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The Anāgatavamsa Revisited

INTRODUCTION

It had been my intention, in collaboration with Dr W. Pruitt, to make an edition and translation of the commentary on the Anāgatavamsa, manuscripts of which are available in France\(^1\) and elsewhere. We have for some years been collecting material towards that end.

In preparation for the edition I began by examining and revising the existing editions of the Anāgatavamsa itself. Recent ill health, however, has made it impossible for me to continue with the edition of the commentary, and I have decided to publish the revised edition of the Anāgatavamsa, in the hope that it will inspire someone to take up the task of editing the commentary.

The edition is based upon Minayeff (1886). Leumann (1919) adopted M.’s edition, accepting some readings from M.’s vv.ll. and conjecturing others. I have made one or two further changes. Obvious misprints in M. have been tacitly corrected. M.’s verse division has been followed, to conform with \textit{CPD} references, although L.’s division is superior in places. I have followed L.’s punctuation and division of words.

The edition is accompanied by a translation, which is a revised version of Pruitt (1988), and I am very grateful to Dr Pruitt for allowing me to make use of his work in this way. In both the text and the translation I have taken account of Collins’ translation and notes (1998, pp. 361–73).

\(^1\)See Filliozat 1993.
ANĀGATAVAMSA

Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato Sammā-Sambuddhassa

1. Sāriputto mahā-pañño Upatissas vināyako dhamma-senāpati dhīro upetvā loka-nāyakaṃ
   (1) B. upagantvā

2. anāgataṃ jin’1 ārabbha āpucchi kaṅkham attano: tuyh’ ānantariko dhīro2 Buddho kīdisako bhave?
   (1) B. anāgataja°; (2) B. thumākantariko viro, C. viro

3. vitthāren’ eva taṃ1 sotum icchām’, ācikkha cakkhumā! therassa vacanam sutvā bhagavā etad abravi:
   (1) B. (and L.) so, M. eva ’haṃ

4. anappakaṃ puñña-rāsiṃ Ajitassa mahā-yasaṃ na sakkā sabbaso vattum1 vitthāren’ eva kassa-ci;
   eka-desena vakkhami, Sāriputta, suṇohi me!
   (1) B. kātuṃ, C. sotum

5. imasmiṃ bhaddake kappe ajāte1 vassa-koṭiyē Metteyyo nāma nāmena sambuddho dvipad’-uttamo
   (1) C. (and L.) so, M. asaṃjāte

6. mahā-puñño mahā-pañño mahā-ñāṇī1 mahā-yaso mahabbalo mahā-thāmo uppajjissati cakkhumā;
   (1) M. (and L.) -ñāṇī

Abbreviations: M. = Minayeff 1886; L. = Leumann 1919; A. = M.’s A.; B. = M.’s B.; C. = M.’s C.; Coll. = Collins 1998; Skt = Sanskrit; m.c. = metri causa; v.l. (vv.ll.) = variant reading(s). The abbreviations of the titles of Pāli texts are those of A Critical Pāli Dictionary.
7. mahā-gati satī c’ eva dhitimā bāhu-saccavā sāṃkhāto sabbā-dhammānaṃ nāto diṭṭho suphassito
pariyogāḥo parāmaṭṭho uppajjissati so jino.
(1) A.C. suphussito

8. tadā Ketumati nāma rāja-dhāni bhavissati
dvādasā-yojan’-āyāmā satta-yojana-vithatā,1
(1) C. viṭṭha°

9. ākiṇṇā nara-nārihi, pāśadehi1 vicittitā, sevītā saddha-sattehi, ajeyyā dhamma-rakkhitā.
(1) C. omits

10. Saṅkhō nām’ āsi so rājā ananta-bala-vāhano, satta-ratana-sampanno,1 cakka-vattī mahabbalo,
(1) L. so, M. sampanno

11. iddhimā yasavā1 c’ eva sabbā-kāma-samappito; hata-paccatthikaṃ2 khemaṃ anusāsissati dhammato.
(1) B. rasasā; (2) B. ʾttikaṃ

12. pāsādo sukato1 tattha dibba-vimāna-sādiso puṇṇa-kammābhinnibbatto2 nānā-ratana-cittito3
(1) B. sugato; (2) L. so, M. ʾnibbato; (3) B. vicittā, C. vicito

13. vedikāhi pariikkhitto suvibhatto manoram1 pabhassar’ accuggato setṭho duddikkho cakkhu-musano2
(1) B. ʾmmo; (2) A. ʾmussano, B.C. ʾmuyhano

14. rañño Mahā-Panādassa pavatto1 ratanā-mayo2 tam yūpaṃ3ussapettvāna4 Saṅkhō rājā vasissati.
(1) A. vutto, B.C. pavattam; (2) L. so, M ratanamayo, B.C. ratanāmayaṃ; (3) B. thūpaṃ, C. rūpaṃ; (4) L. so (m.c.?), M. uussāpettvāna
15. athāpi\(^1\) tasmiṇa nagare nānā-vīthi tahiṃ-tahiṃ
sumāpitā\(^2\) pokkharaṇi ramaṇīyā süpatiṭṭhā\(^3\)
(1) B. attho pi, C. athāpi ; (2) A.B.C. sudhāpitā ; (3) L. so, M.
supatiṭṭhā

16. acchodakā vippasannā sādu-sītā\(^1\) sugandhikā
sama-tīthikā kāka-peyyā attho\(^2\) vāluka-saṃthathā\(^3\)
(1) B. sādudakā, C. sādhusitā ; (2) C. attho ; (3) L. so, M. \(^{°}\)saṃṭhathā,
B. \(^{°}\)saṃṭhitā, C. \(^{°}\)sandhatā

17. padumʾ-uppala-saṃchannā sabbotuka-m-anāvaṭā.\(^1\)
sattʾ eva tāla-pantiyo satta-vaṇṇika-pākārā\(^2\)
(1) B. sabbotupanāyattā, C. \(^{°}\)navatā ; (2) B. \(^{°}\)kaṇṭhika\(^°\), C. \(^{°}\)paṇika\(^°\)

18. ratana-mayā parikkhittā nagarasmīṃ samantato.
Kusāvatī rāja-dhānī tadā Ketumāti bhave.

19. catukke\(^1\) nagara-dvāre kappa-rukkhā\(^2\) bhavissare\(^3\)
nilaṃ pitaṃ lohitakaṃ\(^4\) odātaṅ ca pabhassaraṃ.\(^5\)
(1) B. catutthe ; (2) B. \(^{°}\)kkho ; (3) B. \(^{°}\)ti ; (4) B.C. nilapitalohitakaṃ ;
(5) B.C. \(^{°}\)raṃ

20. nibbattā dibba-dussāni dibbā cʾ eva pasādhanaṃ
genabhoga-paribhogā ca\(^1\) sabbe tatthūpalambare.\(^2\)
(1) B. omits ; (2) B. \(^{°}\)bhare

21. tato nagara-majjhhamhi catu-sālaṃ\(^1\) catummukhaṃ\(^2\)
puṇṇa-kammābhinibbatto kappa-rukkho bhavissati.
(1) C. catussa ; (2) L. so (m.c.), M. catumukhaṃ

22. kappāsikaṃ ca koseyyaṃ khoma-kodumbarāṃ\(^1\) ca
puṇṇa-kammābhinibbattā kappa-rukkhesu lambare.
(1) A. \(^{°}\)ṭṭam\(^°\), B. \(^{°}\)parāni, C. \(^{°}\)kodumparāni

23. pāṇissarā mutingā ca murajʾ-ālambarāṃ\(^1\) ca
puṇṇa-kammābhinibbattā kappa-rukkhesu lambare.
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24. parihrakañ 1 ca kāyūraṃ 2 gīveyyaṃ ratanā-mayaṃ 3 puññakammābhīnibbattā kappa-rukkhesu lambare.
   (1) B. (and L.) so, M. parihrāṇi; (2) B. ori; (3) L. so (m.c.), M. ratanamayaṃ

25. uṇḍataṃ 1 mukha-phullaṅ ca aṅgada maṇi-mekhalā 2 puñña-kammābhīnibbattā kappa-rukkhesu lambare.
   (1) B. ukkallam; (2) M. aṅgadāmaṇī mekhalā

26. aññe ca nānā-vividhā 1 sabb’ābharaṇa-bhūsanā 2 puñña-kammābhīnibbattā kappa-rukkhesu lambare.
   (1) A.B. -vidhā; (2) B. sajāraṇavibhūsītā

27. āropitaṃ sayaṃ-jātaṃ puñña-kammena jantunam 1 aṅkanam 2 athusam suddham sugandham tandaḷa-phalaṃ
akattha-pākimama sālip parihiṅjantu 3 mānusā. 4
   (1) L. so (m.c.), M. oũna; (2) C. akalā; (3) C. akatahi kimāli parihiṅjissanti; (4) L. so, M. manusā, B.C. ọ ssā

28. dve sakaṭa-sahassāni dve sakaṭa-satāni 1 ca
sakaṭā 2 sattati c’ eva amaṇaṃ solasaṃ 3 bhave.
   (1) C. sakasaṭāni; (2) L. so, M. sakaṭe, B.C. ọ taṇḍi dve; (3) C. adds pi

29. atho pi dve ca tumbāni 1 tandaḷāni pavucaare
eka-bije samuppannā puñña-kammena jantunam. 2
   (1) B. tumpāṇi, C. tumappāna; 2 L. so (m.c.): M. oũnaṃ

30. ye Ketumatiyā viharanti Saṅkhassa vijite narā
tadā pi te bhavissanti guṇi-kāyūra-dhārino 1
   (1) L. so, M. guṇi (as separate word)

31. sampuṇṇa-mana-sāmkappā 1 sumukhā 2 thūla-kunḍalā
hari-candana-litt’-aṅgā kāsik’-uttama-dhārino 3
bahūta-vittā⁴ dhanino² viṇā-tāla-ppabodhanā³
accanta-sukhitā niccaṃ kāya-cetasikena ca.⁴
(1) A. (and L.) so, M. bahuta⁶, B. bahavā, C. bahupavi⁶; (2) B. ⁶yo, C. ⁶ro; (3) L. so, B. viṇā, B. viṇātāsabbabodhano; (4) B.C. te

33. dasa yojana-sahassāni Jambūdīpo bhavissati
akaṇṭaka agahano ¹ samo harita-saddalo.¹
(1–1) L. so, M. one word

34. tayo rogā bhavissanti ¹icchā anasanaṃ¹ jarā,
pañca-vassa-sat’-itthūnaṃ² vivāhā ca bhavissanti,
(1–1) L. so, M. one word, B. icchā ca asanaṃ, C. icchā dānasana; (2) B. ⁶thīhi, C. ⁶satti thīnaṃ āvāho vā

35. samaggā sakhilā¹ niccaṃ avivādā bhavissare.²
sampannā phala-pupphehi latā gumba-vanā³ dumā,
(1) L. so, M. sakhilā, B. sukhitā; (2) B. ⁶ti; (3) B. gumpā vanā

36. catur-āngulā tiṇa-jāti¹ mudukā tūla-sannibhā.
nātisūtā nāccunhā² ca sama-vassā manda-mālutā³
(1) C. ninajāti; (2) B.C. nāti-ūnhā; (3) C. mannavālukā

37. sabbadā utu-sampannā, anūnā taḷākā nādi.
tahīṃ-tahīṃ bhūmi-bhāge akharā suddha-vālukā
kalāya-mugga-mattiyo vikīṇṇā mutta-sādisā.

38. alaṃkāt’-uyyānam iva ramaṇiyā¹ bhavissati,²
gāma-nigamā ākīṇṇā accāsanne tahīṃ-tahīṃ
(1) B. (and L.) so, M. ramaṇyo; (2) Coll. assumes -anti

39. naḷa-veḷu-vanam¹ iva² brahā kukkuṭa-sampati³
avicī⁴ maṅñe va phuṭṭhā⁵ manussehi bhavissare,
(1) B. nilānalavanam; (2) B. viya, C. yeva; (3) B. ⁶tā; (4) L. so, M. avicī; (5) C. puṭṭhā
40. pagāḷhaṃ\textsuperscript{1} nara-nārīhi sampuṇṇā phuṭa-bhedanā iddha phitā\textsuperscript{2} ca khemā ca\textsuperscript{3} aniti anupaddavā.\textsuperscript{3}

(1) L. so, M. pagāḷhā; (2) L. so, M. phitā; (3–3) M. one word, B. anītīma°

41. \textsuperscript{1}sadā-rati sadā-khiḍḍā\textsuperscript{1} ekanta-sukha-samappitā\textsuperscript{2} nakkhatte vicarissanti tuṭṭha-haṭṭhā pamoditā.

(1–1) L. so, M. four separate words, C. saddā (twice); (2) B. sukhāmappi°

42. bahv-anna-pānā\textsuperscript{1} bahu-bhakkhā bahu-maṃsa-surodakā Ālakamaṇḍā va\textsuperscript{2} devānaṃ visālā rāja-dhāni va\textsuperscript{3} Kurūnaṃ\textsuperscript{4} ramaṇīyo va Jambūdīpo bhavissati.

(1) B. annapānā khādaniyā; (2) C. omits; (3) L. so, M. ṃdhānī, B. visālarājaṭṭhāni ca, A.C. visānā; (4) B. gurunāṃ

43. Ajito nāma nāmena Metteyyo dvipad’-uttamo anubyaṇjana-sampanno dvatimśa-vara-lakkhaṇo

44. suvaṇṇa-vaṇṇo\textsuperscript{1} vigata-rajo supabhāso jutimdharo yas’-agga-ppatto sirimā abhirūpo sudassano

(1) B. suvaṇṇo

45. mahānubhāvo asamo jāyissati brahmaṇa-kule.\textsuperscript{1} mahaddhano mahā-bhogo mahā ca kula-m-uttamo akkhitto jāti-vādena jāyissati\textsuperscript{2} brahmaṇa-kule.\textsuperscript{3}

(1) A.B.C. brahmaṇe kule; (2) B. bhavissati; (3) A. ṛṇe

46. Sirivaḍḍho Vaḍḍhamāṇo ca Siddhattho c’ eva Candako Ajit’-atthāya uppannā pāsādā ratanā-mayā.\textsuperscript{1}

(1) L. so (m.c.), M. ratanamayā

47. nāriyo\textsuperscript{1} sabb’-ānga-sampannā sabb’-ābharanā-bhūsitā\textsuperscript{2} mahā-majjhimakā\textsuperscript{3} cūḷā Ajitassa paricārikā,

(1) B. nārī; (2) B. cīvhaṃsitā; (3) B. mahantā majjhimā
48. anūnā sata-sahassā¹ nāriyo samalaṅkata.
   Candamukhi nāma nāri, putto so Brahmavaddhano.
   (1) B. °ssāṇi

49. ramissati rati-sampanno modamāno mahā-sukhe,¹
   anubhutvā² yasaṃ sabbaṃ Nandane Vāsavo yathā
   (1) B. °kho; (2) B. abhi bhavitā taṃ sabbaṃ

50. aṭṭha vassa-sahassāṇi agāramhi vasissati.
   kadā-ci rati-m-atthāya¹ gacchaṃ² uyyāne kīlītuṃ
   (1) B. °ttāya; (2) B. gaccha

51. kāmesv ādīnavaṃ dhīro¹ bodhi-sattāna² dhammatā
   nimitte caturo disvā kāma-rati-vināsane³
   (1) B. viro; (2) L. so (m.c.), M. °sattāṇa, B. °ttāna°; (3) B.
   °sano, C. nāsane

52. jinṇaṃ vyādhitakaṇḍ c’ eva mataṇ ca gata-m-āyuṇaṃ²
   sukhiṃaṃ pabbajitaṃ³ disvā sabba-bhūṭānukampako
   (1) L. so, M. jinṇaṇ ca vyādhikaṇḍ, B. jinṇabyādhitakaṇḍ; (2) B.
   katayuttakaṇḍ; (3) B. (and L.) so, M. pabbajjaṃ, C. ojjitaṃ

53. nibbindo¹ kāma-ratiyā anapekkho mahā-sukhe²
   anuttaraṃ³ santa-padaṃ⁴ esamāno⁵ bhīnikkhami.
   (1) L. so, M. nibbindo, C. °nno; (2) B. °kho; (3) B. anattāya; (4) B.
   santi°, C. sandhi°; (5) B. esamāṇā

54. sattāham padhāna-cāraṇa caritvā purīs’-uttamo
   pāsaṇeṇa’ eva laṅghitvā nikkhambissati so jino.

55. mittāmacca-sahāyehi nāti-sālohithei ca
   catur-aṅgini-senāya¹ parisāhi catu-vanṇhi²
   (1) L. so (m.c.), M. -aṅgini°; (2) L. so, M. °vaṇṇhi, B. parisāca°
56. catur-āsīti-sahassehi rāja-kaññāhi pure-kkhato\(^1\)
mahatā jana-kāyena Ajito pabbajissati.\(^2\)
(1) B. purakkhito, C. parikkhito; (2) B.C. °jji°

57. catur-āsīti-sahassāni brahmaṇā veda-pāragū
Metteyyasmiṁ pabbajite\(^1\) pabbajissanti\(^2\) te tadā.
(1) B.C. °jji°; (2) B.C. °jji°

58. Isidatto Purāṇo ca ubhayo te pi bhātaro
catur-āsīti-sahassāni pabbajissanti te tadā.

59. Jātimitto Vijayo ca yugā\(^1\) amita-buddhino\(^2\)
paccupessanti sambuddham catur-āsīti-sahassato.
(1) C. sūyuggā; (2) B. amitta°

60. Suddhiko\(^1\) nāma gahapati Sudhanā\(^2\) ca upāsikā
paccupessanti sambuddham catur-āsīti-sahassato.
(1) B. siddhattho; (2) B. (and L.) so, M. suddhanā

61. Saṅkho\(^1\) nāma upāsako Saṅkhā\(^2\) nāma upāsikā
paccupessanti sambuddham catur-āsīti-sahassato.
(1) B. (and L.) so, M. saṃgho; (2) L. so, M. saṃgha, B. saṅkha

62. Sudhano\(^1\) nāma gahapati Sudatto iti vissuto
paccupessanti sambuddham catur-āsīti-sahassato.
(1) B. (and L.) so, M. saddharo

63. itthī Yasavatī nāma Visākhā\(^1\) iti vissutā
catur-āsīti-sahassehi nara-nārīhi\(^2\) pure-kkhitā\(^3\)
(1) B. visāra; (2) B. nānānārihi; (3) B. purakkhito, C. pūrakkhito

64. nikkhamissanti nekkhammaṁ\(^1\) Metteyyassānusāsane.
aṅñe nāgarikā c’ eva tato jāna-padā bahū\(^2\)
khattiyā brahmaṇā vessā suddā c’ eva anappakā
(1) B. ni°, C. nikkhama; (2) B. mahā
65. nekkhammåbhimmukhå¹ hutvå nånå-jaccå mahå-janå Metteyyassånupabbajjam pabbajissanti² te tadå.
   (1) B. nikkhamå°; (2) B. °jji°

66. yasmiµ ca divase dhåiro¹ nekkhammaµ abhinikkhami²
    nikkhanta-divase yeva bodhi-mañjam upehiti.
   (1) B. viro; (2) B. nikkhama abhinikkhamanaµ

67. aparåjita-nisabha-ʧâhå¹ bodhi-pallaṅka-m-uttame
    pallaṅkena nisåditva bujjhissati mahå-yaso.
   (1) L. so, M. aparåjite nisabhaŋḍâne, B. aparåjite mahåʧâhåne, Coll.
   adopts reading aparåjita-ʧhånamhi from Bv XXV.20

68. upetvå¹ uyyåna-varam phullaµ Någavanaµ jino
    anuttaram dhamma-cakkaµ evaµ so vattayissati:
   (1) A.B.C. upeto

69. dukkham dukkha-samuppådam dukkhassa ca atikkamaµ
    ariyaµ aʧh’-aʧgikaµ¹ maggaµ dukkhåpasama-gåminaµ.
   (1) B. (and L.) so, M. ariy’-aʧh’-aʧgikaµ

70. tadå manusså hessanti¹ samantå sata-yojane
    pariså loka-nåthassa dhamma-cakka-pavattane.
   (1) B. °ss’ upessanti

71. tato bhiyyo bahå devå upessanti tahim’ jinam,¹
    nesåm mocessati² tadå bandhanå sahassa-kotoñam.³
   (1) B. janam; (2) B. mocissati, C. moha°; (3) L. so (m.c.), M. sata-
    sahassakoñam, B. sahassakoñam

72. tadå so Sañkha-råjå ca¹ påsdåm ratanåmayaµ²
    jina-påmokkhå-samghassa³ niyyådetvå, punåparaµ
   (1) A. °jåno; (2) L. so (m.c.), M. ratanamayaµ; (3) L. °sañghassa, B.
    °pamukha°
73. mahā-dānaṁ daditvāṇa1 kapanʿ-iddhika-vaṇibbake,2 taramāṇa-rūpo3 sambuddhaṁ4 deviyā saha-m-ekato5
(1) B. datvāṇa; (2) L. so, M. ṅvanibbake, B kapaṇa ṇvanibbake; (3) B. omits; (4) B. adds samānarūpaṁ; (5) B. āgato

74. mahā-rajānubhāvena ananta-bala-vāhano
navuti-koṭi-sahassemi saddhiṁ jinam upehiti.

75. tadā hanissati sambuddho dhamma-bheriṇ varʿ-uttamaṁ
amata-dudrabhi-nigghosanī1 catu-sacca-pakāsanaṁ.
(1) L. so, M. amataṁ

76. raṇño anucarā janatā navuti-sahassa-koṭīyo,1 sabbe va te niravasesā bhavissantʿ ehi-bhikkhuṅkā.2
(1) L. so, M. navati°; (2) M.°ante hi bhikkhuṅkā

77. tato devā1 manussā ca upetvā loka-nāyakaṁ
arahatta-varam ārabbhā pañham pucchissare jinam.
(1) C. devatā

78. tesaṁ jino byākareyya, arahatta-vara-pattiyā
asīti-koṭi-sahassemi tatiyābhissamayo bhave.

79. khīṇʿ-āsavāṇaṁ vimalānāṁ santa-cittāna1 tādīnaṁ2
koṭi-sata-sahassānam paṭhamo hessati samāgamo.
(1) L. so (m.c.), M. -cittānaṁ; (2) L. so (m.c.), M. tādīnaṁ

80. vassaṁ vuṭṭhassa bhagavato abhīghuṭṭhe pavāraṇe
navuti-koṭi-sahassemi pavāressati1 so jino.
(1) C. (and L.) so, M. pariv°

81. yadā ca Himavantamhi pabbate Gandhamādane
hema-rajata-pabbhāre paviveka-gato muni

82. asīti-koṭi-sahassemi santa-cittehi tādihi1 khīṇʿ-āsavehi vimalehi kilissati jhāna-kiḷītam.
(1) L. so (m.c.), M. tādihi
83. koṭi-sata-sahassāni chaḷ-abhiṇṇā mah’-iddhiṅkā
Metteyyaṃ loka-nāthaṃ taṃ parivāressantī sabbadā,

84. paṭisambhidāsu kusalā niruttī-pada-kovidā
bahu-ssutā dhamma-dharā viyattā saṃgha-sobhanā

85. sudantā soratā dhīrā1 parivāressantī2 taṃ jinaṃ.
pure-kkhato3 tehi bhikkhūhi nāgo nāgehi tādihi4
tīṇṇo tīṇṇehi santehi5 saddhiṅ6 santi-samāgato
1 (1) C. virā; (2) C. pavārā; (3) C. pāra; (4) L. so (m.c.), M. tādihi;
(5) C. dantēhi; (6) C. santo

86. saddhiṅ sāvaka-saṃghehi pavāretvā1 mahā-muni2
anukampako kāruṇiko Metteyyo dvipad’-uttamo
(1) A.C. RESSATI; (2) A.C. ṇīṃ

87. uddharanto bahu-satte nibbāpento sa-devake
gāma-nigama-rāja-dhāniṃ carissati cārikaṃ jino.

88. āhanitvā1 dhamma-bheriṅ dhamma-sankha-palāpanaṃ2
dhamma-yāgaṃ pakittento dhamma-dhajaṃ samussayaṃ
(1) C. āharītvā; (2) C. ḷāsanaṃ

89. nadanto siha-nādaṃ va vattento cakkam uttamaṃ
ras’-uttamaṃ sacca-pānaṃ pāyanto nara-nārīnaṃ1
(1) L. so (m.c.), M. nārīnaṃ

90. hitāya saba-sattānaṃ nāthānāthaṃ1 mahā-janaṃ
bodhento bodhaneyyānaṃ carissati cārikaṃ jino.
(1) C. thanāṅ

91. kassa-ci saraṇ’-āgamane nivesessati cakkhumā
kassa-ci pañca-sīlesu kassa-ci kusale dasa,

92. kassa-ci dassati sāmaṇḍaṃ cattro phala-m-uttame,
kassa-ci asame dhamme dassati paṭisambhīda,
93. kassa-ci vara-sampatti aṭṭha dassati cakkhumā,
kassa-ci tisso vijjāyo chaḷ-abhiññā pavacchati.

94. tena yogena jana-kāyaṃ ovadissati so jino,
tadā viṭhārikam hessaṃ⁴ Metteyya-jina-sāsanaṃ.

(1) A.C. (and L.) so, M. hessa

95. bodhaneyya-janaṃ disvā sata-sahasse pi yojane
khaṇena upagantvāna bodhayissati so muni.

96. mātā Brahmacariṇī nāma Subrahmā nāma so pitā
purohitā Saṅkha-rañño Metteyyassa tadā bhave.

97. Asoko Brahmadevo ca aggā hessanti sāvakā,
Śīho nāma upaṭṭhāko upaṭṭhissati taṃ jinaṃ.

98. Padumā c’ eva¹ Sumanā ca aggā² hessanti sāvikā,
Sumano c’ eva Saṅkho³ ca bhavissant’ agg’-upaṭṭhakā,

(1) B. omits; (2) B. c’ eva; (3) B. (and L.) so, M. saṅgho

99. Yasavatī ca Saṅkhā⁴ ca bhavissant’ agg’-upaṭṭhikā.
²bodhi tassa² bhagavato Nāgarukkho bhavissati

(1) B. (and L.) so, M. Saṅghā; (2) M. one word

100. visa-hattha-sata-kkhandho,ⁱ sākha vis-a-satāni ca
saṃvellit’-aggā² lūlitā,³ mora-haththo⁴ va sobhati.

(1) C. visa hassassa⁰; (2) B.C. pave⁰; (3) B. (and L.) so, M. lalitā;
(4) B.C. °piñcho

101. supupphit’-aggā satataṃ surabhi-deva-gandhikā
nāḷi-pūrā¹ bhave reṇu suphullā cakka-mattakā

(1) B. °ra

102. anuvāta-paṭīvātamhi¹ vāyati dasa yojane²
ājjhokirissati³ pupphāni bodhi-manḍe⁴ samantato.

(1) B. °taṃ; (2) B.C. °janaṃ; (3) L. so, M. °issanti, B. °kiranti;
(4) B. °maṇḍa
103. samāgantvāḥ jānapadā ghāyitvā gandham uttamaṃ vākyam nicchārayissantiḥ tena gandhena moditāḥ:

   (1) B.C. °tāḥ; (2) B.C. (and L.) so, M. °ressanti

104. sukho vipāko puññānaṃ Buddha-seṭṭhassa tādino yassaḥ tejena pupphānaṃ acinteyyō Immediate, pavāyat.

   (1) C. (and L.) so, M. tassa; (2) L. (and Coll.) understands <gandho>

105. atīhāsītiḥ bhave hattho āyāmen’ eva so jino,

   uraṃ bhave pañña-vīśaṃ vikkhambhe tassa satthuno.

   (1) L. so, M. atīha°

106. visāla-netto ajār’-akkhiḥ visuddha-nayano isi,

   animisaṃ divā-rattiṃ anuḥ thūlaṃ maṃsa-cakkhunā

   (1) L. so, M. āḷār°; (2) L. so, M. animm°; (3) L. so (m.c.), M. anuṃ

107. anāvaraṇaṃ passeyya samantā dvādasa-yojanaṃ;

   pabhā niddhāvati tassa yāvatā pañña-vīśati.

108. sobhāti viṣṇu-latīthi va dipa-rukkho vaḥ so jino,

   ratan’-agghika-samkāso bhānumaṃ viya bhāhiti.

   (1) C. ve; (2) C. ēggī°; (3) C. bhāsūma

109. lakkhaṇāno bhījanāṃ raṃṣi diṣṭanti sabba-kālikā,

   patantiḥ vividhā raṃṣi aneka-sata-sahassiyo.

   (1) C. bhavanti

110. paḍ’-uddhāre paḍ’-uddhāre suphulliḥ paḍumā-ruhāḥ, 1

   tiṃsa-hatthāḥ samā pattāḥ, anupattā pañña-vīsati,

   (1–1) M. so, L. two words, but suggests padumā ruhe; (2–2) L. so, M. one word

111. kesarā viṣati-hatthā, kaṇṇikā solasaṃ bhave,

   suratta-reṇu-bharitā padumā kokāsa-m-antare. 1

   (1) L. so, M. kokasa°
112. Kāmāvacarikā devā nimminissanti agghike,\(^1\)
    Nāga-rājā ca Supaṅṇā ca tadā te ’laṃkarissare;
    (1) C. aggike

113. aṭṭha sovaṅṇayā agghi aṭṭha rūpi-mayāni\(^1\) ca
    aṭṭha maṇi-mayā agghi aṭṭha pavāla-mayāni ca.
    (1) C. piyamahāni

114. aneka-ratana-saṃcitā\(^1\) dhaja-mālā-vibhūsitā
    lambamānā kīlissanti dhajā neka-satā bahū.
    (1) C. (and L.) so, M. °cittā

115. maṇi-mutta-dāma-bhūsitā vitānā soma-sannibhā\(^1\)
    parikkhittā kiṅkaṇika-jālā vataṃsaka-ratanā\(^2\) bahū.
    (1) C. momasaṃṭhitā; (2) L. so, M. vataṃsaka°

116. nānā-pupphā vikirissanti surabhi-gandha-sugandhikā
    vividhā nānā-cuṇṇāni dibba-mānussakāni ca.

117. vicittā nānā-dussāni paṅca-vaṇṇika-sobhanā
    abhipasannā\(^1\) Buddhasmim kīlissanti samantato.
    (1) L. suggests abhippo\(^°\) m.c.

118. tattha sahassa-m-ubbedhā dassaneyyyā manoramā
    ratan’-agghika-toraṇā asambādhā susaṃṭhitā

119. sobhamānā padissanti visālā sabbato-pabhā.
    tesaṃ majjha-gato Buddho bhikkhu-samgha-purekkhato\(^1\)
    (1) C. purakkhitto

120. Brahmā va pārisaṅgaṇaṃ Indo va vimān’-antare.
    gacchanti Buddhe gacchante, tiṭṭhamānamhi thassare,

121. nisinne sayite cāpi\(^1\) satthhari saha-pārise\(^2\)
    catu-iriyāpathe nīcaṃ dhārayissanti sabbadā.
    (1) C. vāpi; (2) C. saha pāramise, A. saṭa°
etā c’ aṇṇā ca pūjāyo dibba-mañussakā pi ca vividhāni pāṭihirāni¹ hessanti sabba-kālikā
(1) C. pāṭihāriyāni

ananta-puṇṇa-tejena Metteyyam abhipūjitum. disvāna taṃ pāṭihīraṃ¹ nānā-jaccā mahā- janā
(1) C. pāṭihāriyaṃ

¹sa-putta-dārā pāṇehi¹ saraṇaṃ hessanti satthuno. ye brahma-cariyaṃ carissanti sutvāna munino vacaṃ te tarissanti saṃsāraṃ maccu-dheyyaṃ su-duttaraṃ.
(1–1) L. so, M. one word, C. °pi kehi

¹bahu gighi¹ dhamma-cakkhuṃ visodhessanti te tadā dasahi puṇṇa-kiriyāhi tihi su-caritehi ca
(1–1) L. so, M. one word

āgamādhigamen’ eva sodhayitvāna s’-ādaraṃ anudhamma-cārino hutvā bahū saggūpagā bhave.

na sakkā sabbaso vattum ettakaṃ iti vā yasaṃ.¹ accanta-sukhitā niccaṃ tasmiṃ gate kāla-sampade
(1) C. sāsahāṃ

mahā-yasaṃ sukhenāpi āyu-vaṇṇa-balena ca dibba-sampatti vā tesāṃ mānussānaṃ bhavissati.

anubhutvā kāma-sukhaṃ addhānaṃ yāvat’-icchakaṃ te pacchā sukhitā yeva nibbissant’ āyu-saṃkhhayā;

asīti-vassa-sahassāni tadā āyu bhavissare, tāvatā titthamāno so tāressati jane bahū.

paripakka-mañase satte bodhayitvāna sabbaso avasesādīṭṭha-saccānaṃ¹ maggamaggam anusāsiyā
(1) C. °diṭṭhi°

dhammokkaṃ dhamma-nāvaṃ ca dhamm’-ādāsaṃ ca osadhaṃ¹ sakkaccena hi sattānaṃ² ṭhapetvā āyatim-jane³
(1) C. osaṭṭhaṃ; (2) L. so, M. sattā, C. so satthā; (3) L. so, M. āyatīṃ jino

133. saddhiṃ sāvaka-samghena kata-kiccena tādīna jalitvā aggi-kkhandho va nibbāyissati so jino.

134. parinibbutamhi sambuddhe sāsanaṃ tassa ṭhāhiti vassa-sata-sahassāni asīti c’ eva sahassato; tato paraṃ antara-dhānaṃ loke hessati dāruṇaṃ.

(1) L. so, M. sahassako

135. evaṃ aniccā samkhārā addhuvā1 tāva-kālikā, ittarā2 bhedanā c’ eva jajjarā rittakā bhavā,

(1) L. so, M. adhuvā; (2) C. itarā

136. 1tuccha-muṭṭhi-samā1 suññā samkhārā bāla-lāpanā,2 na kassa-ci vaso tattha vattati3 iddhimassa pi;

(1-1) M. two words; (2) C. bala°; (3) C. pava°

137. evaṃ ūnātva1 yathā-bhūtam1 nibbinde sabba-samkhate. dullabho puris’-ājañño, na so sabbattha jāyati; yattha so jāyati dhīro taṃ kulaṃ sukham edhati.

(1-1) L. so, M. two words

138. tasmā1 Metteyya-buddhassa2 dاسم’-athāya vo idha ubbigga-mānasā suṭṭhum3 karotha viriyaṃ dalham!

(1) B. tassa; (2) B. °ddham; (3) B. °ṭṭhum

139. ye keci1 kata-kalyāṇā appamāda-vihārino bhikkhū bhikkhuniyo c’ eva upāsakā upāsikā

(1) B. (and L.) so, M. kecīda
140. mahantaṃ Buddha-sakkāraṃ¹ uḷāraṃ abhipūjayuṃ² dakkhinti³ bhadra-samiti⁴ tasmiṃ kāle sa-devakā.

(1) B. ṭhāraṃ; (2) L. so, M. -ayaṃ; (3) B. dakkhanti; (4) B. ṭpamitiṃ

141. caratha brahma-cariyaṃ! detha dānaṃ yathārahāṃ¹! uposathaṃ upavasatha²! mettaṃ bhāvetha sādhukaṃ!

(1) B. mahā⁵; (2) B. ṭvāsa

142. appamāda-ratā hotha puṇṇa-kiriyāsu¹ sabbadā!

idh’ eva katvā kusalaṃ dukkhass’ antaṃ karissathā ti.

(1) B.C. (and L.) so, M. -kriyāsu

Anāgatavamso niṭṭhito
TRANSLATION

The Chronicle of the Future [Buddha]

Praise to That One, the Blessed One, the Noble One,
the Fully Self-Awakened One

1. Sāriputta of great wisdom, the leader Upatissa, the firm general of the Doctrine, approached the leader of the world

2. and asked about his own doubts with reference to the future Conqueror: “What will the wise Buddha immediately after you be like?

