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TELAHAṬĀHAGĀTHĀ

This renowned medieval Pali didactic composition was undoubtedly intended to exemplify the šataka verse-form (a poem of 100 stanzas) in spite of its actual presentation in 98 verses. Although it was widely believed that no English translation had been undertaken, in fact the Editor has discovered no less than two renderings which will be discussed later in this essay.

All the classic primers of Pali literature, however, either mention or discuss this work at varying length:

(i) The most detailed appears in B.C. Law’s History of Pali Literature. 1

The inspirational stanzas enunciating the essential ethico-psychology of the Buddhadhāmanā emanate from a thera, Kalyāṇiya, who had been sentenced to death for allegedly intriguing with the queen-consort of King Kālanitissa (306-207 B.C.). He was condemned to boil in a cauldron of oil, hence the title of this poem, “Verses from the Oil Cauldron.” The author is unknown although, in view of the knowledge displayed in this composition, it may be reliably assumed that he was a bhikkhu.

(ii) In his Pali Literature of Ceylon 2, G. P. Malalasekera ascribes this poem to the 10th. or early 11th. century and quotes a native work, the Salālithinisandesa (1462), which refers to the then-existing vihāra erected over the place of execution.

(iii) History of Indian Literature by Moritz Winternitz. 3
(iv) Dictionary of Pali Proper Names by G. P. Malalasekera. 4
(v) Pali Literature and Language by Wilhelm Geiger. 5
(vi) An Introduction to Pali Literature by S. C. Banerji. 6
(vii) A brief mention is also made in Buddhism in India and Abroad by A. C. Banerjee. 7

The Pali text, with a Sinhalese sanne or word-for-word interpretation, was edited by Hikkaduwe Sumangala and published in Colombo in 1872. Another Sinhala text, with translation, was prepared in 1900 by U. Piyatissa. The sole romanised edition was prepared for the Pali Text Society by Edmund R. Gooneratne, the Atapatta Mudaliyar of Galle.

Careful analysis proves that it was Gooneratne's edition that Law incorporated in his collection of Pali texts for M. A. students. It is in the Notes of the latter anthology that mention is made of an English translation, by Law himself. Under the sub-title, 'Verses on oil-pot', it appeared in Indian Culture where the author claims the credit for producing the first translation of the Telakatatagatha. Fortunately, in view of its stilted style and occasional unintelligible renderings, an earlier and more inspiring translation has been unearthed (which is reproduced below). Law was almost certainly unaware of this freer rendering because nowhere in the earlier version is the original Pali title alluded to.

The Editor first discovered this translation, with Pali text (again, copied from Gooneratne's edition), in the library of the London Buddhist Vihara. There it forms the second part of a slim volume privately bound with a 1937 edition of Nyatataloka's Word of the Buddha. The title page is missing so it is not possible to accurately determine either place or year of publication. However, in the Preface, the translator, 'C.S.' refers to the Editor of The Buddhist Ray (see below) 'who has, from time to time, published in his periodical my contributions in this matter, and to whom my application has been renewed, for the publication of the entire work in its present form, for the benefit of American and European readers'. This information, together with the presence of American spellings, inclines the Editor to conjecture an American printing around the turn of the century.

As mentioned earlier, the 'translator' nowhere refers to the original text and merely entitles his version, The Dying Rahat's Sermon—'rahat' being the Sinhalese equivalent of arahat. By implication, therefore, it is possible that 'C.S.' was himself ignorant of the Pali text and produced an English rendering from H. Sumangala's sanne. Fortunately, the Editor was able to refer to The Buddhist Ray in the British Library. This journal proved to be a pioneer Theravada-orientated monthly edited by 'Philangi Dasa', a pseudonym for Dr. H. C. Vetterling of Santa Cruz, California. (He admits to making a vow to produce a Buddhist journal entirely out of his own resources for seven years. Thus, it appeared from 1888-94.) In this closely-printed publication is to be found the above-mentioned English rendering in serial form the 'translator' being C. Samerasingha, of whom nothing is known to the Editor.

The reader may be interested to learn that the story of the ill-fated arahat is to be found in the 22nd chapter of the Mahavamsa; the Rasavahini (composed by Ratthapala Thera of Tungattavanka Pirivena, Mahavihara, Anuradhapura, and revised by Vedeha in the middle of the 14th century); the Kakavanittisaraihavalatu, comprising popular didactic stories, forty from India and sixty-three from Ceylon; and the Saddharmalankara, a Sinhalese compilation from the Rasavahini (1538).

Of the Telakatatagatha, Law comments that 'the charm of the style of composition lies in the balanced rhythm of the lines and alliterations ...'. The poem is composed throughout in the Vasantatilaka metre which is a variety of Sarkari. Malalasekera states that 'the style of the poem clearly shows that it was written by a man who also knew Sanskrit quite well. Only such a man could have constructed in the elaborate and beautiful metre of the poem, so delicate a specimen of mosaic work in Sanskritized Pali.'

In his romanised edition, Gooneratne inserted the traditional subheadings which indicate specific themes of each section of the poem, and Law copied and elaborated on these in the introduction to his translation:

Verses 2-5 Ratanatattaya—in praise of the Triple Gem
6-28 Maranãmussati—recollection of death
29-43 Aniccalakkhaña
44-54 Dukkhalakkhaña
55-63 Anattalakkhaña
64-77 Asubhalakkhaña the characteristics of impermanence, dissatisfaction, egolessness and impurity

11. A few archaic expressions have been replaced and key Pali terms inserted in parenthesis. 'Rebirth' has been substituted for 'reincarnation' although, for poetic effect, 'metamorphosis' 'metempsychosis' and 'transmigratory' have been retained. 'Sin' can be interpreted by a number of Pali words, principally pãpa or akusala.

Vol. III, No. 3 (March 1890): vv. 2-28 (the first verse was omitted, so that only ninety-seven verses appeared, but this was included in the reprint).
Vol. III, No. 6 (June 1890): vv. 44-63
8 (August 1890): vv. 64-83
10 (October 1890): vv. 84-98
15. Law, introduction to "Verses on oil-pot", op. cit.
1. May the sovereign of Lanka subdue and conquer his enemies—a sovereign whose deportment is equal to that of an elephant; who is possessed of integrity and other good qualities; whose limbs are long, stout and elegant as the body of a snake; and who is free from malice and always ready to do good to the righteous.

2. Bow from head and heart, to that benevolent Supreme Being, who has been compared to the full moon in the heaven of the solar race, and who has pointed out the road to Nirvāṇa, receiving adorations from all, and mastering the ocean of knowledge.

3. Always bow down before the Supreme Law preached by Sakya Muni, and equal to a flight of steps leading to heaven, or to a vessel sailing across the ocean of metamorphosis, or to a road free from infernal regions.

4. Bow to the Brotherhood of the Select, infinitely complimented by the Buddha himself, similar to a field of rich soil for the seeds of the meritorious, and possessed of qualities capable of bestowing ultimate happiness on those that make the least offering with pure hearts.

5. Beings! On account of the mighty influence of the Three Gems, myriads of tenants of the Three Worlds (Kāma-, Rūpa-, and Atīra-lokas) have attained the blissful state of Nirvāṇa. There being no refuge equal to that in the Three Gems, contract a habitual acquaintance with them.

6. Shake off your dull sloth and attend to meritorious deeds, as the doctrine of merit and demerit is doubtless made known to the people through the sovereign of Lanka, who does not feel satisfied in doing good to the public and in spending the nocturnal hours on that account.

7. Beings! Go to the king of Ceylon, the true friend of the meritorious, and without hesitation lead a life in accordance with the doctrines of the Law, as it is absolutely rare to find people industriously active and rendering true friendship in promoting the good of the world.

8. Refrain from lethargic habits, and observe the precepts of the Law, as it is evident that the Law is the guide of all. It tastes sweeter than the sweetest, surpasses in value all the worldly gems, and dispels the grief of those in the Three Worlds.

9. Take no rest, absorb wholly in meditation on grief and on the inconstancy and soullessness of the five constituents of the body, put and end to the desires of existence of this rickety vessel of the body, and lead for good and all a life acceptable in the eye of the Law.

10. As there are in the Three Worlds none, in fact, exempted from death, either in the past, present, or future, it is not right and proper to feed on procrastination and to say, ‘‘There is no leisure for me to do meritorious acts today,’’ and, ‘‘I will attend to them to-morrow.’’

11. As it is evident that a stone thrown up is immediately attracted to the earth on account of its weight, so it happens, most undoubtedly, that every one born is destined to share the fate of death.

12. There is nothing that can intervene and prevent the fall of a man hurled from the edge of a precipice, nor is there anyone out of those in the Three Worlds free from death. Hence do not adhere to life and wealth.

13. As it is natural to suppose that a shower of rain attended with lightning, whilst leaving the clouds in the upper regions descends to the earth, so living beings unerringly drop into the dreadful abyss of death, there being none permanent in the universe.

14. As the terrible, big waves of the ocean roll and dash to wash away the sea-beach, so living beings roll and dash, only to disappear in the mighty Ocean of Death.

15. It is an admitted fact that the bull-like Death perpetually devours and consumes the field of living beings, escaping the vigilance of horses, elephants, and armed men of valour, though guarded and protected by them.

16. Beings! As the bright light of a candle is extinguished by a violent storm, so, in this world, the shining lamp of age of living beings is put out by the strong wind of death.

17. In days of yore, valiant monarchs, such as Rāma, Ārjuna, and others that had come off victorious in battlefields, dipping their bodies in waters of mortality, were at last numbered with the dead. Thus in this world there are none excluded from death.

18. Neither one’s wife, children, and friends, nor his wealth, youth, and grace, nor the Goddess of Beauty, nor the earth diversified by elevations and limited by one sheet of salt water, accompany him that is at the point of death.

19. Similar to the fate of insects drawn towards the light of a burning candle, the pre-eminent Brahmās, the gods, anti-gods, demigods, nāgas, rāksas, and all the other beings are snatched away by the flame of death at the expiration of their term of life.
20. Like bright lights standing against a strong current of wind, the principal disciples of the Buddha, such as Śāriputta and others, who has destroyed the four modes of desire (asāvasa), and thereby attained a pure and holy state, at last plunged into the jaws of the tide of death.

21. Possessed of eyes equal to two full-blown lotuses, and of a constitution replete with two and thirty physical features, the Buddha, Lord and Teacher of the Three Worlds, who had made an end of all the desires, at last was dashed by the wild and mighty elephant of death.

22. As some wild-fire that has caught a jungle is never satisfied, so the elephant of death always makes an end of everyone, betraying no mark of sympathy either with the sick, infirm, or young.

23. Neither the ocean is overflooded, though it receives the element of water from every river or source, nor the blazing fire gets tired of consuming the firewood. In like manner the unrelenting Angel of Death is never satisfied, though he has had immense work of execution in the universe.

24. The beings of the world who are destitute of wisdom, merit, and self-denial, and who are led away by the labyrinth of ignorance, sink into the most horrid grave, desiring the acquisition of wealth, which is equal to waves or a transitory dream.

25. Unmerciful death being capable of destroying the Three Worlds, what benefit could be derived from sleep, and why any being born in this world, and subject to decay and dissolution, should adhere to wealth and existence, when they are no better than the imaginary prospect of a phantom?

26. Seeing that the beings of the world are continually subject to decrepitude, passion, envy, malice, disease, fear, and grief, should there be anyone that does not feel disgusted with existence in the universe, he must be a cruel being, and death itself is not so cruel. Let him by all means be reproached.

27. Beings! Beings! Why do you not see the Angel of Death, armed with the sabre of infirmity, continually destroying the Three Worlds, and why do you take your rest indifferently during the three watches of the night? Always lead, without hesitation, a meritorious life that will entail neither birth nor death.

