

# CHAPTER II

## ANALYSIS OF MORNING AND EVENING CHANTING CEREMONY

### 2.1 Complete Pali-English Chanting Ceremony with Requisites

#### Morning Chanting Ceremony:

ARAHAM SAMMA-SAMBUDDHO BHAGAVA.

*THE BLESSED ONE IS WORTHY & RIGHTLY SELF-AWAKENED.*

BUDDHAM BHAGAVANTAM ABHIVADEMI.

*I BOW DOWN BEFORE THE AWAKENED, BLESSED ONE.*

**(BOW DOWN)**

SVAKKHATO BHAGAVATA DHAMMO.

*THE DHAMMA IS WELL-EXPOUNDED BY THE BLESSED ONE.*

DHAMMAM NAMASSAMI.

*I PAY HOMAGE TO THE DHAMMA.*

**(BOW DOWN)**

SUPATIPANNO BHAGAVATO SAVAKA-SANGHO.

*THE SANGHA OF THE BLESSED ONE'S DISCIPLES HAS PRACTICED WELL.*

SANGHAM NAMAMI.

*I PAY RESPECT TO THE SANGHA.*

**(BOW DOWN)**

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#### **INVOCATION (BY LEADER):**

YAMAMHA KHO MAYAM BHAGAVANTAM SARANAM GATA,

*WE HAVE GONE FOR REFUGE TO THE BLESSED ONE,*

(UDDISSA PABBAJITA) YO NO BHAGAVA SATTHA

*(HAVE GONE FORTH ON ACCOUNT OF) THE BLESSED ONE WHO IS OUR TEACHER*

YASSA CA MAYAM BHAGAVATO DHAMMAM ROCEMA.

*AND IN WHOSE DHAMMA WE DELIGHT.*

IMEHI SAKKAREHI TAM BHAGAVANTAM SASADDHAMMAM SASAVAKA-SANGHAM ABHIPUJAYAMA.

*WITH THESE OFFERINGS WE WORSHIP MOST HIGHLY THE BLESSED ONE TOGETHER W/THE TRUE DHAMMA & THE SANGHA OF HIS DISCIPLES*

HANDA MAYAM BUDDHASSA BHAGAVATO PUBBA-BHAGA-NAMAKARAM KAROMA SE:

*NOW LET US CHANT THE PRELIMINARY PASSAGE IN HOMAGE TO THE AWAKENED ONE, THE BLESSED ONE:*

**(ALL):**

[NAMO TASSA] BHAGAVATO ARAHATO SAMMA-SAMBUDDHASSA. (THREE TIMES.)

*HOMAGE TO THE BLESSED ONE, THE WORTHY ONE, THE RIGHTLY SELF-AWAKENED ONE.*

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#### **PRAISE FOR THE BUDDHA**

**(LEADER):**

HANDA MAYAM BUDDHABHITHUTIM KAROMA SE:

*NOW LET US GIVE HIGH PRAISE TO THE AWAKENED ONE:*

**(ALL):**

[YO SO TATHAGATO] ARAHAM SAMMA-SAMBUDDHO,

*HE WHO HAS ATTAINED THE TRUTH, THE WORTHY ONE, RIGHTLY SELF-AWAKENED,*

VIJJA-CARANA-SAMPANNO SUGATO LOKAVIDU,

*CONSUMMATE IN KNOWLEDGE & CONDUCT, ONE WHO HAS GONE THE GOOD WAY, KNOWER OF THE COSMOS,*

ANUTTARO PURISA-DAMMA-SARATHI SATTHA DEVA-MANUSSANAM BUDDHO BHAGAVA;

*UNEXCELLED TRAINER OF THOSE WHO CAN BE TAUGHT, TEACHER OF HUMAN & DIVINE BEINGS; AWAKENED; BLESSED;*

YO IMAM LOKAM SADEVAKAM SAMARAKAM SABRAHMAKAM,

SASSAMANA-BRAHMANIM PAJAM SADEVA-MANUSSAM SAYAM ABHIÑÑA SACCHIKATVA PAVEDESI.

*WHO MADE KNOWN -- HAVING REALIZED IT THROUGH DIRECT KNOWLEDGE -- THIS WORLD WITH ITS DEVAS, MARAS, & BRAHMAS, ITS*

*GENERATIONS WITH THEIR CONTEMPLATIVES & PRIESTS, THEIR RULERS & COMMON PEOPLE;*

YO DHAMMAM DESESI ADI-KALYANAM MAJJHE-KALYANAM PARIYOSANA-KALYANAM;

*WHO EXPLAINED THE DHAMMA FINE IN THE BEGINNING, FINE IN THE MIDDLE, FINE IN THE END;*

SATTHAM SABAÑJANAM KEVALA-PARIPUNNAM PARISUDDHAM BRAHMA-CARIYAM PAKASESI:

*WHO EXPOUNDED THE HOLY LIFE BOTH IN ITS PARTICULARS & IN ITS ESSENCE, ENTIRELY COMPLETE, SURPASSINGLY PURE:*

TAMAHAM BHAGAVANTAM ABHIPUJAYAMI, TAMAHAM BHAGAVANTAM SIRASA NAMAMI.

*I WORSHIP MOST HIGHLY THAT BLESSED ONE, TO THAT BLESSED ONE I BOW MY HEAD DOWN.*

**(BOW DOWN)**

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#### **PRAISE FOR THE DHAMMA**

**(LEADER):**

HANDA MAYAM DHAMMABHITHUTIM KAROMA SE:

*NOW LET US GIVE HIGH PRAISE TO THE DHAMMA:*

**(ALL):**

[YO SO SVAKKHATO] BHAGAVATA DHAMMO,

*THE DHAMMA WELL-EXPOUNDED BY THE BLESSED ONE,*

SANDITTHIKO AKALIKO EHIPASSIKO,  
*TO BE SEEN HERE & NOW, TIMELESS, INVITING ALL TO COME & SEE.*  
 OPANAYIKO PACCATTAM VEDITABBO VIÑÑUHI:  
*LEADING INWARD, TO BE SEEN BY THE WISE FOR THEMSELVES:*  
 TAMAHAM DHAMMAM ABHIPUJAYAMI, TAMAHAM DHAMMAM SIRASA NAMAMI.  
*I WORSHIP MOST HIGHLY THAT DHAMMA, TO THAT DHAMMA I BOW MY HEAD DOWN.*  
**(BOW DOWN)**

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**PRAISE FOR THE SANGHA**

**(LEADER):**

HANDA MAYAM SANGHABHITHUTIM KAROMA SE:  
*NOW LET US GIVE HIGH PRAISE TO THE SANGHA:*

**(ALL):**

[YO SO SUPATIPANNO] BHAGAVATO SAVAKA-SANGHO,  
*THE SANGHA OF THE BLESSED ONE'S DISCIPLES WHO HAVE PRACTICED WELL,*  
 UJUPATIPANNO BHAGAVATO SAVAKA-SANGHO,  
*THE SANGHA OF THE BLESSED ONE'S DISCIPLES WHO HAVE PRACTICED STRAIGHTFORWARDLY,*  
 ÑAYAPATIPANNO BHAGAVATO SAVAKA-SANGHO,  
*THE SANGHA OF THE BLESSED ONE'S DISCIPLES WHO HAVE PRACTICED METHODICALLY,*  
 SAMICIPATIPANNO BHAGAVATO SAVAKA-SANGHO,  
*THE SANGHA OF THE BLESSED ONE'S DISCIPLES WHO HAVE PRACTICED MASTERFULLY,*  
 YADIDAM CATTARI PURISA-YUGANI ATTHA PURISA-PUGGALA:  
*I.E., THE FOUR PAIRS -- THE EIGHT TYPES -- OF NOBLE ONES:*  
 ESA BHAGAVATO SAVAKA-SANGHO --  
*THAT IS THE SANGHA OF THE BLESSED ONE'S DISCIPLES --*  
 AHUNEYYO PAHUNEYYO DAKKHINEYYO AÑJALI-KARANIYO,  
*WORTHY OF GIFTS, WORTHY OF HOSPITALITY, WORTHY OF OFFERINGS, WORTHY OF RESPECT,*  
 ANUTTARAM PUÑÑAKKHETAM LOKASSA:  
*THE INCOMPARABLE FIELD OF MERIT FOR THE WORLD:*  
 TAMAHAM SANGHAM ABHIPUJAYAMI, TAMAHAM SANGHAM SIRASA NAMAMI.  
*I WORSHIP MOST HIGHLY THAT SANGHA, TO THAT SANGHA I BOW MY HEAD DOWN.*  
**(BOW DOWN)**

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**SALUTATION TO THE TRIPLE GEM & THE TOPICS FOR CHASTENED DISPASSION**

**(LEADER):**

HANDA MAYAM RATANATTAYAPPANAMAGATHAYO CEVA SAMVEGAVATTHU-PARIDIPAKA-PATHAÑCA BHANAMA SE:  
*NOW LET US RECITE THE STANZAS IN SALUTATION TO THE TRIPLE GEM TOGETHER WITH THE PASSAGE ON THE TOPICS INSPIRING A SENSE OF CHASTENED DISPASSION:*

**(ALL):**

[BUDDHO SUSUDDHO] KARUNA-MAHANNAVO,  
 YOCCANTA-SUDDHABBARA-NANA-LOCANO,  
 LOKASSA PAPUPAKILESA-GHATAKO:  
 VANDAMI BUDDHAM AHAMADARENA TAM.  
*THE BUDDHA, WELL-PURIFIED, WITH OCEAN-LIKE COMPASSION,*  
*POSSESSED OF THE EYE OF KNOWLEDGE COMPLETELY PURIFIED,*  
*DESTROYER OF THE EVILS & CORRUPTIONS OF THE WORLD:*  
*I REVERE THAT BUDDHA WITH DEVOTION.*  
 DHAMMO PADIPO VIYA TASSA SATTHUNO,  
 YO MAGGA-PAKAMATA-BHEDABHINNAKO,  
 LOKUTTARO YO CA TADATTHADIPANO:  
 VANDAMI DHAMMAM AHAMADARENA TAM.  
*THE TEACHER'S DHAMMA, LIKE A LAMP,*  
*DIVIDED INTO PATH, FRUITION, & THE DEATHLESS,*  
*BOTH TRANSCENDENT (ITSELF) & SHOWING THE WAY TO THAT GOAL:*  
*I REVERE THAT DHAMMA WITH DEVOTION.*  
 SANGHO SUKHETTABHYATIKHETTA-SAÑÑITO,  
 YO DITTHA-SANTO SUGATANUBODHAKO,  
 LOLAPPAHINO ARIYO SUMEDHASO:  
 VANDAMI SANGHAM AHAMADARENA TAM.  
*THE SANGHA, CALLED A FIELD BETTER THAN THE BEST,*  
*WHO HAVE SEEN PEACE, AWAKENING AFTER THE ONE GONE THE GOOD WAY,*  
*WHO HAVE ABANDONED CARELESSNESS -- THE NOBLE ONES, THE WISE:*  
*I REVERE THAT SANGHA WITH DEVOTION.*  
 ICCEVAMEKANTABHIPUJANEYYAKAM,  
 VATTHUTTAYAM VANDAYATABHISANKHATAM,  
 PUÑÑAM MAYA YAM MAMA SABBUPADDAVA,  
 MA HONTU VE TASSA PABHAVASIDDHIYA.  
*BY THE POWER OF THE MERIT I HAVE MADE*  
*IN GIVING REVERENCE TO THE TRIPLE GEM*  
*WORTHY OF ONLY THE HIGHEST HOMAGE,*  
*MAY ALL MY OBSTRUCTIONS CEASE TO BE.*

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IDHA TATHAGATO LOKE UPPANNO ARAHAM SAMMASAMBUDHO,  
*HERE, ONE ATTAINED TO THE TRUTH, WORTHY & RIGHTLY SELF-AWAKENED, HAS APPEARED IN THE WORLD,*  
 DHAMMO CA DESITO NIYYANIKO UPASAMIKO PARINIBBANIKO SAMBODHAGAMI SUGATAPPAVEDITO.

AND DHAMMA IS EXPLAINED, LEADING OUT (OF SAMBARA), CALMING, TENDING TOWARD TOTAL NIBBANA, GOING TO SELF-AWAKENING, DECLARED BY ONE WHO HAS GONE THE GOOD WAY.

MAYANTAM DHAMMAM SUTVA EVAM JANAMA,

HAVING HEARD THE DHAMMA, WE KNOW THIS:

JATIPI DUKKHA JARAPI DUKKHA MARANAMPI DUKKHAM,  
BIRTH IS STRESSFUL, AGING IS STRESSFUL, DEATH IS STRESSFUL,

SOKA-PARIDEVA-DUKKHA-DOMANASSUPAYASAPI DUKKHA,  
SORROW, LAMENTATION, PAIN, DISTRESS, & DESPAIR ARE STRESSFUL,

APPIYEHI SAMPAYOGO DUKKHO PIYEHI VIPPAYOGO DUKKHO YAMPICCHAM NA LABHATI TAMPI DUKKHAM

ASSOCIATION WITH THINGS DISLIKED IS STRESSFUL, SEPARATION FROM THINGS LIKED IS STRESSFUL, NOT GETTING WHAT ONE WANTS IS STRESSFUL,

SANKHITTENA PAÑCUPADANAKKHANDHA DUKKHA,

IN SHORT. THE FIVE CLINGING-AGGREGATES ARE STRESSFUL,

SEYYATHIDAM:

NAMELY:

RUPUPADANAKKHANDHO,

FORM AS A CLINGING-AGGREGATE,

VEDANUPADANAKKHANDHO,

FEELING AS A CLINGING-AGGREGATE,

SAÑÑUPADANAKKHANDHO,

PERCEPTION AS A CLINGING-AGGREGATE,

SANKHARUPADANAKKHANDHO,

MENTAL PROCESSES AS A CLINGING-AGGREGATE,

VIÑÑANUPADANAKKHANDHO.

CONSCIOUSNESS AS A CLINGING-AGGREGATE.

YESAM PARIÑÑAYA, DHARAMANO SO BHAGAVA, EVAM BAHULAM SAVAKE VINETI,

SO THAT THEY MIGHT FULLY UNDERSTAND THIS, THE BLESSED ONE, WHILE STILL ALIVE, OFTEN INSTRUCTED HIS LISTENERS IN THIS WAY

EVAM BHAGA CA PANASSA BHAGAVATO SAVAKESU ANUSASANI, BAHULAM PAVATTATI:

MANY TIMES DID HE EMPHASIZE THIS PART OF HIS ADMONITION:

"RUPAM ANICCAM,

FORM IS IMPERMANENT,

VEDANA ANICCA,

FEELING IS IMPERMANENT,

SAÑÑA ANICCA,

PERCEPTION IS IMPERMANENT,

SANKHARA ANICCA,

MENTAL PROCESSES ARE IMPERMANENT,

VIÑÑANAM ANICCAM,

CONSCIOUSNESS IS IMPERMANENT,

RUPAM ANATTA,

FORM IS NOT-SELF,

VEDANA ANATTA,

FEELING IS NOT-SELF,

SAÑÑA ANATTA,

PERCEPTION IS NOT-SELF,

SANKHARA ANATTA,

MENTAL PROCESSES ARE NOT-SELF,

VIÑÑANAM ANATTA,

CONSCIOUSNESS IS NOT-SELF,

SABBE SANKHARA ANICCA,

ALL PROCESSES ARE IMPERMANENT,

SABBE DHAMMA ANATTATI."

ALL PHENOMENA ARE NOT-SELF."

TE (WOMEN: TA ) MAYAM,

OTINNAMHA JATIYA JARA-MARANENA,

SOKEHI PARIDEVEHI DUKKHEHI DOMANASSEHI UPAYASEHI,

DUKKHOTINNA DUKKHA-PARETA,

ALL OF US, BESET BY BIRTH, AGING, & DEATH, BY SORROWS, LAMENTATIONS, PAINS, DISTRESSES, & DESPAIRS, BESET BY STRESS,

OVERCOME WITH STRESS, (CONSIDER),

"APPEVA NAMIMASSA KEVALASSA DUKKHAKKHANDHASSA ANTAKIRIYA PAÑÑAYETHATI!"

"O, THAT THE END OF THIS ENTIRE MASS OF SUFFERING & STRESS MIGHT BE KNOWN!"

\* (MONKS & NOVICES):

CIRA-PARINIBBUTAMPI TAM BHAGAVANTAM UDDISSA ARAHANTAM SAMMA-SAMBUDDHAM,

SADDHA AGARASMA ANAGARIYAM PABBAJITA.

THOUGH THE TOTAL LIBERATION OF THE BLESSED ONE, THE WORTHY ONE, THE RIGHTLY SELF-AWAKENED ONE, WAS LONG AGO, WE HAVE GONE FORTH IN FAITH FROM HOME TO HOMELESSNESS IN DEDICATION TO HIM.

TASMIM BHAGAVATI BRAHMACARIYAM CARAMA,

WE PRACTICE THAT BLESSED ONE'S HOLY LIFE,

(BHIKKHUNAM SIKKHA-SAJIVA-SAMAPANNA.

FULLY ENDOWED WITH THE BHIKKHUS' TRAINING & LIVELIHOOD.)

TAM NO BRAHMACARIYAM, IMASSA KEVALASSA DUKKHAKKHANDHASSA ANTAKIRIYAYA SAMVATTATU.

MAY THIS HOLY LIFE OF OURS BRING ABOUT THE END OF THIS ENTIRE MASS OF SUFFERING & STRESS.

\*\* (OTHERS CHANT):

CIRA-PARINIBBUTAMPI TAM BHAGAVANTAM SARANAM GATA,

DHAMMAÑCA BHIKKHU-SANGHAÑCA,

*THOUGH THE TOTAL LIBERATION OF THE BLESSED ONE, THE WORTHY ONE, THE RIGHTLY SELF-AWAKENED ONE, WAS LONG AGO, WE HAVE GONE FOR REFUGE IN HIM, IN THE DHAMMA, & IN THE BHIKKHU SANGHA.  
TASSA BHAGAVATO SASANAM YATHA-SATI YATHA-BALAM MANASIKAROMA, ANUPATIPAJJAMA, SASANO PATIPATTI,  
WE ATTEND TO THE INSTRUCTION OF THE BLESSED ONE, AS FAR AS OUR MINDFULNESS & STRENGTH WILL ALLOW, AND WE PRACTICE AS A RESULT.*

*IMASSA KEVALASSA DUKKHAKKHANDHASSA ANTAKIRIYAYA SAMVATTATU.*

*MAY THIS PRACTICE OF OURS BRING ABOUT THE END OF THIS ENTIRE MASS OF SUFFERING & STRESS.*

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**REFLECTION AT THE MOMENT OF USING THE REQUISITES**

**(LEADER):**

*HANDA MAYAM TANKHANIKA-PACCAVEKKHA.NAPATHAM BHANAMA SE:*

*NOW LET US RECITE THE PASSAGE FOR REFLECTION AT THE MOMENT (OF USING THE REQUISITES):*

**(ALL):**

*[PATISANKHA YONISO] CIVARAM PATISEVAMI,*

*CONSIDERING IT THOUGHTFULLY, I USE THE ROBE,*

*YAVADEVASITASSA PATIGHATAYA,*

*SIMPLY TO COUNTERACT THE COLD,*

*UNHASSA PATIGHATAYA,*

*TO COUNTERACT THE HEAT,*

*DAMSA-MAKASA-VATATAPA-SIRIMSAPA-SAMPHASSANAM PATIGHATAYA,*

*TO COUNTERACT THE TOUCH OF FLIES, MOSQUITOES, WIND, SUN, & REPTILES;*

*YAVADEVASITASSA PATIGHATAYA,*

*SIMPLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF COVERING THE PARTS OF THE BODY THAT CAUSE SHAME.*

*PATISANKHA YONISO PINDAPATAM PATISEVAMI,*

*CONSIDERING IT THOUGHTFULLY, I USE ALMS FOOD,*

*NEVA DAVAYA NA MADAYA NA MANDANAYA NA VIBHUSANAYA,*

*NOT PLAYFULLY, NOR FOR INTOXICATION, NOR FOR PUTTING ON BULK, NOR FOR BEAUTIFICATION,*

*YAVADEVASITASSA PATIGHATAYA, .THITIYA YAPANAYA VIHIMSUPARATIYA BRAHMACARIYA NUGGAHAYA,*

*BUT SIMPLY FOR THE SURVIVAL & CONTINUANCE OF THIS BODY, FOR ENDING ITS AFFLICTIONS, FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE HOLY LIFE,*

*ITI PURANAÑCA VEDANAM PATIHANKHAMI NAVAÑCA VEDANAM NA UPPADESSAMI,*

*(THINKING,) THUS WILL I DESTROY OLD FEELINGS (OF HUNGER) AND NOT CREATE NEW FEELINGS (FROM OVEREATING).*

*YATRA CA ME BHAVISSATI ANAVAJJATA CA PHASU-VIHARO CATI.*

*I WILL MAINTAIN MYSELF, BE BLAMELESS, & LIVE IN COMFORT.*

*PATISANKHA YONISO SENASANAM PATISEVAMI,*

*CONSIDERING IT THOUGHTFULLY, I USE THE LODGING,*

*YAVADEVASITASSA PATIGHATAYA,*

*SIMPLY TO COUNTERACT THE COLD,*

*UNHASSA PATIGHATAYA,*

*TO COUNTERACT THE HEAT,*

*DAMSA-MAKASA-VATATAPA-SIRIMSAPA-SAMPHASSANAM PATIGHATAYA,*

*TO COUNTERACT THE TOUCH OF FLIES, MOSQUITOES, WIND, SUN, & REPTILES;*

*YAVADEVASITASSA PATIGHATAYA,*

*SIMPLY FOR PROTECTION FROM THE INCLEMENCIES OF WEATHER AND FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF SECLUSION.*

*PATISANKHA YONISO GILANA-PACCAYA-BHESAJJA-PARIKKHARAM PATISEVAMI,*

*CONSIDERING THEM THOUGHTFULLY, I USE MEDICINAL REQUISITES FOR CURING THE SICK,*

*YAVADEVASITASSA PATIGHATAYA,*

*SIMPLY TO COUNTERACT ANY PAINS OF ILLNESS THAT HAVE ARISEN,*

*ABYAPAJJHA-PARAMATAYA 'TI.*

*AND FOR MAXIMUM FREEDOM FROM DISEASE.*

**Evening Chanting Ceremony:**

*ARAHAM SAMMA-SAMBUDDHO BHAGAVA.*

*THE BLESSED ONE IS WORTHY & RIGHTLY SELF-AWAKENED.*

*BUDDHAM BHAGAVANTAM ABHIVADEMI.*

*I BOW DOWN BEFORE THE AWAKENED, BLESSED ONE.*

**(BOW DOWN)**

*SVAKKHATO BHAGAVATA DHAMMO.*

*THE DHAMMA IS WELL-EXPOUNDED BY THE BLESSED ONE.*

*DHAMMAM NAMASSAMI.*

*I PAY HOMAGE TO THE DHAMMA.*

**(BOW DOWN)**

*SUPATIPANNO BHAGAVATO SAVAKA-SANGHO.*

*THE SANGHA OF THE BLESSED ONE'S DISCIPLES HAS PRACTICED WELL.*

*SANGHAM NAMAMI.*

*I PAY RESPECT TO THE SANGHA.*

**(BOW DOWN)**

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**INVOCATION (BY LEADER):**

*YAMAMHA KHO MAYAM BHAGAVANTAM SARANAM GATA,*

*WE HAVE GONE FOR REFUGE TO THE BLESSED ONE,*

*(UDDISSA PABBAJITA) YO NO BHAGAVA SATTHA*

*(HAVE GONE FORTH ON ACCOUNT OF) THE BLESSED ONE WHO IS OUR TEACHER*

*YASSA CA MAYAM BHAGAVATO DHAMMAM ROCEMA.*

*AND IN WHOSE DHAMMA WE DELIGHT.*

IMEHI SAKKAREHI TAM BHAGAVANTAM SASADDHAMMAM SASAVAKA-SANGHAM ABHIPUJAYAMA.

*WITH THESE OFFERINGS WE WORSHIP MOST HIGHLY THAT BLESSED ONE TOGETHER W/THE TRUE DHAMMA & THE SANGHA OF HIS DISCIPLES*

HANDADANI MAYANTAM BHAGAVANTAM VACAYA ABHIGAYITUM PUBBA-BHAGA-NAMAKARAÑCEVA BUDDHANUSSATI-NAYAÑCA KAROMA SE:

*NOW LET US CHANT THE PRELIMINARY PASSAGE IN HOMAGE TO THE BLESSED ONE, TOGETHER WITH THE GUIDE TO THE RECOLLECTION OF THE BUDDHA:*

**(ALL):**

[NAMO TASSA] BHAGAVATO ARAHATO SAMMA-SAMBUDDHASSA. **(THREE TIMES.)**  
*HOMAGE TO THE BLESSED ONE, THE WORTHY ONE, THE RIGHTLY SELF-AWAKENED ONE.*

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**A GUIDE TO THE RECOLLECTION OF THE BUDDHA**

[TAM KHO PANA BHAGAVANTAM] EVAM KALYANO KITTISADDO ABBHUGGATO,  
*THIS FINE REPORT OF THE BLESSED ONE'S REPUTATION HAS SPREAD FAR & WIDE:*

ITIPĪ SO BHAGAVA ARAHAM SAMMA-SAMBUDDHO,

*HE IS A BLESSED ONE, A WORTHY ONE, A RIGHTLY SELF-AWAKENED ONE,*

VIJJA-CARANA-SAMPANNO SUGATO LOKAVIDU,

*CONSUMMATE IN KNOWLEDGE & CONDUCT, ONE WHO HAS GONE THE GOOD WAY, KNOWER OF THE COSMOS,*

ANUTTARO PURISA-DAMMA-SARATHI SATTHA DEVA-MANUSSANAM BUDDHO BHAGAVA'ŪTI.

*UNEXCELLED TRAINER OF THOSE WHO CAN BE TAUGHT, TEACHER OF HUMAN & DIVINE BEINGS; AWAKENED; BLESSED.*

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**VERSES IN CELEBRATION OF THE BUDDHA**

**(LEADER):**

HANDA MAYAM BUDDHABHIGITIM KAROMA SE:

*NOW LET US CHANT IN CELEBRATION OF THE BUDDHA:*

**(ALL):**

[BUDDHVARAHANTA]-VARATADIGUNABHIYUTTO,

*THE BUDDHA, ENDOWED WITH SUCH VIRTUES AS HIGHEST WORTHINESS:*

SUDDHABHĪÑANAKARUNAHI SAMAGATATTO,

*IN HIM, PURITY, SUPREME KNOWLEDGE, & COMPASSION CONVERGE.*

BODHESI YO SUJANATAM KAMALAM VA SURO,

*HE AWAKENS GOOD PEOPLE LIKE THE SUN DOES THE LOTUS.*

VANDAMAHAM TAMARANAM SIRASA JINENDAM.

*I REVERE WITH MY HEAD THAT PEACEFUL ONE, THE CONQUEROR SUPREME.*

BUDDHO YO SABBA-PANINAM SARANAM KHEMAM-UTTAMAM.

*THE BUDDHA WHO FOR ALL BEINGS IS THE SECURE, THE HIGHEST REFUGE,*

PATHAMANUSSATITTHANAM VANDAMI TAM SIRENAHAM,

*THE FIRST THEME FOR RECOLLECTION: I REVERE HIM WITH MY HEAD.*

BUDDHASSAHAŚMI DASO **(WOMEN: DASI) VA, BUDDHO ME SAMIKISSARO.**

*I AM THE BUDDHA'S SERVANT, THE BUDDHA IS MY SOVEREIGN MASTER,*

BUDDHO DUKKHAŚSA GHATA CA VIDHATA CA HITASSA ME.

*THE BUDDHA IS A DESTROYER OF SUFFERING & A PROVIDER OF WELFARE FOR ME.*

BUDDHASSAHAM NIYYADEMI SARIRANJIVITANĀCIDAM.

*TO THE BUDDHA I DEDICATE THIS BODY & THIS LIFE OF MINE.*

VANDANTOHAM (VANDANTIHAM) CARISSAMI BUDDHASSEVA SUBODHITAM.

*I WILL FARE WITH REVERENCE FOR THE BUDDHA'S GENUINE AWAKENING.*

NATTHI ME SARANAM AÑÑAM, BUDDHO ME SARANAM VARAM:

*I HAVE NO OTHER REFUGE, THE BUDDHA IS MY FOREMOST REFUGE:*

ETENA SACCA-VAJENA, VADDHEYYAM SATTHU-SASANE.

*BY THE SPEAKING OF THIS TRUTH, MAY I GROW IN THE TEACHER'S INSTRUCTION.*

BUDDHAM ME VANDAMANENA (VANDAMANAYA)

YAM PUÑÑAM PASUTAM IDHA, SABBE PI ANTARAYA ME, MAHESUM TASSA TEJASA.

*THROUGH THE POWER OF THE MERIT HERE PRODUCED BY MY REVERENCE FOR THE BUDDHA,*

*MAY ALL MY OBSTRUCTIONS CEASE TO BE.*

**(BOW DOWN AND SAY):**

KAYENA VACAYA VA CETASA VA,

BUDDHE KUKAMMAM PAKATAM MAYA YAM,

BUDDHO PATIGGANHATU ACCAYANTAM,

KALANTARE SAMVARITUM VA BUDDHE.

*WHATEVER BAD KAMMA I HAVE DONE TO THE BUDDHA*

*BY BODY, BY SPEECH, OR BY MIND,*

*MAY THE BUDDHA ACCEPT MY ADMISSION OF IT,*

*SO THAT IN THE FUTURE I MAY SHOW RESTRAINT TOWARD THE BUDDHA.*

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**A GUIDE TO THE RECOLLECTION OF THE DHAMMA**

**(LEADER):**

HANDA MAYAM DHAMMANUSSATI-NAYAM KAROMA SE:

*NOW LET US RECITE THE GUIDE TO THE RECOLLECTION OF THE DHAMMA:*

**(ALL):**

[SVAKKHATO] BHAGAVATA DHAMMO,

*THE DHAMMA IS WELL-EXPUNDED BY THE BLESSED ONE,*

SANDITTHIKO AKALIKO EHIPASSIKO,

*TO BE SEEN HERE & NOW, TIMELESS, INVITING ALL TO COME & SEE,*

OPANAYIKO PACCATTAM VEDITABBO VIÑÑUHITI.

*LEADING INWARD, TO BE SEEN BY THE WISE FOR THEMSELVES.*

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**VERSES IN CELEBRATION OF THE DHAMMA****(LEADER):**

HANDA MAYAM DHAMMABHIGITIM KAROMA SE:

*NOW LET US CHANT IN CELEBRATION OF THE DHAMMA:***(ALL):**

[SVAKKHATATA] DIGUNA-YOGAVASENA SEYYO,  
*SUPERIOR, THROUGH HAVING SUCH VIRTUES AS BEING WELL-EXPOUNDED,*  
 YO MAGGA-PAKA-PARIYATTI-VIMOKKHA-BHEDO,  
*DIVIDED INTO PATH & FRUIT, STUDY & EMANCIPATION,*  
 DHAMMO KULOKA-PATANA TADADHARI-DHARI.  
*THE DHAMMA PROTECTS THOSE WHO HOLD TO IT FROM FALLING INTO MISERABLE WORLDS.*  
 VANDAMAHAM TAMAHARAM VARA-DHAMMAM-ETAM.  
*I REVERE THAT FOREMOST DHAMMA, THE DESTROYER OF DARKNESS.*  
 DHAMMO YO SABBA-PANINAM SARANAM KHEMAMUTTAMAM.  
*THE DHAMMA THAT FOR ALL BEINGS IS THE SECURE, THE HIGHEST REFUGE,*  
 DUTIYANUSSATITTHANAM VANDAMI TAM SIRENAHAM,  
*THE SECOND THEME FOR RECOLLECTION: I REVERE IT WITH MY HEAD.*  
 DHAMMASSAHASMI DASO (DASI) VA DHAMMO ME SAMIKISSARO.  
*I AM THE DHAMMA'S SERVANT, THE DHAMMA IS MY SOVEREIGN MASTER,*  
 DHAMMO DUKKHASSA GHATA CA VIDHATA CA HITASSA ME.  
*THE DHAMMA IS A DESTROYER OF SUFFERING & A PROVIDER OF WELFARE FOR ME.*  
 DHAMMASSAHAM NIYYADEMI SARIRANĪVITAŃCIDAM.  
*TO THE DHAMMA I DEDICATE THIS BODY & THIS LIFE OF MINE.*  
 VANDANTOHAM (VANDANTIHAM) CARISSAMI DHAMMASSEVA SUDHAMMATAM.  
*I WILL FARE WITH REVERENCE FOR THE DHAMMA'S GENUINE RIGHTNESS.*  
 NATTHI ME SARANAM AŃŃAM, DHAMMO ME SARANAM VARAM:  
*I HAVE NO OTHER REFUGE, THE DHAMMA IS MY FOREMOST REFUGE:*  
 ETENA SACCA-VAJENA, VADDHEYAM SATTHU-SASANE.  
*BY THE SPEAKING OF THIS TRUTH, MAY I GROW IN THE TEACHER'S INSTRUCTION.*  
 DHAMMAM ME VANDAMANENA (VANDAMANAYA) YAM PUŃŃAM PASUTAM IDHA,  
 SABBE PI ANTARAYA ME, MAHESUM TASSA TEJASA.  
*THROUGH THE POWER OF THE MERIT HERE PRODUCED BY MY REVERENCE FOR THE DHAMMA,*  
*MAY ALL MY OBSTRUCTIONS CEASE TO BE.*

**(BOW DOWN AND SAY):**

KAYENA VACAYA VA CETASA VA,  
 DHAMME KUKAMMAM PAKATAM MAYA YAM,  
 DHAMMO PATIGGANHATU ACCAYANTAM,  
 KALANTARE SAMVARITUM VA DHAMME.  
*WHATEVER BAD KAMMA I HAVE DONE TO THE DHAMMA*  
*BY BODY, BY SPEECH, OR BY MIND,*  
*MAY THE DHAMMA ACCEPT MY ADMISSION OF IT,*  
*SO THAT IN THE FUTURE I MAY SHOW RESTRAINT TOWARD THE DHAMMA.*

\* \* \*

**A GUIDE TO THE RECOLLECTION OF THE SANGHA****(LEADER):**

HANDA MAYAM SANGHANUSSATI-NAYAM KAROMA SE:

*NOW LET US RECITE THE GUIDE TO THE RECOLLECTION OF THE SANGHA:***(ALL):**

[SUPATIPANNO] BHAGAVATO SAVAKA-SANGHO,  
*THE SANGHA OF THE BLESSED ONE'S DISCIPLES WHO HAVE PRACTICED WELL,*  
 UJUPATIPANNO BHAGAVATO SAVAKA-SANGHO,  
*THE SANGHA OF THE BLESSED ONE'S DISCIPLES WHO HAVE PRACTICED STRAIGHTFORWARDLY,*  
 ŃĀYA-PATIPANNO BHAGAVATO SAVAKA-SANGHO,  
*THE SANGHA OF THE BLESSED ONE'S DISCIPLES WHO HAVE PRACTICED METHODICALLY,*  
 SAMICI-PATIPANNO BHAGAVATO SAVAKA-SANGHO,  
*THE SANGHA OF THE BLESSED ONE'S DISCIPLES WHO HAVE PRACTICED MASTERFULLY,*  
 YADIDAM CATTARI PURISA-YUGANI ATTHA PURISA-PUGGALA:  
*I.E., THE FOUR PAIRS -- THE EIGHT TYPES -- OF NOBLE ONES:*  
 ESA BHAGAVATO SAVAKA-SANGHO --  
*THAT IS THE SANGHA OF THE BLESSED ONE'S DISCIPLES --*  
 AHUNEYYO PAHUNEYYO DAKKHINEYYO AŃĀALI-KARANIYO,  
*WORTHY OF GIFTS, WORTHY OF HOSPITALITY, WORTHY OF OFFERINGS, WORTHY OF RESPECT,*  
 ANUTTARAM PUŃŃAKKHETAM LOKASSATI.  
*THE INCOMPARABLE FIELD OF MERIT FOR THE WORLD.*

\* \* \*

**VERSES IN CELEBRATION OF THE SANGHA****(LEADER):**

HANDA MAYAM SANGHABHIGITIM KAROMA SE:

*NOW LET US CHANT IN CELEBRATION OF THE SANGHA:***(ALL):**

[SADDHAMMAJO] SUPATIPATTI-GUNADIYUTTO,  
*BORN OF THE TRUE DHAMMA, ENDOWED WITH SUCH VIRTUES AS GOOD PRACTICE,*  
 YOTTHABBDHO ARIYA-PUGGALA-SANGHA-SETTHO,  
*THE SUPREME SANGHA FORMED OF THE EIGHT TYPES OF NOBLE ONES,*

SILADIDHAMMA-PAVARASAYA-KAYA-CITTO:  
 GUIDED IN BODY & MIND BY SUCH PRINCIPLES AS MORALITY:  
 VANDAMAHAM TAM-ARIYANA-GANAM SUSUDDHAM.  
 I REVERE THAT GROUP OF NOBLE ONES WELL-PURIFIED.  
 SANGHO YO SABBA-PANINAM SARANAM KHEMAMUTTAMAM.  
 THE SANGHA THAT FOR ALL BEINGS IS THE SECURE, THE HIGHEST REFUGE,  
 TATIYANUSSATITTHANAM VANDAMI TAM SIRENAHAM,  
 THE THIRD THEME FOR RECOLLECTION: I REVERE IT WITH MY HEAD.  
 SANGHASSAHASMI DASO (DASI) VA SANGHO ME SAMIKISSARO.  
 I AM THE SANGHA'S SERVANT, THE SANGHA IS MY SOVEREIGN MASTER,  
 SANGHO DUKKHASSA GHATA CA VIDHATA CA HITASSA ME.  
 THE SANGHA IS A DESTROYER OF SUFFERING & A PROVIDER OF WELFARE FOR ME.  
 SANGHASSAHAM NIYYADEMI SARIRANJIVITANCIDAM.  
 TO THE SANGHA I DEDICATE THIS BODY & THIS LIFE OF MINE.  
 VANDANTOHAM (VANDANTIHAM) CARISSAMI SANGHASSOPATIPANNATAM.  
 I WILL FARE WITH REVERENCE FOR THE SANGHA'S GOOD PRACTICE.  
 NATTHI ME SARANAM ANÑAM, SANGHO ME SARANAM VARAM:  
 I HAVE NO OTHER REFUGE, THE SANGHA IS MY FOREMOST REFUGE:  
 ETENA SACCA-VAJJENA, VADDEHYAM SATTHU-SASANE.  
 BY THE SPEAKING OF THIS TRUTH, MAY I GROW IN THE TEACHER'S INSTRUCTION.  
 SANGHAM ME VANDAMANENA (VANDAMANAYA) YAM PUÑÑAM PASUTAM IDHA,  
 SABBE PI ANTARAYA ME, MAHESUM TASSA TEJASA.  
 THROUGH THE POWER OF THE MERIT HERE PRODUCED BY MY REVERENCE FOR THE SANGHA,  
 MAY ALL MY OBSTRUCTIONS CEASE TO BE.

