Mark Allon

The Composition and Transmission of Early Buddhist Texts with Specific Reference to Sutras

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Hamburg Buddhist Studies 17

Numata Center
for Buddhist Studies

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Bibliographic information published by the Deutsche Nationalbibliothek

The Deutsche Nationalbibliothek lists this publication in the Deutsche Nationalbibliografie; detailed bibliographic data are available in the Internet at http://dnb.d-nb.de.

For Chiara

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Foreword

Mark Allon is well-reputed for his work on the composition and transmission of early Buddhist literature. It is our great pleasure to be able to present his newest outstanding contribution to this field in our series, which draws on his work with Gandhari manuscripts, the oldest Indic manuscripts we have. Building on the comparison of passages in the different versions of texts written and/or transmitted in Pali, Gandhari, Sanskrit, and Chinese, Allon's analysis and conclusions are far-reaching indeed. They open up new and revealing perspectives on the question of how differences in the texts of various Buddhist schools came into existence.

Based on a concise identification of the stylistic and structural characteristics as well as the principles employed in the creation and organization of sutra and verse collections, Allon contends that these texts originated as oral compositions meant for memorization and verbatim transmission. In the course of diffusion they underwent changes, which were—typically and generally—intentional in nature. Given the fact that communal recitations and other measures assuring the correct word-for-word transmission of the text are common, Allon makes the point that it is difficult to account for major changes that are unintentional. He also argues against the view that so-called formulas, i.e. textual units appearing throughout the corpus of texts in almost identical versions, function as the most central elements of a text and, so to speak, constitute the text itself. Equally, Allon demonstrates convincingly that it is unlikely for new doctrines to originate on the basis of creative rearrangements of such modules. Instead, he insists that new texts are not merely the result of a playful and creative combination of existing formulas but rather respond to the needs of a coherent and—if required—updated doctrinal position: Whoever initiated these changes paid attention to the plot, idea, structure, and purpose of the newly created text. In Allon's words: "Meaning was of more concern than wording."

The same holds true for the idea that differences in the transmitted versions of Buddhist texts are due to the fact that these were not all memorized in a verbatim fashion but actualized in marginally different forms whenever they were preached. In this case too, Allon shows conclusively that there is little to no reason to assume this. By contrast,

he argues that similar versions of a text transmitted at different times and places "are not the frozen snapshots of oral performances, but formal 'editions' sanctioned by the community concerned."

Michael Zimmermann and Steffen Döll

Preface and Acknowledgements

Chapter 1

Introduction

On the basis of a detailed study of the main stylistic features of early Buddhist texts in the form of Pali canonical *sutta*s, I argued in *Style and Function: A Study of the Dominant Stylistic Features of the Prose Portions of Pāli Canonical Sutta Texts and their Mnemonic Function* (Allon 1997b, summarized in Allon 1997a) that these texts were designed to be memorized and transmitted verbatim. I also argued that the communal or group recitation of texts that was common in the early Buddhist community and that was an essential part of the transmission of texts by the *bhāṇaka*s, or specialist reciters, required fixed wording; to use words in a more recent article: "Group recitation requires that the wording of the text and the arrangement of the textual units within a collection be fixed; otherwise you would have complete chaos" (Allon 2018: 236; cf. 1997b: 366).

In my recent article "The Formation of Canons in the Early Indian *Nikāya*s or Schools in the Light of the New Gāndhārī Manuscript Finds" (Allon 2018), I argued against the idea proposed by some that neighbouring monasteries of the same *nikāya* transmitted different versions of the same sutra and *āgama*, stating,

> The investment of time and labour that must have gone in to memorizing and transmitting *sūtra* and verse collections, as with any text, combined with the demands of communal recitation, would ensure that communities would have been slow to make changes to their collections since each change would involve considerable time and energy in relearning the material, besides the effort needed to arrive at a consensus to make the changes. (Allon 2018: 236)

Yet Buddhist communities did make changes to the texts they were transmitting as witnessed by the differences encountered between parallel versions of what is essentially the same text transmitted by different

nikāya communities, sometimes even in those transmitted by the same *nikāya* at different times and locations.[1]

In the current work I will first give an overview of the main stylistic features of early Buddhist sutras and the organizational principles employed in the formation of textual collections of sutras that support the idea of these texts and collections being transmitted as fixed entities, and then examine the ways in which such texts changed and were changed over time, attempt to identify the reasons why this occurred, and give an account of the challenge this represents to the idea of oral transmission requiring fixity. I will discuss this primarily with reference to early Buddhist sutras, with some mention of the verses found in canonical verse collections, such as the *Dhammapada/Dharmapada/Udānavarga*s. In the final section I will also address the ideas presented in several recent publications that deal with the issue of the composition of early Buddhist texts. The first is Nathan McGovern's article (2019) "Protestant Presuppositions and the Study of the Early Buddhist Oral Tradition" in which he criticizes the above view that early Buddhist texts were designed to be memorized and transmitted verbatim, arguing, like Lance Cousins (1983), that they were the result of improvisation. The others are Eviatar Shulman's 2019 article "Looking for Samatha and Vipassanā in the Early Suttas: What, actually, *are* the Texts?," his forthcoming article "Orality and Creativity in Early Buddhist Discourses," and his forth-coming book *Visions of the Buddha: Creative Dimensions of Early Buddhist Scripture* (Oxford University Press) which also criticize the emphasis in theories of composition on memorization and verbatim repetition, articulating a possible alternative method for the composition of early Buddhist texts.

To begin, a note on what I mean by "early Buddhist texts" and "early Buddhist sutras." The earliest Buddhist texts we have are undoubtedly the canonical sutras and some of the canonical verse collections such as the *Dhammapada/Dharmapada*s and *Suttanipāta* found in the Pali canon and in the comparable canonical collections belonging to other *nikāya* communities that have survived, mostly partially, in a variety of

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[1]   I first became aware of such differences when in 1987 I undertook a translation of the Sanskrit version of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* and a comparison of it with the Pali version for a 4th year undergraduate Honours degree thesis completed at the Australian National University (Allon 1987). More recently, the comparison of parallel versions of sutra texts has been central to my study and publication of the recently discovered Gandhari sutra texts (e.g. Allon 2001, 2007a, 2009[2013], 2020; Allon and Salomon 2000).

languages (Gandhari, Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit, Sanskrit, Chinese, Tibetan). Accounts of this material are provided by Oberlies 2003, the articles in Harrison and Hartmann 2014, and by Salomon 2018. But new manuscript finds containing such texts continue to surface, with publications appearing at a steady rate. The oldest manuscripts we have are the Gandhari manuscripts from Afghanistan and northern Pakistan that have appeared since the early 1990s, which date from approximately the 1st century BCE to the 3rd or 4th century CE.[2] Substantial examples are preserved in Sanskrit or Buddhist Sanskrit in manuscripts dating from the 3rd or 4th century CE to approximately the 10th century CE discovered in Bamiyan, Gilgit, and Central Asia (notably from the Tarim Basin), while the Chinese translations of such texts begin in the 2nd century CE. Some are also preserved in Tibetan translation. With a few rare exceptions, Pali manuscripts are late, dating from the late 15th century onwards. But as noted by von Hinüber (1996: 4), "the age of the manuscripts has little to do with the age of the texts they contain,"[3] though they do provide a snapshot of the state of a text at a given time and place, as do the Chinese and Tibetan translations.

The dating of the texts that have survived is problematic and far from settled. The exemplars we have certainly span many centuries, with many of them or portions of them going back to the pre-Aśokan period, perhaps even to the period of the Buddha, while others, such as those of the Sarvāstivādins and Mūlasarvāstivādins, which are generally far more elaborate than, say, the Pali versions, postdate, in their present form at least, the earliest Mahāyāna texts, which are not classed as early Buddhist texts.[4] However, even the Pali *sutta*s, which on the whole are relatively conservative and amongst the oldest we have, exhibit changes that are relatively late, meaning those sections at least most likely post-date Aśoka. Despite these changes, the core of these texts, the ideas and teachings they promote, the general account they give of events, and

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[2]   For the radiocarbon dating of Gandhari manuscripts, see Allon et al. 2006; Falk 2011: 19–20; Falk and Strauch 2014: 54; Salomon 2014: 9.

[3]   For a more detailed account of the relationship between Pali texts and manuscript witnesses, see Wynne 2005.

[4]   The oldest manuscripts of Mahāyāna texts are in the Gandhari language, the earliest of which date to the 1st and 2nd centuries CE, which implies that the texts themselves must predate these manuscripts, though by how long is yet to be determined. For these manuscripts, see Allon and Salomon 2010; Baums, Glass and Matsuda 2016; Falk and Karashima 2012, 2013; Schlosser (forthcoming); Strauch 2018.

possibly also much of the wording is likely to stem from the period immediately after the death of the Buddha based on material composed during the Buddha's lifetime. Aspects of language, style, and the world they depict—social and political structures, technologies, human activities, events, geography and places, and individuals depicted and not depicted—all support this view. For instance, building on previous scholars' observations regarding the Buddha predicting the grander future of the village of Pāṭaligāma in the *Mahāparinibbānasuttanta* as the market town (*puṭabhedana*) Pāṭaliputta but not as the capital of the Mauryan empire it would become, von Hinüber (2006[2008]: 202–207) conjectured

> that the latest date for the composition of the *Mahāparinibbāna-suttanta*, at least for this part of it, is around 350 to 320 BC. If this is not altogether too far off the mark, and if it is remembered that the date of the *nirvāṇa* can be assumed to be about 380 BC, this dating of the text certainly has also some consequences for the assessment of the content. For a distance in time of roughly thirty to sixty years from the event recorded to the text conceived allows for a fair chance to trace true historical memory. (p. 206)[5]

In his 2012 article "The Historical Value of the Pāli Discourses" and elsewhere, Anālayo takes "early Buddhism" to be pre-Aśokan Buddhism, which is witnessed by what the sources have in common, stating "it seems to me quite sensible to assume that, if all known versions of a text or passage agree, that text or passage is probably old" (Anālayo 2012: 233). Of course, this depends on what 'agree' means. Two texts can agree in meaning and general account of a particular concept, aspect of the Dharma, and so on, but differ in wording and manner of presenting it. For example, the Gandhari versions of sutras that have parallels in, say, the Pali canon, with which they agree on a doctrinal level, but differ in aspects of wording and structure, are clearly early Buddhist sutras, though in the form in which we have them they most likely post-date Aśoka, that is, although they have their origins, like most of these texts, in the pre-Aśokan period, they have undergone changes in structure and wording in the post-Aśokan period. But as noted, this is probably true of the Pali versions also. For this reason and for the purpose of this study,

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[5]   Von Hinüber 2019: 252–253 refers to this passage again, noting that only the Moriyas of Pipphalivana, not the imperial Mauryas, are mentioned as receiving a portion of the Buddha's relics. For further comments on the dating of the sutra collections (*nikāya/āgama*s), see e.g. Anālayo 2012; Cousins 2013; von Hinüber 1994: 5–8, 1996: 26; Wynne 2005.

an early Buddhist sutra is a text that presents itself as a sutra (see below), has the stylistic features discussed below, is doctrinally in keeping with what we understand to be early Buddhist thought, and forms a part of the *nikāya/āgama* collections, even if the form in which we have it post-dates Aśoka.

The axiom that parallel versions or components of them that agree must be old and go back to a time when distinct *nikāya* communities had not yet formed or were not geographically separated as just articulated by Anālayo is commonly employed. Norman (1984: 7 = 1992: 42), for example, states, "Where the Pāli and Sanskrit versions agree, it is probable that they go back to a common version earlier than both of them. Such a common source can, in the absence of any other information, be regarded as going back to early Buddhism, perhaps even to the Buddha himself."[6] And this, in turn, is closely connected with the position that there was no or little borrowings between different *nikāya* textual communities, as stated by Brough (1962: xviii) and quoted by Norman (1984: 8 = 1992: 44) in the article under discussion, "borrowing between schools, though it may have happened, is unlikely to have been extensive." As is well known, Schopen (1997[1985]: 25–29) took issue with the agreement-equals-old assumption arguing that "If all known versions of a text or passage agree, that text or passage is probably late; that is, it probably represents the results of the conflation and gradual leveling and harmonization of earlier existing traditions" (p. 27). This latter position of similarities being due to levelling has, I believe, been shown by Wynne (2005: esp. 42–46) and Anālayo (2012) to be incorrect. Schopen (1997[1985]: 27) cites several scholars from the previous generation (Wassilieff, Lamotte, Bareau) who believed that borrowings and communication between textual schools took place, an understanding voiced more recently by, for example, MacQueen (1988: 195; cf. p. 112 n. 18) who concludes his comparative study of the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta/ Śrāmaṇyaphala-sūtra*s by stating that borrowings were quite likely and best explain certain features, while Skilling (2017: 297) states,

> All evidence is that textual transmission was an intricate accomplish-
> ment drawing on webs of intertextuality, a human chain of concerted

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6 Schopen 1997[1985]: 46 n. 20 lists many of the earlier scholars who subscribed to this method of "higher criticism." More recently, apart from the work of Anālayo himself, see also Bingenheimer 2013: 202; MacQueen 1988: 112–116, who provides a nuanced approach to comparative studies; Wynne 2004, 2005, esp. 42–46.

efforts to preserve and promote the dynamics of the Buddha's teachings. I suspect that the different projects were regularly looking over each other's shoulders.

Although it is highly likely, if not inevitable, that different monastic and textual communities in a given region, such as ancient Gandhara, and even inter-regionally given the long-distance monastic networks that were operational in ancient India, were well aware of each other's texts and were influenced by each other, Wynne's (2005: 65–66) argument that it is unlikely that the similarities we see between parallel versions could have resulted from a joint endeavour of different Buddhist schools because "such an undertaking would have required organization on a scale which was simply inconceivable in the ancient world" is convincing.

Regarding what constitutes a sutra, the application of the term, even in the case of Śrāvakayāna literature, is sometimes broader than commonly thought. For example, the *Anavatapta-gāthā*, which is normally classed as an *avadāna* rather than sutra, was apparently regarded to be a sutra by the compilers of an anthology of fifty-five Gandhari texts, most of which are classic canonical sutras, a status reflected in the Chinese translation the *Anavatapta-gāthā*.[7] A broader usage of the term *sutta/sūtra* is also seen in the case of the Pali *Suttasaṅgaha* (ed. Chaudhuri and Guha 1957), which is an anthology of eighty-five texts, including canonical *sutta*s and passages from the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka*, *Vinaya-piṭaka*, and commentaries on canonical texts. As suggested by the title, *Sutta-saṅgaha* or "Collection of *Sutta*s," the texts that make up the *Suttasaṅgaha* are all referred to as *sutta*s within the text itself. Examples of such a reference to texts not generally so classed as *sutta*s are a section of the *Vibhaṅga* of the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka* (*Dhammahadaya-vibhaṅga-suttaṃ idaṃ suttaṃ Dhammahadaya-vibhaṅge*, p. 70.9–10) and an extract from the commentary on the *Dhammapada*, the *Dhammapada-aṭṭhakathā* (p. 153.14). But in the current study, I restrict the usage of *sutta/sūtra* to the textual units that make up the four main *nikāya*s/*āgama*s, the *Suttanipāta*, *Udāna*, and *Itivuttaka/Ityuktaka* and their parallels preserved in other languages that report the words of the Buddha and his monastics, and are marked as sutras by being introduced by a *nidāna* recording where the Buddha was dwelling (commonly abbreviated or omitted in the manuscripts and editions).

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7   See Salomon 2008: 9–11, 15–18.

Finally, in the context of early Buddhism and canonical texts, the terms *sutta/sutra* and *suttanta/sūtrānta* are often rendered as "discourse."[8] Although attractive, in this study I want to make a distinction between a discourse or sermon of the Buddha or one of his monastics preserved as a discrete and independent textual unit, a *sutta/sūtra*, and one preserved as part of a larger narrative text, such as the Vinaya or even a large *sutta/sūtra* such as the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta/Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, and so will use the form 'sutra'[9] throughout for such a textual unit (or in some contexts *sutta* or *sūtra*), keeping 'discourse' for any religious talk given by the Buddha or one of his monastics.[10]

Now, early Buddhist sutras, which in form are either in prose, in verse, or in a mixture of prose and verse, and individual verses such as those of the *Dhammapada/Dharmapada/Udānavarga*s had two main functions. The first was to record the teachings, ideas, and actions of the Buddha and members of his community of practitioners and sympathizers (monks, nuns, laymen, gods, deities, etc.), whether historic events or literary artifices, for the purpose of instructing and guiding and in order to provide models for instructing and guiding, including providing models for the defeat of rivals and their views. In the process they record instances of individuals' experiences, insights, inspirations, understandings and practices, which again, may be based on historical events or be purely literary. The second function was to inspire in order to attract converts, to motivate the converted, and to attract financial supporters, that is, these texts function as inspiration and propaganda. This includes showing the Buddha, his teaching, and his community of monastics to be superior to all others, including the gods, recording the defeat of rivals, profiling the attainments of community members, presenting instances of conversion thereby acting as models for conversion — especially of

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[8]   Anālayo (2012: 223 n. 1) restricts the expressions "discourse" and "discourse collections" in the context of Pali texts to the *Dīgha-*, *Majjhima-*, *Saṃyutta-*, and *Aṅguttara-nikāya*s, *Suttanipāta*, *Udāna*, and *Itivuttaka*.

[9]   This spelling is now common in print in many languages.

[10] I am well aware of the historical distinction between *veyyākaraṇa/vyākaraṇa*, *dhammapariyāya/dharmaparyāya*, *suttanta/sūtrānta*, and *sutta/sūtra*, but use *sutta/sūtra* rather than *suttanta/sūtrānta* because it is now the conventional term. It is also the case that Buddhist texts themselves commonly used *sutta/sutra*, as in commentaries and texts such as the *Visuddhimagga* that do not form a part of the formal Tipiṭaka (as a search for **sutte/*suttante* in the electronic versions of the Tipiṭaka will show). For a good discussion of *sutta/sutra* and *suttanta/sūtrānta*, see Klaus 2010, which includes a criticism of von Hinüber's view that *sutta* originally referred to the *Pātimokkha*.

wealthy and elite individuals such as kings, merchants, prominent courtesans, and the like, of those of other religious and ideological persuasions, such as ascetics and brahmans, as well as the spiritually advanced and the ordinary—, and then also illustrating the generous patronage the community received.

Chapter 2

The Stylistic Features of Sutra Prose and What They Reveal About the Composition and Transmission of these Texts

Although we do have verse sutras, the vast majority of early Buddhist sutras consist of prose narrative passages describing personalities, actions, and events and the settings for these and prose and/or verse passages recording the words of individuals (the Buddha, his monks, and nuns, laymen, kings, ascetics, brahmins, gods, etc.) that articulate teachings, practices, ideas (such as religious and philosophical positions), provide recommendations and guidance, record debates, questions asked and responses, and so on. Prose was the medium preferred by the early Buddhist community or communities for the texts they composed, including for the presentation of core teachings. This preference for prose may have been due to the perceived limitations imposed by the metrical structures of verse or, given that many Buddhist authors as well as authors belonging to other religious groups throughout Indian history have effectively used and preferred verse as the medium for the transmission of equally sophisticated ideas, prose may have been adopted because it was the preferred medium for oral texts at that period, as was the case with the late Vedic literature such as the Brāhmaṇas and early Upaniṣads. It is also likely that prose was preferred because it allowed for the gross forms of repetition and other stylistic features, most of which are forms of repetition, these authors considered would best ensure the successful transmission of their texts given the "literary" training, or lack thereof, of their community members,[11] as well as being the medium they considered most accessible to and appropriate for their audience.

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[11] See Allon 1997b: 363; Anālayo 2009a: 6–7, 2011: 868–872.

These texts, both prose and verse, are very much textual or literary artifices. They are not verbatim, or tape-recorder, records of the sayings and discourses of the individuals concerned nor casual descriptions of their actions or of related events. They are highly structured and stylized, extremely formulaic and repetitive, carefully crafted constructs, at least as we have them. And this is so at all levels. Further, the wording used to describe or depict a given event, concept, teaching, or practice is highly standardized across the corpus of such texts transmitted by a given monastic community. As such they do not reflect how a person would normally speak, preach, debate, and interact, or describe an event. What follows is a brief overview of some of the main stylistic features of these texts. For a more comprehensive study with further references, see Allon 1997b.[12]

Most sutras have a clear structure that is not infrequently shared with other sutras. In fact, a large proportion of sutras merely record that the Buddha or sometimes one of his monks preached to the monks or other individuals on a particular topic.[13] The typical structure of such texts is, to use the Pali version as example:[14]

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[12] Allon 1997b can be downloaded from my Academia.edu site: https://sydney. academia.edu/MarkAllon. For the stylistic features of some Sanskrit Buddhist sutra texts and a comparison with Pali versions, see von Simson 1965.

[13] Although this is most typical of the sutras of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya*/*Saṃyuktāgama* and *Aṅguttara-nikāya*/*Ekottarikāgama*s, many sutras of the *Dīgha-nikāya*/ *Dīrghāgama*s and *Majjhima-nikāya*/*Madhyamāgama*s have the same or similar structure, particularly so the latter. The formula is briefly discussed in Manné 1990: 33–34.

[14] Throughout this book I will tend to draw on Pali examples because the material of the Pali canon is the best starting point for the study of stylistic and compositional features of early Buddhist texts. This is because the Pali canon is the only complete canon preserved in an Indic language, which also happens to be the oldest MIA language we have, and so offers the largest body of material for study that is transmitted by a single school. I will, however, be using examples from texts preserved in Gandhari, Prakrit, Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit, and Sanskrit, and to some extent Chinese, belonging to other schools to illustrate topics under discussion. McGovern (2019: 467, 468, 485) rightly comments that an understanding of the composition of early Buddhist texts must take into consideration versions found in languages other than Pali, referencing the work of Gombrich, Wynne, and myself (Allon 1997b) which are based solely on Pali sources. However, the aim of Allon 1997b was to study the stylistic features of Pali *sutta* texts as representative of early Buddhist sutras. This focus was, in part, influenced by the research upon which that book was based being conducted as part of a three-year PhD project. I also felt that such a detailed study of the texts belonging to one tradition would form a solid foundation for a larger comparative study, as I hope the current study shows.

1. introductory setting or *nidāna*:

evaṃ me sutaṃ ekaṃ samayaṃ bhagavā [place (general): loc.] *viharati* [place (specific): loc.]
Thus have I heard, at one time the Bhagavat dwelt in ….

2. the Buddha-monk interchange:

2a. *tatra kho bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi bhikkhavo ti. bhadante ti te bhikkhū bhagavato paccassosuṃ. bhagavā etad avoca*:
There the Bhagavat addressed the monks, "monks." "Venerable sir," replied those monks to the Bhagavat. The Bhagavat said this:

or

2b. *tatra kho bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi bhikkhavo ti. bhadante ti te bhikkhū bhagavato paccassosuṃ. bhagavā etad avoca* [topic: acc.] *vo bhikkhave desessāmi taṃ suṇātha sādhukaṃ manasikarotha bhāsissāmī ti. evaṃ bhante ti kho te bhikkhū bhagavato paccassosuṃ. bhagavā etad avoca*:
There the Bhagavat addressed the monks, "monks." "Venerable sir," replied those monks to the Bhagavat. The Bhagavat said this, "monks, I will teach you *x*. Listen to it, pay attention carefully, I will speak." "So be it, venerable sir," those monks replied to the Bhagavat. The Bhagavat said this:

3. the teaching / the Buddha's discourse;

4. conclusion:

idam avoca bhagavā. attamanā te bhikkhū bhagavato bhāsitaṃ abhinandun ti.
The Bhagavat said this. Pleased, those monks rejoiced in the words of the Bhagavat.

For example, the *Mūlapariyāya-sutta* (MN 1 at I 1–6) uses the combination 1+2b+3+4, while the *Ākaṅkheyya-sutta* (MN 6 at I 33–36) uses 1+2a+3+4. The way in which this event of the Buddha delivering a discourse is depicted is highly formal, almost ceremonial in its tone (see below pp. 93–96).

A standard structure for section 3, the Buddha's discourse or teaching, is equally formal, repetitive and highly structured. To use a concrete example:[15]

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[15]   E.g. AN II 16–17. For further examples in Pali, Gandhari, and Sanskrit, see Allon 2001: 244–299. For the reading *bhikkhu* rather than *bhikkhuno* of Ee in section 1, see Allon 2001: 310 n. 41.

cattār' imāni bhikkhave padhānāni. katamāni cattāri.
Monks, there are these four efforts. What four?

saṃvara-ppadhānaṃ pahāna-ppadhānaṃ bhāvana-ppadhānaṃ
anurakkhana-ppadhānaṃ.
The effort of restraint, the effort of abandoning, the effort of develop-
ing, the effort of protecting.

1. *katamañ ca bhikkhave saṃvara-ppadhānaṃ.*
And what, monks, is the effort of restraint?

idha bhikkhave bhikkhu … [description of restraint]
Here, monks, a monk … [description of restraint]

idam vuccati bhikkhave saṃvara-ppadhānaṃ.
This, monks, is called the effort of restraint.

2–4. [follow the same model as 1 with substitution of the term for the
effort and change of the definition.]

imāni kho bhikkhave cattāri padhānānī ti.
These, monks, are the four efforts.

The first part consists of a statement of the topic, "Monks, there are these
four efforts," a rhetorical question, "What four?," that sets up the follow-
ing presentation, and a summary statement in response outlining the
topic, in this case the listing of the four efforts. The account of each of
the four efforts share the same structure: a rhetorical question, the
description or definition of that effort, and a concluding statement that
this is that effort. The discourse then concludes with a summary state-
ment, in this case "These, monks, are the four efforts." Although variation
does occur, it is not common, which means that the overall structure and
a proportion of the wording of each sutra of this type is highly
predictable. Once again, repetition is integral to this structure.

The prose descriptions of the concepts, teachings, and practices that
form the subject of the discourse are similarly highly structured. A good
example is the practice of the four *brahmavihāra*s, or "divine abidings,"
e.g. MN I 38.20–30:

*so │ **mettā**-sahagatena cetasā │ ekaṃ disaṃ pharitvā │ viharati │ tathā*
dutiyaṃ tathā tatiyaṃ tathā catutthaṃ. │ iti │ uddhaṃ adho tiriyaṃ
*sabbadhi sabbatthatāya │ sabbāvantaṃ lokaṃ │ **mettā**-sahagatena*
cetasā │ vipulena mahaggatena appamāṇena averena avyāpajjhena[16] │
pharitvā │ viharati

*so **karuṇā**-sahagatena cetasā …* (as above)

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[16] The reading alternates between *avyāpajjhena*, *abyāpajjhena*, *abyābajjhena*,
abyāpajjena.

*so **muditā**-sahagatena cetasā* … (as above)

*so **upekkhā**-sahagatena cetasā* … (as above)

The description of each *brahmavihāra* is identical except for a change of the word for the *brahmavihāra* that occurs in each of the two sentences that make up the description of each *brahmavihāra* (the word in bold in the above text), namely, loving-kindness (*mettā-*), compassion (*karuṇā-*), sympathetic joy (*muditā-*), and equanimity (*upekkhā-*). The vertical lines added into the above Pali text of the first *brahmavihāra* demarcate the building blocks, the syntactically discrete units used to construct the description of the practice.[17] Following general English syntax, the units are: he dwells (*so … viharati*) │ having pervaded one direction (*ekaṃ disaṃ pharitvā*) │ with thought of loving-kindness (*mettā-sahagatena cetasā*) │ so (also) the second (direction), so the third, so the fourth (*tathā dutiyaṃ tathā tatiyaṃ tathā catutthaṃ*). │ Thus he dwells (*iti … viharati*) │ having pervaded the entire world (*sabbāvantaṃ lokaṃ … pharitvā*) │ above, below, all around, everywhere, entirely (*uddhaṃ adho tiriyaṃ sabbadhi sabbatthatāya*) │ with thought of loving-kindness (*mettā-sahagatena cetasā*) │ abundant, great, immeasurable, without hate, without ill-will (*vipulena mahaggatena appamāṇena averena avyāpajjhena*). │

The first sentence gives a brief description of pervading each of the four directions with the *brahmavihāra* concerned, while the second uses the same basic sentence (*so/iti … mettā-sahagatena cetasā pharitvā viharati*) to express the thoroughness of the directionality of the practice: "above, below, all around, everywhere, entirely, the entire world" (*uddhaṃ adho tiriyaṃ sabbadhi sabbatthatāya* │ *sabbāvantaṃ lokaṃ*), and to list more specific qualities of the *brahmavihāra*: "abundant, great, immeasurable, without hate, without ill-will" (*vipulena mahaggatena appamāṇena averena avyāpajjhena*).

The importance of repetition to the authors of these texts is evident in this *brahmavihāra* formula. Had textual economy been important, they could have just as effectively listed all four *brahmavihāra*s together in a single passage and dispensed with mentioning each direction individually, for example, **so ekamekaṃ mettā-karuṇā-muditā-upekkhā-sahagatena cetasā catuddisā pharitvā viharati* …., "He pervades the four

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17   There are different ways of dividing the text, including into different subdivisions, for example, *tathā dutiyaṃ tathā tatiyaṃ tathā catutthaṃ* could be further analysed as │ *tathā dutiyaṃ* │ *tathā tatiyaṃ* │ *tathā catutthaṃ* │, but that adopted here will do for our purposes.

directions in due order with thought of loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and/or equanimity ….” However, interestingly, the repetition is not exhaustive since although applied individually to each of the *brahmavihāra*s, the formula is not repeated for each direction.

The highly structured, carefully crafted nature of the text discussed so far, as with all canonical prose, is further evident at the most granular level, that is, in the choice of words and the building up of text. For example, a characteristic feature of canonical prose are strings of grammatically parallel units, such as nouns, adjectives, verbs, and adverbs, that express the same or similar general idea, with each subsequent unit nuancing or expanding the meaning of the preceding ones, presenting further qualities of the thing described, or presenting a similar category of item. So the Buddha does not simply instruct someone with a Dhamma talk (*dhammiyā kathāya sandassesi*), but he instructs, urges, rouses, and encourages them with such a talk (*dhammiyā kathāya sandassesi samādapesi samuttejesi sampahaṃsesi*, e.g. MN I 146.27–28); that is, his act of teaching is expressed through four semi-synonymous verbs rather than one. Further, the component units of these structures or strings are normally arranged according to a waxing number of syllables, that is, the first unit has fewer syllables than the last (or at least their count does not decrease); for example, the syllable pattern of the above four verbs *sandassesi samādapesi samuttejesi sampahaṃsesi* is 4+5+5+5.[18] It is also not uncommon in these string structures for the initial members to be single words and the latter members to consist of compounds in the case of strings of adjectives and nouns, or of verb-object phrases in the case of strings of verbs, and so on, as a means of generating the waxing of syllables. Examples are *unnādino uccāsadda-mahāsaddā*, “exclaiming loudly, with a loud noise, with a great noise,” discussed below where the second member is a compound, and *majjati mucchati pamādam āpajjati* (3+3+7 syll.), “he is intoxicated, infatuated, and careless” (DN III 42.28), where the first two members are simple verbs while the last (*pamādam āpajjati*) is a verb-object phrase. The members of these strings also regularly exhibit sound and metrical similarities or repetitions. For

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18   The phenomenon of arranging such material according to syllable length is well known in many fields, but for the purpose of my Cambridge PhD thesis submitted in September 1994 and subsequently published as Allon 1997b (see p. 191), I coined the phrase Waxing Syllable Principle (WSP). The term was subsequently utilized by my doctoral supervisor, Professor K.R. Norman (1997a: 52–55, etc.; 2nd edition 2006: 68–72, etc.).

example, the four verbs *sandassesi samādapesi samuttejesi sampa-haṃsesi* all begin with the prefix *san-/sam-*, besides naturally sharing the same termination *-esi* (see further examples below), while in *majjati mucchati pamādam āpajjati* there is repetition of labial sounds *m* and *p* and of *mā*: *m*ajjati *m*ucchati *p*a*mā*da*m* *āp*ajjati, and repetition of the palatal consonant cluster in combination with the verbal termination: *maj*jati *muc*chati *pamādam āpaj*jati. The first two verbs share the same metrical pattern (‒◡◡). In the *brahmavihāra* passage under discussion, the string of five adjectives *vipulena mahaggatena appamāṇena averena avyāpajjhena* qualifying *cetasā* can be understood to consist of two groups with a 4+5+5, 4+5 waxing syllable pattern, the first group of three referring to quantity and expanse (abundant, great, immeasurable), and the following group of two members referring to positive psychological qualities (without hate, without ill-will). Sound similarities are evident in the final three words which help to bind the two groups together. Similarly, the five adverbs or adverbial expressions *uddhaṃ adho tiriyaṃ sabbadhi sabbatthatāya* have a 2+2+3+3+5 waxing syllable pattern, which could in fact be understood to consist of two groups 2+2+3, 3+5 based on general meaning and the last two words being based on *sabba-*, "all," which in turn connects this string with the following noun phrase *sabbāvantaṃ lokaṃ*. Finally, the four *brahmavihāra*s of *mettā … karuṇā … muditā … upekkhā* have a 2+3+3+3 waxing syllable pattern.[19]

The tight composition and in some cases "artificiality" of such string structures is further illustrated by instances of words within them only being found in that particular string. An example is *taṃ tad eva te kumārakā vā kumārikā vā kaṭṭhena vā kaṭhalena vā sañchindeyyuṃ sambhañjeyyuṃ sampalibhañjeyyuṃ*, "those boys and girls would break off that [crab's claw], smash it, crack it with sticks and stones" (MN I 234.14–16; SN I 123.25–27).[20] Here the word *kaṭhala-*, "stone," only occurs in *sutta* prose in this pair *kaṭṭha- kaṭhala-*, "stick [or] stone,"[21] while the finite forms of the final two verbs *sam-√bhañj* and *sampali-√bhañj* in the string *sañchindeyyuṃ sambhañjeyyuṃ sampalibhañjeyyuṃ*,

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[19] Although in this passage the four are listed individually in each paragraph, they occur together as a list elsewhere in Pali, e.g. *evaṃ mettaṃ karuṇaṃ muditaṃ upekkhaṃ bhāvetvā* (e.g. MN I 284.11–12). For a far more comprehensive study of the stylistic features discussed in this section, see Allon 1997b: 191–272, 364–367. See also von Hinüber 1994, e.g. pp. 15–17 and Anālayo 2009b.

[20] SN reads *kumārikāyo vā kaṭṭhena vā kaṭhalāya*.

[21] E.g. MN I 128.23; see CPD s.v. *kaṭhală*.

"break off, smash, crack," are only found in canonical prose in this simile of the crab, which itself only occurs twice in the Pali canon; of course, it goes without saying that the three verbs only occur together in this simile. In other words, the two verbs *sambhañjeyyuṃ sampalibhañjeyyuṃ* were created for this specific context to be combined with the first verb *sam-√chind*, which does occur in other contexts, to create a string of three semi-synonymous verbs that waxed in syllables (4+4+5) and shared sound and metrical similarities or repetitions (the first two verbs have the same metrical pattern of four long syllables − − − −). So also, the authors of this passage undoubtedly chose the rare word for stone *kaṭhala* rather than a more common one like *silā* or *pāsāṇa* because of its sound similarities with *kaṭṭha*, "stick," and because they formed a nice waxing syllable pair, in the case of *kaṭṭhena vā kaṭhalena vā* of 3+4 syllables, the pair also forming a sound play with the word for crab, *kakkaṭaka* and perhaps even the word for claw, *aḷa*.[22] As I noted of these structures in my detailed study of them (Allon 1997b: 251):

> The proliferation of similar word elements and units of meaning and the ordering of the member elements of such sequences according to the Waxing Syllable Principle, which thus produces an overall crescendo effect, tends to give a rhythm and homogeneity to this material. This rhythm and homogeneity is then greatly enhanced when, as is frequently the case, the member elements also share sound and metrical similarities. The presence of rhythmical patterns in prose, and especially in long prose texts, must have been extremely important to those who performed or recited this material, and may be functionally parallel to the rhythm produced in verse by metre.