28. Beings! In order to avoid the cold hand of Death, make it always a point to pass your time steadfastly in meditation on death, and in the manner following. He that is given up to such meditation finally puts and end to every mode of desire that is inherently injurious to living beings.

29. What is there substantial in life, when the most graceful body is deformed by infirmity, when every degree of physical energy is snatched away by malignant disease, and when one’s existence, supported by nourishment, is made away with?

30. Beings that are subject to ruin by the drift of wind of actions of merit and demerit, in the mighty ocean of metamorphosis, with waves of dire disease, hasten to do good and to obtain Nibbāna, leaving undone what may entail grief and pain on anyone.

31. Neither his wealth, friends, children, relations, servants, nor his wife, as dear as life, accompany him that is about to depart this life only the result of his own deeds of merit and demerit done in this world.

32. Since the vessel of the body, while sailing in the ocean of eternity is sure to be wrecked in a moment, being subject to the drift of violent storms of actions of previous births, acquire noble merits.

33. The life continually held up in this world in various ways, is as easily knocked down as an unannealed vessel of clay. Lead a meritorious life that will take you to heaven, since it is evident that good deeds are not left unrewarded, even in the same stage of life.

34. In accordance with their merits, the gods at the expiration of their term of blissfulness leave heaven, and so do the children of the earth when their life is extinct. Now, should any being of sound sense cleave to existence, when it is limited both on earth and in heaven?

35. Neither the Supreme Buddha with his train of disciples, nor the moon with the myriads of stars, nor Indra with the host of celestial beings that prostrate themselves at his feet, nor anything that has existence, is free from extinction of existence. Hence life is equal to a bubble of water.

36. Beings pregnant with the desire of existence, and lost in the labyrinth of ignorance, why should you deviate from the path of rectitude, seeing that the flower of youth and beauty, like as it is to a diadem, and the association with the agreeable, though dear as life, are in no way unlike the existence of a flash of lightning?

37. The son in a previous birth took the place of the father, and the father that of the son; the wife, too, on another occasion, was either the mother, the father, or the son. Hence this world is like a theatre where magnificent but contrary events are displayed.

38. Observe that there are beings now admitted to embrace a period of celestial happiness with goddesses in Indra’s paradise, but now animated to suffer the grief and misery in hell, where there are trees full of sharp thorns sixteen inches long.
39. There are also beings who, after an acquirement of irdhī, and after taking ambrosial food from golden dishes, are born in the bottomless pit to swallow the fiery thunderbolts there.

40. There are also beings that, after acquiring wealth and comfort and after driving in stately carriages in this world, as well as in the, abode of the blessed, invade the infernal regions to take their rounds in the brunt of sharp weapons.

41. There are, moreover, beings that are now doomed to take their turn in the Vētārāni hell, after passing a period of merriment and joy in heaven, in the company of goddesses, on the banks of the celestial river that springs from the habitable quarters of the god Īsvara.

42. The most embellished gardens, abundant with verdure and foliage, and the highest Meru, and the Kailāsa mountains, dotted with the habitable groves of the most amiable goddesses, must eventually be brought to an end.

43. Is it wise in any being to stick to life and wealth, when wealth is like wind, fire, or water; when life is like a flash of lightning which is impermanent; and when the body is like a mirage, enchantment, or the reflection of the moon in water?

44. In this world of horror there is nothing that gives felicity to beings, neither is there any being that does not fall a prey to infelicity, and on this account it is far from being the desire of the supreme and intelligent, who are subject to sickness, sickness, and death, to aim at rebirth.

45. Is there any one capable of holding a piece of red-hot iron with his hand, and where is that reasonable being truly wishing to embrace this ungovernable body, which leaks out impurity, and which is a source of grief and pain?

46. Beings! There is nothing in this world so dreadful as death, no pain equal to that of ailment, and no deformity, in like manner, similar to that of decrepitude; yet, in consequence of ignorance, rebirth is desired.

47. As there is nothing essential in this body, it is equal to a reed, bamboo, or the stem of a plantain tree. The belief in the existence of a soul (as a separate entity) is in itself the cause of grief and pain; and the body, as an ungrateful and discontented friend, though nourished and supported by every means of existence, does not follow the dead beyond the grave.

48. On what account should an intelligent man fell the absence of desire; seeing the state of this constitution, a constitution haunted by snakes of the four elements, equal to a most rickety building, and resembling a mass of foam, or a weapon pointed and poisoned.

49. Moment after moment living beings advance nearer and nearer the grave, and the Angel of Death, armed with the scimitar of old age, follows them to make an end of their lives. As the time that is past cannot be recalled, it is indispensable that meditation on existence of grief in the universe should be adhered to.

50. To the one that endures life only for a short duration, repetition of mortality comes ever and anon, and to the other that is long-lived, grief, pain and infirmity are always on the increase. Existence in the universe, in any state, being thus mingled with grief and pain, lead a meritorious life in order to make away with it.

51. Beings! Beings! Lay up prudently a store of good deeds. By those that have been thrown into the prison of metempsychosis, where there is grief equal to fire, no time should be lost.

52. Beings! Felicity in all the worlds is so insignificant that it is compared to a dewdrop at the end of a blade of grass, and infelicity so immense that it is equal to the mighty waters of the ocean. The enjoyment of the former will prevent us from taking a right view, since such enjoyment is inconsistent, and may be reckoned in the scale of the latter. Hence in all the Three Worlds there is nothing but grief and pain.

53. The ignorant in this world destroy animal life and commit other sins to support their own lives, although there is no body that takes to the next world his life, which is continually mingled with sin and defilement. He that desires to have it always becomes the object of ruin.

54. Imagine in a sense of inconsistency the actual state of this body, a body that is always useless and unacceptable, destitute of praise, and subject to infirmity and dissolution. It bears a resemblance to a pot of impurity or dirt of putrid smell, a serpent or a malady, to a draught of poison, or a sword sharp and pointed.

55. It is admitted by men of understanding that there is no soul inherent either in the six organs or in the five constituent parts of a sentient being, and that each constituent is compared to a rainbow, mirage, plantain tree, bubble of water, mass of foam, flame of fire, or swelling of a river.

56. It is absurd to believe in the existence of a soul in this body; a body which is unsteady and perishable as a blaze of fire. The idea of
a soul is as absurd as that of a barren woman’s son running a race along the shaft of a carriage made of the horns of a rabbit.

57. It is rank nonsense to say that there is a soul in this body; a body that is actually soulless and equal to a plantain tree. He that erroneously persists in believing that there is a soul, is indeed in no way unequal to one who attempts to drink, in order to slake his thirst, a draught of mirage out of a cup made of a bubble of water.

58. The endeavours of an unintelligent man to add to mirage scent extracted from the flowers of a fig tree are all in vain, and, in like manner, he that persists in the erroneous impression that there is a soul in this body reaps no benefit, since there is no soul actually in existence.

59. There is nothing to constitute a soul either in the five constituent parts (the body, sensation, perception, habitual tendencies and consciousness) or in the six personal residences (the eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind), and he that persists in the belief of the existence of a soul is evidently compared to one persevering to obtain a solid beam from the stem of a plantain tree.

60. This constitution, which is painful, inconsistent, and, indeed, unfavourable, should not be taken in the light that it is intended for the sake of enjoyment, as there is nothing substantial in it. Such being the case, acquire noble merits without hesitation.

61. There is, in fact, no constitution apart from the five constituent parts of the body, and no cloth that is not composed of the thread. In like manner, on the face of the earth there is nothing in this body that should be styled the soul, save the five constituent parts of the body, which are mutable, and every moment subject to dissolution.

62. As the silly hart in vain runs after the fanciful sight of yonder mirage, taking it to be a sheet of water, so do people give way to desire, purely from a false impression that there is steadiness in the unstable existence of nature.

63. Attend directly to meditation on the subject of the absence of a soul, as there is no soul contained in the body, and the body, similar to a flash of atmospheric lightning, is produced by the conception of thought in accordance with the ordinary operations of nature.

64. It is always usual with beings to support this corporeal constitution; a constitution which is useless, disgusting, filled with excrement and uncleanness, composed of spittle, impurity, blood, tears, and fat, and equal to a pot full of different species of dirt and soil.

65. Beings! Man will never be free from impurity, nor see anything good in this human frame, although he may use for his ablution the immense mass of water contained in the four great oceans, and for his perfumery an enormous quantity of scent, as high as the highest Meru.

66. This body, the containant of urine and excrement, which is subject to grief, pain, and disease, may be compared to a carbuncle from which matter comes out at nine different places. Nor is there any other horrid grave than that of the body itself.

67. Even parents are apt to entertain a feeling of antipathy against their children, if urine and excrement, contained within their bodies, are placed in a contrary position, exposing to the view of others. What more can we expect from our children, wives, and relations?

68. Oh! it is indeed a matter of deep regret to think of the man, led away by ignorance, and actually given up to sinful actions in this world, in order to support his body; a body stinking subject to dissolution, containing nine passages, invaded by worms (micrococi) of eighty species, and composed of blood, phlegm, flesh, and bones.

69. He that takes delight in this body, a body equal to a blister, subject to various disorders, continually filled with blood, water, and fat, and eatable by dogs and foxes, is a man destitute of wisdom, and exposed to grief in his future state.

70. Beings! The body from which urine and excrement perpetually run out is equal to a leaky pot of salt; insignificant as a bubble of water, suspicious as the haunt of a serpent, and always as unpleasant in smell as a cesspool.

71. As the blooming lotus that shoots up from a sheet of soil composed of mud and dirt should not be condemned, because its origin is such, so one’s favourable disposition for the good of the world is never unworthy of praise, in this world or in the next, because it is the result produced by the combination of the five constituent parts.

72. At any rate, the human frame, either male or female, which is composed of two and thirty component parts, filthy and unpleasant, contains, nothing of consequence. Hence, in this world, there is no other benefit the intelligent derive from it than that of doing good to others.

73. Although the body is the combination of two and thirty such parts, it should be supported, for a considerable period, by one of common sense, and during that period of existence he should lead a meritorious life, since merit, as a precious gem in this world, never falls to attain the object that may be desired.

74. When a quantity of milk is mixed with that of a drug, the essence of the one comes in contact with that of the other, so as to produce a
he will remain for millions and millions of years in wretchedness incom-
parable, and will reappear in the human form, loaded with grief, pain, and misery.

84. In this universe there is nothing that should be compared to the
(Good) Law, so far as it concerns the future weal of mankind. By its
effect, which is exceedingly vast, and which contributes to give a death-
blow to every depravity of sin, may I always be so fortunate as to attain
the state of happiness, both worldly and nirvānā.

85. May my relatives, friends, and enemies, and those that are neutral,
and all beings in all worlds, become fortunate and happy, and free from
grief, fear, and disorder.

86. This constitution, which is always subject to sickness, infirmity,
and dissolution, may be compared to a broken pot full of dirt. It is apt
to fall into error and ruin at every stage, and to think that everything
in this world is intended for the good of the living.

87. With regard to the old, the young, or the babe, the Angel of
Death makes no distinction whatever, but involves them indiscriminately
in mortality. Whether I am standing, moving, or resting, I am advancing
nearer the jaws of Death, as death is my fate.

88. O you beings, whose bodies have had the experience of trans-
migratory existence, always attend to meditation, as the repeated bad
qualities are actually inherent in your bodies. Those that are given to
meditation should make it a point at all times to do so; they should
meditate on kind feelings towards all, on Lord Buddha, on his Doctrine,
on the bad state of our nature, and on death.

89. Beings! Attend to retributive deeds of meritorious actions in this
world, and reap their ample rewards. Be charitable in rendering others
what will give them satisfaction and pleasure; because wealth acquired
is nothing compared to contentment gained by charity.

90. When hands are clapped, sound is produced. Hence there must
be a cause for every effect. In like manner there cannot be any birth,
death, or existence in the animal kingdom apart from the combination
of the five constituents.

