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Cui bono? or Follow the Money
Identifying the Sophist in a Pāli Commentary

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Cui bono? or Follow the Money Identifying the Sophist in a Pāli Commentary*

Jonathan A. SILK

Twenty years ago Mori Sodō published a study in which he attempted to identify the so-called Sophists¹ or Vitaṇḍavādins referred to in Pāli commentarial literature.² He concluded from his detailed investigation that there are two general types of Vitaṇḍavādin mentioned in this literature: those corresponding to the ancient Indian Lokāyata (here probably Materialists for the most part), and those to whom reference was added by Ceylonese authors of the Mahāvihārin lineage to disparage their opponents. In other words, this second type of Vitaṇḍavādin is someone who, from the point of the view of the self-proclaimed orthodox Mahāvihāra, holds objectionable or unacceptable opinions. Mori suggested three possible identities for these opponents: 1) Those belonging to the Abhayagiri school; 2) An Indian group accepted by the Abhayagiri school, such as the Vetullavāda; 3) Some Indian sect other than Ceylonese Theravāda, and went on to tentatively deny the likelihood of the first two of these possibilities.³ Most of the fifteen examples cited by Mori concern matters of doctrinal systematics, that is, points of Abhidhammic exegesis, and have not so far

* I would like to express here my profound thanks and appreciation to my friends Yōichi Kaji, Harunaga Isaacson, Jens-Uwe Hartmann, Gregory Schopen and, most especially, Lance Cousins, for their kind and helpful comments on an earlier draft.

1 Jayatilke 1963: 217ff. questions whether “sophist” is an appropriate translation of *vitaṇḍavādin*, identifying a rather narrow technical definition which he maintains is not sophistic but eristic. In our case here, however, it appears that the term is used in a much more general sense of “opponent,” but for the sake of convenience, and since it seems very likely that the term was chosen to convey a (generalized) sense of opprobrium, I adopt the rendering “sophist” below.

2 Mori 1982.

3 There is no reason to accept the flat assertion of Rahula 1978: 71, who equates the Vitaṇḍavādins with the Vetullavādins, adds that Vaitulya refers to Mahāyāna, and concludes: “we can be certain that the terms Vitaṇḍa and Vetulya used in Pāli Chronicles and Commentaries refer to Mahāyāna.” I learn from Lance Cousins (email 19 January, 2002) that the reasons for Rahula’s assertion of this identity is the correspondence between a description in the *Mahāvamsa* XXXVI. 41 (Geiger 1908: 309.3) referring to a position rejected in the reign of Vohārikatissa (3rd c.) as Vetulyavāda (Vetullavāda) and the reference to the same event earlier in the *Dīpavamsa* XXII. 43–45 (Oldenberg 1879: 110.31–111.2) in which the position is characterized as Vitaṇḍavāda (with a variant in Oldenberg’s Sinhalese manuscripts of Vetullavāda).

been noticed to correspond to known sectarian positions. In one case, however, Mori discovered that a position attributed to the Vītaṇḍavādin in the commentaries to the *Majjhimanikāya* and *Vibhaṅga* corresponds to that cited in the commentary to the *Kathāvatthu* as a view of the Mahīśāsaka (Sanskrit Mahīśāsaka) school. With only this one piece of evidence, he was constrained to say quite cautiously that “there is no additional proof that all of the other fourteen views are also attributable to the Mahīśāsakas.”⁴ While further research in scholastic sources may still potentially offer some insights into the background of the cited dogmas, here I would like to explore one other particular instance of Mori’s fifteen from a rather different point of view.

Some time ago when I chanced to be reading Tomomatsu Entai’s very interesting study on the Theory and Practice of Distribution in Buddhism, I came across his quotation of a passage from the *Papañcasūdanī*, Buddhaghosa’s commentary to the *Majjhimanikāya*, in which reference is made to a Vītaṇḍavādin.⁵ I remembered Mori’s article, and discovered that although naturally Mori had noted the passage in question, he contented himself with saying of it:⁶ “Regarding the commentary on a passage in the *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga Sutta*, the MA [= *Majjhimanikāya-Aṭṭhakathā*] quoted a view of the Vītaṇḍavādins differing from that of the Mahāvihāra fraternity.” I believe that, taking more than a small hint from the work of Tomomatsu, we might be able to say a bit more.⁷

The *sutta* passage being commented upon is, as Mori says, from the *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga Sutta*, number 142 of the *Majjhimanikāya*. After the stock opening, we read:⁸

atha kho mahāpajāpatī gotamī navam dussayugam ādāya yena bhagavā tenupasaṅkamī | upasaṅkamitvā bhagavantam abhivādetvā ekamantam nisīdi | ekamantam nisinnā kho mahāpajāpatī gotamī bhagavantam etad avoca | idam me bhante navam dussayugam bhagavantam uddissa sāmam kantaṃ sāmam vāyitaṃ | tam me bhante bhagavā patiggaṇhātu anukampaṃ upādāyā ti |
evam vutte bhagavā mahāpajāpatī gotamī etad avoca | saṅghe

4 Mori 1982: 13 (176). See the commentary to *Kathāvatthu* XX.5 in Aung and Rhys Davids 1915: 347–348, and Law 1940: 230, and Bareau 1955: 187 (Mahīśāsaka §30).

5 Tomomatsu 1970: 63–65. Oddly, he does not there offer any suggestion as to the identity of this *vītaṇḍavādin*.

6 Mori 1982: 8 (181).

7 My debt in the following to Tomomatsu 1932 and 1970 is thoroughgoing, despite the failure to specifically acknowledge each case of my reliance on his work.

8 Chalmers 1899: 253.7–20. Also translated in Nāṇamoli 1995: 1102.

gotamī dehi | saṅghe te dinnam ahan ceva pūjito bhavissāmi saṅghe cā ti | dutiyam pi ... tatiyam pi kho mahāpajāpatī gotamī bhagavantam etad avoca | idam me bhante navam dussayugam bhagavantam uddissa sāmam kantaṃ sāmam vāyitaṃ | tam me bhante bhagavā patiggaṇhātu anukampaṃ upādāyā ti | tatiyam pi kho bhagavā mahāpajāpatī gotamī etad avoca | saṅghe gotamī dehi | saṅghe te dinne ahan ceva pūjito bhavissāmi saṅghe cā ti |

evam vutte āyasmā ānando bhagavantam etad avoca | patiggaṇhātu bhante bhagavā mahāpajāpatiyā gotamiyā navam dussayugam |

Then Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī took a new pair of clothes and went to the Blessed One. Having approached him and respectfully saluted him, she sat down at one side. Sitting to one side, Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī spoke to the Blessed One: “Venerable, this new pair of clothes has been spun by me, woven by me, especially for the Blessed One. Venerable, may the Blessed One accept it from me out of compassion.”

When she had said this, the Blessed One spoke to Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī: “Give it to the monastic community, Gotamī. If it is given to the monastic community, both I and the monastic community will be honored with offerings.”

A second time ... a third time Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī spoke to the Blessed One: “Venerable, this new pair of clothes has been spun by me, woven by me, especially for the Blessed One. Venerable, may the Blessed One accept it from me out of compassion.”

When she had said this, the Blessed One spoke to Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī: “Give it to the monastic community, Gotamī. If it is given to the monastic community, both I and the monastic community will be honored with offerings.”

When he had said this, the Reverend Ānanda spoke to the Blessed One: “Venerable, may the Blessed One accept the new pair of clothes from Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī. ...”

Here, apparently quite simply, Gotamī wishes to make a donation to the Buddha personally, but he directs her that the donation should instead be made to the monastic community. The wording of the scripture itself is straightforward, and in fact almost exactly the same crucial phrase is again found in recensions of the episode recorded in texts attributed to sects other than the Theravāda.⁹ The **Gautamī-sūtra* in the Sarvāstivāda *Madhyamā-gama* says:¹⁰

世尊告曰。瞿曇彌。持此衣施比丘衆、施比丘衆已、便供養我亦供養衆。

The Blessed One said: “Gotamī, give this robe to the community of monks. Giving it to the community of monks, [you] will honor me with offerings¹¹ and also honor the community with offerings.

The version in the **Dakṣiṇāvibhaṅga*, *Fenbie bushi-jing* 分別布施經, the sectarian identification of which appears to be unknown, has:¹²

爾時、佛告摩訶波闍波提。汝可持此鬘衣施諸大衆。所獲勝利同供養我等無有異。

At that time the Buddha said to Mahāprajāpati: “You should give this robe of fine fabric to the great communities.¹³ The special benefits you will receive will equal those from honoring me with offerings, without any difference whatsoever.”

As simple and straightforward as this discussion may seem, within it lie the seeds of a considerable controversy. This controversy reaches not only skyward toward ethereal questions such as those concerning the very status and significance of the Buddha himself, but also deep down into the pockets and treasure chests of the monks and monastic communities. What is of interest to us here in the first place is the interpretation given this episode in Buddhaghosa’s commentary on the *Majjhimanikāya*. Buddhaghosa glosses the exchange as follows:¹⁴

9 To the best of my knowledge, no traces of this episode have been found so far in an Indic language other than Pāli. The Turfan materials contain one fragment of the sūtra, but it does not include the portion of interest to us; see Waldschmidt, Clawiter and Sander-Holtzmann 1971: §979. Note, however, that the crucial sentence is quoted in many and various texts. Among the most unexpected versions is that quoted in the Mahāyāna *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*, which has the Buddha say that honoring the monastic community means honoring the three refuges. See T. 374 (XII) 395c27–396a6 (*juan 5*), translated from Chinese into Tibetan in Derge Kanjur 119, *mdo sde, nya* 84a, noted and translated from Chinese by Tomomatsu 1970: 209–214.

10 T. 26 (180 瞿曇彌經) (I) 721c27–29 (*juan 47*).

11 The term 供養 implies the offering of material gifts. Despite its common translation with words such as honor, venerate and so on, however, so too does Indic *pūjā*, which refers quintessentially to food offerings. See Tomomatsu 1970: 55–58, 67–68.

12 T. 84 (I) 903c4–5. See Tomomatsu 1970: 103–109.

13 Probably the plural marker 諸 here indicates the two communities of monks and nuns.

14 Horner 1938: 67.15–69.15, and the devanāgarī edition of the Sixth (Burmese) Śāsana Council text published in the Dhammagiri-Pāli-Ganthamālā series, vol. 18 (Igatpuri: Vipassana Research Institute, 1995): 231.5–232.23. The latter seems to contain a better text, although it is sometimes hard to see whether we simply have to do with misprints in Horner’s edition. In principle I have quoted the text from the Burmese edition, noting those variants which seem to be even remotely significant, although nowhere does the meaning of the text actually change. The passage is partially translated in Tomomatsu 1970: 63–64.

“*dutiyaṃ pi kho ti saṅghe gotamī dehi*” ti vutte | pahom’ ahaṃ bhante dussakoṭṭhāgarato bhikkhusatassāpi bhikkhusahassassāpi bhikkhusatasahassassāpi cīvaradussāni dātuṃ | “*idaṃ pana me bhagavantam uddissa sāmam kantam sāmam vāyitam | tam me bhante bhagavā paṭiggaṇhātū*” ti nimantayamānā^{a)} āha | evaṃ yāvattiyam yāci | bhagavā pi paṭikkhipi yeva | kasmā pana bhagavā attano diyyamānam bhikkhusaṅghassa dāpeti ti | mātari anukampāya | evaṃ kirassa ahosi | “imissā maṃ ārabha pubbacetanā muñcanacetanā aparacetanā ti tisso cetanā uppannā bhikkhusaṅgham pissā ārabha uppajjantu | evaṃ assā cha cetanā ekato hutvā dīgharattam hitāya sukhāya pavattissanti^{b)}” ti | vitanḍavādī panāha | “saṅghe dinnam mahapphalan” ti tasmā evaṃ vuttan ti |

so vattabbo | “kim tvam satthu dinnato saṅghe dinnam mahapphalataram vadasi” ti

“āma vadāmi” ti |

“suttam āharā” ti |

“*saṅghe gotamī dehi saṅghe te dinne ahañ ceva pūjito bhavissāmi saṅgho cā*” ti |

“kim panassa suttassa ayam eva attho” ti |

“āma ayam evā” ti |

yadi evaṃ “tena hānanda^{c)} vighāsādānam pūvam dehi” ti ca “tena hi tva^{d)} kaccāna vighāsādānam guḷam dehi” ti ca vacanato vighāsādānam dinnam mahapphalatarāṃ ca bhaveyya | evam pi hi sathā attano diyyamānam dāpeti^{e)} ti | rājarājamahāmattādayo pi^{f)} attano āgataṃ^{g)} paṇṇākāram hatthigopakādīnam dāpenti | te rājādīhi mahantatarā bhaveyyuṃ tasmā mā evaṃ gaṇha |

na-y-imasmim loke parasmim vā pana buddhena seṭṭho sadiso vā vijjati |

yam āhuneyyānam aggataṃ gato puññatthikānam vipulaphalesīnan ti ||

vacanato^{h)} hi sathārā uttaritaro dakkhiṇeyyo nāma natthi | evam assā cha cetanā ekato hutvā dīgharattam hitāya sukhāya bhavissanti ti |

kim panaⁱ⁾ sandhāya yāvattiyam paṭibāhetvā^{j)} saṅghassa dāpesi | pacchimāya janatāya saṅghe cittikārajananattam^{k)} cāpi^{l)} evam āha | evam kirassa ahosi | “ahaṃ na ciraṭṭhitiko mayham pana sāsanam bhikkhusaṅghe paṭiṭṭhahissati pacchimā janatā saṅghe cittikāram janetū ti | yāvattiyam paṭibāhetvā saṅghassa dāpesi | evam hi^{m)} sati sathā attano diyyamānam pi saṅghassa dāpesi saṅgho nāma dakkhiṇeyyo” ti pacchimā janatā saṅgheⁿ⁾ cittikāram uppādetvā cattāro paccaye dātabbe

mannissati | saṅgho catūhi paccayehi akilamanto¹⁵ buddhavacanāṃ uggahetvā samaṇadhammāṃ karissati | evaṃ mama sāsanaṃ pancavassasahassāni ṭhassati ti |

“paṭiggaṇhātu bhante bhagavā” ti vacanato pi cetam veditabbaṃ | “sattārā uttaritaro dakkhiṇeyyo nāma natthi” ti | na hi ānandattherassa mahāpajāpatiyā āghāto vā veram vā atthi | na thero “tassā dakkhiṇā mā mahapphalā ahoṣi” ti icchati | paṇḍito hi thero bahussuto sekkhapaṭi-sambhidāppatto | so satthu dinnassa mahapphalabhāve¹⁶ saṃpassamāno¹⁶ va “paṭiggaṇhātu bhante bhagavā” ti gahaṇatthaṃ yāci |

puna vitaṇḍavādī āha | “ ‘saṅghe te dinne ahañ ceva pūjito bhavissāmi saṅgho cā’ ti vacanato sattā saṅghapariyāpanno vā” ti |

so vattabbo | “jānāsi pana tvam kati saraṇāni¹⁶ kati aveccappasāda” ti | jānanto “tīṇi” ti vakkhati | tato vattabbo | “tava laddhiyā satthu saṅghapariyāpannattā dve yeva honti | evaṃ sante ca ‘anujānāmi bhikkhave imehi¹⁶’ tihi saraṇagamaṇehi pabbajam upasampadam’ ti evaṃ anuññātā pabbajā pi upasampadā pi na rūhati | tato tvam neva pabbajito asi na gihi | sammāsambuddhe ca gandhakuṭiyam nisinne bhikkhū uposatham pi pavāraṇam pi saṅghakammāni pi karonti | tāni satthu saṅghapariyāpannattā kuppāni bhaveyyum na ca honti tasmā | na vattabbam etaṃ “sattā saṅghapariyāpanno” ti |¹⁶

“A second time [Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī asked the Buddha to accept the clothing she had made, and a second time the Blessed One said]: Give it to the monastic community, Gotamī.” She urged him saying “I am able to give from my warehouse of clothing robe cloth for a hundred monks, a thousand monks, a hundred thousand monks. This [cloth] now has been spun by me, woven by me, especially for the Blessed One. Venerable, may the Blessed One accept it from me.” So she requested a third time [too], but the Blessed One flatly refused. Why did the Blessed One order that what was being given to himself be given [instead] to the community of monks? Out of compassion for his mother [Gotamī]. It then occurred to him thus: “She has three intentions concerning me

15 This form is not noticed by the *Critical Pāli Dictionary*, Trenckner et al. 1924– (but see 540b, akilamana).

16 Variant readings (H = Horner’s PTS edition; B = Burmese edition):

- | | | | |
|----------------------|------------------------------|--|-----------------|
| a) H: nibandhamānā. | b) H: saṃvattissanti | c) H: tenānanda | d) H: omits tva |
| e) H: dāpesi | f) H: adds ca | g) H: ābhatam | h) H: adds ti |
| i) B: omits kim pana | j) B: paṭibāhitvā, and below | k) H: spells citti ^o , and below. | |
| l) H: vā ti | m) H: evam pi | n) H: adds hi | o) H: “bhāvam |
| p) H: passamāno | q) H: saraṇā ti | r) H: omits imehi | |

[with regard to this gift]: prior intention, an intention of relinquishing, and subsequent intention. She should direct these [intentions] to the community of monks as well. Thus the six intentions [three for the Buddha, three for the community] together will lead to benefit and happiness for a long time.”

