

## Two Notes on Pāli Metre

Oskar v. Hinüber

### 1. *VEDHAS* IN THE THERAVĀDA TĪPĪTAKA.

When Heinz Bechert (1932–2005) discovered and described *vedhas* in the *iti pi so* formula in 1988,<sup>1</sup> he could name only four predecessors who have dealt with this particular type of rhythmic prose, in his detailed survey of relevant research, which need not be repeated here in any detail. After texts with this structure were discovered by Hermann Jacobi (1850–1937) in 1885 in Jaina literature, Ernst Leumann (1859–1931) traced *vedhas* also in Theravāda texts, where they are rare, in the Kuṇāljātaka. His findings were, however, only published posthumously in 1934. These *vedhas* were carefully studied by W.B. Bollée. Finally, Adelheid Mette investigated *vedhas* in Buddhist Sanskrit literature.<sup>2</sup> Consequently, the text presented by H. Bechert was only the second example of *vedhas* in Pāli literature.

There is, however, a third text of this kind found also in a magic spell that is in the same genre of literature as the *iti pi so* formula that is used originally to dispel the fear of monks living alone in the forest. Only later it developed into some kind of Buddhist creed, Bechert's "Bekennnisformel". The second spell is the well-known text protecting monks against snake bites, which was later incorporated into the Mahāmāyūrī of the Pañcarakṣā collection.<sup>3</sup> In the Theravāda Tīpīṭaka the

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<sup>1</sup> "Alte Vedhas' im Pāli-Kanon. Die metrische Struktur der buddhistischen Bekennnisformel". *Nachrichten der Akademie der Wissenschaften in Göttingen*. I. Philologisch-historische Klasse. Jahrgang 1988, Nr. 4. Göttingen 1988.

<sup>2</sup> Kuṇāljātaka (Sacred Books of the Buddhists 36, London 1970), pp. 167–72; and A. Mette, "Vedhas im Lalitavistara und Divyāvadāna: Beschreibungen des schönen Körpers in Sanskrit und Prakrit". *WZKS* 17 (1973), pp. 21–42.

<sup>3</sup> This text is studied in O.v. Hinüber, "Magic Protection in the Palola Śāhi Kingdom – History and Context of Rakṣā Texts and Dhāraṇīs in 7th Century

relevant verses occur three times embedded in various prose introductions, which are irrelevant here:

<i>Virūpakkhehi me mettaṃ</i>	<i>mettaṃ Erāpathehi me</i>
<i>Chabyāputtehi me mettaṃ</i>	<i>{mettaṃ}<sup>1</sup> Kaṇhāgotamakehi ca</i>
<i>apāḍakehi me mettaṃ</i>	<i>mettaṃ dvīpāḍakehi me</i>
<i>catuppadehi me mettaṃ</i>	<i>mettaṃ bahuppadehi me</i>
<i>mā maṃ apāḍako hiṃsi</i>	<i>mā maṃ hiṃsi dvīpāḍako</i>
<i>mā maṃ catuppado hiṃsi</i>	<i>mā maṃ hiṃsi bahuppado</i>
<i>sabbe sattā sabbe pāṇā</i>	<i>sabbe bhūtā ca kevalā</i>
<i>sabbe bhadrāni passantu</i>	<i>mā kiñci pāpam āgamā</i>

*appamāno buddho appamāno dhammo appamāno saṅgho.*  
*pamāṇavantāni sariṃsapāni ahi vicchikā satapadī uṇṇanābhi sarabū mūsikā.*  
*katā me rakkhā kataṃ me parittaṃ paṭikkamantu bhūtāni.*  
*so haṃ namo bhagavato namo sattannaṃ sammāsambuddhānaṃ.*

Vin II 110,7\*-20\* (Khuddakavatthukkhandhaka) = AN II 72,30\*-73,10\*  
 (Catukkanipāta) = Ja II 145,19\*-48,7' (203. Khandhavattajātaka).

The *ślokas* are followed by four lines of metrical prose in form of *veḍhas*. Although printed in the Vinaya and in the Aṅguttaranikāya as verses in some oriental editions C<sup>e</sup> (AN 1915) and B<sup>e</sup> 1956 (Vin, AN), the editors of the PTS texts, C<sup>e</sup> (Vin 1933) and S<sup>e</sup> (Vin, AN 22523 = 1980) did not recognize the metrical structure and printed them as prose instead, and partly as prose, partly as verses in the Jātaka, although they are commented upon.<sup>2</sup> This shows that the Buddhist authors at the time of the Jātaka commentary were still aware of the metrical and canonical character of these *veḍhas*.

