Ambaṭṭha Sutta

The Ambaṭṭha Discourse

[Religious arrogance versus spiritual openness]

(Dīgha Nikāya 3/1:87-110) Translated by Piya Tan ©2007

Fig 4.2b. Iconographical evolution of the Greek Herakles into the Japanese Shukongoshin. (1) **Herakles** (Louvre Museum); (2) **Herakles** on coin of Graeco-Bactrian king Demetrius I; (3) **Vajrapani**, the protector of the Buddha, depicted as Herakles in the Graeco-Buddhist art of Gandhara; (4) **Naraen Kongō** 那羅延金剛, manifestation of Vajrapani, as a protector deity of the Asakusa-ji in Japan.
Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Heracles-Shukongoshin.JPG.

Fig 4.2a. Greek scroll supported by Indian Yaksha, Amaravati, 3rd cent CE, Tokyo National Museum**.**

Fig 5a. The woman (r) is described in §2.10a**.** The woman wears a very elaborate headdress and necklace, a skirt from the waist to the ankles, and a very broad girdle over her hips over the skirt. Detail from bas-relief on Bharhut Stupa, India (200 BCE).

Fig 5b (see §1.2.10a). Vessantara in his chariot, the kind of chariot used by Ambaṭṭha. Notice the plumes on the horses' heads, and their elaborately plaited manes and tails. (Bharhut Stupa panel, India, 200 BCE)

The Ambaṭṭha Discourse

(D 3/1:87-110)

[87] **1.1a** Thus have I heard.

At one time, the Blessed was walking on a Dharma tour in Kosala country[1] with a large company of monks numbering some five hundred. And he arrived at the brahmin village called Icchā,naṅgala.[2] There the Blessed One stayed in the Icchā,naṅgala jungle[3] outside Icchā,naṅgala.

Pokkhāra,sāti

1.1b Now at that time, the brahmin Pokkhāra,sāti[4] was staying in Ukkaṭṭhā,[5] teeming with life,[6] with grass, wood and water, with rice, a royal domain presented (to him) by Pasenadi, the rajah of Kosala, as a royal gift, a brahmadeya [a fief].[7]

1.2a Now the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti heard thus:

"It is said that the recluse Gotama,[8] the Sakya son, who went forth from a Sakya family, is wandering (on a Dharma-tour) in Kosala country with a large number of monks numbering some five hundred, has arrived at Icchā,naṅgala, staying in the Icchā,naṅgala jungle outside Icchā,naṅgala."

1.2b Now a good report about that Master Gotama has been going around thus:[9]

"The Blessed One is an arhat, fully self-awakened, accomplished in wisdom and conduct, well-farer, knower of worlds, peerless guide of tamable people, teacher of gods and humans, awakened, blessed.

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[1] Kosala is one of the 16 "great countries" (*mahā,janapada*) of ancient India of the Buddha's time: see SD 9 Intro (16a) & also http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mahajanapadas.

[2] **Icchānaṅgala** is a brahmin village in Kosala, prob near to Pokkhara,sāti's fief of Ukkaṭṭhā, and a residence for brahmins of "great halls." **Sutta Nipāta** (calling it Icchā,naṅkala) mentions prominent brahmins such as Caṅkī, Tārukkha, Pokkhara,sāti, Jāṇussoṇi and Todeyya, as living there (Sn p115). The famous learned brahmin youths Vāseṭṭha and Bhāra,dvāja brahmin youths live there, too (**Vāseṭṭha S,** Sn p115 f = M 2:196). Buddhaghosa says that learned brahmins of Kosala meet every 6 months under Pokkhara,sāti at Ukkhaṭṭhā for bloodline cleansing (*jāti,-sodhanatthaṁ*), or at Icchānaṅgala for Veda recital and interpretation (MA 3:341). **The Icchā,naṅgala S** (S 54.11) records the Buddha's 3-month rains retreat there in near-solitude, visited only by a monk attendant who brings him almsfood (S 54.11/5:325-327). However, apparently, his stay is not so peaceful, as excited Icchā,naṅgala residents would visit him in noisy droves, so that he has to send Nāgita (his attendant then) to quieten them down (A 5.30/-3:30-32; cf A 6.42/3:341, 6.86/4:340-344).

[3] "Jungle," *vana,saṇḍa,* or "dense woods, jungle thicket."

[4] Be Ce Se *Pokkhara,sāti*; Ee *Pokkhara,sādi.*

[5] See Intro (1.2), sv Ukkaṭṭhā.

[6] *Satt'ussadaṁ = satta + ussada,* lit "abundance of beings," ie densely populated with humans and animals. Comy however refers only to humans: "'***satt'ussada*** means crowded with beings, teeming with the masses, an abundance of humans" (***satt'ussadan*** *ti sattehi ussadaṁ, ussannaṁ bahu,janaṁ ākiṇṇa,manussaṁ,* DA 245,20).

[7] *Ukkaṭṭhaṁ ajjhāvasati satt'ussadaṁ sa,tiṇa,kaṭṭh'odakaṁ sa,dhaññaṁ rāja,bhoggaṁ rañña Pasenadinā Kosalena dinnaṁ rājadāyaṁ brahma,deyyaṁ.* This is stock with differing locations and donors: **Ambaṭṭha S** (*Icchā,naṅgalaṁ…rañña Pasenadi,kosalena,* D 3.1.1/1:87), **Soṇa,daṇḍa S** (*Campaṁ…rañña Māgadhena Seniyena Bimbisārena,* D 1.1/1:111, 1.4/114), **Kūṭa,danta S** (*Khāṇu,mataṁ…rañña Māgadhena Seniyena Bimbisārena,* D 5.1/1:127, 131), **Lohicca S** (*Sāla,vatikaṁ… rañña Pasenadi,kosalena,* D 7.1/1:224), **Pāyāsi S** (*Setavyāyaṁ… rañña Pasenadi,kosalena,* D 23.1/2:316); **Caṅkī S** (*Opasādaṁ... rañña Pasenadinā Kosalena,* M 95.1/2:164, 95.8/166); cf **Amba,sakkhara Pv**: *satt'ussadaṁ nirayaṁ,* "a hell crowded with beings" (Pv 4.1.8/46). ***Brahma,deyya,*** (Skt *brahma,deya*) "a supreme gift," ie land granted to brahmins by the rajah of Kosala and of Magadha for perpetuity. Unlike donated monastic lands, which are the corporate property of the "sangha of the four directions," the brahmadeya is the brahmin's personal property or fief, which he uses for agriculture. In the case of Kūṭa,danta, for example, we see him using such income to perform a large sacrifice (D 5/1:127-149 = SD 22.8). See Uma Chakravarti 1987:57.

[8] This is a stock passage to show that the brahmin householders are well acquainted with the Buddha's background. This paragraph denotes the Buddha's social status (in the minds of the brahmins and the world), which adds a significant sense of charisma to his personality.

[9] For details on the recollection of the Buddha's virtues, see ***Buddhânussati*** = SD 15.7.

Having realized by his own direct knowledge this world with its gods, its Māras and its Brahmās, this generation with its recluses and brahmins, its rulers and people, he makes it known to others.

He teaches the Dharma, good in the beginning, good in the middle, good in the end, both in the spirit and in the letter. **[88]**

He proclaims the holy life that is entirely complete and pure.

It is good to see arhats such as these."[10]

Pokkhara,sāti sends Ambaṭṭha to see the Buddha

1.3 Now at that time, the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti had a brahmin youth (*māṇava*), Ambaṭṭha, as his resident student, a mantra-reciter,[11] a mantra-expert, a master of the Three Vedas, along with their invocations and rituals, phonology and etymology, and the Iti,hāsa Purāṇas[12] as the fifth; learned in the vedic padas,[13] grammarian,[14] and well versed in the Lokāyata [nature-lore][15] and the marks of the great man[16]—so that he is accepted and acknowledged by the words of his own noble [aryan] masters of the Three Vedas, thus: "What I know, you know that, too; what you know, I know that, too."[17]

1.4a Then the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti addressed the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha,

"It is said, dear[18] Ambaṭṭha, that the recluse Gotama, the Sakya son, who went forth from a Sakya family, is wandering (on a Dharma-tour) in Kosala country with a large number of monks numbering some five hundred, has arrived at Icchā,naṅgala, staying in the Icchā,naṅgala jungle outside Icchā,naṅgala."

1.4b Now, a good report about that Master Gotama has been going around thus:

'The Blessed One is an arhat, fully self-awakened, accomplished in wisdom and conduct, well-farer, knower of worlds, peerless guide of tamable people, teacher of gods and humans, awakened, blessed.

Having realized by his own direct knowledge this world with its gods, its Māras and its Brahmās, this generation with its recluses and brahmins, its rulers and people, he makes it known to others.

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[10] *Sādhu kho pana tathā,rūpānaṁ arahataṁ dassanaṁ hotî ti. Arahataṁ* is 3 gen pl. For details on this statement, see **Kesa,puttiya S** (A 3.65/1:188-193) = SD 35.4a (comy n 1d).

[11] "A mantra-reciter…the marks of the great man": *ajjhāyako manta,dharo tiṇṇaṁ vedānaṁ pāragū sa,nighaṇḍu,keṭubhānaṁ sākkhara-p,pabhedānaṁ iti,hāsa,pañcamānaṁ padako veyyākaraṇo lokāyata,mahā.purisa.lakkhaṇesu anavayo*; this is stock: **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3.3/1:88), **Soṇa,daṇḍa S** (D 4.14/1:121), **Kūṭa,danta S** (D 5.6(7)/-1:130); **Ti,kaṇṇa S** (A 3.58.1/1:163), **(Tevijja) Jāṇussoṇī S** (A 3.59.1/1:166), **Doṇa S** (A 5.192.2/3:223); cf Tha 1171 ("expert in the Three Vedas," *tiṇṇaṁ vedāna pāragu*); also Miln 10, Divy 619.20, 620.19. Here *mantra* refers to a particular vedic hymn or sacrificial formula. *Ajjhāyaka* (Skt *ādhyāyika, adhyāyin*) is a vedic student or scholar, one skilled in reciting the Vedas, a brahminical teacher. **The Aggañña S** (D 27) plays a humorous pun on its etym: *na…jhāyanti*, "they do not meditate," hence they are called *ajjhāyaka,* ie non-meditators: see D 27.23/3:94 = SD 2.19.

[12] Iti,hāsa Purāṇas are the oral tradition of brahminical legends of kings and sages.

[13] *Padako veyyākaraṇo,* ie, well versed in the *pada,pāṭha* of Sanskrit grammar. Technically, this refers to the *pada* (or literal, word for word) method of reciting (or writing) Veda sentences, ie, "a method of arranging each word of a Vedic text separately in its original form [cf *pada*] without regard to the rules of [sandhi]; cf *krama-* and *saṁhitā-pāṭha*." (SED). By itself, *pada* can here be translated as "word or word structure."

[14] On *veyyākaraṇa,* see BHSD: sv *vyākaraṇa, = vaiyākaraṇa* (p517).

[15] *Lokāyata*. This seems to be the early meaning of the term. Its reference of the materialistic philosophy of Cārvāka is apparently later: see Rhys Davids, D:RD 1:166-172. See **Lokāyatikā Brāhmaṇā S** (A 9.38/4:428-432) = SD 35.15. See also Jayatilleke 1963:48-58 (§§55-67).