91. Beings! As ignorance is the cause of existence, so the result of
merit and demerit is the cause of birth in various ranks and grades.
Thus in consequence of birth, beings in their transmigratory existence
become continually subject to grief, decay and death.
92. By the destruction of ignorance, the desire of existence disappears, and by the suppression of the desire of existence, rebirth ceases, and by the extinction of rebirth, grief, infirmity and dissolution cease; as if the light of a candle is put out.

93. Beings! It is said by our Lord Sakya Sinha, that he who in this world examines the constitution of the Buddha's Doctrine of Enlightenment sees the Buddha himself. Endeavour to comprehend the Teacher of the Three Worlds, and his holy doctrine; it is the invariable practice of the virtuous to do so.

94. Beings! (To be saved) it is absolutely necessary, by the hook of wisdom, to pull out the principal causes of sin (avarice, malice and ignorance) which are unpleasant and equal to a sharp thorn piercing the heart, and which lead to ruin and every mode of evil.

95. As Mount Meru stands unshaken before a strong wind, so the heart, pure and free from the attraction of existence, is always unshaken by the eight vicissitudes (lokadhamma) of the world and the five desires (kilesas) in their various and complete stages.

96. Beings! Always give your time for the good of others, as the Buddha, the Supreme Lord, who sailed across the deep ocean of ten noble attributes (paramiti), regardless of the horrors of metamorphosis, and who destroyed the flame of ignorance and by self-exertion gained a full knowledge of all that should be known.

97. Suspending the attainment of Nirvāṇa, at a time when he was not far from it, Sakya Muni passed many a dreadful birth on account of his sympathetic feelings toward others. So do I give you instructions chiefly with the object of doing good to others.

98. It is impossible that any one of sound understanding should wander away from the noble path of the Law, after attaining the most difficult object of attainment, the human for, and after gaining all the varieties of wealth and luxury and a comprehensive knowledge of the doctrine capable of giving a death-blow to the desires of existence.

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE SUTTA NIPATA

N. A. Jayawickrama

THE YAKKHA BALLADS

ALTHOUGH the three Suttas, Hemavata, Ālavaka and Sāclidoma are fundamentally similar in that they are riddle-poems resembling the Yakṣa Praśnas of the Mahābhārata, the Hemavata Sutta demands special attention on account of its extraordinary length and the difference it bears to the other two in details. Unlike the other two suttas it contains no prose introduction and its principal characters Sātāgira and Hemavata are represented as friendly beings whereas the two yakkhas Ālavaka and Sāclidoma are no more than mere demons.¹ All the three suttas are dialogue-ballads, but the dialogue consists of only one question and an answer to it in the Sāclidoma Sutta, while there are only two characters in the Ālavaka Sutta. The dramatic element is quite pronounced in the Hemavata Sutta, and the Ālavaka Sutta is not devoid of it.

Hemavata Sutta

The suttas begins as a conversation between Sātāgira, "the dweller on the Sāta Hill in Majjhimadesa", and Hemavata, "the Himayāyan Sprite".² When the former succeeds in convincing the latter of the virtues of the Buddha, they visit him, and Hemavata who plays the role of the questioner throughout the poem asks the Buddha questions. The two yakkhas are delighted with his answers: they extol him and, along with their followers, seek his refuge.

The suttas may be divided into three parts, viz: (i) Sn. 153-167, the dialogue between the two yakkhas, (2) Sn. 168-175, the dialogue between Hemavata and the Buddha, (3) Sn. 176-180, the conclusion which consists of an exaltation of the Buddha.

Part I. When Sātāgira invites Hemavata to visit Gotama, the latter asks him whether Gotama possesses various qualities, which Sātāgira in his answers affirms. All the virtues of the Buddha which are enumerated in this dialogue may equally well be attributed to any sage. Even the

¹ Ālavaka: "of the forest", from atavi, forest; Sāclidoma: "needle-haired".
² SnA, 197. W. Stede suggests that Sātāgira may be a variant for Sātāgila, a secondary form of Satagila "swallowing a hundred". He further suggests that Nālāgiri stands for Naragila.
few stanzas which are meant to describe the personal attributes (Sn. 165-167) lay emphasis on his ascetic life and not his person. In fact the whole poem emphasises the conduct (cariyā) and the spiritual attainments of the Buddha (the word used is citta—the mind). The Buddha at most here is a perfect muni and is not spoken of in the grandiloquent terms that usually accompany a developed phase of Buddhism.

Part II. Hemavata asks a question which may be interpreted as being of cosmological or cosmogonical import, as it vaguely touches upon the ādi and anta of the universe (Sn. 168). The Buddha gives a cryptic answer from a teleological standpoint, but does not enumerate nor specify what groups of six he alludes to (Sn. 169). In answer to the next question in which the yakkha shows that he has understood the allusions to the āyatanas the Buddha mentions the pleasures of the five senses and the mind as upādāna (grasping) as the sixth and states that their abandonment leads to emancipation from misery (Sn. 171-172). The yakkha then asks the nature of the person who crosses the Flood (ogha—Sn. 173) and the Buddha describes the virtuous sage who has gained spiritual attainments and “does not sink into the deep”. (Sn. 174).

Part III. The two yakkhas praise the Buddha (Sn. 176-177) and compliment themselves for having taken the opportunity of visiting him (Sn. 178). They along with their 1,000 followers seek his refuge (Sn. 179) and make a solemn pledge to honour the Buddha and the Dhamma (no Sangha is mentioned) in all their wanderings (Sn. 180). Even here the epithets used of the Buddha are those of the perfect sage.

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The language of the sutta is the standard poetical Pali. There are many poetical expressions as divyā ratti (Sn. 153b), anomanānām (Sn. 153c, 177a), sayusuddhacārana (Sn. 162b, 163b), khinaṇvapatho (Sn. 158b: Comy, khino vacāya patho cp. Sn. 1076d: vadapatha) and ryappatho (Sn. 163Ab, 163Bb, 164b, cp. vyappathayo Sn. 9612). The frequent use of the interrogative particle kacei expressing doubt (18 times) and the disjunctive indeclinable atho (7 times) is very striking. Though the indic. 3 sg. āha (Sn. 158c) is the normal Aor. (pf.) 3 sg. it is used here in the present tense as in several other old suttas.

The syntax if the verses is generally straightforward, but there are a few instances of ellipsis; e.g. Sn. 168, 169. The Comy. correctly takes kismin at Sn. 168ab3 as locative in one or other of its basic meanings.

3. SnA. 21off. kismin at Sn. 168a is explained as bhāvena bhāvalakkhana bhummavacanan (being a condition, it is a locative denoting condition), at 168b: adhikaramatile bhummavacanan (locative in the sense of relation—in time) and at 168d: bhāvena bhāvalakkhana-karomatresu bhummavacanan (being a condition it is a locative characterising condition and denoting cause).

Pāli Buddhist Review 2, 3 (1977) and equates it in the first pāda to kismin uppanne and in the fourth pāda to kismin sati. The explanation of chassu in the corresponding stanza (Sn. 169) is similar.

As regards style the sutta stands out as a highly dramatic piece. Like many other similar ballads this too was probably sung on suitable occasions, three different reciters singing the stanzas ascribed to each of the characters. The poems appears to be divided into two separate scenes, for the dialogue between the two yakkhas takes place at one place and their conversation with the Buddha at a different place. Except for a few occasional poetical flashes the style invites no comments. There are two highly descriptive passages in the sutta, viz. Sn. 165-167, 176-180. The simile siham vekacaraṃ (Sn. 166a) is reminiscent of numerous others of lonely wanderers (vide Khaggavisāna Sutta). The repetition of the same words at Sn. 163A, 163B and 164 is due to a subsequent expansion probably effected in Burma.

The group of six indicating a set of phenomena need not necessarily be late, and the contents show that the reference is to the āyatanas, an early concept in Buddhism. The grouping of epithets at Sn. 167, 176, 177 is to be generally regarded as a sign of lateness, but the absence of any indication of a developed Buddhology attributing supernormal qualities shows that these verses may still be old. There are no indications of these verses being later than the rest of the poem.

Metre. The Anuṣṭubh ślokas of the poem are interrupted by two stanzas in Triśūlub (Sn. 176, 177). The repertory phrases (iti Satāgira yakko, etc.) which the Comy. attributes to the sangitikārā (SnA. 193) do not fall within the metre. The break in the metre may perhaps indicate that the two stanzas in Triśūlub were borrowed from elsewhere; but the full stanza Sn. 176 has not yet been traced to any other work, though three of its individual pādās are seen to occur frequently in other metrical works. On the other hand Sn. 177 occurs at S.I. 38 (cp. Sn. 153). Yet, the composite nature of the Saṅghākāra Vagga of the Saṁyutta does not warrant the inference that Sn. has borrowed this from there. There is no doubt that these stanzas are old. The fact that they are written in the historically older Triśūlub is further proof of their antiquity. However, it may still be probable that these two stanzas were interpolated from an earlier source. There are also a few metrical irregularities in the poem. Sn. 153 is in mixed Anuṣṭubh and Vaiḍīliya (the first pāda in Vaiḍīliya). Sn. 154a, 155a, contain nine syllables each instead of eight.

4. Only Burmese Ms. and SnA. accept these two additional stanzas.
Doctrinal Developments. The whole poem reflects a period when the Muni-ideal was the vogue in Buddhism. The emphasis of the poem on the conduct and mental discipline of the Buddha, the reference made to him as the ideal sage, the simple conception of the Buddha as opposed to what may be seen in later works, and the simplicity of the ideas in contrast with the dogmatism of the latter all point to the early date of the poem. The *sutta* is unadorned by any doctrinal colouring of a speculative nature.

In their application none of the terms shows any distinct growth. In *supanāhita* (*Sn.* 154a, 155a, cp. 163Aa, 163Ba, 164a and the term *padhāna*) is found an idea parallel to yoga though the word itself does not occur here. Again, the yogīn can be implied from *Sn.* 156d, 157d (*jhanāna na riñcati, also cp. terms satipatthāna and bhāvanā*). These ideas are old and were the common knowledge of all schools of contemporary Indian thought. *Sn.* 154b, 155b, 156b, 157b indirectly convey the idea of mettā. The concept of *moha* (*Sn.* 160c, 161c) may be compared with *moha* in the *Bhagavadgītā* (4, 35; 14, 13; 17; 22, etc.). It is essentially a state of mind unlike māyā which is more in the nature of a cosmic (or metaphysical) state found in association with the empirical world. The term *dībhā patha* has already been commented on. The occurrence of the groups of six at *Sn.* 169 indicates the early classification of the āyatana. They are mentioned later under the *pāñca kāmagāna* and the mind (*Sn.* 171ab). The didactic element of the *sutta* is best judged from *Sn.* 174-175—two stanzas important from a teleological standpoint. The terms *ogha* and *anāgáva* have been discussed elsewhere. None of the other terms that occur in this *sutta* calls for particular attention as they are used in all stages of the language.

Judging from internal evidence the *sutta* appears old. Its language shows no signs of lateness while there are no special forms which may be classed as very old. Its diction is the early poetical expression. The numerous *pādas* and stanzas of the second half of the poem (*Sn.* 163A, ff., i.e. at the end of the dialogue between the two yakkhás) which are in common with other metrical works suggests that that section of the poem has borrowed freely from an existing floating metrical literature. External evidence will be discussed after dealing with the internal evidence from the other two *suttas*.

7. *PBR* 1, 3.