3. I wish to hear this in detail. Please tell me, O Seeing One.”

Hearing the Thera’s words, the Blessed One said this:

4. “It is not possible for anyone to describe completely at length Ajita’s great accumulation of merit which is not small, which is of great fame. I will tell [you about] it in part. Listen to me, O Sāriputta.

5. In this auspicious world cycle, in the future, in a crore of years, there will be an Awakened One named Metteyya, the best of two-footed beings,

6. of great merit, great wisdom, great knowledge, great fame, great power, great steadfastness; he will be born, one who sees.

7. That Conqueror will be born, having a great [state of] rebirth, [great] mindfulness, full of wisdom, of great learning, he will be a preacher, a knower of all things, one who sees well, who touches, plunges into, and grasps.

8. At that time, there will be a royal city named Ketumāti, twelve leagues long and seven leagues wide,

9. full of men and women, adorned with palaces, frequented by pure beings, unconquerable, protected by dhamma.
10. There will be a king named Saṅkha, of limitless army and vehicles, possessing the seven jewels, a Wheel-Turning Monarch of great power,

11. having psychic powers, fame, enjoying all sensual pleasures; and he will preach the doctrine of quiescence that destroys all its opponents.

12. [There will be] a well-made palace there, like a divine palace, produced by the action of his merit, resplendent with many jewels,

13. surrounded by balustrades, well designed, delightful, resplendent, very tall, the best, hard to look at, captivating the eye,

14. the jewelled palace that came into existence for King Mahā-Panāda. Having raised up that palace King Saṅkha will live in it.

15. And then, in that city, there will be various streets here and there, delightful lotus ponds, well built, with beautiful banks,

16. with clear water, settled, sweet and cool, fragrant, full to the brim, drinkable by crows, [with banks] strewn with sand,

17. covered with red and blue lotuses, accessible to all people at all seasons. There will be seven rows of palm trees and walls of seven colours

18. made of jewels, encircling the city all around. The royal city of Kusāvatī at that time will be Ketumatī.

19. At the four gates of the city there will be shining wishing trees, [one] blue, [one] yellow, [one] red, and [one] white.

20. Divine clothes and divine ornaments will come into existence and all sorts of wealth and possessions will hang there.

21. Then, in the middle of the city, there will be four halls, facing the four directions, and there will be a wishing tree produced by the action of his merit.
22. Cotton cloth and silk and flaxen Kodumbara cloth produced by the action of his merit will hang on those wishing trees.

23. Tambourines, tambours, and small drums produced by the action of his merit will hang on those wishing trees.

24. Encircling bracelets and necklaces made of jewels produced by the action of his merit will hang on those wishing trees.

25. Tiaras, jewels for the brow, bracelets, and jewelled girdles produced by the action of his merit will hang on those wishing trees.

26. And many other ornaments and decorations of different sorts produced by the action of his merit will hang on those wishing trees.

27. Through the action of beings’ merits, men will enjoy self-generated rice that has no “dust”, no chaff, that is pure, sweet-smelling, with grains ready husked, ripened without cultivation.


29. And at that time what is called two tumbas of rice grains will grow from one grain produced by the action of beings’ merits.

30. Then the men who live in Ketumatī in the kingdom of Saṅkha will wear armour and bracelets.

31. Whatever they want will be fulfilled. They will have happy faces. They will wear large earrings. Their bodies will be covered with yellow sandalwood paste. They will wear the best Kāsi cloth.

32. They will be of great wealth, rich; they will be awakened by drums and lutes. They will constantly be exceedingly happy in body and mind.

33. Jambūdīpa will be ten thousand leagues [long], without thorns and thickets, level, with green grass.
There will be [only] three diseases: desire, hunger, and old age. And the women will marry at the age of five hundred.

They will always be in unity, congenial, without disputes. The vines, trees, woods, and bushes will be covered with fruit and flowers.

There will be a kind of grass four-inches high that will be soft, like cotton. There will be even rains and gentle winds, neither too hot nor too cold.

There will always be good weather. The rivers and ponds will not lack [in water]. Here and there in various parts of the earth, the pure sand will not be rough. It will be scattered around like pearls the size of peas and beans.

It will be delightful like an adorned garden. Here and there, there will be villages and towns very close together and crowded,

like a great forest of reeds and bamboo, at a cockflight’s [distance apart], they will be full of people, I think, like the Avici hell.

Trading cities will be densely filled with men and women, prosperous, rich and tranquil, free from danger, and without trouble.

[People] will wander about at festival-time, always joyful, always playing, extremely happy, delighted and pleased, rejoicing.

There will be much food and drink, much to eat, much meat, drink, and water. Jambudipa will be delightful, like Alakamandā [the city] of the Devas or the broad capital of the Kurus.

The one named Ajita [will be born] as Metteyya, the best of two-footed beings, with the thirty-two excellent marks and the minor characteristics,
44. of golden complexion, without stain, very splendid, resplendent, of the highest fame, glorious, of perfect form, of good appearance,

45. of great power, incomparable. He will be born in a Brahman family, with great wealth, with great possessions, and of the best of great families. He will be born in a Brahman family, not criticized with talk concerning his birth.

46. [Four] palaces made of jewels will have come into being for Ajita: Sīrīvāḍha, Vāḍhamāna, Siddhattha, and Candaka.

47. Ajita’s female attendants will be women perfect in all their limbs, adorned with [all kinds of] ornaments, small, medium, and large.

48. There will be not less than one hundred thousand women fully adorned. Candamukhi will be his wife. Brahmavaddhana will be his son.

49. He will delights in great happiness, endowed with pleasure, joyful. Having enjoyed all fame like Vāsava [= Sakka] in the Nandana grove,

50. he will live in a house for eight thousand years. At some time, going for pleasure to a park to amuse himself,

51. seeing the danger in sensual pleasures and being wise in accordance with the nature of Bodhisattas, having seen the four signs which destroy sensual pleasures and joy:

52. having seen an old man and a sick man and a dead man with life departed and a happy wanderer; [and] having sympathy for all beings,

53. becoming averse to sensual pleasures, not looking for great happiness, seeking the unsurpassed state of peace, he will go forth.
54. Having undertaken the practice of exertion for seven days, the best of men, that Conqueror will go forth, leaping up [into the air] from his palace.

55–56. Ajita will become a wanderer, honoured by a great group of people, friends, ministers and companions, blood relatives, the fourfold army, assemblies of the four castes, and 84,000 princesses.

57. When Metteyya has gone forth, at that time, 84,000 Brahmans who are skilled in the Vedas will go forth.

58. At that time, both of the brothers Isidatta and Purāṇa [and] 84,000 [other people] will go forth.

59. The twins, Jātimitta and Vijaya, of infinite wisdom, will approach that Perfect Buddha from the 84,000.

60. The householder named Sudhika and the lay woman Sudhanā will approach the Perfect Buddha from that 84,000.

61. The lay disciple named Saṅkha and the lay woman named Saṅkhā will approach that Perfect Buddha from the 84,000.

62. The householder named Sudhana and the renowned Sudatta will approach that Perfect Buddha from the 84,000.

63. The woman named Yasavatī and the renowned Visākhā will be honoured by 84,000 men and women.

64. They will go forth in renunciation in Metteyya’s dispensation. Other citizens and many people from the country, and no few nobles, Brahmans, merchants, and workers, being inclined to renunciation, a great crowd of all sorts of birth, will then go forth, following the going forth of Metteyya.

65. On the day that Wise One goes forth in renunciation, on that very day of going forth, he will approach the dais of the tree of awakening.
67. In the place of the unconquered bull [among men], on that supreme seat of awakening, seated in a cross-legged position, the one of great fame will be awakened.

68. Going to the excellent garden Nāgavana in full flower, thus the Conqueror will set in motion the incomparable Wheel of the Doctrine:

69. misery, the arising of misery, the overcoming of misery, and the noble eightfold path leading to the cessation of misery.

70. Then, there will be a gathering of men for one hundred leagues all around at the setting in motion of the Wheel of the Doctrine by the protector of the world.

71. Then, many more Devas will approach the Conqueror there. At that time he will loose the bonds of 1,000 crores of them.

72–73. Then, that king Saṅkha, having given his jewel palace to the Saṅgha with the Conqueror at its head, having given another great gift to the poor, to the needy, and to beggars, hurrying along together with his queen, will approach the Perfect Buddha.

74. Through the power of the great king, of limitless army and vehicles, he will approach the Conqueror with 90,000 crores [of people].

75. Then the Perfect Buddha will beat the excellent and best drum of the Doctrine, the sound of the kettle drum of the death-free, making known the Four Truths.

76. The company of people accompanying the king, all 90,000 crores without exception, will become “Come, Bhikkhu” monks.

77. Then Devas and men approaching the Leader of the World will ask the Conqueror a question concerning the excellent [state of] Arahatship.
78. That Conqueror will answer them. By the attainment of the excellent [state of] Arahatship by 80,000 crores there will be the third penetration.

79. The first assembly will be of 100,000 crores of those whose āsavas are destroyed, who are spotless, with peaceful minds, venerable ones.

80. At the Invitation [to declare purity] proclaimed by the Blessed One when he had spent the rainy season, that Conqueror will utter the Invitation with 90,000 crores.

81. And when the Sage has gone in seclusion to the golden and silver Gandhamādana slope in the Himavanta mountain range,

82. he will enjoy the sport of meditation with 80,000 crores, with peaceful minds, venerable ones, whose āsavas are destroyed, spotless,

83. 100,000 crores, possessing the six higher knowledges, having great psychic power, will constantly surround that lord of the World, Metteyya.

84. Skilled in discriminating knowledges, knowing the words and the explanation [of the Doctrine], very learned, expert in the Doctrine, knowledgeable, adorning the Saṅgha,

85. well tamed, gentle, firm, they will surround that Conqueror. That Nāga [the Buddha] will be honoured by those monks, Nāgas, venerable ones. He who will have crossed over, together with those who have crossed over, arrived at peace with those who are at peace.

86. Together with the orders of disciples, that Great Sage, the Compassionate One, the Sympathetic One, Metteyya, the best of two-footed beings, having uttered the Invitation,
87. raising up many individuals and Devas, bringing them to Nibbāna, the Conqueror will wander around the towns and villages and royal capitals.

88. Having beaten the drum of the Doctrine, sounding the conch shell of the Doctrine, proclaiming the spiritual sacrifice, raising up the banner of the Doctrine,

89. roaring the lion’s roar, setting in motion the excellent wheel [of the Doctrine], causing men and women to drink the drink of truth with its excellent taste,

90. for the sake of all beings, causing a great crowd, both rich and poor, of those who are capable of being awakened to be awakened, the Conqueror will wander.

91. One the Seeing One will cause to take refuge [in the Triple Gem], one to take the five moral precepts, and one to undertake the ten skilful [actions].

92. To one he will give the state of being a recluse and the four excellent Fruition States. To one he will give discriminating knowledges into the incomparable Doctrine.

93. To one the Seeing One will give the eight excellent attainments. To one he will give the three knowledges and the six higher knowledges.

94. By this means that Conqueror will admonish [a large] group of people. Then the Teaching of the Conqueror Metteyya will be widespread

95. Seeing people capable of being awakened, that Sage having gone 100,000 leagues in a moment will cause them to be awakened.

96. At that time, Metteyya’s mother will be named Brahmavatī, his father will be named Subrahmā and will be the priest of King Saṅkha.
His foremost lay followers will be Asoka and Brahmadeva. The [lay] attendant Sīha will attend on that Conqueror.

Padumā and Sumanā will be his foremost female lay followers. Sumana and Saṅkha will be his foremost [lay] attendants.

Yasavatī and Saṅkhā will be his foremost female [lay] attendants. The Nāga tree will be the awakening [place] for that Blessed One.

Its trunk will be two thousand cubits. It will have two thousand branches with curved tips [always] moving. It will shine like the outspread tail of a peacock.

The tips [of the branches] will be continually in flower and fragrant with a heavenly smell. The pollen will fill a nāḷī measure; the blossoms will be the size of wheels.

[The tree] will send its perfume for ten leagues [in all directions], both with and against the wind. It will scatter its flowers all around the throne of awakening.

People from the country, coming together there, smelling the excellent perfume, will pour forth words [of admiration], delighted by that perfume.

There will be a happy fruition of meritorious deeds for that venerable one, the Best of Buddhas, by whose radiance an unimaginable [perfume of] flowers will spread out.

That Conqueror will be eighty-eight cubits in height. That Teacher’s chest will be twenty-five cubits in diameter.

The Seer will have wide eyes, thick eyelashes, clear eyes. Not blinking day or night, with his physical eye he will see things, small or large, in all directions for twelve leagues without obstruction. His radiance will stream forth as far as twenty-five [leagues].
108. That Conqueror will shine like a streak of lightning or a candle-stick. He will shine like the sun, resembling jewelled columns of honour.

109. His [thirty-two major] marks and [eighty] secondary marks will be seen as rays all the time. Many hundreds of thousands of different sorts of rays will fall [from him].

110. At every footstep [he takes] a flowering lotus will grow up. The petals will be thirty cubits [across], even; the minor petals will be twenty-five [cubits].

111. The stamens will be twenty cubits long and the pericaps will be sixteen cubits long. Inside the red lotuses [the flowers] will be filled with very red pollen.

112. The Kāmāvacarika Devas will make columns of honour, and Nāga kings and Supaṇṭa [Devas] will decorate them.

113. There will be eight columns of honour made of gold, eight made of silver, eight columns of honour made of jewels, and eight made of coral.

114. There will be many flags, many hundreds of them, hanging there disporting themselves, ornamented with many jewels, adorned with garlands and flags.

115. There will be awnings adorned with strings of jewels and pearls, resembling the moon. There will be many jewelled head ornaments with nets of small bells surrounding them.

116. Various flowers will be scattered, fragrant, sweet-smelling, perfumed, and different sorts of powder, both human and divine,

117. and a variety of cloths of diverse colours, beautiful, of the five colours. They will sport all around, having faith in the Buddha.

118. There will be gateways there with jewelled columns of honour, a thousand [cubits] high, delightful, beautiful, unobstructed, and well-formed.
They will be seen to be shining, wide, with their radiance all around. The Buddha, at the head of the Order of Monks, in their midst,

[will shine] like Brahmā among the members of his assembly or Inda in his palace. When the Buddha walks, they will walk; when he stands, they will stand;

when the Teacher sits or lies down together with his assembly, they will always practise the [same] four postures.

There will be these honours and others, both human and divine. There will be many sorts of marvels all the time,

to honour Metteyya by the power of his endless merit. Having seen that marvel, many people of various births,

with their wives and children, will go to the Teacher as a refuge because of their lives. Those who practice the holy life having heard the word of the Sage, will go beyond journeying-on, which is subject to death and difficult to cross.

At that time many householders will purify the eye of the Doctrine by means of the ten meritorious acts and the three types of right action.

Many having purified [themselves] respectfully by the attainment of traditional learning, becoming followers of the Doctrine, will be destined for heaven.

It would not be possible to describe in every detail their fame, [saying] “It is so much.” They will be continually extremely happy. When that span of time has passed away,

there will be heavenly bliss indeed for those men, with great fame, with happiness, and with life, beauty, and strength.

Having experienced the happiness of sensual pleasures for as long as they wish, afterwards, at the end of their lives, truly happy they will gain Nibbāna.
At that time a lifetime there will be 80,000 years. Remaining so long, [the Buddha] will bring many people to the other shore.

Having caused beings whose minds are ripe to be completely awakened, having instructed the rest, who have not perceived the [four] truths, about the right path and the wrong path,

having carefully established the torch of the Doctrine, the boat of the Doctrine, the mirror of the Doctrine, the medicine [of the Doctrine] for beings in the future, among the people,

together with the venerable order of lay followers who will have done what should be done, having blazed out like a mass of fire, that Conqueror will attain Nibbāna.

When the Perfect Buddha has attained Nibbāna, his Teaching will remain for 180,000 years. After that, there will be a terrible disappearance in the world.

Thus, the constituent elements are impermanent, not firm, temporary; existences are transitory, liable to destruction and old age, and empty.

The constituent elements are like an empty fist, they are empty, they are the talk of fools. There is no power for anyone there, not even for one with psychic powers.

Thus, knowing this as it really is, one should be disillusioned with all compounded things. A Thoroughbred Among Men is hard to find. He is not born everywhere. Wherever that Hero is born, that family prospers in happiness.

Therefore, in order to see the Buddha Metteyya here, act rightly, energetically, firmly, with agitated mind.

Those who do good things here and dwell vigilant, monks and nuns, male and female lay followers,
who have performed great auspicious honour to the Buddha[s], they together with the Devas will see the auspicious assembly at that time.

Practise the holy life. Give suitable gifts. Keep the observance day. Practise loving kindness carefully.

Be those who delight always in being vigilant in meritorious actions. Having done good here, you will make an end of misery.”
NOTES

Some of these notes are taken over from Leumann. The comments about the number of syllables in pādas and the suggestions about resolution which follow the notes are intended to help with the scansion and sometimes, therefore, the choice of reading.

7a. Presumably mahā- should be understood with sati.

7cde. I take the past participles as active, because they do not make sense as passives.

13d. Pruitt has “harming” for cakkhu-musano; Collins has “dazzling”. It is = Skt netra-muṣ “stealing, captivating the eye”. A.’s reading ॐ ss ॐ could be accepted m.c.

14b. The word ratanā-mayo shows rhythmic lengthening to avoid the succession of short syllables. Cf. 24b, 46d.

18a. The second and third syllables are short. This can be avoided by reading ratanā- (cf. 14b).

19a. catukke nagara-dvāre is a split compound for nagara-dvāra-catukke “at the quartet of city gates”.

24b. For ratanā-mayaṃ see the note on 14b.

25a. Like Collins, I follow Cone & Gombrich (1977, p. 93) for the translations of uṇḍata and mukhaphulla.

33d. Collins takes samoharita- as one word “in abundance”. I take samo as a separate word “level”.

44a. There are ten syllables, which probably accounts for the v.l. suvaṇṇo.

45bf. There are nine syllables, but we could assume resolution of the third syllable. The cadence ~ ~ ~ is, however, unusual and v.l. brahmane is presumably intended to rectify this. The spelling brahmaṇa- instead of the usual brāhmaṇa- may be intended to show
that the word is to be scanned as ə- , with resolution of the sixth syllable.

45d. mahā ca kula-m-uttamo is probably a split compound for mahā-kula-m-uttamo “possessing, i.e. belonging to, the best of great families”.

46d. For ratanā-mayā see the note on 14b.

47a. There are nine syllables, which probably explains the existence of the v.l. nārī. It would be possible to scan nāriyo as nārīyo.

54c. Although pāsāden(a) is an instrumental, it must be translated as an ablative.

62a. Collins’ “Suddhika” is presumably a mistake, carried on from 60 by error.

67a. Collins reads aparājita-ṭṭhānamhi, following Bv XXV.20, perhaps to avoid a ten-syllable pāda. Such pādas, however, are not uncommon, and in this case can be regarded as showing resolution of the first and fourth syllables.

71. Collins translates bhiyyo bahū as “in even greater numbers”.

73ab. This seems to be the root dā with an accusative of the thing “the gift” and a locative of the persons to whom it is given. kapaṇ’-iddhika-vaṇibbake is therefore the locative of a singular dvandva compound.

75c. I translate amata as “death-free”, i.e. the place where there is no death, i.e. nibbāna. “The drum of the death-free” is the town-crier’s drum which he beats to attract an audience to whom he tells the news about nibbāna.

79 & 82. I leave āsava untranslated. For a discussion of possible translations of this word, see Norman 1969 (pp. 133–34 ad Th 47).

94c. hessaµ is a future participle, which is yet another way of signifying the future in this text, beside aorist, optative, present and future indicative.
105a. *āṭṭhāsīti bhave hattho* is a split compound for *āṭṭhāsīti-hattho bhave*.

110b. In the translation I follow L.’s suggestion of *padumā ruhe* for *paduma-ruhā* “a lotus will grow up”.

110c. *patta* is usually translated “leaf”, but it can also be “petal”. Either might be thought to be appropriate here.

112c. There are nine syllables. We could dispense with the first *ca*, which seems redundant.

115c. There are ten syllables. It would be possible to read *parikhittā* and assume resolution of the first and sixth syllables.

116a. There seems to be no subject for *vikirissanti* as an active verb, so it is probably to be taken as a passive.

117c. The short second and third syllables are unusual, which is why L. suggests reading *abhīpp°*.

120ab. There is no verb. L. suggests reading *sobhati* or *virocati*.

124a. Collins (p. 371 note) points out that we should not expect *pāṇehi hessanti* to mean “abandon at the cost of their lives”. I suggest dividing *hessanti* as *ḥ’ essanti*, where *hi* is an emphatic particle, and *essanti* means “they will go”. We could then translate *pāṇehi* “because of their lives”.

124c. There are ten syllables. Although we might assume resolution of the third or fourth syllable, or scan *-cariyāṃ* as *-carīyāṃ*, the *pāda* would still be hypermetric.

125c. There are nine syllables. We could assume resolution of the sixth syllable or scan °*kiriyaḥi* as °*kriyaḥi*.

128a. °*yasā* must be an instrumental, parallel to *sukhena*, etc.

130a. There are nine syllables. If we assume resolution of the fifth syllable we have the cadence °°°°°°, which is unusual.
(1) Pādas where the syllable count can be corrected by assuming resolution:

(a) of the first syllable:
7e, 16c, 18a, 36a, 46a, 56a, 57a, 58c, 59d, 60d, 61d, 62d, 63c, 67a, 73c, 74c, 75c, 76b, 77c, 80c, 83d, 84a, 85b, 86c, 98a, 102a, 106d, 111d, 115ac(?), 116b, 121c, 122c, 126c, 131ac, 134a

(b) of the second syllable:
42c, 91a, 92a

(c) of the third syllable:
45bf

(d) of the fourth syllable:
30a, 67a, 87c, 109d, 114a, 115d, 131d

(e) of the fifth syllable:
102c, 130a (?), 141c

(f) of the sixth syllable:
30a, 42a, 44a, 45bf, 76c, 79a, 80a, 82c, 94a, 115c, 125c (?)

(g) of the seventh syllable:
44a, 76a

(2) Pādas where there seems to be no obvious way of correcting the syllable count:

(a) with nine syllables:
13c, 49a, 56b, 60a, 62a, 75a, 78c, 82a, 85a, 106a, 109a, 113d, 116a, 124c, 130a, 134de
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Sri Lankan Manuscriptology


Blackburn’s paper is interesting for two reasons: (1) It is salutary that more and more Western scholars are showing interest in Sri Lankan palm-leaf manuscripts, (2) It is a contribution to the effort of bringing these manuscripts into the limelight, especially in the context of the importance paid to traditional knowledge in recent times.

THE VALUE OF SRI LANKAN MANUSCRIPTS

Sri Lankan palm-leaf manuscripts are the repository of the intellectual property of that nation up to the twentieth century. After the introduction of printing to the island in the eighteenth century, palm-leaf manuscripts continued to be written even at the beginning of the twentieth century. Although the bulk of the manuscripts were on Buddhism, other subjects of interest (grammar, lexicography, literature, history, astrology, medicine, arts and crafts, yantras and mantras, etc.) were not neglected. All this mass of literature was written in Sinhala, Pāli, Sanskrit, and some in Tamil. The number of manuscripts that have survived destruction (by rival religious sects, foreign invaders, callous neglect leaving documents in unfavourable climatic conditions and prey to the attack of insects, and, in recent times, wanton sale to tourists) shows the prolific literary activity of the past.

The value of these documents and the urgent need to preserve them have been pointed out by me in the following three papers:


The palm-leaf manuscripts have been the main source material for authors of the history of Sri Lankan literature² and naturally for scholars engaged in textual criticism. The value of these manuscripts for the study of a particular branch of knowledge has been amply illustrated in my studies on the history of medicine and traditional medical literature of Sri Lanka.³

**CATALOGUING OF SRI LANKAN MANUSCRIPTS**

The cataloguing of fractions of this wealth of literature started in the mid nineteenth century. The first such effort seems to be that of Mudaliyar Dionysius Perera, *Catalogue of Pali and Other Manuscripts in Temples in the Tangalle District*, presented at the General Assembly of the Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland on 5 May 1832. This unpublished work is reported to be now lost.⁴ Heinz Bechert considers that the first catalogue was published by Edward Upham in the third volume of his work, *The Mahāvansi, The Rājaratnācari, and the Rājāvalī, Forming the Sacred and Historical Books of Ceylon; also, A Collection of Tracts Illustrative of the Doctrines and Literature of Buddhism*. London, 1833, 169–93.⁵ About twenty catalogues of Sri Lankan manuscripts have appeared since then. Some of them are the following:

¹This booklet was published by the Sri Lankan Embassy in Paris.
²See, for example, Godakumbura 1955 and Sannasgala 1964.
³These studies of over twenty years have been published as a collection in Liyanaratne 1999.
⁴See Goonetileke 1970, p. 23.
⁵Bechert 1980, p. 275.


Items 4 and 6 above, notably the former, are of special importance as they have long introductions with a survey of Sri Lankan literature and valuable information regarding the various aspects of manuscripts (techniques of production, writing, numbering folios, dating, etc.).

**BLACKBURN’S INVENTORY**

*General observation*

Blackburn (B) has been handicapped by not being able to examine many of the manuscripts herself. She is reproducing the already available handlists of five collections. In the case of the sixth and final collection, that of the Haṅguranketa rajamahavihārāya, the result of the research has been limited to a broad general survey of two days. This is unfortunate because the particular temple, known as the Hanguranketa potgul vihārāya (“the monastic library of Hanguranketa”) has one of the richest collections of valuable manuscripts with regard to both contents and ornamentation of book covers.
Jinadasa Liyanaratne

The scrutiny of manuscripts is important to ensure their contents, for there are instances where the body of a manuscript does not correspond to the title indicated in the cover or the opening folio or the colophon.

Problems of classification of texts
The category “Miscellaneous Didactic Texts” in B’s classification needs reconsideration. The use of the term didactic itself is unsatisfactory because, on the one hand, the entire corpus of classical Sinhala literature, which centred round Buddhism and purported to inculcate Buddhist ideals, may be called didactic.6 On the other hand, some of the titles grouped under that heading are not specifically didactic. The following are some examples:

1. Anāgatavāṃsaya (p. 11), story of the future Buddha Metteyya,
2. Kavmutuhara (p. 11), a Sinhala poem based on the Dasaratha Jātaka,
3. Dharmapradīpikāva (p. 12), a Sinhala exposition (parikathā) on the Pāli Mahābodhiyamśa,
4. Pūjāvaliya (p. 20), a Sinhala prose work illustrating the Buddha’s epithet “arahaṃ” with Buddhist tales,
5. Butsaraṇa (p. 12), a Sinhala prose work on the life of the Buddha,
6. Amarasiṃhaya (p. 13), an alternative title of the Sanskrit dictionary Amarakośa, after the author’s name, Amarasiṃha.
7. Rājaratnākaraya and Narendracaritāvaloka[na]-pradīpikāva (p. 17), classified under “Textual Compilations”, are both historical works.
8. Lōvāḍa Saṅgarāva (so read) (p. 14), classified under “Grammars and Lexicons,” is a didactic poem.7

7An excellent English translation of this poem, entitled Towards a Better World (Colombo, 2000), has been made by Bhikkhu K. Ṛṇananda, giving the verses in Sinhala characters followed by the English translation. The book, like all
9. Mādhavanidāna, classified under “Grammars and Lexicons” (p. 14), is the famous medical text with the alternative titles Rugviniścaya and Rogaviniścaya. In fact, this is clear in B’s reference to Bechert’s *Singhalesische Handschriften* (1969).

10. Vessantara Jātakaya is rightly classified under “Jātaka Texts” on p. 11, but under “Textual Compilations” on p. 17.

11. Saṃgharājasādhucariyāva, classified under “Other Texts” (p. 29), is the biography of Vālifta Saranāṃkara Saṅgharāja.

12. The classification of the manuscripts of the Haṅguranketa rajamahavīhārāya according to the bookcases in which they are stored, is, to say the least, hardly a scholarly approach.

**Erroneous transcriptions**

Nava Vāranāgilla (p. 14) is undoubtedly Nāma varanāgilla (“declension”).

The correct reading of Nalpavila (p. 22, n. 100) is Talpāvila (a place name).

The transcription of some titles indicates problems confronted in reading. For example, “Sṛtu [= sṛta?] Sangara-kavaniya” (p. 23) is most probably Kalidasa’s Ṛtusāṃhāra-kāvyā (with the Sinhala suffix –ya).

Several words have been deformed due to the misuse of diacritical marks. Some of the glaring mistakes are cited here with the correct form following each example: Aṭṭhasālinī- (p. 9), Atthasālinī- (correct form is given on p. 36); Umāndāva (p. 10), Umandāva or Umaṃdāva; Padasadhaniya (p. 14), Padasādhanayā, exposition of Moggallāṇa’s Pāli grammar; Sarasvatiya (p. 15), Sārasvatayā, Sanskrit grammar;

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8Cf. औ va and ऐ ma. See Dharmarama 1949.
9Sinhala औ ta and ऐ na also differ only slightly.
10Sinhala ṛ is written with a letter similar to sṛ and the two letters g and h (घ ga, ह ha) can be distinguished only by the small head added to the latter. Kavaniya is an obvious error. The same transcription recurs in Jinavamsadīpa Mahākāvanaya (for Mahākāvyaya) on p. 21.
“Pañcanivāraṇadākvena Sūtrayak” (p. 35) should read Pañcanivaraṇadākvena Sūtrayak, “A discourse (sūtrayak) showing (dākvena) the five (pañca) hindrances (nīvaraṇa)”.

“Saṃkhyanāya (sic)” with a note indicating the uncertainty of its identification (p. 38) may probably be the abbreviated title (Saṃkhyanāya) of the Saṃkhya-dhammapādīpikā.11

The nasal ṅ used in place of the Sinhala half-nasal ŋ (before g, d, d) gives a defective pronunciation: Saṅgiya (p. 30 and passim), saṅgiya; Saṅgasaraṇa (p. 31). Saṅgasaraṇa. This half-nasal has been correctly used, however, in the word Maṅgul (p. 40).

It would have been desirable to make a distinction between Pāli and Sanskrit forms of words: Pātimokṣa (p. 9), Prātimokṣa (Skt) or Pātimokkha (Pāli); Dhammapradāpikā (p. 27, passim), Dharmapradāpikā (Skt) or Dhammappadāpikā (Pāli).

**Linguistic problems**

In “Anāgatavaṃsaye Desanāva” (p. 31), the inflection of Anāgatavaṃsaye (gen./loc. sing.) is superfluous. It should read Anāgatavaṃsa desanāva where the stem form Anāgatavaṃsa is used as an adjective of desanāva (“discourse”). On the other hand, in “Saddharmaratnakārāya Kotasak” (sic, p. 38), Saddharma-ratnakārāya should be in the genitive, Saddharma-ratnakarayē (“part of the Saddharmākārāya”). Hōḍiya Pota (p. 55) should be Hōḍi pota (use of the stem form as adjective).

Although the Sinhala alphabet has no capital letters, it has become the practice, especially in some PTS publications, to use capital letters at the beginning of sentences and in proper nouns. As such, the use of capitals in each separate word should have been avoided in conformity with common practice. Thus, titles such as Viśākhavata (sic) and Vena Kathā (p. 17) should read “Visākāvata saha venat kathā”; Matalē

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11See Sannasgala 1964, p. 627.
Disāvagā Kadaim Pota (p. 17), should read “Mātalē Disāvagā kaḍayim pota”, etc.

Kathāvastu (p. 11, n. 26) simply means “stories” (kathāvastuva, singular).

Baṇa pot or baṇa dahan pot (p. 12, n. 30) means “Buddhist books” (religious texts), lit. “books (pot) on Buddhist discourses (baṇa) or Buddhist doctrine (dahan)”. “Moroduva” (p. 13, n. 33) is probably Morontuḍuvā (a place name).

“Siripaññānanda Abhidhāna Sthavirayan Vahansē visin siṁhala parivartanaya” (p. 19, nn. 60, 67) should read “Siri Paññānandabhidiḥāna Sthavirayan vahansē visin [karana lada] siṁhala parivartanaya”: “The Sinhala translation (siṁhala parivartanaya) by (visin) the Elder (Sthavirayan vahansē) named (abhidiḥāna) Siri Paññānanda”.

“Rerukanē Vanavimala Himi” (p. 18, n. 57, p. 20, n. 74) is most probably Rerukānu Candavimala himi.

“Yakuduv” [illegible] Sthavirayan Vahansē” (p. 21, n. 82) is surely Yakkaḍuvā Prajñārāma Sthavirayan vahansē.

“Kaviśvara Sthavirayan Himi Pano” (p. 21, n. 85) is not the name of a text. It is the name of a monk, Kaviśvara. Sthavira himipāṇō is an epithet meaning “Venerable Elder”. (Sthavira is the title of a monk who has obtained the higher ordination (upasampadā); himipāṇō: Skt svāmipāda > Sinh. Himipā, -āṇa is an honorific suffix, -āṇo is nom. pl. honorific).

Nāva-[illegible]-buduguṭa Sannaya (p. 25, n. 117) should be Nava-arahādī Buduguṭa sannaya, “The exegetical Sinhala version (sannaya) of the nine (nava) qualities of the Buddha (Buduguṭa), starting with araham (“worthy”) (arahādi)”.

The entry “Sela Śūtrayādikoṭa-ātisaṅgraha Baṇa Dahan Pota” (p. 31) means “The compendium of Buddhist texts starting with the Sela sūtra”, Sela sūtraya ādikoṭa āti samgraha baṇa pota.
“Sāravaṇga Veda Potak” (p. 39) should read Sarvāṇga vedapotak, “A medical book (vedapotak) on general diseases (sarvāṇga, lit. ‘the whole body’)”.

“Kalunomadinna” (p. 40, n. 161) is not a name; it is a sentence (kalu no madinna) meaning “Do not apply black”. When manuscripts are inscribed, the palm leaves are smeared with lamp black mixed with resin oil to make the letters clear. This process is called kalu mādima, noun; kalu mādinavā, verb.

Annotations
For annotations, B has referred the reader especially to catalogues of Godakumbura and Somadasa in the case of several texts. Many texts are devoid of annotations, however. In the case of the Bhesajamañjūsā, for example, reference should have been given to the PTS edition of the first eighteen chapters (1996) which, for the first time, makes this unique Pāli medical treatise available to the Western readers.

The title “Pāli Nighañduva” (pp. 32, 39, 46), commonly used to denote the Abhidhānappādipikā, should have been annotated to make that meaning clear.

Talpata (wrongly spelt “Talpota”, p. 40), lit. “palm-leaf”, deserves to be annotated because of the historical value of this genre of documents. The note given to this document is also interesting as it refers to a rare type of document written in Tamil: dāmala basaven racita ipārani talpata (= demaḷa bhāṣāven (or bāsāven) racita ipāraṇi talpata, “the ancient talpata (‘royal message’) written in the Tamil language”). The full texts of two Talpatas, one preserved in the Bibliothèque nationale, Paris, and the other in the Musée de l’Homme, Paris, have been reproduced by me in order to give the reader an idea of this type of document.12

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Girimānanda Sūtraya (p. 34) has been analysed by me to highlight its historical importance. 13 A reference to that study, I suppose, would have been of use to readers.

Conclusion
Cataloguing is a rigorous discipline which requires a thorough knowledge of the language(s) and literature(s) of the documents handled. 14 In the case of Sri Lankan manuscripts, a knowledge of Sinhala, Pāli, Sanskrit, and at least a working knowledge of Tamil is necessary. A good knowledge of Sinhala is, however, indispensable.