**(BOW DOWN AND SAY):**

KAYENA VACAYA VA CETASA VA,  
 SANGHE KUKAMMAM PAKATAM MAYA YAM,  
 SANGHO PATIGGANHATU ACCAYANTAM,  
 KALANTARE SAMVARITUM VA SANGHE.  
 WHATEVER BAD KAMMA I HAVE DONE TO THE SANGHA  
 BY BODY, BY SPEECH, OR BY MIND,  
 MAY THE SANGHA ACCEPT MY ADMISSION OF IT,  
 SO THAT IN THE FUTURE I MAY SHOW RESTRAINT TOWARD THE SANGHA.  
 \* \* \*

**REFLECTION AFTER USING THE REQUISITES**

**(LEADER):**

HANDA MAYAM ATITA-PACCAVEKKHANAPATHAM BHANAMA SE:  
 NOW LET US RECITE THE PASSAGE FOR REFLECTION ON THE PAST (USE OF THE REQUISITES):

**(ALL):**

[AJJA MAYA] APACCAVEKKHITVA YAM CIVARAM PARIBHUTTAM,  
 WHATEVER ROBE I USED TODAY WITHOUT CONSIDERATION,  
 TAM YAVADEVA SITASSA PATIGHATAYA,  
 WAS SIMPLY TO COUNTERACT THE COLD,  
 UNHASSA PATIGHATAYA,  
 TO COUNTERACT THE HEAT,  
 DAMSA-MAKASA-VATATAPA-SIRIMSAPA-SAMPHASSANAM PATIGHATAYA,  
 TO COUNTERACT THE TOUCH OF FLIES, MOSQUITOES, WIND, SUN, & REPTILES;  
 YAVADEVA HIRIKOPINA-PATICCHADANATTHAM.  
 SIMPLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF COVERING THE PARTS OF THE BODY THAT CAUSE SHAME.  
 AJJA MAYA APACCAVEKKHITVA YO PINDAPATTO PARIBHUTTO,  
 WHATEVER ALMS FOOD I USED TODAY WITHOUT CONSIDERATION,  
 SO NEVA DAVAYA NA MADAYA NA MANDANAYA NA VIBHUSANAYA,  
 WAS NOT USED PLAYFULLY, NOR FOR INTOXICATION, NOR FOR PUTTING ON BULK, NOR FOR BEAUTIFICATION,  
 YAVADEVA IMASSA KAYASSA. THITTIYA YAPANAYA VIHIMSUPARATIYA BRAHMACARIYANUGGAHAYA,  
 BUT SIMPLY FOR THE SURVIVAL & CONTINUANCE OF THIS BODY, FOR ENDING ITS AFFLICTIONS, FOR THE SUPPORT OF THE HOLY LIFE,  
 ITI PURANAÑCA VEDANAM PATIHANKHAMI NAVAÑCA VEDANAM NA UPPADESSAMI,  
 (THINKING,) THUS WILL I DESTROY OLD FEELINGS (OF HUNGER) AND NOT CREATE NEW FEELINGS (FROM OVEREATING).  
 YATRA CA ME BHAVISSATI ANAVAJJATA CA PHASU-VIHARO CATI.  
 I WILL MAINTAIN MYSELF, BE BLAMELESS, & LIVE IN COMFORT.  
 AJJA MAYA APACCAVEKKHITVA YAM SENASANAM PARIBHUTTAM,  
 WHATEVER LODGING I USED TODAY WITHOUT CONSIDERATION,  
 TAM YAVADEVA SITASSA PATIGHATAYA,  
 WAS SIMPLY TO COUNTERACT THE COLD,  
 UNHASSA PATIGHATAYA,  
 TO COUNTERACT THE HEAT,  
 .DAMSA-MAKASA-VATATAPA-SIRIMSAPA-SAMPHASSANAM PATIGHATAYA,  
 TO COUNTERACT THE TOUCH OF FLIES, MOSQUITOES, WIND, SUN, & REPTILES;  
 YAVADEVA UTPARISSAYA-VINODANAM PATISALLANARAMATTHAM.  
 SIMPLY FOR PROTECTION FROM THE INCLEMENCIES OF WEATHER AND FOR THE ENJOYMENT OF SECLUSION.  
 AJJA MAYA APACCAVEKKHITVA YO GILANA-PACCAYA-BHESAJJA-PARIKKHARO PARIBHUTTO,  
 WHATEVER MEDICINAL REQUISITE FOR CURING THE SICK I USED TODAY WITHOUT CONSIDERATION,  
 SO YAVADEVA UPPANNANAM VEYYABADHIKANAM VEDANANAM PATIGHATAYA,  
 WAS SIMPLY TO COUNTERACT ANY PAINS OF ILLNESS THAT HAD ARISEN,  
 ABYAPAJJHA-PARAMATAYATI.  
 AND FOR MAXIMUM FREEDOM FROM DISEASE.

## 2.2 Concerning the Morning Chanting Ceremony

During a recreational visit to a cave temple in “Pattalung” province [founded by Phra Ajahn Sumedho], to enjoy the experience of solitude and the occasional overflight of bats – a few ‘classes’ of students entered the cave temple to recite the chanting ceremony as well as listen to a dhamma-talk, as part of their field trip. It was interesting to witness how the students merely parroted the chanting verses recited by the monks, with no time or allowance for questioning by the students. On this particular day, the students sat separated, boys to the left, facing the altar; girls on the right facing the altar. These students were practicing the morning recitation order created by King Rama IV. The old process of repeating what was said by the teacher was the method of instruction – not much intellectual activity by the students.

One may recall the wisdom found in the Kalama Sutta, that Buddhadasa and other Thai philosophers decide to invoke regularly; however here, only a quote from the revisionistic and forward thinking monk: “Thus in Buddhism there is no dogmatic system, there is no pressure to believe without the right to examine and decide for oneself. This is the greatest special quality of Buddhism which keeps its practitioners from being the intellectual slaves of anyone... Intellectual and spiritual freedom is best. ...Parents should teach and train their children to know how to understand the words and instructions they receive, to see how reasonable the words are and what kind of results will come from them. When parents teach or tell their children anything, the children should understand and see the benefits or practicing what they are told.<sup>1</sup>” If a child does not understand something, youths should question adults.

It was interesting to observe how the schoolchildren were separated by sexes. In the regularly scheduled chanting ‘ceremony’ in Thai Buddhist temples, the sexes are not separated, but instead, monks sit in the front, novices are behind, and laity and ‘mae-chi’ behind or away from the ordained. Therefore, separation by sexes is incidental, merely because of ‘ordained status’. The ‘intellectual usefulness or potential for intellectual development’ of the fieldtrip may be questioned, as the students merely echoed what the monk chanted. The purpose of the Kalama Sutta is to remind the person as a listener/reader to have wisdom before one has confidence or faith in a teaching.

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<sup>1</sup> Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, *Keys to Natural Truth* (Bangkok: Mental Health Publishing 1999) p. 5-6



On 5 October 2005, an appointment was made at Wat Rajathiwat to interview Ven. Phra Thepvisuddhikawi, the current Vice-Rector at Mahamakut Buddhist University concerning matters inside this thesis; however, after he determined this thesis work was ‘good’ he suggested another ‘friend’ to interview. While waiting for this ‘friend’ to arrive, another monk associate of his, suggested a visit to talk to the former Vice-Rector of Academic Affairs of Mahamakut Buddhist University, a prolific writer/meditation master and current Lord Abbot of Wat Somanas Vihara, the Venerable Phra Dhammavisuddhikavi. The advice was taken, and following the day’s torrential downpour, a very wet student without an umbrella interviewed Ven. Phra Dhammavisuddhikavi, in his *kuti*, concerning chanting. Although he declined to read the ‘final draft’ of this thesis due to his large workload, he generously submitted to questioning, generously gave a ‘private lecture’ concerning chanting and the purpose, and gave the researcher two published books listed in the bibliography, as a gift and study-aid. However, the purposes of chanting as Phra Thepvisuddhikavi imparted, is four-fold:

- As a Recollection – The Buddha, Dhamma & Sangha; the body; brahma-viharas; others...
- For Protection - against harmful ‘things’ such as snakes, spirits, spiders, soldiers, etc...
- For Concentration – to strengthen one’s mental capabilities
- To Gain Merit – the accumulation of good deeds for the future, for a better rebirth

Spiro would determine chants for protection are aspects of his *apotropaic Buddhism*. Spiro would determine chants for merit are aspects of his *kammatic Buddhism*. Spiro would determine chants used for concentration are aspects of *nibbanic Buddhism*. A Buddhist monk would determine his chant to be an act of reverence or part of his daily non-compartmentalized routine, which make up parts of Spiro’s *three systems*.<sup>2</sup>

Now, to the ‘historical’ chanting ceremony found in Thailand as observed and practiced – in and outside of Thailand in many Thai Buddhist temples: the opening activity usually starts with a senior monk lighting the alter candles and incense sticks [sometimes a junior monk assists with providing the ‘flame’], and then returns to sit in his prescribed position, amongst the other monks facing the Buddha image in the temple – much like a Muslim imam [prayer leader] who sits with the crowd. Some places lack the large Buddha images [poorer, rural temples under construction, have small mass manufactured images], and others have a Buddha image but no alter, no candles/incense, and lack flowers – all items one expects to see at a temple. Offerings

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<sup>2</sup> Melford E. Spiro, *Buddhism and Society – A Great Tradition and its Burmese Vicissitudes* (Berkeley: U. Of California Press 1982) p. 12

may be presented to the image, and after the punctual monks arrive and prostrate three times towards the Buddha image<sup>3</sup>, the ceremonial chanting begins.

Monks arriving late to the daily prescribed chanting usually seek their place by ‘non-verbal communication’ and try to sit according to ‘rank’, then bow three times<sup>\*</sup>, beginning to chant along with the rest of the Sangha. It is interesting how, knowing the daily time for chanting and even after hearing the ‘bell-ringing’, monks continue to ‘filter’ into the temple late. I was always on time, and often early, because as a foreign monk, I had to live up to a higher standard either expected of me, or forced upon me by myself. My perception is that it is best to be on time, so one does not disturb others. The ‘silent’ disruption of the shoulder taping causes a mere minor break in individual monks performing their ‘reverence and salutations’, as well as ‘meditative’ concentration; thus, a turn of the torso, and movement of legs, etc., allows and enables the late-comer space and floor to perform his reverential salutations at the expense of those who recognized the disturbance. Once, I interviewed a Buddhist novice from India, resident at a forest temple I was staying at for a time: “Every morning, why are you late to chanting?” He was novice responsible for ringing the temple bell. I suggested he get up earlier in preparation. Nothing I could impart to him caused a behavior change, and I learned from him that the chanting was not so important to him. At the time, this novice was about 18 years old, and was utilized by the abbot for various labor duties. Due to vinaya restriction on monks, novices are often pressed into questionable duties in the absence of laity.

Every temple studied for the purpose of my research possessed monks arriving late for the chanting ceremonies, despite being conducted at the same time daily [except holidays and ‘Wan Phra’]. Frowns can be seen on the faces of elder monks, who visually ‘scold’ the younger monks. Latecomers provide a distraction to the concentration ‘required’ during the chanting ceremony’s potential as a form of

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<sup>3</sup> Melford E. Spiro, *Buddhism and Society – A Great Tradition and its Burmese Vicissitudes* (Berkeley: U. Of California Press 1982) p. 194: “Learned and sophisticated Buddhists can dispense with the Buddha statue completely, and concentrate instead on His teachings. The statue is only a crutch for ordinary people who require a visual symbol.” Many Thai’s would find this troubling! [further cited as Spiro and page #], however the Santi Asok ‘sect’ in Thailand is reported not to have Buddha images – but this has not been confirmed, to date.

<sup>\*</sup> Monks sit according to rank – or how long one has been a monk, followed by true-human age. The eldest monks sit closest to the Buddha image in terms of age/period in robes, while younger ranking monks sit behind the elder monks. Novices sit near the rear, and if there are lay people present, they must sit behind the novices. If there are laymen present, they usually sit near the novices, and laywomen sit behind, due to the ‘regulation’ about not touching members of the opposite sex, for those ‘ordained’. Arguably, laymen ‘serve’ as a protective ‘barrier’. Concerning the ‘bow’ - this is the five-point prostration: knees [feet by circumstance], elbow [forearms and hands] and forehead – make five. This is different from the seated ‘anjali’, which is a posture of raised and joined hands used for respect.

meditation. My perception was to gather late monks or novices, and have them perform separately after the ‘first’ session, where an elder might separately admonished ‘late monks’ and educate them on timeliness as well as to stress making a genuine effort to arrive on time – because the public scrutinizes the living Sangha. However the question: should reverence be forced or done with devotion? One can still be devoted, but perhaps busy, or physically tired/weary from the previous day’s manual labor.

Disrespectful disruptions illustrate further need for training towards the supreme goal of Nibbana, and illustrates lack of respect for the Triple Gem and traditional monastic activities. But when a monk’s position on the floor is vacant, one wonders into the health or business of the missing disciple. The duties of the average bhikkhu are few and many seldom rely on time, therefore timely entry into the ‘*uposot*’ or ‘*viharn*’ for scheduled activities would seem to be important. Lateness, to the novice from India seemed to matter little, because after all, he arrived and performed, and that does account for something.

Redundantly, disciples wake early to collect almsfood and know that there is a morning chanting ritual/ceremony at the scheduled time. Furthermore, he is reminded by the signal of the ringing ‘*ra-kang*’ or bell-tolling - signifying: ‘chanting begins in five minutes’. Therefore, ample time is given to properly dress and enter the temple on time, if one prepares in advance. There seems to be no justification for lateness, even delays caused by ‘elder/superior’ monks – do they not also understand the concepts of time, having more experience? Even some abbots habitually arrive mid-way through chanting ceremonies, perhaps to prepare the evening’s meditation. Some monks totally neglect attending the daily salutation chanting ceremonies, perhaps to entertain/attend to desires/whims of their lay supporters, something Taylor also recognized.<sup>4</sup> Some perhaps have become ‘adepts\*’, needing no further training. Urgency for community reverence is then disregarded, because they ‘themselves’, have become objects of reverence, worthy of gifts, salutations, etc. Monks and novices may be strictly observing the vinaya, but seem to be completely lackadaisical

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<sup>4</sup> Taylor, pp. 178-179: “monk-disciple after monk-disciple fell prey to the demands of an ardent enthusiastic and increasingly mobile laity, catering, in some instances, for their every whim out of solicitude and compassion. These monks would also neglect the important training of their own pupils and sit perennially awaiting the next batch of well-heeled tourists dispensing to them beauty, felicitous *metta* and exempla on the importance of keeping the moral precepts.”

\* The ‘elders’ I evade mentioning have been witnessed seated inside their ‘residence’, facing their main Buddha image, reciting chants for over an hour on several occasions, before ‘retiring’ for the evening’s rest.

towards non-specified activities, perhaps some disciples push the boundaries of what is acceptable.

Returning to the ritualistic attendance to the alter<sup>5</sup>; after the candles and incense are lit and the elder monk returns, he or another elder monk chants, in some temples, a small verse in Pali, untraceable in the texts, after all, not all temples conduct services exactly. Variances exist between denominations, and from temple to temple within the same denomination. This causes ‘frustration’ for those seeking a similar/familiar format, especially when the verse cannot be found in the chanting booklet. Differences do demonstrate ‘relief’ that not all temples ‘adhere’ to the same format, therefore ‘individuals’ can be freer to attend [or not attend] temple of their ‘liking’. Thai Buddhists are not favorable to schism, but some favor Dhammayuttika-Nikaya over the Mahanikaya or vice-versa – but have no real ‘issue’ at attending chanting or sermons at different temples, because most services are nearly identical and an equal amount of merit is earned from listening to the sermon and almsfood giving. Tendencies in the rural area are to visit a temple near one’s home; however, in the case of Wat Buddha Oregon, in the United States, Southeast Asians may drive several hours to attend the only temple in the state of Oregon, outside of Portland. Thai Buddhists can usually attend any Theravada Buddhist temple and find it ‘suitable’ to their liking, if their schedule permits visiting. However, these minor differences in chanting are not burdensome; besides, pervasive uniformity may lead to the death of Buddhist ‘vitality’ in Thailand. It can be said however that the same basic formula exists across Thailand, or rather with Thai Buddhist temples internationally. Additionally, if more stanzas are recited, bear in mind that these stanzas or verses are extra and usually left for the temple abbot’s discretion.

A few scholars unveiled actual ‘chanting styles’ dependent on how the throat and voice is utilized as the sound-producing instrument. This thesis will exclude those details, because of the determination: the content of the chant is more important or meaningful than the vocal technique. However, concerning how one utilizes the voice during chanting: the Vinaya guides and proclaims five dangers<sup>6</sup>, when chanting

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<sup>5</sup> Kenneth E. Wells, *Thai Buddhism – Its Rites and Activities* (Bangkok: The Police Printing Press 1960) p. 44: “The essential articles used in Buddhist worship are four: candles for light, incense for purification, flowers and puffed rice [?] for fragrance. The monks usually depend on the laity for these offerings, and they are usually well supplied.” I argue the word ‘essential’ and ‘puffed rice’ – as some temples or home ceremonies conduct the chanting without such items, thus not ‘essential’ and in the year 2005, I have not seen ‘puffed rice’ at a temple for an offering – Kenneth Wells’ text originates from the 1938-1939 period. Indeed, at least this aspect of Thai Buddhism has withered away. [further cited as Wells and page #]

<sup>6</sup> Vinaya Pitaka, ii. 108 – according to a lost URL/website – also, there are other/various techniques.

Dhamma in a long, singing sound, as perhaps popularized in other traditions outside Thailand:

- He is pleased with himself [filled with pride] regarding that sound
- Others are pleased regarding that sound [they rejoice in the sound, but not the Dhamma]
- Householders look down upon him [because 'music' is for: those who enjoy sense-pleasures]
- While trying for accuracy of sound his concentration is broken [neglecting the meaning of the chant]
- People coming after fall into views [later generations will argue variously about the chants]\*

Venerable Phra Dhammavisuddhikavi, graciously taught three benefits of chanting<sup>7</sup>:

- To Prevent Present Danger
- To Assist in the Rebirth into Happy Places
- To have a pleasant voice/make good sounds through adoration/respect for the activity of chanting

It is said in relation to protective chants, that celestial beings love to hear the dhamma recited and will protect the reciter from evil during recitation. In that respect present danger is averted by chanting. Obviously, if one is chanting in the temple, one is not out on the city streets or in busy places, or in the jungle facing potential threats, bullets, tigers, thieves, etc. Present danger is averted because one is sheltered during devotional recitation. But when the chanting and parittas have ceased – how does one account for the monks murdered by Southern Muslim militants, hit in traffic, killed by tigers or bitten by snakes? These parittas or chants didn't protect during the preceding situations. As 'real' protection devices, they are unreliable – except when performed inside closed doors; inside there the verses sound pleasant to the listening ear.

Contemplation on what is being said can assist one to enter into happy states. Also, the purpose of Buddhist chanting is for recollection, rather than making a famous, or 'hit recording'. The sound is pleasant enough when all monastic dwellers are chanting [more 'melodic' than a reading!], simultaneously and in the same 'key' with the same speed – otherwise the 'out of place' chanter causes others to lose their concentration. As one observes through observation and in accordance to the vinaya-texts, the monk is to have 'restraint' over his body movements. Therefore, many monks sit motionless while chanting; some fight urges to shift their legs. However on one occasion, during a 'house-warming' ceremony/blessing, I witnessed, as a layman

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\* Jokingly, this 'danger' probably refers only to me, since I am writing about chanting for my thesis; however important the 'revisionist approach' may inspire others. Besides, analyzing the chanting delivery style is like analyzing opera and hip-hop music, or heavy rock music versus soft pop... the contents of the song should be analyzed over the delivery technique.

<sup>7</sup> Personal communication/interview with Lord Abbot Ven. Phra Dhammavisuddhikavi on 5 October 2005 at Wat Somanas Vihara

during the period of research, one monk [of the nine performing inside the home], had a rather noticeable neck-movement and head rolling, along with a staccato vocal delivery, that many laity found humorous and non-traditional. The house erupted in suppressed laughter, difficult to control, as tradition accustoms one to hear ‘stern and proper’ delivery methods. Kamala, though recalls, “the ancient art [of chanting or dhamma recitations] in its original form has become virtually extinct. Modern state Buddhism insists sermons be sober and didactic. But since local people [in the outlying provinces] found the standardized, official sermons abstract, dry, alien, and irrelevant to their everyday lives, they ceased to pay attention. Attending sermons dwindled to a ritual of merit making.”<sup>8</sup> In the case of home-invitations, a large meal is provided to the monks, along with ‘gifts, flowers, and money’ for their time, merit-sharing and blessings. A later portion of this text explains how much merit is actually earned through gifts or almsfood giving. One may determine however, that the Dhammayuttika-Nikaya reforms were true to their ‘name’ of adhering to one interpretation of dhamma, even if that meant ‘sober’, non-distractive, chanting styles.

Tambiah asked, “To what extent does the knowledge of [Pali] chants... constitute an esoteric and exclusive body of knowledge confined to the clergy?”<sup>9</sup> My intent is to unveil Rama IV’s dhamma-demonstration to see how wisdom protects. However, Tambiah’s motives drive him to illustrate how the various parittas are utilized, but does not account for the actual contents of the morning/evening chanting – except for ‘charging’ sacred thread in house-blessings. Refuting aspects of his text and cutting through a hierarchy of interpretation would be an extensive work. Books containing Rama IV’s chant can be found virtually everywhere in Thailand, along with translations. The next portion of text directly concerns itself, finally, with the morning chanting ceremony, found in nearly all the temples or dhamma-centers visited for the sake of research and ‘worship’, in Thailand and in America.

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<sup>8</sup> Kamala Tiyavanich, *Forest Recollections – Wandering Monks in Twentieth-Century Thailand* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books 1997) p. 36

<sup>9</sup> S. J. Tambiah. *Buddhism and the Spirit Cults in Northeast Thailand*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980, p. 124-125

### 2.2.1 Preliminary Reverence Passage

*ARAHAM SAMMA-SAMBUDDHO BHAGAVA*

**The Worthy One, Blessed and Perfectly Self-Enlightened**

*BUDDHAM BHAGAVANTAM ABHIVADEMI [PROSTRATE ONE TIME]*

**I bow down before the Buddha, the Blessed One.**

**CONTEXT:** Upon entering the ‘wat’ [temple] or ‘sala’ [pavilion], the large Buddha image is facing you, seated on a raised platform. Usually, because of the setting or ambiance, many people feel he is alive; the array of ornaments and decorations around the image-alter assists this perception. As one visualizes the display of ‘magnificence’ before them, one might feel as if they are in the company of a great man, a great teacher - someone deserving respect. One enters to find a space for sitting, then bows/prostrates three times, and sits comfortably, usually with feet to the side of one’s body, until the ceremony is about to begin; then one repositions the body seated in a kneeling position. Monks sit close to the image [because they are ‘pure’], and laity [un-pure] must sit some distance away. No one is compelled to chant, and can refrain if one wishes, but should sit quietly, so others are not distracted. It will be assumed that everyone participates according to one’s abilities; some have to read from the chanting book.

The first phrase letting the chanter proclaim his/her voluntary respect and ‘subjectivity’ to the Buddha by bowing, which is a sign of humbleness rather than humility. Perhaps only Muslims can identify with prostrations, many in western religions do not practice this ‘sort’ of reverence [prostration], and it may be odd or difficult during the first attempt at reverence, performing without ‘ego’ or *anatta* [non-self]. The five-point prostration is made, and ‘feels’ better, when performed as *anatta*, before the Buddha image, in recognition of the Buddha’s attainments, namely: being an Arahant, being a Blessed One, and being Perfectly Self-Enlightened. You are telling yourself what you are doing, to who and why, so that you understand the target of the respect and rationale as to why this action is conducted.

**DESCRIPTION:** *ARAHAM:* Pallegoix, one of the early ‘westerners’ to comment on Siam’s Buddhism, stated that the Arahant, was: ‘removed from the sinners, near the just, away from the enemies, i.e. from evil desires, pure and chaste.’ Pallegoix’s profession as a ‘priest’ clearly interprets Buddhism through the lens of one adhering

to the Abrahamic traditions<sup>10</sup>, although he was privileged with the honor of learning from Rama IV. An Arahant is generally a Buddhist term for a ‘saint’, but literally means a ‘Worthy One’, derived from a verb meaning: ‘ought or deserve’.<sup>11</sup> What then do we make of Spiro, who states: “Lacking saints and saviors, and possessing simple rituals, [Theravada Buddhism] is found primarily in Southeast Asia...”<sup>12</sup> Clearly, based on the first edition of this text released in 1970, and the second edition released in 1982, he had more than a decade to learn about arahants. Throughout Buddhist history there have been numerous ‘Arahants’, too many to mention, including several females. One of the most respected Buddhist ‘saints’ of recent memory was ‘Phra Ajahn Mun’ who is invoked several times in this thesis. I, myself, am a student from his ‘lineage’, although a few generations removed.

An Arahant is not sex-exclusive and is considered ‘equal’ in status to the Buddha in terms of training.<sup>13</sup> An Arahant is actually the final of four stages of noble discipleship, being the stage that is attained by the elimination of five subtle fetters that remain unabandoned in prior stages, these being: desire for existence in the form/formless realm, conceit, restlessness, and ignorance. Also, Arahants have superior mental powers [*abhinna*, discussed later], developed through meditation techniques. There are numerous characteristics attributed to the Arahant, but they generally are understood as being ‘adept’: needing no further training, having fully eradicated all forms of clinging, abandoned imperfections, freed from all sensual bonds with fetters of existence and defilements destroyed via correct<sup>14</sup> and perfected understanding.<sup>15</sup> Because the Arahant has gone beyond good and evil, his/her deeds are considered as having no ethical value, because their activity is selfless and directed towards helping others tread the path already trodden by them, individually. Thus, an Arahant’s deeds are considered good though some lack creative power, since there is no regarding a sense of self, and registers no kammic effect because their deeds are purely functional [*kiriya*].<sup>16</sup> As such, an Arahant is not subjected to future

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<sup>10</sup> Monsignor Jean-Baptiste Pallegoix, *Description of the Thai Kingdom or Siam – Thailand under King Mongkut* [orig. 1854] (Bangkok: White Lotus Press, 2000) p. 222 [further cited as Pallegoix and page number]

<sup>11</sup> Mahathera Narada, *The Buddha and His Teachings*, (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society 1997) p. 20 [further cited as Teachings, and page #]

<sup>12</sup> Melford E. Spiro. *Buddhism and Society – A Great Tradition and its Burmese Vicissitudes*. Berkeley: UC Berkeley Press 1982; p. 6

<sup>13</sup> Nyanaponika Thera and Hellmuth Hecker [ed. Bhikkhu Bodhi], *Great Disciples of the Buddha – Their Lives, Their Works, Their Legacy* (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society 1997) p. xxi [cited as Disciples, #]

<sup>14</sup> *Teachings*, p. 291

<sup>15</sup> Bhadantacariya Buddhaghosa, *Visuddhimagga – The Path of Purification*, translated by Bhikkhu Nanomoli (Buddhist Publication Society: Kandy, Sri Lanka 1999) p. 9 [further cited as Visuddhimagga, page #]

<sup>16</sup> *Teachings*, citing numerous pages



rebirths, having extinguished numerous ‘excesses’ that otherwise would prevent the attainment of nibbana, and never comes into further existence. Hindrances along the way make traveling the path leading towards liberation from rebirth, very difficult.

Pallegoix, has ‘SAMMA-SAMBUDDHO’, as: knowing the laws of nature [the Dhamma] by himself and knowing all creatures in a certain true, clear and distinct way.<sup>17</sup> Through research, the interpretation is that the Buddha sees things for ‘how they really are’, or with *abhinna*. As for the Buddha being known as the ‘Blessed One’ [BHAGAVA], this perhaps is fairly straightforward – understanding his achievements and being ‘blessed’ to have attained his status; but is sometimes translates as ‘Lord’ in the sense of royalty. Additionally, one scholar states the translation should mean, “one endowed with great riches.<sup>18</sup>” The Buddha was born into the Sakya clan, in a high-caste ruling warrior-class family. His enlightenment further distanced his separation from common people.

**BUDDHA:** Buddhadasa Bhikkhu states there are two Buddhas: the physical body upon cremation was broken broke up by the Mallas and distributed to the various directions<sup>19</sup>; and there is the Buddha that remains in the Dhamma-Vinaya.<sup>20</sup> However, here, the determination is that they are one. If anyone knows Buddhadasa, they already understand his point of questioning everything. The Navakovada<sup>21</sup>, which was written to establish a form of Thai Buddhist orthodoxy availing itself to all monks<sup>22</sup>, states the Buddha is, “One who taught his followers [so that those who heard should know profoundly and see truly the Dhamma which is proper to know and see]: to act properly in body, speech and mind, so as to accord with the Dhamma and Vinaya, which are given the name of, ‘The Buddha-Sasana’, is called ‘The Lord Buddha.’” This is conveyed in the Sangiti Sutta.