Ālavaka and Sāciroma Suttas

The position of the Ālavaka Sutta immediately after the Hemavata Sutta points to an attempt at an arrangement of *suttas* according to subject-matter. This has already been noticed in the remarks on the *Vasala Sutta*. However, there is no consistency in this matter, for the Sāciroma Sutta is placed in the next (Culla) vaggā, after the Mangala Sutta. It is also significant that the four *suttas* (beginning with Parābhava) preceding Ālavaka are parittas. Both the Sāciroma and Ālavaka Suttas contain a prose introduction in which the two yakkhás are seen to intimidate the Buddha with identical threats. The Buddha’s answer in both instances is the same. The first half of the introduction is somewhat different in the two *suttas*, and there is another yakkha, Khara, mentioned in the Sāciroma Sutta. In both instances the *sutta* proper begins with a question in verse, after the prelude in prose. The prose of these *suttas* is the canonical idiom, and therefore represents a later phase of Pali than the gāthās. The *Yakkhā Sānyutta* (*S.I.* 206-215) contains both these *suttas* in identical words. It is quite probable that the prose introductions were appended to the gāthās during the time of the composition of *Sn.* as an anthology, and that they were taken from, the legends in the *Yakkhā Sānyutta* though both works are dependent on an earlier tradition for the gāthās. In spite of the fact that *Mih.* 36 attributes *Sn.* 184 to Sānyutta, both Yakkhā Sānyutta and *Sn.* are collections made from earlier existing material.

The Ālavaka Sutta contains a series of questions and answers (*Sn.* 181-190) followed by an epilogue in verse (*Sn.* 191-192) whereas the Sāciroma Sutta ends with the Buddha’s answer to the question at *Sn.* 190. An examination of the former shows that *Sn.* 190 forms a suitable conclusion to the *sutta* when the line, so ‘ham aja paññāmi yo atha samparāyiko indicates the questioner’s complete satisfaction with the answers he has received. The tone of the epilogue appears totally different from that of the rest of the poem, and resembles that of some of the concluding verses of the Thera-gāthās or the later *Apadānas*. The only connection of the poem with the Ālavaka-legend is in the phrase, Ālavikāgāma at *Sn.* 191b. The fact that this *sutta* is perhaps later than the preceding stanzas is also suggested by the statement, yattha dinnam mahāphalām (line d) which stands at a much lower level than the previous statement.

10. *Vide* PBR.
12. The events connected with the Ālavaka Sutta are placed in the sixteenth year after Enlightenment—E. J. Thomas, *Life of the Buddha*, p. 119.
at Sn. 190cd. It appears quite irrelevant that the yakka should realize that the Buddha is an ideal puññakkuṭṭha, when he should be thankful for the exposition of his questions. Sn. 192 occurs at Ap. 6, 152; 415, 17 and various commentaries; and its tone appears decidedly late. It is highly probable that Sn. 190 formed the original conclusion of the gāthās and that the epilogue was a later addition concurrent with the identification of these gāthās with the Ālāvaka-legend.

The two opening stanzas of the Sācīloma Sutta (Sn. 270-271) consist of a question and an answer. Like the two opening stanzas of the Ālāvaka Sutta they are Triṣṭubh; the first two stanzas of Hemavatī's dialogue with the Buddha are also in Triṣṭubh (Sn. 168-169). Questions and answers of this nature are found in a section of the Devatā Sanyutta (S.I, 36-45); and further, two of the above passages occur there: viz. Sn. 168-169 at S.I, 41 and Sn. 181-182 at S.I, 42. The occurrence of these stanzas in the Sanyutta, independently of the rest of the respective poems suggests the existence of a set of riddles dealing with Buddhist topics prior to their being incorporated in longer poems. Unlike the Ālāvaka Sutta, the Sācīloma Sutta seems to have been built upon one such riddle though Sn. 270-271 have not been traced as an independent piece. The third stanza in Anuṣṭubh is an explanatory verse on the answer to the riddle. The general appearance of a sutta is given by the addition of the concluding stanza. It is obvious that many Pali poems have incorporated earlier existing material, but Sācīloma Sutta appears totally different as it is evident that it is built on the framework of the riddle. The four gāthās as a whole, appear old, but on the basis of this argument Sn. 270-271 are older than the other two.

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The language of the suttas is considerably old; and the Ālāvaka Sutta preserves many dialectical as well as old historical forms. The phrase mittiṇi gāthati (Sn. 185d, 187d) preserves the historical gender of mitta, although in Pali the word is masculine. The idiom itself is perhaps Vedic or post-Vedic rather than Classical Sanskrit or Pali. The word sussāsā is to be taken as a shorter inst. sg. (Vedic) and not as a contraction of the Pali sussāsaya. There is a Vedic prp. in saddahāno (cp. śrād-dadhāna—Sn. 186a); there are dialectical forms as śiṅgha and bhīyoyo (Sn. 189)—also in prose. The particle of interrogation su is frequently added to the interrogative pronouns to emphasise the question, as is characteristic of old gāthā-Pali (cp. Epic sma). Other old forms are: agent noun uṭṭhātā (Sn. 187b) and imp. 2 sg. Āṭp. pucchassu (Sn. 189a). There are hardly any peculiar forms in the Sācīloma Sutta. The forms kutonidānā, kutojā (Sn. 270), itonidānā, itojā (Sn. 271) are common poetical forms. The reading dhāṃkaṃ (crow) should be preferred to vaṅkaṃ (see also SnA. 303).

Style. Both suttas are dialogue-ballads, but the dialogue is more pronounced in the Ālāvaka Sutta. The moral truths are stated expressively in a series of questions and answers in clear and simple language (cf. the opening stanzas of Bhg. VIII). The sutta lends itself to easy dramatization on account of its being well punctuated by the words of the two interlocutors. The concluding stanza (Sn. 192) like Sn. 179-180, enhances its dramatic effect. The Sācīloma Sutta, though short, is more ornate than the other. It contains three similesviz. Sn. 270d-271d, 272b, 272d; and the stanza Sn. 271 is rather cryptic.

Metre: The break in metre in the two poems has already been noted (supra). Although Triṣṭubh is historically older than Anuṣṭubh śloka, it in itself provides no useful data. As observed earlier, the occurrence of one of these Triṣṭubh passages (Sn. 181-182) at S.I, 42 and a similar passage (Sn. 168-169, though in Anuṣṭubh śloka) at S.I, 41 along with many other similar questions and answers, in the Devatā Sanyutta, may presuppose the early existence of a traditional riddle-literature independent of longer suttas. The disparity in metre is therefore due to the fact that some of these passages are either incorporated in, or utilised to build up (as in the case of the Sācīloma Sutta) longer poems. The two opening stanzas of both suttas, thus appear to have belonged to an altogether different stratum from the rest of the two poems. Metrical irregularities are almost absent in the Anuṣṭubh ślokas (Sn. 184-192, 271). There are two instances of even quarters at Sn. 186a and 187a. Of the Triṣṭubh stanzas (Sn. 181-182, 270-271, 273) Sn. 270b-271b are irregular. Besides containing anacrusis, the caesura after the seventh syllable is not reckoned in them. There are two instances of metrical lengthening, viz. āvahāti (Sn. 181b-182b) and larati (Sn. 183a-184a). The lengthening in sūḍha (Sn. 182a) is due to sandhi.

Doctrinal Evidence: Notwithstanding a few words with a semi—or quasi-technical significance, such as ogha, annava, appamāda, viriya and paññā (Ālāvaka), rāga and dosa (Sācīloma), the two suttas are marked by a total lack of metaphysical thought. The simplicity of ideas and the emphasis laid on saddhā shed some light on the antiquity of the Ālāvaka Sutta. The popular character of the whole poem is also seen

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13. The tradition preserved in the Devatā Sanyutta may perhaps be synchronous with a floating riddle literature which was the predecessor of Sanskrit riddle poetry. Also vide Winternitz, History of Indian Literature, I 352 on old riddle poetry.

from the occurrence of the word idha (here, on earth) in saddhi'dha (Sn. 182a). The popular teachings embodied in the sutta (in Sn. 188-189 which state the four fundamental qualities sacca, dhamma—or dama, dhit—or khanti, and cāga, requisite of a devout householders) are reminiscent of the Dharmasāstras and other allied branches of Sanskrit literature. The practice of one's dharma, truthfulness, discriminate living, diligence, energy, wisdom, desire to learn, doing what is correct, tenacity and perseverance all contribute to help a person to reap the benefits of learning, fame, wealth, acquisition of friends, etc. These teachings were accepted by all schools alike as Sn. 189 points out. The answer to the important question of teleological significance (Sn. 183) emphasises the role saddhi plays in popular Buddhism. As the contents show, this sutta dealing with popular teachings appears old and seems to have drawn freely from the fund of old Indian knowledge. The Sūcioloma Sutta which deals with detachment from passions is particularly more Buddhist than the other. Though the sutta itself is too brief to draw any inference on doctrinal grounds, it has the general appearance of an old piece (specially Sn. 270-271). The poem as a whole may not be of very great antiquity, but the two opening verses, for reasons discussed above, are at least as old as the Hemavata and Ālavaka Suttas.

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The Yakkha-legend (Ālavaka)

The following observations on the yakkha-legend shed some light on our suttas. The Commentary connects the story of Ālavaka with that of Sātāgiria and Hemavata (Sn. 221ff.). When the two yakkhas Sātāgiria and Hemavata were on their way to Jetavana in order to pay their respects to be Buddha before proceeding to the assembly of the yakkhas, they found it impossible to pass over Ālavaka's abode. On investigating the cause they found the Buddha there, saluted him, listened to the dhamma and continued their flight to their final destination. A similar story is found at Udā. 64 when they passed the abode of Ajapālaka-yakkha. In this story is seen a popular attempt, however late it may be, to link up the various yakkhas with one another. The legend of Ālavaka occurs in similar words at Sa. 317ff. in the commentary on the sutta in the Yakkha Sanyutta. A summary of the same legend occurs at AA. 389ff. in the comments on Hathaka Ālavaka, a prince who is said to have been saved from the yakkha's hands. The story itself has much in common with the circle of legends grouped by Watanabe under the title Kalmāṣapāda Stories. The essential links are: (1) the man eating yakkha, (2) the captured king who obtains his freedom by promising to provide the yakkha with food, and the sanctity of that promise, and (3) the conversion of the yakkha. This similarity to the Kalmāṣapāda group is sufficient proof of the antiquity of the Ālavaka-legend.13

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External Evidence

There are sufficient references in the Canon to most of the yakkhas who are represented as taking part in these dialogues. Hemavata and Sātāgiria are included in the list of great yakkhas whose protection should be sought when troubled by other yakkhas.16 Their names represent a class of yakkhas (probably their followers) in the Mahāsāṃaya Sutta. Cha sahassā Hemavatā yakkha... and Sātāgirī tītānā yakkha (D. II, 256) may be contrasted with ime dasatā yakkha at Sn. 179 which speaks of a following of 1,000 instead of a total of 7,000.

The occurrence of the Ālavaka and Sūcioloma Suttas in identical words, in the Yakkha Sānyutta has already been mentioned. Besides this the statue of Sūcioloma which is found at the Bharhut Stūpa along with those of many other yakkhas is a fair land-mark indicating the early acquaintance with all these yakkhas.19 There is no doubt whatsoever that all these yakkhas were known, as seen from the references in the Pali Canon, long before the time of Bharhut, yet the Stūpa itself is helpful in determining the lower limit of the date of these legends.

No remarks need be made here on the concept yakkha, the part yakkhas play in Indian literature or the origin of the yakkha-cult. These questions have been exhaustively dealt with by scholars like A. K. Coomaraswamy (Yaksas), W. Stede (Gespenster geschichten des Peita Vatthu, and s.v. P.T.S.), Dela Vallée Poussin (Indo-Européens et Indo-Iranious; L'Inde jusqu vers 300 av. J.C.), O. H. de A. Wijesekera (U.C.R. I, 2) etc. It is also of no importance to investigate further the Commentarial accounts linking up the legends of various yakkhas. The question to be solved is how these yakkhas came to be associated with the gāthās in Sn. As hinted at earlier, the suttas may be analysed roughly into four different strata: (1) riddles which perhaps preceded the rest of the suttas (Sn.

