The Seven Stages of Purification
in Comparative Perspective
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The seven stages of purification form the scaffolding for the *Visuddhimagga*, a work of outstanding importance in the *Theravāda* tradition. Buddhaghosa's presentation of these seven stages is well known and it would be of little interest to the reader if the present article were to focus on the *Visuddhimagga's* presentation of the seven stages of purification. Instead, the present article offers an investigation of these seven stages of purification from the perspective of the early discourses found in the Pāli *Nikāyas* and the Chinese *Āgamas*, attempting to collect whatever relevant information they have to offer.

The sevens stages of purification occur in the *Rathavinīta Sutta* of the *Majjhima Nikāya*, where they form the subject of a discussion between the monks Sāriputta and Puṇṇa Mantāṇiputta.[1] This discourse has two Chinese parallels, found in the *Madhyama Āgama* and the *Ekottara Āgama*.[2]

The Pāli and Chinese versions of the *Rathavinīta Sutta* do not offer much information on the individual implication of these seven purifications. What the discussion found in similar terms in these three discourses clearly shows, however, is that these seven purifications are successive stages required to reach the final goal, each stage constituting the basis for the next stage, comparable to seven chariots used in relay to quickly cover a long distance.

Apart from their occurrence in the Pāli and Chinese versions of the *Rathavinīta Sutta*, the scheme of seven purifications recurs only once more in the Pāli discourses, as part of a scheme of nine purifications described in the *Dasuttara Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*.[3] This passage simply enumerates the purifications and does not expand on their meaning. The *Dasuttara Sutta* differs from the *Rathavinīta Sutta* only in so far as it additionally qualifies each purification as a "factor of exertion for purity" (*pārisuddhi-padhāniyaṅga*). The nine stages of purification recur also in the two Chinese parallels to the *Dasuttara Sutta*, found in the *Dīrgha Āgama*, and in an individual translation found outside of the four *Āgamas*.[4] In addition

to these Chinese parallels, the relevant parts of a Sanskrit version of this discourse have been preserved among the Sanskrit fragments discovered in Central Asia.[5]

The first three stages are purification of morality (*sīlavisuddhi*), of the mind (*cittavisuddhi*) and of views (*diṭṭhivisuddhi*). Concerning the terminology used for these three stages, the Pāli versions and the Chinese *Āgama* versions of the *Rathavinīta Sutta* and the *Dasuttara Sutta* are in close agreement.[6]

Examining these same three stages from the perspective of other Pāli discourses, one finds that "purification of morality" (*sīlavisuddhi*) occurs again in several other Pāli discourses, instances that do not, however, yield additional information.[7] Another discourse that can be called up for help in the present context is the *Sāmugiya Sutta* in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, which explains four types of "purity" (*pārisuddhi*), these being purity of morality, of the mind, of view and of liberation.[8] Though the term "purity" (*pārisuddhi*) used in this discourse differs from the expression "purification" (*visuddhi*) used in the *Rathavinīta Sutta*, the two terms appear to be closely related to each other, since the *Dasuttara Sutta's* scheme of nine purifications also employs the term "purity" (*pārisuddhi*).[9] "Purity" of morality, according to the *Sāmugiya Sutta*, refers to observing the precepts, a suggestion that can easily be adopted for "purification" of morality in the scheme under discussion at present.

According to the same *Sāmugiya Sutta*, "purity" of the mind (*cittapārisuddhi*) represents the development of the four *jhānas*. This clearly indicates that the similar expression "purification" of the mind (*cittavisuddhi*) found in the *Rathavinīta Sutta* as the second stage of purification must be related to the development of concentration, a necessary basis for developing insight and understanding. In the context of the *Rathavinīta Sutta*, however, the level of mental purification required may not necessarily comprise all four *jhānas*, since several discourses indicate that full awakening can be achieved without developing purity of the mind up to the level of being able to attain all four *jhānas*.[10] Thus in the context of a scheme of successive stages of purification leading up to realization, attainment of all four *jhānas* would not seem to be a necessary requirement for being able to undertake the remaining five stages of purification.