His attainments prior to enlightenment took him beyond the realization of direct knowledges [*abhinna*] because that dhamma merely led to a base of nothingness; his next teacher’s dhamma lead him only to the level of understanding the dhamma attained by Ramaputta [some mention the mythologized Rama], which

<sup>17</sup> Pallegoix, p. 222

<sup>18</sup> Sukumar Dutt., *The Buddha – and Five After Centuries* (London: Luzac & Co. 1957) p. 83

<sup>19</sup> Maurice Walshe, *The Long Discourses of the Buddha – A Translation of the Digha Nikaya*, (Boston: Wisdom Publications 1995) p. 276: Mahaparinibbana Sutta [further cited as DN and page #]

<sup>20</sup> Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, *Keys to Natural Truth* (Chaiya: The Buddhadasa Foundation 1999) p. 19 [further cited as ‘Keys to Natural Truths’ and page #]

<sup>21</sup> Somdet Phra Maha Samana Chao Krom Phraya Vajiranavarorasa, *Navakovada – Instructions for Newly-Ordained Bhikkhus and Samaneras, Standard Text for the Dhamma Student, 3<sup>rd</sup> Grade* (Bangkok: Mahamakutarajavidyalaya 2000) p. 37 [further cited as Navakovada and page #]

<sup>22</sup> Yoneo Ishii, *Sangha, State and Society – Thai Buddhism in History* (Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, 1986) p. 76 [further cited as Ishii and page #]

was to the base of neither perception nor non-perception. Neither of the two bases attained thus by Siddhattha Gotama lead to disenchantment, dispassion, cessation, peace, direct knowledge, to enlightenment, and to Nibbana... the intended purpose sought since his renunciation: elimination of suffering. These two bases are also paralleled as the two uppermost of formless realms, being: the Sphere of Nothingness and the Sphere of Neither-Perception Nor Non-Perception. Nibbana, as the final attainment, is beyond these spheres, but since Nibbana entails ‘extinguishing’, it is not a part of the heaven/hell realms described as spheres and bases.<sup>23</sup>

Again, because it is important to realize: few appreciate what the first two teachers of Lord Buddha taught, since he was not enlightened yet. Every ‘teacher’ was once a student. Alara the Kalama was the first teacher the Buddha encountered after renouncing society, but his dhamma, as the Buddha said: “does not conduce to estrangement nor dispassion nor to cessation nor to calming nor to super-knowledge not to enlightenment nor to Nibbana, but only as far as reaching the plane of nothingness.’ So, Bhikkhus, not getting enough from this Dhamma, disregarded and turned away from this Dhamma.”<sup>24</sup> Then, the Buddha sought out Uddaka Ramaputta to be his next teacher; but after sometime mastering his doctrine, the Buddha spoke similarly, replacing the last line with, “...only as far as reaching the plane of neither-perception nor non-perception,” so not getting enough from that Dhamma he disregarded and turned away from that Dhamma.<sup>25</sup> Afterwards, he decided to embark in solitude, undergoing rigorous austerities, which lasted for six years. He saw: “a delightful stretch of land and a lovely woodland grove, and a clear flowing river with a delightful ford, and a village for support nearby...suitable for meditation<sup>26</sup>”, and started to ‘strive’ in austerities there. His freakish battles with austerities ended after some devas visited him and asked to forgo all foods, that the gods would provide him with divine essences. He decided to reject the gods and realized the extreme route was not the correct path, that perhaps there was another way to Enlightenment.<sup>27</sup>

Thus after regaining his health, as the Ariyapariyesana Sutta mentions: Siddhattha Gotama realized he was being subject to birth, aging, sickness, death,

<sup>23</sup> DN, pp. 38-39 & Bhikkhu Bodhi [editor and translator], *Abhidhammattha Sangaha – A Comprehensive Manual of Abhidhamma* (Buddhist Publication Society: Seattle, WA 2000) pp. 230-231 [further cited as AS, and page #]

<sup>24</sup> Phra Khantipalo, “The Splendour of Enlightenment – A Life of the Buddha”. (Mahamakut Rajavidyalaya Press, Bangkok, Thailand) 2533/1990, Volume 1, p.140 (Chronological Biography of the Buddha taken from the Sutta’s in Two Volumes) [further cited as Splendour, and page #]

<sup>25</sup> Splendour, Volume 1, p. 142

<sup>26</sup> Splendour, Volume 1, p. 144-145

<sup>27</sup> Splendour, Volume 1, p. 155

sorrow, defilements; he understood the danger in what is subject to birth, ageing, sickness, death, sorrow, defilements. Consequently, he sought the unborn, unaging, unailing, deathless, sorrowless, undefiled supreme security from bondage or Nibbana; he therefore obtained the unborn, unaging, unailing, deathless, sorrowless, undefiled supreme security from bondage or Nibbana. Furthermore, the following knowledge and vision arose in Him, “My deliverance is unshakable; this is my last birth; now there is no renewal or being.”<sup>28</sup> Siddhattha Gotama wondered and meditated until he discovered the answers, until he discovered the Four Noble Truths and subsequent dhammas.

In a departure, it is interesting how one scholar suggests that, “the analogy has been noted between the Four Noble Truths and the four divisions of Hindu medicine: disease, cause of the disease, absence of the disease, and medicine.”<sup>29</sup> This would not make the Buddha’s declaration of Four Truths to be ‘original’. Siddhattha Gotama must have pondered this in the course of his travels. But through restating the familiar formula with his new metaphor – he now had a new doctrine to further inquire into for later dissemination and elimination of man’s disease or sufferings.

Finally, in what seems to be a stock or standard phrase in the Tipitaka, the Buddha is said to be accomplished, fully enlightened, perfect in true knowledge and conduct, sublime, knower of worlds [heaven and hell realms as mental conditions], incomparable leader of persons to be tamed, teacher of gods and humans, enlightened and blessed.<sup>30</sup> It is through his contemplative practice and many of the preceding reasons, as well as others, that the Buddha is respected and revered. The Buddha is also possessed of the magic to convert people from other ‘faiths’, as the Upali Sutta demonstrates, leading a prominent Jain disciple, Upali, to become a lay-disciple who attained stream-enterer following the Buddha’s discussion.<sup>31</sup> Therefore, Buddhists traditionally bow before him in high admiration and with high respect: **ABHIVADEMI**. He understood what so many people just cannot or have failed to comprehend, due to their ignorance and many impurities.

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<sup>28</sup> Bhikkhu’s Namamoli & Bodhi (trs.), *The Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha – A New Translation of the Majjhima Nikaya* (Wisdom Publications: Boston MA 1995) p. 253-268 – [further cited as MN and page#]

<sup>29</sup> Ishii, p. 4

<sup>30</sup> MN, p. 707 – Bodhirajakumara Sutta

<sup>31</sup> MN, p. 484

**ANALYSIS:** The Buddha's perfect self-enlightenment needs a brief historical explanation. He forsook his wife and new-born son after 13 years of marriage to become a 29 year-old wandering ascetic. He had passed or gone through the stages<sup>32</sup> of *brahmachari* (student) and *grihasta* (householder), and found new company in asceticism, rejoining the *brahmachari* with two teachers and later ventured into extreme, solitary austerities as a *vanaprasta* (forest dweller or Hermit in semi retirement). Following enlightenment, the Buddha became a *sannyasi* (the renounced one in full retirement) stages in traditional Brahmanistic life, but returned to some extent to dwell in housing during rain-periods. These four stages<sup>33</sup> are said to represent periods of preparation, production, service and retirement – and arguably the Buddha's life paralleled these stages. There is really nothing profound about Siddhattha Gotama's renouncement, because it paralleled others<sup>34</sup> who seek the 'holy life'; his excursion into homelessness simply started before the usual age of departure. The others within society are: noblemen, brahmins, householders and recluses; they comprise the four castes as: khattiya's [warriors], brahmana's [priests], vessa's [merchants/farmers] and sudda's [lowest class, laborers and servants]. Siddhattha, as the future Buddha, belonged to a noble khattiya family.<sup>35</sup> He renounced his inheritance/privilege, and wandered as a recluse [temptation, lusts, desires, etc., were overcome since he had been married and had already seen his son] – and thus transcended attachment to caste and occupational stages of a conservative society where few break tradition, though, to repeat, this was not profound. Additionally, one scholar wrote, "Having gone forth from home into homelessness, a religious wanderer of whatever faith or denomination... could not, on principle, seek home or permanent shelter again<sup>36</sup> [except during rainy-season]." In fact, before he became the Buddha, Siddhattha Gotama roamed in paranoid seclusion, trespassed into cow-pens when the

<sup>32</sup> Spirit Cults, p. 63 – He suggests the one that removes himself from the social structure is called a *sannyasin* – and is determined to use this term along with the term for a householder: *grihasta* - the other aspects: he ignores or determines not relevant for his study. In a sense, he is correct, because brahmins remain in the 'householder' life in the sense that they do not renounce sensual pleasures and the 'retired' hermit is probably better remained uncommitted. He touches later on the four stages on p. 91. He claims there are four stages of Buddhists: the ordinary, the precept keeper, the novice, and the monk – based on the amount of precepts one holds individually.

<sup>33</sup> <http://mailerindia.com/hindu/veda/index.php?fourstages> accessed on 26 April 2005

<sup>34</sup> (P. A. Payutto), *Dictionary of Buddhism* (Bangkok: Maha Chulalongkorn University Press 2000) p. 142 [further cited as Dictionary and page #]

<sup>35</sup> According to the Mahabharata, the warrior/khattiya caste's duty is to: protect the people, to bestow gifts, to offer sacrifices, to study the Vedas, and to abstain from attaching himself to sensual pleasures – it is no wonder then: Siddhattha Gotama was fulfilling his caste duty, through his unremarkable renunciation. See: S. J. Tambiah, *World Conqueror, World Renouncer*, [my photocopied edition lacks publication information] p. 20 – further, the khattiya lives a lifestyle based on wrong views [p. 32] & *Yodhajiva Sutta* inside the *Samyutta-Nikaya* – already later cited in this thesis and see the bibliography.

<sup>36</sup> Sukumar Dutt., *The Buddha – and Five After Centuries* (London: Luzac & Co. Ltd. 1957) p. 66

owners were not around to steal and feed on young calve feces. Additionally, this renunciate thief ate his own feces and urine<sup>37</sup> - such were the perverse extremities practiced by Siddhattha Gotama, and brings new definition to the term 'petty thief'. It is difficult to revere someone who feeds on his own excrement. After these six years of various austerities, including the periods under his two teachers, and the days when he tried to maintain equanimity when cow-herder's children would spit and urinate on him and poking sticks into his ears, managed to not arouse an evil-mind against them.<sup>38</sup> Had he stopped here, he would certainly not be revered, and most likely remained mocked for eating feces during his reclusive paranoia. Soon though, the 'soon-to-be' Buddha would eventually wander alone, sitting determined to attain enlightenment after compromising his extremities.

Research discovered meditative attainments are paralleled as realms in cosmology. Heaven and hell are perceived solely on the individual's condition or attainments. Research could not come across a scholar or writer, lay or ordained, who makes this parallel. The diligence put forth through mediation places a person somewhere within the thirty-one realms based again on their attainments, if still subjected to aspects of impurities. Thus, if one strives in meditation, one receives benefits found in full-attainment or extinguishment. This is a rather redundant explanation, but necessary as emphasis. Any talk of a Buddhist cosmology must be taken as mere metaphoric examples of what still needs to be accomplished by the meditator. Walshe alludes to a 'hell' as a term for painful bodily sensations, but he is re-quoting someone: "Bhikkhus, when the uninstructed worldling [an ignorant person] makes the statement, 'In the great ocean there is a bottomless abyss [hell],' he makes such a statement about something that is nonexistent and unreal. This... is rather a designation for painful bodily feelings, that is 'bottomless abyss [hell]'.<sup>39</sup> After making this claim, research mandated a venture into the '*Traibhumikatha*' of King Lithai, where he states (at length):

"In the sensual plane there are eleven domains. What are these eleven domains? One is called the domain of hell beings; one is the [animal] domain; one is called the domain of the [miserable spirits]; one is called the domain of the [demons]. These first four domains are the world of sorrow and suffering. Over these are the single domain of human beings and the six

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<sup>37</sup> MN, p. 174 – the Mahasihanada Sutta [#12.49]

<sup>38</sup> MN, p. 175

<sup>39</sup> Bhikkhu Bodhi, *The Connected Discourses of the Buddha – A New Translation of the Samyutta-Nikaya Vol. II* (Somerville: Wisdom Publications 2000) p. 1262 – Salayatanavagga/Vedanasamyutta 36.4.4 [further cited as SN, and page number]

domains of celestial beings. Of these, one is called [the heaven of the four great guardian kings]; one is called [the heaven of the thirty-three deities]; one is the domain of the [heaven of the deities who have attained happiness]; another, [the heaven of the deities who are constantly joyful]; and another, [the heaven of the deities who delight in what they create for themselves]; and the sixth is called the domain of [the heaven of the deities who make the creations of others serve their ends]. These seven domains are known collectively as the realm of happiness. All eleven domains taken together form the sensual plane.<sup>40</sup>

King Lithai further mentions two other planes: the corporeal plane, which incorporates the four levels of jhana [meditative] attainments; and incorporeal planes, which are the domains of boundless space, boundless consciousness, domain of nothingness, and domain of neither perception nor non-perception. All the previous thirty-one domains represent the *Three Planes of Existence*. Thus: the sensual plane, corporeal plane, and incorporeal plane; or as the Abhidhammattha Sangaha states: the sense-sphere plane, fine-material-sphere plane, and immaterial-sphere plane.<sup>41</sup>

However, the Abhidhammattha Sangaha claims there are four realms of existence [woeful, sensuous blissful, fine-material sphere, and immaterial sphere<sup>42</sup>], rather than King Lithai's 'three' [sensual, corporeal, incorporeal]. Another source, worthy of trust, claims four, as: sensuous plane, form plane, formless plane, and supramundane plane<sup>43</sup>, citing an unavailable source. Analyzing the spheres, realms, or planes further, the student author claims these are mere metaphors for the 'human condition' – or the individual's mind-state, however developed or undeveloped. Subsequently, the previous statement enables Buddhism to be understood more simply – as a religion with no heaven or hells in the sense of Abrahamic religious traditions. Rather, one 'resides' dependent on one's level of control over their 'senses'; dependent on one's ability to develop one's senses enables the individual to reside in either painful or pleasant, or neither painful nor pleasant conditions – dwelling in equanimity. The extinguishment of all the feelings, conditions, senses, etc... leads one to Nibbana, the ultimate 'goal' or attainment in Theravada Buddhism. Buddhism can be seen as a sort of 'mind game'; how well one plays the game, determines success. Furthermore, each realm represents an 'extreme' – extreme suffering and extreme pleasantness, leaving the human realm as the only realm open to the possibility of 'entering the stream' because beings in the hell realms are miserable and

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<sup>40</sup> King Lithai, *Traibhumikatha – The Story of the Three Planes of Existence* (Bangkok: ASEAN 1987) pp. 23, 25 [further cited as Traibhumikatha and page #]

<sup>41</sup> AS, p. 186-187

<sup>42</sup> AS, p. 189

<sup>43</sup> Dictionary, p. 150

suffer, and beings in the heavenly realms enjoy themselves, residing in sensual enjoyment. Thus it is in the human realm, in the ‘here and now’ that the Buddha emphasizes developing the Dhamma, to extinguish or escape the rounds of suffering, attaining Nibbana. Additionally, the life example of Phra Ajahn Mun demonstrates, as Taylor shows: “It is widely believed that the revered Ajahn Mun, through his own persistent effort, attained ‘release’ [vimutti] from the conventional world and entered nibbana. Also, as Maha Boowa says, in clearing the entangled and overgrown time-worn path, Mun showed his followers that the highest ‘fruit’ was indeed attainable in this lifetime.<sup>44</sup>” Here one must point out an inaccuracy in Maha Boowa’s biography of Phra Ajahn Mun, the claim is that multiple Buddhas and their Arahant disciples came to visit Phra Ajahn Mun on his occasion of liberation.<sup>45</sup> The position of this thesis holds that these visits are impossibilities and the claim is subject to skepticism. Maha Boowa further claims the ‘impossibility’ is a condition placed on the unconditioned nature of nibbana. According to the Tipitaka: an Arahant is the highest attainment possible as taught by the Buddha, one who attains nibbana can never return as they are extinguished – conceptually annihilated; Phra Ajahn Mun’s inserted quotation states that a Tathagata is merely a metaphor for one who has the realization of a pure heart, as a manifestation of conventional reality. Working out this issue detracts from the progress this thesis.

*SVAKKHATO BHAGAVATA DHAMMO*

**The Dhamma is well-proclaimed by the Blessed One.**

*DHAMMAM NAMASSAMI [PROSTRATE ONE TIME]*

**I pay homage to the Dhamma.**

**CONTEXT:** One is still in the kneeling position, after rising from the above prostration. The second phrase, pertaining to the Dhamma [the teachings of the Buddha], being well-proclaimed, eludes to several factors. In the *lokiya*-realm or this physical world, the Dhamma is preserved inside texts. These books are voluminous, and are known as the Tipitaka, or Three Baskets, namely: the Suttas [discourses], Vinaya [monastic regulations], and Abhidhamma [higher philosophical concepts or teachings]. Largely, ‘the Dhamma being well-proclaimed’ was announced by those hearing first hand, or via rumor – and upon hearing or testing for themselves, came to

<sup>44</sup> Taylor, p. 16

<sup>45</sup> <http://www.buddhanet.net> Acariya Maha Boowa. *Acariya Mun Bhuridatta – A Spiritual Biography [Screen Version]*. Buddha Dhamma Education Association, 2003 p. 245

this agreement that the Dhamma was indeed, well-proclaimed. It is not an exaggerated proclamation, but a tried and tested – proven statement. One is bowing in agreement, in acknowledgement that one still is ignorant to the vastness of the Buddha's Dhamma, yearning for more wisdom.

**DESCRIPTION:** First, that the **DHAMMA** is 'well-proclaimed', is a direct entry into the indexes of the translated Tipitaka/nikaya literature, an interesting illustration of the institutionalization of the concept. Many beings in the text praise the Dhamma [would they not?], as being well-proclaimed. This too is conveyed in the Sangiti Sutta. Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, proclaims: The Buddha, as stated above, is included in this formula, because he 'lives' inside the Dhamma-Vinaya. Buddhadasa claims that the Buddha said, "One who sees the Dhamma sees the Tathagata. One who sees the Tathagata sees the Dhamma."<sup>46</sup> Buddhadasa does not cite his source, a familiar habit or error known to those who read his work. Buddhadasa states the Dhamma is laws of nature, and is nature – and that humans have the duty to practice Dhamma, as well as the ability to receive and 'fruits'.<sup>47</sup> Arguably, there are only two types of Dhamma: *Lokiya-Dhamma*, and *Lokuttara-Dhamma* – this world, and outer world dhammas, some can determine this to become real and spiritual types of Dhammas. The Navakovada<sup>48</sup>, proclaims the Dhamma to be, "...the Dhamma and Vinaya [monastic regulations], which are His teachings, are called 'the Dhamma'. ...He taught with reasons so that those who heard, could contemplate the teachings and come to see it truly for themselves." As historically tested, practiced and noted, "it is plain that confidence in the [Buddha] is [correctly] directed, that confidence in the Dhamma is [correctly] directed, that fulfillment of the precepts is [correctly] directed and that the affection among companions in the Dhamma is [correctly] directed. Why is that? Because that is how it is when the Dhamma and Discipline [Vinaya] is well-proclaimed and well-expounded, emancipating, conducive to peace, expounded by one who is fully enlightened."<sup>49</sup> The Buddha tells his followers, "...in such a Dhamma and Discipline as that, it is plain that confidence in the teacher is not rightly [correctly] directed, that confidence in the Dhamma is not rightly [correctly] directed, that fulfillment of the precepts is not rightly [correctly] directed, and that affection

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<sup>46</sup> *Keys to Natural Truth*, p. 20

<sup>47</sup> *Keys to Natural Truth*, p. 20

<sup>48</sup> Navakovada, p. 37

<sup>49</sup> MN, p. 162



among companions in the Dhamma is not rightly [correctly] directed. Why is that? Because that is how it is when the Dhamma and Discipline is badly proclaimed and badly expounded, un-emancipating, un-conducive to peace, expounded by one who is not fully enlightened.<sup>50</sup>

Dhamma that is emancipating, conducive to peace and well-expounded pertains to, or rather has roots in the eradication of ignorance, because when ignorance is abandoned and true knowledge has arisen, “then with the fading away of ignorance and the arising of true knowledge he no longer clings to sensual pleasures, no longer clings to views, no longer clings to rules and observances, no longer clings to a doctrine of self. When he does not cling, he is not agitated, when he is not agitated, he personally attains Nibbana. [One] understands: ‘Birth is destroyed, the holy life has been lived, what had to be done has been done, there is no more coming to any state of being.’<sup>51</sup>” The preceding suggests to the reader that education is important, because through learning and investigating, a person eradicates ignorance.

**ANALYSIS:** After completely reading and analyzing the bulk of the Tipitaka, two forms of Buddhism can be recognized within the texts themselves: one for world-renouncers and another for heaven-seekers. Please note that not all monks are renunciates, and thus many monks are concerned with manners similar to laity. There are two sets of ‘Dhamma’, one for materialistically world-minded individuals who are concerned with heaven and hells, and another ‘set’ of Dhamma for those who renounce the world and strive towards nibbana. Distinguishing the differences cannot be made here. The Buddha taught two messages: one for those with attachments, and a different set for those who have renounced the world.

In the realm of existence, the Buddha’s two teachers were able to teach the gone-forth Gotama certain dhamma’s. These dhamma’s did not enlighten the gone-forth Gotama though, and this should remain ‘remembered’. The Abhidhammattha Sangaha, would classify the mental activities or stages of development where the Buddha left his teachers as still presiding in the “immaterial” sphere of consciousness. Here the gone-forth Prince discarded “all objects connected with material form and [could focus] upon some non-material object, such as the infinity of space...”<sup>52</sup> The Buddha-soon-to-be hadn’t yet developed the concepts descriptive of those in the

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<sup>50</sup> MN, p. 162

<sup>51</sup> MN, p. 163

<sup>52</sup> AS, p. 31

supramundane consciousness, at the time. Thus lokiyacitta was mastered by him, and to date prior to his enlightenment, lokuttaracitta was not fully realized to this point. The world of living beings, and the physical universe were probably understood but, the “world of formations...the totality of conditioned phenomena, physical and mental<sup>53</sup>”, could not have been developed by him at this point – because “He entered into the knowledge of previous existences in the first watch of the night, in the second watch he purified his divine eye and in the final watch gained an insight into the knowledge of interdependent causal origins.<sup>54</sup>” Thus, ‘totality’ in knowing the arising and falling, the coming and going, the placement and replacement of conditions, emotions, faculties...etc., all that Buddhists might study in the various traditions, seems to be one of the main goals, especially in meditation – was not realized, until his enlightenment.

If one no longer subjected to sensual desires [for example: those who commit rape are subjected to craving the female form, ‘taking’ the women not willingly ‘available’ for ‘him’], mindfulness may become further developed. Sensation-causing stimuli do not become ‘valuable’ – intoxicating substances [liquor/drugs], sex, food - when craving and clinging are eradicated, violence may become a rare occurrence in society. When one no longer clings to, for example: political or economic views - then ideologies and disputes for company or party gain lose importance and if investigated, are seen as ‘selfish’, due to the frustrations imposed upon an already exploited citizenry. When one no longer clings to the doctrine of self, one no longer gets agitated over minute occurrences, as explained above: the Buddha, Siddhattha Gotama, did not get agitated when the children urinated on him and poked sticks into his ears. Who, in contemporary modern society would not attempt to issue ‘ill-will’ on the children for bringing what is considered ‘indignity’ unto one’s self, because the concept of self is so deeply rooted in people, particularly those in western societies. In addition, this well-proclaimed lokiya-dhamma<sup>55</sup> is considered:

Clear, open, evident, and free from patchwork (free from deception), [so that] there is no future round of manifestation in the case of [those] who are arahants with taints destroyed, who have lived the holy life, done what had to be done, laid down the burden, reached the true goal, destroyed the fetters of being, and are completely liberated through final knowledge...[and in a footnote: “That is, as arahants have achieved deliverance from the

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<sup>53</sup> AS, p. 31

<sup>54</sup> N.A. Jayawickrama [trns], *The Story of Gotama Buddha – the Nidanakatha of the Jatakathakatha* (Oxford: Pali Text Society 1990) p. 99

<sup>55</sup> MN, p. 235 and 1211

entire round of existence, it is impossible to point to any plane within the round where they might be reborn].

The Buddha further states that in those who abandon the five lower fetters become non-returners and will attain Nibbana in a lokuttara realm [the Pure Abodes]; those who abandon three fetters and attenuated lust, hate and delusion become once-returners and will attain Nibbana in the next life [there make an end to suffering]; and those who abandon three fetters become stream-enterers, 'no longer subjected to perdition, bound for deliverance and headed for enlightenment [generally within seven future lives].<sup>56</sup> Lokuttara is defined here, parallel to dependent origination, concerning 'virtue' in two forms, either dependent or independent [not wholly in the dependent origination context]. Within the *Visuddhimagga* context of dependent origination, craving has two qualities: either as dependency through craving or dependency through false views, which also includes eradicating the defilements [greed, hatred, delusion]. Lokuttara, in this context suggests that if a person wishes to become a deity in the next life, for example, then only mundane [lokiya] attainments are possible because virtue pursued through craving and wrong views, dependent on religious rituals, will hinder development. Concerning pure virtue, supramundane attainments are independent of such viewpoints and cannot arise from craving and false views. Lokuttara mind-states [as part of the expounded Dhamma] are conditions that cannot be reached from the unwholesome and corruptive influences of greed, hate or delusion. Otherwise, virtue would be considered mundane and bound to suffering through ignorance. To understand the position in the *Visuddhimagga*, a mention of the mundane [lokiya] must be made. According to the text, some lokiya desires might bring about an improvement in future becoming and is a prerequisite for escaping from the cycle of samsara [and in a series of conditions]<sup>57</sup>:

1. *Discipline for the purpose of restraint*
2. *Restraint for the purpose of non-remorse*
3. *Non-remorse for the purpose of gladdening*
4. *Gladdening for the purpose of happiness*
5. *Happiness for the purpose of tranquility*
6. *Tranquility for the purpose of bliss*
7. *Bliss for the purpose of concentration*
8. *Concentration for the purpose of correct knowledge and vision*
9. *Correct knowledge and vision for the purpose of dispassion*

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<sup>56</sup> MN, p. 236

<sup>57</sup> *Visuddhimagga*, pp. 14-17

10. *Dispassion for the purpose of fading away [of greed]*
11. *Fading away for the purpose of deliverance*
12. *Deliverance for the purpose of knowledge and vision of deliverance*
13. *Knowledge & vision of deliverance for the purpose of complete extinction [of craving] through not clinging*

The above nearly parallels dependent origination, differing in the sense that this seems like the path an ordained Buddhist monk would pursue. I have direct experience with ‘conditions’ 1-6; but cannot quite experience bliss for the purpose of concentration, because of a personal tendency to associate dispassion and happiness together or coexisting in knowing amounts. ‘Conditions’ 8-11, I have experienced – but not conquered; and therefore I am not enlightened or left the realm of samsara. Skill in knowing dependent-origination is included in the Sangiti Sutta, but literally left out of the morning and evening chanting ceremony. In the Abhidhamma, it reveals something rather interesting, that this knowledge can “arise only once, and endure for only one mind-moment; it is never repeated in the mental continuum of the person who attains it – [but] it can be repeated, and with practice can be made to endure for many mind-moments, in the supramundane absorption called fruit attainment.”<sup>58</sup> This is called the development of insight, which strengthens wisdom from understanding the nature of impermanence, suffering and no-self.<sup>59</sup> One experiences more with practice, and through practice one becomes more wise. Returning to the Visuddhimagga, concerning virtue, the supramundane brings about the escape from becoming and is ‘the plane of reviewing knowledge’.<sup>60</sup> In a quoted sutta, the Elder Sangharakkhita the Great, on his deathbed told an assembly of monks that virtue can consist of adhering to the monastic code.<sup>61</sup> The Visuddhimagga, then mentions if one wishes to attain these conditions; the base avenue for doing so is to become a monk to attempt to cut greed/craving from one’s life. Most Theravada Buddhist literature seems to orient a person towards preparing a person to become a renunciate practitioner because the benefits of being a Buddhist are said to be greater when one is not hindered by the everyday, mundane life of the householder or layperson. The founder of the Santi Asok ‘sect’ Bodhirak has stated that he studied meditation intensely for two years as a lay person, and had certain insights, but no one would believe him, so he was self-compelled to ordain.

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<sup>58</sup> AS, p. 66

<sup>59</sup> AS, p. 72

<sup>60</sup> *Visuddhimagga*, p. 17

<sup>61</sup> *Visuddhimagga*, p. 47

The Thai scholar-monk P.A. Payutto derived or defines his definition of lokuttara from the Visuddhimagga in a simpler format, as he narrows lokuttara as having various possible functional meanings, as translated.<sup>62</sup>

- *Supramundane states*
- *Supramundane plane (one of four planes of consciousness/existence or degree of attainment)*
- *Supramundane Dhamma (9 types: Four Paths, Four Fruitations, and Nibbana)*
- *Moral supramundane consciousness*
- *Resultant supramundane consciousness*

Therefore, in understanding lokuttara from his point of view, the heaven aspect can fall under his first idea. It is rather difficult to achieve aspects of the path as a layperson. However, from another eminent monk's book if one makes the effort, then one can realize in this lifetime the path, fruit and nibbana.<sup>63</sup> Mahasi Nayaka says Buddhists aspire to reach the noble bliss of lokuttara nibbana, which is chanted daily in Buddhist prayers<sup>64</sup>, without making distinctions between the ordained or lay population – perhaps only monks/laity in Myanmar make this aspiration – because referring to my monastic chanting book, I find this aspiration missing. He says noble bliss is a feeling, a heavenly feeling. The four planes, from the above functional meanings of lokuttara are: of the sense-sphere, of the fine material sphere, of the immaterial sphere, and of the supramundane. Supramundane Dhamma is considered realizations by stream-enterers, once-returnees, non-returnees, and arahants. Each, within the respective stage of the path achieved, knows of this knowledge within their respective attainment. In summary of Mahasi Nayaka's work, he states that those who have lokuttara wisdom in dhamma can weigh their physical, mental and verbal actions, and that lokuttara actions guide people. If one's mind remains unperturbed, reinforced by faith and reinforced by understanding, then it is possible to have roots for success towards the supramundane path. With the mind unperturbed, the mind can remain steadfast in concentration. The Visuddhimagga speaks of lokuttara in terms of one of the sixteen kinds of concentration but associates it with higher paths of meditative attainments. Because of this, if a person is trying to aspire towards supramundane kinds of consciousness, fruits will not be attainable if one is practicing pure insight or by one whose vehicle is serenity because they are out of reach in terms

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<sup>62</sup> Dictionary, many pages

<sup>63</sup> [www.forestdhammabooks.com](http://www.forestdhammabooks.com), Ajariya Maha Boowa Nanasampanno. *Patipada – Venerable Ajariya Mun's Path of Practice*. Udon Thani: Forest Dhamma Books, 2005; using the example of Ajahn Mun

<sup>64</sup> Mahasi Nayaka, *Dhamma Padetha, Volume II* (Yangon: Aung Chan Tha Press, 2000), p. 107

of what is to be achieved through those methods.<sup>65</sup> Supramundane knowledge is considered the unification associated with the noble paths - being a stream-enterer, once-returnee, non-returnee, or an Arahant [and covered in the Sangiti Sutta]. Someone can jump on the supramundane path through techniques of abandoning the defilements (greed, hate, delusion), and through abandoning those via substitution of opposite characteristics. Then it can be that, by abandoning and cutting away the fetters, and starting into the noble path knowledge, one can develop the supramundane path that leads to the destruction of the defilements. Then the previous abandoning, from the cutting off by suppression and the substitution of opposites, one can understand path knowledge. Once someone realizes the mundane and supramundane through seeing and developing virtue, concentration, understanding, and the influence of continuity by their means – this is developing towards the supramundane. Mahasi Nayaka<sup>66</sup> suggests lokuttara knowledge as:

- *Knowledge that kamma is one's own property*
- *Insight knowledge*
- *Path knowledge*
- *Fruitation knowledge*

But, through studying various texts, the Abhidhammattha Sangaha provides a better explanation of the descriptions of wholesome path consciousness and the resultant fruit consciousness towards the four paths – of stream entry, once-returnee, non-returnee, and Arahantship. Supramundane consciousness transcends the world of conditioned things as the unconditioned element, Nibbana, and this consciousness that directly implies the realization of Nibbana, is called *lokuttaracitta*.<sup>67</sup> In the *Vimuttimaggā*, no progress in contemplation leading towards the supramundane path is possible without getting at least to the first meditative state, free of the defilements. The practice of insight would be unfruitful, ineffective, and obstructed when it is attempted without going away from thought-proximity to the sensual plane...that one who has attained the first stage has created progress, and the best way for this progress is through renunciation.<sup>68</sup> The Buddhist, through renunciation of the mundane world will be able to attain nibbana or realizations into the noble path according to the texts.

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<sup>65</sup> *Visuddhimaggā*, p. 607

<sup>66</sup> Mahasi Nayaka, *Dhamma Padetha, Volume II* (Yangon: Aung Chan Tha Press, 2000) p. 86

<sup>67</sup> AS, p. 31

<sup>68</sup> Upatissa the Arahant, "*Vimuttimaggā – The Path of Freedom*" [translated from Chinese by the Rev. N.R.M. Ehara, Soma Thera and Kheminda Thera] (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1995) pp. 361

In summary, analyzing the above information concerning lokuttara, the texts are consistent with the terminology, using lokuttara as a term to mean things that are outer world, in several contexts. The contexts can range from escaping the suffering that the world is enveloped around, in a cycle; to being virtuous in terms of following the rules of monastic discipline. Consciousness that leads a person away from greed, hatred and delusion leads the mind away from worldly concerns. The knowledge a person acquires through meditation leads a person away from prior stages towards the supramundane states – which if further developed can set a person onto the path towards liberation from samsara. The texts further emphasize that if a person were to choose to become virtuous and strive towards liberation, the best path available is the path of the renunciate. Lokuttara, according to the texts, seems indeed, a heavenly concept, that most people can only wish to attain, but through effort one can get there. Those who are either Dhamma-Followers [dhammanusarin] or Faith-Followers [saddhanusarin], each with different abilities<sup>69</sup> will soon be liberated as either a *ditthipatta* [attained-to-view] or *saddhvimutta* [liberated by faith], respectfully – with no mention when liberation is attained. These two types of people make up the ‘seven types of persons to be found existing in the world’ according to the Buddha in the *Kitagiri Sutta*.<sup>70</sup> The others, as detailed in the sutta, are called: one liberated in both ways, one liberated by wisdom, a body witness, one attained to view, and one liberated by faith. The Buddha further explains that these people need gradual training because final knowledge cannot be achieved at once. Furthermore, there were many learned noble, learned Brahmans, learned householders and learned recluses [who without asking questions but via ‘ordination’ and subsequently through meditation realize for themselves and attain Nibbana], who in the past who made preparations for and were intent upon refuting the Buddha’s dhamma, scheming, but upon meeting and questioning the Buddha surrendered and chose to therefore to become either lay or ordained disciples.<sup>71</sup> These are the famous ‘elephant footprints’ made by the Buddha [the fifth mark is made by tusks: learning dhamma, practicing meditation and observing the vinaya; these ‘marks’ are also attributed in another sutta to be fundamental to the ‘holy life’ as ‘monuments of Dhamma, as per the Dhammacetiya Sutta, MN89]; his ‘stamp’ impacts the earth or society, therefore can be felt and witnessed and made available for practice by the forever changed society

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<sup>69</sup> MN, p. 1211

<sup>70</sup> MN, p. 580-581

<sup>71</sup> MN, pp. 270-271 – the Culahatthipadopama Sutta

and world [after the expansion of Buddhism]. This matter is not merely confined to the Majjhima Nikaya, for the Venerable Sariputta makes similar statements of faith in the Digha Nikaya's *Sampasadaniya Sutta*.<sup>72</sup>

Sariputta proclaims that the Blessed Lord's way of teaching Dhamma is unsurpassed. He was a Brahman before, so he can rightfully discern or judge between ideologies. In the Nidanavagga/Kassapasamyutta, the Dhamma is said to be "well-expounded by the Blessed One, directly visible, immediate, inviting one to come and see, applicable, to be personally experienced by the wise."<sup>73</sup> Dhamma is also described as being lovely in its beginning, lovely in its middle and lovely in its ending, both in its spirit and letter<sup>74</sup>, or with right meaning and phrasing.<sup>75</sup> Furthermore, "a disciple should approach the Teacher who speaks thus in order to hear the dhamma. The Teacher teaches [the disciple] the Dhamma with its higher and higher levels, with its more and more sublime levels, with its dark and bright counterparts. As the teacher teaches the Dhamma to a [disciple] in this way, through direct knowledge of a certain teaching here in that Dhamma, the [disciple] comes to a conclusion in the Teacher thus: 'The Blessed One is fully enlightened, the Dhamma is well-proclaimed by the blessed one, the Sangha [historical and current order of monks] is practicing the good way.' Now if others should ask that [disciple] thus, 'What are the venerable one's reasons and what is his evidence?' whereby he says, 'The Blessed One is fully enlightened, the Dhamma is well-proclaimed by the Blessed One, the Sangha is practicing the good way'. To further summarize the sutta, it is through being taught the dhamma, investigating and coming to direct knowledge of certain teachings of the dhamma, and thus: coming to conclusions that soon confidence in the Teacher being fully enlightened, the Dhamma is well-proclaimed by the Blessed One, the Sangha is practicing the good way," arises. Lastly, "when anyone's faith has been planted, rooted and established in [the Buddha] through these reasons, terms and phrases, his faith is said to be supported by reason, rooted in vision, firm [attainment of faith by a stream-enterer – not possibly pointing to any other teacher but the Buddha<sup>76</sup>]; it is invincible..." This message is possible to deliver by one who has tried and practiced the teachings of the Buddha, as a personal

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<sup>72</sup> DN, pp. 417-425

<sup>73</sup> SN, p. 665, inaccurately indexed as p. 655

<sup>74</sup> F.L. Woodward, M.A., *The Book of Gradual Sayings – Anguttara-Nikaya Vol. I* (London: Pali Text Society 1970) p. 113 [further cited as AN, volume #, and page]

<sup>75</sup> MN, p. 272

<sup>76</sup> MN, p. 1244, note 490.



testament and witness to the validity of the statement, a reliable witness of true faith, not possible through Abrahamic traditions. For this reason again, the Dhamma is well-proclaimed, and that is why Buddhists bow before ‘the Dhamma’ which may or may not have representation at the temple or home’s alter – either in the form of the ‘wheel of dhamma’, or one of the many, or possibly complete set of books comprising the ‘Three Baskets of Buddhist Scriptures’ known as the ‘Tipitaka’.

