

ADORNMENTS OF VIRTUE: THE PRODUCTION OF LAY BUDDHIST VIRTUOSITY IN
THE *UPĀSAKAJANĀLANĀKĀRA*

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The *Upāsakajanālaṅkāra* emerged as a medieval, Pāli language, Buddhist compendium sometime in the late 12th or early 13th century. This text represents one of the fullest, systematic approaches to the literary production of an ideal, Buddhist lay virtuoso known within Pāli Buddhist literature. The teachings that the text has selectively incorporated from other Buddhist texts, and strategically arranged according to the unique vision of the author, explain what the ideal lay virtuoso, *upāsaka*, must do in order to achieve the many rewards, or felicities, that it promises. I present a critical analysis of this Pāli compendium in order to arrive at a clear understanding of the intentions imbedded within the text. In doing so, I argue that this compendium seeks to provide an authoritative image of non-monastic religiosity, a project which complements a larger historical process in which monastic institutions expanded their hegemony outward to regions distant from the political and economic centers.

I then examine the reemergence of this compendium, with its translation into Sinhala, during the final decades of the Kandyan kingdom (ca. 1800). I assess both the broader historical context of the rise of the Siyam Nikāya and the micro-historical context of the socio-political relationships within which the text's author, Moratoṭa Dhammakhandha, lived. In this second part of the dissertation, I conclude that Dhammakhandha may have shared similar concerns to those found in the Pāli original. However, I also conclude, through an examination of the Sinhala version of the text, that Dhammakhandha was not concerned solely with representing and clarifying the teachings of the Pāli for a Sinhala readership, but with the display of literary cultural capital, courtly prestige, and the protection and well being of the kingdom.

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jonathan Young began his academic career at Bowdoin College where he graduated with High Honors. He participated in the Intercollegiate Sri Lanka Education (ISLE) Program where he was first introduced to Sri Lankan history and culture. He returned to Sri Lanka on a grant from the Freeman Foundation to study the historical and contemporary veneration of the goddess Pattini in Kandy, Sri Lanka. Following this research, he produced his honors thesis, *The Way of the Goddess*. Jonathan received his Master's degree from the University of Chicago where he specialized in the History of Religions. While at Cornell University, he has worked across the fields of Asian Studies, History, Buddhist Studies, and Anthropology. Jonathan has returned to Sri Lanka throughout his career, and he holds a deep respect for those who have shared their history, culture, and lives with him and inspired his own fascination with the region and its people.

I dedicate this work to my parents. You taught me the value of learning for its own sake,
encouraged me to work hard in school, and permitted me the freedom to choose my own path.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

SSC.....*Saṅgharāja Sādhu Cariyāva*

SUpās.....*Upāsakajanālaṅkāraya* (Sinhala)

Upās.....*Upāsakajanālaṅkāra*

Introduction: Resituating the *Upāsaka*

The vast majority of individuals who consider themselves Buddhists are non-monastics. Within the Buddhist traditions, several different terms refer to such persons, one of which is *upāsaka* (feminine: *upāsikā*).¹ There is a tendency to translate this particular term simply as “lay person.” However, the term *upāsaka* has a history within Buddhist literature that remains to be written, and I intend the study that follows to be one step towards producing this history. A homogenization of terms employed to designate non-monastic Buddhists, like *upāsaka*, weakens our understanding of, and appreciation for, the variety of ways in which such roles have been debated, contested, and reformulated over the course of the relatively long history of the Buddhist traditions.

I argue that the multiplicity of terms appearing in the Buddhist traditions typically translated as “laity” should be reconsidered carefully in order to avoid the perpetuation of an oversimplified understanding of the modalities of Buddhist lay religiosity. In the Pāli tradition, for instance, various terms formed with the word ‘*gaha*’ meaning ‘house’, such as *gahattha* (“householder”) or *gahapati* (“lord of the house”), refer to non-monastic individuals who maintain some type of domestic residence. They may interact with, and render support to, the monastic community, and thereby fulfill the typical expectations of a lay person, but there is no reason to assume such participation and involvement of a *gahapati*, and there is even less reason to presume that they engaged in specific practices. In fact, a precise, colloquial meaning for a term like *gahapati* is not entirely clear, and in all likelihood, it shifted over time. There is some

¹ The term *upāsaka* derives from the verbal root √as and the prefix ‘upa-.’ The sense of the term is quite variable, and may literally mean “one who serves,” “one who attends to,” or it may mean “one who approaches,” “one who sits near,” or “one who is devoted.” See Margaret Cone (2001, 486-487); in particular, the definitions of: “*upāsaka*,” “*upāsati*,” “*upāsana*,” and “*upāsikā*.”

reason to suspect that early use of the term *gahapati* referred specifically to an elite class of landholders or clan leaders and not to an average non-monastic individual. This variety in the terminology used to refer to lay Buddhists has been noted by Francois Bizot, who writes that:

... the *upāsaka* does not necessarily live as a *grhastha* [Pali *gahattha*], ‘one who lives in a house’, but may *retire from the world* and cultivate the eight-fold path (*atthangikamagga*), for which the essential elements are, for him as for all, morality (*sīla*), concentration (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*prajñā*).²

According to Bizot’s own general understanding of the two categories as they appear in Pāli literature, an *upāsaka* may reside in a house or domestic unit, like a *gahattha*; but, an *upāsaka* might refer to someone who seeks to depart from this lifestyle and thereby “retire from the world”. Thus, the two terms in question do not overlap as smoothly as one might suspect given the tendency to translate both by the single term ‘laity.’ An *upāsaka* may reside in a house or alternatively take up a more ascetic lifestyle. Additionally, if the term *gahapati* does indeed refer to a socio-politically elite class of non-monastics, then there would be *upāsakas* who could not be considered *gahapatis*. Likewise, although we may surmise that some *gahapatis* might become *upāsakas*, there would be a majority of *gahapatis* who could not be described by such a term. It is clear that in Bizot’s interpretation, the term *upāsaka* refers to a special status among certain lay persons, a status which can not be assumed by terms like *gahattha* or *gahapati*.³

² Bizot (1988): 20, emphasis added: “...l’*upāsaka* ne demeure pas nécessairement un *grhastha*, ‘celui qui habite un maison’, mais peut se retirer du monde et cultiver le chemin à huit branches (*atthangikamagga*), dont les éléments essentiels sont, pour lui comme pour tous, la moralité (*sīla*), la concentration (*samādhi*) et la sagesse (*prajñā*).

³ It is interesting to consider this special status of the *upāsaka* in light of Heinz Bechert’s idea of a “Tantric Theravāda.” See Bechert’s introduction to Bizot, *op.cit.* Although I think the term “Tantric” is hardly an apt descriptive here, and there may be problems with the use of the term “Theravāda” as well (see Skilling, 2007, unpublished article), I see Bechert’s idea of an elite community of Buddhists who take up rigorous and/or unconventional practices appealing and useful. The intended audience of the original Pali *Upās* (see below), as much as it may have been a literarily elite group of laity (such as those involved in the Sanskrit cosmopolis as defined by Pollock), may just as well have been a group of adventurous and experimental Buddhist practitioners. Further work may elucidate this.

Recognition of this fact is echoed by Jan Nattier as well. In her work on the

Ugraparipṛchhā, Nattier notes:

An *upāsaka* is not simply a “non-monastic Buddhist”; rather, the term refers to a specific category consisting of lay Buddhists (one might better use the terms “lay brother” and “lay sister”) who are particularly diligent in their Buddhist practice.⁴

Nattier continues:

Specific activities are generally associated with becoming an *upāsaka*, that is, taking the three refuges, observing the five ethical precepts, frequenting the monastery in order to hear teachings and make offerings, and taking extra vows on festival or *uposatha* days (which in essence involve emulating monastic behavior). Moreover, the role of the *upāsaka*, as the etymology of the term (“one who serves”) would imply, is to associate with and to be of service to the monastic community.⁵

Nattier’s attention to the practices that mark one as an *upāsaka* is especially useful, and I provide a detailed assessment of the account of these practices as found in the *Upāsakajanālaṅkāra* (see chapters 3 and 4 of the dissertation). Typical accounts of lay Buddhist religiosity note the five precepts (*pañca sīla*) and the practice of giving alms to monks (*dāna*) as central components of lay Buddhist practice. While these practices often constitute a core of a non-monastic Buddhist’s religious life, such descriptions veil what is in reality a much richer and socially relevant set of lay practices, and it is helpful that Nattier has noted them here.

In contemporary Sri Lanka, for instance, some Buddhists attend local temples clad in white on full-moon *uposatha* days (*poya davasa*) in order to take up the temporarily more austere observation of the eight—rather than five—precepts. This practice, known as taking, or observing, discipline (*sīl gannava*) is believed to produce merit (*pin*). It also temporarily bestows a virtuous quality upon the person who undertakes the practice. When other lay Buddhists, who are not observing *sīl*, arrive at the temple to give alms to those who are taking up this practice,

⁴ Nattier (2003): 78-79, n.11.

⁵ *ibid.*: 79, emphasis added.

the participants receive the alms and offer the benediction “*pin ātivevā*,” “may merit arise,” to their donors. In other words, those lay Buddhists who choose to observe *sīl*, and who are referred to as *upāsakas*, become fields of merit for other lay donors in a capacity similar to that of the monks. What practices like this, which are common throughout Sri Lanka, reveal is that lay Buddhists are not precluded from opportunities for virtuous practice.

Daniel Boucher agrees with Nattier on this point, using the terms “lay brother” and “lay sister” in his own work.⁶ He notes:

Although these terms [*upāsaka* and *upāsikā*] are generally translated rather flatly as layman and laywoman, they almost certainly carried far greater significance than has generally been recognized. These were individuals who were very probably semiordained, that is, who had undertaken special vows of discipline and assumed close ties with monastics while remaining officially nonrenunciant.⁷

Both Nattier’s and Boucher’s statements concerning *upāsakas* provide a much needed warning for scholars not to overlook the significance of, and the specificity intended by, the term. They proffer a reevaluation of the way that this term has been, perhaps too hastily, associated with a generalized conception of Buddhist laity and simultaneously point to the need for historical work in the field of Buddhist studies that might help to clarify the ways in which Buddhists conceived *upāsakas*.

Turning to studies of Sri Lankan Buddhism, Richard Gombrich notes that:

If we wish to observe where the self-restraint ideal **voluntarily** functions, apart from the sporadic hermits who furnish the extreme case, we must look not to the ordinary village-dwelling monk, but to the *upāsaka*. Though an *upāsaka* originally meant any Buddhist layman, the term is now used mainly for those who, usually late in life, renounce worldly

⁶ Boucher (2008).

⁷ *ibid.*: 201, n.60. Boucher hints, here, at the early history of *upāsaka*-s in India, for which there is evidence pointing to an official role for *upāsakas* as something akin to temple servants. However, even if *upāsakas* had a service role within the social hierarchy of early Indian monasteries, of what did such a role consist? In other words, what distinguished *upāsakas* from other types of temple servants (*dāsa*, *kappiyakāraka*, *veyyāvaccakara*, etc.)? More research needs to be done in order to clarify what such a service role entailed, if it existed.

ties. Like the early members of the Saṅgha, **they choose their status** rather than having it thrust upon them, and free choice is a prerequisite for the wholehearted pursuit of any moral ideal. Some village *upāsakas* have a knowledge of scriptures and doctrines which would be remarkable in a person of monastic education.⁸

The fact that Gombrich insists without substantial evidence that the term *upāsaka* “originally meant any Buddhist layman,” notwithstanding, it is important to highlight his observation that the *upāsaka* life is an optional, voluntary status. These lay persons choose to pursue a more rigorous Buddhist lifestyle and, in so doing, may become especially learned Buddhists. In agreement with Gombrich, Gananath Obeyesekere employs what I believe is a helpful, if unfortunately worded, categorization when he refers to the *upāsaka* as a “peasant religious virtuoso.”⁹ Obeyesekere states:

[I]n every society there are religious “virtuosos” who by personal preference and training have rejected the religion of the masses and have aligned themselves with the great tradition. For these people, more interested in salvation than the common herd, the religious paradox [between the practices and ideals of a great and little tradition] has to be resolved in a logical rejection of the gods. In Sinhalese society, this type of **peasant religious virtuoso** is called an *upasaka*.¹⁰

I do not share Obeyesekere’s conception of a great and little tradition, nor do I perceive any reason to presuppose that a virtuous lay person necessarily rejects that which is relegated to the category of little tradition. However, I do appreciate Obeyesekere’s noticeably Weberian use of the term “virtuoso” in his description of the *upāsaka* and his recognition that one becomes an *upāsaka* through “personal preference.” That is, he views the role of *upāsaka* as one in which a lay person takes up an optional intensification of religious practice that is not required of all Buddhists. Thus, not all lay Buddhists should be referred to by the term *upāsaka*. In congruence

⁸ Gombrich (1971): 380, emphasis added.

⁹ Gananath Obeyesekere, “The Great Tradition and the Little,” in Paul Williams (ed.) *Buddhism* v.7, *Buddhism in South and Southeast Asia* (London: Routledge, 2005): 105. Also in *Journal of Asian Studies* 12.2 (1963): 139-153.

¹⁰ *ibid.*, emphasis added.

with Obeyesekere's choice of terminology, I deploy the concept of virtuosity to describe what it is that an *upāsaka* seeks to achieve.

The Pursuit of Virtuosity

In my reading of the Pāli *Upāsakajanālaṅkāra* (*Upās*),¹¹ I assess the ways in which the text seeks to construct an ideal of what I shall call lay virtuosity. I borrow the term “virtuosity” from Ilana Silber's re-working of the Weberian notion of charisma.¹² In her work, Silber uses the idea of virtuosity to explain the socio-religious success of monasticism in certain traditions, comparatively assessing Theravāda Buddhist monks of South and Southeast Asia and medieval Catholic monks of Europe. As Silber states:

Virtuoso and charismatic figures appear to share some important features: They both display a privileged and single-minded connection to the realm of ultimate goals and values, however conceived. Both entail, in different ways but with similar intensity, something outside, beyond, and even antithetical to the socially “normal” and “ordinary.” Yet it would be mistaken to subsume religious virtuosi under the general category of charismatic religious figures and see them as just another instance of the perennial “charisma versus institution” antithesis.¹³

What Silber seeks to develop in her use of the term is a means of reconciling the intensified, yet traditionally circumscribed, religious practice of monastics and their location outside of normal or ordinary social relations. As Silber contends, the virtuoso exhibits some affinity to the more revolutionary and transformative figure of the charismatic leader, yet the adherence to, and reinforcement of, a received tradition marks a clear distinction between these two ideal-types.

Accordingly, Silber offers five criteria of virtuosity, which I paraphrase here: (1) it is a matter of

¹¹ I use von Hinüber's abbreviation here, which follows the Critical Pāli Dictionary. Saddhatissa uses the abbreviation ‘UJ.’, which has become the Pāli Text Society's abbreviation of choice. I prefer that of von Hinüber/CPD because several manuscripts of this text do not use ‘-jana-’ in the title (e.g. *Upāsakālaṅkāra*); thus, the letter ‘j’ in the ‘UJ.’ abbreviation appears misleading. However, readers should be aware of this alternate abbreviation.

¹² Silber (1995).

¹³ *ibid.*: 190.

individual choice, a voluntary option in contrast with the more or less compulsory and/or routine norms and expectations of common religious behavior; (2) it entails a search for perfection; (3) this search for perfection is sustained in a disciplined, systematic fashion; (4) it implies a normative double standard: its rigor is considered neither possible nor necessary for all; and (5) it is based on achievement.¹⁴ In my study of the *Upās*, I extend this notion of virtuosity to non-monastics.

I find the concept of virtuosity to be helpful precisely because it provides a means of understanding the ambiguous category of persons designated by the term *upāsaka* in Pāli Buddhist texts like the *Upās*. Furthermore, just as the Weberian notion of ideal-type implies an inductive process of constructing an imagined model, I find that texts like the *Upās* employ a similar method in their construction of the *upāsaka* as a more or less ideal-type.¹⁵ In other words, a large part of what a text like the *Upās* attempts in providing a comprehensive explanation of what the role of *upāsaka* encompasses is to produce an imagined construct of a subject in ideal-typical fashion. The *Upās* performs, then, the very same task advocated by Weber in that it inductively constructs an image of the ideal *upāsaka* through its own accumulation and interpretation of examples drawn from the Pāli literary corpus. Yet, the *Upās* does not seek merely to describe the ideal *upāsaka*; it seeks to promote its cultivation, to actualize the literary ideal in the real world. In order to better interpret how the text works to achieve this, I employ a conception of subjectivity.

¹⁴ *ibid*: 190-191.

¹⁵ I refer, of course, to Max Weber's classic notion of the ideal type, which he defines in the following statement: "An ideal type is formed by the one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view and by the synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena, which are arranged according to those onesidedly emphasized viewpoints into a unified analytical construct. . . In its conceptual purity . . . this mental construct cannot be found empirically anywhere in reality." See Max Weber, *The Methodology of Social Sciences*, Shils and Finch (eds.) (New York, Free Press, 1949): 90.

Judith Butler remarks:

“The subject” is sometimes bandied about as if it were interchangeable with “the person” or “the individual.” The genealogy of the subject as a critical category, however, suggests that the subject, rather than be identified strictly with the individual, ought to be designated as a linguistic category, a placeholder, a structure in formation. Individuals come to occupy the site of the subject...and they enjoy intelligibility only to the extent that they are, as it were, first established in language.¹⁶

Likewise, Henrietta Moore derives a similar understanding of subjectivity by drawing upon Lacanian psychoanalysis. Moore notes that:

The Lacanian subject is an abstracted, if not actually an abstract, subject, and should not be confused either with the person or with the self...subjectivity is best understood as an *attribute* of the self.”¹⁷

I follow these observations of Butler and Moore in my own conception of subjectivity.

Individuals “come to occupy” a particular subjectivity, it is an attribute that one assumes for one’s self. If we understand lay virtuosity as a kind of subjectivity in this sense of the term, it becomes necessary to understand how a person attempts to cultivate this subjectivity, that is, how they attempt to occupy it, and it is equally necessary to derive an understanding of why they would desire to cultivate it since it is not descriptive of what one already is but rather what one hopes to be.

This attention to virtuosity, conceived in the manner outlined above, can help us to better understand the ways in which literate Buddhists (mostly monks) imagined the cultivation of a perfect, virtuoso lay person. Not only this, but it enables us to look at the diachronic shifts in the (re)production of this subjectivity within the Buddhist textual tradition, which I contend is an

¹⁶ Judith Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power*. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997): 10-11.

¹⁷ Henrietta Moore. *A Passion for Difference*. (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1994): 48, emphasis and ellipses mine.

equally necessary intervention. The subject of the *upāsaka* can always be contested, revived, and reformulated over time and across a variety of geographic locales.

Historicizing Virtuosity

The texts of the Pāli *tipiṭaka* (generally referred to as the Pāli Canon)¹⁸ display a range of voices regarding the religious practices of Buddhist lay persons and the place of the laity within the larger Buddhist community. Early studies of Buddhism tended to emphasize the voice from this collection of texts which downplayed the role of the laity, often to the point of degrading the status of a layperson. Max Weber expresses through his own interpretation of early Buddhism that:

[I]n practice it, [Buddhism], confined salvation to those who actually followed the path to the end and became monks, and that at bottom it hardly bothered about the others, the laity. One can see from the prescriptions created for the laity that they represented external accommodations *without an internally consistent* point of view.¹⁹

This notion that Buddhism ‘hardly bothered about the others, the laity’ exemplifies the scholarly interpretation of Buddhism as a religion which was largely the concern of monks. Weber believed that all lay religious activities were confined to either of two modalities: (1) the practice of giving alms and rendering other sorts of material support to the monks who were the true religious practitioners, or (2) practices which were watered-down versions of monastic practices, which were meant to be accommodations to the laity who may have desired some more active form of religiosity of their own. The fact is that Weber’s assessment of lay Buddhist religiosity was only partially correct.

¹⁸ See Collins (1990) for a useful assessment of the utility of the term ‘canon’ in the context of Pāli literature.

¹⁹ Weber (1958): 233.

There is, as Weber and others found, a strain of discourse in the Pāli *tipiṭaka* that takes a rather dismissive view of the laity. However, there are two problems that arise when deriving assumptions based solely on these types of passages from within the canon. First, this is not the only voice that can be recovered from the texts. In fact, the dismissive voice itself may be best read with an eye to the text's intention of making a monastic livelihood appear more desirable than life as a householder; not as a total rejection of lay religiosity. As Jeffrey Samuels has pointed out:

[T]he Pāli canon contains a historically diverse group of viewpoints and attitudes towards religious practice and...the complexity of views contained in the canon actually undermines, to a large degree, the absoluteness of the categories of 'monastic' and 'laity'.²⁰

Samuels references several instances in the Pāli *Sutta Piṭaka* wherein laypersons receive complex teachings from the Buddha, are noted as teachers of the *dhamma* themselves, and/or have special attributes as a result of advanced achievement along the Buddhist religious path, including meditation.²¹ In a slightly later article, Robert Bluck cites several instances in the Pāli *tipiṭaka* literature in which laity are described as having reached the significantly advanced stages of Buddhist development referred to collectively as the Noble Discipleships (*Ariya Sāvaka Saṅgha*).²² Bluck maintains that:

The essential distinction, both then and now, is not between the monastic and the lay-follower, but between the 'ordinary disciple' [*puṭhujjana*] (who may still be a devout Buddhist rather than a merely nominal one), and the 'noble disciple' [*ariyasāvaka*] who has glimpsed Nibbāna and who is genuinely committed to the understanding and practice of the Dhamma.²³

²⁰ Jeffrey Samuels (1999): 232.

²¹ See Samuels (1999).

²² These stages are, from lowest to highest: Stream Enterer (*sotāpanna*), Once Returner (*sakadāgamin*), Non-Returner (*anāgamin*), and Noble One (*arahant*).

²³ Robert Bluck (2002): 18.

In Bluck's reading of the canonical texts, the distinction between those who have achieved a significant level of advancement along the Buddhist path and those who have yet to do so is paramount to the status distinction between the monastics and the laity. The recognition of two distinct sets of difference, one based on vocation and one based on achievement, which run throughout Pāli literature, according to Bluck, is key. Yet, as we will see in the *Upās*, such distinctions were open to reinterpretation throughout the history of the Buddhist traditions. What these scholars reveal, then, is that such differences can be interpreted in a variety of ways. Both Samuels and Bluck point out, through their own readings of the Pāli *tipiṭaka*, that while some canonical voices attempt to promote the superiority of the monastic vocation, there are several alternative voices which provide evidence for a greater degree of lay religious involvement and greater possibilities for lay religious achievement. In other words, a conception of lay virtuosity may be recovered from the canonical materials, even if these texts also contain a discourse which appears to prohibit it.

It is true that there is no unified voice arising from the canonical texts that explains a singular form of lay Buddhist religiosity, and to this extent, Weber's early appraisal has some merit. Neither is there a homogenous view of the religious goals to which laypersons can and should aspire. Instead, there are several, sometimes conflicting, depictions of lay Buddhist religiosity. The work of scholars like Samuels and Bluck, which proves this to be the case, has been a necessary intervention in the field of Buddhist studies. In fact, moving away from the canonical materials and towards medieval commentaries and compendia, such as the *Upās*, we see that Buddhists have endeavored to do the same sort of textual analysis and exegesis. However, these texts sought more of a constructive goal than the attempts by Samuels and Bluck. Rather than aim to simply prove that a more active depiction of Buddhist laity *exists*

within the canon, post-canonical Buddhist texts, including the *Upās*, attempted to use these various portrayals of religiously engaged laity in order to produce their own image of an ideal, lay Buddhist subject, the *upāsaka*. In other words, medieval Buddhist literati, who sought to provide authoritative depictions of the role of the *upāsaka*, recovered the same voices encouraging a more active role for the laity that Samuels and Bluck discovered in the course of their own research. Unfortunately, the texts from this period have yet to receive the same amount of attention as the canonical texts. Rather than limit reappraisals of Buddhist views on lay religiosity to the canonical texts, it is vital that scholars begin to consider the much longer history of textual production, including these oft neglected texts of the medieval and pre-modern periods.

The fact that Weber ultimately privileged one voice from within the large body of canonical texts, when putting forth his views of lay Buddhist religiosity as an unnecessary and perhaps unfortunate accretion to an otherwise admirable monastic religion, may itself be contingent upon the historical realities of colonialism, Orientalist scholarship, and the prevailing views of elite, monastic informants. As Charles Hallisey has demonstrated, scholars of Buddhism were just as likely to be influenced by the prevailing interpretation of Buddhist literature among the Buddhists with whom they interacted than they were to influence the Buddhists.²⁴ One reason why scholars interpreted the Buddhist stance on lay life in the ways in which they did must have been connected to the interpretations of the tradition that they received from their monastic informants in the late 19th-early 20th centuries. Thus, it may not be fair, or accurate, to charge Weber, and other early scholars of Buddhism, with developing Orientalist fantasies utterly divorced from what Buddhists themselves thought. However, if we do not

²⁴ Hallisey (1995).

desire to allow such interpretations to stand in for the entire Buddhist tradition and its history, where are we to look in order to challenge the old assumptions—of both early scholars and their informants—that still hold sway in the field of Buddhist studies?

One solution is the present study of the *Upās*. This text is a site where Buddhists selectively extracted certain materials from the larger corpus of texts of the *tipiṭaka*, as well as its commentaries, in order to promote a certain interpretation of lay Buddhist virtuosity. It is not an entirely original work of literature, as it consists largely of material borrowed from other sources. However, like all compendia, the *Upās* exhibits originality through the particular combinations of materials that it employs. The structure of the text, the juxtaposition of narratives, the exegeses of terms used, and the commentarial passages chosen all provide an original argument. This text, then, provides one means of accessing how a literate Buddhist monk constructed a vision of the path to lay virtuosity, which in turn will set the stage for comparisons with other Buddhist writers from different times and different places.

Monastic Literati and Lay Virtuosity

In addition to investigating how the *Upās* argues for its own vision of the ideals of lay virtuosity, I also consider why a Buddhist monk, a non-layman, might want to produce a compendium regarding lay Buddhist virtuosity. More importantly, why would he want to make virtuosity a desirable option for lay people? When recognizing the skill and knowledge that went into the production of this text, what might have inspired such rigorous work and study regarding this topic? What might have been at stake when a Buddhist monk chose to produce the *Upās*? I believe that if we recognize that the term *upāsaka* occupies a critical space within the

taxonomic system of Buddhist subjects, it is possible to explain why monks were interested in establishing an authoritative definition of the term.

If we were to simplify the taxonomic system of the religious subjects available in Pāli Buddhism,²⁵ we might revert back to the approach that I have argued against adopting at the outset. That is, we might claim that there are monastics and non-monastics; no further specifications needed. However, rather than attempt to naively situate the *upāsaka* on the non-monastic end of the dichotomy, we could note that it presents us with an anomaly.

In Bruce Lincoln's study of discourse, he explains that an anomaly may be thought of in two ways: "(1) an anomaly is any entity that defies the rules of an operative taxonomy or (2) an anomaly is any entity, the existence of which an operative taxonomy is incapable of acknowledging."²⁶ If Buddhists had maintained a taxonomic system that simply accounted for monastics and non-monastics, then the *upāsaka* would be an anomaly in both senses of the term as understood by Lincoln. The consequences of this anomaly could be disastrous. As Lincoln continues:

Anomalies remain always a potential threat to the taxonomic structures under which they are marginalized, for in the very fact of their existence they reveal the shortcomings, inadequacies, contradictions, and arbitrary nature of such structures. A paradoxical relation and a dialectic tension thus exist between taxonomy and anomaly... What is more—and this is the central point—it is not simply a matter of logical structures because just as taxonomy can encode and legitimate, indeed, help construct sociopolitical and economic orders, so conversely can anomaly be used to delegitimize and deconstruct those same sociotaxonomic orders.²⁷

²⁵ I choose to use the term 'Pāli Buddhism' in reference to the traditions that share both a common understanding of the Pāli texts as canonical and what Steve Collins has labeled the Pāli *imaginaire*. See Collins (1998). This is in preference to 'Theravāda Buddhism,' which may be misleading in reference to premodern Buddhist traditions of Lanka and Southeast Asia.

²⁶ Bruce Lincoln, *Discourse and the Construction of Society: Comparative Studies of Myth, Ritual, and Classification*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989): 165.

²⁷ Ibid: 166.

In other words, the *upāsaka* as anomaly might have been a threat to the very socio-religious fabric of Buddhism. Extending Lincoln's view, if the literati, who control the reproduction of the taxonomic system, do not account for virtuous lay persons, then the religious virtuoso subject constitutes an anomaly and always represents a potential avenue of delegitimation and critique. On the other hand, if the Buddhist literary elite were to compose treatises identifying and limiting the lay virtuoso as a special category of religious person, then the anomaly becomes unproblematic as it is incorporated into the authoritative taxonomic system. This is precisely what texts like the *Upās* serve to do. They present an authoritative description of a Buddhist subject that would otherwise have the potential to disrupt the entire system of classification.

The question remains, however, as to the extent that the author of a text like the *Upās* finds motivation in the calculated assessment of the Buddhist taxonomic system and its shortcomings. In other words, is our author driven to write this compendium as a means of fortifying the taxonomic system itself, or do his concerns lie elsewhere? As helpful as it is to consider what might be at stake in the formulation, defense, and critique of systems of classification, it is not apparent that individual actors have such things in mind when creating works like the *Upās*. Even if a literary work may be read as a discursive device used to protect a system of classification, it remains to be seen just what the motivating factor(s) might have been for the author. What were the historical vicissitudes that prompted the author to address this particular anomaly at this point in time and in this place? Were there competing interpretations of this anomalous religious subjectivity that sparked the author's attempt to produce an authoritative categorical understanding of it? Finally, what of the solution that the author develops? Why might the author's attempt to incorporate the anomaly into the taxonomic system take the shape that it does? These sorts of questions should be addressed if we are to

fully appreciate the importance of a text's intervention in the history of a religious tradition, and I attempt to do so in what follows.

One advantage of my approach in this dissertation is that I examine both the Pāli text of the *Upās* and a Sinhala language reproduction of the text composed towards the end of the Kandyan kingdom (ca. 1800). As will become clear, my analysis of the Sinhala reproduction reveals that the intentions that exist in a given text are not always shared in precisely the same ways by texts that serve as their vernacular reproductions. In fact, the question of what it means to translate a work from Pāli into the vernacular remains an area in need of further study. While there are good reasons to suspect that Dhammakhandha, the author of the Sinhala *Upās*, did share at least some of the ideals espoused in the Pāli source text, a critical examination of his work reveals that he was very much concerned with other sorts of problems than with those which the author of the Pāli text seems to have been preoccupied.

Outline of Chapters

In the first part of the dissertation, I focus explicitly on a critical reading of the Pāli *Upās*. I seek to recover the intentions within the text in order to understand who the text addresses and what the text seeks to convey to this audience. In chapter one, I present an overview of what little is known concerning the history of the text's production. I also evaluate what makes the *Upās* a compendium and argue for the importance of the examination of compendia texts in the field of Buddhist studies through a reworking of the idea of a practical canon. I conclude this first chapter with a brief explanation of the methodological approach that I bring to my reading of the *Upās*.

The second chapter begins the critical analysis of the *Upās* by examining the text's opening chapter on going to refuge (*saraṇāgamana*). Here, I argue that the *Upās* works to produce an image of the ideal lay virtuoso as a subject who is committed exclusively to the Buddhist institution. The interpretation of the ritual of going to refuge and the narratives employed to render this practice desirable serve to produce what I term a devotional subject. Prior to any other teaching, the text makes clear that a virtuous lay person is first and foremost devoted solely to the Triple Gem (*Buddha*, *Dhamma*, and *Saṅgha*) and maintains no doubts as to their superiority over all competing teachers of salvation.

The third chapter presents an evaluation of the ways in which the *Upās* deploys an image of the disciplined subject. I assess the text's treatment of the precepts and the ascetic practices (*dhutaṅga*). I also argue for the importance of considering the transformative capacity of ritual, as proposed by Talal Asad, and I explain how a similar understanding of ritual informs part of the text's strategy to offer an image of the systematic development of the ideal Buddhist layperson. In the fourth and final chapter of part one, I explain how the *Upās* extends the idea of virtuosity that it has developed in the previous portions of the text outward to encompass the *upāsaka*'s socio-economic life through its incorporation of the *Sigālovāda Sutta*, as well as other teachings. I also provide, here, an assessment of the overall strategy of the text and its vision of a gradual cultivation of virtuosity culminating in the *upāsaka*'s embodiment of an active, Buddhist agency whereby she or he becomes capable of fulfilling the ten meritorious deeds (*dasapuñṇakiriyavatthu*). I conclude this first part of the dissertation by arguing that the intended audience of the *Upās* consisted of Buddhists, or potential Buddhists, who resided further from civilizational centers where Buddhism had been prevalent and who might have been exposed to a variety of competing soteriological traditions.

Following this analysis of the Pāli *Upās*, I turn to a study of the text's rebirth during the mid-18th to the turn of the 19th century. Chapter five presents a reading of the Sinhala translation of the *Upās*. Here, I highlight three unique features of this text, in comparison to the Pāli version; the opening describing the auspicious qualities of the Buddha, the ending that offers an elaborate description of the city of Kandy, the founding of the Siyam Nikāya, and the Nayakkar kings, and passages within the main body of the translation where Dhammakkhandha has offered his own, Sinhala paraphrases. Drawing from this reading of the Sinhala text, I argue that the Sinhala *Upās*, like other translation projects of the Siyam Nikāya, represented as much an attempt to build literary prestige and to ensure the protection of the Kandyan kingdom as an attempt to produce accurate, vernacular renderings of Pāli texts.

In chapter six, I provide an historical overview of the rise of the Siyam Nikāya to dominance among all religious institutions in the Kandyan kingdom of central Lanka. In doing so, I reevaluate the category of monks known as *gaṇinnānse*-s and assess what the monks of the Siyam Nikāya sought to suppress in the religious culture of the Kandyan regions during their hegemonic ascendancy. I also explore a few of the many ways by which the Siyam Nikāya achieved both their religious authority and their singular relationship with the Kandyan monarchy, which in large part enabled their continued supremacy.

Finally, in chapter seven, I present a micro-historical account of the career of Moratoṭa Dhammakkhandha, the author of the Sinhala version of the *Upās*.²⁸ Within this account, I draw attention to the many concerns and motivations that emerge from a study of his social networks. I argue, here, that Dhammakkhandha was very much concerned with monastic prestige and the

²⁸ I refer to Moratoṭa Dhammakkhandha as an author since his work consists of both a translation and additional, novel elements not to be found in the Pāli source text.

protection of the Kandyan kingdom in the face of unfavorable developments along the island's coast. I conclude that Dhammakkhandha, and the monks of the early Siyam Nikāya, exhibited both a concern with extending their institution's hegemony throughout the island, an intention they perhaps shared with the author of the Pāli *Upās*, and a simultaneous anxiety over their privileged tie to the monarchy and the Kandyan elite, which shaped the manner in which they produced translations of Pāli literature.

During Dhammakkhandha's career as head of the Siyam Nikāya, British troops began to encroach upon Kandy, monks along the southern coast broke away to form their own monastic lineage (Amarapura Nikāya), and many monks within the Kandyan region failed to adhere to the standards set by the Siyam Nikāya earlier. These pressures encouraged Dhammakkhandha to assert his socio-religious power by producing an authoritative handbook, derived from the Pāli tradition, which exhaustively described proper lay religiosity. The potential for translations to maintain or disrupt relations of power remains an understudied aspect of Pāli Buddhist history, and the following dissertation aids our attempts to better understand the role that the composition and dissemination of such works had.

While there is a great deal more that can be said about both the *Upās* and lay Buddhist virtuosity than one will find within these pages, my goal is to provide a specialized reading of this text as a means to understand the problems that I have outlined in this introduction. I hope that my study serves to pique the curiosity of others in the field of Buddhist studies, as I believe that the *Upās*, and other texts dealing explicitly with lay virtuosity, as I have explained the concept above, have a tremendous potential to reshape and reinvigorate the way that we approach the study of lay religious life and the manners through which monks have sought to

define and shape its possibilities. At the time I prepare this dissertation, Giulio Agostini is working to put forth an English translation of the Pāli *Upās*, through the auspices of the Pāli Text Society, and I have no doubt that this will encourage further study of the text. I sincerely hope that what follows may provide a useful footing on which others may stand as our knowledge of Buddhist lay religiosity develops.

Part I: The Pāli *Upāsakajanālaṅkāra*

Ch. 1 Text and Methodology

The *Upāsakajanālaṅkāra* has a mysterious history in both Buddhist literature and the scholarly literature which seeks to study it. It has caught the eye of several notable scholars in the field of Buddhist Studies, but it has escaped detailed analysis up until now.²⁹ At least two scholars have attempted to determine the historical origins of its composition, but their arguments find little support and remain inconclusive.³⁰ Although it is prudent to place the date of its initial production somewhere in the mid-12th to early 13th centuries, there is little trace of the text in Pāli or vernacular Buddhist literature until the formation of the Siyam Nikaya (the Siyam monastic fraternity) in the Kandyan Kingdom of what is now Sri Lanka around the middle of the 18th century, around five hundred or six hundred years later.

There are several manuscripts of the original Pāli version of the *Upās* located throughout Sri Lanka, the oldest of which may date to the end of the 16th century.³¹ At least one manuscript of the text has been catalogued in Burma, and one has been catalogued in Thailand as well. The manuscript located in Burma (in Burmese script) dates to 1802.³² Notes in the margins of this manuscript state that it was a copy belonging to Khin-ma-min Wun, Mainkhaing Myosa, who

²⁹ Among the scholars who have referenced the *Upās* in their own works are: Agostini (2002), Berkwitz (2004), Collins (1997), Crosby (2006), Hallisey (1988), Heim (2004), Norman (1983), and Schalk (2002).

³⁰ The two are Saddhatissa (1965), who compiled the critical edition of the Pāli text for the Pāli Text Society, and Liyanagamage (1978).

³¹ Saddhatissa (1965): 71. He believes that this manuscript ‘H’ is the oldest among all those he considered for the critical edition claiming that “it is at least 400 years old.” This claim is based on orthography and the appearance of the manuscript, but the precise method by which Saddhatissa makes this determination is not revealed; thus, I am skeptical of the claim. It may be of interest to know that this manuscript was housed in the Hanguranketa Potgul Māligāva, which was a royal library in the Kandyan period. The kings of Kandy used the town of Hanguranketa as a sanctuary to which they fled when the city of Kandy was under attack.

³² Saddhatissa (1965): 67. There is also a record of a manuscript in the Universities Central Library (UCL #9598). See Maung Maung Nyunt, *New History of Pali and Tipitaka Literature in Burma* (Yangon: Sape Biman, 2003). However, this may be the same manuscript that Saddhatissa used from the National Library, as manuscripts were often moved between the two locations. Thanks to Christian Lammerts for this information.

was the author of the *Piṭakatthamaing*, a comprehensive bibliographic text.³³ The manuscript catalogued in Thailand is written in Sinhala script, which suggests a connection with Lankan Buddhism, but there is no information concerning the date.³⁴ These manuscripts reveal that the text had travelled to various parts of the Buddhist world during its life, but the history of these intervening centuries, from the time of its initial composition up to the time it is referenced by Kandyan monks in the mid-18th century, remains unknown and one can only speculate as to its dissemination and reception by various Buddhists in this interval.

In this chapter, I seek to introduce the Pāli text and the information which we have, as scant as it is, concerning its history. I discuss the genealogic relationship that the text holds with other Pāli texts, and I assess its categorization among other types of Pāli literary works. I also provide a brief introduction to the Sinhala version of the text, produced at the turn of the 19th century. Additionally, I explain my methodological approach to the analysis of the text. The overall aim of this chapter is to illuminate the historical and literary contexts surrounding the Pāli *Upās*, to the extent that this is possible, and to clarify how I will proceed to a study of the text itself.

The first part of the dissertation presents a reading of the Pāli *Upās*, which given the brief account above should pose some challenges. Without a clear historical context, and without any means of ascertaining the reception of this text by an audience, only the text itself remains as a subject for investigation. As tempting as it may be to draw connections between the text and various historical developments occurring in the 12th and 13th centuries, there is too little evidence from which to build an accurate account of connections between the text and specific

³³ *ibid*: 65-67. Also see Mabel Bode, *The Pali Literature of Burma* (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1909): x.

³⁴ Skilling and Pakdeekham (2002): 51-52.

Buddhist communities. While it is possible to offer some reasonable and cautious hypotheses regarding the history of the composition of this text, and I do so in the chapters which follow, such speculation must give primacy to the reading of the text itself rather than to the historical contexts, which cannot be satisfactorily determined in this case. It is with this problem in mind that I explain the methodology of my textual analysis at the end of this chapter. But here, I begin with a brief overview of the sparse historical information that should be mentioned regarding the Pāli *Upās*.

A Shadowy History

According to its *Kattusaṃdassanaṃ* (“Exhibition of the Author”), a Sīhala monk named Ānanda composed the Pāli *Upāsakajanālaṅkāra*, or *Adornment of the Laity*. I present a translation of the entire *Kattusaṃdassanaṃ* here as it is a major source in the search for the history behind the text’s original composition:

Formerly, in the excellent city known as Sirivallabha,
a feudatory ruler, a Vañña,³⁵ who was within the feudal domain of the Paṇḍus,
Truthful, clever in reasoning,
—steadfast with respect to the advice to focus on the *sāsana* of the Conqueror,
given by a bhikkhu, who was well-known as Lokuttama,
faithful, of great wealth, born to a great family—
was known as Coḷaganga.

Beautiful *vihāra*-s, excellent to look at, were ordered built by him.
They were three, shining like a diadem beloved by the Earth.

The *vihāra* that was the best of them, beautiful to see,
Endowed with cool water, an abode of various types of tree groves,
A gathering place for the delighted, bee-like eyes of many people,
Resplendent like a stalk of flowers on the creeper of his fame,

³⁵ There remains some doubt as to what the term ‘*vañña*’ means. It may be a caste term, or it could simply refer to any ruler of a forest/jungle (*vana*) region.

Delightful, a weapon against distress,
 A refuge to people, like the ladder to the abode of the thirty [Tāvatiṃsa heaven],
 Was known as Pharaṇī.
 It was made known by the wise as Guṇākara Perampalli [“Mine of Virtue Temple”].
Theras who were banners of Tambapaṇṇi, whose sphere of life was the true Dhamma,
 Protecting the *āgama*, they made a dwelling there,
 Having arrived for their own benefit and further to develop the *sāsana*,
 When the island of Laṅkā was all over embroiled by the fires of the Damiḷa.

By me, who was dwelling in its beautiful, Northeastern building,
 This *alaṅkāra* was written, which delights good people (*sajjana*) always.³⁶

Taking his cue from the reference in the *Kattusaṃdassanaṃ* which appears to allude to a Damiḷa (South Indian)³⁷ invasion of the island of Laṅkā (“when the island of Laṅkā was all over embroiled by the fires of the Damila”);³⁸ Liyanagamage believes that the *Upās* may have been composed in the early to mid-13th century during the invasion of Māgha (1214-1255).³⁹ However, the invasion to which the *Kattusaṃdassanaṃ* refers is not specified, and there is no means of determining it to be Māgha’s invasion. Likewise, the text does not state that the author, Ānanda, arrived at this South Indian temple during the invasion. Rather, it states that “*thera*-s who were banners of Tambapaṇṇi [the island of Laṅkā]” arrived at this temple for the furtherance of the *sāsana* (the Buddhist religious institution), “when the island of Laṅkā, was all

³⁶ Saddhatissa (1965): 357-358; *Upās* 9.21. The text reads: “Sirivallabhanāmena vissute pavare pure/saddho mahaddhano pubbe visālakulasambhavo//Lokuttamo ti paññāto āsi yo bhikkhu tena tu/ Jinasāsanam appetum dinnovāde susaṇṇhito// Paṇḍubhūmaṇḍale yo ‘bhū Vañño sāmantabhūmipo/ saccasandho naye dakkho Coḷagaṅgo ti vissuto// Tena kārāpitā rammā viharā varadassanā/ tayo āsum mahikantā kirīṭam iva bhāsura// Yo tesam pavaro āsi viharo cārudassano/ sītalūdakasampanno nānādumagaṇālayo// Anekajanasammodanayanālisamāgamo/ tassa kittilatāpupphamañjarī viya bhāsuro// Tidasālayanissemi viya jantuparāyano/ aghāpaharaṇo rammo Pharaṇī iti vissuto// Guṇākara Perampalli iti viññūhi dassito/Laṅkādīpamhi sakale Damiḷānalasamākule/āgatā pātum attānaṃ bhūyo sāsanaṃ uddhiyā// Tambapaṇṇiddhajā therā sadā saddhammagocarā/ āgamaṃ anurakkhantā yasmim vāsam akappayum// Tassa pubbuttare ramme pāsāde vasatā mayā/ racito ‘yam alaṅkāro sadā sajjanarañjako ti// Iti Sīhalācariyabhadantānandamahātheraviracito Upāsakajanaṅkaṅkaṇaṇiṭṭhito.” The term ‘*sammoda*’ in the compound ‘*anekajanasammodanayanālisamāgamo*’ is taken to be a poetic form of the adjective.

³⁷ The term ‘Damila’ is used in Pāli and Sinhala texts in reference to South Indians. It does not refer to a nationality but rather to a broad ethno-linguistic group. By the end of the first millennium, it assumes a pejorative sense, and the term ‘Damila’ is never used in reference to monks or other honored individuals but is reserved largely for groups of invaders. See Schalk (2002): 530.

³⁸ Saddhatissa: 358.

³⁹ See Liyanagamage (1978): 106-107.

over embroiled by the fires of the Damila.” There is no direct identification of Ānanda as one among this group of monks who fled from Laṅkā. There is only mention that he wrote the *Upās*, “which delights good people always”, while residing in the Northeastern building of the temple grounds. The description of the temple as a place where monks from Tambapaṇṇi (Laṅkā) arrived during a crisis may simply be colorful background information about this temple where Ānanda eventually dwelt and wrote the *Upās*. Therefore, we can only conclude that by the time Ānanda composed the *Upās*, Lankan monks had fled at one time or another, to this temple in which he resided. While Ānanda may have been one among this group of monks, and the invasion mentioned may have been that of Kalinga Māgha, without further evidence such a claim must remain speculation.

Saddhatissa, on the other hand, believes the text to have been produced sometime during the reign of Parakramabāhu I (1153-1186 CE) by arguing that the author, Ānanda, can be identified with Vanaratana Ānanda of Udumbaragiri, the teacher of Vedeha. Most scholars who reference the *Upās* in their own work use this rough time period for its estimated date of composition as well; probably because there has been little attention paid to alternative theories.⁴⁰ While I find his overview of textual and inscriptional evidence laudable, it is far from convincing as it relies too heavily on unfounded associations based on what is a rather common monastic name. Far more reliable in the dating of the text are the inter-textual references it makes.

The earliest date for the text may be determined by the fact that it references the *Saratthadīpani* of Sariputta, which is a sub-commentary to Buddhaghosa’s *Samantapasādikā*, the commentary to the *Vinaya*. Sariputta was a well-known monk in the time of King

⁴⁰ See Saddhatissa’s introduction to the critical edition of the *Upās* in Saddhatissa (1965): 28-45.

Parakramabāhu I (1153-1186 CE), who donated a monastic residence hall at the royal capital of Polonnaruva to Sariputta.⁴¹ In the beginning of the *Saratthadīpani*, Sariputta states that his teacher, Mahā Kassapa, assisted King Parakramabāhu in the purge and reunification of the monastic orders of the kingdom.⁴² According to the *Mahāvamsa*, specifically the second installment of this chronicle, dating to as late as the Dambadeniya period (1220-1293), this took place in the 12th year of Parakramabāhu's reign, which has been dated to 1165 CE.⁴³ This is corroborated by the Polonnaruva Rock Inscription of Parakramabāhu.⁴⁴ Thus, we can be fairly certain that the *Saratthadīpani*, which the *Upās* cites, must have been composed no earlier than 1165, when it is believed that Parakramabāhu reunited the monastic order.

The *Upās* also cites two works, the *Abhidhammavikasini* and the *Abhidhammatthavibhavani*, both of which were written by Sariputta's pupil, Sumangala. The former work notes that Sariputta was Sumangala's teacher, and it references the *Saratthadīpani* as well. The *Abhidhammatthavibhavani* references the *Abhidhammavikasini*.⁴⁵ This information points to the year 1165 as the earliest possible date of the *Upās*, if all three works, which it cites, are roughly contemporaneous to each other and the *Upās*. There is, of course, the possibility that the *Upās* was written in a later year, which is what Liyanagamage himself believes.

Unfortunately, we have little evidence from which to determine a late limitation of the date of the *Upās*'s composition.

⁴¹ Geiger (1953): 105 (78.34)

⁴² See Devarakkhita (ed.) *Saratthadīpani* (1914): verses 1-9. Cited in Liyanagamage (1978): 101 (n.31). Also see Geiger (1953): 101-104.

⁴³ See Geiger (1953): Ch.78 and University of Ceylon (1959-1960): 569.

⁴⁴ *Epigraphia Zeylanica*, vol. II, pp. 205, 259.

⁴⁵ Liyanagamage (1978): 100-102.

Saddhatissa references three verses which are shared between the *Upās* and those of Gurulugomi's *Dharmapradīpika*, a Sinhala text dating to the late 12th to early 13th centuries.⁴⁶ The source of these verses has not been determined, and therefore we can not say for certain whether the *Upās* borrowed them from the *Dharmapradīpika*, or vice versa, or whether both texts borrowed the verses from a lost original text. The fact that neither text makes any reference to the other leads me to favor the last of the three scenarios. This would suggest that both texts were composed in a common literary milieu, if each author knew about and utilized the same source text, which has now been lost. If either of the other two options were to be found true, then this would either move the earliest date of the composition of the *Upās* up to the late 12th-early 13th centuries (if it borrowed from the *Dharmapradīpika*) or set a limit on the latest date of its composition to this same period (if the *Dharmapradīpika* borrowed from it).

Despite the inter-textual references that we have, there is no clear evidence for setting a limit for the latest possible date of composition for the *Upās* until the Kandyan period, when Vāliṇiṭṭa Saramāṇkara (1698-1778) cites the text in his *Sārārthasaṅgraha*.⁴⁷ The history of Saramāṇkara has been relatively well documented. He was the head (*Sanḅharāṇḁa*) of the monastic fraternity that emerged during the reign of Kirti Śrī Rājasinha. Thus, we can at least be assured that the *Upās* was composed earlier than Saramāṇkara's composition of the *Sārārthasaṅgraha*. This sets a (perhaps overly) cautious late limit of composition to the end of the 17th century. Of course, if Saddhatissa's dating of the older manuscripts which he used is to be trusted, there is material evidence that the text existed in the late 16th century; thereby lowering this limit

⁴⁶ Saddhatissa (1965): 100-101. See Sannasgala (1994): 127 for a description of the *Dharmapradīpika*.

⁴⁷ Saddhatissa (1965): 102-103. Another important figure in the early history of this monastic group, Tibbotuvāvē Buddhārakkhita, also cites the *Upās* in his work, *Śrī Saddharmāvavādasāṅgrahaya*. I discuss the use of the *Upās* among the elites of this fraternity in detail in chapter 5.

significantly. Unfortunately, the information in the *Kattusaṃdassanaṃ* can not help as much as one would like.

The statement that a ruler named Colaganga reined in the Pandyan region (*Paṇḍubhūmaṇḍale*) suggests that he lived in South India. However, the subcontinent is not mentioned directly, as it often is, by referring to the place name *Jambudīpa*. There is also the fact that the Pandyan kings held substantial territorial claims over the island of Laṅkā during the close of the 13th century.⁴⁸ This presents the problem of identifying with absolute certainty that the author is referring to South India in the *Kattusaṃdassanaṃ* and not to a region of Laṅkā held by Pandyan feudatories.

The term *Vañño* is likewise ambiguous. The region of the north-central plains of the island of Laṅkā is referred to as the Vanni region in many texts, and its rulers are called *vañño* or *vanni rāja*. However, the term may be generic, as it is derived from the term for forest or jungle (*vana*), and it may simply refer to any ruler of a forested region. Thus, the passage may be referring to a feudatory ruler of a forested tract in the Pandyan region of South India. The fact is that the text displays enough ambiguity to allow for both interpretations. Although the text mentions that the island of Laṅkā was “all over embroiled by the fires of the Damila,” it does not provide any verbal reference to monks leaving or departing *from* the island.⁴⁹ Neither does the passage specify that the temples which Colaganga arranged to be built were in the Pandyan region themselves. Thus, the *Kattusaṃdassanaṃ* does not provide enough evidence to solve the mystery of the origins of the *Upās*.

⁴⁸ Sastri (1955/2003): 196-197, 215-216.

⁴⁹ The fact that there are no ablative cases of *-dīpa* or Laṅkā to compliment this action makes it difficult to prove that the monks came ‘from’ the island. It is equally possible that the monks came ‘to’ the island. The ambiguity in the grammar keeps both possibilities alive. I couple this observation with the fact that Laṅkā appears in the locative absolute in the preceding verse. The phrasing makes it possible to consider the temple in question as being located in Laṅkā.

The city of Śrī Vallabha and the names of the individuals Colaganga and Lokuttama are likewise ambiguous. There is no means of identifying any of the above with certainty. There are several rulers and generals by the name of Colaganga which appear in the chronicles (*vaṃsa*-s), but there is no connection between these personages and an account of temple construction or a city by the name of Śrī Vallabha. A monk by the name of Lokuttama also can not be linked in other literature or inscriptions to the events described.

The name of the author, provided in the closing line of the text, is “the Great Elder, the noble Ānanda, the Sīhala teacher” (*Sīhalācariyabhadantānandamahāthera*).⁵⁰ This identifies the author as Sīhala (meaning from Sīhala or Laṅkā, not necessarily implying ethnic identity). There is no further information regarding the author, and there is no mention in other texts of Ānanda the author of the *Upās*. The Burmese monk, Khin-ma-min Wun, Mainkhaing Myosa, who was also the owner of the Burmese manuscript noted above, claims in his *Pitakatthamaing* that the author of the *Upās* was the same Ānanda that composed the *Mūla Tika*, the sub-commentary to Buddhaghosa’s commentary on the *Abhidhamma Piṭaka*. There is no reason given for this claim, and Saddhatissa provides a convincing argument against it.⁵¹ I side with Liyanagamage in concluding that “perhaps he [the author of the *Upās*] is different from all the Anandas known to us from Sri Lanka, an Ananda by himself, who probably had no pupils to perpetuate his name but his own work, the *Upasakajanalankara* which has survived through the ages to come down to us.”⁵²

I am content to admit that there is no means at present for determining the author or the precise date of the Pāli *Upās*. I believe that a date somewhere in between the late 12th through

⁵⁰ Saddhatissa (1965): 358; *Upās* 9.21.

⁵¹ *ibid*: 28-31.

⁵² Liyanagamage (1978): 126.

the 13th centuries is most plausible given the references which the *Upās* makes to other texts and its lack of reference to texts later than this period. If the temple where the author resided while composing the *Upās* was indeed located in South India, as is possible, it would seem more likely that the work was completed during a high-point of medieval Buddhist activity in South India, which would be before the close of the 13th century.⁵³ Likewise, if the reference to the Pandyan region, found in the *Kattusaṃdasanaṃ*, is meant to include the location of the temple where the author wrote his work, and if we take this to refer to a region of Laṅkā rather than South India, then it must also have been before the close of the 13th century when the Pandyans lost control of Laṅkā as their attention turned to the Muslim invasions of Malik Kafur.⁵⁴ Thus, regardless of which interpretation we take for the location of the temple (Laṅkā or South India) in which Ānanda wrote the *Upās*, the reference to a Pandyan region (*Paṇḍubhumaṇḍale*) suggests a late limit of the end of the 13th century for the composition of the text. Therefore, I conclude that the text most likely dates between 1165 (the year of Parakramabāhu's reunification of the monastic orders) and the end of the 13th century.

Given the above summary of the available knowledge regarding the history of the text's initial composition, we must be cautious in ascribing any causal links between the arguments set forth within the text and a possible historical context. For instance, it may be tempting to read the production of the *Upās* within various, specific historical contexts such as: Parakramabāhu I's reforms, religious competition in South India, or the revivalist activities of Parakramabāhu II (1236-1270). However, it would be imprudent to rest too much weight upon such historical contexts when we do not yet have enough evidence to link the composition of the Pāli *Upās* to

⁵³ See Schalk (2002): 145. The numerous pieces of material evidence (stone and bronze images), as well as at least one inscription, surveyed in Schalk's two-volume collection provide strong evidence for a period of flourishing Buddhist activity in various pockets of South India during the 10th to 13th centuries.

⁵⁴ Sastri (1955 / 2003): 197.

any one of these periods or places. This does not mean that we must fall-back upon a completely a-historical reading of the text. In order to bring history into the analysis, I argue that we must consider the place of the *Upās* within the larger body of Pāli literature.

Compendium and Commentary

The Pāli scholar K.R. Norman notes:

Although it is reported that there are more than 40 Jain *śrāvakācāra* texts, dealing with the proper conduct of a layman, it appears that there is only one systematic Pāli text dealing with this subject. This is the *Upāsakajanāṅkārā*, also known as *Upāsakāṅkārāna* or *Upāsakāṅkārā*.⁵⁵

Although Norman is right to say that, when compared to the textual corpus of other South Asian religious traditions like the *Śrāvakācāra* texts of the Jains, and one might also include the *Dharmaśāstra nibandhas* of the Brahmanical traditions, the Pāli tradition seems lacking, it is not entirely accurate to single out the *Upās* as the lone example of texts that deal primarily with lay religiosity in Pāli.⁵⁶ I argue that a genre of Buddhist texts concerned with lay virtuosity can be identified.

To begin with, the *Upās* is itself a reworking of an earlier Pāli text (perhaps 10th century) focusing on the conduct of the laity, the *Paṭipattisāṅgaha* (*Compendium of Practice*).⁵⁷ The opening verses of the *Upās* state:

Because of the lack of stories such as the *nidāna*,
The older *Paṭipattisāṅgaha*, due to [its] confusing method,

⁵⁵ K.R. Norman (1983): 170.

⁵⁶ Heim, (2004) discusses both the *Śrāvakācāra* and *Dharmaśāstra nibandha* texts, along with portions of the *Upās*, with specific attention to their various discourses of gift giving. Heim also notes the paucity of Pāli Buddhist texts dealing with lay religiosity, like the *Upās*, in comparison to the numbers of texts in the other two traditions, Jain and Brahmanical, which her work utilizes.

⁵⁷ The *Paṭipattisāṅgaha* (*Compendium of Practice*) is not yet published, and is available only in manuscript form. Saddhatissa offers the most complete discussion of its contents, as he reviewed at least one of the manuscripts for his own project. See Saddhatissa (1965): 49-51. Also see von Hinüber (1996): 178.

Is not at all satisfying for the newly entered (*abhinavāvatārinam*)
In the instruction of the Buddha.⁵⁸

The *Paṭipattisaṅgaha* has yet to be studied in detail, but Saddhatissa reports that the contents are divided into five chapters (*saṅgaha*-s) arranged as follows: (1) *saraṇāgamana* (going to refuge), (2) *sīla* (discipline), (3) *samādhi* (meditation), (4) *paññā* (wisdom), and (5) *ānisaṃsa* (auspicious results).⁵⁹ The *Upās* is itself a compendia text, a selective compilation of a variety of passages from the canonical and commentarial literature. It is arranged into nine chapters (*niddesa*-s) as follows: (1) *saraṇāgamanasīla* (the proper conduct of going to refuge), (2) *sīla* (proper moral conduct), (3) *dhutaṅga* (ascetic practice), (4) *ājīva* (livelihood), (5) *dasapuñṇakiriyavatthu* (the collection of ten meritorious acts), (6) *antarāyakaradhamma* (things that are dangerous), (7) *lokiyasampatti* (worldly happiness), (8) *lokuttarasampatti* (transcendental happiness), and (9) *puñṇaphalasādhaka* (accomplishing the fruits of merit). This arrangement functions as a systematic expression of the ideal progression of a layperson along the Buddhist path. It begins with the primary act of going to refuge and ends with the various forms of attainments (worldly then transcendental). There is more to be said about the systematicity of this progression, which will be dealt with in detail in chapter three of the dissertation.

While there are some obvious affinities between the topics of each chapter listed above and those of the *Upās*, as should be expected given the genealogic relationship between the texts, there are at least three noteworthy departures that the *Upās* takes from the plan of the *Paṭipattisaṅgaha*. Firstly, there is no single chapter on meditation (*samādhi*) in the *Upās*. Instead, meditation falls within the broader class of the ‘ten meritorious acts’ (the topic of

⁵⁸ Saddhatissa (1965): 123; *Upās* 1.4. The text reads: “Yato nidānādikathāvihīnato/ nayākulattā Paṭipattisaṅgaho/ purātano so ‘abhinavāvatārinam/ na kiñci pīṇeti Jinānusatthiyaṃ//.”

⁵⁹ *ibid*: 50.

chapter 5 of the dissertation), where it is only one of the ten. Secondly, there is no chapter labeled ‘wisdom’. The one chapter which deals with issues normally associated with wisdom in Buddhist classification (such as the concept of no-self or *anattā*) comes at the end (chapter 9, ‘accomplishing the fruits of merit’), where it is the subject of a debate rather than a descriptive account. Finally, the *Upās* incorporates a discussion of the *dhutaṅga* (ascetic practices), which the *Paṭipattisaṅgaha* does not.

It appears that the *Paṭipattisaṅgaha* follows a plan that has a much stronger affinity to that of the 5th century *Visuddhimagga* (*Path of Purity*), the single most influential commentarial compendium in Theravāda Buddhism, whose own progression is traditionally divided into the triad of *sīla*, *samādhi*, and *paññā*. In the case of the *Paṭipattisaṅgaha*, this progression is maintained, with the sole addition of a chapter regarding ‘going to refuge’ located at the very beginning of the text. In the *Upās*, however, not only is there an additional chapter on ‘going to refuge’, but meditation (*samādhi*), which takes up a considerable amount of space in the *Visuddhimagga*, is subsumed within the ‘collection of ten meritorious acts’ (*dasapuñṇakiriyavatthu*). The comparative progression of chapter topics among each of the three texts under consideration here is shown in fig.1.