A precondition for being able to attain any *jhāna* is to "purify" the mind from any mental obstruction.[11] Taking a lead from this stipulation, purification of the mind in the context of the seven stages of purification could represent the successful establishing of a preliminary degree of mental tranquillity. The degree of mental purification gained through such tranquillity is indeed a precondition for attaining deeper concentration as well as for the development of insight. Such "purification" (*visuddhi*) of the mind then can lead up to those levels of "purity" (*pārisuddhi*) described in the *Sāmugiya Sutta*, the four *jhānas*. Hence the relation between the two terms, used in the *Rathavinīta Sutta* and the *Sāmugiya Sutta* respectively, could be that "purification" represents the process that leads up to "purity".

The third purification in the *Rathavinīta Sutta*, purification of view (*diṭṭhivisuddhi*), occurs on its own in two other Pāli discourses.[12] Both instances do not provide further information on the implications of the term. According to the *Sāmugiya Sutta*, the similar term purity of view (*diṭṭhipārisuddhi*) refers to understanding the four noble truths "as they really are."[13] Several discourses use the same formulation in relation to the attainment of stream-entry, at which point penetrative insight into the four noble truths will indeed take place.[14] The most frequent occurrence of the same formulation in the discourses leads even higher, often marking the stages of development that culminate in the complete destruction of the influxes (*āsava*).[15]

"Purification" of view in the context of the *Rathavinīta Sutta's* scheme of successive stages of purifications may however refer only to the process that leads up to the "purity" of view acquired with stream-entry. This can be deduced from the fact that once the stage of purification of view has been accomplished, the next purification of overcoming doubt has still to be reached. In contrast, once stream-entry has been attained, all doubt will simultaneously be overcome.

Concerning the next stage, "purification by overcoming doubt" (*kaṅkhāvitaraṇavisuddhi)*, the terminology found in the Chinese versions is fairly similar to the Pāli expression.[16] A noteworthy difference is that the *Madhyama Āgama* version specifies the doubt overcome at this stage to be the "hindrance" of doubt.[17] This raises the question as to the nature of the doubt to be dealt with at this stage of purification.

The exact expression used for the stage of purification under discussion at present occurs only in one other Pāli discourse, found in the *Udāna*.[18] This passage reports the monk Kaṅkhārevata seated in meditation and reviewing his own "purification of overcoming doubt". The same theme recurs in the concluding verses of this discourse, which speak of overcoming any doubt in regard to here or beyond, oneself or others, through the practice of meditation.[19]

According to the commentary to this discourse, this monk was called Kaṅkhārevata, "Revata the Doubter", because he had been greatly worried and concerned about maintaining the proper conduct of a monk without infringing the monastic set of rules. This type of doubt had caused him to be nicknamed "the doubter".[20] In the present instance, so the commentary explains, Kaṅkhārevata was reviewing his purification of overcoming doubt achieved through full liberation. The commentary specifies that through the wisdom of the (supramundane) path he had gone beyond any doubt related to speculations about a self in past, present and future times, as well as beyond any doubt in regard to the Buddha, his *Dhamma* and the *Saṅgha*.

This would seem to relate the present stage of purification to the attainment of stream-entry, since to go beyond such speculations and to have firm confidence in the Buddha, his *Dhamma* and the *Saṅgha* are qualities of a stream-enterer, one who through the strength of his or her realization has completely removed doubt.[21] Yet according to the *Madhyama Āgama* presentation the question at present would appear to be not the removal of the "fetter" (*saṃyojana*) of doubt, but only a removal of the "hindrance" (*nīvaraṇa*) of doubt.

To further explore this point, a closer look at "doubt" and its removal in other discourses is required. According to the *Dhammasavana Sutta* in the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, for example, doubt can be overcome while listening to a discourse on the *Dhamma*.[22] Though listening to the *Dhamma* may at times occasion stream-entry, this is not always the case. Several discourses report junior monks visiting elder monks and posing them questions in order to "remove their doubts."[23] These instances do not seem to be related to the attainment of stream-entry, but only to these junior monks improving their theoretical understanding of the *Dhamma*.