[16] For details, see ***Buddhânussati*** = SD 15.7(4.1)n.

[17] *Yam ahaṁ jānāmi taṁ tvaṁ jānasi, yaṁ tvaṁ jānāsi tam ahaṁ jānāmî ti.* Cf Āḷāra Kālāma's words to the Bodhisattva on completion of the latter's training: "Thus, the Dharma that I know, you too know that same Dharma; the Dharma that you know, I too know that same Dharma" (*iti yâhaṁ dhammaṁ jānāmi taṁ tvaṁ dhammaṁ jānāmi, yaṁ tvaṁ dhammaṁ jānāsi tam ahaṁ dhammaṁ jānāmi,* M 26.15c/1:165 = SD 1.11) & Uddaka Rāma,putta's words on a similar occasion: "Thus, the Dharma that Rāma knew, you too know that same Dharma; the Dharma that you know, Rāma too knew that same Dharma" (*iti yaṁ dhammaṁ Rāmo abhiññāsi taṁ dhammaṁ jānāsi, yaṁ tvaṁ dhammaṁ jānāsī, taṁ dhammaṁ Rāmo abhiññāsi,* M 26.16c/1:166 = SD 1.11).

[18] *Tata.*

He teaches the Dharma, good in the beginning, good in the middle, good in the end, both in the spirit and in the letter.

He proclaims the holy life that is entirely complete and pure.

It is good to see arhats such as these.'

1.4c Now, dear Ambaṭṭha, you go to the ascetic Gotama. Having gone to the ascetic Gotama, find out whether the word going around about the master Gotama is true or not, whether the master Gotama is such or not. Thus will I know the truth about the master Gotama."

1.5 "But how, sir,[19] will I know whether the word going around about the master Gotama is true or not, whether the master Gotama is such or not?"

Dear Ambaṭṭha, in the mantras that have been handed down to us, there are the thirty-two marks of the great man.

Such a great man thus endowed have only two destinies, no other. If they live a household life, they will become a just Dharma-rajah of the four quarters, conqueror with a country blessed with stability, possessor of these seven jewels, **[89]** that is to say: the wheel jewel, the elephant jewel, the horse jewel, the gem jewel, the woman jewel, the householder jewel, and the advisor jewel as the seventh.[20]

And he has more than a thousand sons, brave, heroic in form, crushing the armies of others.

And he dwells over this earth bound by the ocean, holding it in his sway with neither rod nor sword.[21]

If he were to go forth from the house into the houseless state, he will become the fully self-awakened Buddha, who removes the veil over the world.

Dear Ambaṭṭha, I am a giver of mantras; you are a receiver of mantras."

Ambaṭṭha goes to see the Buddha

1.6 "Yes, sir," the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha replied the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti. Rising from his seat, he saluted the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti, circumambulated him and then mounted a chariot drawn by mares; and together with some brahmin youths, departed for dense forest outside Icchā,naṅgala. When he has gone as far as his chariot could go, he descended from the vehicle and, proceeding on foot, entered the park.

1.7 Now at that time, some monks were walking up and down[22] in the open air.

Then the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha approached the monks, and having approached, said this to the monks:

"Sirs, where is master Gotama dwelling now? We have come here to see master Gotama."

1.8 Then the monks thought:

"This brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is from a distinguished family and is a resident pupil of the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti. But the Blessed One will have no difficulty holding a conversation with such a son of family.

They said this to the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha:

"Ambaṭṭha, there is that dwelling place [vihara][23] with its doors shut. Go up to it with little sound, enter the porch softly, then give a cough and knock on the crossbar. The Blessed One will open the door for you."

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[19] *Bho.* In Buddhist literature, this is regarded as a neutral, albeit slightly condescending, mode of address, usu used by brahmins with equals to others as a polite vocative. In brahminical literature, however, *bhoḥ* (tr as "hey, you!") is a disrespectful mode of address, often used in anger. The polite form would be the obsequious *ārya*. The Mahābharata, describing the social upheavels in the Kāli,yuga (end of times), say: *bho,vādinas tathā śūdrā brāhmaṇāś câr̥ya,vādinaḥ*, tr by JAB van Buitenen as "The serfs [= Śūdras] will say 'Hey you!,' the brahmins will say 'Pray, sir!'" (3.186.33). See Olivelle 1999:58 f.

[20] *Āgatāni kho tāta Ambaṭṭha amhākaṃ mantesu dvattiṃsa,mahā.purisa,lakkhaṇāni yehi samannāgatassa mahā,purisassa dve'va gatiyo bhavanti anaññā: sace agāraṁ ajjhāvasati rājā hoti cakka,vatti dhammiko dhamma,-rājā cātur-anto vijitāvī janapada-t,thāvariya-p,patto satta,ratana,samannāgato. Tass'imāni satta,ratanāni bhavanti. Szeyyathîdaṁ cakka,ratanaṁ hatthi,ratanaṁ assa,ratanaṁ maṇi,ratanaṁ itthi,ratanaṁ gaha.pati,ratanaṁ pari-nāyaka,ratanam eva sattamaṁ*. See **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3.1.5/1:88 f) = **Mahâpadāna S** (D 14.1.31/2:16 f) = **Sela S (**Sn p106; cf SnA 450 = DA 1:250); for details, see **Mahā Sudassana S** (D 17.1.7-17/2:172-177); cf Miln 37 f; Divy 467.012-016.

[21] *So imaṁ pathaviṁ sāgara,pariyantaṁ adaṇḍena asatthena dhammena abhivijiya ajjhāvasati.*

[22] *Caṅkamanti,* ie either exercising themselves or doing walking meditation.

1.9a Then brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha, having approached the dwelling place [vihara] with its doors shut. Having approached it with little sound, he entered the porch softly, then gave a cough and knocked on the crossbar. The Blessed One opened the door.

The brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha entered. The brahmin youths, too, entered,[24] and then exchanged friendly words and cordial greetings[25] with the Blessed One. When the friendly greetings were concluded, the brahmin youths sat down at one side.

1.9b But the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha, walking up and down, exchanged various cordial greetings with the Blessed One **[90]** who was seated down, or, while standing, exchanged various cordial greetings with the Blessed One who was seated down.[26]

1.10a Then the Blessed One said this to the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha:

"Ambaṭṭha, is that how you would hold a conversation with old and aged teachers and teachers of your teachers, that is to say, walking and standing, exchanged various cordial greetings?"

Ambaṭṭha's first talk on the "menials"

1.10b "Certainly not, master Gotama! It is proper, master Gotama, *only for a brahmin* to converse while walking *with another brahmin* who is walking, too; or, it is proper, master Gotama, *only for a brahmin* to converse while standing *with another brahmin* who is standing, too; or, it is proper, master Gotama, *only for a brahmin* to converse while sitting *with another brahmin* who is sitting, too.

But, master Gotama, as for shavelings, little ascetics, menials, blacks, born of the feet of our Kinsman (Mahā Brahmā), I would converse with them just as I now do with master Gotama!"[27]

1.11 "Now, Ambaṭṭha, you must have a purpose in coming here. If you have come with a purpose, Ambaṭṭha, you should direct your mind well to that purpose. This master Ambaṭṭha, accomplished in conceit, surely is lacking [unfinished] in his training. For, what else could it be but for the lack of training?"[28]

1.12 Then, the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha, being angered and displeased at being called one lacking in training by the Blessed One, becoming spiteful, contemptuous, said this to the Blessed One:

"Fierce, master Gotama, is the Sakya breed! Harsh, master Gotama, is the Sakya breed! Touchy, **[91]** master Gotama, is the Sakya breed! Violent, master Gotama, is the Sakya breed! Menial, master Gotama,

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[23] *Vihāro,* here referring to a simple monastic cell, not the elaborate building of later times.

[24] Either the Buddha's dwelling place (vihara) was spacious enough to all the brahmins youths, or only some of them entered his quarters.

[25] *Sammodiṁsu sammodanīyaṁ kathaṁ sārāṇīyaṁ vītisāretvā,* lit "they greeted (the Blessed One); having exchanged complimentary talk that gladdens…" The phrase *sammodiṁsu sammodanīyaṁ kathaṁ sārāṇīyaṁ vītisāreti* is stock: D 1:52, 90, 118, 152; M 1:16 (*anussariyamāna,sukhato* ***sārāṇīyaṁ***, "'gladdening,' on account of recollecting happiness," MA 1:110); A 1:55, 281, 2:42; Sn 419; (cf BHS *saṁmukhaṃ saṁmodanīṁ saṁrañjanīṁ vividhāṁ kathāṁ vyatisārya,* Divy 43.8, 47.19, 96.26, 318.16; *saṁmodanīṁ saṁrañjanīṃ vividhāṃ kathāṃ vyatisāryaikānte 'sthāt*, Avdś 1.229, 2:140); *sārāṇīyaṁ kathaṁ katheti,* DhA 1:107.4:87; (cf BHS *saṁrañjanīyaṁ dharmaṁ samādāya,* Divy 260.7).

[26] *Ambaṭṭho pana māṇavo caṅkamanto'pi nisinnena bhagavatā kañci kañci kathaṁ sārāṇīyaṁ vītisāreti. Ṭhito 'pi nisinnena bhagavatā kañci kañci kathaṁ sārāṇīyaṁ vītisāreti.* See Intro 3.2 n foll [§1.9b].

[27] *Ye ca kho te, bho Gotama, mundakā samanakā ibbhā kanhā bandhu,pādâpaccā, tehi'pi me saddhim evaṁ kathā,sallāpo hoti, yatha-r-iva bhotā Gotamenâ ti.* The underscored words—meaning, "shavelings, little [false] ascetics, menials, blacks, born of the feet of the Kinsman (Mahā Brahmā)"—are contemptuous epithets brahmins often use for non-brahmins, esp monks, shudras and outcastes: D 1:90, 103; M 1:334; S 4:117. Although Comys generally equate *bandhu* (Kinsman) with Mahā Brahmā (eg DA 1:254), for the brahmins the term actually refers to Puruṣa, the cosmic man, as mentioned in **Puruṣa Sūkta,** hymn 10.90 of the Ṛgveda. *Ibbha* is a general contemptuous term for non-brahmins, as the ancient imperial Chinese regarded non-Chinese as "devils," the Jews regarded others as "gentiles" (Hebrew *goyim*, sg *goy*), or the fundamental Christians regarded non-believers as "heathens."

[28] *Atthikavato kho pana te, Ambaṭṭha, idh'āgamanaṁ ahosi, yāy'eva kho pan'atthāya āgaccheyyātha* [Ce Ee *āgaccheyyātho*], *tam eva atthaṁ sādhukaṁ manasi kareyyātha* [Ce Ee *manasikareyyātho*]. *Avusitavā yeva kho pana bho ayaṁ Ambaṭṭho māṇavo vusita,mānī kim aññatra avusitattâ ti.* Notice the Buddha's directness, which reflects his serious view on proper spiritual training. Cf ChU 5.3.4, where rajah Jaivali charges Śveta,ketu that he is "not *anuśiṣṭhaḥ*" (ie uneducated) and Śveta,ketu feels *āyasta* (hurt, crestfallen, and angered).

is the Sakya breed! That the ascetics do not honour brahmins, that they do not respect brahmins, that they do not esteem brahmins, that they do not revere brahmins, that they do not worship brahmins!

