CONTENTS

Frontispiece .................................................. i
Editor's Note .................................................. iii
Legend and Cult – Contributions to the History of Indian Bud-
dhist Stūpas. Part 2: The Stūpa of Laying Down the Bows – Max Deeg .................................................. 119
An Outline of the Yogācāra-Vijñānavāda School of Indian Buddhism (II) – Eric Cheetham .................................................. 151
Vimalakīrti in China – Paul Demiéville (tr. S Boin-Webb) .. 179
Once Upon a Present Time – An Avadānist from Gandhāra – Tim Lenz .................................................. 197
Ekottarāgama (XXXIV) – tr. Thích Huyễn-Vi and Bhikkhu Pāśādīka .................................................. 216
Review Article: Nominal Persons and the Sound of their Hands Clapping – Karma Phuntsō .................................................. 225
Book Reviews .................................................. 242

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Editor's Note

With this issue I regret there will be a parting of the ways. After a spare time career spanning exactly forty years, during which I edited and contributed to, first the journals of the London Buddhist Vihāra, then this journal's predecessor for six years, Pali Buddhist Review, I have decided that now is the appropriate time to step down from literary responsibilities.

BSR was launched in 1983-84 as a collaborative effort between the Vietnamese Spiritual Advisor based in Paris as head of the worldwide network of Linh-So'n temples, his German pupil, Bhikkhu Pāśādika, and myself. By an act of kusala-karma we were able to meet in London and lay the foundations for a new journal that would specialise in Buddhism, preceded only by A K Narain's launch of the Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies, initially based at the University of Wisconsin, which has also appeared twice a year since 1978 (but has subsequently and regretfully dropped its book review section). This situation has remained unchanged: no other journal specialises in this field.

Since inception great strides have been made in production and technical skill: during the first decade of its existence, BSR was prepared on an electronic typewriter and only thereafter via the more sophisticated methods of a computer. From 1996 it became the official organ of the newly-formed UK Association for Buddhist Studies but even before this change the entire credit for producing such an attractive periodical goes to Sara Brin-Webb who is also relinquishing her position on the Editorial Board. She wishes to complete her life's ambition of translating all the works of one of the foremost Buddhologist of the 20th century, Etienne Lamotte, whilst I wish to revive my neglected ambition to produce the definitive history of Buddhist studies in Europe.

In content, we can justifiably be proud of the scope of articles and reviews that have appeared over the years. This observation can easily be substantiated with reference to the four quinquennial indexes that have been included with the appropriate journal issue. Numerous papers have been specially commissioned from, in particular, the younger generation of Buddhologists and I hope that this trend will continue. New translations of classic texts have
also featured and here thanks are due to the combined pioneer work that has resulted in the serialisation of sūtras from the Ekottarāgama, whilst another enduring feature are K R Norman’s reviews of almost every new work from the PTS. Space prevents my mentioning everybody but I would at least like to express my appreciation to those colleagues on the Editorial Board whose advice and guidance have ensured the smooth production of a journal which aims to include material from all the Buddhist traditions. Especial thanks are due to Ven. Thich Tri Nhu (i/c Linh-Sơn, London) who has printed the journal since inception.

Dr Rupert Gethin from the Centre for Buddhist Studies at Bristol University has kindly volunteered to produce the next issue (22,1 – 2005) on an experimental basis in that, thereafter, a decision will be made as to whether it will prove more economical and practical to publish BSR on an annual basis. For the time being, the Editorial Address will be c/o this centre, University of Bristol, 3 Woodland Road, Bristol BS8 1TB (or via e-mail: rupert.gethin@bristol.ac.uk). Dr Elizabeth Harris (whos address appears on the inside back cover) will now handle all subscriptions and be responsible for the mailing lists of both members of UKABS and those subscribing (individually or institutionally) to the journal only. She may also be reached by e-mail: ejharris@gn.apc.org

Finally, I would like to thank everyone who has written or spoken to me over the years, encouraging me in my efforts and offering sound advice which has ensured a firm foundation and continuity of this very special journal.

Russell Webb

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Please note corrections as follows: in BSR 20, 1 and 2 (2003) the frontispiece should read ‘in official style script (li-shu)’ rather than ‘in seal script’; in Vol.21, 1 (2004), read ‘in regular style script (kai-shu)’ rather than ‘in seal script’.

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LEGEND AND CULT – CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE HISTORY OF INDIAN BUDDHIST STŪPAS

PART TWO: THE ‘STŪPA OF LAYING DOWN THE BOWS’

MAX DEEG

In Part 1 I discussed the Kaniska-stūpa and the legends and names connected with it. The Kaniska-stūpa is clearly an example of a monument which had become important in the Buddhist world in the time when the Kuśāna dynasty reigned over north India. The origin of the stūpa I would now like to discuss probably goes back to a pre-Buddhist stratum and became incorporated, together with it’s aetiological story, in the Buddhist geographica sacra.

This stūpa – or more correctly caitya – is first to be found in connection with the Mahāparinirvāṇa of the Buddha. In the Mahāparinirvāṇaśūtra (MPS) the Buddha, who is dwelling in Vaiśālī and is asking Ānanda to accompany him on a visit to the Cāpāla-caitya, mentions several caityas, memorial stūpa-like constructions, near Vaiśālī as especially pleasant places. It is there that Ānanda fails to ask the Buddha to extend his life. The text is given in translation following Waldschmidt’s edition of the MPS(S):

15. 7 (The Buddha) after having arranged his alms-bowl and garment went to the Cāpāla-caitya. After having gone (there) he sat down at the root of a certain tree and dwelt there during the

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1 The existence of stūpas prior to the Buddha’s Nirvāṇa, monuments for his disciples, can already be found in canonical literature; cf. Kevin Trainor, Relics, op. cit., p.33, n.4. There are also references to the caityas (P. cetiya) of yakṣas (P. yakkha) such as Gomataka which the Buddha is said to have visited or to the caityas of the Vṛjjas (P. Vrijji) whose proper veneration – according to the Buddha in his well-known ‘political’ advice at the beginning of the MPS – guarantees the prosperity of this tribe-confederation (Trainor, ibid., p.34).

2 For the (material and partly functional) identity of stūpa and caitya, see Gregory Schopen, ‘The Stūpa Cult and the Extant Pāli Vinaya’, repr. in Bones, Stones and Buddhist Monks, op. cit., p.90 f. It is almost certain that in our context a caitya is meant to be a pre-Buddhist memorial mound.
day. 8. There the Venerable One spoke to the honourable Ananda: 9. Pleasing, O Ananda, is Vaisali, the land of the Vrijis, the Cāpāla-caitya, the Sātāmārka(-caitya), the Bahuputraka(-caitya), the Nyagrodha of Gautama, the Sāla Grove, the Dhurānīkṣepana(-caitya) of the Mallas [and the Makutabandhana-caitya].

The Cāpāla-caitya occurring in the text has not been explained either etymologically or contextually as far as I know. The caitya seems to have been an important spot for the early Buddhist geographica sacra as it is also mentioned in the Divyavadāna (Divyāvatāra), Lalitavistara (Lal) and Mahāvastu (Mvy). It is said to have already been in existence in the lifetime of the Buddha, so in the course of its incorporation into the system of Buddhist monuments, its origin as a memorial monument and the corresponding story must have been projected backwards to the past, into a former life of the Buddha.

3 The P. reading bhuputta seems to be confirmed by the Tib. bu-man-po (Waldschmidt, MPS(S), p.205) and by Faxian’s translation Duozhiti (S 7, p.191b15).

4 Waldschmidt, MPS, p.204; cf. also Dīgha-nikāya 3.3.2 (ed. Rhs Davids, Carpenter, PTS, II, p.102). Faxian’s translation closely follows the MPS(P) (S 7, p.191b15 f.).


6 Cf. e.g. Ernst Waldschmidt, Die Überlieferung, op. cit., p.96 ff. J.J. Jones (trans) The Mahāvastu I, London 1949, p.248, n.3, only gives the usual Indian explanation – probably following the commentary to the Pali (P) Udāna (Udānānattakaṅkha, ed. G.P. Malalasekera, Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names I, London 1937, repr. New Delhi 1983, p.863, s.v. Cāpāla-caitya) or Buddhaghosa’s Dīgha-nikāya commentary, Sumanalavilasini (ed. W. Stede, p.554) where the caityas are explained as vihāras – that the place was inhabited by a yaksa called Cāpāla, which is not confirmed by the text of the Mvy in question (see below), because the name Cāpāla is already the name of the caitya and not a derivation of a proper name for which we would expect a compound such as Cāpāla-caitya. This stands true also for the whole list of caityas or stūpas mentioned in this episode.

7 The Tibetan Mulasarvastividān Vinaya uses mchod-rten, the usual word for stūpa. MPS(S) and MPS(P) consistently give caitya / cetiya respectively The age of the idea of the Cāpāla-caitya is shown by an inscription related to a relief from Amarāvatī depicting the quoted scene dated to the second half of the first cent BCE: Koituuka Yutaka, Miyaji Akira (ed.) Sekai-bijutsu-daiensaishū, Tōyō-ken, 13 (The Big Collection of World Art, Section Eastern Art, 13), Tokyo 2000, p.124 (pl.105), description by Miyaji Akira, p.399 f. 耳螺, 壺治昭,

Deeg – Legend and Cult: 2. The Stūpa of Laying Down the Bows

The Chinese pilgrims Faxian and Xuanzang agree with the MPS tradition by connecting the place where the Buddha gave up his ability to extend his life-span with a stūpa. They give the further information that this stūpa had been built in commemoration of events of an āvadāna-story which is not preserved in any Indian Buddhist text but only in Sino-Buddhist translations, and this story seems to give the clue for an explanation of the name(s) of the stūpa(s) or caityas respectively.

Faxian’s report runs as follows:

‘Three miles to the northwest of the city [of Vaiśāla] there is a stūpa called “Laying down the bow-stick”. The name [comes] from the [following] event: on the upper reaches of the river Ganges there lived a king. A consort of the king gave birth to a piece of meat. The main wife was jealous of her and said: “The birth you [gave] is an evil omen.” Then she put the piece of meat in a wooden box and threw it into the river. Downstream there was a king who was on a pleasure trip. He saw the wooden box [drifting] on the water, opened it and saw there were 1,000 infants who had a noble and special [appearance]. Thereupon the king adopted them and raised them. When they had grown up they became brave and strong. Wherever they turned to fight and to conquer the enemy was finally destroyed [or] subjugated. Finally, they were supposed to attack the kingdom of their original kingly father. Thereupon the king became very depressed. The consort asked the king: “Why are you [so] depressed?” The king said: “That king has 1,000 sons who are unmatchably brave and strong and are going to attack my kingdom. That is why I am [so] depressed.” The consort said: “O king! Don’t be [so] sad. Build a tower in the east of the city. When the robbers come, put me on the tower. Then I will be able to repulse their [attack].” The king did as he had told him. When the robbers arrived, the consort [standing] on the tower addressed them: “You are my children. Why do you act against me in such a way?” They said: “Who are you to say you are our mother?” The consort said: “If you do not believe me. Look upwards and open your mouths!” She then took out her two breasts with her two hands. Out of each breast flowed 500 [streams of milk] pouring down into the mouths of her 1,000 children. [Thereby] they knew that she was their mother and laid down their bow-sticks. The two royal fathers contemplated [deeply] and both became Pratyekabuddhas. The stūpa of the two Pratyekabuddhas still exists. When the Lord afterwards attained enlightenment, he told his disciples: “This is the spot where I laid down the bow-sticks.” The 1,000 children were the 1,000 Buddhas of the Bhadra tower.

Xuanzang gives a similar story, however, without providing or explaining the name of the stūpa:

‘It is said that not far from the place where (the Buddha) entered Nirvāṇa there is a stūpa, which is the place where the 1,000 children had seen their father and mother. In former times there was a hermit living hidden in steep valleys. [Once,] in the second month of spring, [the hermit], in a state of excitement, took a bath in the clear water. Soon after that a female deer drank from [the water], conceived and gave birth to a girl of superhuman beauty; only her feet looked like deer-feet. When the hermit saw her, he took her [as his child] and raised her. After some time he ordered her to seek fire. She went to the hut of another hermit and, wherever she put her feet, there were lotus-flowers [coming out of the ground]. When that hermit saw this he was deeply surprised and had her walk around his hut in order to get the fire. The deer-maiden did what she was told, received the fire and went back. At this time the king Brahmadatta was out of a hunting trip and saw the flowers. He investigated [the origin] of the footprints. He was highly pleased by the appearance of the girl, took her into his carriage and returned to the palace. The astrologers predicted that she would give birth to 1,000 sons. When the [king's] other wives heard this, they were planning plots against her all the time. When the time was ripe she gave birth to a lotus-flower. The flower had 1,000 petals and on [each] petal was sitting a [little]

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11 For information about Faxian, cf. Part 1 of this paper.

12 Zhang 枝 (resp. 仗) without gong 箭 can mean ‘bow’ as is shown in Jizang’s 島藏 Bailun-shu 百論疏 (T 1872, p.251b) where dhanuṣāstra, the ‘compendium of archery’, is rendered as bingzhang-fa 兵杖法; 'method of (handling) the military bow (lit. soldier’s stick)’.

13 T 2085, p.861c18 ff.
boy. The other wives slandered [her] and claimed that this was a bad omen. They threw [the lotus-flower] into the [river] Gāṅgā and [it] drifted away on the waves. King Udrāyāna was on a pleasure trip downstream, saw the [flower] covered by a yellow cloud [and] floating on the waves, took [it out of the water], opened it and had a look: there were 1,000 little boys [in it]. He raised them and they became strong men. Relying [on the fact] that he had 1,000 sons, he extended his frontiers in all directions. Because his troops were [so] successful, he then turned against this country [Vaiśāli]. When King Brahmadatta heard this, he was shaken by the fear [that] his military power [could] not resist the opponent, and did not even think of opposing [them]. At this time the deer-maiden, knowing in her heart that those [1,000 warriors] were her sons, told the king: "The enemy is standing in front of the frontiers and everybody, of high and low rank, has lost courage, [but] your majesty's consort with her simple loyalty is able to defeat the strong enemy." The king did not believe her yet and was overwhelmed by fear. Then the deer-maiden climbed on a fortification tower and waited [until] the enemy arrived. After the 1,000 sons with their troops had encompassed the city, the deer-maiden told them: "Do not commit an offence! I am your mother and you are my sons." The 1,000 sons said: "What fraudulent words!" The deer-maiden pressed her breasts with both hands and two streams [of milk] coming out in 1,000 jets entered their mouths in a supernatural way. Thereupon they threw away their arms, returned to their natural family [and] sent the troops back home. Henceforth both kingdoms had a good relationship and the people lived in peace and happiness.\[14\]

From Xuanzang's version it becomes evident that, before the story of the birth of the sons, there was another story of the birth of the mother, the deer-maiden found in several other Buddhist versions of the legend (see below). Therefore, the whole complex in its most extensive version seems to consist of four sub-legends: 1. the birth of the deer-maiden from the miraculous conception of a deer through an ascetic; 2. the deer-maiden, having become queen, gives birth to a strange foetus (lotus, piece of meat\[15\]) which is abandoned in a river; 3. the foetus is saved downstream by a king (ascetic) and develops into many children who are fostered by the king; 4. the children, grown up, return to their mother's country (attacking) and finally recognise their real parents. Faxian omits the story of the birth of the mother (1).

There is no direct parallel Buddhist story preserved in an Indian language, as far as I know, but there is an episode in the Avadānaśatakā (AvS) in which at least the motif of the birth from a piece of meat (2) is preserved. AvS 68, called 'The Sons' (Putrā itti), has obviously changed the motif of the abandoned sons attacking their relatives into a Buddhist edifying tale which has lost its complete narrative tension:

'In Kapilavastu there was a certain Śākya, rich, wealthy... He married a wife from a family similar to his own. He played, had fun, and cohabited with his wife. His wife, while he was playing, having fun, and cohabiting with her, became pregnant. After eight, nine months she delivered. She bore a big, big piece of meat; after the sad parents and the other attendants and relatives living in the house had seen it (they said): "What is this, for heaven's sake, that she has borne?" The householder entered the "lamentation-room", put his cheek in his hand and stayed lost in his thoughts (such as): "Whom can I tell? Who will know what this is?" (Finally) the thought came to him: "The Venerable Buddha is omniscient, seeing everything. I will tell the Venerable Buddha – he will know." He went to the place where the Venerable One stayed. Having gone there he asked the Venerable One. The Venerable One said: "You should not, householder, be afraid of this piece of (meat), do not be afraid! Put the piece of (meat) in a well-prepared piece of cotton, wipe it three times a day with (your own) hands and sprinkle it with ghee. After seven days it will then burst and 100 boys will be

\[15\] The meaning of the birth of a piece of meat is – seen in the light of Indian in general and Buddhist embryology – one of prematurity because this state (pesā) is considered to be one of the first developments of the foetus.

\[16\] Already L. Féer, Avadāna-Çatakā. Cent legendes bouddhiques..., Paris 1891, repr. Amsterdam 1979, p.253 f., has pointed out the connections without, however, coming to a consistent analysis and conclusion.
born, (who) will become strong athletes.” After having heard the Buddha say that, the householder was highly astonished and thought: “A well done acquisition (if) there are sons like these born to me.” Then he did as it was (said). On the seventh day the piece of meat burst and 100 boys were born (from it), all beautiful, fair, pleasant, with all parts of the body and secondary parts of the body, strong athletes.  

The boys, after having wandered around, finally meet the Buddha and attain arhatship after having been taught by him and having received the permission of their parents to enter the Sangha. The Buddha then explains to the monks that these 100 beautiful boys have been born from a ball of flesh because they had, in the days of the Buddha Vipasyin, made the vow (prāṇidhi) to be reborn with a unified mind and body while venerating the stūpa of the Buddha.

There is even a reflection of the motif of the mother ejecting milk into the mouths of her sons in the Avāśa 78, the story of Kacāṅgalā:

18 Ibid., p.376, 1.6 f.: “In the course of time they grew up, became strong and increasingly (powerful) and they all, carried away by their folly of youth, roamed about here and there (until finally) they came to the Nyagrodha Park. There they saw the Venerable Buddha…”.
19 Ibid., p.376, 1.12 ff.: “They, after having seen the truth and having asked their parents for permission, were ordained in the Teaching of the Venerable One. [They]… reached arhatship.”
20 Ibid., p.378, 1.3 ff.: “Thereupon they all in one state of spirit and single-mindedly made the vow: “By means of this root of merit may we be reborn with one self, with one mind, with one body, with the same deeds, with the same dharma, with the same merit (leading to) the same Nirvāṇa.” (Having spoken) thus at this place, the adoration of the stūpa having been their last action, they faded away… Because of this they were born of one piece of meat.”
21 This is the reconstructed form from Tibetan for the Ms’s Kavīvīgala. The person evidently corresponds to the nun Kajāṅgalā in the Pāli Canon (Aṅguttara-nikāya 5.54 ff.) who has, however, no story connected to her (cf. Malalasekera, DPNP, op. cit., 1, p.482, s.v.) – the fact that even the commentaries remain silent about the legend seems to indicate that the latter was

Deeg – Legend and Cult: 2. The Stūpa of Laying Down the Bows

The Venerable Buddha… was staying at Kacāṅgalā in the Kacāṅgalā forest. At (this place) Kacāṅgalā was an old woman called Kacāṅgalā. She took a jar and went to the well to fetch some water. There the Venerable One said to the Elder Ananda: “Go, Ananda, to that old woman (and) tell (her) that the Venerable One is thirsty and that she should give (him) water!” When Ananda had spoken to her, she said: “I will bring (him water) myself.” After Kacāṅgalā had filled the jar with water, she went to the Venerable One. Kacāṅgalā saw the Buddha… As soon as she had seen (him) she was filled with maternal love, and streams of milk came out of her two breasts. With arms held up, (shouting) “(My) son, (my) son!” she tried to embrace the Venerable One. The monks kept her back. The Venerable One said: “Do not, monks, keep her back. For what reason? (Because:) 1. I had been my mother (during my) 500 (previous) births, and had with love for me, her son, embraced my limbs. 2. If she was prevented from embracing my limbs, hot blood would flow now instantly from her mouth. 3. I have remembered my (earlier) gratitude (to her) and observing her longing for the son, and with mercy and sympathy I let (her) embrace my limbs.”

The original motherhood of 500, respectively 1,000 sons, is evidently split into the 500 previous existences of the Buddha, but besides that difference, the parallels to the original legend are clearly discernible: mother and son separated, the mother having her son (the Buddha) recognise her by the stream of milk issuing from her breasts. With regard to the Buddha, one could claim

only known in the Buddhist world in the first millennium CE.

22 Avāśa, ed. Speyer, 2, p.41 f., 1.2 ff.
23 The sudden flow of milk from the breast in connection with dramatic events concerning the own son is also found in the story of the evil dreams of the Buddha’s mother announcing to her the imminent Parinirvāṇa of her son (Mohe moye-jing 摩訶摩耶經, Po mu-jing 佛母經). Interestingly enough, the Jainist biography of the Jina Mahāvīra has a similar episode: in the Viyahapanavati 9.33 the brahmin woman Devaṇḍā, who had received the embryo Mahāvīra before he had been translocated into the womb of the kṣatriya-woman Tisālā, shows all the signs of pregnancy, including the flowing out of milk from her breasts, after she meets her saint-turned ‘son’ (cf. Waithar
that the episode had been de-dramatised by reducing the original motif of milk flowing into the mouth of the child from the breast of the mother to the attempts at embracing the Buddha.

The closest legend which I was able to find in Indian Buddhist literature so far is the legend of the Vṛjiś/Licchavis (P. Vājji, Licchavi)24, e.g. in Buddhaghosa’s commentary on the Majjhima-nikāyā which, for means of comparison with other legends, I give here in full:

‘1. … There at the city called by the name “at Vesāḷī”. This later through its expansion (visāḷi-bhūtatā) came to the name “Vesāḷī”. 2. There is the (following) old story: in the womb of the first queen of the king of Bārāṇāsi was a foetus. When she noticed that she informed the king. The king cared for the foetus. The queen, her foetus being taken care of most diligently, entered the birth-chamber when the time to deliver the foetus had come. Towards dawn, the auspicious (hours), the delivery of the foetus began. And at a certain point of these (hours), around dawn, she had given birth to a piece of meat resembling a bandhujivaka-flower with a lacquered surface. (The queen) thinking: “The king, thinking that the other royal consorts give birth to sons resembling golden images, but the queen (gives birth only) to a piece of meat, will probably directly (purato) blame me,” and being afraid of (the king’s) reproach, she threw that piece of meat into a bowl, closed it, sealed it with the royal seal and had it thrown into the river Gange. Though abandoned by men the gods prepared protection. They fixed a golden strip, on which was written by natural vermilion (ink): “(This is) the offspring of the queen of the king of Bārāṇāsi.” Then, without any trouble such as fear of the waves, they started that bowl (drifting) on the river Ganges.

3. At this time a certain ascetic lived on the shore of the river near the family of a cowherd.25 He went down to the Gange early and saw the bowl coming down (the river) and took it for rags from a heap of dust. Thereupon he saw the slip with characters (written on it) and the royal seal, broke it and saw the piece of meat. Having seen it he thought: “This is probably a (living) foetus, because it is not in a state of bad smell and stink.” He took it to his hermitage and put it in a pure space. Then, after half a month, there were two pieces of meat. When the ascetic saw this he treated them even more carefully. Then again, after half a month, each of the pieces of meat developed five growths destined to be hands, feet and heads. Again, after half a month, one of the pieces of meat became a boy looking like a golden image, the other one (became) a girl. Towards these arose paternal affection in the ascetic. And there was milk coming out of his thumb(s). And from that time on (the children) were fed with milk. The ascetic, after he had taken his food, dripped the milk (of his thumb) into the maws of the children. Whatever entered their stomach was visible as if it had gone into a (transparent) jewel bowl. So they were without (visible) skin (nicchāvī). Others say: their skin was clinging (so close) (līpā chāvī) to each other as if they had been sewn together”. So, by having no skin or by their having skin clinging (to each other), they became named “Licchavis”.26

Schubring, Die Jaines, Tübingen 1927, p.4).

Exactly the same is found in the commentary on the Ratanasutta of the Khuddakapāṭha, the first part of the Khuddakankāyā, the Khuddakapāṭhaṭṭhakathā (also called Paramatthajotikā), in the part called Vesāḷavatthu (I was not able to check and quote by page the PTS edition, but compared both versions on the basis of the Chaṭṭha Saṅgha CD-Rom).
26 gopāka, or gopāka as it occurs later on, in the context here seems to mean not only ‘guardian’ but is also taken in a more literal sense.
27 This may refer to the state in which the two foetuses were still clinging together as if sewn (sīv-) to each other in one piece of meat. This interpretation differs from that of Malalasekera, DPPN, loc. cit., who takes līnā in the sense of ‘thin’.
28 The translation of līnā chāvī is tentatively supported by the Chinese gloss, T 1462, p.743b27: ‘(the children) were called Liche-zī – in Chinese that means “with thin skin (?)” or also “having joint skin”.'
4. The ascetic bringing up the (two) children went to the village for alms-begging after sunrise; late in the day he returned. The cowherds, when they realized what business he was engaged in, said (to him): “Venerable Sir! The bringing up of children is an obstacle to those who lead the homeless life; give us the children, we will foster them; do your own work.” The ascetic answered “Very well!” The cowherds prepared the road, threw flowers (on it), raised flags and banners and, with sweet sounding instruments, came to the hermitage. The ascetic said: “(These) children are very auspicious; raise them with care (and), after having raised them, marry them to each other; after having pleased the king with the five products of the cow and having received land (from him) and founded a city, anoint the boy king”, and gave (them) the children. They answered “Very well” and took the children and fostered them.

5. When the children grew up, they played with the other cowherd children (and), on occasions of dispute, hit (them) with hands and feet. They cried. When they were asked by their parents: “Why do you cry?” they said: “These orphans, having been raised by the ascetic, beat us too hard.” Thereupon their parents said: “These children ruin other children, cause them harm. They should not be treated in a friendly way, they should be avoided (vajjetabba).” Henceforth, this area was called “Vajjika” within a radius of 100 yojanas.

6. Then, after having pleased the king, the cowherds received this area. They founded a city there, anointed the boy when he was declared sixteen years old and made him king. They married him to that girl and made an arrangement not to lead a bride from outside (into this country) and not to give away girls from here to anybody else (as bride). After their first intercourse, two children were born (to them), a daughter and a son. In the same way sixteen times there were born two (children). Therefore not being sufficient to include the splendour of gardens, parks, resting-places and the entourage of the increasing number of their children, they enlarged the city three times in circles of (one) gavāta (quarter of a yojana). From its gradual extension (visālīkatattā) (the city) was given the name “Vesāli”.

This legend, with all the same details, is also found in the Chinese version of the Samantapāsādikā, the commentary on the Vinaya, translated by Sāghabhadrā/Seng-jia-batuo-loo 舍伽跋陀羅 at the end of the fifth century, the Shan-jian-li-pimosa 善見闍毘婆, T 1462, p.743a27-c24, but only a small condensed portion of it – the etiology of Vesāli – is found in the P Samantapāsādikā.

The interesting fact of the story is that the birth of the children happens in the same way as in the legend discussed so far. The legend as a whole is clearly structured along the possibility of getting etymological explanations for the names Licchavi, Vajji and Vesāli in the framework of the P. If these somewhat illogical elements in the plot are omitted, the basic story runs as follows: queen gives birth to a piece of meat – she throws it into a bowl and then into the river (2) – ascetic finds the piece of meat and fosters it and the children are born from it respectively (3) – the children

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29 Here the Chinese differs slightly, giving an explanation for the place where the children quarrelled: ‘The parents answered: “You should stay away from them both.” That is why this playground is called Bashe (*Vajja) – Bashe means “to avoid” in Chinese.’ (T 1462, p.743c15 f.).

30 The motif of the king’s donation is not mentioned in the Chinese version, rendering the motifs of the royal seal and the strip with the children’s origin superfluous.

become rulers of the area obviously donated by their royal father. It seems, furthermore, that even the miraculous milk-feeding of the children has survived in the milk pouring out of the ascetic’s thumb.34

Now, the Pāli legend is declared by Buddhaghosa to be the foundation-legend of the Vrījīs/Lichavīs of Vaiśāki, and it seems reasonable that the story the Chinese pilgrims relate for the stūpa/caitya near Vaiśāki refers to the same events. If we try to bring the P story to a closer similarity with the legend – omitting, for instance, all the somehow illogical elements caused by the etymological features which would only function restrictively in an Indian language different from P (e.g. Skt) and the fact that by the topical setting of the beginning of the legend in Benares which excluded a returning of the Vajīs/Lichavīs to their parental home – reported by the pilgrims, we could construct the following plot: queen gives birth to a piece of meat (2) – she throws it into a vessel and into the river – downstream the piece of meat is found and the (many children) offspring of it are fostered (3) – the children return to their father’s kingdom claiming their right – parents and children are happily reunited (4) – giving the possibility for the same explanation for Vaiśāki as a vṛddhi form of the adjective viśāla, ‘extensive, broad’, because the city had to be adapted to the number of sons having returned to their parent’s country.