Another relevant instance in the present context could be a discourse in which a brahmin requested the Buddha to "remove his doubt" whether the Buddha was endowed with all thirty-two marks of a superior being (*mahāpurisalakkhaṇa*).[24] The removal of doubt envisaged in this instance was evidently not related to stream-entry. Hence to speak of a "removal of doubt" (*kaṅkhāvitaraṇa*) need not necessarily imply the eradication of doubt accomplished with stream-entry.

The same situation applies also to the similar term *vicikicchā*, which in the Pāli discourses often occurs as a synonym to *kaṅkhā*, both representing "doubt". Though the removal of such doubt forms part of the standard descriptions of stream-entry,[25] purification of the mind through having overcome such doubt also occurs in the standard description of overcoming the five hindrances prior to the development of deeper stages of concentration, a context not directly related to stream-entry.[26]

These examples indicate that "purification of overcoming doubt" (*kaṅkhā*) need not necessarily be taken in a supramundane sense. The problem that arises if one were to take this purification in a supramundane sense is that with the attainment of stream-entry not only the fetter of doubt will be eradicated, but also the fetter of self-view, so that one's view similarly becomes purified. The discourses clearly indicate that the eradication of these two fetters takes place simultaneously, at the moment of stream-entry itself.[27] The three versions of the *Rathavinīta Sutta*, however, present purification of view and purification of overcoming doubt as two successive stages, a presentation which would be meaningless if the two were to take place simultaneously. Hence neither of these two stages of purification can be identified with stream-entry. Alternatively, then, "purification of overcoming doubt" would seem to be concerned with the hindrance of doubt, as indicated by the *Madhyama Āgama* version. Yet this interpretation is also not satisfactory, since the five hindrances should have already been temporarily overcome with the preceding purification of the mind. Hence the fourth stage of purification does not seem to fit too well into either of these two schemes.

The fifth stage of purification involves "knowledge and vision of path and not-path" (*maggāmaggañāṇadassanavisuddhi*). While the *Madhyama Āgama* version and Sanskrit fragments of the *Daśottara Sūtra* agree with the Pāli versions,[28] the *Dīrgha Āgama* version speaks at this point of purification of "discrimination",[29] while the *Ekottara Āgama* version

has purification of "the path of practice".[30] The last two, if taken together, indicate that this purification should have something to do with clear discrimination of what is the proper path of practice.

The expression "path and not-path" comes up also in the *Tevijja Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* in a discussion between two brahmins about the capability of their respective teachers to teach the right path to companionship with *Brahma*.[31] This passage corroborates that the expression "path and not-path" refers to the right type of path as against the wrong one. Knowledge and capability in this crucial distinction occurs in several Pāli discourses.[32] Only one of these instances, the *Kāḷī Sutta* of the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, has the expression found in the stage of purification under discussion at present.[33] In this discourse, the Buddha's "knowledge and vision of path and not-path" constitutes an aspect of his penetrative insight into the nature of deep stages of concentration attained through *kasiṇa* meditation. These passages support the impression, gained from the *Dīrgha Āgama* and *Ekottara Āgama* versions, that this stage of purification requires a clear discrimination of what is the proper path of practice.

The sixth stage of purification is "knowledge and vision of the pathway of practice" (*paṭipadāñāṇadassanavisuddhi*). The term *paṭipadā* found in this expression is similar in meaning to the term *magga*, both referring to "path" or "way", though the term *paṭipadā* has a slightly stronger nuance of being a path of practice. As such it often occurs in relation to the fourth noble truth as the path of practice leading to the eradication of *dukkha*, which is moreover the middle "path".[34] This practical nuance becomes particularly evident in the *Mahāsakuludāyi Sutta*, which lists a broad range of meditation practices under the heading *paṭipadā*.[35]

The Chinese versions of this purification more or less agree with the Pāli version.[36] Of particular interest from a comparative perspective regarding this stage of purification is the *Ekottara Āgama* discourse, which speaks of "development of knowledge in the middle of the path".[37] This confirms that this stage of purification has to do with being in the midst of the practical undertaking of the path.