This, master Gotama, is not fitting! This is improper! That these Sakyas, being menials, that these ascetics, being menials, do not honour brahmins, do not respect brahmins, do not esteem brahmins, do not revere brahmins, do not worship brahmins!"

Thus, the brahmin youth, for the first time, charged the Sakyas with talk of being menials.

Ambaṭṭha's second talk on the "menials"

1.13 "How now, Ambaṭṭha, have the Sakyas offended you?"

"Once, master Gotama, on a certain business of my teacher, the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti, I went to Kapilavatthu.

I approached the assembly-hall of the Sakyas. Now at that time, some Sakyas, both old and young, seated on high seats, were jestfully and playfully finger-poking one another. They were obviously ridiculing me, I'm sure! No one offered me a seat!

That, master Gotama, is not fitting! That is improper! That these Sakyas, being menials, that these ascetics, being menials, do not honour brahmins, do not respect brahmins, do not esteem brahmins, do not revere brahmins, do not worship brahmins!"

Thus, the brahmin youth, for the second time, charged the Sakyas with talk of being menials.

Ambaṭṭha's third talk on the "menials": the quails

1.14 "Ambaṭṭha, even quails, little birds as they are, chatter as they wish in their nest. What more of the Sakyas, Ambaṭṭha, in their own Kapilavatthu! It is not worthy of the venerable Ambaṭṭha to take offence of such a minor thing."

1.15 "There are these four classes, master Gotama: the brahmins, the kshatriya, the vaishyas, and the shudras. Of these four classes, master **[92]** Gotama, three happen to be merely servants of the brahmins.

Master Gotama, it is not fitting! It is improper! That these Sakyas, being menials, that these ascetics, being menials, do not honour brahmins, do not respect brahmins, do not esteem brahmins, do not revere brahmins, do not worship brahmins!"

Thus, the brahmin youth , for the third time, charged the Sakyas with talk of being menials.

The slave's son

1.16a Then it occurred to the Blessed One:

"This brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is very set on putting down the Sakyas with talk of menials. What now if I were to question regarding his clan [gens]?"

Then the Blessed One said this to the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha:

"Ambaṭṭha, what is your clan?"

"I am of the Kaṇhâyana [Kṛṣṇâyana] clan, master Gotama."

"Now, Ambaṭṭha, following your ancient name and clan, on your mother's and father's sides, there are Sakya noble sons [sons of the masters]; but *you* are a Sakya's slave-girl's son [descendent].[29] But the Sakyas, Ambaṭṭha, regard the rajah Okkāka as their ancestor.

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[29] *Porāṇaṁ kho pana te Ambaṭṭha mātā,pettikaṁ nāma,gottaṁ anussarato, ayya,puttā Sakyā bhavanti, dāsi,-putto tvam asi Sakyānaṁ.* CPD defines ***ayya,putta*** (Skt *ārya,putra*) as follow: (1) a young master, "the son of the house"; (2) a husband; (3) a venerable person; a prince. Here, its opp seems to be *dāsi,putta:* D 3.1.22/1:95,30. In "but you are a Sakya's slave-woman's son," "son" has a generic sense, meaning "descendent," as at **Sambula J** (J 519/5:94), where *ayya,putta* = *ayya* ("gentleman, lord"); PvA 66. As a suffix, *-putta* should be tr contextually, as in *gaha.pati,putta,* which can be "householder's son" (when paired with *gaha,pati:* **Sāmaññ a,phala S,** D 2.41/1:62; **Kandaraka S**, M 51.13/1:344; **Yamaka S,** S 22.85/3:112); or "young householder" (**Sigāl'ovāda S,** D 31.1/3:180); **Soṇa S 1,** S 22.40/3:48); cf *deva,putta,* "young deva" (D 2:12, 14; S 1:46 f, 216 f, 4:289; A 1:278; It 76); or simply as "a member of a *gaha,pati* clan" or pleonastically, as "householder" (**Kevaḍḍha S,** D 11.1/1:211; *bhaṇḍāgāriko ~o,* "a treasurer who is a householder," Comy on **Tiro,kuḍḍa S,** PvA 20 f). This usage is esp common in late literature, eg *ludda,putta* ("hunter's son = hunter," **Kuruṅga Miga J,** J 206/2:154).

1.16b THE SAKYA LINEAGE. Once upon a time, Ambaṭṭha, **the rajah Okkāka**[30] had a beloved and dear queen.[31] Out of the desire to transfer the royal succession to her son, he banished his elder children —Okkā,mukha [Ukkā,mukha], Karakaṇḍu [Karakaṇḍa], Hatthinika [Hatthinīya], and Sini,sura [Sīni,-pura]—from the country. Being thus banished, they took up dwelling in a great forest of teak trees on the shore of a lake on the Himalayan foothills.

Out of the fear of breaking of their bloodline (*jāti*), they intermarried [cohabited] with their own sisters.[32]

Then, Ambaṭṭha, the rajah Okkāka addressed his palace ministers:

'Where, sirs, do the princes dwell[33] now?'

'Your majesty, there is a great teak (*saka*) forest on the shore of a lake on the Himalayan foothills[34] —the princes are there now. Out of the fear of breaching their bloodline, they have intermarried [cohabited] with their own (*sakāhi*) sisters."

Then the rajah Okkāka made this inspired utterance (*udāna*): **[93]**

'*Sakya* (teak) indeed, sirs, are the princes! Perfectly *sakya* (their own), sirs, are the princes!'

1.16c AMBAṬṬHA'S DESCENT. Now, Ambaṭṭha, there was a slave girl of Okkāka, named Disā. She gave birth to a child name Kaṇha [Black].[35] As soon as Kaṇha was born, he uttered,

'Wash me, mother! Bathe me, mother! Free me from this impurity! So that I shall be of use to you.'

Ambaṭṭha, just as today, people perceiving goblins [demons] recognize them as 'Goblins (*pisāca*)!' even so, then, Ambaṭṭha, people then perceiving goblins, recognize them as 'the dark ones (*kaṇhā*)!'

They spoke thus:

'It speaks as soon as it is born! A dark one is born! A goblin is born!'

Thenceforth, Ambaṭṭha, the Kaṇhâyanā [Kṛṣṇâyanā][36] came into being, and he is the ancestor of the Kaṇhâyanas.

So it was then, Ambaṭṭha, following your ancient name and clan, on your mother and father sides, there were noble sons of the Sakyas. You were the son of a slave girl of the Sakyas."

The Buddha consults the brahmin youths

1.17 When this was spoken, the brahmin youths said this to the Blessed One:

"Let not master Gotama humiliate Ambaṭṭha so harshly with talk of a slave girl's son. Well born, master Gotama, and the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is a householder's son, and the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is deeply learned, and the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is one with a fine voice [the instrument of the Good Word],[37] and the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is wise, and the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is capable of debating with the master Gotama."[38]

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[30] This is the 3rd Okkāka, who, Comys say, had 5 queens (*mahesī*): Hatthā (or Bhattā), Cittā, Jantu, Jālinī and Visākhā, each with a retinue of 500 women. The eldest queen, **Hatthā**, had 4 sons (Okkā,mukha, Karakaṇḍu, Hatthinika, and Sini,sura) and 5 daughters (Piyā, Suppiyā, Ānandā, Vijitā, and Vijita,senā): they are those referred to here. Hatthā passed away after giving birth to the last (DA 1:258; SnA 352). See Nakamura 2000: 32-35. DPPN: sv Hatthā, errs here.

[31] We only know the junior prince's name, ie, Jantu (DA 1:258 f; SnA 1:352 f), which means that her mother is prob Jantū. The Mahāvastu names him Jentā and his mother, Jentī (Mvst 1:348).

[32] *Te jāti,sambheda,bhayā sakahī bhaginīhi saddhiṁ saṁvāsaṁ kappesuṁ.*

[33] *Sammanti,* 3 sg pres *sammati* (*śam;* Dhātp 436 = *upasama*): D 1:92; S 1:226; J 5: 396; DA 1:262 (= *vasati*).

[34] This is prob Kapila,vatthu (Skt Kapila,vastu): see Nakamura 2000:47-54.

[35] According to Māṇava Dharma,śāstra (10.8+47), the Ambaṣṭha clan arose from the union of a brahmin father and a vaishya mother (also SED: Ambaṣṭa). See Intro (1.3).

[36] This is the patronymic from *Kaṇha.*

[37] *Kalyāṇa,vāk,karaṇo.* The "Good Word" (*kalyāṇa,vāk*) here refers to the Three Vedas and brahminical mantras. This is however is conjectural, but this sense is probable if the text is a late one. Interestingly, Ambaṭṭha does not claim that "handsome, good-looking, pleasing, endowed with the most excellent colour, of perfect complexion, of perfect physique, of no mean appearance, one worthy of being looked at," as in the case of Kūṭa,danta: see **Kūṭa,-danta S** (D 5.6(4)/1:131) = SD 22.8.

[38] *Sujāto ca bho Gotama Ambaṭṭho māṇavo, kulaputto ca Ambaṭṭho māṇavo, bahussuto ca Ambaṭṭho māṇavo, kalyāṇa,vāk,karaṇo ca Ambaṭṭho māṇavo, paṇḍito ca Ambaṭṭho māṇavo, pahoti ca Ambaṭṭho māṇavo, bhotā Gota-*

1.18 Then the Blessed One said this to the brahmin youths:

"Now if you brahmin youths think that the brahmin Ambaṭṭha is low born, and the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is not a householder's son, and the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is of little **[94]** learning, and the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is not one with a fine voice [not an instrument of the Good Word], and the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is unwise, and the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is incapable of debating with the master Gotama, then let the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha be silent, and *you* discuss this matter with me.[39]

But if you brahmin youths think that brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is well born, and the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is a householder's son, and the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is deeply learned, and the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is one with a fine voice [the instrument of the Good Word], and the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is wise, and the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is capable of debating with the master Gotama, then let you (the brahmin youths) be silent, and let *the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha* debate with me."[40]

1.19 "Ambaṭṭha, master Gotama, is well born, and the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is a householder's son, and the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is deeply learned, and the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is one with a fine voice [the instrument of the Good Word], and the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is wise, and the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is capable of debating with the master Gotama.

We will be silent! Let the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha debate with master Gotama!"

The Buddha questions Ambaṭṭha

1.20 Then the Blessed One said this to the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha:

"A reasonable question,[41] Ambaṭṭha, have arisen: in spite of your wishes, it should be answered.[42] If you do not answer, or were to digress in any way, or were to remain silent, or were to depart from here, your head would surely right here shatter into seven pieces![43]

What do you think, Ambaṭṭha, what have you heard, when the brahmins, old and aged, the teachers of teachers, were talking together regarding where the Kaṇhâyanas originated from and who the ancestor of the Kaṇhâyanas was?"

When this was said, the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha remained silent.

For the second time, the Blessed One said this to the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha:

"What do you think, Ambaṭṭha, what have you heard, when the brahmins, old and aged, the teachers of teachers, were talking together regarding where the Kaṇhâyanas originated from and who the ancestor of the Kaṇhâyanas **[95]** was?"