The other versions of the legend of the deermaiden and her sons are found in Chinese translations or compilations of Buddhist literature, the oldest being located in the anonymous sūtra from the Late Han period, Dā-fangbiān-fōbōen-jīng 大方便佛報恩經, T 156, pp.138c25-140c12;35 the story plays in Benares (Boluonai 波羅奈). 1. Birth of the deermaiden (lùnī 麂女) from a deer and a rṣi (xiānren 仙人): the rṣi once washed his garment on a

34 This detail is proved to be original by the Chinese parallel: ‘H’s affection (towards the children) became strong as if they were not different from his own children. By the power of affection out of his two thumbs poured milk; with one (thumb) nourishing the boy and with the other the girl.’ (T 1462, p.743b24 f.). The disputing of the children with their comrades may be the surviving element of the fight against the parents.
35 For an abridged version of the story cf. Chavannes, Cinq cents contes, op. cit., IV, p.98 f.

stone near a spring in front of his cave. A female deer drank the water from the stone, licked its genitals (p.139a5: xiābōian-chū 小便處, lit. ‘the spot from where it urinated’), became pregnant and gave birth to a girl who is brought up by the rṣi. Wherever the girl put her feet lotus flowers grew from her footprints. The king of Benares once saw her and made her his wife. After some time she gave birth to a lotus (liánhuā 蓮華) and threw it away into a pond. The king found the lotus and it was discovered that under each of the 500 leaves of the lotus sat a little godly boy.36 The parents had them brought up by the 500 consorts in the palace and when the boys had grown up they all became Pratyekabuddhas and finally entered Nirvāṇa after having performed the twin wonder (shēnbiān 神變/ ‘yamaka-prāthīhārya’).37 The mother erected stūpas for her sons. This early Chinese version is very similar to the story found in the Avś, but has preserved more of the sub-stories: 1, 2 (birth of a lotus) and partly 3 (abandonment of the lotus-foetus in a pond under a coral (?))38, where it is found by its own father).

The next Chinese version is found in Kang Senghui’s 康僧會 (second half of the third century) collection Liūdu-jī-jīng 六度集經, T 152, p.14a26-c10.39 It contains all the sub-stories 1-4, giving the full range of the story to be compared with the legend recorded by Xuanzang. It gives a kind of framing story of a widow giving alms to an ascetic and vowing that in her next life she will give birth to 100 sons resembling the sacred man.40

‘The mother (= widow), after she had died, her spirit moved on and became the child of a brahmin. Her spirit accumulated at

36 p.139c19.
37 ‘... once letting water come out from the upper part of the body and fire from the lower part of the body, (then again) letting water come out from the lower part of the body and fire come out from the upper part of the body... ’ (p.140b27 f.).
38 This story is connected with the Rṣipatana Park, Chin. 聖所遊居 (p.138a26) where the Buddha gave his first sermon.
39 ‘At the shore of this flower pond there was a large coral. Under the coral was a lotus flower having sunk into the water.’ (p.139c15 f.).
40 Translated in Chavannes, op. cit., I, p.80 ff.
41 This story – with modifications to the plot – is extrapolated in the version 2 of T 203, p.453b2 ff. (see below).
the spot where the brahmin had urinated. A deerlicked the urineand became pregnant. When her time came (to deliver) she gave birth to a girl, who the brahmin raised. At the age of ten she had a splendid demeanour and had made progress in learning, (so that she could watch the house and the fire). (But because) she played with the deer she did not notice that the fire was extinguished. (When her) father came home he got angry and ordered her to go and procure fire. The girl went to a village and wherever she put her step a lotus flower sprang up. The fire-keeper told her: “Go three times round my house, (then) I will give you fire.” The girl did as told. The flowers sprang off the ground and encircled the house three times. The people passing stopped (and said): “This is indeed a marvellous!” After some time the king got news (of this miracle) and ordered a fortune-teller to evaluate her. The master said: “She is of sacredoffspring and (the signs) tell that she has plenty of good omens.” The king ordered a wise minister to make enquiries about (who she was) and to invite her with all formalities. Her beauty was so extraordinary that nobody in the palace could match her. She became pregnant and when (the time) came (to deliver) she gave birth to 100 eggs. The queens and royal consorts were indeed very jealous. They provisionally had carved (a piece of) banana tree in the form of a ghost. When the time of birth came close they covered her face with (her hair), painted a bad expression onto a (piece of) banana tree and showed it to the king. All these demoniac creatures distorted the truth and the king was persuaded (by their accusations against the queen). The bunch of wicked (women) put the eggs into a bowl, tightly covered its mouth and threw it into the river. Sakra, the lord of the gods, descended from heaven and sealed the mouth and all the gods watched and protected the bowl, made the current stop and placed themselves on the ground (like pillars). The king of the kingdom downstream, standing on his platform, saw from afar a bowl floating down the river, radiating and shining as if there were something supernatural (in it). He took (the bowl out) and had a look. He saw the seal of the lord (of the gods, Sakra) and when he removed it he got hold of the 100 eggs. He ordered (his) 100 wives to keep them warm. When the time had come the bodies developed and 100 boys were born. From birth on they had the knowledge of wise men, understanding (everything) by themselves without being instructed. The brightness of their appearance expanded the world (and) their auspicious signs were rare (to find). Their strength was extraordinary and their combined energy was 100-fold compared with (other) men. The sound of their voices was like the roaring of lions. The king equipped 100 white elephants with bridles made of the seven precious materials and gave them to his divine sons. (He) ordered them to attack the neighbouring countries. The four neighbouring countries surrendered and called (themselves) subordinates. Then they also attacked the country where they were born. The people in this country, (of) high and low (position), were indeed very frightened and trembling. The king said: “Who has the power to throw back this enemy?” His wife said: “May the great king be not afraid. Look from where this enemy attacked the city. Near that spot erect an observation tower (and I will) subjugate the (enemy) for the king.” The king looked from where the enemy came from to (attack) and erected an observation tower. The mother mounted the observation tower and raised her voice: “There are three major offences. Not to keep away from temptations (means) to commit culpabilities in this world and the other world, that is the first one. Not to recognise the parents from whom one has been born and to offend piety, that is the second one. To rely (on one’s own) strength (and) to kill one’s own parents (or) to direct poison against (one of) the three Venerable Ones22, that is the third one. (Who) is longing for these three offences, his evilness is unsurpassed. Open your mouths wide. I will show you the credibility (of what I have said) at once.” The mother seized her breasts and heaven had (the milk) rush widely into the mouths of (her) 100 sons. Affected by (her) truthfulness, they drank the milk, were moved with feelings and they all said: “She really is our parent.” Tears crossed their faces, they folded their hands, walked forward (having dishonored from their elephants), kowtowed and repented (their deeds). The parents and their offspring were united for the first time and were extremely moved. The two countries fraternised and had kindred feelings (for each other). (All the people in) the different directions were happy about that and it had to be called beneficial.

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22 That is: a Buddha, a Pratyekabuddha and an arhat.

Deeg – Legend and Cult : 2. The Stūpa of Laying Down the Bows

Version 1 gives as place the sub-story 1. the border-region of the Himavat (p.451c16: Xueshan 雪山) and as the name of the rṣi *Devayana (?) / Tipoyan 提婆延. The name of the royal husband of the deer-maiden is given as *Uḍḍīyana/Udyanā (?) (p.551c26: Wutian 烏提延). The number of sons here is 500 and they are born as 500 eggs which the first queen, jealous of the deer-maiden, puts into a case and throws into the Gangā, after replacing the eggs with strips of dough (mianduan 麵段). The name of the foster-father is *Saddharmabodhi (?) / Sadanpu 薩耽菩. In this version at the moment the sons want to shoot at their own mother a saint (or saints) comes flying through the air and explains to the sons that they are about to fight against their own parents, the mother than performing the miraculous milk-feeding as a final proof (p.452b9 ff.).

Version 2 is set in Benares/Boluonai-guo 波羅奈國 and a mountain called Xianshan 仙山 in Chinese, which is obviously a translation for a name corresponding to Rṣipatana", thus corresponding to the version in T 156. The king and royal husband is called Fanyu-guowang 梵豫國王 / Brahmadatta rāja, showing the somewhat topical setting of the story. The number of sons here is 1,000. The mothers give birth to a thousand-petalled lotus flower which is put into a case and thrown into the river by the jealous queen, who replaces the lotus flower with a stinking ulcerated

will their hands could no longer bend the bows’ (p.452b7 f.). Then the 1,000 sons wanted to grasp their bows in order to shoot, (but) against their will they could not grasp (the bows)’ (p.453a18).

It is interesting enough that the enumeration of the cetiyas in the MPS(P) gives an Udena cetiya, P. Udena corresponding exactly with Udyanā, Faxian giving the exact parallel Youtuyan 優陀延 in his translation of the MPS. Has the king in this Chinese version preserved the name of the royal father of the Vṛjīs/Licchāvīs?

‘The king’s main queen was very jealous of the deer-maiden and said this (to herself): “The king now loves (her) very much. If she gives birth to 500 sons, then his veneration of her will double.” Not long after this (the deer-maiden) gave birth to 500 eggs and laid them in a basket. At that time the main queen took 500 strips of dough to replace the eggs, (put) them in the basket, sealed and closed (it) and threw it in the river Gangā.’ (p.452a2 ff.)

Was this originally rṣiparvata, P. -pabāta: Chinese -shan 阿那?

horse lung. The name of the foster-father is *Uḍḍiyāna/Wuqiyan.

The pre-Buddhist character of the legend – presumed by the fact that the monument connected to it is known as pre-Buddhist by the MPS – may also be indicated by the fact that narrative elements are found not in Indian Buddhism but in the great Indian epos, the Mahābhārata (Mbh), and this, notably, not in some side-stories but in outstanding episodes of the main plot. In the Adī-parvan, for instance, we find the story of Dhṛtarāștras’s wife Gāndhārī giving birth to a piece of flesh out of which 100 Dhṛtarāștras and the daughter Duśāla is born:

Mbh 1, p.107.7 ff.: ‘Vaiśampāyana said: Gāndhārī once comforted Dvaipāyana, when he had arrived exhausted with hunger and fatigue. Vyāsa granted her a boon. She chose a hundred sons that would be of equal station with her husband and herself. After some time she was with child by Dhṛtarāștra. For two years Gāndhārī bore her foetus without giving birth, and misery beset her. Then he heard that Kunti had borne a son, splendid like the morning son; and when she felt the hardness of her own belly she began to worry. Unbeknownst to Dhṛtarāștra, Gāndhārī, fainting with pain, aborted her belly with hard effort. A mass of flesh came forth, like a dense ball of clotted blood, and she made ready to throw it out after she had borne it in her womb for two years. Dvaipāyana divined it and came swiftly; then that best of mumblers of spells saw the mass of flesh. He said to Subala’s daughter: ‘What is this you are about to do?’ She truthfully told the great seer her mind: ‘When I heard that Kunti had borne her first son, splendid like the sun, I became so miserable I aborted my belly. A hundred sons you granted me before, to be sure, and now this mass of flesh is born to me for

those hundred sons!’ Vyāsa said: And so shall it yet be and not otherwise, Gāndhārī! I have never spoken a lie in jest; should I do it in earnest? Have at once a hundred pots set up and filled with ghee; and sprinkle this ball with cold water. Vaiśampāyana said: When the ball was doused, it fell apart into a hundred pieces, each an embryo the size of a thumb joint; a full hundred and one duly developed one after another from that ball of flesh as time went by. O lord of the people. He then put them in pots and had them watched in well-guarded places. Then the blessed lord told Gāndhārī after how much time the pots were to be broken open. And after taking measures and leaving instructions, the wise and blessed Lord Vyāsa repaired to the rocky Himālaya to perform austerities. Prince Duryodhana was born first in the sequence of them, but Prince Yuddhiṣthira was both by birth and by authority the older one. As soon as his son was born, Dhṛtarāștra summoned many brahmins as well as Bhīṣma and Vidura, and he declared, “Prince Yuddhiṣthira is the eldest scion in our line. By his own virtue he shall obtain the kingdom, and we shall not demur. But shall this one then become king after him? Tell me truthfully what must be firmly resolved in this matter.” When he ceased speaking, Bhīṣma, there was a sudden outcry on all horizons of gruesome beasts that feed on carrion and of jackals of unholy howls. Remark ing these terrible portents everywhere, the brahmins, and also the wise Vidura, spoke, O King: “Clearly this son of yours will spell the death of the dynasty! In abandoning him there is appeasement, great disaster in fostering him! Let ninety-nine sons remain to you, lord of the land, and with the one you shall secure both the world and your dynasty. For the family, abandon one son; for the village, abandon a family; for the country, abandon a village; for the soul, abandon the earth!” Thus spoke Vidura and all the great brahmins, but the king did not do it, for he loved his son. Within a month’s time the full one hundred sons were born to Dhṛtarāștra. O king, and over and above the hundred also a
girl.

50 ‘(When) the time was full (the deer-maiden), that is when she (was) to give birth to a thousand-petalled lotus flower. When the time had come that she wanted to deliver, the main queen covered her eyes with something, (did) not (let) her hear (anything) and looked herself. She took a stinking, ulcerating horse lung and placed it under the deer-maiden, took the thousand-petalled lotus flower, put it in a basket and threw it in the river.’ (p.452c22 ff.)

Comparing the structure of the birth of the Dhṛtarāștras and the structure of the legend discussed here, it is clear that besides

52 Mbh 1, 107.7-34.
the striking common element of the birth of many sons out of a ball of flesh, also the elements of abandoning a son who will endanger the continuity of the family or dynasty respectively, are all pointing to the Buddhist legend discussed here; even if this is less clearly brought out at this moment in the Mbh, it is evident that the motif of fighting against one’s own relatives is omnipresent and became the overall dominant scenario of the epos.53

There is, besides, another story in the Vanaparvan (Mbh 3, 292+293) which reflects the Moses-motif (child being abandoned in a casket thrown into a river and raised by a king)54 where the reader is told that Prth, alias Kunti, the later wife of Pndu, had an illegitimate son with the sun-god Surya and therefore abandoned him in a basket (marjus) in the river Asva. From there the basket travelled down into the rivers Carmanvat, Yamun, and Gaṅg until it arrived at Camp. The boy was found by Adhiratha, a friend and herald (stā) of King Dhrtarastra, who picked him out of the water and fostered him as his son under the name of Vasuṣena or Vṛṣa. When he grew up his mother Kunti learnt of his existence and his foster father sent him to the court of Dhrtarastra where the prince made friends with Duryodhana, learned archery (isvastakarman) from Drona, became famous for this skill and later on, in the great battle, the opponent of Arjunā.55

53 It is also remarkable that other structurally similar elements are found in the subsequent plots, such as (Mbh 1, 109) King Pndu killing a male deer (marja) when mating with its female, the deer turning out to be an ascetic who cursed Pndu. Further on (Mbh 1, 120) there is the story of the S Gautama, who is a skilled archer, whom the apsaras (devakanyā) Jalapadi (does the name, ‘net-feet’, somehow reflect the wondrous feet of the deer-maiden in our Buddhist legend?) tries to seduce, but produces twin sons by having his seed fall on a reed stalk, the sons then become great archers too. Here we may have, split into two different episodes, the reflection of the deer-maiden and the stā causing her to become pregnant by her semen.56

54 Hara Minoru, Rāma-monogatari to Momotaro-dōwa (‘The story of Rāma and the tale of Momotaro’) (1934) 4, 7 ma, la ma, go, so, ma, yu, go, so, ma, la, go, and Studies Dedicated to Professor Aitsuji Ashikaga, tokyo 1916, has pointed out that there is a similar story of Sītā’s birth and abandonment in the non-Vālmiki traditions of the Rāmāyana.57


Cellanā has bad feelings about the foetus in her uterus which has eaten the flesh of his own father and wants to abort the foetus. Being unable to press it out of her belly, after nine months a boy is born. Cellanā, thinking that the offspring who has eaten the flesh of his progenitor will probably destroy his own family, has the boy thrown on a dung hill (ukurudiya, Skt utkarikā). The king finds the boy because a strange light is radiating from the spot where he was thrown and the boy is taken back to the royal palace and is called Kūniya57. Because the boy’s upper finger-joint (aggānguliya) has been hurt when he was thrown on the dung hill he cries; his royal father appenses him by having him suck blood from his own fingertip and afterwards does so whenever the boy cries. When the boy has finally usurped his father’s throne, he also wants to have two precious items in the possession of his younger brother Vehalla, a necklace and an elephant. Vehalla flees into the protection of his grandfather’s kingdom and Kūniya attacks his relatives to get hold of the two desired items.58

So, in that somewhat strange Jaina story59, we find the now well-known motifs of 1. battle between relatives60, 2. strange birth and abandonment of the protagonist61, 3. the drinking of liquid by the protagonist from his parent’s body: the fact that the baby, babies in the P legend respectively, sucks the finger of his father, adoptive father, the ascetic, respectively is an interesting parallel between the Jaina story and the aetiological legend in the P commentary, though the sucking of milk from the finger is turned into the quite odd motif of sucking blood in the Jaina story which is, on the other hand, of consequence in the framework of the whole plot62. The geographical setting of the fight at Vesālī seems to indicate that this Jaina story was basically related to the legend under discussion here.

Going back to the Cāpāla-caitya and the other caityas mentioned in the MPS, there is no question that the bahuputraka-stūpa/bahuputtaka cetiya of the Skt and P texts – bahupattraka of the MPS(S) (and the Divy) is to be considered as a ‘mistake’ and goes back to the same name as proved by the Tibetan – stands in connection with the discussed legend: it is the stūpa or caitya which was built in commemoration of the avadāna of ‘many sons’ (bahuputra)63.

On the other hand, the dhūraṅkṣepa-cātya (or – stūpa) of MPS(S) and Divy seems to relate to the legend too – as Rhys Davids has already pointed out in a short note64. As the MPS(P) does not have this name, it is reasonable that the name which has

57 The text gives an aetiological-etymological explanation of the choice of this name: the boy was hurt by a cock’s feather (kikkuda-pičha); this ‘etymology’ is rather weak here from the standpoint of phonetic similarity: Kūṇiya: ku(kkuda)-.
58 On the possible historical background of this battle, see H. Jacoby, ‘Buddhas und Mahāviras Nirvāna und die politische Entwicklung Magadhas zu jener Zeit’, in Sitzungsbericht der Preußischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, hist.-phil. Kl., Berlin 1930, pp.557-68 (repr. in H. Jacoby, Kleine Schriften 2 ed. B. Kölver, Wiesbaden 1970, pp.803-15). Kūniya is for the Jaina tradition the name of Ajāṭhasāru who, according to the MPS, wants to attack the Vṛjīs. So it seems that parts of the aetiologiical story of the Vṛjīs/Lechavīs were inserted into the Jaina legend of the battle of Ajāṭhasāru-Kūniya against the state of Vaiśālī.
60 It culminates here in the killing of ten (sic) half-brothers of Kūniya through the arrows (sic) of Cēdāga (Jacoby, op. cit., p.567), turning the story to a dramatic end and reversing the motif of the bow to the party attacked; despite the setback for Kūniya he finally conquers Vaiśālī (loc. cit. and J. Dulleu, Vīyāhapannatti (Bhagavai). The Fifth Anuga of the Jaina Canon, Introduction, Critical Analysis, Commentary and Indexes, Delhi 1996, p.140 fl.).
61 If the connection between the various legends is accepted it seems clear that the efforts of the queen aborting the foetus is a kind of reflection of the birth of a piece of meat (mamsapesi) in the other cases – in fact, according to Indian embryology, it would have come out as a ball of flesh in the case of a successful abortion – and it seems that therefore the strange motif of eating flesh from one’s own husband’s body is related to the motif of the piece of meat.
62 The boy has eaten what was thought to be the flesh of his father in the maternal womb, so it is of consequence in a way of analogical thinking that he is appeased only by a part of his father’s body. This, of course, was somehow considered as the reason why the boy finally attacks his relatives, proving the fears of Queen Cellanā to be true.
63 The only clear reference to this connection I know is that of Hori in his commentary on Xuanzang’s XJ: Hori Kendoku, Kaïtesu-saïkiki, Toyoshima 1912, p.532, 境康德, 解說西域記, 豐島.
no correspondence in the MPS(s) is the alternative one: śāraṇ-
dada, which could have been interpreted as Skt śāramada,
in the meaning of "giving (away) the arrow(s)" in connection
with the etiological story respectively: laying down (nikṣepana)
the bows (dhūra67).

It seems that the text tradition (MPS) has split the various
names or epithets for the same caitya or stūpa into several monu-
ments because the context was not understood by the redactor or
redactors. This is somehow understandable because the differ-
ences in the various texts mentioning the episode show that the
nucleus must have been concentrated on monuments or on a
monument. Caitya in the context of the texts is used in a pre-
Buddhist sense68, which then must have been originally connected
with something which should have been re-collected — something
which the Buddhist texts do not mention because it was pre-
supposed to be known or because it was not known exactly.

The accounts by the pilgrims who only report one stūpa in the
area of Vaiśālī, whose etiological story fits with the names
explained above and given in the lists of the Indian texts, would
suggest that at least in the period of the pilgrims — that is, from the

65 Faxian, T 7 p.191b15, has Suojuo-zhiti 崇羅支提, which could be either Śāla-caitya or Saṇa-caitya. The final element -dada may, however, also just be a
twisted form in P; cf. the Skt epithet puran-tara : P purin-dada of the Buddha in the
Varaśātan. E. Waldschmidt, The Varaśātan. An Etymology of one hundred
Epitheta of Lord Buddha spoken by the Ghaṭapāti Upāli(n), Göttingen 1979, p.17.
66 Another possibility would be — if there is a correspondence to the epithet P
purin-dada and if the PTS Dictionary (p.469a, s.v.) is right to interpret P
purin-dada as an original Vedic puratīr-dārā, "fortress-breaker" — to analyse the
name as 'breaking (dr = dāra) of arrow(s).'
67 Dhūra usually means 'yoke, pole, burden' — the term dhūrapikṣepāna being
Delhi 1990, p.517b, s.v. — but if it is really connected with the legend discussed
here it could either have had a metaphorical sense: the sons laying down their
burden of killing, or dhūra here bears the meaning — although not found
elsewhere — "bow" (the stick of the bow corresponding to Faxian's zhāng ). Or
is dhūra — only a misunderstanding (misreading) of an original dhanu
68 This has already been remarked by Eugène Burnouf, Introduction à l'histoire
du Buddhisme indien, Paris 1876, p.66, n.1, in his translation of the Divy text.

Gupta period on — but probably also before and possibly following
a tradition differing in this one point, one caitya was still shown as
connected with the legend of the deer-woman and her numerous
sons. If this is the case, the name cāpāla in the MPS should also be
connected semantically with the etiological story. Trying to fol-
low the logic of the old analysts — who were nairuktas in the tradi-
tional sense, following more of a semantic-ontological line than
performing a strict formal linguistic analysis69 — one can split the
name into two elements cāpa- and āla; the first element is a word
for 'bow', rather unusual in Skt literature70 but already used in
the Mbh, where we also find — as we have seen above — fragments of
the avadāna.

The second part of the word -āla, however, is not so easily
explained as corresponding to 'laying down (the bows) as Faxian
terms it. It could have been analysed as belonging to the root vā,
with the prefix ā- which is found in the Dhātupātha (Dhātup)

69 Cf. for that kind of 'etymology'. M. Deeg, Die altindische Etymologie nach
dem Verständnis Šākas und seiner Vorgänger: eine Untersuchung über ihre
Praktiken, ihre literarische Verbreitung und ihr Verhältnis zur diätischen
Gestaltung und Sprachmagie, Detmold 1995, and for the tradition: Eivind
Many Chinese translations of Indian names — not least made by the pilgrims
who had been studying in Buddhist academic centres — and their later Tibetan
successors clearly indicate through their work that the nairuktas- or nirvacana-
method of explaining Indian words had a living tradition despite the fact that no
texts of this type were produced after Yāsaka's Nīrūkta.
70 Cf. Böhltingk & Roth, Sanskrit Wörterbuch, op. cit., 2, p.990 s.v.; 1, p.223a,
s.v. The word has relatively few correspondences in Middle-Indo-Aryan or new
Indo-Aryan dialects; cf. R.L. Turner, A Comparative Dictionary of Indo-Aryan
Languages, Oxford 1966, p.257b, no.4746, s.v.
71 It is, however, found in the Buddhist synonymic dictionary, Nāmalugolā
dhāsana by Amarasīthha, known as Amarośkaśa, 2.83 (edition V. Jhalakikar, 1907,
repr. Delhi 1990, p.200; on the dictionary in general see C. Vois, Indian
Lexicography, Wiesbaden 1979, p.309) where cāpa in the dvandva dhanu-
cāpa, introducing the lemma, may point out some common use of the word.
72 Cf. also the Chinese translation of Upāli as Jinqi 近取 or Jinzhi 近執 —
'close' (upā-) and 'to take, to grasp' (ā-), which shows that in this name too
the element -ā was probably taken as belonging to ā.
That this root was evidently used for eymologising Skt words ending in -\textit{la}, is shown by the story of the name of Ceylon, \textit{Sinhala},
given by Xuanzang. The meaning of \textit{ā-lā}-, especially because it
does not occur together with a prefix \textit{ā}-, is not easy to determine,
but the Dhātup gives for the root a rendering (\textit{ādānc} \‘in the
sense of\ to take\’) which would not fit very well with the expected
meaning but would mean just the opposite. There is, however, no
doubt that \textit{vā-lā}- is only a variant of the more common but also
defective root \textit{vārā}-, \textit{to give} (away)\textsuperscript{21}, so that it seems that the
derivationation made by the Dhātup between \textit{vārā}-, \textit{to give} (away),
and \textit{vā-lā}-, \textit{to take}, is an artificial one. Holding that \textit{vā-lā}-, \textit{to give},
affixed with \textit{ā}- gets the meaning \textit{to take}, a semantic shift from \textit{to
take} to \textit{to give\’ in the case of \textit{vā-lā}- is quite possible, especially be-
because the meaning-entry in Dhātup was not definite about the
basic meaning, which can be seen from the variant (\textit{dānc})\textsuperscript{24}.
There is also the possibility – more elegant though avoiding a verbal
etymology of the last member – that the name was analysed as \textit{cāpā +
\textit{alauh} in a kind of syntactical explanation meaning \textit{(do) away
with the bows\’ which would fit with the aetiological story as well.
Whichever of these two \textit{etymologies\’ was really made up by the
aetiological expounders, either of them would have been in perfect
harmony with the climax of the aetiological story and – even
more important – would be the exact counterpart of Faxian’s
translation of the respective stūpa: \textit{Fang-gongzhang 放弓杖}, the
\textit{\‘(stūpa of) releasing the bows\’}.

That the name was also explained in a different way is shown
by the anonymous MPS, T 6 (p.180b12), where we find \textit{Viśi-shendi
急疾神地\’ the \textit{\‘sacred spot \textit{swift}\’}, \textit{cāpāla} being interpreted as a

\textsuperscript{21} Cf Chlodwig H. Werbam \textit{Verba Indoarica, Die primären Wurzeln Sanskrit-
Sprache, Part I: Radices Primariae}, Vienna 1997, p.313 f., s.v. \textit{rā\textsuperscript{20}} ‘schenken,
Gewähren, (preis)geben’. The argument of M. Mayrhofer, \textit{Kurzgefaßtes etymologisches
Wörterbuch des Altindoarischen 2}, Heidelberg 1994, p.443, s.v. \textit{RĀ\textsuperscript{1}}, against Renou for an etymologically different root because the
\textit{semantische[n] Differenz\’ does not take into account the artificiality of the
Dhīp entry.

\textsuperscript{24} Cf. Böhtlingk/Roth, \textit{Sanskrit Wörterbuch, op. cit.}, s.v. 1. \textit{lā}, but also 2. \textit{lā};
das Nehmen, das Geben’.

\textsuperscript{25} This is not very conclusive from the standpoint of Skt word formation,
because it presupposes two \textit{vṛdhis\ of the stem and of the formant.

\textsuperscript{26} To give only a few examples, the story of Romulus and Remus, the already
mentioned similar story of Moses, etc.

