

Any stigma that could be attached to the character of Vessantara by gifting his wife to another is removed by the intervention of Sakka in the guise of a brahmin. Vessantara, while fulfilling his desire to perfect his liberality is saved from any stigma that could mar his character. Gifting of Maddī becomes a mere act of symbolic value. But at the point of handing her over to the brahmin it was not an act of symbolic value either to Vessantara or Maddī but very much an act in real experience. At the end it is also revealed that the elephant, gifting of which caused so much heart burn to the people of Sivi, was restored by the people of Kalinga after the ending of the drought by its power. Thus the story ends with all parties fully satisfied with the exception perhaps of Jūjaka, the old greedy brahmin and his wife. That is if she knew the sad plight faced by her unfortunate husband.

Popularity of the Vessantara Jātaka

The *Vessantara Jātaka*, which portrays the character of the Bodhisatta, in his penultimate human birth before the realization of Buddhahood, in his attempt at the perfection of the virtue of liberality, had become very popular among Buddhists especially in Theravāda Buddhist countries. Decades back, the *Jātaka* put into Sinhala verse, became very popular among Sinhala Buddhists in Sri Lanka. Later a stage drama based on it also became very popular in the country. Much later, in the recent past, a popular film was also produced on the story. In all these three important elements in the story have been highlighted. In the first place efforts are made to strengthen the great admiration Buddhist show for the massive sacrifices made by the Bodhisatta Vesaantara in order to win Buddhahood for the sake of the suffering saṃsāric beings. Secondly the pathos evoking incidents in the story such as the banishment of Vessantara from his kingdom for the gifting of the elephant, gifting of the children and the hardship they underwent in the hands of Jūjaka, Maddī's lamentation when she failed to find her children, are highlighted so as to attract sympathy towards them. Thirdly an element that became very popular is the character of the old brahmin Jūjaka. Slavishly devoted to his young wife so as to undergo much hardship to find slaves for her and, ultimately dying in over eating unable to bear on the riches he had won, portrayed to evoke great mirth in the reader or the viewer. On the other hand he is also made a target of their anger for the harsh treatment meted out to the two innocent children. The whole

treatment of the character of Jūjaka also may contain an indirect criticism of brahmins, a subject so much loved by Sri Lankan Buddhist writers of the past.

Popularity of the *Vessantara Jātaka* is also seen in some of the Buddhist customs in Thailand, especially in the north of the country. In Chiangmai parts of the *Vessantara Jātaka* are read in some temples on the night of the Loi Kratong festival of lights. In North East Thailand the reading of the *Vessantara Jātaka* is the main feature of the three day, Bun Phraawes festival to which Phraa Uppakrut is invited to be the guardian of the ceremony which the devotees believe Phraa Uppakrut could do by subduing Māra kings who come to harm them⁴.

C.Witanachchi

References

1. *J.* Vol. VI p.479 ff.
Tr. Ed. Cowell, E.B., *Jātaka Stories* Vol. VI p.246 ff. Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi.
2. Ed. Vaidya, P.L. *Jātakamālā*, The Mithila Institute, 1959, p.55 ff
Tr. Speyer, J.S., *The Jātakamālā*, Motilal Banarsidass Publishers, Delhi, 1990 p.71 ff.
3. Ed. Vaidya, P.L., *Avadāna-Kalpalatā*, Vol. I The Mithila Institute, 1959, p.175 ff.
4. Tambiab, S.J., *Buddhism and the Spirit Cults* of N.E. Thailand, Cambridge University Press, p.161.

VESSANTARA JĀTAKA See VESSANTARA

VESSAVANA See KUVERA

VEYYĀKARAṆA or *vyākaraṇa*, "explanation" or "exposition", is the third in a listing of types of text, *aṅga*, in early Buddhism (See also AṅGA). The present article will at first survey occurrences of *veyyākaraṇa* or *vyākaraṇa* in the discourses in order to ascertain the range of meaning that inheres in the term, followed by examining its implications in the context of the scheme of nine *aṅgas*.