For the second time, the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha remained silent.

Then the Blessed One said this to the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha:

"Answer now, Ambaṭṭha, now is not the time for you to remain silent! Ambaṭṭha, if you do not answer the question raised by your colleagues, *by the third time* you are asked, your head would surely split into seven pieces!"

1.21a VAJIRAPANI. Now at that time, the yaksha Vajrapani [Thunderbolt-bearer],[44] stood in the air, wielding a great blazing club of glowing iron,[45] standing in the air above the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha, thinking:

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mena saddhim asmiṁ vacane paṭimantetun ti. This is stock: D 3.1.17/1:93 (the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha, of himself), D 4.18/1:122 (the Buddha, of Soṇa,daṇḍa); M 95.11/2:168 (the brahmin Caṅkī, of the brahmin youth Kāpaṭhika).

[39] "*You* discuss this matter with me," *tumhe mayā saddhiṁ mantavho asmiṁ vacane;* alt: "*You* advise me on ths matter."

[40] To prevent a confusing brawl, the Buddha here establishes who is debating with whom. Understandably, the retinue of brahmin youths feel that Ambaṭṭha is capable of defending himself, or they, being young, have second thoughts about debating with a great teacher.

[41] "A reasonable question," *saha,dhammiko pañho.* See foll n.

[42] *Ayaṁ kho pana te Ambaṭṭha saha,dhammiko pañho āgacchati, akāmā vyākātabbo.* Comy explains *akāmā vyākātabbo* as meaning *attanā anicchantena pi vyākaritabbo, avassaṁ vissajetabbo,* "even if he himself does not desire to answer, it is must necessarily be clarified." (DA 1:263). See Intro (4.1).

[43] *Etth'eva te sattadhā muddhā phalissati.* On this head-splitting comment, see Intro (4.1).

[44] Vajra,pāṇī (Skt) (*Vajira,pāṇī,* lit "thunderbolt in hand"): see Intro (4.2).

"If this brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha does not answer the Blessed One regarding the question raised by his colleagues, then I will surely split his head into seven pieces!"

Then the Blessed One saw the yaksha Vajrapani, and the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha, too, saw him.

1.21b Then the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha was terrified, filled with samvega [a sense of urgency],[46] his hairs standing on ends. He sought safety in the Blessed One; he sought shelter (like a cave) in the Blessed One; he sought refuge in the Blessed One.[47] Sitting very close[48] to the Blessed One, he said this:

"What is it that the master Gotama said? Let master Gotama say it again!"[49]

"*What do you think, Ambaṭṭha, what have you heard, when the brahmins, old and aged, the teachers of teachers, were talking together regarding where the Kaṇhâyanas originated from and who the ancestor of the Kaṇhâyanas was?*"

Ambaṭṭha's descent

1.22 When this was said, the brahmin youths were in a tumult, raising their voices loudly, thus:

"So, sirs, it looks like the brahmin youth is lowborn! So, sirs, it looks like the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is not a householder's son! So, sirs, it looks like the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha is a son of a slave girl of the Sakyas! So, sirs, it looks like the Sakyas are the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha's masters! It looks like the ascetic Gotama speaks the Dharma [the truth] after all, and we had thought that he should not be trusted!"[50]

1.23 Then this occurred to the Blessed One:

"These brahmin youths **[96]** humiliate the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha too much with talk of a slave girl's son. Let me now free him from this!"

Then the Blessed said this to the brahmin youths:

"Brahmin youths, please do not humiliate the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha so harshly with talk of a slave girl's son!

The rishi [seer] Kaṇha was a mighty rishi.[51] He went the Deccan country [Dakkhiṇa Janapada][52] and learned the perfect mantras (*brahme mante*). Then he approached the rajah Okkāka and asked for the hand of her daughter Madda,rūpī[53] in marriage.

The rajah Okkāka, displeased, said to him:

'Who is this fellow of an ascetic, the son of a slave girl to ask for the hand of my daughter Madda,rūpī!'

And angrily, he fitted an arrow.[54] But then he could neither let fly the arrow nor let go of it![55]

Then, brahmin youths, the palace minister approached the rishi Kaṇha and said this:

'Let the rajah be safe [Spare the rajah], venerable sir! Let the rajah be safe, venerable sir!'

'The rajah shall be safe, but <u>if he let fly the arrow downwards</u>, it will split the earth as far as his realm extends!'

'Let the rajah be safe, venerable sir! Let the country be safe, too [spare the country, too]!'

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[45] *Ayo,kūṭa,* "iron club": see Intro (4.2).

[46] *Saṁvega:* see SD 9 Intro (7f).

[47] *Bhagavantaṁ yeva tāṇaṁ gavesī bhagavantaṁ yeva leṇaṁ gavesī bhagavantaṁ yeva saraṇaṁ gavesī*: D 1:95. Cf S 4:315, 4:372; A 1:155 f; J 2:253.

[48] "Sitting very close (to)," *upanisīditvā,* from *upanisīdati* [*upa* + *nisīdati* (from √SAD, "to sit"] to sit close to or sit down near to (D 1:95; A 4:10; J 2:347; Pv 4.163 (ger *upanisajja* = *upanisīditvā,* PvA 242); Vism 269. There is a hint of humour here alluding to the Upanishad tradition that was prevalent during the Buddha's time.

[49] Be Ce "*Kim etaṁ* [Ke, *kim me taṁ*] *bhavaṁ gotamo āha? Puna bhavaṁ gotamo bravitû* [Ee *brūmetû*; Se *brūtû*] *ti.*

[50] *Dhammavādiṁ yeva kira mayaṁ samaṇaṁ Gotamaṁ apasādetabbaṁ amaññimhâ ti.*

[51] Cf another dark-skinned great seer, Asita Devāla: **Assalāyana S** (M 93.18/2:156 f) & also SD 2.17(4.2).

[52] See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deccan.

[53] Be *Madda,rūpi*; Ce *Mudda,rūpiṁ* or *Mudda,rūpaṁ*; Ee *Khudda,rūpiṁ*; Se ***.

[54] *Khurappa,* a sharp-edged arrow (D 1:96; M 1:429 (+ *vekaṇḍa,* another kind of arrow); Vism381); the usu word for "arrow" is *sara.*

[55] Comy notes that this is the result of Kaṇha's using "Ambaṭṭha spell" (*ambaṭṭha,vijjā*) (DA 1:266).

'The rajah shall be safe, but if he let fly the arrow above, it will not rain throughout his realm for seven years!'

'Let the rajah be safe, venerable sir! Let the country be safe! Let it rain, too!'

'The rajah shall be safe; the country shall be safe; and it will rain. But the rajah must aim his arrow at the rajah's crown prince! The prince shall be safe, his hair untouched.[56]'

Then, brahmin youths, the ministers told Okkāka:

'Let Okkāka aim the arrow at the crown prince! The prince shall be safe, his hair untouched.'

Then the rajah Okkāka aimed his arrow at the crown prince. The prince was safe, not a hair touched.

But then the rajah Okkāka was terrified, filled with samvega [a sense of urgency], his hairs standing on ends, fearful of divine **[97]** punishment, gave away his daughter Madda,rūpī.[57]

Brahmin youths, please do not humiliate the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha so harshly with talk of a slave girl's son! The rishi Kaṇha was a great sage."[58]

The kshatriya's supremacy

1.24 DEFECT ON THE MOTHER'S SIDE. Then the Blessed One addressed the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha:

"What do you think, Ambaṭṭha? Here, a kshatriya boy cohabits[59] with a brahmin girl, and they have a son as a result of that cohabitation. Would that son born of the kshatriya boy and the brahmin girl receive a seat or water[60] from the brahmins, or not?"

"He would, master Gotama."

"But would the brahmins allow him to partake of the ancestral offering [*śrāddha*],[61] or the sthalipaka offering [*sthālī,pāka*],[62] or the sacrifice [*yajñā*], or the guest meal (*pāhuna*), or not?"

"They would, master Gotama."

"But would the brahmins teach him to chant the mantras or not?"

"They would, master Gotama."

"But would he be allowed access to their women or not?"

"He would, master Gotama."

"But would the kshatriyas consecrate him as a kshatriya?"

"Certainly not, master Gotama."

"What is the reason for that?"

"Because, master Gotama, of the mother's not being born (a kshatriya)."

1.25 DEFECT ON THE FATHER'S SIDE. "What do you think, Ambaṭṭha? Here, a brahmin boy cohabits with a kshatriya girl, and they have a son as a result of that cohabitation.

Would that son born of the brahmin boy and the kshatriya girl receive a seat or water from the brahmins, or not?"

"He would, master Gotama."

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[56] *Sotthi kumāro pallomo bhavissatî ti.*

[57] The lesson on the value of life is a powerful one. The king is made to feel what it is like to lose the life of someone dear, ie, his own crown prince.

[58] Here is an example of ironic humour in the role reversal: at §1.17, it is the brahmin youths who plead with the Buddha not to "humiliate" Ambaṭṭha, but here it is the reverse!

[59] *Saṁvāsaṁ kappeyya,* alt: "were to have intercourse."

[60] As tokens of respect and welcome. The water is for washing his feet, drinking, etc. In brahminical literature, there is the *arghya* (meaning "valuable"), ie perfumed water containing rice grains, flower petals, etc. The Paraskara Gṛhya,sūtra (1.3.1) specifies 6 kinds of persons to whom the *arghya* reception is due: a teacher, officiating priest, father-in-law, the rajah, a friend, and the *snātaka* (a young brahmin who has just performed the ritual lustration, marking the transition from 'student,' *brahma,cārī,* to 'householder,' *gṛhastha*), and describes the hospitality rite in detail (1.3.4 f).

[61] The square brackets enclosed the Sanskrit term.

[62] An offering of barley or rice cooked in milk used as a fire oblation: see BU 6.4.19 (V 3:15; D 1:97 (= DA 1:267); S 2:242, 5:384; A 1:166, 186; J 1:186; Miln 249). Comy say these are "food offered during blessing rituals, etc" (*maṅgal'ādi,bhatte,* DA 1:267).

"But would the brahmins allow him to partake of the ancestral offering [*śrāddha*], or the sthalipaka offering [*sthālī,pāka*], or the sacrifice [*yajñā*], or the guest meal (*pāhuna*), or not?"

"They would, master Gotama."

"But would the brahmins teach him to chant the mantras or not?"

"They would, master Gotama." **[98]**

"But would he be allowed access to their women or not?"

"He would, master Gotama."

"But would the kshatriyas consecrate him as a kshatriya?"

"Certainly not, master Gotama."

"What is the reason for that?"

"Because, master Gotama, he is 'unborn' on the father's side."[63]

1.26 "Therefore, Ambaṭṭha, whether we compare women with women, or men with men, the kshatriyas are superior, the brahmins lowly.[64]

A BANISHED BRAHMIN. What do you think, Ambaṭṭha? Here, the brahmins would shave off the hair of a brahmin guilty of a certain offence [reason],[65] cut him dead with the ash-bag [have ash sprinkled on it],[66] and banish him from the realm or country.