Cataloguing these manuscripts needs a special training in view of certain peculiarities, notably:

1. Lack of punctuation. The usual punctuation mark is the kuṇḍalī, a spiral shape in the form of a cowry shell, generally used as a full stop. Several kuṇḍalī are used to indicate the separation of sections of a text.

2. Lack of separation of words. Writing is a continuous flow, probably in consideration of the economy of space. Here, knowledge of the language becomes indispensable for the correct understanding of the text.

3. Peculiarities of writing. Conjunct consonants especially cca, vva, bba, may be confused with ḍa, kha and ṇa respectively. Attention has also to be paid to the similarity between some letters: kha (走去) and ba (走去); ga (走去), bha (走去), and ha (走去); ca (走去), va (走去), and ma (走去); ta (走去) and na (走去). In seventeenth- and eighteenth-century manuscripts, r is written as pl.

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14 Some practical problems of cataloguing have been pointed out by me in my review article Liyanaratne 1998.
The preparation of a census of Sri Lankan manuscripts on an island-wide scale still remains a desideratum.\(^{15}\) It has to be a vast national project engaging trained teams of scholars allotted to the different provinces of the country. In the absence of any such move, individual attempts like that of B to focus attention on the value of this cultural heritage are indeed commendable. It is hoped that the above observations will be of use to B in the pursuit of her work.

\[\text{Jinadasa Liyanaratne}\]

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\(^{15}\)Somadasa 1959, 1964, although a worthy effort, is not a comprehensive work. Moreover, several manuscripts inventoried therein are now not available in the monasteries indicated.
Sāriputta’s Three Works on the *Samantapāsādikā*

In the twelfth century king Parākramabāhu I of Polonnaruwa, Sri Lanka, instigated a reform of Buddhism which, famously, involved the unification of the existing *nikāyas* of the region under one *nikāya*, the Mahāvihāra. The reform influenced the shape of Theravāda throughout Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia in subsequent centuries, its impact being felt even to this day. As part of the reform, fresh emphasis was laid on the correct understanding and performance of Vinaya. This led to the production of a number of new summaries of and commentaries on earlier Vinaya works. The leading scholar of the day was the monk Sāriputta, whom King Parākramabāhu commissioned to write commentaries on a number of Buddhaghosa’s works, which received particular attention during the reform. In the centuries that followed the reform under Parākramabāhu, monks from throughout Southeast Asia sought fresh ordination in Sri Lanka because of the reputation of the Mahāvihāra for learning and for correct Vinaya. Consequently the reform came to influence monastic life and scholarship throughout the Theravāda world.

The works ascribed to Sāriputta have been discussed most recently by Pecenko in his survey of Sāriputta’s writings and by von Hinüber in his *Handbook of Pāli Literature*.1 The purpose of this brief article is to augment the information supplied by them regarding the Vinaya works of Sāriputta. Among the Vinaya works ascribed to Sāriputta are the following three: the *Līnasāratthadīpanī* (Sp-†), the *Pālimuttakavinayavinicchayaśaṅgaha* (Pālim), and the *Pālimuttakavinayavinicchayaśaṅgahaṭīkā* (Pālim-pt†). These all relate to Buddhaghosa’s commentary on the Vinaya-*piṭaka*, the *Samantapāsādikā* (Sp).2

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2See von Hinüber 1996, p. 104, on the ascription of the *Samantapāsādikā* to Buddhaghosa, an ascription not found in the fifth-century Chinese translation by Samantabhadra, but given by Vajirabuddhi (c. sixth century).

dīpanī, “Illumination of the Meaning of the Hidden Essence” is a subcommentary on the Samantapāśadikā. The Pālimuttakavinayavinicchayasaṅgaha, “Compendium of Pronouncements on Vinaya Independent of the Order of the Canonical Text” is a compilation of the legalistic content of the Samantapāśadikā rearranged according to subject matter. The identity and nature of the Pālimuttakavinayavinicchayasaṅgahāṭikā, “commentary on Pālim”, a description rather than a title as such, is so far unclear from the few statements in secondary literature on the subject.

These three texts are noted by Malalasekera in his Pāli Literature of Ceylon. He writes the following regarding commentaries on Pālim: “Twoṭikās are extant on it in Ceylon, one old (porāṇa) and the other new (nava), but the author and date of neither is known. The Gandhavaṃsa (p. 61) says that Sāriputta wrote aṭikā on it himself.” Pecenko clarifies the matter: “The twoṭikās on Pālim are most probably Pālim-vn-ṭ (= Pālim-pṭ) ascribed to Sāriputta, and Vinayālāṅkāraṭikā, written by Tipiṭakālaṅkāra”. This latter is a seventeenth-century work written in Burma. Both theseṭikās are mentioned by von Hinüber. On the former, he writes, “Pālim-pṭ which is supposed to be the autocommentary by Sāriputta (Gv 61, 32) is quoted in Maṇis [Maṇisāramaṃjūśā], composed in A.D. 1466.” Thus all three authors write about this text rather hesitantly, confirming neither Sāriputta’s authorship of this work nor its content. Furthermore, the quotation of it in Maṇisāramaṃjūśā noted by von Hinüber only sets a terminus ante quem of the mid fifteenth century.

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3The meaning of pālimuttaka here is taken from von Hinüber 1996, p. 158 § 334.
4These are texts 1, 3, and 4 respectively in the list of Sāriputta’s work in Pecenko 1997: 162–63. The first text is discussed by von Hinüber, 1996, §§ 373–74, the second §§ 334–35, the last § 336.
7von Hinüber 1996, § 337.
Both von Hinüber and Pecenko mention the edition of Sāriputta’s “autocommentary” to Pālim published by K. Paññasāra in Colombo in 1908. Pecenko notes that it is recorded in Barnett’s *Supplementary Catalogue of the Sanskrit, Pali and Prakrit Books in the Library of the British Museum*. The text is listed by Barnett under the published works of Sāriputta with shelfmark 014098d34(2). Neither von Hinüber nor Pecenko had access to this text, so they were not able to include descriptions of the text in their overviews. Unfortunately, the British Library’s copy of this rare publication has been lost. The text was borrowed by a member of staff in 1989 and has not yet found its way back to the correct shelf allocation. All is not lost for users of the British Library, however. Manuscript Or. 4957 is a Sinhalese copy of a commentary on Pālim which can be identified as Pālim-प्र from the colophon. Furthermore, a copy of the printed edition is held at Peradeniya University Library in Sri Lanka.

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9 Pecenko 1997, p. 170. Pecenko provides slightly different abbreviations for the texts.


11 Despite the kind assistance of several members of staff of the Oriental and India Office Collection, and my own consultation with the former member of staff in question and searches in the stacks and storage of library, the book has not yet been recovered.

12 This is not the only manuscript of the text. Those listed by W.A. de Silva in his *Catalogue of Palm Leaf Manuscripts in the Library of the Colombo Museum* (Colombo 1938) are also noted by Pecenko 1997, p. 170, n. 44.

13 The shelfmark of the Peradeniya copy is 36402. It is bound at the back of a copy of Pālim by ņānavimala Tissa published a year earlier. It is hoped that a copy is to be restored to the British Library shortly from the Peradeniya holding. I would like to express my gratitude to Peradeniya library for allowing a copy to be made, and in particular to Kusantha Kariyapperuma and Tikva Shobrook for arranging this. I am also grateful to the British Academy, for it was while in receipt of a BA small projects grant to look at certain temple manuscript collections in Sri Lanka that I was able to obtain access to this work. Regarding the quality of the printed edition, the separation of words is frequently misplaced.
The opening verse of Pālim-ṭ gives this descriptive title: Anuttānatthadīpanī, “Exposition of Uncertain Meanings”, a title that parallels that of Sp-ṭ. Both the manuscript consulted and the printed edition also provide the parallel descriptive title at the head of the colophon: (Pālimuttakavinayavinicchayasaṅgahassa) anuttānapada-vanṇanā, “The Explanation of Uncertain Words (for the Pālimuttaka-vinayavinicchayasaṅgaha).”

The author does not name himself in the colophon, but states that he wrote the commentary at the instigation of Parākramabāhu while living at the Jetavana:

ajjhesito narindena so 'haṃ parakkamabāhunā
saddhammaṭhitikāmena sāsanujotakārinā
ten’ eva kārite ramme pāsādasatamaṇḍite
nānādumagaṇākīṇe bhāvanābhiritālaye
sītalūdakasamanpanne vasaṃ jetavane imaṃ
atthabyañjanasampannanā akāsiṃ yoginā hitaṃ
yaṃ siddhaṃ iminā puññaṃ yaṃ caṇṇaṃ pasutaṃ mayā
etena puñña-kammena dutiye attasambhave
tāvatīṃse pamodento silācāraguṇe rato
alaggo paṅcakāmesu patvāna paṭhamam paḷaṃ
antime attabhāvamhi metteyyamunipuṅgavāna
lokagapuggalaṃ nāthaṃ sabbasattahite rataṃ
disvāna tassa dhīrassa sutvā saddhammadesanaṃ
adhigantvā phalaṃ aggaṃ sobheyyaṃ jinasāsanaṃ
sadā rakhantu rājāno dharmamā pariṣ eva imaṃ pajaṃ
niratā puñña-kammesu jotento jinasāsanaṃ

14Both the printed edition and MS Or. 4957 have this hypermetric reading in the second foot, which perhaps should be emended by deleting so or giving the king’s name as pakantabāhunā, a form used elsewhere.

15Sa missing from MS Or. 4957.
At the request of Parākramabāhu, king of men,
who desires the duration of the true Dhamma and causes the
illumination of the religion,
While residing at the delightful Jetavana which he had built,
adorned with a hundred terraces,
Surrounded by different types of trees, a place enjoyed in
meditation,
Completed with cool waters, I composed this, complete in
meaning and expression, for the benefit of practitioners.
The merit achieved through this and the other produced by me
As a result of this act of merit, in my next embodiment
May I, enjoying myself in the Tāvatiṃsa heaven, delighting in
moral precepts, good conduct and virtues,
Free from attachment to the five senses, achieve the first
spiritual goal;
Thereafter, in my final embodiment, after seeing Metteyya, the
bull of sages,
The highest individual in the world, the protector who delights in
the benefit of all beings,
Having attained the highest goal, may I make the religion of the
conqueror shine forth.
May the kings always protect the Dhamma as well as mankind
here,
Devoted to acts of merit, illuminating the religion of the
conqueror,
And may all these beings, at all times free from distress,
Constantly of good intention, attain the deathless realm.

16 Transcribed from Paññāsāra 1908, p. 151. The final stanza does not occur in
MS Or. 4057.
The naming of Parākramabāhu as initiator and Jetavana as the residence in the first part of this colophon are two familiar markers of texts by Sāriputta. Similar statements are found at the end of other texts by him, in some cases the ascription being further confirmed by some additional dedicatory verses by one of Sāriputta’s direct pupils.\(^{17}\) The mention of Parākramabāhu certainly confirms a date of the twelfth century. From the colophon there seems to be no reason to doubt the ascription of authorship to Sāriputta, for whom King Parākramabāhu I built the Jetavana monastery at Polonnaruva. However, the way in which the tīkā author refers to the author of Pālim in the third person, āha or vadati, e.g. kulaputtanti ācāra kulaputtaṃ sandhāya vadati,\(^{18}\) etc., is a little disconcerting since at first sight it suggests distinct authors for the two works, a point to which we shall return below.

The opening of the text, which is very brief compared with that of Sp-ṭ but contains some similar wording, seems fairly neutral regarding authorship:

\begin{verbatim}
mahākārūṇikaṃ buddhaṃ dhammaṃ tena sudesitaṃ
saṃghaṃ ca vimalaṃ vanditvā sugatorasaṃ
anukampāya yoginaṃ kate vinayasaṅgāhe
karissāmi samāsena anuttānatthadīpaniṃ.\(^{19}\)
\end{verbatim}

After worshipping the Buddha, greatly compassionate, and the Dhamma well taught by him, As well as the immaculate Saṅgha, born of the Sugata, I shall in brief compose an Exposition of the Uncertain Meanings in the Compendium of the Vinaya, which was composed out of consideration for practitioners.

\(^{17}\)Pecenko 1997, pp. 166–68, notes the similarity between the colophons of Pālim, Sp-ṭ, and Mp-ṭ, which is extensive. All state that they were written at the request of Parākramabāhu I at the Jetavana Vihāra.

\(^{18}\)MS Or. 4957 folio 58. Paññāsāra 1908, p. 69.

\(^{19}\)MS Or. 4957 reads from saṅghaṃ: saṅghaṃ vimalaṃ setṭhaṃ vanditvā saṅga and then there is a break until part way into the first paragraph of the text.
However, the impersonal *kate vinayasangahe* (‘the Compendium that was composed’) might be interpreted as indicating that the text is an autocommentary, for it was the practice of the period for a commentator to compose some kind of homage to the author of a text at the start of his commentary, and, given the contemporaneity of the two works and the fame of Sāriputta, we would expect the identity of the author of Pālim to be known to the author of Pālim-pt. Therefore, if the two authors were distinct we would expect a more elaborate reference to the author of Pālim.

Given that there appear, then, to be these three texts pertaining to the Samantapāsādikā written by Sāriputta, a further consideration also naturally arises as to why one person would be responsible for three separate works on the same text. In particular, what would be the purpose of an autocommentary on his own text, especially given that he had already composed a commentary (Sp-ṭ) on the full text (Sp) from which his Pālim was extracted?20 It is reasonable to assume that the subcommentary to Sp should have provided ample opportunity to comment on its content. In order to answer this question let us briefly review the character of those two texts.

It has already been noted that the Līnasāratthadīpanī is a subcommentary on the Samantapāsādikā. As such it contains commentary not only on the legalistic content of the Samantapāsādikā, but also on the framework stories that contextualize the rules within the Buddha’s life. The Līnasāratthadīpanī often contains further narrative or draws out the narrative to explain the context or thought processes underlying what people say or do in the main text.

The Pālimuttakavinayavinicchayaśaṅgaha, as has been described above, is a compilation of the legalistic content of the Samantapāsādikā rearranged according to subject matter. As such it contains no material not found within the Samantapāsādikā itself, with the exception of a few connectives. These are added where two excerpts from Sp on a related

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20The style of Pālim is quite lucid. This is in no way similar to the style of Sanskrit *kārikā* texts, which require an autocommentary to be comprehensible.
topic are extracted from different narrative locations. Simple connectives replace the narrative framework so that it can be used as a straightforward legal handbook that reads smoothly in complete sentences. In order to achieve this sentences are also altered slightly. For example, in the *pabbajjāvatthu* the list of physical and other defects that debar someone from ordination into the Saṅgha immediately precedes the rule that a boy may not be ordained without the permission of his parents. They are connected as follows: *iti imehi pabbajjādosehi virahitopi na bhikkhave anunuññāto mātāpitūhi putto pabbājetabboti vacanato mātāpitūhi anunuññāto na pabbājetabbo*. Here the second section of the quotation, given unitalicized, is *buddhavacana* from the Mahāvagga of the Vinaya-piṭaka as quoted in Sp while the first section is purely connective and the third section replaces the narrative phrase *sikkhāpadāṃ paññāpesi* from Sp that no longer makes sense in the narrative-free context and order of Pālim. In contrast, Pālim reproduces the subsequent passage on what is meant by parental permission verbatim from the *Rāhulavatthukathā* of Sp. The sections of Pālim are self-contained accounts on discrete topics of Vinaya including all the supplementary legalistic clarification provided by Sp on that particular subject. The material included is entirely “legalistic”. All peripheral material such as narrative framework is excluded.

The *Pālimuttakavinayavinicchayasaṅgahassa anuttānatthatadīpanī* is a commentary on the above handbook. It provides commentary on terms occurring in the discussion of matters of Vinaya only. As far as I can ascertain, its content is entirely drawn from Sp-ṭ, again with the exception of a few connectives. So, where a passage of Sp-ṭ comments on the purely legal matters found in Sp, it is included in Pālim-ṭ, but

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22In my reading of this text so far I have found all passages, other than the connective phrases, in either the Vinaya-piṭaka or the Samantapāsādikā. Von Hinüber observes, “As far as this can be ascertained at present, Pālim uses only Vin with Sp. Quotations from the old Aṭṭhakathā seem to be borrowed from Sp” (1996, p. 158 § 334).
Sāriputta’s Three Works on the Samantapāsādikā

following the order of Pālim. Thus Pālim-pṭ has the same relationship to Sp-ṭ as Pālim does to Sp. For example, in the *pabbajjāvatthu* of Pālim mentioned above, Pālim-pṭ opens with a few words not found elsewhere, then continues with:

- an extract from Sp-ṭ’s commentary on *pañcābādhavatthu* (Sp-ṭ B⁶ 3.241ff. ; Pālim-pṭ, Paññāsāra ed., pp. 69–70);
- a single sentence from Sp-ṭ on *rājabhaṭādivatthu* (Sp-ṭ B⁶ 2.122 ; Pālim-pṭ, Paññāsāra ed., p. 70, lines 29–30);
- a short extract from Sp-ṭ on *dhaniyavatthu* (Sp-ṭ B⁶ 3.243 ; Pālim-pṭ, Paññāsāra ed., pp. 70–71);
- a page from Sp-ṭ’s *hatthachinnādikathā*, identified as such (Sp-ṭ B⁶ 3.204 ; Pālim-pṭ, Paññāsāra ed., pp. 71–72);
- Sp-ṭ on the *paṇḍakavatthu*, introduced as the *abhabbapuggalakathā* (Sp-ṭ B⁶ 3.257 ; Pālim-pṭ, Paññāsāra ed., p. 72);
- Sp-ṭ on the *ubhatobyāṅjanakathā* (Sp-ṭ B⁶ 3.262 ; Pālim-pṭ, Paññāsāra ed., pp. 72–73), etc.

This continues right up to the final sentences of the chapter, which come from the *anāpucchāvaranāvatthu* (B⁶ 3.256, Paññāsāra ed., p. 84), with the exception of the last few words: *sesam ettha suviññeyyam eva*. The order of these extracts parallels the order of the extracts of Sp in Pālim.

We can conclusively state then that the content of Pālim-pṭ is by Sāriputta. Given that Pālim is a rearrangement of the Samantapāsādikā attributed to Buddhaghosa, and contains no original material by Sāriputta, and that Pālim-pṭ is a rearrangement of the material in Sp-ṭ, it is perhaps inappropriate to refer to Pālim-pṭ as an “autocommentary”. The referent of the third person used in it is Buddhaghosa, the ascribed author of the Samantapāsādikā from which Pālim is extracted. While it is possible that a scholar other than Sāriputta made this rearrangement, this seems unlikely given the features of the opening verse and colophon discussed above.

In composing or compiling these three Vinaya texts, Sāriputta makes the Samantapāsādikā more accessible in three very different
ways, serving quite separate purposes. With the first he provides a full commentary on Sp. With the second he extracts and rearranges the Vinaya material of Sp into a systematic handbook. With the third he extracts and reorders the commentary on Sp, including only what is relevant to the terminology of the Vinaya material included in Pālim, and following its order. For understanding matters of Vinaya it is Pālim and Pālim-pṭ that are most accessible.

Finally, what, if any, is the relationship between Pālim-pṭ and the Vinayālaṅkāraṭīkā (Pālim-nt), written by Tipiṭakālaṅkāra in seventeenth-century Burma? Vinayālaṅkāra is a revised commentary on Pālim rather than a completely new composition, for it uses Pālim-pṭ fully, following its order throughout, even where the borrowing is not explicitly identified as such. In places it shortens Pālim-pṭ, typically by leaving out the quotation marker ti and the attributions to earlier commentaries that Sāriputta had provided. Its inclusion of slight differences from Sp-ṭ found in Pālim-pṭ means that it is drawn from Pālim-pṭ directly, rather than being a fresh extraction from Sp-ṭ. The Vinayālaṅkāraṭīkā relies far more heavily on Pālim-pṭ than one would anticipate from its opening verses, where the author states that he has taken the essence from various older ṭīkās: ṇānāsatthehi sāramādaṇīya. However, the text supplements Pālim-pṭ in two significant ways.  

Firstly, it provides grammatical analysis of terms found in Pālim. Secondly, it includes lengthy extracts from Kassapa’s Vimativinodanī. The Vimativinodanī is slightly later than Sāriputta’s works, and often rejects his opinions. It is where the Vimativinodanī offers a different interpretation from that of Sāriputta that it is included in Vinayālaṅkāraṭīkā.

From the usage of Pālim-pṭ in Pālim-nt we can see that it was exported to Southeast Asia, as were many other works by Sāriputta, and

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23 My description of the Vinayālaṅkāra is based only on a full reading of the pabbajjāvatthu as well as short sections from throughout the text, so there may be further significant features and source texts not observed here.

continued to be preserved there at least as late as the seventeenth century. From that time on, its contents were largely preserved in the Vinayālaṅkāraṭīkā, as well as, of course, remaining embedded piece-meal in Sp-ṭ from which it was extracted.

Kate Crosby

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The Canonicity of the Netti and Other Works

In her book *The Pali Literature of Burma*¹ Mabel Bode has the following statement:

Burmese tradition adds to the fifteen ancient texts of the Khuddakanikāya four other works — the Milindapañha [sic], the Suttasaṅgha, the Peṭakopadesa, and the Netti or Nettipakaraṇa.

Duroiselle,² reviewing this book, criticizes her statement:

No educated Burman, lay or monk, ever included these four works among the Piṭaka books of the Khuddakanikāya…

This is a very sweeping generalization, and therefore it would be very difficult to prove, but quite easy to disprove, which latter is my object here.

In the introduction to the Sumanāgalavilāsini, in the account of the First Council, Buddhaghosa has a section on the minor books, including the following words:³

"Jātakaṃ Mahāniddeso Cūlaniddeso Paṭisambhidāmagggo Suttanipāto Dhammapadaṇḍaṇ Udānaṇ Itivuttakaṇaṇaṇa Vimāna-Petavatthu Thera-Therigāthā ti imaṃ tantīṃ saṃgāyatvā Khuddakagantho nāma ayaṇ ti ca vatvā … Dīghabhāṇakā vaddanti, Majjhimaabhāṇakā pana Cariyāpiṭaka-Apadāna-Buddhavamsesu saddhīṃ sabbam pi taṃ Khuddakagantham … ti vaddanti.

"‘Jātaka, Mahāniddes, Cūlaniddes, Paṭisambhidāmagga, Suttanipāta, Dhammapada, Udāna, Itivuttaka, Vimāna-Petavatthu, Thera-Therigāthā’ — having chanted together this text, having said, ‘This is named Khuddakagantha’ …” — thus say the Dīgha reciters, but the Majjhima reciters say, “Together with Cariyāpiṭaka, Apadāna, and Buddhavaṃsa, all that is also Khuddakagantha …”

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¹Royal Asiatic Society, 1909, pp. 4f.
³Sv I 15.
Thus there appears to be a difference of opinion between the reciters on whether the Cariyāpiṭaka, etc., are canonical.⁴

On this point, Ṛṇāṇabhivamśa, who was Mahāsaṅgharāja of Burma⁵ at an early age, in his Silakkhandhavagga-abhinavaṭīkā (on D I, completed, according to the closing verses, in 2345 B.E.), has this comment:⁶

_Cariyāpiṭaka-Buddhavaṃsāṇaṇī cʿ ettha aggahanāṃ Jātakagatikattā,
Netti-Petṭakopadesādīnaṇī ca Niddesa-Paṭisambhidāmaggagatikattā._

And here Cariyāpiṭaka and Buddhavaṃsa are not taken because they go under Jātaka; and Netti, Petṭakopadesa, and so on, because they go under Niddesa and/or Paṭisambhidāmaggag.

In the first half of the sentence, which is carried over from the old ṭīkā,⁷ Ṛṇāṇabhivamśa is claiming that there was no substantive difference on the contents of the Canon between the reciters: that the Dīgha reciters really did recognize e.g. the Cariyāpiṭaka as canonical, but counted it as part of the Jātaka rather than a separate book. Similarly, in the second half he is claiming that Buddhaghosa and all the other classical authorities considered the Netti to be canonical, but counted it as part of the Niddesa or Paṭisambhidāmaggagag when they listed the books of the Kuddakānīkāya.

I think it is clear from this that Ṛṇāṇabhivamśa considers the Netti and Petṭakopadesa to be just as canonical as the Cariyāpiṭaka and Buddhavaṃsa.

Peter Jackson

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⁴This has been mentioned by various writers before, of course.
⁵My thanks to Lance Cousins for drawing my attention to this last fact.
⁶Introduction, Section 17, _Chattīha Saṅgāyana CD-ROM_, Version 3.0 (Igatpuri: Vipassana Research Institute, 1999).
⁷Sv-ṭī I 29. There are textual variations, but they do not affect my argument.
Mythology as Meditation: From the Mahāsudassana Sutta to the Sukhāvatīvyūha Sūtra*

1. MYTHOLOGY AND THE STUDY OF THE PĀLI NIKĀYAS

The seventeenth sutta of the Pāli Dīgha-nikāya, the fourth sutta of the Mahā-vagga, is known in the manuscripts as the Mahāsudassana suttanta or sutta (MSud). It tells of a king — Mahāsudassana — who lived long ago, of his fabulous city — Kusāvatī — of his fabulous possessions, of how he built a palace, entered that palace, and eventually died. In fact this king, we are told, was the bodhisatta in a distant previous life, and his city stood on the site of Kusinārā where the Buddha will shortly die. The whole sutta is thus a Jātaka, which links King Mahāsudassana, his city, and his death to the Buddha and his death.

The language, content, and structure of the sutta make its mythic qualities manifest. There is nothing here that the modern mind would be tempted to read as history. And while two items of the technical theory of Buddhist meditation — the four jhānas and the four brahma-vihāras — feature in passing, a reader might observe that the sutta’s thirty pages (in the PTS edition) contain no explicit mention of such “classic” items of Buddhist teaching as the eightfold path, the four truths, dependent origination, the five aggregates, not-self, nirvana.

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1See D II 199.

2cf. Waldschmidt’s (1944–48, II 341) comments on the mythic qualities of the sutta.
In this article I wish to pose and attempt to go some way towards answering a simple question: what is such a “myth” doing in the corpus of early Buddhist literature?, or, what did those who composed it and listened to it understand by it?

The scholarship concerned with the Pāli Nikāyas and early Buddhist thought has paid rather less attention to the mythic and narrative portions of early Buddhist literature than it has to, say, those portions concerned directly and explicitly with the classic teachings I have just mentioned. The reasons for this no doubt go back in part to the attitudes and assumptions that inspired the scholars of the latter half of the nineteenth and early part of the twentieth century to devote their energies to the exploration of the Pāli Nikāyas. The increasing knowledge among western scholars of the Pāli canon towards the end of the nineteenth century resulted in a feeling that knowledge of what the historical Buddha really taught was a possibility. The Buddha as depicted in especially the pages of the four primary Pāli Nikāyas was a more historically plausible figure than that found in later and Mahāyāna sources.¹

The methods and motivations of the early scholars of the Pāli canon led them to believe that if they could trim away the mythic and fantastic from the texts, they would be left with the historical core of the Buddha’s life and teachings.² This resulted in an emphasis on those portions of the canon which show the Buddha to have been a practical teacher of ethics, moral training, and common sense — those portions which show him as human rather than divine or superhuman. A sutta like the Mahāsudassana Sutta which depicts the Buddha as claiming in

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¹While Christian missionaries such as Gogerly (see Young and Somaratna 1996, 79–102) and scholars such as Burnouf had already by the middle of the nineteenth century studied closely certain portions of the Pāli canonical texts, it is particularly in the works of T.W. Rhys Davids (Buddhism: Being a Sketch of the Life and Teaching of Gautama the Buddha, first published 1877) and H. Oldenberg (Buddha: Sein Leben, seine Lehre, seine Gemeinde, first published 1881) that we find the suggestion that the Pāli texts represent especially reliable sources for the life of the Buddha. See de Jong 1997, 22–25, 30–32.

²cf. de Jong 1997, 28f.
Some far distant life to have been a king who lived for 336 thousand years\(^5\) in a city with seven walls constructed of gold, silver, and precious gems, and with groves of palm trees similarly made of gold, silver, and precious gems, is hardly one that a late nineteenth century or early twentieth century scholar would adduce as evidence of the Buddha’s ordinary common sense.\(^6\) Whether or not individual scholars have always shared precisely such attitudes, they have nevertheless often set the tone for the scholarly exposition of Pāli Buddhist literature and thought over the last century.

More recently some attention has been paid to some of these mythic narrative portions. Richard Gombrich (1992), for example, has explored the Aggañña Sutta. In significant ways, though, his approach relies on earlier assumptions about the place of myth in the Pāli canon. As early as 1899 T.W. Rhys Davids suggested that we might see a certain deliberate humour in some of the mythic narratives of the Pāli canon and in particular the Aggañña Sutta.\(^7\) Gombrich (1992) has argued in some detail that the Aggañña Sutta — especially in its use of nirukti or etymology — should be read as a parody of certain Brahmanical ideas and methods rather than a literal account of how the world and society came


\(^6\) See, for example, Almond 1988, 77–79, on the more general British tendency in the late nineteenth century to see the Buddha as something of “an ideal Victorian gentleman”, and Hallisey 1995 on the tendency for the early study of Theravāda Buddhism to become effectively reduced to the search for “original” Buddhism.

\(^7\) Rhys Davids concludes some remarks on the Aggañña Sutta (1899, 105–107) by commenting: “We may not accept the historical accuracy of this legend. Indeed a continual note of good-humoured irony runs through the whole story, with its fanciful etymologies of the names of the four vaṇṇā; and the aroma of it would be lost on the hearer who took it au grand sérieux.” See also his comments on the Kūṭadanta Sutta (1899, 160).
into being and evolved. Reading the *Aggañña Sutta* as a humorous parody allows Gombrich to accept its myth as something the Buddha might have actually taught; but, on his reading, as time went on the Buddhist tradition failed to get the joke and ended up taking it literally.

While Gombrich’s account of the text certainly yields useful and important insights, I think it also embodies certain questionable assumptions, the most fundamental of which might be stated as follows: it is obvious from certain portions of the Pāli Nikāyas that the Buddha was “a reasonable sort of chap”, therefore he couldn’t possibly have meant all that obviously unreasonable stuff about beings falling from higher heavenly realms and the evolution of the four classes literally. That is, we play off the way the Buddha is depicted in certain portions of the canon against the way he is depicted in other portions. There is an obvious danger of circularity here: we know that the Buddha didn’t teach implausible myths because in the parts of the Nikāyas that present his genuine teachings there are no implausible myths; when we come across an implausible myth it must therefore not belong to his genuine teachings — unless, of course, it is just a joke. The problem here is that, despite a commitment to the disciplines of objective and scientific scholarship, as twentieth or twenty-first century admirers of much of what the Buddha is represented as teaching in the Pāli canon, we tend to become upset when things we do not find so congenial are put in his mouth. Yet there would seem to be no a priori reason why we should assume that an ascetic wandering the plains of northern India in the fifth century B.C.E. should share the same common sense and notions of plausibility that modern scholars do. Why should the Buddha not have

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8But see Norman 1997, 159 on the problem of judging the intention that lies behind such etymologies.
9Gombrich 1992, 175.
11cf. Gombrich 1988, 84 (with reference to the *Cakkavattisihanāda Sutta*): “From the rest of what we know of him, we cannot think that the Buddha believed that one day people would literally be no more than ten years old and go hunting each other like wild beasts.”
genuinely thought that the world and society evolved after beings fell from the realm of radiance as described in the *Aggañña Sutta*, or that in a previous life he had lived as a great king in a city made of silver, gold, and other precious gems? The suggestion that he did think such things cannot just be dismissed as intrinsically historically implausible.

But whether or not the historical Buddha did teach and believe in the myths of the Pāli canon as “literal truth” — whatever that might precisely mean — is not my main concern.\(^\text{12}\) Steven Collins is perhaps the single scholar who has in recent years devoted the most thought to the mythic and narrative portions of the Pāli canon in his efforts to clarify the Theravāda Buddhist vision of happiness, ultimate and also relative. In response to Gombrich’s suggestion that in the case of the *Cakkavattisīhanāda Sutta* (CSS) one must consider “either that the text is apocryphal or at least it has been tampered with”, Collins makes the following important observation:

> Story motifs, especially in an oral culture, may often be found in other combinations in other contexts; but one must still analyse particular motifs in particular texts, and attempt to understand those particular texts in their given, as-redacted-to-us form.\(^\text{13}\)

So, whether or not the Buddha taught a text such as MSud in the form in which it has come down to us, the text as we have it must still belong to a relatively early stratum of the Pāli Buddhist literary tradition as a whole, and if we want to understand that tradition and its development we need to consider the text as we have it. Thus even if we conclude with Govind Pande (1974, 106) that the lateness of MSud (relative to certain suttas of the Nikāyas) is “manifest from the detailed and gorgeous descriptions that it contains of the royal city, the seven jewels, and the ‘Dhamma’ palace”, we still need to consider what such a text meant to those who put it together in its traditional form, and to those who read or, perhaps better, listened to it.

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\(^{12}\) See my comments on the problematic nature of the categories of “literal truth” and “mythic symbol” in Gethin 1997.

\(^{13}\) Collins 1998, 480–81.
As a preliminary to exploring this question it is worth reminding ourselves that as a “mythic” text the MSud is not especially peculiar in the context of the Nikāyas. Admittedly identifying precisely what we might want to categorize as “mythic” is problematic; in practice nearly any narrative that is suggestive of a serious underlying meaning beyond its mere recounting of events or telling of a story might have to be considered as possessing mythic qualities;\(^{14}\) and in that case, one might argue that all the narrative portions of the Pāli Nikāyas have a mythic dimension. Nevertheless, some narratives stand out more obviously as mythic than others. I would suggest that ten or eleven of the thirty-four suttas of the Dīgha-nikāya are essentially mythic in content.\(^{15}\) By any reckoning this is a significant proportion, and while it may be true to say that the Dīgha-nikāya contains rather more mythic material than the other main Nikāyas, it seems clear that mythic narrative was a significant aspect of early Pāli Buddhist literature.

2. THE PLACE OF THE MAHĀSUDASSANA NARRATIVE IN EARLY BUDDHIST LITERATURE

Formally MSud is presented in the Dīgha-nikāya as a separate, free-standing, self-contained sutta. However, it might also be viewed as a kind of appendix to the Mahāparinibbāna-sutta (MPari), expanding and developing a particular section of the latter. The nidāna (and the opening portion) of MSud already occurs within the framework of MPari. This indicates a close connection between the two texts — a connection that is confirmed by the various versions of MPari that survive in Buddhist Sanskrit and in Chinese translation. In all cases, the full Mahāsudarśana narrative occurs within the framework of the MPari

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\(^{14}\)See, for example, the opening chapter of Kirk 1970 (1–41) for a discussion of the relationship of myth to religion, ritual, and folk-tale, and of some of the problems involved in capturing the elusive qualities of “myth”.

\(^{15}\)Kūṭadanta, Mahāpādāna, Mahāsudassana, Janavasabha, Mahāgovinda, Mahāsamaya, Sakkapaṭha, Cakkavattisīhanāda, Aggaṇa, Lakkaṇa, Āṭānātiya.
narrative, it is only the Pāli MPari that does not contain the full Mahāsudassana narrative. Nevertheless the existence of the Mahāsudarśana narrative as a free-standing text outside the Pāli tradition is confirmed by the survival of the Gilgit manuscript of the Sanskrit Mahāsudarśanāvadāna edited by Matsumura, and a separate Mahāsudarśana Sūtra in the Chinese translation of the Madhyamāgama.

