that the list of eighteen categories is more systematic, the eighteen *manaskāra*s generally being not interrelated and not overlapping and comprising terms different from those we find in the set of forty. Therefore we may assume that the two lists have not been created interdependently. It seems that the main aim of collecting the eighteen categories into one set was the intention to cover all aspects of the Buddhist path. The collection of forty, on the one hand, includes categorisations such as the threefold structure of studying (*śruta*), reflecting (*cintā*) and cultivating (*bhāvanā*), the twofold distinction of *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā* (12th *manaskāra*), as well as different aspects of meditative absorption and of specific practices. On the other hand, the set of eighteen *manaskāra*s provides general typologies of Buddhist practitioners, such as those presented in the first and the third *manaskāra*.

The list provided by Vasubandhu includes the following eighteen categories:[6]

1. *dhātuniyata* (determined by class)
2. *kṛtyakara* (doing the duties)
3. *āśrayavibhakta* (divided according to basis)
4. *adhimuktiniveśaka* (establishing [the practitioner] in conviction)
5. *chandajanaka* (producing aspiration)
6. *samādhisaṃniśrita* (based on *samādhi*)
7. *jñānasamprayukta* (associated with knowledge)
8. *sambhinnālambana* (having the summarised as its object)
9. *vibhinnālambana* (having the analysed as its object)
10. *parijñāniyata* (determined by knowledge)
11. *bhāvanākārapraviṣṭa* (engaged in aspects of cultivation)
12. *mārgadvayasvabhāva* (having the nature of the twofold path)
13. *anuśaṃsa* (beneficial)
14. *pratīcchaka* (receiving)

6 MSABh 56,22-26.

15. *prāyogika* (accompanying application)
16. *vaśavartin* (controlling)
17. *parītta* (limited)
18. *vipula* (great)

As indicated above, the first nine of these eighteen *manaskāra*s have already been investigated in an earlier paper. In the following, the remaining nine are examined.

10. *parijñāniyata* (determined by knowledge)

According to Vasubandhu, the tenth *manaskāra*, characterized as "determined by knowledge", is directed towards the following five aspects of knowledge:[7]

1. the object (*vastu*) to be known (*parijñeya*), consisting in suffering (*duḥkha*)
2. the meaning (*artha*) to be known, consisting in the object's being impermanent, full of suffering, empty and without a self
3. knowledge (*parijñā*), consisting in the path (*mārga*)
4. the fruit of knowledge (*parijñāphala*), consisting in liberation (*vimukti*)
5. its realization (*pravedanā*), consisting in the vision of the knowledge of liberation (*vimuktijñānadarśana*).

In the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*, *vastu* is further specified as "the five appropriated *skandha*s that are included in the truth of suffering."[8] With regard to the second category, i.e., the knowledge of the "meaning to be known", the commentary says that the *skandha*s are impermanent because they cease in every moment. They are *duḥkha* as they are associated with the three kinds of suffering and śūnya because they do not have the permanent self that the non-Buddhists conceptualize among the five *skandha*s. Finally, they are selfless as they do not have the intrinsic nature of the permanent self that is conceptualized by the non-Buddhists.[9] The third category, *parijñā*, is

[7] MSABh 57,8-11.

[8] SAVBh(1) 43,23f.: *de yang nye bar len pa'i phung po lnga sdug bsngal gyi bden pas bsdu ba la bya'o.*

[9] SAVBh(1) 43,28-44,1: *de la skad cig ma re re la 'jig pas na mi rtag pa'o | | sdug*

explained as knowing the impermanence of the five *skandha*s, which is to be understood as the eightfold path and which is achieved by means of the correct view (*samyagdṛṣṭi*). The fruit of knowledge is described as the liberation of the mind (*citta*), which consists in a liberation from contaminations (*kleśa*) such as desire (*rāga*). Finally, the vision of the knowledge of liberation in the form, "The mind is liberated", after it has been liberated from *kleśa*s is the realization (*pravedanā*).[10]

Notably, the same five categories as those enumerated here are mentioned in the "Maitreya-Chapter" of the *Saṃdhinirmocanasūtra*.[11] However, the definitions offered there differ from those provided above. The *parijñeya-vastu* is paraphrased as "all that is to be known" (*sarvajñeya*), namely the *skandha*s, bases (āyatana), etc., while the *parijñeyārtha* is defined as concepts including "the conventional" (*saṃvṛti*), "the absolute" (*paramārtha*), "faults" (*doṣa*), "virtues" (*guṇa*), "suffering" (*duḥkha*) and "true reality" (*tathatā*). "Knowledge" (*parijñāna*) is specified as the 37 "factors belonging to awakening" (*bodhipakṣadharma*), for instance "the applications of mindfulness" (*smṛtyupasthāna*), and "the attainment of the fruit of knowledge" (*parijñānaphalalābha*) is explained as the giving up of "desire" (*rāga*), "hatred" (*dveṣa*), "delusion" (*moha*) and so on. Finally, realization (*pravedanā*) is the "knowledge of liberation [resulting] from the realized factors" (*mngon sum du byas pa'i chos de dag nyid las rnam par grol bar shes pa*).

---

bsngal la rnam pa gsum dang ldan pas na sdug bsngal ba'o | | phung po'i nang na mu stegs kyis brtags pa'i bdag rtags (read *rtag* following Derge) *pa med pas na stong pa'o | | phung po nyid mu stegs kyis brtags pa'i bdag rtags* (read *rtag* following Derge) *pa'i rang bzhin med pas na bdag med pa'o*.

10 SAVBh(1) 44,2-12: *nye bar len pa'i phung po lnga la mi rtag pa la sogs pa lta bur shes par byed pa ni 'phags pa'i lam gyi yan lag brgyad de | de la yang yang dag pa'i lta bas mi rtag pa la sogs pa lta bur shes par byed do zhes bya ba'i don to | | ... yang dag pa'i lta bas phung po lnga la mi rtag pa la sogs pa lta bur shes par byas | 'dod chags la sogs pa'i nyon mongs pa las rnam par grol bar 'gyur te | sems rnam par grol ba ni yongs su shes par byed pa'i 'bras bu yin no | | ... 'dod chags la sogs pa'i sems rnam par grol nas de'i 'og tu sems rnam par grol lo zhes rnam par grol ba'i ye shes mthong ba skyes pa la ni de rab tu rig pa zhes bya'o zhes bya ba'i don to*.

11 Saṃdhi 102f. (21).

11. *bhāvanākārapraviṣṭa* (engaged in aspects of cultivation)

The next *manaskāra* is called "engaged in aspects of spiritual practice" by Vasubandhu. This category is subdivided into two groups, the first being referred to as the "four aspects" (*ākāra*) and the second as the "37 aspects". The first group comprises the factors "selflessness of the person" (*pudgala-nairātmya*), "selflessness of phenomena" (*dharmanairātmya*), "vision" (*darśana*) and "knowledge" (*jñāna*). The second group is constituted by the thirty-seven "factors belonging to awakening" (*bodhipakṣadharma*).[12] The combination of these two groups to form the components of cultivation (*bhāvanā*) seems to be unique to this passage and has not been located in any other Abhidharmic context.

According to the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*, the first of the four aspects indicates the śrāvakas' practice on the *adhimukticaryābhūmi*, in which they focus on the non-existence of a self as it is conceptualized by the non-Buddhists (*tīrthika*) and on the four aspects of the *skandha*s, including being impermanent (*anitya*), full of suffering (*duḥkha*), empty (*śūnya*) and not the self (*anātman*). The practice of *dharmanairātmya* is ascribed to the bodhisattvas on the *adhimukticaryābhūmi*, consisting in the realization that all factors arise from the mind in the same way as the matter perceived in a dream. The third category arises on the path of vision (*darśanamārga*) of the *śrāvaka*s, including the "stream-enterers" (*srotaāpanna*), as well as of the bodhisattvas and refers to the eight kinds of endurance (*kṣānti*) on the first stage (*bhūmi*). *Jñāna* is the cultivation of knowledge while abiding in the eight kinds of *jñāna* on the *darśanamārga*. The commentary adds that *darśana* and *jñāna* can alternatively refer to the cultivation of calm abiding (*śamatha*) and insight (*vipaśyanā*) respectively.[13]

---

[12] MSABh 57,11-13.

[13] SAVBh(1) 44,15-45,3: *gang zag la bdag med pa'i rnam pa la bsgom pa dang zhes bya ba la sogs pa smos te | nyan thos rnams ni mos pas spyod pa'i sa nas gang zag la bdag med pa'i rnam pa bsgom ste | phung po lnga tsam du zad de | mu stegs kyis brtags pa'i bdag ni med la phung po lnga nyid la yang mi rtag pa dang sdug bsngal ba dang | stong pa dang | bdag med pa bsgom pa'i phyir ro | | chos la bdag med pa'i rnam pa la bsgom pa dang zhes bya ba la | byang chub sems dpa' rnams ni mos pas spyod pa'i sa nas chos la bdag med pa'i rnam par bsgoms te | gzugs la sogs pa'i chos 'di dag kyang rmi lam gyi gzugs la sogs pa bzhin du sems las byung bar zad do zhes bsgom pa'i phyir ro | | mthong ba'i rnam pa la bsgom pa dang zhes bya ba*

The following passages in the commentaries to the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* provide short explanations of the cultivation of each of the thirty-seven "factors belonging to awakening" (*bodhipakṣadharma*). Some of the comments appear related to definitions of the thirty-seven *bodhipakṣadharma*s as found in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, the *Abhidharmasamuccaya* and the early canon. However, since they are not identical to any of them and provide some additional information, they are presented here in some detail.

(1) Four applications of mindfulness (*smṛtyupasthāna*)

According to Vasubandhu, the four *smṛtyupasthāna*s consist in the cultivation of the four aspects (*ākāra*) "impure" (*aśubha*), "full of suffering" (*duḥkha*), "impermanent" (*anitya*) and "non-self" (*anātman*).[14] The **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* specifies the first, *aśubha*, as the cultivation that observes the body, from the head to the feet, as being full of blood and pus. This practice is applied with regard to one's own body, that of another person and both.[15] The second *smṛtyupasthāna* is explained as contemplating the fact that every feeling—positive, negative and neutral—is actually negative. Positive feelings become the cause of negative feelings and therefore are associated with the "suffering of change" (*pariṇāmaduḥkhatā*). Negative feelings are associated with the "suffering of suffering" (*duḥkhaduḥkhatā*) and neutral with the "suffering of the conditioned" (*saṃskāraduḥkhatā*). Focussing on impermanence means, according to the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*, to cultivate the realization that the eight forms of mind (*vijñāna*) and the

---

la nyan thos mthong ba'i lam skyes te | | rgyun du zhugs pa thob pa dang | | byang chub sems dpa' mthong ba'i lam skyes te | sa dang po thob pa'i tshe na sdug bsngal la chos shes pa'i bzod pa la sogs pa bzod pa brgyad la gnas pa ni mthong ba'i rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya'o | | ye shes kyi rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya ba la mthong ba'i lam de nyid kyi dus na ye shes rnam pa brgyad la gnas pa'i tshe na ni ye shes kyi rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya'o | | yang na zhi gnas bsgom pa la gnas pa'i tshe na ni mthong ba'i rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya'o | | lhag mthong bsgom pa'i dus na ni ye shes kyi rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya'o.

[14] MSABh 57,13-15.

[15] In chapter 18 of the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* it is stated that only bodhisattvas focus on both their own body and the bodies of other beings, whereas *śrāvaka*s only take their own body as an object. See SAVBh(D) tsi 104b6f.: *nyan thos la sogs pa ni bdag gi lus dang tshor ba la sogs pa tsam zhig la dmigs shing sgom par byed kyi | byang chub sems dpa' rnams ni bdag dang sems can thams cad kyi lus dang | tshor ba la sogs pa la dmigs par byed do.*

mental (*caitasika*) factors change in each moment from being endowed with desire (*rāga*), hatred (*dveṣa*) or delusion (*moha*) and being calm (*śānta*) to the opposite state (i.e., without desire, etc.). The last *smṛtyupasthāna* is associated with the cultivation of the following realization: There is no permanent self that could be contaminated or purified even though it seems that, while being in *saṃsāra*, one is endowed with contaminating factors, such as desire, etc., and at the time of *nirvāṇa*, that one is endowed with purified factors, such as faith.[16]

(2) Four correct abandonments (*samyakprahāṇa*)

The four *samyakprahāṇa*s correspond to the four aspects of "attainment" (*pratilambha*), "utilization" (*nisevana*/*niṣevaṇa*), "removal" (*vinirdhāvana*) and "antidote" (*pratipakṣa*) according to Vasubandhu.[17] The **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* explains *pratilambha* as the effort of bringing forth conviction in order to produce the beneficial (*kuśala*) characteristics of "highest discipline" (*adhiśīla*), "highest contemplation" (*adhicitta*) and "highest insight" (*adhiprajñā*) that have not arisen yet. The second category, *nisevana*, is char-

[16] SAVBh(1) 45,8-32: *nang gi lus dang phyi'i lus dang phyi nang gnyis ka'i lus la klad pa'i rgyas nas rkang pa'i mthil gyi bar du khrag dang rnag la sogs pas gang bar dmigs pa dang | rnam par bsngos pa dang bam pa la sogs pa'i bsgom pa ni mi sdug pa'i rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya'o | | ... tshor ba bde ba dang | tshor ba sdug bsngal ba dang | tshor ba bde ba yang ma yin sdug bsngal ba yang ma yin pa rnams rtag tu sdug bsngal ba yin no zhes bsgom pa ni sdug bsngal gyi rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya'o | | de la tshor ba bde ba yang nam zhig na sdug bsngal gyi rgyur 'gyur bas 'gyur ba'i sdug bsngal dang ldan pa dang | tshor ba sdug bsngal ba yang sdug bsngal gyi sdug bsngal dang ldan pa dang | tshor ba bde ba yang ma yin sdug bsngal ba yang ma yin pa ni 'du byed kyi sdug bsngal dang ldan pas tshor ba thams cad sdug bsngal ba zhes bya ste | ... rnam par shes pa brgyad dang sems las byung ba rnams ni skad cig tu 'dod chags dang bcas pa dang | 'dod chags med par 'gyur ba dang | skad cig tu zhe sdang dang bcas pa dang | zhe sdang med par 'gyur ba dang | skad cig tu gti mug dang bcas pa dang | gti mug med par 'gyur ba dang | zhi ba dang | ma zhi bar 'gyur ro zhes bsgom pa ni mi rtag pa'i rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya ste | ... 'khor ba'i dus na ni 'dod chags la sogs pa'i kun nas nyon mongs pa'i chos dang ldan par zad | mya ngan las 'das pa'i dus na ni dad pa la sogs ba rnam par byang ba'i chos dang ldan par zad kyi kun nas nyon mongs pa dang | rnam par byang bar 'gyur ba'i bdag rtag pa gang yang med do zhes bsgom pa ni bdag med pa'i rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya ste.*

[17] MSABh 57,15f. On the four aspects, see also AKBh 410,19ff. (where they are listed as aspects of *bhāvanā*).

acterized as cultivating (*bhāvanā*) repeatedly in order to extend the beneficial characteristics of the three instructions (*śikṣā*) that have already arisen. "Removal" (*vinirdhāvana*) refers to the effort of bringing forth conviction in order to give up, by means of the three instructions, the opposing, unbeneficial and bad factors that have already arisen. The commentator adds that "giving up" in this context means the cutting off of the continuity of arising and includes the giving up of the seeds of the factors. The last comment is important because, as the commentator notes, the factors themselves cease spontaneously immediately after having arisen. Finally, antidotes (*pratipakṣa*) include the cultivation of the impure (*aśubha*) as the antidote to desire (*rāga*), of friendliness (*maitrī*) as the antidote to hatred (*dveṣa*) and of dependent arising (*pratītyasamutpāda*) as the antidote to delusion (*moha*). The antidotes are applied in order to prevent unbeneficial factors that have not yet arisen from arising. This is achieved by means of removing the imprints (*vāsanā*) of the unbeneficial factors.[18]

(3) Four bases of spiritual powers (*ṛddhipāda*)

Vasubandhu explains the first *ṛddhipāda,* that is, "motivation" (*chanda*), as directing attention (*manaskāra*) in a way that counteracts complacency (*saṃtuṣṭi*). The following *ṛddhipāda*, which is expressed as "making effort and applying energy" (*vyāyacchate vīryam ārabhate*) in the *Mahāyāna-*

[18] SAVBh(1) 46,2-26: *lhag pa'i tshul khrims dang sems dang | lhag pa'i shes rab kyi mtshan nyid dge ba ma skyes pa rnams bskyed par bya ba'i phyir mos pa bskyed 'bad brtson 'grus rtsom pa ni rab tu thob pa'i rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya ste | ... bslab pa gsum gyi mtshan nyid dbye* (read *dge*) *ba'i chos skyes pa rnams 'phel ba dang rgyas pa dang rgya cher 'gyur bar bya ba'i phyir yang nas yang du de la bsgom pa ni bsten pa'i rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya ste | ... bslab pa gsum gyis mi mthun pa'i phyogs su 'gyur pa sdig pa mi dge ba'i chos skyes pa rnams spang bar bya ba'i phyir | mos pa bskyed 'bad brtson 'grus rtsom pa ni gdon pa'i rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya ste | ... sdig pa mi dge ba'i chos spangs pa yang sdig pa mi dge ba'i chos de dag rgyun du skye ba las skye ba'i rgyun gcad pa'o | | yang sdig pa'i chos de dag gi sa bon spangs pa nyid kyis spangs pa zhes bya ste | gzhan du na sdig pa'i chos skyes zin pa rnams ni spang du med de | rang nyid skyes ma thag tu 'gag par 'gyur bas so | | ... sdig pa mi dge ba'i chos ma skyes pa rnams mi bskyed pa'i phyir de'i gnyen po 'dod chags kyi gnyen por mi gtsang ba bsgom pa dang | zhe sdang gi gnyen por byams pa bsgom pa dang gti mug gi gnyen por rten cing 'brel bar 'byung ba bsgom pa ni gnyen po'i rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya ste | ... de la gnyen po la bsgom na bag chags bcom par 'gyur ro.*

sūtrālaṃkārabhāṣya, counteracts distraction (*vikṣepa*) and doubt (*saṃśaya*). The third and fourth *ṛddhipāda*s, consisting in "mind" (*citta*) and "examination" (*mīmāṃsā*), are forms of *samādhi*. The *samādhi* in which the mind is focussed (*pragṛhṇāti*) serves as an antidote to excitement (*auddhatya*). The *samādhi* in which the mind is uplifted (*pradadhāti*) is an antidote to inertia (*laya*).[19]

In the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*, the complacency that is to be counteracted by means of motivation is specified as the state of being satisfied with the virtue attained through the four correct abandonments and not seeking an increase in virtue and *samādhi*.[20] Bringing forth motivation is paraphrased as producing conviction, delight and enthusiasm in order to increase the beneficial roots (*kuśalamūla*) and attain *samādhi*. The second *ṛddhipāda* is, on the one hand, described as effort in order to counteract distraction towards the five sensual pleasures (*kāmaguṇa*) while cultivating *samādhi*. On the other hand, it is the energy that consists in repeated investigation and serves as an antidote to doubts, such as "the object of cultivation and the object to be known are real or are not real". If no energy is applied, the practitioner cannot be liberated from doubt due to idleness (*kausīdya*). In connection with the third *ṛddhipāda*, the commentary explains "excitement" (*auddhatya*) as a mind that becomes scattered remembering past amusement and laughter. The remedy for this mental scattering is the cultivation of *samādhi* that has the nature of calm abiding (*śamatha*). The text adds: "Having moistened the scattered mind with *śamatha*, it becomes focussed on the object." The last *ṛddhipāda* is related to the *samādhi* that has the nature of insight (*vipaśyanā*) and counteracts inertia (*laya*), which is explained as a lack of enthusiasm, sloth, lethargy and mental suppression based on idleness (*kausīdya*). Contemplating the qualities of the Tathāgata or the results of *samādhi*, the characteristics of an enthusiastic and clear mind are brought forth.[21]

---

[19] MSABh 57,17-20.

[20] Note that the Tibetan translator of the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* uses the terms *dad pa* and *mos pa* (instead of *'dun pa*) when translating *chanda*.

[21] SAVBh(1) 46,27-47,25: *chog par 'dzin pa'i gnyen po yid la byed pa'i bsgom pa ni dad pa bskyed pa'o zhes bya ba la | yang dag pa'i spong ba bzhi tsam gyi dge bas chog par 'dzin cing dge ba rgya chen po dang ting nge 'dzin la sogs pa mi tshol la de'i gnyen po yid la byed pa bsgoms te | ... dad pa skyes pa ni ting nge 'dzin dang | dag ba'i rtsa ba rgya chen po bskyed pa'i phyir | mos pa dang dga' ba dang spro ba bskyed pa ste | ... ... ting nge 'dzin du zhugs pa na 'dod pa lnga'i yon tan la sems*

(4) Five faculties (*indriya*)

The five *indriya*s include faith (*śraddhā*), energy (*vīrya*), mindfulness (*smṛti*), contemplation (*samādhi*) and discriminating insight (*prajñā*). According to Vasubandhu, the first is cultivation (*bhāvanā*) having the form of trust (*sampratyaya*) in the supramundane (*lokottara*) fulfilment of the stable mind (*sthitacitta*), the second is cultivation having the form of resolve (*vyavasāya*), the third, cultivation having the form of non-loss (*asampramoṣa*) of the dharma, the fourth, cultivation having the form of mental abiding (*cittasthiti*) and the fifth, cultivation having the form of examination (*pravicaya*).[22]

The stable mind (*sthitacitta*) mentioned in Vasubandhu's explanation refers, according to the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*, to the attainment of the fourth *ṛddhipāda*, which is the attainment of the mundane (*laukika*) *samādhi*. Alternatively, it can also be associated with the obtainment of the four *samādhi*s of the *adhimukticaryābhūmi*. "Fulfilment" is the collections of virtue (*puṇya*) and knowledge (*jñāna*) on the first level (*bhūmi*), on which the supramundane (*lokottara*) non-dual knowledge (*jñāna*) is attained. The cultivation that has the form of faith is characterized by the intention "it is appropriate to attain and complete the collections of virtue and knowledge" while on the first *bhūmi*. By means of the second *indriya*, energy (*vīrya*), the

---

g.yeng bas g.yengs pa zhes bya'o | | bsgom pa'i yul dang shes bya'i dngos po yin nam ma yin no snyam du yid gnyis za ba ni the tshom zhes bya ste | g.yeng ba'i gnyen por ni 'bad pa yid la bya'o | | the tshom gyi gnyen por ni brtson 'grus yid la bya ste | rim bzhin no | | ji ltar gnyen por 'gyur zhe na | ting nge 'dzin gyi dus na phyi'i yul la sems g.yengs shing phyad par gyur pa dang | mi g.yengs par gyur pa'i phyir 'bad par bya'o | | nam the tshom du gyur ba na ma btsal te | le lo'i dbang du byas na ni the tshom las thar bar mi 'gyur te | brtson 'grus bskyed pa la yang nas yang du gzig cing brtags te dpyad na the tshom me dpar 'gyur pas | the tshom gyi gnyen por ni brtson 'grus rtsom mo ... sngon rtsed mo byas pa dang | bgad pa la sogs pa dran nas sems 'phros par gyur pa ni rgod pa zhes bya ste | de'i gnyen por ni zhi gnas kyi ting nge 'dzin bsgom mo zhi gnas kyi ting nge 'dzin bsgom pa na sems rab tu 'dzin pa zhes bya ste | sems g.yengs pa las zhi gnas kyis brlan nas | ting nge 'dzin gyi yul las brlan nas bzhag (read *yul la bzhag*?) *pa'i phyir ro | | zhum pa ni le lo'i dbang du gyur nas sems spro ba med pa dang gnyid dang | rmugs pa dang non pa ste | de'i gnyen por ni lhag mthong gi ting nge 'dzin bsgom mo | | nam lhag mthong gi ting nge 'dzin bsgom pa ni sems rab tu gzengs bstod pa zhes bya ste | rmugs par gyur pa dang lhag mthong gis de bzhin gshegs pa pa'i yon tan nam ting nge 'dzin gyi 'bras bur bsams nas | sems spro ba dang gsal ba'i mtshan nyid bskyed par bya ba zhes bya ba'i don to.*

22 MSABh 57,21-23.

practitioner repeats his cultivation over and over again in order to realize and fully manifest the supramundane fulfilment. In the next step, that is the application of *smṛti*, the practitioner cultivates the factors he has acquired trust (*sampratyaya*) in by means of the faculty of faith (*śraddhā*) and has manifested by means of the faculty of energy (*vīrya*) as having the characteristics of absence of lethargy and clarity. In a further step, the mind is focussed on these *dharma*s which have been established as "unforgettable" (*ma brjed par byas pa*) by means of the faculty of *smṛti*. This one-pointed cultivation constitutes the "cultivation having the form of mental abiding (*cittasthiti*)". Finally, in a last step, a discriminating insight (*prajñā*), which knows correctly the specific and general characteristics of these *dharma*s, arises.[23]

(5) Five powers (*bala*)

In Vasubandhu's commentary the practice connected with the five powers is defined as the five kinds of *manaskāra* that remove resistances (*vipakṣa*) to the five *indriya*s.[24] The **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* adds that the hindrances comprise lack of faith (āśraddhya), idleness (*kausīdya*), loss of mindfulness (*muṣitasmṛtitā*), distraction (*vikṣepa*) and lack of insight (*dauṣprajña*?).[25] As long as the five factors of "faith", etc. appear mixed with the hindrances,

---

[23] SAVBh(1) 48,4-49,1: *'jig rten pa'i ting nge 'dzin thob pa la sems gnas pa zhes bya ba'am | mos pa spyod pa'i ting nge 'dzin bzhi thob pa la sems gnas pa zhes bya'o | | sa dang por gnyis su med pa'i ye shes thob pa la ni 'jig rten las 'das pa zhes bya ste | de'i tshe bsod nams dang ye shes kyi tshogs ni phun sum tshogs pa zhes bya ste | ... sa dang po'i dus na bsod nams dang ye shes kyi tshogs phun sum tshogs pa yin la | bsod nams dang ye shes kyi tshogs de dag sgrub cing thob par byar rung ngo zhes sems pa ni yid ches pa'i rnam pa bsgom pa zhes bya ste | ... brtson 'grus kyi dbang pos kyang 'jig rten las 'das pa'i phun sum tshogs pa de la rtog pa dang | mngon sum du bya ba'i phyir yang nas yang du goms par byed pa ni 'bad pa'i rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya ste | ... dad pa'i dbang pos yid ches par byas pa dang | brtson 'grus kyi dbang pos mngon sum du byas pa'i chos de sems la ma rmugs shing sems la gsal bar snang ba'i mtshan nyid du bsgom pa ni chos mi brjed pa'i rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya ste | | ... dran pa'i dbang pos ma brjed par byas pa'i chos de nyid la sems gzhag ste | rtse gcig tu bsgom pa ni sems gnas pa'i rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya ste | ... de ltar sems rtse gcig tu gzhag na chos de dag gi rang dang spyi'i mtshan nyid phyin ci ma log par shes pa'i shes rab skye bar 'gyur te | de ni rab tu 'byed pa'i rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya ste.*

[24] MSABh 57,23f.

