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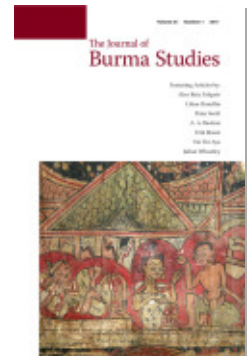
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Journal of Burma Studies, Volume 21, Number 1, June 2017, pp. 1-96 (Article)

Published by Northern Illinois University Press

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1353/jbs.2017.0001>



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The Role of Pāli Grammar in Burmese Buddhism

Aleix Ruiz Falqués

Grammar is a species of Philosophy
S.K. Belvalkar

The earliest extant Buddhist literature written in Burma is the Pāli literature of the Pagan period (eleventh to thirteenth centuries CE). What is perhaps most striking about the medieval Buddhist literature of Burma is that a great portion of it does not deal with Buddhism directly, but with grammatical and philological matters.

The first attempt to explain this phenomenon was put forward by Bode in her seminal paper, “Early Pāli Grammarians from Burma” (*Journal of the Pali Text Society*, 1908) and afterwards in her book, *The Pāli Literature of Burma* (PLB 1909):

In India, where certain of the Upaniṣads belonged to a yet earlier phase of thought than the doctrines of Gotama, men’s minds were prepared for Buddhist conceptions. A philosophical language was already formed in which the teacher or the disputant could lead his hearers step by step in an idiom they knew to conclusions not unfamiliar to their minds. But in Burma the grammar of the Buddhist texts first had to be studied, and when the great legend of the Founder was learned and the code of the Order had grown familiar, there was still a new world to conquer, a new science to master.¹

According to this passage, the science of grammar was a discipline that preceded the proper doctrinal training, a

1 PLB xiii.

preliminary stage that would prepare a monk for proper Buddhist textual education (*pariyatti*). This interpretation has been followed up in more recent times by other eminent scholars: Mahesh Deokar, for instance, accepts this interpretation inasmuch as he understands grammar as a means to learn the Pāli language.² And even the historian Tilman Frasch seems to echo Bode's argument in his assessment of the grammatical culture of Pagan:

It is surely not by chance that a major part of the extant Pāli literature of Pagan deals with Grammar. Pāli was, for the monks and scholars of Pagan, a foreign language, whose structure and rules had to be made transparent first. That is why commentaries were usually composed in the form of *nissaya*, in which short Pāli portions were interspersed with Burmese translations. Compared to Old Burmese, Pāli was without doubt a culture language (Hochsprache) and exerted a correspondingly strong influence on it. This is evident not only in a great number of loanwords, but also in the auxiliary translations. Words like *attaññ-may* ('Impermanence,' Pāli *anicca*) are indeed pure Burmese, but they cannot conceal their Pāli origin. As an instance of successful effort we can see the auxiliary translation *si-cap-mrañ-nhañ-so* ('all knowing and everywhere seeing') for Pāli *sabbaññuta* (Omniscience). The adjustment to Pāli goes so far, that sometimes the privative *a-* is used instead of the usual Burmese negation *ma*. It is against this backdrop that we can understand why scholars and monks of Pagan busied themselves almost exclusively with grammar.³

2 Deokar 2008: 341: "[T]he emergence of an indigenous Pāli grammar was probably prompted by a need to prepare a textbook for the monastic community to teach the broad features of Pāli in the simplest possible way. Śarvavarman's *Kātantra* was the best model of such type of grammar before the compilers of *Kaccāyana*. [...] Thus, the nature of the Pāli grammars is more like a guiding manual." In the same page, the author distinguishes this approach from the approach of Pāṇini's *Aṣṭādhyāyī*: "the form of the *Aṣṭādhyāyī* is not that of a students' textbook on the Sanskrit grammar."

3 Frasch 1996: 332. My translation.

Nevertheless, the evidence of the Pāli grammatical texts goes against this assumption. As I will show in this article, some of these texts are very technical in nature. It is virtually impossible for a beginner to understand these texts at all. Even many advanced students will not be able to understand them. It is actually very unlikely that a monk would learn Pāli using a book written in a Pāli style that is more complicated than the style of the *Tipiṭaka*. Certainly Pāli grammars were part of the Pāli language training, but they were not meant to teach Pāli. Similarly, the Sanskrit grammar of Pāṇini is not meant to teach Sanskrit.

More recently Steven Collins has suggested a different interpretation of Pāli grammatical scholarship in pre-modern Lāṅkā and continental Southeast Asia, especially at the beginning of the second millennium CE:

[R]oyal elites seem to have chosen, at specific moments in history, what Andrew Huxley (1990)⁴ called ‘the Pāli Cultural Package.’ This included Theravāda Buddhism, written law, and monastic institutions and lineages. [...] [L]anguage provided an ‘aesthetic of power’ (Pollock 1996) which functioned as an ideology by imposing a single medium of expression—and by excluding others—rather than by giving voice to a single belief system.⁵

Now in most parts of what Pollock has called the “Sanskrit cosmopolis” (the cultural sphere of Sanskrit influence, which includes Burma), the aesthetic of power is carried by *kāvya* (“poetry”), especially in laudatory hymns (*praśasti*) to the kings. Collins has rightly pointed out that Burmese scholars

4 See Huxley 1990: 42: “The conversion to Theravāda Buddhism between the eleventh and the fifteenth centuries entailed the adoption of the Pāli Cultural Package, in which I include a script, language, literature, and the Saṅgha, as an organized institution.”

5 Collins 1998: 72.

resisted *kāvya*⁶ and were very much attracted to so-called “ancillary sciences.”⁷ The problem with this interpretation is that, perhaps, the role of Pāli grammar was not merely symbolic and it had some effective religious purpose. As I will show, the predominance of the philological sciences is most probably due to the holiness ascribed to the Pāli and texts.

Yet another assessment of Pāli grammatical scholarship in Burma was given by Helmer Smith, the editor of the *Saddanīti* (a Pāli “grammar” written by Aggavaṃsa of Pagan). In the preface of his edition, Smith speculates on the role of Pāli grammarians in the medieval Theravāda world. He argues that their role was to secure the purity of the Pāli language and prevent a process of “sanskritisation” that had started centuries before. In other words, these grammarians had as their mission preserving the text as they received it. Preserving a written text by copying it, we surmise, is not as simple as it may seem, for the threat of corruption on one side and

6 It is important to note that, even though Pāli *kabba* never flourished in Burma, treatises on prosody and poetics were abundant. It is also noteworthy that vernacular Burmese poetics is based on the rules of Sanskrit and Pāli treatises.

7 Collins 2003: 651: “There are Pāli inscriptions on mainland Southeast Asia dated to the first millennium, in what are now Burma, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos. Some have been dated as early as the fourth century, and some indicate acquaintance with sophisticated Higher Teachings texts and commentaries. Our picture is still very sketchy, but it seems that the provenance of much, if not all, Pāli at this time and place was south India rather than Sri Lanka. Pāli texts were certainly part of what Skilling calls the “Theravādin renaissance” in this part of the world, which began with Pagan in Burma in the eleventh century and continued in subsequent centuries in all areas of mainland Southeast Asia (with the exception of Vietnam). Royal sponsorship of monastic lineages deriving from the Mahāvihāra in Sri Lanka and of Pāli texts, however, seems not to have resulted in any significant production of Pāli *kāvya* in these areas of Southeast Asia. *Literature’s ancillary sciences—notably grammar and prosody—were certainly known*, but little Pāli literature seems to have been written in these areas and none has survived.” My emphasis.

sanskritisation on the other was permanent.⁸ Smith famously claimed that the Pāli language that we know, and that we find in the manuscripts, “is a function of the 12th century Pāli, and the knowledge of the Burmese and Sinhalese philology of that time is indispensable for anyone who aims to return, through the recension of Buddhaghosa-Dhammapāla, to a Pāli of linguistic value.”⁹ Smith’s explanation, solid as it is, fails to explain why the *ṭīkakāras* hardly refer to grammatical texts; it further does not solve the question of what to do with grammars composed earlier than the twelfth century. It also does not account for the many philosophical discussions that we find in these grammars.

The fact is that very few of these grammatical texts have been explored. When confronted with such stock of philological literature, we should first ask ourselves, with Kahrs: What is a grammar? Are these simply manuals for learning Pāli, as the ones we use, like Warder’s *Introduction to Pāli*? Or are they reference grammars like Geiger’s *Pāli Grammar*? What are they meant for? What are their actual contents? And finally, what do Pāli grammarians have to say about this matter?

There is no doubt that what we understand as “grammar” is not always the same as what Pāli scholars call *vyākaraṇa* “grammar” or *nirutti* “semantic analysis,” let alone the open-ended concept of *sadda(sattha)* “linguistics.” These are very ancient disciplines in India, which definitely pre-date

8 Smith, 1928: v.[...] “la fin du 12^{me} siècle et le début du 13^{me} comme un temps fertile en *ṭīkakāras* et en grammairiens, dont les doctrines auraient influé sur les générations successives de copistes et de correcteurs qui nous ont transmis la littérature du Theravāda.”

9 Smith 1928: vi. My translation. The full citation says: “C’est donc dans la conviction que notre Pāli est une fonction de celui du 12^{me} siècle—et que la connaissance de la philologie birmane et singhalaise de la dite époque est indispensable à qui voudra remonter, à travers la recension Buddhaghosa-Dhammapāla, à un Pāli d’intérêt linguistique—que j’ai entrepris l’étude de la norme Pālie enseignée par Aggavaṃsa dans les trois volumes qui forment la *Saddanīti*.”

the Pāli treatises on the same subjects. It is necessary, therefore, to investigate the history of these concepts in order to better understand their significance in Burmese Buddhist scholarship.

The Concept of *Vyākaraṇa*: From Kashmir to Pagan

The Pāli grammar, known as the *Kaccāyana* (Kacc), was probably composed somewhere in India, between the sixth to eighth centuries AD. It is the oldest Pāli grammar extant and the most popular among the Pāli grammars. In Burma, it is especially popular and is generally known as “The Great Grammar” (*saddā-kyīh*). One will find this text in almost every collection of Burmese manuscripts, not only in Burma but everywhere in every Pāli library since the Middle Ages. It is also very common to hear young novices chanting the *Kaccāyana suttas* or “grammatical rules” in present-day monasteries. The importance of this text was noticed by early Pāli scholars such as Senart, Kuhn, D’Alwis, and so on. Senart edited the text before many canonical texts had been edited in Europe. It was only in the twentieth century that Pāli *vyākaraṇa* disappeared from the field of Pāli studies. The last decades, however, especially with the turn of the century, have witnessed a revival of Pāli *vyākaraṇa* studies with Pind’s critical edition of Kacc and the studies of Kahrs, Deokar, Gornall, and others. Every person who is interested in Pāli Buddhist literature should therefore have at least a basic idea of what Kacc is.

Kacc is a collection of *suttas* (Skt. *sūtras*), that is, aphoristic rules, on Pāli language. It is always found with a short commentary or gloss called *Kaccāyanavutti* (Kacc-v), allegedly composed by a certain Saṅghanandin. Even though Kacc/Kacc-v is the oldest extant Pāli *vyākaraṇa*, it is not an entirely original work. It belongs to an even older tradition, on which it confidently relies. This is stated in a *sutta* (“grammatical rule”) at the very beginning of Kacc: *parasamaññā payoge*

“when applicable, use the concepts of others.”¹⁰ The Kacc-v clarifies: “others” here does not mean other Pāli grammars, but the “Sanskrit books” (*sakkataganthesu*).¹¹ This *sutta* of Kacc does not explicitly refer to any particular system of Sanskrit grammar, but scholars conventionally trace the genealogy of Kacc back to two ancestors: Pāṇini’s *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (c. 500 BC) and Śarvavarman’s *Kātantra* (second century AD). According to Pind, 215 rules in Kacc are “reproduced in a more or less edited form” from *Kātantra*, and 300 rules “including the overlap with *Kātantra* [...] appear to be edited versions of Pāṇini *sūtras*.”¹² This adds up to almost half of Kacc. The other half is assumed to be original work by the author or authors of Kacc.

In its “original” portion, Kacc is designed to describe the peculiarities of the canonical discourses of the Buddha (*suttantesu*,¹³ Kacc-v ad Kacc 1). But for the rest, Kacc follows Sanskrit models: it benefits from their terminology and methodology, developed through centuries of scholarship and lively debate.

The Sanskrit grammar, known as *Aṣṭādhyāyī* (hereafter *Aṣṭ*), “The Eight Chapters,” is the oldest extant grammatical treatise in South Asia. It was composed around 500 BC by Pāṇini, a Brahmin from Śalātura in Kashmir, in today’s Pakistan.¹⁴ The *Aṣṭ* has exerted a strong influence on the rest of the South Asian grammatical systems, and the Pāli grammatical tradition is no exception.

The *Aṣṭ* consists of nearly 4,000 *sūtras*. A *sūtra* is an extremely compressed line of verbal information designed for memorization. Its main characteristic is the refinement

10 Kacc 9.

11 Kacc-v ad Kacc 9.

12 Pind 2012: 79.

13 Note how the *vuttikāra*, in using the word *suttanta* instead of *sutta*, avoids the ambiguity *sutta* “Buddha’s discourse” and *sutta* “grammatical rule.”

14 Cardona 1988: 1. The date of Pāṇini is disputed. Other scholars, such as Yudhistira Mimamsaka, push it back to the seventh century.

of the metalanguage that allows for a very high degree of brevity.

The material covered by the Aṣṭ includes the Vedic usages (*chandas*, *vaidika*), but it is mainly concerned with spoken language (*bhāṣā*, *laukika*). Even though the object of study may be secular to an extent, *vyākaraṇa* as a discipline is considered part of the Vedic tradition, even by grammarians. Indeed, *vyākaraṇa* is one of the six *vedāṅgas* “limbs of the Veda.” The main purposes of *vyākaraṇa*, according to the commentator Patañjali, are related to assisting in Vedic learning (I will come back to this point later). The other five *vedāṅgas* are:

śikṣā “teaching [on pronunciation]” “phonetics”
nirukta “semantic analysis”
jyotiṣa “astronomy” “astrology”
chandas “metrics” “prosody”
kalpa “ritual”¹⁵

The *sūtra* style is not exclusive to *vyākaraṇa*. Other branches of Indian thought such as Mīmāṃsā, Nyāya, and Yoga, for example, resort to the *sūtra* style. The concept of *sūtra*, “thread,” involves a metaphor that applies to the entire system, as Scharfe points out:

The name for this style is taken from the image of weaving where a thread is stretched out lengthwise as a warp to be crossed by the woof. The warp may be one continuing thread or it may be cut on both sides of the frame: this explains the use of *sūtra* for both the whole work and its sentences. The *sūtra* is thus a stripped *textus*. This explanation is supported by the parallel case of *tantra* ‘thread, text’ with its counterpart *āvāpa* ‘insertion.’¹⁶

15 The oldest attestation of the list is probably in *Muṇḍakopaniṣad*; see Ciotti 2012: 18.

16 Scharfe 1977: 87.

Moreover, *vyākaraṇa* is not the only *vedāṅga* that deals with language, for *śikṣā* and *nirukta* also do. What, then, is the hallmark of *vyākaraṇa* among other linguistic disciplines? The Sanskrit grammarian Kātyāyana, in his *vārttika* 14, gives the standard definition of what we conventionally call “grammar:” *Lakṣyalakṣaṇe vyākaraṇam* “grammar is the sum of ‘characterized’ [words] and ‘characterizing’ [rules].”¹⁷ That is to say, *vyākaraṇa* is a set of rules that allows us to analyse (i.e. dissolve) words. This is what the etymology of the name seems to indicate: *vi* + *ā* + *√kr* “to separate the whole into its parts,” “to analyse.” The word *vyākaraṇa* is considered *karaṇasādhana* (“instrument of action”), and the standard Sanskrit definition would be *vyākriyate anena iti vyākaraṇam* (“*vyākaraṇa* is that by which the analysis [of words] is made”). That is to say, *vyākaraṇa* teaches the formation of correct words (*śabda*).¹⁸ In Pāli grammatical literature, “word formation” receives the technical name *rūpasiddhi* (“achievement of the [final word] form”).¹⁹

The Vedic sub-discipline of *śikṣā*, on the other hand, focuses on the articulation or pronunciation of *varṇas* (“speech-sounds”).²⁰ The oldest Vedic grammatical treatises receive the title of *Prātiśākhya* (Pr), literally “appendix to a branch (or school) [of Vedic ritual].” Every branch of Vedic learning has its own treatise on recitation. The main purpose of the Pr treatises is, as Whitney puts it, “to establish the relations between the combined (*sandhi*) and disjoined (*pada*) forms.”²¹ The *pada* forms, it is understood, are the forms recorded in

17 Scharfe 1977: 83.

18 Cardona 1997: 543.

19 The formula *iti rūpasiddhi veditabbā* is used throughout the *Mukhamattadīpanī* when illustrating strings of connected rules in the process of word formation. I am tempted to believe that the title *Rūpasiddhi* for Buddhappiya’s Pāli grammar is based on that formula and the rearrangement of *Kaccāyana*’s *sutta* in *Rūpasiddhi* is probably based on the strings of *suttas* proposed in the commentary *Mukhamattadīpanī*.

20 I follow Ciotti 2012 in this translation of *varṇa*.

21 Whitney 1862: 339.

Vedic literature. The later manuals on phonetics are simply called *śikṣā*.²²

With regard to *nirukta*, the standard, and the only treatise available to us, is the *Nirukta* of Yāska (perhaps c. fourth century BC).²³ As a linguistic discipline, *nirukta* focuses on semantic analysis, i.e., how words mean what they mean. Yāska qualifies *nirukta* as *vyākaraṇasya kārtsnyam* (“the completion of *vyākaraṇa*” or “a supplement to *vyākaraṇa*”).²⁴ The method of *nirukta* normally consists of tracing obscure words back to a verb or an activity expressed by a verb. That is why the word *nirukta* has been also translated as “etymology.” This translation might be slightly misleading, as the main aim of *nirukta* is establishing the semantic content of a word, not its linguistic history.²⁵ In Pāli grammatical texts, this “method” (*naya*) of word analysis is known as *nirutti*.

Śikṣā, *nirukta*, and *vyākaraṇa* overlap in certain aspects, but they are considered three different domains. We need to keep this in mind when studying how Pāli grammatical thought evolved from Sanskrit models. Indeed, what we call Pāli grammar is not only influenced by *vyākaraṇa*, but also by *śikṣā* and *nirukta*. For instance, the phonemic table that we find in Kacc 7: *vaggā pañcapañcaso mantā* (“the groups are [the *akkharas*] in fives, ending with *ma*”) is already found, with slight differences, in the so-called *pañca pañca vargāḥ* (“five groups of five”) of the *Ṛgvedaprātiśākhya* (Rg-Pr).²⁶ This table of *vargas* is not taught in Pāṇini’s grammar because it is assumed that the student has a previous training in *śikṣā*.

22 For *śikṣā* literature, see Ciotti 2012. See also Allen 1953 and Scharfe 1977.

23 Kahrs 1998: 14.

24 Nir I: 15. Kahrs 1998: 32.

25 Kahrs 2005: 37: “The term *nirvacana* itself has been aptly defined by Vijayapāla, the editor of the *Niruktaślokaavārttika*, who states: “*nirvacanaṃ nāma śabdasya yathārthaṃ vyutpattiḥ*, ‘*nirvacana* means the derivation of a word according to its meaning’.”

26 Rg-Pr, I: 2.8.

According to Scharfe, the *nirukta vedāṅga* was a discipline without historical continuity and it never prospered beyond Yāska's work. However, there are two well-known commentaries on the text: Durgā's and Skanda-Maheśvara's later commentaries. According to Scharfe, again, *nirukta* never crossed the boundaries of Vedic education, but in fact methods of *nirvacana* were used, for example, in Śaiva Kashmir, where devotees employ *nirvacana* techniques in the analysis of names. We should also mention here the influence of *nirukta* in the grand scholastic literature on *kāvya* commentary and other genres.²⁷ It is not surprising, then, that Pāli grammarians should also be considered heirs of the *nirvacana* tradition, and indeed they frequently style themselves as *neruttikas*. This is so because grammar, in the Pāli linguistic domain, emerged together with the exegetical disciplines of the *aṭṭhakathā* ("commentaries"). The oldest instance of a *nirukta* style treatise in Pāli is the para-canonical work *Niddesa*, a commentary on two sections of the *Suttanipāta*. The *aṭṭhakathā* (lit. "explanation of the meaning") essentially operates as *nirvacanaśāstra* ("the science of semantic analysis"), rather than *vyākaraṇa* ("word formation"), even though the *aṭṭhakathā* resorts in some cases to *vyākaraṇa*.²⁸ It is noteworthy that the words *neruttika* ("semantic analyst") and *akkharacintaka* ("phonetician") or "grammarian" are synonymous in Pāli. Both, together with the word *veyyākaraṇa*, can be conventionally translated as "grammarian." But this blend is not exclusive to the Pāli grammatical tradition. The conflation of *vyākaraṇa*, *śikṣā*, and *nirukta* was already achieved by Pāṇini's commentators in India, authors who were well known by Pāli grammarians.

The text of the Aṣṭ has not survived independently of its written commentaries. Our oldest version of Aṣṭ is the same

27 Scharfe 1977: 84. Kahrs 1998: 57f.

28 An instance of Buddhaghosa operating simultaneously on the levels of *vyākaraṇa* and *nirukta* has been critically analysed by Pind (1990: 187–91). But as Pind has explained, Buddhaghosa's grammatical discussions are extremely rare.

as the one embedded in Patañjali's *Mahābhāṣya* "Great Commentary" (c. 150 BC²⁹ henceforth Mbh). But Patañjali does not comment on absolutely every *sūtra*. Intensive Pāṇinian scholarship and criticism were certainly current before the times of Patañjali,³⁰ but we know this only because Patañjali discusses some of these criticisms, and sometimes even grants them some validity, although he finally dismisses them with the formula *sidhyaty evam apāṇinīyaṃ tu bhavati* ("it works this way, but then it becomes un-Pāṇinian [i.e. it is unacceptable])."³¹ Patañjali presupposes the inviolability of Pāṇini's system, and tries to give a rational explanation for every problem derived from ambiguity. A role similar to Patañjali in the Pāli tradition was filled by Vimalabuddhi (c. tenth to eleventh centuries AD),³² the earliest extant commentator on Kacc/Kacc-v.