In addition, the Mahāsudassana narrative, in part or in full, has come down to us or is referred to in a number of other contexts. In the Pāli tradition we find a portion of it in the Saṃyutta-nikāya (S III 144–47), while the sutta is referred to by name in the Cullaniddesa as a sutta uttered by the Buddha indicating the past of both himself and others. Accordingly the story is included in the Jātaka collection (No. 95, Ja I 391–93), and also briefly recounted in the Cariyāpiṭaka (Cp 75). Looking beyond the Pāli tradition we find a relatively full treatment in the Da zhi du lun or *Mahāprajñāpāramitā-śāstra/upadeśa, traditionally attributed to Nāgārjuna (Lamotte 1949, 763–66).
All this establishes not only the close association of the Mahāsudassana myth with the MPari narrative — certainly one of the most important narratives of the Pāli canon — but also its importance as a narrative in its own right. Moreover, as scholars have long recognized, certain descriptions of the Mahāsudassana narrative have clear resonances with passages that occur in a number of other contexts in Indian Buddhist literature: the descriptions of various cities in the Mahāvastu and Divyāvadāna;\textsuperscript{20} the description of Amitābha’s “pure land” in the Sukhāvatīvyūha, the descriptions of heavenly “mansions” in the Vimānavatthu and its commentary.\textsuperscript{21} I shall consider the significance of some of these parallels later, but at this point I should like to give a brief outline of the Mahāsudassana narrative highlighting the basic similarities and some of the differences between the Pāli and Central Asian/Gilgit (CA/Gil) versions.\textsuperscript{22} While a comparison of all the available textual materials is clearly desirable these two versions seem sufficiently representative of the kinds of variation found in the different versions of the narrative to throw the distinctive features of each narrative into clear relief.

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\textsuperscript{20}Waldschmidt (1951, 305) cites the following descriptions: of Sudarśana, the city of the Thirty-Three Gods, and Sudharma, the assembly hall of the gods (Divyāvadāna 220–22), of Bhadrasilā in Uttarāpatha (Divyāvadāna 315), of Dipavatī, the city of King Arcimat, the Buddha Dipaṅkara’s father (Mahāvastu I 194–96), of Utttara, the city of the Buddha Maṅgala (Mahāvastu I 249).

\textsuperscript{21}As discussed by Collins 1998, 311–14, 478.

\textsuperscript{22}Matsumura (1988, viii–ix) concludes that the often verbatim coincidence between the Mahāsudarśana narrative embedded in the Central Asian manuscript of MPari and the Gilgit manuscript of the Mahāsudarśanāvadāna means that we can treat them as essentially a single version.
The narrative opens with the Buddha lying between the two sal trees at the time of his death. Ānanda urges him not to die in a small insignificant town like Kusinārā (Kuśinagarī) but in an important city. The Buddha responds by informing Ānanda that Kusinārā was once the royal city (rājadhānī) of a great king, Mahāsudassana, and called Kusāvatī/Kuśāvatī, although in the CA/Gil version the person of the king is not introduced until later, after the initial description of the city. He is introduced abruptly, as if he had already been mentioned, when we are told that he arranged for girls to hand out food, etc., at the city’s lotus ponds. The formal introduction comes some lines later.

The Buddha proceeds to describe the city. It was twelve leagues in length on its eastern and western sides; seven on its northern and southern. In the Pāli version the city is likened to Ālakamandā, the city of the gods. We are told that it was filled with the ten sounds (a detail that

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23The Pāli version has been translated into English and other European languages several times: Rhys Davids 1959, 199–232, and Walshe 1995, 279–90 (English); Neumann 1912 (German). For a German translation of the Sanskrit MPari, see Weber 1999, 207–28; I am unaware of any English translation.

24The Pāli version explicitly states this at the opening of MSud (D II 169,2–3); in the MPari narrative the Buddha has lain down between the sal trees at an earlier point, see D II 136 and Waldschmidt 1951, 294.

25The first time a proper name or term occurs that is common to the Pāli and Sanskrit texts I give the Sanskrit in brackets; thereafter I give only the Pāli unless referring specifically to the Sanskrit text.

26Matsumura 1988, 7,6–7 (≠ Waldschmidt 1951, 310): tāsāṁ khalu puṣkariṇīnāṁ tīreṣu rājñā mahāsudarśanena kanyā sthāpitā yā annam annārthhibhyā prayacchaṁti ...


is given later in the CA/Gil versions where twelve sounds are mentioned.\(^{29}\)

The city was surrounded by seven walls made, according to the Pāli version, of gold, silver, beryl, crystal, ruby, sapphire, and all kinds of gems. In the CA/Gil version the seven walls are made variously of just gold, silver, beryl, and crystal.\(^{30}\) The city had four gates made of gold, silver, beryl, and crystal.\(^{31}\) At each gate there were seven pillars also made of gold, silver, beryl, crystal, ruby, sapphire, and all kinds of gems. These pillars are three times the height of a man in circumference and four times that of a man in height.\(^{32}\) CA/Gil has only pillars of the

\[^{29}\text{Matsumura 1988, 7,11–15.}\]

\[^{30}\text{D II 170,17–21: Kusåvatya Ånanda råjadhåni sattahi påkårehi parikkhittå ahosi. tattha eko påkåro sovanañamayo, eko råpiyamayo eko veluriyamayo eko phalikamayo eko lohiñkamayo eko masåragallamayo eko sабbaratanamayo. Matsumura 1988, 3,3–5: Kusåvatì Ånanda råjadhåni saptabhihå pråkåraiÅ pariÅsiptå babhåva, caturvidhåiÅ pråkåraiÅ sauvarñai råjåtåir vaidåryamayåiÅ sphaåtikamayåiÅ.}\]

\[^{31}\text{D II 170,22–171,1: Kusåvatiyå Ånanda råjadhåniyå catunnaµ vaññånaµ dvåråni ahesuµ. ekaµ dvåraµ sovanañamayaµ ekaµ råpiyamayaµ ekaµ veluriyamayaµ ekaµ phalikamayaµ. Matsumura 1988, 3,5–6: Kusåvatiyån åjadhånyå catunådåni dvåråni måpitåni abhåvuµ sauvårñåni råjåtåni vaidåryamayåni sphaåtikamayåni.}\]

\[^{32}\text{D II 171,1–5: ekåm ekåsinµ dvåre satta esikå nikhåtå ahesuµ ti-porisångå catu-poriså ubbådåhena. ekaµ esikå sovanañamayå ekaµ råpiyamayå ekaµ veluriyamayå ekaµ phalikamayå ekaµ lohiñkamayå ekaµ masåragallamayå ekaµ sабbaratanamayå. Rhys Davids (1959, 200) translates Eº's ti-porisångå catu-poriså ubbådåhena as “in height as three times or as four times the height of a man” and is followed in this by Walshe (1995, 280). But this must be wrong and the commentary (Sv II 616) is surely right here in explaining tiporisångå as tiporiså-parikkhepå. Other editions (Bº, Cº, Sº) of the Pāli text have tiporisångå tiporiånikhåtå dvådåsa poriså ubbådåhena: “three times the height of a man in circumference, set into the ground to a depth three times the height of a man, and in height twelve times that of a man”. Interestingly this seems closer to the Mahåvastu’s description of the royal city of Dipavatå, the city of Dipamkara’s father Arcimat, than to the CA/Gil Mahåsudårśana Såtra. The Mahåvastu’s Dipavati is described in very similar terms to Kusåvati, and in front of its gates there were pillars “which were embedded in the ground to the depth of three men’s lengths, were three men’s lengths in circumference
four precious substances at the gates, in height seven times that of a man, and set into the ground to a depth three-and-a-half times the height of a man. The CA/Gil version (Matsumura 1988, 3.9–11) adds that the city was surrounded by seven moats lined with bricks (iṣṭikā) of the four precious substances.

The city was also surrounded by seven rows of palm trees made of the seven precious substances. The trunks being of one substance and the leaves and fruits of another — apart from the trees of all kinds of gems which have trunks, leaves, and fruits of all kinds of gems. When stirred by the wind the trees made a lovely sound prompting those in the city who were revellers and fond of drink to dance round. According to the CA/Gil version the seven rows of trees were made, once again, of just the four precious substances, but with the same variation: the leaves, flowers, and fruits of the gold trees are silver, etc., mutatis mutandis.

The Pāli version continues with a long account (D II 172.6–178.20) of Mahāsudassana as a cakkavattin and of his seven treasures (the wheel, elephant, horse, gem, woman, treasurer, adviser) and of his four iddhis (good looks, long life, good health, popularity).

At this point in the narrative, the CA/Gil has still to introduce King Mahāsudarśana, and when it finally does, he is not given the title of cakravartin. We are told only that he possessed the seven treasures (which are simply listed). It is perhaps worth noting, though, that when Mahāsudarśana’s six categories of 84,000 possessions are later listed, and twelve men’s lengths in height” (Mahāvastu I 196: tripauruṣa-naikhānyāṇi tripauruṣa-parigohayāṇi dvādasa-pauruṣā udvedhena).

33Matsumura 1988, 3.6–8 (= Waldschmidt 1951, 306): teṣu khalu dvāreṣu caturvidhā iṣṭikā māpitā abhūvaṃ sauvarṇā rājatāṇi vaidūryamayā sphaṭikamayā sapta-pauruṣā ardha-caturtha-pauruṣā ca nikhātā. The reading iṣṭikā seems problematic and appears to have been restored from i(ṣ)-kā in the mss; Matsumura 1988, 3.7 (following Waldschmidt 1951, 306) gives iṣṭi(kā). MW records iṣṭakā in the sense of “brick” and iṣika in the sense of “reed”, while BHSD gives iṣika/iṣikā in the sense of “sign-post”; Mahāvastu I 196.1 has iṣikāṇi in this context. BHSD gives aiṣikā as equivalent to Pāli esikā (cf. CPD s.v.).
four of them are connected with the treasures: the chief woman is referred to as the woman treasure \((\text{strī-ratna})\), the chief prince as the adviser treasure \((\text{parināyaka-ratna})\), the chief elephant as “the king of elephants Upoṣatha”, the chief horse as “the king of horses Vālāha” (the elephant and the horse treasure in the Pāli version are called respectively Uposatha and Valāhaka). The CA/Gil version does give an account of the king’s four \(\ddhī\) similar to the Pāli, but in a different order.

We are next told how Mahāsudassana decided to build lotus ponds among the palm trees with tiles of four precious substances. The lotus ponds have four flights of stairs made of four precious substances; the gold stairs have (a banister) with gold uprights and silver cross bars and handrail, etc. The ponds were surrounded by two railings with gold uprights and silver cross bars and handrail, etc. The CA/Gil (having not yet introduced the king) simply describes these lotus ponds in broadly similar terms.

Mahāsudassana then had various kinds of lotuses grown in the ponds. He provided bath attendants and \(\dāna\) consisting of food, drink, clothing, transport, beds, wives, and money. In the CA/Gil version again the lotuses are simply stated as growing in the ponds, though curiously, as I have noted, when it comes to the account of the lotus ponds as places for distribution to the needy, Mahāsudarśana is abruptly introduced: he had girls hand out food, drink, clothing, and garlands, etc. And it is at this point that the CA/Gil version mentions how those who were fond of drink and wanted to enjoy themselves came and did so among the palm trees. Immediately after this the CA/Gil formally introduces Mahāsudarśana and describes him as possessing the seven treasures and four \(\ddhī\).

Brahmans and householders next approach the king and offer him money which he refuses. Considering it unfitting to take the money back, they offer to build the king a dwelling \((\text{nivesana})\); he accepts. Sakka learns of Mahāsudassana’s intentions and instructs Vissakamma to build a “palace of dhamma” \((\text{dhamma-pāsāda})\); Vissakamma
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approaches the king who accepts his offer. We are not told where he builds the palace.

In the CA/Gil version town and country folk offer the king valuables which he turns down. They do not want to take the valuables back and so make a pile of them before the king, who then decides to use the wealth to build a dharma-prāsāda. A great number of princes hears of Mahāsudarśana’s wish and offers to build the palace for him. The king at first turns them down, but when eventually they prostrate themselves before him, he accepts, and they build the Dharma Palace to the east of Kuśāvatī (pūrveṇa Kuśāvatyā dharmaṁ prāsādaṁ māpayantī).

A detailed description of the palace follows. While there are some variations in detail there is also substantial agreement between the Pāli and CA/Gil versions. The Palace is one league by half a league (one, in the CA/Gil version); it has columns, boards, and staircases all made of the four precious substances; it has 84,000 upper rooms with couches again made of the four precious substances; at the doors of the chambers there are palm trees of the four precious substances. The manner and detail of the description match closely the manner and detail of the description of the city as a whole: thus, in the golden room there is a couch of silver, and outside there is a tree with a trunk of silver and golden leaves and fruit.

The Pāli version mentions a central room, “the room of the great array” (mahāvyūha-kūṭāgāra-). Presumably the epithet mahāvyūha is intended to indicate that this particular room occupies the central position in the arrangement of rooms, perhaps also suggesting that it affords some kind of view over the whole arrangement of rooms and palace.34

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34The word vi(y)ūha is rare in the Nikāyas; it is used at D I 6, 65 in the sense of the array of an army (senāvyūha). In the Vinaya it occurs in the sense of a cul-de-sac, or enclosed space of some sort (Vin IV 271: vīyāhaṁ nāma yen’ eva pavisanti ten’ eva nikkhamanti); this usage is also found at S V 369, 371 in the expression sambādha-vyūha (Spk III 287: sambādha-vyūhan ti vyūha vuccanti avinibbidha-racchāyo, yā paviṭṭha-maggen’ eva niggacchanti). Thus it might be possible to interpret mahāvyūha-kūṭāgāra- as “the room [at the end] of the great avenue” depending on how we imagine the arrangement of the palace;
At the door of this room of the great array the king has a grove of golden palm trees made.

The king next decides to build a Dhamma Pond (*dhammadhamma pokkharanī*) in front of the Dhamma Palace which is described in detail and in terms similar to those used of the earlier lotus ponds. In the CA/Gil version it is the 84,000 princes who take the initiative in building the Dharma Pond (*dharmī puškariṇī*); these princes also establish a “Dharma Grove” (*dharma-tālavana*) in front of the pond.

Having seen to the needs of various ascetics and brahmans the king himself then enters the palace. Inside the palace the king practises the four *jhānas* followed by the practice of friendliness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity — or, in the CA/Gil version, just the first *dhyāna* at this point, and some time later the four *brahma-vihāras*.

We are then told how it occurs to the king’s wives that they have not seen the king in a long, long time, and so they decide that they should pay him a visit in the Dhamma Palace. At the sound of the great commotion caused by their arrival, the king comes out from the room of the great array (or the Dharma Palace, in the CA/Gil version). The chief queen then urges the king to arouse desire for his possessions, which are listed as consisting of fourteen times 84,000 lots of possession in the Pāli version and six times 84,000 lots in the CA/Gil version. At this the king is not pleased and explains that she should be urging him to let go of any desire he has for his possessions. She duly complies. In the Pāli version the king promptly dies and is reborn in the Brahmā world, while in the CA/Gil version the king now practices the *brahma-vihāras*, but his death and rebirth in the Brahmā world are then similarly described.

The story of the past is now finished, and we are returned to the present where the Buddha announces that it was he who was King Mahāsudassana and that he has died six times previously in this very

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cf. Bollée (1989), pp. 143–49. The word *v(i)yūha* is used in the title of two Sn suttas apparently in the sense of “mental disposition”. 

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At this point it seems worth considering a little further the question of the Mahasudassana narrative’s relationship to MPari. Waldschmidt (1944–48 I 4, II 205, 341) emphasizes that the Mahasudassana narrative must be seen as integral to MPari since it is common to all versions: prima facie this suggests that the Mahasudassana narrative should date from a time prior to the division of the early Sangha into clearly defined schools, that is, the third or even the fourth century B.C.E.. Yet Waldschmidt is troubled by this conclusion since he feels that the mythic content and style of the Mahasudassana narrative — its similarity in style to later (unspecified) descriptions of Buddhist heavens — are suggestive of a rather later date.

Bareau (1971, 76), none the less, suggests that we should see the initial conversation between Ananda and the Buddha, in which Ananda questions the appropriateness of the Buddha’s dying in Kusinära, as primary in the evolution of the MPari narrative. The Mahasudassana

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35D II 198,24–199,3: chakkhattuµ kho panähaµ Ananda abhijånämi imasmiµ padese sariraµ nikhipitaµ, tañ ca kho räja vasamäno cakkavatti dharmiko dhamma-räjà cäturanto vijñäti janapatadhatthävariyappatto satta-ratana-samannägato, ayaµ sattamo sarira-nikkhepo. na kho panähaµ Ananda taµm padesaµ samanupassämi sadevake loke ... yattha Tathägato aṭṭhamamaµ sarämaµ nikkhipeyä ti. Rhys Davids (1959, 232) and Walshe (1995, 290) have mistranslated this passage and have the Buddha incoherently declare that when he died in Kусinära as a cakkavatta it was the seventh time, and there will be no eighth time. Matsumura 47–47,9: yävad Anando kuśinagarä yävaµ naµdë hiranyavati yävad yamakasälavanaµ yävan mallaµnaµ mukütabandhanaµ caityäµ atraµntaµ dvädaµya yojänäni sämäntakena yatra šāktytvah tathägatasya sariraniķœpo babhùva tac ca räjña kṣatriyasya mürdhäbhīṣaktasya idañm saptamaµ väram tac ca tathägatasya rhaµhäsya samyaksambuddhasya näham Ananda taµm prthivi-pradesaµ samanupaṣyämi ... yatra tathägata-syäṣtamaµ sariraniķœpeµ.
narrative Bareau sees as secondary, having been added after the account of this conversation as an explanation of why the Buddha chooses to die in Kusinārā. Whatever the value of Bareau’s suggestion as an explanation for the initial reference to Mahāsudassana and his city, it is inadequate as an explanation of the full Mahāsudassana narrative as it has come down to us: for example, thirty pages in the PTS edition of the Pāli text, and twenty pages in Matsumura’s edition of the Sanskrit text. Clearly the Mahāsudassana narrative does rather more than just explain that Kusinārā was once an important city of an important king who was the Buddha in a previous life.

Bareau’s suggestion would initially seem to imply that the Pāli MPari, which gives only a relatively brief account of Mahāsudassana and his city, represents a rather early stage in the development of the MPari narrative. On the other hand, the existence of a separate MSud in the Pāli tradition might suggest a later development relative to other versions of MPari, all of which still retain a full Mahāsudarśana narrative framed by the MPari narrative.

Yet, despite its status as an independent text, in comparison to the CA/Gil Sanskrit versions the content and narrative structure of the Pāli MSud seem to deliberately tie it more closely to the MPari narrative of the Buddha’s death. Thus in the Pāli version the whole dialogue between Mahāsudassana and the queen (D II 190.23–195.29) takes place on Mahāsudassana’s deathbed. So at D II 190.20 Mahāsudassana lies on his right side in the lion posture, just as the Buddha has done between the two sal trees at D II 137.16, whereas in the CA/Gil versions we are told that he sits on a golden seat prior to talking to the queen.36 In the Pāli version, on seeing the king, the queen observes that his faculties are bright and his complexion pure and clear; she thus fears that he is about

to die.\textsuperscript{37} This echoes the episode in MPari when Ānanda observes that the Buddha’s complexion is pure and clear, and the Buddha announces to Ānanda that this indicates he will die that very night (D II 133.30–134.14). In contrast, while the CA/Gil version also tells us something about the king’s senses at this point, it is that he lowers his eyes and averts them fearing that the presence of so many women in all their finery will provoke desire in him, whereupon the queen wishes that the king were not so uninterested in them.\textsuperscript{38} Again in the Pāli version when the king instructs the queen how to address him, his instructions are explicitly related to his imminent death:

At these words King Mahāsudassana said to Queen Subhaddā: “Lady, for a long time you have spoken to me with words that are welcome, dear and agreeable, but now in these last hours you speak to me with words that are not welcome, not dear, disagreeable.”

“Then how should I speak to you, lord?”

“Lady, speak to me like this: ‘Lord, you should not die with longing. Unhappy and unfortunate is the death of one who dies with longing.’”\textsuperscript{39}

As we shall see, in the CA/Gil version the king’s instructions are couched in more general terms without specific allusion to the king’s imminent death. In the Pāli version we are told that soon after his con-
versation with the queen, the king died, whereas in the CA/Gil version the king returns to his Dharma Palace (dharma-prāsāda) to practice the four brahmavihāras (Matsumura 1988, 42–44). We are then told in the form of a general statement that as a result of developing the four brahmavihāras and his persistent practice of them (tadbahulavihārī), Mahāsudarśana was born in the Brahmā world.40

In the Pāli recension we thus have presented as an independent sutta a text that is, however, closely and self-consciously tied to the MPari narrative; while in the CA/Gil Sanskrit recension we have a text that is rather less closely tied to the MPari narrative, nevertheless firmly embedded in that narrative. This complicates our understanding of the relationship between MPari and MSud. The basic question is whether we should view the MSud as originally a separate narrative that has subsequently been incorporated in the MPari, or as originally a minor episode in the MPari narrative that gradually grew and expanded until it outgrew its MPari frame and attained the status of a separate text in its own right.

Matsumura (1988, xxx–xxxii) has little doubt that the independent Pāli MSud and the Chinese Madhyamāgama MSud have been extracted from their original context within the MPari. Part of the evidence Matsumura adduces is the correspondence between the Mahāsudassana portion of MPari (D II 146,10–147,11) and the opening of the MSud (D II 169,8–170,16). This “proves”, claims Matsumura, that the whole Mahāsudassana story had once been placed there. It is worth noting, though, that (pace Matsumura) the two passages do not show word-for-word agreement. At D II 146,23 (MSud) Mahāsudassana is described as cakkavatti dhammiko dhamma-rājā, while at D II 169,18–19 (MPari) he is described instead as khattiyo muddhāvasitto. The difference would appear to be quite deliberate. In MSud the narrative requires that he is not described as a “wheel-turning king” at the beginning, since he only

40Matsumura 1988, 45,9–11: atha rājā Mahāsudarśanasā catuḥ brahmāṃ vihāṛaṃ bhāvayītāṁ kāmeṣu kāmacchandam prahāya tadbahulavihārī bhramalokasya svabhāvatāyām upapannāḥ.
becomes such later.\(^{41}\) In MPari, where the story of his becoming a wheel-turning king is not related, he can be summarily introduced as cakkavattī dhammiko dhamma-rājā. What this shows, once again, is that this portion of MPari and MSud has been carefully edited.

At a certain level the fundamental association between MSud with MPari seems firm: the name of Mahāsudassana’s city, Kusāvati'/ Kuśāvati, clearly echoes Kusinārā/Kuśinagara, the place of the Buddha’s death. Yet the association of a particular literary narrative with a particular period of or episode in the Buddha’s life does not mean that its literary development as a text is tied to the literary development of all other narratives associated with that same period or episode. Indeed, in addition to the MSud narrative, a number of other episodes that constitute the MPari narrative appear elsewhere in the Nikāyas as independent suttas,\(^{42}\) and it seems likely that at least some of these developed and circulated as independent narrative units prior to — or even at the same time as — being incorporated in the extended MPari narrative.

It seems to me probable then that MSud developed as an independent narrative outside the context of MPari, yet always associated with the episode of the death of the Buddha through the name Kusāvati. That this is so is indicated by the simple fact that the Pāli Dīgha-nikāya and the Chinese Madhyamāgama preserve an independent text, and by the fact that, even while being incorporated in MPari, the CA/Gil version of MSud, as we have seen, remains less integrated with the MPari narrative framework in comparison to the Pāli version.

Moreover the notion of a free-standing independent sutta/sūtra seems to have remained somewhat loose during the formative phase of

\(^{41}\)D II 172,12–17: sutam kho pana m’etam: yassa rāñño khattiyassa muddhāvasitassa tadahu ’posathe paññarase sīsaṃ nāhātassa uposathikassa upari-pāsāda-vara-gatassa dibbaṃ cakkaratanaṃ pātubhatati ... so hoti rājā cakkavattī ti.

\(^{42}\)Rhys Davids tabulated the parallels between MPari and other parts of the Nikāyas almost a century ago (1954, 71–72) pointing out that something like two thirds of the text of MPari is found elsewhere in the Nikāyas.
Buddhist literature. Thus the Gilgit manuscript of the bhaiṣajya-vastu of the Mūlasarvāstivādin Vinaya refers the reader to “the Mahāsudarśana Sūtra in the Dirghāgama in the section of six sūtras” for the full text;\textsuperscript{43} the recently discovered Sanskrit manuscript of DĀ, which appears to belong to the (Mūla-)Sarvāstivādins, possesses an initial section precisely entitled the “section of six sūtras”. The final sūtra of this section is the Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra, and the section contains no separate text of the Mahāsudarśana Sūtra. This suggests that even when the Mahāsudarśana narrative was presented embedded in the MPari framework, it could be thought of as a free-standing, separate sūtra/sutta.\textsuperscript{44}

In suggesting that the Mahāsudassana narrative developed as an independent narrative I am not suggesting that, in preserving a version of that narrative as an independent text, the Pāli tradition has necessarily preserved a more “authentic” version closer to some hypothetical original. In fact, in certain respects, if the Mahāsudassana narrative did evolve independently from the MPari context, the Pāli version might be seen as representing a relatively advanced stage in so far as elements in its narrative seem to have been deliberately developed as counterpoints to the narrative of the Buddha’s death. The CA/Gil version despite being embedded in the MPari context still retains more of the character of a separate piece. There are perhaps other indications of the more developed character of the Pāli version: its tendency to talk of seven rather than four precious substances, as well as its enumeration of Mahāsudassana’s possessions as consisting of fourteen, rather than just six, sets of 84,000. And yet, we need to note that the CA/Gil version also in places shows evidence of additions and development in relation to the Pāli: thus the CA/Gil adds the detail that the city of Kuśāvatī is surrounded by seven moats (parikhā) in addition to seven walls (Matsumura 1988, 3,9–11); it speaks of the city as being filled with

\textsuperscript{43}Matsumura 1988, 131.6–7: \textit{vistareṇa mahāsudarśanasūtraṃ dirghāgame sāṣṭrürikānipāte}.

\textsuperscript{44}cf. also the discussion at Matsumura 1988, xxxiv.
twelve rather than ten sounds,\textsuperscript{45} it mentions the making of the “Dharma Palm Grove” in addition to the Dharma Palace and Dharma Lotus Pond.\textsuperscript{46}

I noted above how Waldschmidt was forced to the conclusion that, since all versions of MPari are associated with a substantially similar Mahāsudassana narrative, the substance of that narrative must belong to a relatively early period — the third or even the fourth century B.C.E. — and yet, because of its mythic style, he was troubled by that conclusion. In response, Bareau (1971, 76) has proposed that this substantial agreement might be seen instead as evidence of later borrowing among the ancient schools of Buddhism. Bareau’s suggestion is echoed by the more recent arguments of Schopen about dating early Buddhist sources. Schopen (1985, 23–30) argues that strictly we must date the Pāli Nikāyas as we have them to the period of the composition of the Pāli commentaries in “the fifth to the sixth centuries C.E.”, since these provide the earliest incontrovertible evidence for the existence of the Nikāyas in the form in which they have come down to us.\textsuperscript{47} Yet there are other forms of evidence to do with the development of Buddhist doctrine and Indian material culture, for example, that Schopen chooses to ignore. Elsewhere (1995, 475) Schopen complains that to treat the various canonical Vinayās as close in time to the lifetime of the Buddha is to conclude that “Buddhist monasticism had little or no real history or development, since by this argument monasticism appeared fully formed at the very beginning”. Significantly there are grounds for concluding that the Pāli Vinaya is a more recent document than the four primary Pāli Nikāyas.\textsuperscript{48} And to

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\textsuperscript{46}Matsumura 1988, 25,13–14: \textit{puṣkarinyāḥ purastād dharmaṁ tālavanāṁ māpayamti}.
\textsuperscript{47}Similarly the Āgamas cannot strictly be dated earlier than their translation into Chinese beginning in the second century C.E., and the date of the various manuscript fragments.
\textsuperscript{48}v. Hinüber 1996, 26: “Buddhist literature can be compared to the material culture in ancient India, which shows, e.g., that the cultural environment of the
insist on a date of the fifth or sixth century for Pāli Nikāyas is similarly to deny any real history or development for early Buddhist literature and doctrine. In terms of doctrinal development the four primary Nikāyas are clearly older than certain texts of the Khuddaka-nikāya and the texts of the Abhidhamma Piṭaka, which in turn are clearly older than the Pāli commentaries.

In the present context perhaps it is Waldschmidt’s (and Bareau’s) difficulty with mythic style as a feature of relatively early Buddhist texts that needs to be questioned. The style of Indian literature that predates or is contemporary with early Buddhist literature — the Vedas, Brāhmaṇas, Āranyakas, and earliest Upaniṣads, for example — does not suggest that the mythic or exaggerated numbers were alien literary motifs.

The issue of the origin and development of MSud — of whether we should view the MSud as originally a separate narrative that has subsequently been incorporated into the MPari, or as a minor incident that gradually grew and expanded until it outgrew its MPari frame and attained the status of a separate text in its own right — is not the main concern in the present context. The MSud is clearly an important narrative of early Buddhist literature: what is it doing? I want to consider this question primarily by reference to the Pāli version and Buddhaghosa’s commentary, but also by reference to the CA/Gil version.49

5. THE INTERPRETATION OF THE MSUD

The Pāli and CA/Gil versions are very similar in basic structure and contain the same basic elements, although each orders these slightly differently in places and has its own distinctive narrative emphasis. As we have seen, the Pāli is more closely tied to the narrative of the first four Nikāyas of the Sutta-piṭaka is markedly older than that of the Vinaya-piṭaka.”

49In what follows I refer to the page and line number of Matsumura’s revised edition of Waldschmidt’s Central Asian Sanskrit text, quoting Matsumura’s Sanskrit text without any of his critical apparatus.
Buddha’s death than the CA/G version. The Pāli narrative is thus more clearly and poignantly tied to the impermanence and passing of things, while in the CA/Gil version the dialogue between Mahāsudarśana and his chief queen is not so specifically related to death.

So what are we to make of this myth? Nineteenth- and early twentieth-century scholarship was often concerned with the question of origins. T.W. Rhys Davids thus commented in his introduction to his translation that the Mahāsudassana “legend is nothing more nor less than a spiritualized sun myth”. But he immediately goes on to say (p. 197) that even if this is so, “it is still essentially Buddhistic”. Jean Przyluski posited Babylonian influences on Buddhist descriptions of the cakravartin’s city, citing for example Herodotus’s account of the ancient city of the Medes, Ecbatana:

[T]he city now known as Ecbatana was built, a place of great size and strength fortified by concentric walls, these so planned that each successive circle was higher than the one below it by the height of the battlements … The circles are seven in number and the innermost contains the royal palace and treasury … The battlements of the five outer rings are painted in different colours, the first white, the second black, the third crimson, the fourth blue, the fifth orange; the battlements of the two inner rings are plated with silver and gold respectively.

The parallel is certainly striking, yet even if we accept such an account as a source of the conception of Kusāvatī, this will not help with the question of what a text such as the MSud meant to those who actually composed it and used it.

Texts describing kings and their ways in the Pāli canon have sometimes been read as offering a Buddhist theory of kingship and society, as providing prescriptions for how a good Buddhist king should behave, or as providing Buddhist legitimations of kingship and political power. Steven Collins (1998, 476–96) has recently, and rightly in my view,

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50 Rhys Davids and Rhys Davids 1959, 196f. This view is presumably derived from the work of Senart on the life of the Buddha at the end of nineteenth century, on which see de Jong 1997, 28f.
51 Histories I 98, translated by de Séllincourt and Burn 1972, 82.
Rupert Gethin
criticized this rather narrow and literalist approach to such texts. He attempts to unpack rather more, and suggests that they can be read as ironical and satirical comment on kings and society from the perspective of the ascetic renouncer.

Collins comments only rather briefly on the MSud (1998, 476–79) and focuses most attention on the CSS, a sutta that recounts another myth concerning a cakkavattin, or rather cakkavattins. He sums up as follows:

CSS does not express a Buddhist social theory: it tells a witty story, by turns pleasantly farcical and fearlessly imaginative, with some familiar doctrinal motifs in unexpected narrative settings; the whole parable being a disbelief suspending morality tale. (1998, 495)

While I think some of what Collins says about the CSS may apply to the MSud, we also need to bear in mind Collins’s observation, quoted above, concerning the need for understanding these suttas as redacted wholes. So, for example, following Rhys Davids and Tambiah, Collins reads the CSS account of the cakkavattin’s conquest of the world with the aid of his wheel-treasure and the admonition to his subjects to keep the five precepts as a parody, an ironical comment on the way in which ancient armies and kings actually did achieve their conquests. Collins comments:

If the Sutta were to be performed as a drama in modern dress I would have the king as a Mafia boss along with his sons and a crowd of hit-men, strolling calmly into opponents’ territory and asserting his power by carefully worded homilies on Catholicism and family values. (485)

While this may vividly bring out a dimension of the text that we might otherwise miss, we must be careful. The account of the cakkavattin’s conquest of the world with the aid of his celestial wheel-treasure is common to both CSS and MSud, and Collins’s reading seems to me problematic in the context of the MSud. In the MSud the cakkavattin is Mahāsudassana, and Mahāsudassana is the bodhisatta. Can we really read the tale of Mahāsudassana as the tale of how the Buddha in a previous life was once, as it were, a big Mafia boss who guarded his lucrative patch on the South Side? I am doubtful and in any case think it
possible only if we are prepared to read the MSud as a narrative of such a Mafia boss’s reform and genuine renunciation of his former evil ways. Moreover we should note that the cakravartin’s conquest of the world with the aid of his celestial wheel-treasure is not recounted in the CA/Gil version, while in the Pāli version it plays a quite different role and is rather less prominent in the narrative of the MSud than in that of the CSS. In the Pāli version of the MSud all seven treasures of the king are elaborately described, not just the wheel treasure as in the CSS. And significantly at one place in the Nikāyas we are explicitly told that the seven treasures of a wheel turning king correspond to another set of treasures, namely the seven constituents of awakening (bojjhaṅga):

As a result of the appearance of a cakkavattin king there is the appearance of seven treasures. Which seven? There is the appearance of the wheel-treasure … of the elephant-treasure … of the horse-treasure … of the gem-treasure … of the woman-treasure … of the master-treasure … of the adviser-treasure. As a result of the appearance of a Tathāgata, an arahant, a fully awakened one there is the appearance of the seven treasures that are the constituents of awakening. Which seven? There is the appearance of the treasure that is the constituent of awakening that is mindfulness … of the treasure that is the constituent of awakening that is equipoise.52

This to me is suggestive of the possibility of a certain symbolism operating in the myth of the MSud, of the possibility that the world of Mahāsudassana should be understood as not so dissimilar from the world of Buddhist practice and meditation. With this in mind I want to consider now a reading of MSud as essentially a mythic narrative of the Buddhist path.

6. MSUD AS A MYTHIC NARRATIVE OF THE BUDDHIST PATH

If one considers the MSud narrative as a whole, one might suggest that it is basically a narrative of a journey out of this world. This aspect of the narrative is apparent at a number of levels. First, the backdrop of MSud is the story of the Buddha’s death, his final departure from the world of saµsåra. Secondly, the story of Mahåsudassana’s life and (especially in the Pålì version) death forms a literary counterpoint to the story of the Buddha’s death. But there is a third level. The narrative of MSud also tells the story of Mahåsudassana’s withdrawal from his city into its inner sanctum, the Palace of Dhamma — a journey from the outer world of the city to the inner world of the Palace of Dhamma — although in the CA/Gil version, where the Palace of Dharma is described as situated to the east of the city, the movement is perhaps away from the city, emphasising renunciation and the giving up of the household life. While it is explicit only in the CA/Gil version, in both versions the king’s entering the Palace of Dhamma effectively marks the beginning of a life as a celibate ascetic removed from his possessions and his wives.