[25] For the term *dauṣprajña,* see Ahn 2003: 229.

they are called *indriya*s. When they arise not being intertwined with the hindrances anymore, they become *bala*s. This means that the practitioner obtains the power of faith as soon as he can no longer be overwhelmed by the lack of faith, the power of *vīrya* as soon as he can no longer be controlled by idleness, etc.[26]

(6) Seven limbs of awakening (*bodhyaṅga*)

As for the seven *bodhyaṅga*s, Vasubandhu explains mindfulness (*smṛti*) as clarity of awakening (*sambodhisamprakhyāna*), investigation of phenomena (*dharmapravicaya*) as examination (*vicaya*), energy (*vīrya*) as enthusiasm (*utsāha*), joy (*prīti*) as happiness (*saumanasya*), ease (*praśrabdhi*) as flexibility (*karmaṇyatā*), contemplation (*samādhi*) as mental stability (*cittasthiti*), and equanimity (*upekṣā*) as equality (*samatā*).[27]

The **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* provides some additional comments on the seven categories.[28] "Clarity of awakening" is explained as knowledge

---

[26] SAVBh(1) 49,2-17: *de la mi mthun pa'i phyogs ni ma dad pa dang | le lo dang dran pa nyams pa dang | g.yeng ba dang 'chal ba'i shes rab ste | nam ma dad pas mi 'phrogs pa'i dus na ni dad pa'i stobs zhes bya'o | | nam le los mi 'phrogs pa'i dus na ni brtson 'grus kyi stobs zhes bya'o | | nam dran pa nyams pas mi 'phrogs pa'i dus na ni dran pa'i stobs zhes bya'o | | nam g.yeng bas mi 'phrogs pa'i dus na ni ting nge 'dzin gyi stobs zhes bya'o | | nam 'chal pa'i shes rab kyis mi 'phrogs pa'i dus na ni shes rab kyi stobs zhes bya ste | ... dbang po lnga dang stobs lnga la khyad par ci yod ce na | gang gis ma dad pa la sogs pa mi mthun pa'i phyogs dang dad pa la sogs pa gnyen po gnyis su 'dres mar 'byung ba na ni dbang po zhes bya'o | | mi mthun pa'i phyogs kyis ma 'dres par gnyen po 'ba' zhig 'byung ba na ni stobs zhes bya ste bye brag ni de yod do.*

[27] MSABh 57,24f.

[28] SAVBh(1) 49,18-50,25: *zad pa mi skye ba'i ye shes la yang dag byang chub ces bya ste | mthong ba dang bsgom pas spang bar bya ba'i nyon mongs pa sngar spangs pa la ni zad pa zhes bya'o | | de phyin chad sems kyi rgyud la nyon mongs pa mi 'byung ba ni mi skye ba zhes bya'o | | yang na sa dang por chos kyi dbyings kun du 'gro ba'i mtshan nyid du rtogs nas gzung 'dzin gnyis spangs te | gnyis su med pa'i ye shes thob pa la yang dag byang chub ces bya ste | de sems la gsal zhing ma brjed par bsgom pa la ni yang dag byang chub snang ba'i rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya'o | | ... ye shes de'i mtshan nyid mi brjed par byas pa nyid phyin ci ma log par shes pa ni rnam par 'byed pa zhes bya'o | | de yang gang gi dus na shes zhe na sa dang po'i dus na shes te | ... yang nas yang du goms par byed pa ni spro ba zhes bya ste | de yang brtson 'grus kyis byed pas na 'dis ni brtson 'grus yang dag byang chub kyi yan lag bstan to | | ... sa dang por chos kyi dbyings rtogs nas | dga' ba'i khyad par skye ba*

(*jñāna*) in which contaminations (*kleśa*) that are to be given up by vision (*darśana*) and cultivation (*bhāvanā*) have been removed and do not arise. "Awakening" (*sambodhi*) is constituted by the attainment of the non-dual knowledge that is obtained on the first stage (*bhūmi*), when the all-pervading characteristic of true reality (*dharmadhātu*) is realized and the distinction of subject and object is given up. Cultivating *sambodhisamprakhyāna* means cultivating the clearness and non-loss of this awakening in the mind. The category "investigation of phenomena" (*dharmapravicaya*) is characterized as knowing correctly, at the time of the first *bhūmi*, the characteristics of the *jñāna* mentioned in the context of the first *bodhyaṅga*. Enthusiasm (*utsāha*) is the repeated cultivation of the realization of the *dharmadhātu*, and happiness (*saumanasya*) is a special kind of delight arising after the realization of the *dharmadhātu* on the first *bhūmi*. Therefore the latter is also referred to as "the delightful stage" (*pramuditā bhūmi*). The next category, that is, flexibility (*karmaṇyatā*), is paraphrased as bodily and mental purity. Bodily flexibility is characterized as a light body and a pleasant appearance in accordance with one's own intentions. Mental flexibility is glossed as the absence of inertia and excitement as well as the focussing on an object and clarifying of the mind by means of *samādhi*. Mental stability (*cittasthiti*) is, according to the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*, cultivated with regard to the *jñāna*, in which contaminations (*kleśa*) are given up and do not arise, as well as with regard to the non-loss of true reality (*tathatā*). Finally, cultivating equality (*samatā*) is defined as practicing without inertia and excitement, the mind being focussed one-pointedly. The commentary adds that three

---

la ni yid bde ba zhes bya ste | 'di yang sa dang po'i tshe rtogs nas dga' ba skyes pas na | sa dang po'i ming yang sa rab tu dga' ba zhes btags te | ... lus shin tu byang ba dang sems shin tu byang ba las su rung ba zhes bya'o | | de la lus las su rung ba ni bdag gi dgos pa sgrub pa la lus yang zhing zo mdog bde ba'o | | sems las su rung ba ni zhum rgod med cing ting nge 'dzin gyis yul la 'jug pa dang | sems gsal ba ste | ... zad pa mi skye ba'i ye shes sam | de bzhin nyid ma brjed par byas pa la sems gnas pa'i rnam pa bsgom pa zhes bya ste | ... de ltar sems rtse gcig tu bzhag pa las zhum pa dang rgod pa gnyis med par bsgom pa ni mnyam pa nyid kyi rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya ste | ... de la btang snyoms rnam pa gsum ste | btang snyoms kyi thog ma'i dus dang | rab kyi dus dang | tha ma'i dus so | | ... zhum rgod spangs pa'i sems dang por thob pa la btang snyoms kyi thog ma'i dus zhes bya'o | | de nas phan chad zhum rgod spangs pa'i sems mnyam pa nyid la sems ngang gis gnas pa ni bar gyi dus zhes bya'o | | de'i dus na ring du ma bsgoms pas zhum rgod 'byung ba'i dogs pa yod pa la rnal 'byor pas yun ring du bsgoms nas zhum rgod 'byung ba'i dogs pa yang med par bsgom pa ni btang snyoms kyi tha ma'i dus zhes bya ste.

kinds of *upekṣā* are to be distinguished: the beginning of the practice, its intermediate stage and its end. The first moment of attaining a mind that is free from inertia and excitement is the beginning. From then on, at the intermediate stage, the mind is focussed internally on the mental equality in which inertia and excitement have been given up. As the practitioner has not yet been cultivating long enough at this time, he still fears that inertia and excitement could reoccur. In the end, after having practiced for a long time, the practitioner loses his fear of inertia and excitement.

(7) Eight limbs of the path (*mārgāṅga*)

Vasubandhu explains the eight limbs of the path as follows: correct view (*samyagdṛṣṭi*) is characterized by the "certainty of achievement" (*prāptiniścaya*), correct intention (*samyaksaṃkalpa*) by "understanding the stage of preparation" (*parikarmabhūmisaṃlakṣaṇa*),[29] correct speech (*samyagvāc*) by "communicating [the truth] to others" (*parasaṃjñapti*),[30] correct action (*samyakkarmānta*) as "engagement in discipline dear to the noble ones" (*āryakāntaśīlapraviṣṭa*), correct livelihood (*samyagājīva*) as the "practice of a restricted mode of life" (*saṃlikhitavṛttisamudācāra*), correct effort (*samyagvyāyāma*) as the "repeated practice of the path attained through previous cultivation" (*pūrvaparibhāvitapratilabdhamārgābhyāsa*), correct mindfulness (*samyaksmṛti*) as "non-loss of the mental images [leading to] the stabilization [of the mind] on the *dharma*s" (*dharmasthitinimittāsampramoṣa*), and correct contemplation (*samyaksamādhi*) as the "transformation of the basis [being] the stability of the [state] without mental images" (*animittasthityāśrayaparivṛtti*).[31]

The **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* explains that the "certainty of achievement" (*prāptiniścaya*) has to be understood as the realization of the characteristics of the all-pervading *dharmadhātu* on the first *bhūmi*, followed by the repeated cultivation of this realization up to the tenth *bhūmi*. "Under-

---

[29] MSABh 57,26 has *-saṃrakṣaṇa* instead of *saṃlakṣaṇa*. For the latter reading, see Nagao 2007: 48.

[30] MSABh 57,26 has *parasamprāpti* instead of *parasaṃjñapti*. However, *samprāpti* does not make much sense in the present context, and *saṃjñapti* is supported by the Tibetan translation of the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkārabhāṣya* (*go bar byed pa*) and also of SAVBh(1) 51,7 (*yang dag par rig par byed pa*).

[31] MSABh 57,25-29.

standing the stage of preparation" (*parikarmabhūmisaṃlakṣaṇa*)[32] is said to refer to the practice on the first *bhūmi*, which the practitioner has obtained by means of the stages of studying (*śruta*), reflecting (*cintā*) and cultivating (*bhāvanā*) from the time he entered the *adhimukticaryābhūmi* onwards. After the practitioner has risen from *samādhi* he asks, "how did I realize the *dharmadhātu*?" and understands, "I have realized it by means of the stages of studying, reflecting and cultivating." Therefore this step is called "understanding the preparatory stage". "Communicating [the truth] to others" (*parasaṃjñapti*) means, according to the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*, that the practitioner explains and makes understandable the *dharmadhātu*, as he has realized it on the first *bhūmi*, to those who do not understand the truth (*tattva*). The "discipline dear to the noble ones" (*āryakāntaśīla*) refers to the discipline delighting the *ārya*s that is characterized by giving up the ten unbeneficial (*akuśala*) activities, ranging from killing to wrong views, as well as engaging in the ten beneficial (*kuśala*) activities. In connection with the next category, "correct livelihood", the "restricted mode of life" (*saṃlikhitavṛtti*) is paraphrased as "restricting oneself" and "not striving for what exceeds that which has been taught in the scriptures, like [using] a begging bowl and monastic robes", and "livelihood not [sustained] by means of deceit". The next phrase to be explained is "repeated practice of the path attained through previous cultivation" (*pūrvaparibhāvitapratilabdhamārgābhyāsa*). In this regard the commentary notes that this path is constituted by entering a special kind of energy on the first *bhūmi* after previous cultivation on the *adhimukticaryābhūmi* up to the first *bhūmi*. The repeated cultivation of this path is the repeated entering into this special kind of energy on stages two to ten. The "non-loss of the characteristics [leading to] the stabilization [of the mind] on the *dharma*" (*dharmasthitinimittāsampramoṣa*) is explained as the non-loss of the three kinds of *nimitta*s of the antidotes to inertia and excitement at the time of focussing the mind one-pointedly on the *dharmadhātu* (the term *sthiti* indicating the one-pointed focus and the term *dharma* referring to the *dharmadhātu*). The three kinds of *nimitta* are defined as the *nimitta* of calm abiding (*śamatha*), serving as an antidote to excitement, of uplifting (*parigraha*), being an antidote to inertia, and of equanimity (*upekṣā*). The last is to be focussed on when the mind gains equanimity after inertia and excitement have been given up, the mind being

[32] Note that *parikarmabhūmisaṃrakṣaṇa* is rendered as *yongs su sbyangs pa'i SA rtogs pa* in the Tibetan translation of the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*.

fixed immovably. In the context of the last limb of the path, that is, "correct *samādhi*", the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* says that "stabilizing [the mind] in the [state] without characteristics" (*animittasthiti*) refers to the mental abiding in a state in which the three kinds of characteristics are not perceived and not focussed on. It is a "transformation of the basis" (*āśrayaparivṛtti*) because a basis is attained in which inertia and excitement do not occur anymore and the mind has settled down.[33]

---

[33] SAVBh(1) 50,26-52,19: *de ltar sa dang por chos kyi dbyings rtogs nas sa bcu man chad de nyid la bsgom pa ni thob pa gdon mi za ba'i rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya ste | de ltar yang yang dag pa'i lta bas bsgoms pas na 'dis ni yang dag pa'i lta ba bstan to | | ... mos pas spyod pa'i sa nas rnal 'byor pas mnyan pa dang bsams pa dang bsgom pa la sogs pa'i rim pas chos kyi dbyings rtogs shing sa dang po thob par byas pa'i sa dang po la yongs su sbyangs pa'i sa zhes bya'o | | de nas rnal 'byor pa zhes ting nge 'dzin las langs nas bdag gis chos kyi dbyings ji ltar rtogs zhes brtags nas mnyan pa dang bsam pa dang bsgom pa'i rim pas rtogs so zhes khong du chud pas yongs su sbyangs pa'i sa rtogs pa'i rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya ste | de ltar yang yang dag pa'i rtog pas rtogs pas na 'dis ni yang dag pa'i rtog pa bstan to | | ... de ltar rnal 'byor pas yang dag pa'i lta ba dang yang dag pa'i rtog pas sa dang por chos kyi dbyings ji ltar rtogs pa de kho na khong du ma chud pa rnams la tshig gis 'chad cing go bar byed pa ni pha rol la yang dag par rig par byed pa'i rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya ste | ... 'phags pa rnams dgyes pa'i tshul khrims la ni 'phags pa 'dun par byed pa'i tshul khrims zhes bya ste | de yang srog gcod pa nas log par lta ba'i bar dag mi dge ba bcu spangs shing rang bzhin gyis dge ba bcu la gnas pa ni 'phags pa 'dun par byed pa'i tshul khrims zhes bya ste | ... lhung bzed dang chos gos la sogs pa lung las ji skad 'byung ba las lhag par mi tshol zhing bsnyungs pa dang | g.yo dang | sgyus mi 'tsho ba ni bsnyungs pa'i tshul du kun du spyod pa'i rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya ste | ... mos pa spyod pa'i sa nas sa dang po'i bar du bsgoms pas sa dang po'i tshe brtson 'grus khyad zhugs pa ni sngon yongs su bsgoms pas thob pa'i lam zhes bya'o | | de nas sa gnyis nas sa bcu man chad brtson 'grus khyad zhugs pa de nyid la goms par byed pa la ni goms pa'i rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya ste | ... chos ni chos kyi dbyings rnam par dag pa'o | | chos de nyid la rtse gcig tu 'jog pa ni gnas pa zhes bya ste | chos kyi dbyings la sems rtse gcig tu 'jog pa'i tshe zhum pa dang rgod pa'i tshe gnyen po mtshan ma rnam pa gsum mi rjed par byed pa ni mtshan ma mi brjed pa'i rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya ste | ... mtshan ma rnam pa gsum ni zhi gnas kyi mtshan ma dang gzengs ba stong pa'i mtshan ma dang | btang snyoms kyi mtshan ma'o | | de la nam sems rgod par gyur pa'i dus na ni zhi gnas kyi mtshan ma bsgoms te rgod pa zhi bar bya'o | | nam sems zhum par gyur pa'i dus na ni gzengs bstod pa'i mtshan ma yid la byas shing sems spro ba bskyed par bya'o | | nam zhum rgod spangs te sems mnyam par gyur pa'i dus na ni btang snyoms kyi mtshan ma yid la bya zhing sems mi bskyod par bzhag go | | ... de ltar sems rtse gcig tu gyur pas zhum rgod mi 'byung ba'i phyir | de'i gnyen po mtshan ma rnam pa gsum la yang mi dmigs mi gnas pa la*

12. *mārgadvayasvabhāva* (having the nature of the twofold path)

Vasubandhu only notes that the twofold path is constituted by calm abiding (*śamatha*) and insight (*vipaśyanā*) and that "no explanation" of this *manaskāra* is provided.[34] The **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* offers a reason for this circumstance: "The *manaskāra*s explained above and the *manaskāra*s that will be explained below are included in *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā*."[35]

13. *anuśaṃsa* (beneficial)

The *manaskāra* directed towards the "beneficial" is categorized as twofold by Vasubandhu: the first relates to the removal of unease (*dauṣṭhulya*) and the second to the removal of the causes (*nimitta*) of the five wrong views (*dṛṣṭi*).[36] Neither the term *anuśaṃsamanaskāra* nor the combination of *dauṣṭhulya* and *dṛṣṭinimitta* to form a twofold group has been located in another text.

According to the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* there are two kinds of *dauṣṭhulya*, namely bodily (*kāya*) and mental (*citta*). The concept of bodily *dauṣṭhulya* refers to unbeneficial (*akuśala*) action, such as killing, stealing or sexual misconduct. Mental *dauṣṭhulya* is mental agitation, such as desire or hatred, that is the cause of unbeneficial behaviour. Both kinds of *dauṣṭhulya* are removed by means of realizing the selflessness of phenomena (*dharmanairātmya*). The category *dṛṣṭi* comprises the five views, namely, "view of the [five] constituents as being [the self]" (*satkāyadṛṣṭi*), "view holding to extremes" (*antagrāhadṛṣṭi*), "erroneous view" (*mithyādṛṣṭi*), "clinging to views" (*dṛṣṭiparāmarśa*) and "clinging to morality and observances" (*śīlavrataparāmarśa*). The *nimitta*s of these *dṛṣṭi*s are explained as

---

sems gnas pa mtshan ma med pa zhes bya'o | | de ltar mtshan ma med pa bsgoms pa nyid gnas gyur pa'i rnam pa la bsgom pa zhes bya ste | sngon zhum rgod dang bcas pa'i gnas dang bral nas zhum rgod mi 'byung zhing sems rnal du 'dug pa'i gnas thob pa'i phyir gnas par gyur pa zhes bya ste.

[34] MSAVBh 57,29f.

[35] SAVBh(1) 52, 24-26: *gong du yid la byed pa bshad pa dang | 'og nas yid la byed pa 'chad par 'gyur ba rnams kyang zhi gnas dang lhag mthong gi char gtogs par zad de | zhi gnas dang lhag mthong du 'dus pas logs shin tu bshad mi dgos so.*

[36] MSAVBh 57, 30-58,1.

being their imprints (*vāsanā*) and as being eliminated by means of realizing the selflessness of the person (*pudgalanairātmya*).[37]

14. *pratīcchaka* (receiving)

This *manaskāra* is defined by Vasubandhu as that which grasps (*grāhaka*) instructions from the buddhas and bodhisattvas in the *samādhi* called "stream of the *dharma*" (*dharmasrotas*).[38] The **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* explains that the *dharmasrotas* refers to the attainment of the four *samādhi*s of the *adhimukticaryābhūmi* (i.e., *uṣmagata*, *mūrdhan*, *kṣānti*, *laukikāgradharma*) by a Mahāyāna practitioner who has brought forth the aspiration for awakening (*bodhicitta*).[39] By means of abiding in the *dharmasrotas*, instructions that lead to the obtainment of the first *bhūmi* are received from the buddhas and bodhisattvas.[40]

---

[37] SAVBh(1) 52,32-53,8: *de la gnas ngan len rnam pa gnyis te | lus kyi gnas ngan len dang | sems kyi gnas ngan len to | | de la lus kyi gnas ngan len ni srog gcod pa dang | ma byin par len pa dang | mi tshangs par spyod pa la sogs pa'i mi dge ba byed pa'o | | sems kyi gnas ngan len ni* (Derge *ni ma lus*; Peking *ni mi lus*) *mi dge ba spyod pa'i rgyu 'dod chags dang | zhe sdang la sogs pa sems la g.yo ba ste | chos la bdag med par khong du chud pas ni gnas ngan len sel bar byed pa'o | | 'jig tshogs su lta ba dang | mthar 'dzin par lta ba dang | log par lta ba dang | lta ba bsnyems pa dang | tshul khrims dang brtul zhugs bsnyems pa'i bag chags la lta ba'i mtshan ma zhes bya ste | gang zag la bdag med par khong du chud pas ni lta ba'i mtshan ma sel bar byed do*.

[38] MSABh 58,1f.

[39] The attainment of the *samādhi* of "the stream of the *dharma*" is also mentioned in chapter 14, verse 3, of the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*. In the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* it is explained that this *samādhi* is constituted by the *samādhi* of the fourth stage of the *adhimukticaryābhūmi*, that is, the stage of *laukikāgradharma*, and that the instructions are received from the buddhas and bodhisattvas by a practitioner who has reached bodily and mental ease (*praśrabdhi*) in order to intensify the practice of *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā* (SAVBh[D] mi 262b3-5: *lus dang sems las su rung bar byas pa'i byang chub sems dpa'i chos kyi rgyun gyi ting nge 'dzin la gnas nas sangs rgyas rnams las sa dang po thob par bya ba'i don du bstan pa dang gdams pa'i lung thob bar 'gyur te | lung de yang zhi gnas rnam par rgyas par bya ba dang | lhag mthong rnam par rgyas par bya ba'i phyir lung nod par byed de | ye shes kyi sgras ni lhag mthong la bya'o | | sa dang po thob par 'gyur ba'i lam 'jig rten gyi chos mchog gi ting nge 'dzin la chos kyi rgyun gyi ting nge 'dzin zhes bya'o | |*).

[40] SAVBh(1) 53,11-16: *theg pa chen po'i rigs la gnas pas byang chub tu sems bskyed nas mos pa spyod pa'i ting nge 'dzin bzhi thob pa la chos kyi rgyun zhes bya ste |*

15. *prāyogika* (accompanying application)

The *manaskāra* that "accompanies application" is subdivided into five categories by Vasubandhu, relating to various objects of *samādhi*: 1. observation of numbers (*saṃkhyopalakṣaṇa*), 2. observation of occurrence (*vṛttyupalakṣaṇa*), 3. observation of conceptualization (*parikalpopalakṣaṇa*), 4. observation of succession (*kramopalakṣaṇa*), 5. realization (*prativedha*).[41]

The *manaskāra* of the first category is directed towards the number of words (*nāman*), sentences (*pada*) and phonemes (*vyañjana*).[42] This observation of numbers is further specified in the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* as the observing in the form of "what is the number of words … of sentences … of phonemes in this scripture" practised with regard to the twelve branches of scriptures.[43] The second category, that is, *vṛttyupalakṣaṇa*, is explained by Vasubandhu to be of two kinds: the phonemes, the number of which is limited, on the one hand, and words and sentences, which can occur in an unlimited number of combinations, on the other.[44] According to the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*, there are only forty-eight phonemes, "from *a* to *ka*". At the same time there is no limitation to the construction of words, such as "Devadatta" and "Yajñadatta", and phrases, as for instance, "the conditioned factors are impermanent", which occur in sūtras such as the *Aṣṭasāhasrikā Prajñāpāramitā*.[45] The next step is the observation of conceptual-

---

chos kyi rgyun la gnas pa des sa dang po thob par bya ba'i phyir | sa dang po thob par 'gyur ba'i ting nge 'dzin gyi man ngag sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' rnams las len cing 'dzin pa la yang dag par nod pa yid la byed pa zhes bya ba'i don to.