But the Sophist says: “That was said thus [by the Buddha in the scripture] because ‘What is given to the monastic community yields a great [karmic] result.’ ”

He should be asked: “Do you say that what is given to the monastic community yields a greater result than what is given to the Teacher?”

[He replies]: “I say yes, it does.”

“Quote the scripture!”

“Give it to the monastic community, Gotamī. If it is given to the monastic community, both I and the monastic community will be honored with offerings.”

“Is that the meaning of this scriptural passage?”

“Yes, precisely!”

[We disagree.] If this were so, according to the [Vinaya] expressions “Well, Ānanda, give the cakes to those who eat scraps of food,”¹⁷ and “Well then, Kaccāna, give those who eat the remains of food [as much] sugar [as they want],”¹⁸ what is given to those who eat the remains of food would yield a greater result. For just so [the scripture] says that the Teacher had what was being given to him given [instead to the community]. Kings, royal ministers and others too have presents which were delivered to themselves given [instead] to their mahouts and others. [According to your thinking,] those [mahouts and others] would become much greater than the kings and others [which is impossible]. Therefore it must not be understood in this way.

Neither in this world nor in the other is there one better than or equal to the Buddha, the first among those who are worthy of oblations, for those [donors] who are desirous of merit, who seek abundant results.¹⁹

17 Oldenberg 1879–1883: iv.91.5–6 (*Pācattiya* 41); Horner 1938–1966: 2.347.

18 Oldenberg 1879–1883: i.225.5–6 (*Mahāvagga* VI.26.4); Horner 1938–1966: 4.306.

19 The same verse, the source of which is untraced but certainly not canonical, is also found with minor variations in the *Kathāvatthu* (Taylor 1897: 555.32–556.3): *na-y-imasmiṃ vā loke paramiṃ vā pana buddhena seṭṭho ca samo ca vijjati | yam āhuneyyānāṃ aggataṃ gato puññatthikānaṃ vipulaphalesīnaṃ ti ||*; translated there by Aung and Rhys Davids 1915: 321. See below for a discussion of the *Kathāvatthu* passage.

According to this expression, there is no one worthy of offerings greater than the Teacher. Thus the six intentions together will lead to benefit and happiness for a long time.

Intending what, then, did [the Buddha], refusing up to three times, have [the donation] given to the monastic community? For the sake of future generations and in order to produce esteem for the monastic community he spoke thus and it occurred to him thus: "I will not remain long [in the world], but my teaching will be established in the community of monks. Later generations must esteem the monastic community. This being so, later generations, esteeming the monastic community by saying 'The Teacher had even what was being given to him given [instead] to the monastic community. It is indeed the monastic community which is worthy of offerings,' will think that the four requisites must be given [to monks]. The monastic community [thus] adequately provided with the four requisites will study the Buddha's words and practice the teaching of the ascetic. Thus my teaching will last for five thousand²⁰ years."

"*Venerable, may the Blessed One accept it.*" From this expression too should be known: "There is no one more worthy of offerings than the Teacher." For the Elder Ānanda has neither loathing nor hatred for Mahāpajāpati. The Elder does not wish [to harm her karmically by hoping] "Let her donation not yield a great result!" For the scholarly Elder is greatly learned, has attained the analytic insight of a learner. Perceiving the fact that what is given to the Teacher yields a great result, he requested "*Venerable, may the Blessed One accept it*" in order that he receive it [which will benefit the donor, Mahāpajāpati].

Again the Sophist, however, says: Because of the expression "*If it is given to the monastic community, both I and the monastic community will be honored with offerings,*" the Teacher is included within the monastic community.

He should be asked: "Do you know how many refuges there are, how many kinds of faith based on understanding?" Knowing, he will say "three [Buddha, Dharma and monastic community]." Then he should be told: "In your view, the fact of the Teacher's being included in the

20 Tomomatsu 1970: 64, who used the "Siamese edition, III.709 et seq.," cites the text as reading *pañcavassasātāni*. Horner quotes no variants. The five thousand year dating is standard in the Theravāda system, on which see briefly Nattier 1991: 56–58. It would be very interesting indeed if a Thai text were to contain this five hundred year date, and the editions should be carefully checked, which I regret I am not able to do at present.

monastic community means that there are only two [Buddha/monastic community, and Dharma]. And that being so, the [Vinaya] injunction 'Monks, I stipulate novice ordination and full ordination by going to these three refuges'²¹ is not effective for either novice ordination or full ordination. So you are neither ordained nor a householder. When the Perfect Buddha sits in the Perfume Chamber, the monks perform the *uposatha* rite, the *pavāraṇa* and the ecclesiastical acts of the monastic community. From the fact of the Teacher's being included in the monastic community those ecclesiastical acts would become reversible, but they are not.²² Therefore it is not acceptable to say 'The Teacher is included within the monastic community.'

There are a number of crucial issues raised here. The central ones include the following: the opponent, the Sophist, suggests that not only are donations made to the monastic community productive of great merit, but this merit is greater than that produced by donations to the Buddha himself. Moreover, the Buddha is to be considered as included within the monastic community, and therefore donations to the monastic community are by definition also donations to the Buddha, which leads to the conclusion that separate donations to the Buddha are unnecessary.

What is at stake here does not, at least initially, appear to be any issue of doctrinal systematics, but rather a very practical and essentially economic question: to whom are gifts to be offered, and who is to benefit from gifts offered to the monastic community? The opinion of Buddhaghosa, the author of the commentary, which ipso facto represents the dominant and orthodox Theravāda view, is that the primacy of the Buddha cannot be challenged by the idea that the monastic community may compete with him for patronage. Although one issue is certainly that of economics, and specifically the legitimacy of directing donations to one recipient or another, there is also a connected doctrinal question: just what is the status of the Buddha? For although the narrative time of the *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga Sutta* is of course the

21 Oldenberg 1879–1883: i.22.21–22.

22 That such ecclesiastical acts would be subject to reversal or be illegal (*kuppa*, Sanskrit *kopya*) is due to the Vinaya legal requirement that all members of the community be present during the execution of an act. Were the Buddha, counted as a monk, to remain nevertheless in his chamber and hence not be present among the rest of the community, the assembly would be incomplete and its actions invalid. Therefore, argues Buddhaghosa, the Buddha cannot be considered to be a monk.

Gregory Schopen points out to me that the Perfume Chamber is unknown to the Pāli canon, and thus Buddhaghosa's argument here is clearly informed by other, non- or post-canonical sources.

time of the Buddha, an imaginary present when the Buddha walks the earth along with his disciples, for the sutta's authors as much as for its commentator their world was in reality one in which the Buddha as a human presence had already ceased to exist. We will see below that Buddhist authors, including Buddhaghosa, were quite well aware of this.

To help us understand the debate we find in Buddhaghosa's commentary, it will be very helpful if we can identify the Sophist whose views contradict those of the Theravāda orthodoxy. Happily, we have excellent evidence in this regard. In the very first place, valuable indications come to us from a number of interrelated doxological treatises: Bhavya's *Nikāyabhedavibhaṅgavyākhyāna* (in fact an extract from his *Tarkajvālā*) and Vinitadeva's *Samayabhedoparacaṇacakrasya Nikāyabhedopadarśana-saṅgraha*, both preserved only in Tibetan, and Vasumitra's *Samayabhedoparacaṇacakra*, of which we have one Tibetan and three Chinese translations.²³ In the course of laying out the doctrinal positions of a number of different Buddhist schools, all of these texts in their various versions set forth the following thesis:

Bhavya:²⁴ *sangs rgyas ni dge 'dun gyi khongs su gtog(s) pa'o || dge 'dun ni 'bras bu chen po 'byung bar byed kyi sangs rgyas ni de lta ma yin no ||*

The Buddha is included in the monastic community. The monastic community generates a great result [from donations to it], but this is not so with respect to the Buddha.

Vinitadeva:²⁵ *ston pa ni dge 'dun gyi nang du gtogs te | de'i phyir dge 'dun la phul ba lhag par don che 'o ||*

The Teacher is included within the monastic community. Therefore the benefit of giving to the monastic community is greater.

Vasumitra:²⁶ *sangs rgyas ni dge 'dun la dmigs so || dge 'dun la phul ba ni 'bras bu che 'o || sangs rgyas la ni ma yin no ||*

The Buddha is perceived to be in the monastic community. [So,] giving to the monastic community has a great result. [Giving] to the Buddha does not.

23 T. 2031 異部宗輪論; T. 2032 十八部論; T. 2033 部執異論.

24 Teramoto and Hiramatsu 1935: 28.14–16 and the better text published by Miyasaka Yūshō 宮坂有勝 in Takai 1928/1978: 23.8–10; Derge Tanjur 3856, *dbu ma, dza* 152a1. See Bareau 1954–1956: 180. Here and below I follow Miyasaka's readings.

25 Teramoto and Hiramatsu 1935: 44.3–4–16; Miyasaka in Takai 1928/1978: 35.4–5. See Bareau 1954–1956: 198.

26 Teramoto and Hiramatsu 1935: 15.10–12; Miyasaka in Takai 1928/1978: 12.14–15. See Bareau 1954–1956: 261–262.

Xuanzang:²⁷ 僧伽中有佛故、施僧者、便獲大果、非別施佛。

Because the Buddha is in the monastic community, one who gives to the community will immediately obtain a great result, but not one who gives separately to the Buddha.

Paramārtha:²⁸ 大衆中有佛。若施大衆得報則大。若別施佛功德則不及。

The Buddha is in the community. If one gives to the community, the result one obtains will be great. If one gives separately to the Buddha, the merit [one obtains] will be less than [what one obtains from giving to the community].

Anonymous:²⁹ 佛僧中。可得施僧得果報、非佛。

The Buddha is in the monastic community. If one is capable of giving to the monastic community, one will obtain a result, but not [if one gives to] the Buddha.

Although there are the kind of trivial differences in wording one would expect from any group of independent translations of the same text, the central point is crystal clear: The Buddha is a member of the monastic community. Because of this fact, donations made to the monastic community yield greater karmic results than donations made to the Buddha alone. This is of course precisely, and virtually verbatim, the position set forth by the Sophist in the *Majjhimanikāya* commentary we noticed above. And the clue we have been looking for to identify that Sophist is right here: this thesis is listed as one of the doctrinal stances held by the Mahīśāsaka school, a fact which goes some way toward supporting the hypothesis hesitantly proposed by Mori on the basis of more limited evidence.

It is significant that the same doxographic texts also present a position directly contrary to this Mahīśāsaka view, categorizing it as one belonging to the Dharmaguptakas. We again read:

27 T. 2031 (XLIX) 17a12; Teramoto and Hiramatsu 1935: 73–74. Translated in Masuda 1925: 62. Probably it is on the basis of this very text that Kuji makes the same claim in his encyclopedic *Dacheng fayuan yilin-zhang* 大乘法苑義林章 T. 1861 (XLV) 346c3–5 (*juan* 6). See Tomomatsu 1932: 152.

28 T. 2033 (XLIX) 221–2; Teramoto and Hiramatsu 1935: 73–74.

29 T. 2032 (XLIX) 19b24–25; Teramoto and Hiramatsu 1935: 73–74. This translation is attributed in many catalogues to Paramārtha (T. 2034 [XLIX] 99a; T. 2147 [LV] 156a1; T. 2148 [LV] 188c24; T. 2149 [LV] 266a29, 301b10, 325a16; T. 2151 [LV] 364c15–16; T. 2153 [LV] 435b18–19). However, the detailed consideration in the *Kaiyuan shijiao-lu* 開元釋教錄 (T. 2154 [LV] 621c1–5; repeated in T. 2157 [LV] 955a15–20) refutes this, and mentions the suggestion that the translation is due to Kumārajīva. (See also T. 2154 [LV] 519a1, 538c16–17.) The issue has been discussed in Mochizuki 1932–1936: 169bc, and Kanakura 1962: 275–76 (who seems to be willing to accept the attribution to Kumārajīva).

Bhavya:³⁰ *sangs rgyas ni dge 'dun gyi khongs su gtogs pa ma yin no || sangs rgyas las 'bras bu chen po 'byung ba de ltar*³¹ *dge 'dun las ni ma yin no* ||³²

The Buddha is not included in the monastic community. [Donations] to the Buddha generate a great result, but it is not so [for donations made] to the monastic community.

Vinīta-deva:³³ *sangs rgyas ni dge 'dun gyi nang du ma gtogs so || sangs rgyas la phul ba 'bras bu che 'o* ||

The Buddha is not included within the monastic community. Presentations to the Buddha have a great result.

Vasumitra:³⁴ *sangs rgyas ni dge 'dun la dmigs so || sangs rgyas la phul ba ni 'bras bu che ba 'o || dge 'dun la ni ma yin no* ||

The Buddha is perceived to be in the monastic community. [Hence,] presentations to the Buddha have a great result. Those to the monastic community do not.

Xuanzang:³⁵ 佛雖在僧中所攝、然別施佛果大、非僧。於刪堵波與供養業、獲廣大果。

Although the Buddha is included within the monastic community, separate donations to the Buddha have a great result, not those to the monastic community. The action of making offerings to the stūpa generates a great result.

Paramārtha:³⁶ 僧中有佛世尊。依戴斗波起恭敬有勝報、恭敬大眾則不及。

The Buddha, Blessed One, is in the monastic community. Generating reverence for the stūpa has a special result. Reverence for the monastic community does not [produce a result] equal to this.

30 Teramoto and Hiramatsu 1935: 29.7–9; Miyasaka in Takai 1928/1978: 23.22–23; Derge Tanjur 3856, *dbu ma, dza* 152a4. See Bareau 1954–1956: 181. Bareau (181, n. 3) correctly notes that the Tibetan text printed by Teramoto has omitted a necessary negation, which is however found in Miyasaka's edition (without variants) and the Derge *Tarkajvālā* text. Almost certainly this merely represents a misprint in Teramoto's edition (in which they are, unfortunately, common).

31 v.l. *dag* for *ltar*.

32 I understand here both times *la* for *las*, in accord with the context and parallels.

33 Teramoto and Hiramatsu 1935: 44.7–8; Miyasaka in Takai 1928/1978: 35.8–9. See Bareau 1954–1956: 198.

34 Teramoto and Hiramatsu 1935: 16.5–7; Miyasaka in Takai 1928/1978: 13.5–7. See Bareau 1954–1956: 192.

35 T. 2031 (XLIX) 17a23–25; Teramoto and Hiramatsu 1935: 79. Translated in Masuda 1925: 64. It is not clear whether the last phrase should form a separate item, as understood for instance by Masuda 1925: 64, but perhaps not. (The stūpa is, of course, functionally equivalent to the Buddha.)