The Pāli tradition followed Sanskrit models not only in terms of terminology and method, but also in the systematisation of authority. For there were other important commentaries on Kacc and Kacc-v, but the reason why they did not survive is probably the authority of Vimalabuddhi's *Mukhamattadīpanī* (Mmd).

Kātyāyana (c. 250 CE) is the most important grammarian between Pāṇini and Patañjali. He was from present-day southern India, and that is why he was aware of different usages of Sanskrit, and adds some extra "rules" or notes called *vārttikas*. It is thanks to Patañjali that Kātyāyana's *vārttikas* on Aṣṭ have been preserved. Patañjali, as Scharfe points out, "included them in his 'great work in colloquial language' (*mahābhāṣya*) and discussed their pros and cons."³³ The word *bhāṣya* normally means "commentary" and *Mahābhāṣya* "the great commentary." According to Scharfe, this Kātyāyana is most probably the author of the *Vājasaneyī*

29 Scharfe 1977: 153.

30 Scharfe 1977: 150.

31 Scharfe 1977: 159.

32 Pind 2012: 118.

33 Scharfe 1977: 135.

Prātiśākhya (henceforth VāPr), otherwise known as the *White Yajurveda Prātiśākhya* or *Kātyāyanaprātiśākhya*.³⁴ This point is relevant for the study of Kacc. For Kacc seems to have been conceived originally as a *sandhikappa* ("chapter on sandhi [phonetics]").³⁵ I think we should not overlook the fact that the name Kātyāyana, in Pāli "Kaccāyana," is reminiscent of one of the earliest and most authoritative treatises on *sandhi* phonetics. It would have been easy for the Buddhists to believe that the famous grammarian was Mahā Kaccāyana, the disciple of the Buddha.

According to Scharfe, Kātyāyana's style betrays the style of the Pr, which is different in method from the Pāṇinian style.³⁶ In terminological terms, the *prātiśākhya* style is characterised by the use of labels "following the meaning" (*anvārtha*), rather than "conventional" (*rūḍhī*). The *anvārtha* style is descriptive, whereas the *rūḍhī* style is abstract, like using the concise but highly versatile language of computer programming. In the case of grammatical texts, the Pr use the term *svara*, which means "vowel," in order to say "vowel," whereas Pāṇini uses the indicatory letter (*anubandha*) "ac" in order to refer to the set of all the vowels from *a* to *au*; the Pr uses the term *sparsāṅghoṣa*, which means "soft (*sparsā*) aspirate (*ghoṣa*)," to refer to soft aspirate consonants, whereas Pāṇini uses, for instance, the *anubandha* "khay" which refers to the set of aspirate consonants; the term *śvastanī*, literally meaning "referring to tomorrow (*śvas*)," indicates, quite logically, a verbal suffix to express the future, but the Pāṇinian method prefers the shortcut "luṭ" to express the same suffix. The first style saves mental strain, the second saves memory and increases accuracy. The Kacc School, on the main, follows the "meaningful" method.

34 Scharfe 1977: 134.

35 Kacc Introductory stanzas, ka, *pāda d: vakkhāmi suttahitam ettha susandhikappam* "Here [in this treatise] (*ettha*) I will expose (*vakkhāmi*) the good (*su-*) chapter on *sandhi* (*sandhikappam*) arranged in *sūtra* style (*suttahitam*)."

36 Scharfe 1977: 140.

Furthermore, Kātyāyana, the *vārttikakāra*, occasionally uses the term *vikāra* ("replacement") instead of the Pāṇinian term *ādeśa*; he also uses the accusative case instead of the genitive case to denote such a replacement. And, as Scharfe points out,

Kātyāyana's obligation to Prātiśākhya techniques goes still deeper and touches on the basic difference between grammar and Prātiśākhya. Grammar strives for scientific generalization, for the essence of things; the Prātiśākhyas look for practical rules to aid the priestly practitioner, with every detail spelled out.³⁷

It is because Kātyāyana partakes of both Pāṇinian and Prātiśākhyan metalanguage that Scharfe describes it as having a "dual approach." The dual approach of Kātyāyana is found, again, in Kacc. For instance, the mixed usage, in Kacc, of the Pāli synonyms *vikāra* and *ādeśa*; or the alternate use of meaningful terms for the *kārakas*, but conventional terms such as *ga* for the vocative; *jha* for *i/ī* masc. and neut. endings; *la* for *u/ū* masc. and neut. endings; *pa* for *-i/-ī/-u/-ū* feminine endings, and so forth.

It has been suggested that Kātyāyana was a critic of Pāṇini, but that later on Patañjali, in discussing Kātyāyana's *vārttikas*, restored the authority of Pāṇini. This view does not seem to be tenable, as Kātyāyana himself uses a reverential formula to refer to Pāṇini at the end of each *vārttika*: *bhagavataḥ pāṇineḥ siddham* "[This formulation] of the venerable Pāṇini is correct."³⁸ Thus, we need to think of Pāṇini, Kātyāyana, and Patañjali as a triad of grammarians forming one single system. This triad has been called the *trimuni-vyākaraṇa* or *munitraya*, where Patañjali is conferred the highest degree of authority.³⁹ This conception of the *trimuni* is found in relatively late grammatical texts. The grammarian Kaiyaṭa (eleventh century AD),

37 Scharfe 1977: 141.

38 Scharfe 1977: 141.

39 Saini 1999: 7.

in his commentary upon Aṣṭ 1.1.29, states that among Pāṇini, Kātyāyana, and Patañjali, “the latter author overrules the earlier one in case of conflict of opinion.”

A similar triadic system developed in other schools of grammar in South Asia, including the Kacc School. The Kacc system was formed by Kaccāyana’s *sutta* (“set of rules”), the *vuṭṭi* (“commentary”) ascribed to Saṅghanandin and the *nyāsa* (“detailed commentary”) of Vimalabuddhi. The development of Pāli grammar in these three stages constitutes what Pind has called the formative period of Pāli grammar.⁴⁰ Here also the later author should overrule the earlier if we really want to make Kacc work as a descriptive device. This principle of authority has been repeatedly overlooked, or simply ignored, by many scholars of Kacc, and this is one of the reasons why the Burmese tradition of Kacc commentators has not attracted much attention.⁴¹

Apart from borrowing rules and borrowing the dialectic model of the *trimuni-vyākaraṇa*, there are also other aspects in which the Pāṇinian School has influenced Pāli grammarians. As is well known, the labors of Patañjali were not purely grammatical. He also established the foundations for a philosophy of grammar and a philosophy of language.⁴² And it is not by chance that one of the greatest philosophers of language in India, Bhartṛhari (fifth century AD), was a Patañjali scholar.

Linguistic disputations along the lines of Patañjali and Bhartṛhari are also found among Pāli grammarians of Lankā and Pagan. It is probably not a mere coincidence that one of

40 Pind 2012: 61: “[T]he period that stretches from the time of composition of Buddhaghosa’s Aṭṭhakathās through the complicated history of Kacc and Kacc-v to the completion of Vajirabuddhi’s *Mukhamattadīpanī*, presumably in the tenth century AD.” Vajirabuddhi is an alternative name for Vimalabuddhi.

41 Some important works that are critical with the Kaccāyana system but completely overlook the commentary of Vimalabuddhi: D’Alwis 1863; Kuhn 1869, 1870; Senart 1871; Grünwedel 1883; Vidyabhusana 1901; and Franke, 1902.

42 Scharfe 1977: 160.

the earliest known works on the Pāli philosophy of language, the *Mañjusā* (c. ninth century AD, now lost), was written by a certain Patañjali.⁴³

To sum up, we can distinguish four types of influence from the Pāṇini system to the Kacc system: (i) an explicit borrowing of rules, as in the *kāraka* section, where Kacc reuses Pāṇini's materials wholesale; (ii) the method by which the grammatical tradition operates: the meta-syntactical device of the *anuvṛtti* ("recurrence"), optionality, hermeneutic devices such as the *maṇḍūkapluti* "frog's leap" and certain implied *paribhāṣā* ("metarules") belong to this second type of influence, which is not manifest in the *sūtra* text of Pāṇini or Kacc, but in the commentarial literature; (iii) the systematic structure of the *trimuni-vyākaraṇa*; and (iv) the philosophical approach to language found in Mbh and picked up by Vimalabuddhi in his *Mukhamattadīpanī*.

The "Grammar for Dummies" and Its Influence on Kaccāyana

The identity of the plans of the Kātantra and Kaccāyana needs no illustration.

Burnell⁴⁴

From the early stages of Pāli studies in Europe, scholars have recognised the influence of Kātantra (Kāt) in Kacc, or at least their striking similarity. Indeed Kāt, also known as *Kalāpa* or *Kalāpaka*, enjoys privileged recognition among Pāli grammarians, for it is frequently quoted, alongside Pāli authorities.⁴⁵ There is thus an awareness that Kāt is somehow part of the Kacc tradition. The presence of Kāt manuscripts in old Burma

43 Pind 2012: 110–1. What we know from the *Mañjusā* is thanks to Vimalabuddhi, who quotes this work in the *kāraka* section of Mmd.

44 Burnell 1875: 11.

45 See chapter I.

and also in modern Burmese monastic libraries seems to corroborate this fact.⁴⁶

The first level of influence of Kāt on Kacc is the borrowing of *sūtras*. Out of the approximately 675 rules of Kacc, 215 are supposed to be adaptations or edited versions of Kāt.⁴⁷

The second level of influence is the arrangement of the topics. Kacc reproduces the general structure of Kāt in four sections: Sandhi, Nāma, Ākhyāta, and Kṛt. The influence is visible even in sub-sections.⁴⁸

A third level of influence is the technical terminology, which is also very similar and follows the *anvartha* principle and keeps *rūḥi* to a minimum.

Kāt is a grammar that was presumably meant to supersede Pāṇini's Aṣṭ. The major departures or innovations of Kāt (and by extension Kacc) with respect to the Pāṇini system are, as Saini has pointed out, the adoption of "an independent and new method in respect of topic-wise rearrangement of the *sūtras*, non-use of the *Pratyāhāra-sūtras* and total omission of the rules dealing with the Vedic Sanskrit and the accents."⁴⁹ In this respect, Scharfe remarks that Kāt, although it goes back to Pāṇini in terms of terminology, uses much less meta-linguistic determinatives, and contractions are absent:

[The Kātantra] lacks the generative tendency of Pāṇini's rules and appears more like a contrastive tabulation.⁵⁰

This feature brings Kāt and Kacc closer to the Prātiśākhya than to Pāṇini. The *Kātantraṭīkā* of Durgasiṃha (sixth to eighth centuries AD) defines the title *kātantra* as "concise grammar, where *kā* is a substitute of the affix *ku* in the sense of

46 PLB 101f; I have personally consulted and photographed a *Kalāpa* manuscript in Sanskrit, written in Burmese characters, stored in the Thar Lay Monastery at the Inle Lake, Burma.

47 Pind 2012: 79.

48 Saini 1999: 26.

49 Saini 1987: v.

50 Scharfe 1977: 163.

conciseness (*iṣadathe*), and *tantra* means *sūtra*.⁵¹ Instead of the nearly 4,000 *sūtras* of Aṣṭ, Kāt has 855 *sūtras*, and around 1,400 *sūtras* if we include the *kṛt* section, a section allegedly composed by a certain Kātyāyana.⁵² It has been repeatedly suggested, indeed, that Kāt is meant to be an essential grammar, easy to learn by all sorts of people.⁵³ The target audience of Kāt, a “Grammar for dummies” as it were, has been described by the Indian scholar Śaśideva with a touch of humor:

The *Kalāpaka*, [a word] having many meanings, is meant to instruct quickly those who are: Vedic scholars, dumb people who are engaged in other *śāstras*, kings, physicians, lazy people, merchants, those who are involved in the production of corn, etc. and are set on worldly matters.⁵⁴

51 Kāt-1 2, 4–5: *saṃkṣiptaṃ vyākaraṇaṃ kātāntram. iṣadathe kuśabdasya kādeśa ucyate. tantryante vyutpadyante 'nena śabdā iti tantraṃ sūtram.*

52 Belvalkar 1915: 87.

53 Belvalkar 1915: 81; Saini 1999: 19; Pollock 2006: 62: “What makes this grammar remarkable is that it is clearly a work of popularization in both its mode of presentation and its substance. It almost totally eliminates the complex metalinguistic terminology of its Paninian model (which it clearly sought to displace, and successfully displaced for many reading communities for centuries) and excludes all rules pertaining to the Vedic register of the language—a striking modification in a knowledge form that for a millennium had regarded itself as a limb of the Veda, and, as Patañjali showed, was above all intended to ensure the preservation of the Veda.” The legend of Kātāntra in the *Kathāsaritsāgara* (I: 7, 12–3) suggests that this grammar was destined to supersede Pāṇini, but it failed.

54 My translation. These verses are from the *Vyākhyānaprakriyā*, quoted from an Ms. in Belvalkar 1915: 82; quoted in full by Dwivedi 1997 *Bhūmikā*: 5:

*chāndasaḥ svalpamatayaḥ śāstrāntararatās ca ye
īśvarā vyādhiniratās tathā lasyayutās ca ye
vaṇīksasyādisaṃsaktā lokayātrādiṣu sthitāḥ
teṣāṃ kṣipraṃ prabodhārthaṃ anekārthaṃ kalāpakam.*

Saini claims that Kāt is “the oldest among the post-Pāṇinian systems of grammar”⁵⁵ (note the implication of “post-” instead of “non-”).⁵⁶ Saini argues that *Kātantra* was the first challenge to the grammatical authority of Pāṇini (i.e. the Pāṇinian system), and therefore all non-Pāṇinian systems are, to a certain extent, indebted to the *Kātantra*. This includes, again, the Kacc system.

The authorship of Kāt is ascribed to a certain Śārvavarman (known as Saptavarman in the Tibetan tradition).⁵⁷ There is much confusion regarding the origins of his grammar. According to the legendary account of Somadeva’s *Kathāsaritsāgara* (twelfth century AD),⁵⁸ Śārvavarman was a Brahmin in the court of a certain Sātavāhana king (around the second century AD). According to Durgasiṃha, the *ṛttikāra*, a certain Kātyāyana (or Vararuci, or Śākaṭāyana) is the author of the *kṛdanta* section of Kāt.⁵⁹ The *kṛdanta* section is probably a later addition, for it has not been found in the fourth-century AD fragments of *Kātantra* in eastern Turkestan (see below).⁶⁰

As for the date, Saini postulates the second century BC.⁶¹ Other scholars, such as Belvalkar or Haraprasād Śāstrī, propose 100 AD.⁶² Pollock is of the same opinion and places Śārvavarman at the Sātavāhana court, c. second century AD.⁶³

55 Saini 1987: vii.

56 Belvalkar (1915: 57), on the contrary, uses the term “non-Pāṇinian.”

57 Burnell 1875: 6.

58 The legend is found in Somadeva’s *Kathāsaritsāgara* I: 7, 1–13 and Kṣemendra’s *Brhatkathāmañjarī*, *Kathāpīṭha*: 3, 48 (ed. Pāṇḍuraṅga, Śivadatta and Kāśinātha, Bombay, 1901).

59 Saini 1987: x; Lüders 1930: 20.

60 Lüders 1930: 14–5.

61 Saini 1987: v.

62 Saini 1987: x. “Dr. S.K. Belvalkar and Mahāmahopādhyāya Haraprasād Śāstrī are of the opinion that Sātavāhana ruled about 100 AD. Pandit Yudhiṣṭhira Mīmāṃsaka holds the opinion that Patañjali in his Mahābhāṣya referred to the Kālāpas, and therefore the *Kātantravyākaraṇa* must have been written before the composition of the Mahābhāṣya.”

63 Pollock 2006: 62.

On the other hand, Lüders, followed by Oberlies, dates Kaumāralāta's grammar (see below) to the end of the third century AD (Macdonell postulates the same date for *Kātantra*)⁶⁴ and *Kātantra* to the fourth.⁶⁵ Except for Saini, scholars seem to agree on dating Kāt during the period of the Kuṣāṇa and Sātavāhana empires. What is not clear is which grammar was first: the Buddhist *Kātantra* of the Kuṣāṇa kingdom, or the brahmanical *Kātantra* of the Sātavāhana kingdom.

The history of the *Kātantra* School is also problematic. The oldest extant commentary on Kāt is Durgasiṃha's *Kātantra-ṛtti* (Kāt-v), composed around the sixth to eighth centuries AD (600–680 AD for both works, according to Dwivedi).⁶⁶ The religious affiliation of Durgasiṃha is still disputed. According to Belvalkar, he was a *śaiva*, and he is not the same as the author of the *Kātantra-ṛtikā* (Kāt-t) also called Durgasiṃha,⁶⁷ who was (according to Belvalkar) a *bauddha* "Buddhist." Belvalkar gives no date for the *ṛtikākāra* but suggests that he is pre-eleventh-century AD.⁶⁸ Conversely, Scharfe and Deokar maintain that Durgasiṃha the *ṛttikāra* was a Buddhist and that he was also the author of the *ṛtikā*.⁶⁹ Deokar informs us, however, that Koparkar considers the author of the *ṛtikā* a different Durgasiṃha, who lived c. 700–950 AD.⁷⁰ Be that as it may, the text of Kāt-v implies that a previous *ṛtti*, allegedly composed by Śarvavarman himself, was the base of the extant *ṛtti*, for this commentary states: *kātantrasya pravakṣyāmi vyākhyānaṃ śārvavarmikam* ("I will explain the commentary on the *Kātantra* made by Śarvavarman").⁷¹

64 Saini 1999: 19.

65 Pollock 2006: 171n14.

66 Dwivedi 1997: 8–9.

67 Belvalkar 1915: 88.

68 Belvalkar 1915: 88.

69 Deokar 2012: 151–2.

70 Deokar 2012: 152; Saini 1987: 152:

*vrkṣādivadamī ruḍhā kṛtinā na kṛtāḥ kṛtaḥ
kātyāyanaena te srṣṭā vibuddhipratibuddhaye.*

71 Scharfe 1977: 163; Kāt-v, introductory stanzas; Kāt-t 2, 9–13.

According to Lüders, a different commentarial tradition is attested in two Eastern Turkestan manuscripts of Kāt: one from Śorcuq, edited by Stieg (SBAW, 1908) and one fragment from Qyzil, not edited. Lüders maintains they are the same work. Its authorship is not known with certainty, but it could be the original commentary by Śarvavarman. The manuscript of this work (c. fourth century AD) is older than the manuscripts of Durgasiṃha's *vr̥tti* (c. sixth century AD).⁷² The introduction of a *Dhātupāṭha* (modeled on Candragomin) and an *Uṇādipāṭha* in the Kāt school was created by Durgasiṃha the *vr̥ttikāra*. The *Liṅgānuśāsana* was composed by Durgasiṃha the *ṭikākāra*.

There is scholarly consensus that the Kātantra has always been a popular grammar among Buddhists.⁷³ It has enjoyed recognition not only in Central Asia, but also in Bengal, Kashmir, South India, Sri Lanka, and Southeast Asia.⁷⁴ A grammar similar to Kāt, as said before, is known under the title *Kaumāravṛyākaraṇa*. It was allegedly written by a certain Kumāralāta. Lüders says that Kumāralāta, Māṭṛceta, and Aśvaghōṣa formed the triumvirate of Buddhist literature in Sanskrit during the first centuries AD in the Kuṣāṇa court. Kumāralāta must have been a fine prose and verse writer in the style of *ākhyāna* ("storytelling")⁷⁵ and he allegedly composed the first Sanskrit grammar for Buddhists. Fragments of this grammar dating from c. 325 AD have been found in Eastern Turkestan⁷⁶ and were edited by Lüders in 1930. The terminology of the *Kaumāravṛyākaraṇa* betrays familiarity with written texts, not just an oral tradition, and is adjusted

72 Lüders 1930: 21f.

73 Deokar 2012: 152.

74 Belvalkar 1915: 89–91. For a detailed survey of commentarial literature on *Kātantra*, see Saini 1999: 20–1. For *Kātantra* in Burma, see PLB 101.

75 Lüders 1930: 53; Lüders (1926) has also edited fragments of Kumāralāta's *Kalpanāmaṇḍitikā*.

76 Lüders 1930: *passim*; Scharfe 1977: 162.

to Buddhist scriptures instead of Vedic texts. That is, at least, what the recurrent usage of the locative *ārṣe* (“in the language of the *ṛṣi* [= the Buddha]”) suggests.⁷⁷ But we have to keep in mind that this is only a conjecture by Lüders.⁷⁸ Nonetheless, it seems clear that the *Kaumāralāta* quotes Buddhist canonical passages from a Sanskrit recension. For instance, in fragment 6R3⁷⁹ we find the line “... rmavinaye a[p](rama)tto vihariṣyati,” which corresponds to Udānavarga IV 38: *yo hy asmin dharmavinaye tv apramatto bhaviṣyati*,⁸⁰ and to Gāndhārī Dharmapada and Pāli canonical texts:

G. Dh. 125 (Brough)	Pāli (DN ii. 121; SN i. 157; Thg 257)
<i>yo imasma dhama-viṇa’i</i>	<i>yo imasmiṃ dhammavinaye</i>
<i>apramatu vihaṣīdi</i>	<i>appamatto vihessati</i>
<i>praha’i jadisatsara</i>	<i>pahāya jātisaṃsāraṃ</i>
<i>dukhusada kariṣadi.</i>	<i>dukkhass’ antaṃ karissati.</i>

“He who (*yo*), in this (*imasmiṃ*) teaching (*dhamma*-) and discipline (*-vinaye*), diligent (*appamatto*) will abide (*vihessati*), abandoning (*pahāya*) birth (*jāti*-) and *saṃsāra*, will make (*karissati*) an end (*antaṃ*) of suffering (*dukkhassa*).”⁸¹

The *Kaumāralāta* manual was apparently used in Buddhist monasteries of Central Asia as a specific grammar for Buddhist texts. As Lüders has convincingly argued, the recensions of *Kaumāra* and Kāt are too similar to be unrelated, but

77 But for the same word referring to the Ardhamāgadhī language, that is to say, the language of the Jaina canon, see Pischel § 16–7. I thank Dr Bryan Levman for pointing this out to me.

78 Scharfe 1977: 162; Lüders 1930: 51: “Diese Regeln über das *Ārṣa* und die im Kommentar dazu angeführten Beispiele sind für die Beurteilung des Textes des Sanskritkanons nicht ohne Wert.”