15. In the list of etad-oggas at A.I. 26 he is called the most pre-eminent of those who cherish the assembly with the four saṅgha patthu (bases of generosity).
17. Malalasekera, D.P.P.N. (s.v.).
18. D. I11, 204-205; Ālānāya Sutta. Cst. the statement at Sn. 197, Hemavata-Sātāgirī atthasati yakkha-sandipataṁ abhanyatāravā mahānubhava yakkhurattāna anesu.
of these two stanzas; for, firstly Sn. 32 appears to be a suitable conclusion to the poem when the herdsman and his wife pledge to practise the holy life; secondly, the recurrence of these two stanzas in totally different contexts at S.I. 6 and 107-108 suggests that they belonged to a stock of traditional verse-stanzas, best represented by the Sagāthaka Vagga of the Samyutta and the Yamaka Vagga of the Dhammapada; and finally, the greater metrical perfection indicating them as distinct from the rest of the stanzas may also point to a difference in the date of composition. Although this is no conclusive proof, it may be surmised with some degree of accuracy that these two stanzas were a subsequent interpolation.

The sutta is mainly a poetical duel between the two chief interlocutors, 'the one rejoicing in his worldly security and the other in his religious belief'. In the alternating stanzas which are highly artistic the Buddha invariably uses the very words of the herdsman either to express the exact opposite or to give a new value to them. Sometimes even the same sounds are reproduced with identical metrical value but expressing something totally different, e.g. Sn. 18a, 19a. pakkodana dhammadhi: akkodhano vigatakkhi. The opposite ideas are expressed in Sn. 18c, 19c with a different connotation for the words repeated viz. channa kuti ahito gini : vivatā kuti nibbuto gini. Sometimes the words in the corresponding stanzas differ considerably, though in each case the speaker makes a statement to illustrate his point of view, e.g. Sn. 20, 21. The contrast is shown only in the topics discussed in Sn. 22, 23, i.e. gopī and cittam respectively. The Buddha is seen playing on the word bhata when Dhaniya says that he is self-supporting (Sn. 24, 25). The next stanza of the Bhagavā is a mere negation of the herdsman's statement. When Dhaniya speaks of tethering his animals the Buddha declares that he has broken all bonds (bandhānāni) and will not seek birth again. Another pair of alternating stanzas concludes the poem when Buddha categorically denies the tempting words of Māra (Sn. 33, 34).

Language and Syntax

Proceeding on to an examination of the internal evidence, language calls for attention first. The sutta contains many archaic and poetical forms.

22. In the former instance the stanza is attributed to a devata, and in the latter to Māra.


24. The Commentary (Sn. 31) says that kuti refers to the body; kuti 'ti attabhāvo. ściyati tī pi, gahā tī pi (Sn. 772), deho tī pi, sandeho tī pi (Thil. 20 Dh. 148) nāvā tī pi (Dh. 369), ratthi tī pi (S. IV. 292), dhaya tī pi, vannikā tī pi (M.I. 144), kuti tī pi, kulakā tī pi (Thil. 1, etc.) uccati.

THE PASTORAL BALLADS

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Dhaniya Sutta

THE Dhaniya Sutta consists chiefly of a dialogue between the rich herdsman Dhaniya and the Buddha. A third interlocutor (Māra) appears towards the end of the sutta, and the narrator himself interrupts the dialogue by describing the scene at Sn. 30. The recitation of the ballads may have proceeded on a line quite similar to the dialogue in the (later) medieval European Miracle Play. The dramatic element predominates in the sutta and the possibility of different reciters singing the respective stanzas attributed to the various characters has been suggested earlier.

It may be said that more definite signs of dramatic representation are seen in the sudden appearance of Māra voicing the popular opinion (Sn. 33, 34). At the same time doubts may be cast on the genuineness

20. Vide SnA. 42.
21. PBR 1, 2, p. 90.
There occur several special poetic compounds as pakkadano, duddhakhāro (Sn. 18a.), akkodhano, vigataktilo (Sn. 19a.), and samñānavāso (Sn. 18b, cp. samñānīyā, Sn. 24b). The lengthening in pathayasi in the refrain is partly archaic and partly metrical. Besides this there are other archaic verbal forms such as vijjare (Sn. 20a, cp. āhāhare, bhāhare, etc. and Vedic śēre and śēre> Pkr. -ire> P. -are, vide Geiger, 122.2); sakkhiṇi (Sn. 28c) historical fūre from śak, śak-śya>- *sakkhya>- sakkhi- with samprasāraṇa; and other historical forms as upassā (future, Sn. 29c), pāvassī (Aor., Sn. 30b), ābhāsatha (Sn. 30d), addassāma (Sn. 31b), cārāmase (Sn. 32b) and bhāvāmase (Sn. 32d) which call for no particular attention. An interesting nominal form is gini (Sn. 18c, 19c) which is dialectal as well as archaic and perhaps poetic. This form probably comes from a dialectal stratum. The initial vowel has dropped off due to loss of accent. (Vedic aṃgira>P. aṅgir- gaṅgir/ gini, cp. aṃtā> aṭṭā/ āṭṭumā/aṭṭumā.) 25 Other noteworthy forms are: samvāṣīyā at Sn. 22b, (diarectic, cp. samñānīyā, Sn. 24b), nibbudhena at Sn. 25b (adverbial inst.) and the sandhi usabho-r-iva with the introduction of the pseudo-organic; Skr, vṛṣabha-iva>P. usabho-iva, the deleted visarga is restored to bridge the hiatus. The word deva, in the refrain is used in the popular sense of cloud and the p.p. nibbuto (Sn. 19c) in its original meaning.

The syntax of the poem also shows that its language belongs to an early stratum of Pali. The free use of the genitive with the verb sunāti (e.g. tassā na sunāmi kā ticā pāpom—I hear no evil of her—Sn. 22c, cp. Sn. 24c, and suvada vassā vassato—hearing it rain—Sn. 30c) is an early construction. The predication of a plural subject with athi is a poetic usage (Sn. 26, 27). 26 The syntax of brahmacariyām Sugata carāmase. (Let us practise the holy life under the Sugata—Sn. 32b) also strikes as belonging to old Pali. The nominal prefix anu-in anuṇare (Sn. 18b, 19b) and the phrase, tin-gu pāragato expressing the early Buddhist concept of ‘crossing over to the Beyond’ are old.

Style

A few remarks on the style of the sutta have already been made in the introduction. The poem stands out as a product of great literary skill and high poetic genius on the part of the composer. With a skillful use of words effecting as little change as possible in the alternating stanzas the author has been successful in illustrating the different points of view of the two interlocutors. The choice of words and expressions is very apt and lends a majestic air to the whole poem. The ballad is no mere versification unlike the artificial poetry of the late Ceylon Chronicles.

25. Tumā <Vedic tman a by-form of ātmān.
26. It is a petrified form even in canonical prose.

All the stanzas are very descriptive and the words of the herdsman paint a beautiful picture of a pastoral scene. Of equal merit is the stanza attributed to the narrator (Sn. 30). The refrain (occurring in Sn. 18-29) with the word deva for rain-cloud is very effective.

Simile, metaphor, world-play, alliteration and assonance and onomatopoeia are employed to some degree. Both the similes used at Sn. 29 reflect ideas quite familiar to other parts of the Canon (cp. Th1, 1184, Th2, 301. Ap. 60, 10 etc.). Most of the Buddha’s answers to Dhaniya contain metaphors. E. M. Hare (Woven Cadences, pp. 218 ff.) has pointed out word-play at Sn. 18a = 19a, 18b = 19b, 22a = 23a, and alliteration and assonance at Sn. 21a, 25abc, 28a, 29b and 33ab=34ab. An onomatopoeic effect is produced by phrases such as, sutvā devassā vassato (Sn. 30c), etc. In spite of the poetical devices employed there appear no signs of lateness in the language of the poem and there is much positive evidence to show that the poem is old.

Metre

The metre of the poem is not uniform, but it is evident that it follows the pattern of the Vaitālīya and Aupacchandāsika—both metres of popular origin in which the syllabic instants are taken into account. Something definite can be said of only the two concluding stanzas which are in Vaitālīya (14, 16, 16). Of the remaining stanzas the sum-total of morae in a half-stanza ranges from 29 (Sn. 30c) to 37 (Sn. 28ab). Some of the pairs of stanzas in the main dialogue are metrical; viz. Sn. 18, 19 contain 36, 30 morae each in their half stanzas, Sn. 20, 21; 32, 32 and 32, 31 morae respectively. Sn. 26, 27; 31, 32 morae each; being there is a disparity in varying degrees in the others viz. Sn. 22, 23 in pada c, only (16, 19, 16, 16; 16, 19, 13, 17 respectively), Sn. 24, 25 in padas ac. (14, 18, 16, 17; 13, 18, 13, 17 respectively), and Sn. 28, 29 in all padas except the refrain (17, 20, 17, 17; 15, 17, 18, 17 respectively).

In addition to Sn. 33 and 34, Sn. 32 can also be taken as a Vaitālīya stanza with anacrusis in the pada b, as pointed out by Helmer Smith. 27 Sn. 20 consists of the number of syllabic instants required for the Aupacchandāsika metre and the rest of the stanzas contain either more or less morae than required for that metre. Other metrical irregularities already observed by scholars 28 are: anacrusis at Sn. 22b = 23b, 30b, trochaic pada at Sn. 24a; and 26b = 27b containing a mora too short (godharāntyō) for the Aupacchandāsika metre. (Helmer Smith, ibid). The lack of uniformity in the metre of the poem supports the view that the writers

27. SnA. 643.
28. Ibid.
of these ballads have been mainly guided by rhythm and not fixed metres. Perhaps these stanzas mark the transition from the purely popular version to the more fixed Vatadvattya and Aupachandhasik metres. This too is in agreement with the general antiquity of the poem.

Doctrinal Developments

No real developments in doctrine are in evidence in the *sutta*. The ideology of the poem conforms to that of Buddhism in its earliest phase. The various Buddhist concepts alluded to in the Buddha’s replies to Dhaniya belong to early Buddhism, and therefore demand no particular attention. The only term with a technical significance is upadhi (substratum of rebirth—Sn. 33, 34) which is known from early Buddhist times, and is met with no less than 19 times in Sn. On doctrinal evidence the *sutta* appears to be considerably old.

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External Evidence

An interesting feature of the poem is that very few of its pādas in the main dialogue are to be met with in other metrical works, though the refrain occurs at Th1. 51-54, 325. On the other hand, the ideas in the *sutta* are common to other parts of the Canon as well. The various metaphorical allusions (e.g. to kuti, gini, bhisi, etc.) in the Buddha’s replies, can be compared with the numerous similes and parables in other parts of the Canon29; e.g. the simile of the kuti at M.I., 190, Th1. 125 etc., bhisi cp. the parable of the raft (kulla) M.I., 134, etc. The whole of the sixth vangga of the Ekā-tipāta of Th1. (Th1. 51-60) is connected with kuti. The occurrence of Sn. 33, 34 at S.I. has already been discussed. The fact that the majority of the pādas in the main dialogue are not found repeated in other metrical works may suggest that these stanzas were quite distinct from the rest. Yet in contents they agree. Taking all the internal evidence (special from language, syntax and metre) into account it may be said that these stanzas may have been anterior to the bulk of the Pāli metrical works.