36 T. 2033 (XLIX) 22b13–14; Teramoto and Hiramatsu 1935: 79.

Anonymous:³⁷ 佛非僧中。可得施佛得大果報、非僧。

The Buddha is not in the monastic community. If one is capable of giving to the Buddha, one will obtain a great result, but not [if one gives to] the monastic community.

Aside from the very odd fact that the Tibetan translation and the Chinese translations of Xuanzang and Paramārtha of Vasumitra's treatise appear to have omitted a negation, since they state (somewhat incoherently) the Buddha to be included within the monastic community, the basic meaning is clear here as well.³⁸ For the Dharmaguptakas the Buddha is separate from the monastic community, and donations to him (or to the stūpa, his presence after his nirvāṇa) are more meritorious than those to the monastic community. At a casual glance there might seem to be a coincidence between the Dharmaguptaka position and that asserted by Buddhaghosa but, as we will see, in fact the classic Theravāda position is much closer to that of the Mahīśāsakas than it is to that of the Dharmaguptakas.

While obviously we cannot always be sure that our doxographical texts correctly represent the doctrines of the schools whose views they purport to cite, in the present case we have some additional evidence supporting the hypothesis that the position of Buddhaghosa's opponent corresponds to that of the Mahīśāsaka school, since other sources contain the same indication. For instance, in section 33 of the so-called **Satyasiddhi* or **Tattvasiddhi* (成實論) of Harivarman, apparently a work of the Bahuśrutiya school,³⁹ the Mahīśāsaka position is explicitly described. There we find the following passage:⁴⁰

辯三寶品第三十三

論者言。摩醯舍婆道人說、佛在僧數。

37 T. 2032 (XLIX) 19c3–4; Teramoto and Hiramatsu 1935: 79.

38 It seems evident that Xuanzang sensed the problem here, for which he apparently attempted to compensate by the addition of "although." Why the negation might have been missing from the completely independent manuscripts of the Sanskrit original which beyond doubt stood behind the different translations I cannot say. Because the doctrinal point is so clear, the case is quite puzzling.

This problem has been noted by Tomomatsu 1932: 202–206. One hypothesis he suggests is a possible shift over time in the doctrine, but we cannot reconcile this with the agreement between T. 2032, the anonymous translation, and Vinīta-deva, probably our earliest and latest sources, respectively.

39 But it is said to incorporate Sarvāstivāda and Sautrāntika elements as well; see Tsukamoto, Matsunaga, and Isoda 1990: 71.

40 T. 1646 (XXXII) 258c20–259a7 (*juan* 3). Translated in Sastri 1978: 65–66, with a large number of serious errors. See Tomomatsu 1970: 184–194.

答曰。若說佛在四衆、所謂、有衆·生衆·人衆·聖人衆、是則非過。若言佛在聲聞衆中、是則有咎。以聞法得悟、故曰聲聞。佛相異故、不在此中。

問曰。佛居僧之首。有人施者、名爲施僧。

答曰。此施屬何等僧。此經小失。是應當言、施屬佛僧。

問曰。佛語、瞿曇彌、以此衣施僧。則爲供養我、亦是供養僧。

答曰。佛意言以語言、爲供養我是物供養僧。如經中說。若人臆病、即是看我。

問曰。諸有成就聖功德人、舍利弗等、皆在僧數中。佛亦如是以同相故。

答曰。若以同相者、諸凡夫人及非衆生數亦有應入僧數者、而不然。是故知佛不在僧中。又、佛不入僧羯磨中。亦不同諸餘僧事。又、以三寶差別故、佛不在僧中。

The commentator says: The Mahīśāsaka practitioners say: The Buddha is within the monastic community.⁴¹

Answer: If you state that the Buddha is part of the four groups — the group of beings, the group of those who are born, the group of humans, the group of noble humans⁴² — then there is no objection. If you are saying that the Buddha is among the auditors (*śrāvaka), then this is an error. They are called “auditors” because they hear the teaching and obtain awakening. Because the Buddha’s characteristics are different, he is not among them.

Objection: The Buddha is the head of those who dwell in the monastic community.⁴³ If someone donates [something to him], this is called donating to the monks.

Answer: To which monks does this donation belong? The scripture has a small lacuna. It should say “the donation belongs to the Buddha and the community.”

Objection: The Buddha said [in the *Dakṣiṇāvibhaṅga Sūtra*]: “*Gotamī, donate these robes to the monastic community. Through this you honor me with offerings, and honor the monastic community with offerings as well.*”

41 We might more literally translate 佛在僧數 as “the Buddha is numbered among the monks,” but since I think that 數 here likely represents *gaṇa* (and thus **bhikkṣugaṇa* or *saṅghagaṇa*?), I have translated in accord with this understanding.

42 The meaning of these four groups is highly problematic, and my translations speculative.

43 This is an odd characterization to attribute to the Mahīśāsakas. See the discussion below of the expression *buddhapramukha bhikkṣusaṅgha*.

Answer: The Buddha intended to say with these words “by honoring me with offerings, these things [you donate] honor the monastic community with offerings.” As the scripture says: “If one tends the sick, then [through] this he looks after me.”⁴⁴

Objection: People who are endowed with sagely good qualities — Śāriputra and so on — are all counted among the monastic community. The Buddha is also so [included within the monastic community], because his characteristics are the same.

Answer: If it is a matter of having the same qualities, then all ordinary beings (**pṛthagjana*) and non-sentient beings should also be enumerated among the monastic community, which is not an acceptable conclusion (**na yujyate*). Therefore we know that the Buddha is not located in the monastic community. Also, the Buddha does not participate in ecclesiastical acts (**karman*) of the monastic community, nor is he treated in the same way in regard to other monastic duties. Also, because of the distinction of the Three Jewels, the Buddha is not located in the monastic community [but constitutes a separate category, so that there are three jewels, not two].

The general attitude of this text, and many of its specific arguments, have much in common with Buddhaghosa’s treatment. For Harivarman, the Buddha stands outside the monastic community, perhaps even more radically than he does for Buddhaghosa, and the same sorts of appeals are made, for example to the logic of the three jewels, which would be two rather than three were the Buddha and the monastic community coincident. The argument that the Buddha does not participate in ecclesiastical acts is identical to that offered by Buddhaghosa. In addition, whatever differences there may be between the positions of Harivarman and Buddhaghosa themselves, the similarity of the views of their respective opponents once again does support the hypothesis that Buddhaghosa’s Sophist, like Harivarman’s critic, is also a Mahīśāsaka.

It is interesting to remark here that, although the materials are frustratingly fragmentary, at least similar arguments are clearly contained in

44 Compare the expression in the Pāli Vinaya, *Mahāvagga* VIII.26.3 (Oldenberg 1879–1883: i. 302.19–20): *yo bhikkhave maṃ upaṭṭhaheyya so gilānaṃ upaṭṭhahissati*. Perhaps even closer is the expression in the *Ekottarikāgama* T. 125 (11.4) (II) 569c1–2 (*juan* 5): 共有瞻視病者、則爲瞻視我已、有看病者、即爲看我已。Also quoted by Vasumitra and Saṅghabhadra in the *Zunpoxumi pusa suoji-lun* 尊婆須蜜菩薩所集論 T. 1549 (XXVIII) 768a26–27 (*juan* 6). The point is the reciprocal identity of the Buddha and the monastic community, not the inclusion of one within the other.

the so-called Spitzer manuscript, the earliest surviving philosophical manuscript from India. There we find in Sanskrit an expression precisely parallel to that in the doxologies quoted above, *buddhaḥ saṃghe nopalabhya (te)*,⁴⁵ and another very close to an expression we have just seen in Harivarman's text: *ye ācāryyagūṇasāmanyaviseṣayuktāḥ saṃghe ... ṣayuktāḥ ataḥ paśyāmaḥ bhagavān api saṃghe iti*, meaning that "the general and specific qualities of the Buddha are present in his disciples ..., and therefore 'we' see that he too is in the saṃghe."⁴⁶ As noted by Eli Franco, who is now studying these materials, already in 1962 Yūshō Miyasaka detected similarities between the Spitzer text and the **Satyasiddhi*,⁴⁷ an impression only reinforced by this passage. It is a shame that the Spitzer text has come down in such a partial condition, which does not permit us to more fully appreciate its arguments here.

A doctrinal position similar to that attributed to the Mahīśāsaka in the **Satyasiddhi*, offered here however without any such attribution, is also mentioned and criticized in the Mahāyāna **Upāsakaśīla-sūtra*. Although the text has a complex history, and a portion of it even appears to be based upon the *Bodhisattvabhūmi*,⁴⁸ this is not relevant for the material of interest to us here. We find there the passage:⁴⁹

若有說言佛入僧數、是義不然。何以故。佛若入僧則無三寶及三歸依·四不壞信。

If someone were to say that the Buddha is a part of the monastic community, this is not acceptable. Why? If the Buddha were part of the monastic community, then there would be no Three Jewels, no three refuges, and no four indestructible faiths [in the Three Jewels and the monastic discipline].

There is very little question that, despite the absence of attribution, we may now recognize this as a Mahīśāsaka position, although the sūtra's silence as

45 In Franco 2000, folio 80b1. Above we noticed that Vasumitra writes *sangs rgyas ni dge 'dun la dmigs so*, and suggested that at the second occurrence of this expression a negation is missing. The Sanskrit here would be reflected in this Tibetan expression perfectly, were a negation to be added to the latter.

46 In Franco 2000, folio 374b1. The English is also Franco's.

47 Franco 2000: 107, referring to Miyasaka 1962 (passim, but see esp. p. 674). For the materials and an attempt at interpretation see Franco 2000: 86, and 98–108. I am grateful to Dr. Franco for his kindness in quickly sending me copies of his relevant publications.

48 See Tsuchihashi 1964.

49 T. 1488 (XXIV) 1061b23–25 (juan 5). Also translated in Shih 1991: 127.

to its source renders it of little direct use to us here.

Equally without provenance is the recounting of the episode of Gautami's gift in the *Chuyao-jing*, an *Udānavarga* commentary and therefore evidently a Sarvāstivādin work which, however, illustrates the same standpoint:⁵⁰

昔佛在世、大愛道瞿曇彌親佛夷母、以金縷織成衣奉獻如來。佛告大愛道。夫欲施者、當詣大眾。何爲獨向我耶。吾亦是大眾之一數。亦有微分。可持此金縷織成衣往施聖眾。如來三界特尊。猶尚不能偏受信施。辭讓聖眾不自專己。

Long ago, when the Buddha was still in the world, Mahāprajāpati Gautamī, the Buddha's maternal aunt, presented to the Tathāgata a robe made from finely woven gold threads. The Buddha said to Mahāprajāpati: "Now, if you want to present it, you should direct it to the community. What is the point of aiming it to me alone? I am [but] one member of the community, and I have [only] a minute share. Go and give this robe made from finely woven gold threads to the noble community." The Tathāgata is the most honored one in the three worlds. But [even] he could not accept this religious gift (**dharmadāna*), and declining and passing it on to the noble community he did not keep it for himself.

The expression "I have [only] a minute share" here is significant. As we will see below, according to Buddhaghosa, for example, items gifted to the Buddha and monastic community are to be divided evenly between them, with half going to the Buddha and half to the rest of the monks. The *Chuyao-jing* seems to suggest that the Buddha is to receive only a single share, not half of all shares of whatever is donated. This too appears to correspond to Mahīśāsaka doctrine.

A further passage of interest is found in the **Abhinīṣkramaṇa-sūtra*, which explicitly identifies its source here as the scholars of the Mahīśāsaka school, 尼沙塞師.⁵¹ In this account of King Bimbisāra's attempt to give the Bamboo Grove (Veṇuvana) to the Buddha, we find the following:⁵²

50 T. 212 (IV) 69ab13–18 (juan 15). See Tomomatsu 1970: 87–102, and on the text in general Mizuno 1981: 359–476. The coincidence of the Mahīśāsaka and early Sarvāstivāda viewpoints concerning the doctrine in question is noted below.

51 T. 190 (III) 860c19 (juan 44).

52 T. 190 (III) 860b28–c19 (juan 44). This passage was translated, or better paraphrased, in Beal 1875: 314, but so freely as to obscure every essential point. It was translated and studied by Tomomatsu 1932: 129–133.

時、頻頭王…而白佛言。大聖世尊、此竹林園去王舍城不近不遠、乃至堪爲善人修道。唯願世尊教我何法以此竹林布施世尊以爲坐處

爾時、佛告頻頭王言。如是、大王。若欲布施我竹林者、聽當布施彼招提僧。

時、頻頭王即白佛言。如世尊教。時、頻頭王。從坐而起、手執金瓶、與世尊水。復白佛言。善哉世尊、此竹林園去城側近、乃至堪爲善人修道。我今捨施諸佛世尊招提僧等。布施以後、唯願世尊納取受用、哀愍我故

爾時世尊即便受取、爲憐愍故。…

爾時世尊…集諸大衆。集已、而告諸比丘言。汝諸比丘、從今已後許諸比丘自畜園林。

At that time King Bimbisāra ... spoke to the Buddha, saying: "Greatly Noble Blessed One, this Bamboo Grove is neither too far from nor too close to Rājagṛha, [meets a number of other conditions detailed in the text previously], and is splendid as a practice ground for good people. Please tell me, Blessed One, the procedure for offering this Bamboo Grove to the Blessed One as a place for sitting in meditation."

At that time the Buddha said to King Bimbisāra: "So it is, Great king. If you want to offer the Bamboo Grove to me, I ordain (**anujānāmi*) that it be offered [instead] to the universal monastic community of the four quarters."

Then King Bimbisāra spoke to the Buddha, saying: "[I will do] as the Blessed One instructs." And King Bimbisāra, rising from his seat, took in his hands a golden vase, and offered water to the Blessed One. Then he again spoke to the Blessed One, saying: "Excellent, Blessed One! This Bamboo Grove is close to Rājagṛha, [meets the other conditions], and is splendid as a practice ground for good people. Now I present it to the Buddhas, Blessed Ones, and the universal monastic community of the four quarters. After the presentation, please, Blessed One, consent to accept it out of compassion for me."

The Blessed One accepted it then out of compassion. ...

At that time the Blessed One assembled the great community, and having assembled it spoke then to the monks, saying: "You monks, from now on I allow monks to themselves take possession of groves."

There are several peculiarities in this passage. In conformity with the expected Mahīśāsaka stance, the Buddha declines a gift offered to him personally and directs that it be given instead to the community at large. But when Bimbisāra actually makes the gift, which the Buddha accepts, he seems

to subvert that intention by presenting it to the Buddhas (plural!) and the universal community. However, the expression 諸佛世尊招提僧等 is odd. What might it mean in such a context to speak of plural Buddhas? And how are we to understand the plural suffix 等 standing at the end? There is only one universal community, but it might be possible to see a reference to the (plural) monks of that community. On the other hand, the Buddha's permission, given at the end of the passage, for monks to take possession of (literally, accumulate) groves seems to suggest that acquisition of offerings should be done by the monks, rather than by the Buddha, which is to say, practically speaking, the stūpa or Buddha image. Despite these ambiguities, which merit further study, the overall position of this passage does seem to conform to what we expect of the Mahīśāsaka ideology.

If the materials we have cited so far are still not decisive, further confirmation, which may be considered almost conclusive, is happily to be found in the unique Mahīśāsaka text available to us, that sect's own Vinaya, the *Mishasaibu hexi wufenlü* 彌沙塞部和醯五分律. Since this is a work of the sect itself, there can be no question here of any possible false attribution of views. And precisely the indications we wish to find do indeed appear. In this Vinaya's account of King Bimbisāra's attempt to give the Kalandaka-nivāpa (Veṇuvana) to the Buddha, we read:⁵³

佛言。可以施僧。其福益多。王復白佛。願垂納受。佛言。但以施僧。我在僧中。王便受教、以施四方僧。

The Buddha said: "Give it to the monastic community. The merit of this is much greater."

The king again said to the Buddha: "Please agree to accept it."

The Buddha said: "Just donate it to the monastic community. I am part of the monastic community."

The king then agreed to this, and donated it to the monastic community of the four quarters.