A passage that further illustrates the building block approach to constructing prose text is the following (DN III 40.16–20), once again the vertical lines demarcating the building blocks:[23]

> *evaṃ vutte │ te paribbājakā │ unnādino uccāsadda-mahāsaddā │ ahesuṃ: │ acchariyaṃ vata bho │ abbhutaṃ vata bho │ samaṇassa Gotamassa │ mahiddhikatā mahānubhāvatā │ yatra hi nāma │ saka-vādaṃ ṭhapessati │ para-vādena pavāressatī ti*

> When (the Buddha) spoke thus, those ascetics exclaimed loudly, with a loud noise, with a great noise: "Wonderful, sir! Marvellous, sir! is the greatness and power of the monk Gotama since he withholds his own theories and invites the theories of others!"

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[22]   Further instances of words only occurring in such strings are given by von Hinüber 1994, e.g. pp. 17–22, 24.

[23]   This passage was also analysed in Allon 1997b: 205, 296–297.

What is most evident in this passage is the not uncommon tendency to create and use building blocks that consist of pairs of words or related textual units. The first is the locative absolute *evaṃ vutte*, literally "when it was said thus." The following subject of the sentence is not the simple noun *paribbājakā*, "the ascetics," but *te paribbājakā*, "those ascetics," a pronoun plus noun. This is then qualified by two predicative attributes, the second a compound (mentioned above), *unnādino uccāsadda-mahā-saddā*, "exclaiming loudly, with a loud noise, with a great noise," which have a 4+8 waxing syllable pattern and exhibit sound repetitions, each beginning in two heavy syllables. The ascetics' exclamation begins with two parallel expressions *acchariyaṃ vata bho │ abbhutaṃ vata bho*, "Wonderful, sir! Marvellous, sir!," which have the same syllable count if the epenthetic vowel is not scanned in *acchariyaṃ*, besides sharing sound repetitions and repetition of wording. The reference to the Buddha is not merely his name Gotama but *samaṇassa Gotamassa*, "of the ascetic Gotama," parallel to *te paribbājakā*, "those ascetics." The subject of the clause, *mahiddhikatā mahānubhāvatā*, "greatness (and) power," consists of two synonymous abstract nouns in *-tā* beginning with *mahā-*, "great," that have a 5+6 waxing syllable pattern and share the same metrical pattern in the first three syllables. Finally, the ascetics' exclamation ends in two parallel units each consisting of verb and "object" *saka-vādaṃ ṭhapessati │ para-vādena pavāressati*, "he withholds his own theories (and) invites the theories of others," that has an 8+10 waxing syllable pattern, with each unit having the same metrical pattern in the first five syllables.

   Nothing in canonical sutra prose is casual. It is as highly structured as verse, if not more so. In fact, apart from many of the component elements of these string structures exhibiting metrical similarities, some canonical prose is metrical.[24] The metre is called *veḍha*[25] and it consists of an undefined number of *gaṇa*, or groups, each containing four *mātrā*, or measures, where a light syllable (˘) is one *mātrā* and a heavy syllable (–) two *mātrā*, the duration of the latter being twice that of the former. The

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[24]   Gamage (2012: 143–144) raises the possibility that the reference to *suttanta-vatta* as one of the three kinds of *vatta* (which he translates as "cadence") listed in Sp VI 1202.12–13 (*dhamme pana suttantavattaṃ nāma atthi jātakavattaṃ nāma atthi gāthāvattaṃ nāma atthi*) and defined in the *Pācityādiyojanā* (Be 452) as *suttantavattan ti suttantassa uccāraṇaṃ vattaṃ*, may refer to ways of reciting prose, though the tradition does not elaborate on this.

[25]   Or *gubbinī* according to Ānandajoti 2013: 36–37.

most well-known example of this is the formula used to describe the Buddha, his teaching (*dhamma*), and his community of monastics (*saṅgha*), the so-called *iti pi so* formula studied in particular by Bechert (1988, 1991a),[26] to which the reader is referred for references and details:

> *iti pi so bhagavā arahaṃ sammāsambuddho vijjācaraṇasampanno sugato lokavidū anuttaro purisadammasārathi satthā devamanuss-ānaṃ buddho bhagavā ti.*

> *svākkhāto bhagavatā dhammo sandiṭṭhiko akāliko ehipassiko opa-nayiko paccattaṃ veditabbo viññūhī ti.*

> *suppaṭipanno bhagavato sāvakasaṅgho ujuppaṭipanno bhagavato sāvakasaṅgho ñāyappaṭipanno bhagavato sāvakasaṅgho sāmīcippaṭi-panno bhagavato sāvakasaṅgho yadidaṃ cattāri purisayugāni aṭṭha purisapuggalā esa bhagavato sāvakasaṅgho āhuneyyo pāhuneyyo dakkhiṇeyyo añjalīkaraṇīyo anuttaraṃ puññakkhettaṃ lokassa ti.*

The metrical pattern of the first passage that describes the Buddha:

> *iti pi so bhagavā arahaṃ sammāsambuddho vijjācaraṇasampanno sugato lokavidū anuttaro purisadammasārathi satthā devamanuss-ānaṃ buddho bhagavā ti*

> The Bhagavat is perfected (*arahat*), completely awakened, endowed with knowledge and conduct, well-gone (*sugata*), a knower of the world, incomparable charioteer of men to be tamed, a teacher of gods and men, awakened, blessed

is

⏑‒⏑|‒⏑⏑|‒⏑⏑|‒‒|‒‒|‒‒|‒‒|⏑⏑‒|‒‒|‒⏑⏑|‒‒|⏑⏑‒|⏑‒⏑|‒⏑⏑|⏑‒⏑|‒⏑⏑|
‒‒|‒⏑⏑|‒‒|‒‒|‒⏑⏑|‒[27]

But a looser form of this metrical prose is not uncommon in less defined contexts, many of which involve the string structures just discussed. In fact, a section of the above *brahmavihāra* passage exhibits such a metrical pattern:

> *iti uddhaṃ adho tiriyaṃ sabbadhi sabbatthatāya sabbāvantaṃ lokaṃ*

⏑⏑‒|�’⏑‒|⏑⏑‒|‒⏑⏑|‒‒|⏑‒⏑|‒‒|‒‒|‒‒|

The same goes for the introduction or *nidāna* (part 1) and conclusion (part 4) to the common structure of many *sutta*s discussed above:[28]

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[26] For some discussion of the possible literary function of this formula, see Shulman (forthcoming a).

[27] For the scansion of this and the other sections of this formula, see Bechert 1988, 1991a.

[28] For these and other examples, see Allon 1997b: 246–249.

evaṃ me sutaṃ ekaṃ samayaṃ bhagavā … viharati …

– – | – ⏑ ᴗ | – – | ⏑ ⏑ – | ⏑ ⏑ – | … | ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ ⏑ | …

idam avoca bhagavā. attamanā te bhikkhū bhagavato bhāsitaṃ abhinandun ti[29]

ᴗ ᴗ | ⏑ – ⏑ | ⏑ ⏑ – | – ⏑ ⏑ | – – | – – | ⏑ ⏑ ᴗ | – – | ⏑ ᴗ ⏑ | – – | ⏑ |

As with the string structures discussed above, these loose *veḍha*-like passages may also have provided a rhythm to chanting the material (Allon 1997b: 248–249).

The above features are in various ways all forms of repetition. But the authors of early Buddhist prose pursued other forms of repetition on a truly grand scale. For example, in my detailed analysis of one *sutta* in the *Dīgha-nikāya* (Allon 1997b: 273–363), I identified several types of quantifiable repetition (Verbatim Repetition, Repetition with Minor Modifications, etc.) and showed, for example, that 30% of this *sutta* consisted of various passages repeated verbatim two, three, or four times and that another 35% of this *sutta* involved repetition with minor modifications at a primary level. An example of Repetition with Minor Modifications is the above *brahmavihāra* passage in which an identical description is repeated four times with one word, the word for the *brahmavihāra*, substituted in each. Astonishingly, in total almost 87% of the *sutta* studied involved quantifiable repetition of one kind or another at a primary level (repetition is also quantifiable within these primary repetitive passages). Further, although 13% of the *sutta* did not occur again within this *sutta*, much of that wording does occur in other *sutta*s in the Pali canon.

Another dominant stylistic characteristic of early Buddhist sutra prose is the use of formulas, that is, the wording used to depict a given concept, action, or event is highly standardized and predictable. The description of the four *brahmavihāra* and the introduction and conclusion to typical sermons discussed above are examples of such formulas.[30]

As noted at the start of this discussion, the stylistic features of canonical Buddhist prose sutra texts, such as formulas, the proliferation of similar word elements with members chosen to maximize sound and metrical similarities, large scale repetition, the use of metrical prose, and

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[29] The reading *abhinanditun ti* and scansion given in Allon 1997b: 248 is incorrect and should be corrected to that given here.

[30] For the most detailed analysis of a whole class of formula, namely, formulas used to depict someone approaching someone else, see Allon 1997b: 9–190.

the building block approach to constructing text indicate that these texts were designed to facilitate the memorization and faithful transmission of this material as fixed text. These are not characteristics one would expect of improvised composition.[31] Although in *Style and Function* (Allon 1997b) I primarily explored the function of these features as aids to the composition and transmission of the literature, they undoubtedly have other dimensions of equal importance. For example, these features have aesthetic and poetical dimensions, which may have functioned to emphasize aspects of the ideas, practices, personalities, and so on, being described, and contributed to the overall attractiveness and emotional force of the material, thereby heightening the impact it had on the audience.[32] Such features may also have been valued for the psychological impact they had on those who memorized, contemplated, and recited these texts, including the attainment of meditative states.[33]

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[31] See Chapter 6 for discussion of McGovern's criticism of the view that these texts were designed to be memorized and transmitted verbatim.

[32] In his article "Early Buddhist Imagination: The *Aṭṭhakavagga* as Buddhist Poetry," Shulman (2012[2013]) explored some of the verse *sutta*s of the *Aṭṭhakavagga* and other texts of the *Khuddaka-nikāya* as poetry. In the course of doing so, he discusses what is generally meant by poetry and the features of these texts, including stylistic features, that make them poetry (pp. 374–378, 384, 396–397, 403), virtually all of which fit sutra prose. For example, he notes that the unanimous definition of poetry in English dictionaries boils down to "(1) A rhythmic composition in verse; (2) A literary expression with enhanced artistic, imaginary and creative character" (p. 375); and later, he refers to polysemic meaning (statements "can speak on more than one level as multi-dimensional, heteroglossic expressions"), frequent use of metaphor (*upamā*, more regularly translated "simile"), and, in the case of the *Aṭṭhakavagga*, a dedicated inquiry into the nature of the perfected being (p. 403). Although prose is obviously not verse by most definitions, it is, as just shown, structurally and rhythmically not very different from it. This topic is worthy for further investigation.

[33] For some mention of other possible functions of these features and references to those who have suggested them, see Allon 1997b: 162–166, 249–252, 357–367. For recent studies of the literary dimensions of early Buddhist texts, see Shulman 2012[2013], just mentioned, and Shulman 2017.

Chapter 3

References within Canonical Texts to Texts being Memorized and Recited Communally

Apart from the fabric of the texts themselves, that is, the very way in which they have been constructed, further evidence for texts being memorized and transmitted verbatim comes from numerous references within early Buddhist texts themselves that describe the recitation and learning of texts, where it is hard to imagine that fixed texts are not what is meant. These have been discussed at length by several authors[34] and I will not rehearse them. Suffice it here to mention but a few to illustrate the point.

In a passage found in the Pali *Udāna* and *Mahāvagga* of the *Vinaya* the Buddha asks the monk Soṇa, who had been a monk for only a year (*ekavasso ahaṃ*), to expound the Dhamma (*paṭibhātu taṃ bhikkhu dhammo bhāsituṃ*),[35] which the *Udāna* commentary glosses with *yathā-sutaṃ yathāpariyattaṃ dhammaṃ bhaṇāhī ti attho*, "the meaning is 'recite the Dhamma as (you) have heard and learnt it'" (Ud-a 312.13–16). In response Soṇa recites the sixteen *suttas* of the *Aṭṭhakavagga*, which is generally considered to belong to the oldest strata of the canon[36] and now

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[34] The most comprehensive discussion of such passages is provided by Anālayo 2011 "Introduction" (pp. 1–22) and "Conclusion" (pp. 855–891). See also Allon 1997b: 1–2; Anālayo 2014a, 2015; Collins 1992; Cousins 1983; Drewes 2015; Norman 2006: 53–74; Wynne 2004. Lamotte (1985: 6–9) discusses interesting examples of monks who have memorized the wording, the text, but have not learnt the meaning.

[35] Ud 59.21–22; Vin I 196.34–35. The reading is that of the Vin; the Ud has the w.r. *paṭibhātu bhikkhūnaṃ dhammaṃ bhāsituṃ* as noted by Ud-a Ee 312 n. 1.

[36] See e.g. Norman 1983: 63–64, 67–69, 2001: xxxi–xxiiii, 2003; von Hinüber 1996: 49–50. Cousins 2013: 106–107 doubts the antiquity of the *Aṭṭhaka-* and *Pārāyana-vagga*s. A new Gandhari manuscript containing a relatively large portion of the *Aṭṭhakavagga* or *Arthakavargīya* or *Arthapada* (as it is called in Sanskrit) that recently came to light is an instance of its transmission as an independent

forms a part of the *Suttanipāta*: *soḷasa aṭṭhakavaggikāni sabbān’ eva sarena abhaṇi*, "he recited all sixteen *Aṭṭhakavagga* (*sutta*s) with intoned voice."[37] The *Udāna* commentary confirms the identification of the text involved: *soḷasa aṭṭhakavaggikānī ti aṭṭhakavaggabhūtāni kāmasuttādīni soḷasa suttāni*, "'sixteen belonging to the *Aṭṭhakavagga*' are the sixteen *sutta*s that make up the *Aṭṭhakavagga* beginning with the *Kāma-sutta*" (Ud-a 312.16–17). The Buddha praises Soṇa with the words *sādhu sādhu bhikkhu. suggahitāni* (*te*) *bhikkhu soḷasa aṭṭhakavaggikāni sumanasi-katāni sūpadhāritāni*,[38] "Well done, well done, monk! Monk, the sixteen (*sutta*s) belonging to the *Aṭṭhakavagga* have been well grasped by you, well attended to, well reflected upon."[39] This account suggests that the initial training for Soṇa and probably also for other new monastics included memorizing and learning to recite texts. But there is nothing surprising about this given the oral context. Young brahmans, and probably also other religious ascetics, had been doing this for many centuries prior to the birth of the Buddha.

In fact, it would appear that the *Aṭṭhakavagga* or sections from it were also learnt by laymen. In a *Saṃyutta-nikāya sutta* (SN 22.3 at III 9–12) the householder (*gahapati*) Hāliddikāni visits the monk Mahākaccāna, quotes a verse from the *Māgandiya-sutta* of the *Aṭṭhakavagga*, which he introduces with the words *vuttam idaṃ bhante bhagavatā aṭṭhakavaggike māgandiyapañhe*, "this, venerable sir, was said by the Bhagavat in (the *sutta* containing) the questions of Māgandiya in the *Aṭṭhakavagga*" (SN III 9.18–19) and asks him to explain it. The following *sutta* (SN 22.4 at III 12–13) records Hāliddikāni asking Mahākaccāna on another occasion to explain a statement made by the Buddha in the *Sakkapañha* (*vuttam idaṃ bhante bhagavatā sakkapañhe*, p. 13.5), the statement he quotes

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collection of sutras. A fragment of this manuscript that forms a part of the 'Split' Collection was published by Falk (2011: 13–15 and figs. 1–2 [Plate 7]). Stefan Baums presented a paper that included a discussion of another section of it at the 17th World Sanskrit Conference, Vancouver, July 2018: "The Gāndhārī Arthapada in Commentaries and a New Manuscript."

[37] Ud 59.23; Vin I 196.36 reads *sabbān’ eva aṭṭhakavaggikāni sarena abhāsi*. It remains possible that the inclusion of the word *soḷasa*, "sixteen," is a later insertion in Ud. For discussion of *sara* and the following *sarabhañña*, see Collins 1992: 125–126; cf. the translation and notes by Masefield 1994: 105.

[38] Ud 59.25–26; Vin I 196.38–197.1. Ud Be *suggahitāni te*, Vin Be Ce Ee *suggahitāni kho te*; Vin Be Ce Ee omit *soḷasa*.

[39] For the most recent English translation of the *Udāna* passage, see Masefield 1994: 105; see Bodhi 2017: 29 for a brief discussion of it.

being found in the *Sakkapañha-sutta*, the eighth *sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* (DN II 283.9–11).[40] Again, a *sutta* in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* (AN 6.61 at III 399) records nuns asking for clarification of a verse spoken by the Buddha "in (the *sutta* containing) the questions of Metteyya in the *Pārāyana-*(*vagga*)" (*Pārāyane metteyyapañhe*). The verse is the first of three that make up the *Tissametteyyamāṇavapucchā-sutta* in the *Pārāyanavagga* of the *Sutta-nipāta* (Sn 1040–1042), the *Pārāyanavagga* being of similar antiquity to the *Aṭṭhakavagga*. As with Soṇa reciting the full *Aṭṭhakavagga*, the laywoman Nandamātā is depicted rising early and reciting the *Pārāyana* (*tena kho pana samayena veḷukaṇṭakī nandamātā upāsikā rattiyā paccūsasamayaṃ paccuṭṭhāya pārāyanaṃ sarena bhāsati*, AN IV 63.11–14).[41] Of course, as noted by Norman (1984: 5 = 1992: 39) concerning such references to the *Aṭṭhaka-* and *Pārāyana-vagga*s and quotes of their verses, "we cannot be certain that the vaggas we have are identical with the originals, and that no additions or removals have been made."

Again, two *sutta*s in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*[42] list things that result in the decline and disappearance of the good Dhamma (*saddhamma*) and their opposites that conduce to its continuance and non-disappearance. In the second category, the first is that the monks learn the *suttanta*s that have been well grasped (*suggahītaṃ suttantaṃ pariyāpuṇanti*) and whose words and phrases are well laid down (*sunikkhittehi padavyañjanehi*), since the latter results in the meaning being well interpreted (*attho pi sunnayo hoti*), a description that brings to mind the stylistic features discussed above. The third is that the monks are learned (*bahussutā*), have mastered the tradition (*āgatāgamā*),[43] are expert in the Dhamma (*dhammadharā*), Vinaya (*vinayadharā*), and outlines (*mātikādharā*) and teach the *suttanta*s to others so that after their death the *suttanta*s will not

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[40] See SN IV 114 for another instance of Hāliddikāni asking Mahākaccāna for explanation of a statement made by the Buddha, AN V 46 for an instance of a laywoman asking Mahākaccāna for explanation of a statement recorded in the *kumāripañhesu*, the questions of Māra's daughters (SN I 124–127), and AN V 54 for an instance of laymen asking a nun for explanation of the Buddha's statement found in the *mahāpañhesu*, "great questions," the passage being found in a SN *sutta* (SN IV 299).

[41] Further examples of *sutta*s from the *Aṭṭhakavagga* and *Pārāyanavagga* being recited, see Norman 2001: xxxv–xxxvi; Bodhi 2017: 29–30.

[42] AN 4.160 at II 147–149; cf. 5.155–156 at III 177–180.

[43] For the term *āgama*, see Anālayo 2011: 864 n. 45 and 2016 (including *āgatāgama*).

be lost but will remain[44] (*te sakkaccaṃ suttantaṃ paraṃ vācenti, tesaṃ accayena na ca chinnamūlako suttanto hoti sappaṭisaraṇo*).[45]

Finally, as is well known, the institution of learning and regularly reciting the monastic rules, the *Pātimokkha/Prātimokṣa*, seems to have begun relatively early in the life of the Buddhist community, being depicted as having been initiated by the Buddha himself (e.g. Vin I 102–104). There are many accounts of reciting and mastering the *Pātimokkha*, with mastery of it, for example, being a requisite for ordaining and instructing others, being considered one who knows the *Vinaya* (*vinayadhara*), and so on. The key phrase describing mastery is *ubhayāni kho pan' assa pātimokkhāni vitthārena svāgatāni honti suvibhattāni suppavattīni suvinicchitāni suttaso* (Vin Ee *suttato*) *anuvyañjanaso*, "both *Pātimokkha*s are well learnt by him in detail, well analysed, well mastered, well discerned down to the rule and explanation."[46] And many details about its recitation—the timing and frequency of its recitation, the manner in which it should be recited, by whom it can be recited, etc.—are laid down in the Vinaya. For example, there are five ways in which the *Pātimokkha* can be recited (*pañc' ime bhikkhave pātimokkhuddesā*), the first four involving reciting only sections of it, the remainder of the *Pātimokkha* being understood as if heard, for example, reciting the origin and the four *pārājika* rules only (*nidānaṃ uddisitvā cattāri pārājikāni uddisitvā avasesaṃ sutena sāvetabbaṃ*), the fifth being reciting the *Pātimokkha* in full (*vitthārena*) (Vin I 112). Another example is the Buddha's instruction that if a group of monks who do not know the *Pātimokkha* is spending the rains retreat together and they are not able to

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[44] Bodhi 2012: 527, 769 translates *sappaṭisaraṇo* as "for there are those who preserve them." It could also be taken to mean that the *suttanta*s will be a refuge. The SWTF s.v. *sapratiśaraṇa* gives "Stütze, Rückhalt habend."

[45] A similar reference to reciting *suttanta*s is *bhikkhūhi dhammaṃ bhaṇantehi suttantikehi suttantaṃ saṃgāyantehi* (Vin I 169.6–7) for which see e.g. Anālayo 2011: 861 and n. 30.

[46] E.g. AN IV 140.23–25; Vin I 65.16–18. For a translation of the Vinaya commentarial (Sp IV 790.12–20) explanation of each of these terms, which take mastery of the *Pātimokkha* to include that of the *Vibhaṅga*, see Bodhi 2012: 1789 n. 1604; see Wynne 2004: 108 for a brief discussion of one such passage where the translation should read "knower of the *Vinaya*" rather than "knower of the *dhamma*." Anālayo 2011: 877 n. 90 lists several scholars who have proposed that the memorizing and reciting of the *Pātimokkha* was the basis or model for the transmission of early Buddhist texts generally. For further discussion of the formulation, learning, and reciting of the *Pātimokkha*, see e.g. von Hinüber 1999; Norman 2006: 56.

attract one who knows it to join them, then a monk should be sent off for seven days to learn it (*eko bhikkhu sattāhakālikaṃ pāhetabbo gacch' āvuso saṃkhittena vā vitthārena vā pātimokkhaṃ paruyāpuṇitvā āgacchā ti*, Vin I 119–120).

Chapter 4

The Formation of Sutra and Verse Collections, and the *saṃgītikāra*s and *bhāṇaka*s

The tight control over textual production and organization aimed at facilitating faithful transmission of that textual material is further witnessed by the way in which similar textual units such as sutras and verses were brought together to form larger collections of such units and even composed for a particular context, namely, *nikāya*s/*āgama*s and individual verse collections such as the *Dhammapada*/*Dharmapada*s, *Theragāthā*, and *Therīgāthā*. This was done on the basis of genre, size, purpose, a numerical principle, subject matter, and so on. The textual units within these larger collections were further organized into more manageable sub-divisions, such as *vagga*/*varga*s, *saṃyutta*/*saṃyukta*s, and *nipāta*s, and then, in the case of sutra collections, into the most basic grouping of the *vagga*/*varga* that consists ideally of ten sutras, the number ten perhaps being influenced by the fact that we have ten fingers. The larger collection was also sometimes divided into *bhāṇavāra*s, or recitation sections, where a *bhāṇavāra* is said to consist of 8,000 *akṣara*s or syllables.[47] Yet another system of organization occasionally used for large collections was to arrange the member sutras into groups of 50, or *paññāsaka*s, a system used to group the 152 *sutta*s of the *Majjhima-nikāya* into three *paññāsaka*s[48] and for structuring the *sutta*s of the large

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[47] *bhāṇavāro mato eko, svaṭṭhakkharasahassako* (Sv-nṭ Be I 81.9–12); see von Hinüber 1995b: esp. 131, 1996: 8 n. 29, 113; PTSD s.v. *bhāṇavāra*. *Bhāṇavāra*s are also found in the canonical texts of other schools. For example, the Chinese *Dīrghāgama* and *Madhyamāgama* have four *bhāṇavāra*s, while the *Saṃyuktāgama* (T 99) has ten (Lu 1963: 243). Lu (1963: 243), in discussing the *Dīrghāgama* which has 30 sutras, states that "recitations" are "divisions made according to the quantity of materials so that each can be recited within a day," although he does not state his source for this.

[48] See Anālayo (2011: 1–13) for possible themes and connections between the *sutta*s in each *paññāsaka* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* and for how the three *paññāsaka* may

Khandha- and *Saḷāyatana-saṃyutta*s of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* and those in Books 2 to 10 (*Duka-* to *Dasaka-nipāta*) of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*. A further set of organizational principles was then used to guide the inclusion and arrangement of textual units within these secondary and tertiary divisions. This included genre, size, whether verse was included and how many verses were involved, subject matter, a numerical feature, a connection based on a key word or words, or key concepts, the manner of treating a topic, including its treatment in brief and in expanded form, the individuals involved, such as who delivered the discourse or spoke the verses or the one to whom they were addressed, the location of events depicted, and figures of speech such as a simile or metaphor, to mention only the main ones.

Genre as an organizational principle is extremely common. For example, the *Aṭṭhakavagga* and *Pārāyanavagga*, which undoubtedly first circulated as independent collections before forming a part of the *Suttanipāta*, consist of *sutta*s composed entirely of verse.[49] Similar verse collections in the Pali canon are the *Dhammapada*, *Thera-* and *Therīgāthā*s, and *Jātaka*. Many other individual books or divisions of collections consist of mixed prose-verse *sutta*s. The *Sāgatha-vagga*, which is the first Book, or *vagga* in the large sense of the word, of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* and comprises eleven *saṃyutta*s, consists of *sutta*s that are either pure verse or contain verse. This tendency to group *sutta*s containing verse at the beginning of a collection is also seen elsewhere. For example, the first seven *vagga*s of the Book of Fours, the *Catukka-nipāta*, of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, which make up the first 70 of the 271 *sutta*s of this *nipāta* (according to the numbering in the Ee), conclude with one or more verses.[50]

Parallel to the ordering of proliferated parallel word elements according to syllable length discussed above, within some canonical texts that consist of verse *sutta*s or of verses spoken by individual monastics the *sutta*s and groups of verses are ordered according to the number of verses they contain, beginning with those containing the fewest and ending with those that contain the most. For example, the sixteen *sutta*s of the *Aṭṭhakavagga* of the *Suttanipāta*, which the monk Soṇa and others

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have featured in the training of monastics (pp. 4–5; cf. also Anālayo 2014c: 39–41).

[49] The last *sutta* of the *Pārāyana-vagga* is the exception, though its prose introduction is thought to be a later addition; see Norman 2001: xxxii.

[50] See Allon 2001: 19.

are said to have memorized (as discussed above), are arranged according to such a system, the number of verses each *sutta* contains being 6, 8, 8, 8, 8, 10, 10, 11, 13, 14, 16, 17, 20, 20, 20, 21. The same principle is used in the ordering of the verses spoken by the elder monks and nuns that make up the *Theragāthā* and *Therīgāthā* and the verses of the *Jātaka*. Of course, a similar numerical principle, but in this case the ordering of sutras according to internal numerical features, forms the basic structure of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya/Ekottarikāgama*s. This principle is also the basis of the listing and analysis of doctrinal items within some sutras, such as the *Dasottara-sutta/Daśottara-sūtra* and *Saṅgīti-sutta/Saṅgīti-sūtra*s of the *Dīgha-nikāya/Dīrghāgama*s and in the ordering of the seven sets that make up the 37 *bodhipakkhiya-dhamma* (4 *satipaṭṭhāna*, 4 *samma-ppadhāna*, 4 *iddhipāda*, 5 *indriya*, 5 *bala*, 7 *bojjhaṅga*, and 8 *aṭṭhaṅgika magga*).[51] This numerical organizing principle is pre-Buddhist going back to the oldest Indian texts we have, namely, *maṇḍala*s or Books II–VII, the Family Books, of the *Ṛgveda*, although from longer to shorter in some cases. To quote Jamison and Brereton (2014: 10–11),

> So Maṇḍala II contains the fewest number of hymns and VII the greatest. Within each Family Book the hymns are ordered first by deity. Thus the hymns to Agni come first, followed by those to Indra. After these collections are the hymns to other deities, generally arranged by the decreasing number of hymns to each deity within the maṇḍala. Within each deity collection the hymns are arranged by their length, beginning with the longest hymns. If two hymns are of equal length, they are ordered according to meter, with the hymns in longer meters placed before those in shorter meters.

The organizational principle is also found in, for example, Jain texts and parts of the *Mahābhārata*.[52]

Forming textual divisions made up of sutras or verses based on subject matter or a key word or words is another common organizational principle. The most obvious example of this are the *Saṃyutta-nikāya/Saṃyuktāgama* collections wherein sutras are arranged into *Saṃyutta/Saṃyukta*s dealing with different topics.[53] But this organizational

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[51] Other texts or sections of texts in the Pali canon that are arranged according to this numerical principle are the *Itivuttaka* of the *Sutta-piṭaka*, which is arranged from the *Eka-nipāta* to *Catukka-nipāta*; the *Ekuttaraka*, which is Chapter 6 of the *Parivāra* of the Pali *Vinaya-piṭaka* (Vin V 115–141) for which see Horner 1966, pp. xxi–xxv; and the *Puggalapaññatti* of the *Abhidhamma-piṭaka*, which deals with types of people from one to ten.

[52] Noted by Norman 1983: 28 n. 83 and von Hinüber 1996: 40.

[53] Norman 1983: 49–54; von Hinüber 1996: 35–38; Bodhi 2000: 21–40.

principle is found at all levels in other texts as well, including at the most basic level of the *vagga/varga* of ten or so sutras.[54] For example, many *vagga*s of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* contain *sutta*s that deal with particular topics,[55] as do some sections of the *Majjhima-nikāya*.[56] Subject matter or a key word is also the basis for arranging the verses of the *Dhammapada/ Dharmapada/Udānavarga* collections into *vagga/varga*s, though each surviving version exhibits different editorial choices as to what *vagga/varga* and topic a verse should belong to.

   Yet another organizational principle, and one that is closely related to topic or subject matter, is grouping together sutras or verses that involve the same class of individual or the same individual, e.g. deities, kings, monks, ascetics, and so on. For example, *vagga*s 6–10 of the *Majjhima- nikāya* each contain ten *sutta*s concerning respectively householders (*Gahapati-vagga*), monks (*Bhikkhu-vagga*), ascetics (*Paribbājaka- vagga*), kings (*Rāja-vagga*), and brahmans (*Brāhmaṇa-vagga*), although this sometimes breaks down.[57] The same principle is used for many *vagga/varga*s and *saṃyutta/saṃyukta*s in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya/Saṃyuk- tāgama*s. The fourteen sutras that make up the *Vana-saṃyutta* of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (SN 9.1–14 at I 197–205), its parallels in the two *Saṃyuktāgama*s preserved in Chinese translation, and an as yet unpublished Gandhari counterpart, each depict a deity visiting a monk or monks who live in a certain forest grove and whose practice or attitude is wrong and uttering one or more verses in order to correct him and in order to spur him on to better practice.[58] Again, many *vagga/varga*s consist of sutras that involve a specific individual, an example being the ten *sutta*s of the *Ānanda-vagga* in the Book of Threes of the *Aṅguttara- nikāya* (AN 3.71–80 at I 215–228), which all involve the monk Ānanda.[59]

   Sutras being grouped together in *vagga/varga*s according to a shared literary feature or figure of speech is also not uncommon. For example,

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[54] Bucknell 2014 (esp. pp. 73–79) includes many references to "decades" as he calls *vagga/varga*s. He makes a distinction (p. 78) between "natural decades" and "mechanical decades," the members of the former having some connection while those of the latter do not.

[55] See Bodhi 2012: 18, 75–84.

[56] See Anālayo 2011: 2–4, 11–13; cf. Bucknell 2014: 73–79.

[57] See Anālayo 2011: 2, 6. For the organizing principles in the *Majjhima-nikāya/ Madhyamāgama*s, see Anālayo 2011: 1–13.

[58] See Allon 2007b: 11, 21–22 for references.

[59] For grouping *sutta*s into the *paññāsaka* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* according to which monk delivers the discourse, see Anālayo 2011: 1–2.

the ten *sutta*s of the *Opamma-vagga* of the *Majjhimma-nikāya* (MN 21–
30 at I 122–205) all contain similes, as indicated by the name of the
vagga.[60] Similarly, the twelve *sutta*s that make up the very short
Opamma-saṃyutta of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (SN 20.1–12 at II 262–272)
all contain similes or "examples" used by the Buddha to illustrate a point.

At a finer level, yet another organizational principle is the tendency to
form pairs of textual units or occasionally longer runs, whether sutras and
verses, within a division such as the *vagga/varga* based on the factors
already noted, for example, based on a key word, the subject matter, a
specific individual or class of person, a numerical principle, a figure of
speech, and so on. Von Hinüber and Anālayo refer to this phenomenon
as concatenation.[61] Although this appears to be a very common principle
with examples found in many if not most canonical texts, besides texts
belonging to other Indian religious and literary traditions,[62] it has been
little studied. For Buddhist texts at least, my detailed study of the
Catukka-nipāta of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* and brief survey of other
sections of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya/Ekottarikāgama*s may be the most
detailed to date (Allon 2001: 18–22).[63]

A detailed study of the *Nidāna-* and *Khandha-saṃyutta*s of the Pali
Saṃyutta-nikāya shows that this organizational principle is also
operational in the arrangement of *sutta*s within the *vagga*s of these two
*saṃyutta*s of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya*, which suggests that it may be
fundamental to the *Saṃyutta-nikāya*. What follows is a brief account of
the ten *sutta*s of the *Āhāra-vagga*, the second *vagga* of the *Nidāna-
saṃyutta* (SN 12.11–20 at II 11–27), by way of illustration.

First, all of the *sutta*s of this *vagga*, like all if not most of the *sutta*s of
the *Nidāna-saṃyutta*, deal with *paṭiccasamuppāda*, dependent arising or
the conditioned nature of things, the overall topic of this *saṃyutta*. All

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[60] The *vagga* title *Opamma-vagga* is not found in Ee but it is found in the Asian
editions; see Anālayo 2011: 145 n. 1. For a discussion of the *sutta*s of this *vagga*
and their parallels, see Anālayo 2011: 145–202.

[61] Von Hinüber 1996: 12; cf. 1999: 20; Anālayo e.g. 2015: 81–85, 2020a: 2716.

[62] For references to studies of some of these, see von Hinüber 1996: 12 n. 44.

[63] See Allon 2001: 18 for previous references to this phenomenon. For a brief
account of pairs of *sutta*s in the *Majjhima-nikāya*, see Anālayo 2011: 5, 11–14.
Anālayo 2015: 80, 81–85 discusses this in the *Pātimokkha* (following von
Hinüber) and the *Dīghanikāya/Dīrghāgama*s. For the *Udāna*, see Anālayo 2009c:
50–53. Hartmann 2014: 143–144, 152 n. 18 briefly mentions the pairing of sutras
in the *Yuga-nipāta* of the Sanskrit *Dīrghāgama*, for which see also Bucknell 2014:
87–89. Others are given below.