\textsuperscript{27} E.g. Sinhala, the ancestor of the Ceylonese, the founder of the Khotanese
kingdom, etc.
papa?78) or arrows (śārandāda) and even the name of the royal father (progenitor princeps) may have been preserved in the Udāna cetiya of the P list. The fact that there was a whole band of sons, young warriors, in the legend of the origin of the Licchavis would fit perfectly to explain the coming into existence of an aristocratic clan ‘republic’ that the Vṛjjis are thought to have formed. Even in the days of the Buddha the young Licchavis were renowned for their hunting with bow and arrow, which could point to ‘Jungmännerbünde’,80 institutionalised in respect of the origins of the clan. The Pāli etiology for the name of Vesālī would – with 100, 500 or 1,000 sons coming home – even attain a higher degree of plausibility than with the regular birth of children.

The historical setting seems to be that the caitya or stūpa of ‘laying down the bows’ or ‘Many sons’ referred to the old legend of the Vṛjjis/Licchavis as it is related by Faxian and Xuanzang near Vaiśālī and it was thought to have been there that the Buddha gave up his will to extend his lifetime. It was well established from about the beginning of the Christian era – the period when texts such as the Divy, Mvu, AvŚ, Lal are supposed to have been composed. It still flourished under the Guptas when Faxian was travelling; in that time the name and its meaning in connection with the story were still known and explained in the local tradition. This local legend in a Buddhisied form then found its way into the Buddhist narrative literature (Chinese versions, AvŚ wile other elements can be found in the narrative tradition of the Hindu and Jainas. Monument and legend and their connection finally fell into oblivion from the seventh century CE: Xuanzang did still know the story of the monument but does not refer either to the name and exact position of the monument79 or to the laying down of the bows. Yiying, Huichao and Wukong do not refer to the existence of such a place – which is not very surprising with even the Parinirvāṇa-stūpa of Kuśinagara having fallen into a state of decay in their days.

To conclude the discussion about the two stūpas: it is usually assumed that Buddhist stūpas were once built as symbols of the Dharma or – in a more philosophical-buddhological framework of interpretation – as a representation of the Buddha’s presence after his Nirvāṇa. Too little attention has, however, been paid to the fact that some of the stūpas and the stories of their Buddhist origin – usually in the form of jātaka- or avadāna-like legends – and sometimes their interaction have a history of their own. A successful interpretation of these monuments can only be given by a careful evaluation of textual (usually, and for the Indologist unfortunately, not Indian), philological (which means here the analysis of names and their meaning) and archaeological data, which in some cases should be able to elucidate each other and enable the historian to write a puzzle-stone – be it only fragmented – in the history of Indian Buddhism, this being the only way to do it.

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78 The Tib. brtson-pa-gton-ba for dhuraṃkṣip-tiyaj-muñj-follows the Skt closely.
79 Āguttrāra-nikāya III, 75 f.: While the Buddha dwells in the Mahāvāna a group of young Licchavis with the bows prepared and surrounded by their hounds (sambhūlā Licchavikumārā sājānā dhanukā) (Mās and Buddhaghosa in the Comm: dhanumādi aukurasanghaparivāra) roam the forest. When they see the Buddha resting under a tree, they lay down their bows (sājānā dhanukā nīkkhipitā), restrain their dogs and revere the Buddha.
80 This may be the background to why the Licchavi Mahānāma subsequently warns the Buddha of the rude and reckless behaviour of these young Licchavis; Buddhaghosa in his commentary on the passage claims that these young men will later on belong to the ruling class of Vaiśālī: ... vaṭṭhisanti Vaiśājījo (H. Kopp, ed., Manorathapūrṇi. Commentary on the Āguttrāra Nikāya III, London 1966, p.261).

81 It is highly probable that all the shrines (caityas) mentioned in the MPS and other texts have been located near the area of the Aśoka pillar of Bāhirā where several archaeological remains can be found; a ruined stūpa and sites which have been identified with the Mahāvāna vihāra and the Markaṭahrādaṅga also mentioned in the Mvu (see above); see Alexander Cunningham, Archaeological Survey of India, Four Reports Made during the Years 1862-63-64-65, Indian repr. Delhi 1972, p.58 ff. (see also plate XXI); the fact that the pillar bears no inscription may indicate that Aśoka wanted to pay homage to a spot which was not directly connected with the Buddha. A final identification of the archaeological sites in the area with Buddhist legends must of course be preliminary, but the position of the place (some 100 m north-west of old Vaiśālī; cf. Faxian’s geographical setting) and the textual evidence may indicate that this was the area where at least some of the clan-caityas of the Licchavis mentioned in the texts could have been situated.
AN OUTLINE OF THE YOGĀCĀRA-VIJÑĀNAVĀDA
SCHOOL OF INDIAN BUDDHISM
PART TWO
ERIC CHEETHAM

Part One of this article set out certain of the doctrinal features of Yogācāra as well as basic practices. Part Two now completes these topics based on the same source material as used in Part One.

THE EIGHTEEN DHĀTUS (ELEMENTS); THE ALL

It has been shown here already that the six triads of the eighteen dhātu scheme (see diagram) are part of the Buddha’s original set of teaching formulas. These, and the elaborations in the Abhidharma texts, are part of Yogācāra’s pedigree from the early mainstream teaching. Āsaṅga presents the explicit version of this same eighteen dhātu scheme in his Abhidharmasamuccaya.39

The Yogācāra scheme of dhātus combines with two other ancient formulas, the five skandhas and twelve āyatanas (faculties and fields). As the skandhas and āyatanas are names for particular collections of dharma elements, when brought together within the eighteen dhātu framework they represent all dharma activity as a whole. Indeed Chapter One of Āsaṅga’s Abhidharmasamuccaya sets out this combined scheme in detail, together with definitions of each of the dharmas involved.

The formula of the eighteen dhātus comprises six triads of elements: the five senses, i.e., organ, object and consciousness for each sense faculty of seeing, smelling, tasting and touching. Added to these is the sixth triad, which consists of mental organ, mental object and mental consciousness. The complete layout is given in the following diagram.

39 Abhidharmasamuccaya trans., op. cit., Part I, Ch. One.
THE EIGHTEEN DHĀTUS IN YOGĀCĀRA

1. caksurdhātu (eye element)
2. rūpadhātu (form element)
3. caksurvidvijñānadhātu (visual consciousness element)
4. śrotadhātu (ear element)
5. śabdadhātu (sound element)
6. śrotavijñānadhātu (auditory consciousness element)
7. ghrānadhātu (nose element)
8. gandhadhātu (odour element)
9. ghrānavijñānadhātu (olfactory consciousness element)
10. ji江淮hātu (tongue element)
11. rasadhātu (taste element)
12. ji江淮vijñānadhātu (gustatory consciousness element)
13. kāyadhātu (body element)
14. sprāṣṭavyadhātu (tangibility element)
15. kāyavijñānadhātu (tactile consciousness element)
16. manodhātu (mental organ element, manas)
17. dharmadhātu (mental objects element)
18. manovijñānadhātu (mental consciousness element)

i.e. viṇīyata (special)
   kusala (wholesome)
   akusala (defiled, unwholesome)
   upaklesa (secondary defiled/unwholesome)
   aniyata (indeterminate)
   cittaviprayuktā saṃskāra (distinct from other mental)
   asaṃskṛta (unconditioned)

For the early schools the sensory objects were real entities which existed externally. Similarly, all the other dhātu combinations consisted of real fundamental elements (dharma) which appeared in consort with others and then disappeared only to be replaced immediately by further clusters of dharmas.

Asaṅga and Vasubandhu only go along with this so far. Yogācāra recognises all the dharmas, as we shall see, and even adds some to the Sarvāstivādin lists. In particular, Asaṅga uses the eighteen dhātu scheme as an all-embracing framework for all dharmas, i.e. Saṃsāra. Again, an important dharma addition is made. This is manas, the seventh consciousness. The fundamental difference, however, is that Yogācāra does not regard any of these dharmas elements as being independent and really existing externals or internals. Instead, they are simply outflows from the ālayavijñāna by means of engendering seeds (bijā).

Vasubandhu expresses this in brief. He says that the sensory consciousnesses depend upon the ālayavijñāna and they manifest subject to causes and conditions. This refers to the Yogācāra teaching of vijnaptimātratā, sometimes called ‘representation only’. This topic will be expanded below, but at this point it is necessary to consider the main Yogācāra additions, one of which is within the eighteen dhātus. They are the seventh and eighth consciousnesses.

Manas, the seventh consciousness, is a dharma and is part of the eighteen dhātu scheme. It is located at number 16, the triad of mentality. As such it is numbered among the Yogācāra list of dharmas (see appendix list, No.89).

Although manas is listed as a dharma, its functions suggest it is not a single momentary entity as described in the old Abhidharma texts. Manas has multipule functions as described here earlier. Vasubandhu states that manas, the seventh consciousness, cogitates and deliberates. It also receives input from all the other consciousnesses and is closely associated with a variety of defilements in its parikalpita state. So, as a thought-centre applying examination and judgement to all this input, manas could be argued to be more than a single entity. The texts do not expand on this but it could be surmised that either manas is a ‘c’uster of various dharmas, or the whole concept of dharmas was amended in the Yogācāra scheme of things. One thing is clearly expressed and that is that manas has the ālayavijñāna, the eighth conscious-

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81 Kośa, Ch.1, pp.5 and 6.
82 Vasubandhu’s Trimśikā, v.15, quoted in DMC, p.cxxxi.
83 Trimśikā, v.2, quoted in ibid., p.cxxii.
84 Ibid., pp.289-303.
ness, as its basis and support as well as its object. The ālayavijñāna, the eighth consciousness, however, does not figure specifically in any of the eighteen dhātu. This may be because of its definition as being the cause and conditions of all the elements. Here we probably have a reference to the bijas, which constitute the ālayavijñāna, these being the progenitors of all dharma.

On the other hand, the eighteen dhātu do not include the conditioned/unconditioned dharma within number 17, the dharma-dhātu. On this matter Yogacāra diverges from the early schools. In these, the asamṣkṛta dharmas were shown as distinctly separate from the five skandhas which, in both Yogacāra and mainstream, are part of the eighteen dhātu. There is some explanation of this by Asaṅga, who says that all the dhātu are ‘knowable’ (jneya) and thus can presumably incorporate the eight asamṣkṛta dharmas. A point, however, not readily explained is this: if the asamṣkṛta dharmas are dharmas, they have to be engendered by bijas (seeds) which can only come from the ālayavijñāna. The question is how is this possible for unconditioned elements which are said to have no independence or relationship with anything else? For example, is Nirvāṇa produced by a bija? Doubtless there is a quite satisfactory answer to this but, so far, it has eluded this writer.

The accompanying dhātu diagram sets out the eighteen dhātu scheme and its contents. The first five triads (Nos 1-5) have sufficient operational clarity to make further explanation unnecessary. Except in one regard. Again, Yogacāra deviates from the earlier Abhidharma by placing the sensory organs in the first place of the triads (Nos 1, 4, 7, 10 and 13). The early schools explained the sensory process as a linkage between object, organ and consciousness. The object impinging upon, or being sought out by, the organ engenders a sensory result which is impressed on the corresponding consciousness. It seems that the Yogacāra reverted to the Buddha’s original sequence here. In any case, all these elements arose from the bijas in the ālayavijñāna in related combinations, so that a primary, external object was redundant.

It is the last of the six triads that need some comment. With the addition of the dharma manas to manodhātu, No.16, the number of dharma consciousnesses within the eighteen dhātu is increased from six to seven. The eighth consciousness, the ālayavijñāna, is not part of the dharma list or the dhātu scheme. The second item of the sixth triad, i.e. No.17, is a collection of all the remainder of the Yogacāra dharma as indicated by the headings appended to it.

With all this in mind it seems to be the case that Yogacāra made abundant use of the Buddha’s original eighteen dhātu scheme, with modifications which were dictated by the deep Dharma’s revelations it unearthed. With Yogacāra, then, the eighteen dhātu combine all the dharma of Samsāra, both conditioned and unconditioned. As a consequence the skandhas and all the āyatanas, being collective names for particular dharma, found a place within the overall dhātu scheme. The essential difference between this and the earlier schemes is that all of it is cittamātra (only mind-made), i.e., the product of bijas (seeds) emerging from the ālayavijñāna. In the parikalpita realm this situation is not known although it is never absent. Only by progress through the realm of paratana to the parinirvāṇa perceptions can reality be known.

It may be for this reason that Yogacāra has ambivalent attitudes towards these dharmas, e.g., the asamṣkṛta and the viprayuktas and manas. If all dharmas are empty and mind-made, precision is superfluous except in the parikalpita realm.

THE YOGACĀRA DHARMA SYSTEM, A SCHEME OF DOCTRINE AND PRACTICE

The Yogacāra system of basic doctrine and practice, like all the early schools of Indian Buddhism, incorporated a dharma scheme of some kind. That is to say, a collection of fundamental elements

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85 Trimsākā, v.5, quoted in ibid., p.cxxv.
86 Abhidhartamasamuccaya trans., op. cit., p.59.
87 Ibid., p.23.
88 Ibid., p.30.
89 Samyutta-nikāya IV, 15.
of conscious existence (dharma), each of which had specific functions and associations. At one time, opinions were expressed that the dharma schemes were the work of later masters and were not part of the original teachings of the Buddha. There are, however, many references to dharmas in the Pāli canonical texts and a part of these has already been presented above. Some of the difficulty has arisen because of the varied equivalents given for the word dharma/dhamma in English textual translations. An example of this can be seen in the various translations of the text of the Dhammapada I, one of which is quoted in the previous section 90. This first verse is critical evidence for dharmas being part of the Buddha's teaching, yet the English rendering completely confused the meaning by not supplying the Pāli term and also by imprecise and various English words like 'thoughts'. Another text can supply further evidence in this regard. It is related in the Pāli Vinaya-piṭaka and elsewhere 91, where Āsāvatī, one of the Buddha's first disciples at Vārānaśī, met Śāriputra before the latter joined the Buddha's following. Śāriputra asked Āsāvatī who his teacher was and what teaching he followed. Āsāvatī answered in a short verse as follows:

Ye dhammā hetu prabhavā hetun tesam tathāgato āha
tesāṁ ca yo nirdho evamvādi mahāsrāmapaṭāh

Translating from Lamotte's French, this can be rendered as:

'Of dharmas which arise from a cause
The Tathāgata has proclaimed
The cause as well as their stopping'.
Thus teaches the great ascetic.

Śāriputra was so impressed by this terse statement about the arising and stopping of dharmas that he went straight to Sākyamuni for more. The rest, as they say, is history.

Bearing in mind the place and the persons involved in this

90 See Part One, The three turnings of the Dharma Wheel, p.[22], n.73.

episode, one cannot get much closer to the original teaching than this. But, as mentioned, there are considerably more textual references to dharmas which can be found in the Buddha's recorded pronouncements. They would be tedious to quote in detail, but some of the reference details are given in the footnote below, to be consulted if required 92.

So again, Yogācāra will be seen here as adopting and adapting original and early canonical teaching to a deeper and more explicit system, though one which is undisputedly derived from its Buddhist precursors and from Buddha originals.

On this evidence the dharmas and their groupings are not just the product of academic embellishment by idle monks in a hot climate. Doubtless this also took place. But it is clear that dharmas were fundamental to the original teaching of the Buddha as well as to the early Abhidharma masters.

Why then are dharmas so important? In the first place they are the result of Buddhist psychological analysis which lays bare the actual entities causing the suffering of all beings. Secondly, once dharmas are brought into view they can be pacified by special practices and, as a result, according to the final passages of the Satipaṭṭhāna, Nirvāṇa can be attained within seven days.

For these and other reasons dharmas remain fundamental to Yogācāra just as they did with its forbears. The more profound insights of Yogācāra, however, required some changes to the old usages. Nonetheless, Yogācāra never lost sight of the primary purpose of bringing dharmas into view. Dharmas always were the basis of right effort, and to facilitate this practical end, i.e., the acquiring and sustaining of wholesome dharmas and the elimination of the defiled and unwholesome variety, the dharma listings were divided into separate categories. For Yogācāra these are:

citta (mentals)

92 The Heart of Buddhist Meditation (Satipaṭṭhāna), tr. Nyanaponika Thera, Colombo 1954, pp.125, 139-40; Saṁyutta-niṣaṇṇa II, 25, and Kośa, Ch.3, p.72; Kośa, Ch.2, pp.215, 310; ibid., Ch.1, p.11; Lamotte, Traité II, op. cit., p.912, quoting the Sūtra-lapikāa.
The largest of these categories is the second, the *caitasika*. This is subdivided into sub-sections which comprise over fifty separate dharmas. The sub-sections include dharmas classified as good/wholesome, bad/defiled, and indeterminate. Such subdivisions are intended as an aid to right cultivation, as mentioned earlier.

Before turning to a detailed presentation of the Yogacara dharma scheme, it is necessary to set out one of the major Abhidharma developments which Yogacara accepted. The *Abhiphalamakaosa* explains the purpose of Dharma/dharma practice. Vasubandhu says, that without the discernment of dharmas, i.e., bringing them into awareness, there is no subjugation of the passions (*klesa*), and hence there is no release from Samsara. Here is a concise statement of doctrine and necessary practice which Asanga would rework later. Indeed it can be seen as the *raison d'etre* of all dharma schemes in mainstream Hinayana and Mahayana.

The dharma topics above which Yogacara took over had a further outcome. It is the doctrine of the *dhammasamtsana*, or mental series. This is a combination of the basic themes of no-self (*anatman*) and impermanence (*anityatva*). It means, generally speaking, that although dharma elements are real (for the *Abhiphalamakosa*), they appear and disappear with minute duration. Consequently, change, rapid or otherwise, is a constant and therefore the dharmas exist in a related sequence with no permanent self/soul. Vasubandhu expressed the case precisely, so his short statements are worth quoting:

‘By series (*samtsana*) we understand material and mental elements uninterruptedly succeeding each other in a procession which has action as originating cause.

The successive moments of the procession are different,

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93 *Kosa*, Ch.1, p.5, v.3.
94 Ibid., Ch.9, p.296
95 Ibid., Ch.3, p.33.
96 Ibid., Ch.2, p.194 and n.3.
97 Ibid., Ch.2, p.153.
Sarvástivādins and others. Now we can turn to what the Yogācārins changed in their own dharma scheme to take account of its deeper perceptions of the Dharma in general.

Perhaps the most important change by the Yogācārins to the meaning of the dharma scheme was that they denied the existence of external objects as separate from the mind, citta. Aśaṅga puts the case for this, i.e., for vijnānatratatā in his Mahāyāna-samgraha. He quotes Mahāyāna sūtras to the effect that the whole world is nothing but mind (citta) and that there is no external object. In respect of dharms and dhatus this means that the rūpadharmas, i.e., dhatus Nos 2, 5, 8, 11 and 14, are not external to the perceiver. This is emphasised, again by Aśaṅga, when he explains the form element (rūpadhātu) and visual consciousness element (caksurajñānadhātu). What happens is that the eye perceives forms and then visual consciousness reacts to that visible form; it is also (and this is crucial) the result of accumulated seeds arising in the ālayavijñāna. All the sense consciousnesses arise from the store consciousness and that is why all of that is projected notions only (vijnānatratatā). Even more radical is Vāsudānanda when he writes, that neither the ātman nor dharmas exist and so all is mere consciousness.

All the pre-Mahāyāna schools taught anātma but that dharmas were real. In Yogācāra (Vāsudānanda) dharmas too are not real existsents. That is not to say that they are not there. They are ‘mind-made’ and all arise from the ālayavijñāna by means of active seeds (bijā).

So, despite the protestations that dharmas do not exist, Yoshācāra then sets out to define and categorise each of its 103 factors in its dharma scheme! This is not as aberrant as it seems because, as will be seen and as already shown in the section on bahuṣrūta and dharma practice, all dharmas have a purpose. This purpose is to become the means to pass out of the parikalpita realm, where

the defiled dharmas are rampant, and into the paratantra and parinispanda realms, where the dharmas can be perceived as they really are: empty (śūnya) and markless (animittā), and where in their real nature they are all the same (samatā).

This perception is only reached in the upper levels of the bodhisattva stages where dharmas activity is then a pure (anāsrava) process and leads to a fundamental turning around in the depth of consciousness (aśāyaparāvṛtti). In order to attain that close approach to full enlightenment the dharmas have to be identified and then cultivated through the perfections (pāramitā). This, of course, starts in parikalpita where false imagination dominates. Hence the necessity of penetration to the operation of dharma (dhmaparāvakya) and so they all have to be brought into view, defined and employed by right effort.

For this purpose lists of both the Sarvāstivādin and Yogācāra dharmas are appended. Here, some of the special features of the Yogācāra scheme are presented.

Controversially perhaps, although the store consciousness (ālayavijñāna) is called the eighth consciousness in the Vijnānatratatāsiddhi and elsewhere, the Sanskrit stanzas of Vāsudānanda do not call it so. Its names have been given to us here as vipākavijñāna and sarvaśikavijñāna. Added to this the ālayavijñāna does not figure in either the eighteen dhatus or in the Yogācāra list of dharmas, although manas appears in both. It may be postulated from this that the ālayavijñāna is not a dharma, at least in the generally accepted sense of that word. Some of the definitions of the ālayavijñāna given by Aśaṅga appear to support the idea that it cannot be a dharma.

For example, Aśaṅga says in his Mahāyānasamgraha that all produced dharmas arise from the store consciousness (ālayavijñāna) and they are then formed into the chain of dependent arising (pratityasamutpāda). Further on in the same text Aśaṅga

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98 SVG, pp.92-4.
99 Abhidharmasamuccaya trans. op. cit., p.4.
100 Tārākāti, v.15, quoted in DMC, p.xxxiii.
101 Ibid., v.17, in ibid.
says that the *ālayavijñāna* as retribution consciousness holds all the seeds (*bijā*) and because of this all the destinies and existences arise from this consciousness.

The *Vijnaptimārtatāsiddhi* expands these by stating that the retribution consciousness (*ālayavijñāna*) is homogenous, continuous and capable of sustaining body and life and preventing these from being interrupted. Again, it states that this consciousness is called *ālayavijñāna* because it includes all defiled dharmas.

These definitions, among a number of others, make it difficult to see how the *ālayavijñāna* can be reckoned among the other single function elements of very short duration, especially in view of the negative evidence that it does not figure in the eighteen *dhātus* or the Yogācāra dharma list. So, whether or not it is the eighth consciousness, it can hardly be of the same kind as the other seven consciousnesses. By its function and titles it seems to be unique and of a different nature to the dharmas contained in the eighteen *dhātus*.

The Yogācāra dharma list is arranged under the five headings of the *skandhas*. The group of mental associates (*samprayukta*) comprises *skandhas* two, three and four. They include such subgroups as the wholesome (*kusāla*) and unwholesome (*akusāla*) and the derived and secondary defiled dharmas (see dharma list). In all, this group is composed of fifty-five separate dharmas, which is over half the total. This is the group which produces most of the 'clusters' and, because all the defilements and passions arise from it, it is a major constituent of the realm of parikalpita. As such, it provides the focus for most of the early dharma practice.

Also included among the fourth *skandha* are the dharmas of the 'distinct from other mentals' (*cittavīryutktaśamskāra*) subsection. This is a strange example of Yogācāra adaptation. The original Sarvāstivādin list contained thirteen of these. The Yogācāra, despite its seeming ambivalence on dharmas in general, adds ten more to these making a total for this subsection of twenty-three. The Yogācāra additions themselves are also rather strange. Such items as rapidity (*java*, No.83) and succession (*anukrama*, No.84), time (*kāla*, No.85) and region (*desa*, No.86) once again do not seem to conform to the general idea of a dharma as an irreducible element of conscious existence. On the other hand, as part of the *skandhas* they do seem to connect the so-called personality (*pudgala*) to the surrounding world. All the dharmas of the *skandha* groups are conditioned (*samskṛta*). The last group of the set is outside the group of the *skandhas* but is contained within the eighteen *dhātu* framework.

This is the section of the unconditioned (*asamskṛta*) dharmas. Here again Yogācāra expanded the original three dharmas to eight. Comment has already been made on this section above. The Yogācāra additions comprise three types of suchness (*tathatā*) and two extra types of 'stopping' (*nirodha*). Why these extra are necessary seems problematical and, anyway, how can there be more than one kind of suchness? This, together with the already mentioned difficulty of unconditioned, i.e., unrelated and unconnected, dharmas being produced by *bijas* from the *ālayavijñāna* makes the additions to this section strange indeed. Further comment will be made in these questions below.

Regarding the detail of the practice dimension of dharmas, this can now be set out. There will be little surprise if it is said that the preliminary practice system in Yogācāra is similar to that of the earlier schools, i.e., to bring dharmā elements into focus and build a body of good roots, i.e., wholesome dharmas, to sustain more advanced practices. Such is the first of the old progressive phases of the five paths (*mārga*). The first path is called *sambhārāmārga*, or path of acquiring equipment. This preparatory stage is also part of the Yogācāra bodhisattva process in that it is necessary to accumulate the *mokṣabhāgiyas* (dharmas of or aids to deliverance). These are faith (*śraddhā*), energy (*vīrya*), mindfulness (*śrīti*) and

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105 Ibid., p.39.
106 DMC, p.227.
107 Ibid., p.185.
109 Trimśikā, v.1.
some wisdom (prajñā)\textsuperscript{110}. These are all dharma as can be seen by
the notes attached.

The process continues by entry into the second path called
prayogamārga (path of preliminary or focused exercise). This
comprises four more features common to both mainstream Hina-
yāna and Mahāyāna, i.e., the nirvedahbhāgiyas.

In Yogācāra, however, these four features have the same
names as before but their definitions and aims vary. The four are
called usmagata (heats), mūrdhān (summits), ksānti (patience)
and laukikāgradharma (supreme worldly dharmas). All eight
together are the ingredients of the good roots (kuśalamūla)\textsuperscript{111}.
The aim of these practices in Yogācāra is described and clearly set
out in the Vijñaptimātratāsiddhi. The aim is to gain access to the
third path, the path of vision (darśanamārga), and for that the
ingrained conception of subject and object needs to be
removed\textsuperscript{112}. If successful they lead to the realisation that these
dharma do not exist other than as viññaptimātra (mere notional
projections)\textsuperscript{113}.

The next stage of this process is called darśanamārga, the third
of the five paths. Here the first ‘vision’ of reality is gained with the
appearance of nirvikalpañjāna, i.e., knowledge free from false
imagination and discrimination. This reveals the two sānyatās, i.e.,
of pūdgala and of dharmas\textsuperscript{114}.

In the same stage of darśanamārga, as a conclusion of the stage,
the higher comprehension (abhiṣamāya) is attained\textsuperscript{115}. This
amounts to an actual realisation of the non-duality of all dharmas
and the real\textsuperscript{116} meaning of the Dharma and the Three Jewels. On
completing the darśanamārga there is entrance into the first of the
ten stages (bhūmi)\textsuperscript{117} which is sometimes referred to as the path
proper, i.e., all preliminaries are fulfilled and the progress through
the stages has begun. At this point also calming (samatha) and
insight penetration (vipaśyanā) continue to function as described
above in the section on bahuṣrūta. At the darśanamārga stage and
beyond, however, insight penetration predominates\textsuperscript{118}.

Now, from the first bhūmi onwards the unobstructed knowl-
edge (nirvikalpakajñāna) is constantly activated. The presence of
this special insight-knowledge is established when prajñāpāramitā
is attained in the sixth bhūmi. This form of perfected insight cuts
off forever the secondary defilements and the seeds (bijā) of the
grasping at subject and object (grahakaugrāhya)\textsuperscript{119}. This cutting
off contributes to the eventual demolition of the two barriers
(āvaraṇa) of defiled dharmas (kleśa) and false or incomplete
knowledge (jñeyāvaraṇa)\textsuperscript{120}. Here we have the start of the fruition
of all the earlier acquired knowledge of the dharma elements and
the practice of right effort (samyagvāṇa) to subdue defilements.

By these processes of passing through the stages (bhūmi), one
of Yogācāra’s primary goals is achieved. It is the ‘transformation
of the base (āśrayakāvṛtti). The base referred to is the
fundamental stratum of both pure and impure dharma activity as
well as the bijas which produce them in the ālayavijñāna.