In contrast to the somewhat confusing version attributed to the Mahīśāsaka in the **Abhiṅṣkramaṇa-sūtra*, the Mahīśāsaka Vinaya's own version of the same episode explicitly states the basic principles we have attributed to this school. This stance is reinforced in another instance, in the same Vinaya's story of Āmrapālī's donation of her mango grove to the

53 T. 1421 (XXII) 110b1-4 (*juan* 16). The passage has also been translated by Bareau 1963: 337, and 1966: 52.

community, where we find the following:⁵⁴

白佛言。毘舍離諸園觀中此園第一。我修此園本欲爲福。今奉世尊。願垂納受。佛言。可以施僧得大果報。憍女重以上佛。佛言。但以施僧。我在僧數。憍女受教即以施僧。

[Āmrapālī] said to the Buddha: “Among the gardens of Vaiśālī, this is the finest. From the beginning I have tended this garden with the desire for the merit [to be gained from its donation]. Now I present it to the Blessed One. Please accept it.”

The Buddha said: “Give it to the monastic community, and you will obtain great results.”

Āmrapālī repeated her request to the Buddha as before. The Buddha said: “Just give it to the monastic community. I am within the monastic community.”

Āmrapālī agreed to this, and gave it to the monastic community.

These passages lead us virtually beyond doubt to the conclusion that the position attributed to the Sophist in the *Majjhimanikāya* commentary corresponds to the stance of the Mahīśāsakas.⁵⁵ This conclusion is only strengthened by the fact that, as Mori has also pointed out,⁵⁶ the Indic Mahīśāsaka Vinaya manuscript later translated into Chinese by *Buddhajīva 佛陀什 with Zhisheng 智勝 and others was acquired by Faxian 法顯 in Ceylon.⁵⁷ This shows quite nicely that right around the time of Buddhaghosa, in the early fifth century of the Common Era, original Mahīśāsaka literature was available in Ceylon.⁵⁸ All of this seems to fit together well.

54 T. 1421 (XXII) 136a11–15 (*juan* 20). Also translated in Bareau 1966: 53, and Tomomatsu 1932: 443–445.

55 The comparative importance of these passages was observed by Bareau 1963: 341, and 1966. Unfortunately, as he himself feared the crucial characteristic of the Mahīśāsaka formulation escaped Boucher 2000: 68 in his reference to Bareau’s arguments. (Incidentally, as far as I have noted, in none of his various references to the issue does Bareau evince any familiarity with the work of Tomomatsu, despite the fact that already in Tomomatsu 1931: 324–333 he discussed the matter, in French and in the *Journal Asiatique*.)

56 Mori 1982: 13 (176).

57 According to the *Gaoseng Faxian-zhuan* 高僧法顯傳 T. 2085 (LI) 865c24; see also Nagasawa 1996: 118–120. (Translations in Legge 1886: 111, and Giles 1923: 76, although the latter is virtually incomprehensible.) See also Hiraoka 1960: 142–143. Note that Faxian also apparently acquired there a *Dīrghāgama*, which was however never translated, and a *Sarvāstivāda Samyuktāgama*. See de Jong 1981, and Enomoto 1986.

58 Buddhaghosa’s dates are controversial, but von Hinüber places him between 370 and 450 (von Hinüber 1996 §207). Faxian was in Ceylon between 409 and 411 (Nagasawa 1996: 120, n. 6).

We have come rather far in our efforts to understand the short passage from Buddhaghosa’s commentary to the *Majjhimanikāya* with which we began. But we have yet to fully determine why and how Buddhaghosa framed his arguments as he did. To pursue this question we must return to the *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga Sutta* with which we began our inquiry. We find there, a bit further along than the passage with which we began, two enumerations of gifts, listed in descending order of value.⁵⁹ This indeed constitutes part of the core of the text, and accounts for its title, “Exposition on offerings.” The first of fourteen gifts directed toward individuals (*pāṭipuggalikā dakkhiṇā*) is that offered to the Buddha, followed by that offered to a Paccekabuddha, Tathāgatasāvaka arahant, and so on. More directly interesting for us is the listing of seven offerings made to the monastic community (*saṅghagatā dakkhiṇā*). The first four are those made to:

- 1) the/a dual monastic community [of monks and nuns] headed by the Buddha, *buddhapamukhe ubhatosaṅghe dānaṃ*
- 2) the/a dual monastic community after the death of the Tathāgata, *tathāgate parinibbute ubhatosaṅghe dānaṃ*
- 3) the/a community of monks, *bhikkhusaṅgha*
- 4) the/a community of nuns, *bhikkhunīsaṅgha*

The Chinese translations are not perfectly parallel here.⁶⁰ The **Gautami-sūtra* in the *Madhyamāgama* has:⁶¹

- 1) 佛在世時、佛爲首、施佛及比丘衆。When the Buddha was in the world, and the Buddha was the head (?),⁶² the gift made to the Buddha and the/a community of monks.
- 2) 世尊般涅槃後不久、施二部衆。Not long after the Blessed One has attained nirvāṇa, the gift made to the/a dual community.
- 3) 施比丘衆。The gift made to the/a community of monks.
- 4) 施比丘尼衆。The gift made to the/a community of nuns.

59 Chalmers 1899: 254.27–255.33; translated also in Nāṇamoli 1995: 1104–1105.

60 Things also seem to have been handled rather differently in the Central Asian Sanskrit text, at least as far as one can judge from the very fragmentary remains in Waldschmidt, Clawiter and Sander-Holtzmann 1971: §979.

61 T. 26 (108) (I) 722a22–26 (*juan* 47).

62 Although awkward, evidently this is to be understood in light of the term *buddhapamukha*.

The **Dakṣiṇāvibhaṅga* has a rather odd ordering and formulation.⁶³

- 1) 施佛現前、諸繭芻衆。The gift made to the/a communities of monks when the Buddha was present before them.
- 2) 施佛滅後、諸繭芻衆。The gift made to the/a communities of monks after the Buddha has perished.
- 3) 施佛滅後、繭芻尼衆。The gift made to the/a community of nuns after the Buddha has perished.
- 4) 施佛滅後、繭芻繭芻尼二衆。The gift made to the/a dual community of monks and nuns after the Buddha has perished.

Setting aside the various problems attending these variant textual traditions, discussed by Tomomatsu without any convincing conclusions, we may once again turn to Buddhaghosa's commentary in the *Papañcasūdanī* and his treatment of this list. For here too he appeals to the same discussion, and the same central sentence, we have seen repeatedly explained in various ways above:⁶⁴

satta kho paṇimā ti kasmā ārabhi | “*saṅghe gotamī dehi saṅghe te dinne ahañ ceva pūjito bhavissāmi saṅgho cā*” ti hi vutta? | tattha sattu sathānesu dinnadānaṃ saṅghe dinnānaṃ nāma hoti ti dassetuṃ imaṃ desanaṃ ārabhi | tattha *buddhappamukhe ubhatoṣaṅghe* ti ekato bhikkhusaṅgho ekato bhikkhunisaṅgho sathā majjhe nisinno hoti ti | ayaṃ buddhappamukho ubhatoṣaṅgho nāma | ... kiṃ pana *tathāgate parinibbuta* buddhappamukhassa ubhatoṣaṅghassa dānaṃ dātuṃ sakkā ti | sakkā | kathaṃ | ubhatoṣaṅghassa hi pamukhe sadhātukaṃ paṭimaṃ āsane ṭhapetvā ādhāraṃ paṭṭhapetvā^a dakkhiṇodakaṃ ādiraṃ katvā sabbaṃ sathu paṭhamaṃ datvā ubhatoṣaṅghassa dātabbaṃ | evaṃ buddhappamukhassa ubhatoṣaṅghassa dānaṃ dinnānaṃ nāma hoti | tattha yaṃ sathu dinnānaṃ taṃ kiṃ kātabbaṃ ti | yo sathāraṃ paṭijjagati vattasampanno bhikkhu tassa dātabbaṃ | pitusantakaṃ hi puttassa pāpuṇāti | bhikkhusaṅghassa dātuṃ pi vaṭṭati | sappitelāni pana gahetvā dipā jālitabbā sātaṃ gahetvā paṭākā āropetabbā ti |

Why [do we find here the passage which] begins by saying “*there*

63 T. 84 (I) 904a16–19.

64 Horner 1938: 73.8–30; Dhammagiri-Pāli-Ganthamālā series, vol. 18 (Igatpuri: Vipassana Research Institute, 1995): 235.9–21. The only textual variant is at a), where the Burmese text has *ṭhapetvā*.

are these seven”? For earlier it was stated: “*Give it to the monastic community, Gotamī. If it is given to the monastic community, both I and the monastic community will be honored with offerings.*” It begins with this exposition in order to show that the gifts which are given in these seven cases are given precisely to the monastic community. There “*to the dual monastic community with the Buddha at its head*” means the community of monks is on one side, the community of nuns on the other, and the Teacher is seated in the middle. This is what is meant by the dual monastic community with the Buddha at its head. ... Now, is it possible to give offerings to the dual monastic community with the Buddha at its head *after the Tathāgata has attained nirvāṇa*? It is possible. How? Having placed an image containing a relic on an altar at the head of the dual community and setting up a stand, starting with offerings of water giving all of those first of all to the Teacher, one must [then] give them to the dual community. Thus the offering is given to the dual monastic community with the Buddha at its head. What is to be done with what was offered to the Teacher? The ritually observant monk who prepares [the offerings] for the teacher shall be given them, for the son comes into his father's possessions.⁶⁵ It is also right to give it to the community of monks. Again, lamps should be lit with ghee and sesame oil, and banners should be raised with cloths.

With this we move firmly into the realm of the material, and begin to confront the practical question of the economic significance and implications of the configurations discussed so far only in a rather abstract way. Buddhaghosa clarifies here precisely what it means to make and accept donations to a monastic community with the Buddha at its head, and most importantly how this will function in an age when the Buddha is no more present in a manner which would enable him to consume what he is offered. An elaborated version of this very same discussion is found in Buddhaghosa's Vinaya commentary, the *Samantapāsādikā*.⁶⁶

65 Gregory Schopen brought to my attention the parallel expression *arhati putraḥ paitṛkasya* in the *Cīvaravastu* of the Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya (Dutt 1939–1959: 2.125.8–9), although the context is different. The notion of the son's right to inherit is treated in quite overwhelming detail in the Dharmasāstra literature (see Kane 1968–1977: III. 543–661), but the most generalized notion is captured in this simple expression.

66 Takakusu and Nagai 1924–1947: 1142.34–1143.23; Dhammagiri-Pāli-Ganthamālā series, vol. 94 (Igatpuri: Vipassana Research Institute, 1998): 398.16–399.5. Commenting on *Mahāvagga* VIII. 32 (Oldenberg 1879–1883: i.309.31–32). The following instances of disagreement between the PTS edition and the Burmese may be noted:

pubbe^a buddhappamukhassa ubhatośaṅghassa dānaṃ denti bhagavā majjhe nisidati dakkhiṇato bhikkū vāmato bhikkhuniyo nisidanti bhagavā ubhinnam saṅghatthero tadā bhagavā attanā laddhapaccaye attanāpi paribhūjati bhikkhūnam pi dāpeti |

etarahi pana paṇḍitamanussā sadhātukaṃ paṭimaṃ vā cetiyaṃ vā ṭhapetvā buddhappamukhassa ubhatośaṅghassa dānaṃ denti | paṭimāya vā cetiyassa vā purato ādhārake pattaṃ ṭhapetvā dakkhiṇodakaṃ datvā buddhānaṃ demā ti tattha yaṃ paṭhamam khādanīyaṃ bhojanīyaṃ denti vihāram vā āharitvā idaṃ cetiyassa demā ti piṇḍapātaṃ ca mālāgandhādīni ca denti | tattha katham paṭipajjitabban ti |

mālāgandhādīni tāva cetiye āropetabbāni vatthehi paṭākā telena padipā kātabbā

piṇḍapātamadhuphāṇitādīni pana yo nibaddhacetiyaṃ jaggako^b hoti pabbajito vā gahaṭṭho vā tassa^c dātabbāni | nibaddhajaggake asati āhaṭabhattam⁶⁷ ṭhapetvā vattam katvā paribhūjiturū vaṭṭati | upakaṭṭhe kāle bhūjītvā^d pacchā pi vattam kāturū vaṭṭati yeva |

“mālāgandhādīsu ca yaṃ kinci idaṃ haritvā cetiyassa pūjam^e karoṭhā” ti vutte dūram^f pi haritvā pūjetabbam |

“bhikkhusaṅghassa^g harā” ti vutte pi haritabbam | sace pana “aham piṇḍāya carāmi āsanāsālāya bhikkhū atthi te āharissantī”^h ti vutte “bhante tuhyam yeva dammi” ti vadati bhūjiturū vaṭṭati | atha pana “bhikkhusaṅghassa dassāmī” ti harantassa gacchato antarā va kālo upakaṭṭho hoti attano pāpetvā bhūjiturū vaṭṭati |

a) PTS: adds pi b) PTS: nibaddham cetiyapaṭijaggako c) PTS: tasseva

d) PTS: bhañjītvā e) PTS: cetiyapūjam f) PTS: dūre g) B: bhikkhūm saṅghassa

h) PTS: harissantī

The corresponding Chinese translation is brief, T. 1462 (XXIV) 794c28–795a2 (*juan* 17): 若人將飲食施佛及僧、以鉢置佛前次第行、佛飯誰得食。若有侍佛比丘得食。若無侍佛比丘、有白衣侍佛亦得食。 “If someone were to bring food and drink and offer it to the Buddha and the monastic community, placing it in a bowl before the Buddha and carrying out the [ritual offering] practices in sequence, who will be able to eat the Buddha’s food? If there is a monk who serves the Buddha, he is able to eat it. If there is no monk who serves the Buddha, and there is a layperson who serves the Buddha, he then may eat it.” The translation in Bapat and Hirakawa 1970: 524 adds in brackets that it is an image of the Buddha that is in question, but it seems significant to me that the text does not say this. On the complex relationship between the Pāli *Samantapāsādikā* and its Chinese version see Mizuno 1937, 1938.

It is true that von Hinüber (1996: 108–109, §220), in discussing the authorship of the *Samantapāsādikā*, suggested that “perhaps three different specialists were at work, when S [amanta] p [āsādikā] as a whole was created,” going on in fact to say that “there is no evidence that the chief redactor was Buddhaghosa.” Nevertheless, with regard to the present passage, its close association with the just quoted passage in the *Majjhimanikāya* commentary strongly suggests a common authorship.

67 Not noted in Trenckner et al. 1924–.

In the past, [donors] donated gifts to the dual monastic community with the Buddha at its head; the Blessed One sat in the middle, the monks sat on his right and the nuns on his left, with the Blessed One the senior monk of both [communities]. Then the Blessed One consumed by himself the requisites he had obtained by himself, and had them given to the monks as well.

In the present day [in which the living Buddha is not present], wise men set up an image containing a relic, or a shrine, and donate gifts to the dual monastic community with the Buddha at its head. Setting a bowl on a stand in front of the image or the shrine, giving offerings of water they say “we give to the Buddhas.”⁶⁸ That is, in the first place they give things to eat and things to drink, or bringing them back to the monastery they donate their alms and garlands, perfumes and so on, saying “we give this to the shrine.” How is this practice to be followed?

First, the garlands, perfumes and so on must be put on the shrine, and banners should be made of cloth and lamps of sesame oil.

The alms, honey, sugar cane juice and so on [which are offered] should be given to the renunciant or householder who is the regular caretaker of the shrine. If there is no regular caretaker, [someone else], taking the food which was brought and following [the appropriate] custom [such as chanting], may eat it. When time is tight [because the noontime restriction on eating approaches], it is quite acceptable to follow [the appropriate] custom after having eaten.

When he is told “Taking whatever it is among garlands, perfumes and so on, you must give worship to the shrine!” even if [the time for the ritual] is a long way off he must take it and give it in worship.