The rather loosely structured *veḍhas* are described in detail by W.B. Bollée with some additional remarks in H. Bechert's article.<sup>3</sup> This

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Gilgit", *Proceedings of the Second International Pāli Studies Week* (Sorbonne, Paris, 20–23 June 2016) ed. by C. Cicuzza, *Materials for the Study of the Tripiṭaka*, Vol. 14, Lumbini (forthcoming).

<sup>1</sup> *mettaṃ*, which is also found at Ja II 145,20\*, is unmetrical and should be omitted as in AN II 73,31\* and in the Sanskrit version: *virūpākṣeṣu me mairī kṛṣṇagotamakeṣu ca*, Ārya-Mahāmāyūrī Vidyā-Rājñī ed. by S. Takubo. Tokyo 1972, p. 5,10\* (°-gotamaksēsū is an obvious misprint).

<sup>2</sup> Similarly, the *veḍhas* in the Kuṇāljātaka are provided with a commentary.

<sup>3</sup> It is astonishing that H. Smith mentions the rhythmic prose of the Kuṇāljātaka only in passing and very briefly without any reference to *veḍhas* in the *conspectus terminorum (metricorum)* §8.9.4 (p. 1172) in the appendix to his Saddanīti edition.

rhythmic prose consists in strings of various length with groups of four morae (*gaṇa*). The end of a string may be marked by a single, often long syllable. The sequence begins with an amphibrach, which is normally allowed only in odd *gaṇas*. It occurs here regularly in the first and fifth *gaṇas*, but here perhaps irregularly also in the eighth *gaṇa* of the second sequence. However, if the word *satapadī* is removed, the structure becomes regular here, too, because the amphibrach moves to the seventh *gaṇa*. It is not totally impossible that *satapadī* is indeed an intruder from the formula *ahi vicchikā satapadī*, AN V 289,10 etc. (2+3+4)<sup>1</sup> and was inserted after the knowledge of the metrical form was lost to the tradition. For, neither the commentary of the Jātaka (Ja II 147,14' foll.) nor that of the Aṅguttaranikāya (Mp III 104,3 foll.) comments on *vicchikā* and *satapadī*, but only on *uṇṇanābhi* and *sarabū*. Lastly, *paritta* < *pari-tra* should be read *pari-ta*.

Forgotten at an early date, the metrical structure is usually hidden beneath an inadequate orthography. Here, for example, *appamāṇo* replaces the metrically correct *apamāṇo*, *sariṃsapāni* must be changed to *sarisapāni* and *satapadī* to *satapadī*, if kept in the text. The vowels *-e* and *-o* are sometimes short *-ě* and *-ō* at the end of a word.<sup>2</sup> All this is very common in *veḍhas*. Moreover, *mūsikā* should be read *mūsikā*, which is not necessarily only a metrical variant, because the form *mūsikā* is actually recognized as such, if only in recent lexicographic literature in the Śabdakalpadruma quoting the Śabdārtharatnāvalī (ca. 1650). Moreover, the ending *-ikā* occurs in other names of animals such as *sūcīkā* “mosquito” or *kaulīkā* “a certain bird.”<sup>3</sup>

The metrically restored text reads:

*apamāṇo buddho apamāṇo dhammo apamāṇo saṅgho*  
 ~ ~ - | - - | - ~ ~ - | - - | - ~ ~ - | - - | -  
*pamāṇavantāni sarisapāni ahi vicchikā [satapadī] uṇṇanābhi sarabū mūsikā*  
 ~ - ~ | - - | ~ ~ ~ ~ | ~ ~ ~ ~ | ~ - ~ | - [ ~ ~ ~ ~ ] - | ~ - ~ | ~ ~ - | - - | -

<sup>1</sup> *A Critical Pāli Dictionary* s.v. *ahi* already observed the rhythmical structure of *ahi vicchikā satapadī*, without further comment, however.

<sup>2</sup> The same can be observed in BHS, cf. *BHSD* §§ 3.64 and 3.74.

<sup>3</sup> Jacob Wackernagel & Albert Debrunner: *Altindische Grammatik*. Band II,2, *Die Nominalsuffixe* (Göttingen 1954), p. 428 § 259aa.

*katā mē rakkhā kataṃ mē paritaṃ paṭikkamantū bhūtāni*  
 ∪ - ∪ | - - | ∪ - ∪ | ∪ ∪ - | ∪ - ∪ | - - | - - | -  
*sō haṃ namō bhagavato namō sattannaṃ sammāsambuddhānaṃ*  
 ∪ - ∪ | ∪ ∪ ∪ | - ∪ | - - | - - | - - | - - | - -

## 2. THE NIGAMANA OF THE SUMAṄGALAVILĀSINĪ

The Nigamana of the Sumaṅgalavilāsinī, which is omitted in the PTS edition, has been edited without paying the necessary attention to metrics.<sup>1</sup> Therefore, it is necessary to have another look at the text in order to restore the metre as far as this is possible. Only in verses 1 and 2 do some doubts remain how to read.