These various attainments just prior to the ‘transformation of the
base’ mark a convergence, in some respects, of the doctrines of
the Madhyamaka and Yogācāra. The stage of the sixth perfection
involves prajñāpāramitā (perfect insight-knowledge) and this
conveys the comprehension that all dharmas are marked by empti-
ness (sārvardharmasānyatālaksana). Indeed they are emptiness
itself. This in turn brings about the full acceptance that dharmas
do not arise (anupattikadharmakānti). With that, the crucial and
specific Yogācāra theme of the ‘transformation of the base’
(āśrayakāvṛtti) comes to be.
All this may serve to illustrate how dharma schemes underlie most of Yogācāra doctrine and practice and, of course, most of the rest of Indian Buddhism. For Yogācāra in particular the point reached at this stage is tantamount to entry into parinirvāṇa (ultimate reality). It should be noted, however, that defiled dharmas of all kinds constitute the parikalpita experience. Yet it is the true nature of these same dharmas which emerges in the higher stages.

Beyond that, as we shall see next, the true dharma nature takes on its supreme form, the fulfilment of the original aspiration to perfect enlightenment, the final flowering of the bodhicitta.

THE DHARMA AND THE DHARMAKĀYA

After passing through the series of the path of vision (darśana-mārga) the next ascending sections are the six perfections (pāramitā) within the corresponding bodhisattva stages (bhūmi). All of this is part of the fourth of the paths called bhāvanāmārga, meaning path of continuous cultivation, or bringing into existence. This too refers to the dharmas, and the changes to them which are brought about in this process produce some very advanced staging posts in these higher levels of the Way.

The first concern here seems to be to overcome the barrier (āvaraṇa) of the defilements/passions (kleśa) still remaining. By repeated access to the unobstructed knowledge (nirvikalpaka-jñāna) both barriers of defiled dharmas and incomplete knowledge (kleśa and jneyāvaraṇa) are dissipated and entry into the parinirvāṇa realm is gained. This highly charged cultivation of good and special dharmas, i.e., prajñā, opens the way to purifying the ālayavijñāna of defiled seeds (bijas) and results in the ‘inner transformation or turning of the base’ (āśrayaparāvṛtti)121.

It is of some interest to note that in this same bhāvanāmārga not only is perfect wisdom gained at the sixth bhūmi i.e. full comprehension of sūnyatā, but the Śrāvaka path to Nirvāṇa is also fulfilled122. This seems to refer back to the statements in the

121 Ibid., p.707.
122 SGV, p.262-3.

Cheetham – The Yogācāra-Vijñānavāda School

Samdhinirmocanasūtra already mentioned concerning the three turnings of the Wheel by which both major branches of the Dharma (Śrāvaka and Mañjuśrī) are incorporated in the explicit teaching of the third turning.

Such constant cultivation of dharmas produces the ‘inner transformation’ (āśrayaparāvṛtti) which can be of six kinds. These different kinds concern the purification of the dharma stream, the fading of the false and the appearance of reality by overcoming the final barriers (āvaraṇa). The sixth kind is actually defined as where the bodhisattva penetrates to the lack of self-existence of the dharmas (dharmapāramitā) and realising that Samsāra is forever calm and should not be abandoned.

By this point in the bodhisattva process several kinds of what are usually lumped together as ‘meditation’ have been either perfected or highly refined and concentrated. These are practices already prescribed here such as dharma-pravīcaya, śamatha and vipaśyanā, samādhi and dhīna. These last practices will have already been perfected by the fifth pāramitā. This allows access to the sixth, prajñāpāramitā, which is the pattern throughout, i.e., specific types of ‘meditation’ practice produce the highest goals in the upper stages. This means that such meditative practices have to be cultivated and intensified as the first bhūmi is approached. From this point on the defiled dharmas (already perceived and worked upon earlier) are gradually transformed and their bijas eliminated from this particular dharmasamāptā123.

As if to reinforce the notion that the dharma elements are central to this whole process it is said124 that all ten bhūmis have a self-nature comprising all the good conditioned (samskṛta) and all the unconditioned dharmas. Furthermore, accession to the tenth and final bhūmi provides mastery of all dharmas.

123 Ibid., p.263.
124 Ibid.
125 DMC, p.723.
126 Ibid., p.711.
127 Ibid., p.741.
A clear distinction is made between seeds (bijas) and their respective dharmas when manifesting. An example is given that the arising of some defiled (klesha) dharmas is cut off at the stage of the first bhumi, whereas the defiled seeds (bijas) are cut off progressively by means of special meditation practice during the passage through all the ten bhūmis. Thus the seeds (bijas) which can give rise to supreme enlightenment (anuttarasamyaksambodhi) can only operate when the two barriers (āvarana) of defilement (klesa) and incomplete profound knowledge (inaya) are cleared away.

All this is part of the continuing process of dharma purification which lies at the heart of the ‘transformation of the base’ (āśraya-parāvṛtti). Indeed the word ‘base’ (āśraya) is said to be the store consciousness (ālayavijñāna) wherefrom all the seeds (bijas) arise. And the purpose of it all is suggested when it is said that the Buddha’s body of enjoyment (sambhogakāya) is produced by the process of the ‘transformation of the base’ (āśraya-parāvṛtti).

The purifying of the dharmas is again referred to when it is said that of the eighteen dhātus, i.e., the person and the whole of Samśāra, Nos 1–15, are always impure (āśraya) until full bodhi. But Nos 16, 17, and 18 can be either pure or impure. For a Buddha, however, all eighteen dhātus are pure. Here, the Buddha is usually referred to as the dharmakāya, a term redolent with several meanings. In this context it is defined as the three bodies (trikāya), i.e., the body of true nature (svabhāva), the body of enjoyment (sambhogakāya) and the appearance body (nirmanakāya). Vasubandhu’s Triṃśikā states with finality that ultimate attainment is the pure dhātu, i.e., the dharmakāya.

This dharmakāya is also said to be the support and base (āśraya) of sovereignty over all dharmas. And yet the Vijñapti-mātratāsiddhi states that the dharmakāya appears when both the ālayavijñāna and the bijas are stopped. This supreme state, i.e., the real body of the Buddha and supreme enlightenment, is attained by the unobstructed knowledge and penetration (nirvikalpakajñāna) focused upon the deep teaching/Drdha of the major Mahāyāna śūtras plus the fulfilment of passage through all ten bhūmis. Here is a clear reference to the previously mentioned main practice system of the triple gnosis (srūta, cintā, sāmatha/vipāsya).

In all this, both Asaṅga and Vasubandhu are elaborating in what had earlier been presented in such basic Mahāyāna śūtras as the Aṣṭasāhasrikāprajñāpāramitā and the Sūramgamasamādhi. In these can be found statements such as: The true nature (tathātā) of the Tathāgata and the tathātā of all dharmas are single, nondual, not divided. Or: Tathāgatas are neither born nor die because of their complete synonymy with the true nature of dharmas.

Such is the unsurpassed peak (bhūtakoti) of all Mahāyānist endeavours. All the details above sets out the means whereby this supreme aim is attained. It should therefore not be wondered at that the dharma elements should figure so prominently throughout the whole process. In doing so, of course, Yogācāra also continues and consolidates the similar tradition among the very earliest Indian Buddhist schools, even the recorded teaching of the Buddha himself. The sublime aim of the further teaching, i.e., that of the first Mahāyāna śūtras, is the reason why Yogācāra

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128 Ibid., p.743.
129 Ibid., p.767.
130 Ibid., p.705.
131 Ibid., p.797.
132 Ibid., p.789.
133 Ibid., p.793.
134 Triṃśikā, v.30.
135 Ibid.
136 SGV, p.266.
137 DMC, p.797.
138 SGV, pp.274-5.
140 Cf. Sūramgamasamādhisūtra trans., op. cit., p.166.
constantly emphasises attention to dharmas, i.e., dharmapraavicaya. Right effort (samyagvyāma) in this area produces insight-knowledge (prajñā) and prajñā opens the gate to all the rest.

* * * * *

Several concluding remarks may now be in order. On the basis of the textual extracts given above, the two main themes of the article have been outlined. Of course, much more textual material could have been used, but it is hoped that the extent has been sufficiently wide and apposite to underpin the main propositions. These are that the main Yogācāra doctrines are derived from and are extensions of the topics of the Buddha’s recorded teachings and of the mainstream Indian Buddhist schools.

Also, that Yogācāra presents a coherent system of doctrine which is closely allied to necessary and related practice. Indeed here, as in earlier schools, doctrine and practice are inter-related and inter-dependent. The difference between Yogācāra and the earlier mainstream Hinayāna is that the Yogācāra is dependent upon and elaborates the deep teaching of the first Mahāyāna sūtras. This reflects Asaṅga’s own experience (and that of his brother Vasubandhu) of being grounded in the Sarvastivāda and then progressing into the further teaching of first phase Mahāyāna.

Despite the amount of detailed exposition here, there remain some very puzzling and unresolved questions (it is ever so).

Having just outlined the dharma scheme of Yogācāra, it may be as well to start here.

The question arising is: what is the status and qualities of a ‘dharma’ in Yogācāra? In the early Abhidharma the answer was clear. A dharma is an element which lasts only an instant and is immediately replaced by another. Even so, each dharma has different characteristics and a karmic outflow. For Yogācāra, dharmas have no external existence and are all ‘mind made’.

Furthermore, although manas is listed as a dharma which is within the eighteen dhātus, its functions, as defined, cannot be carried out by a single, instantly disappearing entity. For manas to be a dharma it has to have qualities of considerable duration, or to be a complex or cluster of related dharmas.

Turning to the group of cittāviprayuktas, items such as Nos 83, java (rapidity), and 84, anikrama (uniform succession), and 88, sāma (totality of causes and effects), do not fit into the usual idea of a single dharma element.

Again, why add so many dharmas to the old list if, as Vasubandhu says, dharmas do not exist? And, strangely, most additions are made to the most problematic groups, i.e., viprayuktas and asamskrta dharmas. The latter raise their own difficulties. They are classified as dharmas and therefore are brought into being by seeds in the store consciousness. Yet by definition these dharmas are non-arising and unconditioned and so cannot be produced.

One speculation to conclude. Asaṅga is said by some to have been the founder of the Tathāgatagarbha school as well as of the Yogācāra. The Tathāgatagarbha teaching followed quickly upon the establishment of Yogācāra. According to Tathāgatagarbha texts the final phase of the process is the transformation of the refined dharmas into their intrinsic purity and true nature. At that point the pure Tathāgatagarbha is revealed, although it is always present. Is Asaṅga further refining his Yogācāra theme of the ālaya-viśṇu by introducing the Tathāgatagarbha? If so, it may be questioned whether the ālayavjñāna and the Tathāgatagarbha are not similar or even the same.
The 75 dharmas of the Sarvāstivādins
from Vasubandhu’s Abhidharmakośa

Section I. The 72 samskṛta (conditioned) dharmas (A, B and C)

A The 11 dharmas of the rūpaskandha are:
visaya (domain)            indriya (organ)
or
(visible) 1. rūpa āyatana (faculty)    6. caksur āyatana (faculty)
(sound) 2. śabda āyatana (faculty)    7. śrotā āyatana (faculty)
(odour) 3. gandha āyatana (faculty)    8. ghrāṇa āyatana (faculty)
(taste) 4. rasa āyatana (faculty)    9. jihvā āyatana (faculty)
(tangible) 5. sprāṭavya āyatana (fac) 10. kāya āyatana (faculty)
and   11. aviññāpti (unmanifested act)

B The 60 dharmas of samskāraskandha

B1 The 46 samprayuktadharmas, i.e. associated with thought

i. 10 mahābhūmikas: 12. vedāṇa (skandha) feeling, sensation
(great, always present)13. samjñā (skandha) perception, notion,
[idea]
14. cetanā volition, will, intention
15. chanda desire for action
16. sparsa contact (qualified as contingency)
17. smṛti recollection, memory, mindfulness
18. prajñā insight/wisdom
19. adhimokṣa approval, acceptance, recognition
20. manaskāra fixing attention
21. samādhi concentration, one-pointed [focus]

ii. 10 kuśalamaḥbhūmikas
(wholesome)

22. śraddhā acquiescence, faith, adherence, confidence (in)
23. viśva energy
24. upekkṣa equanimity, balanced com-
posure
25. hṛi respect, veneration of virtuous qualities/persons

iii. 2 akusalamaḥbhūmikas
(unwholesome)

32. āhṛika disrespect, lack of regard for virtue
33. anapatrāpya disregard of bad repute, no dread

iv. 6 kleśamahābhūmikas
(defiled, bad)

34. mohā ignorance, delusion
35. kauśiḍyā laziness, indolence, sloth
36. sthāna sloth, sluggishness
37. pramāda negligence, carelessness
38. āsṛaddhāya non-belief
39. auddhatya agitiation/restlessness
40. ṭṛṣyā envy
41. mātsarya avarice
42. krodha anger, irritation
43. mraka hypocrisy
44. māya deceit
45. sāthya dissimulation, fraudulence
46. mādā pride, self-esteem
47. pradāśa obstinate approval of misdeeds
48. upanāha enmity, hatred
49. vihimsā active hostility, harmfulness

vi. 8 anīyatas
(indeterminate)

50. kaukṛtya regret, remorse
51. middhā languor, torpor
52. vitarka discursive mental enquiry
53. vićāra judgement, assessment
54. rāga attachment, desires
55. prātiṣṭhā mental disturbances and irritation
56. māna arrogance, conceit, self-aggrandisement
57. vićikītsā doubt

172
B2. The 14 cittaviprayuktaś, i.e. dissociated from thought

58. prapti possession and retention
59. aprapti non-retention, non-possession
60. sābhāgatā compatibility, similarity of

[Type
61. asaṃjnīka unconsciousness, unaware-

[ness
62. asaṃjnīsamāpatti meditative state of
unconsciousness, attain-

[ment of consciousness
63. nirodhasamāpatti meditative state of
stopped thought and

[mental activity
64. jīvita life force, quality of continuity
65. jāti birth, arising, production
66. shtiti duration, abiding
67. jarā ageing, decay
68. anityatā impermanence, instabiliy
69. nāmakāya names that prompt ideas
70. padakāya meaningful phrases
71. vyañjanakāya syllable, vowel and con-

[sonant sounds

C 72. vijnānakandha is a single dharma – simple, unmixed con-

sciousness of a particular object.

Section 2. The three asamskrtas (unconditioned) are:

73. ākāśa space
74. pratisamkhyañirodha (=Nirvāṇa) total stopping by

[insight
75. apratisamkhyañirodha stopping/disjunc-

[tion by lack of

[cause

Cheetham – The Yogācāra-Vijñānavāda School

Asaṅga’s List of Yogācāra dharmas

as contained in the Abhidharmasamuccaya

1. samskṛta dharmas
The five skandhas (aggregates, conditioned)

Skandha one, rūpa dharmas (aggregates of matter)
The 10 āyatanas
dharma number

1. caksurdhātu, eye element
2. śrotadhātu, ear element
3. ghrāṇadhātu, nose element
4. jihvādhātu, tongue element
5. kāyadhātu, body, touch, tactile element
6. rūpadhātu, form element
7. śabdadhātu, sound element
8. gandhadhātu, odour element
9. rasadhātu, taste element
10. sprāṣṭrayadhātu, tangibility element

dharma types and numbers in skandhas two, three and four

a = 5 sarvatrāga, universal
b = 5 viniyata, special
c = 11 kuśala, wholesome
d = 10 akuśala, unwholesome, defiled
e = 20 upakleśa, secondary unwholesome
f = 4 anitya, indeterminate

Total 55 dharmas in skandhas two, three and four

a = sarvatrāga, universal

Skandha two, vedanā (aggregate of feeling)
11) a. vedanā, sensation

Skandha three, samjñā (aggregate of perception)
12) a. samjñā, perception

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141 Abhidharmasamuccaya trans., op cit.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Skandha</th>
<th>samskāra (aggregate of formations)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>13)</td>
<td>a. cetāna, volition aroused by contact with the organs</td>
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<tr>
<td>14)</td>
<td>a. manaskāra, attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15)</td>
<td>a. sparsa, contact</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b = 5 vinivata, special</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16)</td>
<td>b. chanda, desire</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17)</td>
<td>b. adhimoksa, resolve</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18)</td>
<td>b. smṛti, recollection/mindfulness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19)</td>
<td>b. sāmādhi, concentration</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20)</td>
<td>b. prajñā, insight-wisdom</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>c = 11 kuśala, wholesome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21)</td>
<td>c. śraddhā, confidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22)</td>
<td>c. brī, respect (self respect)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23)</td>
<td>c. aparattīya, integrity (modesty)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24)</td>
<td>c. alobha, non-covetousness (absence of greed)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25)</td>
<td>c. advesa, non-hatred (absence of hatred)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26)</td>
<td>c. anihā, non-delusion (absence of delusion)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27)</td>
<td>c. vīrya, vigour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28)</td>
<td>c. prāśrābdhi, aptitude</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29)</td>
<td>c. apramāda, vigilence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30)</td>
<td>c. upekṣa, equanimity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31)</td>
<td>c. avihimsā, non-injury</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>d = 10 akuśala/kleśa, unwholesome, defiled</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32)</td>
<td>d. rāga, greed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33)</td>
<td>d. pratīgha, irritation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34)</td>
<td>d. māna, conceit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35)</td>
<td>d. avidyā, ignorance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36)</td>
<td>d. vicikitsā, doubt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37)</td>
<td>d. satkāyadrśti, view of individuality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38)</td>
<td>d. antagrahaḍṛśti, idea of grasping extreme views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39)</td>
<td>d. āstiparāmarśa, adherence to views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40)</td>
<td>d. śīlavrataparāmarśa, adherence to observances/rituals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41)</td>
<td>d. mithyādṛśti, false views</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>e = 20 upakleśa, defiled/unwholesome</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42)</td>
<td>e. krodha, anger</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cheetham – The Yogācāra-Vijñānavāda School

43) e. upanāha, enmity
44) e. mṛkṣa, hypocrisy
45) e. pradāsa, vexation
46) e. iverīya, envy
47) e. mātsarya, avarice
48) e. māyā, deception/illusion
49) e. sāthya, dissimulation
50) e. māda, pride
51) e. vihimsā, violence
52) e. āhriyaka, shamelessness
53) e. anapatrāpya, non-integrity
54) e. styāna, torpor/inertia
55) e. auddhatya, agitation
56) e. āśraddhya, lack of confidence
57) e. kausidyā, indolence
58) e. pramāda, negligence
59) e. muṣṭasṛṣṭī, forgetfulness
60) e. asamprajanya, wrong understanding
61) e. viśeṣa, distraction

f = 4 aniyata, indeterminate

62) f. mūḍha, drowsiness/lauguor
63) f. kaukṛtya, remorse
64) f. vitarka, discursive mental enquiry
65) f. vicāra, mental judgement

cittaviprayuktasamskāra (distinct from other mentals)

66) prāpti, possession
67) asamjñāsamāpatti, attainment of non-perception
68) nirodhasamāpatti, attainment of non-sensation
69) āsamjñika, state of non-perception
70) jīvitendriya, the life faculty
71) nikāyasabbhāga, similarity of types
72) jāti, birth
73) jara, ageing
74) sthiti, duration
75) anityatā, impermanence
76) nāmakāya, names
77) padaśa, words
78) vyañjanaśa, consonants
VIMALAKIIRTI IN CHINA*

PAUL DEMIEVILLE

(Translated by Sara Boin-Webb)

Besides the importance it holds in the perspective of Indian Buddhism, the Vimalakirti Sutra (Vkn) is of interest in that it is one of the rare Buddhist works which were truly integrated into the Chinese cultural patrimony. In literary and artistic fields, as well as that of philosophy and religion, it was of considerable influence in China. It was much read, by the laity as well as monks, and with no distinction between schools or sub-schools: it made way for an abundant exegesis, very diverse in tendencies or nuances, of which only a small part remains. It never ceased to inspire Chinese poets, painters and thinkers. Through its contents as well as its form, there is hardly any foreign text, before modern times, which so touched Chinese sensibilities.

The doctrines of the Prajñāpāramitā, close as they are in certain regards to ancient Taoism, take on in the Vkn an aspect infinitely better adapted to Chinese taste than the inextricable developments of the large Sanskrit summaries which contained thousands or myriads of ślokas, or than the increasingly condensed manuals, Vajracchedikā, Hṛdaya, etc., whose redaction veers towards mnemotechnical preservation for initiates. It is not surprising that one of the first Chinese literati who took an interest in these doctrines, the statesman Yin Hao of the Eastern

* Translator’s note: This article first appeared in French as Appendix II in Etienne Lamotte’s translation of the Vimalakirtinirdesa, L’Enseignement de Vimalakirti (Bibliothèque du Muséeon, vol. 51) Louvain 1962, pp.438-55. At the time I translated the latter into English, we were unable to obtain permission to include an English version of Demiéville’s article (reprinted in the author’s Choix d’Études Bouddhiques, Leiden 1973), which we are now, somewhat belatedly, able to do, permission having been gratefully received from Brill NV., Leiden. References are to my English translation, The Teaching of Vimalakirti (Sacred Books of the Buddhists, vol. XXXII), London 1976, repr.1994.
Chin (d. 356), after having suffered political and military reverses set to reading Buddhist texts in his old age, preferred the Sutra of Vimalakirti to the Prajñāpāramitā texts which he found either too long or too short.

The Vkn is a work of art. The scene-setting is conducted with the skill of a dramatist. The dialogue sparkles and recalls the expository methods of Confucius, Mencius and Chuang-tzu. The most abstruse theories are illustrated by lively anecdotes beloved of the Chinese. Paradox and irony are handled by a masterly hand, such as in the famous episode of Sāriputra, that holiest of holy men of the Small Vehicle, the foremost of the Buddha’s disciples in wisdom (prajñāvatām agra), whom a malignant goddess covers in flowers which he cannot shake off and who ends up seeing himself changed into a woman (Ch.VI). This story, aimed at scandalising the orthodox, was nonetheless to inspire one of the most gracious rituals of Chinese and Japanese liturgy, that of the scattering of flowers (san hua). The puritanical clericalism of the Hinayāna, so contrary to Chinese ethics, was the subject of a subtle satire. The only one of the interlocutors to find grace in the eyes of Vimalakirti is the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, the crown prince (kumārabhūta) who bore five twists of hair (pañcaćikara) whereas the monks with shaven heads, śrāvakas or arhats, are derided (Ch. III). Was the author of this glorification of the layman a layman himself? Vimalakirti is, basically, aggressively lay: a ‘retired gentleman’

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2 By praising Vimalakirti as highly as the Buddha himself, the sūtra thus shocked the hierarchal sense of the orthodox Chinese, as it appears from a text by Fu-li of the T’ang (T 211, p.551a) cited by Ch’en Yin-ch’ueh in his ‘Postface au texte de Touen-houang d’une “amplification” du chapitre du Sūtra de Vimalakirti intitulé “Les questions de Mañjuśrī sur la maladie”’, Bulletin de l’Institut de recherches d’Histoire et de Philologie de l’Académie Sinica II, Peking 1930, pp.6-7.
3 The least paradox attached to Vimalakirti is none but the size of his dwelling, ‘ten feet square’ (fang-chang), recorded in the ruins of Vaiśāli by the T’ang Chinese travellers, which in China became a designation of the monastic cell, then of the monks themselves or more especially of the head abbots of (chū-shih), as an upāsaka is called in Chinese, a ‘householder’, learned, rich, respected, a guildsman, a businessman whose dealings do not dirty the hands, a benefactor who, if necessary, haunts bad places there to do good works, but without any impure contact defiling him any more than mud defiles the lotus (Ch.II). He resolves the old Chinese dilemma between activism and quietism (tung and ching); Sāriputra’s passive meditation (Ch. III, 3, p.43) is the subject of censure which during the T’ang period the anti-quietists of the southern branch of the Dhyāna school were to highlight. Vimalakirti participates in the action without ceasing to be in quietude; he adapts himself to every situation, ‘responds’, reacts to every external appeal without being concerned. His reflexes are so disinterested, his freedom so perfect, he displays such mastery of himself and the world that the laws of common morality, even those of nature, mean nothing to him. At his command rice increases to feed the visitors who come to his room, and the latter grows to the size of a universal auditorium. Such wonders are qualified as inconceivable, ‘unthinkable’ (acintya). As the commentator Seng-cho, observed, the notion of ‘unthinkable’ is at the heart of the sūtra. All duality is declared illusory, every logical contradiction dodged; the third party is not excluded, categories of normal thought are transcended; all discursiveness is vain. The path of deliverance passes by the passions; Enlightenment is the round of rebirth itself. Opposites are reconciled. The truth is ‘unthinkable’ and derives from silence. One might well be reading Chuang-tzu. Perhaps it is unwarranted to attribute to Vimalakirti the virtues of a literate Confucian and the bearing of a Taoist aristocrat. In any case, it is quite clear that such a type of Buddhist had everything to beguile the Chinese literati, so reasonable that the last word in philosophy was for them always to deny reason.

It is indeed among the literati nourished by Taoist philosophy,
in the intelligentsia of the Eastern Chin (317-420), that the Vkn was to claim its first success in China. At that time, the Sanskrit text had already been translated at least three times; about the middle of the fourth century, the Chinese monk Chih Min-tu made a synthetic edition of it. Chih Min-tu was known through his own exegesis of one of the theories of the Prajñāpāramitā, interpreted in the spirit of specifically Chinese gnosticism known as the Dark Learning (hsüan-hstiēh), which had been in fashion since the revival of Taoist philosophy at the end of the Han. He was in contact with the circle of aristocrats who had emigrated into the region of the lower Blue River and Chekiang after the fall of the Western Chin, and cultivated the philosophy of the Dark Learning while combining it with Buddhist ideas mainly taken from the Prajñāpāramitā (or the Vkn).

His colleague Chih Tun (Chih Tao-lin 314-366) also frequented the great minds of the south, particularly the group of literati who resided in the region of Kuei-chi, near Shao-hsing in present-day Chekiang. Chih Tun excelled in the art of philosophical debate as it was practised by this group under the name of 'pure conversation' (ch'ing-t' an): somewhat like the saloon conversations of Mallarmé, but which took place in a less enclosed atmosphere, since nature, the open air of the mountains, the beauties of the countryside were always appreciated by those Chinese given to subliminal abstraction. Chih Tun had written, taking his inspiration from the Vkn, a short treatise on the identity of matter (rūpa) and emptiness (śūnya) or, in the terms then in usage in Chinese philosophical problematics, of the world of 'there is' (yu) and that in which 'there is nothing' (wu).


a ‘eulogy’ in verse in hymnic style\textsuperscript{14} to the ten comparisons in the sūtra (ball of foam, bubble, mirage, etc., Ch.II, 9), and there is recorded of him, admittedly much later, an anecdote which was current in the Buddhist circles of Canton\textsuperscript{15}. At the time of his tragic execution in the public marketplace of that town, in 433, Hsieh Ling-yün, who had a fine beard, purportedly gifted it to a monastery bearing the name of Jetavanā (Chih-yüan ssu), so that it could adorn a statue of Vimalakīrti. The latter must therefore have appeared from then on in the Chinese temple iconography, and with the long beard of a Chinese sage as he was often to be depicted later. The first image of Vimalakīrti was supposedly the work of the great painter of the time, Ku K’ai-chih (ca 345-411), who also frequented the K’uai-chi circle and was linked with the family of Hsieh Ling-yün: ‘He was the first to create an image of Vimalakīrti; he depicted him with a clear (spare) and emaciated look, which showed his sickness, leaning on an arm-rest and forgetting the word’\textsuperscript{16}. These last two expressions come from Chuang-tzu, who used them to describe Taoist ecstasy; the Taoist cult was practised in a hereditary way in Ku K’ai-chih’s family. However, perhaps the attitude he had given to the sage was rather inspired in him by that of the adherents of ‘pure conversation’, of which Vimalakīrti was to become a kind of paragon or patron. The painting was done on a wall of the Wa-kuan ssu, a monastery founded in about 363-365 in Nanking, the capital of the Eastern Chin. We are told that the monks made an appeal for funds to the worthies of the imperial court. Ku K’ai-chih put down his name for the largest sum, a million sapesks. When his payment was claimed, he asked that a wall be prepared and shut himself in for more than a month. Before ‘pointing up the eyes’ to give life to his portrait, he invited the monks to make visitors pay at the rate of one hundred thousand sapesks on the first day, fifty thousand the next, and what they liked on the third. The million was quickly reached\textsuperscript{17}. The greatest painters of the Southern Dynasties, Lu T’an-wei in the fifth century, Chang Seng-yu in the sixth, attempted to imitate his masterwork, without either being able to equal it. The paintings by Ku K’ai-chih, Lu T’an-wei and Chang Seng-yu were preserved until the T’ang period when, during the great proscription of Buddhism in 845, that by Ku K’ai-chih was transported to a temple in present-day Chenkiang, downstream from Nanking, from where it was again transferred, some years later, to the T’ang imperial collection. The poet Tu Mu had ten copies of it made before it was transferred to Chenkiang\textsuperscript{18}. All this had disappeared before or under the Sung (960-1280).