*sutta*s are set in Sāvatthi except no. 7 which is set in Rājagaha, and all involve the Buddha addressing the monks or a monk asking the Buddha a question, except the pair nos. 7 and 8 that involve ascetics. Using the *sutta* number within the *Nidāna-saṃyutta* rather than within the *vagga*, the first two *sutta*s, nos. 11 and 12 (SN II 11–14), begin in the same way with the Buddha stating that there are four *āhāra*s, nutriments, that maintain beings and assist those coming into being and his listing of them:

> *cattāro 'me bhikkhave āhārā bhūtānaṃ vā sattānaṃ ṭhitiyā sam-*
> *bhavesīnaṃ vā anuggahāya. katame cattāro. kabaliṃkāro āhāro*
> *oḷāriko vā sukhumo vā phasso dutiyo manosañcetanā tatiyā* (Ee *tatiyo*)
> *viññāṇaṃ catutthaṃ. ime kho bhikkhave cattāro āhārā bhūtānaṃ vā*
> *sattānaṃ ṭhitiyā sambhavesīnaṃ vā anuggahāyā ti.* (SN II 11.22–26,
> 13.1–6)

Āhāra is subsequently linked with *paṭiccasamuppāda* in different ways in each *sutta*, but both *sutta*s end with the same "on account of the remainderless fading and cessation" (*asesavirāganirodhā*) articulation of *paṭiccasamuppāda*.

*Sutta*s 13 and 14 (SN II 14–16) both depict the Buddha telling the monks that there are some monks and brahmans (*samaṇā vā brāhmaṇā vā*) who do not understand *paṭiccasamuppāda* and therefore have not realized the purpose of being an ascetic or brahman (*sāmaññatthaṃ vā brahmaññatthaṃ vā*), while there are others who have, with slight variation between the two *sutta*s in the way this is articulated.

*Sutta*s 15 and 16 (SN II 16–18) both depict a monk approaching the Buddha and asking him for clarification of a concept. In the first of these, Kaccānagotta asks the Buddha for clarification of what is meant by right view: *sammādiṭṭhi sammādiṭṭhī ti bhante vuccati. kittāvatā nu kho bhante sammādiṭṭhi hotī ti*; in the second an unnamed monk asks him for clarification of what it is to be a speaker on the Dhamma, the wording used to depict this being the same as that used in the previous *sutta*: *dhammakathiko dhammakathiko ti bhante vuccati. kittāvatā nu kho bhante dhammakathiko hotī ti.*[64] The Buddha's explanations are quite different, but nonetheless involve *paṭiccasamuppāda*. No. 15 connects with nos. 17 and 18 in utilizing the same "avoiding these two extremes a Tathāgata teaches the middle way of *paṭiccasamuppāda*" phrase (see below).

*Sutta*s 17 and 18 (SN II 18–23) both depict an ascetic asking the Buddha very similar questions and the Buddha giving similar responses. In the first, the *acela* Kassapa asks the Buddha whether suffering is one's

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[64] Ee abbreviates the second sentence without indicating it.

own making, another's making, neither one's own nor another's making, etc. (*kiṃ nu kho bho gotama sayaṃkataṃ dukkhan ti*, etc.), to which the Buddha responds in each case "not so" (*mā h'evaṃ kassapā ti bhagavā avoca*). Asked why he responds in this way, the Buddha explains to Kassapa that his questions are connected with eternalist or nihilist views, but that avoiding these two extremes a Tathāgata teaches the middle way of *paṭiccasamuppāda*. In response, Kassapa becomes a monk and soon after an *arahat*. In the second *sutta*, which has a less complex setting than the first, the pattern of Timbaruka *paribbājaka*'s questions and the Buddha's responses are the same except here it is whether pleasure and suffering are one's own making, etc. The remainder of the *sutta* is virtually the same as no. 17 but ends with Timbaruka becoming a lay follower.

In *sutta*s 19 and 20 (SN II 23–27), the final two *sutta*s of the *vagga*, the connection is less obvious. In the first, the Buddha explains to the monks the difference between a fool (*bala*) and a wise man (*paṇḍita*), which is whether or not ignorance (*avijjā*) and craving (*taṇhā*) have been abandoned. The articulation of dependent arising (*paṭiccasamuppāda*) is more subtle in this *sutta* than in the other *sutta*s of the *vagga*. In *sutta* 20 the Buddha teaches the monks *paṭiccasamuppāda* and the things that are dependently arisen (*paṭiccasamuppādañ ca vo bhikkhave desessāmi paṭiccasamuppanne ca dhamme*), giving the fullest articulation of the topic found in the *vagga*. The *sutta* concludes with the Buddha saying that, having seen *paṭiccasamuppāda* and the things that are dependently arisen through right understanding, the noble disciple does not engage with thoughts as to whether he existed or not in the past, how he was in the past, etc., and so on with the future and present. This echoes reference to eternalist or nihilist views in *sutta* 17 while *sutta* 19 connects with *sutta* 18, the second of the previous pair, with the words *sukhadukkhaṃ*, "pleasure and suffering." Thus, although the connections between the last two *sutta*s of the *vagga* are less apparent than in the other pairs, these *sutta*s are nonetheless connected with other *sutta*s in the *vagga* in addition to the *saṃyutta* topic of *paṭiccasamuppāda*.

Again, in several sections of the *Pātimokkha/Prātimokṣa*s, a text that must belong to an early strata of Buddhist literature, we find rules forming pairs or strings based on a common subject or a key word or

wording.[65] With reference to the Pali *Pātimokkha*, von Hinüber (1996: 12; cf. 1999: 20) notes that within the *vagga* divisions of the longer *nissaggiya* and *pācittiya* rules "single rules are often connected by concatenation in such a way that certain keywords occur in a sequence of rules,"[66] while Pruitt and Norman (2001: xl–xli) note the occurrence of pairs among the *sekhiya* rules. But the phenomenon appears to be more widespread in the *Pātimokkha*/*Prātimokṣa*s than suggested by these authors. For example, the thirteen *saṃghādisesa* rules consist of pairs that for the most part share wording in common.[67] In addition, in the Pali at least, the second member of each pair has a greater word count than the first, while on the whole the rules get longer as they progress. This is parallel to the string structures discussed above in which words and units are ordered according to the Waxing Syllable Principle. To use the Pali version,[68] rules 1 and 2 deal with physical expressions of sexuality: rule 1 (p. 12.5–6) concerns the intentional emission of semen; rule 2 (p. 12.8–11) concerns touching a woman. There is little wording in common in this case. They consist of 5 and 21 words, respectively. Rules 3 (p. 12.13–15) and 4 (p. 12.17–21) concern speaking to women in a crude, sexualized way and consist of 16 and 26 words, respectively. I quote these two here to illustrate the way in which pairs of rules share wording in common (wording in bold indicating identical or similar wording):[69]

3. **yo pana bhikkhu** │ *otiṇṇo vipariṇatena cittena* │ **mātugāmaṃ** *duṭṭhullāhi vācāhi obhāseyya* │ *yathā taṃ yuvā yuvatiṃ* │ **methunupa-saṃhitāhi** │ **saṅghādiseso** (p. 12.13–15)

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[65] The *Pātimokkha*/*Prātimokṣa* rules are preserved in multiple languages belonging to a diversity of schools. For convenience, I concentrate here on the Pali version.

[66] Further discussed by Anālayo 2015: 81–82.

[67] This appears to be also true of the *saṃghāvaśeṣa*/*saṃghātiśeṣa* rules preserved in other languages, though this is perhaps not surprising since all versions have the same thirteen rules in the same order except for nos. 12 and 13 which switch order in some versions, though there are differences in wording. This includes a new Gandhari manuscript containing remnants of these rules, the school affiliation of which is uncertain, which I presented at the Gāndhārī Manuscript Workshop, University of Lausanne, 12–16 August 2019, and am currently preparing for publication.

[68] References throughout are to the edition and translation by Pruitt and Norman 2001.

[69] The vertical dividing lines in the Pali help identify the building blocks and facilitate comparison. As noted earlier, the text can be divided in different ways. They are not part of the traditional punctuation.

4. *yo pana bhikkhu* | *otiṇṇo vipariṇatena cittena* | *mātugāmassa* santike attakāmapāricariyāya vaṇṇaṃ **bhāseyya** | etad aggaṃ bhagini pāricariyānaṃ | yā mādisaṃ sīlavantaṃ kalyāṇadhammaṃ brahma-cāriṃ | etena dhammena paricareyyā ti | **methunupasaṃhitena** | **saṅghādiseso** (p. 12.17–21)

3. "**If any bhikkhu should, beset [by passion], with perverted mind**, **address** a **woman** with lewd words, as a young man [addresses] a young girl [with words] **alluding to sexual intercourse**, **this entails a formal meeting of the saṅgha**." (tr. Norman in Pruitt and Norman 2001: 13).

4. "**If any bhikkhu should, beset [by passion], with perverted mind**, in the presence of a **woman**, **speak** in praise of ministering to his own sensual pleasure, [saying], 'Sister, this is the highest of ministries, [namely] if any [woman] should minister with this act to one like me, virtuous, of noble nature, a liver of the holy life,' [with an utterance] **alluding to sexual intercourse**, **this entails a formal meeting of the saṅgha**." (tr. Norman in Pruitt and Norman 2001: 13).

In fact, rule 2 is linked with these two rules by sharing the same initial phrase: *yo pana bhikkhu* | *otiṇṇo vipariṇatena cittena* | *mātugāmena saddhiṃ*, "If any bhikkhu should, beset [by passion], with perverted mind, … with a woman" (tr. Norman in Pruitt and Norman 2001: 13).

Rule 5 concerns acting as a go-between for a man and a woman, which is connected with the previous four rules in being concerned with sexuality, but this rule does not seem to be a member of a pair, the pairing pattern starting again with the following rules. Rules 6 (14.6–13) and 7 (p. 14.16–21) both concern a monk constructing a building with both rules sharing much wording in common. They consist of 44 and 29 words, respectively, which does not conform to the pattern. Rules 8 (pp. 14.24–16.3) and 9 (p. 16.5–11) concern accusing an innocent monk of a *pārājika* offence. They share much wording in common and consist of 37 and 46 words, respectively. Rules 10 (p. 16.14–25) and 11 (p. 18.2–16) concern schism in the Sangha, either causing it (no. 10) or siding with a schismatic monk (no. 11). They share much wording in common and consist of 70 and 115 words, respectively. Rules 12 (p. 18.18–20.6) concerns resisting investigation and admonishment regarding behaviour and rule 13 (p. 20.8–31) concerns corrupting families and resisting admonishment. They share much wording in common and consist of 103 and 179 words, respectively.[70]

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[70] A more detailed study of the composition and stylistic features of the surviving *Pātimokkha*/*Prātimokṣa*s would be productive but is beyond the scope of this study.

An interesting feature of some sections of canonical collections is the seeming "artificiality" of the sutras and verses that make up a *vagga/varga* or similar division.[71] This is particularly evident in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya/Saṃyuktāgama*s and *Aṅguttara-nikāya/Ekottarikāgama*s. Returning to the *Nidāna-saṃyutta* of the Pali *Saṃyutta-nikāya* discussed above, the first *vagga* of this *saṃyutta*, the *Buddha-vagga*, consists of ten *sutta*s (SN 12.1–10 at II 1–11) which all depict the Buddha living in Sāvatthi and addressing the monks on the topic of *paṭiccasamuppāda*. In the first *sutta* (12.1) the Buddha tells the monks that he will teach (*desessāmi*) them *paṭiccasamuppāda* and he presents a basic account of *paṭicca-samuppāda*, while in the second *sutta* (12.2) he tells them that he will teach and analyse (*desessāmi vibhajissāmi*) *paṭiccasamuppāda* and does so by defining each member of the *paṭiccasamuppāda* set. These *sutta*s form a pair, with the second being longer than the first. The bare bones account of *paṭiccasamuppāda* of the first *sutta* is very short, taking me less than two minutes to recite, seemingly too short for a formal discourse. One would expect that the brief account would normally have been followed by the more detailed analysis or have formed part of a more complex discourse, as recorded elsewhere in the canon. It seems that the first *sutta* of this *vagga*, which is also the first *sutta* of the *saṃyutta*, was created to present the most basic account of *paṭicca-samuppāda*, while the second was created to provide definitions of the individual terms. The third *sutta* (12.3) consists of a brief account of *paṭiccasamuppāda* in terms of wrong and right way (*micchāpaṭipadañ ca … sammāpaṭipadañ ca*), which appears to be a nuancing of the understanding presented in the first two *sutta*s. In the remaining seven *sutta*s of the *vagga* the Buddha gives an account of the realization of *paṭiccasamuppāda* by the seven buddhas, beginning with the past buddha Vipassī and ending with himself. Each account is identical except for the change of the name of the buddha. The account of Vipassī is given in full, that of the following five buddhas are heavily abbreviated, having been introduced with a statement that they are to be filled out (*sattannam pi buddhānaṃ evaṃ peyyālo/vitthāretabbo*, p. 9.14), while Gotama's is given more flesh. It is hard to imagine the scenario presented here in which a teacher, in this case the Buddha, gives separate discourses on individual buddha's on different occasions. A more likely scenario is that such a teacher would give an account of his own realization of

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[71]   What I mean by "artificiality" will become apparent in the following discussion.

paṭiccasamuppāda, as we find presented for the Buddha elsewhere in the canon, possibly then followed by a brief statement that the same occurred for the six past buddhas, or more likely, that the Buddha's account of his own realization was applied to the past buddhas by those who composed these texts to form six additional *sutta*s.

An even more extreme example in the *Nidāna-saṃyutta* is the *Samaṇabrāhmaṇa-vagga*, the eight and penultimate *vagga* of the *saṃyutta* (SN 12.71–81 at II 129–130), which consist of eleven virtually identical *sutta*s. In the first (12.71), the Buddha states that there are some monks and brahmans who do not understand old age and death (*jarāmaraṇaṃ na pajānanti*), which is the first link in *paṭiccasamuppāda* and the starting point in its analysis, nor their origin, cessation or way leading to their cessation, and who therefore have not realized the purpose of being an ascetic or brahman, while there are some monks and brahmans who do understand them. This utilizes much of the wording of *sutta*s 13 and 14 of the *Nidāna-saṃyutta* discussed above with its reference to monks and brahmans. The following ten *sutta*s consist of the same wording being applied in turn to each of the other links in *paṭiccasamuppāda*, ending with volitional formations (*saṅkhāra*). Once again, it is hard to imagine that a teacher would give eleven separate discourses each dealing with only one link.[72] It is far more likely that those responsible for the composition of this material divided what was originally a single discourse to form eleven *sutta*s and thus an independent *vagga* in the case of the *Samaṇabrāhmaṇa-vagga*, or the last seven *sutta*s of a *vagga* in the case of the *Buddha-vagga*.[73]

As a recent study by Kuan and Bucknell (2019) reveals, this phenomenon of generating "artificial" or pseudo-*sutta*s, as they refer to them, and whole *vagga*/*varga*s by splitting what must have been original single discourses or by applying the same formulaic wording to an expanded list of items is extremely common in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya/Ekottarikāgama*s, particularly so in the Book of Ones and Twos.[74] Regarding the Book of Ones, they state,

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[72] The following *vagga*, the *Antarapeyyāla-vagga* (SN 12.82–93 at II 130–132), which is the last in the *Nidāna-saṃyutta*, follows a similar artificial pattern.

[73] For *peyyāla*s and repetitions in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya*, see Gethin 2007.

[74] The same is true of some verse collections such as the *Dhammapada/Dharmapada/Udānavarga*s, especially so the *Udānavarga*. Compare, for example, the way in which what is preserved as six verses in the Pali *Dhammapada* (296–301) and Gandhari *Dharmapada* (100–105) with identical

Sets that logically belong in higher nipātas (the Fours, Fives, etc.) have been made superficially appropriate for inclusion in the Ones by being subdivided into their individual components … presumably motivated by a perceived need to produce an *Ekaka-nipāta* comparable to the more natural higher nipātas, despite a shortage of genuine doctrinal sets comprising just a single item. (Kuan and Bucknell 2019, p. 150)

By the opposite process, sutras in the higher *nipāta*s have often been created by combining sequences from lower *nipāta*s, by adding additional comparable elements to form the appropriate number, or by combining two sets of doctrinal items in the same sutra.[75]

The generation of sutras to create a Book of Ones and to fill out the otherwise sparsely populated Book of Twos and the Books of higher numbers within the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*/*Ekottarikāgama*s may well have been motivated by a sense of balance and neatness, to have an *Aṅguttara-nikāya*/*Ekottarikāgama* covering the full number range from one to eleven, but the generation of sutras in other sections of the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*/*Ekottarikāgama*s and in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya*/*Samyuktāgama*s seems more motivated by a desire to create comprehensive textual collections, and to generate repetition that was so loved by the authors and compilers of these collections. A possible motive for wanting to produce such large textual corpora may have been competition, either with brahmans whose corpus of oral literature must have been quite impressive by the time Buddhists came on the scene, with other rival religious groups such as the Jains, or possibly with other Buddhist communities, or some combination of these. Kuan and Bucknell (2019) argue that the Book of Ones, which forms a part of the Pali *Aṅguttara-nikāya* and Chinese *Ekottarikāgama* T 125 (EĀ) but not the second Chinese *Ekottarikāgama* T 150a (EĀ[2]), is a later addition rather than a feature of the ancestral *Aṅguttara-nikāya*/*Ekottarikāgama* for two reasons: "First, the artificiality of the subdividing technique indicates that it is a late development. Second, no corresponding Book of Ones exists in EĀ[2] [T 150a], a fact that correlates well with the artificiality of the Ones in AN and the corresponding part of EĀ [T 125]" and that it is

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pādas a–c and only minor differences in pāda d, have been expanded to form 21 verses in the Sanskrit *Udānavarga* (Uv 15.9–26).

[75] Kuan and Bucknell 2019: 155, 163. For other discussions of the compositional features of the Pali *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, see van Zeyst 1965; Norman 1983: 55–58; von Hinüber 1996: 38–41; Bodhi 2012: 1–25, 63–66. Bodhi 2012: 63–66 lists several organizational principles used in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* not mentioned in the current discussion.

therefore likely "that the observed resemblances between the Ones of AN and EĀ are due to borrowing at some time after the two traditions had separated." (p. 160). Although the lack of sutras from the Ones in T 150a may very well have been due to it being an anthology, thus discrediting it as evidence, that parallel collections belonging to different monastic (*nikāya*) and textual lineages often differ in the way sutras and *vagga/ varga*s have been generated, suggest that this feature is relatively late, meaning post-Aśokan.

The large amount of repetitive material and the forms of repetition that resulted from multiplying parallel textual units, sutras in this case, produced by applying the same frame, the same formulaic passage, to individual items that would more naturally occur together within one sutra, may itself have been what was desired rather than the creation of a large corpus of texts, per se. This repetition is very much in keeping with the way in which repetition is built into the very design of early Buddhist texts from the smallest building blocks to the overall structure of the larger unique sutras such as those of the *Dīgha-nikāya/Dīrghāgama*s and *Majjhima-nikāya/Madhyamāgama*s, and then across the textual units within a collection or collections by means of the standardization of the wording used to depict a given concept, action, or event, namely through the use of formulas, through the use of standardized sutras structures, and so on. Memorizing and reciting the eleven *sutta*s of the *Samaṇa-brāhmaṇa-vagga* discussed above in which identical wording concerning whether some monks and brahmans do or do not have understanding is applied to eleven of the twelve links of *paṭiccasamuppāda* would certainly have ensured accurate transmission of that material. But in addition to this, and perhaps even more importantly, it would have acted as an important tool for mental training, for the development of concentration and attention to fine detail, and as a meditative exercise. One had to be keenly alert to the wording, particularly the moments when key words were to be substituted for the next item in the sequence. As Gethin (2007: 382) puts it,

> this kind of structural repetition involving as it does the substitution of various items in turn must require and develop a certain mental alertness and agility that goes beyond mere rote repetition, such that it might be considered a practice for developing the Buddhist meditative virtues of mindfulness and concentration.[76]

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[76] Gethin (2007: 382–383) also explores repetition as a common religious phenomenon. Repetition as an aid to memorization and faithful transmission of

There is also something in this of the atomization of truth statements in which each and every element or *dhamma* of a teaching or doctrinal set is isolated and emphasized, being ideal for meditative contemplation. It is possible that this as much as a sense of balance was the motive for the creation of the Book of Ones, or perhaps the creation of the Book of Ones was a natural outcome of this process.

As some of the above examples show, canonical collections are not merely the result of the arranging of pre-existing sutras or verses according to certain organizational principles. Sutras and verses were created for a particular context, to present the teachings and practices in a particular order or manner, to develop a particular theme, to develop a particular vision of the Buddha, and so on. For example, as we saw in the study of the *Nidāna-saṃyutta*, the first *sutta* of the first *vagga* was created to present the most basic account of *paṭiccasamuppāda*, while the second was created to provide definitions of the individual terms.[77] I will return to the creation of new sutras below.

It is highly likely that a teacher like the Buddha, who is said to have preached for 45 years, would speak on the same topic many times throughout his teaching career, varying his discourse to suit the occasion,

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textual material, which I emphasized in Allon 1997b, is just one of several possible functions of repetition. The meditative, psychological, and religious dimension of repetition clearly need further investigation.

[77] Hartmann (2014: 148–149) draws attention to Otto Franke's view proposed a hundred years ago (1913) that the *Dīgha-nikāya* was "not just a collection of discourses, but a uniformly composed literary work" ("keine Sammlung von Reden, sondern ein einheitlich abgefaßtes schriftstellerisches Werk," Franke 1913: x), a view that met with some criticism in its day. More recently, Shulman (2017) attempted to show that the thirteen *sutta*s of the *Sīlakkhandha-vagga* of the Pali *Dīgha-nikāya* appear to have been created to illustrate the status of the Buddha in relationship to brahmans and ascetics, particularly the former, and show how these groups should regard him, with the *sutta*s ordered to develop this theme. Hartmann himself has done the most work on the arrangement of the sutras in the *Dīrghāgama*s of the Sarvāstivādins and Mūlasarvāstivādins, including the very interesting *Ṣaṭsūtraka* division, though this involves more the arrangement of sutras rather than the composition of them, since four of the six sutras of this division are found in the canons of other schools not so arranged (see e.g. Hartmann 1991, 1994, 2004, 2014; Hartmann and Wille 2014). Regarding the Sanskrit *Dīrghāgama* as a whole, Hartmann (2014: 157) states, "The whole *Dīrgha-āgama* is, in modern terms, a construction of the prestige of the central figure, a prestige extremely important when we think of the rival situation among all those groups of spiritual seekers who had left society and were unavoidably competing for the same supporters." For further discussion of the arrangement of sutras in the *Dīgha-nikāya/Dīrghāgama*, see Anālayo 2015.

the content and delivery changing as his experience and understanding of his audience developed, and no doubt as his own understanding matured. This being the case, the phenomenon of sutras and other textual units being arranged in pairs indicates that an enormous amount of culling and modification of discourses must have occurred when these collections were created, a process that seems to have gone hand-in-hand with the creation of textual units discussed above.

Finally, the arrangement of textual units within collections and the faithful transmission of these collections is controlled by means of the para-textual mechanism of the *uddāna*s, or mnemonic verses, that key off the members of the group of textual units by means of a keyword of the textual unit being referenced or a word encapsulating its main topic. These normally occur at the end of the division of textual units they reference and may be applied to all divisional levels within the larger collection, beginning with the smallest division of the *vagga/varga* of ten sutras and ending with the *nikāya/āgama* or the like itself. These function to ensure the membership of the collection (inclusion) and the correct ordering of the members and would have been memorized by the *bhāṇaka*s and those who wished to memorize the text or a section of it. An example is the *uddāna* to the first *vagga* of the Pali *Suttanipāta*, which contains twelve *sutta*s (pp. 1–38):

> *tass' uddānaṃ:*
> *urago dhaniyo c' eva, visāṇañ ca tathā kasi*
> *cundo parābhavo c' eva, vasalo mettabhāvanā.*
> *sātāgiro āḷavako, vijayo ca tathā muni*
> *dvādas' etāni suttāni, uragavaggo ti vuccatī ti.*[78]

The *uddāna* is introduced with *tass' uddānaṃ*, "the *uddāna* of that [*vagga*] is," and ends with *dvādas' etāni suttāni uragavaggo ti vuccatī ti*, "these twelve *sutta*s are called the *Uragavagga*," the *vagga* taking its name from the first *sutta* of it as is commonly done. The metre is *anuṣṭubh*.

The first *sutta* (Sn 1–17) is referenced by means of the key word *urago*, "snake," that occurs in the simile that makes up the last *pāda* of each verse: *urago jiṇṇaṃ iva tacaṃ purāṇaṃ*, "as a snake its old worn-out skin." The *sutta* is referred to as the *Uraga-sutta*. The second *sutta* (Sn 18–34) is referenced in the *uddāna* by means of *Dhaniyo*, which is the name of the cowherd who is talking with the Buddha and utters many

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[78] Sn Be p. 311.15–19; Ce p. 66.31–35; Ee p. 38.13–17.

of the verses that make up the *sutta*. His name only occurs late in the *sutta* in verse 13d (Sn 30d): *imaṃ atthaṃ Dhaniyo abhāsatha*, "Dhaniya spoke about this matter," but then is also found in the hyper-metrical reciters' (*saṅgītikāra*) words that were added at a later stage in order to make clear who was speaking the verse,[79] in this case *iti Dhaniyo gopo*, "[said] the cowherd Dhaniya," which occurs after each of Dhaniya's verses (those spoken by the Buddha are marked by *iti bhagavā*). The title of the *sutta* is *Dhaniya-sutta*. The third *sutta* (Sn 35–75) is referenced by means of *visāṇañ*, "horn," which is a key word of the last *pāda* of each verse: *eko care khaggavisāṇakappo*, "one should wander alone like a rhinoceros/ rhinoceros' horn."[80] The title given to the *sutta* is *Khaggavisāṇa-sutta*. The fourth *sutta* (Sn pp. 12–16) is referenced by means of *kasi*, "ploughing," which is both a reference to *kasi*, "ploughing," that occurs in the first verse of the *sutta* (1b–d = Sn 76b–d) spoken by the brahman to the Buddha: *na ca passāma te kasiṃ, kasin no pucchito brūhi, yathā jānemu te kasiṃ*, "but we do not see your ploughing. Being asked, tell us about your ploughing so that we may know your ploughing," and a reference to his name that occurs in the introductory prose: *Kasibhāradvājo brāhmaṇo*, "the brahman Kasibhāradvāja" (p. 13). The title of the *sutta* is *Kasibhāradvāja-sutta*. To mention one more entry, the *uddāna* entry for the eighth *sutta* is *mettabhāvanā*, "the development of loving-kindness" or "loving-kindness meditation." This encapsulates keywords of verse 8a–b (Sn 150a–b) *mettañ ca sabbalokasmiṃ, mānasaṃ bhāvaye*, "and one should develop (*bhāvaye*) loving-kindness (*mettañ*) towards the whole world," and the general topic of the *sutta*. The title given to the *sutta* is *Metta-sutta*.

*Uddāna*s are very much para-textual and contextual entities, that is, they were created and recreated as collections of textual units were rearranged. This is evident in the same sutra that is found in different collections belonging to the same community, e.g. the Pali *Saṃyutta-* and *Aṅguttara-nikāya*s, being referenced differently in the *uddāna*s to each. In fact, there are often quite important differences between the *uddāna*s to the same collection transmitted by different Theravāda communities: Sri Lankan, Burmese, Thai, etc.[81]

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[79]   For the *saṅgītikāra* remarks in the *Suttanipāta*, see Norman 2001: xxxvi–xxxviii.

[80]   For various interpretations of this expression, see Salomon 2000: 10–14 and Jones 2014.

[81]   Of course, *uddāna*s are far more complex than suggested by this brief account. A more detailed study of *uddāna*s based on my paper "Uddānas in early Buddhist

Although brief, the above account of the way in which collections of textual units were created and of the principles that guided the selection of the textual units for inclusion and their arrangement within the collection and its subdivisions further illustrates the degree of control that was exercised over the production and organization of early Buddhist texts, at least as we have them. The creation of textual units such as sutras which involved multiple and complex decisions regarding language, genre, structure, length, diction, style, standardization, and the creation of collections of such units that clearly involved selecting, culling, and even proliferating textual units, must have been an enormous group undertaking that involved considerable investment of time and effort, as would have been the process of getting the results ratified by the community, to say nothing of its subsequent transmission.[82] Very little of the texts that have survived indicate that they are the result of spontaneous creativity, of composition in performance, an understanding that is supported by what we know of the history of early Buddhist communities.

Alongside references in the sutras and the *Vinaya*s to texts being memorized and recited, we find many references to those who are expert or learned in certain classes of text or forms of transmission (several of which were mentioned in passages discussed above), including *suttantika*, "who knows the *suttanta*s," *āgatāgama*, "has mastered the tradition," *dhammadhara*, "expert in the Dhamma," *vinayadhara*, "expert in the Vinaya," *mātikādhara*, "expert in the outlines," *dhammakathika*, "a Dhamma preacher," and *bhāṇaka*, "reciter." But it is unclear what these terms meant in terms of the nature of the actual texts involved and knowledge of them, it only being in the commentaries and other extra-canonical texts, which are relatively late in their present form though certainly based on older material, that they are spelt out. For example, it is only in such texts that we find references to *bhāṇaka*s or reciter communities who specialized in the transmission of particular collections of texts such as the *Dīgha-nikāya, Majjhima-nikāya*, and so on, an institution that, according to Theravāda accounts at least, was initiated at

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texts: their origin, function, and importance" delivered at the *17th World Sanskrit Conference*, Vancouver 9–13 July 2018, is currently being prepared for publication. Further information on *uddāna*s, including the analysis of examples, can be found, for example, in Allon and Silverlock 2017: 7–11; Hartmann 2004: esp. 120, 122–125; Salomon 2000: 33–37; Su 2009, 2013. Norman 2001: xxx–xxxi makes some remarks on the *uddāna*s of the *Suttanipāta*, or at least the relationship of the entry to the titles of *sutta*s.

[82]   See Skilling 2009: 59.

the first *saṃgīti*, or communal recitation or council, that was held in Rājagaha soon after the Buddha's death.[83] A classic list is found in the *Milindapañha*: *suttantikā venayikā ābhidhammikā dhammakathikā Jātakabhāṇakā Dīghabhāṇakā Majjhimabhāṇakā Saṃyuttabhāṇakā Aṅguttarabhāṇakā Khuddakabhāṇakā* (Mil 341.27–342.1). The earliest datable references to *bhāṇaka*s of specific collections of texts are found in Buddhist inscriptions, of which the earliest date to the 2nd century BCE. For example, in the Sri Lankan inscriptions dating from the 2nd century BCE onwards published by Paranavitana (1970) we find reference to Majjhima-bhāṇaka (*majhimabaṇaka*, no. 330), Ekottarika-bhāṇaka = Aṅguttara-bhāṇaka (*ekautirakabaṇaka*, no. 407), and Saṃyutta-bhāṇaka (*sayutakabaṇaka*, no. 666),[84] while in early Indian inscriptions we find references to those who know or are a master of three baskets, the equivalent Sanskrit forms being *paiṭakin*, *traipiṭaka*, *traipiṭikā*, and *traipiṭakopādhyāya*.[85]

However, we have very little understanding of the formation of early Buddhist texts, of what was composed during the Buddha's lifetime, of the characteristics of those initial compositions, of how the first *saṃgīti* worked and what texts were recited on that occasion. We have no idea of the relationship between the texts and collections we have and those early works, nor how the *bhāṇaka* system worked, the extent to which the *bhāṇaka*s modified or even formed the material they transmitted,[86] and the impact subsequent *saṃgīti*s and redaction events had on the material transmitted.[87]

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[83] For discussions of the *bhāṇaka* tradition, see Adikaram 1946 (chap 3); Anālayo 2011: 860 (with numerous references to mentions in inscriptions); Collins 1992: 124–125; Cousins 1983: 4–5, 2013; Goonesekere 1966: 688–690; Lamotte 1988 (see index, *bhāṇaka*); Mori 1990; Norman 1984 (see index, *bhāṇaka*), 2006: 57–66.

[84] The references to *bhāṇaka* in the Indian inscriptions listed in Lüders 1912[1973] simply give *bhāṇaka*, "reciter," and do not list a specific collection.

[85] Those listed in Lüders 1912[1973] are (to use the Sanskrit) *paiṭakin* (no. 856 Bhārhut), *traipiṭaka* and *traipiṭikā* (no. 38 Mathurā, no. 918 Sahēṭh-Mahēṭh, no. 925–927 Sārnāth), and *traipiṭakopādhyāya*, (no. 989 Kānheri); see also Lamotte 1988: 150.

[86] For examples of the impact the *bhāṇaka*s may have had on the diction of the collections they transmitted, see Allon 1997b: 163–166 and discussion below.

[87] Skilling 2017: 276–277 makes a distinction between *saṅgītikāra*s and *bhāṇaka*s: "The canons were the work of *saṅgītikāra*s, the editors or redactors of the various recitations held at different places by different schools at different times. The *saṅgītikāra*s laid the underpinnings of the Āgama traditions; reciters (*bhāṇaka*s) and experts or custodians (*dhara*s: *vinaya-dhara*s, *sūtra-dhara*s, *matṛkā-dhara*s

Although individuals may have mastered particular collections and thereby been known as *bhāṇaka*s, what we do know of the institution of the *bhāṇaka*s, including the impact they had on the material they transmitted and the different views different *bhāṇaka* communities are said to have had on certain topics, indicates that they must have learnt and recited texts communally, which by default involves fixed texts, because as stated at the beginning, group recitation requires that the wording of the text and the arrangement of the textual units within a collection be fixed.[88]

Besides, without a continuous tradition of the communal memorization and validation of texts, we would not have the material that we do that exhibits the peculiar stylistic features and systems of organization I have described, that are preserved in such ancient languages, with parallel versions exhibiting such similarities.[89]

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and, finally, *tripiṭaka-dhara*s) were responsible for maintenance and circulation. But these divisions of labour were not in any way hard and fast. The *saṅgītikāra*s, *bhāṇaka*s, and the various *dhara*s responded to a desire, to a need, for continuity—to enable the Śāsana or the Saddharma to last long in this world (as in the aspiration *ciraṃ tiṭṭhatu saddhammo*). The scriptural collections are the products of group efforts to preserve the Saddharma and to ensure that the Śāsana will endure: they are long-term community projects."

[88]   For the continued orality and practice of memorizing texts in the Mahāyāna, see Drewes 2011, 2015.

[89]   Skilling 2009: 59 similarly argues that the diversity of sutra and *Vinaya* collections could not have happened without the frequent occurrence of *saṃgīti*s.

Chapter 5

The Main Differences Between Parallel Versions of Early
Buddhist Texts and Accounting for these Differences

5.1. Introduction

When we compare parallel versions of sutras and verses that have been
transmitted by different communities at different times and locations,
they exhibit a great range of differences within an overall similarity,
something that is sometimes observable even in the texts transmitted by
the same *nikāya*, such as the Theravāda. Of course, what constitutes a
parallel version is not always straightforward. Sometimes two sutras may
be virtually the same or similar in a portion of the text, but then differ
completely in the remainder, two or more different blocks of text being
combined in different ways to form each. In some instances, we can speak
of partial parallels. In other cases what is preserved as one sutra in one
tradition is transmitted as two in another. There are also many instances
of sutras being unique to only one tradition though elements of their
structure, subject matter, wording, and style closely match sutras known
in other traditions, besides sutras being common to several but not all
traditions or of a tradition lacking a sutra found in the others. But in the
great majority of cases, the parallel status is straightforward.

The main differences encountered between parallel versions of early
Buddhist texts preserved in Pali, Gandhari, or other Prakrit, in Buddhist
Hybrid Sanskrit, Sanskrit, Chinese, and/or Tibetan are, apart from
language and language related phenomena, the following:

- whole episodes or descriptions of events, practices, teachings,
  and so on, found in one version are missing in one or more of the
  parallels;
- differences in the sequence of events and order in which
  teachings are given;

- differences in the arrangement of information within the description of an event, concept or practice;
- differences in the information given within the description of an event, concept or practice;
- different order of items in a list and differences in the number of items listed;
- differences in the names of people and places in the description of what is essentially the same event;
- differences in the wording used to portray a given event, concept or practice, including the use of different synonyms, differences in word order, and differences in the complexity of descriptions;
- differences in the use of markers such as indeclinables and vocatives of address;
- differences in grammar, e.g. verbal tense, grammatical number, etc.