41 MSABh 58,2-8.

42 MSABh 58,3.

43 SAVBh(1) 53,25-28: *yid la byed cing rtogs pa'i khyad par gang gis mdo sde la sogs pa gsung rab yan lag bcu gnyis la gsung rab 'di'i nang nas ming gi grangs ni 'di snyed cig 'byung | tshig gi grangs ni 'di snyed cig 'byung | yi ge'i grangs ni 'di snyed cig 'byung zhes rtogs pa ni grangs nye bar rtogs pa'i sbyor ba can zhes bya'o.*

44 MSABh 58,4f.

45 SAVBh(1) 54,9-14: *de yi ge'i phyi mo ni a nas ka'i bar du bzhi bcu rtsa brgyad las med pa'i phyir ro | | lha sbyin dang mchod spyin zhes ming du btags pa dang | 'dus byas mi rtag ces tshig tu btags pa rnams la tshad med par khong du chud pa ni ming dang tshig gi tshad med pa la 'jug pa zhes bya ste | shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa stong phrag brgya pa la sogs pa'i mdo sde de dag gi nang nas ming dang tshig dpag tu med par 'byung ba'i phyir ro.*

ization (*parikalpopalakṣaṇa*), which Vasubandhu explains as observing two kinds of possible conceptualizations, being either the concept of an object that is based on the concept of a name or the concept of a name that relies on the concept of an object.[46] The **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* describes the first process as conceptualizing the object on the basis of names such as "jar", "cloth", "Devadatta" or "Yajñadatta". The object that is conceptualized, for instance, relying on the name "jar" is characterized as that having "a round belly and a stretched neck and being suitable for pouring water". The second kind of conceptualization being observed within this step is the perception of the qualities "round belly", "stretched neck" and "suitable for pouring water", to which then the name "jar" is ascribed.[47] Vasubandhu finishes his commentary on the *parikalpopalakṣaṇa* by stating that phonemes are not being conceptualized (*aparikalpa*).[48] The **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*'s explanation in this context is not entirely clear. But it seems to indicate that single phonemes, that is, phonemes without vowels (*gug kyed? med pa*), do not have names, and without a name it is not possible to conceptualize an object.[49] "Observation of succession" (*kramopalakṣaṇa*) means, according to Vasubandhu, observing the process of grasping the name preceding the grasping of the object.[50] In the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* this is further specified as first learning the conventional usage of names, such as "jar", etc., and based on this knowledge conceptualizing the object in the form "What is the name for this objective basis?" or "This is the object that is called such [and such]."[51]

---

46 MSABh 58,5-7.

47 SAVBh(1) 54,22-55,3: *bum pa dang snam bu dang | lha sbyin dang mchod sbyin zhes bya ba'i ming shes pa ni ming la kun rtog pas gzung ba zhes bya'o | | de ltar ming shes nas bum pa zhes bya ba'i ming la de'i don gang yin zhe na | lto zlum po ske dang sdeng sdeng po chu blugs su rung ba ste | rtogs pa ni ming gi sgo nas don la kun rtog pa zhes bya'o | | ... bum pa zhes bya ba'i don lto zlum po ske dang sdeng sdeng po chu blugs su rung ba de la ming du ji skad bya zhe na | de la ni bum pa zhes bya'o zhes rtogs pa ni don gyi sgo nas ming du btags pa yin no*.

48 MSABh 58,7.

49 SAVBh(1) 55, 4-6: *yi ge ni kun brtags pa ma yin no zhes bya ba ni yi ge ka dang a la sogs pa gug sked (read kyed?) med pa rnams la ni kun brtags pa zhes bya bar mi bzhag ste | de ci'i phyir zhe na | yi ge 'bru gcig la ni ming med do | | ming med pas ni de don brtag tu mi rung ba'i phyir ro*.

50 MSABh 58,7f.

51 SAVBh(1) 55, 13-15: *de ltar ming ji ltar shes par byas nas | de nas don gyi dngos*

The last category of the *manaskāra* "accompanying application" (*prāyogika*), that is, "realization" (*prativedha*), is subdivided into eleven kinds by Vasubandhu: 1. the adventitious (*āgantukatva*), 2. basis of appearance (*samprakhyānanimitta*), 3. non-perception of the object (*arthānupalambha*), 4. non-perception of perception (*upalambhānupalambha*), 5. *dharmadhātu*, 6. *pudgalanairātmya*, 7. *dharmanairātmya*, 8. inferior intention (*hīnāśaya*), 9. highest intention (*udāramāhātmyāśaya*), 10. determination (i.e., conceptualization and verbalization?) of the *dharma* according to the realization (*yathādh igamadharmavyavasthāna*), 11. determined *dharma* (*vyavasthāpitadharma*).[52]

According to the comments in the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*,[53] the realization of the adventitious refers to the understanding of the phenomena

---

po 'di la ming du ji skad ces bya ba'am ming 'di skad ces bya ba'i don ni 'di lta bu yin no zhes ming la brten nas don la rtogs so. It is not clear why the commentator provides the example of a question such as "What is the name for this objective basis?" in this context. This kind of conceptualization should actually describe the conceptualizing of an object by someone who already knows its name.

[52] MSABh 58,8-13.

[53] SAVBh(1) 55,19-57,13: *ming du btags pa dang don du btags pa'i chos 'di dag ni gyi na brnyan mar btags par zad do zhes khong du chud pa na glo bur du byung ba rab tu rtogs pa zhes bya ste | gang gi phyir don la ming btags pa rnams kyang gyi na glo bur btags pa yin la ming la don du btags pa rnams kyang gyi na glo bur btags par khong du chud pa ste | de ni mos pa spyod pa'i sa drod kyi dus na khong du chud do | | ... gzung ba dang 'dzin pa'i chos de dag yod pa ma yin pa las yod pa lta bur snang ba ni yang dag par snang ba zhes bya ste | 'di ltar snang bar byed pa'i rgyu la mtshan ma zhes bya'o | | ... gzung ba dang 'dzin pa 'di dag sems dang sems las byung ba la snang bar khong du chud pa ni yang dag par snang ba'i mtshan ma rab tu rtogs pa zhes bya ste | de yang mos pa spyod pa'i sa rtse mo'i dus na de ltar rtogs so | | ... don zhes by aba ni gzugs nas chos kyi bar du yul drug la bya ste | yul drug po de dag la mi rtog cing de dag sems la snang ba thams cad spangs nas mi snang bar gyur ba la don mi dmigs pa rab tu rtogs pa zhes bya'o | | de yang mos pas spyod pa'i sa bzod pa'i dus na rtogs so | | ... yul drug la dmigs par byed pa'i sems mig gi rnam par shes pa nas yid kyi rnam par shes pa'i bar du med par khong du chud pa ni dmigs pa mi dmigs pa rab tu rtogs pa zhes bya'o | | de ci'i phyir zhe na | gzung ba med pa dang de la 'dzin par byed pa'i sems kyang yod pa ma yin no zhes khong du chud pa'i phyir te | de ni mos pa spyod pa'i sa'i 'jig rten gyi chos mchog gi dus na khong du chud do | | ... de ltar gzung ba dang 'dzin pa gnyis spangs nas mthong ba'i lam na chos kyi dbyings thams cad du 'gro ba'i mtshan nyid du mthong ba ni chos kyi dbyings rab tu rtogs pa zhes bya ste | de'ang sa dang po'i tshe'i khong du chud do | | ... mthong ba'i lam na nyan thos rgyun du zhugs pa la sogs pas ni gang zag la bdag med pa la rab tu rtogs te | phung po lnga tsam du zad kyi mu stegs kyis*

(*dharma*) conceptualized as names or objects as being adventitious, in the sense of being unreal images, on the stage of "heat", the first level of the *adhimukticaryābhūmi*. On the stage of "summit", the practitioner attains the realization of the "basis of appearance" (*samprakhyānanimitta*), which is the understanding that the phenomena, that is, the object and the subject, appear as existent even though they are non-existent and that the basis of this appearance are the mind and the mental factors. The next step is the non-perception of the object, that is, the six kinds of objects from visible matter up to the phenomena (*dharma*), on the stage of "endurance" (*kṣānti*). The state of non-perceiving is reached when the six objects are no longer conceptualized and their mental appearances have been given up. On the last stage of the *adhimukticaryābhūmi*, the *laukikāgradharma*, the practitioner realizes that the mind (*citta*), that is, visual perception (*cakṣurvijñāna*) up to mental perception (*manovijñāna*), does not exist either, since the perceiving mind cannot exist if its perceived object is non-existent. After the object and the subject have been given up, true reality (*dharmadhātu*) is realized on the path of vision (*darśanamārga*; constituting the first *bhūmi*). This realization is explained as seeing the characteristics of the all-pervading *dharmadhātu*. The next category refers, according to the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*, to the *śrāvaka*s, that is, the "stream enterers" (*srotaāpanna*), etc., who realize the "selflessness of the person" (*pudgalanairātmya*) on the *darśanamārga*, as this is when they understand that only the five *skandha*s exist and not a

---

brtags pa'i bdag ni yod pa ma yin no zhes khong du chud pa'i phyir ro | | ... byang chub sems dpa' rnams kyis ni mthong ba'i lam la chos la bdag med par rab tu rtogs te | phung po lnga nyid kyang rmi lam gyi gzugs bzhin du med do zhes khong du chud pa'i phyir ro | | ... nyan thos rgyun du zhugs pa dang | lan cig phyir 'ong ba dang phyir mi 'ong ba dang | dgra bcom pa dang | rang sangs rgyas rnams ni bsam pa chung ngus rab tu rtogs pa zhes bya ste | bdag gi don tsam du bya ba dang | gang zag la bdag med pa tsam las ma rtogs pa'i phyir ro | | ... sa bcu pa'i byang chub sems dpa' rnams dang de bzhin gshegs pa rnams ni rgya chen po'i bdag nyid chen po'i bsam pa rab tu rtogs pa zhes bya ste | bdag dang sems can thams cad kyi don bya ba rtogs pa dang gang zag dang chos la bdag med par rtogs pa'i phyir ro | | ... de ltar chos kyi dbyings khong du chud nas de khong du chud pa'i yon tan skad cig ma gcig la de bzhin gshegs pa rgya'i zhal lta ba la sogs pa rnams rtogs pa ni chos rnams par gzhag pa rab tu rtogs pa zhes bya ste | de yang sa dang po'i dus na yang dag pa'i lta bas rtogs so | | ... sa gnyis nas sa bcu man chad na bsgom par bya ba'i chos rnams kyang rab tu rtogs shing de'i yon tan skad cig gcig la de bzhin gshegs pa stong gi zhal mthong ba la sogs pa ni rnam par gzhag pa'i chos rab tu rtogs pa zhes bya ste | 'di ni bsgom pa'i lam na yang dag pa'i rtog pas rtogs so.

self of the kind the non-Buddhists (*tīrthika*) conceptualize. The *bodhisattva*s realize the "selflessness of phenomena" (*dharmanairātmya*) on the "path of vision" (*darśanamārga*) insofar as they understand that the *skandha*s are also non-existent in the same way as matter perceived in a dream does not really exist. The realization of the "inferior intention" (*hīnāśaya*) belongs, according to the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*, to the *śrāvaka*s and *pratyekabuddha*s as they practise only for their own benefit and only realize the *pudgalanairātmya*. The "highest intention" is realized by the bodhisattvas of the ten stages and the *buddha*s because they act not only for their own benefit, but also for that of all living beings and realize both *pudgala*- and *dharmanairātmya*. Having understood the *dharmadhātu*, the practitioner realizes the "determination of the *dharma*s" by means of "correct view" (*samyagdṛṣṭi*) on the first *bhūmi*. The determination of the *dharma*s is explained as realizing the qualities (*guṇa*) of the *dharmadhātu*, such as "facing the faces of one hundred buddhas in one single moment". The last subcategory of "realization" (*prativedha*) is the realization of the "determined *dharma*s" (*vyavasthāpitadharma*), which takes place on the "path of cultivation" (*bhāvanāmārga*), that is, on stages two to ten, by means of "correct intention" (*samyaksaṃkalpa*). The **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* also states that this includes the realization of the *dharma*s to be practised on stages two to ten as well as of their qualities, such as "facing the faces of one thousand buddhas in one single moment".

16. *vaśavartin* (controlling)

The *manaskāra* directed towards "controlling" is related to the purification (*suviśuddha*) of *kleśa*- and *jñeyāvaraṇa*, of which three kinds are enumerated by Vasubandhu: 1. purification of *kleśāvaraṇa*, 2. purification of *kleśa*- and *jñeyāvaraṇa* and 3. purification consisting in the completion of qualities (*guṇābhinirhāra*).[54]

The **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* comments on these three purifications in the following way: After contaminations (*kleśa*) that are to be given up by means of vision (*darśana*) and cultivation (*bhāvanā*), such as desire (*rāga*), are given up in order to attain liberation (*vimokṣa*) and *nirvāṇa*, they do not arise in the mental continuum again. This is the first kind of purification. The second kind of purification additionally includes the elimination

[54] MSABh 58,13f.

of *jñeyāvaraṇa*, which is explained as the attachment to the existence of the two factors *grāhya* and *grāhaka* and which is removed in order to attain omniscience. The last purification is stated to be the manifestation of the qualities, including the six supranormal knowledges (*abhijñā*), the powers and the fearlessnesses.[55]

17. *parītta* (limited) and 18. *vipula* (great)

The last two categories are neither commented on by Vasubandhu nor in the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*. As already noted by Robert Thurman,[56] we only find a reference to these two categories in the Chinese translation of the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkārabhāṣya*: The "limited" *manaskāra* refers to the first purification (of the three purifications mentioned in the previous paragraph) and the "great" *manaskāra* to the last two.[57]

3. The Stage of the Practice of Zealous Application (*adhimukticaryābhūmi*)

The concept of the "stage of the practice of zealous application" (*adhimukticaryābhūmi*)[58] appears frequently in the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*'s expla-

---

55 SAVBh(1) 57,22-58,6: *nyon mongs pa de dag nyid rnam par thar pa dang mya ngan las 'das pa thob par bya ba la bar du gcod pas na sgrib pa zhes bya'o | | sgrib pa de dag spangs nas phyis sems kyi rgyud la mi skye bar byas pa ni nyon mongs pa'i sgrib pa shin tu rnam par dag pa zhes bya ste | ... gzung ba dang 'dzin pa'i chos la yod par chags pa ni shes bya'i sgrib pa zhes bya ste | de yang thams cad mkhyen pa'i ye shes thob par bya ba la bar du gcod pas na sgrib pa'o | | sgrib pa de spangs nas phyis mi skye bar byas pa la shes bya'i sgrib pa shin tu rnam par dag pa zhes bya ste ... yon tan ni mngon par shes pa drug dang stobs dang mi 'jigs pa la sogs pa la bya'o*.

56 Thurman 2004: 121.

57 Taisho 1604, 611a24: 小作意者。謂初清淨。大作意者。謂後二清淨.

58 Another possible understanding of the compound *adhimukticaryābhūmi* would be "stage of practicing with conviction" (or "stage of practice [attained] through conviction"?), especially if one takes into consideration the common Tibetan translation of the term as *mos pas spyod pa'i sa* (see, e.g., SAVBh[1] 50,30f.). However, the *Mahāvyutpatti* lists both *mos pas spyod pa'i sa* and *mos pa spyod pa'i sa* as possible translations of the term (MVy 896 and 897). Thus, the exact meaning of the compound remains unclear.

nations of various practices and steps of realization. Thus, it is notable that it is not mentioned in the root text, that is, the verses of the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*, and is referred to by Vasubandhu in his commentary only sporadically, in different contexts than in the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* and without any further explanations. The *adhimukticaryābhūmi* is a preparatory stage, consisting of the four "beneficial roots leading to insight" (*nirvedhabhāgīyakuśalamūla*): heat (*uṣmagata*), summit (*mūrdhan*), endurance (*kṣānti*) and highest worldly *dharma*s (*laukikāgradharma*). According to the *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, these four stages correspond to the "path of preparatory practice" (*prayogamārga*),[59] the second stage of the fivefold path, preparing the practitioner for the *darśanamārga*. The term *adhimukticaryābhūmi* also occurs in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, where it is mentioned as the second level of the path.[60] In the *Bodhisattvabhūmi* it appears without the attribution to the four *kuśalamūla*s and also not in combination with the ten *bhūmi*s (as it does in the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*). Thus, the *adhimukticaryābhūmi* model as it is presented in the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* commentaries seems to be a combination of the traditional model of the four *nirvedhabhāgīyakuśalamūla*s as found, for instance, in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*, the *adhimukticaryābhūmi* mentioned in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, and the concept of the ten *bhūmi*s of the bodhisattva.

The structure consisting of the *adhimukticaryābhūmi* and the ten *bhūmi*s appears in connection with various models of spiritual development in the eleventh chapter of the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*, some of which have already been mentioned above. In another passage of the text, which has been already investigated in a previous study,[61] the practitioner is said to achieve the state of "seeing *nāmamātra*" at the levels of heat (*uṣmagata*) and summit (*mūrdhan*).[62] Then, at the stage of endurance (*kṣānti*) the concept of an object is given up and the mind is abiding in mind only.[63] When the practitioner

---

[59] AS(T) 110a. For a detailed description of the four factors, see also AKBh 343,10ff., where they seem to correspond to the practice of the four *smṛtyupasthāna*s.

[60] BoBh 367,4.

[61] Kramer 2016: 59.

[62] SAVBh(2) 117,21: *drod dang rtse mo'i tshe na chos thams cad ming tsam du mthong bar 'gyur te*.

[63] SAVBh(2) 116,19: *bzod pa'i dus na phyi'i yul mi dmigs kyi sems tsam la gnas pas de la yid gnas pa zhes bya'o* | | and 117,23–27: *de'i 'og tu bzod pa'i dus na chos thams cad sems tsam du mthong ste* | *... gzung ba rnams de'i tshe spangs pa'i phyir ro*.

reaches the level of supreme mundane factors (*laukikāgradharma*), he does not perceive "mind only" anymore,[64] which means that at this stage the concept of the subject also disappears. Finally, on the first *bhūmi* liberation is attained, the practitioner dwelling in objectless knowledge (*jñāna*).[65]

A related classification is found in connection with a practice focussing on four objects (*ālambana*), which is explained in verses five to seven of the eleventh chapter of the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*. Here the four ālambanas comprise the doctrine (*dharma*), "the inner" (*adhyātma*), "the outer" (*bāhyaka*) and "both" (*dvaya*), the latter three being "attained" (*lābha*) through either taking the inner and the outer as reference points (*artha*) or through their non-perception (*anupalambha*). The attainment of "the inner", "the outer" and "both" is stated to be grounded in the engagement with the *dharma* as one's object, which consists in obtaining the three kinds of knowledge (*jñāna*) by means of studying, reflecting and cultivating (*śrutacintābhāvanā*) the *dharma*. The attainment of the *dharma* through studying is explained in verse six of chapter eleven of the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* as the result of "examining [the *dharma*] by someone who [has reached] certainty with regard to the explained object by means of mental verbalization (i.e., conceptualization)" (*manojalpair yathoktārthaprasannasya pradhāraṇāt*).[66] This statement seems to indicate the process of hearing the teachings being explained by the teacher and gaining confidence with regard to their meaning. On this level the understanding of the *dharma* is still part of *manojalpa*, that is, the process of thinking and conceptualizing. The *dharma* attained through reflecting (*cintā*) is described as understanding that the appearance of the object (*arthakhyāna*) has its origin in conceptualization (*manojalpa*).[67] According to Vasubandhu, this means that at this stage the practitioner sees the appearing object as not being different from *manojalpa*. Vasubandhu adds that this corresponds to the above-mentioned attainment of the "inner", i.e., the subject (*grāhaka*), and "the outer", i.e., the object (*grāhya*), "through [taking] the two as reference points" (*dvayārthena*). The latter statement in-

---

64 SAVBh(2) 116,22f.: *'jig rten gyi chos mchog gi dus na gzung ba med na de la 'dzin par byed pa'i sems kyang med do zhes sems tsam du 'dzin pa dang yang bral te.*

65 SAVBh(2) 118,5f.: *sa dang po'i tshe gzung ba dang 'dzin pa gnyis mi dmigs pa'i dmigs su med pa'i ye shes la gnas pa nyid rnam par grol ba yin to.*

66 MSABh 55,12 (see also Nagao 2007: 31, 26f.) and 19 as well as 56,1f. The term *manojalpa* is paraphrased as *manovijñāna* in SAVBh(1) 36,20.

67 MSABh 55,20 and 56,6-8.

dicates the practitioner's twofold realization that "this which is referred to as subject is not different from that which is referred to as object" (*grāhyārthād grāhakārtham abhinnam*) and that "this which is referred to as object is [not different] from that which is referred to as subject" (*grāhakārthāc ca grāhyārtham*).[68] In short, at the level of reflecting (*cintā*) upon the *dharma*, the practitioner realizes that there are no external objects. Finally, the *dharma* attained through cultivation (*bhāvanā*) is stated to be the result of "abiding of the mind in the name" (*nāmni sthānāc ca cetasaḥ*),[69] which Vasubandhu specifies as the non-perception of the two, *grāhya* and *grāhaka*. This step corresponds to the attainment of the fourth object indicated above as "both". Vasubandhu explains that this is the attainment of the true reality (*tathatā*) of all inner and outer objects and the non-perception of the two.[70]

In the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* these steps of realization are combined with the system of the *adhimukticaryābhūmi*. Thus, the "attainment of the outer object" is said to happen on the stage of *kṣānti*, corresponding to the above-mentioned process of giving up the concept of the object. The commentary further explains that distraction (*vikṣepa*) towards the object is given up after the practitioner has seen that outer objects do not exist outside and that they are mind only. The "attainment of the inner object" is ascribed to the level of *laukikāgradharma*, which has been characterized above as the moment in which the concept of the subject also disappears. According to the commentary, in this step the distraction towards the subject is given up after the practitioner has understood that (the status of) the inner mind (*citta*) is not different from the object: the inner mind does not exist, in the same way as the outer object does not exist. The last step, that is, the "attainment of true reality" is said to take place on the first *bhūmi* while the practitioner abides in the non-dual knowledge, not perceiving any appearances of the object and the subject after having realized the all-pervading characteristics of the *dharmadhātu*. In a final remark the commentary notes that the stages of "heat" (*uṣmagata*) and "summit" (*mūrdhan*) are not applicable in the context of the "attainment of objects".[71]

---

[68] MSABh 55,16f.

[69] In SAVBh(1) 37,8-10 *cetas* is explained as "*prajñā* [arising from] cultivation" (*bsgom pa'i shes rab*) and *nāman* as the four non-material *skandha*s (*ming gi sgras ni tshor ba la sogs pa gzugs med pa'i phung po la bya ste*).

[70] MSABh 55,17f. and 20, as well as 56,8f.

[71] SAVBh(1) 35, 5-18: *phyi'i yul rnams logs shig na yod pa ma yin par mthong nas*

Another structure of the path that is combined with the stages of the *adhimukticaryābhūmi* in the eleventh chapter of the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* is the so-called "fivefold stage of spiritual practice" (*pañcavidhā yogabhūmiḥ*). The five levels of this practice include: 1. the doctrine (*dharma*) corresponding (*niṣyanda*) to what has been accomplished and taught by the Buddha, referred to as "support" (*ādhāra*) in Vasubandhu's commentary; 2. correct attention (*yoniśomanaskāra*), that is, "the supported" (*ādhāna*) according to Vasubandhu; 3. *samādhi* or "abiding of the mind in true reality" (*cittasya dhātau sthānam*), which corresponds to the above-mentioned "abiding of the mind in the name" and is called "mirror" (*ādarśa*) by Vasubandhu; 4. seeing objects as existent and non-existent (*sadasattārthapaśyanā*),[72] specified by Vasubandhu as supramundane insight (*lokottarā prajñā*) and "illumination" (*āloka*); 5. "transformation of the basis" (*āśrayaparāvṛtti*), not mentioned in the root verse but in Vasubandhu's commentary.[73] In the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* the first level, *ādhāra*, is ascribed to the state of a normal person (*pṛthagjana*), ādhāna to the four stages of the *adhimukticaryābhūmi*, *ādarśa* to the first *bodhisattvabhūmi*, *āloka* to the second to tenth *bhūmi*s and *āśraya* to the stage of the Buddha (*buddhabhūmi*).[74] The **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* provides some additional noteworthy remarks on the five levels, which will be dealt with in detail in the next part of this series of three papers on the concepts of the spiritual path found in the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*, to be published in the near future.

---

sems tsam du mthong nas gzung ba'i g.yeng ba spangs pas phyi'i dmigs pa rnyed pa zhes bya ste | 'di ni bzod pa'i dus na'o | | ... nang gi sems tha dad pa ma yin pa mthong ste | phyi'i yul med pa bzhin du nang gi sems kyang med do zhes khong du chud nas 'dzin pa la g.yeng ba spangs pas nang gi dmigs pa rnyed pa zhes bya ste | 'di ni 'jig rten gyi chos mchog gi dus na'o | | ... chos kyi dbyings thams cad du 'gro ba'i mtshan nyid du rtogs nas snang ba gzung ba yang mi dmigs 'dzin pa yang mi dmigs par 'gyur te | gnyis su med pa'i ye shes la gnas par gyur na phyi nang thams cad kyi de bzhin nyid kyi dmigs pa rnyed pa zhes bya ste | 'di ni sa dang po'i dus na'o | | drod dang spyi bo'i tshe na ni phyi nang gi de bzhin nyid mngon sum du ma gyur pas dmigs pa rnyed par mi bshad do.

72 In MSABh 65,20 this is explained as "seeing the existent as existent and the non-existent as non-existent, according to their true reality" (*sac ca sato yathābhūtaṃ paśyaty asac cāsataḥ*).

73 MSABh 65,14-20.

74 SAVBh(2) 108,12-109,6.

4. Concluding Remarks

The collection of eighteen *manaskāra*s as found in the *dharmaparyeṣṭi* chapter of the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkārabhāṣya* might appear as just another "mechanically" created list, probably reflecting a "fashion" among Yogācāra scholars and not a particularly important doctrinal advancement. However, when studied in all its details, it reveals—as Abhidharmic systematizations often do—a number of notable doctrinal peculiarities unknown from other sources. It thus broadens our understanding of the Yogācāra school's rich and for the most part still unexplored body of thought, which extends far beyond the well-known concepts of the "store mind" (*ālayavijñāna*), the idea of "[external objects] being only mental representations" (*vijñaptimātratā*), or the three natures (*svabhāva*). The collection also represents an innovative step insofar as the eighteen components differ completely from the categories of other lists of *manaskāra*s. Most of the eighteen items do not appear in connection with the term *manaskāra* in any other source presently known.

As already mentioned in the first part of this study, the seven *manaskāra*s known from the *Śrāvakabhūmi* were probably applied as a specific contemplative practice in its own right, whereas the set of forty *manaskāra*s (mentioned in the *Samāhitā Bhūmi*) and the eighteen *manaskāra*s under discussion here seem to be the result of a theoretical systematization of different aspects of Buddhist practice.[75] The main difference between the sets of seven and eighteen *manaskāra*s seems to be found in the function of the category *manaskāra*. Within the sevenfold practice *manaskāra* represents the "technique" constituting each of the seven steps of spiritual practice. In contrast, within the collection of eighteen *manaskāra*s, the term appears to be applied in the sense of an accompanying attention that is present while the practitioner is engaged in various practices and (mental) states. It is obvious that the eighteen categories, as presented in the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* commentaries, are supposed to cover all aspects of the Buddhist path. Each category represents one of the many different perspectives from which the engagement with the *dharma* can be described. Thus, we find, on the one hand, classifications such as the threefold structure of studying (*śruta*), reflecting (*cintā*) and cultivating (*bhāvanā*) in the seventh *manaskāra*, the twofold distinction of *śamatha* and *vipaśyanā* (12th *manaskāra*), as well as various other categorisations related to meditative absorption and a number of specific

[75] See also Kramer 2018: 283f.

practices (4th, 6th, 8th, 9th, 11th, 14th, 15th *manaskāra*). On the other hand, the *manaskāra* passage offers some more general typologies of Buddhist practitioners, including the various *gotra*s (1st *manaskāra*) and the distinction between monastics and lay people (3rd *manaskāra*).