*SUPATIPANNO BHAGAVATO SAVAKA-SANGHO.*

The Sangha of the Blessed One's disciples has practiced well.

*SANGHAM NAMAMI [PROSTRATE ONE TIME]*

I pay respect to the Sangha.

**CONTEXT:** One returns, still in the kneeling position, following the above prostration. The third phrase in the verse pertains to the reverence of the Sangha, or the Sangha of the Buddha’s disciples, which implies the historical sangha vis-à-vis the current sangha. This is an argument one can take up with commentary literature, regardless, the position of this thesis suggests reverence is towards the well-practicing Sangha. This Sangha is largely the group of monks at the monastery – the ‘*savaka*’ [a ‘disciple; hearer; or follower of the Buddha’<sup>77</sup>] - inside the ‘temple’ where the chanting ceremony is taking place. The Navakovada<sup>78</sup> states, “that group of people who have heard [The Buddha] teachings and who have practiced properly in accordance with the Dhamma and Vinaya, is called the ‘Sangha.’ ...[The Buddha taught to those in the Sangha]: in a way that was wondrous, in that those who followed the way were able to gain benefits proportionate to their practice.” The Sangiti Sutta conveys the same statement. The textbook for Thai monks, the Navakovada, should be corrected: the Savaka-Sangho is the group of monks that have heard and followed/practice the Buddha’s Dhamma as ordained disciples. The ‘savaka-sangho’ is invoked numerous times throughout the ceremony.

**DESCRIPTION:** In a glossary<sup>79</sup> - *sangha*: as the *bhikkhu-sangha*; or the community of Noble Disciples who have attained at least stream-entry, which might exclude many modern monks. But to adhere to traditional renderings, however correct textual commentary is, a monk is considered worthy of gifts, hospitality, offerings,

<sup>77</sup> Dictionary, p. 410

<sup>78</sup> Navakovada, p. 37

<sup>79</sup> SN, p. 2022

reverential salutations and are an unsurpassed field of merit for the world, if the monk is beyond training possessing: the right view; right intention, right speech, right action, right livelihood, right effort, right mindfulness, right concentration, right knowledge, and right deliverance – those bhikkhus who possess these ten qualities are worthy of salutations, and so forth, as above. If one is looking for names, there are numerous publications and examples in the Tipitaka of well-practicing bhikkhus; if one turns to their nearest temple, there has to be at least one monk who is practicing well, all of which may comprise the Sangha, that the Buddhist is saluting, through prostration. Take a look around, read the Tipitaka, and measure one's self against other's practice and determine if one needs to make corrections for their own life. The 'higher Sangha' is recalled, for the 'lesser Sangha' to emulate. This Sangha, for the lay person is [or to remind the monastic dweller]: those who have left the world behind. This world one has renounced, consists of: drugs, prostitution, intercourse with the opposite/same sex or with animals, masturbation, alcohol, cigarettes, gambling, violence, killing, illegal trades/buying/selling, palm-readings, and various other activities [please see the daily front pages of Thailand's numerous newspapers], these monks strive to or have left that behind. For the pure pursuit of the *brahmachariya* [holy-life] one commits to the wearing of the honored robes. These monks are to abide by the 'dhamma-vinaya' and if certain regulations are broken, they are revealed to other monks, twice a month, before the recitation of the *Patimokkha*. Advice of restraining one's self from future bad actions is given, and the mindfulness of the monk is 'restored', having purified himself 'again' before the *Patimokkha* – the twice-monthly recitation of 227 rules and observances of the renunciate *bhikkhu*.

**ANALYSIS:** As a result, if one is in the company of a 'perceived' bad monk, then one can substitute the bad for one known to be good [imagined!]; none-the-less, one may bow without reservation while contemplating the salutation towards those who practice well, to outwardly avoid offending those present, as deemed customary in Thailand. For example, monks can be seen engaging in financial transactions, a perceived 'wrong', a perceived wrong action. The monastic code of discipline, the *Patimokkha*, states in the section on robes [rules 18-20]: 'Should any bhikkhu receive, or cause to be received, or be glad at the money; or engage in trafficking with money;

or engage in the various kinds of buying and selling – this entails expiation with forfeiture.’<sup>80</sup>

Not being glad with the money, I approached my Phra Ajahn to inquire what I should do with the money offered. He suggested I only put it in a safe place, because I might never know when I would need it. As it turned out: once I was stranded without a vehicle-driver, at a forest temple, and needed to come back to Bangkok; had I not had money to take the bus back I would have had to walk back to Bangkok. I also had to pay the taxi-driver from the bus-station back to the temple. On another occasion, I needed to purchase an English translation of certain extra Pali chants, not available in my ordination manual. Most of the money I was given, went to the temple-boy that served me. He needed the money to learn how to do ‘welding’, although, some mornings, I found him hung-over from his nightly-outings. I would ask him about his welding school, and he would only laugh. I had money remaining after I disrobed. I returned the money to various ‘elder monks’ as a donation to them. On other occasions, I donated a sizeable amount to a temple in Lopburi, specifically for the ‘education’ of younger monks/novices; and to a forest temple outside of Pakchong for electricity/water/maintenance. While the receiving of money caused little happiness, the act of charity of donation eradicated any amount of guilt I could have maintained with left over monk-money, having given more than I received. I think everything turned out well for everyone.

One’s local market can be the stage to witness monks making return visits to receive more almsfood, discontent with the amount initially offered to them. Around one’s neighborhood, one can witness monks engaging in disputable transactions, but out of respect for the institution of Buddhism, further specifics have been deleted.

Many other training rules were actually issued to keep lay people satisfied, because ‘word’ came back to the Buddha suggesting a monk did ‘this or that’ and so basically a ruling was made to prohibit the activity determined as ‘unmonkly’ behavior. Many ‘violations’ are minor rules – like accepting a rug made from pure black-goat wool (odd to not accept what is offered based merely on color alone), or sleep under the same roof as someone who is not fully-ordained for more than two or three nights (like when a novice is dwelling with a bhikkhu?), or dig or have made the earth be dug (monks assisting in temple construction or abbots having a new building

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<sup>80</sup> Venerable Nanamoli Thera [translator], *The Patimokkha – 227 Fundamental Rules of a Bhikkhu* (Bangkok: Maha Makut Rajavidyalaya 1992) p. 90 [further cited as Patimokkha and page #]

constructed?), causing plants to be destroyed (temple ground maintenance or keeping a clean appearance?), or monks who visit an army (given blessings/amulets to them before departing for hostile regions?), or drink alcohol, or only to accept alms-food level to the top of the bowl (monks who carry additional plastic bags full of food, or have lay-followers behind them with buckets of previously offered food?), or not teaching the Dhamma to one who is wearing footwear, or teach Dhamma to one wearing a head-wrap (does this prohibit Muslims and Sikhs from learning or listening to the Dhamma, or is ignorance via doctrinal exploitation considered a sickness?), or while standing not teach Dhamma to one who is sitting (teacher in a classroom?) – many of these rules or acts if violated are clearly minor in detail and are made to only keep up some sort of holy appearance, though many faults can be seen in each one, while virtue can be seen in others. One should be careful when constructing a new building, monks visiting an army were perhaps invited to give a protection blessing, teaching Dhamma to one wearing a head-wrap is irrelevant in the student-author's opinion, as well as the Dhamma teacher's standing/sitting position relative to the learning student, though traditionally the teacher should occupy a higher position, standing is certainly higher than sitting, so the prohibition is really not clear. What is clear is that certain minor rules should be adapted to fit modern society, while others should be implemented into the monastic code of discipline – arguments for or against exact rules won't be discussed, while other issues might be evident due to 'witnessed' behavior. None-the-less, modern monastic behavior often strays from life exemplified in the Tipitaka's Vinaya.

Moving forward to the members of the Sangha who have practiced well, one might inquire into the membership of the Sangha. Many members of the initial Sangha consisted of learned Brahmans [knowers and reciters of the Vedas<sup>81</sup>], as well as the people who constituted the aspects of the elephant marks, previously mentioned. The *Nidanavagga-Nidanasamyutta* states: "The Sangha of the Blessed One's disciples is practicing the good way, practicing the straight way, practicing the true way, practicing the proper way; that is the four pairs of persons, the eight types of individuals – this Sangha of the Blessed One's disciples is worthy of gifts, worthy of

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<sup>81</sup> See, for instance: Francis Story, *Prayer and Worship* (Kandy: Wheel Publication #139, 1980) p. 3: "The Buddha declared himself a knower of the Vedas, was familiar with them and had found them to be useless as aids to Enlightenment. ...He even rejects them as a means of obtaining mundane benefits"

hospitality, worthy of offerings, worthy of reverential salutation, the unsurpassed field of merit for the world.<sup>82,</sup>

A stream-enterer is considered to be the one practicing the good way, a once-returned is said to be practicing the straight way, the non-returned is practicing the true way, and the arahant is practicing the proper way. It should be noted that there should not be limitations on 'sangha membership' being perceived as only containing monks/bhikkhus. Why? Many lay people [male and female], took up lay discipleship under the Buddha and attained noble status. Two, namely Isidatta and Purana, have an interesting life. The Samyutta Nikaya, Vol. II, p. 1793-1796 & p. 1955 n.326: both are proclaimed as once-returneds and are content with their wives. In the Anguttara Nikaya, Vol. V, (75) p. 94-99: Purana has turned-celibate and Isidatta continues to take pleasure in his wife. The Anguttara Nikaya, Vol. III (44) p. 246-249 & 314 mentions same, though there is a commentary dispute.<sup>83</sup> Several other 'nobles' are mentioned in the Anguttara Nikaya<sup>84</sup> and other texts. An argument can be taken up to include these lay-devotees as well-practicing members of the Sangha, as well as monks because of higher attainments, if that is the sole criteria to determine noble-discipleship. It is possible that centuries of monastic interpretations have led to a definition that excludes unordained humans as the only possible members of the Sangha hierarchy. There are, however, four assemblies comprising 'Buddhists'. Why is there, seemingly, only one voice recognized in Buddhist history, that of monastics? The four assemblies comprise of fully ordained monks and nuns, male and female lay-followers. Buddhism needs literate lay-disciple teachers as much as nuns and monks.

### 2.2.2 Passage of Homage to the Buddha

YAMAMHA KHO MAYAM BHAGAVANTAM SARANAM GATA,

We have gone for refuge to the Blessed One,

(UDDISSA PABBAJITA) YO NO BHAGAVA SATTHA

(have gone forth on account of) the Blessed One who is our Teacher

YASSA CA MAYAM BHAGAVATO DHAMMAM ROCEMA.

and in whose Dhamma we delight.

IMEHI SAKKAREHI TAM BHAGAVANTAM SASADDHAMMAM SASAVAKA-SANGHAM

ABHIPUJAYAMA.

<sup>82</sup> SN, p. 579, Chapter V [41.1]

<sup>83</sup> SN, p. 1955 n.326

<sup>84</sup> AN, Vol. I, p. 16-25, naming the 'best' disciples with certain attributes

**With these offerings we worship most highly that Blessed One together with the True  
Dhamma & the Sangha of his disciples.**

**HANDA MAYAM BUDDHASSA BHAGAVATO PUBBA-BHAGA-NAMAKARAM KAROMA SE:**

**Now let us chant preliminary passages in homage to the Awakened One, the Blessed One:**

**CONTEXT:** This portion is an invocation, by the present [in attendance] leader of the Sangha. Inside the temple or pavilion, those present have taken refuge, and recognize the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha – as ‘superior’ ‘constructions, vis-à-vis: one’s self. One recognizes one’s imperfections and need for further teaching, and thus ‘seeks’ refuge. One seeks refuge as either a monk or lay-disciple under the Buddha, who becomes and is the great teacher. One seeks refuge to the Dhamma, because the Dhamma remains as the teachings of the Buddha, which if utilized, can only improve the life of the refuge-seeker. Conversely, Buddhadasa Bhikkhu suggested: “The Buddha teaches us to believe in ourselves, to have a free inquiry into truth... why then should we take the Triple-Gem as a refuge? Is it a hindrance for attaining Buddha-dhamma? I confirm that it is.<sup>85</sup> It is... only morally useful, and results in the attainment of a heavenly abode... The Buddha teaches us to be attasara, or to make one-self one’s own refuge. ...To take refuge in the Buddha has some meaning only in the lower stages for an ordinary worldling, as [s/he] is unable to understand how to take refuge in [one-self] and then finally give up all refuges whatsoever, including [his/her] own.<sup>86</sup>” Therefore, the refuge as a formula is a preliminary exercise for Buddhadasa, suggested for only the inept Buddhist. One seeks refuge to the Sangha, because the initiate seeks four requisites: food, medicine, shelter, and robes from somewhere – and the monastery provides that, especially for those seeking to adhere to higher levels of ‘dhamma’: through 5, 8, 10 or 227 training rules. After seeking refuge to the Triple Gem, one is invoking reverential salutations or homage to begin. This concept of the ‘Triple Gem’ is believed to be the core ‘idea’

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<sup>85</sup> Why then does Buddhadasa hypocritically insert the format for refuge into his own book that he wrote for laity at his ‘Samnak Suan Mokkh’? Buddhadasa, possessing greater wisdom, should impart this knowledge unto his disciples [lay or ordained], but instead keeps the format for the unliberated. Having feelings against the refuges, should he not: teach others of this hindrance to assist in the liberation of other humans? See his text, written in Thai: คู่มืออุบาสกอุบาสิกา [*Handbook for Laymen and Laywomen*] (Bangkok: Duang Geaw, No publication date) pp. 21-22. This clearly means Buddhadasa Bhikkhu can never be claimed to be a bodhisatta, in the Mahayanist ‘sense’, because he does not have concern for another’s liberation, irrespective of his own attainments. I attach my demonstration: the liberated then would never go or take the refuge, otherwise it becomes a meaningless ritual, and if taken – further demonstrates one’s attachments and possible future rebirth in hell/heaven.

<sup>86</sup> Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, *Towards Buddha-Dhamma* (Chaiya: Dhammadana Foundation 2002) pp. 19-20

in determining if one is a Buddhist: revering the Buddha, studying and practicing the dhamma, and respecting/submitting to monks.

There are several methods for revering the Triple Gem; here is just the one of immediate concern. The construct of the ‘Triple Gem’ seems to be the ‘tool’ used by missionary Buddhists and the nation’s Buddhist ideology, because: “[Phra Ajahn Mun’s disciples] were active in discrediting popular animistic beliefs and practices prevalent in the northeast countryside ... the northeast [is] was ruled over by ghosts, spirits, and demons... Mun... instructed and awakened them [the people of the northeast] to the truth of Buddhism... [eventually] people became convinced of the truth and came to accept the Triple Gem. ...In 1929, the government issued a prohibition announcement against the widespread popular belief in the power of ghosts and demons, promoting instead adherence to the Triple Gem... [in] an exorcism campaign.<sup>87</sup>” The biography of Phra Ajahn Mun suggests ghosts are only “sanna’s [perception] insidious trickery.”<sup>88</sup> Furthermore, Kukrit Pramoj in one of his many stories<sup>89</sup> and Kamala Tiyavanich addresses this issue as well, but from her study a monk asked a female spirit doctor to believe in the Triple Gem, because belief in spirits is ‘wrong view and lacks virtue and merit’ and that by taking refuge in the Triple Gem is considered wholesome [kusala] and merit can accrue.<sup>90</sup> Kukrit’s tale has a spirit-possessed youth becoming healthy in one of the early exorcism campaigns by taking refuges in the Triple Gem, guided by Phra Sem. Additionally, spirit doctors in the days of Phra Ajahn Mun took refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha – in place of the spirits they previously worshipped.<sup>91</sup>

In a brief departure, social dogmas and religious orthodoxy are presented in these stories “issued” as classroom texts. The Buddhist orthodoxy is not so obvious, unless one looks into the superficial role of the monks in a Theravada Buddhist perspective as being more orthodox than Mahayana Buddhism, but what “Phra Sem” does, is not magic, but assists one to have faith in the Triple Gem, a concept promoted as an example of orthodoxy in more ‘modern’ Thai Literature. From this context, one can see the seriousness the emphasis on the Triple Gem has on practitioners. To be

<sup>87</sup> Taylor, p. 116-118

<sup>88</sup> Acariya Maha Boowa. Acariya Mun Bhuridatta – A Spiritual Biography [Screen Version]. Buddha Dhamma Education Association. [www.buddhanet.net](http://www.buddhanet.net). p. 107

<sup>89</sup> Kukrit Pramoj, *Many Lives (หลายชีวิต)*, (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books)

<sup>90</sup> Kamala Tiyavanich, *Forest Recollections – Wandering Monks in Twentieth-Century Thailand* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books 1997) p. 206-207: in fact she cites several successful exorcisms.

<sup>91</sup> Acariya Maha Boowa. Acariya Mun Bhuridatta – A Spiritual Biography [Screen Version]. Buddha Dhamma Education Association. [www.buddhanet.net](http://www.buddhanet.net). p. 117

Buddhist, one ‘recognizes’ the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha as a source for refuge and as an inspirational source for liberation from worldly sufferings.

**DESCRIPTION:** The invocation is simplistic enough in its meaning, with perhaps only leaving the term: ‘offerings’ as the only discussable word. The monks had sought higher-ordination or ordination as novices for different reasons, which cannot be determined here. As Kamala notices, this is only the ‘sangha’ that has been ordained in Bangkok’s centralized style – making other Buddhist groups such as the current Santi Asok movement and the former case of ‘Siwichai’ who continued to ordain disciples in his ‘Yuan’ denomination until ‘taken’ to Bangkok for six-months of detention<sup>92</sup> - outcastes or not recognized. Now one must try to understand the education reforms, local culture, traditions, languages used, and many other aspects of social life, before going for refuge or ordination is considered. Furthermore, the refuges, taken to ‘proclaim subjectivity’: has reduced 227 rules of training; has reduced 10, the 8 and 5... Why/How? If one is respectful/mindful through acknowledgement of the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha – there would be no need for elaboration of 227 training regulations. The Buddha’s ‘many’ rules were shaped from reprimanding disrespectful, unobservant, or ignorant monks, those who had not fully taken to the difficult life of the renunciate. Now, this may also include adapting to a new culture or traditions – from foreign to Thai, along with the monastic regulations. Also, taking notice to the translation: ‘We’ – this word arise ‘nine’ times in the translation of the morning chanting formula, which begs analysis alongside Thongchai Winichakul’s ‘We-self’ concept.<sup>93</sup>

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<sup>92</sup> Kamala Tiyavanich, *Forest Recollections – Wandering Monks in Twentieth-Century Thailand* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books 1997) p. 44

<sup>93</sup> Thongchai Winichakul, *Siam Mapped – A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books 1994) p. 6-16, suggesting Thai’s possess a certain ‘arrogance’ that qualifies as ‘Thainess’ – an identity that has been academically questioned by numerous scholars. Thongchai determines to settle the matter. He suggests: the ‘We-Self’ concept as perhaps: we, the uncolonized, with our own nationalism, patriotism, identity, culture, history, image, religion, worldview – are physical and spiritual aspects [along with empathy, loyalty, partiality and obsession], that construct the ‘we’... a special cognition... which must exclude communism, subversion, rebellion and *lese-majeste* – a paradigm of political ideas which no one dares to violate. If one violates these ‘concepts’ then credibility and authority are lost. Thongchai continues: Thainess or the ‘we-self’ – as the source, reference, and justification for legitimacy, criteria, standards sentiments, inspirations and antagonisms are never seriously questioned. This also positions the speaker of ‘we-self’ against ‘them’ who are not ‘us’. *Now, I determine:* the nine utilizations of ‘we’ articulate this ‘arrogance’: WE: have gone for refuge, delight, worship, know, renounced, practice and attend – others do not. This language illustrates ‘exclusivity’ and is invoked several times by the leader, demonstrating ‘discipleship’ because ‘we’ – as followers, ‘do this’, as per the invocation – which can also invite outside ‘scorn’ because there is a lack of individuality and depressed intellectual ability to determine one’s own fate due to ignorance of Pali Language. The ‘we’ in the chanting formula is another ‘we-self’ construct. The only ‘externa:’ in the chant is the invitation for one, ‘the wise’ to see for himself [sexist?] and considers others ‘foolish’ by such imagery. Theravadins have been known to be arrogant by Mahayanists, speaking nothing about Thai ethnicity. The Buddha admonished many of his own disciples for



**ANALYSIS:** But the first question is, “What are ‘Buddhist’ offerings?” There is consideration of discrimination, regarding offerings, as one puts aside inferior items and gives only superior [and unopened] items.<sup>94</sup> In verses uttered before the Buddha by deities, offerings are declared as worthless as, “Since they give while settled in unrighteousness, having slain and killed, causing sorrow, their offering – tearful, fraught with violence – shares not the value of the righteous one’s gift.<sup>95</sup>” Gifts should not be offered negligently or with stinginess, and if one desires merit, then a gift should be given; and for those who have little wealth, the offering is worth more merit than those who have greater wealth.<sup>96</sup> However appreciative the Buddha was in response to hearing the verses pertaining to giving, the Buddha addressed the deities, “Surely giving is praised in many ways, but the path of Dhamma surpasses giving. For in the past and even long ago, the good and the wise ones attained Nibbana.<sup>97</sup>” This demonstrates that practicing the dhamma is superior to offering gifts to the Sangha, which merely ushers the donor to a heavenly realm, rather than Nibbana, because of the bliss one may feel when giving to bhikkhus. The Buddha said, “Giving food, one gives strength; giving clothes, one gives beauty; giving a vehicle, one gives ease; giving a lamp, one gives sight. The one who gives a residence is the giver of all. But the one who teaches the dhamma is the giver of the deathless.<sup>98</sup>” Those who give stingily are reborn in hell or if reborn in the human realm, are born into poor families. Some interesting gifts mentioned in the Tipitaka include: delightful hermitages, water tanks in the forest, and causeways over rough terrain, along with food, drinks, clothing, beds and seats<sup>99</sup>, garlands, fragrance, unguents, and fragrant parts of trees and plants.<sup>100</sup> Offering brings one re-birth into non-human realms. A paragraph from the *Culakammavibhanga Sutta* proclaims similarly, that if one offers the above items, then rebirth will take place in a happy destination and if reborn as a human, then the person will be wealthy.<sup>101</sup> The individual is at liberty to

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being arrogant; thus, Buddhist Thai’s – the builders of ‘racist’ nationalism, need admonishment as well. The ‘we-self’, grasped as Thainess, has ideological flaws determined by me to be unwholesomely ‘racist/xenophobic’ in roots, based on delusion and ignorance. Yet, this prevents Thai-land from being ‘Anotherland’, colonized by other races. In the Thai version of the translation, the term/word “rao” is utilized several times as well, as if ‘others’ are inferior – similar to the attitudes ‘foreign missionaries’ brought with them to Southeast Asia and beyond. Rama IV understood this attitude [superior/inferior] and emphasized it in the chanting formula.

<sup>94</sup> SN, p. 365 n. 68

<sup>95</sup> SN, p. 108

<sup>96</sup> SN, p. 108-109

<sup>97</sup> SN, p. 110

<sup>98</sup> SN, p. 120-121

<sup>99</sup> SN, p. 191

<sup>100</sup> SN, p. 1022-1024

<sup>101</sup> MN, p. 1056

give what he can without compulsion to offer, because through offering one can be reborn in a happy or pleasant non-human realm; however these higher celestial realms should not distract one from striving beyond practicing the dhamma that brings one to the highest attainment: Nibbana. Inside the Digha Nikaya, and oddly absent in the Bhikkhu Patimokkha: there is a prohibition against accepting offerings of uncooked rice – why this is offered to monks in Thailand is unknown, but this is often done.<sup>102</sup> The Buddha<sup>103</sup> speaks of himself, “The ascetic Gotama... avoids accepting raw grain or raw flesh.” Why then in Thailand, is uncooked rice presented as an offering made to Buddhist monks, who incidentally don’t cook their own food by default of being ‘homeless wanderers/ascetics’ without the cooking materials present in their dwelling area. Besides, collecting almsfood provides them the necessary nutrients – no need to cook for oneself. Another way of accepting uncooked rice is to collect the offering, but give it to temple laity, who may cook the rice for a later occasion, perhaps again offered. Left over food is given, first to laity, then to temple dogs, cats or chickens.

A few popular offered items seem to be in conflict with the life of the monk, specifically money and uncooked rice. Interesting rule interpretations sometimes allow the unconceivable to occur. When the monk arrives into the temple without offerings, and participates in the ceremony, he can be satisfied without offering material items, because his life has already been dedicated and offered towards practicing the Dhamma – the highest form of merit. Unobservant lay-people by comparison offer only flowers and possibly some burning incense sticks, with little bodily or mental dedication, not receiving much merit. Kamala reminds her readers, that the Bangkok ‘elite’ associate merit and personal wealth together while seeking ‘favors’; this is in contrast to many poor villagers who offer robes anonymously or for mere occasions, such as one’s birthday or Buddhist holidays today.<sup>104</sup>

The fourth phrase contains the word, “ABHIPUJAYAMA” that is translated as meaning ‘worship’. It should be made known that homage is to be done via body, speech and mind<sup>105</sup>, which accords to other doctrinal points, considering vinaya discipline [virtue], meditation [concentration] and wisdom [insight] as derived from the Eightfold Noble Path, as part of the Four Nobles Truths. Thus if one is distracted

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<sup>102</sup> Someone else also noticed this discrepancy – See: Spirit Cults, p. 64 – but he does not venture into inquiry

<sup>103</sup> DN, p. 69 – Brahmajala Sutta

<sup>104</sup> Kamala Tiyavanich, *Forest Recollections – Wandering Monks in Twentieth-Century Thailand* (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books 1997) p. 39

<sup>105</sup> AN, Vol. I, p. 272

by a late-coming monk, proper reverence is broken through the interruption. It seems then that forms of ‘reverence’ are key in Buddhism.<sup>106</sup> Any student of Buddhism may argue that the concept of ‘worship’ must be differentiated from how Abrahamic traditions display their reverence towards their single deity or the fractional attributes comprising the totality of the deity’s construction. The *Dictionary*, states: “worship [external and mental]; honor, veneration; homage; devotional attention; devotional offering.<sup>107</sup>” To explain, if one is: “obstinate and arrogant [arrogance is a fetter/hindrane, if maintained, attainment of nibbana cannot be achieved]; does not pay homage to one who should receive homage, does not rise up for one who deserves a seat, does not make way for one whom one should make way and does not honor, respect, revere and venerate one who should be honored, respected, revered and venerated. Because of performing and undertaking such action... reappears in a state of deprivation...<sup>108</sup>”. Further, in another sutta, “When one person, owing to another, has gone for refuge to the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Sangha, I say that it is not easy for the former to repay the latter by paying homage to him, rising up for him, according him reverential salutation and polite services, and by providing robes, almsfood, resting places [offering of a monastery for monks to live and practice in!], and medicinal requisites.<sup>109</sup>” The Anguttara Nikaya lists characteristics of monks who may be revered as: being virtuous, heard much, companionship with the lovely, has the ability to pass through solid objects and fly like a bird, possessed of right view and seeing, has a divine ear enabling one to hear the sounds of deities and humans at considerable distances, knows the minds of other beings, can recall previous rebirths, has the divine-eye enabling to forecast future rebirths, and through the destruction of the cankers... possessed of these ten the monk is worshipful, worthy of honor, gifts, salutations and as a field of merit.<sup>110</sup> This truly eliminates many monks from being reverentially saluted. Perhaps lay-society should re-assess its behavior before bowing before bhikkhus? According to modern science, few monks can literally pass through solid objects or have the ability to fly through the air, or hear sounds of deities. Some monks are known to ‘predict the future’ but fame earned in this manner is justification for performing the ‘base arts’ which have been made ‘prohibited’ by the Buddha and recollected by the Venerable Sariputta in the following discourse, telling a female

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<sup>106</sup> AN, *Vol. I*, p. 108

<sup>107</sup> Dictionary, p. 387

<sup>108</sup> MN, p. 1056

<sup>109</sup> MN, p. 1103 – the Dakkhinavibhanga Sutta

<sup>110</sup> AN, *Vol. V*, p. 137-139

wanderer, Sucimukhi, “Sister, those ascetics and Brahmins who earn their living by the debased art of geomancy [determining whether or not a site is suitable for agricultural cultivation, but allows for determining virtues and faults for sites selected for homes and monasteries, including the protective verses to be recited over them!] – a wrong means of livelihood, these are called ascetics and Brahmins who eat facing downwards. Those ascetics who earn their living by the debased art of astrology [– a wrong means of livelihood – these are called ascetics and Brahmins who eat facing upwards. Those ascetics who earn their living by undertaking to go on errands and run messages [reducing his role to a mere messenger] – a wrong means of livelihood – these are called ascetics and Brahmins who eat facing the four quarters. Those ascetics and Brahmins who earn their living by the debased art of palmistry [determining a person’s future via bodily features, dreams, etc., as per the *Brahmajala Sutta*, cited below] – a wrong means of livelihood – these are called ascetics and Brahmins who eat facing the intermediate directions.<sup>111</sup>” Via recommendation to cross reference the previous in another volume<sup>112</sup>, which illustrates a monk should not accept raw grain [Why are uncooked grains of rice included into boxed offerings one may purchase for monks from department stores?], money, accept fields and plots [though the Buddha did for the Sangha’s use<sup>113</sup>], refrain from buying and selling, using sunshades [does this imply vinaya breakage when modern monks walk about in public using umbrellas on extremely hot days? Is this the Patimokkha regulation stating that a monk will not go into inhabited areas with his head covered, which interestingly suggests that a monk can wear ‘head-coverings’ on temple grounds, especially during the cold seasons!], as well as many other issues of moral concern, similarly echoed in the Patimokkha and Vinaya. Furthermore, the *Brahmajala Sutta* proclaims, “worshipping the sun or Great Brahma” and invoking the deity of luck is a means of wrong livelihood for monks.<sup>114</sup> The refuge taking is directed to the Buddha, the Dhamma, and Sangha – not to Brahma, Indra, Ganesha, Rahu, hermits, etc. Appeasing the devas, redeeming vows to them, preparing and consecrating building-sites, giving ritual cleansings [does this prohibit the sprinkling of water that generally concludes a merit making ceremony?], giving ‘ointments or balms’, are all included into as being means of wrong livelihood. How many monks must re-assess their

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<sup>111</sup> SN, p. 1018-1019, excluding the notes, inspired from p. 1101

<sup>112</sup> DN, p. 68-69, in the *Brahmajala Sutta*, the first in the volume.

<sup>113</sup> DN, p. 538

<sup>114</sup> DN, p. 73

lifestyle and concerns – or is the ‘escape-clause’ given, that they don’t really care about what they are doing, thus non-attached, and only merely do it to satisfy the laity? Indeed, though, some matters are seen as trivial, but the rules are still in place, despite monks finding creative ways to earn fame. In conclusion, historical and modern circumstances have skewed what is allowable, and what has been made acceptable as ‘rational’, so the determination of what makes a monk ‘reverential’ or even venerable has changed since the days of Siddhattha Gotama, the sole Buddha of our age. Many seek refuge in sensual pleasures, and not the Triple Gem. Subsequently, this insight makes the invocation all the more meaningful. Next, following the leader’s invitation for the invocation in an attempt to expand out from ‘we-self’ to unify ‘we versus they’<sup>115</sup>, is the invocation itself, which unites the purpose of the chanters. This is why all are gathered before the Buddha image, to recite the ‘*namo*’ below - three times, ensuring the phrase will not be forgotten.

(ALL THEREFORE CHANT):

NAMO TASSA BHAGAVATO ARAHATO SAMMA-SAMBUDDHASSA. (Repeated three times.)

*Homage to the Exalted One, The Arahant, The Buddha perfected by himself*<sup>116</sup>

**CONTEXT:** ‘All’ here, have gathered for the purpose, as stated in the above invocation, to pay homage the Buddha. This is recited three times, to not forget. Hajime Nakamura, writes: “In the older portions of the [Tipitaka] Siddhattha Gotama was regarded as only a man, not as a super-human being. However, with the lapse of time Gotama the man gradually came to be deified. The concept of Buddha underwent a great change in the process of its development. He receives such an appellation as ‘VIJJA CARANA SAMPANNO’. He was supposed to work wonders [abhinna]. Finally he came to be called with the Ten Epithets.<sup>117</sup>”

**DESCRIPTION:** Numerous alternate translations describe the term in better detail:

- *Let my obeisance be to the Blessed One, The Honorable One, The Fully Enlightened One*<sup>118</sup>

<sup>115</sup> See: Niels Mulder, *The Concept of Power and Moral Goodness in the Contemporary Thai Worldview* (JSS 67, Part 1, January 1979) to be from *Everyday Life in Thailand: An Interpretation* (Bangkok: Editions Duang Kamol 1979); p. 125 – for a viewpoint concerning ‘we versus they’ – as a lasting, experiencible human world view of basic dualities in seeing others.

<sup>116</sup> Translations, p. 1

<sup>117</sup> Hajime Nakamura, *Indian Buddhism – A Survey with Bibliographical Notes* (Delhi: Shri Jainendra Press 1999) p. 83 – this text fails to address exactly, the ten epithets. I ‘assume’ this is attributed to being the ten powers of the Perfect One, but could easily be something different – perhaps the ten perfections... there is too much speculation involved in dealing with Hajime’s work – seemingly incomplete as an expanded bibliography.