It is therefore mainly in the second half of the fourth century that we see the Vkn gain favour in the scholarly circles of the Eastern Chin, in south-east China; it was clearly adopted there as one of the texts that all highly cultured Chinese should know. One can imagine the sensation that must have been caused in those circles – most particularly in the community of Lushan, on the middle Blue River, whence towards the end of the fourth century

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\textsuperscript{14} T 2103, v.x, p.200a. It is already Kumārajīva’s version (T 475, i, p.329b15-21) which seems to follow Hsieh Ling-yün. He groups in two’s four of the comparisons to reach a total of ten.

\textsuperscript{15} It is recorded in a collection of T’ang anecdotes, the Sui-T’ang chia-hua by Liu Su (ap. T’ang-yen shuo-hui, ed. 1869, fasc.II, p.7a), with regard to an imperial princess who, at the time of Chung-tsung (705-710), had the beard brought from Canton to Ch’ang-an by ‘relays at the gallop’ to amuse her in her games. Also see Yeh Hsião-hsiéh, Hsieh Ling-yün shih-hsiáa, Shanghai 1957, pp.180 and 215.


\textsuperscript{17} Ibid., Acker pp.378-9.

\textsuperscript{18} Ibid., Acker, pp.193, 372, 376, 379. Cf. also P. Pelliot, ‘Les transferts de fresques...’, Revue des arts asiatiques V, 1928, p.207, and ‘Les déplacements de fresques...’, ibid. VIII, 1934, p.218. The temple in Chekiang was burnt down under the Northern Sung in 1100; only one of its buildings survives in which Mi Fu (1051-1107), the famous painter and art critic, in the first years of the twelfth century set up his studio which he gave the name of Vimalakīrti (Ch’ang-ming-chai); cf. Acker, pp.375, n.5, 382. – There is also mention in the Chen-kuan kung-ssu hua shih by P’ei Hsiao-yüan of a scroll illustrating the Vimalakīrti Sūtra, painted by Chang Mé of the (Eastern, 317-420) Chin, as well as of a pien-hsiang by Yüan Chi’en of the Sung (420-478) who purportedly illustrated more than five hundred scenes from the sūtra; cf. Soper, op. cit., pp.35, 57.
the centre of Buddhist intellectualty had moved - by the new translation of the Sanskrit text compiled in the north, at Ch’ang-an, under the auspices of those potentates of barbarian origin who had forced the Chinese legitimacy to leave their country in the south-east with their nobility and élite. For this translation, Kumārajīva benefited from the co-operation of every-thing that Buddhism then considered the most cultivated in northern China. At the head of an impressive team of collaborators, including twelve hundred monks expert in matters of doctrine (i-hsiēh), was the great Seng-chao (374-414)19, the strongest philosophical brain of the period, a precocious and fulgent genius who, since childhood, had acquired the very best of Chinese culture; he had studied the classics and historians, then the Taoist philosophers, before converting to Buddhism precisely through having read the Vkn.20 He himself specifies that Kumārajīva’s Chinese redactors should pay particular attention to the style of the new translation21. This translation is one of the most brilliant of the whole Chinese Canon; its high literary quality had a great deal to do with the lasting acclimatisation of the sūtra in China. Commentaries were written by the best disciples of Kumārajīva, Seng-chao himself, Chu Tao-sheng (d. 434), famous for his flamboyant theories on ‘suddenness’ and on bodhi that can be accessible to those damned by predestination (icchāntika), Hui-jui (alias Sengjui, 352-436), of whom only a preface remains22, Tao-jung,23 and doubtless yet others, without counting all those who devoted themselves to the oral explanation of the text.24 From this first

20 Lives of Seng-chao in the Kao-seng chuan, T 2050, vi, p.365a, and in a T’ang commentary rediscovered in Tun-huang, T 2778, p.510a-b.
23 Kao-seng chuan, T 2050, vi, p.363c.
24 In his ‘Introduction to the history of studies on the Vimalakīrti Sūtra in China’, Tōhō gakuhō (Journal of Oriental Studies) XII, iv, Kyoto, March 1942,

harvest of Chinese exegesis, nurtured by oral teachings from Kumārajīva, but the Sinological interest of which far exceeds the Indological value, there exists only a combined commentary in the name of Seng-chao, and which includes glosses attributed by name to Kumārajīva, Seng-chao, Chu Tao-sheng, Hui-jui and Tao-jung25; this is an important document on the evolution of thought, not only Buddhist, in China at that time.

From then on we would see commentaries proliferating throughout China, in the south as well as the north: at first rather in the south where, alongside numerous monks, many laymen set their hand to the work of exegesis; among them we find imperial princes such as Hsiao Tzŭ-liang (460-494), of the Southern Ch’i, and even emperors such as Kao-ti of the same dynasty (479-502) or Wu-ti of the Liang (502-549) whose eldest son, Hsiao T’ung (501-531) compiler of the Wen-hsian anthology, had taken as his secondary honorific name (hsiao-tzŭ) the first two syllables of Vimalakīrti’s name in Chinese, Wei-t’ung. Their commentaries are unfortunately lost, like most of those of that period26. It was

p.83, Kasuga Reichi lists some thirty disciples of Kumārajīva who were devoted to the study of the sūtra.

25 ‘The annotated Sūtra of Vimalakīrti’, T 1775. This work would have been compiled at a comparatively late date, perhaps under the T’ang in 760 (Tsukamoto in Jōron kenkyû, p.147). A certain number of glosses by Chu Tao-sheng have been translated by W. Liebenthal in Monumenta Japonica XII, Tokyo 1956, pp.74-100.
26 The first commentaries preserved whole, after that of Seng-chao and the others, are those of Hui-yuan (523-592), T 1776, and Chih-i (538-598), T 1777, both of the Sui. Anonymous fragments of the Northern and Western Wei (386-556) have been rediscovered at Tun-huang, in manuscripts dating from 500 (T 2786) and 539 (T 2769, with a note from the Northern Chou, 562); cf. Yabuki Yoshihito, Meishu youju, Tokyo 1933, p.22, or Ono Gemmyō. Bushō kaisetsu daïjiten XI, Tokyo 1935, pp.116b, 123b. For a formidable bibliography of Chinese exegesis, including lost works, see the introduction by Fukaura Masabumi to the Japanese translation of Kumārajīva’s version in ‘Budō boudhique’, Kokuyaku sansai, Kyōshū-bu, VI, Tokyo 1932, pp.304-7, and especially the work by Kasuga cited above, n.24. At the end of the Sui period (613), we can mention the commentary by Prince Shōtoku (T 2186), the first patron of Bud-
under these two dynasties, the Ch'i and the Liang (479-556) that the exegesis of the Vkn was at its most flourishing in the period of the Southern Dynasties, so much so that, according to gossip reported by the philosopher Chu Hsi (1130-1200), who was fiercely opposed to Buddhism and had the cheek to attribute to Chinese forgers anything that he dared not consider devoid of any value in Buddhist literature, this sūtra was supposedly a forgery concocted in the entourage of Prince Hsiao-T'zu-liang.  

In the north, under the Wei of the T'o-pa clan (Northern Wei, 386-534) who had succeeded the Ch'in of the Yao clan (Later Ch'in, 384-417), protectors of Kumārajiva, and other somewhat ephemeral small barbarian dynasties, the Vkn was to know a fortune of another kind than that in the south-east, but no less illustrious. Here, relations were closer with India and Central Asia; the leaders were not pure Chinese, their reactions to Buddhism were not the same as in Nankin or Chekiang. Hardly any of the commentaries written under the Northern Wei, which do not seem to have been very numerous, remain; from the beginning of the fifth century, the intellectual elements of the Buddhist community had for the most part surged back to the south. However, the iconographical documentation leaves no doubt about the diffusion of the Vkn in the Wei empire. In the rock sculptures of Yün-kang, as from the mid-fifth century, then more often in those of Lung-men, near Loyang where the dynasty transferred its capital in 494, we see the appearance of the couple, Vimalakīrti and Mañjuśrī, sometimes combined with portrayals of the Buddha Sākyamuni flanked by two bhikṣus or again two bhikṣus and two bodhisattvas, as if Vimalakīrti was a match in the predication of the Great Vehicle to the Buddha of the two (or three)

dhism in Japan, who quotes Seng-chao, Chu Tao-sheng, etc.; he was assisted by foreign monks.


Vehicles. Should we see in this illustrations of the teaching of the Single Vehicle (ekāyāna) as it is taught by the Lotus Sūtra (Saddharmapundarikā)? In fact, in these same sculptures, the questioners of the Vkn are still more often found to be associated with the propounders of the Lotus, the Buddhas Sākyamuni and Prabhūtaratna. In the Wei caves at Lung-men, Vimalakīrti and Mañjuśrī appear above niches in which are enthroned either Sākyamuni and his acolytes, or the two Buddhas of the Lotus. This is notably the case for the cave known as Pin-yang, which is purportedly due to the emperor Shih-tsong (Hsüan-wu-ti, 500-515); indeed, in 509, in one of the halls of the palace in Loyang, this emperor personally explained the Vimalakīrti Sūtra to his assembled clergy and courtesans. Also translated by Kumārajīva, the Lotus Sūtra thus shared with the Vimalakīrti the favour of the Chinese faithful, until the arrival of soteriological doctrines based on devotion to Maitreyā, then to Amitā. Scenes from both sūtras are equally found combined in the decoration of steles or icons of

29 This is suggested by Tsukamoto Zenyū in the lengthy study he devotes to 'Buddhism of the Northern Wei as it appears in the cave art of Yün-kang and Lung-men', forming a chapter of his book 'Studies on the history of Chinese Buddhism: the Northern Wei' (Shina bukkō-shi kenkyū. Hoku Gi ben), Kyoto 1942, p.543. – On Vimalakīrti and the Lotus Sūtra in the Wei iconography, see also LeRoy Davidson, The Lotus Sūtra, op. cit., pp.32-5, 50-3. In La Chine et son art, Paris 1951, p.106, R. Grousset writes that the monk T'an-yao, promoter of the cave sanctuaries of Yün-kang, [it.] 'based his doctrine on the Lotus of the Good Law and on the teachings of the Arhat[] Vimalakīrti', and refers in a note to one of my articles in which I say nothing of the sort, for the good reason that I have never seen anything on it (not even in the long chapter devoted to T'an-yao in the book by Tsukamoto, pp.1131-65). – Chavannes did not recognise Vimalakīrti in either Yün-kang or Lung-men. With regard to the Pin-yang cave, he writes that the two personages, one of whom holds 'a fly-whisk' and the other 'a branch' (probably the 'lan ping' mentioned in the 894 inscription), must have been 'two famous Buddhist scholars' (Mission archéologique I, p.556).

30 Wei shu, viii, Annals of Shih-tsong, 2nd Yung-p'ing year. Cf. Tsukamoto, pp.395 and 530; Kasuga, p.97a, n.3. – The Pin-yang cave was wrecked by plunderers, and the figure of Vimalakīrti is now to be found in the United States (Sickman and Soper, The Art and Architecture of China, Pelican History of Art, 1956, p.294).
the Northern or Eastern Wei. On the reverse of a bronze in the Umehara collection in Tokyo, dating from 482 and therefore more or less contemporary with the Yün-kang sculptures, we see Sākyamuni and Prabhūtaratna flanked externally by Vimalakirti and Manjuśrī. A stele from Ho-nan, a little later (mid-sixth century) and at present preserved in New York, consists of the Buddha preaching at the top and, in the lower register, Vimalakirti and Manjuśrī flanking the scene of Sāriputra and the goddess of the flowers. This association seems to have been quite general in the China of the Southern and Northern Dynasties. Under the Sung, about the middle of the fifth century, the monk Pi’u-ming had the penitential task of chanting the two sūtras. In the same period (459), the monk Seng-ch’ing, born of a Taoist family, conducted his self-cremation in front of an icon of Vimalakirti which he had made with his own hands, in the presence of the Prefect of Shu (Ch’eng-tu in Szü-ch’uan) and a large public; in fact, it is usually on the authority of the Lotus Sūtra that the practices of self-cremation are carried out.

We are now in a very different atmosphere from that of the educated philosophers of the Eastern Chin who had been the first

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31 LeRoy Davidson, pp.32-3 and pl.3.
32 A. Priest, Chinese Sculpture in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York 1944, pp.30-3 and pl.40-52. Cf. LeRoy Davidson, pp.36-7 and pl.15, which mentions several other similar steles preserved in the United States; Sickmna and Soper, pp.58-9 and pl.44.
33 According to Soper, Literary evidence, p.221, the Vimalakirti Sūtra was, after the Lotus, the most often cited sūtra in the Kao-seng chuan (T 2059, beginning of the sixth century): twenty-eight times (a half less than the Lotus). My own index of the Kao-seng chuan, compiled by a good Japanese archivist, records twenty-three mentions of the Vimalakirti as against fifteen of the Lotus. In the Hsü kao-seng chuan (T 2060, ca. 667), there are no more than twelve mentions of the Vimalakirti as against one hundred and forty-nine of the Lotus.
34 Kao-seng chuan, T 2059, xii, p.407b; cf. Soper, p.225.

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Demiéville – Vimalakirti in China

to extol Vimalakirti in China. The worship of the holy layman circulated among the people. We note cases of bibliolatry. At the beginning of the seventh century (618), in Chi-chou in Hopei, a devotee was stricken with a serious illness because he had torn a manuscript of the sūtra, and was only cured after having offered forty new scrolls. The recitation of the sūtra procures supernormal powers: exorcism of demons, curing of the sick, rescues at sea.

Further evidence of the popularisation of the Vkn is supplied on the literary level by manuscripts of the T’ang or of the Five Dynasties (ninth-tenth centuries) rediscovered in Tun-huang. The ‘romancing’ of the sūtra had, moreover, started in the period of the Southern and Northern Dynasties. Chi-tsang of the Sui (549-623) refers in his commentaries to Chinese apocrypha in which Vimalakirti is endowed, as is appropriate for the hero of a romance, with a properly constituted family, grandfather, parents, wife and children, whereas, in the sūtra itself (trans, Ch.VII, 6, p.180), he expressly refuses to answer questions posed to him concerning his family: his mother, he says, is praṇāja, his father uḍāya, etc. However, in the Tun-huang documents, it is quite another matter. Kumārajiya’s version gives way here to one of those developments in (recited) prose and (chanted) verse which are called ‘texts of scenes’ (pien-wen) and which, aimed at illiterate or barely literate listeners, are the origin of literary narrative in vulgar Chinese and of the Chinese novel. It was a work apparently without precedent in Chinese narrative literature, as much through its wide and epic tone, Indian-style, as its extra-

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37 Fukuura, Kokuyaku issaika, Kyōshū-bu, VI, p.307. The institution of the Japanese ritual called the ‘Vimalakirti assembly’ (Yuima-e) dates from the curing at Nara, in 656, of the minster Fujiwara no Kamaro thanks to the recitation of the chapter on sickness, recommended to the empress Saimi by a Korean nun; cf. M.W. de Vissier, Ancient Buddhist in Japan, Leiden 1935, pp.10, 596 ff.
38 Cf. Te Chen, Yin-k’iue (above, n.2.), p.429. These apocrypha no doubt led to the development of the details of (supposed?) Indian texts such as the ‘epigonical’ sūtras, T 477-480, on which see Vkn trans, pp.cvi-cvii.
ordinary size: some thirty scrolls or volumina (chüan), of which numerous fragments exist, without counting prologues in verse (ya-tso wen) which serve to introduce the sessions, with chanted invocations which the listeners repeated in chorus. The proportions of the development were up to forty times larger than the canonical text.

The ‘texts of scenes’ were sometimes illustrated by ‘depictions of scenes’ (pien-hsiang), painted on scrolls which the reciters or their assistants exposed to the public eye along with the recitation, as is still done in Japan, Tibet, Italy and other countries where the art of oral story-telling survives. They were also painted on the walls of temples; the rock sanctuaries of Tun-huang include fifteen pien-hsiang from the Vkn illustrating all kinds of scenes taken from some ten chapters; sometimes the holy man is lying on his sick-bed, at others he is debating with Manjusri, etc.40 The latter is usually holding a ju-i, a kind of sceptre which, at the outset, seems to have served as a back-scratcher and which was also used in China as a ‘play-thing’ well before it became an attribute of Buddhist monks.41 As for Vimalakirti’s attribute in Chinese iconography, rather than a fan as Western archaeologists often define it, it was a fly-whisk, an instrument of purification such as was wielded by the adherents of ‘pure conversation’; it is designated in Chinese by terms which have nothing to do with Buddhism either, ‘deer’s tail’ (chu-wei), ‘conversation stick’ (t’an-ping), etc.42 One

of the most exploited scenes is that of the goddess of the flowers.43 We also see the magic bowl, surrounded by five personages who must represent the five hundred householders of Vaśāli, Ratnakūṭa and the others.44 I know no finer Vimalakirti than that of cave 149, which dates from the T’ang.45 It gives an idea of what must have been masterworks of the great painters of the period, Wu Tao-tzū, Sun Shang-tzū, Liu Hsing-ch’en, Yang T’ing-kuang and yet others who had depicted Vimalakirti on the walls of monasteries in both capitals, Ch’ang-an and Loyang.46 Later on, too, the theme of Vimalakirti was always to be treated with partiality by Chinese painters.47

It was the same with the poets. It is well known that Wang Wei (701-761) took as his personal honorific the two syllables Mochieh which, preceded by Wei, his official personal name, form the Chinese transcription of the name of Vimalakirti. One can only suppose that he was guided in this play on words by his mother, a

40 For example Gray, pl.48.
41 Numbering by P. Pelliot; 103 according to the Tun-huang Institute. Cf. Pelliot, Les grottes de Touen-houang VI, pl.324 (Matsumoto, pl.46a and pp. 145, 150). There is a superb photograph of details in Tun-huang pi-hua, pl.141. It is mistakenly, it seems, that Gray (pp.25-6) attributes to this cave No.322 of the Tun-huang Institute.
42 As well as other large towns such as Ch’eng-tu. Cf. Matsumoto, pp.163-4; Kasuga, p.108a-b; Acker, pp.257, 272, 289, 361, etc. Mention can be made here of the scene from the Vimalakirti Sūtra modelled in clay, about the beginning of the eighth century (711), at the base of the five-storied stūpa of the Hōryūji, near Nara, and which is doubtless an imitation of the pien-hsiang of the T’ang, with details recalling the Tun-huang paintings (see, for example, Matsumoto, pp.163-4 and fig.33).
43 Li Lung-mien under the Sung, Indra (Yin’-t’o-lo) under the Sung, Indra (Yin’-t’o-lo) under the Yüan, Lo Ping under the Ch’ing, etc. Cf. Kasuga, p.111; Visser, pp.394-5; Matsumoto, p.163, notes according to the Hsiian-hoa hua-p’u ten paintings of Vimalakirti that existed in the collection of the emperor Hui-tsung of the Sung in the Hsuan-ho period (1119-1126). The Li Lung-mien in the National Museum of Tokyo is far from having the vehement energy of the Tun-huang portrait (cf., e.g., A. Guiganno, La pittura cinese, Rome 1959, pl.147).
fervent adherent of the Dhyāna-master Pu-chi (652-739), of the northern branch of the Dhyāna school. Wang Wei composed in his sumptuous prose the inscription on a stele of Hui-neng (638-710), patriarch of the southern branch, and allusions to Vimalakīrti abound in it. In two poems which he addressed to one of his sick friends, an upāsaka named Hu (Hu chu-shih), when sending him a gift of rice, he alludes to theories in the Vīnaṇḍa on sickness and on the magic rice of the Sugandhakūta. Another great T’ang poet, Po Chü-i (772-846), was called on in 826 to represent Confucianism in an inter-religious debate held before the emperor Ching-tsung on the occasion of his birthday: he chose as subject the passage of the sūtra (Ch. V, 10) on Mount Sumeru entering a mustard seed and in a poem written in his old age, when he was sick, he compares himself to Vimalakīrti. We could go on forever citing all the Chinese poets who celebrated Vimalakīrti. As an example, I will attempt to translate a northern Sung piece, dedicated by Su Shih (Su Tung-p’o, 1036-1101) to a statue

48 Liou Kin-ling, Wang Wei le poète, Paris 1941, p.15. The Vimalakīrti Sūtra is often quoted by T’ang Dhyāna-masters, who were in many ways closely linked to the Taoist tradition of the Buddhism of the Six Dynasties. The most frequently invoked passages are those where it is a question of Vimalakīrti’s silence, the obtaining of deliverance though misdeeds and, in the southern branch, (Hui-neng, Shen-hui, Huang-po, Lin-chi, etc.) the condemnation of Sāriputra’s quietism. Commentaries on the sūtra by Dhyāna adherents were few in number and are, moreover, nearly all lost (Kasuga, pp.105b-107b); the school hardly ever practised exegesis.


50 Wang Yu-ch’eng chi III, pp.8a-9b (Szu-pu ts’ung-k’an ed.) According to a note which two pieces date back to the original edition of poems by Wang Wei, these two pieces imitate the manner of Wang the brahmaçārin (Wang Fan-chi), a Buddhist poet of the vulgate to whom are attributed a large number of texts rediscovered in Tun-huang and which seem to date from the eighth to the ninth centuries (cf. Annuaire du Collège de France, 57e année (1957), pp.354-7; 58e année (1958), p.386-90; 59e année (1959), pp.437-9).


Demiéville – Vimalakīrti in China

modelled by a T’ang artist, Yang Hui-chih, and which he had an occasion to admire in the monastery of Fung-hsiang, not far from Ch’ang-an in Shensi, where he lived from 1061 to 1064:

THE IMAGE OF VIMALAKĪRTI

MODELLED BY YANG HUI-CHIH OF THE T’ANG

AT THE MONASTERY OF THE CELESTIAL PILLAR

Formerly Tzü-yü, sick, was about to die,
When Tzü-ssü went to question him,
Tzü-yü slackly dragged himself towards a well, where he settled,
What has Creation done with me? [sighing]

Now, when I see this Vimalakīrti, ancient model,
With his prominent sickly bones like dessicated tortoises,
I know that the perfect man goes beyond births and deaths.
Since his body is but a transformation like a floating cloud.

Worldly people, assuredly, are plump and fine-looking;
Their body is not sick, but their spirit is meagre.
In this old man, the mind is intact, the basis is sure;
While talking and laughing, he would make a thousand
[bears recoil]

When he was alive he was questioned on the Law;
Lowering their heads, they were quiet: it is in spirit that
His image today stays ever silent;
[each knew]

52 Tung-p’o hsien-sheng shih III, pp.10b-11a (Szu-pu ts’ung-k’an ed.). Yang Hui-chih was an eight-century painter who, in despair at never equaling his friend and rival Wu-Tao-tzu, ended by burning his brushes and becoming a modeller (cf. Acker, texts, p.280, n.7). Wu Tao-tzu himself also purportedly modelled statues of Vimalakīrti and Manjuśrī (Pelliot, Tonk Pao XXII, 1923, pp.287-8).

53 Chuang-tzu, Ch.VI, ed Wieger, p.256. Tzu-yü was a ‘fool’ with a deformed body and the soul of a saint.

54 Chih-jen wai sheng-siü, a mixture of Taoist and Bud-dhist expressions.

55 Cf. Vimalakīrti Sūtra, T 475, 1, p.539b29 (trans., Ch. II, 9, p.34).

56 That is, a thousand heroes. An allusion to a poem by Tso Ssu of the Chin (d. 306) on historical themes, in which there is a question of the sage Lu Chung-lin who, during the siege of Han-tan, about 257 BCE, made the Chi’in army recoil through his discourses (Wen-hsian, xxi; cf. Shih-chi, lxxii).
He remains as he was before his death.

The old countrymen, the village women, spare him not a look;
Sometimes a field rat comes to bite his moustache.
The sight of him makes distraught men flee.
So who will question the wordless master for me?

The Sung poet's attitude is remarkably close to that of the first Chinese literati who, six or seven centuries earlier, had known and adopted Vimalakirti. The latter remains for Su Shih a type of sage in Taoist style, incomprehensible to the common worldling: the 'field rats' have nothing to do with this aristocrat of holiness. In fact, his popularization was never to go very far. In contrast to other pien-wen which are at the origin of the vulgar literature of modern times, the large development rediscovered in Tun-huang was to have hardly any posterity in the Chinese novel or theatre.

We have to wait until our own times for Mei Lan-fang, the greatest actor in contemporary China (1893-1961), to stage the episode of the goddess of the flowers which, however, like the rest of the sūtra, lends itself so well to dramatical elaboration that one might wonder if there did not exist in India or Serindia theatrical versions of the 'philosophical drama' of Vimalakirti.

57 An allusion to Vimalakirti's silence, as it was interpreted by the Dhyāna school: supreme knowledge is of the spirit, not of the letter; each person must realise this for him/herself.
58 An allusion to Hsieh Lung-yüan's beard ('moustache' because of the rhyme).
59 Cf. Chuang-ťzu, Ch.VII, ed. Wieger, p.266, where it is a matter of a fortuneteller who claimed to predict people's death but who, confused by the master of Lieh-tzu, ended up by 'fleeing distraught'.
60 A play on words on the term chieh, 'to question, search', which is also the last syllable of Vimalakirti's name in Chinese.
61 This is what is remarked by Tch'en Yin-k'uei in his article cited above (n.2).
62 T'ien-nü san hua, of which there exists a Pathé-China recording. According to Tcheng Mien, Répertoire du théâtre chinois moderne, Paris 1929, p.148, this play was created in Peking in 1921. However, I saw Mei Lan-fang act in it in 1920, and a summary can be found (pp.79-80) as well as a fragment of it (pp.137-8) in the small work on Mei Lan-fang published in 1918 by the Chung-hua shu-chü in Shanghai, in which it is expressly confirmed that this play was an original creation by the distinguished actor.

ONCE UPON A PRESENT TIME:
AN AVADĀNĪST FROM GANDHĀRA†
TIM LENZ

When Captain James Cook set sail from Plymouth on 12 July 1776, he was charged with the secret mission of circumnavigating the globe at the highest possible latitude in the southern hemisphere to search for Terra Australis Incognita, establish British dominion over newly discovered islands or continents, look for new sources of plants, animals, and minerals suitable to quench the British thirst for lucrative items of trade, and make friends with the indigenous inhabitants of the new world. Cook left port armed with astronomers, naturalists, artists, a landscape painter, as well as four chronometers, and ultimately he left the world a detailed account of the land, the people, the plants, and the animals encountered during the course of his journey. Unlike Cook, when the earliest followers of the Buddha set out from the eastern Indian heartland of Buddhism armed with the religious paraphernalia - texts, Buddhist legends, and relics - that would serve to

† The title of this communication alludes to Jan Nattier's Once Upon a Future Time: Studies in a Buddhist Prophecy of Decline, a work that inspired me to discover certain attributes of the Gandhāran avadānists that I might otherwise have missed. Thanks go to Professor Nattier for her comments on an early draft. Thanks also go to Dorothy Lenz and Darcy Dye for their help in ensuring that my observations were rendered into a form that would be intelligible to more readers than a dozen specialists in Gandhāran philology.

1 W. Goertzmann, New Lands, New Men: America and the Second Great Age of Discovery, New York 1987, p.44.
propagate the Buddha’s teachings in distant lands, they apparently traveled without an entourage. The early Indian Buddhist monks left no maps, no journals, and no pictures portraying what they did or what they encountered on their travels. There is, therefore, practically nothing with which a scholar of early Buddhism can draw upon to bring to life the lives of the countless monks and nuns who helped to make Buddhism one of the world’s great religious traditions. But with clues gleaned from sources such as early manuscripts, archaeological excavations, and artistic remains, a researcher sometimes can painstakingly reconstruct some aspect of the life of a member of the early Buddhist community.

The possibilities of making such a reconstruction have been increased in recent years with the discovery of hitherto unknown collections of early Buddhist manuscript fragments. Such collections afford researchers the opportunity to search for clues with which to reconstruct early Buddhist history by means of analytic methods that would otherwise yield little new information. With early Buddhist manuscripts in hand, we can analyze the physical condition of the documents and ponder the significance of their origin in order to discover clues with which to uncover some of Buddhism’s lost past. Specifically, we can study the handwriting of their scribes, catalogue the kinds of writing errors made in their texts (e.g., crossed out letters), discover the genres represented among their texts, assess how their texts are arranged, consider the relevance of their geographic association, and of course, examine the content of their texts. From such analyses, as will become clear, we can deduce information that is unattainable from the usual sources consulted by scholars of early Buddhist history and culture, such as published editions of Buddhist texts, reports of archaeological excavations, and analyses of artistic remains.