The term *veyyākaraṇa* frequently stands for an explanation given in reply to a question, *pañhassa*

veyyākaraṇa (D. I, 223), which could be a reply given at the right time (D. III, 135), a reply made in regard to an appropriate question (S. II, 13), or a reply given in such a way as to satisfy the interlocutor (D. I, 118). Alternatively, a *vyākaraṇa* given in reply may also completely miss the point of the inquiry, a situation similar to discoursing about breadfruit when being asked about mangoes (D. I, 53).

The relation of *veyyākaraṇa* to questions is close enough for the term to be part of a polite manner of asking permission to put a question, *puccheyyāhaṃ ... sace me ... okāsaṃ karoti pañhassa veyyākaraṇāya* (D. I, 51). The corresponding verb *vyākaroti* occurs in the *Vīmaṃsaka Sutta*,¹ which describes how the Buddha would freely answer any inquiry about his own level of purity (M. I, 319; see also V*MAMSAKA SUTTA). The same term also forms part of a formulaic introduction to a teaching given in accordance with the Socratic method, leading the audience via a series of questions to a certain conclusion, *paṭipucchissāmi, yathāte khameyya, tathā naṃ vyākareyyāsi* (M. I, 230).

To be capable in replying to questions appears to have been of considerable importance in ancient Indian debate, so that some debaters would devise their questions in anticipation of the replies the other might give, *evaṃ ce no puṭṭho evaṃ vyākarissati*, (M. I, 176). According to the *Brahmajāla Sutta*, out of apprehension of such debaters some recluses and Brahmins would resort to evasive answers instead of giving a proper *vyākaraṇa* (D. I, 26). In an actual debate situation, however, once a proper question has been asked up to a third time a reply needs to be given. Failing to do so runs the risk that one's head will split into seven pieces, *sahadhammiko pañho āgacchati, akāṃ ā vyākātabbo. Sace na vyākarissasi ... sattadhā muddhā phalissati* (D. I, 94).² Another threat is that one who fails to give a *vyākaraṇa* in reply to a question asked by a *yakkha* might be driven insane by the latter, have his heart split and be taken by the feet and thrown across the Ganges river (S. I, 207 or S. I, 214).

Nevertheless, improper questions can be set aside as being unanswerable (see AVYĀKATA). Questions that should be set aside in this way, *thapanīya*, are one out of altogether four types of questions that require a corresponding mode of reply. The other three are questions that require a categorical reply, *ekaṃsa*

vyākaraṇīya; questions that should be dealt with through further analysis, *vibhajja vyākaraṇīya*; and questions where, before giving an answer, counter-questions are required in order to clarify the inquiry, *paṭipucchā-vyākaraṇīya* (e.g. A. I, 197).

Vyākaraṇa may also denote declarations made by the Buddha about the rebirth attained by some of his deceased disciples (D. II, 200). A retired *cakkavatti* ruler may give explanations, *vyākaraṇa*, to his son on how to properly rule the kingdom (D. III, 65); or a god may reveal his identity by making a *vyākaraṇa* (D. II, 284). An epithet of the Buddha is that he is one who explains or expounds, *veyyākaraṇa* (M. I, 386). Ability at *veyyākaraṇa* is also a praiseworthy quality of a Brahmin, a context where the term stands for expertise in matters of grammar (Sn. 595).

A mode of teaching adopted by a particular teacher may be termed a *veyyākaraṇa* (A. III, 125). Hence the proclamation of a particular view is a *veyyākaraṇa*, be this a view held by a monk (S. III, 112), or by outside recluses, *aññatitthiyānaṃ paribbājakānaṃ ... evaṃ vyākaraṇaṃ hoti* (S. IV, 392). The corresponding *vyākaroti* in the sense of a presentation of a view or opinion occurs in a standard inquiry from the Buddha about how to correctly represent his teaching without misrepresentation, *kathaṃ vyākaramānāpana mayaṃ ... vuttavādino c' eva Bhagavato assāma* (M. I, 482); or when the Buddha instructs his monks on how to properly reply to queries put to them by outside wanderers (S. IV, 138). The same term can also stand for instructions on the development of meditative insight and tranquillity (A. II, 94).