<sup>118</sup> A.G.S. Kariyawasam, *Buddhist Ceremonies and Rituals of Sri Lanka* (Kandy: BPS, 1995) p. 7

- *Homage to the Exalted One, Far from defilements, Perfectly Enlightened by Himself*<sup>119</sup>
- *Homage to Him, The Blessed One, The Worthy One, The Fully Enlightened One*<sup>120</sup>
- *Homage to the Exalted One, The Worthy One, The Rightly Self-Awakened One*<sup>121</sup>
- *Homage to the Blessed One, The Arahant, The Fully Enlightened Buddha*<sup>122</sup>
- *Homage to the Blessed One, The Arahant, The Perfectly Enlightened One*<sup>123</sup>
- *Homage to the Blessed One, Accomplished and Fully Enlightened*<sup>124</sup>
- *Honor to that Exalted One, Arahant, The Fully Enlightened One*<sup>125</sup>
- *I worship the Blessed One, Arahant, Supreme Lord Buddha*<sup>126</sup>

ANALYSIS: Research determines Islam and Buddhism share similar phrases of reverence\*, and this shared sense of respect holds some influence over the Dhammayuttika-Nikaya sect, or at least the chanting ceremony. Regardless, may the above serve as an example of why this thesis is not fully dependent on translation accuracies, there are many arguments, too many ‘not worth-while’ fights. This thesis is more concerned with the concept of the terms, or placing the terms in a current context for people to understand; because, a person cannot truly pay homage or give reverence to something unless they have some knowledge of why the entity should be respected. There is also particular concern over ‘proper’ pronunciation, because of

<sup>119</sup> Dhammayut Order and Mahamakuta Rajavidyalaya [chants by King Mongkut, translated by Phra Khantipalo], *In Commemoration of H.M. King Rama IV (Mongkut)* (Bangkok: 1968) p. 6 [further cited as Mongkut and page #]

<sup>120</sup> Narada Thera and Bhikkhu Kassapa [revised by Bhikkhu Khantipalo], *Mirror of the Dhamma – Buddhist Chanting and Devotional Texts* (Kandy: BPS 1984) [Fifth Edition/Fourth Printing] p. 1

<sup>121</sup> Ordination, p. 15

<sup>122</sup> DN, p. 63

<sup>123</sup> SN, p. 89 – Vol. I; and SN, p. 1133 – Vol. II

<sup>124</sup> MN, p. 77

<sup>125</sup> AN, Vol. I, Vol. II, Vol. V, p.1

<sup>126</sup> Dr. Phra Khru Sujin Dhammajariya (Sangiam Phimmasorn), *The Development of Buddhist Study in Thailand and India* (Unpublished Ph.D. [Faculty of Social Science] Thesis from Magadh University 1983) p. 237 [Phra Ajahn Dr. Sangiam resides at Wat Patumwanaram in Bangkok, Thailand]

\* This is a reflective influence... When one performs the ‘Salat’ : “In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Mercy-giving” – compare this to the meaning of: ‘Namo Tassa Bhagavato, Arahato Samma-Sambuddasa’, which translates as: *Homage to the Exalted One, The Arahant, The Fully Enlightened One*. Can this be any more similar? Additionally: One starts the ‘salat’ with the first ‘surah’, which translates as: “In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. All Praises and thanks be to Allah, the Lord [of man-kind, jinn (angelic-type’s similar to a Buddhist deva) and all that exists]. The Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. ... You alone we worship, and You alone we ask for help for each and everything. Guide us to the Straight Way, the way of those on whom You have bestowed Your Grace, not of those who have earned Your Anger, nor those who went astray.” Dr. Muhammad Taqi-ud-Din Al-Hilali and Dr. Muhammad Muhsin Khan; *Translation of the Meaning of The Noble Qur’an – In the English Language* (Medinah: King Fahd Complex for the Printing of the Holy Qur’an) pp. 1-2; and Al-Ghazali, *Inner Dimensions of Islamic Worship* (Leicestershire: The Islamic Foundation 2000) p. 19. Those ‘positioned’ to ‘pray/chant’ in both traditions, are without chairs, on the ground – and bow/perform prostrations. In both traditions: when in the prostrated position, the performer ‘utters’ a form of apology. One should reflect on the Buddhist morning or evening chanting ceremony and recall the similarities of ‘utterances’. I don’t have time in this thesis to attribute Islamic prayers to the Buddhist monks who spread out in all directions, following the suggestion of the Buddha and Emperor Asoka. It is possible some ‘monks’ entered the caves where the Prophet Muhammad ‘received’ the Qur’an through the Angel Gabriel. The social discipline of Islam is very similar to the discipline of a Buddhist monk – I wish I had more time/space/money to study this important link between traditions that are existent in Thailand.

various discrepancies involved in determining what ‘is’ proper.<sup>127</sup> None-the-less, all are gathered together to ‘honor’ the Buddha for his attainments. Before chanting, taking precepts or making merit, Buddhists always start with ‘namo’; why this is never omitted, according to Phra Ajahn Mun<sup>128</sup>:

“If we take it up for consideration, we find that //na// stands for the water element, and //mo// for the earth element... When the generative elements of the mother and father are combined, the body comes into being. ...The important factors are the two original elements, //namo//. After the child is born, it has to depend on //na//, its mother, and //mo//, its father, to care for it, nurturing it and nourishing it... training it in every form of goodness. The mother and father are thus called the child's first and foremost teachers. ...If we didn't have this body, we wouldn't be able to do anything, which means that we wouldn't have anything at all. For this reason, our body is the root of our entire inheritance from our mother and father, which is why we say that the good they have done us cannot be measured or calculated. Wise people thus never neglect or forget them. We first have to take up this body, this //namo//, and only then do we perform the act of bowing it down in homage. To translate //namo// as homage is to translate only the act, not the source of the act. This same root inheritance is the starting capital we use in training ourselves, so we needn't feel lacking or poor when it comes to the resources needed for the practice.”

While this might be fascinating for some, and agreeable to others, it can be debated linguistically, Payutto's Dictionary claims the elements: earth to be ‘pathavi’; and water to be ‘apo’, in Pali. In Thai, water is ‘naam’ but earth/ground is either: pun-din, or ‘lok’ [derived from Pali for ‘world/realm’]; or the only word close to an ‘m-sound’

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<sup>127</sup> H.H. Somdet Phra Nyanasamvara – The Supreme Patriarch [trans.: Bhikkhu Kantasilo], *Buddha Sasana Vamsa: A Buddhist Monastic Lineage* (Bangkok: Mahamakut Press 1992) p. 10 “Mongkut ... advised him in the Mon ordination and the phonology involved in the method of pronouncing the Pali words... which the Prince himself found to be correct and valid, greatly increasing his faith. [p.11] - Prince Mongkut explained that since he himself was a Thai, perhaps he could not do the chanting as clearly as a true Mon bhikkhu... [p.20] – this shows that the Raman [Mon] style of pronunciation was used first so we may conclude that the sect later settled on a Lankan style after researching the matter and establishing a style in line with proper phonology and the consensus of Pali linguists, which sounds similar to the Lankan style but is not entirely the same” In fact within the same denomination, one continues to hear differences; take for example the following phonetically spelled words for VERAMANI: *way-ram-an-i*, or the following... *way-ramin-noi*... It has been told to me that the later method of pronunciation is considered ‘special’. The monastic-dwellers at Wat Rajathiwat use the later, Wat Pathumwanaram uses the former – both are temples in the Dhammayuttika-Nikaya. A Burmese ‘informant’ suggests to me that the Burmese have a ‘closer’ pronunciation than the Thai’s – and after hearing her chant the basic formula for ‘worship’ the words are identifiably different, but can be determined to be the same word. Thus I am more concerned with the meanings rather than pronunciations. *Additionally*, Wells illustrates seven chanting ‘style’ techniques. See p. 129. Wells’ text is a ‘wonderful’ translation of all the various Pali chanting verses used in Thailand. As his text is merely a work of translation, and highlights of holidays/rituals there is a void in analysis and meanings of Buddhist Doctrines. However in Tambiah’s ‘Spirit Cults’ p. 124 has other styles presented, in an improvement via clarification, from Wells. My thesis goes beyond Wells’ in the manner that I analyze precisely what is contained in the Morning/Evening chanting ceremony – much to my surprise no work has ever been done on the analysis of the chanting order – only translations, which offer nothing of ‘supportive/additional’ material necessary for comprehension. Tambiah asks, if the chants are largely unintelligible to the laity, what is the purpose of doing so? [p. 125] My work is more than the answer.

<sup>128</sup> Thanissaro Bhikkhu [trsn.], *A Heart Released - The Teachings of Phra Ajaan Mun Bhuridatta Thera* (Valley Center: Metta Forest Monastery 1995), Section 3...

is ‘moon’ [Thai’s mispronounce a word that is spelled ‘m-u-l’]. This ‘moon’/mūla means a ‘source, cause, origin, base, and interestingly: dung.’<sup>129</sup> In a late find, Payutto’s Dictionary lists: ‘mala’ as: impurity/stain/refuse.<sup>130</sup> Thus, there is a parallel or metaphoric ‘truth’. He and other monks state: our ‘body’ is useless, like a mound, comprised of the elements, guided by certain mental factors, and performs the homage gratefully - as Phra Ajahn Mun suggests, if we are wise. Phra Ajahn Mun was known for his unique preaching styles, and this definitely demonstrates how he ‘earned’ his fame, to be worthy of gifts and reverence. It is said in Phra Ajahn Mun’s biography that he was proven to be an anagami, and believed by others to be an arahant; but his addiction to smoking four cigarettes a day raises suspicion, especially since Buddhists are taught to eliminate cravings necessary for the highest attainment.

### 2.2.3 Passages for Praising the Buddha

(LEADER):

HANDA MAYAM BUDDHABHITHUTIM KAROMA SE:

Now let us give high praise to the Awakened One:

**CONTEXT:** A great example situating praises to the Buddha, in context, comes from *Samyutta Nikaya* verses, specifically titled ‘The People of the Bamboo Gate’<sup>131</sup>:

“Thus I have heard. On one occasion the Blessed One was walking on tour among the Kosalans together with a great Sangha of Bhikkhus when he reached the Brahmin village of the Kosalans named Bamboo Gate. Then the Brahmin householders of the Bamboo Gate heard: ‘It is said, sirs, that the ascetic Gotama, the son of the Sakyans who went forth from a Sakyan family, has been walking on tour among the Kosalans together with a great Sangha of Bhikkhus and now has arrived at Bamboo Gate. Now a good report concerning that Master Gotama has spread about thus: That Blessed One is an arahant, perfectly enlightened, accomplished in true knowledge and conduct, fortunate, knower of the world, unsurpassed leader of persons to be tamed, teacher of devas, Mara, and Brahma, this generation with its ascetics and Brahmins, its devas and humans, he makes it known to others. He teaches a Dhamma that is good in the beginning, good in the middle, good in the end, with the right meaning and phrasing; he reveals a holy life that is perfectly complete and pure.’ It is good to see such arahants.”

The Buddha’s great reputation preceded his arrival, and all gathered ‘now’, wish to, or should give high praise to the Buddha as well, like the people of Bamboo Gate, who

<sup>129</sup> Chuleeporn Susuwan, *Standard Model Thai-English Dictionary* (Bangkok: Tipiya-Wisut 2543)

<sup>130</sup> Dictionary, p. 140 for the elements, and p. 398 for ‘mala’

<sup>131</sup> SN, *Mahavagga, Sotapattisamyutta – the Connected Discourses on Stream-Entry*, p. 1796-1799



were desirous to be reborn in good/heavenly realms after death. Good reports or positive reputations spread, and in Buddhism, people prepare to meet such charismatic figures. This activity generates excitement amongst laity to see such a revered one, or one worthy of reverence. Below are some further illustrations of good reports from the Tipitaka.

**DESCRIPTION & ANALYSIS:** No other term here needs described. Only the discourse given to the people of Bamboo Gate needs further attention. The above account of the desirous Bamboo Gate people has the Buddha speaking to them on how to live a wholesomely, which will lead to ‘sotapanna status’ – through the following: no killing, no stealing, no sexual misconduct, no false, divisive, harsh, frivolous, and idle speech; along with confidence in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha, and possessing noble virtues... The Buddha allowed the people of Bamboo Gate to determine, if one wishes: to declare for oneself:

“I am one finished with hell, finished with the animal realm, finished with the domain of ghosts, finished with the plane of misery, the bad destinations, the nether world. I am a stream-enterer, no longer bound to the nether world, fixed in destiny, with enlightenment as my destination.”

When the Buddha divulged the path of the nobles to the villagers, they replied:

“Magnificent, Master Gotama! We go for refuge to Master Gotama, and to the Dhamma, and to the Bhikkhu Sangha. From today, let the Blessed One remember us as Lay followers, who have gone for refuge for life.”<sup>132</sup>

The Buddha offers stream-entry to those who conduce themselves to striving, and the path does not seem difficult, and is thus praised. The villagers heard of the ‘reputation’ of the Buddha, finally encountered the Buddha, and after listening to his discourse, the villagers indeed praised the Buddha for the ‘Dhamma’. This further exemplifies the Buddha’s reputation. The Buddha’s reputation was superior to all other teachers in his day. He said during a certain ‘rains retreat’, where the regional sects with their disciples liked to gather [Rajagaha]<sup>133</sup>:

“My disciples esteem me for the higher wisdom thus, ‘The recluse Gotama is wise; he possesses the supreme aggregate of wisdom. It is impossible that he should not foresee the future course of doctrine or that he should not be able to confute with reasons the current doctrines of others.’ What do you think...? ‘Would my disciples, knowing and seeing thus, break in and interrupt me?’”

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<sup>132</sup> SN, p. 1796-1799

<sup>133</sup> MN, p. 635-636: the Mahasakuludayi Sutta

“No, Venerable, Sir.”

“I do not expect instruction from my disciples; invariably, it is my disciples who expect instruction from me. This is the third quality because of which my disciples honor me...”<sup>134</sup>

The Buddha does not command respect, but lets the superiority of the Dhamma illuminate those who or ‘that’, which are worthy of reverence and determined to be worthy of reverence. Continually, people come to the Buddha seeking the end to their sufferings, and the above sutta certainly illustrates this. The Buddha is never demanding of audience; they come to him. As far as the Buddha not expecting instruction, the most famous case of the Buddha receiving instruction was from his own cousin, the chief attendant to the Buddha – Ananda – who instructed the Buddha to let women into the order as bhikkhuni. The debate over this issue will not be taken up further in this thesis, because ultimately women were allowed entry as fully ordained nuns. Many ‘feminists’ take up this issue, and it is not serious enough to debate or counter women’s efforts or merits. Finally, the Buddha’s followers do not have to go to ‘places of worship’ on set occasions, like Abrahamic traditions mandate. The Buddhist is liberated from ritual. The ceremony here is a voluntary expression of praise, conducive for recollection and concentration, and so forth, and is emulation of the previous good reports and past witnesses.

(ALL):

**YO SO TATHAGATO ARAHAM SAMMA-SAMBUDDHO,**

**He who has attained the Truth, the Worthy One, Rightly Self-awakened,**

**CONTEXT:** As demonstrated above, the Buddha strove diligently to attain both conventional and ultimate aspects of the Four Noble Truths; becoming the Worthy One, via his conduct and virtue, and expelled: greed, hatred, and ignorance to become enlightened. Through this effort, Siddhattha Gotama became the Buddha.

**DESCRIPTION:** There is definitely ‘hidden terms’ involved in this phrase: ‘Attained’ eludes to an ‘expansive’ meaning. Various aspects of the Dhamma need practice to realize the truths, and certainly this is applicable to the jhana-levels, and the Four Noble Truths... which ‘attainment’ pertains to. Initially, to start from the conventional and ultimate Truths [as two-fold], and work to illustrate how the jhanas

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<sup>134</sup> This higher wisdom is joined with three others: higher virtue, convincing dhamma-teaching ability and because of the Four Noble Truths.

are proof of ‘attainments’ would be proper. The Buddha, through his strivings, entered into the jhana levels, even as a youth on an occasion. But his later experience of the jhana’s immediately preceding his enlightenment assisted in determining the jhana levels as direct parallels corresponding to the Four Noble Truths. Realizing the power of metaphors [possessing wisdom], the Four Noble Truths arose, and ignorance was eradicated. The *Tathagata* arrives after leaving aside the defilements; Siddhattha Gotama becomes the Enlightened Buddha.

**ANALYSIS:** This phrase in the chanted verse pronounces, “He who has attained the Truth” absorbs the term *tathagata*, here, one must inquire into ‘attainment of the Truth’ which alludes to the ‘Four Noble Truths’. The Sangiti Sutta conveys this aspect of ‘truth’ to be recited. There was urgency and effort; there was striving, towards attainment of these Truths. The rest of the phrase has previously been elaborated. To quote at length<sup>135</sup>:

“An important and often overlooked aspect of the Buddhist teaching concerns the levels of truth, failure to appreciate which has led to many errors [an important reference to the two truths referred to... as conventional speech and ultimately true speech. ...It is important to be aware of the level of truth at which any statements are made...<sup>136</sup>]. Very often the Buddha talks in the Suttas in terms of conventional or relative truth, according to which people and things exist just as they appear to the naïve understanding. Elsewhere, however, when addressing an audience capable of appreciating his meaning, he speaks in terms of ultimate truth, according to which ‘existence is a mere process of physical and mental phenomena within which, or beyond which, no real ego-entity nor any abiding substance can never be found. In the Abhidhamma, the entire exposition is in terms of ultimate truth ...Zen paradoxes [are put in terms of ultimate not relative truths]... The full understanding of ultimate truth can, of course, be only gained by profound insight, but it is possible to become increasingly aware of the distinction [and then equates or suggests the Buddha might have been an early ‘physicist’, to some extent]...”

To analyze the material presented: is this true, or a lokuttara-metaphor; or ultimately true - but our insight has yet to reach the ability or glimpse the meaning of truths?

The origins or details of the Buddha’s enlightenment and discovery of the Four Noble Truths are spread across many different sutta’s; Carol S. Anderson’s work mentioned in the bibliography, explores versions and analyzes the four Truths in great detail; here, only a mention of the time nearing the final days of the Buddha’s austerities will be made. Siddhattha Gotama was nearing physical death due to self-

<sup>135</sup> DN, p. 31-33

<sup>136</sup> DN, p. 555 n.224, not n. 220 as mentioned errantly in his introduction

imposed starvation techniques, and strove on with literally little valuable energy left,<sup>137</sup> all-the-while maintaining: confidence, self-control, perseverance and wisdom. Siddhattha Gotama was able to realize that his efforts were becoming ineffective; and through this continuous striving, he recognized several distractions that can take a person off the noble path many recluses seek, namely: sense-desires; aversion to the holy life; hunger and thirst; cravings; sloth and torpor; fear; doubt; detraction and obstinacy; gain, praise and honor and ill-gotten fame; and extolling of oneself and contempt for others.<sup>138</sup> Conquering these distractions<sup>139</sup>, and generating the metaphor of an ‘evil one’ [Mara], the Buddha decided a key factor for enlightenment would be to control his thoughts, so: “Controlling my thoughts, and with mindfulness well established, I shall wander from country to country, training many a disciple.<sup>140</sup>” He would later perform such feats of mindfully wandering and teaching others, but at this point he was not enlightened and had not attained the Truth, so just what exactly could he determine pre-maturely [unresolved issue], as important to disseminate?

Following the Buddha’s enlightenment, ascetics would have a model to emulate as a conqueror of the distractions, and suppression of the senses, which usually [if not done] take people away from ‘the holy life’ – but at this point, he was not enlightened, though this might be a good way to live in ‘brahmacariya’. Perhaps this speculation is what he would have taught, had he chose to cease his efforts here, preceding the enlightenment. He could teach that if the ‘striver’ was intent and maintained diligence while practicing the teachings – though at this point in his career too many uncertainties exist; rather no determination can be made into exactly what constructs the teachings of an un-enlightened charismatic teacher - what final result would be attained? He needed to strive and *attain* further; he needed to become an Arahant.

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<sup>137</sup> *Teachings*, p. 16

<sup>138</sup> *Teachings*, p. 16-17

<sup>139</sup> It is for this reason that I claim there is no ‘evil one’, as in the Abrahamic traditions, who are known to have an object of evil termed as, Satan or the Devil. Indeed, the above distractions can ‘arguably’ be seen as roots of ‘evil’ concepts – thus Mara [the Buddhist’s Evil One] is a mere metaphor – which parallels my other claim that there is no celestial heavens in Buddhism – but cerebral realms of happiness, joy, etc., as labeled in Abhidhammic charts and the *Thaibhumikatha*, as another example. Sometimes people need metaphors to better understand concepts that would otherwise be too difficult to understand. I later found out through late and additional research that Prince Vajirayana was awakened to the concept of Mara being only a metaphor. His book: *Dhammavicara* declares similarly: “By the term ‘Mara’ or ‘the Evil One’ are meant those contaminated mental reactions which fill the mind with a thirst that can never be gratified. These, for instance, are termed *tanha* [craving], *raga* [lust] and *arati* [hate], each of which work solely for the disgrace and destruction of its owner...” See his pages, p. 6-7

<sup>140</sup> *Teachings*, p. 17

At this point, the famous ‘two extremes’ have been illustrated. As previously mentioned: the Buddha was born into a noble warrior class family so he was familiar with over-indulgence and sensual pleasures; and more recently, he lived the life of a sensually deprived ascetic. This enabled him to recognize: neither direction would lead to his goal, so he renounced both. Siddhattha Gotama determined to re-nourish his body to some semblance of normalcy. He had to do this alone, because the five ascetics attending to him [when he was mere ‘flesh and bones’, now decided to abandon the ‘ascetic’ who returned to luxury, one who renounced extremes and sought to strive in a middle-way or path.

Siddhattha Gotama, recalled the meditative attainment he acquired via breathing mediation [samatha-bhavana: or calming meditation] as a youth, and decided that this was the way to enlightenment. As a reclusive ascetic, Siddhattha Gotama had many ‘failures’ as illustrated in various suttas. So, after thinking, “Why do I dwell always expecting fear and dread,” he decided to remain in one of the four meditation postures until fear and dread were eliminated. Thus became the backdrop for his enlightenment effort. He chose to focus on breathing. This style of meditation is said to have up to five levels of mediation attainment, known as ‘jhana’. Jhana’s are directly conveyed within the Sangiti Sutta. Jhana, according to the ancient commentators, suggest the word has two roots, either meaning: to contemplate, or ‘to burn up’<sup>141</sup>; because many times meditation is used to eradicate the ‘five hindrances’ namely: sensual desire, ill-will, sloth and torpor, restlessness and worry, and doubt. The Sangiti Sutta conveys these five hindrances also. While focusing on breathing it is possible to be overcome with many thoughts. Striving, the recluse Siddhattha Gotama overcame being robbed of his mind and overcame fear and dread, and overcame seclusion<sup>142</sup>, intent to attain his goal. His failures serve as a base for understanding, and his efforts saw him through ‘bad times’ and his successes serve him ‘presently’ as well as what would occur in the future. Thus, “tireless energy was aroused in me and unremitting mindfulness was established, my body became tranquil and untroubled, my mind concentrated and unified.<sup>143</sup>” Without the wisdom developed during his forest dwelling days, enlightenment would not be possible. At this point he had nearly perfected his wisdom, had become purified in bodily conduct, mental conduct and livelihood. Arguably: during the period of his austerities, he must

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<sup>141</sup> AS, p. 52-60 – on jhanas.

<sup>142</sup> MN, p. 102-107 – the Bhayabherava Sutta

<sup>143</sup> MN, p. 104

have succumbed to too many ‘failures’, but eventually saw through them as being disadvantageous towards his goal.

Now, it is more common to understand that there are four jhanas, some prefer the Abhidhammic method, cited below, because it is more systematic. Sources are combined below get a greater insight into the aspects or definition of jhanas. Some though, feel jhana’s lack importance and perhaps do not practice attaining jhanas; as such, few bhikkhus have been able to convey the meanings. One may learn these by self-effort and develop these deeper after knowledge of the levels are given in hindsight. Thus, after re-attempting ‘calming meditation or concentration’ and interpreting levels attained in ‘calm’ one can recognize the developments taking place in the mind – the jhana experiences. Most who practice meditation do not practice methods found in the books constructed and known as the Abhidhamma, but the ‘text’ can be a primary ‘meditation teacher’.

According to Phra Ajahn Manop Upasamo: “deep concentration meditation will not lead you to any wisdom or insight. More worrisome though, is the fact that people who achieve an advanced level of deep concentration meditation lessen their chances of developing real insight that leads to enlightenment. First, advanced deep concentration meditation means your mind will reach the state of jhana or a simple, non-questing, tranquil state of mind. When [these] practitioners reach this stage in their meditation, they feel completely detached and unaffected by sensations and feelings of the ordinary world, they remain in that state for a long time. When your mind is in this dormant mode, naturally you are not likely to learn anything.”<sup>144</sup> Certainly. One, however is cleansing the mind of defilements and working towards calm – possibly trying to attain arahantship – and one cannot be faulted for striving and becoming skillful or enlightened by this manner and effort. Based on academic readings and personal practice: skillful development of jhana’s or ‘calm’ [samatha meditation] is highly valuable for vipassana meditation and the eventual ‘process’ leading to nibbana.

Additionally, contra to Phra Ajahn Manop’s claim that jhana meditation is invaluable for attaining knowledge, jhanas<sup>145</sup> scrutinize objects or characteristics via examination processes, and should be devoted towards a single object, usually

<sup>144</sup> Danai Chanchaichai, *Dhamma Moments – A Rare Blessing*, from *Bangkok Post*, 12 August 2005

<sup>145</sup> Mahathera Henepola Gunaratana, *The Jhanas in Theravada Buddhist Meditation* (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society 1988) – while not citing material, the booklet was read to understand the jhana ‘concept’ deeper. I analyzed my own meditation attainments vis-à-vis this booklet and other cited sources. I site the used ‘jhana material’ from sutta’s or the Abhidhamma below, as necessary.

focusing on the breath is chosen as a simple method. Many people claim the jhana's are 'tantric trances'. People who choose to 'dwell' in happy states may find this 'news' pleasant, and they choose to cultivate the 'trances'; yet, there are others who seek arahant status with the attainment of nibbana, who might view rapturous trances 'sensual' and thus: inhibiting, towards the final goal. Those with this goal try to 'cultivate' mental purity and dwell in equanimity, because the arahant is without 'feelings' of happiness and sadness. Furthermore, just because the mind is burning up hindrances, along with zest, happiness and single-pointedness – as these fall away in jhana meditation: wisdom or knowledge of these occurrences should not cease.

Some people choose to recollect the virtues of the Buddha\* and recite single words, such as: "Buddho" as popularized or attributed to 'Phra Ajahn Mun', the greatly revered monk and convert to the Dhammayuttika-Nikaya, in the Northeastern Thai forest tradition.<sup>146</sup> One is to breathe in contemplating 'Bud' and breathe out contemplating 'dho', as: 'Bud-dho, Bud-dho...' Others suggest focusing on the tip of the nose, while breathing in and breathing out, along with an analysis of the various parts of the body [vipassana meditation]. I took the 'Buddho' meditation prescription and utilized it during daily 3-4 hour walking meditations, after I heard Phra Ajahn Mun was a skillful walking meditator. As a former 'athlete' walking, rather than sitting, is more suitable for my disposition; it can be said that this meditation assisted in partially purifying my unpurified mind. Anyhow, the purpose of focusing on a single object is to eliminate all other distractions, which does result in a great 'calm' and stronger concentration. It is possibly for one to study these results to gain greater wisdom. It has been reported that Phra Ajahn Mun would continually recite 'Bud-dho' when facing dangers, because it pacified him and assisted in conquering negative forces.<sup>147</sup>

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\* As one of forty meditation subjects that are taken up for 'contemplation' in Theravada Buddhism

<sup>146</sup> Additionally, "The problem for the Chakri kings was that in the eyes of the ordinary villager, power resided not just in the rich and the mighty, but in poor, forest-dwelling ascetics as well. Whether they liked it or not, these recluses attracted followers and seekers of wisdom, and were often invested with attributes which they themselves denied." The Dhammayuttika-Nikaya needed to counteract or remove this 'magic and power' from the forest. Thus, my note to compare: Nicolas Tarling [ed.], *The Cambridge History of Southeast Asia, Vol III, Ch. 4* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1999) p. 212 – with King Taksin's self-pronouncement, and the example of Phra Ajahn Mun utilized in this thesis. One was a self-pronounced sotapanna, the other has been proclaimed the status as Arahant by others. 'We' tend to believe what others say, rather than what an individual proclaims. Mun's power today could alter the state of government, as the arahant's followers would exert political pressures, in the same vein as "*Luang Pa Khun*" – the famous monk who recently survived a 'stroke' – seen in old photographs 'smoking cigarettes' and is transposed onto 'money' – his followers exert tremendous political pressure on the top corrupt political officials/ministers and the Sangha hierarchy. When he dies, many will claim his status as 'an arahant', certainly due to the adoration he receives.

<sup>147</sup> Taylor, p. 173

Additionally, the last words [in mantra form] spoken by King Rama IV, were: **ARAHAM SAMMA SAMBUDDHO** – “with each breath he kept calling, until the words became less distinct, but with each the last syllable ‘dho’ could still be heard.<sup>148</sup>” It is likely Rama IV died, minimally, in the first jhanic level. This can serve as inspiration for meditative breathing upon one’s deathbed, and yet another example of ‘Buddho’ recitation, apart from Phra Ajahn Mun, conducive towards calm/jhanic levels. There are a few suttas in the Tipitaka that mention the Buddha or a chief disciple guiding someone ill to high attainment levels on their deathbed.

According to the *Abhidhammattha Sangaha*<sup>149</sup>, the first level of jhana attainment has ‘aspects of\*’ consciousness consisting of initial application, sustained application, zest or pleasurable interests, happiness/rapture, and single-pointedness. Less wordy interpretation declares the first jhana as being, “accompanied by applied and sustained thought, with rapture and pleasure born from seclusion.<sup>150</sup>” This experience is like sitting/walking alone with the intent to meditate and dwell ‘pleasurably or in confidence’ with one’s mind, from personal monastic experience. There is also a parallel the first level of jhana representing the first Noble Truth: recognition of the existence of suffering, in terms of the jhana – the recognition of eliminating the distractions to meditation in order to meditate ‘well’.

The second jhana level has ‘aspects of’ consciousness consisting of sustained application, zest/pleasurable interests, happiness/rapture and single-pointedness. Or, “with the stilling of applied and sustained thought, [having] self-confidence and singleness of mind without applied and sustained thought, with rapture and pleasure born from concentration,” as the second jhana. This attainment is like a reduction in the concept that it is ‘I sitting and I meditating without defilements’, and just examining the ‘rapture’ without distractions, as experienced through personal meditations. The second jhana level is like the second Noble Truth: recognition that the distractions inhibit further attainments.

The third jhana has ‘aspects of’ consciousness consisting of zest/pleasurable happiness/rapture and single-pointedness. Or, “with the fading away as well as rapture... [abiding] in equanimity, and mindful and fully aware, still feeling pleasure

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<sup>148</sup> Mongkut, p. 93

<sup>149</sup> AS, pp. 52-60

\* Here in this paragraph, ‘aspects of’ are to mean “functional/wholesome/moral/resultant consciousness” – as taken and combined by several suttas/sources.

<sup>150</sup> MN, p. 105



with the body, [the third jhana is attained as abiding pleasantly with equanimity and mindfulness].” One way to interpret the next to the last jhana level is to eliminate the rapturous feelings, while still being bound to the neither pleasant and neither ‘negative’ feelings, knowingly.

The fourth jhana has ‘aspects of’ consciousness consisting of happiness or rapture and single-pointedness. The third and fourth jhana stages parallel the third Noble Truth: that ‘suffering ceases – or the distractions leading to Nibbana are being eliminated. And lastly, the final [fifth jhana in the abhidhamma method] level consists of ‘aspects of’ consciousness with equanimity and single-pointedness. Another way to explain the final jhana level is: “with the abandoning of pleasure and pain, with the previous disappearance of joy and grief... [entering the final jhana]... which has neither pain nor pleasure and purity of mindfulness due to equanimity... [being therefore concentrated, purified, bright, unblemished, rid of imperfections, malleable, wieldy, steady and attained to imperturbability].<sup>151</sup>”

Completion of the sequence of jhanas brings one to a ‘here and now’, nibbana. The last level of jhana attainment parallels the final Noble Truth: the way leading away from suffering – the jhana level leading to the experience of Nibbana. It must be known that the jhanas are only mundane<sup>152</sup> and occasionally liberating<sup>153</sup> and do not complete the ‘finality’ that defines nibbana.

As experienced during a temporary forest-retreat research experience and subsequent days as a lay-devotee involved in intensive meditation, the final level of jhana contains only the life-sustaining ‘in and out going’ of breaths. Research was unable to explore the text-book rising and falling of breaths though, ‘in levels as stages’, perhaps ignorant to what an attainment ‘was’, prevented ‘recognition’ of attainments. To restate: lack of ‘expertise’ prevented the researcher from ‘staging’<sup>154</sup> experiences; with no one around to assist with problems, the issue floats. I always

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<sup>151</sup> MN, p. 105

<sup>152</sup> Bhikkhu Nanamoli [trs.], *The Path of Discrimination – Patisambhidamagga* (Oxford: Pali Text Society 1997) p. 242 [further cited as *Discrimination* and page number]

<sup>153</sup> *Discrimination*, p. 241

<sup>154</sup> In hindsight I recognize the stages, but while they were occurring, I ‘lacked the wisdom’ to recognize what was transpiring at the time. Through repeated training, I can recognize the falling away of ‘hindrances and defilements’ while meditating, now. It should be known that I am not making super/supra-natural claims – just experiences as I have been ‘brainwashed’ to attain by Tipitaka-readings. Sometimes I feel like the meditations are not mine, nor am I performing them, because the meditations have been done before, meaning, I wonder if I am even absorbing or gaining from the experience, since it seems it is other’s and if there is an ‘I’, I am only doing as I am asked. In certain aspects, I feel there is little originality in meditations. While ordained, however, most of ‘my meditation attainments’ occurred during ‘candle-kasina’ meditation and walking meditation. One popular monk who ‘championed’ candle-kasina was Jao Wat Aek [Abbot Aek] from Wat Khuakho near Surin, coupled with recitations of chants – see Kamala’s *Forest Recollections*, p. 53.

will wonder if the ‘attainment’ was the final jhana level. One cannot be certain if experiencing jhanic attainments are conducive to breaking the vinaya against ‘supernatural attainments’ so the monk felt compelled to silence himself. Perhaps the lack of detailed awareness and detailed analytical wisdom possessed and experienced by Sariputta<sup>155</sup> who was a Brahmin before converting to the Buddha’s sect, by the monk-researcher, was not experienced – and thus considered an over-estimation? Sariputta was previously aware of Brahmin ‘techniques’ and soon was able to become an arahant. Sariputta’s example might suggest why meditators should remain quiet – because the meditator has not attained Sariputta’s level; viewing possible attainments but not fully grasping them with Sariputta’s full participation and wisdom. Also, the meditator practiced meditation and determined meditation to be more practical without heavenly aspirations. These ‘heavenly or rapturous’ are feelings seen as distraction in producing the equanimity necessary in aspiring towards Arahantship. Going to a heavenly realm is not an aspiration of this researcher.