At the beginning of the sutta Mahåsudassana is established within his city within his kingdom where everything is well. The first half of the sutta emphasizes Mahåsudassana’s siila and dåna; he establishes dåna at the lotus ponds providing food and drink, etc. In the Pålì version as he enters the inner Palace of Dhamma he reflects on what has brought him to this state: “It is as a fruit and result of three kinds of action, namely giving (dåna), control (dama), and restraint (saµyama), that I now have such great fortune and power.”53 The general implications of the latter two terms in the present context seem clear enough, but the commentary spells out specific meanings: while in the Ālavaka Sutta (Sn 181–92) dama means “wisdom” (paññå), here it should be understood as keeping the observance day (uposatha-kamma);

53D II 186: tiññañ kho me idam kammānaµ phalam, tiññañ kammānaµ vipāko, yenāhaµ etarahi evaµ mahiddhiko evaµ mahānubhāvo, seyyathidaµ dānassa damassa saµyamassā ti.
saṃyama is just sila.\textsuperscript{54} If we think in terms of the division of Buddhist practice by way of the three bases of meritorious action (puñña-kiriya-vatthu),\textsuperscript{55} so far, then, we have had dāna and sila; we are now going to get bhāvanā.

As Mahāsudassana enters the Room of the Great Array he “breathed a sigh: ‘Stop here, thoughts of sensual desire! Stop here, thoughts of hostility! Stop here, thoughts of malice!’”\textsuperscript{56} If the Palace of Dhamma is in general a place for a celibate ascetic, its innermost chambers are a place where not even thoughts of sensual desire, hostility, and malice are allowed. The commentary is explicit: the king is entering the house or room of meditation (jhānāgāra), and such thoughts have no place inside it.\textsuperscript{57} We are then told how the king does indeed practise the jhānas in this meditation room: all four in the Room of the Great Array according to the Pāli version, while according to the CA/Gil version he practises just the first dhyāna in each of the different chambers — gold, silver, beryl, crystal.\textsuperscript{58}

\textsuperscript{54}Sv II 630–31: damassā ti Ālavaka-sutte paññā damo ti āgato, idha attānaṃ damentena katam uposatha-kammaṃ. samyamassā ti sīlassa. This passage is missing from the CA/Gil and some other versions but is contained in two of the Chinese translations of the Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra which seem to reflect slightly different terminology (dāna, kṣāntidama, dhyānalmaitrī); see Matsumura 1988, lli.

\textsuperscript{55}D III 218: A IV 241–43.

\textsuperscript{56}D II 186: mahā-vyūhassa kūṭāgārassa dvāre ṭhito udānaṃ udānesi: tiṭṭha kāma-vitakka. tiṭṭha vyāpāda-vitakka. tiṭṭha vihimsā-vitakka.

\textsuperscript{57}Sv II 632: mahāviyūhan ti rajatamayaṃ mahā-kūṭāgāraṃ. tattha vasitu-kāmo hūtvā agamāsi, ettavatā kāma-vitakkā ti kāma-vitakka tayā ettavatā nivattitabbaṃ, ito paraṃ turyham abhūmi, idaṃ jhānāgāram nāma, na-y-idaṃ tayā saddhiṃ vasanaṭṭhānan ti, evaṃ tayo vitakke kūṭāgāra-dvāre yeva nivattesi.

\textsuperscript{58}According to the Da zhi du lun (Lamotte 1949, 765) he practises the first, second, third, and fourth dhyānas in respectively the gold, silver, beryl, and crystal chambers. The translation of the Mahāparinirvāṇa Sūtra included in T. 1 (= Dirghāgama) and the independent translation T. 7 mention four dhyānas; the other two independent translations (T. 5 and 6) refer to the contemplation of impmanence; the independent Madhyamāgama
The Pāli commentary emphasizes the way in which the Mahāsudassana’s Palace of Dhamma is suited to the practice of jhāna by pointing out that the king had no need for actual individual kasiṇas to use as a starting point for his jhāna practice, since wherever he looked sapphire served as a blue kasiṇa, gold as a yellow kasiṇa, ruby as a red kasiṇa, silver as a white kasiṇa. In the Pāli version he proceeds straight from the practice of the four jhānas to the practice of the four brahmavihāras, though in the CA/Gil and other versions these come later.

The palace is thus a place only for those who practice the spiritual life, and a place where they can practise meditation. In entering the Palace of Dhamma Mahāsudassana has left behind all his possessions: the Pāli version enumerates fourteen lots of 84,000 possessions, the CA/Gil just six lots. But he has not put them behind him for good: they are about to come to remind him of their existence.

Dressed in all their finery and headed by the Woman Treasure Mahāsudassana’s 84,000 wives along with his four armies come streaming into the Palace of Dhamma, knocking on the door of the inner room. The king hears the commotion and comes out from the room to tell the women that they are not to come inside. The queen then urges him to arouse desire for all his possessions and for life. But the king reprimands her: like all practitioners of the spiritual life he must not cling to his possessions but let go of them, he must see them as impermanent; while his possessions and good fortune may have come to him as the result of the practice of giving, control, and restraint, they are now obstacles to his progress.

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Mahāsudarśana Sūtra (T. 26) again mentions just the first dhyāna; I am grateful to Dr Kin Tung Yit for this information.

Mythology as Meditation

The CA/Gil version describes how when the king sees the women he is wary lest they excite his desire and so averts his eyes and guards his senses.\(^{60}\) This echoes the Buddha’s advice to Ānanda on how to deal with women which is also found in some other versions of the MPari.\(^{61}\) When the queen sees the king lower his eyes she wishes that he were not uninterested in his wives and then urges him to arouse desire for all his possessions.

The CA/Gil version brings out the way in which his wives are now obstacles to his progress along the Buddhist path in a rather nice play on words. The king says to his chief queen: while in the past you have always acted as a friend (mitra), now you are acting as a rival (sapatna).\(^{62}\) The word sapatna which comes to be used of a rival, opponent, or obstacle in a general sense, is derived from sapatn\(\text{ī}\), a co-wife, a woman who shares her husband, which is, of course, exactly what the Woman Treasure is; she shares her husband M with 83,999 other women to be precise. So the attractions of life as a king outside in the city with wives and possessions represent rivals – obstacles which are opposed to life in the Palace of Dhamma with no wives and no possessions. The world of the senses outside is opposed to the world of meditation inside. And the way to overcome the opponent? Reflect on its impermanence and thereby lose desire for it. Both versions use the narrative to provide its listeners with what is in effect a long, twice repeated meditation on impermanence: first the king instructs the queen on how she should remind him of the impermanence of his possessions

\(^{60}\)Matsumura, 1988, 35,4–6: \textit{adrakṣīd rājā mahāsudarśano dharmaprā-sādādhastāt sarvās tā striyaḥ pītavastramālyābharaṇāḥ pītānulepanā dṛṣṭvā ca punar asyatād abhayat atitraṇjaniyo bata mātrgrāma iti viditvā indriyāny utkṣipati.}

\(^{61}\)D II 141; the Central Asian version edited by Waldschmidt does not contain this incident, but it is found in T. 1 (Dirghāgama version) and the independent T. 7 as well as in an Ekottarāgama text. See Bareau, 1971, 34–35; Matsumura, 1988, Chart IV.

\(^{62}\)Matsumura, 1988, 39,1–2: \textit{pūrve ca tvāṁ bhagini māṁ mitravat samudācarasi sā tvāṁ tarhi sapatnavat.}
and then she carries out his instructions. To quote from the beginning of the Pāli version:

We must lose and be deprived of and separated from everything pleasant and dear. Lord, you should not die with longing. Unhappy and unfortunate is the death of one who dies with longing.63

Or as the CA/Gil version puts it:

Short is the life of man, troubles must be endured. Do what is good! Practise the spiritual life! There is no escape from death for one who has been born; the moment, instant, or second when you must give up this body completely is not known. Whatever desire … you have for your 84,000 women … give it up, be without desire for life.64

It is worth noting here that the long and repetitive list of Mahāsudassana’s various possessions is repeated in full a total of six times in the second half of the Pāli version — a tedious repetition perhaps, unless one takes the second half of the sutta as a deliberately repeated meditation on the beauties and splendours of the world and crucially their impermanence. I shall return to the question of repetitions in the text of MSud presently.

Let me sum up this reading of MSud as a mythic narrative of the Buddhist path. The outer city is the place for the household life; it is in effect the ordinary world, the world of the five senses (kāma-dhātu). The Palace of Dhamma is the place for the celibate and spiritual life (brahma-cariya) of an ascetic; its rooms are for the practice of meditation, of jhāna, and to enter them is in effect to enter the world of pure

63D II 192 : sabbeh’ eva deva piyehi manāpehi nānā-bhāvo vinā-bhāvo aññathā-bhāvo. mā kho tvaṁ deva sāpekhokālam akāsi. dukkhā sāpekhassa kāla-kiriyā, garahitā ca sāpekhassā kāla-kiriyā.

form (*rūpa-dhātu*). Having practised *dāna* and *sīla*, the king is ready to move from the outer city to the inner Palace of Dhamma. Here he practises the *jhānas* and *brahma-vihāras*, following which he meditates on the impermanence of all conditioned things. This is a very straightforward and clear narrative of the Buddhist path: *dāna* and *sīla* followed by *bhāvanā* consisting of the practice of *samādhi* or *samatha* and *paññā* or *vipassanā*. As Rhys Davids observed, this is indeed a thoroughly Buddhistic narrative.

7. MSUD AND VISUALIZATION

One of the features of especially the first half of MSud is the pervasive presence in the description of the various parts of the city of seven, or just four, precious substances or colours: gold, silver, beryl, crystal, ruby, sapphire, and all kinds of gems. These substances and colours form the basis of the description of the city’s walls, its gates, its pillars, its trees, its lotus ponds, and their staircases. They form the basis of the description of the Palace of Dhamma, its staircases, its chambers, its couches, and also its groves of trees. They form the basis of the description of the lotus pond that lies in front of the Palace of Dhamma. Everything in the city is described as being made of gold, silver, beryl, crystal, ruby, sapphire, and all kinds of gems in a manner that the modern reader is tempted to characterize as simply boring. Why not just say everything is made out of these things and move on, why dwell on it at every possible chance? For not only are we told that everything is made of these seven or four precious substances, at a number of points we are laboriously informed that trees and railings made of one substance have leaves and fruit, crossbars and handrails, of another substance:
The trunks of the golden palm trees were gold, the leaves and fruits silver; the trunks of the silver palm trees were silver, the leaves and fruits gold …

What is going on? At the end of his introduction to his translation of MSud Rhys Davids refers to the aspiration of some Mahāyānists to “a life of happiness … in a heaven of bliss beyond the skies”. He comments:

One of the most popular books among the Buddhists of China and Japan is a description of this heavenly paradise of theirs, called the Sukhāvatī-vyūha [sic], the “Book of the Happy Country.” It is instructive to find that several of the expressions used are word for word the same as the corresponding phrases in our much older “Book of the Great King of Glory [= MSud].” (1954, 198)

Some might hesitate to describe MSud so confidently as “much older” than the Sukhāvatīvyūha Sūtra, though there can, I think, be little doubt that the descriptions of Mahāsudassana’s city are earlier and that they provide something of a template for the descriptions of comparable cities in the Mahāvastu and Divyāvadāna, and of Amitābha’s Pure Land.

In a recent article entitled “Mediums and Messages: Reflections on the Production of Mahāyāna Sūtras”, Paul Harrison (2003) has drawn attention to what he sees as the early or proto-Mahāyāna extension of the mainstream practice of buddhānusmṛti to involve the visualization of Buddhas and their worlds — worlds which are described in texts like the Sukhāvatīvyūha. He comments that the descriptions of these worlds are often long-winded and certainly rather tedious to modern sensibilities. He cites a specific example from the Sukhāvatīvyūha Sūtra which describes at some length how the trees that grow in Sukhāvatī are made of seven precious substances gold, silver, beryl, crystal, sapphire, ruby, and emerald. The description here is elaborated in a way that echoes the MSud description in a specific way:

\[D \text{ II 171: sovaṇṇamayassa tālassa sovaṇṇamayo khandho ahosi, rūpi-mayāṇi pattāni ca phalāni ca. rūpimayassa tālassa rūpimayo khandho ahosi sovaṇṇa-mayāṇi pattāni ca phalāni ca.}\]
Mythology as Meditation

There, Ánanda, the trees made of gold have roots, trunks, shoots, branches, flowers, and leaves made of gold, but fruits made of silver. The trees made of silver have flowers, leaves, branches, limbs, trunks, and roots made only of silver, but fruits made of beryl.66

It continues in similar vein ringing the changes. Harrison points out that in the early Chinese recensions of this text this section is even more long-winded than in the more familiar versions. It is thus potentially even more tedious. He then suggests, however, that its tedium disappears once we understand this is a text not to be read but performed: the listener is being provided with detailed and precise instructions for an elaborate visualization. To quote Harrison directly:

This gives us a new way of reading the text, as a template for visualisation, the sheer detail of which now begins to make sense. What we are left with on the printed page resembles the wiring diagram for a television set, of interest only to electricians, baffling and tediously complex to anyone else. But when we “do” the text rather than read it, when we perform its operations ourselves, it suddenly becomes a little more interesting.

Harrison tends to focus on this kind of visualization as characteristic of early or proto-Mahāyāna meditation, yet if his intuition about this section of the Sukhāvatiyūha is correct, then it should equally apply to MSud.67 In which case we must reconsider the place of visualization in what Harrison refers to as “mainstream” Buddhism.

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67It is true that the full Sukhāvatiyūha passage is more elaborate, taking as its basis seven precious substances with seven parts of a tree, but the essential “visual” device would seem to be the sequence of different types of tree, with different types of leaves and fruit. The CA/Gil version uses only four substances to similar effect: “the leaves, flowers and fruit of the golden palms were silver …” (Matsumura 1988, 3.13–5.1: sauvaraṇasyatālasya rājataṇ patraṇ puṣpaṇ phalaṇ māpitam abhūt). That MSud might be understood as a suggestion that Lance Cousins has made in my hearing on several occasions. The fact that both Harrison and Cousins have responded separately to essentially the same text possibly lends weight to it.
One obvious objection to the suggestion that MSud might be read as a visualization is the general lack of supporting evidence: the accounts of meditation preserved in the Nikāyas and such mainstream manuals as the Vimuttimagga, Visuddhimagga, and Abhidharmakośa do not seem to provide explicit instructions for the practice of visualization nor do they show much interest in it. Such an objection is perhaps not as strong as it might first seem.

One problem here is defining precisely what is meant by the English term “visualization”, a term which does not have a clear Sanskrit equivalent. In the proto-Mahāyāna and early Mahāyana texts discussed by Harrison and others the idea of visualization is largely inferred from contexts where “recollection of the Buddha” (buddhānusmṛti) is presented by reference to the appearance of the Buddha or buddhas, and by accounts of practitioners mentally “seeing” (simplex forms of the verbal roots paś and dṛṣ are used) the Buddha or buddhas. In the later esoteric Buddhism of the vajrayāna the notion of “visualization” appears to be commonly conveyed by use of that most universal of words for “meditation”, the causative (vi)bhāvayati, having as its object, for example, “an image of the Buddha” (buddha-bimba). While other words and expressions are also used to convey the general idea of visualization, what seems clear is that there is no specialized word or expression in Buddhist Sanskrit texts for “visualization”. Moreover the notion of “visualization” is somewhat loose, ranging from having some kind of vision, to deliberately cultivating a specific prescribed image. It seems worth considering the possible evidence in the non-Mahāyāna materials of a more general interest in the visual in a meditative context.

Certainly there is some. Harrison and Yamabe have pointed to the accounts of buddhānusmṛti in the Chinese Ekottarāgama (which mentions the use of an image as an aid to practice) and the Mahāvastu

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(which includes some account of the Buddha’s appearance). Yamabe (1999, 15) also cites a remarkable passage from the Central Asian meditation manual edited and translated by Dieter Schlingloff which describes a vision in connection with the practice of mindfulness of breathing in and out:

Moreover as he progresses with the practice of breathing in and out, the world and his body appear made of crystal; from his head a jewelled tree spreads out over infinite worlds. In the full-leafed branches of this tree there appear buddhas teaching the Dharma: jewels, flowers, and lotuses of various colours issue from their mouths in a rain that scatters across the world. The roots of the tree, which shine like beryl and are hollow within, appear set in a golden circle with the soles of the yogin’s feet.

The mention of crystal, beryl, and jewelled trees with leaves and fruits of various colours also recalls the MSud and Sukhāvatīvyūha. In addition Yamabe (1999, 6–12) cites the practice of contemplating a rotting corpse as described in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta as an example of a visualization from the earliest sources, and argues that the fuller and more specific instructions for asubha-bhāvanā and kasiṇa practice found in such texts as the Visuddhimagga are in fact quite close to the

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70 Schlingloff 1964, 79: punar āsvāspraśvāsāt vāhayataḥ sphaṭikamayo lokaḥ āśrayas ca drśyaṃte | tato mūrdhṇaḥ ratnamayo vṛksaḥ anantaḥ lokadhātvāḥ sparitvā tiṣṭhāti | tasmāṃ vṛkṣe ghanapattraśākhāsu buddhā drśyaṃte dharmanā desaṃvamtaḥ tāṃmukhaniḥṣṛtaḥ ratnapuspadapatnāvair nānāvarṇair loko vyavakīryate | vṛkṣamūlāni ca vaiḍūryabhāṃmy antaḥsusirāṇi ... kāṃcanaacakre praṭiṣṭhitaḥ drśyaṃte. My translation of this passage follows Schlingloff’s German more closely than Yamabe’s English.

71 “Again, monks, a monk considers this body as though he were looking at a body left in a charnel ground, one, two, or three days dead, bloated, livid, and festering: This body is of the same nature, of the same constitution, it has not got beyond this.” (M I 58: puna ca param, bhikkhave, bhikkhu seyyathā pi passeyya sariraṃ sivathikāya chadditaṃ ekāhamataṃ vā dvihamataṃ vā tihamataṃ vā adhammatakaṃ vinilakṣitaṃ viuppakajātaṃ, so imam eva kāyaṃ upasaṃkarati: ayam pi kho kāyo evaṃdhhammo evaṃbhāvī etaṃ anatīto ti).
instructions for visualization of the Buddha found in the fifth century C.E. compilation *Wumen chanjing yaoyong fa*.

Further examples can be cited. Sally Mellick’s work on the late canonical *Apadāna* has brought to light an important passage of several pages that quite clearly describes a visualization of a “palace” (*pāsāda*) carried out by the Buddha himself in terms that once more resonate with the Mahāsudassana narrative:

Mentally I collected in full the incalculable gems in the sky and on the earth; there on the silver ground I created (*māpayiṃ*) a jewelled palace with many storeys … It had colourful pillars … the first storey was of beryl … it possessed fine gabled rooms —— blue, yellow, red, white, and pure black —— decorated with the seven jewels.72

The use of the verb *māpeti* here —— the same verb employed in MSud in connection with the construction of the Dhamma Palace —— in the sense of “[mentally] create” is worth noting.

The Abhidharmakośa provides a further clear example of a visualization in connection once more with the practice *aśubha-bhāvanā*:

The ascetic who wishes to develop [the meditation on] ugliness first fixes his mind on some part of his own body…. Cleansing the bone at that point by progressively visualizing73 the flesh as saturated with moisture, he sees the full skeleton. Then, in order to extend his vision, he visualizes a second skeleton in exactly the same way until by progressively taking in the monastery, park, and countryside, he visualizes the earth encircled by the ocean as full of skeletons. Then, in order to gather in his mind, he gathers in [his vision] until he visualizes just his own skeleton.74

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72 *Ap* 1 : ākāsaḥḥā ca bhūmaṭṭhā, manasā sabbām āhariṁ // tattha rūpiya- bhūmiyāṃ pāsādaṃ māpayim ahaṃ / 'nekahummaṃ ratanamayaṃ ... // vicittathambham... // paṭhamā veṭuriyā bhūmi ... // nilā pītā lohitakā odātā suddhakāḷakā kūṭāgāravārūpetā sattaratanaḥḥūsitā // My translation is adapted from Mellick 1993, II 435–38.

73 This passage appears to employ *adhi- muci* in a sense that approximates to “visualize”; cf. *BHSD* s.v. *adhimucyate* and *CPD* and *DOP* s.v. *adhimuccati* for the use of these verbs in the sense of “transform (something, acc.) by magic into (something else, acc.).”

74 *Abhidh-k VI 10 a–b (bhāsya): aśubhāṃ bhāvayitukāma ādito yogācāraḥ svāṅgāvayave cittam nibadhniṃ pādānguṣṭhe laḷāte yatā cāsyābhiratiḥ ∣ sa
Finally it is worth drawing attention to the description of the “sign” (nimitta) that, according to the Pāli commentaries, is seen by the successful practitioner of mindfulness of breathing in and out:

It appears to some like a star or a cluster of gems or a cluster of pearls, to others with a rough touch like that of silk-cotton, seeds, or a peg made of heartwood, to others like a long braid string or a wreath of flowers or a puff of smoke, to others like a stretched-out cobweb or a film of cloud or a lotus flower or a chariot wheel of the moon’s disk or the sun’s disk.\(^{75}\)

More generally the “counterpart sign” (paṭibhāga-nimitta) associated with the attainment of concentration is said to appear to the meditator “like a looking-glass disk drawn from its case, like a mother of pearl dish well washed, like the moon’s disk coming out from behind a cloud”.\(^{76}\)

It seems to me that these passages provide sufficient evidence of the importance of the “visual” in the context of Indian Buddhist meditation generally. We should perhaps also consider that one reason for the relative lack of formal instruction in “visualization” may also be that the visual aspect of certain passages — the fact that they were meant to be imagined and brought to life — may have been largely taken for granted. If we conceive of these texts as being composed orally, being transmitted orally, then the visual dimension may have come alive more

\(^{75}\)Sp II 427 = Paṭis-a II 500 = Vism 285 (VIII 215) : idaṃ hi kassaci târaka-rāpaṃ viya, maṇi-gulikā viya, mutta-gulikā viya ca kassaci kharasamphassaṃ hutvā kappāṣṭhi viya, sāradārusāci viya ca kassaci dīghapāmaṅgasuttam viya, kusumadāmaṃ viya, dhūmasikā viya ca kassaci viṭṭhata makkāka-suttaṃ viya, valāhakapaṭṭalām viya, padumapupphaṃ viya, rathacakkam viya, candamaṇḍalāṃ viya, sūriyamaṇḍalaṃ viya ca upaṭṭhāti. Translation from Ñāṇamoli 1956.

\(^{76}\)Vism 126 (IV 31) : paṭibhāganimittaṃ thavikato nihaṭṭadāsa-maṇḍalaṃ viya, sudhota-saṅkhathālaṃ viya, valāhakantarā nikkhanta-canda-maṇḍalaṃ viya.
or less spontaneously to those reciting and listening to the texts. An oral culture may well nurture a more active visual imagination than a culture transmitted via TV, cinema, and computer screens.

One place one might look for confirmation that MSud should be taken as a visualization is obviously the commentary of Buddhaghosa. It must be said that the evidence of the commentary is inconclusive. I have already referred to one or two passages which certainly suggest that the commentary, in places at least, read MSud as a myth of the Buddhist path. Certainly there appears to be little if any evidence that the commentarial tradition was interested in finding some social theory embedded in the sutta, or in drawing lessons about how kings should behave. While there appear to be no specific instructions about visualization, none the less, the commentary does seem interested in the visual dimension of MSud. So, for example, the commentary is concerned to add further details about the city’s walls, the pillars, and the palm trees.

The innermost and highest wall is the one made out of all kinds of gems, and it is sixty cubits in height. However, some elders say that it is to those standing surveying it from within that the city looks lovely, therefore it is the outermost wall that is sixty cubits, the others being increasingly lower; some elders say that it is to those standing surveying the city from without that the city looks lovely, and it is therefore the innermost wall that is sixty cubits, the rest being increasingly lower. And some elders say that it is to those standing and surveying the city from both within and without that it looks lovely, and it is therefore the middle wall that is sixty cubits, and the three outer and inner walls are increasingly lower. Given that Yamabe (1999, 174–79) suggests that Sanskrit (vy)avalokayati should be seen as part of the technical vocabulary of meditative visualization, it is worth noting that the verb I have translated above as “survey” is the Pāli equivalent oloketi and that, as

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77Sv II 616.
Yamabe himself notes, this is the verb used for surveying the initial object in the practice of _asubha_ and _kasiṇa_ meditation.\(^7^8\)

In the light of the comparison made between the _nimitta_ seen in meditation and a chariot wheel and the disks of the sun and moon, it is perhaps also significant that the commentary devotes considerable space to elaborating on the description of the wheel treasure (Sv II 617–19) telling how some mistook its appearance as a second full moon. Furthermore when the king sees the wheel treasure his body is suffused with strong joy and gladness, and he gets up from his seat to look through the window.\(^7^9\) Such an account recalls the uplifting (_ubbegā_) and suffusing (_pharaṇā_) joy that according to the standard commentarial account of the attainment of _jhāna_ arises with the attainment of concentration and the appearance of the counterpart sign.\(^8^0\)

The possibility of reading aspects of the Mahāsudassana narrative as a visualization raises the possibility of a further connection with much later Buddhist ideas and practices, namely those associated with _maṇḍala_ in the esoteric Buddhism of the Vajrayāna. In his work on Barabudur originally published in the 1930s Paul Mus posits and explores the possible continuities between the construction of the Vedic fire altar, the architecture of stūpas and temples, the description of the city of the cakravartin, and _maṇḍalas_.\(^8^1\) All these constructions in their different ways define a sacred space that is at once a diagram of the cosmos and a point of access between the levels of that cosmos. It seems to me that the Mahāsudassana narrative bears a rather marked resemblance to aspects of the later accounts of _maṇḍalas_. Anthony Tribe (2000, 227–28, 230) sums up the nature of a _maṇḍala_ as a tantric deity’s residence conceived of as a temple-palace comprising a series of

\(^7^8\) e.g. Vism 114 (III 119), 185–86 (VI 50).

\(^7^9\) Sv II 620: _atha rājā balava-pīṭa-pāmojja-ṣuṭa-sarīro pallaṅkaṁ mocetvā utthāy’ āsanā sīhapāṇijara-saṁipaṁ gantvā taṁ cakka-ratanaṁ disvā._

\(^8^0\) See D I 73–74 (the canonical description of the first _jhāna_ and its simile) and Vism 125–6 (IV 31); 143–44 (IV 94–99).

concentric square courtyards with decorated gateways in the middle of each side and the main deity enthroned at the centre; typically a *manḍala* is constructed both ritually and mentally as a visualization that is subsequently dissolved. The narrative of MSud seems to prefigure aspects of this in quite remarkable ways. The narrative takes the listener from the ordinary world — an insignificant village of huts in the jungle — to a fabulous city where a many-roomed jewelled palace is constructed to be entered only by the royal seer who follows the path of meditation. And having given its listeners this fabulous vision, the narrative proceeds to slowly and deliberately dissolve it, bringing the listeners back to the present: the ordinary world, the village of mud huts. While the significance of this possible affinity between the Mahāsudassana narrative and much later tantric practice must be a matter for speculation, it is perhaps worth in conclusion recalling certain of Mus’s own reflections (1998, 341):

> Our interpretation of early Buddhism and Buddhism of the middle period would indeed find useful confirmation in the facility with which it can be applied to the late forms: for whatever may have been said about them, the greater part of the latter have their origins in the early doctrine, or its first specifications … [T]he stūpa of the Pāli tradition with their effigies of the Buddha, of his disciples, etc., are already illustrated *manḍala*: … Buddhist Tantrism therefore invented nothing; or rather what it invented was a cipher. It transcribed the ancient values with the help of more limited conventions.

8. CONCLUSION

To return to the question posed at the beginning of this article: what is the Mahāsudassana “myth” doing in the corpus of early Buddhist literature? It seems to me that, as Collins (1998, 495) has suggested in the case of CSS, the text works in the first place by placing certain familiar doctrinal and especially meditative motifs in an unexpected narrative setting — a narrative setting that is “by turns pleasantly farcical and fearfully imaginative”. Thus, while I think there is undoubted humour and wit in the MSud — especially, for example, in the account of the king’s wives bustling into the palace to see the king — this humour and wit is not so much satirical as simply an aspect of an entertaining nar-
rative that would have engaged a monastic audience concerned with the celibate life.

Even if we hesitate to regard the MSud as a formal visualization in, say, the manner of the tantric maṇḍala, yet its meditative and contemplative dimensions remain manifest. The slow, unhurried description of the city with its groves of jewelled trees with tinkling bells and its lotus ponds, of the palace with its jewelled rooms and couches, evokes an image and sense of wellbeing and calm. The story of the king’s conversation and of his death, especially in the Pāli version, is of considerable emotional intensity: it is a story of letting go, of the passing of the things to which we are deeply attached — the passing even of the Buddha himself. It is thus a perfect complement to the story of Ānanda’s weeping when it sinks in that his teacher will soon die. The MSud thus has the power to move and arouse — certainly in its ancient listeners — religious emotion in the manner so well brought out by Steven Collins in his discussion of the Vessantara Jātaka (1998, 497–554). It is in this sense — the sense in which, after all, the recollections of the qualities of the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha are classified as meditations (kammaṭṭhāna) in the Pāli commentaries — that we might characterize the MSud myth as a form of early Buddhist “meditation”.

Rupert Gethin

82 D II 143; Waldschmidt 1951, 294–96.
### APPENDIX

#### COMPARATIVE TABLE OF THE MSUD PĀLI AND CA/GIL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pāli version</th>
<th>Central Asian/Gilgit version</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mahāsudassana-sutta / Mahāsudarśana-sūtra</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mahāsudarśana-sūtra</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>169.1–3.</strong> The Buddha is lying between the two sal trees at the time of his death.</td>
<td><strong>169.1–3.</strong> The Buddha is lying between the two sal trees at the time of his death.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>169.4–15.</strong> Ānanda urges the Buddha not to die in a small a town like Kusinārā.</td>
<td><strong>169.4–15.</strong> Ānanda urges the Buddha not to die in a small a town like Kusinārā.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>169.16–170.2.</strong> Kusinārā was once the royal city of King Mahāsudassana and called Kusāvatī.</td>
<td><strong>169.16–170.2.</strong> Kusinārā was once the royal city of King Mahāsudassana and called Kusāvatī.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Later: 170.7–11]</td>
<td>[Later: 170.7–11]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>170.2–5.</strong> It was 12 × 7 leagues.</td>
<td><strong>170.2–5.</strong> It was 12 × 7 leagues.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>170.7–11.</strong> It was prosperous, like Ālakamandā, city of the gods.</td>
<td><strong>170.7–11.</strong> It was prosperous, like Ālakamandā, city of the gods.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>170.11–16.</strong> It was filled with the ten sounds.</td>
<td><strong>170.11–16.</strong> It was filled with the ten sounds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>170.17–21.</strong> It was surrounded by 7 walls – of gold, silver, beryl, crystal, ruby, emerald, and all kinds of gems.</td>
<td><strong>170.17–21.</strong> It was surrounded by 7 walls – of gold, silver, beryl, crystal, ruby, emerald, and all kinds of gems.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>170.22–171.1.</strong> It had 4 gates made of gold, silver, beryl, and crystal.</td>
<td><strong>170.22–171.1.</strong> It had 4 gates made of gold, silver, beryl, and crystal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>171.1–5.</strong> There were 7 pillars at each gate made of gold, etc. (7 kinds).</td>
<td><strong>171.1–5.</strong> There were 7 pillars at each gate made of gold, etc. (7 kinds).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>[Missing.]</td>
<td>[Missing.]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>171.6–21.</strong> The city was surrounded by 7 rows of palm trees of gold, etc. (7 kinds); trunk–leaves–fruits variation.</td>
<td><strong>171.6–21.</strong> The city was surrounded by 7 rows of palm trees of gold, etc. (7 kinds); trunk–leaves–fruits variation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>171.22–172.3.</strong> Stirred by the wind the trees make a lovely sound.</td>
<td><strong>171.22–172.3.</strong> Stirred by the wind the trees make a lovely sound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>172.3–5.</strong> The drunkards of the city dance to the sound.</td>
<td><strong>172.3–5.</strong> The drunkards of the city dance to the sound.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>172.6–7.</strong> M had 7 treasures.</td>
<td><strong>172.6–7.</strong> M had 7 treasures.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **172.8–177.14.** Detailed account of M’s 7 treasures: wheel, elephant,
horse, gem, woman, treasurer, adviser.

177.15–178.20. Account of 4 āṭddhis: good looks, long life, good health, popularity.

178.21–179.12. M builds lotus ponds among the palm trees with tiles of gold, etc., flights of staircases of gold, etc.; surrounded by two railings with gold uprights and silver cross bars and hand rail, etc.

179.14–19. M has various kinds of lotuses grown in the ponds.  
[Missing.]

179,20–25. M provides bath attendants.

179,26–180.5. M provides dāna: food, drink, clothing, transport, beds, wives, money.  
[Earlier: 172,3–5]

[Earlier: 170,11–16]

[Earlier: 169,16, 172,6–7]

[Earlier in full: 172,8–177,14]

[Earlier: 177,15–178,20]

180.6–12. Brahmans and householders offer money to the king: turned down.

180,13–21. They do not want to take the money back and offer to build the king a dwelling (nivesana); the king accepts.

[Later: 9,4–13,2]

5,5–13. There are lotus ponds among the palm trees; similarly described.

5,13–7,2. Various kinds of lotuses grow in the ponds.

7,2–5. Various kinds of flowers grow on the banks of the ponds.  
[Missing.]

7,5–8. M has girls hand out food, drink, clothing, garlands and perfume.

7,8–10. The drunkards enjoy themselves and dance among the palm trees.

7,11–15. The city is filled with the 12 sounds.

9,1–2. Kuśavatī was the city of King Mahāsudarśana.

9,2–4. He possessed 7 treasures: wheel, elephant, horse, gem, woman, treasurer, adviser.

9,4–13,2. Account of 4 āṭddhis: long life, good looks, good health, popularity.

13,3–12. Town and country folk offer valuables to the king: turned down (× 3).

13,12–15,8. They do not want to take the valuables back and make a pile of them before the king, who

83Mahāsudarśana is abruptly mentioned for the first time here.
180.22–181.11. Sakka hears of M’s intentions and instructs Vissakamma to build a dhamma-pāsāda; the king accepts Vissakamma’s offer.

181.12–182.21. Description of the Dhamma Palace: $1 \times \frac{1}{7}$ a league, with columns, boards, staircases, 84,000 chambers (4 kinds) with couches (4 kinds) and palm trees at the doors.

182.22–28. The king has a grove of golden palm trees made at the door of the ‘Room of the Great Array’.

182.29–183.21. The Dhamma Palace is encircled by 2 railings and 2 strings of bells.

183.22–184.2. When completed, the Dhamma Palace was difficult to look at.

184.3–185.21. The king decides to build a Dhamma Pond in front of the Dhamma Palace; described in detail.

185.22–26. When the Dhamma Palace and Pond were completed, M saw to the wishes of well-known ascetics and brahmans and went up into the palace.

185.28–186.11. M reflects on the actions that have led to his present circumstances: dāna, dama, saṃyama. At the door of the Room of the Great Array he renounces thoughts of then decides to build a dharma-prāsāda.

15.8–17.10. 84,000 princes hear of M’s wish and offer to build the palace for him; the king turns them down three times; finally they prostrate themselves before the king and he accepts.

17.11–23.12. They build the Dharma Palace to the east of Kuśavatī: $1 \times 1$ league, with columns, boards, staircases, 2 railings, and more; with 84,000 chambers (4 kinds) with couches (4 kinds) and palm trees at the doors.

23.11–13. The Dharma Palace is strewn with gold dust, sprinkled with sandal scented water, etc.

23.14–25.11. 84,000 princes build a Dharma Pond in front of the Dharma Palace; described in detail.

25.12–29.2. They build a Dharma Grove (dharma-tālavana), and then inform M everything is ready.

29.2–9. M reflects that he should not live in the Dharma Palace immediately and so first entertains well-known ascetics and brahmans there and clothes each in a pair of robes.