The model of the "stage of the practice of zealous application" (*adhimukticaryābhūmi*) appears frequently in the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* in combination with the ten stages (*bhūmi*) and is applied in order to systematize the steps of realization. Remarkably, it is not mentioned in the root text, namely the verses of the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra*, and is only rarely referred to in Vasubandhu's commentary. The concept of the *adhimukticaryābhūmi* as it appears in the *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra* commentaries seems to be a combination of the steps listed in the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*, the traditional model of the "beneficial roots leading to insight" (*nirvedhabhāgīyakuśalamūla*) as found, for instance, in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya* and the concept of the ten stages (*bhūmi*).

Bibliography

Primary Sources

AKBh — *Abhidharmakośabhāṣyam of Vasubandhu*, ed. Prahlad Pradhan. Patna: K.P. Jayaswal Research Institute, 1967.

AS(T) — *Abhidharmasamuccaya*, Tibetan translation. Derge 4049.

BoBh — *Bodhisattvabhūmi: A Statement of Whole Course of the Bodhisattva (Being Fifteenth Section of Yogācārabhūmi)*, ed. Unrai Wogihara. Tokyo 1930–1936.

MSABh — *Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkārabhāṣya* of Vasubandhu, in *Asaṅga, Mahāyāna-Sūtrālaṃkāra, Exposé de la doctrine du Grand Véhicule*, ed. Sylvain Lévi. Paris: Librairie Honoré Champion, 1907.

MVy — *Mahāvyutpatti*, ed. Ryozaburo Sakaki, 2 vols. Kyoto University, Faculty of Letters, 1916.

Saṃdhi — *Saṃdhinirmocanasūtra*, ed. Étienne Lamotte. Louvain 1935.

SAVBh(1) — **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*, ed. Osamu Hayashima. *Bulletin of Faculty of Education Nagasaki University* 26 (1977), 19–61.

SAVBh(2) **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*, ed. Osamu Hayashima. *Bulletin of Faculty of Education, Nagasaki University* 27 (1978), 73–119.

SAVBh(D) **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya*. Tibetan Translation. Derge 4034.

Secondary Sources

Ahn 2003

Sung-doo Ahn, *Die Lehre von den kleśas in der Yogācārabhūmi*. Stuttgart: Franz Steiner Verlag, 2003.

Deleanu 2006

Florin Deleanu, *The Chapter on the Mundane Path (Laukikamārga) in the Śrāvakabhūmi*. Tokyo: International Institute for Buddhist Studies, 2006.

Delhey 2009

Martin Delhey, *Samāhitā Bhūmiḥ: das Kapitel über die meditative Versenkung im Grundteil der Yogācārabhūmi*. Wien: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 2009.

Kramer 2016

Jowita Kramer, "Some Remarks on Sthiramati and his Putative Authorship of the *Madhyāntavibhāgaṭīkā*, the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* and the *Triṃśikāvijñaptibhāṣya*", *Buddhist Studies Review* 33 (2016), 47–63.

Kramer 2018.

———, "Concepts of the Spiritual Path in the **Sūtrālaṃkāravṛttibhāṣya* (Part I): The Eighteen *Manaskāras*", in Oliver von Criegern, Gudrun Melzer, Johannes Schneider (eds.), *Saddharmāmṛtam – Festschrift Jens-Uwe Hartmann*, Wien: Arbeitskreis für Tibetische und Buddhistische Studien Universität Wien, 2018, pp. 269–284.

Nagao 2007

Gadjin M. Nagao, *"Daijōshōgonkyō ron" wayaku to chūkai: Nagao Gajin Kenkyū nōto* 『大乗荘厳経論』和訳と注解: 長尾雅人研究ノート (*An Annotated Translation of the Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra: Research Notes by* Gadjin Nagao). 2nd volume. Kyoto: Nagao Bunko, 2007.

Thurman 2004
Robert Thurman, *The Universal Vehicle Discourse Literature (Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra)*. New York: American Institute of Buddhist Studies at Columbia University, 2004.

Chapter IX

The Road Not to Be Taken: An Introduction to Two Ninth-Century Works Against Buddhist Antinomian Practice

Péter-Dániel Szántó, Universiteit Leiden

1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to share some reflections on two works, to the best of my knowledge hitherto overlooked, that discuss antinomian practices in Indian tantric Buddhism. Both are preserved only in Tibetan translation, but there can be little doubt that there were Sanskrit originals behind them. The two works are related, as they were written by master and disciple. The master, the otherwise unknown *Dharmendra (Tib. Chos kyi dbang po), was the author of a learned treatise on Mahāyāna practice, the title of which may be reconstructed as **Tattvasārasaṃgraha* (Tib. *De kho na nyid kyi snying po bsdus pa*). The lion's share of this text is more or less irrelevant for the present study, but it is perhaps not insignificant to note that for the author, it is the Madhyamaka which represents the ultimate teaching, while the Yogācāra is said to serve a propaedeutic purpose. In the last part of his work, the author, answering the question of a literary objector, explains why he does not discuss the Mantrayāna, that is to say tantric Buddhism. The position he adopts is, as far as I can tell, a rather rare one: he seems to accept the tantric revelation as perfectly valid, but he argues that its practices are to be avoided in the present day and age. The second work is by his disciple, the also otherwise unknown *Udbhaṭa Coyaga (Tib. Mtho btsun btso yangs, with several variants for the second element), the title of whose treatise can be reconstructed as **Mantranayāloka* (Tib. *Gsang sngags kyi tshul snang ba*). In the introduction the author explains that the position of his master was met with some controversy and that his own work aims to clarify that view. In other words,

Cristina Pecchia and Vincent Eltschinger (eds.), *Mārga. Paths to Liberation in South Asian Buddhist Traditions*. Papers from an international symposium held at the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, December 17 – 18, 2015. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2020, pp. 363–379.

it is an apology written in *Dharmendra's defence. If we give credence to the colophons, both works were translated in Western Tibet in the first half of the eleventh century, as the Tibetan translator in both cases is the famous Rin chen bzang po, who passed away in 1055 CE. The Indian contributor to the work listed here first is one *Janārdana, whereas in the case of the other it is the somewhat better-known Padmākaravarman. This gives us an upper limit for dating the two texts. However, as I hope to show below, their age is much greater, perhaps by as much as two centuries.

2. The authors and their times

Nothing is known about the authors except what they tell us. *Dharmendra calls himself a follower of the Mahāyāna and the son of a brahmin called *Nāgendra (D 100r *bram ze Klu yi dbang po'i bu*). The authorship colophon styles him an *ācārya*.

His disciple is even more obscure. The first part of his name may be reconstructed as *Udbhaṭa (*mtho btsun*), but the second half is very problematic. It is variously spelt as *btso yangs*, *mtso yags*, *tso yag*, and *btso yags*. The variations suggest that this is not a translation but a phonetic transcription. The word is obviously not Sanskritic. The surname Choyaga is known in current Nepal, but it is extremely rare. Compare this with Newar[1] *coya* (vb.) "to write", "to paint", but also (n.) "writing", "book"; *coyakë* (vb.) "to announce", "to proclaim". For the time being I interpret the *-ga* as a voiced and, if the form was Coyag, perhaps truncated Skt. *kan* suffix, therefore **coyaka* must mean something like "writer", "painter", or perhaps a title of office. In the authorship colophon, *Udbhaṭa is styled a "great *vajrācārya*" (D 78v *rdo rje slob dpon chen po*), a somewhat puzzling title in light of his views. He does not mention his master by name, but does refer to the title of *Dharmendra's work (D 76r) and the contents he discusses match the ideas of the **Tattvasārasaṃgraha* perfectly. Therefore there can be little doubt that his anonymous guru is none other than *Dharmendra.

If I am right to take the second half of *Udbhaṭa's name as a Newar word, then he was Nepalese in origin. Chances are therefore strong that both he and his master were inhabitants of Nepal.

The lower limit for the activity of *Dharmendra is provided by his referenced quotation of the opening verse of Śāntarakṣita's **Madhyamakālaṃkāra*

[1] Jørgensen 1935 [1989] s.v.

(D 85v = D 53r, ed. CXIII). Since Śāntarakṣita flourished in the second half of the eighth century, *Dharmendra must have been either a contemporary or lived later. It is perhaps noteworthy that he also refers to and quotes Kambala's *Ālokamālā*—or a version thereof—rather often (here I trace only referenced quotations: D 87r-87v = ?, 89r = ?, 91v = 174-177ab, 92r = 13, 93v = 205-206, 95r = 129-131, 95r-95v = 267).

The quotations from tantric sources will be discussed below in greater detail. What is important to note here is that the textual pool employed by both *Dharmendra and *Udbhaṭa reflects an exegetical environment typical of the ninth century. I have in mind works such as the *Sūtakamelāpaka* (better known by a title not attested in Sanskrit, *Caryāmelāpakapradīpa*) of the most famous of the tantric Āryadevas, the *Tattvasiddhi* of pseudo-Śāntarakṣita, the *Sāramañjarī* of Samantabhadra, and, to some extent, the *Nāmamantrārthāvalokinī* of Vilāsavajra. The highest doxographical category mentioned is the *yogatantra*; *yoginītantra*s are not mentioned at all, neither the category, nor any text that is later classified into this category. Titles referred to are the following: the *Nayatrayapradīpa* [of Trivikrama], the *Paramādya*, and the *Guhyendutilaka*. Unreferenced quotations can be traced as hailing from the *Guhyasamāja*, the (now lost) *Laukikalokottaravajratantra*, and, again, the *Paramādya*. Four verses are referenced with an unfamiliar title; three of these are either from the *Guhyasiddhi* or a common source.

Based on this circumstantial evidence I have little hesitation to state that both works must date to the ninth century and were possibly written in Nepal, although the evidence for the localisation, a tentative identification of an onomastic element, is quite feeble.

3. The debate

3.1 The position of *Dharmendra's opponent

*Dharmendra's work is written mainly in prose with occasional verses summing up a particular topic. It is very rich in quotations. The passage we are concerned with here is the last question asked by an imaginary opponent (D 98v-99r). His position may be summarised as follows. The Lord recognised that followers of the Mahāyāna can be grouped into three categories according to spiritual capacity: low, middling, and highest. For those of the highest

degree, he revealed the Mantrayāna (*sngags kyi theg pa*), by which one may achieve perfect enlightenment in a single moment. This vehicle differs in its means, but it does not differ in what those means lead to. How is it then that *Dharmendra would not teach the Mantrayāna?

To illustrate and validate his viewpoint, the opponent marshals five quotations from four different sources. Fortunately, all of these are popular verses and they are all extant in Sanskrit.

The first (D 98v) is a celebrated verse from the *Nayatrayapradīpa* (D 16r)[2] summarising the differences between exoteric and esoteric Buddhism: although their aim is the same, the tantric path is supreme, because it is free of confusion, it has varied means, it is easy, and it is meant for the choicest individuals.

The second and third quotations (ibid.) are attributed to the *Paramādya*, somewhat surprisingly styled as *sngags kyi tshul*, **mantranaya* (D 241v and 242v).[3] The central idea of these verses is that buddhahood and one's person are not different. This can be realised by achieving and maintaining—even outside formal sessions of visualisation—meditative union (*yoga*) with one's presiding/chosen deity (*svādhidaivata*). The method is said to be so efficient that even those who have not obtained initiation and possess little merit or wisdom can be successful.

---

[2] The verse is cited in the following form *inter alia* in Advayavajra's *Tattvaratnāvalī* (p. 21), the *Subhāṣitasaṃgraha* (part II, p. 7), and Sahajavajra's *Sthitisamāsa* (Ms. 11v, D 96v): *ekārthatve 'py asaṃmohād bahūpāyād aduṣkarāt | tīkṣṇendriyādhikārāc ca mantraśāstraṃ viśiṣyate* ||. With regard to the text in the *Subhāṣitasaṃgraha*, Bendall's reading *vajropāyād* for *bahūpāyād* is a simple corruption or a misreading. Some testimonies read *mantranītiḥ praśasyate* as the last verse quarter, e.g. Vibhūticandra's *Amṛtakaṇikoddyota* (p. 137). Ratnarakṣita's *Padminī* (Ms. 35v, D 73r) has further variants: *mahāprajñādhikārāc ca mantranītir viśiṣyate*. The original Sanskrit of this work was found only very recently.

[3] These verses are also often cited and they are usually attributed to the *Śamvara*, which adopted them from the *Paramādya*. I quote the verses as they are found in that text (Ms. 2v-3r, D 152r-152v): *ātmā vai sarvabuddhatvaṃ sarvaśauritvam eva ca | svādhidaivatayogena tasmād ātmaiva sādhayet* ||; *utthito vā niṣaṇṇo vā caṅkraman vā yathāsthitaḥ | prahasan vā prajalpan vā yatra tatra yathā tathā* || *amaṇḍalapraviṣṭo vā sarvāvaraṇavān api | svādhidaivatayogātmā mandapuṇyo 'pi sidhyati* ||.

This idea is emphasised by the next (ibid.), unattributed verse, which corresponds to *Guhyasamājatantra* 5.3ab-2cd.[4] Here it is stated that even those who have committed heinous crimes such as the five of immediate retribution can achieve accomplishment in this supreme vehicle, that is to say, the Mantrayāna.

The last verse spells out the method of achievement: it is through pleasure, and not by tormenting the body, that one obtains buddhahood. The stanza is unattributed, but it corresponds to a quotation in the *Tattvasiddhi* (D 30v), where the source is given as the *Laukikalokottaravajratantra*, a lost scripture.[5]

3.2 *Dharmendra's answer

*Dharmendra silently acknowledges that the cited stanzas are part of valid revelation. He must have done so, since otherwise the refutation would have started with something to the effect that he does not accept these scriptures as authoritative (*buddhavacana*), or even their condemnation as the words of the Devil (*mārabhāṣita*). In fact, in his elaboration he praises the tantric means as being profound. He chooses to pin down his opponent on another point (D 99r-99v), suitability, stating that in this day and age there are no such "supreme" persons who would be worthy for tantric practices, and chances are that there will not be any in the future either.

What follows is an elaboration on this point with various metaphors. Nowadays, so *Dharmendra, people "burn" their mental continuum with the firewood consisting of false views such as that of "I" and "mine", which stems from ignorance. Their minds are scattered by the wind of their own conceptualisations, adrift owing to the waves of affliction, sick because of their involvement in perverse views. How could such people be suitable for the practice of tantric methods that are vast, profound, beyond this world?

---

[4] Perhaps this is a rearrangement of the author, or he is citing a different recension. As far as I can see, this problem is irrelevant for the present enquiry. The two lines are: *sidhyanti agrayāne 'smin mahāyāne hy anuttare || ānantaryaprabhṛtayo mahāpāpakṛto 'pi ca |*.

[5] This is only one of many earlier scriptures that have been "lost", that is to say, no longer extant in Sanskrit and not translated into Tibetan or Chinese. The verse is: *sukhena labhyate siddhir na siddhiḥ kāyatāpanaiḥ | yasmāt samādhisambhūtaṃ buddhatvaṃ sarvasaukhyataḥ ||*. Note that *Dharmendra's quotation has **bodhiḥ* for both occurrences of *siddhiḥ*.

The Lord, continues *Dharmendra, taught the Mantranaya in the old times, when there indeed were aspirants of quality. But, since he is omniscient and sees everything, he realised that in the future it will not be so, hence he also banned tantric practices. To illustrate this point, the author gives four scriptural quotations.

The first two, amounting to four verses in total, are attributed to a somewhat mysteriously titled scripture, the *Gsang sngags kyi theg pa tshul* (**Mantrayānanaya*). The three verses in the second block are undoubtedly from the *Guhyasiddhi*, yet another early source; however, the first cannot be traced in the transmission available to us. Here is a tentative translation:

> And this has been taught by the Lord in the Mode of the Vehicle of Mantras: "They [i.e. questionable tantric practitioners] are not versed in wisdom and they are soaked in the stains of egoism. Their behaviour beyond [the conventions of] the world will lead nowhere but the hells." From the same source, "Those bereft of the splendid methods who practise perverse *samaya*s and so forth and behave in opposition [to worldly morality] will fry in the Raurava hell. To give an example: [suppose] one were to throw a heap of grass and wood into a roaring fire; it will burn to ashes and will never resume its [previous] form [i.e. grass and wood]. In the same way, one devoid of [a proper understanding of] reality, committing curious deeds, will stay in hell after death as long as the sky abides."[6]

[6] D 99r-99v: *de yang bcom ldan 'das kyis Gsang sngags kyi theg pa tshul las | shes rab de ni mi shes shing | | ngar 'dzin dri mas spags pa rnams | | de yi 'jig rten 'das spyod pa | | dmyal bar 'gro ba kho nar zad | | ces gsungs pa dang | yang de nyid las | thabs bzang rnam par spangs nas ni | | 'gal ba'i dam tshig la sogs pa | | gang zhig gzhan du byed pa dag | de ni ngu 'bod dag tu 'tshed | | dper na 'di na rab 'bar mer | | rtswa dang shing la sogs pa'i tshogs | | bcug pa thal ba nyid 'gyur gyis | | slar ni rab tu skye mi 'gyur | | de bzhin de nyid rnam bral bar | | shin tu rmad byung las byed pa | | ji srid nam mkha' gnas par du | | shi nas dmyal bar 'gro bar 'gyur | | zhes gsungs pa* [...] Cf. *Guhyasiddhi* 1.33-35*: anyathā ye prakurvanti divyopāyavivarjitāḥ | viruddhasamayādīni pacyante te tu raurave || yathā vahnau pradīpte 'smin tṛṇadārvādisaṃcayaḥ | prakṣipto bhasmatāṃ yāti prarohaṃ na punar vrajet || tathā tattvavihīnās tu kurvanto 'tyadbhutāni tu | vipannā narakaṃ yānti yāvad ākāśasambhavaḥ ||*. Note, however, that *Dharmendra treats the verses as scriptural, since he refers to the speaker as the *bhagavān* before the first verse, and then says that the other three are from the same text.

The following two quotations are also extant in Sanskrit. Although they are marked in a way that would suggest two different *loci*, the verses occur in succession both in the *Sāramañjarī* (Ms. 35v, D 41r-41v) and in the *Tattvasiddhi* (D 27v).[7]

The first verse may have two meanings. If we take *kārayet* as a true causative, then the subject is presumably a teacher and the object a disciple. For the present debate, this is the more apposite meaning: a master must examine a disciple well before judging what type of teaching to bestow on him. However, in this register of Sanskrit the causative may substitute the simplex, in which case the subject is a prospective practitioner, who is enjoined to examine well the path he wishes to take. Failing that, it will be sixteen times more dangerous than entering fire. Only those, the second verse adds, who have a thorough knowledge of "reality" will obtain accomplishment; others court perdition.

*Dharmendra sums up by saying that according to these quotations, the *Mantranaya* is not for common people and that teaching it is not endorsed (*dgag pa*). He embraces this view and will therefore not teach the Way of Mantras.

3.3 *Udbhaṭa's apology

3.3.1 The introduction of the **Mantranayāloka*

The sole aim of *Dharmendra's disciple was to defend his teacher's position concerning the matters related above. He does not discuss the exoteric *Mahāyāna* at all. The **Mantranayāloka* is entirely in verse and the meaning is sometimes difficult to understand. After the customary obeisance verse, this is what the author tells us:

> Times are bad and men are of little worth. This is what my master saw and he did not endorse the teaching of the *Mantranaya*, hence

[7] These are: *sunirūpya susaṃcintya praveśaṃ kārayed budhaḥ | anyathāgnipraveśo 'sya kalāṃ nārghati ṣoḍaśīṃ || tattvaṃ vijñāya yatnena yo 'dhimuktiṃ niṣevate | sa sidhyaty anyathā tasya mahānirayapātanam ||*. The Tibetan translation of the *Sāramañjarī* adds that these verses are from the "*Guhyendutilaka* etc.". The attribution probably comes from the *Tattvasiddhi*, where the same pair occurs in a group of verses of which only the first three lines can be traced in the *Guhyendutilaka*. In *Dharmendra's version, the reading was *tattvaṃ vijñāya *tattvena* rather than the one given above.

> in his **Tattvasārasaṃgraha* he presented both reasons (**yukti*) and the intention [of the Lord] (**abhiprāya*) [that is to say, why he first taught the *Mantranaya* and why he forbid its practice later]. There were some dull-witted people who either did not understand [his reasoning] or they were [merely] jealous. They misrepresented [his views] and on account of their confusion [even] disparaged him. My effort [in writing this work] is dedicated to saving them before they fall like a moth into the fire that is the sin of abandoning him.[8]

The choice of verbs ("disparage", *brnyas*; "abandon", *spang*) seems to suggest that the people *Udbhaṭa has in mind here are not members of the general public, but *Dharmendra's disciples.[9]

The next five verses elaborate on the same idea, but this time the aim of criticism is more general, that is to say not restricted to allusions to the master's disciples. People, says *Udbhaṭa, hear that phenomena are without self, and dimwits as they are, they immediately engage in practices worthy of the Materialists (*rgyang phan*, **cārvāka*/*lokāyata*). Their diet and behaviour are discretionary, they disparage gurus and *kalyāṇamitra*s, their minds are overcome by concepts of "I" and "mine". They commit all sorts of sinful acts

---

[8] D 76r [vv. 2-5]: *dus kyi bdag nyid ngan pa dang | | 'gro ba'ang skal ba med pa dag | | gzigs nas bdag gi bla ma yis | | gsang sngags tshul bshad bkag pa yin | | 'di ltar de nyid kyis mdzad pa'i | | De nyid snying po bsdus par ni | | de ma bshad pa'i rigs pa dang | | dgongs pa yang na* [read *ni*] *bstan pa yin | | gang yang blo dman kha cig ni | | der des ma rtogs pa nyid dam | | phrag dog yin par dogs byed cing | | rmongs pa yis kyang de brnyes* [read *brnyas*] *byed | | de spang sdig pa'i me nang du | | phye ma leb ltar ji srid ni | | ltung bar ma gyur de srid du | | de skyob pa la bdag 'bad do |*

[9] Cf. *Gurupañcāśikā*, Ed. v. 10: *tannāthaṃ* [read *taṃ nāthaṃ*] *yo 'vamanyeta* [read *nāvamanyeta*] *śiṣyo bhūyasacetasaḥ* [read *śiṣyībhūya kadācana*] | *sarvabuddhāpamānena sa nityaṃ duḥkham āpnuyāt* || and v. 14: *ye narakāḥ samākhyātā avīcyādyā bhayānakāḥ* | *tatra vāsaḥ samākhyāta ācāryasya hi nindanāt* ||. I intend to publish a new edition of this work, so this is not the place to go into detailed reasons for emending Lévi's text in 10ab so heavily. Suffice it to say that in the new manuscript, the line reads *tan nāthan nāvamanyeta śikhyībhūya* (and not *śikhībhūya* as I erroneously report in my diplomatic transcript; in any case, also Lévi misread his source here, which actually has *śiṣyī*° and *kadācanaḥ*). This is how I interpret these verses: "Once he [i.e. the candidate for initiation] has become a disciple, he should never disparage that protector [i.e. the guru], for he shall invariably obtain suffering for having disparaged [one who is the equivalent of] all buddhas. [...] Verily, it is said that he shall find his abode in those frightful hells, taught to be Avīci and the others, by disparaging the teacher."

without a proper understanding of the Buddha's true teaching. By this they destroy not only themselves, but also others. They are no better than demons who modify and hence destroy the Tathāgata's teaching. The author repeats his *pratijñā* with a different wording: his elucidation in the present work is dedicated to destroying these "demons".[10]

The next two verses side with worldly morality and emphasise the purity of the Buddha's teaching:

> Abandoning proper behaviour as it is known in the world—with the exception of the Materialists—is not accepted even by the outsiders; what to speak of followers of the Buddha! [For] the [Buddhist] teaching [aims at] overcoming the [two] obscurations, i.e. the afflicting (*kleśāvaraṇa*) and the cognitive (*jñeyāvaraṇa*), as well as [at] vanquishing Māras. It is free of all faults and these numbskulls smear it with their filth.[11]

3.3.2 The position of the opponents

The next eleven verses present the opponents' *pūrvapakṣa*. They state that in the *yogatantra*s the Protector (*skyob pa*, **tāyin*) [i.e. the Buddha] did allow *yogin*s to eat and act as they please. The authority of the *Guhyendutilaka* is evoked and a hallmark verse of that text is paraphrased: there is nothing that a *yogin* may not do.[12]

---

[10] D 76r-76v [vv. 6-10]: *'di na chos bdag med pa ni | | thos pa can* [=*tsam*] *gyis blo ngan rnams | | phal cher rgyang ban* [=*phan*] *grub mtha' yi | | gzhung lugs la ni kun du brten | | zas dang spyod lam la sogs pa | | ngan pa rang dga' nyid du byed | | bla ma dge ba'i bshes gnyen yang | | mi shes dregs pas smod par byed | | bdag dang bdag gir 'dzin smyo byed | | cung zad tsam yang btsal bar ni | | mi nus bzhin du chos rnams kyi | | ngo bo med pa nyid du'ang smra | | thub pa chen po'i bstan pa yi | | de nyid don ni mi shes par | | mi bzad las kyis bcom pa rnams | | gzhan dag kyang ni rlag par byed | | bde gshegs gzhung du bcos pa yi | | bstan pa 'jig byed bdud de ni | | gzhom pa'i don du bdag cag gis | | de nyid cung zad bstan par bya |*

[11] D 76v [vv. 11-12]: *'jig rten grags lam bzang spong ba | | 'jig rten rgyang pan* [=*phan*] *ma gtogs pa | | mu stegs pa yang 'dod min na | | sangs rgyas rjes 'brang smos ci dgos | | nyon mongs shes bya'i sgrib 'jig cing | | bdud rnams 'joms pa'i bstan pa ni | | nyes pa kun las rnam grol ba | | blo gros ngan pas dri mas gos |*

[12] D 76v [v. 15]: *de yang 'di ni gsal nyid du | | Zla gsang thig le la sogs las | | rnal 'byor pa yis mi bya ba | | ci yang med ces gsungs pa yin |*. The paraphrase is undoubtedly of the famous verse: *nāsti kiṃcid akartavyaṃ prajñopāyena cetasā | nirviśaṅkaḥ sadā bhūtvā bhuṅkṣva tvaṃ kāmapañcakam ||*. This verse is quoted with some mi-

What counts as dharma-congruent or contrary to that, continue the opponents, is just a construct of the mind; there is no evidence to the effect that things in themselves are so. It is true that the Tathāgata has both promoted and forbidden tantric practices, but he forbade them, out of compassion, only to those who still hang on the idea that deeds bring about retribution. In reality all things are without a self, unreal like an *utpala* flower in the sky; they cannot therefore bring about suffering. Of course, one may object that this is the case with tantric practices as well. However, they are in a way special, inasmuch as they are empty but also bear fruit.[13] When the mind realises the equality (*mnyam nyid*, *samatā*) of all things, it becomes pure and obtains enlightenment. When one realises the ultimate truth, namely that all phenomena are but an illusion, one becomes like a perfect *buddha* in this world, and may act in whatever way. If there is anything that the Buddha truly forbade for tantric practitioners, it is asceticism. Could one call a person who does not pay heed to scriptural statements such as "enlightenment is obtained through pleasure"[14] a thorough connoisseur of the teaching? Surely not. Therefore all these objections are merely the prattle of those for whom the eye of wisdom is shut by the torpor of ignorance.