The seventh stage of purification involves "knowledge and vision" (*ñāṇa-dassanavisuddhi*). While the *Ekottara Āgama* version agrees with the Pāli presentation, the *Dīrgha Āgama* version speaks of "discarding", the *Madhyama Āgama* version of "knowledge of the way and path of eradication",

and the individual Chinese translation of the *Dasuttara Sutta* of "vision and wisdom eradicating craving".[38] These three Chinese versions of the seventh stage of purification thus make it clear that, from their perspective, eradication or discarding is a central theme of this stage. Such eradicating or discarding could be intended in a supramundane sense, or else it could refer to eradicating and discarding wrong notions through knowing and seeing in accordance with reality.

The Pāli expression "knowledge and vision" features prominently in the Buddha's own insight into the four noble truths, reported in the *Dhammacakkapavattana Sutta*.[39] Similarly the standard descriptions of full awakening speak of "knowing" and "seeing" as the type of activity that leads up to the destruction of the influxes.[40] The same Pāli expression "knowledge and vision" can also connote realizations of lesser import. Among others it may refer to insight into the distinction between the material body and consciousness, to knowing the mind of others, to knowing the past and future, or to internal meditative visions of light.[41] That knowledge and vision need not be identical with realization becomes also evident in a passage in the *Saṅgīti Sutta*, which differentiates between a type of concentration that leads to knowledge and vision and a type of concentration that leads to realization.[42] While the former is to develop perception of light (*ālokasaññā*), the latter requires meditative insight into the arising and passing away of the five aggregates.

These instances indicate that the expression "knowledge and vision" can connote a variety of different realizations and do not necessarily imply realization of *Nibbāna*. In fact, judging from its usage in the *Mahāsāropama* and the *Cūḷasāropama Suttas*, "knowledge and vision" refers only to a stage leading up to, but not yet identical with realisation.[43] These two discourses are of particular relevance in the present context, since they are concerned with the same issue that also forms the central topic of the *Rathavinīta Sutta*, the goal of living the holy life. The *Mahāsāropama* and *Cūḷasāropama Suttas* agree with the *Rathavinīta Sutta* that neither pure morality, nor deep concentration, nor the achievement of "knowledge and vision" should be mistaken for the final goal.

The point that needs to be kept in mind concerning knowledge and vision as a stage of purification is that the scheme of seven purifications forms part of the scheme of nine purifications found in the Pāli, Chinese and Sanskrit versions of the *Dasuttara Sutta*. This nine-stage scheme could

well be at the background of the questions posed by Sāriputta in the three versions of the *Rathavinīta Sutta*, the whole purpose of which was to draw out Puṇṇa's wisdom by presenting him with stages of purification that still fall short of the final goal.

The remainder of their discussion makes it quite clear that in the eyes of both Sāriputta and Puṇṇa this scheme of seven purifications was incomplete as an account of the process of purification. According to the chariot simile found in all three versions, just as when mounting the seventh chariot the goal of the journey is still to be reached, so too with the seventh stage of purification the final goal of the process of purification is still to be attained. According to Puṇṇa's explicit statement in the Chinese and Pāli versions of the *Rathavinīta Sutta*, the seventh stage of purification is still affected by clinging (*sa-upādāna*) and thus cannot be considered the final goal.[44] If this is taken into account, an interpretation of this seventh stage as including the attainment of all four levels of awakening, such as advanced by the *Visuddhimagga*, is surprising.[45]