And then, of course, we find major differences in the ways in which the textual units of sutras and verses were allocated to and arranged within collections of such units, namely, *nikāya*s/*āgama*s and *piṭaka*s. The above list is by no means exhaustive.

Some of the factors that must have contributed to such changes occurring include:

- change of language;
- the *bhāṇaka* traditions, which seem to have been fraternity-like as evident from the fact that they held different views concerning aspects of doctrine, the shape of the canon, and the status of textual collections;[90]
- the authority of the teacher and his specialization;
- geographical isolation or separation: by the end of the Mauryan period (324–187 BCE) Buddhism had spread throughout most of the subcontinent, though undoubtedly in a patchwork fashion, including to Gandhara and the Punjab in the northeast and to Sri Lanka in the south, though its presence in many areas may have been rather weak;

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[90] Whether or not they were fraternity-like, there appears to be evidence for their impact on the material they were responsible for (see pp. 99–104).

- lack of centralized authority, which combined with geographical isolation would have made it difficult to maintain standard versions;
- the formation of separate *nikāya*s: this must have greatly multiplied the possibility of diversity in the texts transmitted, with each school maintaining, rearranging, altering, and supplementing its own version of canonical texts;
- the dynamic attitude towards what constitutes *buddhavacana*, the authoritative word of the Buddha;
- an emphasis on meaning rather than wording (contra the Brahmanical tradition);
- the background and mnemotechnical skills of members of the Buddhist community and the age at which they became monastics;
- the possibility that communities belonging to different *nikāya*s and different textual lineages influenced each other's texts;
- the possibility that an oral performance altered for a given purpose and to suit a particular audience or a sermon based on a text influenced (altered or replaced) the communally transmitted version; for example, of a teacher's exposition on a discourse being felt to have been an improvement on the original or his sermon on a topic based heavily on memorized material producing a result that was considered worthy of formalization and preservation;
- the impact of writing and manuscript transmission, including errors and changes resulting from the limitation of script, e.g. not marking long vowels and geminate consonants, confusion due to similarity of two letters, lack of standardized orthography at some periods and in some scripts; scribal errors and additions; marginal glosses in a manuscript being incorporated into the root text when the manuscript was copied; confusion in the ordering of folios; accidental omission of passages, particularly repetitive passages; words triggering the inclusion of material found in another context known to the scribe, etc.

Once again, this list is not exhaustive. It is also quite difficult to identify which factor or combination of factors was responsible for a given observable difference.

Now, the changes that texts underwent may have been intentional or unintentional, both being possible in the context of purely oral

transmission and transmission involving manuscripts. By intentional I mean that the reciters or those who transmitted the text were consciously aware that they were modifying it, resulting in effort being needed to adopt and learn the modified text. Unintentional change is the opposite, occurring when the reciters were not aware that their recitation of the text differed from their previous recitation of it.

In a purely oral context, unintentional changes may result from the limitations of memory and the way memory works[91] and the social background and mnemotechnical skills of members of the Buddhist community.[92] Although brahmans did apparently make up a significant portion of the early Buddhist community, the majority of monastics came from diverse social backgrounds, ordaining as adults. As a consequence, Buddhists did not utilize the sophisticated mnemonic techniques developed and used by brahmans for the accurate transmission of their texts. Examples of unintentional changes are of a word being replaced by a similarly sounding word; words or phrases being accidentally omitted; words or phrases triggering the inclusion of a stock phrase or description found associated with that word or phrase in other texts transmitted by the community; changes in the order of items being listed or in the order of verses due to lack of adequate guides to maintaining a particular order; differences in the names of people and places; commentarial glosses being included in the root text, for example, it is not uncommon to find elements of the expanded wording encountered in a non-Pali version of a sutra in commentarial glosses in the Pali commentaries or to find similarly expanded wording in late Pali canonical literature. However, the differences encountered between parallel versions of texts cannot be accounted for by unintentional causes and "errors," if they can be called that, in oral transmission alone. It is clear that many changes were intentionally produced, which means that although they memorized texts and attempted to transmit fixed texts, communally reciting them, Buddhists communities were quite willing to change the texts they were

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[91] See Anālayo 2009a for a discussion on the nature of memory and the changes that occurred in the course of the oral transmission of early Buddhist texts.

[92] Allon 1997b: 366; Anālayo 2009a: 6–7, 2011: 855, 868–871 (cf. 2015: 90–91) with references given there. Drawing on the observation of others, Anālayo (2014a: 54) notes that there are greater differences in the nuns' *Pātimokkha/Prātimokṣa* rules than in those of the monks, which he attributes to the lack of training among women in the memorization of texts.

transmitting.[93] Besides, changes that arose through unintentional means must have been accepted by the reciter communities for them to have become standard as we encounter them to be, which involved intention.

With reference to the interpolations found in some versions of the *Ugraparipṛcchā*, Nattier (2003: 52) states,

> [W]hat forces lead to the insertion of new material into an existing religious text? Or to put it another way, what is the motive of the interpolator who seeks to add his (or, at least theoretically, her) own ideas to an already authoritative scripture? This is surely the most natural way for a western-trained scholar to put the question, but to phrase our inquiry in this way is to smuggle in, at the outset, two assumptions about how interpolation works: first, that an interpolator adds to a text in order to express new and creative ideas; and second, that interpolation is necessarily a conscious act. However, an examination of interpolated passages … reveals an immense body of evidence to counter these assumptions. Even a brief cataloguing of these passages will make it clear that to assume a "creative individual author" as the driving force behind interpolations in Buddhist scripture is to import a model that is foreign to most of the literary processes that have shaped the production of Indian religious texts.

In the following pages (pp. 53–59) Nattier discusses examples of interpolations in the *Ugraparipṛcchā*, most of which she classes as unintentional, including multiplication of epithets, completion of a standard list, recall of a passage from elsewhere, filling in the blanks, reiteration with additional examples, and addition of genuinely new material,[94] concluding that "the vast majority of interpolations found in the *Ugra* can best be explained as having emerged within an oral context, and of these a substantial proportion seem to be the result of the recall of previously memorized texts" (p. 58).

This may very well be the case for these instances of interpolation in the *Ugraparipṛcchā*, but this does not cover all instances of change in Buddhist texts, early or otherwise. In the following I will examine examples that illustrate instances of what I regard to be intentional change, the order in which they are presented not implying chronology or a hierarchy in importance or frequency.

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[93] McGovern (2019: esp. 467–468) argues that such differences are better explained if we dispense with the idea that early Buddhists texts were transmitting as fixed, memorized texts, the differences rather being due to variation in the text produced in improvised performance. I will return to McGovern's arguments in the next chapter.

[94] Nattier (2003) also discusses omission, abbreviation, and alteration in the sequences of the text (pp. 59–63).

5.2.   Change of Language

Buddhists were generally quite willing to change the language or dialect of their texts to better suit their audience or the monastic community itself, though this was not by any means the rule as witnessed by the use of Pali in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia where Pali was not the local language. This is evident from the great diversity of languages in which early Buddhist texts are preserved: Pali, Gandhari or other Middle Indo-Aryan (MIA) dialect, various forms of Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit, and standard Sanskrit in the case of Indian languages; Chinese, Tibetan, and various central Asian languages in the case of non-Indian languages. And the texts we have and therefore the languages and dialects witnessed, are only the tip of the iceberg given that so little of the literature has survived of the many Buddhist communities that flourished at different times and places in South, Central, and Southeast Asia and transmitted this literature. As noted by Norman with reference to the Indian context, all versions we have of Śrāvakayāna literature are translations.[95] As with much concerning early Buddhism, our understanding of the languages and dialects used by early Buddhist communities as vehicles for their texts, and the extent and duration of their usage, is rather poor. For example, the status and origin of Pali is still being debated, and although we know that it was the language of the canonical texts in Sri Lanka from at least the 3rd century BCE onwards (or perhaps not universally so in the early period), and then subsequently in Southeast Asia, we don't know how extensively and for how long it was used in India. Gandhari is a little more secure, being the language of the vast majority of Buddhist texts transmitted and composed in the northwest of the subcontinent (Greater Gandhara) from the 3rd century BCE at the earliest when Buddhism was said to have been introduced to Gandhara until approximately the 3rd or 4th century CE when it was replaced for the most part by Sanskrit, or at least increasingly Sanskritized Prakrit and then standard Sanskrit for some groups. Again, although some Buddhist communities began converting their texts to Sanskrit, probably "at the latest during Kṣatrapa or Kuṣāṇa times,"[96] that is the 1st–2nd centuries CE, we again don't know

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[95]   E.g. Norman 2006: 15, 138; 1984: 4–5 = 1992: 38. This is contrary to recent views expressed by Gombrich and Karpik that Pali was the language spoken by the Buddha. For this recent discussion, both pro and counter, see Gombrich 2018; Karpik 2019a, 2019b; Levman 2019; Wynne 2019.

[96]   Von Hinüber 1989: 350; see also Norman 2006: 123–145.

how extensive this was nor the rate at which it progressed. Although our understanding of what language was being used or likely to have been used at a given time and place is based on manuscripts, inscriptions, and to some extent historical accounts and evidence within the texts themselves, the use of manuscripts, the earliest of which are the Gandhari manuscripts dating to the 1st century BCE onwards, did not replace oral transmission and the culture of memorization.

In the Indian context, translation, or transposition as some prefer to refer to it,[97] into another MIA dialect or into Sanskrit primarily consisted of applying the appropriate changes in phonology, morphology, syntax, metre, and sandhi.[98] For example, the Pali, Gandhari, and Sanskrit versions of the common opening prose *nidāna* to many sutras is (with vertical dividing markers to facilitate comparison):[99]

P   *evaṃ me sutaṃ | ekaṃ samayaṃ | bhagavā sāvatthiyaṃ viharati |*
    jetavane anāthapiṇḍikassa ārāme |

G   *eva me rśoda | eka samaya | bhaya⟨va⟩du śavastie viharadi |*
    jedavaṇ(o aṇasapi)ḍiasa aramu |

Skt. *evaṃ mayā śrutam | ekasmin samaye | bhagavān śrāvastyāṃ*
     viharati sma | jetavane 'nāthapiṇḍadasyārāme |

The translation is the same in each case; that for the Pali being "Thus have I heard. At one time the Bhagavat stayed in Sāvatthi in the Jetavana, in the park of Anāthapiṇḍika." The changes in phonology are obvious. An example of a difference in morphology is *bhayavadu* in the Gandhari, the nominative singular masculine of a vowel stem form *bhayavada-* based on the original weak stem *bhagavat*. This contrasts with Pali and Sanskrit *bhagavā/bhagavān*, which are based on the strong form of the

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[97] It was apparently Brough (1962: 113; cf. 49 n. 1) who first proposed 'transposition' as a more appropriate term, stating with reference to the transmission of the *Dharmapada* to Gandhara: "The text of the individual verses corresponds for the most part so closely with the Pali that the two versions might be described more appropriately as word-for-word transpositions of their original rather than as translations in the usual sense." Subsequent uses of the term or discussions of its appropriateness are e.g. Allon 2001: 38; Bechert 1980a: 12 (who prefers 'transformation'), 1980b: 26–29 (preferring German 'Übertragung' to 'Übersetzung'), cf. English version 1991b: esp. 6; Cousins 2011; Karpik 2019a: 12, 13 n. 5, 19, 71; Ruegg 2016: 202, 206, 207; Witzel 2009: 290–291.

[98] For some phonological aspects of translating from one dialect to another, see Norman 1993/1994: 95–99/163–168, 2006: 75–97.

[99] For further discussion of this formula, including variant readings and references, see below (pp. 93–96).

consonant stem.[100] The use of the locative *ekasmin samaye* in the Sanskrit, where the Pali and Gandhari have the accusative (P *ekaṃ samayaṃ*) represents a change in syntax, though some Buddhist Sanskrit texts read *ekaṃ samayaṃ*.[101] The full instrumental form of the personal pronoun *mayā* in the Sanskrit where the Pali and Gandhari have the enclitic contracted form *me* and the addition of the particle *sma* after *viharati* to mark a past tense in the Sanskrit, represent further minor differences. A difference in external vowel sandhi is seen in *jetavane 'nāthapiṇḍa-dasyārāme* of the Sanskrit, which contrasts with the tolerance of vowel hiatus in the Prakrit forms, e.g. Pali *jetavane anāthapiṇḍikassa ārāme*. Finally, the form of the personal name Anāthapiṇḍada with final *-da* in the Sanskrit differs from the *-ika/-ia* form of the Pali and Gandhari: Pali Anāthapiṇḍika/Gandhari Aṇasapiḍia.

New witnesses to the process of the Sanskritization of Prakrit Buddhist texts are provided by recent finds of late Gandhari manuscripts from Bamiyan, Afghanistan, in which a thin veneer of Sanskrit orthography and sometimes morphology is inconsistently applied. These manuscripts generally date to the 3rd or 4th centuries CE, a period that overlaps with the beginning of the use of Sanskrit in the region and sees Gandhari being replaced by Sanskrit, or at least Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit, as the preferred language for Buddhist texts in Gandhara. Examples from a fragment of a Gandhari version of the *Mahā-parinirvāṇa-sūtra* published by Allon and Salomon (2000)[102] and further discussed along with other examples of the phenomenon by Salomon (2001) are: *brahma-*, "Brahma" (P *brahma-* [itself a Sanskritized spelling], Skt. *brahma-*), where *brama-* is the normal Gandhari spelling; *sapta-*, "seven" (P *satta-*, Skt. *sapta-*), where *sata-* is the normal Gandhari spelling; *ayuṣmaṃ*, "the venerable," (P *āyasmā*, Skt. *āyuṣmān*), where *aïśpa/aïspa* is the normal Gandhari spelling; *vyakta*, "wise" (P *viyattā*, *vyattā*, Skt. *vyaktāḥ*), where the regular Gandhari reflex of Old Indo-Aryan *-kt-* is *-t(t)-*; and the genitive singular termination *-sya* of masculine and neuter short *a* stems, where the normal Gandhari spelling is *-sa/-ṣa*, e.g. *saghasya*, "of the community of monastics" (P *saṅghassa*, Skt. *saṃghasya*). Such Sanskritic orthography provides new examples of rare consonantal ligatures, including some that had previously been

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[100] See Allon 2001: 113–114.

[101] For references to this change, see Anālayo 2014a: 45 n. 17.

[102] See especially pp. 266–271.

unattested in the Kharoṣṭhī script, meaning that these scribes or their recent predecessors had to create Kharoṣṭhī ligatures to express the Sanskritic consonant cluster.[103] Given that this orthography is inconsistently applied, while much of the morphology is still standard Gandhari Prakrit, it is unclear how these texts would have been pronounced when chanted.

The changes involved in the shift from one MIA dialect to another or to Sanskrit discussed above are all relatively minor. More significant changes that occurred in the process of translating involved replacing archaic, regional, and obscure lexical items and expressions with those more appropriate to the target audience. An example is seen in a Gandhari version of a sutra in which the simile of the likelihood of a blind (or one-eyed) turtle, which surfaces every hundred years, inserting its neck into a single hole in a (wooden) yoke that is floating on a vast ocean is used to illustrate the rarity of a Buddha appearing in the world. The expression for the yoke with the single hole in the Pali version is *eka-cchiggaḷa-yuga-* (two separate words), where *chiggaḷa-*, "hole (in a yoke)," is a word of non-Aryan origin. The Gandhari version has *eka-tarmao yuo*, where the Gandhari word for hole is *tarmaa-*, the equivalent of Sanskrit *tardman-* with *-ka* suffix, a word that is apparently not found elsewhere in Buddhist literature. It is however found in several early Brahmanical texts but was subsequently replaced in later Brahmanical literature by *chidra*, which was also the word used in most other Buddhist texts. In other words, those who translated this sutra into Gandhari from another Prakrit replaced the "hole" word, most likely *chiggaḷa-* or *chidda-* (= Skt. *chidra-*), with the equivalent of *tardman-* to fit local usage.[104]

Translation as an initiator of more substantial changes to the text is more evident in verse than in prose, at least in translating Prakrit into Sanskrit because the results are commonly unmetrical. For this reason, in texts consisting of prose and verse, the verses were often left in Prakrit or slightly Sanskritized Prakrit, while the prose was more completely Sanskritized. But when the translators did produce Sanskrit versions of the verses, they got around the metrical problem by changing the word order, substituting words with synonyms, and adding or dropping words, particularly particles, or if all that failed, changing the wording and often meaning altogether. Chosen more-or-less at random, let us examine the

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[103] See also Strauch 2012.
[104] For details, see Allon 2007a: 240–246.

following verse found in the Theravāda Pali *Dhammapada* (Dhp 7); the Gandhari *Dharmapada* (Dhp-G^K 217), thought to belong to the Dharmaguptakas and preserved on a manuscript that probably dates to the 2nd century CE; the Patna Dharmapada (PDhp 7), possibly belonging to the Sāmmatīyas,[105] which is in Prakrit with a degree of Sanskritization and is preserved in a manuscript dated to the second half of the 12th century;[106] and the Sanskrit Sarvāstivāda *Udānavarga* (Uv 29.15) preserved in numerous manuscripts from Central Asia dating to approximately the 3rd or 4th centuries CE onwards.[107] The *Udānavarga* went through various stages of Sanskritization with at least two different recensions being recognized.[108] That used here is the version closest to standard Sanskrit. Although manuscripts and writing were no doubt integral to this process (Brough 1962: 30), like the *Dhammapada/Dharmapada*s, memorization of the *Udānavarga* was an integral part of the monastic curriculum in the communities that transmitted it.[109]

In the following analysis of each of the three lines of *anuṣṭubh* verse, the version is designated by its language rather than the usual text abbreviations: P = Pali Dhp; G = Gandhari Dhp-G^K; Pkt. = Patna PDhp; Skt. = Sanskrit Uv. By way of introducing the verse as an integral unit, the translation of the Pali is:

> Dwelling contemplating pleasant things, being uncontrolled in the senses,
> not knowing moderation in food, lazy, lacking energy,
> him indeed Māra (the evil one) overpowers, like the wind a weak tree.

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[105] Skilling 1997b; Dimitrov 2020, esp. 71–86.

[106] Cone 1989: 103.

[107] The editions used are von Hinüber and Norman 1995 for the Pali *Dhammapada*; Brough 1962 for the Gandhari *Dharmapada*; Cone 1989 for the Patna *Dharmapada*; Bernhard 1965–1968 for the *Udānavarga*. The oldest *Udānavarga* manuscript is that from Subaši. For this and the dates of other Central Asian *Udānavarga* manuscripts, see Schmithausen 1970: 81 and Nakatani 1987, vol. 1, p. 8.

[108] Schmithausen 1970; cf. Nakatani 1984.

[109] This is suggested by the very large number of manuscripts of the *Udānavarga* found in Central Asia. The large number of manuscripts of the *Prātimokṣa* no doubt also resulted in part from their use by students for memorization and study, besides the importance the *Prātimokṣa* had to the Buddhist community. For some statistics on the Central Asian manuscript finds, see Hartmann and Wille 1992: 23. The same may be true of the *Ṣaṭsūtraka* division of the Sanskrit *Dīrghāgama* transmitted in Central Asia since more fragments of it have survived than other sections; see Hartmann 2014: 147–148.

*Pāda*s a–b:

P	*subhānupassiṃ viharantaṃ, indriyesu asaṃvutaṃ*
G	*śuhaṇupaśi viharadu, idrieṣu asavudu*
Pkt.	*śubhānupaśśiṃ viharantaṃ, indriyesu asaṃvṛtaṃ*
Skt.	*śubhānu**darśinaṃ nityam**, indri**yaiś cāpy** asaṃvṛtam*

The three MIA versions are identical in both *pāda*s. A Sanskrit equivalent
of the MIA *subhānupassiṃ viharantaṃ* (to use the Pali) in *pāda* a would
be *śubhānudarśinaṃ viharantaṃ*, which has ten syllables when Sanskrit
anuṣṭubh requires eight.[110] Given that *viharantaṃ*, "living, dwelling,
being," has no particular force, the Sanskrit translator was able to solve
his metrical problem by replacing *viharantaṃ* with *nityam*, "always," the
result being "always contemplating pleasant things" rather than
"dwelling contemplating pleasant things."[111] The Sanskrit equivalent of
MIA *indriyesu asaṃvutaṃ* in *pāda* b would be *indriyeṣv asaṃvṛtam*,
which because of Sanskrit sandhi rules makes an unmetrical seven
syllables. To solve the problem, the translator introduced the meaningless
particles *ca + api*, which become *cāpy* before *asaṃvṛtam*.[112] But because
indriyeṣu cāpy asaṃvṛtam has nine syllables, he substituted the
instrumental *indriyaiḥ* for the locative *indriyeṣu*, producing *indriyaiś
cāpy asaṃvṛtam*.[113]

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[110] The three MIA versions have a hypermetric 9 syllables with resolution of the 6th
(see Norman 1997b: 63 note on Dhp 7). Although BHS *anupaśyin* exists, the
accusative singular would be *anupaśyinam* and therefore have resulted in the same
metrical problem.

[111] In a personal communication, Petra Kieffer-Pülz noted that "*viharati* in
combination with another verb which gives the main meaning can stress the aspect
of duration," *nityam* thus expressing the same idea.

[112] Another common particle used by the Sanskrit translator(s) to avoid vowel sandhi
and for other metrical reasons is *hi* which becomes *hy* before a vowel. An example
is Uv 31.11 *yathā **hy a**gāraṃ ducchannaṃ, vṛṣṭiḥ samatibhindati, eva**ṃ hy
a**bhāvitaṃ cittaṃ, rāgaḥ samatibhindati*, where the Pali (Dhp 13) is *yathā **a**gāraṃ
ducchannaṃ, vuṭṭhi samativijjhati, eva**ṃ a**bhāvitaṃ cittaṃ, rāgo samativijjhati*,
"Just as rain penetrates a badly thatched house, so passion penetrates an
undeveloped mind."

[113] For examples of *(a)saṃvuta-* combined with the instrumental *indriyehi* rather than
the locative *indriyesu* elsewhere in Buddhist literature, see Norman 1997b: 117
(notes on Dhp 225).

*Pāda*s c–d:

P	*bhojanamhi cāmattaññum,*[114] *kusītam hīnavīriyam*
G	*bhoyanasa amatraño, kusidu hinaviryava*
Pkt.	*(bhojana)mhi amāttamṇū, kuśīḍam hīnavīriyam*
Skt.	*bhojane **cāpy** amātrajñam, **hīnam jāgarikāsu ca***

Again, the three MIA versions are virtually identical. The Sanskrit equivalent of *pāda* c would be *bhojane 'mātrajñam*, with six syllables. The translator's solution to this was to again insert *ca + api* which gave one syllable after sandhi (*cāpy*) and avoided the elision of the initial vowel of *amātrajñam*. The Sanskrit equivalent of *pāda* d would be *kusīdam hīnavīryam*, which has seven syllables and is metrically problematic. Although the nominative of the similar *kusīdo hīnavīryavān* is found elsewhere in the *Udānavarga*,[115] the accusative of this would be *kusīdam hīnavīryavantam*, which has nine syllables. The Sanskrit translator therefore had no choice but to alter the wording of the *pāda*, choosing to connect *hīna-*, "lacking, inferior, lowly," of *hīnavīriyam*, "lacking energy," with the BHS word *jāgarikā*, "keeping awake," no doubt prompted by the prose sutra formula found in Pali as *indriyesu aguttadvāro bhojane amattaññū jāgariyam ananuyutto* (e.g. SN IV 103–104) in which *indriyesu aguttadvāro* expresses the same idea as *indriyesu asamvutam* in *pāda* b and *bhojane amattaññū* is virtually identical to *pāda* c.

*Pāda*s e–f:

P	*tam ve pasahatī māro, vāto rukkham va dubbalam*
G	*ta **gu** prasahadi **raku**, vadu rakhkṣa ba drubala*
Pkt.	*tam ve prasahate māro, vāto rukkham va dubbalam*
Skt.	*tam vai prasahate **rāgo**, vāto vṛkṣam **ivā**balam*

The fact that the Gandhari and Sanskrit of *pāda* e agree in the reading G *raku*/Skt. *rāgo*, "lust," in contrast to *māro*, "Māra (the evil one)," of the other two, indicates that *rāgo* in the Sanskrit did not result from the translation process but most likely represents a variant produced in oral transmission, possibly stimulated by the following *rakhkṣa* (G)/*rukkham* (P).[116] The Sanskrit equivalent of *pāda* f would be the unmetrical *vāto*

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[114] A common variant reading is *bhojanamhi amattaññum*; see von Hinüber and Norman 1995: 2 and Norman 1997b: 63 note on Dhp 7.

[115] Uv 24.5b = *kusīdo hīnavīriyo* of PDhp 392b, Dhp 112b.

[116] The Pali commentaries appear to lack examples of *māra* being glossed with *rāga* or vice versa.

vṛkṣam iva durbalam, with nine syllables. The translator therefore replaced *dubbalaṃ*, "weak," with the near-synonymous *abalam*.

The above verse may be misleading in that it suggests that the MIA versions differed primarily in phonology with some minor differences in morphology, syntax, and vocabulary. Although this is often the case, it is also fairly common for whole *pāda*s and lines to differ, resulting from the building blocks that are *pāda*s being combined in different ways to produce unique or partially parallel verses, to mention just one of the major differences.[117]

Given the closeness of the MIA dialects, as witnessed by the above examples, it may not have been that difficult for a person who had memorized a text or collection of texts in one MIA dialect (whether it be a vernacular or a "literary/church" one) to learn to recite them in a different dialect as long as the wording was the same or if the differences only consisted of certain words and expressions being changed to reflect local usage. It would primarily be a matter of pronunciation. Sanskrit, however, may have been a different matter, given how different it is on many levels to the MIA dialects. But change in dialect or the adoption of Sanskrit probably required the least effort. As we will see, significant changes in wording, structure, and so on must have been far more challenging.

5.3. Modification of the Wording

A good example of more significant differences in wording to those just discussed are the last words of the Buddha spoken before his death along with the sutra narrator's words that frame them. This passage forms a part of the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*/*Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*s preserved in Pali, Sanskrit, Chinese, and Tibetan belonging to different schools. It suffices here to present the Pali version of the Theravādins[118] and the

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[117] For comparative studies of the *Dhammapada*/*Dharmapada*/*Udānavarga* collections, see Lenz 2003: 11–29; Lévi 1912; Mizuno 1979, 1984; Nakatani 1984. For recent studies of the types of differences encountered between parallel versions of other verse texts, see Salomon 2000 (Rhinoceros Sūtra) and 2008 (Songs of Lake Anavatapta).

[118] DN II 155.31–156.3; SN I 157.34–158.2. The reading of the Be and Ce of the SN version is the same as for DN, but Ee (SN I 158.1–2) reads *appamādena sampādetha vayadhammā saṅkhārā ti*, for which see Anālayo 2014b: 9 n. 30.

Sanskrit version of the Sarvāstivādins,[119] the differences highlighted in bold.

Pali	Sanskrit
atha kho bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi: **handa dāni** *bhikkhave* **āmantayāmi vo,** *vayadhammā saṅkhārā* **appamādena sampādethā** *ti.* *ayaṃ tathāgatassa pacchimā vācā*	[42.8] *api tu karaṇīyam etat tathāgatena yathāpi tat paścimāṃ janatām anukampamānaḥ.* [42.9] *atha bhagav(ān* **svakāyād uttarāsaṅgam ekān)te vivṛtya** *bhikṣūn āmantrayate:* [42.10] *avalokayata bhikṣavas tathāgatasya kāyam. vyavalokayata bhikṣavas tathāgatasya kāyam. tat kasmād dhetoḥ. durlabhadarśanā y(asmāt tathāgatā) arhantaḥ samyaksaṃbuddhās tadyathodumbare puṣpam.* [42.11] *aṅga bhikṣavas* **tūṣṇīṃ** *bhavata vyayadharmāḥ* **sarva***saṃskārāḥ.* [42.12] *iyaṃ* **tatra** *tathāgatasya paścimā (vācā).*
Then the Bhagavat addressed the monks: "Monks, **I now address you**. It is the nature of formations to disappear. **Strive diligently**!" This was the last speech of the Tathāgata.	[The Bhagavat said:] [42.8] **"But this, however, is to be done by the Tathāgata since he has compassion on later generations."** [42.9] Then the Bhagavat, **turning aside the upper robe from his own body,** addressed the monks: [42.10] **"Monks, gaze upon the body of the Tathāgata. Monks, gaze closely upon the body of the Tathāgata. What is the reason for this? It is because the sight of Tathāgatas, Arhats, Completely Awakened Ones is as rare as a flower on a fig tree. [42.11] Monks, please be silent. It is the nature of all formations to disappear."** [42.12] This was, **then**, the last speech of the Tathāgata.[120]

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[119] MPS §§ 42.8–12. Waldschmidt's (1950–1951) edition of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* is based on Central Asian manuscripts. For an English translation of the full Sanskrit *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* (though undertaken as a fourth year undergraduate Honours thesis), see Allon 1987. A German translation is provided by Weber 1999. The new Sanskrit manuscript of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Dīrghāgama* from the Gilgit region contains the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* (Hartmann 2004), but due to damage to the manuscript, not this passage. A new edition of the Sanskrit *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* is currently being prepared for publication by Klaus Wille. Von Hinüber 2019: 251–252 also briefly discusses this passage.

[120] For German translations of this passage, see Waldschmidt 1939: 57–58 and Weber 1999: 245.

The Sanskrit version is much expanded compared to the Pali, as indicated by the amount of text in bold. In the Pali, the Buddha's speech consists of a short statement made up of nine words. This is framed by a statement by the narrator introducing the Buddha's speech and a concluding statement that these were his last words. In the Sanskrit, the Buddha's speech consists of 25 words and although the narrator's framing is similar to the Pali, it has nonetheless also been expanded. The expanded wording in the Sanskrit centres on the Buddha exposing his 80 year-old body to the monks at the time of his death, a gesture missing in the Pali, that graphically illustrates his statement that all formations are subject to change and, by extension, therefore impermanent.[121] The Chinese versions, including that found in the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrghāgama*, are generally yet more elaborate than the Sanskrit.[122] However, the Pali is not simpler on all accounts. Having told the monks that all formations are subject to change (*vayadhammā saṅkhārā*), the Buddha exhorts them to

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[121] Cf. Waldschmidt 1939: 58.

[122] Waldschmidt (1939: 56–63) translates into German and compares all versions. Anālayo 2014b provides an English translation of the Chinese *Dīrghāgama* version and comparative study (pp. 1–8). The Sri Lankan BJTS edition of the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* of the Pali *Dīgha-nikāya* (Ce DN II 244) has a footnote on the passage describing the last words of the Buddha that provides the Sanskrit text of what it says is the Sarvāstivādin version (*Sabbatthikavādīnaṃ, mahāparinibbāna-sutte, evaṃ dissate*) but without any reference: *atha bhagavān uttarāsaṃgataḥ suvarṇavarṇaṃ bāhuṃ nissāryya tān bhikṣūn avocat: tathā-gatasya darśanaṃ loke kadācid eva bhavati yathā udumbarapuṣpaṃ kadācid eva prādurbhavati aruṇavarṇabāhuṃ nissāryya buddhaḥ prādurakarot adbhūtaṃ nimittaṃ āgantukā saṃskārāḥ anityā utpadya vinaśyanti mā pramādethāḥ iti. tasmād bhikṣavaḥ apramādena sampādayata. nāhaṃ prāmadam tena samyak-sambuddhaḥ asaṃkhyeyaguṇo jātaḥ. vyayadharmāḥ saṃskārāḥ apramādena sampādethāḥ. iyam asti tathāgatasya paścimā vāk*. The reading does not match that of the Sanskrit Sarvāstivāda version published by Waldschmidt (1950–1951) but rather seems to be a Sanskrit translation of the Dharmaguptaka version preserved in Chinese translation, of which an Indic version has not survived. In a footnote on p. xxii of his preface to volume I of the BJTS (Ce) edition of the *Dīgha-nikāya*, the editor Baḷangoda Ānandamaitreya Thera refers to "*Sarvasti-vadi Literature* p. 23" as his source of information for the Chinese canonical material. This must be a reference to Banerjee's (1957) *Sarvāstivāda Literature* in which Banerjee (p. 23) states that virtually all of the Chinese *āgama*s belong to the Sarvāstivāda or the Vaibhāṣika school and so treats the *Dīrghāgama* (p. 24) as a work of the Sarvāstivādins. The BJTS edition of volume II of the *Dīgha-nikāya* is dated 1976 in the preface, meaning that they could have made use of the German translations by Weller (1939–1940 § ccxciv [pp. 181–182]) and Waldschmidt (1939: 59–60), though this is probably unlikely. It therefore seems that the Sanskrit translation must have been made from the Chinese, though it is not stated by whom. I am indebted to Aruna Gamage for providing information on the BJTS edition.

strive with diligence (*appamādena sampādetha*), which is missing in the Sanskrit. It is possible that the inclusion of the passage describing the Buddha exposing his old body to illustrate the impermanent nature of things was included by the reciters of the Sanskrit version, or even an earlier Prakrit version in this lineage, to emphasize the humanness of the Buddha in the face of an increasing tendency to deify him.[123] Alternatively, as proposed by Waldschmidt (1939: 62–63) and furthered by von Hinüber (2019: 251–252), it is a possibility that the Theravādins deliberately omitted mentioning the Buddha exposing his body in their Pali version because it detracted from their vision of the Buddha (cf. Anālayo 2014b: 6–7).[124] Both interpretations (inclusion or omission) involve intentional change and both may represent examples of changing a text for ideological reasons.[125]

A feature of the Sanskrit versions, and to some extent the Gandhari versions as well, is the tendency to clarify obscure words and phrases and to articulate what is, as just stated, implicit in other versions such as the Pali. An example of this is the wording used to depict the type of respect a monk, nun or someone who has faith in the Buddha shows the Buddha when visiting him:

P   *atha kho aññataro bhikkhu yena bhagavā ten' upasaṅkami upasaṅkamitvā **bhagavantaṃ abhivādetvā** ekamantaṃ nisīdi.*[126]

G   *añe(aro) bhikhu yeṇa bhayava teṇa uasakami uasakramita **bhayavaḏa paḏa vadita** ekamata ṇiṣiḏi.*[127]

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[123] Of course, it may simply be an example of the common phenomenon of the tendency found in some versions to elaborate on an idea that is presented in a brief way or is implicit in other versions or version.

[124] An argument in favour of the former interpretation, is that deliberate simplification and omission of material is generally not a feature of the Pali versions, while it is evident in other aspects of this passage and in Sarvāstivāda and Mūlasarvāstivāda versions generally that the wording of their texts is on the whole more elaborate.

[125] Von Hinüber 2006(2008): 208–209, briefly discusses the historicity of the Pali version, stating, "We can be sure that this is not exact historical memory, correct in spirit and content at best, but certainly not in wording, because the Buddha did not speak Pāli." This is an unusual argument because although the Buddha may not have spoken Pali, the wording itself could quite easily have been spoken by the Buddha in his own dialect which would probably have differed from the Pali only in phonetic features.

[126] For Pali examples and discussion of these formulas, see Allon 1997b: esp. 45–56, 67–72.

[127] Senior manuscript RS 19.1–2; cf. RS 19.20–21,26–27 which read *ekamata aṭasi*, "stood to one side," rather than *ekamata ṇiṣiḏi*, and RS 20.1–2. For the RS 19 examples, see Lee 2009: 79–84; for the RS 20 example, see Marino 2017: 163–

Skt.   *athānyatamo bhikṣur yena bhagavāṃs tenopasaṃkrāntaḥ upasaṃkramya (/tenopajagāma upetya)* **bhagavataḥ pādau śirasā vanditvai**kānte niṣaṇṇaḥ/nyaṣīdat.[128]

P   Then a certain monk approached the Bhagavat. Having approached, he **paid homage** to the Bhagavat and sat down to one side.