3.3.3 *Udbhaṭa's refutation

*Udbhaṭa, much like his master, does not begin by dismissing the evoked scriptures as spurious. In fact, he does quite the opposite: it is true, he begins, that the *tantra*s uttered by the Protector promote such ideas (more precisely: *samaya*s and *samvara*s, tantric commitments and vows), but one must submit them to critical examination. This is what the bulk of the work does in the next forty verses (D 77r-78v, vv. 26-66).

If relying on things that are not to be eaten (*bza' min*, **abhakṣya*) and improper sexual intercourse (*bgrod min*, **agamya*) as the cause of enlighten-

---

nor differences in a number of 9th-century works, such as the *Tattvasiddhi* (D 27v), the *Sāramañjarī* (Ms. 35r, D missing, because this is a translation of a shorter recension), and the *Viṃśatividhi* (Ms. 7r, D 143v).

[13] Here I have developed the opponents' argument slightly. The passage (D 76v-77r) [...] *'di dag khyad 'phags pa'i | | tshogs pa dang ni ldan gyur pas | | 'bras bu khyad 'phags nyid 'byin te* | echoes the central argument of the *Tattvasiddhi* (Moriguchi 1993: 167, D 26v): *viśiṣṭā hi sāmagrī viśiṣṭam eva phalaṃ janayati*.

[14] The short quotation may refer to several passages. One could be the verse from the *Laukikalokottaravajratantra* given above (n. 5): *sukhena labhyate bodhi[ḥ]*.

ment, how can it be that common people (*tha mal pa*, **prākṛta*[*jana*]) and animals have not been liberated yet? Moreover, things possess their own specific power (*nus pa*, **śakti*), which cannot be changed: turmeric is yellow and excrement is disgusting. Poison inevitably leads to death, washing results in cleansing, and things that are not to be eaten produce sin (*sdig pa*, **pāpa*); this is simply the way things are. One may object that the power of poison is verifiable. The author assures us that it can be inferred that things not to be eaten, etc. are efficacious in the same way, except that this is invisible.

In the next verses the author takes the debate to a social plane and his reasoning suddenly starts to sound like a socio-political pamphlet. Acts in opposition to worldly morality, so *Udbhaṭa, will attract nothing but the scorn of society and the punishment of temporal authority. Ironically, he continues, *yogin*s suddenly forget about the insubstantiality of things when they suffer, and in spite of their assertions that all things are insubstantial, they are not loathe to seeking profit and prestige.

> Deluded people who commit perverse acts will first be disparaged by society at large and then be destroyed by the punishment of the king or another [temporal authority]. [...] Where does [your assertion about] the insubstantiality of things disappear, when it comes to being afflicted by hunger, thirst, cold, heat, torpor, and lethargy? How is it that *yogin*s are not utterly ashamed when it comes to the desire of profit and being honoured, in spite of [their assertion that] all phenomena are without a self?[15]

*Udbhaṭa then turns to the problem of effects beyond perception (D 77v, vv. 35-37). His opponents clearly like things that are profitable and shun things that cause pain. Why would they not accept then that there are indeed things to be adopted (*blang bya*, **upādeya*) and things to be avoided (*spang bya*, **heya*) whose results are only perceptible after death? If deeds and fruition do not form a causal relation, then why do the opponents even bother to make efforts to alleviate hunger and thirst?

---

[15] D 77r-77v (vv. 31, 33-34): *phyin ci log gi las byed na | | re zhig 'jig rten smod byed la | | de bzhin rgyal po la sogs kyi | | chad pas rmongs pa 'jig par 'gyur* | [...] *bkres skom tsha grang rmugs pa dang | | gnyid sogs kyis rab gdungs gyur pa | | snang na de ru khyod kyi ni | | dngos po med pa gang du song | | chos rnams thams cad bdag med la | | rnyed dang bkur sti 'dod pa nyid | | snang na rnal 'byor pa dag ni | | shin tu ngo mtshar cis mi byed |*

The discussion is at this point brought back to the world of hermeneutics. If, as the opponents assert, and with this the author seems to agree, the word of the Buddha is to be divided into provisional sense (*drang don*, **neyārtha*) and final sense (*nges don*, **nītārtha*), why is it that the prescribed *samaya*s are not interpreted as only provisional, i.e. something that needs to be interpreted, not to be taken at face value (D 77v, v. 38). In order to prove this point, in v. 39 (D 77v) the author evokes the authority of Jñānakīrti's *Tattvāvatāra* (traced in D 55r). The verse itself is a little difficult at first sight, but the idea is made clear by the comment affixed to the verse in the original.[16] The point is that *samaya*s, etc. were taught in order to gain control over *yakṣa*s, *rākṣasa*s, *piśāca*s, and other such preternatural entities for those who need some kind of proof to gain trust (*yid rton*, **viśvāsa*) in the efficacy and therefore truthfulness of the Buddha's word. Those who wish to undertake such practices are free to do so, but the Buddha did not teach them as obligatory practices (D 77v, vv. 40-41).

The next verses develop *Dharmendra's central argument. *Udbhaṭa is willing to accept that certain great beings, true *yogin*s, did obtain accomplishment by relying on *samaya*s, but this is just impossible for the dimwits of the present age. The proof is that we do not see anyone's practice bearing fruit. The opponents have stated above that one may do as one pleases when one has become a perfect *buddha*, but, the author retorts, we have no such beings displaying the marks of a perfect *buddha* (D 77v-78r, vv. 42-49). The next verses (D 78r, vv. 50-56) are occasionally obscure and do not, as far as I can see, present new arguments. *Udbhaṭa also points out that the opponents simply fail to take into account the prohibition endorsed by the Buddha in the two verses also cited by *Dharmendra[17] (D 78r-78v, vv. 57-61).

In the closing verses the author re-iterates his master's position, but he is not quite as dismissive. He says that generally the teaching of *tantra*s should be concealed; should there ever be a worthy person (*skal dang ldan pa*, **bhavya*), he will hear this from his guru (D 78v, vv. 62-66). The final verse contains the customary dedication of merit gained from the composition.

---

[16] D 55r: *gang zhig de bsgrub par 'dod pa rnams la de'i thabs ni 'di yin no zhes thabs bstan pa yin gyis* [read *gyi*] *nges par bya dgos so zhes bstan pa ni ma yin no* ||

[17] Here we have a repetition of the verses beginning with *sunirūpya* and *tattvaṃ vijñāya*. See n. 7 above.

4. Reflections

This exegetical standpoint, namely that the teaching of certain antinomian practices does not concern the present age but some hoary past, is not unheard of. What is remarkable, however, is how very "modern" this text is. At least as far as I am aware, the next corpus where a similar view is expressed is in the late Śākta-Śaiva *tantra*s of Bengal, where previously prescribed antinomian practices (drinking liquor seems to be the typical example) are exiled into the distant past: it was proper practice for men of yore, but not for the present Kaliyuga.[18]

These scholastic discussions, arguments and counter-arguments are quite fascinating in their own right and certainly deserve a more than a perfunctory treatment such as the one given here. However, what is perhaps even more important is the historical information we may gather from the polemic. If I read the debate correctly, it would seem that there was a small minority of Buddhist masters who acknowledged the validity of the tantric revelation but would not teach it. Their precise motivation cannot be ascertained, although some clues are present: inviting the scorn of society and the displeasure of temporary authorities must have been a pressing social issue and a very strong reason. On the other hand, it would also seem that not teaching tantric material resulted in the dissatisfaction of some students and co-religionists. *Dharmendra and *Udbhaṭa, if one may put it this way, chose to castrate the transgressive esoteric revelation, but they could not deny it. The latter strategy would have been much simpler, and thus one must infer that esoteric practice was, at least in the environment these two authors worked in, too well embedded to be rejected altogether.

[18] See quotations listed in the introduction to the *Kālīvilāsatantra*, pp. 1–5.

Bibliography

Primary Sources

Amṛtakaṇikoddyota of Vibhūticandra.

Banarsi Lal, ed., *Āryamañjuśrīnāmasaṃgīti with Amṛtakaṇikā-ṭippaṇī by Bhikṣu Raviśrījñāna and Amṛtakaṇikodyota-nibandha of Vibhūticandra*. [Bibliotheca Indo-Tibetica XXX] Sarnath: Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 1994, pp. 111–217.

Ālokamālā of Kambala.

Christian Lindtner, ed., "A Treatise on Buddhist Idealism: Kambala's *Ālokamālā*", in Christian Lindtner (ed.), *Miscellanea Buddhica*. [Indiske Studier V] Copenhagen: Akademisk Forlag, 1985, pp. 109–221.

Kālīvilāsatantra

Parvati Charana Tarkatirtha, ed., *Kâlîvilâsa Tantra*. [Tantrik Texts Vol. VI] London: Luzac & Co., 1917.

Gurupañcāśikā, or more likely *Gurvārādhana* of Vāpilladatta, also attributed to Aśvaghoṣa.

Sylvain Lévi, ed., "Autour d'Aśvaghoṣa", *Journal Asiatique* 215 (1929), 255–285.

Diplomatic ed. of a new witness by Péter-Dániel Szántó, "Minor Vajrayāna Texts II. A New Manuscript of the Gurupañcāśikā", in Nina Mirnig, Péter-Dániel Szántó and Michael Williams (eds.), *Puṣpikā: Tracing Ancient India through Texts and Traditions*. Contributions to Current Research in Indology, Volume 1. Oxford & Philadelphia: Oxbow Books, 2013, pp. 443–450.

Guhyasamāja

Yukei Matsunaga, ed., *The Guhyasamāja Tantra*. Osaka: Toho Shuppan, 1978.

Guhyasiddhi of Padmavajra.

Samdhong Rinpoche, Vrajvallabh Dwivedi, eds., *Guhyādi-Aṣṭasiddhisaṅgraha*. [Rare Buddhist Text Series 1] Sarnath: Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies, 1987, pp. 5-62.

Guhyendutilaka

D Tōh. 477, translated by Rin chen bzang po.

Tattvaratnāvalī of Advayavajra.

Haraprasad Shastri, ed., *Advayavajrasaṁgraha*. [Gaekwad's Oriental Series No. XL] Baroda: Oriental Institute, 1927, pp. 14-22.

**Tattvasārasaṃgraha* of *Dharmendra.

D Tōh. 3711, translated by *Janārdana and Rin chen bzang po.

Tattvasiddhi of pseudo-Śāntarakṣita.

Draft ed. of the Sanskrit text courtesy of Toru Tomabechi.

Partial ed. in Mitsutoshi Moriguchi, "*Tattvasiddhināmaprakaraṇa* I. —所引経論—", in インド学密教学研究, Kyoto: Hōzōkan, 1993, pp. 157–199.

D Tōh. 3708, translated by *Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna and Rin chen bzang po, partially revised by *Kumārakalaśa and Shākya 'od of the 'Bro.

Tattvāvatāra of Jñānakīrti.

D Tōh. 3709, translated by *Padmākaravarman and Rin chen bzang po.

Nayatrayapradīpa of Trivikrama.

D Tōh. 3707, translated by *Padmākaravarman and Rin chen bzang po.

Padminī of Ratnarakṣita.

Ms. Buddhist Library Nagoya, Takaoka CA 15. Paper, complete in 49 folios, Common Nepalese script. Dated Nepal Era 762 = 1642 CE.

D Tōh. 1420, translated by Thams cad mkhyen pa'i dpal, revised by Blo brtan (II) of the Shong.

Paramādya, only part thereof, known as the **Mantrakalpakhaṇḍa*.

D Tōh. 488, translated by *Mantrakalaśa and Zhi ba'i 'od with additions (?) by Rin chen bzang po.

**Madhyamakālaṃkāra* of Śāntarakṣita.

Masamichi Ichigō, ed., *Madhyamakālaṁkāra*. Kyoto: Buneido, 1985.

Tōh. 3884, translated by *Surendrabodhi and Ye shes sde.

**Mantranayāloka* of *Udbhaṭa Coyaga.

D Tōh. 3710, translated by *Padmākaravarman and Rin chen bzang po.

Viṃśatividhi, or *Samājamaṇḍalopayikā*, of Nāgabuddhi/Nāgabodhi.

Ms. as archived in the Giuseppe Tucci collection, Annotated List in Sferra 2008, p. 45, no. 33. Palm leaf, complete in 7 folios, 6r not photographed; so-called proto-Bengali-cum-Maithili script. No date, ca. 12th century CE, probably copied at Vikramaśīla.

D Tōh. 1810, translated by *Tilakakalaśa and Nyi ma grags of the Pa tshab.

Śamvara, or *Sarvabuddhasamāyogaḍākinījālaśamvara*.

Ms. Collège de France, Institut d'Études Indiennes, Archives de Sylvain Lévi no. 48. Palm leaf, incomplete copy in 54 folios; bold Pāla Nāgarī script. No date, ca. late 11th century CE.

D Tōh. 366, no translators given.

Sāramañjarī of Samantabhadra.

Ms. as archived in the Giuseppe Tucci collection, Annotated List in Sferra 2008, p. 45, no. 30. Palm leaf, complete in 39 folios, 32v and 33v not photographed; Pāla Nāgarī script (mixed). Dated 5th regnal year of Nayapāla [of the house of Pāla] = ca. 1035 CE.

D Tōh. 1869, [a different recension] translated by *Nyāyaśrī and Blo ldan shes rab.

Subhāṣitasaṃgraha

Cecil Bendall, ed., "*Subhāṣita-Saṃgraha.* An anthology of extracts from Buddhist works compiled by an unknown author, to illustrate the doctrines of scholastic and of mystic (tāntrik) Buddhism", *Le Muséon*, N.S., part I.4 (1903), 375–402; part II.5 (1904), 5–46, 245–274.

Sthitisamāsa of Sahajavajra.

Ms. National Archives Kathmandu 5/139 = Nepal-German Manuscript Preservation Project reel no. B 24/4. Palm leaf, once complete in 19 folios, currently missing: 3, 9, 13, 15, 19; Hook-topped Nepalese script. No date, ca. 13th century CE.

D Tōh. 2227, translated by *Dhari(?)śrījñāna and Chos 'bar of the Rma, revised by Bar ston, guru Rgya gar ba, and the translator of the Mtshur.

Secondary Sources

Jørgensen 1935 [1989]

Hans Jørgensen, *A Dictionary of the Classical Newārī*. Kathmandu: Tiwari's Pilgrims Book House, 1935 [1989].

Sferra 2008

Francesco Sferra, "Sanskrit Manuscripts and Photographs of Sanskrit Manuscripts in Giuseppe Tucci's Collection", in Francesco Sferra (ed.), *Sanskrit Texts from Giuseppe Tucci's Collection*. [Serie Orientale Roma 104/Manuscripta Buddhica 1] Roma: Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente, 2008, pp. 15–78.

Tōh.

Hakuju Ui, Munetada Suzuki, Yenshô Kanakura, Tôkan Tada (eds.), *A Complete Catalogue of the Tibetan Buddhist Canons (Bkaḥ-ḥgyur and Bstan-ḥgyur)*. Sendai: Tôhoku Imperial University, 1934.

Chapter X

Visual Embodiments of the Buddhist *mārga*: Space, Place and Artistry in Ancient Swat/Uḍḍiyāna

Anna Filigenzi, University of Naples "L'Orientale"

1. Introduction

Though not exclusively Buddhist, the concept of *mārga* has been given particular emphasis by the Buddhist world, to such an extent that it entered Buddhist imagery as a central and transformational topos. Quite in opposition to the traditional Brahmanical culture, Buddhism indeed conceives of moving inward as metaphorically equated to journeying, thus opening in textual, oral, visual and behavioural traditions a potentially unlimited variety of ways in which to entail the wide range of mental and physical aspects of mobility and change.[1] In such a frame of reference, even as the merit-making mechanism assigns a rewarding value to deliberately journeying for pilgrimage purposes, so also moving around may in itself open a path to salvation, insofar as it exposes one to fortuitous encounters (first and foremost with enlightened beings, but also with sacred places, monuments and icons) that are conducive to spiritual growth.

An effectual synopsis of key ideas related to the Buddhist *mārga* is to be found in the many Buddhist rock sculptures that intersperse a large-scale sacred topography in Swat (Fig. 1). Nearly two hundred images of buddhas and bodhisattvas carved on rock faces and loose boulders have been documented over time by various members of the Italian Archaeological Mission

[1] For instance, worth noticing is the close association between Buddhist monasteries and trade networks, which has been documented by various scholars in different contexts. For a recent contribution to the subject matter, see Neelis 2010.

Cristina Pecchia and Vincent Eltschinger (eds.), *Mārga. Paths to Liberation in South Asian Buddhist Traditions*. Papers from an international symposium held at the Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna, December 17 – 18, 2015. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2020, pp. 381–413.

in Pakistan (including its founder, Giuseppe Tucci), initially in a random way in the framework of comprehensive archaeological surveys, then, during the last decades, as a specific subject of investigation that eventually led to a comprehensive publication.[2]

The aim of the present paper is not to linger on the art-historical implications of the sculptures, which have been dealt with extensively elsewhere. Rather, it will attempt to explore their connection with the concept of *mārga*, as strong evidence supports the inference that the rock sculptures were intended not only to mark pilgrimage paths, but to provide the latter with a consonant frame which could magnify the pilgrims' experience and give new significance to it.

Hence, I am particularly grateful to the editors of this volume not only for allowing an art historian to intrude upon a group of philologists, but also for indirectly motivating me to give a preliminary shape to sparse notes and emerging ideas.

2. The general background

Though not unanimously accepted, the identification of Swat with ancient Uḍḍiyāna, or at least with the core of it, can be considered an established fact. Field research of the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan (hereafter, IAMP) started in Swat with the identification of significant places of the ancient topography, in particular urban and Buddhist settlements that are mentioned in Indian, Greek, Chinese and Tibetan literary sources. However, archaeological investigations in Swat were not limited to the most macroscopic evidence, but were implicitly targeted towards a more comprehensive knowledge of the cultural past of the country, also including non-formalised religious traditions and their contribution to codified doctrines. Since its very inception, the IAMP's exploration of the country was thus characterised by a holistic approach, which decentralised the stance of traditional history insofar as it allowed plural voices to be introduced into the historical reconstructions. The scope of enquiry, though rigorously moving from material evidence, indeed always went beyond historical realism, based only on what is written or observable, to encompass the historical significance of the culture and beliefs of the local people and draw grounded inferences

[2] Filigenzi 2015.

about immaterial representations from the complex of what can be empirically observed.[3]

It is a fact that Buddhist relics represent in Swat the most impressive material evidence of the region's historical past. Buddhism spread to Swat in the third century BCE and flourished there for centuries. Generously patronised by motivated aristocracies and nurtured by a strong cultural underpinning, a tight network of Buddhist settlements developed around wealthy urban centres. Art thrived vigorously, with momentous innovations being produced that left a permanent mark on the Buddhist visual culture.

Towards the end of the third century CE, probably following some serious natural disasters, the cities declined[4] and many ancient Buddhist monasteries were abandoned or only modestly repaired. However, the vitality of Buddhism is still attested by archaeological sites such as Butkara I, where at around the same time a new building phase took place which also introduced noticeable changes in both architecture and decoration.[5] The use of well-cut and sculpted stone that had characterised the previous periods was almost abandoned in favour of less durable and less expensive materials such as rough stone or rubble coated with thick plaster, stucco and (we may assume) wood.[6] The fragility of these materials poses limits and challenges to the hypothetical reconstruction of the original appearance of the monuments. Yet, the cultural import of these "new" forms of visual arts, which already contain the germs of the later Himalayan traditions, can hardly be overestimated. The first-hand account left by Songyun about the splendour of Butkara/Talo[7] is also a witness to the sixth century CE still being a period of cultural and artistic vivacity, of which the rock sculptures may thus be considered a further continuation. In turn, as we will see, the formal and conceptual contents of the rock sculptures add credit to Tibetan sources, insofar as the former prove what the latter subsume, i.e. that Uḍḍiyāna must have continued to develop doctrines and practices—long after the third

3 For a summary of the IAMP's activities and related bibliography, I refer the reader to *East and West* 2006 (a special issue celebrating the IAMP's 50th anniversary) and to: http://www.oeaw.ac.at/uddiyana/about-this-website/. For further updates I refer to Vidale, Micheli and Olivieri (2016) and the relevant bibliography.

4 Olivieri 2014.

5 Faccenna 1980-81: Part 1, 77–120.

6 Olivieri and Filigenzi 2018.

7 Beal 2004 (1884): xcvi.

century CE—which eventually earned it a reputation as a famous cradle of Vajrayāna.

3. The rock sculptures in their physical and conceptual context

Like any other expression of rock art, the Buddhist rock sculpture of Swat poses a two-sided challenge to interpretation. The generally poor state of preservation and, moreover, the lack of physical stratigraphic correlations with other artefacts and/or archaeological contexts hamper the formal interpretive analysis as well as a safe chronological attribution.

However, the high degree of consistency in the stylistic, iconographic and iconological patterns of the sculptures provides evidence enough to reliably circumscribe their time frame to the seventh to eighth centuries and to define their cultural background as proto-Vajrayanic. In particular, in terms of style, iconography and area of provenance, the rock sculptures show significant similarities to a series of bronzes, some of them precisely dated by dedicatory inscriptions mentioning donors of royal lineage.[8] This allows us to infer the existence of a typified idiom to which the two productions comply, a circumstance which further reinforces the historical, artistic and cultural significance of both.

Although, as mentioned above, the poor state of preservation of most of the rock sculptures as well as the lack of any established art historical framework has made analytical work difficult, thanks to cross comparisons it has been possible to recognise almost all the iconographic subjects and calculate the percentage of frequency of occurrence. The list, in decreasing order of incidence, includes Avalokiteśvara, Maitreya, Vajrapāṇi/Vajrasattva, Mañjuśrī (?), and a series of unique or rare presences such as the earliest representation of a *siddha*, Avalokiteśvara paired with Gaṇeśa, Sūrya, Sūrya paired with Gaṇeśa, and a multi-armed female divinity trampling on a de-

[8] The inscriptions relate to members of the Paṭola Ṣāhi of Gilgit, thus also providing a reliable chronological frame for the anepigraphic bronzes that share the same formal and technical features. Worth mentioning is the fact that this series of bronzes, seemingly produced in Swat and circulating among political and cultural élites, is characterised by a sophisticated repertoire of iconographic and doctrinal themes. I refer the reader to Filigenzi 2015 for a more detailed discussion and relevant bibliography.

capitated goat, most probably an autochthonous mountain goddess that, on the basis of some perceived homology, was adapted to the "cultured" model of the Hindu Durgā slaughtering the buffalo. Unidentified subjects comprise for the most part specimens of which only few, unreadable traces are preserved, or, in a lesser percentage, the preserved profile of which is compatible with more than one subject, as is the case, in some instances, with Maitreya and Mañjuśrī or Maitreya and Vajrapāṇi. In no cases does "unidentified" mean "unknown".

At first glance, the rock sculptures may appear to be a product of popular art. The clumsy craftsmanship of some of them and, moreover, the apparent lack of any intelligible compositional scheme or symmetrical order in the groups of figures had been indeed tentatively interpreted in the past as the accidental result of a progressive and arbitrary juxtaposition of figures on the same surfaces. However, under close scrutiny the sculptures appear to depend on a visual strategy aimed at achieving a calculated effect. If we observe the sculptures together with the natural shape and features of the rocks that contain them, a compositional rule becomes apparent—albeit highly variable due to its heuristic nature—which seeks to adapt the figure to the natural stone and not vice versa (Fig. 2). All evidence shows that keeping the manipulation of the natural rock to a minimum was an imperative requirement. We cannot imagine any reason behind such a concern other than the illusory evocation of self-existent images. The workmanship is somehow disguised as a subsidiary intervention, simply meant to unveil or give a comprehensible shape to *svayaṃbhū* forms, i.e. forms that spontaneously emerge from the rock.

The significance of the sculptures is however not confined to this intrinsic feature but encompasses a range of extrinsic factors such as relational associations with the surrounding landscape as well as instrumental purposes. The physical environmental characteristics seem to have played a fundamental role in the choice of the most appropriate setting for the sculptures, which are usually placed on rock walls or boulders of striking shape and position.