63

Kasibhāradvāja Sutta

The other “Pastoral Ballad” Kasibhāradvāja Sutta is a regular ākkyāna containing narrative prose connecting the gāthās. The poem itself is a modified parable in which the Buddha explains the Dhamma to the

ploughman by employing the terminology used by him. Though the gāthās consist of only a question and an answer to it, they fit into the general scheme of the narrative which is conducted entirely in prose. The prose which is both introductory and explanatory appears to have been used in order to acquaint the reader (or the listener) with the context of the verses, of which Sn. 76-80 form a separate unit (i.e. the Buddhist ploughman). Like all prose introductions to ballads, it is quite probable that at some early stage the prose of this *sutta* was not fixed, and that the singers of the ballads described the situation in their own words. The fact that the version of this *sutta* found at S.I., 172-173 (Brāhmaṇa-Samyutta) contains these gāthās verbatim, but shows a divergence in the prose30 is in agreement with the unsettled nature of the prose. Further, the enhanced version of the conclusion in Sn. may be indicative of the relative lateness of the compilation of Sn. (as an anthology), for decidedly the shorter version in the Samyutta is the older of the two. The possibility of the existence of two recensions within the same Theravāda School is very remote, and it is quite clear that both versions are based on the same tradition and that the *sutta* in Sn. is merely an enlargement of the same occurring in the Samyutta.

The formula-like phrases of the introduction and conclusion which agree word for word with all such passages in suttas dealing with conversions made by the Buddha, and the emphasis laid on the miracle as an ingredient to conversion exemplifying the consequence of the iddhipower of the Buddha (Sn. p. 15) rather than the teaching itself, are positive indications of the lateness of the prose of the *sutta* as contrasted with the gāthās. There occur a few irregular verbal forms in the prose, which are of no great value here, as they are used in all periods of canonical Pāli; viz. dhammad and damsī, an old form used in all periods (vide Geiger §149) cp. Epic Sk. d反映, dakkhinti, future, cp. sakakkhini (vide Geiger §152), but has the appearance of an old (Vedic) injunctive31, and alaththa-s. aor.—all occurring in Sn. pp. 15-16. One is also struck by the frequent occurrence of imperf. 2 sg. forms in -ssu (historical) and the wealth of denominatives in the passage describing the miracle.

The stanzas in the *sutta* are not very remarkable, and fail to reach the perfection of those of the companion poem, Dhaniya Sutta. Syntactically there appears nothing worth of comment as the verses merely comprise in a series of simple sentences, the counterparts in the religious life.

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29. The Commentator gives an exhaustive list of similar occurrences (SnA. 31 11) which Helmer Smith has traced in the foot-notes.

30. Both introduction are identical. The prose passage after the fifth stanza (Sn. 80 runs: Bhūjanu bhamava Gotama, kassako bhamava Gotama, yam hi Gotama amatapalir pu kasiṃ kasaśi it. The concluding passage in S. begins with, Evam vute Kasibhāradvāja brāhmaṇa bhagavantu evad-avac. Abhiṣikā (bho Gotama, etc. (Sn. p. 15, 11, 17 I, 1 p. 16) and concludes: upāsaken maṇi bhamava Gotama bhūreṇa ujaća-ta-gaṇa pūraṇaparam gata it.

to the various implements and actions in ploughing. On the one hand, the absence of exact counterparts for some items in the similes (e.g. Sn. 78ab), and on the other, the mention of two for the same object (e.g. Sn. 77bd, pañña and sāti) speak further of the lack of perfection of the poem.

The language of the verses is essentially gāthā-Pali. Yet, archaisms are few. The only noteworthy forms are:—janema (Sn. 76d) cp. Pkr. jānimo and jānāmō, Sk. -mah > Pkr. -mo > P. -mu (vide Pischel §510); and dhuradhoraya (Sn. 79a), a peculiar double nominal form (dhura+ dhor-vahya s.v. P.T.S.). The sandhi in vuttir ēsā (Sn. 81d) is historical.

The metre of the poem is somewhat regular; Sn. 76-80 are Anuṣṭubh slokas and Sn. 81-82 are Triṣṭubh. There is anacrusis at Sn. 79a and the caesura is not reckoned after the seventh syllable at Sn. 82d. Metrical lengthening is to be seen at Sn. 77c (hiri) and 81d (sāti) in addition to instances like puṇḍāpekha; (Sn. 82d) for rhythm rather than metre. The style of the sutta has been sufficiently commented on earlier.

The ideology of the poem does not show any late developments. The emphasis is on the practical aspect and the attainment of deliverance through moral and intellectual discipline. Qualities like saddhā, tapo, pañña, hiri, sāti, sacca, sor acca, vīriya and the control over mind, body and speech are accepted as virtues by all early Indian schools; yet the training envisaged in the sutta is essentially Buddhist. There is neither speculation nor metaphysics, and the teaching, however tersely expressed, does not show any departure from what may be expected in the earliest teaching.

There are two terms which demand further attention; viz. yogakkhema (Sn. 79b) and kevalin (Sn. 82a). The technical significance of the former has come about by a direct semantic development from Vedic. In Vedic it meant “exertion and rest, acquisition and possession” (s.v. PTS), whereas in Classical Sk.: “security, secure possession of what has been acquired, or insurance” as at Manu. IX, 219. According to the Petersburg Sk. Dictionary, it is usually explained as “gain and support of a possession” and at Gauto. 28, 46 it means “property destined for religious purposes”. But all these ideas are remote from the Pali meanings. The non-technical meaning of “rest from work” in Pali, is nearer Vedic, and the idea of “freedom from bondage” is logically connected with the former. The term kevalin, which occurs as many as 7 times in Sn. is an epithet for the “perfect one”. The idea itself is very familiar to the Canon even in such phrases as kevalarupanām, etc., though the concept is seen best developed in Jainism (cp. kevalin, the perfect one, an epithet for tīrthānaka, and kaivalya, epithet for nirvāna). The origin and conception of the idea is definitely pre-Buddhist, but it need not be through any Jaina influence that its adoption has taken place in Buddhism.

The evidence from all these sources taken singly does not yield any definite data as regards the date of the poem, but taking the collective evidence the stanzas have a claim to comparative antiquity.

External Evidence

It has already been observed above that the sutta is an enlarged version of that found at S.I., 172. The additional prose passage found on p. 15 is seen to occur in the Sundarika Sutta at S.I., 167-168 though the Sundarikabhāravāja Sutta in Sn. (III, 4) contains no corresponding passage. In order to establish the relationship of these two suttas, their common factor Sn. 81-82 = Sn. 480-481, has to be taken into account. These two stanzas are repeated in three suttas in the Brāhmaṇa Sūnyutta; viz. at S.I., 167 (Aggika-), I, 168 (Sundarika), and I, 173 (Kasi). This necessitates a comparison of these three suttas with the corresponding ones in Sn. 32.

In all the instances where the two stanzas Sn. 81-82 occur there is apparently sufficient justification for their inclusion, for the introductions state either that the Buddha was on his alms-round or that the brahmīn was preparing an oblation. However, the stories contained in these three suttas show that at some stage or another there has set in a confusion of legend. Although it is not easy to say which sutta portrays the original version of the story, the influence of one on the other is evident. It is significant that the section ending with Sn. 80, has very

32. Aggika Sutta (S.I., 166-167) corresponds to, Vasala Sutta (pp. 142-151) which in Sn. bears the alternative title Aggikabhāravāja Sutta. The only noteworthy similarity of the two suttas lies in their respective introductions, though they differ widely in details. The nibbāna (scene of the sutta) in Sn. is Sāvatthī whereas in Brāhmaṇa in S. In both suttas the Brahmīn is said to be preparing for a fire-sacrifice though it is stated differently in words (Sn. p. 21, aggipājātā hoti, dāhu pāgāhita; S.I., 166, sappinā pāyādo samkhito hoti, "aggipājātā hoti, dāhu pāgāhita"). In the Brāhmaṇa the Buddha whereas in S. he offers the pāyāda (in verse) which the Buddha refuses with the stanzas Gāthābhūjasam, etc. The stanzas in the two poems are entirely different though the phrase, na jaccā hotī brāhmaṇo (S.I., 16652, Sn. 136b, 142b) is common to both. The concluding prose is the same.

The introductions to both versions of the sutta recording the conversation between the Buddha and Sundarikabhāravāja are almost identical but only 5 of the 10 stanzas in S. have parallels in the 32 stanzas in Sn.; viz.: S. v. 1 = Sn. 462. (v. 8), S. v. 2 = Sn. 463 (v. 2ab = Sn. 463ab), S. v. 3 = Sn. 459, 479 (v. 3bc = Sn. 459bc), S. v. 4-5 = Sn. 480. 481.

The miraculous incident (if s. p. 15) is related at S.I., 168-169, following which occurs a set of 5 stanzas, both of which being absent in Sn. The conclusion is identical in both works. (Sufficient has been said of the Kashyapabhāravāja Sutta, earlier).
little connection with the rest of the *sutta*, in the *Kasibhāradvāja Sutta*. The discourse ends there, and the line,

etoṁ kasīṁ kasitvāna, sabbadukkhā pamunccati,

affords a fitting climax. Unlike the *Sundarikabhāradvāja Sutta* (both in S. and *Sn.*) the story is not centred on “what is left of the sacrificial cake” (*kavyasa*), which has a greater mysterious significance than pāyāsa (*Kasi-*), a thing mentioned only at this secondary stage. The difference in metre of *Sn.* 81-82 from that in the previous stanzas, and the uniformity in this respect, of all the stanzas (including these two) of the *Sānyutta* version of the *Sundarika Sutta* (and to some extent the poem in *Sn.*) tend to emphasise the fact that *Sn.* 81-82 did not originally belong here.\(^{33}\)

In view of all this evidence, both internal and external, it may be concluded that (a), the *sutta* consists of two different elements (i) *Sn.* 76-80 with the prose introduction which at some stage was not in any fixed form, (ii) the two stanzas *Sn.* 81-82 and the prose on pp. 15-16 which constitute a subsequent addition, (b), the *sutta* has been greatly influenced by another *sutta* (probably the *Sundarika Sutta* of S.), the main theme of which was the exemplification of the miraculous powers of the Buddha, (c), the *sutta* in its present form has been included in *Sn.* at a date much later than that of the composition of the stanzas, and (d), the *sutta* probably is later than the *Brāhmaṇa Sānyutta*, if it has been influenced by the *Sundarika Sutta*.

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\(^{33}\) The *Sundarika Sutta* (S.) presents a more coherent narrative of the incident while the parallel version in *Sn.* is *either* an amalgamation of two suttas, one of which was based on the first 5 stanzas of the sutta in S. *or* an altogether different sutta which has incorporated a greater part of the legend *i.e.* without the miracle, as well the first five stanzas.

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THE BUDDHA’S ADVICE TO BĀHIYA

John D. Ireland

In the *Pāli Buddhist Review* 1 p. 2 there is a translation of the Buddha’s brief instruction to Bāhiya (*Ud.* I 10) by Bhikkhu Nāṇavira. As this difficult passage is of considerable interest it was thought worthwhile to attempt another and fuller translation of it. In the PTS edition of the *Udāna* the Pāli text is hopelessly corrupt and this translation is based upon Woodward’s reconstruction of it from the parallel passage in the *Sānyutta Nikāya* (S. IV p. 73) and the *Udāna* Commentary (p. 92). The italicised portion is the amplification of the text from the commentary.

In addition there is also translated the verse-*udāna*, the inspired utterance the Buddha gives out at the end of the *Bāhiya Sutta*, followed by the *udāna* of *Ud.* VIII. 1, which is evidently a prose gloss on the former. Taken together they provide an illuminating description of the nature of Nibbāna, bearing upon the Buddha’s brief instruction to Bāhiya.

It might be of interest to study in conjunction with these the Buddha’s advice to Mālunayaputta in the *Sānyutta* (S. IV p. 72f) and also the *Mālāpariyāya Sutta* (M. 1). In the *Sānyutta* the passage is not introduced so abruptly, but the Buddha leads up to it by questioning Mālunayaputta which clarifies what is intended. And then the verses expand on Mālunayaputta’s understanding of it.