G   Then a certain monk approached the Bhagavat. Having approached, he **honoured the feet of the Bhagavat** and sat down to one side.

Skt.   Then a certain monk approached the Bhagavat. Having approached, he **honoured the feet of the Bhagavat with his head** and sat down to one side.

The phrase *bhagavato pāde sirasā √vand*, the equivalent of Sanskrit *bhagavataḥ pādau śirasā vanditvā*, does in fact occur in Pali *sutta* texts, where it is clear that it is synonymous with *abhivādetvā*, and in Pali commentaries as a gloss on *abhivādetvā*.[129] In time or perhaps as Buddhist texts spread to new cultural areas, it must have been felt that the meaning of *abhivādetvā* was not clear enough because, to the best of my knowledge, in all Sanskrit versions of this formula it is replaced by *bhagavataḥ pādau śirasā vanditvā* or *bhagavatpādau śirasā vanditvā*, "having honoured the feet of the Bhagavat with his head." The few Gandhari examples documented to date show a similar phenomenon. The three examples in a Gandhari sutra in the Robert Senior collection of Kharoṣṭhī manuscripts (RS 19) read *bhayavada paḍa vadita*, "having honoured the feet of the Bhagavat," which lacks mention of the head. However, the fuller form occurs several times in a similar formula in a Mahāyāna text in the Bajaur collection (BC 2)[130] as *bhagavato pada śiraṣa vadita* and in the Gandhari Senavarma inscription in a different formula as *śirasa pada vadati* (1a).[131] The Gandhari examples show that the replacement of the more obscure *abhivādetvā* took place while Buddhist texts were still being transmitted in Prakrit. Of course, even if

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164; for discussion of these and of an example in a British Library manuscript, see Allon 2001: 163–166.

[128] For examples and study of this phrase, see von Simson 1977.

[129] See Allon 1997b: 52–54.

[130] I would like to thank Andrea Schlosser and Ingo Straugh, who are currently preparing the manuscript for publication, for verifying the reading.

[131] For the most recent edition, see Baums 2012: 227–229 and for further references, Gandhari.org CKI 249.

the initial instance of this change was unintentional, its standardization across texts belonging to different schools required intention.

The Sanskrit versions of the above approach formula also show a change in the verbal elements expressing the approach. What appears in Pali texts as *upasaṅkami upasaṅkamitvā* and in Gandhari as *uasakami uasakramita*, a preterite of *upa-sam-√kram* (to use the Sanskrit equivalent) and a gerund of the same verb, is replaced in Sanskrit versions by *upasaṃkrāntaḥ upasaṃkramya*, a past passive participle and gerund of the same verb as the Pali, or *upajagāma upetya*, a reduplicated perfect of *upa-√gam* follow by a gerund of *upa-√i*. Von Simson (1977) argued that the latter expression *upajagāma upetya* only occurs in the sutra texts of the Sarvāstivādins, which, if the case, may indicate that communities were willing to change the wording of their texts to mark them as their own.[132] I will return to this topic again below.

Another example of deliberate expansion is seen in the formula used to express someone's desire to be ordained by the Buddha. The example here is found in the Pali, Gandhari, and Sanskrit versions of what in Pali is called the *Dārukkhandhopama-sutta*:[133]

P   *labheyyāhaṃ bhante bhagavato **santike** pabbajjaṃ **labheyyaṃ** upasampadan ti*

G   *lahece ⟨avu bhate⟩ bhayava**satia** pravace **laece** vasapaḍa*

Skt. *labheyāhaṃ bhadanta **svākhyāte dharmavinaye** pravrajyām upasaṃpadam **bhikṣubhāvaṃ careyam ahaṃ bhagavato 'ntike brahmacaryam** iti*

P=G May I obtain, venerable sir, the going forth **in the presence of** the Bhagavat. **May I obtain** the higher ordination.

Skt. May I obtain, venerable sir, the going forth **in this well proclaimed teaching and discipline** [and] the higher

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[132] It is possible that the differences noted by von Simson are regional rather than specifically due to school factors.

[133] Pali: SN IV 181.10–11,18–19; Gandhari: RS 19.22–23,27–28; Skt. MSV I 51.13–15,18–19. For the Chinese versions, see Lee 2009: 141–143, 154–156, who also provides some discussion of the different versions. My reading of the two Gandhari occurrences is based on a new reconstruction of the manuscript of RS 19 and differs slightly from the reading given by Lee 2009. The reconstructed reading of the two Gandhari occurrences is *laeja (a)vu bhate bhayavaṣatia pavaj(a) l(a)e vaṣ(a)p(a)de* (ll. 22–23) and *lahece bhayavasatia pravace laece vasapaḍa* (ll. 27–28). Given that *avu bhate*, the equivalent of Pali *ahaṃ bhante*, occurs in the first of the two occurrences, I take its omission in the second as a scribal error or possibly to have resulted from the less formal nature of the Senior manuscripts.

> ordination **as a monk [that] I would live the holy life in the
> presence of the Bhagavat**.

The Pali and Gandhari are the same. The bold text shows where the Pali
and Gandhari differ from the Sanskrit. The Sanskrit reading presented
here seems to be standard across Buddhist Sanskrit literature, or at least
that of the Sarvāstivādins and Mūlasarvāstivādins, though I have not
undertaken an exhaustive search.[134] The Sanskrit wording finds no
parallel in Pali, nor do there appear to be prominent examples of
upasampadaṃ being glossed with *bhikkhubhāvaṃ* in Pali commentaries
as possible source for Sanskrit *upasaṃpadaṃ bhikṣubhāvam*.[135] The
closest is a statement by someone that they are unable to live the holy life
and the Buddha's criticism of them which uses similar wording, which
only occurs a few times in the *Suttavibhaṅga* of the Vinaya and once in
the *Majjhima-nikāya*, e.g. *yv āhaṃ evaṃ svākkhāte dhammavinaye
pabbajitvā nāsakkhiṃ yāvajīvaṃ paripuṇṇaṃ parisuddhaṃ brahma-
cariyaṃ caritun ti*, "that I, having thus gone forth in the well-taught
teaching and discipline, am unable to live the holy life that is perfect and
completely pure as long as I live" (e.g. Vin III 19.15–17). The lack of
similar wording elsewhere in Pali sutra texts in this context or in Pali
commentarial literature suggests that the wording of the Sanskrit version
is an innovation, though it is possible that such a gloss appeared in a
commentary that has not survived.

There are, however, many instances where the expanded wording
found in one version, whether it be Pali, Gandhari, Sanskrit, or Chinese,
is found in another sutra or text belonging to the tradition transmitting the
simpler version. For example, in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta/Mahāpari-
nirvāṇa-sūtra*s, the ascetic *Subhadda/Subhadra* comes to see the Buddha
but is prevented from doing so by Ānanda because the Buddha is soon to
die. However, the Buddha hears their conversation:[136]

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[134] Examples are CPS §§ 19.5,6; Divy 281.20–22; Avś I 347.5–6; see SWTF s.v.
²*upasampad* for further references. See also von Simson 1965: 103 (§ 17.13).

[135] I have found one example of *bhikkhubhāvan ti upasampadaṃ* in a sub-
commentary (DN-ṭ III 45.27–28).

[136] Pali: DN II 150.10–11; Sanskrit: MPS § 40.20; Avś I 230.12–13. Waldschmidt's
reconstruction of this *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* Sanskrit passage is based on the
Avadānaśataka occurrence, no doubt guided by the Tibetan and Chinese
translations (Waldschmidt 1950–1951: 366 n. 5). See SWTF s.vv. *atikrānta-
manuṣya* and *divya* for further examples.

P   *assosi kho bhagavā āyasmato ānandassa subhaddena pari-*
      *bbājakena saddhiṃ imaṃ kathā**sallāpaṃ***

Skt. *(imāṃ ca punar āyusmata ānandasya subhadreṇa) par(iv)r(āja-*
      *kena) s(ā)rdham **antarā**k(athāṃ **viprakṛtām** aśrausīd bhagavān*
      divyena) śrotr(e)ṇa vi(śuddhe)nātikrānta(mā)nuṣeṇa

P   The Bhagavat heard this **conversation** between the venerable
      Ānanda and the wanderer Subhadda.

Skt. The Bhagavat, **with the divine ear, purified, surpassing the
      human**, heard the venerable Ānanda's **hindering conversation**
      with the wanderer Subhadra.

Although lacking in the Pali version, the phrase expressing hearing with
the divine ear of the Sanskrit is common elsewhere in Pali *sutta* texts, e.g.
assosi kho bhagavā dibbāya sotadhātuyā visuddhāya atikkantamānus-
ikāya tesaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ imaṃ kathāsallāpaṃ, "with the divine ear-
element, purified, surpassing the human, the Bhagavat heard this
conversation of the monks" (DN II 1.11–13). The inclusion of the
"hearing with the divine ear" phrase in the passage under review by those
who transmitted the Sanskrit version, or perhaps by those of an earlier
Prakrit version in their textual lineage, was no doubt triggered by this
association and/or by a desire to articulate what they thought was implicit
in a simpler version, although here the Pali commentary emphasizes that
the Buddha heard the conversation with his ordinary hearing (*assosi kho*
ti sāṇidvāre ṭhitassa bhāsato pakatisoten' eva assosi, Sv II 589.1–2),
suggesting that the two traditions differed in their understanding of the
event.[137] Although such an inclusion could have occurred through
unintentional means, that is, by common association alone, given that the
expansion of the wording and the tendency to elaborate, to articulate what
is implicit, to clarify, and generally to give a more attractive account is
so much a feature of Sanskrit versions, it is more likely to be another
instance of intentional change. But perhaps more importantly, Ānanda
and Subhadra were clearly within earshot of the Buddha as noted by the
Pali commentary, since the Buddha is able to tell Ānanda to let Subhadra
in. In other words, the reciters of the version (or versions) that include
the "hearing with the divine ear" phrase included this phrase despite the

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[137] Waldschmidt (1944–1948: 227–231) provides summaries of all versions and
discussion of this passage.

apparent illogicality of it, perhaps motivated by the desire to emphasize the qualities of the Buddha.[138]

The changes documented to date have primarily involved changes to the wording, particularly expansion of the wording.[139] But a comparison of parallel versions often reveals differences, sometimes significant differences, in the very structure of the text itself, in the course of events, and in the way in which the plot is developed. A good example of the latter is the introductory narrative portion of the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta/ Śrāmaṇyaphala-sūtra*, a sutra that is most commonly associated with the *Dīgha-nikāya/Dīrghāgama*. There are multiple versions of this text preserved in Pali, Gandhari, Sanskrit, and in Tibetan and Chinese translation, belonging to different schools and textual lineages, the witnesses of which stem from different times and places. Six are sutra versions, the seventh is found in the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya. The versions and their abbreviations (in square brackets at the end of each entry) for the following discussion are (arranged by language):

Sutra versions
1. Sutra no. 2 of 34 of the Pali Theravāda *Dīgha-nikāya* (DN I 47– 86) [Pali];
2. Gandhari sutra version of which only the introductory narrative portion survives. Although it forms part of an anthology of sutras and other related texts, the full sutra probably formed a part of the *Dīrghāgama* of the Dharmaguptaka community that produced the anthology; the manuscript is dated to the 2nd century CE and originates from the Gandharan region [Gandhari];[140]
3. Sutra no. 20 of 47 of the Sanskrit *Dīrghāgama* thought to belong to the Mūlasarvāstivādins; preserved on a manuscript from the Gilgit region dated to the 8–10th century CE [Skt. DĀ];[141]

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[138] Nattier 2003: 38 draws attention to an example of an "editor" (to use her word) making a change to a text that results in an inconsistency.

[139] For further study of the expansion of wording in Sanskrit versions, see von Simson 1965: 104–138 (§§ 18–23).

[140] Manuscript RS 2 in Robert Senior collection. For details about the collection, see Allon 2007b. I am currently preparing this manuscript for publication funded by a Robert H. No Ho Family Foundation Grants for Critical Editions and Scholarly Translations.

[141] For the most recent account of the manuscript, see Hartmann and Wille 2014. For the carbon dating results, see Allon et al. 2006: 279 n. 3. There are also Sanskrit fragments of the sutra from Central Asia that belong to the Sarvāstivādins (Hartmann 1991: 264–265).

4. Sutra no. 27 of 30 of the Chinese *Dīrghāgama*, which is generally taken to belong to the Dharmaguptakas; translated in 412–413 CE [Chin. DĀ];[142]

5. Sutra no. 43.7 of the Chinese *Ekottarikāgama*, which is sometimes attributed to the Mahāsāṃghikas though other schools have been proposed; translated in 384–385 CE and revised 397–398 CE [Chin. EĀ];[143]

6. Chinese independent translation translated between 381 and 395 CE; the school affiliation is uncertain [Chin. IT];[144]

Vinaya version

7. The *Saṃghabhedavastu* of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*, which is preserved in Sanskrit, Tibetan, and Chinese, contains a non-sutra version. The manuscript of the Sanskrit version dates to the 6th or 7th centuries CE and comes from Gilgit [Skt. SBhV].[145]

As discussed by MacQueen (1988: 104–111), the inclusion of this sutra in the *Ekottarikāgama* and in the *Saṃghabhedavastu* of the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya, the only Vinaya in which it is found, are likely to be secondary.

This sutra (and the Vinaya version) depicts king Ajātasattu/Ajātaśatru of Magadha visiting the Buddha and asking him what the fruits are of living life as an ascetic or monk (*samaṇa/śramaṇa*). The background to this story is that the king had killed his father, king Bimbisāra, who was a follower of the Buddha. Elements of the introductory narrative are to be understood against this background, such as the king's lack of peace of mind, which is contrasted with the peace of mind of the Buddha and

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[142] T 1 no. 1, pp. 107a20–109c21. For further information, see MacQueen 1988: 16–23, who provides an English translation (pp. 30–50) and Meisig 1987a: 13–16. For a summary of the Dharmaguptaka affiliation of the Chinese *Dīrghāgama*, see Salomon 1999: 166–178. Anālayo 2014c: 6 n. 9 provides one of the most recent listings of previous discussions.

[143] T 2 no. 125, pp. 762a7–764b12. For details, see MacQueen (1988: 25–26), who provides an English translation (pp. 72–89), and Meisig (1987a: 16–19); see also Allon 2001: 12 for further references.

[144] T 1 no. 22, pp. 270c28–276b6. For further information, see MacQueen 1988: 17, 23–24, who provides an English translation (pp. 51–71) and Meisig 1987a: 19–23.

[145] The Sanskrit edition is SBhV II 216.8–254.4. Some details of the Chinese version are given by MacQueen (1988: 18), who also gives an English translation of it (pp. 90–97).

the tranquillity of the monks, and his experiencing fear on his way to visiting the Buddha.

Due to the complexity of the material and the multiple sources involved, I will not reference every detail noted. MacQueen (1988) and Meisig (1987a) provide detailed accounts of all versions except the new Sanskrit *Dīrghāgama* (Skt. DĀ) and Gandhari versions, which had not yet been discovered. MacQueen (1988: 30–103) provides English translations of the four Chinese versions. Suffice it here to give an overview of the narrative.

All versions begin by telling us that the Buddha is staying in Jīvaka's mango/fruit grove in Rājagṛha along with 1250 monks. On a full moon night of one or other month associated with the rains (there is variation in which month it is), king Ajātaśatru is seated in his palace surrounded by his courtiers. The king asks his courtiers and/or ministers what he should do on such a night and/or which ascetic (*samaṇa/śramaṇa*) or brahman (*brāhmaṇa*) he should visit who would calm or inspire his mind. Different members of the court recommend various activities. In some versions it is first recommended by different courtiers that he engage in pleasurable activities and engage the military, that is, engage in secular activities. In all versions it is recommended that he visit the six rival teachers of the Buddha's day: Pūraṇa Kassapa/Pūraṇa Kāśyapa, Nigaṇṭha Nātaputta/Nirgrantha Jñātiputra, and so on. Here the different versions exhibit variation in the question or questions the king asks, whether only ministers are asked or both courtiers and ministers, whether they are named or not and if named, what name they bear, and what activity or rival teacher each recommends. In the Pali, which is the simplest, the king asks six unnamed ministers which ascetic or brahman he should visit and they each recommend one of the six rival teachers. In Chin. IT the king asks his unnamed ministers how he should dispel his anxiety. The responses of four different ministers are, in turn, through sense pleasures, through listening to music and song, through soldiering, and finally, through visiting the six teachers. In Chin. EĀ, the king asks eight named courtiers and ministers in turn what he should do on such a night. A named court lady recommends engaging in dance, song, and pleasure. Prince Udāyi recommends military exploits. The remaining named ministers (Prince Abhaya, Minister Sunidha, the brahman Varṣakāra, and so on), each recommend visiting one of the six teachers. In the Skt. SBhV and Skt. DĀ, which both belong to the Mūlasarvāstivāda tradition, the king asks his courtiers what he should do on such a night (*kiṃ asmābhiḥ*

karaṇīyaṃ syād). In the Skt. SBhV, the first unnamed court lady recommends that they amuse themselves, while in Skt. DĀ it is that they amuse themselves with music without men in the upper apartment (see below). The second unnamed court lady then recommends amusing themselves and parading around the city wall, though in different order. Prince Udāyibhadra then recommends that they assemble the army and go to war. An old unnamed minister recommends visiting Pūraṇa Kāśyapa, then an old teacher (Skt. SBhV) or old minister (Skt. DĀ) recommends visiting the remaining five teachers.

The Chin. DĀ and Gandhari are similar to each other, both probably being associated with the Dharmaguptakas. In both, the king first asks one set of courtiers what he should do on such a night. In Chin. DĀ, an unnamed court lady recommends washing the hair, bathing, and sporting with the women. In the Gandhari she recommends playing music. The Gandhari apparently has a second court lady recommending something, but the manuscript is quite damaged at this point. In the Gandhari, Prince Udāyibhadra then recommends assembling the army and parading around the city wall, while in Chin. DĀ it is assembling the army, planning an attack, returning, and amusing themselves. A general then recommends military exploits, which differ in the details given. In Chin. DĀ, the king then asks his ministers which ascetic or brahman he should visit on such a night. In both, named ministers, including the king's younger brother Abhaya, recommend visiting the six teachers (or apparently four in the Gandhari, but this appears to be a scribal omission), which show some variation in the order of ministers and who they recommend. In all but one version, Jīvaka, the court physician, who is a follower of the Buddha, is then introduced. In the Pali, Chin. IT, and SBhV-Skt. DĀ group, the king asks Jīvaka why he is silent. In Chin. EĀ he asks what he should do, while in the Chin. DĀ and Gandhari he asks what ascetic or brahman he should visit. In all versions, Jīvaka recommends visiting the Buddha. In Chin. EĀ it is stated that the king experienced joy, admits his crime of patricide, and that the king and Jīvaka utter some verses. In the Skt. SBhV and Skt. DĀ it is stated that the king's mind was inclined towards the Buddha.

To summarize the events that follow more briefly (and to gloss over many differences), in all versions the king tells Jīvaka to make ready 500 elephants and his state elephant and he sets out to see the Buddha, several versions referring to them carrying torches. On the way the king experiences fear and accuses Jīvaka of betraying him to his enemies, in

some versions noting that he cannot hear the 1250 monks Jīvaka said were with the Buddha. In the Chin. DĀ and Gandhari he asks this three times. In the Gandhari, Jīvaka then tells the king that he will see the Buddha, serene, etc., and be inspired. The king leaves the elephants (and royal insignias in some versions). In the Gandhari the king sees the serene monks and wishes that his son Udāyi would be the same, whereas in the other versions this comes later. The king asks Jīvaka where the Buddha is and Jīvaka tells him. In the Chin. EĀ, the *samādhi* of the monks makes the hall glow, Jīvaka prostrates himself towards the Buddha, and the king asks Jīvaka about the cause of the light. In all versions except the Gandhari, the king sees the serene monks or approaches the Buddha and wishes that his son Udāyi would be the same. This is where the Gandhari manuscript ends. The remaining versions record the dialogue between the Buddha and the king on the topic of the king's question, namely, the fruits of living life as a monk, which constitutes the bulk of the sutra.

The relationship between the many versions of this sutra in this narrative introduction is, not surprisingly, complex, with no two versions being identical at every level. This is true even of those that can be attributed to the same school or a closely related school, such as the Sanskrit, Tibetan, and Chinese SBhV versions and the new Sanskrit DĀ version. For example, the Skt. SBhV and Skt. DĀ versions are both attributed to the Mūlasarvāstivāda school, with the manuscripts of both thought to originate from the same or closely related areas and date to approximately the same period. A comparison of the introductory narrative portion of these two versions shows that most differences are minor: words in compound in one are uncompounded in the other; differences in the order of words or larger units of meaning; differences in the tense of verbs or grammatical case for nouns; the employment of a different verb or verbal prefix, and so on.[146] However, some differences are more significant. An example is the recommendation of the first lady of the court (the differences in bold):[147]

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[146] Similar minor differences are observable between the Gandhari *Dharmapada* discovered in Khotan (Brough 1962) and the fragment of the *Bhikṣuvarga* edited by Lenz 2003, both of which probably were produced by the Dharmaguptakas. See Lenz 2003: 21–24.

[147] I am indebted to Jens-Uwe Hartmann for making images of the *Dīrghāgama* manuscript for this sutra available to me.

SBhV II 216.15–20

athānyatamā avaruddhikā **strī rājānam ajātaśatrum vaidehīputram idam avocat**: *evaṃrūpāyāṃ deva jyotsnāyāṃ rātryām āṣāḍhyām varṣopanāyikāyām abhijñātāyām abhilakṣitāyām* <*pūrṇāyām*> *paurṇamāsyām yad devaḥ* **pañcabhiḥ kāmaguṇaiḥ samarpitaḥ samanvaṅgībhūtaḥ** *krīḍed rameta paricārayet; idam aham devasya karaṇīyam* **manye**.

DĀ *435r7–v1 (reconstructions are based on the repetitive passages within the text)

athā<*nya*>*tamā avaruddhik***aivam āha**: *evaṃrūpā(yāṃ deva jyotsnā-rātrāv āṣāḍhīvarṣopanāyikāyām abhijñātāyām a)bhilakṣitāyām* <*pūrṇāyām*> *paurṇamāsyā*<*ṃ*> *yad (d)eva* **umariprāsādatalagato niṣpuruṣeṇa tūryeṇa** *krīḍed rame*<*ta*> *paricārayet; idam ahaṃ devasya ka(raṇīyaṃ* **vadāmi**).

There are three main differences between these two passages:

1. SBhV: *athānyatamā avaruddhikā* **strī rājānam ajātaśatrum vaidehīputram idam avocat**, "Then a certain lady of the court **said this to King Ajātaśatru, Vaidehīputra**";

    DĀ: *athā*<*nya*>*tamā avaruddhik***aivam āha**, "Then a certain lady of the court **spoke thus**";

2. SBhV: **pañcabhiḥ kāmaguṇaiḥ samarpitaḥ samanvaṅgībhūtaḥ** *krīḍed rameta paricārayet*, "**endowed and provided with the five strands of sense-pleasures**, let the king play, delight, and amuse himself";

    DĀ: **uparipRāsādatalagato niṣpuruṣeṇa tūryeṇa** *krīḍed rame*<*ta*> *paricārayet*, "**going to the roof of the upper apartment**, let the king play, delight, and amuse himself **with music played only by women**";

3. SBhV: *idam aham devasya karaṇīyam* **manye**, "**I think** the king should do this";

    DĀ: *idam ahaṃ devasya ka(raṇīyaṃ* **vadāmi**), "**I say** the king should do this."

There are several possible explanations for the differences in wording between these two versions, including that one version is found in the Vinaya, while the other in an *āgama*, which were transmitted by different groups within the Mūlasarvāstivāda community; that these manuscripts stem from different communities and/or periods; that at this point in time written textual transmission meant that texts were more open to modification; or that they are just further examples of the types of variation we encounter when comparing all parallel versions of a

particular text, whether transmitted by the same community or not. The Gandhari and Chin. DĀ versions, which as noted are closely related and probably both created by members of the same school, show a similar relationship as that between the Skt. SBhV and Skt. DĀ versions, though the latter probably exhibit fewer differences.[148]

The above brief comparison of the introductory narrative portion of the surviving versions of the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta*/*Śrāmaṇyaphala-sūtra*, which only hints at the differences at the level of wording, illustrates well the way in which the account of an event, the plot, was expanded and developed. These developments are certainly intentional, the result of creative minds, no doubt motivated by a desire to ever improve the story and make it more compelling. What is particularly interesting about this example is that the most complex and developed plot, that seen in the Gandhari version, is witnessed by the most ancient manuscript by far, namely, by a 2nd century CE Gandhari manuscript (the translation of the parallel Chin. DĀ version is two centuries later). Once again, this illustrates that such changes were happening in the period when oral transmission was still the dominant medium employed by Buddhist monastics for the transmission of their texts. It also illustrates that, as seen in many of the examples involving Gandhari versions, that such changes are not the result of Sanskritization, though the process of translating into Sanskrit may well have provided an opportunity to "improve" and polish the text.

It has been argued that changes were most likely to occur in narrative portions of sutras, such as the introduction to the *Sāmaññaphala-sutta*/*Śrāmaṇyaphala-sūtra*s just discussed, whereas doctrinal passages and the words spoken by the Buddha were generally more conservative. For example, Anālayo (2011: 886–887) concludes his major study of the sutras of the *Majjhima-nikāya* and their parallels, by stating,

> differences between parallel versions tend to affect more often the narrative portions of the text, which are the parts that were more prominently 'commentarial' and thus more directly open to the influence of the reciters. In contrast, what would have been considered by the reciters to be the word of the Buddha appears to have been more resistant to change.

Anālayo gives copious references in the accompanying footnotes (p. 887 n. 138 and n. 139) of statements made by others along these lines.

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[148] My study of the relationship between the Gandhari and Chin. DĀ versions is still a work in progress.

There are certainly many instances where a high degree of stability is witnessed between parallel versions of words spoken by the Buddha, particularly so discrete passages that describe an aspect of the teaching, define a concept and detail a practice. An example is the second discourse of the Buddha, known in Pali as the *Anattalakkhaṇa-sutta*, which articulates the not-self nature of the five aggregates. Due to the importance of this topic and the place of the discourse in the life of the Buddha, there are, like the first discourse of the Buddha, the *Dhamma-cakkappavattana-sutta/Dharmacakrapravartana-sūtra/-dharmaparyāya*, numerous versions of it preserved in a variety of languages (Pali, Gandhari, Sanskrit, Tibetan, Chinese) within the *Sutta-/Sūtra-* and *Vinaya-piṭaka*s as well as in other texts, that belong to a diversity of schools and originate from different times and places. For a listing of all versions, the reader is referred to Allon 2020, which publishes the Gandhari version. Here I will only discuss two sections of the main Indic versions, what I refer to in Allon 2020 as sections B and E. As noted in Allon 2020: 214, there is, apart from the *Mahāvastu* and Mahīśāsaka *Vinaya* versions, considerable agreement between the surviving versions in the structure and even wording of the text. Section B is an example of almost complete agreement in wording between the parallel versions. The versions used here and the abbreviations are the following: Pali (P) *Saṃyutta-nikāya* and *Vinaya* version of the Theravāda; Gandhari (G) *Saṃyuktāgama* version probably of the Dharmaguptakas; Sanskrit version in the *Saṃghabhedavastu* (SBhV) of the Mūlasarvāstivāda *Vinaya*; and Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit version in the *Mahāvastu* of the Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravādas. The text will be broken up into discrete phrases to better expose the similarities and differences, with a literal translation of the Pali heading each section:[149]

P tr.   Form, monks, is not-self.

P   *rūpaṃ bhikkhave anattā.*

G   *(ruo) bhikṣ(a)v(a) aṇa(t)v(a).*

SBhV   *rūpaṃ bhikṣavo 'nātmā.*

Mvu   *rūpaṃ bhikṣavo anātmā;* **vedanā anātmā saṃjñā anātmā saṃskārā anātmā vijñānaṃ anātmā**

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[149] Pali SN III 66.27–33; Vin I 13.18–24; Gandhari RS 22 no. 2 (ll. 9–13), see Allon 2020; Sanskrit SBhV I 138.10–15, cf. CPS §§ 15.2–3 and p. 448; BHS Mvu III 335.12–16.

P tr.   If, monks, this form were self, this form would not lead to affliction,

P   *rūpañ **ca hidaṃ***[150] *bhikkhave attā abhavissa, nay**idaṃ** rūpaṃ ābādhāya saṃvatteyya,*

G   *(ruo **ya iḏa** bhikṣava atva bhaviśe), ṇa **iḏa** ruo avasae **duhae** sabatiye,*

SBhV   *rūpaṃ **ced** bhikṣava ātmā **syān**, na rūpam ābādhāya **duḥkhāya** saṃvarteta,*

Mvu   ***idaṃ** rūpaṃ **ce** bhikṣavaḥ ātmā abhaviṣyat, na **va** rūpaṃ ābādhāya **duḥkhāya** saṃvarteta*

P tr.   and it would be possible to obtain with regard to form 'Let my form be thus; let my form be not thus.'

P   *labbhetha ca rūpe evaṃ me rūpaṃ hotu, evaṃ **me rūpaṃ** mā ahosī **ti**.*

G   *labh(eṣa ya ruo eva **va**) ruo bhodi, eva **ruo** ma hahuṣi.*

SBhV   *labhyeta ca rūpasyaivaṃ me rūpaṃ bhavatu, evaṃ mā bhūd **iti**.*

Mvu   ***ṛdhyāc ca rūpe kāmakārikatā** evaṃ me rūpaṃ bhavatu, evaṃ mā **bhavatu**.*

P tr.   But since, monks, form is not-self, therefore form leads to affliction

P   *yasmā **ca kho bhikkhave** rūpaṃ anattā, tasmā rūpaṃ ābādhāya saṃvattati,*

G   *yaspaḏ **ayi** ru(o aṇatva, taspi) ruo avasae **duhae** sabataḏi,*

SBhV   *yasmāt **tarhi bhikṣavo** rūpam anātmā, tasmād rūpam ābādhāya **duḥkhāya** saṃvartate,*

Mvu   *yasmāc **ca bhikṣavo** rūpaṃ anātmā, tasmād rūpaṃ bādhāya **duḥkhāya** saṃvartati,*

P tr.   and one does not obtain with regard to form 'Let my form be thus; let my form be not thus.'

P   *na ca labbhati rūpe evaṃ me rūpaṃ hotu, evaṃ **me rūpaṃ** mā ahosī **ti**.*

G   *ṇo ya labhadi (ruo eva **va** ruo) bhodi eva **ruo** ma ahuṣi.*

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[150] *hidaṃ* omitted in SN Ee.

SBhV   *na ca labhyate rūpasyaivaṃ me bhavatu, evaṃ mā bhūd **iti***

Mvu   *na cā**tra ṛdhyati kāmakārikatā** evaṃ me rūpaṃ bhavatu, evaṃ mā **bhavatu**.*

The majority of the differences involve the inclusion or omission of the vocatives, particles, pronouns, and some variation in verb forms, which I would regard to be rather minor. The phrase *ṛdhyāc ca rūpe kāma-kārikatā*, lit. "the condition of doing what one wants with regards to form would succeed," in the *Mahāvastu* in sub-sections 2 and 4 is the exception. But the *Mahāvastu* is in its own category, being much modified compared to the other versions. Apart from this, the most significant difference is *ābādhāya saṃvattati*, "leads to affliction," of the Pali compared to *ābādhāya duḥkhāya saṃvartate*, "leads to affliction and suffering" (to use the Sanskrit version), of the others. As we have seen, this form of expansion of wording, which can involve the inclusion of commentarial glosses, is characteristic of the Sanskrit and to some extent Gandhari versions, though there is only one example of such a gloss in the Pali commentaries: *ābādhāya ti evaṃ dukkhena*.[151]

In comparison, the reading of section E shows substantial difference in the Sanskrit version. The Indic versions presented are the same as above, but with the omission of the *Mahāvastu*, which is quite different at this point.[152] I use bold to highlight the differences between those sections that are the same in the three versions and underline to mark the major difference in the Sanskrit.

P   *evaṃ passaṃ bhikkhave sutavā ariyasāvako rūpasmim **pi***[153]
       *nibbindati vedanāya **pi** nibbindati saññāya **pi** nibbindati saṅ-*
       *khāresu **pi** nibbindati viññāṇasmim **pi** nibbindati nibbindaṃ*
       *virajjati virāgā vimuccati vimuttasmiṃ vimuttam **iti***[154] *ñāṇaṃ*
       hoti khīṇā jāti vusitaṃ brahmacariyaṃ kataṃ karaṇīyaṃ
       *nāparaṃ **itthattāyā ti** pajānātī ti.*

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[151] *Vibhaṅga-mūlaṭīkā* Be 39 (a late commentarial text).

[152] Pali SN III 68.20–25; Vin I 14.27–32; Gandhari RS 22 no. 2 (ll. 24–28); Sanskrit SBhV I 139.10–14, cf. CPS § 15.18 and p. 449. For a more detailed comparison, see Allon 2020.

[153] The Ee of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* occurrence lacks *pi* throughout; *pi* is included in the Ee of the *Vinaya* occurrence, in the Sinhalese manuscripts used for the Ee of the *Saṃyutta-nikāya*, and in the Be, Ce, and Se of the both the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* and *Vinaya* occurrences; see Allon 2020: 217.

[154] So also Be, but Vin Ee *vimutt'amhī ti*.

G   *e(va paśa śrudava) ariaṣavao ruehi ṇividaḏi vedaṇae ṇividaḏi
           sañae ṇividaḏi (sakhare)hi ṇividaḏi viñaṇaspi ṇividaḏi. ṇiviṇo
           virajaḏi virage vimucaḏi. vimutaspa vimutam **eva** ñaṇa bhadi
           kṣiṇa jaḏi vuṣiḏa bramahio kriḏa **me** karaṇao ṇavaro
           imadhatva[155] **ḏi** payaṇadi.*

SBhV   <u>yataś ca bhikṣavaḥ śrutavān āryaśrāvaka imām pañca upādāna-
           skandhān naivātmato nātmīyataḥ samanupaśyati sa evaṃ
           samanupaśyan na kiñcil loka upādatte. anupādadāno na
           paritasyati aparitasya ātmaiva parinirvāti</u> kṣīṇā **me** jātiḥ uṣitaṃ
           brahmacaryam kṛtaṃ karaṇīyam nāparam **asmād bhavaṃ**
           prajānāmīti.*

P = G   Seeing thus, monks, the well-taught, noble disciple is disgusted
           with forms, disgusted with feeling, disgusted with perception,
           disgusted with volitional formations, disgusted with conscious-
           ness; being disgusted, he is dispassionate; on account of
           dispassion, [his mind] is liberated; being liberated, there is the
           knowledge "[my mind] is liberated." He understands, "birth is
           destroyed, the holy life has been lived, what was to be done has
           been done, there is no further **[being] than this.**"

SBhV   <u>And when, monks, the well-taught noble disciple sees these five
           aggregates affected by clinging as not-self and as not pertaining
           to self, (then) seeing thus, he clings to nothing in the world; not
           clinging, he is not troubled; not troubled, he himself attains
           Nirvāṇa.</u> [He understands], "birth **for me** is destroyed, the holy
           life has been lived, what was to be done has been done, I know
           no **further being than this.**"

As discussed in Allon 2020: 218–219, as is typical of this class of
literature, the wording of the Sanskrit version that differs (the underlined)
is found elsewhere in the Pali canon, while the wording of the Pali and
Gandhari is found elsewhere in the canonical literature of the
Sarvāstivādins and Mūlasarvāstivādins.