The verses are *āryās* as in the Nigamanas of the commentaries to all four Nikāyas. Moreover, as the Nigamanas to the other three Nikāyas often run parallel to the one to the Sumaṅgalavilāsinī, they sometimes offer some help in finding the metrically correct text. The wording everywhere needs some adjustment, because as usual the *āryā* metre was not understood by the scribes who consequently often distorted the text which they transmitted.<sup>2</sup>

In the following, a comma is used to indicate the cæsura after the third, or after the first mora of the fourth, *gaṇa*; syllables to be left out are enclosed in braces { }.

In the Siamese edition of BE 2453 = 1910 the verses are printed as prose (Sv S<sup>c</sup> III 335,15–36,3).

<sup>1</sup> O. v. Hinüber, “The Nigamanas of the Sumaṅgalavilāsinī and the Kaṅkhāvitarāṇī”, *JPTS* XXI (1995), pp. 129–33 = *Kleine Schriften* (Wiesbaden 2009), pp. 62–66, cf. O.v. Hinüber, “Building the Theravāda Commentaries: Buddhaghosa and Dhammapāla as authors, compilers, redactors, editors and critics”, *JLABS* 36/37 (2013/2014 [2015]), pp. 353–87, particularly pp. 355 foll. with notes 7 and 9. The metrical lengthening suggested in *gūna*, note 7, is unnecessary once °-*nivāsinā* is read instead of °-*vāsinā* in verse 1.

<sup>2</sup> The *āryā* metre is described by L. Alsdorf, *Die Āryā-Strophen des Pāli-Kanons metrisch hergestellt und textgeschichtlich untersucht*. Akademie der Wissenschaften und der Literatur, Mainz: Abhandlungen der Geistes- und Sozialwissenschaftlichen Klasse, Jahrgang 1967, Nr. 4 (Wiesbaden 1968), p. 251 (9).

ettāvātā ca

āyācito **Sumaṅgalaparivenanivāsīnā** thiraguṇena

- - | √ - √ | - √ √, | √ √ - | √ √ - | √ - √ | √ - | √

†**Dāḥhānāgasamghattherena** <ṭ>theravaṃsanvayena† | 1 |

- - | - √ | - √ = | - - | - √ - √ | - - | √ | - √ |

As printed in the C<sup>e</sup> (1925) and B<sup>e</sup> (1956) the *āryā* obviously does not scan. First, the beginning of the second line is disturbed, because the second *gaṇa* is too short. Moreover, the position of the amphibrach in the odd fifth *gaṇa* is wrong, the seventh instead of the sixth *gaṇa* is | √ |, and finally, one syllable is missing at the end. This last fault can be corrected by following the text of S<sup>e</sup> with °-*anvayenāhaṃ*, which is preserved only in this branch of the tradition. However, the line is still too long.

The first two verses in the Nigamanas to the four Nikāyas differ considerably from each other, because they explain the titles of the individual commentaries and give the names of the initiators. Thus they offer no help in the reconstruction of the metre.

Three different ways to a solution to this problem may be possible. The first two try to preserve the wording of the first half of the line :

**Dāḥhānāg<en>a samgha{t}therena** theriyavaṃsena | 1 |

- - | - - | √ - - √, | - - | √ - √ | - - | √ -

The compound at the beginning is split, and the second half is reconstructed building on a reading preserved in the sub-commentary in all manuscripts and prints in *theriyānvayā ti attho*, Sv-pt III 372.3.<sup>1</sup> This may be a very faint echo of a reading *theriyavaṃsena* in the verse. The price, however, is too high, because now an amphibrach is placed in the odd third and fifth *gaṇas* again. In addition reading *theriyavaṃsena* instead of *theravaṃsanvayenāhaṃ* is a very strong intervention.

In the second attempt, the metre is restored by suppressing the first *gaṇa*, splitting the first compound and thus shortening the line :

<sup>1</sup> E<sup>e</sup> lists a variant *therisa* in manuscripts A, G<sup>m</sup>, M, which, however, certainly is an erroneous reading of *theriya* in Sinhalese script. — On the school names Theriya and Theravāda, cf. O. v. Hinüber, “Translating the Theravāda Commentaries: Why, How, For Whom?”, in: A. Collett (ed.): *Translating Buddhism* (forthcoming).