Basically the message is to bring an end to the deep-rooted craving, attachment and fondness for those things cognised by the senses, experienced now, remembered and yet to be experienced in the future, *at this very moment now*. And when this is realised one does not identify oneself with the pleasure and delight involved, even in the most refined and subtle achievements of meditation experience. They are not thought of as identical with or a possession of the ‘self’; as ‘me’ or ‘mine’.

*Udāna* p. 8 restored:

Tasmāt iha Bāhiya evaṁ sikkhitabbaṁ:  
diṭṭhe diṭṭhamattaṁ bhavissati, sute sutamattaṁ bhavissati,  
mute mutamattaṁ bhavissati, viññāte viññātamatattam bhavissati‘ti.  
Evaṁ hi te Bāhiya sikkhitabbaṁ.
Just this is the end of suffering—this is the end of the suffering of the defilements (kilesa-dukkha) and the suffering of the round of existences (vatta-dukkha).

(Ud. p. 8 and UdA. p. 92)

Where water, earth, fire and air have no foothold,5 There gleam no evening stars,6 no sun illuminates, There shines7 no moon, no darkness8 there is found. When a sage, a brahman, by wisdom has himself experienced (it), Then he is freed from form and formless, pleasure and pain. (Ud. p. 9)

There is, bhikkhu, that state9 where there is no earth, no water, no fire, no air; no base consisting of infiniteness of space, no base consisting of infiniteness of consciousness, no base consisting of nothingness, no base consisting of neither-perception-nor-non-perception; neither this world nor another world nor both; neither sun nor moon.10

There is here, bhikkhu, I say, no coming, no going, no staying, no deceasing, no uprising. Not fixed, not moveable, it has no objective support.11 Just this is the end of suffering. (Ud. p. 80)

5. Gādhāti: to stand fast, to be on firm ground, to have a firm footing, etc.
6. Sukha is the Pāli name for the planet Venus, but it is in the plural here, hence the rendering ‘evening stars’. But it can just mean ‘stars’ generally.
7. The richness of Pāli is seen in the three different verbs employed for the shining of stars, sun and moon.
8. Tamo means darkness both literally and figuratively, thus it is also a term for ignorance, doubt and a state of suffering, as well as merely the absence of light.
9. Thādayatana: that state, base, sphere, place, region, position, etc. The Nibbāna-dhātu. Here it is not meant in any directional (or temporal) sense however.
10. Regarding the sun and moon, there is a stanza beginning, ‘As far as moon and sun revolve in their course And light up all the quarters with their radiance. So far extends the thousand-world system…’ (I. B. Horner’s translation of M. 49)

Therefore the sun and moon probably indicate the universe, symbolising the whole of conditioned existence (Samsāra). And their exclusion from Nibbāna the latters complete ‘otherness’ and its nature as the Unconditioned.

Sun and moon are also known to be deities. In M. 1 a somewhat similar list as here has the four elements and the four formless realms plus the names of a number of deities, without mentioning sun and moon. All of these, including also the four elements or rather qualities of matter, represent the subtle essence of conditioned existence experienced by the most advanced meditators, but which is still ‘mundane’ and ‘other’ than Nibbāna.

11. Anirāmmaman means (a) it has no support, footing, etc. i.e. it is unconditioned, uncaused; (b) it is unthinkable, unimaginable, it cannot be made an object of thought; (c) it cancels out the possible erroneous idea of ‘that state’ (tathāyatana) as something objective, like a mental or sensory object. The words āramman and āyatana are closely related and have the meaning of sense object and the sixfold subjective-objective sensory fields.
Pali Buddhist Studies in the West

Russell Webb

4. Denmark

Oriental studies may be said to have begun with the linguist, Rasmus Kristian Rask (1787-1832), who was sponsored by Frederick VI on a journey that took him through Russia and Persia to India. He then travelled to Ceylon where he befriended an ex-bhikkhu, Dhammakhandha rājagura (George Nadoris de Silva) and a native Christian, Don Abraham de Thomas. Through them he mastered Pāli and Sinhalese to the extent that he felt able to go into print. In 1822, a Sinhalese grammar in Danish—Singalesisk Skriftluere—was published in Colombo. He also contributed to Benjamin Clough’s Pali grammar which appeared in English in 1824. His best remembered act involved the acquisition, for Rs. 9,000 of 200 Pali manuscripts which formed the basis for subsequent Pali studies in Denmark.

For the Danish periodical, Nordisk Tidsskrift for historie, litteratur og kunst (1, 1827), he contributed a pioneer paper, “Om Pali-sproget og om Pali haandskrifter i det store kongelige Bibliotek” (“On the Pali language and on the Pali manuscripts in the great Royal Library”). His collected writings were edited by his brother, H. K. Rask, and published posthumously under the title, Samlede tildels forhen utrykte Afhandlinger af R. K. Rask (Copenhagen 1834-38).

The MSS alluded to in Rask’s essay were more fully described in Codices Indici Bibliothecae Regiae Hovniensis (Copenhagen 1846). This Latin catalogue analyses all the Indian MSS in the Royal Library and devotes over forty pages to Rask’s collection from Ceylon. Its compiler, Niels Ludwig Westergaard (1815-78), was Professor of Indology at Copenhagen University and Fausbøll’s teacher.

Michael Viggo Fausbøll (1824-1908), the son of a Lutheran pastor, graduated in theology from Copenhagen University in 1840 but devoted his free time to a study of Indian philology. Beginning with Sanskrit, he taught himself Pali after taking an interest in the Rask collection. From 1848 he began to transcribe the Sinhala script into Roman characters and thereafter contemplated editing the Jātaka book. However, he was dissuaded from this enterprise by its sheer magnitude—at least for the next twenty years. Instead, he transcribed the Dhammapada text and edited this with a Latin translation in 1855. (This was reprinted by Biblio-Verlag, Osnabruck, in 1972.)

In 1878 he succeeded Westergaard as Professor of Indology and thereafter engaged in editing the text of the Jātaka. He had already translated some stories from this collection which had been published in either Copenhagen or London—viz. Five Jātakas (1861), Two Jātakas (1871), The Dasaratha-jātaka, being the Buddhist story of King Rāma (1871) and Ten Jātakas (1872). After acquiring additional texts on the Jātaka from Burma and Ceylon, he was able to correct those brought by Rask and eventually presented his magnum opus for publication by the Pali Text Society. The entire Jātaka was thus produced in six volumes between 1877-96 (reprinted 1962-64), with a seventh volume containing a postscript and index appearing in 1897 which was compiled by Dines Andersen.

Before retiring in 1902, Fausbøll translated the Sutta-Nipāta as A Collection of Discourses (SBE, London 1880; Delhi 1968) for which he compiled a glossary in 1893; and, for the Journal of the Pali Text Society, compiled a “List of Pali MSS in the University Library, Copenhagen” (1883) and a “Catalogue of the Mandalay MSS in the India Office Library” (1894-96). He presented his own collection of Sinhala, Burmese and Siamese MSS to the Danish Royal Library.

Carl Vilhelm Trenecker (1824-91) matriculated from Copenhagen University in classical philology and, although he never acquired a degree, he mastered Sanskrit, Pali and several spoken Asian languages in addition to Western European tongues. Of humble origins and simple tastes, he spent the last thirty years of his life as a teacher in the capital’s Orphans Asylum.

After studying Pali MSS for about twenty-five years he produced “a masterly edition” of the Milindapañha (PTS 1880; reprinted 1963). This had been preceded by A Pali Miscellany (London and Edinburgh 1879) which comprised the introductory section of the same post-canonical exegesis (reprinted in the JPTS for 1908). He also edited his first volume of the Majjhima Nikāya (PTS 1887; reprinted 1964).

However, Trenecker is to be remembered as the man who conceived the Critical Pali Dictionary (see below). This unique venture began with his first copying Fausbøll’s transcripts of Pali texts which he corrected by collating them with the original MSS in the Royal Library. He subsequently transcribed the bulk of the Rask collection and also some further texts borrowed from London. All these transcripts, which included critical observations and cross-references to parallel passages on almost every line, were intended as the basic working materials for a Pali lexicon. This was to have begun with a critical edition of Moggal-laṇa’s Abhidhānappadīpikā (which, incidentally, had been produced in Sinhala script, with English and Sinhalese interpretations by W. Subuñhi in Colombo in 1865).
Trenckner’s work was to be partially fulfilled by Dines Andersen (1861-1940). Of equally humble origins, Andersen was born on the island of Fyn and matriculated from Odense Grammar School twenty years later. He studied classical philology and general linguistics at Copenhagen University and was awarded his doctorate in 1892 for a dissertation on Sanskrit verbs.

On his appointment as a librarian in the University Library in 1891, he was entrusted with Trenckner’s lexicographical materials and transcripts. Deciding on the necessity to produce a Pali dictionary on truly philological principles, he embarked on a thorough study of the original texts. The initial results were published in 1892 of the first Pali texts to be translated into Danish: six stories from the Rasavahini in Studier fra Sprog og Oltidsforskning, I, 6 (Det philologisk-historiske Samfund, Copenhagen 1891) and the Padhana Sutta from the Sutta-Nipata in Kort Udsigt over det philologisk-historiske Samfunks Virksomhed, III (1899-1904).

Andersen’s best-known compilation, however, is his Pali Reader (Copenhagen and Leipzig: Part I, 1901, Glossary, 1904-7; reprinted in Kyoto 1968). This premiere textbook for learning Pali contains an annotated selection of twenty-eight jatakas and other texts, whilst the glossary incorporates the vocabulary of the Dhammapada. With Helmer Smith, he edited the Sutta-Nipata (PTS 1913; reprinted 1965) and the medieval Sinhalese grammatical works, Dhatumañjūsa and Dhatupatha (Copenhagen 1921).

Andersen held the position of Professor of Indian Philology at Copenhagen University between 1903-27. Although he succeeded in gaining potential supporters to his idea of international collaboration towards realising the Pali dictionary, the First World War prevented implementation of his plan. Instead, he persuaded Helmer Smith (Professor at Uppsala University) to work with him from 1916 onwards. The appearance of new editions of the Pali texts from the PTS, Ceylon and Siam, necessitated the compilers of the Critical Pali Dictionary—as it was known from the publication of the initial fascicle in 1924—to convert Trenckner’s materials into a corporate whole of textual criticism based on the various recensions of the Pali literary tradition.

Poul Tuxen (1880-1955) succeeded Andersen as Professor of Indian Philology in 1928 and devoted his life to research in this field. He translated the Dhammapada in 1920 which was reprinted in Copenhagen in 1953 and included translations of the Cula Målunyka, Dhammacakkavattana and Dhamiya Suttas. From the Jataka, he translated thirty-one “Tales from Ancient India”: Aeventyr fra det Gamle Indien (1924).

Tuxen is also remembered for a completely original study on relativity in Buddhism (which includes a discussion on Nagarjuna’s philosophy): Indledende bemærkninger til Buddhistsk Relativisme (Copenhagen University 1936); together with the clearest and most comprehensive exposition on Buddhism in Danish, based on an analysis of the original source materials: Buddha. Hans lære, dens overlevering og dens liv i nuæden (“The Buddha. His teaching, its handing down and its present state”—1928). He also contributed the chapters on Buddhism to a couple of tomes on Comparative Religion, both entitled Illustreret Religionshistorie: the first, edited by Prof. Johannes Pedersen (1948), with the second, edited by J. Peter Asmussen and Jørgen Laessøe (2 vols., 1968), being essentially a revised and enlarged version of the original compilation.

A quarter of Buddhas vej til Nirvāna (1961) consists of an anthology of texts translated by Tuxen. The author, Frits Pullich, was a professor of the History of Religions.