If liberation were already accomplished with the seventh stage of purification, one might wonder what the implications of the eighth and the ninth stage of purification could be. The Pāli and the *Dīrgha Āgama* version of the *Dasuttara Sutta*, however, speak of purification of "liberation" only with the ninth stage, indicating that only at this stage the culmination point of the series is reached.[46] The similar expression "purity of liberation" (*vimuttipārisuddhi*) in the *Sāmugiya Sutta* also represents full realization.[47]

Looking back on the information collected so far regarding these seven stages of purification, it is a little puzzling that Sāriputta and Puṇṇa both appear to have been quite familiar with a scheme of stages of purification that recurs again only once in the Pāli discourses. Possibly the *Madhyama Āgama* version might hold a key to this puzzle, yet in order to explore this we have to return to the starting point of the discussion between Sāriputta and Puṇṇa Mantāṇiputta.

According to the three versions of the *Rathavinīta Sutta*, this discussion between the two monks was actually their first meeting, at which Sāriputta did not reveal his identity, in order to elicit a detailed explanation of the *Dhamma* from Puṇṇa. As Puṇṇa explicitly stated at the conclusion of their exchange, if he had known from the outset the identity of his interlocutor,

he would not have answered in such detail. According to the *Madhyama Āgama* version, he would not have been able to say even a single sentence.[48] Hence for *Sāriputta* to conceal his identity was indeed a necessary device in order to elicit such a detailed exposition by Puṇṇa.

In the Pāli account, the first question asked by Sāriputta was if Puṇṇa was living the holy life under the Blessed One. This question seems a little strange, since for a Buddhist monk there would seem to be little reason to ask another Buddhist monk if he is living the holy life under the Buddha.[49] The *Madhyama Āgama* version has the same question, with the curious difference that according to its presentation Sāriputta spoke consistently of living the holy life under the "recluse Gotama".[50] Only at the end of the *Madhyama Āgama* discourse, when asking for Puṇṇa's name and about to reveal his own identity, did Sāriputta change expression and use the more appropriate "*Tathāgata*" to refer to the Buddha.[51]

In other discourses in the Pāli *Nikāyas* and Chinese *Āgamas*, only those who do not belong to the Buddhist monastic or lay community use the expression "recluse Gotama" to refer to the Buddha. In view of this it seems strange that Sāriputta, as a Buddhist monk, should use such an expression. Sanskrit fragments of a version of the *Rathavinīta Sutta* appear however to support the *Madhyama Āgama* version, since they have preserved part of a question after the purpose of purification which uses the same expression "recluse".[52] Hence before dismissing this for Sāriputta improbable way of referring to the Buddha as a textual error, a closer look at the situation behind this question needs to be taken.

In order to explore the historical background behind the posing of this question, let me begin by noting that the proper way of sewing up and dying robes appears to have been decided only at a later stage of development of the monastic order.[53] In view of this, during the early historical stages of the monastic community its members were possibly not easily distinguishable by their outer appearance as Buddhist monks, as they may have just dressed in the way used in general among recluses and wanderers roaming the Ganges valley. This suggestion finds support in the Tibetan *Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya*, which reports king Pasenadi on several occasions mistaking outside wanderers for Buddhist monks, on account of the similarity of the type of dress used by both Buddhist monks and other wanderers and recluses.[54]

Puṇṇa and Sāriputta were both ordained at a very early point in time, soon after the Buddha's awakening, so that their meeting reported in the *Rathavinīta Sutta* could have taken place during the early stages of the Buddhist order.[55] Thus it is quite possible that when they met, Sāriputta was not immediately recognizable as a Buddhist monk. If Sāriputta was not recognizable as a Buddhist monk, and if he wanted to avoid being asked his name, which Puṇṇa might have done if he knew his visitor to be a Buddhist monk like himself, one would expect Sāriputta to act in such a way as to not be recognized. Acting in such a way, he would appear to Puṇṇa just like any outside wanderer, who had chanced by and was curious to find out more about the Buddha's teaching. In such a situation it would only be natural for Sāriputta to use the expression "recluse *Gotama*", since if he had used the expression "Blessed One" or ""Tathāgata", he would have prematurely given himself away as a follower of the Buddha.