As previously noted, an important development that appears in both the *Paṭipattisaṅgaha* and the *Upās* is the addition of an initial chapter on ‘going to refuge’, and I discuss this concept in detail in chapter two of the dissertation below. Otherwise, the very beginning of all three texts is quite similar. The *Upās* also includes chapters concerning ‘livelihood’ (*ājīva*), ‘ten meritorious acts’ (*dasapuñṇakiriya*), and a brief chapter on ‘dangerous acts’

Fig 1. Comparison of the sequence of topics in the *Visuddhimagga*, *Paṭipattisaṅgaha*, and the *Upās*

Topics in Order of Their Appearance	Visuddhimagga	Paṭipattisaṅgaha	Upāsakajanālaṅkāra
	_____	Saraṇāgamana	Saraṇāgamana
	Sīla	Sīla	Sīla
	Dhutaṅga	_____	Dhutaṅga
	Samādhi	Samādhi	Ājīva
			Dasapuñṇakiriyavatthu (including samādhi)
			Antarāyakaradhamma
	Paññā	Paññā	_____
	Visuddhi	Ānisaṃsa	Lokiyasampatti
	Ānisaṃsa		Lokuttarasampatti
	_____	_____	Puñṇphalasādhaka

(*antarāyakaradhamma*). Like the *Visuddhimagga*, however, the *Upās* does include a chapter on the *dhutaṅga*-s. In the overall systematic progression which the *Upās* presents, meditation factors as a rather minor concern in comparison to the other two compendia texts. In exchange, the *Upās* presents aspects of religiosity which neither the *Visuddhimagga* nor the *Paṭipattisaṅgaha* discuss. It seems that the predecessor to the *Upās*, the *Paṭipattisaṅgaha*, maintains a stronger affinity with the *Visuddhimagga* than does its descendant. The *Upās*, in its intention to improve upon the older text, breaks from the earlier model and discusses aspects of an ideal lay religious life that had not been satisfactorily incorporated into the systematic depiction of the *Paṭipattisaṅgaha*.⁶⁰

The final difference among the texts is that the *Upās* does not include a chapter on wisdom (*paññā*) before the descriptions of the benefits of practice; rather, it ends with a chapter that functions as a debate over whether or not the fruits of virtuous lay practice actually accrue to any person if the Buddhist idea of selflessness (*anattā*) is to be considered true. In other words, this final chapter is an attempt to defend all of what precedes it from philosophical attacks, which turn an important Buddhist concept (*anattā*) against the Buddhist idea of merit accumulation for lay practitioners. Neither the *Visuddhimagga* nor the *Paṭipattisaṅgaha* conclude with a defensive philosophical chapter similar to this. This suggests that during the time in which the text was composed at least some Buddhist literati felt it necessary to defend Buddhist philosophical positions, like the idea of *anattā*. Additionally, the style in which this debate

⁶⁰ This clarifies what has been noted by Hallisey (1988): 194, and echoed by Heim (2004): 24 in the following statement: “The text [*Upās*] itself is organized on the principles of morality (*sīla*), meditation (*samādhi*), and wisdom (*pañña*), as is Buddhaghosa’s *Visuddhimagga*, except that, as Charles Hallisey has pointed out, these practices are here reworked and recommended for lay people.” I have attempted, here, to offer a more precise assessment of how these principles have been “reworked” in the *Upās*.

appears in the text suggests a connection to a much wider world of religio-philosophical thought and competitive discourse.

Some of the terminology found in the final chapter of the *Upās* appears to be influenced by, or perhaps to be engaging with, philosophical developments of the Madhyamaka tradition.⁶¹ Steven Collins, the only scholar to date to have translated part of the text (the ninth and final chapter) into English, has remarked on this chapter's style of engaging with these philosophical positions when he writes, "this first part of this chapter – unusually for the Pali tradition – consists in a debate, conducted in the characteristically concise manner of Pan-South Asian, Sanskrit intellectual practice".⁶² This information points to the possibility that the *Upās* may have been at least partially aimed at an educated elite who had knowledge of multiple philosophical positions, perhaps something akin to what Sheldon Pollock has in mind in his discussion of the Sanskrit Cosmopolis. As Pollock proposes:

There was thus, I think, a concrete reality to the 'Sanskrit cosmopolis', one that does not exist only in the retrospective gaze of the historian. For a millennium, and across half the world, elites participated in a peculiar supralocal ecumene. This was a form of shared life very different from that produced by common subjecthood or fealty to a central power, even by shared religious liturgy or credo (p. 230).

The Sanskrit Cosmopolis, was an elite culture, steeped in Sanskrit literature and learning; it was not confined by the boundaries of states, and it is possible that the author of the *Upās* sought to address his treatise to individuals and groups who fit such a description and who also associated with the Buddhist clerisy.

The major differences between the three, related texts (*Visuddhimagga*, *Patipattisangaha*, and *Upās*) may be summarized by the five points which follow: (1) The practice of going to

⁶¹ Ibid. pp.23-27.

⁶² Collins, 1997: p.468.

refuge becomes an important, preliminary component of ideal lay religiosity by the time of the *Paṭipattisaṅgaha*, and it continues to be so through the composition of the *Upās*; (2) proper conduct (*sīla*) is consistently included in systematic presentations of ideal religious behavior for laity; (3) there are ascetic practices available for monastics *and* laity according to the *Visuddhimagga* and the *Upās*; (4) the *Upās* makes a significant break from earlier accounts of ideal religiosity by subsuming meditation (*samādhi*) within an account of a wider variety of religious practices aimed at laypersons; (5) and finally, the *Upās* closes with a defensive, philosophical argument supporting both the Buddhist idea of selflessness (*anattā*) and the benefits of proper lay religious practice; something which is not found in either of the earlier texts.

The differences noted above signal that the author of the *Upās* makes an intentional departure from the earlier account of the development of an ideal layperson, which was found in the *Paṭipattisaṅgaha*. Unlike the predecessor text, the *Upās* frees itself from the paradigmatic structure first outlined in the *Visuddhimagga* so as to provide a different, systematic account of ideal lay religiosity; one which departs from an overriding concern with meditation. Without a detailed analysis of the *Paṭipattisaṅgaha*, which is beyond the scope of this project, one can not understand the manner in which meditation was recommended for the laity, and so it is impossible to say from what, precisely, the *Upās* is moving away. However, the analysis of the production of lay virtuosity found in chapters two through four of this dissertation helps us to understand the ideal which the *Upās* does promote. This will aid future studies which seek a comparative analysis with the *Paṭipattisaṅgaha*, thereby developing our knowledge of the genealogic progression of expressions of ideal lay religiosity in Pāli literature.

In addition to the *Paṭipattisaṅgaha* and the *Upās*, there is also the *Upāsakamanussavinaya*, a text which should be included within a genre of lay virtuosity texts.⁶³ Kate Crosby has provided a fairly recent, introductory study of the *Upāsakamanussavinaya*. Crosby notes that this text is “a relatively short text, between seven and nine folios in manuscript form, producing about thirteen pages in a critical edition.”⁶⁴ Thus, unlike the *Upās*, it is not an attempt at a systematic and comprehensive compendium. Crosby goes on to report that:

The main focus of the text is the saṃsāric repercussions of one’s actions through rebirth in heaven or hells, rather than activity directly relating to the path to *nibbāna*. Thus it appears again to be a text that regards lay practice as relevant to saṃsāric rather than nibbānic concerns.⁶⁵

The *Upāsakamanussavinaya* maintains an affinity with the canonical *vinaya* texts in so far as it provides a list of punishments for improper actions. Unlike the canonical *vinaya*, however, these punishments arrive in a future birth and are not imposed upon the transgressor by a community, as are the punishments which the *vinaya* prescribes for monks and nuns.⁶⁶ The possibility that this text was brought to Sri Lanka with the envoy of 1756, to initiate the Siyam Nikaya, provides an interesting connection to the use of the *Upās* among the early members of this monastic fraternity, and it is a concern to which I return in chapter six.⁶⁷ Here, I simply note that the content of the text shares an affinity with the overall concern of the *Upās*, to produce lay virtuosity, and that it should be included in consideration of a genre of texts sharing this intention. Unlike the *Upās*, the *Upāsakamanussavinaya* is clearly not a compendium, and this is

⁶³ The only work that deals with the *Upāsakamanussavinaya* is Kate Crosby (2006). Crosby does provide a useful discussion of this text, which I reference here, but unfortunately she does not offer a sufficient number of citations or translations to provide material for a sustained comparison with the *Upās*.

⁶⁴ Crosby (2006): 182.

⁶⁵ *ibid*: 182.

⁶⁶ See the list provided by Crosby (2006): 183.

⁶⁷ Crosby (2006): 184-185.

an important characteristic of the *Upās*, one which it shares with the *Visuddhiamagga* and *Paṭipattisaṃgaha*.

As a compendium, or anthology, the *Upās* provides a selective compilation of passages from other texts of the tradition (both canonical and commentarial), along with a number of original passages and original commentary. Although much of the content of the text is not original, the arrangement of the chosen passages is far from random. Thus, the text exhibits originality through its selectivity of passages and its strategic placement of them. There are a few additional examples of compendia, which survive in the Pāli tradition. These other instances include the *Suttasāṅgaha* (of unknown date), from which the *Upās* quotes, and the *Sārasāṅgaha* (13th/14th c.), presumably later than the *Upās*.⁶⁸ The canonical *Khuddakapāṭha* itself appears to be an early attempt to create a type of practical compendia.⁶⁹ Unlike most other compendia, the *Suttasāṅgaha* included, the *Upās* maintains a focused concern with presenting an authoritative account of what it means to be an *upāsaka*.

The selectivity shown by the *Upās* in terms of references to other texts, the arrangement of topics, the central verse that provides the basis for much of the text's discussion, and the closing lines of each chapter all reveal that the *Upās* exhibits a primary intention to present the most comprehensive guide to proper *upāsaka* religiosity. This intention is something that the *Upāsakamanussavinaya* shares with the *Upās*, but as already noted, this text is much briefer, it is not a true compendium, and it does not appear to offer as complete a discussion of lay religiosity as does the *Upās*. There are also shorter commentarial texts on the *Sīgalovāda Sutta* (perhaps

⁶⁸ See von Hinüber (1996): 76-77, 177-180. Von Hinüber also includes a few texts, found in Northern Thailand (Lan Nā), within this category of anthologies, namely: *Mangalatthadīpanī*, *Paṭhamasambodhi*, and *Jinamahānidāna*. The first is based on a commentary to the *Mangala Sutta* of the *Khuddakapāṭha*, and the latter two are based around stories of the Buddha's life.

⁶⁹ von Hinüber (1996): 43-44.

the single most influential sutta concerning lay behavior) of the *Dīgha Nikaya*, which are often catalogued as *Gīhi Vinaya*, (*The Moral Code of the Householder*), and such texts are quite numerous in Sri Lanka.⁷⁰ These texts should also be included within a genre of lay virtuosity texts. In fact, the *Upās* contains its own version of this text within the fourth chapter on Livelihood (*Ājīva*), which I discuss in chapter four of the dissertation.

Apart from the *Upās*'s categorization as a compendia text, it also has the characteristics of a commentary. The following verse, introduced at the beginning of the second chapter (on *sīla*), forms the basis for the remaining chapters up to (but not including) the last:

The *upāsakas* and *upāsikās*, who have thus gone for refuge, established in discipline, having purified it by the undertaking of suitable ascetic practices, having renounced the five [forbidden] trades, leading a righteous and tranquil life, reaching the state of the lotus-*upāsaka* and so on, fulfilling daily the ten types of meritorious deeds, having renounced the acts that bar the way, should achieve worldly and transcendental happiness.⁷¹

This list of actions constitutes an abridged outline for chapters 2-8 of the *Upās*, which discuss in order: discipline (*sīla*), purification through asceticism (*dhutaṅga*), right livelihood (*ājīva*), the ten types of meritorious deeds (*dasapuñṇakiriyavatthu*), the acts that bar the way (*antarāyakaradhamma*), worldly happiness (*lokiyasampatti*), and transcendental happiness (*lokuttara sampatti*). The verse assumes completion and comprehension of the topic of the first chapter ('the proper conduct of going to refuge') by directing itself to "the lay disciples ... who have gone for refuge." It then notes each of the remaining seven topics up to 'transcendental happiness'. In addition, the opening lines to each chapter (2-8) make reference back to this verse

⁷⁰ There are a number of *Gīhi Vinaya* and/or *Sīgalovāda Sutta Sannaya* texts listed in various catalogues. See the Hugh Nevill catalogue.

⁷¹ Saddhatissa (1965): 174. "Evam saranagatehi pana upāsakopāsikajanehi sīle patitthāya patirūpadhutangasamādānena tam parisodhetvā pañchavanijjā pahāya dhammena samena jīvikam kappayante hi upāsakapadumādibhāvam patvā dine dine dasapuñṇakiriyavatthūni pūrentehi antarāyakaradhamme pahāya lokiyalokuttarasampattiyo sādhetabbā ti ayam ettha sankhepo."

before launching into their more detailed discussion regarding their respective topics. For instance, chapter three (*Dhutanganiddeso*) opens:

Now, concerning the statement “**having purified it by the undertaking of suitable ascetic practices,**” there are 13, which received the name “ascetic practices” (*dhutangāni*) because of shaking off (*dhunanato*) of defilements (*kilesānam*), which are sanctioned by the Blessed One as suitable practices for those noble sons (*kulaputtānam*) who follow the *sāsana* wanting accomplishment. They are....⁷²

In this way, the text exhibits a deliberate commentarial style. Why it does so is not entirely clear. The central verse, cited above, is not traceable to any known source text; rather, it seems to be a creation of the author.⁷³ This decision to use such a style may derive from the fact that the verse clearly and succinctly outlines the systematic progression, which the text as a whole desires to impart to its readers. This style can be beneficial for those wishing to understand the overall purpose of this text, as it acts much like a sentence-long index elucidating the contents of the text, which would certainly be useful in oral recitation and memorization of the text as well as in practices connected to reading.

As noted above, the *Upās* draws from the *Visuddhimagga*, even as it departs from this authoritative compendium in significant ways. Compare the verse cited above to the following verse, which opens the *Visuddhimagga*:

When a wise man, established well in discipline,
Develops consciousness and understanding,
Then, as a bhikkhu ardent and sagacious
He succeeds in disentangling this tangle.⁷⁴

⁷² Saddhatissa (1965): 247. “Idāni, ‘patirūpadhutangasamādānena tam parisodhetvā’ ti ettha kilesānam dhunanato dhutangāni ti laddhanāmāni yāni terasa Bhagavatā anulomapatipadam yeva ārādhētukāmānam sāsanikānam kulaputtānam anuññātāni. Seyyathīdam...”.

⁷³ Saddhatissa, who has compiled an extensive list of correspondence between the passages of the *Upās* and source texts, finds no source for this verse. Neither have I been able to trace it to another text.

⁷⁴ *Vism* I.3. I borrow the translation given by Ñāṇamoli in the PTS edition, but I have replaced his translation of *sīla* as “virtue” with my own preference of “discipline.”

There is an affinity between the two verses derived in large part by the fact that each outlines a path of progressive development, in an abridged format, leading to ultimate goals. Although the protagonists, the paths, and the final accomplishments differ, each text utilizes a similar style of opening verse as a means of clearly and succinctly revealing the stages in a transformative process. It is this concern with potential transformation, the gradual cultivation of Buddhist virtues on the path toward a recognized end, which the two texts share as practical compendia.

Berkwitz describes the style of the composition of the *Upās* in the following:

The compiler, Mahāthera Ānanda, has skillfully grouped the topics to be discussed in an order resembling the moral and spiritual development imagined to occur within pious devotees. Yet the ideal subject of the text could conceivably be any male or female Buddhist layperson. The summary thus represents a potential chronology, not a past one.⁷⁵

The *Upās* does present a “potential chronology” in the sense that, despite the strategic use of narrative, there are no bio-/hagiographical accounts of ideal, virtuous laypersons. The text does not seek to extol the great laypersons of the past and encourage others to emulate them and/or follow in their footsteps. Rather, the *Upās* deploys a different sort of strategy by assiduously providing exegetical commentary to select passages from the earlier, authoritative texts in order to present a well-supported argument detailing the path of the most virtuous lay Buddhist practice, which is open to all would-be *upāsakas*. Rather than take a holistic view of the life of a virtuous layperson, the text deconstructs the virtuous life into significant categories and presents these categories as aspects of the gradual path to virtuous fulfillment.

However, while Buddhaghosa composes his compendium as an exhaustive response to a verse already found in the *Samyutta Nikāya* (S.I.13), the author of the *Upās* seems to compose an original verse in order to suit his compendium. There may be several reasons for doing so, but I

⁷⁵ Berkwitz (2004): 90.

emphasize the intention to highlight a progressive, developmental path of religiosity for *upāsakas*. If the author could not locate, or simply was not inspired by, any single verse that could serve as an abridgement of the path of lay virtuosity that he envisioned, then he would compose one himself. It was less important that he respond to a single passage from the authoritative texts, as does the *Visuddhimagga*, than he provide a concise, condensed description of the ideal path which his work seeks to explain.

This aspect of the *Upās* as a compendium allows it to function like a manual rather than an encyclopedia, exhaustively presenting an authoritative account of *upāsaka* religiosity in a step by step, or topic by topic, manner. This is a unique characteristic of Pāli Buddhist compendia in general. As Heim has likewise noted:

Unlike the Dharmaśāstra and Jain materials under consideration, the Pali compendia tend to be summaries rather than encyclopedias. That is, where the direction of the Sanskrit material is expansive, gathering everything known on the subject, the Pali material collects and distills the essentials from a vast literature, and makes them manageable for didactic purposes. ...[T]he Pali anthologies more than the others emerge as useful ‘handbooks’ or ‘manuals’ which often usurp the earlier canonical and more authoritative sources in their use as training material for monks up to the present day.⁷⁶

This practicality is shared by the *Upās*, and although the text is certainly comprehensive in its assessment of lay virtuosity, it never sacrifices its overriding concern to evoke a transformation in the intended audience for encyclopedic completeness.

In discussing compendia texts, Heim notes that:

The compendia ... are anthologies first, commentaries second, and for the most part their writers display their learning by their mastery and selective choice of previous literature, and by their choices in organizing it. ...The distinction should not be overdrawn, however.⁷⁷

⁷⁶ Heim (2004): 23.

⁷⁷ *ibid*: 6.

As Heim suggests, the difference between commentaries and compendia is not always clear, nor should we assume a hard and fast distinction between the two categories of texts. The originality of these types of texts lies in their selectivity and their “choices in organizing” the passages which they cite, but there is also a significant amount of originality to be found in the commentarial glosses provided in the compendia.

The materials that have been reassembled within the *Upās*, and the order in which they have been displayed, reveal one instance of a Buddhist’s attempt to provide a systematic and thorough interpretation of what the *Tipiṭaka* says about lay religiosity. This does not mean that the *Upās* is the correct or orthodox interpretation, nor is there any evidence to suggest that this text was itself held to be the only authority on the subject. Nevertheless, the *Upās* provides material from which to propose one solution to the problem we have in Buddhist Studies of arriving at a better understanding of how Buddhists themselves envisioned lay religiosity. This text, unlike the texts of the *Tipiṭaka*, is a coherent and unified voice. It presents one, single and systematic vision of lay religiosity. While it can not take us back to the 6th or 5th centuries BCE, and it can not reveal what the very first Buddhists may have thought about lay life, what the *Upās* can tell us is how one elite monk during the 12th or 13th centuries conceived of the ideal lay religious life.

Given the relatively large number of texts of which the Pāli canon consists, it is not surprising that religious literati would find it useful and perhaps necessary to distill the canonical

texts by composing compendia and anthology texts. In this way, compendia texts function similar to the manner in which Blackburn conceives of a practical canon.⁷⁸

As Blackburn distinguishes the concept of a practical canon from what she refers to as the formal canon, she notes:

The practical canon thus refers to *the units of text actually employed in the practices of collecting manuscripts, copying them, reading them, commenting on them, listening to them, and preaching sermons based upon them that are understood by their users as part of a tipīṭaka-based tradition.*⁷⁹

In other words, the practical canon consist of the texts, or portions of texts, that Buddhists used while simultaneously recognizing their relationship with a larger whole, which is conceived to be the locus of textual authority. I contend that the *Upās* may be thought of as the product of a practical canon in place at one period of history. In other words, the author of the *Upās* drew from the passages that he did in large part because they derived from the texts which he had available, but also because these passages must have been part of his education at some point in time.

A relatively large compendium, like the *Upās*, may serve as a type of frozen practical canon; a textual artifact that displays the wide range of texts and passages that were in use at a particular time period and in a particular setting. While we do not know a great deal about the context in which the text was originally produced, we may at the very least conclude that it provides some reasonable evidence for determining what texts and passages the Buddhists from the mid 12th-13th centuries in South India and Lanka might have used. That is, I believe compendia texts may provide a means of accessing the practical canons of more distantly

⁷⁸ Anne Blackburn, "Looking for the *Vinaya*: Monastic Discipline in the Practical Canons of the Theravāda" *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 22.2 (1999): 281-309.

⁷⁹ Ibid: 284.

situated (in terms of time as well as space) Buddhists. Additionally, we should consider the impact that such frozen practical canons may have upon later generations of Buddhists who may encounter a different set of texts and passages within the compendia when compared to the practical canon of their contemporary Buddhist world.

The question, of course, remains as to what extent this text was ever actually used by Buddhists; that is, how practical was it. Since there are several manuscripts that have survived across the Theravāda world, it is plausible that it has provided some inspiration to Buddhists, but there is no clear means of knowing the extent of this at present. What we do know, however, is that the text was important to the early Siyam Nikaya of the late Kandyan kingdom in central Sri Lanka (ca. 1750-1800), when the text was rewritten in the Sinhala language by Moratoṭa Dhammakkhanda, one of the heads (*Mahānāyaka*) of this Nikaya, who also happened to be a tutor the last two kings of Kandy. By looking at the *Upās*'s reemergence in the Kandyan period, we can see how those monks who accepted this Pāli text's distillation of the various ideas concerning the religiosity of laypersons re-appropriated the text at a later point in history. It is this historical instance of the resurgence of the *Upās* as a relevant practical canon that forms the subject matter of part two of this dissertation.

The Sinhala *Upāsakajanālaṅkāraya*

Prior to Moratoṭa Dhammakkhanda's Sinhala language reproduction of the text, the early leaders of the Siyam Nikaya had cited the *Upās* in their own treatises. Vāliiviṭa Saraṇankara himself, the founder of the lineage, cites the *Upās* in his *Sārārthasaṃgraha* within the discussion

of the ascetic practices (*dhutaṅga*-s).⁸⁰ There is also a close affinity between the story of Mahākappina as found in Saranankara's text and the version presented in the first chapter of the *Upās*.⁸¹ The chief pupil of Saranankara, Tibboṭuvāvē Buddharakkhita, cites the *Upās* in his *Śrī Saddharmāvavādasangrahaya*.⁸² It is plausible to hypothesize that elite members of the newly emergent Siyam Nikaya held the *Upās* in high regard and used the text in the formation of their own interpretation of proper lay Buddhist practice.

The Sinhala text reveals that Dhammakkhanda did attempt to achieve a high level of fidelity to the Pāli text. The most obvious differences come at the very beginning and end of the Sinhala text where whole sections were introduced to the text that were not a part of any known Pāli manuscript. Thus, the Sinhala text begins with an account of the Buddha's auspicious marks and his supernormal powers, and it ends with a description of the city of Kandy. While the latter is not as surprising, given that Ananda also concludes with a brief account of the location in which he composed the Pāli original, the former is a clear innovation on the part of Dhammakkhanda. Overall, however, the Sinhala text does maintain a close affinity to the Pāli, and I discuss this concern for fidelity, along with the strategies Dhammakkhanda employs to achieve it, in chapter six of the dissertation.

There is evidence that the Sinhala *Upās* has had a significant life within Sri Lankan Buddhism since its composition in the late Kandyan period. According to K.D. Somadasa's catalogue of palm leaf manuscripts in Sri Lanka, 206 different manuscript collections contain at

⁸⁰ Saddhatissa: 102. See *Sārārthasangraha*, ed. Sugunāsāra, Colombo, 1913: 331-332, 335-336, and 351.

⁸¹ Ibid. See *Sārārthasangraha*: 378-391 and *Upās*: I.185.

⁸² Saddhatissa: 103.

least one copy of the Sinhala *Upās*.⁸³ This is a fairly large number considering that this particular text had approximately 150 years in which it could be transmitted and copied before Somadasa created his catalogue, whereas older texts like the *Visuddhimagga* would have had over a millennium to find their way into numerous collections. The well-studied Pāli chronicle *Mahāvamsa* in comparison was only listed in 37 collections with its Sinhala translation listed in a paltry 3. On the other hand, the Pāli *Thūpavaṃsa* and the *Anāgatavaṃsa* have roughly the same count as the Sinhala *Upās*, and the *Dhammapada* and *Visuddhimagga* figure in at slightly higher numbers with copies in 236 and 232 collections respectively. This places the Sinhala *Upās* among rather prestigious literary company in terms of the numbers of manuscripts throughout the island. It is also noteworthy that interest in the Sinhala *Upās* has not died. As recently as 1997, a printed edition of the text was published by the Buddhist Cultural Center. The Pāli version, however, does not figure so prominently among the collections.

While the Sinhala text provides an opportunity for a more detailed historical investigation, for the various reasons outlined at the beginning of this chapter, I can not conduct such research with the Pāli version. Although I maintain that a rough date between the mid-to-late 12th and the late 13th centuries is likely, there is not enough evidence to conduct as detailed an historical enquiry as I do with the Sinhala version. Therefore, I recognize that an explanation of my approach to a study that incorporates both the Pāli and Sinhala texts is warranted.

⁸³ K.D. Somadasa, 1959: p.14. Also see Anne Blackburn, 2002(a): p.48. She notes that the library at Hanguranketa holds at least one copy of the Sinhala *Upās*. One text is listed specifically as “Sinhala Upāsakajanālankāra” while there is also a listing for another text (p.54) “Upāsakajanālankārāya” which may be another copy of the Sinhala given the ending of the title in “-ya” which typically denotes a Sinhala rather than a Pali text.

A Brief Note on Methodological Strategies

I approach the Pāli *Upās* with a combination of analytical techniques. My overall approach owes a great deal to the notion of illocutionary intentions, as presented by J.L. Austin and re-theorized by Quentin Skinner. This idea stipulates that any text may contain a performative element. In other words, the text is an attempt to perform an action, the very act of writing is an effort to achieve something. What this something is can be found within the text itself. The language, the arguments, the organizational strategy, the narrative techniques, literary tropes, and other aspects of the text itself may together be thought to constitute an action with an intention (or multiple intentions). As Skinner remarks:

To understand what any given writer may have been *doing in* using some particular concept or argument, we need first of all to grasp the nature and range of things that could recognizably *have been done* by using that particular concept, in the treatment of that particular theme, at that particular time.⁸⁴

In order to evaluate “the nature and range of things” that the *Upās* is doing by employing the tropes, arguments, and exegesis that I recover in this study, I pay attention to both the “particular concept” being used, the “particular theme” in question, and the “particular time” by historicizing the text to the extent that I am able given the relatively wide time frame within which I believe the text could have been written.

In the next chapter, for instance, I provide a reading of the *Upās*’ use of narratives to explain the benefits of going to refuge (*saraṇāgamana*). In order to interpret what the text is *doing in* using these *particular* stories in the treatment of the *particular* theme of going to refuge, I consider the historical frame within which the text was composed. As will become clear, the reason for the inclusion of these particular narratives is not apparent at first glance. By

⁸⁴ Skinner (1988): 77.

employing this Skinnerian approach, which emphasizes the attention to particularities and to history, I am able to arrive at a sound interpretation of the place of these narratives within the overall strategy of the text.

Rather than view a text as a passive object within which information is recorded, Austin and those who have followed him seek to ascertain the active side of texts. The repeated use of the preposition ‘in,’ a unique feature of Skinner’s account of his methodology which he takes from his reading of Austin, marks a difference between this approach and other methodologies, such as the extreme of contextual determinism. Rather than relying solely on contextual data to ascertain an author’s intentions *to* write, this approach focuses on the text itself, which when understood as an action, as an attempt to achieve something, can be read for traces of intentions. These intentions, as the repeated use of the preposition ‘in’ implies, lay within the textual act.

This signals at least two key points regarding the methodology that I implement: (1) an understanding of intention as something that is recoverable *in* the object of the text itself and (2) recognition of the text as a product of volitional activity performed by an agent, the author. It is my own intention is to recover, as accurately as possible, elements of this textually embedded intention lying within the Pāli *Upās*. However, this study which examines both the Pāli text of the *Upās* and the Sinhala text poses a few unique dilemmas.

First, the intentions *in* the Pāli text may differ in substantial ways from those of Dhammakkhanda *to* write. In recovering the intentions and discursive strategies *in* the Pāli, how can I account for their following through into the Sinhala text? That is, even if the attempt to faithfully reproduce the Pāli text on the part of Dhammakkhanda leads to an equally faithful reproduction of the intentions *in* the text, how can I be reassured that Dhammakkhanda shared

these intentions himself? Can this Skinnerian approach be utilized in the study of the vernacularization of a religious text? I believe it can.

In my study of the Sinhala *Upās*, I focus upon the changes and the additions that Dhammakkhanda made to the text in order to understand the unique intentions that he imbedded within his Sinhala language *Upās*. Accompanying this approach, I also discuss the relationship between Dhammakkhanda's intentions *to* write and the intentions recoverable from *within* his text. Unlike the Pāli version of the *Upās*, there is a greater deal of historical evidence that may be used to reconstruct the world in which Dhammakkhanda lived. Thus, although I remain concerned with uncovering the intentions from within the Sinhala version of the text itself, as I do in chapter six, I also provide a richer picture of the historical context within which Dhammakkhanda produced the text, in chapters five and seven. This portion of the study is meant to supplement, not predetermine, the understanding of the Sinhala text that I derive from reading its unique features.

Here, I am concerned with understanding the connections between the socio-religious worlds of Buddhists and the work of texts designed to inform, shape, and (re)produce them. No doubt other approaches to these same texts will yield different results, and as mentioned in the introduction, I welcome them. In what follows, I hope that the reader will find useful interpretations of this, as of now, understudied text. I also hope this study will encourage further work, not only on the *Upās* but on lay virtuosity more broadly.

Chapter 2: Going to Refuge

The *Saraṇāgamana Sutta* (the Sutta on Going to Refuge) consists of the following three lines in Pāli repeated three times:

Buddhaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi
Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi
Saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi

[I go to the Buddha as refuge
I go to the Dhamma as refuge
I go to the Saṅgha as refuge]⁸⁵

The *sutta* is brief and appears relatively uncomplicated; yet, it holds an importance in the ritual lives of Theravāda Buddhists that is often overlooked.⁸⁶ While a dramatic and usually public ritual of initiation marks the entrance into the monkhood (*pabbajjā*), the only contemporary ritual act of a lay person's entrance into the Theravāda Buddhist tradition(s) is the recitation of this simple Pāli verse. Other Buddhist traditions appear to have had, or continue to have, more complex forms of initiation for their lay members, but there are no known parallels within the Theravāda traditions of Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia.⁸⁷ It appears that recitation of the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta* is, in fact, the only contemporary form of lay Theravāda initiation that we consistently observe.

⁸⁵ The *sutta* can be found in the Khuddakapatha of the Khuddaka Nikaya. As noted in the previous chapter, there is a recognized possibility that the Khuddakapatha could have functioned as a manual for Buddhists, providing a condensed version of the Pāli texts from which to practice. I raise this point again later in this chapter.

⁸⁶ John Ross Carter provides the most detailed appraisal of *saraṇāgamana* as seen in the Pāli texts. See John Ross Carter and George Bond, 1982. Kate Crosby also draws attention to *saraṇāgamana* in Crosby, 2000.

⁸⁷ See Holmes Welch, 1967. Here, Welch discusses the various forms of Buddhist lay initiation, also considered 'going to refuge', in China at different points in history. The Chinese rituals included the issuing of certificates stating the date and place of going to refuge as well as the number of precepts taken. In some cases, initiates had ritual branding done to their heads or forearms. In other cases, Welch mentions large, group ceremonies where hundreds of initiates stated their going to refuge and took the precepts collectively. There is no known case like this in the traditions of Sri Lankan Buddhism.

However, there are no rituals that accompany a layperson's recitation of the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta* for the first time; thus, there is no clear initiation ritual marking one's becoming a lay Buddhist. Recitation of the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta* at any point, then, is enough to declare one's self a Buddhist, and it seems that the periodic repetition of the verses over the course of one's life on various occasions is more important than any single moment of initiation as such.

Most Buddhist rituals begin with a recitation of the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta*. When lay persons assemble at temple grounds for various occasions (to light oil lamps, offer donations to the temple and its resident monks, reverence the Buddha images, the Bo tree, and/or reliquary monuments), or conduct rituals in their homes (such as worship at the family shrine or worship with monks who were invited to the home to chant protective verses (*paritta/pirit*) for the family), they recite the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta* first. In this way, the *sutta* functions as part of an introductory rite, or an initiation rite in a looser sense of initiating larger rituals and ceremonies. It is an obligatory, voiced affirmation of one's status as a Buddhist on such ritual occasions, and its importance in Buddhist ritual remains relatively unexplored in academic studies.⁸⁸ In fact, the present-day formula by which laypersons go to refuge, and its shared use across the Theravāda world, is itself the product of historical developments within the tradition which have yet to be adequately explained.⁸⁹ We do know, however, that going to refuge was an integral part of

⁸⁸ There is a promising line for comparative study here. Many religious traditions maintain a rather standard and formulaic affirmation of religious identity that accompanies most (if not all) ritual performances. These affirmations could be studied as a category across traditions. The fact that these affirmations remain standard while the narratives, verses, songs, etc. included within the various rituals of the tradition fluctuate suggests that the affirmations form a surprisingly integral part of the tradition. Instances of commentary upon these affirmations, such as that found here in the *Upās*, provide good instances of intra-traditional constructions of religious identity.

⁸⁹ In current Buddhist practice, the lines “Namo tassa Bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa” [“The name of the Blessed One, the Noble One, the Perfectly Enlightened One”], are repeated three times before the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta* is recited. Then, the 5 precepts (*pañcasīla*) are generally recited. The ‘*iti pi so*’ recollection of the Buddha's qualities often follows the precepts. After this, there is a wide range of verses that could be recited, depending upon

Buddhist practice, including monastic practice, from relatively early on in the life of the tradition.

The *Mahāvagga* of the *Vinaya*, the canonical Pāli text which most clearly explains the rules for entering the monkhood (*pabbajjā*) states that the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta* alone was the formula by which individuals became monks or nuns (*pabbajjā*) and obtained higher ordination (*upasampada*).⁹⁰ Buddhaghosa's commentary on the *Vinaya*, the *Samantapāsādikā*, cites from this text in its own discussion of *pabbajjā* in the following passage:

‘Monks, I authorize the *pabbajjā*, the *upasampadā*, through these three refuge formula’, the meaning is ‘I authorize both the *pabbajjā* and the *upasampadā* through these three refuge formula, namely *buddhaṃ saraṇam gacchāmi* etc., said in this way three times, with purity on the part of both parties [the initiate and the officiate]’. Of the two, the *upasampadā* [performed in this manner] was later rescinded. For that reason it is no longer accomplished only through the refuges. Since the *pabbajjā*, on the other hand, continued to be authorized later by the statement, ‘Monks, I authorize the *pabbajjā* of a novice through these three refuge formula’, it is still valid through the taking of the refuges alone. For by this much he is established in the status of a novice.⁹¹

Here, Buddhaghosa states that *pabbajjā* may be conducted, in accordance with the *Mahāvagga*, by recitation of the “three refuge formula”, which is the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta*. However, the ritual of higher ordination (*upasampadā*) had become more complex, and recitation of the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta* was “rescinded”, and use of the *sutta* alone for this ritual had become obsolete. It was no longer enough by itself to confer the higher ordination status upon members of the monastic community. As Kate Crosby notes, in her analysis of Buddhaghosa's

the occasion. The *Saraṇāgamana Sutta* along with the preceding ‘*Namo tassa...*’ lines, the 5 precepts, and the ‘*iti pi so*’ recollection form a standard, liturgical formula. The historical development of this particular formula and its use in practice is not clear, yet commentarial and anthology texts like the *Upās*, which emphasize the recitation of the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta*, reveal parts of this history.

⁹⁰ *Mahāvagga* I.12.4

⁹¹ *Sp* 969, 34-970, 9, PTS. Translation cited from Kate Crosby, 2000: 464, brackets added. The relevant passage in the canon is *Mv* I.28.3

commentary on *pabbajjā*, recitation of the ten rules of conduct (*dasa sikkhāpada*) had become included in the *pabbajjā* ritual by the time of Buddhaghosa (ca. 5th century).⁹² Thus, the textual evidence supports the idea that monastic rituals of both initiation and higher ordination had developed into more elaborate forms over the course of the 1st millennium of the existence of Buddhism, even in the more conservative traditions. More recent evidence provides us with instances where monks spent considerable time debating the proper methods of performing these rituals, and there is a substantial body of scholarship that one can consult in order to reconstruct the history of *pabbajjā* and *upasampadā* across Theravāda regions.⁹³

While scholars have paid considerable attention to the rules for monastic behavior, including the rituals of initiation and higher ordination, unfortunately we have very little to inform us of the history of the rituals by which lay Buddhists became lay Buddhists. This is one reason why a study of the *Upās* is valuable. The first chapter deals entirely with how one becomes a lay Buddhist through going to refuge, before moving on to explain how such a lay Buddhist then becomes virtuous. As mentioned above, recitation of the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta* is one of the only means of ritually proclaiming one's religious identity as a Buddhist layperson in contemporary Theravāda communities, but the history of how this came to be is unclear. The fact that the *Upās* treats *saraṇāgamana* and the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta* with such importance (the

⁹² Crosby, 2000: 471-472. In Crosby's excellent study, she highlights how Buddhaghosa was concerned with retrieving a type of 'canonicity' for proper Buddhist practice, which was aimed against other methods of practice prevalent at the time, especially that of the Andhakas (South Indians in the Andhara region). Crosby's study lends support to the hypothesis that Buddhaghosa originally traveled to Lanka in order to change the practice of Buddhism in his native South India. The success of his commentarial work across Lanka and Southeast Asia indicates that he was successful in initiating this change for parts of the Buddhist world, mainly those parts that we now call Theravāda. The importance of Buddhaghosa's commentaries in the production of Theravāda is recognized yet requires more research to understand.

⁹³ Other than Crosby's article *op.cit.* one should consult Francois Bizot, *Les Traditions de la Pabbajja en Asie du Sud-Est* (Göttingen: Vandenhoeck and Ruprecht, 1988). I am also thinking of the many 19th and 20th century disputes among monastic orders (*Nikāya*) about the proper procedures for higher ordination involving proper establishment of the ritual boundaries (*sīma*).

first chapter is an extended exegesis of this *sutta*) allows us evidence, hard to come by elsewhere, of how literary elites contributed to the development of a strong link between becoming (or maintaining one's identity as) a Buddhist layperson and recitation of this *sutta*.

Exegetical Strategies

The topics of the *Saraṇasīlaniddeso* (The Exegesis of the Moral Practice of Refuge) may be arranged into three categories: (i) textual exegesis of the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta*, (ii) analysis of *saraṇāgamana* as a practice, and (iii) narratives expressing the benefits of *saraṇāgamana*. The initial exegesis of the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta* consists of a description (traditionally referred to as a *nidāna*) of the context in which the *sutta* was first spoken by the Buddha, framed as a response to potential questions: by whom, when, where, and why was this *sutta* spoken? At first, the text answers each question in brief, following the *Paramatthajotikā*, the commentary to the *Khuddakapāṭha*, attributed to Buddhaghosa.⁹⁴ But, these answers are deemed insufficient. The text states:

However, [the question] ‘by whom was it taught’, and the other questions are not answered well. With respect to these things that are not clear, a doubt arises in the minds of the **new laymen and laywomen** such as ‘who is *Bhagavā*’ and ‘what indeed is an *arahat*?’ There would not be joy and gladness for those who are doubtful. There would not be entrance into the *sāsana* [the Buddhist institution] by means of *saraṇāgamana* [going to refuge], and joy and gladness would not be recognized. [These answers] should be known among them in detail for the sake of producing serene joy (*pasāda*) and for the sake of destroying doubts.⁹⁵

I note, here, the reference to “new laymen and laywomen” (*abhinavānam upāsakopāsikajanānam*) as the overall subject of the passage; a point to which I return below.

⁹⁴ For a discussion of this text see Hinüber, 1996: 127-129.

⁹⁵ Saddhatissa: 125-126. “Ettāvatā *kena desitan* ti ādayo pañhā na suṭṭhu pākāṭā honti. Apākaṭesu pana tesu abhinavānam upāsakopāsikajanānam, ‘ko Bhagavā, arahā nāma ko’ ti ādinā citte saṃsayo uppajjati. Saṅgātakaṅkhānam pan’ etesam pītipāmojjam na siyā. Asati ca pītipāmojje saraṇāgamanavasena sāsanotaro ca na siyā ti, tesam kaṅkhāvicchedanatthaṃ pasādajanatanatthaṃ ca vitthārato tad evañ ca veditabbam.”

The passage highlights the importance the text places upon the proper resolution of doubts and questions, which the new laymen and laywomen may have, *before* going to refuge (*saraṇagamana*) takes place. In fact, this passage claims that they either would not want to, or could not (it is ambiguous) go to refuge until these questions are resolved. Thus, the brief answers to the hypothetical questions provided by the source-text (*Paramatthajotika*) are supplemented in the *Upās* by an original addition of the author, with the intention of dispelling doubts and uncertainties. Neither the passage cited from the *Upās* above nor the lengthier answers that follow are included in the older commentary (*Paramatthajotika*). Rather, the *Upās* utilizes the traditional exegetical framework, provided by Buddhaghosa's commentary, as an opportunity to retell its own chosen narrative of the Buddha's life, from his decision to renounce his kingdom up to his decision to teach the *Dhamma* and establish a ministry of monks. That is, the text answers each question through a continuous narrative of the Buddha's life-story. The answer to one question simply continues the life-story of the Buddha where the previous answer left off.

This tactic serves two purposes. First, it provides the reader with a condensed account of the Buddha's enlightenment and decision to teach, thereby educating the reader (and/or the audience if the text is read aloud) as to the origins of the tradition and the importance of the Buddha. Secondly, it situates the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta* within a traditional, mytho-historical narrative, which ties the recitation of the *sutta* across time, back to the moment when the Buddha initiated his first disciples. Thus, Buddhists could see their participation in *saraṇāgamana* as part of a longer religious history, and they could see themselves as part of a longer lineage of devotees reaching back to the Buddha's own lifetime.

An interesting aspect of this particular narrative account of the Buddha's life is that very little attention is paid to the pre-enlightenment and the enlightenment experience itself. These portions of the Buddha's life-story are rather hastily retold in the answer to the first question (by whom was the *sutta* spoken?).⁹⁶ The remaining questions are answered by retelling the immediate, post-enlightenment episodes in the life of the Buddha.

The *Upās* answers the second question (where was it spoken?) through a retelling of the story of the seven weeks following the enlightenment. During this time, the Buddha encounters two merchants (*dve vāṇijā*) named Tapassa and Bhallika, who become the first laypersons.⁹⁷ They are referred to as two-word laymen (*dve vācikā upāsakā*) because they could only take refuge in the Buddha and the Dhamma, as the Saṅgha had yet to be formed. Before parting, the Buddha offers them a hair from his head as a relic to venerate. The account also states that Tapassa lived as an *upāsaka* “having gone to Rājagaha, having heard the teaching of the Master [the Buddha], and became established in the fruit of Stream-Entry”, and Bhallika, “having become a monk (*pabbajjivā*) and having meditated (*vipassitvā*) became one who possesses the six super-knowledges (*chalabhiñño*).⁹⁸ Thus, the first meeting was not the final encounter with the Buddha, and each of the two men is said to have gone on to great religious achievement, albeit in two different ways, that of *upāsaka* and that of a monk.

The more detailed depiction of this episode, when compared to the condensed narrative in the preceding question's answer, suggests that the *Upās* wishes to highlight this moment in the Buddha's life. There are at least two noteworthy points to draw from this particular story. One

⁹⁶ *ibid.*: 126-128, *Upās* I. 17-29.

⁹⁷ The story occurs in *ibid.*: 130-131, *Upās* I. 41-46.

⁹⁸ *ibid.*: 131, *Upās* I. 46. According to the PTS (p.64), the six super-knowledges are: (1) *iddhi*, glossed as levitation, (2) *clairaudience*, (3) *thought reading*, (4) *recollection of one's previous births*, (5) *recollection of others' previous births*, (6) and *certainty of one's liberation*.

is that the very first disciples of the Buddha each follow different religious paths. Tapassa becomes an *upāsaka* and Bhallika a monk. The second is that there is nothing to indicate that the *upāsaka* path is a deficient or a simplified version of the monastic path. In fact, Tapassa (the laymen) attains the fruit of Stream Entry (*sotāpatiphala*), a significant achievement for monk or layperson alike.⁹⁹ This story, then, suggests that from the very beginning of Buddhism there were two paths, simultaneously begun in the persons of Tapassa and Bhallika, and that the *upāsaka* path is portrayed as a different yet no less promising religious subjectivity.

At the end of the seven weeks, the story continues, the Buddha thinks that his truth (his *dhamma*) is so profound (*gambhīro*) that he cannot teach it to others, but the god Sakka convinces him that he should do so for the benefit of the world. Thus, the Buddha travels to the Deer Park at Isipatana, and he teaches the first sermon (*Dhammacakkappavattana Sutta*) to the students of two of his former (pre-enlightenment) teachers, Ālāra and Uddaka, and the *Upās* concludes its answer to this question (where was it spoken?) having situated the Buddha at the Isipatana Deer Park.¹⁰⁰

Considering that the *Upās* takes the time to relate this story, in comparatively more detail than that of the pre-enlightenment life of the Buddha or the enlightenment experience itself, suggests a preoccupation with the stories of the founding of the Buddhist tradition by the Buddha post-enlightenment. The first question's answer provides a very brief, condensed account of the Buddha's pre-enlightenment life as a prince, his decision to leave the palace, and his eventual attainment of enlightenment. It serves as a short reminder of who the Buddha was, and it notes

⁹⁹ I also point to the fact that the hair relic was offered so that both the layman and the monk could venerate it. This compliments Kevin Trainor's study of relic worship, Trainor (1997), and Gregory Schopen's analysis of epigraphy, (Schopen 1997), which suggests both monks and laypersons practiced relic worship from early on in the life of the Buddhist religion.

¹⁰⁰ Saddhatissa: 132-133, *Upās* I. 51-53.

some of the key moments in this part of the Buddha's life-story. Yet, the *Upās* is more concerned with telling the story of how the Buddha began to teach and how he began to build the community of his followers (the *saṅgha*).

The *Upās* continues with the Buddha's life-story in its answer to the third question (when was it spoken?). Here, the Buddha persuades the students of his former teachers to become monks, and he establishes them in *arahat*-ship. He then notices the qualities for enlightenment in a young man named Yasa, and establishes this man along with 54 others in *arahat*-ship having initiated them into the monkhood.¹⁰¹ At this point, the Buddha is said to utter the following (taken from the *Buddhavaṃsa* commentary):

Making this earth for the welfare of thers and for your own,
Fare along, monks, speaking Dhamma to men.
Dwell in lonely places, on mountain-slopes and in forests,
Constantly making known to the world my True Dhamma.
Set forth, monks, explaining Dhamma's message. There are
Good practices for the welfare of creatures: (such is) my word.
Close every door to states of woe; cankerless, without equal,
Open the door of the way to liberation in heaven.
The Teaching with the practices is the abode of special qualities
Such as compassion. Increase enlightenment and faith throughout
The world.
To those householders who are supporters from their constant
giving of material things, render a service in return by the giving
of Dhamma.
When you are teaching True Dhamma, raise aloft the banner of
Seers. With everything done that should be done, fare along for
the good of others.¹⁰²

¹⁰¹ *ibid.*: 133, *Upās* I. 54.

¹⁰² *ibid.*: 134, *Upās* I. 55-57. Cross-referenced to *Buv* A 19. The translation is from Horner (1978): 28-29. The Pāli text reads: "Parattham c'attano attham karontā paṭhaviṃ imaṃ/ vyāharantā manussānaṃ dhammaṃ caratha bhikkhavo.// Viharatha vivittesu pabbatesu vanesu ca/ pakāsayantā saddhammaṃ lokassa satataṃ mama.// Karontā dhammadūteyyaṃ vikkhyāpayatha bhikkhavo/ santi atthāya sattānaṃ subbatā vacanaṃ mama.// Sabbam pidahatha dvāraṃ apāyānaṃ anāsavaṃ/ saggamokkhassa maggassa dvāraṃ vivarathā samā.// Desanāpaṭipattīhi karuṇādiguṇālayā/ vuddhiṃ saddhañ ca lokassa abhivaḍḍhetha sabbaso.// Gihīnaṃ upakarontānaṃ niccam āmisadānato/ karotha dhammadānena tesam paccūpakāraṃ.// Samussayatha saddhammaṃ desayantā isiddhajaṃ/ katakattabbakammantā parattham paṭipajjathā ti.//"

The inclusion of this entire verse, taken from the commentary, suggests that it has a considerable importance to the author of the *Upās*. This passage tells how the first missionary expedition of the Buddha's monks took place, and it is significant that the *Upās* makes this particular episode the climax of its Buddha narrative. As part of its intention to dispel doubts and uncertainties in the minds of new *upāsakas*, it relates the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta* to the first moment in Buddhist history when the first *arahats* were sent out by the Buddha himself to teach the Dhamma as missionaries.¹⁰³ The *Upās* concludes by stating:

Having instructed [them] in this way, he sent [them] out in every direction. It [the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta*] was spoken while the monks who were sent out were teaching the Dhamma to the world for the happiness and welfare of many people.¹⁰⁴

Here, in the answer to the third question (when was it spoken?), we find an explicit link between the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta* and the very first missionary expedition of the newly formed *saṅgha*.

The importance of the *Upās*' selection of this particular version of the narrative is explained by Jonathan Walters' comparison between it and an earlier version found in the *Mahavagga* of the *Vinaya*. In describing the latter version, Walters notes:

The Buddha does not enjoin/permit all Buddhists of all times to wander forth wandering; the frames make very clear that he uttered this passage only once, at the very beginning of his career as Buddha. It is not even enjoined upon/permitted to all *monks* of all times, but rather quite specifically enjoined upon/permitted to the first sixty arahants only. I have located no evidence that pre-modern Buddhists considered this something the Buddha said annually or implied for perpetuity (*contra* many Buddhologists and modern Buddhist missiologists). There is most certainly no evidence that pre-modern Buddhists believed the Buddha to have articulated in this moment some kind of master plan for the conversion of the world.¹⁰⁵

¹⁰³ Also notice the use, here, of the term householders (*gihin*) rather than *upāsaka*-s. It is the community of householders who offer food and alms to the monks, thereby rendering them worthy of receiving the gift of Dhamma in return; the *upāsaka* being a subjective identity distinct from (although potentially overlapping with) that of the householder.

¹⁰⁴ *ibid*, *Upās* I. 58. "Evaṃ ovaditvā disāsu pesesi. Evaṃ pesitesu bhikkhūsu bahujaṇahitāya sukhāya lokassa dhammadesanaṃ karontesu bhāsitaṃ."

¹⁰⁵ Jonathan Walters, *Rethinking Buddhist Missions*, Dissertation: University of Chicago, 1992: 220.

The point that Walters makes in his interpretation of the *Mahavagga* version is that it was not a missionary text. There is no injunction for all Buddhists to take up this charge of wandering, and as Walters points out, neither are all monks asked to do so. Instead, Walters suggests, quite correctly I believe, that this version of the story provides a narrative means of explaining how the *vinaya* rules came about. Once the monastic community becomes too large, the Buddha commanded the monks to go forth and move to new areas. When all monks lived together, there was no need for monastic boundary lines (*sīma*) or organizational rituals (such as the *patimokkha*). It was the initial dispersal of the monks which created the need for a more detailed code of regulations. However, when Walters considers the version that appears in our text, which derives from the commentary to the *Buddhavaṃsa*, he states that we see something new:

...namely, the beginnings of what was to burgeon into a major discourse of the medieval period: the metaphorical analysis/textualization of the activity of preaching. Here the action of preaching the Truth becomes an object of discourse in a new way...here we have the act of preaching itself glorified and clarified, a fresh canvas for adjectives and metaphors.¹⁰⁶

Walters' reading of the *Buddhavaṃsa Atthakathā* version of the story, which appears in the *Upās*, seems to present a challenge to his initial statements made when discussing the *Mahavagga* version. That is, the fact that medieval texts "glorified and clarified" preaching suggests a new stance on disseminating the Buddha's *sāsana*. Although there may be no evidence that pre-modern Buddhists had a "master plan for the conversion of the world," narratives like the one here lend weight to the idea that medieval Buddhists did seek to spread the *Dhamma* to new places. Thus, I find the *Upās*' choice of narrative revealing. It suggests a concern for dissemination of the Buddhist teachings through preaching, which as Walters explains, was a common theme of medieval Buddhist textual discourse in general.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid: 253.

The final question (why was it spoken?) receives the briefest response: “it was spoken for the purpose of renunciation and higher ordination (*pabbajjattthañ ca upasampadatthañ ca bhāsitam*).”¹⁰⁷ We see, here, that the *Upās* recognizes the initial use of the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta* as a ritual formula. However, there is a problem in comprehending why the *Upās*, if it were intended for laypersons, would draw this connection? Would not such a text state that the *sutta* was spoken for the benefit of all Buddhists, laypersons included? In other words, since the text expresses a concern with the doubts that might arise in the minds of new laymen and laywomen when going to refuge, why would it conclude its Buddha narrative by stating that the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta* was spoken for the purposes of monastic rituals, with no mention of lay or *upāsaka* rituals? This leads to an apparent contradiction between what we have conceived of as the intended audience of the *Upās* and the purpose for which the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta* was spoken. However, as I explain below, there is a good reason for this. The *Saraṇāgamana Sutta* was, according to the Pāli textual tradition, historically used for monastic rituals. In time, it became the formula for becoming an *upāsaka*, although there were other means for doing so prior to the use of the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta*. In this way, the passage in question merely explains the first instance of the use of the *Saraṇāgamana* formula, the *pabbajjā* and *upasamapadā* ceremonies for monastics, and this is in keeping with the history of the formula’s use according to tradition. As we will see, the formula does become part of the *upāsaka*’s own initiation.

This first section of the chapter on *saraṇāgamana* concludes with an exegesis of each of the three gems that constitute the Triple Gem (the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha). There is nothing noteworthy about the exegesis of the first two terms, but consider the explanation of

¹⁰⁷ *Upās* I. 59

saṅgha. It begins with an interpretation of saṅgha as meaning the 8 types of people (or 4 pairs) that constitute the noble disciples (*ariyasāvakā*), and it cites a verse from the *Vimānavatthu* for support.

This *sāvakasaṅgha*, the *saṅgha* of the noble disciples, is not identical to the monkhood. There are several passages in the Pāli canon that clearly define this *sāvakasaṅgha* as constituted by all people (monastic or lay, male or female) who have reached the most advanced stages of the Buddhist path.¹⁰⁸ The *sāvakasaṅgha* is distinguished from the monkhood as a whole through the use of the term ‘ordinary *saṅgha*’ (*pothujjanikasaṅgha*) meaning monks who have not reached the advanced stages of the path. While members of the monastic community (*bhikkhusaṅgha*) may be included among the noble disciples (*sāvakasaṅgha*), the two groups are distinguished by two different criteria; the former by adherence to a code of discipline and membership within a religious institution, and the latter by progress along a religious path.

The interpretation of the saṅgha gem (*saṅgharatna*), to which one would go for refuge, as the noble disciples (*sāvakasaṅgha*) and not the institutional body of the monks (*bhikkhusaṅgha*) is in accordance with the commentarial tradition which the *Upās* has drawn upon thus far.

However, the text continues:

The term ‘*saṅgaho*’ [as support] is to be understood in terms of the *dāna* to the ordinary *saṅgha* as well [as to the noble *saṅgha*], like prior intentions (*purimācetanā*) are situated at the early portion of the practice. Even though one is not included among the noble disciples who have vision and moral conduct, nevertheless, it should be known that ‘*saṅgaho*’ [included in the community] is one who is worthy of adoration and worthy to receive gifts from being included with the ordinary (*pothujjanikena*) [community] that is on the path to nirvana. Thus, both meanings of the word ‘*saṅgha*’ are to be known. This is *saṅgha*.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁸ See especially Robert Bluck, “The Path of the Householder: Buddhist Lay Disciples in the Pāli Canon” *Buddhist Studies Review* 19 (2002): 1-18; and Jeffrey Samuels, “Views of Householders and Lay Disciples in the *Sutta Piṭaka*: A Reconsideration of the Lay/Monastic Opposition” *Religion* 29 (1999): 231-241.

¹⁰⁹ Saddhatissa: 137, *Upās* I. 73: “Pothujjanikasanghassāpi pubbabhāgapāṭipadāya ʔhitattā purimācetanā viya dāne etth’eva saṅgaho daṭṭhabbo. So pi hi kiñcā pi ariyena diṭṭhisīlasāmaññena asaṃhato nīyānikapakkihiyena pana

This passage marks a break from the earlier commentarial tradition, and it draws a link between the *saṅgha* of the three refuges and the monastic *saṅgha* (*bhikkhusaṅgha*), including those monks who would not be considered part of the group of noble disciples (*ariyasāvakaśaṅgha*). This is remarkable since going to refuge, as will become clear, entails a practice of devotion and submission to the Triple Gem. This textual maneuver, then, creates a foundation from which one may argue for greater devotion, on the part of the laity, towards the monastic *saṅgha* as a whole (not just those monks and nuns who are believed to have reached a high level of religious achievement). In other words, the reverence for the noble disciples is maintained. Yet, the text also puts forth a new argument for devotion to the monastic order *in toto*. What this devotion consists of is clarified in the ensuing part of this first chapter.

The Practice of Going to Refuge

Following the exegesis of the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta*, the *Upās* begins a discussion of going to refuge as a practice. Again, the *Upās* follows Buddhaghosa (this time the commentary to the *Majjhima Nikaya*, the *Papañcasudani*) in its description of *saraṇa*:

Therefore, refuge should be gone to, by a layman or laywoman who is going to refuge, by: [1] giving up one's self to the Buddha and the others [saying], 'starting from today, I dedicate myself to the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Saṅgha'; [2] becoming devoted [saying], 'starting from today, consider me devoted to the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha'; [3] undertaking studentship [saying], 'starting from today, consider me a pupil of the Buddha, the Dhamma, and the Saṅgha'; and [4] the highest obedience [saying], 'starting from today, I bow, render service, raise my hands in salutation, and offer homage to the Buddha and the remaining triple gems'.¹¹⁰

pothujjanikena saṃhatattā dakkhineyyapaṇipātāraho saṅgaho yevā ti veditabbo. Evaṃ saṅghasaddassā pi ubhayattho veditabbo. Taṃ saṅghaṃ.”

¹¹⁰ *ibid.*: 145. “Tasmā saraṇaṃ gacchantena upāsakena vā upāsikāya vā ‘ajja ādim katvā aham attānam Buddhassa niyyātemi, dhammassa, saṅghassā ti, evaṃ Buddhādīnam attapariccajanavasena vā, ‘ajja ādim katvā aham Buddhaparāyano dhammaparāyano saṅghaparāyano, iti mam dhārethā’ ti evaṃ tapparāyanabhāvena vā—‘Ajja ādim katvā aham Buddhassa antevāsiko dhammassa saṅghassa it imam dhārethā’ ti evaṃ sissabhāvūpagamanena vā—‘Ajja ādim katvā aham abhivādanam paccupaṭṭhānam añjalikammam sāmīcikkammam Buddhādīnam yeva tinnam vatthūnam karomi, it imam dhārethā’ ti evaṃ Buddhādisu paramanipaccākārena vā saraṇaṃ gantabbam.

These statements establish the *upāsaka* in a relationship of selfless devotion as an obedient student of the three gems, the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha. Going to refuge, in this sense, requires an attitude of submissiveness and respect, as well as a willingness to take instruction. The language used in this passage is suggestive of a ritual utterance. The repetitive quality of each statement along with the phrases ‘starting from today’ and ‘consider me’ signal a performative aspect to these statements. The oath-like statements portray going to refuge for the *upāsakas* as a definite transformation with a recognized point of initiation (‘starting from today’). Thus, the devotion expected of an *upāsaka* begins with an affirmation that one has indeed gone to refuge and has entered into a subservient relationship with the Triple Gem. As previously noted, this means the monastic saṅgha as well as the saintly *sāvakasaṅgha*, the Dhamma, and the Buddha.