79 Lüders 1930: 29.

80 Bernhard 1965: 138. Bernhard gives a full list of parallels.

81 My translation, following the Pāli as literally as possible.

they are too different to be considered the same work.⁸² As a consequence of this, it is generally assumed that one precedes the other, though there is disagreement regarding which one is the original model. Scharfe and Pind, following Lüders, believe that Kāt is a “recast of Kaumāralāta.”⁸³ This would imply that the first challenge to Pāṇinian grammar came from a Buddhist milieu. Pollock, on the contrary, thinks that the differences between *Kaumāra* and Kāt are due to Buddhist additions.⁸⁴ Indeed, the *Kaumāra* contains examples found in Kāt or Kāt-v, but there is no trace of *Kaumāra* examples in the Kāt text. Be that as it may, we have some evidence that the Kacc grammar is closer to the Buddhist Turkestan *Kātantra* recension than to the Indian brahmanical *Kātantra*.⁸⁵

It is believed that Kāt influenced later grammars, not only the Kacc in Pāli, but also Hemacandra’s chapter on Prakrit grammar, or the Sanskrit *Sārasvata* grammar, and probably the Tamil *Tolkappiyam* as well. Burnell suggests even Tibetan grammars were composed under the influence of Kāt. Indeed the influence of Kāt is widespread in South, Central, and Southeast Asia.⁸⁶

Before Saini’s scholarship on the so-called “Post-Pāṇinian systems,” Burnell claimed, already in 1875, that Pāṇini, in applying algebraic conciseness to the ultimate consequences, was the actual revolutionary.⁸⁷ According to Burnell, the

82 Lüders 1930: 53.

83 Pind 2012: 79.

84 Pollock 2006: 170. “But it is precisely the *Kātantra*’s core project of desacralization that makes parts of Kumāralāta’s text appear to be the additions of a borrower—such as the sections on *ārṣa*, or ‘seer’s’ usage, where the seer is the Buddha and the texts in which the usages in question occur are Buddhist Sanskrit canonical works.”

85 Lüders 1930: 17.

86 Shen 2014: 24.

87 Burnell 1875: 13. “It is sufficient to point out here that for the old simple terms, we find in Pāṇini an elaborate classification of nouns and verbs to suit the grammatical forms and irregularities; the analysis is no longer philosophical, but according to the forms.”

Pāṇinian system was an innovation with respect to an older tradition, which he calls the “Aindra system” because it was allegedly revealed by the god Indra.⁸⁸ Burnell states that the Aindra School is referred to by Pāṇini under the name *prāñcaḥ*, which is commonly translated as “the Eastern grammarians,” but Burnell prefers to understand it as meaning “the former grammarians,”⁸⁹ a translation that is quite difficult to accept. Furthermore, according to Burnell, non-brahmanical movements such as Buddhism or Jainism, and even the *kaumudī* grammarians of Sanskrit later on, adopted the straightforward methods of the “Aindras.” If that is true, we should not necessarily understand that Kacc derives from Kāt, but that both derive from the same pool of grammatical knowledge. According to Burnell, the Aindra School contains works such as the Vedic *Prātiśākhya*s, Yāska’s *Nirukta*, the Tamil *Tolkappiyam*, the Sanskrit *Kātantra*, the Pāli *Kaccāyana*, and Vopadeva’s *Mugdhabodha*. In their approach to language, these texts show a remarkable number of similarities that cannot be passed over unnoticed. Their version, Burnell speculates, is the legendary first grammar composed by Indra:

In the old times, Speech (*vāc*) spoke undivided. The gods asked Indra: ‘Divide (*vyākuru*) speech for us!’ He replied, ‘Let me choose a boon! Let it be taken for my sake and for that of Vāyu together.’ This is why the *aindravāyava* is taken together. Then Indra, having descended in the middle [of speech], divided it. This is why this speech is spoken divided (*vyākṛta*). (*Taittirīyasaṃhitā* 6.4.7.3)⁹⁰

What Burnell supposes is what ancient Indians probably supposed. It is to be suspected that the reality was much more

88 Even Patañjali’s account in the *Paspaśāhnika* (51f.) points to a primordial role of Indra in the knowledge of grammar as a science that can know all correct words without listing them all.

89 Burnell 1875: 19.

90 Translation by Ciotti (2012: 18).

complex, but Burnell's theory is still valid in some ways.⁹¹ Since the scope of this question is far larger than the subject of this article, suffice it to say that Kāt is the earliest version of a grammar modeled exactly like Kacc.

Branches of the Kaccāyana Tree

Kacc is not the only extant Pāli grammar, but it is without doubt the oldest one among the surviving Pāli grammars. There are three different corpora of grammatical *suttas* in Pāli: Kacc, *Moggallāna* (Mogg), and *Saddanīti* (Sadd). Some scholars suggest, with good reason, that Sadd should be included in the Kacc system.⁹²

The basic text of the Kacc system is the *Kaccāyanasutta*, composed around the sixth to eight centuries AD. Its earliest commentary is the *Kaccāyanavutti* (Kacc-v), ascribed to a certain Saṅghanandin, composed after Kacc, but before the tenth century AD. We do not know the exact place of composition of these two works.⁹³ Other systems of Pāli grammar existed apart from Kacc, Mogg, and Sadd. Although they are not extant, we know about them because they are frequently quoted in the surviving grammatical treatises.⁹⁴

The core of the Kacc system of grammar is conventionally divided into four layers of text: i) Kacc, which is a set of 674 rules;⁹⁵ ii) Kacc-v, a concise commentary ascribed to Saṅghanandin, c. eighth century AD; iii) the *payoga* ("example")

91 Cardona 1976: 150: "One need not posit a single treatise by the god Indra: one need posit no more than a pre-Pāṇinian methodology."

92 For further references to Kaccāyana literature and Pāli grammarians, see D'Alwis 1863; Franke 1902; and Pind 2012. For Sadd as a system dependent on Kacc, see Kahrs 1992: 7: "[T]here can be no doubt that Aggavaṃsa was strongly indebted to *Kaccāyana* in as much as he included all of the *Kaccāyana* rules and most of the *vutti* in the *Suttamālā*." For similarities and differences between Kacc and Sadd, see Tin Lwin 1991: *passim*.

93 Pind 2012: 71–5.

94 The most detailed examination of lost Pāli grammars is found in Pind 2012.

95 The number of *suttas* may slightly vary from edition to edition.

section, allegedly composed by a certain Brahmadatta; and iv) *Mukhamattadīpanī* or *Nyāsa* (Mmd), an extensive commentary written by Vimalabuddhi (or Vajirabuddhi), allegedly in Sri Lanka, around the tenth century AD.

Kacc has been repeatedly commented upon, and also reworked, either in abbreviated versions (e.g. Dhammakitti's *Bālāvatāra* was written in the fourteenth century AD) or in versions with the rules arranged in a different order (e.g. Buddhappiya's *Rūpasiddhi* was written in the twelfth century AD). The *Rūpasiddhi* (Rūp) is a rearrangement in which the rules are given according to the order necessary for the derivation of certain types of words. Buddhappiya replaced Kacc-v with his own *vutti*, which is the original text of Rūp. A *ṭīkā* on Rūp (Rūp-ṭ) is ascribed to Buddhappiya himself. The *Bālāvatāra* (Bāl), as the title indicates ("Introduction for Beginners"), is conceived as a Kacc primer. Thus, not only is the order of Kacc's rules slightly rearranged, but many rules are simply omitted. The popularity of Bāl is still noticeable among South and Southeast Asian Theravādins, especially among novice monks. It was also the first Pāli grammar to be translated into a European language.⁹⁶

Commentaries on Kaccāyana in Burma are abundant. The oldest one extant is the *Mukhamattadīpanīporāṇaṭīkā* (Mmd-pt), also known as *Thanbyin ṭīkā* (c. twelfth century AD, Burma), allegedly composed by a nobleman of Pagan. The legend says that he had to ordain as a monk and perform this intellectual exploit before he was given a princess as a wife.⁹⁷ Whether this legend is true or not, we cannot tell, because the text itself does not give any information, not even a hint about its author. But the clear and confident assertiveness of Mmd-pt makes it evident that the author was well acquainted with *vyākaraṇa* and the scholastic style. This commentary clearly

96 Benjamin Clough's *Pāli Grammar* (Colombo 1824), which is, as the author acknowledges, "chiefly a translation of a celebrated work called *Bālāvatāra*" (Clough 1824: iv).

97 PLB 21.

explains when the *pūrvapakṣa* (i.e. the opponent or the student) is objecting or asking for a clarification and when the *siddhāntin* (i.e. the master) is replying, something that is not obvious when we read Mmd. Mmd-pṭ is the main, or the official, Kacc commentary of the Pagan period.

The next important commentary, chronologically, is the *Kaccāyanasuttaniddesa* (Kacc-nidd) by Chapāṭa Saddhammajotipāla (fifteenth century AD). Though composed in Pagan, this is the main grammatical commentary of the Ava period.

Another well-known commentary on Kacc is Mahāvijitāvī's *Kaccāyanavaṇṇanā* (Kacc-vaṇṇ), composed in the sixteenth century AD in Pinya. This one, again, is an extensive and erudite commentary that incorporates and supersedes the previous literature on the topic. Kacc-vaṇṇ is the representative Kacc commentary of the Panya period.

Next comes Dhāṭanāga's *Niruttisāramañjusā*, written in the seventeenth century AD in Toungoo. This commentary, representative of the Toungoo period, was meant to be a *ṭīkā* not directly on Kacc, but on Mmd. Again, it tried to supersede the previous commentaries.

There is yet another commentary on Kacc that still enjoys popularity in Burma, the so-called *Galoun Pyan* ("The Flight of the Phoenix") (date unknown). Even though this is a Pāli commentary, its style follows the method of Burmese *nissayas*. It is a rather tedious work that cannot be compared in depth and insight with the previously mentioned commentaries.

In my assessment of the Pāli grammatical commentaries of Burma, I will not include the Burmese *nissayas*, even though, as Smith has proved, they are extremely useful in textual criticism.⁹⁸ Their inclusion would be beyond the scope of this article.

98 Smith 1928: vii.

Furthermore, there are a number of so-called “minor”⁹⁹ grammatical texts, mostly written in Burma. It is not evident that all of them are based on Kacc, but some of them are. For instance: Dhammasenāpati’s *Kārikā* (probably eleventh century AD, Pagan), Mahāyasa’s *Kaccāyanabheda* (unknown date, Burma), and Yasa’s *Kaccāyanasāra* (unknown date, Burma).¹⁰⁰ The number of minor grammars has been canonised as fifteen since the printed edition that followed the publication of the *Chaṭṭhasaṅgāyana* series. But the number of extant minor Pāli grammars is far greater. Due to their conciseness, these minor texts have been commented upon several times. We preserve *ṭīkā*s (“commentaries”) of nearly all of them, and sometimes two or three *ṭīkā*s on the same work. As is the case with minor Abhidhamma manuals, the minor grammatical works usually focus on one particular topic, for instance, *sandhi* (e.g. *Akkharasamūha*), or case syntax (e.g. *Vibhattyattha*), aspects of lexicography (e.g. *Ekakkhara-kosa*), or else they focus on a particular approach, for instance the *Kaccāyanabheda* is a summary of *Kaccāyana*, but the *Mukhamattasāra* is a summary of *Kaccāyana* through the interpretation of the *Mukhamattadīpanī*; and the *Saddatthabhedacintā* is a minor grammatical text that is probably based not on

99 See http://Pāli.hum.ku.dk/cpd/intro/vol1_epileg_bibliography.html (accessed September 9, 2016). The *Saddabindu* with its *nava-ṭīkā* (“new commentary”) have been edited by Friedgard Lottermoser (“Minor Pāli Grammar Texts: The *Saddabindu* and Its ‘New’ Subcommentary,” *JPTS* XI: 79–109). The word *ṭīkā* should not be translated as subcommentary, but simply as commentary. We call *ṭīkā* a subcommentary only when it is a commentary of another commentary; for instance, a commentary on Buddhaghosa’s *aṭṭhakathā*. From the title of the article, it seems that the author was planning a series of editions of other minor grammatical texts. Unfortunately, that did not happen. Editions of such minor grammars can be found in the Devanagari script in modern Indian publications. These are generally Devanagari transcriptions of the Burmese edition and the number of errors and misprints is remarkable. Searchable transcripts of some minor Pāli grammars in Roman script can be found in the GRETIL database: <http://gretil.sub.uni-goettingen.de/#PPhil> (accessed September 9, 2016).

100 Piṭ-s 78f.

Kaccāyana exclusively, but also other Sanskrit and Pāli treatises. As I will show below, it is in the commentaries (*ṭīkā*s) upon these minor works that we find interesting information and references to grammatical systems and philosophical ideas that were important at that time.

A complete assessment of the Kacc tradition presents several problems because, as Pind has pointed out, “most of the literature is no longer extant and has to be studied on the basis of a few fragments quoted in Pāli grammars written at a later date.”¹⁰¹ A good example is the *Atthabyākhyāna* (Atth), which had to be an important work, known and frequently quoted by Pāli grammarians of Pagan. It seems to have the same authority as Sadd, Rūp, or Mogg. It is always quoted as a commentary in prose. My guess, after examining the many quotations of Atth in Kacc-nidd, is that it was a recast of Kacc *suttas*, with an original commentary, much in the style of Rūp. This grammar was already known in thirteenth-century Burma, for there is a library inscription that bears its name.

Indeed, given the fact that many Pāli books have been lost, inscriptions become an important source for the study of Pāli literature. Sometimes they are the only evidence we have of the existence of certain Pāli texts in Pagan. According to Lammerts, around 500 lithic inscriptions from the twelfth to thirteenth centuries have been edited, and there are many more that are still to be “excavated or read or published.”¹⁰² Since these inscriptions generally record donations, they often contain inventories of book collections given to a particular monastery. We need to keep in mind, as Lammerts warns us, that they simply represent the “literary values held by the donor and the immediate monastic recipients of the donation.”¹⁰³ We cannot draw general conclusions about Pagan Buddhism (which was an amalgam of different traditions and

101 Pind 2012: 100.

102 Lammerts 2010: 117.

103 Lammerts 2010: 117.

lineages)¹⁰⁴ only from the evidence of some Buddhist texts that are found in a particular monastery. We can nevertheless prove that certain texts were known in certain monasteries.

In Lammerts' opinion, the 1227 AD inscription "that records the donation of Buddhist texts to a monastery constructed by Lord Singhavīr Sujjabuil is by far the most detailed"¹⁰⁵ testimony of the Pagan period. This inscription, as the well-known but latter (Ava period) 1442 AD list, contains a significant number of grammatical works that I reproduce as edited by Lammerts (2010: 118–9), including the lacunae:

kaccay [*kaccāyana pāṭha?*]
ññay [*nyāsa*]
ṭikā mahāther{a}
ṭikā saṃbyañ
cūlasandhi
 [manuscript containing:] {*sandhivisodhanā*
 {*ku ṭikā mahānamakkār* [*mahānamakkāra ṭikā*]

The inscription goes on with a second donation of *piṭakas* ("books") by the son of Singhavīr Sujjabuil. The second list contains the following grammatical works:

kāccāy mahānirut [*kaccāyana mahānirutti*]
ṭikā mahāther
ṭikā mahāsampeṇ
mahārupasiddhī [*mahārūpasiddhi*]
ṭikā mahārūpasiddhī
maññjūssaṭṭikā
byākhyan mahānirut [*vyākaraṇa mahānirutti*]
ṭikā byākhya [...] [*ṭikā vyākaraṇa*]
nirut [*nirutti*]
cūlasandhi
sandhivisodhanā ku ṭikā
mahānamaggār [...] [*mahānamakkāra*]

104 Handlin 2012: 171f.

105 Lammerts 2010: 117.

From the study of Burmese Pāli grammatical texts such as *Kacc-nidd*, some of Lammerts' conjectures can be confirmed. The *byākhyān mahānirut*, for instance, is the frequently quoted *Atthabyākhyāna* (225 in Bode's List). And the "*ṭikā byākhyā* [...]" is the *ṭikā* on the *Atthabyākhyāna*, also quoted in Saddhammajotipāla's *Kacc-nidd*.

The fact that *Kaccāyana* and the *Atthabyākhyāna* are called *Mahānirutti* is noteworthy. It seems that the title *Mahānirutti* is a generic that applies to full grammatical *sutta* texts, not to abridgements. This could indicate that, perhaps, *Kaccāyana* and *Mahānirutti* are the same work, or *Atthabyākhyāna* and *Mahānirutti* are the same work.¹⁰⁶ Lammerts also raises some important points on the terminology of the inscription:

Here *piṭaka* does not refer exclusively to those texts understood as belonging to modern editions or understandings of the *tipiṭaka* (the 'Pāli canon'), but encompasses a range of commentarial, 'paracanonical,' and grammatical treatises.¹⁰⁷

And subsequently he adds:

Another interesting feature of the 1227 book list epigraph is the prevalence of named Pāli chronicle and grammatical texts. From the first list we notice that of the named and presumably single-treatise texts 7 are *vaṃsas* (some, such as the *Thūpavaṃsa*, *Bodhivaṃsa*, and *Mahāvaṃsa* are connected with the Sinhalese Mahāvihāra lineage), 5 are grammatical texts, 2 are somewhat uncer-

¹⁰⁶ Tradition ascribes a certain work called the *Mahānirutti* to Kaccāyana, cf. Pind 2012: 71, based on Ap-a 491, 17–21 (ad Ap 531): *thero ... puna satthu santikam eva āgato attano pubbapatthanāvasena Kaccāyanappakaraṇaṃ Mahāniruttippakaraṇaṃ Nettippakaraṇaṃ ti pakaraṇattayaṃ saṅghamajjhe byākāsi* ("The Thera, again, having come to the very presence of the Master, on account of his previous aspirations, explained in the midst of the Saṅgha the triple treatise, namely the *Kaccāyana* treatise, the *Mahānirutti* treatise and the *Netti* treatise.") My translation.

¹⁰⁷ Lammerts 2010: 119.

tain, and 1 is a panegyric verse text (the *Mahānamakkāra*). In the incomplete second list all of the named and presumably single-treatise texts are grammatical works except for the *Mahānamakkāra* and the somewhat uncertain *ṭikā mahāther{a}* although the placement of the last text, both in this inscription and in the later 1442 Tak nway Monastery epigraph, might indicate that it is a grammatical text as well.¹⁰⁸

Quotations of the *Mahāthera-ṭikā* in Kacc-nidd confirm Lammerts' guess that this is a grammatical treatise.

Some other titles mentioned in the list are known by name, but the works have never been found. The *Sandhivīsodhana* and its *ṭikā* are also lost. The *Cūlasandhi* is lost, as is the *Mañjūsā-ṭikā*. The *Nirutti* could be the *Niruttiṭṭaka* quoted by Sadd (for instance, Sadd 310, 8–10).

According to Pind, Mmd quotes two grammars that are responsible for 33 interpolated *suttas* in Kacc: the *Sudattakisīvanirutti* and the *Mahānirutti*, both lost.¹⁰⁹ Pind does not state that these two grammars are mentioned but once in the entire Mmd (a volume of 500 pages in the Burmese edition).¹¹⁰ Mmd does not make any comment about these texts. According to the Mmd-pt's much later interpretation, they are grammars belonging to other *nikāyas* (*nikāyantaravāsīnaṃ byākaraṇavisesanāni*).¹¹¹ But we cannot be certain that the author of Mmd-pt, allegedly a Burmese, had first-hand knowledge of these two treatises. He may have simply tried to dismiss these two grammatical authorities as non-orthodox Buddhist schools.

A work called the *Cūlanirutti* and ascribed to Yamakathera is quoted in Sadd and *Padasādhana-ṭikā*. It is allegedly lost. As Pind has pointed out, the *Cūlanirutti* we find today

108 Lammerts 2010: 121.

109 Pind 2012: 100–1.

110 Mmd 231, 1–2.

111 Pind 2012: 100n171.

in manuscripts is a new version composed in Burma.¹¹² The *Mañjūsā* or *Mañjūsā-tīkā* is the commentary on the *Nirutti* (or *Cūlanirutti*) and is, according to Pind, “one of the most influential post-Kaccāyana Pāli grammars.”¹¹³ It is also lost. But the fact that such a great portion of the Kacc literature has vanished is probably not the result of misfortune or carelessness only. When the decision to copy these texts had to be taken, scholar monks probably opted for those texts that were more authoritative; for instance, *Mmd* and *Kacc-nidd*, or those texts that offered something more than grammar, such as short grammatical-philosophical works that focused on one aspect or topic. On the other hand, some grammarians like *Saddhammajotipāla* incorporated relevant points of independent grammars into the Kaccāyana line of commentaries, and with that works as the *Atthabyākhyāna* became perhaps redundant after the fifteenth century.

In the following sections, I will examine some of these minor grammars. These texts have never been studied, let alone translated, in the West, but they are extremely popular in manuscript collections, and they are still part of the syllabus in Burmese monastic education. If we want to understand the role they played in Burmese Buddhism, we need to first examine these works carefully. As the literature is vast and no one has examined it in the past, my attempt will simply be a contribution that aims at throwing some light on this topic.

Saddhammasiri of Pagan and His Philosophy of Language

One of the core texts of grammatical philosophy in Burma is a minor grammar called the *Saddatthabhedacintā* (SBC).¹¹⁴ This treatise consists of nearly 400 stanzas (*śīlokas*). It was

112 Pind 2012: 107.

113 Pind 2012: 107.

114 PLB 20; Piṭ-s 395.

composed by Saddhammasiri of Pagan around the thirteenth century AD. According to Dimitrov, the author may have been inspired by a Sanskrit work on the philosophy of language called the *Śabdārthacintā* and written by the Sinhalese scholar named Ratnaśrījñāna, even though they do not deal with the same content.¹¹⁵

Aside from Dimitrov's (unpublished) study on the *Śabdārthacintā*, and aside from references in manuscript catalogs, there is no significant literature on SBC in any European language, and what we find in Burmese and Sinhalese studies relies on late and untrustworthy chronicle material.¹¹⁶ The only description I have been able to find is in Bode's PLB. Bode, in her chapter on "The Rise of Pāli Scholarship in Upper Burma," mentions Saddhammasiri and his work in the following passage:

Names of grammarians follow close on one another at this period [i.e. Pagan dynasty]. Schisms had indeed arisen, but the time had not yet come for works of *polemik*, and the good monks of Pagan were busy enriching the new store of learning in the country. In the work of Saddhammasiri, the author of the grammatical treatise *Saddatthabhedacintā*, we catch a glimpse of a culture that recalls Aggavaṃsa. Saddhammasiri's grammar is based partly on Kaccāyana's Pāli aphorisms and partly on Sanskrit authorities. The *Sāsanavaṃsa* tells us that Saddhammasiri also translated the *Brihaja* (?) into the Burmese language. He was probably among the first to use Burmese as a literary instrument.¹¹⁷

This passage seems to imply that there is nothing particularly original about SBC. The relationship with Kaccāyana

¹¹⁵ Dimitrov 2016: 594f.