29.9–31.2. He further reflects that he should not enjoy sense pleasures in the Dharma Palace so decides to practice the holy life in the Dharma Palace as a royal seer with a single
sense desire, hostility and malice.

186,12–26. In the Room of the Great Array seated on a golden couch he dwells having attained the first, second, third, fourth jhānas.

186,27–187,5. He then enters a golden chamber and seated on a silver couch dwells suffusing the directions with mettā, karuṇā, muditā, upekkhā.

187,6–188,11. The king’s 14 × 84,000 possessions are listed (first listing).

188,12–189,8. The curious incident of the elephants.

189,9–190,6. Queen Subhaddā reflects that it is long since she has seen the king, and suggests to the women of the harem that they should wash their hair, put on yellow clothes and go to see the king. She has the Adviser make ready the fourfold army and they all enter the Palace of Dhamma, and stand at the door of the Room of the Great Array.

190,7–22. At the noise, the king comes out and tells the queen that she cannot enter; he instructs a man to bring out a golden couch; he lies down on his right side in the lion posture.

190,23–192,9. The queen is struck by his serene senses and clear complexion and fears he is about to die. She urges him to arouse his desire for his 14 × 84,000 possessions (second listing).

31,3–12. He enters the Palace; in a golden chamber seated on a silver couch, in a silver chamber on a golden couch, in a beryl chamber on a crystal couch, in a crystal chamber on a beryl couch, he dwells having attained the first dhyāna.

[Later: 43,8–45,8]

[Missing.]

[Missing.]

30,15–32,15. The 84,000 women of the harem complain to the Woman that it is long since they have seen the king; she informs the Adviser that they are eager to see the king. He tells them to make themselves ready while he summons the king’s 84,000 princes, elephants, horses, and chariots; they all come and make a great noise beneath the Dharma Palace.

33,1–35,4 / 32,16–34,12. The king asks a man about the noise; he explains. The king tells him to prepare a golden seat beneath the palace for him to sit on and survey the crowd.

35,5–39,1. On seeing all the women he averts his senses. The queen sees this and wishes the king not to be uninterested in them. The king comes down from the palace and sits on the seat. The queen approaches him and urges him to arouse desire for his 6 × 84,000 possessions (first listing).
192.10–194.7. The king responds that her words have always been pleasing but that now they are not. She asks what she should say. He tells her that she should tell him to give up his desire for his $14 \times 84,000$ possessions (third time).

194.8–195.29. The queen weeping tells him to give up his desire for his $14 \times 84,000$ possessions (fourth listing).

[Earlier: 186.27–187.5]

195.30–196.8. Soon after, the king died and was reborn in the Brahmā world: for 84,000 years he had been a prince, for 84,000 years viceroy, for 84,000 years king, for 84,000 years a householder practising the holy life in the Dhamma Palace.

196.9–198.17. The Buddha explains that he was M and the $14 \times 84,000$ possessions (fifth listing) were his; of each of the 14 types of 84,000 possession (sixth listing) he used just one.

198.18–23. The Buddha reminds Ānanda that all conditioned things are impermanent.

198.24–199.3. The Buddha announces that he has died six times in this place, this is the seventh, there will be no eighth.

39.1–41.9. The king responds that previously she has addressed him as a friend, but that now she addresses him as an enemy; he calls her ‘sister’ (bhagini). At this she weeps and asks him what she should say as a friend. He tells her that she should tell him to give up his desire for his $6 \times 84,000$ possessions (second listing).

41.10–43.7. The queen tells him to give up his desire for his $6 \times 84,000$ possessions (third listing).

43.8–45.8. Then the king goes up into the Dharma Palace: in a golden chamber seated on a silver couch, in a silver chamber on a golden couch, in a beryl chamber on a crystal couch, in a crystal chamber on a beryl couch, he dwells suffusing the directions with respectively maitrā, karuṇā, muditā, upekkā.

45.9–13. When the king died he was reborn in the Brahmā world. (Details of the four periods of the king’s life are given at 9.4–11 in connection with the first āddhi: during the last he was a “royal seer”.)

45.14–47.2. The Buddha explains in brief that he was King Mahāsudarśana.

[Missing.]

47.3–47.9. The Buddha announces that he has died six times in this place, this is the seventh, there will be no eighth.
199.4–7. Closing verse: Impermanent are conditioned things! It is their nature to arise and fall. Having arisen, they cease. Their stilling is happy.

47.10–11. Closing verse: That which leads to existence is cut out; wandering through births is destroyed; there is now no rebirth
BIBLIOGRAPHY


Mythology as Meditation


112 Rupert Gethin


Jātaka and Paññāsa-jātaka in South-East Asia*

The extreme popularity of the Jātakas is expressed not only by the large number of manuscripts in which they are recorded—whether as complete collections or separately for the most celebrated—but also by the frequency of their representation in Buddhist art.

Jean Filliozat

Introduction: Reflections on Jātaka literature

The jātaka is one of the oldest classes of Buddhist literature. As a genre it is unique to Buddhism: it is not found in Jaina or Brahmanical literature. There are specific jātaka texts such as the collection of verses included in the Theravādin Khuddaka-nikāya under the name Jātaka, or the Sanskrit Jātakamālā collections, but beyond that the jātaka thoroughly pervades Buddhist literature, whether Śrāvakayāna or

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3There may be exceptions, such as Hemacandra, Jaina Jataka or Lord Rshabha’s Purvabhavas (translated by Banarsi Das Jain, The Punjab Sansk. Bk. Depot, Lahore, 1925—not seen: reference courtesy Kazuko Tanabe through Toshiya Unebe), but this late work does not constitute a genre. Nonetheless, further study of the past lives of Tirthamkaras as presented in Jaina literature with the well-developed Buddhist jātaka literature would certainly be welcome.
Mahāyāna. It does this formally, in the sense that stories of past births are related or alluded to in Sūtras—whether Śrāvakayāna or Mahāyāna—and in Vinayas. It does this ideologically, in the sense that a career spanning many lives in which one is linked to past and future Buddhas is a presupposition and a precondition of Buddhist practice.

In the mainstream of Buddhism, the past lives during which Śākyamuni fulfilled the perfections are taken for granted. Accounts of these past lives, the jātakas, are an essential part of Śākyamuni’s bodhisattva career. As such they are inseparable from the biography of the Buddha, as may be seen in the Jātaka-nidāna, in the Mahāvastu, or in Chapter 13 of the Lalitavistara. Narrations of or references to jātakas abound in Mahāyāna sūtras. The Bhadrakalpika-sūtra alludes to many jātakas in its exposition of the perfections, and jātakas are an integral part of the Suvarṇaprabhāsa, an early and important Mahāyāna sūtra. Fifty jātakas are summarized in verse in the Rāṣṭrapāla-paripṛcchā-sūtra. The long recension of the Prajñāpāramitā texts contains an interesting disquisition on the animal births of the bodhisattva from the point of view of prajñāpāramitā thought. Examples from the texts of the Śrāvaka schools are given below.

The Commentary on the Discourse on the Ten Stages, preserved only in Chinese translation and attributed to Nāgarjuna, gives a list of Great Bodhisattvas to be contemplated. The first twenty-one (preceding Maitreya, no. 22) are names of Śākyamuni during his previous lives, his

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4By mainstream I mean the common tradition, the shared heritage, of all Buddhist schools, whether the “eighteen nikāyas” of the Śrāvakas or the traditions that came to be grouped under the term Mahāyāna.


7Edward Conze (tr.), The Large Sūtra on Perfect Wisdom with the divisions of the Abhisamayālaṅkāra, Berkeley, 1975, pp. 621–623.
bodhisattva career related in the early jātakas.\textsuperscript{8} It is with reference to jātakas that a verse of the same text states:

- When he was seeking the Path to Buddhahood,
- he performed many marvellous practices
- As described in various sūtras.
- So I prostrate myself and worship him.\textsuperscript{9}

In his Mahāyānasamgraha Asaṅga cites the bodhisattva’s “displaying of a diversity of births (jātakas)” as an aspect of the profound ethics of a bodhisattva.\textsuperscript{10} Jātakas are referred to in “apocryphal” Mahāyāna sūtras like the Prajñāpāramitā for Humane Kings who wish to Protect their States.\textsuperscript{11} In sum, it seems more difficult not to find jātakas than to find them.

Jātakas have been popular from the time of the earliest post-Asokan evidence for Buddhism in India: the stone reliefs at the monuments of Bhārhut, Sāñcī, Bodh Gayā, Amarāvatī, and elsewhere.\textsuperscript{12} The earliest surviving Buddhist painting, at Cave X at Ajanṭā, dated by Schlingloff to the 2nd century BCE, depicts two jātakas—Ṣaḍdanta and Śyāma—along with the life of the Buddha and the legend of Udayana.\textsuperscript{13} Jātakas continued to be painted at Ajanṭā in the following centuries, and no doubt at other monuments that have long succumbed to the law of

\textsuperscript{8}Hisao Inagaki (tr.), Nāgārjuna’s Discourse on the Ten Stages, Daśabhūmīka-vibhāṣā, Kyoto, 1998 (Ryukoku Literature Series V), p. 158.
\textsuperscript{9}Inagaki, Nāgārjuna’s Discourse, p. 152.
\textsuperscript{12}Lamotte, Histoire du bouddhisme indien, pp. 443–446.
impermanence. The earliest inscription from Nepal, the Cābahilā inscription, “a fragment dated perhaps to the first half of the fifth century”, records a woman’s donation of a caitya “adorned with illustrations from the Kinnarī-jātaka” (kinnarījātakākīrṇannānācitra-virājitam).14

According to the Sri Lankan chronicles Mahāvaṃsa and Thūpavaṃsa, when King Duṭṭhagāmaṇī built the Mahāthūpa at Anurādhapura in the first century BCE, he had the relic-chamber decorated with scenes from the life of the Buddha as well as with jātakas, including the Vessantara, which was depicted in detail (vitthārena).15 Later, in the early 5th century, Fa-hien recorded that on the occasion of the Tooth-relic procession in Anurādhapura, the king had a section of the processional route flanked by “the five hundred different bodily forms in which the Bodhisattva has in the course of his history appeared”.16

The jātaka spread wherever Buddhism travelled. Perhaps we may say the jātakas immigrated, since they were quickly localized, as sites of past lives or deeds of the bodhisattva became pilgrimage or cult centres throughout Gandhāra and the North-West,17 as well as in Nepal, or as jātaka murals donned the costumes of the local culture. The cave-

temples along the Silk Route, such as those at Dun-huang, are rich in jātaka murals, especially in the early period. About one hundred jātakas, some still unidentified, are depicted in relief on the lower galleries of the great stūpa of Borobudur in Java, which dates to circa the 9th century.

Jātakas, originally transmitted in Prakrits, “Buddhist Sanskrit”, and Sanskrit, were translated into Central Asian languages like Khotanese, Tocharian, Uighur, and Sogdian.18 Some of the first texts to be translated into Chinese were jātakas. One of the early translators was K’ang Seng-hui (Kang senghui), who was born in Chiao-chih (Giaozhi, the area of modern Hanoi, in Vietnam) of Sogdian extraction and entered the monastic order at the age of ten. In 247 he went to Nanking, where he translated texts into Chinese. Among them is the Scripture of the Collection of the Six Perfections,19 which Tsukamoto describes as “K’ang Seng-hui’s principal achievement as a translator”, going on to say:

That scripture is one particularly deserving of note … as an example of Buddhist narrative literature. It contains stories of Gautama’s former existences, far antedating the attainment of Buddhahood by Prince Siddhārtha, whether as a king, as a prince, as a rich man, as a poor man, or even as an elephant or deer, existences during the course of which he cultivated the Six Perfections …”.20

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It was from this text that Chavannes drew the first eighty-eight stories of his monumental *Cinq cents contes et apologues extraits du Tripitaka chinois*, which remains the classical collection of jātakas translated from Chinese sources into a European language. Another early translation into Chinese was the *Avadāna-śataka*, a collection of avadānas—a genre related to the jātaka, which includes some jātakas properly speaking. The translation, done by Chih-chien between 223 and 253, generally agrees with the Sanskrit text which is represented by much later manuscripts. The *Ta chih tu lun*, a commentary on the *Pañcavimśati Prajñāpāramitā* translated by Kumārajīva at Chang-an in 404–5, is rich with allusion to and narration of jātakas. It has been and remains a reference work for East Asian Buddhists.

In Tibet several classical jātaka works were translated, such as Ārya Śūra’s *Jātakamālā* and its commentary, or Haribhatṭa’s work of the same name. Numerous jātakas are embedded in other works

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23 Ārya Śūra’s work and commentary (= Peking Kanjur, Otani Reprint, Vol. 128, Nos. 5650, 5651) are conveniently printed in *sKyes rabs so bzi ba’i rtse ’grel bzugs so*, mTsho sñon mi rigs dpe skrun khaṅ, 1997. The root-texts of Ārya Śūra (Otani No. 5650) and Haribhatṭa (Otani No. 5652) are published in *bsTan ’gyur las byaṅ ba’i skyes rabs daṅ rtogs brjod gces bs dus*, Mi rigs dpe skrun khaṅ, 1993. For the jātaka section of the Tanjur, see Tshul khrims rin chen, *bsTan ’gyur dkar chag*, Bod ljoṅs mi dmaṅs dpe skrun khaṅ, 1985,
translated into Tibetan such as the *Vinaya*, the *mDo mdzaṅs blun*, *avadāna* collections, and Mahāyāna sūtras.\(^{24}\) That the genre captured the Tibetan imagination may be seen from the abridged versions produced by Tibetan writers, such as Karma Rañ-byun rdo rje’s *Hundred Births*,\(^{25}\) Zhe chen ’gyur med Padma rnam rgyal’s *mDo las byun ba'i gtam rgyud sna tshogs*,\(^{26}\) or Padma Chos ’phel’s summary of the *Avadānakalpalatā*.\(^{27}\) The *jātakas* were one of the six basic texts of the bKa’ gdamgs pas, the forerunners of the dGe lugs pas.

In the 7th century I-ching noted that *jātaka* plays were performed “throughout the five countries of India”. The culture of dramatic performances of *jātakas* spread with (or developed naturally within) Buddhism. In Tibet, for example, the *Viśvāntara-jātaka*, somewhat

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\(^{25}\)Printed in *bCom ldan ’das ston pa šākya thub pa’i rnam thar bṣugs so*, mTsho sñon mi rigs dpe skrun khaṅ, 1997, pp. 205–506.

\(^{26}\)Zhe chen ’gyur med Padma rnam rgyal, *mDo las byun ba'i gtam rgyud sna tshogs*, Kruṅ go’i bod kyi šes rig dpe skrun khaṅ, 1992.

transformed and under the title *Dri med kun ldan*, became a popular play, according to Bacot “le plus joué de tous les drames tibétains”, which could reduce the rough Tibetans to tears. Bacot notes that another play, *'Gro ba bzañ mo* (*Djroazanmo*) is related at least in certain episodes to a play known to the Cambodians as *Vorvong and Saurivong* and to the Siamese as *Voravong*. The dramatization of *Nor bzañ* or *Sudhana* is well-known both in Tibet and South-East Asia, and in the Malay peninsula it gave birth to a unique dance-form, the Nora. Another adaptation of a *jātaka*—the story of Prince Manicūḍa—is the *Lokānanda*, composed by the famous Candragomin and translated into Tibetan. New year performances of plays, including *jātakas*, have been enacted in Tibet since at least the second half of the 15th century.  

In Japan *jātakas* were known from the early period, as attested by the famous Tamamushi Shrine in the Hōryū-ji temple, Nara (where the stories depicted are drawn from Mahāyāna sūtras). *Jātakas* arrived, of course, with the *Tripiṭaka* texts brought from China. The Chinese

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translation of the *Sūtra of the Wise and the Foolish*, a collection of sermons from Khotan very much built around *jātakas*, was copied and gilt by Emperor Shōmu in his own hand. Jātakas were adapted into Japanese literature, such as in the *Sambō ekotoba* written in 984 by Minamoto no Tameneri, or later works like the *Shishū hyaku-innen shū* of Jūshin, completed in 1257, or the *Sangoku denki* of Gentō, dating perhaps to the first part of the 14th century or to the 15th century. In popular Japanese literature *jātakas* may be mentioned in passing, as, for example, in *Soga Monogatari*, in a manner which suggests that the readers or audience would understand the reference. In the modern period, many studies and translations of *jātakas* and *avadānas* have been made by Japanese scholars.

**Jātaka in South-East Asia**

When and how were *jātakas* introduced to South-East Asia? By whom, and in what language? No answer can be made. No texts, chronicles, or histories survive from the earliest period of Buddhism in the region, that is, the first millennium of the Christian Era. All we have is iconographic and archaeological evidence, starting from about the 7th century.  

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century, from the so-called Dvāravatī state or culture of the Mons, a “lost civilization” possessing a vital, original “Indicized” culture that must have had a flourishing literature. The earliest representations of jātaka from this period are at Chula Pathon Cetiya in Nakhon Pathom. Somewhat later are the so-called sīmā stones in North-Eastern Siam, which belong to a Mon culture which I call the “Chi Valley culture”.

From Chinese sources we learn that Buddhism was established in the kingdom of Chiao-chih (Giaozhi) in the Red River valley (the vicinity of modern Hanoi) by the 1st or 2nd century. In the 3rd century foreign monks resided in or passed through the area. We have referred above to K’ang Seng-hui of Chiao-chih, translator into Chinese of the Scripture of the Collection of the Six Perfections, an early and representative collection of jātakas. It is not clear, however, whether K’ang Seng-hui studied the text in Chiao-chih and carried it with him to

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38Piriya Krairiksh, “Semas with Scenes from the Mahānipāta-Jātakas in the National Museum at Khon Kaen”, in *Art and Archaeology in Thailand*, published by the Fine Arts Department in Commemoration of the 100th Anniversary of the National Museum, September 19, 1974. For two recently discovered examples see Arunsak Kingmanee, “Suvarnakakkata-Jataka on the Bai Sema of Wat Non Sila-atwararam”, *Muang Boran*, Vol. 22 No. 2, April–June 1996, pp. 133–138; Arunsak Kingmanee, “Bhuridatta-Jataka on the Carved Sema in Kalasin”, *Muang Boran*, Vol. 23 No. 4, October–December 1997, pp. 104–109 (I am grateful to Justin McDaniel for these references); Suganya Nounnard, “A Newly Found Sima Stone in the Ancient Town of Fa Daet Song Yang”, *Silpakorn Journal* 45.8 (Nov.–Dec. 2000), pp. 52–74. Note that in Thai the stones are regularly called bai semā, and hence in English “sema stones”. The “Chi Valley culture” is usually classed as part of a monolithic Dvāravatī culture. But there is no basis for such a classification, whether politically (we know nothing about the state[s] in the Chi or middle Mekhong valleys) or culturally (the artefacts are distinctive). I therefore provisionally use the description “Chi Valley culture”.
Nanking, where he did his work, or whether he obtained the text in China.

In 484 the King of Funan, Kauṇḍinya Jayavarman, sent the Indian monk Nāgasena with a petition to the Song court. As was customary, the monk presented items of tribute, among which were two ivory stūpas. In addition to Jayavarman’s petition, Nāgasena presented a written account of Funan to the Emperor. The report contains the following passage:

Le bodhisattva pratique la miséricorde. Originairement, il est issu de la souche ordinaire, mais, dès qu’il a manifesté un cœur (digne de la) bodhi, (il est arrivé) là où les deux véhicules ne pourraient atteindre. Pendant des existences successives, il a amassé des mérites; avec les six pārāmitā, il a pratiqué une grande compassion; ardemment, il a franchi tout un nombre de kalpas. Ses trésors et sa vie, il les a donnés jusqu’au bout; il ne s’est pas dégoûté de la vie et de la mort.

Perhaps this passage does not tell us anything about the actual state of Buddhism in Funan, in that it is entirely normative, giving a condensed account of the spiritual career of the bodhisattva according to general Mahāyāna doctrine. But it does suggest that the “jātaka ideology” was current in Funan.

It is with the flourishing of Theravādin Buddhist culture in the states of Pagan from the 11th century and Sukhothai from the 13th century that we find abundant evidence for jātakas. Here we limit our discussion to the latter, where we find that jātakas are referred to in inscriptions, and represented on the famous stone slabs of Wat Sichum, which are inscribed with the names of the jātakas.

Our discussion of jātaka in Siam may be presented under two categories: classical jātaka and non-classical jātaka.

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1. Classical jātaka

By classical jātaka I refer to the Jātaka of the Khuddaka-nikāya together with its commentary, the Jātaka-āṭṭhavaṇṇanā. These jātakas are classical within the Theravādin tradition in that they are transmitted as part of the Tipiṭaka and that as such they are part of the common heritage of “Theravādin Buddhism”, wherever it spread. I use “classical” and “non-classical” in place of the more common “canonical” and “non-canonical”. The term “classical” has, of course, a relative value: for example, Vessantara and certain other jātakas are classical to all Buddhist traditions, not just the Theravādin, and different “non-classical” jātakas are “classical” to vernacular literatures or cultures: Thai, Lao, Khün, Khmer, etc., all having their own “classics”. Here I restrict the term “classical” to the 547 jātakas, verse and prose, as transmitted in the Jātaka of the Khuddaka-nikāya of the Pāli canon together with its commentary, the Jātaka-āṭṭhavaṇṇanā. (The Pāli Jātaka collection challenges the concept of canonicity in that only the verses, and not the prose, belong to the “canon”. The Theravādin collection of Jātaka verses without narrative prose is unique, the only one known among the various schools. The antiquity of the stories themselves is proven by their representation in the earliest surviving Buddhist art of India, mentioned above, which predates any of our surviving literary texts.)

In his Samantapāsādikā Buddhaghosa defines jātaka, one of the nine component genres (aṅga) of the Buddha’s teaching (navaṅga-buddhasāsana), as “the five hundred and fifty birth stories commencing with Apaṇṭaka”. This is not a definition of the term jātaka as such: rather, it is simply an equation of the jātaka-aṅga with the classical Pāli jātaka collection. This deficiency has been pointed out by Jayawickrama:

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40 There are, of course, jātakas incorporated within the Sutta-piṭaka itself, or in other works like the Cariyā-piṭaka or Apadāna and Buddhavaṃsa commentaries. These are beyond the scope of this paper.
There is no justification for equating the Ánga called Játaka with the extant Játaka collection numbering about 550 stories. Firstly, the stories themselves have no Canonical status, which is reserved for the Játakapāli, the stanzas, only. Secondly, there is no reason why Játakas of Canonical antiquity such as those incorporated in other suttantas, e.g. Kūṭadanta and Mahāgovinda Suttas in D[igha Nikāya], should be excluded. The definition given here is highly arbitrary.41

A good working definition of játaka is given by Asaṅga in the first yogasthāna of his Śrāvakabhūmi:

What is játaka? That which relates the austere practices and bodhisattva practices of the Blessed One in various past births: this is called játaka.42

The narrative aspect is emphasized in the definition in the Mahāyāna Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra:43

What is játaka? This is as in the case in which the World-honoured One, in the days gone by, becomes a bodhisattva and practises the Way, as: “O bhikṣus! Know that, in the days gone by, I gained life as a deer, a brown bear, a reindeer, a hare, a king of a small state, a cakravartin, a nāga, and a garuda. Such are all the bodies one receives when one practise the Way of a bodhisattva.” This is játaka.

For the later scholastic tradition, the játakas, as accounts of the past deeds of the bodhisattva, are illustrations of the perfections, the pāramī or pāramitā. Adopted by the pāramitā ideology, the játakas both

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exemplify the virtue of Śākyamuni and and provide inspiration for those who aspire to Buddhahood in future lives, the bodhisattvas.

In Siam the classical Jātaka is often referred to as Āṭṭhakathā-jātaka or Nīpāta-jātaka: that is, the collection of jātakas organized according to chapters of the canonical Jātaka book of the Khuddaka-nikāya, from chapters with one verse (Ekanipāta) up to the Great Chapter (Mahānipāta). Another term is Phra chao ha roi chat, which means “[stories] about the Lord [bodhisattva] in five hundred births”. The last ten births are often transmitted separately as Dasajāti, Dasajāti-jātaka, or Phra chao sip chat, “the ten births” or “[stories] about the Lord [bodhisattva] in [the last] ten births”, or also the Mahānipāta-jātaka, “the jātaka of the Great Chapter”.

The perennially popular Vessantara-jātaka is transmitted in its own right as “Phra Wetsandon”, Mahachat (the “Great Birth”), or—when the verses alone are recited—Katha [Gāthā] phan, the “Thousand Stanzas”. The recitation of the Mahachat was an important ceremony in pre-modern times and remains so today. Another ceremony, the


“Phra Vessantara Merit-making Festival” (*bun phra wet = puñ[ña] brah ves* [antarə]*) is an integral part of the annual ritual calendar in the North-East of Siam and in Laos.\(^{47}\) Recitation and enactment is part of the fabric of merit-making.

Many different versions of the *Vessantara* exist in Thai. These include the *Mahachat kham luang*, the “Royal Recension” composed at the court of King Paramatrailokanātha in BE 2025 (1482), the *Kap mahachat*, believed to have been composed during the reign of King Song Tham (r. 1610–1628), and the *Mahachat kham chan* composed by Krommamun Kawiphot Supreecha in the 19th century.\(^{48}\) There are numerous “sermon” versions, such as *Mahachat klon thet* (or *Ray yao mahachat*)\(^{49}\) and so on.\(^{50}\) Regional and vernacular versions of the *Vessantara* abound, such as the various Lan Na *Mahachat*-s, the Phetchaburi *Mahachat* (*Mahāchat muang phet*), the North-Eastern

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\(^{48}\) *Kap* is käby, Sanskrit kāvyā; *chan* is chand, Sanskrit chandas: the terms refer to Thai metres.

\(^{49}\) *Sinlapawatthanatham thai*, Vol. 3, Bangkok, BE 2525 [1982], pp. 163–165

\(^{50}\)See for example *Mahachat 6 thamat reu thet 6 ong*, in *Chumnum nungseu thet*, Part 1, Bangkok, Rongphim Tai, 2472. Note that the “sermon” (*thet = dešana*), performed in a range of lively vocal styles and punctuated or accompanied by music, was not only the main vehicle for the teaching of Buddhism in pre-modern times, but also the inspiration for pre-modern narrative literature.
Mahachat (Mahājāti samnuan isan), the Korat Mahachat (Mahājāti korat), and so on. The prevalence of jātakas is demonstrated by a manuscript survey conducted in the North, which recorded inter alia: the Mahachat in 1,424 texts in more than eighty literary styles, and general jātaka stories in 907 texts, “many composed by local monks”. The next largest group was “general Dhamma”, in 472 texts. 51 Udom Rungruangrsri refers to 130 versions of Vessantara-jātaka composed by different authors. 52

One reason for the popularity of the Vessantara-jātaka was the pervasive belief, spread through the Māleyya-sutta and related literature, that by listening to this jātaka one could be assured of meeting the next Buddha, Metteyya, often called Phra Si An (Phra Śrī Ārya Maitreya) in Thai. 53 The recitation of Māleyya followed by the Vessantara is mentioned in an inscription from Pagan dated to CE 1201. 54 A Northern Thai text on The Benefits of the Mahāvessantara-jātaka states: 55

Whoever … wants to see the glorious Metteyya Bodhisatta, let him bring the following propitiatory elements, such as 1000 lamps, 1000 candles and joss-sticks, 1000 lumps of (glutinous) rice … worship and listen to the Mahāvessantara sermon finishing it in one day with great respect … his

53 For the story of Māleyya, see Bonnie Pacala Brereton, Thai Tellings of Phra Malai: Texts and Rituals concerning a Popular Buddhist Saint, Arizona State University, Tempe, Arizona, 1995, and Collins, Nirvana and other Buddhist Felicities. A Pāli version with translation has been published in the Journal of the Pali Text Society (Vol. XVIII, 1993). There are many vernacular versions.
55 Ānisamṣa of the Mahāvessantara-jātaka from Wat Nong Phaek, Tambon Nong Phaek, Amphoe Saraphee, cited in Premchit, “Palm Leaf Manuscripts and Traditional Sermon”, p. 86 (with some alteration).
wishes will all be fulfilled … in the future he will attain nibbāna … in front of that Buddha.

Other reasons include the wish to gain merit by listening to or sponsoring the sermon, or, in rural practice, to bring rain. The sermons were presented in various ways, with great pomp and ritual, and many sorts of offerings and musical accompaniment. In the early Bangkok period it was a court custom for princes, during their period of ordination, to offer a sermon on the Vessantara-jātaka to their father the King. In 2360 [1817], during the Second Reign, for example, Prince Mongkut (the future King Rama IV), ordained as a novice (sāmañera) offered a sermon on the Madri Chapter to King Rama II. In 2409 [1866], during the Fourth Reign, Prince Chulalongkorn (the future King Rama V) offered the Sakkapabba Chapter, in a version composed by his father the King. In the Fifth Reign, Prince Mahavajirunhis offered the Sakkapabba Chapter in 2434 [1891] and Prince Krommaluang Nakhon Rajasima offered the Chakasat Chapter.57

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56 Did the recitation of the Vessantara have any connection with consecration of Buddha images? The Jinakālamālinī (ed. A.P. Buddhodatta, The Pali Text Society, London, 1962, p. 120) reports that when the “Sinhalese image” (Sihala-paṭima) was installed at Wat Pa Daeng in Chiang Mai in CE 1519, the Mahāvessantara-nidāna and Mahāvessantara-nāma-dhammapariyāya were recited in the first stage, and the Buddhavaṃsa at a later stage. Among the chants recited in consecration ceremonies in Thailand is a verse summary of the last ten births followed by the life of the Buddha. It seems, then, that the jātakas and the life empower the image with the tejas of the bodhisattva.

The tradition of rendering *jātakas* into Thai verse continues to this day. Most recently, the *Thotsachat kham chan* (Ten Jātakas in verse) was produced in honour of His Majesty the King’s sixth cycle (that is, 72nd birthday).\(^{58}\)

2. **Non-classical *jātaka***.

The *Paññāsa-jātaka* as a whole should prove to have a value far beyond the sphere of comparative philology, particularly with reference to the Sanskrit Avadāna literature and to various aspects of popular Southeast Asian Buddhism.

*P.S. Jaini*\(^{59}\)

Non-classical *jātakas* are “birth-stories” modelled on the classical stories but, unlike the latter, transmitted outside of the canon and only in certain regions. There is a great mass of such texts in South-East Asia—some known (in diverse recensions) throughout the region, some specific to one or the other region, culture, or vernacular. Non-classical *jātaka* is called bāhiraka-jātaka or chadok nok nibat, “jātaka outside the nipāta”, in Thai. It is not clear when these terms came into use; the latter was used if not coined by H.R.H. Prince Damrong Rajanubhab in the early 20th century. The Northern Thai *Piṭakamāḷā* calls the *Paññāsa-jātaka* “the fifty births outside the saṅgāyanā”.\(^{60}\) This might approach the concept of “non-canonical”, but the relation between text and saṅgāyanā is complex. This complexity may be seen in the *Sārasaṅgaha*, whose compiler appears to accept texts like the *Nandopanandadamana* even though they were not “handed down at the three Councils” (saṅgītītāyam anārūḍham). It is noteworthy that two of these texts are described as “sutta”: *Kulumbasutta, Rājovādasutta*. In contrast, the *Sārasaṅgaha* rejects other texts, including Mahāyāna sūtras.

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\(^{58}\)*Thotsachat kham chan*, Bangkok, 2542 [1999].


and Tantras, as “not the word of the Buddha” (abuddhavacana).  

Non-classical jātakas may be transmitted separately, in their own right, and remain independent or “uncollected”, or they may be collected with other texts into anthologies. The same story may be transmitted in several contexts: singly, or as part of collection a, or as part of collection b, and so on. One common type of anthology contains (ideally) fifty stories, and bears the title Paññāsa-jātaka. The Paññāsa-jātaka cannot be viewed apart from the body of non-classical jātaka literature, whether Pāli or vernacular, of South-East Asia, for reasons that will be seen below. That is, it depends on and draws on this literature, rather than vice-versa.

The independent jātakas include “local jātakas”, stories cast in the jātaka narrative structure and transmitted in regional vernacular traditions. There are far too many to enumerate here. Moreover, one jātaka may be transmitted in several recensions in the same region. Popular stories include Brahmacakra in the North, Sang Sinchai in the North-East, Nok Krachap in the Centre, and Subin in the South. In his

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62 For example, the Samudaghosa-jātaka is included in most known Paññāsa-jātaka collections, as well as independently in regional vernacular versions including verse compositions. It is also a puppet play.
64 Sueppong Thammachat, Wannakhadi Chadok (Jataka Literature), Odeon Store, Bangkok, 2542 [1999], pp. 188–218. Many of the these jātakas are described in the newly published Saranukrom Watthanatham Thai, which devotes fifteen volumes to each of the four regions of modern Thailand (North, North-East, and Centre, with eighteen volumes for the South). For Subin see Subin sanmuang kao: wannakam khong kawi chao muang nakhon si thammarat, Nakhon Si Thammarat Teachers’ College, Nakhon Si Thammarat, 2520 [1977]. For the relation between Southern literature and that of other
Lan Na Literature Udom Rungruangsri lists one hundred titles of Northern jātakas out of over two hundred registered by Harald Hundius. Some are quite long, in ten or fifteen bundles (phuk). Udom gives summaries of Horaman (a story of Hanuman), Phrommachak (Brahmacakra: based on the Rāma story), and Ussabarot, which he describes as influenced by Brahmanical literature. These texts are in Lan Na language but mixed with Pāli. Whether they all had Pāli originals remains to be seen. There is a Lao Rāma-jātaka, related to the South-East Asian Ramakien. This vast literature is outside the scope of this study—let me simply stress that the number of such jātakas is in the hundreds and that this jātaka literature was a vital part of pre-regions of Thailand see Udom Nuthong, “Wannakam phak tai: khwam samphan kap wannakam thong thin uen”, in Sukanya Succhaya (ed.), Wannakhadi thong thin phinit, Chulalongkorn University Press, Bangkok, 2543 [2000], pp. 77–95.

65Udom Rungruangsri, Wannakam lanna, pp.141–143.

modern culture.  

We should bear in mind that jātaka is not an inflexible category. The same narrative can fulfill different functions, at one and the same time or at different times, as a jātaka, a deśanā, an ānisaṃsa, a paritta, or a sūtra. The Khandhvatta-jātaka belongs to Jātaka (No. 203), to Vinaya (Cullavagga, II 110), to Sutta (Āṅguttara-nikāya II 72–73), and to Paritta (Khandha-paritta). Verses from other classical jātakas are recited for protection and blessing, for example in the Mora-paritta, Chaddanta-paritta, and Vaṭṭaka-paritta. The key verse of the latter, the saccakiriyā, is known from two inscriptions in Sri Lanka. It was found inscribed on a copper-plate in Nāgarī characters of about the tenth century in the ruins of the Abhayagiri Vihāra at Anurādhapura, and inscribed “in shallowly incised and badly formed Sinhalese characters of the twelfth century” on the underside of the covering slab of the third relic chamber of the main cetiya at the Koṭavehera at Dedigama. It has been suggested the verse was intended as a protection against fire. The use of verses from the jātakas as parittas demonstrates the power of the speech of the bodhisattva—even in his births as a peacock, an elephant, or a quail.

The non-canonical texts of South-East Asia are equally multifunctional. The Pāli Uṇhissa-vijaya—a narrative related to the

68Jātaka No. 159, which lies at the heart of the Mahāmāyūrī-vidyārājñī, which came to be included in the Pañcarakṣā.
70Jātaka No. 35. Cariyā-piṭaka p. 31, Jātakamālā No. 16.
71Epigraphia Zeylanica I, No. 3 (and Pl. 11); revised reading by S. Paranavitana in Épigraphia Zeylanica III, No. 16; Ancient Ceylon I (January 1971), pp. 106–109.
North Indian *Uṣṇīṣavijaya*—occurs in its own right as a protective chant, a *sūtra*, an *ānisāṃsa*, a *jātaka*, and a *Kham lilit* (Thai verse version), and is embedded in longer texts like the *Paramattha-mañgala* and the *Mahādibbamantra*. The *Jambūpati-sūtra* contains a *jātaka* and an *ānisāṃsa*, and is incorporated in summary in “the *ānisāṃsa* of offering a needle”.