If this much is granted, an intriguing perspective emerges concerning the seven stages of purification. With Sāriputta acting in such a way that Puṇṇa was not able to recognize him as a Buddhist monk, one would also expect the type of terminology used by him not to be specific Buddhist terminology, but rather to be such terms and expressions as were in common use among recluses and wanderers in ancient India. In order to continue acting as if he were an interested outsider, he would have to word his questions in a way that did not compromise the role he had assumed.

From this it would follow that the seven purifications could have been a list of purifications commonly discussed and aspired to among the various contemplative and philosophical traditions in ancient India. That is, these seven stages of purification were (at least at that time) not necessarily a specific Buddhist teaching, but only types or stages of purification aspired to and under discussion in general among recluses and wanderers.

This would explain why Puṇṇa without any hesitation knew what was being spoken about. It would also explain why relatively little material can be found concerning these stages of purification in other discourses, a situation which would be natural if these stages of purification should not have been an original Buddhist scheme and therefore did not merit as much attention as other schemes and aspects of the Buddha's teaching.

Granted this, what is Buddhist about this scheme of purifications would then be mainly the perspective taken in regard to them. Understood in this

way, the central message of the *Rathavinīta Sutta* is not a presentation of the seven individual purifications as such, but to highlight that, while all of them are means to reach the goal, none of them constitutes the type of purification envisaged as the goal of the holy life, complete *Nibbāna* without clinging.

Abbreviations

A   *Aṅguttara Nikāya*
DĀ   *Dīrgha Āgama*
Dhp   *Dhammapada*
EĀ   *Ekottara Āgama*
M   *Majjhima Nikāya*
MĀ   *Madhyama Āgama*
Ps   *Papañcasūdanī*
S   *Saṃyutta Nikāya*
SĀ   *Saṃyukta Āgama*
Sn   *Sutta Nipāta*
T   Taishō
Thag   *Theragāthā*
Ud   *Udāna*
Ud-a   *Udāna-aṭṭhakathā*
Vin   *Vinaya*
Vism   *Visuddhimagga*
[]   indicates uncertain reading of a Sanskrit fragment
()   indicates supplementation to a Sanskrit fragment

Notes

[1] M 24 at M I 145-151.

[2] MĀ 9 at T I p 429c-431c and EĀ 39.10 at T II 733c-735b.

[3] D 34 at D III 288,16.

[4] DĀ 10 at T I 56a23 and T 13 at T I 238c25. The nine purifications recur in the same terms also in DĀ 11 at T I 58c18, a discourse without a parallel in the Pāli Nikāyas.

[5] Published in D. Schlingloff: *Dogmatische Begriffsreihen im älteren Buddhismus*, Berlin 1962 p 18; cf. also de Jong: "The Daśottarasūtra", in *Buddhist Studies*, Schopen (ed.), Berkeley 1979 pp 262 and 271.

[6] T 13 differs slightly, having "energy" (T I 238c25: 精進) for the first purification, but concords with the other versions as far as the second and third purifications are concerned.

[7] Purification of morality (*sīlavisuddhi*) occurs on its own in A 4:196 at A II 200,12 and together with purification of view in D 33 at D III 214,1; in A 2:15 at A I 95,4 and in *Ekottara Āgama* Sanskrit fragments edited by C. Trīpaṭhī: *Ekottarāgama-Fragmente der Gilgit Handschrift*, Reinbek 1995 p 195. Each of these instances merely lists these terms and thus yields no further information on their implications.

[8] A 4:194 at A II 195.

[9] D 34 at D III 288,16.

[10] A 9:36 at A IV 422,7 speaks of realising the destruction of the influxes based on the first *jhāna* only; cf. also M 52 at M I 350,10 and M 64 at M I 435,29.

[11] The standard descriptions found in the Pāli discourses speak of *cittaṃ parisodheti*, e.g. in D 2 at D I 71,21.

[12] D 33 at D III 214,1+2 and A 2:15 at A I 95,4+5.