¹¹⁶ For instance, in the *Pugaṃ-sāsanā-vaṇ* of U Kelāsa, we read that Saddhammasiri was "the Third Chapāṭa." This statement is not backed by any evidence. U Kelāsa does not refer to any source. See Kelāsa 2005: 111.

¹¹⁷ PLB 20.

and Aggavaṃsa can be said of practically any Pāli grammatical text. In reading Saddhammasiri's work, however, it becomes evident that it combines traditional Pāli grammar with notions of a philosophy of language and communication. By philosophy of language, here we have to understand both Abhidhamma philosophy and the *śabdaśāstra* tradition of Patañjali, Bhartṛhari, and other Indian philosophers, including Buddhists such as Dignāga, Dharmakīrti, and obviously Ratnamati. By "grammar" we have to understand, mainly, the *suttas* of Kaccāyana and its commentaries. Philosophical ideas about language and communication are already found in Kacc commentaries such as Mmd, but not in the *suttas* proper.

With regard to Saddhammasiri's originality, it is difficult to single out a completely original thought exposed by this author or his commentators. The merit of this work is probably summarising the grammatical philosophy of its time in a way that suits, or at least does not contradict, the Theravāda doctrine (i.e. the doctrine of the Pāli *suttantas*). That in itself was probably a novelty. Being in verse form, the SBC was probably meant to be committed to memory, as is customary in Burma. One is not supposed to immediately understand the verses of Saddhammasiri, which are composed in a very terse and cryptic scholastic style. The commentaries are indispensable.

Two Pāli commentaries on SBC written in Pagan have been transmitted together with the "root" text.¹¹⁸ These commentaries are Abhayathera's *porāṇaṭīkā*, known as the *Sāratthasaṅgahaṭīkā*,¹¹⁹ and the anonymous *navaṭīkā* or *Dīpanī*.¹²⁰ According to the colophon, the *Dīpanī* was composed in 1362

118 A third, modern *ṭīkā* called the *Saddatthabhedacintā Mahā Ṭīkā* was written by Talaing Koun Sayadaw, published in Yangon in 1937.

119 Piṭ-s 396.

120 Piṭ-s 397.

CE in the Shwe Gu Kyi monastery of Pagan.¹²¹ Abhayathera's commentary seems to be older and, according to a certain tradition, it was composed in the same monastery.¹²²

Since the two commentaries are the key to understanding the verses of SBC, and they do not interpret the text exactly in the same way, I will refer to both of them alternately when unpacking the meaning of SBC verses.

The Origins of Sound

At the very beginning of his work, Saddhammasiri engages in a brief analysis of sound (*sadda*) origination. He distinguishes between two main types of sound, and he summarises two different theories on how thought becomes expressible through meaningful sound. In reading the following passage, it is convenient to keep in mind that the word *sadda* literally means "sound" (or even "noise"), and only by extension does it mean "speech-sound," "word." Therefore I will always translate *sadda* as "sound," and not as "word." The Pāli equivalent of "word" is normally *pada*. Unlike *pada*, which is a linguistic category, *sadda* is in Theravāda Buddhism an ontological category: it is the object of the hearing activity. The Abhidhamma philosophy tells us how *sadda* ("sound") is a material phenomenon (*rūpadhamma*) that arises under specific conditions. Sound, we all know, is

121 SBC-nṭ 247, 22–5: *suvaṇṇamayakūṭādihi virocamānaguhāhi samannāgatattā rhvegū ti pākaṭanāmadheyge mahāvihāre vasatā mahātherena katāyaṃ saddatthabhedacintatthadīpanī catuvīsādhikasattasatāsakkarāje kattikamāsassa kālapakkhuposathe gurudīne niṭṭhaṃ pattā* "this Elucidation of the Meaning of the *Saddatthabhedacintā* was completed on Thursday (*gurudīne*) of the dark fortnight *uposatha* of the month of Kattika, year 724 Sakkarāj, by the Mahāthera dwelling in the great monastery well known as the 'Shwe Gu' (Golden Cave) on account of its being endowed with beautiful caves with temples with the roof and other parts made of gold."

122 Piṭ-s 78, § 392. The colophon of *Sambandhacintā-porāṇaṭikā* does not mention the authorship, but I understand this is the commentary ascribed to Abhaya Thera in Piṭ-s. The colophon of the *Sambandhacintā-ṇaṭikā* mentions a Thera called Adiccavaṃsa as the author.

not necessarily meaningful. Only when it is accompanied by consciousness (*viññāṇa*) can it become “sound-communication” (*saddaviññatti*), i.e., “verbal communication.” Let us now examine the actual verses of Saddhammasiri:

saddo hi dubbidho cittajo 'kāraḍo 'tujo 'dare
saddādyatthopakārattā cittajo v' idha gayhate || 2 ||

Sound is indeed twofold: originated from the mind, as [the speech-sounds] beginning with *a*, [and] originated from temperature, as the sound that arises in the stomach and so on. Here [namely in the *Saddatthabhedacintā*] only [sound] originated from the mind is included, because it is instrumental in conveying meaning.

The distinction between two main types of sound is found already in Mmd-pt (51, 27f.) and follows the Abhidhamma philosophy. Abhaya, the author of the *porāṇatikā* on SBC, quotes the original passage of Mmd-pt in his commentary on SBC 3:

Here, with the word ‘and so on’ (*ādi*), the author includes the sound of the wind, a conch, or a drum. Here [in this treatise], only that [sound originated from the mind] is included because the [sound] originated from the mind is instrumental in conveying the meaning of words such as ‘man,’ etc., and by implication of that, the [sound] originated from temperature is not instrumental (*anupakārattā*) [in conveying meaning].¹²³

What the commentator means is that *utuhasadda* (“sound originated from temperature”) is only included in this treatise as long as it produces meaningful sound, i.e., as long as it helps the mind-originated sound (*cittahasadda*) to originate. For,

123 SBC-pt 5, 5–8: *idh' ādisaddena vātasankhabherisaddam saṅgaṇhāti. purisādyatthassa kathane upakārattā cittajassa. tabbasena cānupakārattā utujassa so vidha gayhate.*

even if *sadda* is produced by the mind, it requires *utujasadda* in order to be articulated as physical sound.

The next stanza explains, in a rather technical manner, how the sound that is originated from the mind becomes meaningful:

*so ca kaṇṭhādīṭhāne 'bhībyattito tattha citta-
pathavīsatti'¹²⁴viññattibhūsaṃghaṭṭanajo mato || 3 ||*

And because this [namely the sound originated from the mind] is made manifest in places of articulation such as the throat, it is considered to have originated due to the striking together there of the earth originated from the mind and the earth [originated from *kamma*] due to the [former's] capacity of communication.

This verse requires the help of the following commentary of Abhaya Thera in order to be interpreted:

Now, in order to teach the cause of the production (*uppatti*) of [sound] originated from the mind in accordance with the ultimate reality (*paramatthato*), he begins 'And [because] this ...' The meaning is: and because this, namely the sound originated from the mind, is made manifest—i.e. made distinct—in the places of articulation such as the throat, it is considered to have originated due to the striking, there, i.e. in the places of articulation such as the throat, of the earth element originated from the mind against the [earth element] produced by *kamma*, i.e. the earth element originated from [past] *kamma*, due to the [former's] capacity of communication.¹²⁵

124 SBC-pt 5, 27: *pathavīsaddaviññattī ti paṭhanti keci*.

125 SBC-pt 5, 9–13: *idāni paramatthato cittauppattikāraṇaṃ dassetum āha so c' icc ādi. so cittaṃsaddo ca kaṇṭhādīmhi ṭhāne abhībyattito abhipākaṭṭā tattha kaṇṭhādīṭhāne cittaṃjapathavīdhātussa sattibhūtavīññattito kammaṃsaṃbhūtena kammaṃjapathavīdhātunā saha ghaṭṭanato jāto ti mato ty attho*.

This passage implies some basic notions of the Abhidhamma ontology. Although the technical vocabulary of Pāli grammar is mainly borrowed from Sanskrit sources, we can observe how in this case the Abhidhamma theory of materiality intersects with the rather secular and mundane field of grammar. Abhidhamma penetrates grammar precisely in what is fundamental to it: phonetics, the theory of articulate sound. This is not a minor point, for the nature of *sadda* (Skt. *śabda*) is one of the most disputed topics in the history of Indian philosophy. Indeed, every school of thought in India and its cultural domain has taken a strong stance regarding sound, because that implied taking a strong stance regarding language and textual (oral or written) authority. The first reason for dispute, I think, is due to the ambivalence of the word *sadda*, which means both “sound” and “word.” Furthermore, the substance of the Tipiṭaka consists of speech. That is why it is called the *buddhavacanaṃ* (“the speech of the Buddha”). If we are going to study speech, we need to know, first of all, what it is made of. Additionally, what is the relationship between speech, sound, and meaning? How do we understand the meaning of sounds? And what is sound, anyway? Following these questions, the philosophy of language merges with the philosophy of materiality. The so-called Pāli grammars have to deal also with this fundamental philosophical problem. The following passage is taken from the grammatical commentary called the *Sampyaṇ-ṭīkā* (= Mmd-pt). Abhaya Thera quotes it in his commentary on SBC 3:

The [following] ‘is said [by this]: For one who has the intention of saying something, a thought (*cittam*) arises, and this thought produces a sound which is adequate to the meaning that is to be expressed. When it [*viz.* that thought] arises, at the very moment of its arising, it produces, in some place such as the throat, the eight material elements (*rūpāṇi*), namely earth, water, fire, wind, colour, smell, taste, and nutriment. At that very moment, also (*ca*), when the *kamma* accumulated in the past (*purimānuciṇṇam*) grasps [the materiality, this *kamma*],

together with the life faculty, causes the same eight material elements to arise. At this point, the earth element originated from the mind strikes [or combines with] the earth element originated from *kamma*. In this way, sound arises in the throat, etc., due to the striking against each other of the two earth elements that depend on two different clusters [of material elements].¹²⁶

The presuppositions to understand this passage is the following: materiality can be originated only from four sources: *citta* ("mind"), *kamma*, *utu* ("temperature"), and *āhāra* ("food"). We should not imagine that these are actual places in the body. They are basic conditions that can be phenomenically distinguished. Now, among the different types of materiality that can be produced, eight are called *avinibbhogarūpaṃ* ("inseparable materiality"), for they arise whenever any type of materiality is produced. The cluster of inseparable material elements is formed by the four great elements (earth, water, fire, wind), in addition to *vaṇṇa* ("color"), *gandha* ("smell"), *raso* ("taste"), and *ojā* ("nutriment"). Even though they are different elements, they arise together and they are never found independently of one another. These are the eight material elements mentioned in the quoted passage. The idea is that, when one has a thought in the form of an intention to verbalise something, two basic material conditions,

126 SBC-pt 6, 1–8: *idaṃ vuttaṃ hoti: idaṃ vakkhāmi ti cintentassa vacanīyathānurūpasaddassa samuṭṭhāpakam cittaṃ uppajjati. tam uppajjamānam evattanoppādakkhaṇe pathabyāpotejovāyovannaṅgandhorasoojā ty aṭṭharūpāni kaṇṭhādisu aññatarasmim thāne samuṭṭhāpeti. tatveva thāne laddhokāsaṃ purimānuciṇṇam kammañ ca jīvitindriyarūpena saha tānevattarūpāni nibbatteti. atra cittajapathavīdhātu kammajapathavīdhātum ghaṭṭety evaṃ dvīsu kalāpesu samabhinivivīṭhānam dvinnam pathavīdhātūnam aññamaññam ghaṭṭanena kaṇṭhādisu so saddo jāyati.* This a gloss on Mmd 10, 29–11, 3; the commentary begins in Mmd-pt 52, 27f.: *duvidho hi saddo cittajotujovasena. tatra saṅkhaṇavādivāḍibāhirasaddo utujo. akārādivaṇṇabyatirekayuttasaviññattisaddo cittajo. tesu cittajasaddassuppattiyā hetubhūtamūlasamuṭṭhāpakacittam puggalādhiṭṭhānavasena dassento anuvitakkayato anuvicārayato ty āha.* This passage is an almost literal quotation of Mmd-pt 53, 8–15.

namely *citta* and *kamma*, are given: *citta* is the intention to speak itself, and *kamma* has to be understood as past actions that have consequences in the present, determining the shape of our body, etc. Each of these basic conditions produces, immediately, a cluster of eight inseparable materialities. But among these eight, only the earth element becomes effective in creating sound, for the earth element represents solidity and hardness, and sound is always produced as the result of two hard objects striking against each other (for instance, the stick against the drum). The *Vibhāvinī-ṭīkā* on the *Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha*, the classic Abhidhamma text in Burma, explains it in this way:

Verbal communication is a particular alteration that becomes the condition for the mind-originated earth element, which causes changes in the voice, to strike against the grasped materialities in the place where speech-sounds are originated.¹²⁷

The process is practically the same in the case of bodily communication (*kāyaviññatti*). Contrary to what we would expect, however, the dominant element in bodily communication is the wind element (*vāyu*), for the wind element is characterized by movement. Conversely, the dominant element in verbal communication is the earth element (*pathavī*), an element characterized by solidity and hardness, for sound is produced out of the collision of two solids (in the Sanskrit tradition, *vāyu* is related to speech in a way that would be more familiar to us, as it is expressed in the myth of Indra quoted by Burnell; see above).

So far, the explanation refers to the ideas of materiality in Abhidhamma. Abhaya's commentary goes on to explain the timing of sound production according to the theory of the

127 I would like to thank Professor Rupert Gethin for clarifying this definition to me. My translation is based on his suggestion. Cf. *Vibhāvinī-ṭīkā* 201, 13–5: *vacībheda karacittasamuṭṭhānapathavīdhātuyā akkharuppatti-ṭṭhānagataupādinnarūpehi saha ghaṭṭhanapaccayabhūto eko vikāro vacīviññatti*.

vīthi (“[consciousness] process”) and the *jāvanas* (“impulsions” or “active stages [in consciousness process]”):

Now, the striking [of mind-originated earth element against kamma-originated earth element] arises only seven times, beginning from the first impulsion, etc., within a single consciousness process. Therefore, even the speech-sounds produced by it are to be considered [as arising] in all seven [impulsions]. Others, however, say that the first six impulsions, due to lack of momentum, do not produce any speech-sound from the striking, but the striking produced by the seventh impulsion, due to having [enough] momentum, produces a clear and distinct speech-sound. As it has been stated that a mother is a condition for the son born due his past *kamma*, [and that] with the support of that [*kamma*] the mother produces a son, likewise it has been stated that the striking of the earth elements too is a condition for the speech-sound originated from the mind, [and that] with the support of that [mind] the striking produces the speech-sound. ‘But indeed all seven consciousness impulsions produce seven speech-sounds at the moment of the striking.’¹²⁸ Others, however, say that the consciousness [impulsions] that are gathered in one single impulsion [i.e., the seventh] produce one single speech-sound.¹²⁹

128 Presumably a quotation *ad sensum* from the authoritative *Vibhāvini-ṭīkā*. The orthodox opinion holds that in the case of bodily communication, only the last *javana* produces communication, but not in the case of verbal communication. *Vibhāvini-ṭīkā* 201, 20–2: *ghaṭṭhanena hi saddhim yeva saddo uppajjati, ghaṭṭhanañ ca paṭhamajavanādisu pi labbhate va*. Gethin (2007: 226) translates, “for sound arises simply with the striking together, and striking together is also obtained with the first and subsequent impulsions.”

129 SBC-pt6, 8–17: *saṃghaṭṭanañ c’ekavīthiyaṃ pathamajavanādihi sattakkhattum ev’ uppajjatīti taṃ nibbattakkharā pi satte vā ti daṭṭhabbaṃ. apare ca chahi javanehi nibbattitagaṭṭanaṃ dubbalabhāvato nākkharaṃ nibbatteti. laddhāsevanena sat-tamajavanena nibbattitagaṭṭanaṃ eva balavabhāvato ekaṃ paribhāyattakkharaṃ nibbatteti ti vadanti. yathā mātā kammanibbattassa dārakassa nissayo hoti. tadupādāya mātā dārakaṃ nibbatteti ti vuttaṃ. tathā bhūsaṃghaṭṭanaṃ pi*

According to Abhidhamma philosophy, a material *dhamma*¹³⁰ (a material phenomenon), lasts, at most, seventeen thought-moments.¹³¹ In regular circumstances, the first five thought-moments consist of advertizing and identifying the object (in our case, a sound). Once the object is determined, it is held (or propelled) in consciousness during seven thought-moments. These seven moments of propulsion are called “impulsions” (*javanas*). If the object is “very great” (*atimahan-tam*), that is to say perfectly clear, after the seven moments of impulsion there are normally two more thought-moments of “registration” (*tadārammaṇa*). According to the passage I have quoted, the actual origination of sound takes place during the seven *javanas*. In the tradition, there is controversy as to whether sound occurs in each one of them, or only at the end of them when there is enough momentum. The orthodox opinion seems to be the one of the *Vibhāvīnī-ṭīkā*: every *javana* produces one speech-sound.

When commenting upon SBC 3, the *Dīpanī* gives a similar explanation, but brings up the concept of *viññatti* (“commu-

cittajakharāṇaṃ nissayo hoti. tadupādāya saṃghaṭṭanaṃ akkharaṃ nibbatteti ti vuttaṃ. cittāny eva tu sattajavanāni bhūtaghaṭṭanāvathāyaṃ sattakkharāni nibbattenti ti. apare tv ekajavanavārapariyāpannāni cittāny ekakkharaṃ nibbattenti ti vadanti.

130 The meaning of *dhamma* is so complex that it is sometimes better to leave it untranslated. See Gethin 2007: xix: “The word *dhamma* is perhaps the most basic technical term of the Abhidhamma. While it has been variously rendered as ‘state,’ ‘phenomenon,’ ‘principle,’ etc., none of these conveys its precise Abhidhamma meaning (which I take as ‘an instance of one of the fundamental physical or mental events that interact to produce the world as we experience it’), and I have preferred to leave it untranslated and preserve the resonances with *dhamma* in the sense of the truth realized by the Buddha and conveyed in his teachings. To adapt a well known saying of the Nikāyas: he who sees *dharmas* sees Dhamma, he who sees Dhamma sees *dharmas*. The reader who is interested in the specifically Theravādin understanding of the notion of *dhamma* is referred to Professor Y. Karunadasa’s *The Dhamma Theory: Philosophical Cornerstone of the Abhidhamma* (The Wheel Publication 412/413, Kandy: Buddhist Publication Society, 1996).”

131 Abhid-s IV: 9; Vibh-a 28.

nication”), which is not found in Abhaya’s commentary. The classic definition of “verbal communication” is “that which communicates intention through speech, reckoned as sounds associated with consciousness, and is itself understood because of that speech.”¹³² As it has been pointed out above, communication can be made bodily (*kāyaviññatti*) or verbally (*vacīviññatti*).¹³³ The concept of *vacīviññatti* plays an important role in the *Dīpanī* discussion on SBC 3:

Because the mind-originated sound is manifested—i.e. is made distinct—in places of articulation such as the throat, etc.—it is thought — i.e. it is stated by the teachers—that this mind-originated sound is produced there—i.e. in places of articulation such as the throat, etc.—due to the striking of the earth element, [a striking] which is caused by verbal communication.¹³⁴

According to this passage, the material element of verbal communication (*vācīviññatti*) is defined as that phenomenon which triggers the striking of the earth element of both clusters (*cittaja* and *kammaja*). That is why it is sometimes called *satti* (Skt. *śakti*) (a “capacity” or “potencial”).

To sum up, verbal communication is a material phenomenon of mental origin.¹³⁵ It does not directly cause the speech-sound, but it causes the striking of the earth element of the mind against the earth element produced on account of past *kamma*. When we say “the earth element [produced] from the mind,” we should not understand this element as originating in a particular place of the body. Rather, we should conceive

¹³² Gethin’s translation. See Gethin 2007: 225.

¹³³ Abhidh-s VI: 13.

¹³⁴ SBC-nṭ 140, 13–6: *cittajasaddassa kaṇṭhādiṭṭhāne abhibyattito pākaṭabhāvato so ca cittajasaddo vacīviññattikāraṇā bhūsaṃghaṭṭhanato tattha kaṇṭhādiṭṭhāne jāto ti mato kathito ācariyehi ti*.

¹³⁵ Mind (*citta*) is one of the four possible bases for material phenomena, the other three being *kamma*, *utu* (“temperature”) and *āhāra* (“nutriment”). See Abhidh-s VI.

it as becoming manifest in any part of the body, insofar as this part of the body falls in the domain of consciousness (the stomach, the throat, the tongue, etc., are all included in this domain). With regard to the material phenomenon of speech-sound, there are different places in the body that are activated due to the process of verbal communication. The variety of such places demonstrates the theory that the earth element originated from the mind has no fixed position.

The previous explanation of speech-sound origination is the orthodox opinion of Burmese Theravādins, but not the only one they considered acceptable. Saddhammasiri offers a second explanation of speech-sound production. This time, as the commentator Abhaya points out later, the source is Sanskrit grammar, in particular the grammar of a certain Jinindabuddhi. This is probably Jinendrabuddhi, the eighth-to ninth-century¹³⁶ author of the *Nyāsa*, a detailed commentary on the *Kāśikāvṛtti*. Jinendrabuddhi was allegedly a Buddhist.¹³⁷ He is the proponent of the following theory:

*nābhito 'ccāraṇussāhabhūtapāṇo 'paropari-
saṃghaṭṭano 'rakaṇṭhādi sirajo ty apare vidū || 4 ||*

Other specialists [consider that] the air (*pāṇo*) that comes into existence due to the effort of making an utterance comes from the navel, goes upward, and it is originated in the head after striking the chest, the throat, and other places of articulation.