Bangkok’s distractions usually prevented a full exploration of jhana levels – the ‘ra-kang’ tolling for ‘tam-wat-yen’, or a ‘sky-train’ passing overhead, as I walked in meditation, are just a few examples hindrances preventing better practice one could gain in the rapidly disappearing Thai forests. Monastic seclusion in forests offers the best setting for jhana exploration, as many experienced meditation masters assert. Each jhana level has something that needs burnt-up. Each level of jhana eradicates a hindrance in attaining nibbana, regardless of the explanation. Almost anyone can accomplish these experiences, if one is diligent in striving to attain this form of temporary liberation, similar to nibbana.

Applying the above ‘jhana’ lesson, Siddhattha Gotama, sat secluded [advantageous for the lack of distractions] from sensual pleasures, secluded from unwholesome states, recalling his youthful meditation attainment with applied and sustained thought, rapture and pleasure born from seclusion, and attended to his former births in detail as a subject matter.\* This occurred during the first watch of the night. The second watch of the night was concerned with the kammic coming and goings of celestial beings. Siddhattha Gotama understood the cosmos. The third

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<sup>155</sup> MN, p. 899-902 – the Anupada Sutta

\* Can there only be, “One Enlightenment Story”? Since this is doubtful, one must scour over all the material to piece together and make sense of what has been collected – meaning, every time ‘someone’ tells a story, certain details are recollected that were not explained or elaborated on the first time explained. There are different times the Buddha had to explain his Enlightenment, and every time he tells the ‘same’ story, different details are expounded, perhaps showing the ‘depth’ of the Enlightenment experience.

watch of the night was concerned primarily with the development of the Four Noble Truths, an idea never before presented, understanding: “This is sorrow/corruptions, this is the arising of sorrow/corruptions, this is the cessation of sorrow/corruptions, and this is the path leading away from sorrow/corruptions.”<sup>156</sup> And then the text suggests that the Buddha cognized and perceived, and his mind delivered from: the corruptions of sensual craving; from the corruption of craving for existence; and from the corruption of ignorance. The Buddha, then proclaimed that he was delivered, and that he is no longer subjected to rebirth and has fulfilled the holy life, and completed what had to be finished, and declared that there is no more of ‘this’ state again. The third watch of the night was complete having dispelled ignorance, wisdom arose; he vanished darkness and light arose. The Buddha attained the ‘truths’ because he was diligent, ardent and resolute – beyond what most common people are capable of attaining, for this – he is further revered. We now have the ‘Worthy One, Blessed and Perfectly Self-Enlightened’, per the chanting ceremony, and attainment of the truth.

Additionally, because the Buddha’s and incidentally Phra Ajahn Mun’s enlightenment occurred ‘alone’ and arose during the ‘watches of the night’ – one may argue the validity of the insightful attainments unless one practices ‘Buddha’s Dhamma’ individually. Then one can be certain of the validity without a witness. Many of the insights can be seen as mere metaphors, meaning: he learned from previous mistakes. For the Buddha, during the first watch of the night, he recalled his past lives. In the second watch, he was able to see future occurrences of celestial beings, metaphorically attributed to ceasing future errors before they arise. The third watch and the attainment of the Four Noble Truths is the metaphor for escaping ignorance, as already suggested; he no longer has any excuse for erring, because perfection has been attained and sustained, then extinguished when he died. Trial and error then moving on and not making the same mistakes twice – is another set of metaphors linked to the Dhamma, regardless of how the ‘metaphoric’ parallels illustrate.

**VIJJA-CARANA-SAMPANNO SUGATO LOKAVIDU,**

**consummate in knowledge & conduct, one who has gone the good way, knower of the cosmos**

**CONTEXT:** The Buddha moved beyond the possibly the lowest possible denominator: stealing and eating young cow feces, to being possessed of the highest

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<sup>156</sup> *Teachings*, p 19 – I combine two verses

virtues, some of which are elaborated in the monastic code of discipline – found in the Sutta’s and Vinaya-Patimokkha. Furthermore, there is guilt in the smallest fault, so virtue must be adjusted blamelessly. After enlightenment, the Buddha faces Brahma, who urged the Buddha to teach. If one wishes to further know the ‘cosmos’, they can read King Lithai’s, *Traibhumikatha*, which is filled with fanciful metaphors for the ‘three-realms’, taken from the various books in the Tipitaka, to exploit Buddhism for its potential to centralize his authority, ‘spiritually’.<sup>157</sup>

**DESCRIPTION:** This phrase, translated as, “consummate in knowledge & conduct, one who has gone the good way, knower of the cosmos”, is packed with summarizations, those already elaborated on with the Buddha’s attainment of wisdom [and this entire thesis is testament to only a portion of this wisdom and knowledge]. Pallegoix has ‘VIJJA-CARANA SAMPANNO’ as merely<sup>158</sup>: ‘endowed with eight arts and fifteen industries’.<sup>159</sup> This is not explained by Pallegoix, in this portion of his text. The Dictionary<sup>160</sup> states ‘CARANA’ as: conduct; course of practice – and then there is a grouping fifteen, consisting of: *three sure courses* [control of the senses, moderation in eating, practice of wakefulness<sup>161</sup>]; *seven virtues* [have: confidence, moral shame, moral fear; be much learned, of stirred up energy; to have mindfulness, and to have wisdom<sup>162</sup>]; *four jhanas* [as expounded above, here jhanas are translated as the four absorptions<sup>163</sup>] – perhaps comprising of Pallegoix’s fifteen industries, but the Dictionary’s fifteen courses of practice. Pallegoix’s eight arts, are perhaps ‘the eight supernormal knowledges<sup>164</sup>’: insight knowledge, supernormal powers, divine ear, penetration of the minds of others, remembrance of former existences, divine eye, and knowledge of the exhaustion of mental intoxicants. This thesis will not explore conduct, or virtues, eluding to the Vinaya, because that would amount to an extensive project. Pallegoix has ‘SUGATO’ to mean: ‘marching with majesty, the welcomed, progressing towards perfection, not regressing toward concupiscence’<sup>165</sup>[?]. Later

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<sup>157</sup> Traibhumikatha, p. 15: doing away with the defilements and all sorts of suffering is the highest ideal – which must include oppressive political authority! Furthermore, read Lithai’s chapter on “A New World Order” p. 439-443, if one is not convinced that his work is ‘royal propaganda’.

<sup>158</sup> Again recall: Hajime Nakamura, *Indian Buddhism – A Survey with Bibliographical Notes* (Delhi: Shri Jainendra Press 1999) p. 83 – this is an appellation

<sup>159</sup> Pallegoix, p. 222

<sup>160</sup> Dictionary, p. 310-311

<sup>161</sup> Dictionary, pp. 129-130

<sup>162</sup> Dictionary, p. 259

<sup>163</sup> Dictionary, p. 71

<sup>164</sup> Dictionary, p. 254

<sup>165</sup> Pallegoix, p. 222

Pallegoix states, “[this] second prayer... is the enumeration of the divine qualities of the Buddha.<sup>166</sup>” LOKAVIDU pertains to knowing the world/known the worlds/cosmos.

**ANALYSIS:** Although, the Sangiti Sutta covers the cosmos, aspects of conduct and various knowledges. The Sekha Sutta<sup>167</sup> explains that noble conduct pertains to the guarding of the “sense faculties, that is his conduct. When he is moderate in eating, that is his conduct, when he possesses seven good qualities [has faith in the Buddha’s enlightenment; has a sense of shame; fears wrongdoing; has learned (analyzed) much; is energetic in developing wholesome mental states; has mindfulness; and is wise], that is his conduct, when he is one who obtains at will – without trouble or difficulty – the four jhanas that constitute the higher mind and provide a pleasant abiding here and now, that is his conduct.”<sup>168</sup> Being moderate in eating, a wise disciple understands that food is not for amusement, intoxication nor for the sake of physical beauty and attractiveness – but only for the continuation of the physical body, to end the pains of hunger, assisting the life of a Bhikkhu, in order to dwell comfortably. The day of my ordination I weighed 90 kilograms; following my disrobing, I weighed 75 kilograms – losing 15 kilograms in three months. One morning meal a day was normal; and I spent about three to four hours in continuous walking meditation in the afternoon. This is great dieting advice for the gluttonous. This is further taken up as a ‘chanting’ subject, twice daily by monks in Thailand, as explained below. On seeing with the eyes; hearing with the ears; smelling with the nose; touches with the body; or cognizes an object with the mind – a noble disciple does not grasp at its signs and features. By guarding the sense-faculties, one is unaffected by ‘sense/sensual invasions’. Having gone the good way is an attribution to his arahant-status and subsequent Nibbana.

The knower of the cosmos is already elaborated during his enlightenment. Also, pertaining to a major Buddhist ‘deity’, as a particular aspect of the Buddhist cosmos, Brahma was investigated and developed into the ‘case study’ strengthening aspects of this thesis. Brahma, otherwise known as Prajapati, is often identified as the Lord of Creatures, or the Creator god and Ultimate Reality with two identities as Nirguna and Saguna [without and with respective qualities]. Brahma created the

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<sup>166</sup> Pallegoix, p. 249

<sup>167</sup> MN, p. 460-465

<sup>168</sup> MN, p. 460-465

world, but now has nothing to do, until he creates the next world, so he comes down to earth in many manifestations. Brahma in Buddhism is not One, and not immortal. Brahma for Buddhists is the creator – as well as a powerful and benevolent being that can bestow mundane favors.<sup>169</sup> Brahma plays a rather large role in Buddhism, as far as interactions are concerned. The Samyutta Nikaya<sup>170</sup> mentions that Brahma was the supreme deity of early Brahmanism, conceived as the Creator and venerated with rituals and sacrifices by learned Brahmins. Brahma during the Buddha's time was probably the most important deity worshipped, though few temples are found to be dedicated to Brahma, in India. The introduction to the *Majjhima Nikaya* says, "The Buddhists themselves asserted that Brahma was not a singular creator God but a collective name for several classes of high deities whose chiefs, forgetting that they are still transient beings in the grip of kamma, were prone to imagine themselves to be the omnipotent everlasting creator."<sup>171</sup>

In the Buddhist texts, Brahma is often criticized and is the object of satire. Brahma, after creating the world, had little to do, so often he came to learn from the Buddha. The Samyutta Nikaya goes further to mention that the Buddha transformed the singular form of an all-powerful Brahma into a class of 'exalted' deities with different names. The texts mention several manifestations of Brahma under the different aliases. Sometimes, in the Buddhist texts, Brahma reappears often in the human form of an ageless youth by the name of Pancasikha. Brahma is the ruler of his realm with other brahmas as ministers and assemblies. In Buddhism, one can be reborn into the Brahma realm/world if one masters the jhanas, a level of meditative attainment – each jhana level corresponds to a level in the realm. In Buddhism, because the Brahmas are long-lived and elevated in stature, they are prone to delusion and conceit.<sup>172</sup> The Anguttara Nikaya suggests one's parents are Brahma, suggesting that parents are worshipped at home, are like teachers of old, and are worthy of offerings – on the account that parents bring the children into the world, nourish the children, raise them up and do many things for children. The text suggests the 'wise' should worship and pay the parents honors due to them [recall the words of Phra Ajahn Mun], thus the reward of joy is given to the child in Heaven.<sup>173</sup> So, it is

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<sup>169</sup> DN, p. 43

<sup>170</sup> SN, pp. 81-83

<sup>171</sup> MN, p. 57

<sup>172</sup> SN, p. 82

<sup>173</sup> AN, *Vol. I*, pp. 114-115 & AN v.2: adds - Devas of old are terms for mothers & fathers [parents] see: v.2, p. 79

Brahma, pleading to the Buddha to teach his Dhamma to the world after he attains enlightenment; the Buddha is hesitant and claims no one will understand, but finally out of compassion, consents. Brahma and his realms are directly mentioned in the Sangiti Sutta.

Additionally, the student author witnessed a ceremony ‘inaugurating’ a statue of Brahma at a Buddhist ‘temple’ in Ubon Ratchathani province in November 2004. A large table filled with food offerings was present, along with flower and banana tree decorations/offerings to the newly installed Brahma statue. On the night of celebration, a woman ‘possessed’ was gyrating her body in front of the alter, along to the music being played via the compact disk (CD) player hooked up to the temple public-address system (PA system), while many people seated in chairs viewed this ‘dance routine’ or ritual. The student author, however as a witness to the activity, ceased viewing after realizing viewing this activity is in violation of the eight-precepts a white-clad Buddhist lay-devotee holds, thus returned to his kuti/room for meditation and evening sleep, while the ceremony continued into the late hours of the night.

In Thai Buddhist texts, the Pali phrase *brahmavihara* appears from time to time [although not specifically in this chanting formula – the *brahmaviharabhavana* chant is recited daily in many temples following the *Tam Wat Chao* chant]. “The term *brahmavihara* comes from Brahma, meaning in one sense ‘exalted’, and another term *vihara*, meaning ‘abode or dwelling place’. Both terms combined convey the meaning that it is a group of Dhamma or virtues that can uplift, or elevate, an ordinary mind to the level of exaltedness or divinity.<sup>174</sup>” The four virtues expressed as *brahmavihara* are: *metta* [loving-kindness], *karuna* [compassion], *mudita* [sympathy], and *upekkha* [equanimity]. The term ‘brahma’ is later defined, “in its literal sense, refers to a kind of being who is far advanced in meditation”; and as, “the father and mother of the offspring. This is due to the fact that, generally speaking, all fathers and mothers are naturally endowed with these four virtues.”<sup>175</sup>

Therefore, Brahma can be redefined as: the *maintenance of existing and continuation of conservative tradition*. Brahma is not a deity, but *the weight that culture bears upon an individual*. Brahma is the *outside elements affecting the individual internally*. The ‘exalted’ claim supports the ‘maintenance of those in

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<sup>174</sup> Venerable Phra Tepvissudhikavi (Pichitr Thitavanno), *Mind Development* (Bangkok: Mahamakut Rajavidyalaya Foundation 1999) p. 162

<sup>175</sup> Venerable Phra Tepvissudhikavi (Pichitr Thitavanno), *Mind Development* (Bangkok: Mahamakut Rajavidyalaya Foundation 1999) p. 163

powerful positions to influence younger generations’. Reviewing this claim – with examples:

- Brahma already exists – conservative traditions are already in place
- Bestowing mundane favors – social welfare programs, volunteer programs – compassionate society...
- Object of satire – no one had yet attained the perfections undertaken by Siddhattha Gotama
- Jhana levels – the Buddha was lead to these by his previous two teachers prior to enlightenment
- Brahma realm – as a link to jhana attainments
- Being prone to delusion and conceit – the Buddha eliminated the hindrances, becomes guru of gods; the deity of the Abrahamic tradition is filled with jealousy and delusions of supremacy
- Brahma as Parents – another ‘conservative’ institution and role the Buddha plays over the Sangha
- Brahma’s pleading – conservative society’s yearning for change/truth – eliminating false doctrines
- Consenting – Gotama consents to teach the Dhamma in an act of ‘revolt’ of sorts, against tradition
- Recent statue inauguration – promotion of ancient beliefs
- Teaching Rebirth in Brahma heavens – inability to escape suffering/attain Buddhist nibbana
- Additionally, the Naga Serpent is a metaphor for a monk with destroyed taints.<sup>176</sup>

Perhaps a study of the other deities in ‘Hinduism’ would reveal similar results. Therefore, the conscious or wise Buddhist would renounce deities in Buddhism – knowing matters as they really are, as: mere metaphors for existing traditions and therefore non-conducive to the proper Buddhist path. Why?

Some Buddhists in the canonical texts are claimed to have full confidence in the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha. These are the objects of refuge for Buddhists. The people of the Bamboo Gate took refuge in the Triple Gem, as seen above. One can look into definitions for the meaning of ‘full’ and ‘confidence’; but no further inquiry will be made. This serves as the prelude to the following: in the *Sangarava Sutta*, a brahmin overhears a stumbling woman [who incidentally was a stream-enterer] utter ‘**NAMO TASSA BHAGAVATO ARAHATO SAMMA-SUMBUDDHASSA**’, three times after regaining her balance. He tries to admonish her, implying the supremacy of the Vedas. After such, the brahmin meets the Buddha and asks him questions pertaining to: consummation and perfection of direct knowledge here and now; the Buddha then tells the brahmin aspects of the Enlightenment – and after such the brahmin utters:

“Master Gotama’s striving was unfaltering... that of a true man, as it should be for an Accomplished One, a Fully Enlightened One. But how is it, Master Gotama, are there gods?<sup>177</sup>”

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<sup>176</sup>MN, p. 239 – Vammika Sutta #23 – in which many ‘items’ are used metaphorically



[The Buddha replies in response], “It is known to me to be the case... that there are gods.”

[The brahmin responds to this], “But how is this... if that is so, isn’t what you say empty and false?”

[The Buddha replies], “... When one is asked ‘are there gods’, whether one answers, ‘there are gods’, or ‘it is known to me to be the case... that there are gods’, a wise man can draw the definite conclusion that there are gods.”

[The brahmin wonders aloud], “But why didn’t Master Gotama answer me in the first way?”

[The Buddha responds], “It is widely accepted in the world... that there are gods.”

The discussion/sutta ends with the brahmin seeking lay status under the Buddha.

Notes to the above sutta state that the commentaries suggest the brahmin is claiming the Buddha uttered ‘false speech’ and suggests that the text was corrupt<sup>178</sup> – yet as suggested: the Buddha just explained to the man about the enlightenment process, yet this brahmin was still intent on inquiring into gods, and the Buddha never declares his belief in deities either, just existence. If one is looking for a deity to worship, if one is looking for people deluded with power/afraid of relinquishing authority, there are gods; The Buddha illustrates that there are, however ‘entities’ worthy reverential salutations and offerings and these are the Buddha himself and his Sangha of monks. It is clear then that the brahmin was not intent on listening fully, further illustrating his lack of full understanding. His questioning, after the Buddha’s pronouncement, clearly suggests ignorance or a quest to maintain deities as objects for reverence. The Buddha recognized this, and he even states that it is known to him that there are gods, because other people all around believe in gods – believe in blind conservatism and Brahma, for example [though the claim here is that all deities represent metaphoric conservative traditions], himself, visits the Buddha. Despite that: the Buddha discovered a profound system of deliverance from suffering [not attuning one’s self to deity concerns], yet the brahmin could not see through his own attachments to sensual pleasures and delusions. The Brahmin declares he is only ready to follow the Buddha as a layman – but not as a monk. Ignorant people are known to seek the existence of gods, but a ‘worthy’ one was right before the brahmin’s eyes. In summary: the brahmin did not listen to the Buddha’s story; the brahmin claims understanding – though demonstrating further ignorance; and the sutta closes with the brahmin seeking refuge as a lay person. Overall the sutta shows how ‘unskilled’ those learned in the Vedas really are: as mere reciters and transmitters of the Vedas – having no real

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<sup>177</sup> MN, p. 821 – Sangarava Sutta #100

<sup>178</sup> MN, p. 1301

understanding of direct knowledge as the Buddha explains through his enlightenment story. Numerous brahmins [and others] were converted to Buddhism. Some people just cannot be taught, or see the truth, which illustrates parallels in other suttas where some people still have dust/mud in their eyes, or are the lotus that blooms underwater – unable to fully ‘penetrate’.<sup>179</sup> This is also the ‘ignorance’ attributed to Brahma, now enabling the Buddha to teach his Dhamma.<sup>180</sup> The sutta is a ‘statement’ that some people just cannot be taught or illustrates some people just do not see matters clearly.

Furthermore, the Buddha through his ‘second watch of the night’ during his enlightenment saw how beings are ‘reborn’ due to their actions. To these attributes, the possessor is said to be perfected in true knowledge and conduct, no longer bound to traditional ignorance. The Buddha said, “As to the source through which perceptions and notions tinged by mental proliferation beset a man: if nothing is found there to delight in, welcome and hold to, this is the end of the underlying tendency to lust, ...aversion, ...views, ...doubt, ...conceit, ...desire for being, ...ignorance; this is the end of resorting to rods and weapons, [various kinds of troubling actions, thoughts and words]; here these evil unwholesome states cease without remainder.<sup>181</sup>” It is not that the Buddha is discrediting others, but that others are attempting to discredit him.

Humans through errors or control of the sense-faculties, recognize and are aroused/stimulated by their senses – resultantly they consider past, present and future ‘manipulations’ of occurrences and interpretations and often attribute this to a deity’s interaction. *What they are failing to interpret is that their experiences have a relationship with results of their interaction with the environment or circumstance - kamma. Results, seen inwardly, allow one to determine the absence of an external deity – often conceived because individuals often are too weak to vouch for their own failings or interactive circumstance.* The Sangiti Sutta conveys the aspects of the senses, and interestingly this perception is absent or not represented directly in the Morning and Evening Chanting Ceremony. When there is no longer anything to delight in or be adverse towards – the unwholesome states cease without remainder. Thus, when one contemplates deities, one understands that deities are still subjected to unwholesome characteristics, and Noble Disciples of the Buddha should be revered above celestial beings, who are mere occupants in the celestial realms, but deserve

<sup>179</sup> MN, p. 261 – Ariyapariyesana Sutta #26

<sup>180</sup> MN, p. 262

<sup>181</sup> MN, p. 202 – the Madhupindika Sutta #18

little human concern. Those who perceive gods have not fully understood.<sup>182</sup> The Buddha is the knower of the cosmos, because he has eradicated ignorance, having fully understood ‘things’ as they really are, becoming awakened to “supreme full enlightenment.”<sup>183</sup>

ANUTTARO PURISADAMMA-SARATHI SATTHA DEVA-MANUSSANAM BUDDHO BHAGAVA;  
unexcelled trainer of those who can be taught, teacher of human & divine beings; awakened;  
blessed

**CONTEXT & DESCRIPTION:** Great people: kings, queens, Brahmins, warrior/headmen; middle-class people of various trades; and even ‘lesser-class’ people, particularly ‘slaves’, all being human – all of those types have been trained by the Buddha, as well as the era’s selection of deities, because he is ‘awakened and blessed’ [also in the sense that his titles were not issued via inheritance or political exploitation]. This phrase, translated as, “unexcelled trainer of those who can be taught, teacher of human & divine beings; awakened; blessed,” implies all of those who are not Arahants, because the ‘rest’ are still ‘sekhas’ or trainees – including deities. The Sangiti Sutta conveys this message as well. Pallegoix has ‘ANUTTARO’ to mean: ‘very excellent, having no peer and to whom all creatures are subjected’.<sup>184</sup> Despite Pallegoix’s attempts to ‘deify’ the term *anutaro*, the suggestion should not be perceived as strongly. Commentators of previous generations are attempting to ‘deify’ the eight types of people comprising the noble-sangha.

**ANALYSIS:** From the *Majjhima Nikaya*: the notes to the *Mulapariyaya Sutta* explains how the disciple in higher training [*sekha*]<sup>185</sup> is:

One who has reached any of the three lower planes of sanctity – stream-entry, once-returning, or non-returning – but still must train further in order to reach the goal, arahantship, the supreme security from bondage. ...the disciple in higher training is urged by the Buddha to refrain from conceiving and delight because of the dispositions to these mental processes still remain within him. With his attainment of stream-entry, he eradicated the fetter of personality view and thus can no longer conceive in terms of wrong views. But the defilements of craving and conceit are only uprooted by the path of arahantship, and thus the sekha remains vulnerable to the conceivings to which they are capable of giving rise. Whereas direct

<sup>182</sup> MN, p. 84 – Mulapariyaya Sutta #1 – a refutation of views held by Brahmins

<sup>183</sup> MN, p. 90

<sup>184</sup> Pallegoix, p. 222

<sup>185</sup> MN, p. 1166-1167

knowledge [abhinna – see below] is the province of both the sekha and the arahant, full understanding (parinna) is the province exclusively of the arahant, as it involves the full abandoning of all defilements.

Virtually everyone is in need of greater training, and deities are no exception [including those in other religious traditions]. Pallegoix has ‘PURISADAMMA-SARATHI’ to mean: ‘punishing or subduing the great persons among angels, men and giants who are in need of conversion’.<sup>186</sup> Clearly, the missionary’s phrasing is questionable, because he lacks ample or proper vocabulary when commentating on Buddhist concepts. Pallegoix is perhaps, alluding to something in his Abrahamic tradition. Pallegoix has ‘*sassada*’, which cannot be placed in the text, but perhaps he means ‘*SATTHA*’ – in the later’s case, meaning: master of the angels and of men, doctor of animals, who teaches the road to heaven – perhaps alluding to a similar concept. Pallegoix has ‘*BUDDHO*’ to mean: ‘knowing the four beautiful truths and leading all creatures to this knowledge, endowed with the sanctity which is the source of merits, endowed with all intelligence, exterminating evil desires, exempt from concupiscence [?], vigilant’. Pallegoix has ‘*BHAGAVA*’, to mean: ‘glorious, full of majesty, it merits that one offers [the four requisites] necessary for monks, endowed with immense merits accumulated during time immortal, having a body and mind applied to prayer which reaches the exit of the world, i.e., the annihilation.’<sup>187</sup> In Buddhist texts, there is no implication that the Buddha ‘subjected, punished, or subdued’ in the sense that Pallegoix implicates. The Buddha subjected himself to austerities, the Buddha admonished monks for ‘bad-behavior/wrong-thinking’; and subdued ‘Mara’, as traditionally being the ‘character’ of Evil, or as the Buddhist version of Satan, but is rather another metaphor for distraction. Pallegoix is trying to make ‘Abrahamic sense’ of Buddhism, and the transpositions skew correct renditions – or eludes to the type of Buddhism he learned from Phra Buddhavajiranana during his twenty-seven year monastic period, which has undergone certain ‘reforms’ since. Subsequent studies have eliminated Pallegoix’s insularities. Additionally, to be fair: “The Puranas recognize [the Buddha] only as a ‘seducer’.<sup>188</sup>” As demonstrated below, this is attributed to the ‘magic’ to convert people to his dispensation – his ability to seduce others to join him. Many thought the Buddha was ‘compassionate’, and eradicated the ‘ignorance’ in those needing ‘cured’.

<sup>186</sup> Pallegoix, p. 222

<sup>187</sup> Pallegoix, p. 222

<sup>188</sup> Lal Mani Joshi, *Brahmanism, Buddhism and Hinduism – An Essay on Their Origins and Interactions* (Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society 1987) p. 17

YO IMAM LOKAM SADEVAKAM SAMARAKAM SABRAHMAKAM,  
SASSAMANA-BRAHMANIM PAJAM SADEVA-MANUSSAM SAYAM ABHIÑÑA SACCHIKATVA  
PAVEDESI.

**who made known: having realized it through direct knowledge - this world with its devas, maras, & brahmas, its generations w/their contemplatives & priests, rulers & common people;**

**CONTEXT:** This phrase, as translated along with above analysis, thus implies: devas are pleasantries or attractions, maras are distractions, brahmas are conservative or existing traditions along with those who promote and populate society – another metaphor, because most do not see things as they really are, again the *Mulapariyaya Sutta* expounds this in greater detail. The above also suggests the Buddha has ‘direct knowledge’ or sometimes translated as *abhinna* – which means the supramundane psychic powers of the Buddha.<sup>189</sup> With this direct knowledge the Buddha sees things for how they really are, without deception, without being blinded by conservatism, as described below. All the above people have scrutinized the Buddha who passed all the examinations, winning them over as converts.

**DESCRIPTION:** There ‘exists’: the classes of people, together with conservative tradition, distractions, and pleasures – the Buddha had the powers to ‘see’ everything as they really were. There are six kinds of *abhinna* described by the Buddha<sup>190</sup>:

- *Iddhividhi*: the performance of dramatic, psychic feats – magic powers
- *Dibbasota*: clairaudience – the divine ear
- *Cetopariyanana*: telepathy or mind-reading – penetration of the minds of others
- *Pubbenivasanussatinana*: recollection of past lives - retrocognition
- *Cutupapatanana*: divine eye – seeing the moving-out and moving-in of sentient beings
- *Asavakkhayanana*: the insight by which all potential, dormant defilements are eradicated

The author of the above work reminds the reader that the hermits/rishis before and of the time of the Buddha were known to possess the first five ‘powers’. Thus, in this respect, the Buddha was not ‘extra-ordinary’ in the sense that many wandering ascetics hold such power. He was just ‘another one’ with such abilities. What separated the Buddha from other ‘known-figures’ was: he possessed the knowledge that came with the attainment of the Four Noble Truths, and the doctrine that developed subsequently. There are other powers mentioned in this book, which is a

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<sup>189</sup> Phom Ratanasuwana, *Abhinna – Supra-mundane, Psychic Powers of the Buddha* (Bangkok: Home of Psychic Research) – as the title suggests. [further cited as *Abhinna* and page #]; and Dictionary, p. 235

<sup>190</sup> *Abhinna*, p. 382-383

patchwork of portions of commentary and lesser known passages in the Tipitaka. In former times [recalling the fantastically illustrative Traibhumikatha of King Lithai], through Krom Phra Paramanujitajinorasa – the Thai people believed quite strongly in the extra-ordinary ‘feats’ as literal expressions of the Buddha’s power. The Abhinna’s author<sup>191</sup>, states:

“Before the times of the later Supreme Patriarch Somdej Kromphraya Vajiranavarorasa [Prince Vajiranana – son of Rama IV, brother to Rama V], the work was regarded as the ‘Life of the Buddha’ being the authority of its kind and widely used as themes of the sermon for the Thai people throughout the country. However, in later times the people tended to disbelieve the accounts of miraculous psychic powers mentioned in the book. Knowing of this fact, the late Supreme Patriarch [Prince Vajiranana], initiated another kind of ‘Life of the Buddha’ by compiling another work in which most of the accounts of miracles were omitted. His work was therefore one dealing with the historical accounts to comply with the tendency and preference of a modern man.”

Incidentally, many retained this respect. It is widely believed that Phra Ajahn Mun possessed the ‘abhinna’ of arahants. Additionally, these ‘abhinna’s’ used to be studied by those monks interested in the forest tradition, as Taylor illustrates. Many people are apprehensive towards those who study/practice ‘black magic’ or the abhinna’s.<sup>192</sup>

**ANALYSIS:** There were many ‘magical/extra-ordinary feats’ either done by the Buddha or by some disciples. The Abhinna book suggests, as borrowed from a popular teaching, not to believe everything printed in the Tipitaka, but this quote has long been exploited. The Kalama Sutta is rarely placed in its proper context, added here to invoke ‘authority’<sup>193</sup>:

- Do not be led by report
- Do not be led by tradition
- Do not be led by hearsay
- Do not be led by the authority of the texts
- Do not be led by mere logic
- Do not be led by interference
- Do not be led by considering appearances
- Do not be led by the agreement with a considered and approved theory
- Do not be led by seeming possibilities
- Do not be led by the idea: ‘This is our Teacher’

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<sup>191</sup> Abhinna, p. 252-253

<sup>192</sup> Taylor, p. 112

<sup>193</sup> Dictionary, p. 274-275; AN Vol. I, p. 170-175

Certain scholars like to cease the ‘message’ here, as authority to dispute Buddhist doctrine, never furthering to suggest why, for our individual selves, because, if:

- These things are unprofitable
- These things are blameworthy
- These things are censured by the intelligent
- These things when performed and undertaken conduce to loss and sorrow

Then indeed ‘we should’ reject them. This is the advice. The advice is not to disregard the teachings of the Buddha, based on what is inside the authoritative scriptures. Revisionists attempt to illustrate this, through deceptive logic. A practicing Buddhist-Socialist once said, “It will neither be a Revolution if it is based on obsolete text books and acted parrot-like.<sup>194</sup>” This precedes Buddhadasa’s [advocate of dhammic-socialism] statement by a few decades, “Only people who are overtly stupid will be unable to benefit from this advice...the ten examples... are a surefire defense against intellectual dependence or not being one’s own person: that is, neglecting one’s own intelligence and wisdom in dealing with what one hears and listens to, what is called in Dhamma language ‘*paratoghosa*’ (sound of others<sup>195</sup>). When listening to anything, one should give it careful attention and full scrutiny. If there is reason to believe what has been heard and it results in the genuine quenching of suffering, then one finally may believe it one-hundred percent.<sup>196</sup>” What is doubly interesting, both U Nu and Buddhadasa recognize those who act as parrots with *paratoghosa* [is there a root-word/linguistic link?]. This lesson teaches those who head this advice, not to become the intellectual slave of others, even at the highest levels.<sup>197</sup> It is interesting that the Kalamas were not ‘intellectual slaves’ but were asking the Buddha which teacher they should believe, because there are a multitude issuing various doctrines – the Buddha taught the Kalamas a set of tools to use in determining acceptable doctrines. Thus the summary of the Kesaputta Sutta,

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<sup>194</sup> U Nu, “*Forward with the People*,” (Ministry of Information, Government of the Union of Burma 1955) p. 9, as from my paper titled: *U Nu – Leader of the Lost Decade*, an undergraduate work for the University of Oregon. I wrote/cited: *In fact U Nu, in a mass rally speech on the 8<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Resistance day, March 27, 1953, said: “It will neither be a Revolution if it is based on obsolete text books and acted parrot-like...Revolution is no other than a sincere effort to uproot all those factors – ideologies, thoughts, organizations or the machineries of the Government – which are opposed to human progress and mental and physical well-being of mankind. This should be borne in mind by those who think they are revolutionaries and those who aspire to become revolutionaries.* <sup>194</sup> It was, this such outlook, that enabled U Nu’s brand of Buddhist Socialism to be compatible, or rather lead to a renewed friendship with Phibun Songkram’s Thailand. [U Nu was a Buddhist who advocated Democratic-Socialism based on Buddhist principles – compare this to Buddhadasa’s Dhammic-Socialism! Then, the Burmese supported a parliament, the Thai supported a dictator – ironic considering today’s political situation]

<sup>195</sup> As included into the two sources/conditions for the arising of correct views, as the Dictionary states: *paratoghosa* – another’s utterance, inducement by others, hearing or learning from others – p. 80

<sup>196</sup> *Keys to Natural Truth*, p. 5 – from a 1988 speech

<sup>197</sup> *Keys to Natural Truth*, p. 8

becomes: Is what one is stating: rooted in greed, hatred or delusion – if so, it must be rejected. This analytical ability, on determining whether or not something is conducive to wholesomeness, is only ‘partial’ knowledge, only a portion of the *abhinna* the Buddha possessed. The term, ‘*Asavakkhayanana*’, must have some weight inclusive to the above definition, which goes largely unexplained, by Phorn Ratanasuwan.<sup>198</sup> Thus, the Dictionary provides ‘*Asavakkhayanana*’ as being the knowledge of the destruction or exhaustion of all mental intoxicants<sup>199</sup> in several similar manners. It is through the hearing of another’s doctrine that one is able to recall, practice/apply for one’s self, and then determine if success results. Every discourse of refutation of other’s [non-Buddhist] doctrine results in conversion [either as lay-disciple or as a bhikkhu], or death.<sup>200</sup>

**YO DHAMMAM DESESI ADI-KALYANAM MAJJHE-KALYANAM PARIYOSANA-KALYANAM;  
who explained the Dhamma fine in the beginning, fine in the middle, fine in the end;  
SATTAM SABYAÑJANAM KEVALA-PARIPUNNAM PARISUDDHAM BRAHMACARIYAM PAKASESI:  
who expounded the holy life both in its particulars & in its essence, entirely complete,  
surpassingly pure:**

**CONTEXT & DESCRIPTION:** This phrase, translated as, “who expounded the holy life both in its particulars & in its essence, entirely complete, surpassingly pure...” This along with the above phrases comprise a stock phrase in the Tipitaka, but as written here, are seen illustrated in the Culahatthipadopama Sutta, Saleyyaka Sutta, Kandaraka Sutta, Apannaka Sutta, Ratthapala Sutta, Brahmayu Sutta, and greatly [in detail] expounded in the Chachakka Sutta – of the Majjhima Nikaya, to only mention a few. No further contextualization is needed. The ‘Dhamma’ is fine as it is, in its respective components, but others need Dhamma explained or described through additional means. There is a method known as ‘gradual training’ utilized for easier understanding, as illustrated above: beginning, middle and end. Specific details and generalities have been expounded or explained.