The entanglement of the sculptures with the natural landscape appears even more critical when considered together with the topographical distribution. Though occasionally one specimen may appear isolated, the sculptures usually form clusters along paths leading to ancient Buddhist sacred areas (see Fig. 1). However, the latter were mostly in a state of serious decay at the time when the Buddhist rock sculpture bloomed. This circumstance adds

very much to the significance of the sculptures. No doubt, the care the artists put in seeking harmony between their works and the physical environment, giving shape to the former without altering the latter, is revelatory of a powerful artistic concept and, moreover, of a unitary plan. The images were evidently meant not only to conjure up an impression of self-existence but also to convey the idea that the sacred place itself, seen in its entirety, was a work of nature, a divine manifestation that time with its all-devouring character cannot affect.

Earlier hypotheses of a random proliferation of the sculptures are untenable in face of such evidence. Rather, the project the sculptures respond to is so precise and wide-ranging that only the local monastic community could have conceived and actualised it. Specialised monks may well have directed the process, from the general conception to the specific selection of sites and subjects, and perhaps even undertaken (at least in part) the actual execution of the reliefs.

As we have seen, apart from a very few specimens of uncertain affiliation, the sculptures are profoundly embedded in the Buddhist culture, of which they intercept a significant stage of change that we may relate to the (inchoate?) Vajrayāna. They therefore have a double relevance: artistic, insofar as they translate—probably for the first time—a host of innovative ideas, techniques and practices into an organic visual vocabulary; and historical, for their witnessing to the intellectual vitality of Buddhism in late antique Uḍḍiyāna, thus warning us against the easy misassumption that cultural vivacity is axiomatically related to conspicuous archaeological signs.

4. The geomantic interpretation of the land: sources, innovations and legacy of the rock sculptures of Swat

The most salient point in the rock sculpture is undoubtedly to be detected in the underlying concept of self-existence. As mentioned above, we may discern in this a fundamental affinity with the concept of *svayaṃbhū*, so deeply rooted—and variously and persistently exploited—in the Indian world. Most probably, the vigorous impetus of artistic developments prompted by the revival of Brahmanism caused new waves of Indian influences to spread across South Asia. Under such circumstances, the Indian concept of *svayaṃbhū* and *svayaṃbhūtīrtha*s (naturally sacred places) may well have affected to

some extent the blooming of the rock sculpture of Swat, but to trace the origin of the phenomenon to its roots we must look within the country itself.

Rich evidence of local non-Buddhist traditions has been collected in recent years in the framework of the IAMP's "Archaeological Map of Swat Valley" project. In particular, a number of rock shelters have been documented in the highlands at the edges of the valleys.[9] The paintings and graffiti that decorated most of them span a very long period of time, from the Bronze Age to approximately the fifteenth century CE, thus attesting a strong and persistent tradition. Probably to be related to non-urban, pastoralist communities which nonetheless had some sort of symbiotic relations with the communities of the valleys, these rock shelters display features that in most cases point to some ritual purpose such as hermitage and/or initiation ceremonies.[10] Their most striking feature, and the one in which we can detect a significant point of contact with the Buddhist rock sculptures, lies in the singularity of their natural forms, which the painted decoration, when present, aptly complements and enhances (Fig. 3). Whatever specific purposes these shelters may have served, their connection with events, beliefs and practices that were crucial to some ideological universe other than Buddhism is undeniable, as is their compliance with auspicious geomantic principles.

The interaction between Buddhism and those native "mountain" cultures to which we may relate the rock shelters is proved by the physical contiguity of some of the latter with Buddhist monasteries. Moreover, this contiguity is also indicative of systematic economic exchange between the mountain people and the inhabitants of the valleys, the former being specialised suppliers of a range of products and services, among them grapes and wine-making.[11]

Such unequivocal evidence of close contacts between different cultures (respectively dominant and subaltern according to traditional historical categories) gives substance to the hypothesis formulated long ago by Tucci[12]

---

9 Olivieri 2015.

10 Olivieri and Vidale 2006: 125; Olivieri 2011: 142; Olivieri 2015: 124.

11 Ample evidence of wine-making (vats carved out of the rock and wine presses) in ancient Swat has been collected exactly in the proximity of the rock shelters and, in some cases, of Buddhist settlements (only vats). We cannot rule out that the monastic community may have acted as an intermediary in the local exchange trading system, certainly vital to the economy of the country. For a discussion of this matter in a wider cultural context, see Filigenzi 2016.

12 Tucci 1977: 68–70.

of a fecund osmosis between Buddhism and indigenous beliefs, which must have largely contributed to the rise of that complex form of Tantric Buddhism known as Vajrayāna.

As for the specific research question at issue, in light of the newly available data we may infer that the idea of the revelatory power of particular places and natural forms which underlies the Buddhist rock sculptures of Swat borrows more from native traditions than from outside influences, or at least owes to the former a receptive acquaintance that allowed possible artistic suggestions of foreign origin to be assimilated and elaborated in an entirely new way. Be that as it may, the result is so impressive and persuasive that it would be no wonder if it could have been regarded as an authoritative model. It is difficult not to think of the rock sculpture of Swat as a visionary revelation which punctuated the pilgrim's pathway. If this is the case, then we must admit that only a very short distance separates it from the later *rang byung* tradition, so deeply embedded in Tibetan mysticism.

5. Icons, pilgrimage and *mārga*

The re-configuration of sacred spaces that was consigned to the rock sculptures evidently interacted with living religious doctrines and related praxis of which we can never hope to capture all aspects and nuances. We can nonetheless fairly assume that the rock sculptures aimed not only at impressing, teaching and convincing, but also at inducing embodied experiences that could transform pilgrimage routes into metaphorical re-enactments of the spiritual journey.

It is difficult for us, modern urban people, to grasp the essence of a phenomenon like this. Moreover, we must keep in mind that any figurative system—that is to say, images that can be clustered according to coherent artistic codes—is something more than a virtual representation of reality or a simple visual translation of oral or written sources. It is a product of imagination, generated by a complex set of associations deriving from both mainstream and localised cultural domains, but also containing elements of arbitrariness.

Yet, especially if we set aside conventional divisions between bound categories such as academic philosophy, doctrine and religious practices and, moreover, if we acknowledge that magic, supernaturalism and geomancy were an integral part of ancient skills and wisdom, not only can we clearly discern the coherent construct which underlies the rock sculptures and

makes them indivisible from their environmental setting, we can also grasp the set of commanding homologies that such a construct established between images, nature, self-existence, revelation, and journey.

As in other forms of communication, an understanding of the whole allows us to better pin down the specific meaning and cogency of the individual components. In particular, the figure that emerges as most emblematic among the Swat rock reliefs is Avalokiteśvara/Padmapāṇi, who is suggestively presented as a true "God of the Path". The connection of Avalokiteśvara with the journey and his protective function in relation to its potential dangers are largely known. To whoever sets off, either physically (such as for pilgrimage or economic purposes) or spiritually (moving along the liberation path),[13] Avalokiteśvara shall offer help, guidance, protection, and relief. I refer to Filigenzi (2015) for a detailed discussion,[14] limiting myself here to recalling that the personage of Avalokiteśvara inherits and transfers to the Buddhist sphere the anagogic function of Indra as it is delineated in the *Upaniṣad*s. The analogy between the two figures is manifested with utmost clarity by the earliest iconographic prototype of the bodhisattva, which appeared in the art of Gandhāra (first to third centuries CE). In particular, the Gandharan scheme of the divine pentad, showing in the foreground a central Buddha flanked by Avalokiteśvara and Maitreya and, in the background, Indra and Brahmā, epitomises a handover from the two Vedic gods to the two bodhisattvas by presenting the former in an attitude of homage and by establishing an almost perfect correspondence of attire between Indra and Avalokiteśvara on one side and Brahmā and Maitreya on the other.[15] Of great interest is also the fact that the incitement to travel and the protection of

[13] The most compelling evidence is Avalokiteśvara as the saviour from the eight great perils, the latter intended in both a literal and a metaphoric sense (cf. Huntington 1981: 55, n. 29), although the aspect of serving as protector from physical dangers prevails, and not only among laymen. According to Xuanzang's biographer Huili, Xuanzang sought help from Avalokiteśvara when in an extremely dangerous situation and his prayers were answered (Beal 1911: I, 17). Also, the *Aṣṭamahābhaya* form of Avalokiteśvara seems to have been an object of special devotion among travellers (and especially merchants) who were particularly exposed to the dangers of voyages, whether by sea or land. It is not by chance that this iconographic subject enjoyed great popularity in the Western Deccan, a region with a strong commercial dealings (see Brancaccio 2010: 160 ff. esp.).

[14] Filigenzi 2015: 95–104.

[15] Filigenzi 2012: figs. 1–7; here, Fig. 4.

travellers is one of Indra's attributions, a circumstance which adds further confirmation to the journey metonymy embodied by Avalokiteśvara.[16]

It is exactly in this semantic domain that the almost ubiquitous presence of Avalokiteśvara among the rock sculptures of Swat finds its explanation.[17] A fixed iconographic scheme represents the bodhisattva in a pensive posture, holding a long stemmed lotus: he ponders the afflictions of the sentient beings, at the same time acting towards their salvation by making the lotus of the *dharma* open in their hearts (Fig. 5). This iconographic formulation, whose origin can already be traced in Gandharan art, epitomises the evolution of the soteriological theory of *karuṇā* as it is more and more explicitly documented by textual sources, from the *Saddharma-puṇḍarīka-sūtra* to the *Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra*.[18]

At times, the rock sculpture offers more transparent and specific metaphors, as for instance a small Buddha figure being revealed in the full-blown lotus held by the bodhisattva,[19] or a subsidiary figure of Gaṇeśa making an allusion to tantric rituals aimed at supporting the process of identifying and removing the obstacles to salvation.[20] Thus, we may say that the physical paths marked by the rock sculptures embody the *mārga* as much as Avalokiteśvara embodies the transformative intrusion of Compassion into karmic bondage. Moreover, the mimetic evocation of self-existence merged into a sacred landscape portrays a powerful allegory of the two fundamental experiences of *darśana-mārga* and *bhāvanā-mārga* (path of insight and the path of repeated mental cultivation, respectively), in a felicitous cross-over between the two. However, one can even walk without seeing the way, but also in this case one has a chance to meet the Great Helper, who accom-

---

16 In the *Aitareya Brāhmaṇa* (VII, 15) Indra says to King Hariścandra, "There is no happiness for the person who does not travel; living amongst men, even the best man frequently becomes a sinner; for Indra is the traveller's friend. Hence, travel!".

17 The image of Avalokiteśvara, either as an isolated figure or as part of a group, occurs far more frequently than any other character, with an estimate of more than 80 per cent of our rock sculptures. Tucci, who already noticed this towering presence, hypothesised that Avalokiteśvara could be regarded at that time as the patron of the region (Tucci 1958: 322). Today, this explanation can still be held as consistent with the empirical evidence even if in a subsidiary way.

18 Filigenzi 2015: 67.

19 Ibid.: 99 and Part II, figs. 16a, b; here, Fig. 2, central figure.

20 Ibid.: 102–103 and Part II, figs. 98a–e.

panies the wayfarers and frees their way of obstacles, thus offering them a chance to awaken to the truth.

6. Generative spaces of ritualised *mārga*: the colossal Buddha of Jahanabad

The reciprocity of sacralised spaces, images, prescriptive and speculative models, beliefs, imaginative emotions and ritual actions is a constitutive part of Buddhist praxis, to perhaps an even greater extent than many other religious systems. Notwithstanding their cultural relevance, such "immaterial" aspects have still been insufficiently studied. They pertain indeed to that particularly elusive sphere of human behaviours which escape traditional archaeological procedures, especially when their material expressions, as in the specific case of our open-air artwork, are not framed within conspicuous and permanent public displays.[21]

However, one cannot avoid inferring that such a massive and symbolic occupying of open spaces meant to the recipients something more than a static presence. It is very likely indeed that the sculptures may have motivated symbolic/ritual behaviours, either of individual or collective/cyclic nature. Valuable food for thought is provided, for instance, by the question of whether or not the rock reliefs were originally painted. So far, no traces of colour have been detected. The lack of shelters to protect the sculptures from weathering exposure seems to have been a kind of constitutive characteristic, as if to stress the emanation of the images from natural forces. In such an environmental setting and conceptual framework, paint was probably considered a redundant addition, but one cannot rule out that it may have been occasionally and selectively applied for special events, in a way not so dissimilar from practices still current in Tibet.

Yet, also thanks to fortuitous circumstances, we may happen to detect tangible evidence which discloses significant associations between artefacts and places, thus encouraging us to pursue further research in this field. A particularly suggestive case study is provided by the colossal Buddha (ht. 6 m) of Jahanabad (earlier known as Shakhorai), about two kilometres from

[21] This does not mean, however, that the archaeological record from architectural settings bears clear witness to ritual actions. Very often, sacred architectures just mark recognisable and yet passive boundaries within which we may safely assume that ritual actions were performed that nonetheless have hardly left material traces.

Manglaor, on the left slope of the Ugad Valley (Fig. 6). Tucci states[22] that this could be the area where, according to a local legend mentioned by Xuanzang, the Adbhuta *stūpa* miraculously emerged from the ground to mark the spot where the Buddha preached a sermon before an assembly of men and *deva*s.[23] The identification was prompted by significant Buddhist remains (all clustered within a very circumscribed area) including the abovementioned Buddha, a huge dome-shaped rock that may well have been regarded as a miraculous *stūpa*, and the ruins of a large *stūpa*.[24] Additionally, behind the last, verses from the Buddhist canonical literature are inscribed on two rocks, these also noteworthy for their spectacular position.[25] If the identifi-

[22] Tucci 1958: 305–306.

[23] Beal 2004 (1884): III, 127.

[24] Tucci 1958: 306 and fig. 12; Ashraf Khan et al. 1996: 86.

[25] Two of these inscriptions are engraved on a rock surface difficult to reach but of striking natural beauty, since the rock, which protrudes from a steep slope, overhangs a small spring gushing from a cave. A third inscription is engraved on a huge boulder locally known as Khazanaghat, the "rock of the treasure" (Bühler (1896–1897; Stein 1929: 78). The inscriptions, in Sanskrit, were first edited by G. Bühler (1896–1897) on the basis of inked estampages provided by the then Deputy Commissioner of Peshawar, Major H. A. Deane. According to Bühler, they were written in a *brāhmī* script resembling "in many respects the so-called North-Western Gupta characters" (ibid.: 133). As remarked by Bühler, the interest of the inscriptions (A, B and C in his edition) lies in the fact that they bear witness to the existence in the area of "Sanskṛit versions of several famous *gâthâs*" (ibid.), although freely rendered (ibid.: 135). They were identified and translated by Bühler as follows: Inscription A, from *Mahāparinibbānasutta*, VI, 10 [16 in the author's text]: "Alas! Transient are the aggregate constituents (*of beings*), whose nature is birth and decay! For, being produced they are dissolved; −their complete cessation is bliss"; Inscription B, from *Dhammapada*, verse 183: '"Not to commit any sin, to acquire merit, to purify one's mind, −that is the teaching of the Buddha"; Inscription C, from *Dhammapada*, verse 281: "(*Let him be one*) who guards his speech, is well restrained in mind, and commits no evil with his body." A (supposedly) fourth inscription was published by E.J. Rapson (1901), who had received the impressions of this and other inscriptions by Captain A. H. McMahon, Major Dean's successor on the Malakand and Political Agent for Swat, Dir and Chitral. According to the description given by Rapson (based on second-hand information), the inscription, "from a rock at Shakorai (?)", was "engraved in very large letters above the entrance to a small chamber cut out of the rock" (Rapson 1901: 292). Judged unintelligible by Rapson, it was subsequently identified by H. Lüders (1901) as a duplicate of the Inscription A published by Bühler, being translated as follows: "Impermanent are

cation is correct, as it seems to be, one cannot but wonder whether any significant association was consciously perceived between the Adbhuta *stūpa* and the rock sculpture, both having in the concept of self-manifestation a common root and source.

The sculpture became the object of the local Taliban iconoclastic fury in September 2007, when the face of the Buddha was targeted twice by shootings with automatic weapons. A second relief representing Avalokiteśvara, situated along the track leading to the Buddha, was also blasted into fragments in 2009. A restoration process was launched in 2012 with the concrete objective of preventing cracks and fissures from causing further damage, but also as a symbolic intervention intended to counteract cultural terrorism and its impact upon local society, economy and cultural landscape.[26]

That the site must have held a special place in the ancient sacred topography is confirmed by concurring factors that came into focus during the restoration work. An ancient track, with steps carved out of the rock, leads up the slope to the top of a narrow tableland. This encloses a small lake fed

all conditioned things. Their nature is to rise and fall away. Having come to pass, they must then cease." Most likely, indeed, this fourth inscription is exactly the same as Bühler's Inscription A. The "small chamber cut out of the rock" might well correspond to the natural cave described by Stein and recently mapped again by the IAMP in the framework of an extensive restoration project (see below, n. 26). For further comments on the inscriptions and their positions see Stein 1929: 78–79; idem. 1930: 49–50; Tucci 1958: 306. All the above-mentioned scholars agree on a date falling within the Kushan period. A new palaeographic analysis and systematic study of their cultural/historical implications would be highly desirable, especially in the light of the broader epigraphic and literary record now available.

[26] The restoration programme was carried out in the framework of the ACT-Field School Project directed by Luca M. Olivieri with the support of the Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the ISMEO, and the Directorate of Archaeology and Museums, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The restoration programme has involved, besides filling the cracks, complete 3D-scanning of the rock, reintegrating the missing parts of the face of the colossal Buddha with a reversible material in order to restore the visual unity of the artwork, collecting the surviving and scattered fragments of the bodhisattva stele, restoring the latter, and restoring the ancient pathways leading to the monument. Cultural terrorism in Pakistan, and particularly in the area of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, is heavily affecting many sectors of cultural, social and economic life, not only education, but also tourism, pilgrimage (Pakistan is home to shrines, temples and sacred places of Muslim, Buddhist, Hindu and Sikh affiliation) and popular forms of entertainment such as music and cinema. On this issue, see the report by Babakhel (2014).

by a spring, a place where one can easily imagine pilgrims taking a ritual bath. The steps end here but the track continues for about hundred metres, up to the foot of the giant Buddha. Two more ancient tracks, one from the spot where the inscriptions are found, the other from the spot where the Avalokiteśvara image originally stood, lead instead to the top of the rock in which the Buddha is carved. Here there are three small artificial cavities. One wonders whether they were used for some ritual purpose, as for instance pouring water taken from the nearby spring on the rock.

However, a fourth and more striking walk is the one the pilgrims could take inside the rock. To the left of the Buddha image, the IAMP team working on its restoration discovered a very narrow cavity which becomes progressively larger and leads to a second cavity (Fig. 7). From here, one can ascend to an exit leading to a sort of small, natural terrace just on top of the Buddha's head.

All together, these features bespeak the strong geomantic energy that local people must have attributed to the place over centuries. Unless new palaeographic studies lead to different conclusions, the date assigned to the inscriptions indicates that this natural space was held in great veneration since at least the first centuries of the Common Era. The tradition, on the other hand, seems to have persisted well into the thirteenth century, when the Tibetan pilgrim O rgyan pa visited Maṅgalaor (Manglaor/Manglawar), to the North of Ra yi k'ar (possibly present-day Raja Gira) where there "is a temple founded by king Indraboti [and] where there are various stone images of Buddha (Munīndra), Tārā and Lokeśvara".[27] Moreover, in the spe-

[27] Tucci 1940: 28; Olivieri 2017: 91–93. The identification of the spot visited by O rgyan pa with Jahanabad has been prompted by the near perfect match of the itinerary described by the Tibetan pilgrim with both the general topography of the area and the evidence on the ground (Olivieri 2017). Either fortuitous or intentional, the association of such a place of spiritual-geomantic significance with Indrabhūti appears particularly felicitous in view of the special connection of the latter with "revelation". I refer the reader to Filigenzi 2015 (47–48) for a brief outline of Indrabhūti's legend and relevant bibliography. I limit myself here to just recalling that archaeological and artistic evidence, though not providing historical authentication of this figure, does offer a plausible historical background from which the legend might have risen. As for the "temple of Indraboti (Indrabhūti)", this remains a matter of speculation. Worth noticing, however, is the large amount of fired bricks scattered around the site, which must have belonged to some (now vanished) monumental building(s) of a relatively late period. Mention must also be made of a black schist lintel found re-used in the masonry of a modern house in the village of Jahanabad/Shakhorai by

cific Buddhist domain, both nature and human artistry also suggest a special pilgrimage spot where the practitioners could physically, emotionally and psychically experience the transformative power of the journey.

Viewed from this perspective, the inscriptions engraved on the rocks acquire a particularly consonant and propitious meaning as a guide on the right path to liberation, but even more so does the nearly hidden cavity that leads deep inside the rock and then ascends to the level of the Buddha's head. This is strongly reminiscent of the holy clefts scattered all over India, such as the famous Shrigundi near Mumbai[28] or Shatrunjaya in Gujarat, which are credited with the miraculous power to heal whoever passes through them, as in a second birth. This ritual practice presumably goes back to a remote antiquity, although no physical evidence or memory of it exists prior to the early historic period, when artefacts started appearing that, although with different meanings, apparently share the same semantic sphere. This is the case with the small stone discs and rings, decorated with auspicious symbols and, sometimes, with the image of a naked goddess, which are attested from the Mauryan epoch (4th to 2nd century BCE[29]). Especially the rings suggest a ritual function, probably associated with the passage from the womb.

Ritual practices of this kind are likely to have originated from folk beliefs, but they must have been codified very early, thus evolving towards formalised and textualised versions where they acquired new or additional meanings extending the semantic field beyond fertility and healing power to include spiritual re-birth. For instance, a Hindu reshaping of ancient rituals

G. Tucci in 1962. After being included in the inventory of the Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan (Inv. no. V. 499), the piece was given by the Government of Pakistan to the Italian Institute for the Middle and Far East (IsMEO) and deposited in the National Museum of Oriental Art, Rome (Inv. no. 4729). U. Scerrato and M. Taddei (1995) listed it among the rare relics attesting that a pre-Muslim monumental architecture using stone architectural elements existed in Swat in the second half of the 1st millennium CE. Based on a coherent set of criteria, they assigned the lintel to a date not much later than the first half of the 7th century CE. The hiatus in the archaeological record, which can be explained by the use of wood and other perishable material for much of this late antique architecture, has been partly filled by the discovery of a Hindu temple dating to the 7th century (Turki Shahi period) on the top of the hill of Barikot. The temple is a stone masonry building of massive proportions (23.17 x 14.70 m), lavishly decorated with stucco work (Callieri 2005; Filigenzi 2005).

28 Edwardes 2011 (1902): 18–19.

29 Asha 1993: 132–133.

is to be found in the modelisation of the Bhīmā-*sthāna*, the place where the goddess manifests herself. As aptly remarked by Srinivasan,[30] the Bhīmā-*sthāna* is apparently not a place of worship where women seek fertility or safe childbirth, but rather a place where men seek a transformative experience. The pilgrim who bathes in the place sacred to Bhīmā, in the *yoni* of the goddess, does not return to the womb, that is to say, he attains liberation from the cycle of rebirth.

One of the many Bhīmā-*sthāna*s scattered across the Himalayan regions is most probably to be recognised in the large cave-temple complex of Kashmir Smast, located at an elevation of 1135 metres in the Sakara mountain range (Khyber Pakhtunkhwa).[31] The site started to be investigated in 2001 by the Archaeological Department of Peshawar University, after art objects (including a great number of coins and seals) reportedly from Kashmir Smast began appearing on the art market. The sacred complex consists of a main cave temple (actually a natural sanctuary showing only minimal artificial modification; Fig. 8) and many other cave shelters and sanctuaries, a small monastery, the remains of a small free-standing temple, and water reservoirs associated with the cultic complex.[32] The site has been identified by Nasim Khan[33] with a spot mentioned by Xuanzang[34] as the home of a famous sanctuary dedicated to Maheśvara and his consort Bhīmā.[35] In particular, according to Xuanzang's account, the image of Bhīmā (probably a shapeless one) was considered by local people as self-existent and was so widely known and venerated for its power of miracles that it attracted pilgrims from all over India.

---

30 Srinivasan 2011: 128.

31 For a quick survey of such sacred Himalayan topography and relevant bibliography, see Srinivasan 2011: 125.

32 Among the many contributions now available on Kashmir Smast, see Nasim Khan 2006; Nasim Khan, Errington and Cribb 2008; Aman ur Rahman and Falk 2011; Srinivasan 2011, where additional bibliographical references can be found.

33 Nasim Khan 2006: 11–13, 43.

34 Beal 2004 (1884): 113–114.

35 The spot mentioned by Xuanzang was earlier identified by Cunningham (1966: 7, reprint) and Foucher (1901: 362–365) with the peak of Mount Karamar, which is located more to the South, in the Swabi District. As for Kashmir Smast, besides the overall aspect of the site, which matches Xuanzang description, the name Bhīmā indeed appears in several inscriptional records.

The finds from the site, in particular coins, cover a long time span, from the second to the eleventh century CE. However, of great relevance to us is the fact that the fame of the site was at its peak at the time of Xuanzang's visit, that is, in a period more or less contemporary with the blooming of the rock sculptures in the very near area of Swat. Buddhism—if we regard it as a pragmatic hermeneutics—was certainly not alien to that cultural atmosphere. Remodelling local beliefs and ritual practice was part of a natural osmosis and, somehow, a negotiating tactic as well, aimed at promoting empathic responses and opposing antagonist systems.

As our archaeological maps develop, thus anchoring to the material world literary and non-literary traditions, notions and narratives, we start perceiving more and more clearly in the past the same flow of cross-cultural exchanges that, after all, we consider simply formulaic in the present day.

This is what happened in ancient Uḍḍiyāna, more often and in a more decisive way than we dare to imagine. A further telling example is now provided by the site of Amluk Dara, which recent archaeological research has brought to the fore as one of the most important Buddhist installations in Swat—and one that resisted the negative effects of the post-Kushan crisis.[36] This huge sacred area, restored, enlarged and embellished several times and still in use until the seventh/ninth century, is situated at the beginning of an ancient path leading to Mount Ilam—a holy mountain for the people of Swat from time immemorial and still held as a sacred place by Hindus, Sikhs and Muslims.[37] Pilgrimage to the peak of Ilam, still practised in August by the Sikh community, was so intense until the recent past that it was overseen by armed guards.[38] Amluk Dara is the lowest and biggest of a series of *stūpa*s built along a mountain track and converging towards a small lake. If we look at the overall picture and not only at the single monuments, we can discern a design that encompasses both the natural scenery and the built-up landscape to create a Buddhist ritualised itinerary. However, it also appears particular-

[36] Olivieri 2014: 321 ff.; here, Fig. 9.