Frequently *vyākaraṇa* stands representative for a whole discourse.³ Such identification of a whole discourse as *vyākaraṇa* often occurs in the concluding section, when the discourse is given a title by the Buddha, or else when its effect on the audience is reported. Other instances are when the Buddha endorses an exposition given by a disciple, indicating that he would have explained it just in the same way, *aham pi taṃ evaṃ evaṃ vyākareyyaṃ, yathā taṃ ... vyākataṃ* (M. I, 304).

In fact, a *veyyākaraṇa* need not be prompted by a question, as the term can simply stand for a detailed explanation given of a succinct statement (S. II, 53). The notion of a detailed exposition may also underlie

a listing found in some discourses that includes questions, *pañhā*, summaries, *uddesā*, and explanations, *veyyākaraṇāni*, (*S.* IV, 299 or *A.* V, 50). Here *veyyākaraṇa* seems to stand for detailed expositions given in reply to a question or else in order to elucidate a summary. Alternatively, *veyyākaraṇa* could just be a succinct saying, such as the *catuppada veyyākaraṇa* taught in the *Kīṭāgiri Sutta* (*M.* I, 480).

Another type of occurrence of *veyyākaraṇa*, where the term also stands for a relatively short saying, is as a declaration of having reached the final goal (*S.* II, 123). Not only an *arahant*, but also a non-returner might make such a formal *vyākaraṇa* of his or her attainment (*A.* IV, 211). The same is the case for a stream-entrant, who could proclaim that birth in lower spheres has been transcended forever (*D.* II, 93). A discourse in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* distinguishes between altogether five declarations of final knowledge, *aññāvyākaraṇa* (*A.* III, 119). These could be declarations made out of delusion; out of evil wishes; out of madness; out of overestimation; or in accordance with truth. Another discourse in the same collection describes how monks skilled in mind reading will be able to find out if such a declaration of final knowledge has been made in accordance with reality (*A.* V, 156). In addition to referring to such declarations, *veyyākaraṇa* may also stand for explanations on how the final goal has been reached (*M.* III, 30).

In sum, then, *veyyākaraṇa* or *vyākaraṇa* can stand for replies, expositions, explanations and declarations. Such explanations could be given in reply to a question, or else without being occasioned by an inquiry. In this way, *veyyākaraṇa* could stand representative for a succinct saying or declaration, for a whole discourse, or even for a particular view or way of teaching.

In the standard listings of the nine *aṅgas*, *veyyākaraṇa* is preceded by *sutta* and *geyya*, and followed by *gāthā*, *udāna*, *itivuttaka*, *jātaka*, *abbhutadhamma* and *vedalla* (e.g. *M.* I, 133). According to the commentarial definition, here *veyyākaraṇa* stands for the *Abhidhammapīṭaka*, for discourses without verses, *niggāthakaṃ suttaṃ*, and for anything not covered by the other eight *aṅgas* (*MA.* II, 106). This commentarial explanation is not particularly helpful. To associate the *Abhidhammapīṭaka* with the *aṅga* listing is an evident anachronism, and a type of text that is not already

included in some way or another under the other eight *aṅgas* would be difficult to find.

The suggestion that *veyyākaraṇa* stands for discourses without verses is not born out by those discourses that employ the term to refer to themselves, as several of these do contain verses. Thus the *Sakkapañha Sutta* repeatedly has verse sections (*D.* II, 265, 272, 285), even though the discourse concludes with *imassa veyyākaraṇassa 'Sakka-pañho 't'eva adhivacanaṃ* (*D.* II, 288). Another example is the *Brahmanimantaṇṇika Sutta*, which contains verses (*M.* I, 328 and 330), yet concludes with *imassa veyyākaraṇassa Brahmanimantaṇṇikan 't'eva adhivacanaṃ* (*M.* I, 331). Thus the commentarial explanation of *veyyākaraṇa* as discourses without verses does not fit the actual use of the term *veyyākaraṇa* in the Pāli *Nikāyas*.