The Critical Pali Dictionary (Pali-Ordobogen) undoubtedly constitutes Denmark’s major contribution to Oriental studies. Under the auspices of the Royal Danish Academy of Sciences and Letters, the following fascicles have appeared: Vol. I Prolegomena and A-asota (11 parts) and Epilegomena (1924-48) Vol. II Å-upakkama (9 parts to date, 1960-75). It is worth singling out the Epilegomena for special mention since it catalogues the texts and secondary works used in compiling the Dictionary. It also includes an exhaustive bibliography of Pali, Buddhist Sanskrit and Prakrit texts that were published in Asian countries and in the West.

Although the compilation of the CPD was initially based on the material assembled by Trenckner, today, as revealed in the Epilegomena, its basis has expanded to include all known, edited texts that have a bearing on the lexicographical task involved. Even at the present time, no more than a handful of scholars—drawn from Denmark, Germany (L. Alsdorf and H. Kopp) and Czechoslovakia (Ivo Fiser) are working on this project full time. Fortunately, liberal financial aid has been forthcoming from the Danish Government, the Carlsberg and Rask-Orsted Foundations, and UNESCO, whilst each participating scholar’s salary is met by his own sponsoring university.

Prof. L. L. Hammerich (1892-1975) was Editor-in-Chief until his death whereupon Prof. Alsdorf was appointed to co-ordinate the work. Apart from Kaj Barr and N. Warmdahl, other Danish participants have included the following: Elof Olesen (1877-1939) assisted in the editing of fascicles 8-10 of Vol. I (1936-39). He graduated from Copenhagen.
University in Sanskrit and classical philology in 1895 but did not begin to study Pali until thirty years later. Hans Hendriksen (born 1913) has been Professor of Indology since 1951 and was co-editor, with H. Smith, of the CPD from 1944-57. Although he prepared a study of the Syntax of the Infinite Verb-Forms of Pali (1944), he no longer works in this field. Prof. F. Möller-Kristensen contributed to Vol. II and now occupies the post of Librarian at the Royal Library.

Else Pauly also contributed to Vol. II and continues to teach Pali and Buddhism at the Institut für indisk filologi. Textbooks used are Andersen’s Pali Reader, Geiger’s Pali Literatur und Sprache, Mayrhofer’s Handbuch des Pali, Warder’s Introduction to Pali; Conze’s Buddhism and Buddhist Texts Through the Ages, Rāhula’s What the Buddha Taught and H. W. Schumacher’s Buddhismus: Stifter, Schulen, Systeme. Buddhist Sanskrit is also taught for which Franklin Edgerton’s Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Grammar and Dictionary is the sole guide.

For further reading:

Peiris, William: The Western Contribution to Buddhism (Motilal Banarsidass, Delhi 1973). Vide pp. 185-212 for further details of the CPD and fuller biographies of Rask, Fausboll, Trenchner, Andersen and Tuxen. Most of Peiris’ material for his chapter on Denmark is to be found in Vol. I of the CPD.


(This was a revised version of an article that first appeared in The Maha Bodhi, Vol. 81, Nos. 5-6—May-June 1973—p. 199).

Corrigenda to Pali Buddhist Studies in the West, 3 Germany (pp. 114-122)

116, line 17: substitute 1970 for 1969
117, line 18 from below: Das Wort des Buddha was first published in Leipzig in 1906 whilst a revised and enlarged edition was published by Oskar Schloss in Munich c. 1925.
line 13 from below: delete entry for Pali-Anthologie und Wörterbuch. The German version of the Buddhist Dictionary was first published in Constance in 1954 and reprinted in 1976.
lines 9 and 2 from below: Geistesstraining durch Achtsamkeit and Kompendium der Dingwelt were correctly prepared by Nyānaponika.
line 3 from below: delete the Therigāthā translation which did not materialise.
BOOK REVIEWS


Pali students will have the opportunity of reading a relatively small selection of these ancient but still fascinating and exciting stones in the original language of texts down the centuries. They have proved a wonderful means of conveying the Teaching of the Buddha to ordinary men and women: and the veneration they have commanded in the Buddhist lands of South East Asia is equalled only by the affection they inspire as they are read in the family circle or retold under the palm trees.

Who knows Pali needs no other key to open the message of Aryan antiquity before the present world. A reader can select any text of the book that takes his fancy: he can, for instance, read the translations and then select a text he likes or finds simple enough. There are 52 fairly brief texts to study as an introduction to Pali and also as an introduction to the authentic Dhamma. These texts each of which includes the text, vocabulary, translation and notes, are selected to indicate essential points.

Buddhism has a great mission to fulfil. This is the spirit which the texts wish to convey to you. They call upon you to study with attention, and indeed with devotion. The interest in the Pali language and literature has been steadily growing in the West during the last few decades, and the main part of the canonical literature has been published both in the original language and in translation. Behind this we find a growing concern with Buddhism: its dynamic conception of man, in analysis of human psychology, its empirical and anti-metaphysical attitude, its tolerance, its demand for personal development—all this has made a deep impression on the Western mind.

The Buddha Saddhamma is profound and extensive, the Tipiṭaka is understandable in its essence by the simple man as well as by the deepest thinker. Thus, this volume presents "A Summary of the Way".

sabbapāpassa akaraṇam kulalassā upasampādā sacittapariyodapanām etam buddhāna sāsanām. (p. 68).

Through these writings the original Pali words of twenty-five centuries ago come vividly alive. You are struck by resemblances to our own era as you read the splendid words of great wisdom. They will give to each that which he is able to derive from them in accordance with his talents and abilities. They offer themselves as a companion for silent hours. We must thoroughly chew the nourishment received, so that it may be well digested: it is indeed worth-while to study the noble Pali language from the selection by Rune Johansson.

Have you ever wondered how the truly great works have become classics? First, because they are so studiable. They would not have survived unless they were studied: they would not have been studied unless they were useful. To be interesting they had to be easy to understand. And those are the very qualities which characterize these selections: Deep Wisdom always valid Common sense and Way of Life, Simplicity. The authentic Words of the Buddha never grow old. In these dramatic expressions of Eastern wisdom you learn not only how to read the texts, but how to take the best possible advantage of life.

Władysław Misiewicz


This voluminous and all-embracing analysis of the Dīgha, Majjhima, Saṃyutta and Anguttara Nikāyas is an extension of the author’s doctoral dissertation accepted by the University of Calcutta in 1966.

Although Indian publications are generally difficult to acquire in the West, this tome proved exceptionally elusive and was only secured after a personal application to the Vice-Chancellor of Rabindra Bharati University, Dr. P. C. Gupta. Moreover, it was only the chance sight of its (sole?) review in Pṛṇā (the quarterly journal of the Buddha-Gaya Temple Management Committee) that brought this study to light.

It is difficult to determine how much the book is a product of original research and how much a plagiarism of earlier authorities. The author—a lecturer in the Department of Pali at the University of Calcutta and an active leader of the Buddhist movement—has, however, admitted the sources for his material despite the tedious nature of numerous footnotes. Whilst the reader is probably conversant with, or at least aware of, the main authorities in the field of early Indian Buddhism—N. and S. Dutt, B.C. Law, G. C. Pande, T. W. Rhys Davids, E. J. Thomas, A. K. Warder and M. Winteritz—the present compilation undoubtedly represents the first attempt to incorporate all the elements of the main texts of the Theravāda school, both sacred and secular, into a single volume.

In view of the foregoing, therefore, a summary of the chapters is warranted:
"The Four Nikāyas": unfortunately this begins with the (superseded rather than discredited) chronological list of texts in the Pali Canon compiled by T. W. Rhys Davids nearly 100 years ago. For a much more detailed analysis of early and late material in the main Nikāyas, the reader’s attention is drawn to Pandé’s excellent and indeed unique survey in Studies in the Origins of Buddhism (reprinted by Motilal Banarasidass, Delhi 1974). Nevertheless the necessary historical scene is set with the bulk of this chapter devoted to a comparison between the Pali, Sanskrit and Chinese recensions of the Nikāya texts, together with a detailed study of the phonetic structure of the Pali language.

"Discourses to the Laity": after distinguishing between the gahapati (the ordinary layman) and the upāsaka/upāsikā (the ‘committed’ lay devotee) and defining the traditional duties of the latter, the author skillfully collates all available and relevant material under three headings—ethical, religious and secular. Nonetheless, the lines of demarcation between these categories cannot always be accurately drawn.

"Discourses on Sila, Samádhi and Paññā": here again, Dr. Barua has collected the relevant material and presented it under the traditional three-fold schema of training, practice and resultant realisation. The persistent use of Pali terminology in the text, however, makes this chapter especially difficult to read, whilst the section on samádhi is far from clear.

"Discussions on Secular Matters" and "Historical and Geographical Materials in the Nikāyas" reveal the little-known and hitherto unappreciated social and economic daily life of 6th century B.C. India. The (Buddhist) objection to the inclusion of these two lengthy chapters (200 pages in all), however, is that they tend to distract attention from the main import of the Nikāyas: the message of detachment, release, Nibbāna.

Two appendices describe the "Mutual Relations of the Four Nikāyas" and "Treatment of Similes in the Four Nikāyas", whilst a third appendix forms a fitting climax: "Brief Contents of the Suttas in the Four Nikāyas" (pp. 403-596). This section undoubtedly constitutes the most detailed analysis of the canonical texts in English—double the extent of Law’s treatment in his History of Pali Literature (reprinted by Bhartiya Publishing House, Varanasi 1974).

A "Select Bibliography" and name and subject indexes complete an enthralling study which, in the absence of any advertised distributors, would seem to be obtainable only from the publishers: Rabindra Bharati University, 6/4 Dwarkanath Tagore Lane, Calcutta 7.

RBW


It is presumed that the author of this recently-published work is quite different from the compiler of An Introduction to Pali Literature, S.C. Banerji (or Banerjee), who was described as Professor at Maulana Azad College, Calcutta. Certainly, that work does not appear in the bibliography of the Companion which has been compiled by the (retired) Senior Professor of Sanskrit in the Department of Education of the Government of West Bengal.

As its title suggests, this book is essentially a reference work for the scriptures of Buddhism and Jainism, comprising those texts in Pali, and Prakrit with a note of their published translations and a list of additional works in Buddhist Sanskrit. However, as with Dr. Barua, the author very largely relies on Law and Winternitz for his source materials.

The Introduction consists of brief surveys of the Pali and Prakrit linguistic structures and the wide and varied literatures which were subsequently developed. A masterly description of the Buddha and his teaching is contained within nine pages.

A list of the known authors of Buddhist and Jain texts is given which is then followed by a detailed index of Pali Buddhist and Jain texts. As far as the former category is concerned, although some European translations have been given, printing errors and omissions abound. For example, under the entry for the Dhanmapada (pp. 66-67), where, as elsewhere no chronological order is observed, one may justifiably make the following comments: P. L. Vaidya supplemented his edition with a translation; Copenhagen should replace the misleading Latin form, Hauniae; Suryagoda Sumanagala (Thera) should replace S. S. Thera (throughout, as with most non-Buddhist writers in Asia, the monastic title is confused with the ordination name); a further thirty English translations alone are entirely omitted (vide the reviewer’s Analysis of the Pali Canon) whilst details of the numerous European translations are either missing or garbled—e.g. V. N. Topstov produced the only complete Russian translation in 1960 for the Bibliotheca Buddhica series whereas Prof. Banerji simply inserts “see JSAI. 25, 1912, p. 324” (presumably GSAl was intended); with regard to the Prakrit recension, B. M. Barua and S. Mitra only published an annotated edition (University of Calcutta 1921) whilst John Brough edited The Gândhára Dharma-pada in 1962 (OUP, London).

The next section, “Characters and Mythological Figures”, features the dramatis personae, although Malalasekera’s DPPN remains the most comprehensive authority in this field. A glossary of “Technical Terms”, follows.
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