[13] A 4:194 at A II 195,27: *idaṃ dukkhan ti yathābhātaṃ pajānāti* ... (etc.).

[14] To understand each noble truth "as it really is" constitutes a distinctive characteristic of the assembly of noble ones (*ariyā parisā*) according to A 2:5 at A I 71,31; the same expression represents the wisdom of the trainee (*sekhā paññā*) in A 3:73 at A I 220,9; and signifies that the stage of a noble one has been reached (*ariyappatto*) according to A 4:190 at A II 184,30. These instances indicate the close relationship of this formulation to the insight gained with stream-entry.

[15] Cf. e.g. D 2 at D I 83,35; D 10 at D I 209,16; M 51 at M I 348,24; M 60 at M I 413,9; M 65 at M I 442,12; etc.

[16] EĀ 39.10 at T II 734b25 has "absence of hesitation" 無猶豫, while DĀ 10 at T I 56a24 and T 13 at T I 238c27 have "crossing over doubt" 度疑.

[17] MĀ 9 at T I 430b29: 疑蓋.

[18] Ud 5:7 at Ud 60,5: *kaṅkhāvitaraṇavisuddhiṃ paccavekkhamāno*.

[19] Ud 5:7 at Ud 60,11: *yā kāci kaṅkhā idha vā huraṃ vā, sakavediyā vā paravediyā vā, jhāyino tā pajahanti sabbā*.

[20] Ud-a 314. A similar nuance also underlies the title of the Pāli commentary to the monastic rules, whose title *Kaṅkhāvitaraṇī* indicates its purpose to be to "overcome doubt".

[21] The expression *kaṅkhā pahīnā* occurs in S 24:1-18 at S III 203-216 as a quality of a stream-enterer. Similarly the *Sabbāsava Sutta* relates going beyond speculations in regard to a self in past, present and future times to overcoming the three fetters, viz. stream-entry (M 2 at M I 9,21). Firm confidence in the three jewels as a distinctive quality of a stream-enterer is moreover a recurring theme in the *Sotāpatti Saṃyutta*, cf. e.g. S 55:2 at S V 343,27.

[22] A 5:202 at A III 248,3 lists "overcoming doubt", *kaṅkhaṃ vitarati* as one of the benefits of listening to the *Dhamma*.

[23] D 34 at D III 285,9; M 33 at M I 223,36; A 3:20 at A I 117,31; A 8:2 at A IV 152,8; A 10:11 at A V 16,5 and A 11:18 at A V 352,14 speak of experienced monks answering such questions and thereby removing the doubts of the junior monks, *kaṅkhaṃ paṭivinodenti*. None of these passages bears any explicit relationship to stream-entry.

[24] M 91 at M II 143,12: *kaṅkhaṃ vinaya*.

[25] *Tiṇṇavicikiccho*, e.g. in D 3 at D I 110,15.

[26] *Tiṇṇavicikiccho* e.g. in D 2 at D I 71,29.

[27] A 3:92 at A I 242,19 and Sn 231.

[28] MĀ 9 at T I 430c1 has 道非道知見 and thus corresponds exactly to the Pāli version. T 13 has "path

path" (T I 238c27: 道道), which could be a textual corruption of "path and not-path", in which case T 13 would also be similar to the Pāli version. The Sanskrit fragment of the *Daśottara Sūtra* reads *mārga-mā[r]g(a)*, which Schlingloff op. cit. p 11 n 1 corrects to *mārgāmārg(a)*, a `mistake' corresponding to the `mistake' made in T 13.

[29] DĀ 10 at T I 56a24: 分別.

[30] EĀ 39.10 at T II 734b26: 行跡.

[31] D 13 at D I 236,28.

[32] In S 8:6 at S I 190,14 (= Thag 1231) as a quality of Sāriputta; in A 4:35 at A II 37,19 and in A 10:26 at A V 47,7 as a quality of the Buddha; and at Sn 627 (= Dhp 403) as a quality of a true brahmin.