Veyyākaraṇa is not only part of the standard listing of nine *aṅgas*, but also occurs in abbreviated listings of the *aṅgas*. This is the case for a three-fold listing found in the *Mahāsuññata Sutta*, which reads *suttaṃ geyyaṃ veyyākaraṇassa hetu* (*M.* III, 115). The Chinese parallel also has only these three (*T.* I, 739c4),⁴ while a Tibetan parallel lists altogether twelve *aṅgas*,⁵ a listing often found in texts of the so-called northern traditions.⁶

Another abbreviated listing occurs in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, which reads *yadi suttaso yadi geyyaso yadi veyyākaraṇaso yadi abbhutadhammaso*, thus comprising only four *aṅgas* (*A.* III, 237). A six-fold listing can be found in the *Karmavibhaṅgopadeśa*, reading *sūtraṃ geyyaṃ vyākaraṇaṃ itivṛttaṃ gāthodānaṃ*.⁷ At least in the last case, the shortened list is clearly the outcome of textual loss, as the same text continues to speak of the nine *aṅgas*, *evaṃ navāṅgaśāsanaṃ*.

Thus *veyyākaraṇa* or *vyākaraṇa* is clearly a central element of the *aṅga* listings. Yet, unless *sutta* originally had a meaning different from "discourse",⁸ it would be difficult to understand why *veyyākaraṇa* is mentioned separately, given that *veyyākaraṇa* regularly stands for a discourse. Moreover, in as much as some discourses that refer to themselves as *veyyākaraṇa* contain verses, it seems similarly difficult to draw a clear dividing line in relation to *geyya* (provided this term stands indeed representative for discourses that contain verses, as suggested by the commentary *MA.* II, 106).⁹

According to the *Śrāvakabhūmi*, a distinction between *geyya* and *veyyākaraṇa* can be drawn in as much as the latter corresponds to what has already been explained, *nītattha*, whereas *geyya* stands for texts that still need explanation, *neyyattha* (on these two terms cf. *A. I*, 60).¹⁰ This explanation does not seem to match the full gamut of meanings of *veyyākaraṇa* in the Pāli discourses, as *veyyākaraṇa* does not always stand for an explanation that has its full meaning already drawn out.

An example in case is the *Susīma Sutta*, which reports the puzzlement of Susīma at hearing other monks making declarations, *veyyākaraṇa*, of final knowledge (*S. II*, 123). The remainder of the *Susīma Sutta* is devoted to drawing out the implication of the *veyyākaraṇa* that Susīma had been unable to understand, so that at least in this instance the *veyyākaraṇa* made by the monks was, from the perspective of the main protagonist of the discourse, clearly *neyyattha*, in need of further explanation. Another example would be the *Kīṭāgiri Sutta*, which uses *veyyākaraṇa* to refer to a succinct saying, the *catuppada veyyākaraṇa* (*M. I*, 480). Such a succinct saying would better fit the category of *nītattha*, instead of being considered *neyyattha*. The same would also hold for a verse given as a *veyyākaraṇa* in reply to a question in the *Kevaddha Sutta* (*D. I*, 223).

Perhaps a solution to this conundrum can be found by seeing the nine *aṅgas* as overlapping categories. In fact, the difficulty of treating the *aṅgas* as neatly separate categories arises not only when trying to distinguish between *sutta*, *geyya* and *veyyākaraṇa*, but also in regard to the other members of the nine-fold listing.¹¹ Perhaps the listings of *aṅgas*, whether these comprise three or nine, never intended to represent neatly separate categories. Instead, they may just have stood representative of the Buddha's teaching as a whole.

To assume that the *aṅgas* were originally not intended as neatly separate categories would imply that they would not have been used as an organizing scheme for the purpose of oral transmission. That is, the distinction into *aṅgas* would be too indistinct for it to exert a determining influence on the oral transmission of the early Buddhist texts in a way comparable to the division into *āgamas* or *nikāyas*. Though to draw a line between a "long" discourse and a "middle-length" discourse, for example, is to some

degree subjective, a distinction into four *āgamas* or *nikāyas* does not involve the degree of overlap that can be found between the nine *aṅgas*.