Now, would he receive a seat or water from the brahmins, or not?"

"Certainly not, master Gotama."

"But would the brahmins allow him to partake of the ancestral offering [*śrāddha*], or the sthalipaka offering [*sthālī,pāka*], or the sacrifice [*yajñā*], or the guest meal (*pāhuna*), or not?"

"Certainly not, master Gotama."

"But would the brahmins teach him to chant the mantras or not?"

"Certainly not, master Gotama."

"But would he be allowed access to their women or not?"

"He would be disallowed, master Gotama."

1.27 A BANISHED KSHATRIYA. What do you think, Ambaṭṭha? Here, the kshatriyas would shave off the hair of a kshatriya guilty of a certain offence [reason], cut him dead with the ash-bag [have ash sprinkled on it], and banish him from the realm or country.

Now, would he receive a seat or water from the brahmins, or not?"

"He would, master Gotama."

"But would the brahmins allow him to partake of the ancestral offering [*śrāddha*], or the sthalipaka offering [*sthālī,pāka*], or the sacrifice [*yajñā*], or the guest meal (*pāhuna*), or not?"

"They would, master Gotama."

"But would the brahmins teach him to chant the mantras or not?"

"They would, master Gotama."

"But would he be allowed access to their women or not?"

"He would be allowed, master Gotama."

Now, Ambaṭṭha, such a kshatriya is one fallen into the greatest degradation, **[99]** inasmuch as he had his head shaven, cut dead with the ash-bag [had ash sprinkled on it], and banished from the realm or country.

Thus, Ambaṭṭha, even though the kshatriya has fallen into the greatest degradation, still the kshatriyas are superior, the brahmins inferior.[67]

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[63] *Pitito hi bho Gotama anuppano ti.* That is, impure on the father's side.

[64] The Buddha is *not* endorsing the notion of class superiority in either case, but bringing the logic of the situation to its own conclusion.

[65] *Pakaraṇe,* which Comy glosses as *dosa* ("fault," DA 1:267), but the same word at S 22.80.1/3:91 is glosses as *kāraṇa* ("reason," SA 2:297); cf *kismicid eva pakaraṇe aparajjhati* ("he is wrong on certain occasions," Miln 189).

[66] *Assa,puṭena vadhitvā* [Be *Bhassa-* or *Bhasma-* for *Assa-*], lit "having been killed with a bag of ash"; as at A 4.242,3/2:242,9-11 (= AA 3:216,20). See CPD: *assa,puṭa* for details.

[67] "The major point of this section," **Brian Black** notes, "is to establish that the brahmins are actually more relaxed [with regard to mixed marriages], and thus less pure, about which mixed unions they recognize." (2007b:9).

1.28 Now, Ambaṭṭha, this verse was uttered by the brahma Sanaṅ,kumāra,[68] thus:[69]

Khattiyo seṭṭho jane tasmiṁ	For those who look up to clan,
ye gotta,paṭisārino	the kshatriya is the best in this generation:
vijjā,caraṇa,sampanno	the one endowed with wisdom and conduct
so seṭṭho deva,mānuse.	is the best amongst gods and humans.

This verse, Ambaṭṭha, is well-sung, not ill-sung, by the Brahma Sanaṅkumāra, well-spoken, not ill-spoken, endowed with meaning, not without meaning—I approve of it. I too, Ambaṭṭha, say thus:

For those who value clan, the kshatriya is the best in this generation;
But the one endowed with knowledge and conduct is the best amongst gods and humans.

[Here ends the first recital cycle, *bhāṇavāra.*][70]

Talk on knowledge and conduct

2.1 "But what, master Gotama, is this conduct (*caraṇa*), and what is this knowledge (*vijjā*)?"

"Ambaṭṭha, in the case of the peerless accomplishment of conduct and knowledge,
one does not talk of birth [class] (*jāti*),
and one does not talk of clan (*gotta*), and
and one does not talk of conceit (*māna*), thus:
'You are as worthy as I am' or 'You are not as worthy as I am.'

Ambaṭṭha, such talk is about taking in marriage (*āvāha*), or giving in marriage (*vivāha*), or taking and giving in marriage (*āvāha,vivāha*). Here, Ambaṭṭha, one talks thus, 'You are as worthy as I am' or 'You are not as worthy as I am.'[71]

Uma Chakravarti here remarks: "[T]he child of a union between a *khattiya* and a *brāhmaṇa* was allowed to participate in all the activities of the *brāhmaṇas*. This would include participation in making offerings to the gods and having access to *brāhmaṇa* women. However, *khattiyas* would not permit the child of such a union to participate in the *abhiseka* (consecration) ceremony of the *khattiyas.* The Buddha argued from this that *khattiyas* were higher (*seṭṭha*) and the *brāhmaṇas* inferior (*hīna*) to them." (1996:110 f)

[68] Sanaṅ,kumāra. See foll n.

[69] Sanaṅ,kumāra's verse is well known. Lines cd are explained in **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3.1.28/3:99) in terms of the *sāmaññ,phala*). See also **Aggaññ S** (D 27.32/1:97, sutta conclusion); **Sekha S** (M 53.25/1:358, spoken by Ānanda), **Sanaṅ,kumāra S** (S 6.11/1:153, verse only), **Mahā Kappina S** (S 21.11/2:284, with Dh 387), & **Mora,nivāpa S** (A 11.11/5:327 f); cf **Soṇa,daṇḍa S** (D 4.13-16/1:121, on the true brahmin), **Jana,vasabha S** (D 18.17-29/2:210-218, on Sanaṅ,kumāra). (At S 2:284, where it appears with Dh 387, it is attributed to the Buddha, giving it even greater endorsement). The name **Sanaṅ,kumāra** means or "Ever Young" or "Eternal Virgin." Like the true brahmins of old, he practised "the celibate divine life" (*komāra,brahma,cariya,* A 3:224 ff), a term I think that is better rendered as "living the celibate ever since he was just a boy," since *brahma,cariya* itself connotes celibacy. Buddhaghosa says that in a former birth, Sanaṅ,kumāra practised *jhāna* while yet a boy (*kumāra*) at the stage where his hair was tied in five top-knots and was reborn in the brahma world. Even as a brahma he often retained his youthful looks, hence his name (MA 3:33; SA 1:219). The oldest mention of **Sanat,kumāra** (Skt) is in the Chāndogya Upaniṣad (ch 7). In the Mahābharata (3:185, Bombay ed), he expresses a sentiment very similar to that of his verse here. Rhys Davids (D:RD 2:292 n3, cf 1:121 n1) sees the Sanaṅkumāra story as the Indian counterpart of the Arthurian legend of Galahad.

[70] This break conveniently divides the sutta into two parts: the first centres around the Buddha's debate with Ambaṭṭha, and the second, the *sāmaññ,phala* teaching (to Ambaṭṭha) and Pokkhara,sāti's conversion.

[71] Bloodline or birth (*jāti*) is a concern of the world, not of spirituality. *Jāti* asserts the notion of a biological family, but the Dharma breaks all bounds for the spiritual family to be possible. Similarly, spiritual renunciation is not "leaving" one's family, but rather giving up the notion of a *biological* for an unconditional acceptance of all beings, ie, seeing all life as a *spiritual* family. See also Uma Chakravarti 1987:110.

Ambaṭṭha, for whomever are bound by the talk of birth [class], or bound by the talk of clan, or bound by the talk of conceit, or bound by the talk of taking or giving in marriage, they are far from the peerless accomplishment of conduct and knowledge.

Ambaṭtha, by the abandoning
the bond of talk of birth [class],
and the bond of talk of clan,
and the bond of talk of conceit,
and the bond of the talk of taking and giving in marriage, ***[D 1:100]***
one realizes the peerless accomplishment of conduct and knowledge.

The Fruits of Recluseship

(*Sāmaññ,phala*)

(A) Training in Moral Virtue (*sīla,sikkhā*)[72]

I. ACCOMPLISHMENT OF MORAL VIRTUE[73]

(*Sīla,sampadā*)

1. THE SHORT SECTION ON MORAL VIRTUE[74]

(*Cūḷa,sīla*)

[Brahma,jāla Sutta, D 1.8-27/1:4-11 = Sāmaññ,phala Sutta, D 2.43-62/1:68]

2. THE MEDIUM SECTION ON MORAL VIRTUE

(*majjhima,sīla*)

3. THE GREAT SECTION ON MORAL VIRTUE

(*mahā,sīla*)

II. ACCOMPLISHMENT OF CONDUCT[75]

(*Caraṇa,sampadā*)

(C) Training in Mental Development

III. ACCOMPLISHMENT IN KNOWLEDGE

(*Vijjā,sampadā*)

(C) TRAINING IN WISDOM

(*Paññā,sikkhā*)

This monk, Ambaṭṭha, is called **"accomplished in knowledge," or "accomplished in conduct," or "accomplished in knowledge and conduct."**

And, Ambaṭṭha, there is no accomplishment of knowledge and accomplishment of conduct that are higher or more sublime than these accomplishment of knowledge and accomplishment of conduct.

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[72] In reality, the Sutta here does not name section as such. The Ambaṭṭha S divides the *sāmaññ,phala* section into 2 parts: "Conduct" (*caraṇa*) [§§2.2a-*D 1.82*] and "Knowledge" (*vijjā*) [§*D 1.83-2.98*]. See n at header "II. Accomplishmeny of Conduct" below (just before *D 1.28*), & see also Gethin 2001:207 n79.

[73] This whole section is popularly known as the "moralities" or "sīlas" (*sīla*), dealing with the moral virtue of a monastic.

[74] These three sections (comprising 13 items or groups) on moral virtue occur verbatim (in whole or with some omissions) in all of the first 13 suttas and may once have formed a separate "tract" (D:RD 1:3 n1). See Gethin 2001: 195 f. See Intro (3) above.

[75] Only here, this section is listed as *caraṇa,sampadā.* In D 1 & 2, it is simply listed, without this heading. This section ends at *[S 2.82]* below. See n on *sāmaññ,phala* at §2.2a.

The brahmins exposed

The four sources of loss

2.3 Now, Ambaṭṭha, in regards to this peerless attainment of knowledge and conduct **[101]** there are the four sources of loss.[76]

What are the four?

(1) Here, Ambaṭṭha, a certain ascetic or brahmin, without fully realizing[77] this peerless attainment of knowledge and conduct, bearing his pole and khari,[78] plunges into the depths of the forest,[79] thinking:

'I will live on available fruits as food.'[80]

But it turns out that he was only capable of being an attendant (*paricāraka*) to the one who has attained peerless knowledge and conduct.

This, Ambaṭṭha, is the first source of loss that occurs with regards to the attainment of peerless knowledge and conduct.

(2) And furthermore, Ambaṭṭha, here, a certain ascetic or brahmin, without fully realizing this peerless attainment of knowledge and conduct,

and without fully realizing the practice of living on available fruits,

taking a hoe and a basket,[81] plunges into a forest wilderness,[82] thinking:

'I will live on bulbs, roots and fruits.'[83]

But it turns out that he was only capable of being an attendant to the one who has attained peerless knowledge and conduct.

This, Ambaṭṭha, is the second source of loss that occurs with regards to the attainment of peerless knowledge and conduct.