When he is told “Take it to the community of monks!” he must take it [and not eat the food portion himself]. But if [the monk spoken to] says “I am going for alms. The monks are in the assembly hall. They will use it,” and [the donor] says “Venerable, I give it to you particularly,” it is acceptable to eat it. On the other hand, [even when he is told] “I give it to the community of monks,” as in the case when he is taking it and going [to deliver it] but time is tight [and he will not be able to deliver it to the monks in time for them to eat it before the post-noontime restriction comes into effect], it is acceptable for him to help himself and eat it.

There is a great deal of interest in these passages, not least the

68 Sic, plural!

description of the offering ritual which has, as far as I know, so far hardly been noted in modern scholarship.⁶⁹ These descriptions deserve their own detailed study, but what we have to notice here most is the distribution of offerings. In a long passage immediately preceding that just quoted from the *Samantapāsādikā*, detailed rules are set out for the distribution of alms, in which it is stated that those given to the Buddha and the community must be divided evenly, one to one, or we may say, half and half.⁷⁰ That is, if one hundred pieces of fruit are offered to the community of monks and the Buddha, the community will receive fifty and the Buddha fifty.⁷¹ Such a distribution probably would not be advocated by the Mahīśāsaka. For them, at least in Tomomatsu's opinion, if we assume a community of ninety-nine monks, a donation of one hundred pieces of fruit to the community would result in each monk receiving one piece of fruit, and the Buddha, as a monk, himself also receiving only one piece, the type of distribution we may have seen implied for instance in the quotation above from the *Chuyao-jing*. Buddhaghosa does not agree with this mode of distribution. When we come to the passage just quoted, however, we see that even the food offered to the Buddha, by way of offering it to the shrine, almost certainly to be understood as the stūpa and the image, is in fact passed on to a monk or monks, or caretaker layman. Here we can see the very similar approach of the Mahīśāsaka and of Buddhaghosa and his tradition, in contrast to more radically separatist schools such as the Dharmaguptaka (and Kāśyapīya), for whom such donations may in no wise be consumed but must rather be left to rot. For Buddhaghosa, the Buddha is a presence, but within the monastic community, not outside it. Food offerings are to be made to the Buddha, but these obviously cannot be consumed by an image or a shrine, and thus they are to be passed along to the monks, and most particularly to the individual(s) responsible for preparing the offerings or looking after the shrine. At least in theory the Mahīśāsaka would probably not face the problem of distribution since they would not, in the first place, encourage donations to the shrine or image, being more likely to suggest those directed to the monastic community as generative of greater merit.

We may bring forward one final piece of evidence in an attempt to

69 Rahula 1956: 125 contains the only reference to the *Samantapāsādikā* passage I have yet seen, but even he does not notice the parallel in the *Majjhimanikāya* commentary.

70 Takakusu and Nagai 1924–1947: 1141.22–1142.34; Dhammagiri-Pāli-Ganthamālā series, vol. 94 (Igatpuri: Vipassana Research Institute, 1998): 397.11–398.16. The Chinese translation is rather more brief, T. 1462 (XXIV) 794c4–28 (*juan* 17), translated in Bapat and Hirakawa 1970: 522–524.

71 For this discussion cp. Tomomatsu 1932: 154–155.

understand the origins and structure of Buddhaghosa's exposition. This comes in the form of a passage from the *Milindapañha* that deals with the question of the monastic community's fitness to receive donations. The text's fifty-third 'dilemma,' (VI.3), provides the following:⁷²

bhante nāgasena bhāsitaṃ petarā bhagavatā mātucchāya mahā-pajāpatiyā gotamiyā vassikasāṭikāya diyamānāya | *saṅhe gotami dehi | saṅhe te dinne ahañ ceva pūjito bhavissāmi saṅho cā ti* | kin nu kho bhante nāgasena tathāgato saṅgharatanato na bhāriko na garuko na dakkhiṇeyyo yaṃ tathāgato sakāya mātucchāya sayampiñjitaṃ sayarṇ-luñcitaṃ sayarṇpoṭhitaṃ sayarṇkantitaṃ sayarṇvāyitaṃ vassikasāṭikaṃ attano diyamānaṃ saṅghassa dāpesi | yadi bhante nāgasena tathāgato saṅgharatanato uttaro bhaveyya adhiko vā viṣiṭṭho vā mayi dinne mahapphalaṃ bhavissati ti na tathāgato mātucchāya sayampiñjitaṃ sayarṇluncitaṃ sayampoṭhitaṃ taṃ vassikasāṭikaṃ saṅhe dāpeyya | yasmā ca kho bhante nāgasena tathāgato attānaṃ na pattiyati na upanissayati tasmā tathāgato mātucchāya taṃ vassikasāṭikaṃ saṅghassa dāpesi ti |

bhāsitaṃ petarā mahārāja bhagavatā mātucchāya mahāpajāpatiyā gotamiyā vassikasāṭikāya diyamānāya | *saṅhe gotami dehi | saṅhe te dinne ahañ ceva pūjito bhavissāmi saṅho cā ti* | taṃ pana na attano patimānanassa avipakatāya na adakkhiṇeyyatāya api ca kho hitatthāya anukampāya anāgatam addhānaṃ saṅho mam accayena cittikato bhavissati ti | vijjamāne yeva guṇe parikkittayanto evam āha | *saṅhe gotami dehi | saṅhe te dinne ahañ ceva pūjito bhavissāmi saṅho cā ti* | yathā mahārāja pitā dharamāno yeva amaccabhaṭabalatthadovārika-anikaṭṭhapārisajjanamajjhe ranno santike puttassa vijjamānaṃ yeva guṇaṃ pakitteti idha ṭhapito anāgatam addhānaṃ janamajjhe pūjito bhavissati ti evameva kho mahārāja tathāgato hitatthāya anukampāya anāgatam addhānaṃ saṅho mam accayena cittikato bhavissati ti vijjamāne yeva guṇe pakittiyanto evam āha | *saṅhe gotami dehi | saṅhe te dinne ahañ ceva pūjito bhavissāmi saṅho cā ti* | na kho mahārāja tāvatakena vassikasāṭikānuppādānamattakena saṅho tathāgatato adhiko nāma hoti viṣiṭṭho vā | yathā mahārāja mātāpituro puttānaṃ ucchādentī parimaddanti nahāpentī sambāhenti api nu kho mahārāja tāvatakena ucchādanaparimaddanahāpanasambāhanamat-

72 Trenckner 1880: 240.1–242.6. In making my translation I have profited much from Rhys Davids 1894: 51–55, and Horner 1964: 44–47.

takena putto mātāpituhi adhiko nāma hoti visiṭṭho vā ti |

na hi bhante akāmakaraṇīyā bhante puttā mātāpitunnāṃ | tasmā mātāpitaro puttānaṃ ucchādanaparimaddananahāpanasambāhanānaṃ karontī ti |

evam eva kho mahārāja na tāvatakena vassikasāṭīkānuppadānam-attakena saṅgho tathāgatato adhiko nāma hoti visiṭṭho vā | api ca tathāgato akāmakaraṇīyaṃ karonto mātucchāya taṃ vassikasāṭīkaṃ saṅghassa dāpesi | yathā vā pana mahārāja kocid eva puriso ranno upāyanaṃ āhareyya | taṃ rājā upāyanaṃ aññatarassa bhaṭassa vā balatthassa vā senāpatissa vā purohitassa vā dadeyya api nu kho so mahārāja puriso tāvatakena upāyanaṭṭilābhamattakena raññā adhiko nāma hoti visiṭṭho vā ti |

na hi bhante rājabhattiko bhante so puriso rājūpajivī⁷³ | taṃṭhāne ṭhapento rājā upāyanaṃ deti ti |

evam eva kho mahārāja na tāvatakena vassikasāṭīkānuppadānam-attakena saṅgho tathāgatato adhiko nāma hoti visiṭṭho vā atha kho tathāgatabhattiko tathāgatupajivī⁷⁴ | taṃṭhāne ṭhapento tathāgato saṅghassa vassikasāṭīkaṃ dāpesi | api ca mahārāja tathāgatassa evaṃ ahosi | sabhāvapatipūjanīyo saṅgho mama santakena saṅghaṃ patipūjessāmi ti | saṅghassa vassikasāṭīkaṃ dāpesi | na mahārāja tathāgato attano yeva paṭipūjanaṃ vaṇṇeti atha kho ye loke paṭipūjanārahā tesam pi tathāgato paṭipūjanaṃ vaṇṇeti | bhāsitaṃ petaṃ mahārāja bhagavatā devātidevena majjhimanikāyavaralañcika dhammadāyādadhammapariyāye appicchapaṭittim pakittayamānena | asu yeva me purimo bhikkhu pujjataro ca pāsāmsataro cā ti | natthi mahārāja bhavesu kocī satto tathāgatato dakkhiṇeyyo vā uttaro vā adhiko vā visiṭṭho vā | tathāgato va uttaro adhiko visiṭṭho |

[Mīlinda:] Venerable Nāgasena, it was again said by the Blessed One to his maternal aunt Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī, when she was giving him cloth for use in the rain retreat: ‘Give it to the monastic community, Gotamī. If it is given to the monastic community, both I and the monastic community will be honored with offerings.’ But, Venerable Nāgasena, is the Tathāgata less important, less significant, and less worthy of reverence than the jewel treasure of the monastic community, that the Tathāgata had his own maternal aunt give [instead] to the monastic

community the cloth for use in the rain retreat which she herself had dyed, combed, beaten, spun and woven, and which was being given to him? If, Venerable Nāgasena, the Tathāgata were really superior, or greater, or more excellent than the monastic community, then he would have said: ‘What is given to me will yield a great result,’ and he would not have had his maternal aunt give to the monastic community the cloth for use in the rain retreat which she herself had dyed, combed and beaten. But since the Tathāgata, Venerable Nāgasena, does not himself make use of [the donation] and does not depend [on such gifts],⁷⁵ the Tathāgata had his maternal aunt give the cloth for use in the rain retreat to the monastic community [instead].”

[Nāgasena:] “Indeed this was said by the Blessed One, Great king, when his maternal aunt Mahāpajāpatī Gotamī, was giving him cloth for use in the rain retreat: ‘Give it to the monastic community, Gotamī. If it is given to the monastic community, both I and the monastic community will be honored with offerings.’ But that was not said because of any absence of [positive karmic] result from providing for [the Tathāgata] himself, nor because of his unworthiness for reverence. Rather, for the sake of the welfare [of the monastic community] and out of compassion [for it], praising [the monastic community’s] existing good qualities he thought: ‘In a future time when I am gone the monastic community will be esteemed,’ and he said: ‘Give it to the monastic community, Gotamī. If it is given to the monastic community, both I and the monastic community will be honored with offerings.’ As a father, Great king, while still alive, praises the existing good qualities of his son amongst ministers, servants, military officials, door-keepers, palace guards, councillors and the people, and in the presence of the king himself, saying ‘[If my son is] established in a position here he will, in a future time, be honored amongst the people,’ just so, Great king, for the sake of the welfare [of the monastic community] and out of compassion [for it], praising [the monastic community’s] existing good qualities the Tathāgata thought: ‘In a future time when I am gone the monastic community will be esteemed,’ and he said: ‘Give it to the monastic community, Gotamī. If it is given to the monastic community, both I and

75 I do not understand well the sense intended by Nolot’s “c’est qu’il n’avait ni assurance ni confiance en soi” (1995: 193), despite her note (1995: 351, n. 256) in which she equates *paṭṭiyati* with *paṭṭiyāyati*. Rather we may notice Aggavaṃsa’s gloss in the *Saddanīti*: *attano pattam icchati* (Smith 1928–1966: 587.18 = 823.6. Smith 1548 suggests *paṭṭiyati* = **pāṭṭiyati*, which I confess I also do not well understand.)

73 Not in Trenckner et al. 1924– s.v. upajīvin.

74 Not in Trenckner et al. 1924– s.v. upajīvin.

the monastic community will be honored with offerings.' It is not, Great king, the case that through so much as a mere granting of cloth for use in the rain retreat the monastic community becomes greater or more excellent than the Tathāgata. Parents, Great king, anoint their children with perfumes, rub, bathe and shampoo them but, Great king, is it the case that through so much as a mere anointing, rubbing, bathing and shampooing a child becomes greater or more excellent than his parents?"

[M:] "Not at all, Venerable. Parents must take care of their children even against the latter's wishes. Therefore parents anoint their children with perfumes, rub, bathe and shampoo them."

[N:] "Just so, Great king, it is not the case that through so much as a mere granting of cloth for use in the rain retreat the monastic community becomes greater or more excellent than the Tathāgata. Yet the Tathāgata, acting against her wishes, had his maternal aunt give cloth for use in the rain retreat to the monastic community. Or again, Great king, some person might present a gift to a king, and the king might give that gift to another — to a servant, military official, general or court priest. Would that person, Great king, through so much as a mere acceptance of a gift become greater or more excellent than the king?"

[M:] "Not at all, Venerable. That man, Venerable, who is in a king's employ is dependent on the king for his livelihood, and the king, having appointed him to that station, gives him a gift."

[N:] "Just so, Great king, it is not the case that through so much as a mere granting of cloth for use in the rain retreat the monastic community becomes greater or more excellent than the Tathāgata. Rather, [the monastic community] is in the employ of the Tathāgata, is dependent on the Tathāgata for its livelihood. The Tathāgata, having appointed [the monastic community] to that station had [Mahāpajāpati] give the cloth for use in the rain retreat to the monastic community. Moreover, Great king, the following occurred to the Tathāgata: 'The monastic community is worthy of honor by its very nature; I will have the monastic community honored with [what, by virtue of its having been offered to me, is] my property.' And he had [Mahāpajāpati] give the cloth for use in the rain retreat to the monastic community. The Tathāgata, Great king, does not praise honor done to himself with offerings, but rather the Tathāgata praises honor being done with offerings to those in the world who are deserving of honor with offerings. Indeed, this too was said, Great king, by the Blessed One, the god of gods, in the most excellent⁷⁶

76 I follow Rhys Davids and Horner here in so rendering *varalañcaka*. See Edgerton 1953, s.v.

Majjhimanikāya, in the discourse called 'Dhammadāyāda,' when he was exalting the practice of being content with little.⁷⁷ 'For me, the first monk [who declines food left over by the Buddha] is more worthy of honor, more praiseworthy [than one who accepts it].' There is, Great king, no being whosoever in [all] the worlds more worthy of reverence, superior or greater or more excellent than the Tathāgata. The Tathāgata indeed is superior, great and excellent."

Although it is possible that both texts share a common source, the very close wording, use of examples and other similarities strongly suggest that Buddhaghosa's main source for his commentary on the crucial passage of the *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga Sutta* in his *Papañcasūdanī* is this very discussion in the *Milindapañha*. It is established and accepted tradition that Buddhaghosa's commentaries were based on older sources, and it has been shown that he knew and quoted from the *Milindapañha*, even its later books,⁷⁸ so there is every possibility that he may have been inspired by that text here as well. (Incidentally, if the suggestion that this is Buddhaghosa's source here is correct, it is a delicious circle made whole that the modern *Milindapañha-Atthakathā* written by a Burmese monk, Thaton Mingun Zetawun Sayadaw, and published in 1948, comments on this section of the *Milindapañha* by quoting verbatim precisely the two passages of Buddhaghosa's commentary to the *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga Sutta* we have cited above.)⁷⁹

lañcaka and lambhaka.

77 *Majjhimanikāya* §3, Trenckner 1888: 13.27–28. Horner 1964: 47, n. 2, states that the reference is to "a monk who, though exhausted, refused to take almsfood on the grounds that it is a 'material thing.' It is not this, he reflects, that he is to be heir to, but the Dhamma." This slightly misrepresents the importance of the case. Indeed, the Buddha praises this monk, but the almsfood he has refused is the Buddha's leftover almsfood. What the Buddha is praising, at least as Buddhaghosa quotes the passage, is the monk's appreciation of the Buddha's infinite superiority, which renders his leftover food too pure and too full of power for the monk to consume. This issue requires detailed investigation, especially with regard to the different ways the general principle was understood, but some general and preliminary observations may be found already in Tomomatsu 1933.