The kind of information that can be gleaned from manuscript fragments can be demonstrated by an examination of some of the texts from a collection of Kharoṣṭhī manuscripts recently acquired by the British Library. These documents were acquired by the British Library’s Oriental and India Office Collections in September 1994. The collection consists of twenty-nine fragments of birch bark scrolls written on both the recto and verso in the Kharoṣṭhī script and the Gāndhārī language. The scrolls contain texts from a variety of Buddhist genres, including didactic poetry, scholastic commentary, doctrinal analysis (abhidharma), and previous-birth stories (jātaka/avādāna). They are written in a language that is generally similar to that of the famous ‘Gāndhārī Dharmapada’, critically edited by John Brough, which was until recently the only Gāndhārī manuscript available for scholarly study. The recent discovery of these scrolls confirms the existence of a Gāndhārī Buddhist canon, which was postulated more than a century ago though only proved with the recent manuscript find. The new manuscript fragments can probably be dated to the first half of the first century CE, making them the earliest Buddhist

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2 Jātakas are commonly distinguished from avādānas as follows: Jātakas concern the past lives of the Buddha whereas avādānas may be about past lives of the Buddha or other figures, including kings, ministers, brahmans, monks, disciples, and commoners. Such a distinction generally holds true in well-known texts such as the Pali Jāatakathāvupāna and the Sanskrit Divyāvadāna, but the complexities of the historical development of this type of literature probably are belied by this rather simple distinction. See T. Lenz, A New Version of the Gāndhārī Dharmapada and a Collection of Previous-Birth Stories: British Library Kharoṣṭhī Fragments 16 + 25, Seattle 2003, pp.92 and 108 for an edition of Fragments 16 + 25 and for comments relating to this matter.


manuscripts discovered to date. The British Library collection is particularly important for our purposes, for it contains a sizable collection of texts written by a single author. When analyzed, these texts provide unique clues with which we can deduce something of the otherwise undocumented life of their author.

From the circumstances of the British Library collection’s discovery, we can determine the location of the home of the monk with whom we are concerned. According to hearsay reports, the British Library manuscripts were found in Hadda, a small village near present day Jalalabad in eastern Afghanistan. This village is located in the heart of Gandhara, the region between the Sulaiman Mountains in Afghanistan and the Indus River in Pakistan (see fig. 1), where the Kharosthi script and Gandhari language flourished from approximately the third century BCE through the third century CE. Although the origin of the manuscripts is unknown with any degree of certainty, the large number of Gandhari manuscripts that have been found at Hadda and other sites in the Jalalabad Plain, lends some credibility to the hearsay reports. Thus, we can tentatively assume that our author was a Gandhara Buddhist monk who lived in Hadda.

This Gandhara monk from Hadda is known only through portions of six texts that are preserved on British Library Kharosthi Fragments 1, 2, 3, 4, 12 + 14 and 16 + 25. To date, only the text on Fragments 16 + 25, lines 174-84 of Frag. 1, lines 1-7 (recto) of Fragment 2, lines 1-11 (verso) of Frag. 3, and the first five lines of the text on Frag. 12 + 14 have been critically edited. In addition, preliminary transcriptions of all of the texts written by this monk, as well as translations and lexicons for the texts on Fragments 2, 3, and 12 + 14 have been produced.

Like many other Buddhist manuscript texts, the aforementioned ones bear no name or biography of their authors. But unlike other manuscript texts, which are largely scribal copies of well-established texts, our Gandhari texts are apparently written in their author’s own hand. In other words, our Gandhari works are Buddhist texts that were learned and memorized by our scribe and subsequently set down by him in written form. All the texts in question, save one, are written in a single hand consisting of large, flowing letters, which are the source of the very non-monastic nickname we have conferred upon their author, “Big Hand.” The sole text of Big Hand that was not written completely in his own hand (Frag. 4) is one that was begun by a monk with a distinctive thin, slanting, vertically elongated hand and apparently completed by Big Hand.

That Big Hand is both author (though not necessarily the

5 See Salomon, Ancient Buddhist Scrolls for a comprehensive introduction to the British Library Kharosthi fragments.
6 The map in figure 1 is reprinted from ibid., p.2 with permission from the University of Washington Press.
Salomon, Ancient Buddhist Scrolls, p.68.
9 See ibid., § 2.3 for general descriptions of these fragments.

10 Lenz, op. cit., Part II.
11 Ibid., appendix 3; see also Salomon, Ancient Buddhist Scrolls, pp.145-9 for comments on another portion of this text.
12 Salomon, ibid., pp.141-5.
13 Lenz, op. cit., appendix 2.
15 All translations and transcriptions used in preparation of this article are my own.
16 See Lenz, op. cit., Ch. 8 for an examination of Big Hand’s handwriting.
17 Salomon, Ancient Buddhist Scrolls, pp. 45 and 54).

original composer) and scribe of these texts is evident from the copious number of textual corrections that stand in his texts, errors that probably would have been expunged by a professional copyist who was merely reproducing a previously written text. For example, in his text on British Library Fragments 12 + 14\(^\text{15}\), a portion of a line of writing (l. 82) has been crossed out (see fig. 2). In another line (l. 98), Big Hand apparently had difficulty writing the verb hokṣadi (IALd, ‘will be’, \(\sqrt{bh}h\), 3\(^{rd}\) pers. sing. fut.), for he apparently wrote hokṣavidi (IALd) and then, for some unknown reason, crossed out \(v\)i and \(d\)i, the final two letters of the word (see fig. 3). Furthermore, in the text on Fragments 16 + 25, Big Hand wrote a large punctuation mark, apparently consisting of six circles arranged in two columns of three circles each, to indicate the end of a section of text. Such punctuation marks are not unusual in Big Hand’s writings, but this one is written over the top of a previously written letter (see fig. 4)\(^\text{16}\). The syllable \(g\)a (A) or perhaps \(g\)e (Y) is obscured but visible beneath the well-preserved left column of circles\(^\text{16}\).

Besides indicating that he is an author as well as a scribe, the corrections in Big Hand’s texts suggest that he does not have complete mastery over the material that he is writing. The crossed out letters (Frgs. 12 + 14) and punctuation marks written over the top of other letters (Frgs. 16 + 25) are reminiscent of student life before the advent of the word processor, when early drafts of handwritten papers were filled with crossed out words, sentences, and sections. In this light, we might regard Big Hand as a student, perhaps a very young monk struggling to become fluent with one genre of Buddhist literature. Such a characterisation is hypothetical, but there is some internal evidence suggesting that Big Hand was a student.

A comparison of Fragments 12 + 14 with Fragments 16 + 25 shows fairly clearly that much like an ‘ideal student’ today, Big Hand has the ability to learn from his mistakes. In addition to the obvious difficulties of writing suggested by the crossed out letters, his text on Fragments 12 + 14 shows stylistic inconsistencies that are absent in the one on Fragments 16 + 25. The texts on both of these scroll fragments are avadāna-type texts, consisting of a numbered series of brief story summaries, or skeleton texts, that presumably were known to their author in much more fully developed forms. Typically the summaries include a one- or two-sentence introduction, a description of a few important scenes, a concluding abbreviation formula telling the reader that he should be able to expand the story for himself with reference to the supplied summary\(^\text{17}\), and a story number. For example, one of Big Hand’s stories (Frgs. 16 + 25, l. 18-23) concerns a previous life of the Buddha as a shipwrecked merchant who sacrifices his life to save his shipmates from drowning:

[18] A previous birth of the Buddha. Thus it was heard. [19] The Buddha was a merchant, a merchant of the great ocean. Supplies were [20] collected by him. He set out on the great ocean. The ship was destroyed. [21] The merchant met his death on the surface (\(^*\) of the ocean). It was a favour... The merchant himself [22] was set down here on the shore. He killed himself. Thus the previous birth (\(^*\)pūrva)ya). Expansion should be according to the model. [23] It should be told. (\(^*\)Story number) 1\(^\text{22}\).

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\(^\text{15}\) Jason Neelis (University of Florida) is currently preparing a critical edition of Fragments 12 + 14.

\(^\text{16}\) Figure 4 is reprinted from Lenz, op. cit., p.124, with permission from the University of Washington Press.

\(^\text{17}\) Ibid., p. 102; for further discussion, see § 7.8.

\(^\text{18}\) For further discussion, see ibid., § 7.2.

\(^\text{22}\) 18. . . . bosissanaprowayege ev[a]
For purposes of this discussion, the above story’s abbreviation formula and its story number are of particular interest. The sentence ‘Expansion should be according to the model’ (vistare yāyupamano siyadi) apparently became a standard abbreviation formula in this genre. It occurs in most of the avadāna-type texts in the British Library Kharoṣṭhī collection, probably occurring four times in Fragments 16 + 25 alone. The stories included in the avadāna-type texts are also numbered with a story number that is almost always placed at the end of a story following one or more circular punctuation marks (see fig. 5) 23.

In Big Hand’s text on fragments 12 + 14, however, the aforementioned abbreviation formula and numbering pattern show unusual variations. For example, at the end of story number 7 (l. 107), Big Hand concludes with a truncated form of the standard formula ‘Expansion should be according to the model’ (vistare yāyupamano siyadi): ‘Expansion according to the model’ (vistare yāyupama). Although the words making up the shortened formula are familiar components of the longer one, the second term lacks its final syllable: yāyupama rather than yāyupamano

   vamiagram [a]* // (*vadi maha- /// [samud]dr[avaj]nige
t(*a)no pañyo
20. samudando mhasamudro adirno [ya]- /// (*napatra) /// blhnum vaniaga tala // //
21. layam=varmage [p](*ra)cagarar(*o) = hovad[i] /// + + /// [sag]rya
22. tirani = lēdvico = apana hado = evo /// (*prova- /// [s]g)go visitare ya =
23. yadi vatava O 1 (ibid., p.150; see also § 11.2.2 for notes and interpretation and pp. 212-6 for Sanskrit and Chinese parallels).

23 The reproduction here is very difficult to read. The reading is clearer on the original colour digital image supplied by the British Library.
24 Two cases are partially reconstructed; see ibid., § 11.1.
25 Figure 5 is reprinted from ibid., p.103, with permission from the University of Washington Press.

(see fig. 6) 25. In other words, it is spelled incorrectly and rather than writing ‘according to the model’, Big Hand wrote something like ‘according to the mod’. This misspelling is rather surprising for such a common word, and for one that is apparently rendered correctly everywhere else in Big Hand’s texts (though other examples may be found after all his texts are critically edited).

Another unusual story ending occurs in story number 6. Here, the story includes the final circular punctuation mark and story number, but lacks the usual concluding abbreviation formula. This is striking. All the other avadānas written by Big Hand for which the end of the story is clearly preserved do have such a final abbreviation formula. However, in a few cases where the text is only partially preserved (particularly in Frag. 4) it is not always obvious whether or not such a formula was included. 26 In any case, the lack of an abbreviation formula at the end of an avadāna is outside of the normal pattern of Big Hand’s work.

In contrast to the text on Fragments 12 + 14, the one on Fragments 16 + 25 is generally free of the kinds of unusual features discussed above. There are no crossed out passages, the story numbering patterns are regular (only numerals are used), and the final abbreviation formula is more often than not the standard one: ‘The expansion should be according to the model’. 
The consistency of the text on Fragments 16 + 25 seems to indicate that Big Hand has a greater command of writing avadāna-type stories than he had when he wrote the text on Fragments 12 + 14. In other words, he seems to have learned from past mistakes and has, therefore, written a cleaner text.

Since it appears that Big Hand improves his writing with practice, we can hypothesize that he is a student of his craft rather than a master. Given the kind of errors and inconsistencies that occur in some of his texts (crossed out letters and passages, unusual numbering patterns and abbreviation formulas), it is tempting to describe him as a young novice, perhaps the equivalent of a modern-day high school student. But such a characterization would be premature without access to biographical accounts or diary entries, which Big Hand unfortunately did not see fit to produce.

In any case, another feature of Big Hand's work that appears to mark him as a student is that in nearly all of his texts there are one or more interlinear notations stating that the text has been 'written' (*likhidago). Seven such notations are written on five different scrolls (for one example, see fig. 7), apparently added after Big Hand had completed his texts:

1. It is written (*l)kh(*i)dago, Frag. 1, l. 130a)
2. Now, all is written, (*likhidago aca safro), Frag. 1, l. 172a)
3. Now, all these avadānas are written (sarva ime avacana [aca] (*likhidaga), Frag. 2, r, between ll. 8 and 9; see fig. 8; see also Salomon 1999: pl. 15)
4. All is written (likhidaga sarve, Frag. 3, above l. 1 (verso); see Lenz 2003: Fig. 18)
5. Written (*likhidago, Frags. 12 + 14, between ll. 75 and 76; Allon 2001: pls. 4 & 7)
6. All is written (likhidago sarvo, (Frgs. 12 + 14, l. 77;

7. Now the avadānas are written (*likhidago aca avadāne, Frags. 16 + 25, l. 18)

These notations are subject to various interpretations, but the fact that they are found exclusively in avadāna-type texts and that two of the notations, numbers 3 (see fig. 8) and 7, specifically refer to avadāna strongly suggest that all the notations refer to the avadāna texts rather than generally to their respective manuscripts. If this is the case and if Big Hand was a student rather than a master, these notations might best be interpreted as proofing marks of a teacher or inspector, indicating that the stories were satisfactorily written by one of his students. Accordingly, Big Hand's text can be viewed as a student's writing assignments and the inspector's notation as something akin to the grading mark that modern-day professors place at the top of completed student papers.

If we accept the ideas that Big Hand was a student and that his texts are completed writing assignments, we can determine the focus of his studies by assessing the range of literary genres represented in his texts. Since Big Hand's extant works are exclusively avadāna-type texts, we can surmise that he probably was studying to become a specialist in this type of literature. Such avadāna specialists are mentioned elsewhere in Buddhist literature. In two verses in the Kalpadrumāvadānamāla, an anthology of avadāna-type stories, they are called 'avadānists', avadānika or avadānārthakovida in Sanskrit:

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27 Salomon (Ancient Buddhist Scrolls, p.76) and Allon (op. cit., p.303) transcribe likhidago safro, but sarvo is clearly visible on Allon's plates 4 and 7.

28 This list was compiled by Salomon (loc. cit.). No. 7 corrected from likhitage.

29 Lenz, op. cit., §§ 7.8 and 7.10; for an alternative analysis, see Salomon, Ancient Buddhist Scrolls, § 4.2.
From dharmic actions, being obtain bliss.
From evil action, they are allotted suffering.
From mixed action, they come to enjoy mixed fruits.
Thus speak the avadānists.30

By the measure of qualities and dharma,
There are no standards of caste at all.
Thus proclaim the Buddhist avadāna-experts31.

If our interpretation of Big Hand’s work is correct, his texts would represent a unique collection of avadāna-type stories written by a student who is studying to become an avadāna specialist, that is to say, an avadānist like the ones mentioned in the Kalpadrumavadānamālā.

Even though Big Hand’s avadāna texts are unique and exciting finds for a modern-day Buddhist studies scholar, the texts that we have probably were little prized by members of the Buddhist community other than by the avadānists themselves. Although there is no direct evidence in this regard, physical evidence suggests that our avadāna-type texts were considered as secondary to other types of Buddhist literature, which is not too surprising for works that may have been student writing assignments. All of the

31 dharmataḥ sukham bhūtāḥ pānapā duḥkhahāyatāḥ; niṣṭhatāḥ niścandhikāta ity uktam avadānikāṭaḥ (Vaidya, Avadhānā-satika, Darbhanga, 1959: Kalpadrumavadānamālāyam v. 108, p.272)
32 Loc. cit. I have changed Strong’s translation of gunadharmapravāna from ‘By measure of dharmic qualities’ to ‘By the measure of qualities and dharma.’
33 gunadharmapravāpaṇa jñetā naiva pramāṇata.
tathā ca procye bhuddhāra avadānārthakovidālaḥ (v. 162, p.275)

avadāna-type texts appear as the second text on scrolls made up of two texts, suggesting that they were not primary. The first text on a scroll that contains two texts is always a formal Buddhist text, such as a didactic or popular poetry text (e.g., Dharmapada)32 or a canonical sūtra text (e.g., Ekottarakāgama-type sūtra)33. Typically, the avadāna texts commence immediately after the first text on a scroll, fill up any remaining space on the recto, and then continue onto and presumably fill the verso, though this remains hypothetical because only the beginning portions of our texts have been preserved. One possible explanation for this state of affairs is that avadānists were ‘scavengers’ who had to search for and appropriate unused space on scrolls containing previously written texts34. In any case, because the avadāna collections are invariably the second text on scrolls containing two texts, they do not appear to have been held in as high esteem as the more formal texts that preceded them. This also might indicate something of the status of Big Hand and his fellow avadānists in the Buddhist community, but there is no indication in the manuscripts that such a hypothesis is warranted.

But even though our Gāndhārī specialist’s written work may not have been accorded high status in the Gāndhāran literary hierarchy and his personal status might not have been extremely high in the monastic hierarchy, we can, nevertheless, deduce that his work did fill an important niche in the monastic community. A still widely held view concerning avadāna-type literature is that it is not serious Buddhist literature and was not really studied by monks; it was a literature for laymen and for the winning of

34 Credit for the outlines of this interpretation (also mentioned in Allon, ibid. p.3 and Lenz, op. cit., p.108) goes to Richard Salomon (see Ancient Buddhist Scrolls, p.35).
converts. No doubt, this is true up to a point. Some of our Gândhári stories seem to be especially aimed at laymen. The most obvious example of this comes from Fragments 12 + 14:

Thus it was heard. The Kardama King’s father was named Kardamaga. He was born in the womb of a pig. An exceedingly stingy mind. All should be according to the model.

The message of this story seems obvious, even though the literary style is extremely terse: ‘Be stingy with regard to the Buddhist monastic community at your peril.’ Presumably, such a story would have been ‘expanded’ in front of a non-monastic audience in order to obtain monetary support or other political favor.

On the other hand, Big Hand wrote one story that apparently is intended for much loftier purposes. The story in question is about a magic contest between a white (indra mayagara) and black (śabari mayagara) magician, wherein the black magician brings about darkness and the white magician overcomes the darkness with light. Such a story could conceivably be used for any number of purposes, but after its conclusion in the written text, there is a notation telling exactly what the story is to be used for: ‘Understanding of impermanence. With regard to the characteristic of impermanence, all should be told.’

Though the significance of this notation is debatable, it seems to me that it implies a ‘serious Buddhist’ discussion that most likely would have taken place within the monastic community. Thus, from the aforementioned two stories we can deduce that Gândhári avadáni oratorical skills were probably put to use instructing both monks and laymen (in Big Hand’s case, training to instruct monks and laymen). Avadáni must have been instructors who always had a story at the ready to ram home an abstruse doctrinal point or to coax an Indo-Scythian king into donating a bag of drachmas to the Buddhist cause.

Thus, even in the absence of paintings, sketches, scientific treatises, and diaries, such as those produced by Captain Cook and his entourage, we are able to reconstruct something of the life of one Gandháran storyteller, the avadáni Big Hand. The reconstruction is admittedly incomplete, but we still have three other avadána-type texts in the British Library collection that wait critical editing and other manuscripts from places such as Merv, Afghanistan (e.g. the so-called Baimam-Ali manuscript) which should provide useful comparative material and further information with which to fill out our initial attempts at drawing a character sketch of one ancient Gandháran monk. With further examinations of Buddhist manuscripts—comparing manuscripts, cataloguing story themes, assessing the percentages of local and ‘traditional’ stories contained in our collection, identifying the historical data (e.g., royal names) preserved in our stories, and accounting for the physical circumstantial and condition of our manuscripts—solutions to many unsolved riddles surrounding the monastic life and career of Big Hand and his fellow avadáni may yet be discovered: To what end does Big Hand specialise in avadána-type literature? What kind of audience would be interested in listening to Big Hand’s stories? Which Buddhist doctrines are illustrated by Big Hand’s stories? What is Big Hand’s status within his monastic community? How was Big Hand chosen to be an avadáni, a specialist in avadána-type literature? Our manuscripts contain the key to answering such questions, though, of course, information gleaned from these sources must necessarily be supported by archaeology, art history, epigraphy, literary criticism, and numismatics. In any case, further creative explorations into
uncharted Buddhist-manuscript territory will undoubtedly bring to
light solutions to many intriguing mysteries associated with the
study of early Indian Buddhism that previously the mists of anti-
quity have caused to remain unsolved.

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Transcription Key

[ ] An unclear or partially preserved akṣara (graphic syllable)
whose reading is uncertain.

(∗) A lost or illegible akṣara that has been conjecturally restored
on the basis of context, parallel citation or other means.

* A missing portion (consonantal or diacritic vowel sign) of a
partially legible akṣara. For example, .e is represents an
akṣara in which the vowel diacritic e is visible, but the con-
sonant to which it was attached is lost or illegible; g. signi-
ifies the consonant g is legible, but incomplete so that it
cannot be determined whether or not a vowel diacritic was
attached to the syllable.

? An illegible, but visible or partially visible akṣara.

+ A missing akṣara that would have appeared on a lost or
obscured portion of the scroll. A series of these symbols
indicates the approximate number of lost syllables; one +
sign being equivalent to one akṣara.

/// Beginning or end of an incomplete line.

. A small dot or circle used in the original text to indicate
word, sentence, verse, half verse or other minor unit divi-
sions.

O A large circle, a design of circles or other large circular or
square design used in the original text to mark sectional
divisions.

= A word break within an akṣara: used in phrases such as
karyam=ido, in which the final consonant of the preceding
word and the initial vowel of the following are written as a
single syllable (mi).

Figures

Fig. 1. Map of Gandhāra proper (dark gray), Greater Gandhāra (light gray),
and surrounding territory.

Fig. 2. Crossed out text from Fragments 12 + 14, line 82:
dravado // su-ro-kurige-foivej spa ? ?.
Fig. 3. Frags. 12 + 14, line 97: hokṣovidi.

Fig. 4. Six-circled punctuation mark from Fragments 16 + 25.

Fig. 5. Story numbering in Fragments 16 + 25: number 1 (?) in l. 23 and number 2 (?) in l. 27.

Fig. 6. Truncated abbreviation formula: vistare yāuyayapam[ma] 7 O.

Fig. 7. Story numbering and abbreviation formula, avadāna 3, Fragments 12 + 14.

Fig. 8. Likhidaṇa notation written in small letters between lines of text (Frag. 2): sarva ime avadana [aca] (*likhīdaga).
EKOTTARĀGAMA (XXXIV)

Translated from the Chinese Version by
Thich Huyën-Vi and Bhikkhu Pāsādika
in collaboration with Sara Boin-Webb

Twelfth Fascicle
Part 21
(The Triple Gem)

9. 1 ‘... What is the enjoyment of forms? [Let us] suppose [someone] sees a girl either of noble descent (kṣatriyajātī), of brahminic descent or of a householder's (gṛhapati) family, fourteen, fifteen or sixteen years old, neither tall nor short, neither plump nor thin, neither [too] fair nor [too] dark, being respectable and of incomparable [beauty] seldom to be found in the world. Hardly has one seen her complexion when one experiences pleasure and joy (sukhasaumanasya) – this is called enjoyment of forms.

How do forms create sheer distress? If one sees that “girl” again after [a time], being eighty, ninety or even a hundred years of age, her complexion has totally changed; with the passage of time her vigour is gone, her teeth are broken and her hair is as white as snow; her body is blotchy, the skin is flaccid, the face all wrinkles, the spine deformed, the body [resembling] a creaking and groaning old cart; [with] shaking frame she stumbles along, leaning on a stick. What do you think, bhikṣus? [The girl endowed with] such a pleasing (ramya) appearance before and afterwards having totally changed, is that not sheer distress? – It is, Exalted One, replied the bhikṣus. – That is how forms create sheer distress, the Exalted One [went on] saying to the bhikṣus.

Moreover, if one sees that woman with her body exposed to great affliction, being confined to bed, incontinent and unable to rise and stand, what do you think, bhikṣus? [The girl] originally [being endowed with] such a pleasing appearance and now exposed to this

affliction, is that not sheer distress? – It is, Exalted One, replied the bhikṣus. – That is how forms create sheer distress, the Exalted One [went on] saying to the bhikṣus.

Furthermore, bhikṣus, if one sees that woman’s body, broken up, lifeless and on its way to the cemetery – how is that, bhikṣus? Formerly beholding that pleasing form and now – what a transformation! When in this [situation one’s] mind experiences pleasure and pain5 welling up, is that not sheer distress? – It is, Exalted One, replied the bhikṣus...

And again, if one sees that woman in one place being dead for one day, two, three, four, five, up to seven days, her body being bloated, putrid, nauseating and decomposing – how is that, bhikṣus? That originally pleasing form which has now undergone this transformation – is that not sheer distress? – It is, Exalted One, replied the bhikṣus...

In addition, if one sees how crows and magpies, kites and vultures come [near], squabbling with [each other] over that woman [as their] prey, or [if] one sees [her] either being devoured by foxes, dogs, wolves [or] tigers or being [infested and] fed on by mosquito larvae, rapidly worming [their way into the flesh, and by other] extremely small wriggling worms – how is that, bhikṣus? Originally she was endowed with such a pleasing appearance, and now she has undergone this transformation! When in this [situation one’s] mind experiences pleasure and pain welling up, is that not sheer distress? – It is, Exalted One, replied the bhikṣus...

Additionally, if one sees that woman’s body half eaten away by birds [of prey] and worms, [with its] bowels, stomach, bloody flesh [and various kinds of] impure substances [exposed]... That is how forms create sheer distress, the Exalted One [went on] saying to the bhikṣus.

1 See T2, 605b18 ff.; Hayashi, p. 201 ff.
2 नाल, lit.: ‘bounded by stains’; cf. M I, p. 88: tilakākatagattim (Burmese and Nālandā readings to be preferred: ‘gattāti’): ‘with her body affected with spots’.
3 Lit.: ‘bed-mattress’.

4 Lit.: ‘grave - intermediate space’. For the Chinese 塚間 is, of course, an area of land for burying the dead whilst the ancient Indian śmaśāna / susāna was ‘a place where the corpses were left to rot’ (after PTS).
5 i.e. the ambivalence of feelings due to one’s remembering that ‘girl of incomparable beauty’ and one’s being shocked to witness the said transformation.
Furthermore, if one sees that woman’s body without flesh and blood, the bare skeleton with its bones [still] joined together... That is how forms create sheer distress... if one sees that woman’s body without flesh and blood and only [with dry bones] held together by tendons [like] a bundle of firewood... That is how forms create sheer distress... if one sees [the remains] of that woman’s body, [viz.] disconnected bones scattered in different places — here a bone of the foot, there a humerus, here a... bone, there (T2, 606a) a hip bone, ribs, a shoulder blade, vertebrae of the neck and the skull... That is how forms create sheer distress... if one sees the shining white or dove-grey bones of that woman’s body... That is how forms create sheer distress... if one sees the dry bones of that woman, after countless years putrid, rotten and [finally] indistinguishable from earth... That is how forms create sheer distress.

Moreover, these forms are impermanent (aniyata), [subject to] change (parinimena) and ephemeral (acira); there is nothing that remains young. That is how forms create sheer distress.

How should one escape from forms? When someone succeeds in giving up and getting rid of all stupefaction (mūrtchā) with regard to forms, this is called giving up with regard to forms. As for forms, the so-called śramanās and brahmaṇ [ascetics] cling to them; they do not know of [their entailing] sheer distress, and they do not overcome [clinging] because they do not know [forms] in accordance with fact (yathābhūtām). They are not [real] śramanās and brahmaṇ [ascetics and] do not [really] know of the deportment pertaining to them, being unable themselves to realise [the ultimate goal] and perfect mastery over themselves. The śramanās and brahmaṇ [ascetics] who, as for forms, do not cling to them, profoundly knowing of [their entailing] sheer distress, certainly know [how] to overcome [all attachment]. That is what is called with śramanās and brahmaṇ [ascetics their] knowing of the deportment pertaining to them; by themselves they realise [the ultimate goal] and perfect mastery over themselves. This is what is meant by giving up [stupefaction] with regard to forms.

What is that which [has been] referred to as enjoyment of feelings? When there is a bhikṣu experiencing a pleasant feeling, he knows, “I am experiencing a pleasant feeling.” When experiencing a painful feeling, he knows, “I am experiencing a painful feeling.” When experiencing a neither painful nor pleasant feeling, he knows, “I am experiencing a neither painful nor pleasant feeling.” When experiencing a pleasant sensual (sāmiṣa) feeling, he knows, “I am experiencing a pleasant sensual feeling.” When experiencing a painful sensual feeling, he knows, “I am experiencing a painful sensual feeling.” When experiencing a neither painful nor pleasant sensual feeling, he knows, “I am experiencing a neither painful nor pleasant feeling.” When [experiencing] a painful spiritual (nirāmiṣa) feeling, he knows, “I am experiencing a painful spiritual feeling.” When [experiencing] a pleasant spiritual feeling, he knows, “I am experiencing a pleasant spiritual feeling.” When [experiencing] a neither painful nor pleasant spiritual feeling, he knows, “I am experiencing a neither painful nor pleasant spiritual feeling.”