<sup>198</sup> Abhinna, p. 382-384 – suggesting it will be dealt with in another volume

<sup>199</sup> Dictionary, p. 119 – as on-third of the Threefold Knowledges, the other two: reminiscence of past lives and knowledge of decease and rebirth of beings; p. 235 – as the final sixth of the relevant Abhinna discussed in this section; p. 280-282, as one of Ten Powers of the Perfect One – one of the Buddha’s or Arahant’s powers.

<sup>200</sup> MN, p. 492: Since the Nigantha Nataputta (leader of the Jain’s) was unable to bear the loss/conversion of one of his chief supporters to the Buddha [the magic to convert others, another attribute!], hot blood, then and there gushed from his mouth; and page 1257: A heavy sorrow arose in [Nigantha Nataputta] because of the loss of his lay supporter, and this produced a bodily disorder that resulted in the vomiting of hot blood. After vomiting hot blood, few beings can continue to live. Thus they brought him to Pava [of the Mallas? – the Buddha died with ‘them’ as well, a chedi/stupa erected containing relicts of the Buddha] and shortly after [the Jain] passed away.



**ANALYSIS:** Bhikkhu Bodhi summarizes the gradual training, as: “the appearance of the Tathagata in the world and his exposition of Dhamma, hearing which the disciple acquires faith and follows the Teacher into homelessness. Having gone forth, he undertakes and observes the rules of discipline that promote the purification of conduct and livelihood. The next three-steps – contentment, restraint of the sense faculties, and mindfulness/full awareness – are intended to internalize the process of purification and thereby bridge the transition from virtue to concentration.<sup>201</sup>” To begin analysis, the Chachakka Sutta’s explains a portion of dependent origination<sup>202</sup>, but particularly suggests understanding all of the following<sup>203</sup> which implicates the sense faculties suggested in the gradual training exercise:

- Six internal bases – the senses: eye, ear, nose, tongue, body and mind
- Six external bases – form, sound, odor, flavor, tangibles, and mind-objects
- Six classes of consciousness – the stimulated internal senses, corresponds to external senses arising
- Six classes of contact – dependent on internal and externals consciousness arise contact
- Six classes of feeling – with the above, contact is the condition for feeling
- Six classes of craving – with the above, feeling is the condition for craving

The Sangiti Sutta expresses the above as well. The chanting formula covers the above in the recitation – and thus highlights the importance of understanding the five aggregates, which have not received proper ‘weight’ from a researcher’s standpoint. As such, the five aggregates comprise a portion of the dependent origination formula, detailed below.

The Visuddhimagga [Buddhaghosa’s post-canonical meditation manual], is a major source for Thai Theravada Buddhist monks to study doctrine and meditation in their tradition, despite being a non-canonical work. This work is instrumental in comprehending matters that may be difficult to learn from the Tipitaka. The chanting formula does not fully incorporate dependent origination but thesis commentary would be incomplete without its inclusion, because ‘outer-worldly’ concepts are implied on numerous occasions, throughout the analysis. Moreover, Buddhist texts suggest one should have profound knowledge of ‘dependent origination’. To facilitate what was said by the Buddha, from the Visuddhimagga<sup>204</sup>:

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<sup>201</sup> MN, p. 35, from Bhikkhu Bodhi’s introduction

<sup>202</sup> Escape from dependent origination or the rounds of samsara leads to attainment of extinguishment – or nibbana – so this is important to understand for those who strive towards the ‘goal’. See Appendix B.

<sup>203</sup> MN, p. 1129-1136

<sup>204</sup> *Visuddhimagga*, p. 525

For this it is said by [Gotama Buddha]...[about] dependent origination:

- With ignorance as condition there are [volitional] formations
- With formations as condition, consciousness
- With consciousness as condition, mentality-materiality
- With mentality-materiality as condition, the six-fold base
- With the six-fold base as condition, contact
- With contact as condition, feeling
- With feeling as condition, craving
- With craving as condition, clinging
- With clinging as condition, becoming
- With becoming as condition, birth
- With birth as condition, there is aging & death, sorrow & lamentation, pain, grief and despair
- With aging and death...[etc.], there is the arising of this whole mass of suffering

And in reverse order, from aging and death... birth... becoming... clinging... craving... feeling... contact... six-fold base... mentality-materiality... consciousness... formations... Ignorance is impermanent, subject to destruction, fall, fading away, cessation...<sup>205</sup>

One can see the above ‘six-sets’ as incorporated into the complete dependent origination formula. Many times over, several avenues are open, allowing one to escape away from the above cycle of rebirths or *samsara*. In the *Majjhima Nikaya*, the notes to the *Sabbasava Sutta* state that the path of stream-entry has the function of cutting off the first three fetters [personality view, doubt, and adherence to rules & observances<sup>206</sup>], binding to *samsara*.<sup>207</sup> But, the fetters to be reduced according to the complete Suttanta and Abhidhamma methods are: sensual lust, attachment to fine-material existence, attachment to immaterial existence (or simply existence for the Abhidhamma method), aversion, conceit, wrong views, adherence to rites & ceremonies, doubt, restlessness, (envy and avarice are included for the Abhidhamma method), and ignorance.<sup>208</sup> The personality view and the adherence to rules & observances, being included in the taints of views, are taints and fetters, while doubt is ordinarily classified as only a fetter, not a taint; but because it is included here among the ‘taints to be abandoned by seeing,’ it may be spoken of as a taint. The taints are: sensual desire, attachment to existence, wrong views, and ignorance – which may ferment for a long time like intoxicants – and are rooted in greed and

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<sup>205</sup> Also, I wish to note as per the text that formation and becoming, are the *round of kamma*; ignorance, craving and clinging are the *round of defilements*; and consciousness, mentality-materiality, six-fold base, contact and feeling are the *round of result* [page 599 in the *Visuddhimagga*].

<sup>206</sup> MN, p. 93 – Sabbasava Sutta #2

<sup>207</sup> MN, p. 1171

<sup>208</sup> AS, p. 268-269

ignorance.<sup>209</sup> For those intent on working towards the four-supramundane stages towards the path of complete liberation, leading one away and out of the samsara cycle: being a stream-enterer; once-returner; non-returner; or an Arahant - ensures such escape. These ‘four noble ones’ are examined later.

Thus this phrase in the chanting set, “who expounded the holy life both in its particulars & in its essence, entirely complete, surpassingly pure...” is like a broad summary of the Buddha’s doctrine, allowing the above details and commentary to represent itself, and further – to be tested by the reader. In summary, the verses for praising the Buddha is valuable for recollection.<sup>210</sup> “The Lord Buddha, having gained knowledge for himself of what was good and proper, then taught others so that they could follow and come to know this also,” towards extinguishment, or Nibbana. One concludes this set of verse with:

**TAMAHAM BHAGAVANTAM ABHIPUJAYAMI,  
TAMAHAM BHAGAVANTAM SIRASA NAMAMI. [PROSTRATE ONE TIME]  
I worship most highly that Blessed One,  
To that Blessed One I bow my head down.**

**CONTEXT, DESCRIPTION & ANALYSIS:** Nothing further at this time.

#### **2.2.4 Passages for Praising the Dhamma**

**(LEADER):**

**HANDA MAYAM DHAMMABHITHUTIM KAROMA SE:**

**Now let us give high praise to the Dhamma:**

**(ALL):**

**YO SO SVAKKHATO BHAGAVATA DHAMMO,**

**The Dhamma well-proclaimed by the Blessed One,**

**SANDITTHIKO AKALIKO EHIPASSIKO,**

**to be seen here & now for one’s self, timeless, inviting all to come & see,**

**OPANAYIKO PACCATTAM VEDITABBO VINÑUHI:**

**Worthy of realizing, directly experienceable by the wise for themselves:**

**CONTEXT:** Witnesses to the ‘above’ have existed for over 2,500 years. Over the course of time, the Dhamma has spread across the globe. Competing ‘ideologies’,

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<sup>209</sup> AS, p. 265

<sup>210</sup> Navakovada, p. 37

particularly of the Abrahamic traditions, have found it necessary to eradicate the Buddhist tradition from the various lands, due to the competitiveness of their deity, out of their ignorance, narrow-mindedness, and/or jealousy. Two occurrences will be mentioned: the destruction of ‘Nalanda’ in India, and the destruction of the standing Buddha statues [carved into the face of a cliff/mountain] in Bamiyan, Afghanistan by the Taliban. Muslims or Islam is not being implicated, rather, ignorance and intolerance [there is a difference!], was responsible for the destruction of Buddhism in various places. Some Muslim nations have attempted preserved their ancient ‘Buddhist past’ recently, namely Pakistan, Indonesia and Malaysia – nations that were primarily Hindu-Buddhist nations before the Islamic conquests. Other nations in Southeast Asia are primarily Buddhist as well, despite various attempts by the ‘communist parties’, discouraging refuge to the Triple Gem, for party allegiance.

Additionally, Taylor, writes: “Paradoxically, as [Max] Weber suggests, in renouncing or abnegating the world, in his higher spirituality the recluse may also accrue special magical powers which permit potential mastery over the mundane dimension. The problem for ascetic practitioners seems to be one of trying to out-distance the fervent laity wishing to connect with these powers through oblations and in so doing transform them to certain worldly advantage. ...With fewer good teachers and an enfeebled tradition – that is, the particular discipline and meditation practice constituting the forest life ways – the opportunity to work out one’s personal liberation and secure release from worldly ties may be increasingly problematical and fraught with contradictions and distortions – perhaps leading again to a conscious need for revitalization.<sup>211</sup>” It is this reason, apart from the suggestions by Rama IV to investigate ‘the tradition’, that the best teacher available for the English speaking renunciate may be the Tipitaka translations themselves. The Tipitaka is the ‘Dhamma’ preserved in text form, and is available in numerous languages. If one wishes to understand Buddhism in an orthodox manner, it is advisable to take on Tipitaka studies for learning the Dhamma. Otherwise, one might become trapped inside local traditions and superstitions, as well as political aspects that are non-conducive to the life of the renunciate – based on personal monastic experience; otherwise one may not understand why the Dhamma is praised. Becoming a monk is a political activity. This context is implying ‘the wise’ seek the study of Dhamma. The following description and analysis will detail this pronouncement.

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<sup>211</sup> Taylor, p. 316

**DESCRIPTION:** Pertaining to the verses in praise of the Dhamma: this phrase is perhaps directly taken from the Mahatanhasankhaya Sutta, where the editors issue the translation as: “Good Bhikkhus, so you have been guided by me with this Dhamma, which is visible here and now, immediately effective, inviting introspection, onward leading, to be experienced by the wise for themselves.”<sup>212</sup> Renunciation is immediate, political or other activities take time.

**ANALYSIS:** In another work, the Venerable Samiddhi replies to a female celestial being who tries to seduce or tempt him sexually, before going on his almsround – but he suggests: “I have not abandoned what is directly visible, friend, in order to pursue what takes time. I have abandoned what takes time in order to pursue what is directly visible. For the Blessed One, friend, has stated that sensual pleasures are time-consuming, full of suffering, full of despair, and the danger in them is still greater, while this dhamma is directly visible, immediate, inviting one to come and see, applicable, to be personally experienced by the wise.”<sup>213</sup> Additionally<sup>214</sup>, “The Dhamma guards those who practice and does not let them fall into evil.” The preceding, as well as ‘all’ that has been previously mentioned pertaining to the Dhamma, is to be recollected here, and thus one ‘can’ direct his ‘intellect’ towards comprehending the reasons for praising the Dhamma. As can be ascertained, the Dhamma, alone, has the potential to be sufficient as one’s sole protective refuge. *Ehipassiko*, includes ‘inviting’ all tourists to come and see Thai Buddhist temples and learn the Dhamma. Thus, one can rightfully state the following verse:

TAMAHAM DHAMMAM ABHIPUJAYAMI,  
TAMAHAM DHAMMAM SIRASA NAMAMI. [PROSTRATE ONE TIME]  
I worship most highly that Dhamma,  
To that Dhamma I bow my head down.

**CONTEXT, DESCRIPTION & ANALYSIS:** The Dhamma is preserved in the Tipitaka, a voluminous collection of texts comprising of the Sutta’s, Vinaya, and Abhidhamma. Commentaries are included in the sets to assist one in maneuvering into difficult to understand passages. The ‘Three-Baskets’ are usually put into practice by monks, who have preserved these ‘teachings’ since the days of his first

<sup>212</sup> MN, p. 358

<sup>213</sup> SN, Vol. I, p. 97-100

<sup>214</sup> Navakovada, p. 37

sermon to the five ascetics who abandoned him after he stopped his austerities. These five would become his first ‘successful’ audience, following the enlightenment – his disciples. Since then, millions of people revere this Dhamma, and bow in recognition of its ability to tame gods and men.

### 2.2.5 Passages for Praising the Sangha

(LEADER):

HANDA MAYAM SANGHABHITHUTIM KAROMA SE:

Now let us give high praise to the Sangha:

(ALL):

YO SO SUPATIPANNO BHAGAVATO SAVAKA-SANGHO,

The Sangha of the Blessed One's disciples who have practiced well,

UJUPATIPANNO BHAGAVATO SAVAKA-SANGHO,

the Sangha of the Blessed One's disciples who have practiced straightforwardly,

ÑAYAPATIPANNO BHAGAVATO SAVAKA-SANGHO,

the Sangha of the Blessed One's disciples who have practiced methodically,

SAMICIPATIPANNO BHAGAVATO SAVAKA-SANGHO,

the Sangha of the Blessed One's disciples who have practiced masterfully,

YADIDAM CATTARI PURISA-YUGANI ATTHA PURISA-PUGGALA:

i.e., the four pairs -- the eight types -- of Noble Ones:

ESA BHAGAVATO SAVAKA-SANGHO --

That is the Sangha of the Blessed One's disciples –

**CONTEXT & DESCRIPTION:** The modern or contemporary context, suggests those in robes are the Sangha, but that is the conventional truth, versus the ultimate truth: because the implication is the ‘attha-purisa’ and by reduction, the ‘cattari-purisa’. Ordained monks and nuns, and lay men and women can all be the above four/eight. There is no distinction based on sex/status. The Sangiti Sutta highlights each of the above members of the Sangha in various ways. Who exactly is the Sangha, particularly of the Blessed One’s disciples? There are too many names and various categories or rankings of disciples. Before analysis begins on disciples, a brief deviation must be made/claimed: the term ‘ariya-puggala’ [holy ones or noble disciples] is absent from the verse, though there is the metaphoric term: ‘*cattari*’, as [*catt & ari*] – Four Nobles, respectfully. Ariya-puggala’s are of two types: sekha [learners], and asekha [adepts/non-learners]. Only arahants are considered non-learners or adept on the noble path; all others are still learning. Ariya-puggala’s are of

four types: Sotapanna [stream-enterers], Sakadagami [once-returners], Anagama [non-returners], Arahant [Worthy One]. The preceding four are determined to have pairs, totaling eight.<sup>215</sup> One is, comprised within the pair depending on or separated apart, if: one has entered and is established in the respective pairing; or one has worked for the realization of respective fruition and is established in the respective pairing.<sup>216</sup> However, each phrase addresses solely bhikkhus who functioned as hearers – the savaka-sangha – those determined fortunate enough to live and practice during the lifetime of the Buddha; this excludes the monastery dwellers of today.

**ANALYSIS:** Now, accordingly, Noble Ones are not ordinary people. Noble Ones are those with higher attainments, who have reduced or eliminated defilements, having moved beyond lokiya realms onto lokuttara [supramundane levels] realms. Briefly, lokiya, concerns matters pertaining to this present mundane earth, whereas lokuttara pertains to outer-earth concerns – the supramundane. The definition of lokuttara can range from escaping the suffering that the world is cyclically enveloped around, to being virtuous in terms of following rules of monastic discipline. Consciousness that leads a person away from greed, hatred and delusion leads the mind away from worldly concerns. The knowledge a person acquires through meditation leads a person away from prior stages towards the supramundane states – which if further developed can set a person onto the path towards liberation from the endless cycle of samsara. Certain texts emphasize, that if a person chooses to become virtuous and strives towards liberation, then best path available is the path of the renunciate [though not necessary]. Lokuttara, as it seems, may only be a heavenly concept that most people can only wish to attain, but through diligent effort, anyone suitable can attain this status. Complete elimination of defilements is necessary for the path of arahantship. To illustrate, sixteen defilements are to be abandoned along steps on the noble path<sup>217</sup> for these lokuttara possibilities<sup>218</sup>:

- The path of stream-entry abandons: contempt, a domineering attitude, envy, avarice, deceit and fraud
- The path of once-returning has abandoned: three fetters and weakened greed, hatred and delusion

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<sup>215</sup> AN, Vol. IV, p. 193

<sup>216</sup> Dictionary, p. 89-91

<sup>217</sup> MN, p. 1179 – in a note for the *Vatthupama Sutta*.

<sup>218</sup> DN, p. 291-Janavasabha Sutta

- The path of non-returning abandons aspects of greed and wrong views, and residual mental factors<sup>219</sup>
- The path of arahantship abandons: covetousness and unrighteous greed, obstinacy, presumption, conceit, arrogance and vanity

Yet, other matters concerning the still-learning/non-adept sekha, and the adept must be made before moving on to detail those comprising the Four Nobles, particularly the ‘sotapanna’. Minor background information is needed, before progressing. The *Sangiti Sutta*<sup>220</sup> and notes to the *Nidanavagga*<sup>221</sup> group these teachings of the Buddha together for the purpose of chanting:

- Four factors of stream-attainment (sotapattiyangani): association with good people (sappurisa-samseva), hearing the true Dhamma, thoroughly attentive [careful attention] (yoniso-manasikara), practice of the Dhamma in its entirety [or practice in accordance with the Dhamma] (dhammanudhamma-patipatti).
- Four characteristics of a stream-winner: Here, the Ariyan disciple is possessed of unwavering confidence in the Buddha, ...the Dhamma, ...the Sangha, [and] he is possessed of morality dear to the Noble Ones, unbroken, without defect, unspotted, without inconsistency, liberating, praised by the wise, uncorrupted, and conducive to concentration.
- Four fruits of the ascetic life: the fruits of stream-entry, of the once-returner, of the non-returner, of Arahantship.

Therefore, it certainly seems that the common worldling cannot achieve this ‘status’ alone. The rest of the definition implies a monastic setting, where s/he can be around good people versed in, and able to teach: Dhamma and meditations. A suitable environment provides the necessary setting to practice teachings. The metaphoric implication is that the prepared entry into a temple/monastic setting is ‘lokuttara’ in opposition to maintaining ‘lokiya’ home-life. Training is needed; even the Buddha had training to the limits his previous two teachers could direct. No one has yet to achieve all these attainments alone. Sometimes Buddhists forget the two teachers Siddhattha Gotama studied with during his period of austerities.

The chanting formula, beginning with the praises of the Buddha, and Dhamma, and Sangha: comprises *the Mirror of Dhamma* [which enables one to discern for oneself any noble attainment – we are being taught this for our benefit in the chanting ceremony]. The knowledge Ananda was given by the Buddha<sup>222</sup> is similar to what the Buddha gave the people of the Bamboo Gate, mentioned above:

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<sup>219</sup> AS, p. 268-269

<sup>220</sup> DN, pp. 490-491

<sup>221</sup> SN, p. 762

<sup>222</sup> DN, p. 241-242: the Mahaparinibbana Sutta



*“Ananda, I will teach you a way of knowing Dhamma, called the Mirror of Dhamma, whereby the Ariyan disciple, if he so wishes, can discern of himself: ‘I have destroyed hell, animal-rebirth, the realm of ghosts, all downfall, evil fates and sorry states. I am a stream-winner, incapable of falling into states of woe, certain of attaining Nibbana.’”*

*...Here, Ananda, this Ariyan disciple is possessed of unwavering confidence in the Buddha, thus:*

- ‘This Blessed Lord is an Arahant, a fully-enlightened Buddha, endowed with wisdom and conduct, the Well-Farer, Knower of the worlds, incomparable Trainer of men to be tamed, Teacher of gods and humans, enlightened and blessed.’

*He is possessed of unwavering faith in the Dhamma, thus:*

- ‘Well proclaimed by the Lord is the Dhamma, visible here and now, timeless, inviting inspection, leading onward, to be comprehended by the wise each one for himself.’

*He is possessed of unwavering confidence in the Sangha, thus:*

- ‘Well directed is the Sangha of the Lord’s disciples, of upright conduct, on the right path, on the perfect path; that is to say the four pairs of persons, the eight kinds of humans. The Sangha of the Lord’s disciples is worthy of offerings, worthy of hospitality, worthy of gifts, worthy of veneration, an unsurpassed field of merit in the world.

*And he is possessed of morality dear to the Noble Ones, unbroken, without defect, unspotted, without consistency, liberating, uncorrupted, and conducive to concentration.*

*This, Ananda, is the Mirror of Dhamma, whereby the Ariyan disciple can discern of himself: ‘I have destroyed hell, ...I am a Stream-Enterer, ...certain of attaining Nibbana.’”*

The above is further echoed in the Sangiti Sutta. It is clear enough, nearly anyone can discern this knowledge for himself, if within one’s abilities to indeed truthfully proclaim – per the authority or ‘advice’ given by the Buddha, to his followers. Additionally, according to the notes to the *Samannaphala Sutta*, “the opening of the dhamma-eye is a term for ‘entering the stream’ and thus one is set irrevocably on the path. ...it is superior to the divine-eye (*dibbha-cakkhu*) which is a superior kind of clairvoyance [attained by the Buddha during the night’s second watch, preceding his enlightenment during the third watch after the profound discover of the Four Noble Truths], and below the wisdom-eye (*panna-cakkhu*), which is the wisdom of the Arahant.<sup>223</sup>”

The Buddha mentions above that nearly anyone who diligently practices can claim lokuttara attainments. Yet, there is vinaya-rule in Theravada Buddhism that mentions one [the ordained] cannot proclaim one’s self to be a noble figure [this was

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<sup>223</sup> DN, pp. 547-548

developed by the Buddha in the first watch of his night of enlightenment, concerning his self]. According to the Patimokkha for Theravada Buddhist monks<sup>224</sup>: “Should any bhikkhu while having no acquaintance of it suggest that (some) superior human state worthy of the Noble Ones’ knowledge and vision is present in himself (saying) ‘I know thus, I see thus’ and afterwards on another occasion should he, whether examined or not examined, having fallen into the fault and being desirous of purification, say thus, ‘Friends, not knowing, I said I know; not seeing, I said I see, what I said was vain and false,’ (then) unless it was through over-estimation, he is defeated and no longer in communion also.” A bhikkhu should not tell a lie [another offense], but what then can be determined or discussed?

1. *Having no acquaintance of it*
2. *Superior human state*
3. *Superior human state worthy of the Noble Ones’ knowledge and vision*
4. *Being desirous of purification*
5. *Unless it was through over-estimation*

Concerning the illustrated determinants: 1-3, the Tipitaka suggests that through certain meditation practices, one can develop these capacities to merge onto the path of stream-entry, so why can there be no claim? Tipitaka ‘students’ are familiar with the ‘attained’ statuses of superior human states. When one is pursuing meditations – are they not trying to purify themselves or attain these ‘stages’? The only offense seems to be the ‘over-estimation, which breaks the rule against false speech – which incidentally does not require banishment from the Sangha. The unexamined question: did monasticism create the suppression of noble attainments? The Patimokkha or Vinaya suggest it is not wise for the Bhikkhu to claim higher status. If he back-slides [explained below], or lies, he is asked to leave the Sangha, thus there might be ‘pressure to perform’ as the Buddha suggests. That the stream-enterer is incapable of declining into a hell-realm, seldom receives attention. How then can the Bhikkhu ensure security in the sangha?

From the *Akankheyya Sutta*, someone heard the Buddha say, “If a bhikkhu should wish, ‘May I, with the destruction of three fetters, become a stream-enterer, no longer subject to perdition, bound for deliverance, headed for enlightenment,’ let him fulfill the precepts.<sup>225</sup>” The note to the Sutta says: “The three fetters destroyed by the stream-enterer are personality view, doubt, and adherence to rules and

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<sup>224</sup> *Patimokkha*, p. 68

<sup>225</sup> MN, p. 116

observances.<sup>226</sup>” One should fulfill the vinaya regulations and renounce others, stop being selfish, and have trust [through practice] in the Buddha’s Dhamma.

Additionally, in the Kosambiya Sutta<sup>227</sup>, the Buddha explains obsessions to be abandoned that are considered aspects of seven factors called, ‘great reviewing knowledges’ of the stream-enterer<sup>228</sup>: “And how does this view that is noble and emancipating lead the one who practices in accordance with it to the complete destruction of suffering?” “Here a bhikkhu, gone to the forest or to the root of a tree or to an empty hut, considers thus: ‘Is there any obsession unabandoned in myself that might so obsess my mind that I cannot know or see things as they actually are?’ If a bhikkhu is obsessed by sensual lust, then his mind is obsessed, if he is obsessed by ill-will... sloth and torpor... restlessness and remorse... doubt... absorbed in speculation about this world... absorbed in speculation about the other world... takes to quarrelling and brawling and is deep in disputes, stabbing others with verbal daggers, then his mind is obsessed.” “He understands thus: ‘There is no obsession unabandoned in myself that might so obsess my mind that I cannot know and see things as they actually are. My mind is well disposed for awakening to the truths.’ This is the first knowledge attained by him that is noble, supramundane, not shared by ordinary people.” This is how a lokuttara-dwelling ariya-puggala is not a lokiya-dwelling common person. Regarding the sekha, the notes to the *Mulapariya Sutta* explain how the disciple in higher training [*sekha*]<sup>229</sup> is:

One who has reached any of the three lower planes of sanctity – stream-entry, once-returning, or non-returning – but still must train further in order to reach the goal, arahantship, the supreme security from bondage. ...the disciple in higher training is urged by the Buddha to refrain from conceiving and delight because the dispositions to these mental processes still remain within him. With his attainment of stream-entry, he eradicated the fetter of personality view and thus can no longer conceive in terms of wrong views. But the defilements of craving and conceit are only uprooted by the path of arahantship, and thus the *sekha* remains vulnerable to the conceivings to which they are capable of giving rise. Whereas direct knowledge (*abhinna*<sup>230</sup>) is the province of both the *sekha* and the arahant, full understanding (*parinna*) is the province exclusively of the arahant, as it involves the full abandoning of all defilements.

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<sup>226</sup> MN, p. 1178

<sup>227</sup> MN, pp. 421-422

<sup>228</sup> MN, p. 1244

<sup>229</sup> MN, pp. 1166-1167

<sup>230</sup> Phom Ratanasuwan suggests ‘Abhinna’ means: *supramundane, psychic powers of the Buddha*

The *Mahacattarisaka Sutta*<sup>231</sup> tells the reader of the path of the disciple in higher training:

“Therein, bhikkhus, right view comes first. And how does right view come first? In one of right view, right intention comes into being; in one of right intention, right speech comes into being; in one of right speech, right action comes into being; in one of right action, right livelihood comes into being; in one of right livelihood, right effort comes into being; in one of right effort, right mindfulness comes into being; in one of right mindfulness, right concentration comes into being; in one of right concentration, right knowledge comes into being; in one of right knowledge, right deliverance comes into being. Thus, bhikkhus, the path of the disciple in higher training possesses eight factors, the arahant possesses ten factors. [The additional two factors for the arahant are right knowledge, with his reviewing knowledge of the destruction of his defilements, and right deliverance, which is identified with the experience of liberation from all defilements].”

Additionally, from the *Indriyabhavana Sutta*<sup>232</sup>:

“And how, Ananda, is one a disciple in higher training, one who has entered the way? Here, Ananda, when a bhikkhu sees a form with the eye... hears a sound with the ear... smells an odor with the nose... tastes a flavor with the tongue... touches a tangible with the body... cognizes a mind-object with the mind... there arises in him what is agreeable, there arises in him what is disagreeable, there arises what is both agreeable and disagreeable; he is repelled, humiliated, and disgusted by the agreeable that arose, by the disagreeable that arose, and by the both agreeable and disagreeable that arose. That is how one is a disciple in higher training, one who has entered upon the way...”

The Buddha emphasized several times for lay-devotees to adhere to the five-precepts<sup>233</sup>:

“Householder, when *five fearful animosities* have subsided in a noble disciple [destroying life, takes what is not given, sexual misconduct, speaks falsely, indulges in wine, liquor and intoxicants], and he possesses the *four factors of stream-entry* [full confidence in the Buddha, the Dhamma, the Sangha, and virtues dear to the noble ones], and he has clearly seen and thoroughly penetrated with wisdom, the *noble method* [dependent origination], if he wishes he could himself declare of himself: ‘I am one finished with hell, finished with the animal realm, finished with the domain of ghosts, finished with the plane of misery, the bad destinations, the nether world. I am a stream-enterer, no longer bound to the nether world, fixed in destiny, with enlightenment as my destination.’”

In the *Anguttara-Nikaya*, concerning lay disciples<sup>234</sup> again, the Buddha speaks to his disciple Sariputta, in the company of Anthapindika and five hundred other lay-disciples:

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<sup>231</sup> MN, p. 1324

<sup>232</sup> MN, p. 1150

<sup>233</sup> SN, pp. 578-579

“Sariputta, any white-frosted home-man you know, who acts controlled in the five steps of the training [the five precepts, mentioned above] and obtains at will, easily and without difficulty the four very purposive abodes of ease [unwavering faith in the Buddha, Dhamma, Sangha and is possessed with noble virtues], here amid things seen, may, should he desire, declare just the state of self by the self, saying: ‘Destroyed is hell for me; destroyed is animal-rebirth; destroyed is the realm of ghosts; destroyed for me is the wayward stream, the ill way, the abyss; I am he who has won to the Stream, not subject to any falling away, sure and bound for enlightenment.’”

It is important to revisit previous portions concerning stream-entry, because the lesser-three nobles still must train further to be an arahant. The lesser-trainees should refrain from conceiving and delight [does this exclude entry into jhana meditation?], because dispositions to mental processes still remain within him.<sup>235</sup> With stream-entry attainment, the fetter of personality view is eradicated and thus he is unable to conceive in terms of wrong views, despite still having defilements of craving and conceit that are only uprooted, signaling arahantship, otherwise the *sekha* remains vulnerable to the conceivings still capable of rising. Also, both the *sekha* and *asekha* possess direct knowledge (*abhinna*), though only the *asekha* is capable of full understanding [*parinna*], since this involves full abandoning of all defilements. These figures are described in the Sangiti Sutta.

Because, as demonstrated, the stream-enterer is still in training and still not fully perfected, his/her lack of mindfulness in guarding the sense-doors, which opens the five aggregates and poor virtue furthers their decline from the entered-stream, which would result in more rebirths [arguably seven?]. Helpful in understanding is the Anguttara-Nikaya<sup>236</sup>, which states that the five conditions of: delighting in business [note mentions ‘kamma’]; delight in gossip; delight in sleeping; delight in company [society?<sup>237</sup>]; and not reflecting with a freed-mind – leads a monk to decline in training. Here there is an implication that there are kammic influences to back-sliding, because the stream-enterer is still subjected to sense-sphere consciousness.<sup>238</sup> There might be controversy towards this paper’s position that a stream-enterer can back-slide to the status of an average worldling, but this position holds and has been proven already.

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<sup>234</sup> AN, Vol. III, pp. 155-156

<sup>235</sup> MN, p. 1166-1167

<sup>236</sup> AN, Vol. III, p. 91

<sup>237</sup> Shwe Zan Aung and Mrs. Rhys Davids, *Points of Controversy or Subjects of Discourse: being A Translation of the Katha-Vatthu from the Abhidhamma-Pitika*, (London: Pali Text Society, 1969), 70

<sup>238</sup> AS, p. 46

The *Katha-Vatthu* only suggests that the Arahant cannot back-slide, except in jhanas.<sup>239</sup> “No one admits that a stream-winner can fall away. They admit the falling away only of those, having fallen away from arahantship, have got [have reverted to] the state of a never-returner... They do not admit that a stream-winner can fall anywhere.<sup>240</sup>” Nor, do they inquire.

Thus, the following is asserted: The debate controversy lacked adequate questioning, and according to reason, a disciple [ordained and lay] can revert back to lokiya-status. Here stated, “these seven things lead to the decline of a monk when training... delight in action, delight in talk, delight in sleeping, delight in company, *unguardedness of the sense-doors*, no moderation in eating; and when there is business of the Order in chapter, a monk undergoing training reflects not: ‘There are in the Order elders of experience, long gone forth, office-bearers, they will be known for that!’ – but makes no effort on his own account.” Also, for a lay-disciple’s decline: “He fails to see the monks; neglects to hear [Dhamma]; trains not in more-virtue; puts little trust in elder, novice or mid-term monks; with critical mind, seeking faults, hears Dhamma; seeks a gift-worthy outside the Order and there first serves. Verily... these seven things lead to a lay-disciple’s decline.<sup>241</sup>” Suggestively, *The Guide*<sup>242</sup> tells the reader, “*Lusts for sensual desires and ill will are common to the ordinary man and to the Stream-Enterer.*”

Noble ordained and lay-disciples back-slide from attainments when *the senses are unguarded and virtue is not purified*. Lack of mindfulness in guarding the sense-doors open the five aggregates, poor virtue furthers decline, resulting in backsliding from the entered-stream, and thus subject to rebirth. Incidentally, the stream-enterer is subject to rebirth anyhow... so perhaps this matter is pertinent to a small percentage of Buddhists. It is through the unsuccessful guarding of the sense-doors, that a stream-enterer falls away from the path.