78 See Rhys Davids 1890: xvi; Horner 1963: xx; Mori 1984: 86–88; and von Hinuber 1996: 85–86 (§179).

79 Deshpande 1999: 259–261. How the commentator came to do this is not completely clear. He himself notes (Deshpande 1999: 1, and 13 of the editor's introduction) that Buddhaghosa took the *Milindapañha* as an authority, also mentioning two Burmese language commentaries, *Milindapañhāvattu* and *Milindapañhānissaya*. Rhys Davids 1890: xvi had already mentioned the existence of a Burmese *nissaya*, which may be the same as the latter text. Thus the commentator was plainly familiar with Buddhaghosa's work and its relation to the *Milinda*, and with previous texts to which I do not have access. These may well be the source of his connection of Buddhaghosa's discussion with this passage, if he did not make the link himself. The recensions of the *Milindapañha* itself are said to differ somewhat one from another, but while I

However, despite the obvious similarities in the use of the motif of the future health of the monastic community and the example of kings passing gifts along to their servants, there are some quite radical differences between the attitudes of the author(s) of the *Milindapañha* and those of Buddhaghosa.⁸⁰ For Buddhaghosa, the Buddha is the head of the monastic community, within it but before it. For the author(s) of the *Milindapañha*,⁸¹ the Buddha is quite totally other. The text's position, in this respect, is rather closer to that we have noticed above identified with the Dharmaguptaka school, a stance held also by the Kāśyapīyas. The example of a parent and child is quite striking. As any parent knows, parents and children are not equals, despite their mutual love and respect, and the hierarchy of parent and child cannot be overcome. A parent is not even an older brother or sister, as a kind of first among equals, but entirely separate. For the author(s) of the *Milindapañha* too, the Buddha is not and cannot be *primus inter pares*, but rather is like a father in relation to his son. Buddhaghosa seems of two minds about this. On the one hand, he clearly accepts the ideology embedded in the expression "the monastic community with the Buddha at its head," an idea we will explore further below. On the other hand, the author(s) of the *Milindapañha* conclude that what the monastic community receives it receives because the Buddha allows it, going so far as to apparently make the claim that the clothes given by Mahāpajāpatī to the Buddha have become his property (*mama santaka*), which he then passes on to the community. While other interpretations, including that of Buddhaghosa, understand that the Buddha never takes possession of the gift, and thus the clothes have no opportunity to become his property, Buddhaghosa still employs in his *Majjhimanikāya* commentary the proverbial expression "the son comes into

his father's possessions," implying that he too accepts in some way the allegorical equation of the Buddha with the father and the monastic community (or an individual monk) with the son. The relation between Buddhaghosa's commentaries and the *Milindapañha* is complex, and requires more attentive investigation than we can give it here. What is nevertheless clear is that, far from simply reproducing his source, if that is what it really is, Buddhaghosa has taken inspiration from the earlier work, but cast his own presentations in a quite different overall ideological frame.

I have argued above that Buddhaghosa, perhaps inspired in part by the *Milindapañha*, composed his *Majjhimanikāya* commentary's presentation of the ideology of the relative merits of donations to the Buddha and the monastic community using as a foil for his own opinion the putative objections of a Mahīśāsaka opponent, whom he characterized as a Sophist. I think this conclusion is correct, but it is nevertheless incumbent upon us to also consider to whom the position criticized by Buddhaghosa might possibly belong, were it not to be to the Mahīśāsaka. Some indication of this might come from an early Sarvāstivāda compendium, the **Abhidharma Mahāvibhāṣā*, in which a similar opinion is found.⁸²

此經復言。若以飲食奉施如來、有造僧伽藍施四方僧眾、此獲施福果大於彼。以僧伽藍無障礙故。

問。施佛功德勝於施僧。此中施福皆先舉劣後舉其勝。何故此中先佛後僧。

答。即以是故、先佛後僧。所以者何。若聲聞僧、便不攝佛。若四方僧、則亦攝佛。是福田僧眾僧故。若唯施佛、但佛應受、僧眾不受、故福為劣。若施僧眾、僧眾與佛俱應納受、故福為勝。無障礙故。獲福無限故。

This sūtra [the *Sudatta sūtra*] again says: "If one donates food and drink to a Tathāgata, and builds a monastery (**saṅghārāma*) and donates it to the monastic community of the four quarters, the latter gift yields greater meritorious fruit than the former. This is because the monastery

do not have direct access to any text other than that edited by Trenckner, judging from the translation in Kanamori 1939: 204–207 (which seems to be excellent), based on the Siamese edition, the text there is identical, and it is unlikely that any inspiration would have come from some version of the root text itself (cp. Thich 1964: 33 for the types of variants the Siamese edition contains).

80 The influences on the formation of the *Milindapañha* have, surprisingly, been little studied. Horner 1963: xlii has noted an example of what may be Sarvāstivādin influence (cp. also Kawamura 1976), and she has listed in the same discussion a number of what she terms "innovations," that is "words and concepts ... that do not appear to occur in the Pali Canon." No doubt this is an important subject of inquiry, but just as vital would be a survey of interpretations of canonical materials that differ from those given by the later Theravāda tradition. Despite Thich's assertion 1964: 23 that "It is crystal clear that the P[āli] text [of the *Milindapañha*, as opposed to its Chinese translations] belongs to the Theravāda school," to the best of my knowledge the relation between this tradition and the later classical Theravāda remains unclarified.

81 We should more cautiously say, for the author(s) of the section in question. It is almost certain that the text as we have it represents a compilation of originally somewhat disparate materials.

82 T. 1545 (XXVII) 678b20–29 (*juan* 130), translated in Tomomatsu 1970: 79–80 (and see 1932: 111). This passage was already noted by Takai 1928/1978: 141–142, along with a number of other relevant sources, in his excellent discussion. Tomomatsu 1932: 111 (and 1970: 79–80) identified the sūtra cited as the *Sudatta-sūtra* in the *Madhyamāgama*, T. 26 (155) (I) 677c–678a (*juan* 39). There are a number of parallel versions including T. 74 (I) 881a19–21, T. 73 (I) 879c, T. 72 (I) 878c, T. 125 (II) 644c (*juan* 19), and the *Velāma-sutta* in the *Aṅguttaranikāya* (ix.20). See also the passage in the *Vinayavibhāṅga* of the Mūlasarvāstivādins, T. 1442 (XXIII) 870b–871a (*juan* 44), and in the Derge Kanjur 3, 'dul ba, nya 87bff. Further study of the significant differences between these versions of the sūtra source must await another occasion.

is free from obstructions (**anāvaraṇa*)."'

Question: The merit from donating to the Buddha surpasses that from donating to the monastic community. Among this [series of items in the sūtra, the preceding members of which are omitted here], in every case the merit of giving to the former [recipient] is weak and that to the latter surpasses it. Why in this [sequence] is the Buddha listed first, then the monastic community [when, as I understand it, the merit of giving to the Buddha should surpass that of giving to the monastic community]?

Answer: It is just for this reason that the Buddha is listed first, then the monastic community [namely, that they *are* listed in hierarchical order]! Why? If it is a question of the community of auditors (**śrāvakaśaṅgha*), then it does not include the Buddha, but if it is a question of the monastic community of the four quarters (**cāturdīśaśaṅgha*), then it does include the Buddha. This is because the monastic community which is the field of merit (**punyaḥsetra*) is the community of monks (**bhikṣusaṅgha*). If one only makes a donation to the Buddha, then only the Buddha will receive it, and not the monastic community, so the merit will be weak. If one makes a donation to the monastic community, both the monastic community and the Buddha will receive it, and so the merit will be superior, because [the monastic community] is free from obstructions, and because its acquisition of merit is limitless.

Here in this clearly Sarvāstivādin text, the viewpoint being expressed is entirely in concert with the position of the Mahīśāsakas that we detailed above. According to Tomomatsu, this is an old Sarvāstivāda position, in contrast to the newer, later idea of the same school that the Buddha and the monastic community are distinct.⁸³ And indeed, later Sarvāstivādin sources offer an opposite point of view. The **Nyāyānusāra* of Saṅghabhadra has the following:⁸⁴

施僧佛何得大果。有作是言。施僧果大、一切無漏聖法種類、皆於僧中具可得故。又言僧是上福田故。又有施主將物施佛世尊勸令廻施僧故。然我所宗施佛果大。以契經說。諸佛世尊證得一切增上自在殊勝功德名最尊故。…所言施主將物施佛世尊勸令廻施僧者、此證非理、觀別因

⁸³ Tomomatsu 1932: 111, and 444.

⁸⁴ T. 1562 (XXIX) 558c23–29, 559a13–16 (*juan* 38). Translated in Tomomatsu 1970: 200–201. Saṅghabhadra actually gives reasons of his own for his position, and then refutes the opponent's positions one by one; here I quote only the last of these refutations.

故。謂佛為欲令僧住持無上正法得久住故、勸以施物廻施於衆。

Which generates a greater result: giving to the monastic community or giving to the Buddha? Some say giving to the monastic community generates a greater result, because all of the varieties of noble dharmas free of defilements can be obtained completely in the monastic community. Others say that it is because the monastic community is the supreme field of merit. Others again say that it is because things which donors give to the Buddha, Blessed One, he ordered be turned over to the monastic community. But our school maintains that giving to the Buddha generates a greater result. As scripture says, because the Buddhas, Blessed Ones, have directly experienced supreme unexcelled freedom and superior virtue, they are called most worthy ones. ...

Regarding the statement "things which donors give to the Buddha, Blessed One, he ordered be turned over to the monastic community," this argument is not reasonable, because we perceive a different cause, namely, that since the Buddha desired to have the monastic community dwell upholding the supreme teaching for a very long time, he encouraged [the donors] to take what they had given to the Buddha and turn it over to the community.

We notice in Saṅghabhadra's refutation of the opponent's third point a clear parallel to an argument of Buddhaghosa's, namely that the Buddha encouraged donors to support the monastic community not because he considered it superior to himself, but so that he might ensure its long term survival. Although certainly it is reasonable to assume that an articulation of the position to which Saṅghabhadra objects is that set forth in the earlier Sarvāstivāda work, the **Mahāvibhāṣā*, that position also fully corresponds to the Mahīśāsaka stance detailed above. (It is true that the passage suggested above as the earlier is found only in Xuanzang's translation of the **Mahāvibhāṣā*. But the fact that it was the same Xuanzang who also translated Saṅghabhadra's **Nyāyānusāra* suggests that we are justified in assuming that the difference in respective ideologies owes more to their original Indian sources than to any possible later interpolation.)

Much later still, a classical Sarvāstivāda position is formulated by the Chinese scholar Puguang 普光, a collaborator of Xuanzang, in his *Jushelun-ji* 俱舍論記, composed between 650–655. Commenting on an *Abhidharmakośa-bhāṣya* passage which uses the expression *buddhapramukho bhikṣusaṅghaḥ* (佛上首僧), the sense of which we will explore further below, he remarks:⁸⁵

功德田者、謂佛上首僧者。釋初句佛於僧中而爲上首。即此僧衆名佛上首僧。又解、於僧田中佛最爲勝、故名上首、即佛名上首僧。佛雖非是聲聞僧攝。是聖僧等。故正理三十八云。佛若非僧攝。契經何故作如是言。汝等若能以少施物、如次供養佛上首僧。則於僧田獲得周遍清淨施福。正理通云。僧有多種。謂有情人·聲聞·福田·及聖僧等。佛於此內非聲聞僧可是餘僧、自然覺故。廣如彼說。以此文證、故知佛亦名僧。

[The phrase from the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*] “The field of merit (**punyakṣetra*) is called the monastic community headed by the Buddha” comments on the first foot [of verse IV.54 in Xuanzang’s translation of the *Abhidharmakośa*].⁸⁶ The Buddha is within the monastic community, but its head, so this community of monks is called “the monastic community headed by the Buddha.” Again, it is explained that because the Buddha is the most superior one among the field of monks, he is called the head, and thus the Buddha is called the head monk. Although the Buddha is not included among the auditors (**śrāvaka*), he ranks as a noble monk, and thus the **Nyāyānusāra* [of Saṅghabhadra, in *juan*] 38 says:⁸⁷ “If the Buddha is not included among the monks, why did the scripture say ‘If you can make a small donation, you should honor in sequence the monastic community with the Buddha as its head. Therefore, [by giving] to the field [of merit that is the] monastic community one obtains the completely pure merit of giving?’” The **Nyāyānusāra* interprets this saying:⁸⁸ “There are many types of monks, namely those ranked as sentient beings, auditors, fields of merit, and noble monks. The Buddha is not an auditor within this [classification], but he can belong to one of the other [categories of] monks, because he awakened to true reality.” Thus it explains in detail, and understanding the matter through this discussion, we know therefore that the Buddha is also called a monk.

It is beyond the scope of the present study to investigate in detail the position of the **Nyāyānusāra* on this matter,⁸⁹ or to explore the significance

85 T. 1821 (XLI) 248b28–c9 (*juan* 15).

86 Found in T. 1559 (XXIX) 82b29 (*juan* 15). The Chinese translation does not correspond well to the Sanskrit text in Pradhan 1975: 232–233.

87 T. 1562 (XXIX) 558c4–6 (*juan* 38). Immediately after this Saṅghabhadra quotes (or rather paraphrases) the sūtra passage with which we began: “Gotamī, if you donate to the monastic community, you honor me with offerings as well.” The entire discussion in this section deserves closer study.

88 T. 1562 (XXIX) 558c9–11 (*juan* 38). Both of these passages closely precede that we quoted above.

89 It is dealt with in detail by Tomomatsu 1970: 199–208.

of Puguang’s text. But obviously there is a disjunction between the position of the **Mahāvibhāṣā* on the one hand and that of Saṅghabhadra and Puguang on the other. The development of this idea within the Sarvāstivāda (or even specifically within the Kāśmīra Sarvāstivāda) is a question which should be addressed by specialists in the Abhidharma. We have seen here the possibility that the position argued against by Buddhaghosa might, from the point of view of its doctrinal content, conceivably belong to the older Sarvāstivāda. The weight of other evidence we have seen does, nevertheless, still suggest the correctness of the Mahīśāsaka identification.

Although I do, then, believe that we have succeeded in establishing not only the identity of Buddhaghosa’s Vitanḍavādin opponent, but also in identifying in the *Milindapañha* a likely model upon which he based the overall framework of his response to this opponent, it is vital to recognize that there does exist some evidence which tends to make parts of the case presented above less than perfectly conclusive. In the very first place, and most importantly, some strong evidence confronts us in our sole extant Mahīśāsaka source, that sect’s Vinaya. Although we have no extant sūtra-ṭīkā of the Mahīśāsaka school,⁹⁰ and thus no exact parallel to the *Dakḥiṇāvibhaṅga Sutta*, and despite the evocative, structurally parallel passages concerning the gifts of Bimbisāra and Āmrapālī we were able to quote from the Mahīśāsaka Vinaya, we do find in that same Mahīśāsaka Vinaya a version of the episode of greatest interest to us here, Gotamī’s gift to Śākyamuni. But there things are presented slightly differently than they are in any other version we have examined. Gotamī’s gift of a robe to the Buddha there reads as follows:⁹¹

世尊、我自織此衣。今以奉上。願垂納受。佛言。可以施僧。得大果報。復如上白。佛言。可以施僧。我在僧數。復如上白。佛言。我受一。以一施僧。然後受教。施佛及僧。

[Gotamī says:] “Blessed One, I wove this robe myself. Now I present it to you; please agree to accept it.”

The Buddha said: “Give it to the monastic community; this will produce a great result.”

[Gotamī] spoke to the Buddha as before [repeating her request],

90 Mizuno 1970 has wondered whether one Chinese *Samyuktāgama* translation (T. 100) might not belong to the Mahīśāsaka (or Dharmaguptaka), but this has been refuted by Enomoto 1980 (see 1986: 24–25), and recently again by Hiraoka 2000, who agree in attributing the text to the Sarvāstivādins or Mūlasarvāstivādins.

91 T. 1421 (XXII) 185b21–25 (*juan* 29).

and the Buddha said: "Give it to the monastic community. I am enumerated among the monks."

She again spoke to him as before, and the Buddha said: "I will accept one [robe]. Give another to the monastic community."