Yet, these ritual statements are derived from the older commentaries, and the *Upās* itself suggests that the four methods were no longer in vogue by the time it was written:

It should be known that today, however, some go to refuge by some other means than these four ways. They go to refuge by themselves repeating the words spoken by a teacher: ‘Buddham saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi’, or by themselves, in some other esteemed place such as a Bodhi tree, Cetiya, or statue, or some other such place.¹¹¹

This passage provides a rare glimpse into the history of the practice of going to refuge. At the time the *Upās* was written, the four older modes of going to refuge had begun to erode, if they had not yet vanished altogether, and the new practice of reciting the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta* with a teacher or by one’s self (in the proper Buddhist environment) was gaining in popularity. This is where we find some means of negotiating the discrepancy noted above where the *Upās* tells us

¹¹¹ *ibid.*: 145, *Upās* I. 127. “Yam pana ajjatanā ‘Buddham saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi, sanghaṃ saraṇaṃ gacchāmi’ ti ācariyehi vuttavacanam anukaronto sayam vā Bodhicetiyapaṭimādinam aññatarasmiṃ garuṭṭhānīye vā aññasmiṃ vā yattha katthaci saraṇaṃ gacchanti, te pi tesaṃ yeva catunnaṃ ākārānaṃ aññataravasena gacchanti ti vedittabbā.”

that the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta* was spoken for the purpose of monastic initiation and higher ordination. As previously mentioned, the text is simply maintaining accuracy with the tradition. Initially, when the Buddha sent out the first missionary expedition, the *sutta* was spoken as a formula for these monastic rituals. By the time of Buddhaghosa, the monastic rituals had grown more complex, and by the time of the *Upās*, recitation of the *sutta* has developed into a means for laypersons to become *upāsakas*. Thus, the text correctly tells the reader that, historically, the *Saraṇāgamana Sutta* was uttered for the monastic rituals, but now, it is part of the ritual by which an *upāsaka* goes to refuge.

This passage is followed by a brief addendum to the fourth, older mode of going to refuge (the highest obedience), which states the unacceptable reasons for paying homage to the Triple Gem. These are explained as follows:

Therefore, a Sākiyo or Koliyo worships thinking, ‘Buddha is our relative’, and *saraṇa* is not taken. Or, one worships with fear thinking, ‘The ascetic Gotama is worshiped by kings, of great majesty, not worshipping him would be unprofitable,’ and *saraṇa* is indeed not taken. One remembers something learned in the presence of the Blessed One in the time of the Bodhisattva, and in the time of the Buddha, having learned something [practical] akin to...

‘Wealth should be enjoyed with one part
Business should be conducted with two
The fourth should be saved,
There will be misfortunes [D. III.188]’

one worships saying, ‘teacher’, and *saraṇa* is not taken. But, [if] one worships thinking, ‘he is the most worthy of praise in this world,’ *saraṇa* is taken. These distinctions of going to refuge should be known.¹¹²

¹¹² *ibid.*: 146, *Upās* I. 130-131. The passage reads: “Tasmā Sākiyo vā Koliyo vā ‘Buddho amhākaṃ nātako’ ti vandati agahitam eva saraṇaṃ. Yo vā ‘samaṇo Gotamo rājapūjito mahānubhāvo avandiyamāno anattam pi kareyyā’ ti bhayena vandati agahitam eva hoti saraṇaṃ. Yo hi Bodhisattakāle Bhagavato santike kiñci uggahitaṃ saramāno Buddhakāle ca—‘Ekena bhoge bhuñjeyya/ dvīhi kammaṃ payojaye/ catutthaṃ ca nidhāpeyya/ āpadāsu bhavissatī ti.’—evarūpiṃ anusāsaniṃ uggahetvā ‘ācariyo’ ti vandati agahitam eva hoti saraṇaṃ. Yo pana ‘ayaṃ loke aggadakkhiṇeyyo’ ti vandati, ten’ eva gahitaṃ hoti saraṇaṃ ti evaṃ saraṇāgamanappabhedo veditabbo.”

Again, the devotional nature of *saraṇāgamana* is stressed. It requires a strict, faithful commitment to the Triple Gem as one's teacher and guide, but this must be done out of a conviction that the Triple Gem is the "most worthy of praise". Rationalized commitment and self-interested displays of reverence to the Triple Gem are not considered true practices of going to refuge. This denies Pascal's wager and other rational choice decisions for religious practice.¹¹³

In another passage, also derived from Buddhaghosa's *Papañcasudani*, we see parameters placed upon the status of one's going to refuge through a discussion of defiled (*sankilesa*) and broken (*bheda*) *saraṇa*. Here, the text argues that one's *saraṇa* is defiled by such things as ignorance, doubt, and false knowledge (*aññānasamsayamicchāññānādayo*).¹¹⁴ The breaking of *saraṇa* is less straightforward. The text claims that one's *saraṇa* is broken by associating with other religious teachers; more precisely: relinquishing one's self, devoting one's self, taking up studentship with, and/or paying homage to another as a teacher. However, the text also qualifies this idea by stating that *saraṇa* is *not* broken: (1) if one hands themselves over to a master without placing trust (*anokappeti*) in him or her, (2) if one takes up studentship with a teacher of non-religious arts, such as a craftsman, desirous of learning an art or trade (*kammāyatanādīnam*

This passage is also found in the Sinhala *Buddha Ādahilla*, studied by Carol Anderson. See Anderson, 2003: 176. However, Anderson's translation (and the analysis that follows) is the opposite of what is said here in the *Upās*, in the source text, and in the version of the *Buddha Ādahilla* that I have (Kiriālle Ñāṇavimala, *Buddha Ādahilla* (Colombo: M.D. Gunasena, 2007). Anderson claims that the text sanctions, rather than opposes, these four reasons for paying homage. I am inclined to disagree and see Anderson's reading as the result of a substantial error of translation (not accounting for the word 'novē' at the end of this passage (p.11 in my version). This is an unfortunate mistake in what is an otherwise important, useful, and frequently cited article. I return to the *Buddha Ādahilla* in chapter 7.

¹¹³ The reference to Pascal is in response to Anderson's analysis. See the preceding note.

¹¹⁴ Saddhatissa: 146.

ugganhitukāmo), or (3) if one pays their respects to a non-Buddhist ascetic because he or she is a relative (*ñātako*).¹¹⁵

This passage suggests that the monks, who produced and preserved the *Upās* and its source text, were interested in establishing boundaries between their lay community and other religious communities. The guiding principle at play, here, seems to be the preservation of the purity and the singularity of the student/devotee relationship between the *upāsaka* and the Triple Gem. However, the exceptions to breaking *saraṇa* mentioned in the text reveal that other forms of practice were perceived as either non-threatening to, or outside the sphere of religion.¹¹⁶

The first exception, for instance, indicates that other forms of servitude, possibly political or economic relationships of subservience, would fall outside of *saraṇa* as it is conceived here. Interestingly, this exception also leaves open the possibility of serving another religious leader unfaithfully. The second exception indicates that other types of student-teacher relationships were permitted and deemed unthreatening to the Buddhist institution; particularly forms of apprenticeship in a trade, but also scholarship in the arts and sciences. The final exception suggests that family relationships were unproblematic, even in cases where a family member happened to be a member of another tradition.

The boundaries of the lay community established in the *Upās* rest firmly on each member's personal, faithful commitment to the Triple Gem as one's only religious teacher and

¹¹⁵ *ibid.*: 147.

¹¹⁶ This would suggest that, contrary to what some scholars have claimed, religion was not always an all-encompassing or unbounded phenomenon of pre-modern societies. See, for example, the argument put forth by Carrette and King (2005): 3. They write: "It is clear for instance that it makes little sense to draw a sharp distinction between the secular (politics, economics, science, philosophy) and the religious dimensions of human life in any other culture than those conditioned by modern liberalism and the European Enlightenment philosophies of the eighteenth century." Contrary to their claim, pre-modern peoples also discursively formed the boundaries for religious traditions and saw certain aspects of their lives as removed from religious concern. This would have important implications for the study of secular culture, and it would challenge contemporary theorists of secularism to look for historical instances of the formation of a 'religious sphere' in pre-modern times.

guide. If there is any disruption or challenge to this relationship, then the *saraṇa* for that individual is considered broken. A faithful (*okappita*) relationship with a teacher of another religious tradition is the central threat to the maintenance of the lay community. So long as one continues to place their trust in the Buddhist institution, their going to refuge remains intact. In this case, beliefs are secondary. If one holds false views or is ignorant of certain Buddhist teachings, their *saraṇa* is merely defiled not broken. They continue to be thought of as a member of the laity, albeit one who needs to alter their views and become mentally purified. According to the *Upās*, the importance of *saraṇagamana* to the formation of a virtuous lay subject lies in its interpretation as an expression of devotion and faithful commitment to the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha.¹¹⁷ The final portion of this first chapter attempts to show the audience why such devotion is desirable.

The Fruits of Refuge

The *Upās* ends this first chapter on *saraṇāgamana* by speaking of the benefits that come with going to refuge. These incentives are expressed in two ways. One is through a discussion of the meaning of *saraṇa*, and the other is through the medium of religious narratives taken from other commentarial literature, especially the commentary to the *Dhammapada*, also attributed to Buddhaghosa. The *Upās*'s definition of *saraṇa* comes directly from the *Paramatthajotikā* (the commentary to the *Khuddakapāṭha*). The text states:

‘*Saraṇa*’ means ‘it kills (*himsati*) just by this act of going to refuge;’ the *saraṇa* of one who has gone to refuge kills and destroys fear, anxiety, sorrow, and the defilements produced from wrong livelihood. Especially by urging good conduct, like when he says ‘Live, monks, endowed with morality,’ and by turning people away from misery, such as

¹¹⁷ This idea of devotion is also expressed by Charles Hallisey, 1988 in his reading of other medieval Buddhist texts.

[by speaking of] ‘ripened, truly wicked rebirth from the taking of life’, the Buddha kills the fears of living creatures; this is *saraṇa*.¹¹⁸

The use of the term *himsati* may seem odd here, given both the importance of non-violence throughout the Buddhist traditions and our post-Gandhian sensibilities; yet, the *Paramatthajotikā*, the source-text for the above citation, also uses this term. Therefore, the *Upās* remains true to the commentarial tradition from which it draws. The active sense of the verbs ‘kills’ and ‘destroys’ renders the triple gem, seen within the act of going to refuge, in a nearly salvific light. While *saraṇagamana* itself requires action on the part of the *upāsaka*, the definition provided above gives the impression that the Triple Gem responds by actively allaying one’s fears. Of course, this is *not* the same as giving the *upāsaka* final liberation (*nibbāna*). So, the definition stops short of portraying the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha as saviors. The benefits that *saraṇa* bestows are mentioned briefly here, but in the later portion of this chapter, we find narratives which provide much more dramatic descriptions of the good results of going to refuge.

The benefits or fruits (*phala*) of going to refuge are classified into two distinct categories. The first is termed ‘the fruit of going to transcendental refuge’ (*lokuttarasaraṇagamanaphala*) and the second, ‘the fruit of going to worldly refuge’ (*lokiyasaraṇagamanaphala*). Each category is further subdivided as follows: the transcendental category of fruits may be either ‘fruit of ripening’ (*vipākaphala*) or ‘fruit of good rewards’ (*ānisaṃsaphala*); and the worldly fruits may be either ‘happiness in life/(re)birth’ (*bhavasampatti*) or ‘happiness in fortune’ (*bhogasampatti*). These rewards for going to refuge are described through narratives collected

¹¹⁸ Saddhatissa: 137-138, parentheses added. “Saraṇan ti ettha himsaṭi ti saraṇam saraṇagātānam ten’ eva saraṇāgamanena bhayam santāsam dukkham duggatiparikilesam himsaṭi vināseti ti attho. Visesto pana ‘sampaṇṇasīla, bhikkhave, viharathā’ ti ādinā hite niyojanena, ‘pānātipātassa kho pāpako vipāko abhisamparāyo’ ti ādinā anattathanivattanena ca Buddhho pi sattānam bhayam himsaṭi ti pi saraṇam.”

from older Pāli literature, mainly the commentary of the *Dhammapada*. The first two stories are intended to explain the transcendental fruit (*lokuttaraphala*) while the last are meant to explain the worldly fruit (*lokiyaphala*). Below, I briefly summarize these stories and offer an interpretation of why these particular narratives may have been selected for incorporation within this chapter. As will be clear from the synopses, it is not immediately apparent why the first two stories fit within this chapter, and further analysis is required to interpret the overall strategy of the text in choosing these narratives.

In the first narrative, we are provided with the story of Jambuka.¹¹⁹ In the beginning of the story, Jambuka seems to be doing well. In the time of the Buddha Tissa (a previous Buddha to the historical Gotama), Jambuka made offerings to the Bodhi tree. In the time of the Buddha Kassapa, he was a monk and lived in a dwelling provided by a householder. Things start to go awry when another monk, who happens to be an *arahat*, emerges from the forest bordering the village seeking a haircut. The householder supporting Jambuka sees this monk, and he takes good care of him, offering him food, shaving him, and finally inviting him to reside on his property. Jambuka becomes jealous at this point, and he tells the other monk, “Oh *bhikkhu*, it would be better to pluck out your hairs with your fingers, go naked, and subsist on excrement and urine than to live being attended upon by that wicked *upāsaka*.”¹²⁰ Jambuka leaves his residence and begins to do the vile things he had just mentioned. He dies and is reborn in a hell where excrement and urine are the only foods. After his time in hell had expired, he was born 500 times in the human world as a member of the Jain order (*nigaṇṭha*).

¹¹⁹ Saddhatissa: 149-152. The cross-reference is to the *Dhammapadatthakathā* II. 52-63. There is also a translation of this story in Burlingame, 1999 (1921): book V, p.130. I have provided my own translation here, which differs slightly from Burlingame’s. In the remaining narratives, I also use my own translation but provide the reference to Burlingame’s work for the reader.

¹²⁰ *ibid.*: 150. “‘*Bhikkhu*, iminā pāpūpāsakena upatṭhiyamānena, evam idha vasantena angulīhi kese luñcitvā acelena hutvā gūthamuttāhārassa jīvitam uttaman’ ti.”

Then, Jambuka is reborn during the time of the Buddha Gotama. His family tries to feed him breast milk, cow's milk, even clarified butter, but he will only drink urine. They try to feed him boiled rice, but he will only eat excrement. They become fed up with him, realize they cannot change his condition, and they abandon him. He decides to become a naked ascetic (*naggapabbajam*) and lives in the forest. Here, he performs various austerities. He doesn't bathe, he stands on one foot, and he fasts for months. People begin to bring him offerings, thinking that he is a great ascetic. During the day, he eats this food by licking whatever he can put on the tip of a blade of grass. But at night, he continues to eat excrement. He does not eat fresh feces which contained living beings (*allagūthakam sappānakam*), but only eats dried excrement. After living this way for 55 years, the Buddha happens to come across him. The Buddha sees like a lamp in the chamber of Jambuka's heart (*hadaybbhantare ghaṭe padīpam viya*), the qualifications for arahatship (*arahattūpanissayam*) blazing. He goes down to talk to Jambuka, he teaches him the Dhamma, and he establishes him in the fruit of Stream-entry. Jambuka eventually becomes a monk, and he even attains *arahat*-ship having practiced insight meditation.

This story may seem like an odd choice for this chapter. What could such a narrative have to do with going to refuge? The *Upās* follows this story with the explanation that, even after all of his horrible rebirths as an excrement-eater, which appears to be an endless cycle brought on by his jealousy and his rough speech to an *arahat*, after taking refuge in the Buddha, he is freed from this condition. The fact that so little is actually said with regards to 'going to refuge' in the narrative itself leads to confusion in understanding why it gets placed within this chapter.

I believe that the solution to this confusion lies in the story's depiction of Jambuka as a naked ascetic. After his release from hell, the narrative states that he became a *nigaṇṭha*. This is the term used to refer to ascetics of the Jain tradition. In his final rebirth where he encounters the Buddha, the austerities Jambuka undergoes also parallel the actions that a Jain ascetic might perform.

In accord with well-known Jain ascetic practice, Jambuka fasts (the ultimate form of which is fasting until death, or *santhārā*) and goes naked (*digambara*). Perhaps the most curious description, though, is Jambuka's avoidance of fresh excrement because it contained living beings. This appears to be related to the Jain concern with killing or harming any form of life, including the microscopic (an extreme interpretation of *ahimsa*). For instance, root vegetables are considered a baser food choice than a leafy vegetable due to the fact that roots grow underground and are believed to be teeming with life forms.¹²¹ The desire to take the practice of doing no harm (*ahimsa*) to its maximum within the Jain tradition is also what informs the practice of sweeping the ground as one walks in order to brush away insects that one might otherwise trample; or the practice of wearing a veil in front of one's mouth to avoid breathing in insects or small organisms or killing them with hot breath.¹²² Thus, the odd comment concerning Jambuka's decision to avoid the organism-containing excrement appears to be a clear reference to the ideals of Jain asceticism.

An interesting aspect of this narrative, then, is that it draws a connection between karmic punishment and Jain holy men. Jambuka is not portrayed as one who has become a committed believer of what the Buddhists would consider a false doctrine. He does not practice asceticism out of his conviction of the truth of Jain teachings. Rather, he has taken up this lifestyle by

¹²¹ Lawrence Babb, 1996: 23.

¹²² *ibid.*: 56.

means of his bad karma, namely, his insults and jealousy of an *arahat* and his subsequent fall into insanity. There are people who mistake his behavior for that of a great ascetic, but the only cause which the narrative mentions regarding his lifestyle is his inability to eat food because of a fault stemming from bad karma from an incident that happened hundreds of lives ago.

At this point, we might reconsider the possibility that the Pāli *Upās* was composed in South India. There is evidence that within the regions of the Pandyan and Cola kingdoms Jainism continued at least into the 15th century.¹²³ Even in the face of growing *Śaiva bhakti*, devotional Śiva worship, both Jainism and Buddhism continued to persevere. Although no substantial Jain community is noted to have existed on the island of Lanka at the time of the *Upās*'s composition (12th-13th centuries), the author himself may have found Jains to pose a competitive alternative if he indeed wrote the text in South India. Since we can not be certain about the location or date of the Pāli *Upās*'s composition, this can only remain a speculative hypothesis. It is important, however, to consider the literary role of Jain ascetics within Buddhist canonical and commentarial literature.

As noted above, the story of Jambuka comes from the *Dhammapadatthakathā*, believed to be a product of the 5th century (possibly, but not probably, a work of Buddhaghosa). The fact that Ananda incorporated this particular narrative into the *Upās* suggests a personal choice, and it is his intention in reproducing this story that is my concern here. However, the depiction of Jambuka as a *nigaṇṭha* may be as early as the 5th century. This means that the unflattering depictions of Jain-like ascetics have a relatively long history within the Pāli literary tradition and

¹²³ See Peter Schalk, 2002. There is a great deal of material evidence, provided throughout the second volume of Schalk's important work, which suggests the presence of Buddhism and Jainism in parts of the imperial Cola region of South India during the 12th and 13th centuries. I also refer to the literary evidence of anti-Buddhist, Tamil, Jain polemical texts such as the *nīlakēci* (10th century), its commentary (14th century), and the *tirukkalampakam* (14th century). These are discussed in Schalk, 2002: 609-644.

did not begin with the *Upās*. Regardless of the presence or absence of actual Jains in a given community, the image of the Jain-like ascetic still functions as a literary device whereby literate Buddhists conveyed comical or disgusting images of heretical ascetics as a means to improve their own image. Furthermore, despite the likely inspirational origins of such characters as Jambuka as Jain ascetics, such literary images would be equally powerful in critiquing other types of ascetics, particularly those who were not under the authority of the Buddhist monks.¹²⁴

Thus, the insult to Jain asceticism or alternative forms of asceticism in general, is intentional, and I argue that it is this feature of the narrative which renders it useful for inclusion in this chapter of the text. One method, by which the text produces the desirability of going to refuge, could be classified as *positive*. As noted above, the *Upās* describes *saraṇa* as “killing fears, anxieties, and sorrows”. There are also several types of fruits, or good consequences of going to refuge. But in this narrative, we find that desirability is produced through a *negative* portrayal of other forms of religiosity. The same is seen in the following narrative, the story of the Brahmin Aggidatto.¹²⁵

In this narrative, there was a brahmin pundit who lived in the Kosala kingdom named Aggidatta. He was an advisor to king Pasenadi. When that king died, he thought himself too old to remain at court, and he went off to become a wandering ascetic. He roamed between the three kingdoms of Kosala, Magadha, and the Kurus, and he advised people wherever he went. He told people that if desires should arise, such as the desire for wealth, they should go to the river, take up a container of sand from the river bank, and place it in a pile in a certain spot. After some

¹²⁴ There are literary devices like this in other traditions as well. The medieval Christian depiction of Pharisees for the purpose of constructing a literary foil to the religiously virtuous among their own community is but one example.

¹²⁵ Saddhatissa: 152-158. Cross-referenced as *Dhammapadatthakathā* III. 241-7. No reference found in Burlingame.

time, the people had created a large heap of sand at that spot. Eventually, a snake king (*nāgarājā*) settled there. Every month, the people would bring gifts to it.

Then, Aggidatta began to advise people to seek refuge (*saraṇa*) in: mountains, forests, parks, and trees. He claimed that they would be delivered from all sorrows by doing so. Meanwhile, the Buddha was residing at the Jeta grove. He saw Aggidatta and his retinue while looking over the world, and he also saw that they were endowed with the conditions for *arahat*-ship (*arahattassa upanissayasampannā*). He sent his disciple Moggallāna to talk with Aggidatta.

When Moggallāna arrives, he asks Aggidatta for a dwelling, expecting hospitality as a fellow ascetic. Aggidatta refuses saying that there is no place for him to reside, but Moggallāna is persistent. He asks who resides at the sand heap. Aggidatta tells him that a snake king dwells there, but Moggallāna requests that spot anyway. Aggidatta tells him that this is a serious concern, but since Moggallāna is persistent, he allows him to do as he wishes. As Moggallāna approaches the heap, the snake king sees him and decides to kill him. When the snake king attacks, Moggallāna engages him in a heated battle of magical powers, where each of them attacks the other with clouds of smoke and blasts of fire. Moggallāna defeats the snake king and subdues him. Aggidatta and his followers see this, and they are amazed. They go to Moggallāna in order to reverence him, but at this time the Buddha enters the scene. They observe Moggallāna bowing down to honor the Buddha; so, Aggidatta and company think to themselves, “Who is this that the monk who defeated the snake king bows down to? He must be even more powerful.” So they approach the Buddha, eager to venerate him. The Buddha asks what Aggidatta’s teachings are, and Aggidatta tells him about his teachings concerning refuge. The Buddha then instructs them not to go to such places for refuge, but to take refuge in the triple gem instead.

This story says a bit more than the previous one did about going to refuge, but the narrative technique is similar. Again, non-Buddhist practices are depicted and shown to be inferior to the Buddhist practices. It is well-known that worship of natural phenomena (e.g. mountains, forests, and trees) was a widespread practice throughout the South Asian subcontinent. Even today, people in South and Southeast Asia make pilgrimages to sacred natural spaces, but there is often a Buddhist reason for doing so. For example, in Sri Lanka, pilgrimages to Adam's Peak (Sumanakuta) are very popular. But, there is a Buddhist monastery at the top of the mountain where an image of the Buddha's footprint is located.¹²⁶ In addition, the Bodhi tree is venerated across the Theravada world. It seems that over the course of the history of Buddhism's development in the various regions of Asia, sacred natural monuments became Buddhist, thus maintaining a continuity with older practices yet replacing any earlier ideas about the purpose (and possibly the goal) of performing them.

In the Aggidatta narrative, we find a mythical account of this process. A group of misguided, brahmin ascetics become converted to the Buddhist path, after a convincing display of power from the Buddha's disciple, and take refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha instead of taking refuge in these natural sites in and of themselves. Also, what led Moggallāna to perform such a convincing display of his power was the fact that the ascetics had previously piled up sand to overcome covetous thoughts and worshipped a snake king who took up residence within the pile.

Thus, I argue that both the Jambuka narrative and the Aggidatta narrative serve to ridicule other forms of religious practice which were prevalent in South Asia; or if not ridicule, to at least make them appear so unattractive and non-efficacious that aspiring Buddhists would

¹²⁶ Also see Swearer (2004) for similar examples from Southeast Asia.

be convinced that these practices are of no use or misguided. Not only this, but the narratives make these practices, and those who perform them, seem powerless. Jambuka cannot control his perverse need to consume excrement, and Aggidatta cannot control the snake king, whom both he and his followers seem to fear as much as they worship. This negative portrayal of such religious practices, if intended to be a means of constructing virtuous Buddhist practice by reference to various religious others, now appears perfectly suitable to the first chapter of the *Upās*. The following narratives, however, do not rely upon this negative strategy.

The first story used to illustrate the worldly fruits of going to refuge is a simple and brief dialogue between the Buddha's disciple Moggallāna and the god Sakka.¹²⁷ Moggallāna tells Sakka about all the benefits of going to refuge that occur after a person has died. He says:

Going to the Buddha as refuge is indeed good, O Lord of the gods. Because of going to the Buddha as refuge, Lord of the gods, those beings that have died are reborn in a happy heaven world (*sugatiṃ saggaṃ lokaṃ*). They surpass the other gods in a thousand ways: with divine lifespan, divine complexion, divine happiness, divine fame, divine power, divine form, divine voice, divine smell, etc.¹²⁸

This is repeated for the remaining two gems as well. The god Sakka then goes on to tell a

Brahman of the benefits of going to refuge using a different list:¹²⁹

Those who have gone to the Buddha as refuge, the Dhamma as refuge, and the Saṅgha as refuge, sir, and are established in virtue, having died, some of them are reborn among the *Paranimmitavasavatti* gods, some are reborn among the *Nimmānarati* gods ...some are reborn among the gods of Tusita, etc.¹³⁰

¹²⁷ This story comes from *S* IV.270.

¹²⁸ Saddhatissa: 159, *Upās* I. 180. "Sādhu kho, devānaṃ inda, Buddhāṃ saraṇāgamaṇaṃ hoti, Buddhāṃ saraṇāgamaṇaṇetu kho, devānaṃ inda, evaṃ idh' ekacce sattā kāyassa bhedaṃ paramaṇā sugatiṃ saggaṃ lokaṃ uppajjanti. Ye aññe deve dasaṃ ṭhānehi adhigaṇhanti, dibbena āyunaṃ dibbena vaṇṇena dibbena sukhena dibbena yasena dibbena ādhipateyyena dibbehi rūpehi dibbehi saddehi dibbehi gandhehi dibbehi rasehi dibbehi phoṭṭhabbehi -pe- Dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gato hoti ti ādi."

¹²⁹ This passage is from *D* II.255.

¹³⁰ Saddhatissa: 159, *Upās* I. 182. "Ye keci, bhonto, Buddhāṃ saraṇaṃ gatā, dhammaṃ saraṇaṃ gatā, saṅghaṃ saraṇaṃ gatā, sīlesu paripūrākārino, te kāyassa bhedaṃ paramaṇā appakacce Paranimmitavasavattīnaṃ devānaṃ saṃvāyamaṃ uppajjanti, appakacce Nimmānaratīnaṃ devānaṃ -pe- Tusitānaṃ devānaṃ Yāmānaṃ devānaṃ saṃvāyamaṃ uppajjanti, te sabbanihīnaṃ kāyaṃ paripūrenti te Gandhabbakāyaṃ paripūrenti ti."

This compilation of the lists of pleasing rebirths (*bhavasampatti*), taken from the canonical *sutta* texts, serves as a simple means of rendering *saraṇāgamana* desirable. The desire for a fortunate rebirth is easy enough to understand. The remaining narratives take a different approach and illustrate the protective powers that derive from going to refuge.

In the first, a king named Kappina sends riders out to see if the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha have yet arrived in the world.¹³¹ The king rides his own horse through the royal gardens, and he notices a group of 500 merchants entering the city. He rides up to ask them if they have any news of the arrival of the religion (*sāsana*). They respond saying that yes, the Buddha has arrived in the city of Sāvatti. The king offers them 100,000 coins for this good news. He inquires about the Dhamma and the Saṅgha as well, and each time the merchants respond in the affirmative, telling Kappina that they have arrived in Sāvatti. The king, so delighted at this news, decides that he will ride to Sāvatti to become a monk. So, he writes a grant on a gold plate giving the kingdom to this group of merchants. As the king rides, with his retinue, towards Sāvatti, he encounters three rivers, which are impassable due to their depth and width. However, at each river, the king reflects on the qualities of the Triple Gem (one Gem per river) and he and his retinue are able to cross without so much as the edge of their horses' hooves getting wet.¹³² When they reach the Buddha, they listen to his teachings and all of them become monks. In the meantime, the merchants who gave him this news reach the king's palace. The queen, Anojā, asks how it is that these merchants are now in possession of the kingdom, and they

¹³¹ *ibid.*: 160-168, *Upās* I. 186-210. Cross-referenced with *DhpA* II. 117. Burlingame: book VI, p.167. The story presupposes that the king has knowledge of and waits for the Triple Gem even before it physically exists. This is somewhat messianic in the sense that he has an expectation of the Triple Gem's appearance, but has not yet encountered any one of the Gems himself. In the longer version of the story, found in the *Dhammapadāṭṭhakathā*, there is a background story that explains the king and queen's good deeds in previous lives. This is the reason why they now await the Triple gem in their current life, where this particular retelling of the story begins (possibly presupposing knowledge of the entire story on the part of the reader).

¹³² The king recalls the good qualities of the Buddha by the 'iti pi so...' formula noted above.

explain what had happened. Hearing that the Triple Gem has arrived in the world, the queen (no less pious than the king) desires to go to the Buddha and become a nun. So, she takes her retinue, and they proceed towards Sāvatti in their chariots. They encounter the same three rivers, and they cross them by the same method of recollecting the qualities of the Triple Gem. They are able to cross the rivers without so much as the rim of the chariots' wheels getting wet. When they reach the Buddha, they too listen to the teachings and become nuns.

This story does not mention going to refuge directly, yet it demonstrates the power of recollecting the qualities of the Triple Gem. According to the story, recollecting the Triple Gem endows one with supernatural powers. Both King Kappina and Queen Anojā were able to use this power to protect themselves and their retinues from the deep, rushing waters of the rivers in order to reach their shared goal of encountering the Buddha and becoming a monk or nun. The story could be read as a metaphor for the life of an *upāsaka*, but the *Upās* does not draw this conclusion. In fact, it turns rather quickly to another story by means of an interesting segue.

The text reads:

It is not amazing (*anacchariyam*) the endurance of the aforementioned king, who gave over his life to the Buddha, going [to him] by the power of recollecting the Buddha (*Buddhānussatibaleṇa*). But it is amazing (*acchariyam*), the non-burning of any of the body of Maṅgalabodhisatta, who performed reverent circumambulations (*padakkhiṇaṃ*) having given over his life to the *cetiya* [reliquary monument], of the teacher who has gone to nirvana, every night having lit lamps all over his body.¹³³

The text then tells this brief story, from the *Buddhavaṃsa* commentary, in which

Maṅgalabodhisatta envelopes his body with lamp wicks, lights himself, and walks around the

¹³³ Saddhatissa: 168, *Upās* I. 211. “Anacchariyam etaṃ pacchimabhavikassa rañño dharmānakam Sammasambuddham uddissa jīvitam paricajitvā Buddhānussatibaleṇa gacchantassa. Parinibbute pana satthari cetiyam uddissa jīvitam paricajitvā sakalasarīre dīpaṃ jālāpetvā sabbarattim padakkhiṇaṃ karontassa Maṅgalabodhisattassa yaṃ sarīra-adahanam tad’etaṃ acchariyam.”

cetiya (or *stupa*) of the Buddha every night without even a hair on his body getting singed.¹³⁴

The *Upās* ends the story with the brief comment: “The fires of passion cannot burn one who has gone to refuge”.¹³⁵

But once again, this story is followed by a segue which claims:

It is not amazing how the Bodhisatta gave over his life to the Buddha, having seen the *cetiya*. But, it is amazing how through play, a carter’s son became familiar with the recollection of the Buddha and instantly received the fruits [of the recitation].

In this final story, once again taken from the commentary to the *Dhammapada*, there are two boys playing a type of ball game.¹³⁶ One, who is the son of a man who has proper views (*sammādiṭṭhikassa putto*), a Buddhist, always wins; while the other, the son of one who has false views (*micchādiṭṭhikassa putto*), always loses. The son of the Buddhist recites the recollection of the Buddha whenever he is about to throw the ball, whereas the son of the one with false views recites a recollection of the noble ones of another tradition before he throws (*titthiyānaṃ guṇe uddisitvā ‘namo arahantānan’ ti vatvā khipati*). So, realizing that he never wins, the son of the one with false views decides to always recite the recollection of the Buddha from this point onwards.

One day, this boy accompanies his father of the false views on a journey to the city. They stop by a cremation ground to let their oxen eat and rest. The oxen wander into the city, so the father follows them in order to bring them back. By the time he reaches them, night has fallen, and the city gates are shut. Meanwhile, the boy has fallen asleep. Since he is by a cremation ground, there are ghosts nearby. Two ghosts, one a Buddhist and the other with false views, notice the boy. The ghost with false views wishes to eat him, but the Buddhist ghost

¹³⁴ *ibid.*, p.168-169, *Upās* I. 211-213. Cross-referenced with *BuvA* 143.

¹³⁵ Saddhatissa: 169, *Upās* I. 212. “Abbhantarikā rāgaggi ādayo pi naṃ saraṇagataṃ jhāpetum na sakkonti c’eva.”

¹³⁶ *ibid.*, p. 169-172, *Upās* I. 215-224. Cross-referenced with *DhpA* III. 455-458. Burlingame: book XXI, p.179.

refuses to harm the boy. As the ghost with false views approaches, the boy awakens and recites the recollection of the Buddha. This frightens the wicked ghost and it goes away. The good, Buddhist ghost tells the other that he should do something as punishment, and he decides to go into the city and procure food for the boy, who is all alone. The ghost enters the city, sneaks into the palace, and takes the bowl of the king back outside to feed the boy. After doing this, the ghost magically inscribes the bowl with writing that only the king can see. The writing tells all about what happened and why the ghosts took the bowl. That night, the two ghosts watch over the boy in the appearance of his mother and father.

In the morning, the king's servants notice that the bowl is gone, and they send guardsmen out to find the thief. After searching for some time, they find the boy who is now alone with the bowl outside the city gates. They bring him to the king telling him that this boy is the thief, but the king sees the writing on the bowl and asks the boy what this means. The boy replies that he does not know, and that he was taken care of by his mother and father all night long. After having summoned the boy's parents, and realizing that it was not, in fact, the boy's parents who had been taking care of him but the ghosts who wrote the inscription on the bowl, the king is convinced of the story. The king is interested in the fact that recollection of the Buddha saved this boy, so he goes to ask his teacher if the power of reciting the recollection is true. The teacher tells him that not only is this true, but recollection of the Dhamma and Saṅgha also confers this power.

This final story of the first chapter of the *Upās* bears a similarity to the Kappina and Mangalabodhisatta stories in that each story demonstrates some supernatural power of protection that recollection of the refuges provides. In each story, it seems that the voiced recitation of these recollections is especially potent. I believe that these stories, and the use of the segue

which connects them, serve as a means of producing wonder and amazement in the audience at these unusual powers and abilities that come with properly reciting the recollections of the Triple Gem. The segue seems to be saying, ‘if this story does not amaze you, then this next one surely will’. Unlike the stories of Jambuka and Aggidatta, these narratives clearly depict the special abilities of those who have taken refuge and use the recollection of the Triple Gem for protection in a positive light. They create desirability for refuge in a more straightforward manner than the previous narratives. However, the question still remains, for whom is the *Upās* producing a desire to go to refuge?

A Good Audience

The fact that the first chapter of this work treats *saraṇāgamana* in such detail suggests a significant relationship between *saraṇāgamana* and the overall intention in the text. Thinking about this intention leads one to question who the intended audience was. One clue is provided by the formulaic ending of each chapter which, at the end of this first chapter for example, reads: “This is the first chapter, named the Exegesis of the Virtuous Practice of Refuge, in the *Upāsakajanālankāra*, which was made for the joy of *newly good people* (*abhinavasādhujana*).”¹³⁷ The use of the term ‘newly’ (*abhinava*) allows us to draw a link between this closing passage and the passage cited at the beginning of this chapter which read:

...a doubt arises in the minds of the **new laymen and laywomen** such as ‘who is *Bhagavā*’ and ‘what indeed is an *arahat*?’ There would not be joy and gladness for those who are doubtful. There would not be entrance into the *sāsana* [the Buddhist institution] by means of *saraṇāgamana* [going to refuge], and joy and gladness would not be recognized.

¹³⁷ Saddhatissa: 173, emphasis added. “Iti abhinavasādhujanapāmojjatthāya kate Upāsakajanālankāre Saraṇasīlaniddeso nāma paṭhamo paricchedo.” It should be noted that the Sinhala version differs from the Pāli by the use of ‘satpuruṣa’ instead of ‘sādhujana’ in each of its chapter endings. The significance of this will be discussed in chapter 5.

In both instances, the text uses the term ‘*abhinava*’. This suggests that the text sees *upāsakas* and *sādhujana* as equally belonging to its audience. However, the sense of what is intended by this term ‘new’ or ‘newly’ is not entirely clear. It may refer to converts to Buddhism, life-long Buddhists who have become more religiously engaged, young Buddhists who have come of age, etc. This formulaic chapter-ending sentence suggests, through this term *abhinava*, some intention to target individuals who have undergone some type of religious transition.

A second term which deserves mention is *sādhujana*. The term *sādhu* is one of several cognate words to the English ‘good’; however, the multiplicity of terms that could be rendered as ‘good’ in the Pāli language necessitates a more detailed analysis of this particular term in order to appreciate its usage in this statement. As an interjection, *sādhu* renders approval, something akin to ‘well done’, or expresses assent, or ‘yes’. It can also be seen in requests where it expresses politeness (suggesting ‘please’ by way of ‘it would be good, or well done if...’). Thus, *sādhu*, has the connotation of a properly performed action, which is readily seen in Buddhist rituals of Sri Lanka today, when ritual acts (such as public offerings, *dāna*, to monks) are followed by the crowd of onlookers chanting ‘*sādhu, sādhu, sā*’.

However, it is important to keep in mind that the word *sādhujana* is what Charles Hallisey terms an ‘under-theorized technical term’.¹³⁸ That is, the term retains a technical, operational function in Buddhist texts and rituals; yet, there is a noticeable lack, on the part of the tradition, to establish any narrow definition for it. This enables Buddhist writers to utilize the term in creative ways. In the *Upās*, the juxtaposition of *abhinava* and *sādhujana* expresses a transition that has occurred or is occurring. The transition gains an especially active sense through the use of *sādhu* rather than a variant term expressing ‘goodness’. Combining these

¹³⁸ Personal communication, 7-18-08.

observations, we may re-read the original statement as: “This is the first chapter...which was made for the joy of persons who have recently done-well (been good).”

However, it is still unclear how we should interpret ‘*sādhujana*’ and its rank among Buddhist subjectivities. Does the term *upāsaka* indeed overlap with *sādhujana*, or are the terms meant to represent individuals at different stages of the religious path? Could one be a *sādhujana* without becoming an *upāsaka*? If one were to already be a *sādhujana*, would this imply that they are and have been an *upāsaka*? Not knowing any clear answer to these questions, due to the term being under-theorized, arriving at an understanding of the intended audience is difficult. In response to such questions, I propose the following hypothesis before moving on to discuss the text’s construction of lay virtuosity in the following chapter.

Conclusion

Going to refuge is at its most fundamental level a form of initiation, and as a ritual recitation it is the central practice by which one becomes a lay person in the Theravāda tradition today. The *Upās* is concerned with the formation of virtuous lay behavior and the production of lay Buddhist subjectivity, and it is apparent that going to refuge constitutes a vital precursor to any further teachings of virtuosity for these lay persons. Within this text, and the commentarial tradition from which it draws, going to refuge is expressed in terms of the formation and maintenance of a strong pupil/devotee relationship between the *upāsaka* and the Triple Gem.

It is interesting to note that the majority of the narratives discussed above, which end this first chapter of the *Upās*, deal with non-Buddhist characters. The first two stories develop their negative depictions of other religious practices primarily through the figures of non-Buddhist holy men. Both Jambuka and Aggidatta appear in these stories as virtuosos of a particular tradition. Jambuka is the epitome of a Jain ascetic, and Aggidatta is a Brahmin leader of a group

of ascetics who have initiated snake worship and the worship of natural phenomena. Their weaknesses are focused upon in the text, and the Buddha always emerges as the one to help bring them out of their unfortunate and non-Buddhist lifestyle.

However, in each story, the Buddha recognizes some inner quality (the *arahattassa upanissayasampannā*) which sparks his attempt to teach them the Dhamma. I believe that this serves at least two important purposes. Since the *Upās* is a Pāli text, it is difficult to imagine an intended audience other than the monastic *saṃgha*. If this is the case, then the text must have been intended to educate other monks on how to recognize virtuous potential among those to whom they preached or, in other words, potential *upāsakas*. The recognition of an inner quality may serve to give the monks confidence that even people who are practicing false traditions may have an inner potential to advance on the Buddhist path. That is, even if one does not see it manifested in a person's current behavior, there could be a hidden ability to excel in the Buddhist practices.

Alternatively, if the text were intended to be read by non-Buddhist literati, as a means of introducing them to Buddhism and as an attempt to convince them to convert, this idea of an inner quality would give such individuals a sense of an unknown ability resting within themselves, waiting to be released through the practice of the Buddhist path. The stories would simultaneously offer a negative image of other types of religious teachers, or holy men, (and their practices) and a positive image of themselves, and the monks with whom they may associate, as aspiring Buddhists. While practitioners of other traditions remain locked in a cycle of bad karma (i.e. Jambuka) or practice forms of worship based on ignorance or fear (i.e. Aggidatta), the aspiring Buddhist can take comfort in knowing that he or she is about to initiate the release of a hidden potential by taking the first step of going to refuge.

I propose that both audiences could be intended by the author of the text. That is, it could equally be intended as a guide for proselytizing monks and a guide for well-educated persons who are literate in Pāli. I lean towards the former audience, but without knowing the levels of Pāli literacy throughout South and Southeast Asia at the time of the text's composition, especially among the literati, the latter option should be maintained as well.

In this chapter, I have reviewed both the *Upās*'s explanation of *saraṇāgamana* and the ways by which it produces desirability for one to observe or practice *saraṇāgamana*. The text establishes a link between going to refuge and the first missionary expedition of the newly formed *saṅgha*. It explains the devotional commitment that is expected of one who observes *saraṇāgamana* and the ways by which this observance is broken or defiled. Finally, the text utilizes narratives to produce a desire for *saraṇāgamana*.

I conclude, then, by drawing attention to the place of *saraṇāgamana* in the overall strategy of the *Upās*. As the topic of the first chapter, going to refuge marks an important, initial stage in the process by which one becomes a virtuous layperson. Preceding any discussion of the practices and religious duties of an *upāsaka*, the text makes it clear that one should maintain a singular, devotional relationship between one's self and the Triple Gem (including the monastic *saṅgha* as a whole). Faithful, committed relationships with other religious teachers are unacceptable. An *upāsaka* can be only a Buddhist. This production of a devotional subject is facilitated by the narratives, which attempt to produce a desire for one to go through with this subjective transformation.¹³⁹ Once the text has made clear the level of commitment expected of the *upāsaka*, it can begin to explain how the *upāsaka* becomes virtuous.

¹³⁹ My understanding of devotion in medieval Buddhist literature owes a tremendous debt to Charles Hallisey's dissertation. See Hallisey (1988). I develop this idea of the devotional subject more fully in the following chapter of the dissertation.

Chapter 3: The Disciplined Virtuoso

Following the *Upās*’ chapter on *saraṇāgamana* is a chapter on *sīla*. As explained in the introduction to the dissertation, I deploy the concept of virtuosity as a voluntary, *disciplined* search for perfection, and I contend that it is through the *Upās*’ chapter on *sīla* and its subsequent chapter on the optional ascetic-practices (*dhutaṅga*) that the disciplined aspect of virtuosity comes most clearly into focus. I prefer to translate the term *sīla* as ‘discipline,’ rather than borrow some of the more commonly used alternatives, because at least by the time of the *Upās* the term has been sufficiently linked to the precept vows (*sikkhāpadas*). This connotative tie to ritually accepted vows discourages taking the term *sīla* in the more general, ethical sense of good behavior;¹⁴⁰ since the specific connotation is lost when translating *sīla* as “morality” or “good conduct.” While the successful observation of the precept vows certainly falls within the domain of good behavior, *sīla* is best understood in this more precise sense of a disciplinary code.

An additional alternative translation of the term *sīla*, found in certain translations such as Ñāṇamoli’s edition of the *Visuddhimagga*, is ‘virtue.’ However, I find that the notion of virtue reflects, in its most basic sense, a quality or characteristic of one engaged in the cultivation of virtuosity through the performance of good deeds and maintaining ethical behavior including, but certainly not limited to, disciplined conduct (*sīla*). Thus, *sīla* is one aspect of virtuosity, but I caution against using terms such as ‘virtue’ to translate it, precisely because this blinds us to its ritual facets as seen in the vow-taking, which is very much at the heart of the practice. In this

¹⁴⁰ The entanglement of these two terms, *sikkhāpada* and *sīla*, deserves an historical study, which is beyond the scope of this project. It can be witnessed today by the use of such terms as *pañcasīla*, or in Sinhala *pansil*, for the five precepts rather than the equally plausible term *pañca sikkhāpada*. A popular Buddhist handbook, the *Buddha Ādahilla*, uses the former terms (Ñāṇavimala, 2007 vii), and I have heard them used frequently during discussions with Lankan Buddhists. This is not to suggest that a more general, ethical sense of the term *sīla* does not exist, but simply that in certain contexts, the disciplinary aspect is specifically intended by the term.

way, the related term ‘*sīlavant*,’ which literary means ‘endowed with discipline,’ would qualify as a virtue, in the same way as would the term, ‘compassionate’ (*karuṇāvant*). The term that best encompasses these sorts of adjectives, which describe various virtues in the Pāli language, is ‘*guṇa*,’ which may be understood generically as ‘quality’ but is often written with the implied specificity of ‘good quality’ or ‘virtue.’ Since *sīla* carries the specific connotation of the discipline of following the precept vows (*sikkhāpada*), I use the term ‘discipline,’ or ‘disciplined conduct,’ to reflect this fact. This is a distinction which becomes clearer when discussing other types of virtuous behavior, like meritorious actions (*puñṇakiriya*) and right livelihood (*ājīva*),¹⁴¹ which do not have the same formulaic, ritual procedures tied to their undertaking.

The Disciplined Subject of Virtuosity

The ritual element of *sīla* is crucial to understanding the means by which the *Upās* envisions the cultivation of a disciplined *upāsaka*. Like devotion discussed earlier, discipline is not something which precedes the path of virtuosity; but rather, it is produced by the virtuous practices that constitute that path. Ritual is, therefore, the necessary mechanism that serves to generate the discipline expected of the *upāsaka*. Through ritual practice the *upāsakas* become disciplined, and as a result, advancement towards a fuller virtuosity, along with the felicities said to accompany it, becomes possible. This formative aspect of lay Buddhist ritual resembles that observed by Asad in his work on medieval Christian monastics.¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ I discuss each of these in the following chapter.

¹⁴² Asad (1993): 125-167. Heim also draws from Asad’s observations of the role of ritual in her reading of South Asian gift exchange practices. See Heim (2004): 87-88, 92-93. I largely agree with Heim’s use of Asad. However, unlike gifting practices, the observance of the precept vows deals explicitly with discipline and is more readily

As Asad states:

In my analysis of monastic rites, I try to show that observation and imitation, although important, were not sufficient for the effective operations of power. The formation/transformation of moral dispositions (Christian virtues) depended on more than the capacity to imagine, to perceive, to imitate—which, after all, are abilities everyone possesses in varying degree. It required a particular program of disciplinary practices. The rites that were prescribed by that program did not simply evoke or release universal emotions, they aimed to construct and reorganize distinctive emotions—desire (*cupiditas/caritas*), humility (*humilitas*), remorse (*contritio*)—on which the central Christian virtue of obedience to God depended.¹⁴³

Asad's interpretation of medieval, Christian, monastic rites leads him to argue that ritual is a productive practice capable of forming specific emotions within its participants. Deliberately distancing himself from previous anthropological theories that viewed ritual largely as a communicative practice, Asad seeks to establish an understanding of ritual as a formative practice, one which has the capability to shape human behavior.¹⁴⁴ As Asad notes, such ritual programs do not seek to permit the release of preexisting, universal human emotions. Rather, their purpose is to cultivate specific types of emotions in the ritual participants; emotions which are discursively produced by the text in question. Additionally, these specific emotions are

compared with the types of evidence which Asad draws upon in his own discussion of ritual. I also feel that Heim loses some clarity when attempting to relate Asad's observations to her own subject matter since she reads portions of texts dealing with gift exchange, including the *Upās*, apart from the larger text of which they appear. Thus, Heim's methodology precludes an understanding of gift exchange as one part of a larger process of subject formation and not as an ends in itself. In other words, reading the *Upās*' discussion of gifting outside of its context as one component in the text's strategy of becoming an *upāsaka* can skew one's understanding and appreciation for the text's discussion. I believe that certain texts, such as *dānānisaṃsa*-s, would help to build a more solid understanding of the role of ritualized gifting on its own.

¹⁴³ Ibid: 134.

¹⁴⁴ I find this interpretation of ritual to align well with Austin's early discourse analysis, especially his idea of "performative" speech acts. See Austin (1962). Although Asad simply notes "echoes" of Austinian theory within the anthropological work he sets up as a foil to his own (Asad 128), and notes that Austin did eventually seek to undo his earlier thought to a significant extent (133 n.11), there is a remarkable similarity between the intervention that Austin's work sought to make and Asad's, albeit from within a different scholarly field. Austin showed that utterances not only communicated information passively but could also achieve something in an agentive capacity. That is, rather than relaying information about the state of things, speech could actively alter the state of things. This is precisely what Asad seeks to do with ritual. Rather than view ritual practice as a discursive statement about the world and the participants within it, Asad sees ritual as carrying the potential to actively shape the dispositions and emotions of the participants in this world. Like Austin's theory of performatives then, Asad's idea of disciplinary practices provides ritual with a transformative capacity.

necessary precursors to the overall intention of the texts’, which in Asad’s case is the cultivation of “obedience to God.” The emotions that disciplinary practices produce in the participants are, in this way, a necessary component in the overall production of the virtuous subject. As Asad continues in his reading of the teachings on monastic rites in the work of the medieval Christian monk, Bernard of Clairvaux:

In this context, speech is not simply a mode of communication or of conventional representation. It is not an instrument of “social control.” Speech in this context is a dialogic process by which the self makes (or fails to make) itself in a disciplined way. Where rites are at the center of preexisting ideas, feelings, and memories, explanations of that process in terms of conditioning are not adequate—as Vygotsky ([1934] 1962) pointed out more than half a century ago.¹⁴⁵

Similar to Bernard, the author of the *Upās* does not exhibit, in his text, an intention to merely communicate the disciplinary precepts or to establish some form of control over the *upāsakas* by means of these precepts. Rather, the *Upās* utilizes case examples and narratives to link the anticipated desires and fears of the intended audience (the potential *upāsakas*) with the felicitous benefits of ritually taking, and successfully following, the precepts; or conversely the terrifying results of not taking them. The text seeks, then, to invoke the ritual performance of the precept vows as an integral and preliminary step along the path to the cultivation of a virtuous subject.

Pañca Sīla

The basic level of discipline normally expected of all Buddhists is the observance of the five precepts (*pañcasīla*) which are as follows: to refrain from harming living beings (*pāṇātipātā*), to refrain from taking what is not given (*adinnādānā*), to refrain from improper sexual acts (*kāmesu micchācārā*), to refrain from uttering false speech (*musāvādā*), and finally to

¹⁴⁵ Asad (1993): 144.

refrain from intoxicating drinks to the extent of carelessness (*surāmerayamajjapamādaṭṭhānā*).

Drawing from two commentarial sources, the *Khuddakapāṭha Aṭṭhakathā* and the *Itivuttaka*

Aṭṭhakathā, the *Upās* explains why it is that keeping these five precepts is suitable for the

upāsaka. According to the *Upās*’ own interpretation of the *Khuddakapāṭha* commentary:

For an *upāsaka* who is taking care of the household duties (*gihīkammaṃ*), considering the gravity of the refusal to accept gold and silver [the tenth precept], only the five precepts are spoken; they are indeed feasible for anyone to guard.¹⁴⁶

This explanation for the use of the five precepts is aimed directly at those *upāsakas* who maintain household duties (*gihīkammaṃ*). It suggests that some precepts beyond the first five may be too difficult for such persons to observe, as the apparent difficulty of maintaining a household without handling money exemplifies. Therefore, keeping only the five precepts is preferable for such persons. So far, the argument mirrors the understanding of lay religiosity as an intentionally watered-down version of the monastic practice, which we find as early as Weber’s assessment of lay Buddhism. However, the *Upās* proceeds from this explanation, and in the second verse, taken from the *Itivuttaka Aṭṭhakathā*, we find it stated:

For an *upāsaka* who is a beginner (*ādikammikassa upāsakassa*) the five are spoken. When speaking [them], having seen the danger in [their] breaking (*khaṇḍane*) [thinking] ‘One is to guard the ten precepts unbroken (*akhaṇḍam*),’ and when thinking of oneself as completed trapped (*samantato veṭṭitam viya*), one would be unable to guard any of them, or guarded, one would obtain a breach of the precepts. Therefore, just the five are spoken for the sake of one’s entrance (*otārattham*).¹⁴⁷

The strategic selection of this passage reinforces the idea, outlined in the previous chapter, that the intended audience of the *Upās* consists of those who seek to enter a stricter observance of

¹⁴⁶ Saddhatissa, 175; *Upās* 2.5. This follows a quotation taken from *KhpA*.24. The text reads: “gihīkammaṃ vicārentassa jātārūparajataṭṭhāṇapaṭikkapaṃ bhāriyato maññamānassa upāsakassa vasena pañc’ eva sikkhāpadāni vuttāni, tāni hi kena ci rakkhituṃ na sukarānī ti.”

¹⁴⁷ Ibid; *Upās* 2.6. Also see *ItA*.II.49. “Ādikammikassa upāsakassa vasena pañc’ eva vuttāni. So hi dasasikkhāpadāni akhaṇḍam rakkhitabbāni ti khaṇḍane ādinavaṃ dassetvā vuccamāno samantato veṭṭitam viya attānaṃ maññamāno na kiñci rakkhituṃ ussaheyya, rakkhito vā sikkhāpadabhedam pāpuṇeyya, tasmā tassa otārattham pañc’ eva vuttāni ti.”

Buddhist practice. The text does not merely recognize the potential difficulties that householder *upāsakas* might find in undertaking more than the five-precepts, but it also recommends the five precepts to any *upāsaka* who is just starting out on the path of virtuosity. The use of the terms “beginner” (*ādikammika*) and “immersion” (*otāra*) are particularly suggestive in this regard. The passage explains that new *upāsakas* might feel constricted if they were to attempt to observe all ten precepts, which novice monks must, and that this would more than likely result in an inability to succeed in keeping all of these precepts, or at least greatly threaten the *upāsaka*’s capacity to stay committed to them. In other words, the *Upās* recognizes the potential need for a less difficult disciplinary regimen that new *upāsakas* will be more likely to follow when they are first immersed in the practice. This explanation implies, therefore, the existence of a stricter disciplinary observance that may be undertaken by the more advanced *upāsakas*.

In its discussion of the precepts, the *Upās* utilizes a strategy that is also found in the *Vinaya* texts.¹⁴⁸ Its extensive exegesis of each of the five precepts provides an account of what each precept entails and the circumstances through which each precept is considered either broken or not broken.¹⁴⁹ That is, the text presents cases which highlight certain exceptions to the rule or clarify it. This method of presentation reveals that the text has a concern to provide the readers and their audience with a helpful means of deciding if and when an *upāsaka* has in fact committed a breach of a given precept. This is why the text employs the legalistic style derived from the *Vinaya* texts.

¹⁴⁸ For a good summary of the *Vinaya* texts and their ‘legalistic’ character see Oskar von Hinüber, “Buddhist law according to the Theravāda-*Vinaya*: a survey of theory and practice,” *Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies* 18.1 (1995): 7-45.

¹⁴⁹ This concern follows that for the breaking of *saraṇāgamana* discussed in chapter 2.

In the exegesis of *kāmesumicchācārā*, for instance, the *Upās* provides a list, taken from the *Vinaya*, of 20 types of sexual partners to show what “improper conduct” entails.¹⁵⁰ It should be noted that neither the *Visuddhimagga* nor medieval compendia like the *Sārasaṃgaha* include this list in their accounts of this precept, which reveals that the *Upās* has a unique interest in defining, more fully than its fellow compendia, the boundaries of proper lay practice. According to the *Upās*’ reading of this list, improper conduct is determined by the status of the partner with whom one initiates sexual activity. However, the *Upās* also considers exceptions to the rule.

When discussing “those who are protected” (*rakkhitā*) by other persons such as parents (*maturakkhitā*, *piturakkhitā*) or a family/lineage (*gottarakkhitā*), the *Upās* states:

The eight among them beginning with ‘one who is protected by a mother’ through ‘one who is protected by co-religionists,’ without the permission of [their] guardians, partake in the sexual misconduct of a person in [such] transgressions. But, for the women [themselves] there is no sexual misconduct. When approaching [each other] with the consent of the guardians, there is no sexual misconduct for both.¹⁵¹

In this scenario, the *Upās* presents an argument that reveals a concern for the appropriate ascription of fault and the potential scenarios that pose exceptions to the rule. Here, there are at least two ways we might interpret the exception. The first holds that, in a manner which most in our own time and place would find problematic to say the least, the text excuses a person from improper sexual conduct with a person under the guardianship of another should the guardian(s) offer consent. This effectively places consideration of the contingent discretion of the

¹⁵⁰ The list is derived from *Vin.* III.139. It includes the following forbidden sex partners: one who is protected by a mother, a father, both parents, a brother, a sister, a lineage, co-religionists, a husband; also a prisoner; one who has become a wife for money, for pleasure, for wealth, or for clothing; one who has performed the water-pitcher (wedding) ceremony; one who has removed the circlet (removed signs of marriage); a slave-wife, a servant who has become a wife; a wife captured in battle; and a woman who has lived with another for a time long enough to be considered a wife.

¹⁵¹ Saddhatissa: 179; *Upās* 2.23. “Etāsu māturakkhitādayo dhammarakkhitāvasānā atṭha rakkhakānaṃ anuññāya vinā vītikkamesu purisassa micchācāraṃ bhajanti. Tāsaṃ pana natthi micchācāro. Rakkhakānaṃ anuññāya upagame ubhinnaṃ pi natthi micchācāro ti.”

guardian(s) before any general, universal rule holding that sex with certain types of persons (minors, the mentally or physically impaired, etc.) is always unlawful. On the other hand, we might read the text as implying that the guardians must live up to their duty, and therefore it does not consider cases in which poor guardians would consent to the abuse of the person under their care. It is unclear, from the passage given, on which side the text actually falls.

In consideration of another exception to the precept against sexual misconduct, the *Upās* states that in cases where consent of the guardians has not been obtained, the person under the protection of those guardians is victimized and does not lose his or her own commitment to this precept, should there be one. Thus, the text acknowledges that victims of rape are not to be blamed for the crime committed against them, and in fact their moral purity (in terms of commitment to *sīla*) remains untarnished. The degree to which this idea found acceptance in social practice – particularly for women – remains to be seen, however, as competing notions of (particularly feminine) purity in South and Southeast Asian societies would have certainly offered a competing discourse.

Although there is some attempt to clarify this precept against sexual misconduct, the cases considered in the *Upās* are by no means exhaustive, and as demonstrated above, the views of the text are not always as clear as they could be. It seems that the examples provided here are merely helpful tools with which the intended readers might reach their own decisions as to whether or not a person has broken the precept, but the *Upās* is far from offering a complete and comprehensive account of an extensive list of potential scenarios. Rather, it simply highlights

the fact that each potential break of a precept must be evaluated contextually. The particular situation and especially the intentions of the actors must always be considered.¹⁵²

Another illustration of this concern for context and intention in the exegesis of *kāmesu micchācāra* is in the following clarification of the precept and its exception:

But, the twelve [types of] wives, such as those who are protected by a husband (*sārakkhā*), partake in sexual misconduct (*micchācāra*) themselves in the transgression with the [temporary] abandonment of their husband. It is said in the *Paṭipattisaṅgaha*: “They say that if a woman who is not abandoned by her husband, having come from another region, not having made known the truth, would have sexual relations (*saṃvāsaṃ*) with someone, that one [the man] even though he has sex with her with the perception that he is blameless (*anavajjasaññāya*), it is a karmic-bond (*kammabandha*) for both on account of her not being abandoned by her husband.”... In [the case of] the [full] abandonment of a husband, for both it is not *micchācāro*.¹⁵³

The case under scrutiny concerns the potential impact of a woman’s abandoning or being abandoned by her husband. Specifically, the text considers how some form of either divorce or temporary separation affects the breaking of the precept. The *Upās* presents the view that a woman temporarily separated from her husband commits the transgression of *micchācāra* if she engages in sexual acts during this period. However, if she is permanently separated from him, there is neither the transgression of inappropriate sexual activity (*kāmesu micchācāra*) for her nor for her partner. However, drawing from the earlier *Paṭipattisaṅgaha*, the text clarifies that a married woman *and* her partner are at fault should she continue to be married but engage in

¹⁵² While there is no evidence that the *Upās* served to inform local legal traditions, it may reflect them, and its use of these sorts of cases in determining the exemption of such persons from moral culpability may mirror the legal understandings of such practices at the time. More research could help clarify this.