[37] It is on this mountain, recorded in the classical sources as Aornos, that the inhabitants of the country took refuge in the face of the Macedonian onslaught. For the identification of Aornos with Ilam and a list of the relevant classical sources, see Tucci 1977: 27, 52 ff. Aornos was earlier identified by Stein (1927: 432) with the Pir Sar. For an archaeological reappraisal of the classical sources dealing with the itinerary of Alexander the Great across Swat, see Olivieri 2006.

[38] L. M. Olivieri, personal communication.

ly evident how the latter purposely overlaps a pre-existent pilgrimage route, thus formally intertwining the Buddhist establishment with places, beliefs and behaviours deeply embedded in local traditions.

We know different stages and aspects of the Buddhist sacred topography of Uḍḍiyāna, from those attested by the magnificent establishments of the early historic period to those pictured much later in the travelogues of Tibetan pilgrims. What we still know far too little about is the human dimension of this topography. We may say that thanks to new archaeological evidence we now begin to better perceive how this burgeoned through a complex and continuing process of cross-cultural stratifications, which also contains—and accounts for—the many-sided expressions of the *mārga*.

Bibliography

Aitareya Brāhmaṇa

Rigveda Brahmanas: the Aitareya and Kauṣītaki Brāhmaṇas of the Rigveda. Transl. Arthur Berriedale Keith. [Harvard Oriental Series 25] Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1920.

Aman ur Rahman and Falk 2011

Aman ur Rahman, Harry Falk, *Seals, Sealings and Tokens from Gandhāra*. [Monographien zur Indischen Archäologie, Kunst und Philologie 21] Wiesbaden: Dr. Ludwig Reichert Verlag, 2011.

Asha 1993

Vishnu Asha, *Material Life of Northern India: Based on an Archaeological Study, 3rd Century B.C. to 1st Century B.C.* New Delhi: Mittal Publications, 1993.

Ashraf Khan et al. 1996

Mohammad Ashraf Khan, Shabir Hussain, Muhammad Aqleem, Badshah Sardar, "Field Survey Report on the Right and Left Bank of River Swat", in Saeed-ur Rehman (ed.), *Archaeological Reconnaissance in Gandhara*. Karachi: Department of Archaeology & Museums, Pakistan, 1996, pp. 80–89.

Babakhel 2014

Ali Mohammad Babakhel, "Cultural Terrorism", *Dawn*, 20 March 2014 http://www.dawn.com/news/1094274 (last visited: 6 August 2018).

Beal 1911
Samuel Beal, *The Life of Hiuen-Tsiang. By the Shaman Hwui Li. With an introduction containing an account of the works of I-Tsing*. London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trübner & Co. Ltd., 1911.
Beal 2004
———, transl., *Si-yu-ki. Buddhist Records of the Western World*. Chinese accounts of India translated from the Chinese of Hiuen Tsiang by… (4 vols.). New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 2004 (1st ed. London: Trübner & Co. Ltd., n.d. [1884]).
Brancaccio 2010
Pia Brancaccio, *The Buddhist Caves at Aurangabad: Transformations in Art and Religion*. Leiden: Brill, 2010.
Bühler 1896–1897
G[eorg] Bühler, "Three Buddhist Inscriptions in Swat", in E[ugen Julius Theodor] Hultzsch (ed.), *Epigraphia Indica* IV. Calcutta: Government of India Central Printing Office, 1896–1897, pp. 133–135.
Callieri 2005
Pierfrancesco Callieri, "Excavations of the IsIAO Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan at Bīr-koṭ-ghwaṇḍai, Swat: the Sacred Building on the Citadel", in Catherine Jarrige and Vincent Lefèvre (eds.), *South Asian Archaeology 2001. Proceedings of the Sixteenth International Conference of the European Association of South Asian Archaeologists held in Collège de France, Paris, 2–6 July 2001*. Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 2005, pp. 417–425.
Cunningham 1966
Alexander Cunningham, *The Ancient Geography of India: The Buddhist Period, Including the Campaigns of Alexander, and the Travels of Hwen-Thsang*. Varanasi: Indological Book House, 1966 (1st ed. London: Trübner & Co., 1871).
East and West 2006
East and West 56,1–3, 2006 [Special Volume dedicated to the 50th Anniversary of the IsIAO Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan (1956–2006), ed. by Luca M. Olivieri].
Edwardes 2011
Stephen Meredyth Edwardes, *The Rise of Bombay: A Retrospect*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011 (1st ed. Bombay: Times of India Press, 1902).

Faccenna 1980–81
Domenico Faccenna, *Butkara I (Swāt, Pakistan) 1956–1962*, 5 vols. [IsMEO Reports and Memoirs III, 1-5.2] Rome: Istituto Italiano per il Medio ed Estremo Oriente, 1980–1981.
Filigenzi 2005
Anna Filigenzi, "Stone and Stucco Sculptures from the Sacred Building of Bīr-koṭ-ghwaṇḍai, Swat, Pakistan", in Catherine Jarrige and Vincent Lefèvre (eds.), *South Asian Archaeology 2001. Proceedings of the Sixteenth International Conference of the European Association of South Asian Archaeologists held in Collège de France, Paris, 2–6 July 2001*. Paris: Éditions Recherche sur les Civilisations, 2005, pp. 453–461.
Filigenzi 2012
———, *Le immagini epifaniche nell'arte buddhistica del Gandhāra. Studio sulle triadi e su alcune iconografie affini*. Bologna: I libri di Emil, 2012.
Filigenzi 2015
———, *Art and Landscape. Buddhist Rock Sculptures of Late Antique Swat/Uḍḍiyāna*. With contributions by L. M. Olivieri and P. Rockwell. [Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften, Philosophisch-Historische Klasse, Denkschriften, 462. Band] Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, 2015 (open access: https://austriaca.at/7241-3?frames=yes).
Filigenzi 2016
———, "Dionysos et son double dans l'art du Gandhāra : dieux méconnus d'Asie", in Jacques Jouanna, Véronique Schiltz, Michel Zink (éd.), *La Grèce dans les profondeurs de l'Asie.* Actes du 26e Colloque de la Villa Kérylos à Beaulieu-sur-Mer les 9 et 10 octobre 2015. [Cahiers de la Villa « Kérylos », n° 27]. Paris: Diffusion de Boccard, 2016, pp. 289–304.
Foucher 1901
Alfred Foucher, "Notes sur la géographie ancienne du Gandhâra : commentaire à un chapitre de Hiuen-Tsang", *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême Orient* 1, Oct. (1901), 322–369.
Huntington 1981
John C. Huntington, "Cave Six at Aurangabad: A Tantrayāna Monument?", in Joanna G. Williams (ed.), *Kalādarśana. American Studies in the Arts of India*. Leiden: Brill, 1981, pp. 47–55.

Kurita 1988–1990
Isao Kurita, *Gandhāran Art*, 2 vols. I: *The Buddha's Life Story*; II: *The World of the Buddha*. [Ancient Buddhist Art Series] Tokyo: Nigensha Publishing Co. Ltd, 1988–1990.
Lüders 1901
H[einrich] Lüders, "A Buddhist Inscription in Swat", *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* 33,3 (1901), 575–576.
Nasim Khan 2006
Muhammad Nasim Khan, *Treasures from Kashmir Smast (The Earliest Saiva Monastic Establishment)*. Peshawar: Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar, 2006.
Nasim Khan, Errington and Cribb 2008
Muhammad Nasim Khan, Elizabeth Errington, Joe Cribb, *Coins from Kashmir Smast: New Numismatic Evidence*. Peshawar: Department of Archaeology, University of Peshawar, 2008.
Neelis 2010
Jason Neelis, *Early Buddhist Transmission and Trade Networks. Mobility and Exchanges within and beyond the Northwestern Borderlands of South Asia*. Leiden – Boston: Brill, 2010.
Olivieri 2006
Luca M. Olivieri, "Notes on the Problematic Sequence of Alexander's Itinerary in Swat: A Geographical Study", *East and West* 46,1-2 (2006), 45–78.
Olivieri 2011
———, "Behind the Buddhist Communities: Subalternity and Dominancy in Ancient Swat", *Journal of Asian Civilizations* (Special Issue) 34,1 (2011), 127–156.
Olivieri 2014
———, *The Last Phases of the Urban Site at Bir-kot-ghwandai (Barikot); The Buddhist Sites of Gumbat and Amluk-dara (Barikot)*. With contributions by Amanullah Afridi, P. Brancaccio, M. Cupitò, F. Genchi, F. Martore, M.W. Meister, R. Micheli, S. Niaz Ali Shah, M. Vidale and others. [Act-Field School Project Reports and Memoirs II] Lahore: Sang-e Meel, 2014.
Olivieri 2015
———, *Talking Stones. Painted Rock-Shelters of the Swat Valley*. [Act-Field School Project Reports and Memoirs, Series Minor 2] Lahore: Sang-e Meel, 2015.

Olivieri 2017
———, "The Itinerary of O rgyan pa in Swat/Uddiyana (second half of 13th century)", *Journal of Asian Civilizations* 40,1 (2017), 87–101.
Olivieri and Filigenzi 2018
Luca M. Olivieri, Anna Filigenzi, "On Gandhāran Sculptural Production from Swat: Recent Archaeological and Chronological Data", in Wannaporn Rienjang and Peter Stewart (eds.), *Problems of Chronology in Gandhāran Art. Proceedings of the First International Workshop of the Gandhāra Connections Project, University of Oxford, 23rd–24th March, 2017*. Oxford: Archaeopress, 2018, pp. 71–92. (open access: http://www.carc.ox.ac.uk/PublicFiles/media/Problems%20of%20chron%20indiv%20chapters/Olivieri%20and%20Filigenzi.pdf).
Olivieri and Vidale 2006
Luca M. Olivieri, Massimo Vidale, "Archaeology and Settlement History in a Test Area of the Swat Valley: Preliminary Report on the AMSV Project (1st Phase)" (with contributions by Abdul Nasir Khan, Tahir Saeed, Luca Colliva, Riccardo Garbini, Leonardo Langella, Roberto Micheli and Emanuele Morigi), *East and West* 56,1-3 (2006) [Special Volume dedicated to the 50th Anniversary of the IsIAO Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan, ed. by Luca M. Olivieri], 73–150.
Rapson 1901
Edward James Rapson, "Impressions of Inscriptions Received from Captain A. H. McMahon, Political Agent for Swat, Dir, and Chitral", *The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, Apr. (1901), 291–294.
Scerrato and Taddei 1995
Umberto Scerrato, Maurizo Taddei, "A Possible Hindu-Shahi Lintel from Swat", in John Guy (ed.), *Indian Art & Connoisseurship: Essays in Honour of Douglas Barrett*. Middleton, NJ – New Delhi: Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, 1995, pp. 52–61.
Srinivasan 2011
Doris Meth Srinivasan, "Childbirth, Childhood and the Magico-Religious World of Transformations", *Annali dell'Università degli Studi di Napoli "L'Orientale"* 71 (2011), 115–135.
Stein 1927
Marc Aurel Stein, "Alexander's Campaign on the Indian North-West Frontier: Notes from Explorations between Upper Swat and the Indus", *The Geographical Journal* 70,5 (1927), 417–440.

Stein 1929

———, *On Alexander's Track to the Indus. Personal Narrative of Explorations on the North-West Frontier of India*. London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1929.

Stein 1930

———, *An Archaeological Tour in Upper Swāt and Adjacent Hill Tracts*. [Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of India 42] Calcutta: Archaeological Survey of India, 1930.

Tucci 1940

Giuseppe Tucci, *Travels of Tibetan Pilgrims in the Swat Valley*. [Greater India Studies 4] Calcutta: Greater India Society, 1940 (revised and expanded version repr. in Tucci 1997, pp. 3–57).

Tucci 1958

———, "Preliminary Report on an Archaeological Survey in Swat", *East and West* 9,4 (1958), 279–328 (repr. in Tucci 1997, pp. 59–113).

Tucci 1977

———, "On Swāt. The Dards and Connected Problems", *East and West* 27,1-4 (1977), 9–85, 94–103 (repr. in Tucci 1997, pp. 165–259).

Tucci 1997

———, *On Swāt. Historical and Archaeological Notes* (ed. by Pierfrancesco Callieri and Anna Filigenzi). Rome: Istituto Italiano per l'Africa e l'Oriente/Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan, 1997.

Vidale, Micheli and Olivieri 2016

Massimo Vidale, Roberto Micheli, Luca M. Olivieri (eds.), *Excavations at the Protohistoric Graveyards of Gogdara and Udegram*. [ACT-Field School Project Reports and Memoirs III]. Lahore: Sang-e Meel, 2016.

List of Captions

Fig. 1 Swat, Pakistan: map showing the areas of concentration of the rock sculptures (developed by the University of Vienna, Department of Geography and Regional Research)

Fig. 2 Dangram/Garasa, Swat: a rock sculpture showing a pensive Avalokiteśvara with a full-blown lotus supporting a small Buddha figure, at the centre; a haloed figure on lion throne, to the right; and a bodhisattva (Vajrapāṇi?), to the left (after Filigenzi 2015: Part II, fig. 16a)

Fig. 3 A rock shelter with anthropomorphic shape (after Filigenzi 2015: fig. 4)

Fig. 4 A Gandharan pentad depicting the Buddha flanked by Avalokiteśvara (to the right) and Maitreya (to the left) and, in the background, Indra (to the right) and Brahmā (to the left); from Sahri Bahlol; Peshawar Museum (after Kurita 1988–1990, I: fig. 403)

Fig. 5 Arapkhanchina: a rock sculpture depicting a pensive Avalokiteśvara (© Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan)

Fig. 6 Jahanabad: the colossal Buddha (after Filigenzi 2015: Part II, fig. 92a)

Fig. 7 Jahanabad: the cavity inside the rock where the colossal Buddha image is carved (© Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan)

Fig. 8 Kashmir Smast: the entrance to the main cult cave (courtesy Klaus Vondrovec)

Fig. 9 Amluk Dara: the site before excavation and restoration (© Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan)

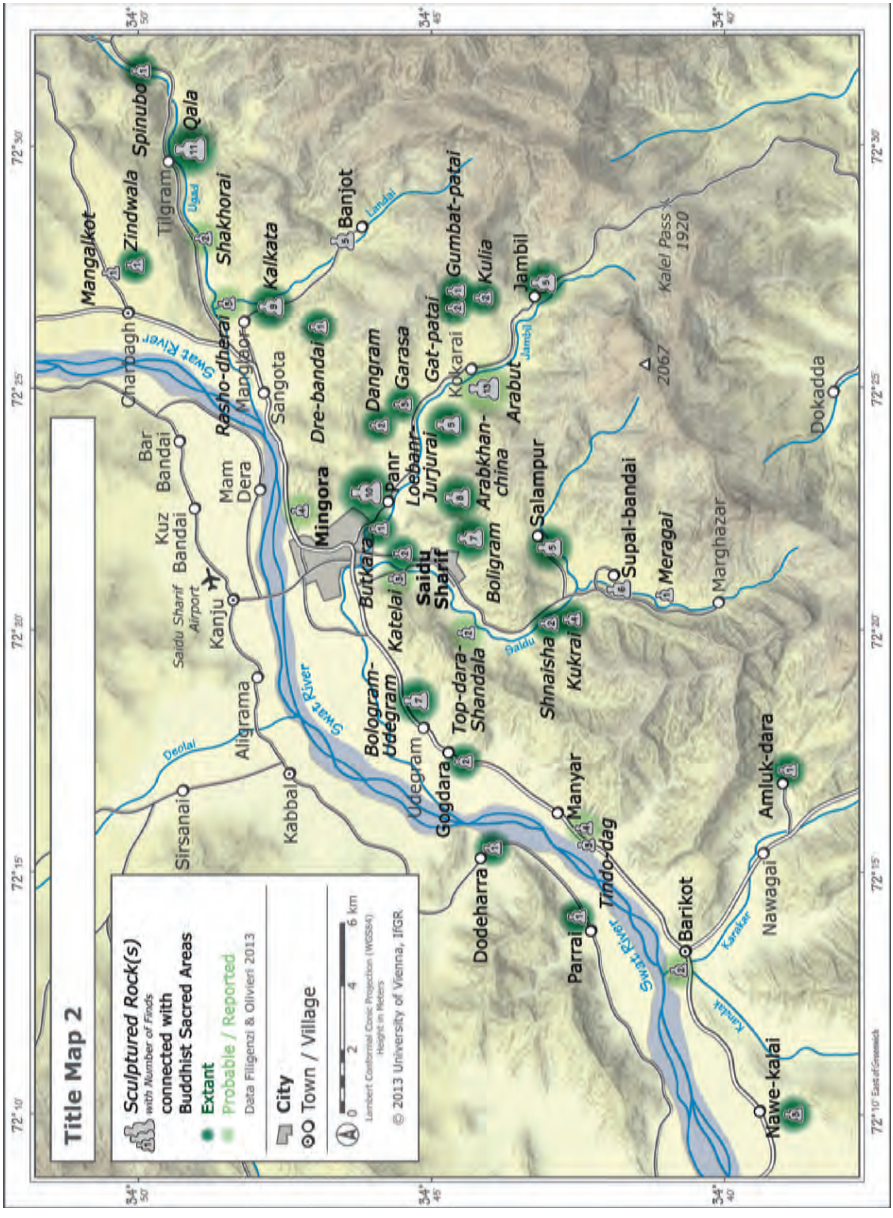

Title Map 2
Sculptured Rock(s)
with Number of Finds
connected with
Buddhist Sacred Areas
Extant
Probable / Reported
Data Filigenzi & Olivieri 2013
City
Town / Village
0 2 4 6 km
Lambert Conformal Conic Projection (WGS84)
Height in Meters
© 2013 University of Vienna, IFGR
Mangalkot
Zindwala
Spinubo
Tilgram
Qala
Shakhorai
Kalkata
Banjot
Landai
Swat River
Charbagh
Rasho-dhara
Mangalor
Sangota
Dre-bandai
Dangram
Garasa
Gat-patai
Gumbat-patai
Kulia
Jambil
Kokarai
Arabkhan-china
Arabut
Jumbil
Kalel Pass
1920
2067
Bar Bandai
Kuz Bandai
Mam Dera
Mingora
Butkara
Ranr
Loebaar
Jurjurai
Saidu Sharif
Saidu Sharif Airport
Kanju
Katelai
Boligram
Salampur
Supal-bandai
Meragai
Marghazar
Dokadda
Deolai
Aligrama
Bologram-Udegram
Udegram
Top-dara-Shandala
Saidu
Shnaisha
Kukrai
Kabbal
Gogdara
Manyar
Sirsanai
Dodeharra
Parrai
Tindo-dag
Barikot
Amluk-dara
Nawagai
Nawe-kalai
Landai
Jambil

Fig. 1



Fig. 2

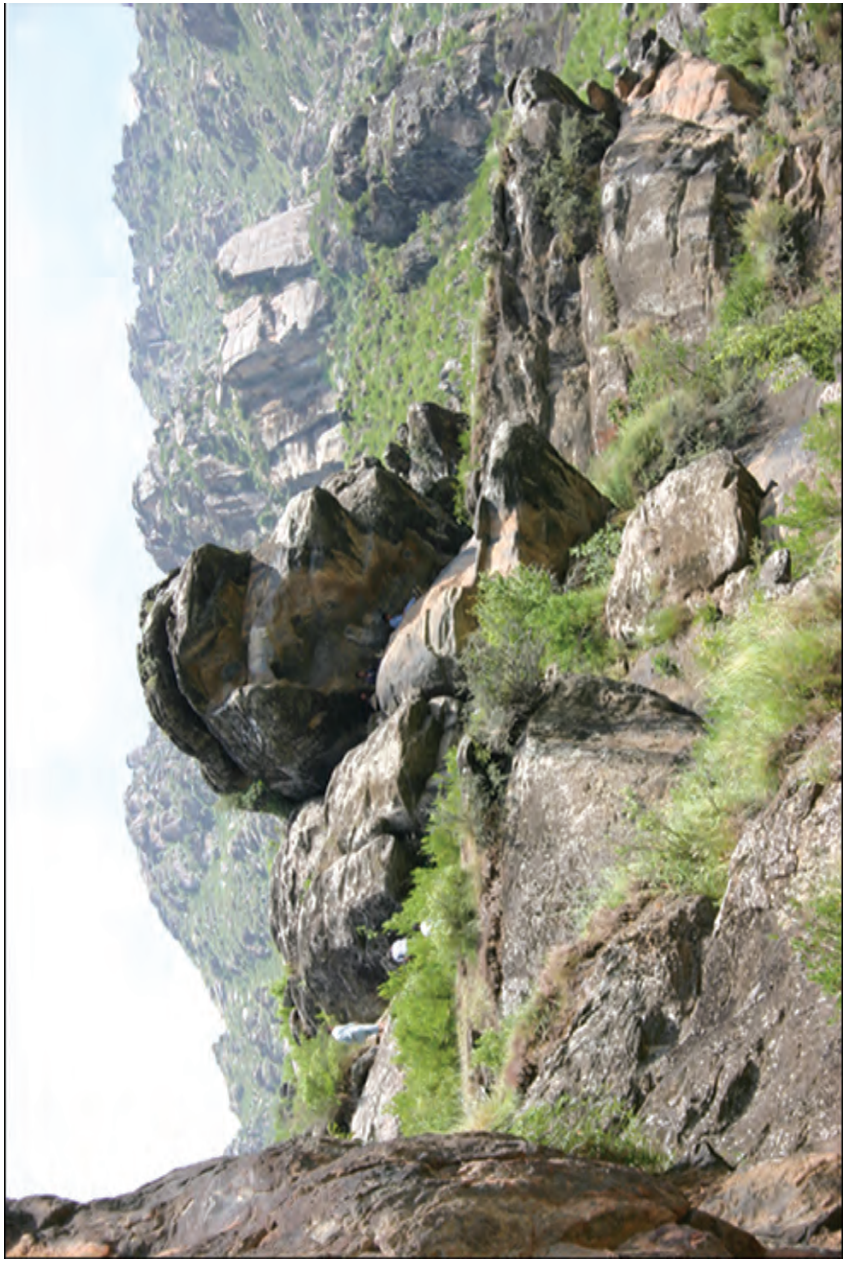


Fig. 3



Fig. 4



Fig. 5



Fig. 6



Fig. 7



Fig. 8



Fig. 9

Index

A

abhaya 200–203
Abhidharma 30, 40, 59, 100, 160, 251, 279–281, 284, 292
  Sarvāstivāda 154, 158
Abhidharmakośa 7, 49
Abhidharmakośabhāṣya 109, 208, 335, 354, 359
abhijñā/*abhiññā* 17, 20, 30, 31n62, 42n91, 48, 51n108, 138, 139n122, 141n130, 160n175, 315, 353
abhiprāya 370
abhisamayavāda 152, 159–161, 164n185
Acala (*arhant*) 206, 215–218
ācārya 189, 220, 364
Adbhuta *stūpa* 392–393
adhimukticaryābhūmi 329, 334, 339, 344, 347, 351, 353–354, 356–357, 359
aduḥkhāsukha 252n10, 265–266n36
Āgamas 5–9, 17, 24, 30–31, 43n94, 46n99, 47, 49, 51, 53, 55, 59–61, 63, 65, 67–68
Ajanta caves
  cave IV 211, 241
  cave XI 189, 192, 199n65, 241
  cave XVI 199n66, 209
  cave XVII 199n63, 201, 203n80, 207nn89–90, 210, 217
  cave XXII 183, 186n28, 188, 190n38, 240
  cave XXVI 198–199, 202, 205, 208–210, 217n127, 219, 241
akarmaṇya 256–257, 270
akarmaṇyatā 253–254, 256n17, 257
akṣayanīvī (permanent endowment) 208
ālayavijñāna 249–252, 255–257, 259, 262–265, 270, 284n22, 358
Amluk Dara 397, 404
anālaya 200–203
ānāpānasati 52n111, 147n145
Anavataptagāthā 204, 205n83, 212
  see also *Fo wubai dizi zishuo benqi jing*
Āndhra(deśa) 182n16, 187, 203n78, 208, 215, 220
Aṅguttaranikāya 25, 37–39, 41, 43, 45, 49
anitya 128n88, 129n90, 154, 155n162, 266, 286n30, 334–335
anugraha 263–267, 270
  āśraya- 250–252, 255
anuśaṃsa 331, 346
  as literary genre 191n39
anuttarajñāna (supreme knowledge) 181, 182n16, 183, 185, 188, 193, 197, 212, 213
anyonyayogakṣema 263–265
apadāna 67n135, 80, 205n83
apavarga 203, 205, 220
apramāṇa(s) 19, 24, 27, 28n56, 30–31, 42–45, 51n108, 52n110, 62–63, 64n132
  see also immeasurable medita-

tions
arhant/*arhat* 161, 163, 195, 196, 205–206, 215–217
arhatship 34, 38–39, 41, 51n109, 55, 163
Aśmaka (dynasty) 199–200, 203n78, 205
āśraya 251-253, 255, 257–259, 260n25, 263, 264n34, 357
Aśvaghoṣa 99–107,109, 111–113, 115–117, 119–122, 124–128, 130–133, 135–143, 145–147, 149–160, 162–166, 188n33, 306–307
Aurangabad (caves) 210
avadāna 85, 88n19, 91, 93
Avalokitasūtra/*Avalokanasūtra* 196, 197n57
Avalokiteśvara 306, 314, 384, 389–390, 393–394, 404
awakening 1, 5–6, 19–22, 24, 26–27, 29–30, 34-35, 40, 46, 51–52, 55–56, 62–63, 64n132, 65, 79, 81, 85, 153, 161n179, 178–182, 193, 195–198, 218, 268, 303–305, 307, 310, 313–314, 320, 323–324, 331, 333–335, 341–342, 347
  of the Buddha 27, 33–34, 41, 47–50, 52, 62, 323
  see also bodhi