The *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta/Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*s provide many
examples of both impressively stable passages that are presented as
reports of what the Buddha said and yet others that exhibit important
differences. As is well known, this sutra depicts the Buddha travelling
through north India from Rājagaha/Rājagṛha to Kusinārā/Kuśinagara
where he dies, with him giving many discourses to the monks traveling

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[155] Read as *ima ? tva* in Allon 2020.

with him or encountered along the way as well as to other individuals and groups. Not only do the surviving versions differ on the topic on which the Buddha spoke in a particular town and whether or not he gave a discourse in that town (in fact, the towns and villages listed in each version differ), but they also frequently differ on the wording of those discourses that are similar in subject matter. For example, in the Pali version, in Koṭigāma, which is just north of the river Ganges, the Buddha gives a discourse in which he states that it is on account of not understanding the four noble truths that we are caught in the endless cycle of rebirths, which ends in two summary verses (DN II 90.9–91.5). This is followed by a statement that while in Koṭigāma the Buddha gave a religious talk to the monks (*dhammiṃ kathaṃ karoti*) on the topic of morality, concentration, and understanding (*iti sīlaṃ iti samādhi iti paññā*) (DN II 91.6–12), a statement that is made at eight different places in the Pali version. In contrast, in the Sanskrit version, the Buddha is depicted giving the discourse on not understanding the four noble truths at the beginning of his journey while spending the night at Veṇuyaṣṭikā, having just left Rājagṛha for Pāṭaligrāmaka (MPS §§ 3.3–9), an occasion where the Pali version merely states that the Buddha gave a religious talk (*iti-sīla-samādhi-paññā* formula), the location being Ambalaṭṭhikā (DN II 81.20–27). In the Sanskrit version, the *iti-śīla-samādhi-prajñā* formula occurs nine times (MPS §§ 8.6–7, 21.3–5, 21.6–9 [abbreviated]), the first occasion being in Kuṭigrāmaka, the equivalent of Koṭigāma of the Pali. In all cases it occurs alone without an associated discourse. Corresponding to the event set in Veṇuyaṣṭikā in the Sanskrit (MPS § 3) and Ambalaṭṭhikā in the Pali, the Chinese *Dīrghāgama* (T 1 no. 1, p. 12a20–24) parallels the Pali in stating that the Buddha spoke on morality, concentration, and understanding, the location being the Bamboo grove near Rājagṛha. The topic of the discourse given at this point in the first of the independent Chinese translations of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, the *Fo bannihuan jing* (T 1 no. 5. p. 162a28–b16),[156] is quite different from the others dealing with the four kinds of suffering, the eight precepts and "correct mind," while the second independent translation, the *Ban nihuan jing* (T 1 no. 6, pp. 177b5–c2),[157] parallels the Sanskrit in depicting the

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[156] *Fo bannihuan jing* 佛般泥洹經 (*Parinirvāṇasūtra*), T no. 5, translated between 290 and 306; summarized by Waldschmidt 1944–1948: 50.

[157] *Ban nihuan jing* 般泥洹經 (*Parinirvāṇasūtra*), T no. 6, translations by unknown translator during the eastern Jin (317–420 CE); summarized by Waldschmidt 1944– 1948: 50–51.

Buddha giving a discourse on the four noble truths, though it is much expanded.

Regarding the discourse given by the Buddha in Koṭigāma/Kuṭi-grāmaka (MPS § 8) in the remaining parallel versions, in the Chinese *Dīrghāgama* (T 1 no. 1, p. 13a3–8)[158] the Buddha lists the four profound teachings: noble morality, noble concentration, noble wisdom, and noble liberation, stating that they are difficult to understand and that it is on account of not understanding them that he and the monks had experienced birth and death for so long, concluding with verses summarizing these ideas. This seems to be a combination of elements from the statement on morality, concentration, and understanding and the discourse on not understanding the four noble truths. The discourse in the *Fo bannihuan jing* (T 1 no. 5, p. 163a14-20)[159] once again differs from the others, though it does touch on the theme of overcoming lust, hate, and delusion and transcending rebirth, while the *Ban nihuan jing* (T 1 no. 6, p. 178b4–12)[160] parallels the Sanskrit in only giving the brief statement on morality, concentration, and understanding.

The discourse on not understanding the four noble truths is only recorded in Pali and Sanskrit sources, and probably others as well, in association with the Buddha's final journey, namely, in the *Mahāpari-nibbāna-sutta/Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*s, as an independent sutra in the Pali and Chinese *Saṃyutta-nikāya/Saṃyuktāgama*s, and as part of the narrative of the *Mahāvagga* of the Pali Vinaya, in the case of Pali at least.[161] In other words, the Buddha is not recorded as having given this discourse earlier in his life. Similarly, the Pali *iti-sīla-samādhi-paññā* formula and its Sanskrit *iti-śīla-samādhi-prajñā* parallel only occur in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta/Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*s, with both the Pali *Saṃyutta-nikāya* and Vinaya occurrences of the discourse on not under-standing the four noble truths omitting it. This discourse and this *iti-sīla-samādhi-paññā* formula therefore seem to have been created by those who composed the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta/Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*s.

Again, since I am most concerned with details of wording, I will focus here primarily on the Pali and Sanskrit versions of this discourse and

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[158] Summarized by Waldschmidt 1944–1948: 68; German translation, Weller 1939–1940: §§ xxxviii–xxxix (p. 58); English translation, Ichimura 2015: 74–75.

[159] Summarized by Waldschmidt 1944–1948: 68.

[160] Summarized by Waldschmidt 1944–1948: 69.

[161] Pali: SN V 431–432; Vin I 230–231. Non-Pali: SĀ sūtra no. 403 (T 2 no. 99, pp. 108a4–23); see Chung 2008: 125–126 for further parallels.

formula, the two surviving Indic versions. To facilitate comparison of these two versions of the discourse,[162] I have introduced Waldschmidt's section numbers into the Pali text and translation, besides the usual dividing lines to facilitate comparison. I do not mark the differences in bold in the translation of sections 3.3 and 3.4 because the Sanskrit of these sections is reconstructed from the Tibetan translation and the Pali itself, though I do so in the actual text. In the following table the Pali is presented on the left, the Sanskrit on the right. This alternates with the English translation.

Pali: DN II 90.8–91.5	Sanskrit: MPS §§ 3.3–9
[3.3] *tatra kho bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi:* | *catunnaṃ bhikkhave ariya-saccānaṃ ananubodhā appaṭivedhā* | **evam** *idaṃ dīgham addhānaṃ sandhāvitaṃ saṃsaritaṃ mamaṃ* **c' eva** *tumhākañ ca.* | *katamesaṃ catunnaṃ.* |	[3.3] *(atha bhagavān bhikṣūn āmantrayate sma:* | *caturṇāṃ bhikṣava āryasatyānām* **ajñānād adarśanād** *anavabodhād aprativedhād* | *idaṃ dīrgham adhvānaṃ saṃdhāvitaṃ saṃsṛtaṃ mayā yuṣmābhir eva ca. katameṣāṃ caturṇām)* |
[3.3] There the Bhagavat addressed the monks: "It is, monks, on account of not discovering, not penetrating the four noble truths that this long round (of rebirths) has thus been run and wandered through by you and me. What four?	[3.3] Then the Bhagavat addressed the monks: "It is, monks, on account of not knowing, not seeing, not discovering, not penetrating the four noble truths that this long round (of rebirths) has been run and wandered through by you and me. What four?
[3.4] *dukkhassa* **bhikkhave ariya-saccassa ananubodhā appaṭivedhā evam idaṃ dīgham addhānaṃ sandhāvitaṃ saṃsaritaṃ mamañ c' eva tumhākañ ca.** | *dukkhasamudayassa* **bhikkhave ariyasaccassa ananubodhā appaṭivedhā evam idaṃ dīgham addhānaṃ sandhāvitaṃ saṃsaritaṃ mamañ c' eva tumhākañ ca.** | *dukkha-nirodhassa* **bhikkhave ariyasaccassa ananubodhā appaṭivedhā evam idaṃ dīgham addhānaṃ sandhāvitaṃ saṃsaritaṃ mamañ c' eva tumhākañ ca.** | *dukkhanirodhagāminiyā paṭipadāya* **bhikkhave ariyasaccassa ananubodhā appaṭivedhā** | **evam** *idaṃ dīgham addhānaṃ sandhāvitaṃ saṃsaritaṃ mamañ c' eva tumhākañ ca.* |	[3.4] *(duḥkhasya* | *duḥkha-samudayasya* | *duḥkhanirodhasya* | *duḥkhanirodhagāminyāḥ pratipado* **'jñānād adarśanād** *anavabodhād aprativedhād* | *idaṃ dīrgham adhvānaṃ saṃdhāvitaṃ saṃsṛtaṃ mayā yuṣmā)bhir eva ca.* |

[3.4] "It is, monks, on account of not discovering, not penetrating suffering, which is a noble truth, that this long round (of rebirths) has thus been run and wandered through by you and me. It is, monks, on account of not discovering, not penetrating the arising of suffering, which is a noble truth, that this long round (of rebirths) has thus been run and wandered through by you and me. It is, monks, on account of not discovering, not penetrating the cessation of suffering, which is a noble truth, that this long round (of rebirths) has thus been run and wandered through by you and me. It is, monks, on account of not discovering, not penetrating the way leading to the cessation of suffering, which is a noble truth, that this long round (of rebirths) has thus been run and wandered through by you and me.	[3.4] "It is on account of not knowing, not seeing, not discovering, not penetrating suffering, the arising of suffering, the cessation of suffering, and the way leading to the cessation of suffering that this long round (of rebirths) has been run and wandered through by you and me.
[3.5–6] *tayidaṃ* **bhikkhave** *dukkhaṃ ariyasaccaṃ anubuddhaṃ paṭividdhaṃ* │ *dukkhasamudayaṃ* **ariyasaccaṃ anubuddhaṃ paṭividdhaṃ** │ *dukkha-nirodhaṃ* **ariyasaccaṃ anubuddhaṃ paṭividdhaṃ** │ *dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā ariyasaccaṃ anubuddhaṃ paṭividdhaṃ* │ *ucchinnā* **bhavataṇhā** *khīṇā bhavanetti natthi dāni puna-bbhavo ti.* │	[3.5] *tad idaṃ duḥkha(m āryasatyam anuviddhaṃ p)r(ati)viddham* │ **ucch(i)nnā bhavanetrī vikṣīṇo jāti-saṃsāro nāstīdānī(ṃ) punarbhavaḥ.** │ [3.6] *duḥkhasamudayo* │ *duḥkha-nirodho* │ *duḥkhanirodhagāminī prati(pad āryasatyam anuviddhaṃ) p(ra)t(i)viddham* │ *ucchin(n)ā bhava-netrī* **vikṣīṇo** **jātisaṃsāro** *nāstīdānīṃ punarbhavaḥ.* │
[3.5–6] "That, **monks**, this suffering, which is a noble truth, is pierced and penetrated, that the arising of suffering, **which is a noble truth, is pierced and penetrated**, that the cessation of suffering, **which is a noble truth, is pierced and penetrated**, that the way leading to the cessation of suffering, which is a noble truth, is pierced and penetrated, **craving for being** is cut off, **that which leads to (renewed) being** is destroyed, and there is now no further being."	[3.5–6] "That this suffering, which is a noble truth, is pierced and penetrated, **that which leads to (renewed) being is cut off, the samsara of births is destroyed, and there is now no further being**. That the arising of suffering, the cessation of suffering, the way leading to the cessation of suffering, which are noble truths, are pierced and penetrated, that which leads to (renewed) being is cut off, **the samsara of births** is destroyed, and there is now no further being.

[3.7][163] *idam avoca bhagavā. idaṃ vatvā sugato athāparaṃ etad avoca satthā:*	[3.7] (only in the Tibetan)
[3.7] **The Bhagavat said this. Having said this, the Sugata, the teacher, then further said this:**	[3.7]
[3.8] *catunnaṃ ariyasaccānaṃ yathābhūtaṃ adassanā saṃsitaṃ dīgham addhānaṃ* **tāsu tāsv** eva[164] **jātisu.** ⎮ [3.9] *tāni* **etāni** *diṭṭhāni bhavanetti samūhatā* **ucchinnaṃ mūlaṃ dukkhassa** *n' atthi dāni punabbhavo ti.* ⎮	[3.8] *caturṇām āryasatyānāṃ yathābhūtam adarśanāt saṃsṛtaṃ (d)īrgha(m adhvānaṃ* **mayā yu)ṣmābhir** *eva ca* ⎮ [3.9] *tāni* **satyāni** *dṛṣṭāni bhavanetrī samuddhṛtā* **vikṣīṇo jātisaṃsāro** *nāstīdānīṃ punarbhavaḥ.* ⎮
[3.8] "It is on account of not seeing the four noble truths as they really are that this long round has been wandered through **in these many births.** [3.9] "These **very ones** having been seen, that which leads to (renewed) being is done away with, **the root of suffering is cut out**, and there is now no further being."	[3.8] "It is on account of not seeing the four noble truths as they really are that this long round has been wandered through **by me and you.** [3.9] "Those truths having been seen, that which leads to (renewed) being is done away with, **the samsara of births is destroyed**, and there is now no further being."

Unfortunately, the text of sections 3.3 and 3.4 of the Sanskrit has not survived and was reconstructed by Waldschmidt based on the Tibetan translation and Pali parallel (Waldschmidt 1950–1951: 134 n. 4), which excludes it from comparison. I include it here to maintain the integrity of the discourse. Nonetheless, if the Tibetan is faithful to the original Sanskrit, as it usually is, then the main differences are in the presentation of the material, with the Sanskrit abbreviating the repetitive wording. The expanded string *ajñānād adarśanād anavabodhād aprativedhād*, "on account of not knowing, not seeing, not discovering, not penetrating," of the Sanskrit reconstruction for *ananubodhā appaṭivedhā* of the Pali would be in keeping with a general characteristic of the Sanskrit versions noted above. Sections 3.5–6 similarly display differences in the way in which repetitive wording is presented. A fairly minor difference is seen in Sanskrit *ucchin(n)ā bhavanetrī vikṣīṇo jātisaṃsāro*, "that which leads to (renewed) being is cut off, the samsara of births is destroyed," compared to Pali *ucchinnā bhavataṇhā khīṇā bhavanetti*, "craving for being is cut off, that which leads to (renewed) being is destroyed," which

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163 Omitted by Vin Ee.

164 So SN Ee and Vin Ee; DN Ee *tās' eva.*

is also seen in the summary verses (see below for further discussion). The Sanskrit omits the sutra narrator's statement *idam avoca bhagavā. idaṃ vatvā sugato athāparaṃ etad avoca satthā* that introduces the verses (§ 3.7), though it is included in the Tibetan translation (Waldschmidt 1950–1951: 137). Interestingly, the Pali *Vinaya* version (Vin Ee I 231) omits these sutra narrator's words where they are included in the *sutta* versions. This formulaic phrase is extremely common if not the norm in Pali *sutta*s where the verse or verses summarize the content of the Buddha's prose discourse. The two verses (§§ 3.8–9) exhibit differences that are quite common in verse and that could easily have arisen through unintentional means. P *etāni*, "these," Skt. *satyāni*, "truths," in pāda a of the second verse (P *tāni etāni diṭṭhāni*, Skt. *tāni satyāni dṛṣṭāni*) refer to the same thing, sound very similar, and have the same metrical pattern. Although we cannot say with certainty which reading was earlier, that the Sanskrit reading *tāni satyāni* avoids the seeming redundancy of pronouns in *tāni etāni* would fit the tendency of the Sanskrit versions to articulate what is unstated, which suggests that this is a later modification. The Pali commentaries do not provide a gloss on these words, though *satyāni* as a gloss on *etāni* may well have been found in a commentarial tradition that has not survived. The greatest difference is in pāda c of the second verse where the Pali has *ucchinnaṃ mūlaṃ dukkhassa*, "the root of suffering is cut out," and the Sanskrit *vikṣīṇo jātisaṃsāro*, "the samsara of births is destroyed." A similar verse is seen in MPS § 34.169 of which only pādas b–d have survived: *(sam)ucchi(nnā) bhava(ne)t(r)ī, (v)i(kṣ)ī(ṇo) j(āti-saṃ)sā(ro, nā)s(t)īdānīṃ punarbhavaḥ*, "that which leads to (renewed) being is well cut off, the samsara of births is destroyed, and there is now no further being." However, the equivalent of pādas c and d of the Sanskrit (*vikṣīṇo jātisaṃsāro, nāstīdānīṃ punarbhavaḥ*) are quite common in the Pali canon combined with a diversity of pāda a and b building blocks, which explains the variation here. An example is *kilesā jhāpitā mayhaṃ, bhavā sabbe samūhatā, vikkhīṇo jātisaṃsāro, n' atthi dāni punabbhavo ti*, "my defilements have been burnt, all becoming is done away with, the samsara of births is destroyed, and there is now no further becoming" (Th 67).[165] It is likely that this variation in the verse lay behind the reading *vikṣīṇo jātisaṃsāro* in the preceding prose of the Sanskrit (§ 3.6) where the Pali has *khīṇā bhavanetti*.

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[165] Cf. Th 87; Ud p. 46.14–15,25–26; Sn 746 (with Be v.l.), SN I 200.23–24. The Sanskrit *Udānavarga* (32.40–47) has eight such verses.

The account of morality, concentration, and understanding (the *iti-sīla-samādhi-paññā/iti-śīla-samādhi-prajñā* formula) in the Pali and Sanskrit is:

Pali: e.g. DN II 81.5–12,20–27	Sanskrit: MPS §§ 8.5–7, 21.2–5, 21.8–9 [abbrev.]
*tatra **sudaṃ** bhagavā [location: loc.] **viharanto** [location: loc.] etad eva **bahulaṃ** bhikkhūnaṃ **dhammiṃ kathaṃ karoti**:* | *iti sīlaṃ iti samādhi iti paññā.* | *sīlaparibhāvito samādhi **mahapphalo** hoti **mahānisaṃso**.* | ***samādhi-paribhāvitā paññā mahapphalā hoti mahānisaṃsā.*** | *paññāparibhāvitaṃ cittaṃ sammad eva **āsavehi** vimuccati* | *seyyathīdaṃ kāmāsavā bhavāsavā (diṭṭhāsavā)*[166] *avijjāsavā ti.*	[8.5] *tatra bhagavā(n bhikṣūn) āmantrayate:* | [8.6] *itīmāni bhikṣavaḥ śīlāny ayaṃ s(amādhir **iyaṃ** prajñā.)* | *śīla-paribhāvitaḥ samādhiś **cirasthitiko** bhavati.* | *prajñāparibhāvitaṃ cittaṃ samyag eva vim(u)cyate **rāgadveṣa-mohebhyaḥ**.* [8.7] *evaṃ samyak-suvimuktacitta āryaśrāvakaḥ samyag (eva) praj(ānāti) kṣīṇā me jātir uṣitaṃ brahmacaryaṃ kṛtaṃ karaṇīyaṃ nāparam asmād bhavam prajānāmi.*
[8.6] There the Bhagavat, **while staying in place x**, frequently gave a religious **talk to** the monks: Such is morality, **such** is concentration, **such** is understanding. Concentration fortified with morality is **of great fruit, of great benefit.** **Understanding fortified with concentration is of great fruit, of great benefit**. The mind fortified with understanding becomes completely released from the **taints (āsava), that is, the taint of sense desires, the taint of being, (the taint of views,) the taint of ignorance**.	[8.6] There the Bhagavat **addressed** the monks: [8.6] "Such, **monks, are these** moralities, **this** concentration, **this** understanding. Concentration fortified with morality is **long lasting**. The mind fortified with understanding becomes completely released from **lust, hate, and delusion**. [8.7] **The noble disciple whose mind is thus completely well-released understands completely: 'Birth for me is destroyed, the holy life has been lived, what was to be done has been done, I know no further being than this.'"**[167]

As noted, this formula is not found anywhere else in the Pali canon, which suggests that it is the work of those who composed the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*. The uniqueness of the formula is also witnessed by none of the component elements being found elsewhere in the Pali canon, the elements being *iti sīlaṃ iti samādhi iti paññā*; *sīlaparibhāvito samādhi*; *samādhiparibhāvitā paññā*; *paññāparibhāvitaṃ cittaṃ*; *sammad eva āsavehi vimuccati*; *seyyathidaṃ kāmāsavā bhavāsavā avijjāsavā ti*

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[166] Although Ee includes *diṭṭhāsavā* throughout, it is likely to be a later insertion given that Be and Ce omit it (reading *kāmāsavā bhavāsavā avijjāsavā*), that the list of four *āsava*s is not found in the four *nikāya*s, while three *āsava*s would better match the structure of this formula that is based on three elements. The commentary on this *sutta* does not comment on the *āsava*s. See Anālayo 2011: 382 esp. n. 217.

[167] For a German translation of this, see von Simson 1965: 98 n. b.

(omitting *diṭṭhāsavā*). The exception is *mahapphalā hoti mahānisaṃsā* which does occur elsewhere. In contrast, virtually all the elements in the Sanskrit version that differ from the Pali version are found elsewhere in the Pali canon, and no doubt in Sanskrit sutra texts also. The idea of a mind being well released (*suvimuktacitta*) from lust, hate, and delusion (*rāgadveṣamoha*) is seen in a not uncommon Pali passage *kathañ c' āvuso bhikkhu suvimuttacitto hoti. idh' āvuso bhikkhuno rāgā cittaṃ vimuttaṃ hoti, dosā cittaṃ vimuttaṃ hoti, mohā cittaṃ vimuttaṃ hoti. evaṃ kho āvuso bhikkhu suvimuttacitto hoti*, "how, friend, is a monk one whose mind is well released? Here, friend, the monks mind is released from lust, his mind is released from hate, his mind is released from delusion. In this way, friend, is a monk one whose mind is well released" (e.g. DN III 270.24–27; AN V 31.28–31), while another very common passage combines the idea of a mind being released from the taints (*āsava*), the wording found in the Pali version, with the knowing-that-rebirth-is-destroyed formula that concludes the Sanskrit version: *tassa evaṃ jānato evaṃ passato kāmāsavā pi cittaṃ vimuccati, bhavāsavā pi cittaṃ vimuccati, avijjāsavā pi cittaṃ vimuccati, vimuttasmiṃ vimuttam iti ñāṇaṃ hoti khīṇā jāti vusitaṃ brahmacariyaṃ kataṃ karaṇīyaṃ nāparaṃ itthattāyā ti pajānāti*, "of one knowing and seeing thus, his mind is released from the taint of sense desire, his mind is released from the taint of being, his mind is released from the taint of ignorance; when released, he has the knowledge 'it is released'; and he understands 'birth for me is destroyed, the holy life has been lived, what was to be done has been done, there is no further [being] than this'" (e.g. DN I 84.8–12,31–35, 209.24–28). Given that the Pali formula is unique to the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta*, while the wording of the latter half of the Sanskrit version, which is the section that most differs from the Pali, consists of wording found in other sutras, it would appear that the differences between the two versions are due to modifications undertaken by those who transmitted the Sanskrit version or a Prakrit predecessor to it. This is also supported by the lack of symmetry in the Sanskrit version, which the Pali version certainly has with its threefold structuring, the omission of the equivalent of the *samādhiparibhāvitā* phrase contributing to the lack of symmetry in the Sanskrit. However, just to complicate matters, the Chinese *Dīrghāgama* version[168] combines the equivalent of

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[168] T 1 no. 1, p. 12a20–24: 與諸比丘説戒定慧。修戒獲定得大果報。修定獲智得大果報。修智心淨得等解脱。盡於三漏。欲漏有漏無明漏。已得解脱生解脱智。

the Pali *iti-sīla-samādhi-paññā* formula with the knowing-that-rebirth-is-destroyed formula, though again, I think the inclusion of the latter formula is an addition, for the reason just stated.

Interestingly, the Sanskrit takes these words to be those of the Buddha, introducing them with *tatra bhagavān bhikṣūn āmantrayate*, "there the Bhagavat addressed the monks," and including the vocative *bhikṣavaḥ*, "monks," in the formula itself, where such a vocative of address only occurs in reported speech. In contrast, in the Pali the passage is introduced with the words *tatra sudaṃ bhagavā* [location: loc.] *viharanto* [location: loc.] *etad eva bahulaṃ bhikkhūnaṃ dhammiṃ kathaṃ karoti*, "there the Bhagavat, while staying in *place x*, frequently gave a religious talk to the monks," with the following wording lacking the vocative, which indicate that these are the words of the sutra narrator summarizing the general topic of the Buddha's discourse. By including wording spoken by the Buddha found in other sutras in this passage, those responsible for the Sanskrit version converted what was originally a sutra narrator statement into the words of the Buddha. It may very well have been the original status of the words as not being those of the Buddha that facilitated their willingness (or that of their predecessors) to modify them. The Chinese *Dīrghāgama* version seems to parallel the Pali in this regard.[169]

The final examples I would like to examine are the *Pātimokkha-sutta*/*Prātimokṣa-sūtra* rules, which have been discussed several times above. As is well known, these rules are held by all Buddhist communities to have been formulated by the Buddha himself and were recited by each community every fortnight at the formal *uposatha* (*poṣatha*/*poṣadha*/*upoṣadha*) ceremony. Because of the importance of the *Pātimokkha*/*Prātimokṣa* and the survival of so many Vinayas, we have the *Pāti-mokkha*/*Prātimokṣa* rules for the monks, in full or in part, belonging to at least nine schools preserved in a variety of languages and witnessed in a

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生死已盡梵行已立。所作已辦不受後有; German translation by Weller 1939–1940: § xviii (pp. 50–51); English translation by Ichimura 2015: 70.

[169] In his English translation of the Chinese *Dīrghāgama* version, Ichimura (2015: 70) presents the first part as the sutra narrator's words ("There, he taught the *bhikṣu*s the curriculum of three [major] trainings: (1) moral precepts (*śīla*), (2) mental concentration (*samādhi*), and (3) [analytical] insight (*prajñā*)"), but formats the remaining text to indicate that it is the Buddha's word, though it is unclear upon what basis he determined this because the Chinese, like the Pali, lacks the vocative of address. For a critical review of Ichimura's translation, see Anālayo (forthcoming).

variety of manuscripts and dated translations stemming from different times and locations. Its importance in the current study is that the *Pātimokkha/Prātimokṣa* is universally accepted in traditional sources and in modern scholarship as having been a fixed, memorized text that was regularly recited; and that although it may not have always been recited communally in the sense that all monastics recited it together, it was recited in a communal setting with all monastics expected to know and understand it. Further, there was a general reluctance to change the rules, as witnessed by the statement in the commentary on the Pali *Vinaya* noted by von Hinüber (1995a: 14): *suttaṃ hi appaṭivattiyaṃ* (Sp 231.27), "for it is impossible to reverse the (Pātimokkha)sutta" (translation by von Hinüber) and by the

> refusal to change even the 'minor rules' (*khuddānukhuddakāni sikkhāpadāni*) hinted at in the pertinent discussion at the council of Rājagaha (Rājagrha) (Vin II 287.29-288.15, cf. DN II 154.15ff.) [which] could indicate the end of the freedom for any changes of the Pātimokkha." (von Hinüber 1995a: 14)

Although the great concern for the correct wording and pronunciation of the *kammavācā*s discussed by von Hinüber (1987/1994) does not seem to have applied to the *Pātimokkha* rules, it reflects the conservative attitude towards Vinaya rules and proceedings in general.

Here I will only discuss the second *Saṅghādisesa/Saṃghātiśeṣa/Saṃghāvaśeṣa* rule of the four surviving Indic versions.[170] As in the above studies of individual passages, I restrict myself to these Indic versions because I am most interested in exact wording with these four providing enough material to illustrate the point. However, it is also the case that to take into consideration the quite large number of versions available which exhibit complex relationships would be a study in itself. I chose the second rule because it is relatively short. The abbreviation for the school is given on the left:

Th   Pali Theravāda *Paṭimokkha-sutta* (ed. and tr. Pruitt and Norman 2001);

S   Sanskrit Sarvāstivāda *Prātimokṣa-sūtra* (ed. and tr. von Simson 2000) based on manuscripts from Central Asia; there are also several Chinese translations (see Clarke 2015: 70–72);

MūS   Sanskrit Mūlasarvāstivāda *Prātimokṣa-sūtra* (ed. Hu-von Hinüber 2003) based on manuscripts from Gilgit and Tibet; there

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[170] See also Pachow 2000: 76.

are also Tibetan and Chinese translations (see Hu-von Hinüber 2003 and Clarke 2015: 73–75);

Mā-L   Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit Mahāsāṅghika-Lokottaravādin *Prāti-mokṣa-sūtra* (ed. Tatia 1975) based on 12th century manuscript photographed by Sāṅkṛtyāyana in Tibet (for other fragments and editions, see Clarke 2015: 64–68).

In addition to these, there are also complete *Prātimokṣa-sūtra*s, preserved either as separate texts or as part of the larger Vinayas, mostly in Chinese translation, belonging to the Mahāsāṅghika, Dharmaguptaka, Mahīśāsaka, Kāśyapīya, and Sāṃmitīya, for details of which, see Clarke 2015.[171] The ordering of the thirteen *Saṅghādisesa/Saṃghātiśeṣa/Saṃghāvaśeṣa* rules is the same in all versions except for nos. 12 and 13 which are reversed in some cases. The four Indic versions of the second *Saṅghādisesa/Saṃghātiśeṣa/Saṃghāvaśeṣa* rule are (dividing lines to demarcate units and help comparison; underline indicating variation, bold more significant difference):

Th   *yo pana bhikkhu │ <u>otinno vipariṇatena cittena</u> │ mātugāmena saddhiṃ │ kāyasaṃsaggaṃ samāpajjeyya │ hatthaggāhaṃ vā veṇiggāhaṃ vā │ aññatarassa vā aññatarassa vā <u>aṅgassa</u> parāmasanaṃ │ saṅghādiseso*[172]

S   *yaḥ punar bhikṣur │ <u>udīrṇavipariṇatena cittena</u> │ mātṛgrāmeṇa sārdhaṃ │ kāyasaṃsargaṃ samāpadyeta │ hastagrahaṇaṃ vā veṇīgrahaṇaṃ vā │ anyatamānyatamasya vā<u>ṅga**jātasyāmarśa-naṃ** parāmarśanaṃ vā │ saṃghāvaśeṣaḥ*[173]

MūS   *yaḥ punar bhikṣur │ <u>avadīrṇṇavipariṇatena cittena</u> │ mātṛgrāmeṇa sārdhaṃ │ kāyasaṃsarggaṃ samāpadyeta │ hastagrahaṇaṃ vā **bāhugrahaṇaṃ vā** veṇīgrahaṇaṃ vā │ 'nyatamānyatamasya vā <u>'ṅga**pratyaṅgasyāmarśanaṃ** parāmarśanaṃ **svīkuryāt** │ saṃghāvaśeṣā*[174]

Mā-L   *yo puna bhikṣu │ <u>otīrṇo vipariṇatena cittena</u> │ mātṛgrāmeṇa sārdhaṃ │ kāyasaṃsargaṃ samāpadyeya │ **saṃyathīdaṃ** hasta-*

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[171] The Gandhari fragment of the *Saṃghāvaśeṣa* rules mentioned in n. 67, will be published in the near future.

[172] Pruitt and Norman 2001: 12.8–11.

[173] Von Simson 2000: 166.5–8.

[174] Hu-von Hinüber 2003: 11.13–16.

*grahaṇaṃ vā veṇīgrahaṇaṃ vā │ anyatarānyatarasya vā **punar aṅgajātasya** **āmoṣaṇa**parāmoṣaṇaṃ **sādiyeya** │ saṃghātiśeṣo*[175]

Th   If a monk, <u>overcome [by passion]</u>, with perverted mind, should engage in bodily contact with a woman, or in holding of hands or holding of locks of hair or caressing this or that <u>limb</u>, this is a *saṅghādisesa*.[176]

S   If a monk, with <u>excited and</u> perverted mind, should engage in bodily contact with a woman, or in holding of hands or holding of locks of hair or **touching or** caressing this or that <u>limb</u>, this is a *saṃghāvaśeṣa*.[177]

MāS   If a monk, with <u>excited and</u> perverted mind, should engage in bodily contact with a woman, or in holding of hands **or in holding of arms** or in holding of locks of hair or **should take on the touching or** caressing of this or that <u>limb</u> **or secondary part**, this is a *saṃghāvaśeṣa*.[178]

Mā-L If a monk, <u>overcome [by passion]</u>, with perverted mind, should engage in bodily contact with a woman, **that is to say**, in holding of hands or in holding of locks of hair or, **again, if he should enjoy himself touching or** caressing this or that <u>limb</u>, this is a *saṃghātiśeṣa*.[179]

In the second unit (as defined by the vertical lines), where the Pali Th and the less Sanskritic Mā-L versions have *otiṇṇo/otīrṇo vipariṇatena cittena*, "overcome [by passion], with perverted mind," the two Sanskrit versions of S and MūS appear to have responded to the awkwardness of the nominative *otiṇṇo/otīrṇo* by forming the more straightforward compound *udīrṇa-/avadīrṇṇa-vipariṇatena cittena*, "with excited and perverted mind." The variation *otiṇṇa-/otīrṇa-* from *ava-√tṝ*, *udīrṇa-* from *ud-√īr*, and *avadīrṇṇa-* from *ava-√dīr*, which all sound the same, is undoubtedly based on uncertainty of the etymology of the word.

The basis for the difference between *-gāha* in *hattha-ggāhaṃ veṇi-ggāhaṃ* of the Pali and *-grahaṇa* in *hasta-grahaṇaṃ veṇī-grahaṇaṃ* of

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[175] Tatia 1975: 8.21–23.

[176] Cf. the English translation by Norman in Pruitt and Norman 2001: 13, which I am guided by.

[177] Cf. the English translation by Pachow 2000: 76, and German translation by von Simson 1986: 273.

[178] Cf. the English translation by Prebish 1975: 55.

[179] Cf. the English translation by Prebish 1975: 54.

the other Indic versions may be merely that the *-ana* form was felt to be more common and more in keeping with the following (*āmarśanaṃ*) *parāmarśanaṃ*. The old commentary within the *Suttavibhaṅga* of the Pali Vinaya does not comment on *-gāha* in these compounds but the commentary on the Vinaya does, glossing *gāha* with *gahaṇa*: *hatthassa gahaṇaṃ hatthaggāho* (Sp III 554.13–14), as does the commentary on the *Pātimokkha* itself, the *Kaṅkhāvitaraṇī* (p. 36.19–20): *iti vuttalakkhaṇassa hatthassa gahaṇaṃ hatthagāho veṇiyā gahaṇaṃ veṇigāho*.

The expansion of the two-member string *hastagrahaṇaṃ vā veṇī-grahaṇaṃ vā* (to use S), "or in holding of hands or holding of locks of hair," to a three-member string *hastagrahaṇaṃ vā bāhugrahaṇaṃ vā veṇīgrahaṇaṃ vā*, "or in holding of hands or in holding of arms or in holding of locks of hair," in MāS is another example of the type of expansion discussed many times above. The Pali Vinaya commentaries do not give a basis for this expansion.

Mā-L's addition of *saṃyathīdaṃ*, "that is to say," at the beginning of this string spells out what is implicit in the other versions, namely, that what follows are instances of *kāya-saṃsagga-/saṃsarga-*, "bodily contact." The Pali commentaries do not reflect this.