¹⁵³ Saddhatissa: 179; *Upās* 2.24-2.25. “Sārakkhādayo pana dvādasabhariyā sāmikassa pariccāgamantarena vītikame sayam pi micchācāraṃ bhajanti. Sace hi kāci sāmikena apariccattā va aññadesantarato pi āgantvā attano tathabhāvaṃ ajānāpetvā kenaci saṃvāsaṃ kappeyya, so kiñcā pi tassā anavajjasaññāya saṃvāsaṃ kappeti, sāmikena apariccattattā ubhinnaṃ pi kammabandho yevā ti vadanī ti Paṭipattisaṅgahe vuttaṃ. Tathā sati paṃsukūlādisaññāya parabhaṇḍaṃ harantassā pi kammabandhappasaṅgato ubhinnaṃ pi kammabandho yevā ti vacanaṃ ayuttaṃ viya dissati. Vīmaṃsitvā gahetabbaṃ. Sāmikassa pariccāge ubhinnaṃ pi natthi micchācāro.”

sexual activity while concealing her marital status. The degree of fault for the unwitting partner, however, is less than that of a full-blown transgression of the precept, and this is designated by the term '*kammabandha*,' which I have taken as 'karmic-bond.'¹⁵⁴

The term *kammabandha* (and its cognate term *kammapatha*) in the *Upās* signifies a harmful intentionality, but one that does not lead to the complete, active breeching of the precept in question. The text uses the terms to identify scenarios in which a person commits a fault related to the breaking of a precept but has not committed a full break. Nearly every time the term *kammabandha* appears, it is in a case where a person has an intention to commit an act but for some reason or other does not (or is unable to) complete the act itself. Thus, the intention marks what I refer to here as a 'karmic-bond' (*kammabandha*), which denotes karmic consequences even if the full act has not occurred and the precept has not been breeched. The manner in which the *Upās* uses this term promotes the idea that such intentions/incomplete actions do not result in the same level of karmic retribution or necessitate the same sorts of ritual purifications, including the retaking of vows, which is warranted by full fledged breaks in the precepts. This is in accord with the commentary to the *Dhammasaṅgaṇi*, the *Atthasālinī* of Buddhaghosa, which reads:

¹⁵⁴ The term *kammabandha* is difficult to translate. The CPD offers the definition 'complicity.' However, the Burmese manuscript consulted by Saddhatissa in his compilation of the critical edition reveals that this version of the text replaces '*kammabandha*' with '*kammapatha*' in every instance. It is clearly not a scribal error but rather represents a conscious choice of what, for at least one particular copyist, seemed to be a more accurate term. It is unclear whether the term '*kammapatha*' was closer to the original than '*kammabandha*', but the terms are cognates. The CPD entry on '*kammapatha*' is more substantial than that on '*kammabandha*', and we find, there, that '*kammapatha*' is associated with the ten *kusala* and *akusala* acts (see D. III. 269). According to *the Encyclopaedia of Buddhism* (Weeraratne, ed.): "Although *cetanā* or intention plays a crucial role in determining the *kusala* or *akusala* nature of an action physical, verbal or mental the mere *cetanā* alone would not qualify an action to be complete. In the commentarial tradition, the term *kammapatha* (course of *kamma*) has been used to underscore this matter" (115).

Because a stirring has occurred in the doors of the body or speech, even then a karmic-bond (*kamma-patha*) is not obtained. [If] a habit exists in the door of the mind, [then] a karmic-bond is not obtained. ... This is the method [of interpretation] there:

Whoever prepares a bow [thinking] ‘I will go hunting’, cuts off a bowstring, sharpens a knife, eats food, puts on clothes, so far there is a stirring in the door of the body. He walks, one day, into the forest, but he does not even obtain so much as a rabbit or a cat. Now, is there an unskillful (*akusala*) bodily act or not? There is not. Why? Because of the non-attainment of a karmic-bond (*kamma-patha*). But, it is to be known that this is all called a wrong act (*duccarita*) of the body. This is the method in terms of the practices such as fishing. ... But, from the mere arising of the intention of killing (*vadhaka cetanāya*) in the door of the mind it is a kind of karmic bond (*kamma-pathabheda*), and it is so by the *intent* to injure (*vyāpāda*) not by the [actual] injury to life (*na paṇātipātavasena*).¹⁵⁵

The importance of this distinction lays mainly in the fact that one whose actions result in a karmic-bond (*kammabandha*), even as they receive negative karmic consequences, do not break the precept in question. Therefore, despite performing an act leading to bad karma, there is no need for such persons to perform a renewal of the *sīla* vows, as there is in the case of a person who commits a full breach of the precept. It is one’s virtuous status, and his or her need to ritually renew that status, that is at stake. Even good *upāsaka*-s, in other words, are not perfect; they may accrue bad karma through acts termed *kammabandha* even if they successfully maintain the precepts.

In another case, this time dealing with the precept not to harm living beings (*pāṇātipāta*), the text makes an effort to clarify both the importance of non-injury to all forms of life, even the microscopic, and the importance of context and intention in determining fault and the breaking of the precept. The text begins by referring to the fact that “the saying ‘the killing of an ant is of

¹⁵⁵ *Atthasālini* 5.252-5.254.

little fault’ is said having considered the killing of other [creatures] such as the very great.”¹⁵⁶ In response, the *Upās* continues:

But, from the saying: ‘Injury to life (*pāṇātipāto*), monks, that is pursued (*āsevito*), developed (*bhāvito*), and repeated (*bahulīkato*) leads to hell (*niraya*), leads to the realm of the animals, and leads to the realm of the ghosts. That consequence which ripens very quickly from injuring living beings is a short human existence in the next life,’ [A.IV.247] injury to living beings is itself of great fault. Therefore, by observers of the five-precepts or observers of the *Uposatha*:

The life of even the smallest creatures is to be protected,
like one’s own life is out of concern for one’s self.¹⁵⁷

The verse at the very end of this citation seems to be an original of the *Upās*, and it follows a passage taken from the canonical *Angutara Nikāya* explaining how any instance of intentional injury to living beings (*pāṇātipāta*) leads to negative karmic results including unfortunate rebirths. The text attempts to clarify the view set forth beforehand that harming small creatures is less of a fault than harming bigger creatures, and harming unrighteous persons is less of a fault than harming someone such as an *arahant*. Here, the text states that all *upāsakass* should avoid killing or harming any living creatures because this act leads to hell, unfavorable rebirths, and a short life. Thus, even though the amount of blame, or fault, is quantifiable by taking account of the biological complexity and the degree of virtuosity of the victim, the act is still something that should always be avoided.¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁶ Saddhatissa: 206; *Upās* 2.91.

¹⁵⁷ Saddhatissa: 206-207; *Upās* 2.92. “Pāṇātipāto bhikkhave āsevito bhāvito bahulīkato nirayasamvattaniko tiracchānayanisamvattaniko pettivisayasamvattaniko. Yo sabbalahuso pāṇātipātassa vipāko so manussabhūtaṃ appāyukabhāvasamvattaniko hoti ti vacanato pana pāṇātipāto pi mahāsāvajjo va. Tasmā pañcasikkhāpadikena uposathikena vā—‘Khuddakānam pi jantūnaṃ jīvitaṃ jīvitaṃ viya/ attano rakkhitaṃ va hitakāmena attano.’”

¹⁵⁸ The proximity of this clarification to the Jain ideal of *ahimsa*, discussed in chapter 2, is remarkable. Further research could clarify the extent to which Buddhists of this period (or earlier) incorporated a more intensive understanding of their own idea of *pāṇātipāta* in light of the more rigid Jain ideals.

In this case as well, intention plays a vital role in ascribing fault and marking a breach of the precept. Here, the text draws from the *Kaṅkhāvitaranī* as well as the *Paṭipattisaṅgha* in presenting its argument. The passage reads:

But, the drinking of water without awareness that it contains living beings is not in any way a fault. It is said:

‘It is not an offense (*anāpatti*) done unintentionally, for one who perceives it is lifeless (*appāṇakasaññissa*), does not know [that it contains life], is not setting out to kill (*na maraṇādhippāyassa*), and for those such as the insane (*ummattakādīnam*)’ [Kvt. 124].

Awareness [that] ‘there is no living creature here’ is [what is meant by] perception that it is lifeless (*appāṇakasaññā*). It is to be known, with reference to the *Paṭipattisaṅgha* [that]:

Having become *Upasatha* practitioners for today, they drink having strained the water. They are faultless for drinking that strained water. [Pps.]

It is said:

It would still be drinkable having been strained even by a keeper of the five-precepts who says mistakenly that, ‘One who drinks with the perception that it is lifeless, without having strained [the water], is blameworthy’ [Pps.].

The drinking after straining [the water] is the most noble (*varatara*), even by such an observer of the five-precepts, on account of the blamelessness of strained water.¹⁵⁹

In this passage, we find both an emphasis placed on the intentions of the actor and a somewhat peculiar depiction of an observer of the five-precepts (*pañcasīla*). Firstly, the text excuses anyone who perceives that the water they are drinking contains no life; this includes the mentally ill. If there is no intention to kill or injure the minute beings living within the water, and there is no recognition or perception of any beings living therein, then the actor is blameless. This coincides with the earlier example in which the unwitting adulterer does not commit an improper

¹⁵⁹ Saddhatissa: 207; *Upās* 2.92-2.93. “Sappāṇakam pana udakam vinā pāṇasaññāya paribhuñjantassa natthi koci doso. Vuttaṃ hi: “Appāṇakasaññissa asaṅcicca ajānantassa na maraṇādhippāyassa ummattakādīnaṃ ca anāpattī ti. Pāṇakā ettha natthī ti saññā appāṇakasaññā. Paṭipattisaṅgahe pana ‘Ajjatanā ‘posathikā hutvā udakam parissāvetvā va paribhuñjanti, taṃ parissāvitodakaparibhogassa anavajjattā’ ti vedittabbam. Na aparissāvetvā appāṇakasaññāya paribhogassa sāvajjattā ti vatvā aññathā pañcasikkhāpadikenā pi parissāvetvā paribhuñjitabbam siyā ti vuttaṃ. Parissāvitodakassa anavajjattā pañcasikkhāpadikenā pi parissāvetvā paribhuñjanam eva varataram.”

sexual act, even though there are negative karmic consequences (*kammabandha*). The intentions are what determine a person's accountability, not the act itself.

Considering the final portion of this citation, however, we see a depiction of an observer of the five-precepts as a less than knowledgeable Buddhist. The practitioner mistakenly thinks that drinking water without straining it is a blameworthy act. In other words, this person does not understand the more refined idea of intentionality, which the text has just laid out for the readers. Nevertheless, the *Upās* follows the *Paṭipattisaṅgaha* in condoning this person's practice as "the most noble" (*varatara*) because, despite the lack of accurate knowledge about the Buddhist theory of intentionality, the person has taken an admirable precautionary measure to ensure that life is not harmed.¹⁶⁰ This illustrates that the text privileges proper practice over correct understanding of the reasons behind it. This characteristic of the text follows through to other sections as well, including its discussion of the proper methods for taking the vows of discipline.

Following the examination of what the precepts entail, their clarification and their exceptions, there is a statement concerning the ritual performance of the precept vows (*sīla samādiyati*). It reads:

¹⁶⁰ The fact that Jain texts, when speaking about lay practice, advocate straining water hints at a potential overlap between the two traditions historically. See Williams, *Jaina Yoga*, (Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass, 1991 [1963]): 70, 113. This citation from the *Upās*, in which keepers of the five-precepts are straining water without fully understanding the importance of intention, may mark an attempt on the part of the text to compel the audience to accept Jain laypersons and/or formerly Jain laypersons as new Buddhists. The fact that these individuals appear to conceive of straining drinking water as an essential practice regardless of whether or not one thinks there are living-beings within it may reflect the stricter attitude found in the Jain texts towards this practice. Despite advocating the more lenient view, that perception and intention are crucial to determining fault, the *Upās* follows the *Paṭipattisaṅgaha* in confirming that these five-precept laypersons' practice is acceptable even if their understanding is flawed. This suggests that (1) practice is privileged over understanding/belief and (2) the audience of the text is encouraged to cultivate tolerance towards persons who attempt to follow proper practice even while being ignorant of the proper interpretations behind it.

Having placed respect in a teacher, in the presence of a *bhikkhu*, *bhikkhunī*, *upāsaka*, or *upāsikā* who recognizes the mark of *sīla* (*sīlakkhaṇaṇṇuno*) by its undertaking, it is to be undertaken (*samādātabbam*) with a pleasant and serene mind and eye, making [the vow] for ‘this day’ (*ajja divasam*), or setting the beginning as ‘today’ (*ajja*), or for a period of time (*kālaparicchedam*) such as ‘in this fortnight, month, season, or year,’ or exerting one’s mindfulness to the end of life (*jīvitapariyantam*) saying ‘to the end of breath (*āpāṇakoṭikam*),’ having proceeded by the spoken method (*vuttavidhinā*) for bestowing *sīla* (*sīladāyakena*), having taken them up as one saying ‘*pañcasikkhāpadāni samādiyāmi*’, or one at a time saying ‘*pāṇātipātā veramaṇī* ... (pe) ... *surāmerayamajjapamādaṭṭhānā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi*’ having pronounced them (*vacībhedaṃ katvā*) according to the texts or in one’s own language when not knowing the method of the texts (*yathā pāliṃ vā pāligatim ajānantena sakasakabhāsāya vā*) it is to be taken. Without another taking it [for someone], it is to be taken by speaking it one’s self.¹⁶¹

Just as with the liturgical rules for recitation of the *saraṇāgaman sutta*, there is a wide variety of methods which one may use. What is vital, according to this description of the practice, is that one must speak the words themselves and do so with a “pleasant and serene heart and mind.” The text advocates the direct, personal involvement of the *upāsaka*, which is, as Hallisey has shown, a characteristic feature of medieval, Sinhala, devotional Buddhist literature. The fact that one must speak the words themselves points to the voluntary nature of the practice, as no one can take the precepts for someone else, but it also highlights the need for self-involvement via a performative speech act.¹⁶² One must ‘perform the utterance’ and enact the initialization of the commitment to discipline by vocalizing it one’s self. It is a necessarily spoken vow that can not be forced. If it were coerced, the *upāsaka* would not have the proper psychological preconditions for successfully cultivating the subjectivity of an *upāsaka*. The optional nature of virtuosity comes through here.

¹⁶¹ Saddhatissa: 182; *Upās* 2.33. “Samādiyantenā pi sīlakkhaṇaṇṇuno bhikkhussa vā bhikkhuniyā vā upāsakassa vā upāsikāya vā santike satthari gāravaṃ uppādetvā pasādasommahadayanayanena ‘ajja divasan’ ti vā ‘ajja’ ādiṃ katvā ‘imasmiṃ pakkhe māse utumhi saṃvacchare’ ti evaṃ kālaparicchedaṃ vā, sati vā ussāhe ‘āpāṇakoṭikan’ ti jīvitapariyantaṃ katvā vā sīladāyakena vuttavidhinā vatvā ‘pañcasikkhāpadāni samādiyāmi’ ti ekato samādāya puna paccakeṃ ‘pāṇātipātā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi —pe— surāmerayamajjapamādaṭṭhānā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ samādiyāmi’ ti yathā pāliṃ vā pāligatim ajānantena sakasakabhāsāya vā vacībhedaṃ katvā samādātabbam. Aññaṃ alabhantena attanā pi yathāvuttavidhinā samādātabbam evā ti.”

¹⁶² See Hallisey (1988): 80-91, 120-130.

Also, while many Buddhists today would maintain that the five precepts are a minimal set of rules, which all Buddhists should follow, the *Upās* permits a temporary observation of them and, therefore, permits that the *upāsaka* establish a time frame for which he or she intends to practice. The idea that one can mark a limited time (*kālaparicchedam*) such as a fortnight, month, season, or year, for the observance of *pañcasīla* supports the view that lay virtuosity operates across a continuum. The more one strives to achieve, the better. However, there is no strict code for an *upāsaka* to follow; rather, the text offers a gradual path of increasing intensity dependent on the *upāsaka*'s abilities. An important point to consider here is that the disciplined subject conceived by the *Upās* is one that requires constant work. One does not become a disciplined *upāsaka* by mere recitation of verses at an initiation. Instead, the ideal *upāsaka* gradually intensifies the ritual procedures necessary to perfect his or her self in an ongoing practice. The disciplined subjectivity envisioned, then, is one that a lay Buddhist may acquire in stages and to varying degrees of intensity.

Intensified Discipline

The five precepts are but one of three types of *sīla* advocated for the *upāsaka*. The *Upās* follows a brief, opening exegesis of the term *sīla* with the following statement: “But, it [*sīla*] is threefold: *pañcasīlam*, *uposathasīlam*, and *dasasīlam*.”¹⁶³ *Uposathasīlam* refers to the practice of taking up an additional three precepts (for a total of eight) on special days, marked by the lunar cycle, known as *Uposatha* days. The *uposathasīla* also entails a stricter version of the third; rather than *kāmesumicchācārā*, one who observes the ritual intensification of discipline

¹⁶³ Saddhatissa: 174; *Upās* 2.3.

(*uposathika*) refrains from all sexual conduct (*abrahmacāriya*). The additional precepts are actually four in number, but the text follows the *Anguttara Nikāya* (A.IV.225) in maintaining a list of eight precepts by combining the seventh and the eighth (as they occur in the list of the ten precepts for novice monks) into one, larger precept. The additional precepts for the *uposathasīla* are as follows: (#6) refraining from eating after noon (*vikālabhojanā*); (#7a) refraining from dancing, singing, playing instruments, attending shows or festivals (*naccagītavāditavisūkadassanā*), (#7b) and from wearing cosmetics of various kinds (*mālāgandhavilepanadhāraṇamaṇḍanavibhūsaṇaṭṭhānā*); (#8) and refraining from the use of high or grand beds (*uccāsayanamahāsayanā*).¹⁶⁴

The *Upās* then paraphrases the commentary to the *Anguttara Nikāya* (AA. II.328) when relating how, in practice, an *upāsaka* should initiate the observance of the *uposathasīla*:

When observing (*samādiyantena*) this *uposathasīlaṃ*, it is to be administered (*vicāretabbam*) for two ways of taking: [saying] ‘tomorrow I will become *uposathiko*’ or ‘today, right here and now (*ajj’eva idaṇ ca idaṇ ca*), you should perform [it] (*kareyyāthā*)’. From [the time of] taking *sīla*, without having done anything else, one is to pass the time (*vītināmetabbam*) by listening to the *dhamma* and by focused attention (*manasikāra*) to a meditative object (*kammaṭṭhāna*).¹⁶⁵

The second method of taking the *uposathasīla* includes a 2nd person plural, optative form of the verb *karoti* (*kareyyātha*), meaning ‘you should perform it’. At first glance, this seems an odd statement for the *upāsaka* to utter. However, it refers to the *upāsaka*’s requesting another individual to administer the precepts, and the plural form is used simply out of respect. Thus, in either case the *upāsaka* is implicitly making the *Uposatha* day vows through the aegis of another Buddhist, the *Upās* states:

¹⁶⁴ Saddhatissa: 182-186; *Upās* 2.34-2.43.

¹⁶⁵ Saddhatissa: 189; *Upās* 2.50. “Tad etam pana uposathasīlaṃ samādiyantena ‘sve uposathiko bhavissāmī’ ti ajj’ eva idaṇ c’idaṇ ca kareyyāthā ti āhārādividhānaṃ vicāretabbam. Sīlasamādānato paṭṭhāya aññaṃ kiñci akatvā dhammasavaṇaṇa kammaṭṭhānamanasikārena ca vītināmetabbam.”

Therefore, early in the morning on the *Uposatha* day, by the spoken method mentioned above (*heṭṭha vuttanayena*), in the presence of a *bhikkhu*, *bhikkhunī*, *upāsaka*, or *upāsikā*, having set a time-limit by [saying] such things as ‘this night’ or ‘this day’, taking them altogether [saying] ‘I take-up the eight precepts for the practice of *Uposatha*’ or having taken up each one by one—[saying] ‘*Pāṇātipātā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ...*’ it is to be taken in Pāli.¹⁶⁶

But the option of a more independent, or private, recitation of the precepts, as in the case of the *pañcasīla* described in the previous citation, is not precluded. If one who wishes to take the *uposathasīla* can not be in the presence of another for these ritual purposes, or if the practitioner does not know the Pāli verses to be uttered, the *Upās* permits the same alternative we saw above:

But, when not knowing Pāli, it [*uposathasīla*] is to be taken [by saying the precepts] singly in one’s own language (*attano bhāsāya*) or as one [saying] ‘I undertake the *Uposatha* ordained by the Buddha (*Buddhapaññattam*).’ Without another taking it, it is to be undertaken by one’s self. When taking the *uposathasīla* by one’s self, it is still taken up as when taking it in the presence of another (*attanā samādiyantena pi samādinnam hoti, parasantike samādiyantena pi*). The taking [of the precepts] altogether at the same time (*ekajjham*) is also truly taking [them] just as [they are] taken singly.¹⁶⁷

Thus, not only can *upāsakas* observe the *uposathasīla* on their own, but the text allows them to recite the vows in their own language, or even make one, single vow intended to cover all of the eight precepts.

This is remarkable since the text displays a clear awareness of the ritual procedures used to administer the *Uposatha* day vows to the *upāsaka*-s, and it acknowledges the fact that an officiant, or guide, in the person of a monk, nun, layman, or laywoman usually functions as a preceptor for the *uposathiko*. Yet, here, the text allows the laity to forgo these procedures. The

¹⁶⁶ Ibid; *Upās* 2.51-2. “Tasmā uposathadivase pāto va heṭṭhā vuttanayena bhikkhussa vā bhikkhuniyā vā upāsakassa vā upāsikāya vā santike ‘imaṇ ca rattiṃ imaṇ ca divasan ti ādinā kālaparicchedaṃ katvā uposathaṅgavasena aṭṭhasikkhāpadāni samādiyāmi ti ekato katvā samādāya puna paccekaṃ ‘Pāṇātipātā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṃ....’ ti yathā pāliyaṃ samādātabbaṃ.”

¹⁶⁷ Ibid; *Upās* 2.53. “Pāliṃ ajānantena pana attano bhāsāya paccekaṃ vā ‘Buddhapaññattam uposathaṃ adhiṭṭhāmi’ ti ekato adhiṭṭhānavasena vā samādātabbaṃ. Aññaṃ alabhantena attanā pi adhiṭṭhātabbaṃ. Upāsakasīlaṃ hi attanā samādiyantena pi samādinnam hoti, parasantike samādiyantena pi. Ekajjham samādinnam pi samādinnam eva hoti, paccekaṃ samādinnam pi.”

apparent liberality, in terms of ritual procedure, that the *Upās* displays here suggests an intention to provide an opportunity for aspiring *upāsaka* virtuosos to practice discipline without the aid of other Buddhists.

Pausing for a moment to reconsider a similar moment of ritual tolerance noted in chapter two of the dissertation, we may notice a trend in the way that the *Upās* provides opportunities for solitary practice. Earlier, we saw how the text states that *upāsakas* may recite the *saraṇāgamana sutta* “by themselves, in a sacred place such as a Bodhi tree, Cetiya, or statue, or some other such place”¹⁶⁸ and not necessarily in the presence of a monk or another layperson, but rather in the simulated presence of the Buddha made feasible by a Buddhist monument like a *cetiya*. I think that there are at least two possibilities of explaining this feature of the text that should be considered.

First, maintaining that the *Upās* may have been written in South India during the 13th century, or late 12th century at the earliest,¹⁶⁹ we know that the Buddhist institutions of this region were in decline at this time. Although certainly not extinct, Buddhist culture was increasingly limited to urban centers, especially the cities of Kāñci and Nāgaṭṭam.¹⁷⁰ In addition, the *Upās* is said to have been written at a temple within the realm of a petty ruler within the Pāndya territory.¹⁷¹ This would situate the place of composition at a distance from these urban centers, which lied further to the north in Chola territory. There is, then, a strong possibility that the author of the *Upās* was witness to the diminishing presence of Buddhist

¹⁶⁸ Saddhatissa: 145; *Upās* I.127.

¹⁶⁹ See chapter one of the dissertation.

¹⁷⁰ Obeyesekere (1984): 516-523. Obeyesekere’s synopsis of the history of Buddhism (and Jainism) in South India usefully draws on earlier scholarship, such as Nilakanta Sastri and N. Subrahmaniam. Also see Schalk (2002) for a more recent and well detailed account of this history.

¹⁷¹ See chapter one of the dissertation, p.22-25.

temples, and Buddhist persons who could fulfill the ritual role of an *upāsaka*'s preceptor, and he realized that it may have become impossible for some of his intended audience to receive the *uposathasīla* at a temple or under the guidance of another Buddhist. Permitting the laity to undertake the observance of the eight precepts on *Uposatha* days by themselves would have enabled those *upāsakas* who were without a temple in their vicinity, and therefore without monks, nuns, or more senior *upāsaka*-s, to continue to take up the practice.

Alternatively, the *Upās* might be providing a space for solitary *upāsaka*s in this text. That is, the text's willingness to permit *upāsaka*s the freedom to recite such vows on their own, in spite of the earlier acknowledgement that such recitations normally take place in the presence of preceptors of some kind, may stem from the text's acceptance of more rigorously ascetic *upāsaka*s practicing (even temporarily) lives of forest-dwelling. In such cases, the *upāsaka*s would be living away from both monks and laymen but still desire to make the vow to undertake the *uposathasīla*. Thus, a consideration of the absence of other, senior Buddhists for the *Uposatha* ceremony might be due to the personal choice of the *upāsaka* to assume a more arduous and solitary Buddhist lifestyle. This becomes a stronger possibility when considering that the *Upās* includes a chapter on ascetic practice (*dhutaṅga*), which I discuss below.

However, the inclusion of these ritual alternatives may simply represent the text's desire to remain consistent with the commentarial tradition from which it draws. The *Visuddhimagga* makes allowance for the solitary undertaking of the ascetic practices where it states:

During the Blessed One's lifetime all ascetic practices should be undertaken in the Blessed One's presence. After his attainment of *nibbāna* this should be done in the presence of a principal disciple. When he is not available it should be done in the presence of an *arahant*, a non-returner, a once-returner, a stream-enterer, an expert in the *Tipiṭaka*, an expert in two of the *piṭaka*-s, an expert in one of the *piṭaka*-s, an expert in one collection, or an expert in the commentaries. When one is not available it should be

done in the presence of an observer of the ascetic practices. When one is not available, then after one has swept the *cetiya* yard, they may be undertaken seated in a reverential posture as though pronouncing them in the Fully Enlightened One's presence. Thus, it is permitted to take them by one's self.¹⁷²

This passage is incorporated verbatim into the third chapter of the *Upās*, which deals with the ascetic practices, but we can see the similarities between this description of the permissible modes of undertaking the ascetic practices and the permissible modes of going to refuge and observing the *Uposatha* recommended in the other sections of the *Upās*. This suggests that the *Upās* not only maintains Buddhaghosa's views regarding the *dhutaṅga* vows but extends them to other vows that the *upāsaka* takes. I believe that the text's intentions in doing so stem from a combined concern for respecting the authority of its source texts and either (if not both) of the first two concerns, dealing with the absence of monastics and the potential for an increased asceticism among the laity, discussed above. There is one crucial difference, however, between the wording of the passage from the *Visuddhimagga* and that found in the various sections of the *Upās* describing vow-taking noted here.

The *Visuddhimagga* provides an exhaustive list of potential preceptors; a list which almost seems to dissuade the potential ascetic practitioner from undertaking the vows on their own. The list forms a hierarchy, with the Buddha at the apex and co-practitioners of asceticism at the bottom. Any of the persons listed are acceptable preceptors, but those higher in achievement should be sought out first. What unites each of them is a tie to the Buddha. Even in the acceptance of solitary vow-taking, the *Visuddhimagga* states, 'after one has swept the *cetiya* yard, they may be undertaken seated in a reverential posture as though pronouncing them in the Fully Enlightened One's presence.' This implies that the *cetiya* itself serves as a monument that

¹⁷² *Visuddhimagga* 2.13. I draw from Ñāṇamoli's translation.

has the capacity to evoke the presence of the Buddha and function as a ritual proxy for one taking the ascetic vows.¹⁷³ This is, however, as the extensive list makes clear, a last resort. The *Upās*, on the other hand, does not use this same list except in the chapter on the ascetic practices (*dhutaṅga*, *Upās* chapter 3), which it cites verbatim from the *Visuddhimagga*. Instead, the *Upās* simply ends its account of the proper method of going to refuge, taking the five-precepts, and taking the *Upasatha* vows by stating that they may also be taken by one's self.

It is also striking that the text permits the recitation of both the *saraṇāgamana sutta* and the taking of the *uposathasīla* in vernacular languages. The reason given is that it is permissible in cases where the practitioner does not know the Pāli verses. This reveals that the *Upās* clearly privileges practice over textual or linguistic study. While it could prescribe that any aspiring *upāsaka* learn the proper Pāli verses, the text chooses to downplay the importance of Pāli as a liturgical language and advocates that the *upāsaka* continue taking up the discipline regardless of his or her lack of knowledge of the appropriate Pāli verses. So long as the practitioner knows what to say in his or her own language, and insisting that they have the proper intention in doing so, the *Upās* approves.¹⁷⁴ This supports the idea that the intended readers of this text consisted of monastics learned in Pāli while the intended audience consisted of Buddhists (or potential Buddhists) among whom many may not have been literate, at least in Pāli.

¹⁷³ This is quite in line with Paul Mus' interpretation of the functionality of the *cetiya* or *stūpa*. See Mus (1935).

¹⁷⁴ There is an important difference between the way Buddhaghosa describes the acceptable use of the vernacular in the *pabbajjā* ceremony and the way the *Upās* words its own argument for the acceptable use of the vernacular as discussed above. See Crosby (2000): 466-467. According to Crosby, and unlike the *Upās*, Buddhaghosa distinguishes between ritual recitation of the vows (*uddisati*) and explanations of those vows (*ācikkhati*). Crosby reads this as Buddhaghosa maintaining the necessity of the Pāli liturgical formulae while allowing for a vernacular explanation to accompany them. The *Upās* does not use such terms. It generally uses forms of the verb 'samādiyati' in both cases. The question remains, however, as to whether or not the *Upās* has misunderstood Buddhaghosa in permitting the use of the vernacular (e.g. not making the same insightful linguistic observations as Crosby) or if it has made an intentional departure in favor of a more liberal interpretation of proper practice.

If the text were aimed directly at literate laypersons aspiring to virtuosity, there would be no need to allow for such exceptions to the normal ritual practice. On the other hand, if the text is directed at literate monks and nuns (the intended readers) it makes sense that it would be instructing them on the permissible ritual procedures so that they may teach the laity (the intended audience) these rules. While the intended reader of the *Upās* must be literate in Pāli, the inclusion of these types of provisions, in which *upāsaka*s might not know Pāli, suggests that the text is not aimed directly at the new *upāsaka*s but rather at the intermediaries of the message. These intermediaries, which would certainly include monastics and possibly well-educated *upāsaka*-s, have to be literate in Pāli, but those to whom they are to teach this text, the audience, need not be.

Also in its discussion of *uposathasīla*, the *Upās* considers the possibility of observing the eight precepts of the *Uposatha* day on other days than the traditionally recognized *Uposatha*. This is a practice permitted in the *Paṭipattisaṅgaha* as well.¹⁷⁵ The *Upās* entertains a hypothetical question concerning this practice in the following:

Is mindfulness of the *uposatha* precepts forbidden for taking on non-*Uposatha* days? It is not forbidden. And why is this so? Wherever there is not in the world something set apart called a holiday (*chaṇadivaso*); yet, somewhere in the world one partakes in a festival (*chaṇaṃ*), one calls it a holiday.¹⁷⁶

The text, once again, acknowledges the traditional practice of observing *uposathasīla* on certain, special days known as *Uposatha* days, but it subsequently opens a space for alternative practice. The day is recognized by the practice, not the name; therefore, the observance of the eight precepts is permissible at any time. Following my argument above regarding the permissibility

¹⁷⁵ Saddhatissa: 103.

¹⁷⁶ Idid: 192, *Upās* 2.60. “Evaṃ hi sati uposathasikkhāpadānaṃ anuposathadivase samādānaṃ virujjhatī ti? No virujjhatī. Kasmā ti ce? Yathā na loke viṣuṃ chaṇadivaso nāma atthi. Yattha yattha pana loke chaṇaṃ anubhoti, so so chaṇadivaso ti vuccati.”

of solitary vow taking, I see here another instance of liberality regarding ritual procedures. This is not to say that ritual has become unimportant in the *Upās*, but rather that it has been opened up to a wider set of potential *upāsakas* in terms of their lack of knowledge of the Pāli language and their lack of proximity to other, senior Buddhists. There are, however, instances where we find a more rigid interpretation of proper practice.

Consider the idea of permanent discipline (*niccasīla*) that follows the citation above. The text reads:

If one establishes a time limit for the *sīla* according to the month or season, removes this limit, and thereafter takes it for the end of one's life (*āpāṇakoṭivasena*); that is to be understood as permanent *sīla* (*niccasīlaṃ*).¹⁷⁷

The continuous, life-long observance of a more rigid discipline is advocated here, but the *Upās* departs from the *Paṭipattisaṅgaha* on one crucial point. It does not permit the observance of the eight, *Upasatha* precepts as a permanent undertaking; it only allows the full ten precepts to be taken in this manner. Sighting commentarial literature, the *Upās* argues:

Here, having taken aside the word '*sīlavanto*', it is explained that 'having been established in *upāsaka*-hood by being endowed with the five and ten *sīla*' but not 'with eight' [SA.I.352]. Thus, from the beginning of the *Parivāra Pāli* [it is said], 'an *upāsaka* is disciplined (*sīlavā*), one for whom the dhamma is pleasing (*kalyāṇadhamma*), adorning his companions (*parisasobhana*)' [VinA.VII.1330], and by a teacher of the commentary who investigates the meaning, having culled the phrase '*upāsako sīlavā*', explains the meaning as 'guarding (*gopayamāno*) the five or ten *sīla*. Thus, according to this [explanation] *uposathasīla* is to be taken according to what is said.'¹⁷⁸

The argument holds that since the commentaries it cites in this passage do not mention eight precepts, an *upāsaka* should only observe either the basic five or the more austere ten as a lifelong pursuit. The observance of eight remains a special and temporary practice. This is odd,

¹⁷⁷ Ibid. "Yam pana sīlaṃ utumāsādivasena kāmariyādaṃ katvā pi tathā akatvā āpāṇakoṭivasena samādiyati, tad etaṃ niccasīlaṃ nāma ti gaheṭṭabbhaṃ.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid: 193; *Upās* 2.61. "Ettha sīlavanto ti padaṃ uddharitvā 'upāsakatte patiṭṭhāya pañcahi pi dasahi pi sīlena samannāgatā' ti atthavaṇṇanā katā, na aṭṭhahi pi ti. Athā pi 'upāsako sīlavā kalyāṇadhammo parisasobhano' ti ādikāya Parivārapāliyā vā atthaṃ vicārentena aṭṭhakathācariyena 'upāsako sīlavā' ti padaṃ ullūṅgitvā 'pañca vā dasa vā sīlāni gopayamāno ti attho pakāsito. Evaṃ tasmā vuttanayena uposathasīlaṃ samādātabbaṃ."

as the only additional precept taken for the fulfillment of ten precepts (*dasasīla*) is to abstain from handling money.¹⁷⁹

In order to understand the text's intention in this argument, I draw attention back to my discussion regarding the competition for symbolic capital outlined in the introduction to the dissertation. If, as I suspect, one reason behind the production of the *Upās* is to simultaneously create a space for a more rigorous lay practice among a wider population *and* to limit that practice to an acceptable position below that of the monastics within a competitive economy of symbolic capital, then it is important to underscore the fact that symbolic capital and material, economic capital are intimately connected. Consider the fact, well demonstrated by works like Carrithers,¹⁸⁰ that the more austere and reclusive forest monks engender such admiration from their supporters that they paradoxically gain a great deal of material wealth in the form of meritorious gifts (*dāna*). Although there is not necessarily a *direct* correlation between the two, symbolic capital expressed in culturally recognizable forms generally provides access to material capital of one form or another as an *indirect* benefit. Knowledge of this fact may very well have led the author of the *Upās* to ensure that any *upāsaka* seeking to practice the more austere discipline of the *dasasīla* (ten precepts) limited his or herself to the same types of material capital that the monastics could enjoy. If the eight precepts were allowed as a permanent undertaking, this would have left room for particularly virtuous *upāsakasto* accept monetary gifts directly and use them for personal expense. Thus, the text draws a line, however fine, between the more worldly *upāsaka*-s, who could potentially maintain wealth and run an affluent household while optionally observing a more sporadic increase in discipline (the *Uposathasīla*), and the more

¹⁷⁹ Although the official number of precepts differs by 2, the seventh precept of the *uposathasīla* becomes the seventh and eighth precept in the *dasasīla* formula. This leaves just the one additional precept to be added.

¹⁸⁰ See Carrithers (1983).

ascetic *upāsaka*-s, who had to relinquish monetary wealth if they were to observe a permanently rigorous discipline of the *niccasasīla* as ten precepts.

Dangers of Deviating from the Discipline

One thing that both the temporary *uposathasīla* and the permanent *niccasīla* share is the capacity to become defiled (*saṅkilesa*). The *Upās* explains that:

Because [it is said] in the *Uposathasutta* [that] ‘an *Uposathiko*, who thinks ‘I ate this and that solid food, and I enjoyed this or that soft food. Tomorrow, from the *dāna* I will eat this or that solid food, and I will enjoy this or that soft food,’ passes the day with this covetous mind’ behavior like this or even another impure thought, such as lustful thought, is to be known as ‘the defilement (*saṅkilesa*) of *uposatha sīla*.’ With respect to these thoughts, *uposathasīla* or *niccasīla* that is defiled by anyone is without great result (*mahāpphalaṃ*), without great auspicious results (*mahānisamsaṃ*), without great splendor (*mahājūṭikaṃ*), and without great pervasion (*mahāvipphāraṃ*).¹⁸¹

Thus, the defiling of *sīla*, unlike the actual breeching of the precepts, consists of the presence of thoughts or intentions which distract one from maintaining the discipline, regardless of the fact that an actual transgression has not occurred. According to the text, defilement necessitates that purification procedures be taken by the *upāsaka* in order to preserve the sanctity of the discipline. The sole means of purification advocated by the *Upās* is the recitation of the ‘remembrance’ verses (*anussati*) of the Triple Gem. Each of these verses recalls the virtuous

¹⁸¹ Saddhatissa: 202; *Upās* 2.83. “Uposathasutte pana uposathiko ‘Ahaṃ khvajja idaṇ c’ idaṇ ca khādanīyaṃ khādiṃ, idaṇ c’ idaṇ ca bhojanīyaṃ bhuñjiṃ. Sve ‘dānāhaṃ idaṇ c’ idaṇ ca khādanīyaṃ khādissāmi, idaṇ c’ idaṇ ca bhojanīyaṃ bhuñjissāmi ti so tena abhijjhāsaḥagatena cetasā divasaṃ atināmeti ti vuttattā evaṃ pavatto añño vā kāmavitakkādi-aparisuddhavitakko pi uposathasīlassa saṅkilesa ti vedītabbo. Etesu pana yena kenaci aññena vā saṅkiliṭṭhaṃ niccasīlaṃ uposathasīlaṃ vā na mahāpphalaṃ hoti, na mahānisamsaṃ, na mahājūṭikaṃ, na mahāvipphāraṃ.”

qualities of the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṃgha and functions very much like a form of meditation.¹⁸²

Hallisey notes that:

The practice of *buddhānussati* is propaedeutic in the best sense of the word; it is an effective preparation for the continued practice of the religious life. Moreover, the commentarial tradition also is clear that, as Buddhaghosa mentions, the practice of *buddhānussati* has worldly (*lokiya*) benefits, even if it does not lead on to transcendent (*lokottara*) benefits.¹⁸³

He goes on to show that the *buddhānussati* in particular features as a topic of relative importance in much medieval, Sinhala Buddhist literature. He notes *Amāvatura*, *Pūjāvaliya*, and *Butsaraṇa* as Sinhala language texts that also include descriptions of the benefits of the recitation of, or meditation on, *anussati*. However, Hallisey does not find within these texts any mention of the purificatory function of *anussati* regarding *sīla* as we see in the *Upās*. Nevertheless, the emphasis of the *anussati* verses is something that is shared by several Lankan Buddhist texts of the medieval period, and the *Upās* is no exception.¹⁸⁴

This use of the *anussati* highlights the operation of the systematic progression envisioned by the *Upās* regarding the gradual cultivation of lay virtuosity. As I have argued in the previous chapter, an *upāsaka* must become a devotional subject prior to embarking on the path to

¹⁸² Perhaps the most popular of these remembrance verses, the *buddhānussati* is a recitation of nine virtuous qualities of the Buddha, and it reads as follows: *Iti pi so bhagavā araham sammāsambuddho vijjācaraṇasampanno sugato lokavidu anuttara purisadammasārathi satthā devamanussānam buddho bhagavā*. This translates to: “The Blessed One is worthy, fully-enlightened, endowed with wisdom and good conduct, well-gone, knower of worlds, unsurpassed, leader of men to be tamed, teacher of gods and men, enlightened, and blessed.”

¹⁸³ Hallisey (1988): 236.

¹⁸⁴ Aside from Hallisey’s work, few Buddhist Studies scholars have acknowledged the importance of the *anussati* in Pāli Buddhist traditions. Paul Harrison’s article on *anussati* in the Mahāyāna traditions is useful. See Harrison, “Buddhānusmṛti in the Pratyutpannabuddhasammukhāvasthitasamādhi-Sūtra” *Journal of Indian Philosophy* 6 (1978): 35-57. Harrison claims, however, that *anussati* was relatively unimportant in Pāli Buddhism in comparison to the Mahāyāna, a claim which deserves to be reconsidered. His claim that the Pāli tradition privileged *Buddhānussati* over the remembrances of the other two components of the Triple Gem is accurate, but texts like the *Upās* mark important exceptions to the rule.

virtuosity. If disturbances arise while on this path leading to the defilement of *sīla*, by advocating the practice of the *anussati* the *Upās* reinforces the devotional subjectivity cultivated at the beginning of the overall transformative process. In this way, devotion serves as the cornerstone to the cultivation of virtuosity. Whenever discipline is in danger, due to such things as a mind distracted by unhealthy thoughts, a strengthening of, and renewed commitment to, one's devotion to the Triple Gem serves as a means of purifying one self and assists in the continued pursuit of higher religious goals.

One final feature of the *Upās*' chapter on *sīla* that should be mentioned is that this portion of the text relies on narratives not only to proclaim the benefits of the proper observance of the precepts but to instill fear in the intended audience as a deterrent for breaking the precepts, which is a strategy we see for the first time in this text. In the discussion of the first precept, to abstain from inuring living beings, the *Upās* relates a list of miserable results (*duggatiphala*) taken from the *Devadūtaasutta* that will occur should one break this precept. It includes the following:

loss of limbs, the wasting away of height and girth, separation from the attainment of speed, feet with poor stability, poor appearance, rough and inflexible feet and hands, the affliction of the separation from purity/cleanliness, weakness, a poor voice, being unpleasant to all the world, having a divided group of companions, paralysis, being easily overwhelmed, death by the aggression of an enemy, having few companions, ugliness, being outcaste, having many illnesses, experiencing much grief, enduring separation from loved ones, and having a short life.¹⁸⁵

Nearly every 'miserable result' consists of some sort of physical affliction, which mirrors the injury done to the victim. This is a point that the *Upās* develops further in its retelling of three stories, once again drawn from the *Dhammapada* Commentary, the *Paramatthajotika*.

¹⁸⁵ Saddhatissa: 207-208; *Upās* II.94.

In the first story,¹⁸⁶ a man who is taming an ox burns it with a hot poker and eventual kills it. As a result, he is reborn in the *Avīci* hell for thousands of years, and afterwards experiences a hundred lives in which he too is burned to death with a hot poker. In the second story,¹⁸⁷ a woman suffocates a dog by pouring sand down its throat. She too is reborn in *Avīci*, where she experiences unending suffering, only to be subsequently reborn a hundred times as a woman who travels on a ship that loses its course. In these lifetimes, the sailors on the lost ship suspect her of trickery, causing them to lose their course, and vote to execute her by pouring sand down her throat. In the final story,¹⁸⁸ seven cow-herder's sons trap an iguana in an anthill and leave it there to starve for seven days before they let it out. In this story, the iguana does not die, but it has been harmed. As a result, the boys are not reborn in a hell, but they themselves become trapped in a cave and starve for seven days over the course of forty lives. Each of these narratives reveals the negative consequences of breaking the precept to avoid harming living beings, and they do so in a way that suggests a form of harm occurring to the perpetrator of the violence that equates with the harm rendered to the victim. Thus, it is important to keep in mind that the *Upās* does not render lay virtuosity desirable simply by recourse to images of felicities, which I treat at length in the next chapter of the dissertation, but it also employs frightful images of negative consequences, at least in its discussion of *sīla*. Again, this strategy is one that we find in medieval, Sinhala Buddhist literature as well. Hallisey writes:

[P]erhaps the most potent instrument for this integration of the community was fear. Authors began to encourage fear as a positive motivation for correct virtuous action....Stories are told with the explicit purpose of increasing fear, and even the Buddha is portrayed as acting to increase fear, taking advantage of opportunities to show

¹⁸⁶ Ibid: 209; *Upās* II.96; Dhpa. III.40.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid; *Upās* II.97; Dhpa. III.41.

¹⁸⁸ Ibid; *Upās* II.98; Dhpa. III.42.

that the path to hell is always accessible, even for those who have attained relatively high spiritual states.¹⁸⁹

This last point of Hallisey's is true of the *Upās* as well. At the end of its detailed assessment of sexual misconduct, the text relates the story (again taken from the commentary to the *Dhammapada*) of one of the Buddha's chief disciples, Ānanda, and the results of his act of adultery in a past life.¹⁹⁰ According to the story:

Our Elder Ānanda, filled with the perfections of a hundred-thousand *kappa*-s, roasted in hell by 'meeting with (*samāgama*)' [euphemism for sexual intercourse] the wife of another by association with bad-friends (*pāpamittasamsaggena*), which happened in a certain birth. Afterwards, he was reborn as a woman for fourteen existences. He was castrated (*aṅgajātavadhaṃ*) for seven existences, and it is said:

'While traversing *samsāra*, that Elder was the son of a smith in the city of Rājagaha in the country of Magadha. Having committed adultery (*paradārakammaṃ katvā*) by the association with bad-friends, he was reborn as a son of a merchant with 80 *koṭi* of wealth in the city of Kosambi in the region of Vaṃsa by the merit he had attained on an occasion at the end of his life. Having made much merit by association with good friends, at the time of his death in Rājagaha, he was reborn in the Roruva hell through facing the *kamma* made by adultery. There, having roasted for several hundreds of thousands of *koṭi*-s of years, having exhausted that *kamma*, he was reborn as an ass in the country of Kaṇṇāṭṭa. There, a son of a minister castrated him [thinking] 'This castrated one will be swift,' and made him his own vehicle.

Then, being reborn, he was a monkey in the great forest. There, on the very day of his rebirth, it was ordered by the leader of the troop 'fetch my son,' and having grasped him firmly, he bit with his teeth the wailing one and he was castrated. Afterwards, he was reborn as an ox in the region of Dasaṇṇava. There, right in his youth, he was castrated.

Afterwards, he was reborn as a sexless person (*napuṃsaka*) to a wealthy family in the Vajji country. He was neither a man nor a woman in this human existence, which is so difficult to obtain. Then, he was reborn as a goddess in the *deva* kingdom of Sakka. Then, for two, three, four existences he was reborn as a goddess. In his fifth existence, he was reborn as the chief queen to Javanadibbaputta in the *deva* world.

The narrative concludes with a female human birth, in which Ānanda, even though he has become a beautiful princess, is forced to work by his/her wicked father without adequate food or

¹⁸⁹ Hallisey (1988): 202.

¹⁹⁰ See Saddhatissa: 217-219; *Upās* 2.116-2.118. This is cross referenced with *DhpA* I. 327.

drink. Due to his/her gifts of *dāna* and keeping *sīla* (it is not specified which type), he/she is reborn as a powerful, *male* god in the Tāvātimsa heaven.

The misogyny is apparent, here, as female rebirth is considered a consequence of bad *kamma*. Yet, the hierarchy of poor to better rebirths is clearly shown as well. Rebirth in hell is the worst fate; even Ānanda can only forestall this karmic consequence for one more lifetime due to his previous merit. Following his time in hell, he must endure several rebirths, the majority as an animal, in which he gets castrated for some reason or another. Then, he becomes a sexless person (*napuṃsaka*) before gaining heavenly rebirth in female form. Finally, he obtains rebirth as a human female and then a male god. This is all prior to his eventually becoming a male during the lifetime of the Buddha. The hierarchy revealed runs as follows, from worst to best: hell, animal (physical castration), sexless human (castration by birth), divine female, human female, divine male, human male (during the time of a Buddha). The human rebirths are considered better precisely because they provide a better opportunity for rising in the hierarchy of beings than any of the others.

The intent in including this narrative follows what Hallisey observed in the quotation above, namely that even the most advanced Buddhists can not escape from the unfortunate results brought on by breaking the precepts. Even one of the Buddha's closest disciples, Ānanda, must endure the karmic consequences of his act. This surely serves to instill fear in the audience, who would understand themselves to be far less advanced than the monk Ānanda, thereby reinforcing the importance of discipline.

It is also important that the text refers to Ānanda as “our Ānanda.” I concur with Hallisey's assessment of the use of these personal, possessive pronouns in devotional Buddhist

literature.¹⁹¹ However, I think the use of such possessives also indicate the increasing levels of sectarian commitment and self-identification expected of Buddhists, especially lay Buddhists, during the period in question. While statements like “our Ānanda” clearly draw a significant and perhaps emotional connection between the individual and the figures found within the texts, these statements also draw a distinction between “our [Buddhist] Ānanda” in contradistinction to a Jain Ānanda or a Śaiva Ānanda. The use of personal, possessive pronouns serves to make, not only a personal connection in devotional fashion, but also a communal distinction. This is significant when considering the requirements of the devotional subject discussed in chapter two of the dissertation and the narratives employed in that section of the *Upās*, including the stories of Jambuka and Aggidatta, which held the virtuosos of other, competing traditions up as foils to those following the path of Buddhist virtuosity.

Optional Asceticism

Following the completion of its discussion of *sīla* in chapter 2 of the *Upās*, the text provides in chapter 3 an account of two, additional, ascetic practices (*dhutaṅga*), which the *upāsaka* should undertake to purify his or her discipline. Following the *Visuddhimagga*, the text sites the ‘one-sitting practice’ (*ekāsanikaṅga*), which is eating just one meal a day, and the ‘bowl-food practice’ (*pattapiṇḍikaṅga*), which is using only one vessel for one’s food, as the two that are permitted for the laity.¹⁹² The commentary on these practices follows the *Visuddhimagga* closely, and it is a relatively brief chapter in comparison to the others. There is

¹⁹¹ See Hallisey (1988). The many allusions made to Hallisey’s work on medieval Sinhala literature here reveal that the *Upās* was written in a similar environment as the texts that he discusses, shared similar concerns with these texts, and advocated a similarly devotional mode of Buddhist practice.

¹⁹² Vism. II.92.

little original content here, but the text describes the benefits of undertaking the permissible ascetic practices in the following terms:

Thus, the discipline (*sīla*) of the *upāsaka*, which is cleansed of stain by the water of virtues such as effort and being easy to support (*viriyārambhasubharatādiguṇasālilavikkhālitmalaṃ*), and is content in seclusion and in the performance of austerity (*santuṭṭhisallekhapavivekaṃ*) from wanting little, will be purified (*parisuddhaṃ*) by undertaking suitable ascetic practices, and one's practices will be successful.¹⁹³

This passage promises the *upāsaka* that performance of the optional ascetic practices (*dhutaṅga*) will purify their discipline (*sīla*) and ensure its success. The *dhutaṅgas* are, in this sense, supplementary to *sīla*; they assist it and purify it.

As has already been noted, the *Upās* shares significant elements of style with the *Visuddhimagga*. Since the *Visuddhimagga* includes a section on the *dhutaṅga* practices, the *Upās* follows its lead by including this section on the appropriate ascetic practices of virtuous laity. In fact, the *Upās* suggests that anyone interested in the commentary regarding the remainder of the *dhutaṅga*-s, even though they are expressly not suitable for *upāsaka*-s, consult the *Visuddhimagga*.¹⁹⁴ Thus, I believe this chapter of the *Upās* is intended at the very least as an attempt to maintain the comprehensiveness of the compendium in light of its awareness of the commentary in the *Visuddhimagga*. However, it is worth considering both the fact that an entire chapter (*niddesa*) is dedicated to the clarification and description of these two, permissible ascetic practices and the fact that the phrase “having purified it [*sīla*] by the undertaking of suitable ascetic practices [*dhutaṅga*]” occurs in the opening, abridged summary-of-contents

¹⁹³ Saddhatissa: 253; *Upās* 3.28. “Evam anurūpadhutaṅgasamādānena hi ‘ssa upāsakajanassa appicchataṃ santuṭṭhisallekhapavivekaṃ pi ca viriyārambhasubharatādiguṇasālilavikkhālitamalaṃ sīlañ c’ eva parisuddhaṃ bhavissati, vatāni ca sampajjissanti.”

¹⁹⁴ Saddhatissa: 253; *Upās* 2.27.

verse. It seems that the text intends to draw attention to the ascetic practices in order to present its own argument as to their proper place within the cultivation of lay virtuosity.

As discussed in the introduction, the world of Buddhist practice was not as uniform and orthoprax in most of the pre-modern period as many contemporary Theravādins would like to imagine. There is ample evidence for forms of the Mahāyāna and Tantra existing throughout South and Southeast Asia, despite the relative disappearance (or transformation) of such practices following centuries of reform and ecclesiastical ‘purifications.’¹⁹⁵ The point, which I reiterate here, is that we know far too little about Buddhist practices, and their practitioners, who deviated from what is now considered Theravādin orthopraxy. Given the evidence compiled by Bizot for Southeast Asia, and well-reviewed by Crosby, who adds supporting textual evidence from Lanka, it is difficult to imagine pre-modern Buddhist practice in these regions as monolithic.¹⁹⁶ The very need for the periodic production of the ecclesiastically legalistic *katikāvata* texts, which I discuss in part two of the dissertation, points to the presence of competing modes of Buddhist practice and alternative types of Buddhist virtuosos.

Granting this argument for the likely pluralism among Buddhist practice and virtuoso subjectivity in pre-modern Lanka, South India, and Southeast Asia, the inclusion of a chapter on the *dhutaṅga*-s signals a strategy of incorporating a more arduous lay Buddhist virtuosity into the fold of acceptable lay practice while simultaneously setting limits on the types of virtuoso practice allowed. This strategy both permits lay Buddhists the opportunity to engage in a rigorous Buddhist lifestyle and brings the proper definition of such a lifestyle under the authority

¹⁹⁵ This includes the reforms of Parakramabāhu in the 12th century at Polonnaruva, but also the equally important reforms of the Dambadeniya period and Kandyan period.

¹⁹⁶ See Crosby, “Tantric Theravāda” *Contemporary Buddhism* 1.2 (2000): 141-198.

of the monks. That is, the *Upās* reveals that at least some monks did not seek to do away with non-monastic virtuosos, but rather to set the terms by which such non-monastic virtuosity could be considered Buddhist. The anomaly, in Lincoln's sense of the term, of non-monastic virtuosity becomes domesticated by monastic texts like the *Upās*, and thereby becomes acceptable to and malleable for the monastic institutions of these monks. Any form of practice deviating from what had been established by the *Upās*, such as practicing any of the *dhutaṅga*-s (or other ascetic practices) aside from the two allowed, would arouse suspicion among those Buddhist communities who accepted this text and the authority of the monks who shared the views of the *Upās*.

Conclusions

Thus far, we have seen the *Upās* bring the devoted subject onto the path of virtuosity through taking disciplinary vows. These vows run across a spectrum of intensity from the basic five-precepts to the periodic taking of *uposathasīla*, the potential undertaking of a permanent ten-precept discipline (*niccasīla*), and the periodic engagement in two suitable ascetic practices. Unlike other texts, including those from which the *Upās* draws, the *Upās* permits a liberality in the ritual procedures for taking these various vows, as it does with *saraṇāgamana*. This liberality does not extend to all facets of vow-taking, but only regarding the language used and the person(s) with whom one recites them. It remains crucial in the *Upās* that an *upāsaka* recite the vows in the proper order, does so with the proper psychological preparation, and understand the conditions in which these vows are defiled or broken. This, at least ideally, ensures that the formative aspects of the disciplinary practice, in terms of producing or cultivating the disciplined

subject, take root. It is also vital that the *upāsakas* realize the limits on the intensity of these vows. For instance, no more than the two ascetic practices discussed here are permitted, and the *uposathasīla* is only to be observed on a temporary basis. Finally, while the text does mention the benefits of following these vows, it also employs a strategy of fear in which breaking the precepts leads to misery and suffering in this life and the (sometimes myriad) lives to follow. In this way the devotional subject who has gone to refuge is frightened into accepting at least the five precepts and encouraged to attempt to undertake more precepts, and the ascetic practices, at some point in his or her lifetime.

The gradual cultivation of discipline, then, constitutes the next step along the path of virtuosity advocated by the *Upās* after the devotional commitment established by going to refuge. The two first chapters of the *Upās*, along with the brief third chapter on the ascetic practices comprises over half of the length of the text. Clearly these steps are paramount to the development of virtuosity as advocated in the *Upās*. However, as we see in the following chapter, lay virtuosity is not portrayed as a solitary enterprise, and the intended audience is clearly not the recluse of the forest.

Ch. 4: Virtuosity in the World

The ideal religiosity presented in the first three chapters of the *Upās* offers a vision of the *upāsaka*'s cultivation of virtuosity through devotion and discipline. The *upāsaka* is asked to take refuge and to take up the precepts in a ritual manner and to successfully maintain these vows for as long as possible, with room for periodic purifications and intensifications, both of which also entail ritual procedures. In the subsequent two chapters of the *Upās*, the text extends the virtuosity cultivated by means of these devotional and disciplinary rituals to the *upāsaka*'s social life. This strategy reveals that the text does not merely advocate a weaker form of monastic religiosity for aspiring lay virtuosos. Rather, the text establishes a different sort of path altogether; one which takes into account the social networks within which most *upāsakas* must live as non-monastics. That is, the portion of the *Upās* that I discuss in this chapter of the dissertation expands the scope of lay virtuosity outward from the individual *upāsaka* to encompass a wider range of social relationships and worldly activities.

Here, I focus upon chapters four and five of the *Upās*, which treat the topics of right livelihood (*ājīva*) and the ten types of meritorious deeds (*dasapuñṇakiriyavatthu*) respectively. Unlike the code of discipline (*sīla*) that an *upāsaka* accepts, or the ascetic practices (*dhutaṅga*) that she or he observes periodically, the teachings and prescriptions found here examine the interpersonal relationships that a person has. Where *sīla* concentrates on the development of pure and virtuous intentions and the self-control of one's body, speech, and mind through ritually initiated disciplinary codes; the chapters that I examine below present teachings concerned with regulating one's social networks and the place that the virtuous subject occupies within them. In other words, the disciplined, virtuous subject is now to be socialized.

The first strategy designed to socialize the lay virtuoso that we find in the *Upas* is its discussion of right livelihood (*ājīva*), which centers on the *Sigālovāda Sutta* from the *Dīgha Nikāya*. Among all Pāli *suttas*, the *Sigālovāda* is perhaps the most commonly associated with discourses of proper lay Buddhist practice.¹⁹⁷ In fact, an alternative name for this *sutta* found in the colophons of numerous manuscripts from Sri Lanka and Southeast Asia is *Gīhi Vinaya*, the Disciplinary Code of the Householder, and there are several vernacular commentaries (Sinhala: *sūtra sannaya*) on this particular *sutta* listed within manuscript catalogues.¹⁹⁸ The fourth chapter of the *Upās* consists almost entirely of this *sutta*, and in order to appreciate how the *Upās* utilizes the text it is helpful to consider what additional material the *Upās* situates alongside the *Sigālovāda Sutta*.

Forbidden Occupations

Prior to the retransmission of the *Sigālovāda Sutta* proper, the fourth chapter of the *Upās* opens with a brief account of the five forbidden occupations (*pañcavaṇijjā pahāyā*) as taken from the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* (A.III.208), which are as follows: selling weapons (*sattha vanijjā*), selling living beings (*satta vanijjā*), selling meat (*maṃsa vanijjā*), selling intoxicants (*majja vanijjā*), and selling poisons (*visa vanijjā*).¹⁹⁹ The text devotes relatively little space to an explanation of these prohibited trades, but there is an intention apparent in positioning this list at the beginning of the chapter. The *Sigālovāda Sutta*, the core *sutta* of this chapter, does not mention professions itself, and the text's choice to include this passage reveals the text's

¹⁹⁷ There are other, single *sutta*-s that feature prominently in discussions of lay Buddhist practice, such as the *Maṅgala Sutta* which is also a protective (*paritta*) text. See Hallisey, "Auspicious Things" in Donald Lopez (ed.) *Buddhism in Practice* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995): 412-426.

¹⁹⁸ It would be a worthwhile project, although beyond the scope of this dissertation, to conduct a detailed comparison of the *Upās*' use of the *Sigālovāda Sutta* and that found in the various *Gīhi Vinaya* manuscripts.

¹⁹⁹ *Saddhatissa*: 254; *Upās* 4.1-4.3.

intention to incorporate a teaching of suitable and unsuitable occupations within its own vision of the ideal, virtuous social life.

The text explains the rationale for setting these five trades apart as forbidden occupations by maintaining that through such occupations people will enable others to commit acts that contradict the five-precepts. The selling of intoxicants, for instance, may instigate people to break the fifth precept, to abstain from drinking intoxicants to the extent of carelessness. Interestingly, the question of whether or not the vendor of the intoxicants abstains from imbibing these drinks his or herself is not asked here. The text stresses how the performance of the occupation creates the potential for this precept to be broken throughout society, and not merely by the vendor. This is a crucial point, which distinguishes the aspects of virtuosity found in this portion of the *Upās* from those discussed earlier, which focus on one's own, personal discipline. It is not enough that the virtuous lay Buddhist refrain from practices which break the precepts; she or he must also refrain from enabling others to do so.

Another of the forbidden trades, literally translating to 'the selling of beings' (*sattavaṇijjā*), has the potential to subvert both the first precept, to refrain from inuring living beings, and the second, to refrain from taking what is not given. In the *Upās*, however, this forbidden occupation is defined explicitly as slavery (*manussavikkayo*) rather than taking the broader interpretation that would include the selling of any living being. Thus, animal trade is rendered acceptable while human slavery is expressly forbidden, a redefinition which may reflect a compromise with the economic realities of the day.