The account of the formation of the early Buddhist canon in the *Dīpavaṃsa* mentions the nine *aṅgas* in its description of how the Buddha's teaching was divided into chapters and collections.¹² The way this passage is formulated does not suggest a replacement of one system with another. Instead, it seems to refer to the nine *aṅgas* as representative of the Buddha's teaching as a whole, which at this point of time was divided into sections for the purpose of facilitating its oral transmission.

In fact, if the *aṅgas* had been divisions of texts for memorizing or organizing purposes, one would not expect the implications of the individual *aṅgas* to be soon forgotten. Yet, from the explanation found in later works it seems as if subsequent Buddhist generations found it difficult to make sense out of them.¹³

It is also difficult to imagine that some reciters would learn only the type of texts that correspond to a particular *aṅga*. The result of such an organization would defeat its very purpose, which is to develop divisions that are easily memorized and which provide each reciter with a representative selection of the teachings. Employing the *aṅgas* for this purpose would result in some reciters specializing on *suttas*, others on *geyya* or else on *veyyākaraṇa*, and again others would memorize *abbhutadhammas* or *vedallas* etc. The net result of such a division would be disproportionate portions of texts, which would not be representative of the teaching as a whole. Given that already the division into *āgamas* or *nikāyas* led to differences of view among the reciters that specialized on them,¹⁴ one might well imagine what would have happened if some reciters specialized on *abbhutadhamma* were to meet others proficient in *vedalla*.

In sum, then, instead of being an early system for dividing and transmitting the teachings that was eventually replaced by the division into *āgamas* or *nikāyas*, the *aṅgas* may have been just a listing of textual types.¹⁵ For such listings of textual types the considerable overlap between individual *aṅgas* would not have been a problem, since the purpose of the listing would just have been to comprehensively cover

the whole variety of the early texts. For such a purpose, the only point of importance would be to make sure that everything is mentioned, for whose sake overlap will willingly be accepted. In contrast, the division into *āgamas* or *nikāyas* clearly reflects the exigencies of oral transmission, as it divides the corpus of texts into easily memorized portions.

To assume that the purpose and function of the *aṅgas* was merely to act as a representative of the teaching as a whole, without having practical implications for the division of labour among the reciters, would concord with the broad range of meanings of *veyyākaraṇa* in the discourses, covering replies, declarations, expositions, discourses and ways of teaching.