Moreover, when the bhikṣu is experiencing a pleasant feeling, he does not experience a painful feeling; and he does not experience a neither painful nor pleasant feeling either; at that time he [knows], “I am just experiencing a pleasant feeling.” When he is experiencing a painful feeling, he does not experience a pleasant feeling; and he does not experience a neutral feeling either; at that time he knows, “I am just experiencing a painful feeling.” When the bhikṣu is experiencing a neither painful nor pleasant feeling, he does not experience...
either a pleasant or a painful feeling; [at that time he knows, “I am] just experiencing a neutral feeling.” Again, feelings are indeed impermanent and subject to change. So considering the impermanence of the feelings certainly being subject to change — that is how feelings create sheer distress.

How should one escape from feelings? When someone succeeds in giving up and getting rid of all stupefaction with regard to feelings, this is called giving up with regard to feelings. As for feelings, those śramaṇas and brahmin [ascetics] who cling to them, do not know of [their entailing] sheer distress, and they do not overcome [clinging] because they do not know [feelings] in accordance with fact. They are not [real] śramaṇas and brahmin [ascetics and] do not [really] know of the deportment pertaining to them, being unable personally12 to realise [the ultimate goal] and perfect mastery over themselves. The śramaṇas and brahmin [ascetics] who, as for feelings, do not cling to them, profoundly knowing of [their entailing] sheer distress, certainly know [how] to overcome [all attachment]. That is what is called with śramaṇas and brahmin [ascetics their] knowing of the deportment pertaining to them; personally they realise [the ultimate goal] and perfect mastery over themselves. This is what is meant by giving up [stupefaction] with regard to feelings.

In addition, bhikṣus, if a śramaṇa or brahmin [ascetic] does not discern (vi-√jñā) painful, pleasant or neutral feelings and does not know [them] in accordance with fact, but if they teach [other] persons, such action is improper. If a śramaṇa or brahmin [ascetic] succeeds in giving up [clinging to] feelings [by dint of] knowing [them] in accordance with fact and if he inspires [other] persons through his teachings to become detached from them [too], this is correct and proper. This is what is meant by giving up [stupefaction] with regard to feelings.

Now, bhikṣus, I have availed myself of [the occasion] to speak about sense-pleasures, one’s clinging to and enjoying them, about their creating sheer distress and about those who succeed in giving them up. I have spoken likewise about forms, one’s clinging to and enjoying them, about their creating sheer distress and about [those who] succeed in getting rid of [all stupefaction] with regard to forms; [I have] availed myself of [the occasion] to speak about feelings, one’s clinging to... them, ... succeed in giving up [clinging to] them. As to what behaves all Tathāgatas to do, viz. to teach (caus. - pra-√jñā), I have discharged [my duty] now. [You should] always practise mindfulness; meditate under trees, wisely reflect (manasi-√kr) in empty places, do not be negligent. That is what I would like to bring home [to you!] (sam-anu-√sās). 13 — Having listened to the Exalted One’s words, the bhikṣus were pleased and respectfully applied themselves to practice.

10. ‘Thus have I heard. At one time the Buddha was staying in Śrāvastī, at Jetū’s Grove, in Anāthapiṇḍāda’s Park. Then the Exalted One said to the bhikṣus: There are three [things] that are inevitably insecure. Which three? Inevitably insecure are a) one’s body, b) one’s life and c) one’s property. These, bhikṣus, are the three [things] that are inevitably insecure. Now, bhikṣus, in regard to the three [things] being inevitably insecure, one should search for [three kinds of] skilful means so as to realise three [kinds of] complete security. Which are the three? [There are the skilful means of someone] in quest of complete security a) [in regard to] one’s body, b) life and c) property that are inevitably insecure. And what is [the skilful means of someone] in quest of complete security a) [in regard to] one’s body that is inevitably insecure? It is reverence (gaurava),

11. Whilst in the Pāli discourse the feelings experienced in the jhānas are referred to, this part of EA, being a close parallel to the EA version of the Śnyānupasthānasūtra (see above n. 6, op. cit., p. 499) on the contemplation of feelings, is inconsistent. The two EA paras. on feeling surely represent a textual corruption; for ‘contemplation of feelings’ does by no means correspond to ‘enjoyment of feelings’.

12. Cf. n. 9 above; here instead of 己身, maybe for the sake of stylistic variation, 以身(āimabhāvena) is found. As for stylistic variation, against Pāli usage, cf. also BSR 21, 1, p. 60, ‘wretchedness’ (after Hiraoka, p. 66: 過= ataya... , ādina), and ibid., p. 61 ff., n. 11, ‘distress’ (患悩).

13. As for the concluding exhortation addressed to the bhikṣus which is not found at M I, p. 90, see the Pāli parallel at, for instance, A IV, p. 139: yam bhikkhave satthārā kariyāṁ... katam vo tome... etāni bhikkhave rukkhamālani etāni suṇāgārini... jhāyātha... mā pamadattha... ayaṁ vo amhākam anusasātiti | Cf. E.M. Hare, Gradual Sayings IV, PTS 1935, p. 94: ‘Monks, the work to be done by a teacher for his disciples, ... that has been done for you by me... at the foot of these trees, (make ye your habitations)! ... Be not slothful! ... This is our command to you.’

skillful means of someone] in quest of complete security [in regard to] one’s life...

What is [the skilful means of someone] in quest of complete security b) [in regard to] one’s life that is inevitably insecure? As for [this kind of skilful means, it is spoken of] when a son or daughter of good family, as long as life lasts, does not kill any living being, does not brandish (pra-đ kṣip) either a sword or a cudgel, being always guided by modesty (lajjā) and with a heart [full of] friendliness (maitri) and compassion (karunā) encompassing all living beings; when [he or she], as long as life lasts, does not steal [anything], always intent upon generosity (dāna) and with a heart unstained by stinginess; when [he or she], as long as life lasts, neither is licentious nor [induces] others to be so; ... as long as life lasts, does not tell lies, being always intent upon absolute honesty and without cheating anybody in the world; ... and does not drink alcohol, [thereby] avoiding getting befuddled and [thus being able] to maintain the observance of the Buddha’s moral training. This is [the

14 This first skilful means is reminiscent of v. 8 of the Mañjalasutta: gāravo ca nivāto ca... kālena dhāmmassavanam | As for the ‘act of hearing / learning’ being connected to ‘enquiring’, see Khuddaka-Pāţha together with its commentary Paramatthajotikā I (PTS 1915), p. 148: kalyāṇamite... te kālena upasāṃ- kamivā pāriṇucchati pāriṇaḥkārito | 15 盛形寿 rendering yāvajīvam, seems peculiar to EA. 16 Cf. D I, pp. 4, 63: pāṇātipātām pahāya pāṇātipātā paṭivirato... nihiladāno nihilasāttho lajjī dayāpanno sabba-pāṇa-bhūta-hitānukampī vihārattī | ... adinnādānam pahāya adinnādāna paṭivirato... dinnaṃdāyī dinna-piśankhī athenena suci-bhūtena attanā vihārattī. See M. Walshe, Thus Have I Heard, The Long Discourses of the Buddha, London 1987, pp. 68, 99f.: ‘Abandoning the taking of life, he dwells refraining from taking life, without stick or sword, scrupulous, compassionate, trembling for the welfare of all living beings, abandoning the taking of what is not given, ... awaiting what is given, without stealing.’ – It is noteworthy that in this place, with reference to the second śīla, EA includes the concept of generosity, being a useful hint relevant to the question of the EA school affiliation. 17 Ibid.: musā-vādaṃ pahāya musā-vādā paṭivirato... sacca-vādī sacca-saṅhī... avisamvādako lokassatī | Walshe 1987, ibid.: ‘Abandoning false speech,... dwells refraining from false speech, a truth-speaker, one to be relied on,... not a deceiver of the world.’ – At Hayashi, p. 205, the second kind of skilful means is omitted.

18 For 楽 Hayashi reads 楽 (encouragement). 19 Cf. BSR 18, 2 (2001), p. 219, n. 5. 20 Ibid., n. 6. 21 Two places in the Vimalakīrtinirdeśasūtra suggest that the present EA sūtra might have been their source: a) Vimalakīrtinirdeśa II, Sanskrit MS of the Vimalakīrtinirdeśa preserved at the Potala Palace, transliterated by the Taicho University ‘Study Group on Buddhist Sanskrit Literature’, Tokyo 2004, p. 172: asārāt sārādānābhinirhrtā käjavajī-vātihoparītāmbhaḥ... b) Ibid., p. 176: yasya dāyakasya dānapater yādṛśī taḥgata daksīṇiyasamajī tādṛśi nāgaradādīr ninnātāva samā mahākaru- nācittena vipākāpratikāmksanatvaya parītyagāḥ... See The Teaching of Vimalakīrti, from the French translation by Étienne Lamotte, rendered into English by Sara Boin, PTS 1976, repr. 1994, pp. 108, 112: ‘(the offering of the giving of the Law consists of)... the gains of body, life
Addendum to EĀ XXVI, XXVII


and riches (kāya-jñitabhogalābha) resulting from the action of taking for the substantial that which is not substantial (asāre sāropādānam)... The giver (dāyaka) who bestows his gifts on the poor of the town (nagaradaridāra) while thinking that they are as worthy of offerings (dakṣiṇāya) as the Tathāgata, the giver who gives to all without making distinctions (asaṃbhinnam), impartially (saṃcittena), with great goodwill (mahāmaitri), great compassion (mahākarunā), and without expecting any reward (vipākaniyapraha), this giver, say I, fully performs the offering of the giving of the Law (dharmanyājanam pariṃparāya). See also R.A.F. Thurman, The Holy Teaching of Vimalakīrti, University Park & London 1976, p. 40 f.: a) ‘(The Dharma-sacrifice consists) of the gain of body, health, and wealth, consummated by the extraction of essence from the essenceless... b) The giver who makes gifts to the lowest poor of the city, considering them as worthy of offering as the Tathāgata himself, the giver who gives without any discriminations, impartially, with no expectation of reward, and with great love – this giver, I say, totally fulfills the Dharma-sacrifice.’ ~ See also Thurman’s n. 34 on p. 122: ‘... The three indestructibles are infinite body, endless life, and boundless wealth... the body, health, and wealth here referred to are not mundane in nature, but refer to the true body, etc., of the Buddha.’

The above second passage of the Vimalakīrtinirdeśasūtra might have been inspired by the third kind of skilful means of the EĀ sūtra, consisting of generously equally practised towards ascetics and ‘all those living in poverty’.

~ REVIEW ARTICLE ~

NOMINAL PERSONS AND THE SOUND OF THEIR HANDS CLAPPING

KARMA PHUNTSO

The butter tea was ready. It was specially prepared for this occasion by my room teacher (shag rgyan). A senior Geshe (dge bshes) accompanied me to the abbot’s residence. As we entered, I made three full prostrations (brikyang phyang), offered a silk scarf (kha dar) and kneeled as instructed while the Geshe presented me to the abbot with the flask of tea. Momentarily, the abbot’s attendant served the tea to all three of us in small china cups. I was not supposed to sip it but gulp it down at once. It almost burnt my tongue and throat. The abbot asked me few questions, to which the Geshe replied on my behalf. The abbot was particularly pleased to have a postulant from Bhutan, a country poorly represented in Geluk (dge lugs) monasteries. With no physical or mental unfitness to bar me from the holy community, he gave his blessings for my admission to the Jay College of Sera Monastery.2

George Dreyfus’s The Sound of Two Hands Clapping gives a vivid and extensive account and analysis of the education that follows the initiation I have undergone like many tens of thousands

1 See also Thurman’s n. 34 on p. 122: ‘... The three indestructibles are infinite body, endless life, and boundless wealth... the body, health, and wealth here referred to are not mundane in nature, but refer to the true body, etc., of the Buddha.’

2 The Sera Monastery in exile is located in Byllakuppe, two hours’ drive west of the city of Mysore, South India.
of Gelukpa monks. Interweaving his rich personal experience with the penetrative analysis of an established academic in his field, the author presents a thoroughgoing study of Tibetan monastic education, particularly in the Geluk tradition, mixed with a saga of his own spiritual and educational journey in that tradition. An impressive work, Dreyfus’s *The Sound of Two Hands Clapping* reveals the formalities, modalities, strengths, weaknesses, challenges and prospects of the scholastic training prevalent in the major seats of the Geluk school. It captures the aspirations, occupations, lifestyle and achievements of monks in Geluk scholastic centres and his personal quest for Buddhist scholarship in such a milieu.

Dreyfus’s odyssey culminated in the highest degree of academic honour the Geluk tradition offers, making Dreyfus, also known as Geshe Sangay Samdrup, the first Western person to obtain a traditional Geshe title. This book, as he rightfully claims (p.5), treats the subject both from within and without, integrating rich personal experience with the academic skill of analytical and comparative thinking. It combines the criticality and inquisitiveness of an enquirer outside the tradition with the in-depth understanding and familiarity of a member within the tradition.

He starts by giving a comprehensive history of the Tibetan monastic and scholastic tradition and the organisation and maintenance of monastic institutions, and the moving account of how his own membership began. He leads the reader on an intellectual journey into the long and arduous system of Tibetan education, for which the Geluk school in particular is well known. Discussing the religious, pedagogical, social and political strands of the educational process culminating in the degree of Geshe and, finally, the dynamics of change with which it is confronted in a globalised world and scattered diaspora, Dreyfus’s work is aimed at portraying a complete and clear picture of the Tibetan monastic education. No-one so far has undertaken such a project and only a few such as this author have the knowledge and means to do it successfully.

Dreyfus’s account, as he duly reminds us, is focused on the three seats of the Geluk tradition, which are debating institutions (rtson grwa) run in the style of corporates. Apart from minor reforms, the seats in India have retained the traditional form of administrative, social and pedagogical practices. The Nyingma (rnying ma) monastic college at Namdroling, which Dreyfus chose to represent the commentarial institutions (bshad grwa), is however a modern establishment styled by the Central Institute of Higher Tibetan Studies in Sarnath. It is truly the best centre for an all round Tibetan Buddhist education focusing on the Nyingma tradition but, except for its pedagogical practice, it is run like a boarding school and thus does not reflect the settings of a traditional commentarial institution. Like the thriving centres at Serta and Yachen in Tibet today, most institutions belonging to the commentarial tradition consisted of unstructured shanties built by independent disciples and devotees encamped around a charismatic lama and lacked a proper administrative and curricular organisation. Thus, the monastic centres discussed here do not represent the set-up of and the lifestyle and education in most Tibetan monasteries, much less all.

In the course of his explanation of the Tibetan monastic polities and the religious education imparted therein, Dreyfus exposes for us a number of underlying assumptions about Tibetan Buddhist monasteries. In particular, he targets the ‘virtual’ image people of the West have of Tibetan monasteries as sanctuaries of peace and tranquillity filled with compassionate and enlightened souls. Far from being islands of peace and spirituality that most outsiders imagine, he tells us that they are ‘oceans housing all kinds of fishes’ (p.38). He shows us their human side with its shortcomings (gun culture, p.55, punk monks, p.38, corporal punishment, p.58, materialism, p.58, etc.) despite the rigorous religious training, which involves much hardship and austere living. Dreyfus even compares the severe discipline of the monasteries to an army boot camp training. This naturally leaves the reader wondering why the means and the end do not meet. Why do the monasteries, notwithstanding the intensive training in one of the world’s most pacifist and non-materialistic civilisations, have a significant

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3 The college officially known as Ngagyur Nyingma Institute is part of Namdroling, the largest Nyingma monastery in exile.
number of bellicose and materialist monks? My teachers told me that the monks of Darge monastery in Kham were almost all armed with guns, as were the gangster monks (I'dab I'dob) in the three seats in Central Tibet. It is not at all rare to come across rows and fights in the big monasteries. I have myself witnessed dozens of bloody confrontations between monks during my eleven years at Sera and Namdroling, in strong contrast to merely two instances of shoving in rowdy bops during six years at Oxford. Tibetan history also contains numerous episodes of large-scale monastic violence.

Dreyfus, like Goldstein, explains such ills as unfortunate elements concomitant with ‘mass monasticism’. They are by-products of being ‘the big ocean’; to give the common Tibetan religious idiom, the dge dün ’dus pa rgya mtsho. However, one may also add to this the inefficiency in the methods of education to civilise the students. The educational curricula and pedagogic techniques, particularly in the first few years of training in the main Geluk centres, are very professional and technical in nature rather than practical and liberal. Although the topics studied mostly consist of serious Buddhist metaphysics and soteriology, they are taught in a highly theoretical and pedantic style and are largely an extrovert art of academic learning rather than a religious training internalised to tame the mind and improve one’s personality, or an education to broaden the perspectives of the pupil.

Geluk monks, as Dreyfus points out, spend years in the monasteries without even knowing what precepts they are supposed to observe (p.114). It is not rare to find a monk running into his fourth year in a Geluk monastery still not knowing what the ten virtuous and ten non-virtuous actions are. Similarly, in many non-Geluk monasteries such as the Dratshang (grwa tshang) of Namdroling and Central Monk Body of Bhutan, monks have to devote almost all their time to liturgical training and duties so that they seldom have the opportunity and means to learn and practise the Buddhism of principles and values. Many do not even know the most fundamental of Buddhist concepts and values. Thus, most monasteries hardly succeed in imparting to their monks a value education and a philosophical and moral training such as the one classically exemplified in the sequential cultivation of three kinds of discriminative knowledge (shes rab rnam gsum).

In Part II, Dreyfus studies the early educational practices and curricula in the monastic centres assessing the roles of literacy and memorisation. He looks into what constitutes literacy and how it is obtained and utilised in Tibet. He also gives a vivid picture of the memorisation exercises, underlying their importance in traditional education and the benefits he has personally reaped from adopting them (pp.96-7). Highlighting the vocality of Tibetan monastic education, here again, Dreyfus’s account destroys the Western imagination of Tibetan monasteries as oases of quiet and peace. He shows how they are full of a cacophony of sounds from memorisation drills, ritual chanting, monastic music and the clapping of hands, thudding of feet and the roars and screams coming from the debate courtyards.

Dreyfus then discusses the monastic curriculum and the roles of commentary, interpretation, authority, oral transmission, meditation and their interrelationship in Tibetan Buddhist scholarship. He provides a clear survey of the scholastic curriculum in the major seats of the Geluk tradition, presenting both its strengths and weaknesses. His clarification on the excesses of yigcha manuals in the Gelukpa curriculum is particularly interesting given the quibls about it among non-Geluk Tibetan scholars and Western academics. However, the curriculum at Namdroling, contrary to Dreyfus’s claim, is not centred on the collection of thirteen texts of m Khan po gZhan dga’, who he also confuses with gZhan phan mTha’ yas, the founder of Srisinha College at Dzogs chen (p.148). Of the thirteen texts associated with m Khan po gZhan dga’, the Abhidharmasamuccaya is not in the curriculum, nor is Dharmakirti’s Pramāṇavārttikā included in the list. Thus, texts within gZhan dga’s collection do not constitute even one third of the volume of the curriculum of Namdroling’s college.

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4 Personal communication with Khempo Pema Sherab, 1995.
at rDzong gsar and rDzogs chen monastic colleges, however, are said to have been centred on the thirteen texts.

Another comparison that can be made between the two traditions, which Dreyfus does not undertake in detail but which is very interesting and educationally significant, concerns moral guidance, which does not form part of the monastic curriculum per se. It is often given before, after or outside the structured curricular lessons. In the Geluk monasteries, such guidance focuses on how to cherish one’s own tradition, to show commitment to one’s system and to serve one’s monastery. Membership in the monastery is taught to be seen as a privileged status and service to the monastery as a noble deed. This inculcates a strong sense of attachment and belonging to the monastery.

Like the answer Dreyfus received to his queries about meditation (p.169), my teachers, who were leading Geshes in Sera, warned me that undertaking meditation with the hope of gaining enlightenment in our degenerate age is too ambitious. Were one to go and stay like Milarepa in the snows, one might only freeze to death. The prudent thing to do now is to study in the monastery, contribute to its communal success and pray to reach enlightenment when Maitreya comes to save the world. Such advice deeply influences the students, making them both attached to the monastery and cordial and committed members. I remember one new monk in Sera gazing at the three-thousand strong assembly from the corner of the hall and remarking, ‘What a great fortune to be sitting with this holy congregation!’ It is primarily such admiration of their monastic community that has helped Gelukpa monasteries to thrive socially and economically. Some monks work as vendors for many years to throw a good party for the whole monastery, while others sacrifice their whole life for the monastery engaging in some drudgery. The Geluk monks are particularly well-known for conducting their public relations with much civility.

In contrast, non-Gelukpas are less occupied with the success of their monastic communities. At every session in commentarial colleges such as the one at Namdroling, moral guidance is given routinely before the curricular lessons in the form of preliminaries known as kun long kun spyod kyi rims pa, the procedure of intention and behaviour. Students are reminded of what intentions and behaviours they should avoid and what they should cultivate in pursuit of the Dharma in general and for the lesson in particular. The length and style vary from teacher to teacher but the students are always reminded to generate bodhicitta and frequently to reflect on the four points of mind turning (blo ldog rnam pa bzhi): the rarity and preciousness of human hood, the impermanence of life, the flaws of samsara and the infallibility of karma.

Monks are also frequently told how important it is to internalise the Buddhist doctrine through practice and to meditate on it after learning it theoretically. In stark contrast to the Geluk attitude mentioned above, the Nyingmapas believe that drastic spiritual developments are possible even today and claim that rDzogs chen teachings have become more effective in the degenerate age so that Buddhahood is obtainable even in one lifetime. Thus, all worldly pursuits are discouraged and meditation taught to be the most important undertaking after scholastic training. Such exhortations instil in the students a strong inclination for unworldly spiritual goals, giving rise to a great number of practitioners. However, as a consequence, Nyingma monks tend to be socially inept and their monasteries are run very poorly with much less solidarity and cohesion than the Gelukpas.

Thus, the advice and admonishments received as an adjunct to the actual curricular teachings and the values and achievements idealised in their communities play a major role in shaping their personalities and outlooks. Although the contents of the curricula in Gelukpa and Nyingma generally are not very different, there is certainly an ideological gap between the two, resulting from the difference in these kinds of approaches and priorities.

Chapters 10, 11 and 12 form the crux of The Sound of Two Hands Clapping. Dreyfus gives an elaborate account of the nature of Tibetan debate and its formulation in the greater context of Indian and Western forms of logic and dialectics. Discussing the procedures and rules of debate, he depicts the ritual that Tibetan debate is, with its theatrical physical conduct and verbal exchanges, which often escalate into a spectacle involving much ag-
gression and abuse, and occasionally blows. He explores the study and teaching of debate through the Collected Topics and its subsequent role in and relationship with the study of subjects such as epistemology and Madhyamaka. An account of the long Geluk educational process is unfolded, interwoven with the art of debate which is its main thread.

Dreyfus’s exposition is thorough and captivating, except perhaps for a rather simplistic remark that Geshe is the highest degree awarded by Tibetan Buddhist monastic universities/institutions (pp.2, 254). Although there is some truth in it, it simplifies the complexity of Tibetan educational systems, which his book seeks to unravel and does so successfully. There is no one common standard for degrees in Tibet and Geshe, as an abbreviation of dge ba'i bshes gnyun (Sanskrit: kālayānamitra) as he notes (p.254), does not always refer to a degree. It is often used as a title, such as the titles of Lopen (slob dpun) and Khenpo (mKhan po). Moreover, the Geshe title in Geluk monasteries is sometimes conferred on people with no proper academic credentials, as suggested by the pejorative epithet Tongo Geshe (gton gso dge bshes) or Party Geshe. Dreyfus passes over this in silence but there is a significant number of Geshe titles given to candidates who go through a symbolic exam and throw a party for the monastery.

In the final chapter of Part II, Dreyfus investigates whether Tibetan debate is merely a pedagogical exercise or constitutes critical enquiry. Maintaining the two cases to be a matter of personal opinion and pedagogical style, he argues that some Geluk scholars consider debate merely as a mnemonic tool and intellectual exercise to internalise pre-given truths. Geshe Rabten is portrayed as a teacher of this category who believed in debate and, for that matter, any educational enterprise as instruments to internalise rather than enquire, and to reiterate rather than reveal. On the other hand, Geshe Nyima, the scholar who had to hold his right eyelid with his finger, is seen as an epitome of the latter type who advocated a degree of Socratic enquiry. Gen Nyima, Dreyfus tells us, excelled in the art of questioning and accepted no answer as final. He rejected absolute views and kept the pragmatic dimension of the inquiry in sight (p.288).

Karma Phuntsho – Nominal Persons/Hands Clapping

Dreyfus continues the discussion of the role of critical thinking and the room for rationality in Geluk monasteries in Part III of his book. He first assesses the role of rational enquiry in Tibetan monasteries, placing it in the greater context of Tibetan world view and juxtaposing reason and rationality with popular cultures. From the many popular beliefs, the author elaborates on spirit worship, a practice that is deeply engrained in Tibetan society. Both here and elsewhere, Dreyfus poignantly narrates the controversy surrounding the cult of Shuk-den (shugs ldan), which has divided the Gelukpa community and resulted in the ruthless murder of one of his teachers. Describing this dispute, in which Tibetan virtuosos of the highest order such as the Dalai Lama and his teachers were involved, Dreyfus remarks that Tibetan scholars saw no conflict between rationality and belief in spirits and many things scientifically unproven. He concludes that Tibetan reason and rationality are thus deeply embedded in their order of the world and culture. He could perhaps have said a little more on how in fact the Tibetans use their reason and rationality to support such beliefs and world order, as they do to prove previous and next lives.

Next, the author explores the limit of rationality in Tibetan monasteries and the constraints imposed internally by the rigidity of scholasticism and externally by orthodoxy influenced by socio-political concerns. He shows how Tibetan scholasticism is progressive in that it evolves through re-interpretation and re-appropriation, but only within the limits set by orthodoxy. Debate and enquiry are constrained by social and political factors. He cites the case of Gedun Choephel (pp.284, 314), the maverick Geluk scholar, and Gen Nyima and Palden Drakpa to illustrate this grip of orthodoxy. Dreyfus concludes by giving a brief overview of his study of Tibetan scholasticism and goes into an account of changes taking place in the scholastic centres driven by both globalising trends and socio-economic factors. He also recounts his departure from the monasteries and his experience at university where he missed debate but broadened his knowledge.

of Tibetan Buddhism through exposure to other traditions. The book ends with sixty pages of very informative endnotes, bibliography and an index but has numerous typographical errors in the Tibetan transliteration (pp.57, 59, 65, 83, 84, etc.).

The Sound of Two Hands Clapping is certainly a great achievement and a compelling read and Dreyfus, as always, treats his subject with much passion and rigour. A personal story intertwined with an intellectual journey into one of the world’s most exotic educational traditions, the book is both a unique and a significant contribution to the field of Tibetan studies. Dreyfus may have failed to be a Geluk protégé of his teachers (p.331), but he has certainly succeeded in revealing their life and wisdom and explaining the intricacies and complexities of their culture with a remarkable zest. This book is indispensable for those wishing to understand Tibetan scholasticism in general and the art of learning by clapping two hands in particular.

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While George Dreyfus is the first Western Geshe, Jinpa is the first traditional Geshe Lharampa (dge bshes lha rams pa) to obtain a doctorate from a famous Western academic establishment. Jinpa was a star scholar of Gaden monastery even before he became the personal interpreter for the Dalai Lama, a role that earned him a high reputation. At the end of Jinpa’s final exam, a prominent Geshe of Gaden is said to have taken off his hat and made a wish publicly that Gaden be filled by personalities like Jinpa (to which one may also add that later, when Jinpa renounced his monkhood and married his wife, some witty monks of Gaden, with playful irony, remarked that the wish of the old Geshe never come true, lest Gaden would have no monks left).

Jinpa’s illustrious career continued with his study at Cambridge University, which culminated in his doctoral degree. Self, Reality and Reason in Tibetan Philosophy is a revised version of his doctoral dissertation entitled ‘Self, Persons and Madhyamaka

Dialectics: A Study of Tsongkhapa’s Middle Way Philosophy’. Combining his profound understanding of Tsongkhapa’s thought, which he obtained through his monastic training in Tsongkhapa’s writings as ‘a living tradition’, and his extensive comprehension of philosophical literature, which he gained later, Jinpa presents a lucid and penetrating exposition of some selected topics of Tsongkhapa’s Madhyamaka thought. Thus, he integrates the two approaches of what he calls his ‘native point of view’ and ‘contemporary philosopher’s point of view’ (pp2-3) in reconstructing and reformulating Tsongkhapa’s Madhyamaka theories in a contemporary philosophical language.