What is interesting in this theory, I think, is that it basically says the same as the previous verse, but does so without Abhidhamma terminology. What some call “effort of utterance” (*uccāraṇussāha*) would be probably called *vacīviññatti* in Abhidhamma. The actual parts of the body (chest, throat,

136 Scharfe 1977: 174.

137 SBC-pt 6, 24–5: *apare ti jinindabuddhyādikā* (“[Here] ‘others’ means Jinendrabuddhi, etc.”).

head ...) correspond to the Abhidhamma (“earth element” of *kamma*). The difference between the previous explanation and this one is the role of “air” (*pāṇa*). As Abhaya says, “air means here the element of wind” (*pāṇo ti c’ ettha vāyodhātu adhippeto*).¹³⁸ Indeed, according to the Abhidhamma, this wind is the result of an increase of the temperature in the stomach. It becomes a supporting factor in the act of speech, but it does not play a central role. In the present stanza, however, the air plays a central role. Air itself becomes sound when colliding against certain parts of the body. As it has been said, this is the tenet of Sanskrit grammarians in general, and it is important to note that here the Pāli grammarian is making it explicit that he also knows the Sanskrit interpretation.

According to the *Dīpanī*, the main point of this stanza is to show that every speech-sound, whatever its final place of articulation, is ultimately born in the “navel,” i.e. the stomach. In other words, even when we call the speech-sound *t* a “dental,” or the speech-sound *k* a “velar,” they can be ultimately reduced to hot air arising from the stomach:

The velar (*kaṇṭhajo*) [speech-sound] is not only produced in the throat, [but] also in the stomach, in the chest, and in the head. The palatal (*tālujo*) [speech-sound] is not only produced in the palate, [but] also in the stomach, in the chest, in the throat, and in the head. Similarly it is said also regarding the retroflex, the dental, and the labial speech-sounds.¹³⁹

Theory of Inference: Nyāya Philosophy in the Saddatthabhedacintā

Further on in the same chapter the SBC engages with a discussion on inference, a favorite topic in Indian philosophical

¹³⁸ SBC-pt 6, 22–3.

¹³⁹ SBC-nt 140, 19–22: *kaṇṭhajo na kaṇṭhe yeva jāto. nābhimhi ure sire ca. tālujo na tālumhi yeva jāto. nābhimhi ure kaṇṭhe sire ca jāto. evaṃ muddhajangantajaoṭṭhajāpiti vuttam hoti.*

debates that, again, we would not necessarily expect in a Pāli grammatical text. After a sequence of stanzas that define speech-sound as “incomplete word, being the ultimate reality” and a definition of word as that which is “complete” in meaning, but ultimately made of speech-sounds, Saddhammasiri defines the sentence as an “aggregate of words” (*padasamudāya*).¹⁴⁰ A sentence, says Saddhammasiri, can have five parts, and these are the five parts of the logical inference according to the ancient Nyāya School. Stanza 15 offers the stock example of the inference of fire through the perception of smoke:

*paṭiññā upamā hetu udāharaṇa niggama-
vasenāvayavā pañcavidhā vākye yathārahaṃ || 14 ||*

The parts in a sentence are fivefold, on account of their being, accordingly: proposition, comparison, cause, example [and] conclusion.

*yathā mahānase evam aggi dahanadhūmato
manyate kattha dhamminosiddhito¹⁴¹ calamattake || 15 ||*

As in the kitchen, similarly, fire is inferred because of the smoke resulting from the burning. Where? At the top of the mountain. [Why?] Because of not finding (*asiddhito*) what bears the sign (*dhammino*) [in other places].

140 SBC 6:

*aniṭṭhite pade vaṇṇo paramattho suniṭṭhitam
padaṃ paññattisaddo ti saddo bhavati dubbidho.*

SBC 13:

*aniṭṭhite pade vaṇṇo vākkharaṃ niṭṭhite padaṃ
vākyam tassamudāyo tamaññiññāpekkhalakkhaṇam.*

141 SBC-pt 12, 18–9: *asiddhito* ti byatirekahetunidassanaṃ. SBC-nt 143, 15–6: *dhammino siddhito* ti dhammino asiddhito ti chedo.

Some background is needed here. The parts of the inference in Nyāya philosophy are defined canonically in the *Nyāyasūtra* of Akṣapada Gautama (c. second century AD).¹⁴² The technical terms are all the same as the ones we find in SBC, except for *upamā*, which is a peculiar Pāli rendering of the Sanskrit term *upanayana*.

The example in SBC 15 tries to prove what follows: if one sees smoke at the top of a faraway mountain, one infers that there must be fire on the mountain. We might have never seen that mountain before, but we have seen smoke and fire before, and every time that we have seen smoke, there was fire, as in the kitchen. Conversely, we have never seen smoke without fire (that is what “because of not finding what bears the mark” means). The conclusion follows that there must be fire in the mountain, even though we do not perceive it directly. Abhaya’s *ṭīkā* elaborates with greater philosophical sharpness. What is at stake here is the status of “sense perception” (*pratyakṣa*) *vis-à-vis* “inference” (*anumāna*) as a “[valid] means of knowledge” (*pramāṇa*).

And in this respect: (1) When something that can be a proposition is there, as ‘there is fire in the kitchen,’ then the [main] proposition is made [as follows]: ‘Fire is inferred [in the mountain] due to the smoke resulting from the burning of a mountain fire.’ (2) When the object of comparison is there, for instance the fire in the mountain, the kitchen becomes the comparison. That whose existence is evident cannot be made an object of the comparison. Therefore the word ‘Where?’ has been stated.¹⁴³

142 Matilal 2005: 1. Cf. *Nyāyasūtra*, 1.1.32–1.1.39.

143 SBC-pt 12, 19–22: *idha ca—(ka) mahānase aggī ti paṭiññātabbe sati pabbataggi dahanadhūmato aggī manyate ti paṭiññā katā. (kha) pabbataggi bhūte upameyye sati mahānasaggi bhūtā upamā (katā). bhāvapākaṭā nūpameyyaṃ. tasmā katthasaddo vutto.*

A subsequent passage in the same commentary explains how the comparison (*upamā*) operates in the process of logical inference:

Furthermore, the comparison is applied on what is compared, because, on account of its function, [the comparison] is simply secondary (*apadhānā*). Because [the compared] needs to be compared via the comparison, [the compared] is the principal matter. The word ‘fire’ [i.e. the fire of the mountain] which functions in this principal matter, is to be related also to the non-principal matter, namely the kitchen [i.e. the fire in the kitchen]. [That is so] because of the exclusion that consists of not finding, by means of an instance (*ādhārena*), that which bears the mark [i.e. fire] (*dharmīno*) and which is compared (*upamīta*), accompanied with a mark (*dharmā*) of comparison (*upamā*) which is similar (*sadisabhūta*) [to it].¹⁴⁴

According to the second half of the argument, the positive example that always follows logically and therefore is called *anvaya* “consequent” must necessarily imply its logical “inversion” or “exclusion,” called *byatireka*. In our example, the reasoning by exclusion is made by proving that the absence of smoke will always imply an absence of fire (dust and other phenomena similar to smoke do not count). Abhaya illustrates the different ways in which a mark (*dharmā*) can be a “cause of implied knowledge” (*ñāpaka*) by exclusion:

(3) ‘Because of not finding’ is formulated as a cause by exclusion. Because, when there is no heat, [it means that the result of fire] is not there, [but] when the result is there [the cause] is given. Now, with regard to this topic [i.e. regarding *hetu* (‘cause’)]: the seed is the cause of

144 SBC-pt 12, 22–6: *upamā ca upamītam ārocetvā pavattattā apadhānā va. upamītapamāya upametabbattā padhānaṃ. tasmīṃ padhāne pavatto aggisaddo apadhānemahānasepisambandhitabbo. sadisabhūtupamādharmasahitopamītadhammīno ādhārena asijjhanato ti nivāraṇattā.*

generating (*janakahetu*) because it generates the trunk of the tree; the noble way is the cause for the attainment (*sampāpakahetu*) [of *nibbāna*] because it makes good people attain *nibbāna*; smoke is the cause of the implied knowledge (*ñāpakahetu*) [of fire] because it makes implicit the knowledge of fire to those who see smoke. Therefore (*ti*), among these three stated [types of] cause (*hetu*), we are concerned with] the cause of implied knowledge (*ñāpakahetu*). And this cause of implied knowledge, in turn, is threefold: by its own nature (*sabhāva*), by exclusion (*byatireka*), by causation (*kāriya*).¹⁴⁵

Furthermore, the various “implied knowledges” (*ñāpaka*) are applied to our example:

Therein a cause of implied knowledge (*ñāpaka*) of the existence of fire in the kitchen [can be exemplified in the following ways]: the cause of implied knowledge by its own nature (*sabhāvañāpaka*) is fire as heat, due to the understanding (*avabodhakattā*) that there is hot fire because of the heat; the cause of implied knowledge by exclusion (*byatirekañāpaka*) is the absence of heat, due to the understanding that there is no fire because its heat is not there. The example [in the stanza under consideration] has to be considered as follows: Because of seeing that the existence of smoke is due to fire, the cause of implied knowledge of this (*taṃñāpako*) [namely of fire, is] smoke, its product, [and that is] the cause of implied knowledge by causation (*kāriyañāpaka*) [for smoke is always caused by fire].¹⁴⁶

145 SBC-pt 12, 26–13, 1: (*ga*) *asiddhito ti byatirekahetu. anuñhattā asatī ti phale satī kato. idha tu bijam rukkhakkhandhassa janakattā janakahetu. ariyamaggo sujane nibbānaṃ pāpetabbattā sampāpakahetu. dhūmo dhūmaṃ passante jane aggim avabodhāpetabbattā ñāpakahetū ti vuttesu tisu majjhe ñāpakahetu. so ca sabhāvabyatirekakāriyañāpakavasā tividho.*

146 SBC-pt 14, 1–5: *tattha mahānase pavattaggino ñāpako. uñhaggi uñhattā atthī ty avabodhakattā uñhaggino (uñham aggino) sabhāvañāpakahetu. anuñhattā tassa natthī ty avabodhakattā taṃ (anuñham) byatirekañāpakahetu. aggito pavattadhūmassa diṭhattā taṃñāpako phaladhūmo kāriyañāpakahetū ty udāharaṇaṃ veditabbaṃ.*

The *Dīpanī* illustrates the case in similar terms, but more graphically:

When touching a cooking place with the hand in order to know whether there is fire or not, one knows that there is fire by the heat. This heat is a cause of implied knowledge by its own nature [as the nature of fire is heat]. When touching [a cooking place with the hand], one knows that there is no fire by the coldness. This [coldness] is a cause of implied knowledge by exclusion. Smoke is a cause of implied knowledge by causation, because smoke is caused, and it is necessarily caused, by fire, and because smoke is the product of fire.¹⁴⁷

The insistence in the difference between heat and smoke as *ñāpakas* is quite remarkable, for the example of heat as a proof for the existence of fire is never found in Nyāya literature. I suspect that some Abhidhamma presuppositions may have forced our grammarian to adopt heat as a *ñāpaka*. For it is definitely true, in Abhidhamma, that there can be no heat without the fire element. This seems to be an original contribution of the Pāli grammarians to the theory of inference.

The fourth member of the inference, according to Saddhammasiri, is the *udāharaṇa* or “instance.” In this case, the instance is given as the actual place where the *sādhya* (“what is to be demonstrated”) is found. We go back to the old commentary now, where Abhaya explains:

(4) When that which is to be exemplified is there as ‘where?’, the example is [also] there as ‘at the top of the mountain.’¹⁴⁸

147 SBC-nt 143, 22–6: *aggi atthi natthi ti nātum uddhanaṭṭhāne hatthena parāmasante yena uñhena aggi atthi ti jānāti. taṃ uñhaṃ sabhāvañāpakahetu. parāmasante yena sītena aggi natthi ti jānāti. taṃ byatirekañāpakahetu. dhūmassa agginā kāriyattā kattabbattā aggissa phalattā ca dhūmo kāriyañāpakahetu.*

148 SBC-pt 13, 8–9: (gha) *katthā ti udāharaṇiye sati acalamatthake ty udāharaṇaṃ.*

This remark simply means that the word “where?” in SBC 15 is a rhetorical question that implies the answer “at the top of the mountain,” and this represents the “instance.”

The fifth member of the inference, *nigama*, somehow redundant, is the repetition of the proposition. Nevertheless, it is formally stated as a conclusion, as the QED in European Logic.

Abhaya finally accounts for the use of the five members of the inference. He points out the obvious fact that they are not obligatory in every sentence. Some sentences contain only a proposition, and others are simply examples:

(5) When that which needs to be concluded, namely ‘as fire in the kitchen,’ is there, the conclusion is made as ‘thus, similarly.’ How[, for instance]? A *sutta* such as *sarā sare lopam* (‘a vowel is elided before a vowel’) is a proposition. *yass’ indriyāni* etc., are the examples. [Sentences such as] ‘the man walks the path’ are single propositions. ‘The rest is [to be understood] according to the [same] method,’ thus, in this way (*iminā*), he shows the result (*phalam*) accordingly (*yathārahaṃ*).¹⁴⁹

The *Dīpanī* summarises the entire discussion as follows:

Thus, ‘fire is known’ is the proposition (*paṭiññā*), because it is the principal statement; ‘at the top of the mountain’ is the instance (*udāharaṇa*), because fire, which is the object of the comparison, is indicated; as fire is inferred in the kitchen due to the smoke produced by the burning [of fire]; [If one asks] ‘Where is the fire?’ [The answer is:] ‘At the top of the mountain.’ In this sentence, however, there are [only] four members, because of the lesser importance of [the fifth member, namely] the conclusion

149 SBC-pt 13, 9–15: (*ñā*) *yathā mahānase aggī ti niggamaniye sati evaṃ tathā ti niggamanaṃ katam. katham—sarā sare lopan ti ādisuttaṃ paṭiññā. yass’ indriyānyādikam udāharaṇam. puriso maggaṃ gacchaṭi ti ādikā ekā paṭiññā. sesaṃ vuttanayaṃ eva. iti iminā yathārahaṃ phalaṃ dasseti.*

(*nigama*) [which is generally introduced by the expression] ‘thus.’¹⁵⁰

This will surely strike some readers as the most convoluted interpretation of the Nyāya theory of inference, for the Theravādin commentators try to summarise more than a millennium of debate in a few paragraphs. At any rate, it is clear that they were aware of this debate. Unfortunately, they do not make their sources explicit. What is important for the purpose of the present article, however, is to show that texts, commonly treated as “grammatical” in histories of literature and catalogs, contain much more than grammatical debates. Pāli grammarians resort to philosophical concepts from the Indian tradition and apply them not to the study of phenomena in general, but to the study of religious and grammatical texts. The following section will give another example of the same phenomenon.

Non-Eternality of Sound

The first chapter of SBC ends with a discussion on the nature of sound. It brings up the question whether sound is never produced and therefore eternal (*nicca*), or produced, like a pot, and therefore “non-eternal” or “impermanent” (*anicca*). As it has been said before, this is a classical topic in the Indian philosophical debate. If one follows the basic tenets of Buddhist philosophy, it will be taken for granted that Saddhammasiri will support the last view, namely that sound, as all other phenomena, is impermanent, like a pot. Surprisingly, however, it is difficult to ascertain whether Saddhammasiri himself supports a straightforward non-eternalism or not. What is clear is that the commentator Abhaya argues for a more nuanced perspective. He accepts that *sadda* can also be

150 SBC-nt 143, 26–144, 1: *evaṃ aggi manyate ti paṭiññā. padhānavacanattā. acalamatthake ti udāharanaṃ. upameyya aggissa nidassanattā. yathā mahānase aggi dahanadhūmato manyate. kattha aggī ti. acalamatthake ti vākye pana cattāro avayavā. evaṃ ti niggamanassa hīnattā.*

considered eternal, if by *sadda* we understand the *sadda* of the Tipiṭaka, which is the Dhamma. As I will show, the Pāli grammarian is faced with a tricky dilemma. But let us follow the argument in the original texts:

*atthe sādhattamattena niccatte pi karīyate
niccena sadisāniccam raṅgahatthādayo yathā || 20 ||*

Even though there is permanence on account of the mere correctness [of the speech-sound] regarding the meaning, it [*viz.* sound] is made [i.e. is a product], in the same way that elephants and other figures are made [i.e. drawn] with colors, impermanently, but are similar to something that is permanent.

The thesis of this verse contradicts a theoretical pillar of Buddhism, the impermanence of all phenomena (except *nibbāna*). The idea of this stanza is that the correspondence of word and meaning is necessarily permanent, otherwise communication would be impossible. This is, I think, a synthesised rendering of Kātyāyana's *vārttika* 3: *siddhe śabdārthasambandhe* "[grammar can be taught] when it is assumed that the relationship between a word and [its] meaning has already been established [on account of the usage of the people]," including Patañjali's commentary upon it.¹⁵¹ When language is used according to this permanent relationship of speech-sound and meaning, we call it correct language. What is impermanent, says Saddhammasiri, are the particular instances of meaningful sounds. That is why sound can be considered permanent and impermanent at the same time. The commentator Abhaya explains the essence of SBC 20 as follows:

Therein, even when there is permanence of the sounds, regarding the meaning, i.e. in the meaning that has to be known, just by being correct, the *sutta*, etc., [i.e. the grammatical treatise] is made. Like what? Like elephants

151 Translation by Joshi and Roodbergen 1986: 90.

and other things are drawn with color, i.e. by the painter; similarly the triad of the *sutta*, *vutti*, and examples of Kaccāyana are made as [something] impermanent, [but] similar to the word¹⁵² (*sadda*) of the Tipiṭaka, which is permanent, [thus] it is to be construed. For, in the same way that a painter, after seeing the natural form of the elephant and other beings, paints reproductions of the elephants and other beings; similarly, Kaccāyana, after seeing the natural [i.e. original] Tipiṭaka in the form of words (*sadda*), writes, in a book, the words, i.e. the *sutta* and the rest [of the grammar], which takes the form of a reproduction. This is how this matter should be considered.¹⁵³

It is difficult to second Abhaya in his analysis, because the verses do not seem to refer to the grammar of Kaccāyana at all, but to linguistic usage in general. What SBC 20 means is simply that what is permanent is the relationship between word and meaning (following Kātyāyana's *vārttika* 3). On the other hand, what is impermanent are the particular utterances. Abhaya understands it quite differently: according to him, what is eternal is the word of the Tipiṭaka, and what is perishable is the word used in the grammar of Kaccāyana. He fails to understand that not all the stanzas in SBC need to defend the tenets of Buddhism. They may well express the tenet of a rival school, doxographically, in such a way that it can be subsequently refuted. Indeed, the belief in the perma-

152 Where I translate *sadda* as “word” in this passage one may as well read “speech-sound.”

153 SBC-pt 15, 7–14: *tattha saddānaṃ niccatte sati pi atthe nātabbatthe sādhubhāvamattena suttādikaṃ karīyate. yathā kiṃ. raṅgena cittikārena likhitā hatthyādayo yathā niccena piṭakattayasaddena sadisaṃ aniccaṃ kaccāyanakaṃ suttavuttiudāharaṇattayaṃ karīyate ti yojjaṃ. pakatihatthyādinaṃ hi rūpaṃ disvā cittikāro vikati hatthyādayo likhati yathā. pakatipiṭakattayaṃ saddarūpaṃ kaccāyano vikatirūpabhūtaṃ suttādikaṃ saddaṃ likhati pothhake ti daṭṭhabbaṃ.*

nence of speech-sound is ridiculed with two amusing examples in the next stanza:

guḷaṃ va gilite nigguhitāṃ siddhedāṃ uccate
marū va marubimbamhā siddhedāṃ siddham uccate || 21 ||

It is said that it [*viz.* the permanence of speech-sound] is proved, as a rice-ball that was concealed [in the navel and is shown] after one has eaten [another ball of rice]. It is called proved [although] it is as if proving the existence of the Wind god from a statue.

This verse plays with two similes that explain why sound is wrongly called eternal, when in reality it is not. The word *siddha* is used here with all its polysemic power, meaning “proved,” “established,” “permanent,” and it is therefore equivalent to *nicca*.¹⁵⁴ It is quite plausible that the insistence on “*siddha*” aims at ridiculing the *vārttika* of Kātyāyana, accepted as a fundamental principle by all *pāṇinīyas*.

Abhaya maintains that the simile expresses the relationship between the permanent sound, which is the word of the Tipiṭaka and the *aṭṭhakathā*, *vis-à-vis* the impermanent sound, which is the reproduction that we find in grammars such as the *Kaccāyana*. He concludes:

And, with regard to this case, it means that the permanent sound (*niccasaddo*) is similar to the swallowed rice-ball. The impermanent [sound], however, is [similar to] the concealed [rice-ball].¹⁵⁵

This interpretation is missing the mark, for both examples intend to show that permanence is a mirage. The

154 SBC-nṭ 145, 23: *siddhasaddo niccatthā*.

155 SBC-pt 15, 21–2: *idha ca niccasaddo gilitaguḷena sadiso. anicco tu niguhitenā ti vuttaṃ hoti*. I translate *ti vuttaṃ hoti* as being different from *ti vuttaṃ* following Kieffer-Pülz 2015: 438.

interpretation of the *Dīpanī* offers a different and, in my opinion, much more sensible explanation. According to the *Dīpanī*, the first simile has to be understood as follows: a magician eats a ball of rice, but he has another ball of rice hidden in his navel. When he shows the hidden ball, he pretends it is the same ball of rice he has just eaten. People then believe (of course, foolishly) that the ball of rice is the same, that is to say, the permanence of the rice-ball has been “proved” (*siddham*). The fact is, however, that those are two different balls of rice and people have been deceived. The point of the simile is to explain why permanence can be wrongly inferred from similarity. For instance, since the word “pot” seems to be the same every time it is uttered (otherwise we would not recognise it), one may (wrongly) assume that it is the same word, manifesting itself at two different moments. According to a Buddhist grammarian, however, only common people (*loka*) would entertain such an idea.