Anālayo

References

- 1 For the sake of consistency, the reading *vyākaroṭi* will be adopted in this article throughout, though the texts at times read *byākaroṭi* instead.
- 2 On the threat that the opponent's head will split to pieces cf. Insler: "The shattered head split and the Epic tale of Śakuntalā", *Bulletin d'Études Indiennes*, 7/8, 1989: 97-139; and Witzel: "The Case of the Shattered Head", *Studien zur Indologie und Iranistik*, 13/14, 1987: 363-415. On debating practice reflected in the Buddhist discourses cf. Manné: "The Dīgha Nikāya Debates", *Buddhist Studies Review*, 9.2, 1992: 117-136.
- 3 This is the case for the *Brahmajāla Sutta* (D. I, 46); the *Sakkapañha Sutta* (D. II, 288 and 289); the *Sampasādanīya Sutta* (D. III, 116); the *Brahmanimantaṇṇika Sutta* (M. I, 331); the *Mahāpuṇṇama Sutta* (M. III, 20); the *Cūḷarāhulovāda Sutta* (M. III, 280; cf. also S. IV, 107); the *Chachakka Sutta* (M. III, 287); the *Tiṃsamattā Sutta* (S. II, 189); the *Anattolakkhaṇa Sutta* (S. III, 68); the *Khemaka Sutta* (S. III, 132); the *Āditta Sutta* (S. IV, 20); the two *Gilāna Suttas* (S. IV, 47 and 48); the *Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta* (S. V, 423); the *Gotamakacetiya Sutta* (A. I, 276); the *Aggikkhandhopama Sutta* (A. IV, 135); and the *Dvayatānupassanā Sutta* (prose after Sn. 765). Notably, only the *Sampasādanīya Sutta* and the *Khemaka Sutta* are spoken by a disciple. Thus the scope of *veyyākaraṇa* as a referent to a whole discourse is clearly not confined to discourses spoken by disciples.
- 4 *T.* stands for the Taishō edition.
- 5 Skilling: *Mahāsūtras*, Oxford 1994: 242.
- 6 Cf. the survey in Lamotte: *Le Traité de la Grande Vertu de Sagesse*, Louvain 1980: 2281-2287; Maeda: *Genshi Bukkyō seiten no seiritsushi kenkyū*, Tokyo 1964 for a comprehensive chart of *aṅga* listings; and the study by Nattier: "The Twelve Divisions of Scriptures in the Earliest Chinese Buddhist Translations", *Annual Report of the International Research Institute for Advanced Buddhism*, Tokyo 2004: 167-196.
- 7 Lévi: *Mahākarmavibhaṅga*, Paris 1932: 161.
- 8 Von Hinüber: "Die Neun Aṅgas, Ein früher Versuch zur Einteilung buddhistischer Texte", *Wiener Zeitschrift für die Kunde Süd- und Ostasiens*, 38, 1994: 129 suggests that *sutta* could originally have intended just the *pāṇimokkha-sutta*, and thence come to represent the *Vinaya*. The commentaries indeed include the whole of the *Vinaya* under the heading of *sutta* (MA. II, 106).
- 9 According to Jayawickrama: "Buddhaghosa and the Traditional Classifications of the Pāli Canon", *University of Ceylon Review*, 1959: 12, *geyya* may "represent the *ākhyāna*-type containing stanzas punctuated with narrative prose".
- 10 Matsunami: *Śrāvaka bhūmi*, Tokyo 1998: 228: *yac ca sūtraṃ neyārtham, idam ucyate geyam ... yac ca sūtraṃ nīārtham, idam ucyate veyyākaraṇam* (the same work also takes *geya* to stand for text with verses and *veyyākaraṇa* for proclamations about the rebirth of disciples); cf. also Ruegg: "Remarks on the Place of Narrative in the Buddhist Literatures of India and Tibet", *India, Tibet, China: Genesis and Aspects of Traditional Narrative*, Firenze 1999: 206
- 11 Jayawickrama op. cit.: 11 comments that "there seems to be a good deal of overlapping, for the same piece can belong to several of these categories at the same time", concluding that the *aṅgas* are "a mere description of literary types and not a division into water-tight compartments".
- 12 Dpv. 31 (4.15): *suttaṃ geyyaṃ veyyākaraṇaṃ, gāthudānītivuttakaṃ, jātakabhūta vedallaṃ, navaṅgaṃ satthusāsaṇaṃ, pavibhattā imāṃ therā, saddhammaṃ avināsaṇaṃ, vaggapaññāsakaṇ nāma, samyuttañ ca nipāṭakaṃ, āgama piṭakaṃ nāma, akāṃsu suttasammataṃ.*

- 13 Kalupahana: "Aṅga", *Encyclopaedia of Buddhism*, 1.4, 1965: 619 concludes that "the real significance of the ninefold and twelvefold divisions was almost lost by the time the later scholiasts attempted to explain them".
- 14 Cf. Adikaram: *Early History of Buddhism in Ceylon*, Dehiwala 1994: 32.
- 15 Norman: *Pāli Literature*, Wiesbaden 1983: 16 explains that "despite the fact that books called Jātaka, Udāna and Itivuttaka actually exist in Pāli, it is probable that the list of nine aṅgas did not originally refer to specific works in the canon, but was a description of various types of text". For an interpretation of the aṅgas as actual divisions of the canon cf. Sujato: *History of Mindfulness*, Taiwan 2005: 52ff.