(3) And furthermore, Ambaṭṭha, here, a certain ascetic or brahmin, without fully realizing this peerless attainment of knowledge and conduct,

and without fully realizing the practice of living on available fruits,

and without fully realizing the practice of living on bulbs, roots and fruits,

builds himself a fire shrine on the fringe of a village or a market town, and there dwells, attending to the fire god [Agni].[84]

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[76] *Cattāri apāya,mukhāni.* Comy: *vināsa,mukhāni,* "sources of destruction" (DA 1:269 = S 943); A 2:166,16 (= *apāya,vāhanaka-c,chiddāni,* "uncertainties leading to destruction," AA 3:155); A 4:283,14 (= *vināsassa ṭhānāni,* "bases for destruction," AA 4:138) = 287,21; opp *āya,mukha* (cf D 1:74,21); cf AA 3:156 f. Cf *cha bhogānaṁ* ~, "six sources of destruction of wealth" (D 3:181,20, 182,21).

[77] "Without fully realizing," ***anabhisambhuṇamāno*** [ppr med of *na* + *abhi,sam* + *bhuṇāti* (near-syn of *pāpuṇāti*)] not obtaining or mastering, not being able to keep up with (D 1:101 = *asampāpuṇanto avisahamāno vā,* DA 1:268). CPD defs *an-abhisambhunana* (qv) as "the not being able to comprehend"; but see under *abhisambhavati* (2): *abhi-sambhuṇāti.* DP defs *abhisambhavati* (= *abhisambhoti*, *abhisambhuṇāti*) as "reaches, attains; is able, capable (of); is adequate; masters; endures, bears." Cf *an-abhisambhuṇanto* (Nm 76 = ~ *vā ti asampāpuṇanto vā asakkonto vā,* "~ means not attaining, not being able to," NmA). The sense is that of neither fully attaining it, nor fully comprehending it.

[78] *Khāri,vidham ādāya.* A *khāri* is a measure of grain (= 4 *māṇikā* or 16 *doṇa*), which is the capacity of the container an ascetic (*tāpasa*) uses to store his requisites, and carried on carrying pole, called *kāja* (V 1:33; J 6:500; Ap 365) or *vidha* (D 1:101; S 3.11/1:78; U 65; J 3:116, 5:204, 207; SA 1:148). Amongst the ascetic's requisites are fire-sticks, a water-pot (*kamaṇḍalu*), and needles.

[79] "Into the depths of the forest," *āraññâyatanaṁ,* only here: cf below.

[80] *Pavatta,phala,bhojano bhavissāmî ti.* Comy glosses *pavatta,phala* as *patita,phala,* "fruits that have fallen" (DA 1:269).

[81] *Kudāla,piṭakam ādāya.*

[82] "A forest wilderness," Be Se *āraññ a,vanaṁ*; Ce *āraññâyatanaṁ*; Ee *āraññe vanaṁ*.

[83] *Kanda,mūla,phala,bhojano bhavissāmî ti.*

[84] *Gāma,sāmantaṁ vā nigama,sāmantaṁ vā agyāgāraṁ karitvā aggiṁ parcaranto acchati.* See **Asāta,manta J** (J 61/1:285), **Naṅguṭṭha J** (J 144/1:494), **Santhava J** (J 162/2:43). The "great moralities" (*mahā,sīla*) prohibit performing the "fire offering" or fire puja (*aggi,homa*) (D 1.21/1:9), found in all the first 13 Dīgha suttas. See *[D 1.21]* above. It is interesting that the Tibetans still perform such a puja.

But it turns out that he was only capable of being an attendant to the one who has attained peerless knowledge and conduct.

This, Ambaṭṭha, is the third source of loss that occurs with regards to the attainment of peerless knowledge and conduct.

(4) And furthermore, Ambaṭṭha, here, a certain ascetic or brahmin, without fully realizing this peerless attainment of knowledge and conduct,

and without fully realizing the practice of living on available fruits,

and without fully realizing the practice of living on bulbs, roots and fruits,

and without fully realizing the practice of attending to a fire shrine, **[102]** he builds himself a four-door almshouse at a crossroads [where four highways meet], and dwells there, thinking:

'Whosoever, whether recluse or brahmin, shall come here, from any of these four quarters, I shall honour him according to my ability and according to my power.'

But it turns out that he was only capable of being an attendant to the one who has attained peerless knowledge and conduct.

This, Ambaṭṭha, is the fourth source of loss that occurs with regards to the attainment of peerless knowledge and conduct.

2.4 What do you think, Ambaṭṭha, do you live with your teacher in conformity with this peerless accomplishment of knowledge and conduct?"

"No, master Gotama. And who, master Gotama, am I, along with my teacher, compared to the peerless accomplishment of knowledge and conduct?[85] Far am I, master Gotama, along with my teacher, from the peerless accomplishment of knowledge and conduct."

(1) "What do you think, Ambaṭṭha? Even without fully realizing this peerless attainment of knowledge and conduct, have you, Ambaṭṭha, along with your teacher, bearing the pole and khari, plunged into the depths of the forest, thinking, 'I will live on available fruits as food'?"

"No, master Gotama."

(2) "What do you think, Ambaṭṭha? Even without fully realizing this peerless attainment of knowledge and conduct, have you, Ambaṭṭha, along with your teacher, lived on available fruits as food, and lived on bulbs, roots and fruits?"

"No, master Gotama."

(3) "What do you think, Ambaṭṭha? Even without fully realizing this peerless attainment of knowledge and conduct, have you, Ambaṭṭha, along with your teacher, lived on available fruits as food, and lived on bulbs, roots and fruits, and built a fire shrine on the fringe of a village or a market town, and there dwelt, attending to the fire god [Agni]?" **[103]**

"No, master Gotama."

(4) "What do you think, Ambaṭṭha? Even without fully realizing this peerless attainment of knowledge and conduct, have you, Ambaṭṭha, along with your teacher, lived on available fruits as food, and lived on bulbs, roots and fruits, and dwelt attending to the fire god [Agni], and built a four-door almshouse at a crossroads [where four highways meet], and dwelt there, thinking, 'Whosoever, whether recluse or brahmin, shall come here, from any of these four quarters, we shall honour him according to our ability and according to our power.'?"

"No, master Gotama."

2.5 "So, you, Ambaṭṭha, along with your teacher, are wanting in regards to the peerless accomplishment of knowledge and conduct!

You, along with your teacher, are wanting in regards to the peerless accomplishment of knowledge and conduct on account of the four sources of loss!

And these words, Ambaṭṭha—'Shavelings, little ascetics, menials, blacks, born of the feet of our Kinsman (Mahā Brahmā),[86] that they should hold a conversation with the brahmins of the Three Vedas!'

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[85] *Kocâhaṁ, bho Gotama, sâcariyako, kā ca anuttarā vijjā,caraṇa.sampadā?*

[86] §1.10b.

— have been spoken by your teacher, the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti: thus, he himself, being imperfect, is at a loss, too![87]

See, Ambaṭṭha, the extent of the failure of your teacher,the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti, in this matter!

The position of the kshatriyas

2.6 PASENADI DESPISES THE BRAHMINS. And, Ambaṭṭha, the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti, enjoys gifts[88] from the rajah Pasenadi of Kosala. But the rajah Pasenadi of Kosala does not grant him a personal audience. For, when he consults him, he does so from behind a curtain. How is it, Ambaṭṭha, that the rajah Pasenadi of Kosala, from whom he would accept alms justly presented, does not grant him a personal audience?

See, Ambaṭṭha, the extent of the failure of your teacher, the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti, in this matter![89]

2.7 SPEECH DOES NOT MAKE THE MAN. What do you think, Ambaṭṭha? Suppose here the rajah Pasenadi of Kosala, seated on an elephant's neck, or seated on horseback, or standing on the foot-rug of his chariot, **[104]** were to consult with those of royal rank on some matter.

And if he were to leave that spot and stand at one side, and then a shudra or a shudra slave were to come up and, standing there, were to consult him, saying, 'Such and such says rajah Pasenadi of Kosala; such and such says rajah Pasenadi of Kosala.'

Although he might have spoken as the rajah might himself might have done, or consulted as the rajah himself might have done, would he thereby be the rajah or a royal minister?"

"No, master Gotama."

The ancient rishis

2.8a Even so, Ambaṭṭha, what about the ancient rishis [sages] of the brahmins, mantra makers, mantra preachers—that is to say, Aṣṭaka, Vāmaka, Vāma,deva, Viśvā,mitra, Jamad-agni, Aṅgi,rasa, Bhāra,dvāja, Vāsiṣṭha, Kaśyapa, and Bhagu[90]—whose ancient mantras and verses are chanted, uttered and collected by the brahmins of today, who sing them and recite them, and having sung them make others sing them, having recited them make others recite them?[91]

2.8b You say, 'I, along with my teacher, know by heart their mantras,' but on that very account you are not yourself a rishi, nor do you know the state of a rishi, nor do you practise for the sake of rishihood!

2.9a Even so, Ambaṭṭha, what about the ancient rishis of the brahmins, mantra makers, mantra preachers—that is to say, Aṣṭaka, Vāmaka, Vāma,deva, Viśvā,mitra, Jamad-agni, Aṅgi,rasa, Bhāra,dvāja, Vāsiṣṭha, Kaśyapa, and Bhagu—whose ancient mantras and verses are chanted, uttered and collected by the brahmins of today, who sing them and recite them, and having sung them make others sing them, having recited them make others recite them?

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[87] "He himself…is at a loss, too," *attanā āpāyiko pi aparipūramāno.* Here *āpāyika,* instead of the usu meaning of "of the *apāya* (state of misery), hellish state," has a non-technical sense.

[88] *Dattikaṁ*, "that which is given," an abstract n, translated as pl here.

[89] Should a teacher know such a truth but concel it, he would not be worth his salt. Thus, in **Sonaka J** (J 529), a rajah, on this account, calls a brahmin "low born" (*hīna,jacca*) compared to himself (J 529/5:257).

[90] For identification of these seers' names, see *Vinaya Texts* (tr Rhys Davids & Oldenberg) 2:130 n3 & V:H 4:337 nn5-9; see also **Tevijja S** (D 13/1:235-252) = SD 1.8 Intro (2,1).

[91] "The ancient seers…make others recite them,"...[*tevijjānaṁ*]* *brāhmaṇānaṁ pubbakā isayo mantānaṁ kattāro mantānaṁ pavattāro, yesam idaṁ etarahi brāhmaṇā porāṇaṁ manta,padaṁ gītaṁ pavuttaṁ samihitaṁ, tad anugāyanti tad anubhāsanti, bhāsitam anubhāsanti vācitam anuvācenti, seyyath'idaṁ—Aṭṭhako Vāmako Vāma,devo Vessā,mitto Yama-t-aggi* [Ke *Yama-d-aggi*] *Aṅgīraso Bhāra,dvājo Vāseṭṭho Kassapo Bhagu* [* only at D 13.13]: this is stock: Mv 35.2 = V 1:245; **Ambaṭṭha S** (D 3.2.8/1:104); **Tevijja S** (D 13.2.13/1:238 f, 13.2.18/1:241, 242, 243); **Caṅkī S** (M 95.13/2:169 f), **Subha S** (M 99.9/2:200); **Doṇa S** (A 5.192/3:223 f, 3:229 f), **(Sāriputta) Dāna S** (A 7.49/4:61). See Intro (5).