The second simile is also elliptic if one does not look up the commentaries. In this case, both commentaries agree. The idea is that *marū* is the Wind god Marut, and the *paṭibimba* (“reflection”) is a statue or reproduction of the god. I assume the Wind god (otherwise known as Vāyu) has been intentionally chosen in order to enhance the contrast between a constantly changing and moving reality and the staticity of a sculpture. In the Pāli grammatical literature, this simile, as well as the previous one, are found for the first time in Vimalabuddhi’s Mmd. The author of *Dīpanī* quotes the original passage from Mmd, which corresponds, interestingly, to Mmd ad Kacc 317, a rule on the formation of compounds. I translate the entire passage from Mmd, including the example of the rice-ball eaters:

In the same way that some people put flowers and other honorings at the statue of a god and other places, and they will say (*vattāro bhavanti*) ‘I have honored the gods,’ for this is how they understand it; [and in the same way that] one who plays with rice balls, swallowing a ball and hiding another ball, again says ‘Look,

ladies and gentlemen! I have swallowed the rice ball, but I will make it appear again from my navel' and as he says so, he makes as if he would take out the hidden rice ball, and shows it, and the people believe (*aveti*) it [saying]: 'Sir, that's amazing: you just swallowed the rice ball but then you have shown it after taking it from the navel!'; similarly, some sentence formed with separate words, which is the replica of a word, having been arranged, in that elision of the ending that we may call the 'navel' they call it a 'compound sentence.' And with that they understand their meaning. And, again, in a separated sentence which is its replica, after eliding the case endings, they call this type of compound 'with elided endings.' And the people believe that this compound word is with elided endings.¹⁵⁶

The point of this argument is that we cannot say that a compound (e.g. railway) is the result of the sentence (the way made of rails) being deprived of case endings, or the sentence the result of a broken compound where words have been given case endings. In the context of Buddhist philosophy, we can only accept that they are equivalent: two ways of expressing the same thing. To make it simpler, however, we may conventionally pretend that a compound is "like" a sentence where case endings have been elided. This is the trick that grammar does with words. Vimalabuddhi settles the dispute

156 Mmd 269, 21–270, 1: *yathā devādippaṭṭibimbe pupphādisakkāraṃ katvā vattāro bhavanti devā me sakkatā ti. bhavati ca tena tesam buddhi. gulakīlaṃ kīlanto ekaṃ gulaṃ gilatvā ekaṃ ca niggūhitvā puna passantu bhonto gilitaṃ me gulaṃ nābhito nīharitvā dassemi ti vatvā nābhito taṃ nīharitaṃ viya katvā niggūhitaṃ eva dasseti. aveti ca taṃ loko acchariyaṃ bho gilitaṃ gulaṃ nāma nābhito nīharitvā dasseti ti. evaṃ saddappatirūpakaṃ kiñci viggahavākyam vikappetvā vibhattilope nābhisankhate tasmim samāsavākyam abhisankhan taṃ ti vadanti. bhavati ca tena tesam atthappaṭṭipatti. viggahavākye ca tappatirūpake vibhattilopaṃ katvā puna luttavibhattikam idan ti samāsapadaṃ dassenti. aveti ca taṃ loko luttavibhattikam etaṃ samāsapadan ti.*

with one of his categorical statements, a statement that the *Dīpanī*, I suspect, has intentionally left out:

This is only conventional talk, proved by convention. And when the meaning is established by the people, only the people are the means of knowledge. For it has been said: ‘speech resulting from social agreement is a conventional truth.’¹⁵⁷ But in the ultimate sense, one does not become a cow killer only by simply destroying the picture of a cow.¹⁵⁸

The concluding statement gives us the key to the example of the Wind god statue: one does not address the Wind god by simply addressing an image of the god.

Now to summarise the meaning of SBC 21: we can call speech-sound or word (*sadda*) “permanent” only conventionally, and that is due to two different causes: out of similarity of one sound with another (as in the example of the rice-ball), or through conventional representation, as in the case of someone praying to a god through its statue. As we will sub-

157 This is a quotation from a well-known stanza on the two kinds of truth: conventional and ultimate truths. The full stanza is quoted in commentaries, for instance, DNa II 383, 21–4:

*duve saccāni akkhāsi sambuddho vadatāṃ varo,
sammutīm paramatthaṃ ca tatiyaṃ n’ ūpalabbhati;
saṅketavacanāṃ saccaṃ lokasammutikāraṇaṃ,
paramatthavacanāṃ saccaṃ dhammānaṃ bhūtalakkhaṇaṃ ti.*

“The Perfect Buddha, the most excellent among speakers, explained two truths:

the conventional and the ultimate. There is no third [truth].

The speech resulting from social agreement is the conventional truth;
the speech which is in accordance with the nature of the ultimate constituents (*dhammānaṃ*) is the ultimate truth” (my translation).

158 Mmd 270, 1–5: *sammuti kathā hesā lokasaṅketasiddhi. lokappasiddhe catthe loko va pamāṇaṃ. vuttaṇ hi saṅketavacanāṃ saccaṃ lokasammutikāraṇaṃ ti. na hi paramatthato gopatirūpakaṃ hantvā goghātako hotī ti.*

sequently see, both conventions are ultimately false—at least according to Buddhist philosophy:

*anicco khaṇiko saddo ghaṭṭādi viya kāriyo
icc eke satthakārā te ye niccāniccavādino || 22 ||*

Sound is impermanent and momentary; it is a product, like a pot. Thus maintain some masters of this discipline (*sattha*). In this way (*iti*), some defend the permanence and some defend the impermanence.

If we follow Abhaya's explanation, the theory of permanence is described in SBC 20, whereas SBC 21 and 22 (*pādas a* and *b*) correspond to the theory of impermanence, presumably closer to Buddhism:

For (*hi*) among them (*tesu*), [that is, among those masters,] the latter defend the theory of momentariness (*khaṇikavādī*); the former defend the theory of continuity (*santativādī*), [this] has to be understood.¹⁵⁹

The *Dīpanī* elaborates on the philosophical concept of sound and specifies that it is impermanent because (according to the Theravāda view), a sound is a mental phenomenon that lasts for the duration of a thought-moment:

Sound is impermanent due to the continuous movement of one thought after the other, and [sound] is yoked to one single thought moment. Furthermore, it is something produced, like a pot and other things which are produced.¹⁶⁰

The *niccavādins* develop their grammatical science from the axiom that meaning is only conveyed through the use of

159 SBC-pt 16, 7–8: *tesu hi pacchimavādino khaṇikavādīnām. purimavādino santativādīnāmā ti daṭṭhabbam.*

160 SBC-nt 146, 12–4: *saddo cittasahabhūcittānuparivattittā anicco ekacittakkhaṇayutto ca ghaṭṭādi viya kāriyo ca.*

correct words, for correct words are invariably connected to their meanings. This definition seems to refer both to the tradition of Patañjali in the *Paspaśā* and to the *Kātantra* grammarians, whose texts, we know, became authoritative among Burmese grammarians under the label “*kalāpa*.”¹⁶¹ The next three stanzas go on with the same debate, comparing the two points of view:

*niccatte piṃsalādīnaṃ*¹⁶² *saññā rūlhi va manyate*
aniccavādīnaṃ vāde anvatthāpi patīyate || 23 ||

According to the school of eternalists such as Piṃsala (?) and the like, a name (*saññā*) is understood as a convention (*rūlhi*) only. According to the theory of the non-eternalists, [however,¹⁶³ a name] is understood according to the meaning (*anvatthā*) too [that is to say, according to its etymology].

Abhaya considers that Saddhammasiri is positing the *codanā* “objection” in this stanza. “Piṃsala” seems to be a proper name of one of the defenders of eternalism, for Abhaya glosses: *tattha piṃsalādīnaṃ niccavādīnaṃ vāde*.¹⁶⁴ And the *Dīpanī*: *satthakāresu tesu piṃsalādīnaṃ niccavādiācariyānaṃ vāde*.¹⁶⁵ The main point of the verse is to distinguish between two schools of grammarians: eternalists and non-eternalists. There is however an ambiguity in the word *saññā*, which

161 See, for instance, Mmd-pt 11, 4: *kattā nāma sakalakalāpabyākaraṇānucari-tabuddhi vimalabuddhitthero* “the author is, namely, Vimalabuddhi Thera, whose intellect follows the whole Kalāpa (= Kātantra) system of grammar.” The Mmd-pt was probably written in twelfth-century Pagan.

162 So reads Bhadanta Vāsettha’s edition. The 1964 edition reads *pi salādīnaṃ*, which does not match with the commentary. We should probably read *piṃgalādīnaṃ* “Piṃgala and the others.” Piṃgala is the author of a treatise on metrics. The misspelling is probably due to the fact that the *akkharas sa* and *ga* are similar in old Burmese script.

163 I follow Abhaya’s gloss: *aniccavādīnaṃ vāde tu*.

164 SBC-pt 16, 12–3.

165 SBC-nt 146, 16–7.

means “name” or “designation,” but in grammar it means a “technical name.” If we read *saññā* as simply “name,” the eternalists believe that names are related to their meaning by convention. Non-eternalists believe in the etymology of names (e.g. a “woodpecker” receives a name that is descriptive of the referent, it is not an arbitrary convention).

On the other hand, if we understand *saññā* as “technical name” in grammar, eternalists believe that *saññās* are based on convention (*rūḷhī*)—for instance, as we have seen, Pāṇini uses the convention *ac* in order to say “all vowels.” The non-eternalists, however, believe that *saññās* should be meaningful (*anvattā*) designations. Exceptionally, non-eternalists can also resort to conventions, as Abhaya reminds us:

[The stanza] is to be construed [as follows]: with the word ‘also,’ even [technical] names (*saññā*) such as *ga*, *gha*, *jha*, *la* and *pa* are understood.¹⁶⁶

He is clearly describing the practice of the Kaccāyana School.

According to the interpretation of the *Dīpanī*, eternalists are forced to accept that even compound words mean what they mean eternally (note that this question arises from the grammatical discussion on compound semantics). Non-eternalists, conversely, accept that the meaning of a compound ultimately derives from the meaning of its parts. That does not prevent non-eternalists to use conventional *saññā* technical terms. In fact, what they accept is that all meaning is conventional in the sense that it is not invariably related to the word.¹⁶⁷

166 SBC-pt 16, 15–6: *pisaddena gaghajhalapaiccādiruḷhisaññāpi patiyate ti yojjam*.

167 SBC-nt 146, 21–6: *idaṃ vuttaṃ hoti—samasanam samāso ti samāsasaññā ekasmiṃ yeva pade na kattabbā. chinnahatthādisaddo tu chinnahatthādinā yeva ekapadattena paramparā paveṇi āgato. tasmā tattha samāsasaññā ruḷhī yeva niccavādinam vāde. aniccavādinam vāde pana niggahavākyam katvā vibhattilopam katvā samāsassa katattā anvattāsaññā. gasaññādayo pana vādadvaye pi ruḷhī yevā ti* “This is what is said: Composition, compound, that is what is meant by a ‘compound name’, does not apply to each word [of the compound]

nicco nikkāraṇo 'nicco kāraṇānugato 'rito
nāyaṃ kaṇṭhādivuttittā nicco vuḍḍhe tu vuttito || 24 ||
saṅketena ca vuttittā nāpy anicco ti vuccate
tena satthan tu saṅketakaraṇatthaṃ kariyate ti || 25 ||

What is permanent is said [to exist] without a cause, [whereas] what is impermanent is said [to be] the consequence of a cause. This one [i.e. the impermanent], on account of being uttered in [places of articulation such as] the throat, etc., cannot be called permanent; however, on account of being spoken by more and more (*vuḍḍhe*) [people], and on account of its being uttered by [an established] convention, it cannot be called impermanent either. Therefore, now, the scientific treatise is composed in order to provide a convention.

If we follow the commentaries, the view of these two stanzas represents a third possibility: the position of those who accept both the permanence and impermanence of speech-sounds, that is to say, the position of the grammarians. Grammarians argue that, from the point of view of particular utterances, speech-sound cannot be called permanent: sound is a product, and products cannot be eternal. Moreover, we know that something permanent is that whose nature cannot be destroyed (*yassa vatthussa taṃsabhāvo na vinassate so vatthu nicco*).¹⁶⁸ This definition applies to phenomena such as *nibbāna*,

only, but in words such as *chinnahattha* 'cut-off-hand' [i.e. 'a person whose hand has been cut off'] the tradition, the lineage, has transmitted it as a single word. Therefore in this case the name of the compound is only conventional according to the doctrine of the eternalists. According to the doctrine of the non-eternalists, however, since the compound is made after analyzing the sentence [into separate words] and deleting the case endings, the name follows the meaning [of the members of the compound]. In both views, however, [technical] names such as *ga*, etc. are merely conventional." The word *saññā* (Skt. *saṃjñā*) "name" "designation" or even "definition" depending on the context. I have tried to be consistent with the Pāli text using the translation "name." The syntax of *paramparā paveṇi āgato* is problematic. I have translated it as a compound: *paramparāpaveṇiāgato*.

168 SBC-pt 16, 30–17, 1.

but not to sound. However, the stanzas argue that calling sound impermanent would also be inaccurate, for there is some sort of permanence in speech-sounds or words. This permanence is given by tradition. The word *vuḍḍhe* is used, according to Abhaya, in the sense of growth in the frequency of usage: *vuḍḍhe tu paramparā vuḍḍhatare jane ...* (“however, in the growth, i.e. in the increasingly bigger number of people in the tradition ...”).¹⁶⁹ This explanation implies an interesting cultural assumption, namely that a language is transmitted by oral tradition, as if it were an open-ended epic poem that every speaker learns by heart and hands down, in fragments (words), to the next generation. It is not true, then, that speech-sound is eternal, but it is also wrong to believe that it has no permanence whatsoever. According to Abhaya, the previous two views (eternalism and non-eternalism) are the views of other *satthas*. The view of SBC 24–25 is the view of the Kātantra School.¹⁷⁰ The *Dīpanī*, on the other hand, maintains that this is the view of yet another group of unidentified teachers.¹⁷¹

To sum up, in the short doxography about the eternality or non-eternality (permanence or impermanence) of speech-sounds, Saddhammasiri adopts a compromise between Buddhist tenets such as the impermanence of all phenomena, which would correspond to *paramatthasacca* (“ultimate truth”) and the conventional truth (*sammutisacca*) of language as a social institution, an idea that is already found in the Tipiṭaka and that does not contradict the spirit of Indian grammatical philosophy.

What is interesting in this discussion is that a Buddhist scholar such as Saddhammasiri is forced to occupy the field of conventional truth when discussing grammar, and yet he

169 SBC-pt 17, 5.

170 SCB-pt 17, 7–8: *aññasatthe hi purimavādadavayaṃ vadanti. kalāpaganthe tu pacchimavādaṃ vadanti.*

171 SBC-nt 147, 3: *iti vacanaṃ aññehi ācariyehi vuccate.*

is unable to overcome the conflict between conventional truth and the principles of the Abhidhamma.¹⁷²

Why Grammar? The *Kārikā* on the Role of Pāli *Byākaraṇa*

We will now move to the period when King Kyanzittha ruled in Pagan (1084–1113 AD). According to historians, Kyanzittha was one of the most prosperous, or at least, better known monarchs of the Pagan dynasty, and the one who most probably established Theravāda Buddhism as a “state religion” (with all the caveats) in Pagan.¹⁷³ Legend has it that Kyanzittha built the Nanda (or Ānanda) temple in that ancient city. This construction, as is well known, is one of the major cultural and touristic attractions in Burma, and is considered a World Heritage Site by UNESCO. The architecture of this temple, it is said, was inspired by a vision of the Nandamūla cave of the Himālaya, a vision “granted to the king by eight saints of that region, who journeyed through the air daily to receive Kyansittha’s hospitality.”¹⁷⁴ Even though this tale is the product of fantasy, it probably contains a grain of truth, for the Nanda monastery seems to be intimately related to north Indian culture.¹⁷⁵ It was in this monastery that a scholar called Dhammasenāpati composed the *Kārikā* (Kār), a work

172 There are more philosophical topics in the SBC, as important as the *apoha* theory of Dignāga (without crediting this thinker, see SBC 102), but this will have to be left for another article.

173 Aung-Thwin 2012: 87f. Handlin 2012: 165: “Sometime in the eleventh century, in one cautious formulation, Pagan’s rulers adopted a Theravādin idiom.” See also Lieberman 1987: 169; Huxley 1990: 70; Skilling 2009: 61–93.

174 PLB 15. I follow Bode here, but it is not clear at all whether we should believe that Dhammasenāpati dwelled at the temple called Ānanda or in another temple called Nandā, which is what the colophon seems to suggest. Both temples were allegedly established by Kyanzittha. Regarding the other work ascribed to Dhammasenāpati, called *Etimāsamidīpanī*, Bode suggests it is a wrong title, because she failed to understand the reference: this was surely a commentary (*dīpanī* “illuminator”) of the grammatical *sutta* of Kaccāyana *etimāsam i* (Kacc 63).

175 Guillon 1985: 24–5; Strong 1992: 4.

that Bode defines as a “modest little metrical treatise”¹⁷⁶ on grammar. Apart from this brief description, nothing else about Kār has been written in English. According to Dragomir Dimitrov, the *Kārikā* bears much resemblance to Ratnamati’s *Śabdārthacintā*, to the point that the *Kārikā* could well be considered a Pāli version of it. Further research is needed to clarify the similarities. Dhammasenāpati also wrote a commentary upon his own verses, the *Kārikā-tīkā* (Kār-ṭ). We do not know whether this author was a monastic or a layman. The *Gandhavaṃsa* calls Dhammasenāpati an *ācariya*, from what we understand that he was a monk.¹⁷⁷ But in Forchhammer’s *List*, he is considered a nobleman of Pagan.¹⁷⁸ Bode concludes:

It is likely that he was known as a man of rank and importance before he entered the Order, and perhaps he threw himself into serious studies while still a layman. We shall find such cases later.¹⁷⁹

Apart from Kār and Kār-ṭ, Dhammasenāpati allegedly composed two other works: the *Etimāsamidīpanī* and the *Manohāra*, both written at the request of a certain Ñāṇagambhīra of Pagan.¹⁸⁰ These two works have never been published or studied. The colophon of *Kārikā* reads:

This treatise was composed by the Thera named Dhammasenāpati, of steadfast mind and rejoicing in the teachings of the Conqueror, while living in the monastery named Nandā, in the residence of the Mahātheras, in the excellent city of Arimaddanapura (Pagan) in the country called Tambadīpa.¹⁸¹

176 PLB 16.

177 Gv: 63, 73.

178 PLB 16 n1.

179 PLB 16.

180 Ñāṇagambhīra is perhaps the author of the *Tathāgatupatti*. Cf. PLB 16.

181 *Kārikā*: 567–8:

*tambadīpavhaye raṭṭhe ’rimaddanapure vare
mahātherānam āvāse nandānāma vihāra ke
vasatā thiracittena jinasāsanānandīnā
dhammasenāpatinā matherena racitā ayaṃ.*

Interestingly, these two verses are not commented upon in the *ṭīkā*. Perhaps they are a later addition. But I think it is more plausible that the *ṭīkā* and the *mūla* text were composed simultaneously, in such a way that the colophon verses were the end of the two works combined.

In the history of Pāli literature, Dhammasenāpati stands as one of the earliest Burmese authors. Kār has a place in the modern canon of the 15 minor grammars, and it is still studied in higher monastic examinations.

The section of Kār 19–41 bears the title *saddānusāsanappayojanavinicchayo* (“Determining the purposes of the study of grammar”). The specific five purposes of grammar will be explained in stanzas 28–41. Before that, Dhammasenāpati discusses the importance of knowing the aim of any study. The issue at stake here is simple. Any treatise of *sattha* (S. *śāstra*) must begin with the clear statement of four things: what is it (*abhidhāna*), what is the object of the treatise (*abhidheyya*), what is the purpose of studying this object (*payojana*), and what is the relationship between the object of study and the purpose of studying it (*sambandha*). The following passages will try to shed some light on the question that has been formulated at the beginning of this chapter: “Why is grammar important for a Buddhist?”

*kākadantaparikkhā 'va na c' ettha nippayojanam
dasatāḷimavākyam 'va na c' ettha nabhidheyyakam* || 19 ||¹⁸²

Here [in the *Kaccāyanabyākaraṇa*], it is not that there is no purpose, as in the investigation of whether crows have

182 I will not translate the entire *ṭīkā*, but I will give the Pāli text in a footnote after every stanza. Kār-ṭ 338, 17–27: *idāni saddānusāsanam dassetum āha—kākadantaparikkhā ti. kākā sadantā kiṃ udāhu adantā ti puṭṭho keci sadantā adiṭṭhā ti vadanti. keci mukhatuṇḍamattā adantā ve ti vadanti. iti kākānam sadantaadantabhāvaupaparikkhāvicāraṇānippayojanā iva. na cettha nippayojanam ti ettha saddānusāsanasaṅkhāte kaccāyanabyākaraṇe piṭakattayānukūlanipphādanahitaatthappakāsa udāharaṇasādhakalakkaṇattā nippayojanam nippahalanam na. cakāro upanyāsatto. upanyāso nāma vākyārambho. dasatāḷimavākyam vā ti dasa janā tāḷimā bījapūrā ti vacanam viya. cakāro samuccayatto. etthā ti saddānusāsane. anabhidheyyakam nisambandham aññamaññasambandha ekatthapaṭipādaka padasamudāyūpagavākyattā.*

teeth or not; and it is not that there is nothing meaningful, as in the sentence ‘*ten pomegranates*.’

According to Kār-ṭ, this verse tells us two things: grammar has a *payojana* (“purpose”) and also an *abhidheyya* (“object of study”). The first counter example shows an activity without purpose, namely the study of whether crows have teeth or not. The second is a counter example of something that is ambiguous or lacking a clear referent. The commentary glosses: *dasatālimavākyam* ‘*vā*’ *ti dasa janā tālimābījapūrā ti vacanam viya* which I would tentatively translate: “as the sentence *dasa tālimā* means: as the sentence ten people full of pomegranate seeds.” I am not completely sure about the meaning of this sentence in the commentary. The reference is to Patañjali’s Mbh 1.38.5 *daśa dāḍimāni* (“ten pomegranates”). The idea is perhaps that grammar does not teach non-conventional language or slang.

In the commentary, we learn that when Kār says “here” (*tattha* or *idha*), it means in the grammatical treatise of *Kaccāyana*, not in the Kār itself. That is why we assume that Kār belongs to the Kacc School.