Furthermore, as previously cited/mentioned, Bhikkhu Bodhi affirms that, “the disciple enters upon the first supramundane path either as a Dhamma-follower (dhammanusarin) or as a faith-follower (saddhanusarin); the former is one in whom wisdom is the dominant faculty, the latter is one who progresses by the impetus of

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<sup>239</sup> AS, p. 68

<sup>240</sup> Bimala Churn Law [trs.], *The Debates Commentary: Kathavatthupakarana-Athakathu* (London: Pali Text Soc. 1969) p. 45

<sup>241</sup> AN, Vol. IV, p. 15

<sup>242</sup> Bhikkhu Nanamoli [trans], *The Guide: Netti-PPakaranam, According to Kaccana Thera*, (London: Pali Text Soc. 1977) p. 75

faith. This path, the path of stream-entry, has the task of eradicating the grossest three fetters:

- [1] personality view, i.e., the view of a self among the five aggregates;
- [2] doubt in the Buddha and his teachings
- [3] adherence to external rules and observances, either ritualistic or ascetic, in the belief that they can bring purification.

When the disciple realizes the fruit of this path, he becomes a stream-enterer (sotapanna), who has entered the stream of the Noble Eight-fold Path that will carry him irreversibly to Nibbana. The only ‘advantage’ given to the back-slider is that the ‘former’ stream-enterer is bound to reach final liberation in a maximum of seven more births, which all occur either in the human world or in the heavenly realms.” The fetters are again, found in the Sangiti Sutta. Analysis suggests: back-sliding or path-regression may occur – but since path-entry occurred, the life-force still has several more attempts to be completely extinguished. Interestingly, stream-entry is simple enough for people to attain on their deathbeds.<sup>243</sup> Concluding this segment, it is interesting that the sotapanna has practiced well – in past-tense – which may allow for an ultimate truth, if indeed, the stream-enterer fell from lokuttara-spheres – in that case, s/he did not practice well.

A once-returner has practiced straightforwardly, surpassing being well-practiced. The following illustrates completely: A once-returner is one who is similar to the layman Mahanama, the Sakyan cousin to the Buddha, brother to Anuruddha and Ananda. Upon a visit to the Buddha, Mahanama tells the Buddha certain mind-claims. The Buddha states, “Mahanama, there is still a state un-abandoned by you internally, owing to which at times states of greed, hate and delusion invade your mind and remain [demonstrating Mahanama is a once-returner]; for were that state already abandoned by you internally you would not be living the home life, you would not be enjoying sensual pleasures. It is because that state is un-abandoned by you internally that you are living the home life and enjoying sensual pleasures. Even though a noble disciple has seen clearly as it actually is with proper wisdom how sensual pleasures provide little gratification, much suffering, and much despair, and how great is the danger in them, as long as he still does not attain to the rapture and pleasure that are apart from sensual pleasures [which represent the first and second levels of jhana’s, as mentioned above], apart from unwholesome states, or to

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<sup>243</sup> SN, pp. 1788-1837

something more peaceful than that, he may still be attracted to sensual pleasures. But when a noble disciple has seen clearly as it actually is with proper wisdom how sensual pleasures provide little gratification, much suffering, and much despair, and how great is the danger in them, and he attains to the rapture and pleasure that are apart from sensual pleasures, apart from unwholesome states, or to something more peaceful than that, then he is no longer attracted to sensual pleasures.<sup>244</sup>” The Buddha then says that he experienced the above, before his enlightenment, demonstrating the Buddha lives better than a king, because he does not have to dwell unpleasantly attached to painful austerities, material sensual pleasures, but instead the Buddha dwells experiencing the pleasantness of jhana meditation attainments for as many as seven days and nights without moving or uttering a word, because he is an arahant.<sup>245</sup> One traveler to Siam, Bowring, interpreted an arahant to be: “a mystical word implying the purity or exemption of Buddha from concupiscence.<sup>246</sup>” As ‘we’ can see, Bowring’s perception was not exactly correct, because there is more, as demonstrated.

A non-returner has practiced methodically, surpassing straightforwardness, through: the elimination of sensual desires and ill-will. Therefore, his/her sense-doors are well-guarded. Nibbana will be obtained in a ‘heavenly realm’. The Arahant has practiced masterfully; and has already been described above. In the above phrases for analysis, one is praising the four noble types of disciples, determined fortunate enough to hear and practice the teachings from the Buddha.

**AHUNEYYO PAHUNEYYO DAKKHINEYYO AÑJALI-KARANIYO,  
worthy of gifts, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offerings, worthy of reverential salutation,  
ANUTTARAM PUÑÑAKKHETTAM LOKASSA:  
the incomparable field of merit for the world:**

**CONTEXT, DESCRIPTION & ANALYSIS:** To the four types of noble disciples go gifts, hospitality and the before noted ‘anjali’ – reverential salutation of joined and raised hands – but to not discriminate or speculate – this is extended to the current members of the Sangha, though ‘we’ cannot be certain of their ‘hidden’ attainments and virtue/purity. Such reverence is often a mere formality/greeting, and means little

<sup>244</sup> MN, pp. 186-189: Culadukkhakkhandha Sutta

<sup>245</sup> MN, pp. 1199-1200 – notes to the Culadukkhakkhandha Sutta

<sup>246</sup> Sir John Bowring, *The Kingdom and People of Siam, Vol. One* (New York: Oxford University Press 1969), p. 121 [further cited as Bowring and page #]



now for some who perform the action thoughtlessly. Although, when one is in the presence of a ‘great’ one, the performer of the ‘anjali’ may be overwhelmed with emotion and thus the ‘anjali’ is performed pure, with mindfulness and reverence. In conclusion, with the ‘wisdom’ received from the above and often-cited Mahaparinibbana Sutta, what has been chanted thus far by the diligent/devoted Buddhist, if true, is enough to enter-the-stream. Additionally<sup>247</sup>, “the Sangha practice rightly the way taught by the Lord Buddha, and then teaches others to do likewise.” In return for their strivings, lay-devotees offer the ‘four-requisites’ and other gifts to monastic/forest dwellers. Even though modern/contemporary Buddhists recite these verses for the ‘higher’ Sangha, the lesser/lower ‘modern’ Sangha is afforded the same ‘respect’ for their virtue in upholding the 227 rules of monastic discipline, as well as being keepers of the Dhamma. For the preceding, and more, one thus concludes with:

**TAMAHAM SANGHAM ABHIPUJAYAMI,  
TAMAHAM SANGHAM SIRASA NAMAMI. [PROSTRATE ONE TIME]**

**I worship most highly that Sangha,  
To that Sangha I bow my head down.**

**CONTEXT, DESCRIPTION & ANALYSIS:** As demonstrated above, one is already in the temple, in the presence of the ‘worthy’, thus one performs the salutation towards the robe-wearers of today, and those ‘well-practiced’ in days gone by.

### **2.2.6 Salutations to the Triple Gem, etc**

**(LEADER):**

**HANDA MAYAM RATANATTAYAPPANAMAGATHAYO CEVA SAMVEGAVATTHU-PARIDIPAKA-  
PATHAÑCA BHANAMA SE:**

**Now let us recite the stanzas in salutation to the Triple Gem together with the passage on the  
topics inspiring a sense of chastened dispassion:**

**(ALL):**

**BUDDHO SUSUDDHO KARUNA-MAHANNAVO,  
YOCCANTA-SUDDHABBARA-ÑANALOCANO,  
LOKASSA PAPUPAKILESA-GHATAKO<sup>248</sup>:  
VANDAMI BUDDHAM AHAMADARENA TAM.**

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<sup>247</sup> Navakovada, p. 37

<sup>248</sup> Concerning the term ‘PAPUPAKILESA’, see my below commentary. The standard translation used fails to present the depth of the true meaning – and perhaps ‘worldlings’ are lead ‘astray’ by errant translations. I only recently came to the commentary conclusion during the research for this thesis.

**The Buddha, well-purified, with ocean-like compassion,  
 Possessed of the eye of knowledge completely purified,  
 Destroyer of the evils & corruptions of the world:  
 I revere that Buddha with devotion.**

**CONTEXT & DESCRIPTION:** One can now sit in a more relaxed posture, with the legs off to one side and the palms still together, in reverence, while chanting. What is now being chanted is an expanded version of the refuge format, but suggested as a salutation. Usually the format for refuge is given elsewhere, and one notices this is not the standard, “Buddham Saranam Gacchami...” This is a more elaborate reverential exposition. The only minor correction to this verse was made through phrase substitutions, which is translate to mean alternately: “*The Buddha, purified, with compassion, Possessed of pure knowledge, Destroying the world’s proliferation of defilements: I praise Buddha with devotion.*” The Pali word ‘vandana’ means ‘veneration’<sup>249</sup>, – alluding to a sense of sacredness that a mantra would project.

**ANALYSIS:** *Papupakilesa*, should mean ‘the proliferation of defilements’ not, ‘the evils & corruptions’. This translation is more correct, and implies more than the conveyed standard verse, which does not demonstrate the abundance of evil and corruptions prevalent in the world. It was the Buddha that helped the world see this ‘darkness’ and helped others by giving the light of dhamma.<sup>250</sup> This rendition became possible because of Bhikkhu Bodhi<sup>251</sup>, who writes concerning a line in which the root word is mentioned: “Common beings become ‘of proliferated perception’. On how perceptions and notions affected by proliferation arise and obsess a person, see the Majjhima Nikaya. *Papanca* is explained by the commentaries as of threefold origin: through craving, conceit and views [tanha, mana, ditthi], in their capacity to cause mental distortion and obsession. Proliferated perception might be interpreted as the distorted perception of permanence, pleasure, self, and beauty in relation to what is really impermanent, suffering, non-self and foul. Such distorted perception is caused by the proliferating defilements.” The Madhupindika Sutta of the Majjhima Nikaya,

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<sup>249</sup> Spiro, p. 193 – but according to Payutto’s *Dictionary*: veneration is ‘Garava’ or ‘puja’ [‘puja’ is explained elsewhere in this thesis]. This ‘garava’ is determined to mean: reverence, esteem, attention, appreciative action; and is of six types: reverence for the Buddha; reverence for the Dhamma; reverence for the Sangha; reverence for the training; reverence for earnestness; reverence for hospitality. – See the Dictionary, p. 221

<sup>250</sup> MN, several suttas: Bhayabherava Sutta # 4; Vatthupama Sutta #7; Culahatthipadopama Sutta #27; Culasaropama Sutta #30... etc., The dhamma is compared to a lamp because it shows the way for those lost.

<sup>251</sup> SN, p. 1409, n.71

as suggested above, states<sup>252</sup>: “as to the source through which perceptions and notions tinged by mental proliferation beset a man: if nothing is found there to delight in, welcome and hold to, this is the end of the underlying tendency to lust, if the underlying tendency to aversion, of the underlying tendency to doubt, of the underlying tendency for conceit, of the underlying tendency to desire for being, of the underlying tendency to ignorance; this is the end of resorting to rods and weapons, or quarrels, brawls, disputes, recrimination, malice, and false speech; here these evil unwholesome states cease without remainder.” The reader is asked to refer to a long footnote, which mentions: that the above mentioned passage is cryptic. Bhikkhu Bodhi analyzed previous translations and determined ‘proliferation’ is better suited as a meaning, in contrast to ‘diversification’ or ‘calculations about perceptions of diversification’ – stating the emphasis in the text is geared towards the imagination of the ‘worldling’. An alternate monk scholar had rendered the term, as: conceptual proliferation. He concludes with the statement: “If nothing in the process of cognition is found to delight in, to welcome, or to hold to, the underlying tendencies of the defilements will come to an end,” – which is a near echoing of what was mentioned above, though this matter does not seem cryptic at all, dependent on one’s ability to think or conceive – which is dependent on ‘manifestations of craving, conceit, and views.’<sup>253</sup> The same footnote states, “The Buddha shows that the conceiving of any object may occur in any of four ways, expressed by the text as a fourfold linguistic pattern: accusative, locative, ablative and appropriative.

The prominent scholar monk professes: “I [Bhikkhu Bodhi], take the pattern to represent the diverse ways in which the ordinary person attempts to give positive being to his imagined sense of ego-hood by positing, below the threshold of reflection, a relationship between himself as the subject of cognition and the perceived phenomenon as its object. According to the fourfold pattern given, this relationship may be one either of direct identification [he conceives X], or of inherence [he conceives in X], or of contrast or derivation [he conceives from X] or of simple appropriation [he conceives X to be ‘mine’]... care is needed in interpreting these phrases. The activity of conceiving thus seems to comprise the entire range of subjectivity tinged cognition, from the impulses and thoughts in which the sense of personal identity is still inchoate to elaborate intellectual structures in which it has

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<sup>252</sup> MN, p. 202 – along with the footnote listed on pages: 1203-1204

<sup>253</sup> MN, p. 1162-1164, n. 6

been fully explicated.” Bhikkhu Bodhi alludes to a fifth phrase [he delights in X] – “which is elsewhere said to ‘delight here and there.’ This, moreover, hints at the danger in the worldling’s thought processes, since craving is pointed to by the Buddha as the origin of suffering.” Bhikkhu Bodhi then states, that the commentaries illustrate many examples of conceiving, and how conceiving is, “the misplaced sense of egoity.” Regardless, the Buddha utilized his capacities to a greater extent than most could ever endeavor, and thus, he is worthy of this offering of reverence.

**DHAMMO PADIPO VIYA TASSA SATTHUNO,  
YO MAGGA-PAKAMATA-BHEDABHINNAKO,  
LOKUTTARO YO CA TADATTHA-DIPANO:  
VANDAMI DHAMMAM AHAMADARENA TAM.  
The Teacher's Dhamma, like a lamp,  
divided into Path, Fruition, & the Deathless,  
both transcendent (itself) & showing the way to that goal:  
I revere that Dhamma with devotion.**

**CONTEXT, DESCRIPTION & ANALYSIS:** This is an elaborate, yet simple illustration, using a ‘shining’ metaphor to see how the dhamma operates, in case it was not clear from above contexts, descriptions or analysis. Additionally, this is distinctly different from the ‘Dhammam Saranam Gacchami”. The verse pertaining to the Dhamma metaphorically being like a lamp, was already explained above. The path is the Eightfold Noble Path as part of the Four Noble Truths. The fruit is becoming a noble disciple from practicing the Dhamma: gaining in wisdom, morality and concentration. The ‘deathless’ will lead one towards nibbana – and consequentially: worthy of practice and reverence. The Buddha showed that the above was possible, not only for himself, but for others.

**SANGHO SUKHETTABHYATIKHETTA-SANÑITO,  
YO DITTHASANTO SUGATANUBODHAKO,  
LOLAPPAHINO ARIYO SUMEDHASO:  
VANDAMI SANGHAM AHAMADARENA TAM.  
The Sangha, called a field better than the best,  
who have seen peace, awakening after the one gone the good way,  
who have abandoned carelessness -- the noble ones, the wise:  
I revere that Sangha with devotion.**

**CONTEXT, DESCRIPTION & ANALYSIS:** This verse pertains to the four types of noble disciples, and is another reverential verse towards those who are worthy of reverence. Those who have been determined to be good, arose after the Buddha declared the path leading away from suffering. Thus the ‘good way’ is: the Eightfold Noble Path<sup>254</sup>; the wise follow this path, and ‘we’ revere those who have preceded ‘us’ in traveling the good way. This is, again, different from the ‘Sangham Saranam Gacchami’ format used elsewhere in the system for refuge.

**ICCEVAMEKANTABHIPUJANEYYAKAM,  
VATTHUTTAYAM VANDAYATA BHISANKHATAM,  
PUÑÑAM MAYA YAM MAMA SABBUPADDAVA,  
MA HONTU VE TASSA PABHAVA-SIDDHIYA.  
By the power of the merit I have made  
in giving reverence to the Triple Gem  
worthy of only the highest homage,  
may all my obstructions cease to be.**

**CONTEXT, DESCRIPTION & ANALYSIS:** Here, a problem is illustrated, because the above is not conventional, or evident in the lokiya-realm. Someone may not know ‘all personal obstructions’ so how can one hope that their obstructions cease? Demonstrated below, is the futility of performing prayer, in conclusion to this formula. The above verse does pertain to merit and higher reverence – yet arguably, the translation does not mean what it claims to state. One interpretation means<sup>255</sup>:  
*“May the merit I acquired saluting individually, each of the Triple Gem benefit all in completely eradicating the defilements, and may this merit be bestowed on all to see.”*  
There is a change in emphasis and attitude in this rendition, based on Tipitaka research; and the concept of merit is arguable. Performing deeds or giving, is merit that brings and yields happiness as a release and is considered fruit in this world and the next as support for human beings<sup>256</sup> - as such one can dwell on this happiness and enter into the jhana levels.<sup>257</sup> The one unhindered from obstacles can obtain nibbana.

<sup>254</sup> Please see APPENDIX A.

<sup>255</sup> My own ‘representation’, based on various renditions cited in bibliography

<sup>256</sup> SN, p. 90, 91, 121, 122, 314

<sup>257</sup> SN, p. 345, n.10

IDHA TATHAGATO LOKE UPPANNO ARAHAM SAMMA-SAMBUDDHO,

Here, One attained to the Truth, Worthy & Rightly Self-awakened, has appeared in the world,  
DHAMMO CA DESITO NIYYANIKO UPASAMIKO PARINIBBANIKO SAMBODHAGAMI SUGATAPPAVEDITO.

And Dhamma is explained, leading out (of samsara), calming, tending toward total Nibbana,  
going to self-awakening, declared by one who has gone the good way.

MAYANTAM DHAMMAM SUTVA EVAM JANAMA,

Having heard the Dhamma, we know this:

JATIPI DUKKHA JARAPI DUKKHA MARANAMPI DUKKHAM,

Birth is stressful, aging is stressful, death is stressful,

SOKA-PARIDEVA-DUKKHA-DOMANASSUPA YASAPI DUKKHA,

Sorrow, lamentation, pain, distress, & despair are stressful,

APPIYEHI SAMPAYOGO DUKKHO PIYEHI VIPPAYOGO DUKKHO YAMPICCHAM NA LABHATI TAMPI  
DUKKHAM,

Association with things disliked is stressful, separation from things liked is stressful, not getting  
what one wants is stressful,

SANKHITTENA PAÑCUPADANAKKHANDHA DUKKHA,

In short, the five clinging-aggregates are stressful,

SEYYATHIDAM: RUPUPADANAKKHANDHO, VEDANUPADANAKKHANDHO, SAÑÑUPADANAKKHANDHO,  
SANKHARUPADANAKKHANDHO, VIÑÑANUPADANAKKHANDHO.

Namely: Form as a clinging-aggregate, Feeling as a clinging-aggregate, Perception as a clinging-  
aggregate, Mental processes as a clinging-aggregate, Consciousness as a clinging-aggregate.

YESAM PARIÑÑAYA, DHARAMANO SO BHAGAVA, EVAM BAHULAM SAVAKE VINETI,

So that they might fully understand this, the Blessed One, while still alive, often instructed his  
listeners in this way;

EVAM BHAGA CA PANASSA BHAGAVATO SAVAKESU ANUSASANI, BAHULAM PAVATTATI:

Many times did he emphasize this part of his admonition:

"RUPAM ANICCAM, VEDANA ANICCA, SAÑÑA ANICCA, SANKHARA ANICCA, VIÑÑANAM ANICCAM,

"Form is impermanent, Feeling is impermanent, Perception is impermanent, Mental processes  
are impermanent, Consciousness is impermanent,

RUPAM ANATTA, VEDANA ANATTA, SAÑÑA ANATTA, SANKHARA ANATTA, VIÑÑANAM ANATTA,

Form is not-self, Feeling is not-self, Perception is not-self, Mental processes are not-self,

Consciousness is not-self,

SABBE SANKHARA ANICCA, SABBE DHAMMA ANATTATI."

All processes are impermanent; All phenomena are not-self."

TE [WOMEN: TA] MAYAM, OTINNAMHA JATIYA JARA-MARANENA, SOKEHI PARIDEVEHI DUKKHEHI

DOMANASSEHI UPAYASEHI, DUKKHOTINNA DUKKHA-PARETA,

All of us, beset by birth, aging, & death, by sorrows, lamentations, pains, distresses, & despairs,

beset by stress, overcome with stress, (consider),

"APPEVA NAMIMASSA KEVALASSA DUKKHAKKHANDHASSA ANTAKIRIYA PAÑÑAYETHA'TI!"

"O, that the end of this entire mass of suffering & stress might be known!"

**\* (Then only for MONKS & NOVICES):**

**CIRA-PARINIBBUTAMPI TAM BHAGAVANTAM UDDISSA ARAHANTAM SAMMA-SAMBUDDHAM,  
SADDHA AGARASMA ANAGARIYAM PABBAJITA.**

**Though the total Liberation of the Blessed One, the Worthy One, the Rightly Self-awakened One,  
was long ago, we have gone forth in faith from home to homelessness in dedication to him.**

**TASMIM BHAGAVATI BRAHMA-CARIYAM CARAMA, BHIKKHUNAM SIKKHA-SAJIVA-SAMAPANNA.**

**We practice that Blessed One's holy life, Fully endowed with the bhikkhus' training & livelihood.**

**TAM NO BRAHMACARIYAM, IMASSA KEVALASSA DUKKHAKKHANDHASSA ANTAKIRIYAYA  
SAMVATTATU.**

**May this holy life of ours bring about the end of this entire mass of suffering & stress.**

**\* (or this segment for OTHERS – non-ordained):**

**CIRA-PARINIBBUTAMPI TAM BHAGAVANTAM SARANAM GATA, DHAMMAÑCA BHIKKHU-SANGHAÑCA,**

**Though the total Liberation of the Blessed One, the Worthy One, the Rightly Self-awakened One,  
was long ago, we have gone for refuge in him, in the Dhamma, & in the Bhikkhu Sangha,**

**TASSA BHAGAVATO SASANAM YATHA-SATI YATHA-BALAM MANASIKAROMA, ANUPATIPAJJAMA,**

**We attend to the instruction of the Blessed One, as far as our mindfulness & strength will allow,  
and we practice accordingly.**

**SA SA NO PATIPATTI, IMASSA KEVALASSA DUKKHAKKHANDHASSA ANTAKIRIYAYA SAMVATTATU.<sup>258</sup>**

**May this practice of ours bring about the end of this entire mass of suffering & stress.**

**CONTEXT, DESCRIPTION & ANALYSIS:** The above verses remain grouped, because of the re-occurring theme of the five aggregates, and the material was previously subjected to analysis for the context. The above description states that the Tathagata appeared and explained the Dhamma, enabling all the possibility to escape samsara/cycle of suffering, through knowledge of the Four Noble Truths, which includes the Eightfold Noble Path. Additionally worthwhile to mention is the possibility to study death or suicide: because – ‘*maranampi dukkham*’ = ‘death is stressful’; but this suffering is only temporary. Life is often stressful, suicidal people tend to think that death is a better option. The front pages of the daily Thai newspapers feature suicides, nearly everyday, so understanding death for Thai’s is an important concept everyone faces. Here we are told that death is also stressful, which gives us more to think about, especially after reading the reports of the numerous suicides that will not be duplicated here. The major religions found in Thailand, Buddhism and Islam, have prohibitions against suicides and killing, but people do take life into their own hands. In case one needs reminded, the five aggregates are subjected to impermanence, suffering and non-self. Our misery will pass. The

<sup>258</sup> Ordination; Translations; and [www.accesstoinight.org](http://www.accesstoinight.org)

Buddha taught this many times, in a simplistic formula for ‘all’ to remember and seek refuge under. The formula concludes with an assumption that we are still subjected to suffering, ignorant and unable to escape samsara – and that we hope dukkha [suffering] ceases. This collection of verses, contains four phrases which stand for analysis, pertaining to: samsara, suffering, and the five aggregates being clinging, impermanent and not-self. The rest of the verses, containing pleas for the end of suffering don’t entail much explanation in themselves, but will attempt to show futility in prayer, via mode of inducing action to correct ‘wrongs’, for lack of a better phrase.

In analysis, the five aggregates are spoken of, more than 100 times: at least 21 suttas in the Majjhima Nikaya; well over 70 suttas in the Samyutta Nikaya; several mentions in the Digha Nikaya; and the aggregates exist inside the Anguttara Nikaya – suggesting the Five Aggregates are a major doctrinal episode for Buddhists inside the major collections. Thus, the five aggregates deserve special attention, here<sup>259</sup>:

- **Rupa** consists of: earth, water, fire, and air – grouped together as this body – as matter
- **Vedana** is feeling sensations – positive, negative, or neutral
- **Sanna** is the remembering so that one recognizes - perception
- **Sankara** is mental factors/formations that arise with consciousness
- **Vinnana** is consciousness/awareness of sense objects at the moment of contact with the body

The five aggregates are subjected to three-fold characteristics<sup>260</sup>, being:

- Anicca or impermanence – the mode of rise and fall, and change, that is reaching non-existence after having come to be
- Dukkha or suffering – the mode of being continuously oppressed by rise and fall
- Anatta or not-self – the mode of being insusceptible to the exercise of mastery, that is, the fact that one cannot exercise complete control over the phenomena of mind and matter.

The Abhidhammattha Sangaha offers this rendition, as an example<sup>261</sup>:

“The five aggregates of clinging: These are called *upadanakkhandha*, aggregates of clinging, because they constitute the objects of clinging. The Buddha states: ‘whatever kind of materiality there is, whether past future or present, etc., connected with taints and subjects to clinging – this is called the materiality aggregate of clinging.’ Again, the same method of definition applies to the other four aggregates. Here, all components of the five aggregates that enter into range of the four types of clinging [clinging to sense-pleasures – any of the things in the world; clinging to wrong views – adoption of nihilism, fatalism, or speculative views about the world being eternal, etc.; clinging to rites and ceremonies – a wrong view that

<sup>259</sup> Definition as grouped –with the assistance of the Abhidhamma Sangaha and the Navakovada

<sup>260</sup> AS, p. 346 – serves also as meditation subjects for the compendium of vipassana insight meditation.

<sup>261</sup> AS, p. 286



these along with ascetic practices can lead to liberation; clinging to a doctrine of self – is adoption of personality view.<sup>262</sup>], are called aggregates of clinging. This includes the entire aggregate of materiality and the four mental aggregates of the mundane plane. The four mental aggregates of the supramundane plane are not aggregates of clinging because they entirely transcend the range of clinging; that is, they cannot become objects of greed or wrong views.”

The Buddha suggests a correct view to the above problem<sup>263</sup> as a remedy:

“A well taught noble disciple who has regard for noble ones and who is skilled and disciplined in their Dhamma, who has regard for true men and is skilled and discipline in their Dhamma, regards material form thus: ‘This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self, [along with similar pronouncements for feeling, perception, formations].’ He regards what is seen, heard, sensed, cognized, encountered, sought, mentally pondered thus: ‘This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.’ And from this standpoint for views, namely, ‘the self and the world are the same; after death I shall be permanent, everlasting, eternal, not subject to change; I shall endure as long as eternity’ –this too he regards thus: ‘this is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.’ Since he regards them thus, he is not agitated [not having fear and does not crave] about what is non-existent.”

And:

“Whatever is not yours, abandon it, when you abandon it, that will lead you to your welfare and happiness for a long time. What is not yours? Material form... Feeling... Perception... Formations... Consciousness... When you have abandoned it, that will lead to your welfare and happiness for a long time.”

And:

“Any kind of material form whether past, future, or present, internal or external, gross or subtle, inferior or superior, far or near, all material form should be seen as it actually is with proper wisdom thus: ‘This is not mine, this I am not, this is not my self.’”

Therefore, one can see how possessing these views are wrong, which is ignorance. Being free from ignorance leads one out of the rounds of rebirth/samara. The whole chanting formula educates us, inspires us to ‘gain wisdom’ and in being wiser, subjects the chanter to misery by asserting we are still subjected. Have the elder monks, who cease attending morning and evening chanting sessions, attained ‘nobility’ and need no further reminding? Further<sup>264</sup>:

“The Buddha is stating that he teaches that a living being is not a self, but a mere conglomeration of factors, material and mental events, linked together in a process that is inherently dukkha [suffering], and that Nibbana, the cessation of suffering, is not the annihilation of a being but the termination of that same unsatisfactory process... One with

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<sup>262</sup> AS, p. 267

<sup>263</sup> MN, p. 224-236 – the Alagaddupama Sutta

<sup>264</sup> MN, p. 1210-1211 n. 268

right view has discarded all doctrines of a self, sees that whatever arises is only dukkha arising, and whatever ceases is only dukkha ceasing.”

With the understanding of the necessity to abandon material form, feeling, perception, formations, consciousness, one may see the escape from samsara ‘open’ for deeper exploration. Samsara is listed in the glossary to the Majjhima Nikaya<sup>265</sup> as falling under the ‘rounds of rebirth’. Dependent origination has already been discussed; however, the Tipitaka has mentioned, over a hundred times, that several avenues are open to escape away from the above cycle of rebirths or *samsara*. Yet there are beings who continue to suffer. Thus suffering, again for remembrance: All of us are beset by birth to aging and death. We are all subjected to: sorrows, lamentations, pains, distresses and despairs. In recollecting the discoveries of Siddhattha Gotama during the third watch of his enlightenment night - the Four Noble Truths [because the chanting formula suggest we are still incapable of understanding]: “This is suffering, this is the arising of suffering, this is the cessation of suffering, and this is the path leading away from suffering.”<sup>266</sup>

As promised, on several occasions, it is fitting – especially when encountering someone imposing Abrahamic traditions upon Buddhists, to illustrate the futility in prayer. The Buddha suggests<sup>267</sup> that if someone throws a large boulder in a deep pool of water, and a large crowd assembles, reciting prayers and offering reverential salutations, etc., hoping, ‘Rise up Great Boulder...’ Would that boulder rise up? No. Prayers, as demonstrated are useless, because most people: still destroy life; still take what is not given; still misconduct themselves sexually; still do not refrain from false speech, from divisive speech, from harsh speech, from idle chatter; still being greedy, still with ill-will, still with wrong views, etc. The Buddha stresses corrective action and only then can ‘the plea become evident’: by keeping the five moral precepts as replacement for prayers. Again, practicing the Dhamma is superior to wishes; consequently, people still ‘go to hell’ for mere prayers because they are not ‘pure’ in their morality. Individuals can help themselves through striving in the life suggested by the Buddha. Prayers going to a tree, prayers to a ‘god’, prayers to an ancestor – all are ‘useless’ because they don’t exist in the manner normal ‘perception’ constructs: ‘form’ and ‘thought’. Spiro’s Burmese study, stated: “Pious people pray only for nibbana; they do not pray to be rich or to go to some other abode. If they pray for

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<sup>265</sup> MN, p. 1395

<sup>266</sup> *Teachings*, p 19 – I combine several verses

<sup>267</sup> SN, p. 1336-1338

these, they are not pious.”<sup>268</sup> Story tells us: “And if it is useless to pray to any gods, it is equally so to pray to the Buddha. He is not a creator, preserver or destroyer of the universe; neither is he a dispenser of favors nor a supreme punitive power. ...When the Buddha is worshipped it is as a teacher, the greatest Teacher of all beings, and to such devotion is a spiritual exercise; the Great Wisdom, last personified in the Master, is the true object of veneration.”<sup>269</sup> During an interview with Venerable Phra Dhammavisuddhikavi, he re-affirmed points on the futility of prayer, as the Buddha suggested, and only added, “cut out the word ‘prayer’”, because it is only ‘reciting’, or a recitation, to make point in the mind more clear.<sup>270</sup> Furthermore, recitations are made to facilitate recollection. Gods are only metaphors, as shown above. As a result how can a metaphor change one’s life? Only through understanding [eradicating ignorance] and if views change, one is led to different results. Accrued action ‘kamma’ is redirected, and soon better ‘fruits’ occur. The prayer was mere idle chatter. In this regard, Rama IV’s reform to emphasize practice over tradition is important to recollect. Here in the chanting ceremony – the hope to eliminate idle chatter is useless, because only through effort does suffering cease. Practicing bhikkhus should be familiar with the methods taught by the Buddha to achieve this, why resort to insufficient methods or ‘group hope’ while taking no corrective action?

The Buddha said, “Now these things, householder, are not to be got either by vows or prayers, I declare; for if they were, why would anyone languish here? To bring about long life, householder, it is of no use for a [noble] disciple, yearning for long life, either to pray for it or to think much of it; the way that leads to long life must be way-fared by the [noble] disciple, and when the way is way-fared by him, it leads to the winning of long life, and he becomes a winner both heavenly life and human life.”<sup>271</sup>

In conclusion: the chanting ceremonial phrases are good in the beginning, good in the middle, but not so good in the end – because after all of the wisdom gained from the above analysis, if one resorts to hope in conclusion – this is not effective, not wise, but perhaps only generates compassion and deepens the necessary social-cohesion to unite ‘failures or those in need of further guidance’ under a

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<sup>268</sup> Melford E. Spiro. *Buddhism and Society – A Great Tradition and its Burmese Vicissitudes*. Berkeley: UC Berkeley Press 1982: p. 78

<sup>269</sup> Francis Story, *Prayer and Worship* (Kandy: The Wheel Publication #139, 1980) p. 17

<sup>270</sup> Personal communication/interview with Lord Abbot Ven. Phra Dhammavisuddhikavi on 5 October 2005 at Wat Somanas Vihara

<sup>271</sup> AN, Vol III, p. 39-40 [#43], see also Francis Story, *Prayer and Worship* (Kandy: The Wheel Publication #139, 1980) p. 1-2

supreme authority – which by deduction, expresses the kingly guidance and wisdom of Rama IV, the creator of the chant.

### 2.3 Concerning the Requisites and Evening Chanting Ceremony

**REQUISITES CONTEXT AND DESCRIPTION:** For brevity, the verses for reflection at the moment of using the requisites will not be ‘presented’ or ‘analyzed’ in depth, because it is not necessary. Due to the straightforwardness and mere need for recollection, this will be presented briefly as a mode for the monk to recollect and consider himself to be blameless, able to live in relative comfort. The four requisites providing the following:

- Robes are for protection against: shame, outside elements, and animals/insects
- Almsfood is for supporting the monk’s body, to end hunger, not for overeating
- Lodging is for counteracting the cold, heat, insects/animals, weather, and for seclusion
- Medicine is for curing sickness, to counteract pains that exist in order to be free from disease

**REQUISITES ANALYSIS:** This is done twice daily, after the various salutations to the Triple Gem. This needs little explanation and is simplistic enough for understanding. This simple advice/formula is found in the Sabbasava Sutta.<sup>272</sup> For the evening chanting, the emphasis shifts from the morning’s purpose to not be negligent, to recalling negligence through again exposing the reasons for use in the evening ceremony. Nothing problematic arises through recollecting these verses.

**EVENING CHANTING CONTEXT, DESCRIPTION & ANALYSIS:** Same as for the Morning Chanting, but the action is done near the end of the ‘day verses the beginning of the day – so the reflective sense is demonstrated more often. There is nothing new to report concerning the evening chanting formula, except that the evening chant tells one that the Dhamma has a path that bears fruit, that if one studies one will achieve liberation. See Appendix B, for greater details; other differences are grammatical or discussed later. Again, many lines in the morning and evening chanting ceremony are similar or there are different ways to convey a similar phrase. The presentation of the Pali-English translations of the evening chanting, as done for the morning chanting, would have been redundant, based on prior and sufficient explanations.

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<sup>272</sup> MN, p. 94