**Paññāsa-jātaka**

There are several collections of *jātakas* in South-East Asia which bear the name *Paññāsa-jātaka*. The title varies, and occurs in vernacular forms like *Phra chao ha sip chat*, “[stories] of the Lord [bodhisattva] in fifty births”. For the most part—though not exclusively—the *jātakas* in these collections are non-classical. Although the tales are diverse, many deal with giving or charity (*dāna*)—not only the relinquishing of material goods but also the ultimate sacrifice, that of body and life—and with ethical conduct (*sīla*) and their benefits (*ānisāṃsa*). The truth-vow (*saccakiriyā*) figures prominently. The hero, the bodhisattva, is often a prince, and many of the tales may be described as romances. The sources of the stories are varied, some going back to India, others being local compositions. The collections are transmitted in a variety of scripts and languages, from “local” Pāli to nisay style (Pāli mixed with Tai dialects) to vernaculars.

Léon Feer was the first European scholar to discuss the *Paññāsa-jātaka*, in an article published in *Journal Asiatique* in 1875. He was followed by Louis Finot, who in his classic *Recherches sur le littérature*...

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73 I am profoundly indebted in my research to the work of several generations of Siamese scholars, from Prince Damrong to Niyada, and to Western scholars from Feer to Finot to Fickle. I regret that I cannot do justice to research done in Japanese, and can mention only the pioneering work of Kazuko Tanabe and the current project of the Paññāsa-jātaka Study Group at Otani University under the leadership of Shingyo Yoshimoto.

74 The word *nisay* is variously spelt in the T(h)ai languages: *nisaya, nissaya, nisraya*, etc. As a narrative genre it differs in many ways from the technical Burmese *nissayas* on classical Pāli literature.

laotien, published in 1917, introduced the subject in some detail. French scholars such as Terral-Martini, Deydier, and Schweisguth, and Jacqueline Filliozat have continued to make important contributions. In English, Dorothy Fickle produced a thesis, unfortunately not published, based largely on the National Library printed edition, and Padmanabh S. Jaini published several articles followed by an edition and translation of the Zimmè Paññāsa. In Thailand pioneering work has been done by Prince Damrong, Niyada, and others.

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79 P. Schweisguth, Étude sur la littérature siamoise, Imprimerie Nationale, Paris, 1951. Schweisguth does not deal with the Paññāsajātaka in general (except with its translation into Thai, very briefly, pp. 318, 357) but gives summaries of some of the popular tales that were circulated both independently and in Paññāsajātaka collections.
80 These include both her identification of Paññāsa-jātaka texts in the course of cataloguing numerous manuscript collections, and her work on Deydier forthcoming, for which see below.
83 For Prince Damrong see below. For Niyada see Niyada (Sarikabhuti) Lausunthorn, Paññāsa Jātaka: Its Genesis and Significance to Thai Poetical Works [in Thai], Bangkok, 2538 [1995].
Paññāsa-jātaka collections are known only in mainland South-East Asia. They are not known in India or Sri Lanka (although a few manuscripts found their way to the latter in recent centuries). I use the plural, “Paññāsa-jātaka collections”, for a reason, and this is that none of the available collections (whether in Pāli, or in vernaculars, whether from Burma, Siam, Laos, Lan Na, or Cambodia) are the same: they are disparate assemblages of varying numbers of texts in different sequences. Even when the same text is included in two collections, the recension may be different, as Terral has shown for the Samudaghosa-jātaka and Yoshimoto has shown for the Surūpa-jātaka. There is no evidence at present as to which collection, if any, is standard, and therefore I avoid referring to “the Paññāsa-jātaka” in the singular.

It may be the norm for tale collections to exist in widely discrepant recensions. The classical Pāli Jātaka itself is not stable: titles vary in different recensions and inscriptions, and the order of the last ten tales is not consistent. Tatelman writes the following about the Divyāvadāna, well-known today in the “standard” edition of thirty-eight tales edited by Cowell and Neil in 1886:

…[T]he several manuscripts entitled Divyāvadāna diverge widely from each other. Yutaka Iwamoto observed that there are only seven stories which occur in every manuscript and that, of these, only two, the Kotikannāvadāna and the Pūrṇāvadāna, always occur in the same place, as the first and second stories respectively. In fact, Iwamoto defines Divyāvadāna as a collection of Sanskrit avadānas the first two stories of

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which are the Koṭikarṇāvadāna and the Pūrṇāvadāna.86

The Sūtra of the Wise and the Foolish is a collection of narratives known through translations into Chinese, Tibetan, and Mongolian. The collection is believed to go back to a single source, in Chinese, but it exists in two Chinese versions. The Tibetan is said to be have been translated from “the” Chinese, but its contents do not correspond to either Chinese version. The Mongolian, said to be translated from the Tibetan, has 52 tales against the 51 of the latter. Mair writes:87

While there is no doubt that the Chinese and the Tibetan versions are indeed related in some fashion, the number of stories that are included, the order in which they are given, and the style in which they are written all differ markedly. Furthermore, three stories that occur in the Tibetan and Mongolian versions were not even present in the earliest known integral printed Chinese edition … of the sūtra.

The Ming-pao chi, a Buddhist tale collection compiled in the middle of the 7th century by Tang Lin, survives in a confused state. Gjertson writes of the Kōzan-ji and Maeda manuscripts:

The order of the tales in the first chūan [roll] is the same in both manuscripts, but differs in the second and third chūan, with two of the additional tales [out of four tales found in the Maeda manuscript but not in the Kōzan-ji manuscript] found in the second and two in the third. … Since … some tales almost certainly forming part of the original Ming-pao chi are found in various collectanea but in neither of these manuscripts, it is also apparent that they do not represent the original state of the collection.88

The original order of the twenty-seven tales collected in the *Kara Monogatari* (“Tales of China”), a work either of the late Heian or early Kamakura period (12th to 13th century), is not certain.\(^89\) Similar discrepancies occur in the available versions of the *Dainihonkoku Hokekyōkenki* of Priest Chingen, a collection of “Miraculous Tales of the Lotus Sūtra”.\(^90\) The *Paññāsa-jātaka* is not alone in being a fluid collection.

The fact that several *Paññāsa-jātaka* collections are available (and that others will become available) raises problems of terminology. “National” descriptions—Burmese, Lao, Thai—are misleading, and I have chosen to refer to available editions as specifically as possible, by their location or place of publication. Again, because these collections differ in contents, organization, and language, they cannot be called recensions, redactions, or editions, and I have chosen to call them “collections”, as does Fickle, for similar reasons.\(^91\)

Like the classical *jātakas*, the stories of *Paññāsa-jātaka* collections contain verses interspersed with prose. Were the verses of the *Paññāsa-jātaka* ever transmitted separately from the stories, like the verses of the Theravādin *Jātaka*? No such collection of verses has survived. It is true that each story of the Zimmè *Paññāsa* (and most stories of the Thai National Library *Paññāsa-jātaka*) opens with the first line of the first verse in question. I cite as example the first *jātaka* in of the Zimmè *Paññāsa*, Ādittarāja:

\[
\text{yadā bhonto supino me ti. idaṃ satthā jetavane viharanto attano pubbakatadānapāramim ārabbha kathesi.}
\]

*Yadā bhonto supino me* is the first line of the first verse. But in the absence of any other evidence, it seems more likely that this opening is

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\(^{91}\)An Historical and Structural Study, p. 10.
simply an imitation of the classical Jātaka opening, which starts with a citation of the verse followed by the satthā ... viharanto ... ārabbha kathesi formula.\(^9^2\)

An even more striking point is that the verses of the Zimmē Paññāsa often differ from those of the Thai National Library collection. That is, the same idea, or progression of ideas, is expressed, with some of the same vocabulary, but the composition (phrasing, metre) is quite different. I cite an example from the Samudaghosajātaka:\(^9^3\)

**Khmer/Siamese text**

\[
\text{Taṃ sutvā bodhisatto anantaraṃ gāthām āha:}
\]

\[
\text{Yadā pucchāmi brāhmaṇe taṃ pavuttim sunomi 'haṃ}
\]

\[
\text{Taṅ c’eva me cintayato ummatako jāto mano}
\]

\[
\text{Tasmā cajeyyaṃ attānaṃ tava samgammakātaṇā}
\]

\[
\text{Caṭetvā mātipitaro āgato tava santike ti.}
\]

**Zimmē Paññāsa**

\[
\text{Taṃ sutvā bodhisatto somanassapatto imaṃ gāthadvayam āha}
\]

\[
\text{Bhadde pucchāmi brāhmaṇe tūhyaṃ guṇam suṇāmi 'haṃ}
\]

\[
\text{Ahaṃ taṃ cintayanto so ummato jāyate sadā (20)}
\]

\[
\text{Tasmā pahōya me raṭṭham karomidha tayā vāsaṃ}
\]

\[
\text{Chaṭtevā mātipitaro āgatāsmi tavantike ti. (21)}
\]

In some cases verses found in one version of a story are not found in another version.\(^9^4\) We may therefore suggest that an important distinction between the classical Jātaka and the Paññāsa-jātaka is that while the former is a fixed collection of verses around which prose

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\(^9^2\)The formula is also used in the Dhammapada-atṭhakathā, and a text or texts using the same formula was known to Prajñāvarman, North-East Indian commentator on the Udānavarga: see Peter Skilling, “Theravādin Literature in Tibetan translation”, *Journal of the Pali Text Society* XIX (1993), pp. 143–153.


\(^9^4\)See Terral, op. cit., pp. 276–279: Zimmē Paññāsa verse nos. 11–13 have no counterparts in the Khmer/Siamese text, which is in prose.
narratives were composed, the latter is a collection of stories, of narratives, accompanied by and in part expressed in verse. Another difference is that the Paññāsa-jātaka verses are themselves often
narrative: this is the case for only some of the classical Jātakas, such as the final stories.

The verses have not been numbered consecutively in any editions, Pāli or vernacular, so we cannot state how many there are. An absolute desideratum for further studies of the Paññāsa-jātaka collections is a pāda index of the verses in published editions, whether Pāli or vernacular. This will help to determine the relation between the Paññāsa-jātaka and other Buddhist and indeed non-Buddhist literature. For example, certain verses of the apocryphal Jambūpati-sutta have parallels in the Paññāsa-jātaka (and there are also stylistic or phraseological similarities). In the Lokaneyyappakaraṇaṁ, a long and important Siamese Pāli text, Jaini found twelve verses paralleling the Thai National Library edition of the Paññāsa-jātaka and two verses paralleling the Zimmè Paññāsa.\(^95\)

Paññāsa-jātaka collections may be classed under two broad categories: Pāli and vernacular. At present two main Pāli traditions are known—one from Burma and one from Siam—but only the former has been published. No Pāli Paññāsa-jātaka manuscripts have come to light in Lan Na and Lan Chang so far (although it will be seen below that the Wat Sung Men Lan Na Thai nisay embeds an almost complete Pāli text).\(^96\) Scholars have traditionally accorded primacy to the Pāli, but the relationship between the vernacular and Pāli versions must be examined carefully, story by story. We must bear in mind that some stories may


\(^{96}\)The status of the Cambodian Pāli collection and its relation to the Siamese collection remains unclear. In Chapter III of An Historical and Structural Study Fickle gives romanized texts of two jātakas—Kanakavanṇarāja and Dhammasoṇḍaka—each based on the Institut Bouddhique Khmer-script printed version compared with a microfilm of a single Khom-script manuscript from the National Library, Bangkok. The variants recorded in her notes are minor and scribal. Thus the Institut Bouddhique and National Library versions of these two jātakas belong to the same textual tradition. If it does turn out that Cambodia has an independent manuscript tradition this would make a third Pāli tradition.
have been translated from vernacular to Pāli. Such is, after all, the case with some of the classical narrative literature of Sri Lankan Theravāda. The Dhammapada stories were translated into Pāli from Sinhalese Prakrit in the 5th century, and then back into Sinhalese in an expanded version in the 13th century. The new Sinhalese version took on “an identity and life of its own”.97

Pāli is a literary language used by people who spoke, and speak, different languages. A significant difference between South-East Asian Pāli compositions and the classical works is that for the most part the latter were translated into Pāli from other Prakrits, while South-East Asian narratives were translated from very different language families such as Mon or Thai. The 15th century Chiang Mai monk Bodhiramṣi states at the beginning of his Cāmadevīvamsa that it was translated from Thai (deyya-bhāsā). It is, therefore, a misconception to have a fixed idea of the Pāli as the “original text”, and the history of each text must be carefully examined.98

Jaini and others have traced some of the sources of the stories in the Zimmē Paṇṇāsa. Here we may again compare the case of the Japanese tale collection Kara Monogatari. Geddes writes:

All but two of the twenty-seven tales of the Kara Monogatari can readily be found in early Chinese sources. However, the question of whether the compiler relied on Chinese works or on Japanese versions of the tales existent prior to the appearance of the Kara Monogatari seems impossible to resolve. A number of tales appear in more than one Chinese work; here too it is impossible to state categorically that one or another work is the source of the Japanese version of a tale. In addition … when the possibility is considered that the Kara Monogatari may be closely related to Chinese

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Jātaka and Paññāsa-jātaka in South-East Asia

or Japanese works now lost, the task of tracing and sorting out sources must be seen as having no ultimate resolution.99

This assessment applies equally to the Paññāsa-jātaka collections.

1. Paññāsa-jātaka in Siam
The National Library edition
Kazuko Tanabe has published romanized Pāli editions of several jātakas from the Paññāsa-jātaka manuscripts in the National Library, Bangkok, but no study or edition has been made of the Pāli collection as a whole. The collection consists of Khom script palm-leaf manuscripts in the National Library, Bangkok, in the Wat Bovoranivet and other temple libraries, and in foreign libraries such as the Bibliothèque Nationale in Paris, the Royal Library in Copenhagen, and the Otani University Library in Kyoto.100

In BE 2466 (CE 1923) the National Library published a Thai translation of the Paññāsa-jātaka in twenty-eight fascicles under the direction of Prince Damrong. Different translators were responsible for different jātakas.101 This collection was reprinted in two volumes in 2499 [1956].102 It contains a total of 61 stories, without any

99 Ward Geddes, Kara Monogatari: Tales of China, Arizona State University, 1984 (Center for Asian Studies, Occasional Paper No. 16), p. 45 (see also p. 46, where Geddes concludes that the “task of tracing the influences and sources … appears hopeless”).

100 The giant of Buddhist studies Léon Feer prepared a list of the contents of the jātaka manuscripts, including Paññāsa-jātaka, in the Bibliothèque Nationale but it remains unpublished, preserved with his papers: see A. Cabaton, “Papiers de Léon Feer”, in Catalogue sommaire des manuscrits sanscrits et pālīs, 2e fascicule—manuscrits pālis, Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, 1908, p. 175.


arrangement into vaggas.\textsuperscript{103} It is divided into a “first part” with 50 stories (48 in the first volume, two in the second) and a later part (pacchimabhāga) with another 11 stories followed by three short supplementary texts, the Pañcabuddhavyākaraṇa, Pañcabuddhaśakarājavarṛṇanā, and Ānisāns pha paṇisukula.\textsuperscript{104} The Thai translation retains many verses in Pāli, which show signs of editing and standardization.

In his introduction to the translation of the Paññāsa-jātaka Prince Damrong states that for some years it was impossible to find a complete set in Pāli, and that finally one was put together from several different temple collections, completed in 2466 (1923) with a manuscript from Wat Pathumkhonkha. Niyada has done a great service by listing the contents of 35 manuscripts in the National Library, by title and bundle (phūk).\textsuperscript{105} Her list reveals the complexity of the transmission of the Paññāsa-jātaka. It is clear that one of the common sets started with Samudaghosa-jātaka. But while the same texts occur in the same order in many manuscripts, the distribution of titles into bundles differs. Furthermore, this same common set is sometimes described as Paññāsa-jātaka ban ton (beginning) and sometimes as Paññāsa-jātaka ban plai (end). Other groups of miscellaneous jātakas are also described

\textsuperscript{103}The contents are listed in Fickle, \textit{An Historical and Structural Study}, Table I, p. 16.


as Paññāsa-jātaka. That is, it is not clear at all what “complete set” should mean.

There is a note on the problem of ban ton and ban plai by Phra Phinit Wannakan (Braḥ Binic Varṇṇākāra) in a footnote to the introduction in the later volumes of the National Library edition:

This Paññāsa-jātaka, according to the manuscripts that have been examined, may be divided into two categories: one category is called Paññāsa-jātaka ban plai [Paññāsa-jātaka, last part], but without, it seems, any ban ton [first part]. Another category is called Paññāsa-jātaka-paṭhamabhāga (that is, the first part), or Paññāsa-jātaka-pacchimabhāga (that is, the last part). The Paññāsa-jātaka ban plai is widespread, while manuscripts of the Paññāsa-jātaka-paṭhamabhāga and Pacchimabhāga are rare. On reading [the titles] for the first time, one assumes that Paññāsa-jātaka ban plai and Paññāsa-jātaka-pacchimabhāga would be the same text [since both names mean “last part”, the one in Thai, the other in Pāli], but upon examination the correspondence is the opposite of what one would expect: Paññāsa-jātaka ban plai corresponds to Paññāsa-jātaka-paṭhamabhāga, a complete work with just fifty stories. This leads one to hypothesize that originally the author of Paññāsa-jātaka ban plai intended it to fit into the Paññāsa-nipāta [in the classical Pāli Jātaka]. Later someone composed an additional fourteen stories; intending [to make the whole] into an independent work, not included in the Nipāta [that is, not included in the Paññāsa-nipāta of the classical Jātaka just mentioned], he [combined the two, the old and the new] changing the name of the Paññāsa-jātaka ban plai to Paññāsa-jātaka-paṭhamabhāga, and calling the newly added section Paññāsa-jātaka-pacchimabhāga.

Phra Phinit’s theory starts with an explanation of the name, Paññāsa-jātaka, suggesting that the collection was meant to be attached to the Paññāsa-nipāta of the classical collection. This theory is not tenable, since the “fifty” of the title Paññāsa-nipāta means that the chapter is made up of jātakas that contain fifty verses. It does not mean that the chapter contains or ought to contain fifty jātakas, and in fact the Paññāsa-nipāta contains only three jātakas.

Another problem lies in the fact that Phra Phinit treats the Paṭhamabhāga and Pacchimabhāga of the Paññāsa-jātaka as if each were composed by a single author. Given not only the multiple origins
of the stories but also the diversity of contents of the different collections, this cannot be realistic, even if we stretch the word *teng* to mean “compile”. Further, the terms *ban ton* and *ban plai* are commonly used to describe other long manuscripts (and even printed books), such as the *Visuddhimagga* and *Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā*, and may rather be book-makers’ conventions than those of the editors. That is, the large collections were too big to be contained in a single wrapper, and had to be divided into two.

Whatever the origin of the collection, it is certain that individual stories included in the *Paññāsa-jātaka* had an enormous influence on Siamese literature. This was noted in the introduction (*kham nam*) to the Fine Arts Department reprint:

Sinlapabannakhan Printers requested permission to print and distribute the *Paññāsa-jātaka*. The Fine Arts Department feels that this book, even though it is classed as religious literature [*dhammagatī*], is different from most religious books in that it contains stories which are quite readable. Some of the stories have been used as sources for the composition of *khlong*, *chan*, and drama, and many have become well-known literary works, such as the poem *Samuttakhot kham chan*, the plays *Phra Sudhana* and *Lady Manora*, *Sang Thong*, *Khawi*, and the story of *Phra Rothasen*.

In his *Nithan wannakhadi* Dhanit Yupho compared the *Paññāsa-jātaka* to an artery running through the entire body of Thai literature. The influence of the *Paññāsa-jātaka* on Thai poetical literature is the main subject of Niyada’s work (originally a thesis for Chulalongkorn University). Niyada lists and discusses twenty-one *jātakas* that functioned as sources for sixty-three Thai poetic works in the genres *kham kap*, *kham khlon*, *kham chan*, *lilit*, drama, *bot khap mai* and *bot mahori*.

Important verse versions include the *Samuttakhot kham chan*, begun by Maharatchakhru (Mahārājagarū) in the court of King Narai (1655–1688), continued by King Narai himself, and completed by

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106 Cited in Niyada op. cit., p. 133.
Supreme Patriarch Prince Paramanuchit (1790–1853). This story is well-known, and depicted in 19th century mural paintings in Wat Dusitaram in Thonburi. There are also kham chan versions of Sudhanu and Sabhaśiddhi. Three stories from Paññāsa-jātaka are embedded in the Traibhūmilokavinicchayakathā composed by Phraya Thampreecha (Kaew) at the behest of King Rāma I: Samudaghoṣa, Sumbhamitra (for which Paññāsa-jātaka is specified as source), and Bahalagāvī. One of the famous works of King Rāma II is a dramatic version of the Suvaṅnasāṅkha-jātaka, the play Sang thong. Adaptations of Sang thong and other jātakas like Manoharā and Rathasena continue to be performed, and at the time of writing

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108 Traibhūmilokavinicchayakathā chabap ti 2 (Traibhūmi chabap luang), Vol. 1, Fine Arts Department, Bangkok, 2520, p. 249, samdaeng wai nai samuttakhot-chadok nan wa …; noted by Dhanit Yupho, Introduction to Samudraghoṣa kham chan, 2503, repr. in Kham nam lae bot khwam bang ruang khong Dhanit Yupho, Bangkok, 2510, p. 79.

109 Traibhūmilokavinicchayakathā chabap ti 2 (Traibhūmi chabap luang), Vol. 1, Fine Arts Department, Bangkok, 2520, p. 453, phra sangkhitikachan (sangitikācārya) wisatchana wai nai paññāsajātaka wa … Does the reference to sangitikācārya suggest that for Brahyā Dharrmaprījā the collection had canonical status? This depends on one’s definition of canonicity.

110 Traibhūmilokavinicchayakathā chabap ti 2 (Traibhūmi chabap luang), Vol. 2, Fine Arts Department, Bangkok, 2520, p. 304.

111 See Fern S. Ingersoll (tr.), Sang Thong: A Dance-Drama from Thailand written by King Rama II & the Poets of His Court, Charles E. Tuttle Company, Rutland Vermont & Tokyo, 1973; Prince Chula Chakrabongse (tr.), The Story of Sangha, published in commemoration of the bi-centenary anniversary of the birth of King Rama II, [Bangkok], 24th February, 1968.

An understanding of jātakas, their interrelation, and their relation to the Paññāsa-jātaka collections is essential to the understanding of Thai literature. It is important to understand that the influence is that of individual stories of Paññāsa-jātaka, and not of the set as a whole. That is, classical Siamese literature does not treat the stories as extracts from the set of fifty: each story exists in its own right.

Indeed, it is remarkable that no old vernacular Central Thai collection is known or listed in any manuscript collections. That is, there is no Central Thai counterpart to the several Northern Thai and Laotian vernacular collections to be discussed below. Individual jātakas were transmitted, told and retold, and performed in Central Siam, but there is only one collection, and that is in Pāli, and even its history, structure, and contents are not clear. Reference in Central Thai literature to the set of fifty, to Paññāsa-jātaka by title, is rare. One example is in the verse kolabot (riddle) version of Sirivipulakitti, composed by Luang Śrī Prījā. Near the beginning the author states that he is translating from the Jātaka, from the “Fifty Births of the Bodhisattva” (paññāsa-jāti-bodhisattva).113 There is some debate over when the work was composed, whether in the late Ayutthaya or early Bangkok period.

Lan Na and the Wat Sung Men collection
Paññāsa-jātaka collections were widespread in Northern Siam, in Lan Na and other states like Nan and Phrae. King Anantaworarit of Nan, who was a generous sponsor of the writing down of scriptures, had a Paññāsa-jātaka in ten bundles copied in CS 1223 [1861/62] and again in CS 1225 [1863/64], the latter along with a nisay.114 Lan Na

114Prachum phongsawadan Vol. 10, Bangkok, 2507 [1964], pp. 86, 95, 96; David K. Wyatt (tr.), The Nan Chronicle, Southeast Asia Program, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York, 1994, pp. 121–122. (CS = Culaśakarāja, the Lesser Saka Era.)
collections drew on the rich local literature, the “Lan Na jātakas”, largely vernacular, referred to above.\textsuperscript{115}

*Paññāsa-jātaka* manuscripts are kept in the following temples in the North:

- Wat Muang Mo, Rong Kwang District, Phrae Province
- Wat Phra Luang, Sung Men District, Phrae Province
- Wat Ton Leng, Pua District, Nan Province
- Wat Klang, Song District, Phrae Province
- Wat Pa Muet, Pua District, Nan Province
- Wat Phya Phu, Muang District, Nan Province
- Wat Chang Kham, Muang District, Nan Province.\textsuperscript{116}

But none of these is complete: the only complete manuscript is from Wat Sung Men, Amphoe Sung Men, in Phrae Province. The Wat Sung Men manuscript is complete in nine volumes (*mat*) written down between CS 1196 (BE 2377 = CE 1834) and CS 1198 (BE 2379 = 1836). It has recently been published in the central Thai script.\textsuperscript{117} This collection has fifty jātakas plus six more given as an appendix.

The final colophon in Pāli with Lan Na Thai gloss (p. 987) reads:

*Kukkurajātakaṃ* the Kukkura-jātaka *patamānaṃ* which falls *paññāsa-jātake* in the 50 births *paññāsajātakaṃ* the full 50 births *samattaṃ* is completed.

The titles of the fifty are very close in order and contents to the “Luang Prabang” manuscript described by Finot (1917, pp. 45–46), but they are

\begin{flushright}

\textsuperscript{116}List from *A Critical Study*, Introduction, p. 25, with some additional information kindly supplied by Dr. Balee Buddharaksa, Chiang Mai.

\end{flushright}
not quite identical.\textsuperscript{118} There is good reason for this. The Wat Sung Men manuscript was copied in Luang Prabang at Wat Wisun at the behest of Mahākāñcana Thera, an Araññavāsi monk from Phrae who travelled to the neighbouring state with his disciples to collect copies of scriptures. The names of two of the monk-copyists are recorded: Thula (Dhulā) Bhikkhu and Śrīvijaiya Bhikkhu.

This edition includes, mixed with others, thirteen stories from the classical collection and one—not named jātaka in its title at all—from the Dhammapada Commentary, the Tissathera-vatthu.\textsuperscript{119} Unlike the Zimmè Jātaka (for which see below), the collection is not divided into vagga-s. The colophons of occasional individual jātakas, however, show traces of an earlier division into kaṇḍa-s and vagga-s.

\begin{center}
\begin{tabular}{lll}
No. 7 & Candaghāta & Viriyakaṇḍo paṭhama \\
No. 11 & Magha & Mettāya kaṇḍo … dutiyo \\
No. 14 & Sonanda & Nekkhamaṇḍo … dutiyo \\
App. No. 5 & Duṭṭharāja & Khantikaṇḍo … chaṭṭho \\
No. 23 & Campeyya & Silavaggo … pañcamo \\
\end{tabular}
\end{center}

If we correct Mettāya to Mettā, we see that the four kaṇḍa-s and one vagga-s all bear names of perfections, pāramī. This suggests that there may once have been a collection that classed the stories according to the perfections that they illustrated, like classical works such as the Pāli Cariyā-piṭaka or the Scripture of the Collection of the Six Perfections referred to above. It may be that the closing Pāli number (paṭhama, dutiya, etc.) is not that of the section itself but of the text within the section: that, for example, the Sonanda-jātaka was the second jātaka in the section on Nekkha. However, the order of the perfections is quite different from that of the traditional list, and the nature of these sections is not at all clear. It may be that the names were carried over when copying from different examplars. Perhaps further clues may be found

\begin{footnotes}
\item[118] The “Luang Prabang” manuscript itself is closer, but not quite identical, to Niyada’s list of 50 jātakas from the Institute for Buddhist Studies edition published in Vientiane (see below).
\item[119] See Table II.
\end{footnotes}
Out of the fifty-six jātakas, twenty-five give their sequential number at the end of the story. The remaining thirty-one do not. Out of those that do give their number, the number is not always the same as that in the current collection, but is off by one or more. For example, No. 11 describes itself as dvādasama, 12. Nos. 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 21 state at the end that they are Nos. 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, and 22, respectively. This suggests that at some stage of copying the order was changed.

A list of locations of the “account of the present” (paccuppannavatthu) of the jātakas is given in the introduction to the edition. The sites are traditional: for example forty-seven open in the Jetavana, three in the Nigrodhārāma, and one in the Velūvana. The style is for the most part nisay—a phrase of Pāli followed by a translation or gloss in Thai Yuan—or vohāra (which has less Pāli than the nisay, giving only intermittent phrases). Some verses are given in full in Pāli. The vernacular is Thai Yuan, and in some cases Lao, evidence for the close links between the two cultures.

Other vernacular collections
Niyada describes the contents of a Paññāsa-jātaka from Chiang Tung (Kengtung, Shan State, Burma), an old state with close historical and cultural links to Lan Na. The manuscript, called Paññāsa-jāti, belongs to Venerable Thip Chutithammo, abbot of Wat Min, Chiang Tung, who reports that the Paññāsa-jātaka has long been popular in Chiang Tung and that the stories are related in sermons. The collection described by

\[\text{\textsuperscript{120}}\text{For details see A Critical Study, Introduction, p. 29 (which gives the figure “twenty-four” but lists twenty-five).}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{121}}\text{For details see A Critical Study, Introduction, p. 29.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{122}}\text{A Critical Study, Introduction, pp. 29–31: romanized here as Table I.}\]
\[\text{\textsuperscript{123}}\text{“Thai Yuan” is one of the several names for “Northern Thai” (kham muang, phasa lanna).}\]
Niyada is divided into 26 sections or kañḍa.\footnote{See Niyada, Paññāsa Jātaka, pp. 57–58. I assume the stories are in the local vernacular, Tai Khün.}

It is not clear whether distinctive Paññāsa-jātaka collections were compiled or transmitted in other regions or vernaculars, such as the North-East or the South of Thailand. The term Phra chao ha sip chat was certainly known, and individual jātakas were transmitted in regional literatures. For example in the North-East Thau Siton (Sudhana-jātaka), Thau Suphamit (Subhamita-jātaka), and Thau Sowat (Suvatra-jātaka) exist in vernacular versions,\footnote{Saranukrom watthanatham thai phak isan, Vol. 4 (Bangkok, 2542 [1999]), pp. 1678–1682, 1684–1686, 1687–1694.} while in the South there are versions of Rotmeri and other jātakas. The ubiquitous Suvaṇṇasankha (Sang thong) is known in versions from the North-East and South.\footnote{Saranukrom watthanatham thai phak isan, Vol. 14 (Bangkok, 2542 [1999]), pp. 4762–4771.} But no Paññāsa-jātaka collection as such has come to light.

The same may be said for Mon versions. While individual jātakas and verse adaptations exist in Mon——of Samudaghosa, Varavarna, and other stories—I have not seen any reference to a Mon collection. All of this needs further research.

2. Paññāsa-jātaka in Laos

From Laos we have information about two different vernacular manuscript collections, one from Luang Prabang, the other from Vientiane. For the study of the Paññāsa-jātaka in Laos, we are indebted to the pioneering work of Finot and of Henri Deydier, the latter both for his published works and for an unpublished work being prepared for publication by Jacqueline Filliozat and Anatole-Roger Peltier under the title Un fragment inconnu du Paññāsa-jātaka laotien, which includes summaries of fifty stories.\footnote{I am grateful to Madame Jacqueline Filliozat for giving me a copy of the work.}
Finot described a collection from the north of Laos, from the “royal capital” of Luang Prabang, which I shall refer to as “Finot’s list”. A printed edition, *Phra Chao Sip Chat*, published in Vientiane by the Committee of the Institute for Buddhist Studies (Khana kammakar pracham sathaban kan suksa phutthasasana) agrees closely in contents to Finot’s list and to the Wat Sung Men collection. Like Finot’s list and the Wat Sung Men *Paññāsa-jātaka*, the Institute for Buddhist Studies collection includes jātakas from the classical collection (14 according to Deydier). Deydier has noted that of the fifty stories in the Lao collection, twenty-seven are not found in the other collections: “Ces 27 récits sont absolument originaux”.

The introduction to the Institute for Buddhist Studies edition states:

The *Phra Chao Ha Sip Chat* is [a collection of] outstanding stories. It is a work that the older generation used to listen to. Professional entertainers-cum-reciters (mo lam ruang) would perform recitations which were heard

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128 It is not clear to me how many volumes of the *Phra Chao Ha Hip Chat* were published. Niyada (*Paññāsa Jātaka: Its Genesis and Significance*, p. 58, n. 1) refers to two volumes published 2517 [1974]. Fortunately Vol. I gives a list of all fifty. I have not seen the original, and refer to the list as given by Niyada, pp. 58–63. A precise concordance cannot be made until all stories are accessible, since some discrepancies may be apparent rather than real, arising simply from variant titles. Even if the collections are identical in contents, that does not mean the recensions of the stories will be identical. The sequence of the stories common to Wat Sung Men and *Phra Chao Ha Sip Chat* is identical, and at most nine titles are different. A list given without naming the source by P.V. Bapat in “Buddhist Studies in Recent Times”, in P.V. Bapat (ed.), *2500 Years of Buddhism*, Delhi (1956: repr. 1959), “Laos”, pp. 431–432 seems the same as the Institute for Buddhist Studies edition, when different names (vernacular vs. Pāli, etc.) are taken into account. Fickle, *An Historical and Structural Study*, gives a list of fifty “titles in Laotian Collection” in Table III, p. 18.

129 Note that my translation of the name of the Institute is tentative: I have been unable to find an official translation.

130 Henri Deydier, *Introduction à la connaissance du Laos*, Saigon, 1952, p. 29. This statement must, of course, be revised in the light of the publication of the Wat Sung Men manuscript.
regularly. There were also many palm-leaf manuscripts to be read at home.\footnote{Niyada, Paññāsa Jātaka, pp. 58–59}

In the forthcoming work Deydier describes an incomplete “Ha sip chat” manuscript in the library of Wat Phra Kaew, Vientiane. The manuscript has nine bundles containing eleven stories (the last not complete). On the basis of internal evidence Deydier concluded that these are Nos. 39 to 49 of the collection. Only three correspond to jātakas of the Bangkok National Library edition, in a quite different order. In contents and order the collection does not resemble the Finot, Institute for Buddhist Studies, or Wat Sung Men collections, or the Institut Bouddhique or Zimmè Paññāsa collections. Indeed some of the eleven stories are not found in any other collection.

\textit{Paññāsa-jātaka} manuscripts are kept in the National Library of Laos in Vientiane,\footnote{Jacqueline Filliozat’s Preface to Deydier forthcoming, p. 3.} but their contents have not, to my knowledge, been analysed. For the time being we can only say that Laos shares in the rich tradition of \textit{Paññāsa-jātaka} collections.\footnote{For one popular story see Thao Nhoy Abhaya, “Sin Xay”, \textit{France-Asie: Revue mensuelle de culture et de synthèse franco-asiatique}, 118–119 (Mars-Avril 1956), Numéro spécial, \textit{Présence du Royaume Lao}, pp. 1028–42.}

3. \textit{Paññāsa-jātaka in Cambodia}

Pāli \textit{Paññāsa-jātaka} manuscripts exist in Cambodia, but the relation between the Khmer and the Siamese Pāli collections is not known since neither has been studied thoroughly. Finot’s list of the contents of a Khmer-script Pāli manuscript collection differs from the Bangkok National Library and other collections available.\footnote{See Fickle, \textit{An Historical and Structural Study}, Table II, p. 17.} Terral’s study (1956) shows that the Khmer-script \textit{Samuddaghosa-jātaka} differs radically from the Zimmè \textit{Paññāsa} version.\footnote{She concludes: “Notons que les manuscrits de la Bibliothèque national de Paris, aussi bien que la traduction siamoise présentée par le prince Damrong, montrent l’identité des versions conservées au Siam et au Cambodge, par opposition à celle du Jañmay [Chiang Mai] paññāsa que nous ne connaissions,}
manuscripts (K3) was copied in Cambodia, it is not clear whether it or the other manuscripts originated from Cambodia or Siam. One
manuscript (K4) has Siamese writing on the cover folios. In the
National Library in Phnom Penh today there is a Paññāsa-jātaka “ban
ton” in 17 bundles, which almost certainly comes from Siam.