Probably the greatest variation is seen in unit 7. Here it is apparent that the simple expression of the Pali *vā aṅgassa parāmasanaṃ*, "or caressing (this or that) limb," has been expanded and clarified by *vā aṅgajātasya āmarśanaṃ parāmarśanaṃ vā* (to give the non-sandhi form), "or touching or caressing (this or that) limb," in S, by *vā aṅgapratyaṅgasya āmarśanaṃ parāmarśanaṃ svīkuryāt*, "or should take on the touching or caressing of (this or that) limb or secondary part," in MūS, and by *vā punar aṅgajātasya āmoṣaṇa-parāmoṣaṇaṃ sādiyeya*, "or, again, if he should enjoy himself touching or caressing (this or that) limb," in Mā-L. The basis for the expansion of the single term *parāmasanaṃ* in the Pali to the two terms *āmarśanaṃ parāmarśanaṃ* in the others is seen in the long list of synonyms in the old commentary within the *Suttavibhaṅga* of the Pali *Vinaya*: *āmasanā parāmasanā omasanā ummasanā olaṅghanā ullaṅghanā ākaḍḍhanā patikaḍḍhanā abhinigganhanā abhinippīḷanā gahaṇaṃ chupanaṃ* (Vin III 120.14–16), with each of these items then glossed: *āmasanā nāma āmaṭṭhamattā parāmasanā nāma ito c' ito ca saṃcopanā*, etc. (Vin III 120.17–18).

The reason for what is most likely an expansion or clarification in *aṅgajātasya* in S, MūS, and Mā-L for Pali *aṅgassa* is unclear. The old Pali commentary takes "limb" (*aṅga*) to mean the remaining limbs/parts

once you take away hands and hair which had already been mentioned (*aṅgaṃ nāma hatthañ ca veṇiñ ca ṭhapetvā avasesaṃ aṅgaṃ nāma*, Vin III 120.12–13). Although *aṅgajāta* normally means a sexual organ in Pali,[180] given that the old Pali commentary clearly shows that the Pali rule concerned any limb, I take *-jāta* in the sense of "kind of."[181] The reason for the inclusion of *svīkuryāt*, "should take on," in MūS and *sādiyeya*, "should enjoy himself," in Mā-L is unclear.

Anālayo (2014a: 53–54, 2020a: 2719–2720, 2020b: 396–402) draws attention to the differences between the *Pātimokkha/Prātimokṣa*s but considers that they are due to errors of memory, monastics knowing the meaning of the text, the intrusion of commentarial material into the root text, and other unintentional factors as he does generally for differences between sutras.[182] He also argues against any possibility of the *Pātimokkha/Prātimokṣa* being intentionally changed because of its importance to the community and its function in defining the community's identity. He states,

> In spite of clearly being perceived as a fixed text, the different extant versions of the monastic code of rules exhibit, a large degree of correspondence, minor and even a few major differences …. These differences reflect patterns of change in line with what can be found on comparing parallel discourses. Since a way of explaining such variations has to be found that is applicable as well to the monastic code of rules and its crucial function for maintaining a monastic community, improvisation or intentional change as the chief mode for the formation and transmission of the source texts is simply not a promising candidate. (Anālayo 2020a: 2720)[183]

Briefly outlining the way in which in oral performance a reciter may respond to the needs of the audience by providing commentary on the root or source text, he then states,

> In an oral setting (as distinct from written and printed text), the difference between source text and commentary is not necessarily always self-evident, given that they are both stored in memory and have been received from the same person(s). During the prolonged period of oral transmission, the dividing line between what is

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[180] CPD s.v. *aṅga-jāta*; DP s.v. *aṅga* [vol. 1, p. 18, right column].

[181] Prebish (1975: 54–55) and von Simson (1986: 273) translate *aṅgajāta* as "limbs" and "Glieder," respectively.

[182] For sutras, see Anālayo 2011: 855–891; cf. 2009a, 2014a, 2015: 89–91.

[183] For the role of the *Pātimokkha/Prātimokṣa* in the community, see Anālayo 2020b: esp. 397–398.

"canonical" and what is "commentarial" would naturally tend to become a fluid one. (Anālayo 2020a: 2720; cf. p. 2721)

That is, the differences we encounter between the *Pātimokkha*/*Prāti-mokṣa*s are due to the blurring of boundaries between the root or source text and commentary.[184] Indeed, some of the differences in the versions of the *Saṅghādisesa* rule discussed above do appear to have their origins in commentarial material, but I would argue that most of them have resulted from active desire to clarify and to smooth awkward formulations, drawing heavily on the authoritative commentarial tradition to do so, a process that is also evident in sutra texts. Also, given that the *Pātimokkha*/*Prātimokṣa* was recited so frequently, and always by a group or in a group setting, with all monastics supposedly knowing it, any accidental change, error, or divergence from the memorized version would have been corrected. Even in a situation where the monastic community was inclined to follow the highly revered senior monk's altered recitation of the monastic rules out of respect and inability to challenge the alteration, there must have been an awareness by the community of the difference and tacit agreement on their part to adopt the modified version. It is also hard to believe that the lead reciter, who performed the recitation of the *Pātimokkha*/*Prātimokṣa* precisely because of his command of it, would not at some point have become aware that his recitation differed from his previous one, for example, when another monk led the recitation using the original wording or, in a period when manuscripts were in use, when he consulted a manuscript of it. Again, the adoption of a version with altered wording may have been possible in a single monastery, but individual monasteries rarely sat in isolation. They were closely connected with monasteries of the same *nikāya* in their region or in neighbouring ones, and no doubt beyond that also, which would inevitably lead to difference being noted and either adopted or rejected. Further, although the *Pātimokkha*/*Prātimokṣa* did play such an important role in the monastic community, which resulted in a conservative attitude being held towards it, the changes encountered generally do not alter the meaning of the rules. Rather, these changes are attempts to make the meaning of the rule clearer and therefore less likely to be misunderstood, which was the motive for the production of the accompanying introductory stories (*vatthu*) and the word for word

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[184] For further discussion of the influence of commentary on the root sutra text, see Anālayo 2010.

explanations (*padabhājanīya*) on the rules. In other words, the changes that were introduced are very much in keeping with the function of the *Pātimokkha/Prātimokṣa*. Finally, there are many examples of manuscripts that preserve remnants of the *Prātimokṣa* that diverge from the standard version transmitted by the community that most likely produced the manuscript, though the phenomenon has yet to be fully explained.[185]

By way of summary, although there are many examples of passages that record the words of the Buddha exhibiting minimal differences among surviving versions, this is by no means the rule. But the above hardly constitutes an adequate study of the phenomenon. A far more detailed study involving a much larger body of material systematically analysed is required to better understand the phenomenon of stability and change in passages recording the words of the Buddha, but that is another study.[186]

Many of the examples discussed so far involve the expansion of the text, particularly evident in the narrative passages. It is therefore interesting to see instances of the shortening and simplification of the texts, of which there are several different types. We have, for example, seen examples where the Sanskrit version has condensed an internally repetitive passage, a phenomenon that is closely related to abbreviation (see e.g. pp. 80–82). Although worthy of attention, what I would like to examine here instead are two interesting examples of the shortening of quite important formulas that occupy prominent positions in the sutras in which they occur. The first is the common formula that begins many sutras that states where the Buddha is staying and that he addressed the monks, the first part of which was discussed above (see p. 11). I will use the version with the Sāvatthi/Śrāvastī setting. Pali and Sanskrit examples are very common and the reader is referred to Allon 2001: 225–232 for

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[185] For Sanskrit fragments, see Ñāṇatusita 2018; von Simson 1997, 2000: 2–15; Wille 1997 (see also SHT I 39–40 in SHT VIII pp. 162–164), 2009 (esp. pp. 49–51); cf. Anālayo 2020b: 396–400. For the Gandhari fragment in the Bajaur collection, see Falk and Strauch 2014: 60; Strauch 2008: 115–118, 2014a: 817–825; cf. Anālayo 2020b: 399–402.

[186] Recent publications, including PhD theses, of Gandhari versions of prose sutras generally involve comparative studies of all versions, for which see Allon 2001, 2007a, 2020; Glass 2007; Lee 2009; Marino 2017; Silverlock 2015; Strauch 2014b, 2017. Salomon 2000 is a study of a Gandhari verse sutra. For examples of differences in the reported words of the Buddha, see Marino 2017: 203–211, 224–239. For publications and theses of the sutras of the Sanskrit *Dīrghāgama*, see Hartmann and Wille 2014: esp. 142–143.

references and the variant readings.[187] The Gandhari version presented here is RS 22.57–59 from the Robert Senior collection, which preserves several other instances of the formula, many in abbreviated form. The Gandhari example presented above in the discussion of the opening *nidāna* (p. 53) is based on two examples found in the British Library Kharoṣṭhī manuscripts (BL 12 + 14.26–28,37–39). Being Gandhari, there is some variation in orthography in the occurrences of this formula.[188]

P   *evaṃ me sutaṃ | ekaṃ samayaṃ bhagavā sāvatthiyaṃ viharati jetavane anāthapiṇḍikassa ārāme. | tatra kho bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi* **bhikkhavo ti. | bhaddante ti te bhikkhū bhagavato paccassosuṃ. | bhagavā etad avoca |**

G   *eva me śuḏa | eka samae bhayava śavastia viharaḏi jeḏavaṇo aṇosap(i)ḏiasa arame. | tatra u bhayava bhikhu amatreḏi |* **ti bhikhu bhayava pacaśoṣe | bhayavaṣu eḏaḏ aya |**

Skt.   *evaṃ mayā śrutam | ekasmin samaye bhagavān śrāvastyāṃ viharati sma jetavane 'nāthapiṇḍadasyārāme. | tatra bhagavān bhikṣūn āmantrayati sma |*

P   Thus have I heard. At one time the Bhagavat stayed in Sāvatthi in the Jetavana, in the park of Anāthapiṇḍika. There the Bhagavat addressed the monks, **"Monks." "Venerable sir," those monks assented to the Bhagavat. The Bhagavat said this**.

G   (as Pali) ... There the Bhagavat addressed the monks. **Those monks accented to the Bhagavat. The Bhagavat said this**."

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[187] For a discussion of the vocative *bhikkhavo* in this formula, which is taken to be a standard Pali form, but *bhikkkave* in the discourse itself, which is understood to be a "Magadhism," or eastern form, see Lüders 1954: 13 [§ 1]; Bechert 1980b: 29–30 (cf. 1991: 11–12), 1988: 131; von Hinüber 2001: 238 (§ 332). See also Meisig 1987b: 225 and Anālayo 2007: 13–14 (along with the vocatives *bhaddante/bhante*). Meisig (1987b: 225) notes that the Pali form is only found in the *Majjhima-nikāya* version of the sutra he studied, not in the Chinese *Madhyamāgama* version, concluding that the phrase was added to the *Majjhima-nikāya* sutras when it was compiled. But the current research suggests that the *Madhyamāgama* has the abbreviated version.

[188] For a discussion of the British Library and the Senior examples and their parallels, see Allon 2001: 225–232. For further discussion of the Senior examples, see Allon 2020: 234–235; Glass 2007: 60–61; Lee 2009: 79–84; Marino 2017: 203; Silverlock 2015: 396. Von Hinüber 2006[2008]: 197–202 discusses such passages primarily with an interest in their recording of places from an historical perspective, noting the antiquity of aspects of the syntax.

Skt.   Thus have I heard. At one time the Bhagavat stayed in Śrāvastī in
        the Jetavana, in the park of Anāthapiṇḍada. There the Bhagavat
        addressed the monks.

The Sanskrit form, which is more-or-less standard throughout
Sanskrit canonical sutra texts, abbreviates the rather elaborate
introduction of the Pali (the text in bold), omitting the whole second half
of the Pali formula: *bhikkhavo ti. bhaddante ti te bhikkhū bhagavato
paccassosuṃ. bhagavā etad avoca*, "'Monks.' 'Venerable sir,' those
monks accented to the Bhagavat. The Bhagavat said this." This is a little
surprising given that the Pali version of the formula, a formula that opens
so many *sutta*s, sets a formal and ceremonial tone to the interchange
between the Buddha and his monks and thereby gives gravitas to the
discourse that follows and the *sutta* as a whole.

The Gandhari version parallels the Pali but omits the exchange of
vocatives of address "'Monks', 'Venerable sir',"" thus apparently
witnessing the beginnings of the process of abbreviating this formula that
ended with the omission of the whole interchange seen in the Sanskrit.
The words *tatra bhagavān bhikṣūn āmantrayati sma* and the Pali
equivalent *atha kho bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi* (with reading *atha kho*
rather than *tatra kho* as in the opening formula) are found alone within
the main body of many sutras functioning to introduce the words spoken
by the Buddha. It is possible that this and a sense that the words *bhikkhavo
ti. bhaddante ti te bhikkhū bhagavato paccassosuṃ. bhagavā etad avoca*
added no new information led to the simplification of the formula.
However, in Pali manuscripts it is common to find the phrase *tatra kho
bhagavā bhikkhū āmantesi bhikkhavo ti. bhadante ti te bhikkhū bhagavato
paccassosuṃ. bhagavā etad avoca* abbreviated with *tatra kho bhagavā
bhikkhū āmantesi*, that is, the whole latter half of the formula is omitted
just as in the Sanskrit, which suggests that the shorter Sanskrit version
may have resulted from the tendency to abbreviate this formula of sutra
openings in manuscripts.[189] Abbreviation of the formula occurs in
Gandhari manuscripts as well, though usually simply with *śavasti-
ṇiḍaṇe*, *śavastia-ṇiḍaṇe* or slightly longer wording, parallel to *sāvatthi-
nidānaṃ* in Pali manuscripts and editions.[190] Although the shortening of
this formula, like the next to be discussed, may have its origins in a

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[189] See Allon 2001: 231–232.

[190] Discussed in the Gandhari publications listed above. For abbreviation of this
nidāna in Sanskrit texts, see SWTF s.v. Śrāvastī.

tendency to abbreviate it in manuscript transmission, it nonetheless involved editorial intention to standardize the new reading across the whole corpus of texts transmitted and recited by the community, a decision that seems to have been made by all communities using Sanskrit.[191]

The second example of the simplification of a formula is seen in the formula that concludes many sutras and depicts a person with whom the Buddha has been in discussion or debate expressing their wish to be a lay follower (*upāsaka*) of the Buddha and take the three refuges. The Indic versions given here have been discussed in detail in Allon 2001: 203−218, and I will restrict myself to a discussion of the main differences. The reader is referred to Allon 2001 for details of the discussion given here.

The Pali version (P) is standard throughout the Pali canon (e.g. AN I 56.3–11). The several Gandhari examples attested to date show some important differences. I present the two most complete examples. The first (G1) is found in an *Ekottarikāgama*-type sutra in the British Library Kharoṣṭhī manuscript collection (BL 12 + 14.20−25), the collection being dated by Salomon to approximately the first half of the 1st century CE (Salomon 1999: 141−155). The second Gandhari example (G2) comes from the Robert Senior manuscript collection (RS 20.10–11), which as noted previously date to the first half of the second century CE.[192] The form found in Buddhist Sanskrit texts (Skt.) shows some variation in reading, but the formula is essentially that given here (e.g. CPS § 16.16).

P   *abhikkantaṃ bho gotama abhikkantaṃ bho gotama.* **seyyathāpi bho gotama nikkujjitaṃ vā ukkujjeyya paṭicchannaṃ vā vivareyya mūḷhassa vā maggaṃ ācikkheyya andhakāre vā tela-pajjotaṃ dhāreyya cakkhumanto rūpāni dakkhintī ti evam eva kho bhotā gotamena anekapariyāyena dhammo pakāsito.** *esāhaṃ bhavantaṃ gotamaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi dhammañ ca bhikkhu-saṅghañ ca. upāsakaṃ maṃ bhavaṃ gotamo dhāretu ajjatagge pāṇupetaṃ saraṇaṃ gatan ti.*

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[191] A study of this formula in Chinese translations of *āgama* sutras may well produce interesting results given that they stem from such diverse communities and periods.

[192] For the latest reading and discussion, see Marino 2017: 189−196 who also presents two fragmentary examples from other Senior manuscripts and a Chinese *Madhyamāgama* example.

G1 *(abhikatu) bhu ghodama abhikatu.* **suyasavi bhu ghudama ṇiujidu ukuje paḍichaṇo a viv(are) muḍhasa va maghu praghaśe adhagharo aloka va <dharae>** *yavad eva cakṣuatu ruaṇa dhrekṣatu evam eva ṣamaṇeṇa ghodameṇa* <u>*krirṇo śukro dharmu akhade vivaḍe s(a)praghaśide*</u> *(eṣaho) ṣamaṇo ghudamu śaraṇo ghachami dhama ca bhikhusagha ca u(asaghu) mi ṣ(a)ma(ṇe ghuda)m(e) dharedu ajavaghreṇa* <u>**yavajivu**</u> *praṇouviade śaraṇo <ghade>* **abhiprasaṇe.**

G2 *eṣao bha geḍam(a) ś(a)r(a)ṇo gachami dhrarma ja bhikhuṣaga ja uasao me bhi goḍama dharei ajavagreṇa* **yavajiva** *p(r)aṇueḍa śaraṇa gaḍe.*

Skt. *abhikrānto 'haṃ bhadantābhikrāntaḥ. eṣo 'haṃ bhagavantaṃ śaraṇaṃ gacchāmi dharmaṃ ca bhikṣusaṃghaṃ ca. upāsakaṃ ca māṃ dhārayādyāgreṇa* **yāvajjīvaṃ** *prāṇopetaṃ śaraṇaṃ gatam* **abhiprasannam.**

P Wonderful, venerable Gotama! Wonderful, venerable Gotama! **Just as, venerable Gotama, one would set upright what has been overturned or uncover what has been covered or show the path to one who is lost or bring an oil lamp into the darkness so that those with eyes might see forms, even so has the venerable Gotama declared the Dhamma in various ways**. I go to the venerable Gotama as a refuge and to the Dhamma and to the community of monks. May the venerable Gotama accept me as a layman, who has gone [to him] as a refuge from today onward, until [my] last breath.

G1 Wonderful, venerable Gotama! Wonderful! **Just as, venerable Gotama, one would set upright what has been overturned or uncover what has been covered or show the path to one who is lost or bring light into the darkness, so that those with eyes might see forms, even so has the monk Gotama** <u>**declared, revealed, and proclaimed the Dharma, dark and bright.**</u> I go to the monk Gotama as a refuge and to the Dharma and to the community of monks. May the monk Gotama accept me as a layman, who **with faith** has gone [to him] as a refuge from today onward, **for as long as there is life**, until [my] last breath.

G2 I go to the venerable Gotama as a refuge and to the Dharma and to the community of monks. May the venerable Gotama accept me as a layman who has gone [to him] as a refuge from today onward, **for as long as there is life**, until [my] last breath.

Skt.   I am successful, Lord. (I am) successful. I go to the Bhagavat as a
        refuge and to the Dharma and to the community of monks. May
        you accept me as a layman, who **with faith** has gone [to you] as a
        refuge from today onward, **for as long as there is life**, until [my]
        last breath.

The Pali and Sanskrit versions differ in several ways but the most
striking difference is the complete absence in the Sanskrit version of the
simile likening the Buddha's discourse to the uncovering of what was
covered, to showing the path to one who is lost, and to the bringing of
light into darkness.[193] It is therefore particularly interesting that while the
Gandhari version G1 parallels the Pali in the inclusion of this passage,
Gandhari G2, the manuscript of which postdates that of G1 by about a
century, lacks it, as do the other examples in the Senior manuscripts. In
fact, the Senior Gandhari manuscript examples are even briefer than the
Sanskrit versions, lacking the equivalent of the initial *abhikrānto 'haṃ
bhadantābhikrāntaḥ*, "I am successful, Lord. (I am) successful," and the
final *abhiprasannam*, "with faith," the latter being also found in G1. Yet
the Sanskrit is not simpler than the Pali in all aspects. The inclusion of
the words *yāvajjīvaṃ*, "as long as there is life," and *abhiprasannam*, "with
faith," is typical of the type of expansion we have seen in Sanskrit
versions throughout this study, which also characterizes the Gandhari
versions, though to a lesser extent. The equivalents of *yāvajjīvaṃ* and
abhiprasannam are also found in G1 (only the equivalent of *yāvajjīvaṃ*
is found in G2) along with another instances of expansion: *krirṇo śukro
dharmu akhade vivaḍe s(a)praghaśide*, "declared, revealed, and
proclaimed the Dharma, dark and bright," for *anekapariyāyena dhammo
pakāsito*, "declared the Dhamma in various ways," of the Pali. This makes
the loss of the very expressive simile illustrating the Buddha's
explanation of the Dharma in the Sanskrit version the more surprising.
The Buddha's interlocutor's reference to the Buddha's explanation as
being like uncovering what was covered, like showing the path to one
who is lost, and like bringing light into darkness clearly functions to
emphasize the extraordinary nature of the Buddha and his teaching and
to establish the reason for the interlocutor's following declaration of
conversion. This richer ending is more in keeping with one of the

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[193] Remnants of the formula preserved on a single Central Asian Sanskrit fragment
(SHT VI 1226 Fragm. 18 verso c-d) raises the possibility that it may have been
more widely known.

functions of sutra texts noted at the beginning of this study, that of keeping and attracting converts. The fuller Pali version of the formula depicting the Buddha addressing the monks that introduces many sutras, discussed above, similarly fits this function in that it sets a formal tone to the sutra. Given that, as noted above, the introductory *nidāna* is commonly abbreviated in the Senior manuscripts, I suspect that the briefer form of the conversion formula found in the Senior manuscripts is similarly a manuscript abbreviation,[194] which tends to support the idea that the simplified version found in all Sanskrit texts represents the adoption of an abbreviated version found in manuscripts as the standard version that must have involved editorial input on a major scale across several schools and textual communities.[195] Of course, it remains possible that the Gandhari Dharmaguptaka versions of these sutra passages were influenced by trends taking place in the sutras being transmitted by other schools in the Gandharan region, perhaps in Sanskrit, rather than being innovations of the Gandharan Dharmaguptaka sutra lineage itself.

If it is the case that these two examples of the simplification of wording, which seem to represent an exception to the almost universal tendency for the wording of texts to be expanded over time, have their origins in manuscript transmission, then it raises the possibility that other changes we have examined to date may have been implemented through writing. Although quite possible, my sense is that most of these differences happened when texts were still primarily being transmitted orally since they are found in the Gandhari texts which are witnessed in manuscripts that date to the very beginning of manuscript usage as far as we can tell from the available evidence. Besides, we also witness differences in wording in parallel passages and in what is essentially the same formula within the Pali canon itself.

In the Pali canon we sometimes find differences in the account of the same event recorded in different sections of the canon, that is, in different

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[194] For abbreviation of the *nidāna* in the Senior manuscripts, see Allon 2001: 225–232, 2020: 223–236; Glass 2007: 174, 186–187 (cf. p. 211 n. 9 for abbreviation of the Pali *nidāna*); Marino 2017: 203. For abbreviation more generally in Gandhari manuscripts containing sutras, see Allon 2001: 27–29.

[195] Skilling 2017: 288–289 raises the possibility that such abbreviation in repetitive passages and formulas may have occurred in oral transmission with the knowledge of how to reconstruct them having been lost at some point. Although interesting and a possible explanation for some repetitive passages and formulas, I think that, as I have argued, the two cases examined here appear to have resulted from abbreviation in manuscripts.

*nikāya*s, books of the *Khuddaka-nikāya* (*Udāna*, *Itivuttaka*, *Suttanipāta*), and different *piṭaka*s. The account of the death of the Buddha provides a good example. The Buddha's last words, the attainments or states (*samāpatti*) he then experiences and the verses spoken by gods and monks at the moment of his death recorded in the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta* of the *Dīgha-nikāya* (DN II 155.31–157.19) are also found in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* (SN I 157.31–159.6). After speaking his last words, the Buddha progresses through nine different states starting with the first *jhāna* and ending with *saññāvedayitanirodha*, the cessation of perception and experience. He then progresses back down to the first *jhāna*, back up to the fourth *jhāna*, and then, having emerged from that, he attains *parinibbāna* (*catutthajjhānā vuṭṭhahitvā samanantarā bhagavā parinibbāyi*). In the *Dīgha-nikāya* version, at the moment when the Buddha attains *saññāvedayitanirodha*, Ānanda asks Anuruddha whether the Buddha has attained the *parinibbāna*, to which Anuruddha tells him that he has not but has attained *saññāvedayitanirodha* (*atha kho āyasmā ānando āyasmantaṃ anuruddhaṃ etad avoca: parinibbuto bhante anuruddha bhagavā ti. nāvuso ānanda bhagavā parinibbuto saññāvedayitanirodhaṃ samāpanno ti*, DN 156.15–19). This interchange is missing in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* version, the description of the Buddha's movement through the states being uninterrupted. A minor difference is that throughout this passage the *Dīgha-nikāya* reads *saññāvedayitanirodhasamāpattiyā vuṭṭhahitvā*, etc., "having emerged from the attainment of the cessation of perception and feeling," etc., where the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* has *saññāvedayitanirodhā vuṭṭhahitvā*, etc., "having emerged from the cessation of perception and feeling," etc. In the *Dīgha-nikāya* version, it is then stated that when the Buddha attained the *parinibbāna* there was an earthquake and thunder (*parinibbute bhagavati saha parinibbānā mahābhūmicālo ahosi bhiṃsanako lomahaṃso devadundubhiyo ca phaliṃsu*, DN II 156.35–37), which is missing in the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* version. Following the Buddha's *parinibbāna*, two gods and two monks each utter one or more verses. In the *Dīgha-nikāya* the order of delivery is Brahmā Sahampati, Sakka devānam inda, Anuruddha, then Ānanda. In the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* the order of Anuruddha and Ānanda are reversed. The reading of the verses in both texts is identical with the exception of the first verse of Anuruddha which differs in pāda d: *nāhu assāsapassāso, ṭhitacittassa tādino, anejo santim ārabbha, yaṃ kalam akarī munĭ*, "no in-breath or out-breath for such a one of steady mind, when unmoved, set on peace, the sage died," in the *Dīgha-nikāya* (DN II 156.12–13), where

the *Saṃyutta-nikāya* reads *cakkhumā parinibbuto*, "the one with vision attained *parinibbāna*," instead of "the sage died" (SN I 159.3–4). The differences noted here are found in all editions.[196]

An example of a difference in the formula used to depict a particular action or event in different texts within the Pali canon is that used to depict the Buddha or a monk visiting another ascetic. In this case the formula used in the *Dīgha-* and *Majjhima-nikāya*s (no. 1) differs from that used in the *Saṃyutta-* and *Aṅguttara-nikāya*s (no. 2):[197]

1. *atha kho bhagavā yena poṭṭhapādo paribbājako ten' upasaṅkami.*
    atha kho poṭṭhapādo paribbājako bhagavantaṃ etad avoca: etu kho
    bhante bhagavā. svāgataṃ bhante bhagavato. cirassaṃ kho bhante
    bhagavā imaṃ pariyāyam akāsi, yadidaṃ idh' āgamanāya.
    nisīdatu bhante bhagavā idaṃ āsanaṃ paññattan ti. nisīdi bhagavā
    paññatte āsane. poṭṭhapādo kho paribbājako aññataraṃ nīcaṃ
    āsanaṃ gahetvā ekamantaṃ nisīdi. ekamantaṃ nisinnaṃ kho
    poṭṭhapādaṃ   paribbājakaṃ   bhagavā   etad   avoca (DN   I
    179.13–23).

    Then the Bhagavat approached the ascetic Poṭṭhapāda. Then the ascetic Poṭṭhapāda said this to the Bhagavat: "May the Bhagavat come, venerable sir. Welcome to the Bhagavat, venerable sir. It is long, venerable sir, since the Bhagavat took the opportunity to come here. May the Bhagavat be seated, venerable sir. This seat has been prepared." The Bhagavat sat down on the prepared seat. Having taken a lower seat, the ascetic Poṭṭhapāda sat down to one side. The Bhagavat said this to the ascetic Poṭṭhapāda as he was seated to one side.

2. *atha kho āyasmā sāriputto yena aññatitthiyānaṃ paribbājakānaṃ*
    ārāmo ten' upasaṅkami upasaṅkamitvā tehi aññatitthiyehi pari-
    bbājakehi saddhiṃ sammodi. sammodanīyaṃ kathaṃ sāraṇīyaṃ
    vītisāretvā ekamantaṃ nisīdi. ekamantaṃ nisinnaṃ kho āyas-

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[196] These differences are briefly noted by Anālayo 2014b: 9 and footnotes. See also Rhys Davids and Rhys Davids 2010: 173 for some discussion and p. 177 n. 1 for possible reason for reversal of Ānanda's and Anuruddha's verses. The apparent discrepancy between the *Dīgha-nikāya* and *Saṃyutta-nikāya* versions of the number of attainments the Buddha experiences just before his death has been dealt with by Anālayo 2014b: 8–9.

[197] For further discussion of these formulas, see Allon 1997b: 118–124. See also Shulman (forthcoming a).

mantaṃ sāriputtaṃ te aññatitthiyā paribbājakā etad avocuṃ (SN II 32.33–33.6)

Then the venerable Sāriputta approached the park of the ascetics of another sect. Having approached, he exchanged greetings with the ascetics of another sect and, having exchanged agreeable and courteous talk (with them), sat down to one side. Those ascetics of another sect said this to the venerable Sāriputta as he was seated to one side.

The formula found in the *Dīgha-* and *Majjhima-nikāya*s depicts the Buddha or monk being shown a high degree of respect by the ascetic, relayed through the forms of address he uses, his gestures, and by his taking a lower seat, while that used in the *Saṃyutta-* and *Aṅguttara-nikāya*s is quite simple, being the same formula used in the *Dīgha-* and *Majjhima-nikāya*s to depict an ascetic approaching the Buddha or one of his monks.

Another example is seen in the wording of the formula used to depict Māra approaching the Buddha towards the end of the Buddha's life to persuade him to attain the *parinibbāna*, an event that is recorded in the *Dīgha-*, *Saṃyutta-*, *Aṅguttara-nikāya*s, and *Udāna*.[198] In the *Dīgha-nikāya* and *Udāna*, Māra approaches the Buddha, stands to one side, then speaks to him (*atha kho māro pāpimā acirapakkante āyasmante ānande yena bhagavā ten' upasaṅkami, upasaṅkamitvā ekamantaṃ aṭṭhāsi. ekamantaṃ ṭhito kho māro pāpimā bhagavantaṃ etad avoca*, DN II 104.12–15, Ud 63.13–16); in *Saṃyutta-nikāya* no mention is made of standing to one side (*atha kho māro pāpimā acirapakkante āyasmante ānande yena bhagavā ten' upasaṅkami upasaṅkamitvā etad avoca*, SN V 260.25–27); while the *Aṅguttara-nikāya* merely states that Māra addressed the Buddha (*atha kho māro pāpimā acirapakkante āyasmante ānande bhagavantaṃ etad avoca*, AN IV 310.11–12).

There are many other examples of such differences in the Pali canon,[199] including forms not discussed here, such as the same verse or teaching being attributed to different individuals, the same event occurring in different locations, and so on. But the above will suffice for the current purpose.

There are several possible reasons for the differences of the kind just outlined between different Pali *nikāya*s, individual books of the

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[198] See Allon 1997b: 61–62; see also Anālayo 2007: 11.
[199] See e.g. Anālayo 2007: 10–14.

Khuddhaka-nikāya, and the *Vinaya*. The most likely is that they are due either to differences in the function and use of each of these collections or to the tradition of *bhāṇaka* reciters or a combination of these two.[200] For example, the diction of the *Dīgha-nikāya* and to some extent the *Majjhima-nikāya* is generally more elaborate than that of the other *nikāya*s and *Vinaya* (which contributes to the bulk of the *sutta*s of these collections and helps qualify them for inclusion in these *nikāya*s) while in these collections the superior status of the Buddha is at the forefront. The inclusion of the passage describing Ānanda asking Anuruddha whether the Buddha had attained the *parinibbāna* and the mention that there was an earthquake and thunder when the Buddha died in the description of the Buddha's death and the differences in the formula used to depict the Buddha approaching an ascetic, are probably instances of differences due to function, while differences in the ordering of the verses spoken by Anuruddha and Ānanda when the Buddha dies and differences in the inclusion or omission and ordering of phrases within parallel passages and formulas are more likely to be due to the *bhāṇaka* reciters, although the function of the text may also have been the cause of the difference in the briefness of the *Saṃyutta-* and *Aṅguttara-nikāya* versions.

This, of course, raises an important issue. Throughout this study I have been comparing parallel versions of sutras and the passages and formulas they contain preserved in different languages (mostly Indic), transmitted by different schools and communities that are witnessed in manuscripts or translations dating from different periods and locations. The Pali examples just discussed show that ideally we should take into consideration the contextual information of each witness: the function of the text and the collection it belongs to, why it was produced, who was the intended audience, why the manuscript or manuscripts that witnesses the text was produced, how and by whom the text was transmitted, and so on. Clearly, these factors affected many aspects of a text: its size, the nature and complexity of the descriptions it contained, the inclusion or omission of passages, the way in which ideas are developed and teachings and practices presented, and so on. And in the case of manuscripts, a sutra

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[200] For further examples and discussion, see Allon 1997b: 61–62, 118–124, 163–166. McGovern (2019: 469 n. 27) takes the differences between accounts of the same event transmitted by the same school, like the differences between parallel versions transmitted by different schools, to be due to oral improvisation. See Chapter 6 for my criticism of this.

written for interment in a stupa as a religious act, one written for didactic purposes, one written for one's personal use, and the one recited communally may very well not be identical.[201] Unfortunately, this remains an ideal, since in most cases this information is not available to us, while, even where the collection of one school is complete and more information is available, such as is the case with Pali texts, adequate studies of these aspects of them have not yet been undertaken, which means that we do not fully understand the Pali texts, to say nothing of those belonging to other schools.

That different *bhāṇaka* or reciter communities transmitted different accounts of the same event and utilized formulas that differed in type or wording raises the possibility that such differences may have been intentionally introduced to identify a text or collection of texts as belonging to a particular community of reciters and even different monastic *nikāya*s. Although probably not involving *bhāṇaka*s, the community responsible for the sutra texts of the Sarvāstivādins made the decision to change what in Pali appears as *upasaṅkami upasaṅkamitvā*, "he approached, having approached," and in other Sanskrit texts as *upasaṃkrāntaḥ upasaṃkramya*, to *upajagāma upetya* (von Simson 1977).[202] That the change to this very common expression is confined to a particular group of texts raises the possibility that it represents a form of branding. Closely related to this is changing a text for ideological reasons, of which components of the description of the last words of the Buddha in some versions may be examples.[203]

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[201] The Chinese translations add another layer of issues, such as the faithfulness of the translation to the Indic original, the competence of the translator(s), the intent of the translators, the status of the Indian and Central Asian manuscript used for the translation or of the version memorized by the Indian or Central Asian informer, and so on.

[202] But apparently not in passages which were recounted by the Buddha (von Simson 1977: 484; cf. Anālayo 2011: 887 n. 139).

[203] Another example may be the addition of wording in the Chinese *Dīrghāgama* that reinforces the Buddha's omniscience noted by Anālayo (2014a: 46). Karashima 2014 shows that the Sarvāstivāda in China revised their *Daśottara-sūtra* and added the category of "the seven kinds of states of existences," to conform to their doctrine of the existence of *antarābhava*, which "demonstrates that, even during the time of their transmission within China, *āgama* discourses could still be affected by revisions made according to the doctrine of a particular school" (p. 217); see also Anālayo 2013.