2.9b Did they (those ancient rishis) find pleasure in being well-bathed, well-perfumed, with hair and beard trimmed, decked in jewelled ear-rings and ornaments, dressed in white garments, endowed with and enjoying the five cords of sensual pleasures—like what you, along with your teacher, are doing now?[92]

[105] "No, master Gotama."[93]

2.10a Did they consume boiled sali rice,[94] free of black specks, with pure meat, curries and garnishings, with various curries, various sauces, such as you, along with your teacher, do now?"[95]

"No, master Gotama."

Were they entertained[96] by women, all dressed up and bent on serving them, by their side, such as you, along with your teacher, do now?"[97] [Fig 5a]

"No, master Gotama."

"Did they go about driving chariots, drawn by mares with plaited manes and tails, whipping them with long wands and goads, such as you, along with your teacher, do now?"[98] [Fig 5b]

"No, master Gotama."

"Did they have themselves guarded by men with long swords, safe behind walled cities, with moats around them,[99] and with cross-bars (across their gates),[100] such as you, along with your teacher, do now?"[101]

"No, master Gotama."

2.10b "So, you, Ambaṭṭha, along with your teacher, are neither rishi, nor do you live, practising, for the sake of rishihood.

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[92] Se: *Evaṁ su te suṇhātā suvilittā kappita,kesa,massū āmutta,maṇi,kuṇḍal'ābharaṇā* [Ee Ce, *āmutta,mālâbharaṇā,* "decked in garlands and ornaments"] *odāta,vattha,vasanā pañcahi kāma,guṇehi samappitā samaṅgī,bhūtā paricārenti, seyyathāpi tvaṁ etarahi sācariyako ti?* Be *āmukka-* for *āmutta* is prob wr. See Intro (5).

[93] Be Se insert §29a as *peyyāla* (refrain) before each of the next 4 sections.

[94] Rice as *vīhi* (Skt *vrīhi;* Tamil *arise*) (Oryza sativa), or broadcast rice, had its origins in India around 3000 BCE and was certainly known to later Vedic people. It was a rainy season crop ripening in autumn but whose yield was limited. This form of rice when cooked is called ***odana*** (ts), ie boiled rice. The change came when the people learned and used the art of paddy transplantation or wet paddy production, which was grown as a winter crop. This better quality rice was known as "shali" (P ***sāli;*** Skt *śāli*) (RS Sharma, *Material Culture and Social Formations in Ancient India*, 1983:96, 161f). See Piya Tan, *The Buddha and His Disciples,* 2004 §4b.

[95] Be Ce Ee Se: *Evaṁ su te sālīnaṁ odanaṁ suci,maṁsûpasecanaṁ* [Ee omits] *vicita,kāḷakaṁ aneka,sūpaṁ aneka,byañjanaṁ paribhuñjanti, seyyathâpi tvaṁ etarahi sâcariyako ti.* See Intro (5).

[96] "Were…entertained by," *paricārenti,* which also means "were amusing himself, gratifying his senses, recreating, or enjoying pleasure" (see PED: sv *paricāreti*), ie, it has sexual connotations: cf Skt *paricārayamāṇam*: see Intro (5).

[97] "By women…by their side," *veṭhaka,nata,passāhi* [Ce *veṭhanaka,passāhi*] *nārīhi,* lit "(attended by) women by their side, wrapped up (in fine dresses) and bent (to serve)." Comy glosses as *dussa.paṭṭa,dussa,veṇi ādīhi veṭhakehi namita,phāsukāhi,* "garbed [wrapped] in fine woven cloth [turban cloth], plaited cotton cloth, etc, bent on comforting." (DA 1:274). See D:RD 1:130 n1. Both Comy & Rhys Davids give interesting and relevant details, but the context is quite simple as it is, without reading too much into it. See Intro (5) above.

[98] *Evaṁ su te kutta,vālehi vaḷavā,rathehi dīghāhi patoda,laṭṭhīhi vāhane vitudentā vipariyāyanti.* See **Takka J** (J 63/1:296), **Vaṭṭaka J** (J 118/1:433), **Valāhassa J** (J 196/2:127, 128), **Culla Nārada J** (J 477/4:219); DhsA 321. *Kutta* ("formed, arranged, dressed") is pp of *kappati,* "is permitted, allowed, suitable." Rhys Davids: "The chariot of the time, as represented on the bas reliefs, had standing room for four passengers, the steeds wore plumes on their heads, and had their manes and tails elaborately plaited. 'Stūpa of Bharhut,' pl XII, shows us the chariot of Pasenadi, king of Kosala (see ibid pp 124, 125)." (D:RD 1:130 n3). Bodewitz captures the sense in which the chariots are regarded as decadent by characterizing them as the "motor cars" of the brahminical elite (1974:90 n17), quoted by Black 2007b:18. See Intro (5).

[99] Cf **Udaya J** (J 458/4:106); Miln 330.

[100] *Okkhitta,palighāsu,* cf M 1:139; A 3:84; Dh 398, where it is used in an ethical sense.

[101] *Evaṁ su te ukkiṇṇa,parikhāsu okkhitta,palighāsu nagarûpakārikāsu dīghâsivudhehi* [Ee Se *dīghâsibaddhehi*] *purisehi rakkhāpenti, seyyathāpi tvaṁ etarahi sâcariyako ti?* Cf J 4:106; Miln 330. The phrase *okkhitta,palighāsu* is used in an ethical sense at M 1:139; A 3:84; Dh 398.

Anyway, be that as it may, Ambaṭṭha, as regards your doubt or perplexity, question me, I will clarify it with an explanation."[102]

The two characteristics

2.11 Then the Blessed One left his residence [vihara], and proceeded to the terraced walkway.[103]

Then the brahmin youth, Ambaṭṭha, too, followed the Blessed One, walking behind him, and, surveying the Buddha's body, for the thirty-two marks of the great man.

The brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha saw most of the thirty-two marks of the great man on the Blessed One's body, **[106]** except for two. Regarding these two—namely, the cloth-covered sheathed member and the length of his tongue—he was in doubt and uncertain, undecided, dissatisfied.

2.12 Then this occurred to the Blessed One:

"This brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha sees all the thirty-two marks of the great man, except for two. Regarding these two—namely, the cloth-covered sheathed member and the length of my tongue—he is in doubt and uncertain, undecided, dissatisfied."

Then, the Blessed One, by way of a psychic manifestation, let the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha see his cloth-covered sheathed member.[104]

Then the Blessed One extended his tongue to touch and stroke both his earlobes and both his nostrils, and covered the whole area of his forehead with his tongue.[105]

Then this occurred to the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha:

"The Blessed One is fully endowed with the thirty-two marks of the great man, not otherwise!" and said this to the Blessed One:

"Well, then, master Gotama, I now depart. Many are my duties, much there is to be done."

"Please, Ambaṭṭha, do as you deem fit here."[106]

Then, the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha ascended his mare-drawn chariot and departed.

Pokkhara,sāti

Pokkhara,sāti reprimands Ambaṭṭha

2.13 Now at that time, the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti had left Ukkaṭṭhā with a great retinue of brahmins, and was seated in his own grove,[107] waiting for the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha.

Then the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha set forth towards the same grove.[108] When he has gone as far as his chariot could go, he descended from the vehicle and, proceeding on foot, to where the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti was.

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[102] This is Ambaṭṭha's golden opportunity for spiritual breakthrough, but his mind is too befuddled to take up this invitation. Or, as in the case of the wanderer Nigrodha and his community in **Udumbarikā Sīha,nāda S** (D 25/3:36-57 = SD 1.4), Māra has taken over their minds. The significant point here is that the Buddha *still* attempts to teach, or in the latter case, has taught, even when there is no immediate spiritual benefit.

[103] *Caṅkama* here can be either (n) "terraced walkway," or (ger) "walking (up and down)," ie in meditation or for a mild physical exercise. It is clear here that the Buddha is obliging Ambaṭṭha so that he is be able to see his great-man marks.

[104] In other words, what Ambaṭṭha sees is only a sort of holographic projection or a vision that is perceived by him alone.

[105] "Covered the whole circle of his forehead with his tongue," *kevalam pi nalāṭa,maṇḍalaṁ jivhāya chādesi.*

[106] *Yassa dāni tvaṁ Ambaṭṭha kālaṁ maññasî ti,* lit "Please do what you think it is now the time to do." This is stock: **Sāmaññ a,phala S** (D 2.103/1:85 = SD 8.10); **Mahā Parinibbāna S** (D 16.3.6/2:104 = SD 13), **Sekha S** (M 53.3/1:354 = SD 21.14), **Kaṇṇaka-t,thala S** (M 90.17/2:132 f = SD 10.8); **Puṇṇ'ovāda S** (M 145.6/3:269 = S 35.88/4:62,31 = SD 20.15), **Avassuta S** (S 35.243/4:183,15+30), **Khemā Therī S** (S 44.1/4:379,29), **Vesālī S** (S 54.9/5:321,16, 17) & **Thapatayā S** (S 55.6/5:348,27 = SD 42.7). See Joy Manné, "On a departure formula and its translation," *Buddhist Studies Review* 10, 1993:27-43.

[107] "His own park," *sake ārāme*: this must be the Subhaga Grove (*Subhaga,vana*) (**Subha S,** M 99.10/2:200): See Intro (1.2). *Sake ārāme* also occurs at V 1:232; D 2:97; M 1:236. On Subhaga,vana, see Intro (1.2).

Having approached the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti, the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha saluted him and sat down at one side.

While Ambaṭṭha was seated thus at one side, the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti said this to him:

2.14 "Well, dear Ambaṭṭha, have you seen the master Gotama?"

"Yes, sir, I have seen the master Gotama."

"Well, dear Ambaṭṭha, have you found out whether the word going around about the master Gotama is true **[107]** or not, whether the master Gotama is such or not?[109]

And is the master Gotama endowed with the thirty-two marks of the great men, and not otherwise?

And did you, dear Ambaṭṭha, have a conversation with the ascetic Gotama?"

"Yes, I had a conversation with the ascetic Gotama."

"And, what, dear Ambaṭṭha, was that conversation that you had with the ascetic Gotama?"

Then the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha recounted to the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti all that had occurred during the conversation he had had with the Blessed One.

2.15 When this was spoken, the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti said this to the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha:

"O, alas, our little scholar! O, alas, our little deeply learned one! O, alas, our little expert in the Three Vedas![110] They say, sir, such a do-gooder[111] would, after death, when the body has broken up, re-appear in a plane of misery, an evil destination, a lower realm, in hell!

To the extent that you have spoken so very insolently to the master Gotama, to that extent, the master Gotama, too, has charged you likewise![112]

O, alas, our little scholar! O, alas, our little deeply learned one! O, alas, our little expert in the Three Vedas![113] They say, sir, such a do-gooder[114] would, after death, when the body has broken up, re-appear in a plane of misery, an evil destination, a lower realm, in hell!"