The Introduction and Chapter I discuss the historical backdrop and context for development of Tsongkhapa’s Madhyamaka theories, as well as the textual context and the methodology for Jinpa’s re-appropriation and articulation of them. He emphasises that much of the time, he ‘listens to Tsongkhapa’ (pp.2, 15) and lets Tsongkhapa speak through ‘his own voice’ (p.5) uncluttered by later scholastic literature, which has dominated the Geluk study of Madhyamaka both in the traditional monasteries and the West, or with too much digression into what Tsongkhapa’s critics have to say. He chooses to undertake a holistic reading of Tsongkhapa by seeking the intended meaning and overall cohesion and consistency in Tsongkhapa’s philosophical enterprise.

A very intriguing observation Jinpa makes in this regard is his distinction of Tsongkhapa’s Madhyamaka vis-à-vis Geluk Madhyamaka (p.5). It is particularly interesting in that it comes from someone of Jinpa’s background and authority. The traditional Geluk scholars would reject such a distinction for it implies divergences between them and the founder, quite against their claim and belief. It is all the more significant because non-Gelukpa authors such as Mipham have also made a similar division between Tsongkhapa and a few other Gelukpas such as I.Cang sjya on the one hand and the mainstream Gelukpas on the other with regard to their ultimate understanding of Emptiness. One Nyingma mKhan po, brTson 'grus Phun tshogs, who also received training at Sera, went so far as to brand the mainstream Gelukpas as Neo-Gelukpas who have discarded Tsongkhapa’s

7 See also his other major work, Recognizing Reality, Dharmakirti’s Philosophy and its Tibetan Interpretations, Albany 1997.
thoughts and who deceive the naïve with self-invented false reasoning.\(^8\)

Another assertion that Jinta makes, which begs further explanation, pertains to the portrayal of Tsongkhapa as a great/foremost ‘reformer’ (pp.1, 12), although not a revolutionary (p. 12). Many authors on the Ggluk tradition seem to indulge in using this epithet for Tsongkhapa\(^8\) while others tend to be cautious. Still others disapprove of its use and have argued against it.\(^10\) The problem is partly due to the linguistic gap. There is no Tibetan equivalent for the English terms ‘reform’ or ‘reformer’. Applications of such terms thus undoubtedly risk arbitrary imposition of an _emic_ term across cultures as though it were _etic_. Tsongkhapa, truly an eminent luminary of Tibet, can rightly be attributed with regeneration and revitalisation (which Jinta emphatically does) for the contributions he made and the changes he brought to Buddhism in Tibet. But on what grounds can we call Tsongkhapa a reformer while many other masters such as Milarpa, Klong che pa, Dol po pa, etc., are not? _Shing rta’i srol ‘byed chen mo_, the concept which Jinta refers to, is itself of very loose application varying from context to context and people to people.

The rest of Chapter I spans the qualms Tsongkhapa had about the Madhyamaka theories prevalent during his day, and how he arrived at his own understanding and interpretation of the ‘perfect middle way’. Tsongkhapa, Jinta says, was first and foremost concerned with a lack of analytical and philosophical rigour in Tibetan thinking. Jinta depicts a picture of pre-Tsongkhapa Madhyamaka scholarship in Tibet as being marred by a philosophical naivety derived from a literal reading of Madhyamaka literature and by an anti-rationalism inspired by an epistemological scepticism and tantric mysticism. Jinta contrasts Tsongkhapa’s highly philosophical and rational approach to this existing trend of his precursors, whom he criticises.

There is certainly no denying that Tsongkhapa excelled in the art of rational and critical enquiry and undertook his Madhyamaka analysis with much philosophical rigour. It is also true that he rightly accused some opponents, particularly practitioners and meditators, of insufficient rationalisation and of their inclination towards non-analytical quietist meditation. However, would it be justified to tax the Mādhyamikas who preceded Tsongkhapa in general, including a great number of Saky (sa skya), Kāyu (rka’ rgyud) and Nyingma scholars, with a literal reading of Madhyamaka literature, philosophical naivety and anti-rationalism?\(^11\) Would Tsongkhapa have described his opponents with such words?

What Tsongkhapa considers literal reading was to the early Tibetan Mādhyamikas direct reading of the texts without any paraphrastic qualifications such as ‘intrinsically existent’ or ‘conventionally non-existent’, which the Gglukpas profusely added. They did not see the need for such paraphrases in the context of Mādhyamika analysis. However, this does not turn them into scholars who stubbornly adhered to the literal meaning of the words without allowing any implied, contextual or figurative use of language. Furthermore, most of the early Mādhyamikas were also staunch rationalists, often conflating Candrakīrti’s ontology and Dharmakīrti’s epistemology and distancing themselves from Hwa shang’s Quietist/Simultaneist tradition. The problem of the over-broad negation that Tsongkhapa accused them of implies their excessive use of deconstructive analysis rather than the lack of it. The denial of the validity of everyday experience and of any thesis in Mādhyamika analytical discourse, which these scholars underscored, is a conclusion reached through a rigorous philosophical

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\(^8\) mKhan po brTson ’grus Phun tshogs, _Sher phyi ’chod pa’i sgron ’gro_, Byllakuppe 1996, p.2: Blo bzang grags pa’i dgon’gs pa rtwa ltar dor // rang bzos ltar snang ngs pa’i ’phral ’khor byis // byis pa’ drid pa dge ldan gser pa’i gzhung ’gzur gnas blo ldan su yis yid ron’os //

\(^9\) See for instance A. Wayman (tr.) _Calming the Mind and Discerning the Real_: Buddhist Meditation and the Middle View, New York 1978, p.8.


and rational enquiry. Thus, to accuse them of being philosophically naïve and anti-rational is, to say the least, a little amiss.

Jinpa gives a succinct discussion of Tsongkhapa’s deep concern about the no-thesis viewpoint and quietest trends and the consequent development of Tsongkhapa’s own Madhyamaka thought, discussing its originality and the process through which Tsongkhapa arrived at it. The most crucial point of this process is of course Tsongkhapa’s vision and consultation of Manjusri, which Jinpa suggests could be seen as a methodological procedure. This mystical experience, for a tradition which claims the centrality of rationality and analytical acumen and disdains others for the lack of such, is ironically the milestone with which to define Tsongkhapa’s novel understanding of Emptiness and bring about profound changes in his philosophical thought.

In Chapter II, Jinpa surveys Tsongkhapa’s Madhyamaka hermeneutics, giving a list of strategies he used in delineating the parameters of negation at the beginning of the chapter (p.38). The most original hermeneutic strategy Tsongkhapa and his followers formulated with much urgency and repetition is perhaps the identification of the Madhyamaka object of negation or negandum. Tsongkhapa accused his precursors of over-broad delimitation of Madhyamaka negandum and underscored its exact identification. The negandum of Madhyamaka reasoning, according to him, is limited to ultimately, hypostatically or intrinsically an existent entity (see Jinpa’s Table 1). As a corollary, Tsongkhapa and his followers also stressed the application of qualifications such as ‘ultimately’ and ‘hypostatically existent’ to the negandum. These endeavours at narrowing the object of negation down to a refined construct and leaving the empirical phenomena unscathed by Madhyamaka analysis then tie up with his famous assertion of the validity of conventional reality. It is these points which the later Gelukpa critics, such as Go rams pa bSod nams Senge, Zhi lung pa Saky a rChos ldan, ‘Ju Mipham rGya mtsho and A mdo ba dGe ‘dun Chos phel, attacked, accusing the Gelukpas of restraining the thoroughgoing Madhyamaka dialectic and its spiritually therapeutic impact by diverting its deconstructive analysis to a hypostatised target isolated from our day-to-day empirical world.

Chapter III contains a discussion of the pan-Buddhist concept of No-self and Tsongkhapa’s hermeneutic manoeuvres for integrating his rather heterodox assertion of the conventional self, which is the object of our instinctive though ‘I am’. Jinpa says (p.72) that Tsongkhapa, in contrast to the standard Buddhist view, adopts what might be called in modern Western philosophical terms a non-reductionist view. In the course of identifying the person and self that is rejected and maintained in Tsongkhapa’s thought, Jinpa explains the nuances of the latter’s distinction of person and selfhood into an eternal, unitary and autonomous self (rtag gce g dang dbang can gyi dbus), a self-sufficient substantial self (rang rkyab thub pa’i rdzas yod kyi dbus), an intrinsically existent self (ngo bo nyid khyus grub pa’i dbus) and a conventional self (tha snyad kyi dbus). He only maintains the last category.

This is followed by a concise exposition of the five- and seven-fold deconstructive reasoning used by Nāgarjuna and Candrakirti to refute the concept of self and an analysis of Tsongkhapa’s concept of intrinsic nature. Jinpa’s clarification is outstanding on Tsongkhapa’s understanding of rang mthang as unique particulars, unique properties and intrinsic nature (p.95), the last of which a Madhyamika rejects according to Tsongkhapa, and the distinction of ‘being intrinsic nature’ and ‘being existent by means of intrinsic nature’. Tsongkhapa uses the latter scheme particularly to harmonise rationally the general Madhyamaka denial of intrinsic nature and the paradoxical presentation of Emptiness as intrinsic nature in Nāgarjuna’s Mūlamadhyamakakārikā XV/2.

Chapters IV and V deal with Tsongkhapa’s radical assertion of conventional person or self, the mere ‘I’, and his criteria for conventional existence. Jinpa critically explores how Tsongkhapa, in the absence of an intrinsic person, which is annulled by Madhyamaka scrutiny, theorises a conventional self qu’a person that is the agent for all our moral actions and spiritual endeavours. No Buddhist, save perhaps the Vatsiputiya personalists, would have argued so emphatically for the existence of self qua the object of I-consciousness. This position, which Jinpa calls conventional realism (pp.116, 168, 176), seems at least prima facie to go right to the heart of the nominalism which Buddhists generally adopted apropos of self and personhood. Moreover, by theorising
the conventional status of self and person and by probing into the status of conventional reality, isn't Tsongkhapa himself succumbing to an implicit reification and the essentialist tendency which he accused other Buddhists of espousing? Can his acclaimed nominalism and conventionalism (p.117) be sustained in the midst of his verification and objectification of the self that almost all Buddhists reject? In defining the self as a nominal construct, which is an atemporal generality separate from the aggregates, how accurate is Tsongkhapa's presentation of the worldly conventional view of self? An astute metaphysician might also argue about the compatibility of such a self with the empirical role a person plays as a moral agent. Jinpa's articulation of Tsongkhapa's thought is both stimulating and thought-provoking, arousing many questions such as these.

Questions can also be raised on Tsongkhapa's concept of convention and its degree of objectivity, but such would escape the purpose of this review. The crux of Tsongkhapa's conventional theory is of course his three criteria for what is conventionally existent (p.157). However, his definition is circular in that one must first establish what it is to be familiar with conventional cognition and agree on a valid conventional knowledge in order to understand what is conventional. Critics such as dGe 'dun Chos 'phel have also argued that this presupposes some form of homogenous and absolute conventional standard and authority among sentient beings, which is impossible. The mention of the ultimate analysis, which probes into the real nature of things, among the criteria for conventional existence also risks conflating the two perspectives of the ultimate and the conventional, a fault which Tsongkhapa accuses others of committing.

Jinpa further explains Tsongkhapa's nominalism through the metaphor of illusion and what may be called his scholastic interpretation of the metaphor in two ways. This is followed by a discussion of Tsongkhapa's procedures of avoiding the extremes of absolutism, nihilism and relativism and the soteriological dimension of No-self and reasons pertaining to it. While proceeding with the rejection of relativism, Jinpa mentions that 'Tsongkhapa does not reject the reality out there' (p.175). This in a way succinctly summarises Tsongkhapa's Madhyamaka ontology and his theory of self and personal identity. This also leaves readers, like his critics, with much disquiet and dissatisfaction. In singling out a hypostatic intrinsic nature as the only philosophical villain to be annihilated and in leaving the empirical world unscathed and indeed validated, and our ordinary sense of self and the world veritably confirmed, Tsongkhapa's description of things as nominal and fiction-like still eludes us and sounds like mere rhetoric.

Nonetheless, Jinpa succeeds in revealing Tsongkhapa's complex and abstruse viewpoints with great clarity and acumen. This is a pioneering work on the topic of personal identity in Tibetan philosophy and, for all those interested in Tsongkhapa, it unravels the most intricate of the thoughts of that lofty figure of Tibet. It will be a long time before another Tibetan will explain his philosophical heritage with comparable insight and articulacy. My only disappointment is the book's price which puts it beyond the reach of many people, particularly in Asia. Yet, all in all, it is a remarkable work.

Karma Phuntsho

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12 See A mdo dGe 'dun Chos 'phel, dGe 'dun chos 'phel gyi gsung rtsom II, Lhasa 1994, pp.275-85.
BOOK REVIEWS


Only a few months after the publication of their Index to the Jātaka, Professors Ousaka and Yamazaki have produced an index to the Visuddhimagga.

As Dr Cone makes clear in the preface, this is an index of the PTS edition as it stands, including its wrong readings and misprints, although a few unambiguous misprints have been rectified. For the most part, however, even obvious errors have not been rectified. The result of this is that a printing error such as ādikusālanāma (4, 28) is listed as such, instead of being listed as the two words ādī and kusalānam.

As in the compilers' previous work, line numbers are shown by a superscript numeral after the page number, instead of following the Critical Pāli Dictionary's pattern of having a lower case numeral in a smaller font size. Occurrences of words in verses are not distinguished from their use in prose, so there are no examples of the strange addition of an asterisk to a page number, which was found in their earlier work.

Dr Cone hopes that this index will prove a valuable tool for anyone preparing a new edition of the Visuddhimagga. At the very least, the existence of the index and the electronic version of the Visuddhimagga upon which it is based will enable the PTS to offer a corrected reprint in due course with (dare we hope?) the paragraph numbers of the Harvard Oriental Series edition inserted. This would make cross-referencing between the two editions and Bhikkhu Nāṇamoli's translation immeasurably clearer.

Anyone wishing to make a corrected version, as opposed to a revised version, of Visuddhimagga will find that this index immediately draws their attention to anomalies. For example, the juxtaposition of pavaṭṭitānāmarūpam and pavaṭṭitānāmarūpam, occurring in close proximity (at 43, 2, 22, 30 and 413, 8 respectively), will show the need to check, and correct, the text.

Usage of this index will very soon enable readers to appreciate more fully the compilers' achievement in producing this invaluable aid to the study of Buddhaghosa's masterpiece.  

K.R. Norman


Findly draws together diverse material in this book to offer an in-depth study of a practice central to Theravāda Buddhism: the giving of food and other requisites to the monastic Sangha by lay people. This specific focus is underscored by her initial definition of the term dāna as 'donation' (p.xiii), which draws on the Latin parallel to the Pāli term rather than the more popular concepts of generosity and giving.

The book is divided into nine chapters. There is a good deal of overlap between them and some repetition. Broadly speaking, the first two focus on the socio-economic and religious context in which the Buddhist practice of dāna developed. The next four explore the dynamics of the donation itself, for example the relationship of interdependence between ordained and lay fostered by dāna on both material and soteriological levels. The main focus of the remaining chapters is the monastic Sangha: its attitude to property; its strategies for encouraging dāna; and lastly, 'The Renunciant as Facilitator: The Case of Ananda'.

Three important strands of exploration are woven together throughout the book: the Vedic antecedents to and parallels with dāna that were consciously exploited by the new Buddhist movement; the socio-economic context in which the practice of dāna developed; the place of dāna in the Dhamma, within the path towards liberation. I will take an example of each strand as illustration of the book's content.

The word pīṇḍa (lit. lump of food, in early Buddhism, alms given as food), Findly suggests, entered Buddhism laden with 'Vedic baggage' (p.131), particularly its presence in the funeral and ancestral rites enacted prior to and after the death of a father to 'preserve lineage and augment family property' (p.132). Draw-
ing on research by David Knipe into the Vedic practice, she parallels this use — an offering to the dead for the benefit of the dead person as well as the donor — with its subtly transformed Buddhist use, ‘the transmutation of food into a new rebirth, not for himself (the bhikkhu) but for the donor’ (pp.135-6). Her implication is that the antecedent uses of the term played positively into the message the monastic Sangha wanted to convey: that food given to it benefited the giver soteriologically by creating the conditions for a better rebirth.

Findly maps a socio-economic context for the development of dāna that was characterised by the rise of the wealthy, middle class gahapati (householder), and a market-orientated culture in which the choice of both religion and objects of patronage were beginning to operate at the level of the individual rather than the family or community. She then looks at the guidelines of behaviour that eventually became the rule of discipline (Vinaya) for the Buddhist renunciant community through the lenses of this data. Her point is that Vinaya studies should not be done without taking into account the demands of this competitive environment, in which the support, and by extension the surplus wealth, of the laity had to be won and retained through good marketing techniques, if the survival of the movement was to be assured. It is not only rulings about clothing and external behaviour that she is thinking of, but also the early emphases on moderation (the Middle Way) and egalitarianism. Both, she argues, served to shape ‘a public etiquette conducive to donor expectations’ (p.34), the whole emerging as a way of ‘drawing donor attention to the worthiness of the recipient’ (p.35).

To pass to the last strand, the author identifies non-attachment as the point where the practice of dāna feeds into the soteriology inherent in the Dhamma. In what she terms a ‘brilliant move’ by the shapers of early Buddhism (p.194), wealth is not condemned — that would have alienated the very people the movement wanted to attract as donors — but attachment to wealth. And by offering itself as the ‘field’ through which non-attachment could be practised and the fruits anticipated, the monastic Sangha again secured its own survival. Findly uses the term ‘contract’ to define this relationship the donor ensures the viability of the ongoing monastic Sangha through material support; the Sangha offers itself in an act of compassion as the means through which lay people could work towards the uprooting of causes of suffering. Both sides ‘purchase’ something from each other.

The question that arose for me in reading this book was: how much of Findly’s material is new? Much of her sociological and historical material is taken from secondary sources, from authors such as Uma Chakravarti, Binayendra Chaudhury, George Erdosy, Richard Gombrich, S.C. Misra and Romila Thapar. This secondary material is fused with extensive references to the Pāli Canon and Vedic Sanskrit texts, drawn both from translations and from the Pāli and Sanskrit originals. For instance, Chapter 3 (Resources to Requisites: Gifts to the Gone Forth) has 342 endnotes, the majority of which contain unmediated references to Pāli and Sanskrit terms.

The conclusion I came to was that the strength of this book lies not so much in the groundbreaking nature of its content but in the thoroughness of the author’s treatment of her subject and in the way in which she combines, on the one hand, the sociological and the textual and, on the other, knowledge of the Theravāda Canon and Vedic Sanskrit texts. It is this combination that gives rise to the new.

Truly original work lies scattered throughout the book. On the evidence of the bibliography, the author has already re-worked some of this for specialist journals, for example why the term arahant is normally not applied to nuns in the Pāli texts (pp.226-31), and the important role of women as donors in the economic context of Early Buddhism (pp.58-80). Then there is the treatment of Ananda at the end of the book. Drawing on and going beyond a 1978 doctoral thesis by Michael Freedman, Ananda is presented as a facilitator of dāna through his warm interactions with lay people and also the ‘canon’s earliest critique of the arahant ideal’ (p.394) in that his evident anukampā (sympathy for others) and lack of selfhood are not adequate alone, within the Theravāda system, for him to attain Nibbāna.

There were points in this book when I expected the author to take a more discriminating attitude to the Pāli texts. For instance, the Cakkavatti Sīhanāda Sutta of the Dīgha-nikāya is wrongly employed to prove that the prospects for society are dismal ‘where there are no donors’ and no generosity (p.197), in disregard of the
fact that the main focus of the sutta is what happens when the state fails in its duty towards the poor. At other points an over-literalist interpretation of the texts risks simplification. However, these instances are outweighed by a broadly judicious use of the texts and secondary sources.

I welcome this book because of the wealth of material it brings together on an important topic that has often been overlooked.

_Elizabeth Harris_
(_Birmingham University_)


Stanley Abe is already known as an established expert on East Asian Buddhist art with a particularly sharp eye for historiographical issues. But this book, an outstanding work of revisionist scholarship, will undoubtedly ensure that he becomes one of those authors who stamp their mark indelibly on their field within Buddhist Studies in such a way that all future researchers will have to be familiar with their writings.

The territory covered is itself a familiar one – the introduction of the Buddhist religion to China – and one might have thought that in the wake of the text-based scholarship of such giants as Erik Zürcher, to say nothing of great art historians such as Alexander Soper, there would be little chance of surprising us with a completely new perspective on the topic. Abe, however, has derived a great deal of benefit from recent archaeology, a science which has now put in our hands a much wider spread of evidence for early Chinese Buddhist material culture than was formerly provided by the relatively few highly regarded pieces of sculpture that were carried off from China to various locations overseas during the early twentieth century. This allows him consistently to challenge the rather narrow perspective of our textual sources which reflect, if not solely the view of the ruling elite, then at best the largely complementary outlook of those members of the Sangha whom the elite found to be congenial companions. At the same time the range of his textual references shows that he is also prepared to incorporate research based on hitherto under-utilised material for the period, such as Taoist sources, rather than base his interpretations on material evidence alone. In fact, one of the main functions of his work is to question existing assumptions and hypotheses, and to stress just how much the new material evidence confronts us with phenomena that we never knew before and indeed have great difficulty in explaining.

To demonstrate how this project is carried out over the full span of almost half a millennium covered by the book would be rather a lengthy business. As an example, however, let us look at Abe’s treatment of the very beginnings of some sort of Buddhist presence in Chinese material culture, a topic addressed in his second chapter (the first is effectively a short introduction to the work as a whole), entitled ‘Small Beginnings’. Here right from the start the scholar has to deal not simply with a dearth of texts but also with considerable uncertainties as to their reliability. On pp. 13-14, for example, some researchers might prefer not to adduce the Scripture in Forty-two Sections as evidence for Chinese Buddhism in the second century CE, especially when reliable evidence for its existence only emerges two centuries later, and when an apparent second-century quotation from the text can be explained in other ways – as is done on p.83 of the anonymous article on the dating of this text reprinted in Zhang Mancao, ed., _Xiandai Fojiao xueshu congkan_ II (Taipei 1979), pp.69-84. Similarly, in the annotation (p.320, n.9) to p.13, it may eventually turn out to be inappropriate to assume that in 166 CE it was the Yellow Emperor and Laozi who were being conjointly worshipped with the Buddha – as is done here apparently on the grounds that the two Chinese sages were linked more than three centuries earlier at the start of the dynasty – and perhaps rather better to write, as on p.14 with reference to the earlier joint worship of the Buddha in 65 CE, that the Chinese counterpart of the imported figure was ‘Huang-Lao’, i.e. literally ‘Yellow-Old’. To judge from some of the overtones of the word ‘yellow’ during this era, one possible interpretation of this compound might be that the now divinised Laozi (an advance in status certainly well attested for the second century CE, as Anna Seidel showed in her 1969 EFEO
monograph) was regarded as a ruler over what had earlier been known as the Yellow Springs, the world of the dead.

This alternative analysis may be of some relevance to Abe’s subsequent discussion of very early images of the Buddha that occur in funerary contexts, especially in what was then the southwest of China, present-day Sichuan. How Sichuan may have been in contact with the Buddhist world is something of a puzzle, though a trade route to India via Yunnan to the south had attracted attention earlier in the dynasty, as is well known from the Shi ji, 129, presented in English e.g. in Jeanette Mirsky, ed., The Great Chinese Travelers (Chicago 1964), pp.19-20. The same source (Mirsky, p.18), however, also points out that the Yuezhi people, who were instrumental in establishing the Kushan empire after migrating west from the borders of China, left behind some of their kin in the neighbourhood of present-day Xining, Gansu. They seem to have retained a somewhat separate identity even in the second century CE, to judge from the materials noted in Miyakawa Hisayuki, Chūgoku shūkyōshi kenkyū (Kyoto 1983), pp.117-18, and Rafe de Crespigny, To Establish Peace I (Canberra 1996), p.9, n.27, and could have been responsible for carrying trade and maybe new beliefs from the Kushan empire on to the south. Alternatively, some would see Buddha images as related to the arrival of coinage – thus for example Huiyi, ‘Fo yu qian de yinyuan’, Fojiao wenhua, 1993.1, pp.28-9. As an argument against this hypothesis it is certainly true to state that none of the Kushan coins bearing a Buddha image have been found in China, as Abe quite understandably points out (p.100). But startlingly enough, Chinese lead ingots bearing clumsy imitations of the Greek script of Bactrian (perhaps early Kushan) coins dating to a period covering the first century BCE to the first century CE equally certainly have been found, and are now published in Annette L. Juliano and Judith A. Lerner, Monks and Merchants (New York 2001), p.37. This discovery illustrates better than most examples the rather random state of our knowledge at this point in the development of Chinese archaeology, which remains as yet quite unsystematic, and the subsequent uncertainties of a situation in which an argumentum ex silento is often the only one available.

In the light of such disadvantages, Abe’s own preference is, commendably enough, to be cautious and to view the Buddha images of Sichuan on the walls of tombs or on funerary objects known as ‘money trees’ simply as performing a rather generalised function, perhaps of an apotropaic nature, that may reflect little or no firsthand knowledge of the Buddhist religion at all. He is particularly hesitant to accept the recent hypothesis of Wu Hung who, in part as a result of the passages linking the two already noted above, sees the Buddha as substituting for Laozi in an originally aniconic Celestial Master form of proto-Taoism. Wu Hung’s arguments, while subtle, certainly seem to assume a degree of unity in Sichuanese proto-Taoism in the second century CE that is rather undermined by Anna Seidel’s work also alluded to above, in which the Lao biānhua jìng, a prime piece of evidence for Laozi’s divinisation, is shown to stem from another and evidently quite distinct Laozi worshipping group active in Sichuan at the same time as the early Celestial Masters. And Abe does stress that the ‘money tree’ objects show a confusing selection of alternative figures, primarily either a bear or the popular contemporary high goddess, the Queen Mother of the West, in slightly different positions. The Buddha image, it seems, equates in its position with the bear a mere guardian figure if ever there was one, since there are no high bear gods in China.

This may, however, be a slightly misleading way to look at the problem, if the aniconic alternative to the Queen Mother of the West was perhaps being represented either by an agent or by a foreign avatar. And Abe’s observation (pp.47-8, 49) that the Buddha seems never to occur together with the Queen Mother of the West has a curious echo in an overlooked textual source making a distinction with regard to their different jurisdictions between the Queen and another figure, namely the well-known compilation by Zhang Hua (ed. Fan Ning) Bowu zhi jiaozhu 9 (Beijing 1980), p.104: ‘Laozi says the ten thousand people all belong to the Queen Mother of the West; only the fates of kings, sages, true men, immortals, and men of the Way belong above to the Lord of the Nine Heavens.’ If we wish to regard the bear as an agent of this more powerful figure, then there is certainly second century CE evidence that has been interpreted to mean that the envoy of the god of the dead, as Anna Seidel noted with regard to the identification made by Hayashi Minao cited on p.698 of her 1987 study of religion in Han tombs, may have an urbane
appearance. As for the Buddha as Lord of the Dead, in 1949, long before any archaeological evidence was uncovered, the Chinese historian Chen Yinke penned a note in his Jinming gao congkao erbian (Shanghai 1980), p.82, in which he interpreted a reference in San Guo zhi 12 (p.388 in the Beijing edition) as indicating that that was precisely the status of the Buddha for at least some ordinary believers of the third century CE. Though this evidence requires careful reconsideration, it does provisionally suggest that despite Abe’s reservations, Wu Hung may at least be on the right track with his hypothesis, and that it might have some merit in a modified form.

Of course, Abe is in all likelihood more than fully justified in his caution at other points, as for example when he goes on in the same chapter to examine the apparently rather trivial Buddhas decorating the so-called hunping funerary jars from further east in China. His treatment in the subsequent chapters of the puzzling steles of fifth century northwest China, and of what has been seen as the ‘Buddho-Taoist’ art of the Northern Wei, certainly takes us into periods when at least some people, even if only a few monks, knew much more precisely what Buddhism was all about, and which do not entail quite the same degree of puzzlement when it comes to relating religion to material evidence. But by exploring some of the complexities involved in studying the ‘Small Beginnings’ of Chinese Buddhism, I hope I have indicated both the scale of the problems that Stanley Abe has taken on, and the outstanding value of his consistently careful and astute scholarship. Any future researchers who care to venture into this very challenging academic territory will most assuredly learn a very great deal from this volume, even should they not end up agreeing with its author at every single point.

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