Three of the remaining forbidden trades – selling weapons, meat, and poisons – are intimately linked with the first precept, not to injure living beings. Yet, the text claims that “selling weapons and selling poisons are unwise (*akiriya*) with respect to the network of business

contacts (*paroparodhanimittatāya*) [involved].”²⁰⁰ Quite aside from the potential to assist one’s clients in committing *pāṇātipāta* through the sale of arms and/or poisons, the *Upās* draws attention to the socially harmful side of these occupations for the vendor. Not only does selling weapons and poisons, both of which are designed specifically to harm living beings, contribute to the breaking of the first precept, but as the text explains, it also produces dangerous social ties for the person who chooses to engage in such trades, assuming that his or her clients would in all likelihood be those intent on harming living beings. The virtuous subject is not necessarily asked, here, to actively work for the transformation of society (this is something we see advocated directly in the *Upās*’ chapter on the ten meritorious deeds), but rather to safeguard her or his own social networks. This extension of virtuosity to the realm of social life is what is meant by the term *ājīva* as we find it in the *Upās*. In order to promote its teaching, the text does not entreat the *upāsaka* to perform ritual vows, as was its tactic earlier. Here, the *Upās* relies solely on drawing connections between the virtuous social conduct that it advocates for the *upāsaka* and the felicities and dangers of the social world. This is a tactic we see most clearly in the text’s choice of including the *Sigālovāda Sutta* in near entirety.

The *Sigālovāda Sutta*

The text begins the *Sigālovāda Sutta* proper following its brief discussion of the five forbidden trades. First, the *Upās* follows the *Digha Nikāya* and discusses the following topics outlined in this introductory statement:

Thus, by the Blessed One, the path called ‘victory of both worlds’ (*ubholokavijayā*), which consists of: the 4 defiling actions (*kammakilesā*) to be done away with, the wicked deeds (*pāpaṃ kammaṃ*) that are not to be done in four ways, the 6 mouths of the

²⁰⁰ Saddhatissa: 254; *Upās* 4.3.

destruction of wealth (*bhogāna apāyamukhāni*) that are to be avoided, the four non-friends (*amittā*) who are to be shunned, the four friends with whom one should associate, and the six directions to be avoided, is taught for sons of a household (*kulaputtānaṃ*) who live the domestic life (*gharāvāsasamāvasantānaṃ*) triumphing over such things as fear, misery, and punishment in the two worlds, that is this world and the other world.²⁰¹

As is suggested by the name given to this path, “victory of both worlds,” the virtuosity imagined here is conducive to both a vertical vector of achievement—advancement towards *nibbāna*—and a horizontal vector of achievement—well-being in this world. These two vectors are not imagined as mutually exclusive in Buddhist literature but rather as a difference in kind. Buddhist texts often describe worldly achievements as being conducive, sometimes necessary precursors to, advancement along the path to ultimate salvation in *nibbāna*.²⁰² I reiterate, here, the importance of understanding how appraisals of virtuosity that limit themselves to the monastics and professional members of the ecclesiastic communities make it easy to lose sight of the many ways in which the pursuit of virtuosity is imagined not so much as an escape from the world of human existence but as a means of improving one’s lot therein; if not in this life then in the next.²⁰³

²⁰¹ Saddhatissa: 255; *Upās* 4.6. “Bhagavatā hi cattāro kammakilesā pahātabbā, catūhi ṭhānehi pāpaṃ kammaṃ na kātabbā, cha bhogānaṃ apāyamukhāni vajjetabbāni, cattāro amittā parivajjitabbā, cattāro mittā sevittabbā, cha disā parivajjitabbā ti gharāvāsasamāvasantānaṃ kulaputtānaṃ ihalokaparalokasaṅkhātesu dvīsu lokesu daṇḍaduggatibhayādīnaṃ vijayanato ubholokavijayā nāma paṭipadā desitā.”

The term “*kulaputta*” is often translated as “good sons,” but it literally means children of a *kula*, which could be rendered as ‘house,’ but in the sense of a clan, lineage, or household. Depending on the usage, the term may imply ‘good households;’ however, there is no reason to draw this level of specificity in all cases. We should also consider the diminutive aspect of the term, in which either laypersons or novice monks/nuns might be called *kulaputta* as a sign of affectionately subjecting them to another’s authority and prestige. In fact, the word is another example of what Hallisey has called an “under-theorized technical term” (see chapter 2). The term ‘*kula*’ may have gained the connotation of *jāti*, *varṇa*, or other social grouping often referred to as caste at specific points in the history of Buddhism. This is generally what scholars have in mind when they add the adjective ‘good’ to their translation of the term. However, more research needs to be done in order to know for sure the senses in which the term has been used and what the implications might be for an understanding of the social life of Buddhists historically.

²⁰² See Holt (1991): 19-26. This remains one of the most extensive treatments of the Sinhala terms *lōkōttara* and *laukika*, which are derived directly from the Pāli *lokuttara* and *lokiya*.

²⁰³ I find this to be true of Silber (1995). Others have stressed the need to account for the variety of soteriological goals displayed in Buddhist literature. See especially Collins (1998) and also Freiburger (2001).

Consider the verse which concludes the account of the 4 states of performing wicked deeds:

Out of lust, anger, fear, ignorance
Whoever does not transgress the *Dhamma*,
That one's fame is full
Like the moon in the bright half of the month.²⁰⁴

The benefit of avoiding the defiling acts is described as an increase in fame (*yasa*), a benefit which loses its meaning apart from a social context. Likewise, take the discussion of “the ways of the destruction of wealth.” The six noted are as follows:

The practice of drinking intoxicants to the extent of carelessness, O householder, is a way of destruction of wealth; the practice of wandering streets at inappropriate times is a way of destruction of wealth, the practice of frequenting festivals is a way of destruction of wealth, the practice of gambling to the extent of carelessness is a way of destruction of wealth, the practice of joining with wicked friends is a way of destruction of wealth, practicing idleness is a way of destruction of wealth.²⁰⁵

This list incorporates one of the five-precepts, *surāmerayamajjapamādatthāna*, but it performs two functions upon the vow. First, it shifts its explanation of the precept from a disciplinary perspective to one that considers the harmful, socio-economic consequences of the act. Here, the reasons behind the problematic nature of drinking intoxicants to excess are described in the following:

Six, O householder's son, are the dangers of drinking intoxicants to the extent of carelessness: theft of material wealth, instigating fights, occasions of disease, production of infamy, immodesty (*kopīnaṃ nidaṃsanī*), and weakness in reason is the sixth. These, O householder's son, are the six dangers of drinking intoxicants to the extent of carelessness.²⁰⁶

²⁰⁴ Saddhatissa: 257; *Upās* 4.16. Cross referenced with A.II.19 and D.III.182. “Chandā dosā bhayā mohā yo dhammaṃ nātivattati/ āpūراتi tassa yaso sukkapakkhe va candimā ti.”

²⁰⁵ Saddhatissa: 258; *Upās* 4.17. “Surāmerayamajjapamādatthānānuyogo kho, gahapatiputta, bhogānaṃ apāyamukkhāṃ, vikālavisikhācariyānuyogo bhogānaṃ apāyamukkhāṃ, samajjābhicaraṇaṃ bhogānaṃ apāyamukkhāṃ, jūtappamādatthānānuyogo bhogānaṃ apāyamukkhāṃ, pāpamittānuyogo bhogānaṃ apāyamukkhāṃ, ālasiyānuyogo bhogānaṃ apāyamukkhāṃ ti.”

²⁰⁶ Ibid; *Upās* 4.19. “Cha kho ‘me gahapatiputta, ādīnavā surāmerayamajjapamādatthānānuyoge: sandiṭṭhikā dhanañjāni kalahappavaḍḍhanī, rogānaṃ āyatanaṃ, akittisañjananī, kopīnaṃ nidaṃsanī, paññāya dubbalīkaraṇī tveva chaṭṭhaṃ padaṃ bhavati. Ime kho, gahapatiputta, cha ādīnavā surāmerayamajjapamādatthānānuyoge.”

In this explanation, the majority of harmful consequences have clear socio-economic implications; injuries to one's wealth, health, and social reputation. In a similar fashion, when explaining the dangers of wandering the streets at inappropriate times, the text claims:

Six, O householder's son, are the dangers of wandering the streets at inappropriate times: one is unprotected and unguarded, one's wife and children are unprotected and unguarded, one's property is unprotected and unguarded, one is apt to be suspected in wicked places, lies spread there, and one is accused for many sufferings.²⁰⁷

Additionally, the dangers of carelessly gambling are noted in the following:

Six, O householder's son, are the dangers of gambling to the extent of carelessness: winning produces hostility, the loser mourns for wealth, theft of belongings, one's words are not taken seriously, one is despised by one's friends and companions, and one is not sought after for marriage, as a gambler is not fit for marriage.²⁰⁸

Clearly, the *Upās*' teachings on "leading a righteous and tranquil life," taken directly from the *Sigālovāda Sutta*, are designed for *upāsaka* living in the midst of the human social world. The strategy that the text utilizes to entice the *upāsaka* into accepting its arguments relies heavily on the persuasive power of its descriptions of the socio-economic hazards that accompany a non-virtuous lifestyle. Concerns for the well-being of one's family, one's suitability for marriage, the safety of one's wealth, and one's reputation are all raised in these accounts. The text's strategy, then, is to portray the human social world as an inherently dangerous place in which terrible consequences await those who fail to live by the Buddha's teachings. This is quite in line with the fundamental Buddhist problem of *saṃsāra*. In other words, by maximizing one's virtuosity, the naturally ever-present dangers of *saṃsāra* are minimized, and one can lead a happy life

The phrase "*kopīnaṃ nidamaṃ*" is literally "exposing genitalia."

²⁰⁷ Ibid; *Upās* 4.20. "Cha kho 'me gahapatiputta ādīnavā vikālavisikhācariyānuyoge: attā pi 'ssa agutto arakkhito hoti, puttadāro pi 'ssa agutto arakkhito hoti, sāpateyyam pi 'ssa aguttaṃ arakkhitaṃ hoti, saṅkiyo ca hoti pāpakesu thānesu, abhūtavacanaṃ ca tasmim rūhati, bahunnaṃ ca dukkhadhammānaṃ purakkhato hoti. Ime kho, gahapatiputta, cha ādīnavā vikālavisikhācariyānuyoge."

²⁰⁸ Ibid; *Upās* 4.22. "Cha kho 'me gahapatiputta ādīnavā jūtappamādaṭṭhānānuyoge: jayaṃ veraṃ pasavati, jito vittam anusocati, sandiṭṭhikā dhanañjāni, sabhāgatassa vacanaṃ na rūhati, mittāmaccaṇaṃ paribhūto hoti, āvāhavivāhakānaṃ apatthito hoti akkhadhutto purisapuggalo nālaṃ dārābharaṇāyā ti."

within the world to the extent that she or he is able to maintain the virtuous lifestyle taught by the text. Although life in *samsāra* is ultimately unsatisfactory according to Buddhist conceptions, this does not preclude a wide variety of felicities from existing within it; even if the enjoyments of the world are inferior to the ultimate achievement of *nibbānic* release. There are positive and negative aspects to life in the world, and the point which the text makes is that *upāsaka* must learn to discriminate between them if they are to live a pleasant life. This recognition of the positive and negative aspects of worldly existence carries through to the *Upās*' vision of human society, as demonstrated clearly in the text's teaching about friendship.

Regarding the four non-friends, the text states:

Know that they are four, O householder's son, the non-friends who take the guise of friends: It is to be known that one who has ulterior motives is a non-friend in the guise of a friend, that one who does not do what they say is a non-friend in the guise of a friend, that one who recites flattery is a non-friend in the guise of a friend, and that a friend who causes loss is a non-friend in the guise of a friend.²⁰⁹

The four friends, on the other hand, are described in the following:

Know that these four, O householder's son, are good-hearted friends: it is to be known that one who helps is a good-hearted friend, one who is the same in happiness and sorrow is a good-hearted friend, one who shows what is profitable is a good-hearted friend, and one who is compassionate is a good-hearted friend.²¹⁰

These teachings advise the *upāsaka* through employing a typology of the sorts of company they should keep. It categorizes the types of persons with whom *upāsaka* might associate into two clear-cut groups and advises that the *upāsaka* must develop the ability to recognize them and, to some extent, control their associations with members of each category. There is an intentionality

²⁰⁹ Saddhatissa: 263; *Upās* 4.42. "Cattāro me gahapatiputta, amittā mittapatirūpakā veditabbā: (i) aññadatthuharo amitto mittapatirūpakā veditabbo, (ii) vacīparamo amitto mittapatirūpakā veditabbo, (iii) anuppiyabhāṇī amitto mittapatirūpakā veditabbo, (iv) apāyasahāyo amitto mittapatirūpakā veditabbo ti."

²¹⁰ Saddhatissa: 267; *Upās* 4.56. "Cattāro me gahapatiputta mittā suhadā veditabbā: (i) upakāro mitto suhado veditabbo, (ii) samānasukhadukkho mitto suhado veditabbo, (iii) atthakkhāyī mitto suhado veditabbo, (iv) anukampako mitto suhado veditabbo ti."

implied in the *upāsaka*'s formation and maintenance of social networks. The *upāsaka* as a virtuous subject is asked to recognize potential friends, weigh their qualities in terms of the two categories presented here, and determine whether or not they should foster or foreclose a relationship. Not all relationships can be considered intentional, however, and the text proceeds to explain the ways in which the *upāsaka* should behave virtuously towards all of her or his relations.

The Six Directions as an Ideal Social Network

The climax of the *Sigālovāda Sutta* is the discussion of the six-directions, in which the text creates a totalizing image of an *upāsaka*'s network of social relations and the reciprocal obligations between these persons and the *upāsaka*. Although the background story to this *sutta* is not provided in the *Upās*, which signals that the text either assumes the intended readers would already be aware of it or that the story is not necessarily important to its purposes here, the version found in the *Dīgha Nikāya* tells of how the Buddha first spoke this *sutta* after seeing a young man, Sigāla, worshipping the six-directions as deities.²¹¹ This youth's father had instructed him to do so while on his death bed, but the Buddha instructs him in the proper means of worshipping the six-directions as the six types of persons with which one has social relations.

These six are as follows:

Know that the East is the mother and father on account of their help in the past, teachers are the South on account of their worthiness of honor, wife and children are the West on account that they follow behind, friends and associates are the North because one crosses over various sufferings because of friends and associates, servants are the Nadir because

²¹¹ I believe, given the prevalence of the *Sigālovāda Sutta* in manuscript collections, that the former possibility is most likely. This means that the *Upās* assumes a working knowledge of the text and its background story. Otherwise, I think the inclusion of a story in which a young man learns an explicitly Buddhist interpretation of a pan-South Asian religious practice would have fit well within the text's strategy to instill a singular devotion to the Buddhist tradition, as explained in chapter two of the dissertation.

they stand at one's feet, and noble ascetics are the zenith because of their excellent virtues.²¹²

One of the reasons why this particular *sutta* is oft cited as the *sutta par-excellence* to treat the religiosity of the lay Buddhist is because it situates the person within the center of an ideal social network and explains in a concise and easily-remembered fashion the social duties incumbent upon the layperson, as well as the reciprocal benefits one should expect to receive from each of these relations. It is, in this sense, a totalizing expression of a layperson's ideal social existence.

In describing this ideal social network, the reciprocal nature of each relationship is stressed. Consider the explanation of an *upāsaka*'s relationship to his or her parents:

On five grounds are parents to be honored (*paccupaṭṭhātabbā*) as the East by a child of the household who is covering (*paṭicchādentena kulaputtana*) the six-directions. Accordingly, it is said: "I, who was supported, will support them, I will do for them what ought to be done, I will maintain the household lineage (*kulavaṃsaṃ*), I will accept my inheritance, and I will furnish offerings to the departed."

Thus, on five grounds do parents who are honored show compassion (*anukampanti*) to their child. Thus it is said: "They restrain them from what is wrong, they establish them in what is beautiful, they teach them knowledge, they unite them with a suitable spouse, and in time they present them an inheritance."²¹³

The obligations presented here run in two directions, and both the children and the parents must render services to each other to uphold the ideal, virtuous relationship. The *upāsaka* must acknowledge their role in these relationships and be aware of the types of duties that are incumbent upon them. Since the duties of parents to their children are already explained in this

²¹² Saddhatissa: 270; *Upās* 4.68. "Mātāpitaro pubbūpakāritāya puratthimā disā ti veditabbā. Ācariyā dakkhiṇeyyatāya dakkhiṇā disā ti. Puttadārā piṭṭhito anubandhanavasena pacchimā disā ti. Mittāmaccā yasmā so mittāmacce nissāya te te dukkhavisesse uttarati tasmā uttarā disā ti. Dāsakammakarā pādamūle tiṭṭhanavasena hetthimā disā ti. Samaṇabrāhmaṇā guṇehi upariṭṭhitabhāvena uparimā disā ti veditabbā ti."

²¹³ Saddhatissa: 270; *Upās* 4.69-4.70. "Etā pana chadisā paṭicchādentena kulaputtana tāva mātāpitaro puratthimā disā pañcahi ṭhānehi paccupaṭṭhātabbā. Vuttaṃ h' etaṃ: 'Bhato ne bharissāmi, kiccaṃ tesāṃ karissāmi, kulavaṃsaṃ paṭṭhapessāmi, dāyajjaṃ paṭicchāmi, atha vā pana petānaṃ kālakatānaṃ dakkhiṇaṃ anupadassāmi' ti. Evaṃ paccupaṭṭhitā hi mātāpitaro pañcahi ṭhānehi puttaṃ anukampanti. Yathāha: 'Pāpā nivārenti, kalyāṇe nivesenti, sippaṃ sikkhāpenti, patirūpena dārena saṃyojenti, samaye dāyajjaṃ niyyādentī' ti."

relationship, the text does not reiterate them in its discussion of the Western direction (i.e. wife and children). Only the duties between husbands and wives are explained there, which reads:

On five grounds is a wife honored by her husband as the West. Accordingly, it is said: “By veneration (*sammānanāya*), by respect (*anavamānanāya*), by being faithful to her (*anaticariyāya*), by giving her authority (*issariyavossaggena*), and by providing her with ornaments.”

Thus, on five grounds do wives who are honored show compassion to their husbands. Thus it is said: “She is one whose work is well-prepared, she is kindly disposed to the servants (*parijane*), she is faithful, she protects the provisions, and she is energetic and skillful on all her duties.”²¹⁴

The teachings of the *Sigālovāda Sutta* espouse what amounts to a social contract between six pairs of social roles. Each member of a pair has obligations to the other member. The wording also implies that if one member does not live up to his or her side of the obligations then the other should not necessarily expect the reciprocal benefits and services to be rendered. The term ‘honored’ (*paccupaṭṭhita*) describes the second member of each pair in the series indicating that these persons must receive the treatment outlined in the first part of the description of that pair if they are to be expected to “show compassion” as the text puts it.

Supplementary Teachings

The fact that the *Upās* incorporates the *Sigālovāda Sutta* in near entirety signals its recognition of this *sutta* as a vital component for the development of the virtuous lay Buddhist life. Nevertheless, the text does supplement this core *sutta* with complimentary teachings, as we have already seen by its inclusion of the discussion of the five forbidden trades above. This reveals that the *Sigālovāda Sutta* by itself, although pivotal to an understanding of the virtuous

²¹⁴ Saddhatissa: 271; *Upās* 4.72-4.73. “Pañcahi ṭhānehi sāmikena pacchimā disā bhariyā paccupaṭṭhātābbā. Vuttaṃ h’ etaṃ: ‘Sammānanāya, anavamānanāya, anaticariyāya, issariyavossaggena, alaṅkārauppadānenā’ ti. Evaṃ paccupaṭṭhitā hi bhariyā pañcahi ṭhānehi sāmikaṃ anukampati. Yathāha: ‘Susamvihitakammantā ca hoti, susaṅgahitaparijanā ca, anaticārīnī ca, sambhatam anurakkhati, dakkhā ca hoti analasāsabbakiccesū’ ti.”

social life, is not considered a complete statement of *ājīva* for aspiring *upāsakas*. Thus, the text incorporates another three, brief teachings which follow the *Sigālovāda Sutta* proper.

The first of these is the financial advice offered by the Buddha as found in the *Dīgha Nikāya*. It reads as follows:

Divide wealth into four,
If you [are to] make friends.
With one [share], wealth is to be enjoyed,
With two [shares], invest it in business,
And the fourth is to be saved,
[For] one will experience misfortunes.²¹⁵

Oddly enough, this is the exact same passage which the *Upās* cited in its first chapter, on *saraṇāgamana*, where it argues against using this type of pragmatic teaching as a reason for going to refuge. In the text's estimation, taking the vows of refuge because the Buddha provided sound, practical wisdom is insufficient and clearly does not contribute to the formation of a devotional subjectivity expected by the text.²¹⁶ However, we see here that this pragmatic teaching itself remains important for the virtuous life of the *upāsaka*, despite its unsuitability as a rationale for going to refuge initially.

Subsequent to this teaching of a virtuous budget, the *Upās* directs the final two teachings of its fourth chapter on right livelihood solely toward women. The first of these is aimed specifically at wives, and it reads as follows:

A woman rises from her bed first, out of compassion for her husband, engages the servants in work, has the house's courtyard swept, does such things as milking; in so far as she serves her husband even a little, she conducts herself thus. She asks [things] from her husband with pleasant words, and she gathers such things as bath water. In the house at evening she has food given to all who are eating, and she takes the food that was not taken by them. She asks about the cattle in the cowpen with respect to their returning and not returning. She arranges for the protection of the gateway [to the home] and has the

²¹⁵ Saddhatissa: 279-280; *Upās* 4.103. Cross referenced to *D.III.188*.

²¹⁶ See chapter two of the dissertation.

keys brought. She has valuables put in well-guarded places. She plans what is to be done early the next day, and she goes to sleep after [everything is done].

She performs acts of honor and respect to her husband, his parents, and to noble ascetics. She prepares seats for those who have arrived, has their feet washed and such, and has food given [to them]. Skilled at such things as spinning thread, energetic with her hands, she makes things for her husband herself, and she has the servants do what they ought to. Regarding the master's servants, she knows the chores they do everyday, those in the morning and those in the evening. Knowing the strengths and weaknesses of the sick, she treats them with medicines and the like. She protects well the wealth amassed by her husband and keeps it. She is not wild (*dhuttī*), a thief (*corī*), or a drunkard (*surālolā*). She is well established in the discipline of refuge. Having become unselfish, she is one who delights in distributing gifts. Endowed with these qualities, this woman is reborn in the presence of the Deities with Pleasing Bodies.²¹⁷

The *Upās* creates what amounts to a code for virtuous, female, domestic life, which it derives from a reading of the *Anuruddha Sutta* from the *Upasathavagga* of the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*. The version found here in the *Upās* differs only slightly from the version found there. The most apparent omission is that the *Upās* does not relate the background story telling of an experience of the Buddha's disciple Anuruddha, in which several, beautiful goddesses approach him and display their three-fold powers of changing colors, changing their voices, and instantly procuring comforts. Anuruddha asks the Buddha how it is that a woman attains rebirth among such

²¹⁷ Saddhatissa: 280-281; *Upās* 4.107-108. “Yā itthī sāmike anukampāya sayanaṭṭhānato paṭhamam utthahitvā parijane kammante yojeti, gehaṅgaṇam sammajjāpeti, khīradohanādiṃ karoti, yathā sāmikassa manam vaḍḍhati tathā paṭipajjati, hadayaṅgamaṇa vacanena sāmike pucchitvā nahānodakādiṃ sampādeti, sāyaṇhe ca gehe bhuñjantānam sabbesam bhojanam dāpetvā, ye aladdhabhojanā tesam pi bhojanam sampādetvā, vajagatānam gunnam pi āgatānāgate pucchitvā, dvārakoṭṭhakādisu rakkhāvidhānam kāretvā kuñcīkāmuddike āharāpetvā, aguttatṭhāne ṭhapitāni bhaṇḍāni guttatṭhāne ṭhapāpetvā, punadivase pāto va idaṃ c’ idaṃ ca kātabban ti vicāretvā, pacchā sayati. Sāmikassa ca tassa mātāpitunnaṃ ca samaṇabrāhmaṇānaṃ ca sakkāragarukāram karoti. Āgatānam āsanam paññāpetvā pādadhovanādiṃ kāretvā bhojanam dāpeti. Sāmikassa suttakantaṇādisu dakkhā gahitaḡahitaṃ analasā va sayāṇ ca karoti, parijanehi kātabbam tehi kārāpeti. Sāmīno dāsadāsīsu ete sakaladivasabhāgaṃ kammāni karonti, ete pubbaṇhe, ete sāyaṇhe ti jānitvā, gilānānaṃ ca tesam balābalaṃ jānitvā, bhesajjayojanādīhi saṅgaṇhāti. Sāmikena sañcitāni dhanadhaṇṇāni surakkhitaṃ katvā ṭhapeti. Dhuttī corī surālolā na hoti. Saraṇasīle patiṭṭhitā hoti. Amaccharī hutvā dānasamvibhāgaratā hoti. Imehi dhammehi samannāgatā sā itthī Manāpakāyikānam devānam santike uppajjati.”

goddesses, and the Buddha's answer closely follows the teaching cited above, though slightly re-crafted in the *Upās*.²¹⁸ The version of this response found in the *Āṅguttara Nikāya* is as follows:

With eight qualities is a woman endowed who after the break of the body after death is reborn in the company of the Pleasant Body goddesses. What are the eight? Now, Anuruddha, a woman whose parents give her to a husband who cares for her as he does himself, out of compassion for him rises first, goes to bed last, assents to doing the chores, goes about pleasantly, and speaks amiably.

Whoever is honored by the husband – mother, father, or noble ascetics – she receives them, she honors them, she reveres them, she reverences them, and she honors them with seats when they arrive.

Whatever be the husband's home industries – wool or cotton – she is skillful, energetic, and has extensive knowledge to prepare and to do them.

Whoever is a member of the husband's house-workers – a servant, messenger, or worker – she knows what they have done by what is done, she knows what they have not done by what is not done, she knows the strengths and weaknesses of the sick, and she divides what is to be eaten into shares.

Whatever the husband accumulates – grains, rice, or gold and silver – she procures it carefully with protection, and in respect to this [wealth] she is not wild (*adhuttī*), not a thief (*athenī*), not a drunkard (*asonḍī*), and not a waster (*avināsikā*).

But, she is an *upāsikā* who has gone for refuge in the Buddha, gone for refuge in the *Dhamma*, and gone for refuge in the *Saṅgha*.

She is virtuous (*sīlavatī*), abstained from injuring living beings, abstained from taking what is not given, abstained from sexual misconduct, abstained from false speech, and abstained from drinking intoxicants to the extent of carelessness.

She is generous; she resides in the home with the intention that the stains of envy are removed. Generous in giving up, open-handed, delights in giving, practices alms-giving, and delights in distributing gifts.

With these eight qualities, Anuruddha, is a woman endowed who is reborn in the company of the Pleasant Body Goddesses.

²¹⁸ A. IV.266. I present a translation of this *sutta* here as the one found in Hare is not precise. Compare to Hare, *The Book of the Gradual Sayings IV* (London: Luzac and Company, 1965 [1935]): 175-178.

As is apparent, there is little deviation between this version and the version found in the *Upās*, but there are some additional bits of information provided in the *Upās* that do not occur in the original. First of all, the *Aṅguttara Nikāya* clearly states that the husband is a man “who cares for her as he does himself.” This is not mentioned in the *Upās*’ version, but it may be implied following the teaching of the reciprocal relationship between husband and wife from the *Sigālovāda Sutta* discussed above. I break the remainder of the description of this code of conduct into four parts for clarity.

The first part deals with the general domestic duties performed by the ideal wife from morning to night. The *Aṅguttara Nikāya* version is rather brief in comparison to the *Upās* in this section. The *Upās* notes the following additional pieces of information concerning the wife’s duties: she instructs the servants on the day’s chores, has the courtyard swept, milks animals, procures bath water, serves herself last at mealtime, makes enquiries about the news of the world from travelers, secures the valuables, locks the gate at night, and plans the next day’s activities. This in no way contradicts what is said in the source text regarding chores, but it does describe domesticity in greater detail than the *Aṅguttara* version, and it sheds a bit of light on some aspects of domestic life in medieval South Asia.

The second section of this code of conduct deals with the ideal wife’s duties performed to revered guests. The *Aṅguttara* version does not include the husband in its own definition of those who are to be honored. It simply states that those who are honored by the husband should be honored by his wife. The *Upās*, however, includes the husband among these others, and it includes the duties of having these people’s feet washed and having food brought to them. Again, nothing contrary to the original version is found here, but the husband appears to be

treated with a deeper reverence, possibly reflecting medieval socio-cultural expectations existing in parts of South Asia.

The third section discusses the role of the wife in the home industries run by the husband. Both versions of the code use spinning fabric of some kind as their example. Each also refers to the wife's responsibility to oversee the husband's workers and to care for them. There is little difference between the two versions here, and there is no real deviation between the two regarding the final section, which mentions that a wife should take refuge in the Triple Gem and take up the five-precepts. Each version also notes three characteristics that the wife does not have – being wild, a thief, or a drunk – though the *Upās* uses slightly different words to make the same point. In all, the *Upās* seeks to maintain affinity to the source text even as it provides us with a clearer picture of what domestic life may have been like at the time.

Following this domestic code of ethics for wives is a story about the roots of beauty, fame, and power found in the *Mallikā Sutta*, again from the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*. The story as found in the *Upās* runs as follows:

One time Queen Mallikā went to Jetavana, worshipped the Buddha, was seated to one side and asked 4 questions: “Lord, in this world, some women are ugly, poor, and of little power. Some women are beautiful, endowed with wealth, rich and of great power. Some are beautiful, poor, and of little power. Some are beautiful, rich, and of great power. What is the reason for their state as such?”

Having heard this, the Blessed One [responded]: “Mallikā, in this world, whatever woman is full of anger, does not look after noble ascetics with gifts of food and drink, etc., and is jealous for the honor and wealth of others, she is ugly having obtained a short human existence, poor, and of little power. Whoever is filled with anger, but gives gifts, and is not jealous, she is ugly in birth after birth, but wealthy, and of great power. Whoever is not angry, but does not give gifts, and is jealous, she is beautiful in birth after birth, but she is poor and of little power. Whoever is not angry, looks after the noble ascetics with food, water, etc., and is not jealous for the honor and wealth of another, she is beautiful in birth after birth, rich, and of great power.”

Having heard this, Queen Mallikā said: “Lord, in a past life I was filled with anger. Now I am ugly. I rendered service to the noble ascetics with food and drink, etc., and now I have great wealth from that. I was not jealous for the wealth and honor of others, and now I am of great power. Now I make dominion over all in the royal family: the warriors, *brāhmaṇas*, lords of the houses, and the women.” And having said, “Lord, starting from today, I am not angry, I look after the noble ascetics with food and drink, etc., and I am not jealous for the honor and wealth of others,” she worshipped the Buddha and she took refuge.²¹⁹

The story clearly ties the felicitous things of this life (i.e. beauty, wealth, and power) to one’s social virtuosity in both this life and previous lives. There is no mention of breaking the precept vows, only committing poor behavior within a social environment. As a queen, Mallikā represents a woman at the apex of the human social world. Yet, even she is dissatisfied with her life. She is, by her own assessment, less than attractive, and she wonders why this can be so when she must have performed enough meritorious works in previous lives to have amassed the wealth and the power that she has at present. The Buddha’s answer in this story – like the account of the unfortunate rebirths for those who harm living beings – draws a line of causality between the type of bad action that one commits and the type of negative karmic result that they receive in the future. We saw, in the discussion of discipline (*sīla*) in the previous chapter of the dissertation, how a man who burned an ox to death with a hot poker received the same fate in

²¹⁹ Saddhatissa: 282-283; *Upās* 4.110-4.113. Cross-referenced with A.II.202-205. “Ekasmiṃ samaye Mallikā devī Jetavanaṃ gantvā Sammāsambuddhaṃ vanditvā ekamantaṃ nisinnā cattāro pañhe pucchi: ‘Bhante, imasmiṃ loke ekaccā itthiyo dubbaṇṇā honti, daḷiddā honti, appesakkhā honti. Ekaccā virūpā honti, bhogasampannā honti, aḍḍhā honti, mahesakkhā honti. Ekaccā abhirūpā honti, daḷiddā honti, appesakkhā honti. Ekaccā abhirūpā honti, aḍḍhā honti, mahesakkhā honti. Tāsaṃ tathābhāvāya kāraṇaṃ kin’ ti? Taṃ sutvā Bhagavā: ‘Mallike, imasmiṃ loke yā itthī kodhanabahulā samaṇabrāhmaṇānaṃ annapānādānādīhi upaṭṭhānaṃ na karoti, paralābhasakkāre issāvamānaṃ karoti, sā ito cutā manussattabhāvaṃ paṭilabhitvā virūpā hoti, daḷiddā hoti, appesakkhā hoti. Yā kodhanabahulā hoti, dānaṃ deti, issāvamānaṃ na karoti, sā uppannuppannaṭṭhāne virūpā hoti, dhanavatī hoti, mahesakkhā hoti. Yā kodhaṃ na karoti, dānaṃ na deti, issāvamānaṃ karoti, sā uppannuppannaṭṭhāne abhirūpā hoti, daḷiddā hoti, appesakkhā hoti. Yā kodhaṃ na karoti, samaṇabrāhmaṇānaṃ annapānādīhi upaṭṭhāti, paralābhasakkāre issāvamānaṃ na karoti, sā uppannuppannaṭṭhāne abhirūpā hoti, aḍḍhā hoti, mahesakkhā hoti’ ti āha. Taṃ sutvā Mallikā devī: ‘Bhante, ahaṃ atītajātiyaṃ kodhabahulā ahoṣiṃ nu kho idāni dubbaṇṇā ahoṣiṃ. Samaṇabrāhmaṇānaṃ annapānādīhi upaṭṭhānaṃ akāsiṃ nu kho tasmā mahābhoga ahoṣiṃ. Paralābhasakkāresu issāvamānaṃ na akāsiṃ nu kho idāni mahesakkhā ahoṣiṃ ti imasmiṃ rājakule khattiyaabrāhmaṇagahapatikaññānaṃ sabbesaṃ hi issariyādhipaccaṃ kāremi. Bhante, ajjapaṭṭhāya kodhaṃ na karomi, samaṇabrāhmaṇānaṃ annapānādīhi upaṭṭhānaṃ karomi, paralābhasakkāre issāvamānaṃ pi na karomi’ ti vatvā vanditvā saraṇaṃ gatā.”

future lives. We saw how the Buddha's own disciple, Ānanda, was repeatedly castrated in successive lives because of the misuse of his male genitalia, and here we see how the specific character flaw of anger leads to the specific infelicity of physical ugliness. However, Mallikā's unfortunate result is not due to a disciplinary infraction. For all we know, she has successfully kept the five-precepts throughout that entire lifetime. What she had done wrong was to behave in a non-virtuous manner to the others around her, her social network, in that past life. By showing anger to others, Mallikā has become, in this life, an ugly person. There is an effort, in the *Upās*, to create a strict interpretation of the Buddhist theory of *kamma* in which the negative experiences and physical qualities that a person endures in this life are the inescapable results of past bad actions. Even queens are not immune to feeling the effects of *kamma*.

The conclusion of this fourth chapter of the *Upās* consists, then, in a female domestic ethic taken from both the *Anuruddha Sutta* and the *Mallikā Sutta*. The use of these two texts comprises a teaching directed specifically at *upāsikā*-s, or laywomen, and Queen Mallikā serves as an example for the aspiring female virtuoso. She has performed considerable good deeds, but she is unhappy with her physical features. She learns, by talking with the Buddha, that she has not been born a beauty because of her tendency toward anger. Following this teaching, Mallikā immediately goes to refuge, thereby initiating her own path to virtuosity. In a similar way, beauty is presented as an incentive for the female domestic ethic derived from the *Anuruddha Sutta*, as the deities into whose company a virtuous woman may be born are described as the Pleasant Bodied goddesses. This theme of achieving beauty through virtuosity reveals how the incentives laid out in the *Upās* do not consist entirely, or even mostly, of transcendental achievements. The conclusion of this chapter of the text confirms this point.

The meritorious results, or *ānisaṃsa*, are listed as:

...the non-existence of miserable sufferings of this world and the next (*diṭṭhadhammikānaṃ samparāyikānaṃ ca duggatidukkhānaṃ abhāvo*) such as public scandals, attacks, and imprisonment (*parūpavādavadhabandhanādīnaṃ*) and the attainment of such things as beauty, which are considered pleasing (*itṭhasammatānaṃ rūpādīnaṃ paṭilābho*).²²⁰

The benefits of following these teachings on right livelihood relate directly to the desires and the fears found in human social life. The chapter culminates in the following characterization of virtuous and non-virtuous *upāsaka*-s:

An *upāsaka* is endowed with five qualities, O monks, who is an Inferior *Upāsaka* (*upāsakapatikīṭṭho*), a Stained *Upāsaka* (*upāsakamalam*), and an Outcaste *Upāsaka* (*upāsakacaṇḍālo*).

What are the five? Being faithless (*assaddho*), of bad discipline (*dussīlo*), one who revels in festivals (*kotūhalamangaliko*), one who relies on omens not deeds (*maṅgalaṃ pacceti no kammaṃ*), one who looks for a person worthy of praise outside of here [the Buddhist community] (*ito ca bahiddhā dakkhiṇeyyaṃ pariyesati*), and renders service there (*tattha ca pubbakāraṃ karoti*).²²¹

Thus, having given up the fruitless livelihood that one has arrived at, an *upāsaka* is endowed with five qualities, O monks, who is a Gem *Upāsaka* (*upāsakarātana*), a Lotus *Upāsaka* (*upāsakapaduma*), and a White Lotus *Upāsaka* (*upāsakapuṇḍarīka*).

What are the five? One is faithful (*saddho*), virtuous (*sīlavā*), does not revel in festivals (*na kotūhalamangaliko*), relies on deeds not omens, does not seek one who is worthy of praise outside of here [the Buddhist community], and renders service here.²²¹

The list of the types of *upāsaka*-s, also taken from the *Aṅguttara Nikāya*, serves to tie virtuosity to one's relationship with the Buddhist institution. Qualities like faithfulness imply a faithful

²²⁰ Saddhatissa: 283; *Upās* 4.115. “Ānisaṃsato parūpavādavadhabandhanādīnaṃ diṭṭhadhammikānaṃ samparāyikānaṃ ca duggatidukkhānaṃ abhāvo itṭhasammatānaṃ rūpādīnaṃ paṭilābho...”

²²¹ Saddhatissa: 283-284; *Upās* 4.116-4.117. Cf. A.III.206. “Pañcahi bhikkhave, dhammehi samannāgato upāsako upāsakacaṇḍālo ca hoti, upāsakamalaṃ ca upāsakapatikīṭṭho ca. Katamehi pañcahi? Assaddho hoti, dussīlo hoti, kotūhalamaṅgaliko hoti, maṅgalaṃ pacceti no kammaṃ, ito ca bahiddhā dakkhiṇeyyaṃ pariyesati, tattha ca pubbakāraṃ karoti’ ti evaṃ āgataṃ ājīvaṃ vipattim pahāya, ‘Pañcahi bhikkhave dhammehi samannāgato upāsako upāsakarātanaṃ ca hoti, upāsakapadumaṃ ca hoti, upāsakapuṇḍarīkaṃ ca hoti. Katamehi pañcahi? Saddho hoti, sīlavā hoti, na kotūhalamaṅgaliko hoti, kammaṃ pacceti no maṅgalaṃ, na ito ca bahiddhā dakkhiṇeyyaṃ gavesati, idha ca pubbakāraṃ karoti’ ti evaṃ āgato upāsakarātanaṃ dhihāvo pāpuṇītabbo ti.”

commitment to the teachings of the Buddha and its representatives in the form of the *saṅgha*. This point is made more strongly in the remaining qualities mentioned. Reveling in festivals (i.e. those not sanctioned by the monks) and reliance on omens (*maṅgalaṃ*) both imply extensive participation in religious practices that compete with those provided by the Buddhists. Finally, the discouragement of seeking, finding, and offering services to those outside of the monastic institution marks a clear concern for the potential *upāsaka*'s singular commitment to the Buddhist monks within a multi-religious environment. The terminology used in this passage also supports the belief that the intended readers must be located within the monastic institution, as the phrase “outside of here” (*ito bahiddhā*) makes sense only when the reader is already situated within the same locale as the text (i.e. the monastery).

This fourth chapter of the *Upās*, on right livelihood, instructs both male and female laypersons in the ideal, virtuous social life. The text considers occupations, general social behavior, how to discriminate between good and harmful friendships, the ideally reciprocal social relationships that must be respected, an ideal budget, and a code of domestic ethics aimed at women. In this way, the text extends the virtuosity cultivated ritually through devotion (*saraṇāgamana*) and discipline (*sīla*) to an ideal social life within the world (*ājīva*). However, the text does not conclude its account of the virtuous path here. The final teaching of the cultivation of lay virtuosity comes in the following chapter, which treats the ten types of meritorious acts that an *upāsaka* should perform.

Good Deeds

The ten meritorious deeds (*dasapuñṇakiriyavatthu*), which culminate the *Upās*' account of the ideal, lay Buddhist life, are listed in the text as follows: giving (*dāna*), discipline (*sīla*),

meditation (*bhāvana*), honoring (*apacāyana*), service (*veyyāvacca*), sharing merit (*pattidāna*), giving thanks (*anumodana*), listening to the *dhamma* (*dhammasavaṇa*), teaching the *dhamma* (*dhammadesanā*), and straightening views (*diṭṭhijjukamma*).²²² This list of the ten meritorious deeds forms a list to which the virtuous *upāsaka* may refer in order to maintain an awareness of the types of acts that she or he should ideally try to fulfill each day; as the *Upās* notes in its key, opening verse to chapter two, “...fulfilling daily (*dine dine*) the ten meritorious deeds.”

If we return to the very beginning of the *Upās* and move forward to this point in the text, we are now able to see more fully the overall progression of the virtuous path that it describes. First and foremost, one must become a devoted subject, a person who has ritually expressed his or her *singular* commitment to the Triple Gem. Next, the *upāsaka* ritually undertakes an appropriate number of precepts, supplementing them with periodic intensifications and optionally attempting two acceptable ascetic practices, thereby becoming a disciplined subject. The third stage is the cultivation of right livelihood, in which the *upāsakas* work to maintain an appropriate occupation, monitor their public behavior, discriminate between good and bad friends, and honor the reciprocal relationships that are constitutive of the ideal social network. I have described this third stage as one whereby the *upāsaka* becomes a virtuously socialized subject. Finally, at the end of this path, we find the list of ten meritorious acts, which are incumbent upon the ideal *upāsakas*. I contend that the previous three steps comprise the path to virtuosity itself – they serve to produce the subjective *upāsaka*. This list of the ten meritorious deeds, then, serves as the ‘to-do list’ for those persons who have become lay virtuosos, allowing the *upāsaka* to become virtuous agents.

²²² Saddhatissa: 285; *Upās* 5.1.

In order to arrive at a point where one has the capability to perform these necessary actions, the first three stages of virtuous development are essential. The text does not begin with these actions precisely because they are not expected of an average Buddhist sympathizer. While anyone may provide alms to the poor, or to the monks, and thereby fulfill the first act (*dāna*) noted on this list of ten, the list taken as a whole is not incumbent upon, and perhaps not possible for, the average layperson. As the layperson *par excellence*, the *upāsaka*'s virtuosity must be cultivated through the stages of devotion, discipline, and socialization. Only then is she or he capable of fulfilling the list of the ten meritorious deeds *in toto*.

The first of the ten, giving (*dāna*), is not only given pride of place sequentially but the description of its benefits is by far the longest of the ten and includes the only narrative of this chapter. Here, the practice of giving is described as:

That called *dāna* is the intention that occurs in giving up something knowingly (*vijjamānavatthupariccajanavasappavattā cetanā*) of one's self for the sake of assistance to, or worship of, others (*paresaṃ pūjānuggahakāmatāya*).²²³

This explanation of *dāna* notes two ways in which an *upāsaka* might give: (1) as a means of rendering assistance (*anuggaha*), presumably to the less fortunate, and (2) as a means of worship (*pūja*), especially when giving to monastics. In either case, the action itself is referred to as the occurrence of an intention (*cetanā*). The subjective state brought on by giving is viewed as arising simultaneous to the activity, and therefore is interpreted as indistinguishable from it.

In order to render these deeds desirable, the *Upās* utilizes a variety of methods to reveal the benefits that may be expected as a result of their proper performance. The description of the benefits of giving (*dāna*), for instance, incorporates the story of Aṅkura taken from the *Jātaka*

²²³ Saddhatissa: 286; *Upās* 5.3. "Tattha sānusayasantānavato paresaṃ pūjānuggahakāmatāya attano vijjamānavatthupariccajanavasappavattā cetanā dānaṃ nāma."

and *Petavatthu*.²²⁴ In this story, Aṅkura is the youngest of ten brothers, all of whom are kings in Jambudīpa.²²⁵ The brothers conquer 63,000 villages, settle in Dvāravatī, and divide their dominion into ten shares. Unfortunately, these brothers forgot to include their sister in their plans and did not provide her with a share. So, Aṅkura decides to relinquish his share to his sister and becomes a merchant. He places his wife in the care of his store-keeper and sets off.

At some point, one of Aṅkura's brothers, Vāsudeva, arrives at his former home and impregnates Aṅkura's abandoned wife. The store-keeper passes away, but Vāsudeva orders that all that this man had received (from king Aṅkura) should be given to his son. Then, upon receiving these items, the boy adorns himself with the special clothing and accessories, which had earlier been granted the store-keeper and goes about. In the meantime, people ask each other, "Is he not a servant?" The boy is embarrassed and flees to Rorūva making his living as a tailor. In this city of Rorūva, there is a merchant named Asayho who gives alms (*dāna*) to beggars. Passersby ask the tailor where the place is located where Asayho gives alms, and the tailor directs the people to this place with his outstretched hand. As a result of this good deed (*puñṇakamma*), he is reborn as a god who lives in a great Banyan tree in the middle of a desert, and he also gains a miraculous power—with the five fingers of his outstretched hand, he can create anything he desires.

Now, Aṅkura, who is a merchant, leads his caravan into this desert on their way to Kamboja with several wagons laden with goods. The caravan exhausts their supplies; so,

²²⁴ Saddhatissa: 297-301; *Upās* 5.38-5.47.

²²⁵ The location Jambudīpa ("Rose Apple Island") is usually taken to mean India. However, a more precise understanding of the term might allow for mainland Southeast Asia to be considered a part of this locale. Jambudīpa is the central island, or continent, in the majority of Buddhist cosmographies, and is surrounded by several smaller islands, including Laṅkā. The Himalayas are considered the *axis mundi*, and thus any lands contiguous with South Asia might have been considered part of Jambudīpa. I note this simply because the other locations in the tale of Aṅkura are Dvāravatī and Kamboja, two places known to be in mainland Southeast Asia.

Aṅkura sends four scouts out to locate a pond, stream, or tree from which they might obtain water. Three scouts return without seeing anything, but one finds the great Banyan tree in which resides the god who had been the tailor (and the son of Aṅkura's former wife and brother). Aṅkura leads his caravan there, and he tells his retinue that gods of great power reside in such great trees as this. He then says that it would be beautiful if that god provided his men with water. So, the god stretches out his hand and water pours forth like a divine stream in the air. Then Aṅkura says it would be beautiful if this god would supply his men with food. So, the god stretches out his hand and produces food.

Aṅkura and his retinue are satiated, but accompanying Aṅkura on this journey is a Brahmin who has the idea to capture the god, take him to Kamboja with them, and use him to make money. Aṅkura, realizing that this would be wrong, refuses to go along with such a plan. In the end, Aṅkura asks the god whether he is Sakka, the king of the gods, or a king of other sorts of supernatural beings (*gandhabbharājā*), and the god responds by telling Aṅkura the story of how in his past life he helped people in need to find the place where the merchant Asayho's great alms-givings (*dāna*-s) were being held in Roruva. Upon realizing the miraculous power gained in an ensuing life from this good deed associated with giving alms, Aṅkura returns to his own city and provides a great alms-giving himself to benefit all the inhabitants of Jambudīpa.

This narrative portrays the meritorious act of giving (*dāna*) as beneficial in an almost contagious way. The son of Vāsudeva and Aṅkura's former wife gains remarkable, supernatural abilities in his next life as a result of merely showing people the way to find the place of the alms-giving. He does not actually perform the giving itself; nevertheless, according to the story, this act is enough to bestow a significant amount of good karma upon the man leading to his

felicitous rebirth. Likewise, Aṅkura performs his own great alms-giving (*mahādāna*) only after learning about the auspicious results obtained by the man reborn as the god who saved him and his caravan in the desert. Aṅkura already had an understanding that gifting could be a wise action, as exemplified by his decision to relinquish his share of Jambudīpa to his sister. However, Aṅkura's encounter with the god in the Banyan tree confirms the virtuousness of giving by presenting him with proof of the felicities that result from the practice. This new knowledge of the benefits accrued from the act of giving encourages him to raise his generosity to unprecedented levels as he distributes alms throughout all of Jambudīpa. Actively engaging in this meritorious practice, then, enables one to enter this self-reinforcing and positively infectious network of felicities.

There are, in all, at least four moments of giving in this story: (1) Aṅkura gives his kingdom to his sister, (2) Asayho gives alms in Roruva, which the tailor assists by pointing people in his direction, (3) the tailor as a god gives sustenance to Aṅkura's caravan using his miraculous powers, and (4) Aṅkura gives great alms across Jambudīpa. An interesting twist of this story is that the man who becomes the tailor/tree-god is the product of Aṅkura's initial act of giving-up his kingdom. The boy would never have been born had Aṅkura not abdicated and provided a chance for Vāsudeva to impregnate his former wife. The tree-god is, then, the very result of giving. The merchant, Asayho, serves as the exemplar to the tailor/tree-god of the specific mode of giving as alms (*dāna*), and when Aṅkura encounters this deity he not only receives karmic repayment in the form of material sustenance from this deity but also the new knowledge of the benefits of giving as alms. His initial act of giving away his kingdom to his sister sets in motion a series of events that will ultimately lead Aṅkura to a higher fulfillment of

meritorious gifting. In this way, the act of *dāna* is contagious, and it is self-reproductive after a person initiates it.

Once again, we see how the *Upās* describes specifically worldly felicities that accompany virtuosity. There is no profound realization of deep and complex philosophical ideas by Aṅkura. He does not discover the truths of impermanence or selflessness. Instead, it is his first-hand experience of the supernatural powers that accrue from the acts associated with giving that compels Aṅkura to perform even greater feats of giving than he has previously accomplished. Witnessing the felicitous results obtained by the tree-god induces Aṅkura to action.

The explanation of *dāna* is the longest within this fifth chapter of the *Upās*, and it is the only one of the meritorious deeds to have a narrative attached to it. Clearly the act of giving is presented as the most important of the ten deeds that are incumbent upon virtuous *upāsakas*. Gombrich notes that “Giving comes first in the list of the Ten Good Deeds, and it is easy to guess why. The existence of the Saṅgha, and hence of Buddhism, depends, in theory at least, on the generosity of the laity.”²²⁶ But, does the text promote the meritorious deed of *dāna* simply out of a concern for the material well-being of the monastic institution? In other words, does Gombrich’s idea hold true for the medieval *Upās*?

Heim has argued persuasively that the medieval Buddhist monasteries of Sri Lanka were sustained largely by royal and elite patronage, and small scale donations had become more or less unnecessary. Drawing from Strenski’s idea of the domestication of the *saṅgha*,²²⁷ Heim argues that:

²²⁶ Gombrich (1971): 289.

²²⁷ See Strenski (1983).

The fact that the *saṅgha* was powerful and wealthy undermines any purely material account of the *dāna* relationship. Considering the enormous landed wealth owned by the medieval domesticated *saṅgha* there were clearly periods in which monks were not financially dependent on ordinary lay generosity. They generated most of their livelihood from royal gifts and their own monastic wealth.²²⁸

Heim goes on to ask the question:

If the medieval monks who composed the *Ornament of Lay People* [*Upās*] and the *Compendium of Discourses* for instance, did not really need the financial assistance that householders' *dāna* provided, why did they devote so much of their attention and praise to it?²²⁹

Heim's answer to this question is two-fold. First, she posits that the act of giving *dāna* was given such pride of place in monastic writings because the monastic authors had a real concern for the development of a virtuous lay population, and the act of giving provided the laity with a means to exercise generosity. However, this first explanation does not help to understand why the *Upās* privileges the particular deed of giving over against the other nine meritorious deeds. Her second explanation is more compelling. Heim notes that, aside from the material support rendered by the gifts of *dāna*, the face-to-face encounter between the laity and the monks, along with the expressions of reverence and respect showed by the laity, helped to ensure a stable relationship between the monastic institution and the larger body of laity whom they served. In other words, the act of *dāna* served to bring the laity to the monastery.

I find that both the arguments of Gombrich and Heim have their merits. Although she is correct to point out the landed wealth of medieval Sri Lankan monasteries, a phenomenon labeled "monastic landlordism" by Weber; Heim does not entertain the possibility that the *Upās*, which she cites in her argument, may not have been written in Sri Lanka but in South India. There is no way of knowing at present that the monastery where the text was composed had the

²²⁸ Heim (2004): 72.

²²⁹ Ibid: 73.

type of financial and material support that Heim presupposes. Even if we entertain the possibility that the monastery where the author dwelt was wealthy and received substantial support from the socio-politically elite, and even granting the possibility that the text was composed in a Pandyan ruled region of Lanka, there must have been a significant population of monastics who resided in smaller monasteries further from the political and economic centers. These monks would certainly need the support of the laity among whom they lived, and Gombrich's point remains valid. There are always monks and monasteries that require the material aid of the average laity, even during times in which large monasteries received substantial royal patronage. Furthermore, why should we assume that royal patronage would not fall under the category of *dāna*? Despite the routinized nature of receiving support from royally endowed lands, the initial grant of land and resources would undoubtedly be classified as a generous and meritorious act of *dāna*. Therefore, I believe that the *Upās*, like other medieval Buddhist texts, privileges the act of *dāna* because it was essential to the maintenance of monasteries and their inhabitants as Gombrich suggests. But, I also see value in Heim's argument, and I think that the fact that *dāna*, at least when it is performed as worship, requires that the laity travel to and enter the space of the monastery remains an important reason behind its privileged status among the ten meritorious deeds.

Although I understand the economic benefits that might be at stake when literate monastics encourage generous gifting, it is difficult to argue for that rationale informing this portion of the *Upās* precisely because, of all the narratives the author might have selected to illustrate the benefits of giving, we find one in which giving as assistance (*anuggaha*) to beggars features as the paradigmatic example of *dāna*. That is, the merchant Asayho's generous *dāna* to needy beggars in Roruva is the indirect cause of the tree-god's miraculous powers, and it is

through hearing this story that Aṅkura is amazed and initiates his own *mahādāna*, which is also performed in the mode of rendering assistance rather than worship. The choice to include this particular story suggests that the text intended to highlight *dāna* as giving to the needy and/or that the story of Aṅkura belonged to a popular repertoire of Buddhist narratives at that time, which encouraged its inclusion here.

In either case, an intention to valorize giving to the monastery is conspicuously absent. This leads me to question the assumption that giving to monks was always the most esteemed form of giving in South Asian Buddhist practice. While many texts do, in fact, provide arguments in this respect, what are we to make of texts like the *Upās*, which do not privilege that mode of giving over and against giving to the needy? More comparative historical work must be done to determine when and where certain forms of giving became the dominant and preferred style of practice. Heim, for example, notes the story of Aṅkura in her work, and she states that “[t]he Theravāda compendia often employ a less technical sense of *dāna* so that the term is used freely for all types of recipients, even to animals, though the paradigmatic *dāna* is to monks.”²³⁰ The question that remains is why is it that these medieval compendia employ such a strategy? Why do they grant the term *dāna* such a “less technical sense” thereby permitting it to be read in its modality of giving to the needy? This question can not be answered without paying closer attention to each compendium as a complete text.

I contend that the nature of the recipient is not a grave concern in the *Upās*. Instead, the text highlights the way in which generous giving produces powerful and miraculous benefits for those involved, and it also makes an effort to depict the way in which the practice of giving, and

²³⁰ Heim (2004):75.

its benefits, grow naturally once initiated. By becoming an active, Buddhist agent through the practice of giving, as the text attempts to show, the *upāsaka* enters into a felicitous network within which generosity ensures a comfortable and secure life in this world and in the following life.

The second act in the list, discipline (*sīla*), has been treated extensively in the earlier portions of the text, but as one of the ten meritorious deeds it is described in the following:

That called *sīla* is the intention (*cetanā*) that occurs: for one who is undertaking and fulfilling the discipline of five, eight, or ten through such means as permanent discipline (*niccasīlādivasena*); for one who is refraining from the harmful acts attained through body and speech having not engaged in them; for one who is going forth (*pabbajantassa*) to renunciation; for one who is undertaking restraint (*saṃvaram*) in the court of higher ordination (*upasampadāmālake*); and for one who is fulfilling the four, pure disciplines.²³¹

As with the description of the meritorious act of giving, this explanation of discipline views the good deed as an intention (*cetanā*) that accompanies the activity, and once again the text draws attention to the mental state occurring in tandem with the act itself. We also find, here, a direct connection drawn between the types of discipline that an *upāsaka* undertakes and those forms practiced by monastics. In making this connection, the text establishes a hierarchy of discipline at the same time that it subsumes all levels under the category of *sīla*. The first types of discipline noted are the very same ones discussed in great length in chapter two of the *Upās*: the five-precepts (*pañca sīla*), eight-precepts (*Uposatha sīla*), and ten-precepts (*dasa sīla*) taken by such means as permanent discipline (*niccasīla*). These represent the lower rung on the ladder. The discipline of the novice monk, or one who is going forth (*pabbajantassa*), follows, and the discipline of one who is undergoing higher ordination (*upasampadā*) takes a higher position still,

²³¹ Saddhatissa: 287-288; *Upās* 5.8. “Niccasīlādivasena pañca aṭṭha dasa vā sīlāni samādiyantassa paripūrentassa, asamādiyitvā pi sampattakāyavacīduccaritato viramantassa pabbajantassa upasampadāmālake saṃvaram samādiyantassa, catupārisuddhisīlam paripūrentassa ca pavattā cetanā sīlam nāma.”

as we would expect. The *Upās* never goes into detail about the monastic disciplines, yet it includes a reference to them here as a means of joining an understanding of the discipline of the *upāsaka* to conceptions of the monastic discipline under the general category of *sīla*. This allows the *upāsaka* to envision their practice as being akin to monastic practice, albeit at a lower level of prestige.

I also note the use of the present participle in this description. The passage speaks of one who “is undertaking” (*samādiyantassa*) or “is fulfilling” (*paripūrentassa*) the discipline. The action is in the process of occurring. Thus, the text sees the goodness of the act in terms of a psychological intention that arises in the quick of activity. Only in the *upāsaka*’s agentic capacity does the merit accrue. The act along with the mental state accompanying it generates the felicities promised by the text.

Although none of the remaining eight good deeds receives the level of attention that *dāna* does in the *Upās*, it is worth mentioning that two of these in particular serve to strengthen the interpretation that this list renders the *upāsaka* an active Buddhist agent. The acts of teaching (*dhammadesanā*) and straightening views (*diṭṭhiṅgukamma*) reveal that the virtuous Buddhist layperson becomes an agent of the Buddhist institution who is expected to actively uphold, exemplify, and spread the teachings. Although these two deeds display the intention to portray the *upāsaka* as a person who helps disseminate the tradition, this is also perhaps one of the reasons behind the incorporation of the story of Aṅkura in the explanation of the first good deed of giving. There we saw how the act of giving assumed a contagious-like quality. The benefits and knowledge of generous giving spread in different ways throughout the story. In a similar manner, teaching others and correcting their views serves to spread the Buddhist teachings and

their felicities. The ideal *upāsaka*, as an active virtuoso, becomes both a model of proper practice and a carrier of the tradition. I stress, however, that this aspect of the *upāsaka*'s identity only comes at the very conclusion of the full explanation of the virtuous path.

Up to this point, I have presented several instances in which the *Upās* deploys a variety of strategies to depict the pursuit of virtuosity as a desirable endeavor. The benefits of going to refuge are portrayed in the several narratives at the end of the first chapter of the *Upās*. The benefits of discipline are listed after the exegesis of each of the respective precepts, and the unfortunate results of breaking the precepts are depicted to frighten the *upāsaka* into accepting them. Finally, the dangers and felicities of leading a virtuous social life are also explained through various means in the text's fourth chapter on right livelihood. Although there are a number of different texts and narratives used to produce this sense of desirability for the virtuous life, I believe that by returning to a crucial term in the very title of this text we may better understand what exactly is being promised in the *Upās*. This is the term *alaṅkāra*, or adornment.

The Adornments of Virtue

The term '*alaṅkāra*' may be taken in at least two distinct ways. The first, which might initially seem the most relevant for a work of literature, is the technical sense of *alaṅkāra* as poetic embellishment used as a literary device. This poetic sense of *alaṅkāra* is elaborated in many grammatical treatises and works of poetic theory from across South Asia, including the influential Tamil scholar Daṇḍin's *Kāvyaḍarśa* (7th century) and a Sinhala language text derived from it, the *Siyabaslakara* (10th century).²³² Although there are several texts that incorporate this

²³² See Anne Monius (2001).

term *alaṅkāra* into their title precisely because they follow the conventions of poetic devices critically outlined in such treatises, this is not the reason for the *Upās*’ use of the term.