The next stanza says:

jarassa haro takkhakacūlāmanyopadesanam
*yathā asakkānuṭṭhānaupadeso pi ettha na || 20 ||*¹⁸³

Furthermore, in this [treatise] there is no instruction on something that is impossible to achieve, as the instruction regarding the crown jewel of Takkha, [a jewel] that destroys aging.

183 Kār-ṭ, 338, 28–339, 6: *jarassa haro takkhakacūlāmanyopadesanam yathā* *ti ettha jarassā ti jarārogassa. haro ti vināsako ti attho. takkhako ti takkhakanāmakō nāgarājā. cūlāmaṇī* *ti tassa cūlāyaṃ maṇī. upadesanam yathā* *ti ayan tu jarārogo takkhakanāmanāgarājassa cūlāyaṃ jaraharamaṇin ti laddhetu pasamissatī ti upadesanam yathā. asakkānuṭṭhānaupadeso* *ti ettha anu uṭṭhātuṃ asamatto upadeso. api-saddo samuccayatto. ettha nā* *ti etasmim kaccāyanabyākaraṇe natthi.*

The commentary confirms that Takkhaka is the king of the snakes (*nāgas*) (reference: *takkhako ti takkhakanāmakō nāgarājā*). The meaning of the stanza is that the subject matter of grammar is clear, visible, and attainable to anyone, unlike the crown jewel of the king of the snakes, a jewel that gives eternal youth, but, hidden in the underworld, is impossible to obtain. Poetic similes regarding the nature of grammatical teaching continue in the following stanzas. The author seems to be criticizing other methods of instruction, seemingly immoral and unsystematic:

mātuvivāhupadeso yathā n' ettha asammato
*lahupāyantaraṃ ettha na c' ettha anupāyanaṃ || 21 ||*¹⁸⁴

Here there is no blameworthy instruction as 'marry your own mother.' Here the method is quick, and here there is no lack of method.

pañcapakaraṇe dosā ganthakārena vajjitā
*susatthaṃ dosavigataṃ sasambandhapayojanaṃ || 22 ||*¹⁸⁵

In the five sections, flaws have been avoided by the author of the book [i.e. the *Kārikā*]. A good scientific treatise (*susatthaṃ*) is without flaws, it has a relationship, and a purpose.

184 Kār-ṭ 339, 7–13: *mātuvivāhupadeso yathā ti bho tava mātuyā taṃ vivāhaye ti yathā mātuyā vivāhassa upadeso asammato viya. nettha asammato ti ettha kaccāyanabyākaraṇe viññūhi asammato upadeso na. lahupāyantaraṃ ti yathā pariggahena attho sijjhati, gahito pi ca haniyo upāyo evaṃ lahuka-upāyanānatthaṃ ettha atthi. na c' ettha anupāyanaṃ upameyyassa anipphannaṇatubhūtaatthaggaṇaṃ ettha natthi.*

185 Kār-ṭ 339, 14–21: *eke eva pakaraṇadosā ti dassetum āha — pañcapakaraṇe ty ādi. tattha pañcā ti gaṇanaparicchedo. pakaraṇe ti yaṃ kiñci ganthe. dosā ti paricchinnadhammanidassanaṃ. ganthakārenā ti pakaraṇadosaṃ jānitvā niddosapakaraṇakattunā kenaci ācariyena. vajjitā ti vajjanīyā ti attho. susatthaṃ ti viññūhi paṣaṃsanīyaṃ. sasambandhapayojanaṃ ti sambandhena payojanena sahitaṃ. ettha ca sambandho ti satthappayojane bhinnassito anusaṅgitappayojanasāṅkhāto sambandho payojanaṃ satthe nipphādanīyamukhyapayojanaṃ. tehi sahitaṃ satthaṃ susatthaṃ nāma.*

*sattham payojanañ c' eva sambandhassa siyū ubho
tesu antogadho tasmābhinno n' utto payojanā || 23 ||*¹⁸⁶

The relationship belongs both to the science and to its purpose. It is part of them, therefore they are not stated separately from the purpose.

*vutte payojane yeva sambandho vihito siyā
payojanam pi vihitam sambandhe vihite tathā || 24 ||*¹⁸⁷

Only when the purpose has been stated, the relationship would be established [too]. In the same way, when the relationship is established, the purpose too is established.

*sabbass' eva hi satthassa kammuno vā pi kassaci
yāva payojanam nuttam tāva tam tena gayhate || 25 ||*¹⁸⁸

For no one can undertake the study of any science, or any action, as long as its purpose has not been stated.

The syntax in the stanzas tends to be loose, but the meaning seems clear and I have translated them according to the meaning, not word by word. The author is very insistent that he is going to tell us the purpose of the study of grammar, for no one undertakes any action without a purpose. Only

186 Kār-ṭ 339, 22–8: sambandhe satthappayojanam sannihitabhāvaṃ tesu ca sambandhassa antogadhabhāvaṃ dassetum āha — **satthan** ty ādi. tattha **satthan** ti vaṇṇo akkharam. akkharasamudāyopadaṃ. padasamudāyo vākyam. vākyasamudāyo saddasannajjhosattham **pakaraṇan** ti attho. **siyū** ti ubho satthappayojanā sambandhaāsaya siyū. **tesū** ti satthappayojanesu yasmā sambandho **antogadho**, **tasmā** payojanato bhinnam katvā **na vutto**.

187 Kār-ṭ 339, 29: tato param silokam ekaṃ uttānattham eva.

188 Kār-ṭ 339, 30–340, 4: sakalakammassa phale vijjamāne yeva tam kenaci gayhate ti dassetum āha — **sabbass' eva** ty ādi. **sabbass' e[va]** ti sakalassa **satthassa kammassa vā yāva** yattakam **payojanam vuttam**. kenaci pi puggalena na sūratena **tāva** tattakam kalam **tam** sattham vā kammam vā **gayhate** sikkhate ti attho.

when the fruits of the action are known does a person undertake this action.¹⁸⁹ If that was not enough, the following stanzas insist, yet again, on the same idea:

*ñātatthaṃ ñātasambandhaṃ sotā sotuṃ pavattati
aviññātatthasambandhaṃ satthaṃ nābhyūpagamyate*
|| 26 ||¹⁹⁰

The student begins to study once the purpose and the relationship [of the *sattha*] are known.

When the purpose and the relationship are not known, the *sattha* is not grasped.

satthādimhi tato vutto sambandho sappayojo
sappayojanasambandhaṃ satthaṃ utvā udīraye || 27 ||¹⁹¹

Therefore, at the beginning of a *sattha*, the relationship, alongside the purpose, is stated. When the *sattha* is stated with a relationship and a purpose, then he may recite it.

From this point begins an examination of the purposes of grammar proper. As I will show, the model is the *Paspaśāhnika* (Pasp) chapter of Patañjali's MBh. Dhammasenāpati, however, made convenient adjustments in order to transform a Vedic auxiliary discipline into a Buddhist discipline.

189 Kār-ṭ 339, 30: *sakalakamassa phale vijjamāne yeva taṃ kenaci gayhate*.

190 Kār-ṭ 340, 5–9: *sotā* puggalo *ñātatthaṃ ñātasambandhaṃ* sotukāmo hoti ti dassetum āha—*ñātatthaṃ ñātasambandhan ti ādi. viññātasambandhaṃ ganthaṃ. sotā* ti sotukāmo sikkhitukāmo. *sotuṃ* ti suṇitum. *savanatthan ti attho. nābhyūpagamanyate* ti na abhiupagamyate. *aviññātatthasambandhaṃ ganthaṃ na sikkhatī ti attho*.

191 Kār-ṭ 340, 10–4: *satthādimhi* sahita-ganthassa ādimhi *tato* yasmāpayo jana-sahito sambandho vattaḃbo hoti. *tasmā sappayojanasambandho ti payojanena phalena saha anugato sambandho vutto timinā sambandhitabbaṃ. utvā udīraye* ti payojanasahitaṃ sambandhasahitañ ca ganthaṃ jānitvā *udīraye* kattheyya.

*saddānusāsanaṇṇa kiṃ payojanaṇṇa ti ce vade
rakkhohāgamalahupāyāsandeḥattham eva ca || 28 ||*¹⁹²

If one would ask: ‘What is the purpose of the instruction on speech-sounds?’ [The answer would be] ‘The purpose is protection, proper attention, tradition, brevity of method, and removal of doubt.’

These five purposes of grammar are taken directly from Pasp in its commentary upon Kātyāyana’s Vārttika 2: *rakṣohāgamalaghvasaṇṇdehāḥ prayojanaṇṇa*.¹⁹³ Let us now examine them one by one.

Rakkhā (Protection)

*tattha rakkho ti atthassa nupāyaparihārakā*¹⁹⁴
*suttantarakkhanattham hi sikkhitabbaṇṇa sudhīmataḥ || 29 ||*¹⁹⁵

Here, ‘protection’ means guarding from wrong methods. For the wise should study [*byākaraṇa*] in order to protect the Suttantas.

The commentary specifies that the study of grammar is meant for the protection of the entire Tipiṭaka, not only the Suttantas

192 Kār-ṭ 340, 15–20: *saddānusāsana-la-iti ce ti saddānusāsanaṇṇa payojanaṇṇa sarūpavasena kiṃ iti ce sakavādī vadeyya. ettha itisaddo vacanālaṇṇkāramattaṇṇa. rakkhohāgamalahupāyāsandeḥatthana ti rakkhanattham uhanattham āgamattham lahu-upāyattham asaṇṇdeḥattham. eva cā ti ettha evakāro avadhāraṇattho. tena rakkhanādyattham evā ti sanniṭṭhāṇaṇṇa karoti. cakāro nipātamattaṇṇa.*

193 I follow Joshi and Roodbergen 1986: v.

194 *anupāyahārikā* in the commentary. The meaning remains the same. See the following note.

195 Kār-ṭ 340, 21–8: *rakkhā ti atthavibhāvaṇṇa kātuṇṇa tatthā ti ādima āha. tattha tatthā ti tesu rakkhādīsū pañcasv atthesu. anupāyahārikā ti atthassa anupāyaparihārikā. atthassa anupāyattham parimāṇe bhāvo rakkhā nāmā ti vuttaṇṇa hoti. suttantarakkhanatthana ti suttantaṇṇa piṭakattayassa cirakālaṇṇa avināsaṇṇa rakkhanattham. hī ti dāḥikammattho. saccama evetaṇṇa ti vuttaṇṇa hoti. sikkhitabbaṇṇa ti saddānusāsanaṇṇakaccāyanaḥbyākaraṇaṇṇa sudhīmataḥ sikkhākāmena kulaputtana sikkhanīyaṇṇa sikkhituṇṇa yuttaṇṇa evā ti attho.*

(this is an echo of Kacc-v ad Kacc 1). The commentary also points out that it is the *Kaccāyanabyākaraṇa*, and not grammar in general that we are talking about.

Now if we look at the source of Kār 29, we can observe how in Patañjali's Pasp, "protection," is obviously a concept that refers to Vedic literature. This is what Patañjali says:

One should study *vyākaraṇa* in order to protect the Vedas. For one who knows about elision (*lopa*), augments (*āgama*) and sound-change (substitution, *varṇavikāra*) will [be able to] preserve the Vedas correctly.¹⁹⁶

The *Kārikā* follows the same reasoning in the following verse, which takes up Patañjali's idea, namely that knowing *lopa* ("elision"), *āgama* ("augment"), and *vikāra* ("change" "[speech-sound] mutation") are the tools for the protection of the sacred texts:

evaṃ sa te ti ādimhi lopo sakāraādīnaṃ
*yathayidan ti ādimhi yakārādīnaṃ āgamo || 30 ||*¹⁹⁷

[For instance:] in the case of *evaṃ sa te*, there is elision (*lopo*) of the syllable *sa*, etc. In the case of *yathayidaṃ*, there is augment (*āgamo*) of the syllable *ya*, etc.

The construction of this verse is very concise. In the commentary, we see how it makes a direct reference to the *Kaccāyana* grammar. The meaning of the first line is that *evaṃ*

196 My translation. Pasp 3: *rakṣārthaṃ vedānām adhyeyaṃ vyākaraṇaṃ. lopāgamavarṇavikārajño hi samyag vedān paripālayiṣyati*. Cf. Pāṇini 6.3.109 and for a Pāli common place Nidd-a II, 264, 10–3.

197 Kār-ṭ 340, 29–341, 6: *suttantarakkhanassa udāharāṇaniyamāṃ dassetum āha — evaṃ ty ādi. evaṃ sa te ti ādimhi evaṃ sate iti ādimhi payoge lopo sakāra-ādīnaṃ. evaṃ assa te ti ādipadacchede kate byañjano ca viśaṇṇogo* [Kacc 41] *ti suttana lopo adassanaṃ anuccāraṇaṃ ti attho. yathayidan ti ādi padacchede kate udāharaṇe. yakārādīnaṃ āgamo ti yathā idan ti ādi padacchede kate yavamadanataralā cāgamā* [Kacc 35] *ti suttana yakārādīnaṃ aṭṭhanṇaṃ byañjanānaṃ āgamo. caggahaṇena avasesa byañjanānaṃ āgamo vā.*

sa te is the result of *sandhi* after *evaṃ assa te*, following Kacc 41 *byañjano ca visañño*. The first example is *evaṃ sa te āsavā* (a quote from a canonical passage in *Majjhima Nikāya* I 9, 28).¹⁹⁸ Kacc 40 *paro vā saro* tells us that, after *niggahīta* (= *m*), a vowel is optionally elided. By Kacc 41, if the vowel is elided and the next consonant forms a cluster (*sañño*) with the previous *niggahīta*, this cluster is to be dissolved (*visañño*).

The second example *yathayidaṃ* (very frequent in the canon) is easier to explain: *yathā idaṃ* takes an augment *-y-*, a glide that can be justified by Kacc 35 *yavamadanataralā cāgamā*, which allows for the intervocalic insertion of *y, v, m, d, n, t, r, l*, and even other consonants. For, according to Kacc-v, followed by Kār-ṭ, the word *ca* in Kacc 35 stands for many other types of *āgama*. This seems a far-fetched interpretation that has nothing to do with the original purpose of the word *ca* in the rule.¹⁹⁹ But what is important here is to note that Kār-ṭ follows not only Kacc, but also Kacc-v, and calls “*kaccāyanabyākaraṇa*,” i.e. the *suttas* along with the *vutti*.

The next stanza exemplifies what is “protection” from “mutation”:

ārisyaṃ ajjavan ty ādi vikāraṇaṃ pi ca
*icc ādi suttaganthassa āraṃkhā ti pakāsītā || 31 ||*²⁰⁰

The protection of the *sutta* book is shown also in examples of mutation (*vikāraṇaṃ*) such as *ārisyaṃ, ajjavam*, etc.

¹⁹⁸ Kacc-v 13, 21.

¹⁹⁹ Kacc-v 11, 9f. Kacc-v understands the word *ca* in the *sutta* as *vā*. The *vutti* subsequently elaborates on the scope of *vā*, but also of the scope of *ca* in the *sutta*. Both words allow for other augments apart from *yavamadanataralā*. The real purpose of *ca* in the *sutta*, however, is the *anuvutti* of *sare* (“before a vowel”) from the previous *sutta*, Kacc 34.

²⁰⁰ Kār-ṭ 341, 7–13: *ārisyaṃ ajjavan ty ādi vikāraṇaṃ pi cā ti ārisyaṃ ajjavan ty ādi payoge ivaṇṇuvaṇṇānaṃ ākārakaraṇaṃ. akārikārukārānaṃ āiūdiḡhakarānaṃ. ākārīkārūkārānaṃ aiurassakaraṇaṃ ca saṅgayhate. icc ādī ti evaṃ ādi vikārādikaraṇaṃ ti attho. pakāsītā ti vinā saddasatthena lopavikārādikaraṇassa asiddhito suttena lopavikārādikaraṇaṃ suttaganthassa āraṃkhā ti dīpitā.*

The examples of this stanza are two words in which we can see the effect of *vikāraṇa* (or *vikāra*) “mutation.” The long *ā* of *ārisyaṃ* (cf. Skt. *ārṣeya*, “the state of being a seer”) is originally short, and the short *a* of *ajjavam* (cf. Skt. *ārjava*, “straightness”) is originally long (shortened by the law of morae).

Uhana (Adaptation)

The word *uhana* (or *ūhana*) stands for the Sanskrit *ūha* (“adaptation [of a mantra to suit a particular context]”). Due to the complexity of the syntax of the stanzas 32–34, I will not translate them literally, but I will paraphrase them following the commentary, assuming that, as tradition maintains, the verses and the commentary were written by the same author:

yadi hi na gato thāne kāyaduccaritādinā
mantam pulliṅganiddiṭṭham yadā itthī siyā tadā || 32 ||
yadi hi na gato thāne itthiliṅgena uhate
mante niddiṭṭham ekattam bahuttana pi uhate || 33 ||
sampādehi ti ādinam sampādehā ti ādinā
suttantassa uhanā ca saddānusāsanasādhanaṃ || 34 ||

A mantra that one has to recite due, for instance, to previous bodily misconduct, may be taught in the masculine gender, but when it is a woman, one needs to adapt to the feminine gender. Similarly, in the case of a verb, one needs to adapt to the number, whether it is singular or plural. Thus, the study of grammar brings about the adaptation to the [recitation of the] *suttantas*.²⁰¹

201 Kār-ṭ 341, 14–24: *mantam pulliṅganiddiṭṭhan ti gato ti ādi pulliṅge niddiṭṭhamantam paramatthabhūtam buddhavacanam. yadā itthī siyā ti yasmiṃ kāle kāyaduccaritādinā paṭipannā itthī bhavēyya. tadā na gato. itthiliṅgena uhate ti itthiliṅgasādena vitakkayate. mante niddiṭṭham ekattan ti ekavacanantena niddiṭṭhānam. sampādehi ti ādinan ti sāmāññabhūtakiriyāpade payujjamānavisesapadatthassa ekattā ekavacanantena niddiṭṭhānam sampādehi ti ādinam kiriyāpadānam. sampādehā ti ādinā ti sāmāññabhūtakiriyāpade payujjamānavisesapadatthassa bahutte sati bahuvacanantena niddiṭṭhānasampādehā ti ādinā uhate ti vuttam hoti. suttantassa piṭakattayassa pulliṅgādiekavacanabahuvacanādi uhanā ca saddānusāsana sādhanam nipphādanam.*

The meaning of *uhana* as adaptation refers specifically to the correct adaptation of mantras. Now, these mantras, according to the commentary, are *kāyaduccāritādinā*, which I understand in an expiatory sense, “due, for instance, to previous bodily misconduct.” That is to say, when a monk has committed a fault, he will recite a mantra. However, if it is a nun who has committed the fault, the mantra needs to be recited in the feminine, otherwise it will not take effect. Otherwise, we could simply understand, in a more general sense, that Pāli mantras (that is to say *kammaṭṭhānas* or meditation subjects) used to expiate infringements must be uttered with care in relation to the gender, the number, etc. of the words spoken. But that is not how I understand the commentary: “when it is a woman, i.e. in the occasion when a woman has committed bodily misconduct or any other offense” (*yadā itthī siyā ti yasmim kāle kāyaduccaritādinā paṭipannā itthī bhaveyya*). This discussion is not found in Kacc or Kacc-v.

What the *Kārikā* says here can only be fully understood as the Buddhist replica of the Sanskrit tradition. In the Sanskrit tradition, *ūha* is the proper attention to the correct pronunciation of Vedic mantras. The following is the definition given by Patañjali:

Certainly, the [suitable] adaptation [of a mantra according to the requirements of a particular ritual is] also [a use of grammar]. The mantras are not recited in the Veda in all genders and all case endings. And they have to be suitably adapted of necessity by the person in charge of the sacrifice. A non-grammarian cannot suitably adapt them. Therefore grammar must be studied.²⁰²

It is clear that Dhammasenāpati himself has “adapted” Patañjali’s theory to Buddhism. It is also clear that *uhana* is a purpose

202 Pasp 18: *ūhaḥ khalv api. na sarvair liṅgair na ca sarvābhir vibhaktibhir vede mantrā nigaditāḥ. te cāvaśyaṃ yajñagatena yathāyatham vipariṇamayitavyāḥ. tān nāvaiyākaraṇaḥ śaknoti yathāyatham vipariṇamayitum. tasmād adhyeyaṃ vyākaraṇam.*

connected with mantra recitation. The person in charge of the sacrifice is replaced, in Buddhism, by the person who sacrifices his or her own self, that is, the monk or nun, or lay follower of the Buddha. This passage reminds us of the interesting introduction to the *Suttaniddesa*, where the fifteenth-century Burmese grammarian Chapaṭa Saddhammajotipāla also argues that the goal of phonetics is the correct adaptation of the meditation mantras.²⁰³

Dhammasenāpati goes on to explain the purposes of *uhana* in greater detail:

*naccagītassa ādīnaṃ naccagīte ti ādīnā
sattamyantādi uhaṇaṃ uhaṇan ti pakāsitaṃ || 35 ||*²⁰⁴

Uhana is illustrated (*pakāsitaṃ*) as the [adequate] consideration on the seventh case, etc., by [understanding, for instance,] ‘in dance and singing’ instead of ‘of dance and singing.’

The key to this stanza is a reference to an example taken from *Apadāna* VIII, 10, 62:

*koṭisatasahassīyo parivāressanti accharā
kusalā naccagītassa vādite pi padakkhiṇā.*

Thousands of millions of *apsarases*, experts in dance and singing [lit. of dance and signing], and skilled in music too (*vādite pi*), will surround [you].²⁰⁵

This text is supposed to exemplify Kār 35. The first thing to be noted about this passage is that it is a canonical text without

²⁰³ See Pind 1996.