5.4.   Rearranging Sutra and Verse Collections and Creating new Sutras and Verses

As noted by Hartmann above, the ordering of sutras within the *Dīrghāgama* of the Sarvāstivādins and Mūlasarvāstivādins differs from that found in the Pali Theravāda *Dīghanikāya* and Chinese Dharma-guptaka *Dīrghāgama*. Differences between different schools or textual communities in the ordering of sutras and verses within a collection and differences in the allocation of a sutra or verse to a particular collection or section within a collection is one of the most dominant and defining characteristics of canonical collections and texts and does not require further discussion, having been documented by several scholars.[204] But worthy of mention is Bucknell 2014 which documents the way in which the Sarvāstivādins/Mūlasarvāstivādins expanded their *Dīrghāgama* by transferring sutras from their *Madhyamāgama*, Vinaya, and possibly other collections despite several of the transferred sutras being much smaller than most other *Dīrghāgama* sutras, while the Theravādins independently expanded their *Dīgha-nikāya*, though to a lesser extent, by transferring sutras from their *Majjhima-nikāya*. Particularly interesting is the way in which the Sarvāstivādins/Mūlasarvāstivādins rearranged the resulting sutras within their *Dīrghāgama* within a new threefold structure that differed in order and to some extent character from the threefold structure of the other *Dīgha-nikāya/Dīrghāgama*s, namely, *Ṣaṭsūtraka-nipāta*, *Yuga-nipāta* (pairs), and *Śīlaskandha-nipāta*. They also added the large "gradual training" passage that characterize sutras of the *Sīla-kkhandha-/Śīla-skandha-* division to several of the transferred sutras so that they could be included in that division. Suffice it to say, that in the vast majority of cases, if not all cases, such reordering and rearranging of textual units must have been intentional and that the implementation of such a largescale editorial project must have involved quite some effort in terms of decision making, eliciting consensus and adapting to the

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[204] For example, with regards to the *Dīgha-nikāya/Dīrghāgama*s and *Majjhima-nikāya/Madhyamāgama*s, convenient tables listing the content of the *Dīgha-nikāya/Dīrghāgama*s and their parallels is given by Hartmann and Wille (2014: 139–141) and Bucknell (2014: 62–66) and for the *Majjhima-nikāya/Madhyamāgama*s by Anālayo (2011: 1038–1055). These publications also provide discussion of the structure of these collections (Anālayo 2014c; Anālayo 2011: 1–13; Bucknell 2014; Hartmann and Wille 2014, cf. Hartmann 1994, 2004), with further references. Bucknell 2014 provides the best account of the movement of sutras between these two *nikāya/āgama*s, as well as between other collections.

change. Although learning a new order of familiar sutras may not have been that difficult, the movement of sutras between *nikāyas/āgamas* would have required the reciters of that *nikāya/āgama* to learn the new sutras, though they would no doubt already have been familiar with them.

But undoubtedly the most significant and grossest form of intentional change that reciters had to deal with would have been learning completely new sutras and verses that had been created by the community and included in one or other *āgama/nikāya*, a phenomenon for which there is substantial evidence. The creation of new sutras is particularly evident in the *āgama*s of the Sarvāstivādins and Mūlasarvāstivādins[205] which contain more sutras than the comparable collections of other schools that we know about, although a larger number of sutras alone does not mean that the additions are later creations because sutras were often moved between collections.[206] The *Dīgha-nikāya/Dīrghāgama*s provide an example of this. The Sanskrit Mūlasarvāstivādin *Dīrghāgama* has forty-seven sutras, the Pali Theravāda *Dīgha-nikāya* has thirty-four, and the Chinese Dharmaguptaka *Dīrghāgama* thirty. Twenty-four of the Sanskrit *Dīrghāgama* sutras have parallels in the Pali *Dīgha-nikāya*, a further ten (or eleven) have their parallels in the Pali *Majjhima-nikāya*, and one in the *Aṅguttara-nikāya*, which leaves ten (or eleven) that have no known corresponding Pali *sutta*.[207] At least four have no known parallel: no. 2 *Arthavistara-*, no. 8 *Sarveka-*, no. 18 *Māyājāla-*, no. 27 *Lohitya I.*[208] But as discussed in detail by Anālayo 2014c, the Chinese *Dīrghāgama*, which has the least number of sutras of the three surviving *Dīgha-nikāya/Dīrghāgama*s, also contains three sutras that are without parallel

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[205] For the relationship between the two, see Anālayo 2020b.

[206] For discussion of sutras unique to the Sarvāstivādins, see Skilling 2010: 32–35.

[207] Hartmann and Wille 2014: 139–142; Hartmann 2014: 141–142; cf. Anālayo 2014c: 7–9. Slightly different calculations are given by these authors.

[208] I leave out the *Catuṣpariṣat-sūtra* here since it has a parallel in the Vinaya, though not presented there as a sutra. Cf. the list given by Skilling 2010: 33–34 and Bucknell 2014: 93, 97; Bucknell (2014: 93) refers to Matsuda's (2006) identification of possible parallels to no. 25 *Tridaṇḍin-* and no. 26 *Piṅgalātreya-*. Hartmann (1991: 280–281) provides an edition and German translation of the *Arthavistara-sūtra* based on the Central Asian fragments along with a German translation of the Chinese parallel. Editions and studies of other sutras in the north Indian Sanskrit manuscript, which includes some of those without parallels, is given in Hartmann and Wille 2014: 142–143. Skilling 1994 and 1997a provides the Tibetan text and a study of the *Māyājāla-sūtra*; see also Skilling 2017.

in any other collection, these being sutra nos. 11, 12, and 30.[209] Anālayo 2014c provides a summary and discussion of these three sutras and a translation of no. 11, and I paraphrase his observations here. The first two (nos. 11 and 12) of these three sutras are based on and are similar in form to sutra no. 10 in the same *Dīrghāgama*, the equivalent of the Pali *Dasottara-sutta*, Sanskrit *Daśottara-sūtra*, which like the *Dasottara-/ Daśottara-* functioned to similarly summarize the teaching and provide a map (pp. 32, 34, 43–45). The third sutra, no. 30, "Discourse on a Record of the World," as Anālayo translates the title, deals with Buddhist cosmology and consists of passages found in other "early discourses." He states, "The overall impression conveyed by the discourse is as if all kinds of information on cosmological matters had been collected from various discourses and passages to form a single text that gives an exhaustive account of the world from a Buddhist viewpoint" (p. 38). This description could well fit the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta/Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*s were we to replace "an exhaustive account of the world from a Buddhist viewpoint" with "an exhaustive account of the last months of the Buddha's life, his death and the distribution of his relics." This sutra (no. 30) is the longest in the Chinese *Dīrghāgama* and "by far the longest discourse in any of the *Āgama* or *Nikāya* collections" (pp. 35–36), the *Mahāparinibbāna-sutta/Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*s being not dissimilar in this regard, though not as long. Anālayo considers all three sutras to be "late additions to the collection" (p. 44), with the first two sutras (nos. 11 and 12) not showing evident signs of lateness (pp. 31–32, 43), but no. 30 being "a rather late text," having been added to the collection after the first two (pp. 39, 43–44). However, as cautioned by Anālayo (2014c: 44–45) and Hartmann (2014: 145) in their discussion of the *Dīgha-nikāya/ Dīrghāgama*s, and as illustrated more clearly by Anālayo (2018) in his study of a sutra in the Chinese *Ekottarikāgama* that is without parallel, a sutra lacking a parallel is not an indication in itself of lateness, in part because we only have a limited number of *nikāya*s/*āgama*s at our disposal with sutras found in a particular *nikāya/āgama* belonging to one school being allocated to a different *nikāya/āgama* in the canons of other schools.[210] Although we cannot be certain that the sutras that lack a parallel in the canonical collections belonging to other schools available

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[209] Bucknell 2014: 92–93 discusses the intentional deletion of three sutras from the Dharmaguptaka *Dīrghāgama*.

[210] See also Skilling 2010: 35.

to us are late additions, there are enough instances of them to show that communities continued to create sutras for some time after textual lineages became separated, which of course is just a continuation of a process that began at the time of Buddha or shortly thereafter.[211] Of all forms of change, the learning of a new sutra probably entailed the greatest amount of effort.

[211] Cf. also Bingenheimer 2013 for discussion of *Saṃyuktāgama* sutras without parallels. See also Skilling 2012 for another example, which is further discussed by Dhammadinnā 2019: 19–20. For Gandhari sutras without parallel, see Allon 2001: 224–243 and Glass 2007: 144–174. An interesting example of the addition of sutras in the case of the Theravādins, though concerning the pre-Aśokan period, is the *Bakkula-sutta* of the *Majjhima-nikāya* (MN no. 124), which the commentary (Ps IV 197.2) states was recited, that is, it was only included in the *Majjhima-nikāya*, at the second council: *idaṃ pana suttaṃ dutiyasaṅgahe saṅgahītaṃ* (see Anālayo 2011: 716, 865 n. 47; 2012: 224 and n. 2).

Chapter 6

Recent Scholarship on the Composition of early Buddhist Texts, and Initiating and Adapting to Change

Despite early Buddhist sutra texts being designed to facilitate their memorization and oral transmission, as witnessed by their stylistic features and their organization within collections, and despite the deeply rooted institution of memorizing texts and reciting them communally that required the text be fixed, these texts underwent many changes throughout the long history of their transmission, both intentionally and unintentionally produced. Now change, and most importantly, intentional change, surely posed major problems to the oral transmission of fixed texts, particularly when undertaken through communal recitation. How did reciter communities who had invested a huge amount of time and effort into memorizing texts adapt to the changes made to the texts of the kind outlined in this study? How were the changes and innovations accepted? By group consensus or by a top-down model with senior monastics or recitation masters authorizing the adoption of the innovations, or both? How were such changes implemented? Did the recitation master(s) lead the community of reciters in learning the new version? And were such changes generally the result of considered pre-recitation, pre-performance, creative impulses or did they also have their origin in innovations produced in the course of someone giving a sermon based on the memorized text?

Before pursuing these questions, I would like to first respond to several recent publications that address the issue of the composition of early Buddhist texts mentioned in the introduction. The first is McGovern's (2019), "Protestant Presuppositions and the Study of the Early Buddhist Oral Tradition." In his paper, which nuances ideas proposed by Lance Cousins (1983), McGovern argues against the idea that early Buddhist texts were designed as fixed texts to be transmitted

verbatim as proposed by, for example, Bhikkhu Anālayo, Richard Gombrich, Alexander Wynne, and myself, considering rather that they were in fact created in performance using fixed or relatively fixed formulas and narrative frames within an improvisatory but conservative oral tradition, the basic stable textual unit being the formula rather than the sutra. Regarding improvisation, he states,

> 'Improvisation' simply means that the text *as a whole* was not memorized word-for-word, and that a roughly similar, but not exactly identical text could be reproduced with each performance through the use of formulas" (McGovern 2019: 461, italics original)

And he argues that this better explains the differences we see between parallel versions of sutras:

> What we are clearly seeing in the different versions of the early Buddhist *sūtra*s is snapshots of performances of what was once a living oral tradition. In this oral tradition, stock formulas and narrative frameworks maintained a remarkable consistency (especially in doctrine) over the centuries, but each performance was nevertheless made without resort to a fixed, memorized text (McGovern 2019: 484).

He maintains that "deliberate memorization is not supported by the evidence" (p. 451), there being "absolutely no basis for the assumption that early Buddhist discourse (*sūtrānta*s) in their entirety could only be faithfully preserved and transmitted through strict memorization" (p. 487).

First, as I hope I have shown in this study, the evidence in fact shows that Buddhist communities composed and memorized fixed text from a very early period, if not within the Buddha's lifetime, but that most communities, if not all, were willing to change the wording, structure, complexity, and so on, of the texts they transmitted to better suit their purposes: meaning was of more concern than wording, though the latter was not insignificant. The examples of texts we have belonging to different communities transmitted at different times and places are not the frozen snapshots of oral performances, but formal "editions" sanctioned by the community concerned. It may well have been the case that innovations that occurred in the course of a skilled monastic delivering a sermon in public or within a monastic setting on what the Buddha and others did and said or on a particular aspect of the Dharma, which drew on the memorized text and involved quoting passages from it, were introduced into the memorized text because they were felt to be

improvements, but these sermons were very different from the fixed, memorized texts transmitted by the community.

Further, why innovate and improvise in public performance with such a high degree of internal repetition that we encounter in these texts? As Shulman (forthcoming a) notes, the "extensive amount of repetition the texts rely on … would produce exceedingly dull performances." Why not just report what happened and what the Buddha said in normal speech as a preacher would? The Buddha would not have spoken in the way he is depicted as speaking in these texts, and one could not imagine that a latter-day preacher would deliver a sermon with the features of the sutras that we have, which I think only make sense in the context of the oral transmission of fixed text.

Again, McGovern (pp. 462–463) critiques three of the examples Wynne (2004) presents as evidence of word-for-word memorization, the first two of which concerns the *Pātimokkha*. In his counter to the first of those concerning the *Pātimokkha*, McGovern (p. 463) states that "No one would seriously doubt that this list of rules was memorized." But as I have shown, despite being a fixed, memorized text that was recited communally, or in a communal setting, and despite Buddhist communities being particularly conservative towards their monastic rules, they were willing to change the wording of them. Further, the types of differences we see between the *Pātimokkha/Prātimokṣa*s belonging to different communities are very similar to the types of differences we see between parallel versions of sutras, though less pronounced due no doubt to the more conservative attitude towards the *Pātimokkha/Prātimokṣa* and because of the frequency of recital. If the differences between the *Pātimokkha/Prātimokṣa*s, which were fixed, memorized texts, can be accounted for through intentional change, then so can the differences between parallel versions of sutras, once we have accounted for those that arose through unintentional means. And here intentional change is not improvisation, but conscious change to text that is being transmitted as a fixed text.

Regarding McGovern's understanding of formulas being the fixed, memorized units rather than the sutra as a whole, formulas themselves are no more conservative than the sutras. As we have seen, although expressing the same idea, the same formulas found in texts belonging to different traditions and preserved in different Indic languages are rarely identical. In some cases the differences are minor—a different synonym or particle used, a difference in some wording, or differences in

grammar—but in other cases the differences are more substantial.[212] We have also seen that even in Pali *sutta*s there is some variation in formulas used to depict the same event or idea, particularly between different sections of the canon. Again, to make the formula the base fixed, memorized unit, would mean that the focus of the reciters' attention was primarily on memorizing these formula-units, yet we have no evidence of this, no handbook of formulas, no mention of monks learning formulas. Similarly, how were the narrative frames or outlines of the sutras learnt? It is hard to imagine that the focus was on learning a body of formulas and narrative frames, not actual sutras. To understand how formulas work and are used, one would have to learn them in their context. I think a more likely scenario for preachers is that, on the basis of having learnt a corpus of memorized texts, he or she would give a free-flowing natural sermon punctuated by the quoting of passages from the memorized sutras and verse collections accompanied by commentary on and analysis of the quoted passage. Alongside this, monastics would have given public recitations of the fixed, memorized text, much as is done in Buddhist communities today. To my mind, both the similarities and differences we encounter between versions of sutras as discussed in the current work show that a memorized text lay behind them and that those who transmitted these texts consciously reworked them to improve them, to make them more compelling, to make them better suit their purposes and their understanding of their audience's expectations, to make them better reflect their understanding of the Buddha and his teaching, sometimes also creating new sutras on the basis of familiar elements.

Another factor that needs to be taken into consideration is that in the period when separate *nikāya*s had formed and certainly in the post-Aśoka period when most of the major changes we witness are likely to have occurred (see below), the language of the texts may not have been readily understood by the general public. This was probably the case with Pali given that, as some have argued, it was a "church" language. This was certainly the case in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia from the beginning, as was also the case with the Sanskrit versions transmitted by communities in India and Central Asia. In their respective contexts, the Pali and Sanskrit sutras would only have been understood by the educated elite, in the case of Pali in the post-Aśokan period, probably only by the monastics. In these environments sutras in these languages would have

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[212] Cf. Allon 2001: 30.

been used for formal public "ceremonial" recitations, not as something to be understood in those public contexts, and as the basis and as source material for public preaching by monastics. This being the case, why innovate in performance? What would be achieved by innovating in a context where the text was not readily understood? We would expect that innovation in performance, if it did occur, would only have happened where the audience, whether monastic, non-monastic, or both, understood the material, otherwise there would have been no point in changing the text.[213] This suggests that in later periods at least, any innovations and changes were initiated within the confines of the monastery, where the audience for such texts were monastics, the new versions being produced for edification of the monastics and as basis for retellings in public. Also, had improvisation been the norm, even if textual communities were on the whole conservative, we would surely see far greater differences than we do see.

Again, in Allon 1997b (cf. also 1997a), I argued that the Buddhist community and its reasons for composing and transmitting texts were on virtually all counts so very different to those who performed oral epics for which oral theory as outlined by McGovern was formulated. It is also the case that Buddhists had as their model the Brahmanical tradition of transmitting fixed texts, not the bardic tradition that initially produced the Indian oral epics such as the *Mahābhārata* and *Rāmāyaṇa*.

Finally, in his brief response to the argument I raised in Allon 1997b (outlined at the beginning of this book) that communal recitation requires the wording to be fixed (pp. 465–466), McGovern states, "One could, for example, imagine a recitation leader guiding the performance of a particular *sūtra*, with other monks joining in for the lengthy recitation of formulaic passages" (p. 466). Although this method may have occurred, we have no evidence for it from the early period. We do, however, have ample evidence of individual and communal recitation of texts from the early period, besides during the many centuries that followed.

The other recent publications that address the issue of the composition of early Buddhist texts are Eviatar Shulman's articles "Looking for Samatha and Vipassanā in the Early Suttas: What, actually, *are* the Texts?" (2019) and "Orality and Creativity in Early Buddhist Discourses"

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[213] Although it is tempting to think that Pali texts are generally the most conservative because in Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia they were only understood by a small number of monastics and dedicated laymen, this was also the case with Sanskrit versions in north India and Central Asia.

(forthcoming a), and his forthcoming book *Visions of the Buddha: Creative Dimensions of Early Buddhist Scripture* (Oxford University Press), which the author has been sharing with me and which have been the basis for productive ongoing discussions between us. Unlike McGovern, Shulman does not doubt that the memorization of texts was integral to the transmission of texts by Buddhist communities (e.g. forthcoming a) and he does not subscribe to the Parry-Lord model of improvisation as it stands, stating with qualification,

> The Parry-Lord hypothesis is, however, a specific approach that is not accepted as standard in all studies of oral literature and must be altered to fit the Buddhist case. Improvisation in performance is inapplicable as the dominant paradigm for Buddhist oral culture; but in its application this argument has created too strong an emphasis on fixed texts and memorization, which does not leave enough room for creativity and textual evolution. Such an approach limits our capacity to account for the corresponding vector of personal engagement and elaboration by the Buddha's students and followers. (forthcoming a)

Shulman then goes on to describe some of the ways in which new texts may have been composed by means of formulas, by the "play of formulas" as he calls it, that were already in use by the community, adapted them to suit the context, or creating new ones for that context if one was not readily available, the community then adopting that text if it was felt to be compelling enough, though it would undoubtedly have gone through much editing and group discussion and modification before being fully sanctioned even if it was composed using the formulas in use and sanctioned by the community. However, like McGovern, Shulman takes formulas as the primary textual elements, though his understanding of formulas is certainly not the same as McGovern's. For example, he states,

> The main building blocks of Buddhist discourse were formulas, which reciters knew by heart. This does not mean, however, that the bearers of the tradition merely repeated what they previously heard and recited. They rather used these formulas in order to create new articulations of Buddhist vision, which in many ways repeated what they had previously heard but were nonetheless new. These articulations were both traditional, conservative expressions and new, creative material. When a new text was introduced it looked much like the texts everybody knew by heart, and therefore could be "brought into sutta" in light of its specific "words and letters." (forthcoming a)

further

> Formulas *are* the texts, and any new element that is introduced must become a formula and fit the requirements of genre. Formulas are

primary to texts, and they are accepted building blocks from which one can produce a possibly infinite array of legitimate Buddhist scriptures. So long as texts are founded on accepted formulas, they have every chance of being recognized as "true" Buddhist speech. In this sense, from a historical perspective, discourses are all probably "late"—that is to say, they are secondary to the building blocks of which they are composed. (forthcoming a; italics original)

and

These scholarly works, together with Allon's [1997b] central study of early Buddhist orality and other major studies of the nature of the early suttas, share two foundational, unquestioned assumptions. The first is that the basic analytical category for the study of early Buddhist textuality is the discourse, as we find it today in Buddhist canons or collections in different languages, which were set for transmission. In response, I argue that formulas are the fundamental textual element, and discourses are products of formulas, not only in the sense that they are composed of formulas, but also in that a basic practice of early Buddhist textuality was combining formulas in different ways to produce ever more Buddhist discourses.[214]

And in a thought experiment illustrating one possible method of how a new text could be created which envisages a monk going into seclusion and contemplating the texts he has memorized and aspects of the Buddha, he states,

Reciting a formula, he now feels it combines in interesting, legitimate, and relevant ways with other officially sanctioned and carefully shaped formulas. Formulas connect to each other elegantly, and he adds slight connecting phrases to cement the passages to each other. (forthcoming a)

Although new texts were undoubtedly created using pre-existing formulas, that does not make formulas the primary textual element. The creation of a text requires a plot, an idea, a structure, a purpose and motivation. Formulas are the means by which plot, idea, structure, and purpose are realized in concrete form. Both categories of literary feature are essential to the composition of a text.

In Chapter 5 of his forthcoming book *Visions of the Buddha* entitled "The Play of Formulas: Toward a Theory of Composition for the Early Discourses," Shulman refers to the chronology T.W. Rhys Davids proposed in his *Buddhist India* (1911: 188) for the development of early Buddhist texts in which the first stage was "The simple statements of Buddhist doctrine now found, in identical words, in paragraphs or verses

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[214] Shulman forthcoming b, Conclusion to Chapter 1.

recurring in all the books," while only in the fourth stage do we have the full *sutta*s of the four *nikāya*s. Shulman interprets Rhys Davids to be proposing here that "formulaic utterance [comes] before the full text" concluding that "we should then think of it along the lines suggested by Rhys Davids, with formulas rather than discourses as the basic, primary units of early Buddhist textuality." First, Rhys Davids was referring to formulas concerning doctrine, not formulas in general, which, of course, are far broader than doctrinal formulas, encompassing all narrative and non-narrative elements that make up sutras. It was undoubtedly the case that some of the first textual units to have been created for memorization were standardized descriptions of teachings, doctrines, and practices that the Buddha's followers needed to contemplate and to engage with and practice the Buddha's path. But much of Shulman's discussion is, in fact, of formulas that would not generally be classed as doctrinal, though they may well have philosophical dimensions, such as the formula used to depict brahmans hearing that the Buddha has come to their town and their subsequent visit and interaction with him, or those employed to relay the Buddha visiting a community of rowdy ascetics and their greeting of and interaction with him, or the formulas depicting brahman's observation of the Buddha's 32 marks, and so on, that is, formulas that depict individuals, their character traits and personalities, their behaviour, and interactions. Such formulas sit in a particular context with a portion of them having been created for that context. Most formulas do not have much appeal except in the context in which they are found. One cannot imagine members of the early community in the first phase of Rhys Davids' chronology formulating and memorizing such context-bound formulas that, say, described the Buddha visiting rowdy ascetics, for personal contemplation and practice. It was the plot and the overarching purpose of the story that generated the production of the bulk of formula, though once generated they could be readily used in the creation of new sutras.

Shulman (forthcoming a) also takes issue with formulas being seen primarily as aids to the memorizing of text (referring to Allon 1997b, among others) stating, "The scholarly paradigm that treats these formulas only as the most convenient way to faithfully preserve the word of the Buddha is at best partial, and in important senses misleading," arguing that they are much more than this, in particular, "their poetic and aesthetic aspects are among their primary features, not only from a literary perspective but even from a religious or philosophical one" and that

"[t]hey are first and foremost designed in order to create a particular, compelling perception of the Buddha and of his message."[215] But this is to confuse the wording of the formula with the formula status of that wording. It is certainly the case that the wording that constitutes some formulas has poetic and aesthetic aspects that relay a "compelling perception of the Buddha and his message," functioning to emphasize the qualities of the Buddha, showing that he is the superior being and the one most worthy of respect,[216] making his teaching appealing, making the ideas and practices of rivals unappealing, and so on, with the wording of other categories of formulas doing other jobs. However, that wording, whether it be short or long, whether it constitutes a fraction of the sutra or large sections of it, becomes a formula and is recognized as a formula through its repetitive use, though it may be modified to suit the context following predictable patterns. In the case of early Buddhist prose texts, the structural features of the formula and the Lego-like building blocks of which it is constructed may also contribute to its recognizability as a formula. The fabric of the text, the wording, is, as we have seen, so highly structured and carefully crafted that even where a phrase or passage is not encountered elsewhere in the corpus of sutras transmitted by the community concerned, it is in effect a formula by its potential to be used and reused to depict the same idea in another text. And indeed, it may well have been so used, though the text in which it was reused was not preserved by that community. Canonical prose is in effect constituted by formulas, whether that standardization was integral to the early phases of the composition of the text or imposed by later editorial projects or both. The question is, why choose highly structured and standardized, that is, formulaic, wording to give a compelling perception of the Buddha and his message? Or more broadly, why use the same wording time and again to depict a given quality, attainment, practice, thought, concept, action, event, or the like? Why not use innovative and poetically rich wording that differed on each telling, each text, each description being unique, the diversity and richness adding to the appeal of the text and the perception of the Buddha and his teaching? As I argued in Allon 1997b, the primary

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[215] Cf. also "Formulas are an active, literary, imaginative, and expressive element with clear emotive and aesthetic dimensions" (Shulman forthcoming b, Chapter 1).

[216] In Allon 1997b, I noted that approach formulas "are extremely important in that they also function to establish the superior status of the Buddha and his monks" (p. 364; cf. p. 163).

function of formulas in early Buddhist prose sutra texts is to aid composition and transmission of fixed texts, which as we have seen in this study continued well after the beginning of the common era, though I tended to concentrate in that study on the latter mnemonic function. But formulaic diction, as distinct from the wording and its meaning that constitutes the formulas, certainly had other functions. Examples are imparting solemnity, gravitas, and authority to the material, that is, making it suitably "religious," thereby inducing respect and reverence; relaying legitimacy, or as Shulman notes, "[s]o long as texts are founded on accepted formulas, they have every chance of being recognized as 'true' Buddhist speech" (forthcoming a); producing predictability, which combined with other forms of repetition enabled the audience to grasp and remember what was said and to participate in the recital (at least mentally), much as one might sing along when hearing one's favourite song; and inducing certain states of mind, moods, and emotional responses.

Finally, Shulman is certainly correct to argue that the preservation of the Buddha's teaching was not the only function of early Buddhist texts and to emphasize the literary and creative dimensions of this literature. So also, he is correct in arguing that texts were not necessarily composed to report historical events. Although his statement that the "central project of the texts is not to provide accurate historical information regarding the founding father, but to visualize him in meaningful ways, presenting him as a sublime, larger-than-life figure" (forthcoming a) is true in general, it is too limiting to maintain that this is the central project of early Buddhist texts.[217] Early Buddhist texts do much more than visualize the Buddha as, in fact, articulated by Shulman elsewhere in the works being discussed here.

Coming back to the initial question of how reciter communities changed the texts they transmitted and adapted to it, like much concerning the early history of Buddhist communities, we can, unfortunately, only

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[217] Cf. "This is the heart of the literary project of the Nikāyas – to depict the magnificent Buddha. The point is not only that the texts are not biography but hagiography, not doctrine but literature. More important, underlying the Nikāyas is a belief in the Buddha's unique status as a fact with deep metaphysical, as well as historical, significance. That there was such a fully realized being who walked this earth is, for the authors of these texts, the most important fact in history and the most revealing truth about reality. Approaching him with devotion offers great prospects for spiritual or karmic development." (Shulman forthcoming b, Chapter 1).

really guess at the processes involved. Presumably, given that seniority in ordination along with skill and accomplishment determined hierarchy in the Buddhist monastic community, the introduction of intentional change or the formal adoption of what had originally been unintentional changes would have been a top-down affair with consensus of all members of a reciter community and the community at large not being required for a new version to be authorized as the version to be memorized and recited. Senior reciters would have led the way by memorizing the new version and leading junior reciters in the new recitation following the method used for memorizing communal texts generally. In the case of adapting to change, although there are many differences between parallel versions of early Buddhist sutras, the degree of similarity indicates that Buddhist communities were on the whole quite conservative regarding the texts they transmitted, which means that reciter communities probably did not have to face this problem that frequently. With so little evidence available to us, it is currently impossible to accurately determine when and where a particular change or set of changes first took place. We also do not know how long it was before geographical isolation and the formation of separate *nikāya*s began to be manifest in the texts transmitted. But for the sake of the current attempt to provide a rough estimate of the period within which the changes witnessed occurred, let us assume that the corpus of sutras transmitted by the Buddhist community prior the Aśokan period in the mid-3rd century BCE was relatively homogenous, an admittedly somewhat bold assumption. At the other end, to state the obvious, the changes of the kind discussed in this study must have occurred prior to the earliest witness we have to that change. Given that the Gandhari sutras discussed in this study, which are thought to belong to the Dharmaguptaka lineage, are preserved in manuscripts dating to the 1st to 2nd centuries CE, then the time within which such changes could have occurred in this textual lineage is approximately four or five centuries. In the case of the Chinese translations, some of the first translations of individual sutras and anthologies of sutras date to the 2nd century CE, while the translations of the main *āgama*s date from the late 4th to 5th centuries, which in the case of the *āgama*s means that we are looking at some six or seven centuries. In the case of the Sanskrit versions preserved in manuscripts from Central Asia and the Greater Gandharan region belonging to the Sarvāstivādin/Mūlasarvāstivādins, we are looking at some eight or more centuries, though the Chinese translations of their

Madhyamāgama and *Saṃyuktāgama* predate them by several centuries. In the case of Pali sutras, it would be some three centuries if the event that halted any further significant change is taken to be the writing down of the canon in Sri Lanka in 1st century BCE or seven or eight centuries if it was the writing of commentaries on the four main *nikāya*s in the fifth century CE in Sri Lanka, both events being proposed by different scholars as the defining event, though it is highly likely that significant change had been halted long before the writing down of the canon in the 1st century BCE. But then, many of the changes encountered in these texts may well predate their earliest witnesses, though we cannot be more precise than this. To take the Gandhari versions as example, as we saw, there is at least one instance of a significant difference in the reading of the same formula found in sutras preserved in the British Library Kharoṣṭhī manuscripts, which are thought to date to the 1st century CE, and those found in the Senior Kharoṣṭhī manuscripts dated to approximately a century later (see pp. 96–99), where both manuscript collections are thought to have been created by the Dharmaguptaka community in Gandhara. It was noted that the version preserved in the British Library manuscript was closer to the Pali while that preserved in the Senior manuscripts paralleled the Sanskrit versions. More research needs to be undertaken on the diction of the Gandhari texts, the situation being quite complex, but this example suggests that such changes were still happening in the early centuries CE for this textual lineage.

It is also the case that many of the changes discussed in this study appeared to have been introduced gradually. This is particularly evident when we line up the Pali, Gandhari, and Sanskrit versions, where the Gandhari versions often witness some of the changes seen in the Sanskrit versions but not all of them, or not to the same degree.[218] The implication is that reciters had to adapt to change only gradually.

Finally, the impact of change when it was introduced would have only been experienced by one generation of reciters, that is, by the monastics who knew the pre-change version and had to learn the new version. Since at this stage they had well-developed faculties for memorization and recitation and had at their disposal a large body of textual material and its components, this may not have been such a difficult thing for these advanced reciters to have done. And all subsequent generations and all those who did not know the pre-change version were in the same position

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[218] Allon 2001: 36–37.

as any beginner faced with the task of memorizing a text or collection of texts, which of course, was no minor undertaking.

Abbreviations

For complete citations to text editions, see References. For Pali texts, see Bechert 1990.

AN	*Aṅguttara-nikāya*
Avś	*Avadānaśataka* (ed. Speyer 1906–1909)
BC	Bajaur Collection (of Gandhari manuscripts)
Be	Burmese (Chaṭṭhasaṅgāyana) edition
BHS	Buddhist Hybrid Sanskrit
BL	British Library (collection of Gandhari manuscripts)
Ce	Ceylonese (Buddha Jayanti Tipiṭaka Series) edition
Chin.	Chinese
CKI	Catalog of Kharoṣṭhī Inscriptions (in Gandhari.org)
CPD	*Critical Pāli Dictionary* (Trenckner et al. 1924–2011)
CPS	*Catuṣpariṣat-sūtra* (ed. Waldschmidt 1952–1962)
DĀ	*Dīrghāgama*
Dhp	*Dhammapada* (ed. von Hinüber and Norman 1994)
Dhp-G^K	Gāndhārī Khotan *Dharmapada* (ed. Brough 1962)
Divy	*Divyāvadāna* (ed. Cowell and Neil 1886)
DN	*Dīgha-nikāya*
DN-ṭ	*Dīghanikāya-ṭīkā*
DP	*A Dictionary of Pāli* (Margaret Cone 2001–)
EĀ	*Ekottarikāgama*
Ee	European (Pali Text Society) edition
G	Gandhari
IT	(Chinese) independent translation
loc.	locative
Mā-L	Mahāsāṃghika-Lokottaravāda
MIA	Middle Indo-Aryan
Mil	Milindapañha
MN	*Majjhima-nikāya*
MPS	*Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra* (ed. Waldschmidt 1950–1951)
MSV	*Mūlasarvāstivāda-vinaya* (ed. Dutt 1984)

Mvu	*Mahāvastu-avadāna* (ed. Senart 1882–1897)
P	Pali
PDhp	Patna *Dharmapada* (ed. Cone1989)
Pkt.	Prakrit
Ps	Pāpañcasūdanī
PTSD	*The Pali Text Society's Pali-English Dictionary* (T. W. Rhys Davids and W. Stede 1921–1925)
RS	Robert Senior (collection of Gandhari manuscripts)
S	Sarvāstivāda
SĀ	*Saṃyuktāgama*
SBhV	*Saṅghabhedavastu* (ed. Gnoli 1977–1978)
Se	Siamese (King of Siam) edition
SHT	*Sanskrithandschriften aus den Turfanfunden* (Waldschmidt et al. 1965–)
Skt.	Sanskrit
Sn	*Suttanipāta*
SN	*Saṃyutta-nikāya*
Sp	*Samantapāsādikā, Vinaya-aṭṭhakathā*
Sv	*Sumaṅgalavilāsinī, Dīghanikāya-aṭṭhakathā*
Sv-nṭ	*Sumaṅgalavilāsinī navaṭīkā*
SWTF	*Sanskrit-Wörterbuch der buddhistischen Texte aus den Turfan-Funden* (Waldschmidt et al. 1973–2018)
T	Taishō edition
Th	Theravāda
Th	*Theragāthā*
Ud	*Udāna*
Ud-a	*Udāna-aṭṭhakathā, Paramatthadīpanī I*
Uv	*Udānavarga* (ed. Bernhard 1965–1968)
Vin	*Vinayapiṭaka*
WSP	Waxing Syllable Principle

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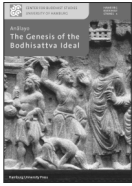
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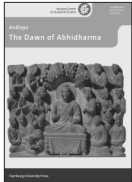
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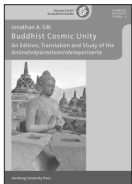
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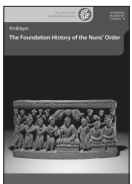
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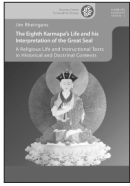
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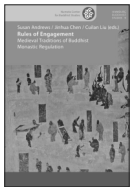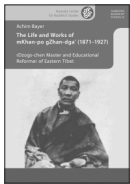hamburg-buddhist-studies/hamburgup-hbs07-rheingans.pdf
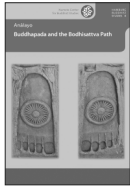
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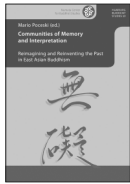
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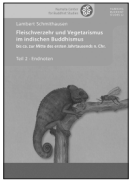**bis ca. zur Mitte des ersten Jahrtausends n. Chr.**
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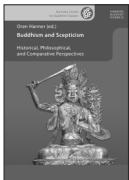ISBN 978-3-89733-503-5 (printed version)

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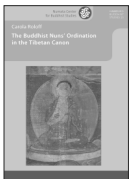ISBN 978-3-89733-504-2 (printed version)

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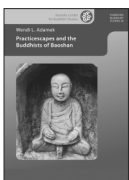ISBN 978-3-89733-505-9 (printed version)

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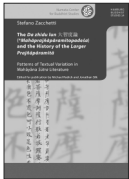
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