[33] A 10:26 at A V 47,7.

[34] The *dukkhanirodhagāminī paṭipadā*, e.g. in D 2 at D I 84,3, this being the *majjhimā paṭipadā*, e.g. in M 3 at M I 15,26.

[35] M 77 at M II 11-22.

[36] DĀ 10 at T I 56a25 speaks simply of the "path", 道, while MĀ 9 at T I 430c1 has道跡知見, literally "knowledge and vision of the way and path", an expression which comes quite close to the Pāli version. T 13 at T I 238c27 has merely 慧見 "wisdom and vision". The Sanskrit fragment version of this purification reads *pr(a)[t](ipa)[d]* and thus appears to correspond to the Pāli version (cf. Schlingloff op. cit. p 11).

[37] EĀ 39.10 at T II 734b28: 於道之中智修.

[38] DĀ 10 at T I 56a25: 除; MĀ 9 at T I 430c1: 道跡斷智; T 13 at T I 238c28: 見慧愛斷.

[39] According to S 56:11 at S V 423,6, the Buddha only claimed to be fully awakened once his knowledge and vision (*ñāṇadassana*) in regard to all aspects of the four noble truths was thoroughly purified (*suvisuddha*).

[40] E.g. D 2 at D I 84,8: *evaṃ jānato evaṃ passato kāmāsavā pi cittaṃ vimuccati* ... (etc.).

[41] *Ñāṇadassana* refers to the insight into the distinction between the material body and consciousness in D 2 at D I 76,31; to knowing the minds of others in D 18 at D II 216,14; to knowing past and future in D 29 at D III 134,3+5; and to internal meditative vision of light in A 8:64 at A IV 302,12.

[42] D 33 at D III 223,2+17 the same recurs also in A 4:41 at A II 45,7+22.

[43] M 29 at M I 196,1 and M 30 at M I 202,21.

[44] M 24 at M I 148,30; MĀ 9 at T I 430c24 and EĀ 39.10 at T II 735a8.

[45] Vism 672,6: `*sotāpattimaggo sakadāgāmimaggo anāgāmimaggo arahattamaggo 'ti imesu pana catusu maggesu ñāṇaṃ ñāṇadassanavisuddhi nāma*.

[46] The 9th purification in the version at DĀ 10 at T I 56a25 reads 解脫, corresponding to the Pāli version's *vimutti* in D 34 at D III 288,23.

[47] A 4:194 at A II 195,35.

[48] MĀ 9 at T I 431c1: 不能答一句. A similar statement can also be reconstructed from a Sanskrit fragment of this discourse, published in *Sanskrithandschriften aus den Turfanfunden*, E. Waldschmidt (ed.), Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1968, vol 2 p 16.

[49] The commentary, Ps II 155, explains that Sāriputta asked this question in order for the conversation to get started. This commentarial gloss reveals that the commentator was also at a loss as to the rationale for this question.

[50] MĀ 9 at T I 430b26: 沙門瞿曇, corresponding to the Pāli expression *samaṇa Gotama*.

[51] MĀ 9 at T I 431b15: 如來.

[52] Cat. no. 1329 B1 in *Sanskrithandschriften aus den Turfanfunden*, H. Bechert (ed.), Wiesbaden: Steiner, 1989, vol 6 p 84 reads: *[ś]uddhyartham [śra]maṇe*.

[53] Vin I 286 reports the Buddha laying down which colours are to be used to die robes and Vin I 287 reports him requesting Ānanda to have the robes sewn together conforming to the pattern of paddy fields. As Ānanda became the Buddha's personal attendant only about twenty years after the Buddha's awakening (cf. Thag 1041), it is probable that the regulations concerning colour and cut of robes do not belong to the earliest stage in the history of the Buddhist monastic order.

[54] Rockhill: *Life of the Buddha*, London 1907 p 50.

[55] On Puṇṇa's early ordination cf. Malalasekera: *Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names*, Delhi 1998 p 222; on Sāriputta's ordination cf. Vin I 43.