²⁰⁴ Kār-ṭ 341, 25–8: *naccagītassā ti ādīnaṃ chaṭṭhyantavasena niddiṭṭhānaṃ padānaṃ kusālā ti saddantarikasanniṭṭhānassa chekā ti atthāyattanayato naccagīte ti sattamyantena uhaṇaṃ vitakkaṇaṃ. uhaṇan ti pakāsitan ti uhaṇaṃ iti uhaṇānāma iti pakāsitaṃ.*

²⁰⁵ I would like to thank Chris Clark for helping me with the interpretation of this verse.

aṭṭhakathā or *īkā* commentary upon it. Dhammasenāpati therefore warns us that we need to learn grammar in order to be sufficiently equipped to understand such passages by ourselves. The commentary reads:

‘*Uhana*’ [means] considering (*vitakkaṇaṃ*) words expressed in the sixth case ending, such as *naccāgītassa*, in the seventh case ending, [i.e. as] ‘*naccāgīte*,’ because of the rule that relates the meaning ‘being able’ (*chekā ti*) to a word separated from it [i.e. *naccāgītassa*], namely *kusalā*. *Uhana* is illustrated, i.e. *uhana*, the term *uhana*, is illustrated.²⁰⁶

I could translate this passage but very literally, as the meaning is quite elusive. The point seems to be that a grammarian knows, without the help of the commentary, that *naccāgītassa* in the verse should be understood as *naccāgīte*, in the locative, as *vādite*, for they are complements of the adjective *kusalā*. This is clearly a new modality of *uhana* that has nothing to do with the Sanskrit model of Patañjali. In this case, instead of pronouncing it well, the rule is “understanding it well” even when it is not well pronounced.

Āgama (Tradition)

paramparānavacchinnaupadeso va āgamo
nikkāmajinadhammo so navaṅgajinasāsanam || 36 ||²⁰⁷

Tradition (*āgama*) is the uninterrupted instruction from one [teacher] to the other. The Dhamma of the Conqueror without desire, this is the Conqueror’s Teaching (*sāsanam*) of nine limbs.

²⁰⁶ See previous note for the Pāli text.

²⁰⁷ Kār-ṭ 341, 29–342, 4: *paramparānavacchinnaupadeso va āgamo ti paresaṃ ācariyānaṃ santatiyā paveniyā avacchinno upadeso va āgamissati ito ti atthasambandhena āgamo nāmā ti uccate. ettha upadeso nāma pekkhāpanaṃ puri-mapurimehi pacchimānaṃ saddassanaṃ. nikkāmajinadhammo ti nikkāmassa kilesakāmarahitassa jinassa vijitakilesassa buddhassa pariyattidhammo. so vedo navaṅgajinasāsanam ti vuccati.*

This stanza is the best example, in my opinion, of the mechanisms of cultural translation that operate in Kār. The verse states an obvious fact, namely that tradition is the uninterrupted transmission of the teachings that are, of course, the Dhamma of the Conqueror (*jīna*), i.e., the Buddha, in its “nine limbs” (an early, well-known division of the Buddhist literature).²⁰⁸ Now the interpretation of this verse changes dramatically if we compare it to what Patañjali states in MBh with regard to *āgama*:

Certainly, [complying with] a Vedic injunction also [is a use of grammar]. [For instance,] *brāhmaṇena niṣkāraṇo dharmah ṣaḍaṅgo vedo 'dhyeyo jñeyah* ‘a brahmin should [learn to] recite [and] should understand the Veda with its six ancillaries as his duty without motive [of gain].’ And among the six ancillaries, grammar is the most important one. An effort made regarding what is most important becomes fruitful.²⁰⁹

Dhammasenāpati has completely reworked Patañjali’s words. In Patañjali’s text, *niṣkāraṇo* refers to the “disinterested” pupil, but Kār has taken the same word in order to describe the Buddha (the teacher is disinterested, not the pupil). Similarly the six *vedāṅgas*, which are only satellite texts in Vedic literature, have been transformed into canonical parts: the nine *aṅgas* of the Pāli literature.

Noteworthy, as well, is the vocabulary used in Kār-ṭ: *āgama* is a *santati* “continuity,” and a *paveṇi* “lineage”: *paresaṃ ācariyānaṃ santatiyā paveṇiyā avachinno upadeso va āgamissati* (“the instruction itself will be transmitted without interruption by means of the continuity, i.e., by means of the lineage, of the others, i.e., of the teachers”). The *īkā* makes an even

208 Sp 28, 4: *kathaṃ [buddhavacanāṃ] aṅgavasena navavidhaṃ, sabbam eva hidaṃ suttam geyyam veyyākaraṇaṃ gāthā udānaṃ itivuttakaṃ jātakam abbhutadhammaṃ vedallaṃ ti navappabhedam hoti*. Cf. DOP sv *aṅga*.

209 Joshi and Roodbergen’s translation. Pasp 19: *āhamaḥ khalv api brāhmaṇena niṣkāraṇo dharmah ṣaḍaṅgo vedo'dhyeyo jñeya iti. pradhānaṃ ca ṣaṣṭvāṅgeṣu vyākaraṇam. pradhāne ca kṛto yatnaḥ phalavān bhavati*.

stronger claim when it says that the Dhamma of the *jīna*, called the *pariyattidhamma*, is a *vedo* “Veda” with nine *āṅgas* (instead of six).

*tadāgamajānanatthaṃ sikkhitabbaṃ hitesinā
veyyākaraṇanāṃ’ etaṃ niruttisaddalakkhaṇaṃ || 37 ||*²¹⁰

The one who aspires to welfare, in order to understand that tradition, should study this *nirutti*, the rules on speech-sounds, known as *veyyākaraṇa*.

*asaddikam anajjhānaṃ milakkhavadanaṃ yadi
anuvaditavākyattā*²¹¹ *bhikkhunā n’ opagamyate || 38 ||*²¹²

If a monk [uses] incorrect words, barbaric and unintelligible speech, on account repeatedly [uttering wrong] words, he will not learn.

My translation is based, again, on the commentary. The commentary specifies that *anajjhānaṃ* means “unintelligible” on account of being wrong speech deviating from correct usage. “Barbaric” (*milakkha*) means other than the *māgadhiḱā* language, that is to say any expression not suitable to “the words of the Buddha’s glorious lotus mouth.” “He will not learn” means that even though he may be devoted to the *sāsana*, he

210 Kār-ṭ 342, 5–11: *tadāgamajānanatthan* ti tassa sammāsambuddhato paṭṭhāya yāvajjatanā anavacchinnopadesassa navaṅgajinasāsanabhūtassa āgamassa jānanatthaṃ. *hitesinā* ti diṭṭhadhammikasamparāyika-attatthaparattasāṅkhātah-itagavesinā kūlaputtēna. *veyyākaraṇanāṃ’ etaṃ niruttisaddalakkhaṇaṃ* ti māgadhiḱabhāsābhāvato aviparītaniruttisaddānaṃ sādhalakkhaṇasahitaṃ etaṃ kaccāyanaveyyākaraṇaṃ *sikkhitabbaṃ* ti vuttaṃ hoti.

211 Kār-ṭ reads *anugahitavākyattā*.

212 Kār-ṭ 342, 12–8: *asaddikam* ti apasaddena niyuttaṃ susaddarahitaṃ ti attho. *anajjhānaṃ* ti susaddarahita-apasaddattā anajjhāyaṃ acintanīyaṃ. *milakkhavadanaṃ* ti sassirīkamukhapadumavivarato niggaṭṭabuddha vac-anānanukūlapaccantade savacanaṃ. māgadhiḱāya bhāsāya bahi bhūtaṃ ti attho. *yadi* ti saṃsayatthe nipāto. ce ti attho. *anugahitavākyattā* ti punappunam gahitabhāveṇa pavattavākyattā. *bhikkhunā n’ opagamyate* ti sāsane yuttapa-yuttēna bhikkhunā n’ opagamyate na sikkhate.

will not “attain,” i.e., he will not be trained (*na sikkhate*). This stanza is a recast of an idea formulated by Patañjali in the section on extra purposes of grammar (see below).²¹³

Lahūpāyo (Brevity of Method)

ato saddāpi nātabbā tesam nāṇe niruttito
*natthi añño lahupāyo sikkheyya saddalakkaṇaṃ || 39 ||*²¹⁴

Therefore even the [correct] words need to be learnt, and for knowing them there is no quicker method than the *nirutti*. [Therefore] one should study the rules on words (*saddalakkaṇaṃ*).

Paraphrasing the commentary once more, the meaning of this stanza is the following: because a monk who uses wrong words never becomes properly trained, a monk should learn the correct words, for they comply with the nature of the Māgadhī language (i.e. Pāli), and if one wishes to learn the correct words, there is no quicker method than *nirutti*.

The topic of this stanza is already found in the Mbh and taken up and elaborated by later grammarians. The Kār version is a metrical rendering of Patañjali’s words, and therefore it is hard to believe that Dhammasenāpati was unfamiliar with the following passage from Patañjali’s Mbh:

And grammar is also to be studied for the sake of simplicity. [An authoritative text says] *brāhmaṇenāvaśyaṃ śabdā jñeyāḥ* ‘a brahmin must necessarily understand the [correct] words.’ And without [the help of] grammar words cannot be understood by any easy means.²¹⁵

213 Pasp 4f.

214 Kār-1 342, 19–23: *ato ti yasmā milakkhavadānaṃ apasaddattā bhikkhunā na sikkhate. tasmā saddāpi nātabbā ti ete milakkhavadānaṃ apasaddā ete na sabhāvaniruttibhūtamāgadhikabhāvato yaṭi hi sotabbāpanetabbavibhāgaṃ katvā saddā nātabbā. nāṇe ti tesam saddānaṃ jānane. natthi ti niruttisatthato añño lahu upāyo na yujjati.*

215 Pasp 20: *laghvarthaṃ cādhyeyaṃ vyākaraṇaṃ. brāhmaṇenāvaśyaṃ śabdā jñeyā iti. na cāntareṇa vyākaraṇaṃ laghunopāyena śabdāḥ śakyā jñātum.*

One simply needs to replace *brāhmaṇena* with *bhikkhunā*. The idea of *lahūpaya* (“quick method”) is a reference to a well-known discussion in the Mbh where it is explained that the number of wrong words is infinite, and therefore it is quicker to learn the limited number of correct words. Knowing the correct words, one immediately knows that the rest are incorrect.

Asandeho (Removal of Doubt)

daṇḍīnaṃ āhareyyā ti sandeho jāyate tadā
*daṇḍīnaṃ dhanam āhara iti vutte na saṃsayo || 40 ||*²¹⁶

When doubt arises, as in an example such as *daṇḍīnaṃ āhareyya*, if one states it [in a different way, namely] *daṇḍīnaṃ dhanam āhara*, the doubt is removed.

If we follow the commentary, the problem in the word *daṇḍīnaṃ* is the ambiguity of the case ending after the suffix *ī* in *daṇḍī* (“policeman”).²¹⁷ This type of suffix follows the declension of the so-called *jha* endings (*i/ī* non-feminine endings).²¹⁸ After the *jha* stem *daṇḍī*, the suffix *aṃ* of the acc. sing., by Kacc 84 *agho rassam ekavacanayosu api ca*, prescribes the shortening of the thematic vowel: *daṇḍī -n- aṃ* > *daṇḍi -n- aṃ*. The suffix *naṃ* of the gen./dat. pl., by Kacc 89 *sunamhisu ca*, allows for a long *ī* before the plural suffixes *su*, *naṃ*, and *hi*: *daṇḍīnaṃ*. One may be confused, however, and think that the particle *ca* in the *sutta*, *sunamhisu ca* [Kacc 89] is retrieving

216 Kār-ṭ 342, 24–9: *sandeho jāyate tadā ti daṇḍīnaṃ āhareyyā ti vutte sandeho jāyate. tasmā katarassato jhato amvacanassa namādesakaraṇena. sunamhisu ce ti ettha sutte caggahananivattana-sunamhivibhattinimittarūpena missakattā. na saṃsayo ti daṇḍīnaṃ dhanam āharā ti vutte saṃsayo sandeho natthi. kasmā. sambandhivisesanadassanato.*

217 According to Kacc 368, *daṇḍādito ikā ī* “the suffixes *ika* and *ī* after words [of the group] beginning with *daṇḍa* [express the one who possesses it].” For instance, *daṇḍa* means “stick,” and *daṇḍī* means “the one who possesses a stick” i.e. a policeman.

218 Kacc 58.

the long *ī* prescribed in previous *suttas*, in which case even acc. sing. could be optionally derived as *daṇḍīnaṃ*.²¹⁹ This is not the case. A grammarian will gloss the sentence *daṇḍīnaṃ āhareyya* as follows: *daṇḍīnaṃ dhanam āhara* (“bring the money of [or to] the policemen”), giving an acc. sg. that will make clear that *daṇḍīnaṃ* is gen. dat. pl. How is the ambiguity removed? The commentary states: “because of the relationship between that which is related [i.e. the money] and the specific reality to which this is related [i.e. the policemen].”

In theory, however, only knowing that *daṇḍīnaṃ* with long *ī* can only be gen. dat. pl. would be enough. Moreover, the grammar of Kaccāyana fails to explain where the *-n-* in acc. sing. *daṇḍīnaṃ* comes from. But I think this is precisely the point of the controversy: in cases where the stem can be, for instance, *daṇḍi-* or *daṇḍin-*, the case ending *aṃ* after the stem *daṇḍin-* can be confused with the case ending *naṃ* after the stem *daṇḍi-*. A grammarian will know that, in the second case, the *i* will be lengthened: *daṇḍīnaṃ*.

The Fire of Understanding

Once the five purposes of grammar have been stated, the *Kārikā* closes the section by reminding us that knowledge without understanding is barren:

yam adhītaṃ aviññātaḍupadeso na vijjate
*anagginhi va sukkhindho na taṃ jalati katthaci || 41 ||*²²⁰

219 This interpretation goes against Kacc-v ad Kacc 89: *caggahaṇaṃ avadhāraṇatthaṃ* “the mention of *ca* is for the purpose of restriction (*avadhāraṇa*).” That is to say *ca* marks an exception (*apavāda*) to the shortening of the thematic vowel.

220 Kār-ṭ 342, 30–343, 6: *te evaṃ sandehe sati ācariyupadesena gammate ti dassetukāma’āha—yam adhītaṃ ti ādi yam adhītaṃ-la-vijjate ti yam aviññātaḍupabbaṃ adhītaṃ sikkhitam. te pubbācariyupadesena vijjate dissati. pubbācariyupadesena padantarena vijjati ti attho. kim iva. na agginhi ti sukkhe upanīte bāhira-aggimhi asati sukkhindho ti sukkhaṃ kaṭṭhādi-indhanaṃ jalati iva. na taṃ jalati katthaci ti tattheva taṃ anadhītaṃ aviññātaṃ katthaci thāne atthaṃ na jalati na pakāsayaṃti.*

That which is learnt [by a person] who has not understood the instruction cannot blaze, as dry wood cannot blaze anywhere without fire.

My translation does not follow the reading of the Burmese edition in Pāli, because it is flawed (perhaps because at some point the reference to Patañjali got lost). Indeed, the *īkā* seems to read: *yaṃ adhītaṃ aviññātaṃ upadesena vijjate*, for it says:

That which (*yaṃ*) has been studied (*adhītaṃ*), i.e. learned (*sikkhitam*) without previously understanding it (*aviññātapubbaṃ*), is found (*vijjate*), i.e. it is seen (*dissati*) by you (*te*) through the teaching of previous teachers (*pubbācariyupadesena*). That is to say (*ti attho*), it is learned by means of another word (*padantarena*), namely the teaching of previous teachers (*pubbācariyupadesena*).

The rest of the commentary is a simile that presents no further problems, especially because the image is very familiar. One could perhaps wonder why Dhammasenāpati uses a simile so charged with brahmanical ideology. *Indhana* is the dry wood or fuel that the young Brahmin disciple (the *brahmacārī*) offers to the master as a tuition fee. This tradition is the background that gives poetical force to this verse: if one approaches a Brahmin teacher in order to learn the Veda, but he does not understand what he learns, his knowledge will become useless, as the dry wood he brought to the master will be useless if there is no fire. Understanding is compared to fire, with all the very ancient reminiscences that fire awakens in Vedic culture (the first word of the *Ṛgveda* is *agnim*, “fire”). This stanza is literally borrowed from one of the examples that Patañjali quotes in his section on further uses of the study of grammar (Pasp 22). In this section, Patañjali explains that one also studies grammar in order not to speak barbarisms, in order to understand what is learned, in order that correct words will lead one to heaven, in order not to be addressed like women, in order that one becomes *ārtvijīna* (according to the commentator Kaiyaṭa, a person on

behalf of whom a rite is performed or the one who causes others to sacrifice),²²¹ in order to become like a mighty god, in order to become a lord of men, in order that Speech will reveal itself like a woman who strips naked in front of a desired husband, in order that speech becomes auspicious, in order to avoid expiation, in order to give proper names to one's own progeny, in order that we may become "truth-deities." These are all purposes that suit a Brahmin, but not all of them suit a Buddhist monk. That is why Dhammasenāpati has only preserved the following one:

*yad adhītam avijñātaṃ nigadenaiva śabdyate
anagnāo iva śuśkaīdho na taj jvalati karhicit.*

What has been recited [but] not understood [and] is merely mechanically uttered, that never blazes forth, like dry fuel on a non-fire.²²²

This stanza is found in the Mbh, but it is actually a quotation from Yāska's *Nirukta* (I, 18).²²³ We suppose that, as with the rest of the section, Dhammasenāpati has taken it from the MBh.

With the Sanskrit model in mind, we can go back to the Pāli text and compare: *aviññātad* has to be restored, as the *ṭīkā* suggests, to *aviññātam*. A copyist might have thought that the *m* was a glide, and he replaced it with another glide, *d*, as is frequently the case. The Sanskrit *nigadena* ("with mechanical recitation") has been replaced with *upadesena* (if we follow the *ṭīkā*, not the *mūla*, which is wrong). *Upadesa* literally means "by instruction." The verb *śabdyate* ("is uttered") is changed to *vijjate* ("is found" or simply "is"; or perhaps from *√vid* "is known" "is learned"). The emended text would read:

yaṃ adhītaṃ aviññātaṃ upadesena vijjate ...

What is memorized by [mere] instruction, but not understood ...

221 Joshi and Roodbergen 1986: 51.

222 Translation by Joshi and Roodbergen 1986: 42.

223 *Nirukta* reads *grhītaṃ* for *adhītaṃ*.

This version makes more sense than the text we find in the Burmese edition. The exegesis of Kār-ṭ, however, is very far from the explanation of Patañjali. According to Patañjali, if one learns a Vedic mantra without understanding it, its recitation will not produce any effect. The Pāli commentary has readjusted the parameters. When glossing *upadesena* (“by instruction”), Dhammasenāpati tries to give a new meaning to the stanza:

pubbācariyupadesena padantarena ti attho

[“by instruction”], that is to say by another word, namely the instruction of ancient masters.

I think this is how we need to understand *padantarena* (Skt. *padāntareṇa*). The point is that if one learns through “instruction,” i.e., through “the word of someone else,” without understanding it, the effort in the discipline is in vain. This is again a reminder that, as Aggavaṃsa declares at the end of the *Saddanīti*, *pariyatti* (the study of the texts) is the authentic root of the *sāsana*. Grammar is the means to correctly understand the texts. This is the understanding that buttresses the effectiveness of the practice. With the assistance of grammar, the texts can be learned in such a way that the practice (*paṭipatti*) becomes fruitful, and insight (*paṭivedha*) into the highest truth becomes finally possible.

Concluding Remarks

In the beginning of this article, I have revised the current views on the role of Pāli grammar in Pagan Burma. Whereas all scholars agree that Pāli grammatical literature is extraordinarily vast in Burma, their explanation of this phenomenon differs. In all cases, however, scholars have tended to elaborate their theories without taking into account the actual texts. A reading of the primary sources has revealed that the connections between Pāli grammar in Burma and the Indian tradition go beyond the technicalities of grammar. The connection has to do with deeper cultural influences. Indeed, Pāli

grammar is considered a discipline that is closely related to the study of the religious texts. As I have shown with the examples from the *Saddatthabhedacintā* and the *Kārikā*, the role of Pāli grammar in Burma was not simply to facilitate linguistic comprehension, but to provide an instrument of doctrinal exegesis, a well-rounded scholastic training. This instrument was highly needed, because Theravāda Buddhism is a Buddhist tradition that bestows a transcendental importance to the texts: they are considered the verbal embodiment of the Dhamma. This belief is vividly illustrated in the late Burmese chronicles when they narrate the establishment of Theravāda Buddhism in Pagan as a struggle for textual authenticity. Even if the late narratives are not strictly historical, there is something in the grammatical texts that makes these narratives quite credible.

In examining some grammatical portions, I have also shed light on their immense richness in terms of linguistic and philosophical debate. Such discoveries can be made by studying the ocean of so-called ancillary texts written in medieval Burma. Reading them as what they really are: Buddhist literature. The fact that they are difficult and highly technical does not make them less Buddhist and less Burmese. In sum, if we overlook the grammatical mass of literature in Burma, we run the risk of overlooking an essential feature of the Burmese intellectual tradition.

Acknowledgements

I would like to thank the Fundació La Caixa, the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin, the Rapson Fund in Cambridge, and the Robert H.N. Ho Family Foundation for funding the research that has led to this article's publication. I am also grateful to my supervisor Eivind Kahrs, Alastair Gornall, William Pruitt, Jim Benson, Rupert Gethin, Petra Kieffer-Pülz, and Bryan Levman for helping me improve the manuscript. This article is dedicated to Lilian Handlin.

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Abbreviations

Abhid-s	Abhidhammatthasaṅgaha
Aṣṭ	Aṣṭādhyāyī
DN-a	Dīghanikāya-aṭṭhakathā = Sumaṅgalavilāsini
DOP	A Dictionary of Pāli
Gv	Gandhavamsa
JPTS	Journal of the Pāli Text Society
Kacc	Kaccāyana
Kacc-v	Kaccāyana-vutti
Kāt	Kātantra
Kāt-ṭ	Kātantra-ṭikā
Kāt-v	Kātantra-vṛtti
Kār	Kārikā
Kār-ṭ	Kārikā-ṭikā
Mbh	Mahābhāṣya
Mmd	Mukhamattadīpanī
Mmd-pt	Mukhamattadīpanī-porāṇa-ṭikā
Mogg	Moggallāna
Nidd-a	Niddesa-aṭṭhakathā = Saddhammapajotikā
Nir	Nirukta
Pasp	Paspaśāhnika
Piṭ-s	Piṭakat-to-samuṇṇa
Ṛg-Pr	Ṛgveda Prātiśākhya
Sadd	Saddanīti
SBC	Saddatthabhedacintā
SBC-nṭ	Saddatthabhedacintā-navaṭikā (= Dīpanī)
SBC-pt	Saddatthabhedacintā-porāṇa-ṭikā
Sp	Samantapāsādikā
VāPr	Vājasaneyi Prātiśākhya
Vibh-a	Vibhaṅga-aṭṭhakathā = Sammohavinodanī

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