Twenty-five jātakas were published by the Institut bouddhique in
Phnom Penh in five fascicules between 1953 and 1962 (for the contents,
see Table III). Khmer translations of the same twenty-five were
published separately between 1944 and 1962 under the title
Paññāsajātak samrāy, also in five fascicules. In both cases publication
stopped with twenty-five stories. In 1963 abridged Khmer
versions of a full fifty stories by Nhok Thèm were published by the
Faculté des Lettres et des Sciences Humaines of the University of
Phnom Penh under the title Paññāsajātak sānkhep (see Table IV for the
contents). The first 20 titles are the same and in the same order as
those of the Institut Bouddhique edition. The first 35 titles are the same
and in the same order as those of the Thai National Library edition, after

jusqu’à présent, que par l’exemplaire de Rangoun” (“Samuddaghosajātaka”, p. 254).
136Fonds pour l’édition des manuscrits du Cambodge, Inventaire des
manuscrits khmers, pāli et thai de la Bibliothèque Nationale de Phnom Penh,
137Ganthamālā, Publications de l’école supérieure de pāli éditées par les soins
de l’Institut Bouddhique X, Paññāsa-jātaka, Texte pāli, Phnom-Penh, Éditions
de l’Institut Bouddhique, 1953–62. The set is very rare. I was able to consult it
in the library of the International College for Advanced Buddhist Studies,
Tokyo, in November 2000. (The French title page of Tome 1 describes it as
“Deuxième Édition”. I have not seen the first edition.)
138Not seen: see Jacobs’ bibliography (below, n. 138), p. 209.
139Nhok Thèm, Paññāsa-jātaka sānkhep, Phnom Penh, 1963, 556 pp. I am
grateful to Olivier de Bernon for informing me of the existence of this work
and providing me with a copy. M. de Bernon notes that “cet ouvrage a fait
l’objet d’une réédition, assez fautive, en deux volumes à Phnom Penh en
1999” (personal communication, December 2000). (The work is included in
Jacobs’ comprehensive bibliography, p. 252, under the orthography Nhok-
Thaem.)
which order and titles diverge.\footnote{Niyada (Paññāsa Jātaka, pp. 63–69) gives a list from the introduction to Fascicle 1 of Paññāsajātak samrāy. The first 35 agree in the main on contents and order with Paññāsajātak sānkhep, after which they diverge.}

Non-classical jātakas were recast in popular verse narratives. Some of the stories are told in Auguste Pavie’s \textit{Contes du Cambodge}.\footnote{Auguste Pavie \textit{Contes du Cambodge}, Repr. Éditions Sudestasie, Paris, 1988.} Pavie describes “Varavong et Saurivong”, of which he provides a complete translation, as “le roman de mœurs et d’aventures le plus aimé du Cambodge”. Many of the stories summarized by Judith Jacobs in her \textit{Traditional Literature of Cambodia} are non-classical jātakas often included in \textit{Paññāsa-jātaka} collections.\footnote{Judith Jacobs, \textit{The Traditional Literature of Cambodia: A Preliminary Guide}, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1996. For mention of Paññāsa-jātaka see pp. 37 foll. and 50–51.}

\textbf{4. Paññāsa-jātaka in Burma}

A Pāli Paññāsa-jātaka transmitted in Burma gives a full fifty stories arranged in five sections (vagga) of ten stories each.\footnote{A list of titles, without division into sections, is given by Fickle in her Table IV. Her thesis was written before the publication of the Pāli Zimmē Paññāsa and English translation by the Pali Text Society. The titles given by Fickle, based on Finot (“Recherches”, p. 45), Terral (“Samuddaghosajātaka”, p. 341), and two other sources agree with those of the PTS edition with one exception, No. 13. This is not surprising since her sources all derive from the printed Hanthawaddy Press 1911 edition. No. 13 has two titles, Suvaṇṇakumāra and Dasapaññahavisajjana.} It is the only known collection to have exactly fifty stories tidily organized into vaggas. According to Jaini, in Burma palm-leaf manuscripts of the \textit{Paññāsa-jātaka} are rare.\footnote{A story recounted by Prince Damrong and repeated by Jaini has it that a Burmese king considered the work to be apocryphal, and had all copies burnt. This was strongly denied by U Bo Kay in a letter to Niyada (Paññāsa Jātaka, p. 36, n. 1).} For his edition he consulted two sources: a complete manuscript in 324 leaves from the Zetawun (Jetavana) monastery in Monywe (Monywa district, near Mandalay) and a

\begin{flushright}
\textsuperscript{140}Niyada (Paññāsa Jātaka, pp. 63–69) gives a list from the introduction to Fascicle 1 of Paññāsajātak samrāy. The first 35 agree in the main on contents and order with Paññāsajātak sānkhep, after which they diverge.
\textsuperscript{143}A list of titles, without division into sections, is given by Fickle in her Table IV. Her thesis was written before the publication of the Pāli Zimmē Paññāsa and English translation by the Pali Text Society. The titles given by Fickle, based on Finot (“Recherches”, p. 45), Terral (“Samuddaghosajātaka”, p. 341), and two other sources agree with those of the PTS edition with one exception, No. 13. This is not surprising since her sources all derive from the printed Hanthawaddy Press 1911 edition. No. 13 has two titles, Suvaṇṇakumāra and Dasapaññahavisajjana.
\textsuperscript{144}A story recounted by Prince Damrong and repeated by Jaini has it that a Burmese king considered the work to be apocryphal, and had all copies burnt. This was strongly denied by U Bo Kay in a letter to Niyada (Paññāsa Jātaka, p. 36, n. 1).\
\end{flushright}
Burmese-script printed edition published by the Hanthawaddy Press, Rangoon, in 1911, in 685 pages. The Hanthawaddy edition does not give any information about the editor(s) or manuscript(s) consulted.\textsuperscript{145} This edition was the base-text for Padmanabh S. Jaini’s roman-script edition published in two volumes by the Pali Text Society in 1981 and 1983,\textsuperscript{146} which is available in English translation by Horner and Jaini.\textsuperscript{147} The Hanthawaddy edition has recently been translated into Thai.\textsuperscript{148}

This collection is known in Burma as the “Chiang Mai Jātaka”, and it was under this title (Zimmè Jātaka) that it was published by the Hanthawaddy Press. But this is a popular title, as is another nickname, the “Yuan Paññāsa”. Is there any other, more formal title? The closing colophon gives the titles Paññāsajāt (in the manuscript) and Paññāsapāḷi (in the printed edition). A colophon at the end of each

\textsuperscript{145}It is probable that the manuscript was that purchased by Charles Duroiselle for the Bernard Free Library, Rangoon. A letter from Duroiselle to Louis Finot, dated Mandalay, 6 June 1917, refers to “un volume du Zimmè Paññāsa” sent by him to the latter. Duroiselle states that “ce volume fut imprimé sur la copie en feuilles de palmier que j’ai réussi à acheter pour la Bernard Free Library après plusieurs années de recherches. C’est la seule copie qui me soit connue en Birmanie.” (Letter cited in n. 4 of Jacqueline Filliozat’s Preface to Deydier forthcoming).


vagga as published by Jaini gives the title of the vagga (which is simply the title of the first story in the section) and a verse table of contents (uddāna) listing the ten titles, along with the prose statement:

*iti imehi dasajātakehi paṭimāṇḍito paññāsajātakaṃsāṅgahe vijamāno [x]-
vaggo ... nīṭhito.*

Thus: The [such-and-such] chapter ornamented with these ten jātakas which exists in the Paññāsa-jātaka-saṅgaha is finished.

Can it be that the original name of the text is Paññāsa-jātaka-saṅgaha, the title given in the vagga colophons? That is, did the author or compiler of this “Burmese collection” name his work Paññāsa-jātaka-
saṅgaha to show that it was a specific collection of apocryphal Pāli jātakas, edited and arranged in vaggas by himself, in order to distinguish it from other collections named simply Paññāsa-jātaka? Since the title is not consistent in all the colophons in Jaini’s two sources, and is not confirmed by the final colophon, further manuscripts need to be consulted before an answer can be given.

The Piṭakat samuṁ, an inventory of titles compiled in 1888 by U Yan (Maṅ kraṅ Mahāsirijeyasū, 1815–1891), the last Royal Librarian of the Palace Library at Mandalay (which was dispersed with the British annexation in 1885), does not use the name Paññāsa-jātaka-saṅgaha, but rather lists the text under a further title, Lokīpaḷṇṇāsa-jāt. The Piṭakat samuṁ lists two works of this title, a Pāli text and a nissaya:149

§ 369. Lokīpaḷṇṇāsa-jāt: by a raṅga sāmanera who was very skillful in religious and worldly affairs (lokadhamma), and who lived in Jaṅ: may [Chiang Mai], Ayuddhaya division, Yui:dayā: ([Thailand]).

§ 898. Lokīpaḷṇṇāsa-jāt-nisya: by Ku gyi Sayadaw (gū kraṅ charā-tō) in the

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reign of the first king who founded the first city of Amarapura *(amarapūra paṭhama mrui taññ nan: taññ ma:)*. The *nisya* has three volumes.

This king should be Bodawpaya, who moved the capital to Amarapura in May 1783. A palm-leaf manuscript containing a section of a Burmese translation in the Fragile Palm Leaves collection in Bangkok also bears the title *Lokīpanṇāsa*. The manuscript contains the stories of the second chapter, *Sudhanuvagga*, in the same order as the *Zimmē Paṇṇāsa*. The name of the translator and date of translation are unknown. On the evidence of U Yan and the Burmese-language manuscript another title of the work is *Lokīpanṇāsa-jāt*. But this title is not given anywhere in the Pāli version. Can it first have been supplied by the author of the *Nissaya*, or by an early translator?

The contents and arrangement of the stories in the *Zimmē Paṇṇāsa* differ from other known collections, such as the National Library and Wat Sung Men editions. Even the verses are frequently different, as shown above. So far the *Zimmē Paṇṇāsa* collection is known only in Burma: no corresponding manuscript collection, Pāli or vernacular, is known in Lan Na or elsewhere. However, a Northern Thai *Piṭakamālā* written down in CS 1181 (BE 2367 = CE 1824) describes a “50 chat” in five *vaggas* which is identical in contents and arrangement to the *Zimmē Paṇṇāsa* (barring the usual differences in spelling and details of titles). To date this is the only evidence for the *Zimmē Paṇṇāsa* in Lan Na itself.

Can the *Piṭakamālā* reference be interpreted as a confirmation of the Burmese tradition that connects the *Paṇṇāsa-jātaka* with Chiang Mai? It cannot, since the collection may have found its way from Burma to Chiang Mai rather than the other way around, perhaps during the long period of Burmese rule (1558–1775). After all, as noted in the


151 The table of contents of the modern printed edition of the *Piṭakat samuīn* uses the nicknames, listing the root-text as “Chiang Mai *Paṇṇāsa-jātaka*” and the *Nissaya* as “Chiang Mai *Paṇṇāsa-jātaka-nissaya*.”
introduction to the printed edition of the Wat Sung Men Paññāsa-jātaka, the Piṭakamālā was written down seventeen years later than Jaini’s Wat Jetavana manuscript, which bears a date corresponding to 1808. All the reference really tells us is that the collection was known to the unknown author of the Piṭakamālā.

Is there any truth, then, in the story of Chiang Mai origins? It is possible, but cannot be proven. At any rate the story should only be applied to the Zimmē Paññāsa, the (purported) “Paññāsa-jātaka-saṅgha”. No such story is transmitted in Siam, Laos, or Cambodia for the other collections, and it would be odd indeed if the widely divergent collections in several languages were all composed by a single novice in Chiang Mai.

The date of the Zimmē Paññāsa is not known. An upper date is that of the Nissaya, composed in the reign of Bodawpaya, that is between 1783 and 1826. Further research into Burmese sources, including the Nissaya, is needed, since this may uncover new information. Another question is whether there are any other collections in Burma.

Prince Damrong’s account of the Paññāsa-jātaka is worth citing at length:

There is a report that once, when the Paññāsa-jātaka had spread to Burma, the Burmese called it “Chiang Mai Paññāsa”. But a king of Burma declared that it was apocryphal (teng plom phra phutthawacana) and ordered it to be burnt. As a result no copy of Paññāsa-jātaka is extant in Burma.152

The king described the Paññāsa-jātaka as an apocryphal teaching ascribed to the Buddha because he misconstrued the Nipāta-jātaka (or what we call in Thai the “Stories of the Five Hundred Fifty Births of the Lord”), taking it to be the word of the Buddha when in fact it is not. The truth of the matter is as explained by King Phrabat Somdet Phra Chula Chom Klao [Rāma V] in his introduction to the [Thai translation of] the Nipāta-jātaka which was printed in the Fifth Reign. [He wrote that] the stories of the Nipāta-jātaka were probably fables that had been popularly recited long before the time of the Buddha. When the Lord Buddha taught

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152 For U Bo Kay’s reaction to this story, see above, n. 143.
the beings to be trained (venaiyasatva) he chose some of these stories to illustrate certain points of his sermon. It was natural that in the stories there would be a hero and a villain. The exemplary figure might be a human or an animal, but in any case was called the “great being” (mahāsattva). Later, after the time of the Buddha, the idea arose that the “great being” in those jātaka stories was the Lord Buddha in previous lives. Later still, when the Tripitaka was compiled, the editors sought to instill a firm faith in accordance with their own beliefs, and therefore composed the “identification of the characters of the jātaka” (prachum chadok = Pāli samodhāna), as if Lord Buddha had clearly explained that this mahāsattva had later been born as the Buddha himself, and other people or animals came to be this or that person in the present [that is, in the time of the Buddha]. This explains the origin of the structure of the jātaka stories as they appear in the Nipāta-jātaka. When members of the saṅgha of Chiang Mai took local stories and composed them as jātakas they simply followed the model of the ancient literature composed in former times by the respected commentators (phra gantharacanācārya)—they had no intention whatsoever of deceiving anyone that this was the word of the Buddha. The king of Burma misunderstood the matter.

Questions: Origins, authenticity, date and place of compilation

Why were the Paññāsa-jātaka stories and collections so popular that they spread throughout mainland South-East Asia? What did they offer, besides good stories? Several answers come to mind. Like the classical Jātaka stories, they could function as sermons (deśanā), offering both moral instruction and explanations of ānisamsa, the benefits that accrue from the practices and deeds of the faithful such as giving (dāna) and ethics (sīla). The stories glorify the bodhisattva. That is, they are expressions of the “Theravādin cult of the bodhisattva” which is an outstanding feature of South-East Asian Buddhism, in which the bodhisattva acts as exemplar, transmitter of folk-wisdom, sanctifier, and embodiment of power and pāramī.

The problem of origins is complex. We have seen above that a Burmese tradition associates the Paññāsa-jātaka with Chiang Mai. Neither the antiquity or source of this tradition are clear. At one time Prince Damrong believed the collection to come from Vientiane in Laos, but later he held that it came from Chiang Mai. Niyada has
suggested that the *Paññāsa-jātaka* originated in Hariphunchai (Lamphun), but on the whole the connection with Chiang Mai has been widely and uncritically accepted: it is given by Prince Damrong in his introduction and even used as the title of the recent Thai translation of the Burmese collection. *Individual jātakas* cannot have their origin in one place alone, whether Chiang Mai or anywhere else. Some, like *Sudhana*, *Surūpa*, and *Kanakavaṇṇarāja*, have Sanskrit parallels in the *Divyāvadāna* and *Avadānaśataka*. Others may have originated anywhere in the region. Some have been localized, but this does not (necessarily) say anything about their origins but only about their history. For example, in Surat Thani in Southern Thailand *Voravong* is associated with Chaiya and it is believed the events took place nearby. In sum, it is possible that one of the *collections*—such as the *Zimmē Jātaka*—was compiled in Chiang Mai, but it is not possible that all of them were.

Since the time of Prince Damrong a number of dates have been proposed for “the” *Paññāsa-jātaka*. The Prince proposed the date 2000–2200 BE (CE 1457–1657) for the Pāli National Library collection. This date was followed by Phra Khru Ariyasatthā Jhim Sun Saddharrmapaññācārya in his introduction to the Institut Bouddhique edition. Jaini suggested a 13th to 14th century dating for the *Zimmē Paññāsa*. Fickle reviewed available theories and concluded:

> With the realization that any date can be only tentative, we shall assign this text to the reign periods of King Tiloka and King Muang Keo (A.D. 1442–1525). The fact that these stories can be found on earlier monuments in Java and Pagan indicates that versions of some of the tales were circulating in Southeast Asia before the composition of the *Paññāsa-jātaka* collections.

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153 For the first two see Jaini, *Paññāsa-jātaka or Zimmē Paññāsa*, Vol. II, Introduction, p. xli. For the last see Fickle, *An Historical and Structural Study*, pp. 63–137. See also Fickle pp. 49–54 and Table VIII.

154 Udom Nuthong, in *Saranukrom watthanatham phak tai pho so 2529*, Vol. 8, p. 3296.

Niyada has proposed before BE 1808 (CE 1265), the date of the Thawkuthamutti or Kusa-samuti inscription (for which see below). Classical Thai poems allude to several jātakas: Kamsuan khlong dan to Samuttakhot and Sudhanu, Dvādasamāśa to Samuttakhot, Sudhanu, and Pācittakumāra. Nirat Haribhūjaya, dated to BE 2060 (CE 1517), alludes to Rathasena, Sudhanu, and Samudaghosa. The poets compare the sorrow of lovers separated from each other with the sorrow experienced by characters in the stories in question.

In the library of Wat Sung Men is a Samudaghosa-jātaka translated from Pāli into Thai Yuan by Phra Ratanapaññā. If this is the same Ratanapaññā who composed the Jinakālamāli, completed in about 1528, this gives us a rare instance of a datable translation from Pāli. But there may have been several Ratanapaññās, and the identification remains tentative. The Chiang Mai Chronicle states that in CE 1288/89 a Mahāthera named Mahākassapa gave a sermon to King Mangrai based on the Vaṭṭaṅgula-jātaka (Zimmè Paññāsā no. 37, Bangkok National Library no. 20). The same story is told in the Northern Chronicle (Phongsawadan Yonok). The Chiang Mai Chronicle dates from the beginning of the 19th century, although the section in question is based on ancient sources. The Northern Chronicle is even later, dating from

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150 The references are given in Niyada, Paññāsa Jātaka, pp. 42–43.
the late 19th century, although based, as is seen in the present case, on earlier materials.

Several stories were known in Burma from an early date. An inscription from Thawkuthathamuti temple at Pwazaw (about four miles south-east of Pagan) dated to 627 (BE 1808 = CE 1265) gives the following curse: “In this life may he be separated from his beloved wife and son like King Thombameik was separated from his queen and prince”. As Fickle notes, “Thombameik is the Burmese rendition of Subhamitta, the hero of a tale which appears in all the P[aññāsa] J[ātaka] collections [e.g. Zimmè Paññäsa no. 5, Bangkok National Library no. 9], a tale which hinges upon the separation of the hero from his wife and children”.

Two other stories were known in 15th century Burma: Sudhana and Sudhanu, which were adapted in his Thanhmya Pyitsan Pyo by Shin Agga, who flourished between BE 2023 and 2044 (CE 1480–1501).

Generally speaking the discussions of place and date have ignored several fundamental facts. As we have seen, there is no single Paññāsa-jātaka: there are several distinct collections, in different languages. The question of date and place of composition is therefore different for each collection: When and where was the Zimmè Paññāsa compiled, when the Bangkok National Library collection? When and where were the Wat Sung Men collection, the collections on which Finot’s list, the Institute for Buddhist Studies, or the Deydier version were based, compiled? When and where were the Khmer, Tai Khùn, etc. collections compiled?

There are no ancient references to supply a ready answer. In central Siamese literature, the earliest reference to a collection seems to be the Traibhūmilokavinicchayakathā, mentioned earlier. For Burma the earliest broadly datable reference to the collection is to the Lokīpaññāsajāt Nissaya. Both references date to the end of the 18th

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161Niyada, Paññāsa Jātaka, p. 36, referring to U San Tun.
century. There is no earlier evidence for the collection in ancient times, although there is literary or inscriptive evidence for some jātakas. That is, regardless of the date of their components, the dates of the collections may be late. This, however, remains to be proven.

These Paññāsa-jātaka collections are not original, unitary compositions (with the possible exception of the Burmese Pāli collection). They are collections, assemblages, accumulations, anthologies. Each story has its own history. Some may be, or certainly are, ancient. Some, such as Sudhana, go back to India; these may even be relics of the early period, Dvāravatī or Funan, when the literature of schools other than the Theravāda, and also of the Mahāyāna, circulated in the region.

The important point is that references in inscriptions or in datable sources to individual titles, to characters or events in an individual jātaka, prove nothing about the date of any Paññāsa-jātaka collection. They only prove that the jātaka, or a version of the jātaka, was known at that time and place. Important references of this nature have been collected by Niyada, and they show that some of the jātakas were known at Pagan and at Sukhothai.162

The Paññāsa-jātaka collections cannot be studied apart from the huge corpus of apocryphal jātaka literature of South-East Asia. How did some tales come to be included in Paññāsa-jātaka collections, others not? What were the principles of selection? Why did certain popular jātakas like Sivijeyya, Lokaneyya, Rājovāda, or Tiṇapāla remain “uncollected”163? The Sisora-jātaka is described in its colophon as taken from the Paññāsa-jātaka, but is not included in any of the known collections.164 Does this mean there are other collections, lost or still to be discovered? Why were important and well-known narratives

such as the stories of the bodhisattva’s self-sacrifice to the hungry
tigress or the bodhisattva’s last female birth attached to the beginning of
the \textit{Mahāsampinīdanā}, \textit{Sambhāravipāka}, and
\textit{Sotatthakimānā}, but not included in \textit{jātaka} collections, or, it
seems, circulated independently? Why was the number fifty chosen?
The number does not seem to have any special mystical, cabalistic,
historical, or classical significance.

Another methodological problem lies in the quest for a single
literary source for individual stories. We are concerned with a narrative
literature that was fluid and flexible, and oral/aural. The same story
would take on different guises according to function: it could be
embellished, expanded, contracted, or abridged according to need or
fancy of preacher, editor, or author. We should not think that people
learned a story from a single, fixed, literary source: they might learn
from a canonical text, an embellishment, a sermon, a teaching, a cloth
painting, a temple mural. The story changes with each telling.

What is the origin of the Pāli versions? To what degree do “local
Pālis” differ from each other? Prince Damrong and others have noted
that the Pāli is poor or substandard. It is, however, uneven from tale to
tale, and research into its stylistic peculiarities is in its infancy. The
language shares features with other texts from Siam, such as
\textit{Dasabodhisatta-uddesa}, \textit{Lokaneyya-pakaraṇa}, \textit{Jambūpati-sutta}, \textit{Mahā-
kappalokasaṃthāna}, etc. Useful preliminary studies of the language of
individual texts have been made by Coedès, Martini–Terral, Jaini, and
others.\textsuperscript{165}

The dates and origins of the vernacular collections are bound up
with a greater problem, that of the anonymous translation of anonymous
literature. There exists a huge body of translations of suttas, treatises,
abhidhamma, commentaries, grammars, in the languages of South-East
Asia, but the date of the translation or the identity of the translators is
rarely if ever known.

\textsuperscript{165}See especially Terral, “Samuddhaghosajātaka” (\textit{Bulletin de l’École
Française d’Extrême-Orient} XLVIII, 1, 1956), which compares several texts.
The *Paññāsa-jātaka* is not the only collection of narratives to circulate in South-East Asia: there exist other collections, which remain to be studied. What is the relation between the *Paññāsa-jātaka* collections and the other collections? This must be determined both in terms of the collections as a whole, and of individual texts.

The *Suttajātakanidānānīsamsa*, for example, is an anthology of diverse Pāli texts drawn from diverse sources. Other collections are the *Sotabbamālinī, Sammohanidānā, Sāvakanībbāna, Bimbānībbāna*, and *Paramatthamaṅgala*. The same text may be found in more than one collection: that is, the contents overlap. The relations between such texts remains to be determined: will the version of a text in one collection be the same as the version(s) transmitted in another?

Another question is that of the “authenticity” of the *Paññāsa-jātaka*. This was addressed by Prince Damrong in the introduction to the Thai translation, cited above. It is not possible to make a categorical statement regarding pre-modern attitudes towards the canonicity of the *Paññāsa-jātaka* and other local texts. We can only suggest that at least for some, perhaps most, the *jātakas* were fully integrated into the tapestry of lives and deeds of the bodhisattva and the Buddha. This is suggested by the importance of murals that depict non-classical *jātakas* or non-classical narratives such as Jambūpati and Phra Maleyya-thera. In the murals they are fully integrated into the history of the Buddha (which is derived primarily from the *Pathamasambodhi*) and stand side-by-side with classical *jātakas*. It is true that the *Piṭakamālā* describes the *Paññāsa-jātaka* as “outside the sangāyanā”, but late Theravādin works accept certain works, such as the *Nandopananda-sutta*, as “Buddha-word”, even though they were not included in the council (*saṅgītim anāropita*). That is, “Buddhavacana” and “Tipiṭaka” are not necessarily coterminous.

Another example shows how the non-classical *jātakas* were on a par with the classical *jātakas*, and how uses and classifications of texts

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166For a list of contents see George Cœœdès, “Dhammakāya”, *Adyar Library Bulletin* XX.3–4, p. 252, n. 2.
extend into realms beyond the temple library. In a Lan Na tradition called *Dhamma-jātā*, people gain merit by offering texts to a temple according to their own year, month, or day of birth. For example, a person born in the Ox Year offers the *Vessantara ruam*, an abridged *Vessantara-jātaka* in Thai Yuan. (The texts offered are highly abridged, “sermon” versions, in a single bundle [*phuk*].) Texts to be offered according to one’s month of birth include non-classical *jātakas*—*Sumbhamitta, Sudhanu, Padumakumāra*—alongside others from the “Ten Jātakas” (*Daśajātī*). A similar connection between certain texts and the twelve-year cycle is found in Cambodia.

**Conclusions**

In this paper I have attempted to show the richness and complexity of the *Jātaka* and *Paññāsa-jātaka* traditions. A paper of this size can only skim the surface, and leaves many questions unresolved. It is important at this stage to raise questions, and to examine the subject in all possible aspects: literary, social, historical, functional, with an open mind.

It seems that the stories predate the collections, and that the collections may be late. It is therefore no longer possible to say, without being specific, that such-and-such a story “is from the *Paññāsa-jātaka*”, or that such-and-such a story “is not included in the *Paññāsa-jātaka*”. One may say that it “is found in the Wat Sungmen *Paññāsa-jātaka* collection”, or that “it is found in the Thai National Library edition but not included in the *Zimmē Paññāsa*”.

In the end it becomes difficult to distinguish between stories included in *Paññāsa-jātaka* collections and non-classical *jātakas* in general. Indeed, texts that are not found in any of the known collections are sometimes described internally as “from the *Paññāsa-jātaka*”. For example, the epilogue of the popular North-Eastern Thai tale *Phya*

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Khankhaak, “The Toad King” states:\(^{169}\)

This is a true account of Phya Khankhaak,
Which has been recited
In the fifty lives of the Buddha-to-be, dear readers …

The mention of “fifty lives” is made by the modern editor, Phra Ariyanuwat, who prepared the work in 1970, but he is following a tradition attested in Lao manuscripts for other tales.\(^{170}\) In the end the study of Paññasā-jātaka almost merges with the study of traditional narrative literature, and calls for close collaboration between scholars of literature—whether Lao, Khmer, Shan, Khün, Thai, Mon, or Burmese—and scholars of Pāli and of Buddhist studies.

Peter Skilling

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\(^{170}\) Peter Koret, oral communication, February 2001.
### Table I

**Contents of the Wat Sung Men Paññāsajātaka**

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<th>Location</th>
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<td>Jetavana</td>
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<td>2.</td>
<td>Sudhanu</td>
<td>Jetavana</td>
<td>Victory over Māra</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Sudhana</td>
<td>Jetavana</td>
<td>A monk who wants to disrobe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Sirasākummāra</td>
<td>Veḷuvana</td>
<td>Devadatta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Sumbhamitta</td>
<td>Jetavana</td>
<td>Devadatta</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>Suvaṇṇasaṅkha</td>
<td>Jetavana</td>
<td>Devadatta</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Candaghāta</td>
<td>Nigrodhārāma</td>
<td>Repaying one’s father and mother</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Kuruṅgamigga</td>
<td>Jetavana</td>
<td>Devadatta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Setapanḍita</td>
<td>Nigrodhārāma</td>
<td>Perfections of giving and virtue (dānasīlapārami)</td>
</tr>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Tulakapanḍita</td>
<td>Jetavana</td>
<td>Sacrifice of one’s life (jīvītadāna)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Magha</td>
<td>——</td>
<td>——</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>Aritṭha</td>
<td>Jetavana</td>
<td>Aritṭhakumāra</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>Ratanapajjota</td>
<td>Jetavana</td>
<td>A monk who takes care of his mother</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>Sonanda</td>
<td>Jetavana</td>
<td>Kiṃcamāṇavikā</td>
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<td>15.</td>
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<td>Jetavana</td>
<td>Perfection of giving (dānapārami)</td>
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<td>16.</td>
<td>Dhammadhajja</td>
<td>Veḷuvana</td>
<td>Devadatta</td>
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<td>17.</td>
<td>Dukamma</td>
<td>Jetavana</td>
<td>Testing the teachings of one’s father</td>
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<td>18.</td>
<td>Sabbasiddhi</td>
<td>Jetavana</td>
<td>The state of a miraculous person</td>
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<td>19.</td>
<td>Paññābala</td>
<td>Pāsāda of Yasodharā</td>
<td>Yasodharā’s devotion to the Buddha</td>
</tr>
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<td>20.</td>
<td>Dadhivāhāna</td>
<td>Jetavana</td>
<td>Mixing with people with bad morals</td>
</tr>
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<td>21.</td>
<td>Mahissa</td>
<td>Jetavana</td>
<td>A monk with much property</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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171I am grateful to Santi Pakdeekham for preparing Tables I and II. They are based on *Critical Study of Northern Thai Version of Panyasa Jātaka*, Introduction, pp. 29–31. We have not been able to check the appropriateness of the “occasions”. 
22. Chaddanta Jetavana A young nun
23. Campeyya Jetavana Uposathakamma
24. Bahalagāvī Jetavana Gratitude to one’s mother
25. Kapirāja Jetavana Acting to benefit one’s relations
   (ñātatthacariyā)
26. Narajīva Jetavana A monk who takes care of
   his mother
27. Siddhisāra Jetavana Dhammacakka
28. Kussarāja Jetavana A monk who wants to disrobe
29. Bhanḍāgārika Jetavana The power of wisdom (paññābala)
30. Sirivipulakitti Jetavana Caring for one’s mother
31. Suvaṇṇakummāra Jetavana Wisdom (pañña)
32. Vaṭṭaka Magadha A forest fire
33. Tissatheravatthu Jetavana Tissa bhikkhu
34. Suttasoma Jetavana Aṅgulimāla bhikkhu
35. Mahābala Jetavana Perfection of giving (dānapāramī)
36. Brahmaghosa Jetavana The “equipment of merit”
   (puññasambhāra)
37. Sādinnarāja Jetavana An upāsaka who keeps the
   precepts
38. Siridhara Jetavana An upāsaka
39. Ajittarāja Jetavana Renunciation (cāgadāna)
40. Vipularāja Jetavana Perfection of giving (dānapāramī)
41. Arindumma Jetavana Perfection of giving (dānapāramī)
42. Viriyapaṇḍita — A past event
43. Ādittarāja Jetavana Perfection of giving (dānapāramī)
44. Surupparāja Jetavana Perfection of giving (dānapāramī)
45. Suvaṇṇabrahmada- datta Jetavana Perfection of giving (dānapāramī)
46. Mahāpadumma- kummāra Jetavana A monk who cares for his mother
47. Mahāsurasena Jetavana Offering the eight requisites
   (āṭṭhaparikhāra)
Peter Skilling

48. Siricudamani Jetavana Perfection of giving (dānapāramī)
49. Nalaka Kosalajanapada A sugarcane tree
50. Kukkura Jetavana Acting to benefit one’s relatives (ñātatthacariyā)

Supplementary stories
-1. Suvaññamigga Jetavana A daughter of good family (kuladhitā)
-2. Canda Jetavana Saving the lives of animals
-3. Sarabha Jetavana Solutions for a crow and a worm
-4. Poranakappilapurinda Jetavana Benefits of sponsoring a Tipiṭaka
-5. Duttha River Jetavana Devadatta
-6. Kanakavanjaraja Jetavana —

Table II
List of stories from the classical Pāli Jātaka in the Wat Sung Men Paññasajātaka

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<tr>
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<th>Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Kuruṅgamiggajātaka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Maghajātaka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>Dadhivahanajātaka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Mahissajātaka (Devadhammajātaka)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>Chaddantajātaka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>Campeyyajātaka</td>
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<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Kapirājajātaka</td>
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<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Kussarājajātaka</td>
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<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>Vaṭṭakajātaka</td>
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<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>Suttasomajātaka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49.</td>
<td>Nalakajātaka (Naḷapānajātaka)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50.</td>
<td>Kukkurajātaka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-1.</td>
<td>Suvaññamigga-jātaka</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Table III
List of the 25 Jātakas published in five fascicles by l’Institut bouddhique, Phnom Penh.

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<th>Fasc. III</th>
<th>Fasc. IV</th>
<th>Fasc. V</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>19. Sudassanamahārāja</td>
<td>23. Dhammikapāṇḍita</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>20. Vaṭṭangulirāja</td>
<td>24. Cāgadāna</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>25. Dhammarāja</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table IV
List of Jātakas contained in the Nhok Thèm’s abridged edition, Paññāsa-jātaka Saṅkhēp, published in one volume in 1963 by the Faculté des Lettres et des Sciences humaines of the University of Phnom Penh.\(^{173}\)

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</thead>
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\(^{173}\)I am grateful to Olivier de Bernon for preparing Tables III and IV.
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25. Narajīva
26. Surūpa
27. Mahāpaduma
28. Bhanḍāgāra
29. Bahulagaṇī
30. Setapanḍita
31. Puppharāja
32. Bārāṇasirāja
33. Brahmaghosarāja
34. Devarukkhakumāra
35. Salabha
36. Sonanda

37. Devanda
38. Narajīvakathina
39. Rathaṇa
40. Varanetta-varanuja
41. Sāṅkhapattā
42. Sabbasiddhi
43. Siddhisāra
44. Sisorarāja
45. Supinakumāra
46. Suvaṇṇakacchapa (dī 1)
47. Suvaṇṇakacchapa (dī 2)
48. Suvaṇṇavansa
49. Sūryavaṇsavaraṇaṇa
50. Atidevarāja

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5. Nissāranā (f.)nissāranīya (n.), osāranā (f.) losāranīya (n.); 6. Nāsanā (n.f.), “expulsion”;
7. Daṇḍa-kamma (n.), “punishment”;
8. Pakāsanīya-kamma (n.), “procedure of proclamation”;
9. Patta-nikkujjanā/-ukkujjanā (n. f.), “turning down/up the alms-bowls”)

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