VIBHAJJAVĀDA (1) : (Sanskrit *Vibhajjavāda* or *Vibadyavāda*) the "Doctrine which analyses or 'religion of logic or reason' according to the Pali Text Society *Pali-English Dictionary*. But Mrs Rhys Davids seems to prefer a rendering like 'to particularize1' to this Dictionary rendering. She also uses the terms analyst, or particularist in the sense of *vibhajjavādin*², a holder of the *vibhajjavāda* conception. N.Dutt³ calls *vibhajjavāda* teaching analytic and not synthetic. Anyhow *vibhajja* is the gerund of the verb *vibhajati* to distribute, divide, distinguish, dissect, divide up, classify, to deal with something in detail, to go into detail. (*PED*. s.v *vibhajati*).

In some places when certain questions were put to him the Buddha would reply that 'in this place' (*ettha*) he is a *vibhajjavādin* but not an *ekaṃsavādin*. Such a statement in the *Subha Sutta* (M.II. 197) has been rendered into English by Miss Horner⁴ as, "On this point I, Brahmin youth, discriminate, on this point I do not speak definitively". Thus accordingly, at least in this context, the Buddha is one who replies discriminatively and not one who gives a categorical reply. Undoubtedly this reply given by the Buddha is based on one of the four types of questions differentiated by him according to the mode of replying applicable to each of them. Thus there are questions needing i. a categorical reply (*ekaṃsa-vyākaraṇīya*), ii. a discriminative reply (*vibhajja-vyākaraṇīya*), iii. a counter question as the reply (*paṭipucchā-vyākaraṇīya*) and, iv. to be set aside without an answer (*thapanīya*-A.II.46). It is very clear from this and other discourses that the second type of answering a question

is only one alternative and not the only one used by the Buddha. Thus the above discourse says-

"Skilled in the questions four they call a monk
Who knows to answer fitly thus and thus"

A monk has to be skilled in using all the four modes as the question demands. The Buddha calls himself a discriminator and not a generalizer in this particular context but not always. It is well known, for instance, how he left certain metaphysical questions unanswered as not profitable or useful for the realization of liberation from *dukkha*. It is also said that a person can be judged competent or incompetent if, in conversation, he replies questions fittingly in accord with these four modes of replying (*ibid*. I.197). Buddhaghosa (*DA*.II.567), in his discussion on *mahāpadesas*, has explained with illustrations how these four modes should be applied in answering questions.

Vibhajjavāda Identified with Theravāda.

The *Mahāvamsa* (5.271-272), the Pali Chronicle of Sri Lanka, avers that the 3rd century A.C. orthodox Buddhist monks in the Mauryan Empire had styled the Buddha a *Vibhajjavādin*. This was a period, according to this chronical, when the Saṅgha had become flooded with numerous holders of heretical views. Arahant Moggalīputta Tissa, the leader of the orthodox monks, who did not desire to commiserate with such heretical elements, had withdrawn from active participation in the affairs of the Saṅgha and lived in retirement in a forest hermitage. But he returned to the capital to help Emperor Asoka to revive the sagging conditions of the religion. Queried by him in conclave, each monk labeled the Buddha as, eg., an eternalist, annihilationist etc. according to one's own views. But the holders of the true and correct views in accord with the Dhamma called the Buddha a *Vibhajjavādin*, which was confirmed by Arahant Moggalīputta Tissa. The *Mahāvamsa* Commentary (vol.1.240) explains that, because the Buddha was an analyst of the aggregates etc. he was a *Vibhajjavādī* (*khandhādīnaṃ vibhājakattā vibhajjavādī Sammāsambuddhō*). This however seems to be a different proposition from what was discussed above. By analysing a person into aggregates (*khandha*) etc. the Buddha demonstrates the absence of a permanent entity or soul in a person. The aggregates etc. into which a person is analyzed are collectively

ENCYCLOPAEDIA OF BUDDHISM

Founder Editor-in Chief

G. P. MALALASEKERA, M. A., Ph. D., D. Litt., Professor Emeritus

Editor-in Chief

W. G. WEERARATNE, M. A., Ph. D.

VOLUME VIII

FASCICLE 3 : Vācā – Z hong a-han



2009