Then she agreed, and gave [robes] to the Buddha and to the monastic community.

From the point of view of all we have seen above, this is a very odd and seemingly internally contradictory presentation. Why, if the Buddha is enumerated among the monks, should he accept a portion of the donation personally, directing that another portion be given to the community? The orientation revealed here seems, from a theoretical point of view, closer perhaps to a later Theravāda, Dharmaguptaka or even later Sarvāstivādin approach to this question than to what we thought we had established as the (a?) Mahīśāsaka position.⁹² Examples of later Theravāda texts presenting this orientation may be found in a text popular in Thailand, the *Paṭhamasambodhi*, and in the commentary to the *Anāgatavaṃsa*, both of which apparently recount the episode almost exactly in this manner.⁹³ I frankly confess my inability to explain this framework here in the Mahīśāsaka Vinaya, in which Gotamī's donation is split, apparently 50–50, between the Buddha and the monastic community. While the passage in itself cannot entirely subvert the hypothesis suggested above, it certainly presents a serious challenge I, for one, am unable to meet at the moment. Other potential objections, however, are more easily dealt with.

The first less serious apparent complication for our hypothesis comes from the *Kathāvatthu*. That text, putatively representing old Indian opinions, but upheld by the Theravāda as an orthodox doxology, contains in section XVII.10 the following:⁹⁴

1. na vattabbarā "buddhassa dinnarā mahapphalan" ti |
 āmantā |
 nanu bhagavā dipadānarā aggo dipadānarā seṭṭho dipadānarā
 pāmokkho⁹⁵ dipadānarā uttamo dipadānarā pavaro asamo asamasamo

92 We did also see at the outset in the **Gautamī-sūtra* that in at least one apparently Sarvāstivāda source the event is not portrayed in this way, but rather in a manner which agrees with the presentation in the Pāli scriptures.

93 See Lévi 1932: 366, and Chit Tin and Pruitt 1992: 18–19, with n. 3, as well as Silk Forthcoming b, nn. 60–61. On the *Paṭhamasambodhi*, see Coedes 1968.

94 Taylor 1897: 555.7–19. See the translation in Aung and Rhys Davids 1915: 321.

95 Edition here and below *pāmokkho*.

appaṭisamo appaṭibhāgo appaṭipuggalo ti |
 āmantā |

hañci bhagavā dipadānarā aggo dipadānarā seṭṭho dipadānarā
 pāmokkho dipadānarā uttamo dipadānarā pavaro asamo asamasamo
 appaṭisamo appaṭibhāgo appaṭipuggalo tena vata re vattabbe
 "buddhassa dinnarā mahapphalan" ti |

1. [Someone offering a heterodox view says:] It should not be said
 "What is given to the Buddha yields a great [karmic] result."

Yes, that's right.

Is not the Blessed One the best of bipeds, the greatest of bipeds,
 foremost of bipeds, chief of bipeds, most excellent of bipeds,
 unequalled, unrivalled, incomparable, unmatched, peerless?

Yes, that's right.

If the Blessed One is the best of bipeds, the greatest of bipeds,
 foremost of bipeds, chief of bipeds, most excellent of bipeds,
 unequalled, unrivalled, incomparable, unmatched, peerless, then it must
 be said that "What is given to the Buddha yields a great [karmic] result."

Here someone suggests that offerings to the Buddha do not yield great results, with which the author of the text disagrees; such gifts do yield great results. Although I have omitted it here, this passage also includes as part of its argument the very verse cited above by Buddhaghosa in the *Majjhimanikāya* commentary on the virtues of the Buddha.⁹⁶ According to the commentary to the *Kathāvatthu*, the opponent in question is representing the view of the Vetullaka or Mahāpuññavādins / Mahāsūññavādins, and unlike the case noticed by Mori in which the *Kathāvatthu* commentary identifies a position attributed to a Viṇḍavādin in the *Majjhimanikāya* commentary as that of the Mahīśāsaka, here no mention of the Mahīśāsaka is found at all.⁹⁷ Now, this commentary is traditionally attributed to Buddhaghosa, and Buddhaghosa is unquestionably the author of the *Majjhimanikāya* commentary. Since we would surely expect some degree of consistency in the attribution of such doctrinal positions, and in harmony with Mori's acceptance of the text's testimony in the other relevant case, the *Kathāvatthu* commentary would seem to suggest that we understand the opponent imagined in the *Majjhimanikāya* commentary also to be a Vetullaka.

96 See above, n. 19.

97 Jayawickrama 1979: 170, referring to 168.19. Also translated in Law 1940: 208, 206.

If this argument were correct, we would be compelled to content ourselves with the conclusion that, although the position of the Sophist in the *Majjhimanikāya* commentary seems to overlap with the opinion of the Mahiśāsakas cited above, Buddhaghosa saw things differently. However, things are not so simple. First of all, the item in the *Kathāvatthu* immediately preceding that we just quoted, XVII.9, reads as follows:⁹⁸

1. na vattabbaṃ “saṅghassa dinnarā mahapphalan” ti |
 āmantā |
 nanu saṅgho āhuneyyo pāhuneyyo dakkhiṇeyyo añjalikaraṇiyo
 anuttaram puññakkhettaṃ lokassā ti |
 āmantā |
 hañci saṅgho āhuneyyo pāhuneyyo dakkhiṇeyyo añjalikaraṇiyo
 anuttaram puññakkhettaṃ lokassa tena vata re vattabbe “saṅghassa
 dinnarā mahapphalan” ti | ...
3. na vattabbaṃ “saṅghassa dinnarā mahapphalan” ti |
 āmantā |
 nanu vuttarā bhagavatā “saṅghe gotamī dehi saṅghe te dinne ahañ
 ceva pūjito bhavissāmi saṅgho cā” ti | attheva suttanto ti |
 āmantā |
 tena hi saṅghassa dinnarā mahapphalan ti | ...

1. [Someone offering a heterodox view says:] It should not be said “What is given to the monastic community yields a great [karmic] result.”

Yes, that’s right.

Is not the monastic community worthy of oblations, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offerings and to be respectfully saluted, the unexcelled field of merit for the [entire] world?

Yes, that’s right.

If the monastic community is worthy of oblations, worthy of hospitality, worthy of offerings and to be respectfully saluted, the unexcelled field of merit for the [entire] world, then it must be said that “What is given to the monastic community yields a great [karmic] result.”

...

3. [Someone says:] It should not be said “What is given to the

monastic community yields a great [karmic] result.”

Yes, that’s right.

Did not the Blessed One say [in the *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga Sutta*]: “Give it to the monastic community, Gotamī. If it is given to the monastic community, both I and the monastic community will be honored with offerings”? Isn’t this scripture?

Yes, it is.

According to this, it should be said “What is given to the monastic community yields a great [karmic] result.”

Here the text seems to be objecting to a view strictly opposite to that offered in XVII.10. Namely, it seems to say here that denying the karmic efficacy of gifts to the monastic community is also an objectionable position. From one point of view, XVII.9 and XVII.10 may seem to be flatly contradictory.⁹⁹ We might naturally assume that either gifts to the Buddha or gifts to the monastic community yield a great result, but not both. But the text here, unlike that in the *Majjhimanikāya* commentary, does not attribute any comparative view: the merit of one type of donation is not suggested as greater than another. Rather, both types of donation are criticized. Who might hold that gifts to the monastic community or to the Buddha do not yield great results? According the *Kathāvatthu* commentary, both of these heterodox opinions belong to the same source, the Vetullakas. And if these Vetullavādins are Mahāyānists, as is often suggested, this makes some sense. It is not charity which leads to great merit, although it generates some, but, depending on the tradition, wisdom, or faith, and so on. Given this, it is very hard to conclude simply that these Vetullakas are to be taken as the Viṇḍavādins of Buddhaghosa’s *sutta* commentary. Had the *Kathāvatthu* commentary attributed only the position denying that gifts to the Buddha are very meritorious, an idea which essentially agrees with that attributed by Buddhaghosa to the objector in the *Majjhimanikāya* commentary, we might have concluded that, irrespective of other evidence, the Viṇḍavādins we seek are indeed Vetullakas. We might also have assumed that the second position is to be attributed to the Dharmaguptaka. But given the coincidence of the commentary’s attribution to the Vetullakas of both this view and its apparent opposite, we cannot identify only one pole of the set with the position set forth in the *Kathāvatthu*, and ignore the other pole. This is true even if the suggestion that Vetullavāda represents Mahāyāna is not correct.

98 Taylor 1897: 553.10–554.3. See the translation in Aung and Rhys Davids 1915: 320.

99 For further explorations of these passages see Tomomatsu 1970: 110–116.

But once again, all is not what it seems.

First, it is possible that for the *Kathāvatthu* commentary which, we must remember, considerably post-dates the *Kathāvatthu* itself and may or more likely may not accurately represent its original intentions, Vetullaka is a term which can be applied to aberrant views of various origins. In Bareaux's opinion:¹⁰⁰ "The doctrine of the Vetullaka as presented by Buddhaghosa is very eclectic. Theses four and five [the two we have just cited] represent the two contradictory positions of the Mahīśāsaka and the Dharmagupta on the merits of donations to the Saṅgha and Buddha." While as we have just seen this could conceivably be so, it is also quite possible that these negative theses are not themselves contradictory if they are understood to imply a third, not explicitly stated, positive position, namely, one which advocates practices other than charity as productive of even greater merit. Moreover, we might also assume that in the period of the composition of the *Kathāvatthu* commentary the differing sectarian origins of such views were sometimes not clearly known, or that the term Vetullaka is understood by the commentary to be a generic one. Such assumptions would also allow us to account for these attributions without reference to sects such as the Mahīśāsaka or Dharmaguptaka.¹⁰¹

If this were not enough, another fact allows us to treat the *Kathāvatthu* commentary with even further suspicion. Although traditional sources, and many modern authors, accept the attribution of the Abhidhamma commentaries, including the *Kathāvatthu* commentary, to Buddhaghosa, careful study has made it certain that this attribution is in fact not correct.¹⁰² Therefore, we may conclude that, first, the *Kathāvatthu* commentary itself may not be referring to any specific sectarian positions at all, and second, that since its authorship differs from that of the *Majjhimanikāya* commentary anyway, we need not assume or expect a strict consistency between them. This seems to effectively solve the problem of what initially seemed to be the troublesome evidence of the *Kathāvatthu* commentary, and it was only the commentary's interpretation in the first place which cast the *Kathāvatthu*'s presentation in a problematic light.

We are, however, not yet quite finished with potential complications for

our hypothesis. In a fourth or fifth century donative inscription from the Northwest, apparently recording a gift to the ācāryas of the Mahīśāsaka school, we find the phrase *buddhapramukh{e} cāturdīse bhikṣusāṅghe deyadharmo ya [m]*, that is to say, "the religious donation directed toward the community of monks of the four quarters with the Buddha at its head."¹⁰³ This is a very important expression, which we have already noticed above several times. Although Hirakawa has claimed that this phrase is a "characteristic expression" (特有の表現) of the Pāli Vinaya and Nikāyas,¹⁰⁴ this is not correct if it is understood to mean that the expression belongs uniquely to this tradition.¹⁰⁵ The phrase is also found in Sanskrit in the *Abhidharmakośabhāṣya*,¹⁰⁶ different versions of the *Mahāparinirvāṇa-sūtra*,¹⁰⁷ Mūlasarvāstivāda Vinaya and *Divyāvadāna*,¹⁰⁸ the *Avadāna-śataka*,¹⁰⁹ the **Nyāyānusāra*,¹¹⁰ various other Turfan Sanskrit fragments,¹¹¹ and so on, as well of course as in texts in Tibetan and Chinese. All of this proves that the expression was in use also by at least the Sarvāstivādins and Mūlasarvāstivādins. But the fact remains that it depicts a configuration probably unacceptable to the Mahīśāsakas, for whom the Buddha is a member of the monastic community, but not its head in the sense of standing apart from that community.¹¹² That is, as the sources referred to above

103 Bühler 1892: 240, ll. 6–7; Sircar 1965: 422–424; Tsukamoto 1996: 976–978 (Kura 1); Shizutani 1978: 297, n. 232, and 166–168; Lüders 1912: §5; Shizutani 1975: Gupta 85. The inscription and the expression have been noted by Schopen 1990: 265.

104 Although oddly he writes "Pāli Āgama" べーリ阿舎経.

105 Hirakawa 1964: 354.

106 Pradhan 1975: 232.17–18, in the introduction to IV.56. As we will see below, in Xuanzang's Chinese translation the term is incorporated into the verse itself, and commented upon in the *bhāṣya*.

107 Waldschmidt 1951: §6.9; 12.4; 26.15; 26.17.

108 See Gnoli 1978: 14.28; Gnoli 1977: 166.33; Cowell and Neil 1886: 43.11. These examples could easily be multiplied.

109 Speyer 1906–1909: II.87.2–3.

110 Bechert and Wille 2000: §1898 V2.

111 For instance, in a portion of the *Kūṣāntāṇḍyasūtra* in Sander and Waldschmidt 1985: §1290 cR3, and in two unidentified fragments in Bechert and Wille 1989: §1486 B2, and §1519 Vx.

112 This point has been misunderstood by Takahashi 1993: 269 (809). (Note also that another inscription mentioning the Mahīśāsaka quoted by Takahashi had been treated much more reliably already by Fussman 1985.) It has, however, been noted by Shizutani who suggests that, while the expression is more at home in the context of the Pāli literature, it may depend here on the Mahīśāsaka idea that the Buddha is part of the monastic community; I do not agree with this. See Shizutani 1978: 168, and 298, n. 234, referring to Hirakawa 1964: 353–354, who in turn notices that the point was made by Tomomatsu 1932. The statement in Shizutani 1975: 174 (§85.3) that the expression is characteristic of the Mahīśāsaka is a slip. The whole issue has been explored in great detail by Tomomatsu 1932, esp. pp. 148–168. I will discuss this matter further on another occasion.

100 Bareaux 1955: 254.

101 This is very similar to a part of the hypothesis mooted by Mori 1982: 14 (175), namely that the term *vitaṇḍavādin* is applied to those whose views were seen as unacceptable.

102 Jayawickrama 1979: viii–xiii. The text does, however, seem to be connected with Buddhaghosa in some way. Tomomatsu 1970: 64 already noticed the disjunction between the *Majjhimanikāya* commentary and the *Kathāvatthu* commentary, and the need for further investigation.

suggest, the Mahīśāsaka stance is much more one of equality between the Buddha and the monastic community. The idea encapsulated in the expression “the monastic community with the Buddha at its head” fundamentally differs from this egalitarian attitude. Thus the appearance of this very expression in an apparently Mahīśāsaka inscription seems to complicate the picture significantly.

Naturally, as one possibility we might suppose that those writing the inscription may simply have been unfamiliar with the finer points of Mahīśāsaka doctrine. However, a closer look at the inscription itself reveals another explanation of this anomaly which is much more compelling. As is clearly stated in the initial edition of the inscription by Buhler, but not in later reproductions of his transcription, of the last two lines of the inscription, “the right-hand portion of the twelfth and the [whole of the] thirteenth seem to have been obliterated by the writer of the original and to have been partly re-written.”¹¹³ Bühler read from the middle of the twelfth line as follows: *ācāryamahis [āsakānām sādhdhakupu] - - treṇa [ācā]*. He added in a note to *ācāryamahis [āsakānām]*: “The bracketed letters of the latter word and those following seem to have been written under a line of intentionally obliterated characters.”¹¹⁴ Having access only to a reprint of Bühler’s edition in which the plate is not very legible, I can say nothing certain, but what is abundantly clear from Buhler’s presentation is that the reading of the name Mahīśāsaka here is far from straightforward. Schopen, in fact, has gone farther, saying that since the sect name “has been written over an intentional erasure, and since the formula [earlier in the inscription mentioning that the merit of the donation is to be dedicated toward the attainment of Buddhahood by all beings] nowhere else occurs in association with a named mainstream monastic order, but always with the Mahāyāna, it is likely that the record

originally read not Mahīśāsaka, but Mahāyāna.”¹¹⁵ Without access to the actual sandstone block on which the inscription is carved, said to be (at least in 1892) in the Lahore Museum, it is very difficult to say what might be made out of the palimpsestic text. However, even without speculating on what may have originally been written under the new writing, the near certainty that the reading Mahīśāsaka is secondary accords well with our impression that one important doctrine of the school sharply conflicts with the tenet that the monastic community has the Buddha at its head. Seen in this light, this inscription too does not prove to be as much of a problem for the hypothesis proposed above as it at first seemed to be.