{*Dāthā*}*Nāgena saṃgha*{*t*}*therena theravaṃsanvayenāhaṃ* | 1 |  
 - - | ~ - ~ | - - | ~, - ~ | - - | ~ - - | ~

This, however, presupposes that the name of the Thera, who asked Buddhaghosa to write the commentary, *Dāṭhanāga*, was abbreviated here for metrical reasons resulting in *Nāga*.<sup>1</sup> This is perhaps unlikely, because both the introduction and the *Nigamana* to the *Visuddhimaggamahāṭīkā* confirm the full form of the name *Dāṭhānāga* with the same metrical lengthening in the introductory verses *ajjhesito dāṭhānāgatharena ... visuddhimaggo yo vutto*, verses 5–7, but as *Dāṭhanāga* in the *Nigamana āyācito* (i.e. Buddhaghoso) *siddhagāmapariveṇanivāsīnā / therena Dāṭhanāgena*, *Vism-mhṭ B<sup>e</sup> II 535,9\** foll. = *N<sup>e</sup> 1972 III 1691,9\** foll. = *S<sup>e</sup> 2470 [1927] III 658,19\** foll. Therefore, the name *Dāṭhānāga* should and could be preserved in the third variant. Here *saṃgha* is dropped in accordance with the *Visuddhimaggamahāṭīkā*, which has only *thera*:

*Dāṭhānāgatharena theravaṃsanvayenāhaṃ* | 1 |  
 - - | - - | - - | ~, - ~ | - - | ~ | - - | ~

The third restoration is the most likely solution, because the intervention is minimal and the verse scans perfectly.

*Dīghāgamavarassa dasabalagaṇagaṇaparidīpanassa aṭṭhakathaṃ*  
 - - | ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ | ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ | ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ | ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ | - - ~ ~ ~ | -

The second *gaṇa* does not scan. Therefore, at the beginning either the syllables *vara* should be left out:

*Dīghāgamassa dasabalagaṇagaṇaparidīpanassa aṭṭhakathaṃ*  
 - - | ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ | ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ | ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ | ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ | - ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ | -

Or, alternatively, and perhaps more likely, is, however, suppressing *dīgha*:

{*Dīgh*}*Āgamavarassa dasabalagaṇagaṇaparidīpanassa aṭṭhakathaṃ*  
 - ~ ~ ~ | ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ | ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ | ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ | ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ | - ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ | -  
*yaṃ ārabhiṃ Sumaṅgalavilāsinīṃ nāma nāmena* | 2 |  
 - - | ~ - ~ | - ~ ~, | ~ ~ ~ ~ ~ | - - | ~ | - - | ~

<sup>1</sup> Alfons Hilka, *Beiträge zur Kenntnis der indischen Namengebung: Die altindischen Personennamen*, *Indische Forschungen* 3. Heft. (Breslau 1910), p. 61.

*sā hi mahā-aṭṭhakathāya sāram ādāya niṭṭhitā esā*  
 - ~ ~ | - - | ~, ~ - | ~ - ~ | - - | ~ - ~ | - - | -

All editions of Sv put *esā* erroneously at the beginning of the next line. The segmentation of the lines is correct in Nigamanas to Ps, Spk and Mp.

*ekāsītipamāṇāya pāliyā bhāṇavārehi | 3 |*  
 -- | -- ~ | - - | ~, ~ ~ | - - | ~ | - - | ~  
*ekūnasatṭhimatto Visuddhimaggo pi bhāṇavārehi*  
 -- | ~ - ~ | - -, | ~ - ~ | - - | ~ - ~ | - - | ~  
*atthappakāsanatthāya āgamānaṃ kato yasmā | 4 |*  
 - - | ~ - ~ | - - | ~, ~ ~ | - - | ~ | - - | -  
*tasmā tena sahā 'yaṃ aṭṭhakathā bhāṇavāragāṇanāya*  
 - - | - ~ ~ | - -, | - ~ ~ | - - | - ~ ~ | ~ ~ - | -  
*suparimitaparicchinnāṃ cattālīsasatāṃ hoti | 5 |*  
 ~ ~ ~ ~ | ~ ~ ~ - | - -, | - - | - - | ~ | - - | -

All editions have *cattālīsasatāṃ* instead of the metrically correct *cattālīsasatāṃ*.