Drawing from a more literal definition, *alaṅkāra* refers simply to anything that decorates or adorns the body. In this sense, it is important to keep in mind the unique conceptions of adornments in South Asian cultures. There is ample evidence suggesting that the term *alaṅkāra* connotes that which simultaneously decorates, beautifies, protects, and perfects the body. As Ananda Coomaraswamy points out, the term *alaṅkāra* was not used to signify an extraneous or superfluous accessory, as we might tend to think of ornaments in our own cultures, but rather something that completed or empowered the one who wore it.²³³ As Coomaraswamy states, the ‘adornments’ signified by the term *alaṅkāra* were “the furnishing of anything essential to the validity of whatever is ‘adorned,’ or enhances its effect, empowering it.”²³⁴ In medieval South Indian literature, the various types of bodily adornments referred to by the term *alaṅkāra* maintain this sense of perfecting and empowering those adorned.

Vidya Dehejia shows that “to be unornamented implies grief, and to this day, in the more traditional segments of society, the absence of ornament implies mourning and a death in the family... To this day, Indian women of a certain generation, whether in India or overseas, wear a necklace, bangles, and earrings into a swimming pool or on a beach.”²³⁵ To be unornamented carries a distinct connotation of being incomplete. Medieval South Indian literature exhibits the same idea that adornments offer protection to the body. A 9th century Tamil poem, *Tirukkailaya-nana-ula*, translated by Blake Wentworth, reveals this in the following verses:

²³³ Ananda Coomaraswamy, “Ornament” *The Art Bulletin* 21.4 (December 1939): 375-382.

²³⁴ *Ibid*: 377.

²³⁵ Vidya Dehejia (2009): 38-39.

Anklets are like drums, proclaiming
“refined men may stay, but those who aren’t must go!”
Knowing this, she puts them on her splendid feet.
Knowing that there must be no unguarded movements to her loins
She gird them with a fine dress and girdle,
Knowing that her charming breasts bewitch young men
She quickly locks them away in an elegant bodice.
With golden armlets she protects her bamboo-like arms,
She screens her lovely neck with a fine necklace
And gleaming earrings shelter her ears,
As though cooling the passion of her lily-dark eyes
She quells them with highlights of kohl.²³⁶

Each ornament, or piece of clothing, offers some form of protection for the woman in the poem.

Her anklets keep unwanted men away. Her “elegant bodice” locks away her breasts. Her armlets protect her arms, and her necklace “screens” her neck. Even her eye shadow cools “the passion of her lily-dark eyes.” This conception of adornments is elevated to an even greater degree in poetic descriptions of royalty. Daud Ali’s translation of a Tamil *Ula* poem, the *Vikrama-Chola-Ula*, which dates roughly to the period in which the *Upās* was composed (late 12th century), displays this well in the following verses:

On his face, which was like a bloomed flower around which
Bees thronged, where the Goddess of Eloquence resided,
Sarasvati, glittered makara earrings.
On his shoulders, where the broad-breasted Goddess of the
Earth stayed, were epaulets brilliant with gems.
On his hand, where the unsteady Goddess of Fame was
fixed, sparkled a bracelet of gems.
On his chest, where the Goddess of Fortune lovingly embraced
Him, shone with increasing splendor a gem from the sea.
On his hip, where the beautiful Goddess of Victory, free of
Distress resided, was a beautiful sword.
Having put on numerous rare ornaments of suitably lofty beauty,
He obtained matchless elegance and grace such that it seemed
as if Siva had bestowed on him, while he was bowing with
the crest of his crown, the beauty he had once attained as “respect”

²³⁶ Blake Wentworth, “Women’s Bodies, Earthly Kingdom: Mapping the Presence of God in the *Tirukkailaya-Nana-Ula*” (Manuscript: University of Chicago, 2003): 65-66. Cited in Dehejia (2009): 39.

from Kama's bow.²³⁷

Each of the Tamil poems cited above lends support to the argument that adornments were not only a means of beautifying the body; they also protected and empowered it.

I argue that the *Upās* intends this sense of *alaṅkāra* in its description of lay virtuosity. By following the path outlined in the *Upās*, the virtuous layperson gains auspicious qualities, which accompany the cultivation of virtuosity, and these qualities adorn the *upāsaka* in the sense that they complete, protect, and perfect the virtuosity that defines the *upāsaka* as a virtuous Buddhist subject. As the *Upās* states in its opening verses:

Those who worship (*samupāsamānā*) these three objects (*vatthuttayaṃ*)
[*Buddha, Dhamma, Saṅgha*],
Are able to attain the state of *upāsaka*.
The beautiful things, such as refuge, adorning (*bhūsayantā*) them
Are called the Adornments of the *Upāsaka*.

Of these virtues (*guṇānaṃ*) that adorn people
This book (*gantha*) is the illuminator (*sandīpakattā*).
By the wise, according to the meaning of the words,
It is known as *Upāsakālaṅkaraṇa*.²³⁸

The text clearly makes it known that it conceives the virtues that accrue to the virtuous layperson as adornments. This is more than a simple, flourish of metaphor since, given the brief overview of the unique understanding of adornments in South India around this time, the concept of adornments carried the important connotations of protection, empowering, and completing one's identity. The virtues that the text goes on to explain in detail, then, are somewhat akin to metaphysical ornaments—the very means by which a layperson transforms one's self into an *upāsaka*—thereby gaining the protection and powers promised throughout the text. Furthermore,

²³⁷ Daud Ali, "The *Vikramacholanula*: A Chola Processional Poem," in *Art of the Chola Bronzes* (London: Royal Academy: 2006): app. A, 142-145. Cited in Dehejia (2009): 59.

²³⁸ Saddhatissa: 123; *Upās* 1.2-1.3.

these ornamental benefits are such that they consist of both internal/psychological improvements brought on by virtuos practice/devotion/discipline and the simultaneously attained physical and socio-economic felicities described as the results of such practices in the text.

Consider the *Upās*' description of the benefits of discipline in the following:

There is no adornment (*alaṅkāra*) equal to the adornment of discipline (*sīlālaṅkārasamo*). There is no scent equal to the scent of discipline. There is no cleanser of stains equal to discipline. There is no cure for fever equal to discipline. There is no generator of fame equal to discipline. There is no door to the stairway to heaven and the entry into the city of *nibbāna* equal to discipline.²³⁹

Discipline, an essential part of the path to virtuosity discussed extensively in its own chapter of the text and once again as one of the ten meritorious deeds, is likened to an unparalleled ornament, a perfume or scent, and a cleanser as well as something productive of fame. Each of these metaphors links this facet of virtuosity to bodily felicities. *Sīla* had been defined, earlier in the very same chapter of the *Upās*, as an intention accompanying the successful performance of discipline, and here it is equated with things used to beautify the body. This is hardly a coincidence.

Another passage, this one describing the benefits of honoring the six-directions according to the method outlined in the *Sigālovāda Sutta*, describes virtuous practice as “covering” (*paṭicchādeti*) the *upāsaka* using the same term that would be used to describe putting on clothing. The passage reads:

Having covered (*paṭicchādetvā*) the six directions while living in a home, just as the bee collects pollen with the sides of its mouth from the flowers without disturbing the scent or the color, and in time makes honey-comb, just so they are to collect wealth (*bhogā*) in

²³⁹ Saddhatissa: 303; *Upās* 5.52. “Api ca, sīlālaṅkārasamo alaṅkāro natthi. Sīlagandhasamo gandho natthi. Sīlasamaṃ kilesamalavidhopenaṃ natthi. Sīlasamaṃ pariḷāhūpasamaṃ natthi. Sīlasamaṃ kittijanaṃ natthi. Saggārohaṇanibbānanagarappavesane ca sīlasamaṃ dvāraṃ natthi.”

time righteously and peacefully (*dhammena samena*) without disturbing themselves or others.²⁴⁰

Once again, the text describes the virtues as something that covers or adorns the *upāsakas*, and in the above citation, the text suggests that through wearing the virtues outlined by the teaching of the six-directions, an *upāsaka* gains the ability to peacefully amass wealth without disturbing others in their social world, like a bee gathering pollen does not disturb the flowers' scent or color.

The strategy the *Upās* employs to render the virtuous life desirable is dependent upon producing precisely this sort of assumed connection between the mental transformation of the virtuous layperson and the material/bodily felicities that she or he should expect as a result. This is a connection that is easier to understand when considering narratives, such as the story of Queen Mallikā, in which physical beauty is directly linked to one's state of mind. In Mallikā's case, her mental anger leads directly to her ugliness in a future life. This idea of the fusion of mental development and bodily appearance finds its early expression in the *Lakkhana Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*, in which the thirty-two auspicious bodily marks of the Buddha are recounted, and we will see in chapter six of this dissertation how the author of the Sinhala language version of the *Upās* recognizes this connection.

Conclusions

In this first section of the dissertation, I have shown the strategy used by the *Upās* to produce a systematic account of the cultivation of the ideal, virtuous, lay Buddhist. This process is explained as a whole in an abridged form through the verse that opens the second chapter of

²⁴⁰ Saddhatissa: 279; *Upās* 4.101. “Evam etā chadisā paṭicchādetvā gharam āvasantena yathā hi bhamaro pupphānaṃ vaṇṇagandhaṃ aheṭṭhayaṃ tuṇḍehi pakkhehi pi rajaṃ āharitvā anupubbena cakkappmāṇaṃ madhupaṭaḷaṃ karoti. Evaṃ attānaṃ pi param pi apīḷetvā anupubbena te dhammena samena bhogā saṃharitabbā.”

the *Upās*. The initial step is one in which the *upāsaka* becomes a devotional subject. She or he must undertake a ritual vow to accept no other teacher for their ultimate concerns than the Triple Gem, consisting of the Buddha, *Dhamma*, and *San̄gha*. This does not preclude the *upāsakas* from maintaining relations with practitioners or teachers of other traditions, but it does forbid them from entering into the type of devotional relationship explained in the text. Devotion to the Triple Gem must be exclusive. There are rules establishing the parameters for breaking or defiling one's commitment to this devotional relationship, and an *upāsaka* can not advance along the path of virtuosity unless this initial step is satisfactorily undertaken and maintained in purity.

As I argued in chapter two of the dissertation, the devotional subject emerges in the *Upās* out of an apparent concern for instilling a solid commitment to the Buddhist institution in the context of a competitive, multi-religious environment which was 12th century South Asia. The intent to forge a stable and exclusive relationship between the virtuous laity and the professional, monastic clergy surfaced in the wake of competition with Jains, Śaivas, and unorthodox Buddhist virtuoso culture. Thus, the first step advocated by the text demands that the *upāsaka* make an explicit commitment to Buddhism.

Next, the *upāsaka* must become a disciplined subject, and the *Upās* establishes this through means of ritually undertaken codes of precepts. Both positive and negative reinforcement appear in chapter two of the *Upās*, where horrifying results of breaking the precepts are presented in various narratives. Following this step, the text teaches that the *upāsaka* must extend their burgeoning virtuosity to their social life and attempt to maintain ideal relationships in the midst of a dangerous world. Once the *upāsakas* have successfully travelled

this path, the list of ten meritorious deeds provides a set of actions that they are expected to fulfill as newly virtuous, Buddhist agents.

As a compendium, the *Upās* brings together a wide array of materials in order to achieve its dual goal of illuminating the path to virtuosity and rendering that path desirable. The stories and passages selected within the text reveal several things about the strategy that it employs. First, it is clearly aimed at a primarily monastic readership literate in Pāli. The extensive exegeses serve to showcase the author's command of the texts and his knowledge of analytic Buddhist scholarship. Each chapter opens with these exegeses, and there is an obvious intent to impress the intended readership and convince those readers of both the author's literary prestige and the validity and authority of the compendium. The intended audience, on the other hand, consists of any number of persons to whom the intended readership might preach.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the liberality of the teachings on taking devotional and disciplinary vows in the vernacular languages suggests an attempt to bring a more intense Buddhist practice to people illiterate in Pāli and perhaps living in regions distant from monastic communities. This is supported by the work of Reynolds and Hallisey who envision the mid-late 12th century (and early 13th century) as a period of the Buddhicization of the countryside. Reynolds and Hallisey postulate a major shift in the history of Buddhism around this period, in which Buddhism transforms from a "civilizational religion" centered in imperial capitals and large, centralized monasteries that served as nodal points in extensive interregional networks to a "cultural religion" in which there was growing importance of the connections between the

regional elites and the more rural populations surrounding them.²⁴¹ The scholars describe this in the following:

The demise of the international Buddhist elite and the weakening of the large and powerful establishments were counterbalanced by a strengthening of Buddhist life at the grass-roots level. Smaller, local institutions that for a long time had coexisted with the great monasteries took on new importance as focal points in Buddhist community life...In contrast to civilizational Buddhism, in which the crucial structural alignment was that between the civilizational elite and the monks and laity at the imperial level, the crucial structural alignment in cultural Buddhism was between the monks and laity of the imperial or state elites, who were located primarily in the capital cities, and *the ordinary people who inhabited local monasteries and villages*.²⁴²

Such a shift may have taken place during the time of the writing of the *Upās*. The political and economic conditions that had enabled the civilizational Buddhism described by Reynolds and Hallisey had given way to conditions that favored cultural Buddhism. Given this scenario, it is easy to see why literate monks would find value in composing texts aimed at informing and controlling the religious practice of those who lived further from the old civilizational centers. It remains to be seen just how “ordinary” such people were, however, and I suspect that (as argued in chapter three of the dissertation) the intended audience of the *Upās* consisted of those who had never been substantially exposed to Buddhism, those who lived within multi-religious communities that may have included a Buddhist component of some kind, and those who may have lived in Buddhist communities but engaged in pursuits of virtuosity which were not considered orthoprax by at least some communities of Buddhist monks. The countryside during this period must have been populated by an interesting assortment of individuals.

In part two of the dissertation, I move to a study of the reception of the *Upās* by monks from the Siyam Nikāya in the kingdom of Kandy during the 18th century and through the

²⁴¹ Reynolds and Hallisey (1987): 17-18.

²⁴² Ibid: 18, emphasis added.

beginning of the 19th century, and the translation of the text into the Sinhala language. There are significantly more historical resources available for contextualizing the study of the production of the Sinhala text, and I draw from several of them. Above, I have presented my own reading of the intentions embedded in the text of the Pāli *Upās*. In what follows, I analyze aspects of the Sinhala *Upās* in order to understand how the elite of the Siyam Nikāya incorporated the *Upās* into their textual repertoire. The monks of the Siyam Nikāya shared similar concerns for the production and display of textual authority, the dissemination of orthopraxy, and the recognition of living within an increasingly competitive and multi-religious world. This is not to draw a simple equation between 12th century South India/Lanka and 18th century Kandy. However, I do suggest that important similarities shared between each context served to render the *Upās* relevant once again.

Part II: The Sinhala *Upāsakajanāṅkāra*

Ch. 5: The Resurrection of a Text

The *Upās* gained a new life towards the end of the 18th century when an elite monk, Moratoṭa Dhammakhandha, translated the work into the Sinhala language. Dhammakhandha was a member of a monastic fraternity known as the Siyam Nikāya, which emerged in the middle of the eighteenth century with the goal of building a pure and authentic form of Buddhism. The early members of the Siyam Nikāya looked to the island's past, particularly its heritage of Pāli texts that had survived in monastic libraries, in order to do this.²⁴³ However, translation projects that produced Sinhala versions of authoritative Pāli texts, such as Dhammakhandha's work with the *Upās*, not only functioned practically by providing teachings for educating monks and laypersons within the Siyam Nikāya's fold. Such projects also granted the literary elites within the Siyam Nikāya a tremendous level of cultural capital. The translations that elite monks produced served as a medium through which these monks displayed to their peers and to other non-monastics, including potential sponsors like the Kandyan king, their cultivation of learning and erudition in Pāli. Texts like Dhammakhandha's *SUpās* were just as much courtly adornments as they were attempts to reintroduce comprehensive manuals on lay Buddhist religiosity. That is, the value of the *SUpās* lay not only in the fact of its being a compendium with a wealth of citations from the Pāli literary corpus to draw from in producing sermons and disseminating ideals of lay religiosity. Rather, its value laid equally in the fact that a literary display of one's command over this material, and a simultaneous incorporation of the

²⁴³ See Blackburn (2001).

text into the Sinhala dynastic culture, served to heighten the claims that an elite monk such as Dhammakkhandha could plausibly make to socio-religious authority and power.

As I will show in chapter six of the dissertation, the Siyam Nikāya sought to monopolize religious authority in the Kandyan kingdom. Through successfully displaying knowledge of, and linguistic command over, Laṅka's Pāli literary tradition, the elite members of the Nikāya attempted to prove that they were worthy of the singular support of the monarchy and that their interpretation of Buddhist practice was correct. In the following chapters, I discuss several ways in which the Siyam Nikāya successfully gained hegemony over the Buddhist institutions of the Kandyan kingdom, such as by issuing legalistic *katikāvata* texts, producing a polarized vision of the monastic population in terms of the (correct) Siyam Nikāya versus (incorrect) *gaṇinnānse* monks, and assuming ownership of important monastic estates. However, the Siyam Nikāya elites also dominated the Buddhist communities by showing that they had an unparalleled mastery of the authoritative textual tradition. Translations of Pāli texts into the Sinhala vernacular demonstrated this knowledge, and the reproduction and dissemination of the Sinhala translations permitted others, monastic and lay, to witness first-hand their skill and mastery of the Pāli texts. This, in turn, encouraged those who encountered such translations to applaud the scholastic abilities of the monks of the new Nikāya and to approve of their exercise of religious power.

In this chapter, I analyze three aspects of Dhammakkhandha's translation of the *Upās* that help us to understand what Dhammakkhandha intended in producing his work. Each of these focal points of the study centers on a feature of the text that Dhammakkhandha added and is not seen in the Pāli version. The first of these is a lengthy opening that describes the many

auspicious qualities of the Buddha. The second consists of an extended closing to the text, which describes the city of Kandy and recounts briefly the history of the Nayakkar kings' support of the Siyam Nikāya beginning with Kirti Śrī Rājasimha. I refer to these two additional components of the Sinhala version collectively as a literary frame for the translation proper, and, although it does not alter the original text itself but rather sits on either end of the text, this frame reveals a substantial amount about Dhammakhandha's approach to the project.

The third aspect of the Sinhala version that I analyze in this chapter consists of Dhammakhandha's explanations, or restatements, of sections of the Pāli text. This includes sections of the Sinhala *Upās* where we find the paraphrasing of passages taken directly from the Pāli, rewritten in the Sinhala language in Dhammakhandha's text, which function like the *sūtra sannaya* texts assessed by Blackburn.²⁴⁴ I contend that Dhammakhandha's explanations of these Pāli passages allow us a glimpse of the ways in which he understood this text. These passages also highlight the sections of the book that Dhammakhandha considered important, as his decisions to include certain quotations from the Pāli over others represent strategic choices on his part. By analyzing these three aspects of the Sinhala *Upās* I am able to present a clearer interpretation of the intentions imbedded in Dhammakhandha's project, and in the following chapters, I relate the observations gained from this textual study to a study of the social world in which Moratoṭa Dhammakhandha composed this translation.

The Buddha's Auspicious Marks

Anyone who has, at least cursorily, examined the Pāli *Upās* would find the beginning of the Sinhala version surprising. The opening, which totals eleven pages out of seventy for the

²⁴⁴ Blackburn (2001): 171-196.

first chapter (roughly 16%) in the 1997 Buddhist Cultural Center printed edition, consists of descriptions and praise of the Buddha's auspicious bodily marks and supernatural abilities.

Consider the very first lines of the Sinhala text:

The Noble Lord Buddha (*budurajāṇan vahansē*), of great compassion, a god above the gods, a *Brahma* above the *Brahma*-s, my master (*māgē svāmiduru*), shines with such virtues (*guṇavilāśayakda āti*) as a beautiful form with the thirty-two marks of a great man (*mahāpuruṣa lakṣaṇa*), the eighty minor marks, illumination by a fathom-wide halo (*byāmaprabhānurañjita*), and the four states of fearlessness, the four bases of psychic powers (*satara ṛddhi pāda*), the four noble truths, the five senses, the five strengths, the six unique knowledges, and the seven branches of enlightenment. How is this so?²⁴⁵

Following this passage, the text proceeds to describe many of these special characteristics in detail, beginning with the thirty-two marks of the Great Man, or *mahāpuruṣa*. While it is, perhaps, tempting to overlook this addition as merely an unnecessary literary embellishment on the part of Dhammakhandha, I argue that the inclusion of this introductory portion to the Sinhala *Upās* is revealing in a number of ways.

Firstly, the choice to recount the auspicious marks and the supernormal abilities of the Buddha reveals something of Dhammakhandha's own Buddhology. Although it is quite usual to open a work with a word of praise to the Buddha, as nearly all works written by monks open by paying respects to the Buddha through, at a minimum, the *Buddhābhivādana*,²⁴⁶ Dhammakhandha's insertion of a lengthy description of the auspicious marks and supernormal powers, such as we find here, is less common. In many respects, his choice to recount each of the major thirty-two marks is an appropriate choice for the text. The Pāli *Upās*'s notion of *alankāra*, which I discussed in chapter four of the dissertation, certainly applies to the Buddha's

²⁴⁵ *SUpās*: 1. "Mahākāruṇikavū devāti devavū brahmāti brahmavū māgē svāmidaruvū budurajāṇan vahansē dvātriṃṣatvara mahāpuruṣa lakṣaṇāśītyanuvyañjana byāmaprahānurañjita rūpa vilāśayak hā satara vaiśāradya satara ṛddhipāda satara samyak pradhāna pañcendriya pañcabala ṣaṭ asādhāraṇāṇāna sapta boḍyaṅgādī guṇavilāśayakda āti sēka. Hē kesēda yat?"

²⁴⁶ In Pāli, this consists of the line "Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammāsambuddhassa." This has also become the usual opening chant for most Buddhist rituals in Theravāda communities.

auspicious marks. An *alaṅkāra*, in the broad sense, refers to bodily ornamentation that simultaneously beautifies, protects, and empowers the individual. Conceived within a specifically Buddhist, ethical framework, *alaṅkāra*-s become the physical results of virtuosity. As I argued at the conclusion of the first part of the dissertation, the Pāli *Upās* creates an explicit link between the cultivation of virtuosity and the development of physical well-being, and I believe Dhammakhandha's choice to include an introductory section in praise of the Buddha's own *alaṅkāra*-s fits well with these larger aims. The extent to which Dhammakhandha sought to align this vision of the Buddha with the particular notion of *alaṅkāra* expressed throughout the *Upās* is debatable. What is clear, however, is that the version of the Buddha Dhammakhandha praises in the opening to his text is one which had a perfected bodily appearance and a mastery of supernormal abilities. That is, we are not dealing with a historicized and rationalized depiction of the Buddha but rather an understanding of the Buddha as a superhuman being with miraculous powers.

Through much of Pāli and Sinhala literature the Buddha is thought of as a fully perfected being, and his body, replete with the thirty-two auspicious marks (*lakṣaṇa*) of a Great Man (*mahāpuruṣa*), as well as the eighty minor marks (*anuvyañjana*), displays this perfection. The list of the thirty-two major marks provided in the opening to the Sinhala *Upās* (*SUpās*) follows the one found in the *Lakkhana Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya*, and it is clear that this idea of the bodily marks has a long history in the Buddhist traditions.²⁴⁷ Several academic works, emerging

²⁴⁷ The 32 marks of the *mahāpuruṣa*, according to both the Sinhala *Upās* and *Lakkhana Sutta*, are as follows: flat feet, palms and soles marked with thousand-spoked wheels, projecting heels, long fingers and toes, soft and tender hands and feet, webbed fingers and toes, hidden ankles, legs like an antelope's, can touch his knees while standing upright without bending, sheathed penis, golden-hued skin, smooth and delicate skin such that no dust accumulates on it, one hair for each pore, each hair turns upward and curls to the right, the body grows straight like Brahma, body has seven protuberances, torso like a lion, no indentation between the shoulders, physical proportions like a Banyan tree, equally rounded chest, acute sense of taste, jaw like a lion's, forty teeth, even teeth, no gaps between

rather early in the life of the field of Buddhist studies, assess the importance of this list in terms of its influence on, and perhaps by, the production of Buddha images;²⁴⁸ thereby asserting the importance of the auspicious marks in the development of Buddhist iconography and the plastic arts. Other scholars considered the origins of this tradition and its possible derivation from the brahmanical traditions.²⁴⁹ More recently, however, and more relevant for my purposes, scholars have begun to examine the accounts of the auspicious marks in relation to Buddhist virtuosity.²⁵⁰

John Powers writes:

Whatever their sources or provenance, the repetition of these lists [of the thirty-two marks] and references to them indicate that the notion of the physical characteristics of a great man was widely accepted by Buddhist authors and that this notion formed a core part of the mythology of the Buddha. This body image apparently appealed to people of the Buddha's time and to later authors of Buddhist texts as the most sublime development of the male physique, one to which other men aspired and which women viewed as supremely attractive. The Buddha's good qualities and spiritual development were displayed on his body, and others read it as a canvas that proved his claims of having attained the ultimate state, that of a Buddha.²⁵¹

As Powers suggests here, the physical qualities are inherently linked to other good qualities, including "spiritual development." The auspicious marks serve to prove to others that the Buddha was in fact who the tradition claims him to be. The rationale behind the use of such imagery includes the idea that one's physical appearance and one's mental/psychological/ethical development mirror one another. This idea extends to all people. As Mroczek states, "Buddhas

teeth, white and lustrous teeth, long and slender tongue, divine voice, blue-black eyes, cow-like eyelashes, tuft of hair between the eyebrows, prominent lump on top of the head.

²⁴⁸ See Boucher (2008): 176, n.10. Here, Boucher notes several key works relating the literary traditions of the auspicious marks to the production of Buddhist iconography.

²⁴⁹ John Powers provides a helpful review of this literature in his *A Bull of a Man: Images of Masculinity, Sex, and the Body in Indian Buddhism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009): 16-19.

²⁵⁰ These works include Steven Kemper, "Wealth and Reformation in Sinhalese Buddhist Monasticism" in *Ethics, Wealth, and Salvation* Eds. Russell Sizemore and Donald Swearer (Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina Press, 1990); Susanne Mroczek, *Virtuous Bodies* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007) and John Powers, *A Bull of a Man* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2009).

²⁵¹ Powers (2009): 19.

are no different from other living beings when it comes to the relationship between body and morality. All bodies, not just those of extraordinary beings, are the karmic effect of past deeds.”²⁵² These sentiments are echoed by the ethnographic observations of Kemper who notes the following of Sinhalese views of monastic bodies:

The most attractive monks, ones with reputations for great virtue or learning, are said to be *pin pāṭa*. Literally, they have the “color” or “look” of merit. They have accumulated such great amounts of merit that, like mastery over the self, their virtue shows itself in their appearance. Lay people are drawn to such monks because to be *pin pāṭa* is to be *saumya* (moonlike and, hence, beautiful). ...lay people say that 75 percent of all beautiful Sinhalese men have these *saumya* qualities. To be *pin pāṭa*, and thus *saumya*, is to have the flush of success, to look like a meritorious person.²⁵³

This suggests that there is an intimate connection between the physical appearance of virtuous beings and their ethical accomplishments, but the relationship is one of simultaneity rather than causality. A special body is not only the result of virtuous lives in the past; it also enables virtuosity in the present and future. As Mrozik notes, “Not only are bodies the effects of morality, they are also the conditions for particular kinds of moral agency.”²⁵⁴ Thus, the nature of the Buddha’s body not only proves his transcendental achievements but also facilitates his supernormal abilities. There is, then, a direct link between the auspicious qualities of the Buddha’s body and the powers attributed to him in the textual tradition. Reading Dhammakhandha’s introduction to the *SUpās* in light of these observations helps to clarify its importance. The recounting of the Buddha’s auspicious marks enables the reader to see the Buddha as the most perfected of virtuous beings, and it simultaneously serves to inform the reader of the way in which the text conceives the bodily adornments of the *upāsaka*; that is, as the natural result of following the path outlined in the text. This initial addition on the part of

²⁵² Mrozik (2007): 66.

²⁵³ Kemper (1990): 167.

²⁵⁴ Mrozik (2007): 70.

Dhammakkhandha also impresses upon his reader and his audience that the Buddha is unlike normal people — he has reached a level of perfection that others can not claim to have, as they do not have these marks—even as the path of practice advocated in the text aims to help initiate a bridging of this gap.

Following the description of the thirty-two marks, the Sinhala *Upās* describes several of the supernormal powers acquired by the Buddha including: the ten powers of knowledge (*dasa ñānabala*), the four fearlessnesses (*catu vaiśāradya ñāna*), the eighteen distinctive qualities (*aṭṭalos āveṇika dharma*), and the fourteen knowledges of awakening (*tudus buddhañāna*).²⁵⁵ These lists include such feats as the ability to know other beings' karma, the knowledge of all of one's past lifetimes, and the attainment of a perfect memory. These psychic/mental powers, like the physical attributes listed at the very beginning, are described in detail in this opening section of the Sinhala *Upās*, as Dhammakkhandha is sure to explain what each of the special abilities entails. He writes, for instance, regarding the ninth power of knowledge, the knowledge of other beings' karma:

The ninth power of knowledge is the knowledge that:

...these beings will be reborn in hell after the dissolution of the body because of their association with the karma of wrong views (*mitthyādr̥ṣṭikarma*) brought on by wrong views (*mitthyādr̥ṣṭigena*) without behaving according to the true practice (*samyak pratipattiyehi*) told by the wise, affected by evil acts of the body, evil acts of speech, and evil acts of the mind;

...these beings will be reborn in a good birth after the dissolution of the body because of their association with the karma of true views (*samyakdr̥ṣṭikarma*) while conducting themselves according to the way told by the noble ones (*ārya jana*) without complaining (*upavāda nokoṭa*), affected by good acts of the body, good acts of speech, and good acts of the mind.

In this way, for the beings who are dying, beings who are being born, low beings, high beings, beings of good caste, beings of low caste, it is the knowledge derived from the

²⁵⁵ *S Upās*: 4-10.

divine eye (*divya cakṣuṣin*) that each according to their good and bad karma, being affected by good and bad conduct, having experienced comfort or suffering will become either pure beings or ghosts (*amānuṣika*).²⁵⁶

The detail employed in Dhammakkhanda's account of these powers helps to illustrate the fullness of the Buddha's supernormal abilities. The above passage considers the many criteria by which one is set on either a good or bad course in life, and it states that the Buddha has known the future destination of any being no matter what their stage of life or social position. The descriptions certainly explain to the reader and the audience what each particular power entails, but they also underscore the vast extent of these powers. The fact that the text takes such time to do so suggests that Dhammakkhanda intended to offer a vivid description of the Buddha—one that establishes him as a perfected being capable of superhuman feats. Descriptions of the *Dhamma* and the *Saṅgha* follow, but they are far briefer. The description of the *Dhamma* reads simply:

The auspicious, true Dharma (*śrī saddharmaya*), which is complete, transcendent, and described in hundreds of verses, thousands of verses.²⁵⁷

Following this, the text describes the *Saṅgha* as:

The noble, great *Saṅgha* of the eight noble persons (*aṣṭāryapudgala mahāsaṅghayā vahansē*), which is the supreme, pure field of merit (*puṇyakṣetra*) in which to sow the seed that is the skillfulness (*kusal*) of all who live in the world, freed from the defilements (*kleśāṅgana*) such as greed, anger, delusion, idle speech, harsh mindedness, offensiveness, disreputable of the home, falsity, production of craving, wrong views, and lustful conduct.²⁵⁸

²⁵⁶ *S Upās*: 8-9. “Mē satvayō kāya duṣcaritayen vāk duṣcaritayen mano duṣcaritayen samanvāgatavā paṇḍita janayan kī samyak pratipattiyehi nohāsira mitthyādrṣṭikarma samādāna kaḷa heyin kābun maraṇin mattehi apāyehi upannāhayi dannā nuvaṇada, mē satvayō kāya sucaritayen vāk sucaritayen mano sucaritayen samanvāgatavā ārya janayanta upavāda nokaṭa ut kī seyin piḷivet koṭa samyak drṣṭikarma samādāna kaḷa heyin kābun maraṇin mattehi sugatiyā upadanāhayi dannā nuvaṇada mesē miyayana satvayanda upadanā satvayanda hīna satvayanda praṇīta satvayanda svaṇavarṇa satvayanda durvarṇa satvayanda sugati dugatiyā tamataman kaḷa karma vaśayen suva vandinā duk vandinā satvayan visundha vū amānuṣikavū divya cakṣuṣin dannā nuvaṇa navavana nānabalayī.”

²⁵⁷ *S Upās*: 11. “pada śatayen padasahasrayen varṇanā karanalada saparyāptika navalokottara śrī saddharmayada...”

²⁵⁸ Ibid. “Lobhadveṣa moha oghayoga grantha vipallāsa cetokhila vinibandha agāravānusaya micchanta taṇhuppāda saṃyojana mithyādrṣṭi tṛṣṇā vicaritādī kleśāṅgana vinirmukta sakalalokavaśiṅgē kusala namāti biju vāpīrīmaṭa niruttara pavitra puṇyakṣetravū aṣṭāryapudgala mahāsaṅghayā vahansēda...”

The opening section of the Sinhala *Upās* glowingly describes the entirety of the Triple Gem; however it is clearly the Buddha who is given pride of place.

I also draw attention to the devotional quality of this opening section of the text. Dhammakkhandha refers to the Buddha in the very first line as “my lord master” (*māge svāmiduru*). The supernormal abilities and the auspicious bodily marks designate the Buddha as a being who is worthy of devotion, even by the gods and other celestial beings, as Dhammakkhandha writes, the Buddha is:

...worthy of veneration and offerings (*pūjyapūjanīya*) from various *brahmas*, *gods*, *demons*, *nāgas*, *garuḍas*, *gāndharvas*, and accomplished holders of wisdom (*siddhavidyādhara*).²⁵⁹

The Buddha portrayed by Dhammakkhandha is the Buddha of legend, a powerful superhero-like being capable of amazing deeds and displaying unmistakable signs of his extraordinary achievement through his bodily appearance. Although we do know, through the work of Blackburn, that the Siyam Nikāya scholasticized the monastic profession, this need not imply a simultaneous rationalization of the tradition. The opening to the *SUpās* strongly suggests that at least some members of the Siyam Nikāya, including elite members like Dhammakkhandha, maintained a supernormal vision of the Buddha. The Buddha, in their eyes, was an extraordinary being capable of miraculous feats, and he is therefore worthy of praise and awe.

Following this additional opening section of the Sinhala text, Dhammakkhandha begins the *Upās* proper by rewriting the verses (in Pāli) that open the original Pāli text and then offering an unembellished paraphrase in Sinhala. Before turning to a discussion of Dhammakkhandha’s

²⁵⁹ *ibid*: 10. “naika brahma surāsuroraga garuḍa gāndharva siddhavidyādharaḍī pūjyapūjanīya...”

treatment of the Pāli text, however, I move to analyze the additional concluding section in which he describes the city of Kandy and the Nayakkar kings.

The City of Virtue

There are two concluding sections (*nigamana-s*) of the Sinhala *Upās*. The first is a translation of the exposition of the author (*kattusandasanam*) from the Pāli *Upās* with one, important addition. After rewriting (in Pāli) these closing verses from the Pāli text, discussed in detail in chapter one of the dissertation, Dhammakhandha notes the date he completed his work, in the year 2344 of the Buddhist calendar (1800-1801 CE), and the fact that he completed the translation in two months and twenty seven days.²⁶⁰ The text does not mention the month of its completion. Thus, there is no reason to suspect that we find this statement of the time that it took Dhammakhandha to complete his work for any other reason than it lays claim to an extraordinary ability to work with the Pāli text and an equally impressive command of the Sinhala language in order to render it into proper translation. The swiftness with which he claims to have finalized his project is intended to mark Dhammakhandha as an exceptionally erudite scholar, which heightens the level of cultural capital that he sought in composing his translation.

Subsequent to this additional remark at the end of the original Pāli *kattusandasanam*, there is an entirely new closing section, which begins by describing the city of Kandy. It begins with the following verse:

Named Senkhaṇḍasela Sirivaddhana,
Many people of the city live comfortably,

²⁶⁰ *S Upās*: 326.

Having become the abode of the Buddha and the other pure Triple Gems,
Endowed with many, great, delightful, rows of shops (*āpaṇapanti*).²⁶¹

The prose description that follows starts by likening the various landmarks of the city to adornments. The city itself is described as the “silver crown” of Śrī Laṅkā. The first few images read as follows:

Accordingly, the city of Śrī Vardhana is as if ornamented (*ābharaṇa*)

...surrounded by a moat named the Mahā Vālukā river, with both banks decorated with white, beautiful sandy stretches, various aquatic creatures, cool crests with shimmering rays, filled with water, walled with vines, deep and high, with agitated breaking waves,

...shining like a silver crown resting atop the highest noble city of Śrī Laṅkā,

...with the divine mansion of the divine king, Nāṭha by name, leading the leaderless, traversing the clouds yoked to a pair [of horses?], crowned with rays of gems;

...in this same way, with the two-storied, exceedingly beautiful mansion, shining with various works of art, equal to the palace of Vaijayanta, the mansion of the divine king Viṣṇu, who is assigned by the king of the gods to protect the stainless *śāsana*, marked by the discus and the two-pointed spear that have destroyed many demons like the fiercest *rākṣasa* Rāvana, having a beautiful and pleasant body, dark in complexion like the blue lotus, shining with auspiciousness, and endowed with great majesty,

...also with the beautiful mansion that is shimmering with adornments of white like the peak of mount Kailāsa, unceasingly delighting the people, the divine mansion of the six-faced divine king, named prince Skanḍa, mounted on his vehicle the peacock, which looks like the moon encircled by various hundreds of thousands of stars,

...also with the divine mansion of the divine lady Pattini, who produces wealth (*vitti*), endowed with majesty, visited by many people, successful in removing diseases of many kinds...²⁶²

²⁶¹ *S Upās*: 326. “Seṅkhaṇḍasela Sirivaddhana nāmadheyya/ āsīpuraṃ sukhita nekajanā ‘dhivāsaṃ/ Buddhā ‘disuddharatanatayavāsabhutaṃ/ nānāvisālarucirā ‘paṇapanti yuttaṃ.”

²⁶² *S Upās*: 326-327. “...yanu heyin śrī vardhana purāṅganābharaṇa pratibhāgāti dhavaḷa ubhaya tīra:laṅkṛta pulinatalābhiramya naika vidha jalacara kadambadulitaśiśirasikara vāripūrita nikuṇḍa gambhirotunga tarāṅgabhaṅgākula mahā vālukā gaṅgā namāti jalaparikhayen parikṣiptavū śrī laṅkāṅganottamamādhāra rajata kirīṭayaksē śobhamānavū anekasuravara mauli maṇiraśmi jaladhautacaraṇa yugalopeta anātha nātha nāthābhidhāna divyarājayāgē divya mandirayakinda eśma sakalaṅkāra śasana sanrakṣita surendra prayojita krūrātara rāvaṇā rākṣasādī bhūta gaṇamardita cakrakuttopalikṣita indivarā nanda sundara kṛṣṇavarṇa deha śrī virājita mahānubhāsampanna viṣṇu divya rājayāgē vicitra citra karmāntojvalita vaijayanta prāsāda pratibhāga sundaratara

The above passages describe the Mahaveli River and the four shrines as sites that bestow great beauty upon Kandy, but these landmarks share a protective function for the city as well. The river is likened to a moat (*jalaparikhaya*) that encircles the city even as the text recounts its aesthetically pleasing qualities. Likewise, each of the shrines described belongs to a class of deities known as the four *guardian gods*; the tradition of having four relates to the four cardinal directions. Here, we find the abodes of Nātha, Viṣṇu, Skandha, and Pattini, and not only does the text present aesthetically impressive images of the shrines, it also remarks on the protective capabilities of each of the deities. Viṣṇu has a spear and discus that “have defeated many demons” and he “is assigned by the king of the gods to protect the stainless *śāsana*.” Pattini, on the other hand, is renowned for curing diseases. The protective potential for each of the divinities finds expression in these descriptions. The four deities mentioned are especially powerful and reside at the top of most versions of the Kandyan pantheon.²⁶³ The text likens the divine mansions (*divya mandiraya*) of these deities to ornaments of the city in much the same way as *alankāra*-s adorn and protect the bearer—the shrines as adornments both beautify and defend the kingdom.

Dhammakkhandha proceeds to describe the major monasteries of the city, including Asgiriya and Malvatte (here named Puṣpārāma), and the Uposathārāma—generally considered a part of Malvatte. The bulk of these brief descriptions consist in relating the good qualities of the resident monks. Asgiriya, for example, is described as:

dvibhumika divya mandirayakinda, naikaśatasahasra bhūta gaṇanārānikara parivṛtanisendrāyamāna sikhī
vāhanārūḍha skandha kumārābhīdhāna ṣaṇmukha divya rājayāgē kailāsakuṭa sikhara pratibhāga sudhā
karmāntojvalita narāmarānandana sundara divya mandirayakinda, pracurajana rogāpanayanayehi samartha
naikajana bhajana sevana mahānubhāvasampanna vitti janana pattini divyaṅganāvagē divya mandirayakinda,...”

²⁶³ Other versions of the pantheon sometimes replace one of the deities, usually Pattini, with either Vibhiṣaṇa or Saman.

...a great monastery (*mahā vihārayak*) designated by the ancient name Asgiriya Vihāra, adorned (*pratimaṇḍita*) with a hall for the lord of sages (*munīndrālaya*), endowed (*nisevita*) with many monks (*saṅghagaṇa*) who are ornamented (*vibhuṣita*) with the pure virtues of the recluse (*śrāmaṇya guṇa*) such as desiring little and contentment.²⁶⁴

The repetition of cognate words for ‘adorned’ (*alaṅkṛta*), such as ‘*ābharaṇa*,’ ‘*pratimaṇḍita*,’ ‘*nisevita*,’ and ‘*vibhuṣita*,’ again suggests an overriding concern for producing an image of these landmarks concentrated on rendering their best qualities as *alaṅkāra*-s. There are several approaches that Dhammakhandha might have employed in his description of the city. Yet, his choice of words is suggestive of an attempt to depict the most important sites as ornaments—the descriptions highlight *both* the beautiful *and* the powerfully protective aspects of these sites.²⁶⁵

Dhammakhandha’s depiction of Kandy appears to share affinities with the sorts of city descriptions that we find at the beginning of Sanskrit works that extol the lives of kings.²⁶⁶ These works have a clear performative function in that they were designed to be read to a king within his court.²⁶⁷ Likewise, the various ‘messenger poems’ (*sandeśa*) found in Sinhala literary culture offer similar descriptions of cities and other important features of the landscape. Such *sandeśas* were composed during the Kandyan period, and it is likely that Dhammakhandha would have been familiar with this genre.²⁶⁸ Additionally, there are Kandyan period poems, like the

²⁶⁴ *S Upās*: 327. “alpeccha santuṣṭādī nikhila śrāmaṇya guṇa vibhuṣita saṅghagaṇa nisevita munīndrālaya pratimaṇḍita asgiri vihārayayi pūrvānāmopalakṣita mahā vihārayakinda.”

²⁶⁵ A comparison of the close of the *SUpās* with the city descriptions found in other literary works of South Asia is a project that I intend to pursue following the dissertation.

²⁶⁶ See, for instance, *Harśacarita*, *Vikramankābhyudaya*, and *Sāhendravilāsa*. As mentioned in the previous note, I am currently working on a comparative investigation of city and landscape descriptions found among these sorts of texts and other texts, like the *sandeśa*; however, the research necessary for this project exceeds the scope of the dissertation. This promises to tell us much about the ways in which locations were imagined in various types of South Asian literature. I am indebted to Lawrence McCrea for the references to the above listed Sanskrit works (personal conversation, 2/17/2011).

²⁶⁷ Lawrence McCrea, Personal Communication 2/17/2011.

²⁶⁸ This is beyond the scope of the dissertation, but we see several manuscripts of *sandeśa* poems circulating in Dhammakhandha’s era. See Nevill: Or.6611(108), Or.6611(109), Or.6611(131), Or.6611(143), and Or.6611(247). Also see the index to Nevill, which includes a lengthy list of *sandeśa* poems in existence during the late Kandyan period and into the later 19th century. For instance, see Or.6611(135), the *Kirala Sandeśaya*, which was composed during the early 19th century and celebrates Dhammakhandha’s successor, Kobbākaḍuvē Sirinivāsa. I am currently

Senkaḍagala Nagara Vistarayak noted in Nevill's catalogue, that exhibit similarities to the description of Kandy found in the *SUpās*.²⁶⁹ The descriptions of the king's city and the royal family found within these texts would almost certainly have been familiar to a literate person like Dhammakkhandha who, as we shall see in the ensuing chapters, held quite a privileged position in the Kandyan court and may very well have performed the *SUpās* to a royal audience.

A lengthy description of the Temple of the Tooth Relic (*Dalada Maligava*) follows the depictions of the major monasteries, and it serves as the climax of the initial portion of this closing section of the Sinhala *Upās* devoted to presenting images of the sacred sites of the city. It is followed by a description of the four-fold army (*caturaṅga sēnāya*), including elephants, cavalry, chariots, and infantry, and finally, the text describes three types of shops with which the city is endowed. These include a row of gem shops (*ratnāpaṇa pantiya*), a row of flower shops (*kusumāpaṇa pantiya*), and a row of medicine shops (*auṣadhāpaṇa pantiya*). The text also mentions the presence of alms houses (*dānaśālāvan*), which offer all types of food (*caturvidha āhāravarga*).

This depiction of the city may be broken into three, main sections. First, we encounter the descriptions of the major landmarks, or sacred sites. The depiction of the Mahaveli Gangā stands out as an introductory element of the description, but following this we find each of the shrines to the four guardian deities, the major monasteries, and finally the Temple of the Tooth Relic. I view this as a hierarchical account of the sacred places of Kandy's landscape. The river is the boundary-line of the city, and therefore Dhammakkhandha begins his account with its description. The text then describes the shrines to the guardian gods in descending order—Nātha

working toward a detailed comparison of the various descriptions found within these *sandeśa* texts and that of the *SUpās*.

²⁶⁹ See Nevill: Or. 6606(52) III. Nevill notes the likeness of this particular poem to the description of Kandy found in the *SUpās*.

being the highest, followed by Viṣṇu, Skandha, and Pattini. The great monasteries come next, relegating the monks to a higher level of prestige than the deities, and finally we find the Temple of the Tooth Relic, the palladium of the Sinhala monarchy, at the apex of the text's account. Thus, we find a map of sorts, which lays out the sacred topography of the city.

The second section of the description lists the components of the kingdom's military, and in this account too we find attention to the *alaṅkāra*-s of each component of the army. The cavalry, for instance, is described as “endowed with all auspicious marks” (*sarvamangalya lakṣaṇānvita*).²⁷⁰ Finally, we find an account of the various types of shops. Once again, the beautiful, aesthetic types of merchandise—flowers and gems of various sorts—are to be found alongside a description of the protective and curative medicines. The mention of alms houses heightens this sense of the city as a beautiful place that offers shelter and protection to its people.

As stated at the beginning of this chapter of the dissertation, I take Dhammakhandha's addition of an original introduction to the text along with the new closing sections discussed above as a literary frame for his translation of the Pāli *Upās*. It does not serve to alter in any way the original text, but rather it enables the text to be read as a performance. Specifically, the frame provides Dhammakhandha's text with the style of courtly praise literature. The Buddha is venerated in an elaborate manner to open the performance, and the royal city, the king, and his forbears all receive praise at the conclusion.

The *SUpās* describes king Kirti Śrī Rājasimha immediately following the description of the city, and it relates a narrative of how the king assisted the emergence of the Siyam Nikāya. It reads:

²⁷⁰ *SUpās*: 329.

There [Kandy] a king by the name of Sukittissari Rājasīha [Kirti Śrī Rājasimha] who lived in the city and saw whoever was cultivating the Buddha's *sāsana*, desired the increase of happiness.²⁷¹

The text continues to tell how Kirti Śrī encountered Vālivīṭa Saraṇaṅkara, and here we find a glowing description of the founder of the Siyam Nikāya, which reads:

He [the king] established in the position of 'beautiful-friend' teacher (*kalāṇa mituru guru*) the noble novice monk (*sāmaṇerayan vahansē*) Śaraṇaṅkara Vālivīṭa, who, because he is endowed with a mind (*citta santāna*) that incites unconditioned skillful acts with wisdom and joy (*saumanasya*), is refuge to the refugeless, adorned with worldly virtue (*laukika guṇālaṅkṛta*), completely abandoned the household life, exploring the wealth of the virtues of asceticism such as discipline (*śīla*), purity (*dhuta*), and wanting little (*alpecchatā*).²⁷²

This narrative serves not only to honor the late king with a retelling of important services that *he* rendered to the new Nikāya, it also recounts the founder of the Nikāya in elegant and detailed terms. This enables the text to instruct the king, who I believe is the intended audience, that he is an heir to a dynasty that has a unique, shared history with the virtuous Siyam Nikāya. The text proceeds to briefly describe kings Rājādhirājasimha and Vikramarājasimha before reaching its conclusion.

Unlike the original Pāli, which I have argued aims its teachings toward potential *upāsakas* more broadly, the addition of the literary frame to the *SUpās* suggests that the intended audience of this text was none other than the king and his court. As will become clear in chapter 7 of the dissertation, Dhammakhandha served as a royal tutor, and he won distinct honors from his service to the monarchy. The *SUpās* is mentioned by name in one of the land grants of the temple estates that Dhammakhandha received. Aside from this historical information, however,

²⁷¹ Ibid: 330. "tasmiṃ sukittissari rājasīha nāmena rājā nagare bhavitvā yo hīyamānaṃ munisāsanaṃ so disvā navatthuttaya vuddhi kāmo."

²⁷² Ibid: 331. "prañā saumanasya sahagata asaṃskārika kuśala saṅvodita citta santāna āti bāvin śīla dhuta vratālpecchatādī tapogūṇa dhana gaveṣaṇa pravrajitākṛta laukika guṇālaṅkṛtāśaraṇaśaraṇa śaraṇaṅkarābhidhāna vālivīṭa sāmaṇerayan vahansē kalāṇa mituru guru tanaturehi tabā."

the addition of the literary frame itself, as presented above, suggests an intention to render the text suitable for a courtly audience. Dhammakhandha may have instructed the future king with the Pāli original; there is no way of knowing for sure. The didactic value of the frame is minimal at best. What is clear, however, is that Dhammakhandha's production of the literary frame provided the text with a suitable opening and ending for courtly recitations.

Vernacularizing the Teaching

The core of the text, what lies in between the literary frame, shows remarkable affinity to the Pāli original. Dhammakhandha does not transform the text into something entirely new. Rather, he seeks to remain true to his source. The style in which Dhammakhandha translates the text may be likened to the *sūtra sannaya* texts, which as Blackburn has shown formed a key element of the Siyam Nikāya curriculum.²⁷³ This suggests that he shared a methodology for treating Pāli texts with his Siyam Nikāya teachers and predecessors. When Dhammakhandha begins his translation of the first verses that open the Pāli text, he translates the initial verse and then provides the following statement concerning his work:

Having explained the meaning of this first verse in this way, without diminishing (*nopirihelā*) the meaning of the remainder, they are told having been raised to pure Sinhala (*eluvāṭa nagā*).²⁷⁴

This is precisely the way in which Dhammakhandha appears to approach the translation as a whole. His primary concern is not to diminish the meaning of the original Pāli work but to “raise” the meaning into Sinhala. Dhammakhandha's approach was, therefore, two-fold. He was not solely concerned with providing a clear, or easily digested, translation—one that might

²⁷³ See Blackburn (2001).

²⁷⁴ *SUpās*: 12. “Mē prathama gāthāvehi artha mesē prakāśa koṭa dakvā sessehida artha nopirihelā eluvāṭa nagā kiyānu lābē.”

be readily accessible to any and all literate Sinhala speakers. Instead, he appears to have been equally preoccupied with employing an appropriate linguistic medium for the translation of Pāli that could assist him in maintaining as close an affinity as possible to the language of the source text.

This attitude towards his translation work supports the idea that Dhammakkhandha's text is aimed at a readership capable of understanding the literary Sinhala that he employs. As I have argued above, the intended audience of Dhammakkhandha's Sinhala *Upās* may have been the Kandyan king and his court. The language used would have enabled monastic literati like Dhammakkhandha, the intended readership, to perform the text for the intended audience in a manner that the audience could enjoy as a prestigious and elite work of Sinhala literature. In other words, it could become an effective piece of courtly adornment. At the same time, there *is* an intention to make the work intelligible to the audience. Thus, even as archaic terminology appears from time to time in the *SUpās*, there are also places where the Pāli terminology has been simplified.

Consider, for example, Dhammakkhandha's translation of the passage, noted in chapter two of the dissertation, referring to the exceptions to the reasons for the potential breaking of an *upāsaka*'s going to refuge.²⁷⁵

Here, the breaking [of *saraṇāgamana*] that is with fault (*sāvadya bhedaya*) by offering (*pidīmen*) one's self to, becoming devoted to (*tatparāyana bhāvayen*), going to studentship with, or by venerating someone such as another teacher (*śāstrī*) has unpleasant results (*anīṣṭa phala*). Here, whenever one hands one's self over (*ātma sanniryātanayen*) to another teacher, the teaching that he speaks, or the community of disciples that follow [him], having **believed** (*adahā*) in the qualities of the teacher, the teaching, and the community, at that time there is a breaking of refuge by handing one's self over.²⁷⁶

²⁷⁵ See pp.16-17 of the dissertation.

²⁷⁶ *SUpās*: 40. "Ehi sāvadya bhedaya anīṣṭa phalaya, anik śāstrī ādīṇṭa ātmaya pidīmen hō tatparāyana bhāvayen hō śiṣyabhāvayaṭa yāmen hō praṇipātayen hō veti, ehi yam kaleka anik śāstrīvakhu kerehida ohu visin kiyana lada

First, I highlight the complex term “*ātma sanniryātanayen*” because it demonstrates the text’s strategy of incorporating what I term intentional archaisms.²⁷⁷ The use of such terms provides Dhammakhandha’s text with the appearance and sound of the older Pāli literature from which his translation derives. The term noted above, “*ātma sanniryātanayen*,” is equivalent to the Pāli ‘*attasanniyyātana*,’ which we find in the original Pāli *Upās*, and Dhammakhandha could have replaced it with an alternate Sinhala term, such as ‘*ātma hāra damana*’ or ‘*ātma bāra dena*,’ which would preserve the meaning and read more easily for a Sinhala speaking audience.²⁷⁸ This option of selecting a less archaic term can be seen in the very same passage.

Towards the end of the quotation the term ‘*adahā*’ is used in place of the Pāli text’s ‘*okappetvā*.’ Both terms may be interpreted as meaning ‘having believed.’ Likewise, both terms share a relation to other Sinhala terms that are used to mean ‘thought’ or ‘idea’ and by extension ‘belief,’ namely ‘*adaha*’ and ‘*kalpanā*.’ Thus, Dhammakhandha could have used the same strategy he employed earlier in the passage and chosen a term much closer to the Pāli original, such as ‘*avakalpanā*.’²⁷⁹ When considering why he chose to depart from the Pāli original in his use of the term ‘*adahā*,’ I draw attention to two factors that appear to influence Dhammakhandha’s translation methodology.

First, Dhammakhandha attempts to simultaneously present a Sinhala version of the *Upās* that is intelligible to those not literate in Pāli, or perhaps not as fluent in Pāli as one would need to be in order to read the original, and to ensure that his translation reads like a skillfully

dharmayehida ehi piḷipan śrāvaka saṅghayā kerehida śāstr dharma saṅghayāgē guṇa vaśayen adahā ātma sanniryātanaya kerēda, ekalhi ātma sanniryātanayen saraṇa bindīma veyi.”

²⁷⁷ I credit Charles Hallisey for providing me this term ‘intentional archaisms.’

²⁷⁸ The fact that this term appears archaic has been noted to me by Charles Hallisey, Amarakeerthi Liyanage, and Bandara Herath, all of whom study literary Sinhala and/or have native fluency in the language.

²⁷⁹ The term ‘*avakalpanaya*’ appears in Siri Liyanage, *Nirukti sahita Sinhala Śabda Koṣaya*. Colombo: Es. Godage saha Sahōdarayō, 2003. The terms ‘*avakappana*’ and ‘*avakalpanaya*’ appear in Vāliṭṭiyē Sorata, *Śrī Sumaṅgala Śabdakoṣaya*. Colombo, Anula Mudraṇālaya, 1970.

written work of Sinhala literature. At times, then, Dhammakkhandha may use terms like ‘*sanniryātanaya*’ to give his *SUpās* the look and sound of the older Pāli text, while at other times, he seems to find it helpful to incorporate terms that are not as closely related to the Pāli, such as his decision to use ‘*adahā*.’

Second, and related to the first point, the helpfulness of any particular term must be weighed in the context of Sinhala literary culture in the late Kandyan kingdom.

Dhammakkhandha would have been well aware of other works of Sinhala Buddhist literature that had emerged in the Kandyan period, and he would have seen himself as a participant in a wider literary culture. It would be interesting to see if patterns emerge in the terminology employed in Sinhala translations of Pāli texts by other members of the Siyam Nikāya.²⁸⁰ This might shed light on the sorts of terms that had become popular and/or discursively powerful at this time in Lankan history. While Dhammakkhandha may have selected the term *adahā* for its clarity, I question why this particular term had become recognizeably clearer than a term like *avakalpanā*. I do note, however, that each facet of Dhammakkhandha’s methodology reflects the dual intention of providing his text with an air of prestige and producing an intelligible version of the Pāli original.

In addition to Dhammakkhandha’s approach to word choice, a close reading of the *SUpās* reveals that the passages to which he elected to add extended explanations or discussions reveals important features of his translation methodology. For instance, later in the *SUpās* Dhammakkhandha provides his own supplementary explanation of the Aggidatta narrative, which I discussed in chapter two of the dissertation, following his translation of the explanation given in the original Pāli *Upās*. He writes:

²⁸⁰ This exceeds the scope of the dissertation, but I plan to develop a comparative study of the terminology employed by Sinhala translations of the early members of the Siyam Nikāya in a future project.

That is, many people who have gone to places out of fear, such as a mountain, forest, hermitages, trees, *caitya*, or *devol* trees, seek assistance (*pihiṭakoṭa*), take refuge (*saraṇakoṭa*), and go. That refuge, such as a mountain, is not a refuge that is without fear (*nirbhaya saraṇak novē*); it is not the highest refuge. By only having gone to such places as a mountain for refuge, one does not escape all suffering, such as birth, old age, and death. Anyone who has seen with proper wisdom these four noble truths—the truth of suffering, the truth of its arising, the truth of its cessation, and the truth of the path, which is the road to nirvana known as the noble eight-fold path—and is a noble disciple (*āryaśrāvaka*) who has gone to refuge in the Buddha, Dhamma, and Saṅgha, that refuge (*saraṇa*), because one does not venerate some other heretic (*tīrthaka*), is without fear; it is the highest. Because of having gone to that refuge, there is escape from all the suffering of *saṃsāra*. Therefore, when giving a Dharma talk (*dharmadeśanā kaḷakalhi*) with these verses, the entire group of sages (*ṛṣi samūhayō*) with the four knowledges (*sivipīḷisimbiyā hā samaga*) became *arhats*. Thus, at first, the group of sages who went to such places as mountains for refuge did not understand nirvana which is peaceful (*śānta vū*) or the path leading to that nirvana. Therefore, any wise person who has amassed devotion (*śraddhāva*)—difficult to acquire, the very best, like a wish fulfilling gem—also climbs (*haraṇē da*) to the triple refuge (*tisaraṇa*). This is what was said.²⁸¹

This additional discussion of the Aggidatta narrative does not add much that is novel to the interpretation provided in the original text. Dhammakkhandha appears to be echoing the moral of the story that was presented in the Pāli. However, there is at least one term that does not show up in the Pāli source text, and it might provide a clue as to why Dhammakkhandha chose to provide an additional explanation for this narrative. This is the term ‘*devol ruk*’ or ‘*devol* trees.’

The *devol* are a class of deities who play a significant role in Lankan ritual culture, especially rituals connected with exorcism, healing, and fire-walking.²⁸² The reference to *devol* trees indicates places that these sorts of deities are thought to inhabit. In the passage above, then,

²⁸¹ *SUPās*: 52. “yanu heyin, bohō manuṣyayō parvata vana ārāma ruk caitya hevat devol ruk basin tāni gattāhu pihitakoṭa saraṇakoṭa yeti. Ē parvatādī saraṇa nirbhaya saraṇak novē, utum saraṇak noveyi. Ē parvatādiya saraṇakoṭa giya pamaṇin jāti jarā maraṇādī siyalu dūkin nomidenneya. Yamek du:kha satyayada, samudaya satyayada, nirodha satyayada, ārya aṣṭāṅgika mārga saṅkhyāta nirvāṇa gāmivū mārga satyayada yana mē caturārya satyayan samyak praṇāven duṭṭuyē vēda, eṣe catussatyāvabodhavū āryaśrāvaka tema budun daham sagun saraṇa giyēda, ē saraṇaya ōhaṭa anya tīrthaka vandanādiyakīn kopya novana bāvin nirbhayat veyi, utumun veyi. Ē saraṇa giya bava hetukoṭageṇa siyalu sasara dūkin midīmat vē. Mesē mē gāthāvalin dharmadeśanā kaḷakalhi ē siyalu ṛṣi samūhayō sivipīḷisimbiyā hā samaga arhatvayaṭa pāmuṇunāhuya, mesē paḷamuven parvatādiya saraṇa giyāvū ṛṣi samūhayō yam heyakin śāntavū nirvāṇayada ē nirvāṇagāmivū mārgayada avabodha nokaḷāhuya, eheyin durlabhava pāmuṇunāvū aṭṭṭayin utumvū cintāmāṇikyayak vānivū śraddhāvama dhanayakoṭa āti kavaranam nuvaṇāti kenek tisaraṇa haraṇēda, kiyana laduyē māyi.”