B

bala 113n50, 122n71, 142n132, 153n157, 154, 340–341
Bāmiyān 178, 188n33, 190n38, 198n59
Barikot 395n27
beautiful (*śubha*/*subha*) 46, 135, 155n163
  human beings 180
bhadrāsana 198, 207
Bhaiṣajyavastu 204n81
bhakti 203
bhāṇaka(s) 61, 193
bhāvanā 53, 126n83, 127, 138, 252, 257–258, 331, 334, 337, 339, 342, 344, 352, 355–356, 358
bhāvanāmārga 159, 257–258, 352, 390
Bhīmā-*sthāna* 396
bhukti 220
bhūmi 60, 86, 89–90, 162, 282, 293, 308, 313, 334, 339, 342–344, 347, 351–352, 354–357, 359
  yoga- 329, 357
bodhi 79, 197n57, 323, 367n5
  -maṇḍa 180
  -pakṣadharma/*-pākṣikadharma* 34, 153, 331, 333–335
  mahā- 218
  see also awakening
bodhicitta 195, 305, 347
bodhisatt(v)a 50–52, 65, 84, 87, 89–90, 93–94, 101–102, 178, 180, 182, 189n36, 193–194, 196–197, 202, 204n80, 206, 217–219, 260–262, 305–307, 311, 314–319, 322–323, 334–335, 347, 352, 354, 381, 389–390, 393n26, 404
  -*śikṣā* (training) 180
  career 88, 90, 211, 220
  path 2, 80–81, 84, 89–90, 93–94, 195, 308, 310-311, 313–316, 320
  practice 48, 262, 307
  vow 306-307
Bodhisattvabhūmi 197, 259, 262, 354, 359

Bodhisattvayāna 177, 181, 194, 196
bodhyaṅga/*bojjhaṅga* (constituents of awakening) 45, 64n132, 143, 153, 164n185, 341–342
Brahmā 20–21, 92n22, 194, 389, 404
Brahmajāla-sūtra/Brahmajāla-sutta 12, 14, 117, 279
Brahmaloka/Brahma world/world of Brahmā 16, 20, 43
see also under rebirth
Brahman 306, 323
brahman(s) 19, 24n48, 64n132
Brāhmī (script) 198, 213, 392
Buddha/*buddha* 26–27n55, 28n58, 50–51, 83–84, 88, 90, 92–93, 177, 179–180, 183, 187n29, 188, 204, 215, 220, 241, 311–312, 314–316, 372, 374
image 191n40, 195
-*pada* (Tib. *sangs rgyas go 'phang*) 194
-*pratimā* 220
-*vacana* 367
Buddhabhadra (donor) 198–203, 205, 207n90, 208–209, 211, 215–219
Buddhaghosa 34, 38, 51, 59, 61,134–135
buddhatva 195, 220, 366n3, 367n5
Butkara I 383

C

caitya 192, 196–197, 207, 216n125
-*gṛha* 198
mahā- 182n16
Caityapradakṣiṇagāthā 190, 197
calm 41, 334, 336, 338, 344, 346
see also śamatha/samatha
Candraprabha (donor) 220
cārvāka 370
Chitral 392n25
cintā 126n83, 331, 344, 355–356, 358
-*maya* 127
citta 19n36, 41, 42nn91 and 93, 46n99, 51, 56nn116 and 118, 58, 59n125, 116n56, 122n73, 145n143, 147–148n145, 151n152, 152, 154n161, 155n163, 164nn185–186, 250–255, 256n17, 264–265, 267, 287n32, 293, 307n8, 329, 333, 338, 346, 351, 356–357
-*caitta* 263–265
-*karmaṇyatā* 268–269
-*parigraha* 107n26, 108n30
-*prasāda* 204
-*sthiti* 339-342
pariśuddha- 57n120
sthita- 339
Cohen, Richard 186n28, 187n29, 189, 212n108
commemoration of the dead 218
compassion 19, 46, 62n131, 63, 64n132, 84, 91–92, 140, 191n40, 203, 305–307, 314–315, 319, 324, 372, 390
see also karuṇā
corps substitué 179

D

dakṣiṇā 204
+ *ā*√*diś* 209
dānapāramitā 197
Dānaparikathā by pseudo-Nāgārjuna 208n92
dānapati 217
darśanamārga 152, 159, 161, 257–258, 334, 351–352, 354, 390
Dārṣṭāntika 99, 104–105, 138

Datang Xiyuji 大唐西域記 by Xuanzang 玄奘 215
dauṣṭhulya 252–254, 256–257, 267, 270, 346
defilement(s) 17, 28n58, 51, 56, 57n119, 105, 127, 136–138, 140–141, 145, 153, 256, 258, 268, 289
  destruction of 17, 19–22, 24–31, 33, 35, 38, 40–41, 43, 45, 50, 59, 62–63, 107–108
devabhavana 207n88
devātideva 207n90
deyadharma 181–184, 189, 211
Dhammapada 314, 392n25
Dhammapāla 39
Dharmaguptaka 6–10, 12, 14–15, 17, 20–22, 25, 27, 38, 43, 46, 53, 61
dharmatā 200, 260
dhyāna(s)/*jhāna*(s) 16, 19–22, 24–31, 33–35, 38–40, 42–43, 46, 48–49, 51–53, 56–60, 62–63, 65, 80n8, 100–103, 138, 163–165, 250–251, 254–255, 330
Dīghanikāya 8–9, 15, 46, 279
Dir 392n25
Dīrghāgama 6–10, 12, 15, 17, 22, 27, 48
duḥkha 94n29, 107n26, 108n30, 116n56, 117n59, 118n63, 128n88, 129n90, 131n94, 137n117, 153n157, 154, 155n162, 161n179, 265–266, 284n21, 286n30, 305, 307, 332–335, 370n9
Durgā 385

E

ekajātipratibaddha 193, 314
ekayogakṣema 263–264, 267, 269–270
Ekottarikāgama 6, 29, 44, 191n40, 215n119
equanimity (*upekṣā*/*upekkhā*) 19, 33, 46, 51n110, 62n131, 142–143, 283–285, 287n31, 341, 344

F

filial piety 198, 211, 213–216
flower, offering of 203–206
Fo benxing ji jing 佛本行集經 211n105
formless attainments (*ārūpya*) 20–21, 25, 27, 29–31, 37–40, 42–43, 50, 51nn108 and 110, 59, 62–63
formless meditations *see under* meditation(s)
Fo wubai dizi zishuo benqi jing 佛五百弟子自說本起經 204n81
  see Anavataptagāthā
Frauwallner, Erich 8, 159, 164

G

gandhakuṭī 179
Gandhāra 178, 280, 282, 389
Gāndhārī 6, 38, 204nn81–82, 213n114
Gaṇeśa 384, 390
generalized goal 195
Ghatotkacha cave 207n90
Gilgit (manuscripts/texts/etc.) 178, 188, 190–191, 193n46, 194, 198n59, 204, 208n93, 214n116, 384n8
Gombrich, Richard 27n55, 63, 64n132
gotra 211–212, 259–260, 262, 359
guru 364, 370, 374

H

Hariścandra (king) 390
Hariṣeṇa 183, 199
heya 373
Huili 389n13

I

IAMP (Italian Archaeological Mission in Pakistan) 382–383, 387, 393n25, 394
iddhipāda see ṛddhipāda
immeasurable meditations 19–22, 24, 26, 30, 42–43, 45–46, 62–63, 64n132, 65
see also apramāṇa(s)
impermanence 58, 63, 128, 148n145, 155n161, 158–159, 209–210, 333, 335
Indra 194, 207, 389–390, 404
Indraboti (Indrabhūti) 394
indriya 122n71, 130–131, 133, 134n106, 135n109, 137n117, 154, 192, 259n24, 262n29, 267, 293n39, 339–341
insight 2, 33n64, 38–41, 45, 51n109, 52–53, 59, 64n132, 106–111, 126–128, 139n122, 160, 163, 313, 320, 334, 336, 338, 340, 346, 354, 357, 359, 390
see also vipaśyanā/vipassana and prajñā/paññā

J

Jaggayyapeta 182n17, 220, 241
Jahanabad 391, 394n27, 404
Jambudvīpa 213, 214n117
jātaka 49n104, 67n135, 79–95
Jātakamālā by Āryaśūra 81–83, 91, 188n33, 192
joy (*muditā*) 19, 46, 62n131
joy (*prīti*) *see prīti*

K

Kaliyuga 375
kalyāṇamitra 370
Kanheri caves 187n31, 241
Kāraṇḍavyūhasūtra 390
karmaṇya 257, 270
karmaṇyatā 253–255, 257, 268–269, 341–342
karmaploti 204
Karmavibhaṅga 205
karuṇā 19, 140, 191n40, 305, 307, 314, 324, 390
see also compassion
Karuṇāpuṇḍarīka 193
Kashmir Smast 396, 404
Kathmandu 220
Khazanaghat 392
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa 393n26, 396
kindness 19, 62n131, 63, 64n132, 147n145
see also maitrī and mettā
kīrti (renown/memorial) 206, 208
kleśa(s) 127, 136, 138, 256–259, 262, 333, 342, 352
knowledge 17, 19–22, 24–29, 33–35, 41–43, 48–52, 56–57, 59, 62–63, 107–108, 114, 116, 118, 124, 139, 287–279, 294, 305, 308, 315, 317, 323, 331–334, 339, 341–342, 349, 353, 355–356
holy 132, 153
of reality 304–305, 307, 317, 369
scripturally based 165, 289
supreme 181, 183, 197, 212-213

knowledges, three 19–20, 22, 33–35, 45, 48–49, 51–52, 62, 139
see also abhijñā/*abhiññā and vidyā*(s)
Kṛkin, dreams of 193
Kṛṣṇa 201
kṛtajña (gratitude) 206, 216
Kura/Khewra 212n108, 213, 214n117
Kushan 393, 397

L

Lamotte, Étienne 67–68, 318n19
Lāṭa 215
lokāyata see cārvāka
Lokeśvara 394
Longmen 龍門 cliffs 206
lord of ascetics (*yogīśvara*) 207n90, 210n99
see also munīndra and munirāja

M

Madhyamāgama 6–7, 26, 29, 33, 35, 39, 42–43, 46, 138
Dharmaguptaka 6, 38
Sarvāstivāda 9, 30, 45, 48, 66
Madhyamaka 292, 304, 310, 314, 322, 363
Mahāparinirvāṇasūtra/*Mahāparinibbānasutta* 155, 392n25
Maharashtra/Mahārāṣṭra 187, 199, 216
māhātmya 203, 350
Mahāvastu 49n104, 81, 86–94, 196, 197n57, 211n105
Mahāyāna 82, 103, 181–182, 186, 280, 282, 303–304, 307, 313, 315, 322, 347, 363–365, 369
Mahāyānasūtrālaṃkāra 329, 335, 354–355, 358–359
Mahīśāsaka (*nikāya*) 214n116
Maitreya 183, 193, 314, 333, 384–385, 389, 404
Maitreyamahāsiṃhanādasūtra 191
maitrī 19, 21, 46, 140, 147n145, 162n181, 163, 305, 337
see also kindness *and mettā*
Majjhimanikāya 8, 22, 24, 29, 33–34, 42–43, 46, 51, 66, 138
manaskāra 329–332, 334, 337, 340, 346–348, 350, 352–353, 357–359
Manglaor/Manglawar/Maṅgalaor 392, 394
Mañjuśrī 103, 384–385
Mantranaya 366, 368–370
Mantrayāna 363, 366–367
Māra 49, 87, 371
mārabhāṣita 367
mārga 1-2, 107n26, 108n30, 138, 262, 308, 316, 321-323, 331–332, 346, 381–382, 390, 398
-abhyāsa 343–344
-aṅga 153n157, 154, 343
-dvayasvabhāva 331, 346
-praveka 129n90, 155n162
aṣṭāṅga- 105, 153
prayoga- 354
sugatatva- 82
see also bhāvanāmārga and darśanamārga
Māthura (donor) 211–212
Maudgalyāyana 215
meditation(s) 16, 27n55, 29n58, 33, 41, 42n93, 46n99, 49n105, 52–53, 57, 60, 61n129, 62n131, 64, 101–102, 105, 114, 138, 142n133, 146, 148n 145, 152,

162, 251–253, 257, 262, 267, 278, 282, 285, 292, 294
formless (*ārūpya*) 19, 22, 24, 37, 39–40, 45, 62, 65
manual/treatise of 103, 165
practitioner of (*yogācāra*) 278n4, 279, 281, 285, 292, 295
subject of 139n122, 142–146, 148–149
see also immeasurable meditations
Meisig, Konrad 9
merit 84–85, 87–88, 93–94, 178–183, 185n24, 190, 191n40, 195, 197, 203–204, 208–209, 210–213, 218–220, 307n8, 318–319, 366, 374, 381, 392
see also puṇya
arising from relinquishment (*tyāgānvaya*) 208
arising from use (*paribhogānvaya*) 208
share of 213
mettā 19n36, 80n8, 147n145
see also kindness *and maitrī*
Mettasutta 64n132
Middle Period (of Indian Buddhism) 177, 180, 191, 196, 277, 279, 281
mindfulness 17, 25, 33, 35, 53, 55–60, 62, 106–110, 126, 130–137, 147n145, 153, 165, 308, 323, 339–341, 343
applications of 25, 28, 55–56, 62, 152, 154–159, 333, 335
of body 28, 53, 56–58, 60
of breathing 52, 57, 59–60, 64
see also sati and smṛti
mokṣa 113, 114n51, 128n88
-*kāma* 206
Mount Ilam 397
Mount Karamar 396n35
mukti 220
Mūlamadhyamakakārikā by Nāgārjuna 203n78, 309
Mūlasarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivādin 7–8, 67n135, 83, 99–100, 105, 109–110, 155, 188, 196, 214n117, 215
Vinaya 10, 47, 204n81, 207–208, 214
munīndra 207n90, 217, 394
munirāja 207n90

N

Nāgārjuna 136, 203n78, 220, 309–310, 315
neyārtha 322, 374
Nikāya(s) 5–8, 17, 19, 24, 30–31, 43n94, 46n99, 47, 49, 51, 53, 55, 59–61, 63, 65, 67–68, 157n168, 184, 186, 188, 196, 214n116
Theravāda 8–9, 25, 29, 35, 39, 43, 56
nirodha (cessation) 58, 110, 161n179, 252
-*samāpatti* 19n35, 41, 50n107
(a)pratisaṅkhyā- 288n34, 289
ārūpya- 31, 49, 62–63, 66
of perception and feeling (*saṃjñāvedayitanirodha*) 19–21, 25, 27, 38, 40, 49, 64
nirvāṇa (nirvana) 8, 39, 102, 163, 181–182, 193–194, 201, 205, 218, 289, 305, 309, 315, 322, 336, 352
nītārtha 322, 374
non-return 38–39, 41, 55, 124
non-returner (*anāgāmin*) 50, 161, 163

O

O rgyan pa 394
omniscient/omniscience 193, 198, 202, 310, 353, 368
see also sarvajña

P

Padmapāṇi 389
pañcavidhā yogabhūmiḥ 329, 357
pāpa 373
Pāramitāsamāsa 197
parents 84, 181, 185, 209–213, 214n116, 215n119, 218
parinirvāṇa 114, 191, 195–196, 200
parītta 51–52n110, 135n108, 144–145nn141–142, 332, 353
path, gradual 9n14, 12, 22n47, 25n52, 26n55, 28–31, 43, 46, 49n105, 53, 55, 57, 60, 62–63, 66, 178
Paṭola Ṣāhi 384n8
portraits (of donors and devotees) 210–211
Potala sūtra collection 190
Poṭṭhapāda-sutta 19–21, 25, 37
prajñā/*paññā* 25, 38, 40, 56n116, 80n8, 102, 106–107, 108n30, 109, 126, 127n84, 164n186, 288, 305–306, 308, 314, 318, 339–340, 356n69
-pāramitānīti 320
-skandha 109n31, 110–111
-vimutti 135n108, 160n175
adhi- 336
lokottarā 357
see also insight
praṇidhāna (aspiration to Buddhahood) 178–179, 217n127, 306–307
-caryā 88
prasāda 123n76, 220, 308
citta- 204
praśasti 198n62, 199n63, 201, 203n80, 217
Prasenajitparipṛcchā/*Prasenajidgāthā* 190–194, 196–197
praśrabdhi/prasrabdhi 114n51, 143, 251–257, 267–268, 270, 341, 347n39
pratipakṣa 138, 151n152, 336–337
dauṣṭhulya- 252
pratītyasamutpāda 148n145, 306, 321n26, 337
-gāthā 195
pratyekabuddha 88n19, 195–196, 262n29, 352
Pravrajyāvastu 207n88
prāyogika 50n107, 332, 348, 350
prīti/pīti 46n99, 51n110, 58,114n51, 143, 250–252, 255, 268, 286n31, 341
-sukha 57n120, 250, 254
Pṛṣṭhapāla-sūtra 14n24, 21, 25, 37
pūjā 191, 205n83, 210, 307
puṇya 85, 181, 185n24, 189, 207n87, 210–211, 213, 218, 307n8, 339, 366
see also merit

R

Raja Gira 394
rang byung 388
Ratnāvalī by Nāgārjuna 202
Ra yi k'ar 394
ṛddhipāda/iddhipāda 52, 154, 337–339
rebirth 17, 28, 33, 43, 45, 48, 52, 62, 94, 137, 161n179, 163, 180, 182,

185n25, 188, 191–193, 197, 204, 206, 208, 219–220, 396
as a human king 194, 221
as a poor or a slave 192
as Indra or Brahmā 194
in heaven 140n129, 205–206, 208, 218–219
in the company of Brahmā 21
in the world of Brahmā 22, 30, 45, 64n132
relics 179, 195, 383, 395n27
Rhys Davids, T. W. 8, 15, 24, 31

S

ṣaḍāyatana-viśeṣa 259–260, 262
Saddharmapuṇḍarīka-sūtra 188n33, 390
Śaila (*nikāya*) 187n29
śakti 123n76, 258n23, 304–305, 373
Śākyamuni 86, 88–90, 94, 183, 194, 215, 217n127, 260n28
samādhi 42n91, 51–53, 57n120, 80n8, 102, 106–108, 111, 114n51, 122n73, 138, 142–143, 194, 330–331, 338–339, 341–345, 347–348, 357, 367n5
-skandha/kkhandha 110–111
Sāmaññaphala-sutta 8, 12, 15, 19n36
śamatha/*samatha* 33n64, 142n134, 338, 344
and *vipaśyanā*/*vipassana* 41nn88–89, 254n14, 331, 334, 346, 347n39, 358
see also calm
Śamathadeva 7n6, 14n26, 110, 193n46
samaya 368, 372, 374
Śambhu (i.e. Śiva) 201
saṃbodhi 160n175, 161n169, 268, 341–342
anuttarasamyak- 197n58
samyak- 182
Saṃghabhedavastu 9, 17n30, 49
saṃsāra 94, 126, 220, 293, 305–306, 313, 315, 318, 322, 336
samvara 134n106, 372
indriya- 133, 134n106, 135, 137n117
samyakprahāṇa 153, 336
Saṃyuktāgama 6, 29, 46, 138, 294
Saṃyuttanikāya 26
Śāriputra 40–41, 51
sarvajña 198, 202
see also omniscient/omniscience
Sarvāstivāda/ Sarvāstivādin 6–10, 14, 30, 34–35, 40, 45–46, 48, 49, 56–58, 61, 66, 83, 99–100, 103–105, 109, 152, 154, 158, 160, 164n185, 280, 287, 291n37
Abhidharma 154, 158
Dīrghāgama 10, 14–15, 17, 20–22, 24–26, 43, 48
Madhyamāgama 26–27, 29–30, 38–39, 43–45, 48, 55, 57, 66
sati 33, 130n92
see also mindfulness *and smṛti*
Satipaṭṭhāna-sutta 53, 55–56, 58, 152n154
saurūpyasaubhāgya (stanza starting with) 189, 190n38, 192, 194
Sautrāntika 99–100, 104–105, 138, 160, 165, 291nn36–37
Schmithausen, Lambert 9–10, 31, 33–34, 48, 154, 249
Schopen, Gregory 67n135, 179, 181–182, 187, 190, 197, 213
Shakhorai 391, 394n27
Shatrunjaya 395
Shrigundi 395

siddha 384
śikṣā 107, 337
see also under bodhisattva
Śikṣāsamuccaya by Śāntideva 196, 197n57
śīla/sila 12, 15, 25, 31, 62, 80n8, 82, 102, 106–107, 108n30, 111–112, 113n50, 114, 133
-kkhandhavagga 8–10, 12, 22, 31, 37, 46, 65
-skandha/kkhandha 24, 37, 65, 110–111
-skandhanipāta 10, 14, 37, 46, 65
-vrata 132n100, 153n157, 160, 161n179, 162, 346
adhi- 336
āryakānta- 343–344
Sindh 216
śiṣya 220
śiva 194, 200–201, 318
Śivadharma 220
smṛti 108, 126, 130, 131n97, 132, 133n103, 135, 153n157, 308, 339–341
ānāpāna- 101
samyak- 106, 107n26, 110n34, 343
see also mindfulness *and sati*
smṛtyupasthāna 28–30, 42, 53, 55–57, 60, 62–63, 65, 153n157, 154–156, 157n170, 333, 335–336, 354n59
dharma- 281–282, 296
Spink, Walter 182–183, 199n64
śraddhā 120–121, 122n71, 123n76, 124, 339–340
Śrāmaṇyaphala-sūtra 9–10, 17n30, 20n40
Śrāvakayāna 198
srotaāpanna 161, 334, 351
srotaāpattiphala 216
śruta 126n83, 331, 344, 355, 358
-maya 127, 288n34, 308
Sthiramati 329
Stuart, Daniel M. 21n42, 60, 63, 264n32
stūpa 93, 179–180, 192, 194, 196, 197n57, 198, 204, 218, 309, 392–393, 397
sugata 82, 192–193, 198n62, 201n70, 220, 312
-ālaya 198n60, 201, 209n96
Sumanas 204–205
Sūrya 384
sutta(s) 8, 10, 12, 15, 19, 20, 22, 24–26, 28–29, 33–34, 38, 40, 46, 49, 51n108, 52, 55–56, 59, 65, 79
svargasopāna 208
svayaṃbhū 385–386
svayaṃbhūtīrtha 386
Swabi District 396n35
Swat 381–384, 386–390, 392n25, 395, 397, 404

T

Talo 383
tantra 372, 374–375
Tārā 306, 394
Tathāgata 9, 15, 20, 22, 24–31, 50, 66, 191n40, 200, 203–204, 312, 319, 322, 338, 371–372
Tathāgatabimbakārāpaṇasūtra 190, 194, 196
Tathāgatabimbaparivarta 195n53
temple 206, 218, 309, 314, 316–318, 393n26, 394, 395n27, 396
cave 206, 396
see also kīrti
Tevijja-sutta 19–21, 26n54, 64n132

Theravāda/Theriya 5, 10, 12, 21–22, 29, 38, 40, 43, 45–46, 49n103, 51, 56–58, 61–62, 64n132, 66, 67n135, 111
Aṅguttaranikāya 39
canon/sources 8, 10, 15, 33–34, 38
Dīghanikāya 8–9, 14–15, 19–20, 27, 38, 43
Majjhimanikāya 22, 24, 27–30, 34–35, 38, 43, 57
Nikāyas 6–9, 25, 29, 35, 43, 56
tīrthika 45, 100, 334, 352
Toramāṇa Ṣāhi (king) 213
Turki Shahi 395n27

U

ud√diś 209
Uḍḍiyāna 382–383, 386, 397–398
Ugad Valley 392
upādāna 263–264
upādeya 373
upaghāta 263–267, 270
upapanna 185n25, 189–190
upātta 263–264

V

vajrācārya 364
Vajrapāṇi 384–385, 404
Vajrasattva 384
Vākāṭaka (dynasty) 183, 199, 208
Valabhī 216
vaṃsa 80
varadamudrā 188, 241
Varāhadeva (donor) 209
vaśavartin 332, 352
Vāsiṣṭha-sūtra 21
Vasubandhu 50–51, 109, 111, 115, 216n125, 217n126, 330–332, 334–337, 339–341, 343, 346–350, 352–357, 359
vidyā(s) 17, 20, 25, 30, 56n115
see also knowledges, three
vihāra 106, 198n60, 204n80, 207, 211
vihārasvāmin 211–214
vimokṣa(s) 42n92, 141n130, 163n183, 352
vimuktipaṭṭa 192–193
Vinaya 7n6, 67n135, 79, 86, 99, 100n3, 114, 188, 196
see also under Mūlasarvāstivāda/Mūlasarvāstivādin
vipaśyanā/*vipassana* 33n64, 41nn88–89, 51n109, 254n14, 331, 334, 338, 346, 347n39, 358
see also insight *and śamatha*/*samatha*
Vipaśyin 194, 204
vipula 203, 254–255, 332, 353
vīrya/*viriya* 35, 80n8, 120, 122–123nn72–75, 124n77, 125–126, 128n88, 143, 151, 152n153, 293, 305, 337, 339–341
Viṣṇukuṇḍin (dynasty) 207n88
Visuddhimagga 38, 61n129, 277

W

wanderers of other schools (*anyatīrthika-parivrājaka*) 24n48, 45–46, 64

X

Xuanzang 215–216, 256, 260n25, 389n13, 392, 396–397

Y

Yit, Kin Tung 9–10, 12n21, 15n27, 31
yoga/Yoga 107–108, 138, 141–142, 151, 152n153, 162–163, 253, 293, 366
yogācāra 60, 103, 141n130, 147, 278n4, 281–282, 288n34
Yogācāra 99, 100n3, 103–105, 138, 251–252, 259, 262–263, 270–271, 292, 313, 319, 321–322, 329–330, 358, 363
yogatantra 365, 371
yogin 113, 139n122, 143, 147n145, 148, 150, 154, 158, 371, 373–374
yoginītantra 365
yoni 396
yukti 319, 370