The situation of the Mahīśāsaka sect with respect to other sects of early Buddhism is a complicated and disputed one.¹¹⁶ Almost all sources seem to agree on the close connection of the Mahīśāsaka and the Dharmaguptaka, despite the fact that with regard to the doctrine of most concern to us here, they are diametrically opposed. Some sources take both the Mahīśāsaka and the Dharmaguptaka as subdivisions of the Vibhājyavāda. Many authorities also link the Mahīśāsaka closely to the Theravāda, here then both together constituting the Vibhājyavāda. Although it appears to me to be a so far unproved hypothesis, Bareau has suggested that “It seems that the Theravādins were the faction of the Vibhājyavādins who resided in Ceylon from the end of the third or the beginning of the second century B.C.E, and the Mahīśāsakas those who stayed on the Indian mainland and of which the doctrine evolved more rapidly.”¹¹⁷ The problem requires much further investigation, but one thing should be clear: if the hypothesis offered above is correct and Buddhaghosa’s Vītaṇḍavādin opponents are Mahīśāsakas then, at least in fifth century Ceylon, despite their overall proximity there were important gaps between the Theravāda and Mahīśāsaka in regard to some doctrines. Or it may be the case that the two schools were in fact so close that Buddhaghosa felt the need to emphasize or even exaggerate their (essentially trivial) differences. But among the things we must keep in mind are the fact that having objections to one particular doctrine does not therefore imply a thoroughgoing rejection of all positions advocated by the same source.

Incidentally, the expression *buddhapramukha bhikṣusaṅgha* is not, as far as I know, found in any other Indian inscription.

113 The question of who did the obliteration seems to me, Bühler’s statement notwithstanding, to be unresolved and insoluble. Shizutani 1978: 167 has noticed Buhler’s statement, but presents it very misleadingly, saying only that the first three and last two lines are damaged. The first three have been, indeed as Buhler says, “seriously injured at both ends,” but this is entirely a different matter from a deliberate erasure and re-writing. Shizutani’s statement (13行から成るが、最初の3行と最後の2行が破損するほかは保存状態は良い) completely conceals this vital fact. Tsukamoto 1996: 976 is even more misleading, saying only that lines 1–3 and part of 13 are damaged. (In 13 Bühler read only the vowel *e* and the letter *ta!*) No mention is made of the condition of line 12 at all. Sircar makes no reference whatsoever to the condition of the inscription.

114 Bühler 1892: 240, n. 7.

115 Schopen 2000: 15. His acceptance of the Mahīśāsaka identification of the inscription apparently led Shizutani 1978: 168 into concluding that the relevant formula need not necessarily signal Mahāyāna influence. (And of course, sectarian identification need not, in theory, preclude Mahāyāna identification as well. As I have suggested in some detail in Silk Forthcoming a, Mahāyānist monks almost certainly belonged to sects as well.)

116 Much data is assembled in Lamotte 1958: 585–603, and presented with much greater detail in Tsukamoto 1980: 414–449.

117 Bareau 1955: 183.

Buddhaghosa's antagonism for the Mahīśāsaka position concerning the status of the Buddha and donations to the monastic community does not imply his complete rejection of that sect or its doctrines. Given this, we cannot conclude that any Mahīśāsaka representative may be classified as a Vitaṇḍavādin by Buddhaghosa, nor of course conversely that any Vitaṇḍavādin need be a Mahīśāsaka, just because one or two are. It may well be that we will never be able to identify the source(s) of some of the thirteen remaining instances listed by Mori in which the Vitaṇḍavādin appears in Pāli commentaries. Even if we were to speculate that one possible source is indeed the Mahīśāsaka tradition, since we lack access to any texts of that school other than their Vinaya, we seem to have no reliable means to trace in Mahīśāsaka sources themselves the Abhidharmic concepts attributed to the Sophists in the Pāli commentaries.

It remains for us here to sketch how and why all of this matters, and what it means. The key to our question lies in the "buddhology" of the respective parties, which is to say, in their conceptions of the Buddha, his relation to the monastic community, and the ways in which he continues to exist and exert authority and power after his death. The doxographic texts whose views we noticed above stating the respective theses of the Mahīśāsakas and Dharmaguptakas regarding donations to the Buddha and monastic community immediately follow these with theses which contain the doctrinal keys to their understanding. In other words, part of the reason — or the result; it is hard to say which is the motivator and which the motivated — for the respective positions of the two schools is found in the views set forth by the doxologies immediately afterwards. There the texts say that for the Mahīśāsakas the path and the liberation of the Buddha and his disciples is the same, while for the Dharmaguptakas the path and the liberation are different.¹¹⁸ In other words, the Mahīśāsakas hold a much more realist and humanistic, less transcendentalist and less docetic view of the Buddha than do the Dharmaguptakas, at least according to these sources. For the monastic authors of the Mahīśāsaka doctrine, the Buddha is one of them, while for the Dharmaguptakas the Buddha is radically other. This is obviously a profoundly important distinction, with vast and significant implications, but

118 The relevant references are: Mahīśāsaka: Teramoto and Hiramatsu 1935: 15.12, 28.16, 44.5–6; Miyasaka in Takai 1928/1978: 12.15–16, 23.10–11, 35.6–7; T. 2031 (XLIX) 17a13; T. 2033 (XLIX) 22b2–3; T. 2032 (XLIX) 19b25; Teramoto and Hiramatsu 1935: 73. Dharmaguptaka: Teramoto and Hiramatsu 1935: 16.7, 44.8–9; Miyasaka in Takai 1928/1978: 13.7–8, 35.9–10; T. 2031 (XLIX) 17a25; T. 2033 (XLIX) 22b14; T. 2032 (XLIX) 19c4; Teramoto and Hiramatsu 1935: 79.

at the same time it is not a difference which Buddhaghosa as a Theravādin necessarily feels. For him the Buddha is the head of the monastic community, in it but not entirely of it. While he cannot agree with the Mahīśāsakas that the Buddha and monastic community are on an equal plane, neither does he see the two as radically separated from each other. And of the two, his position is considerably closer to that of the Mahīśāsaka than to that of the Dharmaguptaka on this point.

Among the implications of these differing formulations, not all are abstract and theoretical. There are concrete ramifications of these ideas which apply to the everyday life of the monks and the monastery. In particular, the stance taken with regard to this question determines who is permitted to make use of the possessions of the community, and who to make use of the possessions of the stūpa, that is to say, of the Buddha. Is what is given to the stūpa (= Buddha) also available to the monks, since the Buddha is only one among other monks and the property of one monk is perforce the property of all? Or is the Buddha (= stūpa) radically other, and therefore his (its) property should not be shared with the community? These, in a nutshell, are the basic economic issues at stake here, and obviously they are not trivial. For the Mahīśāsaka, what is given to the monastic community cannot be used individually, that is to say privately, by any one monk, not even the Buddha, but becomes a purely communal property to be evenly shared. There is no room here for special attention to be given to the stūpa. This position is not unique, of course. We recall here the overall relative lack of official interest among Ceylonese Theravāda authors in stūpas or Buddha images, and the Theravāda tradition is of course solidly based on the monastic community. Moreover, in contrast to the Vinayas of other sects, the Pāli Vinaya gives very little attention to stūpas, although we must remember that this did not necessarily prevent or even deemphasize the actual practice of stūpa worship in any way.¹¹⁹

We began our enquiry by asking about the identity of a Vitaṇḍavādin. This Sophist suggested that the monastic community be understood, on the basis of a phrase in the *Dakkhiṇāvibhaṅga Sutta*, as more worthy of donations than the Buddha himself. We succeeded in identifying this stance with an idea of the Mahīśāsaka school, an identification which becomes more significant when joined with Mori's earlier linkage of another Vitaṇḍavādin position also found in the *Majjhimanikāya* commentary with the same Mahīśāsaka school. Together with the fact that the pilgrim Faxian was able to obtain a

119 See Schopen 1989.

Sanskrit manuscript of the Mahīśāsaka Vinaya in Ceylon at right around the time of Buddhaghosa, this all seems to fit together to form the beginnings of a picture which portrays the Mahīśāsakas as one active source of ideological opposition for Buddhaghosa in fifth century Ceylon. Despite the relative closeness of their respective positions on many issues, or indeed perhaps because of it, Buddhaghosa seems to have been concerned to differentiate his orthodoxy from the wrong views of the Mahīśāsakas, although if this is so why he did not name as such them remains unclear.

Our investigations soon led us to discover that the seemingly obscure and scholastic question of the comparative worth of donations conceals some fundamental controversies. Who controls the financial capital flowing into the monastery, including what is given to the stūpa and offered to images of the Buddha? Does control of this wealth rest with the monastic community as a whole, or are special provisions to be made for various forms of donation? The full details of differences of opinion on these matters are complex and present many examples of ambiguity and even contradiction.¹²⁰ But what is clear from our present limited investigation is that for Buddhaghosa the wealth of the Buddha is to be shared with the monks, because the Buddha is a monk, but not shared evenly, because the Buddha is not just a monk like any other. The theological (or “buddhological”) claim is one of the uniqueness of the Buddha coincident with his commonality with the community of monks as a whole. This differs only slightly from the claim of the Mahīśāsakas that the Buddha and the monks of the community stand on the same level, in the sense that the path and the awakening of the Buddha is not different in substance from that in principle available to monks, even if the latter have not yet attained it. I think Buddhaghosa exaggerates this difference, perhaps in an intentionally propagandistic way, when he accuses his opponent of advocating a doctrine of only two jewels or refuges, rather than three. Saying that the Buddha is a part of the monastic community does not really imply the rejection of the core idea of the three refuges, the Buddha, Dharma and Saṅgha, and for Buddhaghosa to accuse his opponent of this stance is tantamount to accusing him of heresy. Most unfortunately we have no records of what may have been another side to this debate; perhaps there once were literary sources containing a Mahīśāsaka response to Buddhaghosa’s attacks, but if they ever existed they seem to have long since been lost. We do not know much about the doctrines of the Mahīśāsaka

120 It is this general problem which Tomomatsu set out to investigate beginning with his 1932 study. I plan to present an overall appraisal of his work and what it can teach us in the near future.

school. Only part of this is due to inadequate sources; careful study of the Vinaya of this school, which according to Frauwallner has been very badly transmitted,¹²¹ will no doubt reveal subtleties of great interest. In this regard comparison not only with the closely related Dharmaguptaka Vinaya,¹²² but also that of the Theravāda in Pāli, will be very useful.

It is impossible to say yet whether we should expect that the other examples of Vīṭṭavādin objections invoked by Buddhaghosa are to be linked with the Mahīśāsaka school, but we are certainly justified in concluding that simple Abhidharmic analyses will not suffice to locate all points of controversy which appear in our ancient texts. No doubt arcane and abstract doctrinal debates were of great import to many ancient thinkers, but to overlook the practical and the economic issues which they also debated is to fundamentally fail to appreciate the scope of their true concerns. Our investigation above has made it quite clear that disputations also concerned matters other than doctrinal systematics, or to put it another way, that the Vinaya was every bit as much of interest and significance to scholars such as Buddhaghosa as was the Abhidharma. The very existence of the *Samantapāsādikā* alongside the *Visuddhimagga* should be enough to make such a reminder unnecessary, but it perhaps bears repeating anyway.¹²³ On the other hand, it is also worth emphasizing another result of our investigation, namely that there is a smaller gap between abstract doctrine and concrete economic issues than we, with our own ways of looking at the world, might imagine. The practical and seemingly comparatively simple question of how wealth is to be distributed has been revealed to entail in its possible answers complex considerations of the status of the Buddha, and his continuing presence in the world after his death. These are, after all, very important problems indeed.

A final lesson we might learn from our inquiry is this: the details should not blind us to the greater overall questions which give those details meaning. Or to put it another way: while giving due consideration of the leaves, we should still be sure, as now, to fully appreciate the Forest.

121 Frauwallner 1956: 183.

122 Frauwallner 1956: 182.

123 If anything, the fact that Buddhaghosa has been determined not to be the author of the Abhidhamma commentaries attributed to him makes this suggestion even stronger. See, however, the remarks above in n. 66 on the authorship of the *Samantapāsādikā*.

Appendix

Although it contains nothing of direct relevance to our question, for reference, and since the text is not easily obtained, I quote here the passage from Dhammapāla's *Linatthappakāsani* sub-commentary corresponding to the first passage we studied above from Buddhaghosa's *Papañcasūdanī*:¹²⁴

saṅghe gotami dehi ... pe ... saṅgho cā ti idam eva suttapadaṃ | *saṅghe gotami dehi* ti saṅghassa dānāya niyojesi tasmā saṅgho va dakkhiṇeyyataro ti ayam evettha attho | *yadi evan* ti ādinā tattha byabhicāraṃ dasseti | *rājamahāmattādayo* ti ādinā tattha byatirekato nidassanaṃ āha | *mahantatarā bhaveyyun* ti ānubhāvādinā mahantatarā bhaveyyun na ca taṃ atthi ti | *tasmā* ti yasmā guṇaviṣiṭṭhatetukarṃ dakkhiṇeyyatarṃ anapekkhitvā attano dīyamānassa dāpanaṃ labhati tasmā | *mā evaṃ gaṇhān* ti sammāsambuddhato saṅgho va dakkhiṇeyyo ti mā gaṇha |

tattha nicchayasādhakaṃ suttapadaṃ dassento *niyamasmim loke ... pe ... vipulaphalesinan* ti āha | *svāyamatto ratanasutte*¹²⁵ “yaṃ kiñci vittaṃ” ti gāthāya aggapasādasuttādīhi¹²⁶ ca vibhāvetabbo ti | tenāha *sattārā uttaritaro dakkhiṇeyyo nāma nathī* ti |

gotamiyā antamabhavikatāya dānassa digharattaṃ hitāya sukhāya anuppādanato na taṃ garutaraṃ saṅghassa pādāpane kāraṇanti āha *pacchimāya janatāyā* ti ādi | *vacanato pī* ti tassa vatthayugassa satthu eva paṭiggahaṇāya vacanato pī | tenāha *na hī* ti ādi |

sattā saṅghapariyāpanno va īdise ṭhāne aggaphalaṭṭhatāya aṭṭha-ariyapuggalabhāvato sace panassa na sayarṃ saṅghapariyāpannatā katharṃ saṅghe pūjite *sattā pūjito nāma siyāti adhippāyo* | *tiṇi saraṇagamanāni tayo* eva aggapasādāti vakkhati ti *adhippāyo* | *abhidheyānurūpāni hi liṅgavacanāni* | *na ruhati ayāthāvapaṭipatti-bhāvato* na gihivesaggahaṇādinā gihibhāvassa paṭikkhipitattā | *na vattabbam etaṃ sattā saṅghapariyāpanno* ti *sattubhāvato* | *sāvakasamūho hi saṅgho* | *saṅghagaṇe hi sattā uttaritaro anaññasādhāraṇagaṇehi samannāgatabhāvato mūlaratnabhāvato* ca |

124 From the Dhammagiri-Pāli-Ganthamālā series, vol. 22 (Igatpuri: Vipassana Research Institute, 1995): 189–190. On the authorship, see von Hinuber 1996: §358.

125 *Suttanipāta* II.1, verse 3 (Sn 224) (Cūlavagga), Andersen and Smith 1913: 39.11, translated in Norman 1992: 25. Also in the *Khuddakapāṭha* (Smith and Hunt 1915: 3.36).

126 *Itivuttaka* 90 (Windisch 1889): 87.16–88.1. Translated in Masefield 2000: 76. The same is found in the *Aṅguttaranikāya* (*Cakkavagga* 34) (Morris 1888: 34.13–16).

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