²⁸² See Obeyesekere (1984)

we see Dhammakkhandha extend the overall message of the original narrative to apply to local, Kandyan ritual culture with which he apparently took issue. Unlike the major deities of the Sinhala pantheon—namely Nātha, Viṣṇu, Skanda, and Pattini—who were all mentioned at the close of the *SUpās* as noted earlier in this chapter of the dissertation, the *devol* may be thought of as a part of the non-elite religious culture. The mention of these deities signals an attempt by Dhammakkhandha to equate certain features of non-elite religious ritual with the inefficacious types of refuge described in the Aggidatta story. As will become clear in the following chapter of the dissertation, Buddhist monks themselves may have been the target of Dhammakkhandha's reference to the *devol*. During the Kandyan period, and indeed even today, monks engaged in ritual activities such as exorcisms and healing rites.²⁸³ It is possible that Dhammakkhandha made a point to emphasize the message of the Aggidatta story precisely because some monks could be likened to the sages referred to in the above passage. Therefore, some of the additional exegeses found in the *SUpās* appear to serve as a means for Dhammakkhandha to localize the arguments of the text. That is, he highlights certain messages because they may have been particularly relevant to his own understanding of what constituted proper Buddhism in his time. By adding crucial terms, like *devol ruk*, to his text, he provides the original narrative with a more localized message, which in turn serves to render Dhammakkhandha's text capable of contributing to the religious discourse of his day.

Consider a later passage discussing the sorts of items offered as *dāna* to monks. The original Pāli *Upās* reads:

Here, '*dānaṃ*' means 'to be given by one' who has the intention of donating something that is giveable. Thus it is with respect to the others [of the 10 meritorious deeds] as well. There, 'something that is giveable' means:

²⁸³ The specific ritual practices of monks remain a topic for further investigation, and I can not say at this point whether or not there is evidence for monks engaging in rituals dedicated to the *devol*.

Food, drink, cloth, vehicle, garlands, perfumes, unguents,
Bed, domicile, lamps, these ten are the objects of *dāna*.

In this way are mentioned the ten-fold objects [of *dāna*] beginning with food.²⁸⁴

Dhammakhandha does not make any changes to the above. In fact, he includes the Pāli verse, taken from the commentary to the *Suttasaṅgaha*, cited within the original passage. By way of clarification of the types of objects of *dāna*, however, he lists specific items that could be included within each category. The items he mentions reveal the sorts of things that might be accepted, or expected, as gifts to elite monks in the Kandyan period. The *SUpās* reads:

...accordingly, these are the ten types of *dāna*: things that are to be eaten such as food, the eight types of drink that are to be drunk, cloth such as silk or cotton, vehicles such as palanquins (*dōlikūṇan*), fragrant flowers such as *Sīnidda*, *Bōlidda*, and Jasmine that are strung together or not strung together [as a garland], perfumes that color the skin such as yellow or white *Kunkum*, beds such as those that cover the side (*ānda āstaraṇa*), monastic dwellings (*senasun*) such as huts (*kuṭī*), caves (*lena*), or halls (*maṇḍapā*), and lamps such as *pahankandu* and *pahan mālā*.²⁸⁵

Here, we find specific references to the sorts of items that might be gifted as *dāna* to the monks in the Kandyan region. The names of varieties of flowers and particular types of perfumes and lamps help to localize the more general teaching found in the Pāli source text. The reference to palanquins finds support in the fact that elite Kandyan monks often travelled by them.²⁸⁶ While the text remains true to the source, Dhammakhandha's version adds just enough description to localize the teaching and render it more intelligible to a Kandyan audience in the late 18th century.

²⁸⁴ Saddhatissa: 285, *Upās* 5.2. "Tattha dīyate etenā ti dānaṃ, deyyadhammapariccāgacetaṇā. Evaṃ sesesu pi. Ettha deyyadhammaṃ nāma: 'Annaṃ pānaṃ vatthaṃ yānaṃ mālāgandhavilepanaṃ seyyāvasathapadīpeyyaṃ dānavatthu ime dasā' ti. Evaṃ vutte annādidasaṇḍhaṃ vatthu." This is derived from the *Suttasaṅgahaṭṭhakathā*, SsA 31.

²⁸⁵ *SUpās*: 224. "yanu heyin āhārādi anbhava kaṭayutuvū vastuvada piyayutu aṣṭavidhapāna vargādiyada paṭapiḷi kapupiḷi ādī vastrada dōlikūṇan ādī yāna vāhanada getu nogetu sīnidda bōlidda dāsaman ādīvū suvanda malda kaṣāgorada kokum ādī chaviranga karana vilavunda ānda āstaraṇādi seyyāvanda kuṭīlena maṇḍapādī senasunda pahankandu pahan mālādī pahanda yana mē dasadāna vastuyi."

²⁸⁶ See the discussion of the petition of Mahāgoḍa Indesāra in the following chapter.

There are also two general cases in which Dhammakkhandha always adds his own exegesis: following anything that appears in verse, and following anything said by the Buddha. Although he may wish to draw attention to many of the verses and the statements attributed to the Buddha, the fact that he adds his own exegeses in these instances may be due to the fact that he chooses to keep both the verse material and the sayings of the Buddha in Pāli. At the conclusion of the story of Aṅkura, which I discussed in chapter four of the dissertation, Dhammakkhandha rewrites a saying attributed to the Buddha, found in chapter five of the Pāli *Upās*,²⁸⁷ which reads as follows:

Thus, O bhikkhus, if beings would know the benefits of the distribution of gifts, as I know, they would not enjoy without having given, and the stain of avarice would not consume their minds. Even if one's last morsel was their last mouthful, they would enjoy it having shared it, if there was a recipient among them.²⁸⁸

This passage, which the Pāli *Upās* itself takes from the canon, is followed in the *SUpās* by Dhammakkhandha's added exegesis, which reads:

If to some extent I know the benefits of giving (*dāna ānisaṃsaya*), and beings also know to that extent, without giving they do not enjoy and the stain of avarice does not consume their minds. If there is a small morsel of rice (*keḷavara bat piḍak*) among them, they would enjoy it having given even that if there is someone to accept it.

Therefore, giving is a place that protects people. Giving is relatives. It is assistance. It is the highest consideration of beings that experience suffering. Giving is seen as a ship with the aim of crossing to the other side from suffering. Giving is described as a city endowed with such things as gateways and sturdy walls with the aim of protecting [people] from fear. Giving is the greatest venom with the aim of making it difficult to be approached. Giving is a lotus with the aim of purity from such things as the defilement of greed. This is what was said.²⁸⁹

²⁸⁷ This passage is found in the *Itivuttaka* of the *Khuddaka Nikāya*.

²⁸⁸ *SUpās*: 241; *Upās* 5.48, 301; *It.* 18. The Pāli reads: “Evañ ca kho bhikkhave, sattā jāneyyūṃ dānaṃ vibhāgassa vipākāṃ yathāhaṃ jānāmi, na adatvā bhuñjeyyūṃ, na ca tesaṃ maccheramalaṃ cittaṃ pariyādāya tiṭṭheyya. Yo pi nesaṃ assa carimo ālopo carimaṃ kabalaṃ, tato pi saṃvibhajitvā bhuñjeyyūṃ, sace nesaṃ paṭiggāhakā assū ti.”

²⁸⁹ *SUpās*: 241. I provide the Sinhala for comparison to the Pāli. It reads: “...yanu heyin, mama dānayaṅgē ānisaṃsaya yam pariddakin danimda eparidden satvayōt danitnam nodī anubhava nokarati, ovungē sita masurumala pāhāra geṇa nosiṭī. Ovungē yam keḷavara bat piḍak vēda, piḷigannaṭa nissek ātnam eyinudu dandī anubhava keret.”

Dhammakkhandha presents a straightforward translation of the Pāli verse, but then he proceeds to add his own metaphors as a means of emphasizing the power that he attributes to the practice of giving. Interestingly, these metaphors focus on the protective benefits of giving. It is likened to a ship, a well fortified city, and even venom. While these descriptions of the benefits of giving could very well be interpreted in a strictly ethical light, it is difficult to ignore the more pragmatic image of worldly protection that they conjure. In other words, each metaphor describes a truly ethical purpose. The well fortified city is said to protect people from fear, and the the ship is said to allow people to cross over from suffering. These are mental states, not external dangers. Yet, the vivid descriptions of the protective capacities of giving allow for the intended audience's imagination to equate the ethically protective function of the practice with the physically protective function of the items within the various images used.

Such emphasis on protection is not seen at this particular point in the Pāli version. The Pāli *Upās* extols the virtuous practice of giving. Yet, it does not make the step that Dhammakkhandha's version takes in drawing an explicit link between the virtuous practice and the benefits of protection. Although Dhammakkhandha's emphasis on protection is not at all out of line with the general understanding of virtue as found in the Pāli *Upās*, which as I have shown in the first part of the dissertation presents an idea of virtues as *alaṅkāras* that both beautify *and* protect the lay virtuosi, original additions like the passage described above do reveal an intent to emphasize the protective capacity of virtuous behavior to greater degree than that found in the source text. This aspect of the translation proper, in fact, complements what we saw to be the case in the literary frame presented above. The supernatural appearance, powers, and abilities of the Buddha are emphasized in the opening. The protective capabilities gained by virtuous practice find emphasis in the translation of the original text. Finally, the protective features of

the city of Kandy are described in the closing of the *SUpās*. I do not claim that this concern for protection overrides all else that could be said about the text. I simply seek to draw attention to the text's clear attempt to create a link between the virtuosity that it describes and the protective benefits that it claims derive from it.

The concern for protective power was likewise apparent in the passage quoted above pertaining to the Aggidatta narrative. Refuge protects, but there are degrees of protection. As the explanation of that story reveals, only the refuge of the Triple Gem provides the ultimate protection from all fears. Those who rely on such beings as the *devol* deities, and natural phenomena like mountains, do not receive the ultimate protection that refuge in the Triple Gem guarantees.

Conclusions

Even as Dhammakhandha seeks to maintain a close affinity with the Pāli source text, he uses the opportunity provided by his new translation to add original emphases. Through such devices as intentional archaisms, Dhammakhandha was able to ensure that his translation both maintained the flavor of the older work and read like a prestigious piece of literature. However, he was not afraid to make adjustments to the word choice when he deemed it useful.

Additionally, while Dhammakhandha does not appear to have removed anything from the original Pāli text, he did employ a strategy of skillfully adding his own exegeses, sometimes in order to simply clarify the more difficult Pāli verse material, but often to draw special attention to arguments that resonated well with the religious discourse he sought to engage.

I contend that Dhammakhandha's translation shows signs that it was intended for use in a courtly setting, and that it may very well have been aimed at the king as its intended audience.

The literary frame provides the text with a performative capability. The introduction extolling the powers of the Buddha draws the listeners in and ensures that the audience knows that the founder of the tradition is worthy of veneration—and their attention. It also offers a proper praise of the Buddha, which is a key component of any opening of a Buddhist performance. The closing praises the city, the king's dynasty, and the Siyam Nikāya. Not only does this pay homage to the audience itself, as was most likely expected of courtly literature, it also draws a clear connection between the power and beauty of the city, the Nāyakkar kings, and their support of the Siyam Nikāya. Thus, the closing helps to ensure that the king recognized the beneficial nature of his (and his ancestors') support of the Nikāya, which may have had a particularly strong resonance at the conclusion of a treatise on virtuous lay conduct, including the practice of giving.

In the following chapters, I seek to provide a historical context to this reading of the *SUpās*. The goal is not for the historical study to over-determine the reading of the text. That is, the intentions that I have argued exist within the text, which I have discussed above, do not rely on historical context alone for their discovery. Rather, I envision the following portion of my study as a means to understand the place of these intentions and their potential to operate in a particular historical moment. As will become clear, I believe the institutional history of the Siyam Nikāya (chapter 6), and the microhistory of Dhammakhandha's career (chapter 7), provide a richer understanding of the work of the text. They allow us to see the struggles and conflicts that existed at the time of the text's production, and they also allow us to see what might have been at stake in reproducing a text like this at this particular historical moment.

Ch. 6 The Rise of the Siyam Nikāya

The Pāli *Upās* reemerges in Lankan Buddhist history during the formative decades of the Siyam Nikāya, a Kandyan-centered monastic institution which claimed a return to a purer discipline and a revived scholasticism. The monks who formed the inner-circle of this new monastic fraternity attempted to revive earlier Lankan Buddhist scholarship. One component of their mission was to provide Sinhala language translations and commentaries of Pāli Buddhist literature, which had been preserved in the various monasteries throughout the region. Although it was not central to their enterprise, these elite monks did read and reference the Pāli *Upās* in their own work. The founder of the Siyam Nikāya, Vāliṇiṭṭa Saraṇaṅkara (1698-1778), refers to the *Upās* in his *Sārārthasaṃgraha*. One of Saraṇaṅkara's chief pupils, and his successor to the leadership of the Siyam Nikāya, Tibbotuvāvē Buddhārakkhita (ca.1700-1770), also makes reference to the *Upās* in his work *Śrī Saddharmāvavādasamgrahaya*.²⁹⁰ Another pupil of theirs, Moratoṭa Dhammakhandha (1735-1811), also obtained the leadership of the Siyam Nikāya, and it was he who composed a complete Sinhala translation of the *Upās*. While it was not until the end of the 18th century that he did so, it is clear that the *Upās* was incorporated into the practical canon from which the early Siyam Nikāya drew in composing their scholastic works.

During the later phase of the rise of the Siyam Nikāya—particularly during Dhammakhandha's tenure as head of the monastic institution, which I discuss in detail in the following chapter—Kandy began to experience a variety of external threats to its power in ways that it had not earlier in its history. The Dutch, who had established control over much of the coast of the island beginning in the mid-1600's, were superseded by the British in 1796. While

²⁹⁰ Saddhatissa: 102-103.

the Dutch had invaded Kandy, including an assault in 1763, they never succeeded in occupying the city for any substantial length of time or in conquering the kingdom itself. Towards the end of the 18th century, however, the British pressure on Kandy grew considerably. Far more dangerous for the Kandyan monarchy than the threat posed by the Dutch, the kingdom finally fell to the British in 1815, four years after the death of Dhammakkhandha. Prior to this, the British presence along the coast created difficulties for the Kandyan monastic elite, as non-Siyam Nikāya monks began to initiate their own monastic lineages with the combined aid of the colonial government and local Sinhala elites who did not have ties with the major aristocratic families of the Kandyan kingdom.²⁹¹

As I demonstrate below, the Siyam Nikāya forged a vital bond with the Nayakkar dynasty, the last one to rule Kandy. This bond permitted the monastic institution certain advantages by way of economic and legal support. Yet, it also influenced the historical development of the Siyam Nikāya and, as we shall see, inspired the elite monks within the Nikāya to act for the benefit of their monastic institution *and* the political survival of the monarchy. This relationship created a demand for the elites within the Nikāya to address the problems that emerged with the threats discussed above. In order to clarify how the Siyam Nikāya entered into such a relationship with the monarchy, and to contextualize the anxieties that Dhammakkhandha faced during his career as head monk of the Siyam Nikāya, I offer an overview of the historical ascendancy of the Siyam Nikāya, with special attention to its relationship with the Kandyan monarchy.

²⁹¹ See deSilva (1981), Dewaraja (1972), and Malalgoda (1976).

In what follows, I draw largely from the works of other scholars. However, I also introduce evidence from the various Kandyan *katikāvata* texts, in an effort to shed further light on the Siyam Nikāya's rise to dominance. I argue that key members of the Siyam Nikāya maintained a socio-religious mission directed toward consolidating their authority over monastic lands and legitimizing their monopoly of Buddhist orthodoxy with the active consent of the Kandyan king. Although I agree with scholars who have highlighted the reformulation of Buddhist monasticism during this period in terms of scholasticism and discipline, I also see evidence which points to a concern for socio-religious prestige and a reformulation of the separation between monastics and the laity. The presentation of the Siyam Nikāya's rise to power in this chapter will facilitate a closer investigation of Moratoṭa Dhammakkhanda's career, including his production of the Sinhala language *Upās*.

Prestige, Land, and The Monastic Elite

L. De Bussche, a captain in the British colonial army in Ceylon, describes the entrance of Kobbākaḍuvē Śrī Nivāsa, Mahānāyaka from 1811-1819 and Moratoṭa Dhammakkhanda's successor, to an audience with Governor Brownrigg after the capture of Kandy in the following detailed account:

I cannot omit mentioning here, the manner in which the High Priest of Buddha, of the great temple called Maha Wehari, was ushered in, and accompanied to the audience of the Governor. ...Near ten o'clock the noise of numerous tom-toms ..., some fifes, trumpets, and large whips announced the approach of this interesting personage, whose influence over the opinions of the Kandians was well known to us. The spacious courts on both sides of the great audience hall were perfectly lighted up by near a thousand torches, the bearers of which preceded and followed him. ...The whole hall, as well the ceiling and floor, as the beautifully carved pillars, were covered with white cotton cloth. In all these arrangements the strictest Kandian court etiquette was observed. The priests

were all clad in large flowing robes of rich yellow silk; that of the High Priest was of velvet of the same colour; each held a kind of fan before him, which according to their different ranks of priesthood, was more or less covered with gold, silver, or coloured silk embroidery.²⁹²

This impressive scene demonstrates the prestige held by the Mahānāyakas immediately after the fall of the Kandyan kingdom. The arrangements for Kobbākaḍuvē's meeting with the Governor of Ceylon included an entrance accompanied by music and ceremonial whip-crackers, a well-lit audience hall with a large number (if not quite "thousands") of torches and torch-bearers, and white cloths draped all about (a ritual means of purifying space). The fact that Captain De Bussche could "not omit mentioning" this scene impresses upon one the remarkable spectacle it must have been for him. The pomp and pageantry accompanying the Mahānāyaka's entrance discloses the way that elite monks at the time were treated like royal personages themselves.

During the late Kandyan period, the monastic hierarchy mirrored the political hierarchy in significant and conspicuous ways.²⁹³ The two centers of Kandyan monastic activity, Malvatte and Asgiriya *vihāra*-s, were each led by a *Mahānāyaka*, or "Supreme Chief". Similarly, the top of the Kandyan state hierarchy consisted of two *adigār*-s, somewhat akin to Prime Ministers.²⁹⁴ The *Mahānāyaka*-s of Malvatte and Asgiriya were the heads of the Siyam Nikāya, and others, including the *Mahānāyaka*-s of the coastal provinces who were under the *political* authority of the colonial governments, deferred to the Kandyan monastic heads in religious matters. Since all monks received higher ordination (*upasampadā*) only in Kandy, the kingdom maintained an ecclesiastical authority unrivaled along the coastal regions until the turn of the 19th century, which I discuss in the following chapter. Interestingly, the two Kandyan *Mahānāyaka*-s had a

²⁹² Capt. L. De Bussche, *Letters on Ceylon Particularly Relative to the Kingdom of Kandy* (New Delhi: Asian Educational Services, 1999): 45-46.

²⁹³ Dewaraja, 1972 offers the best account of the organization of the Kandyan government, but also see ch.1 of H.L. Seneviratne, 1978.

²⁹⁴ For information on the role of the *adigār* in the Kandyan state, see Dewaraja, 1972: 156-160.

degree of ritual equality with the king as each of the three had possession of the only keys to the casket of the Tooth Relic, the palladium of Lankan kingship. Only when all three were present with their respective keys could the relic be accessed.²⁹⁵

Two deputy-chief monks (*anunāyaka*) presided under each *Mahānāyaka*, and below them was a council of *nāyaka*-s. This is akin to the various ministers serving under the *adigār*-s in the city of Kandy. Away from the capital, monasteries were led by regional head monks (*vihārādhīpati*-s, “lords of the *vihāra*”) based in the various temples found in the villages and towns throughout the Kandyan kingdom, much like regional lords or headmen maintained jurisdiction in the outlying provinces of the kingdom.²⁹⁶

In a letter to the second governor of Ceylon, Thomas Maitland (1805-1811), the low country *Mahānāyaka* of the districts of Colombo and Galle, *Mahāgoḍa Indesāra*, requested that the British government render assistance in enforcing the services and duties owed him. I quote the letter produced on *Indesāra*’s behalf at length to illustrate both the expectations of a *Mahānāyaka* and the problems that low country *Mahānāyakas* faced at the time:

...your petitioner takes the liberty to inform your Excellency that the petitioner was appointed as Chief Priest over all the Upasampada and Samanere Priests residing in the Districts of Colombo and Gall under a Commission of His Majesty the King of Candy with such power that he may reproof the priests of the Boodoo religion agreeable to the Boodoo’s law. ...it was always the custom that the Chief Priests within the European territories of this Island were appointed by the Kings of Candy...therefore the petitioner humbly takes liberty to request that Your Excellency will be kindly pleased to grant him the confirmation of the appointment under your Excellency’s hand and seal...with such power as that the petitioner may discharge from their priesthood such persons who shall not behave themselves according to Boodoo’s law...and also with such effect as that all

²⁹⁵ Seneviratne, 1978: 15.

²⁹⁶ There were a variety of regional chiefs and local headmen in the Kandyan administration. Again, see Dewaraja, 1972 for a detailed description of the many offices and their duties. The monastic hierarchy at this level did not mirror the political administration exactly, as it seems to have in the case of Thailand during the reorganization of the *sangha* by Rama V. However, the top of the hierarchy, based in Kandy, did have similarities as shown above.

such Upasampada and Samanera Priests residing in the said districts shall acknowledge respect and obey the petitioner as their Chief Priest, and also to grant the petitioner that whenever he shall happen to go to the different Corles [Korālas] and Districts that Headmen of such a Corle or District shall assist and respect him and provide him with coolies for his expenses and farther permit your petitioner that he may pass in the palanquin by beating of tom-tom and carrying the Flag along with him without a hindrance of any person whosoever.²⁹⁷

There is no date provided for this petition, but Malalgoda speculates it to be ca. 1805 when Maitland first took office. This is during Dhammakkhandha's career as head monk of the Siyam Nikāya. This petition conveys the expectations of an elite monk quite clearly. First, the Mahānāyaka must have the power to expel other monks from the order. The Mahānāyaka is the final arbiter in all cases of disciplinary (*vinaya*) infractions and acts as the leading authority in cases of internal disputes between monks. Secondly, and following upon the first expectation, the Mahānāyaka must receive respect and obedience from the other monks within his jurisdiction. Finally, and more pertinent for my purposes here, the Mahānāyaka must receive assistance from local headmen when travelling.²⁹⁸ This includes laborers, or "coolies", the use of a palanquin (recall the list of *dāna* items in the *SUpās* noted in the previous chapter), and an accompaniment of musicians and flag bearers. The fact that the petition specifically asks that such provisions be made "without a hindrance of any person whosoever" suggests that the contrary did happen and elite monks encountered obstacles during their travels; otherwise such a comment would be unnecessary. Likewise, the very need for such a petition in the first place, and the formal

²⁹⁷ Pieris, 1939: 167-8. There is no date, but Malalgoda speculates it to be ca. 1805 when Maitland first took office. This is during Dhammakkhandha's career as head monk of the Siyam Nikāya.

²⁹⁸ Kitsiri Malagoda also notes how the monks of the southern province sought the backing of the local colonial government in receiving the honors due to a chief monk when travelling:

A chief monk was entitled, in the first place, to command the obedience and respect of the other monks within his jurisdiction. His rights were not limited, however, to this purely religious sphere. He was also entitled, by virtue of his office, to such traditional honours as travelling in palanquins accompanied by flags and drums, and to such services as receiving *aḍukku* (cooked provisions) and coolies from the headmen of the areas he happened to pass through. The enforcement of these rights required the approval, if not the active support, of the effective political authority within the area concerned (Kitsiri Malalgoda, 1976: 82).

recognition it sought, points to the presence of defiance, or at least indifference, towards elite monks in parts of the coastal region. Unlike Kandy, the coast was without a king, and the socio-political apparatus that could maintain the status quo, through which support of elite monastics could be guaranteed, had to be reinvented with reliance upon the colonial government.

Clearly, successful maintenance of the monastic hierarchy and the social capital that accrued to the most prestigious monks necessitated the assistance of a state, or at the very least the threat of state involvement, should expectations not be met. The predicament of Siyam Nikāya monks in the low country, then, was the absence of a state which would function as reliably as the Kandyan monarchy did in enforcing the privileges of the monastic elite. While all Siyam Nikāya monks received their higher ordination in Kandy at one of the monastic centers, Malvatte or Asgiriya, which bound them in some ways to the kingdom, their temples were located in regions under the political authority of the British. Thus the king had no power to enforce ritual and custom on behalf of these monks. As the above petition makes evident, high-ranking monks expected certain concessions be granted them. Yet, due to their remove from the reassurance of Kandyan political and social structures, they felt—likely from first-hand experience—that such privileges were threatened. Without official backing by the colonial state, which they hoped might fulfill the role of a Buddhist king, their privileges rested on insecure footing. I draw attention to the problem precisely because this was a major feature of state-*saṅgha* relations during Dhammakkhandha's career. The relationship between the Nikāya and the monarchy had to be maintained if the monks were to secure the privileges that they had become accustomed to enjoying.

Aside from the enforcement of rituals of prestige, and the conspicuous display of socio-religious status by elite monks, the material needs of the Siyam Nikāya monasteries also depended upon the direct assistance of a state. From its very beginnings, the incipient Siyam Nikāya derived the majority of its material support from the kings of Kandy. In fact, Saraṇāṅkara's monastic training center at Niyamakanda, which predates the official beginning of the Siyam Nikāya by roughly two decades,²⁹⁹ was entirely dependent upon royal endowments.

Dewaraja notes that:

The educational institution at Niyamakanda, which was established in the reign of Narēndrasimha [1707-1739], greatly benefited from the munificence of the Nāyakkar kings. The king had ordered that rice should be supplied by the royal granary at Gampola, coconuts from the king's lands at Tumpane and salt and other provisions from the *maha gabaḍāva* or royal stores. The king's palm groves at Lēvālla supplied the palm leaves to be used as sunshades by the student monks. *The entire institution was thus maintained at state expense.*³⁰⁰

As I show below, the growth of the Siyam Nikāya depended upon the support of the Kandyan monarchy to a large degree. However, the *vihāras* were generally not supported by the king in the same, direct manner as was Niyamakanda. When the king, or another layperson of means, granted a *vihāra* to the Nikāya through the issue of a royally sponsored grant, or *sannasa*, lands and services were attached to the temple in order to sustain it. When the king made the grant, these lands were part of his royal land holdings, *gabaḍāgam*, but once donated to the temple they became the property of that temple and were known as *vihāragam*. Each temple became a relatively self-sufficient estate as a result of the *sannasas*, and thus did not depend directly on the king for material support. However, the enforcement of a *sannasa* was certainly aided by the backing of the king, as the villagers who happened to live on temple lands and provide services

²⁹⁹ Blackburn, 2001: 49.

³⁰⁰ Dewaraja, 1972: 125, emphasis added. Dewaraja cites the *Sangharājasadhucariyāva* in determining these royal endowments.

to the *vihāra* could be coerced or forced to comply with the *sannasa* if they did not comply on their own.³⁰¹ Aside from these obvious benefits of coercion which the king provided, the temples operated with a degree of economic independence once a *sannasa* was issued.

Malalgoda notes the feudal nature of the *vihāras* and the many types of services that the persons living on temple lands provided for the monasteries in the following description:

...attached to temple lands there were different groups of Navandanno to build and repair temple buildings and to supply craftsmen and painters for temple decorations; people of the Baḍahāla caste to supply bricks, tiles and earthen vessels; Hunnō to provide lime and plaster for the walls and floors of monastic buildings; Radav to furnish clean cloth and lampwicks for temple ceremonies; Berāvayō to provide drummers, pipers and dancers at festivals; Paduvō to carry goods and bear the palanquins of chief monks; and so on. In relation to the services of these different caste groups, the chief monk stood in a position similar to that of a feudal lord. General feudal practices, like the *dākuma* at which the tenants annually appeared before the landlord with presents and betel leaves, were duly observed in temple lands too.³⁰²

We may conclude that the monks of the Siyam Nikāya constituted a powerful and prestigious segment of society, one which demanded that proper respect be shown them through ceremony and ritual etiquette. Economically, the monastic temples, and the lands attached to them, functioned as feudal estates through which monks derived material subsistence, support, and other services of both necessity and luxury. The possession of these estates was guaranteed by the king, but the *sannasa* grants enabled a single, monastic lineage to maintain and control the estate in the manner in which they saw fit and (theoretically at least) within the bounds of the *Vinaya* regulations and the more explicit *katikāvata* regulations which I discuss below.

³⁰¹ I acknowledge the private grants of lands for temples and their monastic inhabitants, but I argue that such small scale endowments could not have sustained the Siyam Nikāya to the extent that royal endowments did. An interesting example of a private, communal grant of a *vihāra* is seen in Bell, 1892: 89, the Pondape Vihāra inscription. A more complex example is the support of the Asgiriya temple by the Pilimatalavvē family. Since this temple became subsumed under the Siyam Nikāya's institutional structure, it is difficult to read the history of this temple apart from that of the Nikāya as a whole. The ramifications of the Pilimatalavvē's political power will be explored below.

³⁰² Malalgoda: 89-90.

The history of this phenomenon of landed, monastic estates runs deep in Lankan history and may be traced back to the late-Anurādhapura period, with the initiation of “monastic landlordism”.³⁰³ The origins lie partly in the Lankan kings’ endowments of Buddhist monasteries with the rights to large tracts of lands, including the produce and natural resources of these lands and the services of the villagers who resided on them. However, the larger *saṅgha* determined the paths of inheritance of these monasteries and their accompanying estates, using methods about which we still know little.³⁰⁴ Eventually, some of the grants issued were dedicated specifically to a particular monk and his lineage of pupils (*śiśyaparamparāva*) rather than the collective *saṅgha* as had been the case in earlier times. The emergence of these lineage-based land grants signals the advent of feudal monasteries, which as Malalgoda noted functioned like semi-autonomous fiefdoms.³⁰⁵ I caution that there are no grounds for assuming a clean, historical break between the collective-*saṅgha* style grants and the private grants, but the increasing prevalence of *sannasas* donated to specific monks and their lineages marks an important historical development that would complicate internal and external *saṅgha* politics for centuries.

³⁰³ For the origins of this term, see Max Weber, *The Religions of India* (New York: Free Press, 1958): 257. For a more focused application of Weber’s concept to the historical development of Lankan monasteries, see Hans-Dieter Evers, “‘Monastic Landlordism’ in Ceylon: A Traditional System in a Modern Setting” *Journal of Asian Studies* 28.4 (August, 1969): 685-692 and Heinz Bechert, “Theravada Buddhist Sangha: Some General Observations on Historical and Political Factors in its Development” *Journal of Asian Studies* 29.4 (Aug., 1970): 761-778. The best survey of historical evidence (literary and epigraphic) regarding monastic property holdings in Lanka, however, remains R.A.L.H. Gunawardana, *Robe and Plough: Monasticism and Economic Interest in Early Medieval Sri Lanka* (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press for the Association of Asian Studies, 1979).

³⁰⁴ Gunawardana 1979 offers the most complete discussion of the tension between the ownership of lands and property by individual monks and the claims of the larger monastic institutions (the *Nikāya*-s) to be the ultimate owners. Gunawardana uses ample evidence to suggest that individual monks did own property, but he cautions that this property was usually understood to be the property of the entire *saṅgha* or at least the *Nikāya* upon the monk’s death. Instances of inheritance of monastic property by pupillary succession do not become frequent until the 10th century.

³⁰⁵ The earliest known grant which specifies a monastic lineage as the recipient of lands is the Buddhannehāla Pillar Inscription dated to the early 10th century. See *Epigraphia Zeylanica* I: 191-200. Gunawardana, 1979: 83 notes the uniqueness of this inscription as well.

During the reigns of Kirti Śrī Rājasimha (r. 1747-1780) and Rājādhi Rājasimha (r. 1780-1798) the kings produced numerous royal *sannasas*, which granted rights to the income and inheritance of the many new temples that were constructed as well as to the older temples that had been rehabilitated. The *sannasas* are largely dedicated to individual monks and their own respective student lineages. The magnitude of the reconstruction projects is attested by the numerous land grants appearing in Lawrie's work, as well as the depictions found in the *Mahāvamsa*.³⁰⁶ This revitalization of monastic Buddhism was not, however, a purely beneficent religious gesture by the Kandyan monarchy. Instead, it served to augment the ascendancy of the Siyam Nikāya. I suggest that one needs to question what (or perhaps who) this rehabilitation and reconstruction work aimed to replace. In order to address this question, we need to reconsider what we know concerning the monks who preceded the Siyam Nikāya, the so-called *gaṇinnānse* monks.

***Gaṇinnānse* Monks Reconsidered³⁰⁷**

The *gaṇinnānse* monks appear in the surviving accounts to be lax in their monastic practice, ignorant of the Pāli tradition, and near to laymen in their lack of ascetic observance. Of course, the most detailed accounts we have are those whose authors were affiliated with and hence sought to praise the Siyam Nikāya and its founders at the expense of other monastics. Thus, it is difficult to ascertain precisely the level of corruption or non-discipline within the

³⁰⁶ Geiger (1953): 290-299. *Mhv.* 100:201-300.

³⁰⁷ My argument in this section closely follows the work of Blackburn, who challenges the dominant historical picture of *gaṇinnānse* monasticism. See Blackburn, 2001: 37-38 and 43-45 and Blackburn, 2003. Also see Holt, 1996:23-26 for a critical appraisal of the economic advantages at stake in the Siyam Nikāya's polemical presentation of the *gaṇinnānse* monks. While I wish merely to highlight this scholarly intervention, I also contribute new evidence in my reading of the *Mandāram Pura Puvata* towards the end of this section.

gaṇinnāṇse community, as these sources are no doubt colored by the polemical stance of their authors. Consider the following passage from the *Mahāvamsa*:

Amongst the bhikkhus who were formerly present on the splendid island of Laṅkā, and amongst all the sāmaṇeras who had undergone the ceremony of world renunciation, were some who had fear of evil, respected the true doctrine, living in good moral discipline, in pure fashion. Others cherished evil, were of bad moral living, followed false doctrine, took pleasure in the maintaining of women and children and in domestic duties and devoted themselves to unseemly professions such as astrology, medical activity and the like.³⁰⁸

This passage divides the monastic community into two, clear sets of monks: those who maintained the proper monastic discipline, and respected the teachings, and those who did not.

This account may be less polemical in tone than either of the two hagiographical texts on Saraṇāṅkara noted above; yet, the rhetoric is the same.³⁰⁹ What in reality must have been a complex monastic *saṅgha* in which disciplinary practices and religious knowledge varied considerably becomes distilled into two, clean and neat categories. The actual extent of the lack of virtuosity described by the texts remains difficult to ascertain. While there may be some truth to the accusations, it is apparent that other motivating factors were at play in bringing these complaints to light.

³⁰⁸ Geiger (1953): 277-278. *Mahāvamsa* 100:44-46.

³⁰⁹ Interestingly, this type of polemic was not confined to the period of the Siyam Nikāya's ascendancy. See John D. Rogers, "Religious Belief, Economic Interest and Social Policy: Temple Endowments in Sri Lanka during the Governorship of William Gregory, 1872-77" *Modern Asian Studies* 21.2 (1987). Rogers refers to court hearings in 4 Kandyan towns conducted to resolve the problems initiated by "memorialists" who presented a petition to the colonial government seeking to be exempt from paying dues to the Saman Devale in Sabaragamuva Province. The hearings included interviews with local people concerning their displeasure with paying dues to religious establishments. The people interviewed at these hearings spoke of the problems with certain monks' behaviors in reference to their displeasure at paying dues to *vihāra*-s where monks were acting inappropriately. They also compared their current situation to an idealized vision of the Kandyan past:

Stories were told of monks keeping mistresses on temple revenues, and one monk was accused of dealing in cattle. Other monks leased out temple lands for long periods; sometimes to a relative for a nominal rent, and sometimes for a lump sum which enabled the incumbent to enrich himself. One monk was reported to have received payment in full for a fifty-year lease and then to have built a house with the proceeds. Many temples were said to be falling into ruin for lack of repairs (Rogers, 1987: 361).

Unfortunately, many scholars drawing from these polemical texts have preserved the stark, dualistic image contrasting Saraṇaṅkara's group with the *gaṇinnānses*, who are intended to be representative of all other monks, in their historical accounts. Malalgoda, for instance, writes:

The traditional practices and regulations within the order came to be forgotten or openly neglected; and those very practices which had been expressly prohibited to monks became more and more widespread. ...some of them, though certainly not all, maintained wives and children in houses close to their temples out of the incomes derived from temple lands. Moreover, their ignorance of the Buddhist texts led them further and further away from the Buddhist great traditionIndulgence in magic and sorcery, astrology and divination was widespread among them. In fact, during this period, the role of the *gaṇinnānses* tended to be more and more that of a priest or magician than that of a Buddhist monk in its ideal and doctrinal sense.³¹⁰

Thus, scholars have, perhaps inadvertently, reproduced the polemical narrative of the Siyam Nikāya sources in their own histories. There is little recognition of a diverse monkhood here. Instead Malalgoda, whose work is unparalleled in other respects, presents all of those monks who fell outside of Saraṇaṅkara's *silvat samāgama* (Disciplined Ones) as a singular entity that shared in a culture of lax discipline. The potentially complex character of the heavily decentralized, pre-Siyam Nikāya monkhood is overshadowed by a reading which accepts the narratives of authors who were related to, or actual members of, the Siyam Nikāya.

I contend that a greater degree of skepticism should be employed when reading these types of texts for historical information. The *Saṅgharājavata*, *Saṅgharāja Sādhucariyāva*, and the last installment of the *Mahāvamsa* were all written to celebrate the triumphant rise of the Siyam Nikāya, its founder, and the royal dynasty who supported it. In doing so, it makes sense to portray the period prior to this in the most negative terms possible in order to establish a clear contrast.

³¹⁰ Malalgoda, 1976: 58. He cites the *Samgarajavata*, *Samgharāja Sādhucariyāva*, and *Mahāvamsa* in forming this picture.

As Blackburn has suggested, the Siyam Nikāya produced an “innovative discourse” to portray themselves as the harbingers of a return to traditional orthodoxy.³¹¹ In doing so, they employed tropes of cycles of decline and revival, and they re-imagined their own institutional emergence as a triumph over non-scholasticism, unorthodoxy, and lax discipline. There were multiple reasons for creating such a discourse. On the one hand, many of the initial members of the Siyam Nikāya, and its predecessor movement (*silvat samāgama*), may have sincerely considered themselves revivalists and sought to express this through recourse to the long history of Buddhism on the island. On the other hand, there was a great deal of prestige and material support at stake in the successful self-presentation of the new monastic group as somehow more orthodox, more disciplined, and more literate than their contemporaries. Claims to an unrivaled inheritance of the great monasteries of old draw a powerful historical link between their group and the re-imagination of Lanka’s glorious Buddhist civilization of the past brought to life via legends and chronicle accounts.

The images that these texts provide, then, should be weighed against evidence to the contrary in order to temper the more dramatic claims. In fact, the *Asgiriyē Talpata*, a chronicle of the Asgiriya monastery,³¹² presents competing evidence in its account of how the *nāyakas* of the temple impressed the Kandyan kings with their learning in the mid-18th century, around the same time in which Saraṇaṅkara’s group began its career.³¹³ Once again, Blackburn provides a helpful reconsideration of the levels of education among the *gaṇinnānse* monks, where she suggests that Buddhist learning may not have been as bleak as the majority of Siyam Nikāya sources claim.

³¹¹ Blackburn, 2001, especially ch.4.

³¹² As noted above, the Asgiriya *vihāra* was one of the two, central monasteries of the Siyam Nikāya. However, most of the surviving accounts from the late Kandyan period derive from sources affiliated specifically with the Malvatte monastery. Thus, the *Asgiriye Talpata* provides an alternative voice even as it comes from within the Siyam Nikāya.

³¹³ *Asgiriyē Talpata*: 18.

She notes the *Asgiriyē Talpata* mentioned above,³¹⁴ but she also considers the fact that there were at least enough educational resources available for Saraṇāṅkara and company to initiate their training. Blackburn comments:

Despite the inconsistency that appears to have characterized monastic educational resources and experiences during this period, there is substantial evidence that a rich textual legacy from earlier periods was protected. ...Moreover, a careful look at the first texts composed by Saraṇāṅkara between 1718 and 1747 confirms that many important Buddhist texts were preserved despite the *absence of major monastic educational centers* after the Kōṭṭe period.³¹⁵

There is evidence, then, that Buddhist literature was preserved in temples throughout Lanka during the period of the *gaṇinnānses*, but the available educational resources were not limited to texts. We must also consider the fact that there were reliably well-learned teachers, with sufficient command of the Buddhist literary tradition, available through whom Saraṇāṅkara and company could gain a sound footing in Pāli. These instructors had not received higher ordination, and in some cases they were laymen. Saraṇāṅkara himself studied under both a novice monk and a layman during his early years. What is apparent is that education was not centralized and those seeking instruction had to follow what Blackburn, following Hallisey, terms an “apprenticeship model”.³¹⁶

This evidence suggests that previous interpretations of the laxity and ignorance of the *gaṇinnānses* may be more a result of positivist readings of the sources derived from the Siyam Nikāya rather than accurate reflections of the lives of these monks. The difference between the *gaṇinnānses* and the emergent Siyam Nikāya, therefore, lies less in the overcoming of a total lack of learning and discipline among the monastic population than in the centralization and

³¹⁴ See Blackburn, 2001:43-45. Here, Blackburn draws from T. Silakkhandha’s thesis and his reading of the *Asgiri Talpata*.

³¹⁵ Blackburn, 2001: 44-45, emphasis added.

³¹⁶ Ibid: 45.

institutionalization of educational practices. Despite the narratives which Siyam Nikāya histories present, it is this centralization and institution building which marks a break with the *gaṇinnānse* past. Ambitious monks, like Saraṇaṅkara, could find texts if they sought them, and they could learn how to read and decipher these texts by establishing an apprenticeship with educated persons, monastic or lay.

Despite these challenges to the dominant view of the *gaṇinnānse* monks, scholars tend to agree with the available accounts on at least three points. One is that *upasampadā* (higher ordination) and novitiate initiation had both ceased by 1730 when no fully ordained monks remained.³¹⁷ Secondly, there were no institutional centers of monasticism that exercised the necessary power and influence to organize and control the practices of the outlying monastic communities dispersed throughout the kingdom. Finally, the monastic lands and buildings inhabited by the *gaṇinnānse*s were passed down within certain families (*ñātiśiṣya paramparāva*) and not according to a kinship-blind, teacher-student lineage (*śiṣyānuśiṣya paramparāva*).

A reappraisal of the *gaṇinnānse*s, incorporating both a critical consideration of the Siyam Nikāya narratives and evidence of an enduring monasticism, suggests that they were decentralized communities of monks who participated in local hierarchies (religious and secular), maintained temple lands, and followed a variety of religious practice, some more in-line with the standards of the Pāli *Vinaya* than others, but certainly not monolithic in character. We might also add that confirming higher ordination (*upasampadā*) status may have become difficult if not impossible by this time, more as a result of the lack of a centralized monastic authority than a total and widespread lack of individual religious effort. The uniqueness of the *silvat samāgama*—

³¹⁷ The last *upasampadā* monk is mentioned in Māndis Rōhaṇadīra (ed.), *Asgiriyē Talpata* (Colombo: Vidyodaya Viśvavidyālaya Press, 1969): 18.

cum—Siyam Nikāya, then, is not merely the reformulation of Buddhist monastic practice but also the successful institutionalization of a centralized monkhood with a monopoly on royal patronage and royal sponsorship (financially as well as legally). Other groups akin to the *silvat samāgama* may have existed at this time in the history of the Kandyan Kingdom, outside from Saraṇamkara's group, but the paucity of evidence renders the historical reconstruction of these groups difficult.

The *Mandārampura Puvata*, a Sinhala language poetic work, mentions that king Kirti Śrī Rājasimha exiled a group of monks who came from the outlying Kandyan provinces. It reads:

At that time, some monks, who were not at all affectionate towards the Saṅgharāja,
Translated the words of the Buddha and spoke them in several places.
Because they brought a large group [of people] to the wrong path,
They were angrily brought to the king for judgment.

The fools who tried to destroy the *sāsana* in Lanka
Were 32 monks from Sītāvaka and Moravaka.
Exiled to Jaffna from the borders of Lanka,
They were driven away from the *sāsana* like parasites.
Again, the king, for all the villages of Lanka
Built great preaching halls and gave out the gift of Dhamma.
The noble one had many teachings given of the meaning of the Pāli Dhamma
And illuminated the path of righteousness everywhere in this Lanka.³¹⁸

³¹⁸ MP. 863-865. Labugama Lankānanda, *Mandāram Pura Puvata*. (Battaramula, Sri Lanka: Sanskr̥tika Kaṭayutu Depārtamēntuva, 1958): 107 and 150. It is also mentioned briefly in Dewaraja, 1972: 129. The verse reads:

Ekalā saṅgarajahu noma risi kisi saṅgana
Peraḷā buduvadan pāvasū noyek tāna
Vipulā senaṅga no maṅgaṭa genagiya bāvina
Genvā nirindu karavā vinisa uraṇina

Lakpura sasun nasanuva tātkala amana
Sītāvak Moravak detisak saṅgana
Lak kaḍayim pahakara yavā Yāpana
Vidi lesa sasun piḷilaya palavā dunna

Yaḷidu nirindu Lakpura gamraṭa nohārā
Damsāl vipula karavā dampaṇḍuru hārā
Peḷadam arut visituru desavā pavarā
Sāmaḥaṭa dhammaṅga eḷikaḷa meLakpurā

These few verses claim that a group of monks had misled the people (*nomāṅgaṭa genagiya*) and were banished by the king to Jaffna. Interestingly, it is not a laxity in monastic discipline but rather a mistranslation of the Buddha's words (*buduvadan*) and the teaching of this misinterpretation in several areas (*pāvasū noyek tāna*) which characterizes the illegitimacy of these monks. The verses state that they came from Sītāvaka (a medieval capital near present day Avisavella), which was in the far west of the Four Korāles and Moravaka, located in the far south of Sabaragamuva. Both the Four Korāles and Sabaragamuva bordered the low country regions controlled by the Dutch at the time and lie towards the fringes of the regions under Kandyan authority. It should be noted that these locales are not contiguous, and mark relatively distant areas from the Kandyan heartland. The number of monks summoned before the king, thirty two, suggests that this heretical group must have been of a significant size.

Kitsiri Malalgoda has recently challenged the authenticity of the *Mandārapura Puvata* and proposes that it must come from a time much closer to the beginning of the 20th century.³¹⁹ I agree with Malalgoda on this point, and I would note that it is indeed peculiar, given the review of the polemical portrayal of the *gaṇinnānses* above, that this source does not condemn the monks from Sītāvaka and Moravaka for failure to comply with the discipline of the *vinaya* or the practice of forbidden arts, like astrology and exorcism. Instead, these particular monks are charged with heretical interpretations of the Buddhist texts and the dissemination of these teachings. I tend to think that the portrayal has much to do with the growing tension between the Siyam Nikāya and the newly emergent Nikāyas in the Southern and Western provinces, and their respective supporters, at the time of the text's composition. Caste and class identities and

³¹⁹ Kitsiri Malalgoda, "Mandarampurapuvata: An Apocryphal Buddhist Chronicle," Paper presented to the 7th Sri Lanka Studies Conference, Canberra, Australia (December, 1999).

loyalties were no doubt part of this tension, as Malalgoda also contends, but the place of apocryphal literature like the *Mandārapura Puvata* within such conflicts awaits further study.³²⁰

I suggest that, despite the inability to read the *Mandarampura Puvata* as an authentic account of the late Kandyan period, the text's decision to situate such a story within this particular time frame is revealing. The author(s) of the text, although writing at a later date, must have been aware of the growing authority of the Siyam Nikāya during the mid-18th century. They would have also known something of the subsequent loss of influence and legitimacy among other, non-affiliated groups of monks. Their knowledge of this situation enables them to deliver a believable account in the apocryphal chronicle. Yet, the details are untrustworthy. The explicit reference to the regions of Sītāvaka and Moravaka was likely aimed at the monks of the new Nikāyas, Amarapura and Ramañña, whose presence was surely growing in these regions during the late 19th century and into the 20th.

Without further evidence relating to such episodes of exile and the elimination of monastic competition, it is dangerous to assume anything more from the text. However, the account provided by the *Mandarampura Puvata* is suggestive, perhaps reflecting monastic memories of dissent within the *saṅgha* at the time of the founding and development of the Siyam Nikāya. This suggestion is supported by the urgency with which the Siyam Nikāya produced the legalistic texts known as *katikāvata*, which were sponsored by the king, in an attempt to monopolize royal support.

³²⁰ Ibid: 15.

These *katikāvata*, the products of monastic councils convened at the invitation of kings, were texts that outlined and detailed ecclesiastical laws. The regulations included in these *katikāvata* texts were not always found in the canonical *Vinaya*, at least not in the same form and not always with the same detail. The rules which they set forth were very much affected by local concerns, and it may be argued that in some cases the injunctions laid out in these texts are contrary to the *Vinaya*. I consider the *katikāvatas* issued during the rise of the Siyam Nikāya in order to understand how the fraternity utilized this legalistic textual genre to gain a monopoly of royal support.

The *Katikāvata* Texts³²¹

The first *katikāvata* composed by the Siyam Nikāya was issued early in its history, during the reign of Kirti Śrī Rājasimha. This text states clearly that its authors conceived it to follow in the tradition of earlier *katikāvata*, especially those issued during the reigns of Mahā Parākramabāhu (r.1153-1186) at Polonnaruva and by Parākramabāhu II (r.1236-1270) at Dambaḍeniya. The *Kirti Śrī Katikāvata* includes a restatement of the injunctions laid out in the earlier *Dambaḍeniya Katikāvata*, from which it draws heavily, but it adds new formulations of rules which were not present in the earlier text. The primary theme of these newly expressed injunctions, of which there are ten, is the control of the economic resources of individual monks

³²¹ This section uses the *katikāvata* texts presented in Ratnapala, 1971. For general information on *katikāvata*-s, see Ratnapala's introduction, as well as Sannasgala, 1994: 545-546. In this section, I use the term *katikāvata* in reference to the *sangha*-wide *katikāvata* texts. I acknowledge that various *vihāra katikāvata* exist, and that unlike the *sangha*-wide *katikāvata*, these texts concern themselves with the rules and affairs of a single monastery and do not seek to reformulate monastic practice as a whole.

and the maintenance of the separation between the wealth of the monks and their families. The ten may be summarized as follows:³²²

- 1) monks are not to provide their families, or other laypersons, with any form of wealth or resources other than medicinal treatments sanctioned by the *vinaya*
- 2) monks are not to keep books, documents, robes and requisites in their families' villages, or other villages
- 3) monks are not to take any books, documents, robes or requisites with them should they give up the robes and return to lay life
- 4) monks are not to buy and sell lands, ask for the donation of lands, or engage in agriculture or agricultural works
- 5) revenues attached to a particular *vihāra* are not to be used for another *vihāra*, or any other place
- 6) monks are to accept villages, lands, and livestock offered by the laity in the correct, ritual manner
- 7) monks are not to accept villages, lands, or livestock offered by the laity in an improper, non-ritual manner
- 8) monks are not to handle gold or silver directly, but are to ask the temple assistants to provide them with the necessary requisites from the funds donated by laypersons
- 9) monks should only write books for merit, not for wealth
- 10) monks should only write books after receiving the approval of the *saṅgha*, considering the benefits to the *sāsana*, and receiving an invitation.

Rules 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, and 7 strengthen the division between the temple economy and the persons to whom monks had social ties before (or perhaps during) their entrance into the monkhood. In particular, rules 6 and 7 ensure that all presentations of wealth by the laity follow proper, ritual procedure, thereby reinforcing the privileged status of the monks and their socio-religious distance from the laity. Monks and their lay donors could not, in other words, engage in conventional business transactions—any transfer of wealth had to take the form of a *public* offering made by a devotee to the *saṅgha*. Rules 4, 8, 9, and 10 limit the sorts of commercial

³²² Here, I paraphrase the injunctions listed as 103-112 in Ratnapala, 1971: 169-171.

activities in which monks could partake; they may not buy or exchange the temple lands which they control, they can not handle currency directly, and they can not use their literary skills for profit. If we consider why these rules were included in the *Kirti Śrī Katikāvata*, it is possible that the infractions which they hope to counter actually occurred. However, it is hard to say with what frequency. Again, I stress the need to be cautious when referencing the texts produced by the Siyam Nikāya as historical evidence for reconstructing the lives and practices of the *gaṇinnānses* as a whole.

An alternative way of approaching these regulations laid out in the *katikāvata* is to consider them as a statement of the Siyam Nikāya's vision of how a paradigmatic monk was to behave within his monastery and interact with the laity. That is, the violations listed here may tell us more about the types of activities that served as tropes within religio-political discourse than about what actually took place in the Kandyan monasteries of the early-mid 18th century. Certain crimes or undesired behaviors may become charged, within socio-political and religious discourse, with a type of potency because they supply a particular group with a means of representing itself to others. That is, the prohibited acts stand in for a wider set of socio-economic and political realities. Thus, even if it is an hyperbole to claim that *gaṇinnānse* monks, as a whole, engaged in frequent commercial enterprises, exchanged wealth with family members, wrote books solely for profit, and practiced agriculture, the Siyam Nikāya monks chose to represent themselves as taking a strong stance against these *types* of practices because they stood for a larger problem faced by the Buddhists of the late Kandyan kingdom. This problem entailed the practice of a certain type of monastic lifestyle that must have brought the monks into closer relations with laity than some persons thought acceptable. The *precise* nature of these lay-monastic relations remains obscured, but it clearly became a central strategy in the Siyam

Nikāya's effort to obtain favor with the king, and the larger body of their potential supporters, to present a clear picture of these practices from their perspective.³²³ In that sense, these particular violations mentioned in the Siyam Nikāya sources may have resonated with the fears of potential abuses of power and prestige by monks among certain sectors of the laity at that time, including the king.

The Siyam Nikāya issued a second *katikāvata*, which largely restates the injunctions of the first. Yet, there are a few new and noteworthy emphases. The monks' sharing of the wealth and manpower reserved for the monasteries with their relatives is given a greater specificity. One regulation states that food and betel offered to the monasteries may be removed, after some time, and taken by the monastery attendants. Gold, silver, and cloth, however, can not be taken away to be used by the monks' relatives or others.³²⁴ Another rule stipulates that villagers who live on lands owned by the monastery are not to be employed in the service of a monk's relatives or others.³²⁵ These injunctions are expansions and clarifications of the rules outlined in the first *katikāvata*. It becomes permissible for some perishable items to be used by others, including non-monastics if the temple incumbants do not use them. Yet, other sorts of wealth, especially the material wealth of gold, silver, and cloth, and the wealth of manpower, were prohibited from being shared with other temples or non-monastics.

³²³ I see a potential similarity between the Siyam Nikāya's focus on these particular types of infractions and the current focus on abortion and homosexuality by the 'religious right' in the United States. I doubt that it is an increase in either abortion or homosexuality that has sparked strong reactions by those in the 'religious right'. Instead, I see discourses that address these issues as forming a particularly poignant means of self-representation and social demarcation. Such discourses also create an image of those who fall outside of the 'religious right' that is greatly exaggerated. That is, just as the Buddhist *Vinaya* sets forth a wide range of rules which the non-Siyam Nikāya monks may be charged with violating, the 'religious right' maintains a much wider code of ethics that seems to be overshadowed by a rhetorical focus on a select few issues. This limited focus, I argue, is part of a strategy of self-representation and mobilization of support. It does not necessarily reflect the actual practices, or at least the prevalence of such practices, among the wider population as a whole.

³²⁴ Ratnapala, 1971: 174-175, n.9.

³²⁵ Ibid: 175, n.11.

Another regulation states “the *bhikkhus* should not live all alone and according to their desires in different villages ...they should live... together with another *bhikkhu* who is capable of granting protection to them.”³²⁶ In a similar vein, the *katikāvata* says “All the *bhikkhus* who have received the Higher Ordination should live associating with a *bhikkhu* who is capable of granting protection to them without roaming about in different places according to their (own) desires.”³²⁷ These injunctions limit the mobility and independence of the monks, including those who have received *upasampadā*. Consider that the *Dambaḍeniya Katikāvata* merely cautions that a monk should not live independently from his teachers and preceptors for more than two months.³²⁸ A later rule in this second *Kīrti Śrī Katikāvata* states:

Whether they are *upajjhāyas* [preceptor] or *ācariyas* [teachers] or *sthaviras* [elders], those of the middle grade or novices, (all of them) should accept, without written or verbal replies, the advice and admonition given (given to them by others) which is in accordance with Dhamma and Vinaya.³²⁹

Each of the last few rules considered situates the monks within a community that exercises disciplinary control over itself using (at least theoretically) the canonical guidelines. The phrase “in accordance with the Dhamma and Vinaya” is rather ambiguous, of course, as it would be the chief incumbent monk who had the authority to decide what was actually in accordance with the *Dhamma* and *Vinaya* in most cases. However, this does leave a loophole open for monks to come together and oust a head monk at a monastery, especially if they received the support of the central authorities in Kandy, because such a coup would have recourse to claiming a more accurate interpretation of the Dhamma and Vinaya. Nevertheless, these rules prevent monks

³²⁶ Ibid: 176-177, n.18.

³²⁷ Ibid: 177, n.19.

³²⁸ Ibid: 150, n.47.

³²⁹ Ibid: 177, n.20.

from dwelling in their own, private residences and practicing according to their own, possibly unique, interpretations of the Buddha's teachings.

One final emphasis in this second *Kīrti Śrī Katikāvata* pertains to the political and religious authorities who should enforce these regulations. It reads:

If laymen, such as kings and ministers, or *Sthaviras* [elders] who have become chiefs of groups (of monks), should cause the degeneration of the *Sāsana* by handing over power to the shameless, sinful *bhikkhus* who live violating this injunction practicing a wrong way of life and who live associating with their relatives, [since it is said] 'He who causes the destruction of my Vinaya by handing over power to the shameless will be born in the unfathomable Lohakumbha [Iron Cauldron] hell while still living (on this earth),' [and] as it is said, 'if (one) hands over power to the shameless (bhikkhus) and thereby causes the destruction of both my Dhamma and my Vinaya (he) would be born in the Lohakumbha hell,' no one should hand over power to the shameless and undisciplined bhikkhus. The monarchs who would come to enjoy the glories of kingship in the future, and the ministers as well as the commanders of the army and the [Great Elders] who will become the chiefs of the *Samgha* should maintain these injunctions without transgression and thereby (they) should strive to enjoy the bliss of heaven and earth, having seen the Buddha Maitreya in the future.³³⁰

This is a call to the political and religious authorities to enforce these injunctions, but it also demands that they refrain from providing support to any "shameless, sinful *bhikkhus*" for fear of hell, as well as for the benefit of rebirth in heaven and the time of the future Buddha Maitreya.

Interestingly, such a warning does not appear in the earlier *katikāvata*. The *Dambadeṇi Katikāvata* simply concludes with the statement:

Having made them [novice monks] rehearse (sic) the *baṇa* in three places (from each text) and having examined them in the manner stated in the *Katikāvata* the prosperity of the *Sāsana* should (thus) be established.³³¹

The *Dambadeṇi Katikāvata*'s conclusion is more concerned with the proper examination of monks who are to undergo higher ordination. The warnings of supernatural punishment or reward, and the call for political and religious authorities to enforce the rules of the *Kīrti Śrī*

³³⁰ Ibid: 177-178, n.22-25.

³³¹ Ibid: 161, n.105.

Katikāvata are particular to the Kandyan period text. The second *Kirti Śrī Katikāvata*, then, reveals an intention on the part of the early Siyam Nikāya to monopolize monastic authority, with the assistance of the monarchy, as much as it seeks to reinforce monastic discipline.³³²

The final *katikāvata* issued during the late Kandyan kingdom comes from the reign of Kirti Śrī's successor, Rājādhirājasimha, and its composition is attributed to Moratoṭa Dhammakhandha, the author of the *SUpās*. The overriding theme among the rules set forth in this *Rājādhirājasimha Katikāvata* is the prohibition of the performance of improper activities by the monks. These include astrology, sorcery, medicine, and exorcism. As mentioned earlier, the *gaṇinnānse* monks are said to have engaged in these practices liberally according to the surviving accounts derived from Siyam Nikāya authors. It is interesting, however, that such injunctions do not appear until this *Rājādhirājasimha Katikāvata* when clearly they could have been listed among the injunctions of either of the two *Kirti Śrī Katikāvatās*. I believe that this late appearance of such rules has something to do with the competition among Siyam Nikāya monks and other ritual specialists as well as the desire to distinguish and privilege Pāli based knowledge over and against other forms of ritual knowledge.³³³ As we saw in the previous chapter, one important aspect of the *SUpās* is its use of intentional archaisms that provided it with the look and sound of an older Pāli text. The Pāli language was clearer privileged by the

³³² I hypothesize that a complex network of political relations among certain members of the aristocracy and the monarchy was at play in the design and implementation of the *Kirti Śrī Katikāvatās*. More research is required to find out who the primary players were, but it is apparent even from the above close reading of the *katikāvatās* that there was an attempt to limit the circulation of wealth and resources from the temple estates. Members of elite families could enjoy the estates while they were robed as monks in the Siyam Nikāya, but they could not take this wealth with them if and when the disrobed and returned to lay life. Neither could they share the resources for these estates with their non-ordained family members. This had the advantage of ensuring that temple wealth remained solely at the disposal of Siyam Nikāya monks, not the heads of aristocratic families, which would have been useful for the monastic elite. It also assisted the king in controlling the wealth of the non-monastic aristocracy. Further study will clarify these political maneuvers and the actors involved.

³³³ This idea of a competitive ritual arena in which monks and other types of ritual specialists (healers, exorcists, astrologers, etc.) competed for the respect of the people deserves more treatment than I can afford here. I am, however, developing this idea as a post-doctoral project.

Siyam Nikāya elite, and the injunctions of the *Rājādhirājasimha Katikāvata* help to elevate Pāli based religious knowledge over and above competing forms. While this does not feature among the initial concerns of the Siyam Nikāya, judging from the evidence of the earlier *katikāvatas*, it seems to have become an obstacle in the later stages of the fraternity's rise to dominance, during Dhammakhandha's career.