{*sabbaṃ*} *cattālīsādhikasataparimāṇaṃ bhāṇavārato evaṃ*  
 { - - } | - - | - - | ~ ~ ~ ~ | - - | - | ~ - ~ | - - | -

The line as edited in C<sup>e</sup>, B<sup>e</sup> and S<sup>e</sup> is too long by one *gāṇa*. The parallel verses in the Nigamanas to Ps, Spk, and Mp suggest that *sabbaṃ* at the beginning should be suppressed.

*samayaṃ pakāsayantiṃ Mahāvihāre nivāsinaṃ | 6 |*  
 ~ ~ - | ~ ~ ~ | - -, | ~ ~ ~ | - - | ~ | - - | -  
*mūlaṭṭhakathāsāraṃ ādāya mayā imaṃ karontena*  
 - - | ~ ~ ~ | - -, | - - | ~ ~ ~ | ~ ~ ~ | - - | -

In contrast to S<sup>e</sup> *mūlaṭṭhakathāsāraṃ*, both C<sup>e</sup> and B<sup>e</sup>, read *mūlaka-*, which does not scan. The correct reading *mūlaṭṭhakathāsāraṃ* is confirmed by the parallel verses in the Nigamanas to Ps, Spk, Mp and by Sv-pt III 372,24.

*yaṃ puññaṃ upacitaṃ tena hotu sabbo sukhī loko | 7 | ti*  
 - - | ~ ~ ~ ~ | - - | ~, ~ ~ | - - | ~ | - - | -

#### ADDENDUM TO: I. VEDHAS IN THE THERAVĀDA TĪPIṬAKA:

It was only after the article went to the press that the opportunity presented itself to read the version of the Mahāvastu as preserved in the oldest extant

manuscript (*Sa*) and to discuss problematic paragraphs with Dr K. Marciniak at Soka University in Hachioji in October 2017. When doing so, it was possible to trace a so far overlooked parallel or even the source of an *āryā*-verse in the Hastinījātaka of the Mahāvastu in the *veḍhas* of the Kuṇāljātaka.

The ancient palm leaf manuscript *Sa* was not known at the time of E. Senart's edition. It is easily accessible now in facsimile in A. Yuyama, *The Mahāvastu-Avadāna in Old Palm-Leaf and Paper Manuscripts*, I. *Palm-Leaf Manuscripts* (Tokyo: Bibliotheca Codicum Asiaticorum 15, 2001). The relevant verse, Mvu III 133,14\* foll., is found in manuscript *Sa* folio 311a2 on p. 156 in the facsimile edition.

Senart's text: *kinnara-kuñjara-vānara-varāha-śārdūla-vyāghra-gaṇacīrṇe*  
 - ~ ~ | - ~ ~ | - ~ ~ | ~ ~ ~ | - - | ~ - ~ | ~ ~ - | -

Text ms. *Sa*: *kinnara-kuñjara-vānara-varāha-śārdūla-vyāghra-gaṇacīrṇa*

Senart's text: *ruru-mahiṣa-sarabha-carite vṛṣabha-camari-śambarākīrṇe*  
 ~ ~ ~ ~ | ~ ~ ~ ~ | ~ ~ ~ ~ | ~ ~ ~ ~ | ~ ~ - | ~ | - - | -

Text ms. *Sa*: *ruru-mahiṣa-sarabha-carita pṛṣata-camari-rurṇakākīrṇe*

The reading *rurṇaka*, which was heavily emended by E. Senart to *śambara*, was found in his manuscripts and is confirmed now also by manuscript *Sa*. After the reading *pṛṣata* is recovered from manuscript *Sa*, it becomes obvious that this *āryā* is ultimately based on a restructured *veḍha* and similar to the perhaps original text preserved in the Kuṇāljātaka: ... *gaja-gavaja-mahisa-ruru-camara-pasada-[khagga]-gokaṇṇa-sīha-vyaggha-dīpi* ..., Ja V 416,19\*\* foll. = Bollée 8,17 foll. (see note 2 on page 115 above). Once this discovery was made the puzzling reading *rurṇaka* in all manuscripts can be explained as hiding the original word *gokaṇṇa*, which emerges from the comparison of the two texts. This word does scan in the *veḍha*, but does not in the *āryā*:

... *carita pṛṣata-camari-gokaṇṇakākīrṇe*  
 ... | ~ ~ ~ ~ | ~ ~ ~ ~ | ~ - - | ~ - - | -

Here, the fifth *gaṇa* ~ - - in unmetrical. This could perhaps be mended by reading \**gukaṇṇa* and thus changing ~ - - into the metrical sequence ~ ~ - . Lastly, the necessity to delete *-khagga-* in the Kuṇāljātaka, as correctly seen by W. B. Bollée, is brilliantly confirmed by the Mahāvastu parallel.