Angered and upset, he gave Ambaṭṭha a blow with his foot,[115] and there and then wished to see the Blessed One.[116] **[108]**

Pokkhara,sāti meets the Buddha

2.16 Then the brahmins said this to the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti:

"It is too late now, sir, for visiting the ascetic Gotama. Let us, master Pokkhara,sāti, go to see the ascetic Gotama tomorrow."

Then the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti had exquisite food, both hard and soft, prepared in his own home,[117] had them loaded onto wagons, and bearing torches, leave Ukkaṭṭhā, and approached the Ukkaṭṭhā jungle

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[108] *Atha kho Ambaṭṭho māṇavo yena sako ārāmo tena pāyāsi*. The phrase *sako ārāmo* is curious, since it should have read *sakaṁ ārāmaṁ.* I am not sure it if it is correct to tr *sake* (see prec para) or *sako* here as "self," as the two sentences (one regarding Pokkhara,sāti and the other, Ambaṭṭha) would contradict one another.

[109] See §1.4c.

[110] *Aho vata re amhākaṁ paṇḍitaka, aho vata re amhākaṁ bahussutaka, aho vata re amhākaṁ tevijjaka.*

[111] *Attha,caraka,* lit "one who conducts himself in what is beneficial," but here an ironical remark, clearly made in despair.

[112] *Yad eva kho tvaṁ Ambaṭṭha taṁ bhavantaṁ Gotamaṁ evaṁ āsajja āsajja avacāsi, atha kho so bhavaṁ Gotamo amhehi pi evaṁ upanīya upanīya avaca.* Rhys Davids: "What could the very points you pressed in your insolent words lead up to, if not to the very disclosures the venerable Gotama made?" (D:RD 1:133). Walshe: "You have heaped insults on the Reverend Gotama, as a result of which he has brought up more and more things against us!" (D:W 123)

[113] *Aho vata re amhākaṁ paṇḍitaka, aho vata re amhākaṁ bahussutaka, aho vata re amhākaṁ tevijjaka.*

[114] *Attha,caraka,* lit "one who conducts himself in what is beneficial," but here an ironical remark, clearly made in despair.

[115] *Padasā yeva pavattesi,* which Comy explains as *pādena paharitvā bhūmiyaṁ pātesi,* "strike with his foot so that he (Ambaṭṭha) fell to the ground" (DA 1:276).

[116] Pokkhara,sāti's dramatic reaction to Ambaṭṭha's insolence clearly has arisen from his understanding that the Buddha is endowed with the 32 marks of the great man, and should have been accorded due respect. In that case, he could well be experiencing samvega (see SD 9.7f), which immediately spurs him to want to meet the Buddha himself to redeem himself.

outside Icchā,naṅgala. When he has gone as far as his chariot could go, he descended from the vehicle and, proceeding on foot, approached the Blessed One.

Having approached the Blessed One, he exchanged friendly words and cordial greetings with the Blessed One. When the friendly greetings were concluded, he sat down at one side.

Seated thus at one side, the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti said this to the Blessed One:

2.17 "Master Gotama, has our resident student the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha has come here?"

"Yes, brahmin, your resident student the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha come here."

"And did you, master Gotama, have a conversation with the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha?"

"Yes, I had a conversation with the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha."

"And what manner of conversation, master Gotama, did you have with the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha?"

Then the Blessed One recounted to the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti all that had occurred during the conversation he had had with the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha.

When this was spoken, the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti said this to the Blessed One:

"The brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha, master Gotama, is a fool! May master Gotama forgive the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha."

"Brahmin, may the brahmin youth Ambaṭṭha be happy (*sukhi hotu*)!" **[109]**

2.18 Then the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti surveyed the Buddha's body for the thirty-two marks of the great man. The brahmin Pokkhara,sāti saw most of the thirty-two marks of the great man on the Blessed One's body, except for two. Regarding these two—namely, the cloth-covered sheathed member and the length of his tongue—he was in doubt and uncertain, undecided, dissatisfied.

2.19 Then this occurred to the Blessed One:

"This brahmin Pokkhara,sāti sees all the thirty-two marks of the great man, except for two. Regarding these two—namely, the cloth-covered sheathed member and the length of my tongue—he is in doubt and uncertain, undecided, dissatisfied."

Then, the Blessed One, by way of a psychic manifestation, let the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti see his cloth-covered sheathed member.

Then the Blessed One extended his tongue to touch and stroke both his earlobes and both his nostrils, and covered the whole area of his forehead with his tongue.

Then this occurred to the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti:

"The Blessed One is fully endowed with the thirty-two marks of the great man, not otherwise!" and said this to the Blessed One:

"Might the master Gotama together with the community of monks accept a meal for today."

The Buddha consented by being silent.

2.20 Then the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti, having known the Blessed One's consent, announced the time to the Blessed One:

"Venerable sir, it is time for the meal."

Then, the Blessed One, having dressed himself in the morning and taking robe and bowl, went, along with the order of monks, to the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti's house.[118] Having arrived there, he sat down on the prepared seat.

Then the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti, with his own hands, served the order of monks headed by the Buddha, exquisite food, hard and soft, and satisfied them. When the Blessed One had finished his meal and taken his hand out of his bowl, the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti sat on a low seat at one side.

Pokkhara,sāti attains streamwinning

2.21 While the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti **[110]** was seated at one side, the Blessed One gave him **a progressive talk**—that is to say, he spoke on giving (*dāna*), on moral virtue (*sīla*) and on the heavens

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[117] From the context, it is clear that Pokkhara,sāti has the meal prepared that very night, and probably does not sleep throughout the night. Similarly, Anātha,piṇḍika, on his first impending meeting with the Buddha, gets up thrice in the night, thinking it is dawn (V 2:155 f). Such an excitable anticipative state could be due to a high level of joy, or more specifically, zest (*pīti*), albeit of a worldly nature: see SD 15.1(9.7).

[118] Be *nivesanaṁ;* Ce Ee *parivesanā,* "food distribution" (prob wr).

(*sagga*). He explained the danger, the vanity and the disadvantages of sensual pleasures (*kām'ādīnava*), and the advantages of renunciation (*nekkhamm'ānisaṃsa*).[119]

When the Blessed One perceived that the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti's mind was prepared, pliant, free from obstacles, elevated and lucid, then he explained to him the teaching peculiar to the Buddhas,[120] that is to say, **suffering, its arising, its cessation, and the path**.

And just as a clean cloth, with all its stains removed, would take dye, even so did the brahmin Kūṭa,-danta, even while seated there, there arose the dust-free stainless Dharma-eye [vision of truth],[121] thus:

"**All that is of the nature of arising is of the nature of ending**."

(*Yaṃ kiñci samudaya,dhammaṃ sabbantaṃ nirodha,dhamman ti*)

2.22 Then the brahmin Pokkhara,sāti, having seen the Dharma [the truth],[122] having mastered the Dharma, having known the Dharma, having immersed himself in the Dharma, having crossed over doubt, having cleared away uncertainty, having won full confidence, independent of others in the Teacher's Teaching,[123] said this to the Blessed One:

"Excellent, venerable sir! Excellent, venerable sir! Just as if one were to place upright what had been overturned, or were to reveal what was hidden, or were to show the way to one who was lost, or were to hold up a lamp in the dark so that those with eyes could see forms, in the same way the Blessed One has, in numerous ways, made the Dharma clear.

I, master Gotama, along with my children, my wife, my retinue, and my colleagues, go to the Blessed One for refuge, and to the Dharma, and to the community of monks. May the Blessed One remember us as lay followers who have gone to him for refuge from this day forth for life.

And just the master Gotama approach other families of lay followers at Ukkaṭṭhā, even so let the master Gotama approach the family of Pokkhara,sāti. Those brahmin youths and brahmin maidens who pay homage to the master Gotama, or who would present him with a seat or with water, or look at him with bright faith, therein will be for them long life of goodness and happiness!"

"Well spoken, brahmin!"[124]

— evaṁ — 070904; 071105

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[119] This passage is stock: V 1:15; D 1:148; A 3:184 etc.

[120] *Buddhānaṃ sāmukkaṁsikā dhamma,desanā.* This is an occasion when the Buddha teaches the 4 noble truths directly to the laity; for stock passage, see **V 1**:16 (the youth Yasa), 16 (Yasa's father, the seth householder), 18 (to Yasa's mother and former wife), 19 (Yasa's five friends), 20 (Yasa's fifty friends), 23 (to the group of 30 lucky youths, *bhadda,vagga*), 37 (to 12 "myriad" (*nahuta*) of brahmins and householders of Magadha, headed by Bimbi-sāra), 181 (Bimbisāra's 80,000 village headmen), 226 (Belaṭṭha Kaccāna, between Rajagaha and Andhaka,vinda); **D** 3.2.21/1:110 (to Pokkhara,sāti), 5.29/1:148 (to Kūṭa,danta), 14.3.11/2:41 (to prince Khaṇḍa and Tissa the chaplain's son), 14.3.15/2:43 (a crowd of 84,000), 14.3.19/2:44 (another similar crowd); **M** 56.18/1:379 f (to Upāli), 91.36/-2:145 (to Brahmāyu); **A 8**.12.9/4:186 (to general Sīha), 8.21.5-6/4:209 (to the householder Ugga of Vesālī), 8.22.5-6/4:213 (to the householder of Hatthi,gāma), U 5.3/49 (to the leper Suppa,buddha).

[121] *Evam eva kūṭadantassa brāhmaṇassa tasmiṁ yeva āsane virajaṁ vīta,malaṁ dhamma,cakkhuṃ udapādi.* Comy says that the "Dharma-eye" (*dhamma,cakkhu*) is the path of stream-winning: in **Brahmāyu S** (M 91.36/ 2:145), it refers to the 3 paths (*tiṇṇaṁ maggānaṁ*), ie culminating in non-return; in **Cūḷa Rāhul'ovāda S** (M 147.9/ 3:280), the destruction of cankers (*āsava-k,khaya*). The following sentence: "All that is subject to arising is subject to ending," shows the mode in which the path arises. The path takes ending (nirvana) as its object, but its function is to penetrate all conditioned states as being subject to arising and ending. (MA 3:92)

[122] "The Dharma [the truth]" (*dhamma*) here refers to the 4 noble truths. Having seen the truth for himself, he cuts off the fetter of doubt and now has "the noble and liberating view that accordingly leads the practitioner to the complete destruction of suffering" (*yā'yaṁ diṭṭhi ariyā niyyānikā niyyāti tak,karassa sammā,dukkha-k,khayāya*, **Kosambiya S**, M 48.7/1:322)

[123] "Having seen the Dharma…in the Teacher's Teaching," *diṭṭha,dhammo patta,dhammo vidita,dhammo pari-yogaḷha,dhammo tiṇṇa,vicikiccho vigata,kathaṁ,katho vesārajja-p,patto apara-p,paccayo satthu,sāsane.* As in the case of **Yasa's father** (Mv 7.10c/V 1:16) = SD 11.2(7).

[124] *Kalyāṇaṁ vuccati brāhmaṇâ ti.* This apparently is a monastic way of saying "thank you" to the laity, but is only found here spoken by the Buddha, and only twice elsewhere: one spoken by the monk Isidatta (S 41.3/4:288) and by the monk Mahaka (S 41.4/4:291), on both occasions to Citta the householder.