The performance of *upasampada* by monks from Ayutthaya in 1753 gave a formal, religious legitimacy to the group, but the ensuing *katikāvatas* issued by king Kirti Śrī Rājasinha and Rājādhirājasimha provided the Siyam Nikāya with a legal monopoly on religious orthodoxy. This entanglement with the Kandyan monarchy that was a feature of the Nikāya's early rise to dominance continued into Dhammakhandha's tenure as chief monk (*Mahānāyaka*). A concern with the political well-being of the Kandyan kingdom, and a specific concern with the Nikāya's relationship with the king, contributed to Dhammakhandha's perceived need to establish himself as a true authority on the Pāli tradition. As we will see in the following chapter, Dhammakhandha served as the tutor to Rājādhirājasimha, he engaged in ambassadorial discussions with colonial powers, and he fought the attempts of monks to break-away from the Siyam Nikāya. The *SUpās* served to instruct the king and to adorn the Kandyan dynastic culture, and this is mirrored by the actions taken in Dhammakhandha's career.

Conclusions

The relationship between the *saṅgha* and the king may be viewed as one of symbiosis, in which the monkhood assists the king in his attempt to present himself as a virtuous Buddhist layman and a righteous ruler, and in return, the king presents the *saṅgha* with material support.

While this seems to be the case, it is also a rather simplistic way of describing this relationship, and it does not attend to the ways in which one monastic group may achieve a monopoly of religious orthodoxy amidst a variety of competitors. Neither does it recognize the potential sacrifices that the monkhood may make in order to receive the support of the king. I argue that these are complicated variables in the historical vicissitudes of the relationship between the Buddhist *saṅgha* and the monarchs of South and Southeast Asia.

In this chapter, I acknowledged how the emergent Siyam Nikāya employed a simplified and dichotomous view of the Lankan monkhood in an effort to portray themselves as the sole virtuous monks in existence at the time, and I also presented evidence suggesting that the *gaṇinnānse* monks were not as monolithic a community, or as homogenous in their practice, as this view claims. In an effort to assert the dominance of their reformulation of Buddhist orthopraxy, the Siyam Nikāya worked with the king in the composition of legalistic *katikāvata*, which guaranteed them the support of the monarch and other lay elites but simultaneously ensured their dependency upon the *sannasas* approved and/or issued by the king.

Thus, while I agree with other scholars who have highlighted the Siyam Nikāya's concern for discipline, orthopraxy, and scholasticism, I have sought to demonstrate that the Nikāya was equally concerned with gaining a monopoly of royal support in what appears to have been a more complex arena of religious competition than we have been led to believe by the polemical works of the Siyam Nikāya. Accepting the claims of the Siyam Nikāya's literature without the necessary skepticism, and without an eye for evidence to the contrary, might perpetuate the simplistic notion that the Siyam Nikāya and the *gaṇinnānses* were diametrically opposed as black to white. In fact, as will become clear in the following chapter of the

dissertation, many elites within the new Nikāya—including Dhammakkhandha—were from wealthy families, held vast estates, and passed these monastic estates along through lines of family inheritance. The *katikāvatas* did not, therefore, dramatically reduce the wealth of monasteries. They limited this wealth to the monastics thereby keeping it out of the hands of non-monastic aristocratic elites—as well as other monks and ascetics who lost control of their estates with the rise of the Siyam Nikāya and the kings’ issuance of the land grants. Those previously wealthy monks who did not manage to secure a place among the Nikāya’s elite, or who did not manage to secure the king’s favor, were at a disadvantage with the issuance of the *katikāvatas* since they could not receive wealth from other estates.

I do not mean to deny the more religiously motivated intentions of the members of the Siyam Nikāya in their rise to dominance, and in fact I would argue that there were multiple intentions within the Nikāya itself—as becomes clear in the following chapter. Nor do I claim that the implementation of the *katikāvata* texts was the sole method through which the Siyam Nikāya solidified their authority.³³⁴ Rather, I see the evidence from the *katikāvata* texts as indicative of the larger process whereby the monks of the Siyam Nikāya reformulated the manner in which monastic estates could legitimately operate, both ecclesiastically and economically. These reforms prohibited the existence of competing Nikāyas and ensured that the increasing number of monasteries being built and reconditioned by the Kandyan kings would be placed under the sole authority of the Siyam Nikāya.

³³⁴ See Blackburn, 2003 for an insightful argument concerning the methods through which the Siyam Nikāya monks downplayed the foreignness of their lineage (the connection to Siam) and constructed a link between their new lineage and the older monastic communities of Lankan history, particularly that of the Dambaḍeniya period *araññavāsī* or forest-dweller lineage.

This was the religio-political landscape at the time in which the *Upās* reemerged within the corpus of texts used and studied by the Siyam Nikāya. When Moratoṭa Dhammakkhandha decided to compose a Sinhala language version of this text, he had reached the heights of the Siyam Nikāya hierarchy and taught kings the Buddhist *Dhamma*. He fought to maintain the privileges of the Siyam Nikāya elite, and he built new monasteries with his own funds. In the following chapter, I provide a detailed account of Dhammakkhandha's career in light of his production of the text as well as with respect to the vision of the initial ascendancy of the Siyam Nikāya and its close relationship with the Kandyan monarchy that I have presented above.

Ch. 7 The Career of Moratoṭa Dhammakkhandha

When Moratoṭa Dhammakkhandha composed his Sinhala translation of the *Upās*, he belonged to an elite circle consisting of the Kandyan aristocracy, monastic leaders, court literati, and the royal family. Dhammakkhandha himself was born into an aristocratic family, with Brahmin roots, in the region of the Four Korales in 1735.³³⁵ He became the royal tutor (*rājaguru*) to the last two kings of Kandy, Rājādhirājasimha (r.1782-1798) and Śrī Vikramarājasimha (r.1798-1815),³³⁶ and he became the head of the Malvatte monastery, the chief seat of the Siyam Nikāya, in 1784.³³⁷ Dhammakkhandha's career took place within the most elite social networks of the late Kandyan kingdom. He had an intimate teacher-pupil relationship with future kings, he controlled significant amounts of temple lands, and he communicated with Dutch and British ambassadors. In many senses, Dhammakkhandha was a sharp contrast to the image of the ascetic recluse—he lived and wrote within the heart of elite, Kandyan political and social life.

In this final chapter of the dissertation, I provide a micro-level historical analysis of the web of social alliances and rivalries within which Dhammakkhandha carried out his career in the Siyam Nikāya and the Kandyan royal court.³³⁸ I reveal the interpersonal relations that he had with kings, ministers, monks, and literati. My intention is to provide a clearer context from which to ascertain this monk's multiple ambitions and their associated projects. In short, I wish

³³⁵ *Moratoṭavata* v.11-17; Buddhadatta, 1950: 12-13. The Four Korales was a Kandyan province in which was located the main pass between Kandy and Colombo. The post of *disāva* to this province was especially lucrative, and the region itself was very much a gateway between the two realms.

³³⁶ *Moratoṭavata* v.61; H.C.P. Bell, 1892: 89-90 [Selawa Vihāra Sannaya]; Buddhadatta: 14; Sannasgala: 506. Dhammakkhandha maintained an especially close relationship with Rājādhirājasimha, but there is evidence that he shared royal teaching duties with another monk, Kobbākaḍuve Śrī Nivāsa. I discuss this below.

³³⁷ *Moratoṭavata* v.72; H.C.P. Bell: 89-90; Buddhadatta: 13-14; Sannasgala: 505-6.

³³⁸ My methodological use of micro-historical analysis derives from the work of Carlos Ginzburg and historians influenced by his approach. See Edward Muir and Guido Ruggiero (eds.), *Microhistory and the Lost peoples of Europe* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1991) and James Brooks, Christopher R. DeCorse, and John Walton (eds.), *Small Worlds: Method, Meaning, and Narrative in Microhistory* (Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2008).

to gain an understanding of who Dhammakkhandha was as a person, and in doing so, I anticipate a better grasp of the man behind the intentions recovered in the Sinhala *Upās* discussed in chapter 5 of the dissertation.

I believe that the micro-historical study of Dhammakkhandha's career can allow for a deeper appreciation of the impact he hoped to have on his own world and the conditions of possibility that enabled him to take up the task of translating this particular text. What might it have meant for Dhammakkhandha to produce a text of this kind at this point in Lankan history and within the social environment I describe below? What can a deeper understanding of Dhammakkhandha's career and social relations tell us about the conditions which allowed for the production and dissemination of such a text? I believe that the historical analysis presented here can provide reasonable and informative answers for these types of questions. This analysis, coupled with the textually centered study that precedes it, enables the most comprehensive account of the historical emergence of the Sinhala *Upās*.

Early Career

The hagiographical poem *Moratoṭavata*,³³⁹ when discussing Moratoṭa's forbears, claims that he descended from a Brahmin family who arrived in Lanka from Madurai sometime during the reign of Bhuvanekabāhu of Kōṭṭē (r. 1472-1480).³⁴⁰ Since the arrival of his ancestors takes place nearly three centuries before the writing of the text, we may be skeptical about the accuracy of this bit of biographical information. Regardless, it reveals that the assertion of

³³⁹ The *Moratoṭavata* (M) was composed by Munkoṭuvē Abēsinha, a prestigious poet with ties to the Kāndyan court, in 1797. See Sannasgala: 513-514. I return to discuss Abēsinha below.

³⁴⁰ M: 6-9, 11; Buddhadatta, 1950: 12; Vāchissara, 1960: 230.

Brahmin roots was a claim to prestige in the late Kandyan period. Otherwise, the poet would surely have refrained from including this information in his work.³⁴¹

The text continues to relate that one among this family of Brahmins received an honorific title, Raṇasiṃha Mudali, during the reign of Rājasimha of Sītāvaka (r. 1581-1593), at which time the family received lands in the vicinity of Moratoṭa village.³⁴² They also received from the king: a pair of gold bangles, a beautiful pearl bracelet, several villages, and a trained elephant.³⁴³ Thus, the text describes Moratoṭa's ancestors as well-to-do Brahmins from an important cultural center in South India, who arrived in Lanka during the 15th century, and who had received lands and gifts from the king during the 16th century. Dhammakkhandha is said to be a son of the 5th grandson (*pasveṇi munuburek*) of Raṇasiṃha Mudali himself.

While this information is certainly plausible, I argue that we should also consider what it tells us about the advantages of claiming such a lineage at this point in Kandyan history. As we saw in the previous chapter, caste consciousness becomes especially relevant to monastic life as a result of the reforms issued during Kirti Śrī's reign. As we will see shortly, Dhammakkhandha supported these reforms and upheld them in his capacity as Mahānāyaka. A biography which clearly depicts Brahmin roots may have assisted in the strengthening of Dhammakkhandha's caste identity. While caste origins would become a highly volatile subject in the ensuing decades of the 19th century, as the production of many *janavaṃsa* texts during this period reveals, the *Moratoṭavata* provides evidence that a South Indian, Brahmin ancestry must have helped to justify one's inclusion in the higher echelons of the *goyigama* caste. Otherwise, a poet friendly to

³⁴¹ This is an interesting detail in light of the contemporary prevalence of ethnic sentiments which would almost certainly preclude a politically mobile person from emphasizing a South Indian heritage, Brahmin or otherwise.

³⁴² M: 12-14; Buddhadatta: 12; Vācissara: 230.

³⁴³ M: 13.

Dhammakkhandha, and familiar with the politics of the Kandyan court and the monastic hierarchy of the Siyam Nikāya, as Munkoṭuvē certainly was, would have had no reason to include this information.

Likewise, the story of Raṇasiṃha Mudali creates a link between Dhammakkhandha's forebears and Lankan kingship. Dhammakkhandha's family, according to the biographical information found here, owes its wealth to the support of Lankan kings, and king Rājasimha I in particular. While chronicles make a case for the damage this king did to the Buddhist religion, recent scholarly work has begun to challenge this image.³⁴⁴ In this way, Dhammakkhandha's ancestry, as portrayed in the *Moratoṭavata*, assumes an almost natural connection between himself and Lankan kings. As his ancestors had done centuries ago, thus he should do now. The lands and the objects that Raṇasiṃha received, according to this account, form a solid link between Lankan kings and Dhammakkhandha's family. The lands they held, the jewelry, and the stories of the origins of these possessions constituted a material display of the royal service rendered by the family and a justification for current prestige. These ancestral claims, then, offer a means of understanding how Dhammakkhandha rose to the rank of *rājaguru*, or at least how this rise was later justified. However, there is more to Dhammakkhandha's story than a privileged background.

Moratoṭa entered the monkhood when he was 13. He studied under the *Saṅgharāja*, Saraṇaṅkara, and received his higher ordination (*upasampadā*) from Upāli Thera, head of the contingent of Ayutthayan monks who had arrived to initiate the Siyam Nikāya, when he was 20

³⁴⁴ See Mhv: 93. In terms of recent scholarship which challenges the anti-Buddhist portrayal of Rājasimha I, I refer to Sujatha Meegama, "The 'Heretic' King and His Kovil: The Patronage and Plunder of the Berendi Kovil in Sitavaka, Sri Lanka." Paper presented at the 38th Annual Conference on South Asia (2009), University of Wisconsin-Madison.

years old.³⁴⁵ The *Moratoṭavata* relates an interesting story which describes how the monk received the name Dhammakkhandha despite initially being given the name Nigrodha (“Banyan Tree”) upon his higher ordination. According to the text, the Ayutthayan monk Upāli heard Moratoṭa reciting the *Prātimōkṣaya* (Pāli: *Pāṭimokkha*) in the midst of the assembly of monks during the *uposatha* day following his admittance to higher ordination. Upāli was so impressed by his abilities at this recitation that he referred to Moratoṭa as a “Dhammakkhandha”, which literally means a “great accumulation of the Dhamma.”³⁴⁶ Thus, his monastic name was changed accordingly. From the very beginning of his career, then, Dhammakkhandha was marked with prestige through his very name. He impressed Upāli, the founder of the Siyam Nikāya, with his knowledge of Pāli texts, especially one as important as the *Pāṭimokkha*, which not only exemplified literary acumen but also, and perhaps more importantly, his disciplinary knowledge.³⁴⁷

Another text, the *Samgharājasādhucariyāva* (SSC), written during Kirti Śrī’s reign, mentions several highlights of Dhammakkhandha’s early career that occurred after his higher ordination. They include: becoming a preceptor (*upādhyā*) to novice monks, performing higher ordination for many candidates, writing many books related to the Pāli canon, performing various types of sermons (*arthakathā* and *dharmakathā*), teaching writing and grammar (*śabdaśāstra*), and teaching how to preach (*baṇadham*) the Vinaya and the Dharma.³⁴⁸ The SSC also notes three students of Dhammakkhandha’s and the temples where each was situated. It seems that since Moratoṭa himself resided in Kandy at the Malvatte monastery, in order to

³⁴⁵ M: 19 (*pabbajā*), 30 (*upasampadā*); Buddhaddatta: 13; Vācissara: 230-231.

³⁴⁶ M: 37-38; Buddhaddatta: 13; Vācissara: 231.

³⁴⁷ The *Pāṭimokkha* is a section of the *Vinaya* recited liturgically on the Uposatha days as part of the monastic ritual of confession and reaffirmation of monastic purity.

³⁴⁸ *Samgharājasādhucariyāva*: 49.

perform his many duties as *nāyaka*, he established his students at the several other monasteries which he controlled. These included Degaldoruvē and Gangārāma monasteries, which were two of the nine most important monastic centers for higher education during the early history of the Siyam Nikāya.³⁴⁹

A theme which emerges out of the text's description of Moratoṭa's career is his dedication to teaching and guiding young monks through the Nikāya's curriculum. A *dinapota*, a journal-style text, produced by Dhammakkhandha is largely taken up with recording the names of the many students whom he provided with higher ordination and the date of the *upasampadā* for each.³⁵⁰ It is apparent that Dhammakkhandha held this to be an important aspect of his career as did the authors of the hagiographical texts. As a preceptor, or *upādhya* (Pāli: *upajjhāya*), novice monks were under his care, and he had the responsibility to prepare them for the requirements of higher ordination and the *upasampadā* ceremony. The *dinapota*, then, serves almost like a score card displaying the many, successful candidates under Dhammakkhandha who had achieved higher ordination. It is well known that some Lankan Buddhists keep merit books (*pin pot*) which list a variety of good, karmic acts that a person has done. The *dinapota* appears to fulfill a similar objective, as it maintains a record of meritorious accomplishments.

Among the students mentioned by name in the SSC are Bāmiṇivattē, who composed the *Āryavaṃśa Sūtrasannaya*;³⁵¹ Dunuvila Sīlavaṃsa (referred to as Dunumālē in the *Moratoṭavata*),

³⁴⁹ Blackburn, 2001: 51.

³⁵⁰ Sri Lanka National Archives, HMC/5/63/101 (1).

³⁵¹ SSC: 49. Sannasgala: 559. Although Sannasgala notes that Bāmiṇivattē composed this *sannaya*, he does not discuss it in any detail. The so-called *Āryavaṃsa Sutta* (or *Ariyavaṃsa Sutta*) is discussed in the greatest detail by Walpola Rahula, "The Significance of 'Ariyavaṃsa'", *University of Ceylon Review* 1.1 (April 1943): 59-68 and more recently by Sodō Mori, "Ariyavaṃsa and Ariyavaṃsa-kathā" *Josai University Bulletin* 13 (1989): 1-12. There is some speculation that this *sutta* formed the basis of a special ritual, but this is contested. Parānavitana, in his assessment of the Tōṇigala rock inscription (EZ 3.17: 182-183), reads the term in question, 'ariyavasa' to be a

who headed Degaldoruva monastery; and Nivulhällē Dhammdinna, who headed Gangārāma monastery.³⁵² Dunuvila Sīlavamsa, figures prominently in the *Moratoṭavata*, in which 5 verses are devoted to him. He is also referred to as Dhammakkhanda's first pupil (*terindugē mul atavāsi*).³⁵³ Among the temples which Dhammakkhanda controlled, Degaldoruva was the prize possession, and thus Dunuvila received it as his inheritance. Several other students of Dhammakkhanda's are noted and praised towards the end of the *Moratoṭavata* (verses 131-157). They include Paraṇātala, also known as "Little", or Kuḍā, Moratoṭa because he was the son of Dhammakkhanda's eldest brother,³⁵⁴ and Dullāva, who was the son of Dhammakkhanda's younger sister.³⁵⁵ These familial connections with students support the idea that the contrast between *gaṇinnānse* monks and monks of the Siyam Nikāya may have been overstated, as mentioned in the previous chapter of the dissertation. Paraṇātala and Dullāva became embroiled in a dispute after Dhammakkhanda's death that sheds some light on the nature of intra-lineage competition, and Paraṇātala was executed by the last king of Kandy after he was suspected of treason. I return to this below in the discussion of Dhammakkhanda's monastic estates.

Nevertheless, the sources speak of Dhammakkhanda's students in words that glorify their scholastic abilities and their attention to discipline. They also highlight the preaching abilities of the students. Little Moratoṭa is said to have preached to the king's servants every day (*sāmadā raja vahala gāvā baṇa kiyana*).³⁵⁶ Varadamanē learned preaching (*baṇa*), Pāli (*peḷa*),

derivation of 'ariyavassa' and refer to the rains retreat, not a text. Thus, textual references to *ariyavasa* in the chronicles (e.g. Mhv 36:38) may refer to rains retreats as opposed to festivals surrounding a special recitation of an Ariyavamsa Sutta. It is unclear how Bāmiṇivattē saw his choice of text for translation as I have yet to come across this *sannaya*.

³⁵² SSC: 49.

³⁵³ M 132.

³⁵⁴ Śrī Cāls da Silvā, 1961: 30; Codrington, 1995: 155.

³⁵⁵ Codrington: 155

³⁵⁶ M 142.

and Sinhala (*heḷu*) quickly in his youth (*bālē hanika*),³⁵⁷ and Goḍigamuvē learned much (*nomanda*) Sinhala (*heḷu*), Pāli (*pela*), and preaching (*baṇa*) with composure (*sansinda igena*).³⁵⁸ Thus, the portrayal of Dhammakkhanda in these sources is one of a dedicated and prolific teacher who achieved a great deal of success in bringing monastic students—including his own relatives—through the relatively new curriculum instituted by the Siyam Nikāya. In doing so, Dhammakkhanda conceived a fruitful lineage to help disseminate the Dhamma and to reproduce the Siyam Nikāya throughout Lanka. One of Dhammakkhanda's most powerful students, however, was not a monk but a layman. This was king Rājādhirājasimha.

The Royal Tutor

As Dhammakkhanda quickly rose through the ranks of the Siyam Nikāya hierarchy, no doubt aided by his reputation as a teacher, he impressed king Kirti Śrī Rājasimha with his abilities. As a result, he became the tutor to Kirti Śrī's brother and heir apparent, who would later become king Rājādhirājasimha. This king, Rājādhirājasimha composed a Sinhala language poem, *Asadisadākava*, based on the Asadisa Jātaka, and within this work, he affectionately gives thanks to his tutor. He writes:

My best friend
Teacher of many teachings
Named Dhammakkhanda, shining
The monk, like the moon, a mind with not a little compassion.

Obtaining the fortune of liberation,
Illuminating a deep teaching
Saying to create a poem,

³⁵⁷ M 150.

³⁵⁸ M 152.

Happily by invitation.³⁵⁹

Referring to Dhammakkhandha as his “best friend” (*ītu mituru*) was certainly a tremendous compliment from the king, and it demonstrates the closeness of their relationship and the fondness that Rājādhirājasimha felt for his teacher. The verses cited above also reveal that Dhammakkhandha invited the king to compose the poem. The *Moratoṭavata* simply notes that Dhammakkhandha instructed the king in the Digha Nikāya (*dik sangiya*) and many preaching texts (*bohō baṇapot*) always (*niraturu*).³⁶⁰ Rājādhirājasimha continues to extol his teacher in the following verse from the *Asadisadākava* describing Malvate monastery:

In the virtuous sky that is that *vihāra*/
In the midst of several lineages of the saṅgha/
Like the auspicious full-moon/
Like the lord of monks, the noble Dhammakkhandha.//³⁶¹

There is a humorous folktale surrounding the relationship between Dhammakkhandha and the king.³⁶² The story tells of how Rājādhirājasimha wanted to test the disciplined character of his teacher, and so one night he adorned an arm and hand with jewelry and cosmetics so as to make it appear as though it were a woman’s. He then snuck up to the window of Dhammakkhandha’s dwelling, and from outside, he reached his arm through. The story then explains how Dhammakkhandha saw through this trick immediately, and he replied to the king in the following verse:

Charming lotus face, tender body,

³⁵⁹ Verses from the *Asadisadākava* taken from Sannasgala: 506. The verses read as follows: mā ītu mituruvana/noyek dahamaṭa guruvana/damkanda nam sobana/yatindu sanda sita nomanda kuḷunena//mok siri labana mena/gāmburu damahak eḷuvena/kavikara kiyana mena/ keḷen ārādanā satosina//.

³⁶⁰ M 46.

³⁶¹ Verse translated from K.D. Somadasa, 1987-1995: Or.6604(15). The original verse reads: ē veheraṃbara soṇḍa/ noyek saṃgaṇeḷa turu māda/ siri sapiri saṇḍa leda, namāti yatindek vīya Damkanda.//

³⁶² This folktale appears in the introductory section of the printed edition of the *Moratoṭavata*, but there appears to be no primary textual source for it. In all likelihood, the story existed solely as an oral tradition until scholars recorded it. See Śrī Cals da Silva, 1966: 22.

[my] mind desires to see [you] fully and closely.
In the month of Āsaḷa, I will see you going to play in the water.
Lady, are you the great king of all of Lanka?³⁶³

The humor in the verse derives in part from the fact that Dhammakkhandha is aware that this is in fact the king's arm; yet, he appears to play along with the king's game until the final line. The reference to the month of Āsaḷa (July-August) derives from the fact that it marks the beginning of the rainy season, and several festivals involving water were held, including the annual procession (*pārahera*) which included a water-cutting ceremony performed by the king. The story continues with a final verse by Rājādhirājasimha, in which he praises Dhammakkhandha for his virtue and his wisdom. This is, indeed, a curious folktale, and I suspect that it may have served to promote the good reputation of Dhammakkhandha in two ways. First, it presents Dhammakkhandha as wise (he saw through the trick easily) and virtuous (he failed to be aroused by the appearance of the decorated limb). Secondly, it defuses potential gossip surrounding the closeness or the intimacy between the teacher and his pupil. This may have been necessary given the way that the king himself characterized their relationship in his poem.

Dhammakkhandha was, however, not the only monk who served Rājādhirājasimha as a teacher. Kobbākāduvē Śrī Nivāsa was also said to have instructed the king in several branches of learning.³⁶⁴ This monk was the incumbent of the prestigious Lankatilaka temple, among others, and in a *sannasa* of 1794 Rājādhirājasimha rededicates the temple to him, referring to him as his tutor.³⁶⁵ There seems to have been some rivalry between Moratoṭa's lineage and the Kobbākāduvē lineage. In 1772, a Kobbākāduvē monk lost his incumbency of the Moneragala

³⁶³ Ibid. The verse reads: *lakala muva tambara siyogata siyumāliyē/ asalaka nam nitara dākumaṭa situ āliyē/ āsaḷa masa diṭṭimi yanavā diya keḷiyē/ sakala siri lakāṭa aga raja numbada liyē//*.

³⁶⁴ John Davy, 1821: 173 and Dewaraja, 1995: 458.

³⁶⁵ Lawrie: 754.

temple to Moratoṭa having incurred king Kīrti Śrī's displeasure and was banished.³⁶⁶ Eventually, that Kobbākadvē monk was recalled to Kandy during the reign of Rājādhīrājasimha, but the Monaragala temple was passed down to Moratoṭa's pupil, Paraṇātala. As I discuss below, the Kobbākadvē lineage eventually regained control of this temple, and more, when Paraṇātala was executed by Śrī Vikramarājasimha in the early 19th century.

The founder of the Kobbākadvē lineage, Kobbākadvē Medhamkara, held the post of disāva (a political office) of the regions of Panama (far southeast coast) and Puttalam (northwest coast) in the late 17th century.³⁶⁷ According to Malalgoda, "he led the Kandyan delegation in their negotiations with the Dutch in 1688,"³⁶⁸ and the history of his lineage as a whole reveals the tendency during this period for powerful families to monopolize the control of individual Buddhist temples. In fact, a member of the lineage testified to the Buddhist Temporalities Commission (a British Colonial attempt to improve the administration of temple lands) in 1876:

Our family possesses the Kobbākadvē Vihāre. The incumbency must always be held by a member of my family, and for that purpose some member of my family becomes a priest and is specially educated for the office. The present incumbent is my first cousin.³⁶⁹

This statement reveals that the *katikāvata* reforms hardly disenfranchised the aristocratic families who controlled monastic estates as *gaṇinnānse* monks. Instead, members of these families either joined the centralized and institutionalized Siyam Nikāya, or they were coerced into it. What changed with the arrival of the Siyam Nikāya was that being "specially educated for the office" meant educated within the Nikāya's Kandy-centered monastic institution, as opposed to what must have been a local and lineage-based apprenticeship. As the example of the Kobbākadvē lineage reveals, powerful families continued to have a strong presence in the Siyam Nikāya.

³⁶⁶ Lawrie: 905 and Kapila Vimaladharmā, 2003:23.

³⁶⁷ See Vimaladharmā, 2003: 23, for a detailed chart of the Kobbākadvē lineage.

³⁶⁸ Malalgoda, 1976: 50.

³⁶⁹ Lawrie: 457.

Although not as politically active as Kobbākāduvē Medhamkara, Dhammakkhandha did engage in communications with the Dutch and the British. It appears that the position of royal tutor provided Dhammakkhandha with political capital, and his close ties with the royal house must have enabled him to serve not only as a teacher to Rājādhirājasimha but as an advisor to his successor, Śrī Vikramarājasimha, in certain affairs of state. In a letter from 1804, Dhammakkhandha replied to a message from the British Governor of Ceylon, Frederic North. The translation of this letter, found within records of the governor's correspondence, reads:

Buddha and [the] Four Gods watch over the island, and every foreign power that may wish to conquer the country will fail in the attempt. If foreigners desire to obtain any advantage from Ceylon they must employ peaceable measures and not violence—of the truth of which the fate of the Dutch is a proof.³⁷⁰

The defiance expressed in this letter reveals that Dhammakkhandha and the Kandyan court were rather confident following the failed military expedition of the British in the previous year. It is significant that Dhammakkhandha refers to the Buddha, as well as the four guardian deities, as protectors of the island. This reflects the deification of the Buddha observed in the opening of the *SUpās* as well as the descriptions of the temples of the Guardian Deities found in the second half of the literary frame.

Dhammakkhandha also exchanged letters with John D'Oyly, a British officer in charge of administering the Kandyan provinces who had gained a solid knowledge of the Sinhala language. These letters dealt with the desire of the British to obtain the release of a prisoner, Major Adam Davie, taken during the first conflict between the two powers in 1803. The thrust of Dhammakkhandha's argument with D'Oyly was that the British must use proper ambassadorial

³⁷⁰ Pieris, 1939: 76; included in CO 54/14, North to Hobart, 30th Sept. 1804.

etiquette, according to Kandyan customs, and deliver a formal letter to the king by way of an official embassy. His letter, through British translation, reads:

In former times when a Governor arrived at Colombo, a suitable *Keydapana* [formal epistle] is despatched in a respectful manner to render that event acceptable to the happy lotus-like mind of the Divine Supremely Great King, the Ruler of Tri Sinhala. Ere this takes place it is impossible to think that the subject matter of this secret letter can have stability. Because heretofore there was not a Governor thus wise and just, many persons suffered loss of property and loss of lives. We have thought it a sentiment proceeding from sense and wisdom that the present Governor making mutual enquiry, negotiates for peace before the occurrence of such loss of property and loss of lives. If contrary to this hostile acts are committed, we shall make the necessary preparations.³⁷¹

D'Oyly's reply was that the British would not send such an embassy until the prisoners were first released. This exchange was primarily an attempt by Dhammakkhandha to assert the power of the Kandyan state and to demand that rituals of prestige be performed by the British. The issue was never fully resolved, and Major Davie died in captivity. He was, however, treated well by the Kandyan king; he was gifted with jewelry, a sword, three servants, and two women.³⁷²

This exchange of letters reveals that Dhammakkhandha not only served king Rājādhirājasimha as a beloved teacher, but that he had gained in political stature during his tenure within the royal court as well. Thus, we see in the career of Dhammakkhandha perhaps the apex of monastic ties with the monarchy which had grown considerably since Saraṇāṅkara gained the favor of king Narēndrasimha back in the 1730's. Dhammakkhandha was not only politically powerful—he controlled a vast amount of economic resources that derived from his substantial monastic estates.

³⁷¹ Pieris, 1939: 89; noted as “Moratoṭa to D'Oyly, 24th September 1805,” included in CO 54/18.

³⁷² Pieris: 93.

The Estates of Dhammakkhandha

As a reward for his services to Rājādhirājasimha, Dhammakkhandha was granted Degaldoruva temple, located just to the northwest of Kandy, and a rich accompaniment of lands and services. The Degaldoruva *sannasa* of 1786 reads:

...His Majesty [Kirti Śrī] having received much instruction and exhortation in the Buddhist faith and full explanation of the books Diganikaya, **Upasaka-Jana-Alankaraya**, Milindaprasnaya, and Mahawansa from the High Priest Moratota Dhammakanda, who had a thorough knowledge of Buddhism, granted to him, his pupils, sub-pupils, in succession, to be held by them for ever, the following property....³⁷³

The *sannasa* directly references the *Upās* among the texts used in teaching the king the Buddhist tradition. Following this passage is a list of the many lands that the king granted to the Degaldoruva temple, that are a testament to the prestige and royal favor which Moratoṭa carried as a result of his services to the king. Included in this list are: a coconut plantation, the services of five Muslims to supply salt to the temple, and a mountain range in the Matale district.³⁷⁴ As the *sannasa* states, not only the temple but these lands and services became the property of Moratoṭa and his own lineage of pupils in perpetuity, or “as long as Buddhism lasts”.³⁷⁵ The grant was a personal reward for services rendered, and it not only marked the prestige which he had gained but served to reinforce and reproduce it as well. Ownership of a vast estate, along with accompanying services and privileges, provided Dhammakkhandha with economic capital to match the cultural capital he displayed while acting as the king’s tutor and advisor. As grand an estate as Degaldoruva almost certainly was, this was not the only temple which Moratoṭa possessed. As stated above, Dhammakkhandha also received the important Gangārāma temple

³⁷³ Lawrie: 138, emphasis added.

³⁷⁴ Ibid: 139.

³⁷⁵ ibid

and accompanying lands for his services as an instructor to other monks.³⁷⁶ This is corroborated by the SSC. Dhammakkhandha also controlled at least one other temple, which differs from the two mentioned above in an interesting way.

The archaeologist H.C.P. Bell discovered a *sannasa* from Selawa temple in the Kegalle District which is granted to Moratoṭa. The Selawa *sannasa*, which Bell dates to 1806, reveals that Dhammakkhandha engaged in a temple building, or rebuilding, project here. I cite the grant at length because it is illustrative of the little discussed practice of temple construction initiated by monks. It reads:

The exalted King Kirti Śrī Rājasinha ... was engaged in improving the Buddha *sāsana* by constructing new *vihāra*-s and rebuilding dilapidated *chaitya*-s. At this time, the venerable Moratoṭa Dharmaskhandha, who had become the *rājaguru* by instructing the king in the meaning of Dhamma, who had attained the position of *Anunāyaka*, and who possessed heaps [skhandha] of good qualities such as great learning in the Tripiṭaka Dharma, began rebuilding this *vihāra* in the Śrī Buddha year of 2322 [1779AD]. Having incurred the expenditure of 18,162 [?] from the commencement of preparing the site, by removing stones and earth from the cave, to the completion of the whole work with the *netra pinkama*, submitted the matter to Śrī Vikrama Rājasinha...

Thereupon, the king, for the purpose of continuing uninterrupted the customary obligations to this *vihāra* and to provide for the requirements of the monks residing there, dedicated to it all the high and low lands including the houses, gardens, trees, and plants of the village Selawa,... the coconut grove, 14 *lahas* in sowing extent of Kitulwattadeniya ... one *amunam* of sowing extent of the field Bogahakumbura of Iluktenna.... These aforesaid villages, paddy fields, and uncultivated lands were dedicated ... to the pupillary lineage of Moratoṭa Dhammakkhandha.³⁷⁷

Unlike either Degaldoruva or Gangārāma temples, Moratoṭa initiated the repair work himself at Selava Vihāra. Degaldoruva was a gift for Dhammakkhandha's services as *rājaguru* and Gangārāma a gift for his success as a monastic instructor within the Siyam Nikāya. Selava, on the other hand, appears to be a private project begun and completed with Moratoṭa's own funds.

³⁷⁶ *Moratoṭyata* v.45. Also see Buddhadatta, 1950: 13. I could not locate the *sannasa*, and it does not appear in Lawrie's catalogue as it lies outside the Central Province.

³⁷⁷ H.C.P. Bell, 1892: 89-90.

While the monetary unit is not stated in the *sannasa* inscription, Moratoṭa must have spent a considerable amount on rehabilitating the *vihāra*. Interestingly, the grant contends that Moratoṭa completed the entire work, including the festival for the eye-opening ceremony of the Buddha statue (*netra pinkama*), by his own means. Yet, he recognized the necessity of state support to ensure continued inheritance of the temple through his own monastic lineage. Thus, he sought king Śrī Vikrama Rājasinha's official *sannasa* for recognition and enforcement of his private ownership of this temple, confirming the centralization of monastic landholdings discussed in the previous chapter.³⁷⁸

The Selava *sannasa* also points to the wider context in which Moratoṭa's rebuilding project took place. It is well known that Kirti Śrī Rājasinha was perhaps the most prolific among the Nayakkar kings in terms of rebuilding Buddhist temples and sacred sites. Less well known, however, is the role played by elite monks of the Siyam Nikāya in these same sorts of rehabilitation projects. Just as the king sought prestige and a good name by rebuilding Buddhist temples, monks appear to have done the same on their own initiative. When the king completed such works, he was free to choose any monk he favored to receive the property and any accompanying lands. The monks, who had the means to do so, rebuilt monastic lands for their own use and the use of their lineage.³⁷⁹

The wealth that Dhammakkhandha controlled sparked serious tensions between his pupils. Upon his death, Paraṇātala (Little Moratoṭa) and Dullāva, Dhammakkhandha's younger sister's son, competed for control of Selava temple. According to the Diary of John D'Oyly, the

³⁷⁸ Bell dates this *sannasa* to as late as 1806.

³⁷⁹ This practice of monks financing their own rebuilding projects and then assuming private ownership of the *vihāra* has deep roots in Lanka as it is mentioned as far back as Buddhaghosa's commentaries. See Gunawardana, 1979: 82, where he references the Cullavaggavaṇṇanā of the Samantapāsādikā.

above mentioned British officer with whom Dhammakhandha exchanged letters, Paraṇātala “was at enmity with” Dullāva.³⁸⁰ D’Oyly goes on to report that:

The property of the late Moratota (valued at a Lak of RDr.[100,000 Rix Dollars]) deposited at Seylawā Wihara were given to Paranatala Unnanse—Whilst Pilima Talawuwe lived, this Property had remained under Charge of Deyliwala Unnanse, who had improved the temple, & seemed to have the fairest Claim...³⁸¹

The fact that Dullāva is said to be “a friend of the late Pilima Talawuwe” is significant because Pilimalavvē was among the most powerful members of the Kandyan aristocracy. He was instrumental in placing the last king of Kandy on the throne, and there is substantial evidence revealing that he had ambitions to claim the throne for himself or his successors at some point by using the British. By the time this conflict between Paraṇātala and Dullāva arose (at least by late 1812 according to D’Oyly) Pilimalavvē had been executed by the king for treason. Although Dullāva is mentioned to be the friend of Pilimalavvē in D’Oyly’s account, and D’Oyly implies that Pilimalavvē was somehow instrumental in the success of Dullāva’s claim to Selava temple, it is possible that a familial alliance existed between Moratoṭa’s wider family, including both Paraṇātala and Dullāva, as it was Paraṇātala who met the same fate as Pilimalavvē. Little Moratoṭa was executed by Śrī Vikrama Rājasimha, and Lawrie provides the following account:

Paranatela Anu Nayaka Unnanse was beheaded by the last king in May, 1814, not for rebellion, but because he had fallen under the king’s displeasure at the time when the king was committing the greatest atrocities in Kandy. The king ordered the Anu Nayaka to be disrobed, but no one would obey. He was confined in the Uda Wahala, and some time after he was beheaded. His vihara and pansalas [temples] were confiscated and given to Kobbekaduwe Unnanse.³⁸²

Following this gruesome intervention of the king, it was Kobbākadvē who gained control of Dhammakhandha’s estates. The powerful lineage must have maintained the king’s favor

³⁸⁰ Codrington: 155.

³⁸¹ *ibid*

³⁸² Lawrie: 140.

throughout this turbulent period in Kandyan history by some means or other. Eventually, Dunuvila (Dunumālē) with whom Paraṇātala had held joint custody of Degaldoruva, regained control of that temple upon the British entrance into Kandy in 1815. However, Dhammakkhanda's pupils were not the only ones to engage in intra-*saṃgha* disputes over control of territory. Dhammakkhanda himself, particularly in his capacity as *Mahānāyaka*, found himself immersed in a number of struggles with his fellow monks.

Monastic Disputes

As witnessed above, control of temple lands fueled serious rivalries in the late Kandyan kingdom. One priest in particular, Kuṃkuṇāvē Sumangala, fought with Dhammakkhanda over control of the Vāllāgala temple at Annapaṭṭuva. In his work, *Vehera Vittiya*,³⁸³ Kuṃkuṇāvē beseeches king Śrī Vikramarājasimha to return this temple to his care. Having fallen on hard times, he writes:

I babble verse faulty enough to earn a blow.
I chatter endless nonsense.
Having no food, fire burns within my stomach.
Lord, is there no temple to give?³⁸⁴

Interestingly, the *Vehera Vittiya*, within which this verse appears, tells the story of how the author, Kuṃkuṇāvē, rescued the Saṃgharāja Saraṇaṅkara during the Dutch invasion of 1763. It says that in the hurried exodus from the town of Kandy, upon word being spread that the Dutch army was approaching, everyone forgot about the aged Saṃgharāja, who was 65 years old at the time. It was Kuṃkuṇāvē who carried the monk to safety on his back. According to the author,

³⁸³ K.D. Somadasa, 1987-1995: Or.6611(90).

³⁸⁴ The verse is taken from Somadasa v.2: 91. Or.6611(90). The translation is my reworking of Nevill's.

this was the reason for which he was granted the Vāllāgala temple. It is unclear just what happened to Kuṃkuṇāvē's control over this temple, but as I have shown, the increasingly centralized control over monastic property meant that lands could be taken away and redistributed to others at the whim of the king. It is possible that, as an enemy of his, Dhammakkhandha requested that his good friend king Rājādhiraśiṃha remove Kuṃkuṇāvē from the temple and grant it to someone else. However, Kuṃkuṇāvē's teacher, Rambukvāllē was the chief incumbent of the prestigious Gangārāma temple prior to Dhammakkhandha,³⁸⁵ and perhaps there was some controversy over the succession to this temple which bled into an ongoing dispute in which Dhammakkhandha seized Kuṃkuṇāvē's remaining temple rights. Regardless, there is no real mention of what fostered this animosity between the two, before the take-over of the temple.³⁸⁶

The stakes were much larger in another dispute in which Dhammakkhandha assumed control over the prestigious and quite lucrative temple of Śrī Pāda. This temple, located on a mountain top, contains a mark of the Buddha's footprint, and it is a major pilgrimage site on the island. Control of this temple meant control of substantial income, but it also held a great deal of symbolic capital for the incumbent. During the very foundation of the Siyam Nikāya, the Śrī Pāda temple was placed under the care of the Saṃgharāja himself. As Malalgoda informs:

During the Saṃgharāja's lifetime, and under his own instructions, the affairs of the shrine were managed, in succession, by three of his low-country pupils: Mālimbaḍa Dhammadhara, Vēhāllē Dhammadinna, and Kumburupiṭṭiyē Guṇaratana. As the latter two

³⁸⁵ See Vimaladharmā: 49.

³⁸⁶ The only evidence is that Moratoṭa is reported to have called Kuṃkuṇāvē "stingy-dirty-one" (*Kunā kunāmaya*) and Kuṃkuṇāvē is reported to have replied with "ferryman's crossing" (*toṭa toṭiyā*). I am unclear as to the intent of this exchange. See *ibid*; also Vācissara: 229-230.

monks held, in addition, the office of the chief monk of the low country, a link developed, through usage, between the two offices.³⁸⁷

When the subsequent *Mahānāyaka* of the low country assumed the office of chief incumbent of Śrī Pāda, Dhammakhandha took the opportunity to distinguish between the two offices and to separate them. His rationale lay in the fact that the new chief priest of the low-country, Karatoṭa Dhammārāma, received a stipend from the British colonial government. Interestingly, Karatoṭa had received this post due in large part to his display of literary talent during the reign of Rājādhirājasimha. He composed a poetic work, the *Bhārasa Kāvya*, “which consisted of twelve alliterative stanzas all of which were included within a single diagram and within which they were readable from left to right and vice versa, and from top to bottom and vice versa.”³⁸⁸ In this way, he and Dhammakhandha had something in common, as they both advanced within the ranks of the monkhood due in large part to their display of literary skill and their gaining the favor of the king. However, as we have witnessed in Dhammakhandha’s exchange of letters with the British, he viewed Kandy and British Ceylon at odds with each other. He sought to maintain Kandyan custom and diplomatic privileges in the face of increasing hostility. Certainly, the fact that Karatoṭa became, in a sense, a salaried employee of the British colonial regime must have angered Dhammakhandha, and as a result he sought recourse by seizing Karatoṭa’s more prestigious land claim. In addition, “Kandy ceased to recognize Karatoṭa as the chief monk of the low country and appointed another monk to the same office while he was still alive.”³⁸⁹

While this particular conflict did involve resentment of the British associations that Karatoṭa had gained, there was an even greater problem emerging from the deepening rift

³⁸⁷ Malalgoda: 85.

³⁸⁸ Ibid, n.35.

³⁸⁹ Ibid: 86.

between the Kandyan monastic elite and their counterparts in the low country. Since the arrival of the Portuguese, the caste groups that were previously considered low-ranking, within the littoral, gained new opportunities for economic advancement. Particularly during the period of Dutch occupation of the coast, however, certain non-*goyigāma* castes gained considerable wealth and political clout, namely the *Karāva* and *Salāgama*.³⁹⁰ Despite the reforms made by king Kirti Śrī concerning the limitation of higher ordination to *Goyigāma* candidates, well-to-do families in the South and West of the island desired to have that status for the monks who came from their own families. The admission to higher ordination was, after all, a precursor to temple incumbency. If monks who came from these castes joined the Siyam Nikāya, they could receive *pabbajjā* but not *upasampadā* and were, therefore, precluded from gaining control over temple lands, even in the coastal regions, by the proclamations made during Kirti Śrī's reign.

Thus, beginning in 1772, low caste monks organized a ceremony of higher ordination (*upasampadā*) at Toṭagamuva temple and another in 1798 at Tangalla.³⁹¹ In response, Dhammakkhandha sent a letter addressed to *Karāve* and *Durāve* laymen in which “he accused the *Salāgama* monks of having bribed the ‘sinful and impious Vagēgoḍa [Dhammakusala]’ into presiding over the *upasampadā* ceremony at Toṭagamuva.”³⁹² Despite the developments in the South and West, Dhammakkhandha sought to uphold *Goyigama* privilege.

In 1799, monks from the *Salāgama* caste who resided in the Vālitara area of the Southern coast traveled to Burma in order to receive higher ordination. Their journey was financed by a wealthy *Salāgama* patron, Haljōti Dines de Zoysa Jayatilaka Sirivardhana. When these monks

³⁹⁰ Malagoda, 1976 discusses this, but also see John Rogers, “Post-Orientalism and the Interpretation of Premodern and Modern Political Identities: The Case of Sri Lanka.” *Journal of Asian Studies* 53.1 (Feb., 1994): 10-23.

³⁹¹ Malalgoda: 97.

³⁹² Malalgoda: 97, n.74. Also SLNA HMC5/63/8/(3).

returned to Lanka, they began their own monastic institution known as the Amarapura Nikāya. The chief monk in Burma at the time, the Saṃgharāja Ñānābhivamsa, wrote a letter addressed to Dhammakkhandha explaining the ceremony that the Burmese provided as well as the historical ties between the Buddhists of Lanka and those of Burma.³⁹³ The intent was to help provide the newly formed Nikāya with legitimacy, but it did not sway Dhammakkhandha from his stance.

Conclusions

Dhammakkhandha passed away in 1811, four years before the British assumed control of the Kandyan kingdom. Much of what Dhammakkhandha had struggled to maintain: the prestige of the Kandyan state in the face of British encroachment, the supremacy and privilege of the *Goyigama* caste within the monkhood, and the instruction of Kandyan kings in the Buddhist textual tradition would all fall apart. Yet, the only major text that we know he produced did survive. The Sinhala *Upās* enjoyed a considerable dissemination throughout the monasteries of Lanka, and several print editions have been produced up to the present day.

To return to the few questions with which I opened this chapter: What might it have meant for Dhammakkhandha to produce a Sinhala version of the *Upās* at this point in Lankan history and within the social environment I have described? What can a deeper understanding of Dhammakkhandha's career and social relations tell us about the conditions which allowed for the production and dissemination of such a text? I believe that there are at least three points that we can take away from the above account of Dhammakkhandha's career that will help to situate his production of the *SUpās*.

³⁹³ See I.P. Minayeff, "The Sandesa-Kathā" *Journal of the Pāli Text Society* (1885): 17-28.

First, his rise to power within the Siyam Nikāya depended to a large extent on his ability to serve both as a gifted scholar and a successful teacher. His ability to preach and to teach to several students whom he saw achieve higher ordination themselves was seen as a mark of distinction by many, including the royal family. The Degaldoruva *sannasa* cites the *Upās* as one of the texts used by Dhammakhandha in his curriculum designed for king Rājādhirājasimha. Since, as we have seen, the *Upās* was one of the texts shared and used by elite members of the early Siyam Nikāya (namely, Saraṇaṅkara and Tibbōtuvāvē), it must have been a text that Dhammakhandha inherited from his own teachers, and it may have formed part of his own curriculum.

Secondly, Dhammakhandha was concerned with maintaining the power, prestige, customs, and social structure of the Kandyan kingdom in the face of increasing pressures from the coasts. Not only were British colonial troops making excursions into the Kandyan hills by the time he wrote the *Upās*, but monks from the coasts were beginning to challenge the authority of the Siyam Nikāya less than 50 years into its existence. The birth of the Amarapura Nikāya—a non-*goyigama* monastic fraternity that derived its ordination lineage from Burma—in 1800, and the earlier, aborted attempts at higher ordination by low caste groups, demonstrated that there were means by which other Lankan Buddhists could escape and challenge the dominance of the Siyam Nikāya. Furthermore, the British colonial government now provided economic backing for some prestigious monks, including Karatoṭa, and some elite coastal monks did not require the support of the Kandyan monarchy in the same way that they had earlier. While some monks continued to seek the backing of the Siyam Nikāya, as shown by the case of the Mahānāyaka Mahāgoḍa in the previous chapter, the extension of support to head monks by the British would have posed a serious threat to the centralizing ambitions of the Kandyan monarchy-Siyam Nikāya tandem.

I contend that these new pressures created a strong sense of urgency on the part of the elite members of the Siyam Nikāya to display themselves as powerful authorities of tradition. The monks who formed the new Nikāyas in the south (e.g. Amarapura Nikāya) employed the rhetoric of pure and proper monastic practice in their self-presentations, as had the Siyam Nikāya in its own rise to power. As a response to this challenge, the monks of the Siyam Nikāya had to qualify themselves as the bearers of authentic Buddhism. The production and dissemination of an authoritative guide to proper lay religiosity, based in the Pāli literary tradition, constituted one means of doing so, and this is precisely what Dhammakhandha did in writing the *SUpās*. Furthermore, the production of the *katikāvata* texts also reveals a perceived need to clearly define, categorize, and control the relations among key elements of the social, religious, and political culture in ways that the monastic elite may not have felt compelled to do so before.

Looking back to the production of the *SUpās* in light of these observations, it is clear that Dhammakhandha sought to promote his own expertise of the Pāli tradition and to link this with the rise of the Siyam Nikāya, centered in the sacred city of Kandy. The literary frame of his text serves to link the auspicious attributes of the Buddha himself with the auspicious qualities of the city, the Siyam Nikāya, and the Nayakkar dyanasty. Dhammakhandha's choice of the *Upās* may have been a result of its already being included within the practical canon of the Siyam Nikāya elites who preceded him. However, as suggested in chapter five of the dissertation, there is also evidence that Dhammakhandha recognized the practical value of including this text within a curriculum designed to educate the king. In order to ensure that the king accepted the authority of the Siyam Nikāya monks, and maintained the exclusive bond that had formed between the Siyam Nikāya and the monarchy since the time of Kirti Śrī, elite members of the Siyam Nikāya literati endeavored to make themselves useful to the court. This included serving

as his teachers. These monks needed to remain valuable to the court and, therefore, had to find a niche within court culture. Prestigious displays of their command of the Buddhist textual tradition and its teachings would certainly help in this regard. They also had to ensure that the Buddhist tradition, which they commanded, maintained its dominance over other, competing traditions. The threat of increasing external pressures, such as the threats posed by the encroaching British and the various Christian missionaries, as well as that of the reformist Nikāyas that emerged along the southern coast, would have only heightened the importance of this mission for elites like Dhammakkhandha.

In brief, I contend that the production of the *SUpās*, as well as the other activities of the Siyam Nikāya mentioned here and in chapter five of the dissertation, point to an increasing anxiety, on the part of the monastic literati, to solidify their position within the kingdom. I believe that part of the reason Dhammakkhandha may have desired to produce the *SUpās* and to disseminate it throughout the monasteries of Lanka was due to his perceived need to present himself as an ultimate authority of proper religiosity. By promoting an authoritative, exhaustive, and traditionally acceptable definition of the ideal Buddhist laity, in a world where new possibilities of religious practice had become a reality, Dhammakkhandha showed his mastery of the Pāli Buddhist sources on appropriate religiosity. This, in turn, made it possible for him to stand as an authority figure in the Pāli tradition and a champion of conservative Buddhist people.

General Conclusions

The periods of the production of both the Pāli and Sinhala *Upās* were both characterized by an environment of religious competition. In each case, this leads our authors to a perceived need for the textual display of authoritative, Pāli canonical knowledge. However, each text exemplifies a different strategy for coping with such a situation, and this may be grasped by contrasting their intended audiences.

The Pāli text, as I have argued in part I, aims its depiction of the ideal *upāsaka* at an intended audience that may have consisted of Buddhists, or potential Buddhists, who resided at some distance from the more cosmopolitan centers where Buddhist institutions had thrived in the centuries previous to the 12th-13th when I believe the *Upās* would have been composed by Ānanda. The text's audience may have been unexposed to Buddhist culture, or at least the author's Pāli Buddhist culture. This intended audience may have supported a variety of religious virtuosi or none at all. They may have participated in some ascetic practices that were not in-line with the form of Buddhism advocated by the *Upās*' own tradition, or they may not have engaged in such practices. Thus, the Pāli *Upās* seems to have been directed toward a varied audience, united, however, as practitioners insufficiently committed to the author's vision of Buddhist tradition. Thus, the *Upās* provides its intended readership, consisting of monastics learned in Pāli, with an instrument for both bringing new populations into the orthopraxy of their tradition *and* a means to call lax populations back to what the monastics considered to be virtuous lay religious life.

Throughout part I, I reconstructed a picture of the Pāli *Upās*' systematic program for the cultivation of lay virtuosity. In doing so, I explored the relationship between textual practice and subjectivity, opening up a new space for investigating the work of texts from a psychoanalytic dimension. In chapter two, I showed the text's depiction of the production of a **devoted subject** through its exegesis and narrative explanations of going to refuge (*saraṇāgamana*). In chapter three, I explored the text's strategy for cultivating a **disciplined subject**. In chapter four, I described how the text concludes its path of virtuosity by encouraging the devoted-disciplined lay virtuoso to extend this virtuosity to a wider social network and to then practice a set of good deeds, which only those lay Buddhists who have succeeded in gaining virtuosity by following the path that the text outlines are capable of performing.

The Sinhala *Upās* does not diverge in any significant way from the path presented by the Pāli source text. Rather, we find in the Sinhala text a different strategy for coping with an environment of religious competition. As discussed in chapter six of the dissertation, the early Siyam Nikāya sought to rise above competing factions of Buddhists—and other religious professionals—by gaining a monopoly of royal support. During the reign of Kirti Śrī Rājasimha, the monks of the early Siyam Nikāya relied upon various strategies to ensure the sole support of the Kandyan monarch. This included the dissemination of a dichotomous vision of the monkhood as virtuous (Siyam Nikāya) or corrupt (*gaṇinnānsēs*), as was achieved through the polemical texts described in chapter six. It also included the securing of land grants (*sanassas*) and the issuance of legalistic *katikāvata* texts, both of which were discussed in chapters six and seven. During the reign of Kirti Śrī, such activities began to tie the monarchy to the success and maintenance of the Siyam Nikāya.

It may be helpful to consider this relationship between the Siyam Nikāya and the Nayakkar dynasty as one between allied groups in a hegemonic project. In what Gramsci refers to as the ‘historical bloc,’ we find a variety of social groups united under the direction of what he terms the ‘fundamental class.’³⁹⁴ In order to exercise hegemony, the fundamental class must integrate the disparate wills and desires of the allied classes within its own project. Mid to late Kandyan history, then, may be read as a struggle between members of the fundamental class, namely the Nayakkars and the Kandyan aristocracy. The Nayakkars included the king and his family, many of whom controlled substantial economic resources and maintained trade relations with their kin in South India. Some powerful Nayakkars, in fact, served as money lenders to the Kandyan aristocrats.³⁹⁵ Of course, the aristocracy was not a homogenous entity. Social cleavages divided families from one another, and so we see a much more complicated picture of a power struggle in which aristocratic cliques vied with one another, and the monarchy, for dominance. Chantal Mouffe’s reading of Gramsci is instructive here. Mouffe describes hegemony in the following:

Hegemony, therefore, becomes, in its typically gramscian formulation, ‘political, intellectual and moral leadership over allied groups’. It is by means of this formulation that Gramsci articulated the level of analysis of the mode of production with that of the social formation in the notion of the ‘historical bloc’. This hegemony, which always has its basis, for Gramsci, in ‘the decisive function exercised by the leading group in the decisive nucleus of economic activity’, operates principally in civil society via *the articulation of the interests of the fundamental class to those of its allies in order to form a collective will, a unified political subject*.³⁹⁶

Leaving aside the question of the mode of production and Kandyan economics, I draw attention to the element of social formation in the historical bloc, which exercises its power through forming a “collective will” and a “unified political subject.” In order for such a collective to

³⁹⁴ My reading of Gramscian theory derives from Chantal Mouffe (1979).

³⁹⁵ Kulasekera (2006): 85.

³⁹⁶ Mouffe (1979): 10, emphasis added.

form, the “interests of the fundamental class” must be articulated to the allied groups. In my reading of Mouffe and Gramsci, this process includes not only economic struggle and subsequent domination but also socio-cultural struggle. Mouffe, quoting Gramsci directly, continues:

... ‘one can deduce the importance of the ‘cultural aspect’, even in practical (collective) activity. An historical act can only be performed by ‘collective man’, and this presupposes the attainment of a ‘cultural-social’ unity through which a multiplicity of dispersed wills, with heterogeneous aims, are welded together with a single aim, on the basis of an equal and common conception of the world.’³⁹⁷

The importance of culture to hegemony, then, rests in its ability to bind groups together through a “common conception of the world.” I argue that this is precisely why Buddhist culture was so important to the Nayakkar dynasty and to the elites of the Siyam Nikāya. In order to exercise control over a hegemonic bloc, the elites within the fundamental class had to articulate their vision of Buddhist culture and to display their authority and command over it. The kings, namely Kirti Śrī and Rājādhirājasimha, allied themselves with the monks of the Siyam Nikāya in order to articulate themselves as virtuous Buddhist kings. The language of political power in 18th and early 19th century Kandy was thoroughly and inescapably linked with Buddhist culture. If the ruling elite wanted to continue to exercise power without provoking a revolution in political culture, they had to do so through the medium of the Buddhist tradition. The monks of the Siyam Nikāya, in turn, allied themselves with the king in order to secure a monopoly of political support. If either side felt that it could do without the other, as happened in the attempted assassination of Kirti Śrī which involved elite monks including Saraṇaṅkara (the founder of the Siyam Nikāya) himself, it might take a chance on breaking the alliance. Nevertheless, so long as all contenders viewed their relationship as advantageous, they would work with each other to maintain a hegemonic ideology within which their power operated. Mouffe concludes:

³⁹⁷ *ibid*: 191.

Thus the intellectual and moral direction exercised by a fundamental class in a hegemonic system consists in providing the articulating principle of the common world-view, the value system to which the ideological elements coming from the other groups will be articulated in order to form a unified ideological system, that is to say an organic ideology.

The attempt to maintain this hegemonic balance by articulating an authoritative command of Buddhist knowledge and a virtuous embodiment of Buddhist practice is one reason behind Dhammakkhandha's production of the *SUpās* as a courtly adornment and a part of dynastic culture. As Rājādhi's tutor, he occupied an especially vital position in the hegemonic alliance. He had to display to the monarchy his expertise in Buddhist learning, but he also had to ensure that the future monarch understood his own role as virtuous Buddhist king. If the king were to express his authority through some other means, some alternative cultural idioms, the alliance with the Siyam Nikāya would be less important than it had been through Kirti Śrī's reign when the Nikāya rose to dominance. The presence of Christian missionaries, break-away monastics in the south (e.g. Amarapura Nikāya), and deviant monks within Kandy all threatened the relationship that had been painstakingly forged between the monarchy and the Siyam Nikāya.³⁹⁸ The fact that the *SUpās* is mentioned by name in the *sannasa* grants that record the gifting of estates by the king to Dhammakkhandha, as mentioned in chapter seven, supports the idea that the *SUpās* found use in a curriculum designed to instruct the monarchs in the ways of virtuous lay Buddhist life.

Several questions, of course, remain. Namely, to what extent did Dhammakkhandha's translation influence Buddhist laity outside the royal court? Somadasa records that a relatively large number of manuscript copies had found homes in monastic libraries all across the island—as noted in the first chapter of the dissertation—but did the monks who resided in these

³⁹⁸ See Dewaraja (1972) and Malalgoda (1976).

monasteries ever use the text in their sermons? A careful look at the physical manuscripts is necessary to determine this. Are there signs of wear and of note taking? Or, do we have evidence of preaching texts (*baṇapot*) that incorporate passages from the *SUpās*? Suffice it to say that the preceeding study, while it has presented a careful analysis of this relatively understudied text, has also opened up a series of new questions that await further investigation.

What I hope is clear, however, is that lay Buddhist virtuosity has a history within Buddhist discourse. There is no stable, traditional, or authentic definition of an *upāsaka*. The nature of the ideal lay Buddhist subject, and the path for one's cultivation of virtuosity, are open to debate. Strategic arguments, perhaps historically conditioned, have been deployed by Buddhist authors in order to present certain understandings of the ideal lay Buddhist subject and his/her path. Such strategic arguments may be found, as I have shown here, in the commentarial tradition as well as in vernacular translations of Pāli texts. Distinctive intentions may guide and shape such vernacular works, and careful textual analysis coupled with close historical investigation is required to bring these intentions to light. We see that the translation of Pāli texts into the vernacular is not always a straightforward project of rendering meaning accessible to a local audience. We still know little about the historical emergence of vernacular translations from Pāli in Lanka and elsewhere. This dissertation suggests ways in which the study of vernacular translations from Pāli may expand our understanding of the life of Pāli-language Buddhist texts, as well as avenues for combining critical textual analysis with social and institutional histories of Buddhism.

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